



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional Development Australia

MID NORTH COAST

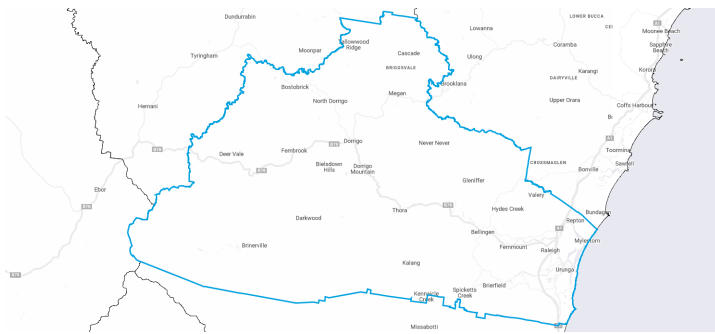
Regional Snapshot

Bellingen LGA

August 2023

RDA Charter - RIF

The RDA network has been issued a new Charter to operate within the Regional Investment Framework (RIF). The focus of the RIF is People, Places, Services and Industries. RDAMNC has collated some key data in these areas for the Bellingen LGA.



Summary Statistics

Table 1: Key area statistics.

Description	Data
Population	13,253
Annualised population growth (2016-2021)	0.9%
Median Age	50 years
Median Weekly Income	\$614
Labour force participation	51.34%

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RIF Statistics

The following table highlights some key data for the Bellingen LGA that are relevant to RDAMNC’s work on the Regional Investment Framework.

Table 2: People, places and industry statistics

Description	Data
People	
% of population between 50-79 years	44.74%
% of Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander	4.18%
% of households with two people	41.72%
% of families not in the labour force	18.29%
% of disengaged youth (15-24 years)	10.97%
% of pop. requiring assistance with core activities	6.26%
% of population living with one or more long term health conditions	31.61%
Places	
% of dwellings owned outright	39.97%
% of dwellings with spare bedrooms	74.49%
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage Score	981
SEIFA Index of Disadvantage LGA ranking	283/547
Industry	
Industry with largest output contribution	Manufacturing
Industry with largest value-add contribution	Rental, hiring & real estate services
Industry with largest employment contribution	Health Care & social assistance
Highest ranking field of study	Society & Culture

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

RDAMNC has categorised the 6 LGAS in the region into small (Kempsey, Bellingen and Nambucca) and large (Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Midcoast). Comparative services data is outlined below.

Table 3: Services in the Region

Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Aged Care	6	8	28
Disability Services	2	4	13
Childcare / Preschool	8	8	43
Primary School	9	12	30
High School	2	3	9
Special Schools	1	1	1
Higher education	0	2	4
Hospitals	2	1	4
Medical Centre's (GP)	5	10	23
Pharmacies	3	7	23
Counsellors / Psychotherapists	0	0	11
Physiotherapy / chiropractic	3	5	22

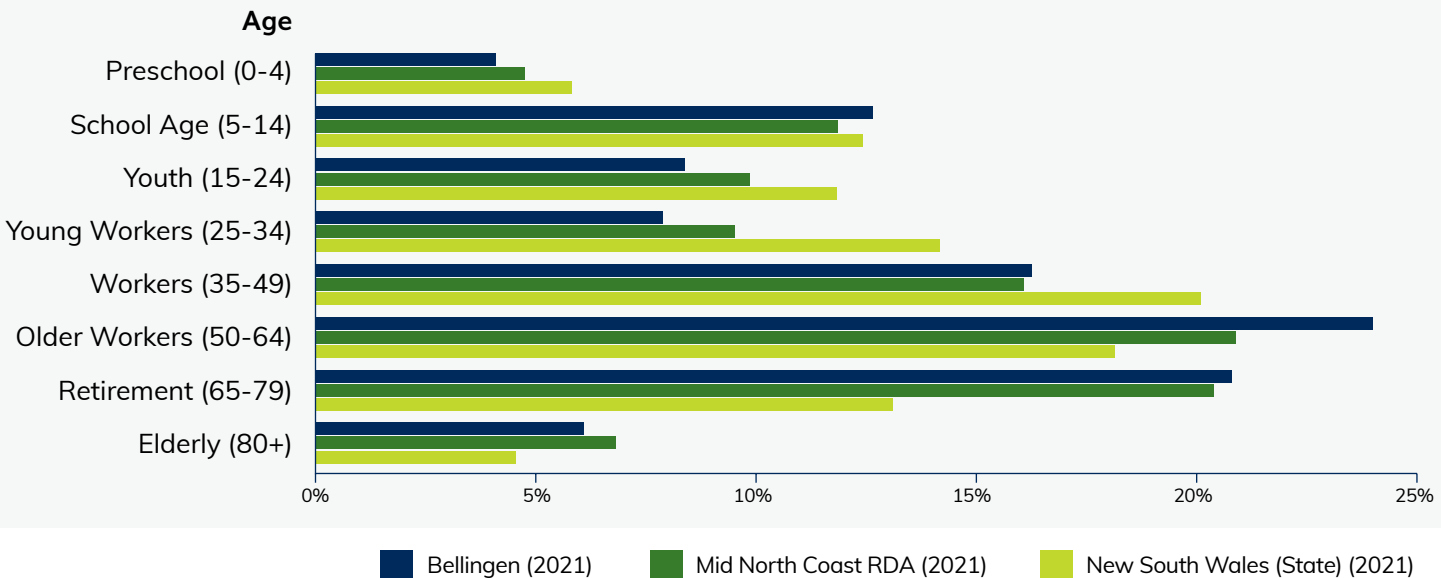
Type	No.	Small LGA Avg	Large LGA Avg
Dentists	3	4	20
Service NSW	1	1	2
Accountants	3	7	30
Lawyer / Solicitors	6	7	26
Financial planners	0	3	11
Transport Services	7	6	10
Major shopping centres	0	0	3
Supermarkets	6	7	16
Department stores	0	0	3
Sporting Clubs	27	23	71
Aquatic & Fitness Centres	3	5	20

Source: Publicly available internet listings as at August 2023

MNC & NSW Comparisons

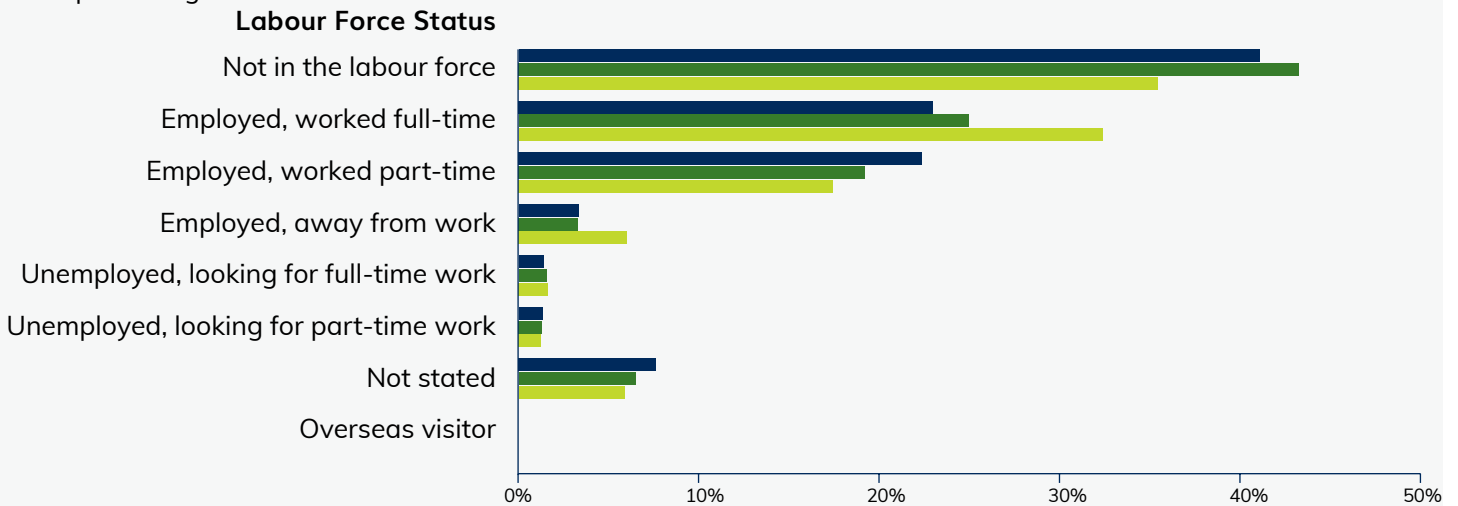
Population by Life Stage

Bellingen has 44.87% of the population as older worker or retirees. In comparison, the MNC has 41.17% and NSW has 31.14%.



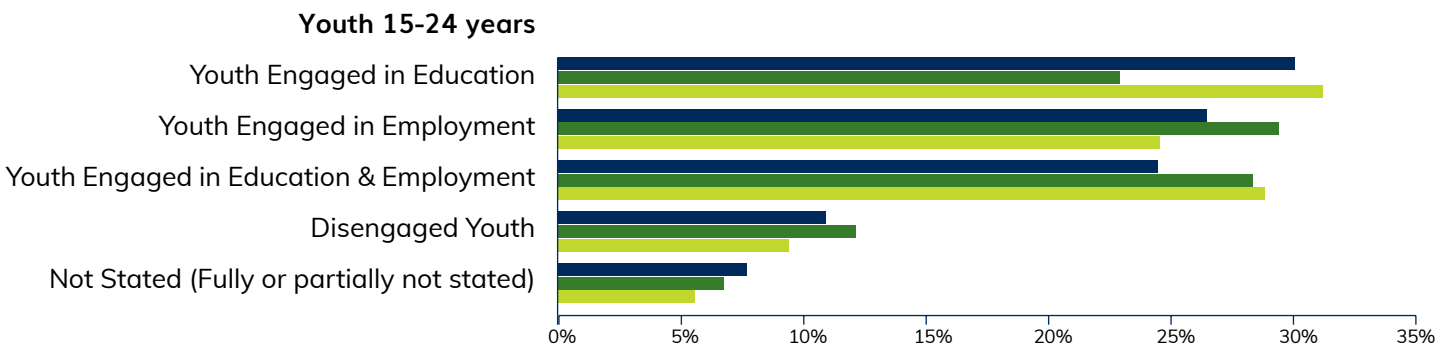
Population by Labour Force

Bellingen has 41.53% of the population not in the labour force. By comparison the MNC has 43.24% and NSW has 35.33%. Bellingen's full-time workforce percentage is less than the MNC overall and significantly lower than the state percentage.



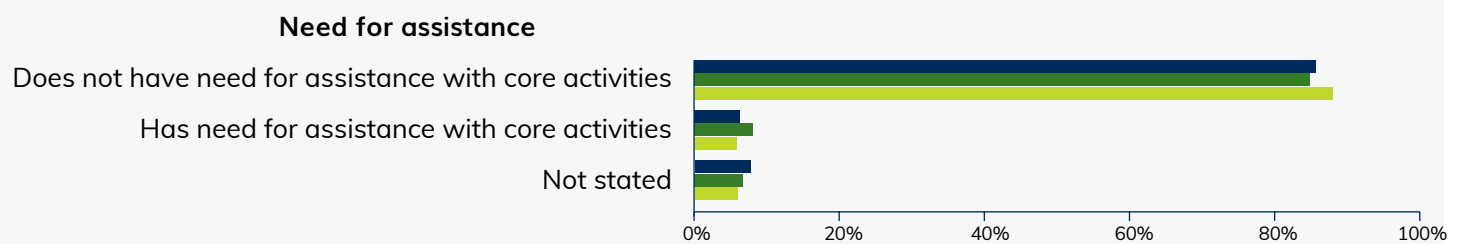
Youth Engagement (15-24 years)

10.97% of Bellingen's youth are disengaged, meaning not engaged in employment or education. However, MNC overall has 12.19% youth disengagement compared to 9.46% across NSW.



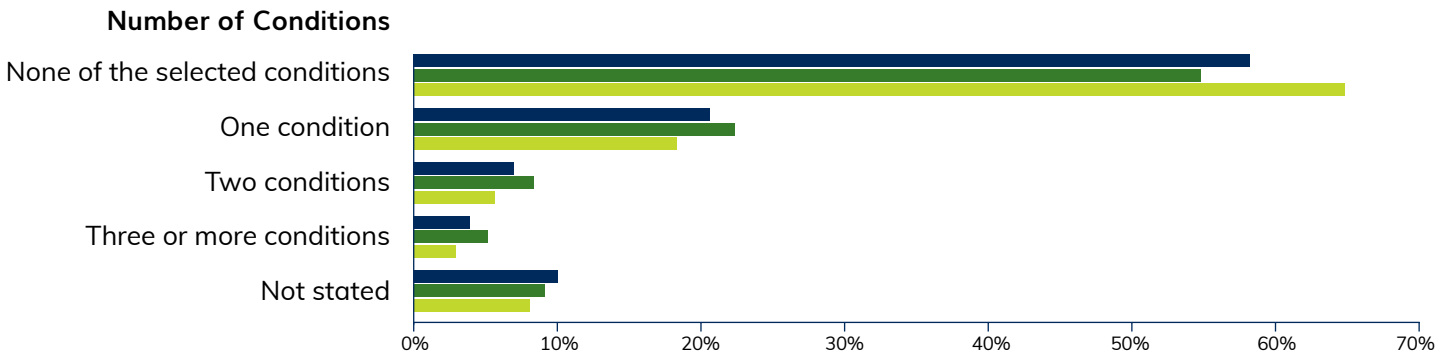
Need for assistance

Bellingen LGA has 6.26% of it's population requiring assistance to undertake core activities. The MNC overall has 8.09% of the population requiring assistance and NSW has 5.76%.



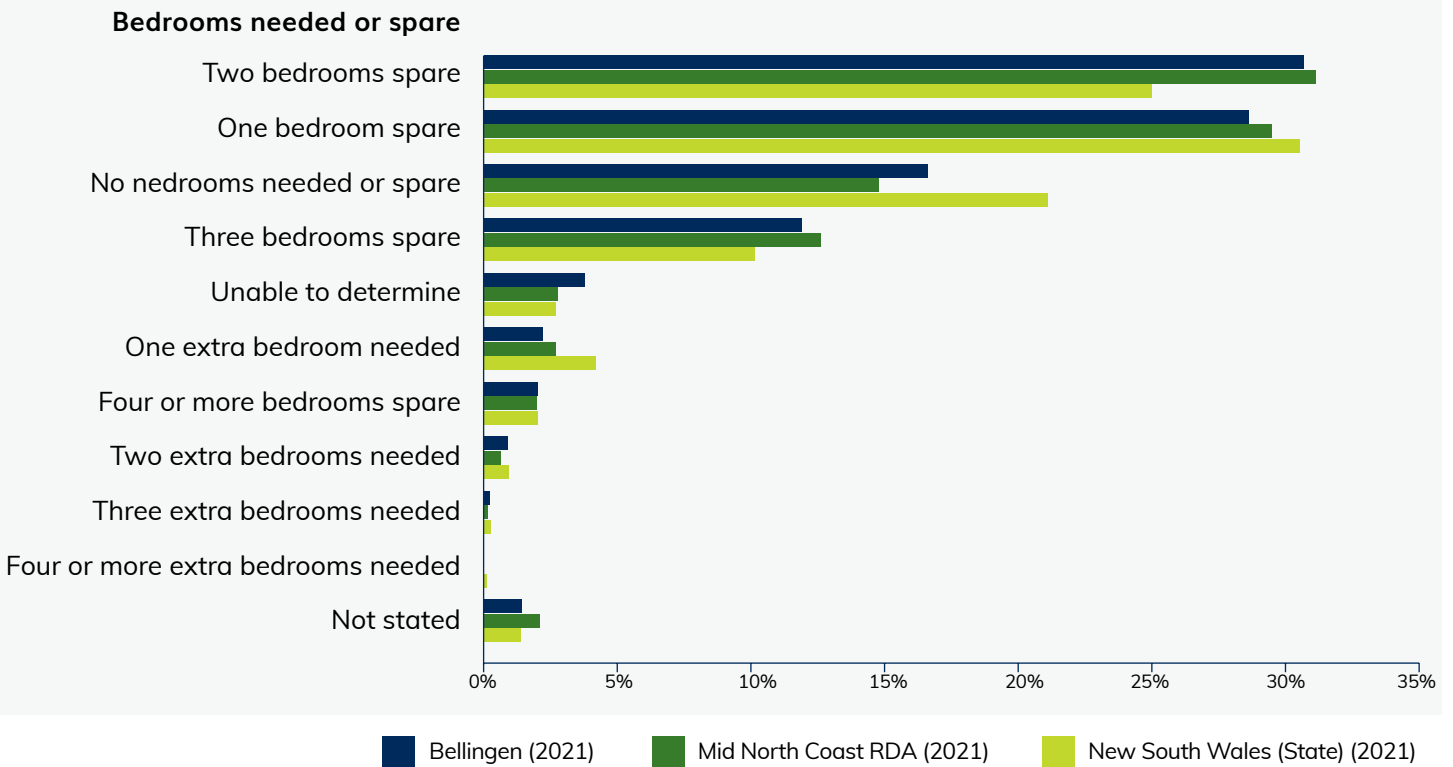
Long Term Health Conditions

There are 31.61% of Bellingen’s population living with one or more long-term health conditions. In comparison, the MNC’s overall population has 35.95% of the population living with long-term health conditions, while NSW overall has 26.97%.



Housing Suitability

Of the dwelling structures in Bellingen, 74.49% of them have spare bedrooms. MNC has 76.52% and NSW has 68.86%. Looking at the reverse, 3.37% of dwellings need additional bedrooms in Bellingen, compared to 3.55% in the MNC and 5.52% across NSW. In Bellingen, 16.89% of dwellings have no spare bedrooms OR need additional rooms. Comparatively, the MNC is less at 15.02% but NSW is 21.48%



SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

The SEIFA scores range from 143 (min) to 1207 (max) with 143 having the highest level of disadvantage and 1207 being the least disadvantaged. There are 547 LGAs in Australia that have been given a SEIFA score. Bellingen’s SEIFA score is 283 / 547. Meaning, there are 264 LGAs which are less disadvantaged and 282 LGAs that are more disadvantaged. A comparison with other LGAs on the MNC are highlighted in the table below.

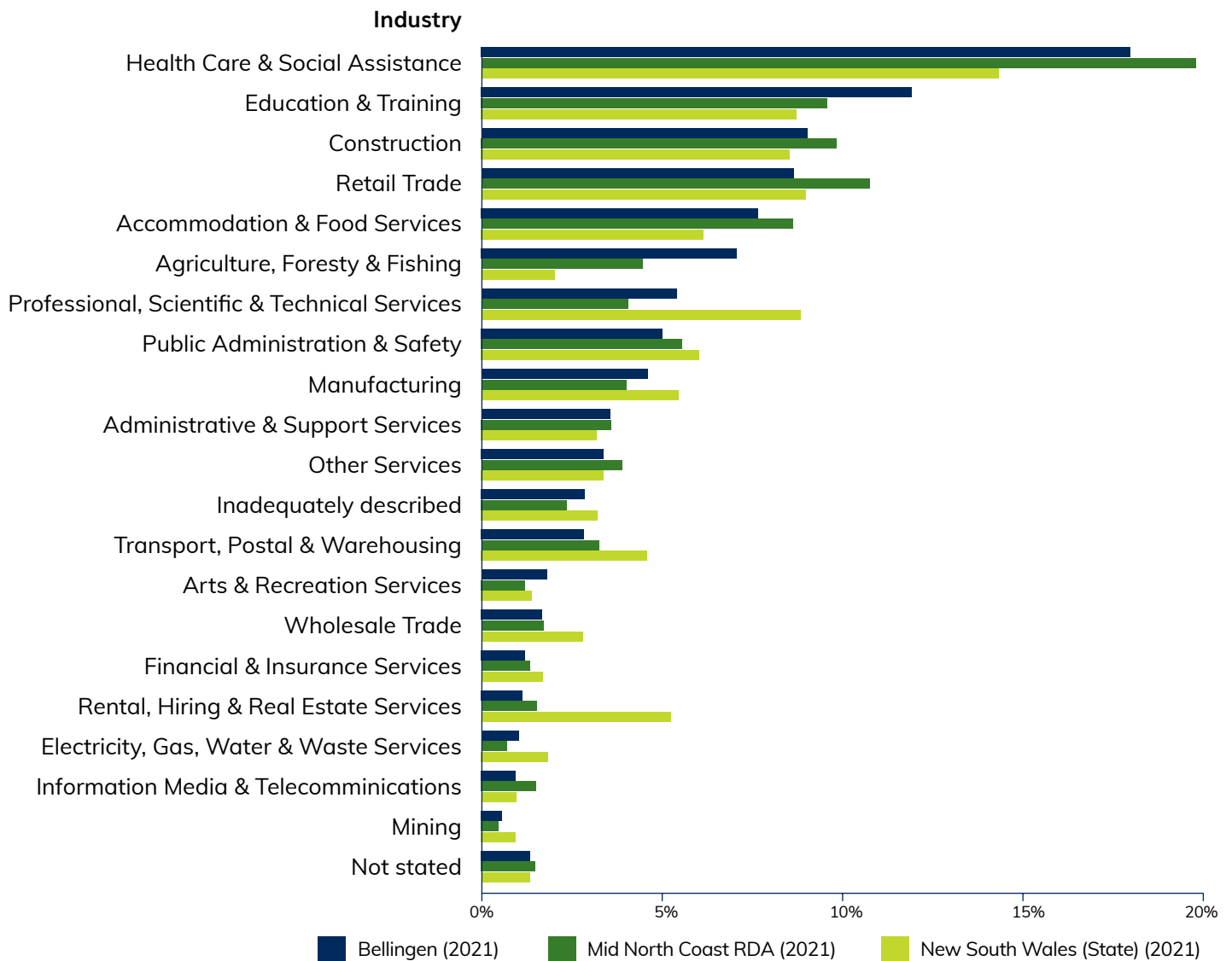
Table 3: SEIFA rankings by MNC LGA.

LGA	Ranking
Port Macquarie – Hastings	295 / 547
Bellingen	283 / 547
Coffs Harbour	243 / 547
Midcoast	138 / 547
Nambucca Valley	91 / 547
Kempsey	67 / 547

Source: Remplan / ABS Census 2021

Industries of employment

The top three industries of employment in Bellingen are Health Care & Social Assistance, Education & Training and Construction. The top three for the MNC overall are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Construction. NSW also has Health Care & Social Assistance as it's top industry of employment, however, Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical services are there other top two industries



Key Insights

Below is a summary of the key statistical data for Bellingen LGA:

- Has the smallest population in the MNC region.
- Has 4th largest land area in the region.
- Is the second highest level of advantage in the MNC.
- High population in older workers and retirees, combined with family composition and dwelling suitability aligns with the region's current housing and key worker crisis.
- Number of available bedrooms highlights need for urgent review of current living arrangements to enable greater utilisation of existing structures in addition to development of new housing.
- The high percentage of population living with long-term health conditions suggests that the need for services and assistance with core activities will only increase in the short-medium term.
- Labour force participation numbers suggest that Bellingen LGA will not be equipped to provide the services needed to support the developing demographics.