



# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## Comments on the

### Draft Queanbeyan-Palerang Community Strategic Plan – Towards 2042

#### Introduction

The Braidwood Community Association (BCA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft [Queanbeyan-Palerang Community Strategic Plan – Towards 2042](#) (draft CSP).

The BCA observes that the draft CSP is quite different to the previous [Queanbeyan-Palerang Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028](#). This suggests that QPRC is not just going through the motions and is truly refreshing the CSP. The BCA also supports the CSP containing two to four broader *Strategic Objectives* and nine to 11 specified *Strategies* under each pillar. This makes the CSP easier to follow and gives increased specificity.

#### BCA's key recommendations for the draft CSP

##### 1. Recognise and address the specific needs of regional communities

The CSP is written as if there is a single uniform community. The reality is that the needs of our communities vary significantly across the Queanbeyan-Palerang region. Residents and ratepayers in Queanbeyan take for granted a whole range of services which those in rural areas either do not benefit from or must travel some considerable distance to access. These include services delivered by Council and many provided by other tiers of government, for which Council could advocate for outreach services. These include health, disability and aged care, youth activities and social workers, maternity services etc. The poor state of rural roads is a dominant issue for those in rural localities, as is the inadequacy of their telecommunications infrastructure. The BCA believes the draft CSP needs to clearly acknowledge that this disparity exists and state that it needs be addressed. Given the way the CSP is laid out, such statements may need to be included in the introductory message from the Mayor.

##### 2. Map all of Council's obligations in the CSP

Council has many functions delegated to it by a range of Acts, including a range of regulatory functions like inspection of food and food premises, companion animal registration and control etc. Unless they are reflected in the CSP, the community may not be aware that these are Council responsibilities and therefore not consider it important until there is an issue in one of these areas, such as a food poisoning outbreak. The CSP should include a mapping exercise of the strategies against the roles of Council to ensure no important issues or activities are missing.

##### 3. Set targets and commit to publishing progress made towards them

Including specific targets for each strategic pillar in the CSP will enable the community to better understand what the Council considers the size of the task ahead. These targets then cascade into the Operational Plan, along with performance indicators which are published at least annually. The CSP should include a clear commitment to regularly publish progress as new data becomes available. This will signal Council's commitment to implement the CSP and drive change throughout the organisation.

##### 4. Council's Role

The role of Council in terms of 'Provide', 'Collaborate' and 'Advocate' are defined briefly on p12. The BCA believes there is a growing role for Council which is not captured by the definition given for 'Collaborate'. In recent years, community groups have successfully applied for grants themselves, but do not always have the capacity to implement the projects and need to work collaboratively with Council staff to implement the projects. Examples include the Braidwood Skate Park, the Mongarlowe Community Hall, and several projects in Araluen and Nerriga. The BCA suggests the definition be expanded to 'Partner with the community, business and industry,

other councils and other tiers of government to influence and/or seek funding assistance and to implement community-driven projects.’

#### **5. Timeframe of the CSP**

The timeframe for draft CSP is for 20 years into the future, when previously it was for 10 years. The BCA understands this change is the result of discussions in the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) with a harmonisation of timeframes, and also that it will be reviewed every 4 years or when a new Council is elected. The BCA would like to know what are the benefits of having a 20-year timeframe? If this timeframe is to be maintained, then the BCA suggests that Council should advocate for the CRJO or the NSW Government to undertake a foresighting exercise to better understand how our lives may change over this time horizon and how this may impact on the services and role of Councils (eg impact of driverless cars).

#### **6. Prioritise planning for the impacts of Climate Change**

The BCA is pleased to see the importance of climate change acknowledged in the draft CSP, but would like to see this further elaborated, with the explicit addition of Council’s role in dealing with the initial emergency response to extreme weather and the subsequent repair and replacement of damaged infrastructure which is so important to the Community.

#### **7. Focus on Affordable Housing**

This is a really major issue at present and is expected to continue into the future. The BCA would like this to be a prominent focus for this term of Council. The BCA congratulates Council on the motion passed at its meeting held on 9 March 2022 to prepare an Affordable Housing Strategy for QPRC. The BCA formed a Community Housing Subcommittee in early 2021 and we have been researching the problems and possible solutions for some time. The BCA is keen to work with Council on this pressing issue. The proposed Braidwood Structure Plan will be a key factor in planning for housing needs on the future. However, there are urgent housing needs which require input from Council in a shorter time frame.

#### **8. Clarify and enforce regulations protecting Heritage in Braidwood**

While two of the Strategies could be considered as dealing with Heritage (A.2 and C.8), the BCA believes that after the recent examples of heritage issues Council has had to deal with in Braidwood, this needs to be given great attention during the current term of the Council. Council should endeavor to provide clarity on the protection of Braidwood’s heritage, with the view to building on its strength as NSW’s only heritage listed town.

#### **BCA’s specific comments on strategic objectives and strategies and drafting observations**

Attachment 1 contains detailed commentary on the specific strategic objectives and strategies and some other detailed observations on the drafting of the draft CSP. Several comments reference the recommendations made above.

#### **Next steps**

Once again, we congratulate Council on taking the important step of consulting widely on the draft CSP. We are available to discuss any part of this submission, and to provide clarifying or additional information about any part of this submission, including providing further context.

We also signal our wish to be included in the next phases of the development of Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, including the Four-year Delivery Program and the Annual Operational Plans. In this respect, Attachment 2 is for the information of Council staff and outlines the priorities for Braidwood and surrounding district for this term of Council which were presented to all candidate Councillors.

Submitted by Sue Murray

BCA President

On behalf of the *Braidwood Community Association*

3 April 2022



# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

*Attachment 1*

## Comments on the specific strategic objectives and strategies.

### A. Community

Objective / Strategy	Comments	Suggested new text
<b><i>Our community is strengthened through connection and participation that enhances our community and cultural life.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>A.1 Build cultural capacity through the availability and participation in arts, performance and cultural gatherings, events, and exhibitions.</i>	Agree this is important and Council has a role to play in supporting this.	
<i>A.2 We recognise and take pride in the unique and individual heritage and identity of our city and villages.</i>	As discussed below, we need a more complete description of our area. The BCA suggests we should go further than just recognise and take pride, but also support and maintain our heritage. This is a closer reflection of reality given Council's role in planning and grants provided for heritage. Exclude the use of 'we' as discussed below.	A.2 Recognise, take pride in, support and maintain the unique and individual heritage and identity of our city, towns, villages and rural localities.
<i>A.3 We welcome and support new and existing residents through community development to build community connection and resilience.</i>	There appears to be two issues here: building community connection and resilience, and welcoming and supporting new residents. Should it be split into two strategies? Exclude the use of 'we' as discussed below.	A.3 Support community connection and resilience for all residents through community development. A.4 Welcome and support new residents.
<i>A.4 Our Traditional Owners and First Nations people's ongoing and historical connection to country is recognised and supported.</i>	The BCA believes we should also 'respect' the Traditional Owners and First Nations people. Before we recognise our colonial heritage, we should recognise, respect and support the Traditional Owners and First Nations people. The BCA believes this strategy should therefore be elevated in the order of list of strategies.	A.1 Recognise, respect and support our Traditional Owners and First Nations People's historical and ongoing connection to country.
<b><i>Our health and wellbeing are supported by strong partnerships and access to services.</i></b>	Agree, but given the statements made above, the BCA believes that it should be made clear that this applies throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.	<b>Our health and wellbeing are supported by strong partnerships and access to services throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.</b>

<i>A.5 Continue to strengthen community safety and crime prevention partnerships with critical stakeholders.</i>	Agree, but we are unclear what role Council has in this sphere. If as we suspect it is only to advocate, then this should be stated (as in B.9 and D.4 below). It should be made clear that this applies throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.	A.5 Advocate for strengthened community safety and crime prevention partnerships with critical stakeholders throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.
<i>A.6 Inclusion and accessibility are enhanced through access to community and support services for those that need them.</i>	Agree, but it should be made clear that this applies throughout the entire Queanbeyan-Palerang region.	A.6 Enhance inclusion and accessibility through equal access to community and support services throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.
<i>A.7 Health and quality of life are improved through access to a range of recreation and leisure opportunities.</i>	Agree, but make more ‘action’ orientated and make it clear that this applies throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.	A.7 Improve health and quality of life through access to a range of recreation and leisure activities throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.
<i>A.8 Active recreational, sporting and health pursuits are supported by the availability of programs and events in the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.</i>	Agree, but it should be made clear that this applies throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region and be more action orientated.	A.8 Support active recreational, sporting and health pursuits by the availability of programs and events throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.
<i>A.9 Enhance life-long learning pursuits through library, historical and museum services across the region through socially inclusive and welcoming facilities.</i>	Agree, but it should be made clear that this applies equally across the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.	A.9 Enhance life-long learning pursuits through library, historical and museum services across the Queanbeyan-Palerang region through socially inclusive and welcoming facilities.
<b><i>Our public and community places are inviting, encourage participation and are well maintained.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>A.10 Maintain public spaces to a high standard.</i>	With a growing population and new areas being developed there is a need for new public spaces as well as maintaining the current ones.	A.10 Maintain and extend public spaces to a high standard.
<i>A.11 Promote our public places and attractions with wayfinding signage to support visitation.</i>	Agree. This could include signage to explain the history and significance of heritage sites throughout the region.	A.11 Promote our public places and attractions with wayfinding signage to support visitation and heritage tourism.
<i>A.12 When planning public and green spaces, explore the inclusion of complimentary activities such as playgrounds, walking tracks, picnic facilities and amenities.</i>	Agree	
<i>A.13 Community facilities are accessible, safe and inclusive.</i>	Agree but make it more action orientated.	A.13 Ensure that Community facilities are accessible, safe and inclusive.

## B. Choice

Objective / Strategy	Comments	Suggested new text
<b><i>Our city and village CBDs are dynamic and thriving places that attract economic activity through the revitalisation of town centres, focus on tourism and improved digital connectivity.</i></b>	Should refer to centres and not CBDs and include city, town and village centres	<b>Our city, town and village centres are dynamic and thriving places that attract economic activity through the revitalisation of centres, focus on tourism and improved digital connectivity.</b>
<i>B.1 Make our town centres inviting through beautification and maintenance.</i>	Agree, but it should also include villages centres. The BCA notes that a beautification plan for Braidwood was drawn up using part of the funds made available after the amalgamation with input from the community but nothing has happened since and this plan is not even referred to in the supporting documents, plans or strategies (perhaps because it was not formally adopted by Council?).	B.1 Make our town and village centres inviting through beautification and maintenance.
<i>B.2 Support and promote existing and new business generation initiatives.</i>	Agree that Council has a role and should inform, collaborate and advocate for this, but not to have its own business initiatives.	B.2 Actively advocate, inform, support and promote existing and new business generation initiatives provided by the agencies responsible.
<i>B.3 Encourage the growth of local retail options by supporting 'buying local' initiatives.</i>	Agree.	
<i>B.4 Explore economic diversification through the attraction of new industries.</i>	Agree that Council should collaborate and advocate for this. However, the BCA does not believe Council should provide any funding or incentives to attract new industries.	B.4 Actively advocate, inform, support and promote economic diversification through the attraction of new industries provided by initiatives of the agencies responsible.
<i>B.5 Build financial and employment capability and capacity across Queanbeyan-Palerang.</i>	Agree that this needs to happen and Council should collaborate and advocate for this, but not to have its own business initiatives.	B.5 Actively advocate, inform, support the building of financial and employment capability and capacity across Queanbeyan-Palerang.
<b><i>Our unique regional identity and social and economic advantages underpin a growing economy and a thriving tourism sector.</i></b>	Agree we should build on our unique strengths, including Braidwood's State Heritage listing.	
<i>B.6 Programs, facilities and events promote and enhance the Queanbeyan-Palerang region to make it a destination of choice.</i>	Agree, but make it more action orientated.	B.6 Promote and enhance programs, facilities and events that enrich the Queanbeyan-Palerang region to make it a destination of choice.
<b><i>Our business practices support a productive and efficient local economy by providing enabling infrastructure</i></b>	Agree	

<i>B.7 Council processes and practices are transparent, and applications are considered promptly.</i>	Agree. It would be great if this was to happen. However, there is a real need to improve the planning application, approval and certification process and unfortunately the new on-line application system has made it worse not better. This needs to be addressed.	
<i>B.8 Collaborate with local business and industry groups to enhance economic resilience and ensure safe practices are adhered to.</i>	There are two separate issues here – enhancing resilience and ensuring safe practices. The latter is a regulatory function of Council to ensure standards are met. The BCA suggests that this strategy be split into 2 separate strategies to make this distinction clear. The wording proposed is similar to the previous CSP.	B.8 Collaborate with local business and industry groups to enhance economic resilience.  B.9 Ensure our local businesses meet required standards and are environmentally sound, ensuring quality services and high level risk management.
<b><i>Our community has access to education, training and learning opportunities.</i></b>	This statement is vague and lacks ambition. Online access to education and training in the rural regions is impacted by the poor and unreliable communications technology in those areas.	<b>Our community has reliable access to leading edge education, training and learning opportunities throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.</b>
<i>B.9 Advocate for and promote education and employment pathways.</i>	Agree	

### **C. Character**

Objective / Strategy	Comments	Suggested new text
<b><i>We acknowledge climate change and we work towards reducing our region's carbon footprint.</i></b>	Agree. The BCA is very pleased to have this explicitly acknowledged.	
<i>C.1 Partner with Government departments and organisations to mitigate the effects of climate change.</i>	If we are to reduce our region's carbon footprint, we need to partner to reduce carbon emissions.  Unfortunately, it is already too late to just mitigate the effects of climate change. We also need to partner on climate change adaption actions.	C.1 Partner with Government departments and other organisations to reduce carbon emissions, mitigate the effects of climate change and take adaption actions.
	Climate change is leading to an increased frequency of extreme weather events, whether this be droughts, fires or floods. As QPRC has responsibilities during the initial emergency response and then for making good most of the damage done to public infrastructure by these events within Queanbeyan-Palerang region, the BCA believes there should be an explicit strategy	C.2 Provide timely and adequate emergency responses to extreme weather events and other emergencies and be both a strong advocate for the funding and timely execution of the repair and replacement of damaged infrastructure.

	on responses to extreme weather events and other emergencies.	
<i>C.2 Increase community education, resilience, confidence and resolution in dealing with the challenges of climate change.</i>	Agree	
<i>C.3 Undertake public waste education programs to enhance understanding of recycling and change community and business behaviour.</i>	Agree. Council should also make it as easy as possible for the community to engage in recycling activities, throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region, noting the differences in access to recycling options in different parts of the region.	C.3 Undertake public waste education programs throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region to enhance understanding of recycling and change community and business behaviour.
<i>C.4 Minimise use of potable water, optimising reuse of recycled water and waste.</i>	Agree, but should make reference to optimising use of tank water. We hope Council will continue to provide incentives for this (eg Waterwise program).	C.4 Minimise use of potable water, optimising reuse of recycled water and waste and use of tank water.
<b><i>We have robust planning systems that provide zoned and serviced land that supports affordability and choice to liveability of the area.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>C.5 Acknowledge our area comprises diverse settlements that have their own unique identity and value our rural landscapes.</i>	Agree, but can we include reference here to the heritage values as well (eg within the Braidwood and Bedervale Curtilage areas)?	C.5 Acknowledge that our area comprises diverse settlements that have their own unique identity and value our rural and heritage landscapes.
<i>C.6 Support a diversity of housing stock by identifying strategies in collaboration with Council, the community, and stakeholders.</i>	Agree, but the BCA believes that with the on-going and worsening affordable housing crisis, this should be specifically mentioned.	C.6 Support a diversity of housing stock, including affordable housing, by identifying strategies in collaboration with Council, the community, other levels of Government and stakeholders.
<i>C.7 Support the sustainable growth of the Local Government Area through land and infrastructure strategic planning, assessment, determination and certification of development, subdivision and building and manage risk through monitoring and compliance.</i>	Agree. As stated above there is a real need to improve the timeliness of the planning process and the BCA believes this should be recognised in the wording here too. Also, the wording should accord with the rest of the document by referring to ‘Queanbeyan-Palerang region’ and not the ‘Local Government Area’.  The BCA underlines the need for strategic planning in the Braidwood district and notes that a ‘Long-term strategic plan for Braidwood’ ranked as the second most important issue in its recent survey of residents.	C.7 Support sustainable growth throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region, through land and infrastructure strategic planning, timely assessment, determination and certification of development, subdivision and building and manage risk through monitoring and compliance.
<i>C.8 Acknowledge and respect the heritage values of our area.</i>	Agree, but the BCA believes we should actively protect our heritage while allowing sustainable development to support a growing community. The	C.8 Acknowledge, respect and actively protect the heritage values of our area, while allowing sustainable development to support a growing community.

	two are not mutually exclusive, but this is an area which needs very careful management.	
<b><i>Our land, vegetation and waterways are managed in an integrated and sustainable manner.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>C.9 Sustain, manage and protect our land, biodiversity, vegetation and waterways.</i>	Agree	
<i>C.10 Manage natural landscapes and open spaces.</i>	Agree, but this is very vague. Does it refer to Council owned landscapes or all landscapes?	
<i>C.11 Passive recreation is supported through a well maintained and connected path network, play areas and green spaces.</i>	Agree, but use more active wording.	C.11 Support passive recreation through a well maintained and connected path network, play areas and green spaces

#### **D. Connection**

<b>Objective / Strategy</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Suggested new text</b>
<b><i>Our transport network and infrastructure are safe and allow for ease of movement throughout Queanbeyan-Palerang and across the ACT border and region.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>D.1 Utilise asset management plans and take a risk management approach to the maintenance and development of the transport network.</i>	Agree	
<i>D.2 Support and maintain urban and rural roads, traffic management systems, car parking, and improvement of bridges.</i>	Agree. The BCA would like to underline that the ‘Better maintenance of unsealed roads’ was the top issue of concern for residents in the Braidwood district in its recent survey.	
<i>D.3 Support and facilitate the continuous development of footpaths and connected walking and cycling tracks.</i>	Agree. But ensure that footpaths are provided where they are needed. Somehow a footpath in Araluen was funded via a recent grant. It seems no-one there asked for it or wants it.	D.3 Support and facilitate the continual development of footpaths and connected walking and cycling tracks as identified in ongoing needs assessment.
<i>D.4 Advocate for public transport infrastructure that meets the needs of Queanbeyan-Palerang residents and visitors.</i>	Agree. But is this intended to apply throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region or just Queanbeyan? Most of the region does not benefit from any public transport.	D.4 Advocate for public transport infrastructure that meets the needs of residents and visitors throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.
<b><i>Our community’s waste, water, sewerage, stormwater and recycled water needs are met.</i></b>	Agree	

<i>D.5 Manage the region's potable water systems and supply to meet the community's needs and national quality standards. sewerage and recycled water systems.</i>	Agree	
<i>D.6 Provide secure water sources that cater for climate change and storage for reliable supply for growing population and business needs.</i>	Agree. It is imperative that Braidwood water supply system receives a significant upgrade as a matter of urgency to avoid a reoccurrence of the Stage 4 water restrictions imposed from January – March 2020.	
<i>D.7 Manage the region's stormwater and recycled water systems and supply to meet the community's needs and national quality standards.</i>	Agree	
<i>D.8 Support public, business and environmental health through the provision of quality water, sewerage and recycled water systems.</i>	Agree	
<i>D.9 Manage the collection of waste and operation of waste facilities to meet community requirements</i>	Agree	
<b><i>Our community facilities are well planned, meet the needs of the community and enhance social connection.</i></b>	Agree	
<i>D.10 Enhance community and recreational use of facilities through robust maintenance and management.</i>	Agree	
<i>D.11 We plan for community facilities to meet the needs of our growing population and promote the maximisation of use of current facilities.</i>	Agree, but remove the possessive 'We'.	D.11 Plan for community facilities to meet the needs of our growing population and promote the maximisation of use of current facilities.
<i>D12 Optimise development contributions to fund new and expanded facilities.</i>	Agree	
<b><i>Our telecommunications infrastructure supports social, economic and educational outcomes.</i></b>	This is very flat and lacks ambition. We acknowledge that this is not a Council responsibility, but Council could play an active advocacy role. Current infrastructure falls far short of needs and expectations.	<b>Our community benefits from world-class telecommunications infrastructure that supports excellent social, economic and educational outcomes throughout the Queanbeyan-Palerang region</b>
<i>D.13 Identify connectivity issues and advocate for better telecommunications coverage, particularly in the rural areas of the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.</i>	Agree. The BCA appreciates that Council can only advocate for better telecommunications infrastructure, but this strategy needs to be strengthened by also referring to better internet speeds which are required in rural areas if they are going to take full advantage of the information age.	D.13 Actively identify connectivity issues and advocate for better telecommunications coverage and internet speeds through the installation, upgrade and maintenance of communication technology across all platforms to all towns, villages and localities in the

	The instability of communication technology networks impacts on all the rural regions in the Queanbeyan-Palerang region. Poor performance of the networks significantly compromises the health and safety of the community during regular times. During natural disasters such as bushfires, floods, high winds and other severe weather events, the lack of services can mean the difference between life and death.	Queanbeyan-Palerang region to maximise the safety of all the community.
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### ***E. Capability***

<b>Objective / Strategy</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Suggested new text</b>
<b><i>The community is serviced by an efficient, effective and innovative Council.</i></b>	Agree. But given all objectives in other pillars are possessive, so should this one.	<b>Our community is serviced by an efficient, effective and innovative Council.</b>
<i>E.1 Recruit, retain and remunerate a safe and harmonious workforce.</i>	<p>The Council's workforce is its greatest asset and BCA members are continuously impressed by their dedication. The BCA suggests the word 'motivated' be added, as this is a key cultural quality Council management should be striving to achieve.</p> <p>The community is concerned about the safety and wellbeing of the Council's workforce. Safety has many facets and includes: occupational health and safety; workplace bullying and harassment; and also the issue of staff undertaking regulatory functions being abused and threatened by some members of the public, which can go as far as death threats.</p> <p>The BCA believes staff safety is a separate issue to recruiting, retaining, and remunerating staff and should have its own strategy to give it the prominence it deserves. .</p>	<p>E.1 Recruit, retain and remunerate a motivated and harmonious workforce.</p> <p>E.2 Have strong procedures in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of the workforce.</p>
<i>E.2 Promote and facilitate excellent performance through the development of streamlined and improved systems, processes and frameworks.</i>	Agree	
<i>E.3 Apply a contemporary risk management framework to mitigate risk, increase organisational efficiencies and reduce red tape.</i>	Agree	

<i>E.4 Manage Council financial systems, processes and projects in a sustainable way that maximises value for money for ratepayers.</i>	Agree	
<i>E.5 Develop and maintain networks and systems to advocate and promote the aspirations and opportunities of the region.</i>	It is unclear what this means as the wording is so broad. Can it be made more precise please?	
<i>E.6 Strategically administer and manage Council's property portfolio.</i>	Agree, but there is a lack of transparency about Council's property portfolio. The BCA would welcome this being addressed.	E.6 Strategically administer and manage Council's property portfolio in a transparent manner.
<b>Council is an open, accessible and responsive organisation.</b>	Agree. While the BCA recognises that Council staff do make efforts in this regard, there is still scope for improvement.  Given all the objectives in other pillars are possessive, so should this one.	<b>Our Council is an open, accessible and responsive organisation.</b>
<i>E.7 Communicate in an effective and timely manner with the community.</i>	Agree. One way would be to have substantial improvements to the QPRC website. The current site is difficult to navigate, and the search engine is not very helpful.	
<i>E.8 Use community engagement methods that enhance community participation in decision making.</i>	Agree this is very important. Communication with local community representatives, who act as multipliers for Council messaging, should be utilised as part of the community engagement methods. Community consultations need to be well advertised on a range of platforms.	
<i>E.9 Establish operational practices and processes that support efficiency and community and business satisfaction.</i>	Agree. When community members have an issue or question it is often difficult for them to know how to progress it with Council. Having staff members who are known contacts for specific localities would simplify and streamline the system for the Community.	
<i>E.10 Manage an automated customer service system that meets the needs of the community.</i>	The BCA is concerned at this strategy and believes this is not something the Community (residents and ratepayers) wants. While we understand that automated customer service systems try to reduce costs, our experience with such systems has not been	Delete E.10

	<p>good and they often lead to frustration and anger on the part of customers. The BCA does not believe QPRC should be a leader in this area but very much a follower once all issues have been sorted out.</p> <p>Further, this strategy involves a very narrow area of activity compared to most other strategies, and is more like an action under E.9.</p>	
<p><i>E.11 Work with the community to achieve its long-term aspirations by integrating goals and strategies outlined in the Community Strategic Plan into the development of other Council strategies and plans.</i></p>	<p>Agree. But this CSP does not have goals, but Strategic Objectives.</p> <p>It is essential that there is thorough and ongoing consultation with the Community and that consultation mechanisms should be enhanced and not weakened.</p> <p>The BCA notes that the QPRC Community committee structure is under review and believes the outcome should lead to an increase in meaningful consultation, with more opportunities for the community to directly meet with staff and Councillors.</p> <p>The short time available for public consultation also present challenges for voluntary Community organisations.</p>	<p>E.11 Work with the community to achieve its long-term aspirations by integrating the strategic objectives and strategies outlined in the Community Strategic Plan into the development of other Council strategies and plans, ensuring adequate time for Community consultation.</p>
<p><i>E.12 Maintain robust governance, audit and risk policies and frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability.</i></p>	<p>Agree this is of high importance.</p>	

## **Other drafting points or observations**

### **Strategic Pillars titles**

The Draft CSP retains the current Strategic Pillars, which uses the same words all beginning with ‘C’ – Community, Choice, Character, Connection and Capability. The nexus between the pillar titles and the issues they represent is not always clear. For example, it is not obvious that Choice is about economic development or ‘Character’ is about sustainability. Extra detail to describe/clarify the pillars is warranted, perhaps by reverting to the previous approach of using an extra expression which describes what the pillars are about.

### **Objectives and Strategies**

The way in which the objectives and strategies are expressed differs between the various pillars. With the exception of ‘Capability’, all the Objectives are possessive (‘Our’ or ‘We’). We have suggested that the two objectives under ‘Capability’ be changed to ‘Our’.

For the Strategies, sometimes they appear to be more observation of our values (eg A.2 We recognise and take pride in the unique and individual heritage and identity of our city and villages). In cases where there are discrete and action orientated (A.10 Maintain public spaces to a high standard) it is easy to see what may be involved, but in other more generic statements (eg C.2 Increase community education, resilience, confidence and resolution in dealing with the challenges of climate change.) it is not clear what aspects they are actually referring to. The BCA would prefer to see a more consistent approach with more ‘active words’ and with each strategy ideally dealing with a discrete issue or activity and indicate what type of action is involved. Some of the strategies are in the possessive form, using the word ‘we’. The BCA believes they should all be written in this form or none at all. We suggest the latter in this case.

### **Standard way to describe our residential areas**

The BCA appreciates that Australia does not have official definitions of what is a city, town, township, village or a locality. Reflecting this, the CSP contains inconsistencies – sometimes using the words ‘city and villages’, and other times ‘townships’. The CSP should refer to Queanbeyan as a city, while Braidwood and Bungendore are ‘towns’ as they have a CBD. Araluen, Captains Flat, Majors Creek, Mongarlowe and Nerriga should be called villages and other population areas are rural localities.

### **The term ‘Measures’**

The BCA questions whether the word ‘measures’ is the best word to use to describe the indicators used to measure the progress of the strategies. This is because ‘measures’ for some mean the instruments to be used – ie projects and initiatives. Previously the words ‘Data Source’ was used, which is also not ideal. We suggest that the words ‘Progress Indicators’ are used instead.

### **Council’s Role**

In addition to the point made above on the term ‘Collaborate’, the BCA believes it would assist the Community’s understanding of the role of Council, if p12 also sets out what Council is responsible for. In this regard, the QPRC website states:<sup>1</sup>

Your local Council regulates and manage services and activities including:

- Local roads, footpaths, cycle ways, street signage, and lighting
- Waste management including rubbish collection and recycling
- Parking
- Recreational facilities including parks, sporting fields and swimming pools
- Cultural facilities including libraries, art galleries, museums
- Services including childcare, aged care and accommodation
- Water and sewerage
- Town planning

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.qprc.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-Business/Role-of-Council>

- Building approvals and inspections
- Domestic animal regulation

Unfortunately, this does not seem to be a comprehensive listing and so other regulatory functions delegated to it should also be added.

**Listings of supporting documents, plans or strategies**

The Urban Forest and Cooling Strategy was adopted by Council on 23 March. This is a wide-ranging strategy impacting on much of Council's activity. Reference to this should now be included under the pillars Community, Choice, Character and Connection.

The BCA also believes all the Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans should be included in the listing of supporting documents, plans or strategies under Character.

## **Results of the Survey of New Priority Projects for Braidwood and surrounding district to be progressed during the next term of Council – November 2021**

### **Approach used**

The Braidwood Community Association (BCA) followed an inclusive approach in this exercise with a thorough three-step process of determining which priority projects for Braidwood and surrounding district the community wants to be progressed during the next term of Queanbeyan and Palerang Regional Council (QPRC).

Firstly, in March 2021 the BCA undertook an on-line and hard copy survey of all residents in 2622 which, among other questions, sought ideas for potential projects to be progressed during the next term of Council. This survey had 314 responses and resulted in 217 suggestions for new future projects, with many being common ideas.

Secondly, through a ‘mining and mapping’ exercise of these ideas and through discussions with interested parties, particularly within the BCA committee, a reduced list of 13 core ideas which are considered to be QPRC’s prime responsibility was developed. Some important ideas proposed, like better telecommunications, fixing Wallace Street and funding for a new 25m swimming pool, were excluded because they are considered to be more the responsibility of NSW and federal governments.

Thirdly, all residents of 2622 (including youth) were asked to rate the importance to them of each of the 13 ideas. To reduce bias in the responses, the on-line survey randomized the order of the questions. Residents were informed that the survey results would be used to create a shortlist of 5 to 6 priority projects which the BCA would ask all Council candidates to commit to supporting prior to the upcoming QPRC elections.

The BCA did not endorse any particular candidate or ticket but gave transparency on those who had committed to progressing the community’s priority projects and those who had not. The responses received from the candidate Councillors are at: [https://www.braidwoodcommunity.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Candidate\\_Responses.pdf](https://www.braidwoodcommunity.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Candidate_Responses.pdf).

### **Results**

Some 210 persons responded to the survey. All but 6 of these indicated they lived in 2622 and there were 10 duplicate entries where the same name and contact were used. Those from outside 2622 and the duplicate responses have been excluded from the analysis, which leaves 194 responses or about 4.5 percent of the estimated population in 2622 (4291 persons).

Respondents were invited to rate each potential project from very low to very high importance on a 5-step scale. A weighted average can be calculated by giving ‘very low’ a score of 1 and ‘very high’ a score of 5, with appropriate weightings for the intermediate ratings.

The projects in order of descending weighted average are given overleaf, with the top 6 projects being:

1. Better maintenance of unsealed roads
2. Long-term strategic plan for Braidwood
3. Securing Braidwood's water supply
4. Environmental enhancement
5. Preservation of Braidwood's heritage
6. Harmonisation of water, sewage, and waste charges across QPRC



# BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Project	Average <sup>1</sup>
1. Better maintenance of unsealed roads - Fully meet maintenance schedule and more transparency and communication of schedule.	4.1
2. Long-term strategic plan for Braidwood - (including locations of future housing and industrial development, possible bypass/ring road, social housing, commitment to heritage protection and beautification, tourism development etc.).	4.0
3. Securing Braidwood's water supply - QPRC is undertaking a review of water security for Braidwood, and depending on the outcome of that review, additional source options may be considered.	4.0
4. Environmental enhancement - eg. more tree planting for shade within town and along roads, protection of significant trees, management of creeks to improve public access, and encourage birdwatching and platypus viewing.	3.8
5. Preservation of Braidwood's heritage - More funding to maintain heritage buildings. Full and consistent application of the Braidwood Development Control Plan 2006.	3.6
6. Harmonisation of water, sewage, and waste charges across QPRC - Overall Braidwood residential charges are significantly higher than those charged in Queanbeyan. In 2021-22 they are higher by \$867.	3.6
7. Completion of all high priority paths in the Braidwood Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan - Excluding works for 2021-22, 4 high priority paths remain at a total estimated cost of \$761,000 (2019 prices).	3.3
8. Development of a shared path around Braidwood - While sections of this could be completed during the next Council term, completion of the overall path may take longer.	3.1
9. More car parking - QPRC is hoping to commence some initial stages of a car park behind D&S Motors and expand on that when their Works Depot is relocated.	3.0
10. Traffic calming of key side streets throughout the town (eg. speed humps and review of speed limits) including the known hotspots of McKellar, Elrington, Wilson and Monkittee streets.	3.0
11. Community centre with scope for performing arts space	2.9
12. Facilitate the development of a caravan park for Braidwood	2.9
13. Develop cycling infrastructure to make the region a cycling destination (eg. dirt bike trails, signage)	2.7

<sup>1</sup> Weighted average where 'very low' importance has a score of 1 and 'low' is 2, 'medium' is 3, 'high' is 4 and 'very high' is 5