



Appendix N

Social impact assessment





Social Impact Assessment

Cowal Gold Operations Underground Development

Client: EMM Consulting on behalf of Evolution Mining

Date: 25 September 2020

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Executive summary

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared by Elton Consulting on behalf of EMM Consulting who have been engaged by Evolution Mining Limited to develop the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) for the Cowal Gold Operations (CGO) Underground Development Project ('the Underground' or 'the Project'). The EIS will be assessed by the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) as part of the planning and regulatory approvals process. This SIA is a technical specialist report that will inform the EIS by making a comprehensive effort to estimate in advance the likely social consequences of the Project.

Project overview

Evolution Mining is the owner and operator of the CGO at Lake Cowal, approximately 38 kilometres north east of West Wyalong in New South Wales.

CGO is an existing open cut mine and has been operational since 2005. The mine operates under Ministerial development consent (DA14/98) which allows Evolution to extract and process ore at a processing rate of 9.8 million tonnes of ore per annum (Mtpa) until 2032. The Project site is located immediately adjacent to Lake Cowal.

Evolution Mining proposes to introduce an underground mine adjacent to the current open cut pit which would extend the life of mine until 2040 and increase the project workforce to up to 660 people. The Underground is being considered a State Significant Development (SSD) under the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act).

Key methodological components

This SIA meets the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) as part of the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) planning approvals process. The methodology for this SIA adopts the approach and principles supported by both international and NSW best practice guidance documents. The key methodological components of the SIA have been:

- » Determination of the 'area of social influence' or SIA study area
- » Compilation of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of communities
- » Literature and strategic planning context review
- » Targeted consultation with local communities, councils and key project stakeholders
- » Analysis of social impacts and evaluation of their significance
- » Mitigation and enhancement strategy development for identified impacts and opportunities.

Social baseline

The social baseline analysis has understood the following community characteristics and existing trends within the area of social influence:

- » Existing communities are proportionately older, which suggests a small labour pool and larger numbers of the population who rely on access to social infrastructure and services.
- » Bland and Lachlan shires are expected to experience decreases to their population over the coming decades while Forbes shire is expected to experience population growth.
- » There is proportionately high numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in Forbes and Lachlan shires however otherwise the existing population is relatively culturally homogenous.
- » There is low resident mobility, indicating that the population is generally stable with high rates of volunteerism; this infers that the sense of community and social cohesion is strong.

- » Community identities are strongly linked to rural lifestyles, farming livelihoods and supporting other members of the community.
- » The community places value on locally-run social activities and events that bring people together and the local heritage.
- » Substantial housing stress is being experienced, with higher average weekly mortgage repayments compared to household income. The rental market is highly strained with little to no rental housing available, particularly in West Wyalong.
- » Youth mental health has been identified as a critical local health issue. The limited availability of doctors in smaller towns and maternal health services have also been identified as gaps in health service delivery.
- » The lack of available and affordable child care services in West Wyalong has presented employment barriers for residents with young children, particularly experienced by women and Aboriginal households.
- » There are limited tertiary education opportunities and career pathways for young people has been identified as an ongoing challenge.
- » There is abundant available recreational facilities and open space, indicating a strong active and sporting culture while community facilities, in particular youth centres and services, are lacking.
- » Top industries of employment include mining and agriculture, followed by health care and social assistance, education and training. There is limited industry diversification and job opportunities, which over time has led to job seekers and young people moving out of the area.
- » There are relatively high rates of violent, alcohol and domestic related assault in Forbes and Lachlan shires indicating potential fragmentation within the community and apparent socio-economic disadvantage.
- » Residents are highly private-car dependent implying existing pressure on local road infrastructure for personal mobility as well as freight supply chains and industry usage.
- » Residents predominately do not travel outside of their shire for work indicating a dependency on local industries and a community commitment to local economies.
- » The area is drought prone where water security and access to water are highly important issues.
- » There are abundant environmental, social and cultural values associated with Lake Cowal; the lake is highly valued by community members and local environmental groups.
- » Significant economic growth anticipated in nearby Parkes Shire over the coming years, as well as several other major projects in their planning stages within Bland, Forbes and Lachlan shires.

Summary of consultation

Up to forty engagement activities were undertaken between May and September 2020 to inform this SIA. These included a range of social research methods, including semi-structured interviews, a multi-stakeholder workshop, community information forums, one-on-one meetings or briefings, and a public survey. A diverse range of social impact matters were raised during these consultations and highlighted the nuanced perceptions, concerns, interests and priorities of the CGO's numerous stakeholders.

Stakeholders consulted for this SIA included:

- » Neighbouring or nearby landholders to the Project site
- » Residents of West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin towns
- » Council representatives from Bland, Lachlan and Forbes shires
- » Traditional Owners and Wiradjuri community members
- » Local business owners or operators in West Wyalong
- » Local industry, environmental and community organisations
- » Water user representative bodies.

Identified impacts

Potential impacts identified and assessed in this SIA have been framed as per the NSW DPIE SIA Guideline (2017) and include both positive and negative impacts. The following is a summary of the impacts assessed in this SIA.

Way of life

- » Decrease in availability and affordability of housing market
- » Increase in opportunities for local employment, upskilling and contracting

Community

- » Increase in new, skilled and working aged residents would likely improve human capital for existing populations
- » Influx in fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) workers may alter the existing community character, localised gender relations and household compositions, which may result in a decrease in perceived public safety

Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities

- » Increase in demand for health services, recreational facilities and commercial services may result in certain facilities experiencing a strain or under-capacity
- » Increase in spending on private or commercial services may lead to service expansions and local economic stimulus
- » Increase in traffic on local roads may decrease conditions and affect usability
- » Influx in FIFO workers may increase demand on existing flight services, which may improve connectivity and expansion of services
- » Continuation of shared value and community programs would increase levels of community wellbeing, cohesion and social capital, particularly for vulnerable community groups

Culture

- » Mining under Lake Cowal may be perceived as affecting community connection to places of value

Health and wellbeing

- » Decrease in mental and physical health of workforce relating to fatigue and personal isolation may reduce human capital and social wellbeing over time

Surroundings

- » Continued rate of water consumption may be perceived as reducing availability or access for other users
- » Vibration disturbance to nearby landholders may cause irritation and may decrease personal wellbeing

Personal property rights

- » Increase in local economic opportunities may cause economic inflation for goods and services which could result in unaffordability for certain community groups

Decision making

- » Decrease in levels of social acceptance by the Wiradjuri community may cause an increase in community fragmentation or conflict between community groups

Fears and aspirations

- » Extended life of mine may provide opportunity to diversify the local economy and support development of new industries and livelihoods

Cumulative

- » Influx of FIFO workforces caused by multiple concurrent projects may place additional pressure on the local housing market, particularly affecting short-stay accommodation providers and the private rental market
- » Increase in demand for labour and contracting services caused by multiple concurrent projects requiring construction workers, would enable job creation and local economic stimulus
- » An increase in traffic on local roads caused by multiple concurrent projects may increase the public safety concerns for road-related accidents and may decrease the capacity of existing road networks
- » An increase in incoming FIFO workforces caused by multiple concurrent projects may place additional pressures on existing infrastructure and services in nearby townships, which may reduce access or marginalise certain population groups.

Key outcomes and recommendations

The SIA found that the Underground Project would result in a number of social effects on local communities who live, work and visit the area of social influence. Identified social impacts relate to the influx of FIFO workers into the regional town of West Wyalong, the reduced level of uncertainty around the future of the community and numerous opportunities to increase local socio-economic benefit.

Evident vulnerabilities exist within the community related to social disadvantage, limited social infrastructure and services, an ageing population and poor youth mental health. While communities across the Bland, Forbes and Condobolin shires have relatively limited economic diversification and skills adaptability, there has been broad support for the CGO over the years, with the majority of community members and stakeholders interested to see the Underground Project continue to activate the local economy and to sustain nearby towns, as CGO has done since commencement.

All negative impacts assessed can be reasonably mitigated throughout a strategic and collaborative approach to planning and development to reduce their significance to low. All positive impacts identified can be reasonably enhanced through a similar approach for communities to realise the range of opportunities that the Project offers.

Overall, this SIA anticipates that the Underground Project has the ability to create many local social and economic opportunities for people in the area of social influence. Evolution Mining is in an opportune position to plan and proactively respond to impacts and opportunities before construction. Key recommended mitigation and enhancement measures centre around the delivery of a Social Impact Management Plan and a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan specific to CGO. These plans would likely result in the most effective and advantageous social outcomes by using the findings and outcomes of this SIA as a foundation for their development.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
AUD	Australian Dollar
CALD	Cultural and linguistic diversity
CGO	Cowal Gold Operations
CSEP	Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
DIDO	Drive-in-drive-out
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMM	EMM Consulting Proprietary Ltd
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)
EPBC Act	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)
FIFO	Fly-in-fly-out
IAIA	International Association for Impact Assessment
km	Kilometre
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local government area
Mtpa	million tonnes per annum
NNTT	National Native Title Tribunal
NSW	New South Wales
SAP	Special Activation Precinct
SEARs	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEIFA	Social-Economic Indexes for Areas
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SIMP	Social Impact Management Plan
SSC	State Suburb Code
SSD	State Significant Development
REDS	Regional Economic Development Strategy
WCC	Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation

1 Introduction

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared by Elton Consulting on behalf of EMM Consulting who have been engaged by Evolution Mining Limited ('Evolution') to develop the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) for the Cowal Gold Operations (CGO) Underground Development Project ('the Underground' or 'the Project'). The EIS will be assessed by the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) as part of the planning and regulatory approvals process. This SIA is a technical specialist report that will inform the EIS by making a comprehensive effort to estimate in advance the likely social consequences of the Project.

The SIA documents the method employed to identify, analyse and manage all identified social impacts of the Underground. It includes a baseline sub-study of the Project's existing social environment and determines the area of social influence. It details the consultation activities undertaken with local communities and stakeholders to inform the findings of this study and enable public participation. The SIA then analyses the identified social impacts from the perspective of the affected stakeholder or population group, and evaluates each impact's significance. Lastly, this SIA provides mitigation and enhancement measures for each impact as well as a framework for the proponent to monitor and manage the impacts. This aims to ensure that adverse impacts are either avoided or mitigated and that positive impacts are enhanced so that social benefit and opportunities are created.

This SIA is the means by which information is provided to DPIE, so that it may appropriately assess the social impacts, both positive and negative, of the CGO Underground Development, and make a final determination.

1.1 Project overview

Evolution Mining is the owner and operator of the CGO, which is approximately 38 kilometres north-east of West Wyalong, 60 kilometres south-west of Forbes in New South Wales. The site is approximately 350 kilometres west of the closest capital city of Sydney, and falls within the local government area of Bland Shire Council. The CGO is situated on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri People and is within the Central West region of NSW.

CGO is an existing open cut mine and has been operational since 2005. The mine operates under Ministerial development consent (DA14/98) which allows Evolution to extract and process ore at a processing rate of 9.8 million tonnes of ore per annum (Mtpa) until 2032. The mine site is located immediately adjacent to Lake Cowal and operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

The area of land to which the Development Consent (DA 14/98) is relevant includes that underlying Mining Lease 1535 and the CGO's water supply pipeline and the Bland Creek Paleochannel Borefield. ML 1535 encompasses approximately 2,636 hectares and is bordered by Evolution's Exploration Licence 7750.

The CGO site is accessed via existing public roads from West Wyalong. Light vehicle access also exists from Condobolin and Forbes. Electricity to the site via a 132 kilovolt electricity transmission line from Temora, approximately 90 km south of the CGO.

Figure 1 Site aerial and surrounds**Site Aerial and Surrounds**

Source: Elton Consulting, 2020

1.1.1 The proponent

Evolution Mining is a gold miner currently operating four wholly-owned mines in Australia: Cowal in New South Wales, Mt Carlton and Mt Rawdon in Queensland, and Mungari in Western Australia. Additionally, Evolution holds an economic interest in the Ernest Henry copper-gold mine in Queensland and has recently announced its acquisition of the Red Lake gold complex from Newmont Goldcorp in Canada (ASX Announcement 26 November 2019).

1.1.2 History and current mining operations

North Limited began exploration and development of the CGO in 1995. Development Consent was granted by the then NSW Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning on 26 February 1999 (DA 14/98) which included the mine water supply pipeline. Barrick Gold Australia then acquired the Project in 2005 and continued to be the owner and operator for the following decade.

The CGO has maintained the Cowal Gold Project Native Title Ancillary Deed (the Native Title Agreement) with the Wiradjuri Condobolin Native Title Claim Group since 2003 and through the mutual obligations contained within that agreement, informs the conditions of consent for the CGO. The Native Title Agreement was signed in 2003 By Barrick and a consortium of community leaders nominated by Elders of the Wiradjuri Nation. The Wiradjuri

Condobolin Corporation (WCC) was established at this time to act as the primary vehicle in which the Native Title Agreement would be upheld. Additionally, under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983, the Project is situated in the jurisdiction of the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council.

In 2015, Evolution acquired CGO from Barrick Gold Corp. for \$US550 million, at a time when mine closure at Cowal was planned for 2024. Since then, Evolution has almost doubled its ore reserves, giving CGO a renewed mine life extending now until 2032. Ongoing exploration and development activities continue to extend the mine's presence in the local area further into the future.

Most recently, Modification 13 to the CGO was approved on 7 February 2017 and involves continued operations at the CGO within ML 1535 for an additional 8 years. Since then, Modification 14 was approved on 4 October 2018 which has allowed for the increased processing rate by 31 per cent, and lastly, Modification 15 was approved in October 2019.

Open pit mining operations at the CGO are supported by on-site facilities including water management infrastructure/storages, a process plant and tailings storage facilities (TSFs). Mine waste rock from the open pit is hauled to waste rock emplacements. Ore mined from the open pit is hauled directly to the primary crusher (adjacent to the process plant), run-of-mine pads or low grade ore stockpiles prior to processing. Mineralised material is also separately stockpiled for future processing.

The ore processing plant is located on site on the south west of the site between the pit and southern waste rock emplacement. A low-grade ore stockpile is located north of the processing plant and the tailing storage facilities are located further west of the process plant. Lake Cowal, to the east, is protected from mining operations with a lake protection bund around the site and a temporary isolation bund between the protection bund and the lake.

Gold at CGO is extracted from the ore using a conventional carbon-in-leach cyanide leaching circuit in the process plant. Tailings are pumped from the process plant via a pipeline to the tailings storage facilities. The gold product is recovered and poured as gold bars.

Figure 2 Key infrastructure and footprint of current mine operations



1.1.3 The proposed Underground Development

Evolution Mining is proposing to construct and operate an underground mine at CGO to extract the GRE46 mineralisation, hereafter known as 'the Underground' or 'the proposed development'. The Underground would involve the extension of the existing mining infrastructure adjacent to the current open cut pit under a part of Lake Cowal, and includes:

- » a box-cut entry to the underground workings
- » a decline from the box-cut to provide access for personnel and maintenance

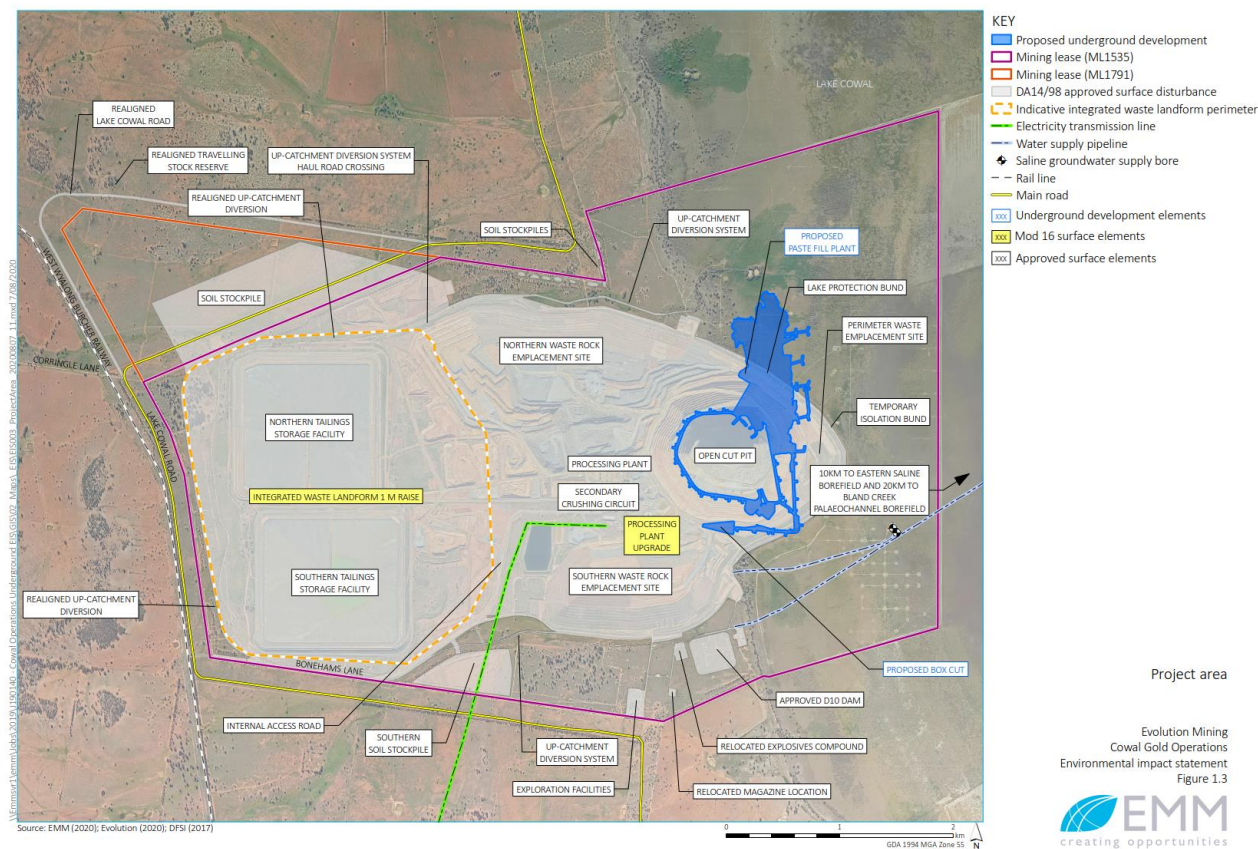
- » six access points to the decline for access, ore haulage, ventilation circuit, underground services and emergency egress
- » a network of underground tunnels to provide access to the ore, transportation to the surface and ventilation
- » use of sub-level open stoping to extract the ore (approximately 1106 stopes over the life of mine)
- » production of up to 27 Mt of ore at a rate of 1.8 Mtpa (no change to the processing rate)
- » production of approximately 5.74 Mt of waste rock
- » delivery of extracted ore and waste rock to the surface by truck
- » development of a paste fill plant, and the delivery of paste fill via a borehole and the backfilling underground stopes with the paste
- » development of ancillary underground infrastructure to support the underground operation, including dewatering infrastructure, ventilation system, electrical reticulation.
- » Extension of the life of mine by 8 years to the end of 2040
- » Further development of an underground mining fleet and associated specialist workforce

Construction of the decline and development drives would occur over a period of up to two years from 2022 and ore production of the currently known economic resource would take place until the end of the 2039.

The Underground would require development of additional surface infrastructure and augmentation of existing infrastructure, all within the existing approved disturbance areas, including (but not limited to): administration facilities, offices and car parking, warehouses and stores, vehicle wash down facilities, heavy vehicle and light vehicle maintenance workshop and maintenance bays, control room, fuel farm, core yards and drill sheds, hard stands and go lines, ablutions, bathhouse and changerooms, communications infrastructure, access tracks, water storages and other minor ancillary infrastructure.

The Underground is being considered a State Significant Development (SSD) under the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act).

Figure 3 Underground Development footprint layout



1.2 Purpose

This SIA is one of several technical studies that form part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project. The purpose of this SIA is to provide an assessment of the potential social impacts of the proposal in response to the NSW Department of Planning Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued on 27 September 2019. The SEARs contain the following requirement for social impact assessment:

an assessment of the likely social impacts of the development on the local and regional community in accordance with the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industry Development (2017), including the likely impacts of the development on the local community, cumulative impacts (considering other mining developments in the locality), and consideration of workforce accommodation.

2 Methodology

The methodological approach used for this SIA was guided by international social impact assessment principles and methods as described in *Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects* (Vanclay, 2015), and endorsed by the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA). The approach is further guided by the *NSW DPIE Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* released in September 2017.

2.1 Regulatory and legislative context

The EP&A Act and NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation) form the statutory framework for planning approval and environmental assessment in NSW, in particular the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act). This legislation is supported by environmental planning instruments including State environmental planning policies and local environmental plans. The EP&A Act includes the need to promote the social and economic welfare of the community and to include social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment.

Under the provisions of clause 8(1) and clause 5 to Schedule 1 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (SRD SEPP) mining development with a capital investment value of more than \$30 million is declared State Significant Development (SSD).

The *Social impact assessment guideline for state significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* (Department of Planning and Environment, September 2017) ('the SIA Guideline') was released by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to provide a consistent framework and approach to the assessment of social impacts associated with State significant resource projects.

2.2 Guidance framework

The methodological approach used for this SIA has been guided by both international and state-level social impact assessment principles and methods as described in *Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects* (IAIA 2015) and as described above, the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* (DPIE, 2017).

Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects (IAIA, 2015)

The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) defines social impact assessment as the process of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. It understands the primary purpose of social impact assessment is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment. This guideline is considered current global leading practice.

Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development (DPIE, 2017)

The DPIE SIA Guideline is consistent with the IAIA SIA Guideline while reflecting NSW's regulatory requirements and planning processes. It acknowledges that SIA is the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and developing responses to the social impacts of a proposed State significant project, as one part of the overall EIS. It continues to recognise that SIA is not a one-size-fits-all process and needs to be proportionate to suit the proposal's context, nature and scale of impact. The DPIE SIA Guideline is considered current best practice for assessing the social impacts of major projects in NSW.

2.3 Defining social impacts

A social impact is defined by a consequence experienced by people due to changes associated with a project or proposal (DPIE, 2017a). People, in this context, can include individuals, households, groups, communities, organisations as well as the NSW population generally (DPIE, 2017). Therefore, underlying this definition is the understanding that social impacts are matters that affect people and their wellbeing, either individually or collectively as well as across a whole society. Social impacts have been grouped according to the categories shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Social impact categories and definitions

Category	Description
Way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » how people live, such as how they get around and access to adequate housing » how people work, including access to adequate employment, working conditions and/or practices » how people play (recreate), including access to recreation activities » how people interact with one another on a daily basis
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » composition » cohesion » character » how it functions / functionality » sense of place
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » public (local, state, federal) » private (for profit) » not-for-profit organisations or volunteer groups
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » shared beliefs, customs, values, stories » connections to land, places and buildings » Aboriginal culture, language and connection to Country
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » physical health » mental health » social wellbeing
Surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » access to and use of ecosystem services » public safety and security » access to and use of nature and built environment » aesthetic value and/or amenity
Personal and property rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » economic livelihoods » personal disadvantage » civil liberties
Decision-making systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » having a say » access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms
Fears and aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » future of the community

Source: DPIE Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development (2017)

2.4 Scoping of social impacts

The scoping component of this SIA was completed between June and August 2019 as part of the Underground Development EIS Scoping Report and Request for SEARs. It involved a site orientation to undertake physical observations, stakeholder analysis and community consultation as well as a desktop review to determine the area of social influence and the Project's social context.

Early engagement with the community and project stakeholders during the scoping phase aimed to:

- » establish a relationship with community groups and other project stakeholders
- » provide information about the project to the community and other stakeholders
- » obtain input on relevant matters to be considered in the EIS.

Scoped social impacts included housing availability and population growth due to workforce influx, noise, visual and traffic disruptions for sensitive receivers, and demand pressure on community facilities and services. No positive social impacts were included in the scoping phase. These matters identified have been considered in this SIA.

2.5 Determining the area of social influence

Social impacts relate to people, their livelihoods and their wellbeing. For this SIA, this means that defining an area of social influence (or 'area of influence') required going beyond the Project's direct infrastructure footprint. The area of social influence considers the way people organise themselves, connect with each other and move around the broader geographic area. This broader and dynamic interlinked network of communities and stakeholders is referred to within SIA as a project's area of social influence (IAIA, 2015).

The area of influence was determined by identification of the main populated communities where people live, work and visit, as well as the existing networks of travel between them. Key considerations have been made to the following features of the Project in understanding how people will be affected or impacted:

- » worksite location(s)
- » workforce accommodation facility location
- » villages and townships nearest to the Project site
- » community livelihood locations (arable land)
- » major connecting roads and transport routes
- » major towns providing core services to communities surrounding the Project.

To determine this for the Project, direct and indirect features of the Project's activities and key components were considered.

For the proposed Underground Development, the major place-based communities where people live, work, travel and visit, as well as the existing socio-economic networks between them, was considered to determine the area of social influence.

The primary study area is where most material impacts would be felt, perceived and experienced, and considers the boundaries of the Bland Shire Council and in particular, the town of West Wyalong. The wider study area is inclusive of the Lachlan Shire Council and Forbes Shire Council where transportation routes to site traverse as well as workforce places of residence. The Lachlan and Forbes LGA boundaries are in near proximity to the Project site (both approximately 10km distance). The towns of Forbes and Condobolin are considered as two other major place-based communities to West Wyalong. The Central West Region of NSW has also been considered to encapsulate the region that the Project is situated, and where wider economic impact or benefit may be realised.

Figure 4 represents the geographical areas used to gather demographic and socio-economic data for the social baseline, which includes:

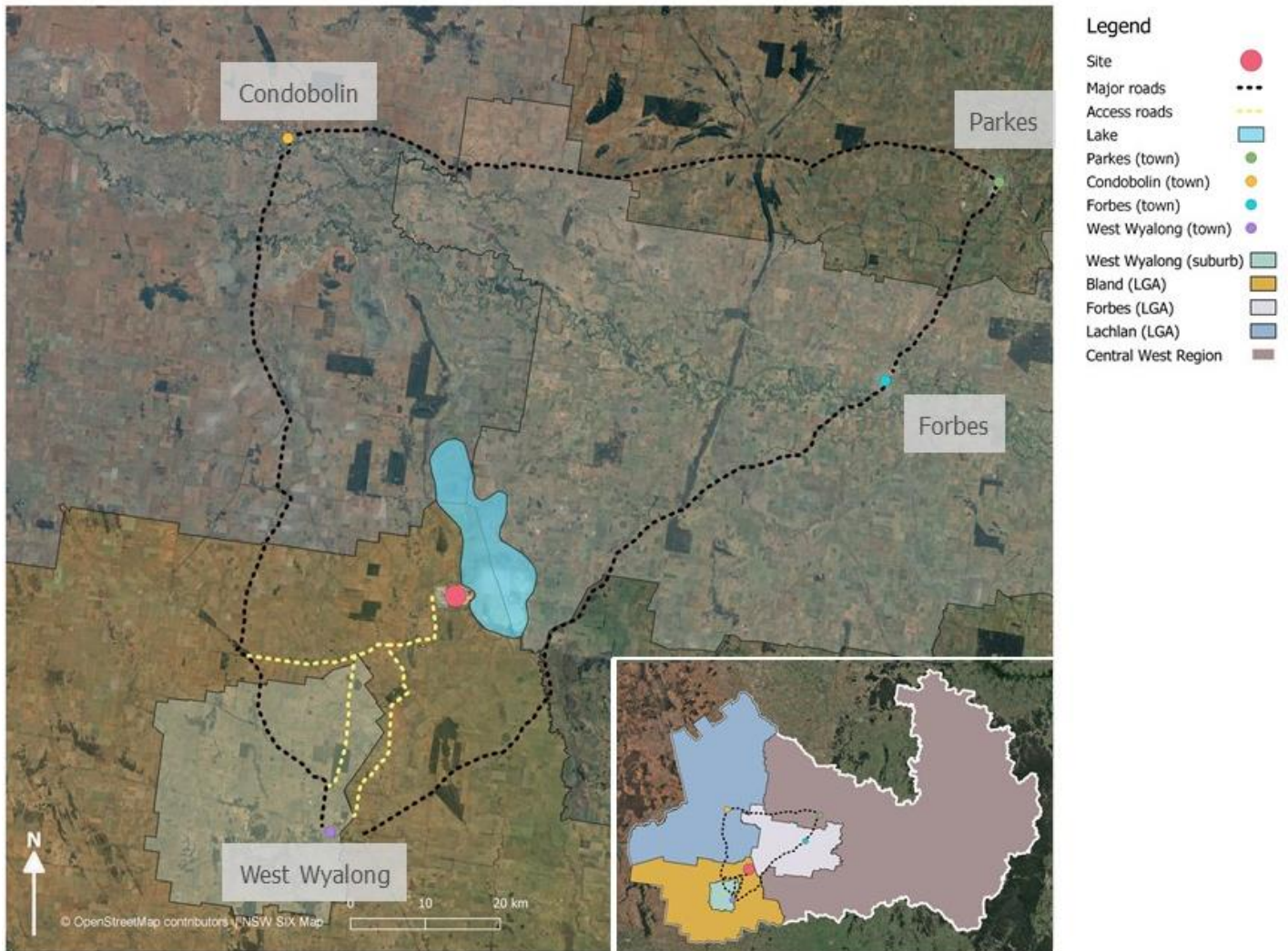
- » **West Wyalong** as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) State Suburb Code (SSC)
West Wyalong is the closest major town to the Project site and represents half the resident population of the Bland LGA. West Wyalong is also the services centre of the Bland LGA for health, recreation, education and emergency services.
- » **The Bland local government area** (LGA) has been included to understand the social effects and communities at the LGA level.
- » **The Forbes local government area** (LGA) has been included to understand the social effects and communities in neighbouring LGAs, also where a large proportion of workers reside. Forbes town is also the second closest major town to the Project, where many Bland LGA residents travel to regular daily activities.
- » **The Lachlan local government area** (LGA) has been included to understand the social effects and communities in neighbouring LGAs. The Project site is situated in near proximity to the Lachlan Shire Council boundary. The nearest place-based community to the Project site of Burcher is in the Lachlan LGA.
- » **The Central West region** as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) reflects data for the whole region, providing a comparison for the demographic and social characteristics of the primary study area.

Together these areas provide differing geographical scale. West Wyalong is the closest township to the project site and is the population centre of the Bland LGA. The Forbes and Lachlan LGAs are adjacent council areas where the townships of Forbes and Condobolin are situated; both LGAs are adjacent to the Bland LGA. The Central West region is included to inform the understanding of the Project's setting relative to the region it sits within as well as to understand the regional socio-economic characteristics and potential impacts.

A visual representation of the area of social influence for this SIA is shown below.

Figure 4 Area of social influence

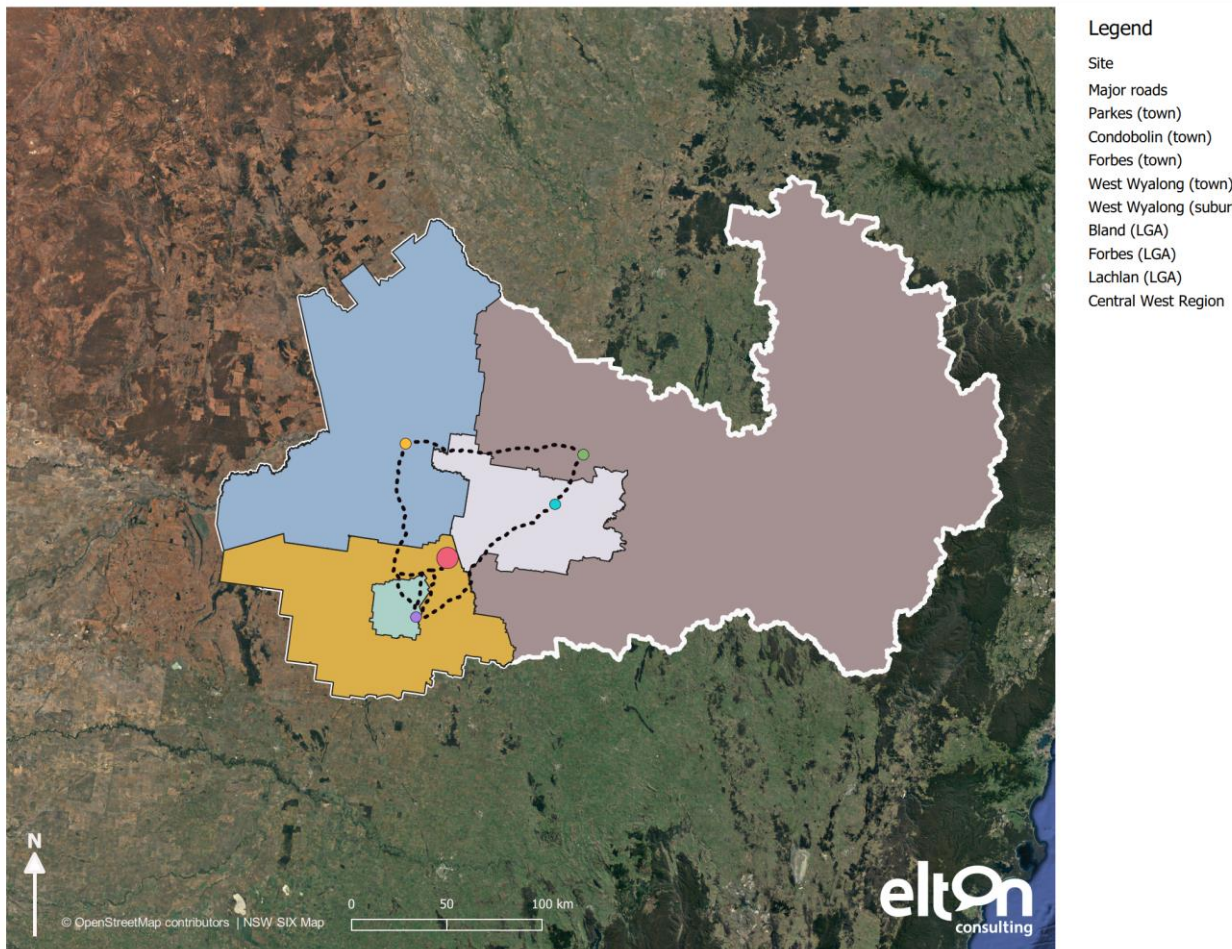
Area of social influence



Source: Elton Consulting, 2020

Figure 5 Area of social influence, regional scale

Area of social influence



Source: Elton Consulting, 2020

2.6 Community and stakeholder consultation

As part of the EIS for the Underground Development, a community and stakeholder consultation strategy has been prepared which considers the guidance provided under the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum and the following NSW DPIE guidelines:

- » draft *Guideline 3 – Scoping an Environmental Impact Statement* (2017a)
- » draft *Guideline 6 – Community and Stakeholder Engagement Guideline* (2017b)
- » *Social impact assessment guideline For State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development* (2017c)

A range of consultation activities were undertaken during the EIS preparation period. SIA stakeholder and community engagement activities were undertaken specifically for the SIA. Up to forty engagements provided qualitative outcomes to input into this SIA, which took place between May and September 2020. Table 2 outlines the community and stakeholder engagement activities in which this SIA has relied upon.

Table 2 Summary of community and stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder	Engagement method
Bland Shire Council – Mayor and General Manager	Videoconference briefing
Forbes Shire Council – Mayor and General Manager	Videoconference briefing
Lachlan Shire Council – Mayor and General Manager	Videoconference briefing
Community Environmental Monitoring and Consultative Committee (CEMCC)	Meeting and workshop
Neighbouring landholders (6)	One-on-one meetings and semi-structured phone interviews
Residents and community members of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan Shires	3x online community information sessions (10 attendees)
Residents and community members of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan Shires	Paper and online survey (19 respondents)
Bland Shire Council – Community Development	Semi-structured interview
Forbes Shire Council – Planning and Growth and Community Development	Semi-structured interview
Lachlan Shire Council – Environment, Tourism and Economic Development, and Community Development	Semi-structured interview
West Wyalong Quade & Moncreiff Livestock & Property	Semi-structured interview
West Wyalong Miller & James Real Estate	Semi-structured interview
West Wyalong Health Service	Semi-structured interview
West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council	Semi-structured interview
Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC)	Semi-structured interview
Lake Cowal Foundation	Semi-structured interview
Business West Wyalong Inc.	Semi-structured interview
Lachlan Valley Water	Semi-structured interview

2.7 Social baseline

Establishing the social baseline provides a 'before' development understanding that is critical to form accurate 'post' development comparisons. The baseline also provides a foundation for understanding the social setting and community characteristics, as well as considering the values, interests, concerns and aspirations of people in the area of social influence.

Data sources

Quantitative data has been utilised from a range of public databases, including:

- » Australian Bureau of Statistics
- » NSW Department of Health
- » NSW Valuer General

- » NSW Department of Education
- » NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

Other complimentary sources of information include a media scan and a literature review have been used to provide additional context. Qualitative and primary inputs have been sourced through community and stakeholder consultation, as well as physical observations undertaken during field investigations in June 2020.

Strategic planning review

The strategic planning review considered a number of documents at the local, state and federal government levels. The following key public policy or planning strategies were reviewed:

- » NSW Government strategies and plans
- » regional plans – prepared by State government with priorities and directions for the Central West region
- » regional districts – led by government in partnership with local councils and community
- » local plans – prepared by local councils (such as Community Strategic Plans).

Document review

A document review has been undertaken to understand the existing social performance at CGO to inform the social baseline of the Underground Development. The following project documents have been reviewed:

- » Evolution Mining Sustainability Policy, 2019
- » Evolution Mining Sustainability Performance Standards, 2019 (specifically 5: Social Responsibility Performance Standards)
- » Evolution Mining Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Public Report, 2019
- » Evolution Mining Diversity and Inclusion Policy, 2019
- » Evolution Mining Sustainability Report, 2019
- » Evolution Mining Community Report, 2018
- » KPMG, Evolution Mining Stakeholder Perception Survey (2016)
- » Deloitte, Evolution Mining Stakeholder Perception Survey (2018)
- » URS, CGO Social Impact Assessment Report (September 2013), prepared for Barrick (Cowel) Ltd.
- » Appendix I: CGO Socio-Economic Assessment (2018, EIS)
- » Appendix K: Socioeconomics and Multi-Criteria Analysis (1997) – Centre for International Business, prepared for North Limited
- » EMM Consulting, CGO Underground Development DP&E Briefing Document, May 2019
- » Overview of Archeological Information, Cowal Gold Project, November 1997, Culture and Heritage
- » Niche Environment and Heritage 2018, Appendix D: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment, Cowal Gold Operations Processing Rate Modification.

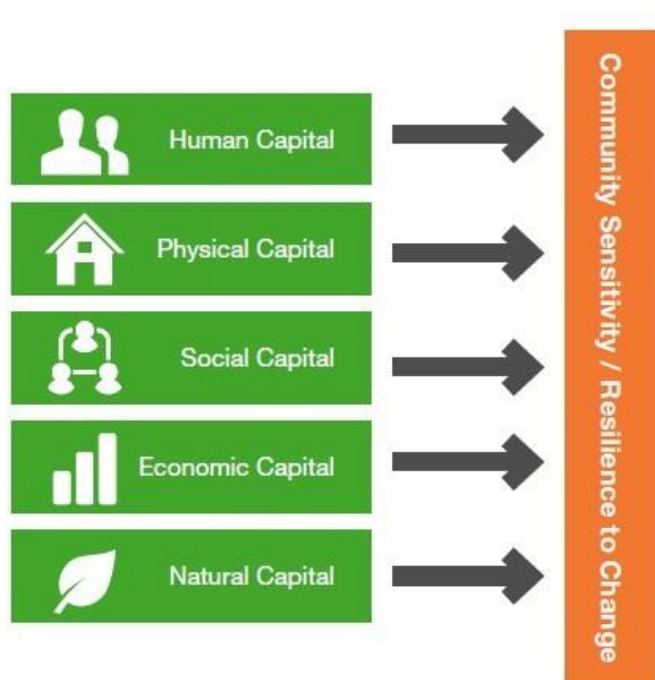
2.7.1 Community profile

The social baseline has utilised the community capitals framework for the collation and analysis of demographic and socio-economic data, under five key 'capitals': human, social, physical, economic and natural. This framework enables an understanding of a community's existing capacity to cope with change and refers to a way of thinking about people in terms of their capabilities, livelihood resources (assets and capitals) and the livelihood strategies undertaken to conduct their way of life (Vanclay, 2015).

A livelihood refers to the way of life of a person or household and how they secure the necessities of life, such as food, water, shelter and clothing, and life within a community. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and into the future while not undermining the natural environment’s resource base. In general, the more assets that a community has across the types of capital, and the more diverse the overall portfolio of assets are, there is an increased likelihood that communities will be resilient when faced with changes in their social environment. In the context of the CGO social baseline, this framework was used to:

- » Identify the level of and access to the five ‘capitals’ within the area of social influence
- » Assess these community assets for strengths or weaknesses which may influence the level of community vulnerability over adaptability when experiencing social change processes.

Figure 6 Community capitals analysis



Source: Adapted from Figure 19.4 Elements of the five capital areas in Coakes and Sadler (2011)

Indicators

The data points contained in Table 3 were used for the development of the social baseline. The indicators have been used to gather data and information of the existing characteristics and demographic profile of people likely to be affected by the Project.

Table 3 Selected socio-economic and demographic indicators

Capital category	Select indicators
Human capital	Population
	Age
	Proportion of the population over 65 years of age
	Household composition
	Household size
	Proportion of Aboriginal households
	Educational attainment

	General population health
	Mental health
	Proportion of population in need of assistance with core activities
Social capital	Socio-economic advantage and disadvantage (SEIFA)
	Resident mobility
	Cultural diversity
	Volunteer work
	Crime and public safety
	Cultural heritage
Physical capital	Available social infrastructure, services and facilities, including education, health, emergency services, child care, open space, recreation and community facilities
	Transport infrastructure and networks
	Method of travel to work
	Internet access and mobile coverage
	Housing availability, including short-stay accommodation
Economic capital	Employment and unemployment rates
	Industry of employment
	Workforce migration
	Household income
	Housing affordability
	Tenure type
Natural capital	Environmental conservation
	Water security
	Land use
	Lake Cowal ecosystem services

2.8 Impact assessment

Assessment of impacts has been considered making use of the study findings namely:

- » understanding the key components and activities of the Project
- » contextualising the proposal in its strategic and regulatory setting
- » considering lessons learned and experiences of comparable projects
- » consideration of the demographic and socio-economic profile of local communities
- » outcomes of stakeholder and community consultation.

This SIA examined both the direct and indirect social impacts of the Project, defined as follows:

- » direct impacts are those caused directly by the proposal and are usually quantifiable through measurement of a set of social indicators. Direct impacts cause changes to the community in the areas of population, health, employment, for example.
- » indirect impacts are those that result from changes caused by the proposal relating to more qualitative indicators such as community cohesion and sense of place.

2.8.1 Evaluation of significance

Each identified negative socio-economic impacts has been evaluated for significance based on factors including:

- » the four impact characteristics that demonstrate the material effect of the impact (extent, duration, severity, sensitivity)
- » who specifically may be affected, directly or indirectly, cumulatively and the level of concern they feel about the matter (high, medium, low), recognising that impacts may affect population groups or individuals differently
- » when the potential impact is expected to occur (construction, operation)
- » the significance of the potential impact, evaluated through consequence, likelihood and level of social risk.

Table 4 defines the key impact characteristics and criteria used to assess each negative impact identified. Defining likelihood has been established by the authors of this study through an understanding of the Project context, as per the SIA Guideline and is outlined in Table 6, with consequence scales defined in Table 5. The social risk matrix in Table 7 was then used to evaluate significance both before and after the application of the mitigation measure.

Table 4 Impact characteristics

Characteristic	Definition
Extent	The geographical area affected by the impact (or the number or proportion of people or population groups who are affected)
Duration	The timeframe over which the impact occurs (project phase)
Severity	Scale or degree of change from the existing condition as a result of an impact
Sensitivity	Susceptibility or vulnerability of people, receivers or receiving environments to adverse changes caused by the impact, or the importance placed on the matter being affected. Attributes of sensitivity include: conservation status; intactness; uniqueness or rarity; resilience to change and capacity to adapt; replacement potential; impacts on vulnerable people; and/or of value or importance to the community

Source: DPIE Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development (2017)

This SIA recognises that social impacts may affect people differently, depending on the nature of the impact and each individual's circumstances. The evaluation of significance has considered the uneven experience of impacts by different people through attributing a social risk rating for the positive perspective of the impact as well as the negative. The evaluation of significance is undertaken from the perspective of the affected parties.

Table 5 Consequence criteria

Consequence criteria	
Minimal	» No discernible positive or negative changes caused by the impact
Minor	» Small change caused by the impact, generally temporary or short term in duration

Consequence criteria	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Impacts confined to a small number of receivers within the proposed development locality » Able to be mitigated such that impacts are deemed to be low.
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Moderate change caused by the impact, generally temporary or short to medium term in duration » Spatial extent of impacts may vary across the affected LGAs » Able to be mitigated or managed such that impacts are deemed to be low
Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Large change caused by the impact, generally medium to long term in duration » Spatial extent of impacts may vary across the affected LGAs, or the broader region or State » Negative impacts would require extensive mitigation or consultation with affected stakeholders.
Catastrophic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Very large changed caused by the impact, likely to be long-term in duration » Spatial extent of impacts may vary across the affected LGAs, or the broader region or State » Negative impacts would require extensive mitigation and consultation with affected stakeholders.

Source: DPIE Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State significant mining, petroleum production and extractive industry development (2017)

Table 6 Likelihood scale

Likelihood level	Definition
Almost certain	Is expected to occur under most circumstances
Likely	Will probably occur in most circumstances
Possible	Could occur and has occurred in comparable circumstances
Unlikely	Could occur but is not expected
Rare	Could occur under only exceptional circumstances

Table 7 Social risk assessment matrix

LIKELIHOOD LEVEL		CONSEQUENCE LEVEL				
		1	2	3	4	5
		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
A	Almost certain	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
B	Likely	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
C	Possible	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
D	Unlikely	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5

E	Rare	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
SOCIAL RISK RATING						
Low		Moderate		High		Extreme

DPIE SIA Guideline 2017, adapted from IAIA 2015

2.8.2 Positive impacts

Evaluation of positive impacts is based on the scale of benefit or improvement, level of importance, its likelihood and the equity of its distribution. Positive impacts consider how the proposal will contribute to the social development of local communities, the region and the people of NSW. The approach outlined for negative impacts has been used to evaluate the significance of positive impacts by replacing (DPIE, 2017):

- » 'level of concern' with level of interest
- » 'severity' with scale of improvement or benefit
- » 'sensitivity' with importance placed on the improvement or benefit and the equity of its distribution
- » 'social risk' with an assessment of likelihood and the scale of improvement or benefit.

2.8.3 Cumulative assessment

Broadly, cumulative impacts are understood by knowing what else is happening across the region. Cumulative impacts refer to the interactions between the Project and other approved or yet-to-start projects, or with reasonably foreseeable future development in the area that is likely to be affected by the Project. Cumulative impacts can indicate that the combination of effects, either positive or negative, created by multiple projects or developments may be greater than that of the impact of one project or proposed development. The analysis considers the recent history of project development in the area of social influence and in particular other large-scale infrastructure projects. The cumulative assessment considers the communities' experiences of past projects and other historical events, ensuring that consideration of local values, priorities and issues are critical in understanding likely community reactions to new developments, and in planning mitigation and enhancement measures.

2.8.4 Mitigation and enhancement strategy development

Recommended mitigation and enhancement outcomes have been developed through a consolidation of input from stakeholders, from industry-specific analysis, review of leading practice and through a practical understanding of the Project's area of social influence.

2.9 Limitations and assumptions

The limitations of this SIA are:

- » Most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics census data is 2016, therefore it is multiple years' old
- » Non-ABS data has limited geographical scale, often only available at the LGA level, and there are differing years of collection and publication for non-ABS data.
- » Social infrastructure reviewed in the social baseline predominantly considers government-provided facilities or services. In some instances, it is possible that local communities access services through private providers that may not have been identified.

- » The social baseline acknowledges these data limitations by discussing trends and general differences, rather than specific numerical values.
- » COVID-19 restrictions on public movement and gathering during the period of preparation for this SIA resulted in several planned face-to-face community engagement activities changing to online or remote engagement methods which may have affected the response or attendance rate.
- » The SIA relies on several assumptions regarding workforce requirements and the associated accommodation strategy that will be refined during later stages of project planning and development. The outcomes of the impact assessment and related mitigation strategies may differ upon confirming the detailed project plans.

3 Social baseline

The social baseline has been prepared to understand the communities within the area of influence. Numerous research activities have been undertaken to gather an understanding of the:

- » regional and local socio-economic setting
- » local mining and extractives industry context
- » strategic planning and public policy context
- » socio-economic and demographic characteristics of local communities
- » current socio-economic trends
- » existing social infrastructure, facilities and services
- » existing social performance activities
- » vulnerability or resilience capacities of local communities.

3.1 Local setting

Bland Shire

The Bland Shire covers 8,559 square kilometres and has an estimated population of 5,959 people, the majority of which are in West Wyalong (ABS, 2016). Other smaller towns within the Bland Shire include Naradhan, Weethalle, Tallimba, Mirrool, Barmedman, Ungarie and Wyalong. Bland Shire's dominant industries are agriculture, forestry and fishing and mining.

The Bland Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 has been created in close consultation with community and reflects community sentiment across a range of areas. The plan highlights the Shire's strong agricultural and mining roots and the need to support these industries in strategy and planning. People are a key element to the Plan which seeks to provide services to the aged, disabled and carers. Evolution Mining is identified as providing community benefit across several areas including:

- » community prosperity – work with the tourism industry to identify and develop products and services that appeal to visitors of the Shire and attract a diverse range of visitors
- » promoting the Shire as a place to do business – encourage and actively seek out businesses and industry to relocate to and within the Shire and lobby for and work with industry, government and education providers to ensure residents and businesses have access to competitive telecommunication services.

Forbes Shire

Forbes Shire borders Bland Shire to the north-east, with the Project site situated roughly 70km from Forbes town. The Forbes LGA has a population of 8,432 people and is currently experiencing population, town and economic growth and diversification (ABS 2016).

Forbes town situated alongside the Lachlan River. Being in relative proximity to Parkes (a 25-minute drive), it is often referenced as it's 'twin centre' and will therefore likely be impacted by the growth and changes taking place in Parkes. However, Forbes has its own set of economic opportunities, in agribusiness, tourism and aged care. It is the only LGA in the Central West that has been identified with aged care opportunities signifying it may play a large role in supporting the growing needs of the region's aging population.

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 highlights a set of priorities for Forbes including:

- » Attract investment in value-adding manufacturing industries
- » Enhance the agriculture sector with improve transport links and value-added production
- » Encourage the development of employment generating rural and agricultural industries

- » Maintain and grow agricultural, livestock and meat processing industries
- » Promote Forbes District Hospital as a regional medical training facility
- » Protect important agricultural land from encroachment from residential development
- » Attract tourism-related development, capitalising on the natural and built character of Forbes.

The Forbes Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 sets out priorities, values and goals for the next decade. The plan considers existing industries, community demographics, infrastructure and the natural environment in establishing priorities for the LGA. The most relevant directions to the Project include:

- » Community and culture – maintaining the features of life in the Forbes LGA that the community value most and contribute to people's wellbeing. This includes; the diversity in people, services, groups, activities, facilities and events; picturesque, open, serene landscapes; and local heritage and history.
- » Local economy – strengthening the local economy by encouraging and supporting local business including mining, promoting tourism and local developments, and containing issues such as competition for water from agriculture and mining industries.
- » Natural environment – maintaining existing natural environment through responsible management of rural and agricultural land
- » Rural and urban land use – ensuring expansion of residential development is balanced and does not erode local identity.

Lachlan Shire

Lachlan Shire borders Bland Shire to the north and has a population of 6,195 people (ABS, 2016), centred in Condobolin, which is roughly 100 kilometres north-west of the Project site by road. Lachlan Shire's largest industry by a significant margin is agriculture, with smaller proportions working in construction, real estate and an emerging tourism sector.

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 (DPIE, 2017) identifies agribusiness, transport, logistics and tourism as the main economic opportunities for the Lachlan LGA with it forming part of the largest natural inland lake system in NSW. The main priorities for Lachlan Shire from the Plan include:

- » Support existing settlements as the focus for new development
- » Support the agribusiness and transport and logistics sectors and associated businesses
- » Develop a regional road transport support node at Condobolin
- » Identify and develop the Shire's mining potential and protect resources while planning for long-term social and utility growth
- » Protect and enhance the natural environment
- » Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural facilities
- » Protect important agricultural land from encroachment and residential development.

The Lachlan Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan 2017/18-2026/27 highlights commitments to:

- » Maintaining a sense of community
- » Professional, friendly and innovative service to residents
- » Maintaining or improving natural and built environments
- » Conducting business with integrity and respect.

The Plan highlights strategic challenges which include growing the population, maintaining a skilled workforce and advocating and lobbying on behalf of the community. Mining is identified as an opportunity to bring about economic development in the region. However, fluctuating commodity prices and demand on water are highlighted as challenges.

3.1.1 Place-based communities

The following towns are those closest to the Project site and have been described to provide an understanding of the key populated locations.

Burcher

Burcher is the closest town to the Project site (approximately 20 km north west) and is within the Lachlan Shire. A number of properties are spaced around Lake Cowal as well as within the small town of Burcher. The town has a population of 82 (ABS 2016), the majority of which are self-employed in the agricultural sector while a small number work in construction and at the CGO. The town is predominantly made up of older residents with an average age of 54 resulting in the local school being shut down in 2009 due to low rates of enrolment.

Ungarie

Ungarie is the second closest town to the Project site (approximately 45 km to the west) and is in the Bland LGA. In 2016 it had a resident population of 557 and a median age of 45. Over 50 per cent of the resident population affiliates as either Anglican or Catholic, with a further 10 per cent associated with the Uniting Church. Agricultural is overwhelmingly the major livelihood for residents, with livestock and grain growing the top industries of employment (ABS, 2016).

West Wyalong

West Wyalong is the administrative and services centre of the Bland local government area, with approximately half of the LGA population residing in the town. West Wyalong is also the closest major town to the Project site, approximately 38 km to the south west. A large proportion of the existing CGO workforce also reside in the town.

3.2 Regional setting

CGO is in the Central West region of NSW. Located west of the Blue Mountains, the Central West region is a driver of economic growth in the NSW with a unique set of economic, environmental and social characteristics.

The fertile land and mineral deposits found across the region's diverse landscapes provides favourable ground for key industries including agriculture, mining and tourism. The region has a long agricultural history and remains a primary driver of the region's economy, the second largest regional product contributor in the State. Similarly, mining plays an important role in supporting the region both through economic output and employment. With environmental challenges appearing more frequently, the region is seeking to sustainably manage mineral resources while increasing renewable energy generation to ensure the region remains an attractive and thriving place to live. Regionally, the Central West's economy is expanding, predominantly driven by mining, energy and agriculture, which is expected to support population growth over the coming years (DPIE, 2017). More recently, growth in the health and education sectors has reflected changing and growing community need for services.

In comparison to the NSW and national averages, the Central West has a relatively high younger and elderly population which together make up nearly 40 per cent of the total population. Most people are of European ancestry with 83 per cent born in Australia. The region also has a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents making up 6.4 per cent of the population, more than double the national and NSW average.

Most residents live in the regional centres of Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo, Lithgow, Mudgee, Cowra, Forbes and Parkes. These major towns are likely to expand in line with growth and economic development across the region. The towns also act as hubs for surrounding communities to access services, jobs and other day to day activities. In particular, Parkes has been identified as a growth area with the NSW Government encouraging investment in transport, freight and logistics, as well as growth in the renewable energy sector.

The Central West region provides key inland transport connections between Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle supporting transport reliant industries and making it a popular place for visitors. Sites, including the Dubbo Zoo, and events, such as the Bathurst 1000 motor race, have each brought in more than 200,000 visitors yearly.

Smaller towns and the rolling countryside landscape provides attractive rural lifestyles and a tourism sector around the Orange food and wine district.

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 (DPIE, 2017) sets out the context and strategic direction for the region over the next two decades. The Plan calls for investment in roads, rail networks and telecommunications infrastructure to support growth in agribusiness, manufacturing, mining and tourism sectors. Growth in these industries will be required to support expanding populations predominantly in the major townships.

Likewise, the South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) 2018-2022 and the Mid-Lachlan REDS 2018-2022 sets the long-term economic vision for regions including Bland, Lachlan and Forbes shires. Both strategies also prioritise supporting growth in the agriculture and mining sectors, through improving energy and telecommunications infrastructure, upskilling the workforce, improving supply chain efficiency and enhancing the liveability of regional towns to enable population growth.

Specifically, the Plan sees the mining sector as a key driver of the regional economy which needs to be underpinned by a strong transport and logistics sector as well as improved connectivity and access to utilities. Key actions within the South West Slopes REDS related to the CGO Project are calls for:

- » A fully serviced residential and industrial estate in West Wyalong to provide for current and future demand from the mining and agriculture sectors
- » A study to evaluate the potential expansion of gas and electrical distribution network to meet future agricultural and mining sector demands.

Water security constraints for all industries experiencing growth has been identified as a major challenge for regional development. Additionally, the REDS highlights the importance of councils facilitating infrastructure growth and positive relationships between mining operations and the local community. Avoiding land use conflict is critical in strengthening the sense of community while concurrently supporting industrial growth.

3.3 Industry setting

Mining has been a formative element in much of the colonial settlement of the Central West region. The regional centres surrounding the site, including West Wyalong, Condobolin and Forbes, as well as most smaller surrounding towns present today, have strong mining histories linked to the gold rush between 1850 and the late 1880s. In addition to the widespread population growth and expansion of existing towns during this period, several new settlements were established, of which many remain today while others were abandoned in the early 1900s. As populations in the region shrunk towards the end of the gold rush period, the agricultural industry became the dominant employer and livelihood of the population, which has since largely supported the towns across the region.

More recently, several large-scale gold projects in the Central West have commenced operations making mining one of the region's primary industries again. These projects include the Cadia Valley Mine near Orange, Northparkes Mine near Parkes, Tomingley Gold Operations near Dubbo, Gidginbung Paragon Gold Mine (decommissioned), the proposed Clean TeQ Sunrise (a nickel, scandium and cobalt mine) as well as the proposed McPhillamys Gold Project near Blayney. The mining sector is expected to continue to contribute significantly to the regional and local economies of the Central West as new gold, silver, copper and rare earth deposits are explored in the region (DPIE, 2017).

The NSW Minerals Strategy (2019) describes the need to capitalise on the significant mineral deposits that exist around the state to meet growing global demand. Increasing investment in renewables and other technologies are at the forefront of this growing demand. The strategy has developed several priorities of relevance to the CGO Underground, including to improve communication and engagement with stakeholders and increased collaboration with local councils. Additionally, the Strategy identifies the need for both government and industry to support a skilled and diverse workforce by encouraging Aboriginal participation, increased female participation and in the promotion of mining and scientific disciplines through training and education.

The Council of Australian Governments Multiple Land Use Framework (2013) was developed to address challenges arising from competing land use, land access and land use change. The framework allows

communities, industry and government to effectively navigate challenges associated with land use change, such as in the context of mining developments in predominantly agricultural areas.

Mining is a largest driver of the economy of the Central West region, contributing a Gross Regional Product of AUD 2.5 billion and providing 5 per cent of the region's jobs. The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 (DPIE, 2017) also directly highlights mining in the following key directions:

Direction 8: Sustainably manage mineral resources identifies mining as a key industry in the area which will be promoted alongside renewable energy generation. The plan underlines the need to identify interim activities that enable productive use of the land to complement mining operations. Land use strategies must respond to the life cycle of mining to give all stakeholders certainty around the long-term productivity of rural land in the region. Identified actions include:

- » 8.1: Consult with the Division of Resources and Geosciences when assessing applications for land use changes (strategic land use planning, rezoning and planning proposals) and new development or expansions.
- » 8.2: Protect areas with potential mineral and energy resources extraction through local land use strategies and local environmental plans.
- » 8.3: Protect infrastructure that facilitates mining from development that could affect current or future extraction.
- » 8.4: Support communities that transition out of mining to manage change in population and demand for services, and explore new economic opportunities.
- » 8.5: Work with councils to scope the application and implementation of a scenario planning or impact modelling tool to be applied at a regional level to help communities plan for the impacts of mining.

Direction 27: Deliver a range of accommodation options for seasonal, itinerant and mining workforces. Fluctuating populations creates stress on the housing market in the Central West and Orana and are driven by the seasonal nature of the key economic drivers of agribusiness, tourism and mining. In recognition of that, the Plan proposes to:

- » 27.1: Produce guidelines to help councils plan for and manage seasonal and itinerant worker accommodation.
- » 27.2: Prepare planning guidelines for the short-term accommodation of mining employees to support workforce needs during mining construction, operation or shutdown.

DPIE also suggest that better integration of workers' accommodation with existing services and infrastructure and 'should not duplicate the services and facilities of existing centres' and that the accommodation can be based on the outskirts of established communities to 'enable temporary residents to use and contribute positively to facilities that serve the entire community, and to better integrate into these communities' (DPIE 2017).

3.4 Traditional Owners

The Project is situated on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri People. Wiradjuri lands spread across the Central West and beyond, with major clan groups historically based in the Bland and West Wyalong localities prior to European settlement.

The Aboriginal people who lived in the Bland area were known as the Yeo Yeo tribe of the Wiradjuri nation, of which the name is understood to be associated with the spiritual significance of the area (Graham, 1963 in Cane, 1994). It is likely that people who were settled around Lake Cowal and Bland prior to the arrival of British settlers may have moved elsewhere or out of the area upon settlers coming in.

Following, Aboriginal people in the area were dispossessed of their traditional lands due to a series of detrimental government (Culture and Heritage, 1997). It is understood that by 1915 only one Aboriginal person was still residing in the area of social influence, near Forbes. However, today, West Wyalong is home to many Aboriginal families and individuals, whose ancestry comes from across various parts of NSW.

The CGO Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (2020) describes:

'Lake Cowal falls within the traditional country of the Wiradjuri peoples, the largest language group in NSW, which extends west from the Great Dividing Range to Hay in the west, Nyngan in the north and south as far down as Albury (Tindale 1940; Tindale 1974; Attenbrow 2010).

The Wiradjuri are amongst some of the oldest cultures that lived in Australia, likely thriving on country as early as 45,000 years ago (Pardoe 2013). Large gatherings for ceremonies, initiation, and trade would have also fostered social and cultural exchange amongst different groups, which would have been paramount for the social and cultural stability of the Wiradjuri (Kabaila 2005).

Wiradjuri country was highly sought after by European colonialists who were drawn to the area in search of fertile soils for agriculture and farming, which lead to open conflict for several years during the early 1800s (Niche 2018a). Read (1983) and Gammage (1983) report that the Wiradjuri were in conflict with settlers until about 1840 (Cu 1994). Ethnohistorical information indicates that despite this period of upheaval, the Wiradjuri still maintained strong kinship ties with their neighbours, reinforced through trade, economy, movements and participating in ceremonies (Kabaila 2005). The Wiradjuri maintain strong cultural connections to, and knowledge of, their land.'

On a more local level, evidence suggests that initiation services and ceremonial gatherings of often over 1,000 people took place at the present-day town of Wyalong, which ceased following British arrival as it was considered desecrated (Cane, 1994).

3.4.1 Native Title

As described in Section 1.1.2, CGO maintains the Cowal Gold Project Native Title Ancillary Deed with the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC); the principal vehicle through which the Native Title Agreement operates. The WCC was established by the Native Title Claimants in 2003 specifically for Cowal Gold Project Native Title purposes.

Since, there have been ten Native Title applications in the Lake Cowal and Bland area. Some claims have been associated with a dissatisfaction with the agreement process formed between CGO and the WCC, and a sentiment that the WCC does not adequately represent the entirety of the Wiradjuri nation on matters related to the CGO.

The West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) has a determined Native Title claim covering parcels of land within West Wyalong town. Across the area of social influence, National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) file number NC2012/001 was determined in 2012 for Traditional Owners across parts of the Lachlan LGA (NNTT, 2012).

3.5 Existing social performance

In 2019, Evolution Mining released a company-wide Sustainability Policy was in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as Sustainability Standards, Social Responsibility Standards, a Diversity and Inclusion Policy, a Modern Slavery Statement (for compliance with the Australian Government Modern Slavery Act 2018) as well as admission to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) Australia and commencement of annual reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) of the Australian Government. Both the Sustainability Report (2019) and the Community Report (2018) refer to several plans and initiatives due to commence at the Project level in 2020 due to these corporate-level frameworks having been introduced. Evolution Mining also has policies in place to promote and encourage local employment and procurement for operational activities, goods, services and supply chains.

Existing shared value, community investment and social sustainability programs at the CGO include supports to (Deloitte 2018 and Evolution Mining Community Report, 2018; consultation outcomes, 2020):

- » Cowal Cares Program
- » Endeavour Scholarship Program: partners with four local high schools to support students to enter tertiary education, through an annual grant to West Wyalong High School, Forbes High School, Red Bend Catholic College, and Condobolin High School

- » Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation, the Wiradjuri Condobolin Training Centre, the Australian Native Food and Botanicals project, Project Bridge and Wiradjuri scholarships
- » 'Somewhere Down the Lachlan'; a partnership with Forbes Art Society
- » Partnership with Lake Cowal Foundation and Lake Cowal Conservation Centre
- » Malleefowl recovery project (NSW Government) in Bland Shire to revitalise the endangered species
- » Cowal Partnering Program
- » Cowal Family Day; mine tours or 'Family Fun Days'
- » Cowal Employees Fundraising Committee
- » Cowal Emergency Response Team have a formal partnership with NSW SES to provide support services in emergency response and relief efforts around NSW
- » One-off donation to NSW Rural Fire Service, Rural Aid Australia and Queensland Rural Fire Service for bushfire and drought relief efforts (2020)
- » Sponsorship of community and sporting events in West Wyalong.

3.6 Community profile

The following section describes the key findings of each of the community capitals (human, social, physical, economic and natural) for communities across the area of social influence. The detailed social baseline dataset is in Appendix A as per the indicators in Section 2.7.1. Compiling and analysing socio-economic and demographic characteristics under the community capitals framework offers an understanding of the available assets that a community has access to then enable an assessment of the community's strengths and vulnerabilities.

3.6.1 Human capital

Human capital refers to the health and welfare of a population and includes their ability to contribute to ongoing community sustainability. This contribution may come through education and skills which can have a significant impact on the resilience of a community (Coakes and Sadler, 2011).

Key findings

Within the area of social influence there is low human capital. Major challenges facing the area are associated with the changing age profile, future population growth trends, educational attainment and health risks.

Population change across the area of social influence has been experienced differently across the three LGAs. Lachlan was the only LGA to experience a negative growth rate, while Bland LGA experienced limited growth. However, looking forward, Bland and Lachlan LGAs are expected to experience notable decreases in the resident population. Future drivers of population decrease are associated with outward migration. Forbes LGA is expected to continue to experience positive population growth, support by both natural growth and inward migration.

All LGAs in the area of social influence have an older population. This is reflected by high median ages, large proportions of older residents and a low proportion of younger residents. This trend is expected to continue with residents aged 85 years and older predicted to experience the greatest growth.

The nature of population change across the area of social influence indicates there will be a decrease in available local labour pool and a continued increase in the proportion of the population who are more likely to require regular medical and aged care support.

Across the area of social influence educational attainment rates tended to be lower than that of the Central West region. There are notably poorer education outcomes with higher rates of year 9 or below and lower rates of university level education attainment. This creates challenges associated with skills within the local labour force

but also offers the ability of residents to re-train, up-skill, diversify their livelihoods or possibly attain higher paying jobs.

Mental health and general wellbeing indicators for the two relevant Local Health Districts and specific LGAs reflect health risks associated with suicide, alcoholism, and lifestyle-related illness or disease. Together these three high level health indicators contribute to lower life expectancy and lower quality of life. If the delivery of and access to healthcare facilities reduces, or services become overcrowded in the context of a growing population or growing demand, these risks will increase leading to fewer resources for care, support or critical response.

Across the area of social influence, key findings for human capital can be summarised as:

- » an older population
- » Bland and Lachlan LGA are expected to experience population decreases; Forbes to experience population growth
- » Proportionately high numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in Forbes and Lachlan LGAs
- » generally low levels of educational attainment
- » relatively high proportion of residents requiring assistance with core activities
- » poor health outcomes associated with lifestyles
- » youth mental health is a major local health issue.

3.6.2 Social capital

Social capital looks to understand the values, identity, sense of place, cultural norms and dynamics, diversity and gendered relations within a community. The interactions between individuals, groups, organisations and institutions within a community is also considered. Levels of social cohesion within a community is an important aspect of this in understanding community resilience (Coakes and Sadler 2011).

Key findings

The three LGAs of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan are well established communities with more around two out of three residents living at the same address for more than five years. A defining feature of Forbes and Lachlan LGA is the large proportion of Aboriginal residents, reflecting a significant Aboriginal population with strong connection to place. Aside from the Aboriginal population, the area of social influence is culturally and linguistically homogenous, with very few residents born overseas.

The LGAs all have a high proportion of residents participating in voluntary work, reflecting a commitment to the local community, an important factor in building community cohesion. There were differences in community safety across the three LGAs, with Forbes and Lachlan LGA having significantly higher rates of assault, domestic violence and alcohol related violence than Bland and NSW. This suggests that within the area of social influence, community cohesion and safety varies.

Key findings for social capital in the area of influence include:

- » the Wiradjuri People are the Traditional Owners of the area of social influence, who have strong cultural connection to land, sites and places in the Project site locality
- » there are varying levels of socio-economic disadvantage across the area of social influence indicating that vulnerability does exist within the community
- » there is low resident mobility indicating the population is generally stable and place-based
- » the area of social influence is relatively culturally homogenous
- » there are high rates of volunteerism indicating the sense of community and social cohesion is strong
- » there are relatively high rates of violent, alcohol and domestic related assault in Forbes and Lachlan indicating potential fragmentation within or between community groups

- » community values include locally-run activities, facilities and events that bring people together, the picturesque, open and serene landscapes of the surrounding area; the local heritage and history
- » local community identities are strongly linked to rural lifestyles, farming livelihoods and supporting each other.

3.6.3 Physical capital

Physical capital refers to the built infrastructure, facilities and services provided for or available to a community, including hospitals, schools and housing, as well as telecommunications services, utilities, and services such as aged and child care. Areas that lack key physical capital are unlikely to experience significant growth nor be as resilient or adaptable to change.

Key findings

The distribution of physical capital across the three LGAs reflects the clustering of physical infrastructure in more highly populated areas and centres. Residents in these towns have better access to schools, healthcare, services, community facilities and recreation opportunities than residents living in rural areas within the LGAs. Overall, physical capital has major gaps and weakness across the area of social influence which impact both residents and economic development.

Key findings regarding physical capital in the area of social influence include:

- » poor internet access and telecommunications coverage have been identified as a major gap and a hindrance to economic growth including for the mining sector, as well as for existing residents
- » industrial freight and transport networks are weak as they are highly road dependent
- » highly private-car dependent populations implying existing pressure on local road infrastructure for personal transport and mobility as well as freight supply chains and industry usage
- » expansion of residential areas within towns as well as new industrial developments that require significant land are seen as encroaching on valued rural lifestyles and potential land use conflict
- » highly strained rental housing market with little to no rental housing available
- » rising property prices and number of property sales in recent years
- » availability of short-stay or temporary accommodation has extremely low occupancy rates due to COVID-19
- » available recreational facilities and open space, indicating a strong active and sporting culture
- » community facilities, in particular youth centres and youth services, are lacking
- » public transportation is highly limited
- » limited tertiary education opportunities, pathways for young people also identified as an ongoing challenge
- » availability of doctors in smaller towns and maternal health services have been identified as an issue
- » the lack of available and affordable child care services has presented employment barriers for residents with young children, particularly experienced by women and Aboriginal households.

3.6.4 Economic capital

Economic capital refers to the variety of economic resources including income, assets, employment and industry that exists within a community. The primary source of economic capital on an individual level is income sourced from employment, which is linked to the active or dominant industries within the area of social influence.

Key findings

Across the area of social influence there is a lack of industry diversification, high levels of housing stress and limited employment opportunities. Together these factors contribute to low economic capital and community vulnerability. This is amplified by low workforce migration, with the majority of residents living and working within the same LGA across the area of social influence.

However, compared to surrounding LGAs and the Central West, residents of West Wyalong and Bland LGA experience on average relatively strong financial capital. Strong local employment in mining and agriculture has provided economic opportunities for residents reflected by the high median incomes and low rates of unemployment. While other industries provide some economic stability, West Wyalong and the Bland LGA has proportionally smaller supporting industries than surrounding areas, and is therefore likely to experience effect of any change to its primary industries.

Despite significantly lower housing costs compared to metropolitan areas, housing affordability across the Central West is an issue with median mortgage repayments higher than median household incomes. This suggests that while areas such as West Wyalong have relatively stronger economic capital, this narrative does not reflect the experience of residents across the Central West region.

A key summary of economic capital includes:

- » limited industry diversification and limited job opportunities
- » skilled working age residents are lower in number than aged residents
- » higher employment rates in Bland than other LGAs, likely due to the mine workers
- » Lachlan LGA has the highest unemployment at almost 7 per cent
- » top industries of employment include mining and agriculture, followed by health care and social assistance, education and training
- » employed residents predominately do not travel outside of their LGA for work indicating a dependency on local industry and in West Wyalong's case, a dependency on the CGO
- » housing stress exists across the region, with higher average weekly mortgage repayments compared to household income
- » most residents own their properties, indicating limited rental availability.

3.6.5 Natural capital

Natural capital refers to the natural resources and environmental features of the area of social influence that people rely on or utilise for day-to-day activities, ecosystem services, recreation, livelihoods and economic activities (Coakes and Sadler, 2011). This includes the extraction or use of natural resources such as water, minerals, and land, as well as local environmental attributes such as waterways, forests, conservation areas and arable land. For the area of social influence, the main natural capital elements include access to water, the extraction of gold ore, the Lake Cowal ecosystem and the abundant agricultural land.

Key findings

The area of social influence has a high reliance on natural capital for both socio-cultural and economic activities.

The Bland LGA and West Wyalong are highly dependent on mining, and to a lesser extent agriculture, for employment and economic livelihoods. Similarly, Forbes LGA and Lachlan LGA are highly dependent on agriculture, and to a lesser extent mining. However, the dependency on extraction industries for economic opportunities is not reflected across the Central West region. This suggests that West Wyalong is a mining centre within the Bland LGA, while the LGAs of Forbes and Lachlan are defined by agricultural activities.

This reliance on the agricultural sector and the mining sector highlights economic vulnerability within local communities. Availability and access to resources such as water, gold ore and arable land will dramatically impact the cost and viability of the mining and agricultural industries across the area of social influence. These

vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by impacts associated with a warming climate. This includes reduced rainfall and decreased soil moisture, bushfires, higher air temperatures and associated impacts to biodiversity in the area (Climate Council, 2018).

The Lake Cowal ecosystem is a critical natural resource adjacent to the Project site that maintains environmental, ecological, cultural and community values.

Key findings relating to natural capital include:

- » the area is drought prone where water allocations and access to quality ground water are highly important issues
- » significant arable land for agriculture (food production and livestock rearing) and large-scale industrial developments are increasingly seen as competition with future land uses across the region
- » the Central West is a highly important agricultural region for NSW, generating significant revenue and agricultural products
- » abundant values associated with the Lake Cowal ecosystem; highly valued by community and environmental groups.

4 Impact analysis

This section identifies and discusses the potential social impacts associated with the construction and operations of the CGO Underground Project. Social impacts, both positive and negative, are discussed according to the social factors described in the methodology.

Scoped social impact matters

Social impact matters identified during the scoping phase included:

- » strain on housing availability
- » population growth due to workforce influx
- » noise and visual amenity disruption
- » traffic disruptions for sensitive receivers
- » increased pressure on community facilities and services.

Key assumptions

Impacts related to the incoming workforce and the associated accommodation requirements has relied on the following breakdowns over the construction and operations stages of the Project.

Table 8 Construction workforce numbers and breakdown by source

Construction 2021-2024			Source		
Resource type	Min	Max	Local/Region (%)	NSW (%)	National (%)
EPCM contractors	14.3	95.1	30	70	0
Evolution project management	3.7	9	100	0	0
Construction workforce	1.3	15	30	70	0
Total	19.3	119.1			

Table 9 Operations workforce numbers and breakdown by source

Operations 2021-2038			Source		
Resource type	Min	Max	Local/Region (%)	NSW (%)	National (%)
Owner's Team - Technical	15	25	50	50	0
Contractor Mine Workers (Staff/Mining/Maintenance/ Diamond Drillers)	74	202	0	100	0
Total	89	227			

4.1 Way of life

Way of life is a broad category of social impact, defined as how people live, work, recreate and interact with each other on a daily basis.

4.1.1 Housing and how people live

Worker relocation associated with the Project would increase demand on housing, impacting housing availability in the area of social influence. An increase in temporary residents in the Project locality could bring economic benefit to the service industry, however increased demand could marginalise or price out residents or visitors seeking temporary accommodation. Currently, approximately 75 per cent of the CGO workforce resides locally, in either Forbes or West Wyalong.

It is common for communities affected by mining operations to experience increases in housing costs associated with an incoming workforce. The combination of low housing supply, increased demand and high income of migratory workers can place strain on local housing markets causing median rent and sale prices to increase. While the development of a workforce accommodation village would likely address this impact, potential closure of the accommodation village and a transition of FIFO workers to a residential workforce at a later point in time, would possibly then strain the local housing market.

Consultation outcomes have identified housing stress as an existing issue driven by a combination of limited housing stock and demand related to other concurrent major project developments. Based on this, increased demand for temporary housing will further place pressure on existing housing needs in the area of influence.

Workforce accommodation strategies were being investigated at the time of writing this study. The primary option being considered is the construction of an accommodation village in West Wyalong. Potential sites for a village are being explored, however it is understood that the accommodation village would have sufficient capacity to accommodate both the construction and operational non-local workforces. The construction of an accommodation village would significantly reduce the impact on the local accommodation and housing market, resulting in negligible impacts on local property values, as non-local workers would be accommodated in the village and thereby would not require housing or short term accommodation from the local property market. While Evolution Mining has committed to an accommodation village, the nature, type, location and management of this facility is as yet undetermined. While a village is likely to be critical in mitigating local housing impacts, further information on the plans for the village is required to assess the extent of this impact with certainty.

While CGO plans to house the Underground workforce in the accommodation, it is possible that contractors or suppliers' personnel would make use of short-stay accommodation in nearby towns, including accommodation village construction personnel. It is anticipated that these workers would be few in number and their stays would be short-term in duration.

Potential future plans for the Underground operational workforce to transition to a residential-based workforce would either make use of Evolution-owned properties in West Wyalong or otherwise would lease additional properties from local private property owners. Such a transition may involve the families, spouses or dependents in addition to the operational workforce, inferring that under this scenario, the relocating population could be between 500 and 1000 people. This approach would likely have effect on the availability and affordability of rental properties for existing residents.

Feedback received during community consultation indicated a concern that the number of Evolution-owned residential properties in West Wyalong restricts access to housing for other residents, which aligns with the inference that existing operations at CGO is the primary cause for the current local market strain (NSW Valuer General 2019). Despite this, Bland Shire Council and residents in West Wyalong have expectation that CGO would continue to attract newcomers into the town and incentivise new families in particular, to relocate into the locality.

Given the current housing market strains, it is critical that the Underground accommodation strategy is jointly planned with councils and other key stakeholders to ensure that existing residents and in particular, renters and low-income households, are not disproportionately affected. Furthermore, it is of importance that as part of future accommodation strategy planning, CGO considers upcoming residential developments such as that of Forbes Shire Council's land release of 223 blocks.

Table 10 Housing impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: housing

Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: operations		Decrease in availability and affordability of rental properties and an increase in property market prices may reduce access to adequate housing for existing residents which could result in localised inflation, resident out-migration or increased mine dependency	
Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Minor
Significance		Moderate	

4.1.2 Employment and how people work

The SIA Guideline defines impacts on how people work to refer to access to employment, working conditions and working practices.

CGO is a major employer in the area of social influence with an average workforce employed at the CGO’s existing operations of approximately 395 people (EMM 2019). Employment numbers for the construction phase of the proposed Underground Development are expected to peak at 119 personnel, with operations requiring an additional 227 personnel. This would equate to a total operational workforce of 660 people until 2040.

It is anticipated that during construction, approximately 65 per cent of workers are expected to be sourced from across NSW and the remaining 35 per cent from within the area of social influence, therefore providing significant employment opportunities for local job seekers. During operations, up to 5.5 per cent of the workforce would be sourced from within the area of social influence, indicating that direct local employment would largely not be experienced. This is largely due to the unavailability of appropriately skilled workers in the area of influence. Both construction and operational workers for the Underground are expected to be on FIFO or DIDO contracts, likely to work a 7/7 roster.

Additionally, the Underground would support the continuation of existing employment by increasing the life of mine for a further eight years. This will in-turn have positive flow on effects for direct and indirect employment, continuing to stimulate the local economy.

Site consumables, goods and services at CGO are currently sourced from Sydney (55 per cent), West Wyalong (25 per cent), an additional 10 per cent from across NSW and the remainder from either Queensland or Victoria (GTA Consultants, 2018). While sourcing for the Underground Project is assumed to follow the same breakdown, the general operations of the accommodation village would likely require a number of services and suppliers from across the area of social influence, indicating that significant local benefit may be realised through services and suppliers contracting for up to twenty years. Requirements to be locally sourced where possible would include cleaning, catering, security, general facilities and maintenance, food and beverage supplies, fuel supply and workforce transport.

Community expectations are high on the Underground offering of local employment opportunities. Residents have indicated their desire to see CGO focus on upskilling local job seekers and job creation to enable long-term resident families to continue to work and reside in the area of influence.

Throughout operations to date, CGO has contributed to the job chain effect in the Bland Shire; the mine has employed skilled workers which has availed agricultural labour opportunities for less skilled or previously unemployed residents (Gillespie, 2018). It was also highlighted that over the last years of severe drought, has enabled local families and households to maintain income and stability, despite many agricultural operations having struggled. In this way, the mine has offered diversity to people’s livelihoods and is seen as a secondary, yet critical, industry of employment in the area of influence. Consultation with residents and nearby landholders indicated that the agricultural sector in Bland has also in recent years faced difficulty sourcing labour due to the CGO attracting workers with higher wages. These local economic dynamics are understood as an existing impact that is likely to continue through the life of the Underground. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an economic downturn affecting small businesses and service providers in the area of social influence.

Additionally, the FIFO work arrangements would likely bring positive benefit to West Wyalong’s small businesses and services sector, however, the existing community may also experience to a degree, the ‘fly-over effect’, which is commonly associated with FIFO workforces with the movement of wealth to urban centres and therefore are not fully captured in local communities (Sincovich, Gregory et al. 2018). To ensure economic benefits are captured by hosting communities, there needs to be a stronger emphasis on local procurement, inclusion of local service providers and support for local industry development.

Table 11 Employment impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: local employment and skills development			
Project activity: general construction and operations			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Access to employment, higher paying jobs, skills development and economic stimulation of the local economy through indirect spending	
		Employment, upskilling, and contracting opportunities may generate an increase in revenue for existing residents and businesses over time, increasing household spending power in nearby towns, in turn improving economic capital and social wellbeing	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Major
Significance			High
Project activity: general construction and operations			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Existing competition for skilled workers in the labour force will intensify, other local industries may experience difficulty retaining or sourcing workers	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance			Low

4.1.3 How people interact and access to recreation

This impact category considers how people interact or socialise with one another and to what extent they have access to recreation facilities.

Consultation with Bland Shire Council and members of the community found that organised sport, community volunteering and active recreation plays an important role in community cohesion and are regular social activities for residents. It is assumed that workers housed in the accommodation village would be encouraged to utilise publicly available recreation, health and fitness facilities for use while off-shift. An increase in the demand for recreational facilities caused by a sudden influx in the residential population may place strain on the capacity of existing facilities such as sporting grounds or private fitness centres. This could lead to an increase in competition for existing residents and over time may result in investment or expansion of the facilities which would improve access, quality and availability of facilities and services for all user groups. Additionally, the influx of FIFO workers into West Wyalong, likely to be a predominantly male and single demographic group, would likely increase rates of alcohol-related recreation, and may over time alter existing norms of social interaction and gathering in West Wyalong.

Table 12 How people play and interact impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: access to recreation activities and social interactions			
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Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Increase in residential population may decrease capacity of existing community recreational facilities	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		The increased residential population by a predominantly male and single demographic may cause an increase in alcohol-related recreation	
Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Minimal
Significance	Low		

4.2 Community

Social impacts to community refer to aspects of population composition, cohesion, character, function and sense of place. It is recognised that this category of impact involves a level of uncertainty because socio-economic environments and the processes that affect them are constantly changing and can vary from place to place and over time.

Consultation outcomes identified the following key values of residents about their community and the reasons why people enjoy living in the area of influence:

- » The supportive, inclusive and small community
- » The family friendly community environment
- » The small-town feel
- » The quiet and rural lifestyles
- » The sense of safety.

4.2.1 Composition and character

The Underground Project's workforce requirements would likely cause inward migration to West Wyalong during construction, and over time also to attract new residents across the Bland, Forbes and Lachlan LGAs.

Future workers who may relocate with their families to towns surrounding the mine (West Wyalong, Forbes or Condbolin) would increase the proportion of residents engaged in the workforce, and through family members, would increase the number of young people. Overall this may slightly reduce the median age and will increase the proportion of younger residents in the area. This would in turn, impact the existing composition and character of the community by possibly bringing in more working aged and skilled residents.

The community of West Wyalong also place high value on the current sense of safety, inferring that perceived changes this can have effect on community dynamics. The likely sudden increase in the West Wyalong residential population with a predominantly single and male demographic would affect the existing community's character and household composition. This may cause changes to gendered relations between residents and workers living in West Wyalong. Additionally, feedback received from existing residents, based on experience from the former workforce accommodation facility in West Wyalong, indicated that an the prevalence of sex work would possibly increase due to the accommodation village development. Despite this, the broad local experience of the former

accommodation village was positive and well-received, with the West Wyalong community anticipating that a future facility would cause no major adverse effect to the existing community composition and character.

Table 13 Composition and character impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: community composition and character			
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Change in resident population would diversify existing community composition, bringing new and skilled residents of working age into the town which can improve social and human capital within the community	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Moderate
Significance		High	
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project Phase: construction and operations		Sudden increase in resident population with a predominant single and male demographic may alter the existing community’s character; localised gender relations and changes to household composition	
Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Minor
Significance		Moderate	

4.2.2 Cohesion, sense of place and functionality

Household mobility in the area of social influence and the high rates of volunteerism indicate that the existing community is relatively stable with a high degree of contribution into the community. Disruptions to the social landscape, increases in new residents or an increased demand for community services could decrease cohesion and bring about perceptions of decreased community safety among existing residents. CGO intends to maintain a Code of Conduct to manage workforce related impacts in West Wyalong and would be included in contract negotiations with future prospective employees.

Development of ‘us and them’ mentalities has been associated with increases in transient workforces in host communities (Ennis and Finlayson 2015). Petrova & Marinova’s (2013) research suggests that transient worker populations negatively impacted social landscapes. Levels of trust and changes in social organisation, networks and volunteering over time were used to assess levels of social capital within the community. The challenge for communities who face shifts in their social landscape is mobilising and adapting to these changes by reshaping local relationships and redefining community identity. Alternatively, many communities including residents in the area of influence, view the incoming workforce as an opportunity to optimise new or expanded facilities, services and commercial activity, into which the town’s liveability can be promoted and the local economy further activated. Rapid changes in gender balances in mining host communities can have perceived and actual safety impacts. Research focusing on the impacts of FIFO populations on rural communities has shown that it is possible for crime rates to rise with an increase in the male non-resident population within a town (Ennis and Finlayson 2015). Research also recognises the increase in sexually transmitted infections as a result of mining developments in other parts of Australia (Mine Australia, 2020). Furthermore, female residents within mining host communities can experience increases in verbal harassment associated with an increased concern for individual safety (Sincovich, Gregory et al. 2018).

Table 14 Cohesion, sense of place and functionality impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: community cohesion and functionality			
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Sudden increase and change in resident population may decrease levels of community cohesion; presence of FIFO workers may decrease sense of public safety in West Wyalong	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		

4.3 Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities

This category of social impact covers a broad array of infrastructure, services and facilities provided by local, state and federal governments, as well as by for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. The sub categories of public, private and not-for-profit infrastructure and services has been discussed together under the broader term social infrastructure.

4.3.1 Social infrastructure

Bland, Lachlan and Forbes shires have all experienced population decline over past decades, particularly in working age residents. Related, there are existing social infrastructure gaps in the area of influence, as described in Section 3, including limited childcare services, healthcare services and school places.

Rapid population growth associated with non-permanent residents creates challenges for local governments in planning current and future needs. Dramatic and rapid increases in users means facilities and services operate beyond their capacity. It is acknowledged that healthcare and medical services, schools and child care are often impacted by increases in non-resident workforces, which can have effect on both resident and transient populations (Sincovich, Gregory, Wilson, & Brinkman, 2018) (Carrington & Pereira, 2011).

It is understood that the accommodation village for the Underground would contain up to 225 bedrooms with the following communal facilities for workers while off-shift:

- » Catering and kitchen
- » Barbecue facilities and outdoor seating
- » Emergency response and first aid
- » Car parking
- » Telecommunications services for personal use.

Based on this, it is assumed that certain infrastructure and services in West Wyalong would be utilised by workers while off-shift, including commercial hospitality venues, pubs and bars, retail and groceries, healthcare services and fitness facilities such as local gyms and sporting facilities and entertainment venues. This rise in usage would over time, lead to further public spending and investment, bringing about improved services delivery and expansion of facilities which would improve access, quality and availability of infrastructure and facilities for all user groups.

Table 15 Social infrastructure and services impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: social infrastructure and services			
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Increase demand for health services, recreational facilities and commercial services provided within the town; which may result in certain facilities experiencing an under-supply or strain on capacity	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Moderate
Significance		Moderate	
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project Phase: construction and operations		Increased spending on local services and businesses and increase in demand will stimulate local economic activity and services expansion, in turn generating improved social and commercial benefit	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Moderate
Significance		High	

4.3.2 Road transport

Public transport usage by residents in the area of influence is very limited, indicating that the locality is highly private-car dependent. It is understood that the Underground workers would likely be bussed to and from site each day, however some Underground workers would commute using their own private cars from West Wyalong. Based on this, the Newell Highway and West Plains Road would not likely experience an increased strain, congestion or any increase to user travel times.

The current and future workforce would continue to use these road routes to travel to and from site from the three nearest major towns of West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin. The CGO operations also relies on this local network for critical operational requirements and supplies. Despite that increased traffic congestion is commonly associated with large-scale projects in regional areas, the CGO Underground Development Project Traffic Impact Assessment (2020) has concluded that existing travel routes all have significant traffic capacity currently and can accommodate the Project’s forecast construction and operations stage daily and peak hourly traffic movements without any need for further road widening or other capacity and safety improvements. Based on this, social impacts associated with transport, connectivity and travel for local communities are likely to be minimal to negligible.

Comparably, in the early 2000s , Orange in the Central West region, experienced a rise in traffic congestion caused by the growth of mining activities and the development of supporting industries. Changes in demand for road infrastructure resulted in local government bringing forward expenditure on roads and introducing more sophisticated traffic control systems (Basu, Hicks et al. 2015). Consultation with residents and councils in the area of influence for the Underground has indicated a common concern for the capacity and general upkeep of these. Landholders along West Plains Road have indicated that local roads are already damaged caused by CGO vehicles and there has been an increase in dust and light pollution and high speed travel by mine workers in recent years.

Table 16 Road transport impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: road transport	
Project activity: general on-site construction and operational activities	

Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Increase in traffic on local roads may decrease conditions and affect usability	
Likelihood	Rare	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		

4.3.3 Air transport

Currently there are limited commercial flights to the Project locality with Wagga Wagga Regional Airport a 2.5 hour drive from the Project and Parkes Airport, although with fewer regular flights, is 1.25 hours by road from the Project. The West Wyalong airstrip can accommodate private charter aircraft. CGO is considering use of all three air transport facilities for FIFO travel. It is understood that the FIFO workforce for the Underground would utilise CGO buses to travel to and from the accommodation village and the nominated airport before and after each rotation. Given the use of busses, there would be limited changes to road traffic connecting Parkes to West Wyalong and Wagga Wagga to West Wyalong due to this.

An increase in demand for commercial flights associated with FIFO work arrangement could cause prices to surge due to increasing demand. This may cause accessibility constraints for residents who travel to Sydney and other major centres for medical, business or personal reasons. Assuming that rotations for both construction and operational workers would be 7/7, there could be up to 80 additional passengers travelling through these airports per week. Given that Parkes Airport is closer to site, it is likely to be the preferred airport option taken up by CGO. With few regular flights serviced, this would likely have impact on the commercial operations of the airport. This could in turn improve mobility and connectivity for local communities, if over time, the number of commercial flights servicing Parkes or Wagga Wagga were to increase due to the rising demand. This is likely the preferred option for local governments, considering that Parkes Shire Council is currently prioritising investment to enable Parkes Airport to become a regional transport hub (DPIE, 2017). However, in the construction and early years of the Underground operations, this rise in demand may cause an increase in competition on availability or accessibility to commercial flights for existing users.

under the scenario of CGO chartering FIFO workers in and out of their rotation, the closer airstrips of West Wyalong, Forbes, Condobolin and Temora would have the capacity to accommodate these additional flight services, while minimising or eliminating the impact on commercial flights and access for existing users.

Table 17 Air transport impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: air transport			
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		FIFO workforce may place pressures on existing flight services and facilities, reducing capacity and ability for existing residents to access services	
Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Moderate
Significance	High		
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project Phase: construction and operations		A FIFO workforce may increase commercial flight services and commercial activity at airports, increasing connectivity and mobility of existing communities	
Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Moderate

Significance	High
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4.3.4 Not-for-profit

CGO’s existing social performance activities would likely be sustained and possibly increased due to the extended life of mine brought about from the Underground Project. Key community partners that the CGO maintains would likely be the major beneficiaries of this, namely the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation, the Lake Cowal Foundation and the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council. The capacity of these organisations would likely experience further growth and stability over the years of sustained funding from Evolution Mining. Additional continued sponsorship of community events and social activities in West Wyalong would see strengthened community cohesion and social wellbeing.

Outcomes from community and stakeholder consultation have indicated that the CGO’s social performance initiatives and local grant funding schemes are the largest contributor to localised community wellbeing activities and are widely supported. Stakeholder priorities for new or upcoming shared value schemes and community investment programs include supports to establish a new culturally appropriate childcare service in West Wyalong, the funding of the Lake Cowal Cultural Heritage Centre, and the InHabitat Lake Cowal eco-tourism project.

The following responses were received by community members and residents when asked what Evolution Mining should focus its local community support and investment on in the future:

- » Skills development and local job creation
- » Support and encourage people to live and stay local for education, shopping, events and so forth
- » Improving community facilities, children’s recreational facilities and tourism infrastructure
- » Continued support for local schools and medical services as the backbones of the community; need to maintain their high standard avoid people from leaving town.
- » Encouraging people to shop in town and keep businesses open
- » Mental health and wellbeing services for the community
- » Youth capacity-building and youth services or facilities
- » Coordinated mine open days with public local events to jointly draw people into the Bland area.

Table 18 Not-for-profit impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: not-for-profit			
Project activity: general operations			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Shared value schemes and community programs would increase levels of community wellbeing, cohesion and social capital, particularly for vulnerable community groups	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Major
Significance	High		

4.4 Culture

Culture as a category of social impact which refers to a community’s:

- » Shared beliefs, customs, values, and stories, as well as language or dialect

- » connections to land, places or buildings
- » Aboriginal culture, spirituality, language and connection to Country.

Lake Cowal carries significant community value for residents in the area of social influence. The changing environment in and around Lake Cowal has been identified as a concern of residents; for example, nearby landholders have associated the reduced levels of crayfish in the lake over the last decade to potential impacts of CGO. The Underground Project may be perceived by local communities as affecting the environmental attributes of the lake over time. This may cause community sense of place and shared values to change. In turn, this could decrease the community’s ability to maintain connection to places of value and efforts to conserve such areas.

Table 19 Connection to land and places impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: connection to land and places			
Project activity: general operations and mine expansion			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: operations		Mining under Lake Cowal may be perceived as affecting community connection to places of value	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		

4.5 Health and wellbeing

Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. In this sense, any social impact has the potential to result in poor health outcomes if it causes affected individuals or groups significant stress and anxiety. This in turn can then affect people’s physical health.

The Underground workforce, for both construction and operations, is assumed to be employed on a FIFO rotation of one week on-shift and one week off-shift (7/7). Comparatively, this offering enables individuals to maintain a work-life balance. Additionally, the accommodation strategy of CGO aims to house workers in West Wyalong town, reducing social isolation of workers.

This strategy aims to avoid the health, psychological and wellbeing risks commonly associated with FIFO work arrangements, as described by the Western Australian Mental Health Commission (Centre for Transformative Work Design, 2018). Such risks include:

- » excessive drinking, recreational drug use and obesity
- » relationship strain from geographical isolation leading to a sense of disconnect
- » anxiety and stress caused by ‘missing out’ on family events and memories as well as limited ability to support during family crises
- » difficulty adjusting between home and work life
- » work related stress due to high intensity work environment and shift length
- » job dissatisfaction and fears relating to job insecurity cause by ‘lifestyle lock-in’.

Underground mining also may cause unique work, health and safety risks for workers, considering the following factors:

- » higher risk of dust related impacts to human health generally caused by frequent and long term exposure
- » risk of mine collapse or underground fires or explosions
- » high humidity and low levels of light, with little to no natural light, for the duration of a shift (up to 12 hours).

Table 20 Health and wellbeing impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: workforce health and wellbeing			
Project activity: incoming workforce			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Decreased mental and physical health of workforce relating to personal and family isolation may reduce health and wellbeing	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		

4.6 Surroundings

Surroundings in SIA refers to the access to and use of ecosystem services, public safety and security, access to and use of nature and built environment and aesthetic value or amenity. Natural capital or environmentally produced assets (i.e. from ecosystems or the natural environment) such as land, agriculture, forests, minerals, fish stocks and ecosystem services, are critical matters to consider in understanding potential impacts. The protection of natural environments within the area of social influence is considered of high importance for the maintenance and management of natural capital.

For the purpose of this analysis, the following sub categories will be discussed together:

- » access to and use of ecosystem services
- » access to and use of the natural and built environments
- » aesthetic value and amenity.

4.6.1 Ecosystem services

The area of social influence is highly reliant on access to ground and surface water with both agricultural and mining industries requiring access in addition to supplying residential populations. Considering recent drought events, the future water supply and consumption at CGO is likely to be a continued concern of various stakeholders. CGO is currently exploring alternative water sources, such as saline groundwater, to reduce demand on water sources that may be perceived as competing with other users, such as the Bland Creek Paleochannel. Local water users have raised concern about CGO’s continued use of water from this source, while local communities and nearby residents are broadly interested to see the lake and its catchment protected. For these reasons, CGO’s current and future water management plans should be communicated with transparency and planned jointly with local stakeholders.

4.6.2 Aesthetic value and amenity

The rural and country lifestyle of the project locality was identified as a key community value. Changes to how people interact with the landscape that the Underground may cause such as light pollution and vibrations from blasting, may have effect over time on nearby residents’ day-to-day lived experiences. Nearby landholders to CGO reported their ongoing experience of vibration from blasting felt individually and on the physical structures of properties and dwellings, the extent to which is usually dependent on the proximity to the Project site. Based on this, several landholders have raised concern relating to additional blasting that the Underground may cause.

Visually, the Underground infrastructure is expected to have minimal to negligible effect has on the local landscape, as surface infrastructure requirements will be situated within the existing site footprint. However, the mine life extension and continued operations at CGO may cause nearby landholders to experience cumulative solastalgia.

Nearby landholders may also experience an increase in localised noise generated by increased road traffic on public roads, general construction activities and additional blasting. This would likely have effect on how people interact with and experience the local surrounds, particularly intergenerational resident families.

Table 21 Surroundings impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: surroundings			
Project activity: general operations			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: operations		Continued rate of water consumption caused by extended life of mine may be perceived as reducing availability or access for other users' over time	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance		Low	
Project activity: general operations			
Nature: Negative		Impact:	
Project phase: construction and operations		Vibration disturbance to nearby landholders may cause irritation and may decrease personal wellbeing	
Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance		Low	

4.7 Personal and property rights

Personal and property rights refer to whether someone’s economic livelihoods are affected and whether they experience personal disadvantage.

Extending the life span of the mine and the development of the Underground will provide both opportunities and challenges for local communities. The extension of the mine’s operations would provide opportunity for young residents entering the workforce to seek further qualifications and gain skills and professional experiences in a sector experiencing growth across the region. For both future and existing workers, upskilling and retraining will provide opportunities both on site and elsewhere in Australia post closure.

As previously discussed, CGO is an important employer in the area of social influence, providing access to higher paying jobs, skills development and economic stimulation of the local economy through indirect spending. The impacts and opportunities of local employment and procurement are discussed further in Section 4.1.2.

While there are evident positive opportunities, increasing workforce and temporary workforce may cause local inflation. The cost of everyday items, housing and services may increase due to increased demand and limited supply. For individuals, families and vulnerable groups who are already disadvantaged, this may further intensify their lived disadvantage.

Table 22 Personal and property rights impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: personal disadvantage	
Project activity: general construction and operations	
Nature: Negative	Impact:
Project phase: construction and operations	Local economic inflation for goods and services may cause unaffordability for vulnerable community groups

Likelihood	Unlikely	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Low		

4.8 Decision making systems

Decision making systems refers to the extent to which people believe they can have their say in decisions that affect their lives, and are aware of and have access to remedy and grievance mechanisms (DPIE, 2017).

The Cowal Gold Project Native Title Ancillary Deed (or Native Title Agreement) with the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC) has been maintained for over eighteen years and forms the condition of consent for Evolution Mining to operate at CGO. Consultation outcomes have identified that members of the Wiradjuri community including the WCC would like to see the Native Title Agreement reviewed, to reflect both the current operations and the future growth plans at CGO that Evolution Mining, such as the Underground Project. Both the WCC and Wiradjuri community members have raised that the Native Title Agreement should represent the time that has passed since it was originally put into place and the change in ownership since 2015.

Consultation with the WCC and Wiradjuri community members has indicated that there is an expectation that the Native Title Agreement should accurately reflect the whole community, their consolidated priorities, needs and interests today. Particularly, revisions to the agreement have been requested to ensure that the Wiradjuri community, including all members of the WCC and other communities of the Wiradjuri Nation, can continue to realise material social and economic benefit from CGO, such as the expectation to receive royalties. Likewise, through consultation it was raised that Bland Shire Council has too not received benefit as an eligible mining-impacted community through the NSW Government’s Resources for Regions program.

It is understood that the CGO, through the formation of the Native Title Agreement, has in the past contributed to community fragmentation and conflict between Wiradjuri community groups. It has been described that numerous community groups today experience dysfunctionality as a result of this past. Organisations in the area of influence have made efforts over decades to improve collaboration between groups, with the aim of optimising shared benefit and positive socio-economic development outcomes from CGO. Furthermore, given the former community opposition to the Project, particularly around issues of Native Title, Aboriginal land rights around Lake Cowal, it is paramount that CGO is responsive to the Traditional Owners of the land in which the Project is situated, being the most critical project stakeholders. This would be an important step for CGO to take in ensuring the Underground Project proceeds with continued community acceptance and is responsive to the diverse views and interests of community groups.

A proactive and transparent approach to understanding the needs, interests and priorities of Aboriginal communities in relation to the Project today would be instrumental in ensuring the Underground Development is planned, constructed and operated with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Aboriginal parties. This would in doing so, recognise the continued connection that the Wiradjuri community has with the land of the Project site and locality, and reflect Evolution Mining’s commitment to empowering local Aboriginal people with opportunities for self-determination and sustained positive socio-economic outcomes. This in turn would offer continued alignment with both industry expectation around Indigenous land access consent and community interests, as well as with Evolution Mining’s own corporate Social Performance Standard (5.5 Traditional Custodians, 2019).

Table 23 Decision making systems impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: decision making systems	
Project activity: general operations	
Nature: Negative	Impact: Decreased levels of social acceptance by the Wiradjuri community may cause an increase in community fragmentation or conflict between community groups
Project phase: construction and operations	

Likelihood	Possible	Consequence	Minor
Significance	Moderate		

4.9 Fears and aspirations

Fears and aspirations on the future of the community related to any or all the above social impact categories are discussed in this section.

There is the potential for the Underground Project to further intensify the dependency that the Bland Shire has on CGO. Consultation outcomes identified that local communities are concerned about the future of the town in the context of CGO’s eventual closure. Feedback received included interest for Evolution Mining to create opportunities targeting local people to be able to keep the community sustained long-term and to support initiatives that focus on West Wyalong’s long-term survival.

The extended life of mine would likely increase the community’s reliance on the mining sector for economic livelihoods, employment and the sustenance of local services and infrastructure funding. The extended life of mine brought about due to the Underground would likely decrease levels of fear about the future of the communities across the area of social influence in providing certainty and confidence in local communities. The extended life of mine could provide greater opportunity for communities and stakeholders together with Evolution Mining to make efforts to diversify the local economy and support development of new industries and livelihoods.

Table 24 Future of the community impact assessment summary

Impact characteristic: future of the community			
Project activity: general operations			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project phase: operations		Extended life of mine would increase certainty about the future of the community	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Moderate
Significance	High		
Project activity: general operations			
Nature: Positive		Impact:	
Project phase: operations		Extended life of mine would provide greater opportunity to diversify the local economy and support development of new industries and livelihoods	
Likelihood	Likely	Consequence	Moderate
Significance	High		

4.10 Cumulative assessment

Cumulative impact assessment refers to the consideration of other nearby development projects along with the proposed Underground Project.

A scan of the NSW Planning Portal Major Projects was undertaken to understand the number and magnitude of existing and proposed proposals in the area of social influence. The figures and tables below have utilised information in project technical documentation and the planning submissions to determine:

- » Size of construction and operational workforce

- » Location of project
- » Approval status
- » Whether the proposal is a new project or modification (existing project)
- » Indicative timeframe of construction period and operational phase.

Together this information has been used to understand the cumulative impacts of multiple concurrent development projects within the area of social influence.

4.10.1 Relevant major proposals

The scan of major projects found in the area of social influence:

- » Most proposals are new projects with only one a modification to an existing site
- » Four of the six major projects have been approved by the relevant regulatory body
- » Peak construction workforce size ranges from 150 to 1,000 personnel
- » Construction phases range from nine to eighteen months
- » Four of the six major projects are solar farms.

Table 25 Major projects in the area of social influence

Project name	LGA	Status	Construction phase duration	Potential construction period	New proposal or modification	Proposed construction workforce
Owendale Scandium Mine	Lachlan	Seeking approval	12 months	N/A	New	N/A (estimate 362*)
CleanTeQ Sunrise	Lachlan	Approved	N/A	2019 onwards	Modification	1,000
West Wyalong Solar Farm	Bland	Approved	12 months	2019-2020	New	300
Wyalong Solar Farm	Bland	Approved	9 months	2019 onwards	New	150
Jemalong Solar Farm	Forbes	Approved	N/A	2019 onwards	New	N/A (estimate 203*)
Daroobalgie Solar Farm	Forbes	Seeking approval	18 months	2019-2021	New	160

*estimates are based on similar projects in the area.

Major projects outside the area of social influence have been included at a high level for the purposes of understanding the development activity ongoing or upcoming in the surrounding LGAs. Identified projects with an expected incoming construction workforce include:

- » Quorn Park Solar Farm in Parkes Shire
- » Goonumbla Solar Farm in Parkes Shire
- » Parkes Solar Farm in Parkes Shire
- » Sebastopol Solar Farm in Temora Shire
- » Inland Rail Parkes to Narromine in Parkes Shire

- » Wyangala Dam Wall Raising Facility in the Cowra Shire but highly relevant to the whole Lachlan River catchment's water security.

Economic development in Parkes

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036 (DPIE, 2017) identifies Parkes' current economic growth is being driven by industries of logistics and freight, agribusiness and mining. These industries are all expected to grow significantly due to the concentration of investment and infrastructure development in Parkes. Notably in mining, the Northparkes Mine contributes almost a third of the region's economy is in the process of a \$72 million expansion. Some specific priorities identified for Parkes include:

- » Develop Parkes as a National Logistics Hub, with supporting infrastructure including roads, rail and air linking Parkes to capital cities and ports
- » Develop Parkes Regional Airport as an air freight hub
- » Work with the Australian Government and local councils as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail progresses
- » Ensure adequate supply of residential, industrial and commercial land
- » Diversify the local economy by supporting new industry development and opportunities in agriculture, value-added manufacturing and the mining and resources sector
- » Improve telecommunications infrastructure, including high-speed internet connectivity
- » Facilitate the growth of local communities through cultural and socially supportive infrastructure
- » Develop and support the visitor economy in line with the Destination Management Plan.

The Regional Plan highlights the National Logistics Hub in Parkes as a 'critical intermodal node' as it sits as the only crossroads for the East-West Sydney to Adelaide rail line and the North-South Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. To support and facilitate this node and the expected growth, NSW DPIE have recently published a Special Activation Precinct (SAP) Masterplan (DPIE, 2020) for Parkes centred around the National Logistics Hub. The Parkes SAP will be formed by distinct precincts that reflect the three key drivers of the economy and are guided by the key principles: economic development, environment and sustainability, community, place and landscape and infrastructure.

Other relevant parts of the Regional Plan identify Parkes as having potential for renewable energy generation. Notably, since the Plan's release, two solar farms have been built and another is awaiting its regulatory approval (as described in the major projects overview). The Plan also highlights the need for a water security strategy given the drought prone climate of the region.

4.10.2 Construction workforce

A review of each major project found that local employment is the preferred option during the construction stage. However, multiple also acknowledge that FIFO workers would be required during construction. Based on available data, the total amount of construction workers required at peak for all major projects in the area of social influence is 2,175 people.

Based on an estimate of 70 per cent of construction workers being FIFO workers, there is the potential for 1,523 workers to come to the area of influence from 2020 onwards. The proportion of FIFO workers was determined by using:

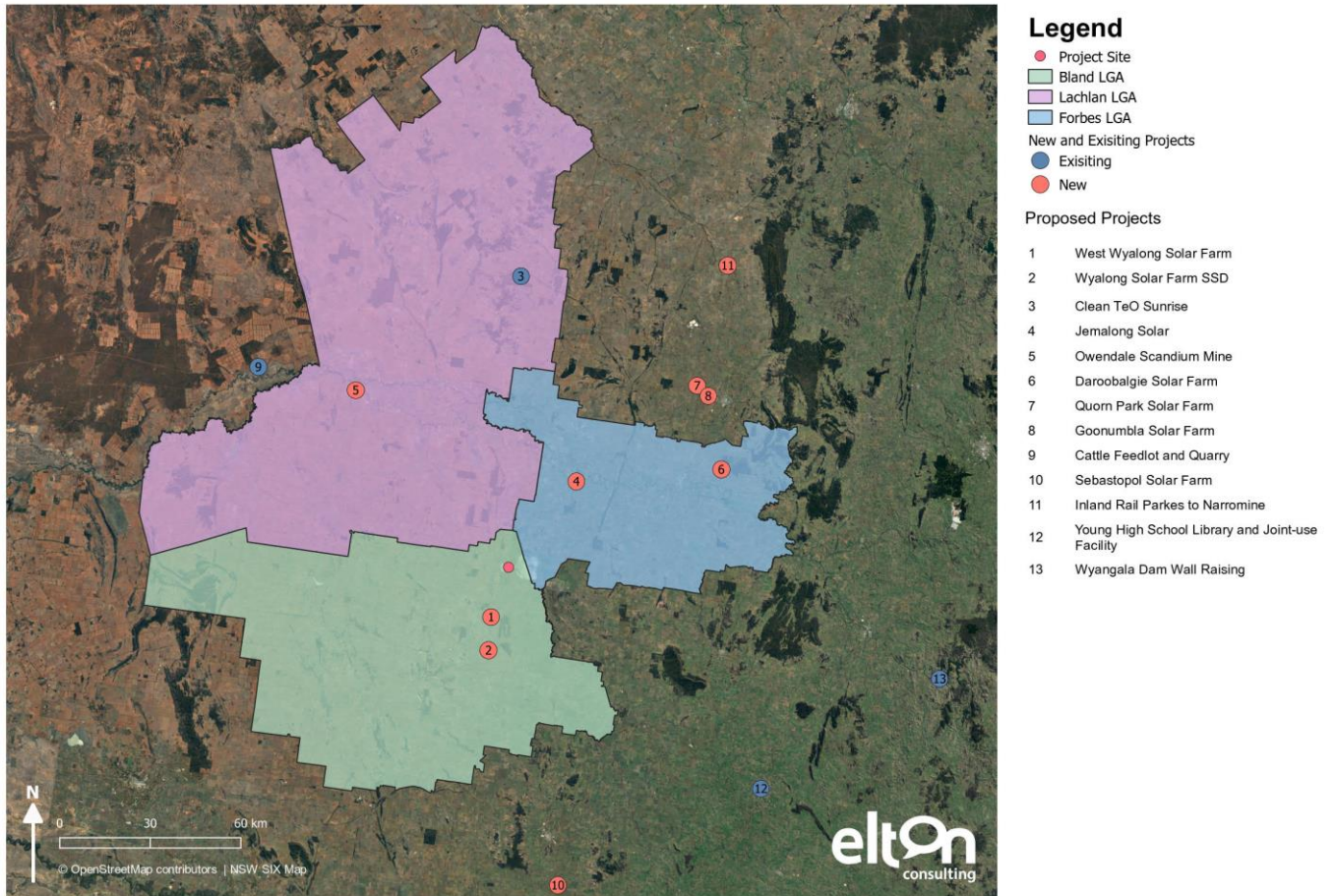
- » estimates for FIFO workers required during the construction phase of the CGO Underground Project at a rate of 65 per cent FIFO workers
- » estimates for FIFO workers required during the construction phase of the West Wyalong Solar Farm at a rate of 50-100 per cent FIFO workers.

When considering the proposed number of construction workers required for other major projects in the area of social influence (2,175 workers), there is a potential need for 2,294 construction workers from 2020 onwards inclusive of the CGO Underground construction workforce. Based on the assumption that 70 per cent of

construction workforces will be FIFO workers, the total number of FIFO personnel working and being accommodated across the area of social influence could be up to 1,609. This figure could also be higher if there is a small or exhausted local labour pool.

Figure 7 Major project type

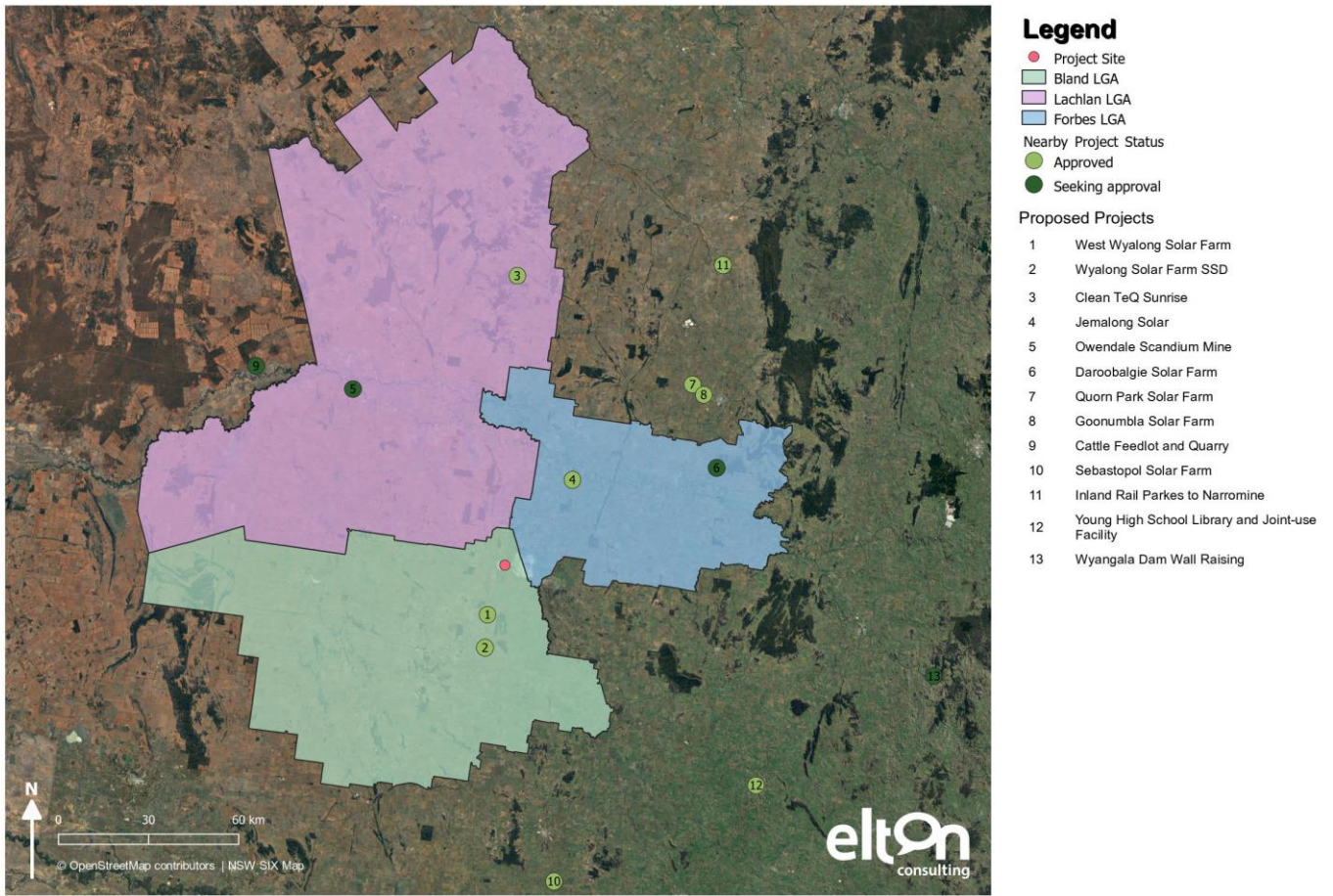
Major Project Type



Source: Elton Consulting; NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW Planning Portal, Major Projects, 2020

Figure 8 Major project current stats

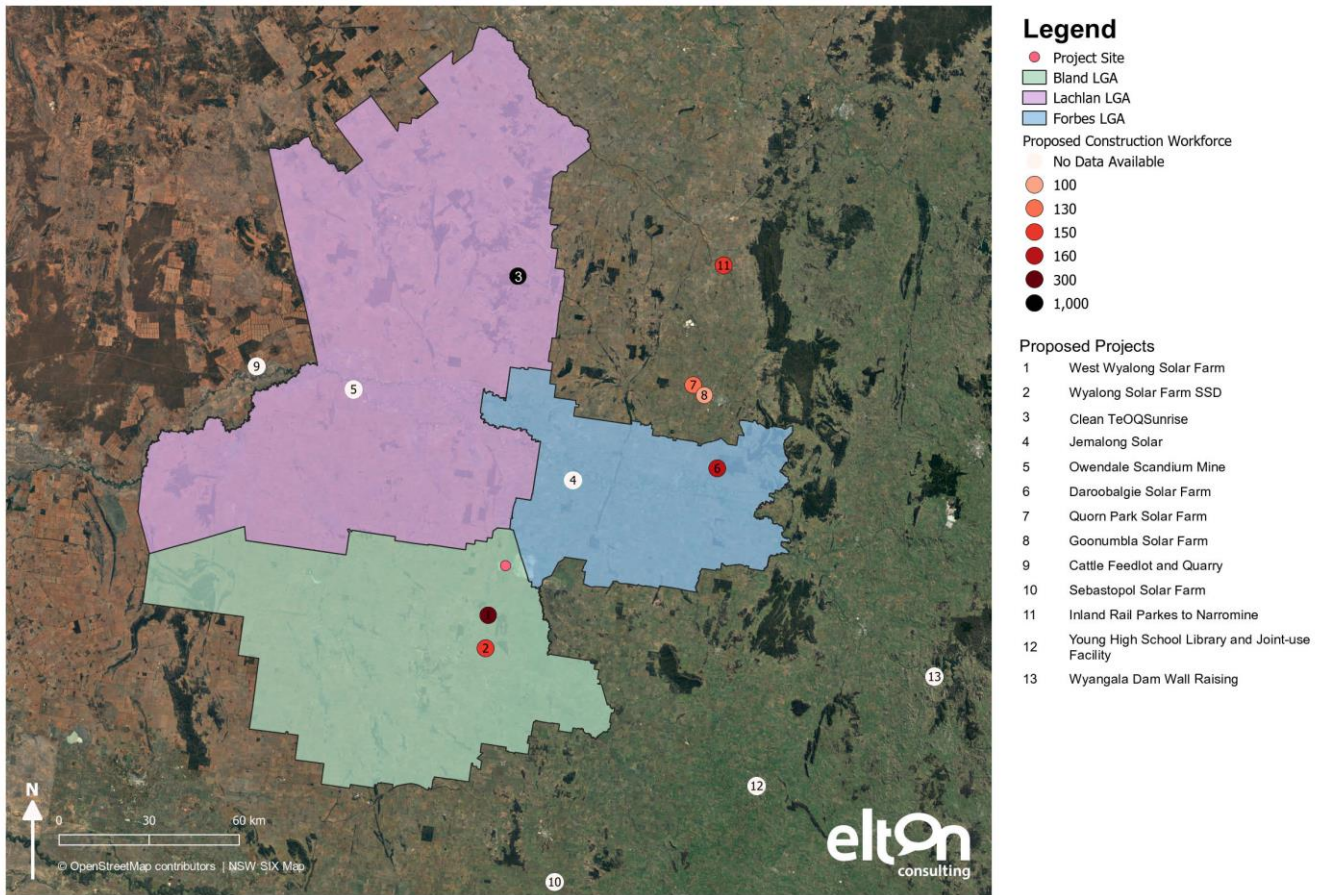
Major Projects Current Status



Source: Elton Consulting; NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW Planning Portal, Major Projects, 2020

Figure 9 Major project workforce requirements

Major Projects Workforce Requirements



Source: Elton Consulting; NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW Planning Portal, Major Projects, 2020

4.10.3 Cumulative impacts

Based on the review of these projects in the context of the region’s strategic goals, the following potential cumulative social impacts have been identified. It is acknowledged that the actual commencement and duration of construction activities for each project may differ from the information available at this point-in-time scenario analysis, and therefore the realisation of impacts may differ from the assessment in Table 26.

Table 26 Cumulative impact assessment summary

Impact category	Impact description	Likelihood	Consequence	Significance
Way of life (housing)	<p>The increase in FIFO workforces caused by multiple concurrent major projects may place additional pressure on the local housing market, particularly affecting short-stay accommodation providers and the private rental market. This could marginalise existing renters and may affect housing affordability for residents and newcomers alike.</p> <p>This impact has been assessed as unlikely based on the assumption of the CGO workforce accommodation village would operate for the life of the Underground.</p>	Unlikely	Moderate	Low (negative)
Way of life (employment and economic livelihoods)	<p>The increase in demand for labour and contracting services caused by multiple concurrent projects requiring construction workers, would enable job creation and local economic stimulus, however may have effect on the cost of labour and availability for other industries.</p> <p>This impact has been assessed as positive by understanding the current economic downturn being experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent heightened demand for employment.</p>	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<p>An increase in traffic on local roads and public highways such as the Newell Highway, especially heavy vehicles, caused by multiple concurrent projects, may increase the public safety risk for road-related accidents and may increase the strain on existing road networks, affecting local road users and existing residents.</p> <p>This impact has been assessed as minor due to the existing sufficient road capacity within the area of social influence.</p>	Possible	Minor	Moderate (negative)
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<p>An increase in incoming FIFO workforces caused by multiple concurrent projects may place additional pressure on existing infrastructure and services in nearby townships, in particular, emergency services, health services or child care services.</p> <p>This may marginalise existing users, particularly disadvantaged community groups. However, over time, continued economic development in the area of influence would likely contribute to improved or expanded provision of infrastructure and services.</p>	Possible	Minor	Moderate (negative)

5 Enhancement and mitigation

All negative impacts assessed in this SIA can be reasonably mitigated throughout a coordinated planning and development approach with key local stakeholders to reduce the significance of each impact to low. All positive impacts identified can be enhanced through a similarly collaborative approach to development to enable realisation of the opportunities that the Underground Project offers.

While it is understood that Evolution Mining is currently preparing a CGO Community Strategic Plan, impact management should be guided by the development of a Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP), which should be informed by a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (CSEP) specific to the Underground and future operations at CGO. Both plans should be informed by the findings and outcomes of this SIA. Such an integrated approach would ensure the ongoing and consistent participation of project stakeholders during the Underground Project's lifecycle in realising positive and sustainable outcomes at the local level. In doing so, this could align the Project with regional and local strategic plans which have identified the need for improved coordination between local actors in responding to changing socio-economic dynamics such as new industry growth, growing populations and the need for improved infrastructure and services.

The following table outlines the recommended mitigation and enhancement strategies for each impact category.

Table 27 Enhancement and mitigation measures

Impact category	Impact significance pre-mitigation	Recommended mitigation or enhancement strategy	Residual impact significance
Way of life (housing)	Moderate (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Evolution Mining to encourage accommodation village contractor to engage local contractors and services and to jointly plan the facility with local stakeholders, with the aim of ensuring local and long-term socio-economic development opportunities are realised » Coordinated approach for future planning of workforce housing requirements and residential transition with Bland Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council and Forbes Shire Council and other key stakeholders including short-stay accommodation business owners, local business chambers, property and real estate agents 	Low (negative)
Way of life (employment)	High (positive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » CGO's Community Strategic Plan to continue targeting local economic or skills diversification schemes such as community programs to focus on re-skilling or up-skilling schemes for local job seekers » Continue existing targeted programs with local training institutions such as West Wyalong TAFE and West Wyalong High School to support career pathways for existing workers, residents, school leavers or general resident population » Develop and introduce local procurement strategy to encourage local businesses and industry to participate and optimise local benefit » Collaborate with councils, local chamber of commerce and business groups, to ensure strategy enables encouragement of local industry, suppliers and businesses in procurement and to promote awareness on procurement and supplier opportunities, e.g. host supplier information nights in Forbes, West Wyalong and Condobolin (noting that Forbes Shire Council has made this recommendation based on a recently well-received similar event held by a solar developer) » Operations to maintain a quota for locally sourced apprentices or trainees » Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to be maintained for all Underground Project personnel including subcontractors as per Native Title Ancillary Deed 	High (positive)
Way of life (access to recreation)	Low (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to provide targeted support to local recreational facilities, groups or activities and collaborate with Bland Shire Council and local service providers to deliver shared value programs such as through the Cowl Cares Program and the Why Leave Town Initiative 	Low (negative)
Community (composition and character)	Moderate (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure Workforce Code of Conduct is tailored and adapted to manage impacts specific to the workforce accommodation village 	Low (negative)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Coordinated approach for future planning of workforce housing requirements and residential transition with Bland Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council and Forbes Shire Council » Monitor changing gender relations in West Wyalong and respond through community partnerships, as appropriate » Provide relocation supports or incentives for workers to relocate with their dependents or families 	
Community (cohesion)	Low (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Introduce penalties or disciplinary measures for off-site anti-social behaviour within Workforce Code of Conduct 	Low (negative)
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	Low / Moderate (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consider partnering with local health and emergency services to facilitate training and capacity-building to appropriately respond to mine-specific health and safety risks, or continue any existing partnerships related to local health services and emergency responsiveness » Explore opportunities with West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to deliver childcare supports for Aboriginal and mine worker families » Continue to ensure that CGO traffic flows utilise a standard road route as determined jointly with councils to reduce impacts on local road users, ensure all road works or traffic changes associated with the Project are effectively communicated with local landholders and other major road users (e.g. school bus) prior to the commencement of works, such as current considerations for an additional bus services » Continue to utilise CGO buses for daily transport of workers to and from site » Continue to consult with Bland, Lachlan and Forbes councils to jointly strategise and plan for road maintenance and upgrades in the Project locality, ensuring continuation of existing local road funding scheme » Consult with Parkes Airport, other major projects with FIFO workforce requirements, Parkes Shire Council, as well as Forbes, Lachlan and Bland councils to strategically plan for FIFO requirements for both construction and operations, aiming to ensure the FIFO workforce brings long-term benefit for regional infrastructure and air transport networks 	Low (negative)
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	High (positive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop community benefit strategy as part of CGO Social Impact Management Plan or through CGO Community Relations Strategy (in preparation) » Continue to explore targeted, strategic and collaborative partnership opportunities that focus on bringing together key project stakeholders, including the Lake Cowal Foundation, the West Wyalong LALC, the WCC and Bland Shire Council to develop shared value initiatives such as the InHabitat eco-tourism project and the proposed Lake Cowal Cultural Heritage Centre 	High (positive)

		» Explore opportunities to partner with West Wyalong LALC, WCC and other community partners to service and supply the workforce accommodation village	
Culture	Low (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to ensure delivery of open, consistent, accessible and transparent communications with the public and key project stakeholders on the environmental impacts and management plans for the Project such as through the existing issues register » Continue to proactively respond to stakeholder or community concerns of damage or effect to environmental, community, cultural or historical values to enable an improved public knowledge base » Continue to jointly implement cultural heritage management process with Traditional Owners and other relevant stakeholders for shared value and improvements to local knowledge, as per the Native Title Ancillary Deed 	Low (negative)
Health and wellbeing	Low (negative)	» Continue delivery of workforce support services such Matecheck and PeopleSense, provision of communication options to foster connections with home, provision of a permanent room at accommodation camps, roster and shift structures that optimise mental health and wellbeing in line with the Centre for Transformative Work Design (2018) 'Impact of FIFO work arrangement in mental health wellbeing of FIFO workers'	Low (negative)
Surroundings (access to water)	Low (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to ensure delivery of open, consistent, accessible and transparent communications with stakeholders on water management plans » Consult with local water user groups to integrate stakeholder and other water user issues into strategy and CSEP 	Low (negative)
Surroundings (aesthetic value and amenity)	Low (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to ensure delivery of open, consistent, accessible and transparent communications on matters of concern to neighbouring or nearby landholders through CSEP, such as blasting schedules, periods of increased site activity, lake access procedures for livestock grazing, road maintenance, traffic management plans, land access procedures (for water monitoring and exploration), land rehabilitation programs that the community may be able to participate in, and so forth » Consider supporting a research project on Lake Cowal to better understand crayfish and bird habitat changes within the lake ecosystem (a landholder recommendation) » Continue strategic support to Lake Cowal Foundation and associated activities 	Low (negative)
Personal and property rights	Low (negative)	» Develop local procurement strategy to encourage local businesses and industry to participate and optimise local benefit (as above)	Low (negative)
Decision making systems	Moderate (negative)	» Consult with Wiradjuri community members and representatives to understand diversity of views, priorities and interests	Low (negative)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure that SIMP and CSEP contains targeted strategies specific to Traditional Owners, Aboriginal land rights and interests, based on an engagement process with Aboriginal groups and communities » Continue supports to WCC and West Wyalong LALC in providing long-term socio-economic benefit and self-determination 	
Future of the community	High (positive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continuation of collaborative partnership with Bland Shire Council and other stakeholders, including industry and community groups or representatives, for future local economic diversification planning and skills diversification schemes, to be appropriately reflected in the SIMP and CSEP 	High (positive)
Cumulative (way of life – employment – and access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities)	Moderate (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consider supports to a coordinated strategy led by councils, to meet the local infrastructure, services and facilities requirements of multiple concurrent projects. From a social perspective, this is critical to ensure that existing residential communities, vulnerable or disadvantaged communities do not experience further inequality due to economic growth in the region. Matters to be jointly considered relate to housing, social infrastructure, local procurement and employment. 	Moderate (positive)

6 Conclusion

The SIA found that the Underground Project would likely result in a number of social effects on local communities who live, work and visit the area of social influence. Identified social impacts relate to the influx of FIFO workers into the regional town of West Wyalong , the reduced level of uncertainty around the future of the community and numerous opportunities to increase local socio-economic benefit.

Evident vulnerabilities exist within the community related to social disadvantage, limited social infrastructure and services, an ageing population and poor youth mental health outcomes. While communities across the Bland, Forbes and Condobolin shires have relatively limited economic diversification and skills adaptability, there has been broad support for the CGO over the years, with the majority of community members and stakeholders interested to see the Underground Project continue to activate the local economy and to sustain the townships nearest to the Project.

All negative impacts assessed can be reasonably mitigated throughout a strategic and collaborative approach to planning and development to reduce their significance to low. All positive impacts identified can be reasonably enhanced through a similar approach for communities to realise the range of opportunities that the Project offers.

Overall, this SIA anticipates that the Underground Project has the ability to create many local social and economic opportunities for people in the area of social influence. Evolution Mining is in an opportune position to plan and proactively respond to impacts before construction. Key recommended mitigation and enhancement measures centre around the development of a Social Impact Management Plan and Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan specific to CGO and using the findings and outcomes of this SIA as a foundation.

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Appendices

- A Social baseline dataset
- B Stakeholder identification
- C Stakeholder and community engagement material
- D Stakeholder and community engagement outcomes

A Social baseline dataset

A-1 Human capital

A-1-1 Population

Population size and change is a key component of human capital. Decreasing population size is often seen as an economic vulnerability, as skills and labour leave the local area. Decreasing resident populations also create social vulnerabilities by reducing the critical mass for services and facilities (this tends to result in higher operational costs based on a per person provision rate). Similarly, population growth can indicate an increase in local service and skills base. However, rapid growth which is unsupported by social, physical and economic infrastructure is detrimental to local communities.

Population across the three LGAs varied. Forbes has the largest population (9,589 residents), followed by Lachlan (6,195 residents) and Bland (5,958 residents). Between 2011 and 2016, the Forbes and Bland LGAs experienced population increases (4.0 and 1.6 percent respectively). Over the same period Lachlan experienced a population decrease of 4.0 percent. Lachlan Council acknowledges in the *Growing Lachlan Report* that a major driver of this decline is the lack of work and educational opportunities for young people.

West Wyalong represents 52.5 percent of the resident population of Bland LGA. Between 2011 and 2016 West Wyalong experienced a 3.3 percent increase in resident population. Compared to the surrounding LGAs, West Wyalong experienced a lower growth rate, however did not experience a negative growth rate.

Between 2016 and 2041, Bland LGA and Lachlan LGA are expected to experience population decreases of 10 per cent respectively. The resident population of Bland LGA is expected to increase until 2026-2031 then begin to decrease 2031 onwards. The resident population of Lachlan LGA is expected to decrease between 2016 and 2041.

Over the same period Forbes LGA is expected to experience a 5 per cent increase over the same period. Across all three LGAs, the number of births and deaths reflects natural increase.

In the cases of Bland LGA and Lachlan LGA, both LGAs are expected to experience negative net migration. This suggests that more residents will move out of the LGA than people moving to the LGA. For both Bland LGA and Lachlan LGA, the negative net migration is higher than natural growth, causing an overall decrease in population. Forbes LGA is expected to have similar numbers of natural change and positive net migration, collectively contributing to population increase. Across all three LGAs, net migration is an important factor in population increase and decrease.

Table 28 Population change 2011-2016

	2011	2016	Change
West Wyalong	3,042	3,141	+3.3%
Bland LGA	5,862	5,958	+1.6%
Forbes LGA	9,169	9,589	+4.6%
Lachlan LGA	6,477	6,195	-4.4%
Central West	196,742	206,155	+4.8%

Source: ABS QuickStats Census, 2016. quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Table 29 Population forecast 2016-2041

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change
Bland LGA	6,024	6,136	6,278	6,035	5,750	5,421	-10.0%
Forbes LGA	9,817	9,967	10,104	10,202	10,266	10,304	+5.0%
Lachlan LGA	6,356	6,286	6,256	6,093	5,899	5,679	-10.7%

Source: Department Planning, Industry and Environment, Projections, 2019. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-projections/Projections

Table 30 Drivers of population change 2016-2041

	Births	Deaths	Natural change	Net migration
Bland LGA	1,869	1,609	260	-863
Forbes LGA	2,943	2,685	258	+229
Lachlan LGA	2,343	1,565	777	-1,454

Source: Department Planning, Industry and Environment, Projections, 2019. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-projections/Projections

A-1-2 Age

Age distributions within a resident population provide insights into community need and representation of potential local labour forces.

Bland and Forbes LGA have relatively moderate median ages (43 and 42) compared to the Central West (41). Lachlan LGA has a significantly older population reflected by a median age of 48. Compared to the area of social influence, the Central West has a higher proportion of residents aged 35-49 and 70-84. Key age differences within the area of social influence include:

- » Lachlan LGA has the highest proportion of children 0-4 and second highest proportion of children 5-11 but the lowest proportion of minors aged 12-17
- » Bland LGA has the lowest proportion of residents aged 0-4
- » Lachlan LGA has the highest rates of residents aged 25-39
- » Bland LGA has the highest proportion of residents aged 35-49 and 50-59

West Wyalong has a higher proportion of residents aged 25-34 and 70 years and older compared to the area of social influence. West Wyalong also has a slightly lower median age of 42. This suggests:

- » Within the Bland LGA, there is a cluster of younger residents in West Wyalong
- » West Wyalong is home to a high proportion of older residents compared to the LGA and area of social influence
- » West Wyalong has a similar median age as Lachlan LGA and the Central West.

Between 2016 and 2041 all LGAs are expected to experience an aging population, generally reflected by a decrease in the proportion of residents under 30-40 years of age and an increase in older residents.

The resident population of Bland LGA is expected to experience a decrease in the proportion of residents under 45 and an increase in the proportion of residents aged 85 and older. The proportion of residents aged 85 and older is expected to increase from 3.4 per cent to 6.0 per cent between 2016 and 2041, representing the greatest proportional increase.

Forbes LGA reflected similar trends however slightly different age category distributions. These include:

- » a proportional decrease in residents aged under 39
- » a slight increase in the proportion of residents aged 39-50
- » a decrease in the proportion of residents aged 60-74
- » an increase in the proportion of residents aged 74+.

Lachlan LGA is expected to experience the following changes in age distribution:

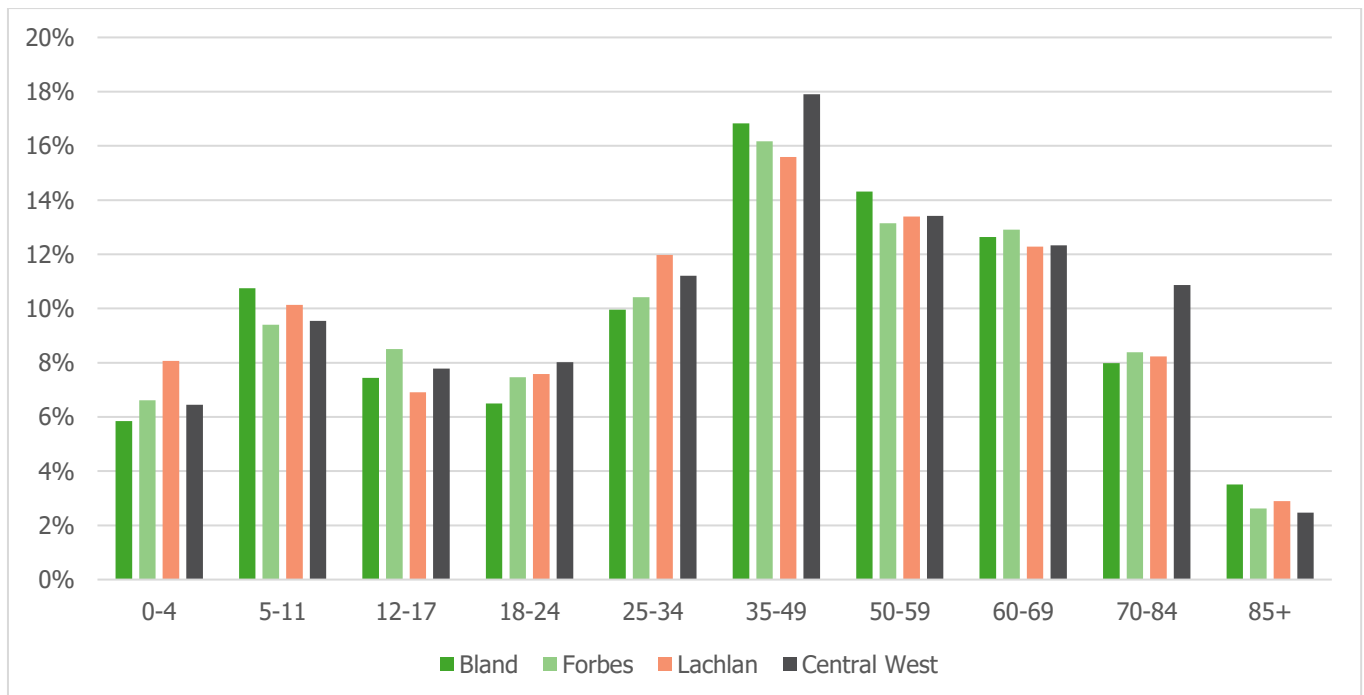
- » a decrease in the proportion of residents under 35
- » an increase in the proportion of residents aged 39-54
- » a decrease in the proportion of residents aged 55-69
- » an increase in the proportion of residents aged 69+.

Table 31 Median age 2016

	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West
Median age	42	43	42	48	41

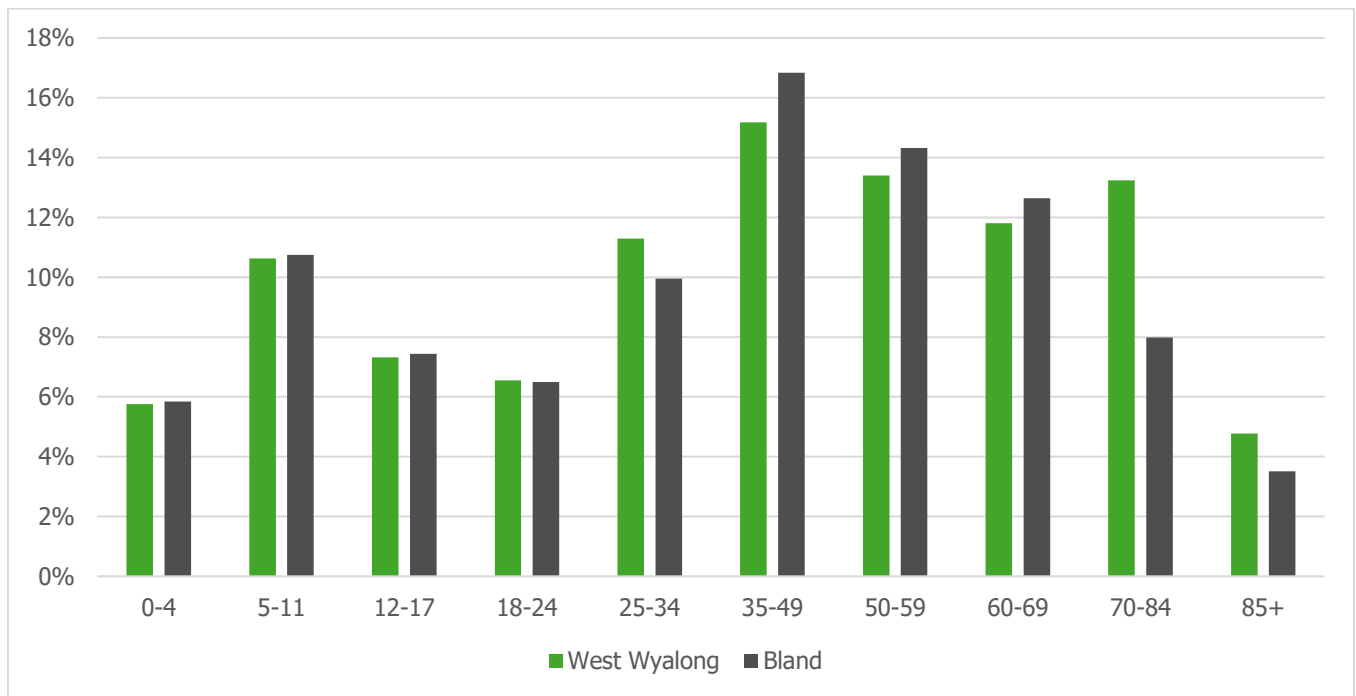
Source: ABS QuickStats Census, 2016. quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Figure 10 Age profile, 2016



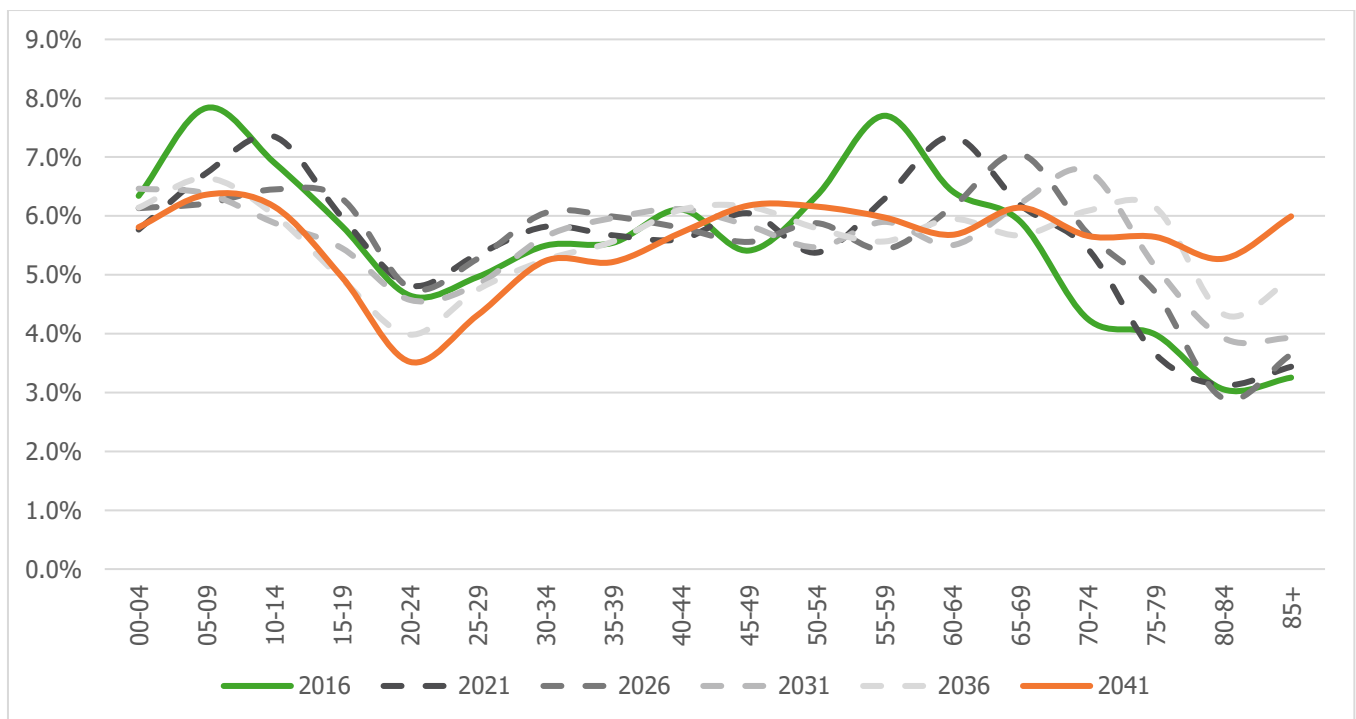
Source: ABS QuickStats Census, 2016. quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Figure 11 Age profile, West Wyalong, 2016



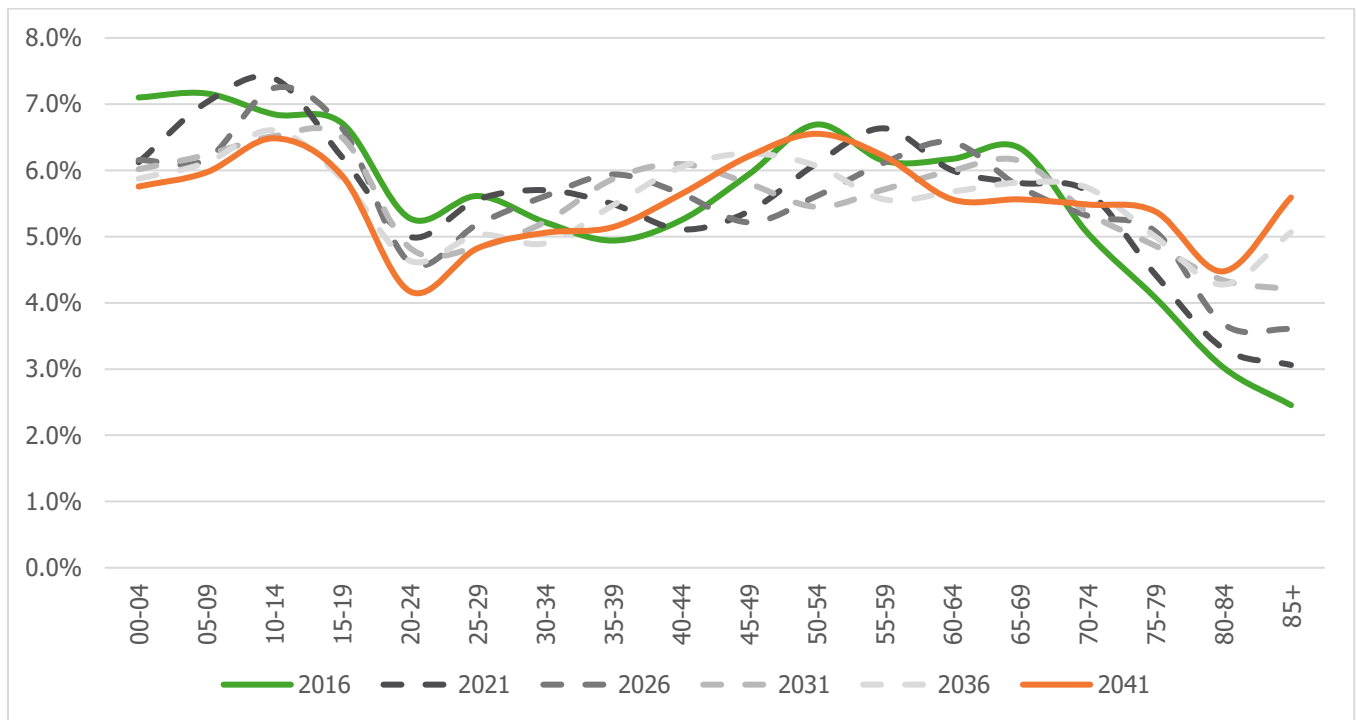
Source: ABS QuickStats Census, 2016. quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au

Figure 12 Age profile change for Bland LGA, 2016-2041



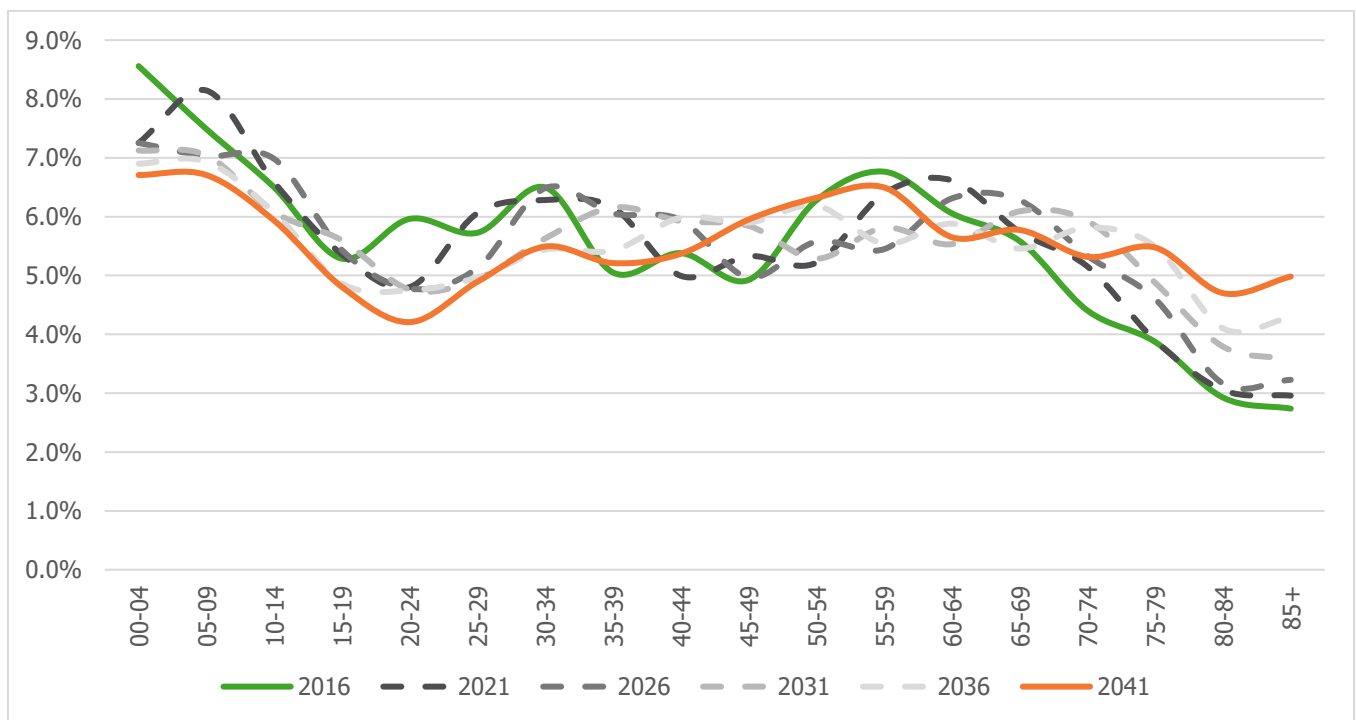
Source: Department Planning, Industry and Environment, Projections, 2019. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-projections/Projections

Figure 13 Age profile change for Forbes LGA, 2016-2041



Source: Department Planning, Industry and Environment, Projections, 2019. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-projections/Projections

Figure 14 Age profile change for Lachlan LGA, 2016-2041



Source: Department Planning, Industry and Environment, Projections, 2019. www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Population-projections/Projections

A-1-3 Proportion of population over 65

The proportion of people over the age of 65 in an area tends to influence the population’s resilience by increasing the number of people not in the workforce, increasing the number of vulnerable people and increasing the

number of people with steady income through government pensions or superannuation – albeit small incomes for some groups.

The proportion of people aged over 65 in West Wyalong was marginally higher than in the surrounding LGAs and higher than the rate for the Central West.

Data in Table 32 indicates over the area of social influence there is a high proportion of aged residents.

Table 32 Proportion of population over 65, 2016

	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West
Proportion over 65	24.8%	21.8%	22.0%	20.3%	19.0%

Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, Variables, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), AGE5P

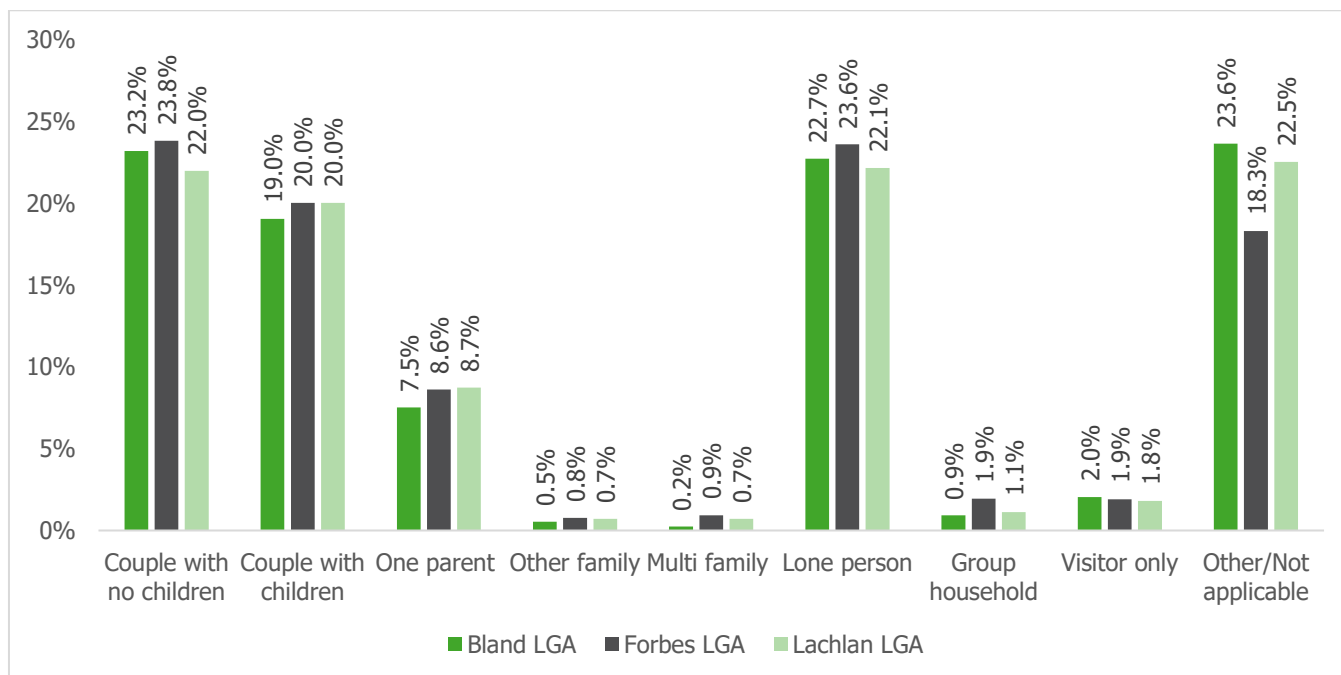
A-1-4 Household composition

Household composition reflects household and family dynamics within a local community.

Bland LGA, when compared to Forbes and Lachlan LGA, has the lowest proportion of couples with children and one parent families. Across the three LGAs there were similar proportions of most household groups.

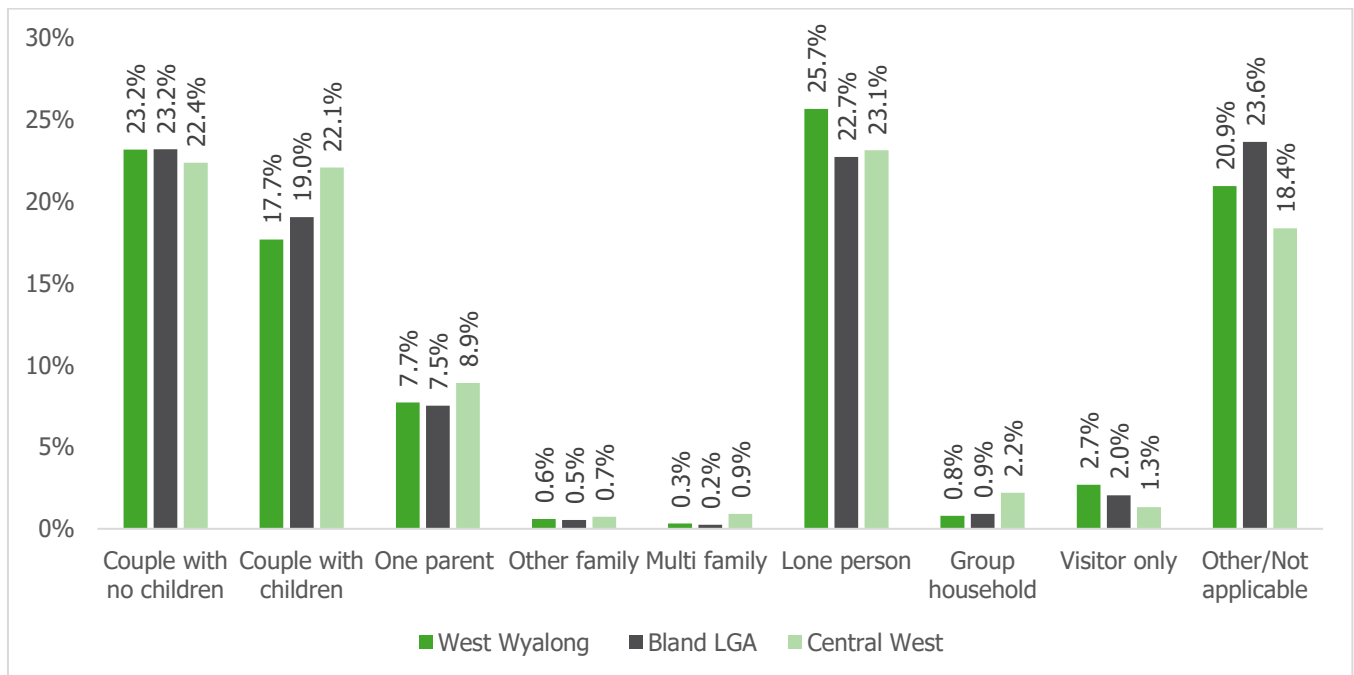
West Wyalong, compared to Bland LGA and the Central West, has the highest proportion of lone person households and lowest proportion of couple with children. Considering the higher proportion of older residents in West Wyalong, it is likely that lone person and couple without children households are slightly older in nature. It is important to acknowledge that older lone person households are generally more vulnerable than other household groups.

Figure 15 Household composition, LGAs



Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), HCFMD

Figure 16 Household composition, West Wyalong



Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Central West (SA4), HCFMD

A-1-5 Household size

Household size reflects the average number of people per dwelling across a select area, reflecting household compositions and number of dependants.

Households in the area of social influence have sizes comparable to that of the Central West region, averaging at 2.4 people per household. West Wyalong has the lowest average people per household of the comparison areas. The low average is also reflected by the suburb’s older population, high proportion of lone person households and low proportion of couple with children households.

Table 33 Average number of people per household

	West Wyalong	Bland LGA	Forbes LGA	Lachlan LGA	Central West
Average people per household	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4

Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Average people per household

A-1-6 Proportion of Aboriginal households

The Lachlan LGA has the highest relative population of Aboriginal people in the area of social influence, while Forbes LGA has the highest number of Aboriginal households. Understanding the proportion of Aboriginal people within a community is important due to their connection to land and cultural values, as well as relative socio-economic disadvantage often experienced by Aboriginal communities across Australia compared to non-Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people affected by a project can be more vulnerable to social changes such as sudden influxes in a population.

Table 34 Proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents

	West Wyalong	Bland LGA	Forbes LGA	Lachlan LGA	Central West
Proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents	4.7%	4.4%	11.1%	17.7%	6.4%
Number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents	148	262	1,062	1,098	13,292

Source: ABS TableBuilder, Census 2016 www.abs.gov.au

A-1-7 Education attainment

The level of education within a population is importance in understanding human capital and community resilience. Those with higher educational attainment are more likely to be able to find employment and tend to receive incomes that can sustain quality of life, access to services and support of dependents.

During consultation with landholders, it was noted that there is high competition for skilled workers in the area. It was also commented that agricultural businesses could not compete with the mining sector for skilled workers due to the differences in industry wages.

Some of the key findings for the area of social influence includes:

- » West Wyalong has roughly the same proportion of individuals that have completed tertiary education to the surrounding LGAs but a lower proportion than the average for the Central West
- » West Wyalong has roughly the same proportion of the population who left school after year 10 as the surrounding LGAs and slightly more than the average for the Central West.

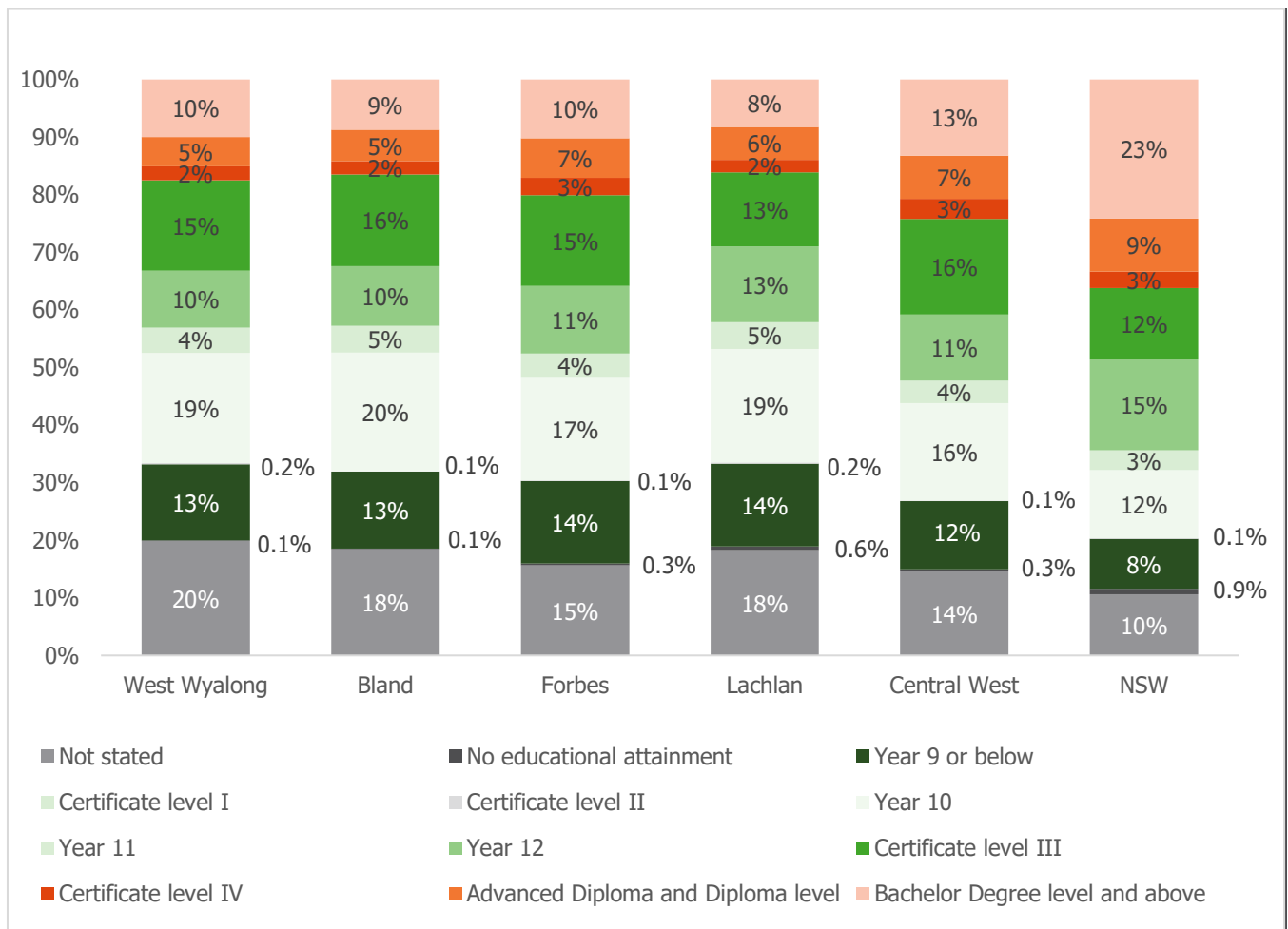
Compared to the Central West, LGAs which make up the area of social influence (Bland, Forbes and Lachlan) tended to have lower rates of educational attainment. Key indicators include:

- » Year 9 or below is the highest level of educational attainment for 13-14 per cent of residents in the area of social influence compared to 12 per cent across the Central West
- » Year 10 is the highest level of educational attainment for 17-20 per cent of residents in the area of social influence compared to 12 per cent across the Central West
- » the Central West Region has the highest proportion of residents who had attained a bachelor degree or higher.

Rates of highest educational attainment for residents in the area of social influence and Central West tended to reflect lower levels of educational attainment compared to the broader state of NSW. This is represented by:

- » significantly higher attainment rates of Bachelor degree level or higher across NSW
- » a lower proportion of highest educational attainment for year 10 across NSW
- » a lower proportion of highest educational attainment for year 9 or below across NSW.

Figure 17 Highest level of educational attainment, 2016



Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), New South Wales (STE) Highest level of educational attainment

A-1-8 General population health

Health data provides an important indication of a community’s quality of life and wellbeing, access and use of health infrastructure and services and needs of certain vulnerable groups. Health indicators reflect local health and wellbeing challenges for both residents and workers alike.

General population health indicators have been considered. Many of these indicators reflect lifestyle habits which impact individual wellbeing.

Consultation with West Wyalong Health Service identified mental health and youth mental health as a highly important issue across the area of social influence.

Residents in rural areas tend to have lower life expectancy and higher rates of disease and injury compared to residents of urban or metropolitan areas. A combination of poorer access to services, education and lower socio-economic factors are key drivers in poor population health

The area of social influence spans across two Local Health Districts. Forbes and Lachlan LGAs are part of the Western NSW Local Health District. Bland LGA is part of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District.

Across the Western NSW Local Health District there are a range of health issues which have been identified as keys areas of focus. For all key areas, rates and proportions are higher across the Local Health District compared to NSW. These areas include adults who smoke, nutrition and weight issues, diabetes prevention and management, infant and child health – particularly Aboriginal children and further improving mental health services.

The most prominent health issues impacting the Murrumbidgee Local Health District include smoking, high body mass, alcohol use, physical inactivity and high blood pressure. More than a third of 'the burden of disease' within the Local Health District is considered preventable, suggesting lifestyle changes, education and targeted services can reduce the long-term impact of health issues impacting the region.

Both Local Health District are impacted by similar preventable health issues relating to tobacco use, diet and physical activity.

A-1-9 Mental health

Rates of intentional self-harm hospitalisation are higher across the area of social influence when compared to NSW. Within the area of social influence, Bland LGA has the highest rate of intentional self-harm hospitalisation while Lachlan has the lowest rate.

When considering intention self-harm hospitalisation by sex, rates are higher for both men and women across the area of social influence compared to NSW. Within the area of social influence, rates are higher for women than men. Between Bland, Forbes and Lachlan LGA rates of self-harm hospitalisation are similar for men but not for women. Bland LGA has the highest rate of women who are hospitalised due to intentional self-harm while Lachlan has the lowest.

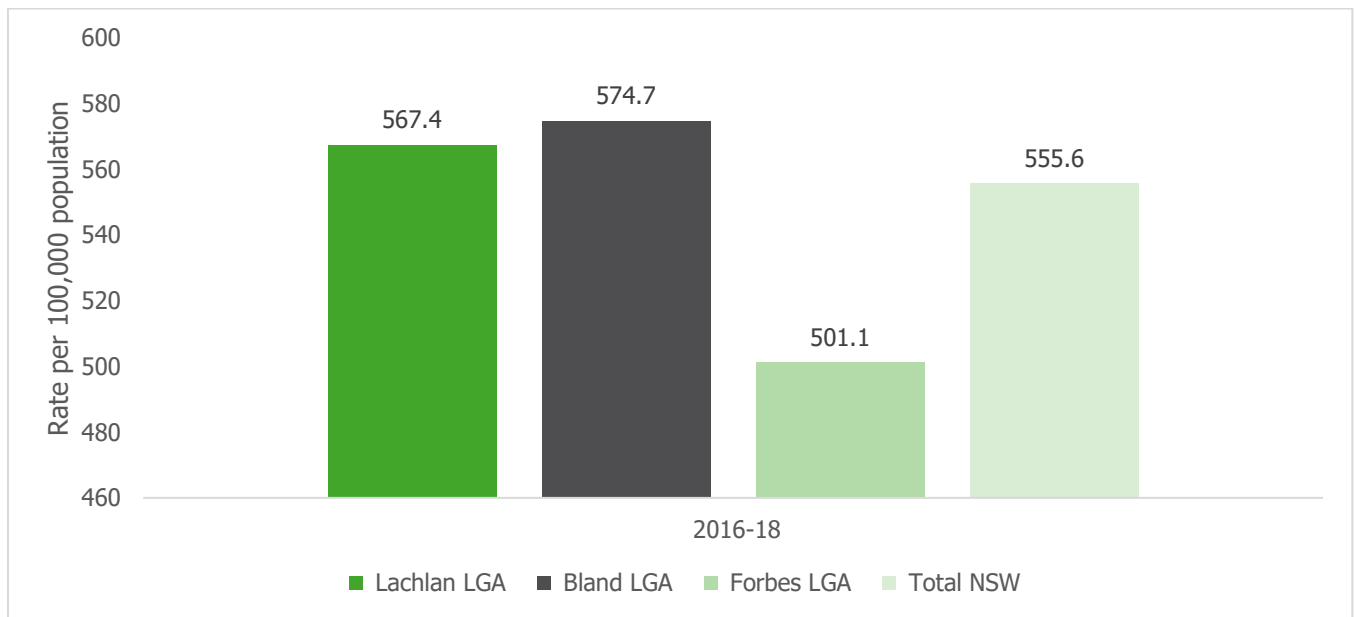
Rates of alcohol attributed hospitalisation varied across the area of social influence. Rates in Bland and Lachlan LGA are higher than the average across NSW while rates in Forbes was notably lower than the other LGAs and the NSW Average. Bland LGA has the highest rate across the area of social influence.

FIFO and DIDO workers face unique health impacts directly linked to their employment. A 2018 report produced for the Western Australian Mental Health Commission outlined the risks associated with FIFO work arrangements, focusing on psychological and wellbeing impacts (Centre for Transformative Work Design 2018). The broader literature agrees FIFO workers have a high risk of experiencing:

- » excessive drinking, recreational drug use and obesity
- » relationship strain from geographical isolation leading to a sense of disconnect
- » anxiety and stress caused by 'missing out' on family events and memories as well as limited ability to support during family crises
- » difficulty adjusting between home and work life
- » work related stress due to high intensity work environment and shift length
- » job dissatisfaction and fears relating to job insecurity cause by 'lifestyle lock-in'.

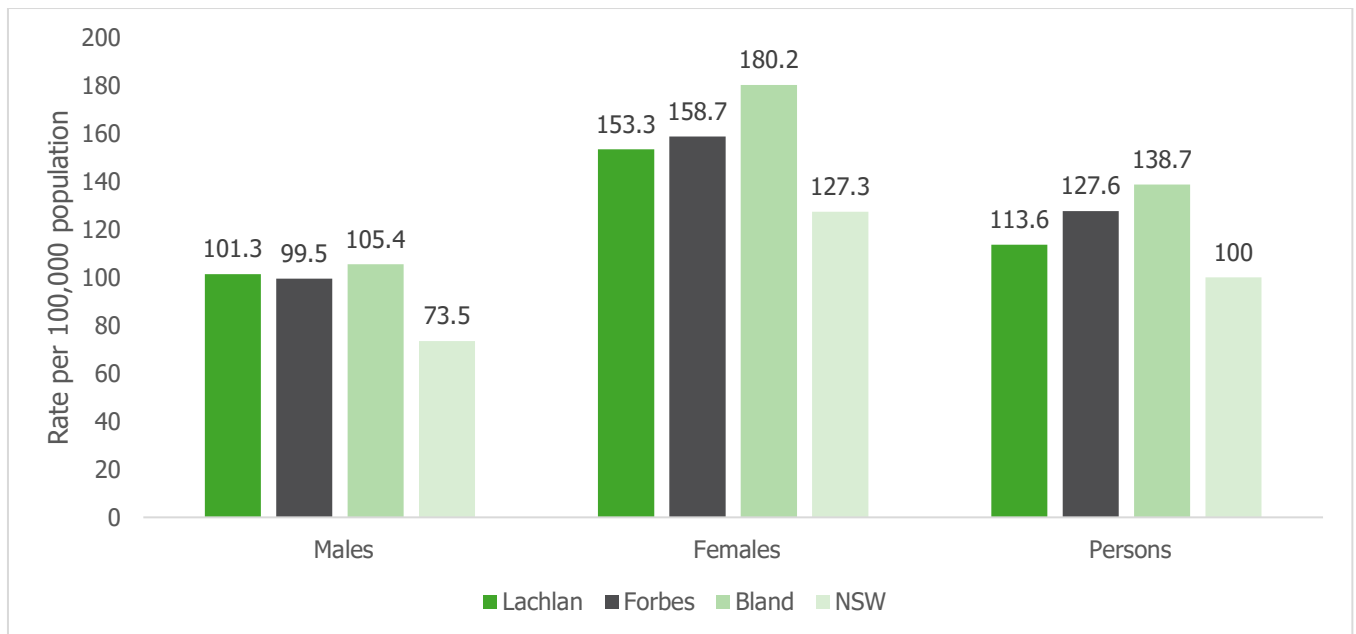
Reported stigmatisation of mental health issues within the resource development sector and the masculine or 'macho' culture associated with the industry can be barriers that prevent workers seeking help (Gardner, Alfrey et al. 2017). Research also suggests that alcohol consumption trends are higher among FIFO and DIDO workers than other workforces. The literature identifies some potential key factors which include; high disposable incomes, social isolation, lack of recreational activities, and a mixture of workplace and rural masculine cultures (Joyce, Tomlin et al. 2012). It is acknowledged that excessive drinking may also be a stress coping mechanism for some workers.

Figure 18 Alcohol attributable hospitalisations, 2016-2018



Source: Department of Health healthstats.nsw.gov.au

Figure 19 Intentional self-harm hospitalisations



Source: Department of Health healthstats.nsw.gov.au

A-1-10 Need for assistance with core activities

The need for assistance in a population is a key indicator of the most vulnerable groups in a population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines an individual who requires assistance with core activities as:

"...people with a profound or severe disability. This population is defined as people who need assistance in their day to day lives with any or all of the following core activities – self care, mobility or communication because of a disability, long-term health condition (lasting six months or more or old age)" (ABS, 2017).

Across the area of social influence, Forbes and Lachlan LGAs have relatively high rates of residents who require assistance with core activities. This is similar to rates across the Central West and NSW. Bland LGA has the lowest rate of residents requiring assistance with core activities. The rate for Bland LGA was also below the rate for the

Central West and NSW. Despite having the one of the lowest rates, Bland LGA has the highest 'not stated' response rate when compared to the area of social influence, Central West and NSW. Under reporting could influence rates across Bland LGA.

West Wyalong has a relatively low proportion of the population requiring assistance with core activities compared to LGAs in the area of social influence, Central West and NSW. West Wyalong also had the highest rates of under reporting ('not stated' responses).

There is evident under reporting across the area of social influence with West Wyalong, Bland LGA, Lachlan LGA and (to a lesser extent) Forbes LGA having higher rates of 'not stated' compared to the Central west and NSW.

Table 35 Proportion of population requiring assistance, 2016

	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West	NSW
Has need for assistance with core activities	4.4%	4.5%	5.6%	5.2%	5.6%	5.4%
Does not have need for assistance with core activities	85.2%	83.5%	84.8%	81.6%	84.4%	87.7%
Not stated	14.8%	13.2%	10.0%	12.1%	9.5%	6.9%

Source: Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, Variables, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), ASSNP Core Activity Need for Assistance

A-2 Social capital

A-2-1 Socio-economic advantage and disadvantage

The Social-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is an aggregated score of factors reflecting relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage within an area. An area with a lower SEIFA score indicates higher levels of disadvantage, less access to material and social resources, and less opportunity to participate in society. For SIA, understanding vulnerable communities or subgroups within a community is critical in considering social change processes caused by a project. Disadvantaged communities are understood to be more vulnerable to socio-economic change experienced in their communities.

The SEIFA scores are grouped by deciles, from one to ten. A score of one indicates the LGA is in the ten percent most disadvantaged LGAs in NSW.

Bland has a SEIFA score of 973 and is in the 6th decile. When compared to other LGAs in NSW it is ranked 66 out of 128, where 1 is the most disadvantaged LGA. Compared to Forbes and Lachlan LGA, Bland is less disadvantaged. This is reflected in score, ranking and area decile.

Lachlan LGA has the highest rates of socio-economic disadvantage of the three LGAs. This is reflected by Lachlan LGA having the:

- » lowest SEIFA score (924)
- » lowest ranking (number 21 out of 128)
- » lowest decile (2).

In the area of social influence, the socio-economic advantage of LGAs varied substantially, with Bland LGA the least disadvantaged and Lachlan the most disadvantaged.

Table 36 Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSAD)

	Score	Ranking within NSW	Area decile within NSW
Bland LGA	973	66	6
Forbes LGA	953	42	4
Lachlan LGA	924	21	2

Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), IRSAD

A-2-2 Resident mobility

Measuring rates of mobility provides an indication of the degree of transience within a community. Areas with high levels of mobility tend to be less socially cohesive. Table 37 highlights that West Wyalong's mobility is roughly the same as Forbes and Lachlan LGAs, slightly higher than in the rest of the Bland LGA and lower than the rate for the Central West.

When compared to the Central West and NSW, mobility rates are generally low across the area of social influence. The higher proportion of households where no resident changed address in the last five years across the area of social influence is notably higher, reflecting low community change.

Table 37 Household mobility, 2016

	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West	NSW
All residents aged five years and over changed address during the last five years	29.1%	26.1%	31.4%	28.8%	36.7%	38.8%
Some residents aged five years and over changed address over last five years but all stated address five years ago	4.8%	4.7%	4.9%	5.0%	4.6%	6.0%
No residents aged five years and over changed address over the last five years	66.0%	69.2%	64.1%	66.2%	59.7%	55.2%

Source: ABS TableBuilder, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), New South Wales (STE) Household five-year mobility indicator

A-2-3 Cultural diversity

Understanding the levels of cultural and linguistic diversity within a community is an important component in understanding community composition, character, values and identity, and can be used as a measure to determine the ability of a community to adapt to change. Communities with shared beliefs and norms tend to fare better in times of adversity. Conversely, communities with various cultural groups, language differences and cultural norms may be more prone to conflict and tension when conditions change (Coakes and Sadler, 2011). As shown in Table 38, West Wyalong has similar levels of diversity as the surrounding areas and the Central West

which indicate a relatively low level of cultural or linguistic diversity in the area of social influence. Of those residents born overseas, two of the top three countries of birth in each area are Anglo Saxon and English speaking, further reducing the levels of cultural diversity within the communities. Aboriginal Australians represent the largest minority cultural and linguistic group in each area.

Table 38 Country of birth, 2016

Country of Birth	West Wyalong	Bland	Lachlan	Forbes	Central West
Top response	Australia 81.1%	Australia 82.2%	Australia 83.4%	Australia 86.2%	Australia 83.1%
Second response	England 0.9%	England 1.2%	England 0.7%	England 0.9%	England 1.8%
Third response	Papua New Guinea 0.8%	New Zealand 0.5%	New Zealand 0.6%	New Zealand 0.5%	New Zealand 0.9%
Fourth response	New Zealand 0.4%	Papua New Guinea 0.3%	Philippines 0.6%	Philippines 0.3%	India 0.4%
Aboriginal Australians	4.7%	4.4%	17.7%	12.1%	6.4%

Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Country of birth

A-2-4 Voluntary work

Voluntary work is a key indicator of community cohesion and resilience; as higher levels of volunteering can result in greater community vitality, organisation, cohesion and connectedness. Consultation with Bland Shire Council confirmed that community sport is an important part of the community and is a social activity for many residents.

Data from Table 39 shows:

- » the proportion of people providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability was similar across West Wyalong and all LGAs within the area of social influence
- » West Wyalong and Bland LGA have the highest proportions of voluntary work for an organisation of all areas considered
- » rates of voluntary work for an organisation are notably higher in all LGAs in the area of social influence compared to the Central West region and NSW.

Considering the above, the area of social influence has high levels of community participation based on volunteer rates in organisations. This is above the regional and NSW rates.

Discussions with Bland Shire Council highlighted strong community values, with the recent drought event an example of community concern and pride which saw neighbours assisting each other. While this does not directly relate to voluntary work, it reflects similar community values.

Table 39 Rate of voluntary work, 2016

	West Wyalong	Bland	Lachlan	Forbes	Central West	NSW
Cared for child / children (last two weeks)	25.9%	26.6%	26.5%	25.7%	27.7%	27.2%
Provided unpaid assistance to a person	12.2%	12.3%	11.2%	12.0%	11.9%	11.6%

	West Wyalong	Bland	Lachlan	Forbes	Central West	NSW
with a disability (last two weeks)						
Did voluntary work through organisation or group (last 12 months)	29.0%	30.9%	27.4%	25.1%	18.1%	18.1%

Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Unpaid work

A-2-5 Crime and public safety

Analysis of crime within a community provides an important indication of community functionality, wellbeing and cohesion and its level of social capital. Where crime levels are low and the types of crime committed impact others to a smaller degree, community cohesion is likely to be higher. Where areas experience higher levels of crime and greater incidence of violent crime, the community is likely to experience greater tensions and decreased levels of individual safety (both perceived and actual).

Key indicators reflecting community safety considering include:

- » rates of assault
- » rates of alcohol related assault
- » top five most common/regular crimes.

Together these indicators reflect the nature of crime and frequency.

Across the area of social influence rates of assault and alcohol related assault varies significantly. The LGAs of Forbes and Lachlan experience relatively high rates of both assault and alcohol related assaults compared to Bland LGA and NSW. Within the area of social influence Bland LGA has the lowest rates of assault and alcohol related assaults – significantly lower than Forbes and Lachlan LGA and NSW.

When considering the top five crimes in each LGA within the area of social influence, West Wyalong and NSW, key findings include:

- » all comparison areas have high rates of malicious damage to property. Lachlan LGA has the highest incident rate, nearly three times that of the NSW. Forbes LGA also recorded high incidents rates, more than double that of NSW. Bland LGA is the only LGA within the area of social influence where incidents rates are below that of NSW, however, within West Wyalong these rates were slightly above NSW.
- » rates of domestic violence ranged from 334.2 to 942.6 incidents per 100,000 people with rates of domestic violence are highest in Lachlan LGA and lowest in Bland LGA. West Wyalong and NSW were the only comparison areas which did not have domestic violence in the top five most frequent crimes. Considering the location of West Wyalong in the Bland LGA, this suggests that incidents of domestic violence are more prominent outside of urban centre of Bland LGA.
- » rates of non-domestic violence are highest in Forbes LGA, more than double that of NSW and triple Bland LGA. While rates in West Wyalong are lower than those for NSW, they are above the rate for the Bland LGA suggesting that most non-domestic violence occurs in the urban centre of the LGA.
- » West Wyalong is the only comparison area which liquor offences was one of the top five offences.

Violent crimes are both common and occur at a higher rate across the area of social influence compared to NSW. Forbes and Lachlan LGA have significantly more violent crime than Bland LGA and West Wyalong.

Table 40 Incidents of assault and alcohol related assault, 2019

	Incidents of assault	Alcohol related assault
Bland LGA	367.6	19.3
Forbes LGA	730.3	295.1
Lachlan LGA	530.1	191.8
NSW	402.1	62.6

Source: BOCSAR year to date 2019, rate per 100,000 <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/>

Table 41 Incidents of crime committed, 2019

	West Wyalong	Bland LGA	Forbes LGA	Lachlan LGA	NSW
1	Malicious damage to property (24 incidents / 764.1 incidents per 100,000 people)	Malicious damage to property (41 incidents / 685 incidents per 100,000 people)	Malicious damage to property (152 incidents / 1,533.8 incidents per 100,000 people)	Malicious damage to property (129 incidents / 2,097.2 incidents per 100,000 people)	Malicious damage to property (57,027 incidents / 713.9 incidents per 100,000 people)
2	Intimidation, stalking and harassment (24 incidents / 764.1 incidents per 100,000 people)	Fraud (32 incidents / 534.7 incidents per 100,000 people)	Steal from dwelling (106 incidents / 1,069.6 incidents per 100,000 people)	Domestic violence related assault (58 incidents / 942.6 incidents per 100,000 people)	Fraud (52,425 incidents / 656.3 incidents per 100,000 people)
3	Liquor offences (23 incidents / 723.3 incidents per 100,000)	Break and enter dwelling (19 incidents / 317.5 per 100,000 people)	Non-domestic violence related assault (93 incidents / 938.4 incidents per 100,000 people)	Steal from motor vehicle (52 incidents / 845.4 incidents per 100,000 people)	Breach bail conditions (47,714 incidents / 597.3 per 100,000)
4	Fraud (19 incidents / 604.9 incidents per 100,000 people)	Domestic violence related assault (20 incidents / 334.2 incidents per 100,000 people)	Domestic violence related assault (79 incidents / 797.2 incidents per 100,000 people)	Break and enter dwelling (48 incidents / 780.4 incidents per 100,000)	Steal from motor vehicle (38,158 incidents / 477.7 incidents per 100,000 people)
5	Non-domestic violence related assault (12 incidents / 382.0 incidents per 100,000 people)	Non-domestic violence related assault (18 incidents / 300.8 incidents per 100,000)	Break and enter dwelling (70 incidents / 706.4 incidents per 100,000 people)	Trespass (43 incidents / 699.1 incidents per 100,000)	Non-domestic violence related assault (32,210 incidents / 403.2 incidents per 100,000)

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2020, Recorded crime by offence, LGA, suburb

A-2-6 Cultural heritage

There are numerous records of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites of significance in the Lake Cowal locality including a base camp, scarred trees, burials, initiation sites, a men's site, and artefacts (Culture and Heritage, 1997). The cultural significance of place is explored in Section A-5 and has included input from local Aboriginal representative groups.

A-3 Physical capital

A-3-1 Availability of social infrastructure

Gathering an understanding of the existing and available social infrastructure within a community allows for analysis into the potential implications on such infrastructure in the context of population growth and the associated effect on existing communities' access to such infrastructure. Planning for migratory workforces is often challenging for local governments and service providers as it is often unexpected or sudden, meaning there is a limited understanding of current and future needs. Dramatic and rapid increases in users means facilities and services can be in the position of operating beyond their capacity.

It is acknowledged that increases in non-resident workforces in regional towns often have effect on schools, childcare, medical and health services, roads and recreational facilities (Rolfe and Kinnear 2013). In this context, local services and facilities can be under-resourced and unable to meet the growing demand which has effect on both resident and workforce populations (Carrington and Pereira 2011, Sincovich, Gregory et al. 2018).

A desktop audit of available social infrastructure has been undertaken for the major townships of each LGA in the area of social influence. The towns considered included West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin and included consideration of:

- » Community infrastructure and services – such as libraries, community centres, Aboriginal services and social services
- » Education – including public primary and high schools and TAFE institutes
- » Emergency services – such as police, fire services and ambulance stations
- » Health and wellbeing – such as health services, medical facilities and supporting services
- » Open space and recreation – such as sports grounds, public parks and aquatic facilities.

Community infrastructure and services

Community facilities and services provide spaces for community gathering, activity and socialising. Community services generally support individuals and community groups through the provision of social and economic support. The provision and delivery of these spaces and services significantly contributes to social cohesion when functioning and operating in a manner which address community needs.

West Wyalong has limited community infrastructure, notably a lack of community space aside from the West Wyalong Library and the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council. The West Wyalong Library programs are targeted at new parents, parents with young children and older residents, there is an evident lack of programming and spaces for young residents and workers. West Wyalong has Centrelink and two Aboriginal services but lacks non-government services, particularly youth services.

Forbes has three community spaces which has the capacity to support performance, cultural and youth activities. There is limited information of library programming. The area is also serviced by a local Centrelink and an Aboriginal Corporation.

Condobolin has two community spaces. The library has programs targeted at young children, infants and parents much like the West Wyalong Library programming. The Condobolin Sport and Recreation (SRA) Hall is a newly rebuilt facility and is hireable for community and functions. Condobolin is serviced by five Aboriginal Corporations

and one Aboriginal Land Council, however there are limited services for other members of the community. Condobolin is also serviced by a local Centrelink.

Table 42 outlines the key community infrastructure and services in the major towns within the area of social influence.

Table 42 Community infrastructure and services

Facility/service name	Description
West Wyalong	
West Wyalong Library	Public access to computers, internet and books. Runs two craft groups, a pen pal ground and two groups targeted at parents with young children.
West Wyalong Aboriginal Land Council	Protects the interests and further the aspirations of its members and the broader Aboriginal community. Specifically focused on the sustainable management and protection of traditional sites, land acquisition, land claims and establishment of community benefit schemes for Aboriginal communities (New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, 2020)
Amaroo Aboriginal Corporation	Organisation which assists local Aboriginal residents
Bland Shire Council	Council chambers and officers
Centrelink	Services Australia master program for lodging, accessing and receiving financial support for the elderly, unemployed, disabled, youth, students and those in general need of assistance
Forbes	
Forbes Wirajuri Dreaming Centre Indigenous Corporation	Organisation which assists local Aboriginal residents
The Youth and Community Centre (YACC)	Large hall equipped with kitchen, free Wi-Fi, outdoor area, disabled access and amenities. Available for hire to individual and community groups.
Town Hall and Concourse Facilities	Can facilitate up to 300 people with lighting and sounds systems. Can function as either a performance space / event space.
Forbes Literary Institute Library	Public access to computers, internet and books.
Centrelink	Services Australia master program for lodging, accessing and receiving financial support for the elder, unemployed, disabled, youth, students and those in general need of assistance
Condobolin	
Condobolin Library	Public access to computers, internet and books. Runs parent and infant groups twice a week and story time for young children twice a week.
Condobolin SRA Hall	Large hall with recently rebuilt.
Condobolin Local Aboriginal Land Council	Protects the interests and further the aspirations of its members and the broader Aboriginal community. Specifically focused on the sustainable management and protection of traditional sites, land acquisition, land claims and establishment of community benefit schemes for Aboriginal communities (New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, 2020)

Callara Culture & Heritage Aboriginal Corporation	Organisations which assist local Aboriginal residents
Kirby Culture Aboriginal Corporation	
Murie Elders Aboriginal Corporation	
Yawarra Aboriginal Corporation	
Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC)	
Centrelink	Services Australia master program for lodging, accessing and receiving financial support for the elder, unemployed, disabled, youth, students and those in general need of assistance

Education facilities

Access to schools is a key factor in understanding the equity, resources and capital of a community. Demand and availability are the primary measures of understanding the level of access to primary and secondary education a community has.

Within the area of social influence, larger schools are located in the centres of West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin. Schools further away from these townships tended to have lower levels of enrolment and therefore greater capacity to accommodate additional students.

West Wyalong is serviced by three primary schools and one secondary school which all have capacity to take on a greater number of students. Forbes and Condobolin are also serviced by several schools each, however, their capacities are more limited than in West Wyalong. There are no evident trends across these town centres for any significant changes to the levels of enrolments.

Consultation with local councils found that many of the local schools are at or near capacity.

Table 43 outlines the primary and secondary schools within the area of social influence and their level of enrolment.

Table 43 Schools and enrolment numbers, 2018

School	Type	Enrolment (2018)
Bland LGA		
Wyalong Public School on George Bland Avenue, Wyalong	Primary school	57
Barmedman Public School on Robertson St, Barmedman	Primary school	9
Tallimba Public School on Kikoira Street, Tallimba	Primary school	24
Naradhan Public School on Kooba Street, Naradhan	Primary school	12
Weethalle Public School on Wattle Street, Weethalle	Primary school	23
West Wyalong Public School on Park Street, West Wyalong	Primary school	276
St Mary's War Memorial School on England Street, West Wyalong	Primary school	121
West Wyalong High School on Dumaresq St, West Wyalong	High school	297

School	Type	Enrolment (2018)
Ungarie Central School on Ungarie-Condobolin Road, Ungarie	Combined	88
Forbes LGA		
Bedgerabong Public School on Golding Avenue, Bedgerabong	Primary School	42
Forbes Public School on Lachlan Street, Forbes	Primary school	285
Forbes North Public School on Thomson and Facey Street, Forbes	Primary school	274
St Laurence's Primary School on Dalton Street, Forbes	Primary school	335
Forbes High School on Wyndham Avenue, Forbes	High school	374
Red Bend Catholic College on College Road, Forbes	High school	715
Lachlan LGA		
Condobolin Public School on Molong Street, Condobolin	Primary school	296
Lake Cargelligo Central School on Canada Street, Lake Cargelligo	Primary school	229
Tottenham Central School on Merilba Street, Tottenham	Primary school	89
Tullibigeal Central School on Kurrajong Street, Tullibigeal	Primary school	58
St Francis Xavier Primary School on Conapaira Street, Lake Cargelligo	Primary school	41
St Joseph's Primary School on William Street, Condobolin	Primary school	104
Condobolin High School on Innes Street, Condobolin	High school	205
M.E.T. School on Officers Parade, Condobolin	High school	unavailable

Source: Department of Education datahub data.cese.nsw.gov.au

Table 44 details the enrolment changes in each school since 2014.

Table 44 School enrolment trends

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change
West Wyalong						
Wyalong Public School	52	62	64	54	57	Stable
West Wyalong Public School	314	289	284	288	276	Decreasing
St Mary's War Memorial School	102	105	112	129	121	Increasing

West Wyalong High School	303	283	277	307	297	Stable
Forbes						
Forbes Public School	291	279	294	291	285	Stable
Forbes North Public School	296	305	297	283	274	Decreasing
St Laurence's Primary School	277	307	296	323	335	Increasing
Forbes High School	361	357	349	378	374	Stable
Condobolin						
Condobolin Public School	272	276	271	284	296	Increasing
St Joseph's Primary School	140	145	137	119	104	Stable
Condobolin High School	220	205	206	205	205	Stable

Source: MySchool, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, West Wyalong, Forbes, Condobolin

Tertiary education facilities

Across the three LGAs there are no university campuses, restricting access to tertiary education. However, West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin all have TAFE NSW campuses, including the Central West Community College (TAFE NSW) in Condobolin. Consultation with local councils found that West Wyalong TAFE has recently received funding to redevelop and expand.

Healthcare facilities

Access to services in rural or regional areas can be a greater issue than the quality or amount of services. Bland Shire is serviced under the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, whereas Lachlan and Forbes LGAs fall under the Western NSW Local Health District. Services offered in both include telehealth, which utilises technology to reduce the issues of limited access to health services in regional areas by connecting to health practitioners or doctors across the state (Health NSW, 2020).

Consultation with West Wyalong Health Service noted the Service is currently not experiencing any pressure or function over capacity. Through strong relationships with Wagga Wagga Hospital and Temora maternity Hospital, West Wyalong Health Service adequately addresses local health needs either directly or through relocation of patients. It was noted that recently Allied Health Services within West Wyalong have relocated to the West Wyalong Health Service, reflecting a clustering of health and wellbeing services. However, consultation with other stakeholders noted that the lack of maternal services in West Wyalong is challenging.

West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin all have district health services including hospitals and medical centres. West Wyalong has the largest cluster of health services of the three towns. Forbes and Condobolin both have targeted Aboriginal health services, an evident gap in West Wyalong. Table 45 provides an overview of the available healthcare and medical services within the area of social influence, their capacity and service type.

Table 45 Health and medical services, capacity and service type

Forbes

Service	Patient capacity (beds)	Service type
Forbes Health Service	<50	Hospital
Yoorana Gunya Family Healing Centre	N/A	Aboriginal Health Clinic
Forbes Medicine & Mind	NA	General Practitioner
Jemalong Residential Village	130	Aged Care
Forbes Medical Centre	N/A	Medical Centre
Relationships Australia Forbes	N/A	Outreach/Mental Health Services

West Wyalong

Service	Patient Capacity (beds)	Service Type
West Wyalong Health Service	<50	Hospital
Bland Home and Community Care Services	N/A	Aged Care
Hearing Australia West Wyalong	N/A	Hearing services
Bland Medical Centre	N/A	General Practitioner/allied health
Tristar Medical Group	N/A	General Practitioner/mental health/allied health
West Wyalong Medical Centre	N/A	General Practitioner/allied health/mental health

Condobolin

Service	Patient Capacity (beds)	Service Type
Condobolin Aboriginal Health Service	NA	Aboriginal Health Clinic
Condobolin District Hospital	<50	Hospital
Lachlan Health Service - Forbes	<50	Hospital
RSL LifeCare - William Beech Gardens	78	Aged care
Melrose Street Medical Centre	NA	General Practitioner/allied health

Source: Google Maps, 2019. <https://maps.google.com>

Specific to West Wyalong, the West Wyalong Health Service is a 22-bed hospital and community health services facility operating under the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. It includes a 24-hour Accident and Emergency Department equipped with telehealth cameras to connect health practitioners with specialists based elsewhere through the Critical Care Advisory Service and the remote Medical Consult Service. Pathology services and X-ray are provided as well as a number of community health services including:

- » Aboriginal health services
- » Aged care services

- » Child protection counselling service (CPCS)
- » Child wellbeing coordinator (CWC)
- » Community care intake service
- » Community care nursing service
- » Critical care advisory service (CCAS)
- » Domestic violence
- » Mental health emergency consultation service
- » Mental health services
- » Nutrition and dietetics
- » Occupational therapy
- » Palliative care
- » Patient flow unit and patient transport services
- » Physiotherapy services
- » Violence prevention and response support services
- » Women's health nurse team.

Emergency services

West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin all have emergency service stations reflecting the towns role in providing these services across each of their LGAs. Each town has a police, ambulance and fire station.

Childcare and aged care facilities

There are limited child care and age care facilities in all three LGAs. In West Wyalong, there is one private and one council-run child care service only. Consultation with the West Wyalong Health Service confirmed there are no aged care beds within the West Wyalong Hospital.

Consultation with key stakeholders reflected on the lack of child care and day care services in West Wyalong is a major gap in social infrastructure and services and is a barrier to sourcing and maintaining staff. These sentiments were also reflecting during consultation with the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council with specific mention of the lack of affordable and accessible child care and day care in West Wyalong is a particular challenge experienced by Aboriginal residents in the community.

Open space and recreational facilities

Access to recreational facilities is important for individual health and wellbeing as well as for community cohesion, socialising, and identity. Community recreation facilities in regional or rural towns are often central places of community gathering and their usage provides insight into community wellbeing.

West Wyalong has thirteen ovals and parks providing active and passive recreational opportunities, including the West Wyalong Showground which has the capacity to hold outdoor events. West Wyalong also has a swim centre and indoor sports centre. Aquatic facilities provide opportunities for low impact recreation as well as aquatic recreation. Diversity in types of recreation is important in addressing a full spectrum of health and wellbeing needs. Having a diverse range of recreational activities is important for both youth engagement in sport and for community inclusivity. For a small town, the number of sporting and open space facilities in West Wyalong indicates a strong level of active outdoors community culture and lifestyles.

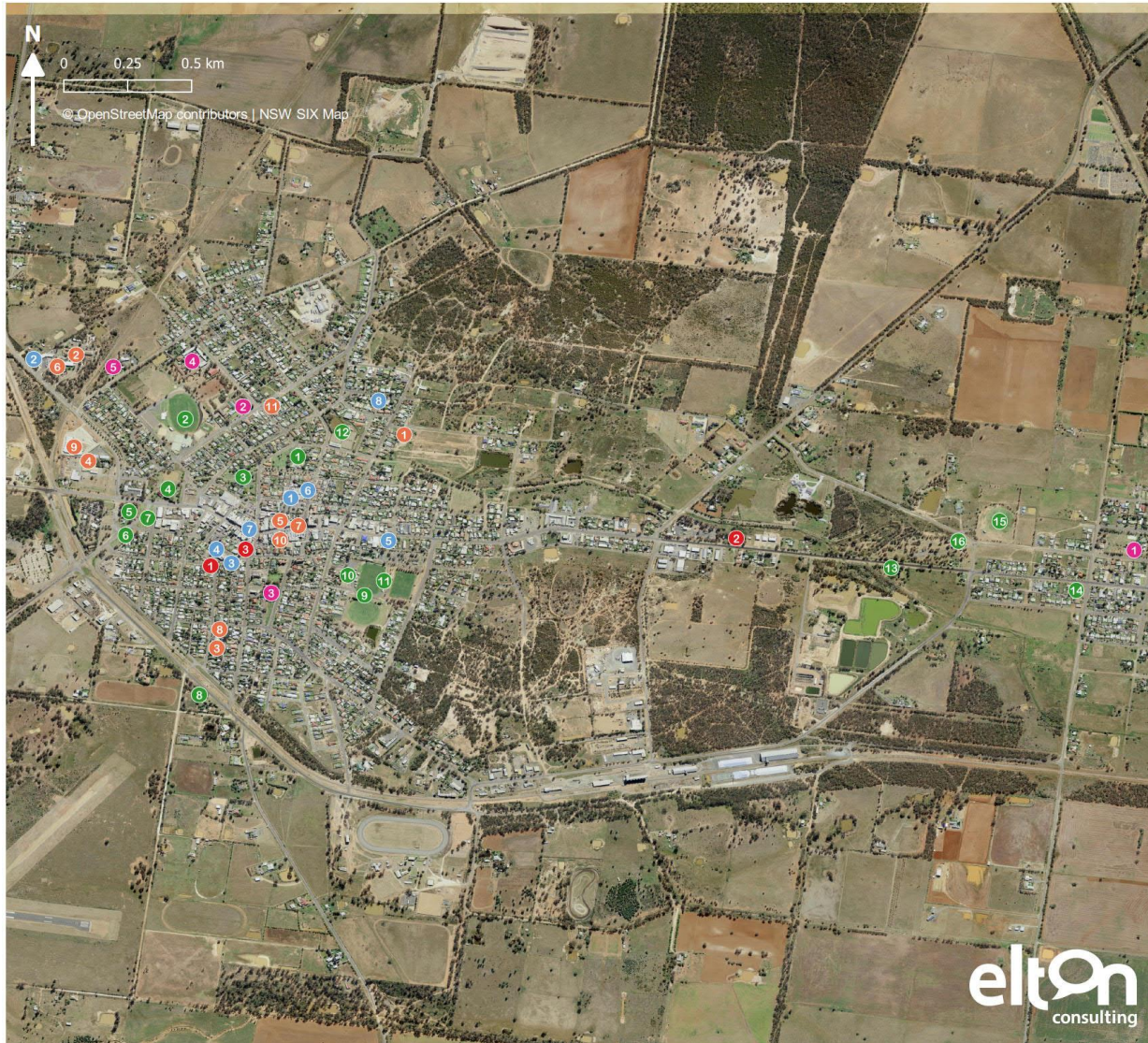
In Forbes, active recreation is clustered along the river shore in, where numerous playing fields and netball courts are co-located. Forbes also has specialised recreational facility which services the greater area, including an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a BMX track and a skate park.

Condobolin has a range of recreational spaces including outdoor playing fields, small synthetic fields, indoor courts and aquatic facilities.

Figure 20, Figure 21 and Figure 22 visually represent the social infrastructure audit in West Wyalong, Forbes and Condobolin towns.

Figure 20 Social infrastructure in West Wyalong

West Wyalong - Social Infrastructure



Legend

Community Infrastructure and Services

- 1 West Wyalong Services & Citizens Club
- 2 West Wyalong Aboriginal Land Council
- 3 West Wyalong Library
- 4 Bland Shire Council
- 5 West Wyalong Community Centre
- 6 West Wyalong Services Club
- 7 Centrelink
- 8 Amaroo Aboriginal Corporation

Education

- 1 Wyalong Public School
- 2 West Wyalong Public School
- 3 St Mary's War Memorial School
- 4 West Wyalong High School
- 5 West Wyalong Campus TAFE NSW

Emergency Services

- 1 Fire and Rescue NSW
- 2 NSW Rural Fire Service
- 3 West Wyalong Police Station

Health and Wellbeing

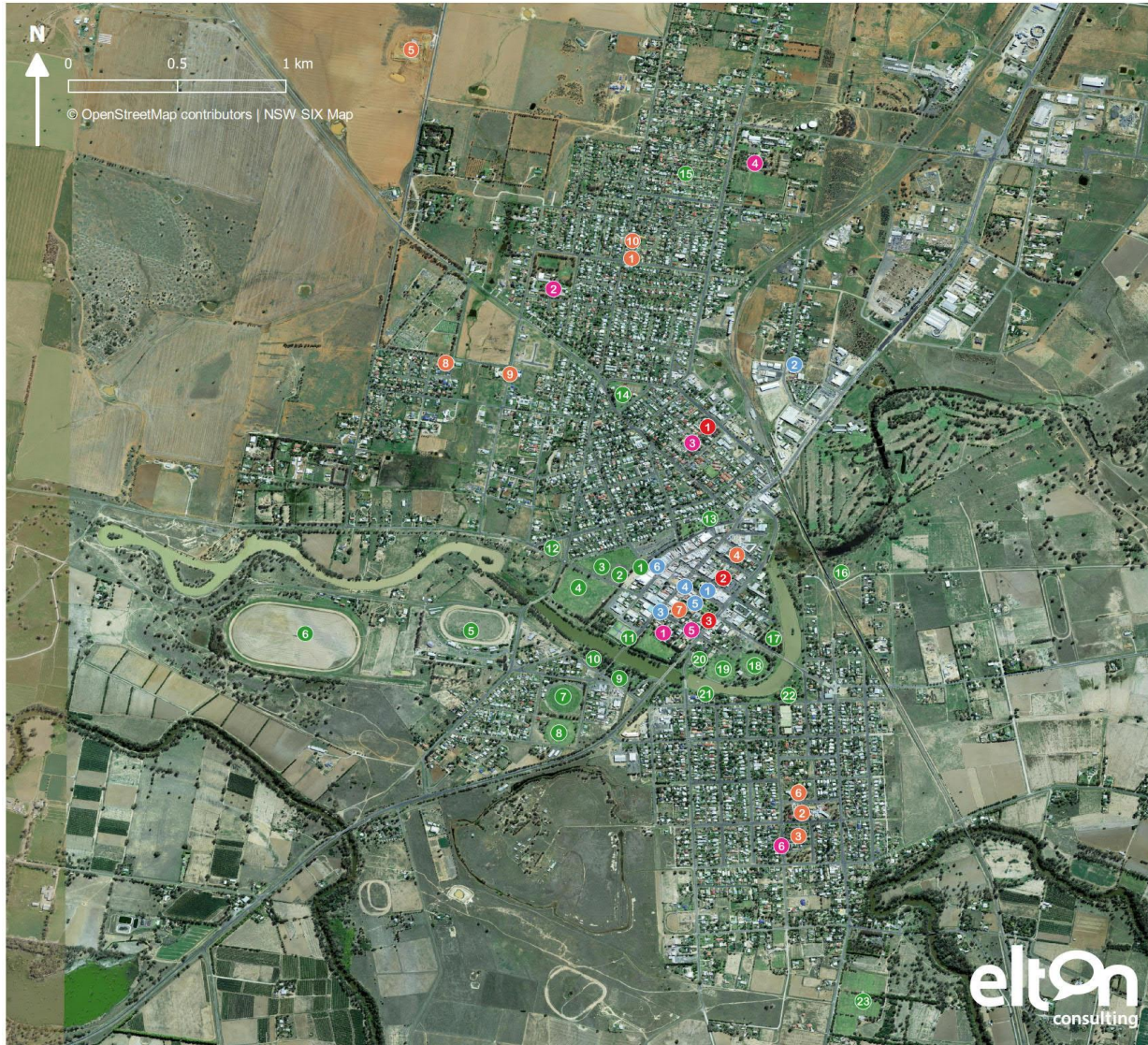
- 1 Bland/Temora Family Day Care Scheme
- 2 Bland Home and Community Care Services (Age Care)
- 3 Bland Medical Centre (Allied Health Service)
- 4 Tristar Medical Group (Allied Health Service)
- 5 West Wyalong Medical Centre (Allied Health Service)
- 6 West Wyalong District Hospital
- 7 Hearing Australia West Wyalong
- 8 Bland Medical Centre
- 9 Tristar Medical Group
- 10 West Wyalong Medical Centre
- 11 Little Wattle Park Street Preschool & Childcare Centre

Open Space and Recreation

- 1 Holland Park Swim Centre
- 2 McAllister Oval
- 3 Park
- 4 McCann Park
- 5 Lions Park
- 6 Reginald Rattey VC Memorial
- 7 Rose Garden
- 8 West Wyalong Show Ground
- 9 Ron Crowe Oval
- 10 West Wyalong Stadium (Indoor Sports Centre)
- 11 Playing Field (x2)
- 12 West Wyalong Bowling Club (Lawn Bowls)
- 13 Rotary Park
- 14 Herridge Park
- 15 Playing Field
- 16 Poppet Park

Figure 21 Social infrastructure in Forbes

Forbes - Social Infrastructure



Legend

Community Infrastructure and Services

- 1 Forbes Shire Council Committee Room
- 2 Forbes Wiradjuri Dreaming Centre Indigenous Corporation
- 3 The Youth and Community Centre (YACC)
- 4 Town Hall and Concourse Facilities
- 5 Forbes Literary Institute Library
- 6 Centrelink

Education

- 1 Forbes Public School
- 2 Forbes North Public School
- 3 St Laurence's Primary School
- 4 Forbes High School
- 5 Forbes Campus TAFE NSW
- 6 Jemalong Regional Education Centre

Emergency Services

- 1 NSW Rural Fire Service
- 2 Fire and Rescue NSW
- 3 Forbes Police Station

Health and Wellbeing

- 1 Forbes Learning Ladder
- 2 Forbes Health Service (Hospital)
- 3 Yoorana Gunya Family Healing Centre (Aboriginal Health Clinic)
- 4 Forbes Medicine & Mind (General Practitioner)
- 5 Jemalong Residential Village (Age Care)
- 6 Forbes Medical Centre
- 7 Relationships Australia Forbes (Outreach/Mental Health Services)
- 8 Bright Beginnings Early Learning Centre
- 9 Goodstart Early Learning Forbes
- 10 Forbes Community OSHC

Open Space and Recreation

- 1 Forbes Skate Park
- 2 Forbes Netball Courts
- 3 Stephen Field
- 4 Playing Field
- 5 Showground and Trotting Track
- 6 Forbes Racecourse
- 7 Spooner Oval
- 8 Playing Field
- 9 Lions Park
- 10 Wheego Park
- 11 Forbes Sport & Recreation Club
- 12 Tintuppa Parl
- 13 Forbes Olympic Pool
- 14 Nelson Park
- 15 Green Park
- 16 Forbes BMX Track
- 17 Sir Francis Forbes Park
- 18 South Circle Park
- 19 Playing Field
- 20 Apex Park
- 21 Meagher Park
- 22 Lake Forbes Water Park
- 23 Botanical Gardens Sporting Grounds

Figure 22 Social infrastructure in Condobolin

Condobolin - Social Infrastructure



Legend

Community Infrastructure and Services

- 1 Condobolin Local Aboriginal Land Council
- 2 Centrelink
- 3 Callara Culture & Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- 4 Kirby Culture Aboriginal Corporation
- 5 Murie Elders Aboriginal Corporation
- 6 Yawarra Aboriginal Corporation
- 7 Condobolin Library
- 8 Condobolin SRA Hall
- 9 Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC)

Education

- 1 Central West Community College TAFE NSW
- 2 Condobolin Campus TAFE NSW
- 3 Condobolin High School
- 4 Condobolin Public School
- 5 OneSchool Global Condobolin Campus
- 6 St Joseph's Primary School

Emergency Services

- 1 NSW Rural Fire Service
- 2 Condobolin Police Station
- 3 Condobolin Ambulance Station

Health and Wellbeing

- 1 Condobolin Aboriginal Health Service
- 2 Condobolin District Hospital
- 3 RSL LifeCare - William Beech Gardens (Age Care)
- 4 Condobolin Preschool Kindergarten
- 5 Lachlan Children's Services

Open Space and Recreation

- 1 Condobolin Swimming Pool
- 2 Willow Bend Sports Centre
- 3 Pat Timmins Oval
- 4 Synthetic Playing Fields (Small)
- 5 Condobolin Showground
- 6 Playing Field
- 7 Memorial Park
- 8 Bobs and Vagene Park
- 9 Playing Field
- 10 Buckland Park
- 11 Mackinnon Park
- 12 Beech Park
- 13 Wellington Square
- 14 Shannon Noll Tribute Park
- 15 Durries Park
- 16 Sacred Park
- 17 Park

A-3-2 Transport infrastructure

Understanding the available and accessible transportation networks and infrastructure provides context for how the Project site connects within the locality and to population centres such as West Wyalong.

Access to the Project site is via public roads to West Wyalong in the south, Forbes to the northeast and Condobolin to the north. The Newell Highway connects the site to West Wyalong and then on to other towns across the Central West region. West Plains Road connects the site from the Newell Highway alongside the shores of Lake Cowal. West Wyalong Condobolin Road is the major road connecting Condobolin and areas north of West Wyalong to the Project site.

Being a regional area, freight transport for regional populations is also highly dependent on the existing road networks. The Newell Highway is the major freight route connecting Wagga Wagga with Parkes, two of the largest regional NSW centres both of which are experiencing substantial economic growth at present.

West Wyalong, Forbes, Condobolin and Temora all have small airstrips for private or charter flight usage, while the closest regional airports serviced by commercial airlines are in Parkes and Wagga Wagga. Wagga Wagga is one of the busiest regional airports in NSW (Wagga Wagga Airport, 2019).

Wagga Wagga has more commercial flights and is serviced by two airlines, REX and Qantas. There are up to eleven flights per week to and from Wagga Wagga; to Sydney, Melbourne and Albury, with most flights scheduled Monday through Friday.

Flights to or from Parkes show are three flights per week to Albury and Sydney (Monday, Wednesday and Friday).

Recognising the damaging implications on the aviation industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic, current or recent data for these airports may be different in the coming years.

A-3-3 Method of travel to work

Understanding how residents travel to work is important in understanding availability or access to public transport or the effectiveness of local public transport systems.

While West Wyalong has the highest proportion of residents using public transport to get to work and the lowest proportion of people driving, the proportion of people driving to work remains high and indicates poor access to public transport in the area and a high reliance on private cars.

This can indicate mobility issues for lower socio-economic households, people with disabilities, aged residents, young people without a driving license and residents in isolated localities within the area of social influence. It also compounds the severity of driving suspensions. While owning a car is not critical in West Wyalong, it greatly improves access to services and employment opportunities.

Public transportation systems and services in the area of influence have been identified as a weakness by stakeholders consulted for this SIA. This context, together with the disused rail infrastructure, imply that communities in the area of social influence are highly private-car dependent.

Table 46 Method of travel to work

	West Wyalong	Bland LGA	Forbes LGA	Lachlan LGA	Central West
Car, as driver	59.9%	53.1%	66.3%	60.2%	67.6%
Car, as passenger	8.0%	6.0%	5.0%	5.4%	5.3%
Worked at home	7.0%	15.3%	9.6%	10.4%	7.0%
Walked only	5.4%	6.1%	4.5%	8.4%	4.4%

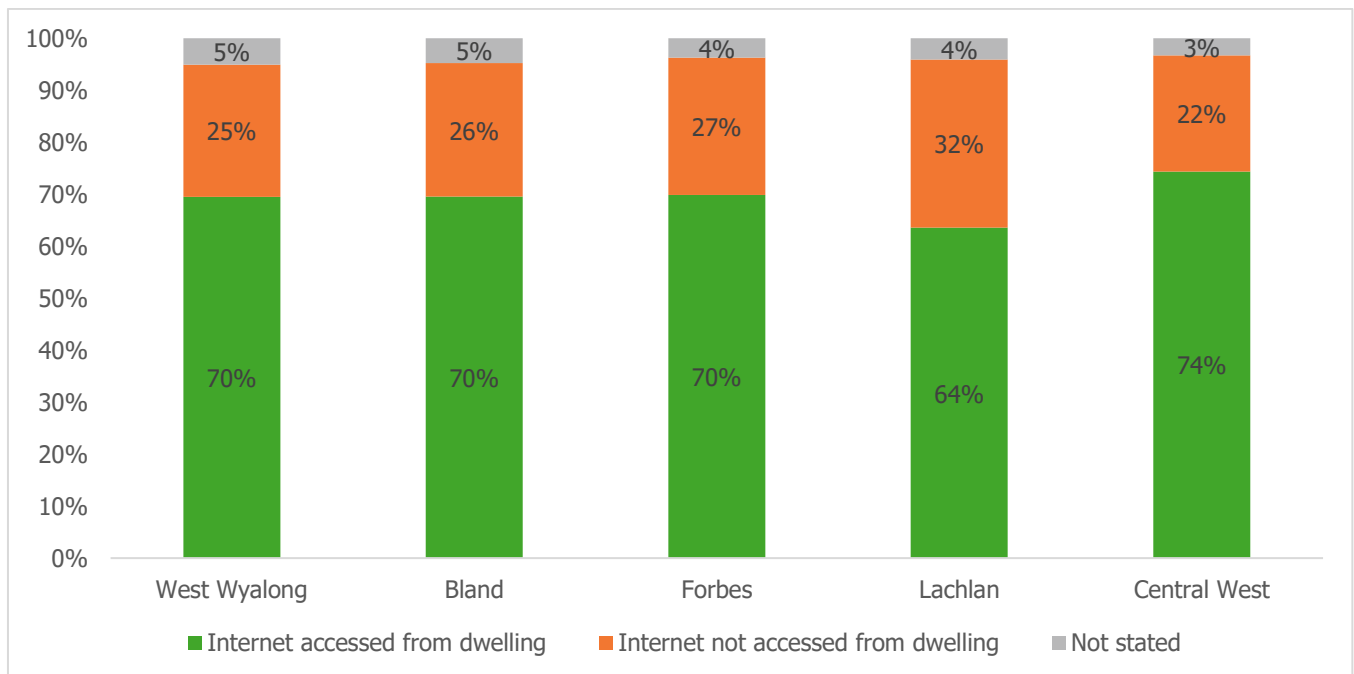
Bus	3.9%	2.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A
People who travelled to work by public transport	4.4%	3.1%	0.8%	1.1%	0.8%
People who travelled to work by car as driver or passenger	68.4%	60.2%	71.8%	66.5%	73.6%

Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Method of Travel to work

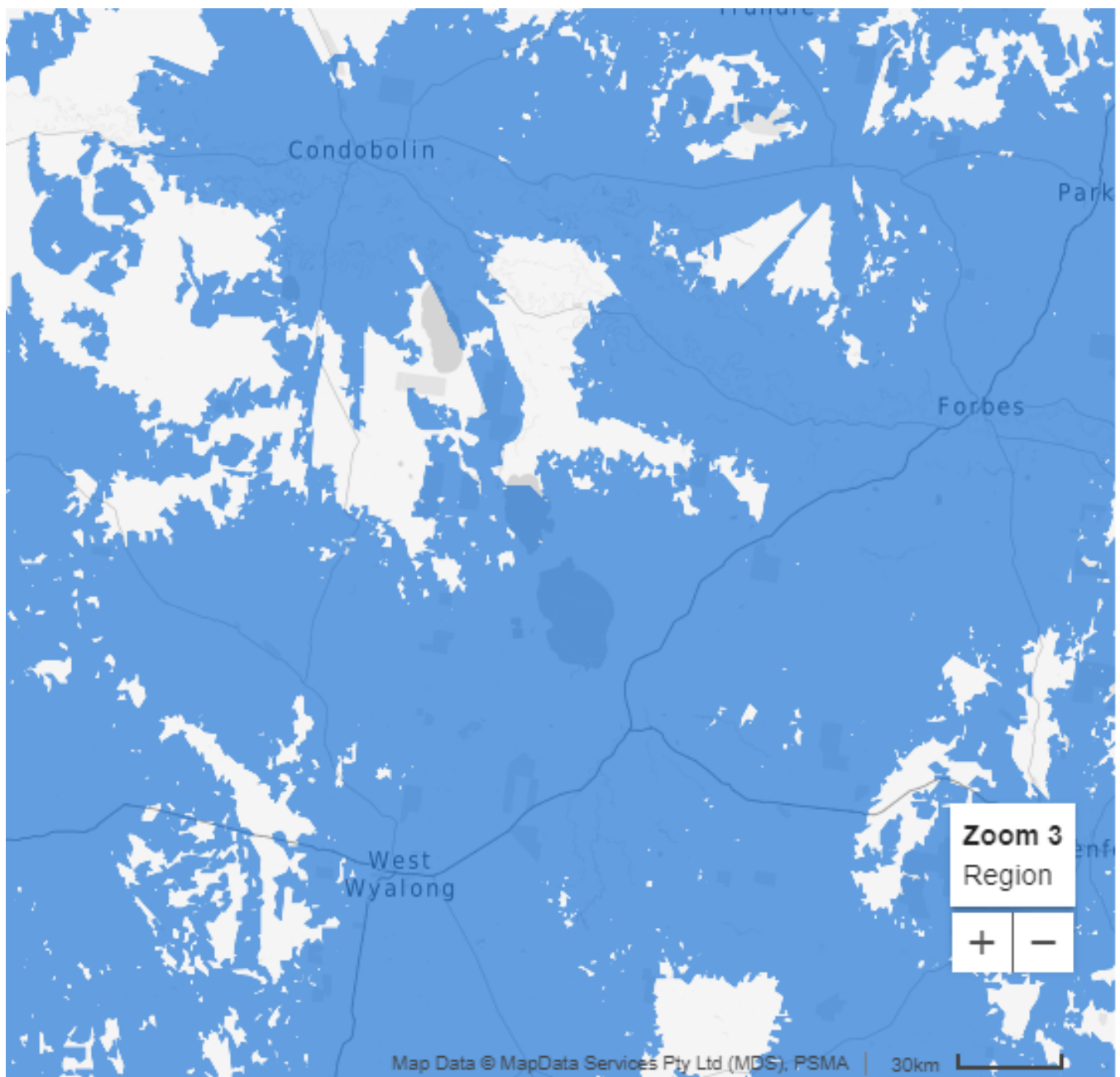
A-3-4 Internet access and mobile coverage

Internet access and mobile coverage is a critical aspect of a community’s physical capital. The data in Figure 23 shows that a quarter of the population of West Wyalong and roughly a quarter of residents in surrounding LGAs and the Central West region do not have Internet access at home. Lachlan Shire experiences the lowest levels, with one third of residents living without Internet access (ABS, 2016). Similarly, Figure 24 highlights the lack of mobile phone coverage surrounding West Wyalong, the Project site and areas around Condobolin and Forbes, specifically reflecting that Lachlan Shire has significant mobile coverage ‘black spots’. This was confirmed through consultation with Lachlan Shire Council who identified improved telecommunications infrastructure as a critical need for the growth and sustainability of the Shire.

Figure 23 Internet access at home



Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Dwelling internet connection

Figure 24 Telstra mobile coverage

***Key: Blue shaded area = mobile coverage**

Source: Telstra, Our Coverage, 2019

A-3-5 Housing availability

The availability of properties for rent or sale is an indication of the current housing supply within a town or locality. A limited housing supply reduces housing availability for residents. Situations where there is a limited supply and a high demand can result in highly competitive housing costs. While property owners and property managers benefit from limited supply and high demand, certain population groups such as renters, lower socio-economic households, visitors or temporary residents, are often placed under increased financial pressure which can exacerbate existing socio-economic vulnerabilities.

Unexpected increases in demand and the ability of non-permanent residents to pay more, can lead to residents being priced out of the market. In the most severe situations this can cause an outward migration of residents (Robertson 2010).

Housing availability summarised from the NSW Valuer General for the Bland, Forbes and Lachlan LGAs has been utilised. Bland LGA has the lowest proportion of residentially zoned properties when compared to Forbes and Lachlan LGA. Bland LGA also has diverse land zoning, reflected by a range of land uses including commercial and industrial.

Consultation with landowners, Councils and other stakeholders found that housing stress was a significant issue in the local area. Stakeholders noted that factors causing housing stress include limited available land for new dwellings, demand relating to major projects and training and skills gap locally to support real estate work. It was also commented that Aboriginal residents feel the impacts of housing access and affordability more acutely than other groups.

Key changes in housing availability across the Bland LGA between 2018 and 2019 included:

- » development of a new 28-lot subdivision, Charles West Estate, in West Wyalong
- » property sales decrease paired with rising property values
- » a decreasing supply of rental properties paired with increasing rents
- » major drivers of housing availability and price include a decline in supply and confidence in 'ongoing activities in the Lake Cowal gold mine' (Valuer General, 2019)
- » a marginal increase of total bonds over the eight reporting quarters suggesting rental opportunities in Bland did not significant increase
- » a low number of new bond submissions suggests limited new renting opportunities.

Key changes in housing availability across the Forbes LGA between 2018 and 2019 included:

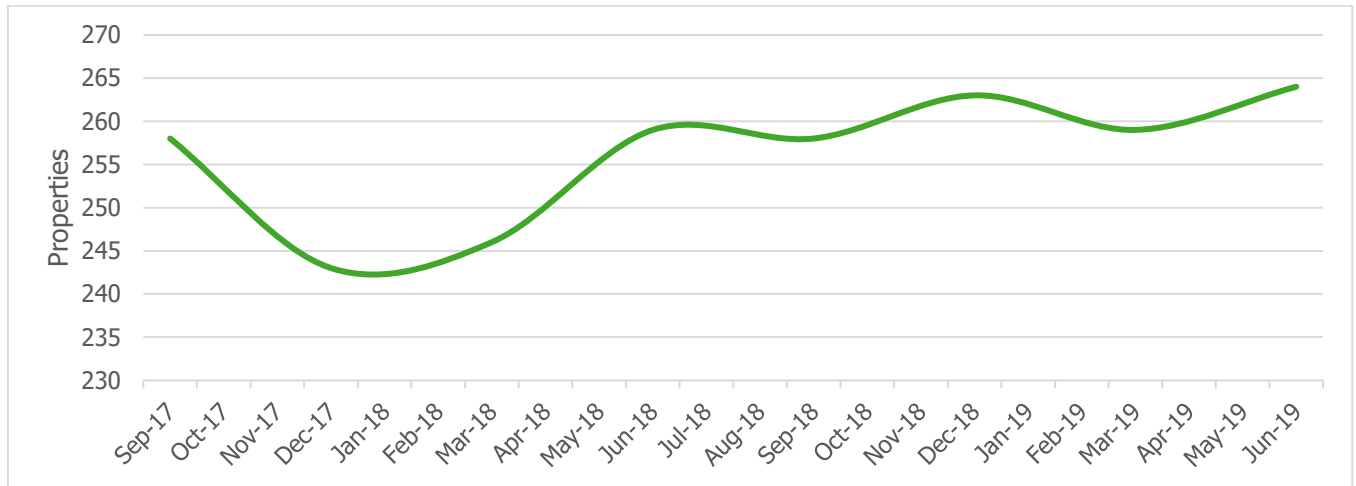
- » an increase in sales volume
- » stable land values
- » continued housing development within flood prone areas in south-west Forbes reflecting a strong demand for housing.
- » a marginal increase of bond submissions over the eight reporting quarters suggesting rental opportunities in Forbes did not significant increase
- » total bonds held in Forbes is approximately double that of Bland, reflecting the larger population in Forbes.

Key changes in housing availability across the Lachlan LGA between 2018 and 2019 includes:

- » increasing land values
- » no overall increase of bond submissions over the eight reporting quarters suggesting little or no growth in renting opportunities.

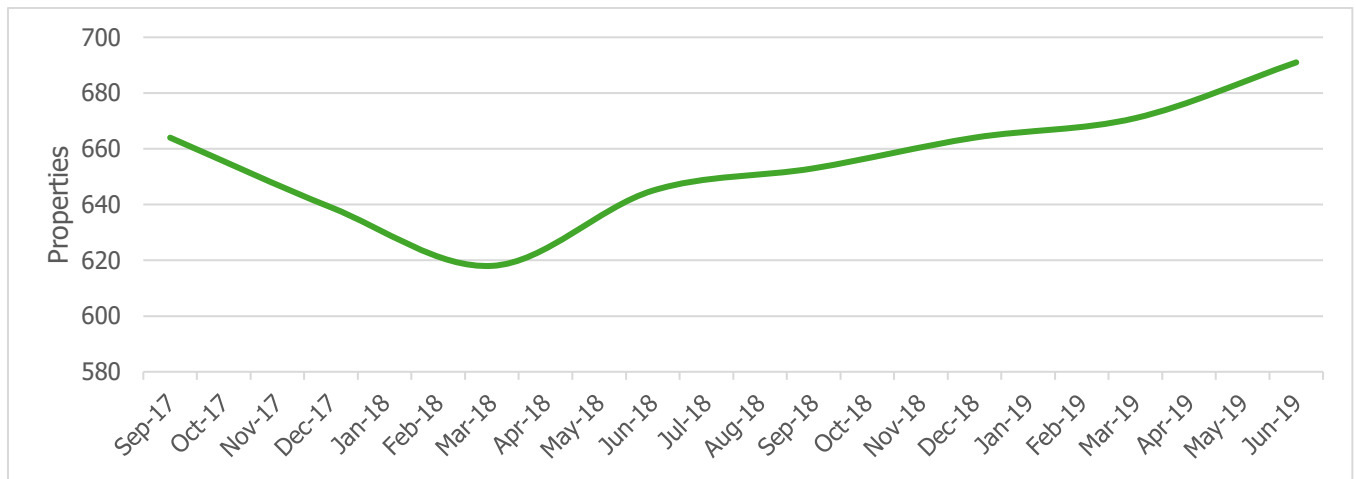
The total number and number of new rental bonds in each LGA has been sourced from the NSW Government rent and sales reporting database to understand recent trends experienced in the rental market (NSW Government, 2019). Figure 25, Figure 26 and Figure 27 indicate that the number of properties being rented in Bland and Forbes LGAs is increasing, whereas Lachlan Shire has experienced a decline.

Figure 25 Total number of bonds in Bland LGA, 2017-2019



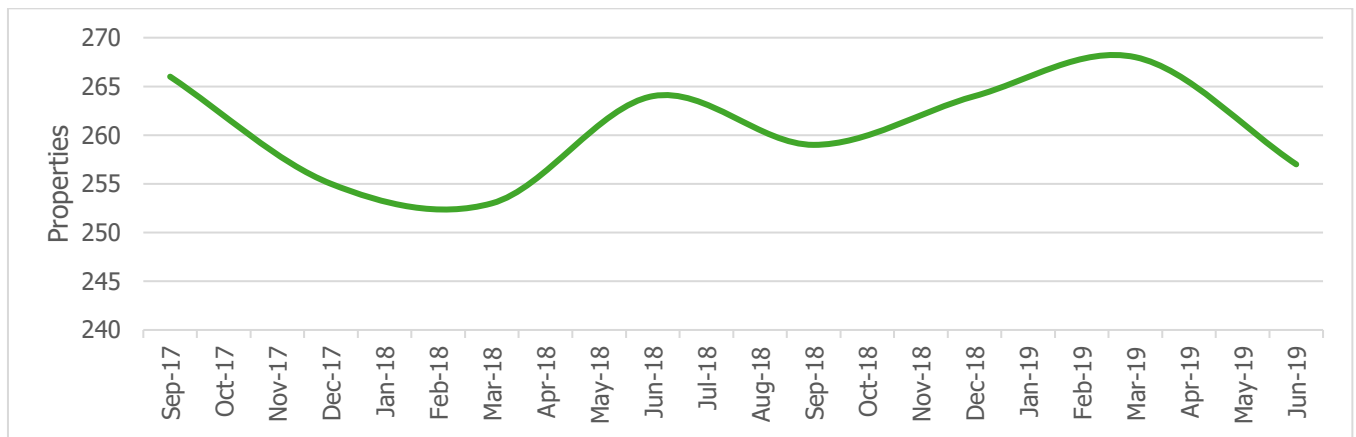
Source: NSW rent report, 2019.

Figure 26 Total number of bonds in Forbes LGA, 2017-2019



Source: NSW rent report, 2019.

Figure 27 Total number of bonds in Lachlan LGA, 2017-2019



Source: NSW rent report, 2019.

A-3-6 Temporary accommodation

A desktop search shows that there are eighteen hotels and motels along Main Street or Newell Highway in West Wyalong with a range of prices. This indicates that the town has previously accommodated temporary or transient populations. The economic downturn and restrictions on travel caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has likely affected the occupancy rates of these accommodation services throughout 2020 and potentially into 2021.

Table 47 Temporary accommodation near West Wyalong

Accommodation in West Wyalong		
Club Inn Resort	Palms Motel	Cameo Inn
Colonial Motor Inn – West Wyalong	West Wyalong Caravan Park	Top Town Motel
Ace Caravan Park	Acacia Golden Way Motel	Mayfair Motel
Royal Hotel	Country Lodge Motel	Tattersalls
Metropolitan Hotel	True Blue Motor Inn	Ardeanal Motel
The Bank B & B West Wyalong	Charles Sturt Motor Inn	Mentor Chambers Serviced Apartment/Bed & Breakfast

A-4 Economic capital

A-4-1 Employment and unemployment status

The unemployment rate in the direct area of influence is a useful measure of a community's economic resilience, particularly when used in conjunction with other economic indicators. Some key points relating to employment in West Wyalong and surrounding areas are as follows:

- » The rate of full-time employment is similar across Bland LGA, Lachlan LGA, Forbes LGA and NSW, while Bland LGA has the highest employment rate
- » Bland Shire's unemployment rate is roughly 3.5 per cent, however, it is nearly double the rate in Forbes and Lachlan, the Central West and NSW
- » The proportion of the population away from work is roughly the same across all areas, with slightly higher rates in Lachlan LGA and lower rates in the Central West Region and NSW.

Table 48 Employment status

	Worked full-time %	Worked part-time %	Away from work %	Unemployed %
West Wyalong	59.2	31.3	6.1	3.4
Lachlan LGA	59.1	26.8	7.3	6.8
Forbes LGA	59.8	28.2	6.5	5.4
Bland LGA	61.0	29.0	6.4	3.6
Central West Region	58.1	30.0	5.7	6.2

NSW	59.2	29.7	4.8	6.3
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Source: ABS QuickStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), NSW (STE), Australia (AUS), Employment

A-4-2 Industry of employment

The distribution of employment across different industries of employment provides insights into the types of industries active in the area of social influence and its economic diversity. Areas with major industries of employment reflects economic concentration, often resulting in a lack of diverse employment opportunities for residents.

West Wyalong is supported by significant agricultural and mining industries, specifically gold mining. Together, mining and agriculture provide employment for one in four workers (25 per cent). Following the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors, West Wyalong's health care and social assistance, education and training, and retail trade industries are the next largest employers (8.9 per cent, 8.8 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively). Some key findings regarding industry of employment in the area of social influence include:

- » West Wyalong, Bland LGA, Forbes LGA, Lachlan LGA and the Central West Region all shared similar industries of employment
- » There is relatively more employment in construction in Forbes Shire and the Central West than the comparison areas, indicating potential economic and population growth being experienced in Forbes
- » There are higher levels of employment in manufacturing in Lachlan Shire than the comparison areas
- » West Wyalong has the highest proportion of residents employed in mining (12 per cent) compared to Bland LGA (8 per cent), Forbes LGA (2 per cent), Lachlan LGA (3 per cent) and the Central West Region (2 per cent)
- » Compared to the LGAs of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan, West Wyalong has the lowest proportions of residents employed in agricultural based industries, indicative of the higher number of mine workers residing in town
- » The Central West has the lowest proportions of residents employed in mining and agriculture compared to West Wyalong and the LGAs of Bland, Forbes and Lachlan, indicating a more diversified economy across the region.

Table 49 Top industries of employment

	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West
1	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (182, 13%)	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (716, 27%)	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (700, 18%)	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (686, 28%)	Health Care and Social Assistance (11,348, 13%)
2	Mining (167, 12%)	Mining (223, 8%)	Retail (447, 11%)	Health Care and Social Assistance (275, 11%)	Retail (8,518, 10%)
3	Retail Trade (137, 10%)	Retail (205, 8%)	Health Care and Social Assistance (447, 11%)	Education and Training (245, 10%)	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (8,190, 10%)
4	Health Care and Social Assistance (120, 8%)	Health Care and Social Assistance (196, 7%)	Education and Training (404, 10%)	Retail (167, 7%)	Education and Training (7,902, 9%)
5	Education and Training (119, 8%)	Education and Training (182, 7%)	Construction (281, 7%)	Manufacturing (132, 5%)	Construction (6,287, 7%)

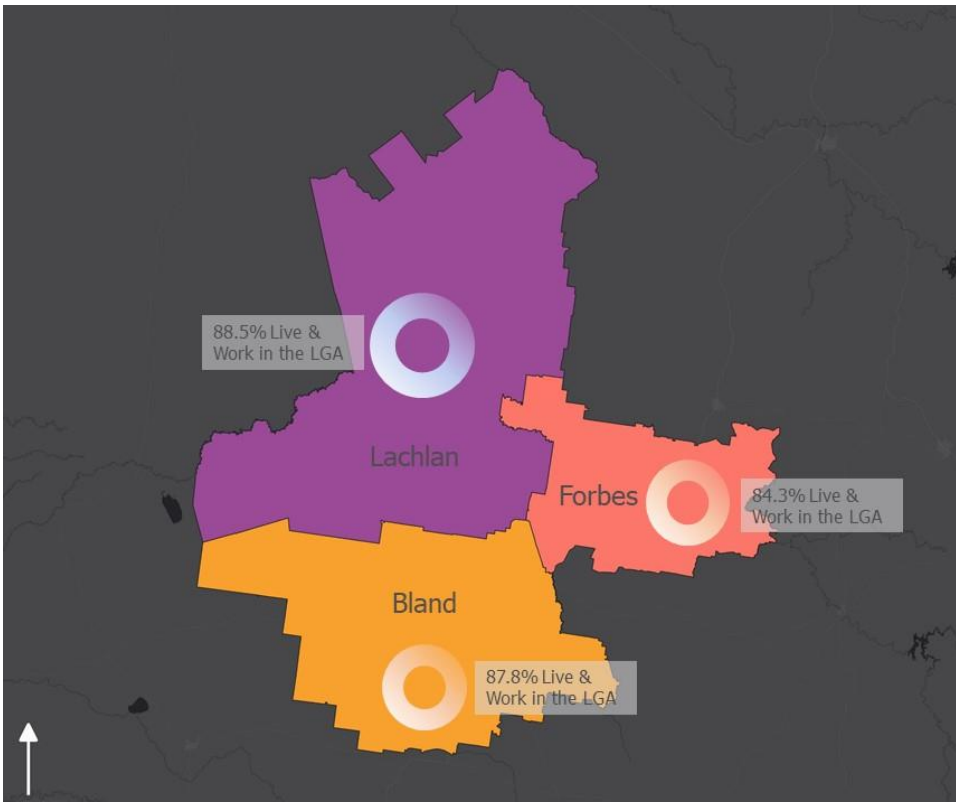
Source: ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, variables: West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), INDP, Counting Persons – Place of Enumeration

A-4-3 Workforce migration

Considering where people live and work can help understand employment opportunities. Workforce migration can assist in highlighting where a workforce comes from, reflecting the economic push and pull dynamics geographically.

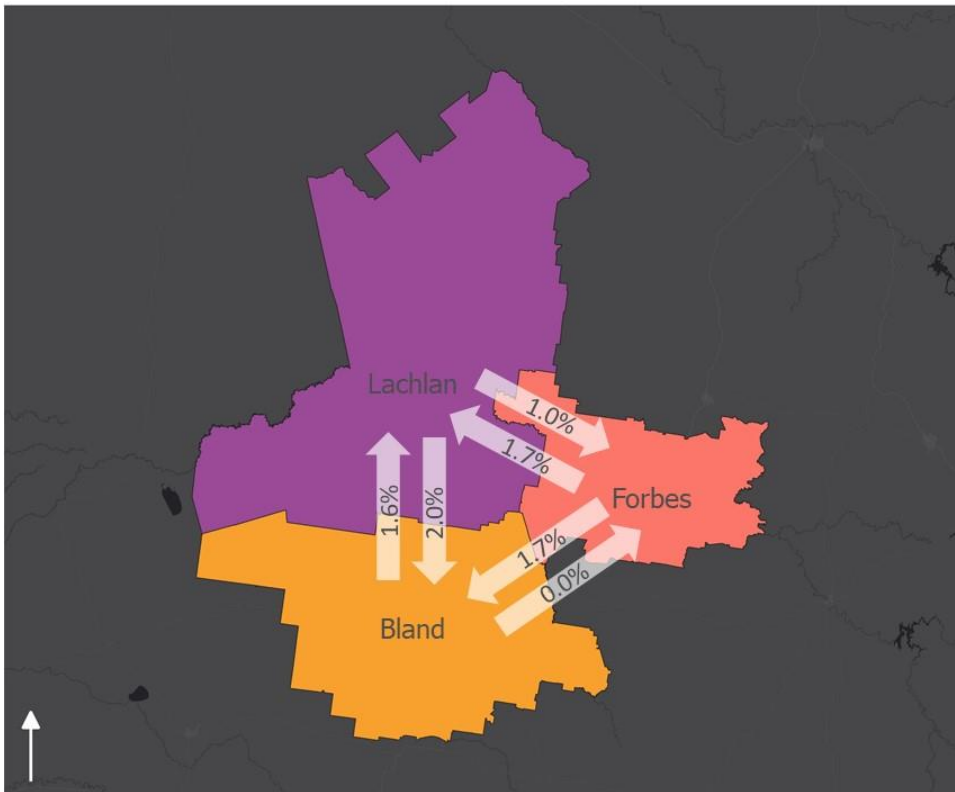
For Lachlan, Bland and Forbes LGA, the majority of employed people are residents, meaning residents live and work in the same LGA. Furthermore, there is minimal workforce movement between LGAs, with very few residents travelling to another LGA for work. Figure 28 and Figure 29 visually represent this finding.

Figure 28 Workforce migration live and work in the same LGA, 2016



Source: Elton Consulting, ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, variables: NSW (LGA), POW, Place of Enumeration

Figure 29 Workforce migration, movement between LGAs, 2016



Source: Elton Consulting, ABS TableBuilder Pro, 2016, variables: NSW (LGA), POW, Place of Enumeration

A-4-4 Household income

Median weekly income reflects the economic opportunities within an area of social influence. Areas with high median weekly income reflects higher wages and access to higher paying jobs. Area with lower median weekly incomes reflects lower wages, possibly lower engagement in employment and restricted access to higher paying jobs. Median weekly incomes can also reflect affluence and socio-economic advantage or disadvantage, with education, cultural diversity, health status and access to adequate housing all impacting individuals earning capacity.

Literary research on the effects of the mining sector on local communities discusses missed economic opportunities at the local level. The multiplier effect of mining projects can have positive economic impacts on local services such as transport, rental and accommodation services. This is evident in Tonts, Plummer & Lawrie (2012) research which studied the economic impacts of the resource sector across thirty-three towns in Western Australia. However, factors such as migrator workforces place uncertainty around local wealth capture (Tonts, Plummer et al. 2012).

West Wyalong and the Central West region have the highest median weekly incomes across all metrics (personal, family and household).

West Wyalong has the highest median personal weekly income, the highest median household weekly income and the second highest median family weekly income. This suggests residents and households in West Wyalong generally earn more than the comparison areas, again likely due to the prevalence of mine workers residing in the town.

Table 50 Median weekly income, 2016

Weekly income	West Wyalong	Bland	Forbes	Lachlan	Central West
Personal (\$)	\$602	\$580	\$571	\$556	\$594

Family (\$)	\$1,453	\$1,360	\$1,326	\$1,279	\$1,473
Household (\$)	\$1,148	\$1,100	\$1,069	\$1,034	\$1,166

Source: ABS QcukStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), Employment

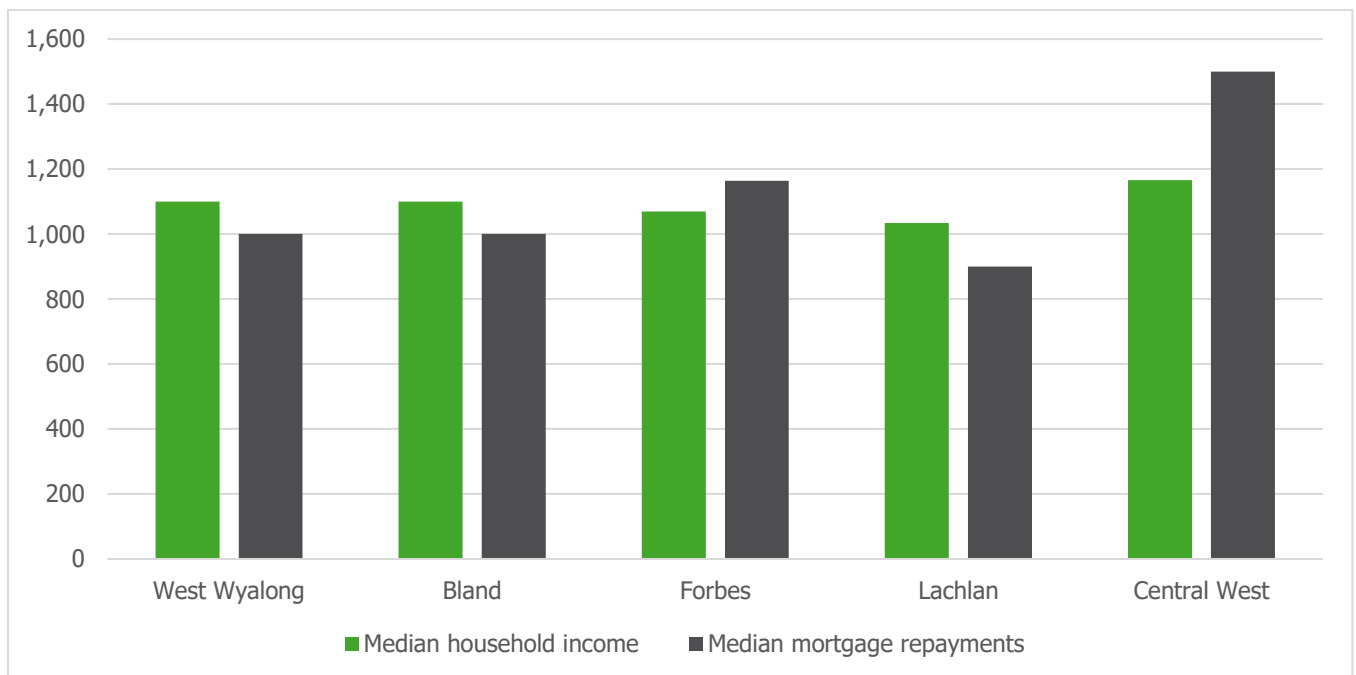
A-4-5 Housing affordability

Housing affordability plays an important role in maintaining resilient communities. Areas where housing is more expensive but household incomes are lower are less likely to be able to adapt to economic changes effectively due to existing financial pressures experienced (Coakes and Sadler, 2011).

It is common for host communities to experience increases in housing costs associated with resource development projects. The combination of low supply, increased demand for housing and high income of migratory workers place strain on local housing markets causing median rent and sale prices to increase.

Figure 30 shows that West Wyalong, Bland and Lachlan have a higher average weekly household income than average weekly mortgage repayments. However, Forbes and the Central West, they have higher average weekly mortgage repayments compared to household income suggests that residents are experiencing housing stress.

Figure 30 Household income and mortgage repayments, 2016

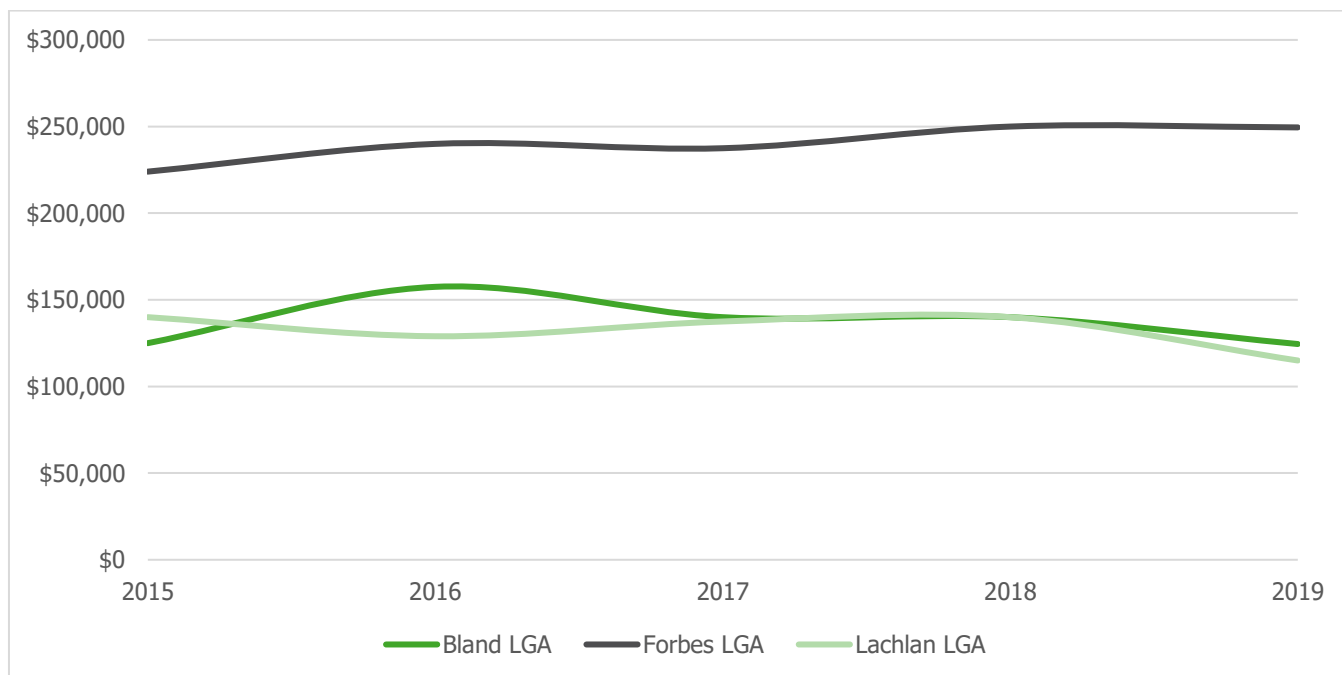


Source: ABS QcukStats, 2016, West Wyalong (SSC), Bland (A), Forbes (A), Lachlan (A), Central West (SA4), median household income, median mortgage repayments

Between 2015 and 2019, Forbes was the only LGA in the area of social influence to experience a positive increase in the median house price. Lachlan experienced the greatest decrease while Bland only experienced a minor decrease. The Valuer General report for West Wyalong, 2019, noted that property values were perceived to be going up in West Wyalong due to 'ongoing activity in the Lake Cowal gold mine'. This was reflected by low sales and increasing demand as well as decreasing supply of rental properties and increasing rents.

Figure 31 Table 51 Change in median sale price 2015-2019 and Table 51 represent data across the three LGAs showing property price trends since 2015. Key findings include that prices in Forbes have experienced an increase whereas prices in Lachlan Shire has experienced a decrease. Property prices within Bland Shire have remained relatively consistent.

Figure 31 Median sale prices, 2015-2019



Source: NSW Government Valuer General, Residential land values, Median sale prices, 2019

Table 51 Change in median sale price 2015-2019

LGA	Median sale price		Change 2015-2019
	2015	2019	
Bland	\$125,000	\$124,500	-0.4%
Forbes	\$224,000	\$249,500	+11.4%
Lachlan	\$140,000	\$115,000	-17.9%

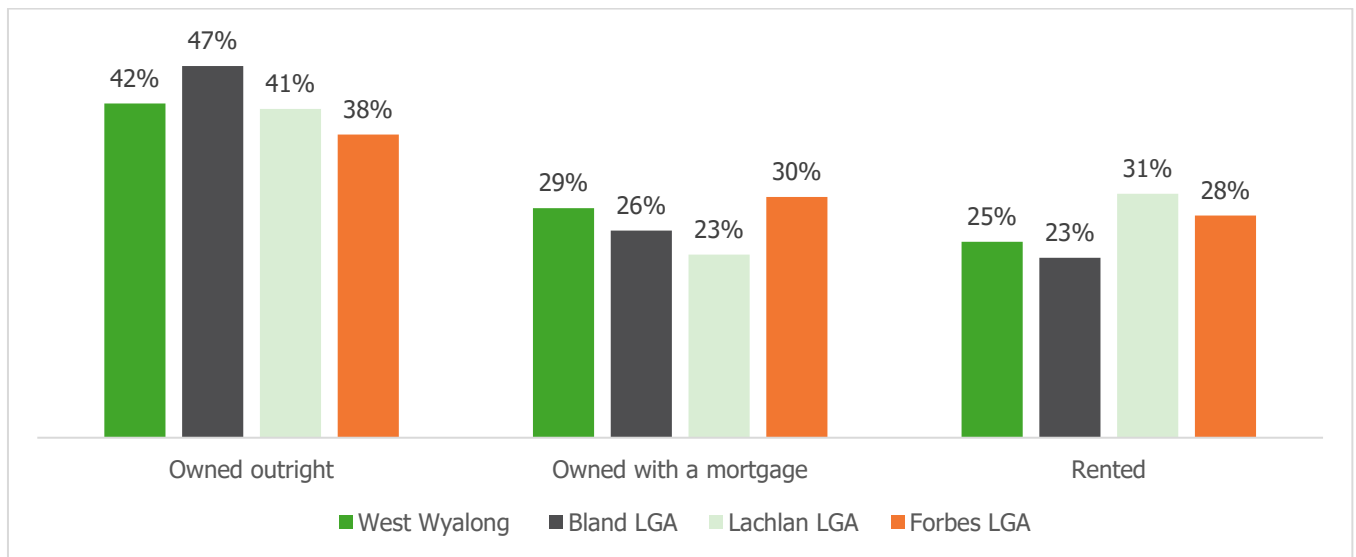
Source: NSW Government Valuer General, Residential land values, Median sale prices, 2019

A-4-6 Tenure type

Housing tenure can impact upon individual and community resilience. Generally, residents who own their property outright experience more financial stability with lower housing-associated costs.

The majority of residents across the three LGAs either owned their property or owned with a mortgage. A minority of people living in the area rented suggesting that renting is not common and that there may not be adequate supply for a transient population increase. Low rates of renting could also indicate minimal renting opportunities.

Figure 32 Tenure type, 2016



Source: ABS TableBuilder Census, 2016. www.abs.gov.au

A-5 Natural capital

A-5-1 Environmental conservation

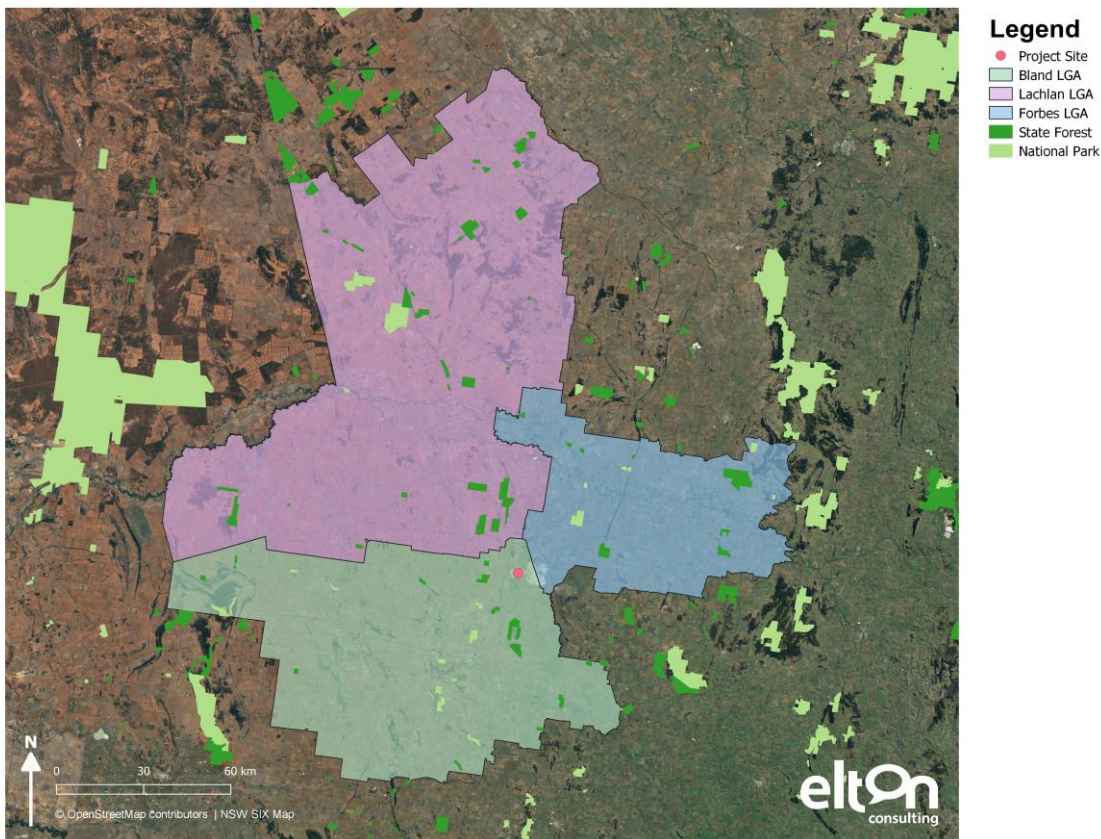
Across the area of social influence there is a limited number of national parks and state forests. Larger conservation areas are located outside the area of social influence to the west and east.

The West Wyalong Wetlands is located east of West Wyalong and south of the Project site. The wetlands are a multipurpose initiative developed by Bland Shire Council to address drainage issues, provide habitat for bird species and environmental and passive recreation for residents and tourists alike. Recreational activities include fishing (Golden Perch has been introduced by Bland Shire Council), canoeing, twitching and trail walking. Bland Shire Council anticipates that the wetland will become the primary water source for all parks, gardens and recreation facilities in Wyalong and West Wyalong (Bland Shire Council, 2020).

Lake Cowal is home to a large number of water birds as well as significant migratory species, and was previously listed on the Register of the National Estate of NSW 'for its natural values as a wetland and important bird breeding location' (Niche 2018). The Lake Cowal ecosystem is described further below.

Figure 33 Conservation areas near the Project

National Parks and State Forests



Source: Elton Consulting, 2020

A-5-2 Water security

The CGO project currently sources water from the Eastern Saline Borefield (ESB) via the Lake Cowal pipeline and the Lachlan River via the Jemalong Irrigation Channel.

The Bland Creek Paleochannel is an important water source for livestock and domestic water uses across the area and is currently over allocated. Long-term sustainability of the water resource is under strain and of concern to local stakeholders and other water users. Due to the quantity and quality of groundwater yield from the Bland Creek Paleochannel it is widely used for irrigation. Across the region groundwater sources are generally highly saline and low yield (Dudgeon, 2012), making the Bland Creek Paleochannel a major water source of low saline ground water.

The mine currently uses a variety of water sources, including recycled water from processing (up to 40 per cent), recovered water from the tailings storage facility, saline water bores and freshwater. CGO makes efforts to reduce the use of water that could otherwise be used for agriculture and municipal supplies by focussing on the sourcing and use of high saline water, with the aim of reducing its reliance on freshwater reserves.

Water from the Bland Creek Paleochannel and the ESB is extracted from the Lachlan Formation Water Source in accordance with the Water Sharing Plan for the Lachlan Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2012. CGO has an annual extraction limit of 3,650 ML for the BCPB and 750 ML for the ESB under this plan. The existing development consent also limits extraction from the BCPB to 15 ML a day or 3,650 ML a year. Operation of the ESB is undertaken in accordance with a Development Consent (DA 2011/64) granted by Forbes Shire Council.

Water from the Lachlan River continues to be accessed for CGO by purchasing temporary water from the regulated Lachlan River trading market. The volume of water sourced from the Lachlan River varies depending on climatic conditions and availability.

Consultation with Lachlan Valley Water identified issues regarding water access, supply and allocation within the area of social influence for both groundwater and surface water. Over the last 20 years, the Lachlan River Catchment has varied significantly, with recent drought events highlighting the need for sustainable water use planning. During the drought event of 2020, water reserves at the Project site were very low.

Towards the end of 2019, areas in regional and rural NSW experienced substantial drought, significantly affecting the economic livelihoods and commercial operations of primary producers, with towns such as Bathurst facing the risk of running out of potable water. Vegetables farmers forfeited 80 per cent of their water rights to ensure water supply to the township (Barrett, 2019). While Bathurst is not in the area of social influence, it does reflect tensions regarding access to water across the State and potential consequences of a future limited water supply.

A review of local and industry media highlights the importance of access to water for the Project. Over 2019 and into early 2020, the severe drought in NSW impacted Evolution Mining's share price amid concerns that further water restrictions would impact production at CGO. Key insights from a review of relevant media sources reflect:

- » Announcement by Evolution Mining to transition Lake Cowal operations to zero dependence on surface water (Ker, 2020), reflecting the risk and scarcity issues associated with surface water access
- » Increase reliance on reused and recycled water amid state-wide water restrictions (Zhou, 2020).

Considering the role of agriculture and mining in the Bland area, sustainable access to water for residents and primary industries is a critical issue and one that local communities and stakeholders have raised as a priority.

A-5-3 Land use and agriculture

All terrain surrounding the Project site is disturbed; cleared and cropped with agricultural infrastructure across the landscape.

Across the region, agriculture is the major land use accounting for 81 per cent of the Central West. Grazing modified pastures is the most agricultural activity and accounts for 54 per cent of all land use. The high rate of agriculture activity is reflected by industry of employment. While the region only accounts for 3 per cent of total employment across NSW, it represents 22 per cent of people employed in agriculture across NSW. Over the 2018-2019 period, the gross value of agriculture was \$1.4 billion and represented 12 per cent of the total gross value of agricultural production in NSW. Major agricultural products include:

- » Cattle and calves (\$314 million)
- » Wool (\$238 million)
- » Sheep and lambs (\$212 million).

While cauliflower is not in the top three agricultural products, the Central West produces 65 per cent of the NSW cauliflower production (Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment, 2019).

Bland LGA has slightly different agricultural land uses to the Central West, with a greater focus on cereals. Top agricultural products across the Bland LGA include:

- » Wheat (\$146 million)
- » Barley (\$45 million)
- » Wool (\$22 million)
- » Canola (\$20 million)

Based on top agricultural gross value in Bland LGA, wheat is the largest agricultural product generating more than three times the revenue of the second highest gross value product (Bland Shire Council, 2020).

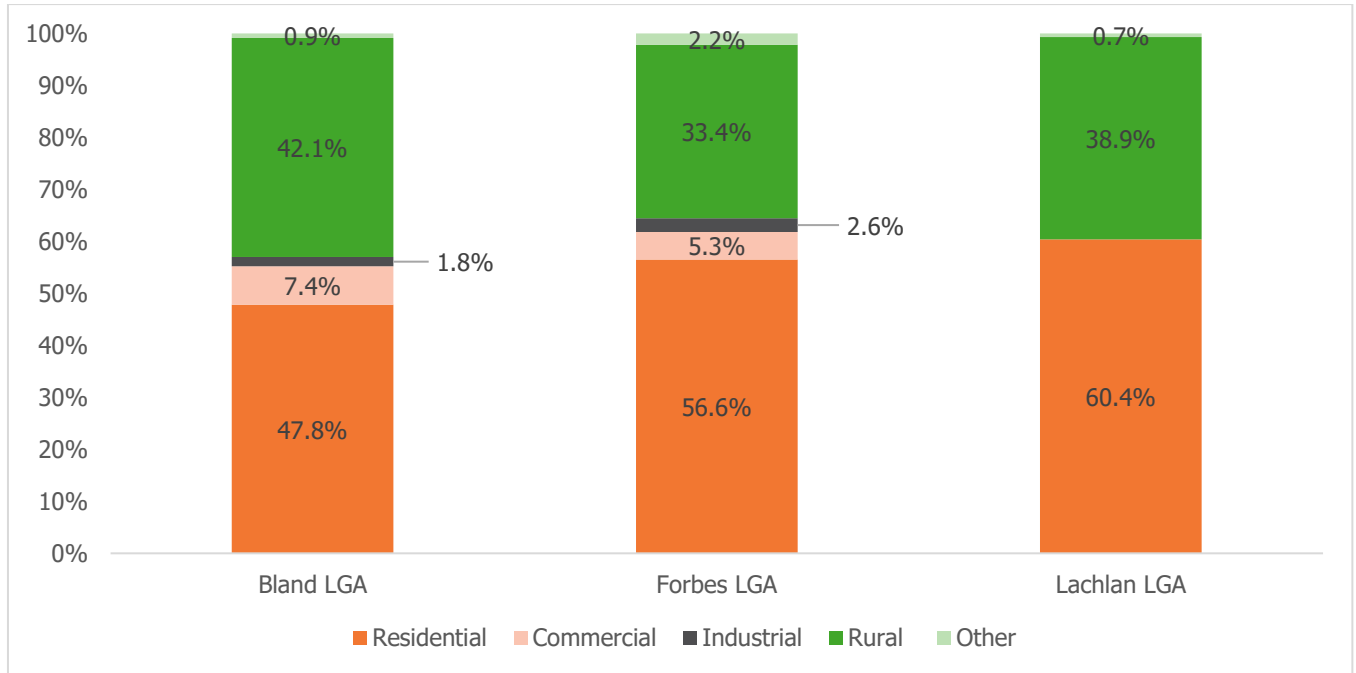
Consultation with local landholders found that access to Lake Cowal is important for grazing patterns when water levels are low. Landholders were concerned about continued access in the context of the Underground Project.

Land zoning

Land use zoning shows that residential is the largest land use across the area of social influence. Key differences within the area of social influence include:

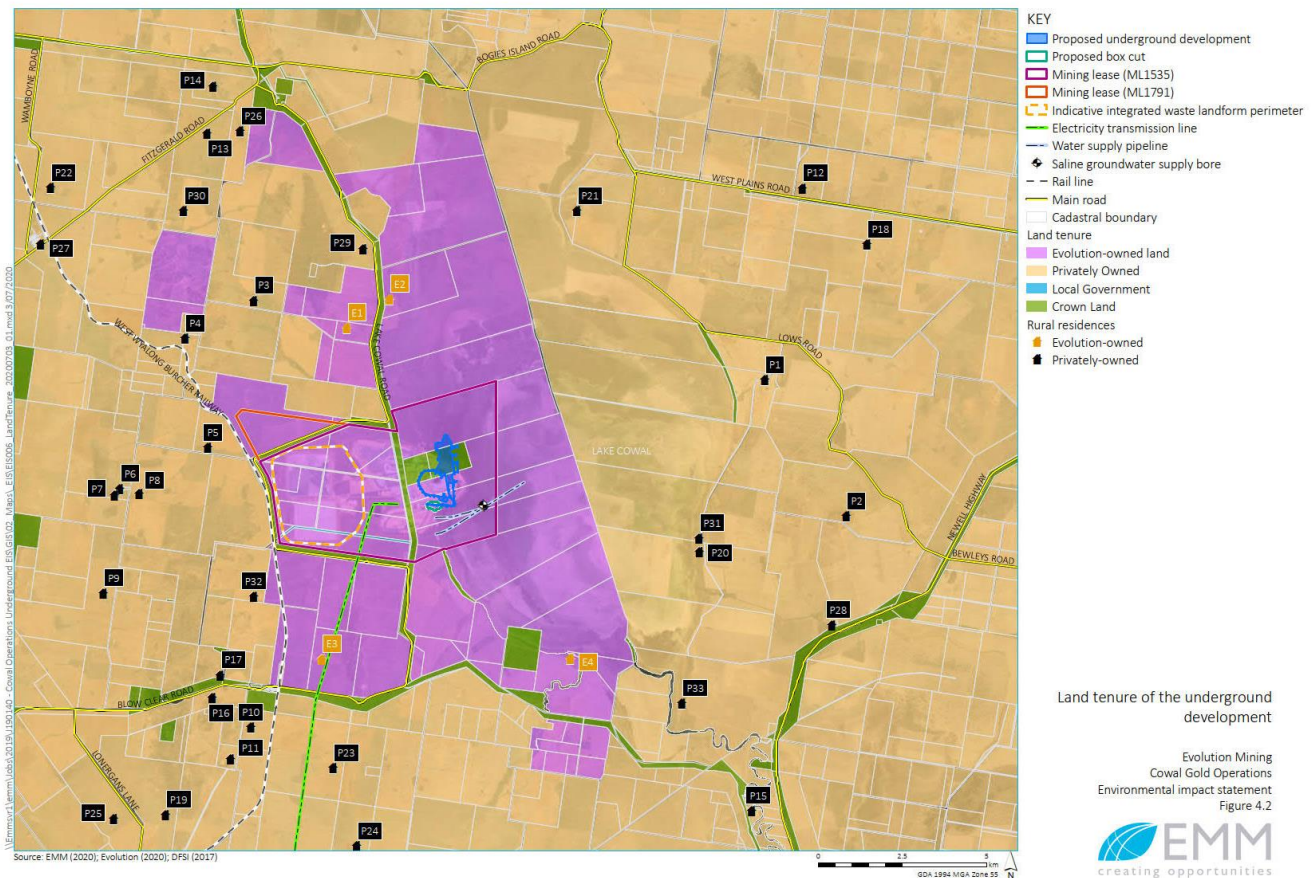
- » Bland LGA has the highest rate of rural land zoning while Forbes LGA has the lowest
- » Lachlan LGA is the only LGA to have no land zoning for commercial and industrial land uses
- » Forbes LGA has the highest rates of industrial and other land zoning
- » Bland LGA has the highest rate of commercial land zone.

Figure 34 Land zoning, 2019



Source: NSW Government Valuer General, Number of properties by zone, 2020, https://www.valuergeneral.nsw.gov.au/land_value_summaries

Figure 35 Land tenure surrounding the Underground Project



A-5-4 Lake Cowal ecosystem services

Lake Cowal is a major water resource, the largest natural inland lake in New South Wales, and when full is approximately 21 kilometres long and 9.5 kilometres wide covering an area of over 13,000 hectares (Lake Cowal Foundation, 2013). Lake Cowal is in the Lachlan River catchment, between the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee Rivers, and is an ephemeral inland wetland system. The lake is fed by two creeks; the largest being the Bland Creek, the other the Sandy Creek, as well as filling from backflow from the Lachlan River, approximately 40km to the north (Culture and Heritage, 1997). Nerang Cowal is another ephemeral lake to the north of Lake Cowal. The semi-arid environment of the locality means that the two lakes frequently runs dry. The mean average rainfall of the locality is 486mm.

Since 2001 the lake has largely remained dry with periods of significant rainfall providing intermittent water coverage. The land surrounding the site is part of the Bland Creek catchment which primarily supports crop farming and grazing of both sheep and cattle on properties surrounding the Project.

Aboriginal cultural values of Lake Cowal

The riverine economy and wetlands associated with the major river systems are significant components of the Wiradjuri landscape, whereby the number of people would have been greatest nearest to permanent water sources (Culture and Heritage, 1997).

Consultation with the West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council highlighted important cultural connections for the Wiradjuri People within the area of social influence, particularly around Lake Cowal. As Lake Cowal is a reliable water source there is historic importance relating to food resources. 'Water bodies of equivalent magnitude have been understood across Australia as focal points for settlement, economic activity, ceremonial

gatherings and territorial conflict' (Cane, 1994). Both Lake Cowal and the Bland Creek are understood to be centre points of historical human activity in the area of social influence.

This historic importance thus in turn gave rise to cultural value. Stone artefacts recovered from the area indicate that areas close to Lake Cowal were used as habitation and work sites, where people made tools and was a meeting place. It is noted that oral traditions record the area as a meeting place for Aboriginal groups from along the Lachlan River and other areas. Other important spiritual sites nearby include the Womboy Mountain, burial sites and scarred trees.

The Bland Creek was known as a 'meeting place of the tribes of the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee Rivers' (Musgrave, 1979). Specific to Lake Cowal, it is understood that Aboriginal people maintained large settlements on the site of the former Lake Cowal Station Homestead with numerous middens (Culture and Heritage, 1997).

Recreational uses of Lake Cowal

Consultation with landholders found that Lake Cowal is popular for its crayfish, with visitors from across NSW travelling to the lake for recreational cray fishing, particularly following periods of rainfall. Additionally, the birdlife that the lake ecosystem sustains has meant it is renowned for recreational birding and ecological research.

Economic livelihoods associated with Lake Cowal

Nearby landholders utilise the lake and surrounds for livestock grazing during its dry periods. Consultation with nearby landholders to the Project indicated that this is an important seasonal attribute of local farming operations.

Historically, the first settlers in the Bland area established large livestock stations surrounding the lake, known as Morangoreel, Burrangong and Currarraburrama (Musgrave, 1979, in Cane, 1994). This context implies the historical and social value of the lake and its surrounds to the shared identity and character of the community today.

B Stakeholder identification

The table below provides an overview of project stakeholders with their likely interests or concerns related to the Project and was used in developing the community and stakeholder consultation plan which informed this SIA.

Table 52 Project stakeholder identification

STAKEHOLDER	AREAS OF INTEREST
Government (State)	
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)	Regulation and compliance; planning approvals and consent; community and stakeholder engagement; environmental impact; cultural and heritage significance (incl Aboriginal heritage)
NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Dubbo	Community and stakeholder engagement; environmental impact; cultural and heritage significance (incl Aboriginal heritage)
NSW DPIE (Department of Primary Industry – Water)	Surface and groundwater management; water security; EIS studies
Government (local)	
Lachlan Shire Council	Generally, Lachlan Shire Council is positive towards this project. Concerns include: management of environmental impacts; community engagement; water usage; and housing.
Forbes Shire Council	Forbes is positive towards the project. Environmental impacts; community sentiment towards the mine; water bore usage Housing is a concern – the impacts of greater demand on housing prices and availability. However, 300 houses are currently being built in Forbes.
Bland Shire Council	Bland Shire is positive towards the project. Concerns include: Management of environmental impacts; community engagement; water usage; subsidence; housing for additional mine worker is a significant concern, there is a current undersupply of housing – Council considering fast-tracking housing, would prefer worker integration within the town.
Resident groups and community facilities	
Local landholders and adjacent residents	Noise impacts; sleep disturbances; air quality; vibrations; light spill
Residents of Bland Shire	Positive economic impacts; housing impacts; environmental impacts; traffic and local business opportunities
Recreational users of Lake Cowal	Potential environmental impact that may limit access and quality of recreational activities and community values

STAKEHOLDER	AREAS OF INTEREST
Local farmers and irrigators	Potential impacts to: water quality and access; agricultural output and quality
Community Environmental Management Consultative Committee (CEMCC)	Overall in support of the project particularly the economic benefits and increased business activity and income growth. Concerns include: noise and blasting; air quality; accommodation and housing; traffic; water
West Wyalong Public School, West Wyalong High School and Ungarie Central School	Involved in the Lake Cowal Conservation Centre; education and training opportunities
Local health service providers	Increased demand from workforce on services; potential for workplace injuries and transport of patients from site.
Lake Cowal Foundation	Funded by Evolution
Community action groups and associations	
Resident and community associations including: » Rotary Club Condobolin » Grazing Down the Lachlan » Riding for the disabled (NSW) West Wyalong Centre » West Wyalong Men's Shed » Growing Lachlan » West Wyalong Services and Citizens Club » Bellarwi Country Women's Association	Jobs creation, local economy, land use and access requirements, ground and surface water, social impacts and housing.
Formerly active organisations such as the Lake Cowal Campaign	Key protestors that were active when Lake Cowal was owned by Barrick Gold. Key issues include: environmental impacts; Aboriginal cultural heritage and Native Title; water impacts
Water users including Lachlan Valley Water, Jemalong Irrigation, Bland Creek Water Users Group, West Plains Water Users Association and Trigalana Water Users Group Inc.	Water security
Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and Registered Aboriginal Parties	
Native Title Claimants in local area Representative organisations including: » Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation » Traditional owners of Wiradjuri nation » West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council » Wiradjuri Council of Elders (Parkes) » Condobolin Aboriginal Land Council	Aboriginal cultural and heritage site protection; land use and management; environmental impacts; employment and economic opportunities; culturally appropriate engagement; Native Title and Aboriginal land rights
Business and tourism	

STAKEHOLDER	AREAS OF INTEREST
Local businesses and West Wyalong Business Inc.	Economic benefits; increased housing demand and workforce accommodation strategy
Condobolin Chamber of Commerce and Forbes Business Chamber	Economic benefits; increased housing demand and workforce accommodation strategy
Local tourism operators	Construction, noise and pollution impacts; road and traffic impacts; potential economic stimulation benefits through workforce accommodation strategy

C Stakeholder and community engagement material

C-1 Interview discussion guides

C-1-1 Bland Shire Council

Objective: To understand existing socio-economic and demographic conditions, existing community services provision, community priorities, identification of vulnerabilities, past experiences.

To gauge impressions/issues of regional development, cumulative impacts and known social concerns and opportunities of the CGO.

Discussion Guide

Bland Shire and community insights

How would you describe the existing community profile in the Bland Shire, and how would you say your community changed over time, say over the last decade or two?

How do you understand the population to change in the future?

What are the **key population groups** in Bland Shire that have specific needs? What do you understand to be their needs or vulnerabilities?

What social infrastructure or community services are needed in your Council? What are the current gaps in facilities, infrastructure and services? e.g. health, emergency services, housing...

What is the current status with regard to **housing affordability** in West Wyalong, and how do you see any of these trends relating to CGO? Have you seen evidence of former residents moving elsewhere?

The CGO Underground proposal and community impacts or opportunities

What would you say the general community perceptions are of CGO and its role in the local community?

What social benefits does the CGO contribute to the Bland Shire currently and how do you see this changing with the Underground?

What do you think would be the main **interests, priorities** or **concerns** of residents in Bland Shire in relation to the CGO Underground? Do you think there are opportunities that exist that have not been explored yet or new ones that may come as a result of the proposed changes and extended life of mine?

What matters do you think CGO may need to consider in planning the Underground? Such as road safety, traffic, airport usage, health care services, emergency services, water security, workforce management...

The proposed accommodation village

What are Council's key interests, concerns or priorities in relation to its proposed development in West Wyalong?

What are the considerations do you think that Evolution should consider in planning the workforce accommodation facility that you could comment on?

It is our understanding that Barrick used to have an accommodation village in West Wyalong (pre-2005). What experiences or history can you recall from when Barrick operated the accommodation village? What may be some of the community's expectations or interests based on this experience?

Regional changes and development

It is our understanding that Bland Shire previously released **residential land** for mine workers when CGO was owned by Barrick. I understand that since then, workers residing in West Wyalong have dispersed geographically around the town as well as to other towns – is this true?

What do you anticipate being required to improve **housing provision and accommodation** in the future with incoming mine workers and their families for the Underground?

How do residents **feel about the changes and growth** across the broader region? Have there been any significant affects to businesses or certain industries in recent years?

What are the key priorities of Council when looking at infrastructure provision, planning and service delivery in the context of regional development?

Which other **development projects** in the region that are proposed or under construction, or recently completed, that may impact on the population and development across the region? Could you name some key developments? E.g. solar projects.

Would these concurrent projects affect the way Council plans and delivers services? If so how?

What do you think the CGO should be prioritising in the context of current growth in the region and the extended life of mine due the Underground?

C-1-2 Forbes Shire Council

Objective: To understand existing socio-economic and demographic conditions, existing community services provision, community priorities, identification of vulnerabilities, past experiences.

To gauge impressions/issues of regional development, cumulative impacts and known social concerns and opportunities of the CGO.

Discussion Guide

Forbes Shire and community insights

What is the existing community profile in your Council area, and how would you say your community changed over time, say over the last decade or two? How do you understand the population to change in the future?

What are the **key population groups** in the region that have specific needs that need to be considered? Which ones and what do you understand to be their needs or vulnerabilities? And in the future?

Would you say that CGO (and possibly other projects in the locality) have increased the number of families and children in the LGA?

What would you say the general community perceptions are of CGO and its role in the local community?

Regional changes and development

What social or community services are needed in your Council? What are the current gaps in facilities, infrastructure and services?

What are the key priorities of Council when looking at social infrastructure and service delivery in the context of regional development and future growth?

How do residents **feel about the changes and growth** across the region? Have there been any significant affects to businesses or certain industries?

Which other **development projects** in the region that are proposed or under construction, or recently completed, that may impact on the population and development across the region? Could you name a few? E.g. solar

How would these concurrent projects affect the way Council plans and delivers services?

The CGO Underground proposal and community impacts or opportunities

Could you touch on how you understand CGO to have a role in all of these matters that we have discussed? What do you think the CGO should think about moving forward in the context of current growth in the region and the mine extension?

What do you think would be the main **interests, priorities** or **concerns** of residents in Forbes Shire in relation to the CGO Underground?

What would Council like to see in the future through the mine extension? Do you think there are opportunities that exist?

What about other social and community matters that CGO may need to consider in planning? Such as road safety, traffic, airport usage, housing, health care services, emergency services, water security, workforce management...

C-1-3 Lachlan Shire Council

Objective: To understand existing socio-economic and demographic conditions, existing community services provision, community priorities, identification of vulnerabilities, past experiences.

To gauge impressions/issues of regional development, cumulative impacts and known social concerns and opportunities of the CGO.

Discussion Guide

Lachlan Shire and community insights

What is the existing community profile in your Council area, and how would you say your community changed over time, say over the last decade or two? How do you understand the population to change in the future?

What are the **key population groups** in the region that have specific needs that need to be considered? Which ones and what do you understand to be their needs or vulnerabilities? And in the future?

Would you say that CGO (and possibly other projects in the locality) have increased the number of families and children in the LGA?

What would you say the general community perceptions are of CGO and its role in the local community?

Regional changes and development

What social or community services are needed in your Council? What are the current gaps in facilities, infrastructure and services?

What are the key priorities of Council when looking at social infrastructure and service delivery in the context of regional development and future growth?

How do residents **feel about the changes and growth** across the region? Have there been any significant affects to businesses or certain industries?

Which other **development projects** in the region that are proposed or under construction, or recently completed, that may impact on the population and development across the region? What about the **Clean TeQ Mine** – its status (planned construction in 2019 near Condobolin)?

How would these concurrent projects affect the way Council plans and delivers services?

The CGO Underground proposal and community impacts or opportunities

Could you touch on how you understand CGO to have a role in all of these matters that we have discussed? What do you think the CGO should think about moving forward in the context of the current changes in the region and the mine extension?

What do you think would be the main **interests, priorities** or **concerns** of residents in Lachlan Shire in relation to the CGO Underground?

What would Council like to see in the future through the mine extension? Do you think there are opportunities that exist?

What about other social and community matters that CGO may need to consider in planning? Such as road safety, traffic, airport usage, housing, health care services, emergency services, water security, workforce management...

C-1-4 Local real estate agents or property developers

Objective:

To understand the local housing market and future development implications on housing supply and demand.

Discussion Guide

Background to the business and local insights

Let's start by learning about you. Could you tell me about the services you provide, your service area, and a little about the local market in which you operate?

How would you describe the current housing market in West Wyalong and across the Bland Shire? **What is the status regarding** housing affordability and availability **in West Wyalong?**

What factors do you see as mostly affecting the local housing market over the last 5 or 10 years?

How would you describe the existing community in Bland Shire and surrounding LGAs, and how would you say the community or demographics have changed over time, say over the last decade (or two)?

What would you say are the biggest challenges faced by the property and real estate sector in the area at the moment?

Could you describe what you understand to be any current plans or strategies by Council or others to improve housing provision and residential development in the Shire and more broadly across the region?

What do you think should be focused on in planning improved housing provision?

The proposed mine changes

Regarding CGO - what do you understand to be the main local effects/benefits of the mine, from what you know?

In thinking about the proposed changes of the CGO, what do you perceive to be potential impacts or opportunities for local communities and regional development?

And what about the potential impacts or effects of the mine specifically on housing for the following population groups:

- > your target market/customer base
- > renters in West Wyalong
- > property owners in West Wyalong
- > property developers or investors

What else is happening across the region that you think is having an impact on the housing market?

Other development projects or growth in certain sectors that may be causing housing market changes?

What do you think needs to be considered in future planning for the area on a more macro/broad level?

C-1-5 West Wyalong Local Aboriginal Land Council

Objective: To understand local Aboriginal representation, needs and issues, to capture sentiment, and to ensure cultural and historical sensitivities are integrated in project planning.

To understand the future priorities and interests of CGO's main community partners.

Discussion Guide

Local setting and WW LALC

Could you tell us about the main priorities, needs and interests of the LALC and your members?

Who would you say are the LALC's main external partners in the local or regional area?

What are the key priorities of the Aboriginal community when thinking particularly about local infrastructure and services?

Native Title – can you talk about existing NT claims, history, status etc.

CGO partnership insights

How would you describe your interactions and work with CGO over the years? Could you detail some of the activities or initiatives that you have done/do together and how it is going at present?

History of Aboriginal cultural heritage at CGO – sites, places or issues that have been a focus?

From your knowledge and understanding, how do your members as well as other Aboriginal communities in the local area feel about the CGO today, generally?

The proposed mine changes

What opportunities do you see for the LALC and the broader community as a result of the proposed changes, the extended life of mine, and the new workforce likely to reside in West Wyalong?

What would you like CGO to do more of in the future?

C-1-6 Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation (WCC)

Objective:

To understand Traditional Owners' priorities, issues, sentiment, Native Title arrangements, and to ensure cultural and historical sensitivities are considered in and inform project planning.

To understand WCC's services and/or initiatives, the existing partnership with CGO and future opportunities.

Discussion Guide

Local setting and WCC

How would you describe the Wiradjuri community today residing in the local area (Lachlan, Forbes and Bland Shires), how would you say the community is changing or has changed over the last decade (or two)?

Could you tell us about the main priorities and interests of the WCC?

Who would you say are your main external partners in the area? How do you work with councils and the West Wyalong LALC, for example?

What are the key priorities of the Aboriginal community when thinking particularly about local infrastructure and services?

CGO partnership insights

Your working relationship with Evolution today - how would you describe your partnership with the CGO? Could you detail some of the initiatives that you do together and tell me a little about the history working with the mine?

From your knowledge and understanding, how do local Aboriginal people feel about the CGO today?

History of Aboriginal cultural heritage at CGO – could you tell me a little about the sites, places or issues that have been of ongoing importance?

The proposed mine changes

Now thinking about the proposed mine changes at CGO, what would you say would be the community's main points of feedback, interest or concern?

What matters do you think CGO may need to focus on/consider in planning? Such as road safety, traffic, airport usage, health care services, emergency services, water security, workforce management...

What opportunities do you see as a result of the extended life of mine and the new workforce residing in the area?

And what about issues or matters that need to be handled with care or sensitivity?

What would you like CGO to do more of in the future?

Regional development

How do you feel about the changes and growth across the region? What else is happening in the area that you think is having an impact on people?

C-1-7 Lake Cowal Foundation

Objective:

To understand local community values and places of significance, the nature of locally-run activities and levels of community organisation and to improve understanding of CGO's major/long-term community investment and external partnerships.

Discussion Guide

Introduction to LCF and CGO partnership

Let's start by describing the LCF and LCCC – its history, main activities, current status – could you tell me about it?

What would you say are the main objectives, priorities and aspirations of the LCF?

We are particularly interested in understanding the current activities and projects of the LCF, and how this compares to past activities. Do you have any upcoming plans, new projects or changes expected in the future?

How would you describe LCF's partnership with CGO over the years, and in recent years with Evolution?

Local community insights

How would you describe the existing community in Bland Shire, and how would you say the community has changed over time, say over the last decade (or two)?

What would you identify as the local community's values, attributes or places of importance?

How would you describe the local communities' aspirations?

Community expectations on the proposed mine changes

What would you say would be the community's main points of feedback, interest or concern in relation to the proposed Underground mine and workforce accommodation village?

What specific matters do you think CGO may need to focus on and consider in planning?

Broadly speaking, what do you understand that local residents would like to see in the future from CGO? Do you think there are opportunities that exist that have not been explored or new ones that may come because of the proposed changes/extended life of mine?

Local and regional development

What else is happening in the local area that you think is having an impact on people? Other development projects that may cause cumulative effects?

C-1-8 Business West Wyalong Inc.

Objective: To gather an understanding of how residents in West Wyalong feel about the proposed changes at CGO and how it may affect the town and the existing community.

Discussion Guide

Local community insights

How would you describe the existing community in West Wyalong, and how would you say your community changed over time, say over the last decade or two?

What do you see as the great things about your local area; the reasons people enjoy living here? What are some of the values or places of importance to the community in and around town and surrounding?

How would you describe the local community's aspirations about their future?

What would you say are some of the priorities of the community in West Wyalong when thinking about local infrastructure and services? What does the community want to see more of or less of in town? Are there certain services in town that are currently not working well, for example?

CGO and community expectations on the proposed mine changes

To start, how would you describe your interaction with CGO over the years? How would you say Evolution is involved in the local community?

What would you say are the main interests or concerns that residents have in relation to the CGO?

Thinking about the proposed underground mine, the workforce accommodation village and the extended life of mine, what feedback, opportunities or concerns do you have on how these developments may affect people's day to day lives in West Wyalong?

Prompt: It is our understanding that Barrick used to have a workforce accommodation village in town. What history can you recall from this? What would you say may be the community's expectations or interests based on this experience?

What other matters do you think CGO may need to focus on and consider in planning?

Local and regional development

Thinking more broadly, how would you say people feel about the changes and new developments across the region? Have there been any significant affects to businesses or certain industries in recent years caused by something in particular?

What else is happening in the local area that you think is having an impact on people? Some other big projects or sectors experiencing growth that you know of?

C-1-9 Lachlan Valley Water

Objective:

to understand stakeholder's concerns, interests and issues related to the mine's current and future water usage in the context of water insecurity across the region

Discussion Guide

Feedback on the proposed changes

What are you most interested in and concerned about in relation to the proposed Underground development?

What do you think the local communities' interests or concerns in relation to the proposed changes would be? How do you anticipate it affecting people's lives differently to now?

How would you say, from your knowledge and understanding, Evolution Mining manages its environmental and water usage over the years?

What would you like to see from large projects/mines such as Cowal Gold now and in the future?

And what about the regional development taking place as well as sectors experiencing growth; what do you see as the major challenges to water sharing, management and general water security across the Lachlan River catchment, in the years to come?

Would you like to receive more information about the EIS process for the CGO proposed changes?

D Stakeholder and community engagement outcomes

D-1 Engagement with landholders

Table 53 Consolidated landholder consultation outcomes

Category	Stakeholder comment
Way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The noise and visual impact of the mine has changed the quiet countryside for those that live nearby. » The community would love to see a theatre in West Wyalong – happy to see that it's becoming more vibrant with small business, cafes etc. » There is competition for the limited skilled workers in the area. Local business and agriculture industry cannot compete with mine wages. » Some people in the area just don't like change and/or development. » There is a need for more skilled workers in Forbes – the mine's workforce should be working to upskill the locals and keep young people here. Evolution could source the additional workforce from recent school leavers – consider partnerships with local schools or the TAFE. » Growth in demand in skilled workers will attract people back from larger regional centres such as Orange. » Burcher could be considered for the workforce accommodation village to bring benefit to the closest local town.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All councils and their economies have been positively impacted by the mine due to stimulus to local business, work for local contractors and generally, more work opportunities. To most people, the negative impacts are either negligible, or no comparable to the positive aspects the project brings. » Housing stress is a concern with the growth of the mine as it coincides with the upcoming solar farm construction, highlighting the need for a workforce accommodation village. The close relations Evolution Mining enjoys with the local community is due to the locally based workforce.
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » There are issues with local roads, one landholder wasn't consulted before the recent works on the adjoining road. Interactions with Evolution have improved overtime with win-win arrangements for nearby landholders. » The rate of traffic on the main road to Forbes has never slowed down since mining started. Some landholders have concerns for the speed that mine workers drive on local roads so it is good that many workers use buses from town. » Mine traffic also impacts on the local road quality – gravel has deteriorated over time and safety is a concern particularly for school buses going into Forbes (a bus turnaround may be needed). Litter on the roadside from mine workers is also concerning. Evolution should consider a road improvement project to seal the local roads. » Mine vehicles have strong lights compared to cars that the public drives and their lights cast shadows up to 5 km away.
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Concern that the loss of crayfish in the lake may be caused by blasting; Lake Cowal used to be famous for its crayfish. » No visitor or tourism centre means a lack of awareness of the value of Lake Cowal and the history of the area. Broken Hill has a good example for a centre. Any increase in

Category	Stakeholder comment
	<p>tourism should be balanced any negative impacts of tourism – such as camping on private property.</p> <p>» Mine open days are popular; maybe this be expanded to different places or mediums such as an interactive exhibit in a local theatre or library.</p>
Health and wellbeing	<p>» Access to medical services has always been difficult in the area and concerned that more worked will add to the strain on the system – consider incentivising health professionals to the area for both mine workers and the locals. Evolution may like to partner with a university. Others note that the mine has already brought more doctors to the area.</p> <p>» Conditions of work for Underground workers is important for Evolution to consider, understanding it will be hot, humid and dark underground.</p>
Surroundings	<p>» Scale of existing mine larger than first expected, it is visually impactful – the Underground won't add to the impacts, but the impacts will continue because of it. For landholders who have resided locally their whole lives, the mine is contributing to changes to the local landscape.</p> <p>» There is some concern at the impacts of the mine on the biodiversity of Lake Cowal – notes crayfish can no longer be found in the lake and concerned on the flow on effect to the rest of the ecosystem. Although it is noted that other factors such as the dam upstream may have contributed to this too, as well as climate conditions.</p> <p>» No studies done of the biodiversity impacts of the mine on the lake – given that this is unique context for a mine, does this need further study.</p> <p>» Impacts of blasting can regularly be felt and heard by nearby landholders – shaking of dwelling and sheds.</p> <p>» The effects vary depending on whether there is water in the lake or not. Concerns on whether the Underground development would increase the rate of blasting.</p> <p>» Will tailings and waste dumps be out and clear of the lake?</p> <p>» Will holes be filled after mining? (Awareness of closure plan?)</p>
Personal and property rights	<p>» Most nearby properties are mixed agricultural farms, including sheep, cattle and grain crops.</p> <p>» How will landholders continue to access Evolution-owned land for livestock grazing (especially when the lake is dry)?</p> <p>» Land access arrangements for mine workers on private property, are currently working well, such as for water monitoring or land leasing.</p>
Decision-making systems	<p>» Evolution Mining has been generally approachable and has developed personal relationships with nearby landholders which is recognised and valued. Landholders are comfortable reporting concerns or issues directly to Evolution staff over the phone.</p>

D-2 Engagement with council

Table 54 Consolidated engagement outcomes from local councils

Category	Stakeholder comment
Way of life	<p>» Residents of Bland Shire have strong community values and a sense of responsibility towards their neighbours – demonstrated by recent drought events.</p> <p>» Ensure awareness of new opportunities for local contractors to get involved in the Underground and school leavers to get involved in apprenticeships.</p> <p>» Possible mitigation: Hold an information night (such as that held by a solar farm held recently) that promotes awareness and the opportunities. Should also support and simply</p>

Category	Stakeholder comment
	<p>procurement processes and be clear about how many opportunity and level of skill needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure that economic benefits of the mine are not overly concentrated in a few large towns, but smaller villages are also considered – these areas should be spread across the three affect LGAs, such as Burcher and Ungarie. » Forbes Council will be releasing 223 up-market blocks of land, however will need greater foresight and information from Evolution Mining if it can adequately plan for workforce housing impacts. » Sport is a key part of the community and how people socialise.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Stakeholders agree that the majority of the community have personal connected to the mine. » Councils have reported higher house prices due to the mine. » The demographics of the area are changing, from the traditional aging population to younger and skilled working families. A major challenge for the area is retaining these new communities and the desired small businesses that they support (shopping, cafes etc.) » Youth, aged residents and Aboriginal residents are highlighted as vulnerable groups. » Particularly mental health, services and skills and education pathways are lacking. » The community is very positive about CGO being a good corporate citizen; recognised by both the public and Bland Shire Council. This includes programs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Cowal Partner Program > Sponsored social/sporting events > Community requests for grant funding are often re-directed to Evolution.
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Housing is the matter across all shires experiencing strain. » Any increase in worker traffic needs attention and heavy vehicle traffic should all go along the Newell Highway. Evolution Mining has a road funding scheme that should continue. » Generally, the Central West is going to undergo a period of growth and expansion as a national logistics hub with the Parkes SAP. Other major projects in the region need to be aware of these broader changes.
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Some councils want to capitalise on the growth of the region through increasing tourism opportunities.
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Forbes Shire Council operates a doctor's surgery to incentivise doctors to work in the area – could something similar be sponsored by Evolution Mining in West Wyalong to help with the lack of General Practitioners. » Some councils have experienced ongoing challenges getting doctors and allied health to their shires. These councils also have aged care facilities' shortages.

D-3 Engagement with stakeholders and community groups

Table 55 Consolidated engagement outcomes from key stakeholders

Category	Stakeholder comment
Way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The continued job security of the mine will further incentivise community members to work there instead of in agriculture.

Category	Stakeholder comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We need more families in this town to help the local economy and businesses. Anything to bring more jobs to town is positive. » Evolution Mining owns too many houses in town; the company should sell them so people who live here have an opportunity to buy and live here. However existing workers who reside in West Wyalong could move into the accommodation village, specifically those who travel in and out of the area for their breaks. » We would like Evolution Mining to find new ways to encourage families to work and live in West Wyalong. » Given the shift in young people wanting to go to university, there should be incentives to bring those people back home once they finish. The current TAFE redevelopment is an opportunity for youth to be trained in mine related skills and Evolution should consider a partnership. » Most people in West Wyalong live outdoors-based lives with the local bushland being very popular – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic people have appreciated these local recreational areas more. » Most people would be relieved that there will be minimal visual impact from a new underground mine. » Can Evolution Mining do anything to attract larger businesses to set up in the area? » Expectation that CGO should employ existing residents rather than bringing new people into town to work at the mine. » The Project is another great employment opportunity for people to move to our town, hopefully newcomers will enjoy being part of a community and put back into the town instead of thinking of it as a stepping stone to living elsewhere. » The local economic activity is heavily tied with the mine, with towns experiencing peaks from worker off weeks and a general increase in business from worker families. » Hoteliers should also be considered and consulted during accommodation planning, particularly as they are hard hit with COVID-19 travel restrictions that have reduced their occupancy rates. » The lack of housing stock is directly related to the demand from the mine and other industrial projects. There is also limited vacant land to develop. Early advocating to Council to incentivise developers is key to meet the expected growth in demand. There are a few sites currently being developed in West Wyalong and others that local investors are considering to build apartments to then rent to future mine workers. » WCC and West Wyalong LALC have expressed interest in partnering with Evolution Mining to operate the workforce accommodation village.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Local Aboriginal communities appreciate the positive impact of the mine, but do not necessarily want to work there. They have appreciated the support from Evolution Mining through things like scholarship programs however the WCC wants to focus on skills development and employment opportunities for young people in other local sectors. » Concern that some original conditions of the Native Title Ancillary Deed with the Traditional Owners has not happened – specifically an Aboriginal agricultural enterprise. This combined with the contentious history of the mine means that Evolution Mining should form a closer relationship with the WCC and West Wyalong LALC and consider their changing needs and interests. » Aboriginal communities may also feel the impacts of the mine more acutely, namely around housing access and affordability, childcare access and affordability and access to health services. » WCC has requested a review process of the Native Title Ancillary Deed with CGO's new management, in the context of the Underground and the extended life of mine.

Category	Stakeholder comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » FIFO workforce would likely attract a brothel to be established in town, based on past experiences.
Access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Expectation for Evolution Mining to support schools and local business, as well as the cinema opening soon. » Local schools are at or near capacity. This needs to be considered considering the expected growth. » Child care services and youth services are lacking in West Wyalong. » Residents across Bland and Forbes shires experience difficulty accessing doctors. This servicing gap has been an ongoing issue. » A day care or child care centre operated by the West Wyalong LALC is being planned at present with Evolution. This will be set up to meet the cultural needs of the local Aboriginal community and will also service mine families, solving childcare capacity issues for both groups.
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Lake Cowal and its surrounds has important cultural value to the local Aboriginal people and this should be respected. » Current shared value schemes being considered by Evolution include a four-way initiative with Bland Shire Council, the WCC, Lake Cowal Foundation and West Wyalong LALC (CGO's major community partners) to celebrate the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Lake Cowal locality through the development of an eco-tourism project and a cultural heritage education centre.
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Youth mental health is a major concern for the local community. » Potential for collaborative training initiatives with Evolution Mining that can upskill local health workers. » Better awareness of the needs of Evolution Mining and mine conditions with the suggestion for a local nurse to shadow an Evolution Mining nurse to enable capacity-building for the West Wyalong Health Service to better service mine workers' needs and upskill health practitioners simultaneously.
Surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Water use and impacts on aquifers and extraction from nearby water channels should be clearly explained in detail to inform residents and water user groups. » Particularly the impacts on water supply and environmental values such as the flora and fauna of the lake. » This will also alleviate concern on local waterways such as the Bland Creek paleochannel and the capacity of the Lachlan River catchment. » Given recent drought events, local communities and water user groups are particularly interested in CGO's future water management plans. » Possible mitigation for water use concerns, coordinate a joint meeting with key water users and speak to their specific concerns. » Education opportunities with local schools and the environment around Lake Cowal should continue to be supported by Evolution.
Decision-making systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Evolution Mining has been generally approachable and has developed constructive relationships with nearby landholders, businesses and Aboriginal groups. » The West Wyalong LALC notes that their relationship with CGO has improved significantly in recent years.

