



Planning &
Environment

DRAFT
Central Coast
Coast
REGIONAL PLAN



CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL PLAN
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FOREWORD

The Central Coast is one of the great places to live. It has a fantastic environment; comparatively affordable housing; a skilled workforce and significant natural, agricultural and extractive resources.

To make sure this region continues to be one of the great places to live, work and visit we need a plan for the future. The *Draft Central Coast Regional Plan* is our proposed blueprint for the next 20 years and it has been developed with the benefit of community and stakeholder consultation.

It outlines a vision, goals and actions that are geared to growing the regional economy, accelerating housing supply, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The environment is the defining feature of this region and the draft Plan identifies its high value environmental areas, including its water catchments, and outlines actions to protect these areas.

To grow more local jobs, provide more services and create more business opportunities, the draft Plan focuses infrastructure and investment in two newly identified regional economic corridors – Somersby to Erina in the south and Tuggerah to Warnervale in the north, including Gosford, the region's capital, and at the major centres of Tuggerah, Wyong and Erina.

It proposes revitalising the region's centres so they become attractive places to live, work and visit, and provide the services for the growing and changing population. It outlines actions to improve roads and public transport to make it easier for residents to get around the region and for business to leverage access to Sydney, Newcastle and the entire State.

It proposes to accelerate housing in and around Gosford to take advantage of the services and infrastructure available, and in the new release areas of Warnervale and Wadalba.

Greater housing choice is prioritised to satisfy the community's desire for smaller households, more affordable housing and opportunities to age-in-place.

The draft Plan includes actions to enhance access to the foreshore, open space and recreation areas and to develop a regional walking and cycling network.

We want to know what you think about the vision, goals and actions in this 20-year plan for the Central Coast because we need everyone working with a common purpose to realise a sustainable and prosperous future for this region.

Have your say.

Scot MacDonald MLC

Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast



INTRODUCTION

The Central Coast includes the two local government areas of Gosford and Wyong (see Figure 1).

The natural environment is the defining feature of the Central Coast and its most important asset. More than half of the region is waterways or areas which have significant biodiversity value.

The predominant ridgelines, valleys, waterways, coast and floodplains east of the M1 Pacific Motorway have shaped the way urban development has occurred in the region. They have concentrated settlement within well-defined urban corridors and centres, primarily along the coast and the Sydney to Newcastle rail corridor, providing attractive residential settings for the community.

The region is at the centre of the State's fastest growing corridor from the northern edge of Sydney to Newcastle. The projected population along this corridor is estimated to be 1.1 million by 2036.¹

Proximity to Sydney has driven residential and employment growth on the Central Coast and will continue to be a major influence into the future. In the period 2016-21, 65 per cent of the region's population growth is expected to come from people outside of the region, with this rising to 85 per cent of new residents by 2031-36.² This in-migration will continue to underpin economic growth as the region's economy becomes more diverse and vibrant, with a variety of local jobs.

More than 95 per cent of the region's population lives within the eastern part of the Central Coast, taking advantage of the 81 kilometres of ocean foreshore and the coastal lakes, rivers, estuaries, lagoons, valleys and mountains.

The western area of the region is characterised by high value conservation and agricultural lands. The agricultural sector and extractive industries in this part of the region both contribute to the regional and State economy.

The Central Coast contributed \$10.8 billion or eight per cent of regional NSW's gross regional product in 2013. Health care and social assistance are the largest employers in the region (17.4 per cent).³ These sectors will be increasingly important for local employment as the region's population grows and ages.

Over the next 20 years, the population of the Central Coast is projected to increase by 70,000 to 409,450. The demographic characteristics of the community will also change. Most of the projected population growth for the Gosford local government area will occur among people over the age of 65 years. The number of residents aged over 65 years across the region is expected to increase from 20 per cent to 28 per cent of the overall population over the next 20 years. Household size will also change, with 72 per cent of the projected growth occurring in single or couple-only households.⁴

Recognising these attributes, the Draft Central Coast Regional Plan (the draft Plan) aims to accelerate housing supply, grow the regional economy and protect and enhance the natural environment and amenity of the region.

To achieve these outcomes, the draft Plan provides the strategic policy, planning and decision-making framework to guide the region's sustainable growth over the next 20 years. It integrates economic, social and environmental considerations in the interests of achieving ecologically sustainable development for the region.



Developing the draft Plan

The draft Plan responds to widespread consultation with community members, industry, interest groups, and State and local government representatives, following the release of the *Your Future Central Coast Discussion Paper* in late 2014. Feedback on the Discussion Paper was received through 85 written and 15 online submissions, 485 completed surveys and more than 630 online and social media comments. Over 400 participants also attended stakeholder discussions.

A comprehensive evidence-base also underpins the draft Plan. This includes data and projections on population, housing, employment and transport. Important environmental and natural resource values have also been considered.

Other inputs into the draft Plan include:

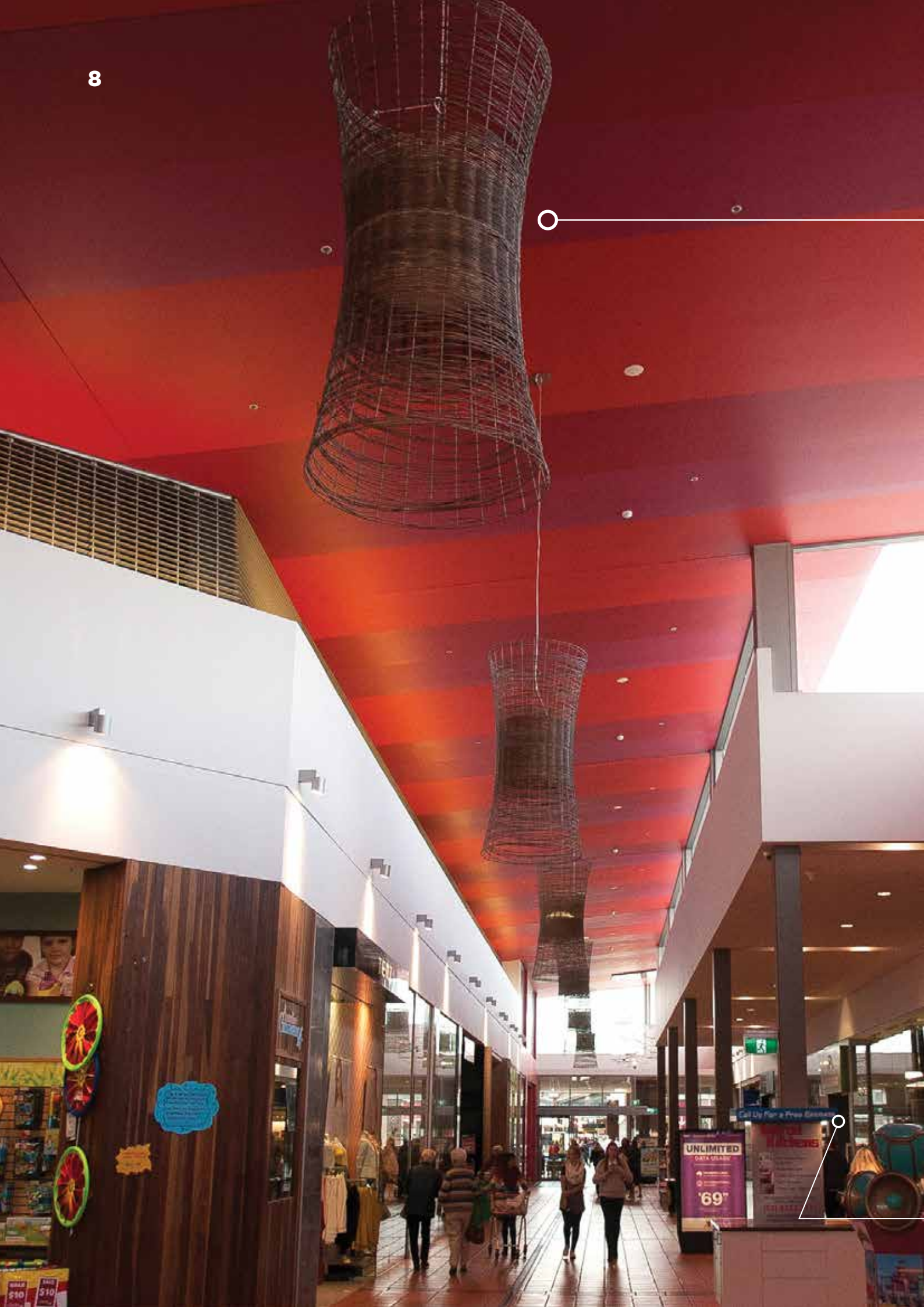
- previous plans and strategies including the *Central Coast Regional Strategy* (2008) and the *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* (2012);
- local plans and strategies prepared by Gosford and Wyong Councils;
- mapping of regionally significant biodiversity values and corridors;
- Urban Feasibility Model, Central Coast (2014);
- *Employment Lands Development Program* report (2015); and
- *Metropolitan Development Program* report, which covers both Sydney and the Central Coast and a range of other housing data.

A range of NSW Government plans and policies have also informed the draft Plan including the *Premier's Priorities (2015)* and *State Priorities (2015)*, *State Infrastructure Strategy* (2012), the *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* (2012), the *NSW Freight and Ports Strategy* (2013) and the *Central Coast Regional Transport Plan* (2013).

Top:
*Fisherman's Wharf Ferry,
Woy Woy*

Centre:
*New Central Coast
Highway, Erina*

Bottom:
*Medium to high density
housing at The Entrance*



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VISION

The vision for the Central Coast region is to protect the natural environment and to capitalise on its productive lands and resources, highly accessible business locations, and attractive coastal lifestyle to achieve sustainable economic growth and liveable communities (see Figure 1).

The region's beaches, lakes, rivers, lagoons, valleys, and mountains are at the heart of the appeal of this region. These areas will continue to attract and support residents, skilled workers, investment and local jobs, and they need to be protected and enhanced.

Central to the draft Plan is creating places for more business activity, from freight and logistics that can benefit from direct access to the M1 Pacific Motorway, through to health, education, retail and commercial activities in the two regional economic corridors of Somersby to Erina and Tuggerah to Warnervale. Access to markets and jobs in Sydney and the Hunter regions creates economic opportunities and makes the Central Coast an attractive place to live and invest. Good road and rail access will continue to be vital to the productivity of the Central Coast.

Gosford City Centre's potential as a strong regional centre, capable of attracting new jobs will be fulfilled by consolidating its health, education, sporting, business and commercial base. A flexible regulatory environment and an attractive public domain that allows people to live, work and relax in the centre will attract skilled workers, business and investment to the region.

Gosford's role will be complemented by Erina, which will become a major centre for the region. Tuggerah-Wyong will also fulfil its potential as the major centre servicing the northern part of the region, including the growing communities in the Warnervale-Wadalba land release area.

Residents will continue to enjoy access to high quality beaches, lakes and bushland close to urban centres and communities. Housing within the region will remain relatively affordable in comparison to Sydney and residents will be supported by more local work opportunities. There will also be greater housing choice, allowing people to access the type of housing they need to suit their circumstances in a location that suits their preference for a coastal, urban or rural lifestyle.

New housing will be developed in and around centres with good access to jobs, amenities, services and infrastructure. Priority will be given to infrastructure planning and delivery to attract further business and investment, and to support housing growth.

The region's productive landscapes have important environmental and food production values and comprise significant natural resources, including drinking water catchments and extractive resources. They will be managed to protect and sustain their values and maintain ecosystem processes.

Growing the capacity of the region's extractive resources, including sand and stone, will strengthen the economy and help to create resilient communities.

To achieve this vision the draft Plan sets four goals:

- enhance community lifestyles and accelerate housing supply;
- grow and diversify the regional economy;
- sustain productive landscapes; and
- protect and manage the natural and cultural environment.

FIGURE 1: DRAFT CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL PLAN OVERVIEW

-  Regional City

-  Major Centre

-  Town

-  Other Centre

-  Heavy rail

-  Motorway

-  Major Motorway Interchange

-  Regional Gateways

-  Regional Economic Corridor

-  Warnervale Wadalba Land Release Area

-  Regional Connection

-  Hospital

-  University and Tertiary Education

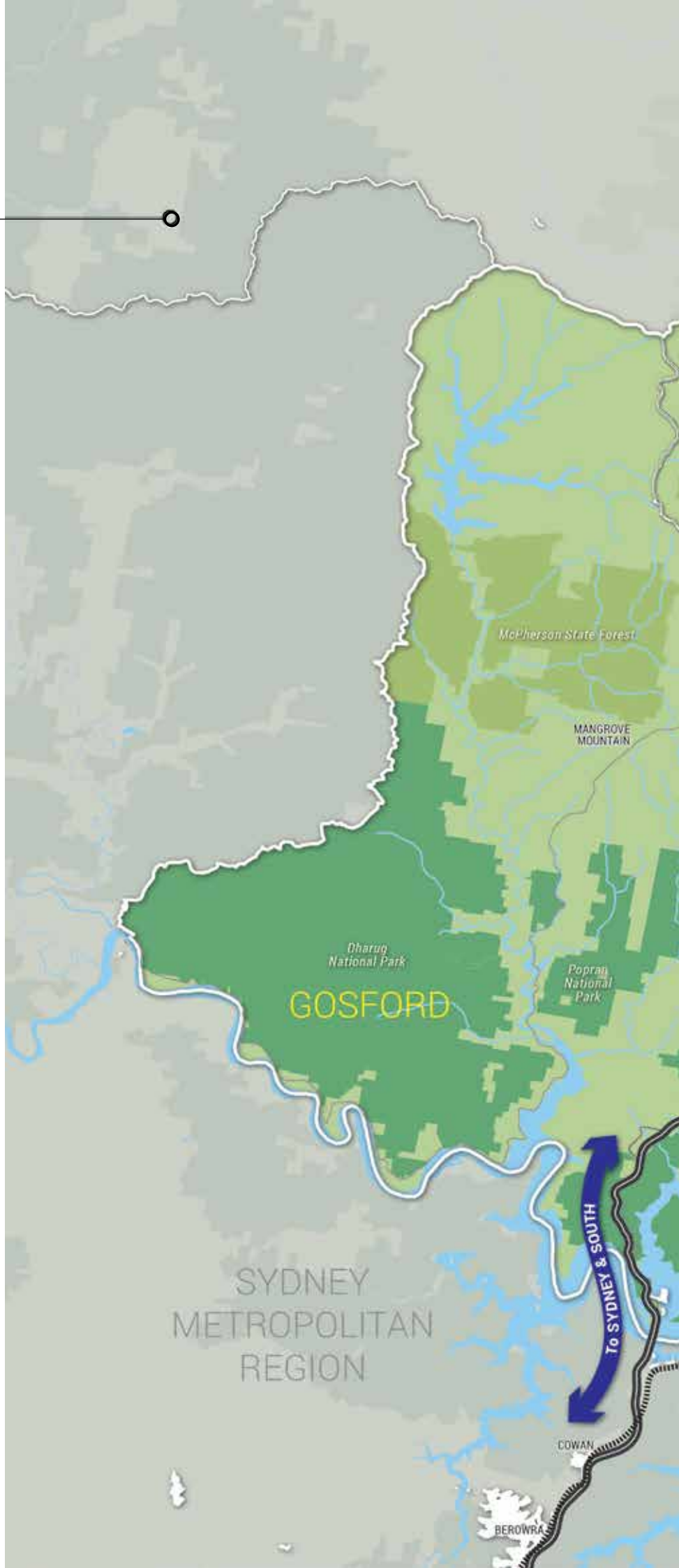
-  Urban Area

-  National Park and Reserve

-  State Forest

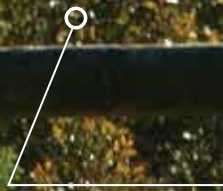
-  Non-Urban Area

-  Waterway



HUNTER REGION





DELIVERING THE PLAN

Achieving the vision and goals of the final Central Coast Regional Plan will require leadership and commitment, ongoing collaboration with all stakeholders, as well as an implementation plan.

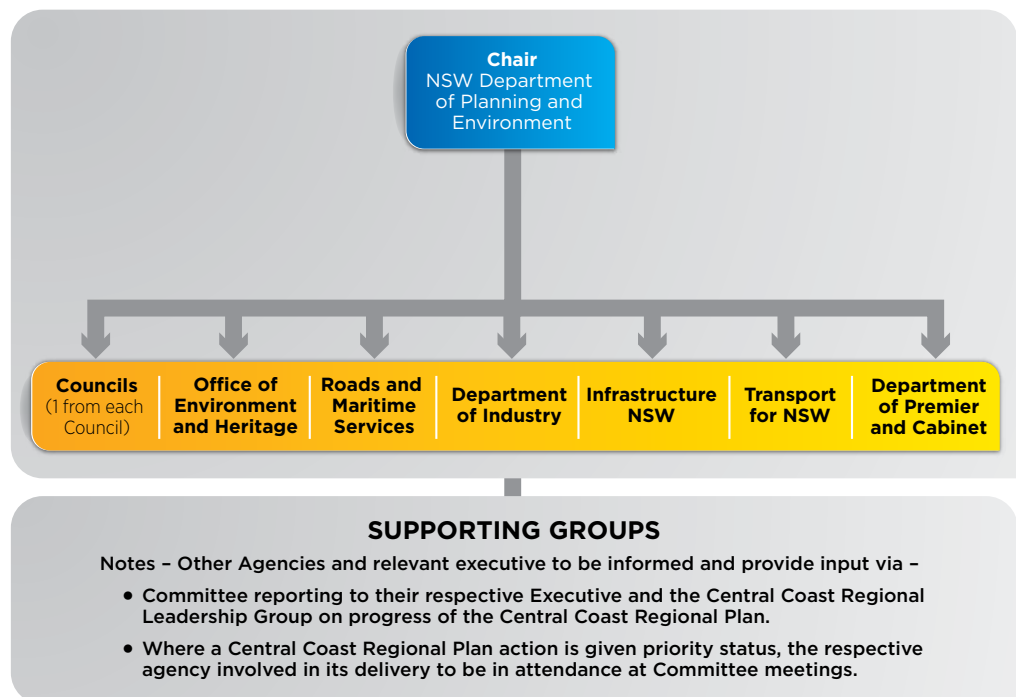
The delivery of the final Plan will be overseen by a Coordinating and Monitoring Committee comprising representatives from the NSW Government, Gosford City Council and Wyong Shire Council (see Figure 2). The committee will review and recommend plans, projects and actions to advance the delivery of the final Plan.

The Committee will have oversight of:

- preparation and delivery of an **implementation plan**;
- **working groups** that bring together appropriate personnel to provide advice on particular issues or projects; and
- **an Annual Monitoring Report** to provide detailed reporting against the progress in delivering on actions and the outcomes in the final Plan.

Actions outlined in the draft Plan cover a range of delivery mechanisms including local planning controls (for example, capacity for housing), regional collaboration (for example,

FIGURE 2: COORDINATING AND MONITORING COMMITTEE



Right:
Crackneck Lookout
in Wyrabalong
National Park



Gosford train station

supporting jobs growth) and specific projects (for example, infrastructure coordination). Responsibility for these actions will rest with a number of NSW Government agencies and will require collaboration across governments, business and the wider community.

The Minister for Planning will issue a local planning direction under section 117 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, to require that planning proposals and reviews of existing planning controls are consistent with the requirements of the final Plan.

The final Plan will be reviewed every five years, or as necessary.

Infrastructure for the region's growth

The infrastructure context in this draft Plan is drawn from the *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy, NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan, Central Coast Regional*

Transport Plan, NSW Freight and Ports Strategy and agency and infrastructure providers' infrastructure plans.

The NSW Government will use the final Plan, along with the annual monitoring of development activity through activities such as the *Metropolitan Development Program*, to advise infrastructure agencies about the timing of new developments and to inform their service planning.

The draft Plan aligns regional economic and housing outcomes to existing and planned infrastructure investments. Opportunities for private sector delivery of infrastructure will also be investigated to encourage innovation in the way that infrastructure is provided to support growth.

The NSW Government will continue to work with infrastructure providers to coordinate delivery of infrastructure that meets community needs. This will include monitoring the roll-out of catalyst infrastructure projects required to deliver growth over the life of the final Plan.

GOAL 1 - ENHANCE COMMUNITY LIFESTYLES AND ACCELERATE HOUSING SUPPLY

The Central Coast offers an attractive setting for residential development. Residents enjoy access to the bush, beaches, waterways and a range of other recreational and open spaces. These features contribute to the attractive lifestyles available in the region.

The relative affordability of the region compared to Sydney is another attraction for residents.

Revitalising existing centres and neighbourhoods to provide more housing, greater housing choice and more local employment options will help to sustain the appeal of the region as a place to live and work.

Increasing the supply and variety of housing in established, accessible areas will make best use of existing services and infrastructure such as public transport. It can also act as a catalyst for urban renewal.

The delivery of a new vibrant centre at Warnervale as an integral part of the new communities in the North Wyong Shire area will allow residents to connect to existing and planned services and jobs.

Diversifying housing supply will help to meet the changing needs of an ageing population, to respond to smaller household sizes and to make housing more affordable.

Collectively, these initiatives aim to accelerate delivery of the projected 39,600 new dwellings required over the next 20 years and to manage this growth sustainably.⁵

DIRECTION 1.1 Create great places to live

The landscape of the Central Coast has great scenic amenity and provides a dramatic backdrop and setting for development.

Iconic landscape features include the Hawkesbury River, Brisbane Water National Park, as well as Brisbane Water, the Tuggerah Lakes, areas around the beaches and headlands, including Crackneck, Norah Head, the Skillion and Lion Island. These and other features provide a range of opportunities for people to interact with the natural environment and enjoy healthy lifestyles.

Foreshore areas support a broad range of activities including private housing, tourism uses (accommodation and restaurants), boating facilities, natural areas, reserves and parks, community buildings (surf clubs), playgrounds, roads, and pedestrian and cycle paths.

The region has extensive open space and recreation that complements the state forests, national parks and conservation reserves. The Gosford Coastal Open Space System comprises over 70 nature reserves, totalling 2,730 hectares of natural open space.⁶ Wyong also has an extensive network of open space and recreational areas, with 409 parks and reserves and 162 playgrounds.⁷

Residents and visitors have ready access to the bushland, foreshore areas and recreation networks of the region, as well as important assets such as the Great North Walk and NSW Coastline Cycleway that wind through scenic national parks, reserves and waterfront areas. In total, the region has 157 kilometres of existing shared paths or off-road cycleways, and 75 kilometres of on-road bicycle lanes.⁸



Left: The Entrance, medium to high density housing
Right: Woy Woy bike track

Residential areas on the Central Coast are focused on the coastal plains and slopes and around the foreshores of the estuaries and ocean. Most Central Coast residents live within one kilometre of the bush, beaches, lakes or major waterways.

The draft Plan will consolidate these comparative advantages by reinforcing the quality, safety and amenity of neighbourhoods and centres within the region, while protecting the natural environment and amenity that contribute to the region's attractive lifestyle.

ACTION 1.1.1 Protect scenic amenity and character

As the region grows, new housing development will need to continue to respond sensitively to the natural environment and local character.

The NSW Government will:

- support local initiatives to protect the scenic values, amenity and character of local areas.

ACTION 1.1.2: Plan for integrated and well-connected open space, sporting and recreation opportunities

In addition to numerous bushland walking trails, the region has a wide range of recreation opportunities with 75 sports grounds and other facilities, including aquatic centres, hard courts, skating facilities and bike tracks (BMX, velodromes and mountain bike trails).⁹

There are regional-level playgrounds at Canton Beach, Long Jetty, The Entrance and Umina, with regional-scale sporting facilities, including the Mariners Sporting complex at Tuggerah and the Central Coast Stadium. These facilities provide a focus for community

activity and interaction and can support urban renewal in their surrounding areas.

Through the *Metropolitan Greenspace Program*, the NSW Government improves open space for recreation purposes and creates links between bushland, parks, waterways and centres. The program applies to the Sydney and Central Coast areas. Since its launch in 1990 (as the *Sydney Region Development Fund*), \$38 million has been awarded to councils for 586 projects. In 2014-15, a total of \$3 million was provided to projects, including \$212,000 for Gosford and Wyong Councils.

The NSW Government will:

- support councils to develop open space and recreation strategies which:
 - identify a range of accessible open space and recreation opportunities;
 - integrate open space and recreation networks; and
 - improve public foreshore access.

ACTION 1.1.3 Investigate opportunities to grow and better connect walking and cycling transport networks

The Central Coast has an extensive walking and cycling network that includes scenic shared paths that link Woy Woy with Gosford along the foreshore of Brisbane Water, and from North Entrance to Chittaway Bay, connecting to Tuggerah-Wyong. This network provides excellent opportunities for recreational walking, cycling, jogging and commuting.

Integrating the recreational walking and cycling networks with commuter connections to centres, bus networks and railway stations will help to increase commuter walking and cycling and support the public transport network.

The NSW Government will work with councils to:

- prioritise links to create a connected network that:
 - maximises use of the bushland and foreshores available; and
 - provides opportunities for residents to access jobs and services.

ACTION 1.1.4: Prepare guidelines for a safe, inclusive, healthy and enjoyable built environment

Creating a built environment that encourages physical activity will help to both revitalise centres and build healthy communities.

Creating mixed-use centres, connecting recreation networks and integrating public transport facilities with walking and cycling facilities will encourage more physical activity. This is particularly important given that 62 per cent of the adult population in the region was classified as overweight and obese in 2014, compared to 52.5 per cent for NSW.¹⁰

Making communities safe is a high priority for the NSW Government. Crime prevention will be one of the factors considered when environmental design guidelines are applied during the planning of future development.

With 28 per cent of the region's population expected to be aged over 65 years by 2036, it is important for urban areas, housing, transport and other services to be accessible to the ageing population. The *NSW Ageing Strategy* is a whole-of-government and community strategy that supports the participation of seniors in the community. Gosford and Wyong Councils have also prepared the *Central Coast Positive Ageing Strategy* which includes a range of actions to support the region's ageing population.

The NSW Government will:

- work with the NSW Healthy Planning Expert Working Group and councils to develop guidelines for planning, designing and developing a healthy and safe built environment; and
- work with councils to support initiatives which allow for people to age positively on the Central Coast.

DIRECTION 1.2 Grow and enhance liveable local centres

The Central Coast contains many desirable local centres and neighbourhoods with access to natural features such as bushland, foreshores and beaches.

Local centres offer a range of activities that provide local jobs and allow residents to service their daily and weekly needs, including retail, health and personal services. Revitalising local centres, providing more housing choice, and increasing the quality and amenity of local neighbourhoods will increase the appeal of these places and enhance the region's lifestyle reputation.

Preparing design and development guidelines will assist communities, State agencies, local governments and industry to deliver safe, enjoyable, and liveable centres and communities.

Developing local and neighbourhood plans will also help to deliver vibrant mixed-use centres that support tourist activities, local businesses and infill housing.

ACTION 1.2.1 Prepare local plans for vibrant, liveable local centres

Providing the right regulatory settings for investment and business activity is an important first step in attracting development, jobs, goods and services.

Developing local plans in consultation with local communities and businesses will help to establish the best regulatory environment and identify complementary actions to support growth, enliven local centres, and generate investment and confidence. Local plans will give residents greater certainty about the scale and mix of activities likely to be supported in future planning decisions.

Local strategies are already being implemented for a number of centres identified with future growth potential including Woy Woy, The Entrance/Long Jetty, Umina, Terrigal, Toukley and Warnervale.



Terrigal, Central Coast

The NSW Government will:

- support Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils to prepare and implement local centre strategies and associated reviews of local environmental plans and development control plans.

ACTION 1.2.2 Support development by directing investment to centres that will grow and change

Investment that improves the amenity of local centres will attract development and business and facilitate growth. It will make the most effective use of existing services and infrastructure such as public transport, and potentially reduce dependence on private vehicle use.

The NSW Government will:

- prioritise investment in infrastructure and services for areas experiencing growth or capable of delivering desired growth; and
- support councils to identify opportunities to facilitate private investment in centres.

DIRECTION 1.3 Create connected and accessible communities and centres

Central Coast communities benefit from access to employment and services provided locally and in greater Sydney and the Lower Hunter.

The region's narrow and elongated urban footprint and road network support multiple access points to inter-regional transport corridors such as the M1 Pacific Motorway and the Sydney to Newcastle rail corridor. They provide ready access to job opportunities and services within adjacent regions.

Over 23 per cent of the working population in the region (more than 30,400 people) commute out of the region each day to jobs in centres across Sydney and within Lake Macquarie and Newcastle.¹¹

The draft Plan supports improvements to the region's road and public transport networks to allow residents greater access to local jobs and services and to opportunities in

Sydney and the Hunter. To facilitate more local jobs, the draft Plan also supports improved connections between the region's communities and regional economic corridors and associated centres, which will remain the hubs of the regional transport network.

A priority of the draft Plan is to sustain high levels of access to the health facilities at both Gosford and Wyong Hospitals and the jobs in the Somersby to Erina and Tuggerah to Warnervale Regional Economic Corridors.

The NSW Government is advancing a range of projects to improve transport and accessibility in NSW and on the Central Coast. This work focuses on both the regional economic corridors and other transport corridors, including the Gosford to Ourimbah and Gosford to Woy Woy corridors, which will also improve the region's connectivity.

Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services are progressively preparing network and corridor strategies to cover every State road in NSW, to better manage transport infrastructure to maximise benefits for customers. These strategies provide the following benefits for the State Road Network:

- a plan for network/corridor improvement that considers all modes of transport;
- transparency for the community, councils and other State agencies about planning and investment decisions;
- consistency in planning, management and operation of roads; and
- the integration of road safety, traffic and asset maintenance projects resulting in cost savings.

The NSW Government's ongoing planning is being supported by upgrades to the State Road Network. Planning, design and construction is currently under way on a range of projects affecting the M1 Pacific Motorway (NSW/Australian Governments), Central Coast Highway, Pacific Highway, Avoca Drive, Terrigal Drive, The Entrance Bridge, and Sparks and Wyong Roads.

ACTION 1.3.1 Facilitate accessible centres and communities

The *Central Coast Regional Transport Plan* outlines the NSW Government's commitments

to improving access within the region. This draft Plan’s proposal to concentrate employment activity within two regional economic corridors aims to support the delivery of an effective and efficient transport system. Priority improvements will focus on:

- connecting to and through the regional economic corridors;
- connecting the corridors and centres to Sydney and the Hunter via road and rail connections; and
- improving public and active transport connections to and through the two regional economic corridors.

DIRECTION 1.4 Accelerate housing supply

Part of the appeal of living on the Central Coast is its housing affordability relative to the Sydney Metropolitan area. The median sale price of housing has grown substantially in recent years - from \$125,000 in 1991, to \$275,000 in 2002, to \$420,000 in 2014 and there are a broad range of housing types from multi-million dollar waterfront houses to manufactured housing estates (see Figure 3). The region’s housing remains highly

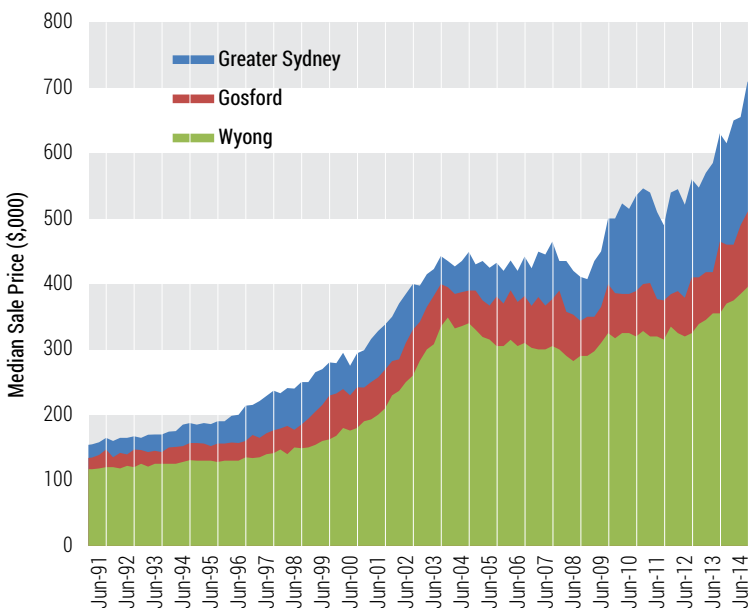
competitive, however, in comparison to the Sydney and Hunter housing markets.

The draft Plan aims to support this competitive advantage. It places emphasis on providing new housing in existing and committed growth areas and will be supported by investigations into the potential housing capacity within the Central Coast’s regional economic corridors and associated centres, where this is compatible with growing the region’s economy.

To meet the projected housing demand over the next 20 years, an average of 1,980 new homes will need to be constructed each year. This is 590 more homes than the average annual housing production of 1,390 dwellings over the 19 years to 2014-15.¹³

The Department of Planning and Environment’s Urban Feasibility Model identified significant capacity for more housing (infill) in existing urban areas across the region. Since the modelling work took place in mid-2014, the average sale price for housing on the Central Coast has increased by a further 12 per cent which is expected to have increased the viability of development and redevelopment in more parts of the region. The types of housing identified by the Urban Feasibility Model as most viable were residential flat buildings in Gosford Local Government Area and multi-dwelling housing in both Gosford and Wyong Local Government Areas.

FIGURE 3: MEDIAN SALES PRICES FOR SYDNEY AND CENTRAL COAST COUNCILS, 1991 – 2014¹²



Consultation with the development industry has identified infrastructure servicing, charges and biodiversity approvals are affecting housing delivery in the Warnervale – Wadalba land release area. The draft Plan proposes specific actions to improve the infrastructure contributions framework, the coordination of infrastructure and land release staging, and the approach to offsetting the biodiversity impacts of new development. Monitoring the outcomes will allow stakeholders to identify if the actions have been successful or require adjustment.

The draft Plan supports more informed planning and delivery of housing supply, using monitoring programs, supportive regulatory processes and tools, and collaborative management and governance, to deliver housing and associated infrastructure as and where required.



Terrigal, Central Coast

ACTION 1.4.1 Coordinate infrastructure delivery to support the timely and efficient delivery of housing

Planning for State infrastructure such as roads, water, energy, schools and health services is undertaken by a range of State agencies. The timely delivery of infrastructure is essential to support growth. Delivering infrastructure involves a process of augmenting or expanding existing systems and networks. This means that for infrastructure to be delivered in a cost-effective manner it needs to be undertaken in a coordinated and often sequential manner.

Coordinating infrastructure delivery between State agencies will provide the community with greater certainty, give confidence to investors, and build business confidence and certainty within the construction industry.

The NSW Government is building or has committed to build a number of infrastructure projects which deliver investor confidence in important locations in the regional economic corridors and centres, including Gosford City Centre (for example, the Government is facilitating redevelopment of the old Gosford Public School site and has committed funding for a regional performing arts centre in partnership with other levels of government).

The Government has also recently invested significant funds in providing access to the proposed Warnervale Town Centre and committed to part funding the proposed Warnervale Link Road.

Annual monitoring data will be provided to councils and infrastructure providers to better inform future infrastructure needs and service planning. In new land release areas this can be used to inform infrastructure sequencing and planning requirements to support the timely delivery of growth.

Annual monitoring data will help to plan for infrastructure that has longer lead-in times for delivery and needs to be planned strategically, in conjunction with council planning. This type of infrastructure includes schools, emergency service facilities, bus depots, energy generation and supply, waste disposal areas, and cemeteries and crematoria.

In new land release areas, development contributes to the cost of State and local infrastructure to support growth and redevelopment. Infrastructure plans are already in place in the Warnervale Town Centre and Wyong Employment Zone.

In the *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* area, if development occurs outside of the preferred sequence, developers may be required to pay a greater percentage of the costs of infrastructure, forward fund, or even construct infrastructure to support their development.

The NSW Government aims to undertake a series of administrative and operational improvements to the developer contribution system. These improvements will seek to improve transparency of State contributions and assist the timely delivery of infrastructure to support growth.

The NSW Government will:

- work with infrastructure providers to coordinate the delivery of infrastructure for land releases and existing urban areas to support development;
- aim to undertake administrative and operational improvements to the developer contribution system including improving management, accountability, reporting and transparency of State contributions;
- develop a revised service model and a new approach to planning school assets in the region; and
- support councils and infrastructure providers to identify appropriate sites for infrastructure such as emergency service facilities, energy production and supply, waste disposal areas, cemeteries and crematoria.

ACTION 1.4.2 Monitor land and housing delivery

Adequate housing supply can help to maintain housing affordability within the region.

Monitoring housing supply and projected demand allows government and industry to identify whether there is sufficient zoned and serviced land available for new development areas, and whether intervention is required to facilitate growth in existing urban areas. The NSW Government produces and publishes housing monitor

reports and the quarterly *Metropolitan Development Program* which monitors housing in Sydney and the Central Coast.

Annual monitoring will allow issues that are affecting the delivery of housing to be identified and addressed. It will also measure if strategies to improve delivery have been successful and whether new interventions are required. In addition, it allows infrastructure and service providers to identify and respond to growth and trends.

The NSW Government will:

- regularly liaise with councils and industry to monitor, evaluate and respond to blockages in housing supply.

DIRECTION 1.5 Improve housing choice (Infill)

As the region's population grows and ages greater housing choice will become increasingly important.

The draft Plan proposes creating a greater diversity of housing in and around Gosford City Centre, the Somersby to Erina and Tuggerah to Warnervale corridors, and local centres across the region. Other centres already identified with potential for additional infill housing include Toukley, The Entrance, Long Jetty, Terrigal, Woy Woy, Umina and Ettalong.

The land in Gosford City Centre, Somersby to Erina corridor and Tuggerah-Wyong is already zoned for urban purposes and can assist in providing additional infill housing. In these areas, a range of housing options are likely, such as apartments, villas and townhouses.

ACTION 1.5.1 Support delivery of greater housing choice in and near centres with existing services

Demographic trends towards smaller household sizes and an ageing population highlight the need for greater housing diversity with good access to transport, health and other community services. Providing a variety of housing types and more affordable options are also important so that people can 'age-in-place' and maintain their connections with social networks and family.

Housing demand and preferences

Over the period 2001-11, the number of four-bedroom homes increased by 8,292, while during the same period 2,277 studios, one, two and three-bedroom homes were lost in the region.¹⁴ The number of homes with three or more bedrooms is also higher in the region (77 per cent compared with 72 per cent for NSW).¹⁵

A survey of existing Central Coast residents in 2014 identified a preference for detached and semi-detached dwellings (79 per cent of respondents) and properties with three or more bedrooms (74 per cent of respondents). For the small portion of respondents who preferred to live in a unit, two bedrooms was the ideal property size.¹⁶

Respondents also indicated that good proximity to shops and the safety of people and property were important considerations in decisions about where to live (63 per cent of respondents). Other important factors such as proximity to the natural environment (55 per cent of respondents), cleanliness and lack of pollution also affected decisions about where to live.

Housing preference research in Sydney and Melbourne by the Grattan Institute indicates that older and single person households are more likely to find the characteristics of the area in which they live more important than the type of house in which they live.¹⁷ Given the expected growth in seniors housing and smaller household sizes, this is relevant for the Central Coast and provides opportunities for growth in and around centres, where good access to services and a high amenity public domain can be achieved.



Terrigal coastal housing

The NSW Government has established several tools to support the provision of affordable housing in NSW. The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009* and the *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 70 Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes)* are policies which encourage the development of new affordable housing and maintain existing affordable housing. There are several other policies which assist the provision of more affordable housing, including seniors housing. Both Gosford and Wyong Councils have affordable housing strategies which propose a range of methods to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The region's centres have capacity for additional infill housing which can take advantage of the infrastructure, jobs, services and transport available. Other areas with emerging attributes, similar to these areas, will be investigated for infill housing in the medium term.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils to:
 - identify planning controls in existing urban areas that will increase the range of housing types provided, particularly in and around centres and in locations with good public transport services;
 - identify other suitable centres and locations for infill housing such as The Entrance; centres on the Woy Woy Peninsula; Toukley; Terrigal; and Ourimbah; and
 - identify blockages to growth and opportunities to facilitate growth;
- implement locally responsive affordable housing strategies; and
- identify opportunities for re-use of surplus government land to support centres revitalisation and unlock investment.

DIRECTION 1.6 Concentrate new development at Warnervale and elsewhere in North Wyong

The draft Plan focuses new land release development opportunities primarily in the Warnervale –Wadalba land release area and elsewhere in the North Wyong area.

The 2012 *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* (the Structure Plan) provides a high level framework to guide land use and infrastructure planning and has been incorporated into the *Wyong Shire Local Environmental Plan 2013*.

The Structure Plan identifies the potential for 16,682 lots in the development areas and supports the establishment of the proposed new Warnervale Town Centre.¹⁸ The town centre is expected to provide business and services for 3,600 new residents on the site and the broader Warnervale-Wadalba land release area.¹⁹

The Structure Plan also identifies several strategic locations subject to a range of physical characteristics (for example, high biodiversity values, and clay and coal resources) that require more detailed local planning to determine development potential. This more detailed planning is yet to occur and will need to consider several development and biodiversity offset proposals for this area, if approved.

A new intersection (\$23 million, largely funded from the NSW Government's Housing Acceleration Fund) and access road (funded by the NSW Government, Wyong Council and Woolworths) have also been built for the proposed Warnervale Town Centre. The Government has also committed to providing \$25 million towards the next stage of Wyong Shire Council's proposed Warnervale Link Road which will connect from the Pacific Highway at North Wyong to Sparks Road.

ACTION 1.6.1 Maintain up-to-date staging for new land release in North Wyong

The staging plan in the *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* will be kept up-to-date in line with the timing of infrastructure delivery. The Structure Plan will also be updated to reflect ongoing planning and to reconfirm the priorities for future release.

The Structure Plan staging plan identifies that areas around the Warnervale-Wadalba land release area will remain the short to medium term development priorities and areas elsewhere in the North Wyong area will be developed over the longer term. The draft Plan supports the implementation and delivery of this staging plan.

Where possible, updates will provide additional guidance on areas identified as ‘*Strategically located, constrained sites subject to further investigation and offset strategies to define conservation requirements and development potential*’. These areas have clay and coal resources, areas of ‘high environmental value’ and contain key components of the potential green corridor areas and habitat networks in the Structure Plan (see Action 1.6.2 below).

Resolution of these local issues could occur on a site-by-site basis, as areas are rezoned for urban development, or as part of a coordinated planning process for a larger area.

The NSW Government will:

- work with Wyong Shire Council to review the existing staging of land release and update, as required, to match delivery of local and State infrastructure to the planned timing for delivering each new community; and
- review the *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* to reflect the latest planning information regarding biodiversity, resources, development and infrastructure, and, where possible, provide greater certainty about issues associated with strategic sites.

ACTION 1.6.2 Secure regional wildlife corridors and offset the biodiversity impacts of new development

The *North Wyong Shire Structure Plan* identifies green corridors and habitat networks that are part of a regionally significant biodiversity and landscape corridor that can complement development in the northern part of Wyong Local Government Area. There are several existing regionally significant landscape and biodiversity links in the Central Coast that link to adjoining regions. The draft Plan supports the ongoing extension of these corridor networks, where appropriate, to conserve the environmental and landscape values of the area and to complement proposed development areas.

Biodiversity offsetting offers a strategic approach to managing the impacts associated with clearing for new development and advances multiple strategic objectives,

including protecting riparian corridors to protect terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity. The draft Plan supports a precinct approach to biodiversity offsetting in northern Wyong to achieve both conservation and development objectives. This could occur at a landscape scale or as development precincts are planned and released, as has occurred with the Warnervale Town Centre site, which was bio-certified by the Minister for the Environment in 2014.

The NSW Government will:

- coordinate the development of a Biodiversity Offset Strategy for new development areas in northern Wyong with Wyong Shire Council; and
- work with councils to identify opportunities to establish and manage landscape and biodiversity conservation corridors.

ACTION 1.6.3: Support further cross-council boundary collaboration

There are strong cross-border links between the southern parts of Lake Macquarie (part of the Hunter Region) and northern parts of Wyong Council. There are a number of inter-regional issues which should be addressed in a consistent, timely and effective manner, including infrastructure, services (including health and public transport planning) and biodiversity conservation. This is particularly relevant for planning, infrastructure and service delivery issues between the growing areas of Warnervale, Bushells Ridge and Wyee.

The NSW Government will:

- support inter-regional land use and infrastructure planning between the Central Coast councils and adjoining councils; and
- work with local government and service providers on cross-border issues.



GOAL 2 - GROW AND DIVERSIFY THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

The proximity of the two biggest economies in NSW, Sydney and the Hunter Region, provides opportunities for greater growth in the region and particularly more job opportunities. To fulfil this potential for growth, the region has to provide a business and work environment that attracts investment and provides local jobs.

The economy of the Central Coast provides a strong foundation for investment. The region's gross regional product in 2013 was \$10.8 billion, representing eight per cent of the regional NSW gross regional product.²⁰ The economic centres and regional economic corridors of the Central Coast are located within 100 kilometres of the nation's biggest market, Sydney (including Sydney International Airport).

The Central Coast had more than 153,700 employed residents in the year ending June 2014.²¹ Nearly one-quarter (23.3 per cent or more than 30,400 people) travel out of the region for work each day.²² The region's unemployment in June 2015 was higher than the average in NSW; 6.1 per cent compared with 5.9 per cent.²³

The areas that have the greatest concentration of existing and planned employment on the Central Coast are the Somersby to Erina and the Tuggerah to Warnervale regional economic corridors. Together, these corridors provide 48,000 jobs, representing almost 50 per cent of regional employment. They have the greatest concentration of infrastructure, transport and services, and significant capacity to support growth. They are also accessible for local markets and workers and are linked by competitive transport, logistics and electronic telecommunications to Sydney and the world.

A range of benefits can be achieved by supporting the clustering of retail and commercial development in centres and facilitating the establishment of a critical mass of economic activity. This will also support the development of more housing in and around centres, encourage more people to access centres for their daily activities and allow people to live and work in accessible locations. Clustering economic activity and housing also allows for more effective use of public transport and encourages greater levels of physical activity such as walking and cycling.



The Entrance
boat house

Central Coast Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy

The planning system alone cannot create jobs but it can enable economic development that leads to job creation. A range of strategies will be required to support economic growth and development and to implement the draft Plan, including those outlined within the *Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy* (the REDES).

The REDES includes a range of strategies which have informed the draft Plan, including:

- securing new jobs and supporting existing jobs by facilitating growth associated with population growth;
- building on existing advantages in food production, logistics, manufacturing and tourism;
- creating new advantages through clusters in health, green industries and ageing sectors;
- attracting new businesses and associated services to the region in sectors such as food production, logistics, manufacturing, tourism, government agencies and call and service centres; and
- actions relating to strengthening employment lands, centres, and area-specific actions for Gosford City Centre, Tuggerah-Wyong and Ourimbah.

The industries which are the largest employers in the region and which have capacity for growth are the healthcare and social assistance sector at 17.4 per cent (compared to 11.3 per cent for NSW), education and training at 9.3 per cent (consistent with 9.3 per cent for NSW), retail trade at 13.4 per cent (compared to 10.2 per cent for NSW), manufacturing at 8.3 per cent (compared to

7.9 per cent for NSW), construction 8.3 per cent (compared to 7.7 per cent for NSW) and accommodation and food services at 8.2 per cent (compared to 7 per cent for NSW).²⁴

There is potential for economic growth in warehousing and logistics associated with proximity to and connections with Sydney and Newcastle via the M1 Pacific Motorway and rail. There are also opportunities to grow the economy through sectors such as health and education, associated with the growing and ageing population.

The NSW Government is supporting growth in the health sector through the Gosford Hospital upgrade and planning for a \$200 million upgrade to Wyong Hospital to support growth and change in the northern parts of the region. Health infrastructure in the northern part of the region will be further strengthened through the construction of new ambulance stations at Wyong and Toukley. These upgrades will provide a range of local employment opportunities for healthcare professionals such as doctors and nurses as well as in allied health, aged care and other support services.

The draft Plan supports growth and diversification in industries where the region has strengths – health care, education (including university education), construction, resources and agriculture, and tourism – and therefore opportunities for greater employment growth. The draft Plan also supports new employment opportunities which could arise, such as renewable energy generation, supported by the region's significant electrical production and distribution infrastructure, or opportunities arising from the region's good access to information and communications technology. The draft Plan also supports the clustering of retail and commercial activity in centres to support their redevelopment and revitalisation.

The draft Plan will support growth in the regional economic corridors and centres, focusing future infrastructure and social investment in these areas, to increase their ability to compete with economic corridors and centres in adjoining regions. The NSW Government will need to work with councils and private investors to achieve this outcome.

DIRECTION 2.1 Support the 21st century needs of business

The draft Plan aims to generate competitive advantages from doing business in the region to increase local employment. It will do this by facilitating a business-friendly regulatory environment that includes timely and efficient business approval processes, and by identifying and responding to current and emerging business needs.

Monitoring the changing land and infrastructure needs of economic sectors will help to inform land use and infrastructure planning priorities on the Central Coast, and improve the delivery of infrastructure.

Industry needs access to transport infrastructure for workers and freight; good access to local, national and global markets; and reliable information and communications technology.

Business expectations about the standard of centres are constantly evolving. Expectations are high about the quality of supporting infrastructure, accessibility and amenity, which the region's centres have capacity to satisfy.

Identifying, coordinating and delivering enabling infrastructure will help to attract new business and employment opportunities within the region's centres and regional economic corridors. Prioritising transport infrastructure and services that provide access to centres from other parts of the region, and to major markets such as Sydney and Newcastle, are a key focus.

ACTION 2.1.1 Facilitate a local planning framework that supports business

New commercial and retail business activity is expected to focus on the region's major centres which are Gosford, Erina, Tuggerah and Wyong, other centres across the region, and industrial areas.

Specialised industry clusters (for example, logistics and food manufacturing and processing) are expected to develop in areas such as Somersby, West Gosford, the Wyong

Employment Zone, Lisarow, North Wyong, Tuggerah, Berkley Vale, Charmhaven and emerging employment areas in Bushells Ridge.

The draft Plan supports business activity across the region, focusing on higher-order activity in the major centres and employment nodes. The NSW Government will:

- support councils to regularly undertake reviews of local planning controls of industrial and commercial areas to:
 - better attract investment and business activity; and
 - encourage industry cluster formation and recognise freight activity precincts in employment lands.

ACTION 2.1.2 Support the business development needs of industry

Small business is a significant contributor to the regional economy and employs almost three-quarters (73 per cent)²⁵ of the region's workforce, compared with 67 per cent across NSW.²⁶ Improving understanding about the way that small business operates will help the NSW Government to provide the right environment for small business development and investment.

A range of sectors will be supported through planning, with the aim of facilitating the expansion of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the region. Most sectors will be supported by the growth and revitalisation in centres and employment lands, including food production, logistics, manufacturing, health, education, State agencies and call service centres.

Activity which occurs outside of centres, including tourism and agriculture, will require a regionally consistent response to planning, and consideration about how these uses occur and relate to other land uses in their local areas.

The tourism and hospitality industries are significant industries for the region. Domestic overnight visitors spent \$507 million in the region in 2014-15, while domestic day-trippers spent \$284 million and international overnight visitors spent \$33 million.²⁷ Tourist facilities and activities occur across the region, although they are generally located east of the M1 Pacific Motorway. They include



Berkeley Vale factory

nature-based tourism; walking trails and sites; Aboriginal cultural heritage tourism; rural activities and farm stays; and wildlife and adventure parks. More traditional tourism is centred on the coast, such as at Ettalong, Avoca, Terrigal, The Entrance and Toukley.

The NSW Government has a range of programs to help small business and create local employment opportunities in areas such as the Central Coast. The *Smart Work Hub Program* is aimed at helping to grow knowledge-based industries and reducing the need for residents to commute outside of the region for work. The Nexus Smart Hub at North Wyong and Gosford Smart Work Hub in Gosford both provide alternative space for workers.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils to identify and implement a range of strategies to support small business growth and innovation; and
- work with councils and industry to prepare industry-specific planning strategies that support growth, and a regionally-consistent planning approach for tourism, agriculture and other sectors, as required.

ACTION 2.1.3 Manage and monitor land supply to enable a flexible and responsive planning environment for business and industry

The NSW Government monitors the supply of commercial and industrial land through the *Employment Lands Development Program* which includes the Central Coast.

The region has over 2000 hectares of zoned industrial land; 55 per cent of which was undeveloped at January 2015. This is adequate to meet projected growth and potential business demands. It comprises:

- 582 hectares in the Gosford Local Government Area (including 292.2 hectares in the Somersby Business Park);
- 1,459 hectares in Wyong (including 335.2 hectares in the Wyong Employment Zone; 48.8 hectares of which is developed); and
- 467 hectares of proposed industrial land (identified in the North Wyong Structure Plan).²⁸

Industrial development valued at \$48 million was approved in 2014, with \$24.5 million in the warehouse sector alone, and the value of building activity in the region recently increased for the fourth year in a row.²⁹ Providing adequate sites for employment, in varying sizes and locations, will help to meet this growing demand.

The region's centres have an adequate supply of commercial zoned land to meet projected demand. Much of the future development will occur through redevelopment and intensification of existing sites.

The NSW Government will:

- investigate programs to manage and monitor the supply of business space within centres; and
- work with councils on changes to local environmental plans and local strategies to respond to changing demands for land and floor space.

ACTION 2.1.4 Coordinate infrastructure delivery to meet changes in demand for industrial land

The region's supply of zoned and serviced industrial land is not sufficient to support growth over the medium term. The timely and coordinated delivery of infrastructure is critical to creating a competitive economy.

There are a number of locations, including the Wyong Employment Zone (286.4 hectares of undeveloped industrial land) and Bushells Ridge (552 hectares of undeveloped industrial land) where a range of issues including infrastructure, biodiversity planning and mineral resources (clay extraction) require resolution.³⁰

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils and servicing agencies to coordinate infrastructure planning and delivery for employment and commercial land.

ACTION 2.1.5 Support other employment development areas and opportunities

A broad range of employment activity occurs outside the regional economic corridors and centres that contributes to local employment and supports the operation and development of local centres. Some of these uses have the opportunity to support additional employment activity which contributes to the development of nearby centres, the regional economy and provide local employment.

The combined University of Newcastle Central Coast and TAFE campus at Ourimbah; Wyong Hospital, large tourism activities, and infrastructure such as waste disposal sites and power stations could support expanded or complementary land uses.

Planning for employment activity outside of centres should facilitate economic and business connections with the regional economic corridors, complement centres' growth and function, and be compatible with nearby land uses.

As the region grows, there will be demand for additional activities, particularly retail. The preferred strategy to support new retail development will be to expand existing centres. This will maximise the use of existing infrastructure and community facilities and facilitate more vibrant centres. If new retail and commercial locations are required, they should be planned as new centres, connected to public transport or with easy pedestrian access.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils and stakeholders to identify opportunities to support local employment and centres growth across the region.

DIRECTION 2.2 Maintain strong inter-regional connections for business

The Central Coast has good freight connections to Sydney via the M1 Pacific Motorway and rail. These links will be improved by initiatives such as NorthConnex, which will link the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga

to the Hills M2 Motorway at Pennant Hills.

Freight and logistics businesses are clustered around the M1 Pacific Motorway interchanges at Somersby, Tuggerah and increasingly at Warnervale in freight activity precincts. There are also several other manufacturing clusters across the region, including the food manufacturing cluster which is supported by complementary services and activities. It is important for freight to move freely around the region to access these areas and for these areas to connect to the M1 Pacific Motorway.

Freight access is also important for the region's agricultural and extractive resource sectors, which are primarily focused west of the M1 Pacific Motorway. Maintaining access to local markets and beyond is important to the ongoing efficiency of business in these areas.

ACTION 2.2.1 Strengthen freight and commerce connections between the regional economic corridors and Sydney and the Hunter

The expected population and employment growth on the Central Coast will also contribute to increases in freight volumes, both on inter-regional connections and on local routes. Maintaining freight access around the region and to the inter-regional links will be critical, particularly given freight volumes on the M1 Pacific Motorway between Hornsby and Newcastle/Gosford are expected to increase by 79 per cent between 2011 and 2031.³¹ The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Program will increase rail freight carrying capacity between Newcastle and Sydney by 50 per cent, from 29 to 44 freight trains each day.³²

The NSW Government is undertaking a range of improvements that will link the regional economic corridors to the M1 Pacific Motorway and link these to the adjoining regions. These include:

- the \$170 million upgrade of the Central Coast Highway-Brisbane Water Drive and Manns Road intersection at West Gosford, (under construction and due for completion early 2016);
- Pacific Highway-Wyong Road intersection, Tuggerah (early works under way; main construction to start early 2016);



1. The Waterfront
 The intention for this precinct is for it to become a focus for a variety of activities and provide high amenity for all of Gosford.

2. The Arts & Entertainment Precinct
 The intention for this precinct is that it contain a range of activities which will attract people to Gosford city centre, such as the proposed performing arts centre, and link to existing entertainment elements such as the stadium.

3. The City Core
 The intention for this precinct is to focus on Kibble Park, link to the major existing shopping centre and link to the waterfront and Rumbalara reserves.

4. The Railway Precinct
 The intention for this precinct is for the station and bus interchange to connect to the surrounding urban area through a series of upgraded pedestrian links and improvements to pedestrian amenity.

5. The Hospital Precinct
 The intention for this precinct is to reinforce health services, close to the Gosford station, consolidate education facilities and improve pedestrian safety, amenity and access.

FIGURE 4: GOSFORD CITY CENTRE

	Heavy Rail Network		Council Facility		Urban Area
	Highway/Major Road		Sports and Entertainment Facility		Non-Urban Area
	City Precinct		Marina		National Park and Reserve
	Hospital		Train Station		Openspace
	University and Tertiary Education		Business zone		Waterway

- M1 Pacific Motorway upgrade between the Kariong and Somersby interchanges (detailed design, for completion in 2019); and
- M1 Pacific Motorway widening between the Tuggerah and Doyalson interchanges (detailed design, for completion in 2019).³³

The NSW Government will:

- continue to work on the implementation of the *Central Coast Regional Transport Plan*; and
- work with councils to support freight corridors and activities, including the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor, freight activity precincts and future freight corridors.

DIRECTION 2.3 Grow Gosford City Centre as the region's capital

The draft Plan supports Gosford City Centre as the region's capital as it is expected to play a key role in providing the region's future employment and housing opportunities (see Figure 4).

Gosford City Centre has significant state infrastructure in the form of a heavy rail line, schools, TAFE and Gosford Hospital. There are 20,000 jobs in the city centre and surrounds, including West Gosford.³⁴

The city centre is also expected to have more medium and high density housing and up to 10,000 new residents.³⁵ This is already being reflected in development and approval activity.

Health care and social assistance is a major employment sector in the city centre. There are several significant healthcare opportunities for Gosford, including the \$368 million redevelopment of Gosford Hospital and the establishment of the Health and Wellbeing Precinct.³⁶ With the Gosford Private Hospital in North Gosford and an extensive allied healthcare sector, Gosford will be a major focus for health activities in the region.

The *Our City, Our Destiny Masterplan* (2010), which was prepared for Gosford City Council and the NSW Government, advocates a vision for Gosford that seeks to strengthen its

regional administrative, civic, service, cultural, residential and employment roles. It capitalises on Gosford's natural setting and waterfront location. The masterplan built on previous initiatives by the NSW Government and Council to establish a vision, public domain plan and new planning framework for the city centre.

The draft Plan supports the delivery of the NSW Government, Council and community vision for the city centre and the coordination of State and local government initiatives to attract business investment to the centre, and complementary investment to nearby areas such as West, East and North Gosford.

ACTION 2.3.1 Support integrated planning for the Gosford City Centre and the Gosford Hospital health and wellbeing, waterfront, and arts and entertainment precincts to grow jobs

The *Our City, Our Destiny Masterplan* identifies opportunities to redevelop five precincts within the Gosford city centre – the hospital, railway, arts and entertainment, waterfront and city core precincts. It also provides high-level guidance about how to achieve potential redevelopment.

Since the masterplan was finalised, the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation has advanced the redevelopment of the waterfront area through the relocation of Gosford Public School. It has rezoned the site to allow for a mixture of commercial and community uses and is proceeding with the sale of part of the site for commercial redevelopment.

Where more detailed precinct planning is still required, precinct plans will be developed that will improve amenity, integrate transport (including walking and cycling), facilitate higher density housing within walking distance of the city centre, and provide community and enabling infrastructure.

The NSW Government has funded investigations into the integration of transport in Gosford City Centre to acknowledge the proposed Gosford Hospital upgrade. This work will be complemented by undertaking long term transport planning for Gosford to help deliver transport that supports the future growth of the city (see Action 2.3.2 over).

The NSW Government will work with Gosford City Council to:

- identify opportunities to support development in and around Gosford city centre; and
- prepare precinct plans, where required, that will support delivery of more broad ranging plans for the city centre and the integration of other precincts within the centre.

ACTION 2.3.2 Undertake strategic infrastructure and services planning

Infrastructure and services planning will be required to support the proposed increase in employment and residential development in and around Gosford City Centre and facilitate private investment. The focus will be on identifying and coordinating the delivery of infrastructure and services that can provide the catalyst for further growth and investment by the public sector.

Given the significant amount of development expected to occur in the city centre in the coming years, long term transport planning for the centre will be undertaken in partnership with local government and the relevant State agencies. This planning will shape how the road and transport system can best be managed to cope with the growth and impact of new development, while delivering a transport system that is integrated and people-focused.

The NSW Government will work with Gosford City Council and other stakeholders to develop a long term transport framework for Gosford City Centre.

DIRECTION 2.4 Focus growth within the Somersby to Erina Corridor

The Somersby to Erina Corridor (see Figure 5) is the priority location for future jobs, services and business growth within the southern half of the region. There are 28,000 people employed in and around this corridor,³⁷ representing 29 per cent of jobs in the entire region. It includes the Gosford City Centre, as well as Somersby Business Park and the Erina commercial precinct which

includes Erina Fair. Erina Fair is the region's largest retail centre, with a gross lettable area in excess of 110,000 square metres.³⁸

The Central Coast Highway is the 'spine' of this corridor and provides access to communities and centres across the southern half of the region. The corridor also has strong connections to Sydney and Newcastle and the Tuggerah to Warnervale Corridor.

The area is framed by Brisbane Water, Erina Creek, the Brisbane Water National Park and Rumbalara and Kincumba Mountain Reserves. These areas have high environmental values and provide a broad range of accessible recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. These areas will be protected and their environmental, recreational and cultural values enhanced, as the centres within this corridor are revitalised.

The draft Plan supports additional action to improve the capacity of the centres and employment nodes in the Somersby to Erina Corridor, to generate greater investment and employment. These actions include:

- recognising the role of the corridor in providing employment opportunities and services for communities spread along the southern coastline of the Central Coast;
- diversifying employment opportunities in Erina;
- supporting the further revitalisation of East Gosford; and
- enhancing connectivity to and through the corridor.

The draft Plan also supports expanding the capacity of employment locations such as the industry, manufacturing and logistics hub at Somersby. As an economic gateway into the region, there is potential to increase Somersby's role as a major employment and economic provider, capitalising on its proximity to Sydney, population centres in the east of the region, and the rural and resource lands in the west of the region.

The draft Plan also aims to capitalise on the proximity of the Somersby to Erina Corridor to natural features such as Brisbane Water, and the wooded ridgelines and areas such as Rumbalara and Kincumba Mountain Reserves, to build on the appeal of the region as a place to live and do business.

1. Regional Gateway

Precinct planning covering Somersby Business Park, Mt Penang and Kariong will improve synergies between activities, servicing and sustaining access to the M1 Pacific Motorway.

2. West Gosford

Increased employment diversity will complement revitalisation of the Gosford City Centre. Integration of land uses and improved connectivity capitalising on the \$170 million upgrade of the Brisbane Water Drive and Manns Road intersection.

3. Gosford City Centre

Integrated planning for Gosford City Centre and the individual precincts in the city centre will improve it as the region's capital, and help to grow local jobs.

4. Erina

Support mixed use and employment diversity complementing the renewal of Gosford City Centre. Improve pedestrian access and amenity. Explore opportunities to expand Erina centre whilst maintaining east - west connectivity along the Central Coast Highway.

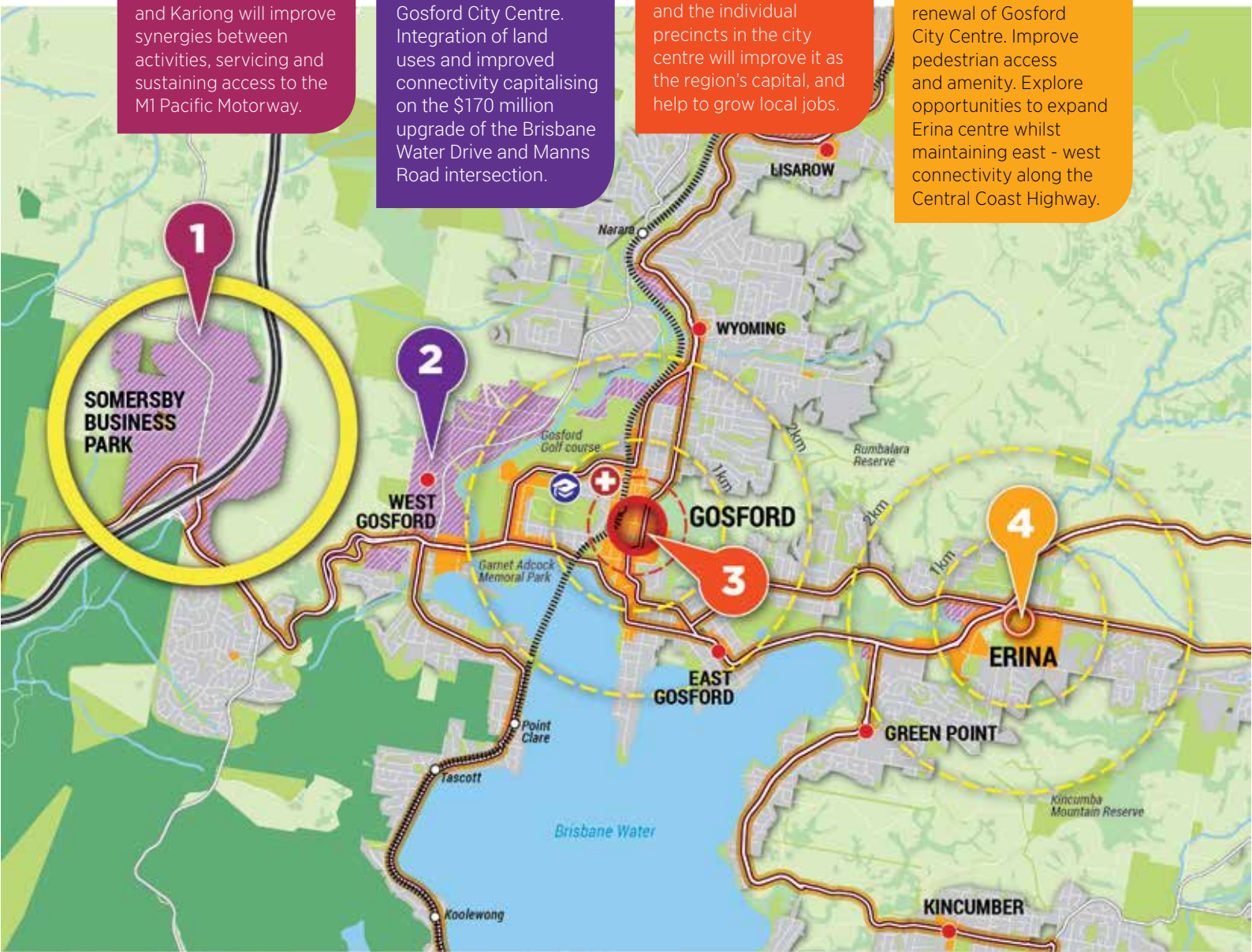
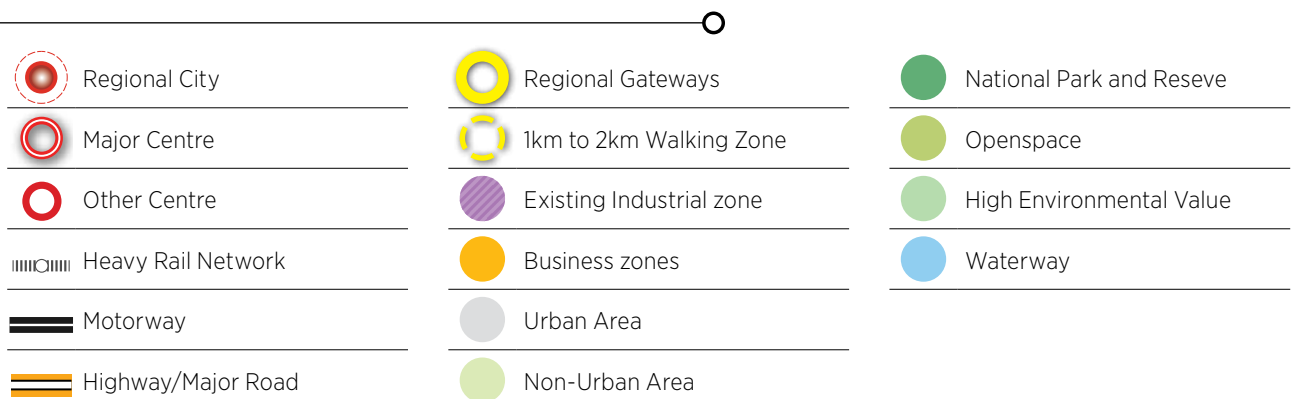


FIGURE 5: SOMERSBY TO ERINA REGIONAL ECONOMIC CORRIDOR





Left: Erina Fair shopping mall
Centre: Tascott train station
Right: Wyrribalong National Park to Forresters Beach

ACTION 2.4.1 Expand the southern economic gateway

The Somersby area and its surrounds, including Mt Penang operates as the region's southern economic gateway. This area has a broad range of land uses including manufacturing, warehousing, logistics and tourism (Somersby), commercial, education and justice (Mount Penang) and residential and centres development (Kariong).

Gosford City Council is currently planning an expansion of the Somersby Business Park as part of a \$28.7 million program of works to upgrade roads, stormwater, sewer and water main infrastructure to service the Somersby area. This work is being part-funded through a \$10 million grant from the Australian Government as part of the National Stronger Regions Fund.³⁹ The NSW Government, via the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation, is also considering future development options for undeveloped parts of the Mount Penang site.

Parts of the Somersby and Kariong areas and surrounds have significant environmental and cultural values, including a number of significant Aboriginal sites.

The draft Plan supports an expansion of the employment functions in this area, and better traffic management, to avoid impediments to east-west movement between the regional economic corridor and the M1 Pacific Motorway.

The NSW Government will work with Gosford City Council to:

- identify opportunities to expand the employment role of the Somersby economic gateway.

ACTION 2.4.2 Plan for a vibrant mixed use centre at Erina

Erina centre is characterised by large retail developments, including Erina Fair. There are opportunities to make this area more attractive for pedestrians, to improve linkages between the large retail elements and adjoining residential areas, and to create a more cohesive centre.

Erina is becoming more of a focus for business activity, public transport and community development (now with a library and community centre). Gosford City Council has commenced a range of studies to inform the preparation of a local area plan for Erina. The local plan will support Council's initiatives to make this a more cohesive centre by supporting a mixture of land uses and activities.

The NSW Government will:

- support Gosford City Council's preparation of a local strategy for Erina to create a well-connected mixed-use activity centre, with enhanced urban amenity.

ACTION 2.4.3 Protect environmental values along the Somersby to Erina Corridor

There are several areas along the Somersby to Erina Corridor where development immediately adjoins areas with high environmental value. These areas include, Narara and Erina Creeks, Brisbane Water, Fagans Bay, Presidents Hill, Rumbalara Reserve and Kincumba Mountain Reserve. These natural areas establish a natural boundary to growth in this area and support a range of ecological, scenic and recreation values.



The draft Plan supports the sensitive management of the relationship between development and conservation values to allow the corridor to develop while protecting the ecological, scenic and recreational values of its natural setting.

The NSW Government will:

- work with Gosford City Council to develop a plan that shows how future development and environmental values in the Somersby to Erina Corridor will be managed.

ACTION 2.4.4 Improve connectivity and amenity along the Somersby to Erina Corridor

The NSW Government is working to improve transport connections within the Somersby to Erina Corridor by undertaking several upgrades, including the \$170 million upgrade to the Central Coast Highway intersection with Brisbane Water Drive and Manns Road at West Gosford.⁴⁰

The NSW Government will work with Gosford City Council to:

- increase road, public transport and pedestrian connectivity along the southern economic gateway; and
- prepare a plan for this corridor that identifies the infrastructure necessary to support growth and improve amenity.

DIRECTION 2.5 Focus growth within the Tuggerah to Warnervale Corridor

The draft Plan recognises the Tuggerah to Warnervale Corridor as a priority location for future jobs, services and business growth (see Figure 6). The corridor facilitates access to communities and centres within and across

the northern half of the Central Coast and the Somersby to Erina Corridor and includes the civic facilities of Wyong Shire Council.

This area comprises regional transport infrastructure that provides connections to Sydney and Newcastle via the M1 Pacific Motorway and train stations at Tuggerah, Wyong and the existing Warnervale Village.

The corridor and its surrounding areas contain almost 20,000 jobs,⁴¹ which is approximately 20 per cent of all local jobs.⁴² Westfield is the dominant retail centre in the local government area, with 83,287 square metres of gross lettable area.⁴³ The Wyong Employment Zone has 267 hectares of undeveloped employment land.⁴⁴

Planning is also under way for an upgrade to Wyong Hospital to cater for growth and change in the northern parts of the region.

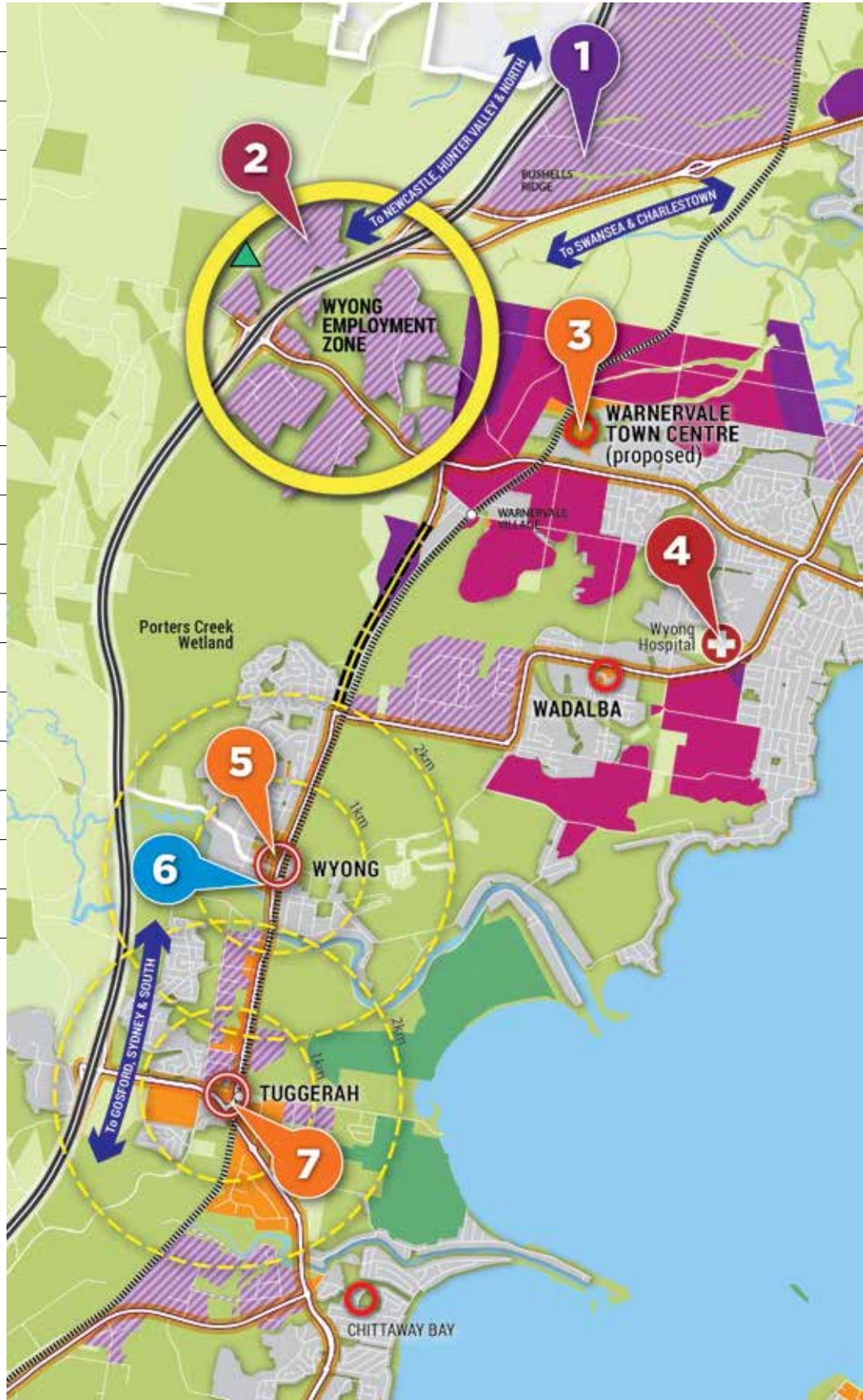
Wyong Council is planning for the centres of Tuggerah and Wyong to operate as a complementary centre, connected by the Tuggerah Straight and the Central Coast Wetlands and Pioneer Dairy site. The draft Plan supports the development of Tuggerah and Wyong as the Tuggerah-Wyong major centre and as the main centre servicing the northern half of the Central Coast.

ACTION 2.5.1 Consolidate Wyong as the civic hub in the northern part of the region

Wyong is currently the civic and administrative hub for the northern part of the region, including both local and State Government offices and services. The centre has the potential to leverage its prominent position on the hill; proximity to Wyong River; heritage character; recreational and sporting facilities; and access to Tuggerah and areas to the north via road and rail, to attract further residential and commercial development.

FIGURE 6: TUGGERAH TO WARNERVALE REGIONAL ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

-  Major Centre
-  Town
-  Heavy rail
-  Motorway
-  Proposed Warnervale Link Road
-  Highway/Major Road
-  Regional Connection
-  Buttonderry Waste Management Centre
-  Hospital
-  Regional Gateways
-  1km to 2km Walking Zone
-  Urban Release Area
-  Industrial Release zone
-  Existing Industrial zone
-  Business zone
-  Urban Area
-  Non-Urban Area
-  National Park and Reserve
-  Openspace
-  Waterway



1. BUSHHELLS RIDGE

Resolution of infrastructure, mining and biodiversity issues for Bushells Ridge will enable the area to become a focus of increased employment development over the medium to long term.

2. WYONG EMPLOYMENT ZONE

The Wyong Employment Zone will have a range of diverse employment activity in the future, and provide for up to 6,000 jobs. As the main economic gateway for the northern half of the Central Coast region, it will maintain access to eastern areas of the M1 Pacific Motorway. Resolution of planning, biodiversity and access issues, and identifying priority areas for development will ensure the success of the Wyong Employment Zone.

3. WARNERVALE TOWN CENTRE

The proposed Warnervale Town Centre will provide a business, transport and service focus for the surrounding residential lands as they develop.

4. WYONG HOSPITAL PRECINCT

The planned redevelopment of the Wyong Hospital precinct creates opportunities for the surrounding area to support establishment of a health precinct comprising complementary land uses including allied health and aged housing.

5. WYONG TOWN CENTRE

Wyong Town Centre will continue to provide the main cultural, civic and administrative activity for the northern half of the Central Coast region. It will have an increasing residential focus with high amenity due to its setting and heritage character.

6. WYONG RIVER FORESHORE

Council planning for the Wyong River foreshore will allow the area to become a focus of infill residential development.

7. TUGGERAH

Tuggerah will remain a focus for retail and commercial activity, and act as a gateway to the regional economic corridor, for the northern half of the Central Coast region.

Wyong Shire Council has prepared masterplans for the Wyong River Foreshore, Baker Park and civic and cultural precincts which identify a range of opportunities to improve amenity in the centre and support additional housing and employment. Council is also supporting additional housing and employment with several major investments, including investment in the Wyong Arthouse, and by identifying opportunities for council-owned land to be developed in a way that could provide a catalyst for further development.

The NSW Government will:

- support Wyong Shire Council's preparation of a local strategy to create a mixed-use activity centre at Wyong that provides improved residential and commercial opportunities and enhanced urban amenity, including a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

ACTION 2.5.2 Create a diverse, connected and vibrant Tuggerah centre

Wyong Shire Council and the NSW Government have undertaken strategic planning for the Tuggerah area. This includes the recent amendment to the *Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2013* to allow part of the 'Gateway Site' adjacent to the M1 Pacific Motorway to be developed for commercial uses. Council has also investigated potential uses around this area, including residential and recreational development.

The draft Plan supports Tuggerah's regional employment role and encourages a greater diversity of land uses, to improve the cohesion of the centre and to create a civic and centre focus.

The NSW Government will:

- support Council's preparation of a local strategy for Tuggerah to create a mixed-use activity centre and enhanced urban amenity, including a more pedestrian-friendly environment.



Gosford bus terminal at train station

ACTION 2.5.3 Support Warnervale as the next town centre for the Central Coast

Extensive planning has been undertaken for the proposed Warnervale Town Centre which is expected to provide services for the growing areas around Warnervale, Wadalba, Hamlyn Terrace, Woongarah and Halloran.

The centre will be based around a main street and will support medium density residential development. The NSW Government recently completed a new \$23 million intersection on Sparks Road (funded primarily from the Housing Acceleration Fund) to support the proposed development.⁴⁵ Wyong Council, Urban Growth NSW and Woolworths recently completed the development of an access road into the town centre site.

The draft Plan supports the proposed Warnervale Town Centre, its integration and connectivity with development in surrounding areas, and transport services which align with this role.

The NSW Government will:

- assist Council and other stakeholders to facilitate development on the Warnervale Town Centre site, including planning for the transport interchange.

ACTION 2.5.4 Improve connectivity and amenity along the Tuggerah to Warnervale corridor

A proactive approach is needed early on in the planning stage to identify and mitigate potential traffic congestion caused by greater development along the Tuggerah to Warnervale Corridor. The NSW Government is working to improve movement within this corridor by undertaking several upgrades, including the Tuggerah Straight, Pacific Highway and Wyong Road intersection, and is planning the proposed upgrade through the Wyong Town Centre.

The NSW Government will work with Wyong Shire Council to:

- increase road, public transport and sense of place connectivity along the Tuggerah to Warnervale Corridor; and

- prepare a plan for this corridor to identify the infrastructure required to support growth and to improve amenity along the corridor.

DIRECTION 2.6 Enhance the Warnervale employment lands

The draft Plan builds on the NSW Government and Wyong Shire Council's plans for the proposed Warnervale Town Centre and the Wyong Employment Zone as a priority corridor for future jobs, services and business growth. These areas form part of the broader Warnervale-Wadalba release area which consists of Woongarah, Hamlyn Terrace, Wallarah, Warnervale and Wadalba.

The Wyong Employment Zone and surrounds will be able to capitalise on proximity to the M1 Pacific Motorway, growing nearby labour markets, and as the northern economic gateway for the region.

Land around the existing Warnervale village has been rezoned to enable up to 2,300 new dwellings, local shops and a large employment area to the west of the railway line.⁴⁶ These areas will benefit from their proximity to the Wyong Employment Zone and the Warnervale Town Centre.

ACTION 2.6.1 Consolidate and update planning around the Sparks Road Corridor

Sparks Road is central to connecting the development areas around the proposed Warnervale Town Centre and Wyong Employment Zone which is the northern economic gateway to the region. It also connects coastal areas to future opportunities in these areas, the M1 Pacific Motorway, and existing employment in the Tuggerah-Wyong major centre.

A review is needed to consolidate planning which has occurred since the Wyong Employment Zone and Warnervale Town Centre sites were rezoned. This will include Wyong Council's proposed education and business precinct. The review will consider land use, and the infrastructure and services

required to support development in this area so that the Government, Council and the community's vision is achieved.

The NSW Government will:

- work with Council to review planning which has occurred around the Sparks Road corridor.

ACTION 2.6.2 Resolve conservation issues

Parts of the Warnervale-Wadalba land release area are located within the catchment of the Porters Creek Wetland, which is the largest freshwater wetland on the Central Coast. The wetland has significant environmental value and drains into the Wyong River and Tuggerah Lakes. Other parts of the land release area also drain into the Wallarah Creek and Wyong River. Water quality and integrated water cycle management are important issues for consideration during planning for release areas.

Wyong Shire Council and the NSW Government have undertaken strategic biodiversity assessments for the Warnervale Town Centre and Wadalba areas.

The Council is proceeding with a strategic biodiversity approval for the Wyong Employment Zone that relies on multi-use flooding and drainage corridors through the area, to offset land clearing for future industrial development. Similar arrangements will be applied as other areas in the north of Wyong Local Government Area are planned and developed.

The draft Plan supports the ongoing protection of areas with high environmental value and linking such areas as new development is planned and zoned.

The NSW Government will work with Council and developers so that:

- appropriate biodiversity planning occurs as land is planned and released in the northern areas of Wyong Shire; and
- water quality issues are considered when planning for new development areas in Wyong Shire.

DIRECTION 2.7 Strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities

OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment) is the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal affairs. It focuses on revitalising and promoting Aboriginal languages and culture; creating opportunities; increasing the Aboriginal community's capacity; providing choice; and empowering Aboriginal people to exercise that choice, as well as giving them the tools to take responsibility for their own future.

ACTION 2.7.1 Conduct a strategic assessment of land held by the region's Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify priority sites for further investigation of their economic opportunities

Many of the OCHRE actions are outside the planning system, but there is an opportunity to look at the landholdings of Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) to see how they can best be planned, managed and developed for the benefit of the local Aboriginal community. This will allow Aboriginal people to gain economic benefit from their land and provide greater opportunities for economic independence.

Together, Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Crown Lands and the Department of Planning and Environment, will work with the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council to identify their landholdings and to map the level of constraint at a strategic scale for each site. This information can be used to develop options for the potential commercial use of the land; for example, for housing and employment opportunities. It has potential to provide economic returns to the Local Aboriginal Land Councils that can be invested in assistance programs in the region.

The NSW Government will:

- work with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify priority sites so that each Local Aboriginal Land Council can create a pipeline of potential projects.



GOAL 3 - SUSTAIN PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPES

The Central Coast's high value rural lands (see Figure 7), extractive resources (see Figure 8) and water resources in the west of the region are a major contributor to the economy. These areas also provide an alternative to the lifestyle available within the urban areas of the region.

The region's rural and resource lands provide additional attributes such as geology, climate, water resources and good road access that allow them to make a significant contribution to the region's economic productivity.

DIRECTION 3.1 Promote investment in rural and resource lands

Agricultural production generates in excess of \$150 million a year⁴⁷ and supports technicians and trade service industries such as irrigation and other infrastructure service providers, together with associated processing and manufacturing industries elsewhere in the region.

Protecting the region's agricultural industry from animal biosecurity threats (i.e. pests and diseases) is a shared responsibility between government and landholders, and is an important facet of the sustainable economic growth of the region's rural and resource lands.

Extractive resources, including sand, sandstone, gravel, clay, hard rock and coal deposits support construction and energy production, generating in excess of \$180 million in output (2013-14).⁴⁸ The region contains extensive coal and petroleum resources (for example, coal seam gas) across both the Wyong and Gosford Local Government Areas.

The Council of Australian Governments Standing Council on Energy and Resources prepared a *Multiple Land Use Framework*

to assist in planning and managing multiple land uses. The NSW Government supports this use of this framework. It includes a series of planning principles that can assist in planning around known resource lands where other high value land uses also exist.

Multiple land use planning approaches (including sequential and simultaneous approaches) should be used to ensure that land is used as productively as possible and valuable resources (such as coal, gas and construction materials) are not sterilised.

The region's agricultural and extractive resource sectors border one of NSW's busiest freight routes, allowing ready access to markets. This gives the region a competitive advantage and the potential to grow these sectors.

The draft Plan aims to sustain, grow and diversify the region's economy and these areas have potential to contribute to this outcome.

The NSW Government will work with industry groups, other levels of government, business and the community to monitor economic activity and to capture new and emerging opportunities, to grow and sustain the economic productivity of the region's rural land.

ACTION 3.1.1 Support development of the agricultural and aquaculture sectors

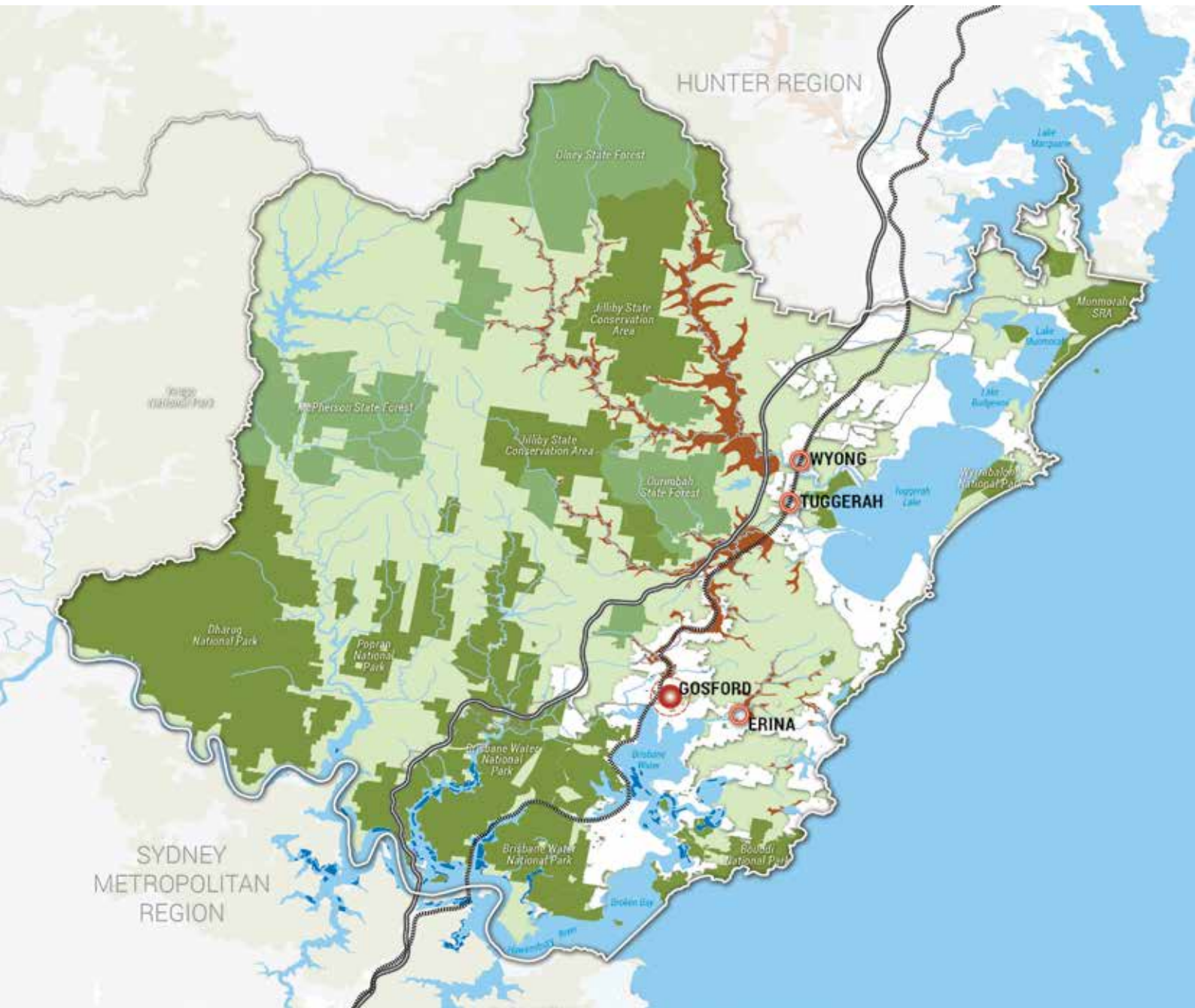
For the agribusiness sector to maintain its contribution to the region, a critical mass of agricultural industries must be maintained that support important parts of the supply chain, including ancillary services, infrastructure, markets, processing facilities and related industries.

Top:
Fisherman's Wharf
Ferry, Woy Woy

Centre:
Wyrabalong National
Park to Terrigal

Bottom:
Terrigal rock fishing

FIGURE 7: SELECTED PRIMARY INDUSTRIES



The Central Coast's proximity to Sydney and other markets, and the location of processing activities, have allowed it to become a focus for particular types of agriculture. More than ten per cent of NSW's cut flowers are produced on the Central Coast and there are 108 oyster and aquaculture permit holders on Brisbane Water alone, and many more in the Hawkesbury River.⁴⁹

The NSW Government's 2014 Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) mapping identifies agricultural land in this region that is of significance to the State. These lands are capable of sustaining high levels of production for a variety of agricultural industries due to high quality soil and water resources. There is an opportunity to complement the existing BSAL information with additional regional-scale mapping that will include areas of regional importance and areas in the Mountains District already identified as having agricultural significance.

A strategy is needed to manage land use impacts on existing primary industry and productive agriculture to secure the longer term future of this sector. Regional-scale mapping that incorporates both biophysical, infrastructure and key socio-economic factors will be considered to inform strategic land use planning for diverse agricultural sectors.

The NSW Government will work with councils to:

- protect productive lands and resources from incompatible development;
- identify and protect significant agricultural lands and aquaculture sites and activities;
- facilitate the continuation and co-location of agricultural activities and related industries (supply chains, research and development);
- retain and increase opportunities to keep fresh foods available locally; and
- recognise and protect the economic potential of productive agricultural land to facilitate future agribusiness opportunities.

ACTION 3.1.2 Protecting the region's wellbeing and prosperity through increased biosecurity measures

Biosecurity contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of the region, and more broadly the nation. The negative impacts of a biosecurity event are not limited to agriculture; they can also affect surrounding or associated industries such as manufacturing and processing, transport and tourism. Managing biosecurity risks is relevant to:

- supporting the globalisation of trade;
- managing population growth;
- responding to climate variability; and
- prioritising access to land and resources.⁵⁰

Strategic planning can support the effective management of biosecurity risks, particularly where the expansion of residential development into rural areas or the expansion of rural or resource industries, increases the risk of animal and plant pests and diseases affecting food production, the environment (particularly wildlife) and human health.

Biosecurity risks can often be minimised through appropriate land zoning and permissibility of land, as well as by applying buffers to separate different land uses by distance, vegetation or topography. Recommended buffer distances can be found in the Department of Primary Industries *Living and Working in Rural Areas*.⁵¹

The *NSW Biosecurity Strategy 2013-2021* outlines the NSW Government's commitment to strengthen and maintain biosecurity measures across NSW.⁵² Local Land Services will continue to play a key role in collaboration with other organisations such as the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils to identify opportunities to minimise biosecurity risks for current and future industries through strategic planning, including a review of zones in local environmental plans; and

- work with councils to promote the application of buffer areas to minimise biosecurity risks when assessing the potential impacts of new development.

ACTION 3.1.3 Plan for the ongoing productive use of lands with extractive resources

The Central Coast region contains extensive minerals and energy resource lands across both the Wyong and Gosford Local Government Areas (see Figure 8). Notable coal mining activity has and still is occurring in the north of the Wyong Local Government Area and regionally significant construction material resources and quarrying activities are occurring in the Gosford Local Government Area.

In 2010-11, quarries in the Gosford Local Government Area alone produced approximately 12 per cent of the State's total production of construction materials.⁵³

Parts of the Wyong Local Government Area have coal resources that are within identified Mine Subsidence Districts. These districts have been, or have the potential to be undermined by resource extraction, and have related development controls that apply to surface development. The North Wyong area is one such area and also contains a clay resource of State significance and important gravel (aggregate) reserves.

As these resources are located in close proximity to both Sydney and the Hunter region, they, and the supporting freight networks, are of strategic significance. By identifying resource lands, potential resource sector development is also identified. The potential short to medium term growth of this sector, however, is limited to those areas with established infrastructure and resource accessibility.

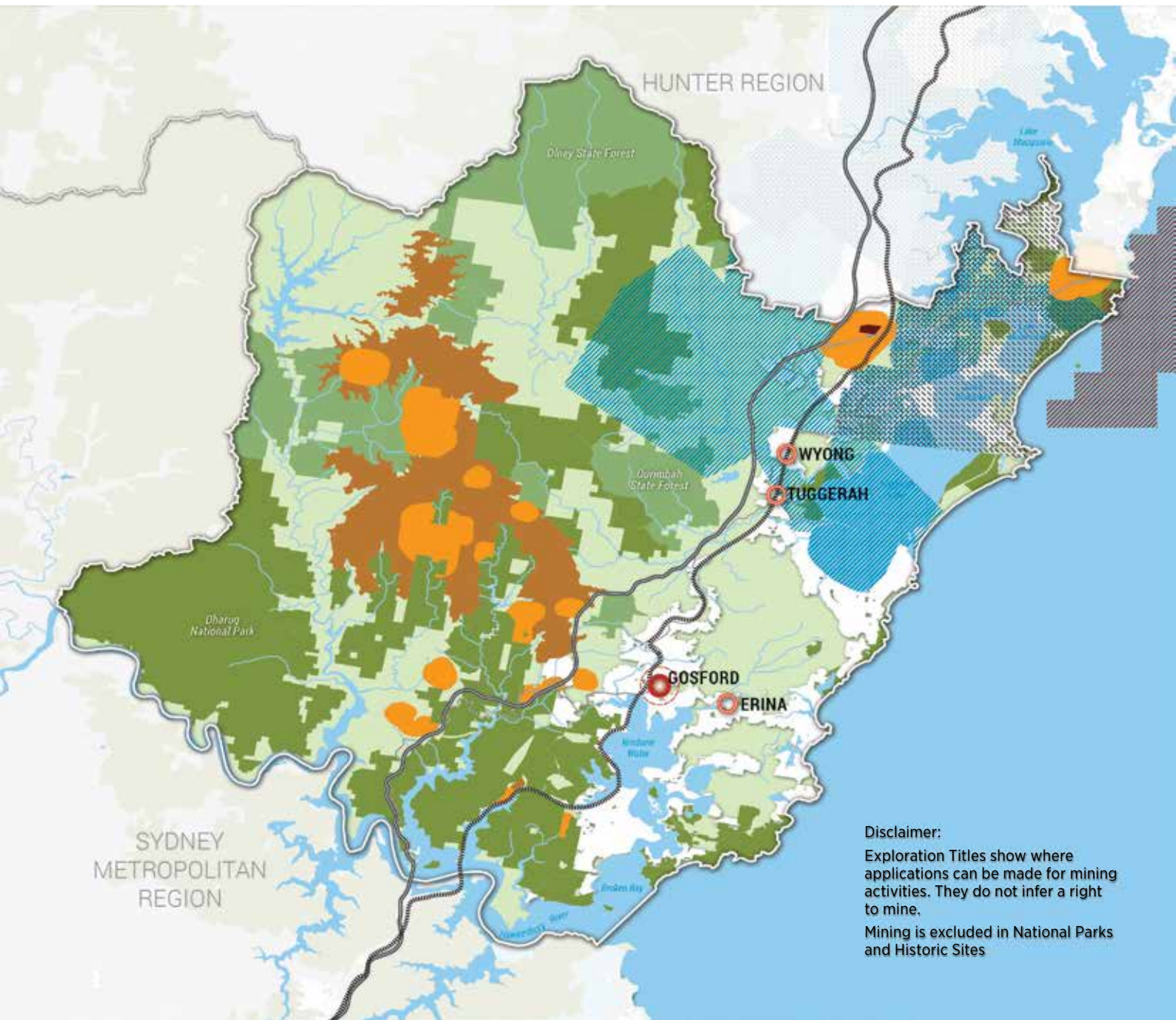
Currently, the NSW Government has several policy and legislative tools that help to support the sustainable growth of the resource industry. Current policy and programs which inform resource and land use planning includes the following:

- *NSW Gas Plan* which includes the Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) buy-back scheme (under which the NSW Government recently purchased PELs which cover large areas of the Central Coast);
- *State Environment Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007* which includes coal seam gas exclusion zones that cover large parts of the Central Coast;
- *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide*;
- *Draft Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum Exploration*; and
- *Draft Preliminary Regional Issues Assessment for Potential Coal and Petroleum Exploration Release Areas Guidelines*.

Mining and energy production activities have specific operational needs that may compete with other uses but can be effectively managed with the right regulation, engineering solutions and ongoing monitoring. These activities are also temporary, dependent on the productive life of the facility or resource, and require planning and management that takes into account their full lifecycle.

The NSW Government is already responding to community concerns about the long term future of coal and gas mining around the State by developing a policy framework for the strategic release of coal and petroleum exploration licences and assessment leases (see p.46).

FIGURE 8: CENTRAL COAST MINING



Disclaimer:
 Exploration Titles show where applications can be made for mining activities. They do not infer a right to mine.
 Mining is excluded in National Parks and Historic Sites

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Regional City |  Coal Production Title |  National Park and Reserve |
|  Major Centre |  Current Minerals Mining Title |  State Forest |
|  Heavy Rail Network |  Identified Mineral Resource |  Non-Urban Area |
|  Motorway |  Current Minerals Exploration Title |  Urban Area |
|  Coal Exploration Title |  Potential Mineral Resource |  Waterway |

Explanatory note: Resources and Energy Sector in Central Coast

Figure 8 identifies the current mining activities in the Central Coast, including the existing licences issued under the *Mining Act 1992*. These include:

- **coal exploration titles** – identifying areas where an exploration licence or assessment lease has been granted to enable title holders to establish the quality, quantity and commercial viability of the underlying coal resource;
- **coal production titles** – identifying areas where a mining lease has been granted to allow coal to be extracted. The extent of land subject to coal production titles may contain a range of mining-related activities, including open-cut or underground mines and surface infrastructure such as roads or rail, as well as buffer zones to sensitive uses or other non-operational areas;
- **current minerals mining titles** – identifying areas where a mining lease has been granted to allow a mineral (other than coal) to be extracted;
- **identified mineral resources** – identifying where previous exploration or assessments have confirmed the presence of a mineral resource (other than coal). The areas shown include an adjacent transition area around the identified resource, where planning and management should consider the current or future implications of extractive activities;
- **current minerals exploration titles** – identifying areas where an exploration licence or assessment lease has been granted to enable title holders to establish the quality, quantity and commercial viability of underlying mineral resource (other than coal); and
- **potential resource areas** – where geological surveys suggest there may be a high likelihood of a particular resource, which may be confirmed through future exploration and assessment.
- There are also locations where mining activities are excluded by the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

The data shown reflects the *NSW Minerals Resource Audit*, finalised in 2015 and relates to existing title approvals issued under the *Mining Act 1992*, as of October 2015. This data does not indicate the nature, timing or location of specific mining and quarrying activities. Further information about recent or current development applications for mining projects in specific locations can found on the Department of Planning and Environment's Major Projects website at: <http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/>.

NSW Government's Draft Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum

The NSW Government has introduced a Draft Strategic Release Framework to release new areas for coal and petroleum.

New exploration licences will only be issued in areas released by the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy after an assessment of economic, environmental and social factors.

The framework recognises there are competing uses for land, and seeks to balance these interests. Community consultation and an upfront assessment of social, environmental and economic matters relating to a potential release area, for example, through a preliminary regional issues assessment, are essential.

Overall, the new framework resets the NSW Government's approach to issuing prospecting titles so that it is transparent, informed and consistent with the NSW Government's broader coal and petroleum strategy.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils to identify significant extractive minerals and energy resource lands, including through the *NSW Mineral Resources Audit*; and
- work with councils when preparing new local environmental plans or sequencing of land releases, to make sure that valuable resources are not sterilised.

ACTION 3.1.4 Implement a robust assessment process for resource development

Providing a clear and robust assessment process for the development of resource projects will help to proactively manage the impacts of development and competing land uses. A robust and transparent approach is required to balance the social, economic and environmental implications of resource development. The mining map (Figure 8) shows areas which are subject to current exploration leases and mining areas, which include land that supports extraction as well as surface infrastructure and buffer lands.

The NSW Government already closely manages the mining industry by:

- imposing legally binding pollution reduction programs on all existing coal mines;
- requiring companies to assess their current operations against best management practice to ensure they are using all reasonable and feasible measures to reduce their dust emissions;
- requiring all new coal mines and applications seeking to modify existing approvals to benchmark their proposals against best management practice to minimise dust emissions;
- requiring open cut coal mines to develop strategies to manage and minimise blast fumes;
- considering options for addressing noise impacts from emerging mining precincts, including through a recent review of the Industrial Noise Policy; and
- improving mechanisms to protect biodiversity and manage offsets in mining areas, as demonstrated by the strategic biodiversity assessment of proposed mines in the Upper Hunter.

The introduction of the Gateway process provides for an independent, scientific and upfront assessment of the impact of particular resource sector development on strategic agricultural land and on agricultural land values. This assessment is conducted prior to the lodgement of a resource development application and requires the water and agricultural impacts of the development to be considered. Where appropriate,

stringent requirements and conditions may be applied to the development that must be met in the development application.

The NSW Government is currently responding to community concerns by further clarifying the requirements for assessing and determining mining applications through the development of an *Integrated Mining Policy*. This policy seeks to improve transparency, consistency and accountability for assessment decisions. Providing consent authorities with a more comprehensive understanding of environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures will improve decision-making. This policy does not change environmental standards or community consultation requirements.

The NSW Government will:

- work with Council and industry to implement the *Integrated Mining Policy*, including finalising economic assessment guidelines;
- develop a cumulative impact assessment methodology to manage the cumulative health and amenity impacts of all relevant activities (including mining and coal seam gas proposals) that consider:
 - whether cumulative impact thresholds or tipping points can be adequately described and predicted; and
 - the cumulative impacts on agricultural lands and water resources;
- investigate appropriate methods for encouraging best-practice rehabilitation and visual impact management for closed mines; and
- prepare a development assessment guideline to mitigate impacts on human health from dust (including dust generated by mining and other activities).



Left: Terrigal rock platform
 Centre: The Entrance
 Right: Mountain biker, Kincumba Mountain Reserve

DIRECTION 3.2 Manage rural lifestyles sustainably

The Central Coast offers rural lifestyles surrounded by pristine natural environments within 30 minutes of the northern suburbs of Sydney and 15 minutes of the region's major centres. Rural communities such as those around Mangrove Mountain and Somersby support industries that add value to rural production activities, for example, through food processing and bottling plants.

The villages and communities of the Central Coast currently have relatively small footprints within the rural environment. Proximity to both Sydney and the employment centres of Gosford, Tuggerah and Wyong is increasing demand for rural lifestyle lots in rural areas. Around 450 hectares of land is already zoned for rural residential purposes, clustered in areas such as Yarramalong, Jiliby, Matcham-Holgate and Bensville.

The draft Plan aims to provide greater certainty about the locations for rural housing, giving priority to the sustainable:

- growth of existing rural communities;
- economic growth of rural production and resource values;
- management of high environmental values and water catchments;
- provision and management of services and infrastructure; and
- delivery of existing and committed rural residential and urban residential land supplies.

ACTION 3.2.1 Support services and employment in local communities

The draft Plan aims to improve the resilience of existing rural communities by supporting local employment and housing opportunities to allow people to age-in-place, while preserving rural amenity and local character.

The NSW Government will work with councils and rural communities to:

- identify capacity to accommodate employment growth, in appropriate locations;
- strengthen rural villages through the clustering of services, housing and other activities; and
- protect the character and amenity of rural areas.



ACTION 3.2.2 Manage future rural residential opportunities, where appropriate

Future rural residential development must not adversely impact on the natural environment, drinking water catchments, and agricultural and extractive resource activities. Due to the large land requirements of rural residential development, careful planning is necessary so as not to adversely affect biodiversity values; the long term productivity of agricultural land; extractive resource potential; or land likely to be used for future urban development. Draft principles have been developed to guide rural residential development in the region.

Future rural residential development will:

- not impact on significant agriculture, resource or biodiversity values;
- not impact on drinking water catchments;
- not result in greater natural hazard risk, for example, bushfires;
- occur on land that is unlikely to be needed for future urban development;
- contribute to the conservation of important biodiversity values or the establishment of important corridor linkages; and
- facilitate the expansion of existing and new tourism development activities in rural and resource lands and related industries (for example, accommodation, place-based activities) across the region.

Where planning proposals for land use change are being considered in existing or known resource lands, councils need to consult the NSW Department of Industry's *Mineral Resources Audit*, and the exploration and mining activity maps, so that they can consider the implications on the viability of the resource activity. Up-to-date mapping showing current exploration and mining activity is available on the NSW Department of Resources and Energy's Common Ground website.

The NSW Government will work with councils to:

- prepare guidelines for future rural residential development, encapsulating the draft principles outlined above; and
- assess the implications of new or sequenced urban release areas on existing and known resource lands.



GOAL 4 - PROTECT AND MANAGE THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The predominant feature of the Central Coast is the natural environment and it is characterised by many kilometres of ocean foreshore, coastal lakes, rivers, estuaries, lagoons, valleys and mountains. The environment supports an incredibly diverse range of plant, animals and ecosystems.

The natural environment has created enviable lifestyle opportunities for residents and acted as a drawcard for visitors and tourists. It has determined the location of urban development and contributes to highly productive rural and resource lands. Protecting and restoring the region's natural environment will be essential to sustaining the lifestyle, economic success and environmental health of the region into the future.

DIRECTION 4.1 Protect and manage the region's environmental and heritage values

The region contains 832 square kilometres (50 per cent of the region) of land designated as 'high environmental value' which is dispersed across the region (see Figure 9). Existing vegetation creates a network of environmental corridors which provide local links and larger connections to the Great Dividing Range, the Hawkesbury, and Ku-ring-gai National Park to the south and Watagans National Park to the north (see Figure 10).

The region is also fortunate to have a rich Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage that is reflected in the environment, and in objects and places. Aboriginal cultural heritage includes places and items that are of significance because of traditions, observances, lore, customs, beliefs and history. It is dynamic and may comprise physical (tangible)

or non-physical (intangible) elements. Aboriginal people have a strong connection to the landscape of the Central Coast.

Protecting heritage items and places is important foremost because of the way that it contributes to the region's identity and visual character, but also because it can help to attract tourists.

Heritage is a non-renewable resource and the significance of heritage to the community should be appreciated, valued, protected and conserved for the benefit of current and future generations.

Councils have invested significant resources in conservation mapping and planning, including through the Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Systems – a partnership between 14 councils. This approach provides a collaborative model which coordinates a range of regional-scale activities and supports local decision making on development and environmental management matters. Gosford City Council has applied this data and knowledge to prepare the Gosford City Council *Biodiversity Strategy* (2008), which implements Council's *Biodiversity Management Policy*.

The draft Plan aims to sustain the region's diverse environment and heritage values by recognising them in the planning process.

ACTION 4.1.1 Protect areas of high environmental value

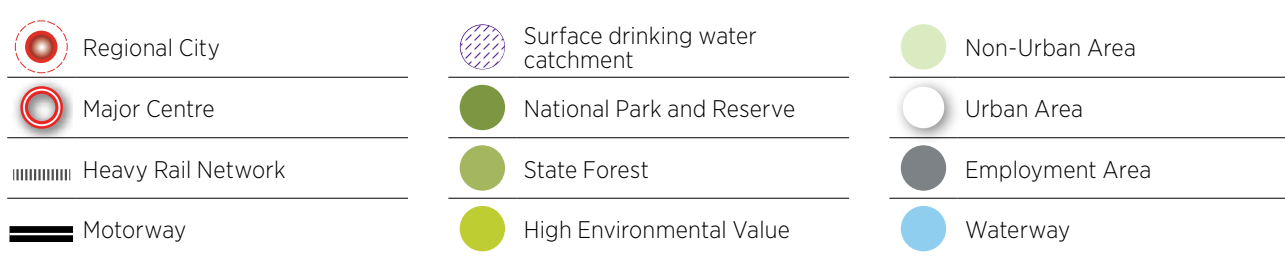
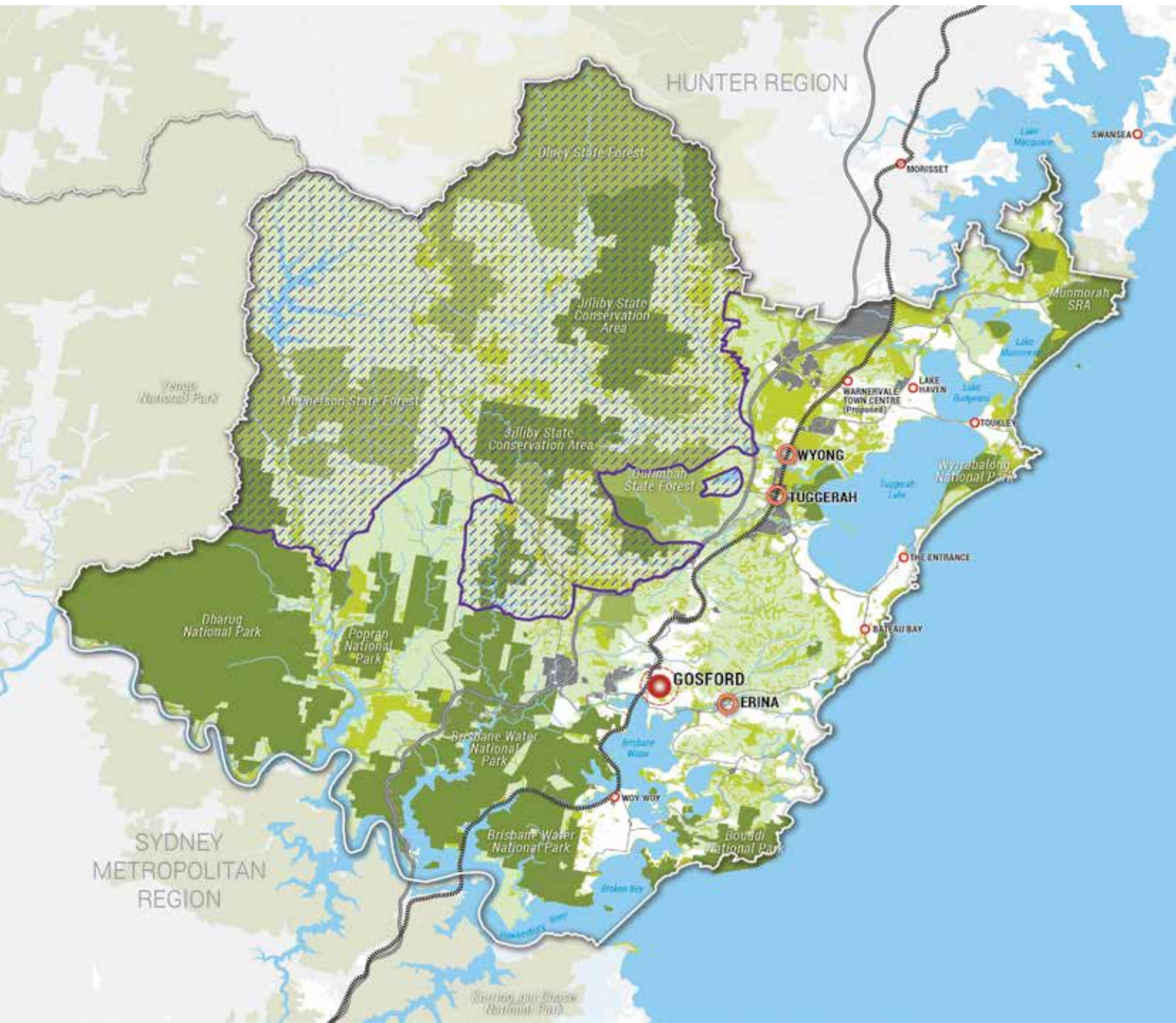
Many of the region's natural features are already subject to a high level of regulation to protect environmental values. Strategic land use planning should identify and take account of the location and extent of these areas of 'high environmental value'. This will ensure that, as far as possible, potential

Top:
The Entrance
public baths

Centre:
Bouddi National Park
view to Maitland Bay

Bottom:
Copacabana Beach
surfers

FIGURE 9: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS



impacts on areas of high environmental value are considered 'upfront' at the strategic stage of the planning system, rather than later at the development assessment stage.

The NSW Government has a range of tools available to assess the potential impacts associated with development in land release areas and minor expansions on the existing urban fringe. Biodiversity Certification allows for the assessment of biodiversity values as the strategic stage. It identifies areas to be protected and provides options for offsetting biodiversity impacts for development.

The NSW Government is also supporting the extension of the existing national park estate. The Government recently purchased privately owned land on Bambara Road, Kariong for an extension of the Brisbane Water National Park.

Groundwater dependent ecosystems, aquatic and marine habitats also have high environmental values. Maps of these are available from the Department of Primary Industries.

The NSW Government will:

- provide planning authorities with mapping and spatial data of environmental features, particularly for areas proposed for land use change or intensification;
- support planning authorities to undertake strategic, landscape-scale assessment of terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity;
- require councils to avoid and minimise impacts of development on areas of high environmental value, and where impacts cannot be avoided, identify and secure appropriate biodiversity offsets through an offset strategy, developed via negotiations with the Office of Environment and Heritage and the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries; and
- protect fish and aquaculture habitats (waterways, wetlands and tidal lands) and sensitive estuaries and coastal lakes from inappropriate development.

Explanatory note: Environmental Assets

The areas identified with high environmental values in Figure 9 relate to natural features that have existing protections under legislation, regulation, policy or intergovernmental agreement.

A range of criteria were used to identify and map land with high environmental values including:

- existing conservation areas, including national parks and reserves, marine parks, declared wilderness areas, Crown reserves dedicated for environmental protection and conservation, and flora reserves;
- native vegetation of high conservation value, including vegetation types that have been over-cleared or occur within over-cleared landscapes, old growth forests and rainforests;
- threatened ecological communities and key habitats;
- important wetlands, coastal lakes and estuaries; and
- sites of geological significance.

The data used to identify high environmental values in this draft Plan is intended to provide a regional-level overview for the purposes of strategic planning. This data will be updated as new information becomes available. Documents such as the *Draft Central Coast Biodiversity Management Plan* and local biodiversity assessments provide greater level detail of the region's biodiversity values. A range of information will be used to inform future updates of the high environmental values mapping to address current information gaps (for example, the current mapping does not identify significant remnant areas of vegetation).

Interested parties should contact relevant agencies, including the Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services and the Department of Primary Industries, for current data and further support.



Woy Woy Hotel

ACTION 4.1.2 Identify and protect heritage values

Urban growth and development has the potential to affect recognised and yet to be identified heritage sites and places. A strategic approach to protecting cultural heritage is essential and requires heritage values to be identified at the earliest possible stage in the planning and development process.

Previous Aboriginal cultural heritage studies have identified a large and diverse range of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Studies have yet to be completed in all parts of the region which means that some Aboriginal heritage values may not have been recorded.

The Aboriginal community will need to be involved in identifying these areas before the planning and assessment process for development is too advanced.

The region also has a range of non-Aboriginal heritage values, including part of the World Heritage listed convict trail and other sites of local, State and national significance.

Heritage can add value to the character of a new development and should be considered in the planning process as a potential asset. It can give a development an added attraction or help establish a unique identity.

The NSW Government will:

- support the preparation of appropriate heritage studies to inform the development of strategic plans, including regional Aboriginal cultural heritage studies.

DIRECTION 4.2 Sustain water quality and security

The northern and eastern parts of the Central Coast drain to the Tuggerah Lakes system, Brisbane Water and Lake Macquarie, while the southern and western parts drain to the Hawkesbury River.

Surface and groundwater systems support ecosystems, industries and communities and provide the chief source of the region's urban water supply. Figures 9 and 10 identify the region's surface drinking water catchments. The region's waterways support recreational and commercial fishing, oyster farms and tourism and therefore rely on good

water quality. The NSW Government has committed \$23 million towards enhancing its ability to map, monitor and protect groundwater resources across NSW.

A network of pipelines and dams, including Mangrove Creek, Mooney and Mardi Dams provide the region's urban water supply. It is the third largest urban water supply system in New South Wales, delivering water to about 125,000 homes and businesses. The system incorporates three dams, three weirs, three water treatment plants, over 50 reservoirs, and more than 2,000 kilometres of pipelines.⁵⁴

The draft Plan aims to protect water catchments, to sustain high quality and dependable water supplies across the region. This requires effectively managing water use in agricultural areas to support food production, while catering for the increasing demands of urban communities and industry.

ACTION 4.2.1 Secure the Central Coast's water supply

Gosford and Wyong Councils work together to deliver the region's water supply, which is planned via the region's long term water supply strategy, *WaterPlan 2050*. Securing the region's water supply in a sustainable way will support ongoing population and employment growth, and protect the environmental values of the region's water sources.

In conjunction with water management and catchment authorities, the community, land owners and industry, the NSW Government will integrate management and planning of the region's water catchments and associated infrastructure. The NSW Government will also facilitate discussions regarding water supply and drought contingency planning between the Central Coast and Hunter regions.

The NSW Government's water sharing plans provide the Central Coast with water security for environmental, residential and industry uses. Currently, the Central Coast has numerous water sharing plans, including:

- Central Coast Unregulated Water Sources (2009);
- Jiliby Jiliby Creek Water Sources (2003);
- Ourimbah Creek Water Source (2003); and
- Kulnura Mangrove Mountain Groundwater Sources (2003).

The NSW Government will:

- continue working with the Gosford-Wyong Joint Water Supply Authority and Hunter Water Corporation on options to enhance the existing water transfer agreement, to benefit both regions;
- work with the councils to review the region's long term water plan, *WaterPlan 2050*, to facilitate the ongoing environmental health of the region's waterways, optimise yield during high flow periods and update drought contingency and transfer agreements;
- use appropriate provisions to protect water catchment areas and groundwater sources from the potential effects of development. Any development should have a neutral or beneficial effect on the region's water quality; and
- work with councils to identify the need for further water sharing plans, based on the growth of the resources sector.

ACTION 4.2.2 Sustainably manage surface and groundwater

The focus of the draft Plan is on managing all surface and groundwater resources within the region to sustain users, including ecosystems, industries and communities.

Water quality is a significant issue for the region given much of the residential population live around the estuaries, rivers, ocean foreshores and coastal lagoons. The NSW Government's *Estuary Management Program* provides support to councils to improve the health of NSW's estuaries. Both Gosford and Wyong Councils are active participants in the program and have produced catchment-based plans for the ongoing sustainable management of estuaries in their area.

The NSW Government is supporting a range of local planning to support estuary and coastline management, including committing to provide \$2 million for a stone wall at The Entrance, and almost \$500,000 for sand nourishment and a study into making the channel deeper.

The NSW Government's *Water Guidelines for Controlled Activities* outline requirements to protect waterfront land, including watercourses, wetlands and riparian areas. Councils and the NSW Government need

to implement these policies, and the requirements under the *Water Management Act 2000*, to achieve healthy, productive watercourses and waterfront land.

Other relevant Government policy applying to the Central Coast includes the *Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregional Assessment*, and *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management*.

The NSW Government will:

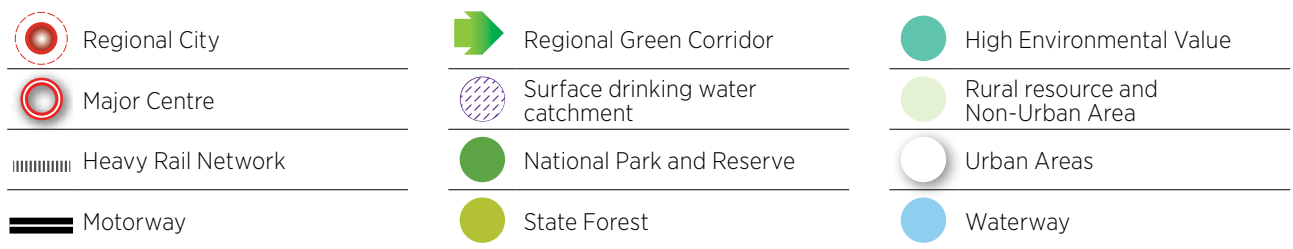
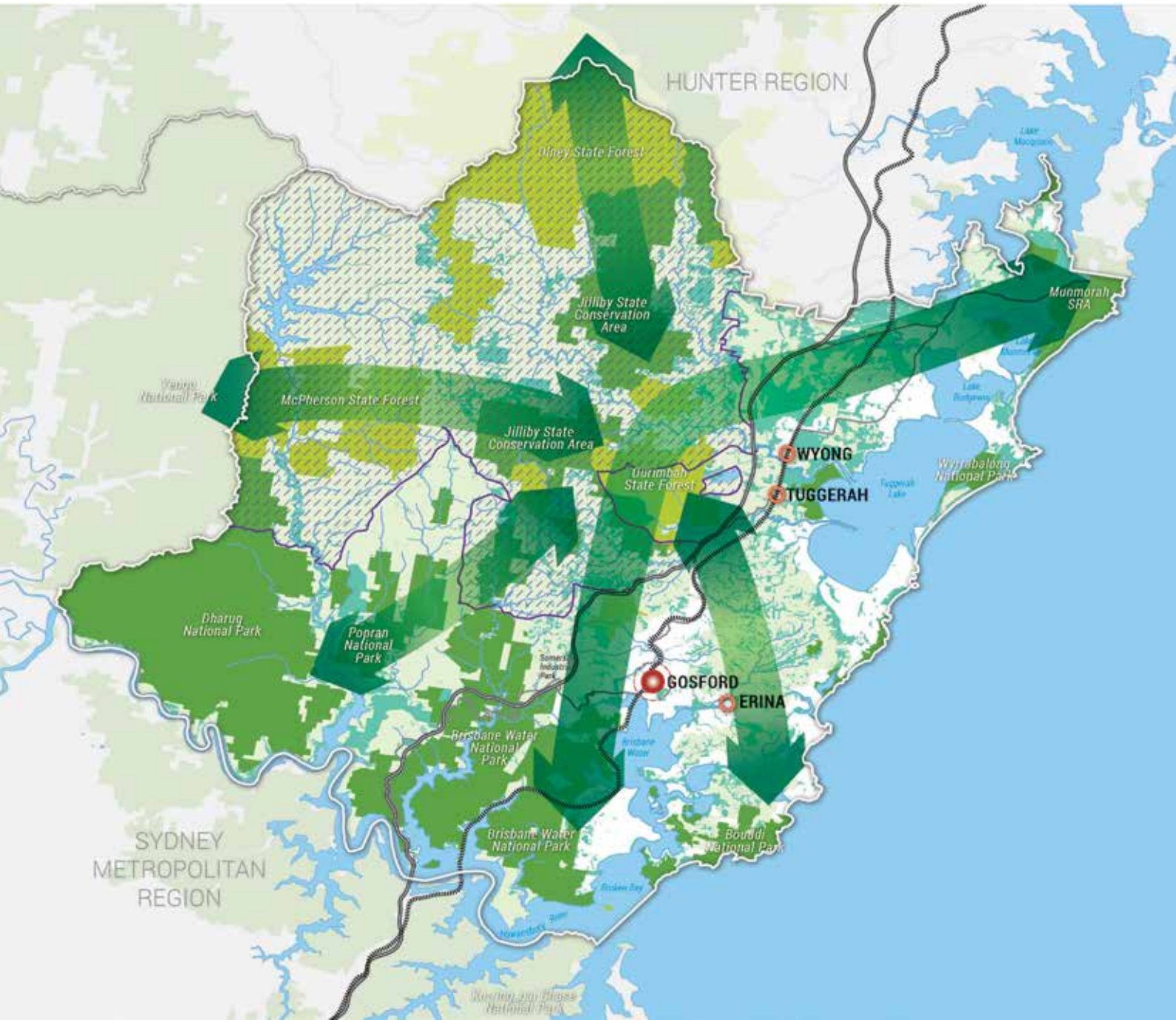
- require decision-makers to minimise the effects of development on waterways (including watercourses, wetlands, riparian lands, estuaries, lakes, beaches and marine waters) to meet Water Quality and River Flow objectives; and
- implement a risk-based decision-making framework to manage water quality and waterway health in the region, including the catchments of all coastal lakes and estuaries where there is planned development, prioritising high environmental value lakes and estuaries, or identified key fish habitat/marine protected areas;
- work with councils to enforce the NSW Government's guidelines for 'Controlled Activities' through resource development approval and monitoring processes; and
- require that planning and development proposals include measures to reduce the risk of introduction or spread of aquatic pests and diseases that may impact fisheries and aquaculture industry practices.

DIRECTION 4.3 Protect the coast and manage natural hazards and climate change risks

The proximity of Central Coast communities to the natural environment increases the potential risk from hazards such as bushfire, flooding, acid sulfate soils, coastal inundation and storms.

Most people in the region live close to the coastline or the extensive lake system. Approximately 180,000 people (56 per cent) live within one kilometre of a lake or ocean and many of these areas are at increased risk from coastal erosion and inundation.

FIGURE 10: WATER CATCHMENT AND GREEN CONNECTIONS



Some areas of the region are also flood prone. The 2007 storm event caused a damage bill for the Central Coast and Hunter regions estimated at \$1.35 billion.⁵⁵ More recent storm events, such as that in April 2015, also demonstrate the cost of natural hazards.

The close proximity of Central Coast 'non-urban' communities to the natural environment means bushfire risk is also widespread. In 2013, bushfires across NSW burnt 768,000 hectares of land and destroyed 279 homes.⁵⁶

Climate change is predicted to result in the increased frequency and severity of some hazards such as bushfire, coastal inundation and storm events.

The draft Plan aims to improve the region's resilience to hazards. The NSW Government will continue to support councils and local communities to identify, monitor, educate and plan for natural hazards.

ACTION: 4.3.1 Apply contemporary risk-management to coastal, man-made and other hazards

Floodplain risk and coastal zone management plans are currently used to manage flood risk and the coastal zone. Other hazards, including bushfire and storm events are associated with some of the areas experiencing the greatest development pressure.

The existence of economic coal reserves and a history of coal mining in the northern parts of Wyong Shire mean that mine subsidence has to be considered in the new development and redevelopment of these areas. Other man-made hazards that will need to be considered include land contamination and rail and road noise.

Suitable mitigation and management strategies for these hazards, such as surface controls for development in potential mine subsidence areas or buffers for development around road and rail corridors, will be identified and implemented through local planning.

The NSW Government will:

- work with councils to incorporate the best available hazard information and mapping of all vulnerable estuaries, coastal lakes and their catchments in planning controls;

- require that councils review and update their floodplain risk and coastal management plans, particularly where growth is being considered that may be affected by natural hazards;
- complete the Coastal Reform Program to respond to community concerns about coastal hazard management;
- prohibit new urban releases in high flood hazard areas and designated floodways, consistent with Coastal and Floodplain Management Plans;
- work with councils so that man-made hazards such as mining-related surface subsidence, land contamination and road and rail noise are considered in future planning and development controls;
- develop strategic and incident-based bushfire actions such as emergency evacuation areas for the mountains community and other isolated communities; and
- develop emergency management actions such as flood and coastal response plans.

ACTION: 4.3.2 Plan for a changing climate

Coastal regions are vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise such as flooding. Better information is needed about the implications of such events, and their impact on the natural environment, future land use and infrastructure planning.

The NSW Government will:

- consider the effect of sea level rise and climate change in flood planning for urban release areas and infill urban areas; incorporate new knowledge on regional climate projections and related impacts; and prioritise resilience to climate change in the siting and development of infrastructure and land use;
- support communities to understand and respond to climate-related risks by applying and communicating detailed climate information to support decision-making; and
- build resilience against such events by supporting regional decision-makers to identify and implement climate change adaptation projects and programs.

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