

Policy: RENEWABLE ENERGY SEP-POL-7
Service: Strategic Planning
Responsible Officer: Director Planning

1. INTRODUCTION

For several years Council has wrestled with the impacts of large scale electricity generating works on the rural landscape and communities throughout Yass Valley.

On 13 June 2018 Council held a Planning Forum on windfarms with speakers for and against the land use.

On 18 June 2018 a Councillor Workshop was held regarding Council's approach to wind farms and other renewable energy projects.

From the Planning Forum and Workshop, Council has developed its policy position on renewable energy projects.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To outline Council's position in relation to renewable energy projects proposed in Yass Valley.

3. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all renewable energy projects proposed in Yass Valley.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The following policy statement has been determined by Council:

A. *Having considered the social, environmental, economic and strategic planning impacts on the Yass Valley communities and the cumulative impacts of the four approved wind farm sites Council is of the view that it has reached the maximum number of industrial scale turbines for the local government area.*

B. *While supportive of renewable energy in general, Council opposes in principle, further large scale wind turbine sites in Yass Valley.*

C. *Council will consider any further proposed renewable energy projects on its individual merits with the following matters (in addition to the Department of Planning & Environment's Wind Energy Guide or the like) to be taken into account:*

- 1. *The location being consistent with the Yass Valley Settlement Strategy***
- 2. *The infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels, substations) not being within view lines of villages and towns or areas of closer settlement***
- 3. *The infrastructure not having an adverse impact on the amenity of other dwellings***
- 4. *The impact of infrastructure (e.g. turbines, panels) on the rural landscape and tourism values of the Yass Valley***
- 5. *Roads being used by any heavy vehicles being upgraded to the appropriate standard in Council's Roads Standards Policy prior to commencement of works on site***
- 6. *A sharing the benefits scheme(s) with the host landowners, immediate neighbours and a Community Enhancement Fund (as per Council policy)***

7. **Noise impacts at adjoining dwellings being consistent with the applicable standards**
8. **The project to commence within 5 years of a Consent being issued and completed within 5 years of commencement**
9. **The impacts of the infrastructure (e.g. panels, turbines) on the heritage values of the site and Yass Valley**
10. **The economic and social impacts on local communities and Yass Valley**
11. **Any community and Rural Fire Service concerns in relation to the bushfire risks and any impediments to firefighting operations**

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Roles & Responsibilities

The following Council Officers are responsible for the implementation and adherence to this policy:

- Director Planning
- Manager Development Control
- Manager Strategic Planning
- Planning Staff

5.2 Communication

This Policy will be communicated to the community and staff in accordance with Council's Policy, Procedures and Process Framework and Council's Business paper process. Following adoption by Council the Policy will be made available on Council's website.

5.3 Associated Documents

The following documentation is to be read in conjunction with this Policy:

- Department of Planning & Environment Wind Energy Guide
- Any Department of Planning & Environment guides on renewable energy
- Yass Valley Council Community Enhancement Fund Policy
- State Environmental Planning Policy (State & Regional Development) 2011
- Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013

6. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed once each term of Council or as needed in response to any change of circumstance including changes in legislation.

7. LEGISLATIVE & LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*

Council employees shall refrain from personal activities that would conflict with proper execution and management of Council's Renewable Energy Policy. Council's Code of Conduct provides guidance for recognising and disclosing any conflicts of interest.

8. DEFINITIONS

Under the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013:

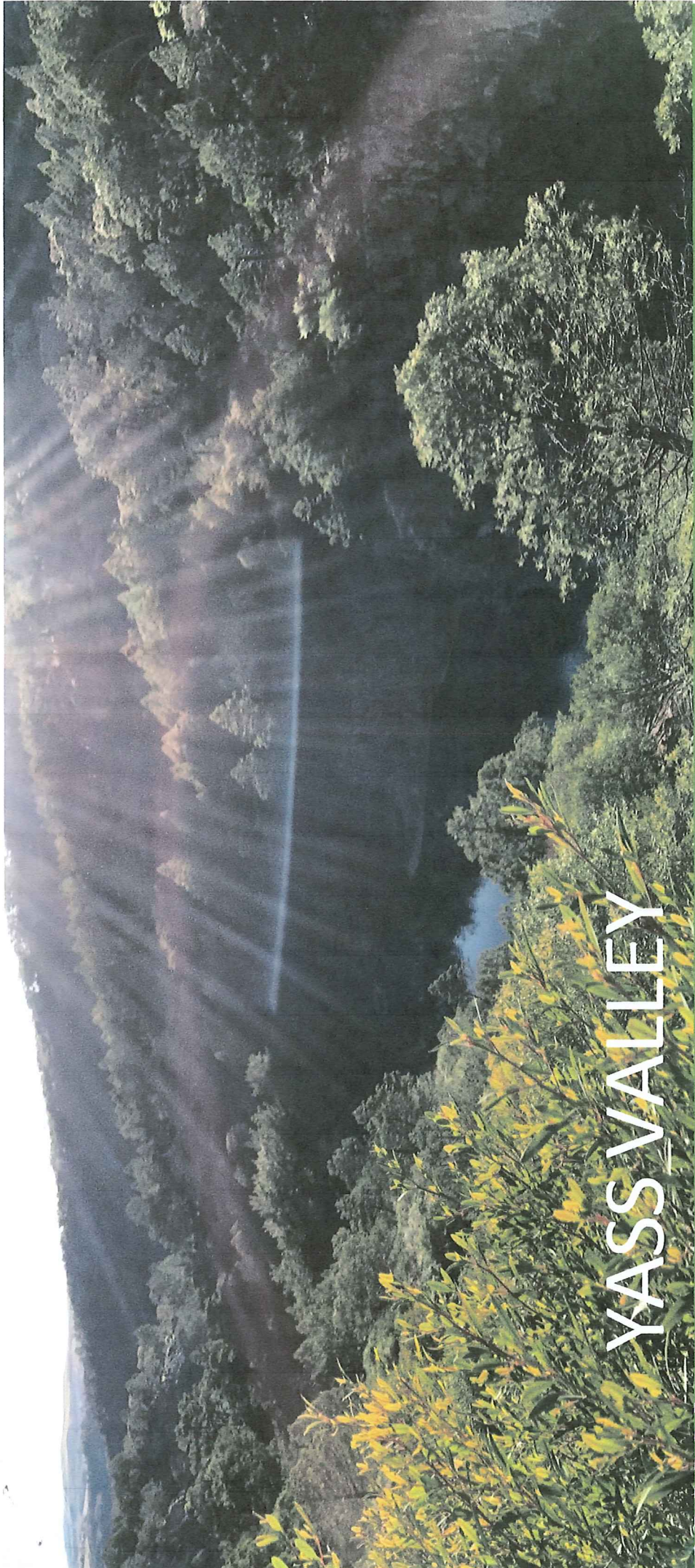
electricity generating works means a building or place used for the purpose of making or generating electricity

9. HISTORY

<i>Minute No</i>	<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Checked by</i>
108	27 June 2018	Council Resolution		
234	24 October 2018	Place on Exhibition	Director of Planning	Council Meeting

DRAFT

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YASS VALLEY

SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

2036

(October 2017 Version)

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Guiding regional growth is a key strategic challenge facing the Yass Valley Council (YVC). The Yass Valley Local Government Area (LGA) has experienced sustained population growth in recent years.

The Yass Valley Settlement Strategy provides a clear direction for long term growth and development, which accounts for the proposed Parkwood development and increasing pressure for NSW-ACT border development (which was not covered in the previous studies and strategies) within the Yass Valley LGA.

The strategy is delivered through several parts:

- review of the strategic planning context
- The development of guiding themes and principles
- A demographic analysis
- An analysis of current settlements
- Recommendations and implementation.

A review of all relevant government strategies and policies provides a comprehensive understanding of the surrounding strategic planning context. The primary strategic policy document relevant to this strategy is the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036 which replaces the Sydney-Canberra corridor Regional Strategy 2006-2031. The strategy also draws heavily on the previous Towns and Villages Study 2010 and associated supporting studies. The review of these policies has revealed a range of themes which aim to deliver appropriate land use and development planning. These themes aim to achieve development which sustainably integrates environmental, social and economic factors which are in the best interests of the community and the region. The following is a summary of the guiding themes which will guide this settlement strategy. The five themes identified are:

- Environmentally, socially and economically sustainable settlements
- Growth will be focussed on existing towns and villages and settlement expansion, rather than isolated site land release or cross-border sprawl.
- Water security is essential for growth
- Establish, strengthen and enhance the role, function and character of settlements
- Consistency with the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036

These themes are further refined and delivered by the principles in this strategy. Key principles which guide the recommendations include:

- Future development should strengthen the hierarchy of settlements, support and maintain strong multi-functional business centres and maximise infrastructure and services efficiencies
 - Future developments should complement existing settlement structure, character and uses and allow for the creation of legible and integrated growth
 - Future development should strengthen the efficient use of infrastructure, services and transport networks and not overburden existing services elsewhere
 - Future development, particularly at the residential/ agricultural and the residential/industrial interfaces should be planned for and managed to minimise potential conflict between adjacent land uses
- Growth in the Yass Valley LGA is influenced by a number of factors, particularly access to a secure reticulated water supply and reticulated sewerage, access and commuting proximity to the ACT, affordable large lot detached housing and rural to semi-rural lifestyle choice (tree-changers). These factors as well as others were thoroughly considered while forming the recommendations in this strategy.

The Yass Valley LGA has experienced sustained population growth since it was formed. In 2005 (post-amalgamation) the estimated residential population of Yass Valley was 13,247. In the ten years following, the population grew by 3,171 people i.e. an increase in total population of over 24 per cent or approximately 2.4 per cent per annum. This increase occurred despite growth being constrained by available water for much of this period. By June 2015, the estimated residential population (ERP) had increased to 16,418 people.

The areas within Yass Valley LGA have developed different roles within the housing market. For example, Murrumbateman and the ACT peri-urban area tend to attract predominantly family households, while Yass, Bowning-Bookham-Rural West and Gundaroo appeal to retirees but also attract families. The differing function and role of these areas means that population outcomes differ across the LGA.

The supply of residential land within the LGA will also have an influence in structuring different population and household futures within the Yass Valley LGA over the next five to ten years. While new residential opportunities are available on the outskirts of most townships, Yass and Murrumbateman provide the majority of the development across the LGA in the form of both standard and rural residential land. Most development in the ACT peri-urban area, Bowning-Bookham-Rural West and Gundaroo will be infill development or subdivision of rural land.

Between 2011 and 2036, the population for the Yass Valley LGA is forecasted to increase by 12,123 persons (77.70 per cent growth), at an average annual change of 2.33 per cent. The following table summarises the population forecasts for the Yass Valley LGA and each of its smaller population settlement areas and highlight how population change will affect different parts of the LGA. Some small areas may be rapidly growing whilst others are stable or even declining in population.

Table 1: Population forecast summary

Yass Valley Council area	Forecast year						Change between 2011 and 2036	
	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total change	Avg. annual % change
Yass Valley Council area	15,603	16,964	18,436	20,268	22,166	27,726	+12,123	+2.33
ACT peri-urban area	2,158	2,326	2,455	2,622	2,804	6,518	+4,360	+4.52
Bowning-Bookham-Rural West	1,722	1,815	1,841	1,864	1,900	1,953	+231	+0.51
Gundaroo & District	1,236	1,285	1,324	1,438	1,575	1,735	+499	+1.37
Murrumbateman & District	3,438	3,819	4,394	5,090	5,878	6,672	+3,234	+2.69
Yass & District	7,049	7,719	8,422	9,254	10,009	10,848	+3,799	+1.74

Population and household forecasts, 2011 to 2036, prepared by .id the population experts, March 2017.

The Yass Valley LGA is forecasted to grow to a population of around 28,000 people by 2036 and to around 43,950 (45,000) at 2056. The majority of this future growth in the short to medium term (to 2036) will be focused in the existing settlements of Yass and Murrumbateman. It is recommended Yass strengthen its role in the region and aim to grow into a Regional Centre of 20,000 people. Murrumbateman, recognising the primacy of Yass, would aim to grow into a major town/large district town of 10,000 people (although it is recognised these numbers are unlikely to be reached within the life of this strategy).

In order to achieve sustainable growth in the region securing a new water supply is required. Two additional water supplies have been identified in this strategy, a supply from ACT water infrastructure and the Burrinjuck Dam. Of these two options, supply from ACT water infrastructure is more compelling. Water supply could be negotiated for the areas north west of the ACT to supply Yass and Murrumbateman. It is not recommended that water supply from the ACT water infrastructure be sought for areas to the north east of Canberra including Sutton, Gundaroo and Mulligans Flat. A secure water supply from ACT water infrastructure in this area could result in unconstrained sprawl into the northern region.

ACT Government advised that it supports Council protecting "the defined settlements of Gundaroo and Sutton. (and) no intention to seek a pipeline to service the area located north-east of Canberra." (EPSD, March 2017)

Development in Sutton and Gundaroo is highly constrained due to the lack of a secure water supply and adequate sewerage treatment. Given, the water constraints and the community's desire for Sutton and Gundaroo to remain as villages, limited future development could be permitted where its impact did not compromise existing village characters or surrounding agricultural uses.

Binalong, Bowning, Bookham and Wee Jasper require no further rezoning's at this time due to a range of issues including low demand for housing, lack of infrastructure, existing supplies of undeveloped land or undesirable distances to Major Regional Centres, Regional Centres and Major Towns in the region. Future planning proposals for further development which supports economic development and tourism may be considered to allow natural and appropriate growth. While the strategy does not identify growth in these settlements, it is also appropriate to monitor their demand as the cost of land in and adjacent to the ACT may rise.

Figure 1: Proposed settlement hierarchy, 2036

