South Burnett Regional Council

Local Housing Action Plan 2023

Contents

Acknowledgement

The South Burnett Local Housing Action Plan was developed with the support of the Queensland Government in association with the Local Government Association of Queensland.

Disclaimer

The South Burnett Regional Council Local Housing Action Plan is a non-statutory plan and ‘living document’ prepared under the Queensland Housing & Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 (Action 5) to support local housing outcomes. This Local Housing Action Plan is not the same as a Housing Strategy under the State Planning Policy, or a housing study, but may inform statutory documents like a planning scheme.

Adoption by Council

The South Burnett Regional Council Local Housing Action Plan was adopted by Council on 24 January 2024. Resolution 2024/267.

1. Introduction

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

This is an iterative process (see Figure 1) that does not intend to duplicate existing actions of Council or the 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 needs.

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 SBRC, 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.

2. Approach and Methodology

The plan provides an overview of key community and housing characteristics, and emerging issues related to housing in the community and identifies a targeted initial set of priority actions to respond to housing needs. It has been developed through a review of a range of supporting documentation including:

- South Burnett Regional Planning Scheme 2017.
- South Burnett Regional Development Strategy 2021-2026.

- Statistical data from the Queensland Government Statisticians Office, including Census and other data sets such as building approvals, rental market data and housing approvals.
- Housing needs data from the Department of Housing and other state agencies as required.
- The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 and the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025.
- Other local data and information such as RAI reports.

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

3. Key Facts

The SBRC area is located within the Wide Bay Burnett Region of South-East Queensland. The area encompasses a total land area of about 8,382 square kilometres and a population of 33,831. The SBRC area is predominantly rural, with a township at Kingaroy, smaller townships at Murgon, Nanango, Wondai and Proston and villages at Benarkin, Blackbutt, Durong, Hivesville, Kumbia, Maidenwell, Memerambi, Tingoora and Wooroolin. The extent of South Burnett region is shown in
Figure 2.

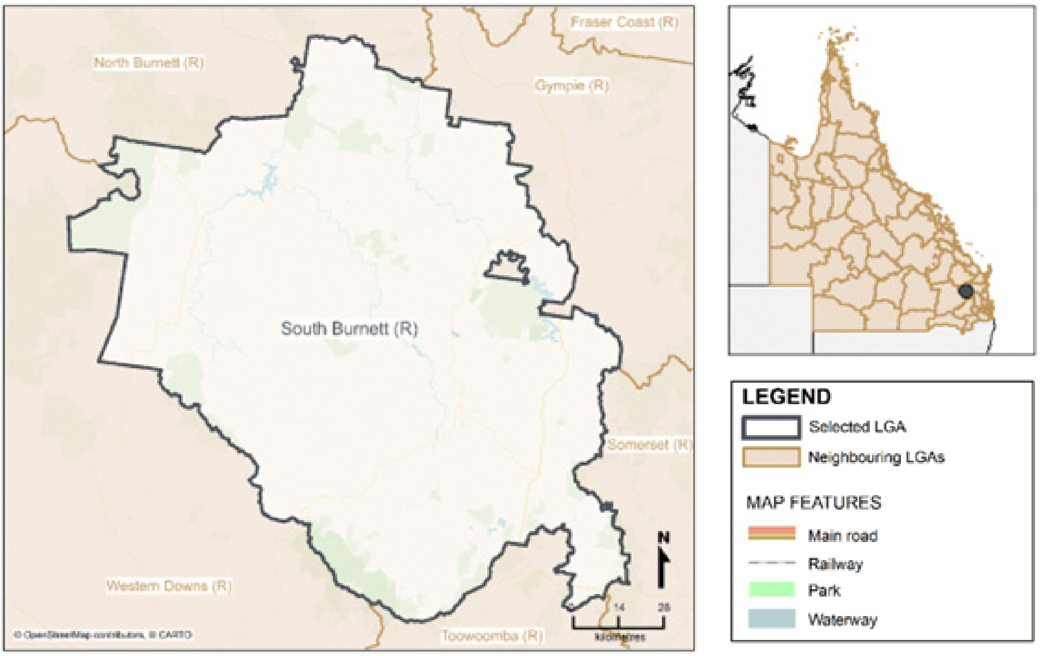

Figure 2: Map of South Burnett Region LGA[1]

Rural land is used largely for agriculture, particularly cattle grazing, and crop and cereal growing. Manufacturing, timber production, viticulture, coal mining and electricity generation are also important industries.

The key employment sectors in the South Burnett Regional LGA are health care and social assistance sectors (accounting for 15.3% of employees), agriculture forestry and fishing (11%), education and training (10.7%).

[1] *Queensland Regional Profiles – South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023.*

SOUTH BURNETT REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Goods-related and Household services comprise 73.6% of employment in the region. Unemployment is near double the national average at 6.6% which is down from 12.3% in September Quarter 2020. With 25.9% of the population aged over 65 years, and the large number of residential care places (301), the health care and social assistance industry provides 2,004 jobs.

The main agricultural industries are cattle grazing and crop and cereal growing (including peanuts, navy beans, maize and dubosia). The main health care facility in the region is Kingaroy Hospital with small public hospitals at Murgon, Nanango and Wondai. The main retail area is the Kingaroy township, with smaller retail areas in the townships of Murgon, Nanango and Wondai, and various small villages. Educational facilities are provided at TAFE Queensland Wide Bay Burnett (Kingaroy Campus) and numerous schools from Prep to year 12. The most significant industrial areas are located in the south at the Tarong and Tarong North Power Stations and nearby Meandu Mine, with smaller industrial areas in the townships of Kingaroy, Murgon and Wondai.

Kingaroy is situated on the traditional lands of the Wakka Wakka and Auburn Hawkwood people.

"We know we are in a crisis, but we also need to chart a course from crisis management to long-term wellbeing for people. We need to embrace prevention and ensure we are on a trajectory towards solving the housing supply crisis in sustainable ways.."

Q Shelter

Photo Credit: The Weekend Edition

4. Key Characteristics of South Burnett

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic data for the South Burnett Regional Local Government Area are based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), July 2021 and is primarily sourced from the Queensland Government Statistician's Office (QGSO) Queensland Regional Profiles for South Burnett ® Local Government Area (LGA) (ASGS 2021). Where relevant, data comparisons are made to Queensland (State) data sets. References to 'South Burnett' will generally refer to the region rather than the locality unless specifically referenced. Statistics provided are based on available statistical data, where information from the 2021 Census is available, these figures have been included in this social baseline.

4.1.1 Population

The SBRC area encompasses a total land area of about 8,382 square kilometres and a population of 33,831. The region has seen an average population growth rate of 0.7% over the past five years and 0.5% over ten years, which is significantly lower than the state average of 1.5% and 1.6% for the same periods. The population surge anomaly in 2020-21 (as shown in the Figure 3 below) can be largely attributed to COVID-19 and its positive migration influence into regional areas. 6.2% of the population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

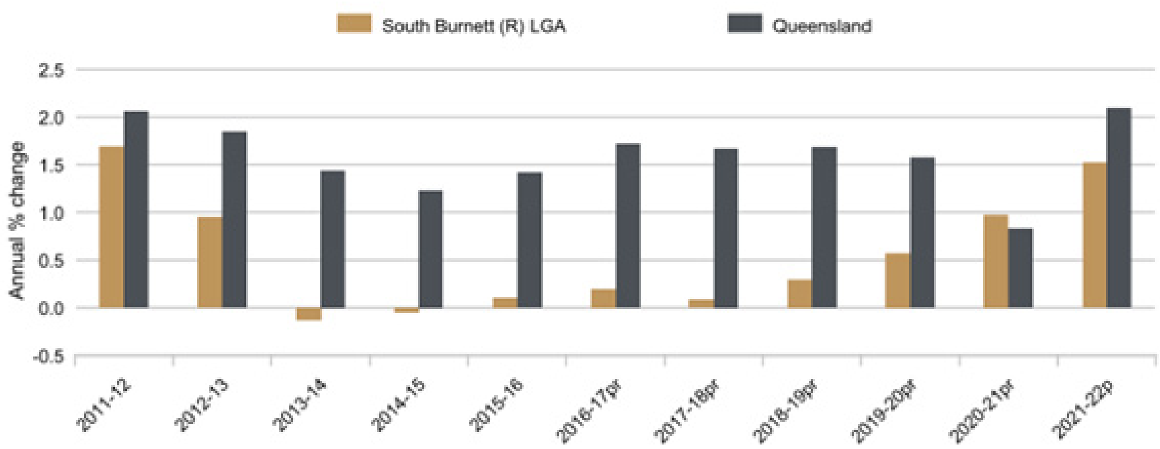

Figure 3: Estimated resident population growth South Burnett LGA vs QLD[2]

[2]*Queensland Regional Profiles – South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023.*

4.1.2 Age

As of 30 June 2021, 25.9% of the population was aged 65 years and over (see Figure 4) which is significantly higher than the state average of 16.6% . The median age has increased by 6.1 years since 2011 to be 47.9 years. This is substantially higher than the state average of 36.6 years.

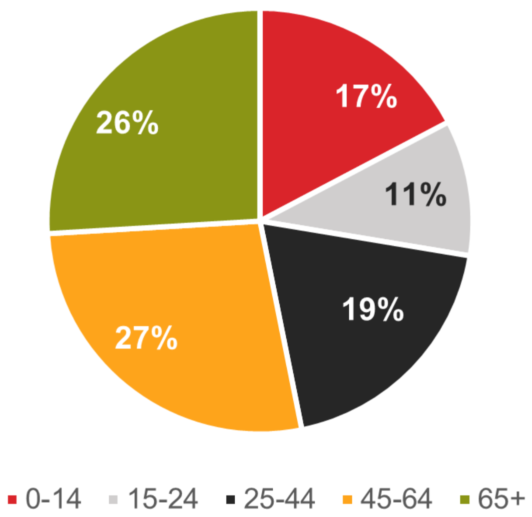

Figure 4: Age Breakdown - South Burnett (R) LGA as of 30 June 2021.[4]

Age projections show that the region will expect to see the median age rise to 49.3 years by 2026, representing a continued growth in the older persons population. Looking beyond 2026, projections to 2046 demonstrate an overall significant growth in the aging population, well beyond the forecast for the rest of Queensland (see Figure 5).

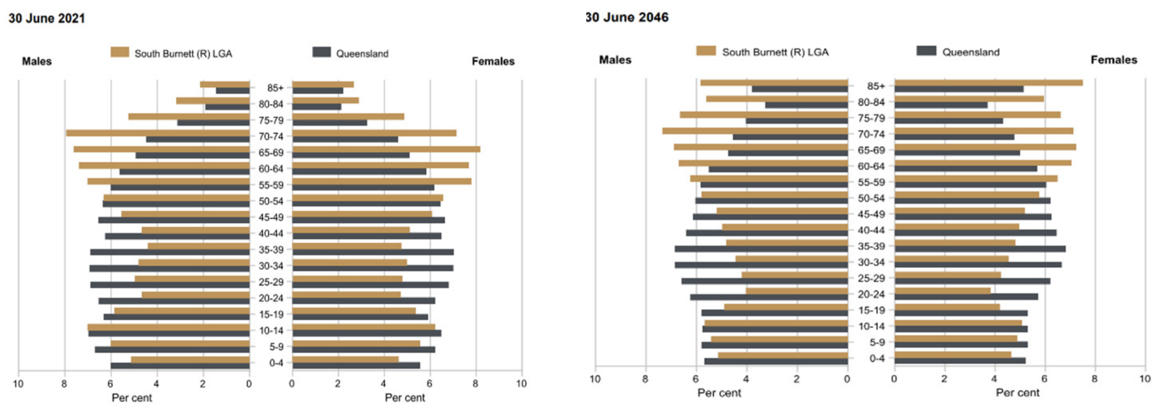

Figure 5: Projected Population Growth from 30 June 2021 to 30 June 2046.[6]

With this gaining population, there is an immediate and future need for homes that cater to an older demographic across the region. Notably, there will be a need for more diverse range of housing stock that considers accessibility and connection to services. Additionally, as this proportion of the population seek these alternative forms of housing, there will also likely be a decline in the demand for traditional family homes.

[3] *Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census, South Burnett (LGA 36630)*
[4] *Queensland Regional Profiles – South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*
[5] *Queensland Regional Profile – South Burnett (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*
[6] *Queensland Regional Profiles – South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*

4.1.3 Household Composition

As of the 2021 census, there were 12,685 households in the South Burnett. The predominant household composition type for the region are one family households, representing 65% of the households (see Figure 6). The second largest proportion of households are comprised of lone person households (30%). The average household size within the region sits at 2.3 persons. Therefore, average household composition means there is an opportunity to deliver units and duplexes.

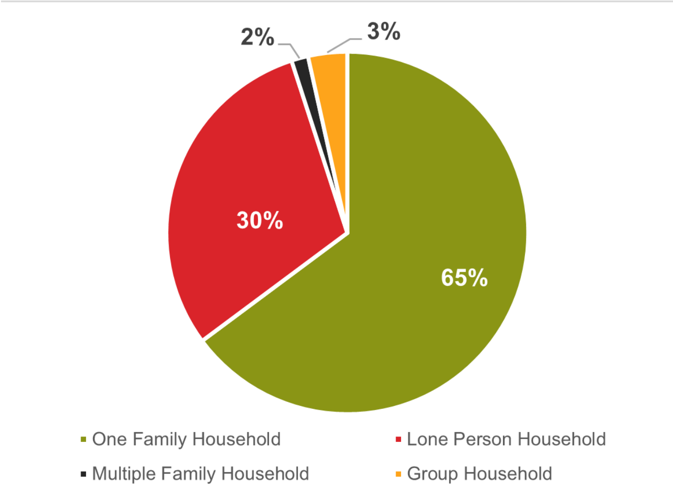

Figure 4: Age Breakdown - South Burnett (R) LGA as of 30 June 2021.[4]

4.1.4 Family Composition

As of the 2021 census, there were 8,604 families within the South Burnett region. When looking at the family composition, almost half (49.4%) were couples with no children, followed by couples with children (31.6%) with one parent families (17.2%) representing the remainder (see Figure 7). The average family size in the South Burnett is 2.8 persons.

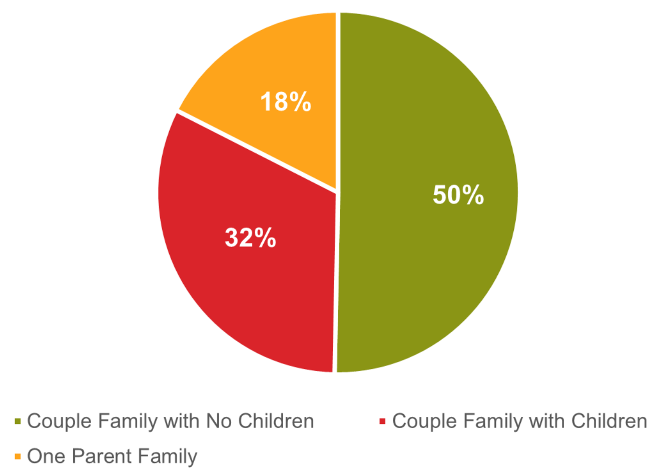

Figure 7: Family Composition in the South Burnett region[8]

[7] *Queensland Housing Profiles – South Burnett Region LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*
[8] *Queensland Housing Profiles – South Burnett Region LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*

Understanding the family composition within the region, paired with the aging demographic, there will be a need for a more diverse range of housing stock to cater for the diverse needs of the population.

4.1.5 Family Incomes

The median weekly household income within the region is $1,045 per week (see Figure 8). 60% of households earn less than $1,000 per week and with the median mortgage repayment seeing at ~$1,083, home ownership is a challenge within the region. In comparison, the rental market sits more comfortably within family earnings, with the median weekly rent sitting at $245.

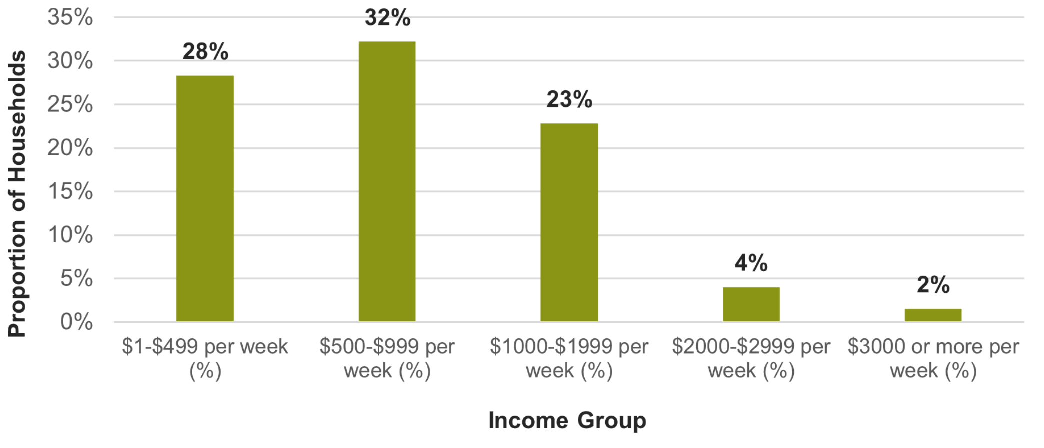

Figure 8: Weekly household income in South Burnett Region[9]

Figure 9 below, sourced from the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, further demonstrates the larger population within the South Burnett that are most disadvantaged (59.9%). In comparison, only 2.3% of the region's population sits within the least disadvantaged segment.

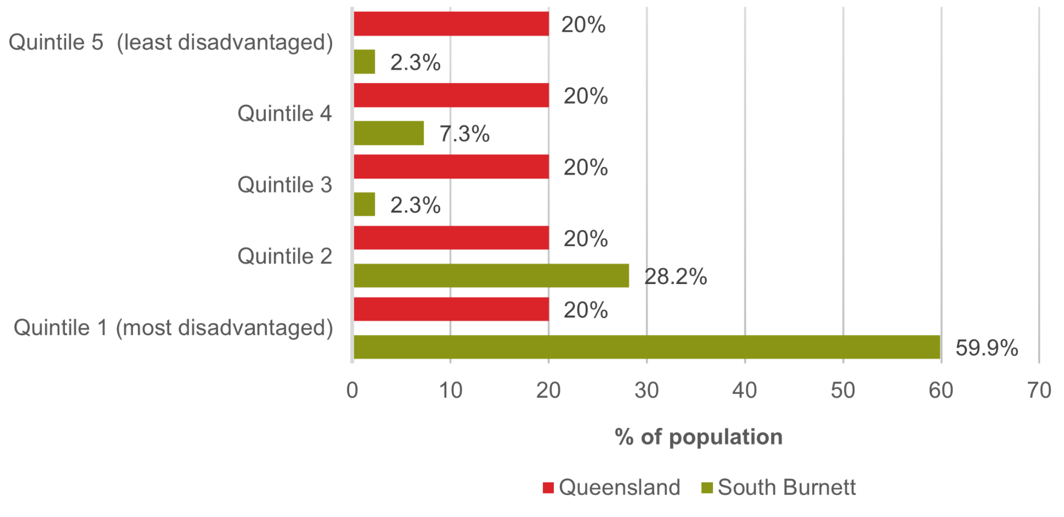

Figure 9: Socio Economic Indexes South Burnett LGA vs QLD[10]

[9]*Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing – South Burnett LGA.*
[10]*Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, Population and Housing Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (Queensland Treasury Edition).*

It is important to note that the index shown above focuses on low-income earners, relatively lower education attainment, high unemployment and dwellings without motor vehicles. Low index values represent areas of most disadvantage and high values represent areas of least disadvantage.

4.1.6 Migration

Migration as of census night (10 August 2021) shows 14.7 % of the population has migrated to the region in the past year and 10.7% of the population has migrated to the region from overseas in the last 5 years. These percentages are slightly lower than the whole of Queensland statistics. 9.7% of the regions' population was born overseas which is significantly lower than the whole of Queensland at 22.7%. In comparison migration 5 years ago was more than double on census night (10 August 2016) there was approximately 36.5% with a different address by place of usual residence. This demonstrates migration has slowed down over the past 5 years.

4.1.7 Other Characteristics

There's an array of varying factors that contribute to the social fabric of a community. These include cultural diversity, language, religion, employment and income and assistance requirements.

First Nations

The South Burnett Region has 6.2% of people (2,045 persons) that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is higher than rest of Queensland at 4.6%.

Cultural Backgrounds

Australia was the most common country of birth with 80.4% not born overseas compared to rest of Queensland being 71.4% Australian born. Approximately 5.6% of the population within the region were born in countries with an English-speaking background (UK, Ireland, Canada, USA, South Africa and New Zealand. The top five non-English speaking countries of birth include the Philippines, Germany, Netherlands, India and Taiwan.

Health and Disability

Over a third of the region's population have long term health conditions (36.6%) representing 12,070 persons in total. Of this group, 1,949 persons (5.9%) have three or more long-term health conditions. This proportion of population is higher than Queensland's overall total of 28.8% with long term health conditions and 3.3% with three or more long term health conditions. Disability is at 10% in South Burnett Region which equates to 3,287 persons needing assistance with a profound or severe disability.   This is significantly higher in comparison to Queensland total of 6%. Overall the South Burnett region has a significant population requiring health and disability services.

Unemployment

As of March 2023, the unemployment rate in the South Burnett region was sitting at 6.6%. This represents 964 persons in the region and is a much higher rate than the Queensland average of 3.8%.[14]

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[11] *Queensland Regional Profile; Resident profile: South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021).*
[12] *Queensland Regional Profile; Resident profile: South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021).*
[13] *Queensland Regional Profile; Resident profile: South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021).*
[14] *Queensland Regional Profile; Resident profile: South Burnett LGA (ASGS 2021).*

4.2 Housing Characteristics

4.2.1 Housing Structure Type

Single detached dwellings (separate houses) are the dominate housing type in the region representing 93% of total housing stock (see Figure 10), significantly higher than Queensland (sitting at 74.8% of housing type). In comparison only 2% of stock is semi-detached and 4% are apartments.

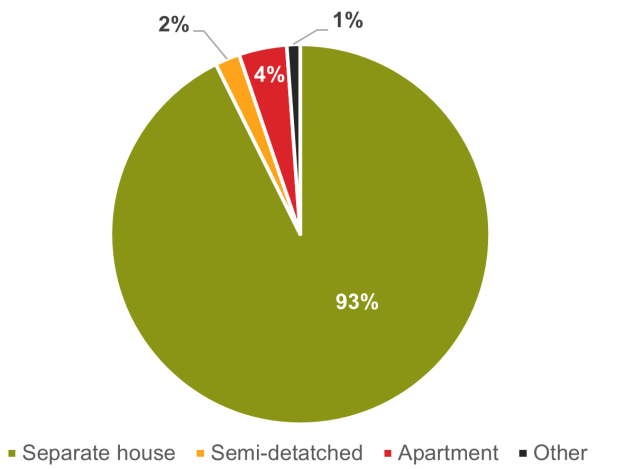


Figure 10: Housing Structure type in South Burnett[15]

This, paired with the key demographic data, potentially illustrates a vast and critical gap in the housing stock to provide alternative options (such as semi-detached homes) to meet the need within the region. Additionally, as separate houses have been the traditional normal housing option in the region, there has been a lack of diversification both within the community and industry to develop alternative housing types in the region.

4.2.2 Housing Ownership

Based on an unpublished analysis completed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) of the 2021 census data, home ownership has been decreasing steadily since 1971 in the region. This is particularly true for younger Australians in the region with home ownership rates declining significantly for this group (see Table 1).

Table 1: Change in Ownership Rates for young Australians/ persons in the region.

Age Bracket	Home Ownership Rate in 1971	Home Ownership Rate in 2021	Percentage Points Difference
25-29 years	50%	36%	-14
30-34 years	64%	50%	-14

It is important to note that home ownership rates have also gradually decreased between 1971 and 2021 among people nearing retirement.

[15]*Queensland Housing Profiles – South Burnett Region LGA (ASGS 2021) – 27 June 2023*

Figure 12 below provides a snapshot of the home ownership trends between 1994-95 and 2019-20 for Australia. Since 1994-95, State and Territory housing authority rentals have steadily and continuously declined. Additionally, the trends show that there are almost as many households renting in the private rental market as homeowners without a mortgage.

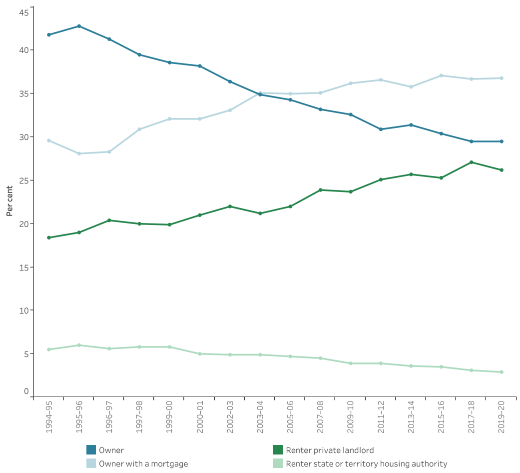


Figure 12: Proportion of households by housing tenure type, 1994-95 to 2019-20.[16]

Since 1994-95, home ownership rates for the 50–54 age group has fallen from 80% to 72% (by 8 percentage points) over 25 years (see Figure 13). The trends identify that home ownership rates have been consistently lower for succession birth cohorts than older groups.

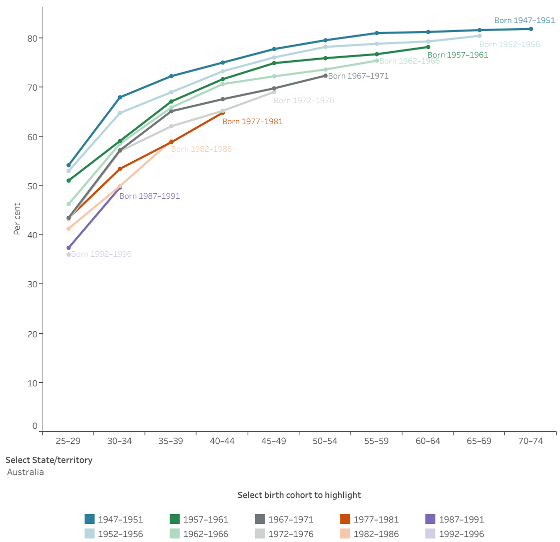


Figure 13: Home ownership rate by birth cohort and age group[17]

[16] *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Analysis of ABS Data 2022.*
[17] *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Analysis of ABS Data 2022.*

The home ownership rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 2021 was 42%. This was the highest rate ever reported for Indigenous Australians with home ownership rates steadily increasing from 25% in 1981.

4.2.3 Land Sales

Records indicate that only 55.4% of all vacant land sales were residential revealing a strong appetite for rural residential allotments. The number of vacant allotment sales decreased from previous years which would typically reflect a decrease in demand, however the strong price increase in the past two years may indicate a 'scarcity premium'. Table 2 below provides more detail on the sales in the region in the past year.

Table 2: Land sales in the South Burnett region between 2021-2022

Land Category	Number of Sales	Average Land Size	Average Sale Price	Cost per m2
Residential <2,500m2	77	1,214m^2	$72,896	$60/m^2
Rural Residential >2,500m2 and < 22,000m2	62	13,921m^2	$149,040	$11m^2

4.2.4 New Land

There have been 60 residential lot registrations in the 12 months between 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023. 50 of these have a land area of between 2,500m^2 to 5 hectares with the 10 remaining lots having a land area less than 2,500m^2. The high proportion of rural residential allotments has been attributed to development viability (reduced costs due to less services) which has made residential subdivision development economically unfeasible in recent years. This supports the need to find solutions on how to make it economically feasible to service residential allotments to support gentle and hight density development.

4.2.5 Established Housing Sales

The South Burnett region's median residential sale price was $310,000 for 2022 with a recorded 979 dwelling sales. There were 60 residential unit sales in the same period with a median sale price of $226,250. The number of unit sales is relatively high given the disproportionately low percentage of units in the local region indicating strong demand for this housing type and a potential change in appetite from investors and potential purchasers. Figure 14 below shows the significant spike in price from June 2021 to December 2022, which could indicate sales have risen due to housing shortage in the market. Evidence post December 2022 shows a continuation of the increase.

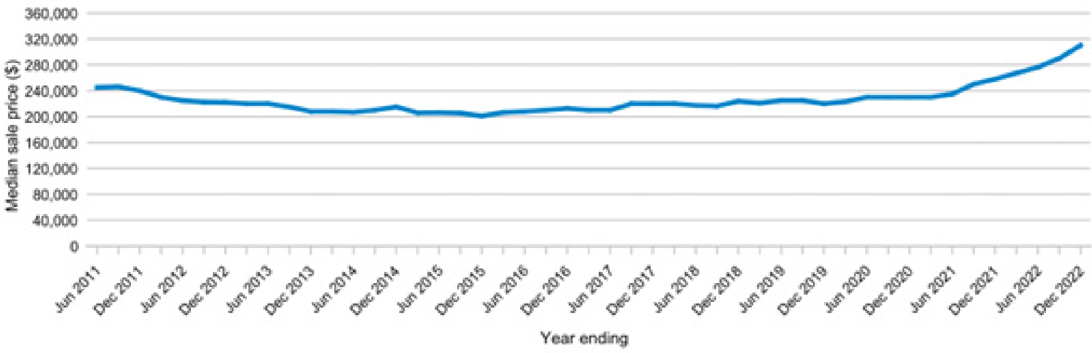


Figure 14: Median Value of Residential Dwelling Sales, South Burnett Region LGA [18]

[18] *Department of Resources, Office of the Valuer-General Property Sales (Dec 2022).*

4.2.6 New Housing

New housing approvals in the region in the twelve months to July 2023 indicate 101 new approvals and 15 applications under assessment. Figure 15 below shows a 5-year trend. It shows that in June 2021 it was as its highest peak then falling back down in February 2022 and turbulent crashing again in December 2022 and picking back up in February 2023. Therefore, the recent peak in approvals could signify that a pipeline of housing may be delivered if the right economic factors are in play, such as feasible building costs, infrastructure to support residential development and availability of skilled labour.

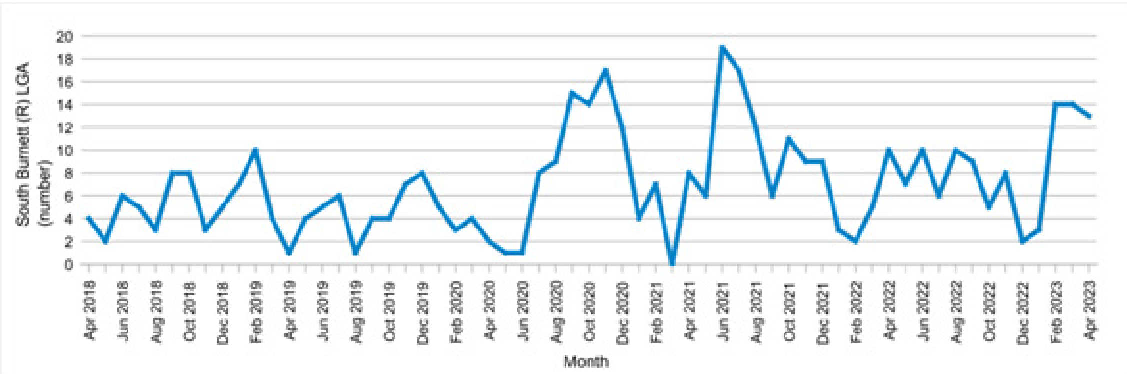


Figure 15: Number of residential building approvals, South Burnett Region LGA April 2018 to April 2023.[19]

4.2.7 Renting

The median rent for a 3-bedroom house was $350 per week, with 585 rental applications lodged during 2022. The region has a vacancy rate of 0.4%. Kingaroy township revealed the highest average rental of $380/week for a house and $300/week for a unit. The demand for units was stronger in all areas despite them comprising 32.5% of the total available listings and a meagre 4.1% of overall housing in the region. Between 1999–00 and 2019–20, the percentage of Australian households that rent their home from a state or territory housing authority decreased from 6% to 3%.

Locally sourced data combined to reveal an average rental price of $350/week for a house and $288/ week for a unit. Recent evidence sourced from local agents indicates current rentals for typical 4 bed/2 bath/2 garage project homes to be in the range of $450-$550/week, indicating a continued increase in rental prices (see Figure 16).

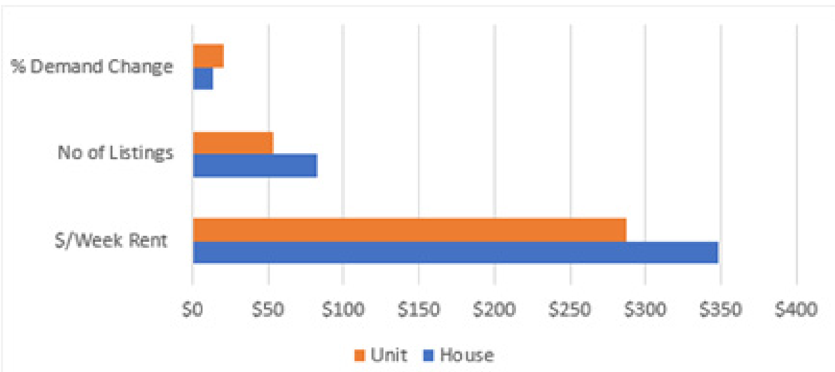


Figure 16: SBRC Area Weekly Rental /Annual Listing / Demand Change.[21]

[19] *ABS various data sets from 2018 to 2023, Building Approvals Australia (various editions).*
[20] *Real Estate Institutate of Queensland, rental data 2023.*
[21] *Locally sourced rental data from estate agents.*

4.3 Housing Need

According to the 2021 census data, there are over 1,300 people in the South Burnett region who are identified as being in housing stress (Figure 17). Within this group there are 101 people within the region who have been classified as being of 'very high need' for housing.

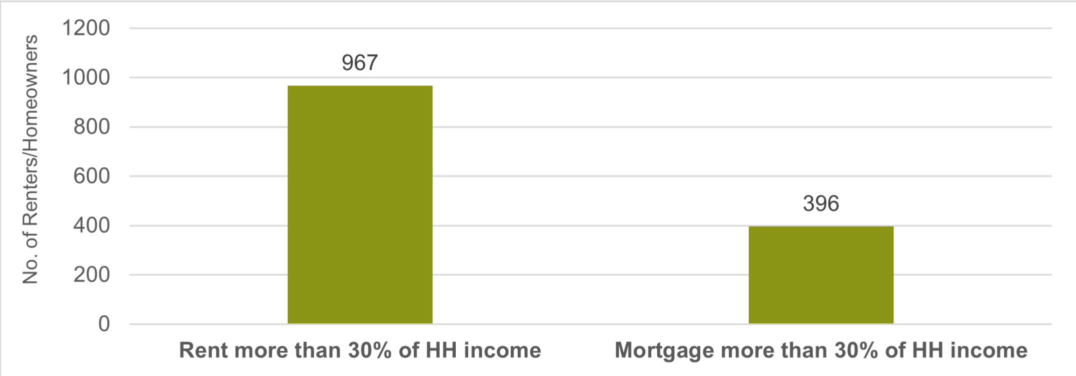


Figure 16: SBRC Area Weekly Rental /Annual Listing / Demand Change

There are 12,685 households in the South Burnett region with 92.4% being single detached dwellings. One family households make up the majority at 64.9% with lone person households comprising 30.2%.

A housing needs analysis will identify changing and emerging housing needs in the region. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on markets in recent years and influence housing use and markets. Community changes, local economic and social variations along with population and migration trends may influence housing needs over time.

Demand is exceeding supply in all facets of housing needs at present in the region. A co-ordinated, responsible, strategic and innovative solution is required to promote supply. The region faces some unique challenges compounded by disproportionate supply variation, limited housing options and variants, traditionally low rental supply, high project worker fluctuations, very high proportion of significantly disadvantaged socio-economic population and a large and aging population living alone in traditional single unit dwellings.

The types of dwellings Australians live in has changed over time. The proportion of households occupying separate houses has decreased in the past 25 years, from 76% of all households in 1996 to 71% in 2021, offset by increases in semi-detached and townhouse households. In 2021, around 13% of households lived in semi–detached row or terrace and townhouses, up from 8% in 1996. Around 15% of households lived in flats or apartments in 2021, an increase from 13% in 1996. Traditional housing structures have a long economic and functional life and have been almost exclusively low density single detached dwellings of 3 to 4 bedroom configuration in the region (92.4% compared to national average of 71%). There has been a substantial increase of residential unit, semi detached and townhouse households in Australia, however our region is stagnant at 4%, well below the national average of 15%. This increased density reduces the demand for new land and provides in-fill opportunities and recent sales and rental data indicate market acceptance for this style of housing.

[22] *Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 and 2022*

5. 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.

5.1 Development Areas

Council has limited lots of serviced land available for housing. Two available allotments have recently been transacted to an affordable housing organisation to be developed to housing. Numerous un-serviced Council allotments are potentially surplus but not 'development ready' or suitable for housing development. Council is continually investigating land use, development, and feasibility with a view to identifying surplus land that may be repurposed to housing and/or social support uses.

Council currently own 33 residential units and 3 single unit dwellings in Nanango township and 2 single unit dwellings in Murgon township. These are predominantly rented to the public with 1 unit occupied by a current employee and two units currently being refurbished to be utilised for employee accommodation on completion.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunity has been identified to potentially address development areas:

- Opportunity for council to partner with key stakeholders and state to work together on key actions that need to be implemented to support housing delivering on council land, which can be utilised to deliver a range of housing accommodation on completion.

5.2 Private Rental Market

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 at March 2022. The rental vacancy rate (as of August 2022) was 0.4% with agents reporting no improvement in supply in the interim.

Net migration to the region surged during COVID which has been driven by various factors including COVID-19, relatively affordable house prices and rental levels, low interest rates and the recent emergence of increased social assistance services. This has been compounded by an influx of workers for major projects and in other industries which has strongly increased demand for both rental housing and housing sales.

This surge in demand has not been alleviated by new home construction and new lot registrations. These have remained historically below Queensland average and the lag for new development to be market ready has stalled growth in the region. This high demand and limited new supply have concentrated the market and created value/cost increases in both sale and rental prices. This in conjunction with recent changes to rental tenancy laws which encouraged investment owners to dispose of residential investments. Recent evidence indicates that of the investment properties that have transacted in the region, the majority have transacted to owner occupiers and have been removed from the available rental housing system, thus depleting net rental stock. This trend along with increased worker accommodation demand from major projects in the region and other worker schemes such as the PALM scheme have reduced rental availability to negligible levels and created a rental housing crisis.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunities have been identified to potentially address private rental market demand:

- Identify market opportunities that can be accelerated and housing projects that can commence construction in the short to medium term.
- Identify available land and look at flexible and innovative housing options to reduce availability lag time.
- Investigate crisis accommodation options and develop flexible and innovative accommodation options to be able to adapt to the changing supply needs.
- Future planning and investment required from major projects stakeholders to lessen the surging effect of worker influx associated with the construction phases of major projects.
- Continually identifying supply opportunities to address the ongoing demand.
- State Government investment into employees and major project housing and accommodation requirement.

5.3 Private Sales Market

There has been a significant decline of new residential land stock being market ready in the past decade in the region. There is available land in the region, however is not residential development ready due to requiring services such as trunk infrastructure. Primarily, the most significant factor is development and holding costs exceeding net realisable value. This has created an economically unviable environment for residential development in the region. The market has adapted creating a very high proportion of rural residential allotments, which have lower development cost, less services and historically good market acceptance.

Cost escalation issues have plagued the residential construction industry in recent years due to several factors including continual cost increases, limited supply of construction materials and skilled labour shortages. This has created an extended and potentially unquantifiable lag time to project completion and potential overcapitalisation risks which have been viewed negatively in the regions' marketplace.

The established housing market has experienced strong demand which has resulted in increased sale prices across the region. There has been a higher proportion of unit sales relative to supply indicating an appetite for alternative housing solutions apart from the traditional detached single unit dwelling. The disproportionate distribution of housing types and lack of diversity may restrict the regions' growth in the future.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunity has been identified to potentially address the demand:

- Council to promote housing diversity and alternate housing models and continue to encourage investment in the region.

5.4 Social Housing

There is a high demand for social housing across Queensland and allocations are focused on supporting households with the highest need. Weekly median household incomes in the South Burnett are $1,045 compared to the Queensland median of $1,675. There are currently 267 social housing dwellings (39 provided by Community Housing) in the region.

[23] *Social Housing Register at 30 June 2023.*

It is understood that the registered social housing demand with very high need as a first preference 101 and further 3 with lower rated preferences . Interviews with local stakeholders indicates that some community members may have withdrawn from making application for social housing until they are aware of houses becoming available.

With over 104 applicants on the waiting list and the average applicant having 1.55 people in the household as part of the application, there are currently over 383 people living in overcrowded situations and 119 sleeping rough (census, 2021). It is understood that there have been 19 people on the waitlist for over 3.08 years.

The ageing and very high proportion of severely socio-economically disadvantaged population in combination with low family incomes creates high demand for social housing.

Council estimates that there is an immediate need for a further 50 social housing dwellings.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunity has been identified to potentially address the demand for social housing:

5.5 Aged Persons Housing

Currently there are 11 aged care services which offer 301 residential places. There are no home or restorative care places within the region. As of 10 August 2021, 52.8% of the population suffered from a chronic health condition.

Given the ageing population and the higher-than-average proportion of elderly in the region and the disproportionately high percentage of lone person households (30.2%) there is a looming requirement for increased aged care places and transitional and alternative housing and assisted living.

Response Opportunities
Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunity has been identified to potentially address the demand for suitable housing for an aging population:

- Council to encourage investment in aged care, transitional housing and assisted living facilities.
- Endeavour to remove barriers to transitioning to more appropriate housing models and encourage additional accommodation targeting this demographic.
- Investigate the financial and administrative restrictions preventing the transition from traditional single unit dwellings currently occupied by lone person households in the region.

5.6 Government Employee Housing

To employ appropriately skilled and suitable employees, employers are required to prioritise attraction and retention incentives such as housing when housing stock is limited, and the standards do not match accommodation expectations. Relocating an employee’s family away from more populated areas creates stress, therefore availability of good standard housing assists in the transition and performance.
Currently SBRC does not supply any local government employee housing in the region. However, the lack of housing in the region has been noted as a major hurdle in attracting duly qualified staff to Council to fulfil a range of positions (as at 27 September, there were 11 job vacancies at Council).
The state government supplies housing for government employees in government owned dwellings. The majority are provided for police, health, and education. In addition, these departments provide “operational housing” for staff were located on operational sites e.g., police stations, hospitals, and schools. When there is not enough state supplied housing stock, state government workers also rent

in the private market. Based on local knowledge and engagement with the community, Council estimates that there is a need for additional dwellings for ten new departmental staff that will need to be provided by GEH or the departments.

Although not specifically included in this plan, it is important that another compounding factor to housing availability in the region is key worker accommodation. There are currently over 50 job vacancies in the region for key services such as youth workers, education providers, dentists, DFV support workers and counsellors. Challenges in attracting and retaining people to fulfill these roles will also centre around the availability of suitable homes, leaving the community without sufficient services.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunity has been identified to potentially address the demand for government housing:

- There is a shortage of government employee housing in the region presenting an opportunity to work with the State in finding solutions on how more government employee housing can be delivered to meet demand.

5.7 Cohort Specific Housing

With an expanding and diversifying population, the demand for specific cohort housing will likely increase within the region. There are a number of factors that are driving the need for suitable housing including:

- Over a quarter of the population being over 65 years;
- 30% of the population living on their own;
- 93% of total housing being single unit dwellings
- Less than 3% social housing;
- 59.9% of the population being in the state's most disadvantaged quintile.

With an expanding and diversifying population, the demand for specific cohort housing will likely increase within the region. There are a number of factors that are driving the need for suitable housing including:

- Crisis accommodation (noting vulnerable populations including persons under extreme financial stress, mental health challenges, homelessness and victims of domestic and family violence);
- Accessible accommodation (noting populations requiring specialist disability accommodation, suitable housing for elderly men and women as well as specific single room accommodation for women aged 55+);
- Affordable accommodation (for unestablished young families, lone person households and disadvantaged families)

Overall there is also a need for an improved standard of rental housing with improved efficiencies.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunities have been identified to potentially address the demand for cohort specific housing:

- Council has the opportunity to work with the state to address cohort specific housing and support people in need and provide more cohort specific housing across the region.
- Council to advocate to the state government for further investment in crisis accommodation for domestic violence and the homelessness with wrap around services.

5.8 Short Term Accommodation

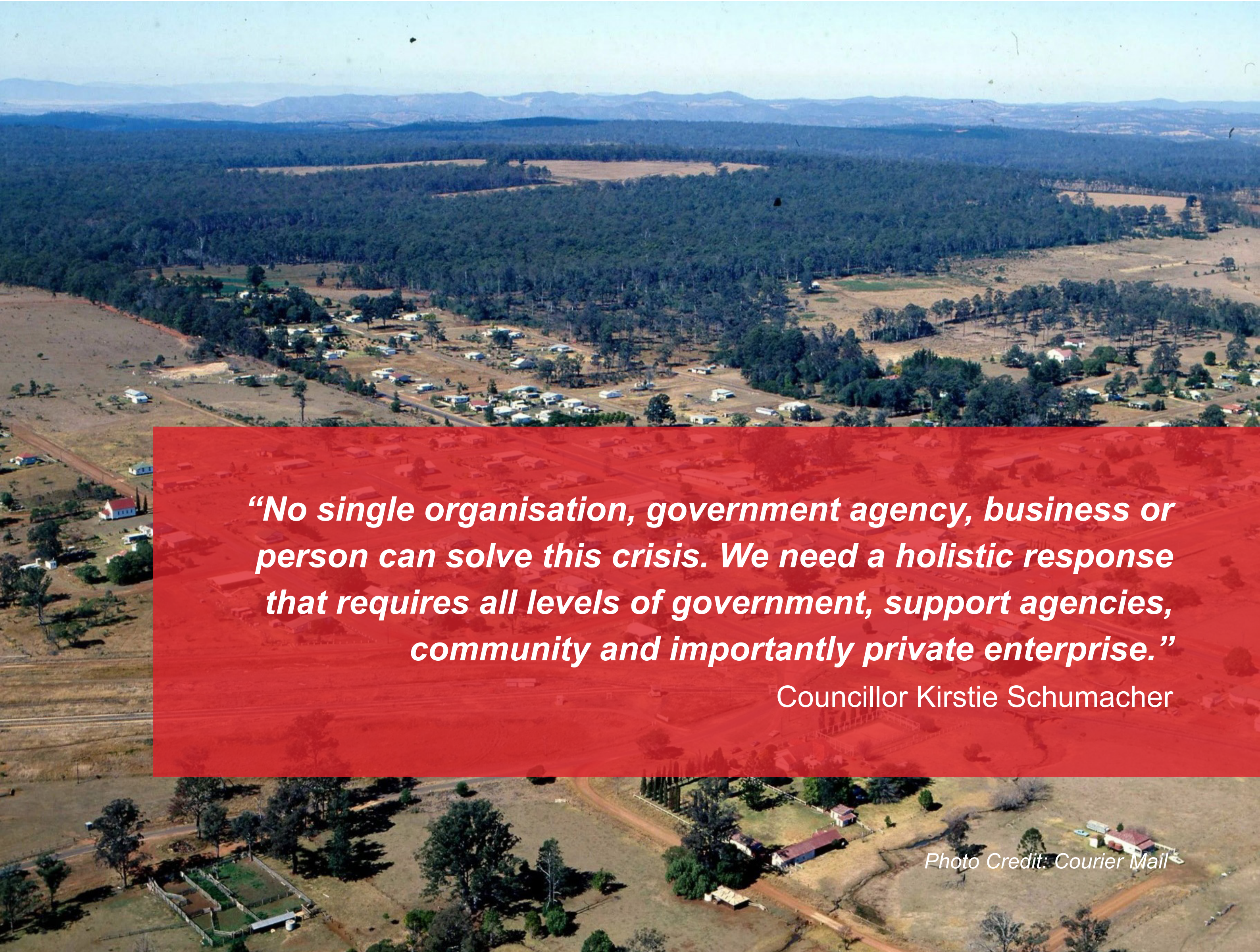
Crisis level demand on traditional housing in the region has spilled over and created unprecedented demand in the short-term accommodation sector. This sector has typically been visitor and tourist based; however, it now has an influx of semi-permanent and longer-term occupants.

There is evidence of well above industry standard occupancy rates and increased tariffs in the past two years despite additional available rooms being added to the market in the region. Owner/managers advise full to near full occupancy and increased term occupancy trends. Major projects and worker accommodation including from workers schemes contribute somewhat to the increase rather than the more traditional tourism/travellers. Tourism and other industries in the region are reliant on short term accommodation availability to facilitate tourists/travellers.

Response Opportunities

Understanding the needs of the region, the below response opportunities have been identified to potentially address short-term accommodation:

- Council to work with industry to explore opportunities to facilitate other diverse accommodation options for workers and longer-term occupants.



"No single organisation, government agency, business or person can solve this crisis. We need a holistic response that requires all levels of government, support agencies, community and importantly private enterprise."

Councillor Kirstie Schumacher

Photo Credit: Courier Mail

6. 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 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 can then be determined that provide flexibility in delivery and support each of the broad areas identified.

6.1 Existing Initiatives

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 Council has implemented include:

- Co-hosting the South Burnett Housing and Homelessness Forum on Friday 7 October 2022.
- Development Incentives
- Regional Housing Project
- South Burnett Regional Council Land Review
- Partnering with local not for profit advocates to secure funding for crisis accommodation and wrap around services.

6.2 Actions

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 foundation culturals that help respond to ongoing housing need.

○	Land and Development	Timeline
1.1	Council in partnership with State to investigate development opportunities in current townships to facilitate medium/high density dwellings on: • Council land • State Land • Identified 8 allotments to repurpose	June 2024
1.2	Council to investigate underutilised parkland/reserves to deliver residential land to then develop and maintain partnerships with state and federal government to ensure collaboration on housing solutions and identification of appropriate funding.	June 2025
1.3	Council to investigate opportunities to develop relationships with private businesses investing in infrastructure in the region to implement housing solutions as part of the project deliverables.	June 2026
1.4	Council to advocate for an increase in short term transitional housing for youth that are unable to access the private rental market.	June 2026

○	Planning	Timeline
2.1	Council to acknowledge and plan for net migration and changing demography through planning scheme changes to facilitate greater housing diversity and need.	June 2025
2.2	Council to advocate the need for digital connectivity (NBN) when implementing new housing developments to also attract and retain workers who can flexibly work in the region.	June 2025
2.3	Council to complete actions of land use assessment and review.	June 2025
2.5	Council to consider opportunities to promote greater housing diversity in the region.	June 2025
2.6	Major Planning Scheme amendments	June 2026
2.7	Landbanking / review of land held	June 2026

	Optimisation	Timeline
3.1	Council to undertake a trunk infrastructure capacity assessment for the region/specific townships.	June 2025
3.2	Council to develop safe, sustainable and efficient housing solutions that protect at risk tenants.	June 2025
3.3	Council to develop case studies to promote development mixed living arrangements.	June 2025

	Master planning	Timeline
4.1	South Burnett Regional Council's Sport and Recreation Plan: Council to the complete review to identify undeveloped sites that compliment future multi-story and duplex development.	June 2025

	Supports	Timeline
5.1	Council to advocate to the State Government for further investment in crisis accommodation for Domestic Violence and the Homelessness with wrap around services.	June 2024
5.2	Continue to partner with and encourage community housing investment.	June 2024
5.3	Advocate for funding for the delivery of transition into tenancy programs.	June 2024
5.4	Council to advocate for appropriate wrap around services and infrastructure to support both social and physical growth of the region.	June 2024
5.5	Council to complete a needs analysis for cohort specific housing in the region.	June 2025

	People in need	Timeline
6.1	Council to investigate opportunities to deliver more transitional style accommodation for older persons in the region to attract investment into vertically integrated Aged Care and transitional accomodation.	June 2025
6.2	Disability housing - Housing that accommodates all abilities and access to meet the needs of a growing disabled population.	June 2025
6.3	LGAQ reworded to: Council to partner with the State to investigate the housing needs for State Government employees including QPS, Queensland Health and Department of Education.	June 2025
6.4	Independent Living (55+) Develop partnerships with community housing providers and the State Government to invest in accommodation for 55+ Men and Woman seeking to downsize from existing accommodation but remain in independent living.	June 2025

○	Construction	Timeline
7.1	Long term Housing Investment Council to work with industry to transition temporary workforce housing solutions into longer term accommodation for the region.	June 2026
7.2	Partner with state government to investigate and introduce regional development incentive policies to attract residential development.	June 2025
7.3	Advocate for the construction of single room accommodation to support people over 55+ to downsize but retain independence.	June 2025
7.4	Work with new industries to develop housing strategies and solutions as part of their infrastructure investment in the region.	June 2024
7.5	Advocate to the State Government for assistance to landlords to increase the liveability, compliance and efficiency of rental accommodation.	June 2024

○	Capital solutions	Timeline
8.1	Council to identify opportunities to engage with existing and perspective private businesses to invest in housing solutions in the region.	June 2025

6.2 Next Steps

A working group of key representatives from SBRC and select State Government agencies will progress actions, review findings, report quarterly and develop and test next steps.