



Radio Telescopes
Picture Courtesy of AAP

LOCATION: Narrabri
7 hours North West of Sydney

POPULATION: 8,500

INDUSTRIES: Cotton, agriculture, research, resources, retail and services.

CLIMATE: Temperate
Summer 19°C – 35°C
Winter 3°C – 17°C
Annual rainfall 644mm

Narrabri is a bustling friendly town in the heart of NSW cotton country. It has built its fortunes on the agricultural bounty of the vast plains stretching west of the Great Divide. But, a new force is emerging in the local economy as gas and coalmines stake their claims.

The town dates back to 1860 when sheep, cattle and wheat growers settled the region. In the early 1960s the Keepit Dam was built on the Namoi River ushering in a new era of irrigation and new possibilities for farmers. The cotton industry was born.

Today cotton remains the dominant crop – the Namoi and nearby Gwydir Valley’s are two of Australia’s biggest cotton regions. But, wheat and oil seed production, sheep and cattle are also part of the mix.

Landmark’s Paul Thomas says Narrabri is a solid, rural town.

“We have come through the droughts and downturns pretty well because of our agricultural diversity,” says Paul.

Further broadening of the economic base will come from resources. Several years ago Eastern Star Gas discovered natural gas in the nearby Pilliga Forest. Coal is another emerging industry. Three coalmines are underway in the shire and other mines operate across the region.

For a country town, Narrabri has a sizeable government sector because of three important research facilities. The CSIRO’s Cotton Research Institute and world-class radio astronomy facility Australia Telescope are based outside Narrabri. The observatory is hard to miss. Six 22-metre antennas dominate a six kilometre stretch and give scientists the ability to see very fine detail in space. Sydney University also has a presence with a Plant Breeding Institute.

Narrabri sits on the junction of the Kamilaroi and Newell Highways. It enjoys a reputation as a safe and friendly town and its shopping centre is a major drawcard, especially for those living further west. The main street has recently had a facelift and two new supermarkets and two motels are under construction.

Nearby, Mt Kaputar National Park is a popular attraction. From its highest point visitors get a 360-degree view of one-tenth of NSW. South of the town, the Pilliga National Park is the largest remnant temperate forest in Eastern Australia.

The town boasts so many sporting facilities it was once named the “sportiest town in Australia”. The local Crossing Theatre is the envy of bigger towns. Its 1000 seat auditorium and cinema complex is large enough to put Narrabri on the conference circuit.

Paul says there has been increasing speculation and investment in the property market because of the expectations driven by the resources sector.

The spin-offs for local businesses and for investors are expected to be substantial. The region is particularly attractive to businesses requiring large amounts of gas and water.

Several residential subdivisions are currently selling, opening up dozens of development sites, including river front blocks of up to 5 acres.

“If you drive through town you can see it is on the move.”

For further information contact:

Paul Thomas

Landmark Narrabri

Telephone 02 6799 6015

Mobile 0429 921 599

Email paul.thomas@landmark.com.au

PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: 3 bedroom weatherboard \$250,000.

Spacious 4 bedroom brick residence opposite golf course \$600,000.

Average block from \$70,000 to \$150,000.

Lifestyle: 5 acres with river frontage \$200,000.

Larger acreage: 300 acre river blocks with small irrigation licence \$330,000.

Best dry land farming: up to \$1300 an acre.

Cotton properties: up to \$1500 an acre plus water. A full river licence is up to \$2 million.