

Kyogle Council

Economic Development Policy



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Growing Kyogle



Sustainable Kyogle – An Economic Development Policy has been developed by Growing Kyogle (formerly named Kyogle Community Economic Development Committee) in partnership with the Kyogle Council. The initiative has been undertaken with funding from Kyogle Council and NSW Department of Industry and Investment.

SUSTAINABLE KYOGLE
AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY – 2011 to 2015
The Vision for a Sustainable Kyogle Local Government Area

PREAMBLE

Introduction

The Kyogle LGA has experienced waves of growth; major investment and activity levels in past decades based on dairy and forestry have changed to the present lower levels of economic growth and investment.

New residents are being drawn to Kyogle LGA as the ‘undiscovered country’ of Northern New South Wales – a region with traditional villages, high quality of life and a welcoming environment.

Residents recognise the unique value of this region and seek to retain its best qualities while improving opportunities for its long term economic sustainability. Balance – in growth, lifestyle, investment and pace of life – is the key. This balance should reflect the views and desires of the whole community – long term residents and newcomers, young and old, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

While the LGA is not a major industry centre, it must actively shape the way that new investment and new jobs are created – creating a sustainable future that the community values.

Significant Characteristics of the Kyogle LGA?

- We live in an area with a mosaic of agricultural and natural landscapes that provides a unique feel and visual amenity. Our biodiversity is of world significance.
- We enjoy a subtropical climate with reliable rainfall, and we have areas of highly productive soils.
- We have a strong growing and Aboriginal community with links to traditional lands and culture.
- We retain strong links to our pioneering history and culture, and value our traditional industries.
- We embrace different cultures and lifestyles, and recognise that there is strength in diversity.
- We maintain our unique identity even though we are in proximity to the growth areas of South East Queensland.
- South East Queensland provides markets for economic development, together with international and domestic tourists.
- New residents bring new skills and knowledge.
- Our community volunteers willingly contribute to our wellbeing and quality of life.
- We have access to raw produce from the Darling Downs in Queensland which we value add then ship to south East Queensland for domestic sale and export
- Large and growing plantation forest industry and very productive native forests.

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Preamble (Cont'd)

Making the Kyogle LGA a better place to live, learn, work and play we need to:

- Strengthen our sense of community within Kyogle, our villages, and across the council area.
- Provide quality infrastructure and services (including in villages and rural areas) to support economic, and community development - roads, water, sewerage, electricity, telecommunications.
- Strengthen and broaden our economic base and level of business support services.
- Build on our traditional rural industries to ensure their economic future. Explore opportunities for new agricultural industries. Pursue value adding, and use new technologies.
- Plan to avoid conflicts between land uses.
- Improve public transport options.
- Create jobs that meet our needs and expectations, and increase participation.
- Provide relevant and accessible education options for jobs and for life.
- Support our volunteers to do the jobs they do best.
- Improve the health of our community. Ensure the delivery of health services reform results in more equitable and improved access to primary, preventative and community based care. Attract and retain medical and dental services, mental health services, and alternative therapy providers.
- Increase cultural, sporting, and recreational opportunities.
- Support our youth, and plan for future generations.
- Meet the needs of our aging residents, in town and in rural areas – provide options for aged care support and accommodation.
- Manage our population in consideration of our impacts on the natural environment, and the quality of life we want now and into the future.
- Maintain our scenic amenity, improve our management of the natural environment, and protect our biodiversity – it is of World Heritage significance.
- Work with our neighbours, including those in South East Queensland - but maintain our distinctiveness.
- Sustain our heritage both built and natural.+

Preamble (Cont'd)

The vision for a Sustainable Kyogle is:

- A **sustainable community** – retaining the region’s current high quality of life, creating employment for the community and attracting services that respond to the needs of the community in the town of Kyogle and villages in Kyogle LGA. Creating a prosperous community which reflects the benefits of the past and creates resilience and optimism in the future.
- A **sustainable environment** – working to retain the high quality natural and rural environment and biodiversity of the region and ensuring that this high quality natural environment can continue to be enjoyed by visitors and residents – a lasting environmental legacy in Northern New South Wales.
- A **sustainable economy** – retaining existing key industry sectors such as agriculture, forestry and current business investment and encouraging business growth in new and emerging industries. Creating an economy which builds on existing assets whilst searching for new opportunities.
- A focus on **sustainable practices** – covering energy usage, built environment, sustainable industry practices and creating a leading example of locally driven sustainable development.
- An **active regional partner** – working with surrounding regions in New South Wales and Queensland to create partnerships, shared initiatives and investment that generate a wider regional economic benefit.
- Investment in **infrastructure** – pursuing active Regional, State and Federal Partnerships to maximise access to programmes which will support the development of social and physical assets for improved economic outcomes.

This vision and the following policy are a starting point. The preparation of an economic development strategy and resourcing the implementation of the strategy are the next critical steps in the journey towards sustainable economic development for the Kyogle LGA. The information provided by both the Sense of Place Project and the Kyogle Community Economic Development Committee will be invaluable in this process.

This Policy aligns with Kyogle Council’s Community Strategic Plan, the Far North Coast Regional Strategy, Kyogle Local Government Area Social Plan 2009-2014, Kyogle Cultural Strategy 2009, Kyogle Council 2009/2010 Management Plan, Kyogle Local Growth Management Strategy and links to the themes of economic development in neighbouring regions. The new policy builds on work undertaken in the Kyogle Sense of Place Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010. Economic development themes and priorities for 2010 align with and build on those identified for action in the Kyogle Sense of Place.

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The Policy

Title

This document is the Economic Development Policy for Kyogle LGA.

Validity

This report gains its validity from Council Resolution 280311/1

Strategic Objectives

The Economic Development Policy for Kyogle LGA provides direction for economic development activities over the next 4 years and outlines a number of areas for action to build a sustainable economy. The outcomes of the actions supported by this Policy are to improve the capacity of the local economy to deliver long term, sustainable economic wellbeing for Kyogle LGA.

The Policy provides a framework for action and investment covering economic growth, community development, strengthening long standing industries in the area and establishing new economic opportunities in tourism, knowledge industries and other sectors. This economic growth will support long term sustainability of communities in Kyogle LGA and retain the high quality environment in the LGA.

Role of Council and Other Stakeholders in Economic Development

The Kyogle Council plays a key role as a facilitator of economic development – creating the environment to support growth and investment and working as a regional partner to support economic development activities.

Growing Kyogle has played a role as project facilitator and acted as a clearing house for information, activities and projects that support economic development. Both Kyogle Council and Growing Kyogle have an active role in investment attraction and supporting new investment in Kyogle LGA.

Business and industry, State Government agencies, neighbouring regions, peak bodies and active groups in the community are vital partners in achieving economic sustainability outcomes.

The Policy

The Policy combines community values, sustainability and economic growth priorities in three important themes:

1) Sustainable Community and Sustainable Economy

Building sustainability in communities can be supported by increased population growth, improved transport (roads and transport services) as well as providing improved telecommunications and high speed broadband internet access. Individual communities also need specific economic development priorities to ensure that they participate in and benefit from sustainable economic growth in Kyogle LGA.

Working with long standing, existing industries is a key driver for long term economic wellbeing. In the agriculture sector, retaining good quality agricultural land, and encouraging investment in food processing, bush tucker production and value adding (agribusinesses and agritourism) can boost incomes and build competitiveness in this sector. While new tree change residents will continue to move into the area and bring economic benefits, managing settlement strategies and retaining high quality agricultural land is important.

The forestry industry is a long standing sector of the economy. Working with this industry to achieve areas of excellence and value adding is a priority.

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The Policy (cont'd)

To add to and diversify the existing local economy, encouraging small and home based businesses in the information and knowledge industries is regarded as a major priority. This focus will ensure that the Kyogle LGA participates in this fast growing sector of national and global economies.

Creating employment for local people of all ages will drive economic prosperity for the LGA. Attracting new investment in employment generating businesses and attracting business owners based on the quality of life the area offers will broaden the economic and employment base in the LGA.

Building local skills, boosting training and using the human capital in the region will improve the area's economic competitiveness. Skills development linked to employment pathways will ensure that local people and their families benefit from economic growth in Kyogle LGA.

To support this economic, population and employment growth, a strategy of attracting new investment in services – public, private and not for profit – will ensure that communities benefit from growth in the area. This includes retailing, retirement village and aged accommodation and care investment and other services to support these communities.

2) Sustainable Environment

Considered and planned growth is the priority that underpins the Policy – creating economic opportunities while retaining the high quality of life in the area and building on the strengths of the local environment (for tourism and environmental initiatives).

The Policy supports growth in tourism, guided by a destination management plan and a tourism strategy. There are opportunities to work with the tourism sectors in surrounding areas and build a high quality, eco focused tourism industry in Kyogle LGA. Supporting growth in a vibrant creative industries sector is also a priority.

The changing world focus on energy usage may enable the Kyogle LGA to better support sustainable energy usage, sustainability in the built environment and in community activities.

3) Supporting Sustainable Growth and Working Together

To support this sustainable economic growth, Kyogle Council and all stakeholders in economic development need to:

Communicate and work together in a spirit of goodwill; and pursue active Regional, State and Federal partnerships to maximise access to programs which will support the development of social and physical assets for improved economic outcomes.

Appendix A

1. Sustainable Community and Sustainable Economy

The vision:

- A **sustainable community** – retaining the region's current high quality of life, creating employment for the community and attracting services that respond to the needs of the community in the town of Kyogle and villages in Kyogle LGA.
- A **sustainable economy** – retaining existing key industry sectors such as agriculture, forestry and current business investment and encouraging business growth in new and emerging industries.

Areas of Focus

- Population growth that supports and expands services – government and private sector – to the town of Kyogle and villages in the LGA. Employment and business growth, linked to population growth is an important catalyst for service investment.
 - Connectivity across the LGA and into the region from SE Qld – roads, transport, telecommunications and access into and out of the region. Improvements to connectivity are closely linked to maintaining and improving quality of life for residents.
 - Community economic development priorities for the villages and Kyogle town as part of the Economic Development Strategy for the region. Consider the social and environmental impact of all development and continue to engage residents in an ongoing process of review and evaluation of needs.
 - Attracting and retaining health professionals
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- **Retention of high quality agricultural land** in Kyogle LGA for food production.
 - **Regional food processing and value adding** and actively link with regional food industry initiatives and investment in niche and high value agricultural production and improved capacity to link to end markets.
 - Development that will not impede **core agricultural development**.
 - **Initiatives in excellence and industry development in plantation forestry in the Northern Rivers Region** as a catalyst for industry innovation, value adding and sustainable industry investment.
 - **Partnerships with the Indigenous and broader community** to support the **bush tucker industry and other development** whilst value adding.
 - **Agribusiness investment** on rural properties such as agritourism and complementary businesses ventures (retail, manufacturing, or other activities) that

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Areas of Focus
<p>increase the economic viability and opportunities for agricultural production in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Southern Downs and Scenic Rim in activities of common interest, for example the horse industry.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kyogle LGA's role in the small and home based businesses in the Information technology and knowledge industries and continued development of creative industries.

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- New investment to the Kyogle LGA that:
 - complements and adds to existing industry sector activities;
 - Is mid to low environmental impact industry. This covers sustainable industries, primary production value adding, forestry processing and value adding, manufacturing, service and knowledge industries; and
 - supports economic and investment growth in neighbouring regions, particularly Richmond Valley, Tweed, Lismore, Gold Coast and South East Queensland.
 - engages with the community based sector to increase non-government organisations in the Local government area.
 - supports the community based aged care sector to develop innovation models of accommodation for the ageing community.
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- **Investment in the retirement village industry and aged care sector** – meeting the needs of the current population and catering for the influx of tree change retirees expected to move to the region in the future.

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2. Sustainable Environment

The vision:

- A **sustainable environment** – working to retain the high quality natural and rural environment and biodiversity of the region and ensuring that this high quality natural environment can continue to be enjoyed by visitors and residents – a lasting environmental legacy in Northern New South Wales.
- A focus on **sustainable practices** - covering energy usage, built environment, sustainable industry practices and creating a leading example of locally driven sustainable development.

Areas of Focus
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capitalise on the high value environmental resources in the area through strong relationships with neighbouring LGAs and other levels of government. ▪ Rural and primary production environmental initiatives in conjunction with local natural resource management groups. ▪ Plantation Forestry and value adding to sequester and store carbon
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Destination management and tourism for the Kyogle LGA
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative industries development – visual arts, performing arts and digital media and link this to the focus on information technology and knowledge based industries.
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar and other sustainable energy usage and resources in Kyogle LGA. • Sustainability in built environment designs in the LGA and focus on recycling and waste minimisation. • Implementation of environmentally sustainable practices. • Support funding applications to both State and Federal Governments for the control of invasive weeds

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3. Supporting Sustainable Growth and Working Together

The vision:

- An **active regional partner** – working with surrounding regions in New South Wales and Queensland to create partnerships, shared initiatives and investment that generate a wider regional economic benefit.
- Investment in **infrastructure** – to support community and economic development for the LGA.

Areas of Focus
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnering with neighbouring regions Southern Downs and Regional Councils and our NOROC neighbours on a broad range of initiatives.• Assisting the stakeholders in the Kyogle LGA communicating and working together in a spirit of goodwill.
<p><i>Focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated Regional Transport Plan• Infrastructure investment to sustain Economic Development particularly improved links to the Darling Downs and Brisbane• Securing funding to support increased infrastructure investment.

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Development of the Policy

Sustainable Kyogle – An Economic Development Policy has been developed by Growing Kyogle in partnership with the Kyogle Council. The initiative has been undertaken with funding from Kyogle Council and NSW Department of Industry and Investment.

The Policy has been developed based on a series of consultation meetings held in February 2010, assessing links with existing Council plans and strategies and assessing links with neighbouring regions.

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