



UNLEASH  
THE OPPORTUNITIES

line

University of  
New England

ARMIDALE  
Regional Council

Live, Play, Work and Invest

INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS



# The Armidale region – the ideal place to live, play, work and invest

**Armidale**, the highest city in Australia, is centrally located on the New England Highway between Sydney and Brisbane, surrounded by dramatic gorges, four national parks and productive farming communities producing beef, and lamb, wool, and vegetable crops.

“ The first mainland region to be switched to the NBN network, connecting over 12,000 homes and businesses to Fibre to the Premises - the Rolls Royce of NBN connection. ”

Set for a positive and exciting future, the Armidale region is a great place to live, work and invest. We pride ourselves on being dynamic, progressive and innovative with affordable land and housing and a thriving arts and culture scene.

Our city boasts a **highly diverse industry base** and a variety of well-established key employment sectors including education, training and healthcare. With a **\$62 million redevelopment of Armidale Hospital**, Armidale has a sophisticated health sector, manufacturing, accessible retail, leading agriculture, forestry and fishing and tourism, which together provide more than 60 percent of employment in the area.

Armidale was the first mainland region in Australia to be switched to the NBN network, connecting over 12,000 homes and businesses to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) - **the Rolls Royce of NBN connection**, and a further 2,000 outlying premises with access through fixed wireless technology. The technology has given local businesses unprecedented access to global markets, and created a **vibrant digital economy** for the region.

NBN technologies have been further capitalised by the recent completion of a **\$10.5 million terminal expansion** at the Regional Airport,

providing increased passenger capacity and the ability to support 200,000 visitors and 4,500 flights over the next decade. The redevelopment is a gateway to international value-adding opportunities for the New England region's agricultural sector, specifically into Asia-Pacific markets, and these will be further strengthened by plans for the commercial development of the **Armidale Airport Business Park**.

The announcement of a **\$65 million secondary future school**, the largest secondary school in regional NSW, will cement Armidale's reputation as one of Australia's leading regional education centres. Armidale is home to the nation's first inland University - the highly reputed **University of New England** with more than 20,000 enrolments, and **TAFE New England** – including the new headquarters for TAFE NSW Digital. In addition, the city has a number of highly regarded and historic private, independent and public schools.

With confident growth forecasts, a vibrant economy and a regional Council driving crucial infrastructure and sustainable economic success, we encourage you to consider our City for you, your business and family.

*Economic Development Team  
Armidale Regional Council*

All figures supplied by Armidale Regional Council previous economic development prospectus and investment prospectus factsheet.

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Throughout this document the word Armidale is used to reference the Armidale region.

The Armidale Regional Council area consists of the city of Armidale, the towns of Guyra and Tingha, and other surrounding villages such as Black Mountain, Ebor, Hillgrove and Wollomombi, covering a total land area of about 8,600 square kms.





## Reasons to do business in Armidale

Armidale set in the heart of the New England high country is the major educational, commercial, retail, and cultural centre for a greater regional population of close to **80,000 people**. Acknowledged as one of only 20 cities in Australia with an **abundant, long-term water supply**, with its cool mountain climate regarded as a major environmental asset.

*Unleashing Our Opportunities: Armidale Region Economic Development Strategy, 2017-2025* supports the achievement of the region's desired economic outcomes:



**\$1.5 billion**  
Armidale Region economy by 2025 which represents a **10% increase**

in the size of the region's economy over 8 years.

**14,500**  
local jobs by 2025.  
Up by approximately 10%  
from 13,200 in 2016.

An increase in the **Armidale Region's population** from 30,000 to at least **35,500 by 2025**

**65%**

Inter-regional exports that account for **65%** of the Armidale Region's GRP (currently around 55%).

## Strong economic outlook

Armidale is set for a positive and exciting future with a diverse economy dominated by education and training, healthcare, retail trade, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and tourism.

The region has one of the strongest economies in regional New South Wales, well-known as a research and education hub and is one of its top agricultural producing regions, providing one-quarter of the State's agricultural output. The region also has an emerging manufacturing sector based on 'high-value' animal health and agricultural activities and a growing transport, warehousing and storage sector in response to the growing importance of 'accessibility' to a range of industries.

Significant developments, either ready to commence or recently completed, include the redevelopment of the Armidale Regional Airport and surrounding business park precinct - a key enabler of the region's long-term prosperity. The region is also benefiting from the recent redevelopment of Armidale Hospital and new aged-care facilities, as well as the announcement of a NSW Government-funded secondary Future School to meet the educational needs of 21st century students.

Around **2,934**  
local businesses in the Armidale region contribute to a gross regional product valued at **\$1.41 billion**



\*Armidale Region Investment Prospectus  
\*National Institute of Economic & Industry Research (NIEIR) © 2016



**TOURISM** continues to play an important role as an economic driver, with the New England North West accounting for **1.5 million** domestic overnight stays, contributing **\$532 million** to the local economy. (2016/2017)

National Visitors Survey (NVS) & International Visitors Survey (IVS) - YE Sept 2017, Tourism Research Australia

## Affordable and streamlined costs to business

**Affordability** is one of the key drivers for doing business in Armidale, with attractive industrial and commercial land prices and rental opportunities catering for light, medium or heavy industry as well as aviation freehold. The development of the Armidale Airport Business Park adjacent to the Armidale Regional Airport, will see competitive real estate prices set to attract significant inbound investment.

Easy access to transportation by highway, air or rail provide the **least-cost pathways and logistics** for your business to access domestic and export markets, and ensure timely delivery of your freight. The Armidale Regional Council's streamlined development application approach and individual case management for liaising with key stakeholders offers procedural guidance and helps to minimise time delays and set-up costs for new businesses.

## Business

**Positive economic outlook** with well thought out **strategic plans** moving forward to **2025**

**Proactive pro-business local government** - with an emphasis on **sustainability**



**Significantly superior NBN and technology infrastructure** available



**Ideal climatic conditions and abundant water**



**Business growth and opportunities** in all major industry sectors



Access to **premium educational institutions** across all age-sectors



**Incubator / Accelerator / Cluster activities with an emphasis on Ag Tech**





## Transport Links

Armidale is located midway between Sydney and Brisbane on the Great Dividing Range and the New England Highway, a one hour flight to either from Armidale. The coast is a two-hour drive away, along one of the most beautiful scenic drives in Australia – Waterfall Way.

Armidale has a daily train service to and from Sydney and daily coach services to and from Brisbane and Sydney. NSW TrainLink, run by NSW Trains, provides regional train and coach services that connect the New England High Country to Sydney and a daily TrainLink service to and from Sydney called the Armidale Xplorer. Coach services provide a link to most centres north of Armidale. The historic Armidale Railway Station is located on the fringe of the Armidale CBD.

*The airport is home to various aviation businesses including Fleet Helicopters, Super-Air, Edwards Aviation VIP Jet Charter, Go Fly, Armidale Aero Club and others.*

Almost **100**  
direct flights  
between Armidale  
and Sydney  
each week

There are almost **100 direct flights** between Armidale and Sydney each week and 12 between Armidale and Brisbane. Daily return passenger flights serve travellers to Brisbane and Sydney, with onward connections nationally, to Asia, North America and Europe.

Armidale's Regional Airport redevelopment will provide increased capacity with the ability to support 200,000 visitors and 4,500 flights over the next decade. The expansion has included a larger terminal area with stunning architecture, more spacious check-in facilities, enhanced security, a VIP departure lounge, upgraded parking, and food, beverage and retail facilities.

## National Broadband Network

Armidale was the first mainland region in Australia to be switched to the NBN network, connecting over 12,000 homes and businesses to Fibre to the Premises - **the Rolls Royce of NBN connection**, and a further 2,000 outlying premises with access through fixed wireless technology. The technology has enabled local businesses unprecedented access to global markets and created a **vibrant digital economy** for the region.

NBN technology offers the same range of telecommunication services available in capital cities. Armidale's superior NBN infrastructure means national and international businesses can experience lower overheads and staff can take advantage of the change in lifestyle and better work-life balance because the tyranny of distance has disappeared with the introduction of super-fast broadband.

Armidale was internationally recognised as a **SMART21 Community** in 2016 by New York based Intelligent Community Forum. The City's reputation in digital leadership has since grown

Over **12,000**  
homes + businesses connected  
via Fibre to the Premises

Verified by nbnc.com.au

with the launch of a flourishing new **UNE Smart Region Incubator**, and the opening of **TAFE NSW Digital** headquarters which will deliver state-of-the-art online learning experiences, and provide for up to 62 jobs at the centre.

Armidale has a thriving small business sector. For the SME's affordable high-speed broadband means easy communication with clients, suppliers and developing new international markets. Armidale is starting to see growth in start-ups and incubator technology businesses due to being one of the first sites in Australia for the roll-out of the NBN.

Both the University of New England and the Armidale Regional Council are establishing free WiFi locations within the city. Locations include UNE campus, the Armidale Airport and the Mall area in the CBD.

## Armidale Airport Business Park

The **Armidale Airport Business Park** will provide a **40-lot industrial subdivision on 25 hectares** for commercial, industrial and air business use.

The Business Park, situated within the Armidale Regional Airport, is a significant asset serving the region through the provision of aviation-related services for passenger flights, air freight, aircraft maintenance, and emergency services, general and private aviation.

The Business Park will increase the much-needed supply of **competitively-priced modern serviced light industrial land** in the Armidale Region and is ideal for businesses looking for a competitive edge through quality transport infrastructure. >

“Set to be a  
key enabler  
of the region's  
long-term  
prosperity.”



Key to the Airport Business Park's success will be the provision of critical enabling infrastructure – a pre-requisite for the development of the **Armidale Regional Airport Business Park**, and includes roadworks, kerbing, guttering, sewerage services, lighting, NBN connection and the provision of underground electricity. Stage 1 will also facilitate new retail and accommodation facilities and visitor attractions including vintage motor and aircraft museums.

The ultimate vision is for the development of additional industrial lots and a major airport runway upgrade for expanded passenger services and the delivery of export-oriented airfreight facilities.

- 40-lot industrial subdivision including an 18,400m<sup>2</sup> tenant space
- Commercial, industrial and air business use
- Provision of critical enabling infrastructure
- Access to air, rail and road transport links
- Wider access to National and International markets.

## Business Park business opportunities

- Manufacturing
- Transport and Freight Companies
- Avionics • Ag Tech
- Transport and warehousing
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Tourism, retail trade and other services





## Building for the future and designing career opportunities

Award-winning Uniplan Group designs, customises and delivers homes, holiday cabins and granny flats to specification with broad selection options; delivering from their Armidale factory to any site in Australia.

“ **Armidale is a fantastic city – we love it, it is our home** as well as the base for our business. We believe that with more economic drivers and continued major investment in industry the city can meet its true potential. ”

*Ben Scott | Uniplan Group Co-Founder and Managing Director*

Established in Armidale in 1999 Uniplan has grown from elementary beginnings into a multinational company. The original three-man crew of family members Howard, Ben and William Scott, now employ 110 local staff with architects, interior designers and project managers providing a full-service experience.

On the back of excellent financial stability, well-developed systems and a ten year average **annual growth in excess of 15%**, Uniplan recently announced \$2 million expansion plans. Securing neighbouring land will now allow the company to boost their factory floor by 80% to 6300m<sup>2</sup> and in the process **create up to 40 more local jobs**.

The company also works hard to put back into the Armidale community that has supported their growth and supplied skilled and educated employees. With a core vision of 'We Innovate to Grow,' the family and their dedicated team are always looking for new designs, methods, and processes, thriving on finding exciting new products.

The company focuses on creativity and efficiency, continually finding new and improved ways to manufacture the perfect home or cabin for their client. This innovation, production efficiencies and varying techniques for manufacturing different size dwellings enable the factory to produce a completed home every two days.

“ **Be a role model in our field of expertise, provide for the local community, elevate our employees and create lasting relationships with a hardworking, family spirit of the highest ethics.** ”

**UNIPLAN** GROUP  
Modern forms, functional design



## BALANCE

## The Armidale region – living life to the full

Armidale is a picturesque city with rich natural, cultural and civic amenities. There are countless opportunities for locals and visitors to be entertained and to enjoy a wide variety of attractions, activities, events and natural wonders.

A truly cosmopolitan centre nestled in the New England high country, Armidale is a regional city with contemporary offerings and deep links with its pastoral, technological and pioneering history. Traditional owners of the land are respectfully acknowledged. Striking heritage buildings are lovingly maintained and put to good use.

Armidale is well known for its social capital and high rates of volunteerism. A much sought after 'balanced lifestyle' is very achievable in the region, due in part to short commute times, a highly relational community, and the abundance of life-affirming green spaces. Getting outdoors is a must. Food grown in and around the region finds its way onto the tables of local eateries, including casual family restaurants, cafés, clubs and pubs to fine dining rooms.

The region is home to thriving museums, music, drama and visual arts scenes. The **Playhouse Theatre** and **New England Conservatorium of Music** host regular performances and workshops, while the celebrated **New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM)** has one of the largest exhibits in regional Australia, boasting six gallery spaces which are enjoyed by approximately 50,000 visitors annually.

The **UNE Natural History Museum** is a library of life; a place of activity, interaction and discovery. The distinctly modern and permanent exhibition houses a must see collection from around the globe.

**10mins**

Average commute time within Armidale

**A**

City centre to Airport **7km**

**B**

More time to explore, experience, enjoy.

Free parking and no road tolls  
= more money in your pocket.

Custodian of around  
**5000** works of art

[New England Regional Art Museum in Armidale]

& home to a number of cultural venues

A diverse choice of Dining options

+ a thriving Wine Bar & Pub scene

Centre left image supplied by  
HINTON: Treasures of Australian  
Art (exhibition view) 2018.  
New England Regional Art Museum



## The best on offer in regional Australia

Considered the 'capital' of the New England high country, **Armidale** is a university city that provides an easy and welcoming transition to regional living.

Equipped with all the niceties and necessities including progressive health care, affordable housing, education options, a busy airport, fast internet, natural wonders and a thriving pub, wine bar and coffee shop scene – **you can order the smashed avo and afford the lifestyle!**

 **\$65 million**  
secondary  
**Future School 2019**  
NSW Dept. of Education

**\$60 million**  
Rural Referral  
hospital  
redevelopment\*



Tertiary education  
provides **1,491** jobs



Education & Training represents  
almost **40%** of Armidale's  
regional exports

NIEIR © 2016

Over  
**500km**

of waterfalls, gorges  
and

wild rivers

\*NSW Govt. Health Report – Hunter New England Local Health District 2017

## Health

Armidale offers some of Australia's leading health services. The region benefits from access to 5 major medical facilities including the Armidale Rural Referral Hospital, currently under a **\$60 million redevelopment**, and the Armidale Private Hospital.

The facilities provide for all types of medical services including surgery, obstetrics, oncology, paediatrics, geriatrics and accident and emergency as well as outpatient clinics. Ancillary services include radiology, pathology, occupational therapy and speech therapy, social work, physiotherapy and pharmacy. More than 30 resident GPs and specialist physicians support the wellbeing of our community, in addition to a range of alternative therapy practitioners.



**30** bed  
modern  
private hospital  
established  
in **1998**

## Education

Armidale's excellence in education, from pre-school to PhD, is well recognised. Home to the **University of New England**, Australia's first university to be established outside a capital city, has a well-earned reputation as one of Australia's great teaching, training and research universities.

Along with a TAFE campus, three independent day and boarding schools, eight public primary schools, a Catholic primary and high school and two public high schools currently being consolidated into a **\$65 million secondary future school**, Armidale is building on its already strong reputation as the state's leading inland education centre.

Over **21,000**  
domestic students @ UNE  
+ over **1000** international  
students enrolled from  
**80** different  
countries



www.planning.une.edu.au  
- YE 2016 UNE

## Sport and active living



**288** sporting events each weekend in Armidale. Facilities include a 50m 8 lane competition pool, 8 turf cricket ovals, 50 all-weather tennis courts + a **state of the art indoor arena**.

**Armidale loves sport.** And with premium facilities, a great climate, altitude training and an active sports community, there is every reason to be involved. Armidale's list of facilities is particularly impressive and are maintained to a high standard with a progressive policy of development. As a result, Armidale is regularly chosen to host regional, state and national sporting events.



## Packing in more than just taste with Controlled Environment Horticulture

There is a growing trend in the agricultural industry towards construction of large-scale, technologically complex, high yielding and resource-efficient greenhouses. These developments are a significant growth industry and offer possibilities for meeting future demand for mainly vegetables and berry fruits domestically and internationally. This can be done in a relatively sustainable way and can create employment opportunities in regional areas.

The Armidale region has the advantage of altitude which means that the region rarely experiences summer days with temperatures in excess of 30°C – and offers relatively high levels of solar radiation. Water is abundant, transport north and south via the New England Highway is easy and accessible as well as the development of the Armidale Airport Precinct are all key drivers for the industry.

Main factors of success of Controlled Environment Horticulture (CEH) in the Armidale region:

- Water
- Sunlight
- Temperature
- Transport Links
- Labour

CEH viable crops include:

- Tomato
- Capsicum
- Cucumbers
- Lettuce and leafy greens
- Eggplant
- Herbs
- Cut flowers

### The Costa Group

The Costa Group under the Blush® brand operates one of Australia's largest, most advanced glasshouse facilities, located in Guyra NSW within the Armidale Regional Council. The glasshouses produce up to 15 million kg of premium truss tomatoes year-round to consumers and put Blush® and Costa at the forefront of innovation in ecologically sustainable practices.

“ The combination of **available land, being logistically located between Sydney and Brisbane and the cool summers and high light levels in winter** makes this an ideal location. The Armidale Council has continued to assist us and be proactive during crucial development stages, actively supporting Costa's expanding brand. ”

*Paul Anderson | Project Manager – Tomato Category, Costa Group*

Guyra, a 30-minute drive from Armidale is one of the highest towns in Australia, situated on a volcanic uplift 1,330 metres above sea level. Here the glasshouses are perfectly positioned to harness the best growing conditions nature can offer thanks to the unique microclimate.

Recently the Costa Group expanded the original 20-hectare facility with an additional 10 hectare \$60 million development, able to grow 450,000 plants. They now employ over 600 staff, making them one of the largest employers in the Armidale region.







We welcome your interest and enquiries and encourage you to choose Armidale to live, play, work and invest.