



UPPER HUNTER SHIRE COUNCIL

PROJECTS FOR FUNDING CONSIDERATION

April 2021

All correspondence to:

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Introduction

This document is to provide candidates contesting the May 2021 by-election for the State seat of Upper Hunter with a range of projects of varying size and type for consideration of funding.

Contact can be made with the General Manager for further information on any projects of interest.



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A Quality Rural Lifestyle - in a vibrant, caring and sustainable community

Rural Unsealed Roads



The rural unsealed road network, some 1,000km, is generally in an average to poor condition due to the lack of quality material for gravel re-sheeting and patching, access to water (particularly during the drought period) and pavement defects such as potholes, heavy patches, corrugations, scours and ravelling. The works will involve:

- Repairs to pavement defects such as potholes, heavy patches, corrugations, scours and ravelling.
- Repair and/or replacement of damaged or undersized drainage structures.
- Gravel Re-sheet (100mm nominal) - improves the pavement strength with gravel overlay, ride quality and safety to road users.

Road users lodge numerous customer requests (complaints) regarding the condition of the road. This has an impact on primary producers having access to their properties and being able to travel to sale yards, abattoirs and wholesalers. Additional running costs also have to be considered due to extra wear and tear of vehicles. Many of these roads are also school bus routes.

- Rossgole Road
- Idaville Road
- Prices Lane
- Cullingral Road
- Scotts Creek Road
- Warlands Creek Road
- Davis Creek Road
- Timor-Crawney Road
- Hunter Road
- Upper Rouchel Road

Estimated Total Cost **\$3,000,000**

Rural unsealed roads that have been identified for upgrade and bitumen sealing due to traffic volumes, composition and characteristic include:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| • Hunter Road (Stage 1) | \$2,600,000 |
| • Hunter Road (Stage 2) | \$2,200,000 |
| • Barrington Forest Road (Stage 1) | \$6,700,000 |
| • Barrington Forest Road (Stage 2) | \$2,200,000 |
| • Middlebrook Road | \$2,100,000 |
| • Cliftlands Road | \$2,800,000 |
| • Yarrandi Road | \$4,900,000 |

Estimated Total Cost **\$20,300,000**

Rural Sealed Roads



The sealed road network is generally in an average to poor condition with defects such as potholes, heavy patches that require major rehabilitation. Roads that require significant repairs include:

- Middlebrook Road \$4,200,000
- Idaville Road \$2,400,000
- Rouchel Road \$2,100,000

Estimated Total Cost \$8,700,000

Regional Sealed Roads

Scone to Merriwa Road (RR62) provides access for heavy vehicles between the Golden and New England Highways. This is a crucial route for industry within the area and the wider region. The pavement has numerous defects such as cracking, heavy patches, shoving, potholes and narrowing.

Scone to Merriwa Road (RR62) from Sophia Creek Bridge to Cuan

Estimated Total Cost **\$1,500,000**

Scone to Merriwa Road (RR62) from Halls Bridge towards Merriwa for 4.0km

Estimated Total Cost **\$2,400,000**

Merriwa to Willow Tree Road (RR358) also provides access for heavy vehicles between the Golden and New England Highways. This is a crucial route for industry within the area and the wider region. Works undertaken in 2018-2020 have failed substantially requiring the route to be closed to all traffic.

Merriwa to Willow Tree Road (RR358) from 36 to 39km

Estimated Total Cost **\$9,900,000**

Northern Overpass



The completion of the Scone Bypass Project has seen a reduction in volumes of heavy vehicles passing through the Scone CBD. However, given that the only access to the Scone industrial area is via Kelly Street and Muffett Street, many heavy vehicles still have to use this route and travel directly through the CBD. The establishment of an overpass onto Muffett Street from Kelly Street will essentially eliminate the need of heavy vehicles, who are accessing the industrial areas, to travel through the CBD area of Scone. This has numerous added benefits including; lessening pavement deterioration, improving both traffic and pedestrian safety and amenity within the CBD.

Council resolved on the 25 June 2018 to:

Work with the RMS, other government departments and the community to further develop a proposal for a northern rail overpass in Muffett Street and continue to lobby for appropriate funding.

Muffett Street (Scone) provides the only access for heavy vehicles to the industrial estate and Regional Saleyards. This is a crucial route for industry within Scone and the wider region. The pavement has numerous defects such as cracking, heavy patches, shoving and potholes.

Council subsequently purchased Lot 21 DP 1235763 in preparation for the further development of conceptual designs to a level where quotations can be called for the full detail design, all associated investigations, detailed cost estimates and tender document preparation.

Estimated Total Cost

\$20,000,000 to \$30,000,000

Urban Streets



Main Street (Scone) is a through street parallel with Kelly Street that has numerous small business such as the Library, Court House, funeral director, antiques, nursery, hair dresser/beauty, dry cleaners and hotel/motel. Repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality and will improve access and amenity through the area.

Waverley Street (Scone) is a residential street that also is a key bus route for Scone Public School and Scone High School. Repairing the pavement defects, sealing the gravel shoulders and resealing will improve the ride quality and will improve access and amenity through the area. This work will also improve the storm water quality through the network, removing heavy sediments (gravel particulates) from the run-off.

Scone Streets Estimated Total Cost **\$1,100,000**

Victoria Street (Murrurundi) is a residential street that provides access to the Murrurundi Hospital. Repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality, improving access and amenity through the area. This work will also improve the storm water quality through the network removing heavy sediments (gravel particulates) from the run-off.

Paradise Road (Murrurundi) is a residential street that provides access to the Murrurundi Hospital. Repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality, improving access and amenity through the area. This work will also improve the storm water quality through the network removing heavy sediments (gravel particulates) from the run-off.

Albert Street (Murrurundi) is a residential street that provides access to the Murrurundi Hospital. Repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality, improving access and amenity through the area. This work will also improve the storm water quality through the network removing heavy sediments (gravel particulates) from the run-off.

Murrurundi Streets Estimated Total Cost **\$600,000**

Hacketts Lane (Merriwa) is a through street parallel with Bettington Street. This also provides a viewing area of the recently completed Silo Art, which has significantly increased the traffic volume on the street. Repairing the pavement defects and providing an initial seal will improve the ride quality, improve access and amenity through the area.

Gooch Street (Merriwa) is a residential street that provides the only access to the Merriwa Treatment Works. Repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality, improving access and amenity through the area.

Merriwa Streets Estimated Total Cost **\$900,000**

Moray Street (Aberdeen) repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality and improve access and amenity through the area.

Kyuga Street (Aberdeen) repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality and improve access and amenity through the area.

Waratah Lane (Aberdeen) repairing the pavement defects and resealing will improve the ride quality and improve access and amenity through the area.

Graeme Street (Aberdeen) is a residential street that also is access for Aberdeen Public School. Repairing the pavement defects, sealing the gravel shoulders and resealing will improve the ride quality, improving access and amenity through the area. This work will also improve the storm water quality through the network removing heavy sediments (gravel particulates) from the run-off.

Aberdeen Streets Estimated Total Cost **\$600,000**

Bridges



Ti-Tree Creek Bridge and Allen Bridge are the two major vehicles bridges that are not primarily constructed on concrete that remain in the Upper Hunter Shire Council LGA.

Ti-Tree Creek Bridge is a Steel Truss bridge built during the 1930s, which later had the timber deck replaced with concrete. The bridge is located 15.7km along Waverley Road, which is an unsealed rural road that links Gundy/Moonan to Timor. The structure is approximately 26 metres long and 4.7 metres wide with a 12-metre drop to the creek.

Allan Bridge is a Timber Suspension bridge built in 1957, and is one of only two vehicular structures (of this type) that are still in service in New South Wales. The bridge is located along Allan Bridge Road, which is an unsealed rural road that links Aberdeen to Glenbawn Dam and surrounds. The structure is approximately 94 metres long and 3 metres wide with a 9-metre drop to the creek. This structure has been listed on the State Heritage list since 1989. This requires specialised maintenance to ensure the structure is safe for road users. There is currently a 4 tonne load limit on this structure. Council's aim would be to construct a new bridge alongside the existing Allan Bridge. This would reduce the amount of maintenance required to keep the structure in service for vehicles, retaining the heritage listed bridge for pedestrians and/or cyclists.

Ti-Tree Creek Bridge replacing the old steel/concrete structure

Estimated Total Cost **\$1,300,000**

Construct an additional bridge to protect the heritage listed Allan Bridge

Estimated Total Cost **\$3,800,000**

Sporting Grounds & Venues

White Park Campgrounds **\$2,725,000**

White Park Camping Ground is located in the White Park Equine Complex, Scone and services local, regional and national events. The campground upgrade will improve the current level of service and promote the facility as a premier venue.

White Park Electrical Phase 2 Upgrade **\$785,000**

White Park Electrical Phase 2 Upgrade is located in the White Park Equine Complex, Scone and services local, regional and national events. The Electrical Phase 2 Upgrade will improve the current level of service and promote the facility as a premier venue. Campdraft arena lighting, Campdraft arena power outlet boards (x3), Vet Shed Supply, Street lighting (25 off 10m lights) and Food Van Alley.

Wilson Oval Fence Upgrade **\$100,000**

Wilson Oval is located in Murrurundi and services multiple sporting groups. The new fencing will protect spectators as they watch the game.

MacKinnon Oval Fence Upgrade **\$100,000**

MacKinnon Oval is located in Aberdeen and services multiple sporting groups, the new fencing will protect spectators as they watch the game.

Merriwa No 1 Oval Fence Upgrade **\$100,000**

Merriwa No 1 Oval is located in Merriwa and services multiple sporting groups, the new fencing will protect spectator as they watch the game also protecting the players and UHSC property

Merriwa No 1 Oval Main Entrance Gate **\$15,000**

Merriwa No 1 Oval is located in Merriwa and services multiple sporting groups, new gates will help protect community assets and maintain the community identity.

Merriwa No 2 Oval Irrigation Upgrade **\$60,000**

Merriwa No 2 is located in Merriwa and services multiple sporting groups. The new irrigation system will improve the playing surface by having the field watered on a regular basis and reduce the cost of manual labour.

Bill Rose Field Upgrade **\$430,000**

Bill Rose Field is located in the Bill Rose Sporting Complex, Scone. Bill Rose Field services multiple sporting groups and a new irrigation system will improve the playing surface by having the field watered on a regular basis and reduce the cost of manual labour to the old system; surface upgrade to improve safety; new fencing will protect spectators as they watch the game; additional storage; and improve disability access.

Murray Bain Oval Change Rooms Upgrade **\$35,000**

Murray Bain Oval is located in Scone and services multiple sporting groups. The change room upgrade will comply with the relevant building code to accommodate male and female participation.

Murray Bain Oval Lighting Upgrade **\$200,000**

Murray Bain Oval is located in Scone and services multiple sporting groups. The light upgrade will comply with the relevant code to allow sporting groups to train under lights.

Scone Skate Park **\$450,000**

The Scone Skate park is located in Scone on the corner of Hill and Susan Streets. The current facility is outdated and difficult to use due to cracking in the concrete. The new facility would be built on community land following consultation.

Parks & Gardens

Merriwa Rotary Park BBQ Upgrade **\$40,000**

Merriwa Rotary Park is located in Merriwa on the western side of town. The Park services local and the traveling public. The upgrade would include new BBQ and shelter along with landscaping.

Bettington Street Garden Bed Refurbishment **\$28,000**

Bettington Street (Golden Highway, B84) is the main thoroughfare through the Merriwa CBD. The proposed works will improve the amenity and aesthetics through the main CBD.

Footpath and Cycleway

Merriwa Footpath Cycleway **\$983,000**

Merriwa Footpath Cycleway project is approximately 4 km of cycle and walkway path. The pathway will connect existing paths to the town's sporting facilities, including a newly built skate park. The new path will also take in the town River Walk, enhancing community and visitor experiences. This will improve connectivity of the town and provide opportunities for exercise and community building. Visitors that stop at the Driver Reviver will be more likely to take in the walk and venture into the town creating economic stimulus.

Bettington Street CDB Footpath Upgrade **\$650,000**

Bettington Street CDB Footpath Upgrade Merriwa would receive a footpath upgrade to tie-in with overall revitalisation town efforts. Additional landscaping and street furniture would be installed to revitalise the central business district and increase its appeal for the community and visitors.

Swimming Pools Upgrade



Merriwa Pool Renewal

\$4,500,000

Merriwa Pool is located in Vennacher Street, Merriwa. The Olympic size swimming pool is in desperate need of repair to the filtration unit and buildings. A complete renewal will fix the compliance issues with the buildings (including change rooms and chemical storage sheds), the filtration and sanitation systems and provide new disabled access.

Murrurundi Pool Renewal

\$4,400,000

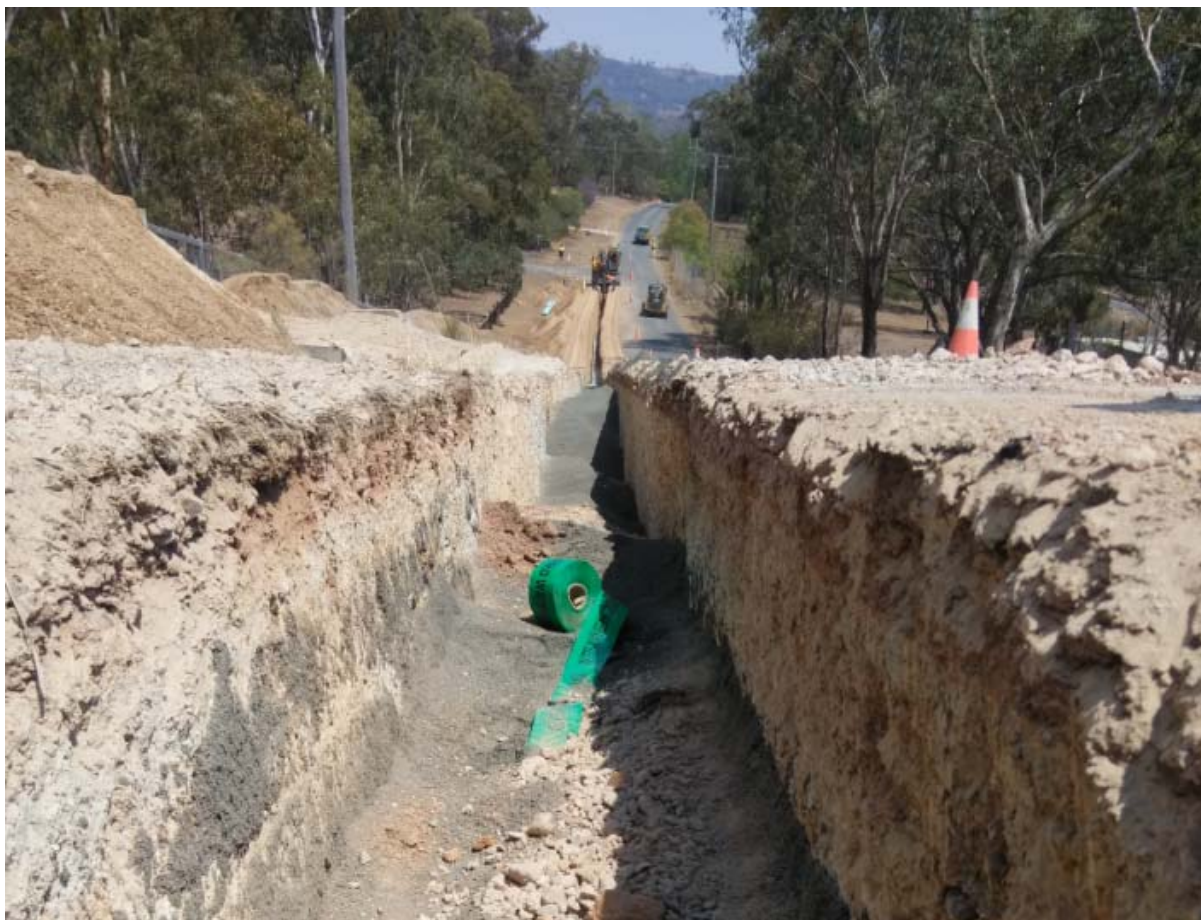
Murrurundi & District War Memorial Pool is located in Mount Street, Murrurundi. The swimming pool has passed the end of its design life and a complete renewal will fix the compliance issues with the buildings (including change rooms and chemical storage sheds), the filtration and sanitation systems and provide new disabled access.

Scone Pool Renewal

\$5,000,000

Scone Memorial Swimming Pool is located in Guernsey Street, Scone. The swimming pool has passed the end of its design life and a complete renewal will fix the compliance issues with the buildings (including change rooms and chemical storage sheds), the filtration and sanitation systems and provide new disabled access.

Water, Sewer & Waste



Upper Hunter Shire Council has a very small rate base that needs to support multiple water supply, sewerage and waste management facilities. Continued major capital investment is required to bring our facilities up to best practice – Council has previously had issues with water quality and security, and meeting all environmental requirements for treated effluent and waste.

Scone Water Treatment Plant **\$24,000,000**

Scone, Aberdeen and Murrurundi are rated level 5 on DPIE's Criticality Matrix, with a water filtration plant required in Scone to supply all three centres.

Scone Sewage Treatment Plant **\$17,000,000**

Scone STP requires a major upgrade in order to meet EPA Licence Requirements, and to improve the quality and security of the recycled water scheme that provides water to the Golf Course, Sports Complex, Race Course, and neighbouring farms.

Cassilis Sewerage Scheme **\$1,900,000**

Council currently have \$1.2M in grant funding to provide an essential sewerage scheme for Cassilis, however current cost estimates has the total project cost at \$4.5M. Council need to source additional funding in order to deliver the project affordably – currently design work is underway.

Scone to Aberdeen Pipeline Replacement**\$4,000,000**

The current pipeline is in poor condition, is adjacent to the New England Hwy, and is made from asbestos material. A replacement is required to secure the 'back-up' water supply to Scone (from Aberdeen) and to secure the primary water supply to Aberdeen from the new Scone WTP.

Gundy Water Supply System**\$7,000,000**

Located on the Pages River, Gundy ran out of water during the last drought, with most properties requiring months of water carting. Gundy could be supplied via 18km pipeline from Brushy Hill Balance Tank, and Water Treatment at Gundy.

Village Water Supply**Parkville, Wingen, Blandford & Middlebrook****\$7,000,000**

Council have \$3M in grant funding to provide water to Parkville, Wingen and Blandford (the villages adjacent to the completed Scone to Murrurundi Pipeline), however this falls short of the money required to connect all properties. Additional money is also required to supply water to Middlebrook, 4km outside of Scone.

State Government Projects

EMERGENCY HOUSING

\$100,000

Public housing is a State responsibility. Council owns a property that could however be made available for the provision of emergency accommodation for vulnerable people including victims of domestic violence. Funds are needed to renovate the property to make it habitable and secure before being leased to a local community service provider to manage.

LANDFILL CLOSURES AND REMEDIATION

\$3,300,000

Council's landfills at Merriwa and Murrurundi are nearing end of life and will need to be closed and capped in the near future. Funds collected by the NSW Government through the waste levy should be made available to Council to enable the required landfill capping and closure works at these sites to be completed. In general, Council would like to see a larger proportion of the funds collected through the waste levy returned to local Councils to provide adequate funding for landfill consolidation and closure, environmental improvements of landfills and waste infrastructure across the state. Since 2011, Upper Hunter Shire Council has paid a total of \$7,636,970 in waste levies to the NSW Government and received only \$1,612,022 in grant funding for waste infrastructure and other waste related projects. Based on our figures year to date, it is anticipated that Council's total waste levy contributions to the NSW government this financial year will be approximately \$1,168,000.

SCONE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

\$1,500,000 - \$2,000,000

The project involves the construction and fitout of a new modern library and Visitor Information Centre on the ground floor of the Campbell's Corner building at 167 Kelly Street, Scone. The project will contribute to the revitalisation of the Scone CBD and will provide an essential public facility that is a focal point for all members of the community within Scone and the broader Upper Hunter Shire.



State Government Assistance

COST SHIFTING



STATE EMERGENCY LEVY

Historically, Council has contributed to the State Government towards a Fire & Emergency Levy in order to assist in funding the following services:

- NSW Rural Fire Service
- NSW Fire Brigade
- NSW State Emergency Service

Council has always acknowledged this contribution as a worthy cost to the community as the services provide assurances and comfort, that when required, these services will be available to meet emergency crisis points.

However, in the past two years Council has noted significant increases in the levy which it regards as totally untenable for a small rural council. The following table over the last 10 years highlights the increase and the % of the levy to Council general rates received.

Upper Hunter Shire Council – Fire & Emergency Levy – FY2011 to Annualised FY 2021

| Year | | \$ | \$ Yearly Increase | % Yearly Increase | Levy as % of General Rates Revenue |
|------|------------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2011 | Base Year | 407,665 | | | 5.31% |
| 2012 | | 321,510 | -86,155 | -21.13% | 4.03% |
| 2013 | | 397,191 | 75,681 | 23.54% | 4.77% |
| 2014 | | 442,387 | 45,197 | 11.38% | 4.98% |
| 2015 | | 451,505 | 9,118 | 2.06% | 4.80% |
| 2016 | | 478,058 | 26,552 | 5.88% | 4.81% |
| 2017 | | 527,053 | 48,995 | 10.25% | 5.17% |
| 2018 | | 538,431 | 11,378 | 2.16% | 5.17% |
| 2019 | | 520,923 | -17,508 | -3.25% | 4.88% |
| 2020 | | 641,804 | 120,880 | 23.21% | 5.82% |
| 2021 | Annualised | 888,682 | 246,879 | 38.47% | 7.90% |

As highlighted in this table, the Levy has increased in \$ terms by \$367,759 or 70% based on the 2019 year. Council considers this as a form of **cost shifting** by the State Government.

To put this significant increase into context, for the 2022 year Council will need to fund the levy increase from its general rates IPART rate peg of 2% amounting to \$228,000 which highlights that this amount is well short of the \$367,000 increase imposed over the last two years which ultimately will effect Council's ability to provide its services to the community.

Council therefore requests that the major increase over the last 2 years be reviewed and reverted back to a CPI increased amount.

Road Reclassification

In February 2019, the NSW Government announced that a Road Classification Review would be initiated to ensure that the current classification framework was still fit for purpose, and that roads across NSW were appropriately classified. The last review was undertaken between 2003 and 2009, with implementation finalised in 2012.

Future Transport 2056 identifies the Road Classification Review as a key initiative to make adjustments to the classification policy framework and update the road network to align with the 'Hub and Spoke' Transport Network Model and the 'Movement and Place' Framework.

The continued maintenance of existing assets to an acceptable level of service and implementation of appropriate renewal programs is crucial to successful network management. Many local governments have a significant backlog of works that are required so that infrastructure, such as road pavements and seals can provide an acceptable and satisfactory level of service.

Council staff have reviewed both the regional and local road networks and have identified a number of roads that meet the general criteria for reclassification to state or regional status.

The committee resolution included the following:

Regional Roads to be reclassified as State Roads

| Road Number | Road Name/Description | Length |
|-------------|--|----------|
| RR62 | Scone / Merriwa Road - (from the New England Highway to the Golden Highway) | 63.37 km |
| RR105 | Scone / Moonan Flat Road – (from the New England Highway via Gundy to Moonan Flat) | 51.60 km |

Local Roads to be reclassified as Regional Roads

| Road Number | Road Name/Description | Length |
|-------------|--|----------|
| 545 | Moonan Brook Road - from Hunter Road (RR105) to Barrington Forest Road | 3.40 km |
| 55 | Barrington Forest Road - from Moonan Brook Road to Barrington Tops National Park | 11.45 km |
| 320 | Glenbawn Road - from Gundy Road (RR105) to Rouchel Road | 13.50 km |
| 720 | Rouchel Road - from MacQueen Street (A15) to Glenbawn Road | 7.90 km |
| 680 | Ringwood Road - from Golden Highway (B84) to Wollar Road | 13.48 km |
| 920 | Wollar Road - from Ringwood Road to LGA Boundary | 21.57 km |
| 280 | Flaggs Road - from Golden Highway (B84) to Hall Road | 23.30 km |

The transfer of regional roads is intended to support local councils to better manage and maintain the rural road network. Any reduction to the financial burden on Council will allow the redirection of additional resources into local road improvements.