



UPPER HUNTER SHIRE COUNCIL

PROJECTS FOR FUNDING CONSIDERATION

January 2023

All correspondence to:

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Introduction

This document is to provide candidates contesting the March 2023 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



Rural Unsealed Roads Repairs

\$3,000,000

The rural unsealed road network, some 1,100km, is generally in an average to poor condition due to the lack of quality material for gravel re-sheeting and patching, flood damage 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 network. 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

Rural Unsealed Roads – Upgrade and Sealing

\$38,500,000

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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| • Hunter Road (Stage 1) | \$9,600,000 |
| • Hunter Road (Stage 2) | \$5,000,000 |
| • Barrington Forest Road (Stage 3) | \$4,000,000 |
| • Moonan Brook Road (Stage 2) | \$4,000,000 |
| • Middlebrook Road | \$3,500,000 |
| • Cliftlands Road | \$2,800,000 |
| • Yarrandi Road | \$9,600,000 |

Rural Sealed Roads



Rural Sealed Road Repairs

\$14,000,000

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 | \$5,200,000 |
| • Idaville Road | \$2,400,000 |
| • Rouchel Road | \$2,100,000 |
| • Rouchel Road Cutting | \$5,000,000 |

Concrete Causeway Replacement Program

\$1,250,000

Council currently has a number of critical rural use causeways within its road network which are approximately 50 years old and are in poor condition due to recent drought and then flooding events. Replacement of these causeways will effectively improve traffic flow and safety for users while reducing the burden of high maintenance costs being incurred by Council.

At least six (6) concrete causeways have been identified for replacement on the following roads:

- Dry Creek Road
- Stewarts Brook Road
- Rouchel Road
- Ringwood Road
- Sargeants Gap Road
- Middlebrook Road



Regional Sealed Roads

Murdering Hut Gully - Halls Creek Bridge for 4.0km towards Merriwa **\$4,800,000**

Scone to Merriwa Road (MR62) 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.

Gundy Road to Belltrees – Stage 3 **\$2,400,000**

Scone to Ellerston Road (MR105) provides access for both heavy vehicles from farming communities to the main highway but also tourism to the Barrington Tops National Park area. The pavement has numerous defects including cracking, heavy patches, potholing, shoulder drop-offs and narrowing which create safety concerns for the road users.

Northern Overpass



Northern Overpass

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

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.

Urban Streets



Scone Streets

\$1,100,000

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.

Murrurundi Streets

\$800,000

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.

Merriwa Streets

\$500,000

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.

Aberdeen Streets Estimated Total Cost

\$600,000

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.

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

\$3,000,000

Replacing the old steel/concrete structure – \$12,000/m²

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

\$6,000,000

Construct an additional bridge to protect the heritage listed bridge.

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.

Sporting Grounds & Venues

White Park Campgrounds **\$3,500,000**

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.

Wilson Oval Fence Upgrade **\$120,000**

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 **\$120,000**

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 **\$120,000**

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 **\$25,000**

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 **\$75,000**

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.

Rosedale Complex Grandstand – Murrurundi **\$200,000**

The existing grandstand facilities require upgrading and an allocation for new aluminium grandstand seating would allow replacement of the old grandstand and better utilisation of the facility

Rosedale Complex Tractor – Murrurundi **\$20,000**

A tractor with bucket and slasher would allow the King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge to operate with a greater level of safety for animal management and better overall maintenance of the facility throughout the year.

Rosedale Complex Amenities – Murrurundi **\$400,000**

Permanent amenities at the Rosedale Complex are required to replace the old toilets and reduce the reliance on portable toilets for events.

Bill Rose Field Upgrade**\$550,000**

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.

Scone Skate Park**\$600,000**

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

Upgrade of the Shire's Playground Equipment

\$750,000

Council has an ageing list of park playground equipment that is currently being replaced slowly under its Playground Equipment Replacement Program. Acceleration of the Program will improve the risks compliance and safety of this equipment that is reaching its useful life.

Elizabeth Park, Scone Amenities Upgrade

\$350,000

Elizabeth Park is the main park within the Scone CBD area that attracts a large number of travellers and residents as a meeting and destination point. Current amenities at the park have become outdated and are considered to be nearing the end of their serviceability for the increasing travelling public. Upgrade of the facilities will enhance the attractiveness for travellers to stop, which will only increase the economic benefits to the Shire.

Footpath and Cycleway

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.

Extension to Scone's Footpath Network

\$300,000

Extension of the Scone footpath network from Liverpool Street to Wingen Street to Bill Rose Sporting Complex will tie in with the linkage of the existing footpath to its sporting facilities. This will provide users of the facility with a safe and secure method of commuting by foot, especially young youths.

Swimming Pools Upgrade



Merriwa Pool Renewal

\$4,500,000

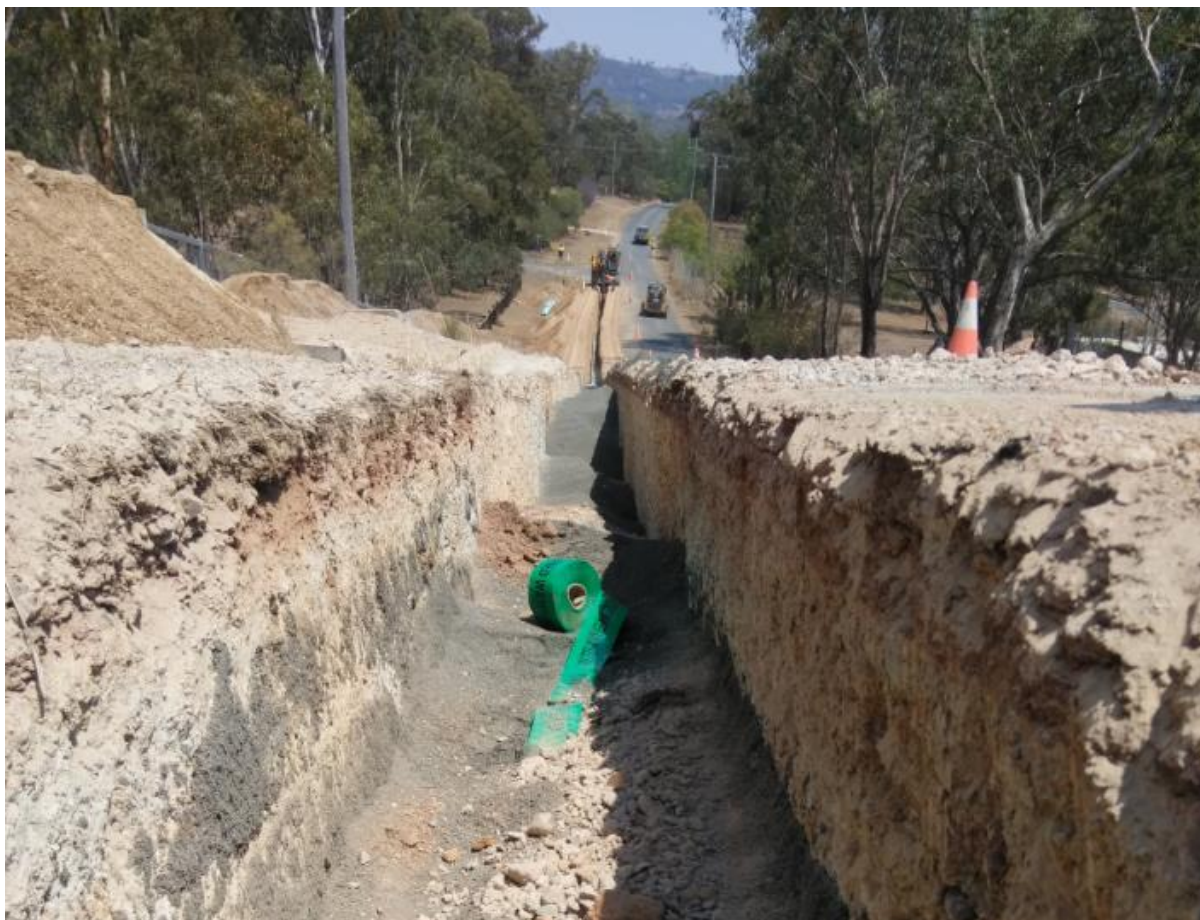
Merriwa Pool is located in Vennacher Street, Merriwa. The Olympic size swimming pool is in desperate need of repair to the filtration unit and buildings. A complete renewal will fix the compliance issues with the buildings (including change rooms and chemical storage sheds), the filtration and sanitation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

Water & Sewer



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 - \$30,000,000

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 and allow for future growth of the townships.

Scone Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)

\$20,000,000 - \$30,000,000

Scone STP is under capacity and 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

\$6,000,000

Cassilis does not have a sewer system. Council has completed a detailed design and costings for the project with estimated costs of \$6 million. The project is to provide an essential sewerage scheme for the Cassilis township residents who are currently utilising onsite sewer management systems. These systems however, are beginning to fail creating possible health concerns for the future.

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.

Merriwa Sewage Treatment Plant Effluent Reuse System**\$8,000,000**

The EPA has requested that Council undertake an assessment of the reuse of effluent water from the sewage treatment plant. It is likely that the EPA will require Council to implement a recycled water use process estimated to be between \$6 and \$8 million.

Community Services

LANDFILL CLOSURES AND REMEDIATION

\$16,000,000

Council's landfills at Scone, 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 the introduction of the levy (July 2011 to June 2022), Upper Hunter Shire Council has paid a total of \$8,462,506 in waste levies to the NSW Government and received only \$1,550,046 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 for the 2022/2023 financial year will be approximately \$850,000.

SCONE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

\$1,000,000

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. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$2.5 million and Council has successfully secured \$1.5 million to date.



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 12 years highlights the increase and the % of the levy to Council general rates received.

Upper Hunter Shire Council – Fire & Emergency Levy – FY2011 to FY 2023

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		888,682	246,879	38.47%	7.90%
2022		666,007	-222,675	-25.06%	5.71%
2023		884,440	218,433	32.80%	7.43%

As highlighted in this table, the Levy has increased in \$ terms by \$363,517 or 70% based on the 2019 year. Council considers this as a form of **cost shifting** by the State Government.

It is noted that the Office of Local Government has provided to councils funding to assist with these major spikes in levies charged but the concern is when this assistance is removed Council will face a deficiency in the budget equating to its current level of rate peg for 2022/2023 year of approximately \$230,000.

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 and managed by the State Government

Road Number	Road Name/Description	Length
MR62	Scone / Merriwa Road - (from the New England Highway to the Golden Highway)	63.37 km
MR105	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.