

ESTABLISH YOUR BUSINESS IN THE WESTERN DOWNS

Why Western Downs?

National and multi-national companies continue to invest billions of dollars in the Western Downs. The reason lies in our key advantages including:

- Connectivity to national and international export markets such as Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport and the Port of Brisbane
- Transport efficiency including B-triple approved transport routes
- Growing diverse economy with established supply chains
- Available land to expand
- Land zoned to allow for low medium and high impact industries
- Skilled workforce



Fast Facts

- The Energy Capital of Australia
- Opportunity across a diverse range of established industries and access to major projects
- Access to the award-winning Western Downs Regional Council Planning Scheme (fast approval process)
- Land zoned to allow for low, medium and high impact industry
- Available land to expand your business as required
- A pool of skilled workers with positive team cultures and high workforce retention rates
- Efficiencies around connectivity (road, rail and air), with B-Triple approved routes
- Access to the Port of Brisbane and Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport create export opportunities
- Support from economic development groups, industry groups, active Chambers of Commerce and Western Downs Regional Council



Our region is built on the people that make it. People who lead the way in dynamic agricultural, manufacturing and energy industries that underpin our diverse economy. The flow-on from their success has enabled unique businesses to prosper in our local communities. Western Downs Regional Council understands the needs of business, the importance of fast approval processes and affordable commercial land. Come and talk to us about your business ideas and we'll help you make it too.

Cr Andrew Smith

Mayor, Western Downs Regional Council



Experience Western Downs

It's the people that make it.



Opportunities

With many major projects currently underway, the Western Downs offers opportunities for employment, services and further investment.

Current major projects include Surat Gas pipeline Project, Wambo Wind Farm, The Western Downs Green Power Hub, Chinchilla Battery, Wandoan South Solar Project, Edenvale Solar Park, Wilkie Creek Solar and Wind Farm and Chinchilla Solar Farm.

Intensive Animal Industries

The location of the Western Downs means that intensive animal businesses have a few advantages when compared to other regions including:

- Store cattle producers
- Stable temperate climate
- Extensive active grain production for feedlots
- Proximity to large meat processing plants
- Home to the largest same-day cattle yards in Australia
- Lower cost and more efficient transport with highway access to via Toowoomba Bypass to Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport and the Port of Brisbane
- 20% cheaper export costs via the Port of Brisbane to Asian markets
- Capacity to attract investment in larger international meat processing facility

Manufacturing

Where there is energy and agriculture, there is demand for manufacturing and skilled workers. The Western Downs has more than 130 manufacturing businesses covering agri-foods, machinery, food products and drones and equipment. Companies like MFE, White Industries, Finch Engineering and Simplicity Australia are innovative and utilise cutting-edge technologies.

Manufacturing businesses in the Western Downs benefit from lower land acquisition costs, a skilled stable workforce, ease of access to supply chain, a collaborative manufacturing culture and a strong economy to assist with business sustainability.

Retail Business

Our strong economy, high employment and low cost of housing means that many residents have a healthy disposable income. Retail businesses in the region include major chain stores as well as unique local boutiques, restaurants and cafes that add character to our communities. Major chain stores include:

- Supermarkets: Coles, Woolworths, Aldi, Foodworks
- Department stores: Big W, Kmart
- Large stores: Bunnings, Harvey Norman, Supercheap Auto
- Fast Food: Dominos, Subway, McDonalds, Hungry Jacks, KFC, Red Rooster
- Fashion: Jeanswest, Best & Less, Golders, Millers

Council is committed to diversifying and growing the regional economy, attracting new business and investment in emerging markets and maximising air, land and rail connectivity opportunities. To learn more, view the Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028 at wdrc.qld.gov.au.

Western Downs Regional Council's Economic Development team supports new businesses looking to:

- Facilitate and promote business and industry events to enhance growth in key industries
- Support business development opportunities through collaboration with key strategic partners
- Refer businesses to government agencies and economic development organisations providing business support and funding opportunities
- Provide information on developments and investment within the Western Downs Region
- Provide economic impact modelling and statistics to support grant and funding applications

- Powering the Western Downs Economy - Resources and Renewables Projects -

Mining Industry Opportunities for Local Business (Coal Mine)

Ever since the first mine opened on the Western Downs in 1914, the region's resources sector has been on an upwards trajectory with investors from all over the world keen to get a share. Coal is still the number one resource and second largest employer in the region.

Open cut black coal mines currently operating in the region include CS Energy's Kogan Creek mine and Yancoal's mine in Cameby Downs.

Renewable Energy Opportunities for Local Business

Major projects provide great opportunities for local communities and businesses. Not only can these projects be lucrative for business, but they also help them grow, fine-tune processes, hone skills and train staff, gain accreditation and provide valuable experience for future projects.

The construction phase of wind and solar farms generally requires contractors in construction, earthworks, electrical, concreting and more. They also provide hundreds of jobs for skilled workers. More workers around the region means opportunities for all local businesses including retail, hospitality and health.

Since 2016, there are currently around 24 major solar projects approved or under construction in the Western Downs with many more awaiting approval.

Thermal Power Stations

There are six thermal power stations in the Western Downs located at Braemar, Condamine, Daandine and Kogan Creek. Each power station will be continually upgraded throughout the course of its life therefore contributing to the local economy in more ways than just through generating power. Upgrades mean jobs and flow-on to local businesses.

Gas Resources

The Surat Basin district of the Western Downs currently boasts the most coal seam gas activity in the country. The gas industry has, and continues to bring, infrastructure and investment to the region providing new jobs while strengthening and diversifying the economy. Arrow Energy, Senex Energy, Shell QCG, Origin and Central Petroleum – Incitec Pivot JV all operate in the region, producing for both domestic and export markets.

Hydrogen Projects Approved/Under Construction

CS Energy, in partnership with IHI Corporation Japan, are building a renewable hydrogen demonstration plant next to Kogan Creek Power Station with construction commenced in 2022.



REGIONAL PROFILE

Rich in natural resources, natural beauty and natural history, the Western Downs is the place to be. These natural strengths are supported by strong industry foundations across the agriculture, energy, manufacturing, and construction sectors. Together with significant and continuing investment in infrastructure and tourism, these have positioned the Western Downs as one of the highest performing local government areas in Queensland, and Australia.

Known as the Energy Capital of Queensland, the Western Downs is experiencing high economic growth, investment, consistently high employment and includes some 38,000km² of land. The region boasts an impressive \$4 billion worth of approved renewables, including \$2.4 billion under construction.

One of the greatest benefits of the location of the Western Downs is the connectivity and proximity to the supply chain and relevant markets. Another is a connected labour pool resulting in good workforce relations and retention rates and a diversity of industries with high workforce attraction.

Western Downs Regional Council's Gross Regional Product was \$3.68 billion in the year ending June 2022, growing 12.4% since the previous year (economy.id).

Home to a growing population of more than 34,500 residents, the Western Downs offers contemporary technology and opportunities in a friendly regional location.

Modern facilities such as aquatic and fitness centres, art galleries, museums, cinemas and civic centres bring a metropolitan feeling to regional communities.

The region also offers residents accessibility to public and privately run medical and health care services including access to hospitals, medical centres, dental and other health care professionals.

The roll-out of the National Broadband Network (NBN) and increasing mobile and internet coverage has positively impacted the global connectivity of businesses, lifting productivity and profitability. Dalby is classified as a 'Business Fibre Zone' providing business grade fibre at reduced wholesale prices.

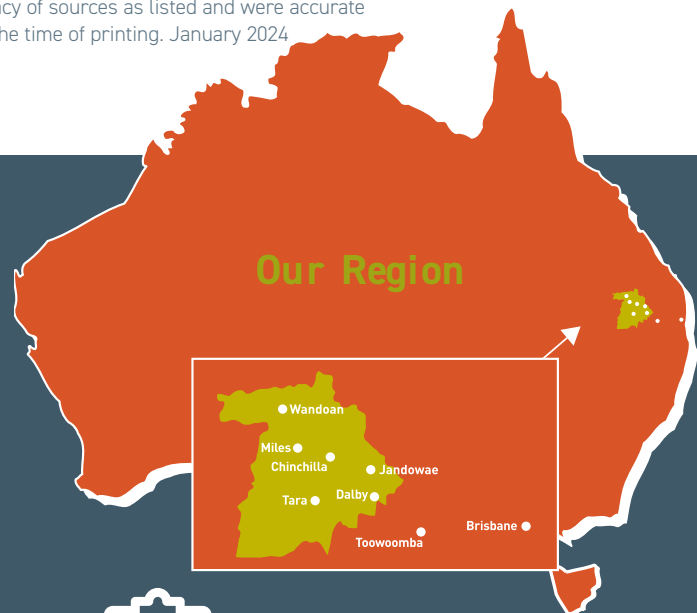
Residents enjoy a lower cost of living due to affordable housing (less than half of QLD average), ease of access to schools, work and retail outlets, with the NBN providing the network connectivity required for families and businesses to flourish.

It also offers a growing, diverse regional economy across agriculture, intensive agriculture, manufacturing, resources and renewable energy.

INNOVATION

Digital technologies create opportunity for growth and transformation. Technology is a continually evolving field and the Western Downs offers local businesses contemporary communication solutions via NBN access to stay connected and current.

The information and statistics included in this document are reliant on the accuracy of sources as listed and were accurate as at the time of printing. January 2024



A SNAPSHOT



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDING LOWER THAN QLD AVERAGE



A SKILLED AND EXPERIENCED WORKFORCE



GRP: DOUBLED OVER 15 YEARS

Energy Capital of Queensland: Resources & Renewables



DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPERS SUPPORTED AND WELCOMED WITH WDRC PLANNING SCHEME



COMPARATIVELY STRONG INDUSTRY SUPPLY CHAINS PER CAPITA OF POPULATION

NBN

INNOVATION: NBN ROLLOUT = DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY & SPEED FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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AVERAGE DISPOSABLE INCOME \$3K HIGHER THAN QLD AVERAGE

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