

# Manufacturing

## IN THE WESTERN DOWNS



The strength of the Western Downs economy comes from a powerful mix of energy, agriculture and construction – a great foundation for success in manufacturing.

### Opportunities

While the region's economy is underpinned by agriculture (cotton, grain, beef, pork and chickpeas), it is also known as the "energy capital of Queensland" with substantial investment and construction in coal, gas, hydrogen, wind and solar industries.

With strong investment in the region, opportunities for manufacturing continues to grow. Currently there are 123 manufacturing businesses covering agri-food, food products, machinery and equipment.

According to the Queensland Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, the main strengths of the Western Downs Region include:

- Location of Australia's newest regional airport with access direct to international markets
- Australia's leading agricultural sector in production and innovation
- Strong transport infrastructure connectivity including the \$1.6B Toowoomba Bypass and Warrego Highway upgrades.
- Future regional freight hub for Inland Rail between Brisbane and Melbourne
- Growth in the feedlot sector and associated beef processing industry with long established export orientated processors located across the region
- Strong education (including tertiary institutions) and health sectors

- Key industry sectors are supported by a strong and innovative manufacturing sector that has built expertise across agriculture, mining, civil construction and coal seam gas
- Resilient and diverse economy

According to Western Downs Regional Council other key benefits for manufacturers are:

- Fast council approval process
- Low land acquisition costs (Fraser Valuers)
- Skilled stable workforce
- Collaborative manufacturing culture



Nowhere is the saying that in the Western Downs 'it's the people that make it' more true than our wonderful manufacturing sector. Our region outdoes itself with locally manufactured products being recognised for quality in both national and international markets, just one reason why we've made the commitment to buy local.

**Paul McVeigh**

**Mayor Western Downs Regional Council**



Experience Western Downs

It's the people that make it.



**Future focus – innovation, digital technologies and sustainable practices**

Manufacturing matters to Queensland because it is vital to our state's economy, employs around 180,000 people, drives innovation and contributes more than \$19.2 billion to the economy. By 2026 the Queensland Government sees the State as an international market leader in the delivery of advanced manufacturing technologies, systems, products and services that are innovative, sustainable, and embedded in local and global supply chains.

The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water has established the Queensland Advanced Manufacturing 10-year Roadmap and Action Plan to help achieve that vision.



Jeff Wade - Wade Custom Fabrication Tara



Population 34,560 (2021)  
Employment in manufacturing 1,619  
(7.7% of the population)



Industrial land acquisition cost in the Western Downs is 87% less than Brisbane City prices per hectare (Fraser Valuers)



Western Downs Council development assessment process takes on average 13.5 days



123 manufacturing businesses



Manufacturing industry increased the value of inputs (value-add) by 93.5% and worker productivity by 32.3% over a five-year period

GRP in June 2021 \$4.07 billion



Finch Engineering

## Western Downs Regional Council Supports Manufacturing Industries

We want to empower our entrepreneurs so they can convert their ideas into commercial success stories with social and economic benefits to our region. So Council is committed to a proactive approach to economic growth through an award-winning planning scheme geared towards development throughout the region. This means a fast approval process for major projects, competitive application fees and support throughout the process.

### Going Global

Global resource companies operating in the Western Downs are supported by many small and medium enterprises, including manufacturers, opening doors for products and services to become part of global supply chains. The strength of the region's resource, construction and agricultural sectors make it prime for a variety of manufacturing specialties including:

- Machinery and equipment
- Fabricated metal products
- Mining equipment
- Technology services
- Food processing
- Innovative processing technologies
- Precision tooling and niche machining
- Products for use with wind turbines, cooling towers, solar thermal generators and energy storage systems

### The Manufacturing Workforce

Manufacturing is the region's third largest employment sector offering many opportunities for skilled and non-skilled workers.

### Training

Locally trained apprentices are sought after by manufacturers across Queensland due to their reputation for quality training and industry experience. Local apprentices are often sourced through Gateway to Industry Schools Programs for advanced manufacturing and also through Trade Training Centres at Dalby State High School, Miles State High School and Chinchilla State High School. The Western Downs is well-served by TAFE Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland.

### References

[www.economy.id.com.au/western-downs](http://www.economy.id.com.au/western-downs)

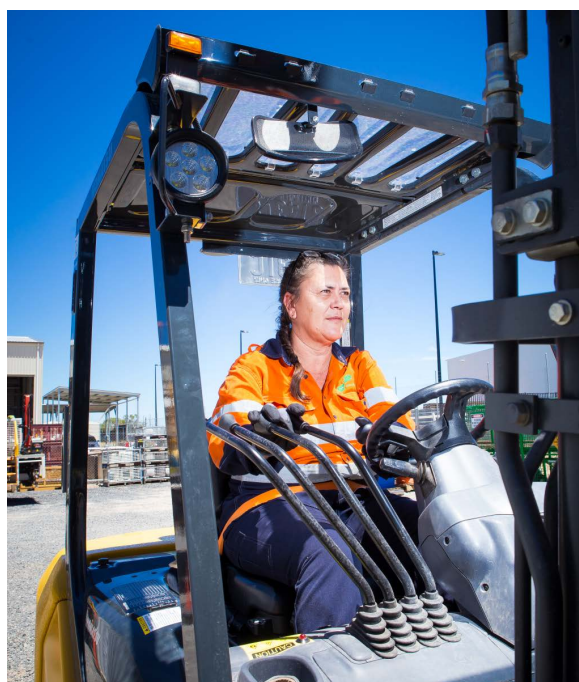
Fraser Valuers

TSBE – Western Downs Development Status Report

Queensland Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water [www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/regional-development/our-regions/darling-downs-south-westDowns](http://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/regional-development/our-regions/darling-downs-south-westDowns)

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## 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 38,000km<sup>2</sup> 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.

The Gross Regional Product (GRP) of the Western Downs region has more than doubled over 15 years to reach over \$4.07 billion.

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 'Business Fibre Zone' providing business grade fibre at reduced wholesale prices.

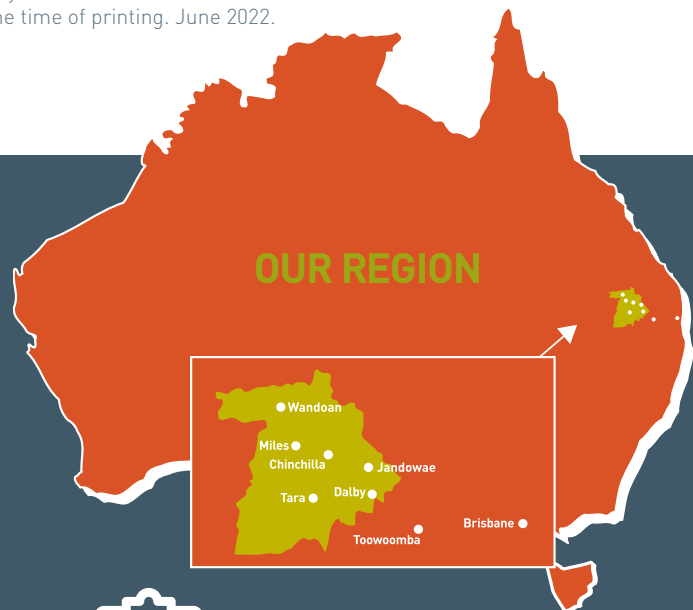
Residents enjoy a lower cost of living due to affordable housing (less than half of QLD average), ease of access to schools, work and retail outlets, with the NBN providing the network connectivity required for families and businesses to flourish.

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. June 2022.



## 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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