

GLOUCESTER

LOCAL COMMUNITY PLAN



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and pay our respects to Elders past and present and future.

Our vision

We live in a special place with a caring, friendly, supportive community.

We are proud of where we live and our continued success is important to us all.

We work together to protect and love the pristine beauty of our natural environment, invigorate our economy and build a strong, prosperous future for us all.

We accept and cater for the diversity in our community, valuing our families, youth and aged sectors and are inclusive and supportive.

Introduction

This local community plan aims to bring together the vision the community of Gloucester has for its area and will be used to encourage support and funding from all levels of government as well as to foster a sense of common purpose within the community.

This plan was developed by the local community, with support from MidCoast Council through a series of facilitated and information activities.

Through surveys, workshops and feedback sessions the community got together to identify what is important for the future and to plan how we will go about achieving our goals and aspirations.

Through this process key themes of **environment, economy, community** and **infrastructure** were identified around which aspirations and objectives could be aligned.

The history of Gloucester

The first inhabitants of the Gloucester region were the Kabook and Watoo people of the Guringai, Guringay or Gringai nation. Their traditional country ranged from the land between the Hunter and Manning Rivers, from the ocean to and including the Great Dividing Range. From modern day Newcastle to Singleton, on the northern side of the Hunter, through the Barringtons and back down the Manning to the ocean.

Their language group, the Gathang, encompassed the lands between the Hawkesbury and Hastings, the ocean and the mountain ranges. Ceremonial, kinship and marriage ties took them further into the northern and southern bordering language groups. Their story lines connect them to the surrounding nations, country and sea.

The Kabook and Watoo people were hunters and gatherers who moved throughout their territory in response to the seasonal availability of food. This meant that the land's resources were naturally replenished.

The Clan occupied the valleys year-round, visiting the plateaus in spring and summer to gather food. During winter they would hunt kangaroos, emus, possums and wombats, fish and other animals. A wide range of plant foods was collected from the lowland forests. The edible fruits found in the Barrington Tops area include: orange thorn, wild apple tree, giant stinging tree, figs, native cherry, geebung, native raspberry, lillypilly and medicines like kangaroo apple and corkwood. Other traditional plant foods include the bulbs of many orchids and the starch from the crown of tree ferns and the starch from stinging tree roots being roasted to make bread.

The Aboriginal occupation of Kabook and Watoo people of the Gringai clan is well recorded in oral history, and in the presence of open campsites with stone artefacts, scarred trees, ceremonial places and mythological sites recorded in dreaming stories.

On the Barrington one of the bora rings, or initiation grounds, of the local tribe was in the Bulliac-Tugrabakh area, some four miles from Gloucester. Another two bora rings where they used to camp and hold their corroborees is located where the Gloucester Public School now stands, one ring used by the women and the other used by the men.

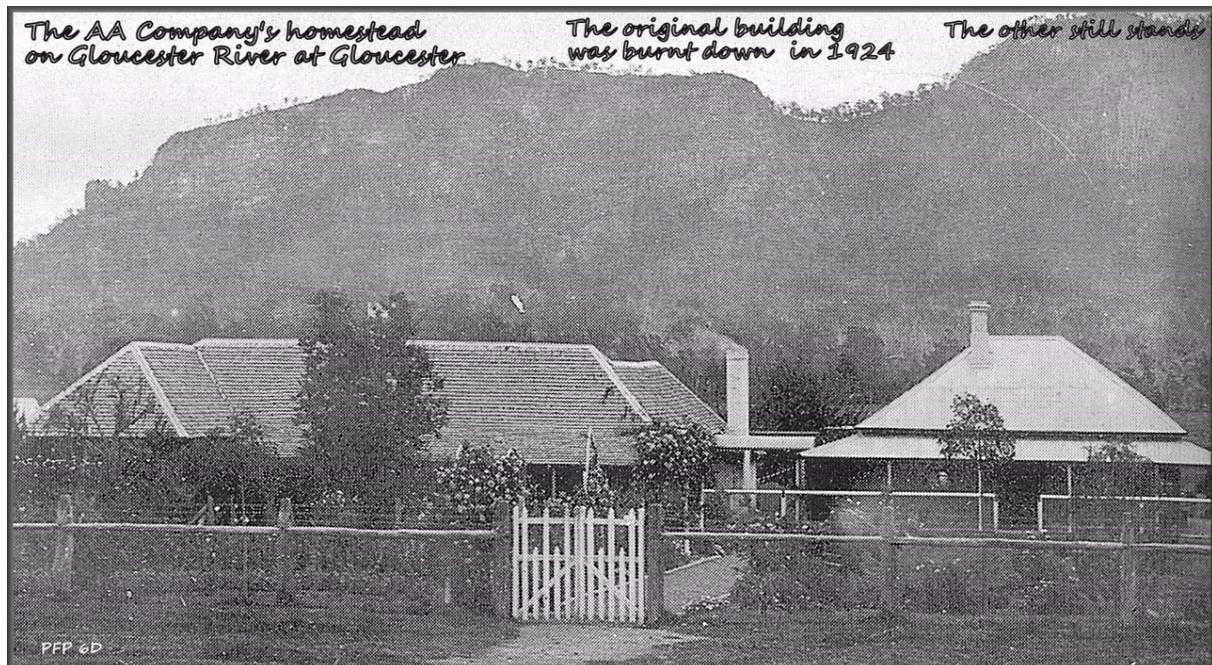
European settlement

The first European to pass through the area was the explorer Henry Dangar in 1826, but in the same year, Robert Dawson, the first manager of the Australian Agricultural Company (AAC) visited the district. Impressed with the beautiful scenery of the river valley, he named the town 'Gloucester' after the English region of Gloucestershire.

The Australian Agricultural Company (AAC) was formed in England in 1824 with the object of raising fine wool and agricultural products for importation to England.

By 1831, the AAC was well established. The Gloucester and Avon valleys were soon well stocked with the company's sheep and a dairy was established on the estate around 1831 for the supply of AAC employees. There was a very small township laid out. The Gringai people lost their homelands to

logging, clearing and livestock. Traditional hunting grounds were depleted, and sacred sites were destroyed. Wildlife dwindled. Oral history tells us that by 1840 the natural food supplies were almost exhausted.



The sad story of dispossession that occurred across Australia as white settlement forcefully took the land of the First Nations people also occurred in the Gloucester region. There are documented reports of shepherds stealing Gringai women, and Gringai retaliations on those individuals. At the same time, starving Gringai people began killing stock. The settlers and government troopers retaliated with random shootings and massacres. In 1838, at McKenzies Cliffs, near the head of the Gloucester River there was a devastating massacre of Gringai people. Around the Manning River basin, there were reports of waterholes and gifts of food being laced with arsenic. The difficult to access terrain of the Barrington became a refuge for Aboriginal people.

Today Barrington Tops National Park and State Conservation Area is important to the Worimi, Gringai and Biripi communities as an intact part of Aboriginal country.

A drought in the early 1840s was so severe it killed off many of the AAC's sheep. By the late 1850s the AAC had sold or removed all the sheep and reduced its landholdings in the area. Attention turned primarily to cattle with the Gloucester 'run' home to a large and excellent herd.

Goldrushes and bushrangers

The goldrushes of the 1850s caused labour shortages for the AAC which started to import Chinese workers. By 1861 Gloucester comprised a slab-and-bark hut occupied by the resident constable, a wooden hotel with a shingle roof, an Anglican church (built in 1860 at the expense of the AAC) and a blacksmith's shed.

Notorious bushranger, 'Captain Thunderbolt' (Fred Ward), hid out at Gloucester Tops in the mid-1860s.

Alluvial gold was discovered to the west of Gloucester, at present-day Copeland, in 1872. The gold discovery was kept secret until 1876 when a rush started. Subterranean mining commenced in 1877 and, at the height of the rush (1877-80), there were some 3000 people in the area working 51 reefs which yielded 566 kg of gold. In 1878 surveyors laid out plans for a new town named Copeland.



A modern town

In 1903 the AAC sold its property to the Gloucester Estate Syndicate which cleared the land, drew up the town subdivision, and sold allotments. This marks the beginning of the modern day township of Gloucester. In 1905 two hotels were built, a school of arts was completed, and the *Gloucester Advocate* went into print. In 1906 the Barrington Butter factory opened and the Gloucester Shire Council held its first meeting. Significantly for Gloucester, the railway arrived in 1913. The Majestic Theatre was built in the early 1920s and Gloucester was connected to electricity in 1923. Gloucester's first high school opened in 1961.

After the mining boom caused by the goldrush, the region's economy was largely agricultural, with beef and dairy holdings dominating. By 1913, timber felling and milling was a major industry for the Gloucester region, which continued for around 80 years.

The 1980s was the beginning of change in Gloucester. The timber essentially 'ran out' and the timber industry declined significantly. At the same time, the birth of a tourism industry for Gloucester occurred. Carved out of an ancient volcano in the Mount Royal Ranges, Barrington Tops rises from near sea level to 1586 metres and is part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia. It became a World Heritage site in 1986 and was added to the Australian National Heritage List in 2007. The Tops became the focal point for visitors to the region. In the 1990s a burgeoning tourism industry - with the Barrington wilderness, river rafting, rural retreats and horse riding, wineries and farm stays began to spring up and continue to grow today.

From the 1970s coal exploration had been undertaken in the Gloucester region, culminating in the establishment of the Stratford Coal Mine in 1996. In 2008 a new proposal to establish coal seam gas extraction fields on Gloucester's town edge. The proposal caused great controversy, with residents divided between the prospect of more jobs for their town versus the impact on the environment, water ways and inevitable decline in scenic amenity and the unique character that tourism had brought to Gloucester. In the end, after an enormous community battle a stay was put on coal seam gas extraction.

During perhaps the worst drought in living memory for New South Wales, 2019 saw the Barrington River run dry for the first time in recorded history. Water was trucked into town, sourced from the Tea Gardens aquifer. As Gloucester's only water source, this was a significant event and one which gives its residents pause to consider their future as climate change begins to make its impact felt.

Throughout history, all Gloucester's people, from the First Nations Gringai to today's enterprising and adaptive folk, have faced challenges with fortitude and stoicism. Evident today is a strong commitment to move forward together as custodians of their land, town and region.

Sources for this information:

[The Kabook and Watoo People of the Gringai Barrington River Gloucester, NSW – Hunter Living Histories](#)

[Gloucester, NSW - Aussie Towns](#)

McCalden, Gerald "The way we could be", 2015. Published on <https://www.groundswellgloucester.com>

Photos courtesy of the Gloucester District Historical Society

Our community today

Gloucester has a strong and caring community, and this is one of the things people who live in Gloucester value most about it. The small town feeling of knowing or being connected to everyone is something that has been highlighted by residents of all ages during the building of this plan.

There is a sense of belonging and caring that provides a friendly family atmosphere that is important we retain as a community.

The community has a range of service groups, sporting organisations and interest groups that combine to support the fabric of the community.

The area does benefit from migration from cities and larger regional centres by those who wish to relocate to an area that has a strong community spirit and country town feel.

Our community want a level of growth and provided opportunities to increase interest for people to move to Gloucester. This is important for a sustainable future where people want to visit and live, without losing the things that make the community the special place it is.

Our environment

The environment is not only important to the people of Gloucester, but to those in adjoining regions who rely on our water catchment areas. It is also highly valued by those who travel from throughout the world to experience our World Heritage National Parks.

Our environment is a significant driver of the local tourism industry as people travel from across the State to enjoy the natural beauty that can be found in Gloucester and environs.

There are a number of stakeholders working to protect our region - the National Parks Service, catchment management agencies, state agencies, MidCoast Council and environmental groups.

Our community value the beauty of the pristine environment Gloucester is surrounded by and want to protect it by becoming more sustainable.

Our people

In 2019 the population of Gloucester was 3,046 (ABS). The local towns and villages that form the Gloucester surrounds had a population of 2,126.

2016 ABS statistics for Gloucester reported:

- Median age of 52 years
- 7.5% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population
- 24.7% of the population are in rental accommodation
- 21.6% of the population have a mortgage
- 6.4% of the population reporting needing help in their day today lives due to a disability

Gloucester's population is skewed to older residents, with over one third (37.0%) aged over 60 years. The total workforce aged group, from 18 years to 60 years is 42.6% of the total population. Children aged under 18 years make up 19.8% of the population.

First Nations people make up 7.5% of the population, well above the regional NSW average of 5.5%.

A total of 6.4% of Gloucester residents report that they need help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This is around the same proportion of people reporting disability in regional NSW.

Of Gloucester's residents aged over 15 years, 11.8% did not provide their education qualifications, so these figures have an error margin. A total of 41.4% of Gloucester residents have tertiary qualifications, either a Bachelor or higher degree, an Advanced Diploma or Diploma or vocational qualifications. 46.6% of residents aged over 15 have no formal tertiary qualifications.

Population growth from 2011-2016 is comparatively low, being just under 0.5% per annum, with a total local population of 2,390 in 2016 - albeit being a rural service centre for many smaller surrounding communities.

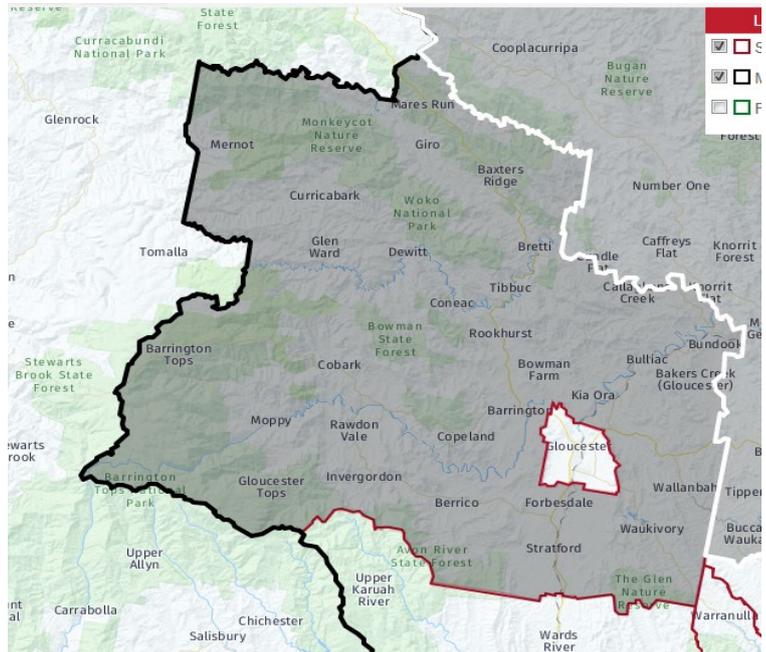
Our economy

Gloucester’s economy reflects its character as a service centre in a rural region, with 5,172 people (5.5% of the MidCoast region’s population) residing within the area delineated on the map below.

Gloucester has an economic output of \$626.8 million, which is 7.15% of the total economic output of the MidCoast region.

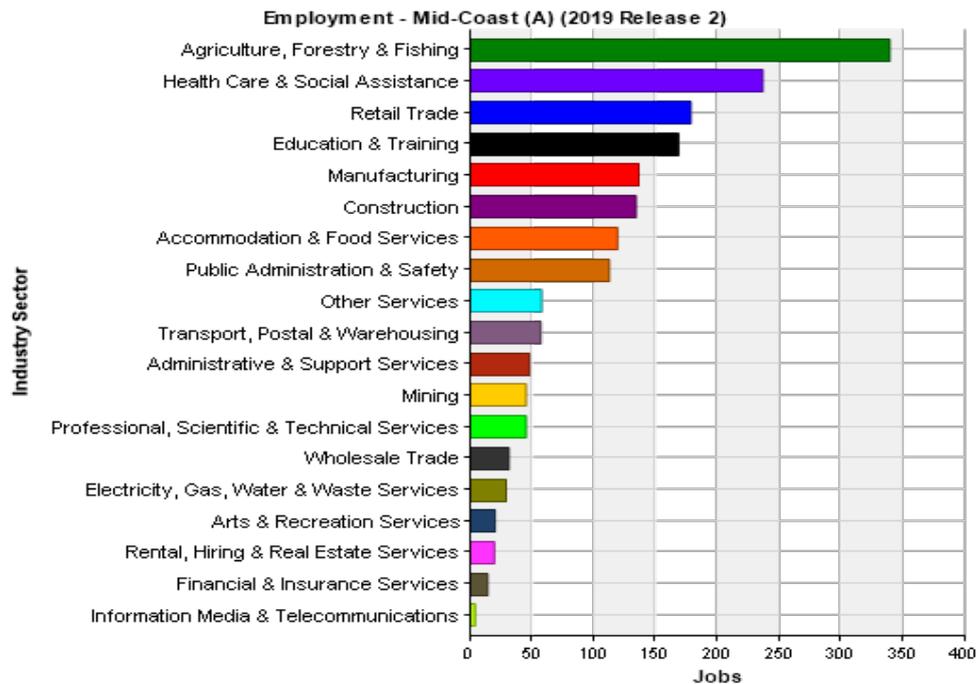
Agriculture, forestry and fishing along health care and social assistance, retail trade, education and training, manufacturing and construction are the mainstays of Gloucester’s economy.

The map below shows the area from which the following statistics are drawn.



Employment

There is a total of 1,794 jobs in the Gloucester area, comprising 6.3% of the total employment of the MidCoast region. The breakdown of these jobs by industry sector is shown below.



The three largest industries by employment are Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (18.9%), Manufacturing and Construction 15.1% and Health Care and Social Assistance (13.2%)

Service industries provide the bulk of the rest of the industry profile for Gloucester. Retail Trade (9.9%), Education and Training (9.4%), Accommodation / Food Services (6.6%) and Public Administration / Safety (6.3%) are the largest of these.

There is a small but significant presence of Mining (2.5%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (2.5%). Mining is a potential source of employment growth, along with Tourism, reflected in different industry groups in the Table below.

Table: All industry sectors in the two selected destination zones within Mid-Coast (A) ranked by Employment

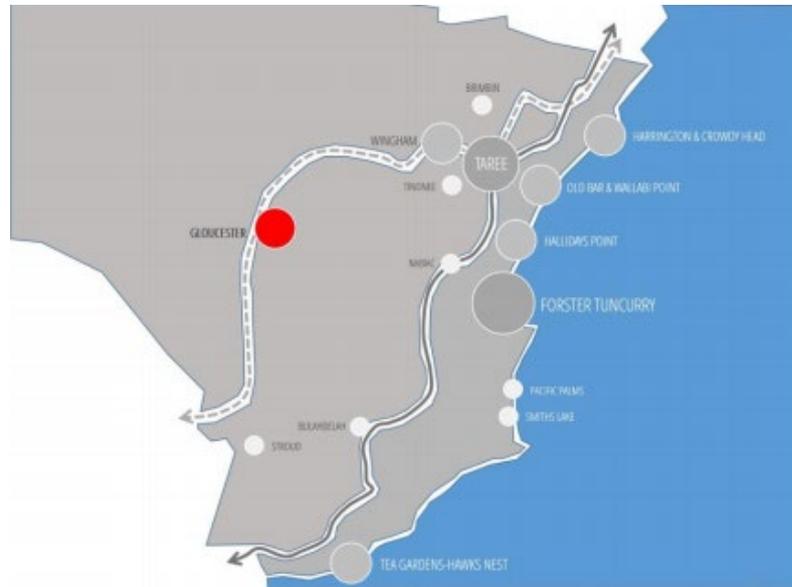
Industry Sector	Mid-Coast (A) (2019 Release 2)	
	Jobs	%
Agriculture, Forestry Fishing	339	18.9%
Health Care Social Assistance	236	13.2%
Retail Trade	178	9.9%
Education Training	168	9.4%
Manufacturing	136	7.6%
Construction	134	7.5%
Accommodation Food Services	119	6.6%
Public Administration Safety	112	6.3%
Other Services	58	3.2%
Transport, Postal Warehousing	57	3.2%
Administrative Support Services	48	2.7%
Mining	45	2.5%
Professional, Scientific Technical Services	45	2.5%
Wholesale Trade	31	1.7%
Electricity, Gas, Water Waste Services	29	1.6%
Arts Recreation Services	20	1.1%
Rental, Hiring Real Estate Services	19	1.1%
Financial Insurance Services	14	0.8%
Information Media Telecommunications	4	0.2%
Total	1,794	100.0%

How we live

The area comprises generally flat lands to the east of the river, built along the railway which borders the town on the east. Over time, the urban areas have spread to the north along Thunderbolt's Way and the south along The Bucketts Way.

Urban structure - The original settlement area is consistently structured around north-south and east-west grids, many with laneways behind. More recently developed subdivisions to the south are similar to the conventional cul-de-sac designs of the post-war period.

Lot sizes are relatively consistent throughout the original urban area, usually around 1,000sqm. The more recent subdivisions on the southern side of the town are smaller, generally around 700-800sqm.



Built form - Few buildings extend beyond a relatively restricted 7.5m / two storey height limit, with some prominent retail and industrial buildings being more prominent in terms of their scale and presence rather than height, particularly around the town centre and rail line. This provides for sweeping and longer-distance views from many areas, particularly with respect to the dramatic backdrop of The Gloucester Bucketts Mountain range to the west and Mount Mograni to the east.

Around the town's urban area, open spaces are immediately apparent, with open countryside and lifestyle blocks providing housing diversity.

Key housing characteristics:

- Relatively high dwelling vacancy rate for a rural location (14%), though much lower than many coastal areas
- Low population growth, 0.46% per annum between 2011 and 2016, albeit consistent with the broader inland and rural areas
- Low household size - 2.1 people per dwelling
- Supply of vacant zoned urban land available to meet likely demand
- Heritage listings and character controls in place

What's important and how do we move forward?

There are a number of key considerations that are apparent with respect to the future directions of Gloucester. The historical character combined with the spectacular views and context as a gateway to the World Heritage Barrington Tops are core elements of the town. Protection of views and character whilst maintaining an open and progressive framework for economic development, job opportunities

and growth are critical. The aging population, and core services being available to those wishing to remain in the area, or to move from rural localities to Gloucester, are also important.

Flexibility in future approaches to zoning, combined with strong character and design controls are the key to achieving a balance. Being smart about how and where to increase density, encouraging walkability to the town centre and ensuring infrastructure is available to meet community needs and future prosperity of the town are key considerations.

Inland centres such as Taree and Gloucester have their own unique and desirable characteristics that differ to the coastal areas. They offer diversity in housing character and affordability and ensure housing diversity across the MidCoast.



Gloucester with the Bucketts and Barrington Tops ranges beyond

Future housing opportunities

The opportunities for housing in the future would involve:

- Facilitating development through the use of a broad residential zone through the older areas of Gloucester, which enables a range of housing types
- Maintaining specific character and heritage controls for the area, which seek to protect its unique setting and history
- Encouraging future urban infill development in appropriate residential areas to meet the longer-term demand
- Retaining the generally low scale of development in terms of height, with some limited areas around the town centre where three storey development has been envisaged

Health services

While health services are provided in Gloucester via a Gloucester Hospital run by Hunter New England Health and various private practitioners, it is an area that does cause community concern.

As the hospital is part of a wider health service, there are services that have been relocated to Manning Base Hospital including maternity services. There is also a lack of services such as mental health services within Gloucester, with residents having to travel to other centres, including Newcastle and Taree and access specialist services.

This does present difficulties to the elderly members of the community and combines with the lack of public transport to potentially exclude people from services that are required.

Work has been undertaken on the Gloucester Hospital in recent times to upgrade and relocate the emergency department to the ground floor and other upgrades have also been implemented.

There is one GP service in town, some allied health services and a pharmacy.

There is also nursing home accommodation and in home aged care providers operating in the Gloucester area to support the community.

Transport services

Manning Valley Area Community Transport operates regularly to take residents on shopping trips around Gloucester, as well as bigger outings to Taree, Forster and Raymond Terrace. With one employed driver for a few days a week, the service is very reliant on volunteers to enable it to deliver services to the Gloucester community.

The Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group facilitates a health transport scheme for local health and out of town transport.

Gloucester has a school bus network that only operates during the school term.

Apart from these services transport within Gloucester is primarily by private vehicle as there are no public transport options available. This is a limiting factor for residents, particularly if they have a need to access health care in neighbouring towns and centres.

Gloucester is on the Sydney-Brisbane train line and as such receives an XPT passenger train service, however access to the train station from town is an issue as it is not within walking distance and there are no public transport services to connect the train station with the main part of town.

Education

The education facilities in Gloucester include two primary schools, a high school, preschool, family day care and child care facilities. There are also primary schools in Barrington and Stratford, however there is no active after school care available.

The Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group partner with registered training providers provide a range of credited and non-accredited courses to Gloucester residents.

TAFE and university institutions exist further afield, and attendance relies on transport and support to be able to attend.

However, the transition to online learning that has happened in recent times may present some opportunities for better access to higher and technical learning for the youth of Gloucester.

It is important for the community to work towards practical solutions for increasing access for young people for training and working towards practical solutions for increasing access for young people in Gloucester.

Youth issues

With 20 per cent of Gloucester's population under 18, and a further 5.7 per cent between the ages of 18 and 24, young people are an important aspect of life in Gloucester.

A lack of service provision in areas such as mental health, alcohol and other drugs, domestic violence and homelessness is leading to an increased burden on the school to handle issues that are increasingly arising in their context.

This lack of provision is based in both a limited number of services as well as a lack of accountability (perceived and/or real) for services funded to cover the region.

As an isolated region, young people have limited access to services like transport and technology to engage in the opportunities that young people in other regions have, and limited opportunities for activities and youth friendly places.

There are a range of potential opportunities to stimulate youth employment in the district including an area of excellence of agriculture, indigenous and adventure tourism and natural resource management given the region's geographic location.

Access to local employment opportunities is also perceived to be limited.

Age structure	Number	Per cent of Gloucester population
Babies and pre-schoolers (0-4)	244	4.9
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	452	9.0
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	342	6.8
Tertiary education/independence (18-24)	272	5.4

*2016 ABS statistics

Where do we want to be?

In the development of this plan a number of things have been identified by the community as important for the future of Gloucester, along with the retention of the things that are important today such as the community and natural environment.

A strong, connected caring community

The community will always be the heart of Gloucester and the small town family, friendly, caring nature of the community is something that is important to retain.

In an extension of this, the vision for the community is to become more inclusive and supportive of all sections of the community and accepting of diversity.

Maintaining health services

Maintaining and improving health services within the region continues to be a key focus for the future.

These services are fundamental to the long-term sustainability of Gloucester - for meeting the needs of our aging population and attracting 'tree- changers' and working families to the area.

Affordable aged care facilities continue to be a particular priority. Older residents said they want to stay in Gloucester. They don't want to be forced to move away from family and friends due to a lack of appropriate housing.

Social housing is also an area that needs to be addressed to ensure there is a place for everyone who wants to call Gloucester home.

Educational opportunities

While Gloucester has a strong school environment, there is a need for more opportunities and diversity in educational services to be able to provide varied opportunities to the youth of the area, to allow them to remain in Gloucester will gaining further education.

Employment opportunities

Providing local jobs and career opportunities is another area of opportunity for Gloucester. The growth of industries such as tourism offers opportunity but more diversity is required to provide for opportunities for youth and a growing community. The location of Gloucester near the Barrington wilderness area provides opportunities for development as an area of excellence for natural resource management and other research. Other opportunities exist in areas of agriculture, Aboriginal and adventure tourism.

Protecting the environment

The future protection of our environment is another key area, with the community strongly expressing a desire to protect the pristine beauty of the region. Protecting the environment extends beyond just this, however to being innovative in sustainability, focusing on climate change, renewable energies and reducing waste.

Water security

Water security is also an important aspect for the future of Gloucester. The long-term future of the town water supply is one aspect, however the impact of climate change on the flow of the Barrington River and the impact that has on the agricultural community is another important issue for the community.

Compiling this plan

To help inform the development of this Gloucester Community Plan, a number of community consultation activities were undertaken.

Several think tank sessions with the community were held to workshop what people loved about Gloucester, what they wanted to see improved and how they saw the town in 20 years time.

Representatives from the Gloucester High School took part in some of the sessions and also contributed their thoughts on the above aspects.

A steering committee was then formed to further discuss aspects of importance to the Gloucester community.

This draft plan will be placed on public exhibition to test the actions that have come out of all these activities with the wider community.

What do we love about Gloucester?



What is important to us about where we live?



Our priorities

From these community activities and referencing the former Gloucester Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan, the following have been identified as major priority areas for the Gloucester community, and it is around these the local community plan has been build.

- Being a supportive and active community
- Community facilities and infrastructure
- Protecting our environment
- Creating a strong economy

The following section looks at each of these priorities and outlines the actions that could be taken to help realise these priorities.

Priority: Community facilities and infrastructure

<i>What does this look like?</i>	<i>What do we need to do?</i>	<i>Who can help with this</i>	<i>What is Council's role</i>
We have appropriate health and social services for our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain existing mental health services and lobby for additional services where gaps are identified • Attract and maintain services to support those in the community impacted by alcohol and other drugs, domestic violence and homelessness • Lobby for provision of local midwifery services • Retain suicide prevention services • Maintain medical facilities and services adequate to community need • Retain and attract medical professionals and specialists adequate to community need 	<p>Hunter New England Health</p> <p>Private health providers and specialists</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Centre</p> <p>Mental Health Service providers</p> <p>Gloucester Hospital</p> <p>Suicide prevention services</p>	Advocacy
Our facilities are accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New public facilities are accessible and inclusive for all members of the community • Prioritisation of improvements to access and usability of existing public facilities for people with disabilities and families, where upgrades are available • Provision of a Parents room in the CBD 	<p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>MidCoast Council</p> <p>Disability agencies and advocacy groups</p> <p>Children services and playgroups</p>	Community engagement on Council led projects and master planning

		Community members	
We have facilities that encourage and enable physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend and connect cycleways and pathways within the CBD and to neighbouring villages, such as cycleway to Barrington Continue to develop mountain bike and bushwalking trails within Barrington tops and surrounding areas 	Service clubs Local interest groups Barrington Coast Tourism MidCoast Council	Prioritisation, planning and implementation of cycleway and pathways – linkage to PAMP
There are opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage local businesses to provide dog friendly facilities in outdoor dining areas Provide additional dog friendly spaces within central locations 	Chamber of Commerce Community Groups MidCoast Council	Prioritisation, planning and implementation in Master planning for recreation spaces and CBD.
There is a range of affordable, accessible and adaptable housing choices to suit the needs of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage investment in affordable housing to meet the needs of the population Lobby for the establishment of accessible aged care facilities that support residents to stay in Gloucester Lobby for the establishment of social housing in Gloucester 	Aged care providers Community Groups State Agencies Developers Social Housing Providers	Advocacy Prioritisation in long term Strategic planning – linkage to Housing Strategy, LEP and Ageing Strategy
We have a reliable public transport network connecting us locally and regionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby State Member of Parliament for continued provision of connectivity to regional centres and cities via rail and buses 	Local Member of Parliament Chamber of Commerce Local transport companies	Advocacy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for the establishment of a taxi service or ride sharing service 	State agencies	
Our community and businesses are digitally connected via reliable mobile phone coverage and internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby State and Federal Members for improved mobile phone coverage across Gloucester and surrounds 	Chamber of Commerce Telecommunication providers Local Member of Parliament	Advocacy
We have a vibrant cultural community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate interest and support for a cultural arts centre 	Art Gallery Local artists and interest groups	Advocacy
Billabong Park is an attractive, well used regional park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve existing facilities to meet community uses including fixing pedestrian bridge, improved lighting and additional toilet facilities Encourage beautification of Billabong Park through community projects such as fruit tree planting, edible gardens and public art/sculpture Continue use of the park for markets, festivals and community events Expand and improve existing skate park Expand children's playground to include a toddler play area, water play areas 	Service clubs and community groups Local event organisers MidCoast Council	Prioritisation, planning and implementation for master planning. Support with event bookings Advocacy

<p>Gloucester District Park is a well used and managed facility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan of management to enhance the sporting and recreational opportunities for the Park • Improve pool facilities, including more shade, lighting, review entry times and fees 	<p>Sporting Groups Sports Council MidCoast Council</p>	<p>Prioritisation, planning and implementation for master planning.</p>
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Priority: Protecting the environment

<i>What does this look like?</i>	<i>Actions to get us there</i>	<i>Who can help with this</i>	<i>Council's role</i>
The beauty of the natural environment is protected and preserved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain healthy waterways through implementation of initiatives from Council's Catchment Management Plan • Build communities resilience to emergencies, such as flood and fire through participation in the development of Council's Resilience Strategy • Continue to support weed management initiatives • Protect and enhance the natural environment and urban tree canopy through vegetation management controls including tree preservation orders 	Community Groups Chamber of Commerce Local Businesses Rural landowners Emergency Services MidCoast Council	Prioritisation, planning and implementation – linkage with existing plans and initiatives – i.e. Emergency Resilience and existing catchment, tree management and weed management programs
Our water resources are valued and managed for the benefit of all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a coordinated approach for the use of river water in time of drought between town and agricultural uses • Support the investigation and planning for off-stream storage for the town water supply • Investigate opportunities to secure ongoing water supplies for the agricultural community 	Community Groups Chamber of Commerce Businesses MidCoast Council State agencies	Prioritisation, planning and implementation – linkage with existing water supply initiatives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community and businesses to become more water efficient through education and resilience programs 		
<p>We are a proactive community in response to Climate Change, focusing on renewable energy and sustainably manage our waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging and supporting local businesses and community members to use sustainable technology • Advocating for the establishment of Gloucester as a plastic free town • Encourage residents and local businesses to utilise renewable energy • Support the implementation of Council waste minimisation and recycling programs 	<p>Community Groups Chamber of Commerce Businesses Local community MidCoast Council</p>	<p>Support via waste initiatives, Climate Change Strategy,</p>

Priority: Creating a strong economy

<i>What does this look like?</i>	<i>Actions to get us there</i>	<i>Who can help with this</i>	<i>Council's role</i>
We grow employment opportunities through the attraction of new businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote Gloucester as an attractive business investment and relocation destination Actively promote Gloucester as an optimal location for light industry Develop strong relationships between businesses, education and government agencies through networking and participation in collaborative opportunities Develop programs to identify and enhance workforce skills Increase utilisation of the Gloucester saleyards, by improving existing facilities and increasing promotion across MidCoast 	Industry Businesses Chamber of Commerce Department of Education Other State agencies Barrington Coast Tourism MidCoast Council	Advocacy
We promote Gloucester is as an attractive tourist destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to investigate the relocation of the Visitors Information Centre Provide formalised RV parking and directional signage in CBD Develop resources for additional tourist-based activities such as walks 	Barrington Coast Tourism MidCoast Council	Prioritisation, planning and implementation through future development of VIC, master planning for CBD parking and management of caravan park

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the availability and standard of caravan park facilities • Improve tourist signage to welcome and direct visitors to Gloucester 		
Our central business area is vibrant and attractive, supporting tourism and economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a beautification program for the Gloucester Main Street, including provision of more shade trees • Embracing vibrant spaces opportunities for the main street, such as establishment of a Civic heart • Installation of water refill stations in CBD • Increase vibrancy and visitations to the CBD through the development of a program of events • Provision of shade for car parking areas • Promote local landmarks and history through the placement of plaques • Upgrade stormwater drainage in Gloucester's central business district 	<p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Historical Society</p> <p>Service Clubs</p> <p>MidCoast Council</p> <p>Local Businesses</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>Local event organisers</p>	<p>Support via Vibrant Spaces initiative - Economic development</p> <p>Water services</p> <p>Prioritisation, planning and implementation in master planning for CBD and stormwater drainage</p>

Priority: Being a supportive and active community

<i>What does this look like?</i>	<i>Actions to get us there</i>	<i>Who can help with this</i>	<i>Council's role</i>
We acknowledge and respect our Aboriginal heritage and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and facilitate projects that acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal history, culture and reconciliation • Acknowledge Gathang language within the town, such as acknowledgment signage • Promote Aboriginal history within wider community to improve understanding 	Local Aboriginal Land Council, Elders and community MidCoast Council	Advocacy Prioritisation, planning and implementation in regard to signage
We support and provide opportunities for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a central youth hub to provide education opportunities, support services for the vulnerable and a safe socialisation space • Work with educational facilities to increase opportunities for young people to further their education within the Gloucester community • Support and develop local events and entertainment opportunities for youth • Support and develop recreational activities for youth • Support and develop transport solutions for youth to access activities and educational opportunities 	Department of Education TAFE Community Transport Local Transport Companies Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Centre Community groups Community members Taree University Campus	Advocacy

<p>We have a strong social fabric</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support existing not for profit community groups to deliver important community services and social connection • Encourage activity and participation in the arts and cultural activities • Foster and support active community relationships and social activities 	<p>Community groups and not for profits</p> <p>Art Gallery</p> <p>GaCGi</p> <p>Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Centre</p> <p>Service clubs</p> <p>Community groups</p> <p>Community members</p> <p>MidCoast Council</p>	<p>Advocacy</p>
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Gloucester summary profile, 2016

Place of usual residence	Number	%	MidCoast Council area %
Population Summary			
Total population	2,979	100.0	100.0
Males	1,398	46.9	48.8
Females	1,581	53.1	51.2
Total dwellings	1,518	100.0	100.0
Indigenous population	284	9.5	6.2
Australian citizens	2,764	92.8	90.3
Eligible voters (citizens 18+)	2,187	73.4	72.6
Australian-born	2,589	86.9	82.3
Speaks language other than English at home	44	1.5	2.6
Overseas-born	188	6.3	9.3
Needs assistance due to age or disability	215	7.2	8.2
Age Structure			
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	169	5.7	4.6
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	244	8.2	7.6
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	209	7.0	6.8
Tertiary education/independence (18 to 24)	171	5.7	5.6
Young workforce (25 to 34)	231	7.8	7.4
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	445	14.9	15.0
Older workers & pre-retirees (50 to 59)	391	13.1	14.5
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	468	15.7	17.7
Seniors (70 to 84)	510	17.1	17.0
Frail aged (85 and over)	139	4.7	3.8
Household Types			
Couples with children	248	19.0	18.8
Couples without children	389	29.8	32.2
One parent families	145	11.1	10.8
Lone person households	416	31.9	27.7
Group households	27	2.1	2.6
Education			
Attending pre-school or primary school	294	9.9	8.6
Attending secondary school	170	5.7	5.5
Attending university or TAFE institution	62	2.1	3.0
Labour Force			
Employed	1,004	91.2	91.0
Unemployed	97	8.8	9.0
Total labour force	1,101	44.8	43.2
Not in the labour force	1,227	49.9	49.5
Dwelling Summary			
Separate houses	1,330	88.9	77.9
Medium and high density	111	7.4	18.6
Other dwellings (inc. Caravans, houseboats)	44	2.9	2.8
Occupied private dwellings	1,307	86.1	82.0
Unoccupied dwellings	198	13.0	17.7
Non private dwellings	13	0.9	0.3

Housing Tenure			
Owned	578	44.3	43.9
Purchasing	268	20.6	22.7
Renting	364	27.9	23.9
Household Income			
Less than \$650 (low)	386	30.9	27.7
\$650 to \$1,449 (lower middle)	481	38.5	39.4
\$1,449 to \$2,499 (upper middle)	164	13.1	14.8
\$2,500 or more (high)	92	7.4	7.5
Incomes not stated	126	10.1	10.6
Internet Connection			
Internet connection	854	65.5	70.2
No internet connection	369	28.3	21.8
Not stated	85	6.5	8.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Census of Population and Housing 2016](#). Compiled and presented in profile.id by [.id](#) (informed decisions).

