



Queensland
Government



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Partnership Acknowledgement



The Bundaberg Regional Council Local Housing Action Plan was developed with the support of the Queensland Government in association with the Local Government Association of Queensland.

Disclaimer

The Bundaberg Regional Council Local Housing Action Plan is a 'living document' prepared under the Queensland Housing & Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 (Action 5) to support local housing outcomes. Although the Local Housing Action Plan is a non-statutory plan, it may inform statutory documents like a planning scheme.

Acknowledgement of Country

Bundaberg Regional Council acknowledges the Traditional Country of the Taribelang Bunda, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, and Bailai Peoples and recognises that this Country has always been and continues to be of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise the thousands of generations of continuous culture that have shaped this Country and the people on it. We pay respects to Elders, past and present. Bundaberg Regional Council further acknowledges other neighbouring traditional owner groups within the Wide Bay-Burnett Region.

PREAMBLE

Like most Australian regions, the Bundaberg region is experiencing a shortage of social, affordable, and private market housing. Council acknowledges that addressing this issue will require all levels of government, the community housing sector, and the development industry to work together.

While the State and Federal governments have responded with new programs and funding to improve housing availability and affordability, including significant State funding in the **'Homes for Queenslanders'** plan, Bundaberg Regional Council has also pursued a range of initiatives. These include:

- Working with the Queensland Government to identify Council owned land that could be developed for social housing, to fulfil the State's ambitious 'Big Build' agenda;
- Investigating and supporting local short-term accommodation opportunities;
- Maintaining a supply of over 2,900 residential lots approved and ready for construction;
- Preparation of this Local Housing Action Plan (LHAP) in partnership with the Local Government Association of Queensland; and
- Other advocacy efforts.

However further reforms and initiatives – particularly in areas of planning and infrastructure - have the potential to accelerate the supply of social, affordable, and private market housing in the Bundaberg region.

Advocacy position: That Council supports the state and federal governments in their delivery of more social and affordable housing in the Bundaberg region

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Local Housing Action Plans

This Local Housing Action Plan (the Plan) has been developed through a joint initiative involving the Queensland Government, Bundaberg Regional Council (BRC) and the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) to respond to a range of immediate, emerging, and longer-term housing challenges in the Bundaberg local government area.

This is an iterative process (see Figure 1) that does not intend to duplicate existing actions of BRC, actions under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027, or the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025. It seeks to identify opportunities, consider an agreed response, develop targeted actions on key priorities and enable ongoing review of effort to adapt and respond to changing need.



Figure 1: The Local Housing Action Plan Iterative Process

The Plan aims to:

1. **develop agreed priority actions** to respond to housing need in the local government area;
2. **establish strong foundations for longer-term housing responses** to assist housing and homelessness outcomes in the local government area into the future;
3. **incorporate existing information and plans** that assist with developing responses to housing need and acknowledge work already completed by BRC, state agencies, private and not-for-profit organisations; and
4. **facilitate targeted interaction between all parties through agreed actions** to ensure a focus on deliverables and projects that can improve housing responses in the short and longer-term.

1.2 Approach and Methodology

This Plan provides an overview of key community and housing characteristics, emerging issues related to housing in the community, and identifies priority actions to respond to housing need. It has been developed through a review of a range of supporting documentation including:

- [Bundaberg Regional Council Planning Scheme 2015](#)
- Bundaberg Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2021-2026
- Bundaberg Regional Council [Community Development Strategy 2020 - 2023](#)
- Bundaberg Regional Council [Community Development Strategy 2024-2028 Pre-analysis Snapshot](#)

- Bundaberg Regional Council [First Nations Strategy 2022-2026](#)
- Statistical data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Queensland Government Statisticians Office, including Census and other datasets such as building approvals, rental market data and housing approvals
- Housing needs data from the Queensland Government, as required
- The [Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027](#), the [Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025](#), and the [Homes for Queensland](#) plan
- [The Queensland Government Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2023](#)
- Other anecdotal data and information such as general community or industry sentiment as expressed to relevant officers from time to time.

Emerging issues and opportunities, key challenges and potential responses have been developed from a review of a range of datasets, anecdotal feedback, and preceding engagement opportunities with BRC and other stakeholders.

1.3 The Bundaberg Housing and Homeless Forum

In November 2022, the Bundaberg Housing and Homeless Forum (the Forum) was held at the Bundaberg Multiplex and brought together stakeholders across the region (charities, community housing providers and other key groups) to identify and discuss the most pressing issues in the region.

Based on the outcomes of the event it was agreed that the Forum would continue to deliver an ongoing series of discussions.

The Forum continues to play a pivotal role in the Bundaberg region by uniting local service providers. Together, they tackle the pressing issues faced by those experiencing or at risk of homelessness - demonstrating the power of collective action.

Key actions and achievements of the Forum include:

- Bringing together all stakeholders in quarterly meetings:
- Formation of the Bundaberg Rough Sleepers Response group which meets fortnightly and helps to direct resources to areas of need;
- Successfully raised \$100,000 to purchase a sleepbus to operate from Bundaberg. The Sleepbus is expected to commence operating by August 2024;
- Keeping updated and distributing information to the homeless and key service providers, including the Homeless Flow Chart; and
- Promoting and distributing information on the Helping Hands Guide, a guide to emergency relief and other assistance coordinated by the Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre.

2.0 KEY FACTS

2.1 The Bundaberg Region

The Bundaberg Region is a local government area (LGA) in the Wide Bay–Burnett region of Queensland, with a total land area of 6,431.1 km². Located 360 kilometres north of Brisbane. The BRC LGA is bounded by the Gladstone Regional Council LGA in the north, the Coral Sea in the east, the Fraser Coast Regional Council LGA in the south-east, and the North Burnett Regional Council LGA in the south-west and west as shown on Figure 2 below.

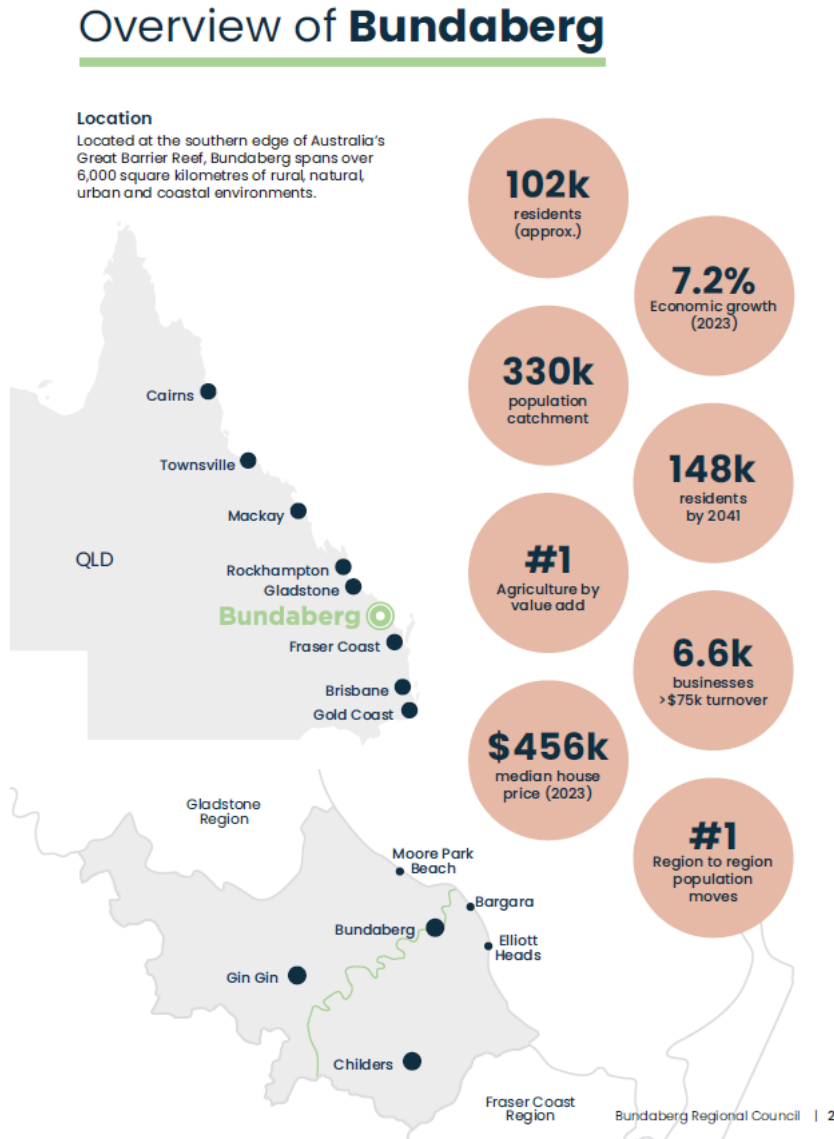


Figure 2: Bundaberg Region Map

2.2 First Nations

The region has a slightly higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples when compared to the proportion of the population across the state. Walkervale has the highest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the region. The Taribelang Bunda, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, and Bailai peoples are traditional custodians within the Bundaberg region.

Within the Bundaberg region there is a native title determination application from The Kabi Kabi First Nation Traditional Owners. The Kabi Kabi claim area covers over 11,500 km² of traditional country up along the Sunshine Coast from north of Brisbane to the Gregory and Isaac Rivers south of Bundaberg. The Kabi Kabi land takes in the eastern part of the coastal ranges including the volcanic Glasshouse Mountains and the Mary River valley that flows from the Conondale Ranges to the sea near Maryborough.¹

There are First Nations service providers in the local area, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Housing and Advancement Society that manages housing for First Nations' people in the region, predominantly in Bundaberg Central.

BRC strives to understand and be inclusive of all cultures, identify housing opportunities and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to inform housing actions. This commitment is reflected in BRC's First Nations Strategy 2022-2026 which informs the importance of cultural awareness, appropriateness and inclusion throughout all of Council. It outlines a framework to develop and implement cultural strategies and actions and introduces the use of cultural protocols as guiding principles for regional engagement and communication practices. Further, it supports BRC's commitment to advance reconciliation in collaboration with First Nations communities.

The First Nations Strategy also outlines several key actions that have been considered and overlaid in the development of this LHAP. These key actions and their relevance to BRC's corporate values are tabulated below.

Corporate Values	First Nations Strategy
Communication and leadership	Effectively engage and work with First Nations' Community and Peoples.
Sustainability	Support an understanding of First Nation governance structures as being key to cultural protocols, decision-making and engagement practices.
Innovation	Advocate cultural inclusion for positive social change in shaping our regional identity. Support cultural visions as integral and attributable within regional development.

The Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts is also currently working within the cultural context in addressing the homelessness issue within the Bundaberg region (and the Wide Bay Brunett region more broadly). As of December 2023, a Bundaberg Local Decision-Making Body was established to support ongoing initiatives and ensuring First Nations' perspectives are considered across the housing needs of the Bundaberg Region

¹ Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation <https://www.kabikabination.com.au/>

3.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

3.1 Demographic Characteristics

The table below provides a summary of the key demographic trends in the Bundaberg region.

Data Category	Bundaberg Data
Population	<p>As at 30 June 2022, the estimated Bundaberg Local Government Area (LGA) resident population was 102,078, with an average annual growth of 0.9% over ten years. The Queensland estimated resident population was 5,320,496 with average annual growth rate 1.5% growth over ten years.²</p> <p>As of 2021, 4,963 persons (or 5.0%) of the Bundaberg population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared to 237,303 (or 4.6%) persons in Queensland as a whole.</p>
Age	<p>As at 30 June 2022 the proportion of the estimated resident population (ERP) aged 65 years and over for the Bundaberg LGA was 26.0% (or 26,523 persons). The proportion of the ERP aged 65 years and over for Queensland was 16.9% (or 896,824 persons) – suggesting the Bundaberg region has an older population than the Queensland average.</p> <p>As at 30 June 2022 the median age of the Bundaberg LGA's population was 47.6 years which is an increase of 4.6 years from median age of 43.0 years as at 30 June 2012 – suggesting an ageing population.</p>
Household Composition	<p>As of 30 June 2022, there were 38,462 households in the Bundaberg region, of which 67.1% were one family households. In the Bundaberg region, lone-person households make up 27.7% of households which is higher than the Queensland proportion.</p>
Family Composition	<p>As at 2021 the Bundaberg LGA had 27,173 families. Of these families, 32.1% were couple families with children which equates to 20.6% of total households in the region. This leaves a large proportion of households not having children within the Bundaberg region.</p>
Family Incomes	<p>As at 2021, the median total family income for the Bundaberg LGA was \$74,204.00 per year. By contrast, the Queensland median total family income was \$105,248 per year.</p> <p>There are 2,677 (or 9.9%) low-income families in the Bundaberg LGA.</p>
Migration	<p>The percentage of persons in the Bundaberg LGA with a different address five years ago was 40.0% - representing 37,921 persons- suggesting a relatively mobile population.</p>
Cultural Backgrounds	<p>As at 2021, 12,940 Bundaberg residents (or 13.0%) were born overseas.</p>

² QGSO Queensland Regional Profile, 4 December 2023.

Work	<p>As at 2021, key industries in the Bundaberg LGA included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care and social assistance industry (19.3%) - Retail trade industry (10.2%) - Agriculture, forestry and fishing (3.9%). <p>For the June quarter 2023, the unemployment rate in the Bundaberg LGA was 5.3%.</p>
Health and Disability	<p>37,012 persons (or 37.3%) within the Bundaberg LGA live with one or more long-term health conditions, while 5,814 persons (or 5.9%) live with three or more long-term health conditions. This is higher than Queensland with 28.8% and 3.3% respectively.</p> <p>Additionally, 9.6% of persons in the Bundaberg LGA in need of assistance with a profound or severe disability. This is higher than Queensland with 6.0% of the population.</p>
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas	<p>In the Bundaberg LGA, 49.8% of the population are within the most disadvantaged quintile.</p>

3.2 Household Composition

Data Category	Bundaberg Data
Dwelling by Structure	<p>As at 2021, there were 38,462 dwellings in the Bundaberg LGA. Over 32,687 (or 85%) of these dwellings were separate houses.</p> <p>The average household size in the Bundaberg LGA was 2.4 persons per dwelling. In the 12 months ending 30 June 2023, a total of 477 residential dwellings were sold. The median sale price was \$445,000 – over \$100,000 lower than the Queensland median sale price of \$595,000.</p>
Vacant Land	<p>During the 12 months ending 30 September 2023, there were 258 vacant land sales, and the median vacant land sale price was \$252,000.</p>
Building Approvals	<p>In the year ending December 2023, 501 detached houses and 6 other residential dwellings received building approval.</p>
Residential Lot Registrations	<p>The number of residential lot registrations in the Bundaberg LGA in the 12 months ending December 2023 was 306. Of the 306 lots, 232 were urban residential lot registrations.</p>
Vacancy Rate	<p>The Bundaberg LGA's vacancy rate was 0.7% in March 2023 - slightly below Brisbane's 0.9% average. Vacancy rates in the Bundaberg LGA have held relatively steady over the past 12 months, with a slight uptick in early 2023 due to investors capitalising on a tight rental market.</p>

Home Ownership	As at 2021, the number of fully owned private dwellings in the Bundaberg LGA was 15,442 (or 40%) of the total 38,462 dwellings.
Homeless	As at 2021, the rate of homeless persons in the Bundaberg LGA was 64.5 homeless persons per 10,000 persons – which is significantly greater than Queensland’s 43.2 homeless persons per 10,000 persons.
Mortgage Affordability	As at 2021, the Bundaberg LGA’s median mortgage repayments were \$1,300 per month which was less than the Queensland median mortgage repayment of \$1,733 per month.
Housing Stress	As at 2021, there were 3,686 renter households (35.4%) were in ‘rental stress’ where rent payments were more than 30% of household income in the Bundaberg LGA, while 10.5% of mortgage holders were in ‘mortgage stress’ paying more than 30% of household income in mortgage payments.

4.0 KEY FOCUS AREAS

Areas of focus have been determined through a review of existing data and engagement with stakeholders as identified in the methodology. These focus areas will be considered when identifying and prioritising actions.

4.1 Development

BRC is currently seeing a population consistent with a high growth scenario.

Over the past decade, the Bundaberg LGA has experienced a population growth rate of 1%. If this were to continue, the Bundaberg LGA's population would reach 122,000 by 2040. While the State's Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan includes a projection of 114,091 to 2046, in 2022, actual population growth increased to 2%. If this were to continue, the Bundaberg LGA's population would reach 148,000 by 2040.

In the year ending June 2023, a total of 573 residential lots were approved in the Bundaberg LGA, representing a 48% increase in total lot approvals compared with the previous year. Additionally, these approvals represent a 206-lot increase on the 5-year annual average of 367 lots per annum.³

As at the June 2023 quarter, there were 3,093 uncompleted lots (i.e. lots associated with current approvals and awaiting development) - representing an 11% increase compared to the same period last year, and 2,021 more lots than the 5-year June quarter average of 2,892.

Of the approved lots in the region, 30% also have operational works approvals, meaning there are over 900 lots ready for development and currently have no further constraints from a council perspective.

Regardless of the *available* lots for development, the region is facing challenges in seeing these convert into *actual* development. Some of the key challenges the region is facing in regard to development are outlined in the table below.

Key Challenge	Housing Implication
Building Material Costs and Shortages	Between March 2022 – March 2023, the cost of construction materials rose by an average 24% across Australia. As a regional community, Bundaberg has seen the flow-on of these rising costs, impacting the affordability of building new homes.
Availability of Construction Workers	Nationally, labour shortages continue to impact the construction sector with a shortage of 214,000 skilled workers as of October 2022 across Australia. Availability of construction companies and subcontractors to complete works is a major challenge faced in the Bundaberg region.
Infrastructure Connection Costs	The reluctance of developers to engage in housing projects is exacerbated by the considerable expenses associated with connecting to existing infrastructure despite the region boasting substantial infrastructure. The financial burden of linking up with established facilities can outweigh the cost of the land itself, particularly evident in regional areas where associated costs are notably more onerous. This challenge becomes even more pronounced when comparing it to the Southeast Queensland (SEQ) corner, where the allure of potential returns may be higher due to the comparatively lower costs of infrastructure integration and the overall value of the land.

³ Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury, 2023, Residential land development activity profile, Bundaberg (R) Local Government Area.

Market considerations	Economic considerations, such as market demand and financing constraints, further contribute to the complexity of attracting developers to invest in a particular area.
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Given the higher marginal cost of trunk infrastructure in regional areas, State Government reforms to trunk infrastructure funding has the potential to help increase the supply of housing in Bundaberg. Reinstatement of trunk infrastructure subsidies to regional councils, and the removal of infrastructure capping, would help councils increase the supply of local housing. Further, changes under the Queensland *Planning Act 2016* could also make it easier for regional housing providers to deliver housing.

In the context of these challenges and the role which the council can play, BRC is incentivising the construction of higher-density developments. Refer to [Section 5.0](#) for additional targeted response opportunities, such as infrastructure funding reform.

4.2 Housing Diversity

The current housing diversity in the Bundaberg region is 85% houses, with 6.9% semi-detached and remaining apartments or other types. This demonstrates a lack of housing diversity in the region and most housing development over the last five years has been detached homes.

The need for more diverse housing stock becomes increasingly apparent considering an ageing population in the Bundaberg region for several key reasons. As individuals age, their housing requirements often change to accommodate evolving health needs and lifestyle preferences. Accessible and age-friendly housing designs, such as single-floor layouts or features that aid mobility, become crucial to ensuring a comfortable and safe living environment for older adults. Additionally, the demand for smaller, more manageable homes may rise as older individuals seek to downsize from larger family residences. Introducing new housing options tailored to the needs of older persons not only promotes independent living but also addresses the growing demand for communities that provide essential services, social connections, and healthcare facilities in proximity.

The Bundaberg region also sees an influx of people into the region looking to retire and or downsize. These migrants into the region are a segment of the market being catered to by developers through over 50s resort villages. This proportion of the population typically enters the region with higher incomes and financial capability to purchase these products, however locals are missing out on the needed housing stock for downsizing.

Another primary obstacle to expanding housing diversity and stock in the region lies in the prevailing preference among developers for constructing single-storey 4-bedroom house typologies, influenced by a history of successful financial outcomes. Particularly noting that developers tend to stick with developing lots on the larger end of 800sqm². While the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan suggests greater diversity in housing offerings, the preference by developers for these 4- bedroom detached house typologies underscores a challenge in aligning the market with the diverse and evolving requirements of the Bundaberg region.

4.3 Private Rental Stock

Almost all local government areas in Queensland are considered to have 'tight' rental markets (characterised by a vacancy rate under 2.5%). Over three-quarters of Queensland local government areas (77%) have vacancy rates under 1% as of March 2022. The rental vacancy rate as of March 2023 in the Bundaberg region was 0.7%.

As of December 2023 there are 107 available houses for rent, ranging from \$320 to \$1,900 per week, with a median rental rate of \$1,110 per week. Additionally, there are 33 units for rent, priced between \$280 and \$950 per week, with a median of \$615 per week. Over the period from March 2022 to March 2023, rents have experienced an increase of approximately \$50 per week (or 14%), outpacing the growth in annual wages. Census data reveals that 9.81% of private dwellings are currently unoccupied.

Unit developments are very under-represented within the region, with only 10 new units being submitted and approved between 2022-2023.

4.4 Social and Affordable Housing

There is high demand for social housing across Queensland and allocations are focussed on supporting households with the highest need. Weekly median household incomes in the Bundaberg region are \$1,427 - compared to the Queensland median of \$2,024. Applicants for social housing are assessed against an eligibility test, which includes a limit on their income. There are currently 1,011 social housing dwellings in the Bundaberg region⁴ with 729 active applications on the social housing register.⁵

With over 1,000 applicants on the waiting list and the average applicant having 1.6 people in the household as part of the application⁵, there are currently 659 persons sleeping rough (Census, 2021).

As of June 2021, 1,143 dwellings were owned with a mortgage with repayments greater than 30% of household income (10.5%) and 3,686 renter households with rent payments greater than 30% of household income (35.4%). These rates of affordability are aligned with Queensland household affordability of 11.9% and 32.3%, respectively.

Within the region, the focus for providing social housing will be in the primary centre of Bundaberg. The reason for this is that the majority of services are focused in Bundaberg, so housing provision should be targeted here. There is also anecdotally the need to have more social housing on the Coastal Strip (Bagara, Innes Park, Elliott Heads and Burnett Heads) as well as in the hinterland townships. However, this would place households away (by substantial time and distance) from core services in the Bundaberg city area, causing flow on effects of the costs of transport to the hubs.

4.5 Homelessness

A lack of affordable and secure housing is the number one reason for people seeking homelessness support. Although 2021 Census data shows there were 659 people sleeping rough in the Bundaberg region, unofficial estimates place the current figure much higher – between 1,800 and 2,000, with local service providers like *Bundaberg Living Word* noting that demand for homelessness support is growing.

Homelessness in the Bundaberg region presents a multifaceted challenge with distinct camps emerging as focal points for those experiencing homelessness, including the Tallon Bridge group, North Bundaberg Lions Park, Kirby's Wall, Strathdees, and Hinkler Lions Park on Uni Drive.

Unfortunately, where homeless populations gather, there is a tendency for additional social issues to arise, notably involving drugs and alcohol. BRC has taken steps to address immediate concerns such as fire hazards and rubbish, requesting individuals to move-on when breaches occur, but these measures only offer temporary relief.

Despite the grim circumstances, welfare services in Bundaberg work diligently to provide daily essentials like meals, showers, and access to washing machines. The success of these services has resonated beyond the region, with social media spreading the message, inadvertently attracting homeless individuals from outside the area. The Housing and Homelessness Forum's efforts to procure a sleep bus, while commendable, underscore the limitations in providing sustainable solutions for those experiencing homelessness.

While there is plenty of available space in caravan parks for the likes of 'grey nomad' travellers, these travellers are instead securing free camping sites by exploiting existing homelessness camps, further straining available resources for those who are experiencing homelessness.

Housing service providers in Bundaberg struggle with a lack of stock, whether affordable or simply available. The changing dynamics of seasonal homelessness, where individuals historically moved

⁴ *Tenancies in government managed social rental housing as at 30 June 2023, Qld Government Open Data Portal*

⁵ *Social Housing Register, 30 September 2023*

north and south with the weather, pose a unique challenge as these populations now appear to be staying longer.

Families grappling with homelessness are also being placed in motel accommodations, albeit with limitations such as inadequate cooking facilities and restrictive timeframes. This arrangement raises concerns among housing service providers about children missing out on schooling opportunities, adding a layer of urgency to the issue. Homelessness in Bundaberg is not only a local concern but part of a broader national issue, prompting a growing sense of community awareness and a call for comprehensive, collaborative solutions.

4.6 Workers' Accommodation

The Bundaberg region is poised for a substantial influx of development, with a staggering \$6.3 billion in major projects currently in the pipeline. Appendix 1 provides a list of some of these projects. In particular, three key projects will see the largest developments, all of which have not included accommodation as part of their approval applications (which are being progressed under Ministerial Infrastructure Designations);

- Paradise Dam improvement project;
- Bundaberg Hospital; and
- Bundaberg East Levee.

As these major initiatives gain momentum, the expectation is that they will draw in a surge of skilled workers and professionals, resulting in increased demand for housing. This influx of employees typically triggers heightened demand for both rental and owned properties, exerting upward pressure on housing prices.

Consequently, local real estate markets may experience increased demand, and the construction sector may witness heightened activity to meet the growing demand - adding to the challenges of the already strained construction industry.

4.7 Cohort Specific Housing

4.7.1 Youth Housing

Youth-specific housing also plays a vital role in preventing homelessness - offering a stable foundation during critical transitional phases. By acknowledging and addressing the distinct requirements of young individuals, society can contribute to the creation of a nurturing environment that empowers the next generation to thrive and contribute positively to their communities. However, there are currently no providers specifically focused on youth-appropriate housing for those who are, or are at risk of, homelessness.

4.7.2 Aged Care Housing

As discussed in Section 3.1, Bundaberg's population is older than the Queensland average, and ageing faster than the Queensland average. Furthermore, approximately one quarter of households in the Bundaberg region are pensioners – suggesting a heightened need for smaller, lower-maintenance homes and aged care facilities.

As of June 2023, there were 25 aged care services and 1,029 aged care service operational places in the Bundaberg region.

4.7.3 Supported Housing

There is a need for continued investment in current supported housing for people with disability as well as provision of additional supported housing in the Bundaberg Region. According to NDIS data as of 28 November 2023, there is currently 109 participants with a need for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) housing, with two persons seeking SDA and then an additional 33 seeking alternative SDA.

5.0 RESPONSE OPPORTUNITIES

A Local Housing Action Plan enables engagement across all levels of government, and benefits from partnerships between private and not-for-profit organisations. An initial set of tactical actions has been developed, enabling refinement through an ongoing iterative process. These actions provide for a targeted response and outcomes that will seek to either create immediate benefit or establish a foundation for the next phase of actions. More specific responses will be determined in consultation with the local housing and social services sector. These responses can provide flexibility in delivery and support each of the broad areas identified.



5.1 Existing Initiatives

The Council has already worked on several key initiatives to address the housing crisis to date and look forward to accelerating opportunities in partnership with the State. Some of the key activities and initiatives the Council has implemented include:

- The Bundaberg Regional Council are working in partnership with Regional Housing Pty Ltd in collaboration with the Bundaberg Housing and Homelessness Forum to work towards possible solutions to the current housing crisis;
- Working with the Queensland Department of Housing to identify Council owned land that could be developed for social housing;
- Investigating and supporting local short-term accommodation opportunities;
- Investment in key infrastructure to support population growth and private development opportunities;
- Undertaking additional local area and infrastructure planning to ensure the timely and efficient opening of new emerging communities to development;
- Maintaining a supply of over 2,900 residential lots approved and ready for construction; and
- Other advocacy efforts.

5.2 Actions

The Council with the support of the Queensland Government through the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 is committed to engage in the delivery of its initial Local Housing Action Plan through this set of actions, developed to target immediate to longer term housing responses. This is an iterative process, and these actions and target outcomes will seek to either create immediate benefit or to establish foundations that help respond to ongoing housing need.

○	Land and Development	Timeline
1.1	Advocate for catalytic infrastructure funding, to unlock approved and potential development opportunities.	
1.2	Council to seek funding from the \$350 million Homes for Queenslanders funding that will provide infrastructure charges relief to incentivise infill development.	
1.3	Where opportunities are identified to offer council-owned land to community housing providers, on either a permanent or temporary basis, promote these opportunities to the community housing sector and conduct an expression of interest process.	
1.4	Advocate for the State to review their land holdings in the Bundaberg region, to identify opportunities for land to be provided for social, affordable or community housing.	
1.5	Advocate for State funding to support inventive measures to attract community housing providers to the region.	
1.6	Seek State funding to offer incentives to private developers for the development of private-led diverse, affordable housing.	
1.7	Explore development opportunities with private businesses wanting to invest in the delivery of infrastructure in the region to facilitate housing solutions.	

○	Planning	Timeline
2.1	Advocate for the State to revise Queensland's infrastructure charging framework to make it more feasible to deliver development.	
2.2	<p>Review the planning scheme to identify and remove potential impediments to realising developing on the large stock of approved lots and achieving housing diversity. Key potential areas of investigation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern construction (such as prefabricated buildings); • Level and standard of required infrastructure; • Requirements on multiple unit and alternative housing types; and • Possible de-regulation of low-risk housing types. 	
2.3	Seek funding from the Homes for Queenslanders \$12.5m fund to assist Council implement the findings of the statutory review of the current planning scheme	

○	Optimisation	Timeline
3.1	Investigate options to support local short-term accommodation opportunities, and where appropriate, seek State funding to support incentive measures.	
3.2	Advocate for planning reform to allow for expedited planning scheme review processes, where planning scheme amendments are proposed to support diverse or affordable housing.	

○	Master planning	Timeline
4.1	Work with State Government and housing service providers to identify opportunities within the Bundaberg region.	
4.2	Identify catalyst precincts which could accommodate infill growth and undertake master planning exercises - subject to State funding.	
4.3	Investigate opportunities to set benchmarks for the provision of social or affordable housing in master plan areas.	

○	Supports	Timeline
5.1	Advocate for a formal agreement with the State to ensure the appropriate number of social homes are located in the Bundaberg region from the State's projection of 53,500 additional social homes by 2046.	
5.2	Seek State funding to undertake a review of the current planning scheme, to identify specific policy measures that encourage diverse, affordable housing for the Bundaberg region's changing demographics.	
5.3	Complete a needs analysis for cohort specific and culturally responsive housing in the region to better understand diverse housing types and support needs.	
5.4	Investigate more immediate temporary housing solutions for Bundaberg's homeless population.	

○	People in need	Timeline
6.1	Liaise with the State regarding their research into the effectiveness of inclusionary zoning to better understand its potential application within the region.	
6.2	Advocate for the State to investigate measures which could encourage privately developed affordable housing and housing for special needs groups (e.g. youth and supported accommodation).	
6.3	Liaise with State to investigate housing opportunities with First Nations people engagement to identify housing and support needs across the region, including working with service and housing providers	

○	Construction	Timeline
7.1	Explore avenues to support local manufacturing and innovative construction (faster, cheaper, and/or higher quality) through partnerships with local industry and research institutions investigating prefabrication, modular or industrialised house-building programs.	
7.2	Advocate for the State to consider opportunities to promote education and training to take up a trade, or provide training to existing contractors, such as partnerships with TAFE and Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ). This could also include accommodation subsidies and transitional or temporary housing.	

○	Capital solutions	Timeline
8.1	Identify opportunities such as land availability, reduced application assessment timeframes, application fees and infrastructure charges that will encourage developers to invest in the housing solutions in the LGA.	
8.2	Advocate for the establishment of a low or no-interest 'Housing Innovation Fund', to support innovative development which would otherwise be unable to attract conventional financing.	
8.3	Advocate for State funding to Council to build trunk infrastructure that will directly open up opportunities for private-led housing development.	

It is important to note that this Local Housing Action Plan provides an overview of available information as a basis for discussion and decision making. It should not be viewed in isolation but considered as part of broad response to supporting housing need across both the Bundaberg region and the State more broadly.

5.3 Next Steps

The Council's Development Group, with assistance from other key stakeholders as needed, will be responsible for implementation of the plan, including progressing actions and reporting regularly to the Executive Leadership Team and the Planning and Development Committee of the Council. The Planning and Development Committee will be responsible for monitoring progress and providing guidance to officers in development of options and further steps.

Appendix 1 – Major Projects in the Bundaberg Region

- Coral Cove Future Expansion
- South Beach Estate
- Burnett Heads Gateway Marina
- Bundaberg Hospital
- Friendlies Private Hospital
- Mt Rawdon Pumped Hydro
- Bundaberg East Levee
- Kensington solar farm
- Innes Park Solar Farm
- Bundaberg Biohub
- Bundaberg Ammonia Hub
- Qunaba/Woongarra Solar Farm (Three Chain)
- Gooburrum Solar Farm
- Bundaberg Solar Farm
- Kensington (Branyan/Childers) solar farm
- Port of Bundaberg expansion
- Paradise Dam improvement project
- Childers-Gayndah line rebuild
- Australian Bauxite Limited
- Bundaberg Aquatic centre
- Redevelopment of ANZAC park
- Moore Park Beach Masterplan
- Bundaberg Community Hub
- Bundaberg Brewed drinks expansion
- Okara Pty Ltd expansion
- Marquis Macadamia expansion
- Royal Flying Doctors flight simulator
- Hillwood Berries expansion
- Gin Gin Rail Trail
- TAFE Queensland expansion
- Rubyanna sewerage diversion