



Background Report: Wandoan Community Plan

12/2021

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01 Background

Wandoan is one of the six major towns in the Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC) area of Queensland, Australia. As the local centre for a productive surrounding beef cattle industry, host to a local timber mill, natural gas extraction, growing solar farms and a new battery, it is home to a range of services. Wandoan has a proud soldier settler heritage with a resilient community spirit led by a passionate and proactive Community, Commerce and Industry (WCCI) group. There is a wide range of sports and activities on offer for an active social and sporting community as well as several faith groups. Creating opportunities for the Wandoan town and district to enhance future liveability and ensure the ongoing sustainability of the community is important to many.



Like many smaller rural towns, Wandoan's population has declined over the years from 767 in 2006 to 566 residents (2016 Census). Some of this decline can be attributed to the sale of several family-operated farms for potential gas and coal development. In addition, Wandoan has been a declared drought-affected area for seven of the last ten years.

This report details a comprehensive consultation and engagement process conducted with residents and stakeholders of the Wandoan township and district, to develop a 10 Year Community Plan and should be read in conjunction with the Summary Report and Action Plan documents.

The aim of the project was to develop a community-led plan with the specific goal to reverse population decline and sustainably increase the population over time. It does this through a lens of community resilience which has been described by the Post Carbon Institute (2016) as "the ability of a system to cope with short-term disruptions and adapt to long-term changes without losing its essential character".

An important characteristic of resilience is that it must benefit all community members and consider the range of challenges and opportunities being faced. More importantly is that resilience enables a system, in this case the Wandoan community, to intentionally change and adapt, while preserving what is important to them.

What you told us 02

To kickstart the process Peta Ashworth and Kathy Witt, from Ash Research, were in Wandoan over the show period April 8 – 10, 2021. During their stay, they collected names for their database and invited local people to complete a survey to start the data collection phase of the project. They also had two ideas boards available for comments from the community. The first board asked:

"WHAT WOULD A SUCCESSFUL THRIVING WANDOAN LOOK LIKE IN TEN YEARS?"



The second question asked:

"IF YOU HAD ONE IDEA THAT WOULD REVOLUTIONISE WANDOAN WHAT WOULD THAT BE?"



The responses have been organized into four main themes: People, Place, Prosperity and Process and are detailed in the table on the following page. These themes represent the ‘ingredients’ for resilient communities and will be critical for enabling a thriving community.

PEOPLE

PLACE

Young families

Motorbike trail rides

Thinking outside the square

Better footpaths - safety

Diverse population

Improve residential living

Good teachers

Picture of Wandoan on Highway

More connection with local indigenous history and culture

Billboard

Professional services

Shady trees and seating areas

Permanent doctor

Street scaping (street appeal)

Make it attractive for young people to stay

Fix roads

Retirement home

Nice gardens

Proud soldier settler history

More sports/activities for kids

Can do attitude

Good schools

Friendly, supportive, happy, harmonious, tolerant

Lights on netball court

Swimming pool open longer

History trail with stories to show what 'makes' Wandoan great

Arboretum and bush tucker

PEOPLE

PLACE

	Courtesy bus /transport
	Gym at pool
	Music festival
	Car rally
	Use the old rail trail

PROSPERITY

PROCESSES

Work and business opportunities	Cheap water for rate payer gardens
Childcare	Support local businesses
Connectivity - good internet	Everybody needs to pitch in
Better/new pub	
Thai/Mexican restaurant - choice!	
Beer garden in the pub	
Bigger shows	
Jobs for our community	
Maccas /No Maccas	

Strengths and Weaknesses

Across all levels of engagement, participants described Wandoan and its surrounding areas as a friendly, community-minded rural town with great natural resources, for agriculture, energy and other industries. The strengths of the town identified included the caring nature and proactive attitudes of its residents and its ability to embrace the new energy sector. Social events, parks for families and the history of the area were also other identified strengths. Strong, supportive relationships between community members and the quiet “country town feel” were described as an essential part of Wandoan and its surrounding community that people love and wished to preserve.

Current weaknesses for Wandoan and its surrounding community included concerns regarding continued population decline, lack of integration of energy sector workers’ camps, lack of choice in employment opportunities including opportunities for apprenticeships, and lack of local businesses and services.

Participants suggested more frequent events be held to attract interest and tourism to the area, improve public facilities such as pathways and public toilets, and increase essential services that would create jobs for professionals. There were also some concerns expressed about the need for additional police presence in the community.



STRENGTHS

PEOPLE

Community lifestyle

Dedicated people working together

Services - friendly policeman, paramedic and nurse

Great school and it seems to be growing again.

Resource companies and their workers support the town

Younger population in Wandoan appears to be growing – as children return to farms

Kindergarten provides a useful service and is growing currently full with 20 kids.

PLACE

Facilities - skate park, pool, parks, showgrounds

Many sporting clubs - often cheaper fees than the city

Free camping - Waterloo Plains

Community Cultural Centre

PROSPERITY

Resource companies have supported the community - Healthcare Centre, the Show

Agriculture provides a strong backbone and is doing well as cattle industry

WEAKNESSES

PEOPLE

Population decline

People not wanting to change

Divide between old and new locals

Resources' workers in camps and working long hours so not spending in town

No permanent doctor

Lack of childcare

Small group of volunteers spread too thin - less younger people involved

Ageing population

PLACE

Its position - going to Rockhampton but not on the road to anywhere else - how to make them stop.

Main street is uninviting in its current format, lacks street appeal

PROSPERITY

Empty shops

Lacks some services - banks, accountant, paying for registration etc.

STRENGTHS

PROCESSES

Safe - relatively low crime rate

WEAKNESSES

PROCESSES

School capped at Year 10, so families move away to prevent children from boarding or travelling

Difficult to get a spare room in town at present.

Opportunities and Threats

As with all identified strengths and weaknesses, most of these can also be turned into opportunities and threats which, once acknowledged, can help to build a solutions-oriented approach to implementation, overcoming the threats and turning them into opportunities where possible. Encouragingly, the opportunities people see for Wandoan far outnumber the threats.

Opportunities were seen in the presence of the resources sector, particularly in relation to current and potential resource extraction projects. However, the resources sector was also mentioned as a threat if the opportunities for benefits to local businesses, for local employment and for better integration of the workforce into town life were not realized. Many Wandoan residents would like to see a balance between resources sector workers who stay in camps and those who bring their families to stay and rent in the town.

Another threat mentioned was the rate of absentee owners of properties in Wandoan. This is a residual effect of a property 'boom' in the region when the resources sector first began construction of large projects and rental properties were in high demand for workers. High rental returns sparked investors from outside the region to buy and/or build properties in Wandoan. Once the initial construction period ended however, the demand for housing dropped suddenly, leaving some investors in debt and triggering property sales.



OPPORTUNITIES

PEOPLE

Pitch Wandoan as a space for young families - affordability, country lifestyle, sense of community

Connection to Darren Lockyer - can he become a town as an ambassador

Park run

People close to retirement may like to relocate to Wandoan and bring skills

PLACE

Empty shop fronts mean it could attract different businesses

Improve streetscape increase murals and art across town

Cultural Centre could be used for more activities

Sign to attract people off the highway into the town

Build on existing events - Show, Soldier Settlers Camel races, Polocrosse, Footy

Dog story - can this be promoted more - perhaps tie in with Bluey

Improve pub to make it more inviting

THREATS

PEOPLE

High turnover of school-teachers - often early graduates with little experience

Principal not given a permanent contract

Sending children away to Miles and Chinchilla and boarding schools

Attracting teenagers and other young people

People wanting to retire but no-one wanting to buy their business

Resources workers do not tend to bring their families

Need for an engineer

Not able to fill all job vacancies, help on farms, hospitality

PLACE

More food outlets

Government assisted housing - need resources to support them

Small number of hospitality outlets

OPPORTUNITIES

PLACE

Farm stays, Camping in Queensland -
Camp oven, smoked meats...

Create a longer run along the railway track
now not being used

Golf club for other events - 3 Day event for
horses?

Silos, illuminated - outdoor theatre -
Wandoan Weekend

PROSPERITY

Affordable house prices

Sawmill and other businesses

Bus to show the different solar farms, gas
plants, batteries - tour

School facilities for vocational education

Build on Lifeline shop to also sell furniture on
consignment

Bowls club - could it be utilised by all sports
communities. Serve meals to campers.

Another evening food outlet or building on
existing

Local weddings - Historic Centre - country feel.

Develop social enterprises with mothers etc.

Monthly markets advertise widely - sell local
goods

Tap into the pop-up roving caravan shops. i.e.
like the Indian, Boost juice that visited
Chinchilla

THREATS

PLACE

PROSPERITY

Changing environmental regulations to the Great
Barrier Reef pressure for farmers on chemical
use

Mining lease of Wandoan 42000 hectares –
220 Qld gas wells QGC
COVID 19 unknowns and how it has changed
the nature of some business operations

Internet can be slow in places

Long term effects of drought on farming and
profitability

OPPORTUNITIES

PROCESSES

Grant writer and grant opportunities

Welcome to Wandoan committee

Photo competition

Lights to keep swimming pool open longer

The Council can provide support to the community for their ideas also work with them on tourism

THREATS

PROCESSES

Resource industry structure - money does not flow back into the community, in camps

03

Engaging with local business

Based on the compiled strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), a survey was extended to local businesses, with follow-up interviews to better understand their views and explore the opportunities they thought would enhance growth and investment in Wandoan. We were provided with a total of 34 businesses and over the course of the follow up engagement at least 30 of those businesses were either spoken to in a short telephone interview or completed a paper survey to highlight their observations about the SWOT.

Many businesses rely mostly on the surrounding agricultural sector for trade but may have in the past provided goods or services to the resources sector and many recognized that the resources sector provides opportunities for some local businesses.

The current business environment in Wandoan was described mostly as steady and “all right” but some business owners/operators also described it as being a struggle and “could do with more”.

STRENGTHS

The businesses confirmed the great spirit and support of the Wandoan community was a major strength of Wandoan. “When the chips are down for someone, they will all rally together”.

The people who are “non-locals”, but living in Wandoan for a period of time for work (e.g. teachers, nurses, some tradespeople, industry professionals) were also valued for the range of skills and new ideas they brought to the community.

The longevity and persistence of the agricultural sector providing a steady stream of business (i.e. transport drivers, mechanics, electricians and other retail) was also welcomed. However, the resources sector received a mixed response. Some businesses suggested their presence de-risks reliance on the agricultural sector. While smaller businesses were less likely to derive income directly from energy companies, they acknowledged the indirect benefits Wandoan received through grants and sponsorship. Local events were also a valued source of additional revenue for local businesses.



WEAKNESSES

Wandoan's small population was seen as a major weakness and the Wandoan business climate was described as a "bit dull" at times. While some people enjoyed the relatively low-stress environment, others believed they could use a bit of "perking up". This was described as having a brighter attitude and a greater emphasis on customer service, working better together, being more innovative in how they present and operate their businesses as well as being more adaptable.

The current presentation of the main street was seen as a weakness as it was felt it does not reflect the community spirit and wealth generated by the diverse industries in the region. People visiting are not thought to experience the "true Wandoan". A general lack of services, particularly business administration services was also seen as a weakness in the Wandoan business climate.



THREATS

Attracting and retaining skilled and reliable employees in Wandoan was observed to be a major threat to businesses. Mainly attributed to the lack of reliable access to essential services (such as a doctor, dentist, and school to Year 12) to attract families. Retention of workers was exacerbated by the wages offered by larger contractors to energy and gas companies compared to what local businesses could afford. This also applied to apprentices, who once trained, would most often leave for a higher paying job.

Drought notably affects a wide range of local businesses when farmers delay non-urgent spending and freight needs reduce. Getting wholesale supplies in a timely and cost-effective manner was an everyday challenge. "You have to have a different mindset to the city, there is no Bunnings around the corner". Additionally, it was explained that for some goods, delivery and freight costs increase substantially from Miles to Wandoan due to different zonings. This makes it difficult for local businesses to keep the price of goods competitive. Particularly when customers can drive to Miles or Chinchilla for the same product/service at a cheaper price. The quality of some roads was also seen to be a major threat to some businesses.

As raised by many in the community, internet connection (access and slow speeds with low bandwidth) was also seen as a challenge for many businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

Most of the opportunities suggested by the businesses also reflect the views expressed by the community. In no priority order, those raised by the businesses included:

- Attracting a permanent doctor, or a system like Taroom which has two doctors working two weeks on and two weeks off alternately.
- Improving internet connection to attract new businesses and utilize additional online business opportunities.
- Energy and resources sector to enable more direct work opportunities for locals, as well as apprenticeships, and hold forums to provide information on the types of services they need to acquire and allow locals to tender for these opportunities.
- Coordinate and pool freight requirements to reduce overall costs to businesses.
- Continue to host events to attract more people to the town and ensure there is good signage to attract people into Wandoan
- Encourage more local apprenticeships and internships with local businesses and identify clearer pathways for young people to learn skills in trades and occupations that are needed, with opportunities to complete education to Year 12 without leaving the area.
- Attracting more families to come and live in Wandoan through special incentives – some of this can be encouraged by showcasing the stories of people currently living in Wandoan for work and what they see as the benefits.
- Extend the opening hours of the Information Centre by not only relying on volunteers but by gaining funding for a paid position. Linked to this is to extend the range of Wandoan souvenirs and products sold.
- Improve the overall streetscape, including for the ageing population, to include better disability access and footpaths and more shady places to sit.
- Improve access to water by negotiating with the council.
- Ultimately aim to enter a Tidy Towns competition once the above actions are implemented.

Students were then given three weeks to submit their essay if they wished. In total 11 essays were received and the winning three can be found at Appendix A. To summarise, students were very keen to see the population grow, expressed concern for the lack of services for the elderly population and the presence of a full-time doctor. Others suggested ideas were for additional businesses to support the agricultural community as well as additional food and take away outlets. In particular, many were keen to see a baker and a butcher.

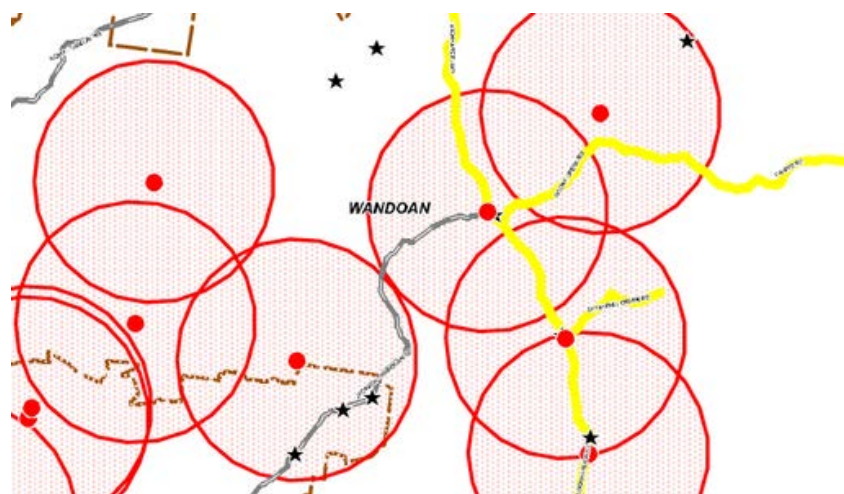
The winning entrants were:

1. Elli Zillman
2. Ashton Schultz
3. Destini Buddee

With both Quinlan Reis and Lilly Schultz being highly commended for their efforts.

05 Connectivity

Over the period of consultation issues around telephone and internet access were raised often. Best illustrated by a 24-hour outage experienced for all phones and internet connections during the period of the consultation. Ann Yardley from the Western Downs Regional Council has responsibility for this and is aware of the issues as demonstrated in the figure below.



It was noted that community members are encouraged to monitor and report all blackspots to ensure these can be addressed over the longer term. While four more towers had been proposed by Telstra to ensure more consistent coverage, at the time of writing, these are no longer going ahead. The WDRC is also still following up on a proposed NBN tower and this should be a priority action for the community. The NBN coverage shown on the map below is fixed Mobile NBN. A map of the fiber network in the region has also been requested but was not available at the time of publication.

It is recommended that the community invite Telstra to visit Wandoan to talk through what further opportunities are required to ensure improved and reliable internet at all times of the day.



Translating ideas into action



Leading the transition V1

WANDOAN AIMS TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST REGIONAL COMMUNITIES IN QUEENSLAND TO BE CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2032

This statement combines Wandoan's competitive advantage of being the epicentre of energy resources (solar, battery, gas and potentially bioenergy and renewable hydrogen). Through carbon farming initiatives there is potential for farms, businesses and the wider community to offset carbon and methane emissions and recoup carbon credits from the renewable energy projects and tree planting. For example, creating an arboretum through the Glencore buffer zone which could also become an active tourist attraction.

There is an opportunity to bring in more circular economy elements through the recycling of solar panels or other goods which could create additional industries while also offsetting emissions. Wandoan would be known for its renewable energies, recycling efforts, sustainable waste management and would host an annual 'Junk' festival of sculptures and art made from upcycled and recycled materials (similar to this one held in the Northern Territory). In addition, Wandoan becomes known for having the best Opportunity shop in regional Queensland.



The best gold is found off the beaten track **V2**

WANDOAN WELCOMES YOU TO ENJOY A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE COMBINING AGRICULTURE, ENERGY, FOOD, AND NATURE TO ALL THOSE WHO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT THEIR COMMUNITY.

Wandoan is well known for the strength of their community, agriculture and the energy resources that operate in their region. They host regular and fun social events where visitors can get a taste of authentic Queensland country life and hospitality. There are multiple opportunities to capitalize on these strengths along with their existing events to establish Wandoan as the preferred area to visit for all beef products (barbecued, smoked meats etc.), camp oven cookouts at the Juandah Historical site and potentially tourist visits to energy projects in the surrounding area.

Opportunities for fly-drive packages from Roma, taking in the sweeping vista and uniquely shaped bottle trees with a trail of interpretation of the soldier settler struggles and achievements. The illuminated silos provide a good reason to stay the night and even watch an open-air movie. The town is welcoming and inviting with local produce and handicrafts on sale. There may be a bespoke brewery/distillery and unique food experiences combined with music/theatre/cultural experiences.



07 Business opportunities

While not without its challenges to secure sustainable growth over the longer term there is a need to attract new businesses that will ideally operate from Wandoan. There were several suggestions that emerged, and these are listed below in no order of priority.

1. Developing a recycling centre for solar PV panels or other components and other furniture sold on consignment. See for example: ReclaimPV:

<https://www.reclaimpv.com>; the World's Biggest Garage Sale:

<https://worldsbiggestgaragesale.com.au>.

2. Working with feedlots and Parkside Mill and other waste generators to develop a biomass/bioenergy project. There is potential to use this as behind the meter energy to power a separate business: refer Professor Bernadette McCabe, USQ

<https://agengineering.usq.edu.au/energy/>

3. In addition to bioenergy, around the world there is a growing focus on green hydrogen made from electrolysis of water using renewable energy. Depending on what happens with water allocations and the proposed Nathan Dam this could be another opportunity for Wandoan.

The added value of hydrogen production is that it can be used locally to provide cheap energy for advance manufacturing and other industries. This could tie in nicely with the ideas for recycling.

4. Childcare – there is an identified need to establish a formal childcare centre at Wandoan. An earlier community survey suggests there are up to 50 children that could use places if one was operating. The Australian Federal Government runs several grants that provide funds towards the development of a community childcare facility which should be investigated further.

5. Developing a bespoke brewery/gin distillery that could either be attached to the existing pub or a separate one. There were several suggestions about the need to revamp the hotel to bring it back to life and this could compliment that. See for example the Whalebone Brewing Co.

HOME ABOUT US OUR BEERS WHATS ON GIFT VOUCHERS TAKEAWAY

WHALEBONE BREWING CO.

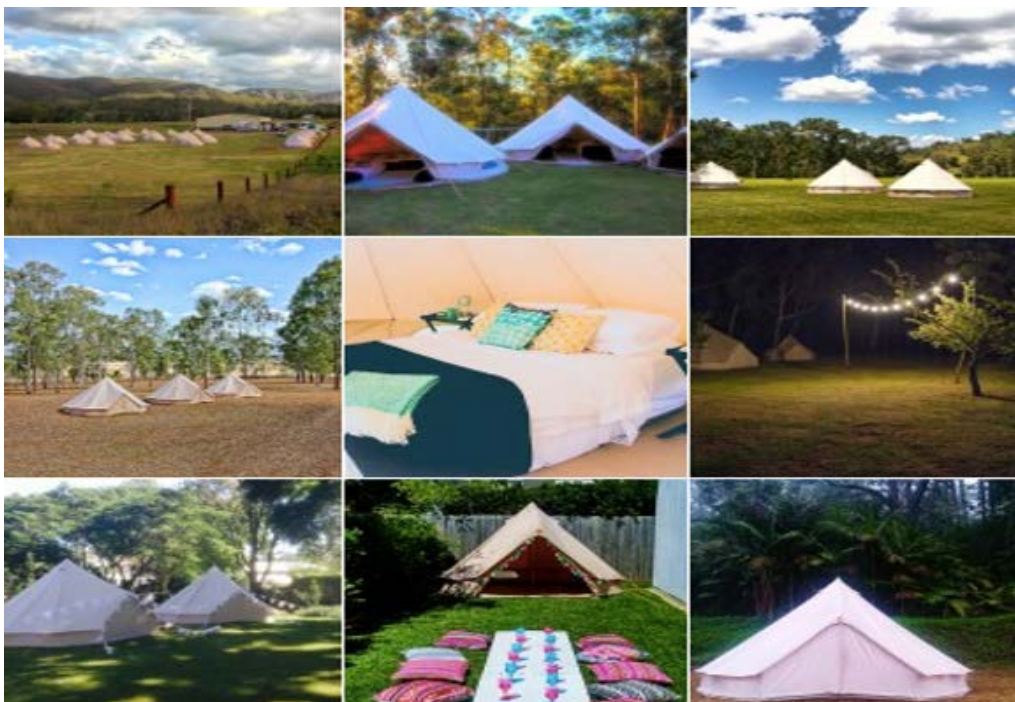


6. Mechanical engineer - since Graham Omara has left Wandoan, his engineering shop remains closed and unused. However, there is an identified demand for these services. There is potential to advertise to attract a mechanical engineer or similar who may like to relocate to Wandoan to take on the business left behind by Graham.

7. Social enterprises – across the Wandoan community there are a number of talented individuals that could potentially combine their skills into a social enterprise that not only has a shop presence within the town, but also an online presence using social media. This could also be extended to local produce sales as well and investigation of alternative high value food production.

8. Rotational pop-up stores/food vans – given there are a number of vacant stores in Wandoan and it is currently difficult to attract retail outlets - pop up stores and food vans provide a unique opportunity to fill this gap. It would be worth exploring whether a variety of established businesses from Brisbane/Toowoomba would consider bringing their wares for 4 – 7 days to Wandoan. This could potentially be on a fortnightly or monthly basis depending on demand and success.

9. Attract some highly rated chefs to come to Wandoan for the weekend for a special event – i.e. a long table at Juandah or the showgrounds. The accommodation park could be opened for people to stay overnight as part of the event and a package deal be offered. Alternatively, glamping tents could be bought in as part of the accommodation package. See for example Bell Tent Hire Company.



Source: <https://belltenthireco.com/gallery/>

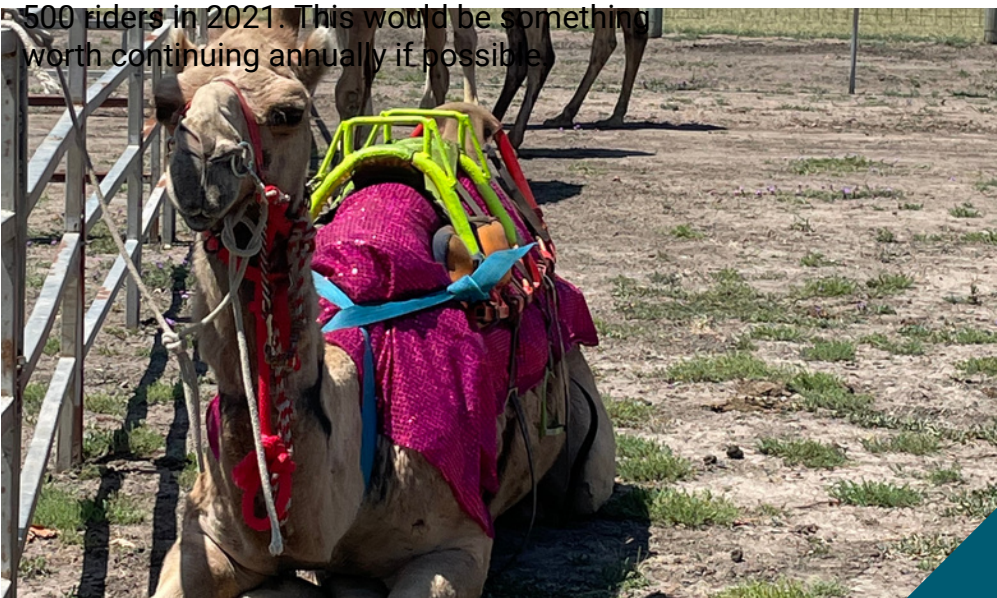
Existing Events

08

Wandoan already has several well-established and successful high-profile events. These include the Wandoan Show, State Polocrosse championships, Junior Football Competition and the Camel Races. While recognising the town has limited resources which makes capacity to undertake events a challenging component, there is an opportunity to think creatively to build on these events to further enhance the attractiveness of Wandoan.

For example:

- Wandoan Show – the local community has already investigated including a more “doggy” element to the show. However, there is also a chance to bring some more well-known musicians to raise the overall profile of the event. This could potentially be linked to, or find synergies with, musicians from the Big Skies Festival held at Jimbour House in April.
- Solider Settlers – this is a unique historical event and attraction that provides an excellent opportunity for those connected to Wandoan to return. It also provides a unique insight into the history of the town and Australia’s heritage for returning soldiers and should continue to be capitalised on.
- State Polocrosse championships – attracted 500 riders in 2021. This would be something worth continuing annually if possible.
- Camel Races in October with over 3000 attendees, is another event that gains a great deal of attention and is a critical fundraiser for the community kindergarten. There is interest to potentially grow this into a larger event. For example, given the mechanic’s expertise and interests could it become “cars and camels” – attracting a large number of those with an interest in cars or “cars, camp ovens and camels” – building on the idea of beef and camp ovens. Or even include “cowboys, cars, camp ovens and camels” to include the country and western feel or “cameras, cowboys, cars, camp ovens and camels” to bring in the photography and drone expertise that is already developing in Wandoan. There are multiple ways to consider such extensions, but it will need to be resourced and sustainable.
- Park Run – has been well received and should continue as this also provides an opportunity for a different attraction that could be packaged as part of a weekend stay in Wandoan.



09

Other ideas for growth

There was also a genuine interest in ways to enhance a “Weekend in Wandoan” concept which encouraged people to come and stay in the area. However, to do this it would require packaging and marketing a number of experiences. For example, now that funding has been received for the illumination of the silos, there is the possibility to screen open-air movies on a regular basis as part of the weekend of attractions.

Other ideas included:

- Enhancing the street appeal of Wandoan was a suggestion that arose in several of the discussions. There was a strong feeling that improving the overall streetscape would encourage more individuals to visit and stay longer in the town. There are several ways to progress this. One way would be to run a competition with some of the universities that have architecture and town planning offering a small prize pool to encourage teams of students to enter and share their ideas. It would eventually require planning and approvals from the WDRRC, so working collaboratively on this activity would be the best way to progress. Similarly, to ensure it that it becomes a consideration for their budgeting process. Chinchilla has recently received a large amount of funding to improve their streetscape so a lot could be learned from their process to not reinvent the wheel.
- Building on this would be to include some updated signage, based on the new visions, to encourage travelers to come into Wandoan.
- In addition to considering attracting star performers for the Wandoan Show weekend, the Birdsville – Big Red Bash is normally held in July each year. There is potential to explore attracting one or two of these performers to a side event in Wandoan.
- There have also been suggestions for increasing attraction to the Juandah Historical Centre
 - For example, one suggestion was to build on Wandoan’s beef industry by setting up a barbecue cook out serving smoked meats, briskets etc. and including a camp oven experience. This could be part of the weekend in Wandoan.
 - If this was suggested that there may be a way to establish Bush Weddings as part of the offerings.
- Astrotourism WA, established by Carol Redford, is gaining momentum in Western Australia (WA). Carol has been working with local governments across WA and now has 14 towns registered as dark skies locations to maximise celestial viewing. Like WA, Queensland’s celestial sky is a natural asset. According to the WA government “Our night skies offer exceptional viewing opportunities for scientific and recreational star gazes that could unlock new tourism opportunities around the State.” In late 2021, the concept was featured in the West Australian paper World class stargazing trail across Western Australia.

- There are a number of resources relevant for building this and Carol is keen to explore a partnership with Wandoan and the broader WDRC to establish a partner Astrotourism Qld of which Wandoan could take the lead. Winton has already established itself as the first Dark Sky Sanctuary and there is potential to explore synergies with this as well.

- Wandoan is already known for its murals and there is another opportunity to build on this. The town of Sheffield in Tasmania has built up a wonderful display of murals on almost every building in town. With an improved streetscape and buildings this could also be something that Wandoan may wish to aspire to, and it could be planned for over time. It is certainly an attraction that would encourage people off the highway to visit.



Source:Google.com

- There are several other ways to raise awareness of Wandoan to encourage individuals to visit and stay longer. For example, there is a Queensland Camping Facebook page which has a large number of followers who are always looking for ideas around places to visit. The Waterloo Plains facilities should be promoted on this to raise awareness of what Wandoan offers.



- The WDRC already has a birdwatching brochure for the region. However, in discussion with birdwatching groups there was a suggestion that a specific site guide is also attractive to birders – so perhaps an opportunity to build more details into what is being offered – this could also be coordinated with the wildflower track where signs need to be upgraded.
- Similarly, some of the local farms could offer camping and farm stays to host travelers and share some of their insights. There are a few models for these, some that require engagement and others are more relaxed where individuals are left to themselves. See for example The Barn at Roma.
- There is also an opportunity to consider whether the Golf Club could be utilised for a different resource since it was not sustainable as a Golf Club. For example, a country town in WA developed an equestrian 3-day event which bought a large number of riders to the town. Similarly, rodeos and camp drafts are popular around Wandoan and establishing riding schools that develop these skills might be another consideration if there was interest.

Priority Actions 10

Based on the consultation and to achieve both visions and the goal of arresting the population decline the following priority actions have been identified:

1. Establish a childcare centre – to allow more parents to be able to gain paid employment
2. Heat the swimming pool so that it can be accessed all year round with swipe access and potential for gym over the longer term or liaise with the Windmill Village to find a way to allow local community access in the interim – although it must be a competitive business model to progress
3. Improve the streetscape of the town
4. Find ways to provide water to all houses for their gardens
5. Attract funding for developing murals on all buildings
6. Improve signage to attract people from the highway into Wandoan based on visions
7. Improve overall internet connectivity
8. Businesses to work together share/reduce freight costs
9. Decide on the community calendar of events for the year to ensure not too many overlaps between months
10. Build up the information centre to open longer – paid staff, more local goods to sell, coffee and cakes

11. Attract new businesses to town
 - Medical
 - Weeds and pest management for resources sector
 - Accountant or other internet-based activities (if connectivity is improved)
 - Recycling, upcycling
12. Ensure opportunities for apprenticeships
 - Resources companies
 - Other trades
 - Taroom bakery
 - Butcher
 - Electronics – internet-based options
13. Develop and attract new food outlets that are open on Sunday and evenings
 - Chef - can rent kitchen from Central Apartments and operate restaurant
 - Butcher
 - Baker
 - Bowls club to serve meals
14. Revitalise the pub or develop a separate central and pleasant licensed indoor/outdoor meeting place – e.g. beer garden, café/restaurant
15. Other tourist attractions
 - Silos illuminated – monthly outdoor movie
 - Juandah Historical Centre – camp oven cookouts
 - Soldier settlers' stories – promote more widely
 - Monthly markets – to coincide with calendar of events
 - Social enterprises
 - High rated chefs, glamping, accommodation packages
16. Astrotourism Queensland



Appendix A: Student Essays

The Future of Wandoan

Wandoan. So much could change in 10 years. But what are my plans and goals for Wandoan in 10 years' time? Here are some questions for me to guide you through what I want to see in the future. First, people; who would be living in the town and what services can achieve their wants and needs? Second, place; what makes Wandoan attractive, is it the natural, unique or man-made elements? Third, prosperity; what businesses are in town and what economic elements make Wandoan prosper? And fourth, processes; who can make this happen? Let me guide you through what to expect as for the future of Wandoan in 2032.

The first discussion is people; who would be living in the town and what services can achieve their wants and needs? The strength of Wandoan at the moment is that Wandoan has a great community. Everyone knows everyone and you can fit in easily if you're new. We have so many clubs where you can meet new people like swim club, tennis, gun club, polocrosse, gymnastics, touch and Wandoan junior rugby league. These clubs help people connect and meet new residents in the community. However, there are some weaknesses which are ruining some of these activities. One is that our population in Wandoan is declining. So, these clubs won't have enough people to even run. For example, the Hot Shot Tennis Club that shut down when I was in grade 4. Every Friday afternoon, kids from any age would go down to play tennis with an actual coach but as people moved away and stopped coming, the club was not making any more profit so had to shut down. The population declining is also affecting other clubs in this community like the swim club for example.

Now if in 2032 we have somehow succeeded in increasing our population we would have a greater range of different cultures, religions and generations from years before. Wandoan will then have to benefit the needs and wants of the community in Wandoan, suitable for all ages. So, a maintained football field; a pool that can be open in winter (heated); elderly support; a day-care for young mothers or families; a doctor that can be here all week; and more technology to suit the fast-moving world of computers and digital devices. As well as new business options that might come to town, if it is a new hairdresser, more trade options and other opportunities for upcoming adults. Therefore, Wandoan in 2032 will have greater activities which can reach the needs and wants for our community if it is young or old.

My second discussion is place; what makes Wandoan attractive, is it the natural, unique or man-made elements? Wandoan is a place of agriculture with vast areas of farming and forestry. But we also have our man-made elements that make this town beautiful. Wandoan is a big part of forestry like Waterloo Plains, rivers, and trees that run for kilometres. But it is also the elements that, us as a community has made, like for example the Wandoan School mural, Nancy Davies Memorial, the lush green oval at Wandoan State School and more elements that contribute to Wandoan. But then again Wandoan has old and rustic features around that are just brick which are crumbling and wearing from weather and erosion. Like for example the pub has been there for over 50 years and its needs a makeover. So, in 2032, I hope to believe that some new features, man-made or natural, can help bring Wandoan to become an aesthetically pleasing sight for travellers and the locals.

Appendix A: Student Essays

My third discussion is prosperity; what businesses are in town and what economic elements make Wandoan prosper? Like I have said before Wandoan is a town of agriculture, so I truly believe that is what makes Wandoan prosper. The cattle industry and crops help keep Wandoan running. We have so many amazing farms that can produce the best of meat and crops. But we also have our local businesses in town which are HB beauty that only came last year, Foodworks, the pub, and also all the locals that own their own cattle businesses in Wandoan. As a result, in 2032 I hope to see more technology use in the future. Like drones to check water and troughs, water observant sensors and so much more that could help farmers' work much easier. The world is moving so quickly with its technology and Wandoan is behind and we need to catch up. If it is on farms, in our school, or just locally.

My fourth and last discussion is processes; who can make this happen? Being school captain for Wandoan State School I believe it is part of my duty to see these plans go through. So, who can make this happen. Well I believe us, the community as a whole. This town has a great sense of belonging as I have said before. Therefore, we need to make this happen, we need to put in the work to see these plans and make it real not just as our goals and dreams. Wandoan might have some problems, but they can be fixed together.

Therefore, in the end, with some plans in mind and a great community, we can achieve this. So, I hope in 2032 we can do these and if not, at least half of the goals then. Like I said at the start there are so many ways Wandoan can change if people, agriculture, the sights, the prosperity or just a new pub.

But now we wait, see you in 10 years.

Sincerely
Elli Zillman, School Captain of Wandoan State School

Appendix A: Student Essays

The Future of Wandoan

Wandoan is an upright town and community. The town consists of sport, shows, races, community events and more. We all share a lovely bond with the community and life here, we enjoy it because of this.

Shops

Here in Wandoan everything is good although some things can be better, this means that things could either be fixed or touched up in our town. This could involve our shops here. We do have a Lifeline but all the items there are old items from other people, and I assume that most people in town don't want to buy clothes or items that have already been used. So maybe with this we could add a Target or something, so the citizens of Wandoan can have more of an option. Another thing is we could add a Wandoan newsagency. Now you see Wandoan did have a newsagency it is where HB beauty is now. Unfortunately, it closed down because there was not as many workers there and not enough profit, so they decided to shut it down. This is why Wandoan should add more shops because our nearest shops are an hour away.

Wandoan State School

Here at Wandoan State School we have around 70 to 80 students, this includes the high school. Here in this school we learn all different subjects for example: English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, Art and Music we also do a lot more extra-curricular activities. Wandoan State School has been going since 1911, it started as just a primary school and gained a high school in 1962. As an active citizen of the town and part of Wandoan State School Student Council I would suggest that there could be a few touch ups to the school. Maybe we could do home economics, I say this because we have a kitchen and a dining room so we might as well put them to use by adding this class.

The Skatepark

I have heard many community members and students talk about the skatepark and how it's getting quite boring. So, for the skate park we could get another ramp or paint it. I think this will make a lot of people happy because I hear people talking about how bland it is all the time.

Wandoan's population

Recently Wandoan's population has gone down since 2006 with 767 people living here to 566 in 2016 so it's not doing so good. To prevent us from going down we need to work our way up again. A great way to do this is to hold more community events. For example, maybe have a big Easter hunt for all the kids in the town and parents are invited to watch. We could also hold a festival for the school to raise money. We had something like this in 2017 called Grass it was a lot of fun, and a lot of people came.

Thank you for listening to some ideas that I have to improve the town. I hope if I come back here in my early 20's I'll be able to see some of these changes.

Your Sincerely,

Quinlan Reis, Member of the Student Council of Wandoan State School

Appendix A: Student Essays

My Vision for Wandoan in 2032 by Destini Buddee

In 2032 my vision for Wandoan is that we will have a full-time doctor. Wandoan is a small town but here there are elderly people and young children and babies who need the care. Young children and babies need lots of care like vaccines and when they are sick, they need check-ups to make sure they are getting better or at least not getting any worse. Most elderly people need doctors to get medications and to get regular check-ups to make sure they are okay. A lot of people here need a full-time doctor because they have injured themselves, at least once every day I hear about someone who has hurt themselves.

If a full-time doctor is asking for too much, then a doctor who can at least be called in whenever he or she is needed. I know asking for this is a lot considering it is a small town, but it is a necessary requirement for the people of our town. In Wandoan we have activities like shooting, gym club, swimming club or just going to the skatepark with your mates. These all have a possibility of someone hurting themselves, when out shooting someone might get shot, in gym someone could get badly injured like breaking a bone, in swimming someone might swallow a lot of water and at the skatepark someone might fall off their bike or scooter, which an on-call doctor could really help in these situations.

In 2032 there could even be a bakery, where people could buy fresh loaves of bread and some nicely cooked pastries, like some meat pies or an apple turnover. They could sell some delicious biscuits and donuts and I'm sure that people in Wandoan would go there for a lunch break, or just to get out of work to get a pie or a sausage roll as a snack. Kids would beg their parents for a donut or a cookie, while they are just there for some fresh bread for their house. A bakery in Wandoan would bring people who are meant to be just driving past, into our community to just stop in for a nice pie or pastry to eat while they have a break from driving. When people come in from out of Wandoan to visit family or friends, the bakery would be a good place to go to get something to eat while you catch up with that person or people, so a bakery would benefit the Wandoan community.

2032 is almost 10 years away and now is when we have to start thinking about Wandoan's future, and the way we can do that is to take a look at the vacant land plots and do something with them instead of just leaving them there. People could buy them and put a house, an apartment or a shop on there. There are quite a few land plots that can be done up, but no one does. This town is small but there is more we could do to this town to improve it. Some people say this small town is great and yes it may be but adding things like another shop, apartments etc. can improve it, to make it the best place it could be.

A lot of improvements can be made to Wandoan for the future, but a big thing is that we have a lot of activities for children, but they all cost a large amount of money and some people don't have that kind of money for those types of things. So, then they have a child, or children, at home with nothing to do but want to go out and have fun. May be a game place for children to go where every second or third day there are different activities for the kids to complete. For example, they could play an hour's worth of Red Rover and then the next time they could play tag or something fun. Or making a low price for the activities we have so other people can join in and have fun with their friends.

Appendix A: Student Essays

In 2032 the bypass for Wandoan, could be gone and we could have a road where they have to drive through Wandoan to get to their destination and then people could actually see what Wandoan is like. The bypass allows people to just drive past and miss out on seeing this amazing country town and meeting our community's people and activities.

In 2032 Wandoan will hopefully have upgraded, and I think that the ideas I have presented will give Wandoan that little touch it needs to give it that interesting part that everyone wants to know and see. Like adding a bakery or an on-call doctor can give it that step up from other county towns and some are requirements that are needed. These are my ideas for the future of Wandoan.

Thank you for reading.

Appendix B: Data & Trends

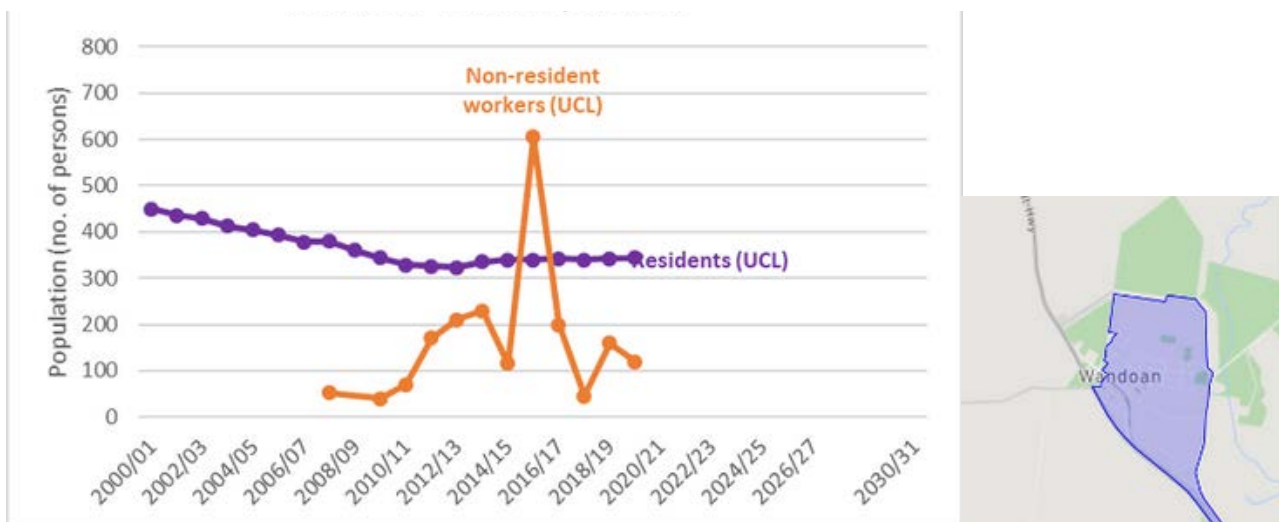
Theme: People

Population in the township of Wandoan (UCL) has stabilised since around 2012/13. In addition to the resident population of 344 in 2020, there were 120 non-resident workers staying in town in either accommodation, rental units or houses. This means about 1 in every 4 people in Wandoan is a non-resident worker. In reality, there may be more as this figure is for projects listed with the state government and may not include private or WDRC contractors.

For the Wandoan district, census data shows population as:

2001 - 396
2006 - 386
2011 - 655
2016 - 566

Wandoan Town Population



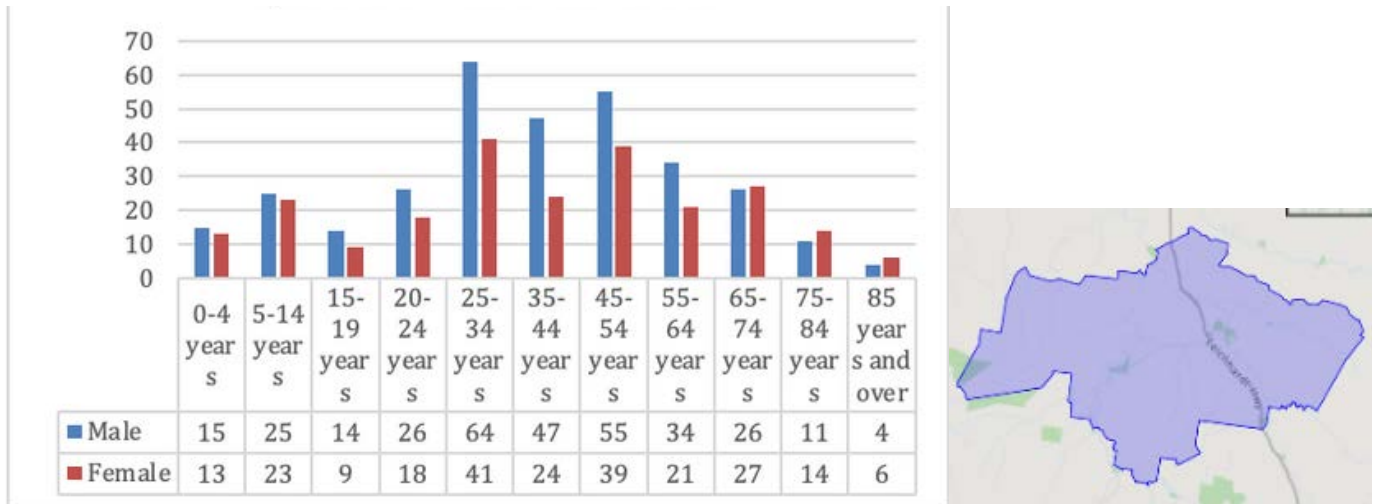
In the wider Wandoan district, most people are working age and there are more males than females (2016 data). Most people were born in Australia (438) with only 12% of the population (55) born overseas.

In 2016, more women (41) than men (21) had completed higher education (a diploma or above), but more men (81) than women (34) had certificates. Younger people tend to be more highly educated.

Volunteering in Wandoan is high (over 25% of the population volunteer) compared to the rest of the state (around 19%).

Appendix B: Data & Trends

Wandoan District Population

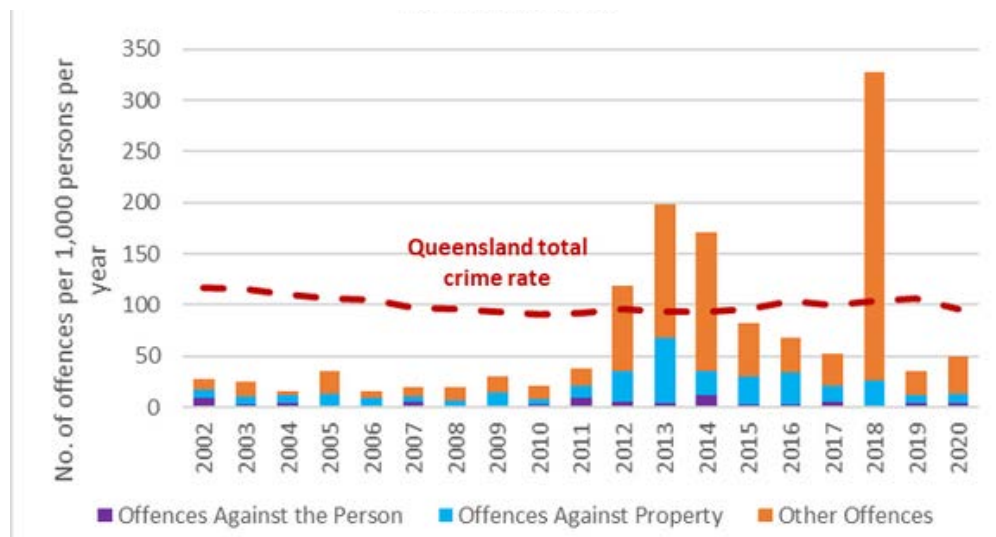


Theme: Place

Wandoan is a very affordable place to buy or rent a home. In 2016, there were 286 private dwellings in the Wandoan district and 122 families. According to a local real estate agent, there are current vacancies in the rental market, mostly for properties designed for corporate tenants. Residential housing is usually taken up very quickly. Average rent in Wandoan is rising at \$300 per week but this can vary depending on the type of property. House sale prices also vary and there are few sales to gain an average. There has been a trend of decline in house sale prices.

Wandoan is a very safe place to live with crime rates well below the Queensland rate. Other offences include traffic infringements and drugs. The spike in 2018 was attributed to drugs offences.

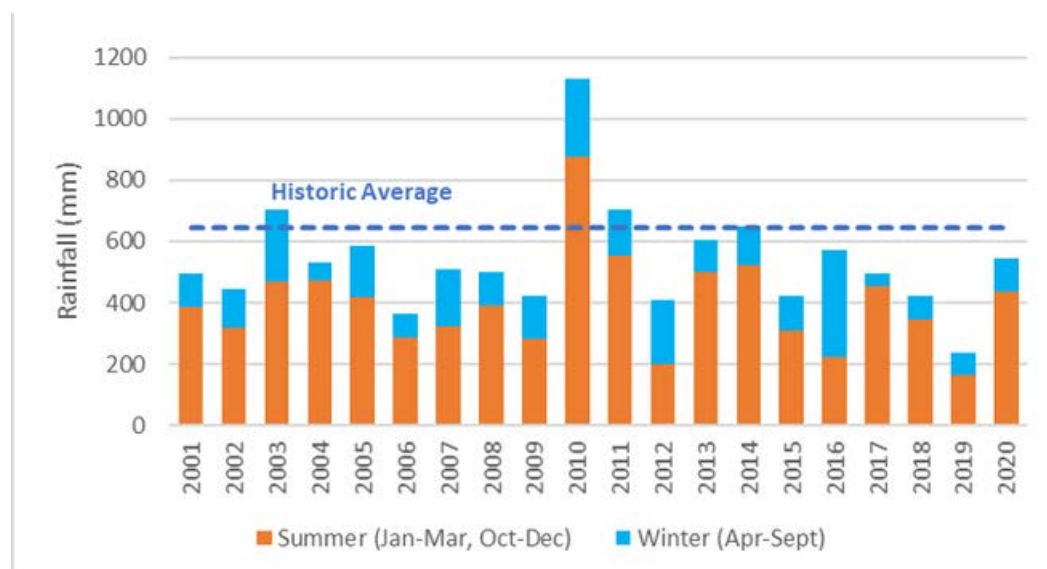
Total Offences



Appendix B: Data & Trends

Wandoan experienced lower than average rainfall for most of the last two decades. Not only is the amount of rainfall important but the time of year when it falls.

Total Rainfall



Theme: Prosperity

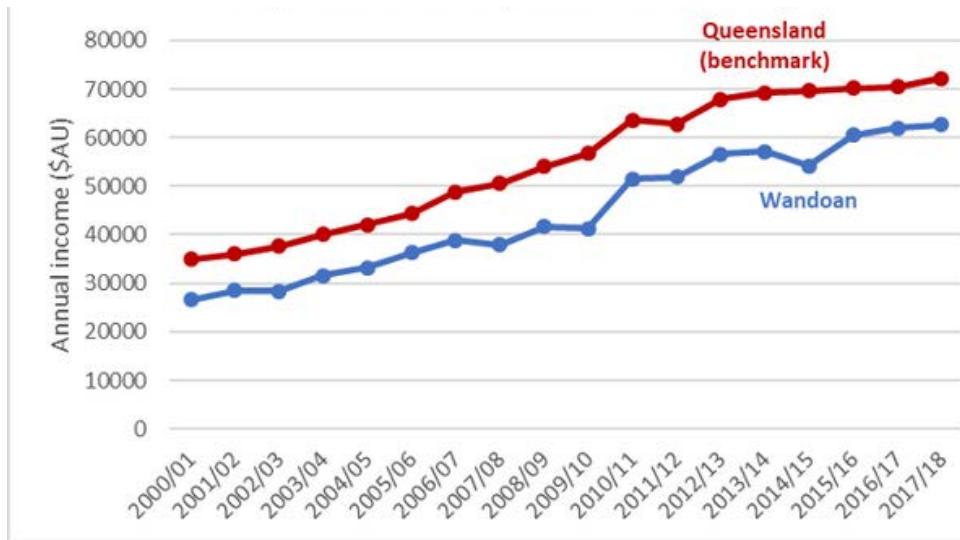
The beef cattle industry is the largest employer in Wandoan (almost 20% of the population in 2016), followed by the oil and gas industry (almost 7%), earthmoving and site preparation (6.4%) sawmilling (6%) and accommodation (6%).

Most people who live in Wandoan work. Although the unemployment rate rose from a very low 0.7% in 2013 to 3.65% in 2019 these rates are still comparatively low and the unemployment rate is decreasing again. The average income for people with taxable incomes (Wandoan postcode 4419) has fluctuated in recent years but remains on a long term trend in line with the Queensland average.

There are currently 641 active ABNs registered to postcode 4419 which includes local associations, businesses and individuals.

Appendix B: Data & Trends

Average Taxable Income (Taxable individuals only)



Despite low rainfall the individual ABNs registered as primary production businesses performed strongly and have maintained a consistent level of income with better years in 2015 and 2016. Income from non-primary production individual ABNs is steady after a peak in 2012-2013.

Total Income: Individual ABN Primary Production



Total Income: Individual ABN Non-Primary Production



Appendix C: Grant Examples*

Future Drought Fund:

Drought Resilience Innovation Expression of Interest (EOI) and Grants Program (29 July 2021 to 8 September 2021). 3 grant types are available in this EOI and grant opportunity:

- Ideas Grants will provide \$50,000 (GST inclusive) for one year.
- Proof-of-Concept Grants will provide funding of up to \$120,000 (GST inclusive) for one year.
- Innovation Grants will provide funding of between \$300,000 to \$1.1 million (GST inclusive) per year for a maximum of 3 years. <https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants/future-drought-fund>

Queensland Tourism Grants:

Also provide additional opportunities to build on existing events. To be eligible for the program:

- The event must be held wholly in Queensland region
- Must be able to provide past event historical data in terms of performance, revenue generated, media coverage and participant numbers
- The event must show ability to grow against the baseline

Based on the type of projects, the funding amount may vary from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per year.

<https://australiangrants.org/qld-tourism-grants/>

Other Business Grants for Qld:

<https://australiangrants.org/category/business-grants/business-grants-qlld/>; Community Grants

<https://australiangrants.org/community-development-grants/>

*Current at the time of writing.

