

Appendix C

Coastal Management Program - Strategic Context (EMM, 2020)



ES1.1.1 Coastal Management Program - Strategic Context

Central Coast Local Government Area

Prepared for Central Coast Council
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Coastal Management Program - Strategic Context

Central Coast Local Government Area

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1 Introduction

1.1 Central Coastal Local Government Area

1.1.1 Background

The open coast of the Central Coast stretches from Frazer Beach in the north to Patonga in the south. The coastal zone, generally defined by the extent of tidal influence, extends as far west as Wisemans Ferry and as far north as Point Wolstoncroft in Lake Macquarie. The submerged lands of Tuggerah Lake, Budgewoi Lake, Lake Munmorah and Brisbane Water. The numerous coastal estuaries, creeks, lagoons and smaller lakes, such as Wyong River, Ourimbah Creek, Mangrove Creek, Avoca Lake, Terrigal Lagoon, Cockrone Lagoon and Wamberal Lagoon.

Currently, the Central Coast Council (hereafter 'the Council') directly implements six coastal and estuary management plans:

- Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan (2006)
- Wyong Coastal Zone Management Plan (2011)
- Gosford Beaches Coastal Zone Management Plan (2017)
- Brisbane Water Coastal Zone Management Plan (2012)
- Gosford Lagoons Coastal Zone Management Plan (2015)
- Pearl Beach Lagoon Coastal Zone Management Plan (2014)

Additionally, the Council supports the implementation of the Lake Macquarie Estuary Management Plan (1997) and the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan (2009).

When the *Coastal Management Act 2016* (CM Act) came into force, it introduced a new framework for coastal management and as part of the savings provisions in the CM Act, any existing certified Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMPs) remained valid but need to transition to the requirements of the Coastal Management Act by December 2021.

1.1.2 The coastal zone

The coastal zone within the Central Coast local government area (LGA) is defined by reference to maps published under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 (CM SEPP).

The four coastal management areas available under the CM SEPP are:

- Coastal Wetlands and Coastal Rainforests Area;
- Coastal Vulnerability Area;
- Coastal Environment Area; and
- Coastal Use Area.

The Coastal Vulnerability Area is not mapped under the CM SEPP for the Central Coast LGA. The other three coastal management areas are mapped and together form the coastal zone for the purposes of the CM Act and the CM SEPP.

1.1.3 Sediment compartments

The coastal zone within the Central Coast local government area (LGA) is identified under the CM Act as being part of three coastal sediment compartments:

- Central Coast
- Newcastle Coast (part)
- Broken Bay (part)

There are two estuaries identified under the CM Act within the Central Coast LGA:

- Lake Macquarie
- Hawkesbury River (part)

1.2 Scoping Study

With the introduction of the Coastal Management Act, the State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 and the supporting guidance and information within the NSW Coastal Management Manual, Council has initiated the first stage (Stage 1) of the new Coastal Management Program (CMP) process, which comprises the preparation of a CMP Scoping Study.

The purpose of the CMP Scoping Study is to build on existing knowledge contained within previous plans and studies, lessons learnt from implementation of management actions, and the awareness of current and future coastal management issues, constraints and opportunities, to enable the scope of subsequent CMP stages (i.e. Stages 2, 3 and 4) to be defined. The CMP Scoping Study serves two purposes:

- Stage 1 of the Coastal Management Program under the *Coastal Management Act 2016*; and,
- A document which assists in satisfying the requirements of a planning proposal (if required) under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The main elements nominally contained within a CMP Scoping Study are:

- Strategic Context for Coastal Management;
- Purpose, Vision and Objectives of the CMP;
- Recommended Scope of CMP;
- Review of Current Management Practices and Arrangements;
- Governance;
- Focus Areas for CMP Actions and Additional Studies;
- Stakeholder and Community Engagement Strategy;

- Preliminary Work Plan; and
- Forward Program for CMP Delivery.

This document relates only to the Strategic Context for Coastal Management but should be used to inform the other elements of a Scoping Study.

2 Legislative framework

2.1 Introduction

There are numerous legislative instruments which, to greater or lesser extent, regulate the activities in the Central Coast coastal area and which establish a strategic direction for the open coastline, estuaries, lagoons and tidal rivers. The more relevant legislative instruments are described below.

2.2 Coastal Management Act 2016

The NSW Government's Stage 2 Coastal Reforms resulted in the introduction of the *Coastal Management Act 2016* and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 (CM SEPP) which was commenced on 3 March 2018.

The CM Act sets out the objectives for the management of the coastal zone; provides for four coastal management areas which, in combination, define the coastal zone in NSW. It also provides development controls and management outcomes for each of the zones; and also provides for the preparation of coastal management programs.

Section 14(1) of the CM Act guides councils in the preparation of coastal management programs (CMP), notably:

14 Preparation of coastal management programs

(1) A local council is to prepare a coastal management program in accordance with the coastal management manual.

The Coastal Management Manual, amongst other things, provides for a staged approach to coastal management plans, and as a mandatory first step, the manual notes that councils should prepare a Scoping Study.

A CMP, and the Scoping Study for a CMP, can be prepared for some or all of the coastal areas within a local government area.

The CM Act also prescribes the matters which must be considered in a CMP, and the processes required in the preparation, adoption and gazettal of the CMP, including community engagement.

Noting that the CM Act (section 15(1)) provides for a CMP to deal with *issues affecting the areas to which the program is to apply*, it is open for the CMP to address only the relevant hazards rather than seek to address hazards which are not present or not sufficiently present to be considered an issue affecting the subject area.

2.3 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

There is a clear linkage between the State's planning system and the NSW marine and coastal management system.

Notably the CM Act provides, at section 10(1) that:

a local environmental plan under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* may amend a State environmental planning policy under that Act to identify a coastal management area (or part of such an area) for the purposes of this Act.

The CM Act also provides, at section 15, that a coastal management program (CMP) must, amongst other things do the following:

identify how and when those actions [to address coastal management issues] are to be implemented, including those to be implemented by local councils under Chapter 13 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, those to be implemented under environmental planning instruments and development control plans under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and those to be implemented by public authorities.

Finally, section 22 of the CM Act deals with the implementation of a CMP. Subclause 22(2) stipulates that a Council is to give effect to its CMP in the preparation of planning proposals and development control plans (DCPs).

This means that a Council may establish or amend mapped areas under the CM SEPP through the process of making a planning proposal. That power is limited (under EP&A Act section 3.31(1)) to land within the local government area of the local plan making authority and such areas of the State (including coastal waters) as the plan-making authority (Council) determines.

Within the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), Division 3.4 of Part 3 deals with the making of local environmental plans, including the preparation and submission of planning proposals. Importantly, section 3.33 of the EP&A Act provides that:

the planning proposal authority is required to prepare a document that explains the intended effect of the proposed instrument and sets out the justification for making the proposed instrument ('the planning proposal').

Section 3.33 also requires that a planning proposal includes stated objectives, an explanation of the provisions to be included in the instrument (in this case the LEP), the justification of those provisions, details of community consultation undertaken, and maps which show the proposed application of the changes.

It is also noted that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) has prepared a guide to making planning proposals, and this will be used to assist in the preparation and administration of any planning proposed prepared for CM SEPP purposes.

Serving both purposes means that where both statutes require a process to be followed, the Central Coast CMP will adopt the more stringent requirement, to ensure that both sets of requirements are satisfied. For example, the evidence and consultation should be at a standard sufficient to meet the requirements of a planning proposal.

2.4 Local Government Act 1993

The *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act) provides a fundamental legal framework for the system of local government in NSW.

Part 2 of Chapter 13 of the LG Act provides for strategic planning within a local government area. Importantly, this chapter deals with the key strategic and implementation planning arrangements which need to be integrated with a CMP. The LG Act provides for:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Resourcing Strategy
- Delivery Program
- Operational Plan

- Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines

Note that the Community Strategic Plan (CSP), which is the core strategic plan to articulate a ten-year vision for the community, must address (amongst other things) key social, economic and environmental issues, and must have regard to State and regional plans.

Amongst other things, the LG Act also provides for a council to make and apply a levy for coastal protection services (Sections 496B and 553B) and the reduction of rates for land that has suffered physical damage such as flood, tidal inundation or coastal hazards.

The other important LG Act provision relating to coastal management is Section 733 within Division 2 Liability. This provision creates an exemption from liability for councils under specific circumstances, including:

(1) A council does not incur any liability in respect of—

(a) any advice furnished in good faith by the council relating to the likelihood of any land being flooded or the nature or extent of any such flooding, or

(b) anything done or omitted to be done in good faith by the council in so far as it relates to the likelihood of land being flooded or the nature or extent of any such flooding.

(2) A council does not incur any liability in respect of—

(a) any advice furnished in good faith by the council relating to the likelihood of any land in the coastal zone being affected by a coastline hazard (as described in the coastal management manual under the *Coastal Management Act 2016*) or the nature or extent of any such hazard, or

(b) anything done or omitted to be done in good faith by the council in so far as it relates to the likelihood of land being so affected.

And further that:

(3) Without limiting subsections (1), (2) and (2A), those subsections apply to—

(a) the preparation or making of an environmental planning instrument, including a planning proposal for the proposed environmental planning instrument, or a development control plan, or the granting or refusal of consent to a development application, or the determination of an application for a complying development certificate, under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and

(b) the preparation and adoption of a coastal management program under the *Coastal Management Act 2016* (and the preparation and making of a coastal zone management plan under the *Coastal Protection Act 1979* that is continued in effect by operation of clause 4 of Schedule 3 to the *Coastal Management Act 2016*), and

(c) the imposition of any condition in relation to an application referred to in paragraph (a), and

(d) advice furnished in a certificate under section 149 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and

(e) the carrying out of flood mitigation works, and

(f) the carrying out of coastal protection works, and

(f1) the carrying out of bush fire hazard reduction works, and

(f2) anything done or omitted to be done regarding beach erosion or shoreline recession on Crown land (including Crown managed land) or land owned or controlled by a council or a public authority, and

(f3) the failure to upgrade flood mitigation works or coastal protection works in response to projected or actual impacts of climate change, and

(f4) the failure to undertake action to enforce the removal of illegal or unauthorised structures that results in erosion of a beach or land adjacent to a beach, and

(f5) the provision of information relating to climate change or sea level rise, and

(f6) (Repealed)

(g) any other thing done or omitted to be done in the exercise of a council's functions under this or any other Act.

(4) Without limiting any other circumstances in which a council may have acted in good faith, a council is, unless the contrary is proved, taken to have acted in good faith for the purposes of this section if the advice was furnished, or the thing was done or omitted to be done—

(a) substantially in accordance with the principles contained in the relevant manual most recently notified under subsection (5) at that time, or

(b) substantially in accordance with the principles and mandatory requirements set out in the current coastal management manual under the *Coastal Management Act 2016*, or

(c) in accordance with a direction under section 14(2) of the *Coastal Management Act 2016*.

The CM Act also provides, at section 15, that a coastal management program (CMP) must, amongst other things do the following:

identify how and when those actions [to address coastal management issues] are to be implemented, including those to be implemented by local councils under Chapter 13 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, those to be implemented under environmental planning instruments and development control plans under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and those to be implemented by public authorities.

2.5 Marine Estate Management Act 2014

The *Marine Estate Management Act 2014* forms part of the NSW Marine Estate Management Framework. The framework comprises statutory instruments, strategies, assessment, plans and policy settings, and is administered under the auspices of the Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA).

The key legislative instruments are:

- *Marine Estate Management Act 2014*;
- Marine Estate Management Regulation 2017;
- Marine Estate Management (Management Rules) Regulation 1999; and,
- Aquatic Reserves Notification 2015.

The *Marine Estate Management Act 2014* (MEM Act) provides for strategic and integrated management of the NSW marine estate, including the marine waters, coasts and estuaries.

The MEM Act does this by:

- providing for the management of the marine estate consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development;
- establishing two advisory committees, a Marine Estate Management Authority and Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel;
- requiring the development of a Marine Estate Management Strategy to address priority threats identified through threat and risk assessment;
- facilitating the maintenance of ecological integrity, and economic, social, cultural and scientific opportunities;
- promoting the coordination of government programs; and
- providing for a comprehensive system of marine parks and aquatic reserves.

The Act is supported by regulations that set out the rules for managing the marine estate and marine parks, and an aquatic reserve notification is in place with management rules for aquatic reserves.

It is important to recognise the linkages between the MEM Act and the preparation of a Scoping Study under the CM Act. Specifically, section 3 of the CM Act sets out the objectives for that act, and there is a specific objective which is:

(m) to support the objects of the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014*.

2.6 Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983

The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* has a number of purposes, including to provide for Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW and to vest land in those bodies.

The Act makes provision for claimable Crown lands and other dealings by Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC). It also provides for agreements to permit hunting, fishing and gathering by Aboriginal groups or persons.

The Central Coast land is within the administrative area of three LALCs:

- Darkinjung
- Bahtabah
- Metropolitan

2.7 Crown Land Management Act 2016

Much of the intertidal and submerged land on the open coast of the Central Coast LGA is Crown land up to the Mean High Water Mark.

The Act requires, amongst other things, that environmental, social, cultural heritage and economic considerations to be taken into account in decision-making about Crown land. This includes coastal management decisions regarding Crown land.

For the purposes of the Act, the principles of Crown land management are:

- (a) that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land, and
- (b) that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible, and
- (c) that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged, and
- (d) that, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged, and
- (e) that, where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity, and
- (f) that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

It is noted that the Act also provides (Division 4.2) for Crown land to be vested in local councils, or (Division 4.3) in other government bodies.

2.8 National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act) provides for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage in NSW, and for the reservation of land for that purpose. Protected areas can include nature reserves, national parks, Aboriginal areas and historic sites.

There are a number of protected areas within the coastal zone of the Central Coast, including:

- Wyrabalong National Park
- Brisbane Water National Park
- Bouddi National Park
- Dharug National Park
- Popran National Park
- Wamberal Lagoon Nature Reserve
- Colongra Swamp Nature Reserve
- Cockle Bay Nature Reserve
- Tuggerah Nature Reserve
- Rileys Island Nature Reserve

- Pelican Island Nature Reserve
- Lion Island Nature Reserve
- Saratoga Island Nature Reserve
- Munmorah State Conservation Area
- Lake Macquarie State Conservation Area
- Tuggerah State Conservation Area

Aboriginal places within the coastal zone gazetted under the NPW Act include:

- Tuggerah Lakes Resting Place (within Tuggerah Nature Reserve)

2.9 Fisheries Management Act 1994

The Fisheries Management Act 1994 (FM Act) provides for the conservation of fish stocks and key fish habitats, and promotes ecologically sustainable development in the fishing and aquaculture industries. The FM Act also includes provisions for the conservation of threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and for the regulation of threatening processes.

Marine and estuarine threatened species currently listed are:

- Grey nurse shark; and
- Marine brown algae

Grey nurse sharks are highly mobile and can occur throughout the coastal waters of NSW, including the Central Coast. The Marine brown algae has an indicative distribution limited to the mid north coast of NSW. There is a National Recovery Plan for the Grey Nurse Shark (Commonwealth of Australia 2014) which includes protective measures to assist in the recovery of the Grey Nurse Shark populations.

The FM Act also provides for the leasing and licencing of land and activities within public waters. This can include leasing land for aquaculture.

The FM Act provides for the protection of mangroves, seagrasses and other marine vegetation (Division 4) and includes provisions to regulate dredging and reclamation work.

2.10 Heritage Act 1977

The NSW Heritage Act 1977 provides for the management of heritage items and landscapes across NSW.

There are numerous items listed within the Central Coast LGA, and those with a specific coastal relevance include:

- Foreshore land and structures, 6 Pixie Avenue, Green Point (#01306)
- Hawkesbury River Rail Bridge and Long Island Group, Brooklyn (#01040)
- HMAS Parramatta Shipwreck and Memorial, Bar Point (#01676)
- Rosemount (house), 36 Village Road, East Saratoga (00286)

- The Entrance Ocean Pools, Ocean Parade, The Entrance (01663)
- Norah Head Light Station, Bush Street, Norahville (01753)
- Hargraves House, 3 Elizabeth Drive, Norahville (00131)

2.11 Central Coast Local Environmental Plans

There are two local environmental planning instruments relevant to the Central Coast:

- Gosford Local Environmental Plan 2014 (GLEP 2014)
- Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2006 (WLEP 2013)

Council is currently working towards a consolidated LEP for the entire LGA to create a consistent set of development controls and land-use plans to reflect the amalgamation of the former Wyong Shire and Gosford City Councils.

As part of the State-wide initiative to consolidate the number of local councils, the State government issued *Guidance for Merged Councils on Planning Functions* (May 2016). Some of the key matters to note are

- the previous decisions and actions of former councils are recognised as decisions and actions that the new council can rely on;
- a newly amalgamated council requires a new vision to support positive change and to provide a shared sense of direction guiding communities to a resilient and sustainable future;
- the amalgamation process provides an opportunity for councils to foster new ways of engagement and participation with the community;
- the expectation is that councils will maintain existing development rights and opportunities, ensure developments contribute positively to a sustainable future and the transition of centres and corridors are managed in an open and engaged manner; and
- councils should work to harmonise strategic planning.

2.11.1 Gosford Local Environmental Plan 2014

The Gosford Local Environmental Plan 2014 (GLEP 2014), consistent with the Standard Instrument- Principal Local Environmental Plan, zones the submerged land within the local government area (LGA). Two of the three waterways zones have been adopted, being W1 Natural Waterways and W2 Recreational Waterways.

The objectives of submerged land zoned W1 are:

- To protect the ecological and scenic values of natural waterways.
- To prevent development that would have an adverse effect on the natural values of waterways in this zone.
- To provide for sustainable fishing industries and recreational fishing.
- To provide for aquaculture.

The objectives for submerged land zoned W2 are:

- To protect the ecological, scenic and recreation values of recreational waterways.
- To allow for water-based recreation and related uses.
- To provide for sustainable fishing industries and recreational fishing.

The zoning of the coastal lakes, estuaries and lagoons varies. Terrigal Lagoon and Avoca Lake are zoned W1; Hawkesbury River, Mullet Creek and Mangrove Creek are zoned W2. Mooney Mooney Creek has sections zoned W1 and W2. Wamberal Lagoon is zoned E1. Brisbane Water is zoned W2.

Other (dry) land is zoned according to the intended use and a range of zoning categories are applied across the LGA. The inter-tidal areas of beaches on the open coast tend to be un-zoned land under GLEP 2014 but are generally adjacent to the foreshore areas which are typically zoned RE1 Public Recreation.

The GLEP 2014 includes a local provisions acid sulfate soils (Clause 7.1), flood planning (Clause 7.2) and floodplain risk management (Clause 7.3), all of which will generally have development implications for coastal land.

The GLEP 2014 also switches of complying development provisions within an environmentally sensitive area, which includes coastal waters, coastal lakes and coastal wetlands, and the normal provisions relating to development near boundaries is also switched off for land within the coastal zone.

2.11.2 Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2013

The Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2013 (WLEP 2013), consistent with the Standard Instrument- Principal Local Environmental Plan, zones the submerged land within the local government area (LGA). Two of the three waterways zones have been adopted, being W1 Natural Waterways and W2 Recreational Waterways.

The objectives of submerged land zoned W1 are:

- To protect the ecological and scenic values of natural waterways.
- To prevent development that would have an adverse effect on the natural values of waterways in this zone.
- To provide for sustainable fishing industries and recreational fishing.
- To provide for aquaculture.

The objectives for submerged land zoned W2 are:

- To protect the ecological, scenic and recreation values of recreational waterways.
- To allow for water-based recreation and related uses.
- To provide for sustainable fishing industries and recreational fishing.

Tuggerah Lake, Budgewoi Lake and Lake Munmorah are zoned W2.

Other (dry) land is zoned according to the intended use and a range of zoning categories are applied across the LGA. The inter-tidal areas of beaches on the open coast and the adjacent foreshore areas are typically zoned RE1 Public Recreation.

The WLEP 2013 includes a local provisions acid sulfate soils (Clause 7.1), flood planning (Clause 7.2) and floodplain risk management (Clause 7.3), all of which will generally have development implications for coastal land. Clause 7.5 provides standards for development on the foreshore area and Clause 7.6 is focussed on ensuring that access to the foreshore is considered when development is proposed.

The WLEP 2013 also switches of complying development provisions within an environmentally sensitive area, which includes coastal waters, coastal lakes and coastal wetlands, and the normal provisions relating to development near boundaries is also switched off for land within the coastal zone.

3 Policies, strategies, plans and reports

3.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018

As noted elsewhere, the State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018 (CM SEPP) is the primary policy mechanism directing coastal management in NSW.

The CM SEPP sets the development standards and assessment requirements for activities within each of the coastal management areas. Maps gazetted as part of the CM SEPP set the spatial extent of the application of each coastal management area, noting however that no Coastal Vulnerability Area map was included when the CM SEPP was made.

The CM SEPP also lists coastal lakes within NSW. There are two categories:

- Sensitive coastal lakes; and
- Other coastal lakes

There are no sensitive coastal lakes within the Central Coast LGA.

Several lakes relevant to the LGA are listed as 'other coastal lakes', and these include:

- Avoca Lake;
- Cockrone Lake;
- Terrigal Lagoon;
- Tuggerah Lake (including Lakes Budgewoi and Munmorah); and
- Lake Macquarie.

3.2 Central Coast Regional Plan 2036

The *Central Coast Regional Plan 2036* is the NSW Government's blueprint for the Central Coast Region.

The Central Coast is acknowledged as being the State's fastest growing corridor.

The Plan will guide the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years. Importantly, it identifies:

- economic, social and environmental opportunities to build a more prosperous region; and
- actions to guide development and land use.

Some of the key drivers for land-use planning at the regional level include:

- a projected population increase of 75,500 more people by 2036;
- approximately 55% of the increase will be in the 65 years and older category; and
- a further 41,500 dwellings will be required.

The strategic goals identified by the Regional Plan are:

- a prosperous Central Coast with more jobs close to home;
- protect the natural environment and manage the use of agricultural and resource lands;
- well-connected communities and attractive lifestyles; and
- a variety of housing choice to suit needs and lifestyles.

The Regional Plan identifies the revitalisation of Gosford City Centre as a priority action. One of the themes that emerged from the community consultation regarding Gosford City Centre was the need to consider flooding, climate change and sea level rise, and to increase sustainability requirements for new buildings.

As part of Goal #2 to protect the natural environment and manage the use of agricultural and resource lands, there are several directions and actions identified with a coastal focus. Some key examples include:

Action 8.1: Protect the Central Coast's scenic amenity by planning for development that respects the distinct qualities of different places.

Action 8.2: Identify and protect heritage values to minimise the impact of urban growth and development, and to recognise its contribution to the character and landscape of the region.

Action 12.1: Identify terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity values and protect areas of high environmental value to sustain the lifestyle, economic success and environmental health of the region.

Action 12.3: Undertake a precinct approach to biodiversity offsetting in northern Wyong to protect riparian corridors and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and achieve the conservation and development objectives of the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan.

Action 12.4: Strengthen the Coastal Open Space System by expanding its links and extending new corridors to balance growth in the north of the region and protect the network of natural areas across the region.

Action 13.5: Implement catchment-based plans for the ongoing sustainable management and health of estuaries in the region.

Action 14.1: Manage the risks of climate change and improve the region's resilience to hazards such as flooding, coastal erosion, bushfire, mine subsidence and land contamination.

Action 14.2: Review and update floodplain risk and coastal management programs to manage flood risk and protect the coast, particularly where urban growth is being investigated.

Action 14.3: Incorporate new knowledge on regional climate projections and related cumulative impacts in local plans for new urban development.

3.3 Central Coast Local Strategic Planning Statement

Central Coast Council's first draft Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is a 20-year planning vision, including land use, infrastructure and sustainability objectives to demonstrate how the Central Coast will change to meet the community's needs over the next 20 years. J200377 | RP#2 | v1 16

The LSPS includes the following:

- **Vision** - The future direction for the Central Coast is framed in the LSPS as a 20-year land use vision which together with Council's Community Strategic Plan will guide the social, environmental and economic aspirations of the community.
- **Planning Priorities** - Works alongside the Community Strategic Plan to guide future land use decisions.
- **Actions** - Actions required for achieving the vision and planning priorities.
- **Implementation** - The basis on which the council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.

The Draft Central Coast Strategic Planning Statement was published in 2020. More information is available at www.yourvoiceourcoast.com/draft-central-coast-local-strategic-planning-statement

3.4 Central Coast Council Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Central Coast Council operates under an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPR Framework).

The IPR Framework supports a suite of strategic documents including:

- Community Strategic Plan;
- Delivery Program and Operational Plan;
- Resourcing Strategy; and,
- Environment and Sustainability Strategy.

3.4.1 Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2018-2028 – also known as “One Central Coast” – was developed through consultation with the community to shape the vision for the Central Coast over a ten-year horizon.

With respect to coastal matters, the CSP notes:

The values of the Central Coast community are strongly tied to our local natural environment, including our beaches, waterways, ridges, estuaries, lakes and valley floors.

Our natural environment is important to our coastal identity.

As a coastal region, the Central Coast is vulnerable to climate change impacts. Issues include sea level rise, safety in extreme weather events and secure access to fresh water. The need to address climate change is imperative, as is implementing frameworks that address climate risks.

Maintaining our natural assets is a critical component of what we value as a community.

The CSP clearly acknowledges the fundamental value placed on the coast and waterways of the LGA. It is why most people choose to live here.

3.4.2 Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2019-2020

Council has prepared a joint Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2019-2020.

These documents identify budgets and funding sources (rates, grants etc), and key areas of expenditure. The Delivery Program is reviewed annually, and an Operational Plan reflects year-to-year resourcing requirements.

These documents both inform the Long-Term Financial Plan (10 years), the Workforce Strategy (4 years) and Asset Management Strategy (10 years) for Council.

3.5 Central Coast Development Control Plans

Two operational Development Control Plans have been retained since the amalgamation of the former Gosford and Wyong councils:

- Gosford Development Control Plan 2013
- Wyong Development Control Plan 2013

Broadly, these development control plans (DCPs) identify matters such as the desired scenic quality and local character of a precinct, and set development controls and performance measures to achieve the preferred outcome. DCPs are policy documents and not statutory instruments. The primary purpose of a DCP is to support the aims and objectives of the relevant local environmental plan.

The former Wyong Shire and Gosford City Councils have a strong tradition of planning for coastal hazards, evidenced by the 2011 Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) for Wyong Coastlines and the 2015 Gosford Beaches CZMP. Council now has up-to-date plans for all geographic coastal catchments and beaches and coastal policy within the environmental planning instruments applying to the Central Coast Region.

There is a distinction between the mapping used in each former Council regarding development controls for coastal hazards.

The coastal building line for the Gosford DCP uses one line, being the most landward of:

- the 2050 zone of slope adjustment; or
- the general allowable setback from the seaward cadastral boundary for beachfront property being 6m for single storey dwellings and 10m for multi storey structures; or
- the previous (existing) building lines.

The Wyong DCP on the other hand adopts a time/risk-based approach and allocates development controls depending on whether the land is within:

- an immediate coastal hazard planning line; or
- a high risk coastal hazard planning line; or
- a low risk coastal hazard planning line.

3.5.1 Gosford Development Control Plan

The Gosford Development Control Plan (GDGP) covers a range of matters relevant to coastal development. Note that there are specific parts relating to:

- acid sulfate soils;
- coastal frontage; and

- scenic quality.

There are also location-specific standards for selected waterfront precincts.

3.5.2 Wyong Development Control Plan

Wyong Development Control Plan (WDCP) covers a range of matters relevant to coastal development. Note that there are specific chapters relating to:

- coastal hazards;
- floodplain management; and
- wetlands management.

Council is intending to consolidate these DCPs in the future.

3.6 Central Coast Council Climate Change Policy 2018

The Central Coast Climate Change Policy 2018 (issued in July 2019) articulates the policy setting and the strategic principles for Council in terms of mitigation and adaptation.

The six strategic principles are:

1. Council endorse the Ecologically Sustainable Development values through integrating social, economic and environmental considerations into Council's decision making through the implementation of the four principles a) precautionary principles, b) inter-generational equity, c) conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity and d) improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanism.
2. Council implement a holistic approach to anticipate and adapt to climate change actions that comprise the time scales such as now and the future as well as the impacts of the complex interactions and interdependencies between the human and the environment systems.
3. Council implement an evidence based decision making to respond, to adapt and build resilience to Climate Change.
4. Council implement a collective decision making approach to collaborate and partner with the community, business and other stakeholders in framing and implementing climate actions through learning and shared responsibility.
5. Council implement a proactive approach and ensure continuity to better anticipate and adapt to complex challenges posed by the changing climate.
6. Council implement a Place-based approach to enhance Council and community capacity for climate resilience that is context specific, knowledge based and collaborative.

Commitments under this Plan which are specific to coastal management are:

- acknowledge the importance of shared responsibility across all levels of Council, community and business in addressing climate change impacts and transitioning towards a Net Zero Emissions Central Coast Region;

- embed climate change planning within Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, namely the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery and Operational Plans and Council’s Corporate Plan;
- advancing opportunities to finance climate change initiatives and invest savings from climate actions towards achieving sustainable development goals for the Central Coast region;
- develop Place Based Climate Change Action Plans in partnership with the community that establishes regional targets for mitigation and prioritises local adaptation planning (e.g. sea level rise, coastal hazards, disaster management);
- undertake ongoing monitoring and assessment of climate change risks Climate Change Policy – Central Coast Council and their impacts on ecological, social, economic and physical built forms systems based on best available science;
- incorporate climate change risks in strategic and infrastructure planning for the region to maximise local liveability through informed land use planning, development of planning controls and guidelines that facilitates regional urban growth, transport connectivity and utility services;
- invest in climate resilience opportunities through advancing technology, innovation and alternative industries for local employment and continuous improvement in the planning and management of existing built and natural assets, infrastructure renewal projects and renewable resources;
- undertake climate change risk assessment and incorporate risks and vulnerabilities to inform asset life cycle analysis for all new and existing infrastructure assets, to meet current and projected demands and develop relevant adaptation and mitigation strategies to ensure climate resilience;
- support initiatives and education programs to enhance the Central Coast community’s understanding of and build resilience to climate change risks; and
- develop strategies, plans and development controls to protect, conserve and work in partnerships with community and local agencies to enhance resilience of biodiversity across the Central Coast region.

3.7 Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028

The Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028 sets out a ten year plan to implement the vision the objectives of the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014*, and to articulate the vision for the NSW marine estate.

Relevant to the Central Coast Scoping Study are the ten underpinning principles of management. Those principles are:

1. effective community engagement to identify and prioritise benefits and threats;
2. identification of priority actions will be based on threat and risk assessment;
3. values will be assigned to enable trade-off decision between alternative uses of the marine estate;
4. best available information will be used in trade-off decisions, but judgement will still be required;
5. the wellbeing of future generations will be considered;
6. existing access arrangements will be respected;

7. the precautionary principle will be applied;
8. efficient and cost-effective management to achieve community outcomes;
9. management decisions will be transparent and adjust in response to new information; and
10. management performance will be measured, monitored and reported and information pursued to fill critical knowledge gaps.

The management initiatives advanced by the Strategy are:

- improving water quality and reducing litter;
- delivering healthy coastal habitats with sustainable use and development;
- planning for climate change;
- protecting the Aboriginal cultural values of the marine estate;
- reducing impacts on threatened and protected species;
- ensuring sustainable fishing and aquaculture;
- enabling safe and sustainable boating;
- enhancing social, cultural and economic benefits; and
- delivering effective governance.

3.8 Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment

The Central Coast LGA is situated within the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion.

MEMA began the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment in 2015 and recommended a number of management initiatives to enhance marine biodiversity conservation whilst achieving balanced community outcomes including opportunities for a wide range of recreational and commercial uses. This project formed part of a suite of priority NSW Government initiatives to be delivered as part of its new approach to the sustainable management of the NSW marine estate.

Community engagement formed an early stage of the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment. The outcomes are documented in the MEMA publication *Summary of Hawkesbury Shelf community and stakeholder engagement* (MEMA 2015).

MEMA also conducted a formal Threat and Risk Assessment (TARA) to identify the priority threats and risks to the environmental assets and social and economic benefits derived from the bioregion, and then an evaluation was carried out of the threats causing high and moderate risks to determine those that were 'acceptable' under current management settings, and those that were outside Marine Estate Management Authority agencies' jurisdiction to manage and those that required further management.

3.9 Proposed Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Park

The Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment has been through three stages. The third stage has produced a proposal for a new marine park in the bioregion to reduce risks at a local scale from some site-based threats, while helping to conserve marine biodiversity. It is designed to complement the initiatives and management actions of the Strategy, while allowing for a wide range of recreational and commercial activities to still occur.

The NSW Government has released a discussion paper describing the threats and opportunities for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion (between Newcastle and Wollongong) which includes a proposal to establish a marine park. It includes a network of 25 distinct sites, rather than a single large marine park. Three zone types - sanctuary zones, conservation zones and special purpose zones are proposed across the 25 sites.

Sites within the Central Coast LGA include:

- Bird Island;
- Norah Head;
- Tuggerah Bay;
- Forresters Beach;
- Ex-HMAS Adelaide;
- Bouddi; and
- Lion Island.

3.10 Local Land Services - Greater Sydney Local Strategic Plan

The *Local Land Service Act 2013* requires the development of regional strategies to inform the deployment of local land services through resources and creation of partnerships across the regions.

Greater Sydney Local Land Services has prepared a *Local Strategic Plan 2016-2021* for the Greater Sydney region, which includes the Central Coast LGA. The Plan sets the vision, priorities and strategy for the delivery of local land services in the region, including economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Greater Sydney Local Land Services implements natural resource management and sustainable agriculture programs with funding from both the NSW and Australian Governments.

Funding is available to landholders, local government and other groups to carry out projects that align with the Greater Sydney Local Strategic Plan and funder priorities.

The Plan has identified six strategic objectives, the objectives incorporate the four State-wide goals and localise them to the landscape of the Greater Sydney region.

The Strategies that apply to funding natural resource management works in the Bate Bay area are:

- Strategy 1.1 Improvement management of key vertebrate pests.
- Strategy 1.4 Improve management of pest plants to minimise impacts of agricultural and environmental assets.

- Strategy 3.3 Improve the condition of Greater Sydney's harbours and estuaries to maximise recreational, commercial and environmental values (stormwater controls as needed).
- Strategy 4.1 Increase the extent and connectivity of priority native vegetation to improve ecosystem health and connectivity.
- Strategy 4.2 Protect and restore key biodiversity assets such as wetland and rainforests to improve ecosystem health and resilience.

Local Land Services Greater Sydney Region have a number of key programs across the region, and those programs with a coastal relevance in the Central Coast LGA include:

- Habitat Restoration for the Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater;
- Riparian Health and Threatened Species Programs;
- Every Bit Counts (small farm and rural lifestyle) Program; and
- Central Coast Wild Dog and Fox Program.

3.11 Tourism and Transport Plan

The *Tourism and Transport Plan* (March 2018) is a sub-plan of *Future Transport 2056*.

Some key elements of the Plan are:

- boating plays a key role in supporting the visitor economy;
- visitors are attracted to a range of recreational activities on the water in NSW including boating, fishing and yachting;
- transport can facilitate growing nature and cultural tourism in more locations in NSW; and
- nature-based tourism includes outdoor and nature experiences, and is one of the main reasons people visit regional NSW. In 2016 visitors who took part in a nature-based activity stayed 46.2 million nights in regional NSW, spending \$8.5 billion. Thirty-two per cent of visitors to regional NSW participate in a nature tourism experience.

3.12 Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan

The *Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan* (March 2018) also supports the NSW Government's Future Transport 2056 strategy.

One of the key initiatives for the Central Coast is faster rail connections to Newcastle and Sydney.

Gosford is identified as a 'satellite city' and growth will generate greater transport demand, including private vehicles and public transport. From a coastal perspective, the 'hub-and-spoke' model proposed under the Plan includes ferry connections between Woy Woy, Empire Bay, Wagstaffe, Ettalong and Palm Beach.

3.13 Maritime Safety Plan 2017-2021

The Maritime Safety Plan 2017-2021 sets the strategic direction in maritime safety over four years. It provides for continual improvement in safety and infrastructure State-wide.

The objective of this plan is to continue the downward trend in the drowning fatality rate and to further reduce the rate of fatalities and serious injuries on NSW waterways by 30 per cent by the end of 2021 at 2014 levels.

Seven behaviours and three activities are identified as priority safety issues:

- lifejackets;
- excessive speed;
- weather conditions;
- no proper lookout;
- excess alcohol;
- poor judgement;
- towing activities;
- cold water;
- personal watercraft; and
- paddle craft.

4 Socio-economic context

4.1 Economic performance

The Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan – part of the NSW Government’s Future Transport 2056 initiative - notes that:

In 2014–15 the region contributed \$8.6 billion to the NSW economy, primarily due to its specialisation in agribusiness and food, professional services, health and aged care and freight, logistics and distribution. Opportunities are available to better connect the region’s residents and visitors and in doing so, support the growth of employment within the region.

Gosford is identified as the capital of the region and its renewal has and will continue to attract new residents, jobs, business and investment to the Central Coast. To support this, two growth corridors between Erina and Somersby as well as Tuggerah to Warnervale have been identified under the Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan for increased investment in health, education, advanced manufacturing and service industries.

Regional factors highlighted as desirable for economic growth by the NSW Government (NSW Office of Regional Economic Development) are:

The region continues to attract new business services and government departments due to its cost-competitive location, available land and well-educated workforce.

The region’s strategic location and extensive infrastructure make it a competitive choice for freight and logistics hubs in a range of industries.

The growing ageing population, availability of land and Central Coast’s idyllic lifestyle and climate presents excellent investment opportunities in aged care facilities and services

The Central Coast LGA Gross Regional Product was \$14.33 billion in the year ending June 2019, growing 1.4% since the previous year (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data)

4.2 Governance, infrastructure and centres

The LGA comprises approximately 1,681 square kilometres and is governed by Central Coast Council under five wards:

- Budgewoi;
- Gosford East;
- Gosford West;
- The Entrance; and
- Wyong.

The population is dispersed across a range of urban settings including major administrative and commercial centres such as Gosford and Wyong, as well as dozens of suburbs and villages which are predominantly clustered around the numerous waterways that distinguish the Central Coast.

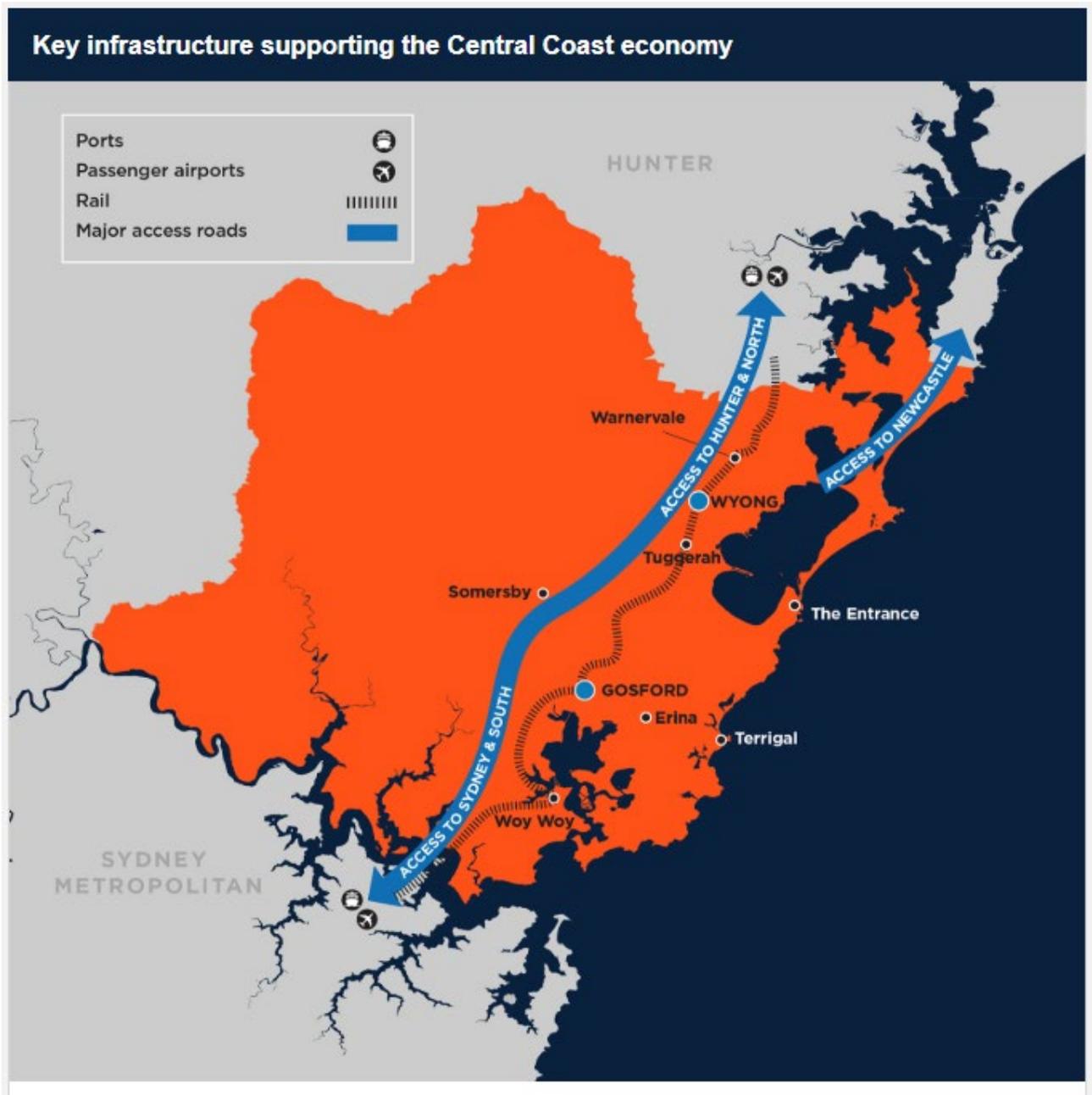
The LGA includes two major hospitals at Gosford and Wyong. The main retail centres are in Erina and Tuggerah, plus numerous local retail precincts in the larger suburban areas.

Industrial land is focussed around Colongra, Doyalson, Jiliby, Kincumber, Lisarow, Mannering Park, North Gosford, Somersby, Tuggerah, West Gosford, Wyoming and Wyong, including collieries and power stations.

The Central Coast LGA features two tertiary institutions (TAFE NSW Hunter Institute - Gosford, Ourimbah and Wyong Campuses, and The University of Newcastle - Central Coast Campus) and numerous private and public schools.

The Central Coast LGA is served by the Sydney-Newcastle Freeway, the Pacific Motorway, the Central Coast Highway, the Pacific Highway, the Sydney-Newcastle railway line and Warnervale Airport. Refer to Figure 4.2.1.

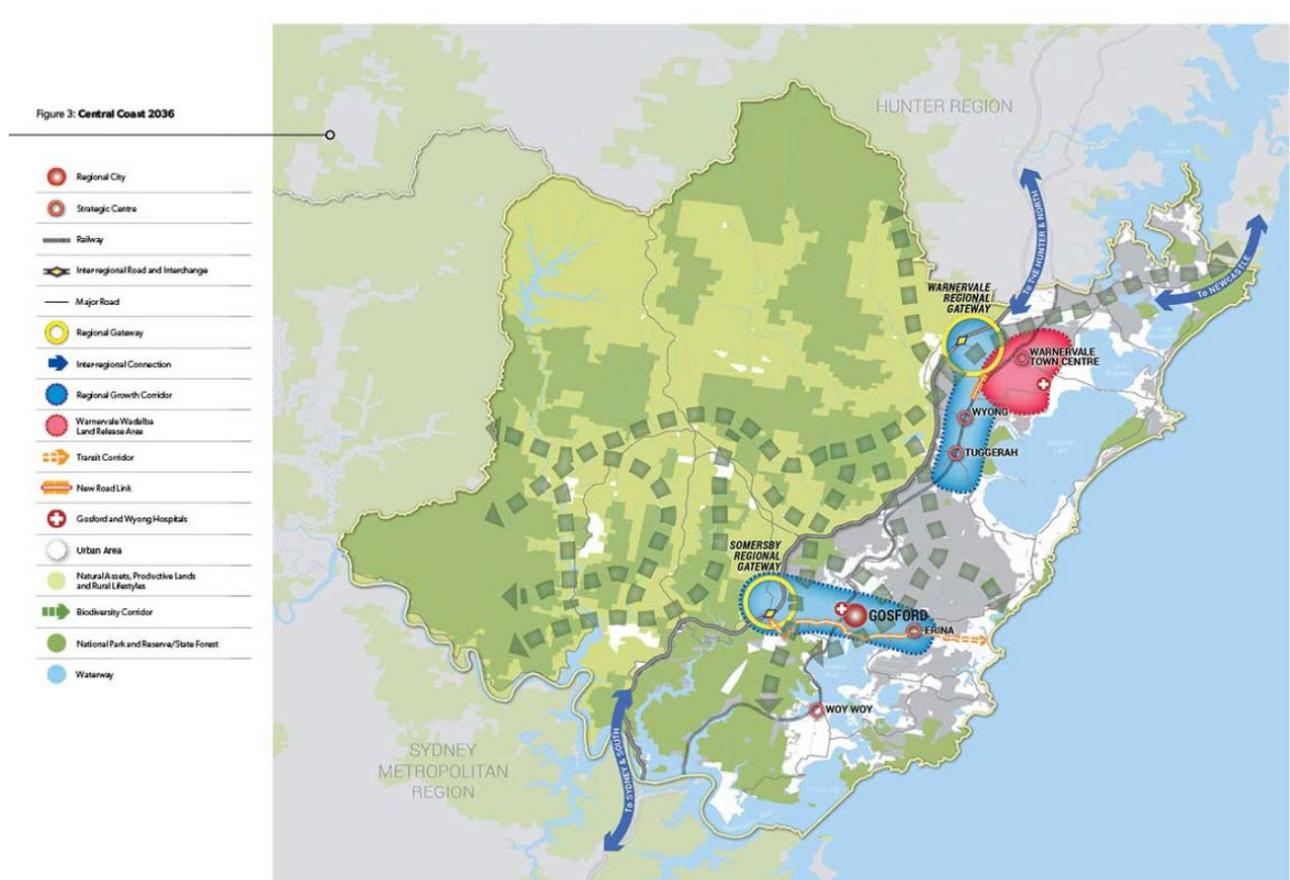
Figure 4.2.1 Key transport infrastructure



Source: Invest Regional (NSW Government)

The Central Coast Regional Plan also identifies two regional growth corridors – one corridor at Warnervale-Wyong-Tuggerah; and one corridor at Somersby-Gosford-Erina. Refer to Figure 4.2.1. Both growth corridors have elements within the coastal zone.

Figure 4.2.1 Growth corridors



Source: Central Coast Regional Plan 2036

4.3 Population

Broadly, the DPIE 2019 Population Projections tell us:

- NSW is living longer and is more active and productive;
- border and coastal regions are retirement havens;
- there is powerful growth in regional hubs; and
- as well as being a destination for overseas migration, the Greater Sydney Region will see more babies than ever before due to the number of potential mothers living in the area.

The most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data for the Central Coast LGA (2018) records a resident population for the whole LGA as 342,047. On a 25 year average, the Central Coast population grows at approximately 1% per annum.

The median age of the population is 41.9 years. The percentage of the population in the working age bracket of 15-64 years is approximately 61% and this has not varied greatly for the past 5 years.

The percentage of the population born overseas (ABS 2016) is 14.6 percent, increasing slightly from 14.0% in 2011.

For the Central Coast LGA, the DPIE data indicates the following projections.

The population of Central Coast is estimated to increase by 95,250 people between 2016 and 2041, from 336,600 to 431,850. The Central Coast will continue to attract working-aged people and their families from areas including Sydney and Newcastle, and continue to support a sizeable retirement population.

The working age population (aged 15-64) is estimated to increase by 205,200 in 2016 to 241,450 in 2041 – a change of 36,250.

The number of children aged 14 and under is estimated to increase by 7,550 children, from 63,600 in 2016 to 71,150 in 2041.

The number of people aged 65 and over is estimated to increase from 67,800 in 2016 to 119,300 by 2041 - a change of 51,500.

The average household size in the Central Coast LGA is currently 2.48 people (ABS 2016) and this is projected to decline slightly to 2.32 people in 2041 (DPIE 2019). The implied dwelling projection is 207,050 in 2041, up from 151,750 in 2016.

4.4 Housing

Residential development on the Central Coast originally clustered around the rail connections in the early post war era but has since evolved to a greater focus on coastal locations.

Analysis by ID Community Demographic Resources indicates that:

There is continued demand for residential development within the Region, catering for both people moving from Sydney and also new households being formed from within the existing population of the Central Coast. Consequently, there is significant pressure for residential expansion within the Region from both existing residents and from people moving to the area.

The future pattern of development is not equal across the Region, with much of the supply of detached dwellings occurring in the north of the Region (the former Wyong Shire), continuing to drive development in the Warnervale area. The south of the Region, in contrast, is likely to continue to lose population to the north, especially as the supply of detached dwellings is likely to become limited over the mid-term, with future residential development instead concentrating on the densification of centres, primarily Gosford.

There are also significant differences in the supply of residential property within the Region which will also have a major influence in structuring different population and household futures over the next five to ten years. Significant new 'greenfield' opportunities are being developed in Woongarah, Wadalba and Warnervale, and Hamlyn Terrace continues to develop. Meanwhile, Gosford-West Gosford has significant potential to develop more intensively as a regional centre, with higher density residential dwellings likely to continue to develop over the forecast period, with a consequent increase in rental stock. The Entrance, North Gosford, Terrigal, Woy Woy – Blackwall, Umina Beach, Wyong and Toukley are expected to have

growth in dwellings in their town centres. This will generally take the form of medium and high-rise development. These areas, and areas such as Kincumber, also have many retirement villages, which are likely to continue to develop or expand, providing housing for empty-nester and retiree households. Elsewhere, there are significant constraints to future development, with limited availability of land suitable for development. Growth in households in the coastal areas is also expected to come from the conversion of holiday dwellings to permanent residences as well as the construction of new dwellings. Finally, aged care services are likely to continue to expand on the Central Coast, prompting increases in people aged 85+.

(Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data).

The average household size in the Central Coast LGA is currently 2.48 people (ABS 2016) and this is projected to decline slightly to 2.32 people in 2041 (DPIE 2019). The implied dwelling projection is 207,050 in 2041, up from 151,750 in 2016.

The number of dwellings recorded at 2016 in the Central Coast LGA was 145,958. This is projected to increase to 184,129 by 2036 - an increase of 26.2%. (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data)

4.5 Employment

The hotspots for employment are clustered around the existing commercial and industrial precinct. There include Gosford City Centre and Erina, and to a lesser extent Woy Woy, Terrigal, Somersby, Alison, Toukley and Mannering Park.

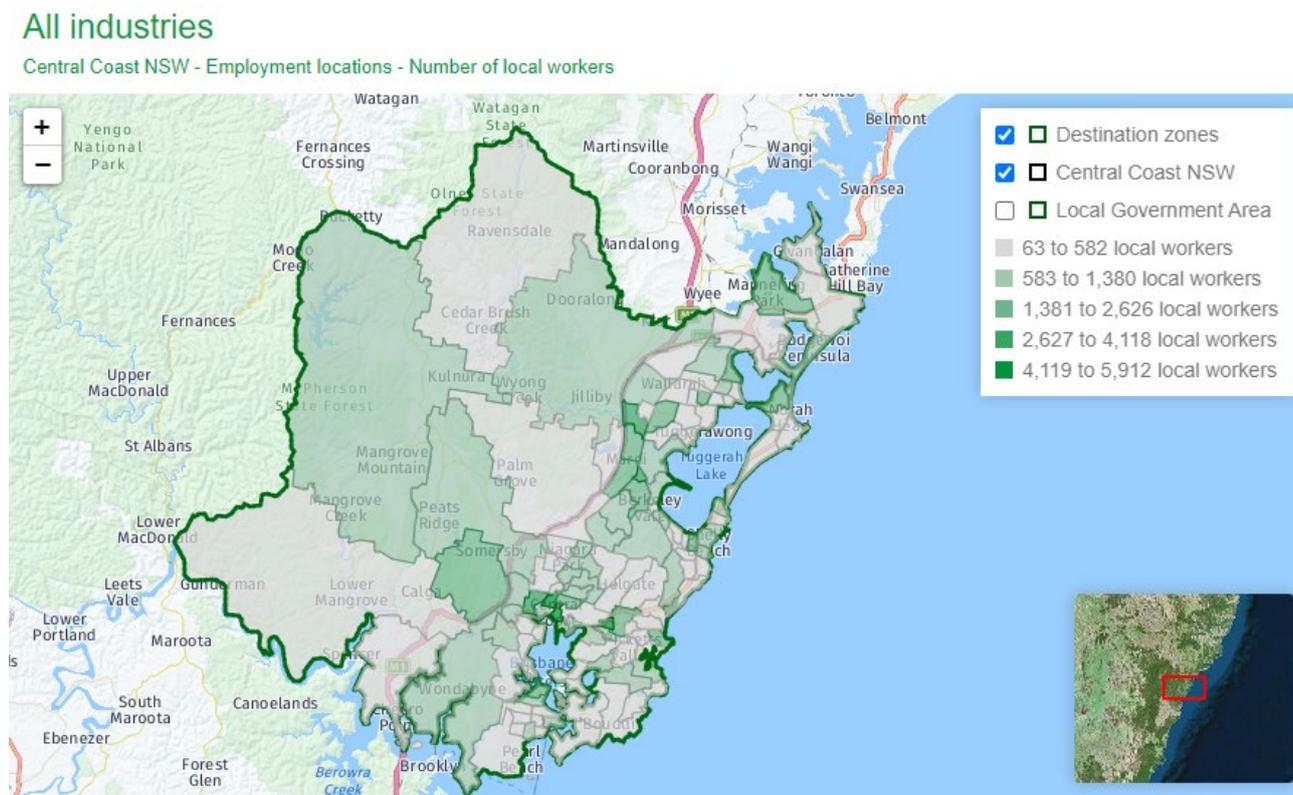
Figure 4.3.1 indicates the locations of employment centres.

The biggest employer (by sector) is Health Care and Social Assistance which accounts for 18% of the employment. The second ranked employment sector is Retail Trade which accounts for 13% of the employment within the LGA. Growth since 2011 has been most pronounced in Construction, Accommodation and Food Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance. Manufacturing experienced the greatest decline as an employment sector within the LGA. (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data)

Approximately 35,300 or 25.3% of the Central Coast LGA resident workers travel outside of the area to work. Sydney is the location for most of the work undertaken by those working outside the area (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data).

The unemployment rate for the Central Coast was 5.1% as at the December quarter of 2019 (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data).

Figure 4.3.1 Employment centres



Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data

4.6 Businesses

There were 24,188 businesses registered within the Central Coast LGA in 2019.

The most common category of business is construction (23.8%) and there was also a notable presence of businesses in Professional, Scientific and Technical (12.3%), Rental, Hiring and Real Estate (9.3%) and Financial and Insurance Services (7.9%) (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data).

4.7 Tourism

Tourism is an important part of the local economy and tends to be focussed on the coastal regions of the LGA.

For 2018/19, there were 875,992 international visitor nights in the Central Coast Council area, accounting for 9.4% of the total visitor nights. The main tourism sector is domestic, with 4,343,114 domestic visitor nights (46.4%) recorded in 2018/19. Domestic day trips revealed similar number at 4,149,784 (44.3%) for the same period. (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on Tourism Research Australia data)

4.8 Agriculture

In 2015/16, the total value of agricultural output in the Central Coast Council area was \$161 million. The largest commodity produced was livestock slaughterings (predominantly poultry), which accounted for 64.0% of the

Central Coast LGA total agricultural output in value terms (Source: ID Community Demographic Resources, based on ABS data).

Key agricultural activity (by gross value) includes chicken and egg production; nurseries, cut flowers and cultivated turf; vegetables and fruit (Source: ABS Agricultural Census 2016-2017).