

# SAFE DRIVING ON RURAL ROADS

When driving on rural roads in Wollondilly, you might see and experience some instances that you certainly wouldn't have driving in an urban environment. Choosing to live in a rural environment requires adapting your driving skills to suit the conditions of the road surface and an understanding from the community that road type and surface will differ to those provided in an urban environment.

The nature and volume of traffic differs greatly in a rural environment, for instance you can expect to cross paths with livestock being moved between properties. The nature of the Shire means that many rural roads are unsealed and consist of a gravel surface with no kerb and guttering.

Council is committed to improving the Shire's roads as part of our Capital Works Program, with a proposed budget of \$30.9 million for road renewal in 2024-25 to build on the massive investment in recent years. However, this does not mean every unsealed road shall be sealed and provided with kerb and guttering.

## General Roads Information

Wollondilly Shire Council is responsible for the planning, control and maintenance of 870 kilometres of roadway. Much of the road network is comprised of typical country roads, narrow winding two lane rural roads, many of which also serve as major arterial roads. These roads usually have an open road speed restriction of 100km/hr. Rural roads are narrow and undulating with few overtaking opportunities and a limited amount of line marking and delineation. The traffic consists of a mix of heavy vehicles servicing the coal and mixed agriculture industries, and daily commuter and through passenger traffic.

Some of the key issues and what to expect when driving on rural roads within the Shire of Wollondilly are outlined in this information sheet.

## Livestock on Rural Roads

When driving on Wollondilly's rural roads you will encounter circumstances where livestock are being moved along the road between properties, or are grazing on the roadside verge. Livestock are legally allowed to walk along roads and graze on the roadside verge, provided that signage is placed at either end of the stretch of road affected and they are not unattended.

Therefore, you can expect to share the Shires rural roads with livestock from time to time. Patience needs to be demonstrated when sharing the road with livestock and speed needs to be reduced to minimise the chance of impact. Farmers will work with you and guide livestock away from vehicles and advise you when conditions are safe to pass.



### Farm Vehicles on Rural Roads

When driving on rural roads in the Wollondilly, you may come across instances where farm vehicles are driving along the road between properties. These vehicles include tractors, motorbikes, harvesting equipment and other types which may be slower and wider than conventional vehicles. In this instance, the majority of farmers will move over and allow you to pass when there is sufficient room on the road verge and there is no oncoming traffic coming.

Farm vehicles used for moving livestock, farm produce, farm feed and fertiliser supplies, milk carrier, bulk feed and bulk waste trucks can be expected to be seen on the Shires roads all year round. Expect to encounter additional farm vehicles during harvesting periods for fruit and vegetable crops, and after a good season when farmers take the opportunity to make hay and silage from excess pastures. When encountering farm vehicles on the Shires roads your patience is necessary for your own safety.



### Road Conditions

Concentration when driving on rural roads is critical to ensure you have enough time to respond to incidences with other cars, livestock, wildlife, sudden corners and fallen vegetation. Keep on the look-out for varying road conditions such as a change in road surface from bitumen to gravel, sharp corners not signposted, or crests which reduce visibility ahead and alter your speed accordingly.

A few things to keep in mind include:

- Unsealed gravel roads can be slippery in all weather conditions.



- Passing traffic can throw out stones which can scratch your car and crack windscreens.
- Corrugations and potholes.
- Visibility is often reduced by the presence of encroaching roadside vegetation and sharp corners.
- During winter months frost and/or black ice may be present on road side verges, particularly in shadow lines during the early morning.

### Roadside Vegetation & Native Fauna

There are significant stands of roadside vegetation present within the Shire which act as corridors for native fauna and biodiversity conservation. Care needs to be taken when driving near or adjacent to roadside vegetation as native fauna move out of the reserve to source food, most commonly on the side of the road where water runoff allows grass species to proliferate.

When driving on rural roads at night, early morning and at dusk, caution needs to be taken as these times are when animal activity and the chance for vehicles to impact with native fauna are the greatest. If you do have the unfortunate experience of colliding with native fauna whilst driving in the Shire, you can contact WIRES Wollondilly on 1300 094 737 or fill in the [online rescue form](#) whom provide crisis accommodation for injured wildlife.



### Rural Property Entrances

# FACT SHEET

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When driving on rural roads you will come across many rural property entrances where vehicles will be exiting and entering the property. Property entrances vary in nature some signposted with the property name and a letterbox, others only noticeable from the presence of a farm gate. Drivers need to be aware of vehicles entering and existing rural properties and adjust their speed accordingly. Particular care should be taken when approaching a crest by reducing vehicle speed in case there is a property entrance just over the crest.