

Department of Planning,
Housing and Infrastructure



NSW State Land Use Plan



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Artwork by Kyara Fernando, Dunghutti (Dhanggati) artist.

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NSW State Land Use Plan

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Minister's foreword

New South Wales is a great state and the powerhouse of the nation. It has some of the most liveable cities, vibrant communities and extraordinary landscapes. From our coastlines and cityscapes to our regional centres and rural communities - the diversity of our great State underpins a strong, growing economy and supports our thriving communities.

In short, NSW is one of the best places in the world to live, work, and visit. As one of the best places in the world, it deserves a great plan for its future. A plan that is ambitious, that is innovative, and that is both hopeful and realistic for what we can achieve.

This Plan is the foundational element of the NSW Government's new approach to strategic planning. Previous approaches have been fragmented, complex, confusing, and inconsistent; they have not been looking at the whole picture with the future in mind. Strategic planning is at its best when it thinks in decades. It is designed to envision what the future may hold and to put in place the mechanisms to support that.

The NSW State Land Use Plan plots a new coordinated approach to planning for our State. This Plan considers our State's growth in a way that will strengthen our economy, support our communities and protect the natural environment that makes NSW so unique.

If we do not plan for this growth and evolution in a way that is flexible to change as infrastructure investments are made, population trends change and new industries occur - then we are failing to plan for our future.

As Australia's economic powerhouse, NSW continues to grow and evolve. With that growth comes increasing demand for homes, jobs, infrastructure and services, alongside the need to protect our productive lands, natural environment and cultural heritage, while continuing to recognise the enduring connection of Aboriginal people to Country.

The NSW State Land Use Plan establishes 7 state-wide priorities to provide clear direction for land use decisions across NSW.

Together with regional plans and local strategic planning, the NSW Government's new approach to state-wide land use planning provides a consistent three-tier framework to align growth with infrastructure investment. It coordinates development and helps communities have access to the housing, services, infrastructure, and the open public spaces they need to thrive.

Strategic planning at all levels can and should respond better to local opportunities. This new framework will lead the way in demonstrating how that can be done, so that every level of government

is making decisions that are built for today and future-proofed for tomorrow. Planning for the future means making long-term decisions that balance competing land use needs and create lasting benefits for communities right across NSW.

The NSW State Land Use Plan provides our State with a clear and comprehensive planning framework to deliver outcomes that meets the needs of our communities today and in the future.

The Hon. Paul Scully

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces



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1 How to use the plan

The NSW State Land Use Plan (the State Plan) provides the overarching direction for land use across NSW. It sets a clear and consistent strategic planning framework to guide planning decisions.

The State Plan sets a long-term vision for land use across NSW over the next 20 years, guiding how the State will grow, develop and respond to change.

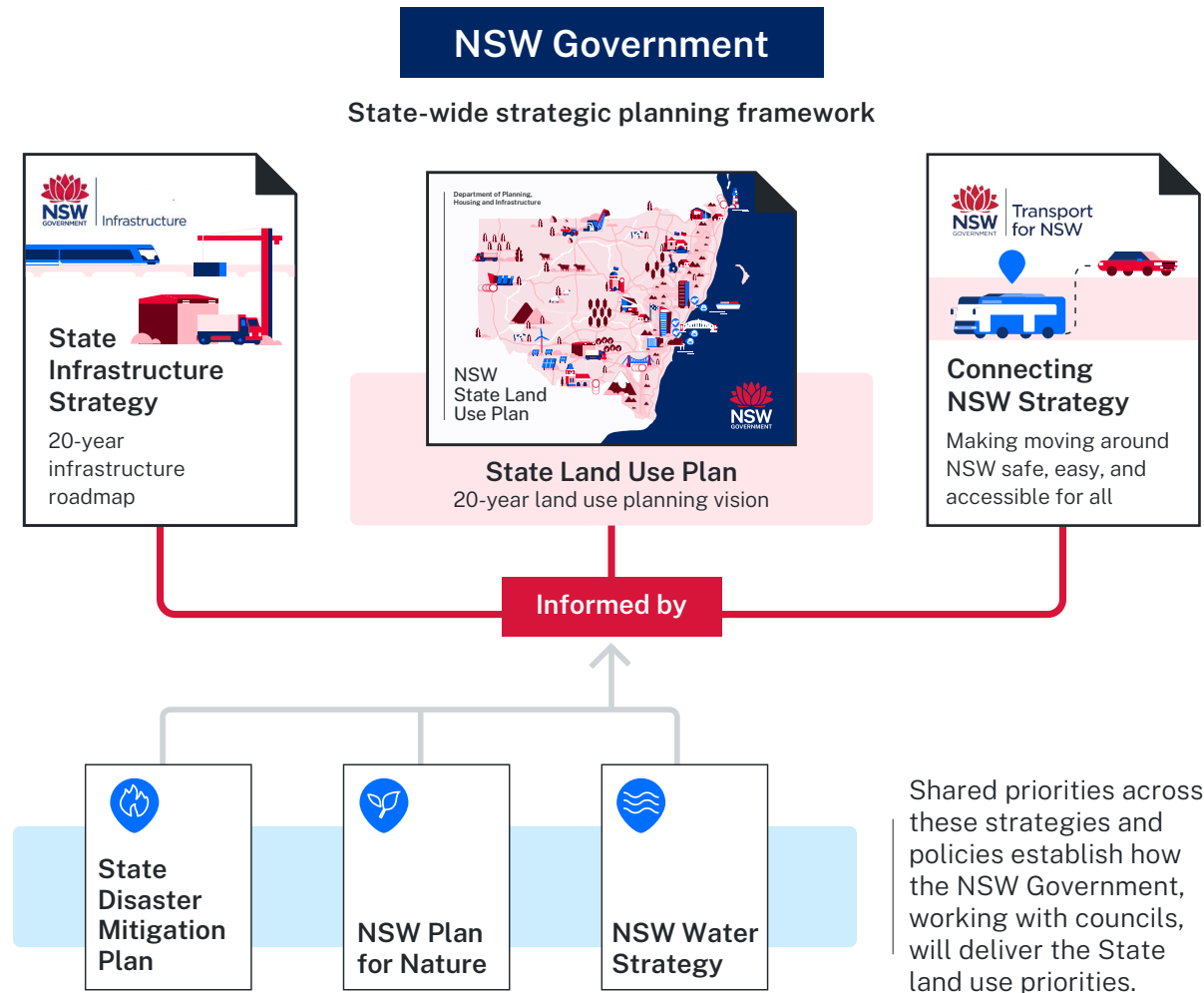
To realise the State vision, 7 State land use priorities have been set. Each priority is supported by priority statements that provide strategic direction on how the priority should be implemented across State, region and local planning. Additional guidance on how priorities are to be delivered is provided in the technical appendices.

The State Plan sits alongside other state-wide infrastructure and servicing plans, including the *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy* and the *Connecting NSW Strategy* (Figure 1).

The State Plan considers other state level policies such as the *State Disaster Mitigation Plan*, *NSW Water Strategy* and *NSW Plan for Nature*. Shared priorities across these documents establish how the NSW Government, working with councils, will implement the State land use priorities in this plan.

The State Plan is the first piece of the puzzle. Next steps for future strategic planning reform and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework are identified at the end of the document.

Figure 1: Alignment with other state-wide planning and policy documents



2 State vision



Our physical landscape, natural features and attractions

NSW is known around the world for its beauty, lifestyle and extraordinary landscapes. The unique geography of our State shapes where and how people live, work and connect, from the iconic coastline stretching from Byron Bay to Eden, to the alpine landscapes of Kosciuszko, the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and the expansive inland regions shaped by the Murray-Darling river systems. These landscapes, natural features and environments will continue to define the identity and character of NSW for generations to come, attracting people to live, work and visit from across Australia and the world. Through careful stewardship and resilient planning, our natural assets will continue to be protected, restored and accessible for future generations.

Aerial view of coastline between Merimbula and Tathra



1.8 m

more people



1.2 m

more homes



20%

more jobs

Our diverse population, rich culture and vibrant communities

By 2046, the population of NSW will have grown by over 20%, be enriched by people from diverse cultural backgrounds and be grounded in one of the world's oldest continuous cultures whose ongoing connections remain deeply rooted in the land, skies and waters of our State. A bigger NSW means planning for opportunities for everyone whether they are new to NSW or have lived here for generations.

The future of housing supply in NSW will be aligned with infrastructure, opportunity and safety. Supply will grow in places where people can live close to jobs, infrastructure, services and amenities. Housing will be more affordable and accessible and people will have greater choice from a rich mix of housing types across our cities, towns and regional communities.

A diverse NSW will continue to welcome people from all backgrounds, cultures and generations. Our communities will become increasingly diverse in culture, age and experience, shaping vibrant and inclusive places across the State. Infrastructure, services and community spaces will evolve alongside these changes, supporting connection, participation and wellbeing for people throughout all stages of life.

Communities will be safe, healthy, and supported by equitable and easy access to jobs, education and community infrastructure. New development and changes in land use will support growth while balancing community needs and preserving the unique cultural, social and economic fabric of our cities, towns and regions. Well-designed places will foster belonging, social cohesion and vibrant communities.

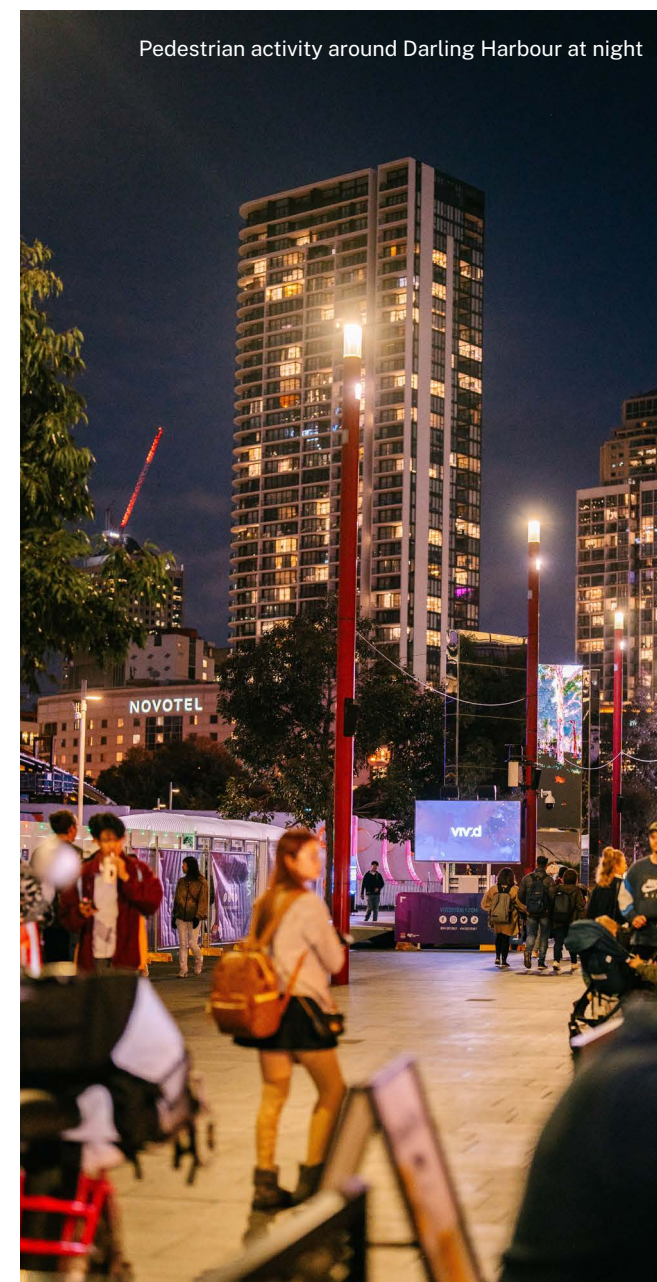
Our thriving businesses, diverse economy and local prosperity

NSW will continue to be the State of choice for businesses to grow and invest, creating shared prosperity and diverse opportunities for people to work, connect and move easily across a network of interlinked metropolitan and regional cities.

The State's economic foundations will remain among the most globally competitive in the country, enabled by our 3 international ports and a growing network of international airports. Sydney will continue to excel as Australia's global gateway city, supported by the maturing metropolises of Newcastle and Wollongong, each contributing to national and international connectivity through leading innovation, strong business and logistics infrastructure.

Economic opportunities will continue to grow across more places in NSW, creating jobs, prosperity and wellbeing for communities throughout the State. As Australia's largest and most diversified economy, NSW will be supercharged by new advancements in technology, enhanced productivity, efficient freight networks, and infrastructure.

Pedestrian activity around Darling Harbour at night



Industries across NSW will continue to drive innovation, investment and jobs. Manufacturing and new industrial precincts in the Hunter, productive agriculture across the Murray and Riverina, renewable energy and mineral resources in the Central West, and emerging industries linked to Sydney's Aerotropolis will support economic growth across the State.

Newcastle's advanced manufacturing sector, Port Kembla in Wollongong, and post-mining regions across the Hunter, Illawarra and regional NSW will continue to support innovation, investment and jobs across both metropolitan and regional communities. A focus on innovation, economic diversity and transition will ensure NSW continues to be Australia's jobs powerhouse for generations to come.

Our inclusive and equitable State

In the next 20 years, NSW will be prosperous, more diverse and a more equitable state, shaped by growth and valued for its rich culture, vibrant communities, natural beauty and enviable lifestyle. NSW will be a place where we honour and strengthen our connection to Country and support our Aboriginal communities' opportunities for greater economic self-determination.

As the State grows and diversifies, the benefits of prosperity and opportunity will be shared more equitably across communities. Our wealth per capita will continue to rank among the highest compared to leading economies around the world, supporting and enhancing our quality of life as NSW continues to grow. As one of the world's most attractive places to live, work and visit, the people of NSW will continue to be proud to call this State home.



Portside steelworks in Port Kembla, Wollongong

3 NSW strategic planning framework

The State Plan establishes a new strategic planning framework for NSW.

The framework comprises 3 core elements:

1. A simplified three-tier hierarchy of plans which establishes clear roles and responsibilities.
2. Updated planning regions to reduce duplication, reflect regional nuances and deliver consistent land use outcomes.
3. A framework designed to adapt and remain relevant.

A three-tier hierarchy of plans

The State Plan introduces a streamlined strategic planning framework built around 3 tiers of plans.

The new hierarchy describes how the State, region and local planning levels work together to guide land use decisions across NSW, providing an integrated structure for translating state-wide priorities into place-based outcomes.

This approach resolves the current system's complexity by ensuring planning documents developed under each tier have a clearly defined purpose. This will clarify responsibilities across all tiers to support more coordinated and accountable delivery, meaning implementation can be easily monitored.



Aerial view of Parramatta

Figure 2: Purpose and functions of each level of the strategic planning framework

The State Land Use Plan

Defines the state-wide overarching direction and priorities

- Sets the long-term vision for strategic land use planning in NSW.
- Establishes clear state-wide land use priorities that guide region and local plans.
- Establishes technical appendices to outline state-wide land use and systems policies for all region and local planning.
- Supports coordinated decision-making across strategic and statutory planning mechanisms.
- Establishes a monitoring and evaluation framework to support the implementation, review and continuous improvement of strategic plans.

Region Plans

Provide spatial direction and sequencing for the 4 NSW regions to establish where and when growth should occur

- Translates State land use priorities into region-based spatial strategies that reflect regional vision and context.
- Balances competing land use, infrastructure and environmental considerations at a regional scale.
- Coordinates and guides local strategic planning across the region.
- Provides strategic direction to guide the sequencing and prioritisation of land use and infrastructure.
- Identifies regional level responses to deliver state-wide land use priorities.
- Establishes technical appendices to outline region-based policies and approaches.
- Supports accountability across State agencies and delivery partners.

Local Plans

Translate state-wide priorities into local context to be delivered at a local government area scale

- Sets out how councils will implement State and regional directions in their local context.
- Translates regional directions into local priorities, with local interpretation and detail.
- Implements region plan responses, applying local vision informed by local strategic planning work and evidence.
- Identifies local infrastructure to support growth leveraging State infrastructure.
- Holds councils accountable for zoning, local planning and other planning decisions, ensuring they align with regional sequencing and infrastructure coordination.

Planning regions

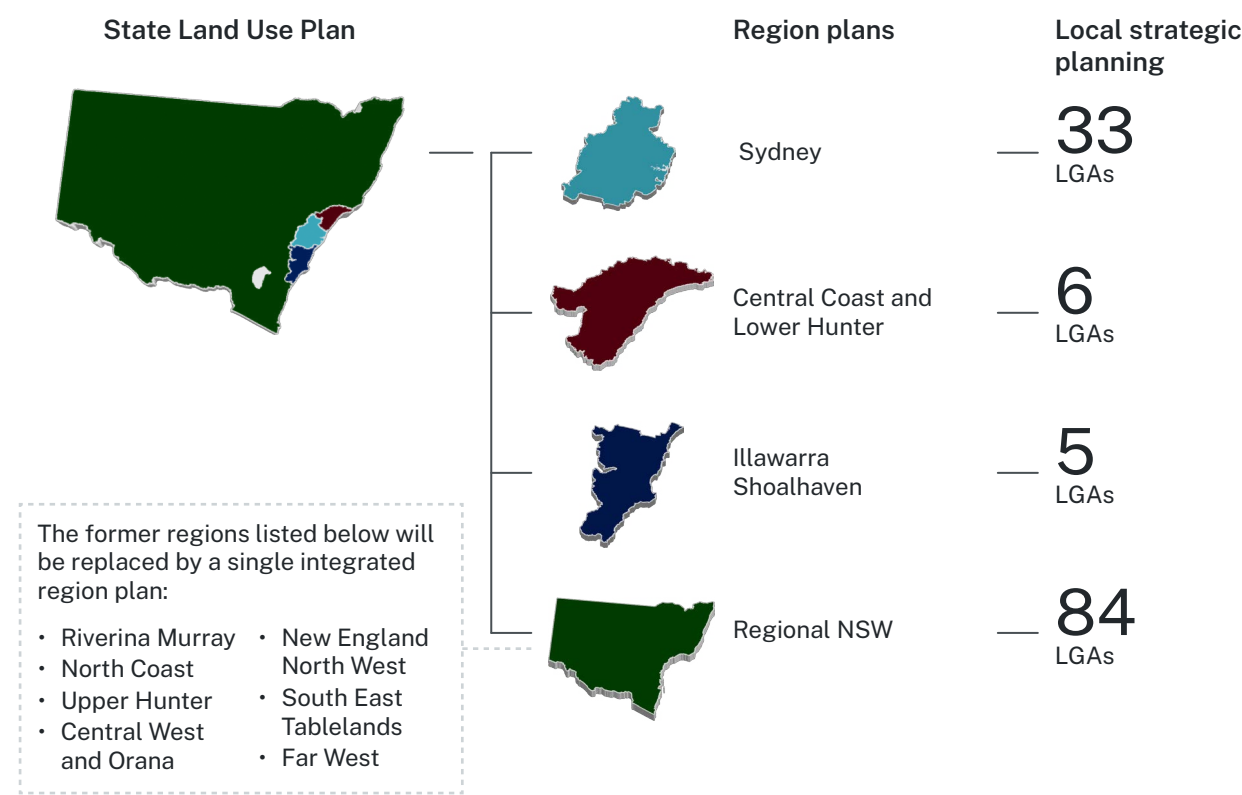
For the purposes of region planning, NSW will be defined as 4 regions:

- Sydney
- Central Coast and Lower Hunter
- Illawarra Shoalhaven
- Regional NSW.

These new planning regions define the geographies for preparing region plans. They reduce duplication, simplify the strategic planning framework, and support clearer local planning and decision making.

The planning regions reflect functional relationships and shared outcomes across administrative boundaries and enable strategic land use planning to better respond to local challenges.

Figure 3: Strategic planning regions



Sydney

The Sydney planning region remains unchanged.

Illawarra Shoalhaven

The Illawarra Shoalhaven planning region includes the Wingecarribee Local Government Area (LGA). This reflects the strong economic, environmental and community connections between Wingecarribee and the rest of the region.

Central Coast and Lower Hunter

The Central Coast and Lower Hunter planning region builds on the last 2 iterations of region plans. It responds to planned growth across the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie LGAs.

Regional NSW

The Regional NSW planning region covers the largest and most diverse regional economy in Australia. It requires a coordinated, up-to-date plan for the next 20 years.

Coordinated planning will focus growth where it is best suited, in regional cities and urban growth areas, while balancing competing priorities such as water, biodiversity, natural assets and resources, with energy and agricultural industries.

Planning for Regional NSW will respond at a subregional scale, recognising that many issues are shared across local government areas, even where they are geographically distant.

Timing

The draft Central Coast and Lower Hunter Plan and draft Regional NSW Plan will be released for public exhibition in 2027, aligning with the 5-year review cycle of region plans. NSW Government will take the additional time to continue developing the evidence base, engage further with councils, government agencies and key stakeholders and align to recent transport and infrastructure planning.

A framework designed to adapt

Division 3.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires that a region plan is reviewed every 5 years after the document has been made by the Minister.

The purpose of this review is to determine whether the priorities, responses and actions remain relevant to the context in which the plan is being delivered, and whether a new region plan is required.

While this cycle of reviews is critical to ensuring plans are aligned to their broader context, NSW needs a more dynamic approach whereby plans can respond to changes without requiring full document repeal and renewal.

Under the new framework State and region plans may be updated from time to time to reflect changes in land use, policy, population and infrastructure investment.

Plans will retain a long-term vision and land use priorities, but the responses and actions of individual plan components and technical appendices may be updated. Updates to strategic plans will be undertaken selectively and only in response to major, system-wide changes that materially alter underlying assumptions.

Triggers that could require updated plans include:

- significant changes in population
- transformational region or city-shaping infrastructure investment decisions
- major external shocks
- land use changes.

In each case, plans may not need to be fully revised; instead only relevant components will be updated. Changes and updates will be communicated with stakeholders and consultation undertaken, where required.

Further information on the approach to making updates to State and region plans is provided in Appendix B: *Framework for Updates to Strategic Plans*.



Western Sydney Airport

4 A growing and changing NSW



Population and growth

- NSW is Australia's most populated state and it is projected to grow to 10.5 million people by 2046.
- Around one-third of Australia's Aboriginal population lives in NSW.
- The State is home to diverse communities from more than 310 ancestries.
- Population growth supports an ageing population, offsets people moving interstate, and strengthens economic productivity.

Figure 5: Population

Source: DPHI 2024

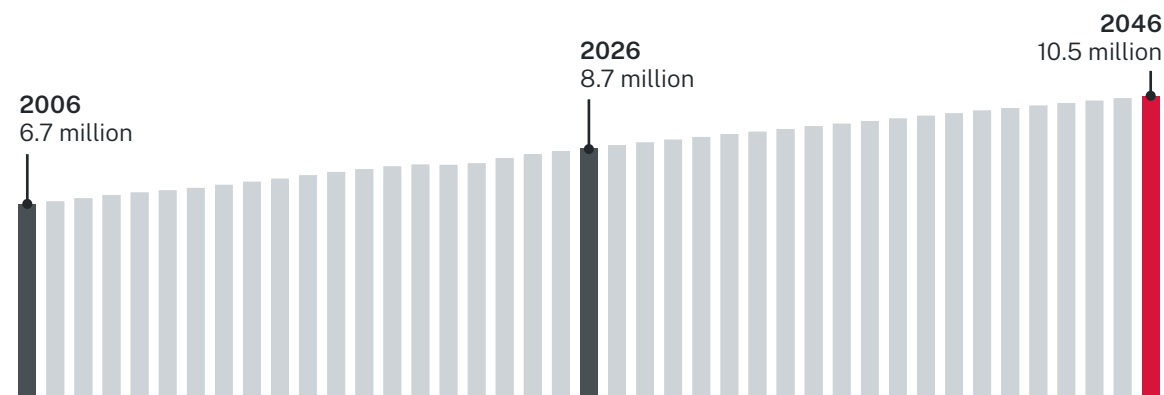


Figure 6: Population change 2026 to 2046

Source: DPHI 2024

NSW	1.8 million	▲
Natural change	687,000	▲
Net interstate migration	380,000	▼
Net overseas migration	1.5 million	▲
Sydney region	1.3 million	▲
Illawarra Shoalhaven region	161,000	▲
Central Coast and Lower Hunter region	233,000	▲
Regional NSW	187,000	▲

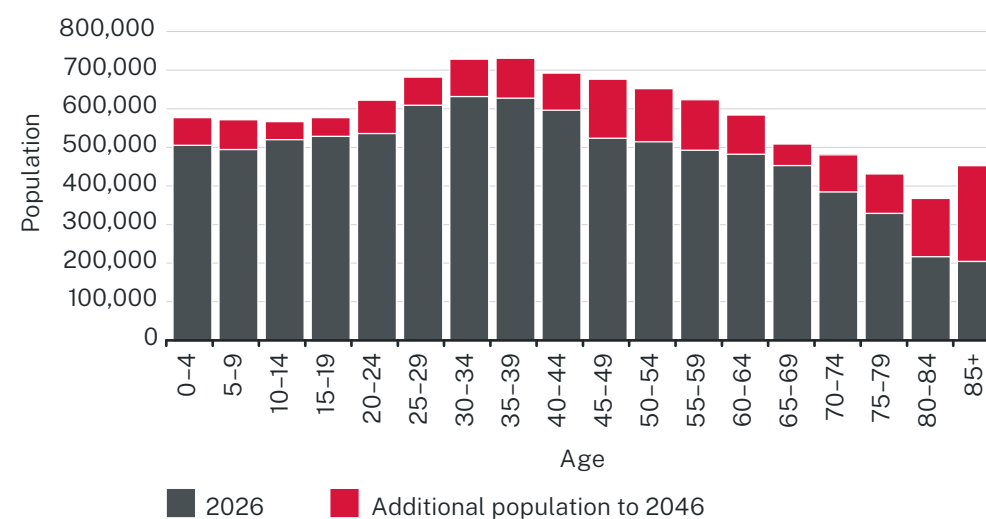
Figure 7: Median age

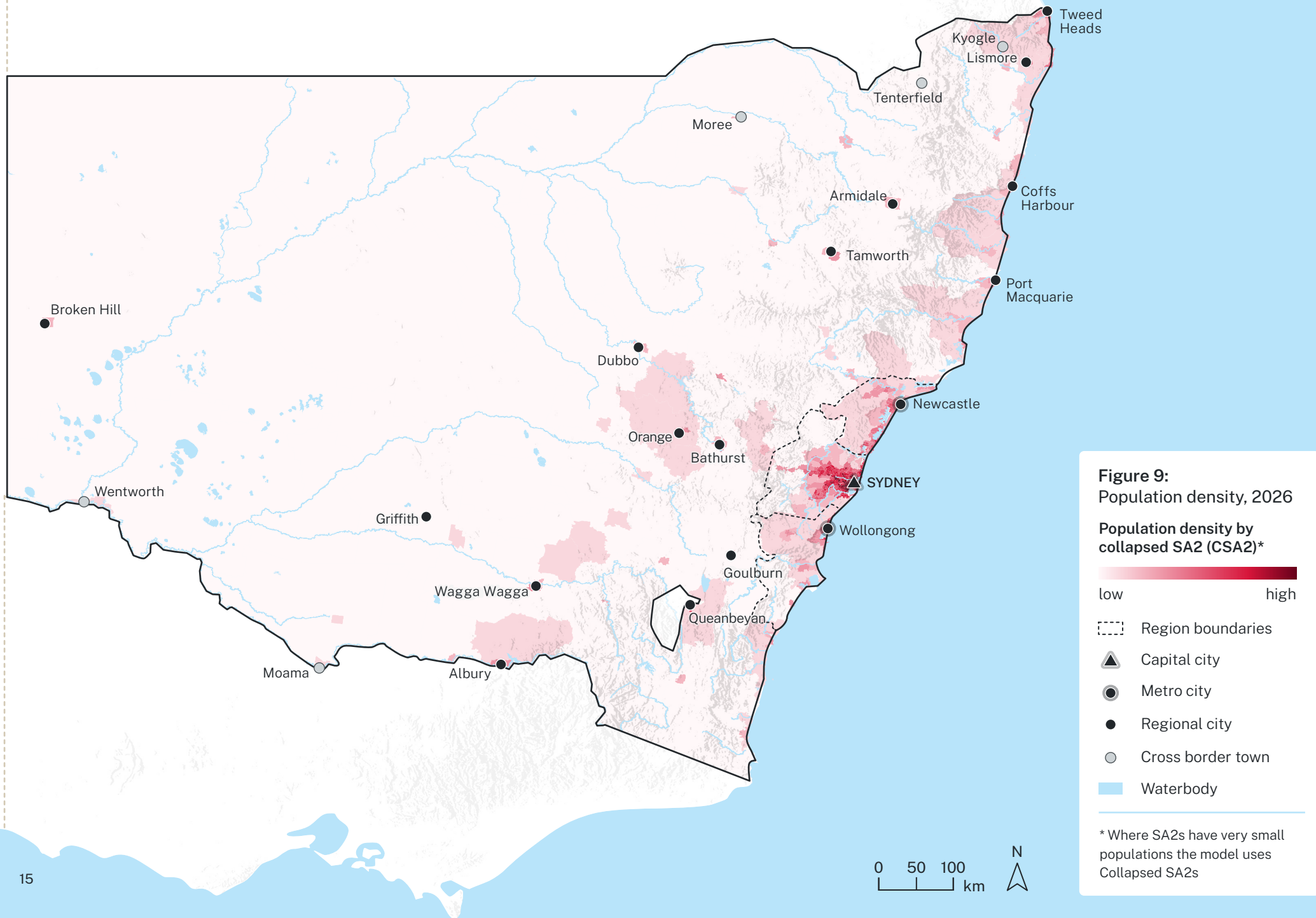
Source: DPHI 2024; ABS



Figure 8: Age profile

Source: DPHI 2024





Economy and employment

- NSW is Australia's largest state economy, contributing \$855 billion in the financial year 2024–25. It is projected to reach \$1.4 trillion by 2060–61.
- The economy is driven by a mix of industries and generates 4.4 million jobs. By 2046, the State's workforce is projected to grow by more than 20% additional jobs.
- Well-developed transport infrastructure supports the economy and workers.

Figure 10: Gross State Product as share of Gross Domestic Product, FY 2024–25

Source: ABS 2025

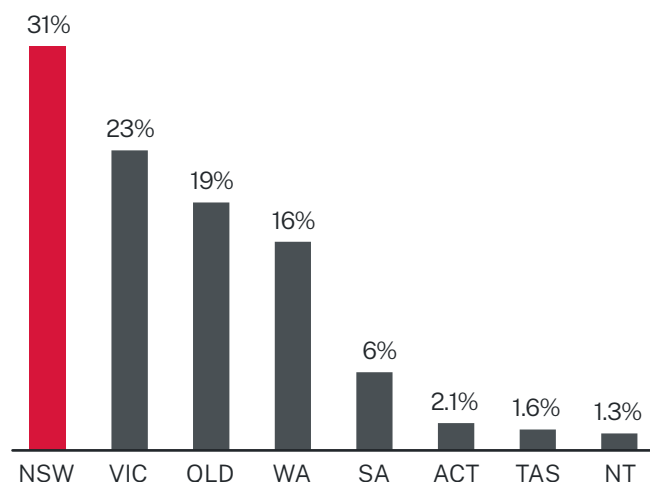


Figure 11: Additional jobs

Source: TZP 2024

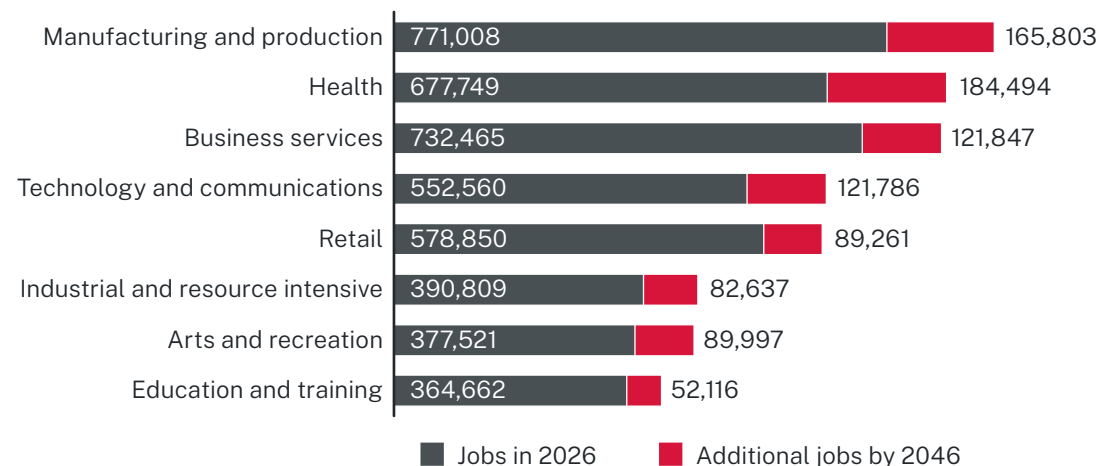
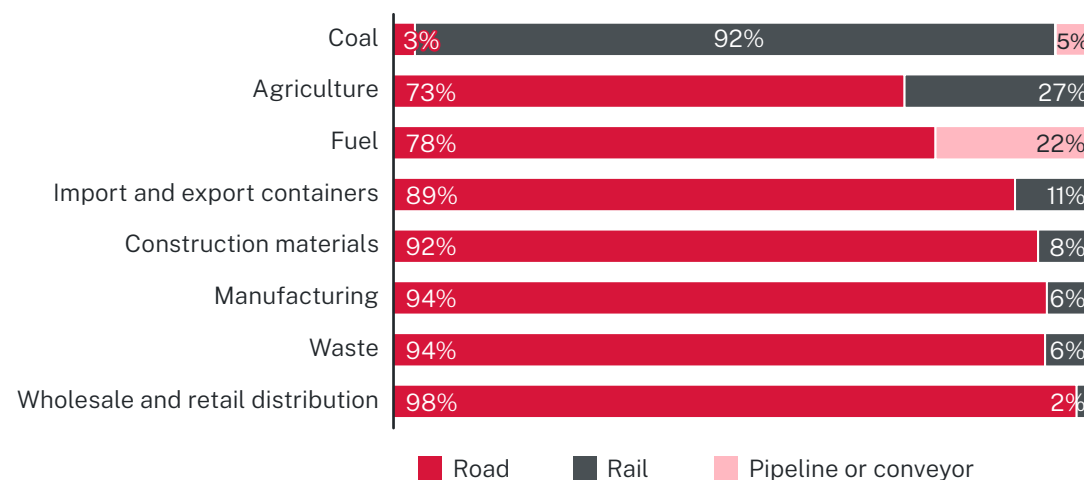


Figure 12: Movement of goods by transport type, 2026 projection

Source: SFM 2022



Housing and lifestyle

- Housing needs and lifestyle preferences are changing as the population grows and diversifies.
- Household sizes are declining, increasing demand for more diverse housing types.
- Housing has become less affordable over time.

Figure 13: Housing types

Source: ABS 2021

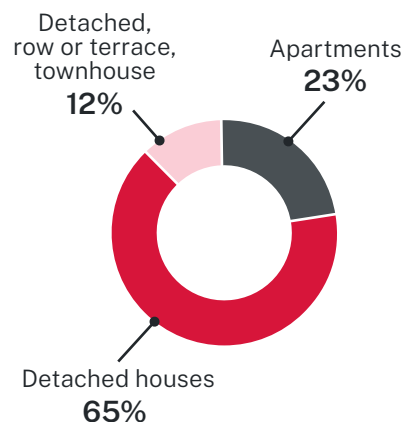


Figure 14: Number of bedrooms

Source: ABS 2021

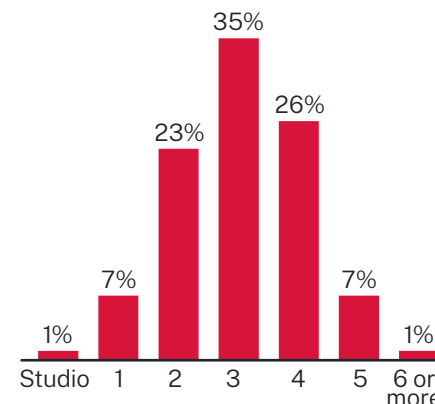


Figure 15: Persons per dwelling

Source: ABS 2021

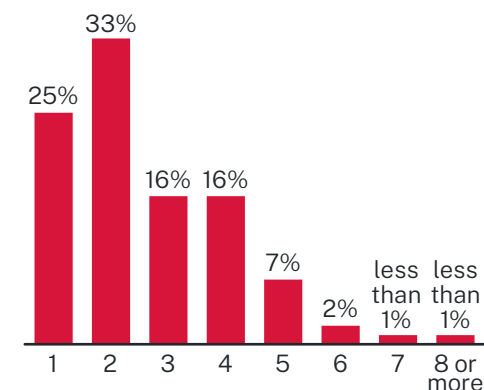


Figure 16: Household composition

Source: DPHI 2024

	2046	Change 2026–46
Couple with children	1.2 million	▲ 19%
Single person	1.1 million	▲ 33%
Couple only	1.1 million	▲ 26%
Single parent family	443,000	▲ 25%
Group household	163,000	▲ 18%
Other family	104,000	▲ 21%
Multi-family	96,000	▲ 23%

Figure 17: Average persons per household

Source: DPHI 2024; ABS

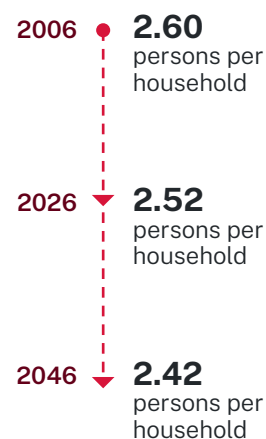
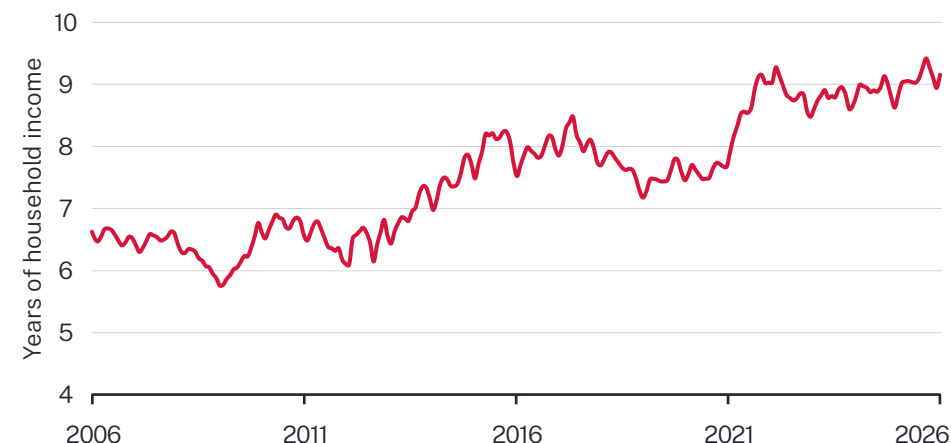


Figure 18: Dwelling price-to-annual household income ratio

Source: ABS; Cotality



Natural environment, climate and energy

- NSW's rich natural environment and biodiversity is central to the State's identity. It includes a variety of coastlines, waterways, rural areas and extensive public spaces.
- Climate change is leading to increases in temperature and hot days over 35 degrees.
- Energy, water and waste management needs will increase into the future as the State grows and changes.
- Renewables will continue to support electricity generation as the State transitions to net zero emissions.

Figure 19: Increase in average temperature

Source: NARClm2.0

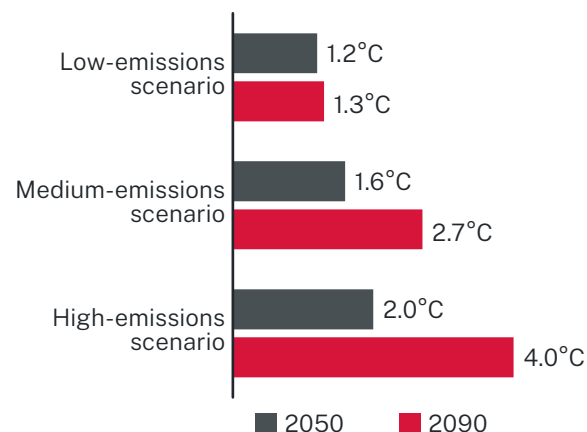


Figure 20: Increase in hot days over 35 degrees per year

Source: NARClm2.0

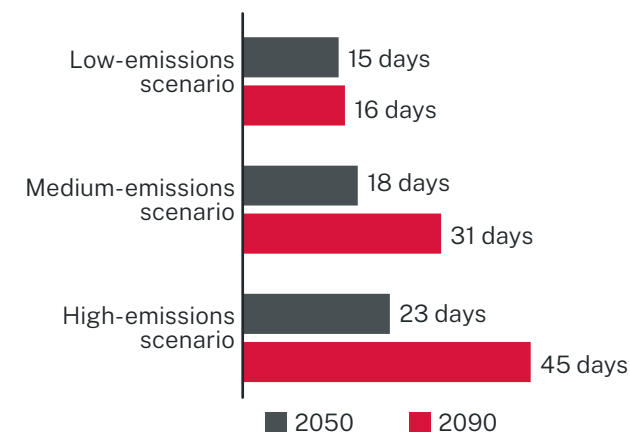


Figure 21: Electricity generation

Source: DCCEEW (Australian Government) 2025

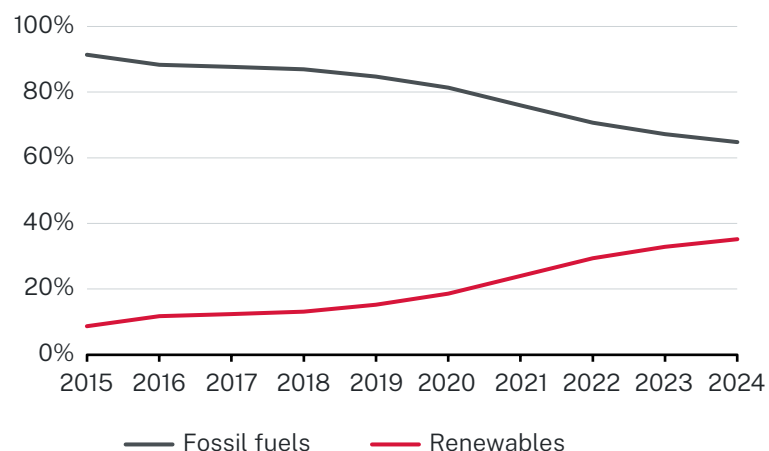


Figure 22: Total waste

Source: NSW EPA 2025

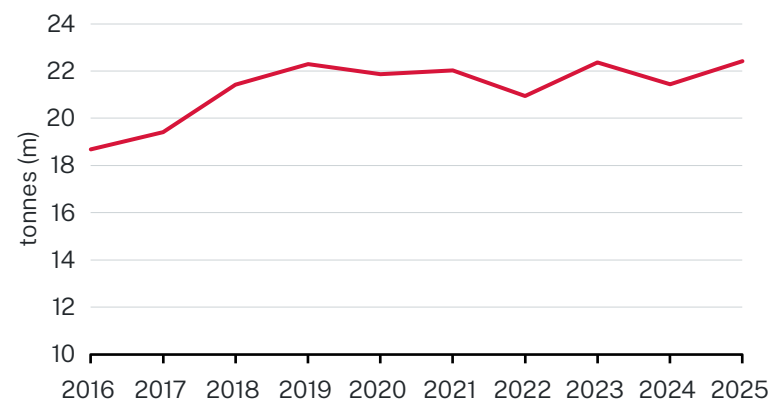
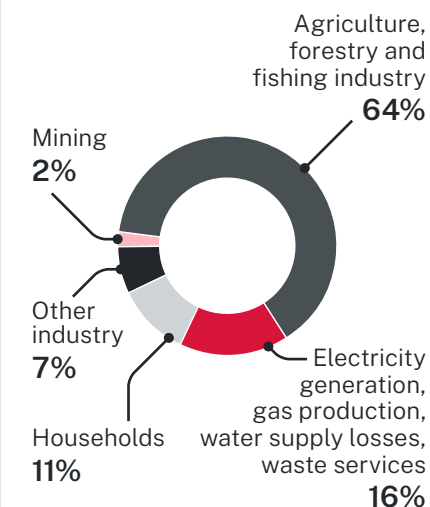


Figure 23: Water use

Source: NSW EPA 2024



5 State Land Use Planning Priorities

Delivering the State vision requires clear priorities to guide how land is planned, managed and developed. Over the coming decades, NSW will experience significant population growth, economic transformation and environmental change. These factors will increase demand for housing, employment land, infrastructure and natural resources while placing greater pressure on the natural systems and productive landscapes that underpin the State's prosperity.

Strategic land use planning will direct growth to the right locations, support economic productivity, and protect the natural and agricultural assets that sustain communities and industries across NSW.

The 7 state-wide land use planning priorities have been developed to respond to major long-term trends, opportunities and challenges shaping NSW and the future needs of the State. Together, they provide an integrated framework that balances social, economic, environmental and cultural considerations in land use planning.

The priorities translate global, national and State trends and challenges into a consistent framework for land use decision-making, aligning with broader government priorities and commitments across NSW.

They provide the strategic direction for how land use planning will be delivered, guiding decision-making

across the planning system. While each addresses a distinct area, the priorities are interconnected and designed to be considered together to support balanced and sustainable development.

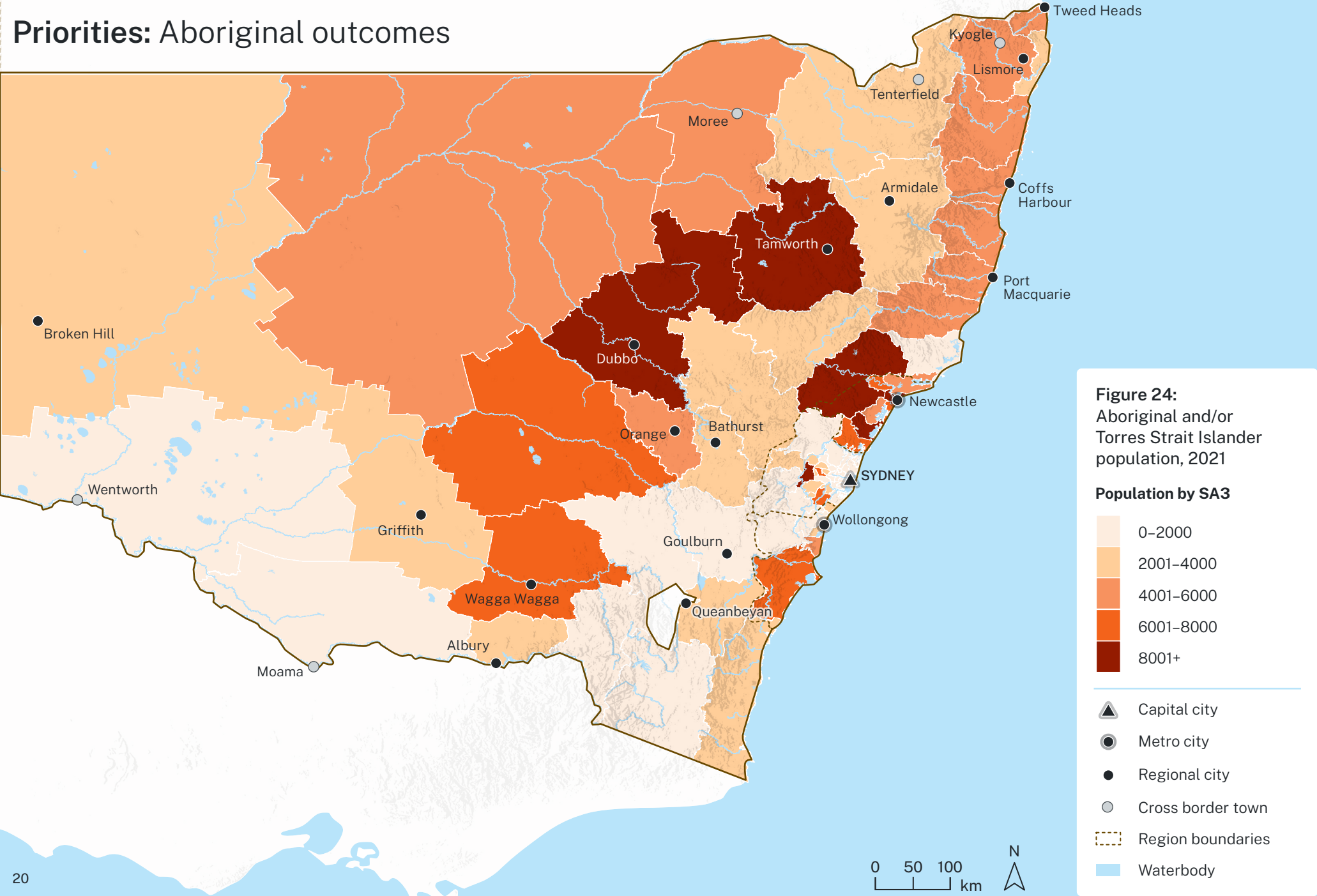
Each priority is supported by:

- priority statements that establish the consistent strategic direction for land use planning
- a land use planning approach that explains how the priority will be applied through strategic planning
- state-wide technical appendices that support a consistent approach to implementation.

Region and local plans will give effect to these priorities by responding to the region-specific opportunities, constraints and needs of different places across NSW.



Priorities: Aboriginal outcomes





Priorities: Aboriginal outcomes

Priority: Embedding co-design to recognise Country in planning outcomes. Success means that land use plans recognise Country and custodianship to support use and benefit opportunities for Aboriginal landowners to achieve social, cultural, environmental and economic self-determination.

NSW is home to more than one-third of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, each with distinct cultural identities, stories and deep connections to Country. Aboriginal peoples continue to care for the lands, waters and skies of NSW despite significant change through urbanisation and development.

Aboriginal cultural heritage is a living expression of connection to Country encompassing cultural landscapes, knowledge, stories, languages and practices that continue to be maintained and shared today.

Aboriginal peoples participate in land use planning as Traditional Custodians, with enduring responsibilities to care for Country and maintain cultural heritage, and as landowners, developers and delivery partners through Aboriginal organisations. Recognising these distinct but complementary roles in strategic planning is critical to supporting opportunities for Aboriginal landowners and communities to use and benefit from land in ways that advance cultural, social,

environmental and economic self-determination while strengthening cultural heritage and connections to Country.

NSW has 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) which collectively hold a substantial and geographically diverse land base across NSW. In addition to LALCs there are other Aboriginal land managers and organisations including Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs), Aboriginal Corporations (ACs), Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS), that play an important role in managing Aboriginal land under State and Commonwealth legislation.

There are also non-statutory bodies known as Aboriginal Alliances/Assemblies, which are regional governance bodies that play an important role in supporting community aspirations and facilitating engagement with the NSW Government. Across the State there are 8 Aboriginal Alliances. Both statutory and non-statutory bodies hold important cultural, social and economic responsibilities for caring for Country and maintaining cultural heritage.

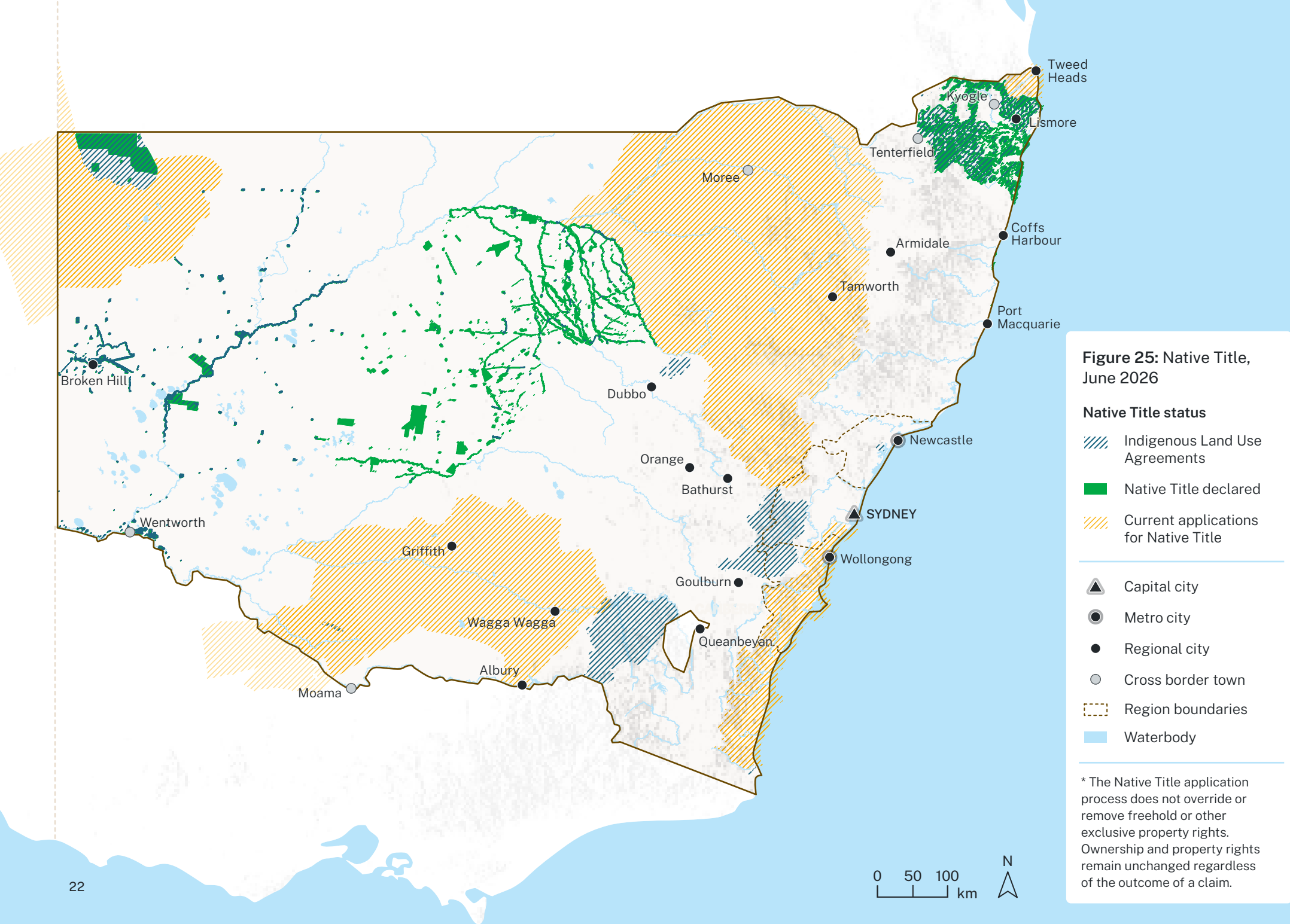
The NSW Government is committed to partnering with Aboriginal communities and landowners to deliver on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap through the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (CAPO). This Plan strengthens these commitments by supporting housing development on Aboriginal community-owned land (Outcome 9) and by helping Aboriginal peoples maintain strong connections to Country (Outcome 15).

The legacy of colonisation has created enduring inequities that affect Aboriginal people's participation in, and ability to benefit from,



the planning system. Contemporary planning frameworks were not derived from Aboriginal systems of governance and land management, and have not always recognised Aboriginal knowledge, decision-making, cultural values or connections to Country. Many Aboriginal landowners, community organisations and Aboriginal communities operate with limited resources and face complex planning, environmental and regulatory constraints, which can act as barriers to housing delivery and economic development on Aboriginal community-owned land.

Land use planning can help address these inequities by embedding Aboriginal participation, voices and perspectives in decision-making through stronger partnerships with Aboriginal landholders, Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal communities. It can also recognise cultural heritage as a living part of Country and support Aboriginal aspirations for land, culture and self-determination by better reflecting Aboriginal rights and interests in planning decisions. With strong cultural capability and consistent frameworks in place, strategic land use planning can play a practical role in advancing Aboriginal self-determination, protecting culture and enabling equity and shared prosperity.





Self-determination through economic empowerment enables social, cultural and environmental outcomes

Priority statement: The planning system supports Aboriginal-led development proposals from concept through to delivery.

Land activation on Aboriginal land in NSW is shaped by a layered legislative framework that recognises land rights, native title and pathways for development.

The Aboriginal Land Planning Framework aims to align with the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (ALRA) by facilitating development and recognising the social and economic value of Aboriginal-led planning proposals. Despite this framework, land activation on Aboriginal land remains constrained by limited developable land, resource limitations, lengthy assessment processes and insufficient consideration of the ALRA in the planning system (Figure 26). These barriers can hinder housing delivery and economic development on Aboriginal Land.

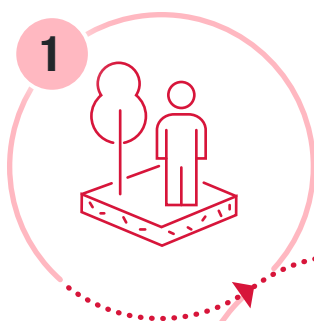
Strategic planning can strengthen consistency and certainty in identifying and progressing Aboriginal land use opportunities through an improved Aboriginal Land Planning Framework. This includes streamlining assessment pathways, building capability across the planning system and supporting consent authorities to better consider the ALRA in decision making.

Figure 26: Challenges for land activation on Aboriginal Land

Land claim

Challenges

- High land maintenance costs
- Without appropriately zoned land for development opportunity



Rezoning proposal

Challenges

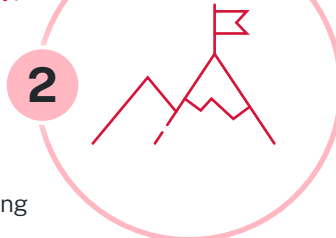
- Historically long assessment periods
- Insufficient consideration of ALRA and benefits to LALCs in assessment process



Vision development

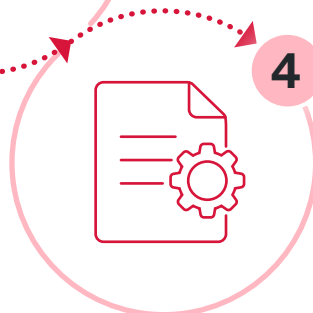
Challenges

- Insufficient funding, resources, and capacity
- Lack of support for navigating the planning system



Development application

Same challenges as Stage 3



Aboriginal Land Planning Framework

The Aboriginal Land Planning Framework is a set of mechanisms that facilitate and support Aboriginal landholders and communities to advance their land aspirations and strengthen self-determination. Its overall intent is to align the NSW planning system with the ALRA to improve governance, strategic planning and land use.

The framework operates alongside NSW planning laws and policies and guides local councils, developers and State agencies to engage effectively with Aboriginal stakeholders, assess potential impacts on Aboriginal community-owned land, and support outcomes that respect traditional ownership and ongoing custodianship.



Enabling Country in planning

Priority statement: Planning decisions reflect traditional ownership and custodianship principles and embed Aboriginal knowledge of Country.

Country is ongoing, unbroken and everchanging. It encompasses lands, waters, skies, people, stories, knowledge and cultural practices. Aboriginal cultural heritage is inseparable from Country and continues through ongoing custodianship and community connection. Aboriginal knowledge systems reflect a deep understanding of interconnected landscapes and can inform more sustainable, resilient and equitable outcomes. Recognising Aboriginal peoples' enduring spiritual and physical connection to Country enables land use planning to better integrate culture, knowledge and rights into decisions about development and growth.

The planning system includes statutory and non-statutory mechanisms to identify, assess and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage. Local councils play an important role through Local Environmental Plans (LEPs), Development Control Plans (DCPs) and heritage listings, alongside due diligence requirements under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. While these mechanisms provide important safeguards, they are often applied at specific stages of the planning process. Early and ongoing co-design helps ensure Aboriginal knowledge, values and aspirations are embedded proactively rather than considered retrospectively.

Co-design is essential to culturally respectful exchange and enables Aboriginal peoples to meaningfully influence decisions that affect Country.



Dr. John Hunter (Gamilaraay/Wiradjuri) facilitating a National Reconciliation Week 2025 event for NSW Government staff at Murama Healing Space, Wangal Country.

Early engagement helps identify cultural values and aspirations before land use decisions are made. Applying this approach early supports the integration of Aboriginal aspirations across all levels of planning.

The *Connecting with Country Framework* outlines guidance on how to engage with Country when planning, designing, and delivering projects in the built environment. Adopting the framework supports objectives that recognise, protect and sustain Aboriginal culture and cultural heritage through planning and design. It promotes collaborative processes that bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge to deliver enduring cultural, social and environmental outcomes.

Applying the *Connecting with Country Framework* across State, region and local processes will support the consistent integration of Aboriginal knowledge, values and aspirations into land use planning and decision-making.

Strategic planning can help protect culturally significant places and landscapes while supporting the continuation of Aboriginal culture through future growth and development.

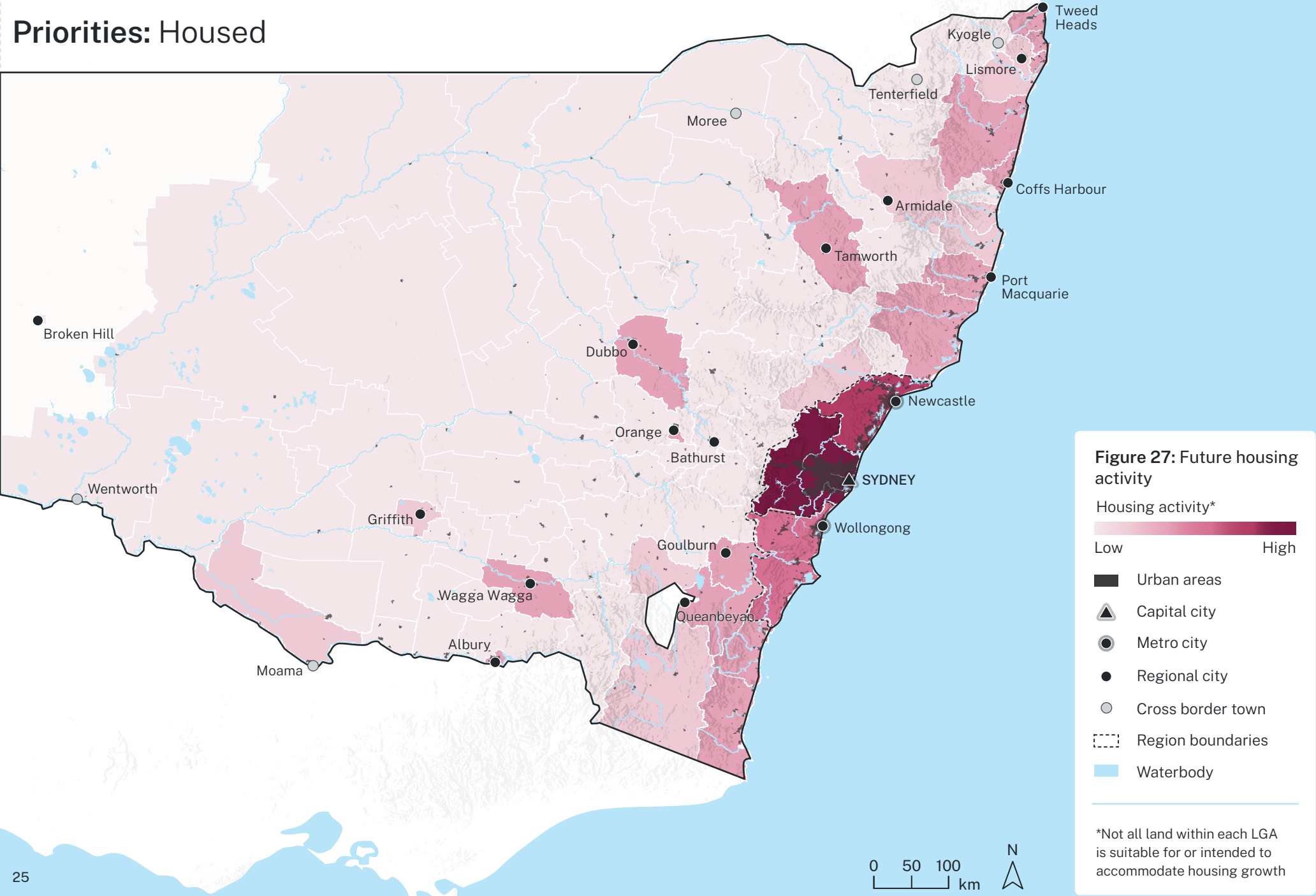
Legislative context

The Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) recognises Traditional Custodians' pre-existing rights and interests in Country, shaping how land use and development can occur in areas where native title exists. Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) are voluntary agreements made under the NTA that support negotiated outcomes for land management, access and development.

The ALRA provides a statutory mechanism for LALCs, as Aboriginal landholders, to claim certain Crown land (generally unused land that is not required for an essential public purposes). This supports land restitution and forms a basis for economic, cultural and community development.

The *Crown Land Management Act 2016* (CLMA) establishes the framework for the ownership, use and management of Crown land. It requires that environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic factors be considered in decision-making.

Priorities: Housed





Priorities: Housed

Priority: Delivering affordable, diverse housing in accessible locations. Success means more homes are built faster, close to jobs and transport.

NSW is expected to grow to a population of 10.5 million by 2046. To meet the needs of this population, 1.2 million new homes will need to be delivered across NSW (Figure 28).

Demand for housing has grown faster than supply for many years. Population growth and smaller household sizes have increased the number of homes needed, while the delivery of new housing has consistently lagged behind demand. More recently, housing delivery has also been affected by feasibility challenges, further constraining supply (Figure 29).

One of the key drivers of this supply gap has been the limited supply of housing opportunities in well-located areas where infrastructure, services and planning settings support development. In some regional markets, these pressures are compounded by additional demand, such as the need to find housing for workers supporting the delivery of major projects.

Demographic change is also reshaping housing demand. An ageing population and changing lifestyles are increasing demand for a broader mix of housing types, including a wider range of accessible and adaptable homes in well-located areas close to services and transport.

Over time, these combined factors have created a structural imbalance between where housing is needed and where it can be delivered, contributing to rising home prices and rents, low rental vacancy rates and increasing financial pressure on households.

Strategic land use planning must support a housing supply pipeline that is well-located, diverse and affordable. While some housing challenges sit beyond the planning system, strategic land use planning plays a critical role in identifying and unlocking housing opportunities.

Figure 28: NSW 20-year housing need

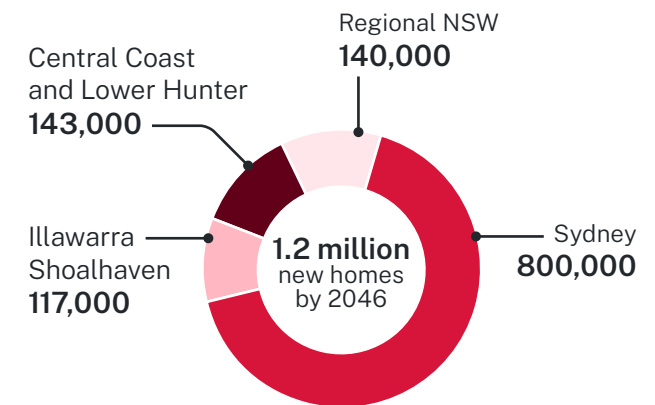
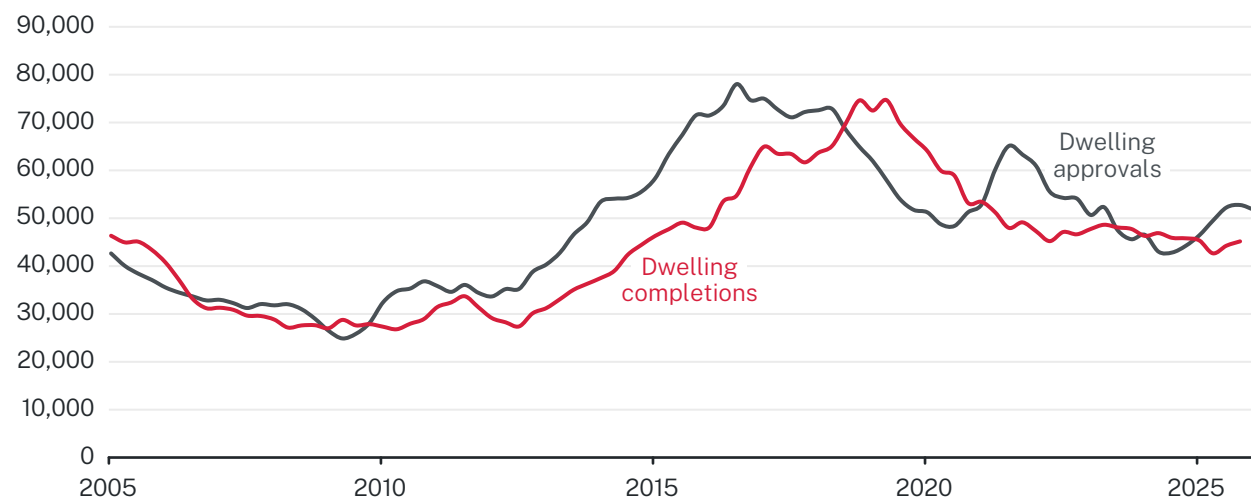


Figure 29: NSW Dwelling approvals and completions (ABS 2026)



Maintain a strong housing supply pipeline

Priority statement: Maintain 30 years of feasible housing capacity and 5 years of realisable housing capacity to support the sustained delivery of housing in line with need.

The strategic planning system is critical to enabling a strong pipeline of housing that meets demand, supports affordability and aligns infrastructure planning and delivery.

Housing completion targets guide councils and the NSW Government to plan for housing and supporting infrastructure. However, the targets alone do not ensure the system can respond to demand.

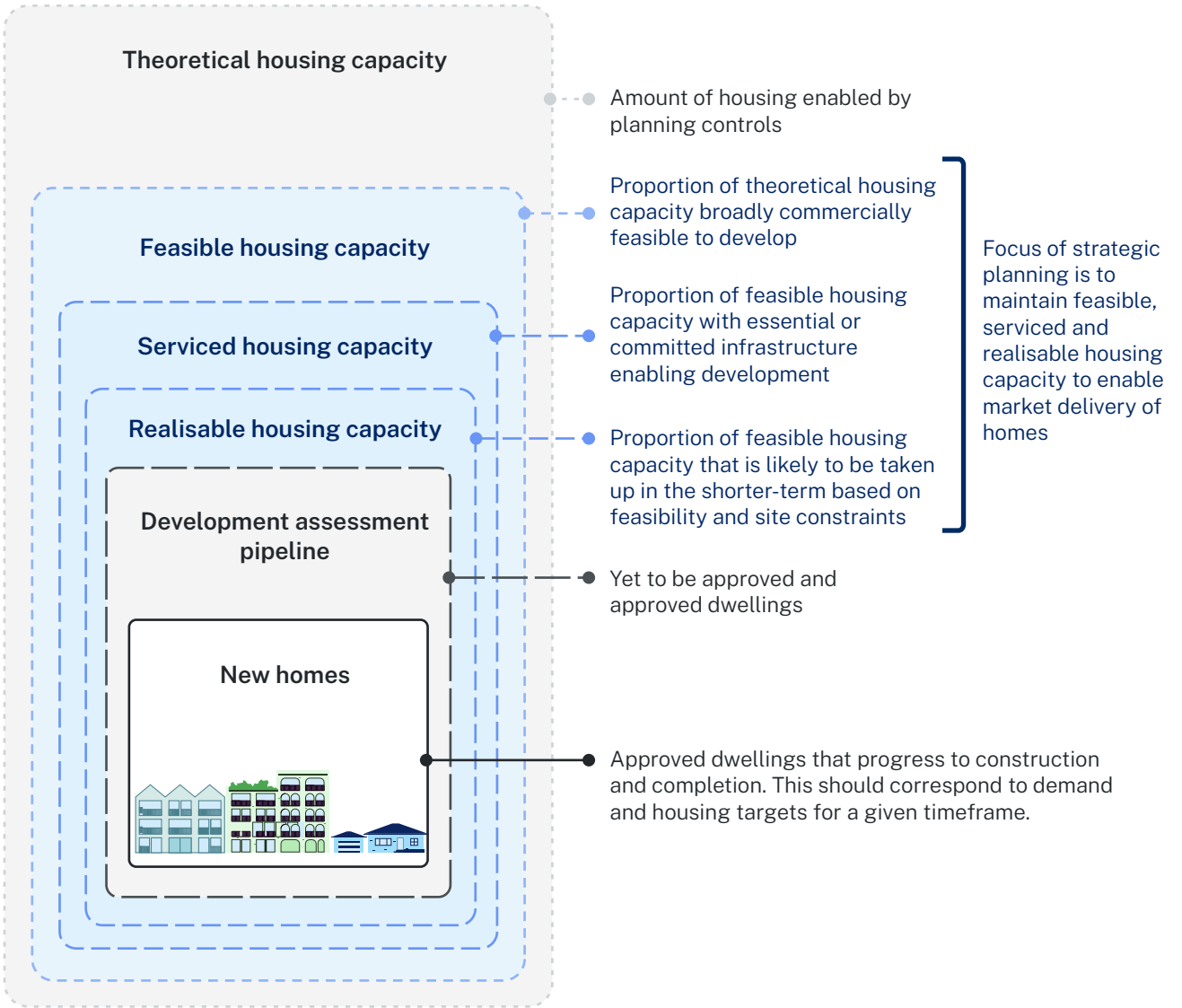
Housing supply is primarily delivered by the private sector and influenced by market conditions, including construction costs, labour availability and financing. While planning can identify housing capacity, not all zoned land is feasible or likely to be delivered. Planning for feasible and realisable capacity is critical to responding to demand (Figure 30).

Strategic planning must maintain sufficient feasible housing capacity in well-located areas to enable industry to deliver housing choice and respond to market conditions.

Region plans will give effect to this priority by identifying feasible housing capacity requirements alongside actions to set 5-year completion targets.

Appendix C: *Feasible Housing Capacity Policy* provides guidance on establishing, maintaining and measuring feasible housing capacity in region and local strategic planning.

Figure 30: Feasible housing capacity





Greater housing diversity creates more choice

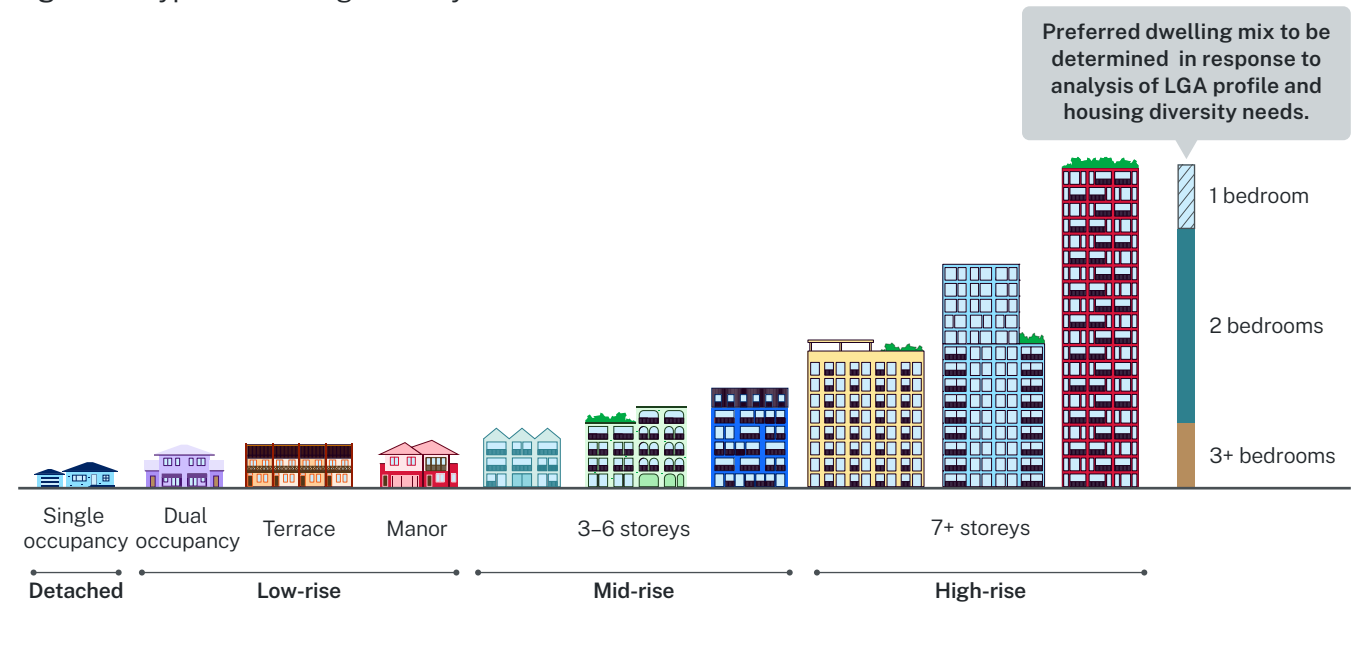
Priority statement: Plan housing capacity to enable diverse housing opportunity aligned to changing demographics and lifestyle preferences.

A robust housing system is defined not only by the number of homes in the pipeline but also the availability of diverse housing options. In NSW housing stock has not adequately kept pace with changing demographics.

Over time, the average household size has declined with more one- and two-person households, while demand for multi-generational living is also increasing. Strategic planning must respond by enabling a wider range of housing forms that reflect how people live across metropolitan and regional areas and across different stages of life.

Historically, strategic planning has focused on the overall volume of housing supply, with less attention to the mix of housing types being enabled through the planning system. While planning controls may permit a range of dwelling forms, the pipeline of housing opportunities has not consistently identified or monitored capacity for different housing types. As a result, even where overall housing capacity appears sufficient, the homes delivered may not reflect changing household needs or provide diversity across price points.

Figure 31: Types of housing diversity



Increasing housing diversity will provide more choice across different price points, supporting a wider range of household types (Figure 31). Housing diversity looks different across the State and is largely dependent on feasibility. In metropolitan areas, it includes a mix of bedrooms in apartments, townhouses and other smaller home types such as co-living near transport, services and jobs.

In regional and rural areas, it means a greater variety of lot sizes and different dwelling types within towns and serviced villages, including apartments, townhouses, dual occupancies, adaptable housing, smaller homes and options for seasonal or temporary workers. Providing different housing options also supports social inclusivity, including providing housing that meets the needs of Aboriginal people to support culturally appropriate outcomes and connection to Country.



People living near jobs, services and amenities and optimising infrastructure

Priority statement: Prioritise housing growth in well-located areas with good access to jobs, services and amenities while minimising land use conflict.

Locating housing near jobs, services and amenities improves access, reduces travel costs and supports economic productivity. Strategic land use planning can support this by directing housing growth to accessible locations and strengthening centres.

In metropolitan areas, this means prioritising renewal and infill development around existing and planned transport corridors. In regional and rural areas, strengthening housing opportunities in and around town centres, employment areas and

along key transport routes supports greater access to services, education and jobs. Greenfield housing will continue to play an important role in meeting housing demand, particularly in regional areas, but it must be appropriately coordinated with infrastructure.

Planning for housing growth should also consider local context, including Aboriginal cultural values where relevant, alongside the capacity and cost of local infrastructure needed to support new communities. Early engagement with local government and infrastructure providers will help inform the location and sequencing of housing growth and support more efficient infrastructure investment and delivery.

Strategic planning should also consider existing and future land uses to minimise potential conflicts and ensure housing growth is compatible with surrounding environmental, economic and infrastructure functions.

Encouraging well-located housing (Figure 32), whether through urban renewal, regional centre growth or new neighbourhoods near transport and employment helps more people live closer to where they work, learn and access essential services. Strategic initiatives such as the Low and Mid-Rise (LMR) Housing Policy and the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Program support this approach by creating opportunities to deliver a greater variety of homes, particularly in well-located areas close to centres, transport and services.

Strategic sequencing and coordinated infrastructure delivery are critical to ensuring growth is supported by timely services and amenities. Data-driven approaches, including the Urban Development Program (UDP), will provide a

consistent evidence base to identify, sequence and monitor housing growth where infrastructure can be delivered efficiently.

Region strategic plans will be updated to program and sequence growth. This will provide greater certainty to industry and the community, support more efficient infrastructure delivery, and enable housing to be delivered sooner.

More affordable and secure housing

Priority statement: Increase the supply of well-located affordable housing through land use planning.

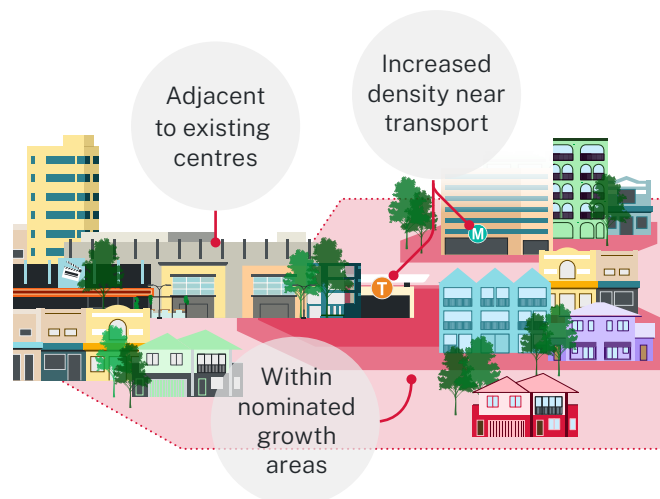
While greater housing choice is essential, many people across NSW cannot secure safe, affordable housing through the private market. Demand for social and affordable housing exceeds supply in both metropolitan and regional areas.

Notably, rental stress affects essential workers in health, education, emergency services and other key sectors, particularly in high-cost and fast-growing metropolitan and regional centres. Expanding well-located affordable housing can improve housing security and support essential service delivery.

Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing provides a vital safety net for households unable to meet market rents. Strategic land use planning can support this by widespread implementation of affordable housing contribution schemes, and by locating affordable and social housing close to jobs, services and transport.

A sustained, long-term approach is needed to establish a consistent pipeline of well-located, affordable rental housing state-wide.

Figure 32: Well-located housing



Priorities: Prosperous





Priorities: Prosperous

Priority: Growing resilient, innovative economies. Success means land use decisions help create jobs, supports emerging and diverse industries, and strengthens supply chains.

NSW is Australia's largest state economy, contributing around one third of national Gross Domestic Product in 2025, and will continue to attract businesses, investors and skilled workers.

A prosperous NSW is supported by an interconnected network of cities, regional centres, towns and rural communities, each contributing distinct economic strengths and employment opportunities. Strategic land use planning will support this network by providing a consistent state-wide approach to employment distribution, centres planning and industrial land management, supporting access to jobs and economic opportunity across NSW.

While the economy is diverse in nature, there has been a shift towards service-based industries over recent decades (Figure 34). This reinforces the importance of centres as key locations for jobs, productivity and innovation, while maintaining a strong and protected industrial land base to support logistics, manufacturing and essential services.

This economic strength is built on the diversity of its places and industries — from advanced

services and innovation to agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism and renewable energy. Together, these industries position NSW as a leading destination for investment, talent and enterprise, supporting employers and high-value economic growth.

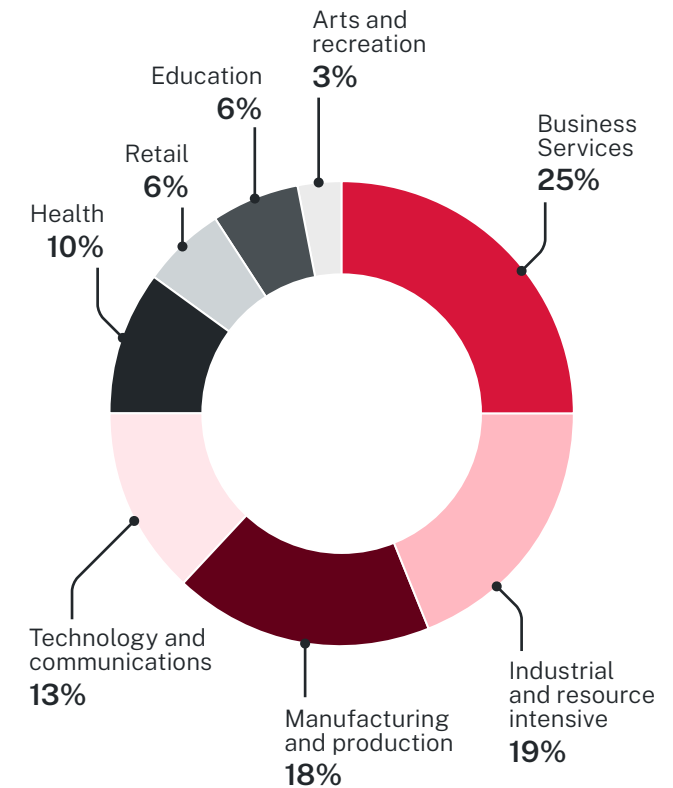
As the economy grows and becomes more diverse, and industry needs continue to evolve, demand for well-located employment land, centres and industrial areas is increasing. In many locations, land is constrained or under pressure from competing uses, particularly in high-demand metropolitan areas and key regional economies. These pressures are shaping where industries can locate, expand and access labour, infrastructure and markets, and how communities access jobs and economic opportunities.

Business location decisions are driven primarily by the private sector and influenced by factors such as access to labour, customers, suppliers, infrastructure and markets. Strategic land use planning cannot determine where industries choose to locate, but it can create the conditions that support investment by protecting appropriate land, coordinating infrastructure and enabling places to build on their comparative economic strengths.

Strategic land use planning responds to these challenges by coordinating employment land, centres, industrial areas and resource lands with infrastructure and population growth. This supports productive businesses, strengthens supply chains and enables industries to expand, innovate and create jobs across NSW.

Figure 34: Gross Value Added by industry FY 2024–25

Source: REMPLAN 2024–25





More jobs in the right places

Priority statement: Plan for employment opportunities that are close to or accessible from where people live.

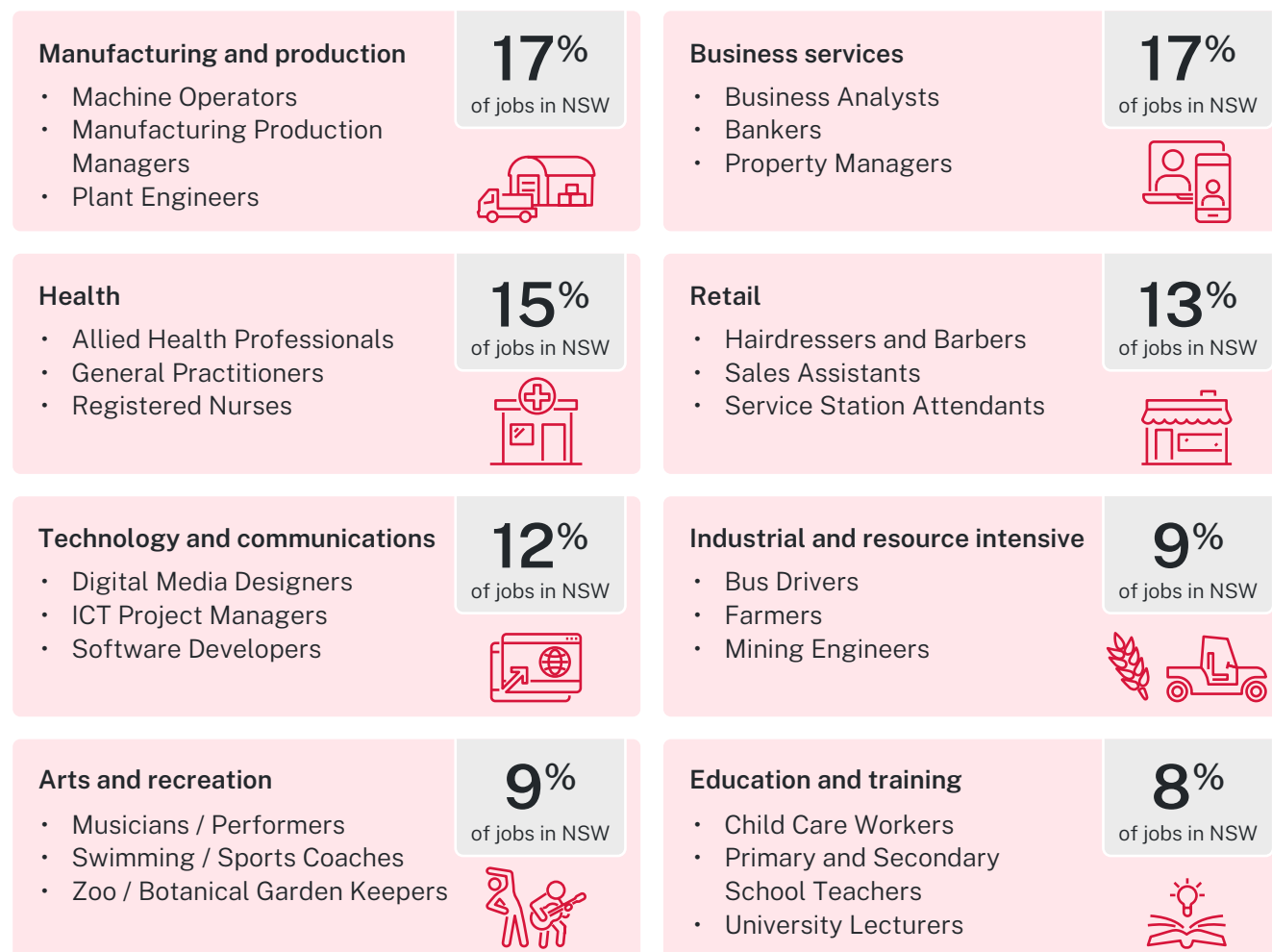
NSW has over 4.4 million jobs in 2026 across a broad range of industries and locations (Figure 36). The economy will continue to evolve, with more than 20% additional jobs projected by 2046.

Planning for a growing diversity and number of jobs – across diverse industries and locations – supports economic productivity and employment opportunities. It also contributes to improved liveability, including more equitable access to jobs.

Direction for how regional strategic planning should plan for jobs growth is provided in Appendix D: *Statewide Employment Guidance*. The guidance provides an evidence-based methodology for setting jobs targets and identifies 8 broad industry categories to guide growth. Further direction is provided by the *Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands* (Appendix F) and the *NSW Centres Framework* (Appendix E).

Figure 36: Jobs by industry, 2026

Source: TZIP 2024



A network of centres

Priority statement: Plan a network of centres to concentrate employment and services, in line with infrastructure investment, economic growth and community needs.

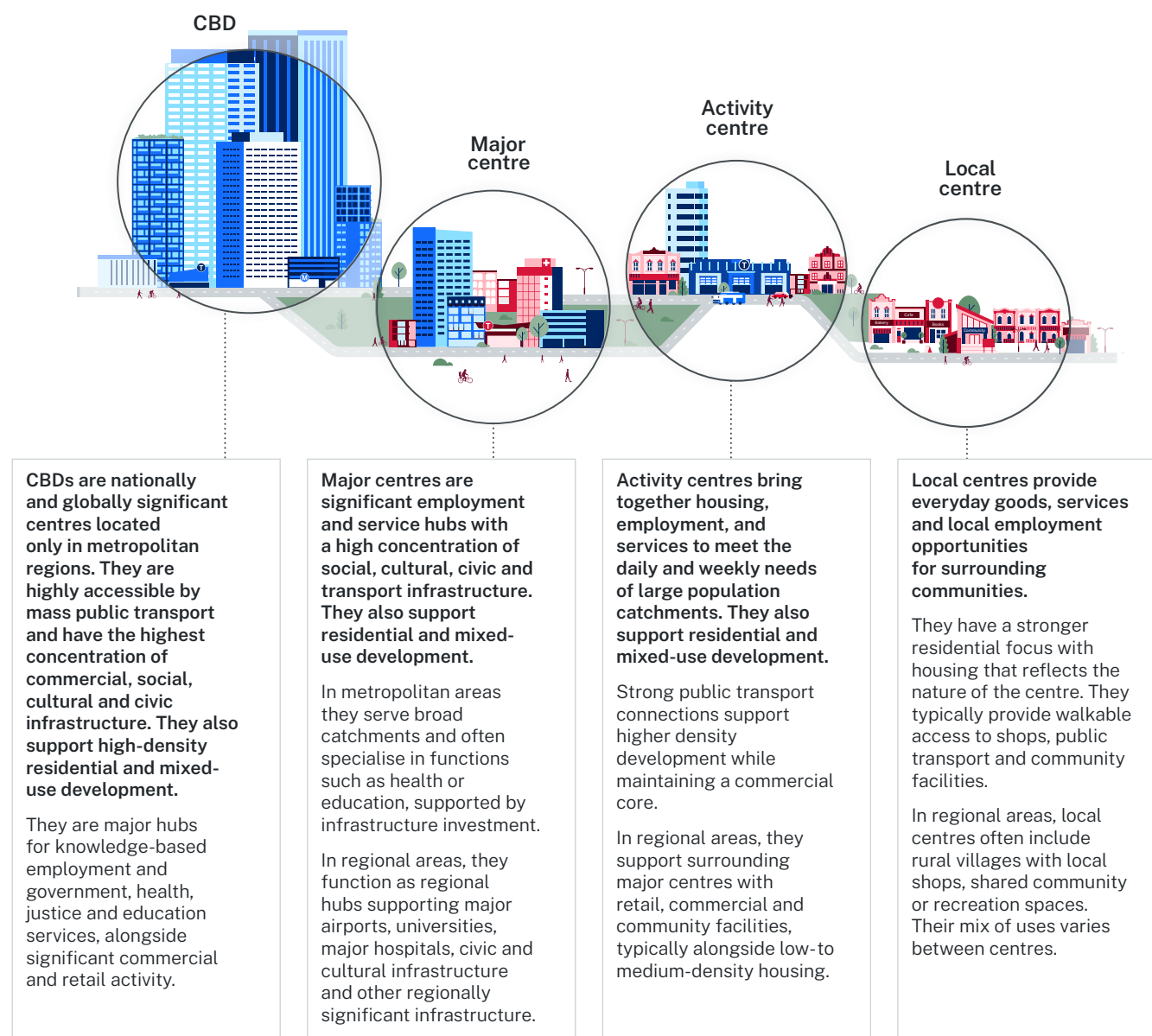
NSW's economy has shifted toward service-based industries, increasing demand for commercial space in centres where businesses benefit from proximity to customers, services and labour markets. By coordinating employment, housing and infrastructure within centres, strategic land use planning strengthens local economies, supports small and emerging businesses and improves access to opportunity. This role is increasingly important as knowledge-intensive and service industries continue to grow, concentrating employment in accessible, well-connected locations.

In Sydney, 48% of all jobs in the region are in centres, and a significant portion of jobs in regional areas are also located in centres. While the scale and function of centres differ between metropolitan and regional areas, their role in supporting communities and economic activity is consistent across the State.

Strategic land use planning will concentrate jobs and services in or near centres to encourage access via public transport and active travel, improve labour mobility, and enable businesses to benefit from agglomeration effects and improved productivity.

The *NSW Centres Framework* (Appendix E) provides a state-wide approach to defining the role and scale of centres (Figure 37). Region and local plans will apply this framework to support growth, balance land uses and support investment certainty across diverse economic contexts.

Figure 37: Centre typologies





Productive industrial land

Priority statement: Maintain a sufficient supply of well-located and development-ready industrial land.

Industrial land underpins trade, logistics, manufacturing and essential services relied upon by communities across NSW.

Industrial lands support processing, agribusiness, manufacturing, logistics and emerging industries that add value locally and strengthen regional economies.

There is an opportunity to strengthen downstream processing, advanced manufacturing and critical mineral value chains, supporting emerging industries and capturing greater economic value

for regional communities. These industries are central to exports, local employment and the State's transition to a low-emissions economy.

The location and supply of industrial land influences business competitiveness and supply chain resilience. Maintaining a sufficient supply of well-located industrial land strengthens NSW's interconnected economic network.

Pressures on industrial land vary across NSW, including constrained supply, increasing land costs and changing industry formats driven by e-commerce, freight growth and advanced manufacturing. Many areas are facing an immediate shortfall of serviced fit-for-purpose industrial lands, which can increase operational costs that are often passed on to the consumer, affecting the price of goods, cost of construction and contributes to driving inflation.

Encroachment by residential and other sensitive uses can constrain industrial operations, limit opportunities for expansion and create land use conflict, reinforcing the need to protect appropriate interfaces around significant industrial areas.

Guidance for how regional and local planning should plan for the supply of industrial lands is provided in Appendix F: *Statewide Policy for Industrial Lands*. The policy establishes a framework for categorising industrial land as State, regionally and locally significant, and supports planning for new and intensified industrial areas (Figure 38). Implementation is supported by the Employment Lands Development Monitor, that tracks industrial land supply (Table 1); and the Employment Lands Development Program (ELDP), that identifies and maintains a pipeline of development-ready industrial land.

Table 1: State of industrial land across NSW (total hectares)

Region	Zoned	Zoned and undeveloped	Zoned, undeveloped – access to water and wastewater connections	Zoned, undeveloped – access to roads suitable for heavy vehicles	Zoned, undeveloped – access to water, wastewater, roads suitable for heavy vehicles	Average annual take-up of employment lands from 2018–24
Sydney	20,210	7,166	631	4,227	385	165
Central Coast and Lower Hunter	8,957	4,498	1,926	2,504	1,065	43
Illawarra Shoalhaven*	4,462	1,362	561	523	291	9
Regional Cities**	9,954	5,901	N/A	N/A	N/A	51 (2022–24)

Source: Employment Lands Development Monitor data January 2025

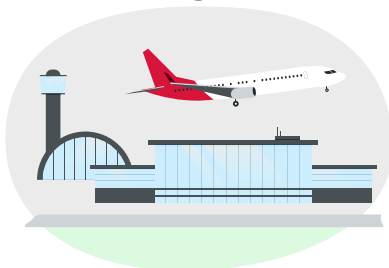
**Figures for Illawarra Shoalhaven do not include the Wingecarribee Shire LGA.

***Regional cities data includes employment lands in the LGAs of Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Griffith, Lismore, Orange, Port Macquarie–Hastings, Tamworth, Tweed, and Wagga Wagga.



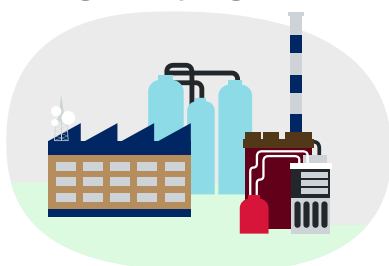
Figure 38: Industrial lands classification

State significant



Industrial lands that are critical infrastructure of State or national significance.

Regionally significant



Industrial lands that are essential to supply chains and broader city functions.

Locally significant



Industrial lands that serve the local area and support local uses and urban services such as mechanics or last-mile delivery.

The ELDP maintains a rolling 20-year pipeline of development-ready industrial land, aligned with projected demand, land suitability, and proximity to population and infrastructure. Broad development-ready land supply targets have been established for each region and will be incorporated into updated region plans. Across NSW, maintaining an average supply of around 370 hectares of development-ready industrial land each year will support a healthy long-term pipeline.

The ELDP also identifies Employment Land Investigation Areas with the potential to become development-ready through active planning and infrastructure coordination. These investigation areas form part of the long-term industrial land pipeline and will be incorporated into the updated region plans.

Natural Resources and energy for the future

Priority statement: Protect land required for current and future resource production, renewable energy and associated industries.

Priority statement: Manage land use transitions to minimise land use conflict and support the repurposing of post-mining lands.

Regional NSW has a diverse range of natural resource-based industries, including mining, Renewable Energy Zones (REZs), and critical minerals that are essential to clean energy and other technologies. These industries will continue

to support regional economies and require coordinated land use planning to enable future investment and manage land use change.

As coal-fired power stations and mining activities wind down, strategic land use planning will guide the transition of these lands to new economic uses, including renewable energy, and industry and community-supporting activities. This work is supported by initiatives such as the Future Jobs and Investment Authority, which helps coordinate investment and facilitate the transition of post-mining lands. Planning for these transitions should recognise local context and support opportunities for Aboriginal communities to participate in future economic uses of post-mining land where appropriate.

Strategic planning safeguards land required for long-term resource production, manages land use conflict throughout the resource lifecycle, recognises Aboriginal cultural values and aspirations in land use transitions where appropriate, and coordinates infrastructure to support investment and orderly transition, while balancing environmental outcomes.



Agricultural growth and productivity

Priority statement: Protect productive agricultural land by preventing and managing land use conflict.

Agriculture remains central to the identity and economy of many communities across NSW, supporting food and fibre production, exports, and employment. In 2025, agriculture, forestry and fishing contributed \$19 billion to the NSW economy.

Agricultural productivity also relies on healthy soils, secure water resources, pollination and other ecosystem contributors that sustain food and fibre production.

As populations grow and markets evolve, maintaining productive and resilient agricultural land will be essential to food security, economic stability and long-term prosperity.

Future productivity will be shaped by innovation, diversification and value-adding with advances in technology, data, supply chains and processing influencing how agricultural land is used and managed.

Strategic land use planning must support agricultural growth by protecting high quality agricultural land, managing land use conflict and ensuring farming operations can continue to operate efficiently. This includes limiting the encroachment of incompatible uses, supporting farm viability, enabling infrastructure and protecting the processing, freight and supply chain networks that underpin agricultural productivity.

A long-term approach to agricultural land use will ensure the sector can adapt to changing conditions, while continuing to contribute to NSW's interconnected economy and supporting resilient communities.

Visitor economy and tourism

Priority statement: Ensure tourism development occurs in locations supported by existing or planned infrastructure capacity, while responding to environmental values and community needs.

Tourism is a significant contributor to the NSW economy, generating spending across accommodation, hospitality, transport, retail, events, culture, sport and the night-time economy. In 2025, domestic and international visitors spent a combined \$60 billion in NSW, with strong growth expected over the next decade across cities, regional centres and rural communities. The State's distinctive landscapes, waterways, cultural heritage and natural assets are also central to its visitor appeal.

Strategic land use planning plays a central role in enabling sustainable tourism growth by guiding the location and scale of visitor accommodation, event and cultural infrastructure, agritourism ventures, and other tourism assets, while creating opportunities for nature-based tourism and Aboriginal cultural tourism that support Aboriginal peoples' ongoing connection to Country. To achieve the NSW Government's goal of \$91 billion in annual visitor expenditure by 2035, strategic planning

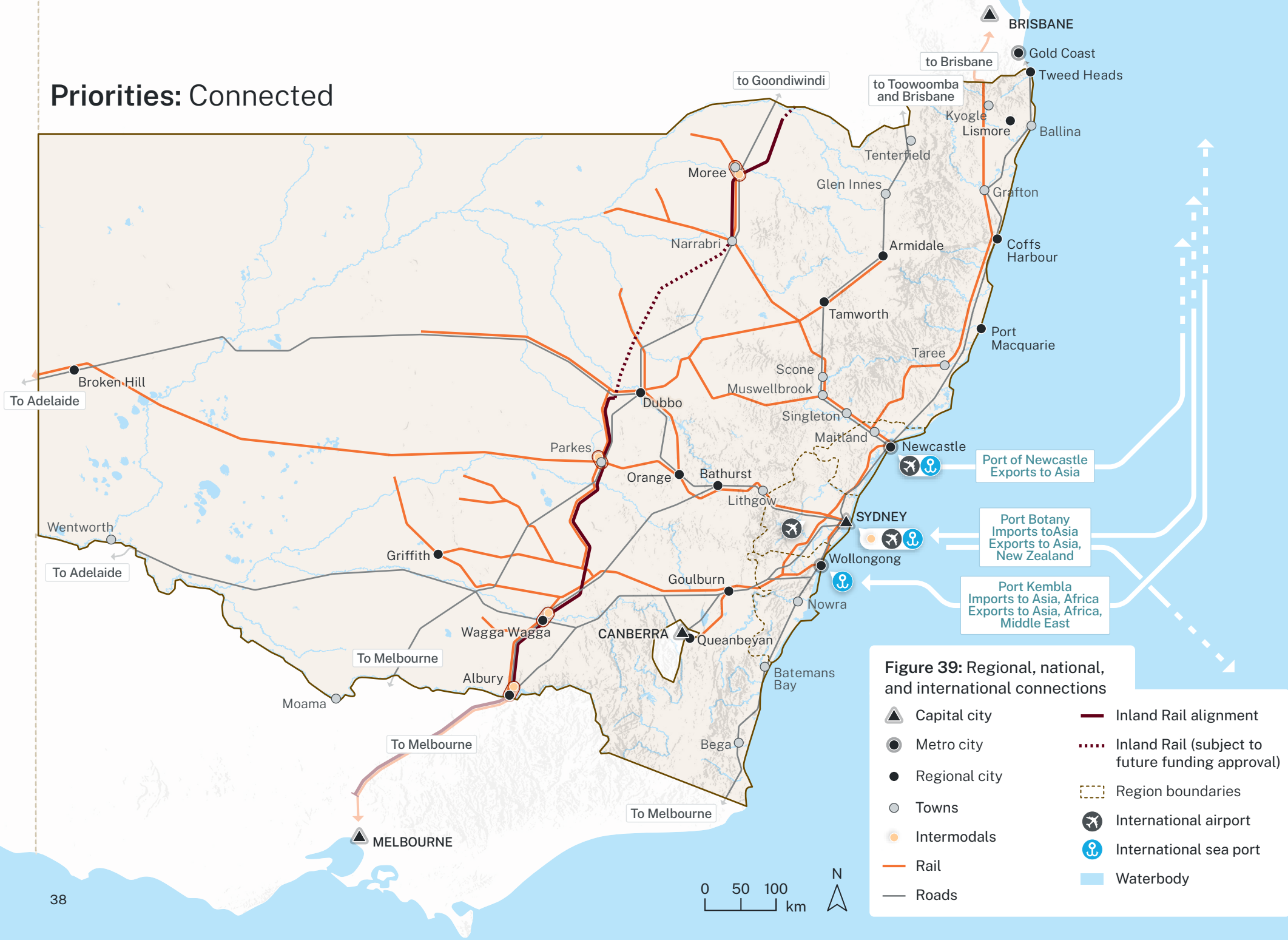
Vineyard on Mitchell Highway, south of Orange



must enable for the expansion and upgrade of tourist and visitor accommodation. Planning must balance tourism development with residential needs, infrastructure capacity and environmental constraints to ensure growth remains sustainable.

Coordinating visitor uses within centres and along key transport and nature-based corridors supports economic resilience and manages cumulative impacts. By aligning tourism infrastructure with settlement patterns, transport networks and environmental assets, strategic land use planning contributes to a strong visitor economy across NSW.

Priorities: Connected





Priorities: Connected

Priority: Linking communities with safe, reliable, resilient and efficient transport systems. Success means homes, jobs, and services are easier to reach and more accessible.

Safe, reliable, resilient and efficient transport networks underpin economic productivity by facilitating access to labour markets, supporting the movement of goods and services, and connecting NSW to national and global economies.

As population and employment grow, demand on key corridors, centres and freight networks will increase. In metropolitan areas, congestion and longer travel times affect accessibility and productivity. In regional areas, dispersed settlement patterns can limit connectivity and transport choice, including access to services and freight movement. This can contribute to transport disadvantage by reducing access to jobs and services and limits the efficiency of the network.

Freight movement is critical to the NSW economy and relies on an integrated network of ports, intermodal terminals and transport corridors. Protecting these networks and their connections to industrial, employment and logistics areas is essential to support economic activity and accommodate future demand.

Strategic land use planning must align housing and employment growth with existing and planned transport infrastructure, safeguard key corridors and improve accessibility across NSW.

Maximise housing and employment opportunities around existing transport infrastructure

Priority statement: Concentrate higher-density housing and employment uses around existing and planned transport infrastructure.

Strategic land use planning can strengthen connectivity by aligning growth with key transport routes and infrastructure and reinforcing links between cities, regional centres, towns and villages. This aligns closely with the *Connecting NSW Strategy*, which supports coordinated land use and transport planning to deliver a safe, reliable, resilient and efficient transport system across NSW.

Concentrating development in well-connected locations improves access to key destinations within reasonable travel times, supports sustainable travel choices, and reduces congestion and infrastructure costs. Where growth is not aligned with transport infrastructure, it can increase travel distances, reduce accessibility and place additional pressure on existing networks.

Where capacity exists within transport networks, including rail, bus and other mass transit, centres can accommodate additional homes and jobs in accessible locations. Where capacity is constrained, coordinated investment in transport infrastructure and services can unlock new opportunities for well-located housing, employment and community facilities.

As Australia's top visitor economy, NSW welcomed 127 million domestic and international visitors in 2025. Major tourism destinations across the State rely on extensive road, rail and aviation networks. Maximising the use of existing transport infrastructure supports efficient access to major tourist destinations and strengthens the visitor economy.



Newcastle CBD and surrounds



The freight network connects to industrial lands

Priority statement: Allocate and reserve land for key freight routes and transport corridors to support the efficient movement of goods and people.

Priority statement: Preserve and intensify industrial and employment lands near key freight routes and corridors.

The freight network connects producers with domestic and international markets and underpins supply chains across NSW. The freight and logistics sector contributed around \$74 billion in 2022–23 and is projected to grow to \$131.5 billion by 2060.

Strategic land use planning supports productive and resilient freight networks by protecting key freight corridors and logistics precincts, maintaining appropriate separation from incompatible development, and safeguarding land needed for future freight infrastructure.

As freight demand grows, the integration of transport corridors with industrial lands will be critical to maintaining supply chain efficiency, reducing costs and supporting economic competitiveness across NSW. As cities grow, strategic planning also supports evolving urban freight and logistics needs through appropriately located industrial and logistics land.

Around 80% of non-bulky interstate freight is transported by road, placing pressure on key

Case study: Port Kembla

Port Kembla is well connected by road and rail to metropolitan and regional areas, enabling efficient supply chain movements. It is surrounded by extensive industrial lands that accommodate a range of freight-related activities. This alignment supports the successful operation of the largest motor vehicle import facility in NSW.

Once motor vehicle imports arrive to the purpose built terminal, pre-delivery inspections and services are provided onsite. The vehicles are then transported to off site storage facilities or delivered directly to motor vehicle dealerships across the State via the road network.



corridors and surrounding land uses. Effective freight movement relies on an integrated system of ports, airports, intermodal terminals and distribution hubs, supported by compatible land uses and protected corridors. These patterns highlight the importance of aligning freight infrastructure with industrial lands and port related activities.

Planning for freight networks should also consider climate change, natural hazards and network resilience to minimise disruption to communities, businesses and the movement of goods.

Coordinating land use with road and rail infrastructure helps strengthen supply chain capacity by protecting strategic freight corridors, improving connectivity and supporting the reliable and efficient movement of goods.

Strategic land use planning plays a significant role in managing this growth by safeguarding freight corridors, supporting strategically located industrial lands and minimising land use conflict.

Support active transport through connected places

Priority statement: Prioritise walking and cycling networks in centres, neighbourhoods and transport corridors to support safe and convenient travel.

Travel patterns across NSW are dominated by private vehicle use, with a smaller proportion of trips made by public transport and active transport. Improving the safety and connectivity of walking and cycling networks can support active travel and strengthen connections to centres and public transport. Reducing reliance on private vehicles will also lower emissions, as the State transitions to net zero emissions.

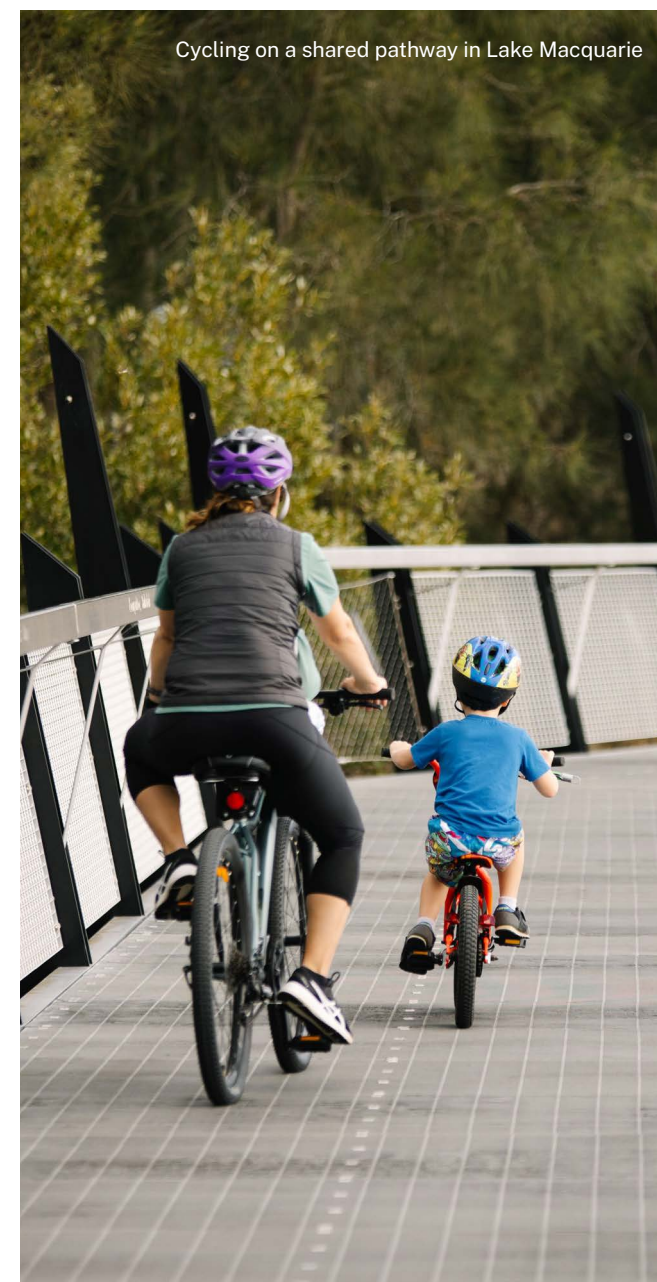
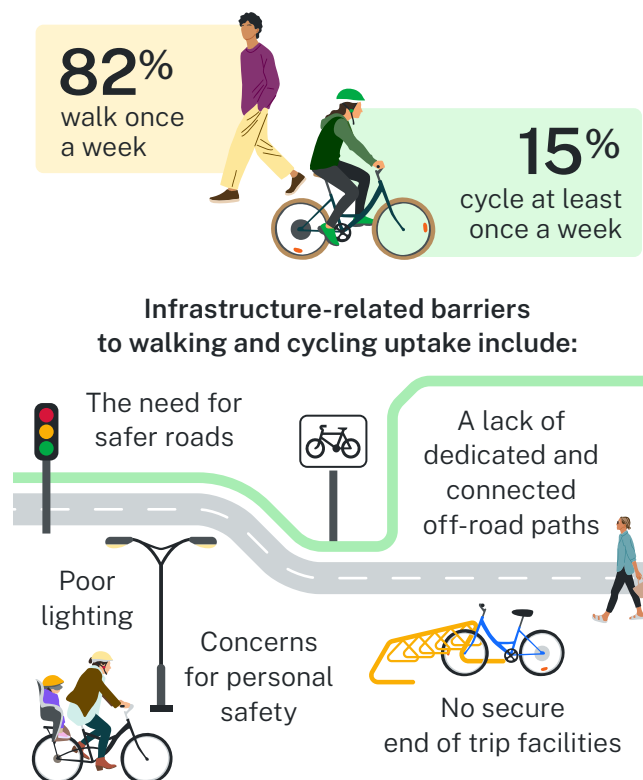
Across NSW more than 1.5 billion walking and cycling trips are made each year, but participation is often limited by a lack of safe and connected infrastructure (Figure 40). Delivering and improving safe and connected transport networks can support equitable access to jobs, services and open space, particularly for communities with limited transport options.

Strategic land use planning can encourage active travel by concentrating development in centres, improving street connectivity and integrating blue and green infrastructure to enhance local amenity. This aligns with the strategic objectives in the *Connecting NSW Strategy* to facilitate mode shift from private vehicle use to active transport across the State whilst also supporting the transition to net zero emission transport options.

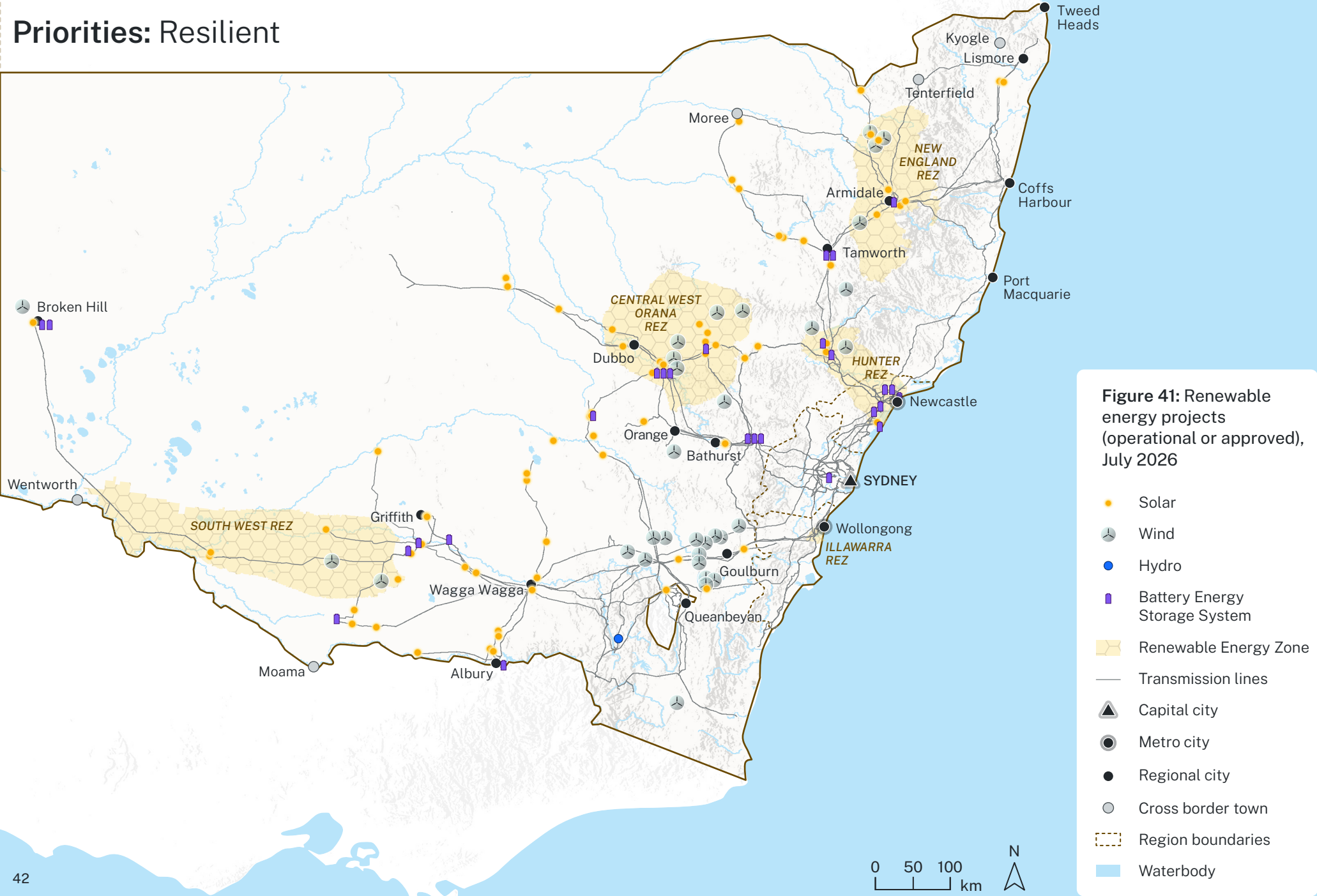
In some regional towns and communities, dispersed settlement patterns and longer travel distances contribute to higher car dependence and limited public transport options. Strategic planning can support smaller-scale active transport networks that improve local access and provide alternative travel options within towns and centres.

Figure 40: National walking and cycling participation survey results

Source: CWANZ 2025



Priorities: Resilient





Priorities: Resilient

Priority: Supporting a sustainable environment and biodiversity to help achieve net zero emissions and build climate resilience. Success means communities can better withstand hazards and environmental pressures.

NSW has a diverse natural environment, from stretches of iconic coastlines, estuaries and mountain ranges through to arid landscapes. Healthy waterways, native vegetation, green spaces and biodiversity underpin the wellbeing, prosperity and resilience of current and future generations. They support Aboriginal cultural values, productive industries, healthy ecosystems and liveable communities, while helping buffer the impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

NSW has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and to reducing future climate risks. Strategies to reach net zero emissions include the transition to low-emissions technologies, planning for compact urban centres with public transport and improving the condition of native vegetation, soil and waterways.

Climate impacts are already being felt across NSW, with increasing exposure to extreme heat, bushfire, flooding, drought and coastal hazards, such as inundation and erosion. These pressures are growing as the State develops, increasing the exposure of communities, infrastructure and assets to risk.

As NSW grows and becomes more diverse, strategic land use planning will shape how

communities experience the benefits of growth equitably and safely. Managing location and exposure to natural hazard and climate risk will be critical to enabling places to adapt over time, balanced with supporting housing supply, economic opportunity, a healthy natural environment and liveability.

Population growth and economic activity will also increase demand for water, energy and waste infrastructure. Strategic land use planning must ensure these systems are efficiently located, integrated with development and capable of supporting long-term growth while reducing environmental impacts.

Aboriginal cultural knowledge and land management practices contribute to the health and resilience of Country. Respectfully incorporating this knowledge into strategic land use planning strengthens outcomes and supports Aboriginal aspirations for housing, economic participation and cultural expression.

Increase resilience to natural hazards

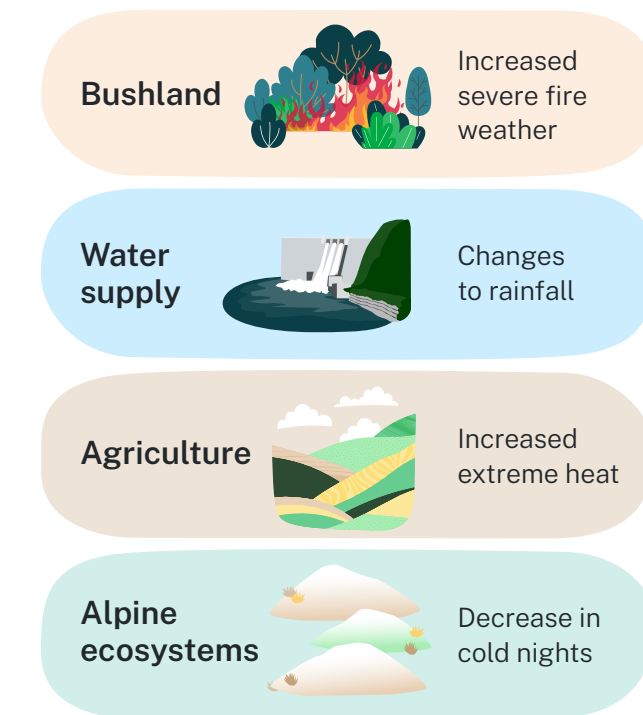
Priority statement: Direct growth to locations with lower natural hazard risk or where risks can be cost-effectively mitigated.

Priority statement: Use consistent climate change scenarios and data to assess natural hazard risk.

NSW has long-planned for natural hazards, but the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme

Figure 42: Key climate change impacts in NSW

Source: NARClIM2.0 NSW: Climate change snapshot



weather events (Figures 42, 43 and 44), and their growing economic and social consequences, have brought resilience to the forefront in strategic land use planning.

As the population grows and development expands into new areas or intensifies, more communities, infrastructure and assets are exposed to natural hazard risks, requiring strategic land use decisions that reduce exposure and build resilience.



Strategic land use planning plays a critical role in directing growth to appropriate locations, avoiding and managing exposure to risk and strengthening the capacity of places to adapt over time, while balancing other land use priorities to support sustainable growth.

Strategic land use planning also supports coordinated infrastructure investment where appropriate to improve the resilience and functioning of existing communities.

Different land areas have varying levels of vulnerability to natural hazards. In some locations, built-form controls and design responses associated with appropriate intensification can cost-effectively improve resilience, for example by managing localised flooding. In other areas, further intensification may be inappropriate due to evacuation constraints or the cumulative increase in risk to existing communities. In extreme cases, long-term adaptation approaches, including managed retreat, may be required to support community safety.

Consistent and up-to-date hazard information based on standardised climate change scenarios is essential to informed decision-making. The NSW Government is strengthening resilience in strategic land use planning through planning reforms, hazard-specific frameworks and guidance for bushfire, flooding, coastal hazards and urban heat. In more vulnerable areas, Disaster Adaptation Plans are guiding long-term responses, with strategic land use planning playing a key role in implementing these directions.

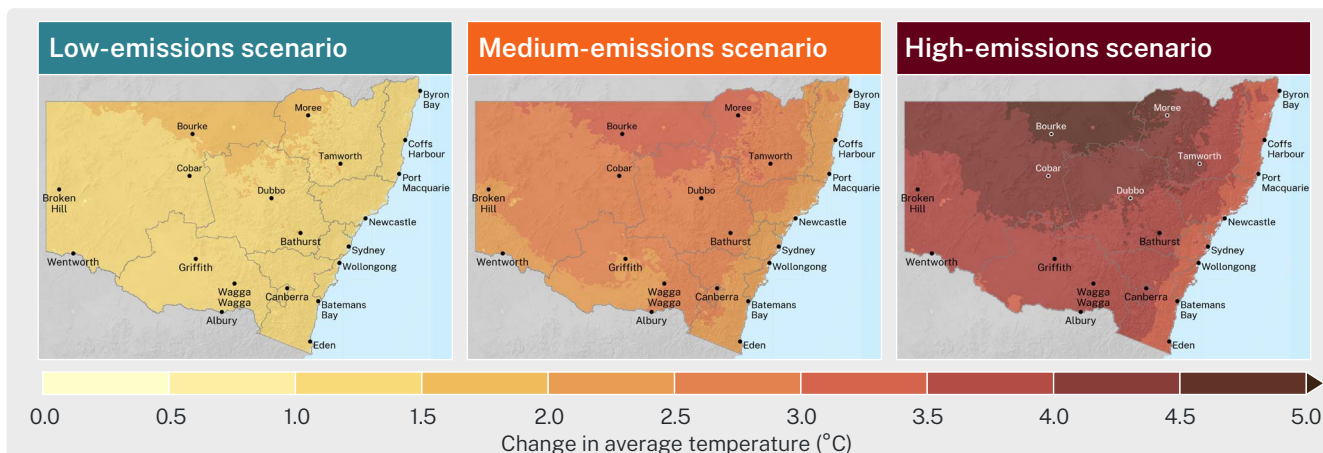
Post-disaster recovery and rebuilding will also be supported through frameworks such as Building Back Better, helping shape land use and development decisions to improve resilience over time.

Figure 43: Projected climate changes

Source: NARCLiM 2.0

Projected change (days per year)						
By 2050			By 2090			
Low-emissions scenario	Medium-emissions scenario	High-emissions scenario	Low-emissions scenario	Medium-emissions scenario	High-emissions scenario	
 Increase in hot days (where maximum temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$)	~ +15	~ +18	~ +23	~ +16	~ +31	~ +45
 Decrease in cold nights (where minimum temperatures $< 2^{\circ}\text{C}$)	~ -9	~ -12	~ -15	~ -11	~ -19	~ -24
 Increase in heatwave frequency	~ +13	~ +17	~ +22	~ +13	~ +32	~ +50
 Increase in severe fire weather (where Forest Fire Danger Index > 50)	~ +3	~ +3	~ +5	~ +4	~ +7	~ +9
 Increase in the longest number of days in a row with less than 1 mm of rain	~ +4	~ +5	~ +6	~ +3	~ +8	~ +7

Figure 44: Projected temperature change by 2090. Source: NARCLiM 2.0





Protect and enhance natural assets and biodiversity

Priority statement: Avoid development in high biodiversity value areas and maintain connectivity by protecting and strengthening terrestrial and aquatic corridors.

Natural assets, including land, water and biodiversity, support community wellbeing, Aboriginal cultural values and economic activity. Biodiversity underpins healthy ecosystems that provide clean water, food production, pollination and other essential elements, while also helping to buffer the impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

The NSW Protected Areas Network includes over 890 terrestrial national parks and reserves, 6 marine parks, 12 aquatic reserves, and protected estuarine and oceanic habitats within national parks and nature reserves. Collectively, these areas conserve about 8.3 million hectares of land and approximately 367,000 hectares of the NSW marine estate.

NSW is home to around 905 native animal species, with over 1,000 plants and animals listed as threatened under State legislation. Around 6% of the State comprises more than 20,000 wetlands covering approximately 4.5 million hectares, supporting aquatic biodiversity, water quality, flood management and ecosystem health.

These natural assets play a critical role in supporting sustainable growth by maintaining ecosystem functions, reducing risk and enhancing the liveability of metropolitan and regional areas.

However, biodiversity and ecosystem health continue to decline under cumulative pressures from land-use change, habitat fragmentation and climate change. While the State's biodiversity is internationally significant, the capacity of native vegetation to support ecosystems has declined to around 29% of preindustrial levels.

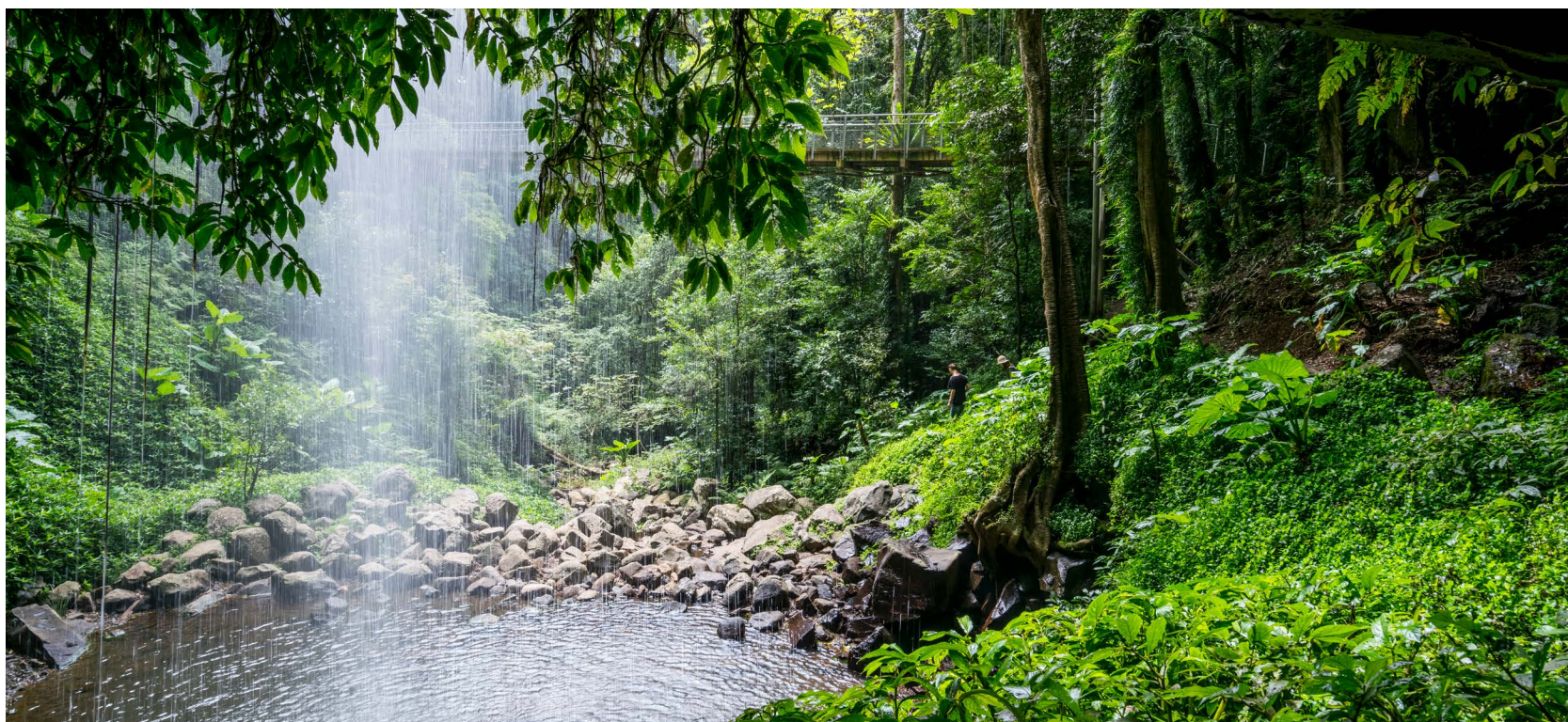
Increasing pressure from land-use change and climate impacts reinforces the importance of protecting existing biodiversity, restoring degraded ecosystems and strengthening ecological connectivity. Identifying areas of high biodiversity value early in strategic planning and applying landscape-scale approaches that protect and reconnect ecosystems across land tenures will improve biodiversity outcomes and strengthen resilience to climate change.

Guiding development away from high biodiversity value areas while protecting and restoring natural assets will help restore and enhance biodiversity, strengthen ecosystem function and improve environmental resilience. This aligns closely with the objectives in the *NSW Plan for Nature* to put nature on a path to recovery by protecting and improving biodiversity.

Strategic land use planning plays a key role in ensuring planning decisions strengthen, rather than fragment, ecological connectivity and environmental resilience. Applying the most appropriate protection, restoration, enhancement and stewardship mechanisms in each context, including recognising Aboriginal cultural values and Traditional Ecological Knowledge where appropriate, will help ensure that growth enhances environmental resilience and that all communities benefit from cooler, greener and more liveable places.

Cycling at Lane Cove National Park, Lane Cove





Crystal Shower Falls in
Dorrig National Park, Dorrig

Consider water early in land use planning

Priority statement: Integrate water planning into land use planning to support resilient and sustainable communities.

Water is a valuable and finite natural asset that underpins healthy communities, ecosystems and economic activity. Strategic land use planning should consider water availability, servicing, infrastructure capacity and water quality from the earliest stages of planning. This will support long

term water security, sustainable growth, climate resilience and efficient infrastructure investment while avoiding future development constraints. In some locations, water availability may influence the scale, location and type of future growth, making early integration of water planning essential to strategic land use decisions.

Integrated catchment management, integrated water cycle management and water-sensitive urban design provide important frameworks for managing water across the planning, design and development process. Together, these approaches support the efficient use of potable and recycled

water, wastewater and stormwater, and at the same time protect waterways, riparian corridors and water quality.

Applying these approaches through strategic land use planning and coordinated infrastructure planning will improve resilience to changes in water availability, support coordinated infrastructure investment, reduce development constraints and contribute to healthier, more sustainable and liveable communities. This aligns closely with the objectives of the *NSW Water Strategy* to secure sustainable water resources and resilient communities amid a changing climate.



Set up of Moree Solar Farm, Moree

Plan for Net Zero emissions

Priority statement: Enable renewable energy development and support co-location with compatible land uses, including agriculture.

Priority statement: Maximise renewable energy generation and storage in urban areas to support an equitable transition to net zero emissions.

Transitioning to a low-emissions economy is essential to building a resilient and prosperous NSW. However, this transition is increasing demand for land to accommodate renewable energy generation, storage and transmission infrastructure across both metropolitan and regional areas.

Strategic land use planning plays a key role in enabling the transition to net zero emissions by coordinating land use, infrastructure and investment decisions to ensure new growth supports renewable energy generation, energy-efficient development, and low-emissions infrastructure across metropolitan and regional areas.

This includes planning for emerging land-use demands such as energy infrastructure and data centres, which require reliable access to energy, water and transport networks and are becoming increasingly important to the State's economy.

Strategic land use planning will support the co-location of renewable energy with existing land uses, including agriculture, to balance energy generation with food production to support regional economies. REZs and associated transmission infrastructure will be planned in a way that responds to local context, minimises land-use conflict and addresses potential cumulative impacts.

Achieving net zero emissions is not solely the responsibility of REZs and regional areas. Metropolitan areas also have a role. Strategic planning will maximise opportunities for renewable energy generation and storage within metropolitan and regional centres, including in industrial, commercial and residential buildings. Improving access to renewable energy programs across a wider range of housing types, including apartments and rental properties, will support a more equitable transition.

Waste management and long-term water security also support the transition to net zero emissions. As waste generation grows and water security becomes increasingly linked to patterns of development, particularly in regional areas, strategic land use planning will support the appropriate siting of resource recovery infrastructure and planning for long-term water security. This will help reduce emissions, improve water security and support a circular economy.



Sustainable built environment

Priority statement: Plan and design the built environment to minimise emissions, improve resource efficiency, enable the circular economy and strengthen resilience to climate change impacts.

Well-designed, energy-efficient buildings, infrastructure, public spaces and precincts reduce emissions, improve amenity and strengthen resilience. They also reduce overall demand for energy, water and resources through more efficient land-use patterns and built form outcomes, while lowering household energy costs and improving cost-of-living outcomes. Locating housing and employment close to public transport and services supports sustainable travel choices and lowers the cost of transitioning to lower emissions transport networks.

Waste reduction, resource efficiency and the circular economy are integral to a sustainable built environment.

Strategic land use planning supports these outcomes by ensuring resource recovery and organics processing facilities are appropriately located and their impacts managed. It can also help protect and create the right spaces for the circular economy to grow.

Maintaining an adequate supply of appropriately located land helps support the efficient operation and long-term viability of circular economy activities. These approaches improve resource efficiency, reduce waste and help create a more resilient and sustainable built environment.



One Central Park Sustainable Buildings, Chippendale

Priorities: Liveable



The Grand Central Precinct Planning and Design Project



Image credit: Cobar Shire Council

Orange Regional Sporting Precinct



Image credit: Orange City Council

Northern Rivers Rail Trail



Image credit: Tweed Tourism Company. Northern Rivers Rail Trail, 2023

Coal River Precinct



Image credit: Destination NSW

Burwood Special Entertainment Precinct



Image credit: Destination NSW

Willandra Lakes Region



Image credit: Destination NSW

Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre



Image credit: Create NSW

Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail

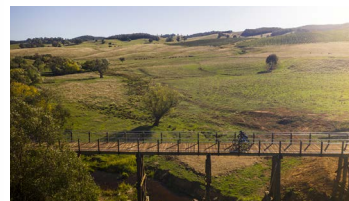


Image credit: Snowy Valleys Council

Blue Mile Pathway



Image credit: Wollongong City Council

Figure 45: Examples of features supporting liveability

- ▲ Capital city
- Metro city
- Regional city
- Cross border town
- Region boundaries
- Waterbody



Priorities: Liveable

Priority: Building vibrant places that support quality of life. Success means more public spaces, better urban design, and stronger social cohesion.

The liveability of NSW is shaped by its diverse natural landscapes, culturally rich population, and strong metropolitan and regional communities. People experience the built environment through everyday life in streets, parks, neighbourhoods and community and cultural spaces.

Planning for liveable places involves creating neighbourhoods where daily needs are met locally through safe, accessible transport and high-quality public spaces, including access to nature and green spaces. It also recognises the importance of access to Country in strengthening local identity and the visitor experience.

As the population grows and becomes more diverse, with more people living in higher density environments and smaller households, the demand for housing, services and public spaces will increase. Strategic land use planning supports quality of life alongside growth, ensuring places remain accessible, inclusive and responsive to community needs.

Delivering well-designed public spaces, accessible settlements and thriving main streets and centres, supports recreation, culture and local identity. Together, these elements create inclusive and connected communities that reflect the diversity of NSW (Figure 46).

Warners Bay, Lake Macquarie





Support diverse and changing communities

Priority statement: Enable inclusive, mixed-use places and connected communities that support changing demographic and health needs, in locations with access to jobs, services and transport.

NSW has an increasingly diverse population, with almost one-third of residents born overseas in 2021. The population is also ageing, with more than 2.2 million people aged 65 and over projected by 2046. Internal migration is reshaping settlement

patterns across NSW, including older generations and younger families moving away from capital cities to regional and coastal areas for lifestyle reasons, placing new demands on regional infrastructure, services and amenity.

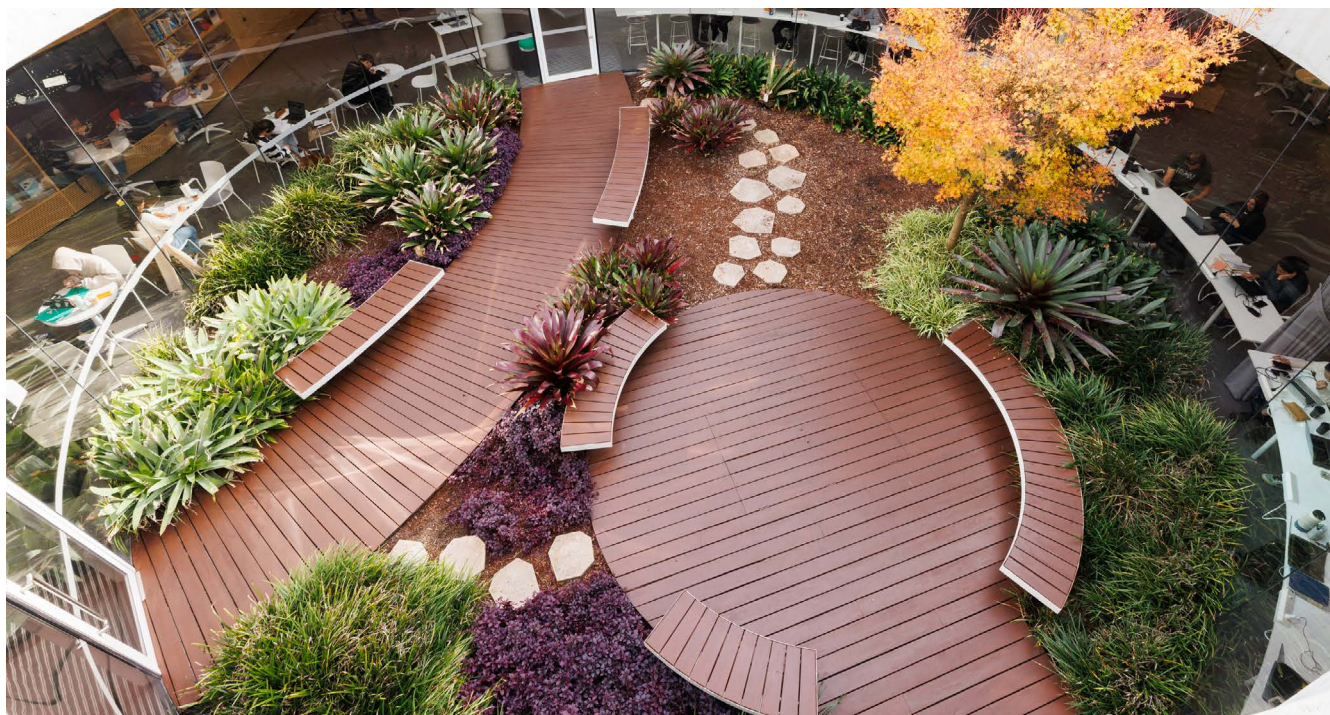
Demographic changes reinforce the need for walkable, well-connected places that support ageing in place, improve access to health, education and social infrastructure and services, and enable inclusive participation in community life.

As these patterns continue, demand for housing, services and community infrastructure will increase across both metropolitan and regional areas. This will require compact, well-connected

neighbourhoods and townships that integrate diverse housing, jobs, services and social infrastructure. Enabling ageing in place is a priority and can be achieved through accessible housing, universal design, and walkable neighbourhoods with nearby health, social and transport services.

Strategic land use planning must support growing and changing communities by enabling mixed-use development, locating social and cultural infrastructure in accessible centres, and designing public spaces that are inclusive, welcoming and safe for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds during the day and night. This includes recognising Aboriginal cultural values, cultural practices and local identity in the design of community facilities, supporting intergenerational interaction through shared public spaces, and ensuring places can adapt to the evolving needs of diverse communities.

Region plans will support this by identifying well-located centres for housing, jobs, services and social infrastructure, and by encouraging flexible, multi-functional public spaces that respond to changing community needs over time.



Green Square Library, Zetland



Improve access to public and open space, infrastructure and services

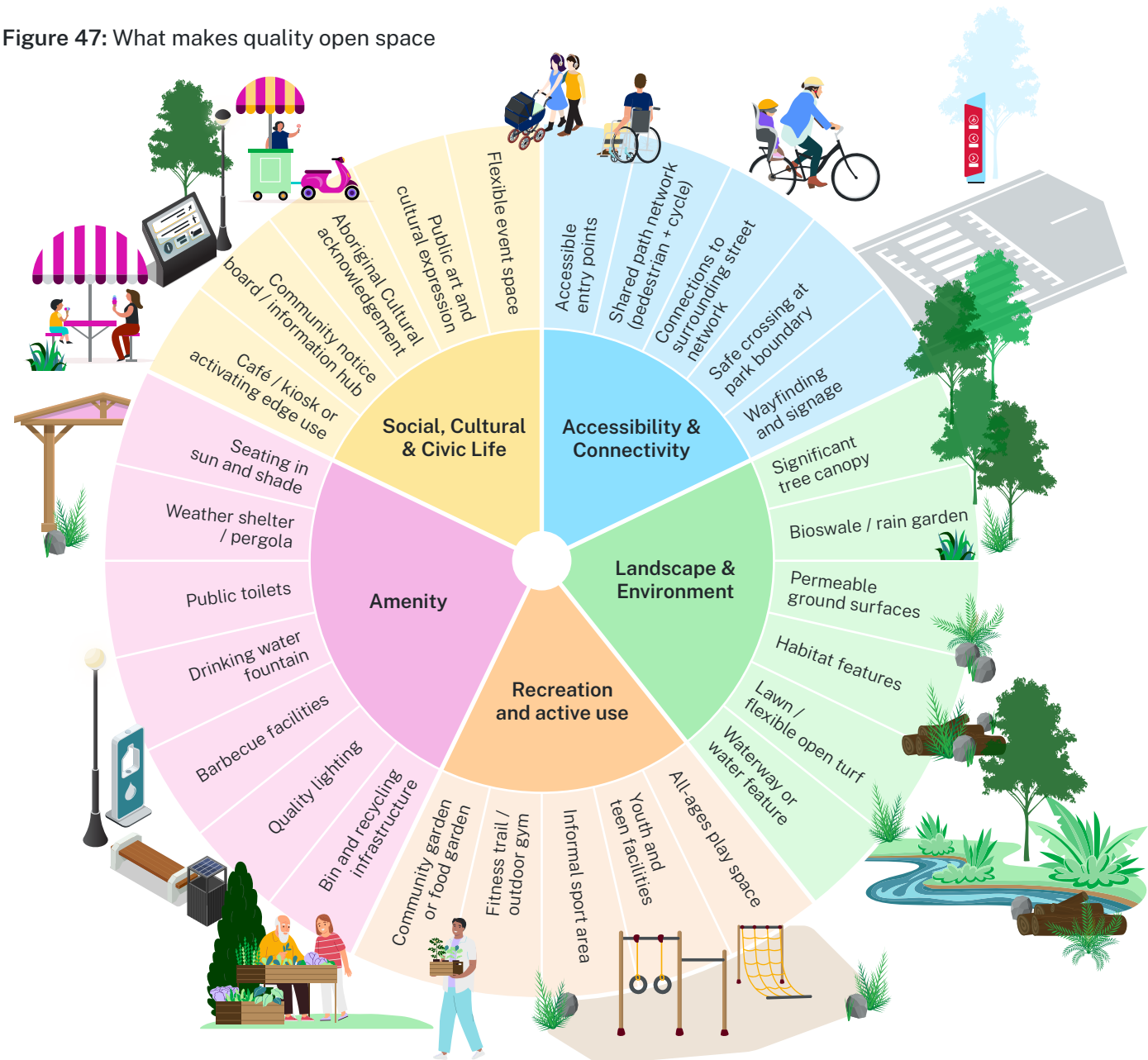
Priority statement: Locate growth to ensure access to public space, open space, infrastructure and services can be efficiently provided.

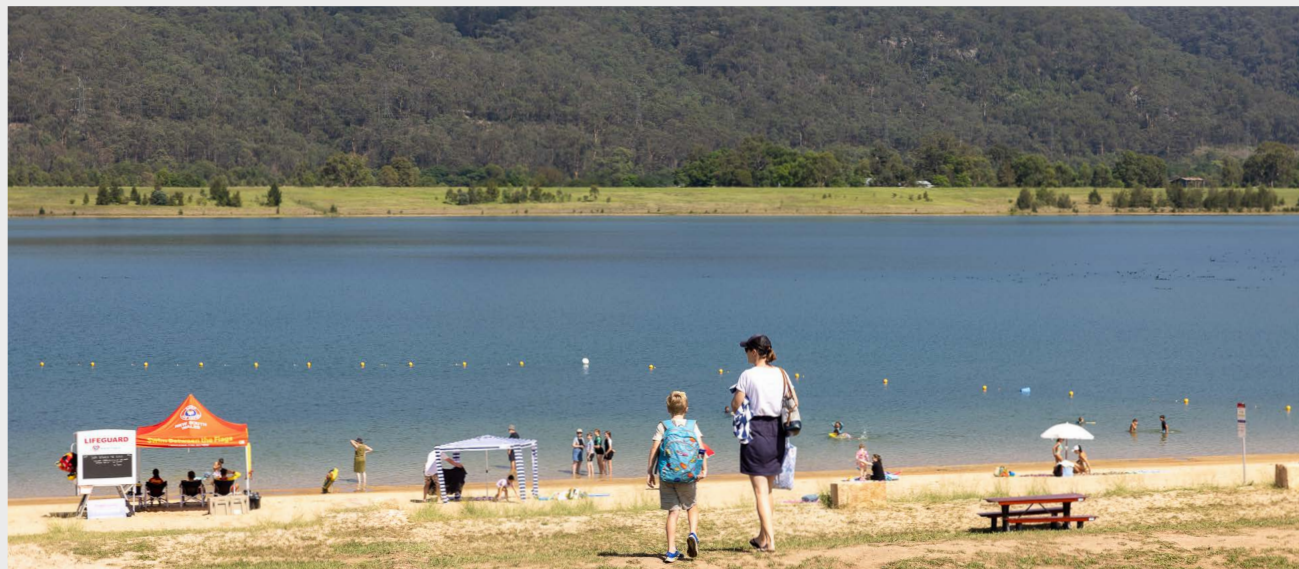
Quality public spaces, including parks, civic spaces, streets, waterways and other open spaces (Figure 47) is essential community infrastructure that supports physical and mental health, wellbeing, social cohesion, environmental amenity, tourism activity and local economies. In some areas, access to open space, services and infrastructure is limited or uneven, particularly in locations experiencing rapid growth or constraints associated with existing urban form. As NSW grows, expanding and diversifying access to open space and community services will require a coordinated approach to land use planning and infrastructure delivery.

As many cities and regional centres grow to accommodate more homes in compact forms, well-designed public spaces will play an increasingly important role in supporting everyday recreation, social connection and access to nature.

Established urban areas face land and cost constraints, making it essential to prioritise the creation, enhancement and connection of public spaces and green networks through strategic planning. Urban greening, including tree canopy, enhances the quality of public spaces by providing shade, improving comfort, supporting biodiversity and contributing to healthier, more liveable communities.

Figure 47: What makes quality open space





Places to swim

Under the *Places to Swim* initiative, NSW Government agencies and councils are improving facilities and public access to natural bodies of water including inland rivers, lakes, pools and dams, to enable more communities to connect with water-based recreation.

These upgrades are designed to ensure safe, inclusive access and broaden recreation opportunities across inland NSW.

Penrith Beach is part of the *Places to Swim* program

Major urban renewal, precinct planning and greenfield development also provide opportunities to secure new local and regionally significant open spaces that meet the needs of growing communities. This includes integrating open space into new development, linking smaller parks into continuous green networks and managing sustainable access to sensitive environmental assets. Well-managed access protects culture and environmental values while supporting growing demand for ecotourism and cultural tourism experiences.

Well-planned public open space will play an increasingly important role in supporting liveability, providing places for recreation, social connection and everyday access to nature for growing communities.

Future access to open space and services will depend on targeted investment and programs that unlock new recreation opportunities and strengthen active transport networks. Enhancing access to waterways through programs such as *Places to Swim* will broaden participation in water based recreation, where upgraded harbour, river, lake and dam access can deliver safe, inclusive public spaces.

Public spaces, including streets, plazas, parks and waterfronts, should be planned as connected networks that support recreation, social interaction and active travel.

Improved walking and cycling connections, supported by initiatives such as *Places to Roam*, will help reduce reliance on private vehicles and enable healthier travel choices. This will

also increase physical activity, improve health outcomes, and generate local economic benefits by improving access to centres, trails and tourism destinations. Nearly half of all work trips in regional areas and outer metropolitan areas are under 10 km yet fewer than one per cent of people currently cycle. Improving micromobility access, end of trip facilities and expanding safe cycle trail links between towns and centres represents a significant opportunity to support active travel and strengthen visitation between destinations.

Region plans will identify opportunities to protect, enhance and expand public space and regionally significant open space networks, urban tree canopy, recreation and cultural opportunities that respond to local needs and support equitable access to services, infrastructure and recreation opportunities as communities grow.



Strengthen vibrant communities

Priority statement: Strengthen local cultural expression and community identity by protecting and enabling diverse public spaces, venues and precincts.

Centres play a critical role in creating vibrant communities as focal points where people access cultural, social, education and economic opportunities. They provide access to cultural activity and recreation, supporting daily life and community wellbeing.

In 2021–22, 64% of adults and 80% of children in NSW attended a cultural venue or event. As communities grow and become more diverse, demand for cultural spaces, events and social infrastructure will increase, requiring planning to support both community needs and maintain amenity.

Strategic land use planning supports vibrant communities by protecting cultural and creative spaces, creating well-designed places that reflect local identity, enabling compatible mixed uses, and managing the impacts of noise, activity and movement.

Places with distinctive heritage, culture and character attract residents, workers and visitors, contributing to vibrant centres, thriving local businesses and strong community identity. Strategic land use planning also plays a key role in supporting the visitor economy by ensuring destinations can accommodate increasing numbers of visitors while balancing amenity, community expectations and cultural expression.

Enmore Road Special Entertainment Precinct

The Enmore Road Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) was established in December 2023, and is the first permanent SEP in NSW.

The precinct is supported by Inner West Council with ongoing precinct management, acoustic controls and community engagement to create a safe, walkable and culturally rich destination that celebrates live performance, local business and creative life from day to night.

Its focus includes place activation and public space improvements that build on Enmore Road's thriving arts and nightlife culture. These include curated street events, live music, outdoor dining, creative installations, neighbourhood festivals and programming that showcases the area's strong artistic identity.

Precinct planning guides activity across the strip, strengthening local culture, creativity and business while supporting improvements to lighting, safety and accessible transport options in partnership with key stakeholders.

In metropolitan areas, multiple centres serve smaller, overlapping catchments, while regional centres often serve much larger and more dispersed populations. This makes planning even more critical, as they function as key hubs for services, culture and social connection across wide geographic areas.

Planning initiatives such as the NSW Vibrancy Reforms, including Special Entertainment Precincts, and streamlined planning pathways for place activation help provide greater certainty



for cultural activity while supporting safe, active and inclusive places. By enabling diverse day-and night-time uses in centres and neighbourhoods, strategic land use planning can strengthen local economies, including the visitor economy, while supporting social connection and community resilience across NSW.

Region plans will identify cultural, open space and vibrancy opportunities that reflect local identity and support the long-term vitality of centres, precincts and communities.



Priorities: Coordinated

Priority: Aligning land use with infrastructure delivery. Success means major infrastructure investments directly support planned growth areas.

Infrastructure unlocks development by providing services such as water, waste, roads and schools, and it activates communities by delivering amenities such as open space and health services. It also supports economic productivity by enabling efficient movement of people and goods, access to jobs and services, and the functioning of key industries.

However, infrastructure delivery has not always kept pace with growth and in some areas development has occurred ahead of infrastructure. This can result in infrastructure being delivered too early, too late or in locations that do not support planned growth, affecting community wellbeing and limiting opportunities for new homes and businesses.

A coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery aligns NSW Government agencies, local government and the development industry. It makes clear how and where growth will be prioritised and supported, thereby building confidence for investors, communities, and government. It also resolves issues early, maximises the public value of infrastructure, ensuring that growth is aligned with the services and facilities needed by residents.

Strategic land use planning supports coordination by aligning land use with infrastructure planning and investment, including the sequencing and prioritisation of development.

A coordinated strategic planning framework is critical to aligning planning decisions across State, regional and local levels, and ensures that growth is supported by infrastructure, services and investment.

Maximising infrastructure capacity and use

Priority statement: Direct growth to maximise the use of existing and planned infrastructure.

A coordinated strategic planning framework enables growth to be directed to locations where infrastructure can support development efficiently and sustainably.

Development in greenfield areas usually requires substantial new infrastructure investment or extensive servicing upgrades. By contrast, infrastructure costs for infill housing are typically 2 to 4 times less than for greenfield housing because infill development can utilise, upgrade or repurpose existing infrastructure.

Many areas across NSW still have considerable capacity to provide more housing density and services within the existing urban area. In addition, intensification of employment lands, such as through increased floor space and building heights, can help accommodate changing economic needs and support jobs creation.

Strategic land use planning should prioritise development within established urban areas, where infill can make best use of existing infrastructure

by minimising costs and maximising available capacity. Optimising these opportunities supports more efficient use of services, transport networks and community infrastructure. This aligns with the strategic direction in the *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy* to integrate land use, infrastructure and service planning where there is existing capacity.

Greenfield areas may also supply land for new housing and employment where required, but only where the necessary infrastructure is already in place or where it can be delivered in a sequenced and orderly manner to support growth.



A building construction site, Badgery's Creek Road, Bringelly



Coordinating infrastructure for growing communities

Priority statement: Prioritise greenfield and urban renewal areas based on existing and planned infrastructure capacity.

To enable growth, strategic land use planning, infrastructure planning and investment decisions must be aligned, recognising local context, including Aboriginal cultural values where relevant. NSW Government agencies, councils and industry must coordinate the timely provision of essential infrastructure informed by the NSW Government's UDP and ELDP.

The ELDP supports stakeholders where possible to resolve infrastructure coordination issues and support the development of zoned industrial employment land. The program continues to monitor emerging trends in the use and development of industrial employment land to position government and other stakeholders to make timely investment decisions.

The UDP aligns growth with infrastructure delivery by identifying, prioritising and sequencing State-funded infrastructure to maximise value and support growth where communities need it most. The Urban Development Committees provide a central forum for NSW Government agencies, councils, utility providers and industry to share

information and resolve critical issues and delays. The program's committees operate in Sydney, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Central Coast, Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle, and other high growth regional areas.

Infrastructure Opportunities Plans identify infrastructure projects already funded or underway, along with future infrastructure that could be delivered as works-in-kind by developers under the *Housing and Productivity Contribution Works-in-Kind Guideline*.

Beyond the UDP areas, coordination is required to identify urban growth areas to ensure infrastructure supports growth and the delivery of jobs and homes.

Infrastructure contributions are an essential tool to coordinate the delivery of infrastructure to support NSW growth and ensure equitable access to services. In NSW, infrastructure contributions include:

- The Housing and Productivity Contribution is a State-level developer charge where developers make a monetary contribution or deliver infrastructure directly. Delivering infrastructure directly is known as works-in-kind and it provides developers with the opportunity to fast-track the delivery of infrastructure and help to unlock more homes and drive economic growth.
- Local infrastructure contributions provide critical local funding. This is charged by councils when new development occurs, and it helps to fund local infrastructure delivered by councils such as parks, community facilities, local roads, footpaths, stormwater drainage, and traffic management.



Mamre Road upgrades



Woodlawn Bioreactor with wind farm in the background, Lake George.

Leveraging renewable energy investment and infrastructure

Priority statement: Align new employment and land use opportunities with renewable energy investment.

NSW is accelerating its transition to net zero emissions, by shifting towards an energy system based on renewable energy generation supported by new storage and transmission infrastructure.

Communities and businesses across NSW will play a part in, and benefit from, the shift to clean energy through new investment, funding and local jobs.

The NSW Government has identified 5 REZs that will harness wind and solar energy to assist the State's transition to clean energy. The REZs comprise: Central-West Orana, New England, Hunter-Central Coast, Illawarra, and South-West. In addition, green hydrogen projects include hubs in the Hunter Valley, Moree Plains, and Port Kembla.

It is important that strategic planning facilitates the efficient rollout of infrastructure to support this work, while also assessing and managing impacts. Impact studies will identify ways for the NSW Government to support communities and alleviate cumulative impacts on local and regional infrastructure and services. Cumulative impacts include housing and workforce accommodation, land use conflicts, social infrastructure and services, traffic and transport, visual amenity and noise, Aboriginal heritage, biodiversity, water security and waste management.

6 Implementation

The State Plan provides the overarching land use planning vision for the growth of NSW. It establishes a clear framework for strategic land use planning priorities and policies by aligning State, region and local planning.

The Plan will be implemented through a staged program of policy development, region and local planning updates, and ongoing monitoring. This staged approach will support a smooth transition to the new strategic planning framework, and provide certainty for government agencies, councils, industry and the community.

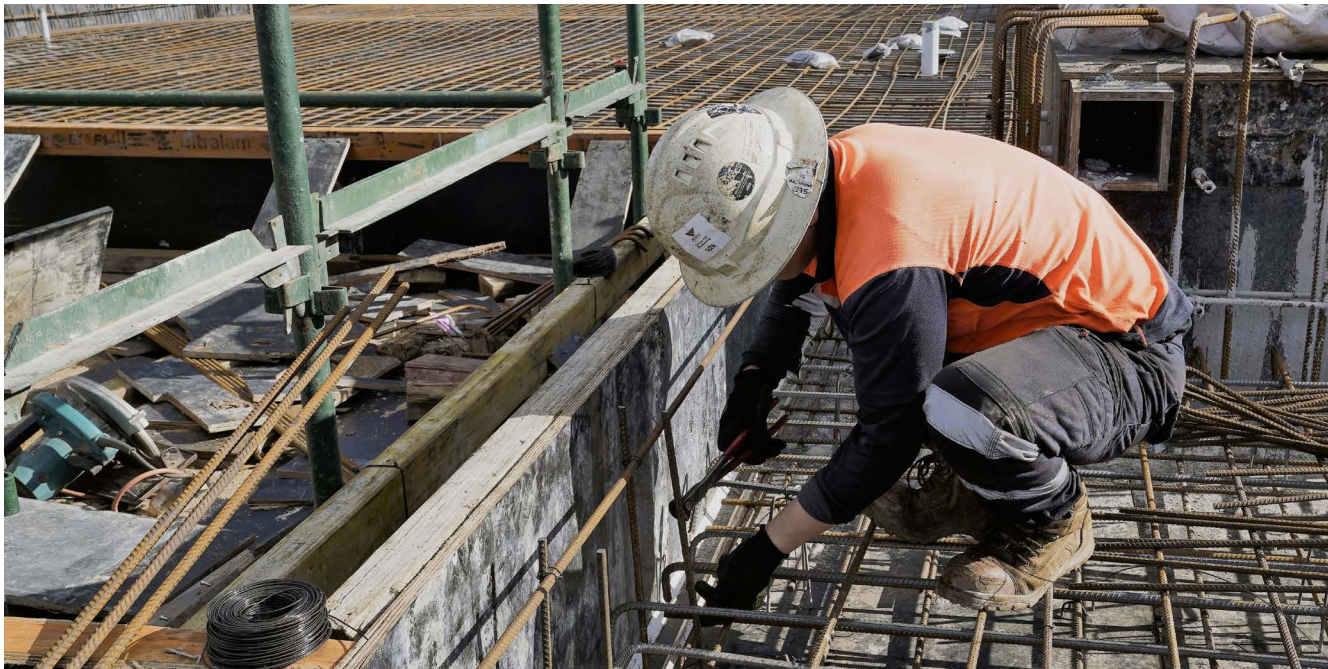
Implementation will occur across 2 stages from 2026, with actions progressively embedded into State, region and local planning processes.

The first stage focuses on embedding the State Plan into planning policy and regional strategic planning. Key activities include:

- updating region plans to align with the State Plan
- a review of Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPSs) and LSPS guidelines
- establishing monitoring, reporting and benchmarking processes to measure implementation and performance.

The second stage focuses on implementation at the local level and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategic planning framework. Key activities include:

- councils reviewing and updating LSPSs and associated planning strategies to align with the State Plan, region plans and updated LSPS Guidelines
- ongoing monitoring and evaluation of State, region and local planning outcomes
- collection and reporting of performance data to measure progress against State land use priorities
- ongoing alignment with other government agency policies and programs such as the UDP and ELDP
- legislative and policy amendments to strengthen and refine the strategic planning framework
- ongoing review of the State Plan and supporting technical appendices to ensure they remain current and responsive.



Construction site for residential apartments, Campsie.

Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework will track the implementation of NSW's strategic land use plans, inform ongoing decision-making, and enable timely updates where required.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure will develop the framework and publish periodic updates on its website. It will include the following components:

Monitoring

- Progress on implementation of region plan actions will be captured through an Actions Tracker.
- The Actions Tracker will be structured around 5 themes (Figure 48). These themes align with the state-wide priorities and will include metrics to measure real-world social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- Data to support monitoring will be drawn from existing programs. For example, the Council League Table tracks council performance in development assessment; the UDP tracks housing completions and residential land supply; and the Employment Lands Development Monitor tracks zoned and development-ready employment land.

Evaluation

- Monitoring will support evaluation of strategic land use plans and associated policies and identify emerging challenges and opportunities.
- Evaluation findings will inform updates to strategic land use plans.

Figure 48: Alignment between state-wide priorities and indicator themes

							
Indicators	Aboriginal outcomes	Housed	Prosperous	Connected	Resilient	Liveable	Coordinated
Theme 1: Diverse and affordable housing supply	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Theme 2: Strong economy and more jobs	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Theme 3: Vibrant, inclusive and connected communities	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Theme 4: Resilient built and natural environment	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Theme 5: Strategically aligned land use system	✓	✓		✓			✓

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- (2025) [Freight Policy Reform Program](#).
- (2026) [Freight Hub](#).

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