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# DRAFT WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINE

Department of Planning and Environment



RMCG

CoFutures...



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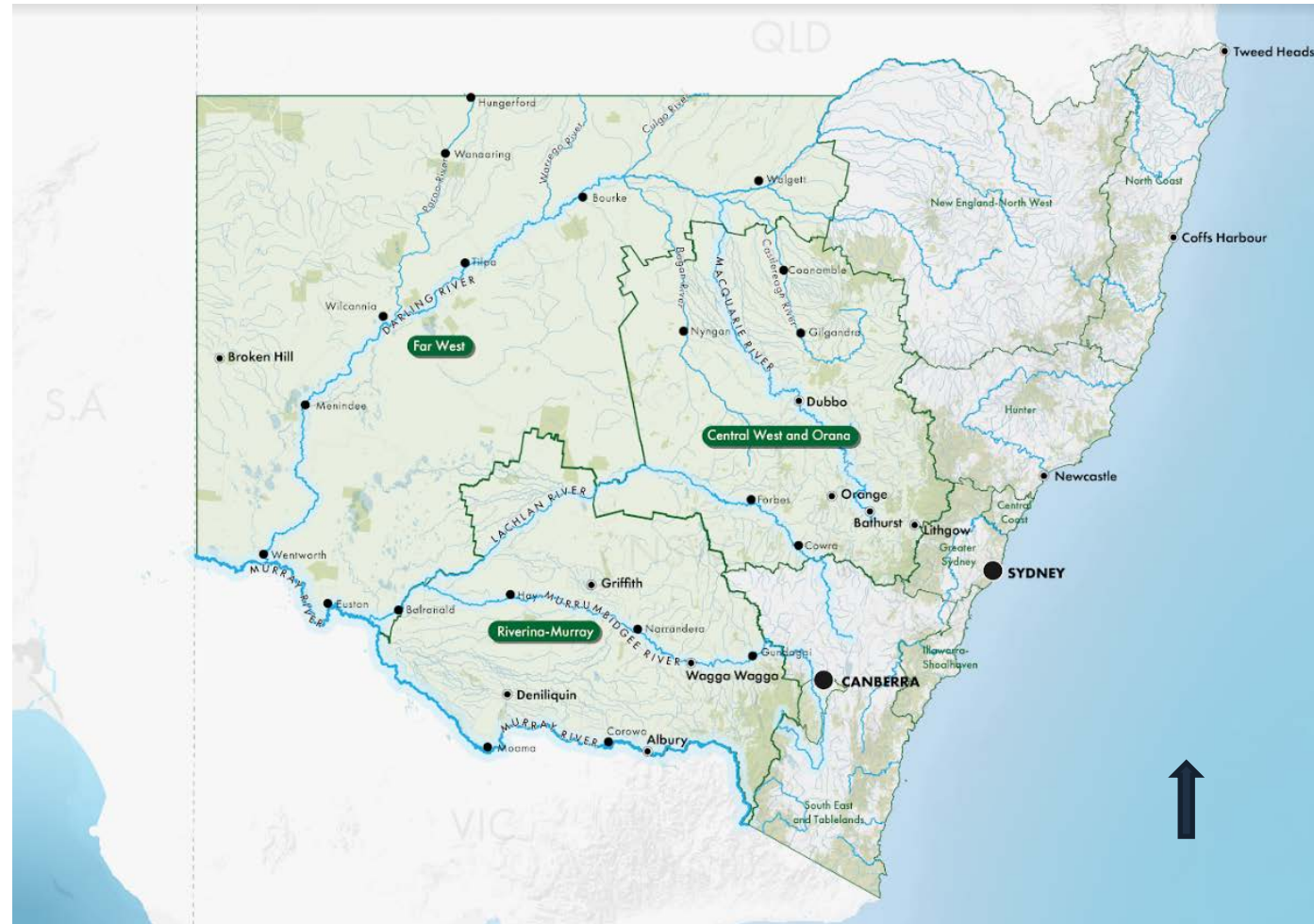
# Preface

*Western NSW is home to many of Australia's most significant river systems including the Murray, Darling, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan rivers. For thousands of years Aboriginal people have had a deep cultural and spiritual connection to the rivers of western NSW and today, the region's rivers are vital in maintaining diverse habitats, sustaining vibrant communities, and supporting prosperous economies.*

*Rivers are fragile and complex ecosystems which are vulnerable to change. In recent years, the unique natural features and landscape character that makes rivers and waterfront locations desirable are being eroded. This is attributed to a range of increasing development pressures, competing land use priorities and inadequate planning and management.*

*Rivers are strategic assets that must be protected for future generations and this Waterfront Development Guideline provides a framework for achieving best practice planning for waterfront areas. They have been informed by consultation with government agencies, stakeholders, river users and local communities over several years . The guideline will support councils, developers and landholders to plan and sustainably develop waterfront areas that benefits current and future waterfront communities.*

## River systems of western NSW



# Glossary

Terms used in this report:

**Waterways** - rivers, anabranches, creeks, lagoons, lakes, billabongs, and wetlands.

**Waterfront areas** - land with connection to a waterway, including the riverfront, as well as land less proximate to the waterway

**Riverfront** - land adjoining a river or other waterway

**Riverbank** - the bank of a river located within the riverfront

**Public space** - includes all publicly accessible **open spaces** such as waterways, parks and gardens

**Boating infrastructure** - boat ramps, lifts and slipways, pontoons and jetties, berthing and mooring structures, marinas and dry-stacks, fuelling and sewerage pump-out, club facilities, boat shed, fish cleaning and boat washdown facilities

**Riverfront access infrastructure** - riverbank stairs, walkways, inclinators and flying foxes providing access to the water's edge

# Introduction

The rivers of the Riverina Murray, Central West and Orana and Far West regions (the region) are significant economic, social and environmental assets.

Riverine floodplains, wetlands, forests and estuarine systems form a rich, complex, fragile and unique environment that has incalculable ecological value. They support a diverse range of plant and animal species, many of them rare and endangered as well as internationally significant wetlands.

Aboriginal stories recall the creation and formation of the rivers and this strong connection to rivers continues today, contributing to the spiritual, cultural and economic wellbeing of Aboriginal communities.

The region's rivers and irrigation development have contributed to it becoming one of Australia's most productive agricultural areas. Increasingly, waterways and riverfronts support a wider range of economic activity including tourism.

The region's communities have developed around waterways relying on them for critical services such as the town water supply, and the lifestyle and recreation opportunities they provide.

## WHY DO WE NEED A GUIDELINE?

There is increasing pressure for development - residential, tourism, recreation - in the region's sensitive waterfront areas. The qualities that attract people to the waterfront are being eroded however, by poor planning decisions and development outcomes, such as subdivision and privatisation of the riverfront, inadequate development setbacks and proliferation of private boating infrastructure.

Development is also degrading environmental values of waterways due to vegetation clearance, stormwater pollution and changes to flow regimes.

The opportunities that riverfront areas present for economic growth and social well-being are not being realised. A change in approach to planning waterfront settlements is required to activate tired and poorly planned urban riverfronts and allow everyone to access and enjoy the river.

## WHO ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR?

This guideline is designed to assist decision makers in government, planners and development applicants and local communities.

The guideline seeks to ensure a regionally consistent approach to planning land use and development of waterfront land that can be applied at multiple scales including:

- Local Strategic Planning Statements
- structure plans for new development areas
- revitalisation plans for urban areas
- master planning of urban waterfronts and public open spaces
- greenfield residential and rural residential development
- development applications.

## HOW THE GUIDELINE IS ARRANGED

The guideline is arranged in two parts:

Part 1: Development Strategies

- **Principal strategies** - the strategies that apply to all waterfront development
- **Riverfront public space** comprising strategies for open space, the riverfront-built form interface and water recreation infrastructure.
- Strategies for particular types of development and land use:
  - **Residential development**
  - **Tourism development**

Part 2: Implementation - outlines approaches for incorporating the waterfront development guideline into local planning and decision making and increasing riverfront public space.

## SCOPE

This guideline can be applied to any river, its tributaries and associated water bodies, including related anabranches, creeks, lagoons, lakes, billabongs and wetlands and at various scales - region, local government, multiple-lots and individual lots. The guideline therefore does not specify a land area to which it applies

## PRINCIPLES

The waterfront development guideline is nested within the principles of ecologically sustainable development including:

- decision making processes should effectively **integrate both long term and short term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations.**
- **inter-generational equity** - the present generation should ensure that the biodiversity, cultural heritage and productivity of the river environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.
- **conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity**
- the **precautionary principle** - avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment.

Furthermore the guideline has been prepared with reference to the relevant legislation and policy instruments, in particular the SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 – Chapter 5 River Murray Lands, the Urban Design Guidelines for Regional NSW<sup>1</sup>, extensive community consultation<sup>2</sup> and analysis<sup>3</sup>.

## OBJECTIVES

The guideline supports a place-based planning approach for new waterfront development and renewal of established areas that responds to local issues, opportunities and community expectations and is supported by technical, economic and social studies.

The following objectives for waterfront development provide a framework for waterfront development strategies to support best-practice planning.

Create resilient built environments and communities

Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

Provide public access to the riverfront

Protect and celebrate heritage sites and places

Incorporate sustainable development measures

Prioritise compact development

Respond to the regional climate and future climate impacts

Ensure planning and development is responsive to natural hazards

# Part 1: Guideline



# Principal Strategies

The principal strategies are relevant to any development in a waterfront area, including public space, tourism, residential and rural residential development.

## Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- avoid and minimise impacts to biodiversity by directing higher intensity land uses to areas of lowest biodiversity value
- retain as many existing indigenous trees and vegetation as possible and replace weed and exotic species (e.g. willows) with indigenous vegetation
- rehabilitate degraded land to a form or use compatible with the natural systems or visual appearance of the area
- setback development from the river bank to accommodate natural geomorphic process (river bank erosion and accretion)
- setback development to protect existing trees and allow for non-invasive vegetation to be added into the riverfront
- setback development to minimise the visual impact of development on the natural environment of the riverfront and protect views from the river and
- cluster boating and water access infrastructure
- avoid use of hard infrastructure such as retaining walls or constructed banks on the riverbank

## Provide public access to the riverfront

- provide continuous riverfront public space as part of the wider open space network

- provide water access infrastructure such as boardwalks, pontoons, and jetties to support public access to the riverfront by people of all abilities
- cluster boat infrastructure and services in locations accessible to residents and visitors
- provide safe and attractive paths that connect the riverfront with established path networks, the wider open space network and town centre

## Protect and celebrate heritage sites and places

- ensure sites and places of indigenous cultural heritage and non-indigenous heritage significance are protected
- engage with traditional owners to identify opportunities to promote the visibility of cultural heritage and incorporate indigenous culture.

## Incorporate sustainable development measures

- incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design and wastewater reuse measures
- ensure stormwater and wastewater does not discharge directly to waterways
- incorporate measures that promote renewable energy use and generation e.g. electric vehicle charging points, solar panels

## Prioritise compact development

- avoid ribbon development along the riverfront
- ensure development promotes connectivity, walkability and cycling opportunities

## Respond to the regional climate and future climate impacts

- mitigate climate impacts and temperature extremes by providing an appropriate amount of tree canopy cover in landscaping
- incorporate shade trees and/or shade structure to provide cool pleasant spaces and refuges from heat

## Protect people and built form from natural hazards

- ensure adequate setbacks to accommodate natural river processes such as flooding and reduce the need for future hazard protection
- mitigate flood risk by incorporating flood prone land into public open space
- avoid the use of flood protection structures such as retaining walls and levees to manage flood risk
- avoid development of bushfire prone land



# Desired future character:

The waterfront guideline seeks to ensure waterfront settlements:

- have continuous, publicly accessible riverfront public space supporting environmental, cultural and heritage values and recreation and business opportunities
- have vibrant and welcoming urban riverfronts attracting residents and visitors and offering flexible spaces for community and social gatherings and events throughout the year
- accommodate a diversity of on-water activities supported by sustainable, publicly accessible infrastructure and services
- support housing choice and high quality tourism development connected to town centre services and facilities via riverfront walking and cycling paths.

# Riverfront public space

The waterfront settlements of western NSW have a diversity of public spaces including formal and informal green spaces, working ports and boating infrastructure. Adjoining buildings, including businesses and private residences, also contribute to the role and character of riverfront public space. The strategies for riverfront public space therefore separately address open spaces, the interface between buildings and open space and water recreation infrastructure.

## Open spaces

### OPPORTUNITY

A continuous network of enticing and engaging riverfront public space accommodates a range of formal and informal activities throughout the year. Accessible by foot, bike or boat, public spaces encourage people to spend time within them and on the water and ensure the landscape and environmental qualities of the waterfront are protected and enhanced.

### CHALLENGES

Rather than continuous and accessible open space, the riverfront comprises disconnected spaces that lacks focal points to attract visitors and places where people can engage with the water.

### STRATEGIES

In addition to the principal strategies, the following strategies apply to riverfront open spaces.

#### Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- link riverfront public spaces to publicly accessible nature reserves and parklands through provision of vegetation corridors
- provide landscaping that supports the amenity, attractiveness biodiversity and safety of open space

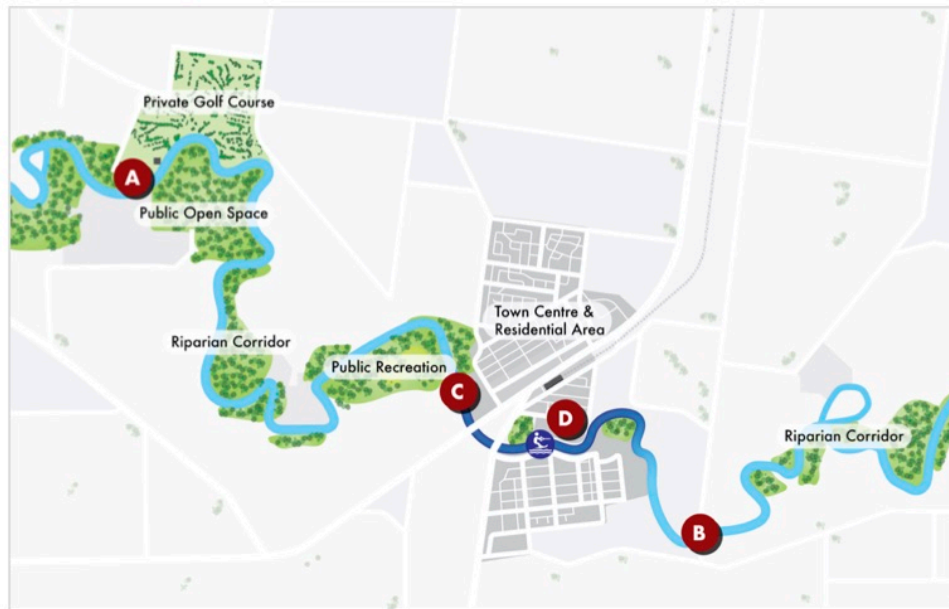
#### Provide public access to the riverfront

- provide continuous riverfront public space that supports a variety of riverfront experiences including structured and unstructured recreation, organised and informal sports, on and off-water activities. Consider incorporating:
  - floating pontoons, boardwalks, jetties, platforms and steps to allow people to reach the waters' edge and interact with the water
  - opportunities for watercraft such as non-motorised leisure craft (e.g. stand up paddle boards, canoes, kayaks) and temporary moorings or short stay berths
  - temporary berths for commercial and motorised watercraft
  - amenities such as barbecues and picnic tables
  - facilities such as tourism information centres and public toilets placed in locations that best meet community needs
  - a venue for outdoor and community events, festivals, markets where communities can gather
- ensure riverfront public spaces are a sufficient width to incorporate a range of future uses
- ensure connections are designed with high amenity and recreational opportunities such as exercise stations that encourage activities such as walking and cycling
- prioritise access by people not cars by providing safe access points to the riverfront, traffic calming measures and separation of parking and vehicles from pedestrians
- identify strategic sites to be acquired for future public spaces to improve riverfront public space connectivity

#### Protect and celebrate heritage sites and places

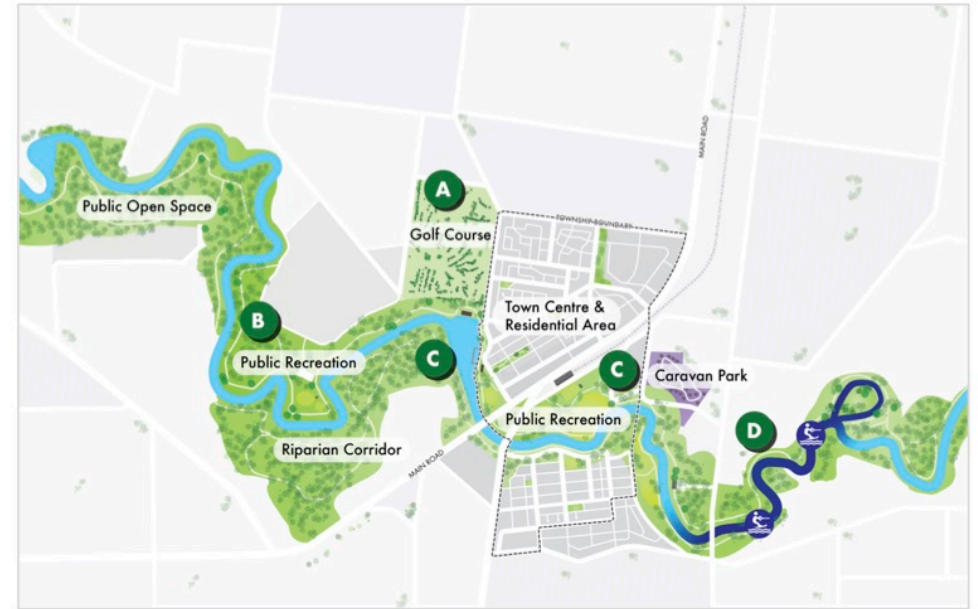
- retain and enhance existing heritage elements to contribute to the sense of place
- provide interpretative information about heritage

## Undesirable practice



- A** Riverfront is not accessible to the public
- B** Lack of continuous and connected riverfront public open space
- C** Lack of facilities to attract visitors and residents
- D** Conflict between on-water activity and adjoining land use

## Desirable practice



- A** Riverfront is accessible to the public
- B** Riverfront open spaces are connected by pedestrian and cycling paths
- C** Riverfront open spaces support a range of activities and connects to the town centre
- D** Designated areas for high impact water activities



# Built form interface

## OPPORTUNITY

Active riverfront public spaces attract people day and night and support a variety of hospitality and tourism businesses, retail outlets and visitor services and facilities that encourage people to meet, socialise and play and connect with the river.

## CHALLENGES

Riverfronts of western NSW were commonly the focus for commercial and industrial activities and the rear of buildings, fencing and car parks commonly front the river. There is limited opportunity for businesses and activities that cater to visitors and linkages between the town centre and the riverfront are poor.

## STRATEGIES

In addition to the principal strategies, the following strategies apply to the riverfront-built form interface.

### Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- important public view corridors to the river should be protected and not be obstructed

### Provide public access to the riverfront

- facilitate re-orientation and improved connection of existing buildings to the riverfront
- include permeable edges to the riverfront and a punctuated building pattern to enable multiple patterns of movement and improve connectivity to the town centre
- encourage a broad mix of uses to support daytime and evening activation, community access and enjoyment
- ground floor spaces should be flexible and adaptable to maximise amenity of users of the street and activity on the riverfront
- encourage passive surveillance opportunities and incorporate lighting and other measures for security and safety at the pedestrian level
- prioritise access by people not cars by providing safe access points to the riverfront

- ensure paths and linkages are part of a wider integrated network and promote access to the riverfront by people of all abilities
- consider introduction of public art, wayfinding and interpretation in linkages to the riverfront
- identify strategic sites to be acquired to improve connectivity to the riverfront

### Prioritise compact development

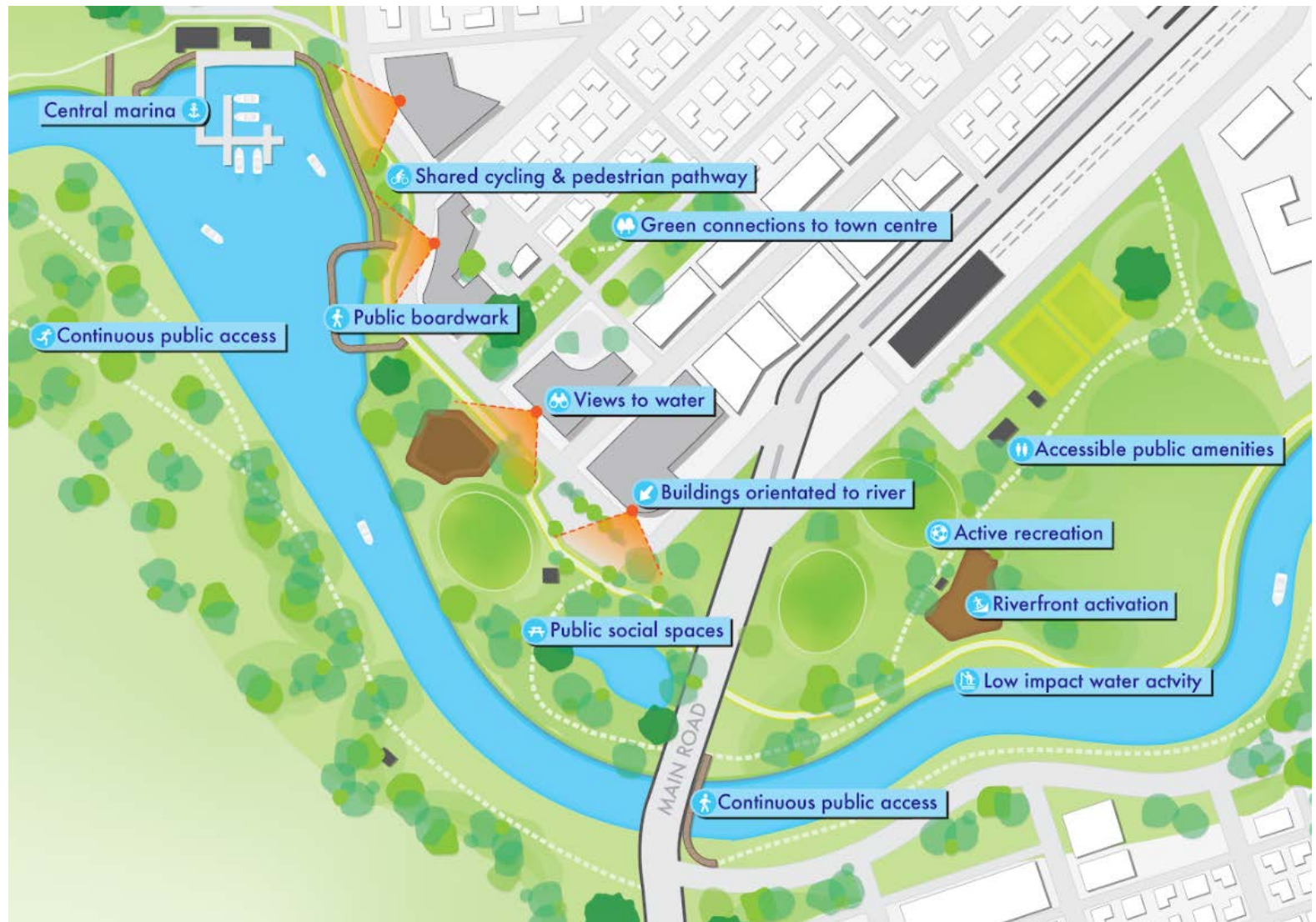
- increase living opportunities within walking distance of the riverfront, including medium to high density residential development.

## Desirable practice

Buildings are oriented to the waterfront  
Riverfront is accessible to the public by boat, bike and foot

A mix of uses boosts activity in public spaces attracting residents and visitors  
Flexible spaces can accommodate a range of activities: festivals, markets, community celebrations, concerts, day and night, throughout the year.

Amenities (e.g. seating, waste receptacles, toilets, lighting) increase people's comfort and enjoyment



# Water recreation

## OPPORTUNITY

Regional rivers are a focus for recreation providing opportunities for fishing, swimming and motorised and non-motorised watercraft. Recreational boating is an important economic driver and a key component of the visitor economy. Well located, designed and maintained publicly accessible water recreation facilities will attract users of all ages and abilities.

## CHALLENGES

Recreation on inland waters has increased significantly and it is likely that this trend will continue. Power boats are having significant impacts on river health, including bank erosion, water pollution and removal of fish habitat and other river users due to boat congestion and noise. Proliferation and poor maintenance of private boating is causing erosion of the riverbank and degrading landscape qualities. Lack of facilities such as fish cleaning stations, temporary and short term berthing are leading to a decline in water quality and destruction of riparian vegetation.

## STRATEGIES

In addition to the principal strategies, the following strategies apply to water recreation development:

### Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- cluster water recreation and water access infrastructure to minimise vegetation removal and disturbance of the riverbank
- avoid de-snagging or removal of in-stream native vegetation
- provide washdown bays, pump out and fish cleaning facilities with a water supply and connection to sewer and rubbish bins for fish frames and offal

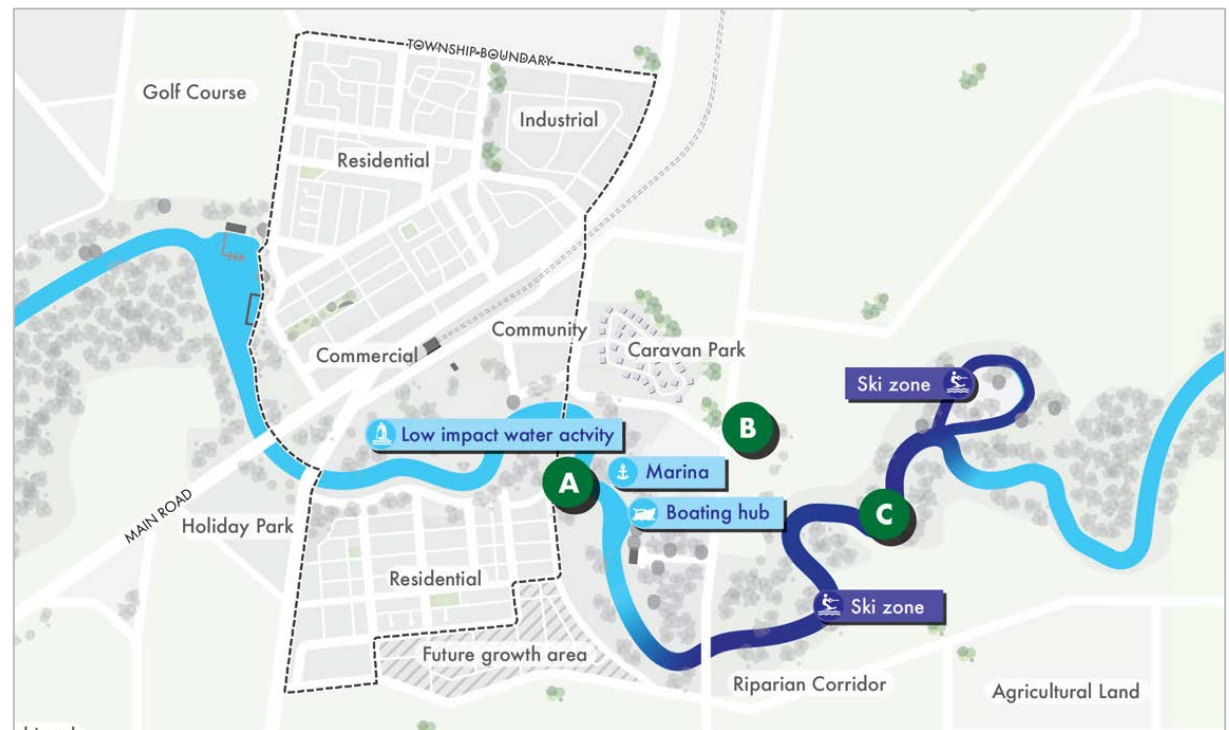
### Provide public access to the riverfront

- designate areas of the river for high impact uses such as skiing, compatible with the adjoining land use
- provide marinas, group moorings, public boat ramps where they can be supported by off-river boat facilities and services
- encourage 'off river' boat storage, maintenance and servicing facilities

- consider provision of temporary and short stay berths
- consider safety, including pedestrian safety, safe trailer manoeuvring and lighting around boating infrastructure.

## Desirable practice

- A** Boardwalks, pontoons enable public access to water and water's edge for non-motorised activities
- B** Boating hub clusters public ramps, marinas and boat service facilities
- C** Dedicated zone for high impact water activities



# Residential Development

## OPPORTUNITY

Waterfront areas are highly desirable places to live. High quality residential developments provide wonderful lifestyle opportunities for residents and a positive contribution to the liveability and quality of waterfront towns. Integrated with riverfront public space, residential development can support restoration and enhancement of riverfront biodiversity and provide access to the river by all.

## CHALLENGES

Subdivisions layouts have been designed to maximise private river access resulting in privatisation of the waterfront, ribbon development and proliferation of private boating and water access infrastructure. This has led to loss of riverfront vegetation, riverbank erosion, consumption of important agricultural land and poor connectivity between new subdivision and existing settlements. The natural and landscape qualities that contribute to the liveability of waterfront towns and make riverfront locations attractive places to live are being compromised.

## STRATEGIES

In addition to the principal strategies, the following strategies apply to new residential and rural residential development. For new subdivisions, it is essential to:

### Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- incorporate existing trees and vegetation into the subdivision design
- orient streets to maximise views to the river
- ensure streets and houses look onto the riverfront and avoid sides and rears of lots along riverfront and public open space boundaries.
- discourage private boat lifts and on-water boat storage facilities
- discourage private water access infrastructure e.g. stairs, lifts on the riverbank

### Provide public access to the riverfront

- provide riverfront public space in new subdivisions
- provide safe and attractive walking and cycling paths that integrate with established path networks, the open space network, riverfront and town centre
- cluster water access and boating infrastructure

### Incorporate sustainable development measures

- where possible, utilise or augment existing reticulated services

### Prioritise compact development

- ensure subdivision plans contain a range of lot sizes and configurations that respond to housing need
- avoid subdivision that leads to out-of-sequence or ribbon development in riverfront areas
- avoid subdivision of important agricultural land.



## Undesirable practice



- A** Lack of public access to the riverfront
- B** Long narrow lots create inefficient pattern of development
- C** Development has destroyed vegetation and ecological connectivity and contributed to bank erosion
- D** Proliferation of jetties and moorings

## Desirable practice



- A** Riverfront is accessible to the public
- B** New subdivision extends the existing street network and pedestrian and cycling connections
- C** Biodiversity values are protected and enhanced in public space
- D** Shared boating infrastructure

# Tourism Development

## OPPORTUNITY

Waterfront areas are highly desirable locations for tourism development. High quality, sustainable tourism development provides visitors with a range of leisure and recreation opportunities both on land and on the water set within a unique riverfront environment.

## CHALLENGES

Riverfront tourism development, particularly large scale tourism developments, such as caravan and camping parks, conference centres, golf courses and wineries, have resulted in privatisation of the riverfront, ribbon development along the riverfront and poor connectivity to existing settlements and tourism services and facilities. Boating infrastructure has caused degradation of the environment and large numbers of boat users has led to conflict between river users. In some cases, occupation by permanent residents has resulted in the development becoming a quasi-residential estate. The natural and landscape qualities that contribute to the attractiveness of the riverfront for tourism is being eroded by large scale development located too close to the riverfront, removal of vegetation and construction of infrastructure on the riverbank.

## STRATEGIES

In addition to the general guidelines, the following guidelines apply

### Protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape qualities

- incorporate existing trees and vegetation into the development design
- include indigenous plant species in landscaping to support biodiversity and integrate the development with the surrounding area
- ensure that the appearance of development is subordinate to the local landscape setting, with views from the river of development being filtered through vegetation.
- ensure noise, privacy, traffic, visual and other impacts do not unduly detract from the amenity of the area

### Provide public access to the riverfront

- provide riverfront public space in new tourism development
- provide safe and attractive walking and cycling paths that integrate with established path networks, the open space network, riverfront and town centre
- cluster riverfront infrastructure, such as infrastructure for watercraft and water access

### Protect and celebrate heritage sites and places

- retain and enhance existing heritage elements to contribute to the sense of place
- provide interpretative information about heritage

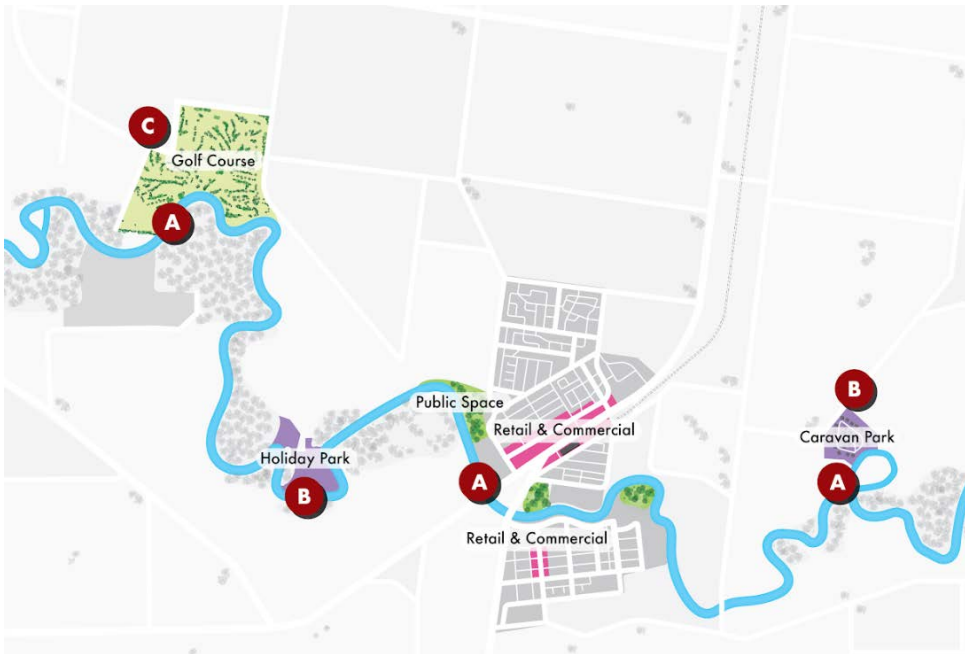
### Incorporate sustainable development measures

- where possible, utilise or augment existing reticulated services

### Prioritise compact development

- locate tourism development in reasonable proximity of a township, major tourism node or touring route
- avoid tourism development that will contribute to the urbanisation of an area
- ensure development does not consume important agricultural land or limit the operation of agricultural or other rural activities.

## Undesirable practice



- A** Riverfront is not accessible to the public
- B** Tourism facilities are remote from boating facilities
- C** Lack of connections between tourism and recreation facilities and the town centre

## Desirable practice



- A** Riverfront is accessible to the public
- B** Tourism development is connected to the town and other attractions by riverfront pedestrian and cycling paths and proximate to boating infrastructure
- C** Areas designated for water skiing are located to avoid adverse impacts and access supporting infrastructure

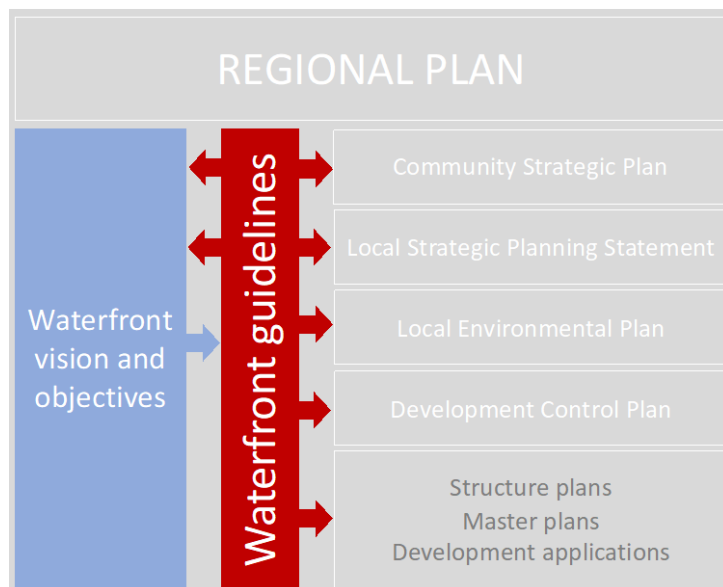
# Part 2 Implementation

# Local strategic planning

The Riverina Murray, Far West and Central West Orana Regional Plans promote improved strategic and statutory planning for waterfront environments, consistent with this guideline. There are a number of opportunities to achieve this outcome. The guideline can inform high level plans such as **Community Strategic Plans (CSP)** and **Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS)** and provide the foundation for incorporating the guidelines into Local Environmental Plans (LEP) and Development Control Plans.

The guideline can also be used to inform preparation of more focused strategic plans such as **township structure plans, precinct structure plans, waterfront master plans, open space plans** and **economic development strategies**.

Strategic plans and development applications that are consistent with the guideline, will help speed up approval timeframes, provide greater consistency and certainty and make development consents and concurrences easier to navigate.



The Urban Design Guidelines for Regional NSW provide detailed guidance on local strategic planning including suggestions for:

- Defining and scoping the project
- Engagement with stakeholders and the community
- Background research
- Developing scenarios and options
- Evaluating and confirming preferred options
- Implementation

Additional considerations for waterfront planning are provided here.

## UNDERSTANDING THE WATERFRONT

Riverfronts and waterways are complex and dynamic environments. Collating relevant information will be important to developing sustainable and successful waterfront plans. Information that will be useful in waterfront planning includes:

- Biodiversity assessments
- Landscape character assessments
- Flood studies
- Heritage studies
- Tourism and visitor analysis
- Housing demand and supply
- Inventory of boating infrastructure and needs analysis
- Open space and community infrastructure analysis
- Inventory of unauthorised or non-compliant development.

Building an understanding of the waterfront will assist in identifying:

- constrained areas where development should be avoided
- areas required to accommodate natural riverine processes including flooding, erosion and accretion



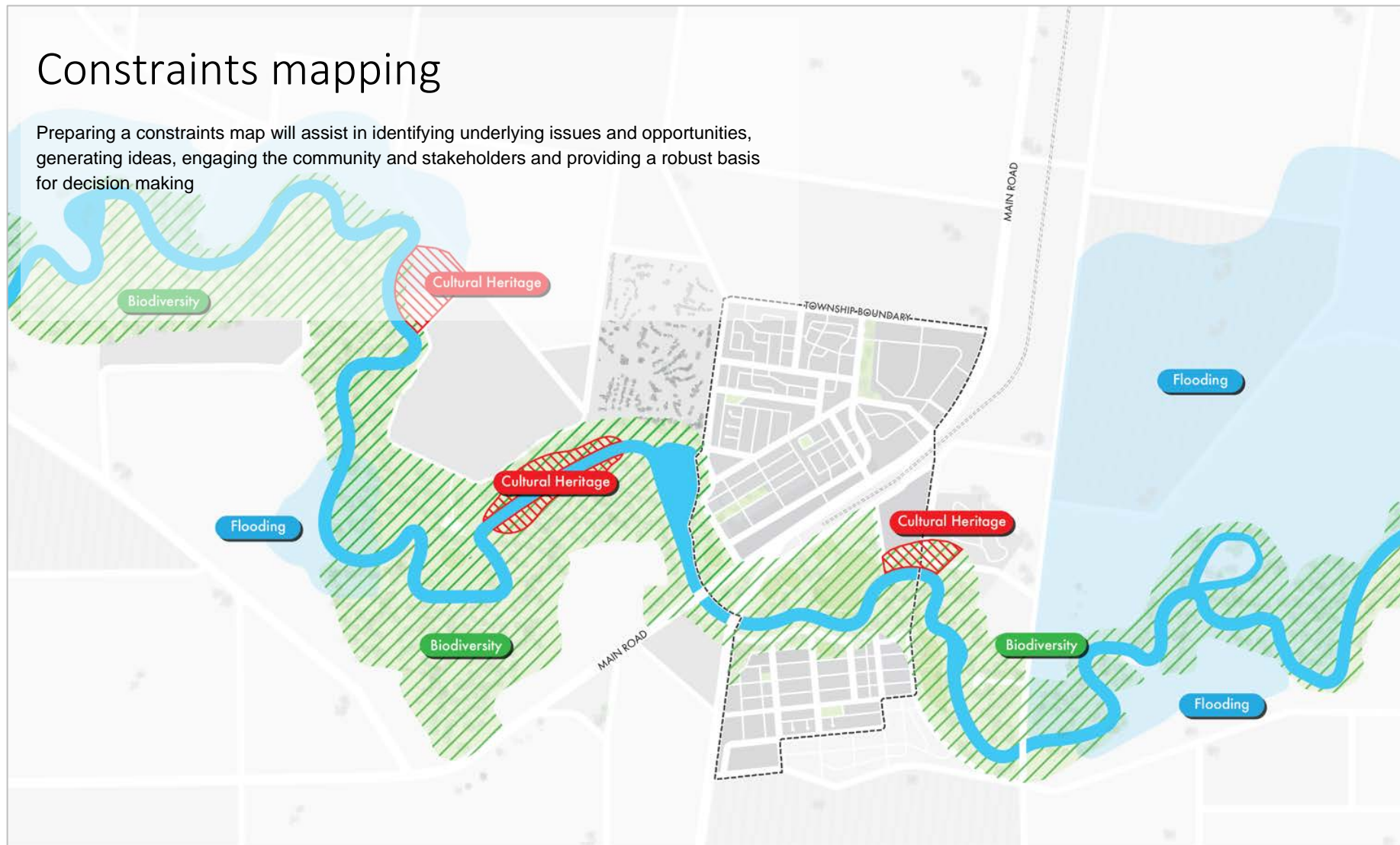
- areas of environmental or cultural significance where development requires particular consideration
- strategic sites to be acquired for future public spaces to improve riverfront public space connectivity.

Understanding how waterways are used by recreational and commercial users will be important to enable better integration and alignment with on-shore land use. For

example, identifying dedicated river reaches, and providing appropriate infrastructure for skiing, can avoid impacts on residents and non-motorised recreational watercraft. Non-motorised recreational watercraft are compatible on-water uses for urban locations and environmentally sensitive areas.

## Constraints mapping

Preparing a constraints map will assist in identifying underlying issues and opportunities, generating ideas, engaging the community and stakeholders and providing a robust basis for decision making



## AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Planners and decision makers must weigh up competing land uses, divergent views and a diversity of issues and opportunities as well as coordinate the input of multiple agencies, including sometimes, interstate agencies. Agency and stakeholder engagement and consultation in waterfront planning therefore warrants careful consideration. Consultation should be conducted in accordance with council's Community Participation Plan and seek to

- facilitate discussion between stakeholders so they can hear each other's concerns and ideas
- create opportunities for up-front discussions that reduce potential disputes or uncover hidden opportunities
- assist decision makers identify community concerns and priorities
- utilise local knowledge and expertise
- engage Aboriginal Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people of all ages and abilities.
- establish an agreed vision for waterfront areas
- test options and ideas to achieve the vision.

Example questions that could be used in initial discussions with community include:

What are the most important waterfront values?

What could be done to improve the riverfront?

How do you interact with the river now?

How do you want to interact with the river into the future?

What changes are needed to make that happen?

Engagement with Traditional Owners will be important given the cultural significance of waterways. Planning engagement in conjunction with Traditional Owners can ensure that the relevant people are involved and appropriate engagement processes and timeframes are provided.

In addition to NSW state agencies and adjoining local government areas, consultation with Victorian state agencies and local governments will be important for communities along the Murray River.

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Large scale tourism developments, developments such as caravan parks, conference centres and golf courses, can have significant flow on benefits to local communities including increasing visitation to other tourism businesses and custom to township retail businesses and services as well as providing employment opportunities. These developments can also introduce land use conflict and have significant impacts on the environment, particularly in riverfront areas. Development applications for new tourism developments should therefore demonstrate

- that the development is consistent with local and regional strategic tourism planning
- that the development will fill an existing need or gap in the tourism offer
- how the facility will contribute to the tourism economy of the region
- that the site is strategically located with respect to tourist routes, tourist attractions and other infrastructure
- if the site is outside a town boundary, why a rural location is required
- that the development will not contribute to the urbanisation of the area
- the development will not compromise the operation of adjoining and surrounding businesses including agricultural enterprises
- the site has access to all relevant servicing infrastructure or will meet all costs for infrastructure provision to the site.

## PLANNING CONTROLS

Zoning, being the zone objectives and permissibility of land uses in a particular zone, gives effect to the intent of master plans and strategic plans ensuring land use and development will achieve the riverfront vision and objectives.

There are numerous zones and combinations of zones that could be applied to waterfront land. Councils and developers are encouraged to consider the full suite of zoning options to respond to local circumstances and the preferred land use and development outcomes for waterfront lands. For example:

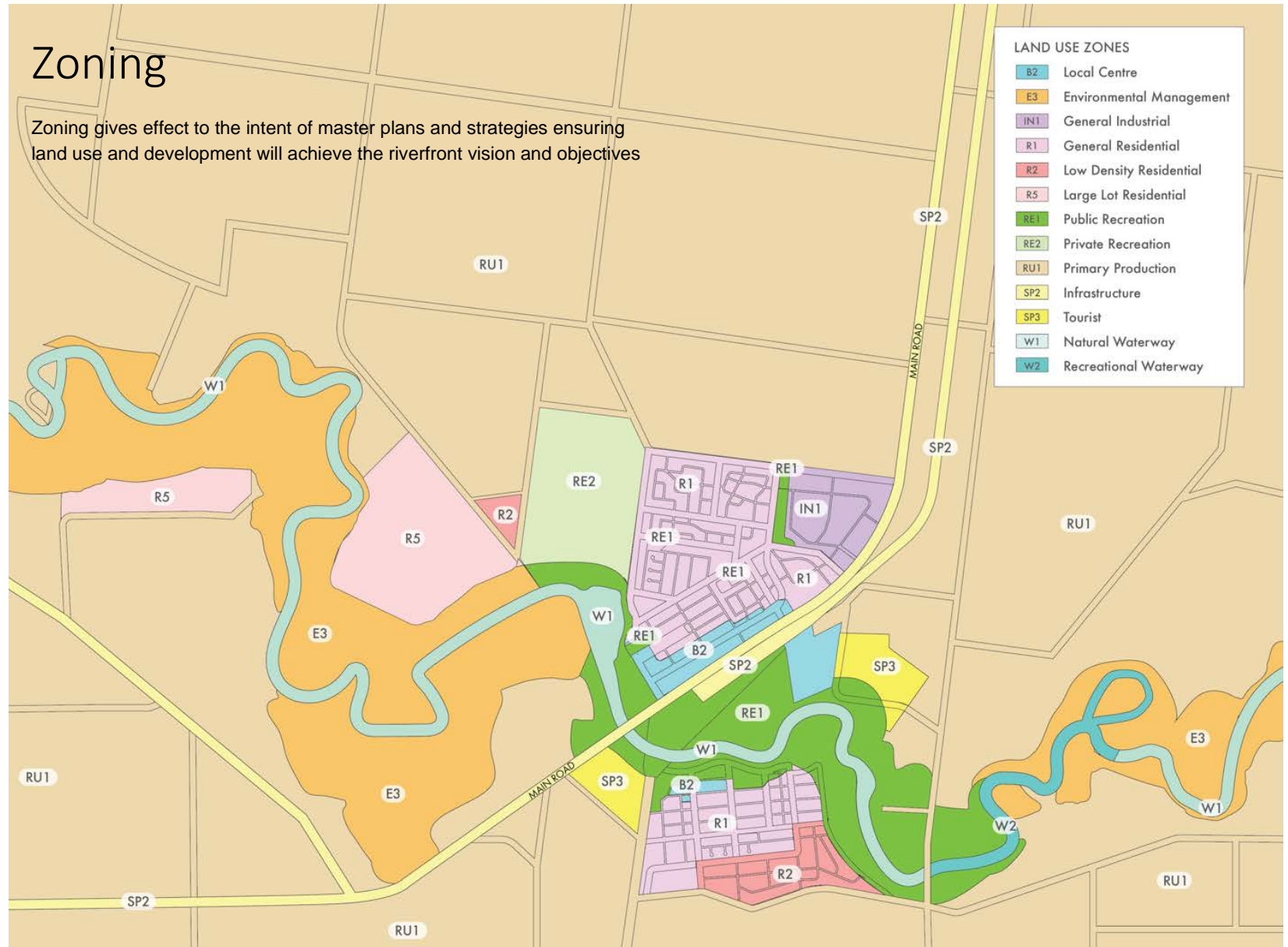
- apply a Conservation Zone to flood prone land to protect flood plain function and ecological values and provide for compatible development
- apply the W1 Natural Waterways zone to areas of environmental or landscape significance and provide for low impact on-water uses.

- apply the W2 Recreational Waterways to areas where higher impact on-water activities such as skiing will be accommodated.
- apply the RE2 Public Recreation Zone to land identified for public open space corridors, particularly near urban areas.

This approach will facilitate development that is appropriate to the land attributes, river function and strategic context. Development control plans, prepared by councils, provide opportunities for detailed opportunities to protect and enhance vegetation at the development application stage. Other planning tools include councils' ability to require building envelopes, easements and covenants on certain land when considering developments. Various agencies have regulatory roles in relation to clearing on waterfront land and are important to recognise and include in the planning process.

## Zoning

Zoning gives effect to the intent of master plans and strategies ensuring land use and development will achieve the riverfront vision and objectives





# Increasing riverfront public space

Riverfronts are important environmental, social and economic assets. Increasing public access to the riverfront is a fundamental objective of these guidelines. Public ownership may be the best way to increase access to, and the quality of the riverfront, for the benefit of the whole community, in perpetuity. There are a number of mechanisms to facilitate transfer of riverfront land from private to public ownership.

## LAND DEVELOPMENT

The development of land also provides an opportunity to increase public access to riverfront land and public ownership of riverfront land.

**Voluntary Planning Agreements** - in which the developer agrees to dedicate land free of cost for a public purpose, as part of a development application to rezone or develop land (*Planning Agreements Practice Note - February 2021*). Alternatively, developers in non-riverfront areas may pay a monetary contribution for council to secure riverfront land. These are generally more appropriate for large scale developments.

**Community title** - for smaller subdivisions, a community title scheme can facilitate public access to the riverfront, with riverfront land held as common property. The common area is owned and maintained by a Community Association comprising lot owners within the subdivision. In the longer term, common areas could be acquired by council and integrated into the wider open space network.

## SOURCE FUNDING

Implementation of riverfront strategies will require significant support. Councils should consider the opportunity for seeking developer contributions towards funding of riverfront projects. Riverfront plans and strategies can also be used to support submissions for funding assistance from Commonwealth and State Government grants.

## LAND ACQUISITION

The Draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 recommends that a framework be developed for the management of the Western NSW river including identifying mechanisms to fund public ownership of riverfront land where appropriate. Through riverfront strategic planning process, councils should identify key sites for future acquisition.

# Resources and References

## USEFUL RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

Batemans Bay Waterfront Masterplan and Activation Strategy, Eurobodalla Shire

Coastal Design Guidelines for NSW, NSW Coastal Council

Siting and design guidelines for structures on Victorian Coast, Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Port Melbourne Waterfront Activation Plan, City of Port Phillip

Docklands Public Realm Plan, City of Melbourne

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