



HILLS FUTURE 2036

LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

The Hills Shire Council | October 2019



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire



The Local Strategic Planning Statement was endorsed by Council on 22 October 2019, Minute No.565.

A letter of support was received from the Greater Sydney Commission Assurance Panel on 4 March 2020 and the Local Strategic Planning Statement was formally made on 6 March 2020.

This document represents the collaboration of information from several sources, including NSW Government plans and policies, and plans and policies of The Hills Shire Council. The Hills Shire Council received funding from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to support this document's preparation.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

This document may be reproduced for personal, in-house or non-commercial use. Reproduction of this document for any other purpose shall only be permitted with the written permission of The Hills Shire Council.

DISCLAIMER

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of printing. The Hills Shire Council disclaims all liability in respect of the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon any part of this document. The maps provided in this document are general in nature and should not be relied upon. This document is subject to change without notice.

*Proudly funded
by the NSW
Government*



Mayor's Message

The Hills Shire's Local Strategic Planning Statement – *Hills Future 2036* – reflects our community's aspirations and outlines how we will deliver a wonderful lifestyle for residents in the future. It showcases the strategies we have developed in collaboration with you, our residents, to create a Shire we can all be proud of.

It's no secret that The Hills is going through a time of unprecedented growth and change, and with the arrival of Sydney Metro Northwest, transformation in The Hills is inevitable. This Local Strategic Planning Statement for The Hills Shire is designed to help with change and to manage growth, now and into the future. We developed a vision based on what residents told us was important – beginning with how we manage growth, to how we can retain and invigorate what we have. We want to provide new parks, playgrounds, sporting and community facilities to ensure our residents have the best possible quality of life.

This document considers how our strategic and local centres and communities can thrive and support our population, which is estimated to reach more than 250,000 people in the next 15 years. It looks into the transport opportunities that will connect The Hills with other regions of Greater Sydney, whether through established or planned corridors and routes. These networks will allow people to move around The Hills, or get to jobs or education facilities across Greater Sydney and, in time, to Western Sydney International Airport.

We want our residents to be able to live a life where they have the right mix of housing, jobs and transport options. We are making sure areas around new stations become places where people can live and work within a short walk of transport, with plenty of nearby shops, cafes, community hubs and well-designed open spaces. This is a priority for us as it promotes a healthy, active and engaged community.

We're also investigating how we can cut commuter travel times by supporting an increase in local jobs. This requires us to look at how we can attract more businesses to the area so that more residents can work close to where they live and spend their valuable time with friends and family.

I look forward to Council implementing the many exciting ideas in *Hills Future 2036* so that we can retain our reputation as a great place to live, do business, be part of a community and raise a family.



Dr Michelle Byrne
Mayor of The Hills Shire

From the General Manager

Welcome to *Hills Future 2036* – our Local Strategic Planning Statement.

The Hills Shire is a desirable place to live, where people can easily access quality schools, sporting facilities and centres. The Hills Shire has accommodated much of Greater Sydney’s population growth and will continue to do so into the future.

This means that over the next five years, we are in an implementation phase. We know that the community is concerned about how population and housing growth might change our suburbs and centres and change residents’ lives. It can mean that it is more difficult to move around or that urban environments are undergoing significant change.

We need to work within the planning system so that landowners, investors and government are clear on how growth and change will influence The Hills Shire. We cannot manage this growth and change alone – we need the commitment of all stakeholders to get the job done.

That’s why our focus now is on managing development that is already identified and providing the right mix of infrastructure to support new development. We also want to pursue initiatives to provide more jobs in The Hills. We want to optimise the benefits that come with growth, such as new and enhanced public places, intersection and road improvements, new pedestrian and cycle links, and new and upgraded parks and playing fields.

Hills Future 2036 is centred on what is needed by Council, the NSW Government, the community, local business and the development industry to realise the benefits that come with growth. We are working hard to build confidence in our community through exemplary urban renewal, such as around new Sydney Metro stations. As we do this, we want The Hills Shire to remain true to the values that make it a great place to live.



Michael Edgar
General Manager
The Hills Shire Council



Contents

| | | | |
|--|-----------|--|------------|
| 1. ABOUT HILLS FUTURE 2036 | 3 | Planning Priority 12 | 71 |
| 2. CONTEXT | 7 | Influence travel behaviour to promote sustainable choices | |
| 3. 2036 VISION | 15 | Planning Priority 13 | 72 |
| 4. PLANNING PRIORITIES | 19 | Expand and improve the active transport network | |
| 5. ECONOMY | 27 | Planning Priority 14 | 73 |
| Planning Priority 1 | 28 | Plan for a safe and efficient regional road network | |
| Plan for sufficient jobs, targeted to suit the skills of the workforce | | Planning Priority 15 | 78 |
| Planning Priority 2 | 30 | Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces | |
| Build strategic centres to realise their potential | | 8. ENVIRONMENT | 81 |
| Planning Priority 3 | 44 | Planning Priority 16 | 82 |
| Retain and manage valuable industrial and urban service land | | Manage and protect the rural/urban interface | |
| Planning Priority 4 | 46 | Planning Priority 17 | 84 |
| Retain and manage the Shire's rural productive capacity | | Protect areas of high environmental value and significance | |
| Planning Priority 5 | 49 | Planning Priority 18 | 91 |
| Encourage support activities and tourism in rural areas | | Increase urban tree canopy cover | |
| 6. SHAPING GROWTH | 51 | Planning Priority 19 | 94 |
| Planning Priority 6 | 52 | Manage natural resources and waste responsibly | |
| Plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney's growing population | | Planning Priority 20 | 97 |
| Planning Priority 7 | 55 | Prepare residents for environmental and urban risks and hazards | |
| Plan for new housing in the right locations | | 9. PROACTIVE LEADERSHIP | 99 |
| Planning Priority 8 | 57 | Planning Priority 21 | 100 |
| Plan for a diversity of housing | | Prepare residents for growth and change | |
| Planning Priority 9 | 61 | Planning Priority 22 | 101 |
| Renew and create great places | | Initiate and deliver solutions to growth and change challenges | |
| Planning Priority 10 | 64 | Planning Priority 23 | 103 |
| Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs | | Collaborate with other councils and the NSW Government to improve places | |
| 7. INFRASTRUCTURE | 67 | 10. IMPLEMENTATION | 105 |
| Planning Priority 11 | 68 | | |
| Plan for convenient, connected and accessible public transport | | | |



WELCOME



1

ABOUT *Hills Future 2036*

Hills Future 2036, The Hills Shire Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), is about the future of the whole community.

It will support future planning decisions as well as drive future land use planning and how we manage population, housing and economic growth in The Hills. It draws on an understanding of economic, social and environmental needs over the next 20 years and sets planning priorities and corresponding actions that, over the next five years, will provide for more housing, jobs, parks and services for the growing population.

All councils are required to prepare a local strategic planning statement in accordance with clause 3.9 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).



Hills Future 2036...

Provides a land use vision for The Hills Shire to 2036

Provides planning priorities and actions for the next five years

Outlines the characteristics that make The Hills unique

Identifies our shared values that must be maintained or enhanced

Directs how future growth and change will be managed

Informs changes to our Local Environmental Plan

Builds on the *Central City District Plan* where relevant to The Hills

Identifies where further strategic planning work will be needed

The Hills Shire's place in Greater Sydney and its mix of urban and rural environments create both challenges and opportunities that will influence how we can plan for new housing, jobs and services.

Hills Future 2036 considers these challenges and opportunities, while building on existing local strategies and strategic planning documents such as Council's Community Strategic Plan, *The Hills Corridor Strategy* (2015) and various precinct plans. It will be used to inform future changes to our Local Environmental Plan (LEP), Development Control Plan (DCP) and contribution plans.

Consultation

We established the themes of this LSPS from the findings of consultation in 2017 for the update of The Hills Shire Plan. We engage with the community every year during these updates so that actions remain relevant and themes reflect the highest priority issues raised by the community.

Hills Shire 2036 was also developed in consultation with the community. A draft was placed on exhibition from 1 July to 9 August 2019, and attracted nearly 100 formal submissions and nearly 150 survey responses. We also had over 200 one-on-one discussions with the community at drop in sessions during July and August 2019.

We engaged with the community through drop-in sessions at shopping centres and Council libraries, and targeted meetings with local businesses and interested community groups. These processes informed the community about our strategic planning for The Hills Shire and allowed us to consider their views and aspirations.



CONTEXT

The Hills Shire's place in Greater Sydney

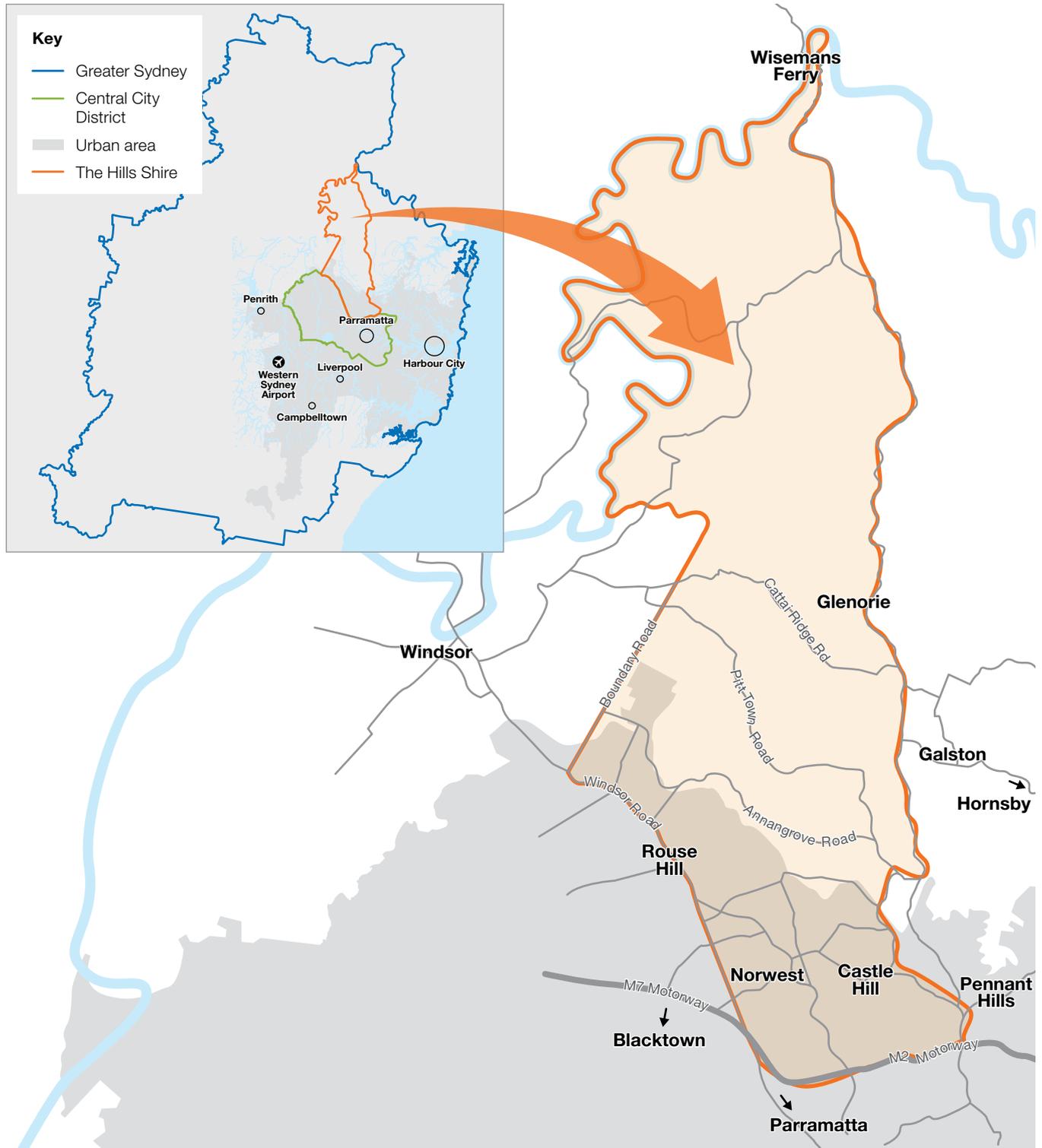
The Hills Shire is in the north west of Greater Sydney. While connected to the Central River City, centred around Parramatta, The Hills has strong links to the Eastern Harbour City and will grow connections to the future Western Parkland City and the Aerotropolis.

In 2019, it is home to around 178,000 people, up from 162,500 people in the 2016 Census (the basis from which we have set forecasts and targets for *Hills Future 2036*).



Between 2016 and 2036 our population will grow by around 80 per cent – an extra 128,400 people.”

Figure 1: The Hills Shire as part of Greater Sydney



Of The Hills Shire’s 380 square kilometres, 70 per cent lies in the Metropolitan Rural Area, where development is limited due to environmental characteristics; bushfire and flooding hazards; and the capacity of utility services and the transport network. The area is, however, well suited for agricultural production, and offers lovely views and landscapes, as well as opportunities for semi-rural living, extractive resource industries and tourism. The Hills Shire contains the only Metropolitan Rural Area land in the Central City District.

The 90 square kilometres of urbanised land in The Hills Shire has accommodated a substantial share of Greater Sydney’s recent population, housing and economic growth. The Hills also includes areas of new development – described as greenfield land – at Balmoral Road Release Area, North Kellyville, Box Hill, Box Hill North and Rouse Hill.

Other development includes urban renewal areas along the North West Metro corridor (Rouse Hill, Norwest, Bella Vista/Kellyville, Hills Showground,

Castle Hill and Cherrybrook) and in Baulkham Hills town centre. We expect residential development to remain predominantly in the urbanised area.

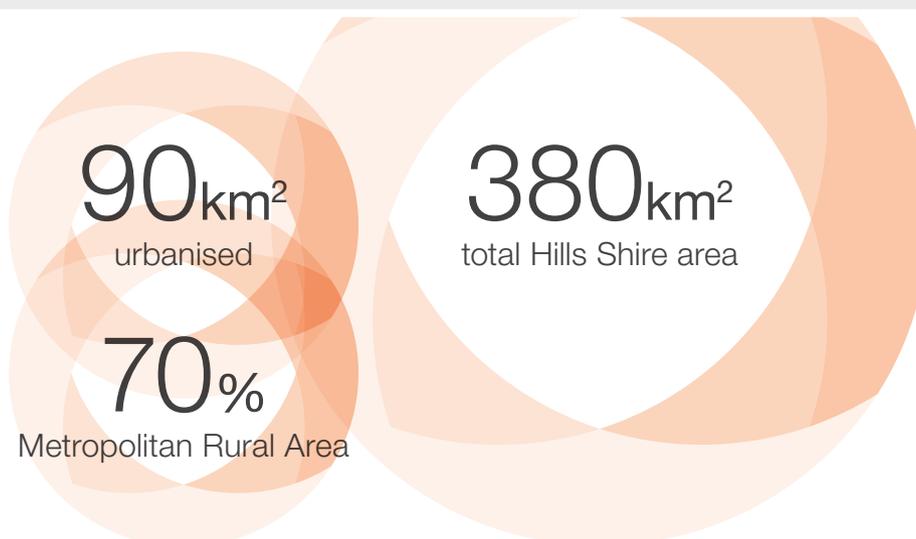
The Hills Shire is also anchored by Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill – strategic centres that accommodate the bulk of jobs in the Shire. Centres such as Kellyville and Winston Hills and rural villages such as Kenthurst also provide local jobs and services. Annangrove Road Employment Area and Box Hill Business Park will accommodate a significant increase in jobs in the future.

The Shire is serviced by strategic bus corridors and the new Sydney Metro Northwest, supporting major road corridors such as Windsor Road, Old Northern Road and Old Windsor Road.

The Hills Shire will be a significant contributor to achieving outcomes identified under the *Central City District Plan* (see Table 1).

Table 1: Contribution to Central City District Plan to 2036

| | Central City District 2036 | The Hills Shire 2036 | Contribution |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Additional dwellings | 207,500 | 38,000 | 18% |
| Additional jobs (in strategic centres) | 108,000–141,100 | 32,200 | 23%–30% |
| Metropolitan Rural Area | 290km ² | 290km ² | 100% |



Policy context

The Hills Shire is part of the Central City District along with Blacktown, Cumberland and City of Parramatta local government areas (LGAs). *Hills Future 2036* responds to the vision and actions of the *Central City District Plan*, which itself is a bridge between the *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and local planning. *Hills Future 2036* is also informed by *Future Transport 2056* and *Building Momentum*, the State Infrastructure Strategy.

The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Central City District Plan*, released in early 2018, set a vision for Greater Sydney as a metropolis of three cities, where most residents live within 30 minutes of jobs, education, health facilities, services and great places. This strategic planning envisions a future Central River City, with Greater Parramatta at its heart. It will connect to the Eastern Harbour City focused on Sydney CBD, and an emerging Western Parkland City that draws on the development of Western Sydney International Airport and Aerotropolis.

This vision for Greater Sydney positions The Hills Shire as a growing part of the Central River City, with increasing connections to the economic activity of the Western Parkland City.

Hills Future 2036 links higher-level strategic planning to The Hills Shire Plan, which includes our Community Strategic Plan. This allows us to plan for future land uses that match the community's broader goals.

Hills Future 2036 is supported by six strategies that provide finer detail about how we will achieve our vision and guide growth into the future.



As we move towards the implementation phase, the focus is on delivering what is needed to support growth and ensure that our current and future residents enjoy the lifestyle The Hills is renowned for.”



Figure 2: Links to the region and district plans



Community profile 2016

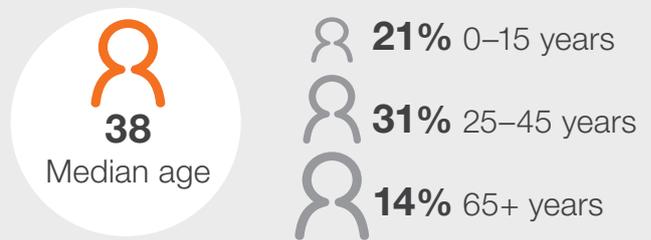
HOUSEHOLD TYPES



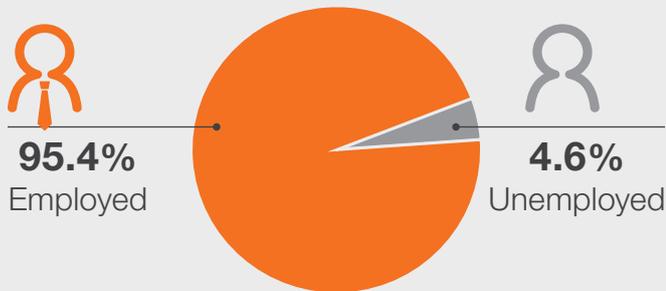
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



AGE



EMPLOYMENT



- 11.5%** Health
- 10.4%** Professional and scientific
- 10.3%** Retail
- 9.3%** Education
- 6.8%** Finance
- 6.1%** Manufacturing

EDUCATION



JOURNEY TO WORK



INCOME



HOUSING TENURE



Local opportunities and advantages

Lifestyle, prosperity, connectivity and diversity

The Hills Shire is known as The Garden Shire, thanks to its natural environment and a rural area that forms a scenic, green backdrop to the urban area. The Shire is set apart by a range of lifestyle and employment options made possible by this unique mix of urban and rural areas, intersected by contemporary transport, health and education infrastructure.

A journey along the iconic Old Northern Road reveals this uniqueness. From apartments, townhouses and detached homes in Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill in the urban area, to larger lots in Glenhaven and Dural, through to productive rural lands and scenic natural landscapes in the north at Wisemans Ferry, The Hills offers diverse places, lifestyles and opportunities.

Rural lands are an integral part of The Hills Garden Shire identity. In its early years, The Hills rural area provided fruit for the burgeoning Sydney colony. Now, it is a valued provider of agricultural and horticultural produce and building materials in the region. Smaller villages in the rural area provide essential services and meeting places while acting as a gateway to recreation and tourism opportunities along the Hawkesbury River.

Rural lands will make an increasingly important contribution to the Shire's economy, with connections to the Western Sydney International Airport and future transport links like the Outer Sydney Orbital creating opportunities to transport fresh produce to new, and potentially international, markets, particularly for cut flowers and nursery products.

Creating a clearly defined urban edge will protect valuable productive lands, reduce conflict between incompatible residential and rural uses, and provide certainty to rural industries to enable them to prosper.

In urban areas, Sydney Metro Northwest has already begun to shape neighbourhoods and support business. It will influence a shift away from private car use to public transport, walking and cycling. The planned renewal around seven Sydney Metro stations will bring greater housing choice, more opportunities to work closer to home and easier access to services.

Sydney Metro creates opportunities to build on Norwest's prestigious business and lifestyle reputation. Growing investment in health and education infrastructure and knowledge-intensive jobs will better suit the skills of residents, and strengthen Norwest's status as a world-class business park. Norwest is second only to Parramatta in the Central City District in terms of targeted job growth.

We see a 5–10 year window to increase commercial capacity in Norwest before its competitive advantage lessens with the completion of the North South Rail Link to the Western Sydney International Airport.

As Greater Parramatta evolves into a metropolitan centre, businesses and industries will need to access a larger and more diverse labour pool. Baulkham Hills can be the node that connects workers in The Hills to Greater Parramatta and the Shire's strategic centres. We want to work early and well with the NSW Government to determine how the future mass transit corridor between Parramatta and Norwest will integrate with Baulkham Hills town centre, to ensure residents have reliable and fast transport options to Parramatta, the CBD and the rest of the Central River City.



2036 VISION

To shape exceptional living, working and leisure places where expected growth brings vibrancy, diversity, liveability and prosperity.

In 2036, The Hills Shire is distinguished by high quality living and working environments. With the population increasing by almost 80 per cent since 2016, the urban area is busier and more vibrant, especially around Sydney Metro stations.

Urban and rural locations are full of character and are attractive places to live, work and play for people of all ages. The Hills is awake with a thriving night life in Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill, giving locals and visitors places to socialise, dine and have fun. Public transport and walking and cycling tracks provide for safe and convenient journeys.

People can access the right mix of jobs, a variety of housing to suit their needs and a network of green spaces and parks. The rural area remains valued as the green backdrop for Greater Sydney and long-standing

basis of our Garden Shire identity. Agricultural production and natural resource extraction create local and wider economic benefits.

Norwest Business Park is well established and well regarded, supported by a highly skilled, professional local workforce. Sydney Metro Northwest has catalysed growth in the Shire's urban areas, complemented by careful planning for new dwellings and employment opportunities close to public transport.

The incorporation of urban technology into the fabric of streets, buildings and parks has helped people utilise future technologies and find their way around the Shire. Embracing these technologies has provided opportunities for efficiency, connectivity and social harmony.

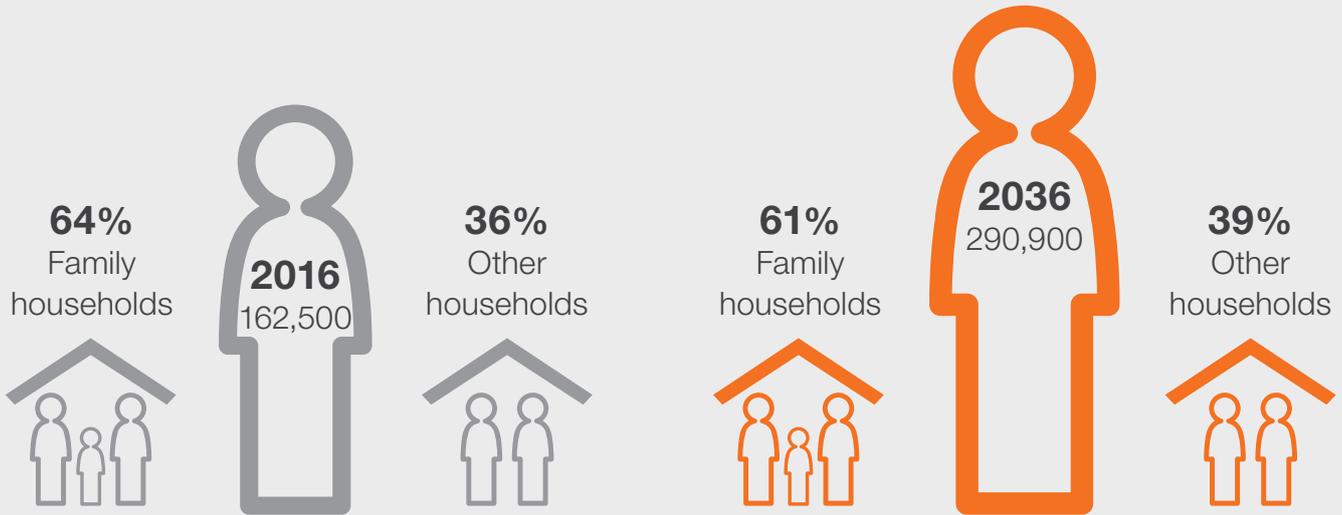
“

Most residents will live within 30 minutes of jobs, education, health facilities, services and great places.”

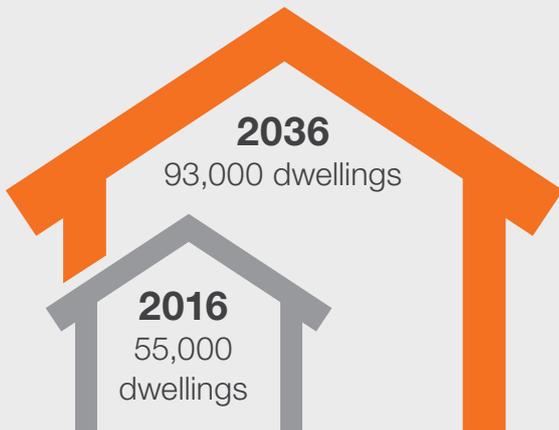


Growth in The Hills 2016 to 2036

POPULATION*



HOUSING



| 2016 | | 2036 |
|------|--|------|
| 80% | | 57% |
| 14% | | 13% |
| 6% | | 30% |

* Population projections derived from the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment 2016 Population Projections



WORKFORCE

2016

24,870 residents who live and work in the Shire



80,180

resident workers
(Shire residents who are employed)



63,680

local jobs

2036

44,570 residents who live and work in the Shire



143,500

resident workers



114,280

local jobs



We are looking beyond 2036 to ensure The Hills remains a great place to live for today's young people."



4

PLANNING PRIORITIES

Five related themes form the basis for the community's vision of The Hills:

- a vibrant community and prosperous economy
- shaping growth
- delivering and maintaining infrastructure
- valuing our surroundings
- proactive leadership.

We will monitor these themes against identified measures and use them to shape our work across 23 planning priorities. These planning priorities will be implemented through strategies that guide our land use decisions and actions.

Meeting our vision for The Hills Shire is a shared responsibility. We will work collaboratively with the community, the NSW Government, other councils, business and the development industry to uphold the priorities of *Hills Future 2036* to make the vision a reality.



Hills Future 2036 links higher-level strategic planning to The Hills Shire Plan, which includes our Community Strategic Plan.

.....



ECONOMY

Planning Priority 1

Plan for sufficient jobs, targeted to suit the skills of the workforce

Planning Priority 2

Build strategic centres to realise their potential

Planning Priority 3

Retain and manage valuable industrial and urban service land

Planning Priority 4

Retain and manage the Shire's rural productive capacity

Planning Priority 5

Encourage support activities and tourism in rural areas



SHAPING GROWTH

Planning Priority 6

Plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney's growing population

Planning Priority 7

Plan for new housing in the right locations

Planning Priority 8

Plan for a diversity of housing

Planning Priority 9

Renew and create great places

Planning Priority 10

Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs





INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning Priority 11

Plan for convenient, connected and accessible public transport

Planning Priority 12

Influence travel behaviour to promote sustainable choices

Planning Priority 13

Expand and improve the active transport network

Planning Priority 14

Plan for a safe and efficient regional road network

Planning Priority 15

Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces



ENVIRONMENT

Planning Priority 16

Manage and protect the rural/urban interface

Planning Priority 17

Protect areas of high environmental value and significance

Planning Priority 18

Increase urban tree canopy cover

Planning Priority 19

Manage natural resources and waste responsibly

Planning Priority 20

Prepare residents for environmental and urban risks and hazards



PROACTIVE LEADERSHIP

Planning Priority 21

Prepare residents for growth and change

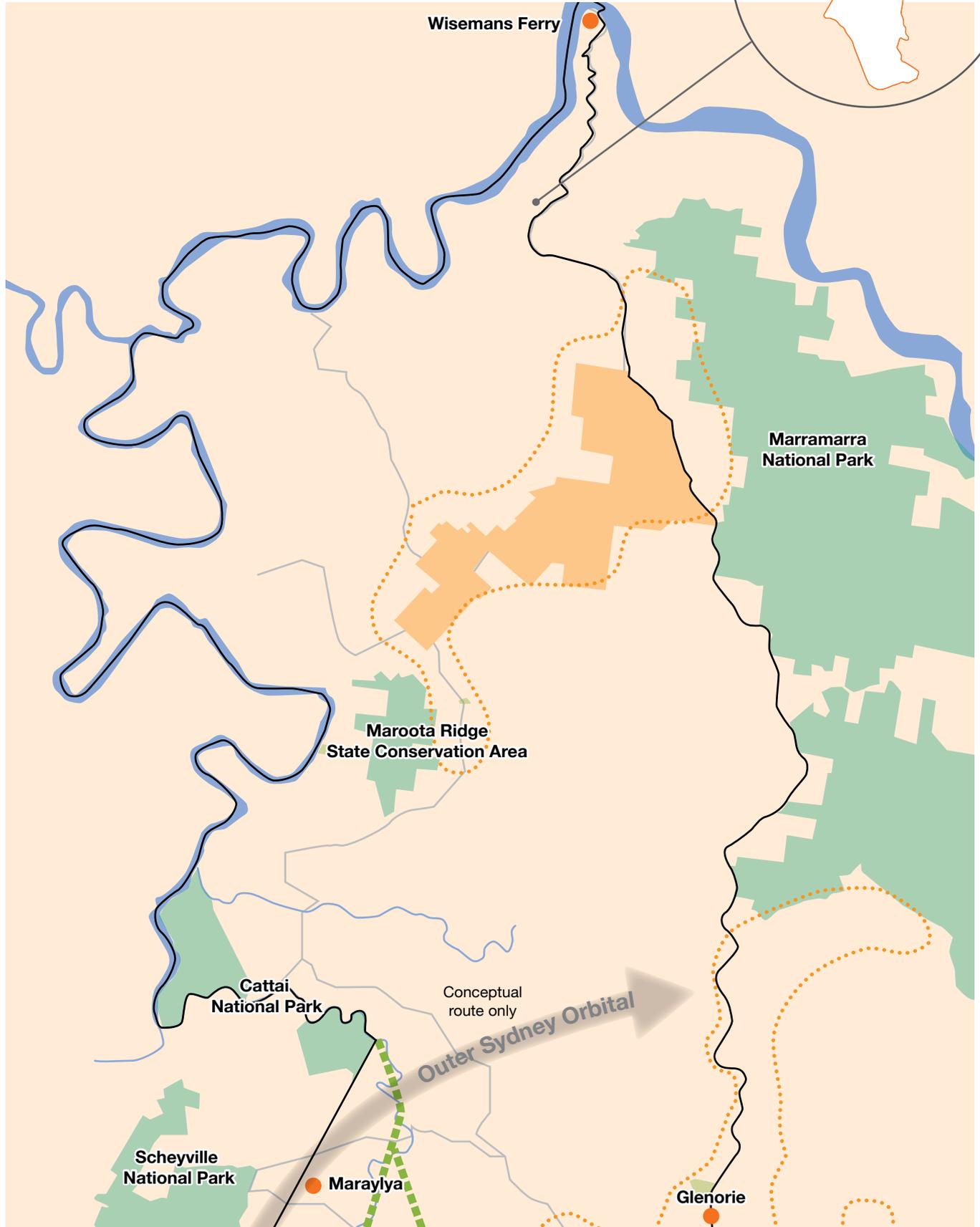
Planning Priority 22

Initiate and deliver solutions to growth and change challenges

Planning Priority 23

Collaborate with other councils and the NSW Government to improve places

Structure Plan



KEY

Rural Lands (see page 24)

-  RU1 Primary Production
-  Agricultural clusters
-  Metropolitan Rural Area
-  LGA Boundary

Open Space (see page 24)

-  Rural Green Grid
-  National, State and Regional parks

Centres

-  Rural villages



There is enough land zoned or strategically identified for housing growth in the Shire.”



EMPLOYMENT TO 2036

Rouse Hill Strategic Centre **+2,800 jobs**

Norwest Strategic Centre **+23,900 jobs**

Castle Hill Strategic Centre **+5,500 jobs**

Annangrove Road Employment Area **+16,390 jobs**

Box Hill Business Park **+11,620 jobs**



RELEASE AREAS TO 2036

Box Hill **+5,800 dwellings**

Box Hill North **+3,200 dwellings**

North Kellyville **+6,500 dwellings**

Balmoral Road **+3,100 dwellings**



STATION PRECINCTS TO 2036

Rouse Hill **+800 dwellings**

Norwest **+2,100 dwellings**

Bella Vista/
Kellyville **+2,000 dwellings**

Hills Showground **+7,000 dwellings**

Castle Hill **+6,500 dwellings**

Cherrybrook **+ 400 dwellings**

Structure Plan

KEY

-  LGA Boundary
-  Urban Growth Boundary
-  Metropolitan Rural Area
-  Employment area
-  Station precinct
-  Release areas

Infrastructure

-  Strategic bus corridor
-  Bus priority measures
-  Metro station
-  Train station
-  Hospital
-  Education
-  Potential health precinct

Open space

-  Rural Green Grid
-  Urban Green Grid priorities
-  Playing field opportunity sites
-  National, State and Regional parks
-  Local parks

Centres

-  Metropolitan centres
-  Strategic centres
-  Town centres
-  Transit centres
-  Village centres
-  Planned village centres
-  Neighbourhood centres
-  Planned neighbourhood centres
-  Rural villages

Rural lands

-  RU1 Primary Production
-  Agricultural clusters

Cultural infrastructure

-  Castle Hill Heritage Park
-  Balcombe Heights Estate
-  Bella Vista Farm Park
-  Pioneer Theatre
-  Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

Urban Green Grid priorities

-  Caddies Creek Trail
-  Greenway Link
-  Smalls Creek Trail

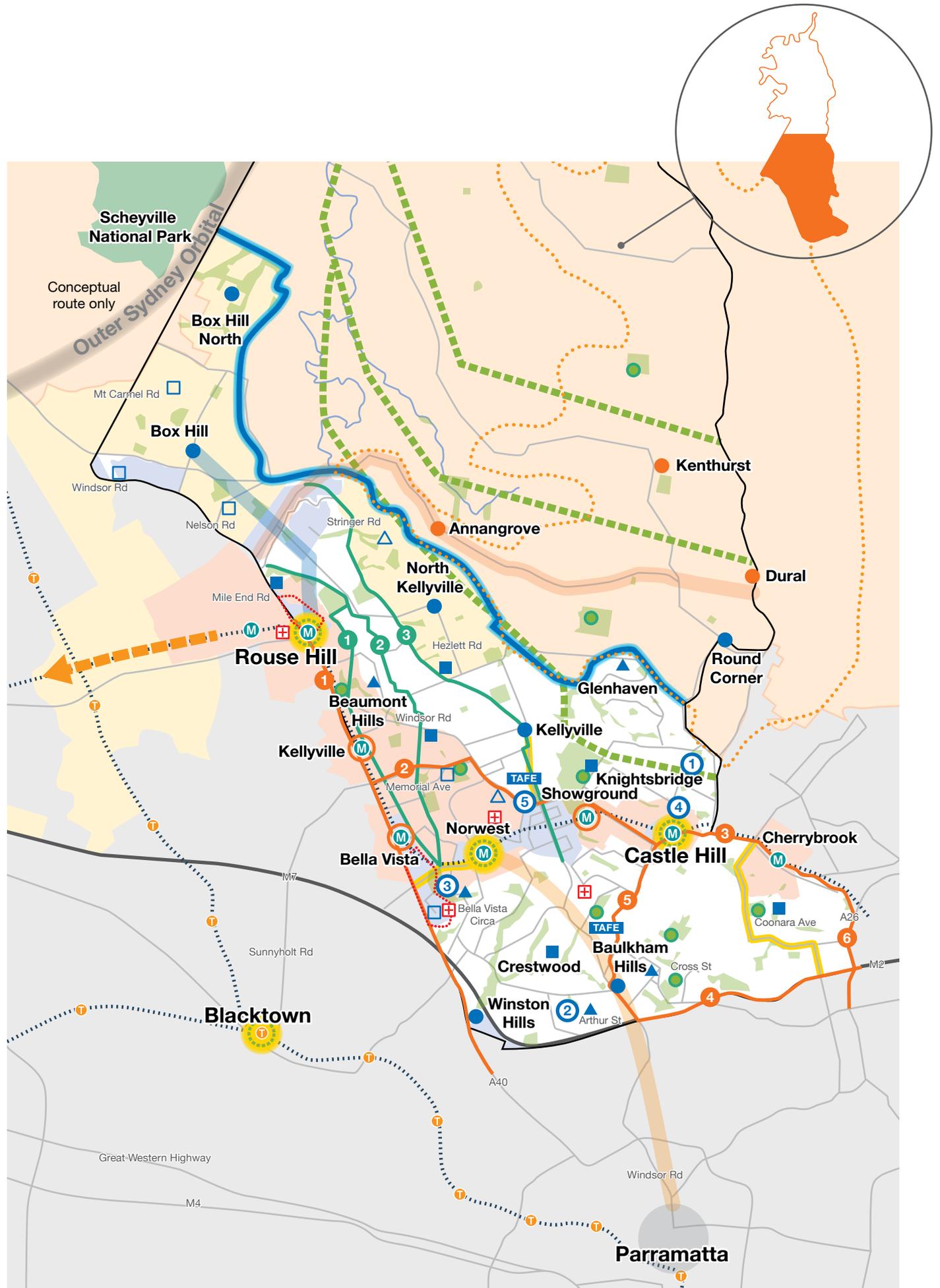
Strategic Bus Corridors

-  Rouse Hill to Parramatta T-Way
-  Blacktown to Castle Hill T-Way
-  Castle Hill to Hornsby
-  Castle Hill to City (via Macquarie)
-  Parramatta to Castle Hill
-  Parramatta to Hornsby

Regional transport priorities

-  **Corridor identification** – Outer Sydney Orbital
-  **Annangrove Road** – Arterial status and Bypass of Round Corner at Kenthurst Road
-  **Public transport corridor investigations** – Rouse Hill to Box Hill
-  **Public transport corridor investigations** – Norwest to Parramatta
-  **North South Rail Link**







5

ECONOMY

A vibrant community and prosperous economy.

This theme recognises our desire to grow the Shire's service and knowledge-intensive economy and the continuing importance of the rural area.

A vibrant community connects residents to services and facilities that contribute to their health and wellbeing. A prosperous economy supports businesses with the right networks, good physical and social infrastructure, and connections to encourage growth and fuel the creation of a vibrant community.

The Hills Shire benefits from a diversified economy that includes traditional manufacturing, knowledge-intensive industries, a growing health and support services sector, high quality education and training and an active agricultural and mining sector.

Agricultural and mining activities have formed an economic base for the rural area, and this has increased over the last 10 years with a move to more intensive horticulture and better technology, despite a reduction in the amount of land used for agricultural purposes.

In urban areas, Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill strategic centres will grow and evolve to serve the new population and bring more knowledge-intensive jobs

to the area. In addition, services and connections to Greater Parramatta and Western Sydney International Airport will benefit the Shire's economy.



ECONOMY

Planning Priority 1

Plan for sufficient jobs, targeted to suit the skills of the workforce.

Planning Priority 2

Build strategic centres to realise their potential.

Planning Priority 3

Retain and manage valuable industrial and urban service land.

Planning Priority 4

Retain and manage the Shire's rural productive capacity.

Planning Priority 5

Encourage support activities and tourism in rural areas.

Measures:

- Increase in proportion of knowledge-intensive jobs.
- Increase the number of residents working in the Shire.
- Increase in gross regional product (GRP).
- Decrease in commercial vacancy rates.
- No net decrease in the amount of land zoned for employment purposes across various industry sectors.
- Overall increase in visitor numbers.



Planning Priority 1

Plan for sufficient jobs, targeted to suit the skills of the workforce

Planning Priority 1 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C10 Growing investment, business, and job opportunities in strategic centres.
- C12 Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors.

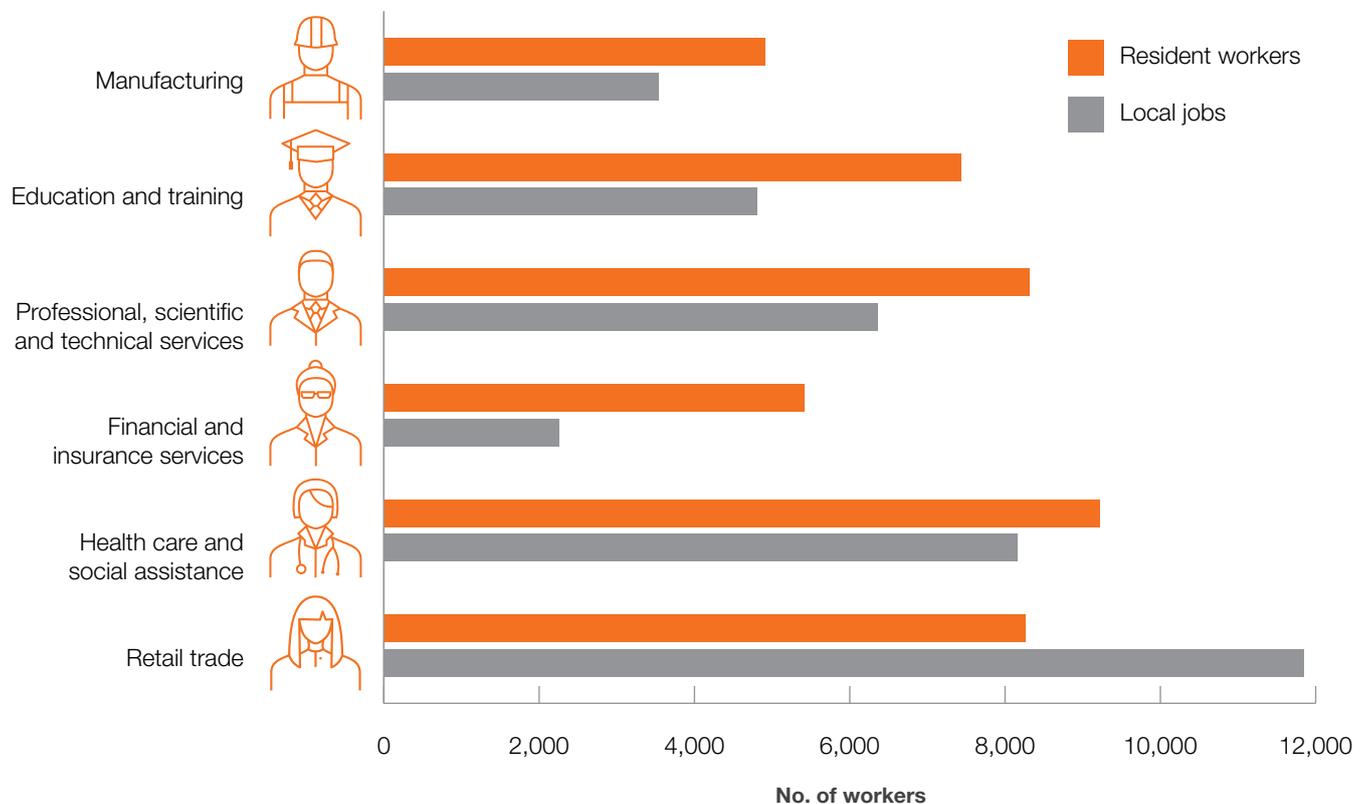
Rationale

As the Shire’s population increases, we want to maintain the current ratio of jobs per resident worker of 0.8:1 – this means that for every 10 working residents, there are 8 local jobs. To do this, we want to protect existing and planned business and industrial land now and set the frameworks to create around 50,000 additional jobs in the Shire by 2036.

The Shire has enough land to accommodate around 83,000 more jobs; of these, 50,000 will be required by 2036.

The remaining capacity in existing and potential business and industrial lands will be required to accommodate growth beyond 2036.

Figure 3: Comparison of local jobs vs skills of resident workers (2016)



The Hills has a predominantly highly educated, highly skilled, highly paid resident workforce. The mix of local jobs does not match residents' employment needs. Providing suitable employment for local residents requires us to understand the locational requirements of businesses, especially as we see a transition to a more knowledge-intensive economy. Our *Productivity and Centres Strategy 2019* focuses on these industry sectors and examines the potential to grow health, education and knowledge-intensive jobs.

When more residents can work locally, commute times and congestion will lessen, helping to meet the vision of Greater Sydney as a 30-minute city. This will encourage a better work-life balance, increased local spending and stronger local communities. Our *Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy 2019* details how better, new transport infrastructure can support jobs growth.

Council will:

- Work with businesses to attract new investment and identify what makes locations attractive.
- Target businesses and industries that suit the skills of residents.
- Discourage conversion of employment land, such as business parks and industrial lands, for residential or part-residential purposes.
- Seek a university presence and closer connections to facilities at Parramatta and Hawkesbury to boost the knowledge economy and agricultural sector.
- Support the health precinct at Norwest and its connection with the new health precinct at Rouse Hill in the vicinity of the proposed Rouse Hill Hospital.
- Work with the NSW Department of Education to build school infrastructure, and address the shortfall between planned provision and forecast population growth.

Actions

- 1.1 Protect the extent, role and function of strategic centres and employment lands through land use zones and objectives (June 2020).
- 1.2 Include a commercial core within strategic centres for economic and employment uses (June 2021).
- 1.3 Prepare an Economic Growth Plan (June 2022).
- 1.4 Complete Retail and Commercial Study to confirm take up and future demand (June 2020).

Economic Growth Plan

- Program to attract new investment and jobs.
- Business partnering to attract knowledge-based industries.
- Research around what attracts those companies to The Hills.
- Changes to land use controls to attract the right businesses.
- Changes to works program to create better places.
- Changes to promote low impact night-time economy uses.
- Measures to grow the visitor economy.



Planning Priority 2

Build strategic centres to realise their potential

Planning Priority 2 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C10 Growing investment, business, and job opportunities in strategic centres.
- C12 Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors.

Rationale

The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Central City District Plan* identify Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill as strategic centres – flexible, diverse places targeted to attract high levels of private sector investment that will co-locate a range of activities. Suitable areas in these centres will transition to greater commercial activity and functions, helping to provide an appropriate number and mix of jobs.

While the trend towards mixed use development – where traditional commercial or retail development is co-located with apartment developments – creates active neighbourhoods that are easy and safe to walk around, commercial office precincts such as Norwest

are essential clusters of higher-order employment where businesses can agglomerate. Residential uses can detract from commercial functions and decrease the potential for agglomeration, which in turn decreases the viability and desirability of future commercial investment.

The District Plan acknowledges that the designation of a commercial core may be necessary to manage the impact of residential developments in crowding out commercial activity. This will protect economic vitality in major employment centres so that they can continue to provide the right jobs to satisfy population growth after 2036.

Figure 4: The Shire’s strategic centres

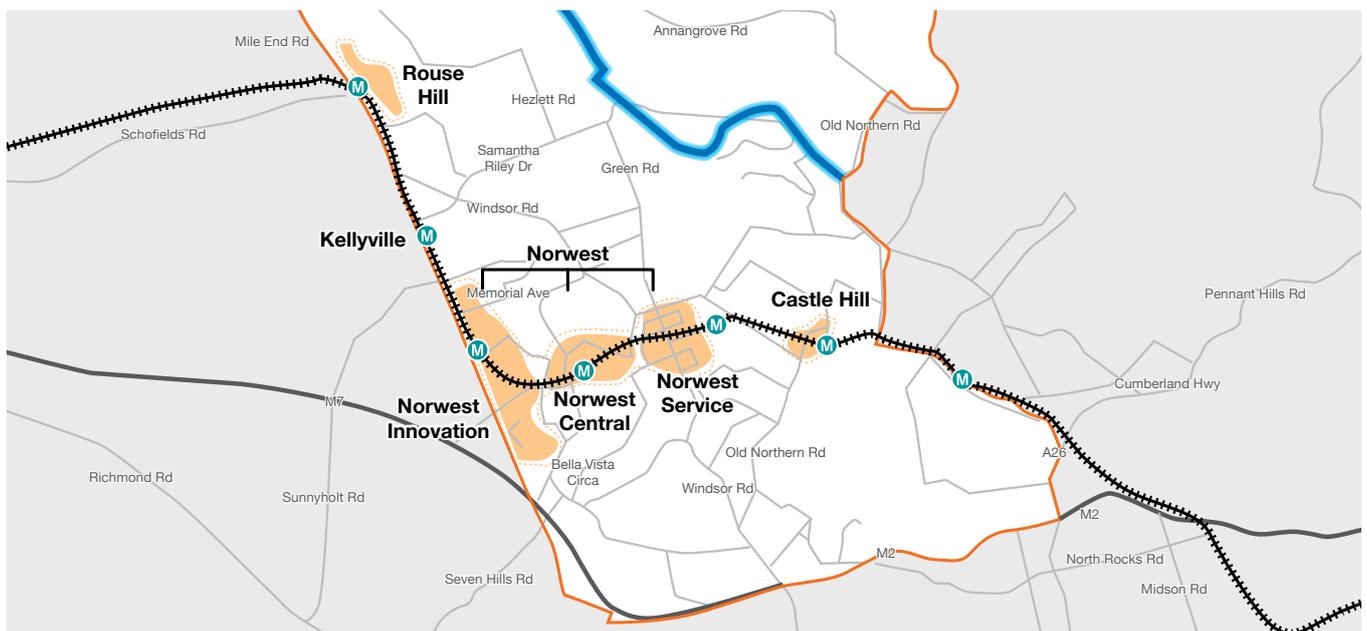


Table 2: District Plan job targets in strategic centres to 2036

| Strategic centre | Targets for additional jobs baseline – higher | Estimated capacity for additional jobs |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Castle Hill | 6,200 – 9,700 | 5,500 |
| Norwest | 16,600 – 20,600 | 23,900 |
| Rouse Hill | 5,800 – 6,800 | 2,800 |
| TOTAL | 28,600 – 37,100 | 32,200 |

Given that large parts of the Shire’s strategic centres are already considered suitable for high density residential development, we see no need for further residential development in significant employment land – especially given our continued focus on better pedestrian and cycle networks and higher density development around transport nodes.

Instead, we will focus mainly on building employment and economic activity in strategic centres. The *Central City District Plan* sets jobs targets for strategic centres, which will be essential to achieving our overall jobs target of 50,000. We believe Norwest has capacity to go beyond the District Plan targets; however, more work is needed to meet jobs targets in Castle Hill and Rouse Hill.

Castle Hill is located close to where the workforce lives, as well as transport infrastructure, and has sites for potential office development. Growth is inhibited, however, as businesses move to business parks (Norwest in particular), and deal with traffic congestion and a lack of premium grade commercial office space. We need to set a vision for Castle Hill’s commercial future and consider a catalyst to attract investors to the area.

In Rouse Hill Strategic Centre, which includes Rouse Hill Town Centre and commercial land to the north west of the town centre along Windsor Road, the new public hospital can be the catalyst for a health precinct. We will collaborate with the NSW Government and Blacktown City Council to build capacity for health services, recognising this sector as one of the fastest growing in The Hills and well suited to residents’ skills.

In addition to Sydney Metro Northwest, planning for a rail link between Rouse Hill and St Marys and ultimately through to the Western Sydney International Airport will underpin success at Rouse Hill. Additional precinct planning work is also needed to complete the overall vision for Rouse Hill to effectively transition to a fully functioning strategic centre.

Coupled with this necessary focus on jobs, residential development will be restricted in strategic centres – an approach that corresponds with the *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Central City District Plan*. We have prepared structure plans and phasing strategies that outline how each centre is expected to grow and evolve.

Provision of physical and social infrastructure to support the workforce will also be important. Work locations that are rich in opportunities for meeting and connection, convenience retail, events and dining are valued by this generation of workers. A focus on the night-time economy will make it easier for workers to blend their work commitments and lifestyle.

As we welcome new residents and workers, and an increasing number of visitors, there is potential to create a vibrant night-time economy in strategic centres through mechanisms such as a review of permissible land uses, hours of operation and our outdoor dining policy; public domain planning; and place-making.

When we plan for changes in strategic centres, we need to make sure we consider how we can integrate new technologies into public spaces; these technologies will influence mobility, infrastructure and security, governance and education, buildings, energy and healthcare.

While new technologies may help to make centres more functional and easier to navigate, they may also have a visual impact on public areas and streetscapes. Where possible, Council can act as an integrator, working with partners to bring together various products and providers to bring about the greatest benefits for the community and business, and to ensure our strategic centres function well.

A Public Domain Strategy will integrate with precinct planning to create great places to work and spend time out of work hours. Flexible planning controls will create a mix of vibrant main streets with opportunities to eat out, catch up and enjoy a variety of entertainment.



Public Domain Strategy

Our Public Domain Strategy will direct works and improvements throughout the Shire. It will include:

- design principles applicable across the whole Shire
- key street design elements
- specific design principles for local, village and town centres, and business and industrial areas
- provision for precinct-specific public domain plans for:
 - Baulkham Hills town centre
 - Castle Hill strategic centre
 - Norwest strategic centre
 - Rouse Hill strategic centre.

The Public Domain Strategy will drive better place-making. Precinct-specific and Shire-wide plans will inform our Capital Works Program and provide direction and certainty to developers and planners preparing and assessing applications that have an impact on the public domain.

Council will:

- Prepare land use planning documents and respond to development applications and planning proposals in strategic centres in line with the structure plans and phasing strategies.
- Work with the NSW Government to bring forward planning for the city-shaping link between Norwest and Parramatta (refer to Planning Priority 11).
- Advocate for the early completion of Sydney Metro linking strategic centres with Sydney CBD and Western Sydney International Airport.
- Investigate measures to promote a low-impact night-time economy including a review of permissible land uses, hours of operation, the outdoor dining policy; public domain planning; and place making.





The ***Productivity and Centres Strategy 2019*** articulates our vision for employment and centres to 2036 and provides detail on employment supply and future demand for jobs and skills.

Actions

- 2.1 Prepare and implement precinct plans and development controls for Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill strategic centres (June 2021).
- 2.2 Partner with Health Infrastructure NSW, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Blacktown City Council and landowners to develop a Health Precinct Strategy for Rouse Hill Hospital (Ongoing).
- 2.3 Prepare and implement a Public Domain Strategy to enhance the image and amenity of strategic centres (June 2021).
- 2.4 Review planning controls and permissible uses within the IN2 Light Industrial and B6 Enterprise Corridor zones with a focus on the Norwest Service sub-precinct and its ability to function as an incubator for start-up businesses (June 2022).
- 2.5 Investigate and implement measures to manage serviced apartments in employment zones (June 2020).

Structure plans

Structure plans indicate where we will focus jobs and housing in strategic centres over the next 20 years. These are informed by the *Principles for Greater Sydney Centres* in the region and district plans. The following structure plans focus on desired land uses, accessibility and the public domain and act as an update to the NSW Government’s *North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy* (2013), *The Hills Corridor Strategy* (2015) and existing master plan work.

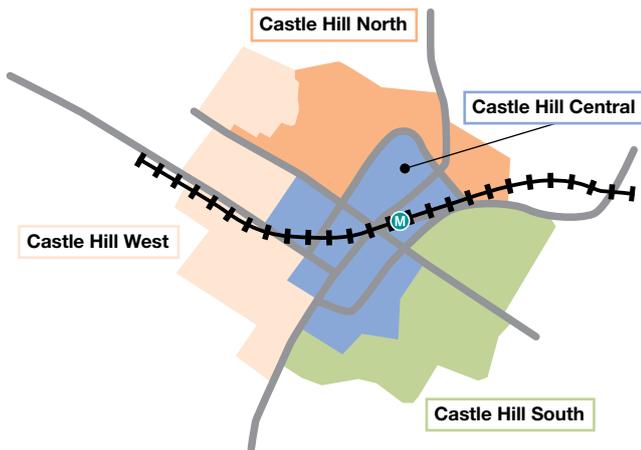
The structure plans acknowledge the opportunities resulting from public infrastructure investment such as Rouse Hill Hospital and regional transport connections.



Structure plans represent a 20-year strategic vision for each strategic centre.”

Castle Hill strategic centre

Figure 5: Castle Hill strategic centre sub-precincts



Castle Hill is the Shire’s central business district – the place that will be a vibrant and active centre with offices, retail, community facilities, recreation, cultural facilities, education and increased housing densities within walking distance of the station. It includes four sub-precincts.



The District plan acknowledges that the designation of a commercial core may be necessary to manage the impact of residential developments in crowding out commercial activity.”

Land uses

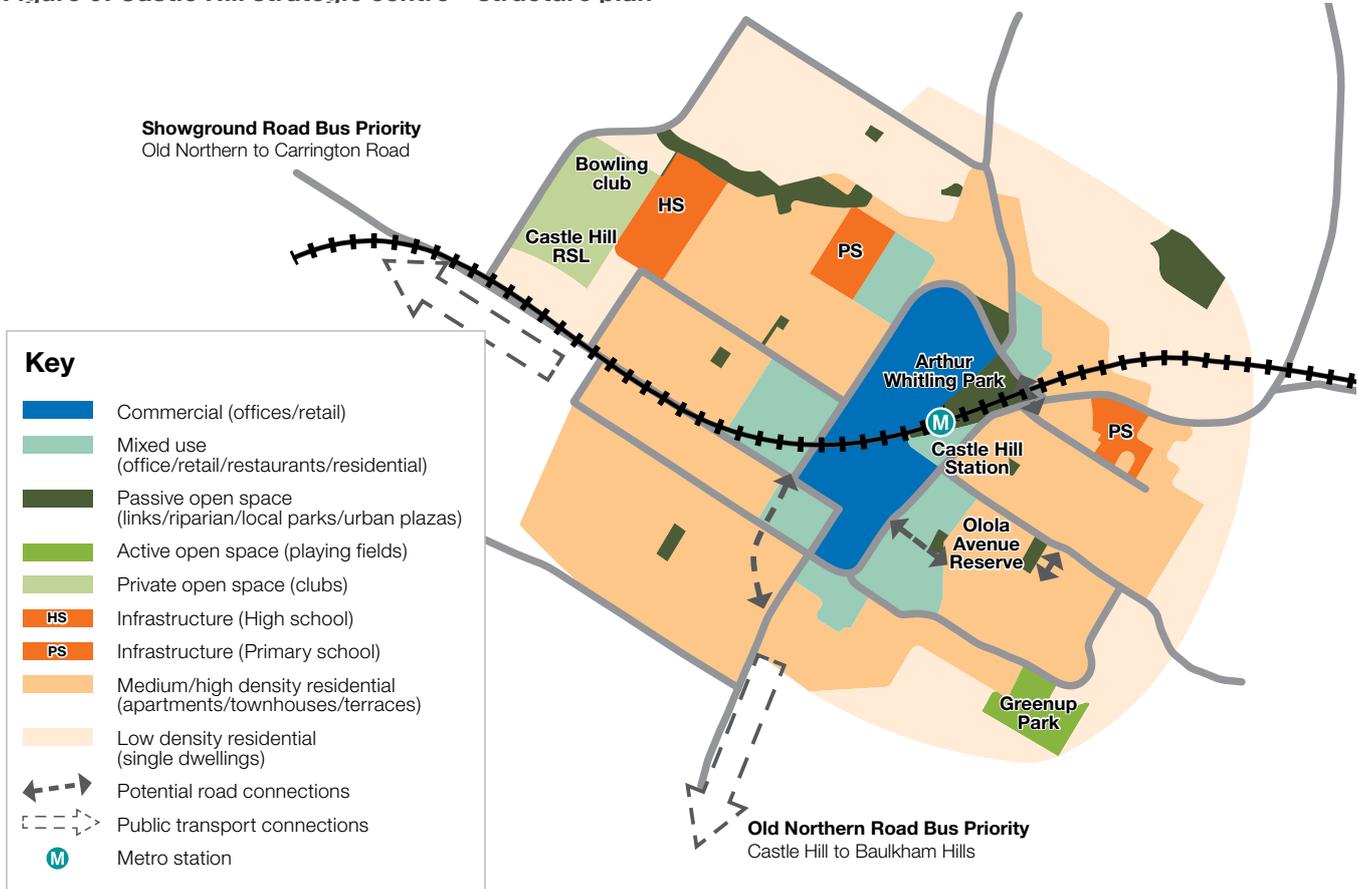
- Development within the ring road will form a commercial core in Castle Hill Central sub-precinct allowing for retail, business, office, leisure, entertainment, hotel, administration and community uses.
- Development surrounding the core will provide a mix of business, office, residential, restaurants and retail to create an active lifestyle precinct to support the commercial core. Precinct planning will inform an appropriate amount of residential development in this area.
- Development beyond the commercial core and mixed use surrounds will provide a diversity of housing within an easy walk of facilities and transport:
 - higher density residential (7 to 20 storeys) principally to the north
 - lower-scale apartment development to the south, with heights around four to six storeys
 - beyond this, townhouses, duplexes and single detached dwellings.
- Development within and surrounding the centre will incorporate a variety of building heights, including some distinctive or landmark heights.

Access

- New pedestrian and vehicle connections, including some local road widening, will improve connectivity and ease of movement through the precinct.
- The Old Northern Road and Terminus Street ring road link will remain the primary north-south thoroughfare through the centre with changes to its alignment at Brisbane Road and McMullen Avenue to improve accessibility and safety.
- Showground Road will continue to connect Norwest Business Park with Castle Hill.
- Streetscape upgrades on major thoroughfares will provide attractive and accessible pedestrian connections between the retail and commercial centre of Castle Hill and adjacent uses.



Figure 6: Castle Hill strategic centre – structure plan



Public domain

- Attractive street furniture and new widened footpaths in and around the centre will improve streetscapes.
- Activation of buildings at street level will be promoted with urban plazas and recreational zones for people to get together and enjoy open space, particularly within the station precinct and the core of the centre.
- Existing green spaces such as Arthur Whitting Park, Maurice Hughes Reserve and Bert Parkinson Reserve will be protected and enhanced. We will investigate expanding local parks such as Olola Avenue Reserve as part of precinct planning.
- A Public Domain Plan will detail these initiatives and guide the broader character of the public domain.

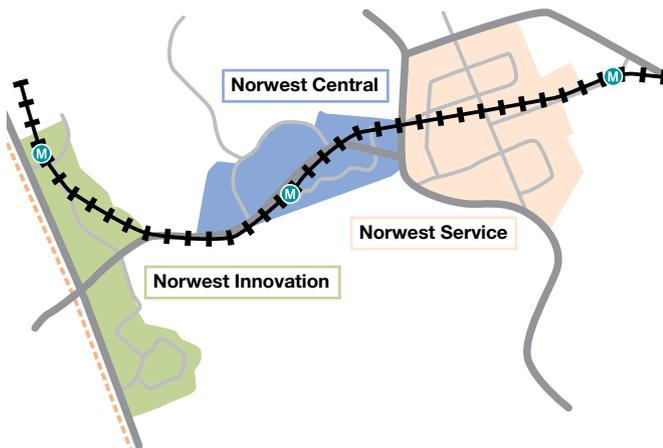
Norwest strategic centre

As a strategic centre, Norwest combines a mix of business and commercial uses, with a variety of low to high density housing surrounding and permeating the commercial areas.

The core of Norwest is Marketown, which is the focal point for shopping and services, with some capacity for further residential development.

Norwest has capacity to accommodate jobs beyond those forecast to 2036.

Figure 7: Norwest strategic centre sub-precincts



Land uses

Norwest Central sub-precinct

- Norwest Marketown and immediate surrounds will be the core of the sub-precinct, with a mix of retail, business, office, leisure, entertainment and community uses, and some higher density housing.
- This core will serve the employment area and wider community with diverse shopping, leisure, recreation and dining. New housing will be balanced with the vision for a high amenity, vibrant place for workers and residents.

- Sites surrounding the mixed use core will offer office and business uses to contribute to job targets.
- Development beyond Marketown and commercial surrounds will provide a diversity of housing within an easy walk of facilities and transport.
- Development within and surrounding the centre will incorporate a variety of heights to facilitate a varied and interesting skyline without impeding on existing views.

Norwest Innovation sub-precinct

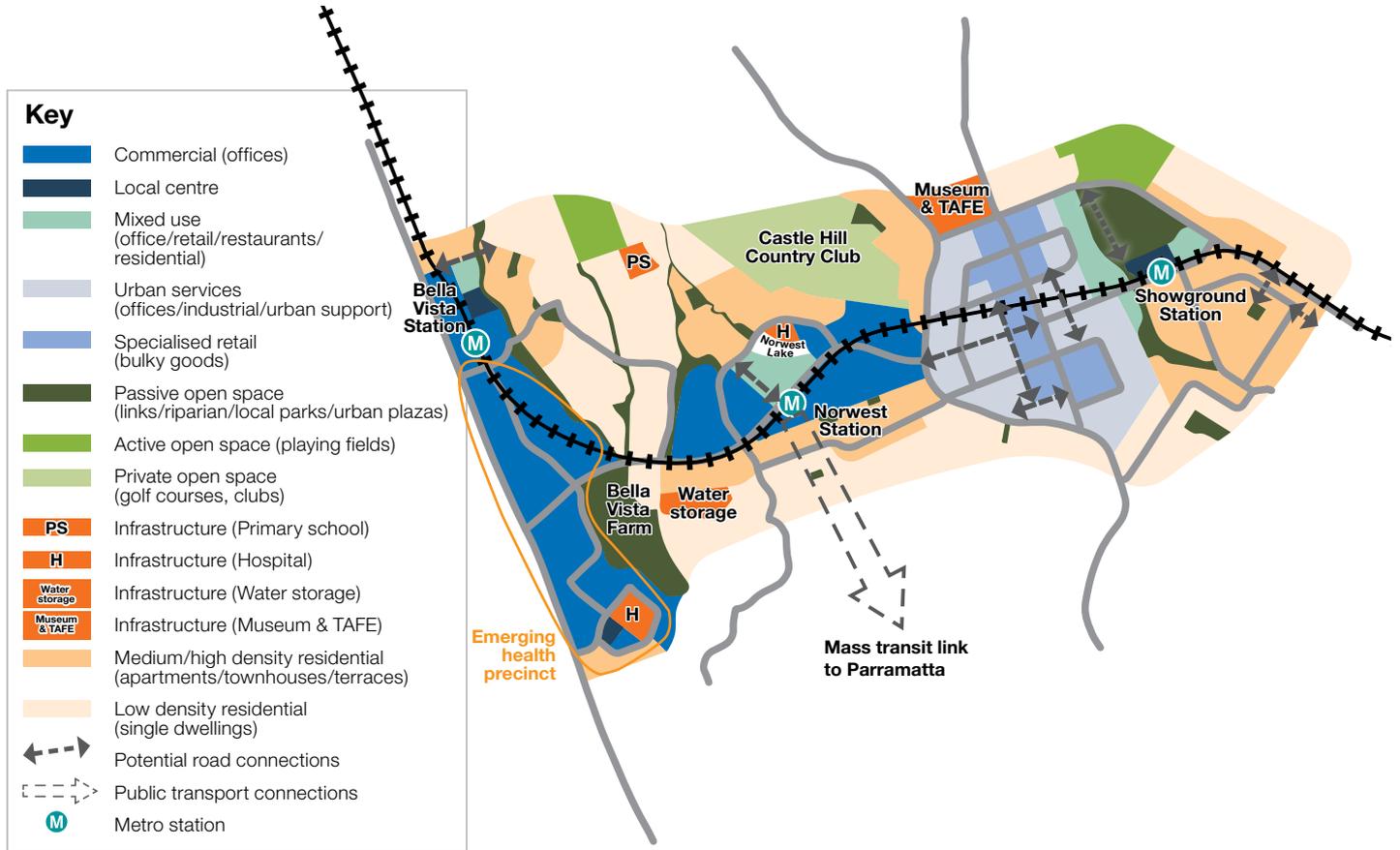
- The emerging health precinct around Norwest Private Hospital will grow, with potential along Lexington Drive for large floor plate campus-style office spaces.
- Development near Circa Retail Shopping Centre will create an enhanced local centre and longer term commercial capacity, subject to traffic and built-form implications.

Norwest Service sub-precinct

- The specialised retail (bulky goods) spine along Victoria Avenue will be retained.
- New commercial/office development along Carrington Road and on Windsor Road adjacent to Norwest Business Park could include taller office style buildings, with setbacks that incorporate quality landscaping to complement existing areas.
- Mixed use residential and employment development adjacent to Cattai Creek will facilitate restoration of the creek while benefitting from the natural setting and open space.
- Light industrial areas in the west of the precinct will provide urban services but in the longer term could also provide space for smaller start-up businesses following a review of lot sizes and permitted uses.



Figure 8: Norwest strategic centre – structure plan



Access

- Connections from employment areas to Norwest, Showground and Bella Vista stations will be enhanced, including through on- and off-road pedestrian/cycle links, new road connections and intersection upgrades.
- Norwest Boulevard is the primary east-west thoroughfare, connecting the business park to the M2 and M7 motorways.
- Showground Road continues to connect Norwest Business Park with Castle Hill and in the longer term a new link will connect Norwest Boulevard to Carrington Road.
- Streetscape upgrades to major thoroughfares will provide attractive pedestrian connections, including landscaped medians, wide footpaths and mature street trees along Carrington Road.

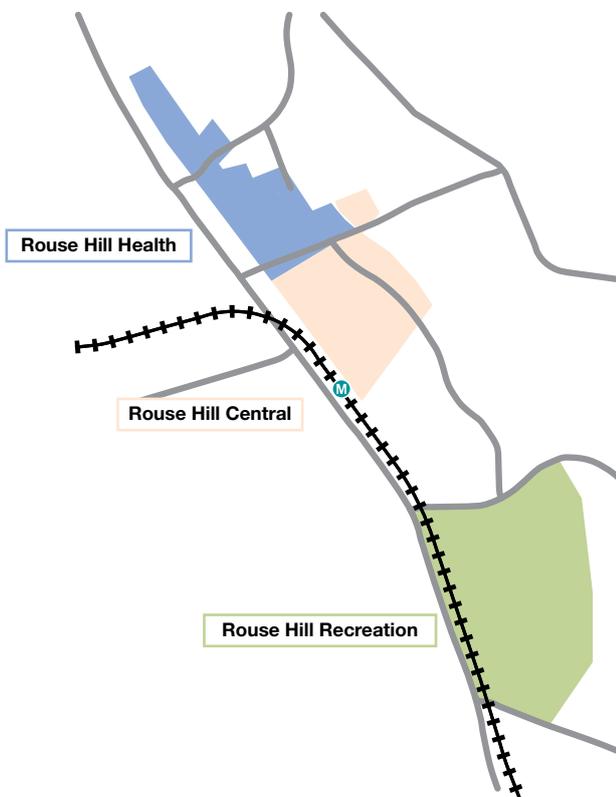
Public domain

- Norwest Station and Marketown will be the vibrant and active heart of the strategic centre with an enhanced network of footpaths, forecourts and boardwalks creating an attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. People will enjoy Norwest Lake and a variety of restaurants, cafes, shops and public spaces.
- In all employment and residential locations, upgraded streetscapes will make it easier for people to get to stations on foot or by bike, and new and widened footpaths and attractive street furniture will bring character and activity.
- A Public Domain Plan will detail these initiatives and guide the broader character of the public domain.

Rouse Hill strategic centre

Rouse Hill serves the rapidly growing north west with a mix of shopping, dining, recreation and community services. Enhancing the retail offer and new commercial capacity within walking distance of Rouse Hill station will increase its vibrancy. The centre will complement the new Rouse Hill Hospital with knowledge-intensive jobs.

Figure 9: Rouse Hill strategic centre sub-precincts

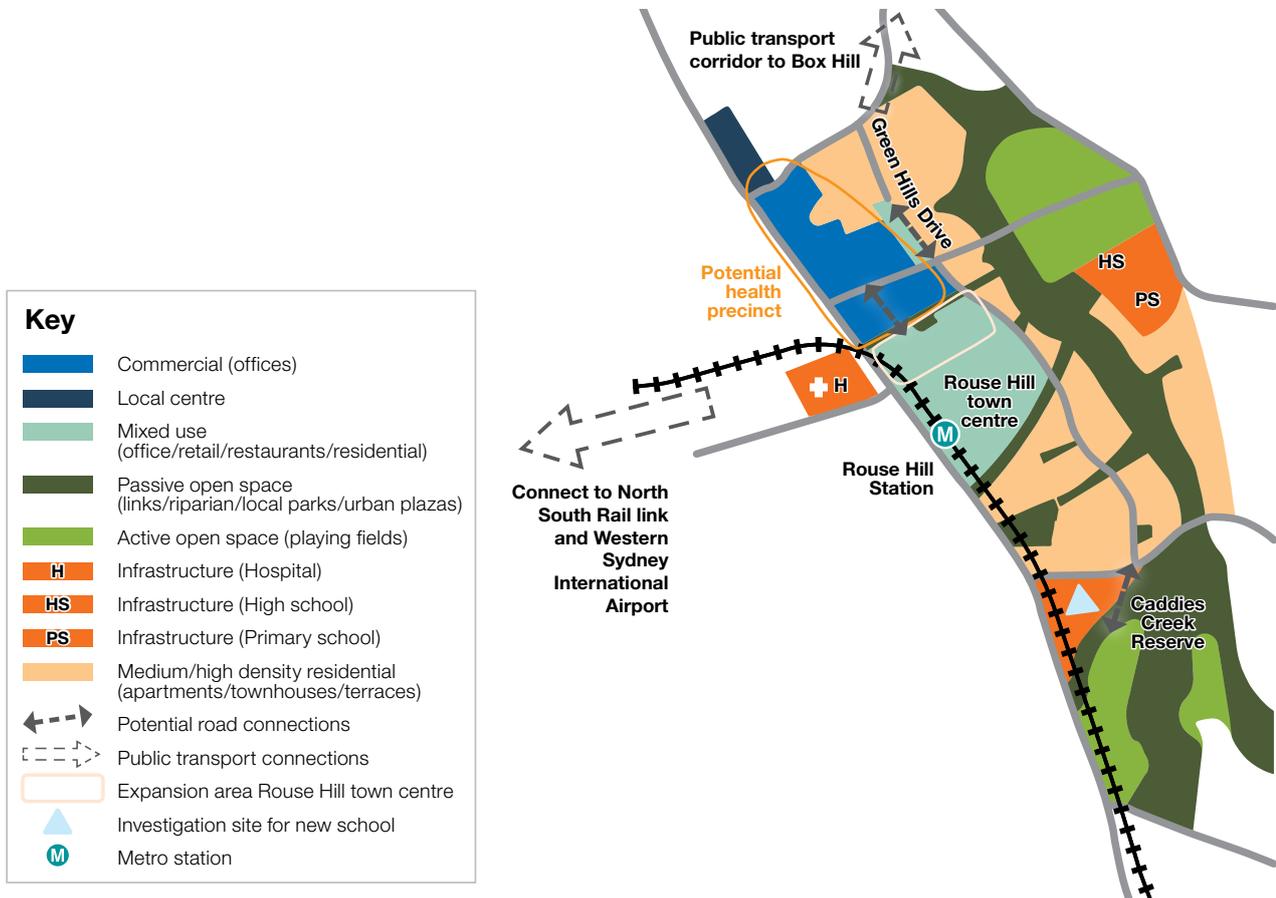


Land uses

- Rouse Hill Town Centre will be the mixed use core of the precinct, with a mix of retail, business, office, leisure, entertainment and community uses and some higher density housing. In the centre's north, precinct planning will consider the expansion of these activities to inform a suitable level of residential development.
- The mixed use core will serve the wider community with diverse shopping, leisure, recreation and dining. New housing, while contributing to a sense of vibrancy, will not inhibit the creation of a high amenity, vibrant place for the north west.
- Sites north of the mixed use core will be used for office and business capacity to help meet job targets and leverage the adjacent Rouse Hill Hospital.
- Development beyond the mixed use core and potential health precinct provides a diversity of housing within an easy walk of facilities and transport.
- Development within and surrounding the centre will incorporate a variety of building heights, including some distinctive or landmark heights.
- The village centre north of Mile End Road will continue to serve local residents' and workers' daily shopping needs.
- Land around Caddies Creek will continue to be used for organised sports.
- NSW Government-owned land north west of Caddies Creek Reserve could be used for State infrastructure such as a new school.



Figure 10: Rouse Hill strategic centre – structure plan



Access

- New pedestrian and vehicle connections to increase connectivity and ease of movement through the precinct will include:
 - extending Green Hills Drive as part of adjacent mixed use development to help deliver a future public transport corridor to the north.
 - enhancing road and pedestrian connections through the land to the north of the existing Rouse Hill town centre.
 - adding pedestrian links from employment areas to the town centre and hospital.
 - investigating a pedestrian bridge connection across Windsor Road.

- upgrading Commercial Road, including pedestrian links to active open space.
- enhancing access to Caddies Creek Reserve from Sanctuary Drive.

Public domain

- Upgraded streetscapes in and around the centre will include new and widened footpaths and attractive street furniture.
- Activity on the ground floor of buildings will interact with urban plazas and recreational zones to create spaces for people, particularly within the station precinct and the core of the centre.
- A Public Domain Plan will detail these initiatives and guide the broader character of the public domain.

Indicative delivery timeframes

The structure plans represent a strategic, 20-year vision for each centre, and will ultimately be implemented through changes to zonings, amendments to development controls and the preparation of developer contribution plans and public domain plans.

Further precinct planning work is required to inform decisions around built form, transport improvements, connectivity, accessibility and infrastructure. We will stage this planning through short-term (phase 1), medium-term (phase 2) and long-term (phase 3) activity.

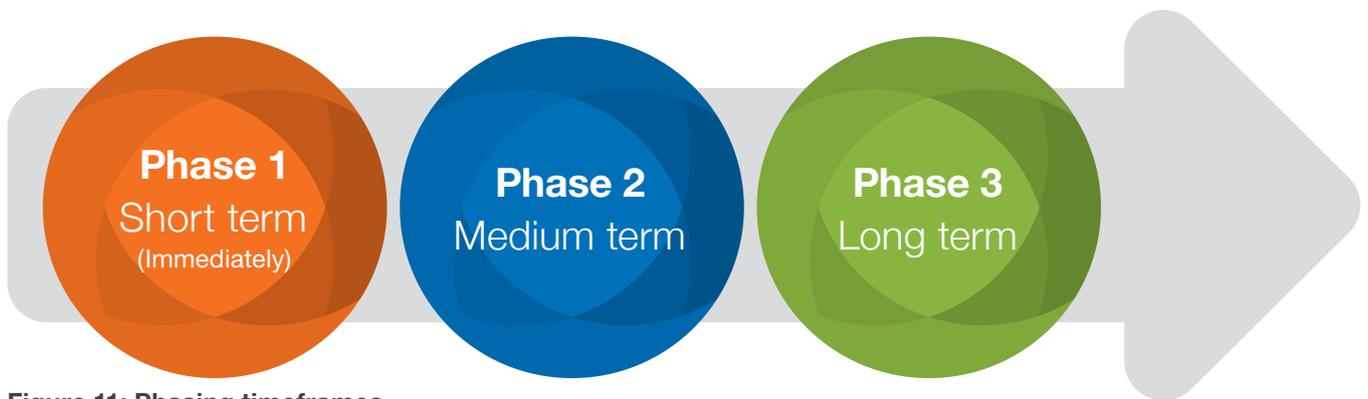


Figure 11: Phasing timeframes

Phase 1

Phase 1 indicates areas where planning and associated infrastructure investigations are complete or near complete and implementation can commence. In some instances, development applications have been approved. Areas identified as Phase 1 show where development is likely over the next few years.

Phase 2

Phase 2 will respond to the job targets through a land use planning framework to grow commercial capacity and attract investment, business activity and jobs.

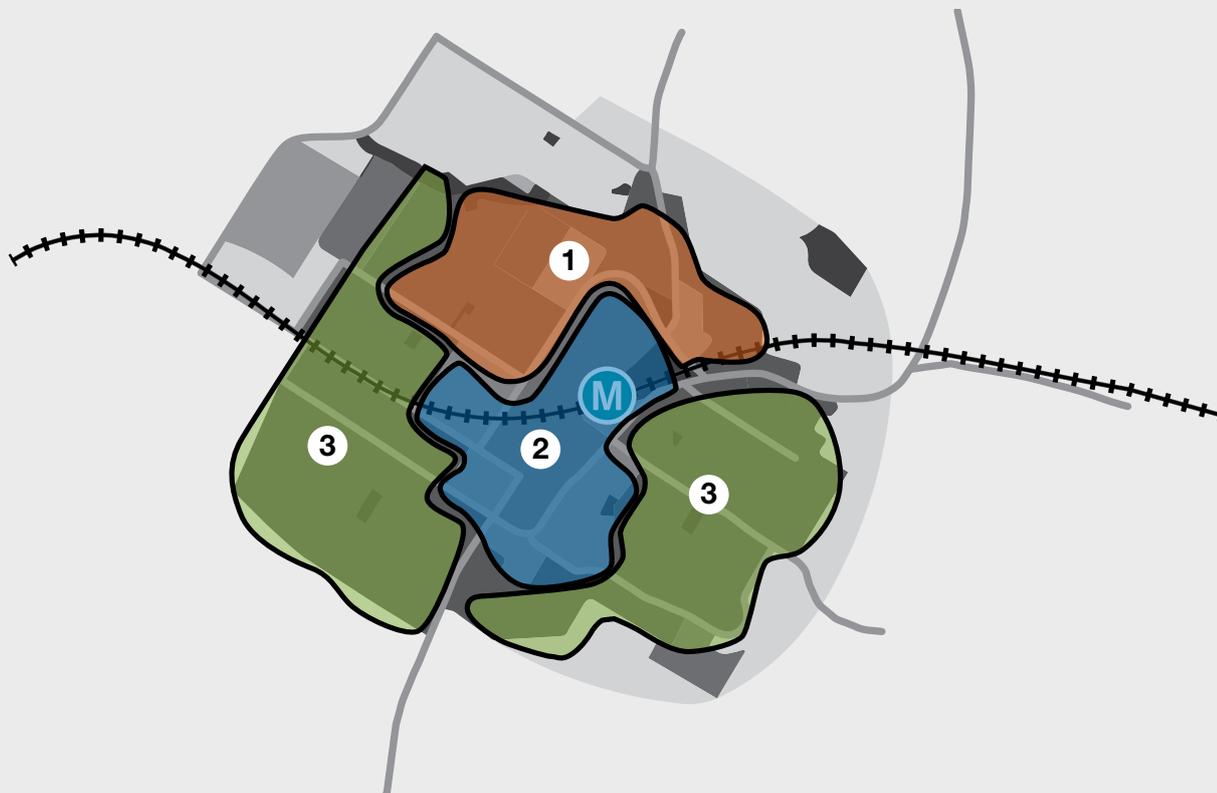
This work will be part of precinct planning, flagged for completion in 2021. We will discourage site-specific planning proposals to enable investigation of all implications of growth and formulation of cohesive and sensible solutions.

Phase 3

Phase 3 is either not required in the short to medium term or requires further investigations in addition to those identified for Phase 2 development.

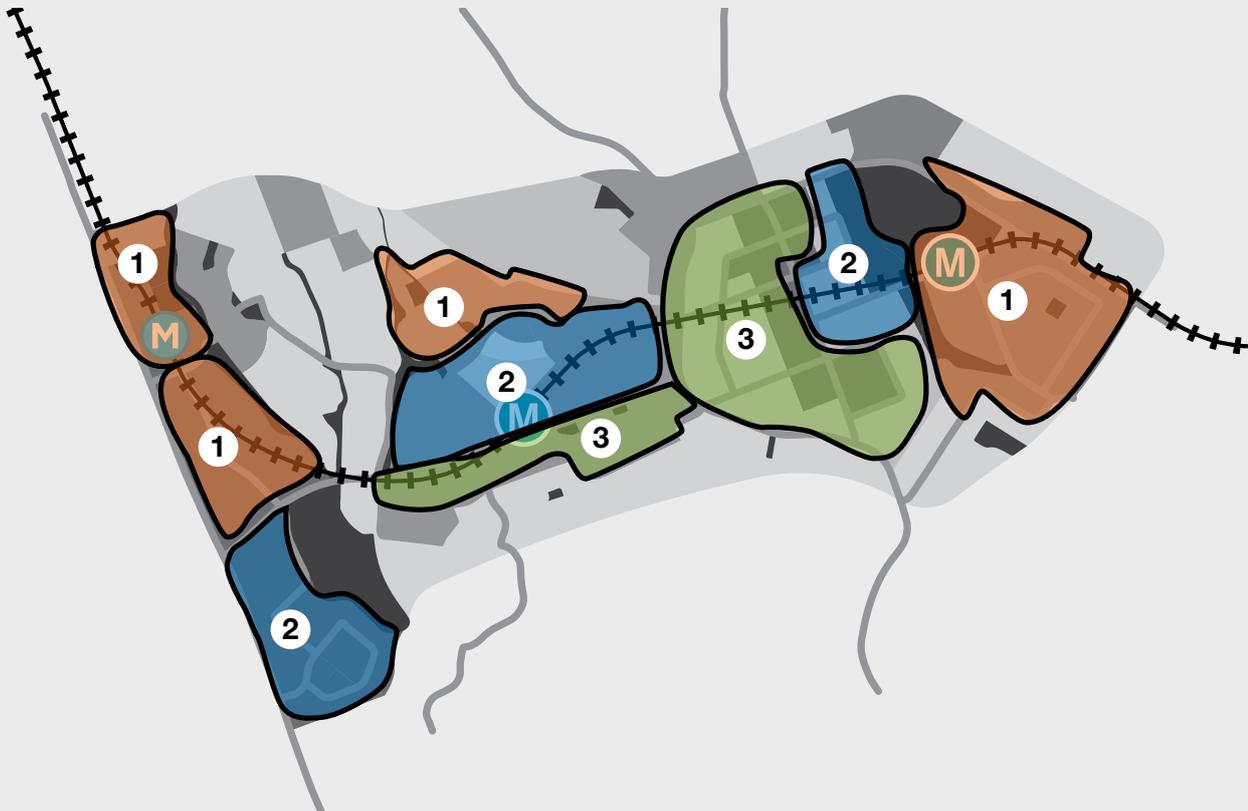


Figure 12: Castle Hill strategic centre – phasing strategy



| Phase | Location | Key work required to support growth |
|-------|---|---|
| 1 | Castle Hill North | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precinct planning complete |
| 2 | Castle Hill Central (Retail/commercial core and mixed use perimeter) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic modelling to confirm roads will operate at an acceptable level • Commercial and retail market demand analysis • Infrastructure investigations, including open space and school facilities • Urban design and built-form analysis |
| 3 | Castle Hill South and West (Medium and high density residential) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key work, as above in Phase 2 • Realisation of opportunities will be longer term as market demand increases |

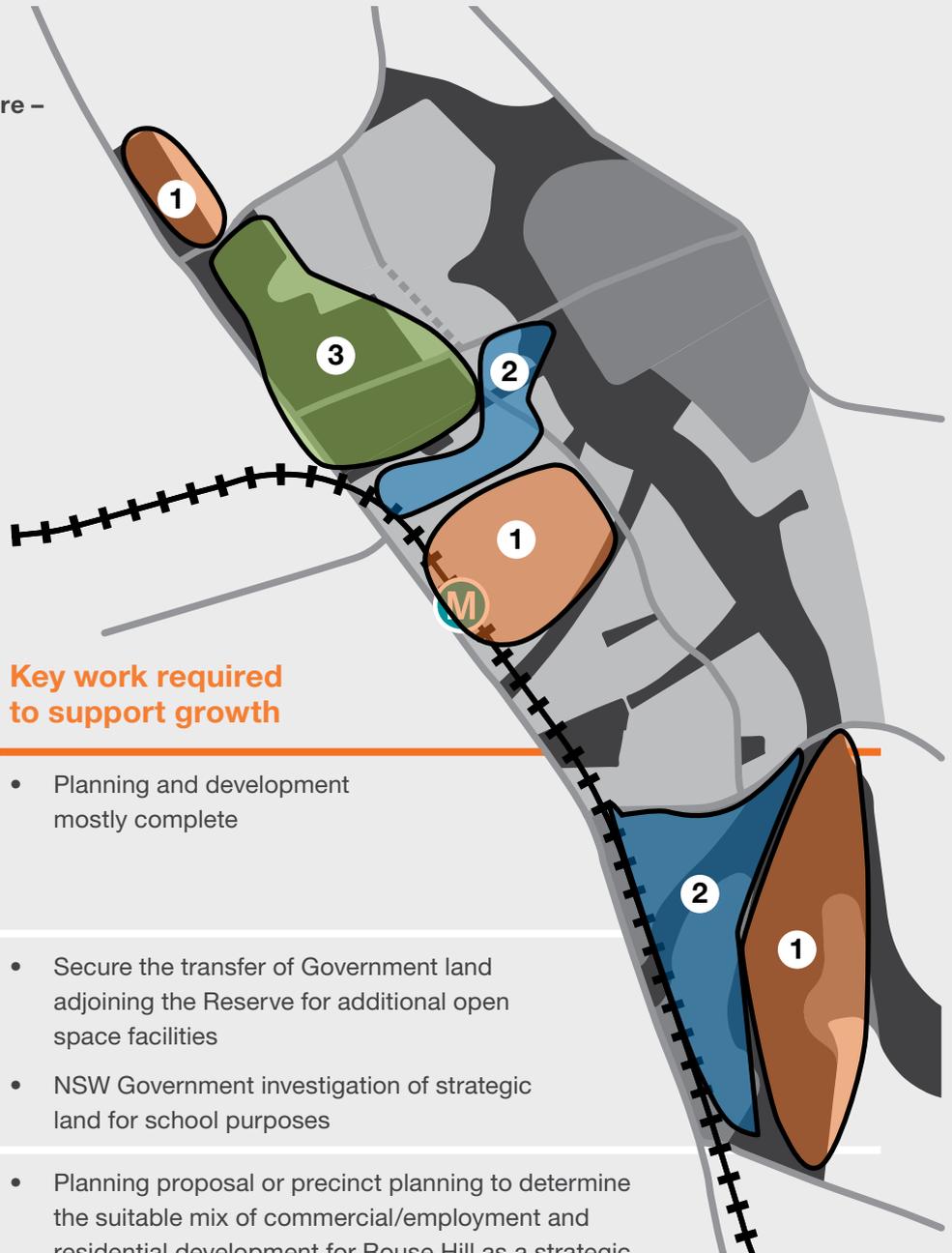
Figure 13: Norwest Strategic Centre – Phasing Strategy



| Phase | Location | Key work required to support growth |
|-------|--|---|
| 1 | Showground Station Precinct Bella Vista Station Precinct Norwest Central (Residential-north) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precinct planning complete for Showground Station Precinct • Ongoing infrastructure investigations to inform contributions planning for Bella Vista and Norwest |
| 2 | Cattai Creek West Master Plan area Norwest Central (Commercial) Norwest Innovation (Commercial around Circa) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic modelling to confirm roads will operate at an acceptable level • Commercial and retail market demand analysis • Infrastructure investigations, including open space and school facilities • Commitment to Kindergarten to Year 12 school • Urban design and built-form analysis |
| 3 | Norwest Service Precinct (west) Norwest Central (Residential-south) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key work, as above in Phase 2 • Detailed review of planning controls and permitted uses in Norwest Service sub-precinct to facilitate start-up business activity • Realisation of opportunities will be longer term as market demand increases |



Figure 14: Rouse Hill Strategic Centre – Phasing Strategy



| Phase | Location | Key work required to support growth |
|-------|--|--|
| 1 | Rouse Hill Central (mixed use core) Rouse Hill Recreation (Caddies Creek Reserve) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and development mostly complete |
| 2 | Rouse Hill Recreation (Caddies Creek Reserve expansion) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the transfer of Government land adjoining the Reserve for additional open space facilities NSW Government investigation of strategic land for school purposes |
| 2 | Rouse Hill Central (expansion of mixed use core) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning proposal or precinct planning to determine the suitable mix of commercial/employment and residential development for Rouse Hill as a strategic centre for the North West Growth Centre Traffic modelling to confirm roads will operate at an acceptable level Commercial and retail market demand analysis Infrastructure investigations, including open space, community, library and school facilities Urban design and built-form analysis |
| 3 | Rouse Hill Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key work, as above for both Rouse Hill Recreation and Rouse Hill Central Collaboration with State agencies, Blacktown City Council and landowners Realisation of some opportunities will be longer term as market demand increases |



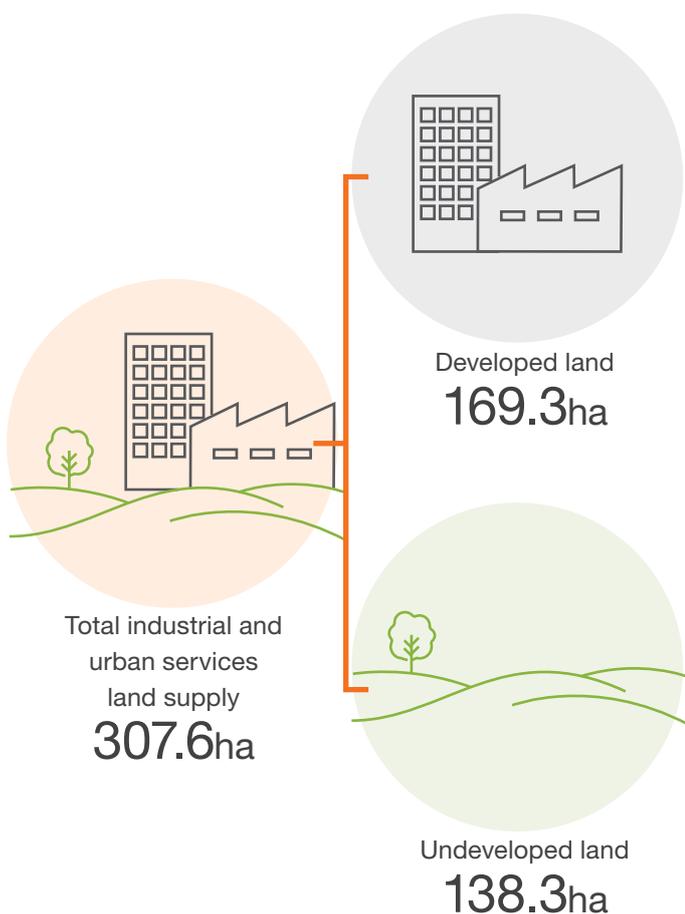
Planning Priority 3

Retain and manage valuable industrial and urban service land

Planning Priority 3 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C11 Maximising opportunities to attract advanced manufacturing and innovation in industrial and urban services land.

Figure 15: Industrial and urban service land supply



Rationale

Demand for the services that support people’s lifestyles is growing and evolving. Land for industrial and urban services provides jobs, supports ongoing business and residential growth, and provides essential, everyday services. The *Central City District Plan* takes two management approaches to industrial and urban services land – Review and Manage, and Retain and Manage. The Hills contains land covered by both approaches.

Further work by the Greater Sydney Commission, published in *A Metropolis that Works*, discourages the rezoning of industrial and urban services land to ensure sufficient capacity for urban services to operate in these areas to support the population beyond 2036.

Our *Strategic Review of Industrial and Employment Activities* identifies how Annangrove, Winston Hills, Norwest Service (known locally as the Castle Hill industrial area), Box Hill and Glenorie contribute to local employment and the local economy. Drawing from the Commission’s latest approach and our Strategic Review, we will aim to Retain and Manage all industrial and urban services land in The Hills Shire. Between 2016 and 2036, the amount of industrial and urban services land will almost halve from 18.9m² per capita to 10.5m². We will protect urban services land to ensure sufficient land to accommodate these services beyond 2036.

Rising land values and land use conflicts place pressure on industrial precincts. There is limited land available for urban services to keep pace with population growth. Many low-impact urban services such as warehousing and storage services, postal and courier pick-up/delivery services and 24-hour gyms can be located within the B6 Enterprise Corridor Zone, where they are



Population growth is not anticipated to slow; once this land is lost to residential and retail land uses, it is almost impossible to get back.”



close to where people live. Higher impact services such as vehicle repair, manufacturing or water and waste treatment plants are ideally located within industrial zones that safeguard against land use conflict with non-compatible uses.

The nature of industrial and urban services uses is evolving with increasing demand for a diversity of industrial lots. As manufacturing technology improves and the types of services change, there may be opportunities to increase densities on industrial and urban services land with a range of floor plate sizes to optimise the use of available land.

The Hills is likely to have sufficient capacity to satisfy demand to 2036, as long as industrial and urban services land is protected and managed to ensure it remains able to support growth. Our planning framework must respond to market needs, including lot size and height requirements, and an audit of permissible land uses is required to ensure industrial and urban service lands provide for a mix of jobs, as intended. If the planning system does not support the needs of service industries, land may be turned over to residential, business or retail zonings.

Well connected urban services land can enable local distribution and freight services to grow and thrive in locations close to customers and markets. Preserving existing industrial and urban services land will retain opportunities for services to locate close to markets, boosting the local economy, providing a competitive edge and allowing adaptation to emerging trends and technologies.



Land for industrial and urban services provides jobs, supports ongoing business and residential growth and provides essential, everyday services.”

Industrial precincts should be designed well to create a positive experience for staff and visitors. This will reinforce a sense of place and identity and emphasise the importance and value of industrial and urban services lands.

Council will:

- Protect industrial and urban services land to meet the needs of existing and future residents to 2036 and beyond.
- Discourage planning proposals seeking to rezone industrial and urban services land.
- Investigate opportunities to renew and improve controls related to pedestrian access, car parking and landscaping in industrial areas.

Actions

- 3.1 Protect the extent, role and function of industrial and urban services land through land use zones and objectives (Ongoing).
- 3.2 Prepare an Economic Growth Plan (June 2022).
- 3.3 Review planning controls in employment zones to support freight operations and businesses while minimising negative impacts on urban amenity (June 2022)



Planning Priority 4

Retain and manage the Shire’s rural productive capacity

Planning Priority 4 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

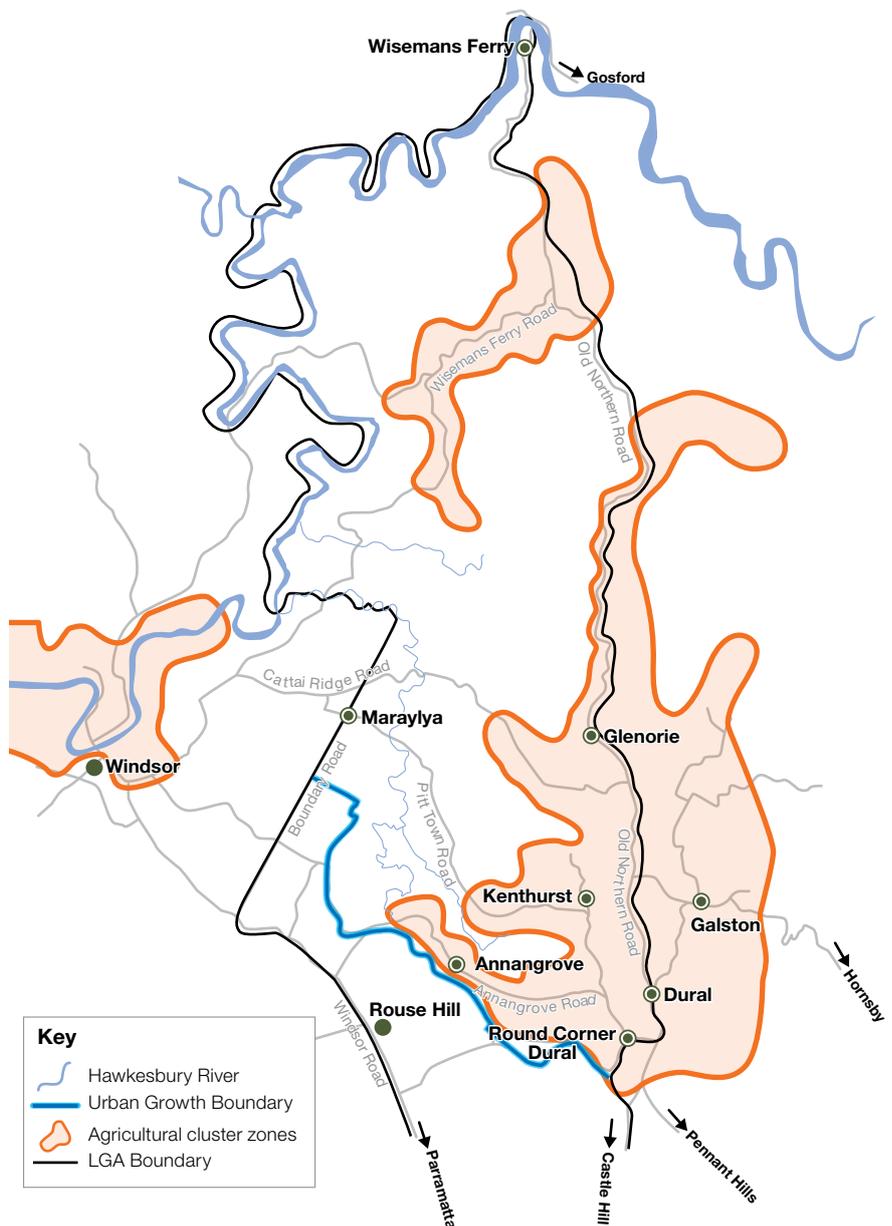
- C12 Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors.
- C18 Better managing rural areas.

Rationale

As Greater Sydney grows to 8 million people by 2056, the Shire’s rural area will continue to provide fresh produce and building materials. The Hills Shire is the only LGA in the Central City District that contains land in the Metropolitan Rural Area, with two distinct clusters of rural activity within the Shire – Middle Dural to Glenorie, and around Wisemans Ferry Road in Maroota.

Despite a decline in land used for productive purposes, the Shire’s agricultural industry is becoming more efficient. Output and employment opportunities have increased due to technological advances and intensification of agricultural practices. Further intensification of food crop production could help to maintain the proportion of fresh food supplied to Greater Sydney.

Figure 16: Agricultural and extractive clusters



Productive rural uses must be protected from land use conflict arising from incompatible uses. We will focus residential development in the urban area by implementing an Urban Growth Boundary. Buffer zones and appropriate separation distances between productive uses and sensitive rural residential uses will also help to minimise future land use conflict, allowing primary producers to undertake their lawful activities. Protecting productive agricultural land also lessens demand on freight by reducing the distance fresh produce needs to be transported.

The RU6 Transition zone has been applied since 2012 to provide a buffer between intensive urban land uses and sensitive agricultural uses. In the past, the intent of the zone has been misinterpreted as ‘residential-in-waiting’; however, the zone is intended to provide a boundary to urban development, to protect the viability of agricultural uses. The proposed Urban Growth Boundary reinforces this position. We will review permissible land uses in the RU6 zone to provide additional clarity.

The Shire’s agriculture and extractive industries contribute 1.5 per cent to the local economy, mainly in the cut flower and nursery sectors. Over 85 per cent of agricultural output is sold locally, indicating the importance of the productive rural area to the local economy.

Innovation and research in agricultural practices, including greenhouse research by Western Sydney University, presents opportunities to build relationships with researchers and intensify agricultural production.

The development of the Western Sydney International Airport and associated agribusiness precinct will change how rural agricultural/horticultural businesses access markets. Preservation of a corridor for the Outer Sydney Orbital in the short term will give certainty to extractive industry operators and agricultural producers about future freight links to allow for effective planning. Once built, the Outer Sydney Orbital will allow rural industries to build on existing markets, access new opportunities and be competitive within the region.

Council will:

- Protect productive agricultural lands across the Shire from land uses that may create land use conflict.
- Forge links between The Hills Shire producers and Western Sydney University’s Greenhouse Research Education Training Facility at Hawkesbury and encourage intensification of horticulture activity, including hydroponics and greenhouses.
- Encourage better ways to access markets and distribution points to benefit agricultural and extractive materials producers.
- Work with the NSW Government to preserve land for, and build, the section of the Outer Sydney Orbital between north west Sydney and the Central Coast to open new markets and supply chain efficiencies for agricultural and extractive industries.

Actions

- 4.1 Review our planning controls and permissible uses in rural zones to minimise land use conflict and maintain desired character (June 2020).
- 4.2 Investigate using the optional Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan clause 5.16 to ensure consideration of existing rural uses when assessing applications for rural subdivision and dwellings (June 2020).







Planning Priority 5

Encourage support activities and tourism in rural areas

Planning Priority 5 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C12 Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors.

Rationale

Agricultural production and extractive industries will only succeed with access to supporting industries. Businesses that process agricultural produce, supply and service farming equipment, or sell products such as fertilisers, feed or farm equipment, must be close to concentrations of agricultural or extractive activity. We will look to identify potential locations and criteria for a future rural support hub for these uses.

We must also plan for a diversity of tourism uses to increase future output and employment opportunities. The Shire's rural landscape and proximity to the Hawkesbury River attracts visitors who may wish to stay in caravan parks or camping grounds or enjoy water-based recreation. Farm stay experiences, fruit picking, quality restaurants and cafes, markets, nurseries and golf courses throughout the area also attract visitors and provide a base to the visitor economy. Eco-tourism is becoming more popular, as people value experiences with minimal environmental impact. A significant area at Wisemans Ferry in the Shire's north is zoned SP3 Tourist, which facilitates a variety of tourism-related uses. We will identify ways to capitalise on opportunities in this area and increase tourism in the Shire.

Healthy waterways and natural areas, particularly around the Hawkesbury River, provide the foundation for tourism. Increasing urbanisation in The Hills, Blacktown and Penrith LGAs impacts the quality and health of the Hawkesbury River, increasing its turbidity and potentially limiting water-based recreation opportunities. Water quality in the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries needs to be carefully managed so that all waterways are accessible, healthy and able to support recreational uses.

Council will:

- Value the contribution that rural industries make to Greater Sydney's economy and protect productive agricultural land from development pressures, particularly along the rural-urban fringe.
- Discourage planning proposals which seek to rezone viable agricultural land for residential purposes.
- Investigate ways to grow tourism in the Shire.
- Collaborate with other councils and catchment management authorities to better manage water quality in the Hawkesbury River.

Actions

- 5.1 Identify potential locations for a future rural services hub in the Shire's north (June 2023).
- 5.2 Review planning controls and permissible uses in rural zones to facilitate land uses that will support and serve rural industries and encourage tourism in appropriate locations (June 2020).



Our ***Rural Strategy 2019*** articulates our vision to protect and manage rural lands to 2036 and establishes an Urban Growth Boundary.





SHAPING GROWTH

Providing a choice of housing in great neighbourhoods.

Shaping growth means creating well planned, attractive and convenient neighbourhoods that make a contribution to Greater Sydney as a growing city, while retaining the character and elements that make The Hills unique. It is also about ensuring safe and accessible transport options and a variety of recreational activities that support an active lifestyle. Planning for new housing is part of a bigger picture. We want to create neighbourhoods and places that people love living in.

The Shire's population is expected to grow by almost 80 per cent between 2016 and 2036, requiring an additional 38,000 dwellings. Demographically, while there will be an increase in the proportion of people aged over 65, the dominant age group will continue to be people aged between 30 and 55. We will continue to focus on planning for a diversity of housing in the right locations that meets the needs of the community at all stages of their lives.

Residential growth to 2036 will be mainly in the existing greenfield areas of Box Hill, North Kellyville and Balmoral Road, within defined precincts close to Castle Hill, Rouse Hill and Norwest, and around Sydney Metro Northwest stations.

Homes in greenfield areas that are further from centres and Sydney Metro stations will predominantly be at low to medium densities, maintaining a supply of homes with backyards. Around Sydney Metro stations, higher density housing will integrate with busy, walkable neighbourhoods focused on the transport hubs to take advantage of services and infrastructure.

In seeking to maintain the Shire's character and garden identity, we do not expect to support significant growth in rural villages. Any growth in or around rural villages or in the rural area will need to satisfy specific criteria detailed in our *Rural Strategy 2019* in order to be considered by Council.



SHAPING GROWTH

Planning Priority 6

Plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney's growing population.

Planning Priority 7

Plan for new housing in the right locations.

Planning Priority 8

Plan for a diversity of housing.

Planning Priority 9

Renew and create great places.

Planning Priority 10

Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs.

Measures:

- Net new dwellings approved and completed align with expected targets.
- Monitor the percentage of low income households experiencing rental stress.
- Housing mix.



Planning Priority 6

Plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney’s growing population

Planning Priority 6 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C5 Providing housing supply, choice and affordability, with access to jobs, services and public transport.

Rationale

With an additional 128,000 residents living in The Hills by 2036, we are expecting an additional 38,000 dwellings on existing zoned and planned residential land, with capacity for a further 38,100 dwellings beyond 2036.

We are on track to exceed the five-year dwelling target set out in the *Central City District Plan*. Based on current development approvals, completions and take-up rates, we anticipate 9,500 dwellings will be completed by 2021.

We are now determining 10-year and 20-year targets. To do this, we consider forecast growth, housing locations and anticipated zoned yield and uptake rates. We believe initial uptake rates in greenfield areas are nearing their peak and new dwelling approvals will begin to decline over the next 10 years; zoned capacity will be largely exhausted in 20 years.

Figure 17: Dwelling targets (cumulative)

| Timeframe | Target |
|-----------|------------------|
| 5 years | 9,500 dwellings |
| 10 years | 18,500 dwellings |
| 20 years | 38,500 dwellings |

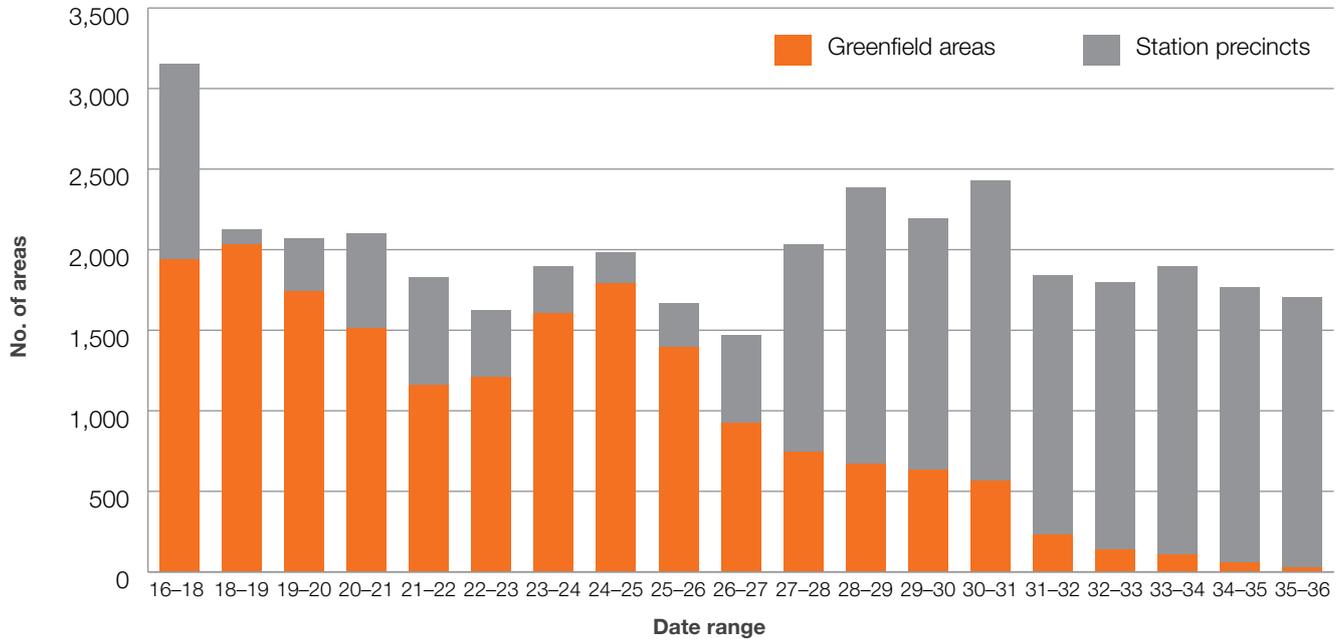


Dwelling targets have been prepared based on a number of inputs including NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment 2016 population and housing projections and analysis of housing data and trends as described in *The Hills Housing Strategy*.

Housing targets are subject to agreement between The Hills, The Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.



Figure 18: Estimated rate of development to 2036



In greenfield areas, uptake rates depend on many factors, such as the availability of sewer, water and electricity infrastructure. Upgrading roads or relocating utilities can delay housing development and requires State agencies to proactively upgrade assets to lessen the risk of housing delays.

A NSW Government review of the planning framework in Box Hill and North Kellyville greenfield areas identified a disconnect between anticipated yields and the scale of development sought in the area, which has implications for infrastructure provision. The review proposed maximum numbers of dwellings in these areas to address this mismatch and to provide certainty around how many dwellings will ultimately be accommodated in these areas to better align with planned infrastructure in greenfield areas. Changes to the planning framework to implement the findings of this review have not been finalised.

Matching infrastructure with growth is a challenge. Funding mechanisms do not facilitate upfront delivery of local facilities such as roads, drainage, parks and sporting fields. Funding of libraries, community centres and aquatic facilities in these communities is also

uncertain with only the land for these facilities funded through local development contributions. The cost of such facilities is significant; funding the upfront and ongoing costs is beyond the capacity of Council using existing rate revenue. This must be addressed by the Office of Local Government and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

Development in urban renewal areas is subject to several challenges:

- exposure to the risks associated with economic cycles
- securing financing for development
- funding and location of adequate open space.

Higher density housing must be provided in areas connected to or within reach of transport and other urban services. Sydney Metro station precincts are being planned using transport-oriented design principles that provide for a mix of land uses, increased walkability and public domain improvements.

6. SHAPING GROWTH

Table 3: Status of Precinct Planning

| Station precinct | Status at 2019 | Indicative timeframe for housing |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Cherrybrook | Pending Precinct Planning | Medium to long term |
| Castle Hill | Precinct Planning complete for Castle Hill North | Short to medium term |
| | Precinct Planning for balance of precinct scheduled for completion in 2021 | Medium to long term |
| Hills Showground | Precinct Planning complete for residential area | Short to medium term |
| | Precinct Planning pending for Cattai Creek West Master Plan area | Medium to long term |
| Bella Vista/Kellyville | Precinct Planning complete | Medium to long term |
| Norwest | Planning complete north of Marketown | Short term |
| | Precinct Planning for balance of precinct scheduled for completion in 2021 | Long term |
| Rouse Hill | Precinct Planning scheduled for completion in 2021 | Medium to long term |

Council will:

- Advocate for a positive planning framework that responds to market and community needs and expectations.
- Focus on dwelling completions in areas already zoned or planned for growth.
- Discourage planning proposals seeking to rezone industrial, employment or rural lands for residential purposes.
- Monitor, review and update the *Housing Strategy 2019* so that housing is supplied to meet community needs and market demand.

Actions

- 6.1 Complete a Housing Market Demand and Diversity Analysis to confirm take-up rates and future demand (June 2020).
- 6.2 Prepare a planning proposal to amend State *Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006* to introduce a maximum density band or other suitable mechanism to ensure development is in line with infrastructure in Box Hill (June 2021).
- 6.3 Advocate for the NSW Government to address the timely funding and delivery of necessary infrastructure to support residential growth (Ongoing).





Planning Priority 7

Plan for new housing in the right locations

Planning Priority 7 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

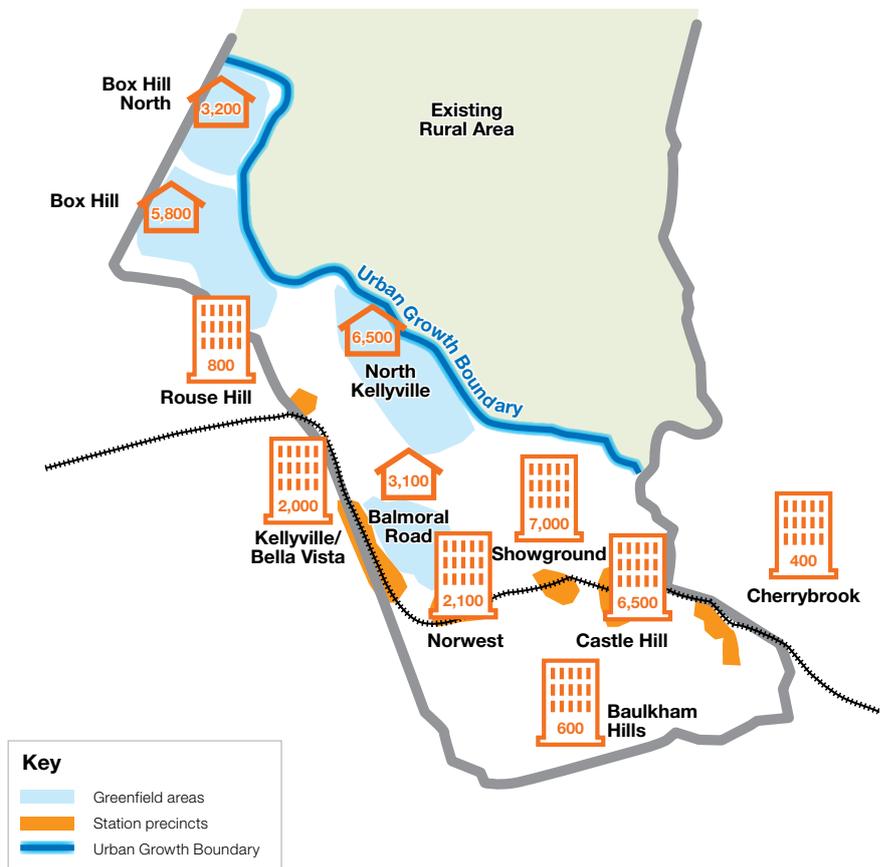
- C5 Providing housing supply, choice and affordability, with access to jobs, services and public transport.

Rationale

Most new homes built over the next 20 years will be high density dwellings located close to public transport hubs. This creates liveable and connected neighbourhoods where people can enjoy a mix of uses close to transport and services.

High density development must be supported by the right infrastructure. The Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill Sydney Metro station precincts will be subject to detailed precinct planning that considers the services that should support an uplift in housing; growth in other areas will be monitored to ensure significant change only occurs once infrastructure is in place.

Figure 19: Housing growth locations (to 2036)



6. SHAPING GROWTH

The greenfield areas of North Kellyville, Box Hill, Box Hill North and Balmoral Road will continue to provide low and medium density housing, supported by existing and planned infrastructure, to meet demand for detached dwellings, which have been the core of The Hills housing market to date. Existing residential areas such as Baulkham Hills will be subject to some new housing to 2036 predominantly as ageing housing stock is renewed.

Given the amount of land already zoned residential or identified for rezoning for residential development, we do not envisage a need to convert employment, industrial, rural or environmental zoned land for residential uses. We will implement an Urban Growth Boundary to help limit development to the existing urban area, and to protect the productive capacity and scenic characteristics of the rural area.

Rural cluster subdivisions, attached dual occupancies and secondary dwellings will continue to be a feature of rural areas.

Rural villages

Rural villages are the lifeblood of rural communities; they provide the services that support the people who live and work in rural areas. They are a hub of social activity and help people to connect and interact through education, recreation and employment. They are home to people who are transitioning from other rural lifestyles or seeking village-type amenities. Given the Shire's proximity to Sydney CBD these rural areas are popular for people seeking a rural lifestyle close to the city.

As the population grows and changes, we will protect the role and function of rural villages and provide opportunities for limited expansion to meet the needs of the rural community. Any investigations will consider existing constraints and balanced growth, in line with criteria detailed in the *Rural Strategy 2019*.

Council will:

- Use the zoning framework to identify the intention for housing growth close to centres, services and transport and to protect areas with environmental and scenic qualities.
- Limit residential growth to within the existing and planned residential zoned areas below the Urban Growth Boundary.
- Support coordinated development of higher density development in station precincts using a transit orientated approach.
- Encourage orderly and serviceable growth around Cherrybrook Station.

Actions

- 7.1 Prepare precinct plans for Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill strategic centres (June 2021).
- 7.2 Investigate opportunities for limited residential expansion in rural villages in line with the criteria recommended in the *Rural Strategy 2019* (June 2023).





Planning Priority 8

Plan for a diversity of housing

Planning Priority 8 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C5 Providing housing supply, choice and affordability, with access to jobs, services and public transport.

Rationale

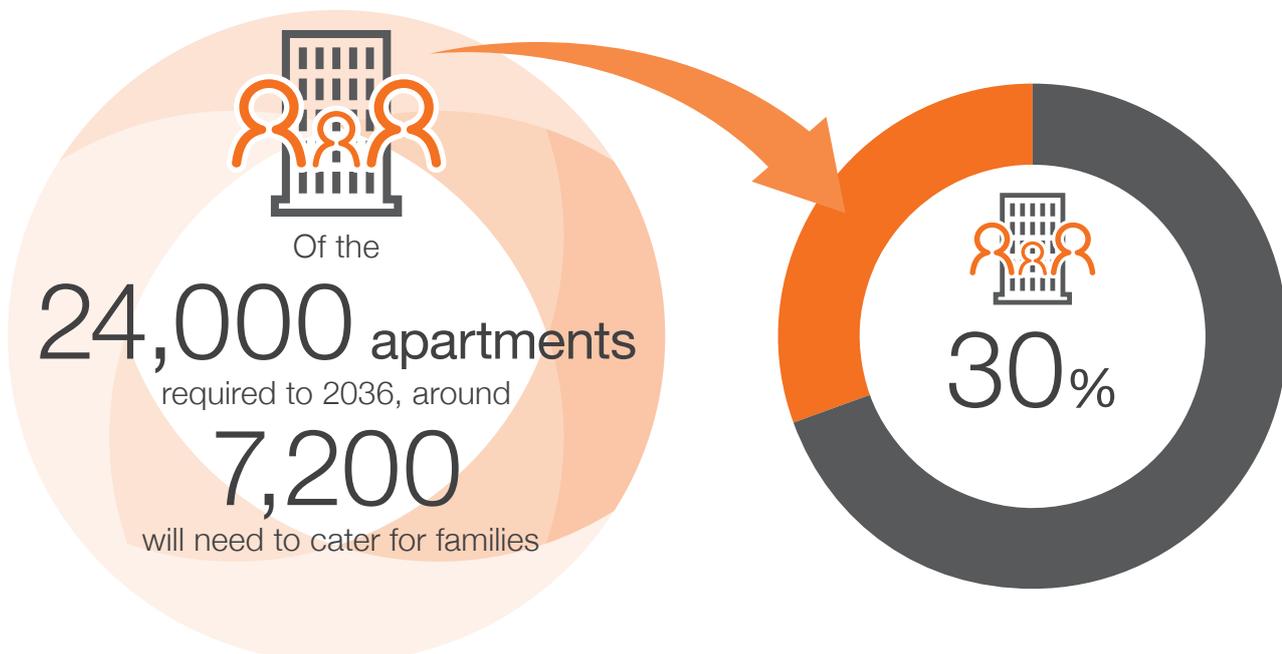
New housing needs to suit a range of budgets and lifestyles. Most new households in The Hills will comprise family groups and the average household size may increase slightly beyond 3.2 people per household. The expected number of single dwellings and townhouses will not accommodate all new family households. This means we will need to plan for apartments to cater to these groups.

We introduced a housing diversity clause in 2016 that required at least 30 per cent of new apartment dwellings to be suitable for families, with a greater proportion of apartments with three or more bedrooms and larger living areas. We will continue this approach in response to the expected number of new family households.

While the Shire's demographics are expected to continue to mainly feature families, the way in which families live is changing; some opt for smaller dwellings closer to public transport and activities, others aspire to larger homes or blocks, even if the number of people in the family does not reflect the need.

The Hills is home to an increasingly diverse community. While it does not accommodate a large migrant and refugee population, in 2016 more than 35 per cent of the population was born overseas (see Figure 21). Between 2011 and 2016 the Chinese population increased from 3,700 to more than 8,000 people.

Figure 20: Housing diversity



6. SHAPING GROWTH

Changes in residents' cultural backgrounds influence housing needs and choices. Some cultural groups prefer to live in larger homes that accommodate many generations of the one family. They may need access to goods and services that cater to their cultural needs.

We recognise the variety of needs and preferences of different cultural groups through:

- making planning controls more flexible to allow for larger apartments that could accommodate multi-generational families.
- expanding the variety of dwellings that can be built in greenfield areas.
- investigating low-impact night-time uses that could contribute street-level activity.
- enabling neighbourhood supermarkets in appropriate areas to cater for different cultural groups.
- allowing schools in areas over and above the requirements of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017*.



We need to look at our capacity to provide a diverse range of housing to suit our future population.”

Mayor of The Hills Shire, Dr Michelle Byrne

Figure 21: Hills Shire residents' place of birth other than Australia

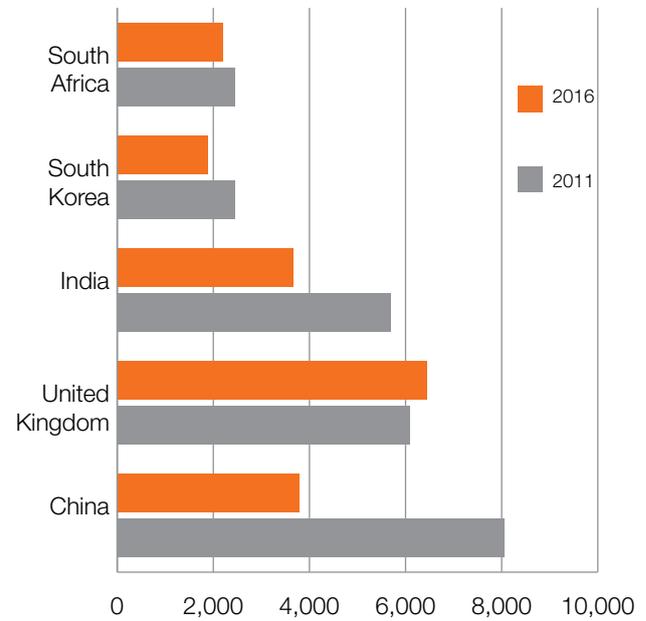
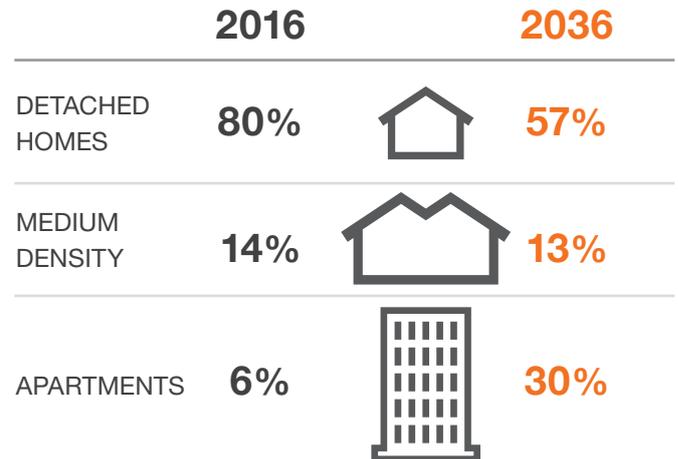


Figure 22: Dwelling mix 2016 to 2036

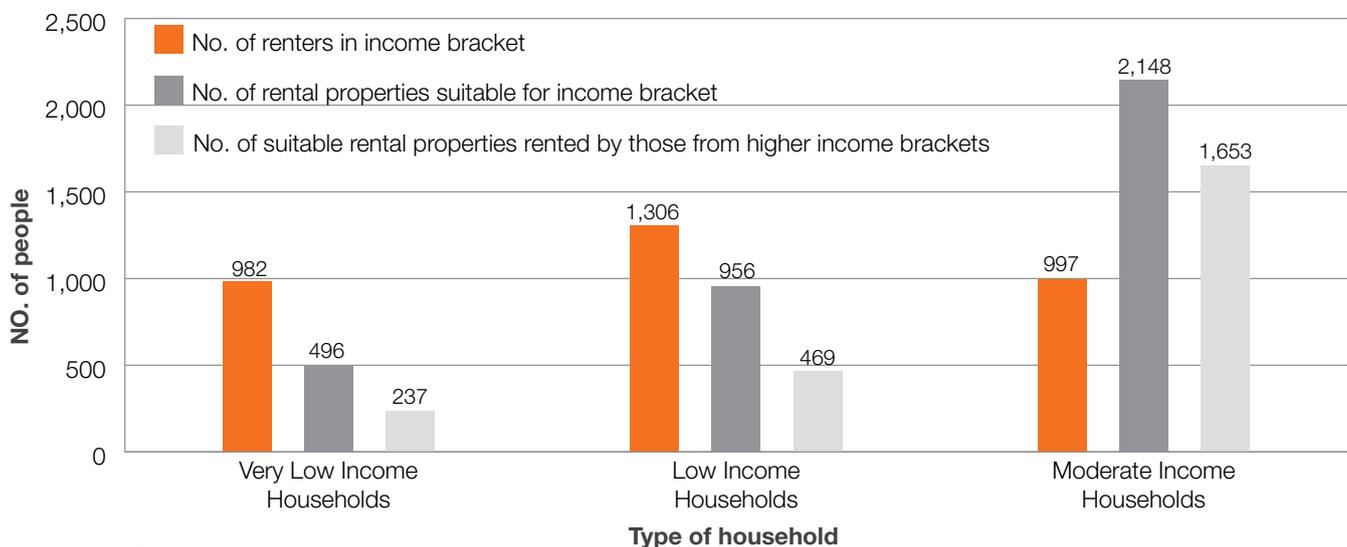


Making housing more affordable

Housing affordability is influenced by location, the types of services available, housing types, access to transport and employment opportunities. The Hills has traditionally attracted families and highly skilled workers, with most homes being detached dwellings on large lots. Nearly 80 per cent of dwellings are either owned or mortgaged. Only 16 per cent of households rent their homes.

The provision of affordable housing is an issue across Greater Sydney. Approximately six per cent of households in The Hills suffer rental stress and may be in need of affordable housing options. Most of these households fall within the very low, low and moderate income brackets. Within this group of renters, there is a higher degree of rental stress, as most properties leased at rates suitable for these income brackets are occupied by those that fall within higher income brackets.

Figure 23: Moderate Income Households



Source: ABS Census 2016

This forces residents who need to occupy these properties into rental stress, as they must seek properties that are beyond the 30 per cent threshold of their income.

State Environmental Planning Policy No 70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes) gives councils the option of entering into affordable housing contribution schemes, where developers contribute to the cost of affordable housing.

While Council has not yet entered into an affordable housing scheme, our approach aligns with that policy - that is, we seek to ensure a mix of housing types across the Shire, and a supply of housing that is affordable for very low, low and moderate income households. This will retain a socially diverse population that represents all income groups.

Demand for affordable housing is currently managed by a combination of social housing, community housing providers and the private rental market.

Any affordable rental housing scheme must be considered in conjunction with a diverse supply of housing, movement within existing affordable housing stock and supply and vacancy rates.

Planning for a diversity of apartments, townhouses/terraces, affordable housing, housing for seniors and people with a disability, dual occupancies and detached dwellings will make it easier for people to relocate within their local area and stay connected to community services, friends and family while achieving the lifestyle that they desire.

6. SHAPING GROWTH

The Housing Market Demand and Diversity Analysis (see Planning Priority 6) will provide more detailed data on effective housing demand; in particular, the housing types and mix needed to satisfy future need, which specific-needs groups should be prioritised, and how to distribute the supply of affordable housing among households who actually require it.

The District Plan indicates more investigation is needed to understand how affordable housing can be provided. The Greater Sydney Commission will consider different allocation, ownership, management and delivery models and will work with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on innovative purchase and rental models.

Medium density housing

Housing stock in The Hills has traditionally been lower density, with limited medium density stock available. We will continue to facilitate medium density housing in the form of dual occupancies, townhouses and houses on small lots.

We are looking to incorporate medium density elements in the master planning for station precincts, particularly terrace-style development.

The NSW Government's Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code will facilitate further medium density housing (townhouse and terraces for example); however, it presents challenges, primarily around manor houses (small apartment buildings), which result in densities higher than those expected from other medium density forms. While we support medium density housing in the right locations, it should reflect the desired character of the local area.

Housing for seniors and people with a disability

Many capable and active seniors still want the privacy and space that a detached dwelling provides without the maintenance burden of a larger landscaped lot. In the same way that a portion of housing needs to be suitable for families, a portion also needs to appeal to seniors and people with a disability, so that they can stay in their community as their needs change.

Location is vital to the liveability of a development. While larger housing developments for seniors may provide for shuttle buses and medical facilities for residents, in smaller developments residents need easy access to supermarkets, post offices, health care facilities and pharmacies.

Larger housing developments for seniors can take on the density and form of medium and high density housing developments.

In rural areas, these developments do not complement rural character and generally lack the connection to services and facilities. We are working with Hornsby Council, the Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to investigate the impact of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* in rural areas.

Council will:

- Aim for a supply of apartments for larger households with sufficient space, quality and facilities.
- Encourage affordable housing in areas supported by services and infrastructure.
- Support medium density residential development in areas serviced by infrastructure.
- Support housing for seniors and people with a disability in accordance with the requirements in the *Housing Strategy 2019*.

Actions

- 8.1 Review residential zonings, objectives and provisions to provide for a diversity of housing in the right locations, with a focus on the capacity of land zoned R3 Medium Density Residential (June 2020).
- 8.2 Investigate demand for affordable rental housing and options for improving housing affordability (June 2022).



The ***Housing Strategy 2019*** details what types of housing will be provided in particular locations.





Planning Priority 9

Renew and create great places

Planning Priority 9 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C4 Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.
- C6 Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage.
- C15 Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes.

Rationale

Creating great places requires early planning.

In areas that are being developed, such as station precincts, master planning underpins our efforts to create great places to live, work and play while respecting existing character. Master planning provides a clear vision and identifies opportunities for better connection and creating inviting places for planned and incidental interaction with others. Our Design Excellence Panel and Design Review Panel focus on great design in urban renewal areas.

Our Public Domain Strategy will provide a vision for the Shire's public areas and guide the preparation of individual public domain plans for areas that are subject to master planning.

These plans will guide the design of public spaces and help to create wide footpaths, landscaping and canopy trees, lighting, signage and wayfinding, better visibility of the street to increase safety, and methods to limit overshadowing and prevent buildings from dominating the street.

Opportunities exist to incorporate evolving technologies into centres and places to better connect the community. The way we design and manage places and spaces also needs to evolve in a way that monitors and captures information, allowing better utilisation of available resources to improve quality of life.

Rural character

The Metropolitan Rural Area has three distinct areas:

- rural landscape – productive, largely undeveloped, high biodiversity value.
- peri-urban – large-lot rural-residential, lifestyle blocks, some dispersed agricultural practices.
- villages – community hub, contained residential settlement, recreation and employment options.

The Shire's Metropolitan Rural Area is the only rural land in the Central City District; broadly, rural land is limited in Greater Sydney. It is therefore important to maintain areas of rural character in The Hills.

Character statements can articulate the elements of a place that give it a unique feel and identity. They will be prepared for these three areas and we may use them in urban areas subject to significant change.

Aboriginal and European cultural heritage

Before European settlement, Aboriginal people from the Darug tribe lived on the land now known as The Hills Shire. The land, animals and plants around the Hawkesbury River and adjacent valleys and hills provided an abundance of food. Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal occupation in these areas remains throughout the Shire today.

This evidence provides insight into the unique and complex nature of the Darug people's relationship to the land as maintained through the mythologies of 'the Dreaming', whereby all parts of the local landscape had cultural significance and meaning.

The early pattern of European settlement in the Shire was also influenced by Aboriginal culture. For example, the road to Windsor and the road to Wisemans Ferry were based on Aboriginal trails used for trade and visiting ceremonies.

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has statutory responsibility for the identification, management and conservation of Aboriginal heritage under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. In line with longstanding recommendations regarding the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, we have utilised environmental zones where Aboriginal cultural heritage is likely to be present, such as along creek lines.

Existing greenfield areas have been investigated for Aboriginal cultural heritage. With no new areas proposed to be released for urban development, Aboriginal heritage sites do not need to be reviewed for inclusion in the LEP.

Our Heritage Study was conducted more than 20 years ago and informed the list of European cultural heritage items in Schedule 5 of our LEP. There are 206 heritage items listed with varying levels of heritage significance. A further five items in the North Kellyville and Box Hill greenfield areas are listed in the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006*.

Heritage contributes to the character of a place and preserves important elements of a shared history. The planning framework enables appropriate protection to items of significance and informs the development of places so that heritage remains a key character element as neighbourhoods change.

Renewal in centres

Some smaller centres are declining. The centre at Windsor Road, Kellyville presents a unique set of challenges given its main road location, poor streetscape appeal and amenity, insufficient range of retail mix, ageing building stock, shop vacancies and poor connectivity. We will prepare a master plan to create an overall vision for the centre and amend development controls to achieve an integrated and orderly approach to development.

We need to carefully plan to avoid freight and servicing activities detracting from amenity, safety and attractiveness in centres, while also ensuring deliveries and waste collection are timely and efficient.

We will prepare Commercial/Retail Urban Design Guidelines to guide the redevelopment of existing centres or development of new centres. These will align with the principles for local centres in the *Central City District Plan* and be supported by our Public Domain Strategy. To achieve positive change in older centres, we will promote the benefits of centre redevelopment to business and property owners and work with business owners to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

Neighbourhood centres

Neighbourhood centres are smaller, walkable centres that provide for the daily needs of the community. The introduction of a new definition for 'neighbourhood supermarkets' provides an opportunity to review permissible uses that may be suited to these small-scale centres.



Council will:

- Prioritise place-making in new and emerging neighbourhoods.
- Promote the economic benefits of centre redevelopment to businesses and landowners.
- Discourage commercial and residential uplift in Baulkham Hills town centre until transport and traffic issues are resolved.
- Only encourage planning proposals for local centres that align with our master plan for the centre and protect its primary role to provide goods and services, or be a place for new or evolving employment functions.
- Protect items of Aboriginal and European cultural heritage significance from the impacts of development.
- Investigate measures to encourage land uses that will promote vibrancy in higher density residential zones.
- Work with the community to extend local character mapping to identified areas of significant local character, and develop local character statements to guide development in these areas.

Actions

- 9.1 Introduce a character clause and map to The Hills LEP to guide development to reflect desired character in the Showground station precinct (June 2020).
- 9.2 Review the 1993–1994 Heritage Study and update Schedule 5 of the LEP (June 2023).
- 9.3 Review permissible uses in the B1 Neighbourhood Centre zone to ensure they are in keeping with the small-scale objectives of neighbourhood centres (June 2020).
- 9.4 Prepare and implement Commercial/Retail Urban Design Guidelines (June 2022).
- 9.5 Prepare a master plan for the centre at Windsor Road, Kellyville (June 2022).



Centres are a critical part of the urban environment, contributing to people's quality of life."



Planning Priority 10

Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs

Planning Priority 10 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C3 Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs.

Rationale

Social and cultural infrastructure include the places and spaces that contribute to quality of life and provide opportunities for social interactions. Providing the right types of social and cultural infrastructure as well as shops and services, in high growth areas, is critical to great places.

Social infrastructure

Galleries, theatres, active open space, libraries and community centres provide a focal point for community activity. Community gardens, walking trails and playgrounds help people to be active and to interact while enjoying the outdoors.

Council provides libraries, cemeteries, community facilities and locations for cultural events such as Shakespeare in The Park, The Second Age Youth Theatre Project, Lunar Festival, The Sydney Country Music Festival, Orange Blossom Festival and others.

We are developing a library and community facilities strategy to determine catchment areas for existing libraries and community facilities and whether any upgrades or expansions are required to service existing or anticipated demand.

In recognition of the growing population and the existing capacity of cemeteries, we are also investigating potential new sites for cemeteries.

As part of master planning, we identify land for public open space and use the zoning framework to protect and manage open space. Our aim is to deliver identified facilities in line with population growth. We have developed an open space hierarchy and standard levels of service to reflect the role and function of all open space in the Shire. We detail the provision of passive and active open space in Planning Priority 15.

Retail services

Centres are places where people can access services, buy goods and spend time as part of a connected community. The District Plan describes local centres as diverse – they vary in size while providing easy access to day-to-day goods and services near where people live.

We have adopted a centres hierarchy that classifies each centre in terms of size, geographic area of influence, role and function in relation to other centres. Local centres are grouped as town, transit, village, neighbourhood and rural villages, and have different functions.

Larger local centres like Baulkham Hills town centre provide for weekly shopping needs, and some recreation and entertainment. Smaller neighbourhood centres like Arthur Street in Baulkham Hills can cater for daily needs and provide cafes and small-scale shops.

The redevelopment and revitalisation of existing centres is essential to supporting the growing population and economy. Precinct planning for centres experiencing significant change, such as Norwest and Castle Hill, will help to identify opportunities to improve functionality, identity and amenity.



Initial analysis indicates there may be an undersupply of specialty retail shops in existing centres. Current supply of specialty retail shops (158,600m²) is 22 per cent lower than would be expected based on the Sydney-wide ratio of 1.25m² per person. We need to focus on planned and potential supply in the right places and at the right time to avoid retail shops remaining vacant for extended periods.

We will conduct a retail floor space analysis and review the functions of local centres to determine whether spatial distribution and scale will meet community needs in accordance with the District Plan's *Principles for Local Centres*.

Specialised retail (or bulky goods) stores sell household appliances, furniture, outdoor/camping supplies, furnishings and homewares, and floor and window coverings. Providing floor space for specialised retail is a challenge. Within The Hills Shire, these premises are concentrated in homemaker-style centres in the Norwest Service Precinct (Victoria Avenue) and a smaller pocket on Commercial Road, Rouse Hill.

Preliminary demand analysis indicates a need for an additional 93,700m² of specialised retail floor space by 2036. A planning proposal for land at Withers Road and Annangrove Road will respond to short- to medium-term demand with potential for up to 60,000m² specialised retail floor space. There may be a longer-term opportunity to develop a specialised retail cluster around this location.



Well planned social infrastructure can improve quality of life and community connections.”

Council will:

- Ensure the provision of social infrastructure and retail services keeps pace with population growth and meets the needs of existing and future residents.
- Continue to use the centres hierarchy and zoning framework to communicate the role and function of centres.
- Support a range of cultural and creative community events.
- Facilitate specialised retail development (bulky goods) only within larger centres and specific precincts, subject to locational criteria contained in the *Productivity and Centres Strategy 2019*.
- Encourage developers to address the identified undersupply of specific retail types identified in the *Productivity and Centres Strategy 2019*.

Actions

- 10.1 Prepare a library and community facility strategy (June 2021).
- 10.2 Reinforce and protect the hierarchy of centres through land use zones, objectives, permitted uses, local provisions and amended development controls where appropriate (June 2020).
- 10.3 Start to implement recommendations of the cemeteries site identification investigation (June 2023).
- 10.4 Complete a Commercial and Retail Floor Space Demand Analysis (June 2020.)



The ***Productivity and Centres Strategy 2019*** establishes the hierarchy of centres and examines the amount and type of retail floor space needed to serve future residents based on benchmarks.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Delivering and maintaining infrastructure

Regional and local infrastructure is crucial to community wellbeing and supports economic growth. Community infrastructure must be attractive, safe and well maintained. New infrastructure must be delivered to meet the needs of the growing population.

Infrastructure includes local and regional roads, cycleways and pathways, appropriate commuter car parking and accessible recreation facilities. Within the framework of a metropolis of three cities, where most residents live within 30 minutes of a metropolitan or strategic centre, the planning and delivery of key regional transport connections must support economic and employment growth. This will require meaningful collaboration with, and by, State agencies, supported by information from Council on the staging and location of growth.

Targeting infrastructure provision to areas expecting new housing and jobs makes more efficient use of land and financial resources while lessening potential environmental impacts.

We will plan to the extent legislation allows for local infrastructure for new communities. Local infrastructure in greenfield areas is funded and delivered by developers. Rate revenue that is collected in these new areas contributes to ongoing maintenance of this infrastructure. Local infrastructure in urban renewal areas is more complex and, in part, will need enhancement of existing assets.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning Priority 11

Plan for convenient, connected and accessible public transport.

Planning Priority 12

Influence travel behaviour to promote sustainable choices.

Planning Priority 13

Expand and improve the active transport network.

Planning Priority 14

Plan for a safe and efficient regional road network.

Planning Priority 15

Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces.

Measures:

- Mode share.
- Infrastructure projects planned and completed.
- Level of service of social infrastructure.



Planning Priority 11 Plan for convenient, connected and accessible public transport

Planning Priority 11 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C1 Planning for a city supported by infrastructure.
- C9 Deliver integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city.

Rationale

Easy access to public transport will shorten work commutes and increase the number of residents that can travel to their nearest centre within 30 minutes.

Sydney Metro Northwest has improved connections to Macquarie Park/Sydney CBD and within the local area. To make the most of this, Sydney Metro stations must be easy to get to; we will leverage opportunities to connect the local road network to Sydney Metro stations.

In addition to commuter car parking at selected Sydney Metro station locations, we are implementing the NSW Government’s Sydney Metro parking management strategy for streets within a 400-metre radius. Linking the network of cycleways and footpaths to Sydney Metro stations will also make it easier for people to get to public transport and take cars off the road. We are investigating ways to make best use of existing infrastructure to provide pop-up commuter parking, supported by regular bus routes, to provide additional commuter parking outside of the walkable catchment of stations.



Integrating land use planning with the delivery of new and improved transport, traffic and movement network is essential to shaping the future of The Hills.”

We need new transport solutions to connect residents of Box Hill and Box Hill North to Rouse Hill and the Sydney Metro network and extensive bus services. These greenfield areas are expected to accommodate close to 56,000 people and are already 35 per cent complete. Investigations are urgently needed to identify a public transport route that builds on the existing corridor along Withers Road, Mile End Road and Green Hills Drive.

Figure 24: Box Hill to Rouse Hill corridor identification

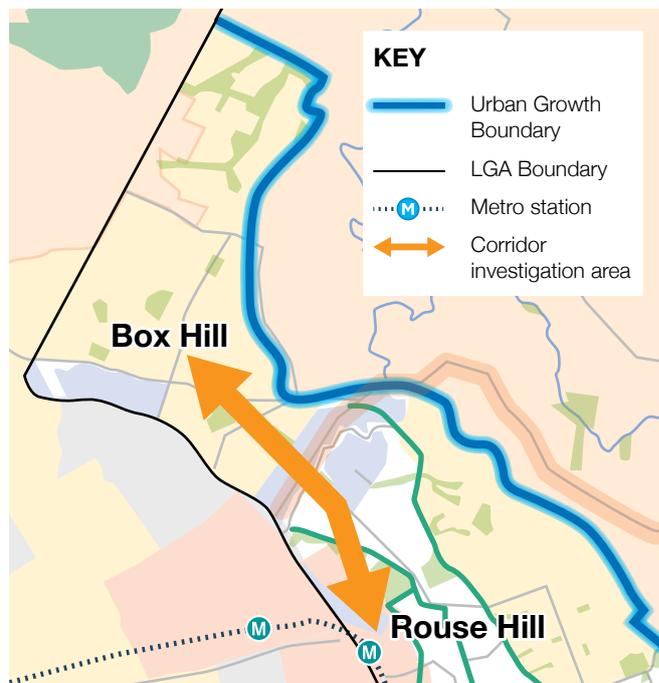
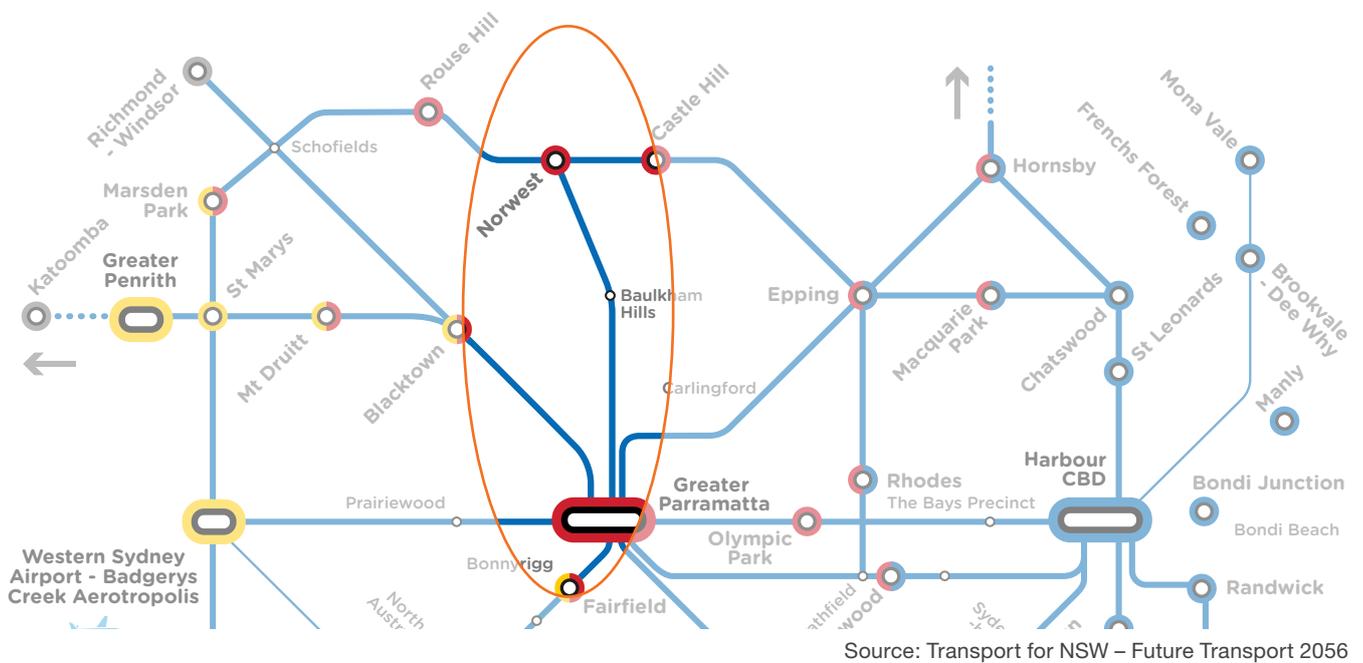


Figure 25: Potential mass transit link between Parramatta and Norwest, identified in *Future Transport 2056*



Parramatta is the CBD and focal point for jobs in the Central River City. Establishing a mass transit connection to Parramatta is another key priority. More than 12 per cent of working residents travel to Parramatta for work, almost as many as those who travel to the Sydney CBD. These workers will not be served by the Sydney Metro and will continue to rely on their own cars or buses in the short term. *Future Transport 2056* identifies a future mass transport link between Norwest and Parramatta and nominates a timeframe of approximately 20+ years before planning will commence. Early delivery of this link will cement Parramatta as the heart of the Central City.

Future Transport 2056 identifies Baulkham Hills as part of this mass transit link between Parramatta and Norwest. Assuming this would be a metro system, identifying a station location would reaffirm a commitment to the link and provide an opportunity to develop a bus interchange to service this route while planning for mass transit link is underway. Possible locations include Crown land around Baulkham Hills library or behind the Bull and Bush site. The library site is considered the optimal location with access to Windsor Road and the ability to contribute to any future underpasses or overpasses at Windsor Road and Seven Hills Road.

The North South Rail Link via Schofields should be prioritised to create connections from the Shire to centres within the Western Parkland City and to provide faster commutes to Parramatta. This would be an interim solution until the mass transit link between Parramatta and Norwest via Baulkham Hills is delivered.

As Sydney Metro Northwest shapes change and influences travel behaviour, the local bus network will remain an important public transport option. Bus patronage has increased in recent years and further investment in bus infrastructure will continue this trend. Buses provide convenient connections to Sydney Metro stations and serve routes that are not on the Sydney Metro network, including between The Hills and Parramatta. Our *Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy 2019* identifies bus priority measures that will help to improve the bus network.

Council will:

- Collaborate with Transport for NSW to identify and preserve a public transport corridor between Rouse Hill and Box Hill and determine the most appropriate transport mode.
- Monitor the NSW Government's Sydney Metro parking management strategy and identify improvements or appropriate extensions to its area of operation.
- Advocate for earlier planning and identification of necessary land for the mass transit link from Norwest to Parramatta.



Continued investment in bus infrastructure will help to increase bus patronage and support the operation of the Sydney Metro Northwest.”

Actions

- 11.1 Identify preliminary corridor and station options and advocate for the earlier planning for a mass transit link between Norwest and Parramatta (Ongoing).
- 11.2 Seek NSW Government commitment to the early planning and delivery of the North South Rail Link between Tallawong Station and St Marys (Ongoing).
- 11.3 Plan for and advocate to Transport for NSW for appropriate local bus priority measures as identified in the *Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy 2019* (Ongoing).
- 11.4 Commence a pilot program of pop-up commuter car parking (June 2022).





Planning Priority 12

Influence travel behaviour to promote sustainable choices

Planning Priority 12 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C1 Planning for a city supported by infrastructure.
- C9 Deliver integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city.

Rationale

The Hills Shire has historically high levels of car ownership due to fewer public transport options and relatively long distances to employment locations such as Parramatta, Sydney CBD and Macquarie Park.

Future Transport 2056 does not identify any major new road connections to or through The Hills within the next 20 years. Any additional vehicles will thus be added to the existing road network, increasing the need to address congestion issues and parking demand. Rather than meeting demand for car parking, an alternative approach is to influence demand. A transit-oriented development approach, where higher density housing is close to Sydney Metro stations and a mix of shops and services will reduce dependence on private cars for short trips and encourage public transport use.

Development controls in The Hills have historically provided for a large amount of parking. Reducing car parking rates for residential and commercial developments close to public transport could influence travel behaviour and reduce construction costs, potentially increasing development viability.

Car sharing initiatives in high density residential and commercial areas close to transport hubs will be supported through development controls such as reduced car parking rates for developments that incorporate shared parking facilities in station precincts, requirements for dedicated car sharing spaces for new developments or dedicated on-street parking for shared vehicles.

The availability of convenient and safe short-stay parking is essential to individual businesses and centres. Improving active and public transport quality, limiting the available long-stay parking and including paid short-term parking in appropriate locations will encourage a change in travel behaviour, enhance the effectiveness of public transport and support the economic vitality of businesses in the area.

Council will:

- Seek to influence travel behaviour through careful and technologically efficient management of parking demand.
- Consider the integration of smart technology in the management of parking systems and demand.

Actions

- 12.1 Review car parking rates for centres (June 2021).
- 12.2 Investigate and implement car parking controls for car sharing spaces in large-scale commercial and residential development (June 2022).
- 12.3 Investigate metred, short-term parking in key locations to manage parking demand and support businesses (June 2022).



The urban environment encourages alternative travel choices by making them convenient, safe and attractive.”



Planning Priority 13

Expand and improve the active transport network

Planning Priority 13 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C1 Planning for a city supported by infrastructure.
- C4 Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.
- C9 Deliver integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city.

Rationale

A network of pedestrian and cycle paths that link public transport hubs to parks, waterways, centres and services will encourage more people to use the Shire’s many recreation areas while potentially reducing the number of cars on local roads.

A safe, attractive and accessible walking and cycling network encourages people to be more active and connect with the natural environment. In general, providing these links also comes at a lower cost to Council and the community, as off-road links are less expensive to build and maintain than road connections.

Increasing walking and cycling links throughout the Shire will help to create places for people, characterised by slower movement and the prioritisation of walking and cycling over vehicle use. The Movement and Place Framework identified in *Future Transport 2056* recognises that when the pace of transit slows down, the quality and amenity of a place increases. This benefits residents’ physical and mental wellbeing as they walk or cycle to connect with their community.

Council will:

- Progressively identify and fill the gaps in the network off-road cycleways and footpaths.
- Support the health and wellbeing of residents by prioritising active transport links in centres and residential areas.

Actions

- 13.1 Review and update the Bike Plan (June 2021).
- 13.2 Improve wayfinding on existing and proposed cycleways (June 2023).



Places with walking and cycling at the forefront of design are attractive, safe and liveable areas with plenty of street activity.”





Planning Priority 14

Plan for a safe and efficient regional road network

Planning Priority 14 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C1 Planning for a city supported by infrastructure.
- C9 Deliver integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city.

Rationale

Upgrading and maintaining existing road infrastructure is a challenge. Key road connections identified in *Future Transport 2056* will enable fast and safe movement of people, goods and waste – all of which are increasing in number and volume. However, *Future Transport 2056* indicates these connections will not be planned within the next 20 years.

Road congestion is a source of frustration for Shire residents and creates a negative view of growth. While improvements to public transport can alleviate concerns in the short term, improving levels of service on arterial and regional roads will ensure the road network can support growth in the long term.

The Outer Sydney Orbital will connect The Hills to the Central Coast and South Coast via Western Sydney International Airport and will provide access to employment and business markets. The Orbital will be key to the success of Box Hill Business Park and will influence the Shire's agricultural and extractive industries sectors, as it will constitute the main freight link to the new airport.

Growth in Box Hill and neighbouring areas such as North Kellyville, The Ponds, Schofields and Riverstone in Blacktown LGA increases demand on Annangrove Road. It is frequently used as an alternative east-west route for people in the north of The Hills and Blacktown to access Hornsby and the M1 Motorway via Pennant Hills Road, to bypass Windsor Road, the M7 and M2 Motorways.

While most sections of the road operate at a satisfactory level of service, other sections, including between Bannerman Road, Sedger Road and Angus Road, are nearing capacity with up to 970 vehicles passing through during the morning and afternoon peak, equivalent to volumes expected on regional, rather than local roads. With Box Hill and Box Hill North only a third complete, traffic on Annangrove Road will only increase, particularly as employment lands in Box Hill develop to capacity and operators seek access to markets to the north and east.

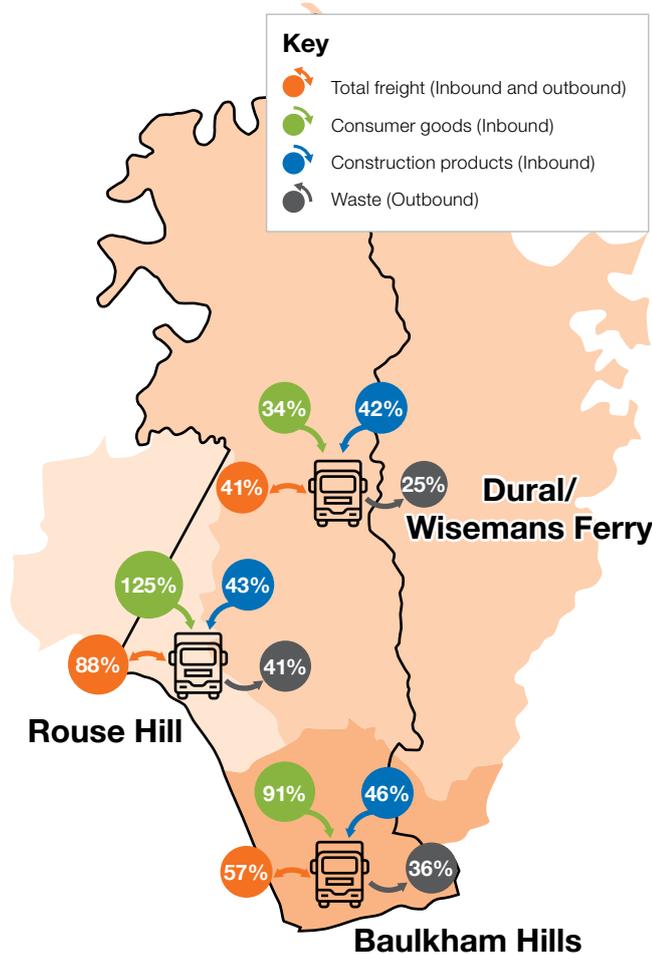
Amending the status of Annangrove Road from sub-arterial to arterial will help to secure the attention and funding to upgrade it to accommodate current and expected usage. In conjunction with upgrades to Annangrove Road, a bypass of Kenthurst Road to connect with New Line Road would ease congestion around Dural and Round Corner.

Residents living in and around Baulkham Hills face congestion and delays every day. Construction of an overpass or underpass (known as grade separation) at Windsor Road and Seven Hills/Old Northern Road will improve intersection capacity and functionality. Resolving traffic congestion at this location is needed in the short term and we will continue to advocate for grade separation to not only reduce congestion, but as a precursor to the identified corridor between Parramatta and Norwest.

Responding to the freight task

Freight demand in Greater Sydney will transform with population and economic growth, and changing consumption patterns. Figure 26 shows the expected changes in freight demand for The Hills Shire to 2036.

Figure 26: Changes in freight demand in The Hills Shire to 2036



Source: Transport Performance and Analytics (Transport for NSW)

Demand for construction materials for new infrastructure, and residential and commercial development will continue. Increasing consumer deliveries through e-commerce requires transport connections to be preserved and improved. Waste volumes will increase significantly as the Shire’s population grows. As existing landfill capacity is depleted, waste will increasingly need to be transported further afield.

With residential growth, we need to consider the local road network and its capacity to accommodate delivery vehicles, removalists and waste collection vehicles in addition to increased local traffic. This is challenging where streets are narrow and on street parking inhibits manoeuvring of larger vehicles. For Showground Station Precinct, the development control plan provides for widening of a number of local streets to facilitate parking on one side to improve the function of the road network.

Planning for freight and servicing of residential and commercial development supports economic growth and employment. It is crucial to how the Shire works and connects to adjoining areas, Greater Sydney and beyond. Planning for freight is a shared responsibility between the NSW Government and councils. Transport for NSW identifies and protects key freight corridors and builds transport infrastructure. Figure 27 (on page 76) shows the Shire’s existing freight corridors and networks. Key corridors are the M2/M7 Motorway, Old Northern Road, Windsor Road, Pennant Hills Road and Norwest Boulevard.

Land uses in The Hills that generate freight movements include extractive industries and intensive horticultural activities at Maroota, construction activities in the North West Growth Area, manufacturing and wholesale trade in Norwest, Castle Hill and Winston Hills, and Annangrove Road employment area.

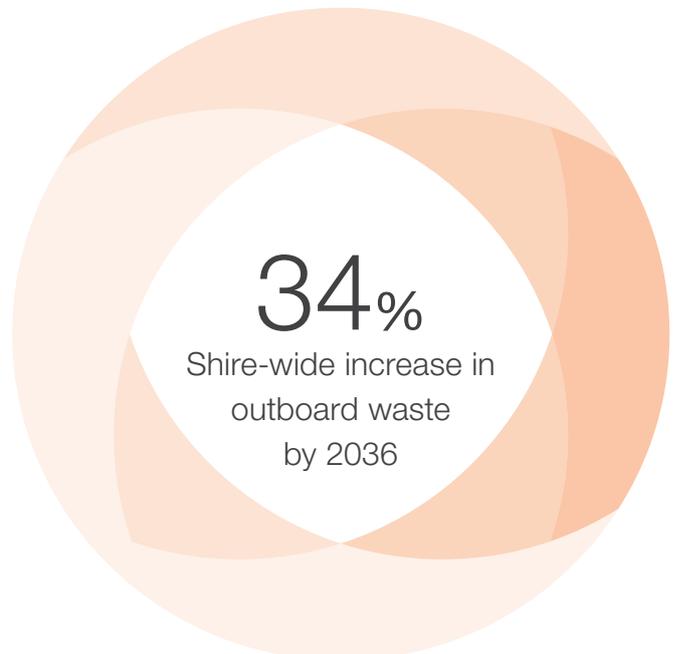
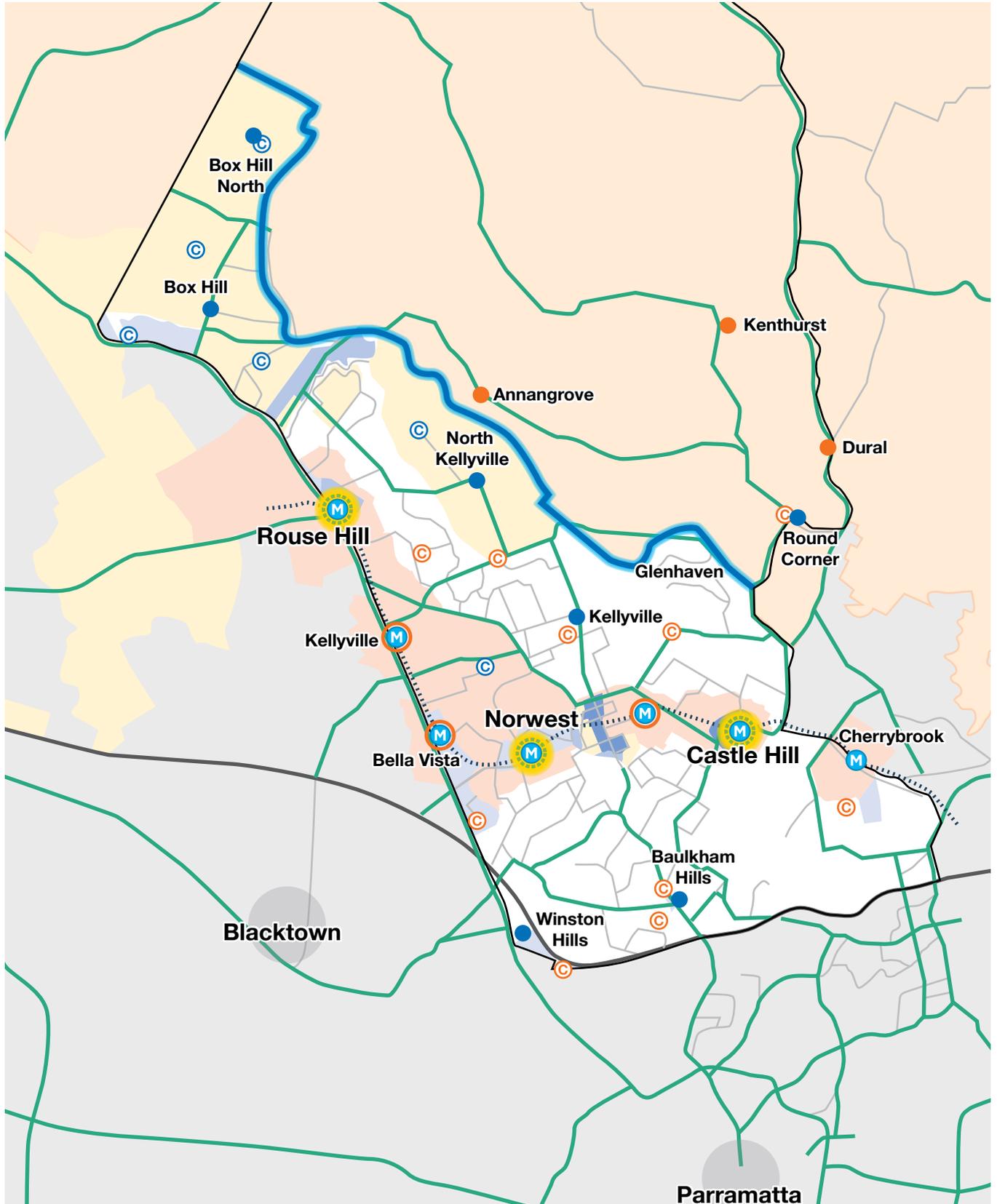




Figure 27: Freight and logistics precincts and key freight corridors through the Shire



| KEY | |
|---|--|
|  | LGA Boundary |
|  | Urban Growth Boundary |
|  | Metropolitan Rural Area |
|  | North West Growth Area |
|  | Station precincts |
|  | Industrial lands |
|  | Business parks |
|  | Retail and specialised retail land |
|  | Existing freight routes |
|  | Existing shopping centres/supermarkets |
|  | Planned shopping centres/supermarkets |
|  | Metro station |
|  | Metropolitan centres |
|  | Strategic centres |
|  | Town centres |
|  | Transit centres |

As we move towards 2036 and beyond, the commencement of NorthConnex and the planning and delivery of the Outer Sydney Orbital will connect existing and future employment lands to customers and markets in the Central Coast and further afield via the Western Sydney International Airport. In addition, strategic improvements to the regional road network (Annangrove Road and Baulkham Hills town centre) have the potential to better facilitate the movement of goods through the Shire.

At the local level, employment and industrial zoning allow for warehouse or distribution centres and a new land use term – ‘local distribution centre’ – seeks to permit smaller distribution centres close to where people live so that deliveries are made in smaller vehicles more appropriate to the urban environment. Local distribution centres may help reduce congestion and assist in meeting consumer expectations for fast on-time delivery.

With an IN1 General Industrial zoning, the Winston Hills employment precinct has potential for more intense freight and logistics operations, noting its proximity to Old Windsor Road and the M2/M7 motorways.

We will continue to advocate for regional road projects, monitor the uptake of local distribution centres to better understand demand and any barriers to their development, investigate opportunities to improve local road networks and review development controls for commercial and higher density residential development.

Council will:

- Advocate for regional road projects that will benefit the Shire as well as Greater Sydney.
- Monitor traffic levels on key regional roads to pinpoint timing for necessary upgrades.
- Monitor uptake of ‘local distribution centres’ and consider if the use is appropriate in additional zones to improve the efficiency of the freight network.
- Consider opportunities to improve local road networks to better accommodate delivery vehicles, removalists and waste collection as part of precinct planning.
- Review development controls for commercial and higher density residential development to ensure efficiency of deliveries and servicing.

Actions

- 14.1 Work with the NSW Government to revise the status of Annangrove Road to an arterial road (Ongoing).
- 14.2 Plan for and seek NSW Government support for grade separation at the intersection of Old Northern Road/Seven Hills Road and Windsor Road, Baulkham Hills (Ongoing).



The ***Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy 2019*** articulates our vision for land use and transport planning to 2036 and provides additional detail on the road hierarchy and regional and local transport priorities.





Planning Priority 15

Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces

Planning Priority 15 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C1 Planning for a city supported by infrastructure.
- C4 Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.
- C17 Delivering high quality open space.

Rationale

All residents should be able to easily reach high quality and well maintained playing fields, parks and playgrounds, whether it be to relax in a small local park or play organised sport at world-class sporting facilities.

Open space of all kinds enables an active, healthy lifestyle and creates opportunities to connect people to the natural environment. Open space also brings ecological benefits by providing and preserving vegetation links and habitat for native animals.

The Shire's active recreation facilities cater for a variety of formal sports and include indoor recreation centres, community facilities and private health and fitness venues.

We have developed an open space hierarchy and levels of service to guide the provision and embellishment of open space. Passive open space is generally provided at a rate of a minimum 1.62 hectares per 1,000 people; existing and planned provision in The Hills is expected to exceed this benchmark.

For active open space, an adopted level of service of one field per 2,000 people in low and medium density areas and one field per 4,000 people in high density areas will require us to source an additional 21 fields above those already planned.

Locating new fields in established urban areas is a challenge. We are actively seeking innovative solutions to this challenge through shared use of facilities with the Department of Education. Bella Vista Public School includes a synthetic playing field and indoor sports facility that is shared with Council. The experience gained through this collaboration will influence future collaboration opportunities on other school sites.

Caddies Creek Reserve is in the ownership of the NSW Government. We are working with the NSW Government to secure the ownership of this land as open space with additional playing fields and better active transport links between Rouse Hill and Kellyville. This will be part of the priority Green Grid connection along Caddies Creek, identified in the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*.

We are bound by an Essential Works List prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment that articulates what infrastructure can be included in a local contributions plan. This often leads to outcomes that are more expensive and less efficient. Broadening the list to include facilities such as synthetic playing fields will enable us to identify and levy for shared facilities and increase capacity of existing facilities. While embellishing existing open space may be expensive, it is often more cost effective than providing additional open space.

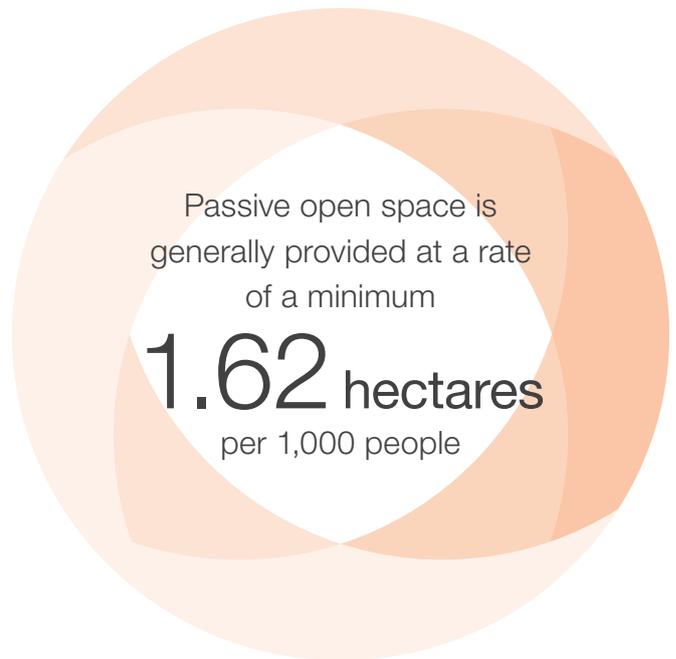


Council will:

- Progressively review and update key existing open spaces to reflect their role within the Open Space Hierarchy and Standard Levels of Service contained within the *Recreation Strategy 2019*.
- Investigate locations for new playing fields, shared use agreements with local schools and expansion of existing open space facilities to meet the future demand for open space and playing fields.

Actions

- 15.1 Apply the criteria in the *Recreation Strategy 2019* when planning for new passive and active open spaces (Ongoing).
- 15.2 Secure the transfer of NSW Government land adjoining Caddies Creek Reserve to facilitate planning for additional open space (June 2021).



The **Recreation Strategy 2019** articulates our vision for open space and recreation planning to 2036 and details the open space hierarchy, levels of service and existing and future gaps in provision.



Innovative solutions and collaboration are needed to provide the right amount of playing fields in the Shire.”





ENVIRONMENT

Valuing the Shire and its surroundings.

The Shire's natural environment and bushland setting provide desirable living conditions for Hills residents. As the Shire changes and transforms, careful management of natural assets and use of natural resources will ensure future generations will benefit from the Garden Shire lifestyle.

The natural environment shapes how people live, the spaces they play in, and the communities they live in. A focus on natural surroundings will contribute to building vibrant, healthy communities. Managing impacts responsibly through education and regulatory action is a key part of our Community Strategic Plan.

Over the next two decades, waste generation will more than double within the Central City District, and the overall use of natural resources will rise. Bushfire, flooding and extreme heat also have the potential to impact residents and infrastructure within The Hills, now and in the future.

We need to be proactive and smart as we seek to avoid the creation of waste, reduce resource consumption and be as efficient as possible in waste disposal. We also need to be prepared for the risks associated with environmental hazards in both the rural area and, in particular, in the urban area.



ENVIRONMENT

Planning Priority 16

Manage and protect the rural/urban interface.

Planning Priority 17

Protect areas of high environmental value and significance.

Planning Priority 18

Increase urban tree canopy cover.

Planning Priority 19

Manage natural resources and waste responsibly.

Planning Priority 20

Prepare residents for environmental and urban risks and hazards.

Measures:

- Increased tree canopy coverage in targeted areas including Kellyville and Box Hill.
- Environmental indicators (water quality, air quality).



Planning Priority 16 Manage and protect the rural/urban interface

Planning Priority 16 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C15 Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes.
- C18 Better managing rural areas.

Figure 28: Urban Growth Boundary



Rationale

Land at the interface between urban and rural areas provides a transition between rural and other more intense uses associated with urban development. Limiting the extent of more intense development preserves rural values and protects environmentally sensitive areas predominantly located in rural areas.

Despite sufficient capacity for residential growth in urban areas, there is pressure on land at the rural/urban fringe to be developed for residential uses. This impacts the availability of viable land for rural activities and threatens the character of rural areas. The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* recognises that urban expansion is not appropriate in the Metropolitan Rural Area. An Urban Growth Boundary will reinforce the commitment to protect land at the rural/urban interface.

Existing State planning policies, in particular the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004*, can sidestep local planning and allow outcomes detrimental to the values and character of the rural area. This requires us to continue to work with the NSW Government to protect rural lands from urban encroachment and support a productive rural economy that is free to operate without the constraint of land use conflict.

As noted in Planning Priority 8, we are collaborating with Hornsby Council, the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to investigate the impacts of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* in the rural areas.

Council will:

- Implement an Urban Growth Boundary that largely follows the boundary of the RU6 Transition zone.
- Not support planning proposals or development applications seeking to intensify urban land uses above the Urban Growth Boundary line.

Actions

- 16.1 Apply the outcomes of the Greater Sydney Commission working group in relation to seniors housing in rural areas (June 2021).



Protecting rural character is a high priority for Hills residents.”



The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* recognises that urban expansion is not appropriate in the Metropolitan Rural Area.



Planning Priority 17

Protect areas of high environmental value and significance

Planning Priority 17 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C13 Protecting and improving the health and enjoyment of the District’s waterways.
- C15 Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes.

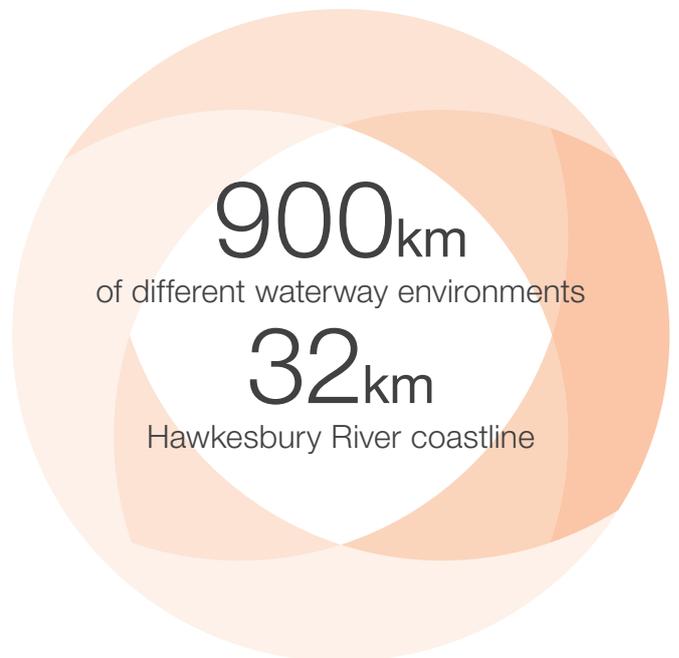
Rationale

The natural environment requires protection and management. Not only does it provide vital habitat for plants and animals and green spaces for people to enjoy, it supports human life and prosperity. The World Wildlife Fund’s *Living Planet Index 2018* observed that nature underpins all economic activity, presently worth an estimated US\$125 trillion on a global scale.

Large areas of densely vegetated land in the Shire are home to species of plants and animals, many of which are identified as vulnerable or critically endangered in the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. An improved understanding of the extent of these areas will enable us to better plan for their protection as well as the protection of the plants and animals they support.

Waterways

Around 900 kilometres of different waterway environments wind their way throughout the Shire; around 32 kilometres is Hawkesbury River coastline. These waterways facilitate conservation, recreation and tourism. We need to work with partners to monitor, improve and maintain water quality and ensure residents and visitors use these environments responsibly.



The Hills straddles the catchments of the Hawkesbury River and the Upper Parramatta River. The northern rural areas of The Hills drain to the Hawkesbury River while land south of Castle Hill drains to the Parramatta River and ultimately Sydney Harbour. Land in the Box Hill release area forms part of both the Hawkesbury River Catchment and the South Creek Catchment, with important drainage land preserved through environmental and public recreation zoning.

In addition to the Hawkesbury River, iconic waterways and waterbodies in the Shire include the Broadwater and Blundell's swamps; Killarney Chain of Ponds; Caddies Creek; Hunts Creek; and Darling Mills Creek.

We protect these waterways and waterbodies through statutory protections, using appropriate environmental land use zones (E2 Environmental Conservation and E3 Environmental Management) in combination with restricted development areas in selected locations.

We also provide and maintain infrastructure that addresses stormwater quantity and quality, and carry out waterway improvement works that stabilise and improve the condition of riparian corridors.

The Shire's waterways also link public and private open spaces, and in some areas are part of the Greater Sydney Green Grid. We map the health of waterway areas that we manage to inform decisions around improvement works and projects and will update mapping to reflect current conditions and to monitor the success of waterways improvements to date.

The overall health of the Hawkesbury River depends on the health of local waterways. We need to consider waterways, the stormwater network, wetlands and coastal areas along the Hawkesbury to safeguard future water supply and plan for the future health and enjoyment of wider water systems.

Sensitive lands

Protection of environmentally sensitive lands occurs through State legislation and local policies. At the State level, the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* affords significant protection; at a local level, LEP mapping, site-specific development control plans, conservation management plans and restricted development areas help us to identify and protect these areas.

The Terrestrial Biodiversity map identifies land with environmental values that could be negatively impacted through development. We are reviewing the map to more accurately reflect the nature and value of environmentally sensitive lands. The review is based on principles relating to habitat quality, vegetation type and density. We will include exclusion zones around established and approved dwellings and outbuildings on affected land so that reasonable development of rural properties is not restricted.

Important scenic and cultural areas in the Shire such as Castle Hill Heritage Park, Bella Vista Homestead and Balcombe Heights Estate are listed in our LEP and protected through conservation management plans. Restricted development areas are listed in our DCP and apply to land with exceptional views (along Windsor Road looking west over Bella Vista Farm to the Blue Mountains, for example). They also apply to views close to creek lines (in Castle Hill and Glenhaven). In many cases they are combined with environmental land use zones to afford extra protection to these sensitive areas.

Green Grid

The District Plan prioritises two Greater Sydney Green Grid corridors within The Hills: Cattai and Caddies Creek corridors. These corridors will provide walking and cycling connections to and between established and developing residential areas, and connect recreation areas, create green spaces in our urban area, assist with stormwater management and help to maintain biodiversity. By protecting these corridors we are committing to providing urban spaces that maintain the Garden Shire image.



Greater Sydney Green Grid

The Greater Sydney Green Grid is a long-term vision for a network of high quality green spaces and linkages that connect urban centres, public transport and features within the landscape. The Greater Sydney Green Grid will provide significant cooling benefits and will improve access to open space and natural areas. It will connect natural areas and support walking, cycling and leisure activities.



In rural areas, public access to the Green Grid corridors is limited, as they are mostly privately owned or face topographical constraints and bushfire risk. Their primary function therefore rests in scenic qualities, biodiversity conservation and providing habitats for plants and animals.

Council will:

- Protect natural assets and ensure the biodiversity of our Shire is appropriately identified and preserved for future generations.
- Retain and enhance vegetated riparian corridors, bird habitats and wildlife corridors across the Shire to support biodiversity and water quality outcomes.
- Seek opportunities to improve access to Green Grid corridors in our urban areas.
- Continue to manage areas of high environmental value.
- Continue to protect and enhance water quality in local catchment areas.
- Progressively fill the gaps in the network of paths to complete the Green Grid priorities identified in the District Plan.

Actions

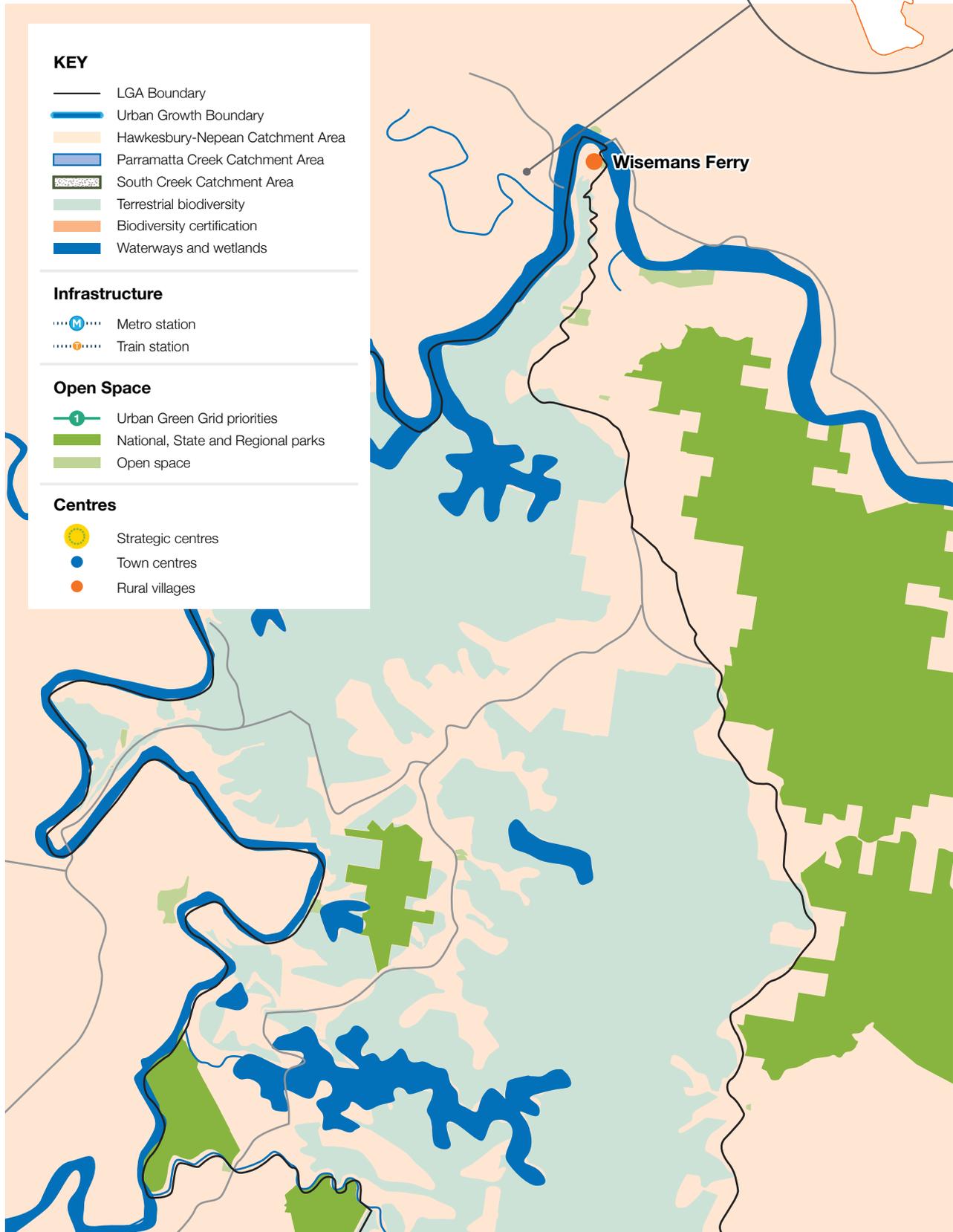
- 17.1 Review and update Terrestrial Biodiversity mapping as contained in our LEP (June 2023).
- 17.2 Commence a review to update waterway health mapping (June 2023).
- 17.3 Identify opportunities to collaborate with adjoining councils to link Green Grid corridor initiatives (Ongoing).







Figure 29: Environmental priorities and catchment areas



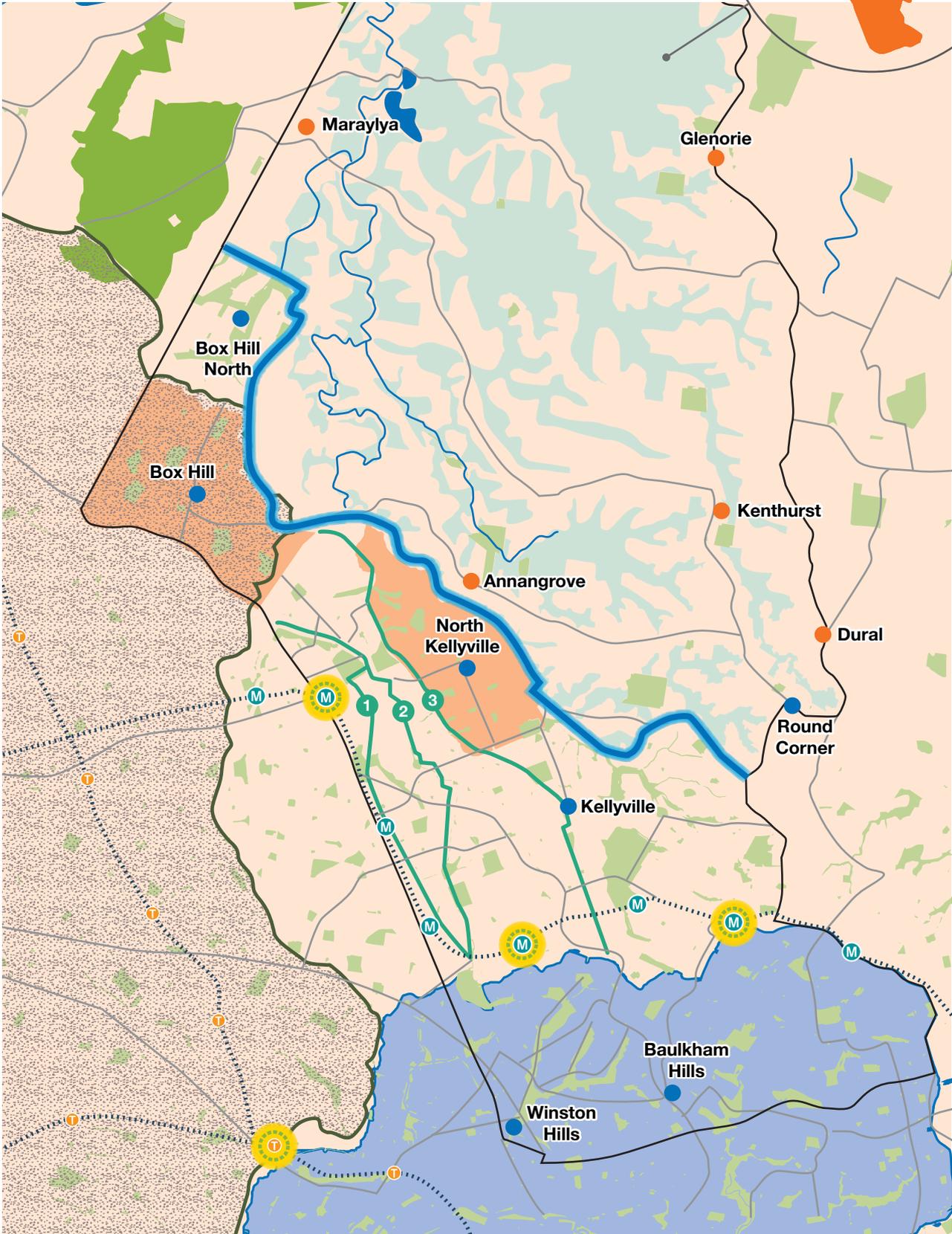
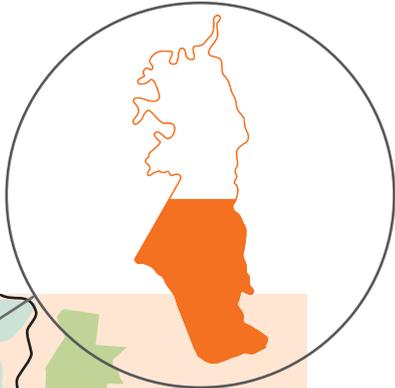
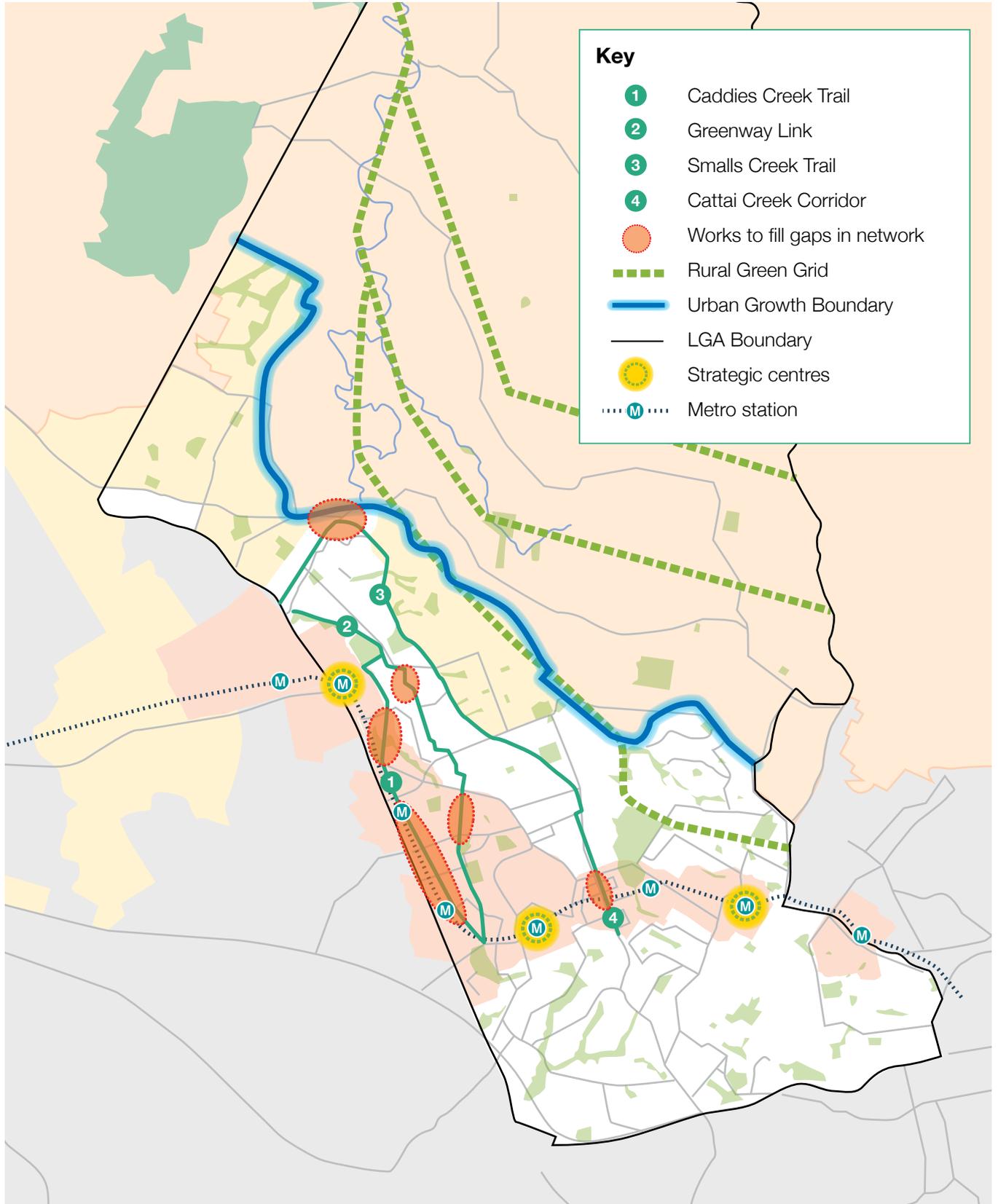


Figure 30: Urban Green Grid priorities





Planning Priority 18

Increase urban tree canopy cover

Planning Priority 18 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C16 Increased urban tree canopy.

Rationale

Tree-lined streets, urban bushland and tree cover on private land create the urban tree canopy, a form of green infrastructure that mitigates the urban heat island effect, supports cleaner air and water and provides areas of local habitat.

The Hills benefits from good urban tree canopy cover in the east of the urban area, which contain typically older detached dwellings on large lots; these are the areas of the Shire which have historically contributed to the Garden Shire image. Residential streets with wide setbacks contain established street trees, intermingled with large swathes of urban bushland such as Fred Caterson and Bidjigal reserves.

As residential development moves to the west and north of the Shire, development lots have become smaller and house sizes larger, reducing opportunities for tree planting. The urban tree canopy map shows the transition between older and newer suburbs. Some more established suburbs like Bella Vista have a leafy feel, but the density of tree cover is lower than in the more established eastern suburbs.



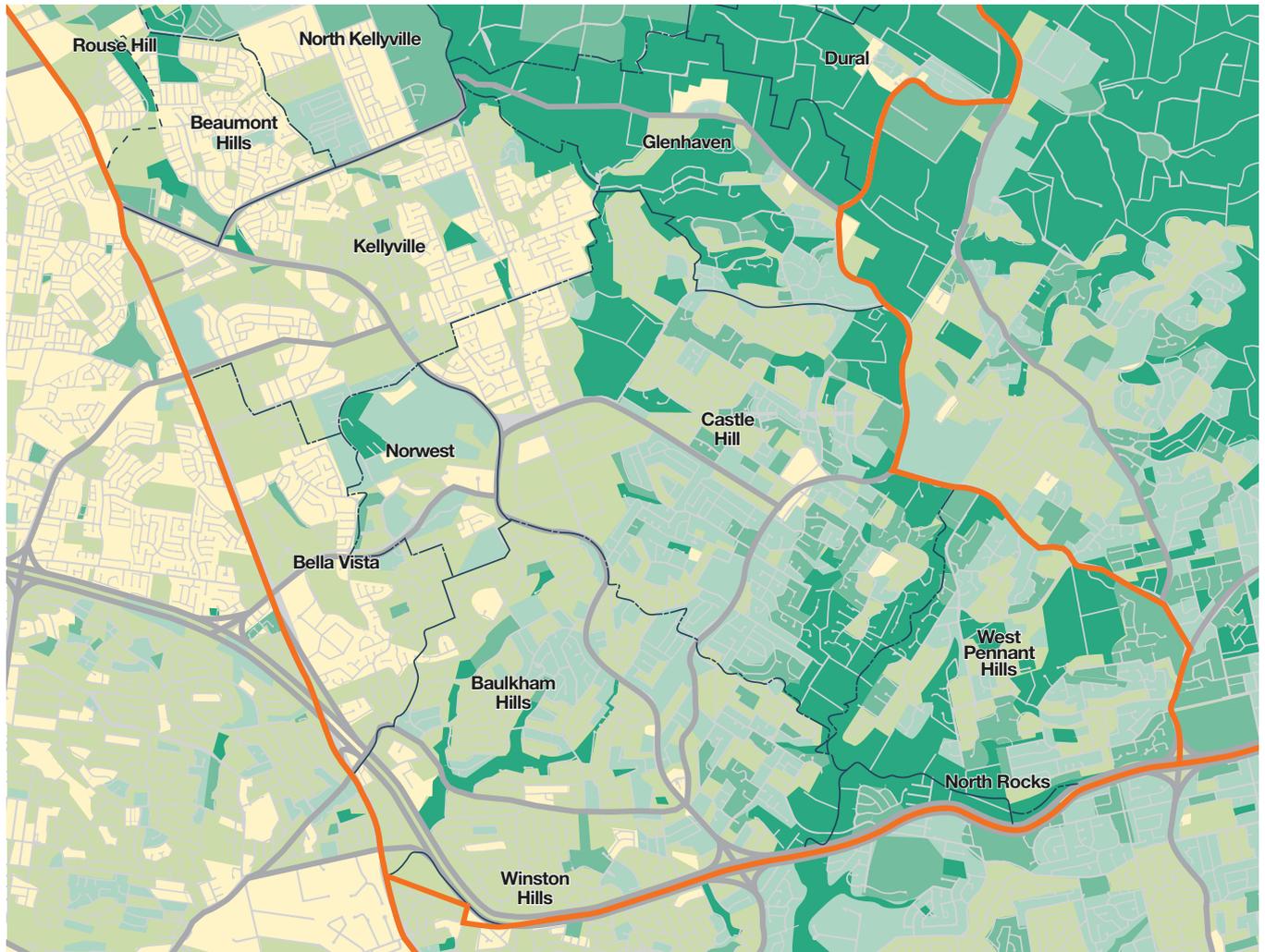
Urban heat island

The urban heat island effect is where large amounts of hard and dark-coloured surfaces like roads and roofs cause localised warming – meaning that built-up, urban areas are hotter than surrounding areas.

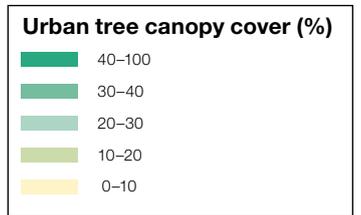


The urban tree canopy can build community resilience to a changing climate by reducing the impact of extreme heat, lowering living costs by reducing cooling requirements and contributing to the character of places.

Figure 31: Urban tree canopy



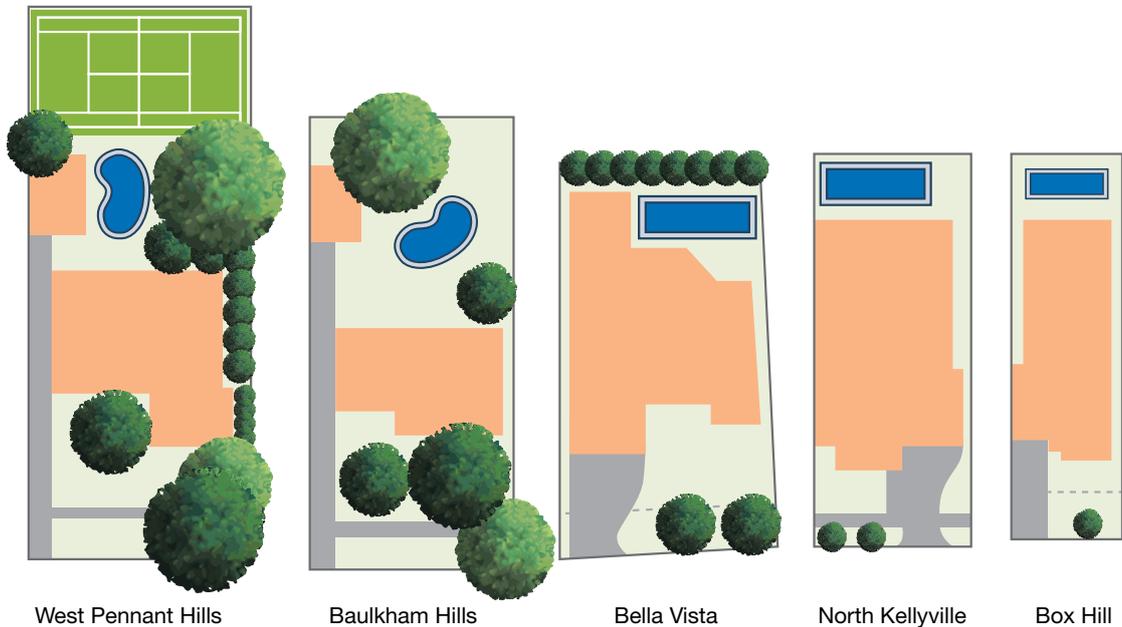
Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment



Our Street Tree Planting program helps residents to green their suburbs by providing street trees and giving advice on how to care for them.”



Figure 32: Evolution of housing lots in The Hills



As lot sizes get smaller, people are more likely to use public areas, which then makes tree cover more important. This, however, comes with challenges, as the location of utilities and services and smaller road verges limits the potential to plant trees in greenfield areas.

We have prepared street tree master plans for a number of locations to guide efforts to retain or build the character of greenfield and renewing areas. In high growth areas, street tree master plans will guide tree planting in public areas, with implementation through conditions of consent on development applications as well as through Council works programs.

Our Public Domain Strategy will also consider how street trees can be better accommodated in the public domain in developing areas. This may include using trees in traffic calming or enabling planting away from services contained within the road verge.

We lead the Street Tree Planting program that provides street trees to residents, whereby people can request a tree of their choice to be planted in a nominated location. We determine final planting location and species type after considering where services are located, sight lines, property width and growth characteristics of the chosen tree.

We received more than 250 requests for street tree planting in 2018; more than half of these came from Kellyville and North Kellyville. As new communities develop we will continue to promote the street tree planting program to help people in greening their neighbourhoods.

Council will:

- Incorporate measures to increase urban tree canopy and shading within the Public Domain Strategy.
- Progressively develop street tree master plans for high growth areas.
- Continue to educate residents in regards to the street tree planting program and the benefits of street trees.

Actions

- 18.1 Identify areas vulnerable to the urban heat island effect and direct planting and education efforts to these areas (June 2021).



Planning Priority 19

Manage natural resources and waste responsibly

Planning Priority 19 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C19 Reducing carbon emissions and managing energy, water and waste efficiently.

Rationale

Natural resource use, particularly water and energy, and the generation of waste impact the natural environment. How waste is stored, transferred and disposed also has environmental impacts.

Measuring carbon emissions provides an understanding of natural resource use. As of 2016, The Hills produced approximately 10.49 tonnes of carbon emissions per person, slightly below the Greater Sydney average. Most emissions are attributed to electricity and transport use with most electricity emissions originating from detached dwellings. This reflects primarily detached family housing and limited access to public transport, and a reliance on private vehicles. As the Shire grows and changes, so too will its impact on the environment.

Transit-oriented development around station precincts will create walkable, liveable communities adjacent to the Sydney Metro Northwest, where people are less reliant on private transport. A focus on design excellence, including a requirement to consider environmental impacts and align with the principles of ecologically sustainable development, will optimise solar access, orientation and natural ventilation to reduce reliance on artificial heating and cooling. Detailed development control plans will specify requirements to support natural ventilation, integrated water management and ecologically sustainable development.

Waste

By 2036, the amount of waste generated within the Central City District will increase by 137 per cent.

Overall, there has been an increase in the amount of materials diverted from landfill through recycling initiatives, chemical clean-up events, composting and green waste collection. However, as landfill facilities approach capacity and new sites become scarcer, we need to take every opportunity to avoid creating waste, reduce consumption and dispose of waste efficiently.



We are trialling innovative solutions such as on-site organics processing in apartment buildings to reduce waste management costs and the amount of waste going to landfill. We are also investigating large waste compactors for apartment buildings to reduce collection frequencies and trips to waste disposal facilities. We will also look into innovations such as re-use and recycling options for hard waste clean-up materials, and the collection of food waste in green lid bins.

The planning and design of new developments contribute to the efficiency of waste collection and management. Roads and laneways need to be wide enough for larger waste removal vehicles that reduce trips to distant disposal facilities. Loading facilities in apartment buildings and commercial areas must support efficient and safe waste collection while not impeding the development of attractive places or future innovations such as precinct-based waste collection, or re-use and recycling systems in higher density areas.

Energy and water

If water use continues at the same rate as today, consumption across the Shire could more than double by 2036. As an organisation, The Hills Shire Council is a large user of energy and water. We are committed to reducing energy and water use and have installed solar panels on Council facilities. We are becoming a more sustainable user of energy and will continue to look at opportunities to capture and re-use water to reduce water use.

Over the past five years, rooftop solar has become more efficient and cheaper to install, increasing residential and commercial uptake. Over 20 per cent of households in The Hills have installed solar panels, one of the highest percentages in Greater Sydney.

With better lighting technology, we now specify LED lighting for existing and new sporting facilities. As they use less power, LED lighting lowers operational costs.

Many residents have access to the Rouse Hill Water Recycling Scheme for use in the garden, laundry and toilets, and other outdoor uses. New developments require residents to install tanks to capture rainwater from rooftops for re-use in gardens. Rainwater tanks decrease the reliance on potable water and reduce the impacts of flash-flooding and storm surges in local waterways.

We continue to install sub-surface drainage and water tank infrastructure at sports complexes to capture and re-use water for irrigation. We use water from the Rouse Hill Water Recycling Scheme for sportsfield irrigation where possible, allowing us to maintain a high standard of playing surfaces while reducing reliance on potable water. This also reduces stormwater runoff and the leaching of nutrients into local waterways. Several synthetic turf playing fields have also been installed, which do not require irrigation.

We are responsible for stormwater management, which impacts the amenity of places and the health of the environment and waterways. Our Stormwater Asset Management Plan will detail how stormwater is managed, identify areas for improvement and will inform our capital works program.

8. ENVIRONMENT

Council will:

- Continue to educate our community on how to minimise waste generation and raise awareness of waste as a resource.
- Continue to investigate regional contracting opportunities that may assist in the development of an alternative waste disposal facility for Western Sydney.
- Continue to improve the efficiency of public assets through projects that decrease ongoing running costs.
- Investigate opportunities where precinct planning can incentivise development to exceed minimum BASIX ratings, reducing living costs and residents' carbon footprints.
- Investigate opportunities to capture and re-use water on Council-owned facilities.
- Continue to support the Design Excellence and Design Review panels in encouraging development that limits environmental impacts and accords with the principles of ecologically sustainable design.
- Continue to limit impacts on natural resources through the preparation, review and implementation of development control plans.

Actions

- 19.1 Commence trial of on-site organics waste separation for high density developments (June 2023).
- 19.2 Seek community feedback on the collection of food waste in existing green lid bins (June 2022).
- 19.3 Review development controls for residential flat buildings and rear laneways to ensure that sufficient space is available for efficient and safe waste collection (June 2022).
- 19.4 Complete the Stormwater Asset Management Plan (June 2023).





Planning Priority 20

Prepare residents for environmental and urban risks and hazards

Planning Priority 20 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C20 Adapting to the impacts of urban and natural hazards and climate change.

Rationale

The Shire's rural land is heavily vegetated and at risk of bushfire. Much of this land is also steeply sloping and at risk of geotechnical instability. The Shire's location in the Hawkesbury River Catchment places some properties at risk of flooding.

Risks associated with bushfire and flooding include fire damage, property inundation, isolation due to road closures and health impacts associated with flood waters. The Hawkesbury-Nepean River is fed by major tributaries but is confined by steep terrain as it winds its way through The Hills resulting in the 'bath tub' effect. Areas around Windsor, Richmond and Penrith flood rapidly and deeply and drain slowly. Most flood-affected land in The Hills is within rural areas north of the Urban Growth Boundary. Risk is managed through land use controls that limit growth in these areas and through flood controls in The Hills DCP.

Urban environments that have been mostly cleared of vegetation, such as industrial land or new residential areas, are vulnerable to the urban heat island effect. Hard surfaces such as concrete, asphalt and dark roofs combine to attract and retain heat, making these areas hotter than non-urbanised areas. Increasing awareness of risks associated with extreme weather conditions and the natural environment will help residents to make decisions that may reduce the impact of these events.

With more people comes more transport use and waste generation, which have a negative influence on air quality (dust, smoke and odours) and noise pollution (traffic, construction and industry). Management of public health risks associated with food safety, waterway quality and recreational facilities, and the transmission of communicable diseases, becomes vitally important in areas where more people live, work and play closer to one another.

We minimise risk by designing and building assets that embed public safety principles while providing opportunities for people to connect. We will continue to educate the community about environmental risks and hazards and develop mechanisms to minimise these risks so that new developments are less likely to be affected by extreme weather events.

Council will:

- Continue to provide hazard identification maps that show areas at risk of bushfire and geotechnical instability.
- Educate and inform our community about environmental and weather-related risks and hazards.
- Continue to collaborate with the NSW Government, including Infrastructure NSW, in response to the Hawkesbury Nepean Flood Study and regional flood risk, including flood awareness and education in the Hawkesbury Nepean catchment.

Actions

- 20.1 Prepare a suite of information material to raise awareness of and prepare existing and future residents for environmental and urban risks and hazards (June 2021).
- 20.2 Review and update flood planning controls and flood plan as required (Ongoing).



The ***Environment Strategy 2019*** articulates Council's vision for the protection and management of the environment to support a healthy and vibrant community.





PROACTIVE LEADERSHIP

Valuing and engaging the community.

As a Council, we value residents as customers and work to achieve prudent financial management and sound governance.

In a planning context, this requires us to keep the community informed and provide opportunities for people to participate in strategic land use planning decisions that affect them.

We also need to ensure that the strategic land use decisions we make today will be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable into the future.



PROACTIVE LEADERSHIP

Planning Priority 21

Prepare residents for growth and change.

Planning Priority 22

Initiate and deliver solutions to growth and change challenges.

Planning Priority 23

Collaborate with other councils and the NSW Government to improve places.

Measures:

- Increased community participation in planning.
- Appropriateness and quality of landowner-initiated planning proposals.
- Success of collaboration projects.



Planning Priority 21

Prepare residents for growth and change

Planning Priority 21 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C2 Working through collaboration.
- C4 Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.

Rationale

As the Shire grows and changes, the community has the right to participate and be engaged in making decisions that affect their future. By regularly engaging with the community, we increase our knowledge and create more chances to identify the challenges and opportunities that are important to residents.

We engage with the community at all levels of planning for change, from the preparation of strategic documents including The Hills Shire Plan and *Hills Future 2036*, to site-specific strategic decisions, including planning proposals and individual development applications.

Our Community Engagement Strategy details how we engage with the community and encourages community participation in the planning system. It is our primary tool to guide engagement around the preparation of The Hills Shire Plan, including the Community Strategic Plan.

Our Community Participation Plan sits within the Community Engagement Strategy and meets the requirements of the EP&A Act. It details the circumstances in which we will engage with the community on specific planning matters and how that consultation may take place.

Council will:

- Encourage increased community participation in the planning system.
- Educate and inform our community about planning matters which affect them.

Actions

- 21.1 Review and update the Community Engagement Strategy and Community Participation Plan as required (Ongoing).



We've been out there talking to and working alongside industry leaders, our local MPs and the community. We've begun the robust conversation to embrace, manage and plan for growth – working together.”

Mayor of The Hills Shire, Dr Michelle Byrne





Planning Priority 22

Initiate and deliver solutions to growth and change challenges

Planning Priority 22 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C2 Working through collaboration.

Rationale

We will continue to provide sound governance in the face of change and the challenges associated with growth by finding the right solutions that will make The Hills a premier destination to live, work and play as the population and economy grows.

Council has a direct role in the creation of great places, which must be well planned and designed. Creating great places requires different thinking and a focus on what makes a good place to live. To meet the challenge of significant growth we will use a combination of the physical and digital worlds to help the Shire function effectively.

Planning for communities

We use a master planning approach to plan for new areas of development, or to plan for the renewal of existing places. Master planning is a holistic approach to planning for an area. It takes a long-term view and considers all elements that come together to create a place – buildings, open spaces, public spaces, community facilities and services. Coupled with our focus on transit-oriented development, master planning helps to locate housing close to transport locations, plans for efficient infrastructure, and prioritises active transport where possible. These approaches combine to benefit the environment by making efficient and appropriate use of land and reducing car dependency.

Strategic planning approach

Strategic planning includes the preparation, exhibition and adoption of precinct plans, technical studies (including traffic modelling) and contributions plans. This is the most efficient way to ensure future development can be adequately serviced.

In an environment of rapid change, we need to efficiently manage landowner-initiated planning proposals.

In most cases, planning proposals seek to amend planning controls to increase residential densities and development yield, often on isolated sites. We have, in recent times, received planning proposals seeking development outcomes well in excess of what can be justified under existing strategic planning controls; approving these would result in poor design quality and inadequate infrastructure support.

When lodged in isolation from strategic planning, site-specific planning proposals are difficult to assess as longer-term and broader development outcomes are unclear, with ad hoc, potentially disconnected results. Further, as applicants can seek a review of Council decisions from planning panels, we are less able to make decisions based on strategic outcomes and community expectations.

Planning Proposal Policy

Despite these challenges, landowner-initiated proposals do help to deliver required housing, jobs and infrastructure. We will develop a policy to guide the preparation of proposals and articulate our position to the development industry and the community. The policy will consider:

- whether to articulate locations where planning proposals will (and will not) be considered (in accordance with *Hills Future 2036* and supporting strategies).
- the extent to which developers must address the need for new infrastructure and public benefits associated with increased development yields.
- the process for accepting and assessing planning proposals and the prevention of ambit claims and overdevelopment.
- information requirements for lodgement of planning proposals.
- guidance with respect to the key elements of a successful planning proposal.

Urbanisation and technology

Evolving technology quickly becomes part of everyday life. As it gets cheaper and easier to produce, its appeal and accessibility increases. Consideration of how to best integrate evolving technologies such as 5G, big data, the Internet of Things, electric vehicle charging points, and automation into the fabric of our public spaces will assist in improving amenity and social connectedness.

We will improve the design and management of public places by integrating appropriate new technologies within these spaces to support residents, workers and visitors. These technologies enable things such as real-time monitoring of traffic flow and car parking, energy management and waste collection, all of which can improve the quality of life for residents as well as environmental outcomes. Considering how to integrate these technologies during master planning will make it easier and more cost effective for the private sector to deliver these technologies as they become more widespread.

A focus on technology as part of the master planning process will be guided by the following principles:

- Governance – collaboration across government, industry and business.
- Living – connects people and uses technology-enabled infrastructure.
- Economy – digital infrastructure to support business growth, investment and sustainability.
- People – a strong and connected community using technology that enables everyone to participate.
- Environment – technology and innovation to improve the environment.

Council will:

- Seek to integrate technology as part of master planning for new communities in a way that responsibly manages impacts on public land while providing better connected and informed communities.
- Articulate our expectations in regards to the quality, location and requirements for lodgement of new planning proposals.

Actions

- 22.1 Prepare and endorse a policy to guide the delivery and use of evolving technologies in the urban environment (June 2022).
- 22.2 Prepare and endorse a Planning Proposal Policy to articulate the circumstances under which Council will consider changes to land use zones within the Shire. (June 2020).





Planning Priority 23

Collaborate with other councils and the NSW Government to improve places

Planning Priority 23 gives effect to the *Central City District Plan*, specifically:

- C2 Working through collaboration.

Rationale

Meeting the challenge of unprecedented population growth cannot occur in isolation and will require cooperation and collaboration with the NSW Government and neighbouring councils to provide the best possible outcomes.

Opportunities exist to collaborate with neighbouring councils and the NSW Government to improve outcomes in areas including major infrastructure improvements, management of shared natural assets, jobs creation, active transport links and place-making.



Smart growth means collaboration and better sharing the resources we already have. Sharing and efficiency are absolutely essential in the environment and times we live in.”

Mayor of The Hills Shire, Dr Michelle Byrne

We are already working in collaboration with other councils and State agencies on the Hawkesbury Nepean Flood Study, Hawkesbury Catchment Management Plan and shared use of sporting facilities at Bella Vista Public School. Other opportunities include:

- the creation of a health precinct around Rouse Hill Hospital.
- planning and delivery of the Norwest to Parramatta mass transit link and extension of the Sydney Metro Northwest from Tallawong to St Marys.
- shared sporting facilities in other schools.

Council will:

- Welcome opportunities to collaborate with the NSW Government and/or other councils where it will enable better community outcomes and meet the priorities of *Hills Future 2036*.



IMPLEMENTATION

As our Local Strategic Planning Statement, *Hills Future 2036* communicates the long-term land use strategy for The Hills Shire between 2016 and 2036. To realise our vision, we will need to amend existing plans and policies to create a framework for strategic planning.

Detail on the implementation of individual actions in *Hills Future 2036* is included in our *Local Strategic Planning Statement Implementation Plan*.

LEP amendments

Amendments to the LEP are subject to planning proposals in accordance with section 3.4 of the EP&A Act. Planning proposals may be prepared by Council or by applicants. Whether they align with the strategic direction of *Hills Future 2036* will be a key consideration in their assessment.

Hills Future 2036 and supporting strategies demonstrate sufficient capacity in existing zoned land and strategically identified land to meet housing targets. Changes to planning controls may be required following further investigations and precinct planning. We expect to complete this work by the next five-year review.

Proposed amendments that do not warrant detailed master planning or further investigations will be included in the LEP review to be completed by June 2020.

Monitoring and review

Council will monitor, review and report on *Hills Future 2036* under the existing Integrated Planning and Reporting framework within the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act).

Our first full review will occur in line with legislation and align with the review period with community strategic planning and IP&R under the LG Act.

Funding

Hills Future 2036 influences our resourcing strategy, with funding of strategies and studies to be considered in the four-year delivery program and annual operational plan.

Partnerships

As outlined in Planning Priority 23, we will establish effective partnerships with other councils to recognise and collaborate on regional matters that require a coordinated approach. *Hills Future 2036* provides a framework for us to coordinate with many other partners in delivery. We will continue to establish effective partnerships with State agencies and other organisations to support the realisation of *Hills Future 2036*.



The Hills Shire Council



+61 2 9843 0555

During business hours (8am – 4.30pm Mon – Fri)



The Hills Shire Council

3 Columbia Court, Norwest 2153



The Hills Shire Council

PO Box 7064, Norwest 2153



thehills.nsw.gov.au



If you do not speak English and need an interpreter,
please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service
on 131 450 and ask them to call Council on 9843 0555.