



SOFALA

Village Plan 2015



Image: Denison Street

Sofala Village Plan

The Bathurst Regional Local Government Area contains a number of villages. Village plans have been created for eight villages; Sofala, Wattle Flat, Hill End, Peel, Rockley, Sunny Corner, Trunkey Creek, and Yetholme. Each village has its own, unique history, community, and assets; however they also share commonalities in their past, present, and the opportunities and challenges that each will face in the future.

The Sofala Village Plan will act as a guide for future planning and development for the community. This plan identifies the preferred future, opportunities and challenges, and aligns with *Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan* through its strategies and objectives which have been developed in consultation with the Sofala community.

Introducing Sofala

Sofala is 45 kilometres north of Bathurst and has an estimated population of 77 people usually resident in 46 dwellings. (2011 Census, ABS 2011)

The Wiradyuri people are acknowledged as the traditional custodians of the land where Sofala is situated. Wiradyuri people are of the goanna totem and are the people of the three rivers – the Wambool (Macquarie), the Kalari (Lachlan) and the Murrumbidgee. They have lived on these lands for more than 40,000 years.

History of the Village

The discovery of gold on the Turon River in 1851 led to the establishment of Sofala. The early township followed the river for over 16kms with churches, schools, hotels, a court of petty sessions, a hospital and many other businesses servicing this fast growing area. The village also benefitted from its position on the main road between Bathurst and the Hunter Region and the fact that the gold lasted much longer here than in any other region. *Extract from 'A Guide to Bathurst & Lithgow Regional Villages'*



Images: Royal Hotel

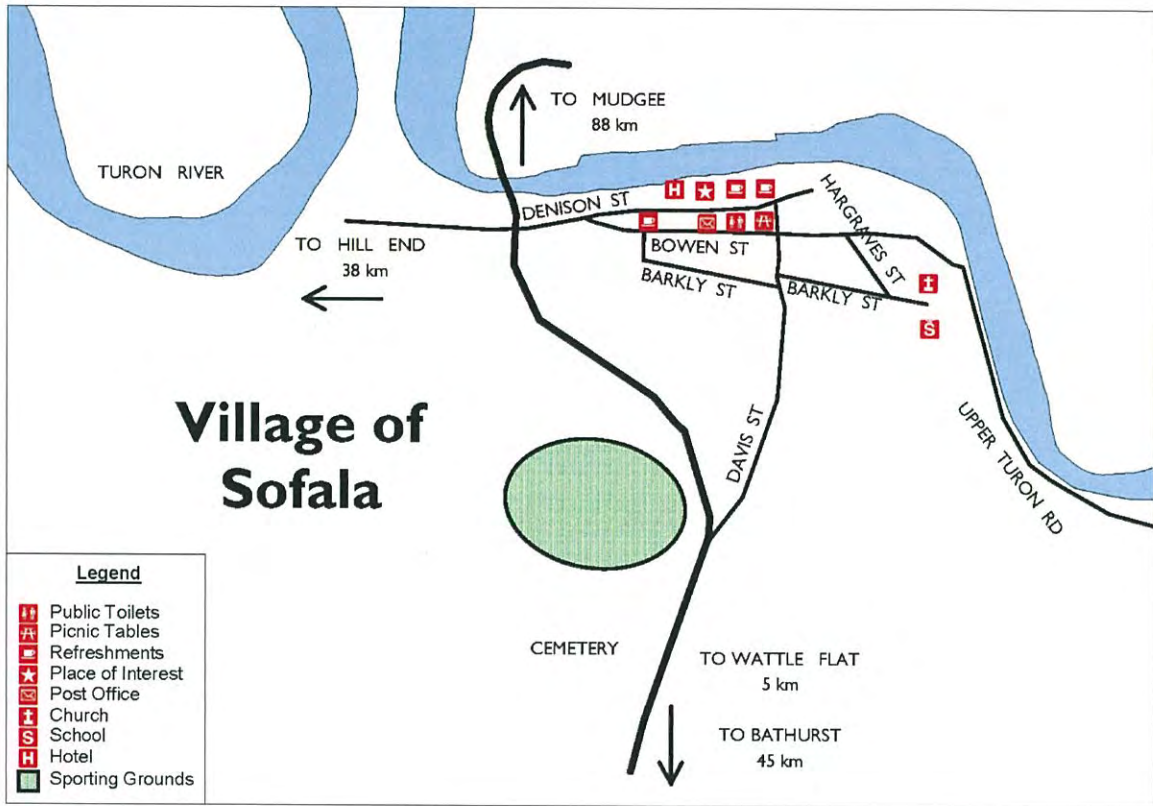


Image: Old Sofala Gaol

Present Day

Although the population has dwindled since the gold rush times, Sofala remains Australia's oldest surviving gold town. The narrow streets lined with many unique old buildings and the spectacular scenery of the surrounding hills, have attracted movie makers and artists to the area. Fossickers search the river and streams for any gold that might still lie hidden there – and some lucky ones have even struck pay dirt. *Extract from 'A Guide to Bathurst & Lithgow Regional Villages'*

Some of the community capital and infrastructure of Sofala includes:

- Sofala Public School.
- General Store.
- Rural Fire Service.
- Goldfields Museum.
- Sofala Showground/Sportsground.
- Public Toilets.
- Picnic Facilities.
- Community Hall.
- Children's Playground.
- Waste Management Facility.
- Water (firefighting supply).
- Cemetery.
- Public House.
- Bathurst Mobile Library service to the village.
- Bus Shelters.
- Sofala Progress Association.
- Sofala & District Agricultural & Horticultural Show Society.



Image: Historic Building, Sofala



Image: Historic Building, Sofala

The Sofala Community

Information for this plan regarding 'what people love about Sofala' and 'the preferred future for Sofala' has been gathered using a variety of methods. This has included consultation with community members and school children held in 2010, annual Council meetings held in Sofala, as well as ongoing dialogue with village groups, associations and individuals. The information that has been gathered through ongoing consultation has been used to develop the Sofala Village Plan as well as the objectives, strategies and actions contained in the Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan.

What people love about Sofala

Throughout the consultation it was evident that the residents of Sofala loved their community and felt that it was a great place to live and raise their families. They identified the following key assets as important elements that make their community strong with its own sense of place. These assets were also identified as essential to maintain and enhance into the future.

Our People

The Sofala community identified the diverse range of people including the many well-known characters as one of their greatest assets. They recognised the strong sense of community spirit, where people share friendships and support one another as important in making the community a safe and caring place to live.

Our Environment

The natural and manmade environments within and surrounding Sofala were acknowledged as an important element to the resident's quality of life. The peace and tranquillity, the landscapes, hills and open spaces were highlighted as reason why people chose to live in this community. The beautiful river for fishing, swimming, camping, and picnicking was identified as a particular asset.

Our Community Groups, Organisations and Services

The existence of a range of community groups, organisations and services was also identified as important to the Sofala community. Regular visits by medical services were seen as indispensable to the community's quality of life and welfare. Visits by the mobile Bathurst Library service and a regular bus service for the elderly to Bathurst were also identified as important.

Our Facilities

The community identified a range of community facilities that were important to their quality of life. The community hall, public toilets, shops, public hotel, and the general compact layout of the village with its linked blocks and streets were identified as assets. The school was seen as an important hub of the community, as it united residents and attracted young families to the village.

Our History

The long and varied history of the community particularly its connection to the discovery of gold in the area is something that the community prides itself on. The historic buildings are valued as they reflected the village's unique history. Residents also took pride with the fact that, the artistic heritage of Sofala is recognised as one of the most painted villages in Australia. The community also acknowledged the wealth of oral history that is retained in Sofala and passed down through generations by its older residents.

Our Economy

The residents identified the importance of retaining a vibrant local economy. They encouraged and supported a range of small businesses highlighting the relatively low cost of living as an attraction to further business development. Tourism was identified as a way of keeping businesses sustainable. Maintaining of public amenities such as the public toilets and camping areas, as well as the provision of the shops and the public hotel were vital to attracting visitors.



Image: Old Post Office building, historic image

The Preferred Future for Sofala

Residents saw the future of Sofala in ten years as a cohesive village community where people can enjoy a peaceful rural lifestyle including:

- The retention of the picturesque heritage of the community to reflect the way Sofala would have looked in the 1850's, but with modern services and appropriate facilities. This would involve the continued restoration of buildings, appropriate landscaping, signage, and planting of deciduous trees;
- The river would be clear and accessible with walkways and camping facilities to encourage tourism;
- Community members would continue to support each other and there would be an active social life including street fairs, community festivals, music performances, art galleries, and interaction between children, adults and tourists;
- More young families would move to Sofala increasing business and employment opportunities and supporting the thriving school;
- There would be business opportunities and the revival of existing shops as well as the establishment of new local shops selling fresh fruit, vegetables, and petrol;
- Tourists would visit Sofala as a destination enjoying the unique qualities of the village.

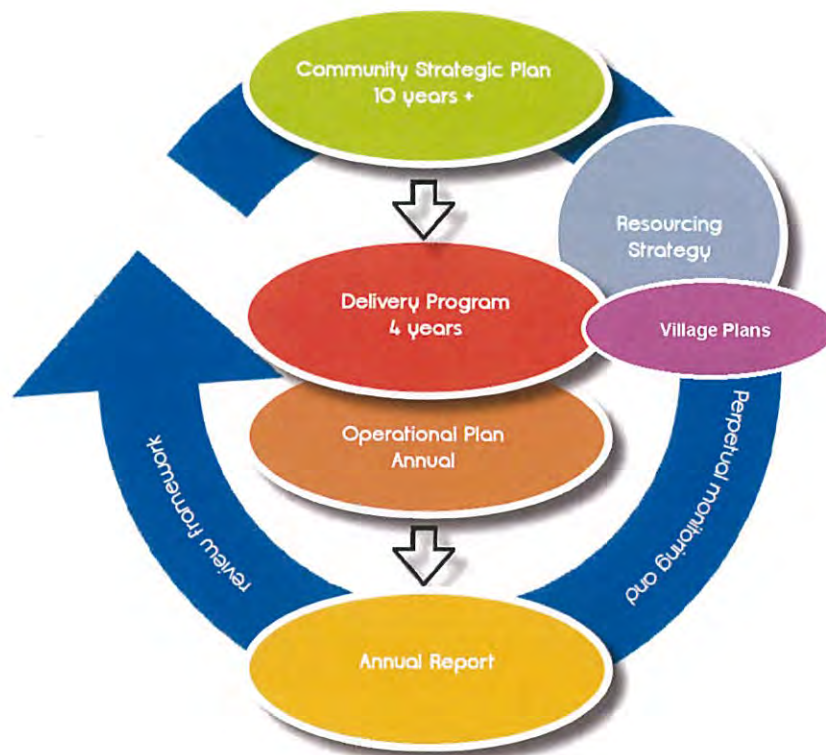
Actions are included in the Community Strategic Plan that seeks to deliver on the preferred future for Sofala.



Images: Remains of historic cottage

How this plan integrates with the Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan

In February 2013 Bathurst Regional Council adopted *Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan (CSP)* in line with the NSW Government requirements. Bathurst 2036 was developed using an asset based approach and outlines a number of objectives, strategies and outcomes that represent the priorities for the whole Bathurst Region community. Village plans have been developed for eight villages aligning with the objectives and strategies identified in Bathurst 2036. The reporting and resourcing have been incorporated into the CSP. The village plans include additional information relating to the unique qualities of each Village, and the views and ideas of the residents.



Further planning documents relating to the villages can be found on the Bathurst Regional Council's website: www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au including:

- Local Environment Plan (LEP) 2014
- Development Control Plan 2014
- Bathurst Regional Archaeological Management Plan 2012
- Bathurst Regional Heritage Strategy 2014 - 2017

Objective and Strategy

The objectives and strategies contained in the Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan reflect the needs and strengths of the community as a whole. The strategies and actions identified in the plan are reviewed every four years through consultation with the community.

A specific objective (see below) that includes a range of strategies and outcomes has been specifically targeted to the opportunities and challenges identified for the Villages and rural settlements in the Bathurst Regional Local Government Area.

Objective 17: To encourage living, vibrant and growing villages and rural settlements

No.	Strategies	Key Partners
17.1	Implement the adopted Rural Strategy through the Local Environmental Plan to provide for the concentration of new living opportunities within and close to the existing villages and settlement areas and provide for ongoing major review in each 10 year period.	Government Agencies
17.2	Implement provisions within the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan to provide a strong village system that includes housing choice, viable business and tourism opportunities, adequate transport systems and a concentration of community services.	Government Agencies
17.4	Continue to provide for and promote the village improvement program.	Government Agencies, Village Communities, Community Groups
17.5	Facilitate ongoing communication opportunities with each village locality.	Village communities, Community Groups
17.6	Provide outreach Council services to village and rural settlements where appropriate (e.g. library services, artistic programs, subsidised transport for children).	Village and Rural Communities
17.7	Advocate for the provision of relevant State and Federal Government services and facilities to village and rural locations (e.g. cultural, health and telecommunications).	State and Federal Government Agencies, Services Providers
17.8	Maintain infrastructure within and to rural and village locations in accordance with Council's Asset Management Plans.	Government Agencies
17.9	Continue to support new and existing cultural, community and recreational services and programs in rural and village locations.	Government Agencies, Village Communities, Community Groups, Service Providers
Community Outcomes		
Shared vision and community priorities for the individual villages.		
Establishment and maintenance of sustainable infrastructure and services.		
Good communication with village and rural settlement communities.		
Village growth is appropriate and sustainable.		

Bathurst Regional Council's Commitment to Sofala

Since the amalgamation of Bathurst City Council and Evans Shire Council in 2004, Bathurst Regional Council has committed a range of resources to enhancing the amenities of Sofala. These have included support for community celebrations, through to developing and maintaining infrastructure in roads and community facilities.

The following outlines funding allocated to the Sofala community through the Village Improvement Program (VIP). This program provides funding to villages to develop infrastructure based on the annual allocation as determined by Council.

Year	Project	Funding
2005/06	Contribution to toilets, playground equipment, picnic facilities	\$33,412
	Seal access road to showground	\$6,000
2006/07	Tourism infrastructure upgrade, Stage 2	\$67,165
	Further sealing of road and upgrade of showground	\$8,500
2007/08	Hall - new toilet, hot water, curtains, upgrade, lighting	\$26,481
	Cemetery - upgrade (seating)	\$3,880
	Campgrounds upgrade and road	\$45,679
2008/09	Hall - ramp, paint inside, sand/seal floor, repairs, storage shed, kitchen cupboards and bench	\$31,489
	Cemetery – shelter	\$4,056
2009/10	Water tanks, pump, hot water service and plumbing works	\$5,397
	Upgrade toilets	\$6,380
	Disabled toilet and facility	\$7,660
2010/11	Showground - concrete slab and pavilion construction	\$37,825
	Hall - replace wiring and security light, verandah over front, shelter over BBQ area, cover picnic tables	\$19,136
2011/12	Sofala Progress Association Inc – Plumbing of water tanks to composting toilet tank	\$803
2012/13	Sofala Progress Association Inc – New water tank for toilets	\$1,200
2013/14	Sofala and District Agricultural & Horticultural Show Society Inc – security screens for craft section for adults, upgrade children's craft section, upgrade photography section	\$712
	Sofala Progress Association Inc – handrails on ramp leading to back street and composting toilets, new sign in Joyce Pearce Memorial Park to promote village	\$712
Total		\$306,487

Other Village Works Undertaken in Sofala

In addition to the Village Improvement Program, Bathurst Regional Council has undertaken other works to improve the amenities of Sofala and its surrounding area, including;

Year	Project	Funding
Reseals		
2012/13	Reseal Village Streets	\$23,765
Reconstruction and sealing of Hill End Rd		
2008/09	Spring Creek Bridge	\$449,773
2010/11	0.510 - 3.100 Hill End Road	\$600,000
2011/12	5.048 - 6.720 Hill End Road	\$600,000
2012/13	8.900 - 10.510 Hill End Road	\$800,000
2013/14	6.720 - 7.800 Hill End Road	\$800,000
2014/15	7.800 - 10.500 Hill End Road	\$800,000
Other Projects		
2005/06	Playground Picnic Area	\$9,955
2006/07	Rehabilitation of Tip Site	\$100,000
	Public Toilet Construction	\$30,013
2007/08	Denison St Drainage	\$5,754
	Construction of new transfer station	\$160,508
	Upgrade Camp Ground Roads	\$30,361
2011/12	Various village improvements	\$56,961
Total		\$4,467,090

Ongoing Commitment to Sofala

Bathurst Regional Council values all members of the broader community. Council has made an ongoing commitment to continue to support Sofala through ongoing consultation and investment into the infrastructure and amenities of the village. A strategic and advocacy approach will be maintained reflected in the strategies, objectives, and outcomes identified in *Bathurst 2036 Community Strategic Plan*.



Image: Old Post Office building

Image: Old building in Sofala



Image: Old footbridge in Park, formerly crossed the river

Attachments

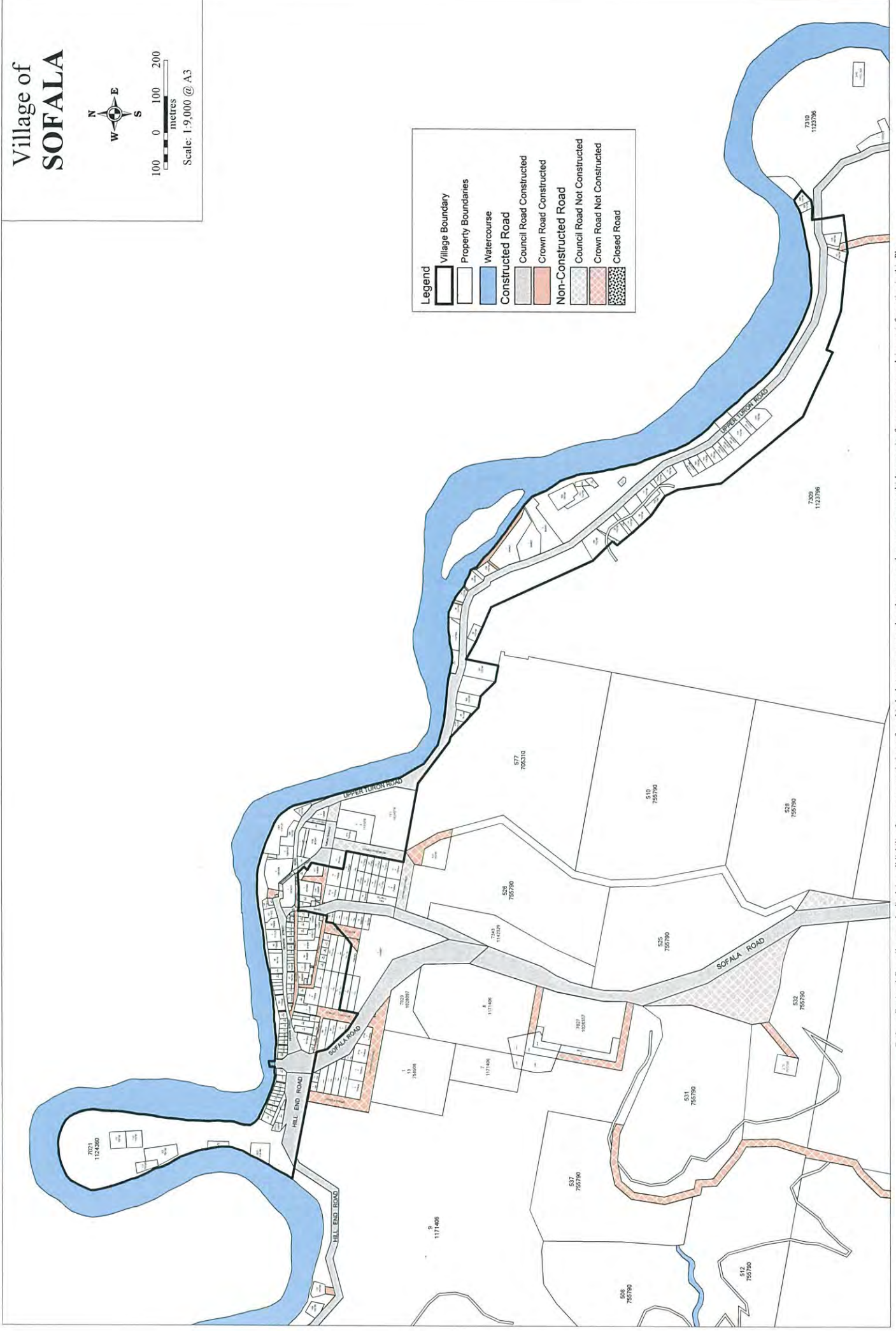
- 1 Village Map, including village and property boundaries, and crown roads.
- 2 Aerial Village Map, including village and property boundaries.
- 3 Development Control Plan 2014.

Village of SOFALA



Scale: 1:9,000 @ A3

Legend	
	Village Boundary
	Property Boundaries
	Watercourse
	Constructed Road
	Council Road Constructed
	Crown Road Constructed
	Non-Constructed Road
	Council Road Not Constructed
	Crown Road Not Constructed
	Closed Road



Bathurst Regional Council expressly disclaims all liability for errors or omissions of any kind whatsoever, or any loss, damage or other consequence which may arise from any person relying on information in this Plan

Note: The colours on this Plan do not indicate landuse zones under the Bathurst Regional Local Environment Plan 2014.

Date 10/04/2015

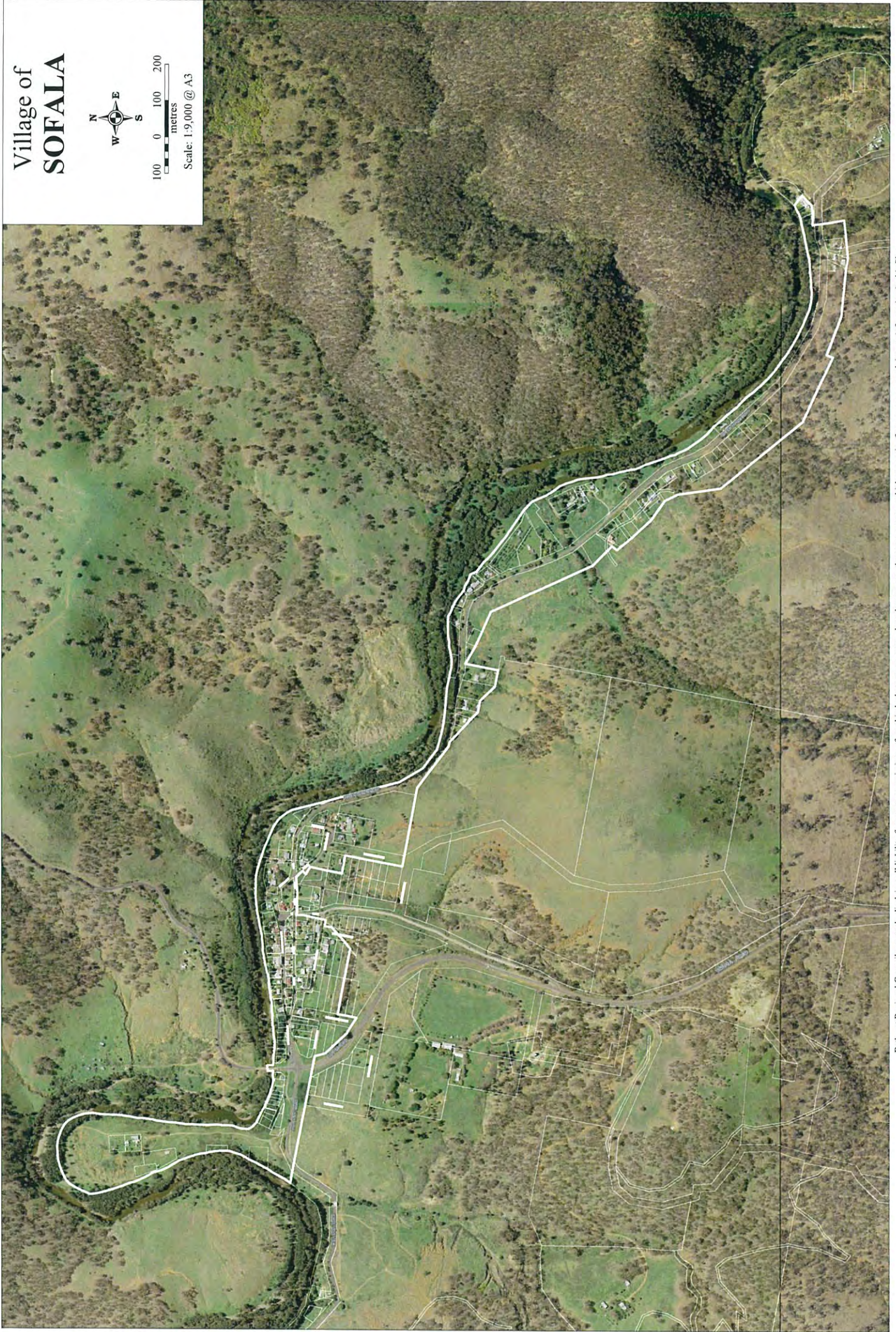
"Base Maps. © Department of Lands 2006"

Village of SOFALA



100 0 100 200
metres

Scale: 1:9,000 @ A3



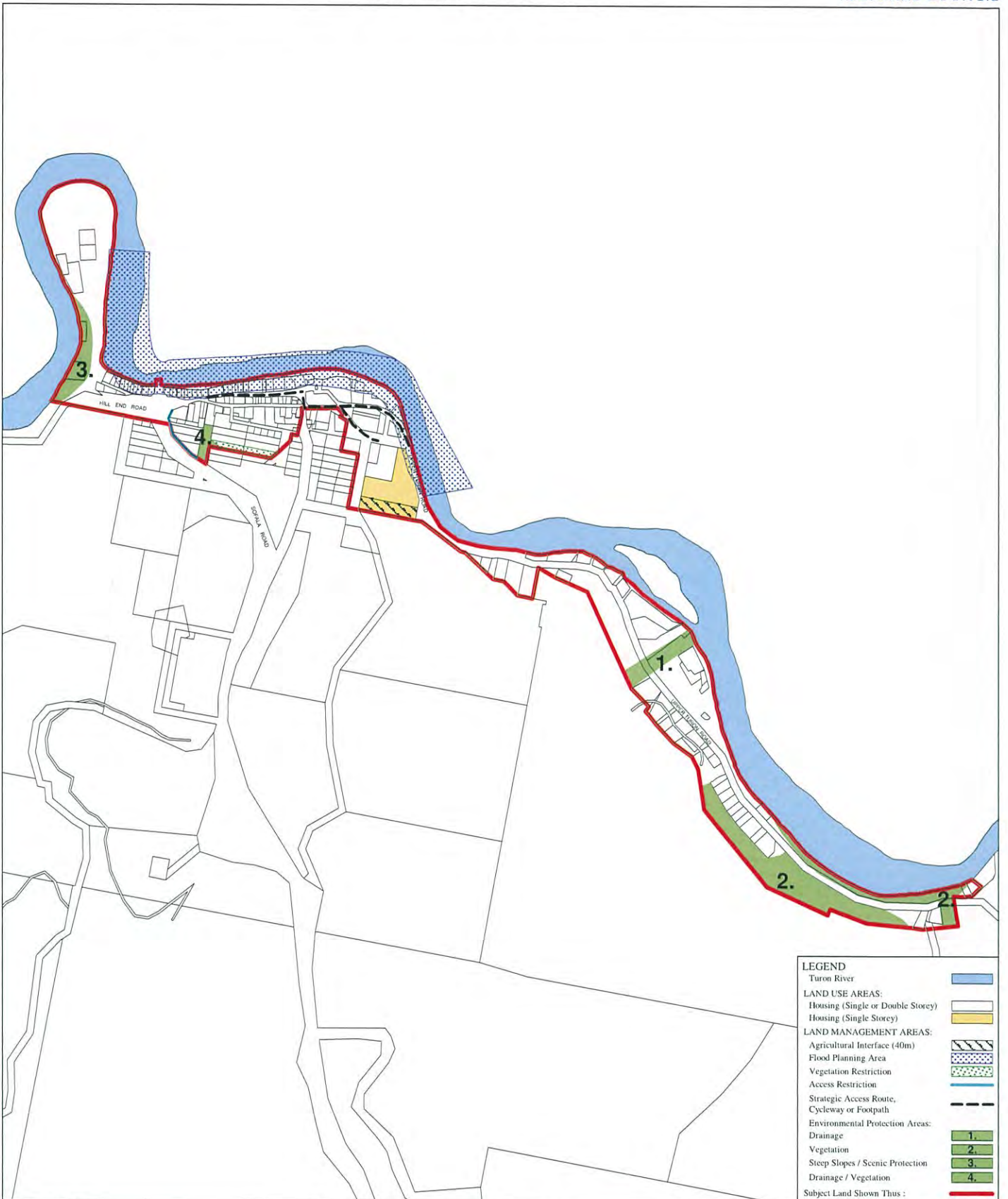
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"Base Maps: © Department of Lands 2006"

BATHURST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2014 MAP No. 23 - SOFALA



LEGEND

- Turon River 
- LAND USE AREAS:**
- Housing (Single or Double Storey) 
- Housing (Single Storey) 
- LAND MANAGEMENT AREAS:**
- Agricultural Interface (40m) 
- Flood Planning Area 
- Vegetation Restriction 
- Access Restriction 
- Strategic Access Route, Cycleway or Footpath 
- Environmental Protection Areas:**
- Drainage  1.
- Vegetation  2.
- Steep Slopes / Scenic Protection  3.
- Drainage / Vegetation  4.
- Subject Land Shown Thus: 

ADOPTION DATE:		
AMENDMENTS		
No.	DATE.	DESCRIPTION.

LOCALITY: SOFALA

 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT, 1979

BATHURST REGIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA.

SCALE: 1:15,000


NORTH

 CERTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979 AND REGULATIONS


 GENERAL MANAGER. DATE: