



HLN STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

Purpose

This Strategic Plan provides the strategic directions of Holbrook Landcare Network (HLN) for 2024- 2027. It provides a framework to support the Board’s sound decision making, enable on ground action, measure performance and develop consistent budgets and workplans. It builds on previous plans and conveys HLN’s vision to 2027 as well as reflecting our group progress and evolution over time.

Whilst independently written for the purpose of HLN members only, this Strategic Plan is written with consciousness of relevant state- and commonwealth-based priorities, including the NSW Landcare Program, Landcare NSW, NSW Local Land Services, Future Drought Fund, and industry priorities, including Meat & Livestock Australia and Grains Research & Development. This demonstrated alignment of priorities enables easier cooperation between our organisations. This Strategic Plan provides the longer-term context for our Annual Operating Plan and a reporting framework for the HLN Board.

Where we work

Holbrook Landcare Network is based in Holbrook in southern NSW. Whilst most of the membership and activities occur in a core area within a 50 km radius of Holbrook, HLN also draws membership and at times provides services to a much wider audience including landholders in the Upper Murray region of both NSW and Victoria and South-west Slopes and Eastern Riverina area of southern NSW.

As a leading community group in the region, we also engage with, or deliver, research, development and extension projects with influence over a much wider footprint as opportunities emerge and where they align with our strategic and organisational goals. HLN works closely with other Landcare and community groups, local government, state agencies, private industry and other stakeholders active in our region, to ensure our activities are as collaborative as possible and don’t duplicate or compete with services already offered.

Agriculture is the major economic driver in our region, dominated by highly productive mixed farming enterprises. Our membership is strongly represented in leadership and advisory roles with industry peak bodies, and in state and federal natural resources organisations and also in rural community advocacy.

Our area leads in the provision of livestock genetics for Australia as well as being nationally recognised for natural resource management in agricultural landscapes.



Our Future

The strategies identified in this plan have been designed to help HLN navigate the wide range of challenges facing both the organisation and the communities we service to 2030. Climate change will increase stress on our natural and agricultural ecosystems requiring further focus on adaptation and resilience. Shortages in labour availability impacts on the amount of free time farmers can attend events, staff availability and volunteerism in general. As in 2004, the investment priorities are again shifting away from traditional on-ground funding of revegetation to a market driven approach. With HLN’s reliance on unsecured project funding, it will be necessary for HLN to continue to evolve, exploring opportunities for new partnerships, service delivery, meeting changing member needs and ensuring HLN has a role in the rapidly expanding carbon, natural capital and Environmental Social Governance fields. Without compromising on our well-established values, HLN needs to leverage the legacy we have created on behalf of members to position both the organisation and our communities for a bright future.

Our Legacy

There is a strong history in the Holbrook area of the community coming together to discuss and address local issues effecting the productivity and sustainability of their landscape. This collective approach to dealing with issues is grounded in the belief that working together people achieve much more than by working only as individuals.

In 1962, the Holbrook and District Rural Advisory Service (HADRAS) became one of the first standalone community driven groups of its kind. With a specified membership hosting field days, trials and discussion groups it was effectively the beginning of an evolution which included Holbrook and District Rural Advisory Group, Holbrook Trees on Farms and eventually in 1989 the formation of the Holbrook Landcare Group. Examples of early issues addressed by the group were remnant vegetation protection and revegetation, rising water tables, erosion, native tree dieback, salinity, acid soils and perennial pastures.

In 2004 a change in investment priorities by state and federal governments led to the development of a ‘regional model’ which did not favour the collective approach engendered by Landcare and producer groups. This resulted in a marked loss of momentum for Holbrook Landcare but also saw several neighbouring groups struggling to remain viable. In 2008 a turning point was reached with the incorporation of other local groups with Holbrook Landcare Group to form the Holbrook Landcare Network, incorporating members and priorities of the groups. This time also saw a broadening of focus for activities including all facets of landscape sustainability and productive agriculture and a move from being defined by a geographical boundary to being more subject and issues driven.

Holbrook Landcare Network today is a nationally significant, members driven, Not for Profit community network in southern NSW, a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered charity with Deductible Gift Recipient Status. Our governance structure includes a Board of Directors with an Executive Officer and operational staff as appropriate depending on demand for project services and funding.



VALUES

MEMBER-DRIVEN: We exist for our members who take great pride and pleasure in our landscape, our community and our contribution.

ACTION-ORIENTED: We create a huge voluntary uptake of coordinated environmental works, sustainable agricultural practices and community engagement.

GOVERNANCE: We are an organisation with robust governance and systems, ready to partner and collaborate to invest in our environment, productivity and networks.

TRUSTWORTHY: We are an efficient and trusted point of contact and a key link between farmers and other land managers and researchers, agribusiness, agencies, investors and consultants.

LEADERSHIP: We are a significant, nationally recognised, stewardship organisation at the forefront of participatory research & extension with inclusive networks and strong partnerships.

INNOVATIVE: We have a strong reputation for working with farmers, forging and maintaining a culture of innovation and care for the land through evidence-based principles.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

VISION: AN ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY RESILIENT RURAL COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATING STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.



AN ENGAGED AND CONNECTED MEMBERSHIP THAT IS GROWING, AND THEIR NEEDS ARE BEING WELL MET.

STRATEGY 1.1 Undertake meaningful engagement with members to identify needs and develop projects and activities to meet those needs.

STRATEGY 1.2 Offer a range of core member services that are inclusive, accessible, relevant and valued by our diverse membership.



PROVIDES A RANGE OF QUALITY SERVICES THAT HAVE BUILT THE CAPACITY OF OUR RURAL COMMUNITY TO INCREASE THE ADOPTION OF IMPROVED FARMING PRACTICES & NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES.

STRATEGY 2.1 Deliver information to members and community through targeted extension and engagement activities.

STRATEGY 2.2 Act as a conduit for knowledge transfer between members, industry, government and other stakeholders.

STRATEGY 2.3 Form partnerships to provide access to current, credible and relevant technical expertise and subject matter.

STRATEGY 2.4 Be a source of information by undertaking trial, demonstration and monitoring activities

STRATEGY 2.5 Facilitate on ground change through the delivery of devolved grants programs to landholders

STRATEGY 2.6 Co-ordinate on ground change through direct provision of services or through volunteer activity



ATTRACTS STABLE AND SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO DELIVER ON THE STRATEGIC GOALS FROM A DIVERSE RANGE OF VALUED PARTNERS AND INVESTORS

STRATEGY 3.1 Actively establish and develop relationships with investors and partners who share common goals or outcomes

STRATEGY 3.2 Clearly articulate, communicate and demonstrate the value of Holbrook Landcare Network

STRATEGY 3.3 Undertake representation and advocacy and take a leadership role in creating an external environment, which recognises and supports Landcare and local producer driven activity.

STRATEGY 3.4 Create an 'employer of choice' environment to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.



MAINTAINS AND ENHANCES IT'S ROBUST, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

STRATEGY 4.1 Establish and maintain robust gap analysis and review processes for policies and procedures

STRATEGY 4.2 Provide skills and knowledge development for Board and staff to ensure capacity to maintain high standards of governance

STRATEGY 4.3 Utilise recognised and transparent systems for information management to demonstrate accountability and reliability



PROMOTES AND MAINTAINS A CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION AND PROGRESSION WITHIN THE ORGANISATION, THE MEMBERSHIP AND IN THE DELIVERY OF PROJECTS.

STRATEGY 5.1 Demonstrate leadership, innovation and sensitivity in the management of socio-political issues affecting HLN including the acknowledgement and embracing of First Nations peoples and culture and other sources of community diversity.

STRATEGY 5.2 Demonstrate an ability to be locally relevant whilst nationally or globally connected and conscious in the design and application of projects

STRATEGY 5.3 Demonstrate the capacity for synergy and coexistence of environmental and agricultural values and outcomes within productive farm systems.

STRATEGY 5.4 Advance innovation and astute technology adoption on farm