

4 Social profile

The Yass Valley LGA is an area undergoing a process of change in terms of its demographic composition and community identity. An area long associated with agriculture and its associated industries, the Yass Valley is now feeling the roll-on effects of its proximity to the expanding nation's capital as well as the effects of internal migration trends being experienced across the state. It is therefore important to consider the social profile of the Yass Valley LGA in determining and planning for its future.

This section provides an outline of various social indicators for the non-urban areas of the Yass Valley LGA, focusing on specific socio-demographic profiles in order to best determine the composition of the LGA into the future, and the subsequent servicing and infrastructure that will be required to meet and sustain future community needs. Information for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole and for surrounding LGAs is also provided for comparative purposes.

4.1 Population size and change

In 2006, the total population in the Yass Valley LGA was 13,135 with 7,311 or 56% of the population residing in non-urban areas (refer to Table 4.1). Between 2001 and 2006, the total population increased by 13% with the rural population increasing by 12%. The non-urban percentage of the population remained relatively unchanged between 2001 and 2006.

The rate of population growth has increased when compared the previous five years (1996 and 2001) when the population grew by just 5.85 percent (SGS 2003) as outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Population comparison of the non urban population in the Yass Valley LGA to the total population of the Yass Valley LGA, 2001-2006

Census year and urban/non urban population	Population and percentage of total population
2001	
Yass Valley LGA	11,613
Non urban population	6,528
% of total population as non urban	56.2%
2006	
Yass Valley LGA	13,135
Non urban population	7,311
% of total population as non urban	55.7%
2001-2006	
% change in Yass Valley LGA population	13.1%
% change in non urban population	12%

Source: ABS 2006

Figure 4.1 illustrates the population change for non urban Collection Districts in the Yass Valley LGA and shows that population growth was concentrated in the central and southern areas, while there was decline in the west and the east. Growth in the central and southern areas of the LGA can be attributed to easy access to employment and recreational opportunities in Canberra. Anecdotally, these areas experience the most amount of development demand and this is likely to continue into the future.

Figure 4.1 Change in total population by Collection District in the Yass Valley LGA (2001 to 2006)

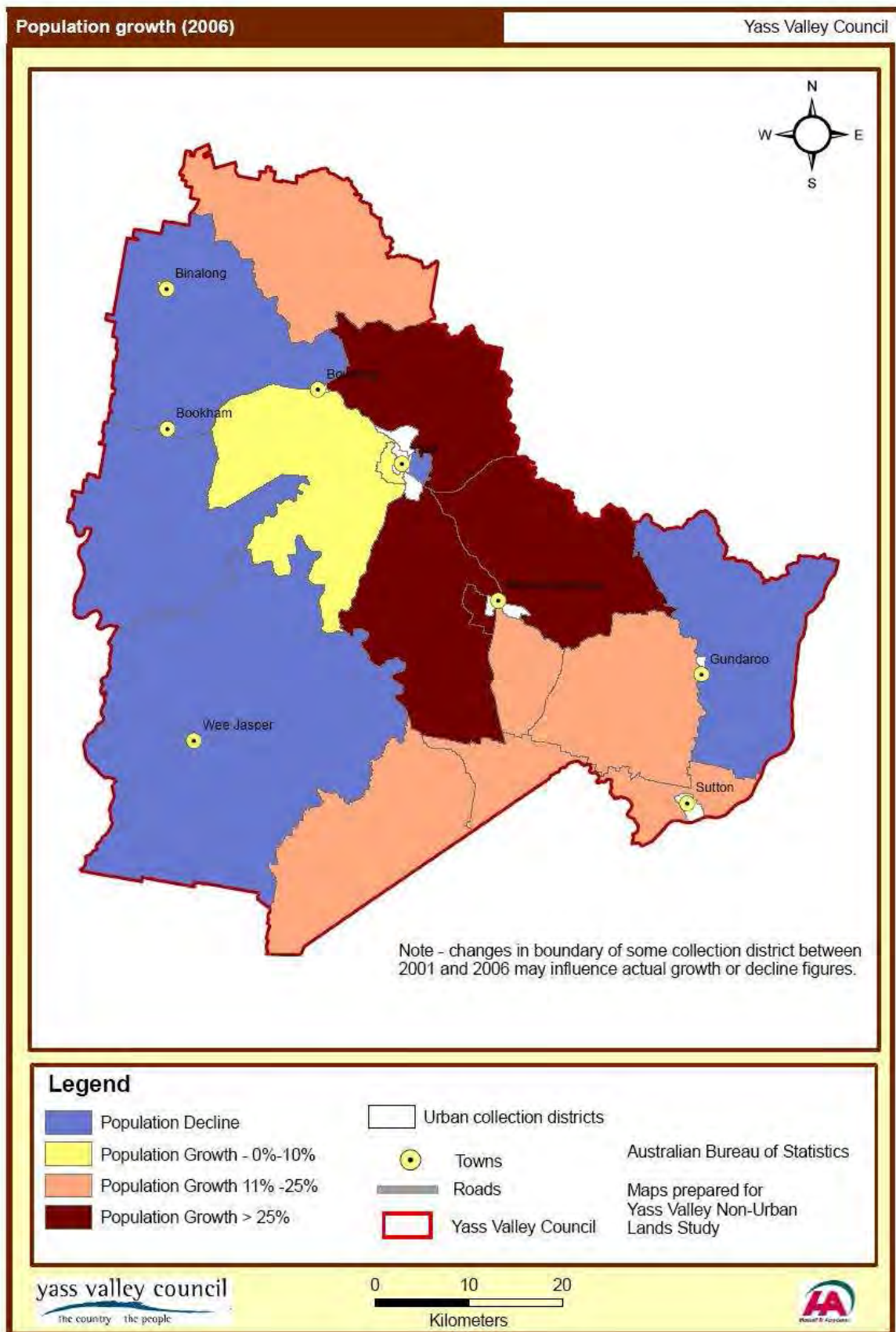


Table 4.2 shows the total and non-urban populations in 2006 for YVC compared to the surrounding LGAs of Harden, Boorowa, Upper Lachlan and Palerang. YVC has the highest total population of the five LGAs (13,135) although Palerang as the highest non-urban population (8,582). The percentage of the Yass Valley non-urban population (56%) is intermediate between Palerang with the highest percentage (70%), and Harden with the lowest percentage (45%).

Table 4.2 Total and non urban population comparison of surrounding LGAs, 2006

Local Government Area (LGA)	Total population, 2006	% of total population for non urban
Yass Valley LGA		
Total population	13,135	
Non urban population	7,311	56%
Harden LGA		
Total population	3,581	
Non urban population	1,599	45%
Boorowa LGA		
Total population	2,296	
Non urban population	1,223	53%
Upper Lachlan LGA		
Total population	7,054	
Non urban population	4,261	60%
Palerang LGA		
Total population	12,318	
Non urban population	8,582	70%

Source: ABS Census 2006

4.2 Age distribution and change over time

Figure 4.2 shows the age distribution of the non urban population of the Yass Valley LGA between 2001 and 2006. The age group with the highest percentage of the total non urban population is in the 45-54 years group, while the age group with the lowest percentage of total non urban population percentage is the 20-24 years group.

Between 2001 and 2006 there was a noticeable increase in the 55-64 years age group and a noticeable decrease in the 25-34 years age group. Changes in the percentages of other age groups were relatively minor. This data indicates an overall increase in the average age of the non urban population.

Although not shown in the accompanying tables and figures, there has been a similar shift in the age profile for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole but with a greater increase in the proportion of people in the 65 years + age group.

Figure 4.2 Age distribution of non urban population by percentage of total, 2001-2006

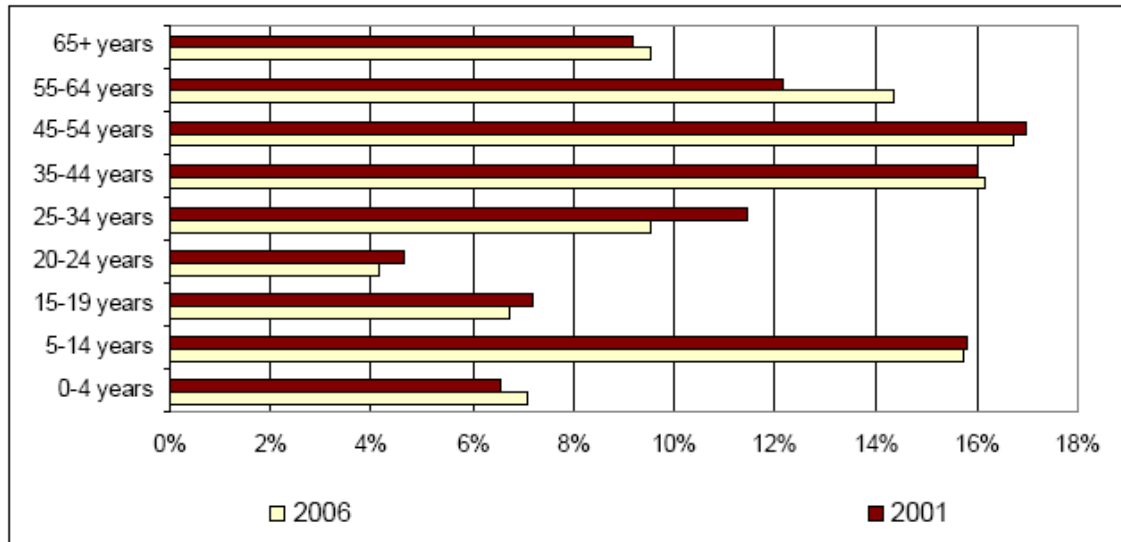
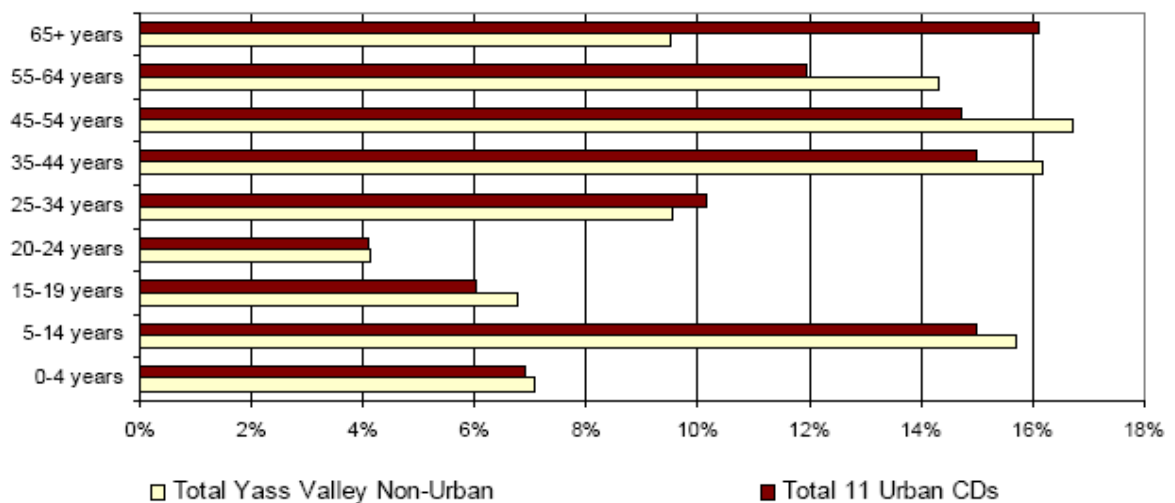


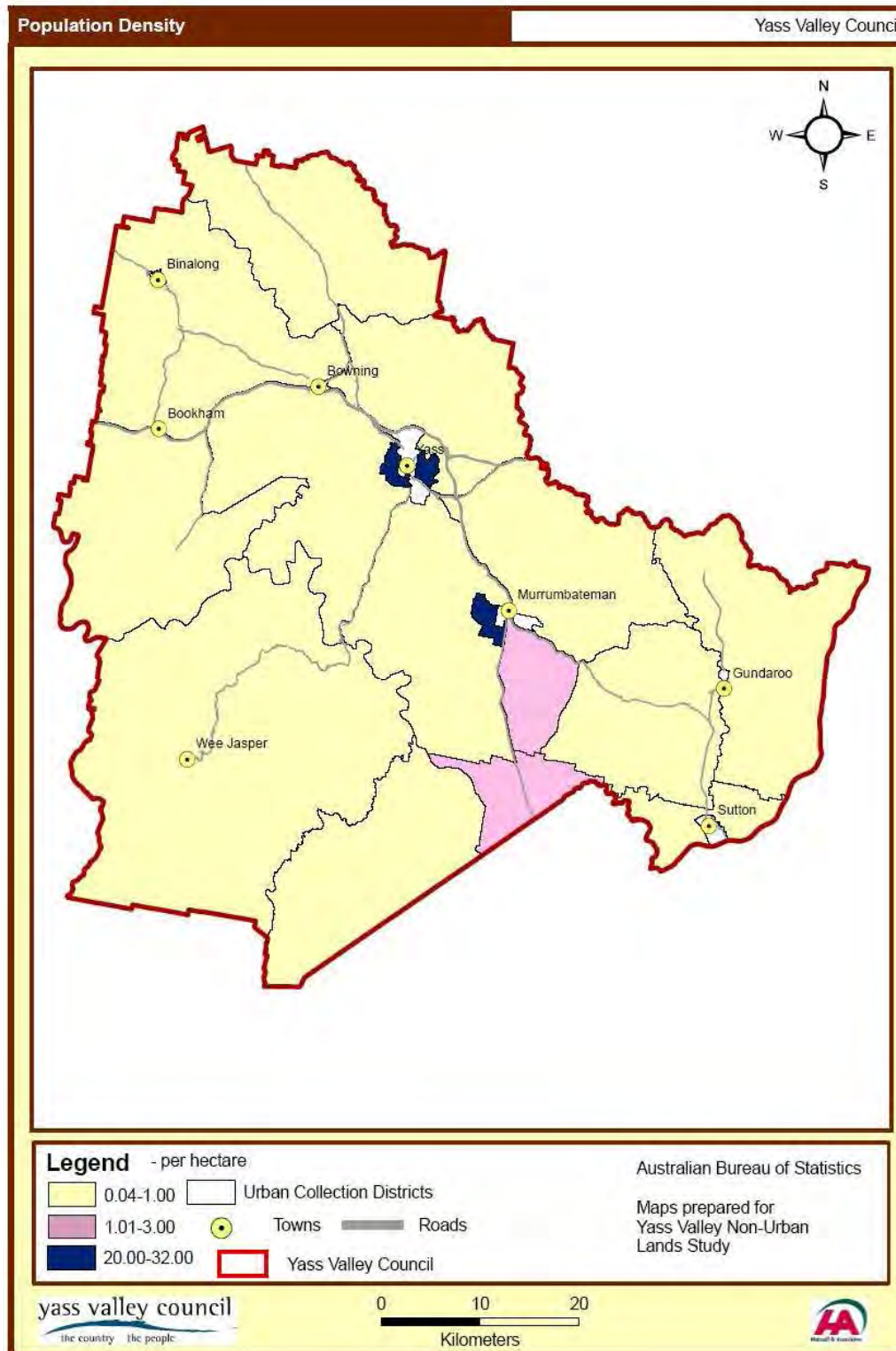
Figure 4.3 compares the age distribution of the total Yass Valley LGA population with the non urban Yass Valley LGA population in 2006. The 65 years + age group has a significantly lower representation in non urban areas of the LGA compared to the urban areas, while the 35-44, 45- 54 and 55-64 years age groups have a higher representations in the non urban area. The lower representation of the over 65 years group in the non urban areas of the LGA may reflect the trend to move closer to services provided in urban localities such as health care.

Figure 4.3 Comparison of age distribution of total Yass Valley LGA population and non urban population, 2006



The highest levels of density of population occur in the rural residential areas surrounding Yass and Murrumbateman (refer to Figure 4.4). There are also higher levels of density along the Murrumbateman to Canberra corridor than remaining non urban areas.

Figure 4.4 Density of population aged under 15 years by Census Collection Districts, 2006



4.3 Trend based population forecast

Yass Valley Council provided future estimated population projections for the Yass Valley LGA (Table 4.3). The estimated future population projections are for the years between 2005 and 2034. These estimations indicate that the Yass Valley LGA will follow statewide and national trends of population decrease into the short to medium future.

Table 4.3 Population projections for the Yass Valley LGA, 2005-2034

Year	Total population	Percentage increase (%)	Rural population	Percentage increase
2005	12,938	3.40%	4,207	1.3%
2006	13,361	3.30%	4,263	1.3%
2007	13,712	2.60%	4,318	1.3%
2008	13,958	1.80%	4,374	1.3%
2009	14,205	1.80%	4,429	1.3%
2010	14,804	4.20%	4,484	1.3%
2011	15,401	4.00%	4,540	1.2%
2012	15,995	3.90%	4,590	1.1%
2013	16,482	3.00%	4,640	1.1%
2014	16,900	2.50%	4,691	1.1%
2015	17,221	1.90%	4,741	1.1%
2016	17,544	1.90%	4,791	1.1%
2017	17,874	1.90%	4,849	1.2%
2018	18,204	1.80%	4,907	1.2%
2019	18,535	1.80%	4,965	1.2%
2020	18,865	1.80%	5,023	1.2%
2021	19,192	1.70%	5,080	1.2%
2022	19,533	1.80%	5,146	1.3%
2023	19,871	1.70%	5,211	1.3%
2024	20,209	1.70%	5,276	1.3%
2025	20,547	1.70%	5,342	1.2%
2026	20,885	1.60%	5,407	1.2%
2027	21,223	1.60%	5,473	1.2%
2028	21,561	1.60%	5,538	1.2%
2029	21,900	1.60%	5,603	1.2%
2030	22,238	1.50%	5,669	1.2%
2031	22,576	1.50%	5,734	1.2%
2032	22,914	1.50%	5,799	1.1%
2033	23,252	1.50%	5,865	1.1%
2034	23,590	1.50%	5,930	1.1%

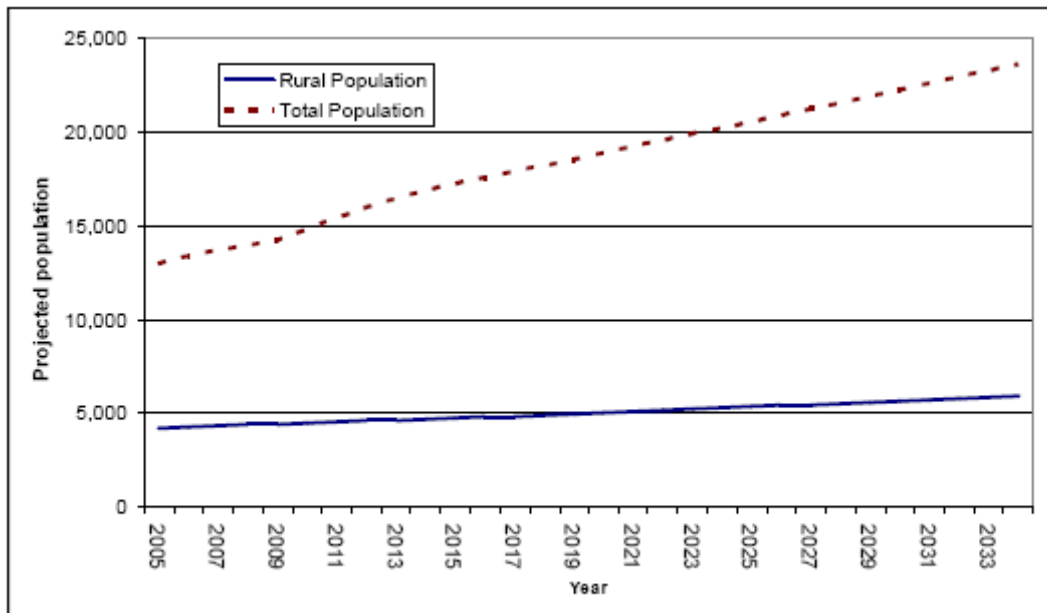
Source: Jackson 2004

The projection for the Yass Valley LGA indicated that the population would steadily increase by 3,962 persons between 2005 and 2014. The Yass Valley LGA's population is then predicted to continue to increase at a lower rate from 2015 to 2034. The rural population (as illustrated in Figure 9) is predicted to increase only slightly by 1,723 people between 2005 and 2034.

The results of the ABS Census for 2006 show that the predictions for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole are in line with the actual population recorded in 2006 (13,361

predicted compared to 13,135 from the Census). However, the rural population figures differ from the non-urban figures presented in Table 4.1. This difference is most likely due to different classifications of non-urban collection districts in this report compared to Jackson's. The current analysis indicates that the non-urban population is increasing at a similar rate to the increase in the LGA as a whole.

Figure 4.4 Estimated Population Projections for rural population and population as a whole, 2005 - 2034



Source: Based on Jackson (2004)

4.4 Housing type

In 2006, total dwellings in the non-urban area accounted for 53 per cent of all dwellings in the Yass Valley LGA (see Table 4.4). In the non-urban areas, separate houses accounted for 97.9 per cent of dwellings compared to 94.5 per cent in the whole of the LGA where there were more alternative dwelling types (semi-detached, flats etc).

Table 4.4 also shows the predominance of separate houses within the Yass Valley LGA, both as a whole and in the non-urban areas, compared to NSW as a whole where separate houses comprise about 71 per cent of housing types.

Based on the population totals from Table 3, the average number of persons per household (occupancy rate) is 2.82 for the whole of the Yass LGA, and 2.96 for the non-urban areas. This suggests occupancy rates are fairly consistent across the LGA.

The housing type and occupancy rates for the LGA are likely to continue to remain consistent as per the continued demand for rural amenity. The implications of such trends indicate that future land releases are likely to be low-density development comprised of separate dwellings in the Yass Valley LGA.

Table 4.4 Comparison of housing types for Yass Valley LGA, rural areas of Yass Valley LGA and NSW, 2006

Housing types	Yass Valley Rural		Yass Valley LGA		NSW	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Separate house	2,415	97.9%	4,398	94.5%	1,662,621	71.4%
Semi detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	7	0.3%	84	1.8%	226,552	9.7%
Flat, unit or apartment	0	0%	98	2.1%	411,793	17.7%
Other dwelling	48	1.9%	76	1.6%	45,703	1.1%
Dwelling structure not stated	0	0%	0	0%	1,548	0.1%
Total	2,267	100.0%	4,656	100.0%	2,328,217	100.0%

Source: ABS Census 2006

4.5 Employment

Between 2001 and 2006, the labour force in the non-urban areas of the Yass Valley LGA increased by 12.1 per cent to 4,125 persons. The total number of people employed increased by 14.5 percent and the unemployment rate subsequently declined. This was similar to employment changes for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole, although there was a greater decline in unemployment in the non-urban area.

Table 4.5 also shows there is a higher labour force participation rate in the non-urban area.

Table 4.5 Comparison of labour force for Yass Valley LGA, rural areas of Yass Valley LGA and NSW, 2006

	Yass Valley LGA			Yass Valley LGA - rural		
	2001	2006	Change 2001 - 2006	2001	2006	Change 2001 - 2006
Persons aged 15 and over	8,932	10,193	14.1%	5,032	5,648	12.2%
Total labour force ¹	6,138	6,932	12.9%	3,679	4,125	12.1
Total employed	5,893	6,750	14.5%	3,541	4,055	14.5%
Total unemployed	245	182	-25.7%	138	70	-49.3%
Unemployment rate ²	4.0%	2.6%	-	3.8%	1.7%	-
Labour force participation rate (%) ³	68.7%	68.0%	-	73.1%	73.0%	-

¹ People employed or actively seeking work

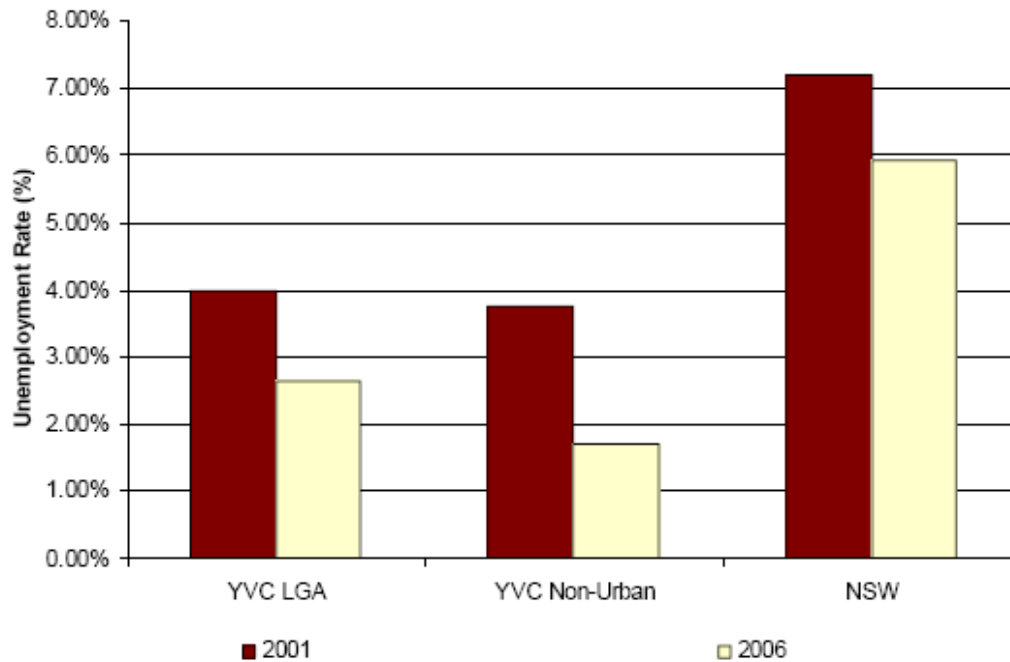
² Total unemployed as a percentage of labour force

³ Percentage of persons aged 15 and over in the labour force

Figure 4.5 shows that the unemployment rate for the non-urban area is lower than for the LGA as a whole and that the unemployment rate has declined significantly between 2001 and 2006. The unemployment rates in both the non-urban area and the LGA as a whole are significantly lower than the average in NSW. The decline in non-urban unemployment rate could be associated with the wider trend of seeking off farm employment often supplementary to agricultural production. The proximity of the YVC

LGA to the urban centres of the ACT and Queanbeyan provide the opportunity for this type of employment.

Figure 4.5 Comparison of unemployment rates for the Yass Valley LGA, Yass Valley LGA – non urban and NSW, 2001 and 2006



Source: ABS Census 2001 and 2006

Table 4.6 shows a profile of the non-urban area labour force for the Yass Valley LGA compared to the non-urban area labour force in surrounding LGAs. Although Palerang has the highest total labour force, participation rate is highest in the Yass Valley LGA and the unemployment rate is the lowest.

Table 4.6 Comparison of labour force for Yass Valley LGA, rural areas of Yass Valley LGA and NSW, 2006

	Non Urban Labour Force				
	Yass Valley	Harden	Boorowa	Upper Lachlan	Palerang
Persons aged 15 and over	5,648	1,274	946	3,391	6,829
Total labour force ¹	4,125	815	608	2,120	4,681
Total employed	4,055	792	584	2,051	4,579
Total unemployed	70	23	24	69	102
Unemployment rate ²	1.7%	2.8%	3.9%	3.3%	2.2
Labour force participation rate (%) ³	73.0%	64.0%	64.3%	62.5	68.5%

¹ People employed or actively seeking work

² Total unemployed as a percentage of labour force

³ *Percentage of persons aged 15 and over in the labour force*

The high labour force participation rate for the Yass Valley LGA's non-urban area (73%) suggests a solid demand for employment and combined with the low unemployment rate (1.7%) indicates a strong labour market. This is most likely due to the proximity of and employment opportunities provided by Canberra, which is reinforced by similar strong labour market statistics for Palerang.

Table 10 shows the percentage of people employed in YVC within different industry classifications. It should be noted that the ABS changed industry classifications between the 2001 and 2006 reporting periods so that it is difficult to directly compare between years. Where particular classifications are not used in each year, they are reported as not available (N/A).

Table 4.7 Comparison of Employment by Industry for Yass Valley LGA as whole and Yass Valley LGA – non urban

	2001		2006	
	Yass Valley LGA	Yass Valley LGA – non urban	Yass Valley LGA	Yass Valley LGA – non urban
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	14.0%	19.2%	10.4%	14.2%
Mining	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Manufacturing	4.3%	4.0%	3.5%	3.8%
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	1.7%	1.4%	1.8%	1.4%
Construction	7.7%	7.7%	9.1%	9.9%
Wholesale Trade	3.2%	2.5%	2.2%	2.1%
Retail Trade	13.1%	11.3%	9.3%	7.6%
Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants	5.2%	4.6%	6.8%	5.6%
Transport and Storage	3.1%	2.6%	3.3%	2.6%
Information Media and Telecommunications	N/A	N/A	1.6%	1.3%
Communication Services	1.6%	1.3%	N/A	N/A
Finance and Insurance	1.7%	1.9%	1.4%	1.5%
Property and Business Services	10.9%	11.4%	N/A	N/A
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	N/A	N/A	1.4%	1.5%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	N/A	N/A	7.9%	8.7%
Government Administration & Defence	10.5%	9.7%	N/A	N/A
Administrative & Support Services	N/A	N/A	2.0%	2.2%
Education	6.7%	6.4%	7.4%	7.9%
Public Administration & Safety	N/A	N/A	16.0%	15.1%
Health and Community Services	8.2%	7.4%	9.1%	8.7%
Cultural and Recreational Services	2.4%	2.4%	1.0%	1.0%

Personal and Other Services	3.9%	4.2%	N/A	N/A
Non-classifiable economic units	0.8%	0.9%	N/A	N/A
Other Services	N/A	N/A	3.0%	2.7%
Inadequately described/Not stated	1.0%	0.9%	2.5%	2.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: ABS Census 2001 and 2006

Note: Between 2001 and 2006, ABS made changes to industry categories

The largest employment classification within the Yass Valley non-urban area during 2006 was the Public Administration and Safety sector (15.1%) followed by the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector (14.2%). The construction sector is the next most important (9.9suzanne%).

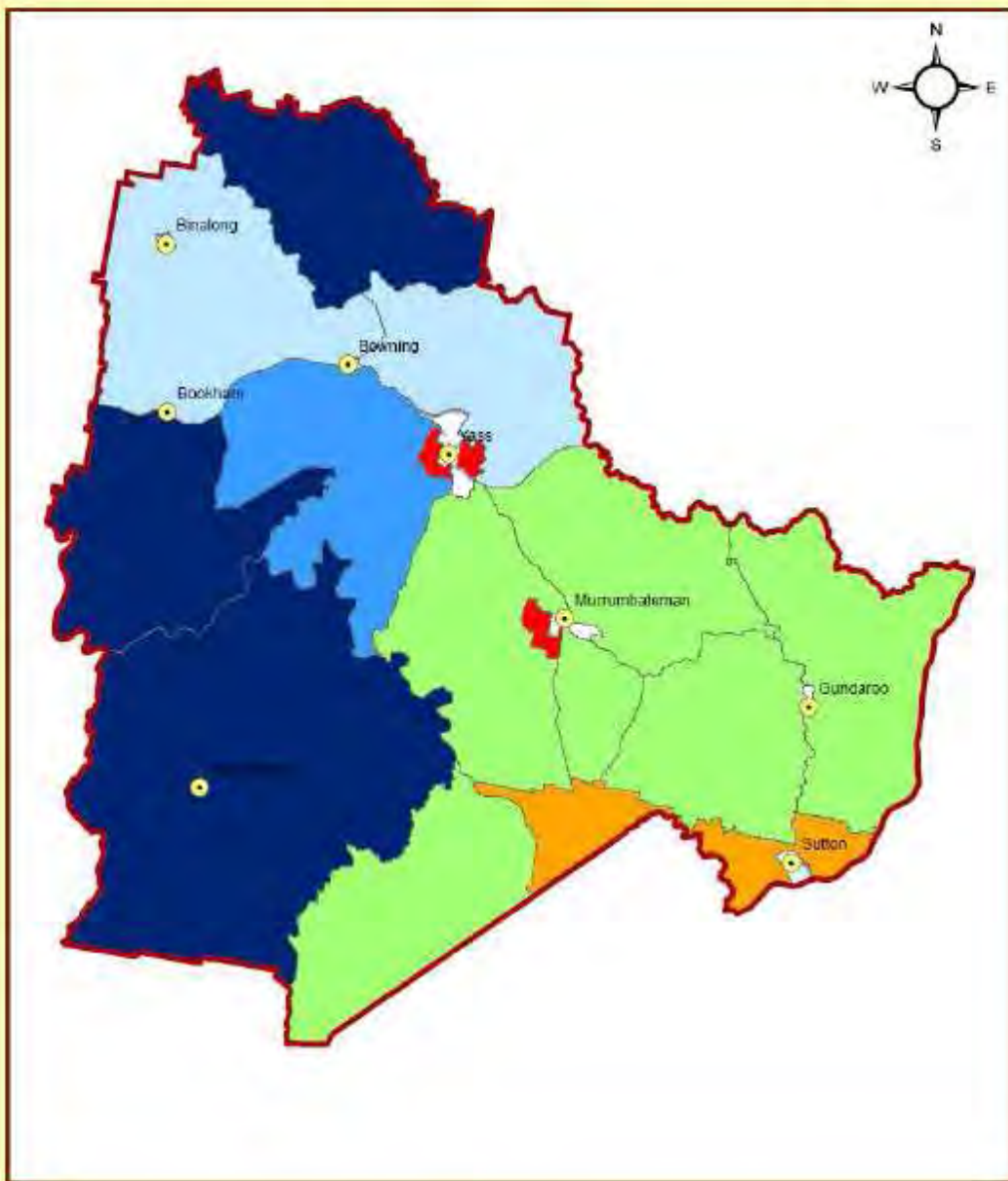
The Public Administration and Safety sector and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector are also the two highest employment industries for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole, but with a significantly lower percentage for the agriculture sector.

Despite the change in industry descriptions between 2001 and 2006, it is clear that there has been a relative decline in employment in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector for both the non-urban area and the LGA as a whole. Over the same period it appears that there has been an increase in employment in the government sector with Government Administration and Defence representing 9.7 percent of employment in the non-urban area in 2001 and the Public Administration and Safety sector representing 15.1 percent in the non-urban area in 2006.

The decline in agricultural employment is consistent with a general trend, and is further exasperated by the ongoing drought that has spanned the majority of this decade. The actual rate of decline may be masked by the trend to seek off-farm employment to subsidise agricultural ventures. This has implications for land use planning in determining minimum lot sizes in order to sustain agricultural viability across the LGA.

The percentage of people employed in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector is not evenly distributed across the LGA. Figure 11 shows that the percentage of people employed in this sector is higher in the north and west of the LGA, and lower around Yass, Murrumbateman and the ACT border.

Figure 4.6 Proportion of people employed in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sectors in non urban areas, 2006



Legend

- 0-5%
- 5-10%
- 10-20%
- 20-30%
- 30-40%
- 40-51%
- Urban Collection Districts

- Towns
- Water courses
- Roads
- Yass Valley Council

Data source: Census Data 2006

Maps prepared for
Yass Valley Non-Urban
Lands Study

4.6 Incomes

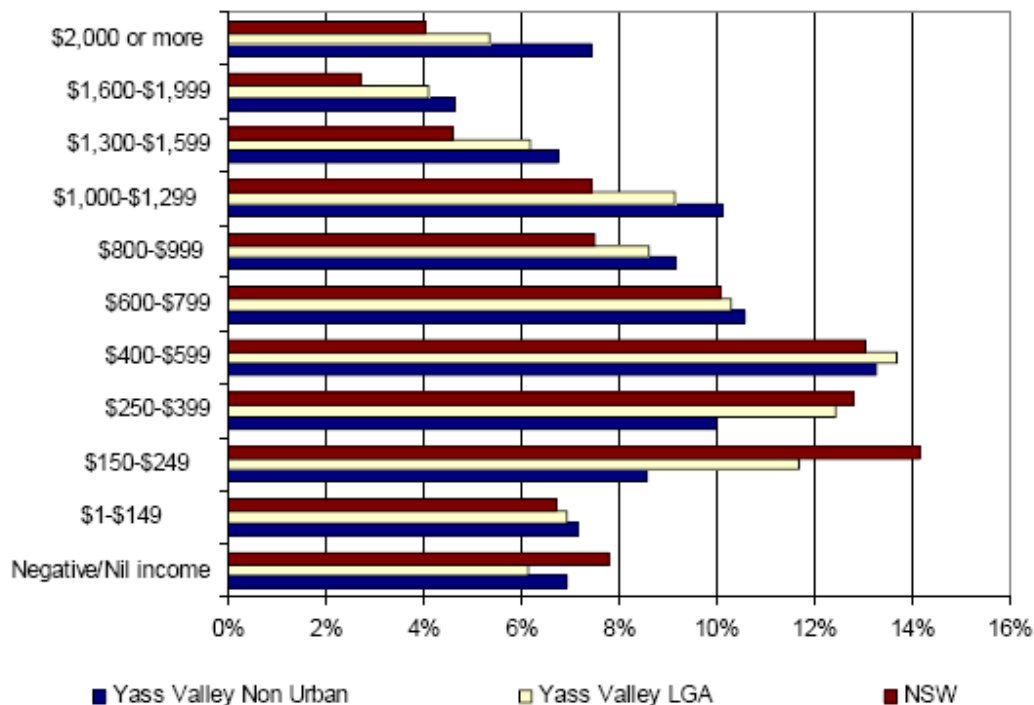
Median gross weekly incomes at the individual, family and household level are higher in the non-urban area compared to both the Yass Valley LGA as a whole and for NSW (see Table 4.8). The median weekly income for individuals in the non-urban area is 14% higher than for the Yass Valley LGA as a whole and 34% higher than for NSW.

Table 4.8 Median weekly incomes for the Yass Valley LGA, Yass Valley LGA – non urban and NSW, 2006

Median weekly income	Yass Valley LGA	Yass Valley LGA – non urban	NSW
Individual	\$546	\$620	\$461
Family	\$1,377	\$1,582	\$1,181
Household	\$1,165	\$1,460	\$1,036

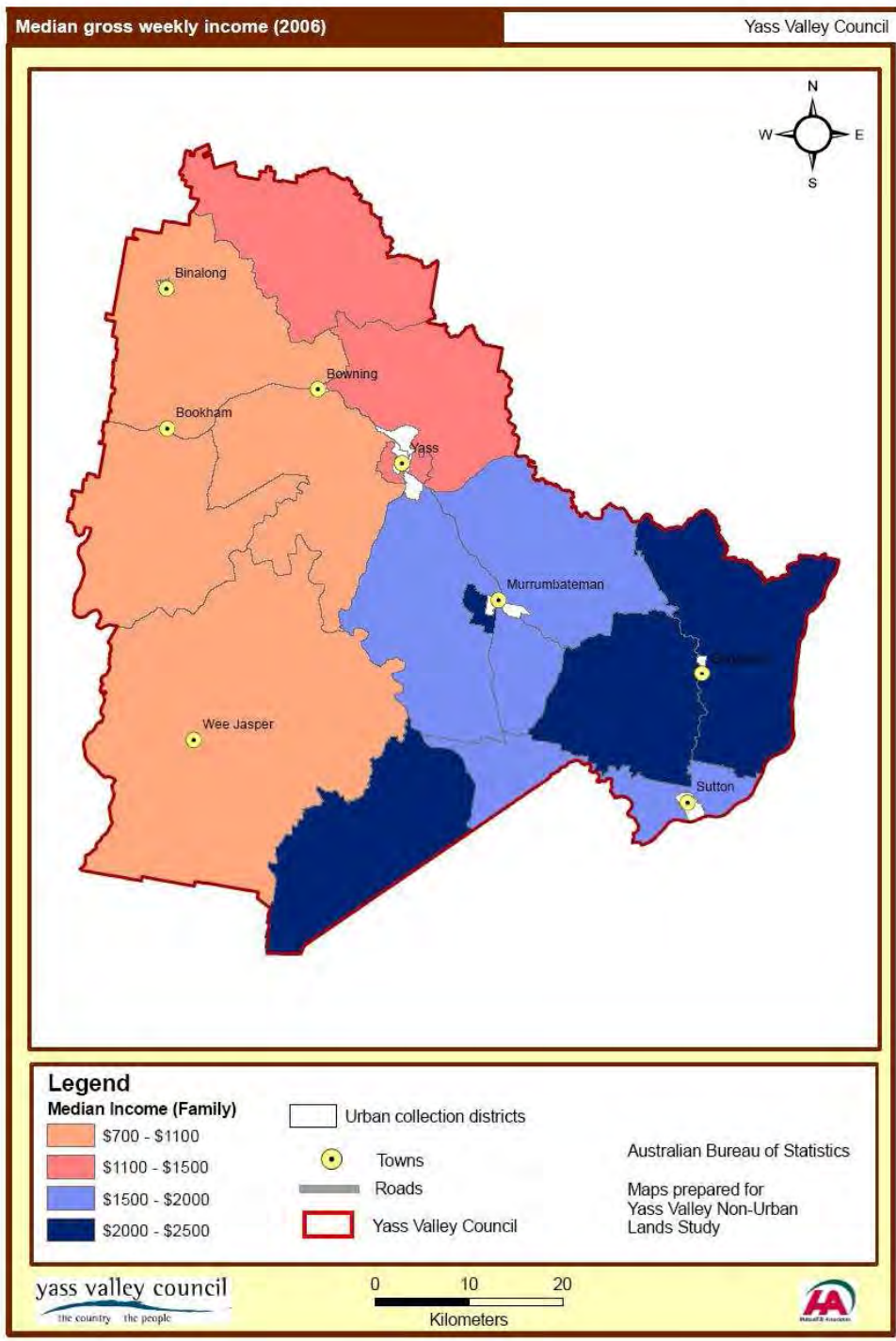
This difference is further demonstrated in Figure 4.7, which shows the higher representation of individuals in the non-urban area within the higher median weekly income brackets compared to the YVC as a whole and to NSW.

Figure 4.7 Median weekly incomes for the Yass Valley LGA, Yass Valley LGA – non urban and NSW, 2006



There is also a variation of median incomes across the non-urban area of the Yass Valley LGA as shown in Figure 4.8. The south-eastern sections of the LGA have a higher median gross weekly family income compared to other areas.

Figure 4.8 Median gross weekly income across non urban areas of Yass Valley LGA, 2006

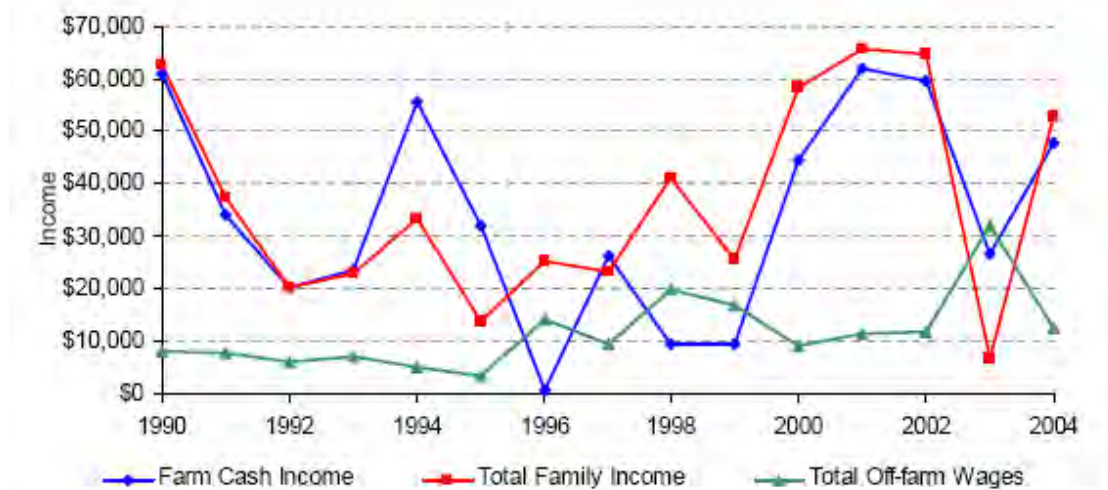


The non-urban area includes agricultural holdings that obtain income from sales of produce and also have access to non-farm income. Average farm family income in the region for the 2000 to 2004 period was \$49,600 (ABARE 2006). Farm family income is assessed as income drawn from the farming business plus off-farm income sources. The

average level of off-farm income earned over the same period is estimated at \$23,300 per farm, of which an average \$15,300 (66%) is generated from off-farm wage income.

Farm total cash income, farm family income and off-farm wages over the 1990 to 2004 period are provided in Figure 4.9. Off-farm wages have fluctuated over the period, but generally trended positively. Farm cash incomes and farm family income remain highly variable with farm income still the main driver of the level of farm family income.

Figure 4.9 Farm cash, family and off-farm incomes,



Source: ABARE AGSurf Database (2006)

4.7 Issues arising

The implications of the demographic change in the Yass Valley LGA are as follows:

- The Yass Valley LGA is experiencing an overall increase in population, however the distribution of population growth is not uniform across the LGA. Some areas of the LGA are experiencing significant growth, whilst others are experiencing population decline.
- The anticipated duplication of the Barton Highway between Yass and Canberra would improve accessibility between the areas of Murrumbateman and Yass and the ACT and is expected to increase the popularity of these areas for rural living.
- An increase in number of people living in YVC LGA and sourcing income from the ACT will place increasing pressure on housing in the areas of the LGA adjoining the ACT. Provisions enabling subdivision around these areas will need to consider the impacts of fragmentation of agricultural land in the preservation of agricultural viability across the LGA.
- The relatively small increase in the age groupings in the middle of the age

distribution profile for the non-urban and urban areas of the LGA is typical for most rural areas as young adults migrate to areas with greater education and employment opportunities; better access to Canberra's services due to highway upgrade may increase number of young students/professionals living in LGA.

- Table 6 shows a decline in the 20-29 years age bracket which suggests that there is out migration from the LGA by this group. Simultaneously, migration is occurring into the LGA in the 35-54 age groupings. This may suggest the increased demand for facilities catering for families.
- The decline in the agriculture forestry and fishing sector across the LGA coincides with the growth in the public administration and safety sector. The gradual increase in off-farm employment in the non-urban area of the LGA may suggest the decline in agriculture viability of the land, and a movement away from traditional agricultural enterprises.