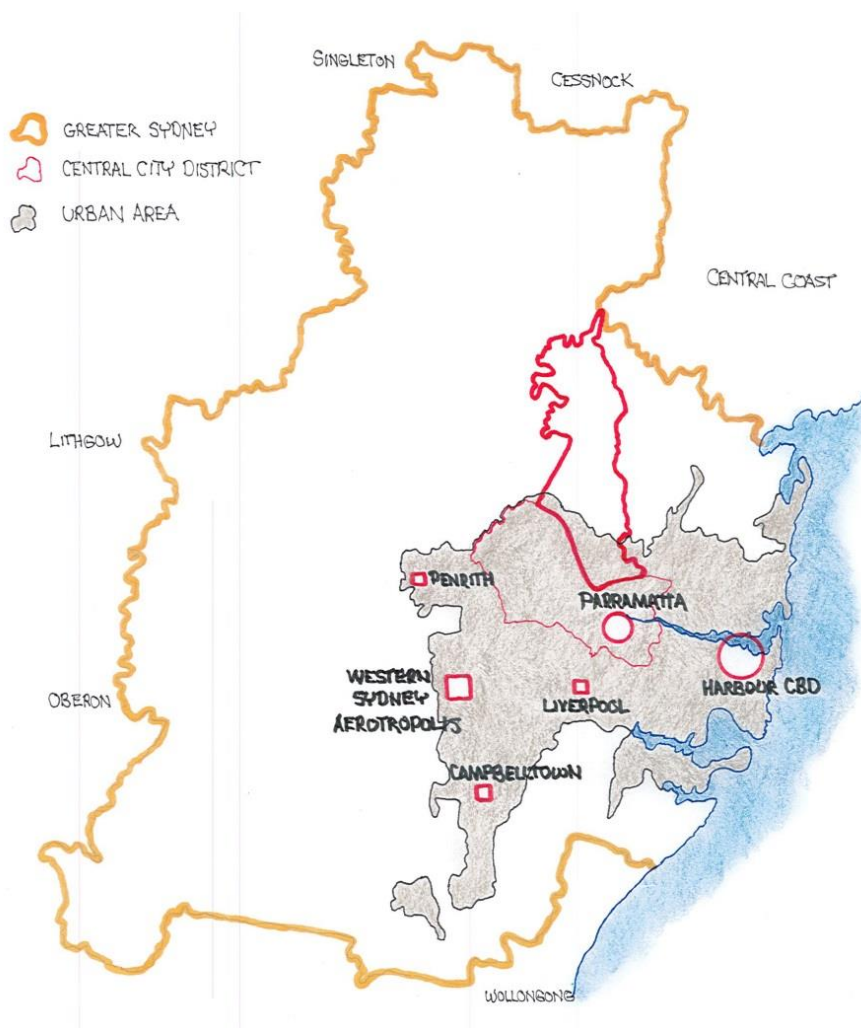

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

LOCAL STRATEGIC
PLANNING STATEMENT

THE HILLS SHIRE

2019



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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Introduction

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.

The Local Strategic Planning Statement has been prepared to respond to the expectations of Government as enunciated in the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*, and the *Central City District Plan*. It articulates how we will implement the actions and aims of these plans that came into effect in March 2018. Both of these plans are built upon a vision of a metropolis of three cities where most residents live within 30 minutes of jobs, education, health facilities, services and great places. It is also informed by *Future Transport 2056* and the *State Infrastructure Strategy*.

The Central City District Plan is a 20 year plan to manage growth in the context of economic, social and environmental matters; working to achieve the 40 year vision of Greater Sydney. It is a guide for implementing the Greater Sydney Region Plan at a district level and is a bridge between regional and local planning.

The LSPS links the Regional and District Plans to Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to guide how we will use our land to achieve the community's broader goals. It is supported by six strategies that provide finer detail about how we will achieve our vision and guide growth into the future.

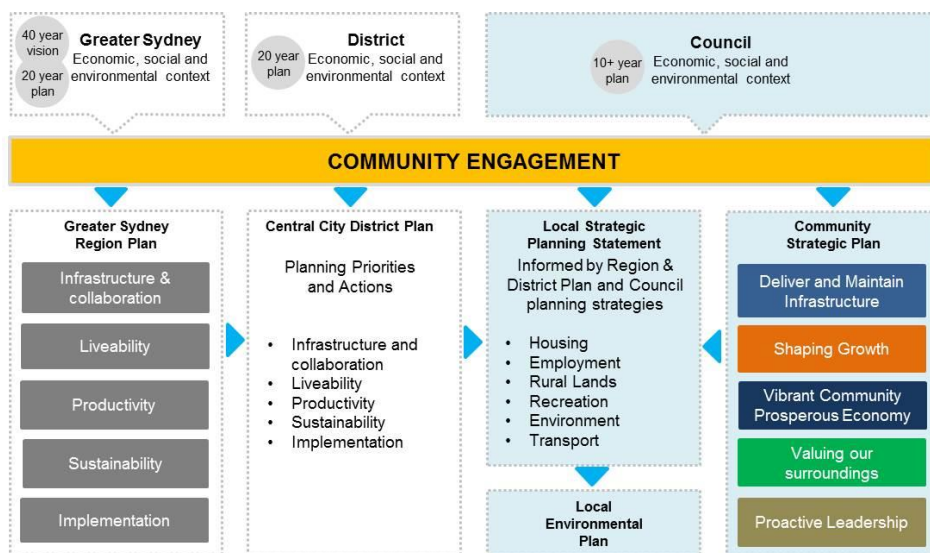


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Strategic Plans

The Local Strategic Planning Statement is the document that binds the macro strategies to deliver a functioning metropolitan city with the detailed instruments that guide land use planning and management decisions at the micro level. In developing this strategic statement investigations have been undertaken in a number of key areas to provide the vision for the future of the Hills Shire.



Figure 2: Local Strategic Planning Statement and Supporting Strategies

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 Environmental Planning Policies

Local Level

- Community Strategic Plan
- Local Strategy

State Policy

The NSW State Government implements numerous policies 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 Productivity and Centres 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.

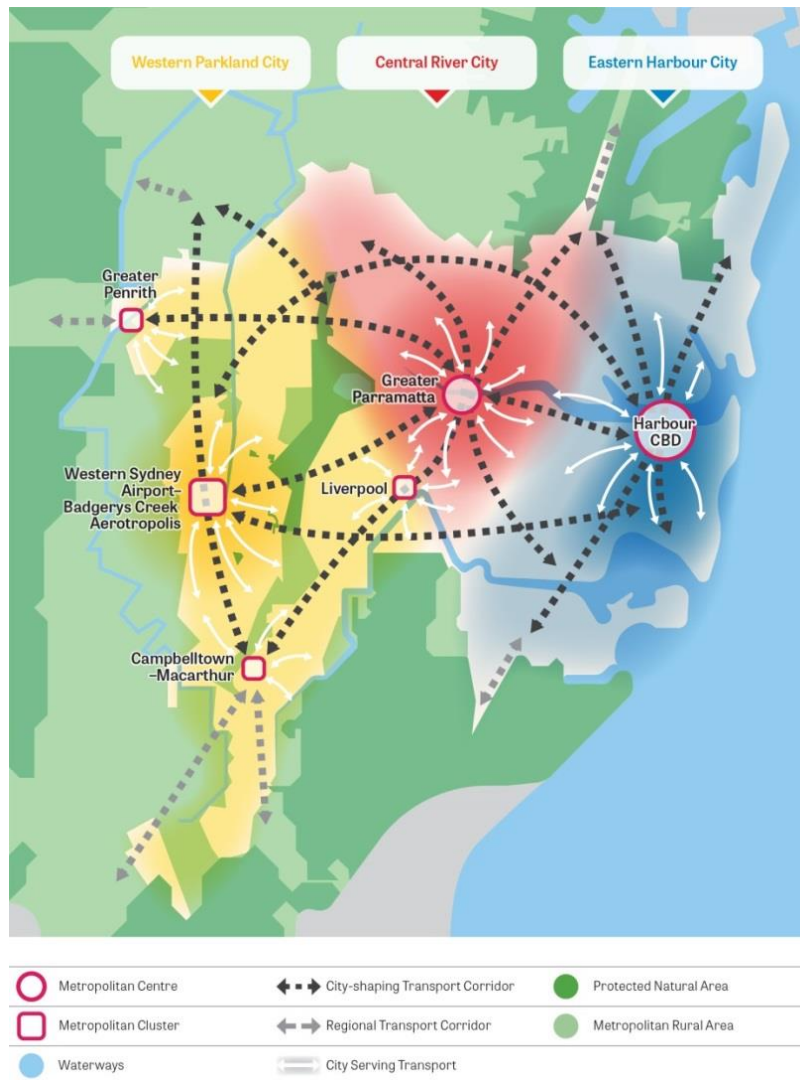


Figure 3: Metropolis of Three Cities

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 Hills Shire Council is located within the Central City District along with Parramatta, Cumberland and Blacktown Local Government Areas.



Figure 4: Central City District – The Hills, Blacktown, Parramatta & Cumberland LGA’s

North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy

The North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy prepared by State Government in 2013 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 area 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 appropriate zonings and amendments to built-form controls to guide the assessment of future development within the station precincts.

Local Policy

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. The Local Strategic Planning Statement is informed by a number of key strategies as outlined below:

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan “Hills Future” 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 being:

- Building a vibrant and prosperous economy;

- Proactive leadership;
- Shaping growth;
- Delivering and maintaining infrastructure; and
- Valuing our surroundings.

The Hills Corridor Strategy

The Strategy articulates Council's response to land use development for each of the seven (7) new Sydney Metro Northwest stations 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 expectations of The Hills Shire residents.

The intent of the 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 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.

The Hills Shire Local 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.

Local Planning Instruments

Council's Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan was notified in October 2012 and reflects the desired strategic direction for employment lands and centres. A range of rural, business, industrial and special use zones are relevant to the Shires employment lands and centres, depending on their role and function. 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.

The following strategies support Council's draft Local Strategic Planning Statement and are informed by specific objectives and actions in both State and Local policy documents:

- Draft Housing Strategy;
- Draft Productivity and Centres Strategy;
- Draft Recreation Strategy;
- Draft Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy;
- Draft Environment Strategy; and
- Draft Rural Strategy.

2

Housing Strategy

The Hills population is expected to grow by approximately 128,400 residents by 2036. Within existing zoned and planned residential land we are expecting to deliver and additional 38,000 dwellings by 2036.

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant objectives to the delivery of housing are:

Objective	Description
6	Services and infrastructure meet communities' changing needs
7	Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected
10	Greater housing supply
11	Housing is more diverse and affordable
12	Great places that bring people together

Table 1: 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:

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

Table 2: 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.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The following table outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies that are relevant to the Housing Strategy. This Strategy will assist Council in delivering the community's aspirations for The Hills.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes	Strategies
Building a Vibrant Community and Prosperous Economy	1. A connected and inclusive community with access to a range of services and facilities that contribute to health and wellbeing.	1.1 Provide quality Library resources, programs and facilities for leisure, cultural and education opportunities. 1.3 Facilitate the provision of services across the community. 1.4 Recognise and value our community's local heritage and culture.
Proactive Leadership	3. Sound governance that values and engages our customers and is based on transparency and accountability.	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. 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.
Shaping Growth	5. Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meet growth targets and maintain amenity.	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.
Delivering and Maintaining Infrastructure	7. Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained. 8. Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.	7.1 Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community. 8.1 Provide new and refurbished infrastructure in a timely manner that meets the needs of our growing Shire.

Table 3: Community Strategic Plan - Relevant Directions, Outcomes and Strategies

The Hills Shire Local Strategy

The Local 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).

3

Productivity & Centres Strategy

The Hills at the 2016 Census had 63,865 local jobs and 87,017 residents in the workforce. If our job growth is to keep pace with population growth we need at least an additional 50,600 jobs.

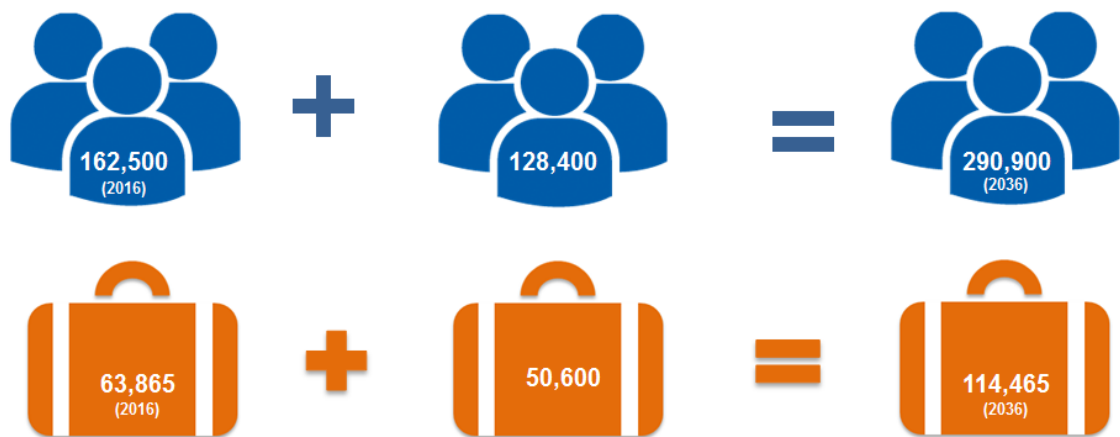


Figure 5: Implied Employment Demand for the Shire

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant objectives to the delivery of jobs, centres and a stronger economy are:

Objective	Description
12	Great places that bring people together
14	Integrated land use and transport creates walkable and 30 minute cities
16	Freight and logistics network is competitive and efficient
22	Investment and business activity in centres
23	Industrial and urban services land is planned, retained and managed
24	Economic sectors are targeted for success

Table 4: Relevant Planning Priorities from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

Objectives 14 and 16 are critical to productivity outcomes of driving investment and business across Sydney and delivering an internationally competitive freight and logistics sector. Responding to these objectives and their related actions are clearly part of how Council will plan for and manage its

employment lands and centres and it is important to note that this Strategy should be read hand in hand with Council’s Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy.

The Productivity and Centres Strategy focusses on the economic development and employment role that employment lands and centres play in The Hills, as well as the significant social role that centres play in bringing people together and facilitating vibrant communities.

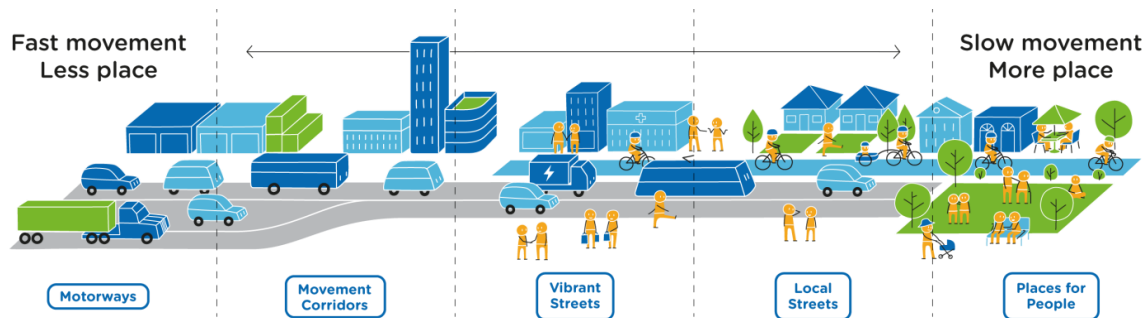


Figure 6: Movement and Place Framework

Great places are characterised by a mix of land uses and activities that provide opportunities for social connection in walkable, human scale, fine grain neighbourhoods.

Source: Greater Sydney Region Plan 2018

Central City District Plan

The following Planning Priorities from the District Plan are relevant to this Strategy:

Planning Priority	Description
C4	Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities
C6	Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District’s heritage
C8	Delivering a more connected and competitive Greater Parramatta Olympic Peninsular Economic Corridor
C9	Delivering integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city
C10	Growing investment, business opportunities and jobs in strategic centres
C11	Maximising opportunities to attract advanced manufacturing and innovation in industrial and urban services land
C12	Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors

Table 5: Relevant Planning Priorities from the District Plan

The foregoing priorities, together with the Greater Sydney Region Plan strategies, provide the framework for the planning and development of Council’s employment lands and centres. Council’s

Local Strategic Planning Statement, informed by this Productivity and Centres Strategy, provides a line of sight between the regional and district priorities and places them within the local context, tailored to the unique characteristics of the Hills Shire.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The following table outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies that are relevant to the Employment and Centres Strategy. This Strategy will assist Council in delivering the community's aspirations for The Hills.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes – where we want to be in 10 years	Strategies – how we will get there
Building a Vibrant Community & Prosperous Economy	Well informed local and potential companies about the range of employment opportunities, locations and business intelligence about the region.	<p>Promote an awareness of the region's business opportunities and provide information and support to attract new investment and jobs.</p> <p>Support existing businesses and business networks to increase business capacity and capabilities to grow jobs.</p> <p>Supporting visitor economy in The Sydney Hills for planned growth.</p>
Proactive Leadership	Sound governance that values and engages our customers and is based on transparency and accountability.	Ensure Council is accountable to the community and meets legislative requirements and support Council's elected representatives for their role in the community.
Shaping Growth	<p>Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meets growth targets and maintains amenity.</p> <p>Safe, convenient and accessible transport options and a variety of recreational activities that support an active lifestyle.</p>	<p>The Shire's natural and built environment is well managed through strategic land use and urban planning that reflects our values and aspirations.</p> <p>Strategically plan for the North West Sector growth through the development and construction of transport infrastructure, integrated local roads, parks and other civil infrastructure.</p>
Delivering & Maintaining Infrastructure	<p>Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained.</p> <p>Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.</p>	<p>Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community.</p> <p>Provide new and refurbished infrastructure in a timely manner that meets the needs of our growing Shire.</p>

Table 6: Community Strategic Plan – Relevant Directions, Outcomes & Strategies

The Hills Local Strategy

The Local Strategy was supported by a number of key directions including the Employment and Centres Directions.

Achievements - Employment Lands Direction

- Review of zones & development controls LEP 2012
- Collaborate to secure delivery of Sydney Metro Northwest
- Delivery of Castle Hill Main Street project
- Planning of Box Hill Industrial precinct
- Review of Annangrove Rd Employment precinct
- Support for businesses to grow and build competency.
- Policy guidance to protect and manage employment lands in response to rezoning requests

Achievements – Centres Direction

- Centres hierarchy - zones, capped neighbourhood shops, bulky goods precincts
- Review of Memorial Ave/Hector Ct neighbourhood centre
- Introduce shop top housing controls
- Review outdoor dining policy
- Apply design excellence provisions
- Pedestrian access to centres
- Seek density capping growth centres
- Policy guidance to protect and manage centres in response to rezoning requests

Trends Impacting our Employment Lands and Centres

The demand for, and use of, employment lands at the local level is clearly influenced by global and regional trends. Such trends can affect location choices, labour requirements, land and floor space requirements and the success of business activity.

KEY TRENDS

- Changing **metropolitan structure** provides opportunity for the Shire businesses to support the Central and Western cities.
- Growing **knowledge economy** and government investment brings opportunity to grow our health industry and build connections with university sector.
- Changes in the **way people work** requires technological support and flexibility in work spaces.
- Increase in **online and digital interactions** highlights the need for key transport connections and flexibility for local distribution facilities to support the role of freight logistics.
- The importance of **attractive and vibrant centres** remains, with retailers and consumers valuing physical interactions.

A Polycentric City

As outlined in the Greater Sydney Region Plan, our city is planned to change from one global city on the eastern edge to three cities to maximise economic growth and cater for population growth. This approach seeks to rebalance opportunities for all residents to have greater access to jobs, shops and services and is a significant change from how Sydney's growth has been historically planned and managed.

With improved transport connections, businesses in The Hills will be able to access the Central and Western City within reasonable timeframes, ideally positioning the region to become a leading service economy. A focus is need on the types of services and value the Shire's businesses can provide to the three cities as they evolve.

Jobs and Economy

Australia's economy is undergoing transition, from an economy based on manufacturing and agricultural production to a service and knowledge based economy. This transition has been fuelled by many factors including globalisation, improvements in technology and the rapid rise and relocation of manufacturing in Asia.

The 'knowledge based economy' is an expression used to describe the greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors. Key industries involved in this transition include finance, health, scientific and professional services.

Innovation precincts, often supported by higher education providers, are increasingly in demand. Specialist innovation precincts not only support the development of a knowledge based economy but are also vital for education, recruitment and retention of highly skilled workers. As outlined in the Greater Sydney Region Plan, universities, hospitals, medical research institutions and tertiary education facilities are significant contributors to Greater Sydney's economy with 21% of all jobs in Greater Sydney projected to be in the health and education sectors by 2036.

The Hills is well placed to capitalise on this period of transition and continue to grow our service and knowledge based industries. Government investment in major health facilities, including the new Rouse Hill hospital, brings opportunity for local jobs and growth in ancillary services. Over time there is potential for health clusters to evolve to innovation districts with increased economic productivity.

Workforce and Workplace Mobility

As technology continues to improve, there has been an increase in the mobility of industries and workers who can generally establish in any location. They are less dependent on face to face client interaction and less influenced by factors including access to transport.

Mobile industries may be more attracted to developing business and industrial lands where they may be able to access more affordable land and facilities. Alternatively they may locate outside of traditional employment lands where they can be adequately supported by technology.

Flexible Work Spaces

As the pace of change in the workplace increases, businesses have to become more responsive and adaptive to rapid change. Businesses are seeking to work smarter, controlling costs, optimising space utilisation and creating environments which attract and retain workers. Real estate is one of the largest costs for business, and increasingly businesses are reassessing their needs and seeking out opportunities for sharing of spaces.

Co-working spaces such as We Work or Space & Co have become increasingly popular with smaller start-up businesses, offering space to grow and the benefit of access to a larger office environment. There is a role for Council in providing flexibility in land use controls so that the right balance or mix of floor space can be achieved including shared and flexible spaces and working with the small business community to understand their needs.

Digital Innovation and Retail Disruptors

The NSW retail sector is dynamic and highly competitive. Constantly evolving consumer preferences and technology continue to transform traditional retail. Consumers can now shop anytime anywhere, and have increasing expectations regarding levels of service, delivery options and product range. The increase in online retail and influence of digital interactions upon retail sales is forcing the retail sector to evolve. By the end of 2017, online sales reached approximately 8% of total traditional retail sales (Australia Post, 2018).

A recent Deloitte report indicates that 56% of in-store sales involved a digital device (Deloitte, 2016). Increasingly, purchasing decisions are being made long before entering a physical store and retailers are accordingly viewing their physical shop-fronts as just one part of their offering.

Retail 'disruptors' find ways to differentiate themselves from traditional retailers, and in doing so, influence the sector. Much of this activity relies on sophisticated understandings of their customer bases through the use of digital infrastructure and marketing. Marketplace-style companies like Amazon, Uber, Air BnB and global brands such as Zara, H&M and Uniqlo that offer merchandise at the same time as it is offered in the northern hemisphere have all entered the Australian market and forced retailers here to re-examine their business models and operations.

Despite the conveniences and efficiencies achieved by digital innovation in retail, physical interactions remain valuable to retailers, as these are the opportunities that must be maximised so as to make their customers feel like a valued member of their brand.

Shopping Centres

Given the growing tendency of consumers to be very selective and deliberate about their purchases, shopping centres are becoming 'experience centres'. They are increasingly focussed on growing entertainment and dining offerings so as to increase the likelihood of consumers staying longer and purchasing more. This is in conjunction with their function of meeting place, civic centre or transport interchange.

The hospitality industry has grown in importance. Australians are spending more money on eating out than ever before (News.com.au, 2017). Council and land owners need to ensure retail precincts are attractive to visitors, to deliver thriving town centres where people want to spend their time.

Industry and Freight Logistics

Transport, warehousing and logistics operations are moving west as land prices increase in eastern Sydney suburbs. Manufacturing is declining as business moves overseas, resulting in a significant reduction in these jobs in Western Sydney. To ensure this industry survives, it needs to be smarter and more technology-driven, taking advantage of recent developments in artificial Intelligence and information technology.

As the population grows and the 30-minute city comes to fruition, the role of freight logistics will become more important. Integral to this will be the provision of local distribution services that enable fast delivery and localised service.



Technology is changing logistics

Image courtesy of Logistream

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Census 2016

Resident Workforce (labour force)	Resident Workforce includes all people living in the Shire aged 15 years and over who are either employed or looking for work and available to start. Both full and part-time work counts towards the labour force.	84,017
Unemployment rate	The number of looking for work and available to start as a percentage of the labour force.	4.6%
A. Resident Workers	The Resident Workers include all employed people who are resident in the Shire, regardless of where they work.	80,182
B. Local Workers Local Jobs	The Local Workers are all the people who are employed in the Shire, regardless of where they live. This figure also represents the jobs available in the Shire.	63,865
C. Resident Local Workers	Number of people who live and work in the Hills Shire.	24,870
D. Employment Self-Containment D=C/A	Self-Containment measures the proportion of <i>Resident Workers</i> who are employed within the Hills Shire. It indicates the propensity of residents to seek employment outside the Shire.	31%
E. Employment Self-Sufficiency E=C/B	Self-sufficiency measures the proportion of <i>Local Workers</i> in the local area who also live in the Shire. It indicates the level at which the resident workers meet the labour requirements of the local industries or businesses.	39%



Figure 7: Key employment facts and figures

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – Census 2016 and National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2018, presented in economy.id

Characteristics of Local Workers

Local Workers are all the people who are employed in the Shire, regardless of where they live.

63,865 Local Workers

Top industries

1. Retail Trade 18.6%
2. Health care 12.8%
3. Construction 10.5%
4. Professional 10.0%

Where they live

39% live within the Shire

As of 2016, 63,865 people were working within The Hills Shire. This represents a growth in the workforce of around 7,300 people or 12% from 2011 to 2016. Local jobs exist across a range of industries, with the top industries being retail trade, health care and social assistance, construction and professional and technical services.

Whilst retail is still one of The Hills biggest employers, as a percentage of overall employment retail has been decreasing, as has profession and technical services. Health care and social assistance is the fastest growing industry in The Hills. Construction is experiencing a sharp increase related to steady construction of new homes in the North West growth area, this is expected to continue to increase in the short term owing to development around station precincts.

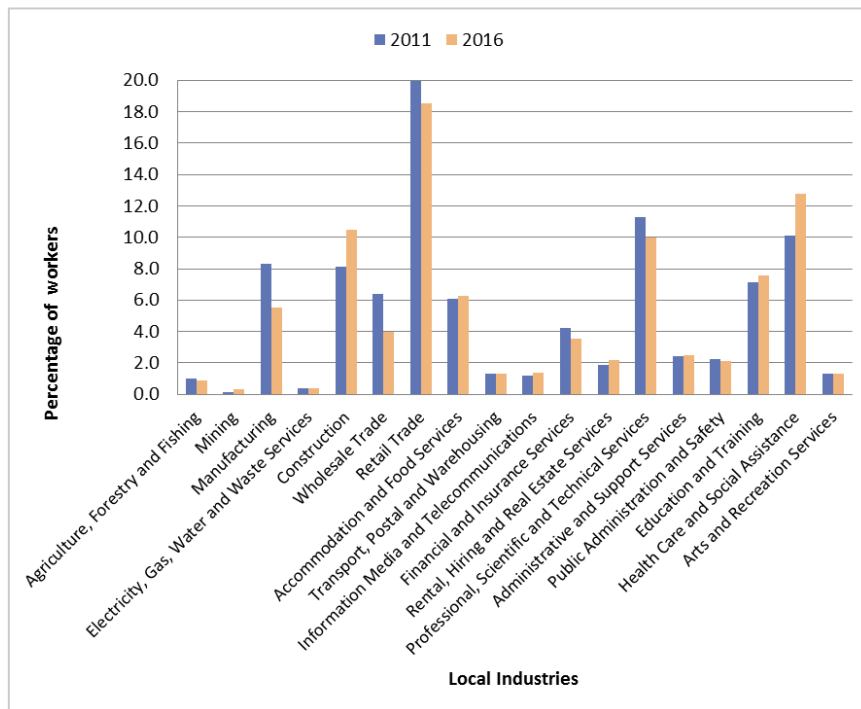


Figure 8: Proportion of workers in Hills Shire industries

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

When viewed as a percentage of jobs available in The Hills, manufacturing appears to be in significant decline. However, more detailed consideration of the manufacturing industry in The Hills reveals that the total number of jobs available, though fluctuating, has remained reasonably steady over the past 15 years. Manufacturing has continued to add increasing overall value to the local economy despite fluctuations in the size of the workforce as shown in Figure x. The decline of manufacturing as a proportion of our local jobs is more reflective of growth in other industries rather than a decline in manufacturing.

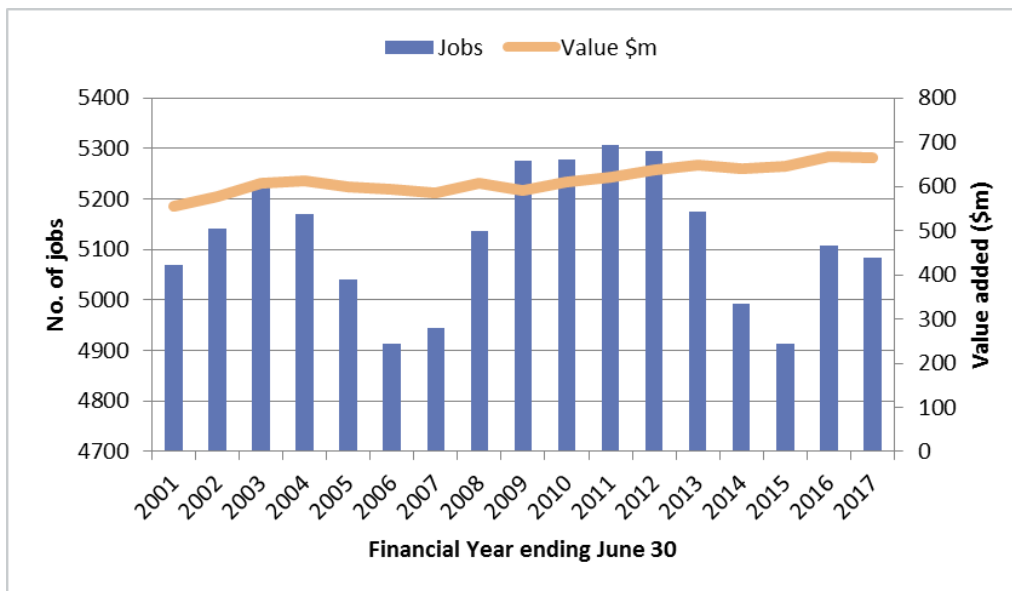


Figure 9: Manufacturing jobs and value

Source: Profile id. National Economics (NIEIR) - Modelled series

Table 7 provides a summary of the top 10 employment generating industries in the Shire in 2016.

Industry	Number Of jobs	%of total
Retail Trade	11,846	18.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	8,157	12.8
Construction	6,706	10.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	6,355	10.0
Education and Training	4,813	7.5
Accommodation and Food Services	3,983	6.2
Manufacturing	3,536	5.5
Industry not classified	3,080	4.8
Other Services	2,684	4.2
Wholesale Trade	2,550	4.0

Table 7: Top 10 Hills Shire industries

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Characteristics of Resident Workers

Resident Workforce is all people living in the Shire who are working or are able to work.

Resident Workers are all employed people who live in the Shire, regardless of where they work.

84, 017 Resident Workforce

When compared with Sydney

Lower unemployment rate
(4.6% compared with 6.1%)
Higher median household income
(\$2,360 compared with \$1,740)
Higher tertiary education
(34% compared with 28%)

Top industries

1. Health care 11.5%
2. Professional 10.4%
3. Retail trade 10.3%
4. Education 9.3%

The number of resident workers in The Hills has been steadily increasing. Between 2006 and 2016 our workforce grew by 15% to 84,000 people. Approximately 95% of residents engaged in the labour force are employed.

Unemployment in The Hills has historically remained much lower than that of the Greater Sydney region, though fluctuations in the unemployment rate have followed similar trends. Presently, the unemployment rate appears to be on the rise, though it still remains significantly lower than the Greater Sydney region.

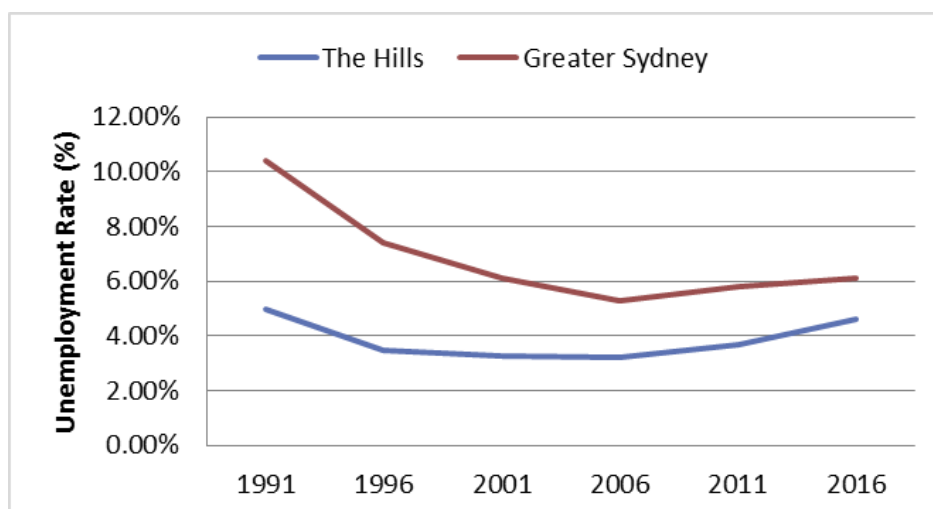


Figure 10: The Hills unemployment rate 1991-2016

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

The Hills has a predominantly highly educated, highly skilled, highly paid resident workforce. Compared to Greater Sydney, The Hills has a larger proportion of high income earners, with over 30% of households earning over \$3,000 per week. Similarly, The Hills have a lower proportion of low income earners.

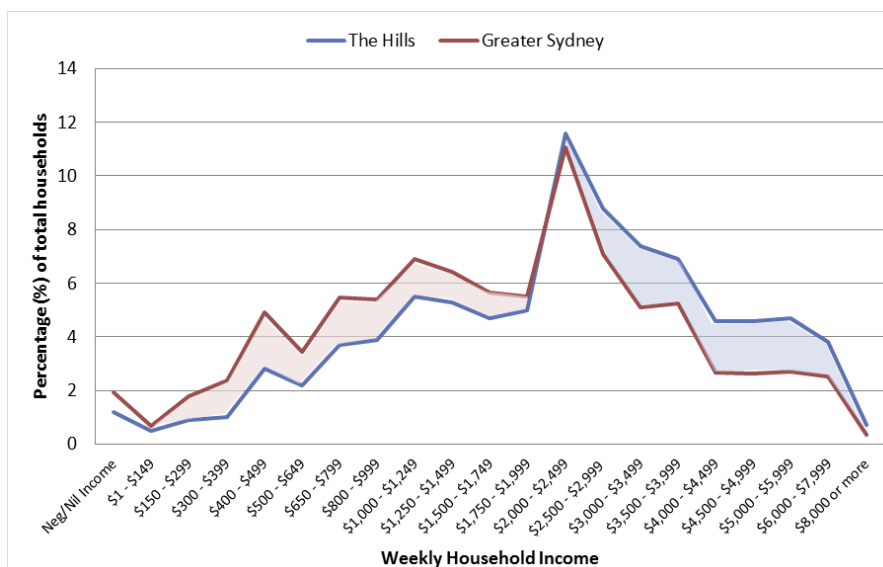


Figure 11: Weekly household income 2016

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Median household, family and personal incomes have steadily increased over the last ten years. The median weekly household income for Hills residents in 2016 was \$2,360 which is approximately 30% higher than the weekly household income for Greater Sydney of \$1,740.

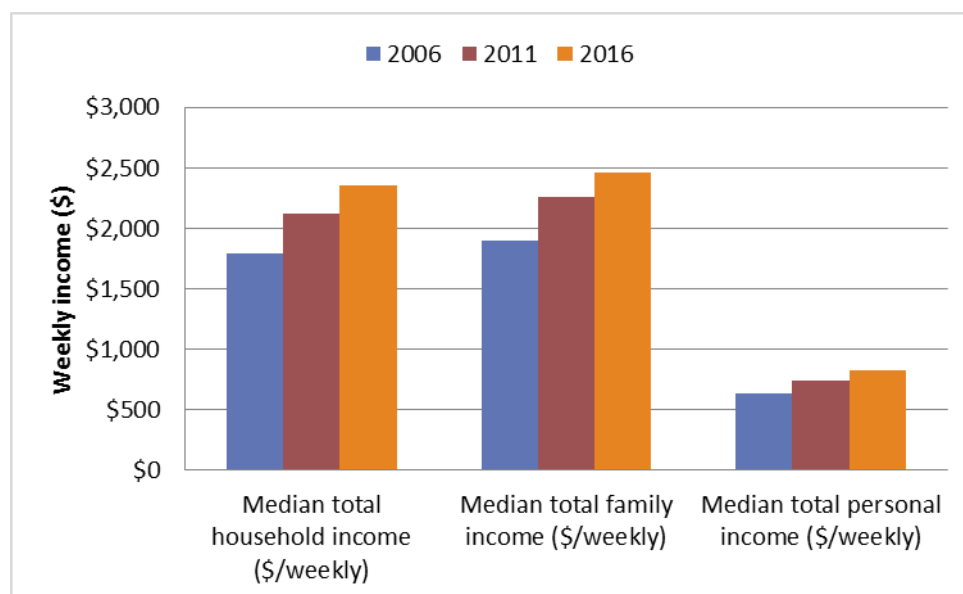


Figure 12: The Hills Median Household, Family and Personal incomes 2006-2016

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Hills residents also benefit from high levels of education. Over 60% of residents have undertaken some form of higher education with 34% of residents having attained a Bachelor degree or higher, compared with 28% in Greater Sydney.

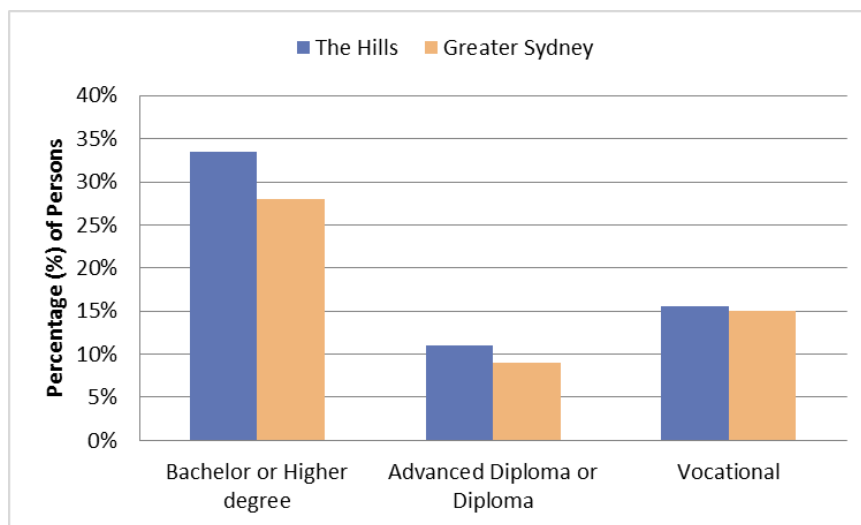


Figure 13: Higher education (% of all persons aged 15+)

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

The highest proportions of Hills residents are employed in technical and highly skilled industries including professional and technical services, finance, health care and education. This is reflective of the comparatively high levels of education attained by Hills residents. Health care and social assistance is the fastest growing industry; both for Hills based workers and residents.

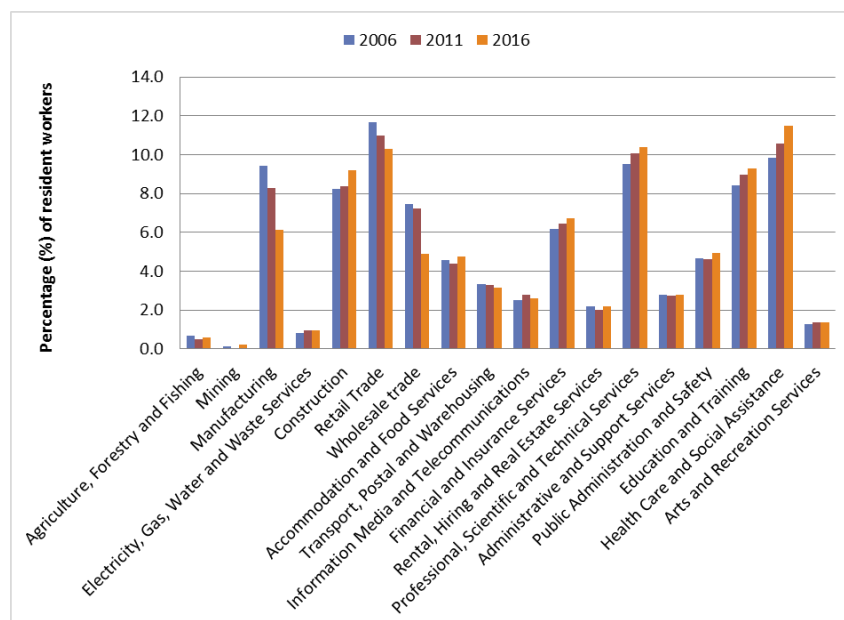


Figure 14: Industry of employment for residents (% of workers)

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Table 8 provides a summary of the top 10 employment industries for Shire residents in 2016.

Industry	Number Of jobs	%of total
Health Care and Social Assistance	9,228	11.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	8,316	10.4
Retail trade	8,260	10.3
Education and Training	7,439	9.3
Construction	7,383	9.2
Financial and Insurance Services	5,412	6.8
Manufacturing	4,916	6.1
Public Administration and Safety	3,956	4.9
Wholesale trade	3,937	4.9
Accommodation and Food Services	3,797	4.7

Table 8: Top 10 industry of employment for Shire residents

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Work locations

Of the Hills local workforce 39% lives within the Shire, however nearly 70% of our residents work outside of The Hills. Understanding where our residents choose to work and where our workers choose to live helps to determine the types and location of jobs we need in the future. In addition, where our residents work and where our workforce live influences travel choices and infrastructure requirements to contribute to the vision of the 30 minute city.

Our local workforce, which has a higher proportion of lower skilled jobs than our labour force, draws primarily from The Hills and Blacktown. For our residents, the biggest drawers for employment are the Sydney CBD and Parramatta. The types of highly skilled and technical jobs available in these locations align with the levels of education seen in our resident population.

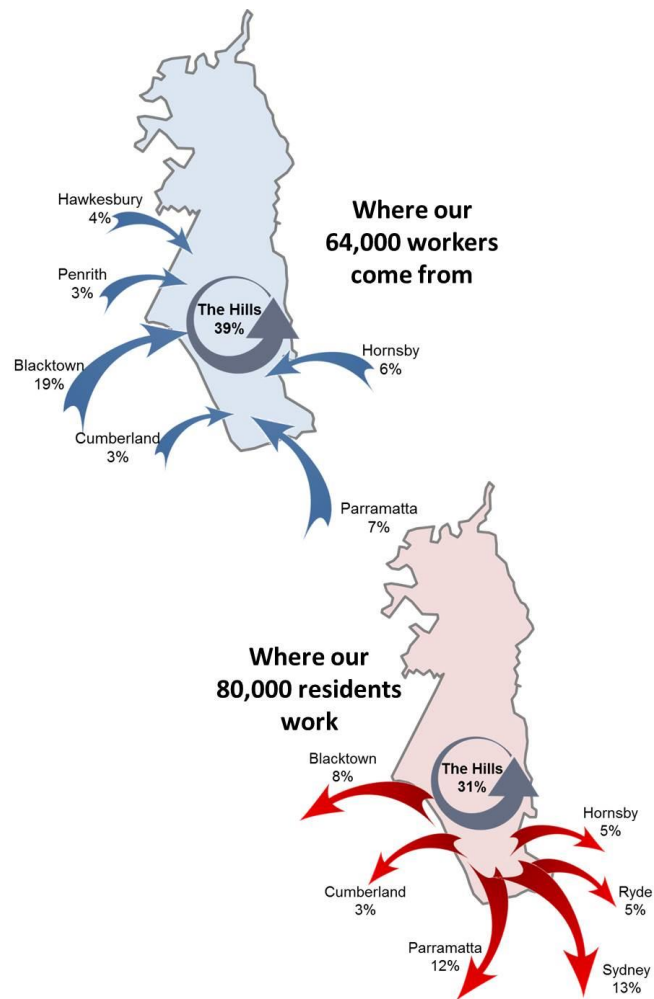


Figure 15: Residents place of work and workers place of residence

Source: ABS Census Data 2016

Our Economic Position

Gross regional product (GRP) refers to the net wealth of the local economy. The value of The Hills local economy is steadily growing; however there remains a significant divide between the economic output of our residents (Residents GRP) and the net value of our local industry.

This is reflective of the current containment rate for The Hills where nearly 70% of local residents seek work outside the Shire. Shrinking the gap between our resident’s economic output and the net value of our local economy will require a shift in our containment rate, particularly for high skilled, high value jobs.

The top 5 industries by contribution to the local GRP are Construction (17%), Professional and technical services (12%), Retail Trade (11%), Health Care and Social Assistance (9%) and Manufacturing (8%).

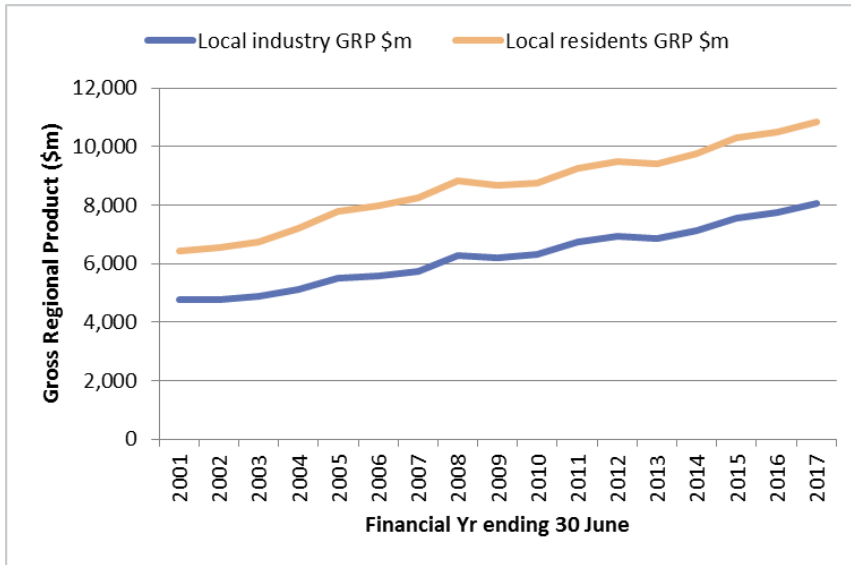


Figure 16: Gross Regional Product

Source: Profile id. National Economics (NIEIR) - Modelled series

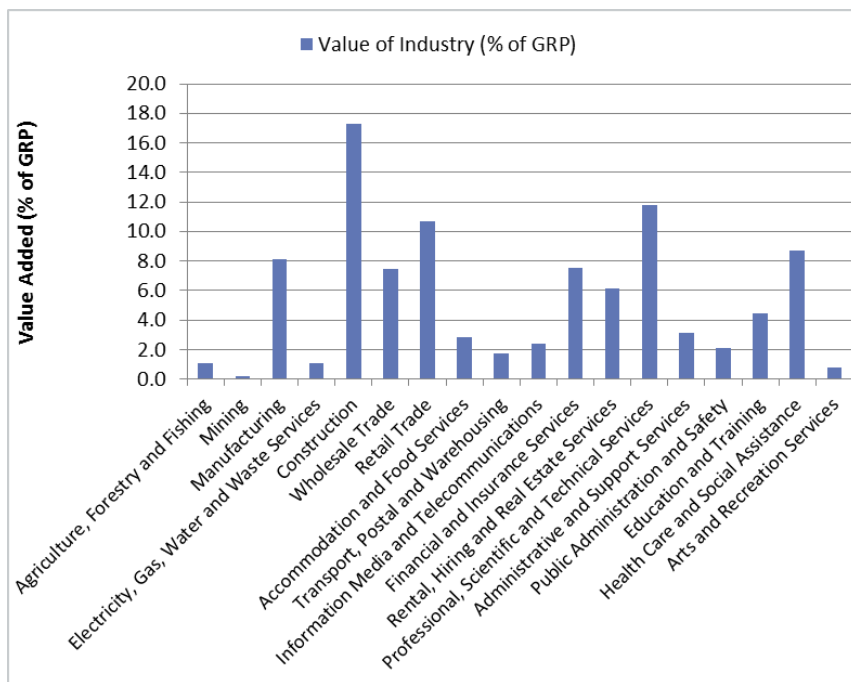


Figure 17: Value added by Industry (% of GRP)

Source: Profile id. National Economics (NIEIR) - Modelled series

4

Recreation Strategy

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant objectives to the delivery of quality open spaces and recreation facilities are:

Objective	Description
6	Services and infrastructure meet communities' changing needs.
7	Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected.
12	Great places that bring people together.
31	Public open space is accessible, protected and enhanced.
32	The Green Grid links parks, open spaces, bushland and walking and cycling paths.

Table 9: Relevant Planning Priorities from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

Objective 6 highlights that improved health, public transport and accessibility outcomes can be achieved through the provision of schools, recreation, transport, arts and cultural, community and health facilities in walkable, mixed use places co-located with social infrastructure and local services. It emphasises that good accessibility to local services is an important way of enabling people to age within their community which will ultimately contribute to improved mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes.

As the population grows it will become increasingly important to optimise the use of existing public land for social infrastructure. This will include making better use of existing infrastructure through the implementation of creative and innovative ways to meet the future demand.

Objectives 7 and 12 seek to create healthier and more socially connected communities through the delivery of well-planned neighbourhoods. The provision and delivery of accessible open space is considered to be an essential ingredient in the achievement of a healthy, resilient and socially connected community.

Objective 31 of the Plan highlights that the provision of appropriate open space has the potential to support sustainable, efficient and resilient communities and assists in expanding people's sense of home to include the wider local area and shared communal spaces and facilities. It recognises that access to high quality open space is becoming increasingly important. The key considerations for recreation planning are quality, quantity and distribution.

The Plan highlights that urban renewal needs to begin with a plan to deliver new, improved and accessible open spaces that will meet the needs of the growing community, particularly where density increases.

Objective 32 relates to the implementation of the Green Grid across the Region. The Greater Sydney Green Grid is intended to keep the region cool, encourage healthy lifestyles, support walking and cycling, provide better access to open spaces, enhance bushland and support ecological resilience. Planning and delivery of the green grid will be influenced by the ways people move through places and the multiple roles of green grid corridors.

Central City District Plan

The following Planning Priorities from the District Plan are particularly relevant to this Strategy:

Planning Priority	Description
C3	Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs
C4	Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities
C16	Increasing urban tree canopy cover and delivering Green Grid connections
C17	Delivering high quality open space

Table 10: Relevant Planning Priorities from the District Plan

Planning Priority C3 within the District Plan gives effect to Objective 6 within the Region Plan. It seeks to improve safety, accessibility and inclusion by co-locating activities benefits all residents and visitors.

It recognises that infrastructure can be adapted and shared for different uses. The Plan encourages the joint and shared use of facilities to make school assets available to the community outside school hours and to give schools access to community facilities. 'Joint use' could involve a school and a community partner funding shared facilities, such as building and operating a sportsground with a local council. Whereas 'shared use' would occur where a school allows use of school facilities for a community uses during out-of-school hours.

Planning Priority C4 recognises the importance of fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities. The delivery of walkable neighbourhoods which provide direct accessible and safe pedestrian and cycling connections from homes to schools, daily needs and recreation facilities will encourage greater physical activity and social connection. Of critical importance to delivering healthy and socially connected communities is ensuring high degrees of accessibility to open spaces and locations which can accommodate physical recreation.

Planning Priority 16 includes 2 key elements which are to increase the urban tree canopy and connect the Greater Sydney Green Grid.

Increasing the Urban Tree Canopy

According to the District Plan in 2011, the urban area of the Central City District had 19 per cent tree canopy cover. Trees are valued by residents and contribute to the streetscapes, character and amenity of the District and expanding the urban tree canopy in public places will become even more important for supporting sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods.

Whilst the State Government has set a target to increase tree canopy cover across Greater Sydney to 40 per cent, noted challenges to extending the tree canopy include narrow road reservations and verge widths which cannot accommodate street trees and the location of services (above and below ground).

Connecting the Greater Sydney Green Grid

As per Objective 32 within the Region Plan, this Planning Priority seeks to implement the Green Grid across the District. The long-term vision for the Greater Sydney Green Grid in the Central City District is shown in the following figure. The long term vision highlights the Priority Corridors and key Projects that are important to the District.

Of specific significance to the Hills Shire is the 'Cattai and Caddies Creek Corridors' identified as Item 5 in the long term vision map. This project will use the creek corridors for recreation, walking and cycling, urban greening, improved water quality and stormwater treatment and ecological protection, and create east-west links to provide access between the parallel creek corridors.

Green Grid Priority Projects have been selected to provide district-scale connections that link open space, waterways and bushland. Councils will lead the delivery of the Greater Sydney Green Grid through land use planning and infrastructure investment mechanisms such as development and land use controls, agreements for dual use of open space and recreational facilities, direct investment in open space, and other funding mechanisms such as local development contributions and voluntary planning agreements. The NSW Government supports the delivery of regional open space and green grid connections through the Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

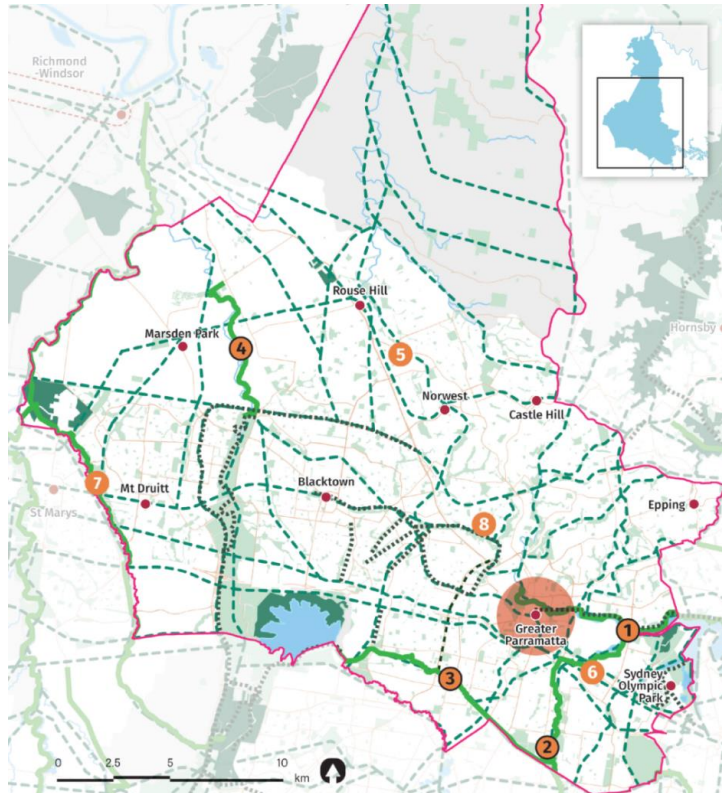


Figure 18: Central City District Green Grid Opportunities

Planning Priority C17 gives effect to Objective 31 of the Region Plan and reiterates the importance of open space in supporting healthy and active lifestyles, and brings communities together. Planning for urban renewal needs to consider opportunities to deliver new, improved and accessible open space, including spaces for active sport and recreation that meet the needs of the growing community. It is underpinned by the philosophy that all residents living within an urban area should be able to walk to local open space. The Plan provides the following in relation to high density areas, strategic centres and land release areas.

High Density Areas: Public open space is used like a shared backyard, providing a green communal living space. Open space in high density neighbourhoods need to be durable, multipurpose and accessible to a wide variety of users. High density neighbourhoods also need to have high quality open space within close proximity.

Strategic Centres: In local and strategic centres, local open space is important to provide places for workers to relax and for people to meet and socialise. It also provides for tree and vegetation planting in the centre.

Land Release Areas: Provision will need to be made to accommodate new open space areas to fulfil the wide needs of the community – from local playgrounds to sportsgrounds.

Whilst it is essential that the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space is increased to meet the demand of the growing population, the District Plan recognises the difficulties associated with providing open space, especially in areas where residential density is increasing. In these locations, a combination of new open space and innovative use of existing open space will be required. The Plan also highlights that open space within school grounds is a potential asset that could be shared by the wider community outside of school hours.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

This Strategy will assist Council in delivering the community's aspirations for The Hills.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes	Strategies
Shaping Growth	5. Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meet growth targets and maintain amenity.	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.
	6. Safe, convenient and accessible transport options and a variety of recreational activities that support an active lifestyle.	6.1 Strategically plan for the North West Sector growth through the development and construction of transport infrastructure, integrated local roads, parks and other civil infrastructure.
Delivering and Maintaining Infrastructure	7. Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained.	7.1 Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community.
		7.2 Manage and maintain a diverse range of safe, accessible and sustainable open spaces and provide recreation, sporting and leisure activities and facilities.
	8. Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.	8.1 Provide new and refurbished infrastructure in a timely manner that meets the needs of our growing Shire.

Table 11: Community Strategic Plan - Relevant Directions, Outcomes & Strategies

The Hills Local Strategy

Key open space achievements since the 2008 Environment and Leisure Direction include:

- Installed first synthetic fields in the Shire – 2018.
- Formed first formal joint partnership with Department of Education – single synthetic field and double indoor court facility at Bella Vista Public School – 2019.
- 2 court extension to Basketball Stadium at Fred Caterson Reserve (undertaken by the Basketball Association) – 2017.
- Construction of Caddies Creek Sports Complex – 2018.
- Construction of first parks in North Kellyville – 2016.
- Extension of playground at Bernie Mullane Sports Complex incorporating Livvi's Play Space and the Shire's first splash pad (water play) – 2016/17.
- Construction of Field 7 – Kellyville Park.

The Hills Corridor Strategy

Specifically relevant to the Open Space and Recreation Strategy is Principle 4 – Facilities to Match Shire Lifestyle. The overarching intent of this principle is to ensure that residents within new growth areas (release areas and railway precincts) are not undersupplied with social infrastructure such as open space. Whilst it can be difficult to increase the quantity and distribution of open space within existing urban areas, Council will endeavour to implement innovative solutions to ensure that the future population has the same high quality of life as our existing residents.

It is also worth noting that if the growth areas are undersupplied with new open space, then this will ultimately increase demand on the Shire's existing recreational infrastructure (parks and playing fields), which are already at capacity. If this approach is pursued there would be a progressive reduction in the overall level of service for all Hills Shire residents, not just those future residents within the growth areas.

5

Integrated Transport & Land Use Strategy

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant objectives to the delivery of an integrated land use and transport network are:

Objective	Description
1	Infrastructure supports the three cities
2	Infrastructure aligns with forecast growth
3	Infrastructure adapts to meet future needs
4	Infrastructure use is optimised
6	Services and infrastructure meet communities changing needs
12	Great places that bring people together
14	<i>A Metropolis of Three Cities</i> – Integrated land use and transport creates walkable and 30 minute cities
16	Freight and logistics network is competitive and efficient
17	Regional connectivity is enhanced
33	A low carbon city contributes to net zero emissions by 2050 and mitigates climate change.

Table 12: Relevant Planning Priorities from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

Objectives 1 and 2 highlight the move away from a radial focus on the Sydney CBD and the need to consider interconnections between the three cities and within each city. The new vision will form the basis for infrastructure decisions to fairly balance population growth with infrastructure investment. The challenge created by finite resources is recognised, noting that investments need to be prioritised to deliver maximum benefits to the community. A methodical and sequenced approach is advocated to align infrastructure with areas of growth and transformation before new areas are rezoned.

Objectives 3 and 4 seek to ensure infrastructure is adaptable, can have shared use and is able to respond to technological change. Examples include facilitating the use of electric vehicles, promoting digital technology, designing car parks that can be adapted for alternative uses such as commercial uses or storage. As the Shire's population grows it will become increasingly important to optimise the use of existing infrastructure including strategies to influence behaviour changes and to reduce demand for new infrastructure.

Objectives 6 and 12 highlight that improved health, public transport and accessibility outcomes can be achieved through the provision of schools, recreation, transport, arts and cultural, community and health facilities in walkable, mixed use places co-located with social infrastructure and local services. It emphasises that good accessibility to local services is an important way of enabling people to age

within their community which will ultimately contribute to improved mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes.

Objectives 14, 16 and 17 are critical to productivity outcomes of driving investment and business growth across Sydney and delivering an internationally competitive freight and logistics sector. The strategies seek to integrate transport and land use plans as outlined in *Future Transport 2056* and ensure future corridors are identified and protected.

Objective 33 notes the contribution of the transport sector to greenhouse gas emissions and points to measures such as a shift from private car use to public transport and promoting low emission vehicles as ways to support the aspirational objective of net zero emissions by 2050.

Central City District Plan

The following Planning Priorities from the District Plan are particularly relevant to this Strategy:

Planning Priority	Description
C1	Planning for a city supported by infrastructure
C6	Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage
C7	Grow a stronger and more competitive Greater Parramatta
C8	Delivering a more connected and competitive Greater Parramatta Olympic Peninsula Economic Corridor
C9	Delivering integrated land use and transport planning and a 30 minute city
C10	Growing investment, business opportunities and jobs in strategic centres
C19	Reducing carbon emissions and managing energy, water and waste efficiently

Table 13: Relevant Planning Priorities from the District Plan

Planning Priority C1 within the District Plan gives effect to Objectives 1 to 4 of the Region Plan. It supports the three cities concept, aligning growth with infrastructure, and seeks to ensure infrastructure is adaptable and its use optimised. It recognises that planning and investment in infrastructure is essential to attracting and retaining jobs in the District and enhancing the liveability of existing and new communities.

Planning Priority C6 gives effect to objective 12 within the Region Plan. The role of streets in connecting and uniting communities is highlighted. Improvements to walkability should guide decisions on locations for new jobs and housing as well as the prioritisation of transport, health and school infrastructure. Actions for councils include using place based planning to support the role of centres as a focus for connected communities. Further, Council has a role in investigating opportunities for adaptable car parking, ensuring parking availability takes into account access by public transport. Council will also encourage the use of car sharing, electric and hybrid vehicles including charging stations.

Planning Priorities C7 and C8 relate to reinforcing Parramatta as one of Sydney's metropolitan city centres. In terms of transport, actions relevant to the Hills include prioritisation of public transport

investment to improve connectivity to Greater Parramatta from Norwest. Greater Parramatta needs a radial transport network to make the most of its location at the centre of Greater Sydney.

The 30-minute city concept contained in Planning Priority C9 is a long term aspiration to guide decision making on locations for new transport, housing, jobs tertiary education, hospitals and other amenities. It is about more people having public transport access to their closest metropolitan or strategic centre. This priority is at the centre of developing a strategy to integrate land use and transport. Actions include working with State Government to protect future transport and freight corridors and supporting innovative approaches to the operation of businesses to improve the performance of the transport network. Priority corridors identified in the Plan include North South rail link from Schofields to the Western Sydney Airport and the Outer Sydney Orbital.

Planning Priority C10 focuses on strategic centres which includes Norwest, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill in the Hills Shire. The opportunity to transform Norwest Business Park into a transit-oriented vibrant and diversified centre is recognised with the construction of the Sydney Metro Northwest which will enable faster and more reliable business to business connections to other centres. The need to work with NSW Government to identify a potential future corridor for mass transit link to Parramatta is a key action. Enhanced transport connections from Castle Hill to Parramatta are identified together with actions to align State priorities for expenditure on regional roads to support growth and address current deficits.

Future Transport 2056 Strategy

Future Transport 2056 sets a 40 year vision for the transport system to support the land use vision contained within the Greater Sydney Region Plan. The preparation of this Strategy concurrently with the Region Plan and State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038 seeks to align land use, transport and infrastructure outcomes for Greater Sydney.

The Strategy identifies transport initiatives in four categories: Committed, Investigation 0-10 years, Investigation 10-20 years and Visionary 20 years plus. A hierarchy of corridors is identified for Greater Sydney as:

City-shaping corridors – Major trunk roads and public transport corridors providing higher speed and higher volume connections between our cities and centres. These corridors shape locational decisions of residents and businesses.

City-serving corridors – Higher density corridors within 10km of metropolitan centres providing high frequency access to metropolitan cities/centres with more frequent stopping patterns.

Centre-serving corridors – Local corridors that support buses, walking and cycling. These corridors connect people with their nearest centre and transport interchange.

Projects identified in Future Transport 2056 that are relevant to the Hills are shown in the following table.

	Description	Timeframe
Mass Transit/Rail	North South rail link St Marys to Western Sydney Airport	Committed initiative 0-10 years
Mass Transit/Rail	North South rail link Tallawong to St Marys	Investigation 0-10 years
Mass Transit/Rail	Greater Parramatta through Baulkham Hills to Norwest	Investigation 20+ years
Road	Central City Strategic Road Corridor (North Connex to Southern Sydney)	Investigation 20+ years
Road/freight rail	Outer Sydney Orbital to Central Coast	Investigation 20+ years
Cycleway	Within 5kms of Strategic Centres Norwest, Castle Hill, Baulkham Hills and Rouse Hill	Investigation 10-20 years

Table 14: Relevant transport initiatives for The Hills - Future Transport 2056

The identified connection from Parramatta to Norwest via Baulkham Hills is a key priority for the Shire given the proportion of the Hills labour force that travel to Parramatta for employment purposes.

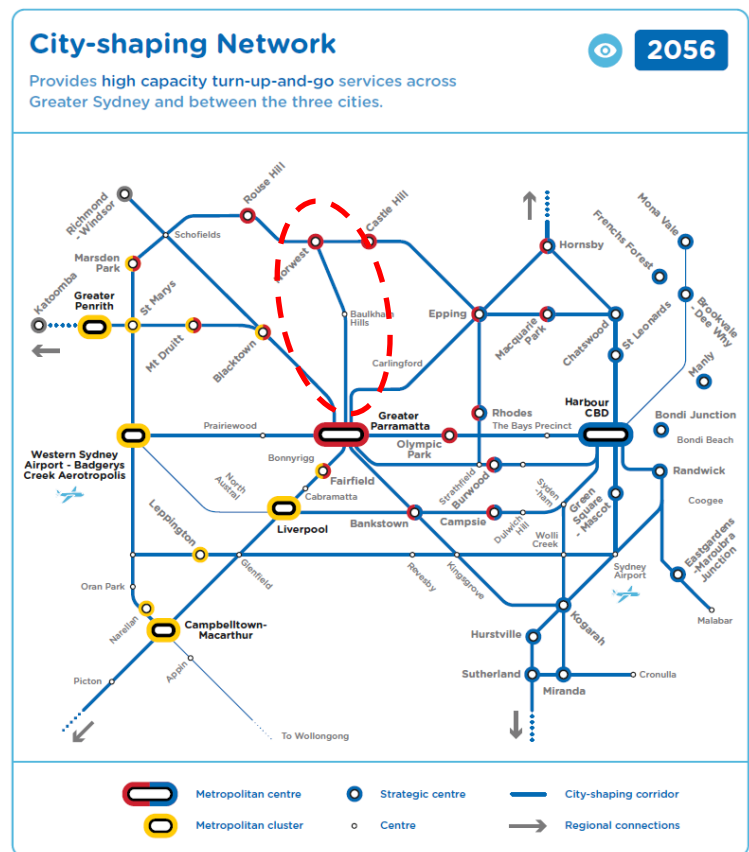


Figure 19: City shaping corridors - Future Transport 2056

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The table below outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies from Hills Future that are relevant to the Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes	Strategies
Shaping Growth	5. Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meet growth targets and maintain amenity.	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.
	6. Safe, convenient and accessible transport options and a variety of recreational activities that support an active lifestyle.	6.1 Strategically plan for the North West Sector growth through the development and construction of transport infrastructure, integrated local roads, parks and other civil infrastructure.
Delivering and Maintaining Infrastructure	7. Our Community infrastructure is attractive, safe and well maintained.	7.1 Provide and maintain sustainable infrastructure and assets that enhance the public domain, improve the amenity and achieve better outcomes for the community.
	8. Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.	8.1 Provide new and refurbished infrastructure in a timely manner that meets the needs of our growing Shire.

Table 15: Community Strategic Plan - Relevant Directions, Outcomes & Strategies

The Hills Local Strategy

The strategy was supported by a number of key directions including the Integrated Transport Direction. Key achievements from the Integrated Transport Direction include:

- Sydney Metro Northwest – Scheduled for completion in 2019;
- 100 additional buses and improvements to strategic bus routes;
- Norwest – Intersection upgrades to Norwest Boulevard to facilitate three right hand turning lanes onto Windsor Road;
- New shared pedestrian and cycle ways to facilitate better active transport movements;
- Showground Road widened to four lanes with improvements to associated pedestrian and cycle ways;
- M2 – Additional lanes and improvements to west facing ramps at Windsor Road;
- Local infrastructure delivery (roundabouts, cycle ways, footpaths and crossings);
- Town Centre improvements (Baulkham Hills); and
- Review of policy framework (centres car parking rates, public domain plans, Shire bike plan).

The Hills Corridor Strategy

Specifically relevant to the Integrated Transport & Land Use Strategy is Principle 2 – Balance High and Lower Density Housing. This is founded on the well-recognised and accepted principles of transit oriented development (TOD). Locating higher density housing in locations with access to services, community facilities and transport supports the ongoing operation of the Metro link and allows for a scale of development appropriate for pedestrian connectivity. The transition of housing densities from medium to lower density further from centres and transport hubs is a strategic policy of Council that has been successfully implemented since its 1997 Residential Development Strategy.

6

Environment Strategy

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant Objectives to the Environmental Sustainability strategy are:

Objective	Description
Objective 25	The coast and waterways are protected and healthier
Objective 27	Biodiversity is protected, urban bushland and remnant vegetation is enhanced
Objective 28	Scenic and cultural landscapes are protected
Objective 30	Urban tree canopy cover is increased
Objective 33	A low-carbon city contributes to net-zero emissions by 2050 and mitigates climate change
Objective 34	Energy and water flows are captured, used and re-used
Objective 36	People and places adapt to climate change and future shocks and stresses
Objective 37	Exposure to natural and urban hazards is reduced
Objective 38	Heatwaves and extreme heat are managed

Table 16: Relevant objectives from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

Central City District Plan

The following Planning Priorities from the District Plan are particularly relevant to this Strategy:

Planning Priority	Description
C13	Protecting and improving the health and enjoyment of the District's waterways
C14	Creating a Parkland City urban structure and identity, with South Creek as a defining spatial element
C15	Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes
C16	Increasing urban tree canopy cover and delivering Green Grid connections
C19	Reducing carbon emissions and managing energy, water and waste efficiently
C20	Adapting to the impacts of urban and natural hazards and climate change

Table 17: Relevant priorities from the Central City District Plan

The above priorities, together with the Greater Sydney Region Plan strategies, provide the framework for the planning and development of Council's employment lands and centres. Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement, informed by this Productivity and Centres Strategy, provides a line of sight between the regional and district priorities and places them within the local context, tailored to the unique characteristics of the Hills Shire.

Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

On 25 August 2017, the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1996, Native Vegetation Act 2003 and National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 were repealed and replaced by the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016 and The State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017. Together they regulate land management and biodiversity conservation in NSW. Assessment and approval pathways for vegetation clearing activities now depend upon the nature, location and extent of the vegetation clearing activity.

The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and Regulation 2017, outlines the framework for addressing impacts on biodiversity from development and clearing. It establishes a framework to avoid, minimise and offset impacts on biodiversity from development through the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme creates a transparent, consistent and scientifically based approach to biodiversity assessment and offsetting for all types of development that are likely to have a significant impact on biodiversity. It also establishes biodiversity stewardship agreements, which are voluntary in-perpetuity agreements entered into by landholders, to secure offset site.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018

Together with the Coastal Management Act 2016, the SEPP established a new land use planning framework for the management of the Shire’s Hawkesbury River foreshore and wetland areas. The SEPP contains targeted development controls that apply to the coastal management areas for consideration in the development assessment process. The SEPP also requires Councils to prepare a Coastal Management Plan and coastal hazard mapping.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The following table outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies that are relevant to the Strategy.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes	Strategies
Valuing Our Surroundings	9. Our natural surroundings are valued, maintained and enhanced and impacts are managed responsibly through education and regulatory action.	9.1 Effective regulatory strategies, local laws, and compliance programs, manage public health and the impact of new and existing development on the community. 9.2 Demonstrate leadership in sustainable environmental performance and manage environmental risks and impacts responsibly and provide education and regulatory actions. 9.3 Manage new and existing development with a robust framework of policies, plans and processes that is in accordance with community needs and expectations
	10. Encourage and education people to live sustainably by facilitating resource recovery and minimising waste.	10.1 Provide services, infrastructure, information and education that facilitate resource recovery and encourage commercial and residential waste minimisation

Table 18: Relevant directions from Community Strategic Plan

Achievements from Local 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 has 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 Waterways Direction and the Environment and Open Space Direction.

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Achievements - Waterways Direction

- Mapping and condition assessment of all Council owned waterways
- Urban Overland Flow Study
- Development of a Flood Controlled Land Development Control Plan
- Stormwater system upgrades and waterway improvement works in priority areas

Achievements – Environment and Leisure Direction

- Introduction of terrestrial biodiversity mapping in LEP 2012

Greater Sydney Region Plan

The relevant objectives to the protection and management of rural lands and the strengthening of the rural economy are:

Objective	Description
Objective 6	Services and infrastructure meet communities' changing needs
Objective 24	Economic sectors are targeted for success
Objective 27	Biodiversity is protected, urban bushland and remnant vegetation is enhanced
Objective 28	Scenic and cultural landscapes are protected
Objective 29	Environmental, social and economic values in rural areas are protected and enhanced
Objective 32	The Green Grid links parks, open spaces, bushland and walking and cycling paths

Table 19: Relevant objectives from the Greater Sydney Region Plan

Objectives 28 and 29 are critical to rural land management outcomes. Responding to these objectives and their related actions is clearly part of how Council will plan for and manage its rural lands and industries. It should be noted that this Strategy should be read in conjunction with Council's Productivity and Centres Strategy.

The Rural Lands Strategy focuses on the role that rural lands play in The Hills, and the industries they support, as well as the significance of the scenic and cultural landscapes to the shire and district.

Central City District Plan

The following Planning Priorities from the District Plan are relevant to this Strategy:

Planning Priority	Description
C3	Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs
C6	Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage
C12	Supporting growth of targeted industry sectors
C18	Better managing rural areas

Table 20: Relevant priorities from the Central City District Plan

The above priorities, together with the Greater Sydney Region Plan strategies, provide the framework for the planning and management of Council's rural lands. Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement, informed by this Rural Lands Strategy, provides a line of sight between the regional and district priorities and places them within the local context, tailored to the unique characteristics of the Hills Shire.

NSW Right to Farm Policy

In the interest of increasing certainty for existing agricultural land use and minimising land use conflicts, the NSW Government has developed a 'right to farm' policy that supports the right of farmers to continue farming as long as they are employing good management practices. This may mean a loss of amenity for surrounding land uses; however it underscores the importance of and need for agricultural land and activities.

SREP 9

The *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 9 - Extractive Industry (No 2-1995)*(SREP 9) identifies land which contains significant reserves of extractive material such as sand, clay and shale and aims to facilitate the development of these resources in proximity to the urban population of Sydney. It ensures these industries are carried out in an environmentally acceptable manner and that urban development does not adversely impact on the ability of extractive industries to realise their full potential. Importantly, it also prohibits extractive industries in environmentally sensitive areas associated with the Macdonald, Colo, Hawkesbury and Nepean Rivers.

SREP 9 also specifies particular requirements for extractive industries at Maroota, in order to protect the Maroota groundwater resource and the threatened species, populations and ecological communities found in that locality. This legislation also requires that following the cessation of extractive activities, the land be able to support sustainable agricultural production and land uses compatible with the character, landscape and natural quality of the Maroota locality.

SREP 20

The *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 20—Hawkesbury-Nepean River (No 2—1997)* (SREP 20) aims to protect the environment of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system by ensuring that the impacts of future land uses are considered in a regional context. Specifically this SREP recommends strategies that will assist in the protection and enhancement of the Hawkesbury River and its catchment area. Of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy are those related to total catchment management, rural residential development and recreation and tourism.

Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The following table outlines the Strategic Directions, Community Outcomes and Strategies that are relevant to the Rural Lands Strategy.

Strategic Direction	Community Outcomes – where we want to be in 10 years	Strategies – how we will get there
Shaping Growth	<p>Well planned and liveable neighbourhoods that meet growth targets and maintain amenity.</p> <p>Safe, convenient and accessible transport options and a variety of recreational activities that support an active lifestyle.</p>	<p>The Shire’s natural and built environment is well managed through strategic land use and urban planning that reflects our values and aspirations.</p> <p>Strategically plan for the North West Sector growth through the development and construction of transport infrastructure, integrated local roads, parks and other civil infrastructure.</p>
Building a Vibrant Community & Prosperous Economy	<p>Well informed local and potential companies about the range of employment opportunities, locations and business intelligence about the region.</p>	<p>Promote an awareness of the region’s business opportunities and provide information and support to attract new investment and jobs.</p> <p>Support existing businesses and business networks to increase business capacity and capabilities to grow jobs.</p> <p>Supporting visitor economy in The Sydney Hills for planned growth.</p>
Valuing our surroundings	<p>Our natural surroundings are valued, protected and enhanced and impacts are managed responsibly</p>	<p>Manage new and existing development with a robust framework of policies, plans and processes that is in accordance with community needs and expectations.</p>

Table 21: Relevant directions from Community Strategic Plan

The Hills Local Strategy

The Strategy was supported by a number of key directions including the Rural Strategy, which was independently reviewed in 2005.

Achievements - Rural Lands Strategy

- 654 hectares of land with high biodiversity value protected through rural cluster subdivisions
- Development and implementation of the Rural Development Control Plan
- Working with Hornsby Council to improve boat ramp and wharf facilities at Wiseman’s Ferry
- Tourist zone implemented at Wiseman’s Ferry
- Existing heritage items incorporated into LEP 2012 to uphold rural character
- Productive rural lands have been protected through continued use of the RU1 zone

