PART B: VISION STATEMENTS

The following statements are intended to guide development across the Shire and take into account the unique qualities and characteristics of the individual villages and localities. The statements themselves have been adapted from the Strategic Plan 2010, shaped throughout the planning and development of the Coolamon Local Environmental Plan 2011.

The relationship between the Vision and the Objectives is outlined in the following diagram:

10. Strategic Vision
The strategy seeks to promote and encourage sustainable development practices across every sector of the Shire's economy, and to stimulate civic, community and business opportunities which will enhance and protect the Shire's special features and characteristics.

Water, soils, minerals, land, native vegetation, scenery, landscape, cultural heritage and biological communities are recognised by the Council as valued resources requiring diligent and responsible management to ensure their survival in ways which will not disadvantage future generations.

The sustainability principle underpins the strategic objective of marshalling the land and other economic resources needed to provide jobs and commercial opportunities without risking adverse consequences for future generations.
11. **General Strategic Planning Objectives**

The strategy adopts the objectives of the current Riverina Tourism Strategy and of the current Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan insofar as they relate to Coolamon Shire.

The strategy seeks to provide housing choice supplemented by suitable support facilities for the needs of a changing residential community.

Wherever and whenever possible, social health, informal security and support networks will be retained and strengthened, along with social and cultural infrastructure consistent with the needs of the Shire population.

12. **Specific Strategic Objectives**

12.1 **Living areas : Urban Services**

The Council, through this strategy, will encourage the more efficient utilisation of the existing housing and residential land stock in Coolamon Shire’s towns and villages whilst making limited provision for development in new areas subject to compliance with adopted standards for subdivision and building design based on the principles of ecological sustainability.

Newcomers to the Shire and region will be encouraged to settle in Coolamon, Ganmain and Marrar as a preferred alternative to Wagga Wagga and other larger centres.

The strategy confirms the primacy of Coolamon town as the principle centre for higher order urban services and facilities in the Shire, whilst recognising the importance of encouraging growth in Ganmain, Ardlethan and Marrar.

12.2 **Industry and Commerce**

There are several industrial enterprises established in Coolamon and Council recognises their importance as sources of employment and as anchors in the local economy. The strategy seeks to

- Encourage the more efficient utilisation of existing industrial land resources and enterprises throughout the Shire.
- Where appropriate, identify localities in which special provisions designed to encourage development would apply from time to time.

12.3 **Education and Research**

The progress and enhancement of all the schools in Coolamon, Ganmain, Ardlethan, Marrar, Matong and Beckom will continue to be strongly supported. Ties with Charles Sturt University, the Agricultural Research Stations in Temora and Wagga Wagga, nearby colleges of TAFE, and other tertiary institutions will be strengthened whenever and wherever possible.

12.4 **Social and Community Development**

The Council will continue to create conditions conducive to the on-going enhancement of the Shire’s social capital, and the development and strengthening of the Shire’s social and community infrastructure and services.

The supply of appropriately designed housing and ancillary facilities for seniors and retirees who wish to remain in the Coolamon Shire within their chosen localities will continue to be strongly encouraged, as will the provision of services and facilities for young people – including young families.
12.5 The Towns and Villages

Plans and policies will ensure the continuing primacy of Coolamon town as the principle centre for higher order urban services and facilities in the Shire. In the town centre, the Urban Conservation Area focussed on Cowabbie Street will continue to be enhanced by means of quality urban design and sensitive heritage conservation with a view to helping the precinct to reach its full potential as a meeting place, community heart and tourist attraction.

In Ganmain, opportunities for encouraging new residential development and attracting jobs will be pursued. Support for unique local enterprises such as the sheaf hay industry, gourmet foods, and heritage based tourism will continue. The amenity of the main street precinct will be improved through quality urban design and landscaping. Additional land on the outskirts of the village will progressively be made available to cater for limited use as small-holdings and farmlets.

In Marrar and Matong the important role these two small villages play as focal points for community action will continue to be recognised. Consistent with the availability of utility services, they will be assisted to continue to provide housing alternatives whilst relying on the larger centres in the Shire for higher order facilities.

Ardlethan's role as the northern gateway to the Shire will be enhanced and strengthened. The attractiveness of the main street environment will continue to be upgraded through quality urban design and landscaping. The installation of a sewage treatment plant will be investigated. The planned improvement of the entrance to the town from the Newell Highway has already been completed, thereby encouraging new highway oriented development in that locality. In the adjoining village of Beckom, heritage qualities and community functions will continue to drive policy.

12.6 The Rural Sector

Across the broadacre farming areas of the Shire the stock of prime crop and pasture land will be protected whilst allowing for new agricultural enterprises and ‘eco’ and ‘agri’ tourism. Several small areas in the immediate proximity of Coolamon and Ganmain will be set aside for small-holdings and farmlets.

Farm-gate sales of local produce will be encouraged, as will the provision of 'farm-stay' and on-farm tourism attractions and visitor accommodation on working farms. New "value-adding" rural enterprises such as tours for special-interest groups (eg: those interested in grain harvesting or fat lamb production) will also be encouraged.

The Council seeks to retain the existing standard of 200ha as the minimum area for rural subdivisions carrying dwelling entitlements. This figure has been endorsed by the Council and the Shire community, and is consistent with research recently carried out by Council on this matter.

The 200ha minimum is seen by Council as a considered response to the need for achieving a balance between economic, social and environmental considerations relating to farmland preservation. Council’s policy is based on its desire to achieve social and environmental objectives whilst not jeopardising the economic base that agriculture contributes to the Shire.

For the rural sector the specific planning objectives are to:

- Protect prime crop and pasture lands from inappropriate subdivision and development whilst recognising the need to cater for and encourage legitimate forms of agriculture and agri-related businesses including agri-tourism;
- Progressively develop and extend habitat corridors to link environmentally sensitive lands, TSR's and roadside vegetation as part of a shire-wide commitment to responsible management of native vegetation;
• Identify non-urban heritage sites and properties, encouraging owners to adopt good maintenance practices;
• Where appropriate, places of tourist interest to be promoted within the context of the Eastern Riverina Tourism Strategy.
• Ensure consistency of Shire development with relevant action plans and targets of the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Blueprint.
• Enhance and beautify the main entry points to the Shire.

Right:
Agriculture is an important element to the economy of the Coolamon Shire. (2013)

12.7 Railway Land
The Council will engage with and seek partnerships with the relevant rail authorities with a view to reaching agreement on productive alternative uses for under-utilised or derelict railway land in Coolamon, Ganmain, Ardlethan, Matong, Marrar and Beckom.

12.8 Tourism
The strategy will seek to progressively improve the Shire's image and attractions as a distinct destination for day-trippers and tourist visiting the eastern Riverina.

The development of quality over-night accommodation, up-to-date and relevant sources of information, and quality service from local businesses will all be encouraged and facilitated where possible. The strategy recognises the important economic development potential associated with the links between tourism and heritage conservation. A flexible approach will be adopted in assessing applications for novel and imaginative development proposals, balancing environmental and conservation needs with the need to attract investment and create jobs. The Council will support and work with the current regional tourism plan.

12.9 Heritage
The strategic aim is to continue to promote the Shire's cultural heritage through education, publicity and research. Owners of heritage properties and items will be encouraged to support Council's heritage policies and programmes. Strong policy support for local heritage programmes and initiatives will be offered.

12.10 Managing the Murrumbidgee Catchment
The Council will continue to work with the Riverina Local Land Services department on projects of mutual benefit.

12.11 The Environment
The Council will work closely with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and other relevant agencies to redress the loss of native vegetation throughout the Shire. Through the new LEP, the Council will ensure that further loss of sensitive habitats and threatened species is minimised and that remediation of areas degraded by excessive clearing, salinity or other adverse impacts is encouraged.
13. **Locality Character Statements & Objectives**

13.1 **Ardlethan**

**History**
Ardlethan is a rural service town located at the northern gateway to the Shire. Originally known as Rosebank, Ardlethan was proclaimed a village in 1908. Ardlethan is the birthplace of the Australian kelpie.

**Existing Character**
Ardlethan is located at the junction of the Burley Griffin Way and the Newell highway. The Temora – Griffith rail corridor runs east west through the village.

The village centre is located in Ariah Street between Mirrool and Yithan Streets with grain silos opposite on the rail line.

**Desired Future Character**
Ardlethan is to remain a rural village but is strategic location at the northern gateway to the Shire provides an opportunity for highway orientated development (e.g. fuel and food stop, motel) at the new entrance from the Newell Highway.

Whilst the proximity of this infrastructure junction is positive, the fact that the main commercial precinct is located off the highway remains a challenge.

The village centre will continue to focus on Ariah Street with the streetscape and heritage elements to be retained. Any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage elements.

Housing will be consolidated in exiting residential areas however its expansion is limited by the lack of sewer infrastructure, flooding and bushfire constraints, as well as road and stormwater infrastructure.

Rural residential development is limited to the west of the village.

Opportunities for the progressive rehabilitation of the disused Yithan tin mine (including possible alternate uses for the pit).

The Strategic Plan for Ardlethan is included in Figure 13.3.
Figure 13.3: Ardlethan Strategic Plan

- Swimming Pool
- Recreation/Community Services Precinct
- Grain Handling and Storage
- Development limited by Flooding

Town Centre Precinct
Town Entrance
13.2 Beckom

History
Beckom is a village situated approximately 5 kms north-east of Ardlethan. The village is located on the bank of the Mirrool Creek and off the Newell Highway.

Beckom was proclaimed a village in 1909 following the arrival of the rail line.

Existing Character
Beckom is a small rural village. It provides a focal point for community activity via its school, churches and community hall.

The Temora – Griffith rail corridor runs through the village where the village previously played a role as a rail head for grain harvesting. The intermittently used grain silos remain the tallest built structures in the landscape.

The village centre is located in Ariah Street between Moore and Deakin Streets, with the village park located opposite a feature used by travellers of the Newell Highway.

 Desired Future Character
Beckom is to remain a rural village and community focal point.

Heritage buildings and the village centre streetscape are to be retained. Any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage elements.

Housing will be consolidated in exiting residential areas.

The Strategic Plan for Beckom is included in Figure 13.7.

Figure 13.4:
Beckom Hotel (2014)

Figure 13.5:
Former CBC Bank (2014)

Figure 13.6:
Mirrool Creek. (2006)
Figure 13.7: Beckom Strategic Plan

- Retain and enhance historic community buildings as community focus (i.e. hall, churches)
- Retain and enhance historic village centre & buildings

Beckom Union Church
Beckom Hotel
Former CBC Bank

Historical landmark building in village centre
Cluster of historic brick buildings in village centre
13.3 Coolamon

History
Coolamon was first settled by Europeans in the 1870’s as the area opened up to agricultural expansion into the Riverina. Following the arrival of the railway in February 1881 Coolamon was gazetted as a town in October 1881. The Shire Council was established in 1906 as the town grew into a rural service centre.

Existing Character
Coolamon is a rural service centre for the surrounding agricultural community and smaller villages. It is the principal centre for higher order urban services and facilities within the Shire including health services, schools and sporting facilities.

The town is at the junction of the Canola Way and both the Coolamon and Ardlethan Roads. The former links Wagga and the Newell Highway at Ardlethan, whilst the Canola Way links Junee to the east with the Newell Highway at Grong Grong to the west.

The Junee – Griffith rail corridor runs through the town. The town plays a role as a rail head for grain harvesting.

The town business centre is focused on Cowabbie Street between Stinson and Loughnan Streets. This area combines a heritage precinct on a sloping main street providing a unique and attractive view corridor from the southern approach.

Desired Future Character
Coolamon is to remain as the principal town settlement in the Shire, promoted as a rural living alternative to the nearby city of Wagga Wagga.

Residential development is primarily to be consolidated within the town area with additional rural residential areas to the north east and south west.

Local industry will be focused along Canola Way and the rail corridor.

The town centre and business precinct is located in Cowabbie Street North (refer Figure 28.1) and is to remain as the principal retail and commercial focus for both the town itself and the Shire as a whole.

The Cowabbie Street area south of the rail line is to be a civic and health precinct reflective of the community facilities already located in this area. Health care facilities including dementia and retirement housing needs are to be strengthened and expanded in this precinct. A site for future multi-purpose civic centre is to be identified.

Heritage buildings and streetscape (especially Cowabbie Street) are to be retained throughout the town and any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage assets.
A green corridor around the urban boundary will provide a visual delineation between the town itself and the surrounding agricultural activities.

The Strategic Plan for Coolamon is included in Figure 13.11.

*Figure 13.11:*
An aerial view of Cowabbie Street looking South. (2013)
Figure 13.11: Coolamon Strategic Plan

- State Forest
- Bushland Entrance
- Residential Infill Area
- Cemetery
- Sewage Treatment Plant
- Showground & Harness Racing
- Rural Residential
- Future Growth Precinct (Rural Residential)
- Bushland Entrance
- Recreation Precinct
- Coolamon Town Centre
- Swimming Pool & Caravan Park
- Industrial Enterprise Corridor
- Civic/Community Services Precinct
- Boulevard Entrance

Important View Corridor
Note: Between “hilltops” at Loughnan St (N) and Devlin Street (S) emphasised by the wide street, central median, angle parking & separation between building fronts.
13.4 Ganmain

**History**
Ganmain was first known as Boggy Creek and settled in the 1880’s. Its status as a village was proclaimed in 1894.

Ganmain is regarded as a centre for sheaf hay and chaff production for the race horse industry.

**Existing Character**
Ganmain is located on the main east west road link (Canola Way) and straddles both the Junee-Griffith rail line and Boggy Creek. The main entrance from the east brings visitors through the Ganmain State Forest.

Ganmain remains a rural village to the surrounding agricultural community providing a focal point for community activity via its school, churches and community hall.

Importantly the village is home to the rural transaction centre allowing local people to do banking, search the internet and obtain counselling services the Centre is also a Medicare and Centrelink outlet and has a small meeting room.

The grain silos dominate the village landscape reflective of its role as a rail head for grain harvesting.

The village centre is located in Ford Street between Langham and Lakes Streets.

**Desired Future Character**
Ganmain is to remain a rural village and community focal point.

Housing is to be consolidated in the existing village zone commensurate with sewer availability. Additional rural residential allotments are to be located to the south and east of the village.

Landscaping beautification will be focused on the Boggy Creek environs.

The village centre will continue to be focused on Ford Street. Heritage buildings and the village centre streetscape are to be retained. Any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage elements.

The Strategic Plan for Ganmain is included in Figure 13.14.
Figure 13.14: Ganmain Strategic Plan
13.5 Marrar

History
Marrar is a small village located to the east of Coolamon on the Canola Way. The village is on the southern side of the Junee – Griffith rail line.

Marrar was proclaimed a village in 1904 following the arrival of the rail line.

Existing Character
Marrar is a small rural village and provides a focal point for social and community activity via its school, churches and sports ground.

The Junee – Griffith rail corridor provides the northern boundary of the settlement. Like other villages in the Shire, Marrar is a rail head for grain harvesting. Of significance to Marrar however is the local bulk grain export industry which relies on rail access to enable efficient movement of grain to seaports along the eastern seaboard.

The village centre is located in York Street between See and Wood Streets.

Desired Future Character
Marrar is to remain a rural village and community focal point.

Remaining heritage buildings and the village centre streetscape are to be retained. Any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage elements.

Housing will be consolidated into the exiting residential areas. The village’s proximity to Wagga Wagga also provides an opportunity to promote Marrar as an alternative to city living.

The Strategic Plan for Marrar is included in Figure 13.16.
Figure 13.16: Marrar Strategic Plan

- Royal Hotel: Landmark building in village centre
- Grain Handling & Storage
- Village Entrance
- Mural opportunity on grain silo to deter graffiti
- Retain and enhance community buildings (i.e., churches)
- Development not to distract from view corridor along Marrar North Road
- Retain and enhance historic village centre buildings
- Grain Handling & Storage
- Cemetery
- Village Entrance
13.6 Matong

History
Matong is a small village located to the west of Ganmain. The village is on the southern side of the Junee – Griffith rail line.

Matong was proclaimed a village in 1904 following the arrival of the rail line.

Existing Character
Matong is a small rural village and provides a focal point for social and community activity via its village park, school, churches and sports ground.

The Junee – Griffith rail corridor provides the northern boundary of the settlement and like other villages in the Shire is a rail head for grain harvesting.

The village centre is located in Matong Street between Olive and Wood Streets.

Desired Future Character
Matong is to remain a rural village and community focal point.

Remaining heritage buildings and the village centre streetscape are to be retained and enhanced. Any new development is to ‘fit in’ and be sympathetic to these heritage elements.

Housing will be consolidated in exiting residential areas.

The Strategic Plan for Matong is included in Figure 13.19.
Figure 13.18: Matong Strategic Plan

- **Matong Hotel**
  - Retain built form of historic landmark building

- **Community park as a focal point**

- **Village entrance**
  - Improve village entrance (eg. tree planting)

- **Grain handling and storage**
  - Retain and enhance historic community buildings

- **Retain and enhance historic village centre and buildings**