

**Submission  
No 38**

## **OPTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Broken Hill City Council

**Date Received:** 12 September 2024

Please find a brief submission below on behalf of Broken Hill City Council to the NSW Legislative Assembly Select Committee regarding essential worker housing in New South Wales.

Key points:

- \* New essential worker housing is critical for Broken Hill to avoid a housing crisis for essential workers
- \* New housing should ideally be medium/high density to accommodate younger working professionals and those not looking to live in the city long-term
- \* Council would welcome partnering with Government departments to create a new multi-level apartment building for Essential Workers.

Broken Hill is currently experiencing a housing crisis due to a number of internal and external factors which is impacting on housing availability for essential workers. A brief summary of these factors can be found below. Further information on many of the points below and other housing-related issues can be found in Council's Housing Review and Liveability Strategy (attached).

Poor condition of existing housing stock

The majority of housing stock in Broken Hill is aged 50 years and over. As of 2022, the city had 7,30 dwellings, with 1,528 of those vacant. While that vacancy number may seem large at face value, the low rate of vacant properties available on the rental market, the poor quality of housing available for rental and purchase, and a considerable number of properties identified as uninhabitable are major issues. Many houses are simple wood and iron structures previously inhabited by mining families. Council previously wrote to every resident in the city urging them to sell or renovate their property to ensure housing is available for key workers and other people looking to move to the city for work. Feedback from home owners showed that many were unable to renovate due to a number of reasons including a shortage of tradespeople and the presence of asbestos or other hazardous materials which would cause renovation or demolition to be prohibitively expensive.

Council has compiled a roster of vacant land and properties and the contact details of owners. This is passed onto developers upon request, however these are only individual parcels of land, and developers generally require several blocks of adjacent land to undertake any large scale housing developments.

Burgeoning industry

There are a number of major mining developments that are set to ramp up in the Broken Hill region over the next 1-5 years including Hawsons Mine, Cobalt Blue Mine, and the Hydrostor project which will create around 2,500 jobs during construction and approximately 900 ongoing jobs. All companies



have indicated a preference for a workforce based out of Broken Hill where possible, which will put on even greater strain on the housing market in the years ahead.

#### Housing type suitability

95% of all dwellings in the city are separate houses, with approximately 94% having three or more bedrooms. Many of these houses have multiple sheds and/or large yards that require significant upkeep. While this may be ideal for larger families, many working professionals and younger people require less space and would prefer not to maintain a yard and be burdened with the costs that come with buying purchasing and maintaining a large plot of land.

#### Land availability

All Crown land in and around Broken Hill is affected by Native Title and its associated legal technicalities, making it extremely difficult for Council to open up any new greenfield sites for housing developments in a timely fashion. Council also does not have the resources to compulsorily acquire land to make available for new housing.

#### Other items of note:

Council embarked on a plan to ease the housing pressures faced by essential workers by looking to partner with the Government to construct a multi-storey apartment block in the CBD. Unfortunately the sale of the land to house this project fell through. Despite this setback, Council remains keen to pursue this project with the Government if suitable arrangements can be made and there is sufficient interest from all parties.

Further information on this project and its potential impact on essential worker housing can be found below:

<https://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au/Community/News-articles/Council-eyes-key-worker-housing>

<https://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au/Community/News-articles/Iceworks-project-shelved>

# Broken Hill Housing Review

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Department of Planning and  
Environment  
August 2022

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

In the spirit of reconciliation, Astrolabe Group Acknowledges the Barkandji Traditional Owners of Country across Far West NSW and their continuing connections to land waters and community. We show our respect to elders past and present. We acknowledge that we stand on Country which was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

## **About Astrolabe Group**

Astrolabe Group are the recognised experts in urban growth and change management with a uniquely empathetic approach to client and community.

This report was prepared for the Department of Planning and Environment, in partnership with Broken Hill City Council. In preparing the report, Astrolabe has made every effort to ensure the information included is reliable and accurate. Astrolabe is unable to accept responsibility or liability for the use of this report by third parties.

## **Purpose of document**

This document has been to assist in the preparation and consideration of the Far West Regional Plan 2041 and to help Broken Hill City Council to develop their liveability and housing strategy.

Astrolabe has conducted site visits and interviews, undertaken desktop research, and reviewed census data in providing feasibility analysis and considerations for the two above-mentioned strategic documents.

## **Image Disclaimer**

Photos used throughout this report were sourced through and belong to Broken Hill City Council.

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# Overview

## The challenge

Broken Hill currently has over 8000 dwellings, and historically serviced a much larger population – with the town hitting its population peak in the 1970s. Despite this, the City of Broken Hill is currently experiencing housing pressures. Broken Hill City Council and the NSW Government recognise that interventions are needed to ensure supply can meet the changing demand. The prospect of new mining projects commencing operations in Broken Hill in the coming years has impacted who is demanding housing in Broken Hill, and how many people are interested in the market. This, together with existing local conditions, is placing extra stress on the housing system and is creating a sense of urgency to understand and alleviate local housing pressures. This is important for the economic and social wellbeing of the city and its community.

Broadly, Broken Hill's housing dilemma can be summarised as:

- Existing housing stock has not been adequately maintained and renewed
- Significant number of vacant dwellings
- Constraints on the market's capacity to increase supply, and
- Demand for short-term and medium-term accommodation, servicing the visitor economy and mining operations – placing increased pressure on housing during periods of high demand.

The end result is that Broken Hill does not have housing supply that is fit for purpose, and ultimately lacks redundancy—that is, the city has a low capacity for responding to change. Housing pressures need to be alleviated in order for the city to leverage economic opportunities and strengthen community wellbeing.

Broken Hill's population has steadily declined over decades, however, this trend obscures Broken Hill's hidden housing dilemma. The dilemma being Broken Hill had pressure on housing before new mining proposals added to the demand, in part because Broken Hill's housing stock is aged with low levels of renewal. The age of stock and requirements for renewal and changing household characteristics has seen a decline in household size (i.e., the same amount of people are taking up more homes) are key contributing factors affecting supply of housing that is fit for purpose. However, we consider there are other contributing factors as to why there is also a high number of vacant properties in Broken Hill – although this requires further investigation (e.g., through the distribution of a survey to property owners across town). In addition, short-stay rentals now represent approximately 1% of total housing stock, restricting supply for the local residential population. Ageing motel accommodation improves the appeal of short-stay accommodation.

In the short term, all signs suggest a potential reversal of population decline. Broken Hill will grow driven by the need for labour to develop and operate new mines leading to an increase in workers needed across a range of support industries such as health services, education, government services and hospitality.

## **A note on definitions**

Our approach to understanding the housing challenges facing Broken Hill are framed by the concept of redundancy. From a systems thinking perspective, redundancy refers to having spare or extra capacity that can accommodate stress on a system. Accounting for system redundancy enables a system to recover quickly and ensures the users of the system are not disrupted.

Throughout this report we will refer to the Broken Hill's housing market having a lack of redundancy, and that a lot of the housing challenges various groups within the community are facing is due to the lack of redundancy in the market. What we mean by this concept and the application of the term is that there is no spare capacity or even safety net in the system. When the local housing system reaches capacity, the lack of redundancy means there is absolutely no ability for the market to absorb more demand and this has implications across the system and has social and economic impacts.

## **The opportunity**

Broken Hill's housing dilemma should be viewed as an opportunity. Smart, timely solutions to resolving supply issues will maximise both sustained and short-lived economic development opportunities. Renewal and restoration of the city's heritage building stock will strengthen Broken Hill's play in the visitor economy space, instil confidence in investors, support investment in public space and infrastructure projects, and maintain locals' identity and connection to place and country.

This report describes the dynamics of the local housing market, identifies opportunities, and presents potential strategies to increase housing supply to match demand. The lack of redundancy in the housing market is a clear challenge for Broken Hill.

The recommendations in this report are not government policy. Rather this report provides Broken Hill City Council and the NSW Government with a set of considerations, including a suggested roadmap, which may be used to guide the steps needed to address the local housing challenges over the next five years.

In the first instance, the report will be used to inform preparation and finalisation of the revised Far West regional plan and support Council's preparation of its local housing strategy. It is recommended to be most effective, the report should also be provided to other NSW Government agencies that are involved in housing delivery, such as the Department of Regional NSW. Successful implementation of the collective impact operating model, as described in this report, is dependent on stakeholder participation. Revision of the Far West regional plan presents an opportunity to define stakeholder roles.

## **Proposed workstreams**

While traditionally housing supply is increased by building new housing, the large number of vacant buildings in Broken Hill means a combination of strategies will be required to also reactivate both existing housing and zoned and serviced residential land. It would be preferable to explore these opportunities before exploring opportunities to expand the town, given the complexity of navigating Unincorporated NSW (which surrounds Broken Hill).

This report identifies six potential ‘plan and build’ workstreams that would support the delivery of additional housing supply in Broken Hill. Combined, these workstreams could boost supply of permanent residential stock, plus temporary stock in response to short, sharp increases in demand. To support this activity, we propose two additional workstreams focused on governance and monitoring of the housing system. See Table 1 for an overview of these workstreams and the potential supply associated with each stream.

No one actor can solve and meet this challenge on their own. A collective impact operating model is recommended to guide a coordinated approach that will align stakeholders to undertake the design and implementation of actions. The overarching goal in suggesting this recommendation is to deliver required changes efficiently and to maximise the impacts of actions taken.

Ongoing monitoring indicators of demand, supply and health of the local housing system will be critical to resolving Broken Hill’s housing dilemma. Monitoring will allow for timely, appropriate action. Monitoring will help inform when periods of peak demand may occur and the reason behind this peak, understanding these factors will help inform the number of houses needed to meet demand and the timing of when this is likely to be needed.

**Table 1 – Proposed workstreams**

Workstream	Potential supply (upper limit)
A: Targeted infill development	Estimate of 290 lots totalling 44 ha
B: Incentivise/ motivate property owners to renew stock and release in the market	Estimate of 500 vacant dwellings
C: Fast housing	Estimate of 434 lots totalling 199 ha
D: Increase density	Estimate of 16 lots totalling 5.7 ha
E: Greenfield land release	Estimate of 10 lots totalling 290 ha
F: Conversion of vacant hotel/ motels for short to medium-term stays	Estimate of 44 rooms available in currently vacant businesses
G: Incentivise granny flat developments on existing lots	Estimate of 3,200 lots
H: Influencing cultural perspectives and household size	5,500 households that have one or more bedrooms spare <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ABS 2016 Census Housing Suitability

# Introduction

## Purpose

The Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) engaged Astrolabe Group to prepare a report on the condition of housing and the local housing market in Broken Hill and provide recommendations to increase the supply of available and suitable housing. The project was undertaken in partnership and consultation with Broken Hill City Council (BHCC).

BHCC has observed that Broken Hill's housing system is under pressure to meet demand. Council anticipates greater impacts on the community as pressure will increase if the population grows as anticipated due to new employment opportunities, such as new mining projects.

This report has three sections:

- **Section One: Understanding Broken Hill's housing dynamics** details Astrolabe's review of Broken Hill's housing dynamics;
- **Section Two: Opportunities and recommendations** provides our responses to opportunities considering the local housing dynamics and recommendations for strategies to explore further;
- **Section Three: Next steps** provides a roadmap to guide NSW Government and BHCC actions over the next five years.

Our analysis and recommendations are informed by desktop research, interviews with stakeholders and information inputs provided by stakeholders.

This report provides a methodology and recommendations that could be applied to other towns facing similar issues in regional NSW.

## Methodology

Astrolabe's housing review is based on three key lines of enquiry:

- Service needs analysis (understanding demand-side and supply-side drivers, existing dwelling analysis)
- Site suitability analysis (understanding environmental and spatial considerations that shape where housing is located)
- Feasibility analysis (understanding financial feasibility and viability of housing development and construction).

Astrolabe has developed an understanding of these three lines of enquiry through discovery, synthesis and validation activities listed in the table below. Our findings are presented in Section One of this report. This understanding has informed the opportunities, described in Section Two, and our recommendations to DPE and BHCC outlined in Section Three.



**Table 2 – Our methodology**

<b>Service needs analysis</b>	
Discovery activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demand-side drivers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Desktop review of Council and regional plans and strategies to understand key directions and industries that shape demand</li><li>- Review of major projects and workforce needs</li><li>- Demographic analysis to understand population drivers of demand</li><li>- Interviews with stakeholders</li></ul></li><li>• Supply-side drivers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Desktop review of data to understand typologies and sizes of housing</li></ul></li><li>• Existing dwelling analysis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Desktop research of age of stock</li><li>- Interview with stakeholders</li><li>- Observations from site visits</li></ul></li></ul>
Synthesis activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consolidate the different groups driving demand</li><li>• Site visit and observation of housing</li><li>• Review data on water and waste services to understand utilisation/ occupancy of housing</li></ul>
<b>Site suitability analysis</b>	
Discovery activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Desktop review of spatial datasets</li><li>• Interview with council staff, Crown Lands staff</li></ul>
Synthesis activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify potential housing opportunity sites</li></ul>
<b>Feasibility analysis</b>	
Discovery activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Desktop review of housing rents and sales</li><li>• Interviews with local real estate agents and developers</li></ul>
Synthesis activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify challenges and pain points in current models for housing delivery</li></ul>
<b>Validation and finalisation activities</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop with BHCC and DPE to validate findings and discuss emerging strategies (9/6/22)</li><li>• Validation of draft reports</li></ul>

List of sources:

- ABS Census
- Id. profile (community profile, population forecasts, housing monitor)
- Environmental Planning Instrument (EPI)/ spatial data
- CoreLogic Australia Property data
- Council provided information
- Housing-related stakeholders in Broken Hill (i.e., housing policy, development and construction, land use planning, mining industry, and other major projects).

BHCC and DPE provided contact details for key stakeholders that Astrolabe interviewed, and information used in this review. Appendix A lists stakeholders Astrolabe interviewed for this project.

Throughout this report we discuss the urban boundary of Broken Hill which can be seen in Figure 1. Outside of the urban boundary is Unincorporated NSW, Crown Lands and Native Title determined land. We recognise the complexity of developing on this land and as such the recommendations we make throughout and the opportunities we identify to alleviate the housing dilemma exist within the context of Broken Hill's defined urban boundary.

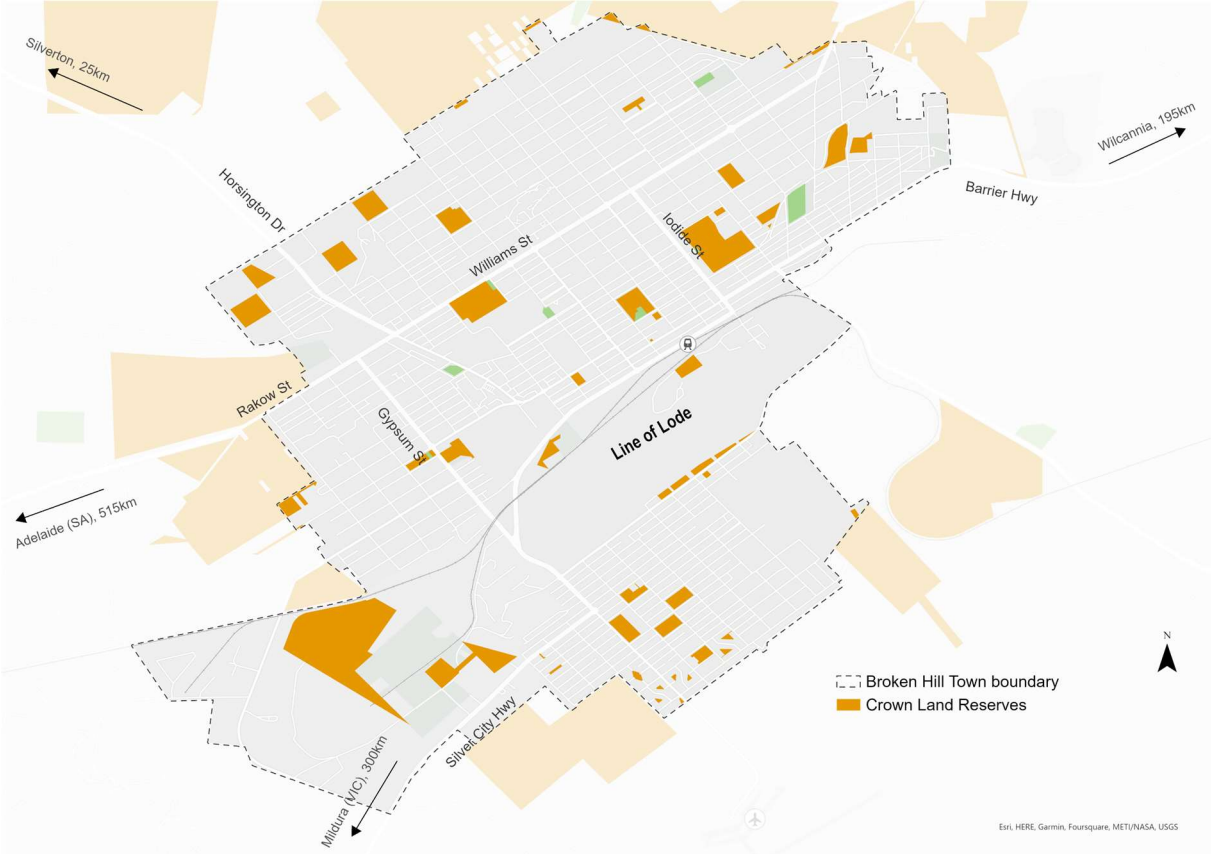


Figure 1 Broken Hill's urban boundary

## Limitations

Some information in this report, such as workforce and employment numbers and the local housing supply pipeline, was shared by local stakeholders during interviews. These are included in this report to illustrate a trend observed or indicate the scale of activities.

At the time of drafting this report an initial release of 2021 Census data had been made available. Where possible, 2021 Census information is presented, however where data is not yet released (such as detailed household and employment information) then 2016 Census information is presented.

Note that local stakeholders have shared information openly with the intention that this information is used to help our understanding of local dynamics. This information should not be taken as the committed intention or whole view of stakeholders.

In addition, this report includes information that is indicative only. The data represented is at a point in time and subject to limitations including varying degrees of accuracy, currency, and custodianship. The information presented and maps should be considered as indicative and descriptive of problems and opportunities, not definitive. Information on housing age and condition are also indicative, reliant on a desktop review and a rapid visual assessment during a site visit to Broken Hill. A detailed audit and building assessments were not within the scope of this project. Information is subject to further qualification and/or further refinement by either government or industry stakeholders in the future.

# SECTION ONE

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## Understanding Broken Hill's housing dynamics





The housing system in Broken Hill is under pressure due to multiple factors, so finding a mix of long-term solutions and short-term relief is needed.

The most significant finding that emerged is that there is a lack of redundancy in Broken Hill's housing market. Specifically, there is concern about the shortage of stock for rent, and that there is a small housing supply pipeline (a patchwork of small and one-off developments). This means if step-change growth in demand occurs, the market does not have the capacity to respond to this.

Our research indicates that the Broken Hill housing market is challenged to stimulate housing supply fast enough to support demand, which means government intervention and change management processes are required to address this and support the market.

The significance of this finding is that housing quality and the ability to access housing can impact people's experiences and perceptions of place. We believe that the housing situation in Broken Hill is and should be strongly linked to strategies for population stability and management of periodic increases in demand, economic development and securing the future viability of the city and positive social outcomes.

More so, we think it the imperative of this project and ensuing to recognise and centre the connection of the Barkandji people to the lands where Broken Hill is situated. The Barkandji people endured an 18 year wait to determine a native title claim which eventuated in the largest native claim NSW has seen<sup>2</sup>. The Barkandji people are key stakeholders in this place given their connection to country. Further 10% of the Broken Hill population identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander<sup>3</sup>. There is an opportunity to involve the First Nations community and Traditional Owners in shaping Broken Hill's response to current challenges and future directions. More so, the Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) is a stakeholder in the future housing story in Broken Hill. Both the LALC and the Barkandji Registered Native Title Body Corporate are likely to be freehold land holders in BH in the future, in addition to the Native Title determination.

Given that demand-generating investment decisions still need to be made (i.e., commitment from mining companies), the implications of the current high rental demand and the expected potential population step-change (explained in the following section) needs to be understood.

This section outlines the challenges, opportunities, and severity of the impacts of external factors that affect housing in Broken Hill. We have looked at this from a housing opportunity (land and property) perspective, rather than a demographic demand, meaning we have investigated whether there is suitable housing to meet the needs and desires of the people demanding it. This can guide focus areas for further analysis on population demographics, housing typologies and the quantum of housing to be delivered (housing demand and supply gap) to respond to expected change (e.g., ageing of the population and reducing household size).

At the end of each section, we propose indicators that need to be monitored to inform the design, scale, and timing of work streams to be implemented, outlined in Section 3. We conclude that a minimum level of housing capacity needs to be created in Broken Hill to enable its ability to respond to demand, regardless of how great that demand is.

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<sup>2</sup> ABC News, 16 June 2015, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-16/nsw-largest-native-title-claim-determination/6549180>

<sup>3</sup> 1,751 people according to the ABS Census 2021

# Housing demand

With mining being a key industry in Broken Hill and the genesis of the city linked to mining, the prosperity of Broken Hill and the size of the city's population has always been linked to commodity pricing cycles and mining industry interest. With new major (mining) projects recently being announced, Broken Hill is gearing up for another potential boom period. Broken Hill is also experiencing temporary step-changes with the influx of industries, like film and the visitor economy that bring many people, for a short time. As such, when coupled with supply issues explored later, the local housing market has experienced extreme stress. However, this may not be a sustained demand that encourages a long-term solution. There may be risks associated with responding solely to this influx if this demand for housing disappears as quickly as it arrived.

## Broken Hill is a city designed for a larger population

In the 19th century, Broken Hill became New South Wales's 3rd largest population centre. The city's population peaked in the 1960s at around 30,000. Since then, Broken Hill's population has been slowly decreasing in size, shaped by the local mining industry and changes in workforce needs.

In addition to the boom-bust cycles of commodity pricing, the industry has become more efficient with technological advances. This means it needs fewer people to extract more resources, which will affect how many people move to the city with the opening of a new mine.

Like many other cities across regional Australia, Broken Hill has experienced a population drain with people moving away to other regions and cities and an ageing population. Figure 2 shows Broken Hill has experienced a declining trend in population since the 1960s. Figure 3 shows the number of dwellings in Broken Hill has remained steady over the past 30 years.

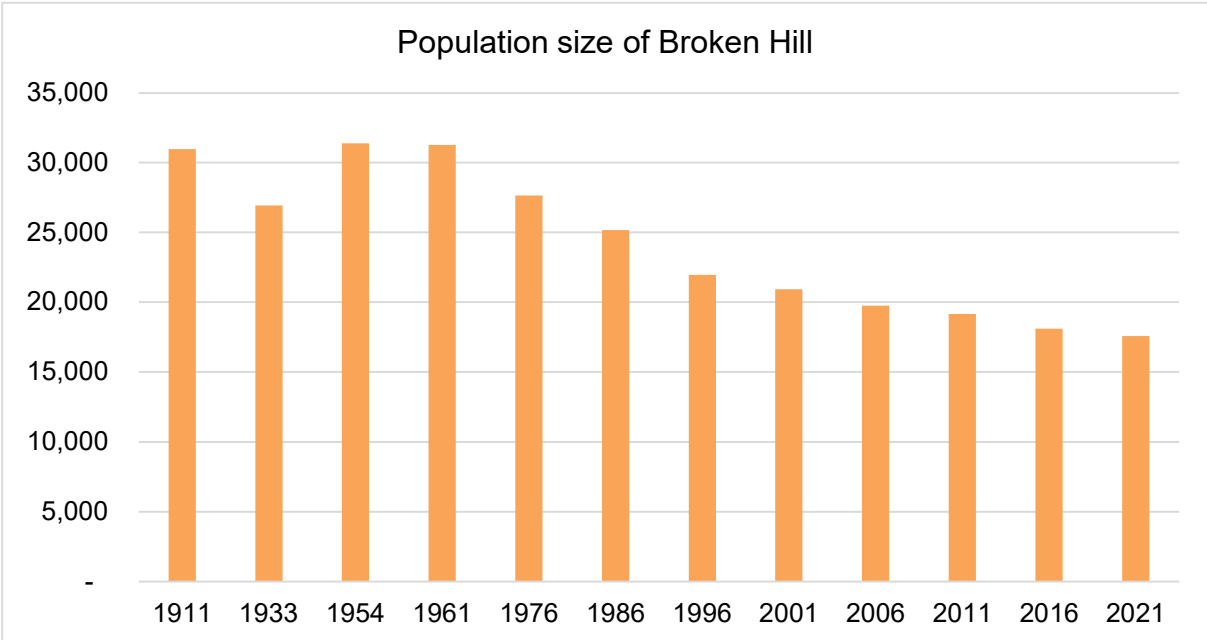


Figure 2 Historic population size of Broken Hill. Source: ABS Historical Population

At first glance, this trend in declining population size would suggest that demand for housing should be lower than what it previously has been in Broken Hill. However, we know that users of housing extend beyond residents and includes the short-term rental market and there is a falling number of people per dwelling (Figure 17). This is parallel to a potential reduction in the number of houses available and fit for occupation<sup>4</sup>, and as such indicates that housing demand could be higher than available supply.

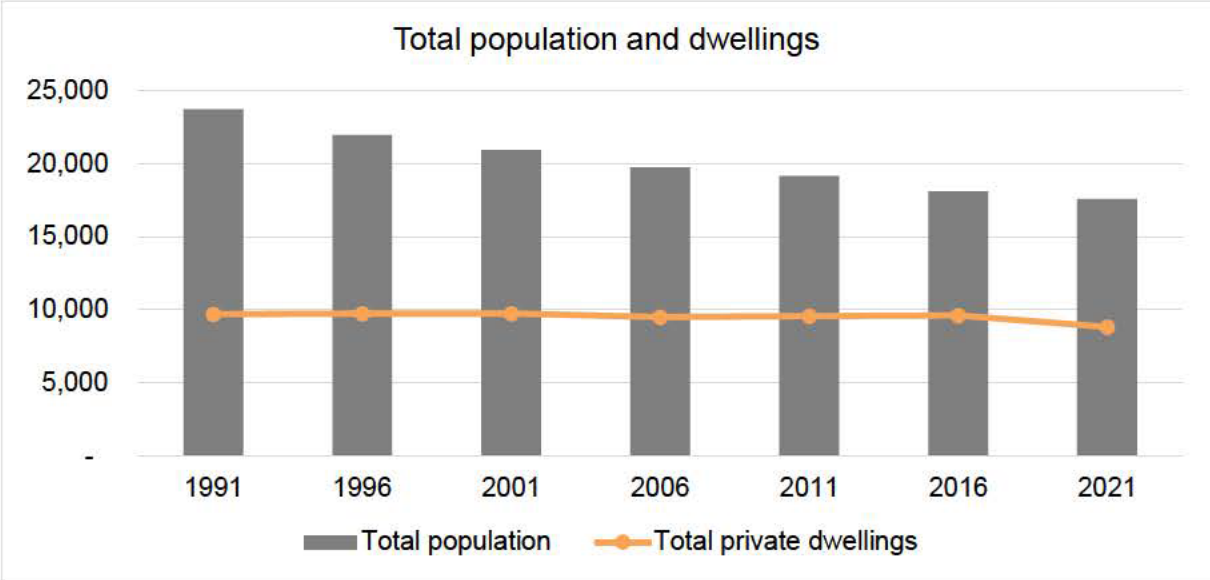


Figure 3 Historic population size and number of dwellings (ABS Census 1991 – 2021)

### Broken Hill’s housing market is feeling a squeeze

As of May 2022, the residential vacancy rate for Broken Hill was 0.4%, well below the period of the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, see Figure 4. This indicates that Broken Hill’s housing system is lacking redundancy, which is best understood in the following anecdote.

**Engagement insight**

*A local real estate agent told us they get calls for rentals constantly, every day throughout the day. He further stated that his agency, like all other agencies in the city, has a list of 40-50 pre-approved rental applications that are waiting for a vacancy. In reality, this percentage is 0 as there are minimal to no dwellings available for rent on the market.*

<sup>4</sup> The following section of this report 'Housing Supply' outlines the various factors contributing to the falling supply of dwellings available to accommodate the population driving demand in Broken Hill

# RESIDENTIAL VACANCY RATES

## REGION: BROKEN HILL-DUBBO

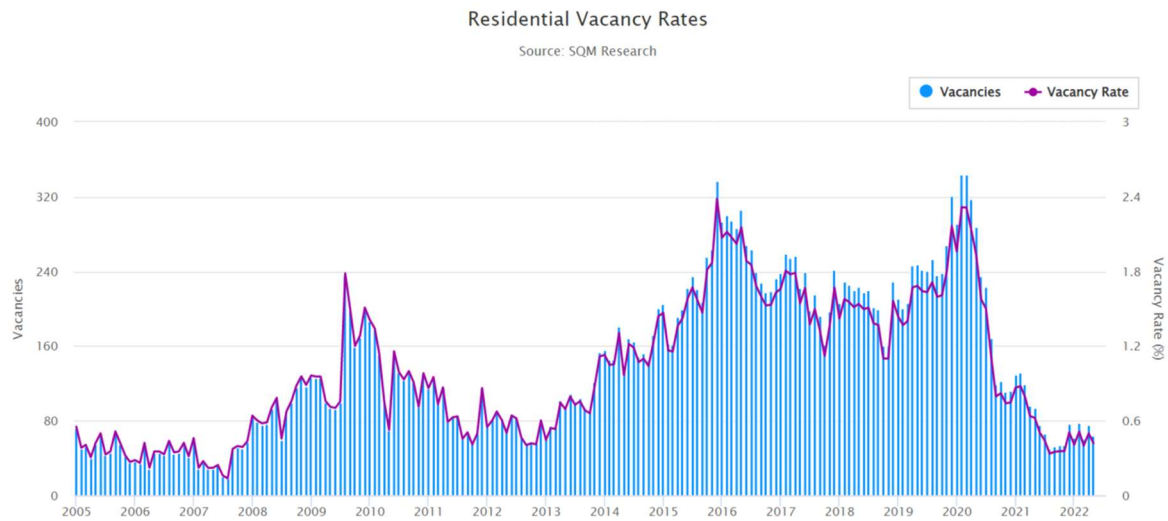


Figure 4 Residential Vacancy Rates for Broken Hill-Dubbo. Source: SQM Research

From our observations during this project there have been changes in the market that indicate demand is continuing to increase. In early May 2022, a desktop search for listed residential properties returned a range of listings for sale invited offers. However, a desktop search in early July 2022, returned a series of listings for auction. This indicates that, at that time, Broken Hill's housing market is gaining attention and potentially greater investor interest.

## Different groups have differing housing needs

Broken Hill is no different than anywhere else in the sense that different demographic groups are looking for accommodation, each with their own preference for tenure, typology and site characteristics. We have identified what we consider to be the key groups looking for housing in Broken Hill. These groups can be considered as key personas that need to be understood to effectively inform the gaps in Broken Hill's housing market and the types of dwellings that need to be supplied.

### Existing population

The population of Broken Hill has experienced a small decline since 2016, decreasing by 120 people to approximately 17,590 people in 2021. During this time, the proportion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has increased by 1.5%, to 10%. The proportion of Broken Hill residents born in Australia has remained consistent at a significant 87%.

### Household composition

The household composition has shifted in the past 5 years (see Figure 5), with a greater number of lone-person households – up from 32.8% in 2016 – and couples without children – up from 24.5%.



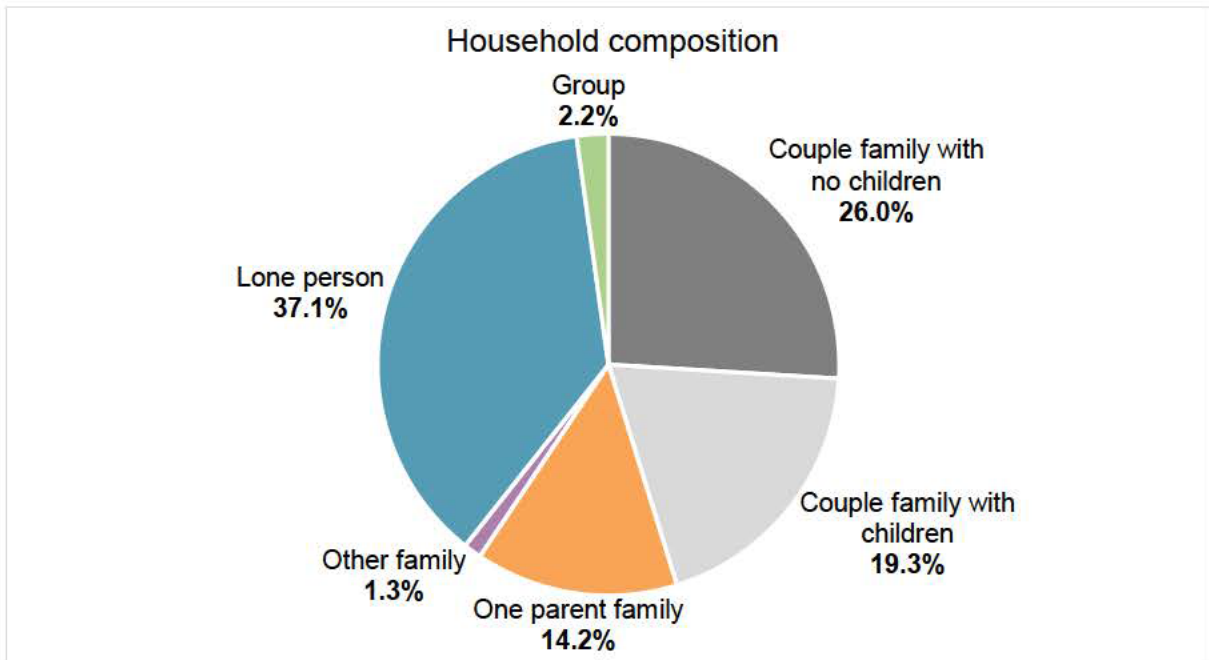


Figure 5 Household composition 2021. Source: ABS 2021 Census

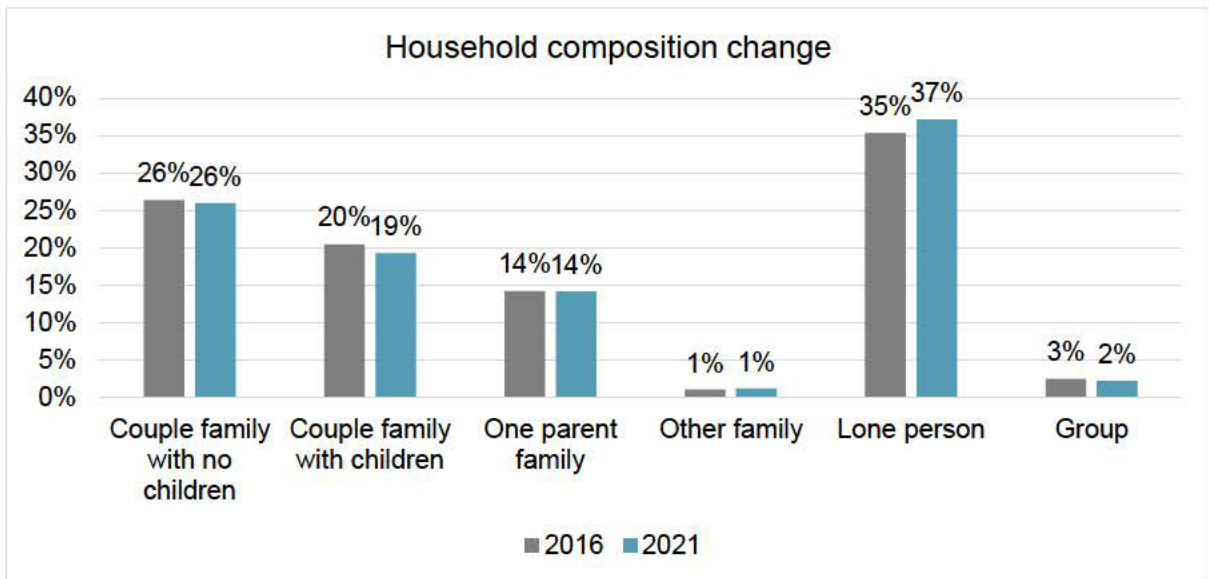


Figure 6 Household composition change between 2016 – 2021. Source: ABS Census 2016 & 2021

## Household income

Approximately one third of households in Broken Hill are in the 'very low' income band, equivalent to approximately 50% or less of median income<sup>5</sup>. 15% of households are considered to be in the 'low' income band, with 17% in the moderate band.

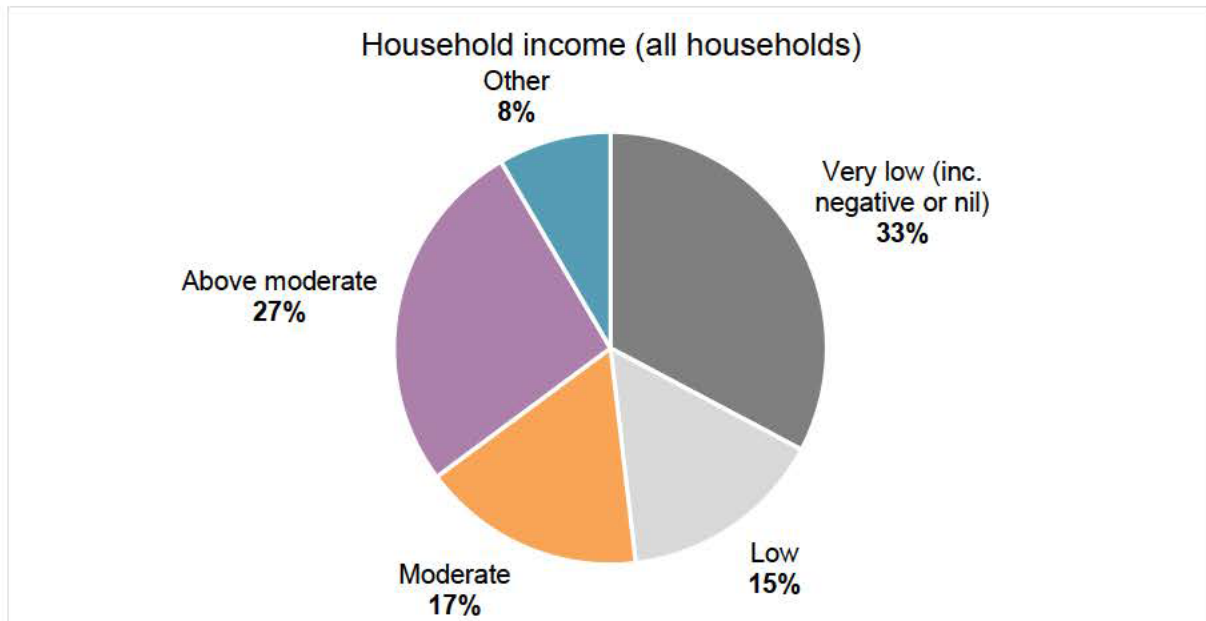


Figure 7 Household Income 2021. Source: ABS 2021 Census

Housing stress<sup>6</sup> disproportionately impacts very low-income households, with 61% of those with a mortgage and a higher 76% of renters experiencing stress<sup>7</sup>.

When looking at affordability against household composition, lone-person households are more likely to be experiencing issues, with 7% reported to be in housing stress, compared to 5% of family households and 4% of group households<sup>8</sup>.

In 2016, a total of 631 households had an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander resident, approximate 9% of all households. These households were more likely to be in houses that was not suited to their needs, with almost 8% of households requiring one of more additional bedrooms (ABS Census 2016). This is significantly higher than remaining households, where less than 2% were in need of additional bedrooms.

Figure 8 indicates the breakdown of income bands amongst Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander households in 2016. A significant proportion of households were considered as having 'very low'

<sup>5</sup> The breakdown of household incomes bands has been developed using the methodology outlined by Family and Community Services (<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/housing/affordable/manage/chapters/household-median-incomes-2020-21>). As ABS releases census data on household incomes in a unique set of bands, the breakdown above has been adjusted as follows: very low (less than \$41,548 annual household income), low (\$41,549 - \$64,948) and moderate (\$64,949 - \$103,948). 'Other' encompasses 'partial income stated' and 'all incomes not stated'.

<sup>6</sup> Spending more than 30% of income on housing costs

<sup>7</sup> <https://housing.id.com.au/broken-hill/stress-and-need#>

<sup>8</sup> <https://housing.id.com.au/broken-hill/stress-and-need#>

incomes at 44%<sup>9</sup>, with 31% having either a low or moderate income, and 13% having an above moderate income.

The needs of different groups, particularly those that are most vulnerable in the community, must be considered in the review of existing housing supply and design and delivery of new supply.

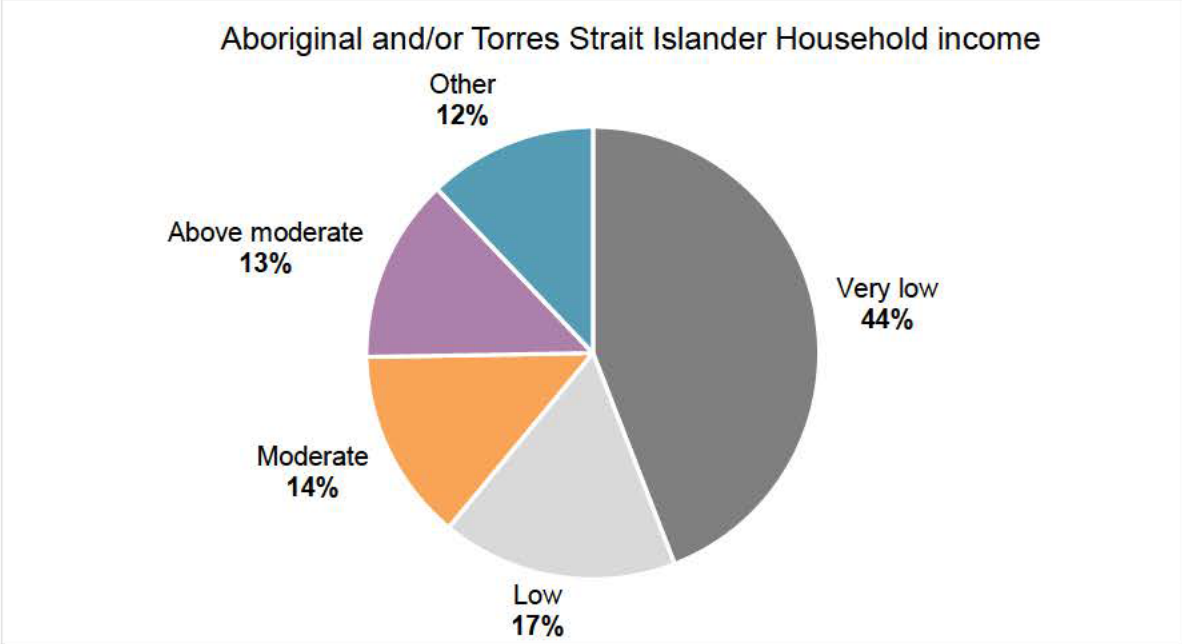


Figure 8 Households with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons Income 2016. Source: ABS 2016 Census

Population size is determined by three key drivers: natural increase (balance of births and deaths), net internal migration (balance of people within Australia moving to a place compared to moving to elsewhere in Australia) and net overseas migration (balance of people moving to a place from overseas compared to moving away to elsewhere in the world). Figure 9 shows the population drivers in Broken Hill and that the net population has been declining over the past five years. Both the ageing population and a larger number of people moving away from Broken Hill than moving in has contributed to population decline.

**Migration**

In Broken Hill, sustaining the city’s existing population is dependent on emigration of people into Broken Hill. In recent years there have been more people leaving Broken Hill for other places than there have been people moving in.

<sup>9</sup> The breakdown of household incomes bands has been developed based on the 2016 median weekly household income for the Rest of NSW (\$1,168, ABS Census 2016). As ABS releases census data on household incomes in a unique set of bands, the breakdown above has been adjusted as follows: very low (less than \$33,800 annual household income), low (\$33,800 - \$51,999) and moderate (\$62,000 – \$77,999). ‘Other’ encompasses ‘partial income stated’ and ‘all incomes not stated’.



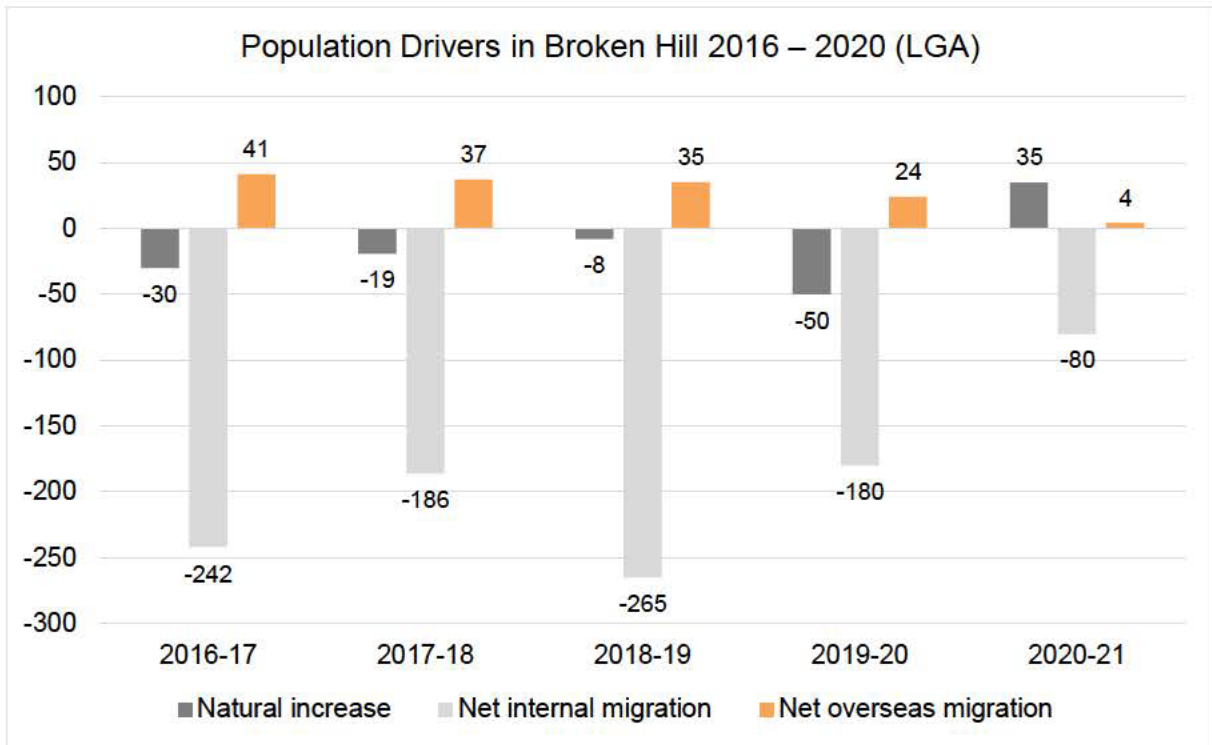


Figure 9 Population drivers for Broken Hill. Source: ABS Regional Population

The differences between the NSW Government and BHCC's (see Figure 10), perspectives on population projections for Broken Hill highlight the impacts of jobs and industry workforce needs on who resides in Broken Hill. Id. population forecasts show a stable population as it assumes in-migration from workers moving to Broken Hill to take up job opportunities with new major projects.

As shown in Figure 10, id. population forecasts indicate a significant increase in population between 2021 and 2026, assuming proposed new mining projects commencing in this period. The population then stabilises over the next fifteen years. The significance of this difference in population projections is that Broken Hill's housing system is dependent on knowing who it needs to service, how many people and when. As we recommend later in this report, monitoring demand drivers is crucial to relieving Broken Hill's housing pressures (see Recommendation 2).

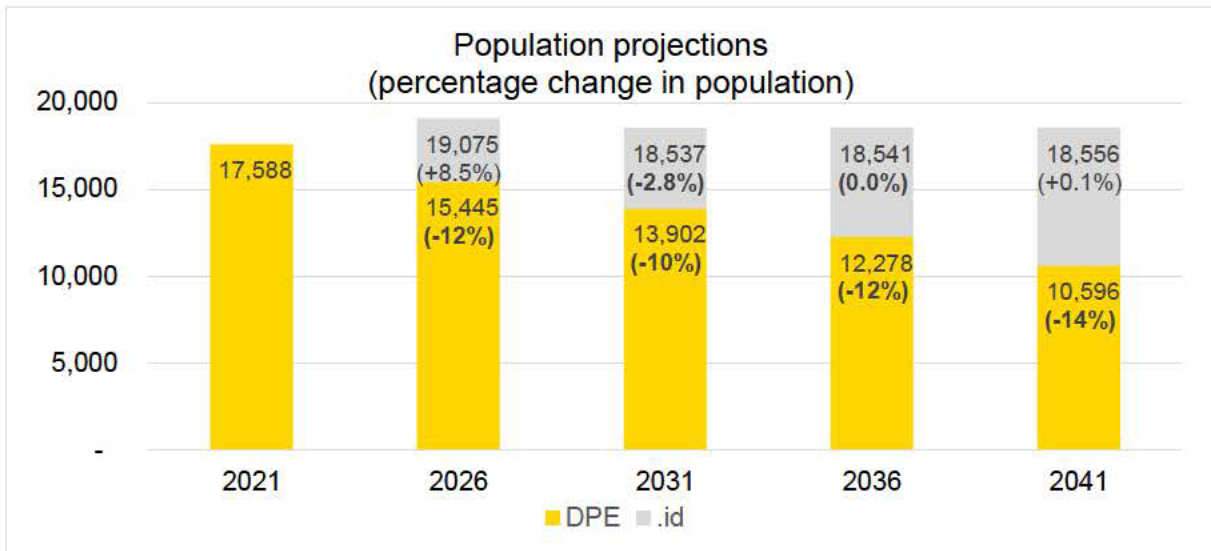


Figure 10 Comparison of population projections for 2026-2041. Source: NSW DPE Population Projections 2022 and .id. population forecasts

### Natural increase

The existing population is ageing. If there is little in-migration of people of childbearing age who give birth in Broken Hill, then an ageing population can lead to a decline in population over time. Figure 11 shows the differences in assumptions where the NSW Government's DPE projections assume little migration and therefore an older population in 2041, whilst .id population forecasts assume some in-migration of workers which creates a younger population in 2041.

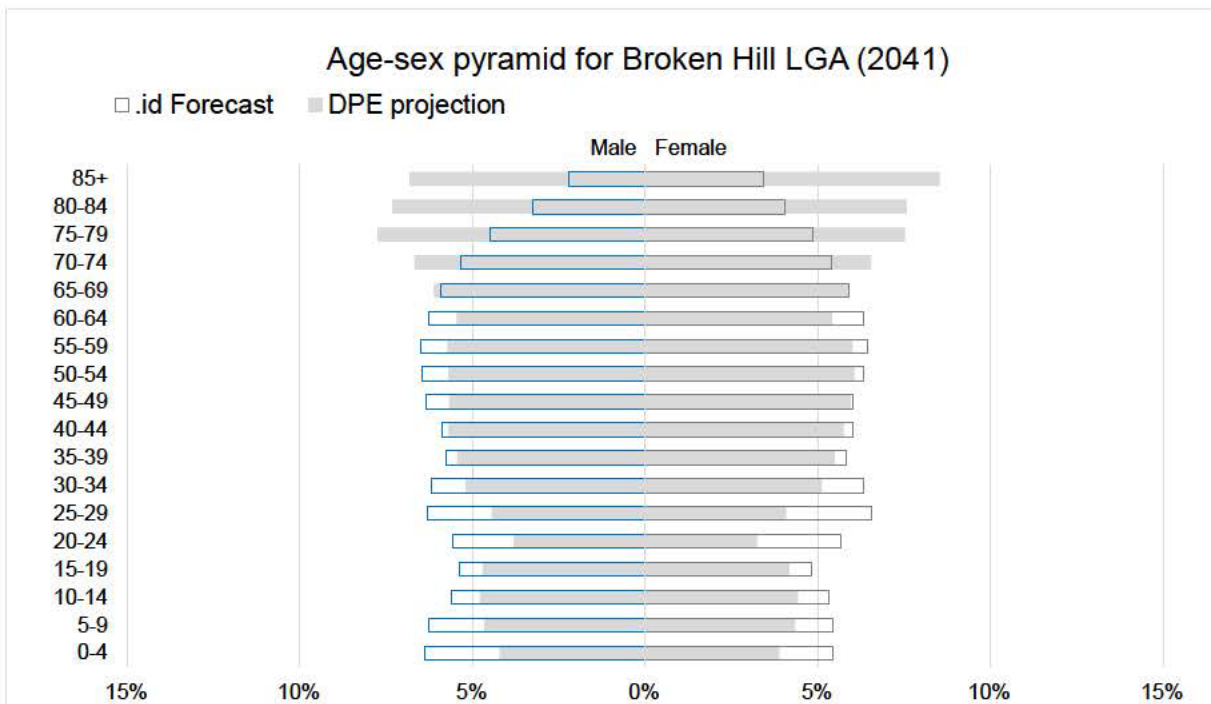


Figure 11 Comparison of population projections for 2041. Source: NSW DPE Population Projections and .id. population forecasts



## Key workers and population serving workers

Key workers are a key group who are contributing to the demand for housing in Broken Hill (see Box 1). Despite differing population projections and narratives about the decline of Broken Hill, it must be recognised that Broken Hill is a strategic centre in the Far West of NSW and plays an important role in the provision of services to part of the broader region. As such, there will always be a base level of demand for key workers.

### **Engagement insight**

*Speaking to a nurse at Broken Hill Airport she told us she uses Broken Hill as a base to provide clinical support to other towns nearby in the Far West region. She explained that when booking accommodation she couldn't find a room that could house her for her entire stay instead she had to change location midway through her work visit.*

In addition to the key workers, as defined by the Government, ancillary services are operating in Broken Hill whose workers are not government employees but are still in demand, such as the Royal Flying Doctor's Service and the University of Sydney's Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health.

### **Box 1. Department of Regional NSW – Housing Key Workers**

The Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) currently defines 'key workers' as those employed by NSW Government in health, education, police and justice. We acknowledge that this definition is static and excludes the numerous other workers who are key to ensuring Broken Hill's success. Population serving workers, such as retail and hospitality workers, bankers, government employees, hairdressers, and barbers, are workers that are part of every community and provide the community with a range of important services and products. As the population in Broken Hill grows, so will the need for key workers and population serving workers.

DRNSW is currently leading a program to provide housing for key workers across regional NSW, including Broken Hill. Astrolabe supported the DRNSW in conducting research and analysis and found that workers are having to either leave a job as they can't find suitable housing or reject offers of employment for the same reason. This means, that Broken Hill is currently struggling to house the population of key workers already in the city.

Despite being known as a 'mining town', Figure 12 illustrates that after mining, the top industries of employment for residents are health care and social assistance. This is followed by retail, education, hospitality, and public administration, which are critical population-serving jobs for the community living in Broken Hill as well as communities across the wider Far West region.

This is further supported by Figure 13, where the data shows the relationship between the number of mining jobs compared to jobs in other industries in key mining towns across Australia. It indicates that within a community, despite there being a dominant industry, other workers live-in and support a town. In Broken Hill, there is relatively more diversity in employment opportunities when compared to some other interstate mining towns. For Broken Hill, this means that without mining there is a

diverse population of workers to house. The issue arises when this already tight housing market experiences 'peak demand' in a short period of time, an example being when new mining workers move to town to align with the opening of a mine or more short-term peaks due to filming or festivals.

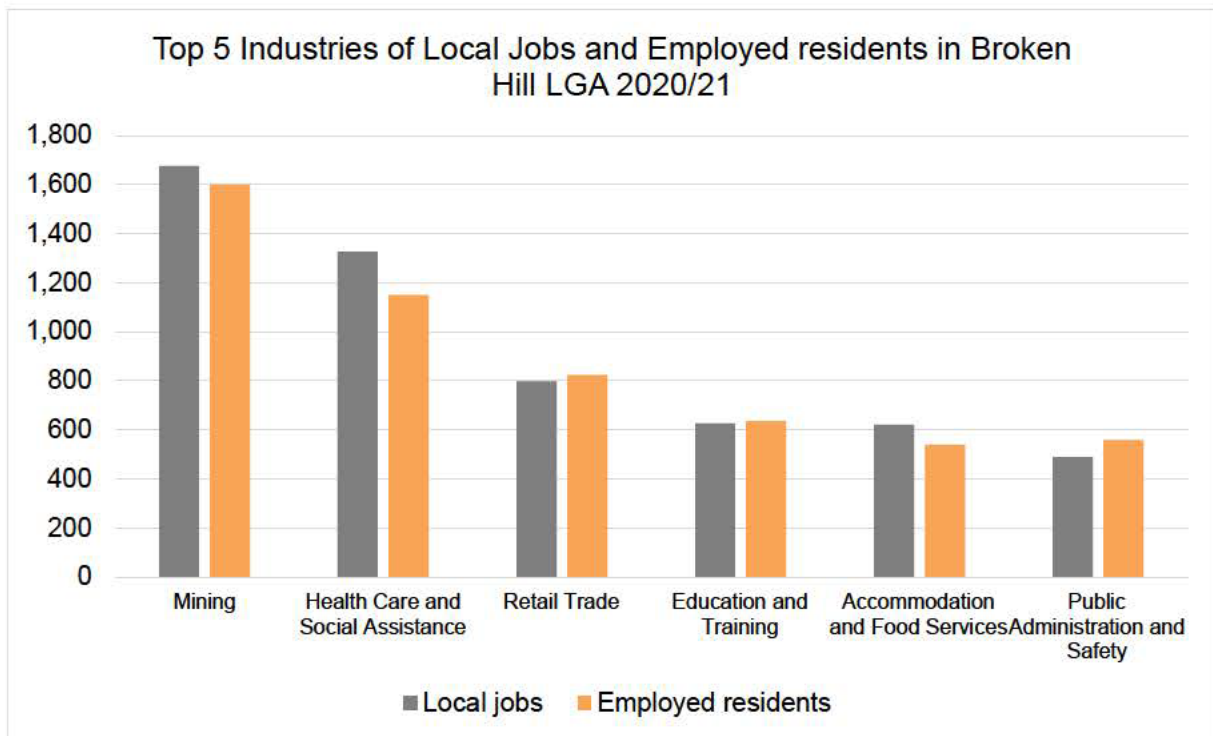


Figure 12 Top 5 industries for local jobs and industries that residents are employed in. Source: .id economic profile

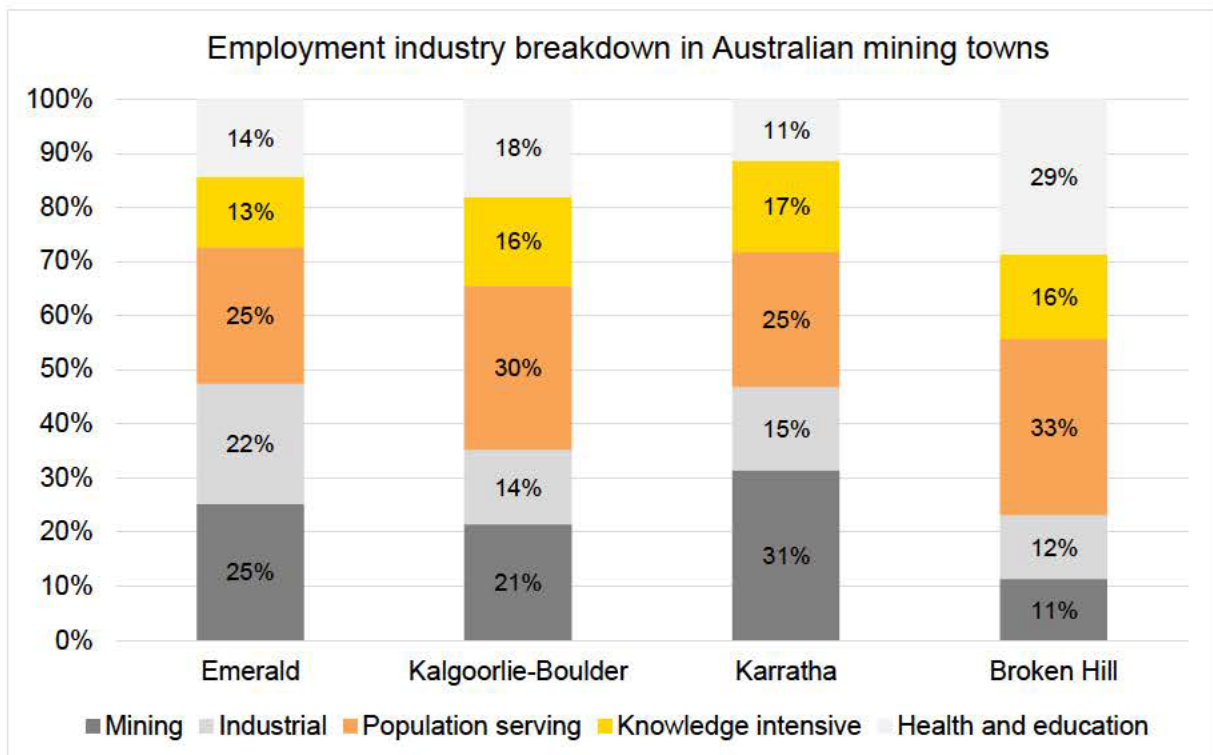


Figure 13 Ratio of mining workers compared to other industries. Source: ABS 2016 Census



Figure 14 shows, there is further unmet demand that needs to be accommodated. With the two main industries advertising vacancies on SEEK are two key worker industries; healthcare and medical, and government and defence (which includes police and justice).

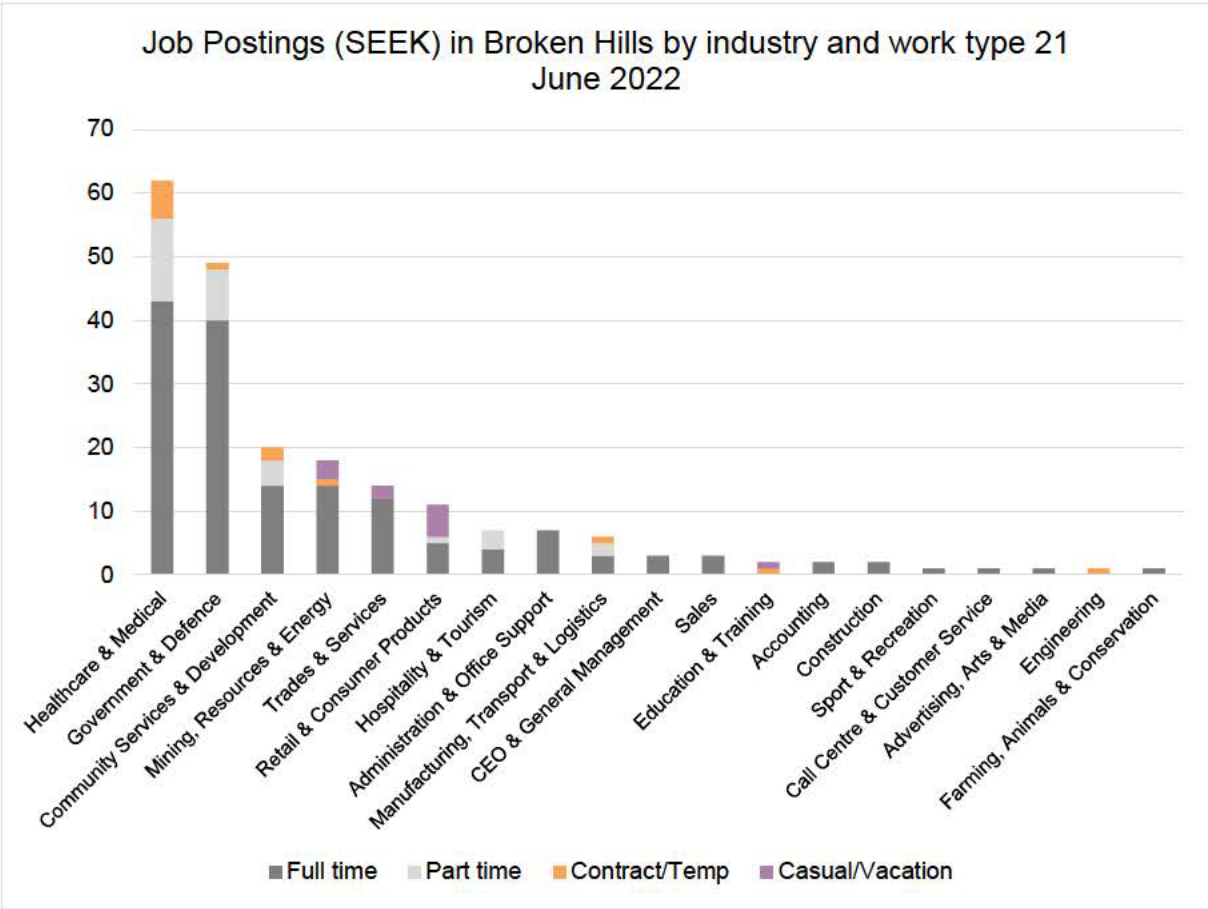


Figure 14 Job Postings (SEEK) in Broken Hills by industry and work type. Source: SEEK

Peak demand for housing may be caused by any population of workers if there is a new project or increased service brought online. Determining if workers will be a key driver of demand for housing, and contribute to periods of 'peak demand', requires knowing if these workers already exist in the city or are external to Broken Hill. If only a percentage of the projected workers needed for these projects come from outside of Broken Hill, meaning a majority of the workforce already resides in Broken Hill, it will impact the housing stock needed.

Currently, the unemployment rate in Broken Hill is 5.9%, thus it is reasonable to suggest that there is a low probability that suitably qualified people are in Broken Hill to fill these roles and instead people are relocating to Broken Hill to fill job vacancies. Figure 15 shows the industries where there are more jobs in Broken Hill than the number of employed residents in these industries. The industries that have a higher ratio indicates that their workforce may not live locally. Important to note that Broken Hill is home to a lot of mine workers, and as such is not as reliant on fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) like other regional mining towns.

Additionally, as with each of the populations driving housing demand, we need to understand workers' tenure and housing preferences to create an effective and efficient system of housing



people. While some key workers and population serving workers will be focused on making Broken Hill home, there will be a population of workers who will be in Broken Hill for shorter periods but will still require suitable and comfortable accommodation – partly to ensure these workers commit to coming to Broken Hill. Without ensuring the attraction of these workers there will be other serious consequences for the health and socioeconomic future of Broken Hill.

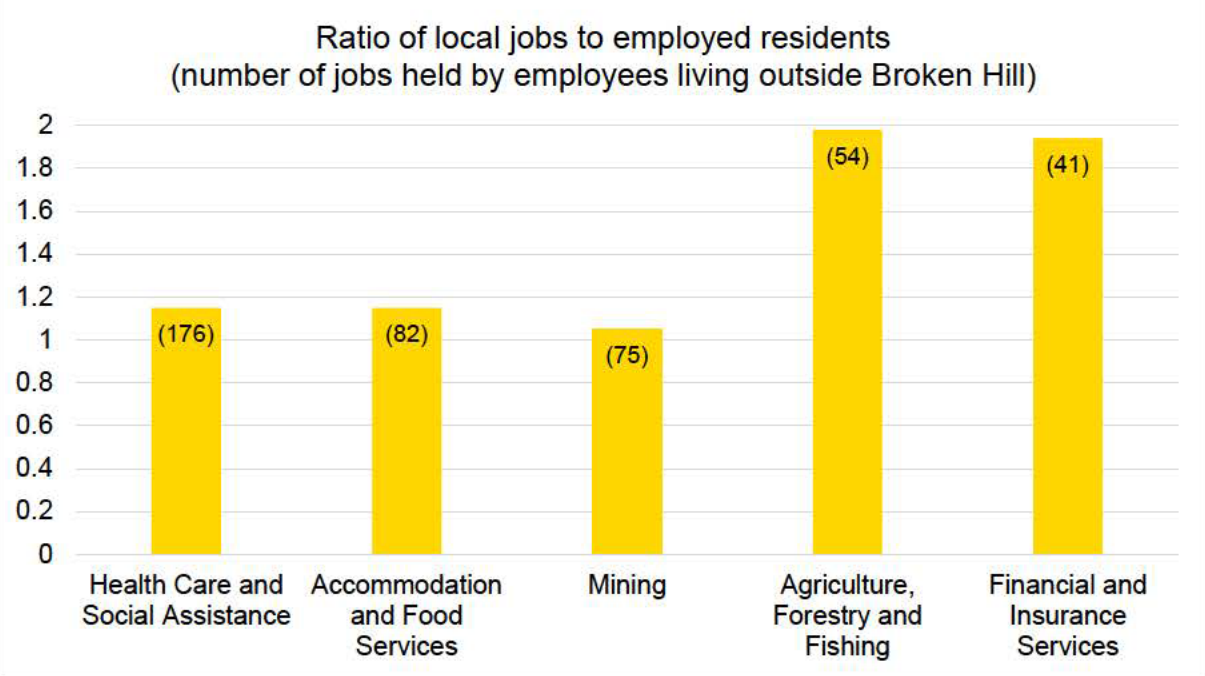


Figure 15 Ratio of local jobs to employed residents in Broken Hill 2022-21. Source: .id economic profile

**Key industries – mining workers**

One of the most influential groups interested in housing in Broken Hill is mine workers. According to the Minerals Council and BHCC, there is a suite of new major projects that are expected to commence operations locally over the next 2-4 years which will drive demand for workers in Broken Hill.

Workforce projections for these projects have been outlined by the NSW Minerals Council, additionally, there are other major Council projects and State Government projects requiring a workforce (see Appendix B for an overview of each project's timeline and workforce projections). There are two workforce projections: one estimation for the construction phase of a project and one estimation for the permanent workforce required for the operating phase of a mine.

However, these numbers are unconfirmed, with mining companies yet to undertake workforce audits for proposed projects, and do not give a nuanced overview of whether Broken Hill has an existing workforce that can meet these projected demands.

### **Engagement insight**

*For example, Cobalt Blue is a year out from understanding the real demand for the project, and the timeline for other projects will be longer. Cobalt Blue is yet to finalise technical papers that will identify how many workers are needed and if they are needed from outside of Broken Hill.*

*Further, they are a year from understanding the demographic characteristics of this workforce, and the housing that these workers will require.*

### **Short stays (tourism/seasonal work)**

Demand for accommodation in Broken Hill is linked to how the city has strategically positioned itself as an attractive location for the film industry to base major projects, e.g., the recent Mad Max production. Broken Hill City Council has a dedicated services page<sup>10</sup> on their Council website that shows a catalogue of the diverse landscapes and opportunities Broken Hill provides to the film industry.

However, this is a group that while not expected to be permanent residents of Broken Hill, requires short-term stays. For the city to remain strategically placed to host these events and industries it must devise a solution in which an influx of short-stay visitors does not cause a housing crisis, which is currently the case. As of June 2022, the NSW Planning Portal shows there are 85 short stay properties registered in Broken Hill. More so, a solution needs to be delicately devised to ensure the solution doesn't cause a crisis when these populations leave Broken Hill (i.e., flood the market with housing).

In addition to the presence of the film industry affecting housing in Broken Hill, the following factors have also made the city an accessible and attractive place, that in turn has impacted the demand for accommodation:

Broken Hill has grown to be a cultural hotspot, for people in the Far West, but also for visitors to the Far West as music festivals and seasonal annual events are making their way annually onto the city's event calendar. As such, domestic tourism to Outback NSW, especially since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased. In December 2019 the average number of nights spent in Outback NSW was 3.1, whereas after the COVID-19 pandemic in December 2021 this has increased to 4.1 nights per stay.

Though the influence of covid on visitors has seen domestic tourism rates increase to the largest since before the pandemic, visitor numbers may decline over the next two years as overseas travel picks up and returns to pre-covid trends.

The number of visitors to Broken Hill seeking short-stay accommodation may fluctuate and the permanence of trends can be uncertain. Tourism campaigns that BHCC and the NSW Government are running and the announcement to increase QantasLink services to Broken Hill could generate greater visitors to the city or may have only temporary impacts.

This demand for short-stay accommodation has consequences for our finding about a lack of redundancy in Broken Hill's housing system. Currently, short-stay visitors and entire film crews are

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<sup>10</sup> Broken Hill City Council | [Filming in Broken Hill](#)



soaking up accommodation that may be better suited to temporary workers on contracts in Broken Hill.

### **Engagement insight**

*During our stakeholder engagement we were told that with the arrival of the Mad Max film crew to the city there wasn't enough accommodation to house the entire crew, so Broken Hill residents were making room by moving out of their homes, some staying with friends and relatives, to free up housing and offering their houses for the film crew to stay.*

## **Housing preferences influence demand for housing type and location**

While we have outlined how a change in population will impact the demand for housing, we must also explore how demand for housing can also increase while a population remains stable. This situation will occur if household sizes shrink, and/or because there is a change in a population's tenure preference. Different groups in the community will have specific preferences for tenure given their situation and this needs to be considered in the planning, design, and incentivising of new housing supply. Thus, it is crucial to understand the demand for tenure if you are going to solve this problem.

Tenure preferences for housing can be based on various factors, including but not limited to:

- **Affordability** – what price they are willing or able to pay for accommodation.
- **Length of stay** – this may impact what size, condition, and level of comfort a person is seeking. This can also impact the amount of money someone is willing to pay and invest in housing.
- **Household make-up and family members** – a family situation may influence someone's desire for more secure tenure (through property purchase). For example, someone with children may desire tenure that enables their security to stay in one place, linked to a community or school, rather than someone who may be more amenable to moving and comfortable with renting. Whether a person is single, in a couple or part of a family may also influence their preferences around finding their own house or joining a share house.

In addition to tenure, people may prefer houses in particular locations over others.

### **Engagement insight**

*Our discussions with real estate agents and local developers gave us insight into possible preferences in the local market. Generally, it is considered that the northern side of the city is a desired location and home to premium stock. When it comes to new builds, local developers stated that people in Broken Hill need the confidence to make a change and are reassured with new stock being on display across the city that residents will create a chain reaction of people demanding new builds across the city.*

House prices can indicate locations that are more desirable, with higher house prices. Figure 16 below shows the variance in recent house prices for properties sold over the past five years, by location. While Figure 16 doesn't demonstrate clear-cut differences in prices between different neighbourhoods, anecdotal evidence from some local developers communicated that the northern part of the city is the preference for building and acquiring new stock. This trend may only become a problem if demand only remains for this part of town and not the rest of Broken Hill given the shortage of land available across Broken Hill. Simply put, a lack of land supply means dwelling location preference is limited. This is a factor that needs to be managed to ensure new residents to Broken Hill aren't being influenced by stereotypes and in turn deterred from living in other parts of Broken Hill.

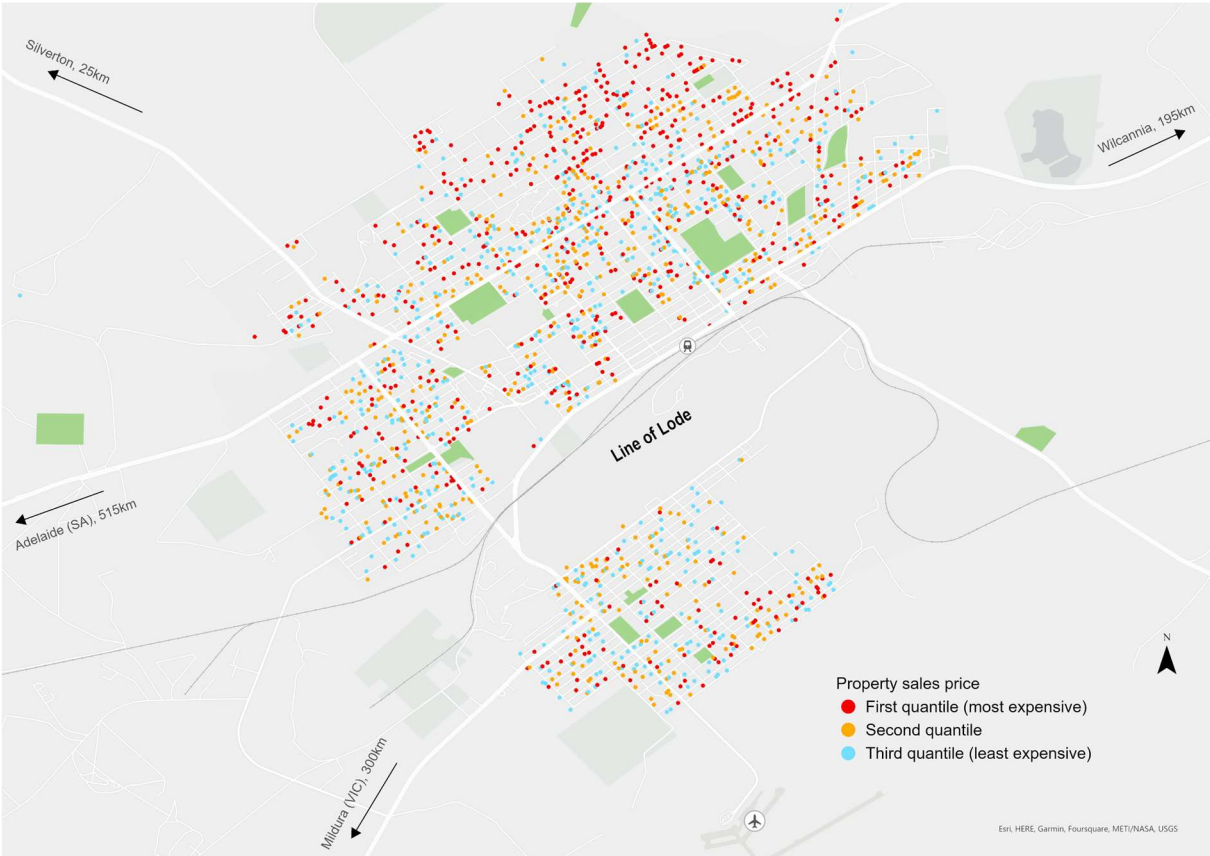


Figure 16 Spatial variation of house prices across Broken Hill. Source: CoreLogic Australian Property Data - Single dwelling houses with 2-4 bedrooms sold between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2021 are shown

Smaller household sizes impact the demand for housing. If the population size remains the same, but with fewer people per household, then there is a need for more dwellings. Over the past 20 years, average household sizes have decreased in Broken Hill. As Figure 17 shows the average household has shrunk from 1996 to 2016. However, between 2016 and 2021 the average household size in Broken Hill increased, for the first time since 1996. Household size increases can be indicative of housing stress as people choose to stay at home longer or live with friends and family due to the unavailability or unaffordability of housing.

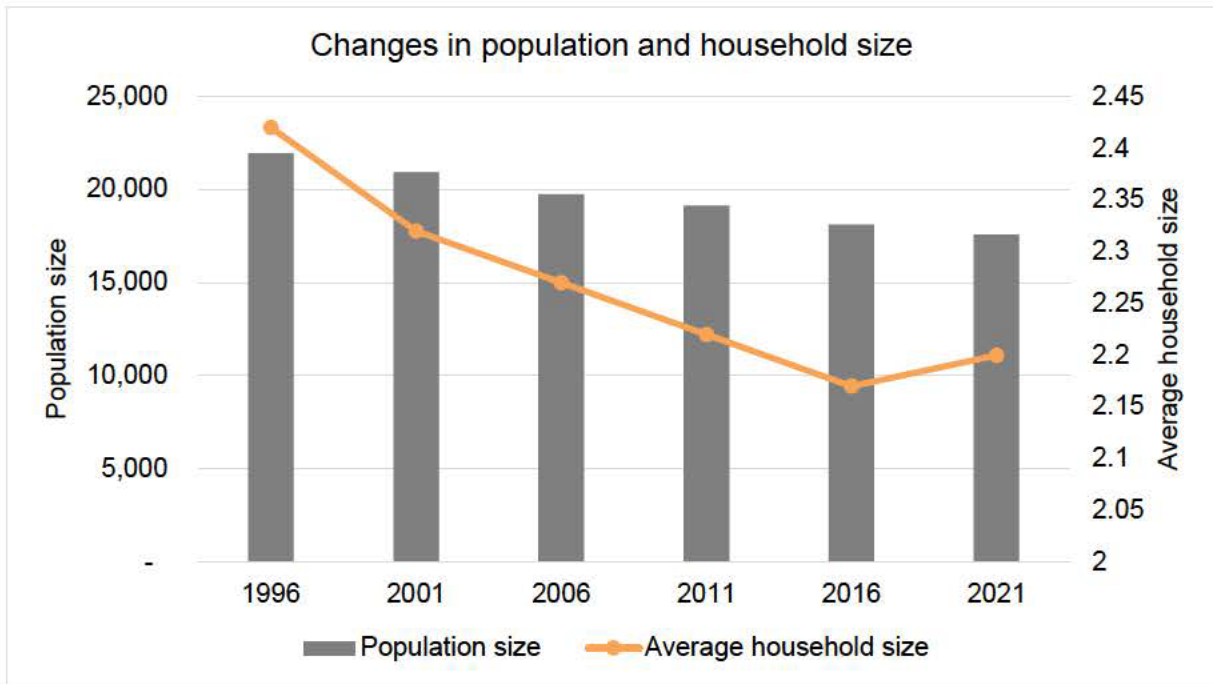


Figure 17 Changes in population and household size. Source: ABS Census 1996-2021

## Personas for housing demand in Broken Hill

Drivers of demand in Broken Hill can be mapped against various personas or different population groups. This exercise helps to understand the possible reasons for seeking accommodation in Broken Hill and people's preferences for tenure and stock. It is crucial to understand these groups' niche demands to inform the next step of supply. The below table overviews examples of possible personas and their demands.

Solutions to Broken Hill's housing shortage may involve changes to density and require developments in less preferential parts of the city. As such navigating what people are demanding and what will be suitable will require management of culture and expectations.



Table 3 – Examples of personas and their housing demands

Persona	Time in Broken Hill	Demand for tenure	Housing suitability (potential preferences)
Existing resident (local)	Ongoing	To buy/build <sup>11</sup>	New stock Upsizing for family Downsizing as child grows up and moves out of family home Downsizing for retirement
Student nurse on placement	Between weeks and months	Seeking somewhere to rent  In May 2022 the residential vacancy rate for the region of "Broken Hill-Dubbo" was 0.4% <sup>12</sup> .	Nearby work, or with easy access to work  Possible share accommodation  Safe part of town
Consultant doctor (key worker)	A few months, ongoing contract	In Broken Hill for work on a temporary basis – may be longer than student nurse  Seeking somewhere to rent or possibly to buy that can be rented out during months away	Nearby work, or with easy access to work  Space for family  Desirable part of town
Hairdresser (a new worker attracted to move)	Relocating to Broken Hill for work opportunities given population demand	May seek out a rental before committing to buying a house  May be restricted to renting	Possible share accommodation  Space for family
Tourist	A few days to a week <sup>13</sup>	Motel/ hotel accommodation, caravan park or short stay accommodation	Motel/hotel room  Space for a family or couple

<sup>11</sup> Based on the concept that Broken Hill residents need confidence to build new and that people never want to regress in their housing journey

<sup>12</sup> SQM Search, Residential Vacancy Rate | [Broken Hill-Dubbo](#)

<sup>13</sup> A NSW Destination Report ending March 2022 reported that the average length of stay in Outback NSW is 3.6 nights – [Outback NSW Visitor Profile](#)

Persona	Time in Broken Hill	Demand for tenure	Housing suitability (potential preferences)
		(e.g., Airbnb, short-term holiday letting)	Easy to access to the CBD for shops, cafes and restaurants, events, and attractions
Government agency staff	A few days to a week to attend meetings and connect with colleagues	Motel/ hotel accommodation or short stay accommodation (e.g., Airbnb, short-term holiday letting)	Motel/hotel room Near to work Comfortable accommodation that meets corporate standards Near to CBD for access to cafes and restaurants
Mine worker w/ family	Duration mine operation (decades) – relocating life and family to Broken Hill	Wants to buy a house, or sign a long-term lease	Multiple bedrooms Multiple bathrooms Desirable part of town
Single mine worker	Duration of mine operation	Wants to buy a house, or Sign a long-term lease, or May seek out a rental before committing to buying a house	Possible share accommodation Live solo with enough space for future Desirable part of town
Property investor	N/A	The return on investment from buying a property and renting it out is approximately 7-10% <sup>14</sup>  Information about yield has encouraged investors to buy in Broken Hill	3-4 bedrooms (premium product) Desirable part of town Surrounded by desirable stock

<sup>14</sup> This percentage fluctuates. Data from SQM Research illustrates this particular range from March 2022 to July 2022 | [Property Gross Rental Yield - Broken Hill](#)

# Volatility of demand

The nature of a boom-bust cycle means Broken Hill has previously experienced periods of growth, and in turn, periods of loss. While there is optimism about incoming major projects from the mining sector, the demand profile is still uncertain. Uncertainty creates volatility, which Broken Hill is currently experiencing with a lack of redundancy in the housing system. When certain events cause a spike in demand, it adds pressure to the system. Currently, an event that would cause this pressure would be a film crew moving to the city (e.g., Mad Max) or a flight being cancelled. More significant events such as the commencement of new mining operations, which has spurred this study on the local housing situation, will add significant pressure.

Figure 18 conceptually illustrates how the different groups contribute to demand and the potential demand that won't be satisfied with current housing supply.

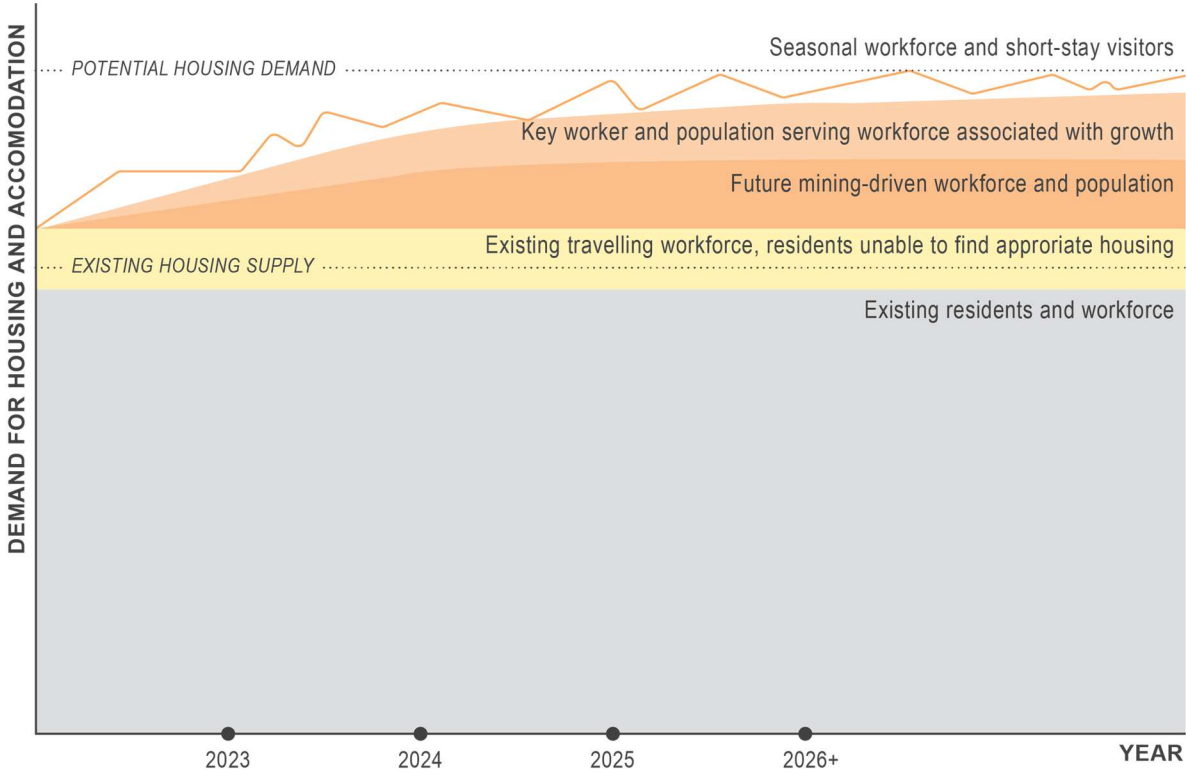


Figure 18 Groups contributing to demand for housing and accommodation

The demand profile includes:

- How many people are expected to move to Broken Hill for mining, and other industries
- The types of households needed to accommodate these people
- The timing of when people are due to arrive in Broken Hill (all at once or staggered).

This demand profile is necessary for Broken Hill to strategically plan the type of housing they need to plan for and when it needs to be ready. More so, certainty about demand will help to ensure that the optimism felt across the city doesn't become a risk to Broken Hill growing too big, too fast and not having the expected peak of demand.



There is a lack of redundancy in Broken Hill's housing system, which means if events spike demand it adds pressure to the system. Further investigation and engagement with local stakeholders, particularly with mining companies as project planning matures and workforce needs become more certain, will provide a better understanding of demand.

### Indicators to monitor to understand demand

Monitoring the following indicators can provide an understanding of whether demand for housing is steady, expected to increase or decrease. This can inform responses needed and timing.

**Table 4 – Indicators of demand**

Indicator	Measure/s	Source
<p><b>Migration</b></p> <p>Migration is a key driver behind population loss in Broken Hill</p>	<p>Net internal and overseas migration</p>	<p>ABS Regional Population 3218.0</p>
<p><b>Household size</b></p> <p>Increasing household sizes indicates people are making different living arrangements to manage the lack of available housing. Trends of smaller household size indicates demand for more housing amongst the existing population, without population growth.</p>	<p>Average number of people per household</p>	<p>ABS Census and ABS Regional Population 3218.0</p>
<p><b>Major projects and workforce needs</b></p> <p>Workers associated with major projects are significant contributors to housing demand. The workforce profile can help to understand the type and size, tenure and duration of housing needed.</p>	<p>Timeframes for project phases (construction and operation);</p> <p>The number of workers needed for each project phase;</p> <p>Workforce profile</p>	<p>Companies and local industry representatives</p>
<p><b>Short-term or seasonal work</b></p> <p>Workers can contribute to the demand for short-term and rental housing.</p>	<p>Number of workers expected and timeframes and duration of stay</p>	<p>Companies, local hotels and motels</p>
<p><b>Job advertisements</b></p> <p>Job vacancies can indicate the potential number of new workers needed from other areas to fill local workforce needs and may require housing in Broken Hill. Particularly if positions have been advertised for a long time.</p>	<p>Number of job vacancies;</p> <p>The duration the advertisement is posted</p>	<p>Job search platforms, such as seek, and local businesses</p>

# Housing supply

This section looks at the pipeline of housing stock in Broken Hill and identifies leverage points to increase supply. There are various factors impacting the quantum of supply and delivery of suitable stock to meet demand. The condition of housing stock in the city as well as the availability of stock for rent and sale can impede the ability of current stock to meet current and future demand for housing. According to the 2021 Census, there is a total of 8,859 dwellings in Broken Hill.

## Broken Hill has ageing housing stock

The majority of housing stock in Broken Hill is aged 50 years and over. The location of older stock aligns with the pattern of growth and expansion of the city with older stock in the centre and newer stock being built on the outer rings and fringes (Figure 19 and Figure 20).

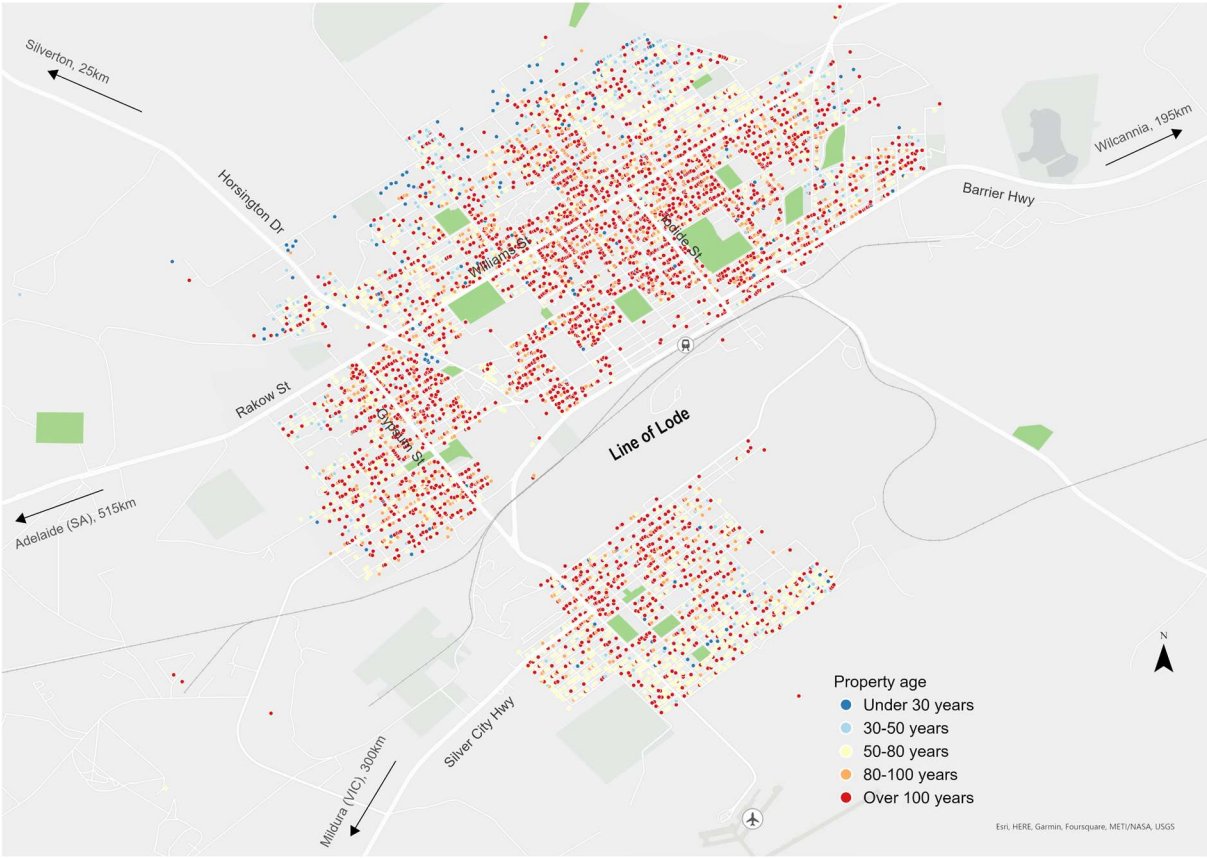


Figure 19 Age of housing stock in Broken Hill, by location. Source: Corelogic Property 2022

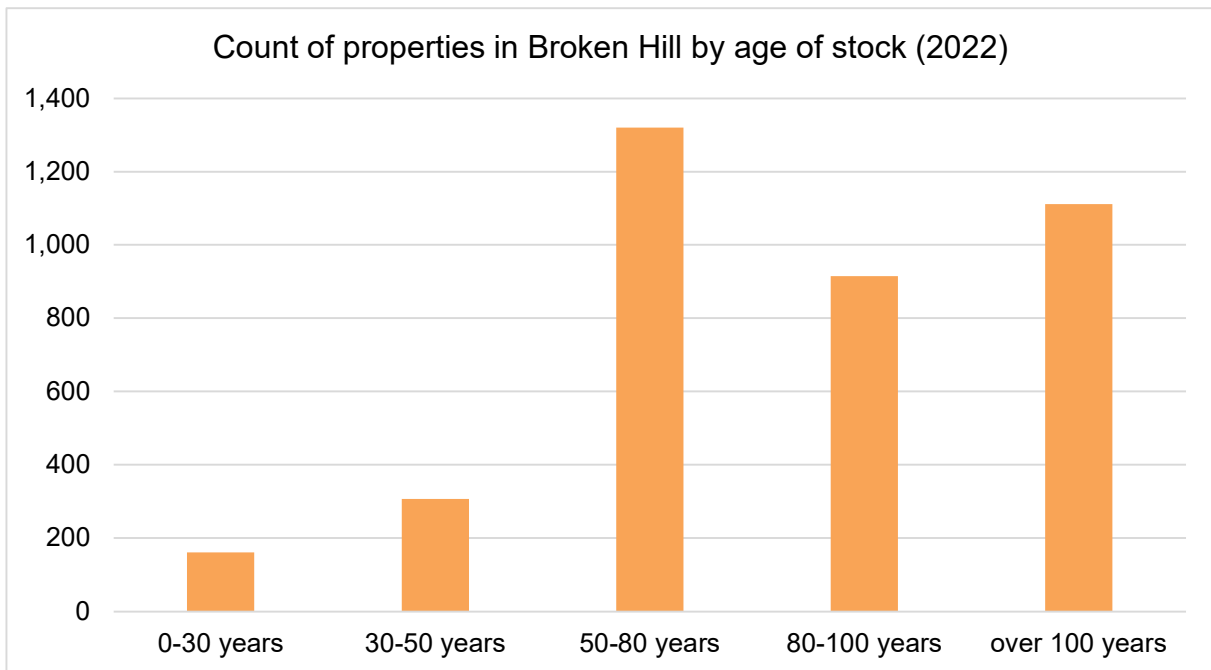


Figure 20 Count of housing stock in Broken Hill, by age. Source: Corelogic Property 2022

While there is the potential for renewal and refurbishment of this stock, the age of the houses means the construction materials require hazard management when disposed of as many homes contain traces of asbestos and lead. The barrier to freeing up this stock for the market is the cost of removing hazardous materials and renovation.

The cost of demolition can vary depending on the size of dwelling and materials, and in addition to this the presence of hazardous materials could also vary costs and fees involved. For example, one stakeholder shared that the cost of removing and disposing of asbestos could cost approximately \$20,000-\$30,000 and the estimated cost of disposing other hazardous materials such as lead could be \$6,000-\$7,000.

Currently, there is no concern about the supply chain of materials, with these being easily sourced and transported from Adelaide. However, this is something that needs to be monitored as construction scales up and the volume needed to be stockpiled and accessed increases as demand rises.

### There is a lack of diversity to meet different household needs

Broken Hill's housing stock is predominantly characterised by low-density housing, with 97% of all housing being either detached or semi-detached dwellings (Figure 21). Similarly, housing stock is significantly geared towards larger houses, with approximately 94% having three or more bedrooms (Figure 22).

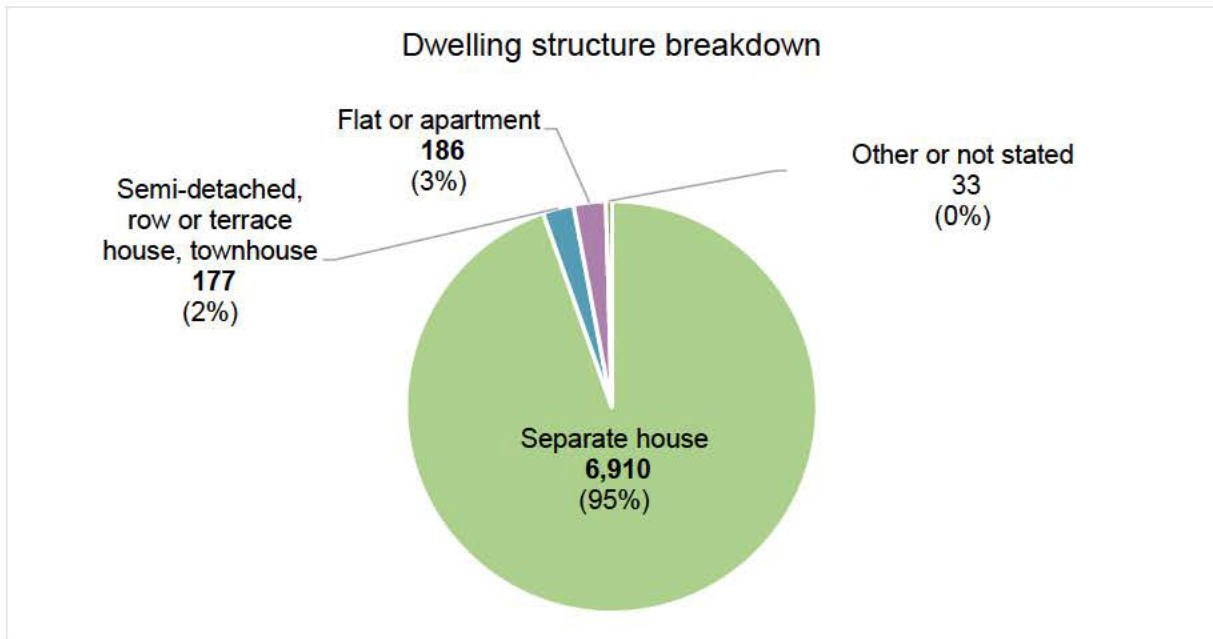


Figure 21 Dwelling structure in Broken Hill. Source: ABS Census 2021

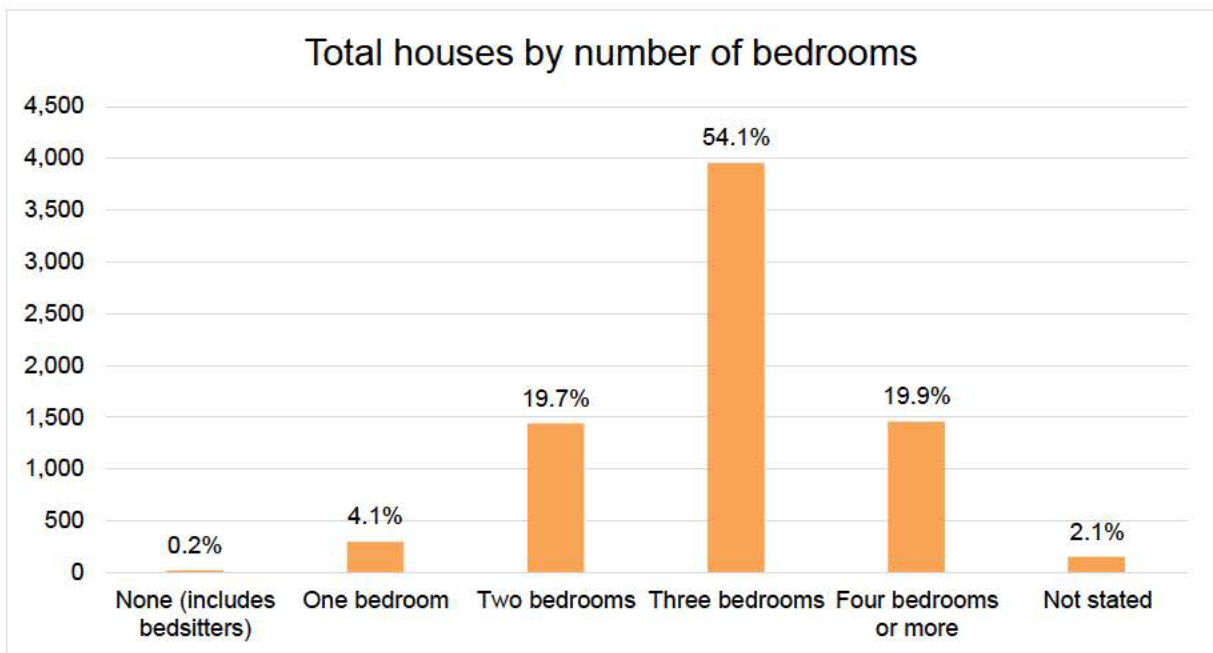


Figure 22 Breakdown of houses by number of bedrooms in Broken Hill. Source: ABS Census 2021

As the population changes, for example, if average household sizes decrease, then existing housing stock may not be adequate to respond to changing needs. In this scenario, there will be greater demand and pressure on a lower number of smaller houses (one and two bedrooms). It is therefore important to encourage diversity in housing stock to support people to have a choice in housing that is appropriate to their needs.



## Tenure can limit who can access accommodation

Broken Hill has a high proportion of households that either own their houses outright, or are paying them off through a mortgage, with only 24% of households renting (Figure 23). This high level of home ownership limits the availability of rental properties for those who are not yet ready, or unable to commit to the investment of buying a home.

The use of properties for short and medium accommodation in Broken Hill further tightens the rental market, with short-stay properties potentially decreasing the number of long-term rentals available. There are currently 85 short stay properties registered in Broken Hill, according to the NSW Planning Portal.

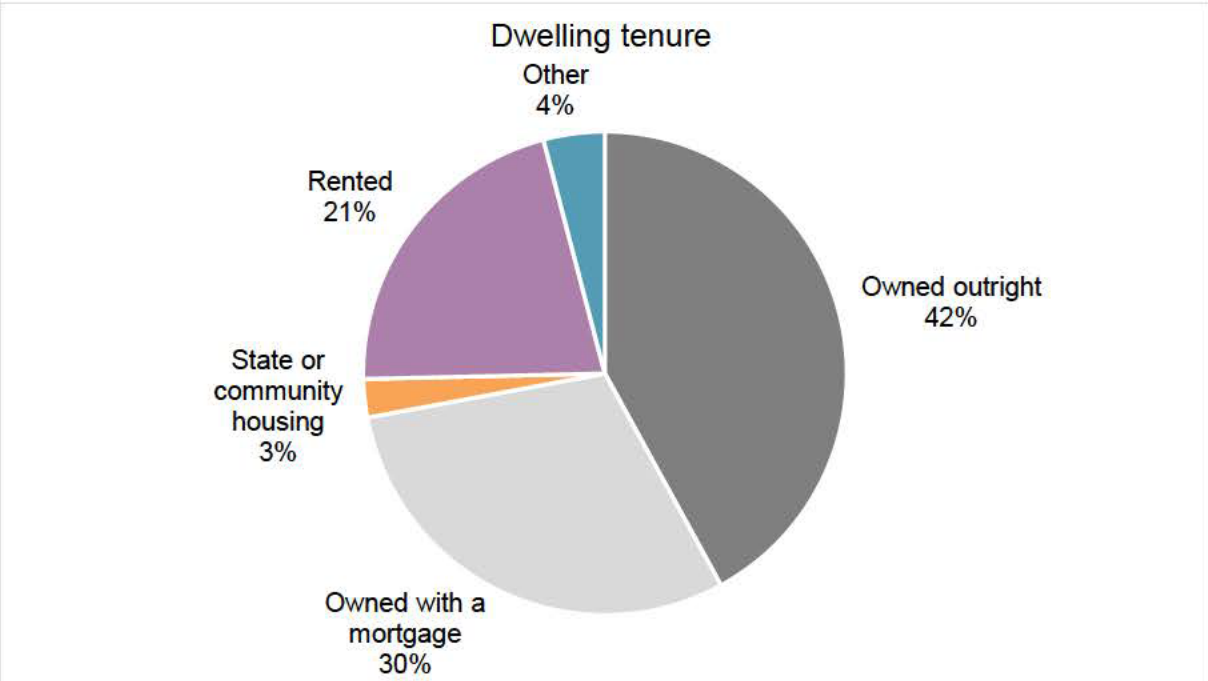


Figure 23 Dwelling tenure in Broken Hill. Source: ABS Census 2021

In 2010, when BHCC released their Strategic Tourism Plan they noted there were 711 rooms available for short-stay visitors. This included a diverse typology of accommodation such as hostels, backpackers, holiday cottages, caravans and camping. However, the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Survey of Tourist Accommodation for 2015-16 revealed this number had more than halved with only 318 rooms being available in June 2016<sup>15</sup>.

## Supply is currently underutilised

Currently, there is stock that is currently under-utilised (sitting empty). However, the process of getting this stock to market is the next challenge. It requires identifying owners and understanding why these houses are unoccupied.

<sup>15</sup> 2015-16 was the final year the ABS collected the Survey of Tourist Accommodation. From June 2017 STR collected and reported this data, of which we do not have access to.

There are 500 dwellings in Broken Hill that are currently estimated to be unoccupied, based on a recent audit of water usage that documented water connection and consumption patterns. These dwellings are dispersed across the city. Refer to Appendix C for the map identifying these dwellings.

In addition to this, BHCC has identified approximately 120 properties to have unpaid rates over the past five years. We understand these to be a mix of vacant lots and houses, however, this indicates there may be further houses that are sitting vacant that could be made available.

The challenge continues, even if owners are identified and engaged, the condition of underutilised houses may be unsuitable for the various workers seeking accommodation in Broken Hill. A survey of owners of unoccupied dwellings could help provide some insights into why they leave their properties unoccupied and what the barriers are to listing their properties on either the rental or sales market. These insights could help the design of strategies to address barriers and support the release of unoccupied dwellings to the market.

## There is a small pipeline of new stock

The bulk of residential developments in Broken Hill over the past 10 years was for residential alterations and additions. See Figure 24.

A review of Council's development application data showed that the majority of residential development applications assessed in Broken Hill over the 2018-2022 period are for residential alterations and carparks (Figure 25). There are very few DAs in Broken Hill for new dwellings or subdivisions creating additional supply. In the period 2018-2020, only 2 new residential dwellings were approved as complying development according to the Local Development Planning Monitor Dashboard.

The historically small pipeline of new housing stock demonstrates that increasing supply may require a step change to business as usual for the local development industry, builders, and trades as well as for BHCC in relation to the volume of development applications.

### **Engagement insight**

*During our site visit, we spoke with stakeholders who informed us of the various housing developments currently underway across the city. It is a patchwork of development, with three houses being built by one stakeholder, 11 by another (wasn't engaged by us), and 5 by a local building company. The building company informed us that they have committed to only working on new builds and not accepting renovation jobs.*

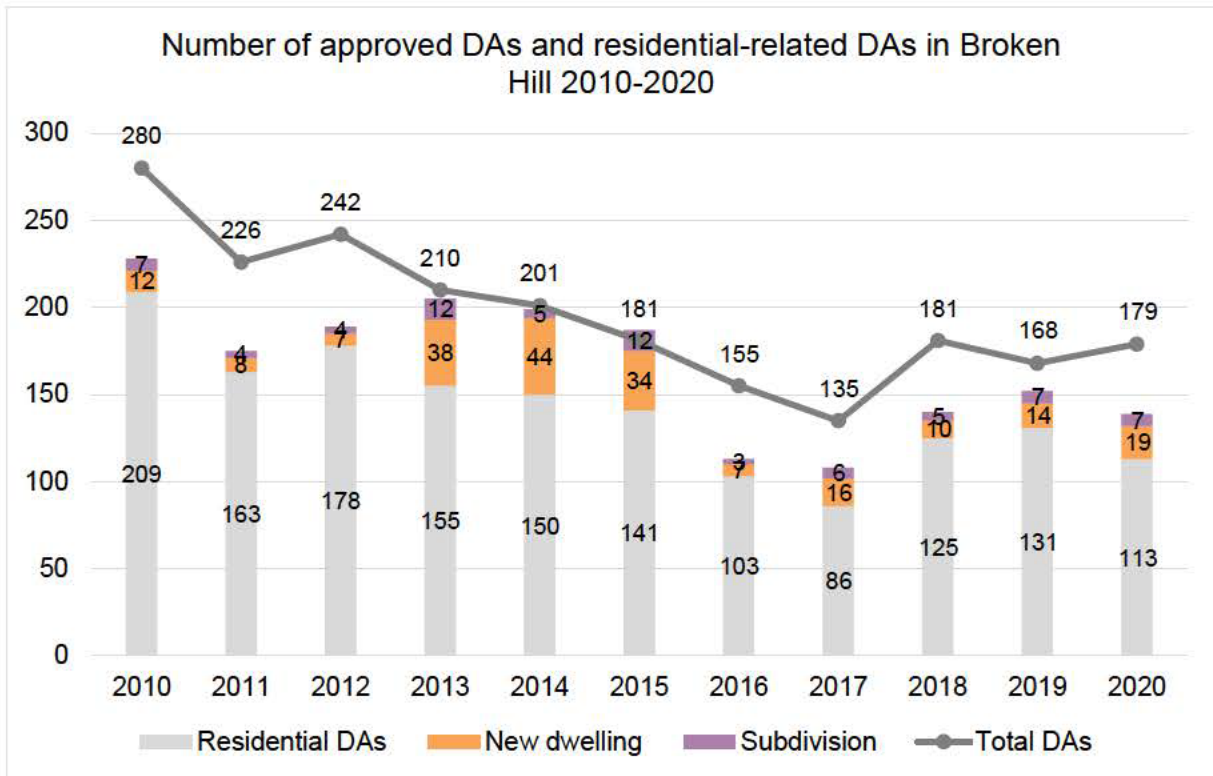


Figure 24 Breakdown of approved residential-related development applications. Source: Local Development Planning Monitor Dashboard

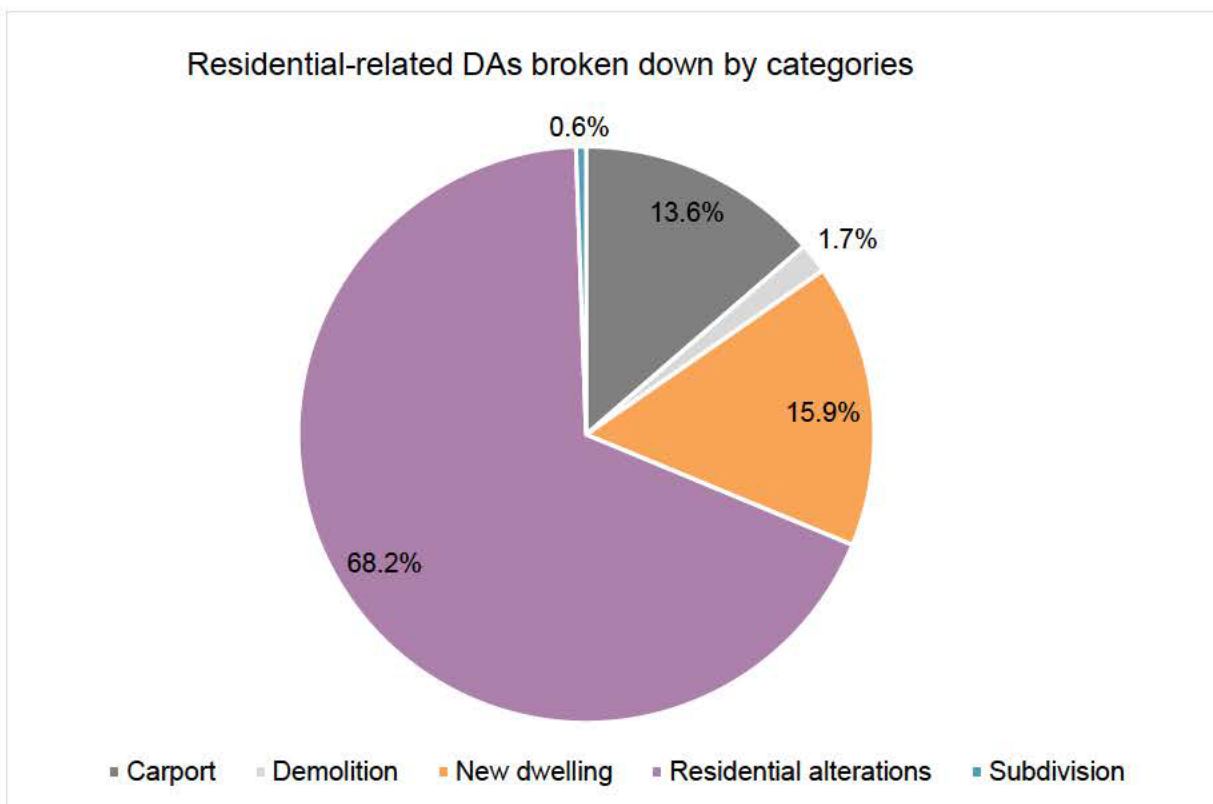


Figure 25 Breakdown of residential development applications by category



## Indicators to monitor to identify changes in supply

Monitoring the following indicators can help with an understanding of the local housing supply pipeline, available housing, and the potential quantum of new supply being delivered. Monitoring can inform whether government activities are influencing and achieving the creation of supply that is needed.

Table 5 – Indicators of supply

Indicator	Measure/s	Source
<p><b>Development activity</b></p> <p>Development activity indicates the quantum and type of new supply that is being approved and will likely be delivered within a 12-month timeframe.</p>	<p>Number of residential-DAs;</p> <p>Size and typology of approved new dwellings;</p> <p>Number of dwelling house renovations</p>	<p>Council assessment data; NSW Planning Portal</p>
<p><b>Vacant dwellings</b></p> <p>An audit of water usage identified suspected vacant dwellings. Ongoing monitoring can indicate whether there is an underutilised supply.</p>	<p>Number of vacant dwellings</p>	<p>Audit of water or energy consumption</p>
<p><b>Dwelling condition</b></p> <p>Dwelling condition can indicate whether houses should be repaired or knocked down and rebuilt. Condition can also influence the cost of housing, functionality and desirability – indicating if people’s preferences can be met by existing stock.</p>	<p>Dwelling condition</p>	<p>Condition audit*</p>
<p><b>Intentions of property owners</b></p> <p>Approximately 500 dwellings are suspected to be currently vacant and not available to the market to access.</p>	<p>Current and future occupancy;</p> <p>Additional sales and rental property;</p> <p>Change in tenure</p>	<p>Property owners survey**</p>

\*Astrolabe recommends that a condition audit is scoped and implemented as a priority, considering the high number of ageing dwellings in Broken Hill. Funding could support engagement of building professionals or local real estate agents to conduct walk-throughs of private dwellings and collection of information.

\*\*Astrolabe has designed a survey Council can conduct to understand property owner intentions. This is provided in Appendix D.



# Land use and ownership

## The city's urban boundary is defined and unable to be easily expanded

Broken Hill could be described as landlocked by Crown Lands, Native Title, and land outside the Broken Hill City local government area (Unincorporated NSW). In a sense, it is an island in the desert. The only way to expand Broken Hill's urban boundary is to navigate the complex land ownership and management processes for Crown Lands. These processes are also resource-intensive for the Crown Lands.

To make land surrounding Broken Hill accessible for development would require consideration of different categories of land and the relevant processes.

- Unincorporated NSW: Developing here would be time-consuming and difficult given there is no existing planning framework for this region to guide decision making and approval processes
- Crown Lands Reserves and environmental conservation (land use zone): This zone includes environmental protections for the city against dust storms and is not to be developed
- Western Lands Lease: Can convert this lease into freehold through an application (via direct negotiation or public tendering)
- Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA): Requires a Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) to have "consulted with native title holders and obtained their consent"<sup>16</sup> and it would also be involved where the Native Title holders own freehold land
- Aboriginal Land Rights: Requires negotiations with LALCs via approval from NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC), for land subject to a land claim or owned freehold by the LALC.

The suggestion from Crown Lands<sup>17</sup> was to work with the Broken Hill community to identify vacant freehold land and prioritise the process of infilling, as the Crown Land processes are too complex to be a key solution to this current and urgent problem. However, they did suggest a viable and potentially mutually beneficial option would be to activate Aboriginal-owned land within the existing town boundary. This may be LALC-owned land or Native Title holder-owned land. Both pathways incur their own legislative process and timeframes that may not be best suited to a fast-housing solution and may be better suited to medium-long term options.

The consequences of being landlocked, in relation to housing, means:

- It is challenging to make new land available for residential use and this process would take time, which may not be available considering the immediate housing needs. Expanding the city boundary would require engagement with Aboriginal land owners and navigating complex government policies and processes. More so, even if land was made available infrastructure servicing would then need to be considered and developing within the city boundary is likely to be more cost effective.
- Expansion of residential land in the future can also be limited if there is competition for land for other uses, such as industrial land.

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<sup>16</sup> Aboriginal Affairs NSW, January 2017, [Land Rights and Native Title in NSW](#)

<sup>17</sup> During our interview with Crown Lands as a part of our discovery phase of the project

### Engagement insight

Land use competition needs to be monitored to ensure the provision of sufficient industrial land. This is to support ancillary mining and other heavy industrial activities. Anecdotally, industry has indicated to Council that more land may be required to support ancillary businesses. Council has flagged expanding the existing industrial estate (on the south side).

## Government owns and manages sites on residential zoned land

Both council and state government own or manage a number of sites throughout Broken Hill that may be suitable for further residential development. Larger parcels of land are largely located in the north, with smaller parcels dispersed throughout the town (shown in Figure 26)<sup>18</sup>.



Figure 26 Government owned sites. Source: (DRNSW 2022, Broken Hill Council 2022, SIX 2022)

<sup>18</sup> Figure 25 only shows crown land in zones that permit residential development

## Development considerations

The following development considerations may influence locations of new development, development viability and design and characteristic of residential development across the city.

### Utilities

Within the urban boundary, most land is serviced by necessary water, wastewater and electricity. However, some lots on the fringe of the city are not serviced by wastewater and require the installation of septic tanks. This would be an additional cost to development.

### Heritage

The city of Broken Hill is listed on the National Heritage List recognising it as a place of outstanding value to the nation. The long, enduring, and continuing mining operations in the city, including the community's connection to this cultural legacy, are significant, along with the city's context within the outback landscape.

There are over 380 individual items of state and local significance in Broken Hill and identified heritage conservation areas. These listings recognise the state and local significance of items (such as buildings) and neighbourhoods and recognise the value of heritage characteristics to the Broken Hill urban landscape.

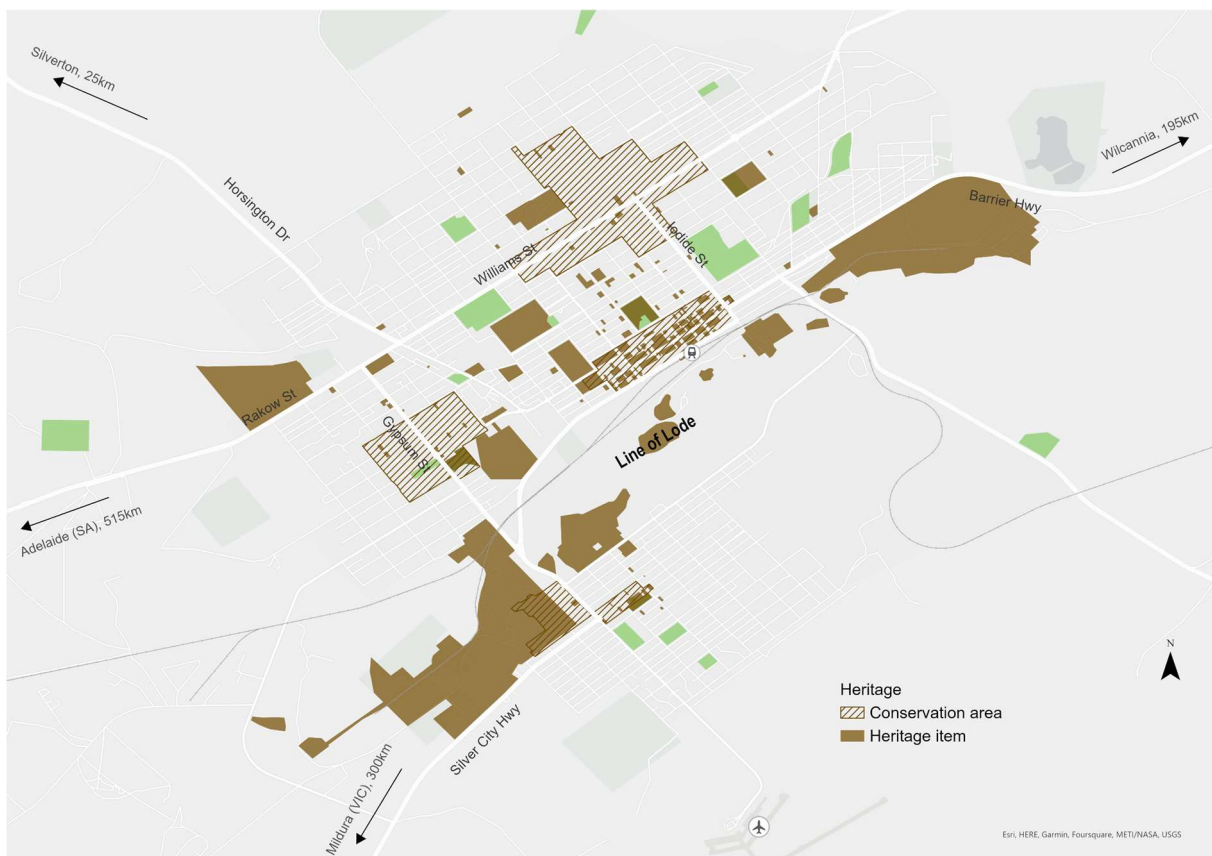


Figure 27 State and local heritage items and conservation areas. Source: EPI State and Local Heritage Register 2022

The national heritage listing of Broken Hill sets in place a process to ensure that any proposed actions do not have a significant impact on the national heritage values and reasons for the national listing. The NSW State Heritage Register will identify these heritage values and the Broken Hill Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013 and Broken Hill Development Control Plan (CDP) 2016 sets development controls and guidelines concerning heritage conservation that must be considered when proposing new development.

State and local heritage listings do not prohibit development, however, they may impose restrictions or considerations to be satisfied when proposing renovations to existing residential properties or to new dwellings being built to protect the heritage values of items and places. Residential development can generally proceed so long as it is sensitive to heritage values and impacts on heritage are appropriately considered and managed.

### Topography

Topography can influence the viability and feasibility of developing in certain areas of the city. More sloped areas may require the site-specific design of housing to accommodate the incline and may have less capacity to support multi-unit or require more significant costs to develop to accommodate for changing site levels.

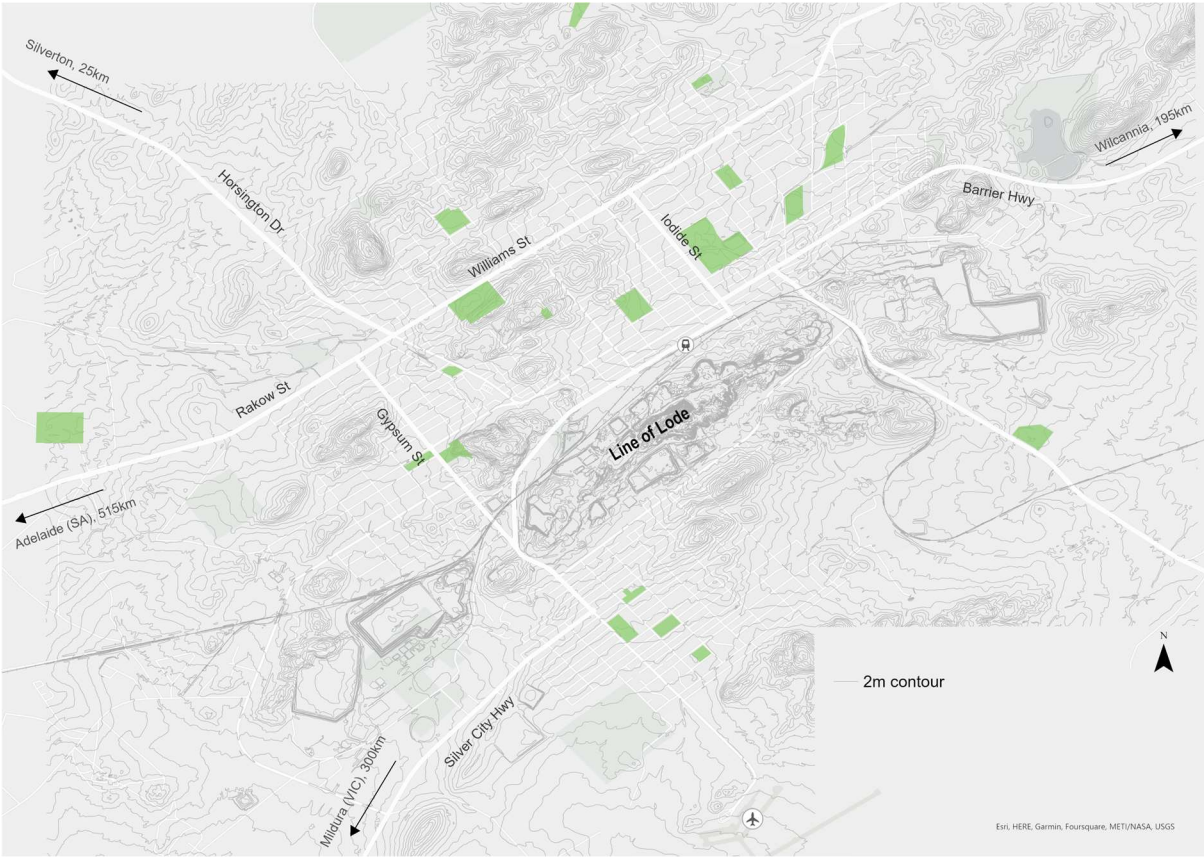


Figure 28 Broken Hill 2m contour. Source: NSW Spatial Information Exchange



## **Lead contamination**

Historic mining activities have resulted in lead contamination in parts of Broken Hill. The location of houses, the extent to which houses are sealed against dust, the condition of lead-based paint and soil lead levels, can influence the risk of exposure. The NSW Government and Council with local stakeholders have delivered various programs and initiatives to raise awareness, manage health impacts and remediate homes.

Lead contamination does not prohibit or restrict residential development, however risk to exposure and potential remediation needs to be considered as part of renovation and renewal of existing dwellings and building of new dwellings.

## **Other considerations**

Broken Hill does experience flooding events, but Council manages this through the design of stormwater management systems. Flooding will have little influence on the viability of development, this is not accounting for future effects of climate change. This however may need to be considered further if different residential development outcomes are sought, such as multi-storey development and construction of basements for car parking.

Broken Hill is located within an important environmental landscape and national parks and nature reserves outside of the city are designated for conservation management. In addition, regeneration reserves sit on the fringes of the city strategically designed and grown to protect the city and manage the impact of dust storm events. These areas cannot be developed.

## Planning controls are relatively uniform

Broken Hill's planning controls relating to residential development are relatively uniform across the city, with one residential zoning (R1 General Residential) and a standard minimum lot size (230sqm) within the town (Figure 29 and Figure 30). Additional zones permitting residential development and variation in lot sizes are found on the town's edges. The built form of residential development across the city is relatively consistent (low-density, detached dwellings).



Figure 29 Land uses. Source: Broken Hill LEP 2013



Figure 30 Minimum lot size. Source: Broken Hill LEP 2013

## Matters to investigate further concerning land use and ownership change opportunities

The following activities are recommended to understand the scope of negotiations with land owners and policy changes and pathways to increasing housing supply and generating better outcomes.

- **Engage with Aboriginal land owners (including Traditional Owners and LALCs)** – build relationships and understand the aspirations of Traditional Owners and local communities in relation to their land and use of land. Explore the potential for partnerships that could lead to generating housing, social and economic outcomes that benefit Traditional Owners and their local communities as well as the broader Broken Hill community.
- **Confirm the status of government-owned property** – identify properties that are no longer required and are available to either convert to freehold land or can be enabled for lease or development arrangements to deliver new housing.
- **Explore precinct-based planning and review of planning controls** – to encourage different forms of residential development that is appropriate and feasible in different locations across the city.



## Housing market and supply chain

Given Broken Hill's history of boom and bust, we can assume there is a tentativeness for both locals and outsiders to Broken Hill to confidently invest long term. Especially given the rates on the return of investment, it suggests this boom-and-bust cycle has caused poor confidence for investors looking at the market. Various stakeholders have identified the need to increase supply but are waiting for investment, and without any intervention, the market will not have the capability to break the stalemate.

This section outlines what is needed to ensure the housing market and the supply chain of skills and materials to build these houses are equipped with the necessary resources and given a suitable planning environment to increase the supply of housing and free up necessary land. While confidence is one aspect of this, it takes time to build and waiting on the market to invest in Broken Hill will risk worsening the housing system.

### There is a lack of private investment or confidence in the market

The property market in Broken Hill offers investors significant returns and some of the highest returns in the state. The rental yield (per annum) from buying an investment property, and then renting the property, can range between 7 to 10%<sup>19</sup>, however, there is still a lack of commitment to the region from investors. This may be an awareness issue, particularly for owners and investors that are not local.

Considering the good rental yield, the lack of available rental properties, high demand, and the relatively higher volume of properties available – all these indicators show that Broken Hill would be highly attractive to invest in. However, we are yet to see more housing supply being released to the rental market from investment activity.

Since June 2017, the median rental (of new bonds) for two-bedroom properties has increased 18%. For three bedrooms properties, rents have increased by 13% (Figure 31).

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<sup>19</sup> This percentage fluctuates. Data from SQM Research illustrates this particular range from March 2022 to July 2022 | [Property Gross Rental Yield - Broken Hill](#)

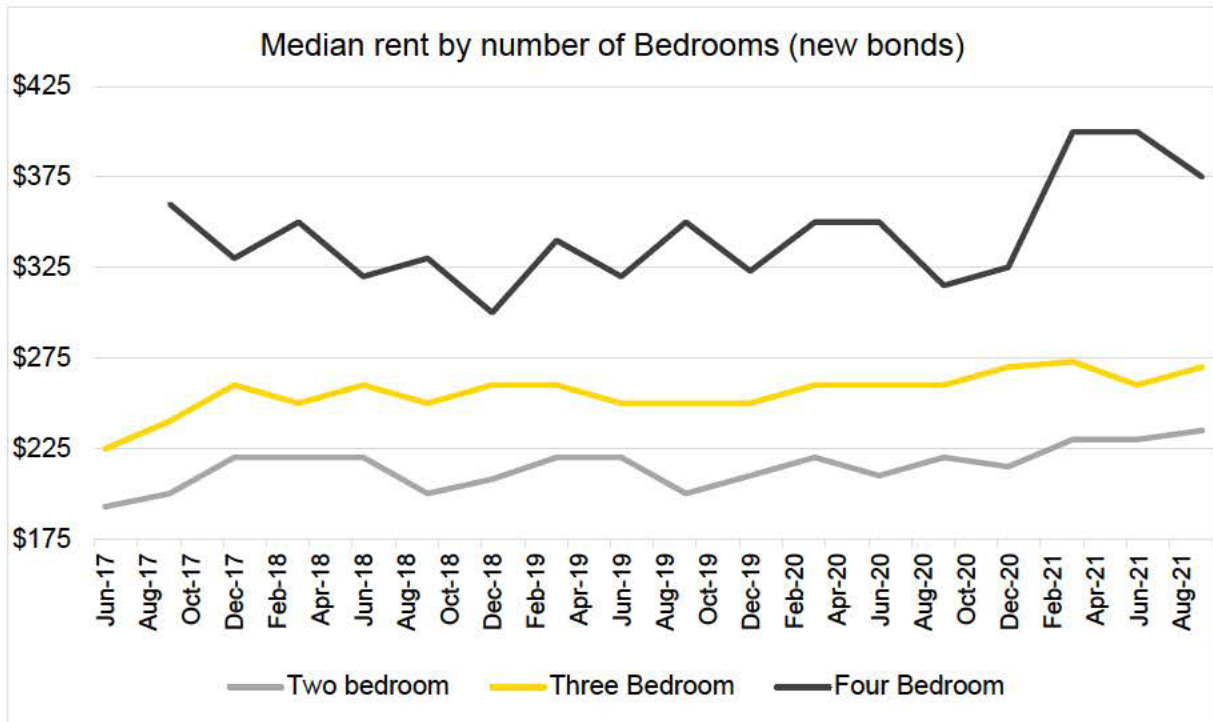


Figure 31 Median rent for new bonds. Source: Family and Community Services Rent and Sales Reports (2017-2021)

The rental market in Broken Hill is steady, as indicated by the net change in new bonds held (Figure 30). It is uncertain the trends behind the spikes in new bonds held throughout different periods of the year, however, the spikes could relate to new workers to town taking out tenancies at the beginning of the new school year (February) or at the commencement of the new financial year (end June). Otherwise, the pattern of spikes could reflect the cycle of rental agreements being reviewed. Prior to June 2020, there were a lot more fluctuations in the number of total bonds held – i.e., fewer new bonds were coming in vs. going out. But since then, there have been consistently positive net new bonds being held, indicating a market with increasing demand and a very tight rental market.

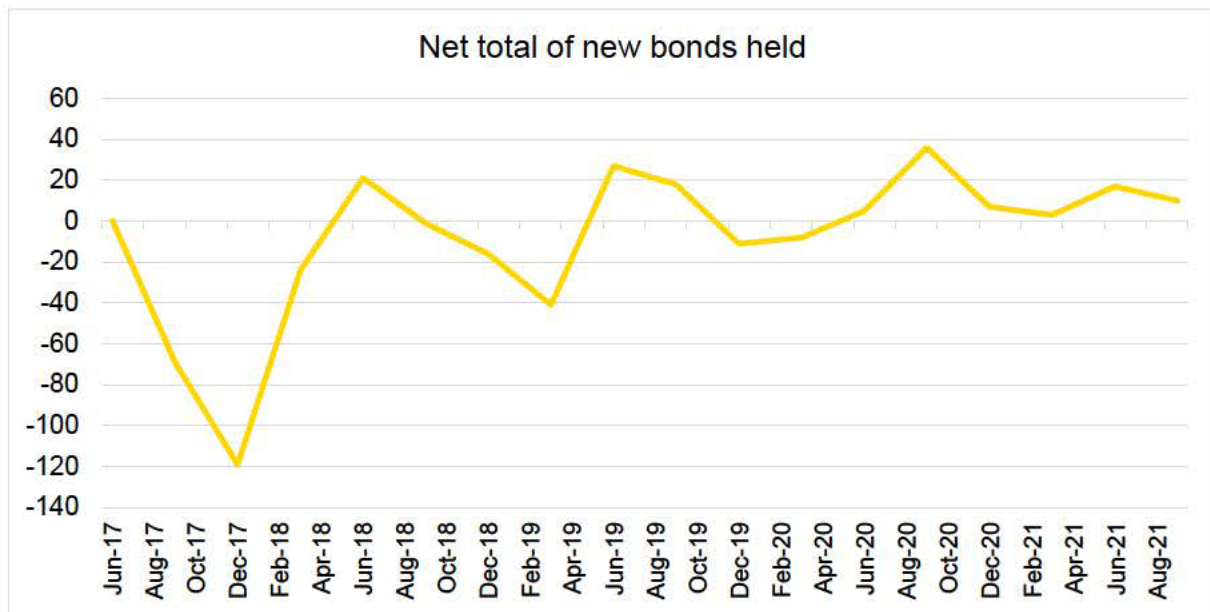


Figure 32 Net changes in new bonds held. Source: Family and Community Services Rent and Sales Reports (2017-2021)

### ***Engagement insight***

*A local real estate agent stated that every agency in the city has a list of 40-50 pre-approved rental applications. At the time of the interview, zero houses were available to rent demonstrating a significantly high demand for rental properties.*

Housing sales information indicates that the local market for purchasing is strong. From the period between June 2017 to August 2021 there has been a 27% increase in the median sale price, and a 32% increase in the mean sale price (Figure 33). There was a significant increase in the number of total sales during the period from August 2020 to August 2021. This indicates there is a strong demand. However, in this context, changes to the affordability of housing for the local community need to be understood and monitored.

At this point in time, the potential effect of rising interest rates on the market is unknown. For this reason, monitoring of the market will be critical to the design and implementation of responses to Broken Hill's housing dilemma, as recommended throughout this report.

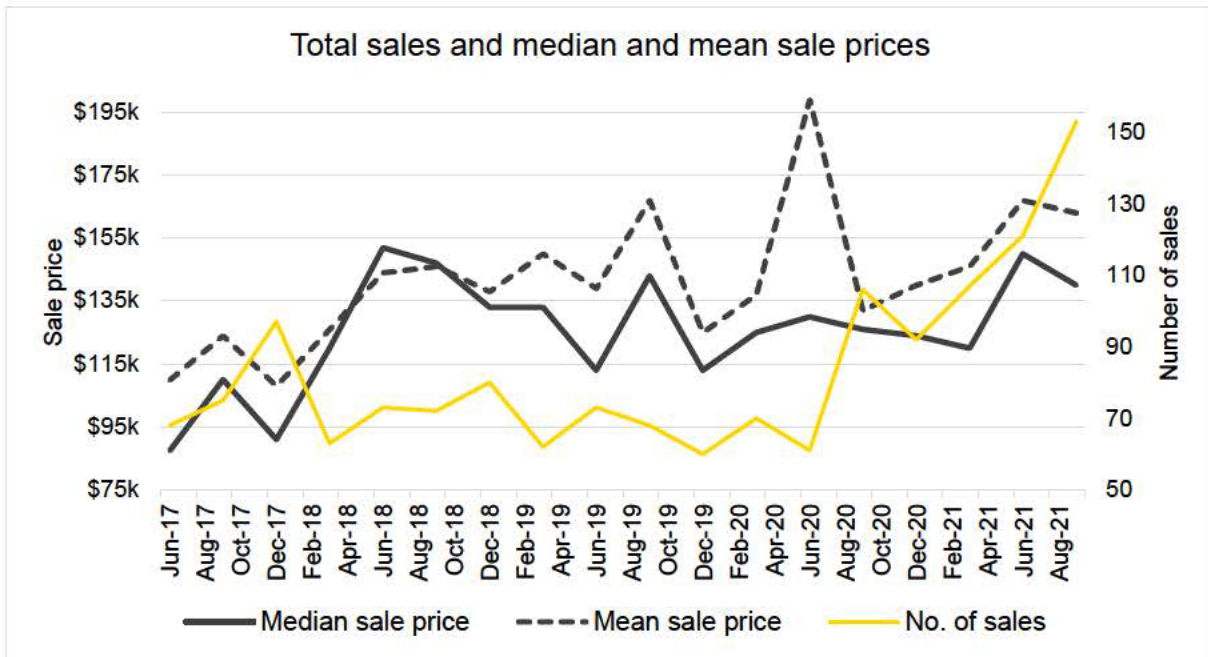


Figure 33 Total sales and sale prices. Source: Family and Community Services Rent and Sales Reports (2017-2021)

**Engagement insight**

Local stakeholders suggested that a number of cultural factors could affect confidence in the market and influence investment in Broken Hill. It was described that people don't want to live next to a house in need of renovation or repair, with the high number of perceived 'uncared for' houses, this preference can affect a whole neighbourhood.

In addition to this, Broken Hill locals that have a close connection to the city and its history, (i.e., the boom-bust narrative, speculative proposals that are not developed, and personal or family experiences with this) may contribute to hesitation in investing before mines are fully committed to the operational phase of new projects.

**Local developers have a secure supply chain**

Speaking to local developers they stated that scaling up development in terms of labour and materials would not be an issue, rather the issue remained with access to land. Further, developers and builders estimated they currently have the capacity of delivering no more than 20 dwellings at a time, which is consistent with DA trends over recent years.



### **Engagement insight**

*A local housing developer has focused on securing large building company Hutchinson Builders over local companies. Possibly to allow for the ability to scale up. A way to secure development and give investors confidence in the city is by potentially attracting a big player to have a local presence. This may initiate some commitment to the city and secure a larger pipeline of building projects. A partnership with a large building company could be incentivised through negotiations to undertake council projects, civil works, and other industrial activities.*

## **Skills and resources are needed to support delivery of a larger supply pipeline**

The renewal of old housing stock and the construction of new stock is dependent on Council's timelines for approval and the resources available to process these applications. These approval timeframes and resources are currently a concern for various housing stakeholders.

### **Engagement insight**

*Anecdotally during our engagement, stakeholders involved in developing and construction, have explained that Council processing times for development applications and certification is slow and hindering their work.*

Figure 34 shows the time it took to assess residential DAs during the 2017-2019 timeframe has been longer than the previous five-year period. Assessment timeframes in 2020 however did drop to the average timeframes experienced pre-2015. For the year 2020, BHCC took an average of 32 days to determine residential DAs. This is compared to an average of 63 days for the same category of DAs for councils across NSW.

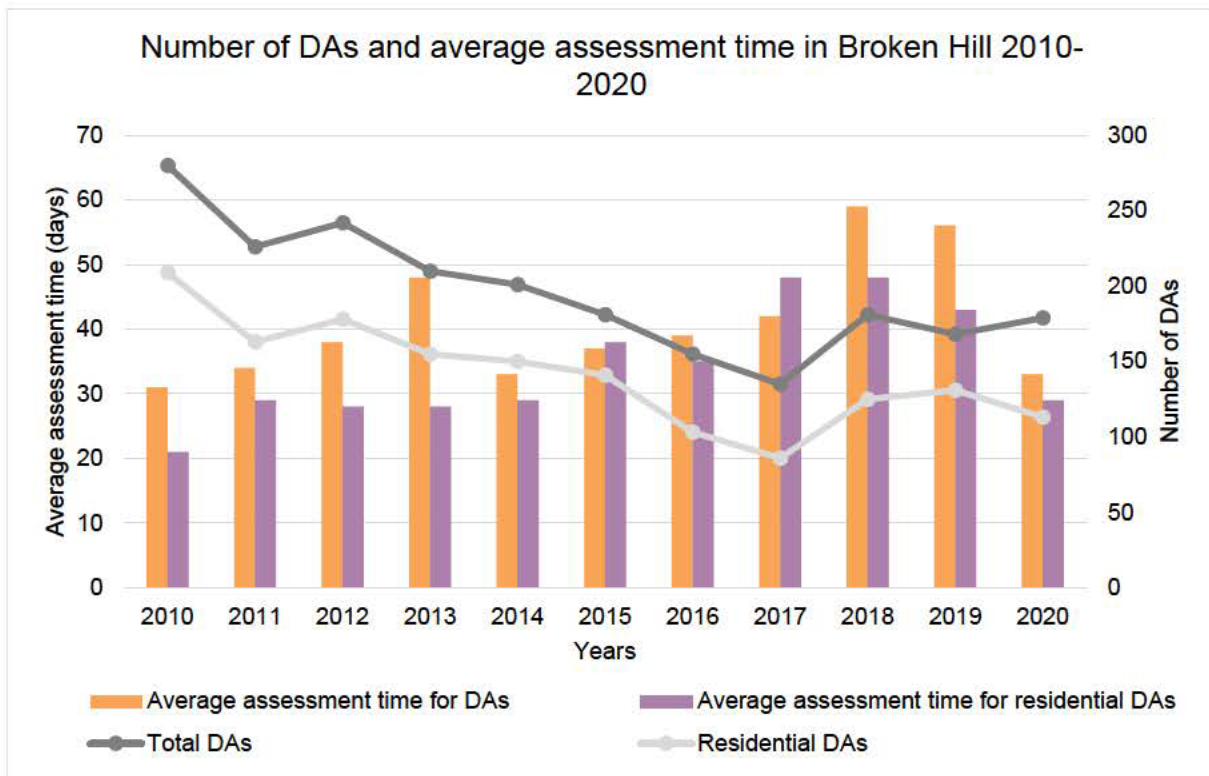


Figure 34 Average DA assessment times. Source: Local Development Planning Monitor Dashboard

The time it takes to assess development can be influenced by whether Council has resources to assess applications, the volume of applications received at the same time and the complexity of applications.

Considering the context of Broken Hill and potentially the requirement to scale up housing development to meet demand, the capacity of Council, as well as other professionals involved in the planning and construction process to support this scale-up, needs to be considered.

Figure 24 shows that very few new dwellings have been delivered in Broken Hill in recent years and Figure 34 shows the expected assessment timeframes based on the pipeline of new development shown within the same period. Paired with our interviews with local developers and builders, we understand that currently a maximum of 20 dwellings are delivered each year in Broken Hill. If the rate of delivery needs to increase to meet the scale of demand, more professionals (e.g., planners, certifiers, building surveyors), as well as builders and skilled trades, may be needed to help deliver the volume required. Attracting these workers to focus on housing projects and to work in Broken Hill needs to be considered to meet the requirements of the housing supply task.



### **Engagement insight**

*From what we have heard, tradies are most likely to take a mining job once mines start operating in the city, based on the assumption they provide better job security and better pay. Meaning there will be a shortage in skilled labour needed to build houses. However, the company CliqHomes have developed a product they are marketing to Broken Hill<sup>20</sup> that doesn't require skilled labour and is quick to erect<sup>21</sup>.*

## **Feasibility and viability of residential developments vary**

We have prepared comparisons of the high-level feasibility of different development scenarios to understand the most viable options, in the current market, for developers to deliver. We have considered costs associated with development (land purchase price, fees, construction costs), cost of financing, and average sales prices in the Broken Hill market.

The most viable option is to buy existing stock and renovate it as it provides the best returns on investment. The feasibility and attractiveness of this investment proposition and form of development should be considered as part of the strategies to increase supply to be pursued and where incentives should be targeted for different development outcomes.

Table 6 – Development feasibility analysis

<b>Development scenario</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Potential return on total development cost</b>
A small 4-lot subdivision	Not feasible – make a loss	-6%
A larger 17-lot subdivision	Not enough profit – and large enough vacant land doesn't exist	7%
A single house if you buy vacant land	Feasible	26%
An existing house and renovate it	Feasible	35%

The assumptions and inputs to our feasibility analysis are in Appendix E.

Local stakeholders have also told us that the cost of asbestos removal can add to the cost of building, and renovation, and have noted that this could potentially be prohibitive or an issue if scaling up. As discussed in terms of the condition and age of housing stock in Broken Hill, removing asbestos is costly and currently a barrier to freeing up old stock to renew. Any increases in costs like this would need to be carefully considered and may impact the feasibility of development.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-04-29/broken-hill-eco-friendly-homes-barkindji-jobs-nara-nation/101022570>

<sup>21</sup> <https://cliqhomes.com.au/>

## Indicators to monitor to understand the health of the local housing market

Monitoring the following indicators can help to understand the health and performance of the local housing market and whether there is a balance between housing demand and supply. This can inform if interventions may be needed.

Table 7 – Indicators to monitor the local housing market

Indicator	Measure/s	Source
<p><b>Housing rental prices</b></p> <p>Rises or decreases in rental prices can indicate demand for rental housing and the ability of renters to meet the cost of housing.</p>	Rental price for new bonds lodged	<p>Source: Family and Community Services Rent and Sale Reports</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/rent-and-sales">https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/rent-and-sales</a>)</p>
<p><b>Housing sales prices</b></p> <p>Rises or decreases in sales prices can indicate demand for housing for purchase and the ability of buyers to meet the cost of housing.</p>	Median sales prices by size or type of dwelling	<p>Source: Family and Community Services Rent and Sale Reports</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/rent-and-sales">https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/rent-and-sales</a>)</p>



## Indicators to monitor the capacity of the local building supply chain

Monitoring of the following indicators can help to understand the ability of the local market to deliver the quantum and type of new housing that is required.

Table 8 – Indicators to monitor the local building supply chain

Indicator	Measure/s	Source
<p><b>Cost of materials</b></p> <p>The cost of materials will influence the ability of builders and trades people to source material and influence the final cost of housing.</p>	<p>Cost of building materials for construction</p>	<p>Local builders and their suppliers</p> <p>Broken Hill City Council Spendmapp data</p>
<p><b>Availability of labour</b></p> <p>The availability of labour, considering Broken Hill's remote location, will impact on how quickly construction projects can be completed, how many projects can be in construction at one time, the complexity of the building project (if special skills or expertise is required), and the cost of building.</p>	<p>Number of builders and trades people;</p> <p>Job vacancies for construction and trades roles</p>	<p>id profile; job search platforms, such as seek; local businesses</p>
<p><b>Capacity to manage construction waste</b></p> <p>The capacity of waste removal and management, and the cost for these services, will influence the cost of construction as well as the number of projects that may be able to occur concurrently before new services need to be provided. Due to Broken Hill's remote location there is a need to consider the capacity of local services and when non-local services need to be sought to manage demand.</p>	<p>Capacity of waste removal and management services;</p> <p>Cost of asbestos removal</p>	<p>Broken Hill City Council</p>

# Local housing ecosystem

Many stakeholders are part of the local housing ecosystem in Broken Hill and are involved in various parts of the housing delivery process. The role of each stakeholder and their relationships need to be considered to understand the dynamics of housing in Broken Hill.

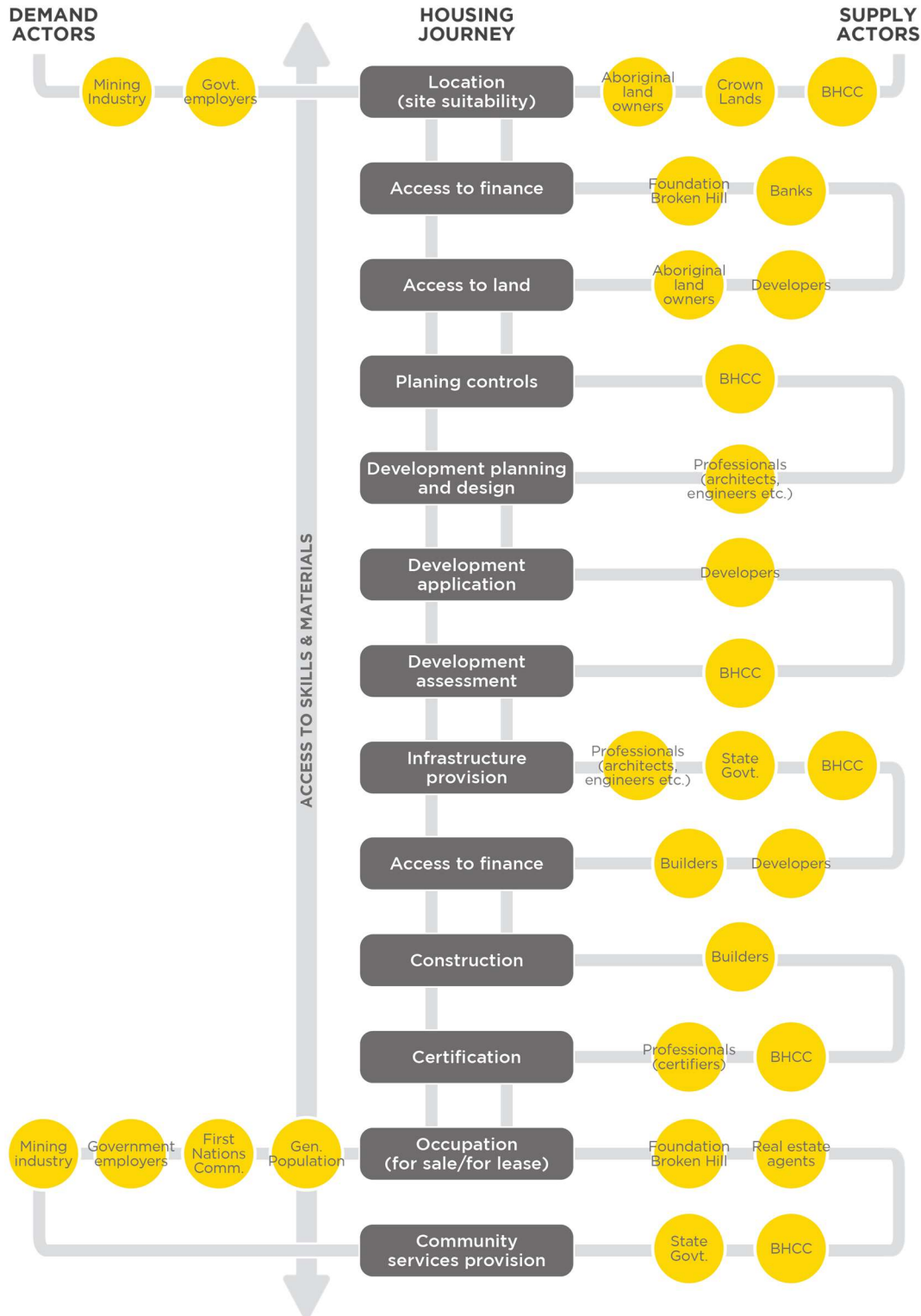


Figure 35 Local housing ecosystem. Source: Astrolabe Group

# SECTION TWO

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## Opportunities and recommendations





As stated at the beginning of this report, Broken Hill's housing system is under extreme pressure due to multiple factors, and so when devising solutions, it requires a combination of long-term and short-term reliefs.

The underlying issue causing this pressure is the lack of adequate, and available, supply of suitable housing, across the city. As such, the first opportunity we have identified to alleviate pressure on the housing system is through a series of workstreams – each tailored to increase housing supply.

While the drivers of housing demand are not the sole cause of Broken Hill's housing problem, they are a key variable influencing periods of peak demand, and in turn periods of supply crisis. As such, the opportunity when it comes to alleviating the pressure on the housing system is to monitor these drivers of demand. Monitoring will provide insight into periods of peak demand, and in turn, can be used to build a resilient housing system that is prepared for and constantly planning for different characteristics of demand.

Monitoring housing supply and delivery will also allow Broken Hill (Council or agency) to monitor success of interventions and to monitor the health of the housing market. A healthy housing market would have more redundancy and better ability to be responsive to housing demands as they arise.

Finally, as we identified throughout this project, there are various stakeholders interested in Broken Hill's housing system, each with a specific intervention but most with the attitude that this is a problem Broken Hill is facing but it is also an opportunity to strengthen and grow Broken Hill. More so, we have identified that because of the multiple stakeholders involved this is a systems issue that requires a collaborative approach to solve. As such, we propose the implementation of a collective impact model to create a network of stakeholders, all united by a shared vision, each with their own responsibility for increasing the housing supply and improving the housing system in Broken Hill.



## Recommendation 1: Workstreams to increase housing supply

We have identified 8 workstreams that would support the delivery of additional housing supply in Broken Hill to meet demand. These are a mix of build and non-build solutions. This section provides a description of each workstream, the rationale behind the workstream and what challenges it seeks to address, and an overview of what the workstream could potentially deliver. These workstreams are ideas presented for further consideration by State and local government.

The table below is a high-level estimate of the potential housing supply that could be triggered by each workstream. Note that the same sites may be identified for different workstreams. The information presented for each workstream should be considered as indicative and descriptive of opportunities and not definitive.

Each workstream are opportunities that could be pursued, however, require further investigation to understand the specific quantum of housing that could be delivered, resourcing and timing implications and evaluate the feasibility of solutions. This could be completed as part of Council's Local Housing Strategy. For this reason, it is also recommended that the collective impact model have an approach to information management that services participating stakeholders, allowing for evidence-based decision-making and the reduction of the need for assumptions.

Pursuing multiple workstreams will enable the greatest opportunity of meeting the anticipated peak housing needs for Broken Hill in the future. We recommend that a collective impact operational model is established to guide the design and implementation of each workstream.

Table 9 – Overview of housing supply workstreams

Workstream	Potential supply (upper limit)
A: Targeted infill development	Estimate of 290 lots totalling 44 ha
B: Incentivise/ motivate property owners to renew stock and release in the market	Estimate of 500 vacant dwellings
C: Fast housing	Estimate of 434 lots totalling 199 ha
D: Increase density	Estimate of 16 lots totalling 5.7 ha
E: Greenfield land release	Estimate of 10 lots totalling 290 ha
F: Conversion of vacant hotel/ motels for short to medium-term stays	Estimate of 44 rooms available in currently vacant businesses
G: Incentivise granny flat developments on existing lots	Estimate of 3,200 lots
H: Influencing cultural perspectives and household size	5,500 households that have one or more bedrooms spare <sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> ABS 2016 Census Housing Suitability

## A: Targeted infill development

### Description

Infilling consists of identifying vacant lots and working with their current owners to build houses. One strategy is to identify and target vacant government-owned lots<sup>23</sup>. The next step is to negotiate the sale and lease arrangements to release lots to market. This workstream aims to allow lots to be developed for housing.

### Rationale

This strategy allows Broken Hill to address the underutilisation of sites that are serviced, zoned residential and available for development. From our research, it does not appear that Government is currently using these sites. These sites are currently unavailable to the private sector to develop.

### Reference cases and examples

- Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC) have introduced incentives to support infill development. It is a financial incentive that has reduced development fees for water and sewerage connection to \$nil<sup>24</sup>. A councillor from LPSC noted that this incentive is to support infill development, as it “is the most cost-effective, lowest impact way to provide greater land supply for housing and it offers mum and dad developers savings”.
- The below map identifies government owned land that could potentially be developed.

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<sup>23</sup> If there is the possibility of future Aboriginal freehold ownership of government-owned land, the NSW Government could look to do this in partnership with the relevant parties (i.e., LALC or PBC or both). This could be for either temporary worker accommodation to deal with peaks in short-term accommodation needs (e.g., mining/film industry) and/or long-term.

<sup>24</sup> Liverpool Plains Shire Council, 23 February 2022, <https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/News-and-Media/Media-releases/LPSC-approves-amendments-to-fees-and-charges-for-infill-development>

## Scope

### Target locations



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Council, State government agencies
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Quick – Land is available and serviced
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	Medium – approximately 290 lots
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Medium – dispersed and mixed lot sizes mean a site-by-site solution is needed. Negotiation and coordination between government landowners and developers required
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government decisions to make sites available</li> <li>• Investigate feasibility (of different typologies) and local market capability</li> </ul>

## **B: Incentivise/ motivate property owners to renew stock and release to the market**

### **Description**

This workstream involves establishing a limited-time program that provides financial incentives to property owners to renovate or renew properties to release to the market. To qualify for incentives property owners will be required to demonstrate that, once this renovation has happened, the property has been listed for rent/ sale or rented out/ sold.

This strategy can be targeted to unoccupied dwellings only or a broader group of dwellings to stimulate activity in the market and encourage the renewal of stock and city 'beautification'. The incentives used in this strategy could include:

- Subsidise DA fees
- Subsidise asbestos removal
- Grants/ subsidies to conduct renovation works

### **Rationale**

One of the characteristics of Broken Hill's housing system is that there is a large number of properties in Broken Hill currently unoccupied. This strategy enables these to be released on the market to increase supply. Specifically, this would give relief to the tight rental market.

Another prevalent issue facing Broken Hill's housing stock is that stock is not fit or adequate to meet the standards of the rental market. As such this program incentivises lifting the condition of housing.

### **Reference cases and examples**

- Broken Hill City Council provides heritage grants for homeowners to carry out works.
- Bogan Council subsidises the removal of asbestos in local homes (funded by DRNSW).
- Defence Housing Australia's (DHA) model allows property owners to rent properties directly to DHA and be guaranteed a long-term lease, rental income, and a range of property care services<sup>25</sup>. The model has been used by Defence Housing Australia to access privately owned dwellings and has encouraged property owners to undertake renovations and improvements to meet standards to ensure their property is an attractive and suitable option for DHA. Using the DHA model, a similar program could be developed for health, education, and law enforcement NSW Government employees.

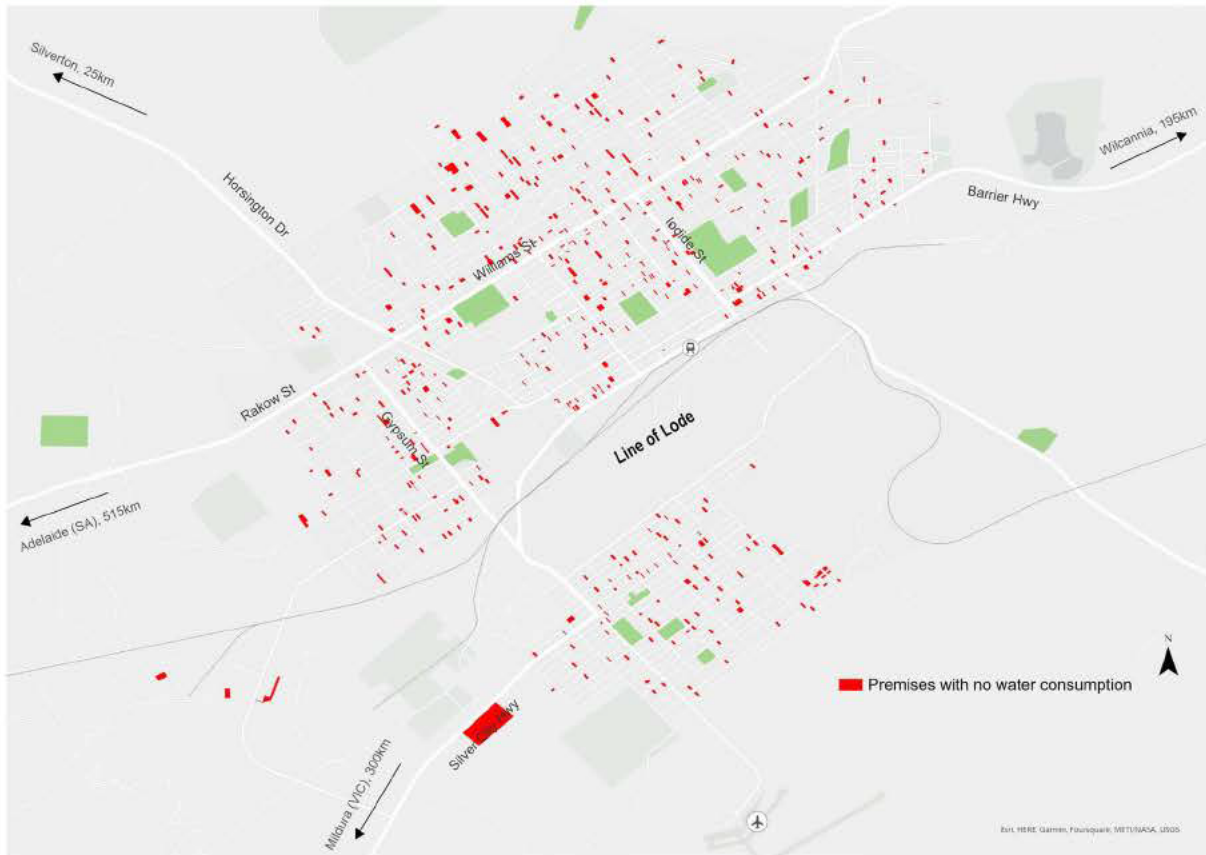
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<sup>25</sup> Defence Housing Australia, <https://www.dha.gov.au/investing/ways-to-invest/lease-your-property-to-dha>



## Scope

### Target locations



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Private
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Quick – can make supply available to the market in a short time
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	Low – cannot guarantee 100% of potential stock being supplied to the market. It is dependent on private take-up of incentives
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Hard – letting the local market lead
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government funding and commitment for the program</li> </ul>

## C: Fast housing

### Description

This workstream is focused on a rapid supply of housing to meet the demand of those who need accommodation immediately. It consists of identifying sites that can accommodate temporary housing. Appropriate temporary housing sites are currently vacant sites that are already serviced, zoned for residential development and large enough and appropriate for the size and design of mobile, quick-build, manufactured homes.

Ideally, this is a workstream that would seek a partnership with manufactured home providers, as it requires a coordinated effort. More so, this activity could be combined with other workstreams, such as Workstream A – which suggests developing Council and Government owned land. Additionally legacy infrastructure could be provided (possibly on Aboriginal-owned land).

### Rationale

This strategy provides relief to housing pressures, without requiring a permanent solution. This strategy can also help Broken Hill's housing system adapt to manage the peaks and troughs of housing demand. The simplest option is to use modular/ manufactured homes as they can be shifted and moved around to other towns or locations when they are no longer needed. This is ideal for matching accommodation to the demand from the temporary workforce or seasonal visitors/ workers when at its peak.

Manufactured homes can be designed or ordered to meet requirements. Multiple dwellings can be located on one site and could potentially accommodate the needs of housing multiple employees from one employer if needed. More so this arrangement can temporarily activate sites that are currently vacant or needed in the future, but not now.

### Reference cases and examples

- The Victorian Government have been trialling modular homes in parts of the state that are experiencing public housing shortages to house people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. It is a quick solution as houses “can be built quickly and easily transported”<sup>26</sup>.
- In natural disaster affected Northern Rivers, temporary housing estates made up of modular homes have been created to house residents displaced by flooding. Nine sites were identified to provide approximately 800 modular houses<sup>27</sup>.
- Osprey Village is an example of private public partnership for manufactured housing. Osprey Village was the creation of a whole new suburb in South Hedland, Western Australia (293 new homes). It offers diverse housing options for singles, couples, and families<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Northern Beaches Review, 20 May 2022, <https://www.northernbeachesreview.com.au/story/7744388/modular-homes-to-remedy-public-housing-crisis-in-country-areas/?cs=9676>

<sup>27</sup> Clarence Valley Independent, 18 May 2022, <https://clarencevalleynews.com.au/hundreds-more-temporary-homes-in-woodburn-evans-head-and-beyond-for-flood-displaced-residents/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.housing.wa.gov.au/ospreyvillage>

## Scope

### Target locations



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Mixed – though primarily Government
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Quick – short construction period, can make supply available to the market in a short time
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	Low – few sites available
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Medium – the focus of effort will be in securing appropriate sites and managing the delivery process and identifying a site manager for the period the site is being occupied
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government decisions to make sites available</li> <li>• Ability to resource property management activities</li> <li>• Community support for this model</li> </ul>

## D: Increase density and diversify typologies

### Description

This workstream supports higher-density residential developments on appropriate sites. Ideally, these sites are nearby precincts in and around the city centre, close to other activities. More so, it enables Broken Hill to diversify the type of dwellings available on the market – something that can make housing more affordable and improve housing suitability across the market.

This should be informed by strategic planning and delivered through a review of land use zones and development controls. The initial focus should be on providing simple multi-storey walk-up developments and/or terrace housing, as they are more feasible for developers and cost-effective to build. This strategy relies on good design, as it presents a change in the type of tenure offered in Broken Hill and will require a cultural shift to be an attractive tenure option to residents.

### Rationale

This workstream enables an increase in housing supply within the existing urban footprint. Additionally, this approach could incentivise different forms of housing and increase the diversity of housing. Broadly this approach supports economic development strategies.

Broken Hill, despite being a regional centre, is facing challenges we would traditionally consider urban problems. Given it is landlocked by Unincorporated NSW and Crown Land. As such, it requires an urban lens to supply housing. As BHCC prepare a new housing strategy, we suggest it look for opportunities to increase housing densities and encourage development of diverse stock.

### Reference cases and examples

- Orange City Council have also identified the need to increase housing supply and diversity to meet the population's needs. Similar to Broken Hill they have identified the demand essential workers place on the housing system and have stated that "these workers seek more affordable housing such as smaller houses, units and flats. Such housing should be provided in the form of mixed-use developments, medium and high-density housing near hospitals, educational institutions, and the city centre"<sup>29</sup>. Council have identified actions in their Draft Local Housing Strategy to review planning controls to encourage more diverse housing options and higher density development to relieve pressure on the housing system.
- Explore precinct-based planning and review of planning controls – to encourage different forms of residential development that is appropriate and feasible in different locations across the city.

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<sup>29</sup> Orange City Council, October 2021, [Draft Orange Local Housing Strategy](#)



## Scope

### Target locations



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Mixed – Can be government or private
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Long – market valuations need to justify increased densities
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	High – the potential is high across the city. The approach can vary in different locations.
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Hard – significant planning activities are required, dependent on site-by-site feasibility, likely to require the amalgamation of sites, and requires community support
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community support for changes to the built environment (lack of market take-up for smaller lot housing in the past)</li> <li>• Capacity to deliver new housing products</li> </ul>

## E: Greenfield land release

### Description

This workstream targets the release of new land to enable an increased housing supply. It consists of identifying sites that are located appropriately for new land release. This requires government lead and intervention to create greenfield land supply. Appropriate sites should meet the following criteria:

- No or managed environmental/ hazard constraints,
- Close to existing services, and
- Sites that can extend water/ wastewater/ electricity/ telecommunications services.

We recommend BHCC develop additional criteria that can help proponents/developers identify future sites. A full set of criteria can be investigated through the new housing strategy.

Identifying appropriate sites would also require a detailed investigation of current site uses and understanding of Aboriginal land ownership and interests. Ideally, this is an opportunity to partner with Aboriginal land holders to identify opportunities for Aboriginal stakeholders to develop their land, if they choose to. Sites that are sized at 1 hectare or more should be targeted as these parcels would be able to support viable subdivision projects of 400-500 sqm lots.

### Rationale

Employing this strategy is an opportunity to enable the creation of new housing stock that aligns with the current market demand. Further, it would enable the creation of new housing stock to contemporary standards without changing the existing fabric of the city. Importantly it provides an opportunity to include diverse voices about housing priorities and potentially allow Aboriginal land owners to access economic opportunities while maintaining determination over their land.

### Reference cases and examples

- The NSW Government attribute the development of the Buronga HealthOne Facility due to the partnership with Traditional Owners of the Barkandji Nation. NSW Government state, “The opportunity to develop the facility on this site was made possible with thanks to the Barkandji Nations. A landmark agreement signed between the Barkandji communities, and the NSW Government will see Native Title preserved.”<sup>30</sup>
- The Far West Regional Plan 2036 sets a direction (Direction 10) to enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities. This workstream supports this direction and has the potential to fulfill this outcome as it is linked to the development of Aboriginal-owned land to gain economic benefits.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.nsw.gov.au/health/fwlhd/facilities/buronga-healthone>

## Scope

### Target locations<sup>31</sup>



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Council, State government agencies
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Long – negotiations to access land are required, and infrastructure servicing may be required
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	Medium – can access large contiguous lots that can enable the delivery of many lots in one process
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Hard – Negotiation and coordination between government landowners, potentially Native Title Owners and developers required. Planning frameworks and infrastructure servicing solutions need to be designed.
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government decisions to make sites available</li> <li>• Partnership with Aboriginal land owners</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> Source: National Native Title Tribunal, available on: <http://www.nntt.gov.au/assistance/Geospatial/Pages/DataDownload.aspx>, data extracted 9 August 2022

## F: Conversion of vacant hotels/motels for short to medium term stays

### Description

This workstream focuses on providing suitable and effective housing for short- and medium-term visitors or workers without putting extra pressure on the housing system. Currently, there are vacant motels and hotels for sale across Broken Hill that can be upgraded and repurposed to accommodate the visitor economy or workers from key industries whose presence in the city is essential for a short period of time, but not permanently. In most cases, these buildings are rundown and lifeless, as they may not have been financially viable for previous owners to invest more to upgrade and keep running. As such they will require an upgrade to meet modern standards and function in a way that supports Broken Hill to house people and cope with peak demand periods. With this workstream, balancing the demand for accommodation from tourism and demands for other short to medium term stays will need to be considered.

### Rationale

Employing this strategy is an opportunity to repurpose buildings that already exist and transform them into a well-tailored and effective relief for the housing system.

Location of sites and design of rooms suitable for short to medium-term stays for seasonal and short-term workers, can also be suitable for tourists. Planning for this peak demand by repurposing large and vacant accommodation means the housing system will not have to deal with this additional pressure.

### Reference cases and examples

- As many regional towns across NSW and Australia are experiencing a housing shortage crisis, parts of the community are exploring innovative ways to provide accommodation. In Echuca-Moama the organisation 'A Room for U' has transformed an old motel into affordable accommodation option for "truckies or tradies"<sup>32</sup> who need short- or longer-term stays. In this instance this organisation is seeking to supply affordable housing<sup>33</sup>, however, the transformation of the space to offer short-term stays could divert demand from the rental system into other accommodation options.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.a roomforu.com.au/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-17/echuca-moama-regional-housing-affordability-crisis/101159538>





## G: Incentivise granny flat developments on existing lots

### Description

This workstream increases housing supply without the need to release new land or renovate and refurbish old stock, more so, it is an opportunity for residents to earn extra money and benefit from a range of incentives. The strategy encourages people to innovate with space by planning it so it efficiently accommodates a larger amount of people, and economically benefits owners.

Government could incentivise the development of secondary dwellings (granny flats) on existing lots by subsidising construction costs or costs of development applications, infrastructure contributions, and certification fees.

### Rationale

This workstream accommodates more people without expanding the urban boundary. This strategy is effective immediately as it does not require any policy changes as this development is permissible within Council's current development controls, under certain conditions.

This is a mechanism to create more supply, but the appropriateness of this to be available to all parts of the market (or groups in the community) may depend on:

- A lot being big enough for more long-term stays,
- The lease being a reasonable price (for owner and tenant),
- The site being private enough that it can support long-term stays and separate households.

### Reference cases and examples

- Tiny houses have grown in popularity across the country as housing unaffordability has increased. Heather Shearer, a researcher for the Cities Research Institute at Griffith University has argued "that tiny houses could be part of a solution to the perennial and wicked problem of unaffordable housing, as well as improving urban density and the environmental sustainability of housing"<sup>34</sup>. Shearer has further argued that tiny houses pose an opportunity for improving the provision of affordable housing, and for housing single older women who are the fastest-growing demographic experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Heather Shearer, 20 September 2017, <https://theconversation.com/interest-in-tiny-houses-is-growing-so-who-wants-them-and-why-83872>

<sup>35</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, April 2019, *Older Women's Risk of Homelessness: Background Paper*, [https://ownnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ahrc\\_ow\\_homelessness2019.pdf](https://ownnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ahrc_ow_homelessness2019.pdf)

## Scope

### Target locations



<b>Land or property owner/s</b>	Private
<b>Timeframe to deliver</b>	Quick – can make supply available to the market in a short time and building timeframe is short
<b>Scale of delivery</b>	Low – cannot guarantee 100% of potential stock being supplied to market. It is dependent on private take-up, suitability of sites and willingness
<b>Ease of delivery</b>	Hard – letting the local market lead
<b>Dependencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community acceptance</li> <li>• Financial feasibility</li> </ul>

## H: Influencing cultural perspectives and household size

### Description

- This workstream focuses on change management and a cultural shift in tenure preferences, and to help curate an efficient and collective housing system. This is not a build solution. It is a strategy for shaping Broken Hill's shared house and communal living network, by encouraging share living. It is an opportunity to identify members of the community who are interested in shared living and see the benefits of creating an equitable and functioning house system. We recommend Council to facilitate the networks for shared living that brings together individuals, and employers via a campaign or service.

### Rationale

This workstream focuses on encouraging the consolidation of lone households and encouraging 'share-house' models so as to potentially release more housing supply to the market. This is targeting the finding that household sizes are smaller than the size of dwellings, which has been putting pressure on Broken Hill's housing system as household sizes used to be larger. Meaning more people could be accommodated within the same number of dwellings.

The long-held narrative of Australian housing preferences is that people favour detached housing and low-density dwellings. However, research has found that cultural attitudes towards housing are changing, particularly in middle suburbs and low-density cities<sup>36</sup>. A key aspect of this change is the desire of residents to live in amenity-rich and well-serviced areas.

Despite being older research, the Grattan Institute's report "The housing we'd choose" explores the housing preferences of people relative to their budget. "The research suggests significant shortfalls of semi-detached housing and apartments in the middle and outer areas of both cities."

The next phase of work could further work to design culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal people in the existing urban areas, including discussions to consider intergenerational housing.

### Reference cases and examples

There are numerous examples of co-housing structures across Australia, some formalised via a development, others organised by a group of connected and likeminded people.

- Developer Nightingale build/renew houses and apartments to promote the shared use of facilities<sup>37</sup>.
- Existing organisations like Agency Cohousing and Community<sup>38</sup> and Cohousing Australia<sup>39</sup> are working to support individuals come together to live independently, in separate 'homes' but ultimately share facilities and utilities (e.g., shared kitchen and dining, garden, laundry etc.)

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<sup>36</sup> Newton, P.W., Newman, P.W.G., Glackin, S., Thomson, G. (2022). Changing Attitudes to Housing and Residential Location in Cities: The Cultural Clash and the Greyfield Solution. In: Greening the Greyfields. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-6238-6\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-6238-6_6)

<sup>37</sup> <https://nightingalehousing.org/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://agencycohcom.org/what-is-cohousing/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://transitionaustralia.net/site/cohousing-australia/>



- Cohousing in Germany is dominant housing system, with research from 2020 estimating there were “1,900 housing cooperatives with almost 3 million members”. Key issues hindering these projects are land access, financial security and liability risks for contractors and residents. However, it has been recognised that this housing structures are social equitable and sustainable and cost-effective especially in relation to housing an ageing population. As such, “German local authorities and public housing landlords are becoming increasingly involved in developing projects”<sup>40</sup>. More so by providing funding to these organisations it can relief public housing systems of being the sole provider of affordable housing solutions.
- There are technology solutions facilitating the sharing of available space to those in need. Airbnb’s Open Homes initiative provides free temporary accommodation for refugees, disaster relief and medical stays. Airbnb provide a platform and hosts manage their listings. This helps to free up underutilised accommodation, and hosts have the option of being subsidised by Airbnb.

## Scope

Target locations	
Across the city – all households	
Land or property owner/s	Private
Timeframe to deliver	Ongoing – the community’s response will determine when the impacts of this will be felt
Scale of delivery	Low to Medium – 5,500 households that have one or more bedrooms spare
Ease of delivery	Hard – this is not resource-intensive and requires little budget and no capital works, however, it requires the private market to lead.
Dependencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protocols and requirements of key employers</li> <li>• Condition and size of housing</li> <li>• Community acceptance</li> </ul>

<sup>40</sup> Stefanie Dühr, (2020 working paper), The role of government in supporting co-housing accommodation models for older people in Germany: towards a research agenda. DOI: [10.13140/RG.2.2.17082.00963](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.17082.00963)

## Recommendation 2: Monitor demand drivers

### Description

Throughout this report, at the end of each section is a list of demand drivers that we have identified as factors that need monitoring to stabilise and relieve Broken Hill's housing system. What we have identified are factors, events or people that need to be monitored to better understand the demand for housing, peak demand and expected timing. Monitoring demand drivers requires establishing a set of processes and assigning resources to effectively monitor these drivers. We have recommended why these drivers need to be monitored and provided suggestions for the best way to monitor them in Section 2.

### Rationale

Monitoring these drivers of demand allows Broken Hill to effectively inform housing supply strategies and shape the planning and design of housing delivery. Importantly, however, monitoring these drivers will inform the scale of response required and in turn allow Broken Hill to understand the necessary commitment of investment and resources.

### Reference cases and examples

- City of Casey, Victoria, Growth Indicators Dashboard<sup>41</sup>

### Scope

Indicators to monitor are summarised in the table below and it is recommended that BHCC leads in the monitoring of these indicators on a regular basis.

Factors that impact the housing system	Indicators to monitor
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Migration</li><li>• Household size</li><li>• Major projects and workforce needs</li><li>• Short-term or seasonal work</li><li>• Job advertisements</li></ul>
Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development activity</li><li>• Vacant dwellings</li><li>• Dwelling condition</li><li>• Intentions of property owners</li></ul>
Housing market health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing rental prices</li><li>• Housing sale prices</li></ul>
Capacity of the local building supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost of materials</li><li>• Availability of labour</li><li>• Capacity to manage construction waste</li></ul>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.casey.vic.gov.au/our-community-location>

## Recommendation 3: Establish a collective impact operation model

### Description

Broken Hill's housing problem is being experienced by numerous stakeholders, each with their own needs and aspirations. More so, the way the system currently operates is being positioned as a barrier to Broken Hill positioning itself as a strategic centre for Far West NSW. DPE's revision of the Far West Regional Plan 2041 provides an opportunity to establish a collective impact operating model.

Our work thus far has identified the various stakeholders and processes operating within Broken Hill that are trying to fix the system by freeing up housing for those who need and want it now, and the projected population who will need it in the future. However, these stakeholders are currently siloed. Thus, the opportunity to bring these stakeholders together into a network, to share and plan together is possibly the most effective action to solve the housing problem.

We propose the implementation of a collective impact model to connect these networks and enable them to share (a vision, an agenda, actions and information) and generate meaningful impact. A collective impact model establishes a shared agenda and reinforcing actions towards generating collective impact to tackle challenges in relation to the housing supply needed in Broken Hill.

Collective Impact is a framework first presented in the Stanford Social Innovation Review<sup>42</sup> in 2011 to tackle large-scale social change which requires broad cross-sector coordination. The aim of collective impact is to increase the impact and combat isolated impact which can occur as systems become large in scale and complexity, as is demonstrated in Figure 36. This model can be contextualised for Broken Hill by using the ecosystem map in Figure 35 to identify relevant actors and cohorts.

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<sup>42</sup> [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)

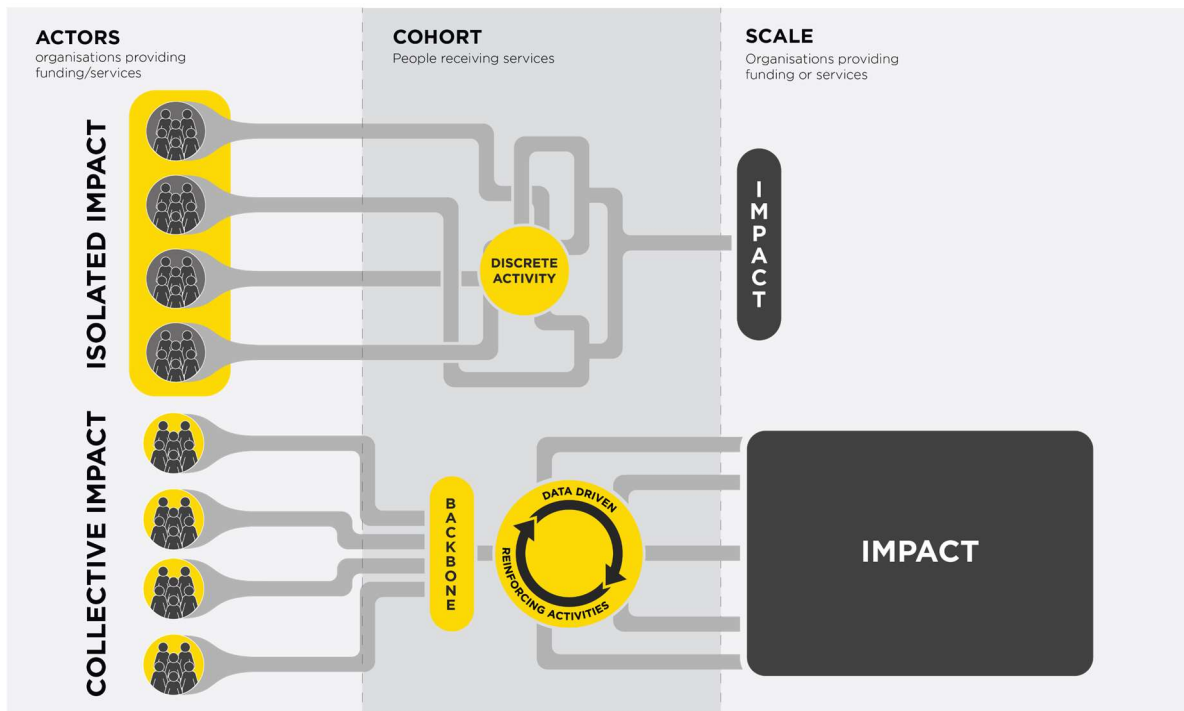


Figure 36 Benefits of a collective impact operating model. Source: Astrolabe Group

## Rationale

From our work we have observed the complexity of the housing ecosystem in Broken Hill. This complexity is also a characteristic of the solutions needed to solve this problem. In part, it is complex due to the multiple stakeholders who have identified or are experiencing the same housing problems and are working independently of others to increase the housing supply. If this ecosystem of stakeholders continued in its current state, it may culminate in entities competing with one another to solve the same problem, possibly in the same way. It would be counterproductive, inefficient and a burden on Broken Hill's growth.

Solutions to creating greater redundancy in Broken Hill's housing system relies on uniting the ecosystem of stakeholders into a collective network. This network can then leverage each stakeholder's skills, resources, and experience to efficiently and effectively work towards a shared solution, and vision.

By bringing together diverse stakeholders in this network, Broken Hill can predict negative externalities associated with specific solutions and inform how to best mitigate against negative impacts on the community and the strategic position of the city. The unique position of Broken Hill in the Far West, as being landlocked by Unincorporated NSW is both a challenge (as is evident in increasing the supply of housing) but also a gift. This is a place where the people working to grow it are committed to it and are not being interrupted by surrounding jurisdictions or legislative influences. It is a place that is tight knit enough where a collective impact model is viable as all the relevant stakeholders are known and the environment they are working in is clearly defined.



We have identified potential impacts that intervening in the housing system may cause, and what a collective network needs to be aware of when working on the solution to the housing supply shortage:

- Increasing housing supply and positioning Broken Hill as an attractive investment market has the potential to increase house prices and price out the rest of the community (established community in Broken Hill). Any solution needs to be informed that there is a risk of creating social division, especially with new arrivals having access to newer, better condition, and more expensive housing than the locals.
- The intervention into housing in the city may cause tension or concern throughout the community. Work in this area requires smooth transitions and be the case for developing a change management plan for housing supply.
- To mitigate disruption to residents and businesses across the city, development needs to be coordinated, efficient, and well managed. This may be realised through identifying the need for and providing, supporting infrastructure and servicing requirements. A clear and coordinated plan will maximise the value of change and intervention at a precinct level.
- Create accessibility and accommodate for a diverse population and a diverse set of preferences and needs. This requires the delivery of a mix of typologies and tenure to increase the diversity of housing stock in the local market.

Moving forward, these potential impacts can be reframed as housing goals or principles for Broken Hill.

### Reference cases and examples

- Burnie Works is a collective impact initiative made up of a collaborative agreement with Australian Government, Department of Social Services, Department of Communities Tasmania, Burnie City Council, Beacon Foundation, and the University of Tasmania. Burnie Works was established to address the needs of a community who were once resource rich and a hub for manufacturing, and as industry left began to experience factors signifying a low-socioeconomic community. This collective impact model worked to initiate the Making Burnie 2030 Community Plan<sup>43</sup>.
- Maranguka Initiative is a justice reinvestment project based in Bourke, NSW, that works to establish community-led teams and help them partner with government and non-government agencies to improve outcomes for Indigenous children, young people, and families. Using a collective impact model, the Initiative is “a different form of collaboration with dedicated roles and a purpose-built structure which focuses on the design of solutions to complex problems and the development of evidence-based policy and shared measures to address system level change”<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.burnie.tas.gov.au/Living/Our-City/Making-Burnie-2030>

<sup>44</sup> <https://justicereinvestment.net.au/community-profiles/bourke-new-south-wales/>

## Scope

The following components define a collective impact operating model and are critical to its success.

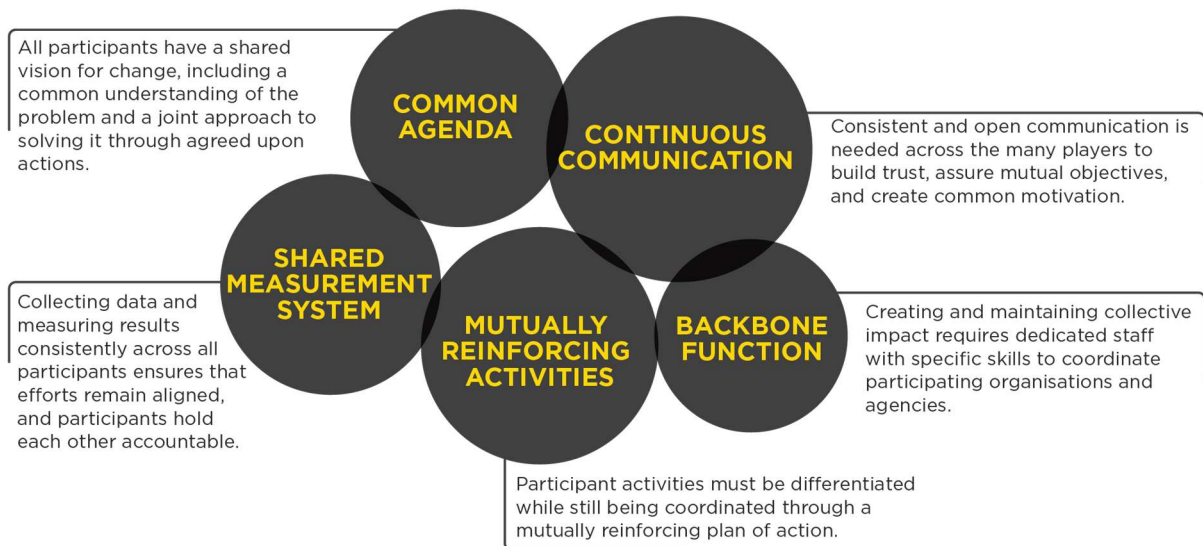


Figure 37 Features of a collective impact operating model. Source: Astrolabe Group

It will take time and require engagement and coordination of stakeholders to establish and mature the operating model to realise the benefits of this approach. Refer to stakeholders identified in the local ecosystem map (Figure 35).

The tables below outline steps to establish a collective impact operating model in Broken Hill and suggested roles and responsibilities for DPE and BHCC. It is recommended that BHCC takes a lead on actions, supported by DPE through funding and/or resourcing contributions.

We recommend that priority is placed on establishing the backbone function and shared measurement system first before the other components. These can be initiated and incubated internally and will create foundation resources to support the other components involving other non-government stakeholders.

Table 10 – Overview of backbone function

<b>Component: Backbone function</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	Creating and managing collective impact requires dedicated staff with specific skills to coordinate participating organisations and agencies.		
<b>Horizons</b>	<b>Initiation phase</b>	<b>Establishment phase</b>	<b>Operation phase (ongoing)</b>
<b>Actions needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a proposal for the backbone function – Identify staffing and skills required</li> <li>Develop a project plan for the pilot phase and outcomes to be achieved</li> <li>Secure seed funding to initiate and pilot the backbone function</li> <li>Recruit for backbone function</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish team and confirm project plan for the pilot phase</li> <li>Secure office space</li> <li>Deliver pilot phase</li> <li>Review outcomes of the pilot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure ongoing funding for backbone function (either by cash contribution or in-kind allocation of staff time)</li> <li>Establish operational roles and governance</li> <li>Recruit for ongoing operations</li> <li>Establish team</li> <li>Secure office space</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	BHCC, supported by DPE and DRNSW	BHCC and Backbone function	BHCC and Backbone function
<b>Output or activity</b>	Proposal and seed funding	Pilot project(s)	Ongoing resources and sustainable funding model

Table 11 – Overview of shared measurement system

<b>Component: Shared measurement system</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures that efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.		
<b>Horizons</b>	<b>Initiation phase</b>	<b>Establishment phase</b>	<b>Operation phase (ongoing)</b>
<b>Actions needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline (using suggested indicators in this report)</li> <li>Communicate results to stakeholders</li> <li>Engage stakeholders and identify data gaps and additional data that can be used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design methodology for collecting and measuring indicators</li> <li>Carry out the first period of review</li> <li>Communicate results to stakeholders</li> <li>Review and revise the monitoring approach</li> <li>Design strategy for communicating and reporting (e.g., Dashboard or report)</li> <li>Identify additional measures and data sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and revise the methodology for collecting and measuring indicators</li> <li>Review and revise strategy for communicating and reporting</li> <li>Seek feedback from participants</li> <li>Apply measures collected to inform funding to support reinforcing activities of stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	BHCC	Backbone function	Backbone function
<b>Output or activity</b>	Initial report	Methodology paper Report	Revised methodology paper Report



Table 12 – Overview of common agenda

<b>Component: Common agenda</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	All participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions.		
<b>Horizons</b>	<b>Initiation phase</b>	<b>Establishment phase</b>	<b>Operation phase (ongoing)</b>
<b>Actions needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define the problem/opportunity (validate this report with stakeholders)</li> <li>Confirm where stakeholders will work together and why this model suits the needs of the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene stakeholders to refine the shared vision for change</li> <li>Stakeholders agree on the problem/opportunity and the focus areas</li> <li>Confirm participants that will work together on this common agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and refine the shared vision for change as and when needed</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	BHCC	BHCC and Backbone function	Backbone function
<b>Output or activity</b>	A draft Collective Charter	Workshop/s	Revised Collective Charter

Table 13 – Mutually reinforcing activities

<b>Component: Mutually reinforcing activities</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.		
<b>Horizons</b>	<b>Initiation phase</b>	<b>Establishment phase</b>	<b>Operation phase (ongoing)</b>
<b>Actions needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit individual actions currently being delivered by stakeholders</li> <li>• Identify where stakeholders have an interest or dependency in another project's success</li> <li>• Identify work that should be done that is not yet funded or programmed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the first round of funded and programmed projects (the roadmap) to be delivered individually and collectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design new projects to respond to insights shared by delivering the first round of projects.</li> <li>• Develop the second round of funded and programmed activities including individual and collective projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	NSW government lead (Regional Leadership Executive)	Backbone function	Backbone function
<b>Output or activity</b>	Activity baseline report	First round activity forecast (designed individually and collectively)	Activity reporting Second round activity forecast (designed individually and collectively)

Table 14 – Continuous communication

<b>Component: Continuous communication</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.		
<b>Horizons</b>	<b>Initiation phase</b>	<b>Establishment phase</b>	<b>Operation phase (ongoing)</b>
<b>Actions needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness of the collective impact operating model initiative</li> <li>• Establish a brand or identity for the initiative</li> <li>• Define communication channels for stakeholders</li> <li>• Collate a participants register and their contact details</li> <li>• Identify and advertise a point of contact for the initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a communications and engagement strategy</li> <li>• Develop a plan for communications and engagement for the pilot phase</li> <li>• Initiate relationship building and relationship management approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise communications and engagement approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	BHCC, supported by the NSW government (such as the Regional Leadership Executive)	Backbone function	Backbone functions
<b>Output or activity</b>	Information package Point of contact	Communications and engagement strategy and plan	Revised Communications and engagement strategy and plan

# SECTION THREE

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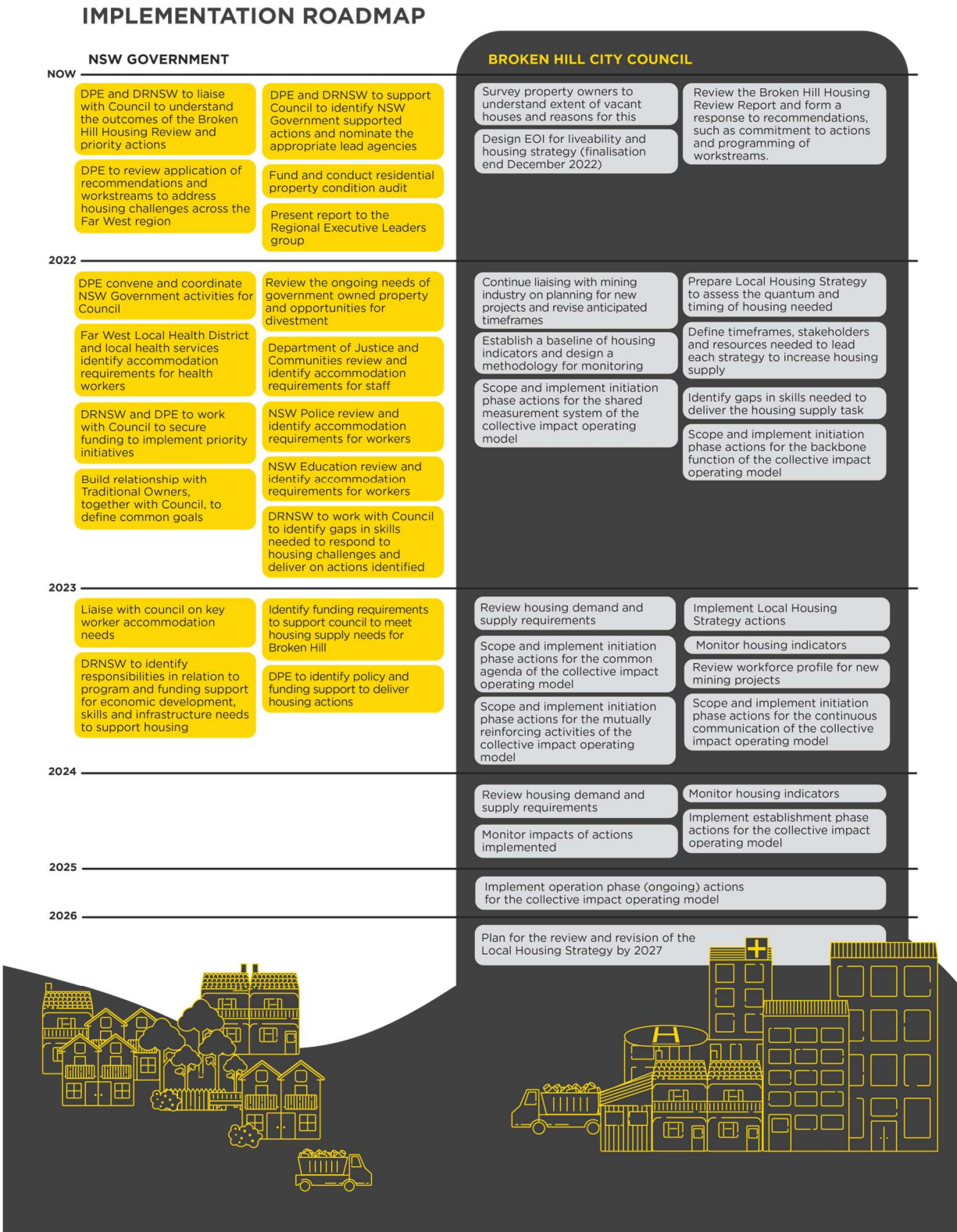
Next steps





# Implementation roadmap

The following graphic outlines a roadmap. It guides activities over the next five years for the NSW Government and BHCC to deliver on the recommendations of this report that contribute to delivering the housing supply needed to meet demand in Broken Hill.



## Appendix A: Stakeholders interviewed

Stakeholder	Interviewee
Broken Hill City Council	Anne Andrews, Executive Manager Growth & Investment
	Bailey Treloar, Economic Development Trainee
	Georgina Falkner, Strategic Land Use Planner
	Tracey Stephens, Town Planner
	Kathryn Graham, Waste and Sustainability Manager, Interim Works Manager
	Meryl Robertson, Rates & Revenue Officer
Mining industry	Travis Nadge, Project Officer, Foundation Broken Hill
	Joe Kaderavek, CEO, Cobalt Blue Holdings
Real Estate	Clifford Wren, Agent, Ray White
Developer/ builders	Kyle Dwyer, Dwyer Building Group (local)
	Selina LaRovere-Nagas, Globe Home Timber & Hardware
	Jo Brown and David Bearman, Cliqbuild
State Government	Crown Lands: Anna Osland, Jody Chinner (Far West), Shaun Barker (Far West), Janelle Pearson (Council Crown Lands Manager team), Natalie Ryan
	DPE (Western Region team): Robert Hodgkins, Rebecca Martin, Oyshee Iqbal, Paul Amoateng

## Appendix B: Major Project Workforce Projections

The following table summarises information provided to us from BHCC and industry stakeholders on major project and their associated workforce needs. This indicates the potential additional workers that need to locate to Broken Hill and an estimate on timing. These are indicative and are subject to further refinement and validation with stakeholders, particularly as more detailed information is made available as planning for major projects progress.

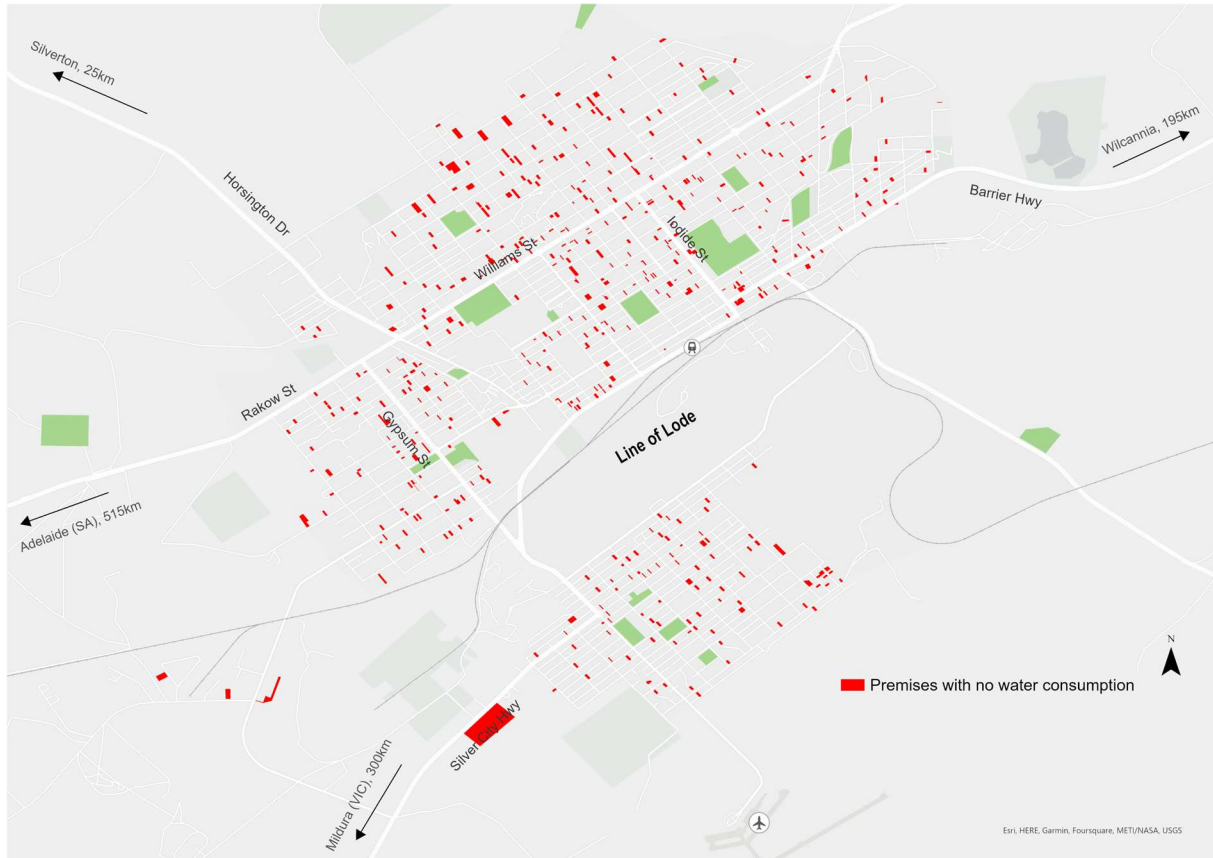
Project name	Timeline	Job creation projections	Source
CBD Masterplan	Currently in design stage End date within 5 years	84 FTE over two years (2022—2024)	<a href="#">BHCC Website - CBD Masterplan</a>
Cultural precinct, library, and archive	End date within 5 years	Unknown	<a href="#">BHCC Website - Cultural Precinct and Library &amp; Archive</a>
O'Neill Sporting Precinct	End date within 5 years	Unknown	<a href="#">BHCC Website - O'Neill Sporting Precinct Redevelopment</a>
AGL Energy Limited – Broken Hill Battery Energy Storage System Project	Waiting approval	50 direct jobs during peak construction	<a href="#">AGL Scoping Report - Broken Hill Battery Energy Storage System Project</a>
<b>Central West Projects</b>			
Broken Hill Cobalt Project	Planning phase 2022-2023	710	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a> Information provided by BHCC
	Construction approximately 2yrs Operation from 2025 (20-year operation)	400 jobs ongoing	
New Cobar Complex Underground Project	Unknown	501	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>
Federation Project (related to Hera Mine)	Unknown	350	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>

Project name	Timeline	Job creation projections	Source
Owendale Scandium Project	Unknown	121	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>
Hawsons Iron Ore Project	Currently in planning phase	1,700	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>
		1,200 jobs in construction phase 500 jobs in steady-state production	Information provided by BHCC
<b>Far West Projects</b>			
Pine Dale Extension	Unknown	72	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>
Angus Place West	Unknown	200	<a href="#">Resources for Recovery Report – NSW Minerals Council</a>
Bowden's Silver Project	Unknown	350	
Broken Hill North Lead	Unknown	72 in construction phase 140 jobs ongoing	DPE DAs
Sturt's steps Environment and tourism fund	2020 to 2022/23	Unknown	<a href="https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund">https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund</a>
Rasp (MOD 8)	Unknown	2 in construction phase 2 jobs ongoing	DPIE DAs



# Appendix C: Potentially vacant premises

The map below shows properties identified from a recent audit that had no water consumption. This indicates that the property is potentially currently vacant.



# Appendix D: Property owner survey

This is a draft survey Astrolabe has designed for BHCC to conduct. This survey could be conducted as part of Council's preparation of their Local Housing Strategy.

## Purpose

The purpose of the survey is to identify why houses across Broken Hill remain unoccupied and to understand if they are a viable option to relieving the housing supply challenge Broken Hill is experiencing.

## Methodology

As a result of the desktop research, interview, and site visits, we have identified the unique problem in Broken Hill: a high number of unoccupied dwellings in a town currently experiencing high rental returns on investment. As such, we can consider the freeing up of these dwellings as a core stream that would work simultaneously alongside the other priorities to relieve the housing supply challenges.

The survey is designed to understand what is stopping owners from releasing these properties to the market (which may include sentimental value, ignorance to the economic value or other factors). Survey results can inform how viable the opportunity to release unoccupied dwellings to market may be and how DPE and BHCC may best design a solution to implement the opportunity.

## Suggested approach

1. Council identifies contact details of vacant properties (as indicated in the water usage audit)
2. Council distributes background information, the survey (or a link, if conducted online) and contact name and details of a council officer for enquiries
3. Survey to be open for 3 weeks (suggestion)
4. Council to review findings after the survey is closed

### Considerations:

- Conduct the survey online to assist with distribution (and access to survey). An online/ digital survey also enables a quicker process for collecting and analysing responses. Does council have an existing/ preferred platform to conduct online surveys? Otherwise, Astrolabe Group can suggest easy to access platforms.
- It is recommended that council conducts the survey and contacts property owners as contact information is private and held by council.
- It is recommended that responses are anonymous to encourage people to participate. Assuring anonymity will reinforce that the purpose of the survey is to understand an issue further (property owner sentiment) rather than a targeted exercise on specific properties.
- Despite the previous point, it is recommended that respondents are asked about the general location of their property, e.g., what part of town, so this can inform if solutions need to be focussed on particular locations.

# Proposed survey

## Suggested preamble – Justification/explainer to owners

Currently Broken Hill is experiencing a very tight rental market. Which means it is challenging for people to secure accommodation. People coming to Broken Hill as a key health care, education, or security professionals, alongside workers from other various industries are struggling to find housing and at times are having to turn jobs down because they can't find accommodation. This has both economic and social consequences.

Many stakeholders working to solve this problem identify available land and the releasing of new development sites as the major issue facing the town. However, there is an interesting situation that exists in Broken Hill where numerous houses across town are currently unoccupied, and some may have been unoccupied for a long time. Council's research shows that there are potentially 502 dwellings in Broken Hill that are unoccupied, based on a review of water usage. This signifies that there are unoccupied dwellings in town that could be made available to people that are actively seeking housing through either a lease or purchase.

Council have identified you as an owner of a dwelling in Broken Hill that is potentially unoccupied and are seeking to confirm whether this is the case and understand why it is that your house is unoccupied. In so doing, we are trying to understand if there is potential to help solve the housing supply shortage issue confronting Broken Hill.

## Survey questions

Question	Answer format
<b>Part 1: Context setting</b>	
1. Where do you currently live?	Select one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken Hill</li> <li>• NSW</li> <li>• Victoria</li> <li>• South Australia</li> <li>• Other... [option to enter text]</li> </ul>
2. Do you have a residential property in Broken Hill?	Select one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• I have more than one property</li> </ul> Is this property/ies your (select one): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary place of residence</li> <li>• Not my primary place of residence</li> </ul>
<i>Proceed to Questions 3, 4 and 5 if you have a residential property in Broken Hill that is not your primary place of residence</i>	
3. Please indicate what part of the town your house in Broken Hill is located. [Note: The design of this question depends on survey format and available functionalities]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area 1</li> <li>• Area 2</li> <li>• Area 3</li> <li>Etc....</li> </ul>

4. Is this house currently occupied? Select one:
- Yes
  - No
  - Some of the time
- 
5. When was the last time you lived at this address? Or called this home your primary address? Short response
- 
6. Who previously lived in this house? Were they a family member, friends, a tenant? Short response

### Part 2: Your connection to Broken Hill

7. Did you grow up in Broken Hill? Select one:
- Yes
  - No
- 
8. If you live elsewhere, when did you leave Broken Hill? Short response
- 
9. If a friend asked you, 'where is home', would you say Broken Hill? Select one:
- Yes
  - No
- [option to enter short response]
- 
10. How often do you visit Broken Hill? Select one:
- Once a month
  - Every 2-3 months
  - Every 6 months
  - Once a year
  - Other
- 
11. When visiting Broken Hill, do you stay in the house you own? If not, where you usually stay? Select one:
- Yes, I stay in this house
  - No, I stay with:
    - Friends
    - Relatives
    - Hotel
    - Other holiday accommodation

### Part 3: Future of the house

*The following questions are only relevant if the respondent has answered 'yes' to having a residential property/ies in Broken Hill that 'are not' their primary place of residence to Question 2*

12. Are you interested in living in this house in the future? Select one:
- Yes
  - No
- If no, why? [option to enter short response]
- 
13. Are you interested in either renting out or selling the house? Select one:
- Yes
  - No
- If no, why? [option to enter short response]?



14. Would you consider renovating or refurbishing the house in the near future? Select one:

- Yes
- No

[option to enter short response]

15. What things do you think about when considering what to do to your house? Long/open response  
What information or assistance could help with your decision?

#### Part 4: Keeping up with local news

16. Are you aware of the shortage of rental properties in Broken Hill? Select one:

- Yes
- No

17. Are you aware of the current weekly rents tenants are paying for houses in Broken Hill? Select one:

- Yes
- No

18. On a scale of 1-5, how often do you read news about Broken Hill? Select one:  
1 – Never, 2, 3, 4, 5 – Always

19. On a scale of 1-5, how connected do you feel about Broken Hill? Select one:  
1 – Not connected at all, 2, 3, 4, 5 – Extremely connected (I am a local)

#### Part 5: Demographic questions

*Optional questions to help us understand demographic profile of respondents*

20. Choose your age group Select one:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- Above 64
- Prefer not to say

21. Gender Select one:

- Male
- Non-binary
- Female
- Prefer to self-describe [option to enter text]
- Prefer not to say

## Appendix E: Feasibility analysis assumptions

Below are the information inputs and assumptions made to inform the high-level feasibility analysis and comparison of four development scenarios.

These information inputs reflect the local context of Broken Hill.

Inputs	Information sources and assumptions			
	4 lot subdivision	17 lot subdivision	1 property	1 property renovation
<b>Land size</b>	1,000 approx. min lot size 230sqm = 4 lots	Some lots exist at this size but there are native title right issues with them	Based on what is currently for sale	Based on what is currently for sale
<b>Purchase price</b>	\$60,000 based on previous property and current property on Realeste.com	\$100,000 based on a vacant lot from previous property and current property on Realeste.com	\$160,000 based on what is currently for sale – land value only	\$40,000 based on what is currently for sale – land value only
<b>DA &amp; CC cost</b>	Surveyor, consultant reports, certifier fees – assume a premium due to the location	Surveyor, consultant reports, certifier fees – assume a premium due to the location	No subdivision required, more simple process, based on market rates	No subdivision required, more simple process, based on market rates
<b>Financing costs</b>	market rates	market rates	market rates	market rates
<b>Timeframe</b>	6 months to build a house is industry standard	6 months to build a house is industry standard	6 months to build a house is industry standard	6 months to build a house is industry standard
<b>Build cost</b>	The lots are smaller you will need 2 storey homes  Talking to the local builder Kyle Dwyer – the rate would be \$2,400 for 2 storeys.  Assume 160sqm of house	The lots are smaller you will need 2 storey homes  Talking to the local builder Kyle Dwyer – the rate would be \$2,400 for 2 storeys.  Assume 160sqm of house and \$2,200 per sqm build cost due to more volume in this example	Talking to the local builder Kyle Dwyer – the rate is \$1,800 per sqm for single storey  Assume 180sqm home	Talking to the local John who is currently using a group from Mildura to renovate a home and the home hardware owner
<b>Selling cost</b>	From local agent discussions	From local agent discussions	From local agent discussions	From local agent discussions
<b>Selling price</b>	Based on market evidence and agent feedback	Based on market evidence and agent feedback	Based on market evidence and agent feedback	Based on market evidence and agent feedback







# QUALITY CONTROL

KEY THEME	1. Our Community		
OBJECTIVE	1.1 Our community spirit is our strength		
STRATEGY	1.1.2 Ensure that the liveability factors that enhance our lifestyles are identified, considered, maintained, and grown		
FILE REFERENCE No	22/137	EDRMS No	D23/12293
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Manager Growth and Investment		
REVIEW DATE	March 2027		
DATE	ACTION	MINUTE No	
29 March 2023	Public Exhibition	47156	
31 May 2023	Adoption	47223	

## Acknowledgement

We pay respect to the Traditional Owners of the Broken Hill area - the Wilyakali People - on whose land we live and work upon. We acknowledge, pay respect and celebrate the ongoing cultural traditions and contributions to Broken Hill and the surrounding region by Aboriginal people. We acknowledge the Elders past, present and emerging.

This Strategy was compiled by Broken Hill City Council.

Council acknowledges Astrolabe Group, a change management consultancy, who has supported the development of this Strategy.

Copies of this Strategy can be viewed on-line at [www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au](http://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au)

Images were sourced from Council's image library.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Hello and thank you for taking the time to consider our Liveability Strategy 2043.

The term 'liveability' can ultimately mean different things to different people, so please allow me to briefly outline how it is expressed in this document.

We believe a liveable place is one that is safe, attractive, socially cohesive and inclusive, and environmentally sustainable. It should offer affordable and diverse housing linked by convenient public transport, walking, and cycling infrastructure to employment, education, public spaces, shops, health and community services, and other key features of the city.

We believe Broken Hill achieves many of the aspects listed above, however we know there is always room for significant improvement.

Broken Hill's Community Strategic Plan calls for all sectors of our community to work together to enhance quality of life in Broken Hill, and this Liveability Strategy provides a 20-year view of the future and sets a focus on 12 liveability indicators and priority actions that will help us achieve these goals.

We already know that a lack of housing is currently a barrier to people coming to and staying in Broken Hill, and that solutions are needed to support new economic and growth opportunities.

This key issue is a focus of the Strategy, along with a range of other important issues such as inclusivity, provision of services, education and healthcare opportunities, facilities and infrastructure, our environment and open spaces, and much more.

This Strategy provides an initial roadmap where Council will facilitate and lead through collaboration to tackle our liveability issues, however all sectors of our community must work together if we are to achieve the goals outlined within.

I would like to thank everyone who has informed and helped shape this Strategy, and I call on our community and stakeholders to partner with Council to help deliver on this Strategy and provide a better Broken Hill for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Tom Kennedy  
Broken Hill Mayor

# 1. LIVEABILITY IN BROKEN HILL

Broken Hill needs to be a large, thriving and viable regional city to provide support services to communities across the Far West region. The lands around Broken Hill have been home to many generations over many millennia and are cared for by the Wilyakali Traditional Owners. Since the discovery of ore in the 1880s, the presence of natural resources has attracted people to the region and led to the establishment of and growth of Broken Hill – Australia's longest-lived mining city.

Today, the City continues to support mining as the key local industry, is home to a well-known and growing outback arts and culture industry and is a regional hub for important health, education, government and retail services for surrounding communities and the broader Far West region. Broken Hill attracts people to visit and locate to this unique City for a different lifestyle, employment opportunities and to join an inclusive community.

---

*In developing this Strategy, Council together with local stakeholders and the community, is defining a vision for a future where the relationship between people and place is strongly connected.*

---

This Strategy takes a 20-year view of the future and sets a focus on 12 liveability indicators and priority actions that will enhance liveability – supporting people to stay in Broken Hill to live happy and healthy lives; and attracting people to come to Broken Hill to support a growing economy and create new opportunities.

Broken Hill has a rich history that is strongly shaped by its strengths in industry, natural resources and location in Far West NSW. Into the future, Broken Hill can position itself as a City on the global stage with the opportunity to be a key supplier of resources that are in high demand across international markets. These factors shape the characteristics of its residential population, its needs, and the nature of housing that is required.

The City needs to both cater for a stable residential population and a component of the population that is cyclical (or dynamic) in nature that services the peak workforce needs of the significant mining industry as well as healthcare, tourism and arts and culture. Therefore, the City must have a response that caters for these stable and dynamic needs otherwise there is a risk that residents, visitors and workers are not offered what they desire on an ongoing basis. As Broken Hill grows through the opportunity presented by investment in economic industries it has a responsibility to grow its population serving capabilities, which critically includes enabling people to find housing that is safe and affordable.

Given its location, Broken Hill cannot rely on other towns to manage overflow in the needs for housing and services when the population peaks. This Strategy supports Broken Hill to create redundancy in services and housing and ensure adequate supplies of rental housing stock as part of the way for people to make the initial move to Broken Hill, enjoy the lifestyle the City has to offer, and encourage more permanent decisions to stay.



## WHAT MAKES A LIVEABLE PLACE?

A liveable place is defined as one that is “safe, attractive, socially cohesive and inclusive, and environmentally sustainable; with affordable and diverse housing linked by convenient public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to employment, education, public open space, local shops, health and community services, and leisure and cultural opportunities”.<sup>1</sup>



## PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY

This Strategy builds on opportunities for sustainable growth over time while promoting and protecting the environment and creating an equitable welcoming community that celebrates diversity. Looking forward over the next 20 years, the Broken Hill community can grow and change in different ways. This Strategy describes three horizons of growth that reflect plausible future scenarios that will shape Broken Hill's population and demographics, economy and work, and needs and expectations of current and future residents.

Council has led the development of this Strategy, with input from the community and stakeholders. The Strategy serves as a guiding document for community members and stakeholders that contribute to liveability in Broken Hill. Priority actions are defined for each liveability indicator and liveability measures will be monitored to track progress and impact of the Strategy. Establishment of a Collective Impact Model enables shared responsibility for the coordinated and collaborative implementation of this Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Lowe M, Whitzman C, Badland H, Davern M, Aye L, Hes D, et al., 2015, Planning healthy, liveable and sustainable cities: How can indicators inform policy? Urban Policy and Research. 33(2): 131–44. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/08111146.2014.1002606>>

The Liveability Strategy Background Paper accompanies this Liveability Strategy. The Paper outlines research and engagement outcomes that have shaped the liveability indicators and priority actions in this Strategy.

**BROKEN HILL COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022**

We are a strong, vibrant and growing regional city with wide opportunities, abundant natural assets, and a commitment to living lives of quality and connection in a unique location.

**BROKEN HILL LIVEABILITY STRATEGY TO 2043**



Access to Diverse and Affordable Housing



There is growth and diversity in jobs



Broken Hill is connected



There is access to education and training



There is access to quality healthcare for all stages of life



There is diversity in retail, services and industries



Broken Hill is a healthy and resilient city



People feel safe in Broken Hill



There is access to quality open spaces



There is choice in recreatio activities for all ages and groups



There is growth and support for Culture and the Arts in Broken Hill



Broken Hill is an inclusive community that celebrates cultural diversity

LIVEABILITY BACKGROUND PAPER (2023)

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Implementation through a collective impact model

**PRIORITY ACTIONS**

**LIVEABILITY MEASURES TO MONITOR**

## Delivering the Community Strategic Plan 2022

The Broken Hill Community Strategic Plan 2022 defined an important focus on the quality of life for the Broken Hill community and the need to plan for the future. During engagement on the Community Strategic Plan, community members raised that factors that relate to liveability were particularly important.

Specifically, this Strategy delivers on the Community Strategic Plan Objective 1.1 *Our community spirit is our strength* and Action 1.1.2 *Ensure that the liveability factors that enhance our lifestyles are identified, considered, maintained and grown*.



## Relationship to other strategies

This Strategy operates alongside other Council plans and strategies as the actions, activities and decisions defined in these documents also influence and contribute to liveability outcomes. The priority actions presented in this Strategy address additional actions, with a focus on liveability outcomes, which are not currently defined in other plans and strategies.

Community	Economy	Environment	Leadership
Cultural Plan 2021-2040	Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027	Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	Advocacy Strategy 2022
Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026	Airport Masterplan 2023	Active Transport Plan	Reconciliation Action Plan
		Sustainability Strategy 2018-2023	
		Heritage Strategy 2020-2023	

## PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

### Broken Hill today

#### OUR COMMUNITY

Total Population

**17,588**

Largest Age Cohort

**60-64 years**

Most significant decrease in age group

**40-59 years**

The greatest driver of population change is domestic migration, as more people move out of Broken Hill than to it. This has led to a decrease in population. Net internal migration between 2016 and 2021 was as follows:

- 2016-17: **-242**
- 2017-18: **-186**
- 2018-19: **-265**
- 2019-20: **-180**
- 2020-21: **-80**

Population born in Australia  
**15,119 | 89%**



Population born overseas

Philippines | 1%  
United Kingdom | 0.8%  
New Zealand | 0.4%

#### OUR HOUSING

Number of households

**7,308**

Number of occupied dwellings

**7,308**

Number of unoccupied dwellings:

**1,528**

Dominant dwelling type

**Separate house**

95% of all dwellings



Average rental cost (2022)

**\$280 weekly**

One bedroom  
**\$180 weekly**

Two bedroom  
**\$270 weekly**

Three bedroom  
**\$300 weekly**

Four bedroom  
**\$415 weekly**

Average house price (2022)

**\$173,000**

#### OUR ECONOMY

Total number of jobs in 2021

**7,575**

Number of local jobs by industry (top 5)

Mining  
**1,676**



Health Care and Social Assistance  
**1,326**



Retail Trade  
**797**



Education and Training  
**627**



Accommodation and Food Services  
**621**



Number of registered businesses by industry (top 5)

Construction  
**162**



Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing  
**142**



Retail Trade  
**92**



Accommodation and Food Services  
**91**



Other Services  
**84**





Today Broken Hill is a community of 17,588 people (ABS 2021 Census). It is a City built off the back of the mining industry and thriving from its rich social fabric and strong commitment to community. The City is a welcoming place with a strong arts, culture and events sector, fuelled by the unique landscapes that surround it. The community is proud of their City, its strengths and values and want to ensure that its future is planned for, and its unique strengths are enhanced.

### **Future scenarios – the road to success**

The creation of a more liveable Broken Hill requires a commitment across stakeholders to incremental changes and investment in activities and projects that lead to impact across multiple liveability indicators.

The future of Broken Hill as a community and City can evolve along different pathways. However, maintaining and supporting liveability needs to be at the core of all future scenarios and underpin how Council, the community and stakeholders respond and leverage the opportunities ahead.

The following scenarios describe different horizons of growth, the impacts to people and place and the role and range of interventions that would be needed to support liveability across these different contexts.



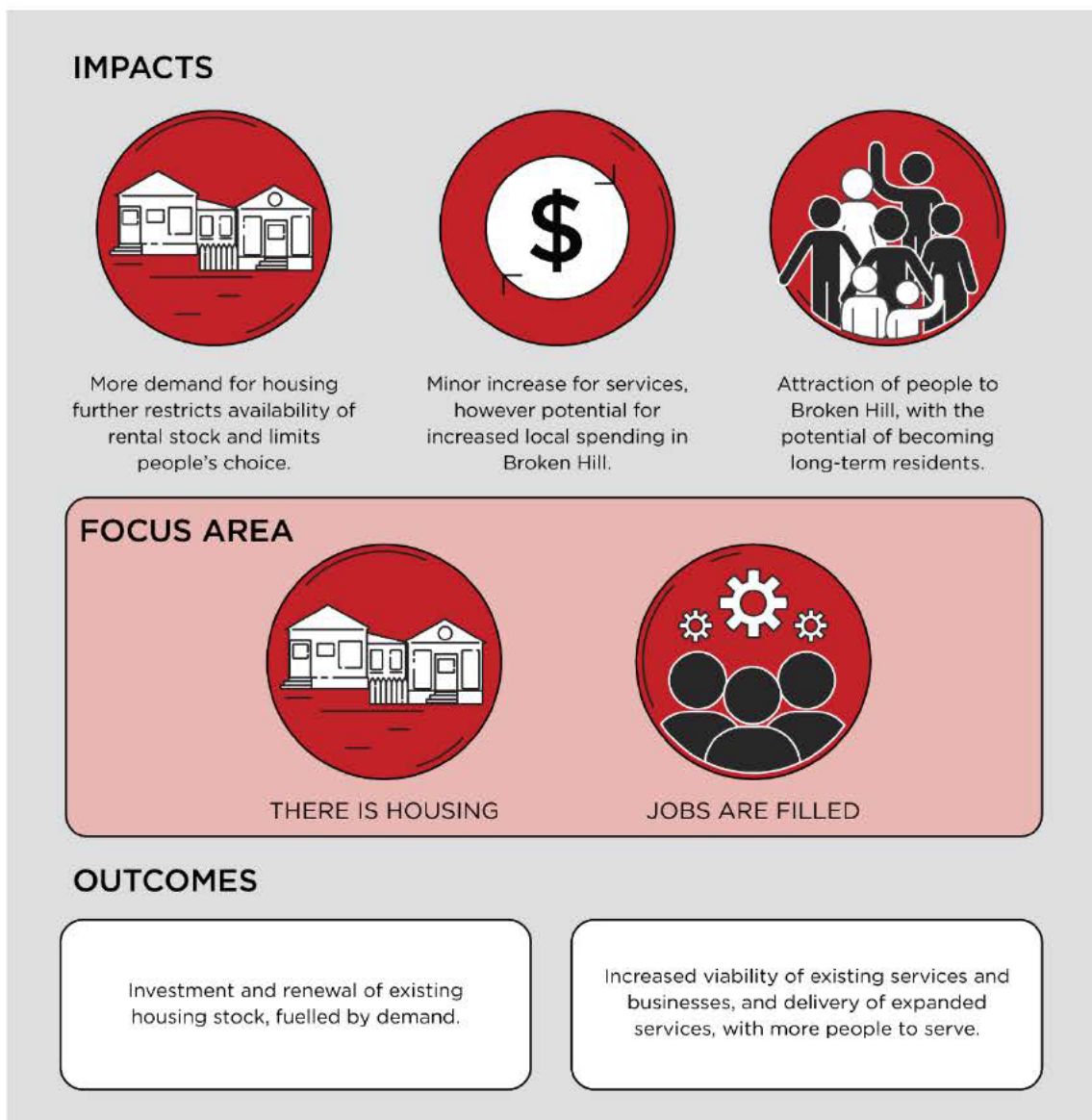
Image 1: Local Children Participate in the Totem Skate Workshop

## Horizon 1 – Filling our shape

Broken Hill has a high number of jobs to working population, indicating that there are more jobs available in Broken Hill compared to the number of working people living in Broken Hill. Filling vacant positions requires attraction and accommodation of job seekers to the City.

Attracting and more importantly retaining people long term to Broken Hill, through work, will increase the residential population and potentially spur further growth as new residents generate demand for additional services, infrastructure, and the need for more population serving jobs to be filled (such as health care workers, teachers and hospitality workers).

Housing and providing access to a range of accommodation options will be critical to attracting and enabling new residents to locate to Broken Hill to fill available work opportunities.

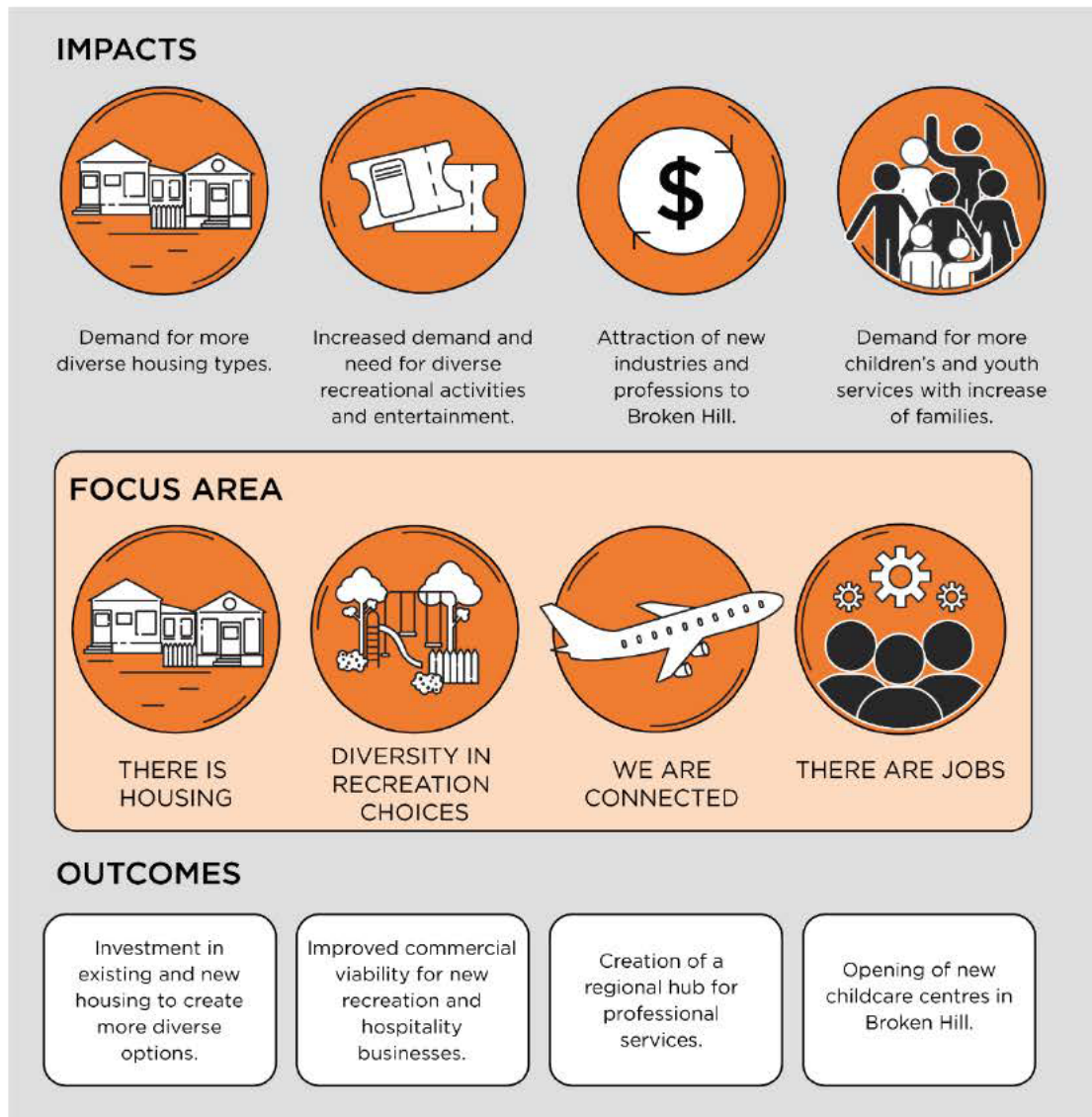




## Horizon 2 – Extending our reach

Following minor increases in population and housing/services demand described in Horizon 1, Broken Hill City receives investment in Smart Infrastructure connecting the community to the national/international markets and workforce. Since the Covid-19 pandemic there has been a global shift towards more flexible hybrid and remote working opportunities. This shift has increased the labour pool available to employers and provided employees the opportunity to live where they want to live, not where they work.

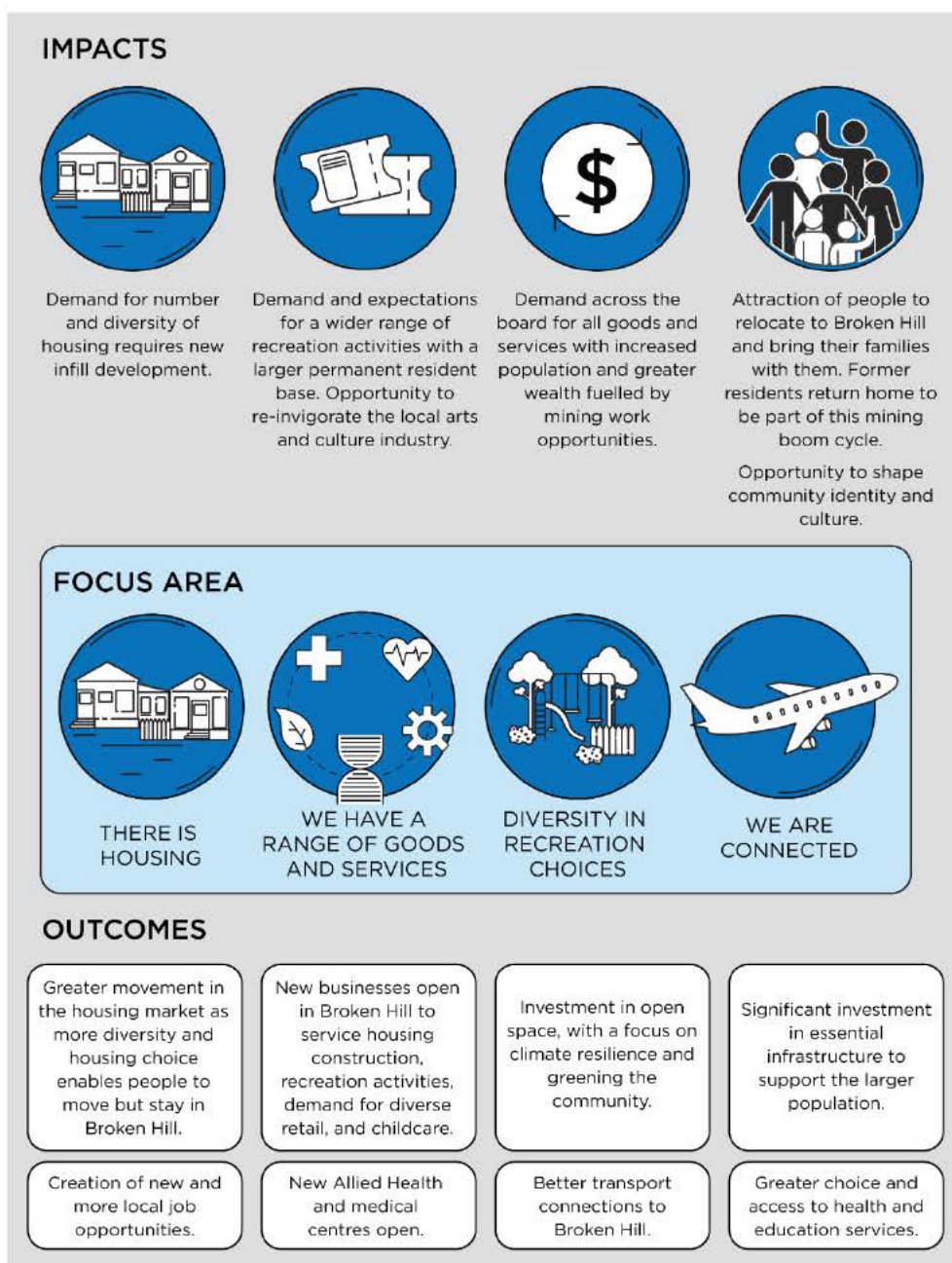
Improving Broken Hill's digital connectivity to the world will open a range of opportunities for working and learning remotely, as well as improved capacity to acquire and deliver services such as counselling and triage medical services and interventions. The increase in connectivity and the support of remote working as seen record numbers of capital city residents abandon the fast-paced live for the slower pace of Australia's regional towns seeking affordable housing, reduced commutes, and the opportunity to be part of a connected community.



## Horizon 3 – Making big bold moves and aspirational change

Having realised growth and change in the community described in Horizons 1 and 2, the building blocks are in place for the City to capture opportunities associated with aspirational change. This aspirational scenario describes a future where the mining industry resurges and the commencement of new mining operations in and around the City attracts a new residential workforce and their families to come to Broken Hill.

This scenario is ignited and driven by the mining industry. To achieve this, new mining operations will need to be supported, approved and operational. Mining operators will need to see investment potential and advantages to supporting a residential workforce over a fly-in, fly-out workforce.





## 2. LIVEABILITY INDICATORS

The Liveability Strategy is structured around 12 Liveability Indicators.



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 1  
**Access to Diverse and Affordable Housing**



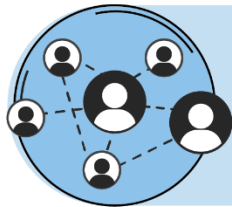
LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 7  
**Broken Hill is a healthy and resilient city**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 2  
**There is growth and diversity in jobs**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 8  
**People feel safe in Broken Hill**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 3  
**Broken Hill is connected**



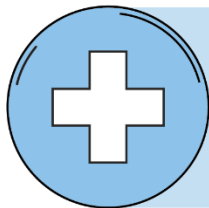
LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 9  
**There is access to quality open spaces**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 4  
**There is access to education and training**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 10  
**There is choice in recreation activities for all ages and groups**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 5  
**There is access to quality healthcare for all stages of life**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 11  
**There is growth and support for Culture and the Arts in Broken Hill**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 6  
**There is diversity in retail, services and industries**



LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 12  
**Broken Hill is an inclusive community that celebrates cultural diversity**

These indicators are presented through report cards that explain why the indicator is important, the relevant current challenges and opportunities, and priority actions that are required to address identified gaps and opportunities. The report cards also identify how we measure the indicators to ensure that we are progressing towards improved liveability outcomes.

# HOW TO READ THIS STRATEGY



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 6: THERE IS DIVERSITY IN RETAIL, SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES

The diversity of services and industries is a significant component of liveability as it can improve the community's access to a range of essential services and goods and respond to the needs of a wide range of community groups. Such a diversity can reduce Broken Hill's reliance on regional centres and dependence on transport and consequently, reduce the sense of isolation in the region.

Furthermore, a diversified economy can provide the community with a wide range of employment opportunities in various industries.

There are 12 liveability indicators that represent the different factors that make Broken Hill a liveable City.

There are unique challenges and **opportunities and community** perspectives that shape our priority actions for each liveability indicator.

### Opportunities and challenges

What we heard from you...

"Shopping and products [are] very limited. Entertainment is limited."

"Once the children have finished school, we plan to move somewhere there is more opportunity for them and access to services and employment not available here."

"The availability of childcare for children before they start school. This is a limiting factor in me being able to return to work."

The mining industry is a backbone of Broken Hill's economy. However, the significance of having new industries such as Renewable Energy (solar and wind), Manufacturing (e.g.,

**Priority actions** contribute to enhancing liveability in Broken Hill and fill gaps that existing strategies and action plans do not address.

There are four types of priority actions, reflecting different approaches to implementation:

- **Advocacy and partnership:** Facilitate relationships and seek support from stakeholders to lead
- **Engagement and communication:** Build awareness and educate on issues and ways of contributing
- **Funding:** Investigate and secure funding to deliver
- **Planning:** Conduct further studies to understand an issue and confirm actions to be taken

### Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Undertake a retail and services audit and identify gaps in service provision or opportunities to expand services.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Engage with childcare providers to encourage creation of additional spaces in within Broken Hill.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

Priority actions contribute towards different **horizons of growth** and are categorised by how immediately they need to be completed:

- more **immediate actions** address *Horizon 1 - Filling our shape* and the current state of liveability in Broken Hill
- **medium term** foundational projects contribute towards achieving a future described in *Horizon 2 - Extending our reach* and provide a platform for change
- **longer term** projects actively shape a future described in *Horizon 3 - Making big bold moves and aspirational change*

### How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is sufficient capacity in childcare services locally.	Count of children aged 0-4 (ABS Census 2021, id population forecasts) Count of childcare spaces in local centres (childcare providers)
There is diversity in local retail and fresh food offerings.	Count of business types (local businesses)

**Data sources** and potential data custodians for each measure.

**Measures** provide a way to monitor and track whether there has been progress made and impact generated from delivering priority actions. Regular monitoring of measures will inform how successful actions have been and whether changes to actions are needed.



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 1: ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Access to a range of quality housing options that are affordable and well located is an integral component to an individual's quality of life and the wider liveability proposition within Broken Hill. Housing shortages or housing design or type that does not suit multiple stages of life, differing family dynamics and socio-economic status can lead to individuals leaving the area to seek more appropriate and housing options. It will also serve as a deterrent to those seeking to relocate to Broken Hill.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**“[I] would love to have the opportunity to downsize to something smaller and new – my house is too big.”**

There are diverse housing need and preferences across the community. While some people are looking for opportunities to downsize, others moved to Broken Hill for the larger blocks and lifestyle of having a larger house. Thus, the provision of housing diversity (e.g., dwelling size, number of bedrooms) is one of the key opportunities for catering for different needs.

However, the low rate of vacant properties available on the rental market, the poor quality of housing available for rental and purchase, and a considerable number of properties identified as uninhabitable are the major challenges for housing.

The number of rental properties in Broken Hill needs to be significantly increased to accommodate the higher proportion of the community that lives in Broken Hill temporarily, compared to other places in NSW due to the nature of employment opportunities and the unique characteristics and location of the City. Whilst there are opportunities to purchase properties in the City, enabling people that have a 'try before you buy' accommodation option in Broken Hill creates a greater attraction to locate to Broken Hill temporarily with the opportunity to make a more permanent move in the future.

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Investigate establishment of an investment program for long term rental housing. Initiate an EOI to identify and convene potentially interested participants in a scheme.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Develop precinct revitalisation plans for Broken Hill, to enhance the urban amenity and increase liveability. Focus on South Broken Hill and the CBD fringe.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 – Extending our reach)
Complete an employment lands study to understand land requirements for employment to complement precinct planning for residential.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 – Filling our shape)
Develop a communications program to highlight development opportunities and pathways.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 – Filling our shape)
Investigate incentives program for reintegrating vacant properties back into the rental supply chain.	Funding	Immediate (Horizon 1 – Filling our shape)
Advocate to the State Government to provide funding and resourcing support to maintain a pipeline of housing and expand the spectrum of housing (social, affordable, rental, for purchase) to support Broken Hill as a regional city in the Far West.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 – Filling our shape)



### How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
The diversity of housing stock within Broken Hill increases.	Audit of existing housing typologies (ABS Census 2021)
The ratio of housing to residents increases.	Count of residents (ABS Census 2021) Count of dwellings, existing and newly created (ABS Census 2021) New water connections to residential premises (Essential Water)
There are less unoccupied dwellings in Broken Hill.	Residential premises with little or no water consumption for a period of 6 months or longer (Essential Water)
Housing is affordable.	Household income (ABS Census 2021) Housing purchase and rental prices (NSW Rent and Sales reports, Real estate listings)



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 2: THERE IS GROWTH AND DIVERSITY IN JOBS

Economic prosperity is a key component of a liveable place as it enables people to purchase essential goods and services needed for liveability and an improved quality of life.

To achieve long term economic viability and resilience, it is important that Broken Hill has growth and diversity of employment opportunities across various industries and sectors.

Diversity of employment opportunities also enables Broken Hill to retain local talent and will form a basis to attract people to relocate to Broken Hill for the professional opportunities it offers, subsequently helping to increase population. A stable economic base will be a vital element to attract future investment into the City which will in turn create an increase in commercial viability for small businesses.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**“[We] need opportunity for larger corporate retail businesses to invest in Broken Hill and create employment opportunity for our youth”.**

There is a need for ensuring the growth in employment opportunities and providing diversity in the types of new jobs created in Broken Hill. While continuing to support mining is significant, the need to target new industries and technologies is also important to ensure that Broken Hill is economically resilient into the future.

The City also needs to support opportunities for new local businesses to grow and succeed in Broken Hill, which creates job opportunities for locals as well as enabling the community to access a greater range of services and retail.



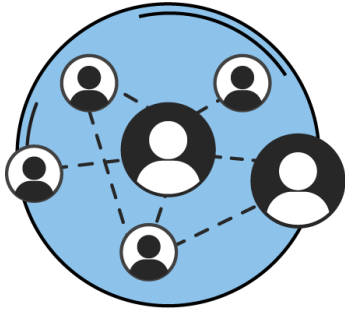
Image 2: Background Photography from the filming of 'Awake In Fright' – courtesy Channel 10

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Develop an investment prospectus, branding and 'Invest in Broken Hill' campaign.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Investigate opportunities to develop a Co-Work Hub or incubator in Broken Hill.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Establish a commercial floorspace audit.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Develop a small business toolkit to support start-ups and existing small business.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Develop a Twilight economy action plan.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
The number of jobs per capita increases in Broken Hill.	Count of residents (ABS Census 2021) Count of jobs (Economy id., sourced from National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR))
The number of new businesses in Broken Hill increases.	Count of new businesses registered (Australian Business Register Statistics)
Job vacancy rates.	Count of advertised jobs (online job listings, Australian Government Far West Orana Labour Market Data Dashboard)



### LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 3: BROKEN HILL IS CONNECTED

Connectivity plays a key role in the wider liveability of a place, from being connected physically via transportation and pedestrian or share path networks to digital connectivity providing access to a wide range of services, and the ability to connect to the world with a click of a button.

With the geographic location of Broken Hill, connectivity to other regional centres would provide increased access to a broader workforce and range of goods and services. Internally within Broken Hill, the sense of connectivity via safe and accessible network of pathways, can increase incidental activity, and reduce the reliance on private vehicles. Incidental exercise is one of the key influences on an individual's health and wellbeing.

Lack of connectivity can lead to a sense of isolation for the wider community and create supply issues for industries operating within the City, and potentially deter other industries/businesses from relocating to Broken Hill. An increase in connectivity for Broken Hill can influence a number of liveability factors.

#### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**"[we need] more improvements in transport options and better affordability."**

**"Broken Hill isn't particularly walkable outside of the main CBD, especially during the heat, and private transport options are unreliable and expensive for people on low incomes / mobility issues."**

**"Establishment of a fast NBN internet service that would support Broken Hill become the digital Hub for rural and remote towns."**

The aging transport infrastructure (e.g., roads and airport) and the lack of diverse and affordable public transport options to other regional centres and capital cities are the major challenges for physical connectivity in Broken Hill. The uneven distribution of services across the City (i.e., distance from services for outer suburbs) and poor quality of footpaths are barriers for using active transport. To ensure a stable digital connectivity, the internet networks need to be improved.



## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Investigate opportunities for greater utilisation of community transport and on demand transport services within Broken Hill.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Investigate viability of piloting shared mobility services in Broken Hill, such as car share or bike share programs.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Implementation of the Shared Path Network as identified in the Active Transport Plan.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Continue direct advocacy with airlines regarding opportunities for increased flights to Broken Hill.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Advocate for improving digital connections that support businesses, health and education services, as well as the households' digital connections.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)

### How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is a growth in public and shared transport usage across Broken Hill.	Public transport patronage (service providers)  Shared transport patronage (service providers)
There is an increase in premises connected to the National Broadband Network (NBN).	NBN connections by technology types (Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications)
There is an increase in the kilometres of share/bike paths connecting the City.	Length of paths managed, and new paths built (Broken Hill City Council)
There is an increase in number of air passengers flying to Broken Hill.	Number and capacity of air services to/ from Broken Hill Airport (Broken Hill City Council)  Number of passengers alighting/ disembarking at Broken Hill Airport (Broken Hill City Council)



#### LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 4: THERE IS ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The access to education and training plays a critical part in the Broken Hill's liveability story. It can ensure that employers access the skills and talent needed to operate within Broken Hill. Such as access to education and training can help to retain residents within the City, who wish to seek higher or alternate education activities. Furthermore, it can ensure providing an ongoing learning and development opportunities at all stages of life.

Lifelong learning is also an important element of an individual's happiness as it provides opportunities for personal development, social inclusivity and active participation within the community.

#### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**"The City has fallen behind similar sized cities in NSW, [for] health and education facilities."**

**"[need] further education beyond high school and vocational training."**

**"Broken Hill is a good place to raise young children, but I question how it will be in the future for education, health and the general living."**

There is a need to improve the quality of education opportunities and also increase opportunities for further upskilling and training to support people find jobs relevant to their skills.

The lack of diversity in training opportunities is contributing to the loss of residents who need to travel outside of Broken Hill to receive their training and qualifications. This issue is particularly relevant with younger people and school leavers.



Image 3: Graduating Class at Country Universities Centre Far West 2022

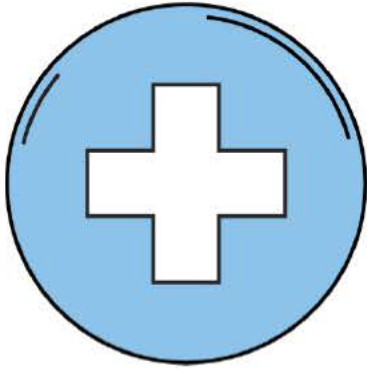
## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Investigate opportunities for the provision of learning through Council's Library.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Investigate opportunities for the provision of uniquely Broken Hill training and education opportunities.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Investigate with education partners designing and growing graduate and placement programs with industry in Broken Hill.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Investigate opportunities to utilise a co-work hub as an online regional learning centre for the Far West.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Facilitate annual forum for regional education advocacy across the broad education sector.	Engagement and communications	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is an increase in the number of tertiary and vocational courses training available in Broken Hill.	Count of courses accessible to local residents (NSW TAFE)  Count of the number of students enrolled at the Country Universities Centre in Broken Hill (Country Universities Centre Far West)
There is an increase in the industries/sectors to which training is available.	Count of residential internships or work placements hosted in Broken Hill (University of Sydney, healthcare organisations, mining operations)





### LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 5: THERE IS ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR ALL STAGES OF LIFE

Access to affordable and specialist healthcare services is essential for the community’s quality of life and wellbeing, particularly for the vulnerable groups such as the older people, and individuals with serious health conditions, disabilities, or mental health issues. Providing quality healthcare can encourage the temporary and short-term workers to choose to live in Broken Hill for long term and prevent the locals from leaving the City.

#### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**“Increase in healthcare facilities and equipment.”**

**“More jobs and better health services so there is no need to travel.”**

**“Ageing and remote medical, dental and hospital services mean being flown way for treatment and end of life care.”**

Telehealth services, which have been more widely used since the COVID-19 pandemic, are beneficial to the Broken Hill community and reduce limitations to accessing healthcare.

A main concern for the community is the availability of healthcare services such as access to General Practitioners (GPs) and specialist treatment, long waiting lists, insufficient home care packages, limited affordable aged care services as well as the insufficient technologies and devices for medical tests. The lack of continuity of care provided with by health professionals on short term contracts is another challenge.

#### Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Develop a suite of evidence to assist in advocating for an increase in the range of healthcare services available in Broken Hill.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Continue to work with NSW Health, the Public Health Network and other key stakeholders to improve health services within the Far West Region.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Investigate with NSW Health opportunities to expand on digital and virtual healthcare for Broken Hill and the wider region.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)

**How do we measure this and know it is improving?**

Measure	Data sources
There is an increase in the number of GPs and specialists per capita.	Count of people employed in general practice and specialities (local healthcare clinics)
There is an increase in aged care beds and homecare packages available.	Count of spaces available and homecare packages (local aged care providers)
There is an increase in the diversity of services accessible locally such as specialist medical, allied health, tele or remote services, dental or mental health services.	Audit of services (Far West Local Health District, local healthcare clinics)



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 6: THERE IS DIVERSITY IN RETAIL, SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES

The diversity of services and industries is a significant component of liveability as it can improve the community's access to a range of essential services and goods and respond to the needs of a wide range of community groups. Such a diversity can reduce Broken Hill's reliance on regional centres and dependence on transport and consequently, reduce the sense of isolation in the region.

Furthermore, a diversified economy can provide the community with a wide range of employment opportunities in various industries.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**“Shopping and products [are] very limited. Entertainment is limited.”**

**“Once the children have finished school, we plan to move somewhere there is more opportunity for them and access to services and employment not available here.”**

**“The availability of childcare for children before they start school. This is a limiting factor in me being able to return to work.”**

The mining industry is a backbone of Broken Hill's economy. However, the significance of having new industries such as Renewable Energy (solar and wind), Manufacturing (e.g., steel), and the Circular Economy is recognised by the community as opportunities to make Broken Hill an industrial hub for the Far West as well as a hub for Arts and Tourism.

An increase in childcare services, further support for the small businesses, and a more even distribution of services across the City, particularly in South Broken Hill, are priorities expressed by the community and opportunities for future development.

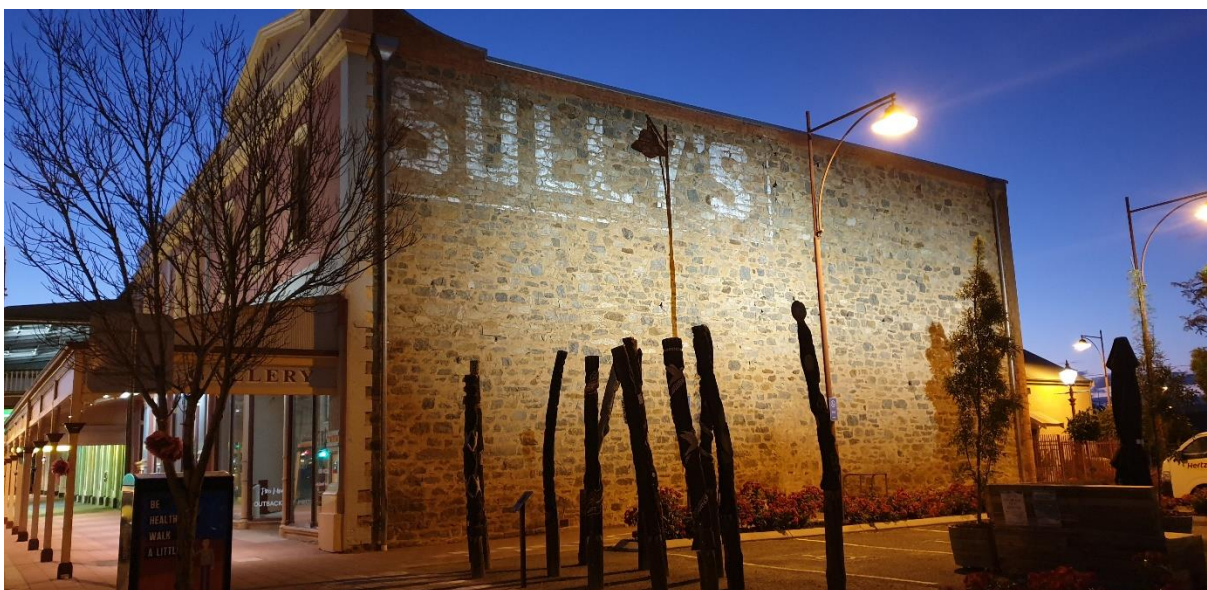


Image 4: First Nations Story Poles in the Central Business District



## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Undertake a retail and services audit and identify gaps in service provision or opportunities to expand services.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Engage with childcare providers to encourage creation of additional spaces in Broken Hill.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is sufficient capacity in childcare services locally.	Count of children aged 0-4 (ABS Census 2021, id population forecasts)  Count of childcare spaces in local centres (childcare providers)
There is diversity in local retail and fresh food offerings.	Count of business types (local businesses)  Time of day and average length of local business operation hours (local businesses)
Increase in number of businesses and diversity.	Count of number of businesses, by industry (Australian Business Register Statistics)
Stability in the number of approved food venues.	Count of food venues (Broken Hill City Council)





## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 7: BROKEN HILL IS A HEALTHY AND RESILIENT CITY

The environmental health of the City and planning to combat environmental issues and impacts such as climate change are a key component of a liveable place. For the City of Broken Hill, this is particularly important as the City is subject to a range of weather extremes, and susceptible to environmental impacts emanating from historic mining practices.

The environmental health of the City such as soil, water and air quality can have significant impacts on the health of residents. Improving these factors can lead to improved health outcomes for residents, now and into the future.

This indicator also considers the resilience of the City against changes in environmental and climatic conditions. Planning to increase the resilience of the City will ensure that it continues to be a valued and liveable place into the future.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**"I like living close to the natural environment."**

**"I love my home here. I enjoy the community and the quiet."**

**"We need a much greater and more active focus on sustainability and environmental health issues."**

**"Increase the number of trees, large and medium size, street verges and car parks given global warming they need to be natives of this part of the world."**

The residents of Broken Hill value the environment highly as what makes the City liveable. However, there is a need to proactively plan to improve the environmental health of the City and ensure that climate change and severe weather events are planned for. The issues of recycling as well as soil contamination by Lead are other areas of focus for the community to protect the health of the environment.

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Investigate opportunities to implement a network of smart monitors around the City.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Investigate opportunities to use low-impact and recycled materials in any council construction work.	Planning	Longer term (Horizon 3 - Making big bold moves and aspirational change)
Develop a system to consider sustainability as part of Council's Capital Works Program.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Undertake a review of recycling within the City and investigate opportunities to improve re-use and recycling.	Advocacy and partnership	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Develop a program of annual planting to increase trees in public places.	Funding	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is an improvement in water quality across the City.	Water Quality Monitoring (Essential Water)
There is an increase in the number of trees and tree canopy coverage across the City.	Count in trees (Broken Hill City Council)
There is a decrease in waste being collected in local tips	Volume of waste collected (Broken Hill City Council)



### LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 8: PEOPLE FEEL SAFE IN BROKEN HILL

Safety is a critical part of a liveable place. It contributes strongly to a sense of belonging and sense of community. A sense of safety also influences the community's willingness to be in public places and participate in community activities, particularly after dark. Key factors that can influence people's safety can include the actual occurrence of crimes, or the perceived threats against safety.

Often the built environment can influence the perception of safety in public places. For example adequate street lighting and maintaining clear lines of sight can make people feel safer. Improving the perception and actual safety of a community will lead to improved community wellbeing and participation. It will also support and enable more night-time economy activities in the City.

#### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**“Safety is good but there is a huge distance from everywhere.”**

**“Nothing for my teenagers to do in Broken Hill besides sport... The town should have more activities and areas kids can go. Like a drop-in centre/youth club.”**

Broken Hill is experienced and perceived by the community to be a safe place to live. However, there is a growing concern about the use of drugs in the City and the impact this could have on community safety into the future. Concerns around crime is also closely linked to a lack of non-alcohol recreation activities available within the City particularly after dark.

According to the NSW Bureau Of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) 2021, there is a reported increase in Domestic Violence related offences, intimidation, stalking and harassment in Broken Hill.



Image 5: Broken Hill New Year's Eve Celebrations

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Develop an annual program of Safer by Design Audits for all Council Assets.	Planning	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)
Work with key stakeholders to promote Domestic Violence Support and awareness programs.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
The rate of crime in Broken Hill decreases.	Incidences of crime (Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR)).
There is an improved sense of community safety.	Community satisfaction (Community survey, Broken Hill City Council).





**LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 9: THERE IS ACCESS TO QUALITY OPEN SPACES FOR ALL**

Access to quality open spaces is an important part of a liveable place. It can influence community pride and cohesiveness, correlates to physical activity and therefore, influences a community's overall wellness.

Importantly, access to open spaces must be equitable for all groups and abilities, ensuring that shared paths, parks and playgrounds are accessible and welcoming spaces. Improved

access and quality of open spaces will see a positive increase in the number of people accessing spaces for incidental and passive play.

**Opportunities and challenges**

*What we heard from you...*

**“We need upgrades on parks for more shade and picnic areas.”**

**“All parks are just parks, except Patton Park has the rocket, Sturt Park has the skate park and North Park has the train - Imagine how great [it would be if] our kids enjoy all the parks. The North Family Park near the pool could have a scooter track, etc.”**

Broken Hill has several parks and lots of open spaces which play a significant role in the lifestyle and liveability within the City. However, there is a need to improve some open space areas including pathways to connect recreation areas, parks and playgrounds. Improving the quality of open spaces, including provision of shade, ensuring spaces are accessible and enabling different activities, will also maximise usage and allow people to enjoy the spaces more and more often.

**Priorities**

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Develop an Open Space (Recreation) and Community Facilities Strategy to identify opportunities to activate and improve Community land.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

**How do we measure this and know it is improving?**

Measure	Data sources
The community is satisfied with the quality and access to open spaces in Broken Hill.	Community satisfaction (Community survey, Broken Hill City Council).



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 10: THERE IS CHOICE IN RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES AND GROUPS

The provision of recreation activities is a significant component of a liveable City as it improves the quality of life and impacts the community's health and wellbeing. The diversity of such activities and their availability for all ages and groups not only responds to the needs of all cohorts but also provide the community with a sense of inclusion.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**"I am raising children here and I find that there is not a whole lot for older children/teens to do. Sporting facilities are lacking severely."**

**"The recreation facilities for children need updating. The town needs more programs focused on the youth of the town to be more attractive and to retain young families."**

**"Imperial lakes and Umberumberka Reservoir/and Stephens Creek need to be opened/developed as recreation areas, which would help to alleviate the large amount of domestic violence and mental health/child welfare issues which is alarmingly high."**

Public recreational facilities are ageing in Broken Hill. The range of activities in the City is also limited and do not cater to all people in the community, for example individuals with disabilities or mental health issues, different age cohorts (particularly youth). Upgrading existing facilities, increasing the number of facilities and activities and attracting providers to open and manage new facilities in the City, particularly for youths, is a priority for the community.

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Undertake an audit of commercial recreation offerings in the City to identify gaps and opportunities in provision.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Undertake a review of existing play spaces and identify opportunities to diversify play equipment and designs to attract all age groups to play.	Planning	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is an increase in the number and variety of recreation activities available (commercial and free).	Audit of recreation activities (local businesses, community organisations, Broken Hill City Council).
Range of activities based on being suitable for specific age cohorts or groups of people.	Audit of recreation activities (local businesses, community organisations, Broken Hill City Council).





**LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 11: THERE IS GROWTH AND SUPPORT FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS IN BROKEN HILL**

The promotion of culture and arts in Broken Hill is an opportunity to make Broken Hill liveable for its community. It demonstrates the acknowledgement of the heritage, history, and cultural values of Broken Hill's local community as well as the First Nations community's significant contribution. Supporting the culture and arts and representing that in events and festivals will provide the community with a stronger sense of identity and belonging to

their City and increases the social inclusion among them.

Moreover, promoting the arts and culture through events and festivals or commodification of arts and culture will attract tourists and develop the cultural tourism.

**Opportunities and challenges**

*What we heard from you...*

**"I would see greater support for the arts and culture in Broken Hill."**

Broken Hill has a history, art and cultural heritage which are significant for its community. However, the insufficient funding is a barrier for promoting arts and culture and maintaining the cultural assets. Secure funding and resourcing are required to ensure longevity of arts and cultural programs, including attractive strong visitation to events, to ensure that programs and events are sustainable and continue into the future.

Promoting the cultural events and festivals, branding the City as a hub for arts and culture and developing the cultural tourism are a number of priorities for the community and opportunities for future development.

**Priorities**

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Work with the local artists network to develop a program of arts education opportunities.	Advocacy and partnership	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Develop evidence base to advocate for increased and ongoing arts funding.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Identify opportunities to strengthen and showcase the arts and cultural networks across the broader Far West Region.	Engagement and communications	Medium term (Horizon 2 - Extending our reach)



**How do we measure this and know it is improving?**

Measure	Data sources
There is an increase in the number of events held.	Number of events held by the Broken Hill Council (Broken Hill City Council)
There is an increase in the identified number of artists and performers in Broken Hill.	Artist register data (Arts and culture organisations)
There is an increase in funding for the arts in Broken Hill.	Grants and Council budget across 12 months (Broken Hill City Council)
There is an increase in the number of training and education opportunities in arts and culture.	Number and capacity of opportunities (Arts and culture organisations)



## LIVEABILITY INDICATOR 12: BROKEN HILL IS AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT CELEBRATES CULTURAL DIVERSITY

An inclusive community that celebrates diversity creates a welcoming environment, a sense of place and belonging. These are all key components to what makes Broken Hill a liveable place now and into the future. Diversity and inclusion relate to gender, age, ethnicity, race, cultural background, disability and religion.

One of the key strengths of Broken Hill is its sense of community, and that it is welcoming to new residents from all backgrounds and cultural diversities. As the City grows in population and more new residents call Broken Hill home, it will be essential that this sense of community and celebration of cultural diversity is built upon to maximise opportunities.

As Broken Hill grows as a City that celebrates and supports cultural diversity, it could provide opportunities for new business and professional services seeking to operate in a community with these values. This could also influence key sectors such as the Arts and Culture sector as new artists and art types emerge.

### Opportunities and challenges

*What we heard from you...*

**"I enjoy living in Broken Hill because it is a caring, supportive community which respects individuality and diversity. It is affordable and has a relaxed pace of living. There is a good variety of sporting, cultural and community groups to enhance people's lives."**

There is a strong sense of community in Broken Hill and the people feel welcomed and accepted. The community acknowledge the significant role that multiculturalism has played in Broken Hill and the contribution that it can have to make the City a liveable place. There is a desire to continue to nurture a culture of inclusiveness and embracing diversity so that Broken Hill is known to be a place that is welcoming to all.

## Priorities

Action	Action type	Growth horizon/Priority
Investigate opportunities to expand services and resources to assist non-English speaking persons.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)
Support arts and other events highlighting inclusion and cultural diversity.	Engagement and communications	Immediate (Horizon 1 - Filling our shape)

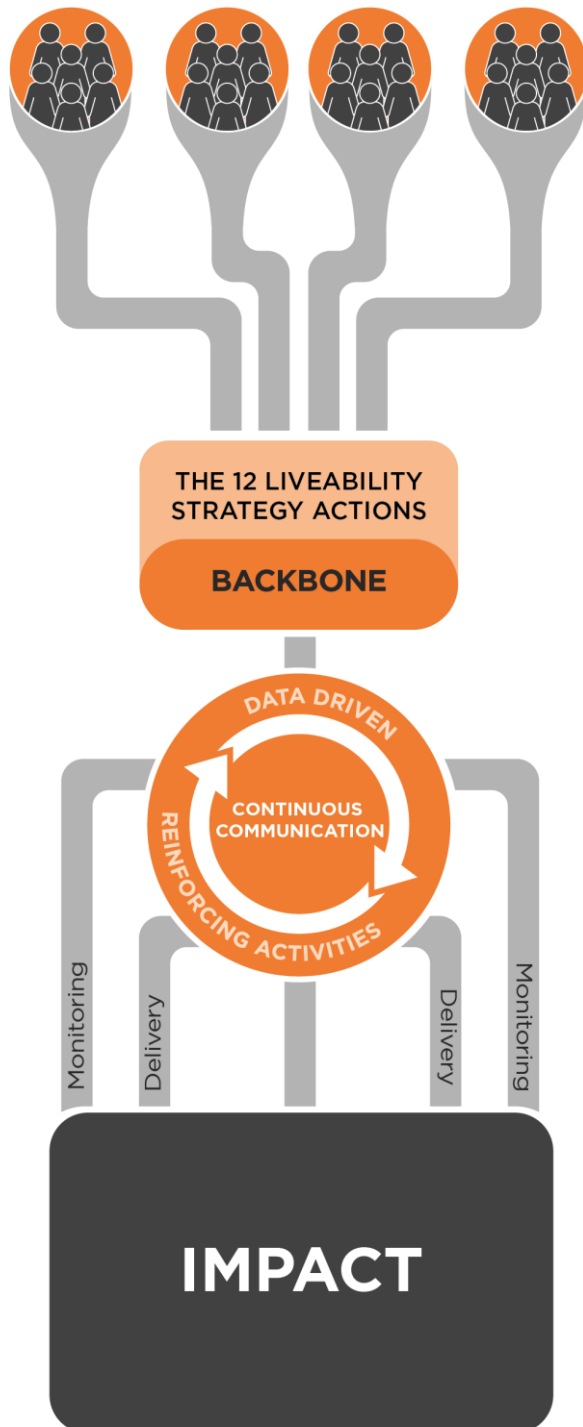
## How do we measure this and know it is improving?

Measure	Data sources
There is an increase in the number of community groups or members of groups increases.	Number of community groups (Broken Hill City Council) Membership of community groups (community-based organisations)
There is an increase in persons moving to the area from CALD backgrounds.	Diversity indicators (ABS Census)
There is an increase in events and activities to celebrate inclusion and diversity.	Number of locally held events (Broken Hill City Council)

### 3. WHERE TO FROM HERE?

#### DELIVERY THROUGH A COLLECTIVE IMPACT MODEL

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT



Enhancing liveability in Broken Hill requires support and participation from different stakeholders. A Collective Impact Model enables delivery of this Strategy involving all organisations and groups across the community that have an interest and contribution to make.

*Collective impact is a framework that applies a critical lens to a specific place to progress a complex problem at scale.*

Collective impact is about enabling, equipping and leveraging the many organisations and activities already in place and filling any gaps that may exist. In some instances, existing entities may be competing with one another, and this can be counterproductive to the solution they're trying to affect. While leveraging existing providers/initiatives it is important to also consider is it the right way and the best way – or is there a better way.

Unlike most collaborations, collective impact harnesses a unique operating model that establishes a *backbone* that includes a centralised infrastructure, a dedicated staff, and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants.

Council will take a leading role to establish a Collective Impact Model with participants to conduct activities, make investments and contribute to liveability and housing in Broken Hill to implement this Strategy.



## ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Council will convene and facilitate implementation of the Liveability Strategy, with support from stakeholders.

The initial actions Council will take are:

1. Establish the 'Housing our future' program as an initial priority to progress Liveability Indicator 1 – Access to diverse and affordable housing, recognising housing as a critical issue in Broken Hill and housing as an enabler for Broken Hill to sustain a population and services to service the Far West region.
2. Engage the NSW Government and advocate for funding support to enable Council to establish and facilitate delivery of the backbone infrastructure to support Council and its partners.
3. Appoint a lead for the project, which can be a member of staff within Council or appointed and funded through stakeholder support.

Appointment of a project lead is important as they will oversee the development of the implementation plan and approach, including convening stakeholders. Responsibilities and accountabilities include:

- Setting direction
  - Develop a project plan for the 'Housing our future' program – define shared goals, accountabilities, milestones for delivering, budget requirements.
  - Define terms of reference for the project, including establishing governance arrangements and the collective impact approach which involves defining participant roles and accountabilities, approach to information sharing and project selection.
- Resourcing activities
  - Convene stakeholders that will participate in the program and execute participation agreements.
  - Participants could include Broken Hill City Council, NSW Government, Business Far West, Foundation Broken Hill, key mining operations, Far West Local Health District, Home in Place, Local Real Estate agents.
- Initiating actions
  - Define and agree on the first five projects for delivery, based on the priority actions of this Liveability Strategy. Initial actions could focus on connecting people looking for accommodation with people that have space available and developing a communication pack for the current community, investors and people looking to move to Broken Hill.
  - Develop an agreed funding approach with participants for delivery, including agreed project milestones and performance measures.
  - Establish an approach to information collection, sharing and maintenance so that the program is informed by an accurate database of what houses are occupied and their tenure.

Establishing and funding an initial 2-year program would enable the testing and maturation of the Collective Impact Model and review of the effectiveness of activities and the approach to implementation.



[www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au](http://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au)