The Hills Shire is a Local Government Area within the Greater Metropolitan Area of Sydney and forms part of the Central City District, along with the Blacktown, Cumberland and Parramatta Local Government Areas. It is unique within the district, being the only LGA that extends into the Metropolitan Rural Area (MRA). Approximately 70% of the land area of the Hills is within the MRA, with the remaining 30% spanning urban areas of varying densities and characters. For the foreseeable future, development within the Shire will be constrained to this urban area.
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Executive Summary

The Hills Shire is located in North West Sydney, approximately 30 km from the Sydney CBD. Spanning approximately 38,500 hectares (386km²), the LGA includes land between Baulkham Hills and West Pennant Hills in the south, to Wiseman’s Ferry in the north. In 2016, The Hills was home to approximately 162,500 residents within 55,000 households, 64% of which contain family households.

Expected population growth, within the existing release areas coupled with the growth within the Sydney Metro Northwest Corridor, will see the Shire accommodating 290,900 people by 2036. Our Local Strategic Planning Statement, informed by this and other supporting strategies, has a vision of shaping exceptional living, working and leisure places where expected growth brings vibrancy, diversity, liveability and prosperity for the Hills. The delivery of a diversity of housing opportunities in the right locations, supported by sufficient services and infrastructure is essential to creating vibrant and liveable neighbourhoods.

Achieving the vision will require concerted efforts to improve infrastructure to support new communities. Collaboration with, and commitment from, all stakeholders including the community, State Government, business and development industry will be key to making the vision a reality.

This Strategy is based around the following Planning Priorities to guide the planning, delivery and management of our housing and supporting infrastructure in the longer term as well as Council’s actions over the next 5 years:

- Plan for housing supply to support Sydney’s growing population;
- Facilitate housing in the right location;
- Deliver a diversity of housing;
- Renew and create great places; and
- Provide services and social infrastructure to meet residents’ needs.

The Hills Shire has adopted a targeted approach to the delivery of housing since the implementation of its 1998 Residential Development Strategy that provides for a range of low, medium and high density residential zones as part of the land use planning framework. The focus has been on concentrating higher density surrounding our centres and transport hubs which have increased in accessibility, and facilitating a downward transition of density further from the centres to ensure an appropriate address to low density areas. This approach facilitates a balance between achieving housing targets and retaining the low density character of established residential areas that is valued by The Hills community.

For high densities to be sensible, it must be provided in areas that are well connected and within reach of available transport and other urban support services. There are 6 Metro Station precincts in
our Shire and (with the exception of Cherrybrook, which is shared with Hornsby Council) all are forecast for significant uplift in jobs and housing. These precincts need to be carefully planned along transport oriented design principles providing for a mixture of land uses, increased walkability and improvements to public domain.

There is enough land zoned or strategically identified for housing growth in the Shire to meet identified housing targets. The future housing growth will be a mix of greenfield development and urban renewal and over the coming decades, more of the supply is likely to be in urban renewal areas around centres and Metro Stations.

The following table demonstrates the capacity and expected dwelling completions in The Hills over the next 20 to 40 years. With the projected dwelling numbers exceeding those set out as targets for Council in the Region and District Plans, Council does not intend to accelerate or rezone additional land for residential uses unless exemplary development and community outcomes are to be achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Additional Dwellings by 2036</th>
<th>Additional Dwellings beyond 2036</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Release Areas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmoral Road Release Area</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Kellyville Release Area</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Hill Release Area</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>9,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Hill North Release Area</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Release Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,600</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,400</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infill/ Station Precincts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Hill</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hills Showground</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella Vista/ Kellyville</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>7,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwest</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>3,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherrybrook</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouse Hill</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baulkham Hills Town Centre</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Infill/ Station Precinct</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,700</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,100</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total dwelling capacity</strong></td>
<td><strong>76,100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Capacity for Additional Dwellings*
For our greenfield areas the rate of take up of housing opportunities depends upon many factors however the timing of delivery of State level utilities often impacts upon the level of development activity. It is essential State agencies are encouraged to more actively participate in delivering upgraded assets.

In greenfield areas, Council has prepared local infrastructure plans but residential densities are higher than what was originally planned for. Matching infrastructure with growth is a challenge and the funding mechanism does not facilitate upfront delivery of local facilities such as roads, drainage, park and sporting fields. Funding of libraries, community centres and aquatic facilities in these communities is also uncertain with only the land for these facilities being able to be funded through the local contribution framework.

In urban renewal areas, the supply of housing will be slower than that of greenfield areas. It is also difficult to fund the required active open space to meet the needs of future residents as in most cases, it is not practical and cost prohibitive to provide it within the catchment of these precincts.

The cost of public facilities is significant and better ways are needed to ensure timely funding and delivery of necessary infrastructure to align with growth. The Office of Local Government and Department of Planning & Environment can play a role in helping to solve these challenges.
Introduction

Council has been well served by a series of housing strategies which have guided planning for and provision of housing within the Shire since 1998. The most recent housing strategy, the Residential Direction, was prepared in 2008, prior to construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest. This document provides a refresh of the Strategy within the context of the recent Greater Sydney Region Plan, Central City District Plan and the investment into substantial transport infrastructure.

Purpose of the Strategy
The purpose of this Strategy is to clearly establish the basis for strategic planning of the residential component of the Shire’s urban lands to 2036. It is Council’s response to the housing components of the Region and District Plan. It is also the evidence base that informs the planning priorities and 5 year actions contained in our Local Strategic Planning Statement. It provides the finer detail about how we will achieve our vision and guide growth into the future.

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

Vision - Hills Future 2036 Local Strategic Planning Statement

The overall aim is to deliver housing growth that meet the needs of the existing and future population by providing a framework for how such lands will be managed into the future. This document provides the strategic justification for Council’s planning controls, thereby assisting in decision making on planning proposals and development applications. It is also intended that Government agencies will use the document as a resource when undertaking their own programming and planning within their core business activities in the Shire.

Developing the Strategy
This Housing Strategy complements the Hills Future Community Strategic Plan and will contribute to the themes of building a vibrant community and prosperous economy, proactive leadership, shaping growth and delivering and maintaining infrastructure.

Successfully responding to anticipated growth requires a good understanding of where we are now – the characteristics of our different residential areas as well as the characteristics of our existing population. To determine where we want to be, evaluation is needed of the strategic context, prevailing trends, likely demands on our residential lands and their capacity to respond to growth and change.
In developing the strategy the following has been completed:

- A review of State Government policies including the Greater Sydney Region Plan, the Central City District Plan, Future Transport Strategy 2056;
- A review of demographic data including trends or changes over time;
- A review/audit of existing zoned residential land including the quality and suitability of existing sites; and
- a Housing Market Demand Analysis including a review of sought after areas including analysis of why they are sought after and dwelling types (to be completed whilst draft Strategy is on exhibition).

Additional documents supporting this strategy and Council’s Local Strategic Planning Statement may be found on Council’s website (www.thehills.nsw.gov.au).
Understanding the strategic context of this Strategy is vital to ensuring that the priorities and actions are delivered effectively. The Hills has a legislative obligation to implement the objectives and vision of State Government policy documents. Beyond that, Council also has an obligation to its community to deliver a Shire in which they want to live, work and play, noting the outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan.

**Figure 1:** Hierarchy of Strategy Plans

The Local Strategic Planning Statement is the document that binds the macro strategies to deliver a functioning metropolitan and rural Shire with the detailed instruments that guide land use planning and management decisions at the micro level. In developing the LSPS, background strategies have been undertaken in a number of key areas to provide the vision for the future of the Hills Shire, one of which is this Strategy.
A review of the strategic planning framework provided by both the State and Local strategies indicate the Shire will have a significant role in designing places for people, developing accessible and walkable neighbourhoods and contributing to housing supply. The key documents in this framework are:

**State Level**
- Greater Sydney Region Plan
- Central City District Plan
- State Planning Instruments
- North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy

**Local Level**
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Hills Future Community Strategic Plan
- The Hills Local Strategy
- The Hills Corridor Strategy
- Local Planning Instruments

Information on the above documents and the implications for Council’s Housing Strategy are set out in more detail in Appendix 1.
This section provides an overview of the population expected for The Hills Shire and likely housing demand and supply. It examines the types of housing needed to support the future population, gaps and future development capacity. Understanding need and capacity in different housing markets will equip Council to better satisfy residents’ preferred housing choice.

Demographic Overview

Population
The Hills Shire has seen rapid growth of the urban area and population change, in the southern portion of the Shire, over a relatively short timeframe as illustrated in the figures below.
This growth has seen areas of the Shire once dominated by farms, orchards and bushland become more urbanised with the most significant change occurring since the 1980’s due to urban release programs. Most of this growth occurring in the southern areas; in the suburbs of Beaumont Hills, Bella Vista, Castle Hill, Kellyville, Rouse Hill and West Pennant Hills, and more recently in the suburbs of Baulkham Hills, North Kellyville and Norwest.

The continued development of the North West Growth Area, including the Balmoral and Box Hill North Urban Release Areas, along with urban renewal around the future stations of the Sydney Metro Northwest will see the population of the Hills Shire almost double by 2036. The Hills is expected to grow by around 128,000 over the next 20 years, to approximately 290,000 people, equivalent to a 2.1% annual growth.
A review of demographic data including trends or changes over time has been completed to understand the likely housing needs of the future population. This is included in Appendix 2 and provides information and evidence on:

- Projected population of the Central City District councils;
- Population locations and change over time;
- Projected age profile of The Shire;
- Household composition and size;
- Countries of origin for overseas born residents;
- Number of children per household and projected change over time;
- Average number of bedrooms per dwelling;
- Tenure type in the LGA;
- Household income;
- Housing stress (rental and mortgage); and
- Migration.

**Housing Demand, Trends and Diversity**

**Underlying Demand**
The implied dwelling requirement considers the projected population and household sizes to determine the potential number of dwellings required to serve the population. To accommodate the additional 128,000 residents by 2036, an additional 38,000 dwellings would be required (assuming an average occupancy rate of 3.3 persons per dwelling).

While The Hills Shire is unlikely to attract significant overseas migration, between 2011 and 2016, approximately 8,000 residents migrated from overseas, making up only about 6.3% of immigration. The majority of in-migration between 2011 and 2016 was from residents previously living in the neighbouring Local Government Areas of Parramatta, Cumberland, Hornsby and Blacktown. The most significant out-migration is seen in residents aged 18-34 and aged 55 years and over and there is a significant increase in residents aged 35-44 years of age and young children.

The age structure of people who move into and out of The Hills Shire is strongly influenced by the residential role and function of the area and can influence demand for particular services. For instance, inner city areas near employment, education and entertainment tend to attract many young people in their late teens and early twenties, who move out in their late twenties and thirties to start families in suburban areas. Rural areas tend to lose young adults and retain families and retirees.

Understanding The Hills Shire’s attraction to different age groups helps to plan services for the community as well as advocating with other levels of government and private enterprise to provide infrastructure, employment opportunities and facilities which may help to retain age groups which are otherwise leaving the area.
Effective Demand
It is anticipated that the demographic trends of family dominant households currently seen in The Hills will continue, however there is anticipated to be an increase in couple only and lone person households likely attributed to the increase in smaller dwellings and apartments. To ensure existing and future residents’ desired dwelling type is catered for, it is important to deliver a diversity of dwelling types and sizes, to provide ample choice within the market that suits a range of lifestyles, means and needs.

Seniors and People with a Disability
While the number of people aged 55 years and over is anticipated to increase, they do not make up a significant proportion of the population as a whole. Notwithstanding, there will be an increase in demand for dwellings that meet the needs of people aged 55 years and over.

Between 2011 and 2016, there was an increase of approximately 1,300 residents who needed assistance with core activities, with the largest proportion of people aged 85 years and over. This increase suggests an increased demand for housing for seniors and people with a disability providing higher levels of care.

![Figure 6: Need for Assistance with Core Activities](source:image-url)
Affordable Rental Housing
The Central City District Plan recommends setting Affordable Rental Housing Targets as a mechanism to deliver an additional supply of affordable housing for very low to low-income households in Greater Sydney. Affordable rental housing for people on very low to low incomes is priced so that housing needs can be met alongside other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.

The District Plan states that, within Greater Sydney, targets generally in the range of 5 to 10 per cent of new residential floor space may be viable. However, the introduction of the Sydney Metro Northwest raising landowner sale price expectations, paired with unprecedentedly high property prices across Greater Sydney mean that the delivery of affordable rental housing is less attractive to developers.

![Median Property Price in Urban Areas](source: realestate.com)

Figure 7: Median Property Price in Urban Areas

The application of any target will be the subject of a viability test that the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment are currently developing. Once this viability testing is available, Council will analyse and identify areas where affordable rental housing could be best located.

Analysis indicates that 2,883 very low, low and moderate income households in The Hills are experiencing rental stress. This equates to 35% of all renting households in The Hills Shire, or 7% of our total households. The implied need includes these households in rental stress as well as people experiencing homelessness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households in rental stress</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low income in rental stress</td>
<td>897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income in rental stress</td>
<td>1,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate income in rental stress</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of all rental households</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing need</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households in need of affordable housing</td>
<td>3,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of all households</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implied need</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional housing need</td>
<td>3,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (existing and implied)</td>
<td>6,382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing supply of ‘affordable’ rental stock</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total &lt;$630 per week</td>
<td>5,674</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Affordable rental housing provision**

Station precincts may present the best opportunity to provide additional affordable housing stock in The Hills. On face value this could require a contribution of up to 9% of all new high density dwellings to satisfy the implied additional need for affordable housing. The viability of any such scheme requires detailed analysis in light of rapidly rising land prices in station precincts.

New affordable housing is only one part of the equation and should not be considered in isolation. Currently there is almost enough stock of housing in the affordable bracket to satisfy existing and implied demand. Some of this is likely to be lost as urban renewal areas develop, however a significant proportion is likely to remain. At present these dwellings are occupied by households who are not in the low income brackets previously described. As new high density dwellings become available it is likely that some of these households will move into new accommodation, freeing up some of the existing stock.

Vacancy rates are another challenge in The Hills, with high rental vacancy rates in areas including Kellyville and Rouse Hill. In 2018 median rental prices in Kellyville saw a dramatic 7.9% drop owing in large part to high rental vacancy rates. Currently housing stock in The Hills is dominated by large detached dwellings. As is being experienced in Kellyville and Rouse Hill, diversity in dwellings is driving downward pressure on rental prices. This trend may assist in improving housing affordability without the need to impose high targets for an affordable rental housing scheme.

**Students**

In the past decade there has been a steady increase in the number of students aged 15-24 years that were attending University or other Tertiary Education Institute either full time or part time. The Sydney Metro Northwest provides a direct route between The Hills and Macquarie University, it is likely that this number will increase, either opting to live at home with parents or renting.
The Hills Shire Council  |  Housing Strategy

Strategic Planning Statement and Productivity and Centres Strategy seek to build a university presence in The Norwest Strategic Centre, which will likely be an attractive option of local residents. Notwithstanding the above, it is not necessary to consider options or locations for student specific accommodation at this time.

Social Housing Waiting Time
The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) has released updated information on the expected social housing waiting times for general applications. The Hills is located within Parramatta/Baulkham Hills Allocation Zone, where there were 2,025 general applications and 125 priority applications at 30 June 2018 (Ref: FACS). The expected waiting time for general applications is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwelling Type</th>
<th>Waiting Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio/ 1 bedroom property</td>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bedroom property</td>
<td>10+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bedroom property</td>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ bedroom property</td>
<td>10+ years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Family and Community Services

Table 3: Waiting Time for Social Housing

Housing Supply, Trends and Diversity
An audit of The Hills existing zoned and planned residential land has deduced that there is sufficient capacity in existing zoned land for an additional 38,000 dwellings by 2036, with additional capacity beyond that.

The Hills Housing Diversity clause (cl 7.12) was gazetted in The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012 in April 2017. This incentives program provides bonus floor space to high density residential developments that meet Council’s preferred apartment size and mix controls on identified sites within the Sydney Metro Northwest Station Precincts. The program will assist in delivering a range of apartment sizes and types to meet varying needs and budgets. At present, four (4) sites as well as certain land within the Showground Station Precinct have been identified in the LEP. There will also be sites within the Castle Hill North Precinct that will be eligible to enact this clause.

There may be opportunities to broaden the scope of applicability within the remaining Station Precincts.

The Hills have seen a significant spike in development approvals over the last 10 years. At present, the proportion of dwellings completed sits around 60-70%, this is largely due to the increase in
apartment developments being approved, the precarious nature of the market and subsequent lending requirements for large scale developments.

![Building Approvals](image)

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment Housing Monitor

**Figure 8**: Building Approvals

**Desirable Locations**

In November 2018, the average sale price for a detached dwelling was $1,446,344 and the average sale price for a unit was $736,059. Comparatively, in April 2019 the average sale price for a detached dwelling was $1,345,100 and the average sale price for a unit was $844,688. The drop in sale prices for detached dwellings could be attributed to the cooling of the market and the lack of return on properties purchased for consolidation seeking uplift. The increase in apartment prices is likely attributed to the construction of new apartments close to services including the Sydney Metro Northwest.

Based on information (2018-2019) available from RealEstate.com on the average number of visits to listed properties, the top five suburbs in The Hills are:

- Annangrove (1,220);
- Winston Hills (1,121);
- North Rocks (888);
- Glenhaven (865); and
- Glenorie (861).
Land Use Opportunities and Constraints

Beyond the capacity within precincts that have already been zoned, there are three station precincts that are yet to go through the precinct planning and subsequent rezoning required to deliver additional dwellings in these localities.

Opportunities:
- Aged housing stock in many growth areas.
- Proximity to transport infrastructure.

Constraints:
- Demand for unplanned social infrastructure.
- Environmental impacts.
- Natural hazards including heatwaves, bushfires and storms.
- Land price expectations and development feasibility.

The Hills Corridor Strategy (2015) provides further information on the opportunities and constraints for the specific station precincts. These will inform precinct planning together with updated structure plans for our strategic centres (contained in Planning Priority 2 of Local Strategic Planning Statement).

Analysis of the Evidence Base

There is a longstanding trend of couples with children being the dominant household type in The Hills. Whilst other household groups are anticipated to increase, this trend is expected to continue.

Dwellings in The Hills are predominately owner occupied (either fully owned or with a mortgage), however dwellings that are renter occupied are increasing. This trend is expected to continue as more high density dwellings come on to the market.

Rental stress is increasing, however as high density units are the main dwelling type for renters, the increase in apartments expected to come on to the market should reduce the cost of rent and subsequently reduce rental stress.

Shifting the population age structure forward 10 years, it is clear that two population groups are leaving The Hills, being young adults and empty nesters. There are a range of factors that could be contributing to this, including:

- A lack of smaller dwellings sizes to meet the needs of lone person householders or empty nesters;
- Insufficient job opportunities; or
- A lack of amenity and high profile jobs to retain the younger population once they move out of their parents’ house.
These issues are being targeted in an attempt to retain a younger resident workforce and provide opportunities for existing residents to age in place.

**Figure 9**: Changing age structure due to out-migration

**Housing Supply Gaps**

Whilst Council is anticipating the delivery of 38,000 dwellings by 2036, there is capacity for a further 38,100 dwellings within existing zoned and planned residential land. Should additional housing be required, the identified capacity of zoned land can be taken up by the market, subject to public utility infrastructure being available.

Housing supply is not seen as an issue likely to be faced in The Hills in the next 20 to 40 years. The likely problem will lie with getting the right types of dwellings to meet the existing and anticipated population’s needs, means and lifestyle choices. As shown in the following figure, a significant proportion of housing supply to 2036 will be high density units, and while there is an expected increase in smaller households, families and larger households will remain the dominant population group with most new households in The Hills family groups.

With some empty nesters opting for smaller dwellings within centres or moving to seniors’ housing developments and children growing up and moving in to their own dwellings as a lone person or couple, some internal migration will occur. However the projected capacity in low and medium
density housing areas will not be able to accommodate all new family households. Accordingly, a proportion of high density dwellings must be able to accommodate these larger households.

Council’s housing diversity clause requires that at least 30% of new apartment dwellings should be suitable for families. However, this clause will only apply to certain land within the Sydney Metro Northwest Station Precincts and may need to be extended to ensure a larger proportion of development is captured.

**Figure 10:** Projected New Dwelling Stock

### Areas with Development Capacity

The most significant growth will be seen in Release Areas (North Kellyville, Balmoral Road, Box Hill and Box Hill North), Station Precincts (Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Showground, Norwest, Bella Vista/Kellyville and Rouse Hill).

The release areas will continue to supply The Hills with a range of low, medium and high density housing outcomes, with approximately 18,600 new dwellings anticipated to 2036. The most significant dwelling growth will be located in the infill/station precincts (approximately 19,400) and will predominately be high density units. There will be capacity for medium density dwelling outcomes in the station precincts, however given the age of the housing stock and the market climate, these dwellings are not expected to be delivered in the short term.

The following table demonstrates the capacity and expected dwelling completions in The Hills to 2036 and beyond.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwelling Demand</th>
<th>Dwelling Supply</th>
<th>No. (%) Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Household Types</td>
<td>High Density 24,000 Units</td>
<td>16,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family households 21,280 (56%)</td>
<td>Low/Medium Density 14,000 Dwellings</td>
<td>7,280 (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38,000 Additional Households 2016-2036
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Release Areas</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Additional Dwellings by 2036</th>
<th>Additional Dwellings beyond 2036</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balmoral Road Release Area</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Kellyville Release Area</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Hill Release Area</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>9,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Hill North Release Area</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Release Area</td>
<td>18,600</td>
<td>14,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Infill/ Station Precincts     | Castle Hill                   | 6,500                         | 3,000                           |
|                               | Hills Showground              | 7,000                         | 3,800                           |
|                               | Bella Vista/ Kellyville       | 2,000                         | 7,100                           |
|                               | Norwest                       | 2,100                         | 3,400                           |
|                               | Cherrybrook                   | 400                           | 4,200                           |
|                               | Rouse Hill                    | 800                           | 900                             |
|                               | Baulkham Hills Town Centre    | 600                           | 1,300                           |
| Total Infill/ Station Precinct| 19,400                        | 23,700                        |

| Total                          | 38,000                        | 38,100                        |

| Total dwelling capacity        | 76,100                        |

Table 4: Capacity for Additional Dwellings

It is noted that not all land in the Station Precincts have been zoned for the anticipated residential growth. The Cherrybrook, Castle Hill South, Norwest and Rouse Hill Stations require more detailed master planning to give effect to the vision for these precincts outlined in the Hills Corridor Strategy (2015) and the structure plans for strategic centres contained in the Local Strategic Planning Statement.
Figure 11: Land with Development Capacity

Rate of Development
The rate at which development occurs is a key factor in driving demand for jobs, services open space and recreation, transport and other facilities and services which shape the liveability of neighbourhoods. The estimated rate for residential development for the Shire to 2036 would result in an average development of 1,900 dwellings per year.
Council has previously identified areas as having environmental, heritage or scenic significance using various methods in the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan. These areas have been protected against development for amenity reasons.

Beyond this, the large lot rural-residential lots within the RU6 Transition zone are considered to exhibit exceptional local character that needs to be preserved against urban sprawl and unsympathetic development. Further, as significant master planning is undertaken in all the Sydney Metro Station Precincts, the desired future character needs to be carefully guided.

As The Hills has demonstrated the capacity to meet housing demand, the preservation of existing and desired character areas will not inhibit housing delivery. Accordingly, the development of local character statements will assist in defining the desired character and associated development controls. This is further discussed in the following section of this strategy.
This section outlines Council’s priorities for housing to meet the needs of the future population and how that will be achieved. The following Planning Priorities will guide the planning, delivery and management of our housing supply and supporting infrastructure in the longer term as well as Council’s actions over the next 5 years:

- Plan for housing supply to support Sydney’s growing population;
- Facilitate housing in the right location;
- Deliver a diversity of housing;
- Renew and create great places; and
- Provide services and social infrastructure to meet residents’ needs.

**Plan for housing supply to support Sydney’s growing population**

*This planning priority relates to PP6 in The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement.*

Within existing zoned and planned residential land we are expecting to deliver an additional 38,000 dwellings by 2036. The Hills is on track to exceed our 5 year dwelling target set out in the Central City District Plan. Based on current development approvals, completions and take-up rates, 9,500 dwellings are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2021.

In determining 10 year and 20 year targets, consideration has been given to forecast growth, housing locations and anticipated zoned yield and uptake rates. It is anticipated that initial uptake rates in release areas are currently nearing their peak and new dwelling approvals will start to decline over the next ten years with zoned capacity in these areas largely exhausted in 20 years. The delivery of dwelling completions in station precincts is expected to commence from 2025, contributing to longer term dwelling targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>9,500 Dwellings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>18,500 Dwellings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>38,000 Dwellings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 13: Dwelling Targets*
The hierarchical zoning approach has achieved reasonable levels of housing growth in high and medium density zones and is consistent with Council’s policy position of providing housing near jobs, transport and services, providing suitable transitions between intensity of uses and protection of low density housing. Continuation of this approach is recommended.

In addition, local environmental plan standards and development controls seek to influence the built form and siting of dwellings to assist in creating or maintaining character, limiting the negative impacts of urban living and encouraging active, attractive, comfortable, safe and sustainable communities.

The planning framework needs to be regularly reviewed to ensure controls are supporting delivery of housing and supporting infrastructure in line with community and industry needs and expectations.

**Matching growth with infrastructure**

For our greenfield areas, the rate of take up of housing opportunities depends upon many factors however the availability and delivery of sewer, water and electricity infrastructure by State agencies has a correlation to development activity. The complexity of upgrading existing roads and relocating utilities adds significantly to the delay.

Matching growth with infrastructure is a challenge and the funding mechanism does not facilitate upfront delivery of local facilities such as roads, drainage, park and sporting fields. Funding of libraries, community centres and aquatic facilities in these communities is also uncertain with only the land for these facilities being able to be funded through the local contribution framework. The cost of such facilities is significant and it is beyond the rating framework to fund the upfront cost or service the debt. This is a matter that the Office of Local Government and Department of Planning & Environment need to address.

In urban renewal areas, the supply of housing will be slower than that of greenfield areas. This is due in part to the way these developments are financed, leaving it more exposed to economic peaks and troughs. It is also difficult to fund the required active open space to meet the needs of future residents as in most cases, it is not practical and cost prohibitive to provide it within the catchment of these precincts. The community is concerned about the impact of density in these areas as it finds it difficult to accept that levels of service will drop for existing roads, intersection and social infrastructure limits are exceeded.

For high densities to be sensible, it must be provided in areas that are well connected and with reach of available transport and other urban support services. The Metro Station precincts in our Shire need to be carefully planned along transport oriented design principles providing for a mixture of land uses, increased walkability and improvements to public domain.
Achieving appropriate densities
In 2006, The State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 (Growth Centres SEPP) was gazetted. Target yields of 4,500 in North Kellyville and 10,000 dwellings in Box Hill were identified. In 2013, State Government exhibited proposed changes to the planning framework in the Growth Centres, which intended to deliver greater housing diversity and more affordable housing. Council raised a number of concerns that the package of changes had the potential to significantly increase housing density in locations remote from facilities and services stating that:

'It is unreasonable to expect the Hills Shire to accommodate the potential for significant additional housing without detailed consideration of availability and capacity of infrastructure to serve that population."

The Housing Diversity amendments to the Growth Centres SEPP came into force in 2014. Since this time, Council has sought serviceable densities in the Growth Centres. In 2015, State Government exhibited amendments to the State Policy which included the introduction of maximum as well as minimum dwelling densities. These amendments have not been gazetted. Council has continued to urge State Government to apply the density bands and reassess infrastructure provision in light of the revised yield projections within North Kellyville and Box Hill.

Council will:
- Ensure the planning framework facilitates good outcomes and responds to market and community needs and expectations.
- Focus on facilitating dwelling completions in areas already zoned or planned for growth.
- Discourage planning proposals seeking to re-zone industrial, employment or rural lands for residential purposes.
- Monitor, review and update the Housing Strategy 2019 to ensure sufficient housing is delivered to meet community needs and market demand.

Actions
- Complete Housing Market Demand Study to confirm take up rates and future demand.
- Prepare a planning proposal to amend the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 to introduce maximum density bands in Box Hill and North Kellyville.
- Advocate for State Government to find better ways to address the timely funding and delivery of necessary infrastructure to support residential growth.
Facilitate housing in the right locations

*This planning priority relates to PP7 in The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement.*

We want our communities to enjoy attractive, liveable neighbourhoods. A high proportion of our new homes to 2036 will be in the form of high density dwellings. For many years we have successfully adopted a ‘Transit Oriented Development’ approach to zoning that locates higher density dwellings around public transport nodes. The focus of this approach is providing liveable and connected neighbourhoods with a mix of uses close to transport and services. This approach will continue to shape growth into the future.

Creating capacity for new housing in the right locations is about optimizing the use of existing infrastructure and maximizing the investment in new infrastructure. Housing capacity that aligns with infrastructure can be realised by urban renewal, local infill developments and land release areas. The implementation of an urban growth boundary will assist in limiting development to the existing urban area, and ensure the productive capacity and scenic characteristics of our rural area are protected (refer Rural Strategy for more information on this approach).

Release areas and station precincts will deliver the majority of future housing capacity. The station precincts are best placed to accommodate a significant number of dwellings within high density residential developments due to high accessibility and active transport options as well as job and leisure opportunities.

**Urban Renewal within Station Precincts**

Housing coordinated with local infrastructure creates liveable, walkable and cycle-friendly neighbourhoods with direct, safe and universally designed pedestrian and cycling connections to shops, services and public transport. This means that some areas are not appropriate for additional housing due to natural or amenity constraints, or lack of access to services and public transport.
Hills Showground, Bella Vista and Kellyville station precincts have been rezoned, and the Castle Hill North Precinct is nearing completion. The Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill station precincts are the final four (4) precincts awaiting master planning and subsequent rezoning. Planning for these three precincts will take place over the next 5-10 years.

Local Infill
Local infill development typically has a slower turnover than urban renewal precincts. Outside of the high growth areas, there are opportunities for local infill development, predominately delivering dual occupancies and secondary dwellings, with some medium density housing outcomes appropriate adjacent to existing local centres.

Local infill development can assist in supporting the viability of, and revitalise ageing, local centres. Baulkham Hills Town Centre has been investigated for potential residential and commercial uplift. A draft master plan was prepared and exhibited which identified strategic investigation and opportunity sites that could facilitate additional uplift. This master plan was not adopted by Council as infrastructure issues (predominately relating to grade separation of Old Northern Road and Windsor Road and a transport interchange near Railway Street) were not resolved. Future uplift in the town centre would only be supported once investment in infrastructure is secured.

A mass transport link between Norwest and Parramatta has been identified by State Government via the Baulkham Hills Town Centre. This infrastructure investment could provide opportunities for increased density in the future. Council is seeking to work with Transport for NSW for a corridor to be identified and planning and delivery to be brought forward from the timeframes identified in Future

Figure 14: Greater Sydney Mass Transit / Train Network in 2056

New communities in Release Areas
The Hills has four (4) release areas at varying stages of completion with North Kellyville and Balmoral Road approaching completion in the next 10 to 20 years to Box Hill and Box Hill North that are just at the beginning stages of development turnover. These areas predominantly feature low density residential with areas of medium and high density residential around new local centres.

An important consideration for release area planning is providing opportunities to encourage social interactions, this can be either planned (like a café or community centre) or incidental (like walking tracks, community gardens or park seating). This infrastructure will create bonds within the community, improving the quality of life of residents.
Outside of these three developable areas, existing low density residential areas and rural areas of The Hills are will contribute to incremental dwelling renewal with minimal growth. These areas will provide for a market option for residents seeking larger homes or properties that meet their needs and lifestyles.

Between Box Hill and Box Hill north there is a number of contiguous properties currently zoned RU6 transition. Any planning proposal for rezoning in this area should include all identified properties and present a master planned proposal which includes detailed investigation of infrastructure needs and land capability assessment (including but not limited to) traffic and transport, water and flooding, utilities and services, urban design, potential for contamination, bushfire risk and significant vegetation.

Figure 15: Current RU6 zoned properties between Box Hill and Box Hill North

Given the significant amount of existing zoned land and land identified for re-zoning for residential development, there is no identified need to convert employment, industrial, rural or environmental zoned land for residential uses.

Any planning proposal seeking further residential uplift beyond that already zoned or planned by Council is unlikely to be supported at this time unless a significant community benefit is proposed.
Council will:

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

Actions

- Prepare precinct plans for Castle Hill Central, Norwest and Rouse Hill Station Precincts.
- Investigate opportunities for limited residential expansion in rural villages in line with the criteria recommended in the Rural Strategy 2019.

Deliver a diversity of housing

*This planning priority relates to PP8 in The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement.*

Whilst a range of dwelling types is vital to delivering housing diversity, a range of dwelling sizes within each dwelling type and diversity of tenure types, are equally as important. A mix of housing types allows people to relocate within their local area and stay connected to community services, friends and family. This includes planning for a diversity of dwelling types including apartments, townhouses/terraces, affordable housing, housing for seniors and people with a disability, dual occupancies and detached dwellings.

Within this dwelling mix, it is also important to provide for a diversity of dwelling sizes, particularly with the expected number of apartments to be constructed in The Hills over the next 20 years. Up until recently the dominant residential development in The Hills has been a detached dwelling. This is now beginning to shift, with an increase in apartments predominately located in and around strategic centres. This trend will continue as the station precincts start contributing to dwelling completions.
Diversity of Apartment Sizes

Whilst the demographic in The Hills is expected to remain family dominant, the way in which families live their lives is changing, with many opting for smaller dwellings with greater access to public transport and recreational activities. The influx of apartments provide the ageing population with opportunities to ‘age in place’ in more manageable dwellings close to services including medical centres. Further, with more apartments being built in The Hills than ever before, an increase in a younger population as well as single person households is expected. For these reasons, and because apartments will make up a significant proportion of future dwelling completions, it is vital for a diversity of apartment sizes to be provided that meet a range of needs, budgets and lifestyles.

Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code

The Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code was introduced into NSW in July 2018. The new State Policy introduces new dwelling types, including manor houses (a two storey apartment building with three or four dwellings) and vertical dual occupancies and provides an approval route for complying development for dual occupancies, terraces and manor houses.

The Hills recognises the important role of medium density housing in providing housing choice and diversity and is already seeking to facilitate small lot housing and terrace style housing in a number of locations. The allowance for manor houses to be built as complying development on 600m² lots is a concern. Apart from increased density and infrastructure implications, the proposal does not allow for desirable outcomes in terms of adequate setbacks, landscaping and private open space consistent with the character of the Shire’s medium density zones.
The Hills Shire Council was one of 50 Local Government Areas which have been granted deferral from the code until 1 July 2019. The deferral has allowed time to determine lot size requirements for manor houses that will allow for the appropriate siting of buildings, sufficient private open space, equitable solar access, and to ensure development is in keeping with the desired character and streetscape.

Council has sought a further deferral from the Code to align with the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Local Environmental Plan (LEP) Review Program, as well as exemption from the application of the Code within the Growth Centres and Sydney Metro station precincts. The requested deferral would assist Council in better responding to shared objectives of a diversity of housing in locations that have sufficient capacity to support growth. A preferred alternative would be to provide exemption to this part of the State Policy, recognising that Council is already taking a number of measures to facilitate medium density outcomes.

Example of manor house

Manor houses are not considered to be appropriate in areas where detailed master planning has been undertaken (the station precincts) where housing diversity and public domain outcomes are planned at a precinct level, or where infrastructure provision is already strained (release areas).

A review of land zoned R3 Medium Density Residential is required to ensure the zoning framework aligns with current dwelling stock and desired character, delivers dwellings close to services, and any uplift resulting can be supported by infrastructure.

Affordable Housing and Housing Affordability
The housing continuum recognises all types of housing from crisis and social housing through to market housing. Planning for housing needs to consider the type of dwellings required to respond to expected changes in household and age structures. The number of single person households is expected to increase by 81 per cent over the 20 years to 2036 (Central City District Plan 2018). The number of single-parent and couple-only households is also expected to increase. This requires additional smaller homes, group homes, adaptable homes of universal design and aged care facilities.
At the same time, households comprised of couples with children will remain the highest proportion of households in the District.

Notwithstanding the need for affordable housing, land values in The Hills are so high that developers are seeking significant residential uplift to make the provision economically viable. Noting this, The Hills seeks to make housing more affordable through the provision of a diversity of dwelling types and size, pending further information from the Department of Planning and the Greater Sydney Commission on viability testing, as mentioned in the Evidence section of this Strategy.

**Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability**

Noting an increased demand for housing for seniors and people with a disability, as demonstrated in the Evidence section of this Strategy, it is vital for these developments to be located in close proximity to services and transport options (both active and public) to ensure an improved quality of life for these residents and prevent isolation.

Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability is permissible in a range of residential and business zones across The Hills Local Government Area and is encouraged in appropriate locations with access to infrastructure where it is compatible with surrounding land uses. In recent years, there has been significant interest in the redevelopment of rural lands for urban purposes, with particular interest in development permissible under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability) 2004.

The Hills has had a longstanding policy position on the importance of providing for seniors housing as an opportunity for existing residents to ‘age in place’ and retain connections with friends, family, doctors, services, community facilities and local clubs while living in a home that meets their needs and lifestyle.

It is important to provide for varying levels of care, from independent living units to full on-site care. Whilst it is not imperative for these services to be provided on the same site, co-location of different housing types and levels of care enables a development to cater for a wider range of needs. It means that residents are able to move in to an independent living unit that does not exceed their current level of care with the option to remain within the establishment should their needs change into the future.
Data from the Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (2017) shows that an increasing number of people are accessing Home Care packages, allowing them to stay in their own homes longer. In addition, the care requirements of those in residential aged care are increasing; trending towards high and medium care patients with a decreasing number of low care patients, likely linked to more low care patients ageing in place.

As is the case with standard market housing, diversity is an important element to housing for seniors and people with a disability. Many capable and active seniors still want the privacy and space that a detached dwelling provides without the maintenance burden of a larger landscaped lot. It is therefore important to encourage adaptability of low to high density residential dwellings within the private market and to incorporate a range of dwelling types within seniors housing developments.

Notwithstanding the need for seniors housing, location is vital to the ‘liveability’ of a development. Larger seniors housing developments may have the means to provide for shuttle buses and medical facilities to meet the daily or weekly needs of residents, however for smaller developments it is important that residents have access to essential services including supermarkets, post offices, health care facilities and pharmacies. Further to the above, large scale seniors housing developments take on the density and built form character comparable to medium and high density housing developments.

Noting the above, these types of development are generally not supported in rural areas. The following figure provides detail on the conditions where housing for seniors and people with a disability are supported. Council is currently collaborating with Hornsby Council, the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to investigate the impacts of the Seniors Housing State Policy in the rural areas. A discussion on this is provided in the Rural Strategy.
Council will:
- Focus on the delivery of apartments that can support larger households with sufficient space, quality and facilities that provide a level of amenity that makes it an attractive and realistic choice for families.
- Encourage the delivery of affordable housing in areas supported by services and infrastructure.
- Support the delivery of medium density residential development in areas where infrastructure can accommodate growth.
- Support housing for seniors and people with a disability in accordance with the requirements listed in the Housing Strategy 2019.

Actions
- Review residential zonings, objectives and provisions to ensure the planning framework effectively provides for a diversity of housing in the right locations, with a specific focus on the capacity of land currently zoned R3 Medium Density Residential.
- Investigate the viability of an affordable housing scheme for new dwellings in urban renewal areas.
Renew and create great places

*This planning priority relates to PP9 in The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement.*

Local Character Statements

Local Character Statements are a mechanism that can add to Council’s Housing Strategy by recognising the special characteristics which contribute to our local identity, shared community values and how to manage change into the future. They can be the starting point to identify the agreed direction and plans for the future of a locality; whether it is to undergo change, be enhanced or maintained.

Essentially Local Character Statements provide Council and its residents and customers with a context and a direction to manage change in line with community preferences. As flagged by the Department of Planning & Environment in their exhibition of a Discussion Paper in 2019, these statements can assist when reviewing land use zones, development standards and controls and when proposing and assessing proposed development. At the most basic level, these statements can inform the plans for an area and can be utilised when determining whether a proposed development or planning proposal is compatible with the existing and desired future character of an area.

To guide future development, it is recommended that Local Character Statements be prepared for the following areas:

- The seven (7) station precincts along the Sydney Metro Northwest; and
- Rural land zoned RU6 Transition and rural villages.

The station precincts are expected to undergo significant changes over the next 20 years. Local Character Statements will guide applicants in the preparation of development applications or planning proposals to ensure they are reflective of the desired future character identified for these areas.

Rural lands are important to the Shire and to Greater Sydney. While not all rural properties are currently utilising their agricultural potential, they play a larger role in providing alternate lifestyle opportunities and in maintaining the scenic qualities of the area. The character of this portion of our Shire, including rural villages, needs to be articulated so as to guide the future use of this land. More information on this is available in the Rural Strategy.

The Department of Planning & Environment have discussed the use of character overlays to further protect areas exhibiting exceptional local character.
The E4 Environmental Living zone in the Hills Shire is used to retain natural drainage channels, protect vegetation, scenic views and topographical features and to reduce the risk of geotechnical hazards. The application of the E4 zone is most effective when applied to a large contiguous area.

The corridor along Old Northern Road is located on a prominent ridgeline and an Environmental Living zone has been applied to this corridor to preserve view corridors, vegetation and land affected by geotechnical constraints. The ridgeline has been preserved through land zoning, larger minimum lot size requirements and other planning controls to reduce the scale of development permissible in this area.

Whilst there are individual lots within wider corridors that do not exhibit the characteristics where an E4 zone is typically applied, they form an important function in maintaining the integrity and preservation of those characteristics. Continuation of this zoning approach is recommended.
Use of Restricted Development Areas
Restricted Development Areas (RDAs) within The Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) were historically applied to lots that feature similar environmental and scenic characteristics as outlined above, however they are generally confined to constrained areas. To further protect the desired environmental and scenic qualities of the land, no development is permitted to take place where a RDA has been applied.

Current practices for protecting significant landscape characteristics within The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) include zoning as well as biodiversity and landslip mapping. There are further opportunities to identify land that exhibit exceptional character and scenic qualities through a character overlay, as mentioned above. A staged audit of land affected by Restricted Development Areas should be undertaken and translated into the LEP which will ensure high quality characteristics are protected.

Encouraging High Quality Built Form Outcomes
To improve the design quality of higher density residential and commercial developments Council has established design excellence and design review panels to assist in the assessment of development applications. These panels will play a vital role in ensuring new development contributes positively to well-planned and liveable neighbourhoods.

To assist in creating great places and to enable a sense of place, a Public Domain Strategy will be developed to set the future direction for works and improvements in public areas throughout the Shire. Public Domain Plans have already been developed for precincts anticipating significant changes, including Baulkham Hills Town Centre, Castle Hill North Precinct and Showground Precinct. The Public Domain Strategy will be an overarching Strategy that will assist in the preparation and assessment of development applications and will address key issues, such as place making strategies, landscape treatments, lighting, signage / wayfinding and street activation.
Affordable Living
To complement the consideration of housing affordability, affordable living recognises that there are additional costs for households associated with housing choices, besides rental or mortgage payments. The location and dwelling type can impact ongoing household costs including costs related to transport and energy consumption. Increasing the number of dwellings with access to public infrastructure will assist in reducing transport costs (including the need for car ownership as well as registration and insurance costs).

There are ways in which Council can promote smarter construction methods that reduce operational costs of running a household, including the use of solar panels and rainwater, landscaping requirements, window placement and shutters, and the use of lighter coloured materials for external building materials (roofs, walls, driveways etc.) through Development Control Plan requirements. An audit of The Hills Development Control Plan should be undertaken to determine where Council has capacity to assist in reducing ongoing operational costs.

Enhancing Local Heritage
Council’s existing Heritage Study was conducted in 1993 to 1994 and informed the list of heritage items contained within Schedule 5 of The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012. Currently there are 206 heritage items listed in The Hills LEP with varying levels of heritage significance. There are a further five (5) items located within the North Kellyville and Box Hill Release areas and are listed in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006.

Heritage contributes to the character of a place and preserves important elements of our shared history. The planning framework enables Council to afford appropriate protection to items of significance and inform the development of places to ensure heritage remains a key character element in evolving neighbourhoods.

Bella Vista Farm Park
Bella Vista Farm is a significant cultural landscape on the Cumberland Plain, and is of exceptional significance to The Hills Shire Council as a cultural and recreational facility. Bella Vista Farm is listed as a Heritage Conservation Area on the New South Wales State Heritage Register and within Schedule 5 of LEP 2012.

As it has been over 25 years since a Heritage Study was undertaken, it is recommended that a review be undertaken by a qualified heritage consultant and include any conservation or management recommendations. There may be opportunity to consider the inclusion of new items, subject to more detailed heritage investigations in the future. In addition to detailing the significance of items, these investigations could also propose any conservation and/or management recommendations.

**Amenity and Lifestyle**

Whilst providing additional housing opportunities is an important part of this story, it is not the whole part. It is not enough to simply provide sufficient housing for people to live in, they should want to live here and enjoy their lives in The Hills.

With lot sizes decreasing and areas becoming denser, the provision of recreation and entertainment facilities is vital to enhance quality of life. This includes restaurants and cafes, small bars, cinemas, theatre, indoor recreation facilities and amusement centres. Most of these uses are best suited to being located within the strategic centres, where any amenity impacts, including noise and parking, can be mitigated. However, small scale shops, supermarket, cafes etc. may be appropriately located within high density residential developments.

It is recommended that investigations be undertaken to assist in activating development within the R1 General Residential and R4 High Density Residential zones, this could include local environmental plan amendments (i.e. the permissibility of convenience retail uses, such as neighbourhood supermarkets or cafes), or development control plan amendments (i.e. flexible design or setbacks).
Council will:

- Prioritise place making in new and emerging neighbourhoods to ensure a quality living environment that is attractive, safe and connected, with a strong sense of community.
- Protect items of European Heritage significance from the impacts of development.
- Investigate measures to encourage active uses in the R4 High Density Residential zone.

Actions

- Prepare Local Character Statements for rural character areas and investigate the benefits of including character overlays in the Local Environmental Plan.
- Review the Heritage Study undertaken in 1993-1994 and make any recommended changes to Schedule 5 of LEP 2012.

Future work

- A staged audit of land affected by Restricted Development Areas.
- Make amendments to The Hills Development Control Plan to assist in reducing ongoing household operational costs.

Provide services and social infrastructure to meet residents’ needs

_This planning priority relates to PP10 in The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement._

An important consideration for planning in high growth areas is providing opportunities to encourage social interactions, this can be either planned (like a café or community centre) or incidental (like walking tracks, community gardens or park seating). This infrastructure will create bonds within the community, improving the quality of life of residents.

A library and community facility strategy is being developed to deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future. This strategy will determine catchment areas for existing libraries and whether any upgrades or expansions are required to service existing or anticipated demand. Further, the strategy will identify locations for new facilities in areas expecting a significant population increase e.g. Bella Vista Station Precinct.

The Hills Showground is currently used for community activities and events including the annual Castle Hill Agricultural Show, horse shows, farmers markets and more. The Showground is currently in preliminary stages of master planning and will provide opportunities for more cultural events to support existing and future residents. The possibility of a multipurpose facility is being considered in the context of the master planning for the Showground site that could cater for a variety of uses including conferences and tradeshows, concerts seating up to 3,000, elite sports events and indoor show arenas.
The Hills supports a range of cultural and creative events that engage the community like Shakespeare in The Park, The Second Age Youth Theatre Project, Lunar Festival, The Sydney Country Music Festival etc. Beyond this, The Hills has a number of strategies to promote community engagement including the development of Castle Hill Main Street as a cultural space by continuing community activities like the Orange Blossom Festival, pop-up parks and Christmas light shows.

**Educational Establishments**

Based on the 2016 Census, the Shire had 9,772 babies and pre-schoolers (0-4 years), 16,932 primary school aged children (5-11 years) and 13,838 high school aged children (12-17 years). The Hills Shire has a higher proportion of primary school aged residents (10.8%) than the Greater Sydney Region (8.8%) and a higher proportion of high school aged children (8.8%) than the Greater Sydney Region (6.9%). Whereas the proportion of The Hills population within the 0-4 year age group (6.2%) was slightly lower than the proportion for the Greater Sydney Region (6.4%).

There are currently 43 schools within The Hills Shire, which provide placement for 26,600 students (total school aged children in the Shire – 30,700). These schools include 9 high schools, 29 primary schools and 5 K-12 schools. There is potential for an additional 128,000 residents to 2036, primarily within release areas and station precincts. Considering the current and projected family demographic of The Hills Shire the population growth is likely to result in around 7,000 additional pre-school aged children and 25,000 additional school-aged students.

New primary schools opened in Bella Vista and North Kellyville in 2019 with each having capacity for 1,000 students. There are six other new schools planned to service growth within the greenfield release areas including 5 primary schools and 1 high school. It is difficult to identify specifically how many additional schools the Department of Education will need to provide, as final development yields in some precincts will be the outcome of ongoing strategic planning processes. Further, some demand may be met through additional private schools and/or expansion of capacity within some existing schools. In addition, it is noted that demand for student places will not eventuate at a single point in time, but will result from the roll out of development over a 20-30 year timeframe.

Notwithstanding, it is clear that the current planned provision of schools across release areas and the rail corridor is inadequate to cater for the anticipated future growth within the Shire and would leave a significant shortfall.

Beyond TAFE premises at Castle Hill and Baulkham Hills, there is no tertiary education presence in The Hills. The opening of the Sydney Metro Northwest will provide a vital transport connection to Macquarie University, which will provide easy and reliable access to tertiary education. Notwithstanding this, the Productivity and Centres Strategy discusses the need to build a university presence in The Hills, specifically the Norwest Strategic Centre. Whilst this will undeniably have impacts on the local economy, it will provide education opportunities closer to home, not only for recent school graduates, but for those already in the workforce seeking to further their skills.
Cemeteries and Crematoria

Cemeteries and crematoria are key social infrastructure that also need to be accessible geographically and economically, and reflective of a diversity of cultures and backgrounds. A growing Greater Sydney requires additional land for burials and cremations with associated facilities such as reception space and car parking. The delivery of this infrastructure should take into account the cultural requirements of residents. Council currently operates two (2) cemeteries, located in Castle Hill and Sackville North, which have capacity for approximately 7,000 plots.

With population growth placing additional demand of Council’s existing facilities, an investigation into the identification of future cemetery sites is being undertaken.

Council will:

- Ensure the provision of services and social infrastructure keeps pace with population growth and meets the needs of existing and future residents.
- Support a range of cultural and creative community events.
- Work with the Department of Education to deliver school infrastructure, noting that the planned provision of schools does not cater for the population growth expected, thereby inhibiting the natural growth in jobs that would be expected.

Actions

- Prepare a library and community facility strategy.
- Implement the recommendations of the cemeteries site identification investigation.

Land Use Planning Mechanisms

Whilst most areas for growth have been rezoned, the Cherrybrook, Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill Station Precincts require significant master planning and the preparation of a subsequent planning proposal with supporting development control plans, contribution plans and public domain plans to ensure sensible and serviceable growth is delivered and that built form outcomes produce healthy communities.

Over the past five (5) years, The Hills has been inundated with planning proposals, predominately seeking residential uplift. The introduction of the standard instrument local environmental plan and several state planning policies, as well as the reduced weight of Council’s Development Controls Plans, has made it difficult to deliver master planned outcomes.

As a development concept cannot be ‘locked in’ at the planning proposal stage, it is important to find appropriate mechanisms to deliver agreed upon options, where amendment to local environmental plan zones or development standards such as height and floor space ratio does not provide security or certainty. It was this challenge that lead Council to the introduction of the Housing Diversity clause, introduced in 2017, as well as the use of local provisions and additional permitted uses.
While tailored planning standards may not be appropriate for all proposals, there are merits to using the more flexible options within the standard instrument. In some instances, local provisions or additional permitted uses are the best way of delivering outcomes. However, these mechanisms are to be used sparingly only when the existing planning framework cannot provide sufficient certainty and flexibility.
Implementation and Delivery

The actions contained within this Strategy are to be implemented in accordance with the Action Plan in the Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Stakeholders

There are a number of internal and external stakeholders who will assist in the delivery of the needed housing and associated infrastructure, including:

- Residents;
- Development Industry;
- State Agencies including the Greater Sydney Commission, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Department of Education and Training; and
- Social Housing Providers.

Planning Instrument

This strategy flags a number of potential changes to planning controls following further investigations and master planning work. It is anticipated that these master plans and subsequent planning proposals will be completed by the next 5 year review.

Proposed amendments that do not warrant detailed master planning or further investigations will be included in the pending review of Local Environmental Plan 2012, intended to be completed before June 2020.

Monitoring and Review

It is recommended that the Local Housing Strategy be monitored annually and used to inform future review programs. It is anticipated that the Local Housing Strategy will be reviewed, exhibited and re-adopted on a five (5) yearly basis to ensure housing supply meets the needs, budgets and lifestyles of The Hills residents.
Appendices
Appendix 1

Planning Policy & Context

State Policy
The NSW State Government implements numerous policy directions through plans, such as the Greater Sydney Region Plan, and enacts legislation to guide the future and establish parameters within which the community can operate. The following are relevant to the Housing Strategy.

Greater Sydney Region Plan
The Greater Sydney Region Plan (GSRP) outlines the 40 year vision for Greater Sydney and establishes a 20 year plan to manage growth and change in the context of economic, social and environmental factors. It conceptualises Sydney as a Metropolis of Three Cities - the Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Harbour City. Its key aspiration is a 30-minute city where jobs, services and quality public spaces are in easy reach of people’s homes.

A Metropolis of Three Cities
The GSRP provides ten Directions relating to liveability, productivity and sustainability to guide future planning for Greater Sydney. Directions relevant to this strategy are those related to liveability: A City for People, Housing the City and A City of Great Places, which aim to design places for people, ensure adequate housing supply and develop a more accessible and walkable city. Within this framework, specific objectives are attached to each Direction to assist in achieving the goals of the GSRP. The relevant objectives are:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Services and infrastructure meet communities’ changing needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Greater housing supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Housing is more diverse and affordable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Great places that bring people together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Relevant Planning Priorities from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

The Region Plan includes a series of strategies to achieve the objectives. To ensure services and infrastructure meet communities’ changing needs, Strategy 6.1 aims to deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future. For The Hills, this means providing the infrastructure needed to support families with children and residents aged 65 years and older. Strategy 6.2 aims to optimise the use of available public land for social infrastructure. This includes co-locating services such as libraries, community rooms and cafes.

To ensure communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected, Strategy 7.1 aims to deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places for people of all ages and abilities that support active, resilient and socially connected communities by:

- Providing walkable places at a human scale with active street life;
- Prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport;
- Co-locating schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities; and
- Promoting local access to healthy fresh food and supporting local fresh food production.

Objectives 10 and 11 are critical to achieving an adequate supply of housing that will appeal to people across different life stages and price-points. Responding to these objectives and their related actions to prepare a housing strategy and develop 6-10 year housing targets provides the way forward for Council to plan for and manage housing across the Shire as well as creating great places for new and existing residents to live in.

Strategy 11.1 requires Councils to prepare Affordable Rental Housing Target Schemes, following the development of implementation arrangements. The Region Plan requires the Greater Sydney Commission to work closely with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to streamline implementation of new programs, particularly in respect to the workings of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) and State Environmental Planning Policy No.70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes).
Tasks will include finalising a consistent viability test for the Affordable Rental Housing Targets to support councils and relevant planning authorities and ensuring that housing strategies include an affordable housing needs analysis and strategy to identify preferred affordable housing locations in each local government area.

Prior to the inclusion of affordable rental housing targets in the relevant State policy, the Greater Sydney Commission, in partnership with relevant State agencies, will develop detailed arrangements for delivering and managing the housing that is created by the targets. This additional work will consider eligibility criteria, allocation, ownership, and management and delivery models.

Central City District Plan
The Central City District Plan is focused on implementing the Region Plan at a district level and act as a bridge between regional and local planning. The following Planning Priorities and actions from the Central City District Plan are relevant to this Strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Priority</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people’s changing needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Providing housing supply, choice and affordability, with access to jobs, services and public transport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District’s heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C15</td>
<td>Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C18</td>
<td>Better managing rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C20</td>
<td>Adapting to the impacts of urban and natural hazards and climate change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relevant Planning Priorities from District Plan

Together with the Region Plan strategies, these priorities provide the framework for the provision of housing for the Hills Shire. Council’s Local Strategic Planning Statement, informed by this Housing Strategy, provides a line of sight between the regional and district priorities and places them within the unique local context of the Hills Shire.

Each of the above priorities has related actions with responsibilities identified for councils, other planning authorities, State agencies or corporations. Beyond the need to address housing supply and demand, Councils are obligated to ensure areas where housing is located has access to transport
and services to improve quality of life and minimise environmental impacts. Key actions relevant to this strategy are as follows:

**Responsibly delivering housing targets**
- Achieve 5-year housing supply target set by the Greater Sydney Commission (Action 16).
- Develop 6-10-year housing supply target for The Hills (Action 16).
- Contribute to long term 20-year housing target for the Central District (Action 16).
- Prepare affordable rental housing target schemes (Action 17).

**Fostering connected communities in great places**
- Deliver social infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community now and in the future (Action 8).
- Optimise the use of available public land for social infrastructure (Action 9).
- Providing for walkable places, with active street life and prioritising opportunities for people to walk, cycle and use public transport (Action 10).
- Co-locate schools, health, aged care, sporting and cultural facilities (Action 10).
- Facilitating opportunities for creative and artistic expression and participation. This requires consideration of locations for multi-functional and shared spaces for creative industries and cultural enterprises, stimulating and diversifying the night time economy and enabling greater use of the public realm to activate spaces and encourage participation (Action 14).
- Considering how to strengthen social connections within the community noting that the identity of local centres can be built on connections created by community infrastructure, learning spaces such as libraries and schools, shared spaces such as community gardens and street life (Action 15).
- Using a place-based and collaborative approach throughout planning, design, development and management, deliver great places (Action 18).
- Identify, conserve and enhance environmental heritage (Action 19).

**Locating housing in appropriate locations**
- Align forecast growth with infrastructure (Action 3).
- Use place-based planning to support the role of centres as a focus for connected neighbourhoods (Action 20).
- Identify and protect scenic and cultural landscapes (Action 66).
- Enhance and protect views of scenic and cultural landscapes from the public realm (Action 67).
- Limit urban development to within the Urban Area (Action 74).
- Avoid locating new urban development in areas exposed to natural and urban hazards and consider options to limit the intensification of development in existing urban areas most exposed to hazards. (Action 82).
State Planning Instruments
State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) which apply to land in The Hills and that may impact upon the provision of housing include:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006.
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009.
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008.
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004.

This strategy will assist in achieving the goal of these SEPPs and noting appropriate locations for their implementation.

North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy
The North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy provides a vision for how the areas surrounding the Sydney Metro Northwest Stations could be developed to provide housing and jobs and deliver transit oriented design outcomes. The Strategy includes a Structure Plan for each of the eight new train station precincts. These structure plans look at the current constraints, controls, opportunities and predicted growth, and present a vision for each Precinct for the next 25 years.

The Corridor Strategy was a preliminary document and was considered to be the first stage in the precinct planning process for the railway corridor. It includes broad character statements and growth assumptions. The Corridor Strategy and Structure Plans are intended to provide guidance for more detailed planning around the future stations and are to be implemented through more detailed precinct planning that identifies appropriate densities and amendments to controls that guide future development within the station precincts.

Local Policy

Local Strategic Planning Statement
Amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 came into force on 1 March 2018 requiring all Councils to create a Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The Statement sets out the 20 year vision for The Hills Shire, including planning priorities and actions to give effect to the District Plan.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan
The “Hills Future” Community Strategic Plan sets the long term strategic direction for the Hills Shire and was prepared after extensive community consultation. The Hills Future reflects the highest priority issues and aspirations of the community and is structured around five key themes. Outcomes are identified in association with each theme, and reflect the community’s desires for the future of the shire. The strategies listed in Hills Future indicate how Council will deliver the Community Outcomes.
The following table outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies that are relevant to the Housing Strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Direction</th>
<th>Community Outcomes</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building a Vibrant Community and Prosperous Economy</td>
<td>1. A connected and inclusive community with access to a range of services and facilities that contribute to health and wellbeing.</td>
<td>1.1 Provide quality Library resources, programs and facilities for leisure, cultural and education opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Facilitate the provision of services across the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Recognise and value our community’s local heritage and culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Leadership</td>
<td>3. Sound governance that values and engages our customers and is based on transparency and accountability.</td>
<td>3.1 Facilitating strong two way relationships and partnerships with the community, involving them in local planning and decision making and actively advocate community issues to other levels of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 Ensure Council is accountable to the community and meets legislative requirements and support Council’s elected representatives for their role in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaping Growth</td>
<td>5. Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meet growth targets and maintain amenity.</td>
<td>5.1 The Shire’s natural and built environment is well managed through strategic land use and urban planning that reflects our values and aspirations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering and Maintaining Infrastructure</td>
<td>7. Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained.</td>
<td>7.1 Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.</td>
<td>8.1 Provide new and refurbished infrastructure in a timely manner that meets the needs of our growing Shire.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community Strategic Plan - Relevant Directions, Outcomes and Strategies

The Hills Shire Local Strategy
As mentioned in the introduction of this Strategy, The Hills Local Strategy has been Council’s principal document for communicating the future planning directions of the Shire since it was adopted in 2008.
It provides detail on long-term planning in order to guide future decision making. The Local Strategy provided a sound framework for the preparation of Council’s Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan (LEP 2012) as well as consideration of individual planning proposals.

The strategy was supported by a number of key directions including the Residential Direction. Key achievements since the adoption of the Residential Direction include:

- The application of the hierarchical zoning framework to clearly identify the intention for housing growth close to centres;
- Target Sites program complete – all sites either developed or no longer in the Shire;
- Planning controls in place to ensure residential amenity is maintained (LEP 2012; DCP 2012);
- Growth Area precincts rezoned;
- Investigations into higher density residential development in Castle Hill Town Centre (Castle Hill north complete, preliminary planning into Castle Hill remainder in progress).

**The Hills Corridor Strategy**

The Corridor Strategy articulates Council’s response to land use development for seven (7) Sydney Metro Northwest station precincts within and adjacent to the Shire. It provides an update of Council’s Local Strategy by translating the vision and targets of the State Government Corridor Strategy in a manner consistent with the needs and expectation of The Hills Shire residents.

The intent of the Corridor Strategy is to facilitate outcomes that are well founded and respond to the strategic priorities of Council including housing that meets the needs of the existing and expected future Hills Shire population, jobs close to home and provision of appropriate infrastructure to support future development and maintain the standard of living expected in the Shire.

The Corridor Strategy is underpinned by six (6) guiding principles that reflect Council’s approach to growth. These principles include the following:

- **Principle 1 - Accountable and Sustainable Approach**: Outcomes are guided by clear evidence that respond to the opportunities and constraints presented by the existing natural and built environment.
- **Principle 2 - Balance High and Low Density Housing**: Higher density housing is located in areas that have greatest potential for change, in easy walking distance to retail centres and the future stations, thereby enabling nearby low density character to be retained.
- **Principle 3 - Housing to Match Shire Needs**: A diversity of housing options are to be provided to respond to future demand, with a particular focus on the delivery of viable and attractive apartment living for families.
- **Principle 4 - Facilities to Match Shire Lifestyle**: Residents of new developments are able to access open space, recreation and community facilities in line with the lifestyle enjoyed by existing Hills residents.
- **Principle 5 - Jobs to Match Shire Needs:** A range of employment opportunities are made available that reflect the qualifications and skills of Shire residents and facilitate more jobs close to home.

- **Principle 6 - Grow our Strategic Centres:** Reinforce the hierarchy of centres recognising the significance of Castle Hill and Rouse Hill as major centres and Norwest as a specialised centre.

Together, the guiding principles provide the ingredients for liveable urban areas that reflect the amenity enjoyed by existing residents. These principles respond to opportunities and constraints, locating high density in easy walking distance to the future stations, maintaining low density housing choice in more peripheral locations, providing a diversity of housing choice with a focus on family living, ensuring access to appropriate infrastructure to support lifestyles, provision of employment opportunities suited to Hills residents, and maintaining the significance of strategic centres.

**Local Planning Instruments**
Council’s Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan was notified in October 2012 and reflects the desired strategic direction for residential lands. State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 provides the primary statutory framework for the urban development of the North Kellyville and Box Hill Precincts. This Housing Strategy will review the use of land use zones, objectives, provisions and development standards. It will also guide any future change to the statutory mechanisms.
**Appendix 2**

**Demographic Data**

A review of demographic data including trends or changes over time has been completed to understand the likely housing needs of the future population.

Significant growth is expected throughout the Central City District and neighbouring Local Government Areas as demonstrated in the following figure:

![Projected Population to 2036 of Central City District Local Government Areas](image)

*Source: Department of Planning and Environment 2016 NSW State and Local Government Area Population Projections*

*Note: The Hills population for 2011 & 2016 have been adjusted to reflect LGA boundary changes in 2016.*

Projected Population to 2036 of Central City District Local Government Areas

The majority of the Shire’s population reside within the urban area, in particular the suburbs of Baulkham Hills, Castle Hill and Kellyville. Between 2011 and 2016, all suburbs in the Hills Shire, with the exception of Box Hill, experienced growth. The suburb with the greatest amount of growth was Kellyville, which can be attributed to the continued housing completions in the North Kellyville Growth Area Precinct. An increase in dwelling numbers in both Castle Hill and Baulkham Hills can be attributed to densification in these centres over the past decade.
The majority of housing growth over the next 20 years is expected to occur within station precincts associated with the Sydney Metro Northwest and new release areas within the North West Growth Area.

**Population Profile**

Whilst residents aged 30 to 55 will continue to be the dominant group in The Hills age structure, accounting for 33% of our population by 2036, followed by children under 19, there are significant increases in population groups aged 65+.

Many of the factors which influence the rate of ageing in our population, including longer life expectancies, improved health, fitness and health care, also influence peoples housing choices. An increasing number of people are choosing to age in place, this means staying in private accommodation longer, rather than choosing smaller housing or seniors living product and residential aged care. Many of these people will choose to age in place in their family home or in a multigenerational household, rather than relocating to a new dwelling.
The age structure also indicates that young people within The Hills tend to leave around the age of 20 years; this may be attributed to work, education or social opportunities being sought outside of The Hills.

**Dwelling Requirements and Households**

In 2016, there were 55,000 households in The Hills, approximately 82% of which were in detached dwellings. Despite an expected reduction in average household size from 3.19 people in 2016 to 3.10 people in 2036, couple families with dependents will remain the dominant household type within the Hills, representing approximately 48.7% of all households. There are also increases expected in couple only and lone person households. This is reflective of the expected increase in apartment dwellings close to public transport.
Household Composition in 2016

Average Household Size 1991-2016
Between 1991 and 2006 the average household size was in decline within The Hills as well as for all LGA’s in the Central City District and Greater Sydney. Between 2006 and 2016 however, the average household size across Greater Sydney and the Central City District has been steadily increasing. Possible explanations for the Sydney wide increase beginning in 2006 may include factors such as migration and housing affordability. The delay in this trend within The Hills may be a result of internal migration, with new families relocating from their first place of settlement.

These recent increases in household sizes coincide with the Hills Shire becoming an increasingly diverse community. Between 2011 and 2016 there was a substantial increase in the number of residents born overseas. The majority of this increase was within the Chinese community which more than doubled to become the largest group of people born outside of Australia to live within the Hills, representing 5.1% of our population.

Top five countries of origin for overseas born residents

The average number of children per household is expected to remain fairly stable across family households at approximately 1 child per household. However, the average number of children per household overall is expected to gradually decline. This is likely to reflect the predicted increase in lone person households and couple only households.
Average Number of Young Children

**Number of Bedrooms per dwelling**
The average number of bedrooms per dwelling for apartments has remained at around two (2) bedrooms, however it is noted that available census data was taken prior to the introduction of The Hills housing diversity clause and prior to introduction of the Sydney Metro Northwest which is expected to spur the development of a large number of apartments. The average number of bedrooms for detached dwellings has remained steady between 2006 to 2016, reflecting the sustained need for dwellings that cater for families and larger households.
**Tenure Type**

The Hills has historically been an area of high home ownership, both fully owned and mortgaged. Whilst this is expected to continue, there has been an increase in rental properties between 2011 to 2016. This trend is likely to continue in light of the expected growth in apartment dwellings which are generally more likely to attract a higher number of investors than owner occupiers.

![Bar chart showing the percentage of properties by tenure type from 2006 to 2016.](source: ABS Census Data 2016)

**Source**: ABS Census Data 2016

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**Dwelling Type by Tenure**

Whilst separate dwellings make up the majority of total dwellings in The Hills, the majority of rental properties are high density units.

![Bar chart showing the number of dwellings by tenurale type and dwelling type from 2006 to 2016.](source: ABS Census Data 2016)

**Source**: ABS Census Data 2016

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Median Household Income
The majority of Hills residents are occupied as professionals or managers, which are typically paid well. The median household income in The Hills is increasing, for household, family and personal income.

![Median Household Income Chart]

Median Income 2011-2016

Housing Stress (Rental and Mortgage)
Between 2011 and 2016, there has been an increase in the number of residents in rental stress, with approximately 19% of all renters in The Hills under rental stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage of total (%)</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage of total (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hills Shire</td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>1,586</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Sydney</td>
<td>122,165</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>147,789</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Proportion of all Renters in Rental Stress
Conversely, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of households with a mortgage that are under mortgage stress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage of total (%)</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage of total (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hills Shire</td>
<td>1,780</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1,744</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Sydney</td>
<td>61,596</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>55,887</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Percentage of Households with a Mortgage in Mortgage Stress

Migration

While The Hills is unlikely to attract significant overseas migration, between 2011 and 2016, approximately 8,000 residents migrated from overseas, making up only about 6.3% of immigration. The majority of in-migration between 2011 and 2016 was from residents previously living in the neighbouring Local Government Areas of Parramatta, Cumberland, Hornsby and Blacktown.

Net Migration Locations between 2011 and 2016

The most significant out-migration is seen in residents aged 18-34 and aged 55 years and over and there is a significant increase in residents aged 35-44 years of age and young children.
Net Migration between 2011 and 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Net Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 to 11 years</td>
<td>1,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 17 years</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 years</td>
<td>-521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34 years</td>
<td>-475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44 years</td>
<td>3,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54 years</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64 years</td>
<td>-852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>-986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Census Data 2016
References

Greater Sydney Region Plan – Greater Sydney Commission March 2018

Central City District Plan – Greater Sydney Commission March 2018


Profile id https://profile.id.com.au/the-hills


Council Internal Data & Analysis
JLL Feasibility Study – Bella Vista/ Kellyville and Showground Finalisation Reports

The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015


The Housing Strategy was adopted by Council on xxxxxx Minute No.xxx.

This document represents the collaboration of information from a number of sources, including Government Plans and Policies and plans and policies of The Hills Shire Council.

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