

Ordinary Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, 22 August, 2022

Location: Council Chambers, City Administrative Building, Bridge Road, Nowra

Attachments (Under Separate Cover)

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Monthly Investment Report

July 2022

CL22.361 - Attachment 1

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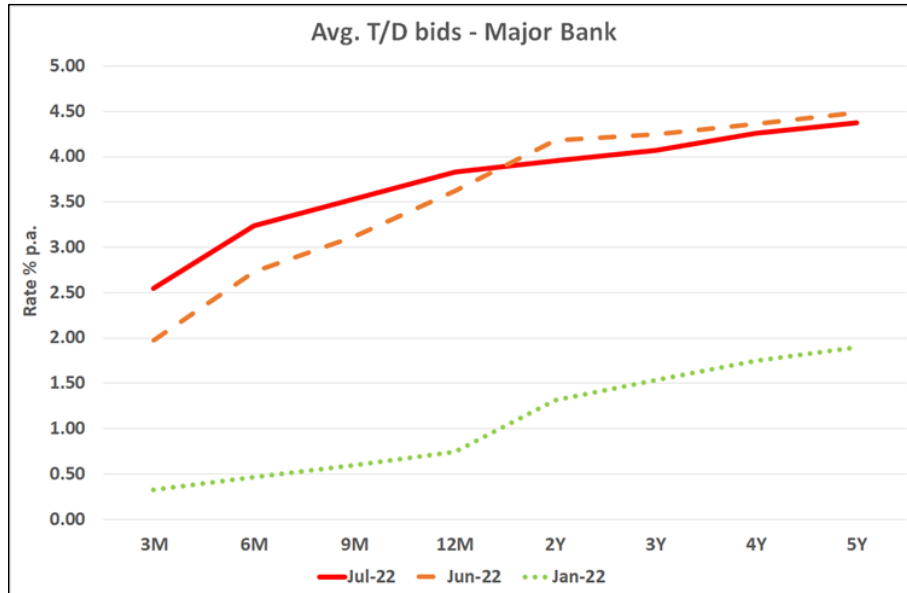
Impact of COVID-19 to Council's Portfolio

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted financial markets, which in turn, has also affected Council's investment portfolio. We provide a quick summary in this section.

After global central banks set official interest rates back to emergency levels during the height of the pandemic (2020), financial markets have transitioned to the recovery phase. Ongoing supply chain issues, China's zero-COVID strategy and the war in Ukraine has resulted in surging inflation. Longer-term bond yields have risen significantly in 2022 as central banks reverse their policy measures (i.e. remove quantitative easing), whilst undertaking aggressive interest rate hikes to try and control inflation. Importantly though when interpreting the stance of monetary policy, it is not just about the cash rate, but how broader financial conditions are influencing the economic outlook, **with markets now factoring the possibility of a global recession as early as the second half of 2023. The RBA increased the official cash rate by another 50bp to 1.85% in early August 2022 and is looking to move towards their neutral setting of 2½% by calendar year-end**, although the *"timing of future interest rate increases will be guided by the incoming data and the Board's assessment of the outlook for inflation and the labour market"*.

Outside of the NSW TCorp Long-Term Growth Fund, which Council only began investing in mid-July 2021, the largest impact to Council's investment portfolio is with regards to its largest exposure being assets held in bank term deposits (fixed and floating), which accounts for around ~58% of Council's total portfolio. Despite official rates rising, given an upward sloping deposit curve, maintaining a slightly longer duration position will continue to outperform averaging shorter durations.

With markets factoring in additional rate hikes over coming months, this has seen a significant shift in longer-term deposit rates, particularly over the past 6 months. The long-end of the deposit curve (+12 months) actually fell over July (compared to June) as the market starts to factor in a global recession:



Source: Imperium Markets

'New' investments above 3½% p.a. now appears likely if Council can place an allocation of its surplus funds for terms of 12 months to 2 years. With recessionary fears being priced in coming years, investors may take an insurance policy by investing across 3-5 year fixed deposits and locking in rates above 4% p.a. (small allocation only).

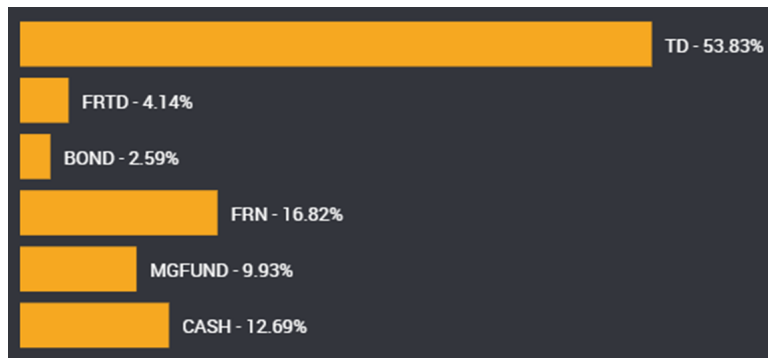


Council's Portfolio & Compliance

Asset Allocation

The majority of the portfolio is directed to fixed and floating rate term deposits, followed by liquid senior FRNs. The remainder of the portfolio is directed to the managed with TCorp, the introduction of fixed bonds with Northern Territory, as well as cash accounts.

Senior FRNs are now becoming more attractive as spreads have widened in recent months – new issuances should now be considered again on a case by case scenario. In the interim, fixed deposits for 12 months to 3 years appear quite appealing following the spike in medium-to longer-term yields in recent months. With recessionary fears being priced in coming years, those investors that can allocate longer-term surplus funds may take an insurance policy by investing across 3-5 year fixed deposits and locking in rates above 4% p.a.



CL22.361 - Attachment 1



Term to Maturity

All maturity limits (minimum and maximum) comply with the Investment Policy. Short-Medium Term (1-2 years) assets account for around 13% of the total investment portfolio, with capacity of ~\$110m remaining.

We recommend surplus funds be allocated to 1-3 year fixed rate term deposits in combination with any attractive new FRNs as they come to market (refer to respective sections below).

Compliant	Horizon	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Min. Limit (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	0 - 90 days	\$39,524,170	20.46%	0%	100%	\$153,672,168
✓	91 - 365 days	\$75,499,799	39.08%	0%	100%	\$117,696,539
✓	1 - 2 years	\$25,483,378	13.19%	0%	70%	\$109,754,059
✓	2 - 5 years	\$33,512,437	17.35%	0%	50%	\$63,085,732
✓	5 - 10 years	\$19,176,555	9.93%	0%	25%	\$29,122,530
		\$193,196,338	100.00%			



Individual Counterparty Limits

As at the end of July 2022, all counterparty exposures comply within the Policy limits, except for AMP Bank (BBB), which was marginally overweight by \$1.52m. This can be addressed by withdrawing from their cash accounts. We note the AMP 31 Day Notice Account is now a sub-optimal investment given the rise in deposit yields in recent months.

Capacity limits are also dependent on the movement in the cash balances. Overall, the portfolio is well diversified across the entire credit spectrum, including some exposure to the regional bank (lower rated) ADIs.

Compliant	Issuer	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	ANZ	AA-	\$3,503,635	1.81%	100.00%	\$189,692,703
✓	CBA	AA-	\$52,987,187	27.43%	100.00%	\$140,209,151
✓	NAB	AA-	\$39,950,323	20.68%	100.00%	\$153,246,015
✓	Northern Terr.	AA-	\$5,000,000	2.59%	100.00%	\$188,196,338
✓	NSW (SIRA)	AA+	\$3,077,000	1.59%	100.00%	\$190,119,338
✓	Westpac	AA-	\$18,003,348	9.32%	100.00%	\$175,192,990
✓	Citibank	A+	\$999,764	0.52%	100.00%	\$192,196,574
✓	Macquarie	A+	\$6,912,885	3.58%	100.00%	\$186,283,453
✓	Rabobank	A+	\$7,976,448	4.13%	100.00%	\$185,219,890
✓	Suncorp	A+	\$4,709,698	2.44%	100.00%	\$188,486,641
✓	Bank of China	A	\$2,483,378	1.29%	100.00%	\$190,712,960
✓	ING Bank	A	\$2,000,000	1.04%	100.00%	\$191,196,338
✓	BoQ	BBB+	\$5,000,000	2.59%	10.00%	\$14,319,634
✓	Bendigo	BBB+	\$1,643,597	0.85%	10.00%	\$17,676,037
X	AMP Bank	BBB	\$11,179,236	5.79%	5.00%	-\$1,519,419
✓	Auswide Bank	BBB	\$1,499,799	0.78%	5.00%	\$8,160,018
✓	MyState Bank	BBB	\$3,000,000	1.55%	5.00%	\$6,659,817
✓	Newcastle PBS	BBB	\$2,093,486	1.08%	5.00%	\$7,566,331
✓	P&N Bank	BBB	\$2,000,000	1.04%	5.00%	\$7,659,817
✓	NSW TCorp LTG	Unrated	\$19,176,555	9.93%	100.00%	\$174,019,784
			\$193,196,338	100.00%		

In late June 2022, Standard & Poor's downgraded Suncorp-Metway from AA- to A+ (negative watch). Suncorp recently announced that it is undertaking a strategic review of its banking operations. The downgrade reflects S&P's view that the Suncorp Group's likelihood of support for the bank had "slightly" diminished and that it was no longer a core part of the Group. In July 2022, ANZ (AA-) announced it was putting a bid to buy Suncorp's banking division for ~\$4bn. Should that takeover be formalised, Suncorp-Metway's (A+) current credit rating is likely to be upgraded to ANZ's (AA-).

We remain supportive of the regional and unrated ADI sector (and have been even throughout the GFC period). They continue to remain solid, incorporate strong balance sheets, while exhibiting high

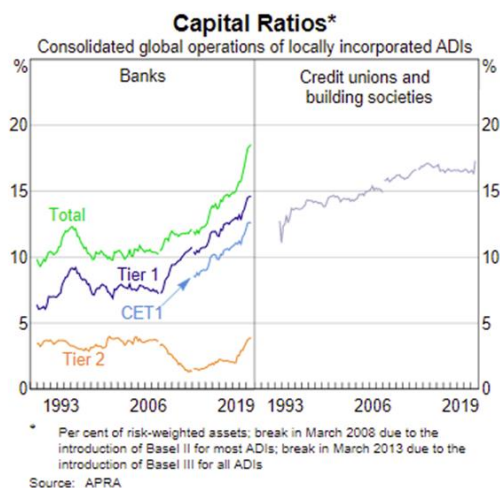


levels of capital – typically, much higher compared to the higher rated ADIs. Some unrated ADIs have up to 25-40% more capital than the domestic major banks, and well above the Basel III requirements.

APRA's Chairman affirmed that the banks had satisfactorily moved towards an 'unquestionably strong' capital position and that bank's stress testing contingency plans were now far better positioned than was previously the case years ago. **RBA Governor Lowe has commented that they have not seen any signs of stress in the financial system and that unlike during the GFC, the banks now have cash, are well capitalised and are acting as "shock absorbers" during the pandemic.**

Overall, the lower rated ADIs (BBB and unrated) are generally now in a better financial position than they have been historically (see the Capital Ratio figure below). We believe that deposit investments with the lower rated ADIs should be continued going forward, particularly when they offer 'above market' specials. Not only would it diversify the investment portfolio and reduce credit risk, it would also improve the portfolio's overall returns. The lower rated entities are generally deemed to be the more 'ethical' ADIs compared to the higher rated ADIs.

In the current environment of high regulation and scrutiny, all domestic ADIs continue to carry high levels of capital, particularly amongst the lower ("BBB") and unrated ADIs. There is minimal (if any) probability of any ADI defaulting on their deposits going forward – this was stress tested during the GFC. **APRA's mandate is to "protect depositors" and provide "financial stability".**





Overall Credit Quality Limits

The portfolio is well diversified from a credit ratings perspective. The portfolio is predominately invested amongst the investment grade ADIs (BBB- or higher). The allocation to the Unrated category reflects the investment in the TCorp Long-Term Growth Fund.

Pre-pandemic (March 2020), a 'normal' marketplace meant the lower rated ADIs (i.e. BBB category) were offering higher rates on term deposits compared to the higher rated ADIs (i.e. A or AA rated). But due to the cheap funding available provided by the RBA via their Term Funding Facility (TFF) since mid-2020¹, allowing the ADIs to borrow as low as 0.10% p.a. fixed for 3 years, those lower rated ADIs (BBB rated) did not require deposit funding from the wholesale deposit from the likes of Council. Given the higher rated banks had more capacity to lend (as they have a greater pool of mortgage borrowers), they subsequently were offering higher deposit rates. In fact, some of the lower rated banks were not even offering deposit rates at all. As a result, most investors placed a higher proportion of their deposit investments with the higher rated (A or AA) ADIs over the past two years.

Going forward, with the RBA now removing these cheap borrowing facilities, this has meant the lower rated banks (BBB rated) have started to become more competitive as the market starts to 'normalise'. Investors should have a larger opportunity to start investing a higher proportion of their surplus funds with the lower rated institutions (within Policy limits), from which the majority are considered to be the more 'ethical' ADIs as they generally do not lend to the Fossil Fuel industry.

All ratings categories are within the Policy limits:

Compliant	Credit Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	AAA Category	\$0	0%	100%	\$193,196,338
✓	AA Category	\$122,521,493	63%	100%	\$70,674,845
✓	A+ to A Category	\$25,082,173	13%	100%	\$168,114,165
✓	A- Category	\$0	0%	40%	\$77,278,535
✓	BBB+ to BBB Category	\$26,416,118	14%	30%	\$31,542,784
✓	BBB- & NR Category	\$0	0%	5%	\$9,659,817
✓	NSW TCorp LTGF	\$19,176,555	10%	100%	\$174,019,784
		\$193,196,338	100.00%		

¹ The RBA's Term Funding Facility (TFF) allowed the ADI to borrow as low as 0.10% fixed for 3 years: <https://www.rba.gov.au/mkt-operations/term-funding-facility/overview.html>



Performance

Council's performance for the month ending July 2022 (excluding cash) is summarised as follows:

Performance (Actual)	1 month	3 months	6 months	FYTD	1 year
Official Cash Rate	0.11%	0.21%	0.24%	0.11%	0.29%
AusBond Bank Bill Index	0.12%	0.21%	0.20%	0.12%	0.22%
T/D Portfolio	0.10%	0.25%	0.49%	0.10%	1.08%
FRT/D Portfolio	0.21%	0.62%	1.22%	0.21%	2.45%
FRN Portfolio	0.25%	0.63%	1.17%	0.25%	2.22%
Bond Portfolio	0.09%	0.27%	0.54%	0.09%	-
Council's Fixed Interest[^]	0.14%	0.37%	0.69%	0.14%	1.39%
TCorp LTGF	3.67%	-2.39%	-6.62%	3.67%	-6.21%
TCorp LTGF Internal Benchmark	3.62%	-1.29%	-5.36%	3.62%	-5.04%
TCorp Long-Term Target ^{^^}	0.50%	1.48%	2.93%	0.50%	6.00%
Council's Total Portfolio	0.53%	0.16%	-0.10%	0.53%	0.45%
Performance (to Bank Bills)	0.41%	-0.05%	-0.30%	0.41%	0.23%

[^]Council's Fixed Interest portfolio returns excludes Council's cash account holdings.

^{^^}TCorp has a target of 3.5% above inflation of ~2.5%. The long-term target is therefore 6% p.a. on an ongoing basis.

Performance (Annualised)	1 month	3 months	6 months	FYTD	1 year
Official Cash Rate	1.35%	0.85%	0.48%	1.35%	0.29%
AusBond Bank Bill Index	1.45%	0.83%	0.40%	1.45%	0.22%
T/D Portfolio	1.17%	1.01%	0.99%	1.17%	1.08%
FRT/D Portfolio	2.53%	2.48%	2.47%	2.53%	2.45%
FRN Portfolio	3.02%	2.51%	2.38%	3.02%	2.22%
Bond Portfolio	1.11%	1.09%	1.09%	1.11%	-
Council's Fixed Interest[^]	1.70%	1.46%	1.40%	1.70%	1.39%
TCorp LTGF	52.87%	-9.16%	-12.90%	52.87%	-6.21%
TCorp LTGF Internal Benchmark	52.00%	-5.04%	-10.52%	52.00%	-5.04%
TCorp Long-Term Target ^{^^}	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%
Council's Total Portfolio	6.41%	0.63%	-0.20%	6.41%	0.45%
Performance (to Bank Bills)	4.96%	-0.19%	-0.61%	4.96%	0.23%

[^]Council's Fixed Interest portfolio returns excludes Council's cash account holdings.

^{^^}TCorp has a target of 3.5% above inflation of ~2.5%. The long-term target is therefore 6% p.a. on an ongoing basis.

For the month of July, the total portfolio (excluding cash) provided a return of +0.53% (actual) or +6.41% p.a. (annualised), outperforming the benchmark AusBond Bank Bill Index return of +0.12% (actual) or +1.45% p.a. (annualised). Over the past year, the portfolio returned a positive return of +0.45% p.a., outperforming bank bills by 0.23% p.a.



The strong performance continues to be driven by the handful of deposits that were originally placed for terms greater than 12 months. Going forward, with additional rate hikes over coming months, Council's interest income can be increased significantly by undertaking a slightly longer duration position (12-24 months), with rates on offer along this part of the curve likely to be offered at nearly double the rate compared to shorter tenors. However, the volatility of the TCorp Long-Term Growth Fund will also greatly impact returns on any month.

The T-CorpIM Growth Fund was a major contributor to outperformance this month, with the Fund returning +3.67% (net actual) as shares rebounded strongly. Despite the volatility in the Fund over the past few years, the Growth Fund has performed well over longer-term time periods.



NSW T-CorpIM Growth Fund

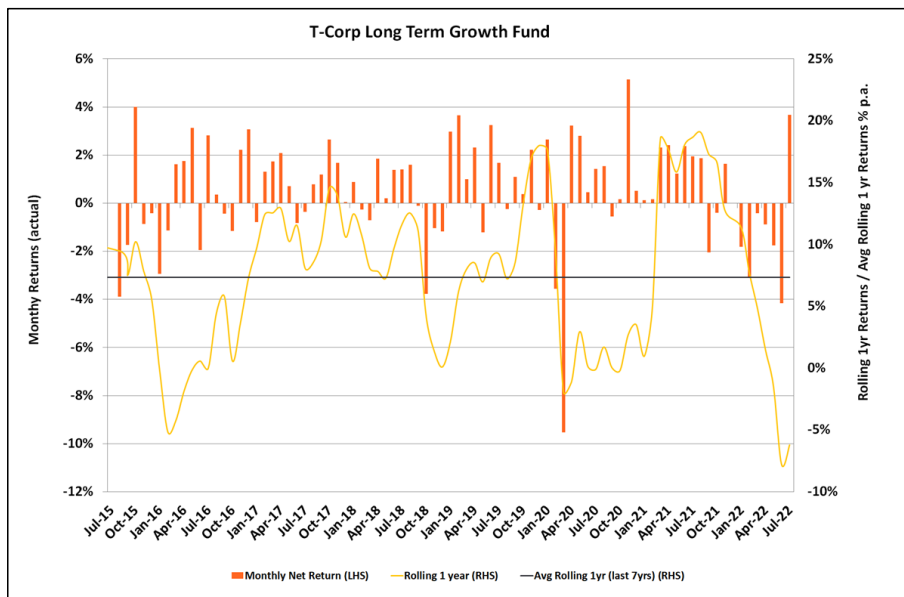
The Growth Fund returned +3.67% (actual) for the month of July. The gains this month were led by the rebound in domestic and global shares (S&P ASX 200 Accumulation Index rose +5.75% while the MSCI World ex-Australia Index gained +7.89%), as well as fixed bonds (AusBond Composite Bond Index rose +3.36%).

The global economy has entered a stagflationary environment, where inflation remains well-above target but growth slows significantly. Recession over the next few years is a risk, but not a certainty as we have experienced twin supply-shocks to the global economy and central bankers have the potential to deliver policy overtightening with aggressive rate hikes. Central banks are attempting to solve inflation problems, which are largely a result of supply chain issues, by restricting demand, yet these demand management tools will not directly impact the source of the inflation problem. Rate hikes will weaken demand and the prospect is that a sharp downshift in demand will be needed to match reduced supply levels so as to lower inflation.

Overall, we remain cautious on the future performance of the T-Corp Growth Fund given the high volatility associated with a diversified growth fund, which generally allocates a range of 60%-80% in domestic and international shares. Investors are bracing for central banks to raise official rates more aggressively than previously anticipated to combat inflation driven by supply-chain bottlenecks, a global energy crunch and ongoing geopolitical risks.

The Fund should be looked at with a long-term view, with a minimum holding period of +7 years. Given the exposure to the volatile asset of shares, Council should expect to see, on average, a negative month once every 3 months over a long-term holding period.

Since Inception	T-Corp Long Term Fund
Negative Months	135 (~1 in 3 months)
Positive Months	262
Total Months	397 (33.1 yrs)
Average Monthly Return	+0.64% (actual)
Median Monthly Return	+1.02% (actual)
Lowest 1 year Rolling Return	-21.12% p.a. (Nov 2008)
Highest 1 year Rolling Return	+29.89% p.a. (Jan 1994)



CL22.361 - Attachment 1



Council's Term Deposit Portfolio & Recommendation

As at the end of July 2022, Council's deposit portfolio was yielding 1.35% p.a. (up 23bp from the previous month), with a weighted average duration of ~248 days (8 months).

Where possible, we recommend Council extends this average duration closer to 12-18 months. With an upward sloping deposit curve, investors are rewarded if they can continue to maintain a longer average duration. As the past decade or so has highlighted (post-GFC era), we have seen too many portfolios overpay for liquidity and generally not insured themselves by diversify their funding across various tenors.

At the time of writing, we see value in:

ADI	LT Credit Rating	Term	T/D Rate
BoQ/ME Bank	BBB+	5 years	4.50% p.a.
BoQ/ME Bank	BBB+	4 years	4.40% p.a.
BoQ/ME Bank	BBB+	3 years	4.10% p.a.
ICBC, Sydney	A	3 years	4.10% p.a.
ICBC, Sydney	A	2 years	4.00% p.a.
BoQ/ME Bank	BBB+	2 years	4.00% p.a.
Westpac	AA-	2 years	3.79% p.a.
CBA	AA-	2 years	3.76% p.a.
Bendigo-Adelaide	BBB+	2 years	3.70% p.a.
NAB	AA-	2 years	3.65% p.a.

The above deposits are suitable for investors looking to maintain diversification and lock-in a premium compared to purely investing short-term.



For terms under 12 months, we believe the strongest value is currently being offered by the following ADIs (dependent on daily funding requirements):

ADI	LT Credit Rating	Term	T/D Rate
BoQ/ME Bank	BBB+	12 months	3.80% p.a.
CBA	AA-	12 months	3.78% p.a.
Westpac	AA-	12 months	3.75% p.a.
Suncorp	A+	12 months	3.71% p.a.
NAB	AA-	12 months	3.70% p.a.
Bendigo	BBB+	12 months	3.70% p.a.
Suncorp	A+	6 months	3.34% p.a.

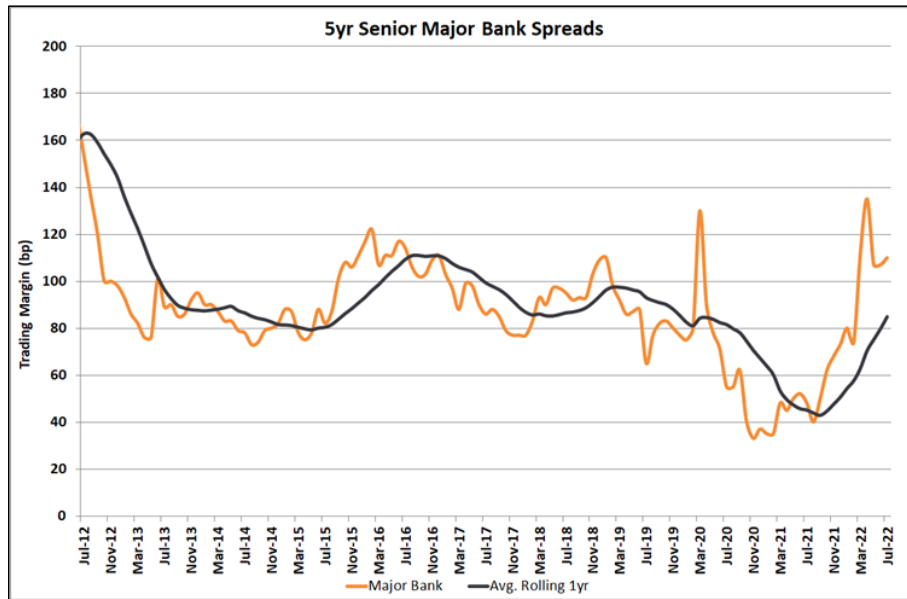
If Council does not require high levels of liquidity and can stagger its investments longer-term, it will be rewarded over coming years if rolls for an average min. term of 18 months to 2 years (this is where we current value), yielding, on average, up to ½%-1% p.a. higher compared to those investors that entirely invest in short-dated deposits.

With recessionary fears being priced in coming years, Council may take an insurance policy by investing across 3-5 year fixed deposits and locking in rates above 4% p.a. (small allocation only).



Senior FRNs Review

Over July, amongst the senior major bank FRNs, physical credit securities remained relatively flat at the long-end of the curve. Major bank senior securities are now looking fairly attractive again in a rising rate environment (5 year margins around the +105-110bp level):



Source: IBS Capital

There was slightly less activity in the primary market during July, with only a few noticeable 3-year AAA rated covered securities issued by RBC and CIBC. Amongst the lower rated sector, the “BBB” rated ADIs were marked around 20bp wider at the 3 year part of the curve. There was minimal movement in the “A” rated category.

Credit securities are looking much more attractive given the widening of spreads in 2022. FRNs will continue to play a role in investor’s portfolios mainly on the basis of their liquidity and the ability to roll down the curve and gross up returns over ensuing years (in a relatively stable credit environment).



Senior FRNs (ADIs)	31/07/2022	30/06/2022
"AA" rated – 5yrs	+110bp	+107bp
"AA" rated – 3yrs	+88bp	+90bp
"A" rated – 5yrs	+125bp	+125bp
"A" rated – 3yrs	+100bp	+100bp
"BBB" rated – 3yrs	+130bp	+110bp

Source: IBS Capital

We now generally recommend switches ('benchmark' issues only) into new primary issues, out of the following senior FRNs that are maturing:

- **On or before mid-2024 for the "AA" rated ADIs (domestic major banks);**
- On or before mid-2023 for the "A" rated ADIs; and
- Within 6-9 months for the "BBB" rated ADIs (consider case by case).

Investors holding onto the above senior FRNs ('benchmark' issues only) in their last few years are now generally holding sub-optimal investments and are not maximising returns by foregoing realised capital gains. In the current low interest rate environment, any boost in overall returns should be locked in when it is advantageous to do so, particularly as switch opportunities become available.

Primary (new) FRNs are now looking more appealing and should be considered on a case by case scenario.



Council's FRN Portfolio – Sale/Switch Recommendations

During the month, Council sold out of the following FRNs as they were yielding less than 3% p.a.:

Issuer	Rating	Maturity Date	ISIN	Face Value	Trading Margin	Capital Price (\$)	Unrealised Gain (\$)
WBC	AA-	6/03/2023	AU3FN0040994	\$2,000,000	+48.0bp	\$100.152	\$3,040
Great South.	BBB	21/02/2023	AU3FN0052924	\$1,000,000	+67.0bp	\$100.085	\$935
NAB	AA-	26/02/2024	AU3FN0046777	\$2,300,000	+68.0bp	\$100.502	\$11,546
NAB	AA-	19/06/2024	AU3FN0048724	\$2,000,000	+72.0bp	\$100.361	\$7,220

Council realised capital gains of \$22,741. Council is in a position to reinvest proceeds into higher yielding complying assets closer to 3½ - 4% p.a. if placing for terms of +12 months.

We recommend that Council retain its remaining FRNs at this stage. We will continue to monitor them individual and advise when it is appropriate to undertake a similar strategy to boost overall returns.

Council's Senior Fixed Bonds

In September 2020, Council has invested into the following NTTC (AA-) fixed bonds:

Investment Date	Maturity Date	Principal	Rate % p.a.	Interest Paid
15/09/2021	15/12/2024	\$3,000,000	1.00%	Annually
15/09/2021	15/12/2025	\$2,000,000	1.10%	Annually
Totals / Wgt. Avg.		\$5,000,000	1.04%	

We believe this was prudent given the low rate environment and particularly after the RBA's easing decision in early November 2020 and forward guidance towards official interest rates (no rate rises "until at least 2024").

The NTTC bonds are a 'retail' offering and not 'wholesale' issuances. Given the lack of liquidity and high penalty costs if they were to be sold/redeemed prior to the maturity date, they are considered to be a hold-to-maturity investment and will be marked at par value (\$100.00) throughout the term of investment.



Senior Fixed Bonds – ADIs (Secondary Market)

As global inflationary pressures have escalated, this has seen a significant lift in longer-term bond yields (valuations fell) as markets have strongly factored in a tightening of global central bank policy measures (i.e. withdrawal of Quantitative Easing and lifting official interest rates).

This has resulted in some opportunities in the secondary market. We currently see value in the following fixed bond lines, with the majority now being marked at a significant discount to par (please note supply in the secondary market may be limited on any day):

ISIN	Issuer	Rating	Capital Structure	Maturity Date	~Remain. Term (yrs)	Fixed Coupon	Indicative Yield
AU3CB0255776	ING	AAA	Covered	07/09/2023	1.11	3.00%	3.55%
AU3CB0258465	Westpac	AA-	Senior	16/11/2023	1.30	3.25%	3.56%
AU3CB0265403	Suncorp	AA-	Senior	30/07/2024	2.00	1.85%	3.91%
AU3CB0265593	Macquarie	A+	Senior	07/08/2024	2.03	1.75%	3.88%
AU3CB0265718	ING	AAA	Covered	20/08/2024	2.06	1.45%	3.80%
AU3CB0266179	ANZ	AA-	Senior	29/08/2024	2.09	1.55%	3.65%
AU3CB0266377	Bendigo	BBB+	Senior	06/09/2024	2.11	1.70%	3.90%
AU3CB0268027	BoQ	BBB+	Senior	30/10/2024	2.26	2.00%	4.03%
AU3CB0269710	ANZ	AA-	Senior	16/01/2025	2.47	1.65%	3.71%
AU3CB0269892	NAB	AA-	Senior	21/01/2025	2.50	1.65%	3.72%
AU3CB0270387	Macquarie	A+	Senior	12/02/2025	2.54	1.70%	4.03%
AU3CB0287415	Westpac	AA-	Senior	17/03/2025	2.63	2.70%	3.72%
AU3CB0280030	BoQ	BBB+	Senior	06/05/2026	3.77	1.40%	4.35%
AU3CB0282358	ING	AAA	Covered	19/08/2026	4.06	1.10%	4.06%
AU3CB0284149	BoQ	BBB+	Senior	27/10/2026	4.25	2.10%	4.40%
AU3CB0286037	Westpac	AA-	Senior	25/01/2027	4.49	2.40%	3.92%



Economic Commentary

International Market

Risk assets rebounded in July after steep losses during the first half of the calendar year. In the US, the S&P 500 Index gained +9.11%, while the NASDAQ surged +12.35%. Europe's main indices also gained strongly, led by France's CAC (+8.87%), Germany's DAX (+5.47%), and UK's FTSE (+3.54%).

The US Fed hiked by 75bp, taking the target range to 2.25%-2.50%. Guidance remained unchanged that ongoing increases in the target will be appropriate, although the commentary was evidently less hawkish than feared. US Q2 GDP contracted by -0.9%, prompting some hope that the Fed may move towards a less aggressive rate path.

US CPI printed at +9.1% y/y from +8.8% y/y. Core CPI also exceeded expectations with a +0.7% monthly rise, reducing the annual rate by just +0.1% to +5.9%.

The US unemployment rate printed at 3.6% for the fourth consecutive month, its post-pandemic low.

The Bank of Canada was the first advanced economy central bank to opt for a full 100bp rate hike, to 2.50%, against 75bp generally expected.

The RBNZ offered up a "no surprises" Monetary Policy Review, delivering another 50bp hike to 2.50% and indicating comfort with its projections in the May Statement which showed the official rate heading to about 4%, well above its neutral setting.

Eurozone inflation printed a record +8.6%y/y in June vs estimate for an +8.5% outcome. The core reading eased to +3.7%y/y from +3.8%, and against expectations for a rise to +3.9%.

The European Central Bank (ECB) hiked rates by a more-than-expected at 50bp (only 50% chance of a 50bp hike was priced into the meeting), taking the deposit rate back to 0%, and ending its negative interest rate policy that has been in place since 2014.

UK headline inflation continued to rise, hitting +9.4% in June, slightly higher than expected. The Bank of England expects headline inflation to reach 11% later this year after energy companies increase prices.

China's June CPI came in +2.5% y/y from +2.1% (and +2.4% expected). The annual rise in PPI slipped to +6.1% from +6.4%. China's zero covid policy is taking much needed momentum out of the economy. Q2 GDP fell -2.6% (-2% expected) with the annual growth rate slipping to just +0.4% y/y. The government's +5.5% annual growth target is now widely considered to be out of reach.

The MSCI World ex-Aus Index rose +7.89% for the month of July:

Index	1m	3m	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr
S&P 500 Index	+9.11%	-0.04%	-6.03%	+11.49%	+10.83%	+11.59%
MSCI World ex-AUS	+7.89%	-1.62%	-10.54%	+8.04%	+7.12%	+8.41%
S&P ASX 200 Accum. Index	+5.75%	-6.04%	-2.17%	+4.27%	+8.03%	+9.44%

Source: S&P, MSCI



Domestic Market

As expected, the RBA hiked the cash rate target by 50bp to 1.35% in its meeting in July, its highest level since May 2019. There was little change to the concluding paragraph *“the Board expects to take further steps in the process of normalising monetary conditions in Australia over the months ahead”*.

The Board’s Statement overall was slightly less hawkish than what markets had thought. Medium-term inflation expectations was depicted as being *“well anchored”*. This suggests the RBA does not see itself as needing to race into restrictive territory as the market is currently pricing and the RBA is likely to slow the pace of hikes as it approaches neutral, which it pegs around 2.50%.

The minutes to the RBA’s July policy meeting and RBA Deputy Governor Bullock’s speech during the month was also seen as hawkish. Governor Lowe still thinks the nominal neutral interest rate is at least 2.50%, although the Board has hinted it may need to go above neutral to control inflation.

Headline CPI came in at +1.8% q/q and +6.1% y/y. The more closely watched core trimmed mean measure rose +1.5% q/q, which was exactly in line with consensus. There was an upward revision to the past quarter helping push the core annual rate to +4.9% y/y.

The labour market has tightened more quickly than the RBA had been expecting with the unemployment rate plummeting by 0.4% to 3.5% in June (from 3.9%), a 48 year low. The decline was driven by a sharp rise in employment of +88k, smashing expectations for a +30k gain.

The participation rate rose 0.1% to 66.8% to a new record high and building on the sharp increase last month. Participation is now 0.9% above pre-pandemic levels. The underemployment rate rose 0.3% to 6.1%.

Treasurer Chalmers and RBA Governor Lowe backed Australia’s 2-3% flexible inflation target as the review into the RBA gets underway.

The trade surplus came in at \$16bn in May, driven by a surge in coal (+20% m/m) and LNG (+12% m/m) export volumes.

The Australian dollar rose +1.71%, finishing the month at US70.07 cents (from US68.89 cents the previous month).

Credit Market

The global credit indices tightened over the month as risk markets parred back some of their recent losses. They are back to their levels experienced during the start of the pandemic (Q1 2020):

Index	July 2022	June 2022
CDX North American 5yr CDS	83bp	101bp
iTraxx Europe 5yr CDS	110bp	119bp
iTraxx Australia 5yr CDS	123bp	130bp

Source: Markit



Fixed Interest Review

Benchmark Index Returns

Index	July 2022	June 2022
Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index (0+YR)	+0.14%	+0.05%
Bloomberg AusBond Composite Bond Index (0+YR)	+3.36%	-1.48%
Bloomberg AusBond Credit FRN Index (0+YR)	+0.24%	+0.05%
Bloomberg AusBond Credit Index (0+YR)	+2.40%	-1.34%
Bloomberg AusBond Treasury Index (0+YR)	+3.55%	-1.32%
Bloomberg AusBond Inflation Gov't Index (0+YR)	+4.75%	-2.23%

Source: Bloomberg

Other Key Rates

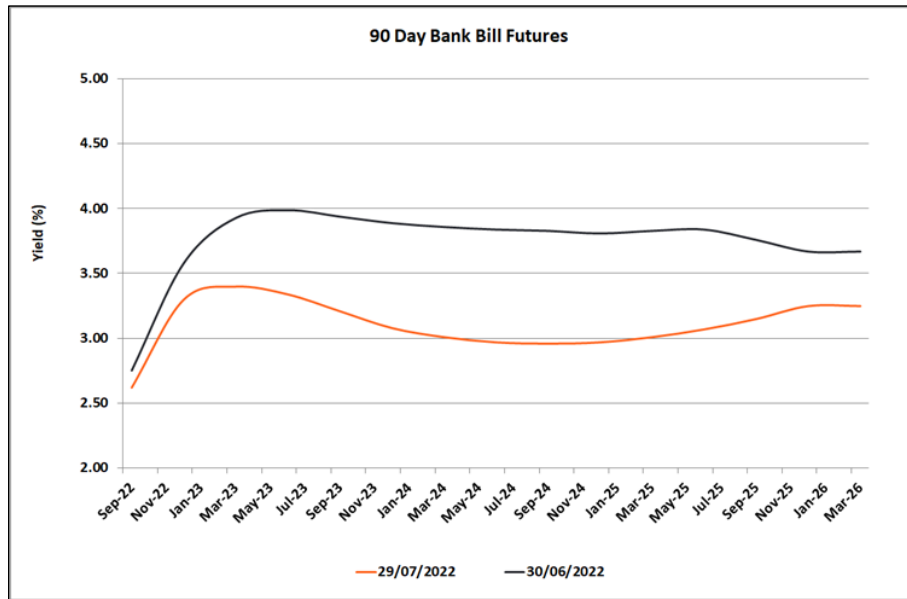
Index	July 2022	June 2022
RBA Official Cash Rate	1.35%	0.85%
90 Day (3 month) BBSW Rate	2.12%	1.81%
3yr Australian Government Bonds	2.70%	3.16%
10yr Australian Government Bonds	3.05%	3.66%
US Fed Funds Rate	2.25%-2.50%	1.50%-1.75%
3yr US Treasury Bonds	2.83%	2.99%
10yr US Treasury Bonds	2.67%	2.98%

Source: RBA, AFMA, US Department of Treasury



90 Day Bill Futures

Over July, bill futures fell sharply at the long-end of the curve as the market factors in a higher probability of a global recession over the next few years, highlighted by the drop in the futures pricing in 2023-2024:



Source: ASX



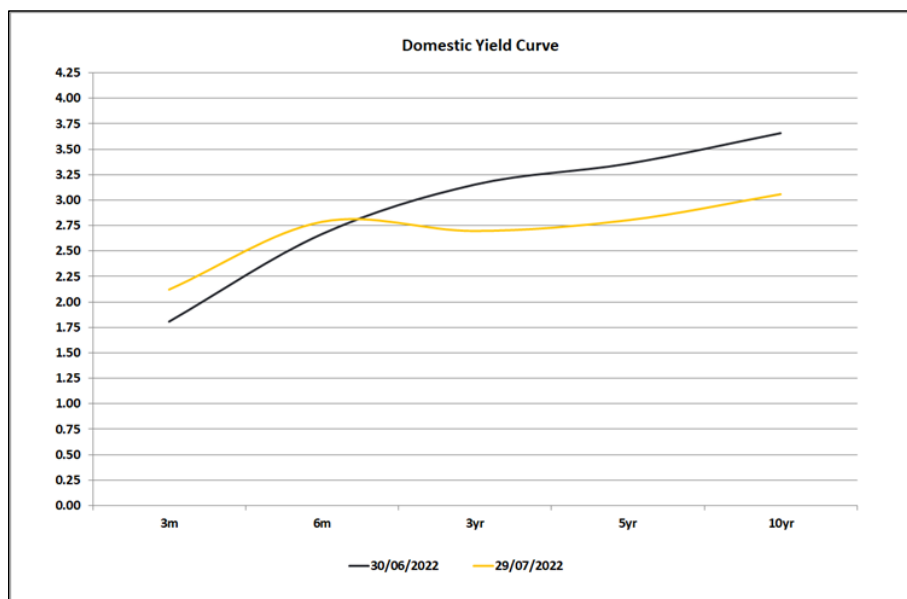
Fixed Interest Outlook

After the US Fed hiked rates by 75bp in July, the accompanying statement gave the impression of less urgency in future rate rises, noting that *“indicators of spending and production have softened”* and a prior reference to supply disruptions from China lockdowns was removed. US Fed Chair Powell said further moves will depend be data dependent. With the target rate now back at neutral, slowing of rate hikes would become appropriate, although the June *‘dot plots’* were still a valid guide.

Domestically, the latest headline CPI came in at +1.8% q/q and +6.1% y/y. The more closely watched core trimmed mean measure rose +1.5% q/q which was exactly in line with consensus. There was an upward revision to the past quarter helping push the core annual rate to +4.9%. This should keep the pressure on the RBA to continue to move quickly towards a more neutral setting of policy. The market reaction suggested markets are braced for an upside surprise.

The RBA states *“we do need to chart a credible path back to 2-3%. We are seeking to do this in a way in which the economy continues to grow and unemployment remains low”*. That suggests the RBA is still prioritising a soft landing as long as inflation expectations remain anchored as they currently are.

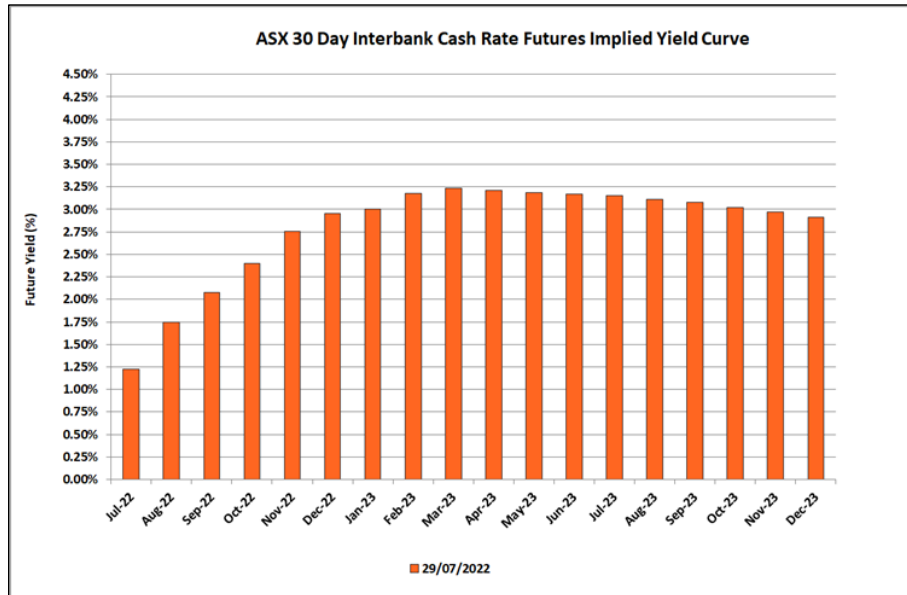
The domestic bond market continues to suggest a prolonged low period of interest rates on a historical basis (10-year government bond yields still just over 3%). Over the month, yields fell around 60bp at the long-end of the curve:



Source: AFMA, ASX, RBA



Markets are currently pricing in around 8 additional rate rises over the next year (up to 3¼%), against the RBA's neutral setting of 2½%. Fears of a looming global recession have actually seen rate cuts start to be priced in towards the second half of 2023:



Source: ASX

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PROPOSED DIVERSION CHANNEL

1221 BOLONG ROAD, COOLANGATTA

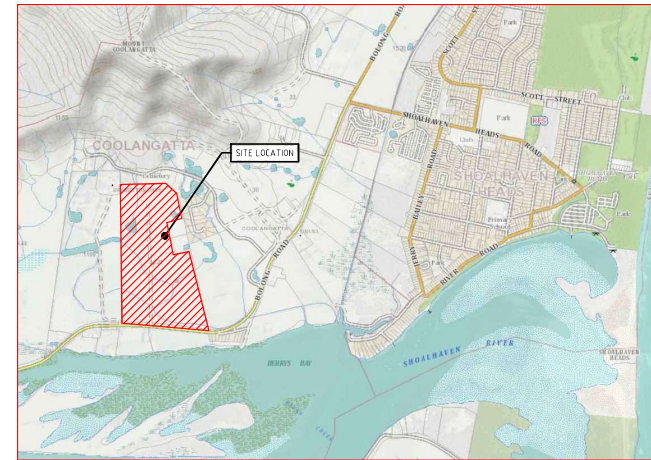
NSW, 2535

FOR CC APPROVAL

DRAWING SCHEDULE

DRG. No. DRAWING TITLE

C000	TITLE SHEET, DRAWING SCHEDULE & LOCALITY PLAN
C001	CONSTRUCTION NOTES
C100	SITE PLAN
C101	CATCHMENT PLAN
C200	DETAIL PLAN OF PROPOSED DIVERSION CHANNEL
C300	DIVERSION CHANNEL LONGITUDINAL SECTION
C400	DIVERSION CHANNEL CROSS SECTIONS
C500	DIVERSION CHANNEL TYPICAL SECTIONS & DETAILS- SHEET 1 OF 2
C501	DIVERSION CHANNEL TYPICAL SECTIONS & DETAILS- SHEET 2 OF 2
C600	DIVERSION CHANNEL CUT/FILL PLAN
C700	SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN
C701	SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN STANDARD DRAWINGS (SHEET 1 OF 3)
C702	SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN STANDARD DRAWINGS (SHEET 2 OF 3)
C703	SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN STANDARD DRAWINGS (SHEET 3 OF 3)



LOCALITY PLAN

NOT TO SCALE



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						DRAWN BY S.C.A.					
						FINAL APPROVAL					
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							CC				
B0	15/12/21	J.A.	S.B.	B.J.	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION						
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CL22.370 - Attachment 1

GENERAL

- G1 All Development Consent Conditions are to be fully complied with throughout the completion of the project.
- G2 All work to be in accordance Council's Design and Construction Specifications.
- G3 Inspections by Council's Development Control Engineers are to be undertaken at critical stages when directed and where required by the Design Code. Generally a minimum of 48 hours notice is required for inspections, however this may vary for certain inspections.
- G4 No work to be carried out on Council property or private property without the written permission of the owner. A copy of the written permission is to be sent to Council for its records.
- G5 All rubbish, buildings, sheds, undergrowth, and fences are to be removed from the site and road reserves to the satisfaction of Council's Development Control Engineer
- G6 All trees to be removed shall be clearly marked on site and inspected by Council staff prior to removal as required by the consent conditions.
- G7 Where excavation is required adjacent to trees, all roots shall be clean cut and treated by a qualified arborist. Certification by the arborist that works have been done in accordance with best practice will be required to be submitted to Council prior to issue of the Construction Certificate.
- G8 Make smooth connection to all existing engineering work.
- G9 All existing services to be located and levelled by the Contractor prior to the commencement of work.
- G10 All services affected by new work to be adjusted to suit in the field to the satisfaction of the relevant service authority.
- G11 The Contractor shall provide traffic control which complies with AS1742.3 – 2002. A copy of the plan showing layout of proposed traffic control for the commencement of work and certified by a suitably qualified person is to be submitted to Council prior to commencement of any work. Further plans are to be submitted if work site alters.
- G12 Any road restoration required shall be in 150mm layers of DGS 40 from the bottom of trench or top of sand overlay over any pipes, compacted to a minimum of 97% modified compaction with the final layer of 100mm of DGB 20 compacted to a minimum of 97% modified compaction and finished level with existing road surface.
- G13 The Contractor shall maintain and/or restore any damage which may have been caused by the construction of the subdivision to the road pavement, roadside drainage or underground facilities in Council Road's which give access to the subdivision.
- G14 All disturbed areas to be reinstated as nearly as possible to the pre-construction condition.
- G15 Contractor is to apply to Council for a 138 Consent, a minimum 7 days prior to commencing work.
- G16 All regrading, compaction of fill and batter slopes are to be certified by a qualified Geotechnical Consultant.

CONCRETE – Culvert Structures, etc

- C1 Workmanship and materials to conform with the requirements of AS3600, formwork to be in accordance with AS1509.
- C2 Concrete strength to be grade 20, AS3600 (20MPa) throughout unless noted otherwise.
- C3 Expansion joints shall be too finished in all pathways and dummy joints 10mm deep shall be struck at 1.2m intervals. Joint interval to vary with path width.
- C4 Joint filler / sealant to be 10 thick 'Bridgestone super sealant' type UV.
- C5 Crack control joints shall be too finished at 4m intervals between expansion joints, 20mm deep.
- C6 Placing: All concrete shall be mechanically vibrated, vibrators shall not be used to spread concrete.
- C7 Inspection: Concrete shall not be placed until the completed falsework, formwork and reinforcement fixing have been inspected and approved by the Council Engineer.

SERVICES

- SE1 Where existing drainage, sewerage and water services are to be relocated a plumber's permit & approval under section 68 of the Local Government Act is required from Council prior to commencement of work.
- SE2 Where existing gas, electricity and telecommunications services are to be relocated, approval and design is to be obtained from the relevant service provider prior to commencement of work.
- SE3 Upon completion of work, a 'Work as Executed Plan' is required.

STORMWATER

- S1 Kerb inlet pits and grating to conform to SCC Standard drawing 263702.
- S2 Junction pits to conform to SCC standard drawing 263706 and Engineers Specifications.
- S3 Headwalls to be constructed in accordance with SCC Standard drawing 263714 or can be precast type in accordance with manufacturers specifications.
- S4 Pipes to be rubber ring jointed on Type 'HS2' bedding which complies with AS3725 and Council's Development Control Plan for subdivisions.
- S5 Lintels to be located centrally on sag pits unless otherwise shown.
- S6 Provide step irons on all drainage pits deeper than 1.2m.
- S7 Backfill to all pipes in road reserve to comply with Development Control Plan Section D4.
- S8 All pipe joins in pits, headwalls and other drainage structures are to be mortared to prevent infiltration.
- S9 All pit grates are to be galvanised steel grid type. Heavy duty grates are to be used in areas where they may be subject to vehicle loading.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

- TC1 The contractors to provide traffic control measures at all times during construction in accordance with AS1742.3
- TC2 Contractor to satisfy council & RMS requirements with respect to working on public & arterial roads.

SURVEY REFERENCE DETAILS

All survey data supplied by Shoalhaven City Council.

VEGETATION

- RG1 All disturbed areas to be grassed (turfed or seeded) within 7 days of work being completed in that area.
- RG2 Channels to be top soiled to a minimum depth of 150mm including application of lime and fertilizer.
- RG4 All disturbed areas including cut/fill shall be spray grassed where turf cannot be laid.
- RG5 All drainage swales shall be turfed. The channel is at risk of erosion until vegetation is established. Turf may need to be staked to subgrade if heavy rainfall is expected prior to establishment.
- RG6 All topsoil stockpiles shall be grass seeded.

SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT

- SWMP1 All soil and water management control measures are to be installed and maintained in accordance with 'Managing Urban Stormwater, 4th Edition' produced by the NSW Department of Housing and in accordance with the accompanying Soil and Water Management Plans on Drawings C700 to C703.

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						DRAWN BY S.C.A.				
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										SUB-PR NO. P02
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										REV 00

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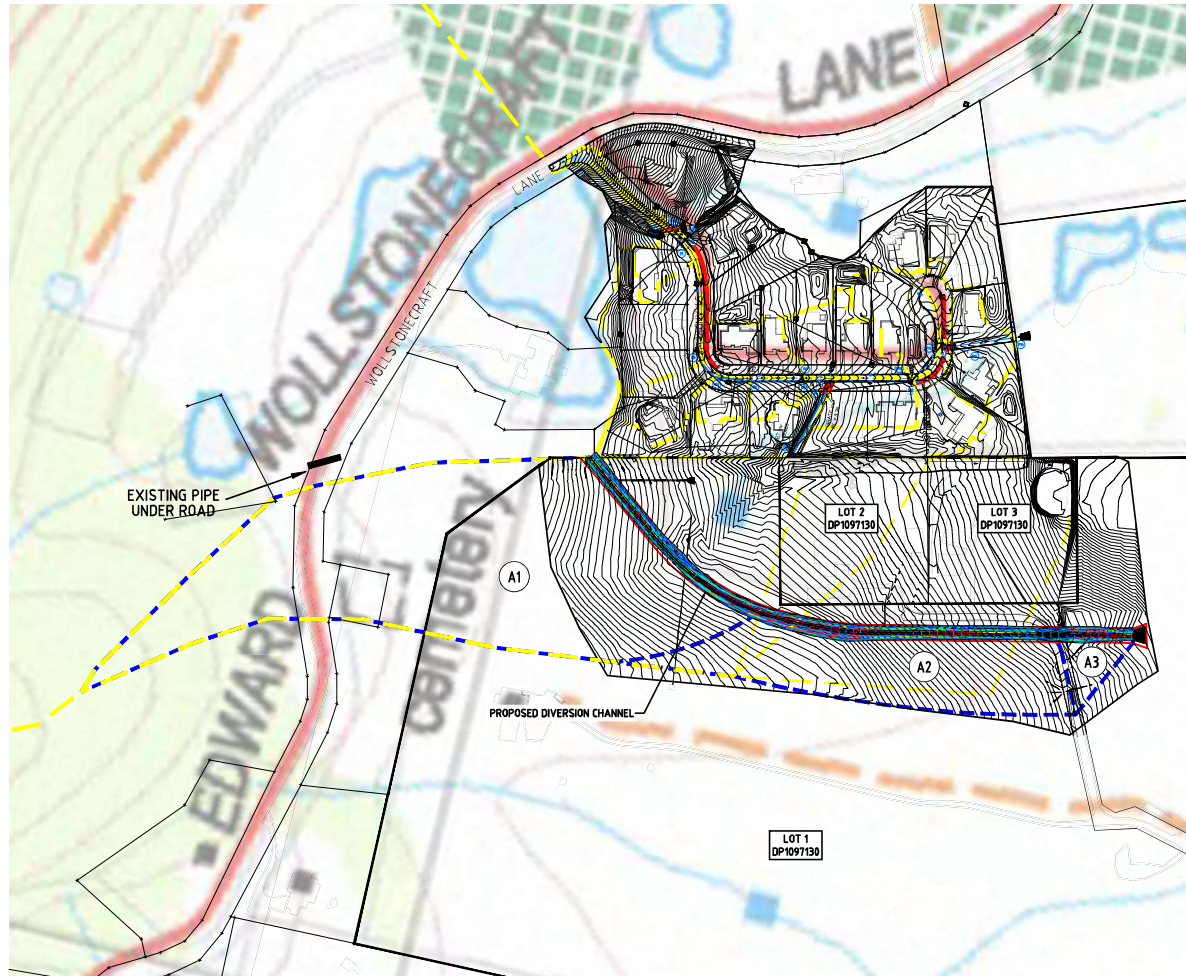
Sales 7 & 8, 68-70 Station Street
PO Box 1050, Surfers Paradise QLD 4217
(0) 62 4862 1623
(0) 62 4862 3388
email: reception@seec.com.au
WWW.SEEC.COM.AU

PROJECT NO.	SUB-PR NO.	DRAWING NO.	REV
12000298	P02	C100	00

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CATCHMENT AREAS	
A1	3.73 Ha
A2	1.24 Ha
A3	0.15 Ha

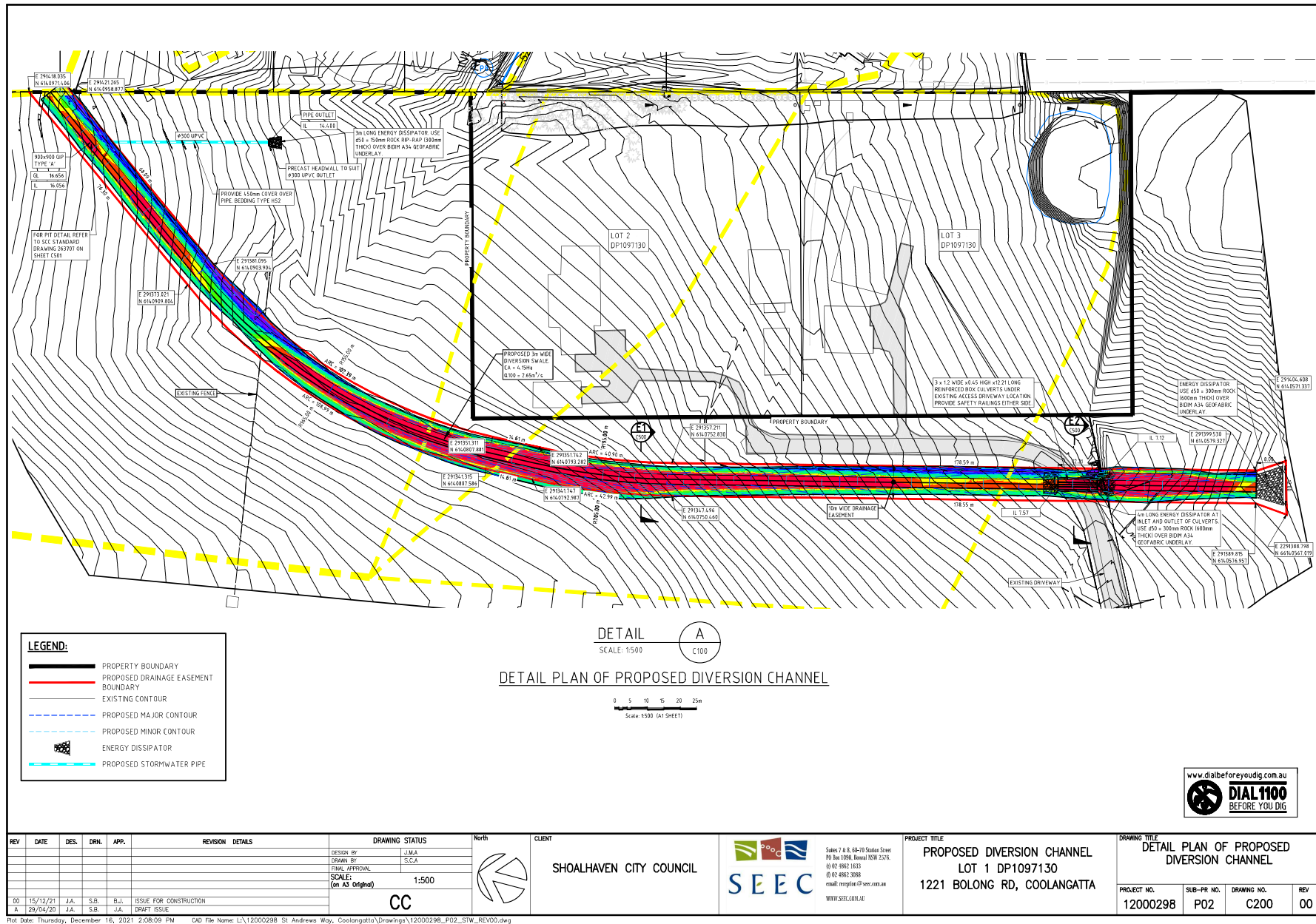
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	PROPERTY BOUNDARY
	CATCHMENT BOUNDARY

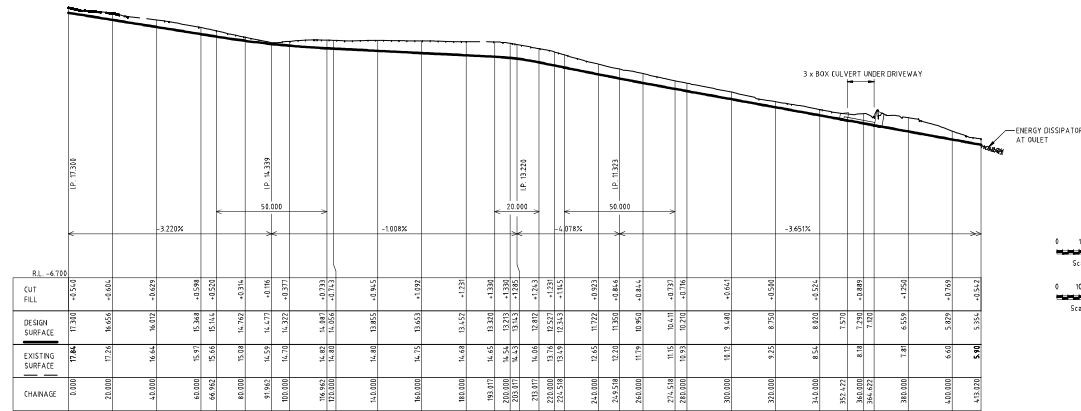


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						DRAWN BY S.C.A.						PROJECT NO. 12000298	SUB-PR NO. P02	DRAWING NO. C101	REV 00
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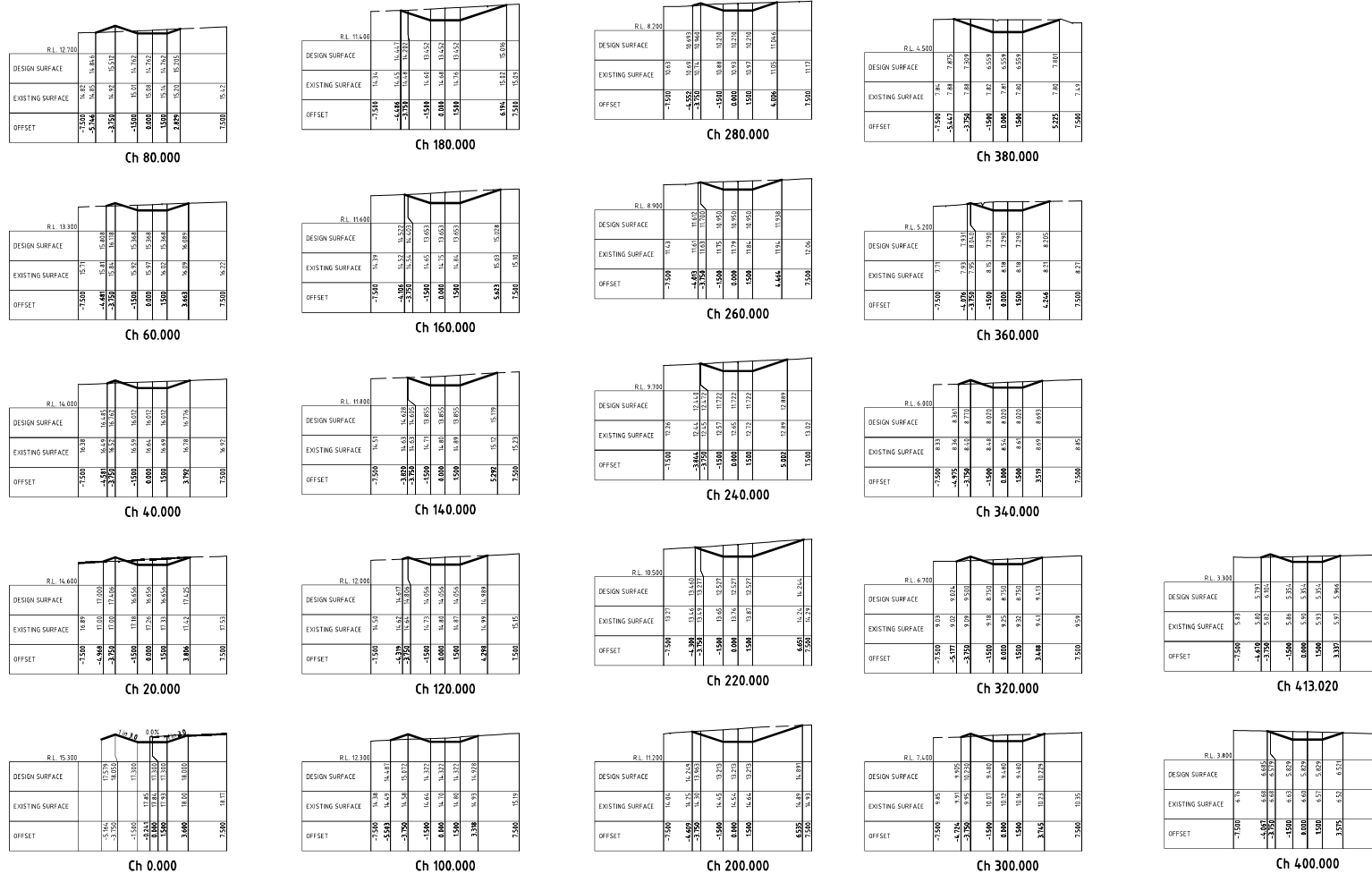


LONGITUDINAL SECTION ALONG PROPOSED DIVERSION CHANNEL

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						FINAL APPROVAL					
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						AS SHOWN					
						CC					
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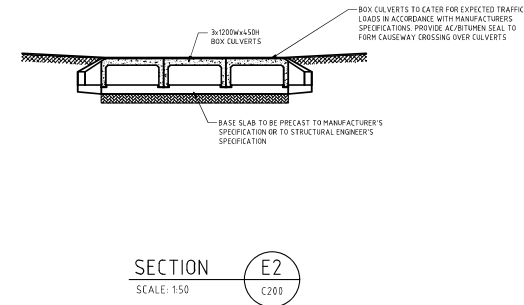
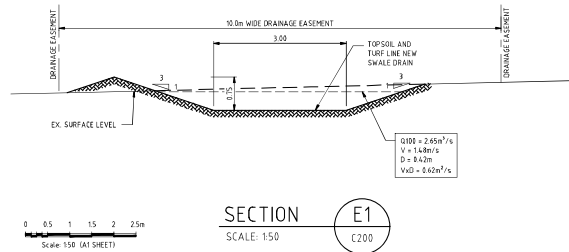
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email: reception@seec.com.au
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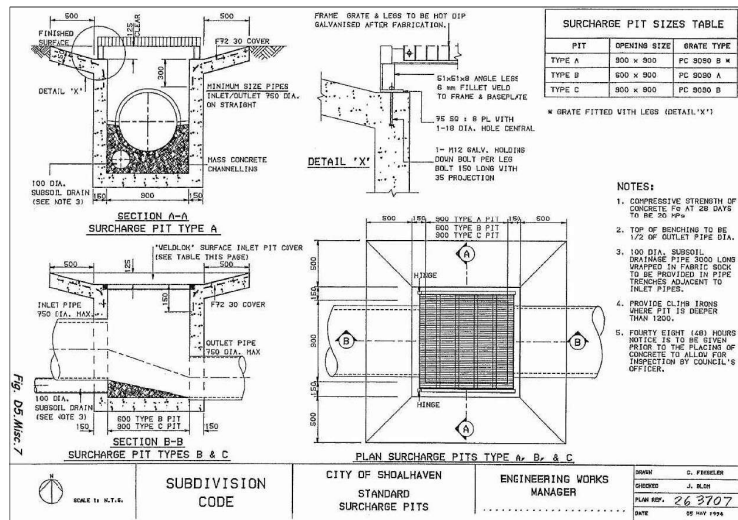
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						FINAL APPROVAL				
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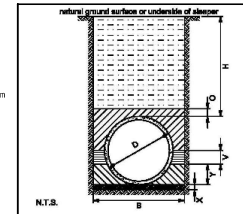


STORMWATER PIT NOTES

- ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETERS.
- WELDOK GRATE WITH FLAT SHIRT BASE TYPE GG 7852 OF WELDOK GRATE AND FRAME TYPE GG 7851 OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT TO BE USED (DIAGRAMS GENERALLY REFER TO TYPE GG 7851 GRATE AND FRAME TO BE HOT DIP GALVANIZED 80-85 MICRONS THICK. ALL GRATES TO BE PROVIDED WITH LOCKING CLIP).
- ALL UNITS TO BE APPROVED PRECAST TYPE DIMENSIONS SHOWN ON PLAN TO DENOTE CLEAR OPENINGS.
- COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH (Y) FOR CAST IN-SITU CONCRETE SHALL BE A MINIMUM 20MPa AT 28 DAYS.
- 100 DIA. SUBSOIL DRAINAGE PIPE 30 LONG WRAPPED IN FABRIC SOCK TO BE PROVIDED ADJACENT TO INLET PIPES.
- DETAILS REFER TO PITS CONSTRUCTED ADJACENT TO FLEXIBLE PAVEMENTS. TOTAL ISOLATION OF PITS IS REQUIRED ADJACENT TO RIGID PAVEMENTS.
- ALL PITS TO BE ADEQUATELY STREAMLINED AND BROWED.
- GRATES TO BE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE LIFTING CLIPS TO 7 BOLTS.
- REINFORCING FABRIC SLID MESH IS TO BE PLACED CENTRALLY IN ALL PITS GREATER THAN 1500mm DEEP. REINFORCEMENT IS TO BE CONTINUOUS THROUGH ALL WALLS AND BASE. MESH CAN BE BENT AT CORNERS OR JOINED BY 40° T BARS (SEE LEGS AT 300 CENTRES) ON STEEL IS 50 UNLESS SHOWN OTHERWISE.
- PITS DEEPER THAN 50mm AND WIDER THAN 120mm ARE TO BE DESIGNED BY A STRUCTURAL ENGINEER.
- PITS DEEPER THAN 600mm SHALL HAVE A MINIMUM 600mm DEEP OPENING. PITS DEEPER THAN 12m SHALL HAVE STEP ROPS.
- ALL HEADWALLS TO BE PRECAST TYPE TO SUIT THE RELEVANT PIPE SIZE REQUIRED UNLESS.
- ALL CURB INLETS AND OUTLETS TO HAVE ROCK ROP-RAP 150mm OVER NON-WOVEN FABRIC BEDDING A3, OR SHALIN UN-0.

DESIGN PARAMETERS

- D = PIPE EXTERNAL DIAMETER (mm)
- B = TRENCH WIDTH (mm)
- H = HEIGHT OF FILL (mm) MINIMUM 450mm COVER
- HS2 = SUPPORT TYPE
- DESIGN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF AS/NZS 3725:2007
- DESIGN FOR INSTALLATION OF BURIED CONCRETE PIPES



Installation Quantities		Quantities (m³)		Minimum Zone Compaction (%)	
Support Zone	Depth (mm)	Solid	Loose	Density Index (for cohesionless soils)	Relative Density (standard compaction)
Bed zone	X = 100	0.005	0.102	60	-
Haunch zone	Y = 165	0.082	0.096	60	-
Side zone	Z = 150	0.035	0.042	60	90
Course zone	Q = 150	0.042	0.000	as per project specification	as per project specification
Backfill	300	0.255	0.000	as per project specification	as per project specification

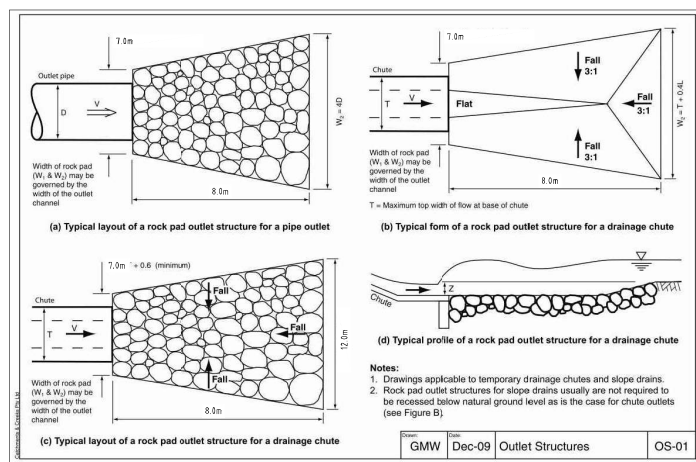
Material Grading Requirements

Size (mm)	75.0	150	300	475	750	900	1075
Bed & Haunch Zones (% mass passing)	100	100	100-20	100-30	100-10	100-10	100-10
Side Zone (% mass passing)	100	100	100-20	100-30	100-10	100-10	100-10

Design Notes:

- All bed, haunch and side zone material passing the 0.075 mm sieve to have low plasticity (AS 1726).
- Ordinary fill material to have no slopes > 1:1.5 and no more than 20% to be 75-150 mm.
- For additional information refer to the project specification.
- A nominal pipe wall thickness of 38 mm has been assumed.

TYPICAL CONCRETE PIPE BEDDING DETAILS - SUPPORT TYPE HS2



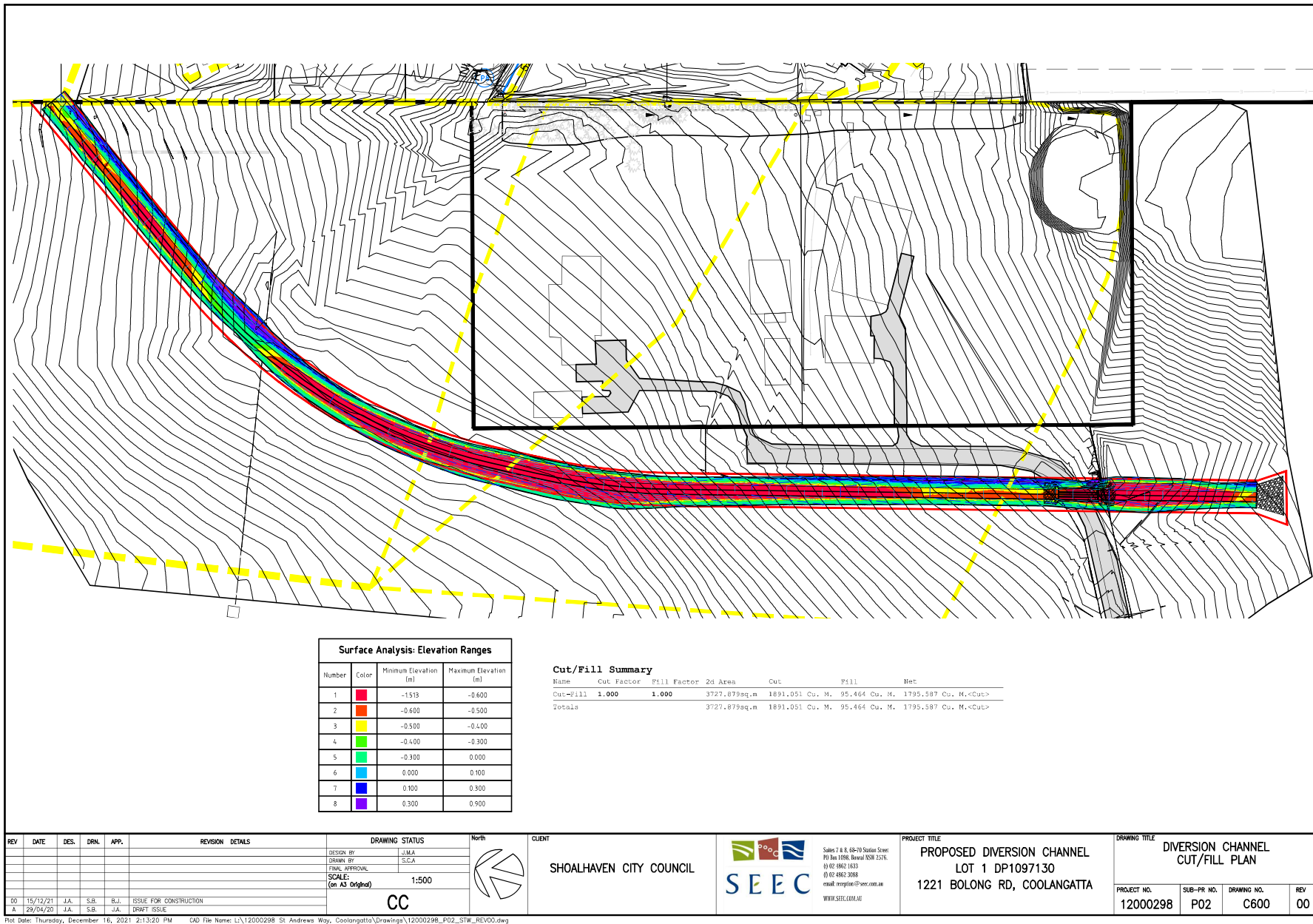
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PROJECT TITLE	DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED DIVERSION CHANNEL LOT 1 DP1097130 1221 BOLONG RD, COOLANGATTA	DIVERSION CHANNEL TYPICAL SECTIONS & DETAILS SHEET 2 OF 2
PROJECT NO. 12000298	SUB-PR NO. P02
DRAWING NO. C501	REV 00



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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Barrier flagging (or alternative measures) is to be installed around the edge of the disturbance area to restrict access and to minimise unnecessary disturbance.
2. Construct proposed stabilised topsoil or earth bund upslope of work area as early works to direct upslope clean water around work area.
3. Install sediment fencing (or mulch bund) and a U-shaped sediment trap in the locations shown on this drawing and in accordance with Blue Book Standard Drawing SD 6-8 and IECA Standard Drawings UST-01 & 02.
4. Stabilise and rehabilitate any disturbance downslope of the sediment fence or mulch bund to achieve at least 70% cover (minimum) within 10 days.
5. Install trafficable hump/roller across proposed driveway to minimise the risk of clean water ingress and dirty water egress.
6. Commence stripping and earthworks. Refer to Standard Drawing SD 4-1 for stockpiling requirements.
7. All erosion and sediment control measures to be monitored at least weekly and before/after forecast rain (i.e. 50% chance of 5mm or more in 24 hours). Clean out or replace controls as necessary.
8. All disturbed areas are to be stabilised to final design to achieve at least 70% cover within 20 days of completion. Refer to Standard Drawing SD 4-2 and SD 7-1 for topsoil replacement and seedbed preparation respectively.

As areas are completed (i.e. at least 70% final cover over the catchment), temporary sediment and drainage controls can be decommissioned and removed. Progressively stabilise all disturbed areas as they are completed to final design rather than waiting until the entire channel is completed.

SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT CONTROL DESIGN

This Soil and Water Management Plan (SWMP) has been prepared in accordance with Blue Book Volume 1 (Landcom, 2004).

EROSION HAZARD ASSESSMENT

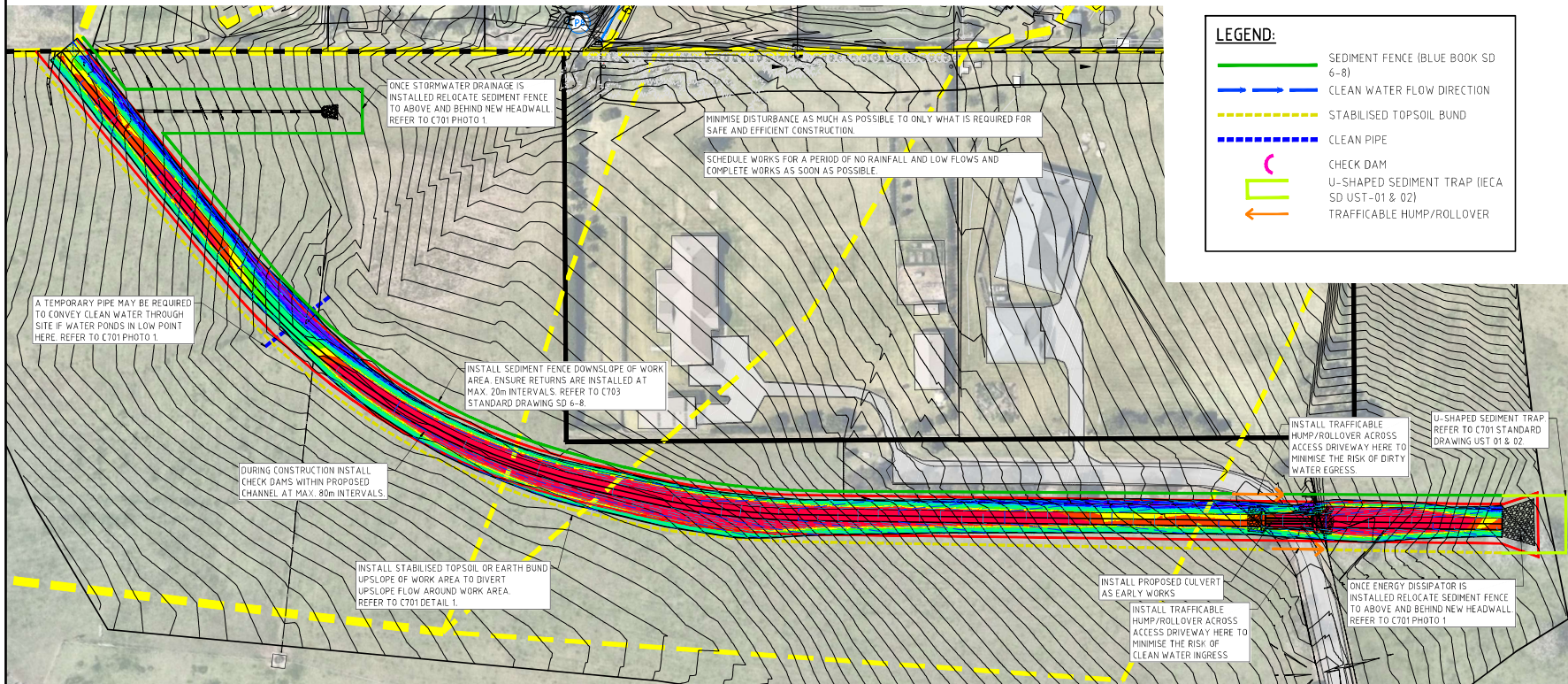
$$A = R \times K \times L \times S \times C \times P$$

The following values have been used:

- R: 4.000 (from Blue Book)
- K: 0.039 (Shoalhaven Soil Landscape)
- LS: 0.83 (3.7%, 80m)
- C: 1.0 (Construction stage - i.e. no soil surface protection or ground cover applied)
- P: 1.3 (for general construction areas)

Based on the above data, the potential soil loss is up to 169 t/ha/yr (Soil Loss Class 2).

Under Blue Book standards, sediment basins are required if the soil loss in any catchment is >200 t/yr. Therefore, a sediment basin is not required as the disturbed catchment is 0.47ha.



LEGEND:

- SEDIMENT FENCE (BLUE BOOK SD 6-8)
- CLEAN WATER FLOW DIRECTION
- STABILISED TOPSOIL BUND
- CLEAN PIPE
- CHECK DAM
- U-SHAPED SEDIMENT TRAP (IECA SD UST-01 & 02)
- TRAFFICABLE HUMP/ROLLER

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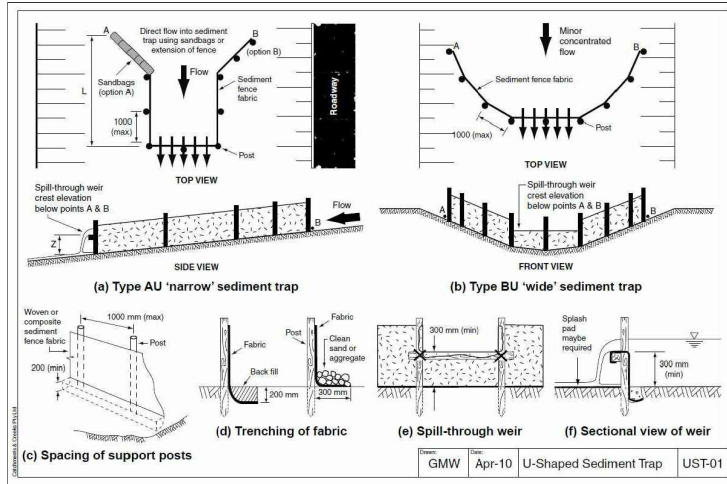
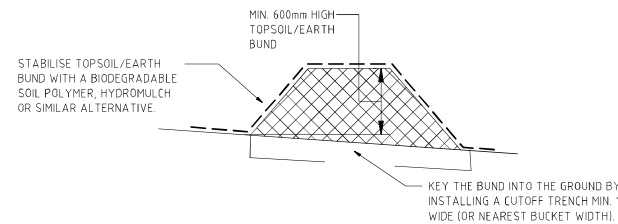


PHOTO 1: TEMPORARY CLEAN WATER DIVERSION AND SEDIMENT FENCE BEHIND COMPLETED HEADWALL

<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>FABRIC: POLYPROPYLENE, POLYAMIDE, NYLON, POLYESTER, OR POLYETHYLENE. WOVEN OR NON-WOVEN FABRIC, AT LEAST 100mm IN WIDTH AND A MINIMUM UNIT WEIGHT OF 140gsm. ALL FABRICS TO CONTAIN ULTRAVIOLET INHIBITORS AND STABILISERS TO PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF 6 MONTHS OF USEABLE CONSTRUCTION LIFE (ULTRAVIOLET STABILITY EXCEEDING 70%).</p> <p>FABRIC REINFORCEMENT: IF USED) WIRE OR STEEL MESH MINIMUM 14 GAUGE WITH A MAXIMUM MESH SPACING OF 200mm.</p> <p>SUPPORT POSTS/STAKES: 150mm (MIN) HARDWOOD, 250mm (MIN) SOFTWOOD, OR 1.9kg (MIN) STEEL STAR PICKETS SUITABLE FOR ATTACHING FABRIC.</p> <p>INSTALLATION</p> <p>1. REFER TO APPROVED PLANS FOR LOCATION, EXTENT AND REQUIRED TYPE OF FABRIC (IF SPECIFIED), IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS WITH THE LOCATION, EXTENT, FABRIC TYPE, OR METHOD OF INSTALLATION CONTACT THE ENGINEER OR RESPONSIBLE ON-SITE OFFICER FOR ASSISTANCE.</p> <p>2. INSTALL THE FABRIC IN A U-SHAPE, EXTENDING THE WING WALLS EITHER UP THE SIDE SLOPES AND/OR UP THE CHANNEL. INVEST AS DIRECTED TO A POINT WHERE THE GROUND LEVEL IS AT LEAST 100mm HIGHER THAN THE CREST OF THE SPILL-THROUGH WEIR.</p>	<p>3. ENSURE THAT THE EXPECTED CHANNEL FLOW WILL ENTER THE SEDIMENT TRAP EITHER BY EXTENDING THE WING WALLS UP THE BANK SLOPE, OR CONSTRUCTING SANDBAG FLOW DIVERSION BANKS.</p> <p>4. UNLESS DIRECTED BY THE SITE SUPERVISOR, EXCAVATE A 200mm WIDE BY 200mm DEEP TRENCH ALONG THE ALIGNMENT OF THE SPILL-THROUGH WEIR AND WING WALLS.</p> <p>5. ALONG THE LOWER SIDE OF THE TRENCH APPROPRIATELY SECURE THE STAKES INTO THE GROUND SPACED NO GREATER THAN 1m.</p> <p>6. CONSTRUCT THE SEDIMENT TRAP FROM A CONTINUOUS ROLL OF FABRIC, SECURELY ATTACH THE FABRIC TO THE SUPPORT POSTS/STAKES USING 25mm STAPLES OR TIE WIRE AT MAXIMUM 150mm SPACING WITH THE FABRIC EXTENDED AT LEAST 200mm INTO THE TRENCH.</p> <p>8. INSTALL A SPILL-THROUGH WEIR AT THE LOWEST POINT IN THE FENCE. THE WEIR MUST BE AT LEAST 300mm ABOVE ADJACENT GROUND LEVEL, AND BELOW THE LOWEST GROUND LEVEL AT THE ENDS OF THE WING WALLS.</p> <p>9. SECURELY TIE A HORIZONTAL CROSS MEMBER (WEIR) TO THE ADJACENT SUPPORT POSTS. CUT THE FABRIC DOWN THE SIDE OF THE POSTS AND FOLD THE FABRIC OVER THE CROSS MEMBER AND APPROPRIATELY SECURE THE FABRIC.</p> <p>10. IF DIRECTED, INSTALL A SUITABLE SPLASH PAD IMMEDIATELY DOWN-SLOPE OF THE SPILL-THROUGH WEIR TO CONTROL SOIL EROSION DOWNSTREAM OF THE SEDIMENT TRAP.</p>	<p>11. BACKFILL THE TRENCH AND TAMP THE FILL TO FIRMLY ANCHOR THE BOTTOM OF THE FABRIC AND MESH TO PREVENT WATER FROM FLOWING UNDER THE FENCE.</p> <p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>1. INSPECT THE SEDIMENT TRAP AT LEAST WEEKLY AND AFTER ANY SIGNIFICANT RAIN. MAKE NECESSARY REPAIRS IMMEDIATELY.</p> <p>2. REPAIR ANY TORN SECTIONS WITH A CONTINUOUS PIECE OF FABRIC FROM POST TO POST.</p> <p>3. WHEN MAKING REPAIRS, ALWAYS RESTORE THE SYSTEM TO ITS ORIGINAL CONFIGURATION UNLESS AN AMENDED LAYOUT IS REQUIRED OR SPECIFIED.</p> <p>4. IF THE FABRIC IS SAGGING BETWEEN STAKES, INSTALL ADDITIONAL SUPPORT POSTS/STAKES.</p> <p>5. REMOVE ACCUMULATED SEDIMENT IF THE SEDIMENT DEPOSIT EXCEEDS A DEPTH OF 150mm.</p> <p>6. DISPOSE OF SEDIMENT IN A SUITABLE MANNER THAT WILL NOT CAUSE AN EROSION OR POLLUTION HAZARD.</p> <p>7. REPLACE THE FABRIC IF THE SERVICE LIFE OF THE EXISTING FABRIC EXCEEDS SIX MONTHS.</p>	<p>REMOVAL</p> <p>1. WHEN DISTURBED AREAS UP-SLOPE OF THE SEDIMENT TRAP ARE SUFFICIENTLY STABILISED TO RESTRAIN EROSION, THE SEDIMENT TRAP MUST BE REMOVED.</p> <p>2. REMOVE MATERIALS AND COLLECTED SEDIMENT AND DISPOSE OF IN A SUITABLE MANNER THAT WILL NOT CAUSE AN EROSION OR POLLUTION HAZARD.</p> <p>3. REHABILITATE/REVEGETATE THE DISTURBED GROUND AS NECESSARY TO MINIMISE THE EROSION HAZARD.</p>
<p>DESIGN: GMW, DATE: Apr-10, TITLE: U-Shaped Sediment Trap, DRAWING NO: UST-02</p>			



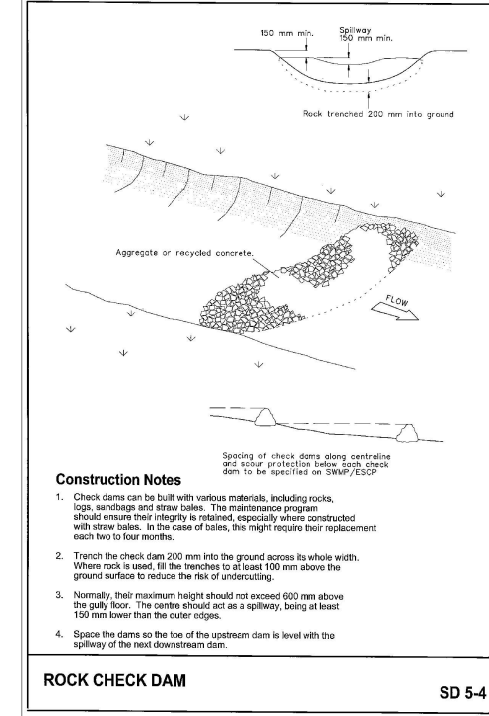
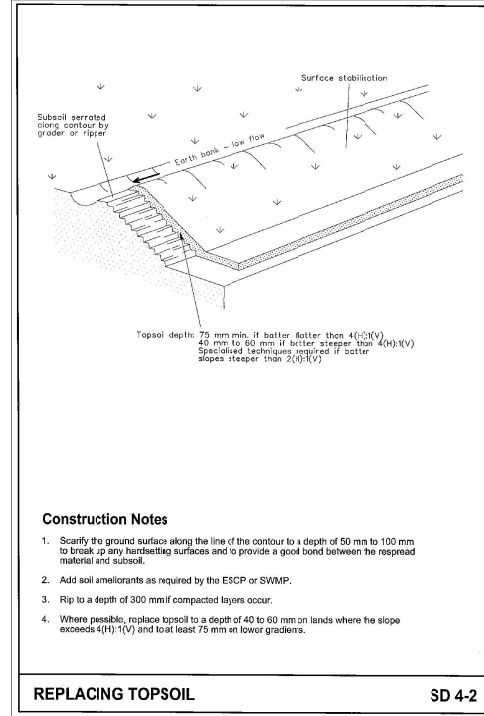
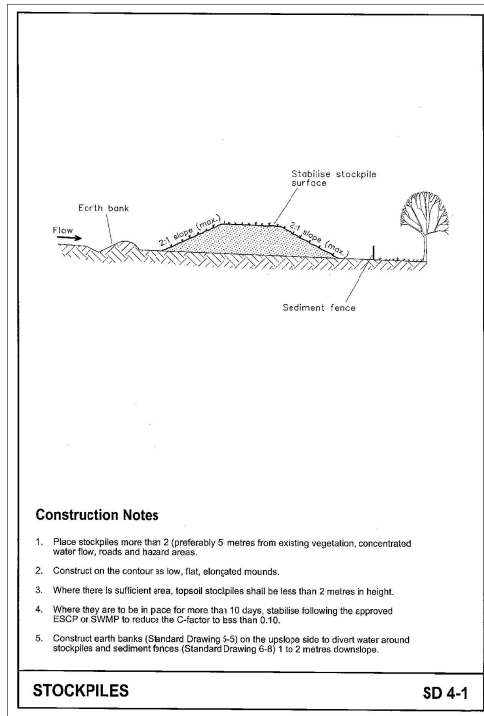
DETAIL 1 - STABILISED TOPSOIL/EARTH BUND



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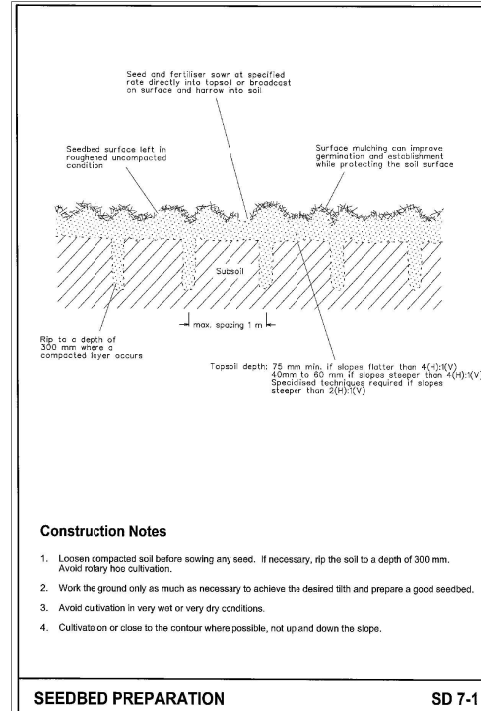
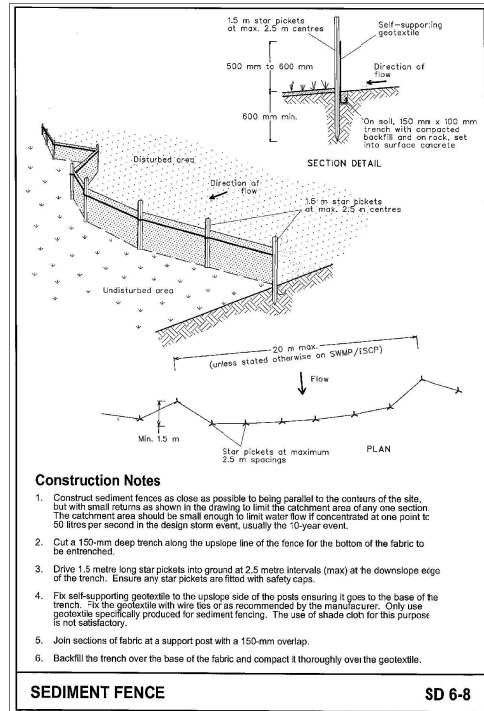
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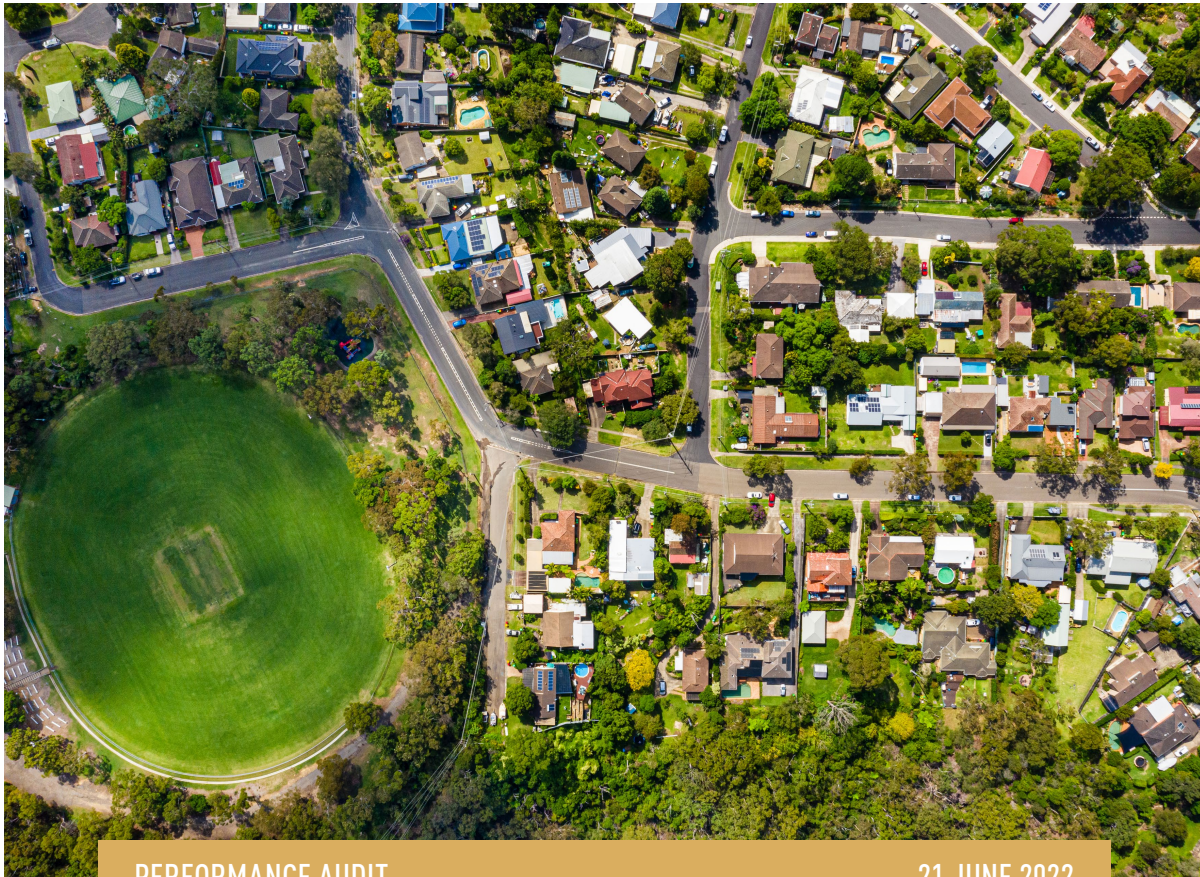


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PERFORMANCE AUDIT

21 JUNE 2022

NSW planning portal

NEW SOUTH WALES AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

THE ROLE OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL

The roles and responsibilities of the Auditor-General, and hence the Audit Office, are set out in the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

We conduct financial or 'attest' audits of state public sector and local government entities' financial statements. We also audit the Consolidated State Financial Statements, a consolidation of all state public sector agencies' financial statements.

Financial audits are designed to add credibility to financial statements, enhancing their value to end-users. Also, the existence of such audits provides a constant stimulus to entities to ensure sound financial management.

Following a financial audit the Audit Office issues a variety of reports to entities and reports periodically to Parliament. In combination, these reports give opinions on the truth and fairness of financial statements, and comment on entity internal controls and governance, and compliance with certain laws, regulations and government directives. They may comment on financial prudence, probity and waste, and recommend operational improvements.

We also conduct performance audits. These examine whether an entity is carrying out its activities effectively and doing so economically and efficiently and in compliance with relevant laws. Audits may cover all or parts of an entity's operations, or consider particular issues across a number of entities.

As well as financial and performance audits, the Auditor-General carries out special reviews, compliance engagements and audits requested under section 27B(3) of the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983*, and section 421E of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

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In accordance with section 38E of the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983*, I present a report titled '**NSW planning portal**'.

Margaret Crawford
Auditor-General for New South Wales
21 June 2022



The Audit Office of New South Wales pay our respect and recognise
Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land in NSW.

We recognise that Aboriginal people, as custodians, have a spiritual, social and
cultural connection with their lands and waters, and have made and continue
to make a rich, unique and lasting contribution to the State. We are committed
to continue learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history
and culture.

We honour and thank the traditional owners of the land on which our office is
located, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and the traditional owners of
the lands on which our staff live and work. We pay our respects to their Elders
past and present, and to the next generation of leaders.

contents

NSW planning portal

Section one – NSW planning portal

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Section one

NSW planning portal

CL22.374 - Attachment 1

Executive summary

The ePlanning program is an initiative of the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) to deliver a digital planning service for New South Wales through the NSW planning portal (the portal, or the planning portal). The department defines the portal as an online environment where community, industry and government can work together to better understand and meet their obligations under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW). Using the portal, relevant planning activities can be carried out online throughout New South Wales. This includes, but is not limited to:

- applying for and gaining planning approval
- applying for and gaining approval for building works, sub-dividing land and similar activities
- issuing occupancy and other certificates.

The portal has been developed under three separate business cases. The first business case in 2013 led to the creation of a central portal, which made planning information available to view by planning applicants and allowed some planning applications to be lodged and tracked online.

Under a second business case prepared in 2014, the department set out to improve and widen the functions available via the portal. The department prepared a third business case in 2020 to fund further improvements to the portal over the period July 2020 to June 2023. The third business case also extended the portal's functions to support the building and occupation stages of the planning cycle.

In late 2019, the government mandated the use of the portal for all stages of development applications. This decision took effect across 2020–21 and applied to all councils as well as certifiers and others involved in the planning process.

The objective of this performance audit was to assess the effectiveness of the department's implementation, governance and stakeholder engagement in delivering the NSW planning portal. We investigated whether:

- delivery of the NSW planning portal was planned effectively
- sound governance arrangements are in place to ensure effective implementation of the program
- users of the NSW planning portal are supported effectively to adopt and use the system.

Conclusion

Since implementation commenced in 2013, the NSW planning portal has progressively achieved its objectives to provide citizens with access to consolidated planning information and allow them to prepare and submit development applications online. Implementation was initially hindered by deficiencies in planning and it has taken the department significantly longer and cost significantly more to implement the portal than first anticipated. While the portal's implementation has delivered financial benefits, the department has overestimated their value. As a result, the department cannot yet demonstrate that the portal has achieved overall financial benefits, relative to its costs.

In the first two years of the ePlanning program, the department delivered a portal that allowed planners, developers, certifiers and the public to view important planning information. However, the department found the delivery of a second, transactional version of the portal in 2017 to be much more challenging. This version was intended to offer more integrated information and allow development applications to be submitted and managed online. The department did not rollout this version after a pilot showed significant weaknesses with the portal's performance. A subsequent review found that this was partly because the department did not have a clear view of the portal's role or the best way to implement it. In recent years the department has improved the planning, implementation and governance of the ePlanning program resulting in improved delivery of the portal's core functions.

By the time the program reaches its scheduled completion in 2023, it will have taken the department ten years and around \$146 million in capital expenditure to implement the portal. This will be significantly longer and more expensive than the department originally expected. This overrun is partly due to an increased scope of services delivered through the portal and an initial under-appreciation of what is involved in creating a standard, central resource such as the portal. The department also experienced some significant implementation difficulties – which saw the transactional portal discontinued after it was found to be not fit for purpose. Following this, the department re-set the program in 2017–18 and re-planned much of the portal's subsequent development.

In November 2019, the New South Wales Government decided to mandate the use of the portal for all stages of development applications by the end of 2020–21. The department had previously planned that the portal would be progressively adopted by all councils and other stakeholders over the five years to 2025. The decision to mandate the portal's use for all development applications brought forward many of the portal's benefits as well as the challenges of its implementation. The department did not change its overall delivery approach in response to the changed risks associated with the government's decision to mandate use of the portal.

The current version of the portal has given the department more timely and comprehensive planning information and has helped New South Wales to provide continuous planning services during COVID-19 lockdowns, which interrupted many other public functions. The portal has also delivered financial benefits, however the department has not independently assured benefits calculations carried out by its consultant, and the reported benefits are overstated. In addition, some stakeholders report that the portal is a net cost to their organisation. This has included some certifiers and some councils which had implemented or had started to implement their own ePlanning reforms when use of the portal was mandated in 2019. The department now needs to address the issues faced by these stakeholders while continuing to deliver the remaining improvements and enhancements to the portal. Over the remaining year of the program, it will be critical that the department focuses on the agreed program scope and carefully evaluates any opportunities to further develop the portal to support future planning reforms.

1. Key findings

Shortcomings in the department's initial planning and management of the program led to a significant time overrun

The first two ePlanning business cases were each intended to last for two years, four years in total. Program delivery under the first business case met the two-year timeframe, but the second business case took five years. The time overrun was partly caused by a failure to plan for the full scale of work required to design and build an online government service of this nature. There were other reasons for the time overrun, such as the department's failure to effectively manage its contract with an external implementation partner, and the department initially not having a clear view of the portal's role or the best way to implement it.

The department did not provide time contingency in the project schedules

The department's three ePlanning business cases did not include any contingency for a time overrun. The department's first business case was prepared at the same time as the department was consulting stakeholders on wider reforms to the planning system. The department set a timeline of two years to deliver the service and chose not to include any time contingency to help manage the risks associated with building a new government service or the risks associated with business requirements which were developing in parallel to the system development.

The department's second business case aimed to extend and strengthen the portal services beyond what had been set out in 2013 in the government's planning system White Paper. The second business case set out an ambitious program of activities designed to respond to high-priority user requirements and identified service needs. Delivery was originally intended to take place from July 2015 to June 2017.

Actual delivery of the second business case took place over the five years from July 2015 to June 2020, three years longer than planned. While some of this overrun can be attributed to implementation challenges, failing to fully plan for risks to the delivery timeframe was a fundamental contributor.

The department now has a clear view of the scope necessary to finalise the program, but has not yet published the services it plans to implement in 2022 and 2023

The department has a clear scope of services in its third business case and has a governance process to ensure that any additions to the program scope are well managed. As a result, the department is now better positioned to manage the ePlanning program scope through to the program's conclusion in 2023.

The department's overall program planning disciplines have improved. However, it is still considering additions to its current program of work. While the program should respond to important new policy and other requirements, it should also aim to closely define its future program of work and clearly communicate this to stakeholders. However, the department has not yet communicated the new services it plans to add, or improvements that it plans to make, to the portal over the remainder of the program.

Mandating the portal's use for all development applications changed the program's strategic risk environment, but the department kept its overall delivery approach the same

In November 2019 the New South Wales Government decided to mandate the use of the planning portal for all development applications. Use of the portal had previously been required in some circumstances but the government's decision required the portal to be used for all stages of development applications lodged in New South Wales as well as certificates for construction, sub-division, sub-division works and occupation. This significantly changed the program's strategic risk environment, primarily because the program was now required to work more closely with councils and technology vendors that had previously been less engaged with the program.

When use of the portal became mandatory for all stages of development applications, the department had to work more closely with a cohort of stakeholders, many of whom did not want to adopt the portal. This added complexity and difficulty to the program's efforts to ensure the widescale adoption of the planning portal by users. However, the department did not update its main change management approach, alter any key planning assumptions, or provide additional time or cost contingency to support the mandatory use of the portal.

The decision to mandate the use of the planning portal for all stages of development applications brought forward the expected benefits as well as potential costs of the ePlanning program. However, the department did not update the third business case to reflect the mandate. It instead continued to finalise the business case under its previous assumptions which included a much slower uptake of portal services by councils and other users.

The program steering committee has managed key issues, but has had less success in managing strategic risks

The ePlanning steering committee has focused on issue management and general project oversight. However, the steering committee has not dedicated regular time to carry out strategic risk management and has not always sought information on strategic risks which would help it to discharge its important responsibilities.

The steering committee could have reduced the likelihood of issues impacting the program if it had reserved regular time to focus on strategic risk management. For example, the steering committee could have better managed the risks attached to the department's management of:

- the implementation partner's overall performance rather than just its timeliness
- change management and technology risks following the government's decision to mandate the use of the portal for all development applications.

The portal has delivered financial benefits but reported benefits are overstated

In September 2021, the department reported that the program had achieved \$334 million of benefits over the three financial years to June 2021 plus the first two months of 2021–22. The reported benefits were significantly higher than the expected benefits of \$93 million. This was primarily because the department has not updated its benefit targets to reflect the impact of the 2019 decision to mandate the use of the portal for all development applications.

However, the department's calculation of benefits is overstated because:

- a proportion of reported benefits is likely to be due to other planning reforms
- the calculation of the largest single benefit is incorrect
- the reported benefits may not fully account for dis-benefits reported by some stakeholders.

The largest contribution to the department's September 2021 benefit report was an estimated saving of \$151 million for developers due to lower costs associated with holding their investments for a shorter time. However, the department's calculation of this benefit assumes a high baseline for the time to determine a development application. It also assumes that all development applications except for additions or alterations to existing properties will incur financing costs, whereas a small but material number will be self-financed. The calculation also includes several data errors in spreadsheets.

Some users consulted as part of this audit report that the planning portal is not intuitive and creates additional work for them. The department recognises that the portal does not currently deliver an optimum experience for all users and has established a project to develop and release enhancements to the portal monthly until June 2022. It has published information to help councils and certifiers to automatically integrate their systems with the portal and has also provided \$4.8 million funding to assist regional councils with this task. Once fully implemented, the department expects the system integration will reduce costs incurred by stakeholders.

The department has only reported benefits since 2019 and has not independently assured the calculation of benefits

The department originally intended to track benefits from October 2014. However, it only started to track benefits in 2019 when it appointed an external provider to calculate the benefits achieved by the program. Any benefits or dis-benefits between the introduction of the portal and 2019 are unknown and not included in the department's calculation of benefits.

The department has appointed an external provider to calculate the benefits achieved by the portal. The department does not have access to the benefits calculation model which is owned and operated by the external provider. The department trusts that the provider correctly calculates the benefits and does not verify the reported benefit numbers.

2. Recommendations

By December 2022, the Department of Planning and Environment should:

1. publish a roadmap of the services it expects to release on the NSW planning portal across 2022 and 2023
2. update its ePlanning program assumptions, benefits targets and change management approach to reflect the government's decision to mandate the use of the portal for all stages of a development application
3. independently assure and report publicly the correct calculation of ePlanning program benefits to account for:
 - errors and assumptions in the calculation of benefits due to changed holding costs for developers
 - the contribution of other planning reforms to reduced timeframes to determine planning applications
 - any dis-benefits which may be experienced by stakeholders.

CL22.374 - Attachment 1

1. Introduction

1.1 The ePlanning program

The ePlanning program is an initiative of the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) to deliver a digital planning service for New South Wales through the NSW planning portal (the portal, or the planning portal). The department defines the planning portal as an online environment where community, industry and government can work together to better understand and meet their obligations under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW).

The department first launched the ePlanning program in 2013 and has implemented the program continuously since then. The department's current aims for the program are to:

- centralise and publish more planning information
- help the public to be involved in the planning process
- reduce the need for planning applicants to provide repeat information
- improve the customer experience to deliver easy and equitable access to planning services and reduce assessment times
- ensure planning decisions and oversight are supported by clear data and evidence.

Changed management of digital planning services

The department has prepared three business cases to direct its ePlanning program activities. The first business case in 2013 focused on creating a central online environment (the portal), making important planning information available to view by planning applicants and stakeholders, and developing a facility to lodge and track some planning applications. Under a second business case prepared in 2014, the program set out to improve and widen the transactional functions in the portal and add a tool to calculate certain contributions paid by developers. The department prepared a third business case in 2020 which funds enhancements to the portal over the period July 2020 to June 2023.

Exhibit 1: Characteristics of the three ePlanning program business cases 2013 to 2020

Characteristic	2013	2014	2020
Model	Central repository of planning information and optional planning application services	Central repository of planning information and optional planning application services	Central repository of planning information and mandatory planning application services
Key services	<p>Planning portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive House, which shows domestic rules and codes on a simplified domestic house • Spatial Viewer, which displays some planning information, zoning, etc for locations • development application lodgement and tracking (for limited types of planning application) 	<p>Services under the previous business case plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning dashboard, including single sign-on • enhanced planning viewer, showing planning rules linked to specific land parcels • development application lodgement and tracking (for additional types of application) • ability to view fees and make payments 	<p>Services under the previous business cases plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration with more planning and some licensing functions such as liquor licensing • digital 'building manual' • public access to local planning panels • development application lodgement and tracking (for additional types of application)

Characteristic	2013	2014	2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholder consultation mechanisms and forums 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> registration of compliance and post-consent certificates
Councils in scope	120 out of 152	120 out of 152	128 out of 128
Funding basis	Centrally funded	Centrally funded	Centrally funded plus user fees
Investment costs (planned)	\$30 million	\$21.8 million	\$55.5 million
Delivery time (planned)	2 years	2 years	3 years

Source: Audit Office of NSW analysis of Department of Planning and Environment documents.

1.2 Key stakeholders

The planning portal is used by stakeholders including:

- applicants, including developers and others who need planning approval for developments
- local authorities, such as councils which evaluate and can consent to planning applications
- state agencies, such as the department and other agencies which may also consent to planning applications or which otherwise rely on information in the portal
- certifiers, including those employed in the public and private sector, who can inspect building work and issue certificates for construction, occupation and compliance.

1.3 Planning services supported by the portal

The current version of the portal supports the end-to-end planning lifecycle of:

- applying for and gaining planning approval
- carrying out building works, sub-dividing land and similar activities
- occupation and compliance activities.

Exhibit 2: End-to-end planning services supported by the portal

Planning service	Detail	Supported by business case
Investigate	Understand requirements using modelling tools and viewers	Business cases 1 and 2
Enquire	Access information and provide feedback	
Lodge	Prepare and submit planning applications	
Assess	Track application status	
Determine	Decide and advise applicants	
Confirm	Access data and provide reports	Business case 3
Certify	Receive conditions of consent	
Build	Understand obligations	
Occupy	Prepare and receive occupancy and other certificates	
Compliance	Access records and understand ongoing obligations	

Source: Audit Office of NSW analysis of Department of Planning and Environment documents.

1.4 Large program in a wider set of planning reforms

The ePlanning program is a key part of the department's wider planning reforms which are designed to deliver a better planning system. The department has work underway which aims to improve assessment time frames, reduce administration and accelerate projects. This includes, but is not limited to, the:

- Planning Reform Action Plan, which was announced in 2020 and is defined by the department as a long-term structural reform of the planning system. It includes measures to:
 - reduce assessment times for planning proposals, regionally significant development applications and major projects
 - provide new resources for the Land and Environment Court
 - reduce concurrence and referral cases between agencies
 - expand complying development
 - accelerate precinct coordination.
- Planning Delivery Unit, which the department introduced to progress priority planning projects. The unit operates a case management and concierge service. It also supports regional councils with:
 - access to a panel of planning consultants to help speed up planning decisions
 - office facilities for regional planners which reduces the need for them to relocate or travel.

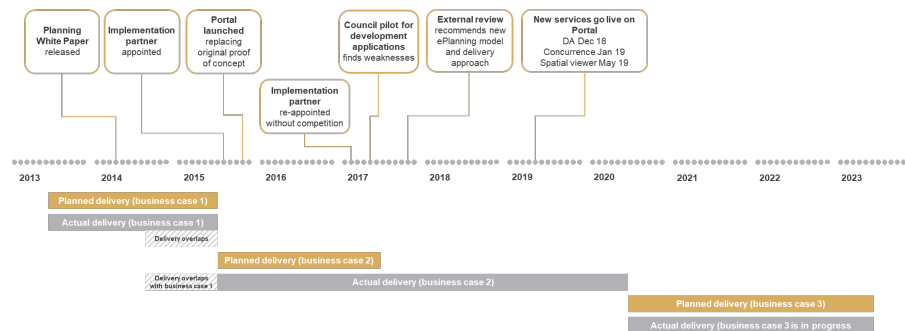
1.5 Timeline of key events in the program

The department started the ePlanning program in July 2013 and now expects to complete the program in June 2023. Further development of the planning portal after then will be carried out as part of the department's normal business and not through a dedicated program.

The department developed a proof-of-concept version of the planning portal in 2014. It replaced this in November 2015 with an information-only version of the portal before developing a version of the portal that could support the lodgement of development applications, which it piloted with one council in May 2017. However, the department and stakeholders determined that this version was unsuitable for rollout to councils. The department then commissioned an external review of the portal's design, software and operating model.

In November 2017 the department recommenced the program under new management with a changed operating model and new system design. The department assumed greater direct responsibility for technical delivery from then and reports that it moved from a waterfall style delivery approach to a project management approach which includes significant components of agile project management. New development application services went live in December 2018. Since then, the department has added new services and worked to improve the existing services.

Exhibit 3: Timeline of services and delivery (planned and actual) for the ePlanning program 2013 to 2023



Source: Audit Office of NSW analysis of Department of Planning and Environment documents.

1.6 Regulation changes during the life of the program

Since 2013, the department has reformed the New South Wales planning system to implement changes in government policy and to respond to events, such as the economic impacts of COVID-19. Many of the changes to the planning system have impacted the portal. Key changes include:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Act 2014* which provided for the establishment of the planning portal and database
- Environment Planning and Assessment Amendment (ePlanning) Regulation 2015 which provided for fees to be used to operate the planning portal and maintain the database
- Environmental Planning and Assessment (Savings, Transitional and Other Provisions) Regulation 2017 which, as an interim measure, allowed the registration of a development consent or other approval on the portal to be considered a notification to the applicant
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (ePlanning—Complying Development Certificates) Regulation 2018 which allowed Complying Development Certificates to be lodged on the portal
- regulations made in 2018 which provided for the use of the portal for development applications which require concurrent review by government agencies, or which are integrated development
- regulations made in 2020 which provided for the use of the portal to publish certain documents online rather than in newspapers, and which established transitional provisions to phase in the use of the planning portal for all development applications by 1 July 2021.

The *Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020* and Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2021 were also introduced requiring use of the portal by professional engineers and design and building practitioners.

1.7 About the audit

This audit assessed the department's performance in bringing a range of planning services online since it first launched the ePlanning program in 2013. It considered the ePlanning program's links to the department's wider planning reforms but did not review those reforms.

The audit objective was to assess the effectiveness of the department's implementation, governance and stakeholder engagement in delivering the NSW planning portal.

The audit investigated whether:

- delivery of the NSW planning portal was planned effectively
- sound governance arrangements are in place to ensure effective implementation of the program
- users of the NSW planning portal are supported effectively to adopt and use the system.

2. Implementation

This part of the report sets out how:

- the ePlanning program has been planned and delivered
- users of the portal have been supported
- the program has been governed.

2.1 Planning and delivering the first two ePlanning business cases in 2013 and 2014

The department's first two business cases were approved in July 2013 and October 2014. Under these business cases, program delivery took place over the seven years to June 2020 and delivered services including:

- an online spatial viewer showing planning information by location, and an interactive building showing domestic rules and codes on a simplified domestic house
- a central repository for environmental planning instruments such as district plans
- lodgement and tracking services for some types of planning application
- concurrence and referral services, which are used when multiple government agencies consider a planning application
- a contribution payment system, free trees application, cladding register, analytics, information and other services
- a pilot portal which could support the lodgement of development applications which was trialled in May 2017.

The department initially failed to plan for the scale of work required, which led to a significant time overrun

The department's first two business cases were each scoped to last for two years, four years in total. Actual program delivery took place over seven years, with delivery under the second business case taking five years. The time overrun was partly caused by a failure to plan for the scale of work required to design and build a new online government service of this nature.

In 2013, the department intended the program to be the key enabler for many of the reforms proposed in a government White Paper on the planning system. The department anticipated the program would be a two-year, \$30 million project which would be completed by 30 June 2015. Although this first business case noted that this investment could be a foundation for future work, it presented the portal as a stand-alone project which would deliver New South Wales 'a customer-focused electronic planning system'.

The first business case did not scope any subsequent phases of work or indicate that further investment or implementation might be required. This was despite the business case acknowledging that there were business requirements which were not yet defined as they were subject to an ongoing consultation on the government's planning system White Paper.

In 2014, the department prepared a second business case to extend the scale and scope of the ePlanning program beyond what had been set out in the planning system White Paper. The second business case was again a two-year program and included a capital investment of \$21.8 million and \$2.2 million for an upgrade of the system after five years of operation. The second business case presented the new two-year program as a crucial step in achieving improved user experience and updating the planning platform. It did not scope any subsequent phases of work or link the delivery of a full planning portal service to any further program implementation.

Program delivery under business cases one and two took place over the seven years to June 2020. The department then prepared a third business case which sought funding for three further years of the ePlanning program. The third business case extended the program's scope into the building, occupation and compliance stages of the planning lifecycle. It was approved in July 2020.

The department failed to effectively manage the contract with its implementation partner

The department initially appointed an implementation partner in September 2015 to build and operate the first version of the portal which replaced an existing proof-of-concept portal. The department was satisfied with the initial performance of its partner and wanted the partner to further develop the portal to enable the lodgement and management of development applications. In February 2017 the department obtained Ministerial approval to reappoint the same vendor and negotiate a new contract without further testing the market.

The department paid its implementation partner a total of \$8.7 million. The department and the partner built the second version of the portal and piloted the development application lodgement service in 2017 at Liverpool City Council and provided demonstrations to other councils. The pilot found a range of performance issues and an overall poor user experience. The department paused the rollout of the development application lodgement service and reviewed the ePlanning program and the work carried out by its implementation partner.

The department reports that the system built in 2017 was inflexible, not fit for purpose, and required significant rework. Despite this, it negotiated a reduction of only \$600,000 from the contracts with its implementation partner and sought no formal remedy for the poor performance of the portal built in 2017.

The department did not have a clear view of the portal's role or the best way to implement it

Following the difficulties experienced with the pilot in 2017, the department commissioned an external review of the program, which considered the portal's software design and operating model. The review found that:

- The department was not clear on the portal's overall role or the range of services that it should deliver. The review found that there was a lack of consistency and clarity around the department's vision for the portal, its desired capabilities and the extent to which it would process different types of development application.
- The portal software was highly customised and not sufficiently flexible.

By November 2017 the department had re-commenced the program under new management with a changed operating model and new system design. The department also assumed greater direct responsibility for technical delivery. As part of this, the department reports that it moved from a waterfall style project management approach to one which included significant components of agile delivery.

The department did not provide time contingency in the project schedules

The department's three ePlanning business cases did not include any contingency for a time overrun. The inclusion of a time contingency was particularly important for the first two business cases because:

- the department was designing and building a new government service, which inherently involves some complexity and has an associated risk to timely delivery
- both program schedules were planned to be only two years, which are relatively short durations for government technology programs.

The department's first business case was prepared at the same time as the department was consulting stakeholders on wider reforms to the planning system. The business case acknowledged that this meant some business requirements were not yet precisely known and could only be defined once the consultation had ended. Despite this uncertainty, the department set a timeline of two years to deliver the services and chose not to include any time contingency to help manage the risks associated with building a new government service or the risks associated with business requirements which were developing in parallel to the system development.

The department's second business case was developed after one year of the program. It aimed to extend and strengthen the planning portal services beyond what had been set out in the government's 2013 planning system White Paper and was originally intended to take place from July 2015 to June 2017. It set out an ambitious program of activities designed to respond to high-priority user requirements and identified service needs.

The second business case also lacked time contingency and was optimistic in some key areas. For example, it set out how the department intended to secure an implementation partner to build and operate the second release of the planning portal. It described the department's requirements as a 'complex solution' and noted that a 'best of breed' or 'challenger' vendor should be considered. At that time, the department had started but not yet completed an initial expression of interest.

The business case expected that procurement activity, contract negotiation and initial services to release a new version of the portal would take place over only nine months from September 2014 to June 2015. However, the procurement and contract negotiation steps alone took 12 months.

Successful delivery of the second business case required a combination of high-quality program management, strong technical development, a clear operating model, sound vendor management, and supportive and engaged stakeholders. The department judged that these conditions were sufficiently present to commit to a second business case schedule of only two years. Actual delivery of the second business case took place over the five years July 2015 to June 2020, three years longer than planned. While some of this overrun can be attributed to implementation challenges, failing to fully account for risks to the planned delivery timeframe was a fundamental contributor.

2.2 Planning and delivering the third business case in 2020

The department prepared a third business case for the ePlanning program in 2020 which provides for enhancements to the portal over the period July 2020 to June 2023. Under this business case, the vision for the portal is to provide a digital experience that supports effective planning and decision making in support of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW).

The work planned under the third business case includes:

- mechanisms for online community engagement
- support for local planning panels
- additional services in the build and occupy stages of construction, leading to a buildings 'digital manual'
- broadened development application services including for Crown Land applications and State Significant Development and State Significant Infrastructure
- integration with licensing decisions for complex and high-risk liquor and gaming decisions
- improvement and expansion of digital mapping functions.

In late 2019 the government mandated the portal's use for all development applications; this changed the program's strategic risk environment, but the department kept its overall delivery approach the same

In November 2019 the New South Wales Government decided to mandate the use of the planning portal for all stages of development applications, initially by all metropolitan councils and some larger regional councils as well as certifiers and others involved in planning. Use of the portal had previously been required in some circumstances but the government's decision significantly changed the program's strategic risk environment, primarily because the program was now required to work more closely with councils and technology vendors that had been less engaged with the program.

Although the department understood that mandating the portal would have significant implications for councils and other users, it did not update its main change management approach, alter any key planning assumptions, or provide additional time or cost contingency to support the new mandatory use of the portal.

The decision to mandate the portal was announced in November 2019 but took effect on 1 July 2020 when the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Planning Portal) Regulation 2020 became effective. This required the portal to be used for all stages of development applications, as well as certificates for construction, sub-division works and occupation. Greater Sydney and some regional local government areas were required to do this by 31 December 2020, and this was extended to all local government areas by 1 July 2021.

On 1 July 2020, 68 out of 128 councils were using the development application lodgement service. The new mandatory requirement particularly affected the 60 other councils, as well as certifiers and other prospective users who had so far chosen not to adopt the portal for managing their development applications. These stakeholders were now required to use the portal. The new mandate required them to change aspects of their own systems and processes, irrespective of their quality or maturity. As a result of the mandate, many councils had to separate the integration of their planning systems from other council systems such as finance systems or property and rating systems. For these and some other users, the portal may bring more costs than benefits however it was beyond the scope of this audit to validate the costs to stakeholders.

The department's overall change management approach has matured but not significantly changed throughout the ePlanning program's lifecycle. The approach aims to promote the benefits of the portal to councils and other potential users. It involves:

- understanding the scale and scope of changes arising from implementation of the portal
- identifying and supporting sponsors and champions within councils
- promoting awareness and gaining acceptance of changes arising from implementation of the portal.

When use of the portal became mandatory, the department had to work more closely with a cohort of stakeholders, many of whom did not want to adopt the portal. This added complexity and difficulty to the program's efforts to ensure the widescale adoption of the planning portal by users.

The department responded by increasing the number of stakeholder engagements and prepared a regulation under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) that gave regional councils an additional six months to comply with the mandate. The department did not refine its planning assumptions or update its change management approach. The department also has not provided time contingency for the implementation challenges that it may still face in the remaining two years of the program.

The department did not update the third business case to reflect the higher benefits that were expected under the mandated portal

The decision to mandate the portal for the lodgement of all development applications increased the department's estimation of the benefits that were expected from the portal. This was because all councils and certifiers would be required to use the planning portal for this purpose by the end of 2020–21. This was earlier than they otherwise would have used the portal and four years sooner than the department was modelling in its third business case, which was draft at the time.

The decision to mandate the use of the planning portal for all development applications brought forward the expected benefits as well as potential costs of the ePlanning program. However, the department did not update the third business case to reflect the mandate. It instead continued to finalise the business case under its previous assumptions which included a much slower uptake of portal services by councils and other users.

Chapter 3 discusses the expected and reported benefits from the ePlanning program.

The department now has a clear view of the scope necessary to finalise the program

The department's third business case sets out a clear program of work. Once the business case is delivered, the planning portal will become part of the department's normal business operations. At that time, the portal will provide services which allow applicants to enquire, lodge and track planning applications, receive planning consent, and receive construction and other certificates. The business case includes additional services to link with some licensing decisions for complex and high-risk liquor and gaming decisions, as well as broadened and improved development application services. The services built under the third business case are designed to complement and build on those created under the first two business cases.

The department has recently re-activated a 'design authority', which is a key committee in the ePlanning program's governance. The design authority helps to ensure any additions to the program's scope are carefully considered. The design authority also advises the ePlanning steering committee on technical considerations such as standards for ePlanning, technology architecture arrangements, prospective new ePlanning services and opportunities to manage technology risk. The department intended that membership of the design authority would include an independent technical advisor, however at the time of the audit this position was unfilled.

The department's clear scope of services, supported by the design authority, means that it is now better positioned to manage the ePlanning scope through to the conclusion of the program in 2023.

A roadmap of planned services for calendar years 2022 and 2023 is not yet published

While the department's overall program planning disciplines have improved, it is still considering additions to its current program of work (such as changes to State Environment Planning Policies to support reforms in housing, design and place, and codes). While the program should respond to important new policy and other requirements, it should also aim to closely define its future program of work and clearly communicate this to stakeholders. However, it has not yet communicated the new services it plans to add, or improvements that it plans to make, to the portal over the remainder of the program.

Capital costs over the three business cases

Capital expenditure for the ePlanning program was \$119.6 million from July 2013 to December 2021. This was \$38.5 million or 47.5% more than expected. The majority of the overspend occurred under the second business case.

Exhibit 4: Capital expenditure for the ePlanning program 2013 to 2021

Business case	Planned (\$ million)	Actual (\$ million)
One	30.0	20.1
Two	21.8	58.7
Three (1 July 2020 to 31 December 2021)	29.3	40.9
Total	81.1	119.6

Note: The approved capital budget for business case three, which covers planned program expenditure through to 30 June 2023, is \$55.5 million.
Source: Audit Office of NSW analysis of Department of Planning and Environment documents.

2.3 Supporting users of the planning portal

The department's stakeholder management approach encourages stakeholder views to be considered in the program

The department has established a series of representative stakeholder groups to help ensure the system is well designed and targeted to user needs. The department's third business case identified over 100 stakeholders for the portal reforms. To help coordinate and manage the engagement with this large stakeholder group, the department has convened separate reference groups for industry, councils, certifiers and state government agencies. The department uses these reference groups to share information and seek feedback, including on the desirability of various features on the portal. The department also works with councils on a one-to-one basis to support the portal's adoption and uses feedback from stakeholders to improve the planning portal.

Training and support services are available to help developers, certifiers, councils and other stakeholders to use the system

The department runs training sessions and provides other information to stakeholders when it releases new functions on the portal. This includes:

- quick reference guides and similar 'how to' documents
- videos, articles and promotional material in a variety of industry and department publications
- in-person and remote training sessions.

From August to November 2021, the department delivered:

- over 100 sessions for councils and government agencies, attended by 2,215 people
- 17 sessions for certifiers and trade and industry representatives, attended by 200 people.

Some users report that the system can be difficult to use and creates additional work for them

The department uses feedback from stakeholders to improve the planning portal. The department operates a service desk which records and responds to customer queries. The department then analyses this data to identify and develop system improvements. The department also responds to feedback from the reference groups for industry, councils, certifiers and state government agencies. Despite this, some users consulted as part of this audit report that the system is not intuitive and creates additional work for them, primarily because the portal duplicates work that they carry out in their own systems.

The introduction of the portal has required councils to re-engineer aspects of their own business systems and create new ways of integrating council information systems with the state government's portal. Mandatory use of the portal has also required additional, ongoing work for some certifiers.

The department recognises that the planning portal does not currently deliver an optimum experience for all users. To address this, it has established a project to develop and release enhancements to the portal monthly until June 2022.

The department has performance targets for its user support activities but does not report its performance against them

In July 2020, the department and Local Government NSW agreed a Memorandum of Understanding which sets out obligations and expectations of the department and councils for the use of the planning portal. The agreement is non-binding but describes the intention of both parties to cooperate in a timely manner, act in good faith and manage any issues. The agreement also sets out target resolution times for incidents and planned customer support for the portal. This includes:

- level one queries which are handled by Service NSW via an online form, email or telephone between 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday
- level two queries which are escalated from Service NSW and are handled by the ePlanning program
- level three queries which are handled by the ePlanning program in consultation with external specialists.

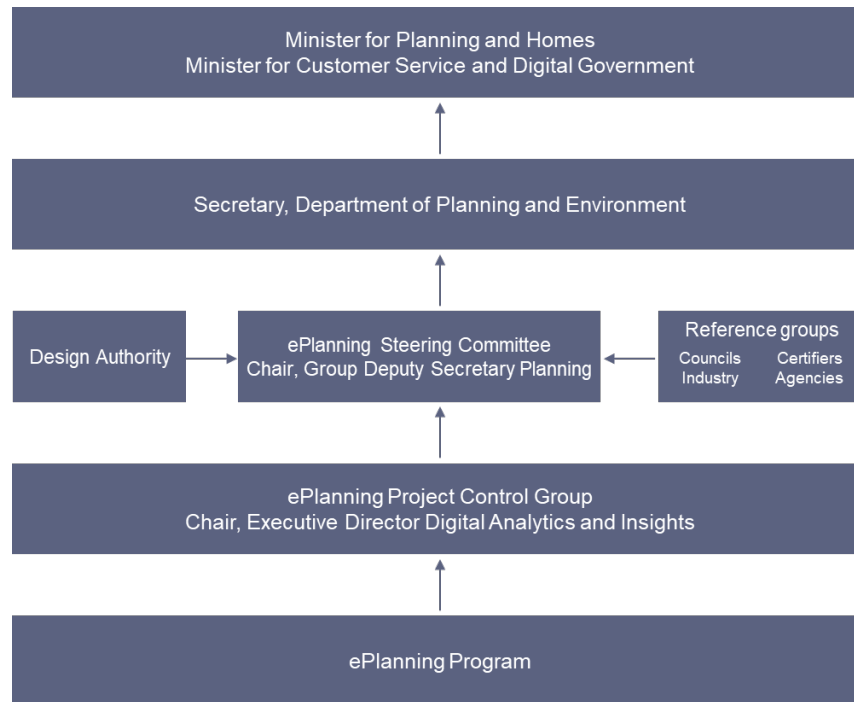
The department does not currently report to Local Government NSW its performance against the standards set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

2.4 Governing the ePlanning program

A senior-level steering committee governs the program

The ePlanning program is governed by a steering committee chaired by the department's Group Deputy Secretary Planning. The committee includes an external specialist and representatives from other government agencies and policy and operational areas within the department. The steering committee meets monthly and is supported by a design authority, a project control group and stakeholder reference groups.

Exhibit 5: ePlanning program governance 2020 to 2022



Source: Department of Planning and Environment.

The steering committee has managed key issues but has had less success in managing strategic risks

The steering committee has focused on issue management and general program oversight. These are important functions which cannot generally be delegated. As part of this, the steering committee has:

- commissioned the November 2017 review which led to the program being reset under new management with a changed operating model and new system design
- responded to mandatory assurance reviews such as those led by the department of Customer Service
- ensured the program received funding and resources
- maintained oversight of the actions to address identified program weaknesses.

The steering committee has not dedicated regular time to carry out strategic risk management and has not always sought information on strategic risks which would help it to discharge its important responsibilities. Particularly in the early years of the program, the steering committee's ability to govern the program was also hampered by the quality of information and analysis presented to it. For example, in November 2016 the program team provided the steering committee with a high-level roadmap leading up to the first major portal go-live. The roadmap consisted of four stages over the following seven months with a total of nine projects or activities. It did not show dependencies or provide contingencies or give any clear idea of where implementation risk was likely to be. This was despite the main rollout of services under the new portal being planned to commence only five months later.

The steering committee could have reduced the likelihood of issues impacting the program if it had reserved regular time to focus on strategic risk management. For example, the steering committee could have better managed the risks attached to:

- **the department's management of the implementation partner, as well as the quality of the portal delivered by the partner, rather than just its timeliness.** In January 2017 the steering committee received an extract from the program risk register which highlighted a risk of the 'inability of the implementation partner to reach the desired delivery date for the full solution'. This risk had been unreviewed for 12 months. The steering committee may have reduced the likelihood of the quality issues which effected the May 2017 pilot of the portal if it had sought a more timely and comprehensive consideration of the risks attached to the implementation partner
- **the new strategic risk environment after the decision to mandate the portal.** In November 2019 the New South Wales Government decided to mandate use of the portal for lodgement of development applications. This decision had wide-ranging and important implications for the program and significantly changed the program's strategic risk environment. However, the steering committee failed to seek a new risk assessment from the program. If it had done so, it may have identified and reduced change management and technology risks attached to use of the portal by councils.

More recently, the program and the steering committee have balanced their attention more evenly between issue management (addressing the existing and short-term actions required to keep the program on track) and strategic risk management (addressing the longer-term actions required to keep the program on track). The program has improved its risk surveillance and reporting. However, this overall improved risk management has not been consistently maintained by the department. For example, in April 2021 an external assurance review found that the steering committee was no longer receiving regular risk updates from the program. This practice was restarted soon after.

3. Benefits

This part of the report sets out the ePlanning program's:

- expected and reported financial benefits
- calculation of financial benefits.

In 2019, the department increased its expectations for net financial benefits

The department's three ePlanning business cases each forecast substantial financial benefits from the implementation of the planning portal. The department expected that most financial benefits would flow to planning applicants due to a quicker and more consistent planning process. It also expected that government agencies and councils would benefit from the portal.

Exhibit 6: Summary of the financial benefits originally expected

	Business case 1 (\$ million)	Business case 2 (\$ million)	Business case 3 (\$ million)	Total (\$ million)
Benefits	90.0	44.3	270.9	405.2
Costs	43.3	29.4	89.8	162.5
Net benefits	46.7	15.0	181.1	242.7

Note: Benefits and costs are incremental. All amounts are calculated over ten years. Amounts for business case 1, 2 and 3 amounts are expressed in 2013, 2015 and 2019 dollars respectively. All amounts are discounted at seven per cent to show their value at the time when they were calculated. Amounts may not add due to rounding.

Source: Audit Office analysis of data provided by the Department of Planning and Environment.

In 2019 the department commissioned a review to explore opportunities to better identify, monitor and realise the benefits of the ePlanning program. Using this work, the department updated the expected benefits for business cases 1 and 2 to take account of:

- errors and miscalculations in the original benefits calculations
- slower delivery of the portal and changes to the take-up of portal services by councils
- changes to the services supported by the portal.

Exhibit 7: Summary of the financial benefits expected for business case 1 and 2 after the 2019 update

	Original business case 1 and 2 (combined) (\$ million)	New business case 1 and 2 (combined) (\$ million)
Benefits	134.3	210.6
Costs	72.7	96.3
Net benefits	61.7	114.3

Note: Benefits and costs are incremental. All amounts are calculated over ten years. Amounts for the original business case 1 and 2 are expressed in 2013 and 2015 dollars respectively. The new combined amount is expressed in 2019 dollars. All amounts are discounted or inflated at seven per cent to show their value at the time when they were calculated. Amounts may not add due to rounding.

Source: Audit Office analysis of data provided by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Reported benefits significantly exceed the current targets

In September 2021, the department reported that the program had achieved \$334 million of benefits over the three financial years up to June 2021 plus the first two months of 2021–22. These reported benefits were significantly higher than expected.

Exhibit 8: Reported financial benefits from the ePlanning program

	2018–19 (\$ million)	2019–20 (\$ million)	2020–21 (\$ million)	July to August 2021 (\$ million)	Total (\$ million)
Benefits	5.2	68.8	214.7	45.1	333.8
Target	2.5	14.4	56.7	19.2	92.8
Amount and per cent above target	2.7 108%	54.4 378%	158 279%	25.9 135%	241 260%

Source: Audit Office analysis of data provided by the Department of Planning and Environment.

The department attributes the higher-than-expected financial benefits to the following:

- benefit targets have not been updated to reflect the impact of the 2019 decision to mandate the use of the portal for all development applications. This decision brought forward the expected benefits as well as potential costs of the program. However, the department did not update its third business case which was draft at the time. The business case was subsequently approved in July 2020
- one-off cost savings for agencies not having to develop their own systems
- public exhibitions of planning proposals continuing to be available online during 2020 when some newspapers stopping printing due to COVID-19.

The calculation of benefits is overstated

The department reported \$334 million of benefits in September 2021 due to the ePlanning program. This calculation is overstated because:

- a proportion of reported benefits is likely to be due to other planning reforms
- the calculation of the largest single benefit is incorrect
- the reported benefits may not fully account for dis-benefits reported by some stakeholders.

The program's benefits are calculated primarily from changes in planning performance data, such as the time it takes to determine a planning development application. The department currently attributes the benefits from shorter planning cycles entirely to the effect of the ePlanning program. However, planning cycles are impacted by many other factors such as the complexity of planning regulations and the availability of planning professionals. Planning cycles may also be impacted by other departmental initiatives which are designed to improve the time that it takes for a planning application to be evaluated. The Introduction describes some of these initiatives.

The largest contribution to the department's September 2021 benefit report was an estimated saving of \$151 million for developers due to lower costs associated with holding their investment for a shorter time. However, the department's calculation of this benefit assumes a high baseline for the time to determine a development application. It also assumes that all development applications except for additions or alterations to existing properties will incur financing costs. However, a small but material number of these applications will be self-financed. The calculation also includes several data errors in spreadsheets.

The calculation of some benefits relies upon an extrapolation of the benefits experienced by a small number of early-adopter councils, including lower printing and scanning costs, fewer forms and quicker processing times. However, some councils report that their costs have increased following the introduction of the portal, primarily because aspects of the portal duplicate work that they carry out in their own systems. The portal has also required some councils to re-engineer aspects of their own systems, such as the integration of their planning systems with other council systems such as finance or property and rating systems. It has also required councils to create new ways of integrating council information systems with the planning portal.

The department has published information to help councils and certifiers to automatically integrate their systems with the planning portal. This approach uses application programming interfaces (or APIs) which are an industry-standard way for systems to share information. In April and May 2021, the government granted \$4.8 million to 96 regional councils to assist with the cost of developing, implementing and maintaining APIs. The maximum amount of funding for each council was \$50,000. The department is closely monitoring the implementation of APIs by councils and other portal users. Once they are fully implemented the department expects APIs to reduce costs incurred by stakeholders.

The department has not yet measured stakeholder costs. It was beyond the scope of this audit to validate these costs.

The department has not independently assured the calculation of reported benefits

In 2020 the department appointed an external provider to calculate the benefits achieved by the ePlanning program. The department advised that it chose to outsource the calculation of benefits because the provider had the required expertise and because it wanted an independent calculation of the benefits. The process involves:

- extraction and verification of planning performance data by the department
- population of data input sheets by the department
- calculation of benefits by the external provider using the data input
- confirmation by the department that the calculation includes all expected benefit sources.

The department does not have access to the benefits calculation model which is owned and operated by the external provider. The department trusts that the provider correctly calculates the benefits and does not verify the reported benefit numbers. However, as the benefits model involves many linked spreadsheets and approximately 300 individual data points, there is a risk that the calculation model contains errors beyond those discussed in this audit.

The reported benefits have only been calculated since 2019

The department originally intended to track benefits from October 2014. However, it only started to track benefits in 2019 when it appointed an external provider to calculate the benefits achieved by the portal. Any benefits or dis-benefits between the introduction of the portal and 2019 are unknown and not included in the department's calculation of benefits.

Section two

Appendices

CL22.374 - Attachment 1

Appendix one – Response from agency



Office of the Secretary

IRF22/1882

Margaret Crawford
Auditor-General for New South Wales
Via email: mail@audit.nsw.gov.au

Dear Auditor-General

Thank you for your correspondence on 17 May 2022, attaching the NSW Audit Office Report (final).

I acknowledge and thank the Audit Office of NSW and its team for the collaborative approach taken with the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department), its stakeholders and specifically, our Digital Analytics and Insights team during the audit process.

The Department accepts and is already working to implement your three recommendations. We will provide a report to the Audit Office of NSW on our progress in December 2022.

I appreciate your acknowledgement that the Department's ePlanning program has progressively achieved its objectives and that our improvements to the planning, implementation and governance of the program has resulted in improved delivery.

At this point in time, the ePlanning program consists of nearly 30 digital planning services, has more than 180,000 registered users and has accepted more than 170,000 development applications. An adjustment period and stakeholder issues are to be expected when a digital transformation of this magnitude is progressively introduced.

I am pleased to say that more than 85 per cent of users gave the 'thumbs up' through the Department's customer service feedback widget.

As the number of digital planning services increases, the Department will intensify its work with its stakeholders, as well as adapt its change management approach by increasing training, customer support, communications, and stakeholder forum opportunities.

The ePlanning program has led the digital transformation of the NSW planning system from a heavily paper-based, low democratised and opaque system to one that is digital, transparent and provides access to near real-time data.

4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 | Locked Bag 5022 Parramatta NSW 2124 | planning.nsw.gov.au



As testament to this achievement, the NSW Government's ICT Assurance Review conducted in December 2020 noted that "the program had effectively adopted an agile development methodology which has contributed to a consistent record of delivery. This approach, along with a council stakeholder feedback loop, has contributed to a strong level of engagement with stakeholders and the continual improvement of the Portal".

Should you have any further inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Cassel".

Mick Cassel
Secretary
NSW Planning

8 June 2022

CC:



Appendix two – About the audit

Audit objective

This audit assessed the effectiveness of the Department of Planning and Environment's (the department) implementation, governance and stakeholder engagement in delivering the NSW planning portal.

Audit criteria

Criterion 1: Delivery of the NSW planning portal was planned effectively.

- The department had plans in place at each stage of the project and followed these plans.
- The department worked with all relevant stakeholders to understand business needs at the outset of each stage of the project.
- Significant variations to the project delivery approach, scope, budget and timeframe were justified, approved and supported by a revised business case.

Criterion 2: Sound governance arrangements are in place to ensure effective implementation of the program.

- The department uses a governance framework to support sound decision-making and monitor project implementation.
- The department effectively identifies, monitors and addresses key project risks and issues.
- The department is effectively measuring, monitoring and managing realisation of benefits.

Criterion 3: Users of the NSW planning portal are supported effectively to adopt and use the system.

- The department has developed and is implementing an effective stakeholder engagement strategy.
- The department has established an effective support function for internal and external users.
- The department has performance measures in place to provide support to system users and uses these measures to inform its ongoing support strategy.

Audit scope and focus

The audit assessed the effectiveness of the department's planning and implementation of the NSW planning portal. The audit focused on the department's decision-making in relation to the project, governance arrangements and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

The audit scope included:

- project implementation from 2013 to present
- project management and governance
- project scope, timeframes and budget management, including alterations made
- stakeholder consultation and support.

Audit exclusions

The audit did not seek to:

- comment on the merits of government policy objectives
- examine other programs and initiatives delivered as part of the ePlanning reforms
- examine implementation of ePlanning at councils
- validate reported benefits.

The audit does, however, comment on the above where these affect our findings and/or are contextually relevant.

Audit approach

The audit team conducted the audit in accordance with ASAE 3500 'Performance Engagements' and ASAE 3000 'Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information'. The standards require the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about an activity's performance against identified criteria and express a reasonable assurance conclusion against the audit objective.

Our procedures included:

1. Interviews and system demonstrations with the department's staff involved in the program. The audit involved consultation with other stakeholders including:
 - interviews with staff from select councils
 - interviews with key external stakeholder groups such as Local Government NSW
 - interviews with other relevant internal and external stakeholders.
2. Examining and analysing documents relating to planning and implementation of the program, including:
 - relevant legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines, ministerial circulars and ministerial orders
 - documentation/formal procedures and guidance around the delivery strategy and governance framework
 - documentation/formal procedures and guidance around risk management, such as risk management plan, risk registers, issues logs, minutes of meetings, etc.
 - program plans and business cases
 - program variations and corresponding formal approvals, justifications and revisions in business cases
 - implementation plans
 - scope, budget and timeframe management documents
 - benefits realisation assumptions and management documents
 - stakeholder engagement strategy
 - user support strategy, agreements and policies
 - minutes of meetings
 - emails and other correspondence
 - briefing and recommendations to decision-makers
 - delegations and approvals.
3. Analysing data:
 - project performance monitoring and evaluation
 - user support function, including user support performance measures and/or performance management data.

We also examined:

- documentation from other stakeholders obtained throughout the audit such as research and studies, statistical data and analysis.

The audit approach was complemented by quality assurance processes within the Audit Office to ensure compliance with professional standards.

Audit methodology

Our performance audit methodology is designed to satisfy Australian Audit Standard ASAE 3500 'Performance Engagements' and other professional standards. The standards require the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance and draw a conclusion on the audit objective. Our processes have also been designed to comply with requirements specified in the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance provided by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Audit cost

The estimated cost of this audit including disbursements is \$330,000.

Appendix three – Performance auditing

What are performance audits?

Performance audits determine whether State or local government entities carry out their activities effectively, and do so economically and efficiently and in compliance with all relevant laws.

The activities examined by a performance audit may include a government program, all or part of an audited entity, or more than one entity. They can also consider particular issues which affect the whole public sector and/or the whole local government sector. They cannot question the merits of government policy objectives.

The Auditor-General's mandate to undertake performance audits is set out in section 38B of the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983* for state government entities, and in section 421B of the *Local Government Act 1993* for local government entities.

Why do we conduct performance audits?

Performance audits provide independent assurance to the NSW Parliament and the public.

Through their recommendations, performance audits seek to improve the value for money the community receives from government services.

Performance audits are selected at the discretion of the Auditor-General who seeks input from parliamentarians, State and local government entities, other interested stakeholders and Audit Office research.

How are performance audits selected?

When selecting and scoping topics, we aim to choose topics that reflect the interests of parliament in holding the government to account. Performance audits are selected at the discretion of the Auditor-General based on our own research, suggestions from the public, and consultation with parliamentarians, agency heads and key government stakeholders. Our three-year performance audit program is published on the website and is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to address significant issues of interest to parliament, aligns with government priorities, and reflects contemporary thinking on public sector management. Our program is sufficiently flexible to allow us to respond readily to any emerging issues.

What happens during the phases of a performance audit?

Performance audits have three key phases: planning, fieldwork and report writing.

During the planning phase, the audit team develops an understanding of the audit topic and responsible entities and defines the objective and scope of the audit.

The planning phase also identifies the audit criteria. These are standards of performance against which the audited entity, program or activities are assessed. Criteria may be based on relevant legislation, internal policies and procedures, industry standards, best practice, government targets, benchmarks or published guidelines.

At the completion of fieldwork, the audit team meets with management representatives to discuss all significant matters arising out of the audit. Following this, a draft performance audit report is prepared.

The audit team then meets with management representatives to check that facts presented in the draft report are accurate and to seek input in developing practical recommendations on areas of improvement.

A final report is then provided to the head of the audited entity who is invited to formally respond to the report. The report presented to the NSW Parliament includes any response from the head of the audited entity. The relevant minister and the Treasurer are also provided with a copy of the final report. In performance audits that involve multiple entities, there may be responses from more than one audited entity or from a nominated coordinating entity.

Who checks to see if recommendations have been implemented?

After the report is presented to the NSW Parliament, it is usual for the entity's Audit and Risk Committee/Audit Risk and Improvement Committee to monitor progress with the implementation of recommendations.

In addition, it is the practice of Parliament's Public Accounts Committee to conduct reviews or hold inquiries into matters raised in performance audit reports. The reviews and inquiries are usually held 12 months after the report received by the NSW Parliament. These reports are available on the NSW Parliament website.

Who audits the auditors?

Our performance audits are subject to internal and external quality reviews against relevant Australian standards.

The Public Accounts Committee appoints an independent reviewer to report on compliance with auditing practices and standards every four years. The reviewer's report is presented to the NSW Parliament and available on its website.

Periodic peer reviews by other Audit Offices test our activities against relevant standards and better practice.

Each audit is subject to internal review prior to its release.

Who pays for performance audits?

No fee is charged to entities for performance audits. Our performance audit services are funded by the NSW Parliament.

Further information and copies of reports

For further information, including copies of performance audit reports and a list of audits currently in-progress, please see our website www.audit.nsw.gov.au or contact us on 9275 7100.

Professional people with purpose

OUR VISION

Our insights inform and challenge government to improve outcomes for citizens.

OUR PURPOSE

To help Parliament hold government accountable for its use of public resources.

OUR VALUES

Pride in purpose
Curious and open-minded
Valuing people
Contagious integrity
Courage (even when it's uncomfortable)

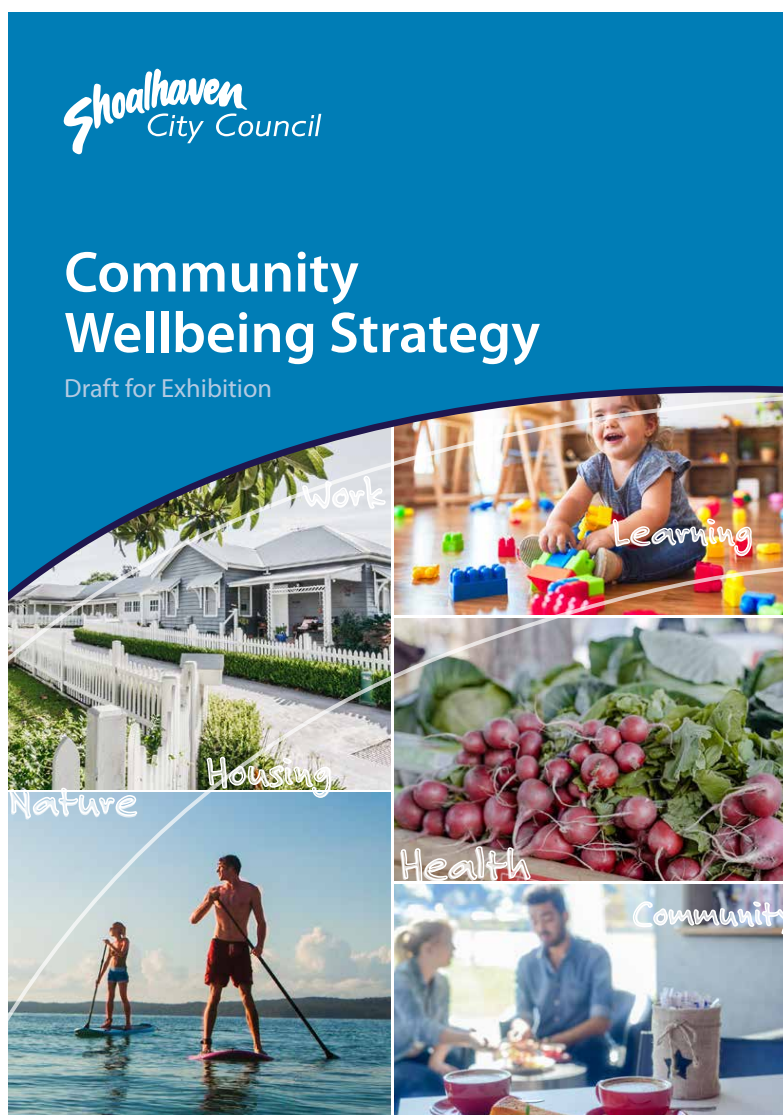
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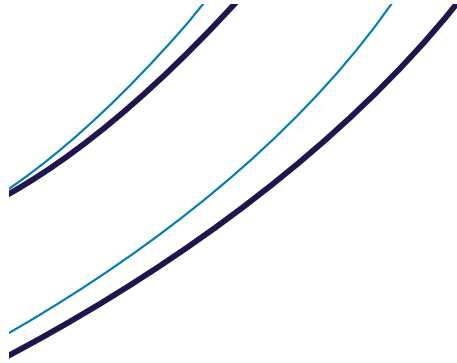
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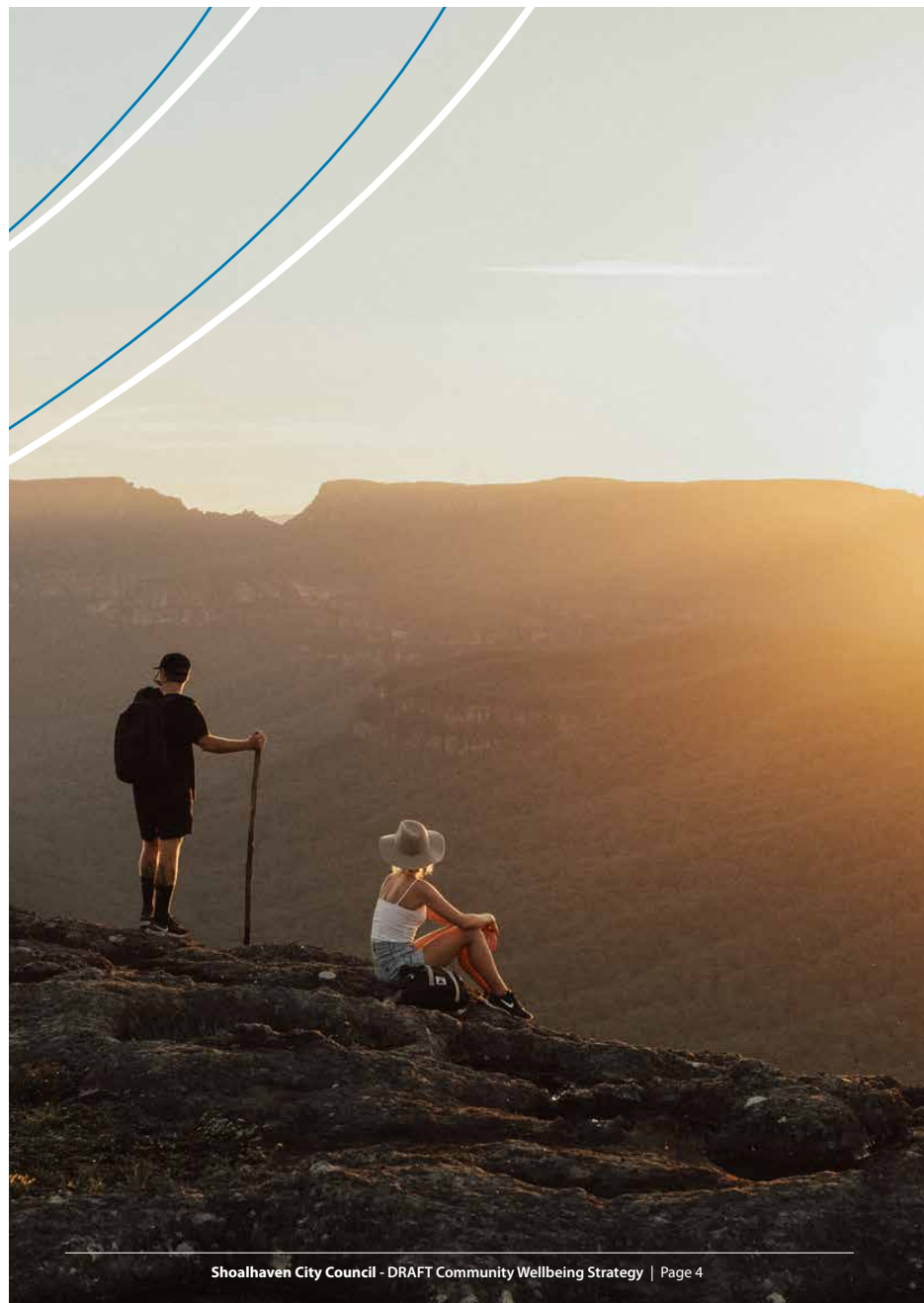
Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this country and their continuing connection to the land through culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

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Executive Summary

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan is a framework to guide Shoalhaven City Council in making business-planning decisions to improve community wellbeing.

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan will comprise:

- This document, the **Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy**, which identifies the strategic priorities for Council to improve community wellbeing. It will provide the strategic direction to guide development of the Action Plan and Evaluation Framework.
- The **Action Plan** will identify specific actions that will be used to achieve the outcomes identified for each strategic priority in the Strategy.
- The **Evaluation Framework** will allow Council to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of our work in terms of impact on wellbeing indicators.

The Plan will provide a tool that will support Council to evaluate the importance and effectiveness of our investments, programs and assets in achieving wellbeing outcomes and to plan evidence-informed work in response.

Approach

Wellbeing is the ability to thrive, to which all should have equitable access. Community wellbeing is a shared responsibility that requires all community stakeholders to work collaboratively to achieve shared goals and aspirations for wellbeing.

This Strategy identifies the foundations needed to create community wellbeing – the broad range of key things that the community needs to thrive, including both the places and the people that make up communities that support wellbeing.

Methodology

To develop the Strategy, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken to consider current research and ensure a contemporary understanding of community wellbeing. In addition, we heard from over 460 people in the Shoalhaven community, using surveys and community and stakeholder workshops and interviews. The Strategy is also informed by the perspectives of a broad range of experienced Council teams.

Council's role

Council is a key player in creating the conditions for wellbeing but cannot achieve community wellbeing alone. Recognising this, the Strategy supports Council to work more strategically and collaboratively to improve community wellbeing, considering how our efforts work alongside those of other stakeholders and valuing the important contribution that people in our community make to community wellbeing.

To create the conditions for individuals and communities to thrive, eight Foundations have been identified as integral for wellbeing. The key aspects of each Foundation form the Wellbeing Domains, which are summarised over the page.

The Strategy outlines Council's existing work contributing to each Domain, as well as opportunities for future work and the key partners who make each Domain happen in the Shoalhaven.

Foundations for Wellbeing

Foundation 1

Vibrant communities where everyone can participate and connect

Access to opportunities to participate and connect in the community and with culture

Domains:

1.1 Community life

People do things in their community and feel connected, included, community pride and belonging

1.2 Civic engagement and community agency

People actively participate in shaping their community and have a sense of shared responsibility

1.3 Creativity and culture

People value and celebrate creative and cultural expression (Participation in the arts, engagement with cultural events/activities that represent and reflect the community's stories, heritage and character)

Foundation 2

Lifelong learning and helping each other

Access to opportunities throughout life to learn, help others and be supported

Domains:

2.1 Training for employment

People have access to education to improve their employment opportunities

2.2 Learning opportunities for all ages

People have access to learning opportunities to build skills for enjoyment and to build capacity; Children and their families/carers have support for early childhood development

2.3 Local community supports

People have access to well-resourced local support services; People volunteer to help others in the community

Foundation 3

Safe and prepared communities

Safety in relationships, in the community and during emergencies

Domains:

3.1 Safe built environment

People experience safety in community spaces

3.2 Safe behaviour and healthy relationships

People feel safe with others and are supported by healthy, respectful relationships

3.3 Prepared for disasters and emergencies

People are prepared for disasters; Emergency Managers are ready to keep people safe during disasters and emergencies

Foundation 4

Healthy and active communities

Access to opportunities to live healthy and active lifestyles

Domains:

4.1 Health services and support

People have good access to health services and supports

4.2 Places and programs for active lifestyles

People have access to green space and facilities for active recreation, play and walking; People have access to sports and active recreational activities

4.3 Healthy and equitable food systems

People have equitable access to healthy food

Foundation 5

Transport connections to access our community's opportunities

Access to transport infrastructure and services so we can participate in life

Domains:

5.1 Active transport

People access places and services in their community by walking or cycling; People with additional access needs can get around

5.2 Transport facilities and services

People can get around with public transport and other transport services; People have good facilities when using public transport

5.3 Road access

People can get around by road

Foundation 6

Sustainable natural and built environments

Sustainable access to natural resources by managing our impact on them

Domains:

6.1 Sustainable management of natural resources

People can access our natural resources in a way that supports the long-term sustainability of them.

6.2 Sustainable access to natural environments

People can enjoy our natural environment in a way that is sustainable for future generations (Natural environments are sustainably managed so people will have access in the future)

6.3 Sustainable built environment

People are supported to understand sustainable building and to build sustainably

Foundation 7

Housing that meets the community's needs

Access to secure and affordable housing that meets our households' needs

Domains:

7.1 Housing security for people of all income levels and tenure types

People can live without housing stress; People can access social and Affordable dwellings

7.2 Housing for people with access and support needs

People can access adaptable and accessible dwellings; People can live in supported accommodation

7.3 Housing for residents

People can live where resident communities live (the majority of housing is available for residents)

Foundation 8

Resilient local economies and inclusive economic opportunities

Access to secure employment opportunities and income to provide for our households

Domains:

8.1 Economic opportunity

People have secure employment; People have income to meet their household's needs; People have equitable access to material and social resources

8.2 Economic diversity

People have local employment opportunities in diverse and resilient industries



Message from the Mayor

Title

Content

Amanda Findley
Mayor



Message from the CEO

Title

Content

Stephen Dunshea
Chief Executive Officer

“Everything we value in life
(such as health, fairness, freedom, the economy, the
environment or anything else)
matters because it contributes to the wellbeing
of current and future generations”
- Action for Happiness

“The purpose of
public policy and community action
is to improve people’s lives.”
– What Works Centre for Wellbeing

Introduction

Purpose of document

The purpose of the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan is to create a framework to guide Shoalhaven City Council in making business-planning decisions to improve community wellbeing. The Plan will provide a tool that will support Council to evaluate the importance and effectiveness of our investments, programs and assets in achieving wellbeing outcomes and to plan evidence-informed work in response. The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan has three components:

- This document, the **Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy**, identifies the strategic priorities for Council to improve community wellbeing. Guided by the strategic direction of this document, the two components below will be developed.
- The **Action Plan** will identify specific actions that will be used to achieve the outcomes identified for each strategic priority in the Strategy.
- The **Evaluation Framework** will allow Council to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of our work in terms of impact on wellbeing indicators.

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy is informed by international, national, state and regional strategies and legislation, as well as by *Shoalhaven 2032 – Community Strategic Plan*. As a strategic document created to guide decision-making, the Strategy will inform the development of future plans and policies used by Council to implement work-planning decisions.



Defining Wellbeing

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan uses the following definition of wellbeing, which is based on the literature review and community engagement described in the 'Methodology for Understanding Wellbeing' section.

Wellbeing is not the absence of problems but the ability to thrive, to which all should have equitable access. To thrive is to flourish and do well, to develop or grow vigorously, be healthy and strong.

The wellbeing of individuals and communities is shaped by where and how we live. Since the foundations for wellbeing are largely social in nature, creating the conditions for wellbeing requires a whole-of-community focus.

Approach to Community Wellbeing

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy has been developed based on the principle that community wellbeing is a shared responsibility that requires all community stakeholders to work collaboratively to achieve shared goals and aspirations for wellbeing.

In response, this Strategy identifies the foundations needed to create community wellbeing – the broad

range of key things that the community needs to thrive. Wellbeing requires both healthy built environments and healthy social environments: the places AND the people that make up communities that support wellbeing.

This approach recognises that Council is a key player in creating the conditions for wellbeing but cannot achieve community wellbeing alone. The approach supports Council to work more strategically and collaboratively to improve community wellbeing, considering how our efforts work alongside those of other stakeholders and valuing the important contribution that people in our community make to community wellbeing.

Vision for Community Wellbeing

The Shoalhaven is a place where everyone can thrive. It is a place where people and communities have equitable access to the foundations for wellbeing, which are the conditions and opportunities they need to improve their quality of life and to thrive.

Shoalhaven City Council works together with the community to facilitate wellbeing in the Shoalhaven. Since community wellbeing is a shared responsibility that requires all community stakeholders to work collaboratively, we work strategically to align our work with the work that residents, community groups, government and the private sector do to improve community wellbeing.

Methodology for understanding wellbeing

To develop the Foundations and Domains that underpin the Strategy, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken to consider current research and ensure a contemporary understanding of community wellbeing. In addition, we asked the Shoalhaven community about their experiences and ideas, hearing from over 460 people using surveys, community and stakeholder workshops and interviews. The Strategy is also informed by the perspectives of a broad range of experienced Council teams.

Literature and statistics review

Research covered a literature and data review from academic and practice-levels, at the international level, Australian federal and state levels and local government publications and policies. Population and health statistics for the Shoalhaven and its sub-regions were drawn from a range of sources (details of the demographic and health studies consulted are provided at Appendix 2). Literature and data sources included:

- World Health Organisation and the international health sector
- Australian federal and state health, planning and infrastructure sectors
- Australian university sector and non-government organisations
- Local government in NSW and other Australian states
- Australian Bureau of Statistics' Census of Population and Housing
- NSW agencies including Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District and Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan
- Council surveys including Community Satisfaction Survey and Housing Affordability Strategy

When considering the factors that contribute to individual health and wellbeing, the literature identifies that the nature and scope of individual action is influenced by our individual makeup, life circumstances such as where you have spent your time, family circumstances, education and employment opportunities. One significant model building on the WHO definition is the 'Social

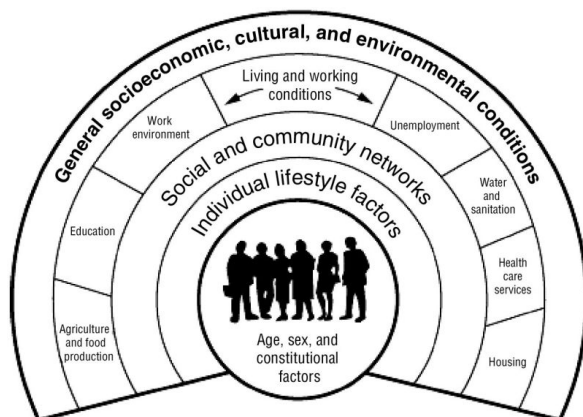


Figure 1. Social Determinants of Health

SOURCE: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991) Dahlgren G, Whitehead M. 1991. Policies and Strategies to Promote Social Equity in Health. Stockholm, Sweden: Institute for Futures Studies.

Determinants of Health', summarised in Figure 1. This model recognises the breadth of factors influencing individual health and wellbeing, ranging from individual genetics to broader society-based determinants such as lifestyle and social networks and, more broadly, to social and cultural context. A detailed discussion of the concept of individual and community wellbeing, and references consulted, is provided at Appendix 1.

Local and international literature emphasises the role of all levels of government in contributing to wellbeing. Local government, including in the Shoalhaven, has a long-standing involvement in supporting individual and community wellbeing, particularly through activities like providing parks and recreational facilities. In Victoria, all councils must have a Social Plan addressing wellbeing, with resources available to guide the process and content. The literature review also considered similar documents for other Australian states, New Zealand and further afield internationally. Aspects of wellbeing highlighted in the literature included active living and 'liveability', with numerous research papers, advice and initiatives focused on local government.

The Shoalhaven is a unique series of places with a diverse population. It covers over 4,500km² of beautiful coastline and forest, with 49 settlements ranging from tight-knit villages to small regional towns. With 74% of the land area designated as National Park, there are 275 threatened species and 16 threatened ecological communities. The estimated population in 2021 was 108,892, of which 6.5% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (compared to 3.4% for NSW). Census 2021 data also shows we have an ageing population, with 69.7% over 30 years old (63.1% for NSW) and 28.0% over 65 years old (17.6% for NSW). Of the LGA's 38,909-strong labour force, 77.5% (30,153) also work in the area and are part of producing an \$11.4 billion in annual economic output (2016 Census). More information on population characteristics is provided at Appendix 2.

At the time this Strategy was developed, data from the 2021 Census was available for some population characteristics but was not yet available for all characteristics. As the Strategy was researched and drafted, statistics and trends resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic were emerging, including impacts on health, housing prices and the local economy. Monitoring of trends will continue and will be addressed as future versions of the Strategy are produced.

Community engagement

In developing the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy, we heard from over 460 people in the community using surveys, workshops and interviews with residents, service providers, community organisations and Council teams. This approach allowed us to hear from people across the Shoalhaven, including engagement targeted to hear from young people and seniors, and to also learn from the insights of experienced Council staff.

The research was used to inform community engagement, and the results of the community surveys, workshops and interviews refined the Strategy's priority areas and objectives. Initial interviews with key Council staff crystallised the information from literature and initial engagement into four focus areas that were the basis of the detailed survey work. The results of the survey informed further development and identification of the Foundations and Domains.

Insights from the community and stakeholder engagement specific to each Foundation are presented throughout this Strategy. A summary of the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement is detailed in Engagement Outcomes report accompanying the Strategy. Feedback on the draft Strategy will also be sought from the community through public exhibition and a follow-up workshop with external stakeholders.

The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy conducted for this Strategy consisted of the following elements:

- Community surveys. A preliminary online survey asked initial questions and sought community interest in participating in the community workshops. The preliminary survey and workshops informed the development and delivery of the detailed community survey.
- Community workshops. This consisted of two online workshops open to the whole community (with participants drawn from the preliminary survey) and targeted workshops with seniors and young people. A proposed workshop with the Aboriginal community was replaced by three targeted interviews. Community engagement undertaken as part of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan review was also used to inform the Strategy.
- Detailed interviews with service providers, Councillors and Council teams

D. Workshops with service providers and Council teams

The engagement showed that residents are feeling the impacts of a rapidly changing world, and that some groups are particularly hard-hit. The community place high importance on neighbourhood connections and local public places, as well as access to the natural environment and support services as sources of wellbeing. The challenges of climate change and natural disasters, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, growing financial stress, and increased risks of mental illness and social isolation are being felt by everyone in Shoalhaven (indeed the world), but may be affecting people in different ways.

While the community rated their overall wellbeing as slightly better than neutral, significant, and longer-term challenges are mounting and have a direct impact on wellbeing. Growing financial stress and the pressures of maintaining a roof over their family's head was nominated as the number one factor that was impacting on the community's health. This stress was also identified as the cause of several other key health concerns, with participants nominating cost as the number one barrier to improving health, and work-life balance being another major stress in people's lives.

Assets identified in the Shoalhaven were the natural environment, strong neighbourhoods and a community-mindedness, expressed through concern for looking after people affected by the current pressures of living. The key priorities identified by the community were access to health services, greater transport connectivity, improved access to open space, resilient and connected neighbourhoods, and addressing financial stress. Other key issues raised were physical activity, healthy and safe built environments, access to healthy food, housing, employment and education.

Interviews with the Aboriginal community highlighted the need to raise awareness of Aboriginal culture and its importance to Aboriginal people, the significance of contact with the land and ensuring a voice in Council decisions, including appropriate engagement and awareness of cultural protocol.

Staff guidance

From commencement, the project was managed by Council staff, including continued input throughout from a Project Control Group. Initial interviews with key Council staff crystallised the information from

literature, interviews, workshops and surveys into four focus areas that were the basis of the detailed survey work. The staff workshops added detail to the Strategy on current activities and future directions. Feedback on the draft Strategy was received from a broad section of Council staff, acknowledging the cross-sectional relevance of Council activities and wellbeing outcomes.

Council's role

Community wellbeing is a shared responsibility to which everyone needs to contribute. Community wellbeing requires all levels of community stakeholders to work collaboratively to achieve shared goals and aspirations for wellbeing. Key partners in achieving community wellbeing include:

- Government organisations at all levels
- Non-profit organisations and institutions
- Local businesses and other private sector entities
- Community groups and local residents

Local government is a key player in creating the conditions for community wellbeing. As well as working in partnership with other stakeholders, Council directly delivers services and activities that influence community wellbeing. A wide range of facilities and activities are provided by Shoalhaven City Council with the purpose of improving wellbeing – creating the conditions in the Shoalhaven that allow people here to thrive.

Local government is uniquely placed to have strategic oversight and give strategic guidance to the way the local community changes and develops over time. This unique position can be used to encourage changes that improve community wellbeing. Local government can influence change in the community through the provision of diverse services including infrastructure planning and management, provision of activities and programs, strategic planning of land-use development, delivery of a range of regulatory functions, as well as advocacy and working in partnership.

Recognising the need for a collaborative approach to community wellbeing, this Strategy supports Council to work more strategically by considering how our efforts work alongside those of other stakeholders and valuing the important contribution that people in our community make to community wellbeing. As well as working in partnership with residents, community groups, other levels of government and

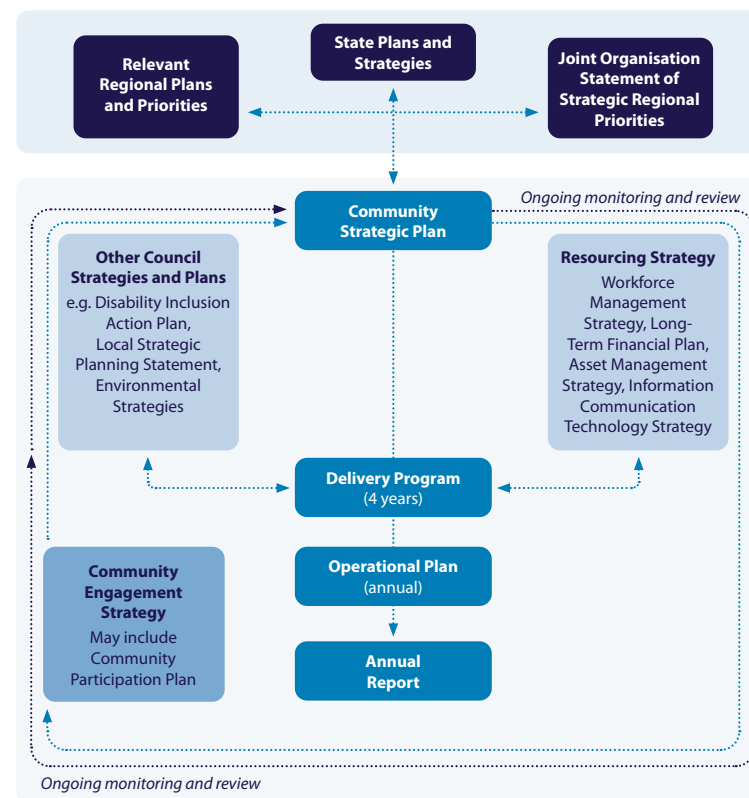
the private sector, Council can perform a connective function in co-ordinating and facilitating networks that improve local collaboration.

The work of local government is resourced through the collection of rates, funding from other levels of government and grant-making entities, and by charging fees for the services they provide. This Strategy identifies the priorities for improving community wellbeing, but specific actions to address the priorities and resourcing to be used will be

identified in the Action Plan.

Legislation, planning framework and policy context

The Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy is informed by the themes and priorities of *Shoalhaven 2032 – Community Strategic Plan* as well as Council's Core Values of **Collaboration, Adaptability, Integrity and Respect**. It is informed by international, national, state and regional strategies and legislation. As a strategic document created to guide decision-



(Figure 2): Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

making, the Strategy will inform the development of future plans and policies used by Council to implement work-planning decisions.

The activities of councils in NSW are primarily guided by the Local Government Act 1993, which sets out the responsibilities and powers of councils. The Act sets out principles that provide guidance to enable councils to carry out their functions in a way that facilitates local communities that are strong, healthy and prosperous. These principles include that councils should:

- Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- Plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- Work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- Work co-operatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- Make decisions in a way that is transparent and accountable, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles

The Local Government Act 1993 requires all NSW councils to use an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework that begins with talking with the community to identify the community's aspirations for the next 10 or more years. Using a suite of integrated plans, councils are required to set out the community's vision, as well as goals and strategic actions to achieve them. The documents that make up the IP&R Framework are outlined in Figure 2. The primary strategic document for Shoalhaven City Council is Shoalhaven 2032 – Community Strategic Plan (CSP), the long-term plan guiding Council's action over the next 10 years. Alignment between the CSP Priorities and the Foundations for Wellbeing from the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy is addressed in the following section on 'Council's Strategic Outcomes'.

This Strategy has been created to guide decision-making. It will inform the development of future plans and policies that Council uses to implement work-planning decisions. As the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy is used, it will influence decisions about the work included in future Delivery Programs and Operational Plans – the documents detailing Council's strategies and actions that will be undertaken.

Another key piece of legislation influencing Council's work is the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, which requires local government to carry out land-use planning roles in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources.

Council performs a broad range of functions, and this diverse work is guided by state and federal legislation requirements, regional plans, as well as Council's own policies and strategies. In addition to having a range of responsibilities and powers under both state and federal laws, local governments can also use local laws to respond to issues and community needs within a municipality. The legislative responsibilities and guiding strategic documents relevant to each Domain are listed throughout the Strategy, including those related to the Local Government Act 1993 and Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979. Beyond the minimum legislative requirements, there are a range of initiatives councils can consider to improve amenity and wellbeing within their communities. All work needs to be carried out in a way that meets the requirements of any relevant legislation, though this is not within the scope of this document.

Council's strategic outcomes

Shoalhaven 2032 – Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is Shoalhaven City Council's long-term plan that outlines the key priorities and aspirations identified by the Shoalhaven community for the future. It guides Council's action over the next 10 years. Below is a table identifying the alignment between the CSP Priorities and the Foundations for Wellbeing from the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy. The priorities listed are from the exhibited draft CSP 2032 and will be updated following adoption of the final CSP 2032 by Council.

Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Foundation	Shoalhaven 2032 – Community Strategic Plan Priority
1. Vibrant communities where everyone can participate and connect	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 1.2 Preserve, support and develop cultural and creative vitality across our communities 3.2 Deliver safe, vibrant & attractive public spaces 4.3 Inform and engage with the community about the decisions that affect their lives
2. Lifelong learning and helping each other	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 1.3 Support community wellbeing through fostering active and healthy communities 2.1 Manage our infrastructure and assets for long term sustainability to meet community need
3. Safe and prepared communities	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 2.1 Manage our infrastructure and assets for long term sustainability to meet community need 3.2 Deliver safe, vibrant & attractive public spaces
4. Healthy and active communities	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 1.3 Support community wellbeing through fostering active and healthy communities 2.1 Manage our infrastructure and assets for long term sustainability to meet community need
5. Transport connections to access our community's opportunities	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 2.1 Manage our infrastructure and assets for long term sustainability to meet community need 2.2 Manage growth and development with respect for environmental & community values
6. Sustainable natural and built environments	2.2 Manage growth and development with respect for environmental & community values 2.3 Protect the natural environment and enhance sustainability 4.1 Deliver reliable, high-quality services
7. Housing that meets the community's needs	1.1 Support inclusive, safe and connected communities 1.3 Support community wellbeing through fostering active and healthy communities 2.2 Manage growth and development with respect for environmental & community values
8. Resilient local economies and inclusive economic opportunities	2.2 Manage growth and development with respect for environmental & community values 3.1 Strengthen and diversify the economy 3.2 Deliver safe, vibrant & attractive public spaces



Foundations for Wellbeing

To create the conditions for individuals and communities to thrive, eight Foundations have been identified as integral for wellbeing. The key aspects of each Foundation have been identified and form the Domains of the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Strategy

Council's existing work contributing to each Domain has been outlined. This includes work carried out as part of legislative responsibilities, in addition to initiatives beyond legislative requirements. It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive listing of Council's work for each Domain. Also outlined are opportunities for future work that could be considered, and the key partners in community wellbeing who make each Domain happen in the Shoalhaven.

Each individual Foundation and Domain is needed for community wellbeing in the Shoalhaven. Due to the inter-related nature of the aspects of wellbeing, it should be noted that one action can contribute to multiple Foundations and Domains. Impact across multiple Foundations can be an indicator of integrated, socially sustainable and well-designed actions.



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Foundation
1

Vibrant communities where everyone can participate and connect

*Access to opportunities to participate and connect in
the community and with culture*

1.1

Community Life

People do things in their community and feel connected, included, community pride and belonging.

Participation in local activities is vital for forming social connections that develop a sense of belonging and connection to the community. When people come together as a community, they feel community pride and develop community identity. This contributes to a vibrant community life that supports individual wellbeing and resilience. Public health and epidemiology literature shows that social connectedness protects and promotes mental health, 2018 research found that social connectedness can act as a 'social cure' for psychological ill-health¹. Research in 2021 found that the influence of social relationships extends beyond emotional well-being to influence long-term physical-health outcomes, including mortality risk².

For the community to come together, they need inclusive community gathering spaces. Traditional community halls are used for diverse range of group gathering, including resident meetings and family celebrations. Outdoor community spaces allow organised community events and informal gatherings and, when these spaces are in local centres, contribute to more vibrant places. Contemporary practice for community facilities is moving towards providing spaces that can support a range of community uses, such as outdoor "community loungerooms" which can be used for a full range of community activities, from regular group meetings to informal gatherings and community events. Libraries are increasingly multi-purpose, used for community gatherings ranging from informal knitting groups and parents' groups to community events like talks by local guest speakers.

Streets are important community spaces, most physical activity occurs in streets, at the neighbourhood level and in towns and villages, supporting incidental interactions with neighbours and people from our broader community. Council can design and manage streets to promote community activity and amenity level, including through public domain works like traffic calming measures, maintenance of roadside parks and tree planting programs. 2002 research in Perth suggests that perceived quality of public open space and shops is strongly associated with sense of community, irrespective of whether those spaces were used frequently. Considering this research, policies and plans to support high quality public spaces, particularly shops and open space, could be focused on vibrant town centres³.

Activities and programs can't happen without a suitable space, but facilitators of programs and activities are also needed for community spaces to be filled with community life. Whilst Council delivers activities and programs, the diverse range of community groups across the Shoalhaven are essential partners in providing people with access to opportunities for local participation in community events and activities. The capacity of community partners can be improved through supports such as community grant programs and opportunities to build and share skills, which may be targeted to disadvantaged or diverse groups to improve inclusion.



What the community told us

A lack of places to come together in the Shoalhaven, as reported by Community Wellbeing Survey participants, highlights a desire for social infrastructure (sporting facilities, libraries, community centres, etc) that leverages the region's natural landscape and embrace residents' desire to come together in an outdoor setting. However, the *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017-2036* identifies a surplus of community infrastructure for the needs of the current and future populations, highlighting the challenges of meeting community expectations with available resources.

Young people emphasised their need for recreational spaces, highlighting that across the entire LGA there were not many spaces where they felt welcome and safe. More recreational/social facilities and more festivals and events were the most popular ways for Council to better support young people, as named by Youth Workshop participants.

Participants from both the workshops and community survey acknowledged the importance of organised events to foster community spirit and create a broader sense of connection across the entire Shoalhaven. Opportunities identified by the community ranged from revitalising town centres and multipurpose community centres to smaller-scale meeting points linked to environmental attractions.

"Empower villages - communities to lead their own inclusion and diversity events and programs to build cohesion and breakdown racial barriers" – Online survey participant

"Town centres are the heart of any community and as such need to be thriving and vibrant to provide a secure sense of community." – Online survey participant

"People living in Nowra (like in the beach suburbs...) want to feel proud of their surroundings" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Plan, design and manage public space and community spaces that facilitate community connection and community gathering, including community facilities, outdoor community spaces, streets and roadside verges. Community facilities providing low-cost community space include halls, recreation centres and libraries.
- Facilitate community activities, by providing activities (for example, at Shoalhaven Libraries) and supporting community partners with grant programs, training opportunities and networks. Council also provides financial support for events through the Council Donations Policy, Fee Waivers for community groups and the Shoalhaven Tourism Event Support Program.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Create more vibrant town and village centres with a strong sense of place and community, with community, business and other stakeholders delivering activation strategies that foster community connections and enhance spaces providing informal opportunities for people to interact. Also listed under 8.2 Economic diversity.
 - Create a co-ordinated program of diverse community events across the Shoalhaven for all residents (including younger and older people) and visitors, and considering how transport connections can be improved.
 - Build capacity of community partners to collaborate and be well-informed, to provide outreach services (including via transport), to recognise and celebrate volunteers, and to build local neighbourhood connections. Also listed under 2.3 Local community supports, 4.1 Health services and support.
 - Develop the role of Shoalhaven Libraries as the curator of a program of opportunities for local participation, facilitated by community partners such as parents' groups, knitting groups and community event organisers.
 - Accommodate service providers and community groups in Council buildings in exchange for provision of programs that meet community needs and activate community spaces. Also listed under 2.3 Local community supports.
 - Better understand the needs and challenges of young people in relation to participating in community life.

- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:

- Implementation of the provision strategy for open space, recreational equipment, community facilities and youth spaces to equitably meet the needs of community members of all ages across the Shoalhaven, identifying resourcing needed for delivery and informed by engagement on contemporary community use of community infrastructure. This could consider ways to support activation of town and village centres, climate resilience and adaption, flexible and multipurpose infrastructure, the needs of young people and older people, and small interventions to provide meeting points in key environmental sites. Also listed under 4.2 Places and programs for active lifestyles.

- Easy booking of facilities, parks and civic spaces by community partners that deliver events and programs that activate community places.

- Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- Wollongong Library's Comic Gong is an annual pop culture festival that celebrates comics, graphic novels, gaming and cosplay. It demonstrates fun, inclusive and effective engagement of people of all ages, attracting more than 10,000 people each year.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community: local community groups including youth groups, seniors' groups, parents' groups, Community Consultative Bodies and more – everyone who lives, works and studies in the Shoalhaven.
- Non-profit organisations and service providers delivering local activities and programs
- Local businesses providing social gathering spaces, managing privately-owned public space and interfacing with public space
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government grant providers

1.2

Civic engagement and community agency

People actively participate in shaping their community and have a sense of shared responsibility.

People thrive when they feel empowered to create change and they actively participate in community action to shape their community as a place where they want to live. Research in 2018 found promising quantitative and qualitative evidence that wellbeing was improved by community development projects that meaningfully involved community members in decisions that could change the material and/or social conditions they live in⁴.

This domain is about empowering communities to work together on local initiatives independently and in partnership with other stakeholders. Civic engagement and community agency require people to have the capacity to contribute, empowered with the knowledge, skills and confidence to participate

in community-shaping processes. It also requires access to inclusive opportunities to get involved and influence decisions affecting their lives. Council can support meaningful participation in local decisions and resident-led initiatives through improving capacity and inclusive opportunities to participate.



What the community told us

Survey participants identified the impact of “community led programs – for community by community” in creating local change, recognising that this empowers villages and improves inclusion at a grassroots level. Community-led programs also reflect the unique characteristics and needs of the diverse local communities they are led by.

Interviews with Aboriginal community members raised the need to improve engagement with Aboriginal communities, to improve their ability to participate in Council decisions. This requires an awareness of cultural protocols and how they impact on engagement and implementation of programs.

“Empower more community led projects, enable communities to lead decision making that improves communities for community.” – Online survey participant

“An external agency can’t do much for the community. Got to come from the community. We need to foster ‘champions’, with technical assistance from staff and state agencies” – Councillor interview

“The community associations are a great forum for improving the local area but it is difficult to get young people there (i.e. under 55) to give their opinions” – Online survey participant

“After the year that was, I feel that our community are very keen to reconnect - socialise and support improvements to our park assets, natural areas and footpaths to improve our infrastructure whilst protecting our beautiful natural environment. Maybe consider a “make it happen” in your village campaign to educate community on how easy it could be to mobilise communities to work together and improve our villages... just a thought following the success of our committee.” – Online survey participant

Future directions

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Actively engage with local communities and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Produce and implement a Community Engagement Strategy (*Local Government Act 1993*) and a Community Participation Plan (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*) setting out how community members can participate in Council's strategic planning and development assessment processes.
- Produce and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (*NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*) setting out the actions Council will undertake to improve the access to participation for people with disability. The actions identified in this plan impact delivery of services related to all domains of the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide inclusive community engagement opportunities for a diverse range of Council projects across the Shoalhaven, using both face-to-face activities and online platforms.
- Facilitate advisory committees covering a diverse range of perspectives and groups in the community
- Work with community and resident groups to support communities across the Shoalhaven to be informed and participate in local decisions.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Help the community understand and participate in local decision-making processes.
 - Improve the way engagement opportunities consider the cultural needs and barriers of Aboriginal people, working with the local Aboriginal community.
 - Improve the way community-led strategic plans are developed and used to support community wellbeing.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Participation in processes and decisions by disengaged and vulnerable people in the community who experience barriers to participation.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community: local community groups including youth groups, seniors' groups, parent groups, Community Consultative Bodies, advisory committee members and more – everyone who lives, works and studies in the Shoalhaven.
- Service providers and non-profit organisations delivering local programs to improve participation in community leadership and local decision-making.
- Office of Local Government providing advice on implementing the IP&R process (including the CSP process).
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government grant-providers.

1.3

Creativity and culture

People value and celebrate creative and cultural expression (Participation in the arts, engagement with cultural events/activities that represent and reflect the community's stories, heritage and character).

Create NSW defines 'culture' as the production, distribution and participation in creativity and the reflection and expression of the community's customs, traditions, heritage and social character. It includes visual arts and crafts, media and digital arts, film, performing arts, literature and archival preservation².

Cultural vitality is developed through participation in the arts, access to opportunities for creative expression, and engagement with cultural events that represent and reflect the distinctive characteristics of the community. When we value and celebrate creative and cultural expression as a community, we share and reflect on our experiences and build understanding and connection in the community, improving tolerance, inclusion and resilience. Visitor surveys conducted by the Shoalhaven Regional Gallery in 2021 showed that 91% of respondents agreed that their visit helped them enjoy a greater quality of life, with 85% agreeing that their visit helped them feel like part of the community.

Cultural facilities are places provided to facilitate cultural expression, including arts centres, galleries,

and heritage facilities such as museums and heritage walks. Public art creates places of cultural expression that are publicly-accessible and make for more vibrant community places. Whilst Council delivers cultural activities and programs, access to opportunities for celebration of culture across the Shoalhaven relies on community partners including cultural groups, arts groups, historical societies and owners of items of heritage significance. The capacity of community partners can be improved through supports such as grant programs and training or networking opportunities.

Shoalhaven Council recognises Aboriginal people as the first people of Australia and is committed to building mutually respectful and collaborative relationships with Aboriginal communities of the Shoalhaven. Recognising the unique connection Aboriginal people have with Country, it is important that local Aboriginal communities have control and ownership of initiatives to celebrate local Aboriginal culture and foster understanding in the broader community.



What the community told us

Survey participants were asked to identify priorities for strengthening community connections, with arts and cultural events named by 71 of 192 people, just after community events. Recognising the diverse impacts of arts and cultural programs, they were also named by 40 people as being a priority area for improving individual health. Survey participants highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on arts and cultural activities, and the importance of revitalising these activities to rebuild social connections.

Interviews with Aboriginal community members highlighted the need to raise awareness of Aboriginal culture and its importance to Aboriginal people. These interviews emphasised that collaboration with the Aboriginal community was vital to find ways to appropriately recognise Aboriginal culture and ensure community places and activities were inclusive and welcoming. The need for greater consultation with the Aboriginal community was identified as a top priority for members of the Aboriginal community, who highlighted that understanding of cultural protocols was needed to overcome challenges to implementing actions.

"We need more arts and culturally engaging spaces, these include cultural places, infrastructure and community events to maintain connectiveness, particularly Aboriginal connections" – Online survey participant

"Events and arts/cultural activities foster a sense of place, and encourage community connection" – Online survey participant

"Opportunities for connection (arts and cultural activities) have a significant impact on general wellbeing" – Online survey participant

"Connecting with our diverse Aboriginal culture through programs or tours is also huge in a feeling of well-being and connectedness" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Protect, manage and conserve heritage, both in land-use planning roles (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*) and as a property owner and developer (*Heritage Act 1977*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Plan, design and manage cultural facilities and cultural activities including:
 - Provide Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and programming, guided by -- Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Business Plan.
 - Provide Shoalhaven Regional Gallery and programming, guided by Arts Centre Strategic Plan.
 - Provide Shoalhaven Libraries facilities and activities, guided by Shoalhaven Libraries Strategic Management Plan and the Heritage Shoalhaven – Local Heritage Strategic Plan. This includes helping people connect with heritage through access to onsite historical resources, digital resources, local history groups, volunteer talks on the local area, and recording and transcribing oral histories.
 - Encourage, provide and maintain public art, supported by the Public Art Policy. This includes street art initiatives in Nowra in partnership with the Nowra Revitalization Committee.
- Provide and maintain heritage facilities including heritage walks.
- Support cultural activity providers and partners:
 - Provide community facilities that are used by cultural activity providers.
 - Provide small heritage grants to owners of heritage items .
 - Provide ongoing mentoring and support for Aboriginal cultural businesses providing services like cultural talks and tours.
- Provide signage at town entrances with known Aboriginal language translations to town names across the Shoalhaven (e.g. Nowra – Black Cockatoo).
- Formally acknowledge Aboriginal Culture through corporate internal protocols.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Develop the role of Shoalhaven Libraries as the curator of a program of opportunities for local expression, facilitated by community partners such as writers' festivals, poetry slams and Aboriginal cultural activities throughout the year. This could include expanding the collaboration between Shoalhaven Libraries and Millhouse Art Gallery that is generating positive community response and increased reach.
 - Improve understanding of Aboriginal cultural meaning of Shoalhaven places (both natural and developed areas), which could include activities, talks, tours or signage.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Cultural expression through community buildings and spaces, including with public art, building naming and architectural designs that improve inclusion and promote connection with local culture and heritage. Celebration of Aboriginal culture in public buildings and spaces could be used to improve understanding in the community and improve the feeling of welcome for Aboriginal people.
 - Celebration of and connection to heritage in ways that reflect contemporary cultural expression and emerging media.
 - Delivery of public art initiatives that celebrate local culture and build community identity and pride.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Community partners (both non-profit groups and businesses) delivering local cultural activities and programs, including arts groups, historical societies and owners of items of heritage significance.
- Local Aboriginal communities, as it is important they have control and ownership of any initiatives improving understanding of local Aboriginal culture.
- Library network, including South Coast Cooperative Libraries partners and NSW Libraries.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government grant-providers, including Create NSW, Destination NSW, Regional NSW.



Foundation
2

Lifelong learning and helping each other

*Access to opportunities throughout life to learn, help
others and be supported*

2.1

Training for employment

People have access to education to improve their employment opportunities

Access to education and training is recognised as an important factor in improving future employment opportunities. Research in the UK in 2016 found that higher levels of education are associated with a wide range of positive outcomes - including better health and wellbeing, higher social trust, greater political interest, lower political cynicism, and less hostile attitudes towards immigrants⁴.

Primary and secondary education is provided by the NSW Government Department of Education, though small, isolated communities sometimes experiencing challenges related to low student numbers and travel distances to the nearest school. Non-government schools (independently provided but subsidised by NSW Government) also play a role in meeting community needs for primary and secondary education, mostly located in larger urban centres. Further employment-related training includes formal tertiary education, as well as work-based training programs like apprenticeships/traineeships and volunteering programs. Access to these training opportunities relies on providers including universities, colleges and technical institutes, businesses, community groups and service providers. University of Wollongong provides a campus in Nowra, and the recent opening of a

Country University Centre in Ulladulla is working to improve access for south of the region. Businesses provide consistent feedback that access to relevant trades education for the wide range of skills and jobs in the region is critical, with many students needing to travel to Sydney or Newcastle to access apprenticeship education. Provision of training opportunities can be improved by developing the capacity of providers, such as helping community groups develop volunteering roles or helping small businesses offer traineeship programs. Ongoing collaboration between education providers and businesses is critical for access in this regional area.

Whilst increased online provision can improve access to digital-suitable training, face-to-face training opportunities are often available only in the larger urban centres, meaning that access for communities across the Shoalhaven is limited by lack of affordable transport connections, with public transport being a key challenge throughout the region (see 5.2 Transport facilities and services). Access to training depends on people having the knowledge, skills and confidence to access opportunities for themselves or their dependent children. In addition, notably for tertiary study, students need to be in a financial position to devote time to studying.



What the community told us

Across all engagement methods, participants perceived that there were limited work and training opportunities within the Shoalhaven, particularly for young people looking to start their careers. Participants felt that retaining and nurturing young people was more important than ever, with the region's aging population, and they perceived that there were limited career prospects for young people, despite the wide range of employment sectors in the Shoalhaven with job opportunities. Participants of the Youth Workshop acknowledged the impact this has on their wellbeing, with 37 of the 38 participants indicating that school and work prospects are something they care and worry about. Overall, there is a gap in understanding about the broad economic value of the region and large range of sector opportunities for young people from the community.

"In these ever changing times people need to access educational opportunities to up-skill or re-skill in an area where there are employment opportunities" – Online survey participant

"Having access to more educational opportunities is always a must however again I'm unsure how to meet this objective other than more promotion of online learning and ways to access that (in terms of tools and equipment and financial support)" – Online survey participant

"With regard to educational opportunities, we have a wonderful TAFE here in Bomaderry who often offer great stage 1 courses but follow up courses are often not available unless you want to travel to Shellharbour and beyond" – Online survey participant

"Daughter goes to a large public high school with over 1200 students. We need another secondary school to service the area as there is no room left for expansion. We also need more tertiary education and apprenticeship options in the southern Shoalhaven" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that recognises diverse local needs and considers social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide Shoalhaven Libraries facilities in 4 locations across the Shoalhaven (and a mobile library), including use of computers, meeting rooms, printing, copying, scanning and tech help. Resources that can be borrowed include books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and audiobooks, including many reference materials to support studying.
- Provide student placement, cadetship, traineeship and work experience opportunities, in a way that provides pathways to permanent employment. High school students can also gain skills through involvement with Council's Youth Advisory Committee.
- Support school and employment collaboration through formal and informal school career advisor networks and partnerships with business sectors.
- Provide strategic guidance to economic development across the region, with education identified as a key sector in the Shoalhaven Employment, Advocacy and Growth Advisory Group (SEGA) in recognition of the critical role education plays in employment.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Provide employment support for individuals or groups, such as industry training or job-ready courses on resume-writing and interview skills. This could make use of recreation facilities or library spaces and resources.
 - Provide volunteer programs that improve employment skills, for example through swim squad coaching or other local sporting groups.
 - Improve access to tertiary education with tertiary institution outposts or using co-working spaces for distance education.
 - Improve awareness of existing tertiary education and opportunities and providers including UOW and Country Universities to ensure our community know what is available in our region and how they can access education.
 - Increase community awareness of the broad opportunities available in our diverse local economy including jobs in manufacturing, health care, defence industries, government, farming, tourism and more.
 - Advocate for a greater range of trade education available in our region.
 - Advocate for greater access to public transport to support student access to education.
- Explore opportunities to demonstrate leadership as a large employer that:
 - Provides employment development opportunities through traineeship and work experience programs that the community has good awareness of, that offers opportunities across a broad range of professional skill areas (particularly for hard to-fill skill shortages) and that has good consistency and performance evaluation across the organisation.
 - Supports employees to access professional development opportunities through good awareness of study leave entitlements and supportive working conditions.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People of all ages participating in training to improve their employment opportunities .
- NSW Government Department of Education providing and subsidising primary and secondary schools
- Independent schools providing primary and secondary schools.
- Tertiary education providers – universities, colleges and technical institutes.
- Businesses, community groups and service organisations – providing apprenticeships, traineeships and volunteering programs.
- Managers of spaces that are suitable for outreach training, such as community halls hosting outreach TAFE courses, training spaces hosting face-to-face courses, or digital-ready spaces hosting hybrid (online and face-to-face) training courses.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

2.2

Learning opportunities for all ages

People have access to learning opportunities to build skills for enjoyment and to build capacity; Children and their families/carers have support for early childhood development.

People of all ages can enjoy the sense of achievement and growth that comes with learning something new, whether it comes from learning how to do a new craft, how to budget, how to cook something delicious and healthy, or how to use new technology. Learning opportunities mean that we can improve our life skills or just learn how to do something we enjoy. There is clear evidence that learning impacts positively on wellbeing, with health benefits including reduction in mental health issues, loneliness and dementia⁷.

Whilst Council delivers lifelong learning activities, community groups, service providers and businesses across the Shoalhaven are essential partners in providing people with access to opportunities for learning for all ages. The capacity of community partners can be improved through supports such as community grant programs and skills development opportunities for providers, which may be targeted to improve inclusion of disadvantaged or diverse groups. Access to learning opportunities can also be improved by building the awareness and confidence of people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to

participate. With the move towards online provision of learning opportunities, digital inclusion (skills and resources) is increasingly impacting on access to learning opportunities.

Early childhood is a crucial time for children to develop social competence, emotional maturity, communication and cognitive skills. Supporting children and their families/carers during the first five years gives children's brains the best foundations for the years ahead. Whilst Council's family day care services and library activities for children provide early childhood development support for children and their families/carers, service providers, local businesses and community groups play an important role in supporting early childhood development across the Shoalhaven. Small and isolated communities with few young families may find limited opportunities for children to socialise with others of a similar age (and for parent/carer networks to form). Education and outreach initiatives can be used to improve community awareness of the available supports and capacity to access them.



What the community told us

Survey responses revealed the many community clubs and groups that people of all ages in the community learn and share skills through, often strengthening social connections at the same time. Men's sheds, community craft groups, book clubs, robotics clubs, seniors computers clubs, the University of the Third Age, writers groups, scout groups, citizen science programs and more – all these community activities support lifelong learning.

Participants of the Seniors Workshop nominated low digital literacy as a key barrier to improving their wellbeing. While this was a challenge not highlighted by other demographic groups in the engagement, the older people participating in the session acknowledged the transition to online health education resources as a key risk to their individual health and wellbeing.

"Educational opportunities such as clubs for arts/robotics etc can be limited in the area for kids and only available in Wollongong. This limits children's exposure to cultural activities and educational opportunities" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that recognises diverse local needs and considers social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Providing free and low-cost learning opportunities for all ages through Library Services, including:
 - Storytime and Rhymetime for pre-school kids, school holiday and coding club for school kids.
 - Sessions and support to help the community improve their tech skills.
 - Author talks, book launches, book clubs, and adult craft sessions.
- Provide care and education for over 240 children annually through a network of Family Day Care educators. Our educators offer babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers and school aged children a loving, fun, safe and educational small group environment, based in educators' homes across the Shoalhaven.
- Provide Shoalhaven Libraries facilities in 4 locations across the Shoalhaven (and a mobile library), including use of computers, meeting rooms, printing, copying, scanning and tech help.
- Resources that can be borrowed include books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and audiobooks, including many reference materials to support learning for all ages.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Develop the role of Shoalhaven Libraries as the curator of a program of diverse lifelong learning opportunities facilitated by community partners, such as workshops by mens' sheds or knitting groups.
 - Deliver intergenerational learning opportunities that bring people of different ages together to shares skills like community gardening or digital literacy.
 - Work with the Aboriginal community to reflect the cultural needs of Aboriginal people and their connection to Country in Council's Family Day Care facilities and services, with the aim of improving the sense of welcome for Aboriginal people and the utilisation of facilities.
 - Education workshops on sustainability and growing food in community gardens.
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Provide robotics clubs at Shoalhaven Libraries, which could make use of the new library makerspace.
 - Provide Shoalhaven Libraries' learning activities like craft, cooking and robotics groups in community outreach settings.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- Inner West Council's Cyber Seniors facilitates intergenerational learning with volunteer students providing one-on-one tuition for seniors

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People of all ages participating in learning opportunities to build skills for enjoyment and to build capacity.
- Businesses, community groups and service organisations providing learning opportunities to build skills. Aboriginal community organisations are key partners providing opportunities to learn about local Aboriginal culture and heritage.
- Managers of spaces that are used for learning opportunities, such as community halls, training spaces hosting face-to-face courses, or digital-ready spaces hosting hybrid (online and face-to-face) training courses.
- Parents and carers of young children being committed to and accessing support for healthy early childhood development. Businesses, community groups and service organisations providing early childhood development supports including playgroups, storytime activities and early learning child care.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.

2.3

Local community supports

*People have access to well-resourced local support services;
People volunteer to help others in the community.*

When people in our community are struggling, local support services make a huge difference helping people through the difficulties they are experiencing and ensuring they have access to the essentials for living. Crisis accommodation, emergency food relief, support for people experiencing domestic violence and more – local services providing vital supports like these are part of the social support network. Access to this help in the Shoalhaven depends on the activities of local services providers and community groups.

The capacity of service providers can be built by improving access to resources like information, funding opportunities and skills training. Local support networks are more effective when providers work together to meet community needs. Council plays a role in facilitating the capacity-building of

service providers, and facilitating providers to work more collaboratively in the local area. Improving community awareness of available supports means local people are better able to access help, and Council can also help facilitate community access to this information.

Volunteers are a vital part of support services in the Shoalhaven. Whether it is volunteers helping community service organisations or resident-led groups in each village, it is about local people helping local people. Whilst Council co-ordinates some volunteering opportunities, service providers and community groups ranging from Red Cross to Meals on Wheels are important partners in offering local volunteering opportunities.



What the community told us

Survey participants talked about the importance of local community supports, from the perspective of both giving and receiving support. Community and service provider networks were considered a priority for strengthening community connection by 69 survey participants, and 20 participants identified that they volunteer in the community. As well as crisis support from domestic violence and homelessness services, the range of service providers and volunteer groups identified by survey participants was diverse, such as Blaze Aid, Red Cross, Legacy, UOW Medical School volunteers, an Aboriginal education advisory group, Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention & Awareness Network, and Police Citizens Youth Club.

In May 2022, Council facilitated a Community Workshop for Homelessness, bringing together service providers and community members, including people with lived experience of homelessness. Participants highlighted the need for ongoing, co-ordinated, holistic and easy to find supports for people at risk of homelessness.

"Service providers are a wonderful help but their resources are at times stretched" – Online survey participant

"Community and service provider networks are essential for ensuring that people are connected and don't fall through the cracks" – Online survey participant

"(There is a) lack of referrals or programs to specialised support services encompassing a holistic approach to housing and general health and wellbeing within the Shoalhaven, specifically for those with complex needs or disabilities." – Participant at the Community Workshop For Homelessness, May 2022

"Community & service provider networks are very important for our aging community" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that recognises diverse local needs and considers social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).

Other current and planned work includes:

- Co-ordinate regular meetings between Council staff and local specialised homelessness services, to support vulnerable people who present at Council facilities to link with local support services.
- Build the capacity of local support services and volunteer organisations, including through improving their skills, improving access to resources/information and facilitating collaboration. For example:
 - Provide Community Wellbeing Grants to support community groups to provide services for vulnerable community members.
 - Provide subsidised facility hire and community buildings to accommodate services.
- Oversight of monitoring and review of the Homelessness Community Strategic Plan, which aims to address homelessness through a range of collaborative actions that will be implemented by the homelessness and housing sector.
- Facilitate the community to access supports:
 - Partner with Escabags to provide overnight essentials packs at all Council facilities for people escaping domestic violence.
 - Provide an up-to-date online directory of local community services and printed information at Council library facilities.
 - Responding to community enquiries about local supports.
- Convene the Homelessness Taskforce, a strategic advisory committee to advocate for and inform Council decisions. It is made up of all levels of government, community organisations and service providers, and community members including people with lived experience of homelessness.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Work with or support community partners to:
 - Build capacity of community partners to collaborate and be well-informed, to provide outreach services (including via transport), to recognise and celebrate volunteers, and to build local neighbourhood connections for informal support. Also listed under 1.1 Community life, 4.1 Health services and support.
 - Accommodate service providers and community groups in Council buildings in exchange for provision of programs that meet community needs and activate community spaces. Also listed under 1.1 Community life.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Frontline Council staff to identify resident needs and refer to support services.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community seeking information on supports and accessing them when needed, and supporting others to do the same.
- People in the community volunteering their time to help others in their local community.
- Community groups and service organisations providing local support services and volunteering opportunities.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government grant-providers, including Department of Communities and Justice.



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Safe and prepared communities

Safety in relationships, in the community and during emergencies

3.1

Safe built environment

People experience safety in community spaces.

People are more likely to use public spaces they feel safe in, and more likely to linger and spend time there. When people feel safe in community spaces, they can use them to live active lifestyles, make social connections, get around the local area and participate in the community. Spending time in community spaces creates opportunities for incidental interactions and encourages people's sense of community and connection to place. Visible community activity in public spaces makes our communities attractive and thriving places where we want to live, visit and spend time.

The cyclical relationship between sense of safety and use of public spaces means that increased use is seen as an indicator to others that people feel safe enough to use a place⁸, and this generates further increases of use. This role of place activation as an indicator of safety is particularly important in places like the Shoalhaven, where significant economic activity is generated by visitors who may assess a place at first glance – this is particularly relevant in the Shoalhaven's main centres and gathering places.

The way we design, manage and use public spaces influences the level of safety that people experience there.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, also called Safer by Design, are design and management principles that can be applied to improve the safety of the built environment by reducing the fear and incidence of crime. Other benefits of using CPTED principles include: improved perception of public places; reduced opportunities for anti-social behaviour; increased usage of public places in the daytime and evening; more liveable and sustainable environments; improved quality of life. The four key CPTED strategies

are territorial re-enforcement, surveillance, access control and space/activity management. All CPTED strategies aim to create the perception or reality of capable guardianship.

March 2022 data from BOCSAR shows that the majority of crime in Shoalhaven is happening in a residential setting rather than public places⁹. However, improving the sense of safety and activation of our residential streets improves surveillance and guardianship of our communities to benefit all residents. The Shoalhaven experienced rates of crime that were higher than the NSW average but 2 and 5 year trend data shows that many types of crime are happening less often. This includes break and enter of homes, theft from motor vehicles, arson, possession or use of amphetamines, offensive language, liquor offences and trespass¹⁰.

Police play an important role in law enforcement and implementing crime prevention and reduction strategies across the Shoalhaven. As the largest manager of public space in the Shoalhaven, Council can design and manage Council-owned public spaces using CPTED principles to promote community safety. Safety in privately-owned public spaces like shopping centres depends on effective management by the space owner, but use of CPTED principles can be encouraged through land-use controls. Users of community spaces also have an important role to play – people using public places are the most effective surveillance system. Community ownership of public space sends positive signals to the community, and effective guardians of places are often ordinary people who are spatially 'connected' to a place and feel an association with, or responsibility for it.



What the community told us

The results of the community survey showed that 31.6% of respondents ranked "personal safety and security" as one of the top three priorities they feel impact on their individual health. In addition, there was very low incidental interaction in the community, with 62% of respondents speaking to people they don't know very well once a week or less. This would include bumping into a neighbour or speaking to strangers at the shops. Only 16% of respondents spoke to people they don't know very well at least daily. When survey comments on walkability were examined, the most-raised issue was safe walking facilities such as pathways and crossings. The equal second most-raised issue was safety in the community related to feeling safe and crime prevention.

In January 2021, Place Score conducted a site visit to Nowra that showed that "safe, well-maintained public spaces" was ranked as the second most valued place characteristic by people in Nowra. Five areas of the Nowra CBD were scored and "sense of safety" was highlighted as an Improvement Priority for four of those five areas. The Revitalising Nowra Action Plan 2020-23 identifies "poor perception of safety" and "unsafe pedestrian experience" as key challenges for the Nowra CBD.

"With regards to walkable suburbs - it's more of a safety issue. I don't feel safe walking alone and usually stick to the couple of houses around my home." – Online survey participant

"Safety and security is clearly an issue in the community that needs to be addressed" – Online survey participant

"Personal safety and security - currently don't feel safe exercising or going out at night" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Act as the roads authority in the Shoalhaven, performing functions including opening and closing roads, approving use of roads for footpath dining and permitting road events, regulating traffic and giving consent for any work (including pedestrian facilities and public transport facilities) in the road reserve, as outlined in the Roads Act 1993 which recognises the rights of members of the public to pass along public roads (whether on foot, in a vehicle or otherwise).

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Work in partnership with South Coast Police and community safety initiatives in public places, including convening the Safety Liaison Committee.
- Plan, design and manage public space and community spaces (including streets) to facilitate the community to experience safety by applying principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design to new and existing spaces. As Council is appointed as Crown lands manager, this also includes managing Crown lands.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Have accessible safe rooms in shopping centre developments to support people escaping from domestic violence or sexual assault, learning from the Macquarie Centre example.
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Have a Council officer with a dedicated community safety function.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Prioritisation of CPTED principles in Council-led developments from the design stage.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community, including businesses, who use public spaces in a way that encourages others to experience safety – being present to provide surveillance and create a sense of welcome and activation, lingering and spending time at community events or informal social gatherings, feeling a sense of ownership and speaking up as a community guardian of the space.
- Community groups and businesses that activate community spaces through their activities.
- Providers of public spaces managing their spaces effectively, including Transport for NSW, Health NSW and ISLHD, NSW Department of Education.
- Providers of privately-owned public spaces managing their spaces effectively.
- Developers of land that interfaces with public space, ensuring that their development contributes positively to the interface.
- South Coast Police enforce the law and implement crime prevention and reduction strategies across the Shoalhaven.
- Australian Building Codes Board maintains the National Construction Code of Australia (previously called the Building Code of Australia), a national set of technical requirements for the design, construction and performance of buildings and other structures throughout Australia.

3.2

Safe behaviour and healthy relationships

People experience safety with others and are supported by healthy, respectful relationships.

Experiencing safety in our community is more than being safe in public spaces. The interactions we have in our homes and in our relationships are an important part of feeling safety and security. Respectful relationships are important for our wellbeing because they help us feel safe, encouraged, valued, understood and accepted.

Experiencing bullying or violence in our interactions and relationships with others is one indication of a lack of safety. March 2022 data from BOCSAR shows that the majority of crime in Shoalhaven is happening in a residential setting rather than public places. This data shows that the Shoalhaven experienced rates of crime that were higher than the NSW average for assault (61% in residential settings), sexual offences (75% in residential settings) and intimidation, talking and harassment (70% in residential settings)¹¹.

Safety from violence is only one aspect of healthy and respectful relationships. In a healthy relationship, both people experience and give respect, trust, good communication, honesty and support. People of all ages can benefit from learning more effective and healthy interpersonal and relationship skills. Learning opportunities are provided by community service providers and local businesses, such as anti-bullying

initiatives in schools, marriage and relationship counselling and courses to learn parenting skills. Local community supports (see 2.3 Local community supports) are available for people experiencing a crisis or needing immediate help.

When we understand what healthy, respectful relationships look like and what support is available, we are most able to take advantage of learning opportunities to improve our interpersonal and relationships skills. Awareness-raising initiatives and easy-to-find information resources can help with this. The capacity of service providers can be built by improving access to resources like information, funding opportunities and skills training. Council plays a role in facilitating the capacity-building of service providers, and facilitating providers to work more collaboratively in the local area. Improving community awareness of available supports means local people are better able to access help, and Council can also help facilitate community access to this information. Police play an important role in law enforcement and implementing crime reduction strategies across the Shoalhaven.



What the community told us

Results from the online Community Wellbeing survey paint a picture of a well-connected and open community in the Shoalhaven, with loneliness recorded at a very low level. Nearly 80% of the 192 survey participants recorded feeling lonely once a month or less (with 64% saying they hardly ever or never feel lonely). This picture is supported by the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted by Council in 2020 - personal relationships were the highest scoring attribute of the Personal Wellbeing Index score for the Shoalhaven community, and the Index score was above the national standard and increased between 2018 and 2020. This attribute scored 4.4 out of 5, with 91% of residents reporting they were satisfied with their personal relationships, followed by 85% of residents reporting being satisfied with how safe they feel. The same survey showed that 84% of residents speak to a neighbour or someone in their street weekly.

When people are not experiencing safety and respect in relationships, they may be reluctant to report or discuss this with others, making information on these experiences challenging to gather. While crime data can give insight into the number of people in relationships with an extreme lack of respect and safety, less information is available on relationships that are less-extreme but still unhealthy and disrespectful.

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Work in partnership with South Coast Police and community safety initiatives in public places, including convening the Safety Liaison Committee.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Expand provision of safe relationships training in high schools.
 - Update the Crime Prevention Plan using a collaborative approach to improve community understanding and civic engagement with building community safety, empowering local residents and businesses to play a positive role in contributing to community safety in partnership with other stakeholders.
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Have a Council officer with a dedicated community safety function.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community who have relationships and interact with people in a healthy and respectful way. This includes being committed to learning effective and healthy interpersonal and relationship skills.
- Providers of learning opportunities including schools providing anti-bullying initiatives, businesses providing relationship counselling, and community organisations providing parenting skills training. National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect train facilitators to provide the Love Bites respectful relationships education program from young people aged 15-17 years.
- South Coast Police enforce the law and implement crime reduction strategies across the Shoalhaven.
- Department of Communities and Justice fund community services including Specialist Homelessness Services and domestic violence services, as well as overseeing the justice system



3.3

Prepared for disasters and emergencies

People are prepared for disasters; Emergency Managers are ready to keep people safe during disasters and emergencies.

Every year, communities are devastated by disasters like bushfires, floods and storms. The Shoalhaven is no stranger to the impacts of disasters – in 2019-20, the Currowan Fire resulted in three deaths and destroyed 312 homes, damaged a further 173 homes and burnt nearly half a million hectares in the southern Shoalhaven. By their nature, emergencies have the potential to damage our homes and community infrastructure, to impact our health and wellbeing, or even cause loss of life. The impacts of emergencies cannot be eliminated, but can be managed by taking action to reduce risks and manage hazards, and preparing plans for both immediate/short-term responses and longer-term recovery.

Preparedness and disaster risk reduction is a shared responsibility in which everyone in the community needs to be involved. This involves all levels of government, non-government organisations (NGOs) and businesses. Individuals, families and communities all play a role in determining how well they are prepared for and safeguarded from emergencies and their ability to recover from them.

Emergency Management Australia leads the Australian Government disaster and emergency management response. They work to build a disaster resilient Australia that prepares and responds to disasters and emergencies. Australia's emergency management arrangements bring together the efforts of all governments, and private and volunteer agencies to deliver coordinated emergency management across all hazards.

In NSW, Resilience NSW leads whole-of-government disaster and emergency efforts from prevention through to recovery. NSW has 11 emergency management regions made up of local government areas. The Illawarra South Coast Regional Emergency Management Plan provides a coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management in the Illawarra, including the Shoalhaven. It names the Combat Agency responsible for managing emergencies arising from different types of hazards.

Everyone in the community can be part of emergency preparedness by ensuring their own household has an emergency plan and understands important emergency information – knowing about local hazards, where to get emergency information and support, who to contact and how to manage stress in an emergency. Community members can also contribute by helping their friends and family be prepared, helping their neighbours during an emergency, and by joining community volunteering organisations that are part of preparing and implementing emergency response and recovery activities, such as NSW State Emergency Service and NSW Rural Fire Service.



What the community told us

In 2021, a survey was completed as part of the Council's Recovery into Resilience Project. Of the 260 community members that completed the survey, 93% had experienced extreme weather events in the last five years in the Shoalhaven, and 76% felt threatened by extreme weather events. The impacts they were most worried about included environmental damage, impacts to infrastructure, damage to property and loss of life. Most respondents (84%) thought that the Shoalhaven should have an adaptation and resilience strategy and that the community should be involved in the preparation of such a strategy.

"Our street floods so there is always the stress of possible flooding especially when the opening to the ocean is not open" – Online survey participant

"It's been hard the past year after the fires and through COVID-19 to feel connected to the local community" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Act as the roads authority in the Shoalhaven, performing functions including opening and closing roads, regulating traffic and giving consent for any work in the road reserve, as outlined in the *Roads Act 1993*.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Provide a Local Emergency Management Officer who co-ordinates and participates as a member of Shoalhaven Local Emergency Management Committee.
- Recovery into Resilience Project to improve community resilience, including community involvement and installation of equipment to create 23 Local Information Hubs across the Shoalhaven.
- Through the FORTIS House project, help residents save time and money by providing free buildings designs for highly resilient, sustainable, affordable and adaptable homes. This project is delivered in partnership with the Bushfire Building Council of Australia and NRMA Insurance.
- Implementing programs to make water infrastructure more resilient to disasters and climate change impacts.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Support people in the community to be part of resilience planning for their communities and households.
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Expand programs to make water infrastructure more resilient to disasters and climate change impacts, considering learning from bushfires and other natural disasters.
 - Have a Council officer with a dedicated community safety function.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community being committed to emergency preparedness for their household and helping friends, family and neighbours to be prepared or during an emergency. Volunteering as part of emergency response and recovery services.
- National Recovery and Resilience Agency (NRRA) supports communities impacted by disaster, with a strong on-the-ground presence and a guiding principle of locally-led recovery. They deliver initiatives to reduce risk and lessen the impacts of future shocks. Emergency Management Australia (EMA) leads the Australian Government disaster and emergency management response. The NRRA and EMA will soon merge to form the National Emergency Management, Resilience and Recovery Agency.
- Resilience NSW leads whole-of-government disaster and emergency efforts from prevention through to recovery.
- Shoalhaven Local Emergency Management Committee provides a coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management in Shoalhaven. Combat agencies responsible for managing emergencies arising from different types of hazards include Police, NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW State Emergency Services, Surf Life Saving NSW and Marine Rescue.



Healthy and active communities

Access to opportunities to live healthy and active lifestyles

4.1

Health services and support

People have good access to health services and supports.

Throughout our lives, we maintain, improve or manage our physical and mental health by using services provided by health workers, including allied health and complementary therapy providers. Doctors, nurses, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, pharmacists, paramedics, physiotherapists, radiographers, psychologists, counsellors, herbalists, aromatherapists and more – we expect to have ready access to services and support to meet our health needs.

Availability of health services is impacted by the complex provision framework. NSW Health has service agreements with Local Health Districts (LHDs), assigning to them the responsibility of managing public hospitals and healthcare clinics in defined geographical areas, supported by the Australian Government's Medicare which covers public hospital services costs. Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is the LHD for the Shoalhaven and provides 3 hospitals, with Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital being the main acute care hospital that is currently being redeveloped for expansion. Supporting the public hospital system are Nowra Private Hospital and private same-day hospital services at Ulladulla Endoscopy and Medical Centre. ISLHD collaborates with health and social service providers including General Practitioners (GPs), private health providers, Department of Communities and Justice, non-government organisations and Co-ordinare. As the Primary Health Network (PHN) covering the Shoalhaven, Co-ordinare is funded by the Australian Government to identify health needs in the region and support health service providers to improve patient care and improve coordination between providers. PHNs can commission external healthcare providers to meet the needs in the region, such as providing health promotion programs, mental health services or support for GPs.

Whilst many essential health services are subsidised

by Medicare, the market provides most health services – this means that the government does not direct the location of health service providers like general practitioners or specialists (other than in public hospitals and clinics). The market-provision model means that regional areas like the Shoalhaven can struggle to attract health professionals into the region, particularly where living costs are high. Strategic land-use planning measures to support access to health services include the development of controls that encourage medical centres in village centres and health precincts in larger urban centres. Aged care facilities, carers and service providers are also important providers of support for people needing daily health support.

Where health services are available, having access to those services can present other challenges. The long distances and poor public transport connections between the dispersed villages of the Shoalhaven are significant barriers to our community accessing health services. Specialist services are generally located in the main urban centre of Nowra near Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital, making access more difficult for people at the southern end of the Shoalhaven. Increasing use of telehealth programs offers opportunities for improving access for isolated communities, and eHealth is a key strategy in NSW State Health Plan Towards 2021. Telehealth and eHealth services are not suitable to replace all face-to-face health services, both for digital inclusion reasons and the need for physical examination or use of specialist equipment. Outreach services in under-served locations and transport services from these areas are other ways to address barriers related to travel.

Access to health services can also be improved by improving the provision of culturally appropriate health services and support, including alternative and complementary health care. This should consider

all cultures, but due to the significant differences in health outcomes experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, there is a need to undertake action to close this gap. Examples include building the capacity of Aboriginal Health Services, improving cultural understanding across the provider network and facilitating access to cultural practices like birthing on Country.

Community awareness programs and information resources can be used to improve health literacy, which is people understanding the health impacts of their choices, what their health needs are, what services are available to support their health and

having the skills to navigate the system and access support. Health promotion initiatives can also be used to encourage people to choose behaviours that support better health, such as to increase vegetable intake or to quit smoking. Using the Social Determinants of Health framework, we also understand that the conditions of our life – where we live, work, grow and age – shape our individual and community health¹². The Foundations for Community Wellbeing identified in this Plan aim to consider and address the full range of the Social Determinants of Health.

What the community told us

The community survey showed that people rated their mental health as poorer than their physical health – 11.4% of participants rating their physical health as 'poor' or 'not so good', compared with 17.1% for mental health. Only 67.8% of survey participants living in the Shoalhaven felt they could easily access the health services they need from where they live, with 27.3% saying they couldn't.

The following points about health outcomes and health services were noted in the community surveys:

- Difficulties accessing GPs in smaller settlements
- Need to address service gaps and barriers in access to hospital services
- Disability carers and local support services play a significant role
- The significance of companion animals, especially for older residents

Survey participants and community service providers both recognised the rise of mental illness in the Shoalhaven. Participants highlighted the growing pressures that were having a noticeable impact on their health, commonly identifying financial stress and the need to maintain job security as the number one factor impacting their mental health.

Seniors Workshop participants nominated low digital literacy as a key barrier to improving their wellbeing. While this was a challenge not highlighted by other demographic groups in the engagement, Seniors acknowledge the transition to online health education resources as a key risk to their individual health and wellbeing.

"Access to dental, GP and basic hospital services are fine but the higher level of medical care can be a bit hit and miss. Access to mental health care appears to be problematic." – Online survey participant

"There need to be more doctors and medical services in Nowra. We don't have enough specialists and the ones that are here have a waiting list of many months and even years. We also desperately need more Medicare funded services... I needed a colonoscopy and the waiting list at Nowra hospital on Medicare was 2 years... Many medical services are unavailable here and often one has to travel to Sydney for specialist services." – Online survey participant

"Access to health/mental health services in the area is limited, wait times can be long, costs are very high" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Ensure compliance with *Public Health Act 2010* requirements for public health safety in settings including skin penetration establishments (tattooists and body piercers), cooling towers (legionella control) and public swimming pools.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Co-ordinate regular meetings between Council staff and local specialised homelessness services, to support vulnerable people who present at Council facilities to link with health and support services.
- The Local Emergency Management Officer co-ordinates identification of sites for health disaster responses (eg. testing locations).
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Work with community partners to deliver health promotion campaigns and initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles, such as the Get in Step program with the Heart Foundation and the Health and Wellbeing Expo¹³.
- Provide Community Wellbeing Grants to support community services which can be used to improve access to health and support services.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Build capacity of community partners to collaborate and be well-informed, to provide outreach services (including via transport), to recognise and celebrate volunteers, and to build local neighbourhood connections. Also listed under 1.1 Community life, 2.3 Local community supports.
 - Expand work with community partners to deliver health promotion campaigns and initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles. This could include initiatives to improve community awareness of local services or to collate health data on local need for services.
 - Address health service gaps including access to GPs, hospital services, and specialists, particularly for identified vulnerable groups such as older people. This could make use of advocacy, outreach and pilot programs, grant funding, research projects and needs identification / collection of evidence.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- NSW Rural Doctors Network Bush Bursary attracts health professionals to regional areas by providing sponsored health student placements.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People across the Shoalhaven being committed to health literacy for their household, seeking support and using available supports to meet their health needs. This also applies to people providing voluntary or unpaid care to family or other community members.
- Community service organisations providing free or low-cost mental health services, physical (including sexual) health services, and alcohol and other drug services. For example, Grand Pacific Health, Headspace, Flourish Australia, Lives Lived Well, Lifeline, One Door, Anglicare, Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre and Crossroads Youth Health Service. Local Area Coordination providers help NDIS recipients to access NDIS supports.
- South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation are an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation providing health and health related services at 8 sites and working to improve the equity of access to mainstream services for the Aboriginal communities in the Shoalhaven.
- Community groups providing affordable transport services for people needing to attend medical appointments.
- Local businesses providing health and complimentary therapy services – medical centres, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, radiography and imaging centres, psychologists, counsellors, herbalists, aromatherapists and more. Private hospital services are also available at Nowra Private Hospital and private same-day hospital services at Ulladulla Endoscopy and Medical Centre. Aged and disability care-providers (aged care facilities, in-home care supports, etc) support people in their care to access health services.

- Healthy Cities Illawarra help design the infrastructure of a healthy community by developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based and sustainable programs that address the underlying social, economic and environmental causes of health inequity. There has been limited expansion of activity into the Shoalhaven due to funding limitations.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District has a service agreement with NSW Health and is responsible for managing 3 public hospitals, healthcare clinics and institutions in the Shoalhaven. They are also responsible for providing health services in the Shoalhaven and promoting, protecting and managing the community's health, including through the work of their Health Promotion Officers and by providing the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health Education Centre in Wollongong. They also provide Community Health Nurses to deliver nursing care to community health centres and at home.
- Coordinare is funded by the Australian Government as the southern Eastern NSW PHN to:
 - conduct assessments of the health needs of the region and identify groups who need more resources, programs and services
 - support GP's, nurses and allied health practitioners to improve patient care
 - improve coordination between different parts of the health system (eg. between hospital and GP when a patient is discharged)
 - PHNs can commission external healthcare providers to meet the needs in the region, such as funding or provide: health promotion programs, mental health services, support for primary care (GPs)
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Medicare (Australian Government) pays some or all of the costs of necessary health care, including the costs of seeing a doctor, getting medicines and accessing mental health care, as well as covering public hospital services costs.



4.2

Places and programs for active lifestyles

People have access to green space and facilities for active recreation, play and walking; People have access to sports and active recreational activities.

People have active lifestyles when they are physically active in their life. Physical activity includes sports, unstructured outdoor play, exercise/fitness activities (dance, cross-fit, yoga, mountain-biking, swimming, etc), and many other forms of active recreation like bush-walking and kayaking. It also includes incidental physical activity, which is unstructured activity as part of daily living, such as walking to school and doing housework/gardening¹⁴.

Regular physical activity that raises the heart rate has significant health benefits and can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, colon and breast cancer, and depression. Adequate levels of physical activity, including through low intensity activity like walking, helps manage weight and also decreases the risk of falls and fractures in older age. Being physically active outdoors can provide additional physical and mental health benefits. Regularly visiting green spaces is linked to higher levels of physical activity and spending 30 minutes per day at a park can reduce the incidence of high blood pressure and depression. Physically active children tend to have better academic achievement, better attendance and fewer disciplinary problems.¹⁵ Communities that participate in sport and recreation develop strong social bonds and are safer places, and the people who live in them are generally healthier and happier than places where physical activity isn't a priority¹⁶.

Active living is supported by the places we live in – through the built environment such as pedestrian and cycle paths, sport and recreation facilities, public open space, parks and reserves¹⁷. Places that support active lifestyles are often places with walkable neighbourhoods (see 5.1 Active transport) and have good access to natural areas (see 6.2 Sustainable

access to natural environments). Places that support active lifestyles also have sport and active recreation facilities, which are indoor and outdoor spaces assigned for sports, leisure and recreation purposes. These may include sports grounds, leisure parks, golf courses and spaces with recreational equipment for play and exercise. People in the community also make use of community places like halls, parks, beaches and streets to exercise. Virtual spaces are increasingly being used to meet online, including for exercise and active recreation. While Council provides many places in the community that are used for active lifestyles, local businesses also provide places like dance studios and gyms. The Office of Sport has identified that many young people in the Shoalhaven are more likely to undertake informal active recreation than formal 'group sports' programs, emphasising the need for infrastructure for informal active recreation like bushwalking, mountain bike riding and skateboarding.

As well as having places that support active lifestyles, we also need programs and activities happening in those places. 2002 research in Perth suggests that while a supportive physical environment is necessary for increasing community recreational activity levels, it was secondary to the influence of individual and social environmental factors such as being in the habit of exercising or having social support like clubs or exercise partners. This high level of influence of individual and social environmental factors indicates that education campaigns and organised activities could have more impact than additional facilities, where the physical environment is already supportive of recreational activities. The research also indicated that the most frequently used facilities were informal,

particularly the streets and public open space, and recommended greater emphasis on creating streetscapes that enhance walking for recreation and transport¹⁸. Active lifestyles are also supported by cultural and social factors and programs such as healthy lifestyle and travel behaviour change programs, campaigns, information, education, clubs, cost to participant, technology and a broad range of initiatives that encourage participation in active lifestyles.

While Council provides activities and programs to support people to live active lifestyles, access to opportunities to meet the community's needs relies on the work of community partners including both non-profit groups and businesses. Sporting clubs and teams, active recreation groups like bushwalking

clubs, dance academies, martial arts schools, personal trainers, Pilates and yoga instructors, weights classes, cross-fit groups, swim schools – the range of active recreation activities is as diverse as people's interests.

Access to both places and programs that support active lifestyles can be improved by ensuring that opportunities are inclusive for all ages, cultures, locations and financial situations. We all have a right to live an active life, so supports to build the capacity of non-profit providers of low-cost activities like gentle exercise should focus on improving inclusion. Access can also be improved by initiatives that improve community awareness of available places and activities, as well as the health benefits of participation.

What the community told us

Survey participants acknowledged that the Shoalhaven region is well resourced to enable many residents to exercise and improve their physical and mental health for limited or no cost. Neighbourhood open space plays an important role with residents who frequently utilise local parks, facilities, and sidewalks to get active, foster connections, and seek respite from day-to-day stresses. When asked for ideas that would improve community wellbeing, survey participants suggested that better paths, more outdoor exercise equipment, expansion community-run exercise classes and more off-leash dog areas. Dog parks and off-leash areas are highly-valued recreational facilities in the Shoalhaven.

From the online survey, those who felt they were unable to easily access open space recorded a significantly lower health score. Nearly 80% of survey participants reported being able to easily walk to a park or natural surroundings. The 14% of participants who said they could not easily access open space recorded a significantly lower mental health rating of 2.7/5 and health rating of 3/5 (compared to the community average of 3.5 for mental health and 3.6 for physical health). All of this particular group also recorded being dissatisfied with the transport connections in their area.

"Sporting and community events bring people together. To have those two things you need social infrastructure - sporting fields, halls, parks and other spaces to have events in." – Online survey participant

"I enjoy bushwalking and swimming as leisure activities so access to the natural environment and quality open spaces and recreational facilities are important to me" – Online survey participant

"My favourite activity is walking my dogs on the beach where I can chat to other dog owners." – Online survey participant

"We are rapidly developing and currently kids have very little access to sporting facilities. We should have adequate and accessible basketball and netball courts. Not to mention a skate park or pump track. Things like a golf driving range or a PCYC would be hugely beneficial for our rapidly expanding community." – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Prepare and implement Coastal Management Programs (to replace the previous Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan) to manage the use and development of the coastal environment in an ecologically sustainable way, for the social, cultural and economic well-being of the people of New South Wales (*Coastal Management Act 2016*).
- Plan for and manage public land as the appointed Crown land manager under the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*, including having a Plan of Management for land classified as 'natural area' or 'reserve'.
- Act as the roads authority in the Shoalhaven, performing functions including regulating traffic and giving consent for any work (including pedestrian facilities) in the road reserve, as outlined in the *Roads Act 1993* which recognises the rights of members of the public to pass along public roads (whether on foot, in a vehicle or otherwise).
- Ensure compliance with *Public Health Act 2010* requirements for public swimming pools and spa pools.
- Act as the local authority in carrying out the provisions of the Companion Animals Act 1998 which provides for the effective and responsible management of companion animals, including to protect native birds and animals. In addition, this requires Council to promote awareness of the responsibilities of dog and cat owners, including penalties for not complying.
- Ensure compliance with *Public Health Act 2010* requirements for public health safety in public swimming pools.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Plan, design and manage open space, recreational facilities and other public space to facilitate active lifestyles (recreation and play), including:
 - Plan, provide and maintain recreational infrastructure (sportsgrounds, recreation centres, pools, play equipment, exercise equipment, walking and cycling facilities), guided by the documents including the Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan, PAMP, Bike Plan and site masterplans. This includes providing learn-to-ride facilities to build cycling skills and confidence.
 - Provide active recreational activities, including Shoalhaven Indoor Sports Centres holiday programs, Swim Sport & Fitness leisure centre programs and bike safety events in parks
 - Manage Crown lands, beaches and coastal zone, guided by plans including Plans of Management, Strategic Direction for Nowra Riverfront Precinct, and using thirteen Coastal Management Programs and the Shoalhaven Development Control Plan

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Work with community partners to provide programs and activities to support people to live active lifestyles:
 - Hiring sportsground and facilities to local sporting clubs.
 - Convening the Sports Board advisory committee.
 - Working with NSW Office of Sport alongside community partners to deliver the Shoalhaven Active Youth Program.
 - Provide Community Wellbeing Grants to support community groups and sports clubs to increase participation and improve resources.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Improve access to inclusive sport and physical activity programs, including programs for people with disability and programs that increase the participation of young women. For example, providing 'come and try' days, social sport and recreational activities, and adaptive sport activities like Shoalhaven Walking Basketball.
 - Provide programs that respond to emerging health issues and develop an evidence base for program impact.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Provision of open space, recreational equipment, community facilities and youth spaces to equitably meet the needs of community members of all ages across the Shoalhaven, guided by a provision strategy that identifies resourcing needed for delivery and is informed by engagement on contemporary community use of community infrastructure. This could consider ways to support activation of town and village centres, climate resilience and adaption, flexible and multipurpose infrastructure, the needs of young people and older people, and small interventions to provide meeting points in key environmental sites. Also listed under 1.1 Community life.

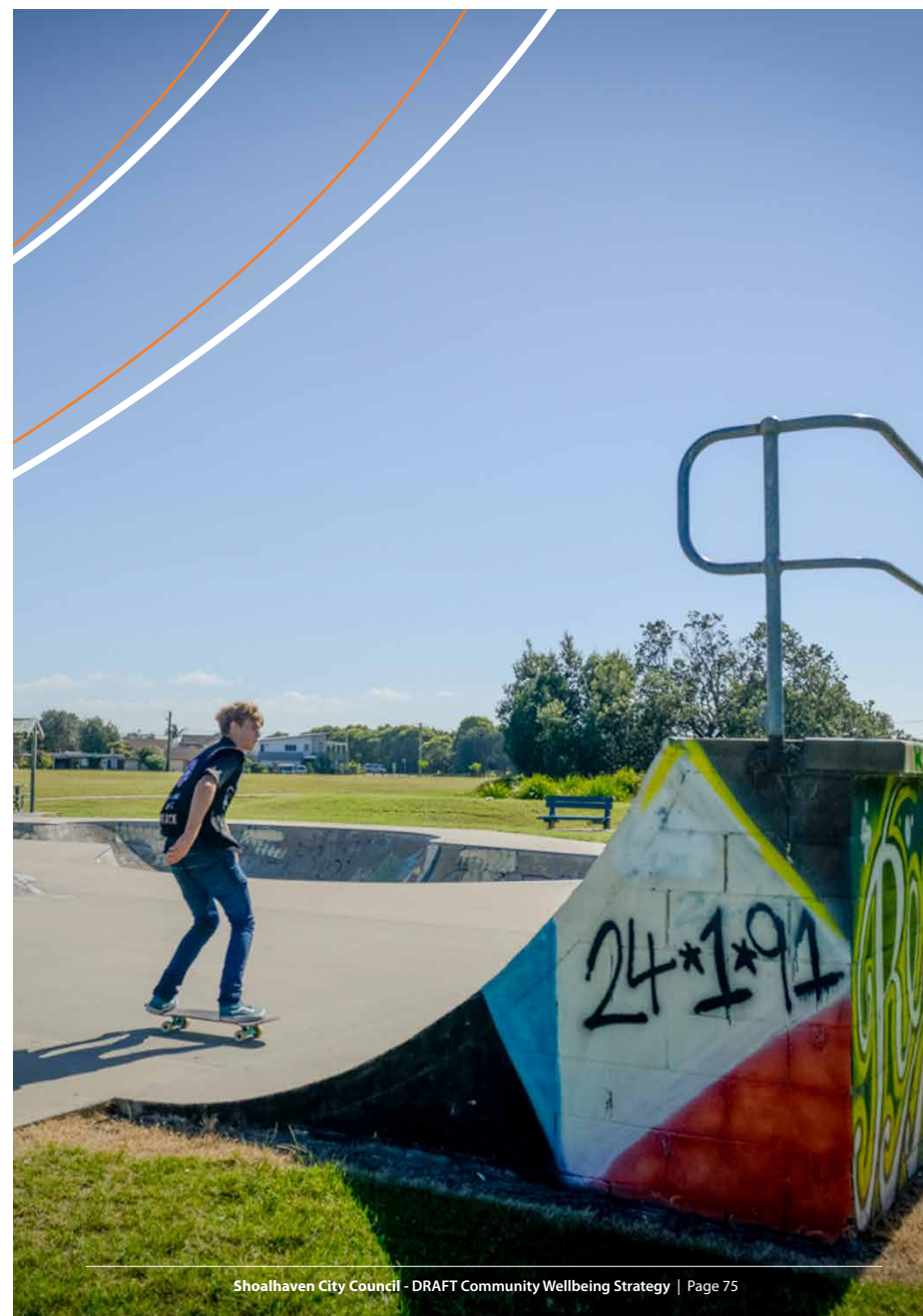
Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- The Draft Wilton Growth Area Development Control Plan 2019 identifies wellbeing as a purpose of the plan, by saying that one of the plan's purposes is to "Support the health and wellbeing of local residents and workers by promoting physical activity, transport choice and accessibility, access to employment and education opportunities, social infrastructure, housing diversity and affordability, access to healthy food, a desirable and safe public domain, opportunities for recreation and entertainment, access to the natural environment, and a sense of place and community identity".
- The network of Jordan Springs Lake, Lakeside Parade and Melaleuca Lake is an example of drainage infrastructure that is also designed to perform a recreational function for community.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People across the Shoalhaven being committed to active lifestyles for their household, using available places to be active and supporting others to be active.
- Non-profit and business facilitators of diverse 'active recreation' activities across the Shoalhaven – sporting clubs and coaches, Pilates instructors, dance teaches, walking groups, personal trainers, park-run groups, cross-fit boxes, gym operators, etc.
- Property developers provide contributions towards meeting the needs of new population, including towards the provision of open space and recreational infrastructure identified in any relevant development contributions plans. Community service organisations improving equitable access to healthy food, including providers of programs including food relief for vulnerable community members, Kitchen Garden programs, and FoodREDi or other healthy eating learning programs.
- South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation are an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation providing health and health related services at 8 sites.
- Healthy Cities Illawarra help design the infrastructure of a healthy community by developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based and sustainable programs that address the underlying social, economic and environmental causes of health inequity.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District has a service agreement with NSW Health and is responsible for promoting, protecting and managing the community's health, including through the work of their Health Promotion Officers and by providing the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health Education Centre in Wollongong.
- Coordinare is funded by the Australian Government as the southern Eastern NSW PHN to:
 - conduct assessments of the health needs of the region and identify groups who need more resources, programs and services.
 - PHNs can commission external healthcare providers to meet the needs in the region, such as funding or providing health promotion programs.
- Office of Sport NSW provides programs, funding and infrastructure to enable higher rates of participation in sport and active recreation, including grants for facilities and local programs, as well as Active Kids vouchers.
- Heart Foundation provides advice and resources to support councils to create healthy built environments. For example, Good for Busine\$\$ - The benefits of making streets more walking and cycling friendly and Healthy Active by Design.
- Infrastructure NSW and NSW Sport invest in public transport infrastructure and regional/ subregional sporting and recreation facilities.
- Other managers of public lands used for active recreation: NSW DPE holds Crown land and appoints Council as the Crown Land Manager, Forestry Corporation of NSW manage State forests in NSW, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service manages national parks.
- Roads and Maritime Services plan and maintain state and regional roads, including pedestrian infrastructure in the road reserve.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Government Architect NSW and Marine Estate Management Authority.



4.3

Healthy and equitable food systems

People have equitable access to healthy food.

Everyone in the Shoalhaven should have fair, secure and affordable access to healthy food. For this to occur, we need a healthy, equitable, sustainable and resilient food system that supports connected communities and good food for all. An equitable system supports fair outcomes for people throughout the food supply chain, from farmers, food processors, transport and logistics providers, retailers and consumers¹⁹. An equitable food system provides and prioritises nutritious and culturally appropriate food for all, and is resilient to issues like the impacts of disaster or international supply chain logistics. An equitable food system also manages food waste. Access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food is a basic need and should be treated as a human right, with priority given to the most vulnerable.

What we consume is critical for individual health and wellbeing. On Maslow's hierarchy of needs, food and water are essential foundations for a healthy human, more important for our survival than safety or a sense of community. Eating a wide variety of healthy foods helps to keep you in good health and to protect against chronic disease. Eating a well-balanced diet means eating a variety of foods from each of the 5 food groups daily, in the recommended amounts²⁰. The main reason for food insecurity is material hardship and inadequate financial resources. People can also experience food insecurity due to financial or geographic difficulties accessing affordable healthy food, or because they have limited understanding about how to purchase and prepare ingredients to make a healthy meal²¹.

Equitable access to healthy food is also important for building social connections because social activities are often focused on food – in the home, on picnics or in restaurants. Food also has a cultural meaning, as shown by the range of food-related festivals and events and the emergence of community and verge gardens. This highlights the need for the community

to have access to culturally appropriate food as across cultures food plays an important role in building social and community connections.

Achieving an equitable and sustainable food system depends on the co-operation of stakeholders throughout the food supply chain, from primary producers to transport industry and consumers. Land-use controls, regulated by state and local government, need to facilitate local food production and processing, as well as retail locations that provide access for all in the community. The activities of businesses including producers, processors, transporters and retailers are also needed to meet the community's needs. Community groups and service providers can also contribute, such as providers of low-cost food programs for vulnerable community members. Other examples are breastfeeding promotion and support groups, and community garden groups who support people to grow and access fresh food locally. Access to healthy food can be improved through initiatives to improve health and nutrition literacy, so people better understand the impacts of food choices and have the skills and confidence needed to make better nutrition choices²². Council also plays a role in implementing food safety regulations.

Many Victorian local councils have dedicated food system policies that articulate the interconnection between the environmental, social, health, and economic elements of the food system. A project to comprehensively map local government's role in creating healthy and equitable food systems was completed in 2021.²³ This is a good resource to support councils to understand the variety of ways they can influence food systems, from having community garden policies or strategies to support local food production.



What the community told us

While 91.8% of survey participants living in the Shoalhaven felt they could easily access healthy and fresh from where they live, there were 6.5% that said they couldn't. It was commonly acknowledged that the most affordable and freshest food was concentrated at farmers markets, and that they were difficult to access for most of the population with cost, transport, and lack of inclusion being the three main barriers. The community suggested that this could be improved by expanding the farmer's market network and providing a more accessible co-op for local growers and producers in the Shoalhaven.

"Markets, like the Berry farmers market with fresh produce at reasonable prices would be a great improvement for the community living in Nowra" – Online survey participant

"Community gardens are wonderful" – Online survey participant

"While I can access fresh food it is very expensive so it's one meal a day" – Online survey participant

"(My ideas for improving community wellbeing are) Information boards with healthy eating suggestions. Cheap meal information days at local community centres. Information boards with dangers of obesity. A community weight loss programme. Obesity seems to be a huge (pardon the pun) problem in Shoalhaven." – Online survey participant

"If our access to fresh food was limited because of a natural disaster, conflict or transport problems due to fuel shortages, our ability to live well would be affected. The fires that impacted the south coast during the summer of 2019 / 20 are an example of how quickly our access to fresh food and water, which are staples for life, became limited or temporarily unavailable. The impact of this event created panic, stress and uncertainty, all factors that do not support wellbeing" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Ensure compliance with *Public Health Act 2010* requirements for private water suppliers and water carters, including ensuring businesses use approved quality assurance programs for potable water.
- By appointment by NSW Food Authority, act an enforcement agency to ensure retail food businesses comply with *Food Act 2003* requirements to ensure that food for sale is safe and suitable for human consumption, including annual inspection of all retail food businesses.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide Community Wellbeing Grants to support community groups to:
 - Create and maintain community gardens, guided by the Community Garden Policy.
 - Provide food for vulnerable community members.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Provide water and wastewater services including:
 - Manage collection, treatment and distribution of water.
 - Manage the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater safely back into the environment, including managing a water recycling scheme that provides irrigation for dairy farmers Provide community spaces for food markets.
- Provide waste management services.
- Provide education programs to residents to learn about growing food at home.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to improve access to healthy food by:
 - Improving local producers' access to networks and information, such as farmer's markets, co-operatives for local growers and producers, and awareness of planning permissibility for roadside stalls and farmers markets.
 - Improving community use of school facilities for community gardens and produce markets.
 - Providing healthy eating education programs to improve health literacy and programs to improve access for people with food insecurity. For example, offering FoodREDi train-the-trainer program to local service providers and school canteen staff would allow food literacy programs to be run at locations across the Shoalhaven.
 - Support a regional approach to agricultural production, with updated mapping of productive resource land.
- Explore opportunities to demonstrate leadership as a provider of community facilities and activities:
 - That provides healthy food options and encourages healthy food choices.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Provision of community gardens that are managed by community groups.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- Several local governments in Victoria have introduced food systems policies to enhance the capacity of local food systems to sustainably meet current and future community needs. Examples include Cardinia Shire's Community Food Strategy and City of Ballarat's Good Food For All Food Strategy 2019-22.
- Northern Rivers Food Project was a federally funded project in 2016 that explored the role of councils in providing for and promoting access to healthy food. The project produced a full kit of advice for councils, ranging from model clauses and policy documents, through to standard development application forms and lodgement advice.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People being committed to healthy and equitable food systems: growing food at home for themselves or to share with friends, family and neighbours; buying locally grown produce, locally processed food and supporting local retailers.
- Local producers including community gardens and farmers/growers (and co-operatives) of diverse products like honey and oysters.
- Local businesses providing food transport, storage, processing and retail services, including farmers market organisers. Some businesses use food waste reduction programs to provide food relief, such as the Second Bite, OzHarvest programs and other small-scale local programs.
- Community garden organisers sharing learnings and resources to help communities establish new community gardens.
- Community service organisations improving equitable access to healthy food, including providers of programs including food relief for vulnerable community members, food co-operatives, Kitchen Garden programs, and FoodREDi or other healthy eating learning programs. To establish a community garden on Council land, communities need the support of a local incorporated community group (including Community Consultative Bodies).
- South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation are an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation providing health and health related services at 8 sites.
- Healthy Cities Illawarra help design the infrastructure of a healthy community by developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based and sustainable programs that address the underlying social, economic and environmental causes of health inequity.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District has a service agreement with NSW Health and is responsible for providing health services in the Shoalhaven and promoting, protecting and managing the community's health, including through the work of their Health Promotion Officers and by providing the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health Education Centre in Wollongong.
- Coordinare is funded by the Australian Government as the southern Eastern NSW PHN to:
 - Conduct assessments of the health needs of the region and identify groups who need more resources, programs and services.
 - PHNs can commission external healthcare providers to meet the needs in the region, such as funding or providing health promotion programs.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Government Architect NSW and Marine Estate Management Authority. 2018 - 2028 which outlines how to protect and enhance our waterways, coastline and estuaries over the next ten years.





Foundation
5

Transport connections to access our community's opportunities

Access to transport infrastructure and services so we can participate in life

5.1

Active transport

People access places and services in their community by walking or cycling; People with additional access needs can get around.

When we walk or cycle to access places and services in the community, we are undertaking physical activity as a means of transport. Active transport is possible when destinations are close to home, workplaces, or transport connections. Places that support use of active transport provide an affordable and healthy way to get around, visit our family and friends, and access local services and opportunities.

There is strong evidence that walking improves health²⁴ and that well-designed pedestrian networks promote walking. Designing our built environment to encourage active transport is a foundational step in which Council plays an important role, particularly in new housing developments. Australian research in 2016 found that two key factors encourage walking for transport: the connectivity of streets (more intersections, fewer big blocks) and a high number of local living destinations, such as supermarkets, shops, parks and public transport, within 1600m.²⁵ At a walking pace, the potential for incidental interaction is improved, compared to being in a car or cycling, encouraging the local community connections highlighted in 1.1 Community Life.

Even within the existing built environment, walking and cycling can be encouraged by improving the pedestrian experience with facilities such as shared paths, shading and pedestrian-friendly intersections. By addressing the barriers experienced by people with additional access needs, active transport becomes more accessible for everyone in the community. With our ageing population, and for

those with limited mobility, the use of 'mobility scooters' is increasing, and work is needed to adapt the built environment to cater for this mode of transport, particularly in localities with seniors and aged accommodation.

'Pedestrian Access and Management Plans' (PAMPs) can outline the principles and actions necessary for a safe, accessible, well-located and well-designed pedestrian network. Bike Plans or Cycling Strategies can address the same matters to encourage bicycle use, also covering 'end-of-trip facilities' such as bike racks, showers and change rooms (for larger commercial premises and at other key destinations)²⁶. As one of the largest landowners of public space, councils play an important role in providing active transport infrastructure, but there is a significant funding gap between community expectations and what can be provided, even when grant funding is available. Community education and the promotion of local activities like walking groups and events like Walk to School Day can also encourage the use of active transport.

'Active transport' is also relevant for bus and train travel because public transport (addressed within 5.2 Transport facilities and services) is often used in combination with walking. This makes active transport connections particularly important to those relying on public transport, including children, young people and those unable to drive (or walk long distances).



What the community told us

Walkable suburbs were seen as one of the top 3 priorities for creating more supportive natural and built environments, identified through the community consultation. When asked to nominate a big idea that would improve community wellbeing, the second most common response nominated by survey participants was "Increased active transport", noting a need for action around people feeling unsafe using the road or verge to get around in locations across the Shoalhaven.

Residents living in neighbourhoods they reported as being pleasant and walkable recorded the highest level of personal wellbeing from survey participants. However, across all engagement methods, the community reported that moving within suburbs and town centres was difficult in the majority of towns in the Shoalhaven. The topography of the land and the prioritisation of vehicular traffic were the two most common causes captured during the engagement.

"We need to improve active transport connections to the beautiful destinations in our LGA, since having a kid recently I've noticed a lot of the natural areas, open spaces or recreation facilities I want to go to aren't accessible in a pram" – Online survey participant

"The streets have no footpaths and makes it difficult to access medical and shops or social. In the rain or wet the middle of the road is your only option and it's not safe so it isolates me" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Plan, design and manage public space to facilitate active transport, including:
 - Plan, provide and maintain active transport facilities (footpaths, cycleways, kerb ramps, pedestrian crossings, shading and roadside verges), guided by the PAMP and Bike Plan.
 - Provide learn-to-ride facilities to build cycling skills and confidence.
 - Develop strategies and project plans to get projects 'shovel ready' to help secure grant funding.
 - Ongoing advocacy for increase in funding at all government levels.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Use of active transport.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community: local walking and cycling groups, pedestrians creating a welcoming environment for other pedestrians, motorists creating a welcoming environment for people walking and cycling.
- Non-profit organisations and service providers promoting active transport locally, including the Heart Foundation providing 'Healthy Active by Design' resource.
- Property developers provide paths to contribute to meeting the needs of new population.
- Local businesses providing equipment and services to support active transport, such as bicycle retailers and servicing, as well as end of trip facilities.
- Transport for NSW provide advice and partner to connect active transport facilities with public transport services, and extend these networks to improve service, accessibility and connectivity in and between communities. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan provides a blueprint for how Transport for NSW will proactively respond to the transport needs of the region, as well as address the key trends that will necessitate a transport related response into the future.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government funding providers.



5.2

Transport facilities and services

People can get around with public transport and other transport services; People have good facilities when using public transport.

Transport facilities and services support people to get around when active transport is not available or is unsuitable. In addition, some community members are unable to drive or access a private vehicle, including aged persons, those with a disability, school children, young people and unemployed people trying to enter the workforce. For these people, public or community transport services are essential for them to access services and places in the community. Public transport provision is an NSW Government responsibility. The challenge of a smaller population spread over a large geographical area means that public transport opportunities are limited in the Shoalhaven. Transport for NSW provides a train line linking Bomaderry and Berry through Gerringong to Wollongong and beyond via the South Coast line. Transport for NSW also contracts a range of private bus companies to provide public bus services across

the large Shoalhaven region. As an NSW Government responsibility, public transport services in the Shoalhaven are dependent on the planning and funding priorities of Transport for NSW.

Public and community-based transport services provide opportunities for socialising and incidental interactions when compared to private car transport. For people without car access, a reliable publicly accessible system provides a means of getting to and from essential services, open space, shopping and community facilities.



What the community told us

Transport infrastructure in the Shoalhaven was identified in the community engagement as the second highest priority for strengthening community connections. Survey and workshop participants agreed that some residents are unable to participate in community events, work, study or join clubs due to poor public transport and active transport options. Stakeholders and community members alike acknowledged the increased health risks of residents being unable to access essential services and professional health advice. The Shoalhaven's reliance on private vehicles, due to lack of transport alternatives, was viewed as the most common barrier to creating a sense of local community and connection. Participants highlighted the need to create better connectivity between townships through an improved regional transport plan, including the potential benefits of a unified Opal card system.

"Transport is a major issue. Providing transport opportunities to all is an imperative to improving community wellbeing. Access to employment and education opportunities improve quality of life. People cannot better themselves if they cannot get to work or school. Their situation cannot change, and they are powerless to change it. Increasing the diversity of routes and decreasing commute times is essential to improving community wellbeing." – Online survey participant

"It is near impossible to travel by public transport if you are time poor... You need a car to get anywhere within a reasonable amount of time therefore creating congestion on the roads" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that recognises diverse local needs and considers social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Act as the roads authority in the Shoalhaven, performing functions including opening and closing roads, regulating traffic and giving consent for any work (including public transport facilities) in the road reserve, as outlined in the *Roads Act 1993*.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Plan and provide transport facilities:
 - Provide transport facilities such as bus interchange and bus-stop facilities, park and ride facilities, and transport hubs.
 - Advocate for increased funding, expanded public transport services and expanded active transport infrastructure to connect with public transport nodes.
 - Develop strategies and project plans to get projects 'shovel ready' to help secure grant funding
- Provide Comerong Ferry services.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Extend the Jobs and Skills Bus trial.
 - Embrace new technologies to enhance our travel options and lessen our footprint.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Consideration of mobility scooter use in planning and providing transport facilities and services.
- Continue to advocate for the public transport actions identified in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan to be brought forward, and include an expansion of the 16 Cities program to extend more broadly across the Shoalhaven.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- Community Transport provision by Eurobodalla Shire Council is co-ordinated by the council and the eligibility criteria make it available to a broad range of community members.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Shoalhaven Community Transport Service provide the Shoalhaven Transport Guide website, a comprehensive guide to public transport services in the Shoalhaven.
- Service providers and non-profit organisations (including Shoalhaven Community Transport Service) delivering local community transport programs for isolated community members.
- Property developers provide road infrastructure that cater for bus networks, that contribute to meeting the needs of new population.
- South East Australian Transport Strategy has developed the South East Transport Strategy which identifies priority projects to benefit the entire region and beyond. Their goal is to advocate for an effective integrated transport network that stimulates economic growth that is sustainable and sensitive to the environment and enhances communities.
- Transport for NSW provide rail services and engage local bus providers, including delivering the 16 Cities Program. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan provides a blueprint for how Transport for NSW will proactively respond to the transport needs of the region, as well as address the key trends that will necessitate a transport related response into the future.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government funding providers for community transport programs.

5.3

Road access

People can get around by road.

The network of local, regional and state roads is an essential link providing people with access to services and places in their community. The road network is used by private vehicles, as well as public bus services and community transport providers. Effective road networks also require provision of appropriate car parking facilities. Road assets represent significant infrastructure, with planning and maintenance requiring services including traffic engineering, civil engineering, drainage and bridge infrastructure, as well as liaison between local and state government where road assets intersect.

The challenge of a smaller population spread over a large geographical area means that there is a high rate of road asset per household, with 42.8m of road per household in the Shoalhaven, nearly triple the rate for similar regional areas. As local and regional road maintenance is carried out by Council using rates collections with limited grant funding assistance provided by other levels of government, these road assets represent a significant cost for ratepayers. Provision of state roads is primarily a NSW

Government responsibility. In the Shoalhaven, only the Princes Highway and Moss Vale Road form part of the State Road network, but Council has some limited maintenance responsibilities where these roads pass through towns and villages. State road provision plays a significant role in transport access as the Princes Highway acts as the main transport spine running north-south through the Shoalhaven.

Physical access to essential services and other key destinations via a well-designed and maintained road system is essential for individual and community wellbeing and requires ongoing direct action by the Council. Extensive damage caused by weather events between 2019 and 2022 (including more than 9 floods) impacted the community's ability to get around using the road network, highlighting the rising costs of road maintenance through an increase in extreme weather and disaster events. The Black Summer bushfires of 2019-20 emphasised the role Shoalhaven roads play during emergency events, acting as a critical evacuation route for many of the 'one road in' villages along our coastline.



What the community told us

As the dominant mode of transport in the Shoalhaven is the private car, provision of roads consistently shows as a high priority for people in the Shoalhaven. Shoalhaven City Council's 2020 Customer Satisfaction Survey recorded that the Council service with the lowest resident satisfaction was the maintenance of sealed local roads, with 49% of respondents dissatisfied. The main reasons for dissatisfaction were the condition of the roads and the quality of the maintenance carried out. The primary issue identified was potholes, with 23% of respondents mentioning potholes. Some references were also made to 'patchwork' maintenance, stating that roads should be repaired properly rather than temporarily maintained.

"The roads and intersections of our villages are getting busier as our population both permanent and temporary has increased over the last 12 to 24 months" – Online survey participant

"Roads are not safe due to the poor condition they are in" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Act as the roads authority in the Shoalhaven, performing functions including opening and closing roads, regulating traffic, giving consent for any work in the road reserve, approving use of roads for footpath dining and permitting road events, as outlined in the *Roads Act 1993*.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Planning, providing and maintaining road infrastructure:
 - Construction and maintenance of local and regional roads and bridges.
 - Planning for local road networks in new subdivisions and upgrades of existing local road assets to respond to changing needs.
 - Liaising with Transport for NSW regarding the intersection of state road assets with local and regional assets.
 - Advocacy for responsibility for regional roads to be handed back to the NSW Government.
 - Develop strategies and project plans to get projects 'shovel ready' to help secure grant funding.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

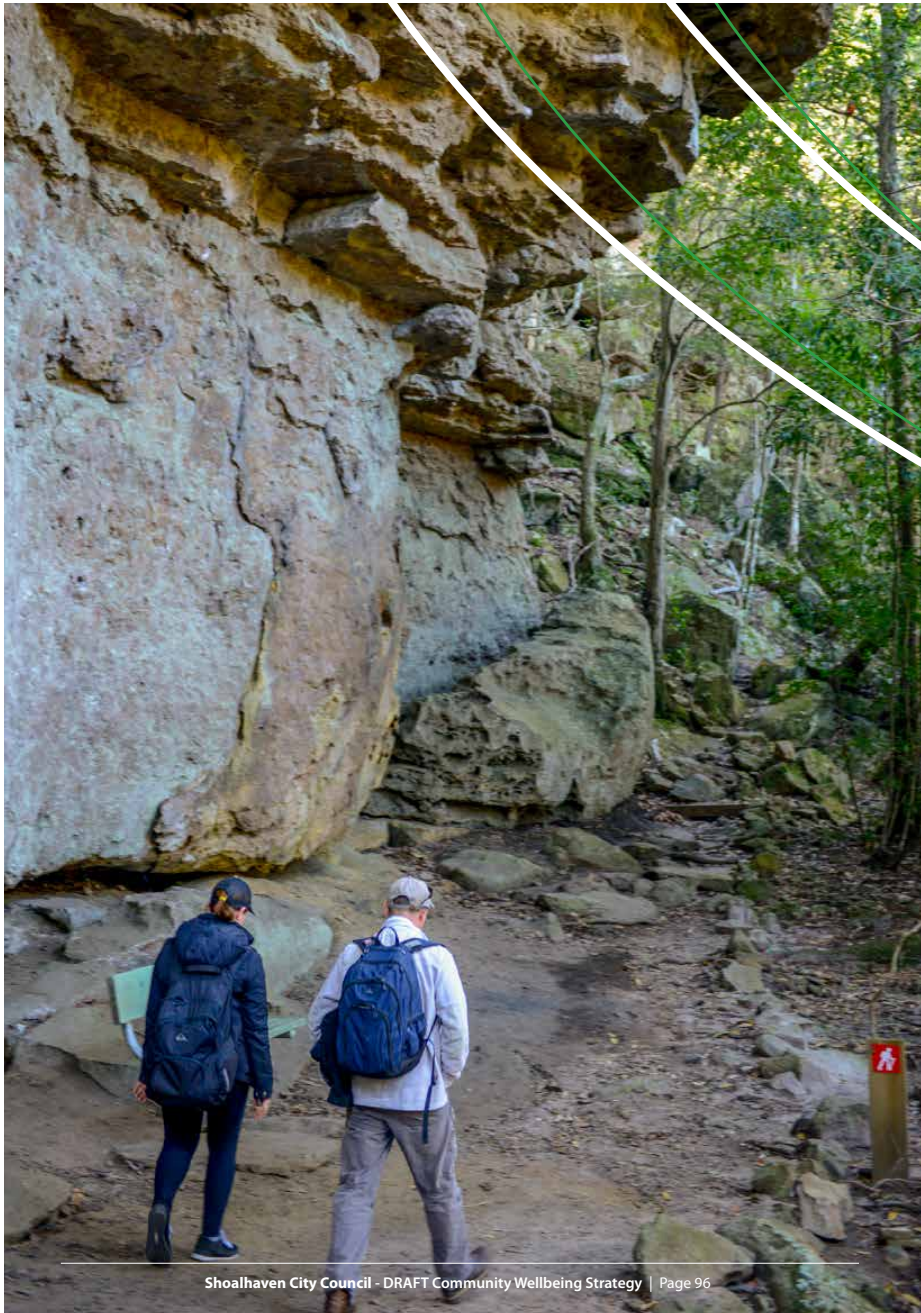
Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Building on existing advocacy for responsibility for regional roads to be handed back to the NSW Government, deliver a program to raise awareness of the high rate of road assets (metres) per household in the Shoalhaven and impacts related to condition of roads.
- Continue to advocate to other levels of government to "Keep Nowra Moving" and continue to develop Nowra Key Roads Strategic Direction projects and advocate for their funding.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Local businesses providing services to support road transport, such as road maintenance services and learner driver schools.
- Property developers provide contributions towards meeting the needs of new population, including towards the provision of road infrastructure identified in any relevant development contributions plans, in addition to other road and intersection improvements identified as part of development assessment determinations.
- South East Australian Transport Strategy has developed the South East Transport Strategy which identifies priority projects to benefit the entire region and beyond. Their goal is to advocate for an effective integrated transport network that stimulates economic growth that is sustainable and sensitive to the environment and enhances communities.
- Transport for NSW provide state roads, including delivering the 16 Cities Program actions related to road upgrades. TfNSW are key partners in delivering any approved congestion-busting projects in Nowra including State Road upgrades and Local Nowra Key Roads projects. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan provides a blueprint for how Transport for NSW will proactively respond to the transport needs of the region, as well as address the key trends that will necessitate a transport related response into the future.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government funding providers, including Infrastructure Australia and Infrastructure NSW.



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Sustainable natural and built environments

*Sustainable access to natural resources by managing
our impact on them*

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6.1

Sustainable management of natural resources

People can access our natural resources in a way that supports the long-term sustainability of them.

Our natural resources include the air we breathe, the water we drink, the soil we use to grow food and the wood we use to build our homes, as well as energy resources like gas and solar power that provide comfort and enjoyment in our homes. These natural resources are central to our quality of life because they provide us with safety, shelter, nourishment and comfort that is needed for wellbeing.

With a deep understanding and respect for the environment in which they lived, Aboriginal people lived for tens of thousands of years without depleting these resources, using only what was needed and ensuring that these resources would continue to be available for generations to come. As Aboriginal people have done for so long, environmental sustainability requires us to find ways of meeting our own needs without compromising those of future generations. As people sharing the beautiful and rich resources of the south coast of NSW, we have a shared responsibility to continue to manage our resources sustainably.

Managing our natural resources sustainably requires everyone in the community to make thoughtful and conscious choices about how we live our lives. People can use active or public transport to get around,

where these are available, instead of travelling by car. Homeowners can choose to build their home with sustainable materials and using thermally-efficient designs, or can install solar panels and retrofit measures to improve thermal and energy efficiency. Businesses can supply their local community and use more sustainable inputs, like renewable products, local employees and local suppliers. When we choose to buy food that is grown locally or made in Australia, we are making sustainable choices because less energy was used for transport. Recycling, reusing and repurposing our waste can reduce landfill and mean we need to buy fewer things. Reducing our material consumption means that there will be more for future generations, whilst composting our food waste reduces pressure on landfill and minimise fuel consumption associated with transporting waste. People are more able to live sustainably when they understand the value of natural resources, the choices available to them and the impacts of their choices on current and future generations. Awareness-raising initiatives can help individuals, business and whole communities to make more sustainable choices – for example, 'place of origin' product labels and advertising campaigns like 'Go Local First' to support

local businesses. Solar rebates and the 'return and earn' program are examples of incentive programs that can be used by all levels of government to encourage more sustainable behaviour. At a local government level, volunteer programs such as Landcare, Coastcare and Bushcare, as well as participation in Council managed environmental awareness programs, can play a critical role in guiding best practice in sustainable management of our natural resources in a way that encourages community education, participation and ownership. Government, particularly at state and national levels, also play a legislative and regulatory role to ensure that individuals, businesses and industry comply with requirements to manage our natural resources sustainably. For example, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth) and Biodiversity Conservation

Act 2016 (NSW) provide a strong framework for protection of the environment and the conservation of biodiversity.

Our natural resources are increasingly impacted by global issues, including population growth, climate change and natural disasters, and supply chain issues such as fuel shortages. Our local agricultural industry, which is key to ensuring local supply, can use sustainable practices to help manage the food bowl for the future by maintaining soil quality, reducing erosion, and protecting water catchments and water quality. In the Shoalhaven, Council helps the community to sustainably access clean drinking water and helps ensure wastewater can be safely returned into the environment (with wastewater treatment and liquid trade waste regulation).

What the community told us

"I am lucky to have land where we can grow our own food and satisfy our needs to maintain the quality natural environment (keep weeds at bay etc). I enjoy living in a community where values of sustainable food growing and maintenance of the environment are paramount." – Online survey participant

"I take pride in the Shoalhaven it's such a beautiful place. Having grown up in the Hunter I saw the massive growth the highway upgrade to Sydney had on our region. The Shoalhaven is coming to this point. It would be great to see it happen in the region but it needs to be closely controlled to make sure people aren't left behind and our natural resources are ruined." – Online survey participant

"Community gardens in every town and village to promote sustainable living" – Online survey participant

"Managing our natural resources sustainably is central to our wellbeing because we cannot live without access to clean air, the plants we eat, the water we drink, resources to heat our homes and provide us with shelter... Maintaining soil quality, reducing erosion, protecting water catchments and water quality are all examples of what is required to manage our resources sustainably, and thus, positively impact our wellbeing." – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Prepare and implement Coastal Management Programs (to replace the previous Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan) to manage the use and development of the coastal environment in an ecologically sustainable way, for the social, cultural and economic well-being of the people of New South Wales (*Coastal Management Act 2016*).
- Develop and implement floodplain risk management plans in accordance with NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy and Floodplain Development Manual, including preparation of flood studies.
- Plan for and manage public land as the appointed Crown land manager under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, including having a Plan of Management for land classified as 'natural area' or 'reserve'.
- Ensure compliance with *Local Government Act 1993* requirements for onsite sewage management systems, including operational approval and inspections.
- Monitor environmental pollution and ensure compliance with *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* including water quality, air quality, noise pollution and waste management.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide water and wastewater services including:
 - Manage collection, treatment and distribution of water using 3 large storage dams, 38 reservoirs, 26 pumping stations, 4 water treatment plants, 1,500km of water mains and a water sharing agreement with Water NSW.
 - Manage the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater safely back into the environment using 13 EPA-licensed wastewater treatment plants and by regulating liquid trade waste and managing the 'REMS' reclaimed water recycling scheme.
 - Use water and carry out of activities near water sources in a way that protects water sources, water quality, features of Aboriginal significance, habitats, animals and plants.
 - Provide water conservation education and incentive programs, including water treatment plant tours, rainwater tank rebates and the TAPSTAR program in primary schools.
- Support volunteers to participate in programs to restore and rehabilitate natural environments, including Bush care and Coastcare groups and Clean Up Australia Day.
- Provide waste management services (including green waste and household bulky waste vouchers) and provide education programs, including waste facility tours.
- Provide cemetery and crematory services.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

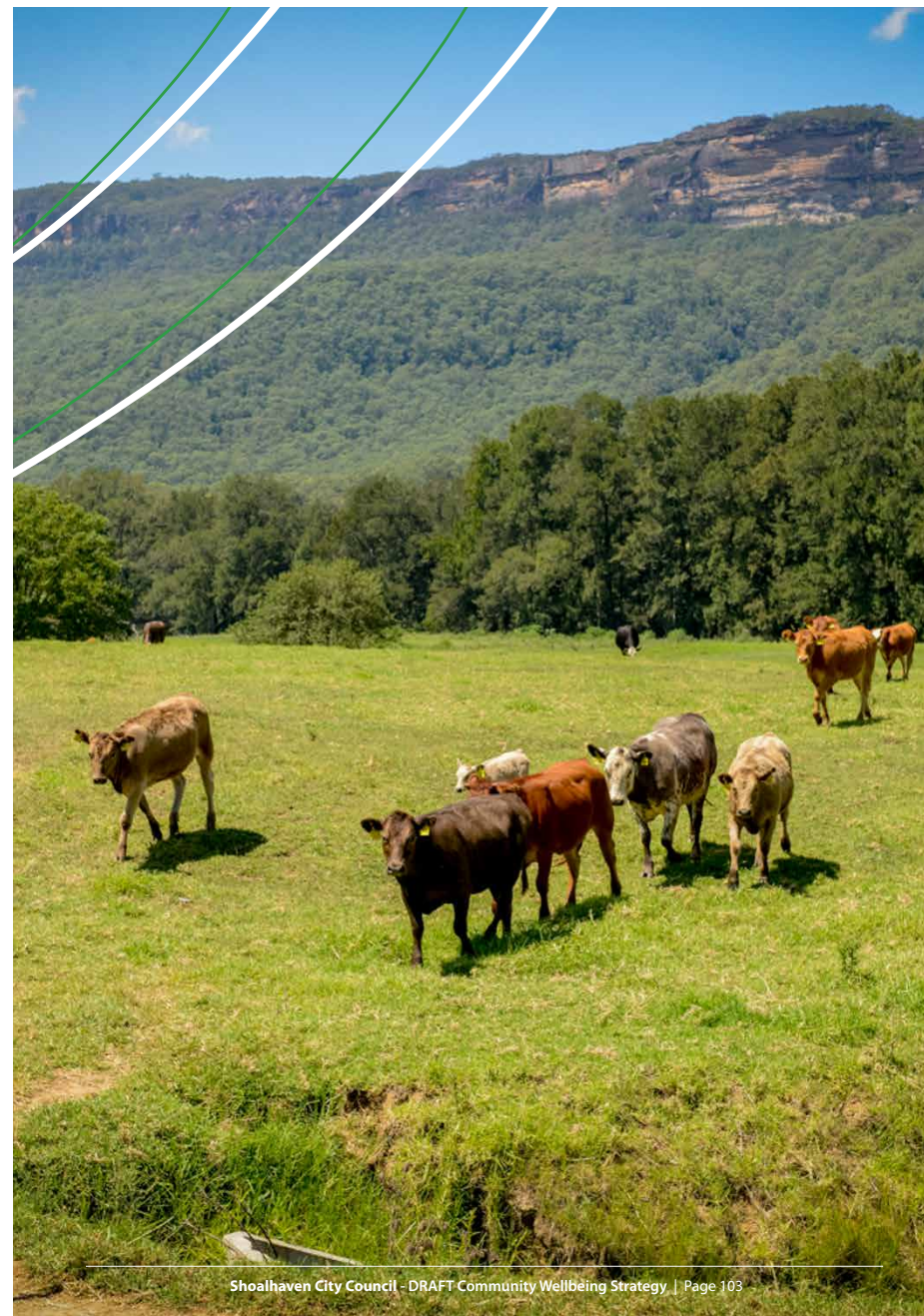
Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Deliver education initiatives such as sustainable farm tours and information resources (eg. guide to encouraging biodiversity, local sustainable businesses).
 - Improve capacity of community groups to access grants and information for delivering sustainability initiatives.
 - Improve capacity of local businesses to deliver services in an environmentally sustainable way (eg single-use plastic free villages).
 - Grow trees in schools or community gardens, for planting in the local community to improve canopy cover in urban settings.
 - Develop partnerships to improve understanding and use of Aboriginal cultural burning practices.
 - Install electric vehicle chargers in town centres using programs such as NSW Government Energy Saver electric vehicle charging grants.
- Explore opportunities to demonstrate leadership as a manager of public space that:
 - Demonstrates good practice use of sustainable control measures for noxious species.
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Expand water conservation education and incentive programs, such as expanding water-wise education programs into high schools and improving understanding of rainwater tank rebate program and other incentive programs.
 - Expand capacity of REMS water recycling scheme.
 - Expand programs to make water infrastructure more resilient to disasters and climate change impacts, considering learning from bushfires and other natural disasters.
- Advocate for state and federal government policies and programs to improve protection of natural resources like Ramsar wetlands and water resources, reflecting our experience of natural disasters.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community being committed to making environmentally sustainable choices for their household.
- Non-profit organisations, community groups and education institutions promoting and providing environmental sustainability initiatives, such as Landcare and Bushcare groups and Re-Power Shoalhaven.
- Local Aboriginal community members and Aboriginal Land Councils working to protect natural resources which are culturally important to their community, including through sharing their knowledge of sustainable management of natural resources (through the use of cultural burning, etc).
- Local businesses being committed to making environmentally sustainable choices and providing locally-grown or locally-produced products.
- Suppliers of natural resource products offering sustainable options, including energy suppliers.
- Water NSW have a water-sharing agreement with Council.
- Office of Local Government providing advice on Plans of Management for community lands.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service protect and maintain natural resources in our National Parks.
- Natural Resources Commission identifies strategic priorities for the NSW government to manage our natural resources for the benefit of all of NSW.
- NSW Rural Fire Services carry out hazard reduction strategies, including to mitigate the risk of damage to natural environment from fire.
- NSW DPE (NSW Crown Land) holds Crown land and appoints Council as the Crown Land Manager
- NSW Farmers Association represent farmers across the state and advocates for a profitable and sustainable NSW farming sector.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Environment and Heritage Group, Marine Estate Management, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- NSW Government providing a legislative framework and regulatory oversight of how our natural resources are managed, and approvals/licenses are granted for the protection of the environment and the community, including through NSW Department of Primary Industry (DPI), NSW Crown Land and the Environment Protection Authority. NSW DPI (which includes NSW DPI - Fisheries and NSW DPI - Marine Parks) deliver programs to grow the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, and enforce regulations including related biosecurity and recreational fishing.



6.2

Sustainable access to natural environments

People can enjoy our natural environment in a way that is sustainable for future generations (Natural environments are sustainably managed so people will have access in the future).

This domain is about people being able to access our natural environments to spend time in nature and enjoy recreational activities. Boating and fishing on our waterways, walking through bushland, enjoying our beaches and picnicking in our parks are all ways that we enjoy access to our natural environments. Spending time in this way can reduce stress and increase feelings of emotional wellbeing, as well as contributing to our physical wellbeing. The provision of well-managed and approved pet-friendly natural sites supports recreational activities like dog-walking and horse-riding to happen in a way that manages the impact on our natural environments. It is widely understood that time with pets can have similar benefits to spending time in nature, and appropriate policies and controls allows us to combine these two wellbeing benefits without negatively impacting the environment.

Access to these natural places is highly valued by people that live in and visit the region, as well as tourism businesses which are a critical part of our local economy on the south coast. There is a need to balance the community's desires and expectations for access with the need to protect and restore our natural environments. Our access to natural spaces to benefit our wellbeing must not compromise the need to protect our natural environments, and the diverse land and water resources within them, that sustainably support industries like agriculture, tourism, fisheries and forestry. In vast national and marine parks, people can completely immerse themselves in nature and enjoy the wellbeing benefits – this distance from urban and built-up environments is highly valued by the community when enjoying the expanses of natural environment in the Shoalhaven.

Access to our national and marine parks, reserves, waterways and beaches is important for the

traditional custodians of the Shoalhaven region because of the cultural significance of these places to local Aboriginal people. The long and deep connection that the traditional custodians have means that access to natural environments can include being able to hunt, fish, gather and participate in cultural activities on Country, as well as be involved in the management of national parks, state conservation areas and wilderness reserves. Genuine consultation with traditional custodians is needed to ensure community access to natural areas is culturally appropriate. When culturally-sensitive sites are unsuitable for public access, indirect access and community education can be facilitated by cultural talks, signage and visitor centres. This provides opportunities to improve community understanding (including businesses like tour operators, and government), whilst protecting Country and nurturing connection to place and wellbeing.

The many walkways and bike paths that give us physical access to natural sites also help to protect the sensitive environments around them to ensure long term sustainable use. Infrastructure to get there is needed too – the establishment and maintenance of road networks, public transport, bridges, interpretative signage, amenities blocks and car parks are all necessary to support access. We improve access for everyone when we consider additional mobility needs by providing pathways, parking and amenities that are suitable for people with a disability, parents with prams and people using mobility aids.

NSW State Forests (managed by Forestry Corporation of NSW), National Parks (managed by National Parks and Wildlife Service) and Crown lands (some of which are managed by Council as the appointed Crown Land Manager) are important natural environments

in the Shoalhaven. Council also manages other important natural environments including beaches, parks and reserves. For each of these natural environments, the land manager is responsible for the management strategy and providing paths, amenities and accessibility plans. When managers of assets work co-operatively, the community benefits with more sustainable access to natural environments. For example, well-integrated interfaces between NSW government managed land and Council-managed reserves could reduce damage of the road reserve from informal parking or preserve wildlife corridors (terrestrial and aquatic). Another example would be improved access to key sites through better public transport services and facilities (for more information on transport connections, see Foundation 5).

Infrastructure offers the opportunity, but sustainability of access to our natural environments relies on people in the community choosing to use these places in a sustainable way, including

residents, visitors and businesses. Awareness-raising initiatives can help the community understand the value of natural environments and the impacts of their behaviour. Community volunteers in programs like Landcare, Bushcare and Coastcare also play an important role in protecting and restoring our natural environments to ensure they will be there for future generations, and also encourage community education, participation and ownership. Government, particularly at state and national levels, also use legislation and regulation to manage access to our natural areas in a sustainable manner. Both state and local governments play a role in developing and implementing land-use planning controls, which are used to manage residential, agricultural and industrial development and its proximity to, and impact on, our important natural environments, as a way of balancing development and environmental conservation outcomes.

What the community told us

Eighty-nine percent of survey respondents spend time in nature several times a month and 80 percent acknowledge that they were able to easily walk to a park or natural areas. To create greater access to the natural environment and natural assets in the region, community workshop and survey participants highlighted the need for pathways and connections within these landscapes and parks to be accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

Opportunities highlighted by engagement participants included expanding the network of walking trails and access paths in key environmental sites, and expanding the provision of facilities and amenities around key natural assets, with a focus on facilitating social gathering and coming together. In addition, the need for better public transport connectivity between suburbs and areas of natural beauty was a common recommendation, within the broader desire to see better transport linkages in the region. Many respondents noted the need for more off-leash dog areas amongst the natural landscape. This point was a key priority for engagement participants over the age of 65.

"The Shoalhaven is all about nature and outdoor living. We try to spend as much time outdoors with our young kids, so having access to community facilities, having recreation facilities is important" – Online survey participant

"We live in a beautiful place and making use of our natural resources such as our beaches, nature reserves etc is great for our physical and mental wellbeing" – Online survey participant

"Connection to Country – vital for environment and acknowledges traditional custodians and their knowledge" – Online survey participant

"The over-use of these coastal areas is of increasing concern. There is a need for greater ongoing attention to access by providing and maintaining access to beaches, reserves, footpaths and toilet facilities that are high quality, reduce damage to the environment but designed to blend appropriately." – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Prepare and implement Coastal Management Programs (to replace the previous Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan) to manage the use and development of the coastal environment in an ecologically sustainable way, for the social, cultural and economic well-being of the people of New South Wales (*Coastal Management Act 2016*).
- Develop and implement floodplain risk management plans in accordance with NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy and Floodplain Development Manual, including preparation of flood studies.
- Plan for and manage public land as the appointed Crown land manager under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, including having a Plan of Management for land classified as 'natural area' or 'reserve'.
- Act as the local authority in carrying out the provisions of the *Companion Animals Act 1998* which provides for the effective and responsible management of companion animals, including to protect native birds and animals. In addition, this requires Council to promote awareness of the responsibilities of dog and cat owners, including penalties for not complying.
- Monitor environmental pollution and ensure compliance with *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* including water quality, air quality, noise pollution and waste management. This includes providing community health safety advice and warnings, such as advice to avoid swimming in natural environments after floods.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Manage areas of natural environment to protect and conserve them whilst facilitating community access and use. This includes providing infrastructure such as tracks and paths (including accessibility ramps), bridges, carparking and amenities, and local roads that facilitate access to:
 - Beaches and coastal zone, guided by plans including 13 Coastal Management Programs and the Strategic Direction for Nowra Riverfront Precinct, and using the Shoalhaven Development Control Plan.
 - Crown lands, guided by Plans of Management.
 - Assessment of coastal environments after weather events to mitigate further damage from community use of damaged access points.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Promote responsible access to natural environments, for example 'Leave only footprints' and 'Take three for the sea' campaigns.

Future directions

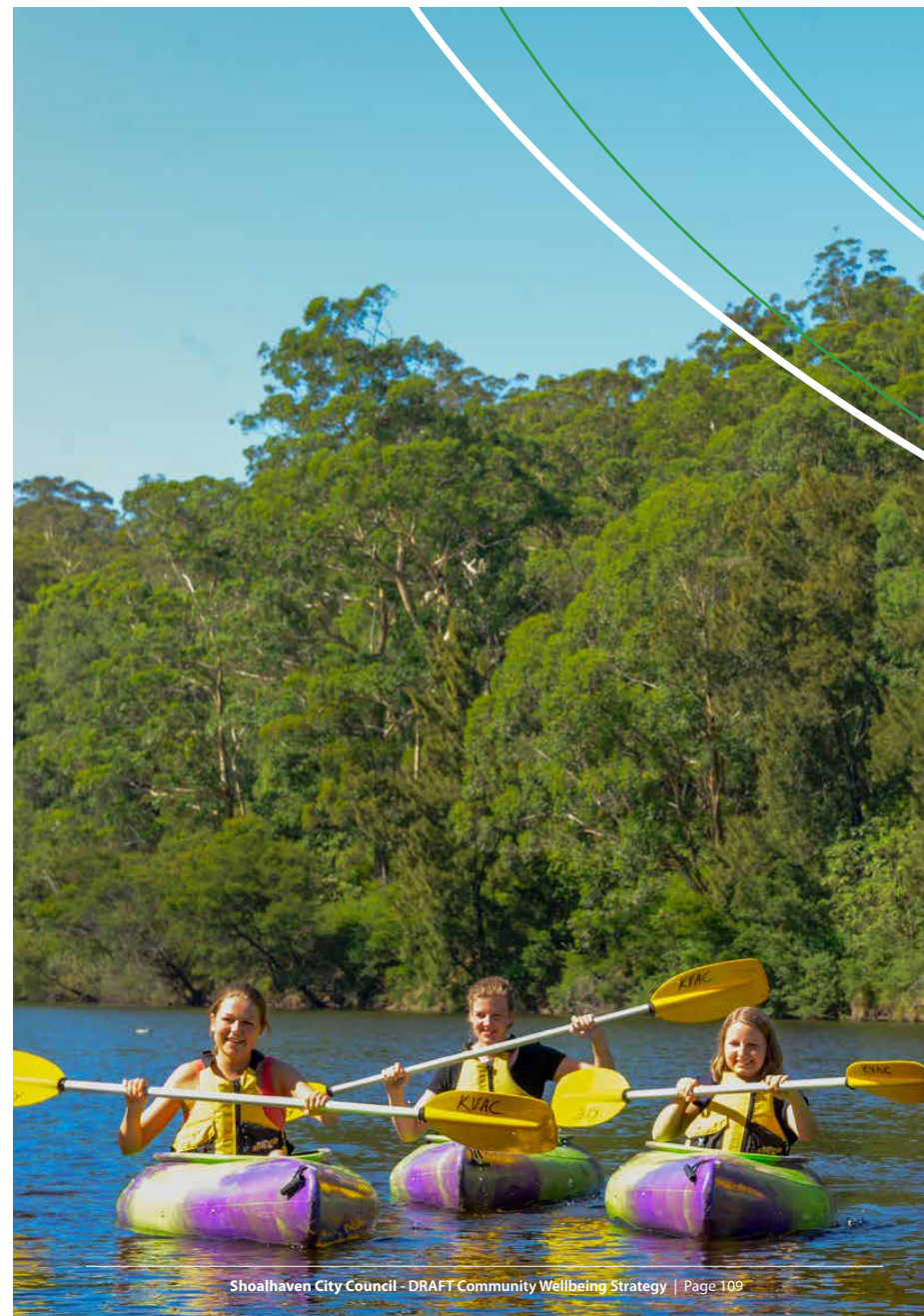
Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Build capacity of tourism operators to deliver services in an environmentally sustainable way. This could include incentives or certification programs for businesses, or initiatives to help visitors understand and appreciate natural environments, resources and systems.
 - Understand how young people wish to come together in open spaces and in the natural environment.
 - Work with Aboriginal community partners to improve the community's understanding about access to culturally-sensitive natural environments and protection of natural environments which are culturally important).
- Explore resourcing opportunities to:
 - Improve access to existing walking trails through improved signage and promotion, which could include an online information resource.
 - Expand the network of walking trails and access paths at key environmental sites, with special consideration of accessibility for all, subject to approvals and further investigation and ensuring a balance between conservation and accessibility.
 - Expand environmental awareness programs to engage young people.
- Explore opportunities to adapt processes and policies to better support:
 - Co-location of community facilities and amenities with key natural assets.
 - Access to natural environments that considers adaption to climate change and observed community behaviours (such as access after weather events and areas where litter like fishing line is frequently discarded). Inclusive access should consider the needs of diverse people, including all disabilities and CALD communities. Inclusive access could include information to help people understand natural hazards present in natural environments.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community being committed to using natural environments in an environmentally sustainable way
- Non-profit organisations and community groups helping restore and protect natural environments, such as Landcare and Bushcare groups
- Local Aboriginal community members and Aboriginal Land Councils providing advice on appropriate access to culturally-sensitive natural environments and helping to protect natural environments which are culturally important to their community, including through sharing their knowledge of sustainable management of natural environments (through the use of cultural burning, etc)
- Local businesses being committed to using natural environments in an environmentally sustainable way, such as tour operators on our waterways
- Office of Local Government providing advice on Plans of Management for community lands
- NSW DPE (NSW Crown Land) holds Crown land and appoints Council as the Crown Land Manager
- Forestry Corporation of NSW manage State forests in NSW, including permits for collection of firewood
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service manages National Parks
- Parks Australia works in partnership with Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community to manage Booderee National Park, and manages Jervis Bay Marine Park
- Natural Resources Commission identifies strategic priorities for the NSW government to manage our natural resources for the benefit of all of NSW
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Environment and Heritage Group, Marine Estate Management, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- NSW Government providing a legislative framework and regulatory oversight, through the Environment Protection Authority, of how our natural resources are managed.
- NSW Government providing a legislative framework and regulatory oversight of how our natural resources are managed, and approvals/licenses are granted for the protection of the environment and the community, including through NSW Department of Primary Industry (DPI), NSW Crown Land and the Environment Protection Authority. NSW DPI (which includes NSW DPI - Fisheries and NSW DPI - Marine Parks) deliver programs to grow the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, and enforce regulations including related biosecurity and recreational fishing.



6.3

Sustainable built environment

People are supported to understand sustainable building and to build sustainably.

The built environment touches on all aspects of our lives, including the buildings we live in and the buildings we use for leisure, like halls, libraries and sports centres. The distribution systems that provide us with water, electricity and transport (roads, bridges and public transport) are all part of our built environment. These structures and networks provide us with suitable spaces for living, working and recreation. Creating and maintaining all these spaces and systems requires the use of natural resources on a very large scale and we need to ensure that we manage them in a way that is environmentally sustainable. We spend significant amounts of our time in these built environments and our experiences using them can contribute to our social connections, relationships, physical health, work productivity, community cohesion and even crime rates. Factors within the indoor built environment that we may rarely consider but that impact our wellbeing, include air quality, light, temperature comfort, access to and quality of the natural environment.

Technological advances and our understanding of the natural resources that we have available to use for our built environment have changed over time. As a result, there are many opportunities for the private sector and all levels of government to collectively develop programs, design incentives and implement

policies so people know what to do to achieve sustainable built environments. With consumers becoming more environmentally conscious and wanting more from their homes and urban environments, organisations such as the Housing Industry Association (HIA) have developed HIA GreenSmart® - Australia's first sustainable building program designed for the residential building industry.²⁷ It is tailored to support builders in getting their green building credentials, so they are then able to support their customers with sustainable building design and implementation.

Programs such as Your Home, an initiative of the Federal Government, is an independent guide to designing, building or renovating homes to ensure they are energy efficient, comfortable, affordable and adaptable for the future. When people have access to these programs and thus, building a sustainable home, the wellbeing of the occupants can benefit from the use of energy-efficient products and environmentally durable materials for long-term lifestyle and health benefits. The NSW Department of Fair Trading manages a building sustainability index so residents can learn how to ensure a newly built home uses less water and energy. Such online tools make access to this information easily and readily available.

The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC) works to understand the long-term productivity, liveability and sustainability of our cities, urban communities, and their infrastructure.²⁸ Their advocacy for improving and enforcing energy efficiency requirements in the Building Code will support communities to improve the sustainability of our built environment. It is necessary for this information to be available at the community level when people are at the early stages of their decision making around building a new home. Local councils, providers of sustainable building products, architects and builders are all well placed to develop programs with support from organisations such as the ASBEC so that this information can be accessible at a local level.

As one the largest owners and planners of the built environment in the Shoalhaven, Council can play a leadership role by demonstrating good practice in environmentally sustainable building planning, construction, retrofitting and maintenance. As real-life examples that helps us see what is achievable, sustainable Council buildings are a valuable resources for tours and talks, whether aimed at commercial and government developers or primary school students and their home-building parents. Community or cultural facilities with sustainable designs or using sustainable materials are also an ideal venue to hold sustainability workshops and environmental education programs that build community awareness and motivation for environmental stewardship.

What the community told us

The importance of the natural environment to the wellbeing of Shoalhaven residents is a theme throughout the entire engagement. This was a top three theme for Local Stakeholders and Service Providers, the Youth Workshop, Seniors Workshop and the Online Survey. Comments captured in the Online Survey highlight that the priority given to climate change action is directly related to the importance that the community place on being able to access pristine natural environments. Almost 80% of Youth Workshop participants acknowledged that they worry deeply about climate change, having a profound impact on their mental health.

Survey participants identified that financial stress and concerns about environmental degradation (due to development in the area and global warming) were issues causing them stress. Whilst the community didn't raise sustainable built environments as an issue, improving the sustainability of the built environment is a vital component of reducing the impact that people have on the environment. Environmentally sustainable homes can incorporate thermally efficient designs and make use of energy-saving features, which also reduces the ongoing costs of living in the home.

"Design and develop an environmentally sustainable community" – Online survey participant

"I believe well-designed housing that can adapt to both the environment and variable needs of residents into the future is vital in all housing considerations" – Online survey participant

"Sustainable living needs to be a priority, this does not mean new housing estates but more so adaptive living or multiple housing on single existing blocks." – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Prepare and implement Coastal Management Programs (to replace the previous Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan) to manage the use and development of the coastal environment in an ecologically sustainable way, for the social, cultural and economic well-being of the people of New South Wales (*Coastal Management Act 2016*).
- Ensure compliance with *Local Government Act 1993* requirements for onsite sewage management system, including operational approval and inspections.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Provide a mapping tool that helps residents understand the solar access of their home and potential for solar energy systems.
- Through the FORTIS House project, help residents save time and money by providing free buildings designs for highly resilient, sustainable, affordable and adaptable homes. This project is delivered in partnership with the Bushfire Building Council of Australia and NRMA Insurance.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Support the community to understand and implement sustainable building design and retrofitting techniques such as light-coloured surfaces, rooftop solar, water sensitive urban design, compact homes, canopy cover and street trees. This could include incentive programs for residents and businesses or education initiatives like tours of sustainable homes and farms.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- Penrith City Council's urban heat research learnings in implementing projects in disadvantaged communities and working through community objection and street tree projects provide.
- University of Wollongong's Sustainability Street and Illawarra Flame demonstration home that shows how to retrofit a 'fibro' home into a sustainable 21st-century net-zero energy home.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community being committed to building and renovating in an environmentally sustainable way.
- Non-profit organisations and community groups supporting people to understand sustainable building and build sustainably.
- Local businesses being committed to and offering sustainable building products and services.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Environment and Heritage Group, Marine Estate Management, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- NSW Government providing a legislative framework and regulatory oversight of how our natural resources are managed when we build.



Housing that meets the community's needs

Access to secure and affordable housing that meets our households' needs

7.1

Housing security for people of all income levels and tenure types

People can live without housing stress; People can access social and Affordable dwellings.

Housing is the basis of stability and security for an individual or family – a place to live in peace, security and dignity. Access to adequate housing is recognised as a human right because it meets our fundamental need for shelter and safety. Housing security is when people live in housing that is stable, safe and adequate. Conversely, housing insecurity means people experience uncertainty from lack of control over their housing or are vulnerable to being forced to move. Housing insecurity is linked to higher levels of insecurity in other aspects of our life, including financial, employment, health, self-identity, family and relationship insecurity²⁹.

Security of occupancy is an important aspect of housing security, with tenure security being a central component of the right to adequate housing. Security of occupancy means that people feel a sense of certainty that they can remain in their home for as long as they wish. For renters, this is impacted by their rights in relation to the length of their lease, required notice periods, and ending of the lease.

Housing affordability is a key factor in housing security. A lack of affordable housing can lead to overcrowded housing and people living in areas that have poor access to essential services, employment opportunities and other supports. This makes it harder for people to participate in life – to get and keep jobs, to get to education and training, to access health services, healthy food, parks and social support networks.

Housing stress happens when housing costs are not affordable for the household's income. Housing stress is most common in households that are renting or have a mortgage, but can also occur for homes owned outright if income is lower than the cost of upkeep. Most definitions of housing stress consider that more than 30% of pre-tax income is unaffordable for low-income households. However, this does not consider that inadequate housing may cost more to heat, or involve higher transport costs because it is poorly located.

Affordability of housing for purchase and rental is related to the supply of and demand for housing in an area. The housing market is influenced by complex and inter-related supply and demand factors including:

- land-use zoning and development approval (provided by state and local government, as well as market provision by town planning consultants and private certifiers)
- development industry profitability and appetite, and supply of construction services (provided by the market)
- other market factors including government subsidies and incentive programs (NSW government), and cost/availability of financial services products (lending provided by the market) Affordable Rental Housing is for people on very low to moderate incomes so they

can afford to pay rent while meeting other living costs. It is poorly supplied by the market without government intervention, and a number of initiatives by the NSW government to encourage the market have not seen significant improvements in supply. The provision of Affordable Rental Housing is complex – the costs for establishment are high, there is often community objection, and ongoing management

needs to be planned. However, working with social housing providers can help by managing Affordable Rental Housing, and this improves the viability of their social housing provision. This is vital as the current supply of social housing is inadequate to meet community needs.

What the community told us

The results of the online survey uncovered the financial stress that is crippling many members of the Shoalhaven community. Participants could not overstate the importance that housing security placed on personal wellbeing. Both survey and workshop participants identified the perceived increase in the number of holiday homes as one cause of the issue, forcing residents into unsuitable homes and causing financial stress. While not ignorant of the financial benefits of increased tourism in the region, many shared stories of households struggling due to the unaffordable rental market in the region: families living in separate house, workers travelling long distances from home, and elderly people living in unsuitable housing.

For some, this is impacting their health as they forgo professional medical assistance to make rental and mortgage payments. Those particularly struggling to find or afford suitable dwellings included: young parents trying to live near schools, older residents with special access requirements, people needing good public transport, and pet-owners who considered their companion animals as essential for maintaining their mental health. It was highlighted that the Shoalhaven's greatest asset, its natural environment and coastal lifestyle, no longer appeals to young people who feel they will be unable to afford housing here.

The community suggested that Council could do more to provide affordable housing, advocate for stronger state and federal taxation on investment properties, address the concerns of young people and work with local social housing providers to better understand the key risks and needs of vulnerable community members.

"Affordable housing has become completely inaccessible. I myself am paying almost half of my weekly wage to keep a roof over my family's heads, while employment opportunities are few, rental prices continue to increase and security of keeping that rental has become very stressful for a lot of families" – Online survey participant

"We feel very insecure as renters as there are so few rental properties vs. holiday rentals around. Rising house prices and demand from investors mean it is difficult to buy and feel secure that we can stay in the area." – Online survey participant

"There is a housing crisis in the Shoalhaven. So many people homeless and couch surfing who don't have the stability of their own home. The prices of homes in the Shoalhaven have dramatically risen along with rents which is pricing people out." – Online survey participant

"Affordable housing options increase social cohesion. People on lower incomes will be able to remain in their local neighbourhoods. Affordable housing for the elderly, people starting their first jobs, socially disadvantaged people, single people etc" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.
- Ensure compliance with *Local Government Act 1993* requirements and associated regulations for caravan parks and manufactured home estates, including for operational approval, fire safety, amenities, waste and upkeep.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Deliver actions identified in the *Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy 2018* to improve access to affordable housing in the Shoalhaven, including working with Southern Cross Housing to deliver the Coomea St project.
- Co-ordinate regular meetings between Council staff and local specialised homelessness services, to support vulnerable people who present at Council facilities to link with housing services.
- Convene the Homelessness Taskforce, a strategic advisory committee to advocate for and inform Council decisions. It is made up of all levels of government, community organisations and service providers, and community members including people with lived experience of homelessness. The Taskforce also monitors and reviews delivery of the Homelessness Community Strategic Plan through a range of collaborative actions that will be implemented by the homelessness and housing sector.
- Through the FORTIS House project, help residents save time and money by providing free buildings designs for highly resilient, sustainable, affordable and adaptable homes. This project is delivered in partnership with the Bushfire Building Council of Australia and NRMA Insurance.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Support the community to understand the planning framework, how they can participate in planning processes, and how to they can contribute to improved community outcomes related to housing security.
 - Understand the housing needs of vulnerable community members.
- Advocate for state and federal policies and programs to improve housing security.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community: owners of investment properties who support tenants to experience housing security.
- Community housing providers plan, provide and manage social housing and Affordable housing.
- Local suppliers of construction services, property developers and private certifiers provide supply of new housing.
- Developers of local property (whether owners of one investment property or large portfolio) choosing to provide diverse and affordable housing types.
- Home loan providers provide financial products that people use to purchase homes.
- Housing NSW provides social and affordable housing using Land and Housing Corporation property.
- National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation provides long-term and low-cost finance, and capability building assistance, to registered community housing providers to support the provision of more social and affordable housing.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment.
- NSW government provides subsidies and incentive programs for home-buyers and renters.
- Department of Defence provides housing for their staff.

7.2

Housing for people with access and support needs

*People can access adaptable and accessible dwellings;
People can live in supported accommodation.*

Some people in our community have additional needs for support and accessibility. Our needs change over time and these additional needs can be a result of ageing or physical disabilities, whether short or long-term. Our human right to access to adequate housing must consider our access and support needs – housing is inadequate if people are unable to get out of their bedroom or house to access basic living requirements. With an ageing population and a high proportion of older people in the Shoalhaven, increased demand is expected in the future for housing for people with increased access and support needs.

Accessible housing is any housing that includes features that enable use by people either with a disability or transitioning through life stages. Although the focus of many accessibility features is on mobility disabilities, accessible housing should also consider the needs of people with other types of disability. Adaptable housing is housing that can be easily modified to become accessible in the future. Whilst improved housing can meet our access needs within our dwelling, it is important that accessible housing facilitates our participation in the community as well, by being well-located and connected to

community places and services. Accessible and adaptable housing is poorly provided by the market without government intervention. Whilst Council can promote the construction of accessible and adaptable housing with affirmative emphasis in the Development Control Plan, housing developers and individual home-owners often provide the minimum required as accessibility features can increase construction costs.

For people with high support needs, such as the frail aged or people with more severe disabilities, supported accommodation has trained staff to provide varying levels of assistance with daily living. Supported accommodation for younger people with disabilities is needed so that they are not housed inappropriately in an aged care setting. Supported accommodation is provided by aged care providers and disability service providers, which are privatised sectors providing services to recipients of government-funded support packages. There is poor community understanding of this complicated system and private sector market, with significant opportunities to improve community understanding with education initiatives and information resources.



What the community told us

Some older participants in the Community Wellbeing survey highlighted concerns about aged care and home support as one of the biggest issues causing them stress, particularly when supported living was not available in the local village they live in and where they have built support networks. Concerns about aged care and home support related to availability, affordability, and suitability to meet their needs.

A community survey was completed for the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26 (DIAP), targeted to reach people with a disability, their families and carers, and the service providers and businesses that support them. Accessible and affordable housing in the area was an issue for many individuals surveyed. Many residents were concerned about the increasing cost of rent and property prices, and the lack of accessible building design was another concern. 62% of the respondents said it was difficult to find appropriate and affordable housing in the Shoalhaven, stating that more social housing is needed

"Accessible, adaptable housing - I feel this is important with the ageing community it provides the ability to live independently longer. Also important to include for all people with low-mobility." – Online survey participant

"There is a huge need to for affordable, accessible and adaptable housing" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Support the community to understand the planning framework, how they can participate in planning processes, and how to they can contribute to improved community outcomes related to accessible and adaptable housing.

Good practice examples that could inform Council's future work:

- University of Wollongong's Desert Rose demonstration home is designed to show that a dwelling can be architecturally inspiring and cater to the changing needs of occupants as they age, specifically considering design for dementia.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Community housing providers and Housing NSW (with Land and Housing Corporation) plan, provide and manage social housing and Affordable housing that includes accessible and adaptable housing.
- Providers of supported accommodation including aged care providers and disability service providers.
- Developers of local property (whether home-owners building or developers of large portfolios) choosing to build accessible and adaptable housing.
- Local suppliers of design, architecture and construction services needed to build accessible and adaptable housing.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment and Government Architect NSW.
- Australian Building Codes Board maintains the National Construction Code of Australia (previously called the Building Code of Australia), a national set of technical requirements for the design, construction and performance of buildings and other structures throughout Australia. The NCC includes requirements related to access for people with a disability.



7.3

Housing for residents

*People can live where resident communities live
(the majority of housing is available for residents)*

In Foundation 1, we considered the importance of Community life:

"Participation in local activities is vital for forming social connections that develop a sense of belonging and connection to the community. When people come together as a community, they feel community pride and develop community identity. This contributes to a vibrant community life that supports individual wellbeing and resilience."

For people to form social connections and come together as a community, they need to live in communities where a stable community of residents lives. Visitors can bring vibrancy and economic activity to a place, but residents are needed to make that place a community. A requirement for 'community' is people living there, which means the majority of housing is available for residents rather than being vacant or used for short-term occupation. Regular visitors, who return to the same towns and villages, can be part of a community but perform a different role from stable resident communities. The choice of whether a dwelling is used for resident housing or not is made by the property-owner.

For over 50 years, coastal towns in the Shoalhaven have been destinations for visitors. Over 30% of visitors give their reason for coming to the Shoalhaven as visiting family and friends, and there are many more who seasonally come to the same towns and villages for family holidays. Many holiday homes are used for private use only, rather than holiday letting. Proximity to the major population centres of Sydney and Canberra, improved by upgrades to road networks, has made living in the Shoalhaven and working in cities more accessible than ever before. This increased demand for coastal living, heightened during COVID, has seen significant

increases to housing purchase and rental prices. During this time, accommodation prices and supply have stayed reasonably the same. Whilst holiday letting is perceived to be having a significant impact on availability of housing for residents, the holiday letting data indicates that the situation is more complex. 2021 Census data shows 12,791 unoccupied dwellings in the Shoalhaven, a decrease of 661 dwellings from 2016. However, current holiday accommodation data shows only 4,394 properties in the Shoalhaven listed for accommodation, including hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and short term holiday letting.

In 2020, NSW Fair Trading introduced a new code of conduct to regulate short-term rental accommodation platforms, hosts, management agents and guests. The code is a move towards greater regulation of this industry and requires short-term rental accommodation to be registered with NSW Department of Planning and Environment. While the code doesn't prevent housing being used for short-term rental accommodation, it puts the NSW Government in a better position to implement stricter regulations if they are needed in the future.

In addition to housing being available for residents to live in, the quality and diversity of housing options within an area allow households to live in that community throughout their lives, choosing from a range of different housing types and arrangements based on their needs and resources as they change over time. If people's housing needs change and their community's housing options don't meet their new needs, they may have to move out of an area they feel established in or adopt unsatisfactory accommodation arrangements. This can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of

individuals and families as their relationships and social supports are affected. NSW Government and Council can play a role in encouraging housing diversity by developing land-use controls that allow diverse housing types. However, housing developers

and individual home-owners often deliver housing that maximises profitability or affordability, rather than providing diverse housing.

What the community told us

Both survey and workshop participants identified the high number of holiday home purchases as a perceived root cause of financial stress crippling many members of the community, as those outside of the Shoalhaven are affecting affordability by purchasing homes to relocate to regional areas from cities or only making them available for short term rental. However, data on short term rental stocks does not show significant growth, indicating that housing supply situation is more complex. While participants acknowledge the benefits of tourism in the region, there is a general lack of understanding around the many causes of housing shortages, with many community members providing stories of families who are living in separate houses, travelling long distances from home for work, and elderly people living in unsuitable housing, driven by a lack of stock in the long-term rental market

The high number of holiday rentals was seen as having a negative impact on the sense of community within the suburbs of the Shoalhaven, although holiday accommodation has been a longstanding part of our communities and has decreased in recent years. Beyond the stress that participants reported feeling due to roads and local infrastructure struggling to accommodate peak holiday crowd, participants also felt that an increasingly 'temporary population' was eroding the fabric of neighbourhoods, and ultimately residents' sense of safety in their own home. Lack of school enrolments was raised by the community as a potential impact for communities with high levels of holiday letting, though this is also impacted by the high proportion of older households in the Shoalhaven.

"...people buying houses to use as holiday rental is taking away the options for locals...This is also destroying the sense of community with so many empty houses in non-peak times" – Online survey participant

"The continuous building of 'McMansions', massive land sale and land clearing - mostly for holiday houses and non-permanent residents. Empty houses don't build communities - people do!!! I am not against growing and development but not at the expense of the natural beauty that people come here for in the first place, and whilst lots of existing buildings sit empty. Would love it if we could find a way to limit the amount of 'non-permanent' housing and favor affordable smaller houses and jobs for younger people and families instead plus proper infrastructure to support them living here" – Online survey participant

"Their first jobs, socially disadvantaged people, single people etc" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Ensure compliance with *Local Government Act 1993* requirements and associated regulations for caravan parks and manufactured home estates, including for operational approval, fire safety, amenities, waste and upkeep.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require investigation of resourcing requirements. Opportunities that could be considered include:

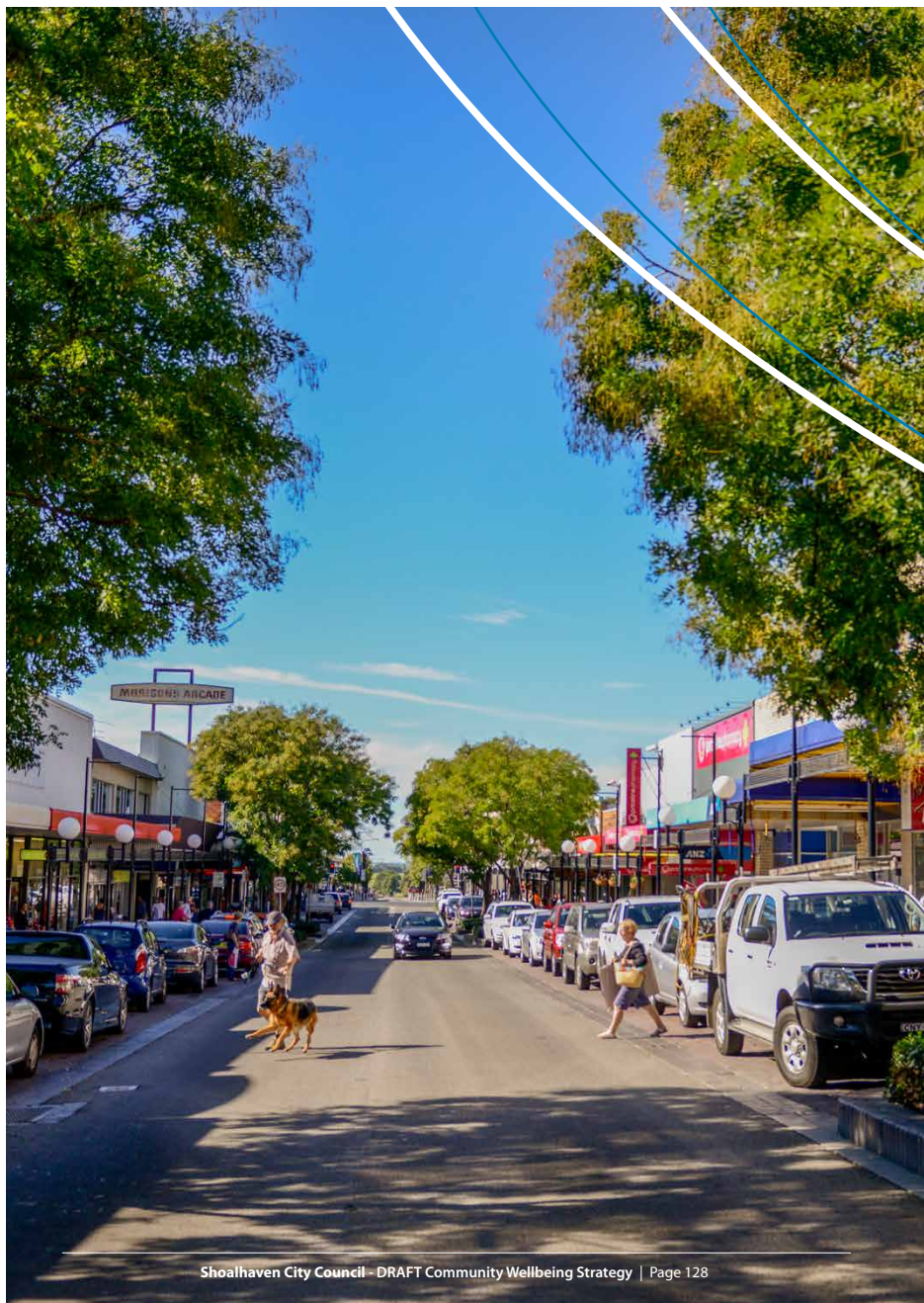
- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Support the community to understand the planning framework, how they can participate in planning processes, and how to they can contribute to improved community outcomes related to accessible and adaptable housing.
- Advocate for state and federal policies and programs to improve housing for residents.
- Investigate the impacts and scale of short term rental accommodation in the Shoalhaven.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- People in the community: owners of properties living in them, owners of investment properties choosing to use them for long-term rental.
- Developers of local property (whether owners of one investment property or large portfolio) choosing to provide diverse housing types.
- Community housing providers and Housing NSW (with Land and Housing Corporation) plan, provide and manage social housing and Affordable housing and supporting tenants to be part of communities of residents.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment and Government Architect NSW. DPE also manages the register of short-term rental accommodation providers, required by the NSW Fair Trading's Code of Conduct for the Short-term Rental Accommodation Industry.
- Government Architect NSW provides advice and resources on well-designed built environment (Better Placed) and healthy built environments in regional areas (Urban Design for Regional NSW).





Foundation
8

Resilient local economies and inclusive economic opportunities

Access to secure employment opportunities and income to provide for our households

8.1

Economic opportunity

People have secure employment; People have income to meet their household's needs; People have equitable access to material and social resources.

To thrive, people need economic stability through access to the means to provide for their household's needs. Many people rely on employment to do this, whilst others receive income from other sources such as welfare payments or income-producing assets. In the Shoalhaven, 2016 figures show 46.7% of people over 15yo are part of the labour force (either employed or looking for work), compared with 59.2% for NSW²⁰, however it should be noted that 2021 data is not yet available to show changes post COVID. The Shoalhaven's low rate of participation in the labour force is linked to the high proportion of people of retirement-age, who may receive a pension and/or income from assets. Feedback from major employers in the area indicate recruiting to roles is currently difficult, stating that many jobs are available and are a challenge to fill.

To provide economic stability, income needs to be in balance with local costs of living and come from a reliable source, such as secure employment or a secure asset. A high rate of part-time employment in the Shoalhaven³¹ and increasing casualisation of the workforce contribute to reduced security of local employment. In addition, employment cannot positively contribute to wellbeing when there is poor

work-life balance or stress from working conditions and pressures. Access to employment opportunities is supported by availability of and participation in employment-related education (see 2.1 Training for employment).

Regardless of how people provide for their household's needs, socio-economic disadvantage and advantage happens when access to resources is not equitably available to everyone in the community, so that some people are unable to participate fully in society. Disadvantaged households face more barriers to accessing life opportunities than other households. When there is equitable access to material and social resources, economic opportunities are inclusively available for everyone in the community.

Access to economic opportunities in the Shoalhaven can be improved by strengthening the local economy (see 8.2 Economic diversity and resilience) and improving people's capacity to take advantage of opportunities. It is also significantly impacted by external influences including Federal government welfare support and global financial market performance.

What the community told us

The 3 biggest issues that survey participants identified as affecting their sense of wellbeing or causing them stress related to financially meeting their household's needs, including housing and employment pressures. The top 3 responses were:

1. Financial stress/concern
2. Work-life balance
3. Unemployment and housing security

Regional migration due to Covid-19 and increasing housing costs (both rental and mortgage) have created a housing bubble within the Shoalhaven that is out of step with local wages and work opportunities, and was the number one source of stress within households. The results from the survey worryingly showed that financial stress is impacting the health (addressed in 4.1 Health services and support) of people in the Shoalhaven community, including some forgoing professional medical assistance in order to make rental and mortgage payments. Consultation participants also commonly identified financial stress and the need to maintain job security as the number one factor impacting their mental health.

Across all survey questions relating to financial stress and stability, female survey participants faced greater risk than their male counterparts. Most poignantly, when asked "If you suddenly had to raise \$5,000 for an emergency, would you be able to do so?" there were 5 times as many women as men who responded "No", indicating a significant gender gap in ability to respond to a major shock or stress that posed a threat to the safety of a household.

Participants in the community engagement identified an immediate need for the region to attract major industries or employers who can offer stable, full-time employment in large numbers, and provide residents with an opportunity to build a career in the Shoalhaven, rather than simply working a job.

"Banks will not lend money to people working in casual work and casual work does not give people security, especially if they do not know how many hours a week they will get and also penalty rates have been taken away from many in the hospitality, retail & fast food industries." – Online survey participant

"One man in his 40s said he had to move into a share house as he couldn't afford to rent by himself any more as he didn't get enough hours." – Online survey participant

"It is getting to the point where people who work here can no longer afford to even rent here, let alone buy. There is no real full time work. It is mostly contract/part time or casual, and average weekly rent is outstripping the average wage." – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to address identified local community needs and priorities, using a strategic plan and by working with others. Councils should make decisions in a way that is transparent, recognising diverse local needs and considering social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (Local Government Act 1993).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.
- Demonstrate leadership as a large employer in the region by promoting availability of secure employment with career development opportunities and supports for employee wellbeing, including addressing barriers experienced by people living with disability through implementation of the *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Understand the key barriers to training and employment for young people in the Shoalhaven.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Non-profit organisations and businesses supporting people to access employment opportunities
- Local employers offering secure employment opportunities.
- NSW Ministry of Health providing resources on workplace-related programs and projects such as the 'Get healthy at Work' program.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government funding providers, including Services Australia's provision of welfare support programs.



8.2

Economic diversity and resilience

People have local employment opportunities in diverse and resilient industries.

The resilience of the local economy is improved through the diversity of local industries and the readiness of employers to adapt and innovate. Diverse employment opportunities are also more aligned with the employment needs and skills of our diverse population which has a range of ages, abilities, training and talents. Local economic resilience helps ensure that economic opportunities will be available in the future, resistant to the unpredictability of economic change and shocks.

With a strong historical base in Defence industries, manufacturing, primary industries and tourism, demographic and technological changes are opening up new opportunities for economic diversity in the Shoalhaven. Recent major infrastructure projects are bringing approximately \$1.5 billion to the region and COVID saw a dramatic increase in domestic tourism in 2021-22. As a major employer for the Shoalhaven, Council contributes to the diversity of local employment opportunities, as well as working with a range of partners to improve economic activity in the region and linking local businesses with available supports to innovate and adapt to change.

The diversity and resilience of local employment opportunities depends on the actions of all the employers in the Shoalhaven – manufacturers and farmers, sole traders and gig economy workers, educational institutions and non-profit organisations, small businesses and branches of national corporations, state government entities and more. Access to information about emerging markets and technologies, and a willingness to adapt in response, is needed for local employers to be part of building economic resilience and diversity across the region.

Local residents play an important role in local economic resilience by offering a consistent customer base and supporting local businesses. By joining local events and activities in community gathering places (covered in 1.1 Community life), people across the Shoalhaven help activate the Shoalhaven's villages and make them more attractive to spend time.

What the community told us

Community consultation participants emphasised the need for diverse employment available to all groups, but particularly for the future of young people. Participants of all ages, including those in the Youth Workshop, considered the lack of employment and training opportunities for young people as key risks for the future of the region.

In addition to not being home to large industry, community consultation participants felt that the region does not provide a business ecosystem that facilitates growth of medium sized businesses or leverages the region's proximity to the national and international gateway of Sydney. Instead, it was felt that the local economy was built on small businesses that lacked resilience and were unable to provide job security or provide training or development for young people. Tourism was acknowledged as an important employment sector but there was concern about managing the impacts on the environment, amenity and infrastructure for local residents, as well as housing affordability.

Community consultation participants wished to see Council build a strong, long-term economic proposition for industry in the region. Whilst this acknowledged that secure employment as a foundation for people accessing other life opportunities, it may indicate a lack of understanding of the limitations and conflicts of Council's role in working collaboratively with stakeholders and partners to develop equitable economic opportunities for people across the Shoalhaven.

"Liveable communities need to have chances for all- whether down on their luck or/and ambitious-renewable industry and manufacturing to support the tourism industry in off seasons" – Online survey participant

"we need to encourage visitors to the Shoalhaven area, for a lot of businesses in the region this is their main trade and livelihoods. I realise that there can be negative impacts on the residential areas especially during the peak times, but if we didn't have the tourists we would suffer greatly employment opportunity wise." – Online survey participant

"full-time, solid jobs from within the manufacturing sectors... This type of employment creates long term prospects" – Online survey participant

Council's work

Legislative responsibilities include:

- Plan actions to meet identified local community needs and priorities, and collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals. Councils should make decisions in a way that recognises diverse local needs and considers social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights (*Local Government Act 1993*).
- Carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community by the proper management, development and conservation of the State's natural and other resources (*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). This includes acting as the determining authority for relevant development applications and identifying the basis for the land-use planning strategy and planning priorities for the Shoalhaven.

Other current and planned work includes:

- Provide strategic guidance to economic development across the region (including working with government, institutional and business partners) guided by the *Shoalhaven Economic Development Strategy 2017-2026*, *Shoalhaven Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-22* and *Shoalhaven Tourism Master Plan*.
- Provide strategic guidance for land use development across the region, guided by *Shoalhaven 2040 – Our Strategic Land-use Planning Statement*.

Future directions

Opportunities for future work require further investigation of resourcing requirements to assess feasibility. Opportunities that could be considered include:

- Explore opportunities to work with or support community partners to:
 - Create more vibrant town and village centres with a strong sense of place and community, with community, business and other stakeholders delivering activation strategies that foster community connections and enhance spaces providing informal opportunities for people to interact. Also listed under 1.1 Community life.
 - Create a co-ordinated program of diverse community events across the Shoalhaven for all residents (including younger and older people) and visitors, and considering how transport connections can be improved. Also listed under 1.1 Community life.
 - Establish local apprenticeship and graduate networks and investigate setting up incubator space for start-up businesses.

Key partners

Stakeholders who play a role in creating this Domain:

- Local employers being future-focused and ready for change
- Public and private industry stakeholders (including State and Federal governments) partnering in the delivery of employment and education related programs and initiatives such as the State Regional Tourism and Marine-based Tourism Strategies.
- Federal and NSW State Government agencies and land-use planning authorities that support Council to carry out land-use planning in a way that promotes the social and economic welfare of the community, including NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Environment and Heritage Group, Marine Estate Management, NSW Movement and Place Community of Practice and Government Architect NSW.
- Federal and State Government funding providers for regional and economic development programs.



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CL22.375 - Attachment 1



Management Committee Guidelines



CL22.376 - Attachment 2

Management Committee Guidelines

Shoalhaven City Council recognises the important part that volunteers and community groups play in managing Council's facilities. On behalf of a very grateful Shoalhaven community, Councillors and staff would like to welcome you and thank you for your commitment and generosity in all the work you do for our community.

Management Committees provide a mechanism by which interested persons can have an active role in the management of Council facilities or services. This provides a two-fold benefit by increasing community involvement in local facilities, and by providing Council with assistance in carrying out its functions. Objectives of the committee are to make the facility readily accessible to the community, whilst raising funds for its maintenance and future improvements.

Since the committee will be acting on behalf of Council, it is important to uphold the principles of equity, accessibility, and inclusivity. As members of Council's team, we all abide by the core values of Respect, Integrity, Adaptability and Collaboration, as well as Council's Code of Conduct.

These Guidelines have been prepared to:

- Provide a comprehensive guide on the responsibilities, functions, and operations of community facilities, and to
- Clarify Council's and the committee members' role in this partnership.

Members of Council's Management Committees are required to adopt and adhere to the conditions set out in this document.

Management Committee members have a right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment;
- Be adequately covered by insurance;
- Be provided with sufficient training to undertake their role.

Council provides advice and direction on matters associated with these committees and members can seek Council's assistance in this crucial role at any time.

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1. Introduction

Shoalhaven City Council provides a wide variety of public recreation and community facilities such as Sporting, Tennis and Equestrian facilities, Community Centres and Showgrounds.

Due to the large area of the Shoalhaven and its widely spread population, it is difficult for Council to manage these facilities to their full potential. Therefore, a significant element of community-based management is therefore essential. This method of management gives local communities opportunities for developing skills, 'local ownership' and pride in achievement.

About Section 355 Committees

Under the Local Government Act 1993 (Section 355), Council is authorised to delegate some of its functions to a committee of Council. Council uses this delegation to appoint community people to manage some community facilities.

As a Section 355 committee performs delegated functions of Council, its operations are bound by the same rules and requirements as Council. The committees are extensions of Council rather than separate entities. The facilities and funds handled by them are public facilities and public monies. The committee members act on behalf of Council, and are insured to do so, when acting within the terms of their delegated authority. These Guidelines outline the terms of delegation, thus providing essential information for the safety of volunteers and community alike.

It is important that all members read the full guidelines in order to understand the committee's delegations and responsibilities.

Considerable care must be taken by committees in the exercise of their delegated powers. They are required to adhere to these guidelines which ensure, firstly, their proper functioning in accordance with the rules and regulations which govern Council's activities; and secondly, the integration of their procedures with those of Council.

The following pages detail the essential roles and functions of committees reflecting the protocols and procedures that they must follow in carrying out these roles. The guidelines may not, however, cover every circumstance. There will be many instances where further liaison with Council will be required.

Council's liaison officers are available at all times for consultation and assistance, who can also attend Management Committees' meetings if required. Council's liaison officer must be invited to the committees' AGMs.

A Section 355 committee must:

- Perform activities that are considered a function of Council;
- Adhere to the committee's Term of Reference (TOR) which outlines such things as objectives, composition, membership, meeting frequency, quorums etc;
- Distribute and advertise agendas, take minutes and submit this documentation to Council;
- Accurately record financial transactions which are reviewed by an independent accountant or bookkeeper annually and submitted to Council;
- Ensure that Council's Code of Conduct, Code of Meeting Practice, Policies and Volunteer procedures are followed.

There are a number of limits to the powers that Council can delegate to committees under Section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993. The powers which cannot be delegated to committees include:

- The making of a charge or fixing of a fee
- The borrowing of money without the express written consent of Council
- The voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations
- The acceptance of tenders which are required under the Act to be invited by Council

- The carrying out of any works on or to the facility including alterations, repairs and construction without the prior consent of Council (Does not include minor maintenance and operational costs)
- The payment or making of any profit, gain or gift, to or by its members, including allowance for travelling expenses incurred whilst attending committee meetings.

Friends of Milton Library Management Committee

The Friends of Milton Library Section 355 Committee provides volunteers to extend the opening hours at the Milton Library. This committee does not manage and run Milton Library. All Fees and Charges income is retained by Council. The committee does not maintain the building or manage financial accounts. Certain clauses in this document do not apply to the Friends of Milton Library Section 355 Committee, in accordance with these parameters.

Code of Conduct and Core Values

All Council delegates should note that Council's Code of Conduct applies to them in exercising their role, and a link will be provided to each member of a Management Committee (hard copies can be provided by Council's liaison officer). Members are required to read this Code and, if the provisions of the Code are not clear or understood, to contact Council for clarification and advice.

The Code of Conduct reflects Shoalhaven City Council's Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Adaptability and Collaboration, which underpin all Council practices.

2. Committee Roles and Functions

2.1 Planning

- The Local Government Act, 1993 requires Councils and their agents (including Management Committees) to be transparent, accountable and responsible in their management of public facilities. This requires, in part, clear objectives and targets for each service provided, and reports on performance against these targets.
- Management Committees are required to facilitate this by adopting and implementing sound business practices in compliance with Council Policies and Procedures.
- Each committee is required to prepare a Facility Management Plan** and update this in a working document, to be provided to Council in April of each year. The format is standardised to enable updating of Council records during April and May each year.

Plans will incorporate the following items:

- Background and History of Facility
 - Description of Facility
 - Banking and Accounts
 - Media and Communication
 - Regular Users and Hirers
 - Facility Services and Maintenance Details
 - Volunteer Service Arrangements
 - Contractor Service Arrangements
 - Utilities Agreements and Account Details
 - Asset Management Operational and Capital Works
 - Work Health and Safety Risk management
 - Approvals and Planning Documents
 - Asbestos Register
 - Checklist of Management Committees Actions and Reporting Requirements
- Committees are required to liaise with Council's liaison officer to seek approval prior to enacting operational or infrastructure changes to a facility. This approval requires Council's review and assessment that the proposed changes are aligned with Council's strategic direction and comply with all relevant Policies and Legislation. The committee

must not give any consent or approval under the Local Government Authority or any other law to any development, building works or variance to current infrastructure, on any land.

2.2 Managing Facility Use

2.2.1 Community Access

- (a) Committees are required to ensure that community access to facilities is maximised and cannot refuse entry to hirer/user groups. They do not have delegated authority to restrict access to or direct members of the public to leave public land and facilities. Council's Precinct Managers, Facilities Coordinator and Building Services Team Management have this delegation and will be happy to consult and assist.
- (b) All legitimate users of facilities have a reasonable right of access – subject to legality of use and public convenience. Particular exceptions may be made, such as where unacceptable damage was incurred on prior usage, relevant fees were not paid, or payment was significantly delayed.
- (c) Community centers or halls are designed to be versatile and adaptable for general purpose use and enjoyment by all sections of the community. The use of buildings and facilities should extend beyond the provision of social and recreational services for the active aged.
- (d) The general public may not be excluded from any 'public open space' sporting areas except during events which have been approved by the Management Committee or if the activity is incompatible for the approved land use.

2.2.2 Community Use

Council will monitor the use of facilities and will pay particular attention to under and over utilisation. Council reserves the right to schedule non-committee activities at facilities controlled by committees in liaison with the committee – provided that participants pay the adopted fees if applicable.

2.2.3 User Charges

- (a) Committees will manage hire applications in accordance with the schedule of Fees and Charges adopted by Council annually. The approved schedule of Fees and Charges is to be prominently displayed at the facility. No discounts or waiving of fees by Management Committees is allowable, as legislated in the Local Government Act. Hirers can apply to Council's liaison officer for consideration of a discount or fee waiver.
- (b) Local public schools and local incorporated sporting clubs will not be subject to fees for the use of sportsgrounds, including floodlighting. This includes but is not limited to: soccer, cricket, rugby league, rugby union, touch football, netball, softball, hockey, AFL, athletics. Fees may be charged for other users e.g. carnivals, fund raising events, schools, and sporting groups from outside the Shoalhaven, in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges.
- (c) Fees received will be retained by committees to cover the day-to-day costs of running and maintaining the facility as set out in 2.3.2(b), and carrying out improvements as approved by Council (subject to those improvements being identified within the approved Facility Management Plan).

2.2.4 Bookings

- (a) Committees will use Council's standard Application form and Terms and Conditions of Hire when processing booking applications. In some circumstances Special

Terms and Conditions may also apply and Committees will include these in the application process, as directed by staff.

- (b) Management of risk at an event is generally the hirer's responsibility. If a proposed hire involves a high-risk activity then Council is entitled to request sufficient documentation (such as a site-specific risk assessment and operational licenses) from the hirer, to ensure their activities are undertaken safely. Booking Officers should forward the application to Council's Insurance Claims Officer for review and advice.
- (c) The online booking system will request a description of the event, its purpose and activities involved.
 - (i) Committees' Booking Officers will have direct access to the booking system to manage online bookings. A Procedure Manual is maintained by Council, and one-on-one training provided. 24hr support is available to booking officers via the Helpline, Council's system administrator and Customer Service Officers.
 - (ii) Council will manage Fee income collected from the online booking system. Funds collected will be transferred to the Management Committees' bank accounts for management of expenditure at the facilities.
 - (iii) Bonds will be managed and held by Council. Upon approval to release funds by the Committee's Booking Officer, funds will be credited directly back to the hirer.
 - (iv) Documents required can be uploaded during the application process or uploaded at a later date by the hirer. Documents are reviewed by the Booking Officer and all payment required prior to bookings being confirmed by the Booking Officer.
 - (v) Hirers will be directed to the Committee's Booking Officer or to Council's Customer Service staff for assistance if required during the booking process.

2.2.5 Compliance with Licensing Laws regarding the use of intoxicating liquor, and other Planning and Health Regulations

- (a) Committees shall not permit facilities to be used for any purpose which may conflict with Council's Planning or Health Regulations. Council is to be contacted where any doubt exists as to what constitutes permissible use of facilities.
- (b) The erection of fencing, or advertising signs on buildings and sporting areas may only be undertaken with the approval of Council.
- (c) Requirements for the sale of alcohol is stipulated within the Terms and Conditions of the Hire / Use Application Form. See Appendix E.

2.2.6 Risk Management

Management of facilities must be undertaken in accordance with the NSW Work Health and Safety Act (2011), NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation (2011) and these Management Committee Guidelines. Each committee must ensure that the premises it is responsible for (including access to and egress from) are safe and without risk to health.

Subject to specific limitations which may be imposed by Council, each committee is delegated all necessary powers, duties and authorities to achieve these ends.

Volunteer Inductions

All members of Management Committees must complete an online Work Health and Safety Induction. Information is provided by staff when new members are appointed and every 10 years for refresher training. It is the responsibility of the committee to ensure that all members have been inducted. Council maintains a Register of these inductions.

WHS Manual & Inductions

Council's WHS Manual is provided and to be kept on the premises in an accessible location for all committee members. Updates to the Manual contents will be delivered to the registered committee WHS representative, in order to maintain the currency of the manual.

All members are required to be inducted to the WHS Manual. It is the responsibility of the WHS representative to ensure this. An online induction video is available to assist.

All members are responsible to update the Manual's Registers as required.

The Manual's Registers are to be tabled at all committee meetings. Photos or scans of the current documents are to be provided to Council staff with meeting Minutes.

Facility Inspections

Committees and Council staff will undertake a WHS inspection every two years to ensure the facility is maintained in a safe manner, for public use.

Committees' WHS representatives are required to inspect the facilities every 3 months and advise outcomes to the committee Meetings for inclusion in the Meeting Minutes.

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment must be worn when handling machinery or chemicals. Please refer to the relevant Safe Work Instructions in the WHS Manual.

2.2.7 Conflict / Complaints

- (a) Complaints from the general public will be addressed by the Management Committee in the first instance. Complaints received by Council may be forwarded to the Management Committee for their action; however, Council may elect to address the complaint directly. In either instance the Management Committee will be informed.
- (b) Council may intervene to address complaints in liaison with the Management Committee.
- (c) Queries/complaints from Management Committee members, volunteers, contractors or members of the public may always be directed to Council's liaison officer.

2.2.8 Employment of Persons

Committees shall not enter into agreements with individuals which may be construed as employer-employee relationships without prior written Council approval. This will generally not be given without Council involvement and compliance with all relevant procedures for the appointment of staff. Extreme care should be taken, as committees have no authority to employ any individual on a basis which could legally be held to be an employer-employee relationship. Serious consequences could arise from such action, including issues regarding Work Health and Safety, taxation, workers compensation, breaches of awards and other industrial Acts and regulations.

This does not preclude committees from engaging the services of contractors registered with BNG or Council approved, for one-off jobs, such as carpenters, electricians and plumbers, for maintenance works associated with the facility.

2.2.9 Hire of Contractors

- (a) The Contractor and Volunteer Management procedure outlines the requirements and responsibilities of all Council workers, including contractors and volunteers. Please see the procedure here:

<https://doc.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/displaydoc.aspx?record=PRD18/165>

It is focused on the prevention of incidents, injuries or illnesses resulting from undertaking work within a Council facility. A summary can be found in the WHS manual.

- (b) Contractors are required to meet the Work Health and Safety Policy requirements set by the Work Health Safety Act 2011 and Work Health Safety Regulation 2017. The Contractor and Volunteer Management procedure summarises these requirements.
- (c) Contractors are required to register and maintain accreditation through BNG Conserve prior to commencing work. There is an annual fee associated with registration that contractors are required to pay.

Please view requirements and find a link to BNG Conserve here:

www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/For-Business/Tenders-Supply/Contractors-Validation-Criteria-Requirements

- (d) If in special circumstances contractors are not registered with BNG, approval must be obtained from Council's liaison officer for the engagement of that contractor.
- (e) Contractors and their employees or sub-contractors must complete site-specific inductions with Management Committee or Council representatives, prior to the commencement of work.

2.2.10 Volunteer Workers

- (a) The Contractor and Volunteer Management procedure outlines the requirements and responsibilities of all Council workers, including contractors and volunteers.

<https://doc.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/displaydoc.aspx?record=PRD18/165>

It is focused on the prevention of incidents, injuries or illnesses resulting from undertaking work within a Council facility. A summary can be found in the WHS manual, while the official document is located on the Council website.

- (b) Volunteer workers must be registered with Council and must always work under the direction of the Management Committee (Appendix H). They are required to complete an induction (as advised by Council's liaison officer), prior to commencing work. Workers should only attempt work for which they have the appropriate qualifications and training (Appendix G – Daily Sign on Sheet).
- (c) Volunteers must be assigned to tasks for which they have the required skills, competency and capability.
- (d) Per 2.2.9 (d), volunteers will not be permitted to complete the following high-risk work:
 - (i) Working at heights where the fall is greater than 2 metres
 - (ii) Excavation Work
 - (iii) Confined or partially enclosed space work
 - (iii) Hot works, welding and grinding
 - (iv) Asbestos disturbance or removal
 - (v) Work that is near overhead powerlines
- (d) A General Construction Induction Card or Council specified training course is required for work considered construction work in the Council area. Contact Council to determine whether this is required.
- (e) Prior to commencing work, a Pre-plant Inspection Checklist and Site Specific Risk Assessment is to be conducted and all volunteers at the site are to be involved.
- (f) Volunteers are required to complete the online volunteer induction prior to commencement of work. This induction can be completed face to face if required.

2.2.11 Evacuation Procedure

All facilities are required to display Emergency Evacuation diagrams. If these need to be replaced, contact Council's liaison officer.

Report any damage to Emergency Exit Doors, or lighting failures of the Emergency Exit Lighting signs, to Council's liaison officer immediately, for Council's attention.

2.3 Managing Facility Maintenance

2.3.1 General

- (a) Committees are to review and update annually, a Facility Management Plan which is to be provided to Council in April of each year.
- (b) Committees are responsible for ensuring that facilities under their control are properly maintained. This will entail regular maintenance of buildings and / or playing fields (cleaning, replacement of consumables such as paper towels, mowing and watering) and periodic maintenance of a major nature (repainting, line-marking, replacement of worn or broken items).
- (c) Committees are required to inform Council of any urgent WHS issues, or substantial repair or upgrading work required, as identified through their 3-monthly facility inspections.
- (d) Any major work, new infrastructure or upgrades, or works costing in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) must be referred to Council for advice and approval before the work is undertaken. The works should be identified in the Facility Management Plan and in Council's Works Program. Please note that works under \$5,000 that vary the presentation or function of the facility require approval. See 2.1(c) for FMP.
- (e) Works considered necessary or desirable, but beyond the means of a committee, are to be identified in the Facility Management Plan. These will be considered for inclusion in future Works Program or grant funding applications.
- (f) These Guidelines cover committee responsibilities in general terms. Specific requirements for particular facilities may vary from the Guidelines according to particular circumstances. Such requirements will be annexed to the Facility Management Plan. Requirements may include, but are not limited to, Heritage requirements, Crown Land restrictions & Native Title assessments.
- (g) Maintenance agreements have been negotiated with all sportsground Management Committees. The arrangements made to manage all aspects of facility maintenance should be recorded in the Facility Management Plan.

2.3.2 Public Buildings

- (a) Council will be responsible for major maintenance and improvements as funding allows, such as:
 - car parks and roads
 - re-roofing
 - major plumbing / electrical repairs
 - building extensions
 - external painting
 - maintenance of fire services equipment i.e. fire extinguishers, fire exit signs, emergency exit doors.These works should be identified in the Facility Management Plan and Council's Works Program.
- (b) Committees will be responsible for:
 - electrical
 - water
 - gas
 - telephone
 - garbage and effluent disposal accounts

- liquid or solid trade waste
- cleaning
- minor plumbing maintenance
- minor electrical maintenance
- repairs such as broken windows and fittings
- installation of new fittings
- cleaning grease traps
- maintenance of furniture and equipment.

The committee will also be responsible for maintaining the external surfaces of the premises including keeping all trees, plants and lawns in a properly groomed condition.

- (c) Maintenance may be carried out by Council's maintenance staff at committee cost. Requests for maintenance by Council staff should be referred to Council's liaison officer.

2.3.3 Outdoor Sporting Areas

- (a) Committees will be responsible for maintenance as detailed in their maintenance agreement.
- (b) Committees will be responsible for payment of water and electricity accounts.
- (c) With the approval of Council, committees may make improvements or alterations to playing fields. Partial funding for minor improvements is available through Council's Sports Grants scheme. Applications for funding through this scheme should be made by the constituent clubs through their Association / peak body.
- (d) Where buildings exist within sporting areas, committees will be responsible for such buildings as outlined under 'Public Buildings' above (unless otherwise specified by Council).
- (e) Maintenance may be carried out by Council's maintenance staff at committee cost. Requests for maintenance by Council staff should be referred to Council's liaison officer.

2.3.4 Maintenance Subsidies for Sportsgrounds

- (a) The committee is required to assume total responsibility for the control and responsible management of any subsidy funding, ensuring that all income is being appropriately spent and all maintenance is of a justifiable standard.
- (b) Maintenance works can be carried out by the following means:
 - (i) Volunteer labour – Committees must advise Council's liaison officer, in advance, of any organised volunteer (physical) working activity and all volunteer workers are to sign into the WHS Manual register. The register must be maintained at all times. A copy of the signed register must be forwarded to Council's liaison officer upon request, tabled and included in Meeting Minutes quarterly.
 - (ii) Use of contractors in accordance with 2.2.9.
 - (iii) Council staff and equipment on the basis that the committee pays Council the appropriate hire rates.

2.3.5 Maintenance Schedules

When a Facility Management Plan is received from committees, maintenance schedules will be reviewed and discussed with Chairperson. Where appropriate items may be recorded in Council's Facility Works Program either for:

- (a) Delivery under current budget allocations

- (b) Information – projects to be promoted in future grant applications
- (c) Budget Bids for next FY budget allocation. These bids are submitted in October each year for the following financial year so proposals should be submitted by August if a budget bid is requested.

A note is to be added into the Facility Management Plan advising that it has been added.

2.3.6 Community Infrastructure Guidelines

- (a) This document provides a guide to developing community (or committee) proposals for new community infrastructure.
- (b) Project proposals can be forwarded to Council at any time and should be accompanied by information as requested in Council's Community Infrastructure Guidelines. Staff will review and assess projects in consultation with Chairperson/applicant.
- (c) View the guidelines and associated documents here:
<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Council/Grants-Funding/Community-Development-Grants-Program>

3. Council Roles and Functions

3.1 Planning

- (a) Council Officers will assist in the formulation of initial Facility Management Plans.

3.1.1 Communications Plan

Ongoing communications to Management Committees will be scheduled in a Management Committees Communication Plan. These communications will provide updates, announcements, notifications and any other information relevant to committees, members and facilities.

3.1.2 New/Changes to Existing Infrastructure or Procedures

Council officers will assist in the design of new procedures and infrastructure at facilities. All new/changes to existing infrastructure or procedures require Council approval to ensure the ongoing compliance of facilities with changing legislation and Council policies and procedures.

3.2 Facility Use and Maintenance

3.2.1 Monitoring / Auditing

- (a) Generally speaking, committees are expected to operate with minimum Council intervention or involvement. However, Council bears ultimate responsibility for facilities (which, collectively, are valued at many millions of dollars) and monitoring procedures are therefore necessary.
- (b) Details of the annual reporting requirements for committees are noted in the Facility Management Plan. Council will review these reports to oversee the committees' governance of facilities. Other checking procedures are kept to a minimum to maximise committee autonomy, however regular liaison between committees and Council staff is encouraged to ensure that problems are recognised early and resolved as soon as possible.
- (c) Council may undertake random audits of Committee accounts.
- (d) As online booking systems are implemented at committee facilities, these systems will enable Council to monitor usage trends directly from user data obtained during the booking process.

3.2.2 Maintenance Subsidies for Sportsgrounds

- (a) The cost of maintaining sporting facilities may be subsidised where there are shortfalls in funds after taking into account all income, justifiable expenditure and available volunteer services.
- (b) Subsidies will be assessed and paid annually as scheduled in the Facility Management Plans. Assessments will consider information provided in the committee's annual Financial Statements and Facility Management plans.

4. Operational Guidelines and Policies

4.1 Authority / Powers

4.1.1 Appointment

- (a) New committees are appointed, and are ratified annually, by Council resolution.
- (b) New members must be appointed by Council resolution or by the delegated authority of the Chief Executive Officer, before being able to vote at meetings of the committee. Nominees may, however, attend meetings to familiarise themselves with meeting information and procedures. A Notice of New Members Form (Appendix H) must be completed and forwarded to Council's liaison officer so that members can be formally inducted as a Council Volunteer.
- (c) Powers, duties and functions are delegated by Council to committees under Section 355 and 377 of the Local Government Act, 1993. Such committees will be acting on behalf of Council in the exercise of delegated powers.
- (d) In any resolution of Council in appointing a committee or an individual to a committee, the resolution should mention the delegation of power, authority, duty or function under Section 377.

4.1.2 Dissolution

Council retains the right to dissolve committees without notice or withdraw the membership of any individual member without notice.

- (a) On dissolution of the committee, the Secretary / Treasurer or the responsible member must immediately forward all records to Council.
- (b) All keys must be collected from committee members and users and be returned to Council.
- (c) All assets and funds of the committee must be handed over to Council for the future management of the facility or held in trust by Council.

4.2 Information and Advertising

- (a) Committees are to provide information to Council's liaison officer, to ensure that website information is socially appropriate, current and informative.
- (b) Committees are to document all means of regular advertisement in the Facility Management Plan (including web or Facebook pages, signage, advertisements, pamphlets etc.). A copy of advertisements and pamphlets should be appended to the Facility Management Plan.
- (c) A copy of advertising material will be provided to Council's liaison officer for approval prior to display or lodgment.
- (d) Council's Shoalhaven Tourism website promotes facilities for weddings and events.

4.3 Membership

4.3.1 New Members

- (a) Committees will actively seek members (from the community) with the potential to enhance the depth and balance of committee skills.
- (b) All user groups will be approached to have representation on the committee.

- (c) Committees must consist of a minimum of three members and maximum of eighteen members, or more on approval by Council.
- (d) The following elected Executive positions must be filled (by different people) for the committee to be viable:
 - **Chairperson** - Primary spokesperson for the committee and liaison contact with Council. Responsible for convening and chairing meetings, preparing the agenda in liaison with the Secretary, ensuring the recording of accurate minutes, ensuring the Committee / Club acts within Council's delegated authority, and ensuring reporting responsibilities are met.
 - **Treasurer** - Responsible for maintaining accurate records of income and expenditure of public money, and ensuring Financial Statements are submitted in a timely manner.
 - **Secretary** - Responsible for managing correspondence, recording minutes of meetings and ensuring reporting responsibilities are met.
- (e) The following additional Executive positions may be elected as required, with such positions being filled by any committee member (who does not hold another executive position):
 - Vice Chairperson
 - Assistant Secretary
 - Assistant Treasurer
- (f) Committees must designate members to undertake the following duties (which can be undertaken by an Executive member):
 - Booking Officer
 - Maintenance Officer
 - Safety Officer - assumes ownership and maintenance of the WHS Manual and procedures.
- (g) Members must be minimum 16 years of age.
- (h) Members may be appointed for subsequent terms.
- (i) From time to time it may become necessary to appoint new members to committees, either to fill vacancies or provide additional representation.
- (j) Membership of committees at all times remains in Council's control. Due consideration will be given to recommendations from committees. It is Council's usual practice to consult with committees before appointing additional members.
- (k) New members may not vote at committee meetings or be elected to executive positions until they have completed the induction process to:
 - (i) Management Committee Guidelines
 - (ii) Work Health and Safety Manual
 - (iii) Council's general Online Volunteer induction.

Information will be provided by Council's liaison officer.
Please see a link to the online induction below:
<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Council/Careers/Online-Volunteer-Induction-Health-Safety-Behaviour>
- (l) Should vacancies or changes in status occur, committees are to inform Council in writing. Where possible replacements are to represent the user groups of outgoing members. All user groups are to be notified of changes. If vacancies exist, these are to be advertised on facility notice boards and in the media. Contact Council's liaison officer for assistance.
- (m) All nominations for replacement are to be forwarded to Council's liaison officer, together with committee recommendations. The advice is to be in the form of Appendix H.

- (n) All user groups are entitled to have equal representation on the committee. No one user group can have a majority of members, other than Showground Show Societies.
- (o) Each user group may exercise a maximum of two (2) votes on any matter when a vote is called at a meeting, excepting Show Societies which may exercise a maximum of five (5) votes (MIN10.654).
- (p) Members may be required to attend specific training and information sessions from time to time.
- (q) Each member of the committee acts for the committee and provides any labour, on an honorary and voluntary basis. No member of the committee shall be entitled to any remuneration or wage as a result of that person's membership of the Committee.

4.3.2 Elections

- (a) Office bearers are to be elected by the committee on the following basis to maintain continuity:
Every year at the Annual General Meeting all Executive positions will be declared vacant. A Council or independent community member will stand as Returning Officer and conduct the election of Executive office bearers for the following financial year.
- (b) The Executive office bearers will comprise Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer at a minimum, and may also include Vice Chairperson, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer.
- (c) A committee member shall not hold more than one executive position at any one time.
- (d) If an executive office bearer ceases to hold the position, an election should be held at the next General Meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

4.3.3 Members Ceasing to Hold Membership

- (a) Members shall cease to hold membership if they:
 - (i) Resign;
 - (ii) Fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings of a committee without reasonable explanation;
 - (iii) Fail to attend at least half of the committee meetings in any one year;
 - (iv) The group they represent withdraws their support for the member.
 - (v) Council revokes their membership.
- (b) In respect of the above, this does not preclude such persons from being eligible to be considered for reappointment.
- (c) Where members cease to hold membership as a result of the above, committees shall notify Council's liaison officer of such fact by email as soon as possible after the fact.

4.4 Meetings

4.4.1 General Meeting

- (a) Meetings of committees may be held as often as considered necessary or desirable for their purposes. However, meetings must be held at least quarterly.
- (b) A simple majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum. This means a majority of the Committee members need to be present at meetings. eg. For a committee with 7 members in total, 4 members must be present at a committee meeting.

- (c) Meeting procedures should adhere as much as possible to generally accepted procedures.
- (d) All decisions must be adopted by a majority of members present. Where any member objects to a resolution carried at a meeting of the committee, such objections must be recorded in the minutes and such resolution shall not be valid (and so must not be acted upon or implemented by the committee) until Council advises to confirm or amend the resolution.
- (e) For those committees handling funds, a financial report must be submitted to each meeting.
- (f) Committees are subject to Council's requirements for transparency, accountability and responsibility. To ensure these aims are met, meetings are open to the public.
- (g) Members of the public do not have voting rights and may only address the committee if agreed to by a committee executive member.
- (g) Confidential and sensitive matters may be discussed with Council's liaison officer.

4.4.2 Annual General Meeting

- (a) The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is to be held between 1 July and 30 September.
- (b) Committees are to promote their AGM by:
 - Giving 4 weeks prior notice of an AGM, including full details of date, time and place;
 - Displaying notices of intent on internal and external noticeboards;
 - Advising all current and potential user groups in writing; and
 - Placing advertisements in relevant media giving details of the AGM.
- (c) Inviting Council's liaison officer to attend.
- (d) The procedure for the AGM shall follow the recommended Agenda outlined in Appendix B.
- (e) The Executive Office bearers shall be elected at the committee's Annual General Meeting, as above.

4.4.3 Minutes

- (a) Committees need to be aware of the importance of Minutes, because of their legal status and their liability to be subpoenaed in court cases.
- (b) Minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of committees must be recorded. A sample minutes format is at Appendix C.
- (c) Minutes of all meetings must be submitted in full to Council's liaison officer as soon as practicable after the meeting and be placed on public display within facilities or on community notice boards.
- (d) Resolutions should be worded clearly and unambiguously to show the intent of committees.
- (e) Minutes are to be confirmed as a true and accurate record or amended appropriately by resolution at subsequent meetings.
- (f) Minutes shall be made available on request for inspection by Council's Chief Executive Officer or any Council Officer nominated by the Chief Executive Officer.
- (g) All new payment arrangements that will be ongoing or are over \$200 are to be approved at committee meetings and included in the minutes.
- (h) All correspondence is to be noted at committee meetings and included in the minutes.

4.5 Conflicts of Interest

4.5.1 Disclosure and Presence in Meetings

Detailed below is an extract from Section 451 of the Local Government Act, 1993, relevant to the disclosure of interest by members of committees.

451 Disclosure and Presence in Meetings

- (1) A Councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council or committee is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- (2) The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or
 - (b) at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

4.5.2 Disclosures to be Recorded

Detailed below is an extract from Section 453 of the Local Government Act, 1993, relevant to disclosures to be recorded at meetings.

"A Disclosure made at a meeting of a council or council committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meetings."

Persons who fail to comply with the Act in respect of declarations of pecuniary interest in matters before committees are guilty of an offence under the Act and proceedings for such offences may be instituted in a court of law. An example would be a relative or acquaintance of a committee member receiving payment for cleaning or working at the facilities.

If members have any doubts as to whether disclosures of interest should be made, it is recommended that interests be declared and that such members not take part in discussions or votes on the subject matters.

It should also be noted that the interests of relatives (if known to members of committees) are deemed to be the interests of those members and, therefore, declarations of interest in the matters prescribed must be made.

4.6 Financial Management

4.6.1 General

Committees are subject to the same standards of financial accountability as Council, and it is therefore important that committees manage their finances appropriately. All funds and assets managed by the committee are Council assets. The committee is responsible for the care and control of these assets in compliance with Council procedures and instructions, which are designed to ensure required standards of governance of public monies.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the financial procedures of Council. Council will issue instructions to individual committees, or all committees, on specific financial matters. Any such instructions issued must be strictly adhered to. Council has the right to audit committee finances at any time.

4.6.2 Payments to Members

No payment in the form of an honorarium shall be made by committees to any of their members. However, reasonable expenses incurred whilst carrying out

executive duties of committees may be reimbursed upon production of receipt or proof of expense.

4.6.3 Financial Accounts

A set of accounts shall be kept by each committee and reports provided to Council annually. Council will provide an Excel Financial Statements template for the committee's use.

An alternative accounting software package may be used on the proviso that the system is set up to generate reports for Council in the formats required by Council's Finance Team.

(a) Financial Records must include:

- Date of transaction
- Particulars of transaction, including Name of Payor
- References
- Amount of transaction
- GST collected or paid
- Entries should be made in such a manner as to allow cross reference to the Receipt Book or digital accounting package, and cheque books.

(b) All money received must be recorded in the accounts and a receipt issued.

(c) Committees are required to ensure that all monies due to them are received including the full amount of any fees and charges due and payable. It should be noted that committee members may be liable for any monies that they fail to take reasonable action to recover.

(d) Should a committee be unable to recover any monies, Council is to be notified of the details in writing.

4.6.4 Fixing of Fees and Charges

In accordance with Section 377 of the Local Government Act, 1993 committees do not have the power to set fees and charges. All fees and charges must be set by Council resolution annually. Council adopted a Fees and Charges Review for the 22/23 financial year, standardising fees across the Shoalhaven for community facilities, to promote transparency and equity of service provision in the Shoalhaven.

(a) Committees are to forward comments regarding fees and charges for the ensuing year by December 31 each year.

(e) All fees are set in accordance with 2.2.3(b). No reduction or waiving of fees is allowable except as set out in 2.2.3(b).

4.6.5 Receipting of Money

(a) Tax Invoice - Receipt Book or Digital Invoicing

- (i) Tax Invoices must be issued for all monies received.
- (ii) If using a Receipt Book, it should consist of pre-numbered receipts and duplicates so that originals may be detached, and the duplicates retained in the book. The receipt must be marked "Tax Invoice".
- (iii) Used Receipt Books must be retained.
- (iv) Where errors are made in writing out receipts, the originals and the duplicates must be cancelled and copies of both retained in respective Receipt Books.
- (v) Receipt Books are provided by Council and can be requested from the Council liaison officer.

4.6.6 Disbursements

- (a) Council resolves each year that funds collected by committees are to be spent on the care, control and management of respective facilities. Expenditure for any other purpose is not permitted except where approved by Council resolution.
- (b) All payments must be supported by Tax Invoices for goods and / or services received. Cheques should be made to order and crossed 'Not Negotiable'.
- (c) All cheques must be signed by any two of the following: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer.
- (d) All new payment arrangements that will be ongoing, or are over \$200 are to be approved at committee meetings and included in the minutes.
- (e) Where payment must be made between meetings, payment is permitted subject to such payment being confirmed at the next meeting and the particulars recorded in the minutes.
- (f) All payments shall be recorded separately in the accounts/cash book together with the details thereof.
- (g) Committees shall not indebted themselves beyond the funds held at any one time without prior approval from Council.

4.6.7 Banking

- (a) Prior to handling any monies, committees will (with Council's approval) open a bank account in the name of the committee at an approved bank, through which all transactions shall be made.
- (b) All monies received by committees shall be banked in the form received, by the end of the month, in a manner which enables the reconciliation of bank accounts within the accounting system.
- (c) All bank accounts must acknowledge Shoalhaven City Council's right to access funds.

4.6.8 Petty Cash

- (a) Committees may operate petty cash accounts on the imprest system.
- (b) The cash 'float' shall not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) at any one time.
- (c) Only payments of less than fifty dollars (\$50.00) may be made from petty cash. All other payments shall be made by cheque or bank transfer. Petty cash will normally be reserved for Secretarial and Treasury expenses.
- (d) Petty cash shall at all times be kept in a locked container with the key being held by the Treasurer.
- (e) All petty cash payments must be supported by receipts which shall be placed in the petty cash container.
- (f) At any one time, the total of receipts and cash in the container shall equal the cash 'float'.
- (g) The 'float' may be replenished from time to time by drawing a cash cheque to the total amount of the receipts in the petty cash container. Such receipts may then be removed and properly recorded. The receipts should be retained.
- (h) Details of reimbursement of petty cash shall be made available to respective committees.

4.6.9 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- (a) GST must be collected on all income. The amount of tax is calculated as one eleventh of the total amount.

- (b) A Financial Statements template, as well as cashbook, receipt book and monthly summary have been provided to assist with account keeping. The committee's Financial Statements must be submitted annually, prior to the end of July.
- (c) GST refunds will be processed by Council annually, upon receipt of the annual Financial Statements. If the committee has collected more GST than it has paid, a cheque for the difference between what has been collected and what has been paid should accompany or be sent to Council at the same time as the Financial Statements.
- (d) Committees may submit GST returns more frequently if they wish, monthly at a maximum.
- (e) If a GST refund is due to the committee (i.e. more GST has been paid than has been collected), then a refund will be issued by Council.
- (f) Bonds do not attract GST but if any portion of a bond is retained to cover damages or losses then a Tax Invoice must be provided to the customer and GST will be collected on the retained amount.
- (g) The receipt books issued comply with the requirements of the Tax Invoice and should be used whenever a Tax Invoice is required, unless a digital invoice is provided.
- (h) All invoices must contain the supplier's ABN (Shoalhaven City Council) and the words TAX INVOICE.

4.7 Reporting

4.7.1 Treasurer's Report

- (a) Treasurers must submit financial reports to each properly convened meeting of committees.
- (b) The reports should include full details of the following:
 - Payments made prior to the meeting
 - Payments submitted for approval of the meeting
 - Bank reconciliation
- (c) Reports should be signed by the Treasurer and / or Chairperson or Secretary and formal adoption of reports should be noted in the minutes of the meeting.
- (d) The report should be included with the Meeting Minutes.

4.7.2 Annual Statement of Accounts

- (a) The financial year for all committees shall be from 1 July to 30 June each year.
- (b) A standardised template will be provided to Management Committees by Council's liaison officer prior to the commencement of the Financial Year. This will assist with maintaining ongoing accurate reporting consisting of:
 - (i) A loans register
 - (ii) A bank accounts register
 - (iii) An asset register
 - (iv) An income register
 - (v) An expense register
 - (vi) An automated profit and loss statement
 - (vii) An income statement
- (c) Prior to 31 July each year, each committee shall prepare and submit to Council an annual statement of accounts using the template supplied, outlining the information in 4.6.2 (b). In addition, the following must also be provided:
 - (i) A bank reconciliation
 - (ii) A Bank Statement showing the balance of funds held as at 30 June.
- (d) By September 30 the statements of each committee must be audited, preferably by a qualified Auditor appointed by the committees. If a qualified Auditor is not available,

the person selected must be experienced and possess a sound knowledge of the principles of book-keeping.

- (e) The Auditor or person selected must be provided with a copy of the current Guidelines and be required to sign the following certification:

'I hereby certify that the above statement of receipts and payments and the bank reconciliation statement of theManagement Committee have been accurately and properly prepared from the financial records maintained by the committee and that I have inspected the Minute Book and financial records of the committee and, as far as I can establish, these comply with Shoalhaven City Council's Guidelines in respect of all financial procedures and requirements.'

- (f) If the Auditor is unable to make such a statement because of deficiencies, then the statement should be qualified to the extent of the deficiencies.

A certification by the Auditor (or the audited accounts) must be submitted to committees for formal adoption.

- (g) A copy of the financial statement and attachments together with the Auditor's Certificate and any comments made by the Auditor must be submitted to Council before 30 September.

Council will be able to assist committees in the proper setting out of their annual statement of accounts.

4.7.3 Annual Report

Committees are to present to each Annual General Meeting, an Annual Report containing the following information:

- (a) Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
- (b) Chairperson's Report
- (c) Treasurer's Report
- (d) Secretary / Booking Officer Report

A copy of Annual Reports and AGM minutes shall be sent to Council.

4.8 Purchasing

Committees may need to purchase items to carry out their purposes. Committees may take advantage of favourable prices negotiated by Council through the Purchasing Unit.

Committees may utilise Council's stores for the purchase of items such as toilet paper, hand towels and cleaning products etc. To do this, such purchases should be made through Council's liaison officer.

Assets of greater the \$5,000 value may not be purchased by committees without prior approval from Council.

4.9 Insurances

Council's Insurance Manager is available and authorised to discuss any matters associated with insurance, and to provide more specific information as required by committees. All queries and concerns regarding insurance should be forwarded to Council's liaison officer for attention.

4.9.1 Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurances

Members

As committees are appointed under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993 the committees and their members fall within the definition of an insured party in Council's Insurance Policy. Coverage for committees and members is available when acting within the scope of their delegated duties.

Council carries a Deductible for all claims. In the event that a committee member is involved in a claim below that deductible amount, subject to the member acting within the scope of their delegated duties, Council indemnifies the committee member for the Deductible accordingly.

Council carries Professional Indemnity Insurance providing protection for claims arising out of any negligent act, error or omission in the conduct of the Member's (Council's) business and notified during the period of protection, other than personal injury or property loss or damage otherwise insured above.

Public Liability for users/hirers

Council holds Public Liability Insurance for users (including hirers) of Council's facilities. This cover does not apply to certain users/hirers. Booking Officers must familiarise themselves with these exclusions and advise users/hirers accordingly. Please refer any queries to Council's Liaison officer.

Council's Public Liability Insurance cover does not extend to events associated with the following, and therefore these users/hirers are required to hold public liability insurance cover with an approved Australian provider and be for an amount that is determined to be acceptable by Council for the hire of the particular venue. This includes all:

- sporting bodies
- clubs;
- associations or corporations;
- other entities of any kind;
- or
- bookings for a commercial activity or for the purpose of making profit

At the time of booking the Hirer is required to provide evidence, in the form of a current Certificate of Currency, that they hold Public Liability insurance cover of at least \$20 million. A renewed certificate must be provided, if required to cover the booking period.

Please note:

If the application is made by a Community Group for the purpose of a simple meeting then the Community Group is not required to provide evidence of public liability insurance as part of their application, however the Community Group understands and accepts that Council cannot extend its public liability insurance to cover the activities of the Community Group during the hire.

The Certificate of Currency must:

- Note the interests of Shoalhaven City Council and the Minister administering the Crown Lands Act. Please note this requires only a phone call to the insurer and they will be able to email an amended Certificate to the policy holder.
- Be signed by or on behalf of your organisation's insurer.
- Be issued by an approved insurer, currently listed on the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority's Register of Authorised Insurers.
- Clearly note the expiry date of the policy.
- Be renewed within 7 days and Council supplied with a new Certificate of Currency if it expires during the period of hire.

Sub-contractors/Third Parties:

Hirers who obtain services (paid or unpaid) from others to assist with the booking (eg caterers, cleaners, technical specialists etc) are required to ensure all contractors/service agents:

- Abide by these conditions of use
- Arrive and leave the premises within the approved period of the booking

- Hold evidence, in the form of a Certificate of Currency, that they hold Public Liability insurance cover of at least \$20,000,000 or other amount determined to be acceptable by Council
- Have assessed the facility for risk and have adequate safety procedures in place, which may include safe work method statements.

Safety Precautions:

In all circumstances, the hirer agrees that all reasonable precautions will be taken in connection with their hire to:

- Prevent personal injury;
- Prevent the manufacture, sale or supply of defective products;
- Comply and ensure that the hirer's employees, servants, agents comply with statutory obligations, by-laws or regulations imposed by a public authority for safety of persons or property.

Name of Event:

Users must include a description of their event during the online application, including the purpose and activities involved in the event.

Where Council's cover does apply, the insurance is for \$20 million and does not apply to the user or their property, but indemnifies Council for any third parties claims for personal injury, property damage or products liability in connection with the hire of the facility by the user.

A Deductible applies to each claim, payable by the user in event of a claim.

The following general information applies to the Public Liability policy:

- If any injury or damage to property occurs to any member of the public, committee members are not empowered to admit liability or give any information or advice in relation thereto. The admission of liability by a committee member may result in the loss of indemnity under the insurance cover.
- Any member of the public who wishes to make a claim against Council or the committee should make a claim in writing setting out full details of the incident (where, when, how etc.) and the grounds on which they hold Council or the committee responsible.
- When a committee receives a claim in writing from a member of the public, the Secretary should investigate promptly with any or all members involved and then complete a written report with all the details involved, including a response to any specific points raised by the claimant.
- The claim and report from committee should then be forwarded, without delay, together with any relevant documentation to the Chief Executive Officer, Attention: Manager, Insurance & Risk Management.
- Community groups undertaking a meeting will be covered under Council's casual user's policy.

4.9.2 Property Insurance

Council property is covered under a blanket Property Protection Policy. Council retains Content Insurance for items which belong to Council and are stored within Council facilities.

User groups' property is not covered by this Policy and should be insured by the property owner(s).

Any claim is subject to a Deductible.

If any building is known to be unoccupied in excess of thirty (30) days, please advise Council's Insurance Section prior to this period.

4.9.3 Personal Accident Insurance

Council has a Personal Accident insurance policy which provides personal accident and sickness cover to members of committees appointed under the Local Government Act, 1993.

Cover applies whilst the insured person is engaged in or on any activity connected with the business of the committee including whilst travelling to and from such activity.

Compensation is not payable to persons under the age of 10 or over the age of 90. Further compensation is not payable where person is entitled to benefits under any workers compensation scheme, statutory transport accident scheme or by reason of their employment or for expenses incurred as a result of a professional service for which a Medicare benefit is or would be payable in accordance with the Health Insurance Act 1973.

Volunteer workers are covered in the same manner as committee members.

Any injury or event that may give rise to a claim should be reported immediately, or on the next working day to Council's liaison officer or Manager, Insurance & Risk Management.

4.10 Record Management

As determined by The State Records Act 1998, neither the committee nor Council is the owner of records created and maintained by them. As a public office these records are officially records of The State and must be managed accordingly.

- (a) Storage and Custody of records
 - (i) Records should be stored in an area away from potential hazards.
 - (ii) Records should be kept in a secure location.
- (b) Destruction of Records
 - (i) No ingoing or outgoing correspondence may be destroyed, except for advertising materials.
 - (ii) Records must not be destroyed but can be given to Council for archiving.
- (c) Access to Records
 - (i) Access to records by persons other than current committee members or an authorised member of Council is prohibited.
 - (ii) Request for access to records by other people must be directed to Council's liaison officer
 - (iii) The committee has a responsibility under the Privacy and Personal Information Act of 1998 to protect the personal information and privacy of individuals.

APPENDIX A

SECTION 355 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993

How does a council exercise its functions?

355 How does a council exercise its functions?

A function of a council may, subject to this Chapter, be exercised:

- (a) by the council by means of the councillors or employees, by its agents or contractors, by financial provision, by the provision of goods, equipment, services, amenities or facilities or by any other means, or
- (b) by a committee of the council, or
- (c) partly or jointly by the council and another person or persons, or
- (d) jointly by the council and another council or councils (including by means of a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils of which the councils concerned are members), or
- (e) by a delegate of the council (which may, for example, be a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils of which the council is a member).

SECTION 377 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993

General power of the council to delegate

377 General power of the council to delegate

- (1) A council may, by resolution, delegate to the General Manager or any other person or body (not including another employee of the council) any of the functions of the council, other than the following:
- the appointment of a General Manager
 - the making of a rate
 - a determination under section 549 as to the levying of a rate
 - the making of a charge
 - the fixing of a fee
 - the borrowing of money
 - the voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations
 - the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property (but not including the sale of items of plant or equipment)
 - the acceptance of tenders which are required under this Act to be invited by the council
 - the adoption of a management plan under section 406
 - the adoption of a financial statement included in an annual financial report
 - a decision to classify or reclassify public land under Division 1 of Part 2 of Chapter 6
 - the fixing of an amount or rate for the carrying out by the council of work on private land
 - the decision to carry out work on private land for an amount that is less than the amount or rate fixed by the council for the carrying out of any such work
 - the review of a determination made by the council, and not by a delegate of the council, of an application for approval or an application that may be reviewed under section 82A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
 - the power of the council to authorise the use of reasonable force for the purpose of gaining entry to premises under section 194
 - a decision under section 356 to contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons
 - the making of an application, or the giving of a notice, to the Governor or Minister
 - this power of delegation
 - any function under this or any other Act that is expressly required to be exercised by resolution of the council.

APPENDIX A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993 Cont.

- (2) A council may, by resolution, sub-delegate to the General Manager or any other person or body (not including another employee of the council) any function delegated to the council by the Director-General except as provided by the instrument of delegation to the council.

RELEVANT PASSAGES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT PERTAINING TO CLAUSE 4.4 – CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 442

What is a “pecuniary interest”?

442 What is a “pecuniary interest”?

- (1) For the purposes of this Chapter, a “pecuniary interest” is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated as provided in section 443.
- (2) A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to the matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in section 448.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 443

Who has a pecuniary interest?

443 Who has a pecuniary interest?

- (1) For the purposes of this Chapter, a person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of:
 - (a) the person, or
 - (b) another person with whom the person is associated as provided in this section.
- (2) A person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:
 - (a) the person’s spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person, or a partner or employer of the person, has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
 - (b) the person, or a nominee, partner or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.
- (3) However, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter as referred to in subsection (2):
 - (a) if the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative, partner, employer or company or other body, or
 - (b) just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, a council or a statutory body or is employed by the Crown, or
 - (c) just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of a council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter, so long as the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

APPENDIX A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993 Cont.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 448

What interests do not have to be disclosed?

448 What interests do not have to be disclosed?

The following interests do not have to be disclosed for the purposes of this Chapter:

- (a) an interest as an elector,
- (b) an interest as a ratepayer or person liable to pay a charge,
- (c) an interest in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to the public generally, or to a section of the public that includes persons who are not subject to this Part,
- (d) an interest in any matter relating to the terms on which the provision of a service or the supply of goods or commodities is offered to a relative of the person by the council in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as apply to persons who are not subject to this Part,
- (e) an interest as a member of a club or other organisation or association, unless the interest is as the holder of an office in the club or organisation (whether remunerated or not),
- (f) an interest of a member of a council committee as a person chosen to represent the community or as a member of a non-profit organisation or other community or special interest group if the committee member has been appointed to represent the organisation or group on the committee,
- (g) an interest in a proposal relating to the making, amending, altering or repeal of an environmental planning instrument other than an instrument that effects a change of the permissible uses of:
 - (i) land in which the person or another person with whom the person is associated as provided in section 443 has a proprietary interest (which, for the purposes of this paragraph, includes any entitlement to the land at law or in equity and any other interest or potential interest in the land arising out of any mortgage, lease, trust, option or contract, or otherwise), or
 - (ii) land adjoining, adjacent to or in proximity to land referred to in subparagraph (i), if the person or the person, company or body referred to in section 443 (1) (b) or (c) would by reason of the proprietary interest have a pecuniary interest in the proposal,
- (h) an interest relating to a contract, proposed contract or other matter if the interest arises only because of a beneficial interest in shares in a company that does not exceed 10 per cent of the voting rights in the company,
- (i) an interest of a person arising from the proposed making by the council of an agreement between the council and a corporation, association or partnership, being a corporation, association or partnership that has more than 25 members, if the interest arises because a relative of the person is a shareholder (but not a director) of the corporation or is a member (but not a member of the committee) of the association or is a partner of the partnership,
- (j) an interest of a person arising from the making by the council of a contract or agreement with a relative of the person for or in relation to any of the following, but only if the proposed contract or agreement is similar in terms and conditions to such contracts and agreements as have been made, or as are proposed to be made, by the council in respect of similar matters with other residents of the area:
 - (i) the performance by the council at the expense of the relative of any work or service in connection with roads or sanitation,
 - (ii) security for damage to footpaths or roads,
 - (iii) any other service to be rendered, or act to be done, by the council by or under any Act conferring functions on the council or by or under any contract,
- (k) an interest relating to the payment of fees to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor),
- (l) an interest relating to the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to councillors (including the mayor and deputy mayor) in accordance with a policy under section 252,
- (m) an interest relating to an election to the office of mayor arising from the fact that a fee for the following 12 months has been determined for the office of mayor,

APPENDIX A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993 Cont.

- (n) an interest of a person arising from the passing for payment of a regular account for wages or salary of an employee who is a relative of the person,
- (o) an interest arising from being covered by, or a proposal to be covered by, indemnity insurance as a councillor or member of a council committee,
- (p) an interest arising from appointment of a councillor to a body as representative or delegate of the council, whether or not a fee or other recompense is payable to the representative or delegate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 451

Disclosure and presence in meetings

451 Disclosure and presence in meetings

- (1) A councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- (2) The councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or
 - (b) at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 453

Disclosures to be recorded

453 Disclosures to be recorded

A disclosure made at a meeting of a council or council committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

APPENDIX B
PRO-FORMA - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

1. Record of Attendance
2. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting
3. Reports
 - Chairperson
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary / Booking Officer
4. Election of Executive.
5. Nomination of new members
6. General Business
 - Review of Fees and Charges
 - Review of Facility Management Plan etc.

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

**APPENDIX C
PRO-FORMA - MINUTES OF MEETINGS****Minutes of * Management Committee Meeting of ********Date:****Meeting Opened:** 7:00 pm**Present:** Names of committee members present**Absent:** Names of committee members absent**Apologies:** Names of committee members who have submitted apologies**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting read by Secretary.

Action / Resolved: Moved by * seconded by * that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as read.

2. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**3. Finance**

3.1 Financial Report read by Treasurer

Action / Resolved: Moved by * seconded by * that the financial report be accepted.

3.2 Accounts for payment tabled by Treasurer

Action / Resolved: Moved by * seconded by * that the accounts be accepted for payment.

4. Correspondence

4.1 Correspondence out and in tabled / read by Secretary

Action / Resolved: Moved by * seconded by * that the correspondence be accepted as tabled/read.

4.2 Business arising from correspondence

5. Agenda Items**6. General Business****7. Next meeting scheduled for ***

APPENDIX D
HIRE APPLICATION FORM

**Application Form - Hire/Use of Community Facilities
Management Committee Facilities**

Facility Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

LODGE MENT OF APPLICATION FORM

Application forms are required to be lodged at least 21 days prior to your booking date

1 Applicant

Given name: _____

Surname: _____

Organisation (if applicable): _____

Is the Organisation: ☐ Community ☐ Commercial

Postal Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

2 Purpose of Public Reserve / Facility Hire

Venue / Facility Name: _____

Specific Area requested for Hire:
(i.e. room name/if in reserve provide a site plan/map)

Type of function: _____

Day: _____ Date: _____

Maximum No. of people: _____

Function Times: (to include set up & pack up):

Date: _____ time arrival _____ /departure

Date: _____ time arrival _____ /departure

Date: _____ time arrival _____ /departure

Date: _____ time arrival _____ /departure

Additional Function Information

Do you require access/entry keys? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you require on-site power? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Alcohol served/sold? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Copy of valid RSA attached? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Copy of Safe Party Form lodged & attached? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you providing security personnel? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you using a PA system? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Total floor area of marquee: _____

Details of any additional items proposed to be brought to public reserve/facility: _____

Is the event covered by Council's Public Liability Policy? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If not, Public Liability Insurance attached: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Tax Invoice required for GST use: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Function Safety Coordinator Details:

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

The above person has agreed they must be on site at all times during the function, be contactable at all times by mobile phone and be responsible for liaising with all of the relevant authorities.

The above person is responsible for ensuring the safety and cleanliness of the hired space throughout the function and returning the space to how it was found.

Should information provided by the applicant be incorrect, Council reserves the right to cancel this hire application. I have read and agree to abide by all the following Terms and Conditions of Hire, applicable for hiring a Council reserve or facility.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Form Number: 776.2	Issue Date: 07/2021	TRIM Form No. FM21/56
Version Number 6	Next Review date: 07/2025	Confirmation Sent: _____

F O R M 7 7 6

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

APPENDIX E TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE



Address correspondence to The Chief Executive Officer, PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541 Australia
Bridge Rd, Nowra NSW 2541 02 4429 3111 | Deering St, Ulladulla NSW 2539 02 4429 8999
shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au | council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au | Fax 02 4422 1816

Terms & Conditions of Hire/Use

Public Halls, Community Centres and Meeting Rooms,
Reserves, Sportsgrounds, Courts, and Showgrounds

Permit
Upon payment of your booking, Council will issue you with a permit for your hire of the venue which is your booking confirmation. This permit must be available for viewing at the venue during the hire period and must be produced on demand. This application form is not a permit or booking confirmation.
Legislation
You must comply with all State and Federal Legislation in your use of this facility. Council may review the Terms and Conditions of a hire agreement in order to meet legislative requirements.
Hire Period
Your hire period will start and end at the times set out in the permit. You will not have access to the venue before or after these times, unless expressly authorised by Council. The delivery or removal of equipment, setting up or cleaning of the venue must be completed during the hire period.
Hire Fee
You must pay the hire fee to Council prior to issue of the Permit. The hire fee will be charged in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges.
Bond
Council may require you to pay a bond for use of the venue. Bond and payment will be required prior to issue of the permit. Council will inspect the venue after the function. If the venue has been left in a satisfactory condition, Council will refund the bond to you. If the venue has been left in an untidy condition or the venue has been damaged, Council will contact you and make arrangements for cleaning or repairs to be carried out. Any costs incurred for any additional cleaning or repairs necessary to reinstate the venue to the condition it was before the time of hire will be deducted from the bond or additional charges will be incurred by you.
Approvals
You must obtain all necessary consents and approvals for your use of the venue including any Development Consent required under the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979. If are unsure whether your function requires Development Consent, contact Council's Development Services Section on 4429 3111.
Hirer's Obligations
The Event Coordinator must remain in attendance during the hire period and is responsible for venue security, safety of guests and supervision of all activities during the hire period. In all circumstances, the hirer agrees that all reasonable steps will be taken in connection with their hire to: prevent personal injury; prevent the manufacture, sale or supply of defective products; comply and ensure that the hirer's employees, servants or agents comply with statutory obligations, by-laws or regulations imposed by a public authority for safety of persons or property.

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

**APPENDIX E
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE Cont.**

Cancellation by Council
Council reserves the right to cancel any booking or close any ground. If this happens Council will refund all payments but will not be liable for any loss incurred by the hirer.
Cancellation by You
If you decide not to use the venue for your function you must immediately notify Council in writing. If you cancel your booking at least 7 days prior to the booking date Council will refund any hire fee and bond paid. No refund will be issued after this time.
Liability
The hirer must accept responsibility for any claim for damage to property or injury to persons which arises from any negligent act or omission of the hirer which occurs from their use and occupation of the venue.
Insurance & Indemnity
All commercial bookings and bookings associated with a sporting body, club, association or corporation, or entity of any kind, must hold public liability insurance cover with an approved Australian provider and be for an amount that is determined to be acceptable by Council for the hire of the particular venue.
At the time of making the booking a current certificate of currency must be supplied, and a renewed certificate provided to Council, if required to cover the booking period.
The certificate must note the interests of Shoalhaven City Council and the Minister administering the Crown Lands Act. Please note this requires only a phone call to the insurer and they will be able to email an amended Certificate to the policy holder. Currently approved insurers are listed on the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority's Register of Authorised Insurers.
You agree to at all times indemnify Council from and against all liability whatsoever that is caused by any unlawful or negligent act or omission, or breach of these terms and conditions by the hirer, their guests or contractors during the period of the use of the venue.
Hirers who obtain services (paid or unpaid) from others to assist with the booking (eg caterers, cleaners, technical specialists etc) are required to ensure all contractors/service agents:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by these conditions of use • Arrive and leave the premises within the approved period of the booking • Hold evidence, in the form of a Certificate of Currency, that they hold Public Liability insurance cover of at least \$20,000,000 or other amount determined to be acceptable by Council • Have assessed the facility for risk and have adequate safety procedures in place, which may include safe work method statements.
Damage
You will be responsible for any damage you cause to the venue or any fixtures, furniture or equipment at the venue, except for reasonable wear and tear. Any damage will be repaired by Council at your cost and any expenses incurred will be deducted from the bond or charged to you. You should report any accidental damage to the venue upon return of the keys. If not reported, the damage may be deemed as wilful and may be reported to the Police.
Cleanliness
You must leave the venue in a clean and tidy condition and return it to the condition before the time of hire. This includes returning any tables, chairs and other equipment to their original position, removing garbage and cleaning any kitchen, cutlery, crockery or glassware. If the venue is not left in a clean condition, any cleaning costs incurred will be at your cost and may be deducted from the bond.
No Smoking
Council has a No Smoking Policy which applies to indoor venues and sportsgrounds.

**APPENDIX E
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE Cont.**

Alcohol & Alcohol Free Areas
Some reserves have been declared alcohol prohibited or free areas. Under no circumstances is alcohol to be consumed in or around any of these designated reserves at the designated times. These areas or reserves are identified on Council's website.
In relation to other venues where alcohol is permitted to be consumed, the hirer must adhere to the NSW liquor laws. Alcohol must not be sold at the venue unless a copy of a valid Liquor Licence and Responsible Service of Alcohol Certification is provided at the time of booking.
Safety
You must be aware of, and follow, the evacuation procedure for the venue and ensure that you keep any fire exits clear at all times. You must immediately report any accident or incident at the venue to Council.
Glass Bottle Free Sportsgrounds
Council prohibits the supply, sale and consumption of drinks in glass bottles or glass containers on Council managed sportsgrounds.
Electrical Equipment
You must not use double adaptors at the venue and must ensure that all electrical appliances used by you are tested and carry a current tag. All electrical devices must be protected by a Residual Current Device.
Sub-Letting
You must not sublet the venue or assign your rights to any other organisation or person without Council's prior consent.
Offensive Noise
The noise level from the event shall not cause a noise nuisance to nearby residents. Offensive noise may be defined as any noise that may be capable of being heard inside the residence of any person. If an amplifier is to be used the speakers will be oriented away from other residences. The speakers shall be located as close as possible and mounted at a downward 45-degree angle. Only persons nominated by the function safety coordinator shall be permitted to use the PA system.
Council's Property
You must not interfere with any electrical wiring, switchboard or sound equipment at the venue. Any alteration of Council property without written approval will result in the loss of the bond.
Police Advice
You must advise the Police of any evening/night function (excluding small meetings) held at the venue. If it is a party or function a safe party form must be submitted to the police at the time of booking the venue.
Decorations & Structures
You must not affix any decorations to the walls or floors of the venue by nails, screws, hooks, blue tack or use adhesives in any part of the venue.
Any flammable material must be treated with a fire retardant solution.
You must remove all decorations from the venue when vacating the venue, unless specific arrangements are made with Council.
You must not erect any structures on the reserve or sportsground without the prior written consent of Council. If you wish to erect a marquee it must be consistent with Council's Private Functions on Public Reserves Policy.
No helium filled balloons to be used on any playing field, sportsground or reserves. No balloons, helium filled or otherwise, to be released in or around any Council owned playing field, sportsground or reserves.

APPENDIX E
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE Cont.

Precedence - Elections
Certain buildings are designated polling booths for Local, State or Federal elections. Council reserves the right to cancel your booking should the building be required for this purpose.
Emergencies
Community facilities can be designated emergency evacuation centres in case of bushfires, floods and other disasters. Council reserves the right to cancel your booking should the facility be needed for this purpose.
If the facility is required in an emergency your venue hire will be cancelled and hire fees refunded.
Charitable Activities
You must observe any requirements of the Charitable Fundraising Act.
If you have an enquiry about these requirements, contact the Department of Gaming and Racing on 9995 0300.
Use by Others
Your booking does not include the exclusive use of the remainder of the reserve or building.
You must cause minimum inconvenience to local residents and to other persons wishing to use the reserve or building.
The rights of the general public to have free and unrestricted access to a reserve or sportsground must be respected.
Fire Restrictions
You must follow any fire restrictions that are in force during the hire period. You must not light fires except in properly constructed fire places.
Trees/Vegetation
You must not cut or lop any trees or vegetation to facilitate your function.
Waste
It is recommended that you inspect the venue before the function to check if additional bins are required. It
is your responsibility to ensure that adequate bins are supplied. Additional bins can be sourced from SITA on 4423 1711. You should place all additional bins at the roadside immediately after the function, ready for emptying by the SITA Waste that you have arranged.
Amusement Devices
You do not have approval to use amusement devices except for jumping castles which may require specific insurance coverage. If you want to use amusement devices, specific approval is required and should be sought by contacting Council's Booking Officer on 4429 3111.
Security
Council reserves the right to advise local Police and Council rangers of functions occurring on weekends.
Any after hours emergency can be reported to Council on 4421 3100.
You are required to submit a Safe Party Form to the police for any parties/functions, details available from Booking Officer or during online booking process.
Directions
You must comply with any direction given by an authorised officer of the Council (including Council Rangers) or a Police officer acting in the course of their duties.
Exits
You must maintain clear access of not less than 1.1 metres wide to all exit doors.

APPENDIX E
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE Cont.

Sale of Goods
The sale of goods is prohibited except in accordance with Council's Market Policy. For further information, contact Council's Development Services section on 4429 3111.
Vehicle & Crowd Control
Vehicular access to the reserve or sports ground is restricted. If consent is given in the permit, times may allow to load and unload materials. No vehicle will remain on the reserve or sports ground except if specified in the permit. Vehicles must park in designated parking areas only. Vehicle and crowd control remain your responsibility.
Keys
You can collect and return the keys as instructed by the booking officer. Keys will not be handed over unless you produce proof of payment. You must not copy the keys.
Reserves & Sportsground only
Existing Structures
You must inspect structures, goal posts, in-ground sprinklers and the like for safety and compliance with Australian Standards before use of the sportsground. Any unsafe areas should not be used, and should be reported to Council immediately.
Underground Services
Council may have underground services (eg: water mains and electricity) located within the reserve or sports ground. You must not install stakes, star pickets, pegs or the like without first consulting Council about location of services.
Failure to comply with this requirement may be dangerous and result in inconvenience for your function.
For information about location of services can be requested when making a booking, dependant on the request, additional fees maybe charged.
Food
If you wish to provide or sell food to the public, you must obtain a licence for Mobile Food Stalls & Temporary Food Premises before the function occurring. For more information, contact the Environmental Services Section on 4429 3111.
Camping
No camping is allowed on any reserve except for showgrounds. Fees apply for camping at these locations. For information on camping at Berry, Nowra and Milton Showgrounds contact the Booking Officer.
Nowra Showground
Locks
All gates are generally locked and unlocked at sunrise/sunset, excepting in the case of events onsite.
You can discuss security arrangements directly with Council's booking officer.
Closing Time
Your use of the venue must cease at 12:00am. You should ensure that your function is concluded in order to leave enough time for you to clean up the venue before 12:00am. The Security Patrolman will liaise with you at approximately 11.30pm (unless stated otherwise) to ensure that no people/vehicles are locked inside the venue unnecessarily.

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

APPENDIX E
TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE/USE Cont.

Worrigee Equestrian Common
Use by Others
The hirer of Worrigee Equestrian Common undertakes responsibility for risk management of the site for the duration of the hire period. To this end, Council invests the hirer with the authority to manage the site, including public access to the entire common area, for the duration of their hire period. Please report abusive or dangerous behaviour to the local police for assistance.
Nowra and Berry School of Arts
Theatrical Bookings
When you book the venue for theatrical purposes, the date of the booking will start from the time the scenery or other equipment is brought into the venue and continues until the scenery or equipment is removed.
All scenery and stage props must be made and painted outside the venue and must be rendered fireproof.
Piano
You may use the grand piano after gaining prior approval of Council.
Nowra Library Meeting Room
Cleanliness – should the room not be left clean and tidy after use, an additional cleaning fee may be charged.
Keys – should keys to the room not be returned, a replacement fee will apply.
Alcohol – No alcohol is permitted in the meeting room.
Storage – No storage can be provided in the room and regular users are required not to leave any of their belongings on the Library premises. Council will not assume any responsibility for any belongings left on the premises.
Library address – the hirer shall not use the address of the Library as their mailing address.

Office Use Only
Related Policies <u>Application Form 776, Trim ref. FM21.56</u>
Trim Form Number <u>D21/330433</u> Issue Date <u>22/07/2021</u> Review Date <u>22/07/2025</u>
Owned By (section) <u>Shoalhaven Swim Sport Fitness</u>

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

APPENDIX F
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
POL 20/12

Shoalhaven City Council is committed to providing a healthy and safe workplace for all workers and visitors. We are committed to:

- the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work, and effective hazard identification and risk management processes, consistent with our activities and the scale of our health and safety risks
- consultation with workers to involve them in decision making where there is an impact on their health and safety
- the establishment, monitoring and review of health and safety objectives and targets to ensure continuous improvement aimed at the elimination of work related illness and injury
- the compliance with all health and safety legislation, codes, standards, self-insurer and other requirements relevant to Council's activities, products and services
- ensuring health and safety responsibilities for workers and others are identified, documented and communicated; and that adequate authority is assigned to allow fulfilment of responsibilities
- the provision of health and safety training and instruction to workers and others to ensure safe work practices are followed
- the supervision of workers, as appropriate, considering the risk of work activities to be undertaken; and the experience and competence of the workers required to perform the work
- the dissemination of relevant safety information to workers and visitors to the workplace
- the implementation of this work health and safety policy across all areas of Council through the allocation of adequate physical, financial and human resources.



STEPHEN DUNSHEA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Issue Date: 04/02/2021

Review Date: 04/02/2024

**APPENDIX G
REGISTER - DAILY SIGN ON SHEET**



WHS System – Corporate
WHS Manual Release Introduction

Daily Sign-on Sheet

NOTE:

- All Management Committee Members, Contractors and Volunteers must be inducted into the WHS Manual.
- This form is to be completed on a daily basis before commencing any work.
- Refer to Section 1 for Safe Work Instructions (SWI) details.
- All Management Committee Members, Contractors and Volunteers must list SWIs used on the day, sign and date.

Name	SWI Number/s	Risk Assessment Completed? Y / N	Signature	Date	Hours Worked

A copy of this completed register must be sent to Council with your AGM minutes and annual statement.

APPENDIX H NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER FORM



**Nomination / Request to Appoint
New Management Committee Member**

Corporate & Community Services Group

City Administrative Centre Bridge Road, Nowra, NSW, Australia, 2541
Address all correspondence to: The General Manager, PO Box 42, Nowra, NSW, Australia, 2541
council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au | www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au | Phone: (02) 4429 3111 | Fax: (02) 4422 1816

1 Nominee Details

Name: _____

Postal Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2 Committee Information

Name of Management Committee: _____

User Group Representing: _____

Position of Applicant on Committee: _____

Nominated by: _____

Seconded by: _____

3 Approval

Authorised by Facilities Officer: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Privacy Notification: This form is for the purpose of Shoalhaven City Council sighting insurance requirements and for administrative purposes. The information will be used solely by Council officials for the purpose mentioned above. The applicant understands that this information is provided on a voluntary basis and they may apply to Council for access to, or amendment of, the information at any time.

This form may be published on Council's website in accordance with Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

OFFICE USE ONLY

Form Number: 791	Issue Date: 06/2016
Version Number 5	Next Review date: 06/2017

APPENDIX I

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Role of the Chairperson

Main spokesperson for the Committee, Council's primary point of contact. Convening and chairing meetings, preparing the agenda in liaison with the Secretary, and ensuring the Committee acts within Council's delegated authority.

Responsibilities

- Maintain familiarisation with the Management Committee Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Manual and Facility Management Plan
- Draw up the agenda in liaison with the Secretary
- Chair meetings and maintain order in a responsible manner, ensuring that the agenda is followed and remains the main focus of the meeting
- Be impartial and remain objective
- Follow debates and ensure questions are confined to the question under consideration. Ensure anyone who wishes to speak is given the opportunity to do so.
- Impose time limits, for example 2 minutes, when there is a lot of business, or if several people wish to speak
- Rule "Out of Order", where necessary, to questions that do not deal directly with the business before the meeting or listed on the agenda
- Put motions to the meeting and declare according to his/her opinion whether the motion is resolved in the affirmative or the negative, identifying the resolution of the Committee for the Meeting Minutes
- Give a casting vote when necessary
- When a decision is made clarify who will be responsible for implementing it
- Acknowledge conflict but do not let it interfere with decision-making processes
- Present the Annual Report at the Annual General Meeting
- Liaise with community/user groups as required
- In conjunction with other members annually update the Facility Management Plan and Reporting Requirements
- Ensure Committee operates in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct, policies and procedures

APPENDIX I
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMITTEE MEMBERS Cont.**Secretary**

Attending to correspondence and recording agendas and minutes of meetings.

Responsibilities

- Maintain familiarisation with the Management Committee Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Manual and Facility Management Plan
- Advertise to the public and send out details of upcoming meetings to members of the Committee and council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au, stating the date, time and place of meetings
- Advise council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au of the date of the Annual General Meeting (which must be held in July / August / September of each year) and forward a copy of the minutes of the AGM to Council by 1 September each year
- Draw up the agenda, in liaison with the Chairperson
- Keep Minutes of all meetings. Minute all resolutions, recording the name of the mover, the seconder and whether the motion was carried or lost
- Send copy of all Minutes to committee members and council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au, including photographs/scans of WHS sign-on sheets and forms
- File and hold in safekeeping the committee's correspondence, records and books, including an up-to-date list of members
- Put into effect the committee's decisions by providing relevant information to the nominated member responsible to enact the decision, and recording this in the minutes.
- Notify council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au of the names, addresses, contact phone numbers, and email addresses (with signatures) of people nominated for Committee, and any changes to Committee members' details
- Receive and table all correspondence at committee meetings
- Coordinate the Committee's reporting responsibilities and send to Council
- Coordinate and contribute to annual review of Facility Management Plan

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

APPENDIX I
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMITTEE MEMBERS Cont.**Treasurer**

Maintain accurate records of receipt and expenditure of public money from the use/hire of community facilities.

Responsibilities

- Maintain familiarisation with the Management Committee Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Manual and Facility Management Plan
- Maintain and monitor accurate accounts of income and expenditure of public money
- Organise payment of accounts
- Reconcile petty cash monthly
- Coordinate receipting and banking of public money with the Booking Officer
- Reconcile receipts with bank deposits
- Prepare and present monthly financial statements to committee meetings
- Present Annual Financials Statements to the Annual General Meeting
- Provide Council with Annual Financial Statements by 31 July, and audited Statements by 1 September
- Provide information on costs and any other financial information for committee to make well-informed decisions
- Contribute to annual review of Facility Management Plan

CL22.376 - Attachment 2

APPENDIX I
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMITTEE MEMBERS Cont.**Booking Officer**

Administrate the hire/use of community facilities.

Responsibilities

- Maintain familiarisation with the Management Committee Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Manual and Facility Management Plan
- Process bookings and respond to enquiries from people wishing to hire the facility. Provide an answering service when not available to take a call.
- Respond to requests for information on the hire of the facility ensuring equity of access to all applicants by adhering to Council's Code of Conduct, policies and procedures
- Where appropriate liaise with the Committee members in the acceptance of bookings
- Maintain a diary of facility bookings
- Ensure users/hirers complete and sign a hire agreement and make them aware of Council's current Terms & Conditions of Hire/Use, as provided by Council's liaison officer
- Ensure all required documentation is provided, in line with Council's Terms & Conditions of Hire/Use, including but not limited to Public Liability Insurance, Site Specific Risk Assessment, Licences to operate equipment (seek advice from Council's liaison officer where required)
- Levy fees in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges
- Receipt all fees paid
- Coordinate with the Treasurer to reconcile receipts with cash deposits
- Issue keys to hirers as required and maintain a register of keys issued and returned
- For a special event such as a State/National Championship, or for events over 200 people, refer the applicant to Council's Events staff prior to accepting the booking
- Ensure all cleaning and maintenance does not conflict with existing hire arrangements
- Inspect the facility after all functions to ensure the building is clean and not damaged and return the Bond to the hirer
- Contribute to annual review of Facility Management Plan, including usage data for the facility

**APPENDIX I
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES – COMMITTEE MEMBERS Cont.**

Volunteer Safety Officer

Ensuring the safety of volunteers at a facility.

Duties

- Maintain familiarisation with the Management Committee Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Manual and Facility Management Plan
- Complete a face-to-face induction to the WHS Manual at a Council information session
- Volunteer Inductions:
 - Council maintains a register & requires that all new members must complete an online Work Health and Safety Induction (to be refreshed every 10 years)
 - The Volunteer Safety Officer ensures that all committee members are inducted to the WHS Manual. Council staff and an online induction video is available to assist.
- WHS Manual:

Ensure Council's WHS Manual is kept on site at the facility in an accessible location for all committee members

 - Review sign-on sheets in the Manual to ensure volunteers are signing on for meetings and workshops, maintaining accurate records.
 - Table sign-on sheets at committee meetings – photos or scans of sign on sheets are to be provided to Council by the Secretary with the Meeting Minutes
 - Update the Manual contents with information provided by Council
- Safe Work Procedures:

Advise volunteers of Safe Work Procedures, including:

 - To be aware of and employ applicable Safe Work Method Statements, including conducting Site Specific Risk Assessments where required
 - Personal Protective Equipment to be worn when volunteers are handling machinery or chemicals. Please refer to the relevant Safe Work Instructions in the WHS Manual.
- WHS Inspections:
 - Participate with Council staff in a WHS inspection every two years to ensure the facility is maintained in a safe manner, for public use.
 - Ensure a facility inspection is undertaken every 3 months to review safety concerns. Advise outcomes to the committee Meetings for inclusion in the Meeting Minutes.

CL22.376 - Attachment 2



Email: Council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

Bridge Road, Nowra (02) 4429 3111

Deering Street, Ulladulla (02) 4429 8999

All communication should be addressed to

The Chief Executive Officer:

PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541

DX 5323 Nowra NSW

Fax: (02) 4422 1816

shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au     



CL22.376 - Attachment 2