

EC1 – Metropolitan or Regional Classification

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Metropolitan or Regional Classification

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TRIM 10462

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Currently both State and Federal Government Agencies use a variety of different classification types for Wollondilly which is based on regions, population and statistical divisions.
- A single classification type based upon being metropolitan or rural across all State and Federal Government Agencies does not exist.
- The location of Wollondilly and its proximity to the edge of Sydney means that Council is classified in range of different classifications depending on the State and Federal Government Agency.
- The different mix of classifications requires Council to obtain the best outcome for the shire and lobby on a case by case basis when pursuing a change in classification for a particular portfolio.
- It is recommended that Council note the diversity of Government classifications and advocate for PeriUrban to be considered in all metropolitan and rural grant opportunities as a priority for funding due to the unique issues these areas face and that should Council require a detailed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis to be undertaken as part of a future operation plan, that Council determine the priority service areas requiring a review of the current classification type.

REPORT

Council at its meeting held on 16 October 2017 considered a Notice of Motion regarding Council's classification type.

Council resolved that this matter be deferred and a further report outlining the implications be brought back to Council. Further, that a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis of metropolitan versus regional classification be undertaken.

Council officers have investigated this request and to undertake a detailed analysis for each service area of Council would require significant resourcing and to be programed as part of a future operational plan. It may be more beneficial for the Council to determine the priority service areas requiring a review of the current classification type in order to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Efficient and Effective Council
Report to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 16 April 2018

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The issue of classification is not a matter of whether Council is classified as either metropolitan or regional. A considerable range of classifications exist across a number of State and Federal Agencies.

In looking at the different levels of Government it is apparent there is not a universal classification system.

Agency	Region Classification
Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Division	Outer South Western Sydney
Australian Biogeographic Regions	Sydney Basin
Australian Weather Forecasting	Illawarra District
NSW Department of Planning & Environment	Metropolitan Sydney
NSW Office of Local Government	Greater Sydney
NSW Ministry of Health	South Western Sydney
NSW Police Service	South West Metropolitan Region (Camden PAC and Campbelltown City PAC) North West Metropolitan Region (Nepean PAC)
NSW State Emergency Service	Sydney Southern Region
NSW Rural Fire Service	Southern Highlands District
Australian Government classification of Local Governments	Urban Fringe Medium
Local Government Remuneration	Non-Metropolitan Regional Rural
Children's Services	Regional
Family & Community Services	Metropolitan
Tourism	Regional
Biosecurity	Metropolitan
Illegal Dumping	Regional
EPA Landfill Classification	Regional
Local Land Services	Regional
Arts	Regional

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Wollondilly Shire has not been classified singularly as either metropolitan or rural or regional.

Classifications appear to be based upon different criteria as set by multiple agencies within different levels of Government.

An analysis of how Council should best position itself as being in the metropolitan area or a rural council needs to be considered on a case by case basis given the approach taken across Governments.

Wollondilly Shire is positioned in a fast changing locality on the edge of Sydney. An approach that may be adopted is an awareness of our locality and to approach the issue with a view to obtain the best outcome the different classifications may have to offer for the Wollondilly Shire.

Community Outcomes Comment

Wollondilly has been successful for grant funding for arts and cultural events and programmes in both regional and metropolitan applications. For example Council has in the past received funding for IlluminARTe through Create NSW under our classification as part of Western Sydney (metropolitan). Council has also received grant funding through the Regional Arts NSW's Country Arts Support Programme.

Council's Library receives annual grant funding from Libraries NSW. The whole State is broken into regions or zones which Wollondilly is part of the South East Zone.

Economic Development and Tourism Comment

Council has written to both Destination NSW (Tourism) and NSW Department of Industry (Economic Development) to seek confirmation of how each department within NSW Government treats Wollondilly Council in relation to tourism and economic development funding programs.

AusIndustry (Commonwealth) have advised that Wollondilly can sometimes be clarified as metropolitan or regional depending on the specific funding program.

Infrastructure Planning Comment

Council is classified as being in the Southern Region for the purposes of Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) infrastructure funding programs. The following table illustrates this:

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Program	Classification
RMS Pedestrian Infrastructure Around Schools Program	RMS Southern region
Transport NSW Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme	RMS Southern region
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Bridges Renewal Program	RMS Southern region
The Repair And Improvement of Regional Roads (REPAIR) Program	RMS Southern region
Walking and Cycling Programs - Active Transport	RMS Southern region

Below are the grants available within the NSW Government’s Regional Growth Fund which we are not eligible for because we are not considered to be a Regional Council.

Local Government Area (Council)	Regional Sports Infrastructure ↗	Stronger Country Communities Fund	Resources for Regions	Regional Cultural Fund ↗	Connecting Country Communities	Growing Local Economies
Wingecarribee Shire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wollondilly Shire Council	-	-	-	-	-	-

PeriUrban consideration

The Future Directions for NSW Local Government – 20 Essential Steps, released by the Independent Local Government Review Panel, highlighted the need to improve the strength and effectiveness of Local Government in NSW. One area that was highlighted in this paper was the need to strengthen the strategic capacity of Local Government through managing the PeriUrban fringe issues.

The review identified two local government areas as leaders in championing PeriUrban issues. These areas are Wollondilly and the Hawkesbury.

The PeriUrban area is a landscape type in its own right, neither fully urban nor rural but rather a mosaic of often unique incompatible and unplanned uses which presents unique challenges to policy makers and communities.



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PeriUrban areas contain important natural resources, remnant biodiversity and significant landscapes, important for agricultural and recreational activities and initiatives, attracting diverse populations of people and pressure of growth.

Sydney's PeriUrban areas are recognised as being part of a NSW solution for managing growth through providing opportunities for major land releases, strengthening local town and village character, settlements, lifestyle, tourism and agricultural (and economic) pursuits.

The PeriUrban area has a unique interface that is focused as much on cultural and heritage issues and, relationships as on agriculture and food production. The ties that bind the PeriUrban area are strong, but often informal and as part of this interface, local food is combining with social and cultural influences, driving an opportunity to rethink tourism opportunities, agribusiness initiatives and the agrifood system.

Due to these issues there is a need for innovative policy development and funding opportunities specific to PeriUrban areas as they do not fit "nicely" into funding guidelines or criteria and often slip through the net when grant and policy development opportunities do arise. There is a lack of policy settings and funding programs for PeriUrban areas in the Greater Sydney Region.

Wollondilly is located in the PeriUrban space and like many other PeriUrban areas, often miss out on funding opportunities and strategic initiatives due to the confusion of fitting into neither metro nor rural guidelines.

Wollondilly Shire Council is a member of the Sydney PeriUrban Network (SPUN). The network has a membership of twelve councils that are located on the fringe of the Sydney metropolitan region. One of the issues that gave rise to this network was the lack of funding opportunities and policy development initiatives for the PeriUrban areas. Councils involved include: Wollondilly; Camden; Blue Mountains; Gosford; Hawkesbury; Hornsby; Kiama; Penrith; Shellharbour; Shoalhaven; The Hills and Wingecarribee.

PeriUrban areas need a voice and a balanced approach to development and funding opportunities to ensure long term sustainability of NSW.

Planning Comment

In terms of status Council is now subject to the IHAP requirements for Metropolitan Councils. We are also subject to the Regional Planning Panel requirements which applies state wide.

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CONSULTATION

Executive Director Community & Corporate
Director Planning
Manager Governance
Manager Community Outcomes
Manager Infrastructure Planning
Tourism & Business Investment Manager
Community Projects - Events Team Leader

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current diversity in classifications may impact in both a positive or negative manner in relation to the seeking of grants or funding.

As outlined in the body of this report, opportunities for funding should be considered on a case by case basis due to the lack of a single classification system.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council note the diversity of Government classifications.
2. That Council advocate for PeriUrban to be considered in all metropolitan and rural grant opportunities as a priority for funding due to the unique issues these areas face.
3. That should Council require a detailed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis to be undertaken as part of a future operation plan, that Council determine the priority service areas requiring a review of the current classification type.