



# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## Submission on the Draft Queanbeyan-Palerang Region Community Strategic Plan 2042 (2025 Revision)

### Introduction

The Braidwood Community Association (BCA)<sup>1</sup> welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft [Queanbeyan-Palerang Community Strategic Plan – Towards 2042 \(2025 Revision\)](#) (draft CSP).

The BCA observes that the draft CSP has been significantly revised since the 2022 edition and is impressed at the improvements in the drafting of the current version, with a more consistent style<sup>2</sup> and more concise document.

As a high-level document, it is often difficult to know exactly what a particular strategy will entail in practice. Further, with the development of Local Community Plans like the one for Braidwood, attention of local communities will focus on these plans. Our comments are therefore limited to our major issues with the draft CSP together with some suggested improvements to the drafting of the CSP given in attachment 1.

### Local Community Plans (p4)

Having been through the process of developing the Braidwood Local Community Plan, the BCA believes this is a crucial and welcome initiative by Council. It was a very inclusive process with many projects identified. The BCA hopes that the lessons learnt through this process will be applied to other locations and future iterations of the Braidwood Local Community Plan. Most notably we support the need to prioritise projects and give clear timelines, so we do not end up with just a long ‘wish list’ of potential projects.

### Plan (p14)

The BCA agrees with the renaming of the five key themes to: 1. Our community; 2. Our economy; 3 Our environment; 4. Our infrastructure; and 5. Our civic leadership.

Some of the previous names (Community; Choice; Character; Connection; and Capability) were pretentious and at times incomprehensible.

### Objectives

The BCA notes that overall, the number of Objectives has been reduced from 14 to 11 (with one being moved from Theme 1 to 4). The BCA is generally happy with this streamlining.

The exception is the deletion of the Climate Change objective from Theme 3. Addressing Climate Change, both through reducing emissions and adaptation, is one of the great (if not the greatest) current challenges for our society. Local government has an important role to play in the necessary transition and an issue of this gravitas deserves to be identified as a community objective. The removal of this objective also suggests that the current Council takes Climate Change less seriously than the previous Council, which we hope is not the case. The BCA requests that the Climate Change objective be reinstated.

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<sup>1</sup> The BCA has around 150 members and supporters and this submission was prepared by the BCA Committee and a ‘kitchen table’ group, including some who were very senior Australian Public Servants in the past.

<sup>2</sup> The BCA attempted to address this in our [submission](#) on the 2022 version by suggesting revised text but was not taken up at the time.

## **Strategies**

The number of strategies has been reduced from 57 to 30, again indicating a signification rationalisation of the CSP, no doubt to make it more workable.

The BCA suggests adding 3 extra strategies in Theme 3. Two relate to climate change and one to Heritage. It also suggests that Strategy 5.1 in Theme 5 be deleted as it is not a strategy, and its intent is covered by the next two strategies.

## **Our Progress (p26)**

The BCA is pleased to see that the draft Plan has a built-in four-year review and reporting process through a *State of the Region Report*. This is an important innovation.

## **Measures (p26)**

There is an impressive listing of indicators proposed to be used but the BCA believes there are perhaps too many. It is not clear from the draft CSP how they will be used by QPRC or whether they will be published by QPRC as part of the State of the Region Report, or published annually as new data is released. The latter is preferable as it will allow councillors and the community to see how QPRC is tracking during the term of the Council and not just at the end of its term.

The BCA would like to see the discussion on measures extended to say how the measures will be used.

Further, for transparency, following the adoption of the final CSP, the BCA would like to see a time-series of the data for each indicator published on the QPRC website alongside the CSP.

The BCA notes that for many of the indicators the desired trend is given as ‘Stabilise’. The BCA believes that for many of these indicators such a desired trend lacks ambition. To give just three examples:

- Median Household Income – should be ‘Increase’ not ‘Stabilise’.
- CO2e emissions per capita – should be ‘Decrease’ not ‘Stabilise’.
- Quality of Local Roads – should be ‘Increase’ not ‘Stabilise’.

For some indicators, there is no desired trend given. If there is no desired trend, why is the indicator there?

Similarly, if the indicator is not linked to one of the strategies in the CSP why is it there? The BCA believes the indicators should relate to measures wholly or substantially in QPRC's purview.

The BCA asks that Council staff review the indicators to both check they are all relevant and the desired trends are correct when drafting the final CSP.

Many of the indicators are from the ‘UoC Regional Wellbeing Survey 2021’. The BCA notes that there is data for 2023 on the UoC Regional Wellbeing Survey [website](#). The same is true for the ‘OLG Your Council Report 2022-23’, where the Your Council Report [website](#) has 2023-24 data is available. The BCA suggests that the final CSP has the latest data given as the Baseline.

Thank you in anticipation of your consideration.

Submitted by Sue Murray

BCA President

On behalf of the Braidwood Community Association

7 May 2025

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# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## Drafting Suggestions on the Draft QPRC Community Strategic Plan

### Images used

The images used give the impression of a Queanbeyan bias, which the BCA is confident is not the intention. The photo of Wallace Street Braidwood at night on the front cover is a terrible photo and does not give a good impression of the town. The BCA suggests that Council staff review the choice of the photographs and credit their location in the text.

### Welcome (p2)

In para 1, we suggest adding to the second sentence the wording '*living*', so it reads '*This living plan ...*'. Whilst this is discussed on p26, it would be good to have this stated upfront in the CSP.

In para 2, we suggest replacing the word '*custodial*' with '*stewardship*'.

In para 7, replace the third '*our*' with '*its*'.

### Vision (p4)

Replace '*world-class*' with '*high quality*', as world-class is an unrealistic expectation for a regional Council.

Add '*safe*' to '*and fostering a ...*'.

### Local Community Plan (p4)

Delete last paragraph as this will soon become dated.

### Our Queanbeyan-Palerang (p6)

Total population – please add the date to which the data refers.

Top industries of employment – these have changed significantly since the previous plan. The source is not known for the order given, but it does not reflect the data on the id community [website](#), the normal source used for economic data by QPRC. This gives the top industries by employment in descending order as: Construction, Public Administration, Health Care and Social Assistance, Education and Training and Manufacturing. Can Council staff please review.

### Demographics (p7)

Please add the date to which the data refers.

In para 2, add '*with*' before '*several townships*' and '*ones*' before '*main being*'

Why are retired persons excluded from the data? We suggest these are added to the data as they represent an important cohort of the demographics.

The demographics for household types includes only people '*living by themselves*' or '*living in families*'. This excludes households of people who are unrelated but share accommodation. These households must exist within our community.

### Key Priorities (p10)

The reference to '*Monaro Street*' is the only geographical reference to a project in the Key Priorities and so is out of place. Those in other locations also want their local town centres improved. The BCA suggests the reference to '*Monaro Street*' is replaced with '*town centres*'.

## **Our Community (p16)**

1.1 Typo with '*opportunities*'. Suggest spell check the document.

1.6 Council's Role should also include '*Advocate*' as this is really Council's prime role for this strategy.

## **Our environment (p20)**

3.2 Current wording does not make sense. The word '*sustainably*' is superfluous in this context.

Add new objective '*Reduce our region's carbon footprint.*'

Add new strategies:

3.\* *Implement necessary climate change adaptation actions.*

3.\* *Undertake climate change and public waste education programs to enhance understanding and change community and business behaviour.*

Add to the objective on planning, the word '*timely*', so it reads '*Our planning systems are robust, timely and support the liveability of the area.*'

Similarly add '*timely*' to strategy 3.6, so it reads '*Ensure responsible and balanced development through rigorous timely assessment and compliance.*'

There is nothing in this section about heritage. We suggest another strategy is added at the end:

*'3.\* Protect, promote and enrich the heritage and traditional values of our area.'*

## **Our infrastructure (p22)**

The merger of Queanbeyan and Palerang sewer and water funds and the harmonisation of their charges is a major outstanding action by Council following amalgamation.

We therefore suggest Strategy 4.7 be amended to add the words '*merged*' and '*funds*' so it reads '*Manage the region's merged water and sewer funds and systems to maximise value for money and long-term sustainability.*'

## **Our civic leadership (p24)**

5.1 We suggest that the substance of this strategy is covered by 5.2 and 5.3 and this motherhood statement is superfluous and should be deleted.

If Council staff believe that the words '*delivers the highest value*' are vital to be included then they could be added to the objective, so it reads '*Council is effective, financially sustainably, responsible and delivers the highest value.*'

**Submitted by Braidwood Community Association**

**7 May 2025**