

# 7 Infrastructure and Community Services

Much of the infrastructure described in this Section are located within the urban areas of the LGA. However, as the infrastructure and community services also service rural population they are relevant to discuss.

## 7.1 Water

The town of Yass and the villages of Bowning and Binalong are serviced with water from the Yass River. Yass Dam has a storage capacity of 850ML. Council is currently in the process of undertaking environmental studies to raise the dam wall to increase capacity threefold.

The Yass Water Supply is dependent on the flows in the Yass River. Under extreme drought conditions without the implementation of water restrictions, the capacity of the Yass Dam is only sufficient to supply average summer demand for a period of 3 to 4 months.

Murrumbateman has an independent water supply that was developed in 1984 and is sourced from groundwater. Water is untreated and is drawn from a bore located within the grounds of the Murrumbateman Recreation Ground. Murrumbateman water supply capacity is insufficient to meet the current maximum peak day demand.

In rural areas, domestic water is supplied through rainfall, surface water and groundwater extraction.

In some rural residential subdivisions, community title dams and bores supply non potable water to houses. Under the 1(c1) Rural Residential provisions of Yass LEP 1987, a reticulated water supply is required to be provided to service the subdivision.

## 7.2 Sewerage

Effluent generated in Yass is treated at the Yass sewage Treatment Plant. Council has an environment protection licence from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to discharge into Banjo Creek (a tributary to Yass River) and to irrigate council-owned pastoral land.

Effluent in the remaining parts of the Yass Valley LGA is treated by on-site sewage management systems that include conventional septic tank and absorption trench and pump out systems, aerated waste treatment systems, waterless composting systems and wet composting systems. Council also holds a licence to discharge backwash water from the Yass water treatment plant into a sedimentation lagoon. Decanted water is discharged into Yass River upstream of Yass Dam.

The Yass Sewerage Treatment Plant dates back to the construction of the conventional trickling filter system in 1935 with a capacity of 3,500 EP (equivalent population). In 1982, the system was augmented with the addition of twin 2,000 EP Pasveer Channels. All discharges at this stage were to the Yass River. Increasing concerns regarding the discharge of nutrients into the Yass River resulted in an effluent reuse scheme developed adjacent to the treatment works. Currently this system involves irrigation of 40 ha of agricultural land

throughout the summer period. Between April and October most effluent continues to be discharged to the Yass River. Nutrient levels of the effluent, particularly phosphorus have been recognised as a concern to the health of the river system and in 1992, Council initiated investigations into options for expanding reuse into the recreational areas and upgrading the treatment processes. Investigations have been completed into the proposed upgrading of the treatment plant with options for reuse to playing fields and ovals.

An option study has been completed identifying the feasibility of sewerage systems to the villages of Murrumbateman, Binalong and Bowning with projected populations of 430, 500 and 250 respectively. Preliminary Environmental Studies have been completed for these villages. Funding for the systems from the State government has not been confirmed.

### **7.3 Electricity**

Various existing TransGrid interests affect Yass Valley LGA. TransGrid's newest 330/132kV Substation was officially opened on 27 April 2006.

The \$45 million dollar project involved rebuilding what was Australia's first 330kV Substation when the original substation was commissioned in 1959. Yass Substation has now been rebuilt to increase its reliability and reinforce supply to the southern parts of New South Wales. It is the major interconnection point for supply from the Snowy generators to the Sydney and Canberra regions, and for transfer of power south from the main thermal generators in New South Wales and Queensland to south-western New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Work on the complex project commenced in July 2003 and has created one of the largest Substations, and the most modern, on TransGrid's extensive network. The project has utilised innovative engineering solutions with the development of a new 330kV breaker-and-a-half switchyard and a new 132kV single bus switchyard.

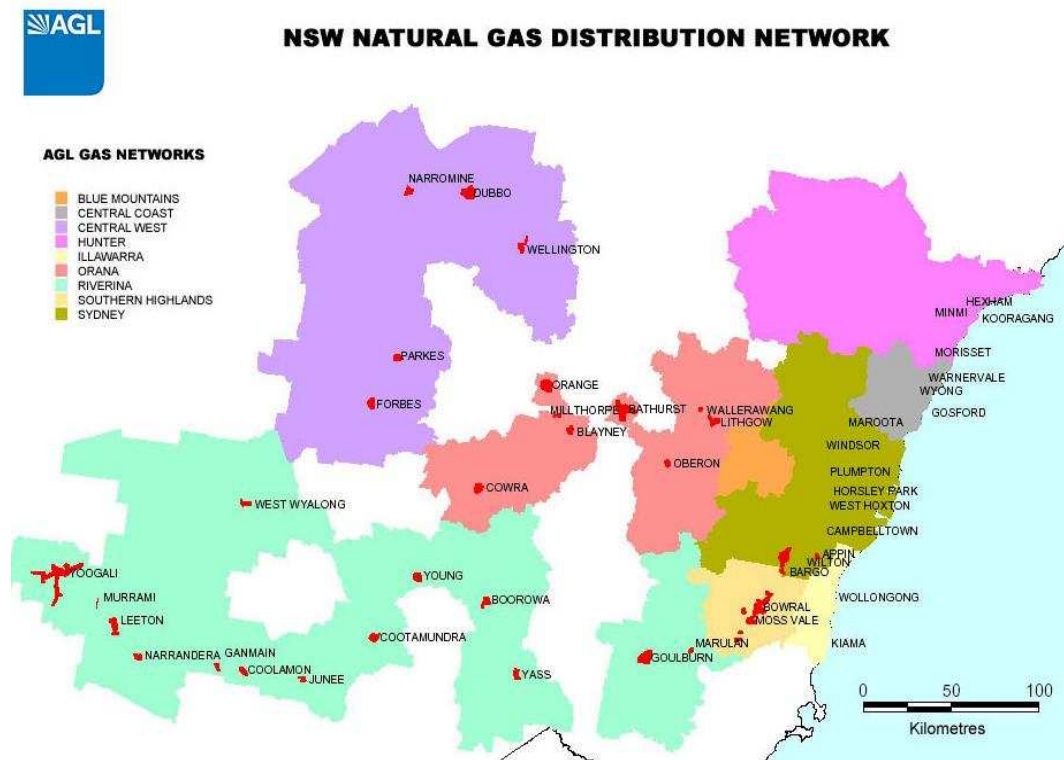
### **7.4 Natural Gas**

AGL Gas Networks Limited owns 23,500 kilometres of natural gas distribution system, delivering approximately 100 petajoules of natural gas to approximately 951,000 homes and businesses across New South Wales.

Natural gas is transported across NSW through high-pressure transmission pipelines, which operate at a pressure of 10,000 kPa.

As shown in Figure 7.1, the majority of the Yass Valley LGA is serviced by the AGL natural gas network.

Figure 7.1 Natural gas distribution network



## 7.5 Telecommunications

Telstra provides a basic telephone service with a minimum Data speed of 4800 bps as a part of obligations under the Universal Service Obligation (USO).

This service is provided under commercial consideration, and may be a combination of technologies, including copper line, a mixture of copper and fibre, or fibre or wireless.

Telstra is to provide this service to the boundary of the property within standard time frames from time of application by the occupier.

These USO requirements may not meet all developer, Council or customer requirements. Telstra can provide an alternative service by commercial arrangement. For example: new mine sites, industrial plants and other commercial works. The USO component is taken into consideration when these arrangements are negotiated.

Telstra has recently introduced a new arrangement to assist Developers and Council regarding Broadband and Mobile phone coverage, and provision of a telephone service to all blocks in new developments. This arrangement is now available in all areas of NSW. The process revolves around the Developers, the Local Councils and Telstra working together to ensure a planned development with appropriate infrastructure.

Due to the undulating topography of the area, mobile coverage is inconsistent and sometimes unreliable. The main centres and surrounding area have generally reasonable to good coverage. CDMA generally provides more coverage than the digital networks.

## **7.6 Waste services**

The Yass Valley Council currently operates four types of waste facilities within the Council area and these include:

- One Licensed Solid Waste Landfill;
- One Inert Waste landfill;
- Four Transfer Stations; and
- Two Unlicensed restricted use Landfills.

### **7.6.1 Solid Waste Landfill**

The only licensed solid waste landfill operated by Yass Valley Council is located off Isabel Drive at Murrumbateman.

The Murrumbateman Landfill site is currently utilised for the disposal of all domestic waste. The Landfill has been in operation since 1986 and has an anticipated life of 5 to 6 years at the current rate of usage. Approximately 2,500 tonnes of waste are taken to the Murrumbateman Landfill each year.

The South West Region Waste Management Group comprising the following Councils of Harden, Boorowa, Cootamundra, Yass, Gundagai, Tumut, Young and Tumbarumba, has commenced operations at the regional landfill at the Bald Hill Quarry site near Jugiong. Council now disposes of approximately 50 tonnes per week to this facility, including all wastes collected kerbside and disposed of at the Yass, Binalong, Bowning and Bookham Transfer stations.

Yass Valley Council has recognised the benefits of utilising this regional landfill and has indicated support for transporting waste from Yass Valley LGA to the site, subject to satisfactory operational agreements being established between the owner of the quarry and the other participating Councils.

### **7.6.2 Inert Landfill**

Council operates an Inert Landfill on the old Yass Landfill site. The materials currently being disposed at this facility are predominately from the building and construction industry. This material has been identified as a valuable resource, with the potential for the majority of the current materials being deposited being either reusable or recyclable.

### **7.6.3 Unlicensed Landfill**

Council operates two unlicensed restricted use landfills in the villages of Wee Jasper and Gundaroo. These are locked facilities and residents have been given access to the facility via secure key system. However this system only restricts the number of users but does not restrict or control the types of waste being deposited.

### **7.6.4 Transfer Stations**

Council currently operates four transfer stations within Yass Valley. These sites include:

- Yass Transfer Station – 7 days per week;
- Binalong – 2 x ½ days per week;

- Bookham —2 x ½ days per week;
- Bowning —2 x ½ days per week.

The Yass Transfer Station operates the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) which predominately deals with the sorting of kerbside collected recycling. The facility also processes recyclable materials deposited at all the waste facilities and bales Paper and Cardboard from the commercial cardboard collections.

## **7.7 Community facilities**

Sporting and recreation facilities are well provided for, with seven sportsgrounds, two pools, over twenty tennis courts, as well as walking paths, bike paths and parks. While there are two museums, there are no private art galleries, theatres or cinemas.

The centres of Yass and Murrumbateman are both serviced by libraries, the latter of which, offers a limited service.

## **7.8 Education**

Schooling is not directly a Council responsibility, but the provision of educational services has a direct effect on the opportunities for young members of the community for career choices and employment. The Yass Valley LGA is serviced by seven Government primary schools, one Government secondary school, one Catholic K –10 school and one Technical College of Further Education (TAFE).

## **7.9 Housing**

For people least able to afford housing, information from the NSW Department of Housing shows a deficit of public housing relative to demand. There are 110 Department of housing properties in the area, and the Department reports that it is increasingly finding appropriate local solutions to housing, where there is a shortage of the traditional provision of public housing stock.

## **7.10 Health**

Yass Valley is serviced by one hospital, with 18 hospital beds. However, the availability of specific treatments must be taken into account and there is insufficient data on these. In the last report, the Southern Area Health Service (SAHS) reported that around 80% of all hospitalisations are handled within the region (55% by the SAHS and 25% by the ACT health system), with the remainder most likely to be treated in Sydney.

## **7.11 Emergency services**

Yass Valley is serviced by:

- Two police stations (Binalong and Yass),
  - One NSW Fire Brigade (Yass),
  - 20 Rural Fire Service brigades (with over 1200 personnel),
  - One ambulance station, with three ambulances (Yass), and
- » One State Emergency Service unit (Yass).

## 7.12 Issues arising

Issues from this section relevant to planning in the Yass Valley Council local government area are as follows:

- Reticulated water supply to Yass, Bowning, Binalong and Murrumbateman is limited and is a critical factor for future planning.
- Many of the smaller villages in the Yass Valley do not have reticulated water supply or sewerage systems, which limits the potential for population in these towns to grow without significant investment in infrastructure. Funding from the State government for sewerage systems in Murrumbateman, Bowning and Binalong has not been confirmed.
- There is adequate electricity supply, and the majority of the Yass Valley LGA is serviced by the natural gas network.
- Community facilities and other forms of “soft” infrastructure are generally located within the larger towns and villages.