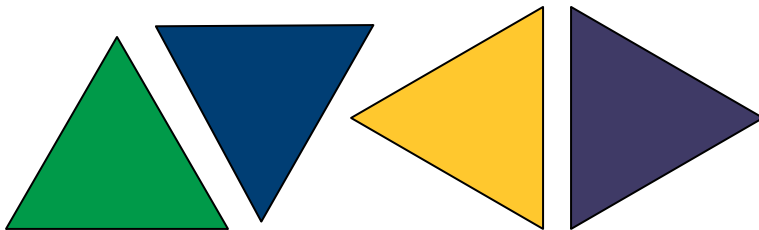


# SOUTHERN COUNCILS GROUP SUBMISSION TO PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE NSW

11 November 2013

## The Illawarra Over the Next 20 Years Discussion Paper

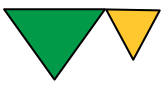


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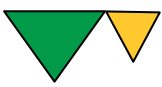
# Introduction

SCG welcomes the release of the Illawarra Over the Next 20 Years Discussion Paper and the approach it takes of seeking to support economic growth in NSW through the delivery of efficient and effective strategic planning.

Southern Councils Group extends across the Illawarra and South East of NSW. The Illawarra region begins just south of Sydney covering 8,485 square kilometres stretching from Helensburgh in the north to Durras Waters 228 kilometres to the south and centres of Bowral, Moss Vale and Mittagong to the west, and is bounded by the ocean to the east. The South Coast region stretches from Durras in the north to the Victorian border in the south and is bounded by the Great Dividing Range to the west and the Tasman Sea to the east, covering 9702 square kilometres.

The residential population of half a million can double, and up to treble, in coastal locations during the summer months from the October long weekend to Easter. With a large multicultural influence in the north of the region, an ageing retirement population in the south and west, and a small but strong indigenous presence in all areas, the region is both historically, geo-physically and socially, a micro-representation of Australia itself. Economically, despite recent adversity the region is significant. With an increasingly diverse manufacturing base, ports at the northern and southern ends of the region, a vibrant tertiary education sector closely allied to the region's entrepreneurial spirit, close proximity to Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, and a "can do" attitude, it is poised to take advantage of initiatives such as the economic growth which the regional growth plan aims to foster.

The SCG Board discussed the Illawarra Regional Growth Plan at its meeting held 18 September 2013 and resolved that a submission, informed by member Councils submissions, and a meeting with the Directors of Planning from member Councils, be prepared and submitted by the due date.



# The Illawarra over the next 20 years: Discussion Paper

## The SCG regional advantage

*Location, Location, Location.*

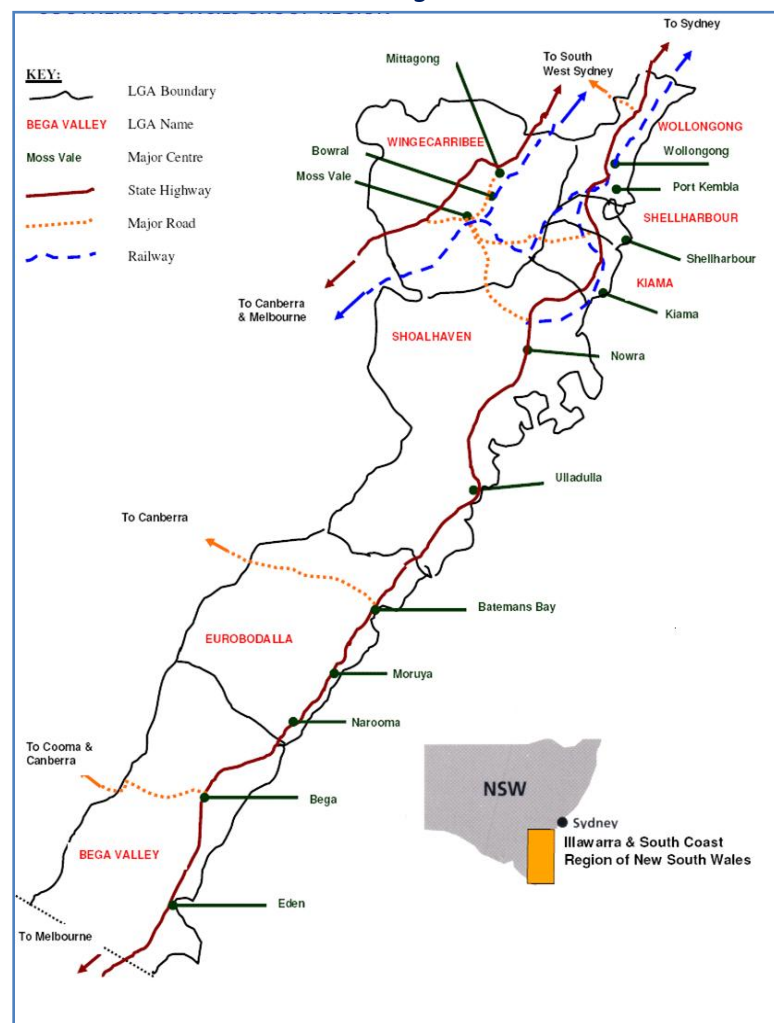
The SCG Region is characterised by its location – central to, and with major transport linkages to Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.

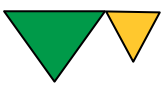
In addition, proposals for:

- ▶ A 2<sup>nd</sup> Sydney airport at Wilton,
- ▶ High Speed Rail from Sydney to Melbourne,
- ▶ The Maldon Dombarton Freight Rail line from the Port of Port Kembla to the hinterland,
- ▶ Further NBN rollout

All offer a solid base for economic growth.

Illawarra and South Coast Region





# Shaping the Illawarra

## Important Connections

As noted above, the interconnectivity of the Wollongong Shellharbour and Kiama region to the Southern Highlands, the Shoalhaven and far south coast, and to Sydney is considered by of paramount importance to the future of the area and a significant regional advantage. On a macro-level, the connectivity of the wider SCG region to Sydney, the ACT, Victoria and Melbourne is also recognised and a recent Strategic Economic Analysis of the SEATS Region Cross Border Study highlights the “picture of a vibrant, rich and diverse sub-region reliant on an effective road network to achieve its considerable potential” and which “punches above its weight”. The region is also a player at the global level due in no small part to Port Kembla.

SCG particularly recognises the importance of the major north-south connections of the Princes and Hume Highways, the South Coast and Main South rail lines, and the increasing significance of the east-west connections that link these, including the potential of the Maldon Dombarton rail line, and the need to consider future connections to a possible High Speed Rail corridor on the escarpment.

Greater recognition of the Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven strategic development may need to be factored in the eventual Plan, particularly the role that Shoalhaven and specifically Nowra-Bomaderry play in the settlement and employment options for the Illawarra; and that the Wingecarribee plays in the development of the Port of Port Kembla.

## Efficient Transport Networks

SCG has a long history of working in partnership with other regional agencies and organisations for effectively integrated transport and land-use strategies. While it applauds the development of the NSW Transport Master Plan, and has participated in discussions towards the development of a Regional Transport Plan for the Illawarra District, it is concerned that the release of this has been delayed to date, and is not available to be reviewed in conjunction with this Discussion Paper. SCG economic developers and transport planners believe that finalisation and release of the Regional Transport Plan is essential for consideration prior to further development of the planning strategy. Land use and transport planning **must** go hand in hand.

## Regional Demographics

SCG member Councils have questioned the demographic projections of the Discussion Paper. These necessarily underpin much of the strategic direction for the region, with particular implications for the employment and workforce projections, the role of centres, and the case for investment in both soft and hard infrastructure development. Getting these projections as close to reality as possible is critical to the success of the Plan and more consultation and dialogue with credible data sources may be necessary to achieve this.

## Governance and Accountability

Member Councils are vitally aware of the need to ensure that robust governance and accountability measures, based on believable and measurable performance indicators, are built into the final plan. For this reason, SCG strongly supports the need for clearly articulated governance arrangements “to formalise the shared responsibility and cooperation between the State and local Government in the delivery outcomes for the region”.