

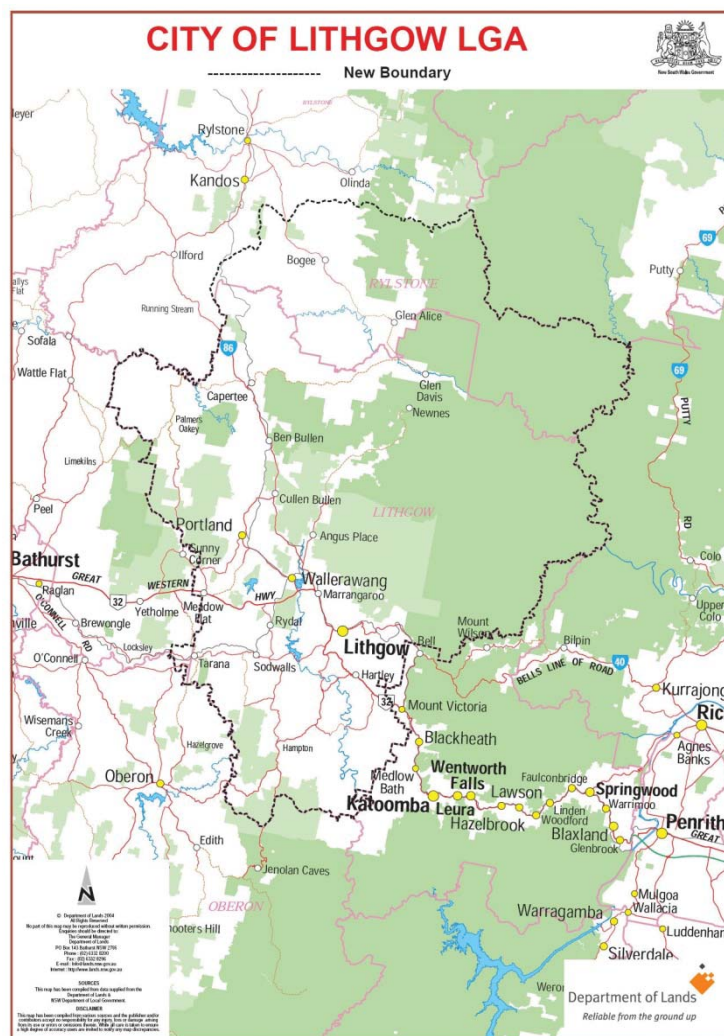
## CHAPTER 2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

### INTRODUCTION

The Lithgow Local Government Area (LGA) lies within the Central West Region of New South Wales. The LGA covers an area of 4,551 square kilometres and accommodates a resident population of 19,759 persons. The major urban centre is Lithgow which is supported by two smaller towns of Wallerawang and Portland and a number of rural villages and localities.

The LGA is located only 150km from the City of Sydney and sits on the western most fringe of the Blue Mountains and the eastern most fringe of the Central West Region. The junction of the two major highways to the central west occurs in the centre of Lithgow as well as the end of the electric rail system. This provides the LGA with a strategic locational advantage and opportunity to capitalise on an expanding Sydney Basin and gateway to the central west.

Figure 1. LGA Location within Region



## EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE LGA

The LGA has a strong industrial heritage and still relies heavily on the employment base and economic spinoffs of the mining and power generation industries and is therefore subject to the vagaries of changes to the domestic and international coal markets and pricing of electricity.

A growing mining industry within the region could in the future compete with Lithgow for a skilled labour force and may result in out migration of skilled young persons.

The dominant regional centres of Bathurst and Penrith continue to provide higher order facilities and services and continue to capture retail expenditure from the LGA. These centres also compete with Lithgow in attracting development, investment and employment growth.

The LGA has a strong connection to the Oberon Shire through a shared bulk water supply from the Oberon Dam administered by the Fish River Water Supply Scheme. This supply has a small catchment and is subject to the vagaries of climate change and may impact upon the ability of the LGA to provide a secure and reliable water supply into the future.

Large areas of the LGA are not serviced by broadband technology or mobile telephone services.