

# HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC  
PLAN

# OUR HAWKESBURY 2045



[www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

Council acknowledges the Dharug and Darkinjung people as the Traditional Custodians of the land throughout the Hawkesbury.

Council recognises the continuing connection of First Nations people to their Country and respects the cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of this land.



Image: Bellbird Lookout, Kurrajong

# ABOUT THE PLAN

The Community Strategic Plan is Hawkesbury's highest-level plan, outlining the community's priorities and vision for the future.

Written on behalf of the community, it provides strategies to achieve these high level goals and measures to ensure an understanding of how things are changing.

Council takes a lead role in implementation, however, achieving long-term success is a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration across all levels of government, non-government agencies, industry groups, businesses, community organisations and individuals.

Building on the previous Community Strategic Plan, this update incorporates feedback from a detailed community consultation process.



Image: Richmond Park, Richmond

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**GREAT PLACE  
TO LIVE**



**SUSTAINABLE  
ENVIRONMENTS  
AND HERITAGE**



**THRIVING  
ECONOMY**



**EFFECTIVE  
LEADERSHIP**

# OUR COMMUNITY'S VISION

*We see the Hawkesbury as a vibrant and collaborative community living in harmony with our history and environment, whilst valuing our diversity, striving for innovation and a strong economy, to preserve and enhance our lifestyle and identity.*



Image: Hawkesbury Fest, Governor Phillip Park, Windsor

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCILLORS

Dear Hawkesbury Residents,

Thank you for sharing your vision for the future of Our Hawkesbury. Your voices, ideas and aspirations have helped shape the Community Strategic Plan: Our Hawkesbury 2045 (CSP), a long term vision that belongs to all of us.

This plan captures what matters most to you and sets a clear direction for how we will work together to build a strong, connected and resilient Hawkesbury over the next 20 years. The CSP represents a whole of community roadmap that will rely on shared effort, partnerships and active involvement from residents, businesses, community groups, government agencies and other stakeholders.

Delivering on this vision will require strong collaboration. Council is committed to being a leader, partner and advocate, bringing people together, aligning resources, and delivering actions and projects that reflect your priorities. Together, we can shape a future that protects what we value while responding to the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Five key priorities emerged through the CSP community consultation process:

- **Improve roads and invest in infrastructure**
- **Manage development and effectively plan for growth**
- **Support resilience and disaster preparedness**
- **Conserve, protect and value our environment, heritage and history**
- **Create well serviced, liveable communities and places**

This plan presents key strategies to help deliver these priorities, and measures to ensure we are tracking the indicators that help us understand whether we are moving in the right direction.

These are all framed under the four key Strategic Directions:

- 1. Great Place to Live**
- 2. Sustainable Environments and Heritage**
- 3. Thriving Economy**
- 4. Effective Leadership**

These priorities and directions will help guide how we work together. By strengthening community connections and working side by side, we can ensure the Hawkesbury realises the vision for Our Hawkesbury 2045.

Thank you for being a part of this important journey.

# INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

## THE PROCESS

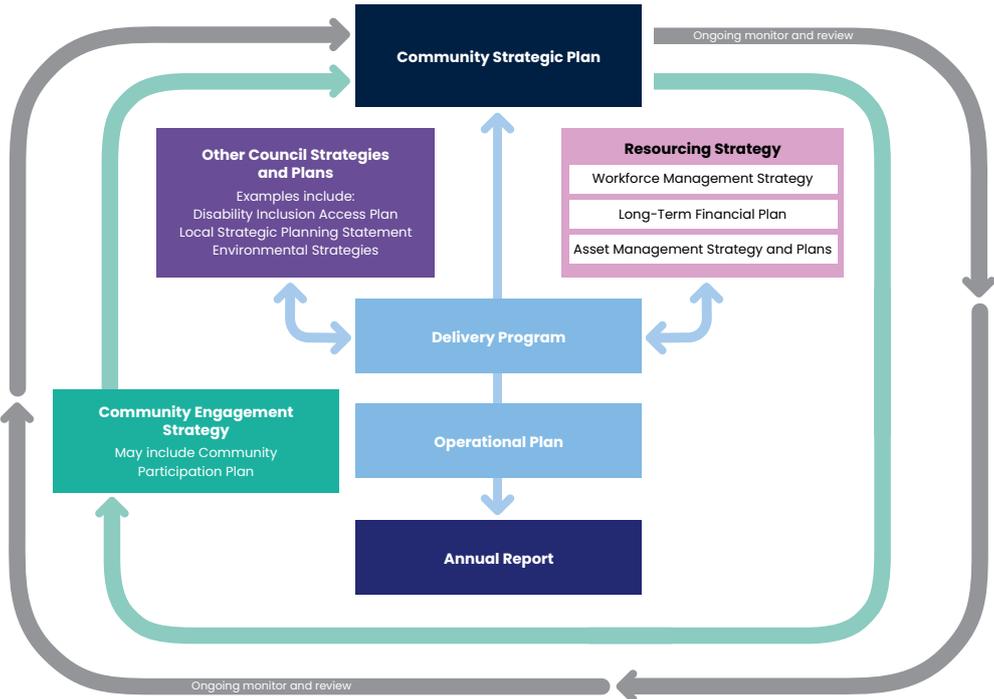
All Councils in NSW operate under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. The IP&R framework guides how each Council develops, documents and reports on their strategic plans under the Local Government Act 1993. It ensures that Council has effective plans for the future of the region, robust actions and projects to move things forward, and touch points to engage and update the community.

## COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (THIS DOCUMENT)

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) sits above all other Council Plans and Policies. Its purpose is to identify the community’s long term (10+ years) priorities, aspirations and outcomes for the future. The strategies in it consider the social, environmental and economic issues that affect the community, and the level of resources realistically available. It also takes into account State and regional planning, as well as civic leadership for the region.

While Council has a custodial role in preparing and updating the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the Hawkesbury (every four years following an election), it is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as State agencies and community groups will be engaged in delivering the long term strategies of the plan.

The CSP is then supported by the strategies and plans developed by Council, which directly translate these priorities and aspirations into activities, actions and projects Council will deliver and resource to help achieve the CSP. These include the four year Delivery Program, Annual Operational Plan and Budget which resource the major informing strategies and plans.



## COUNCIL'S ROLE

The role that Council will play will vary for each of the strategies in this CSP. Although being facilitated by Hawkesbury City Council, the vision is intended to represent the community and key stakeholders of Hawkesbury, and is not just focused on all of the activities internal to the Council. The varying roles that Council will perform in delivering on these strategies are included in the table below.

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### LEAD

Council takes responsibility for delivering projects and actions, with dedicated resources, clear timelines and communication of progress and outcomes.

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### PARTNER

Council works with key partners to deliver projects and actions, focusing on collaboration and ensuring mutual input and benefits.

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### ADVOCATE

Council influences decision-makers by developing an informed position and pushing for changes that support the priorities and strategies.

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### SUPPORT

Council provides assistance, such as in-kind support or resources, to externally led projects and actions that help deliver on the strategies.

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### ENABLE

Council helps build the capacity of others to deliver on the strategies by guiding, connecting, and enabling them to take action on their own initiatives.

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Council's Delivery Program 2025–2029 and Annual Operational Plan outline the specific actions and projects that will be undertaken to help achieve the key strategies of Our Hawkesbury 2045. These plans detail how projects and activities will be resourced and delivered to move the strategies forward. To learn more and view the plans, visit: [Our IP&R Web-page](#)



Image: North Richmond Community Centre, North Richmond

# OUR STORY

The Hawkesbury is a unique area located in the Hawkesbury River Valley. It is the largest Local Government Area in the Sydney Metropolitan Region, covering approximately 2,776km<sup>2</sup>. Our population is growing slowly and has reached 68,704 in 2024.

The Hawkesbury and its townships, rural villages and landscapes share a rich and enduring Indigenous and European cultural heritage.

Prior to European settlement the area was inhabited by the Dharug and Darkinjung peoples for over 40,000 years. The Hawkesbury River (known as Dyarubbin by the Dharug people) was a focus for those people. Its tributaries and floodplains provided abundant natural resources and were places of strong social and spiritual significance for the First Australians. It has been estimated that there were up to 3,000 Aboriginal people living in the Hawkesbury area in 1788.

European explorers first arrived in the Hawkesbury in 1789, making it the third oldest European settlement in Australia. Windsor (originally Green Hills) which was established in 1794, is one of five 'Macquarie Towns', four of which are located within the Hawkesbury. Governor Macquarie had a profound influence on the development and landscapes of the Hawkesbury, which included naming the townships of Windsor, Richmond, Wilberforce and Pitt Town and the layout of their streets, cemeteries and town squares.

The Hawkesbury Local Government Area straddles the divide between the urban metropolitan councils to its east and the rural councils to its west. While it is classified as part of Metropolitan Sydney, its unique blend of urban and rural settlements is uncharacteristic of the metropolitan area.

The Hawkesbury is therefore classed as a metropolitan-rural area by virtue of its location and its natural assets, including its natural beauty, its five rivers and their tributaries, its mountains, national parks and wilderness areas. The heritage towns of Windsor, Richmond, Pitt Town, Wilberforce and Ebenezer are all located within the Hawkesbury.

The agricultural lands that surround the Hawkesbury's towns and villages represent the oldest rural land holdings under continuous cultivation within Australia. The Hawkesbury also contains the oldest church, hotel and public square. Thompson Square, located in Windsor, was named and established by the then Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1811 as recognition of the emancipist Andrew Thompson. Thompson Square and its immediate surrounds is also recognised as the oldest surviving public square in Australia.

The Hawkesbury features several remote locations, extending throughout the Macdonald Valley and along Putty Road. These areas have a unique character, with communities historically relying on the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries for transport, trade, and daily life.

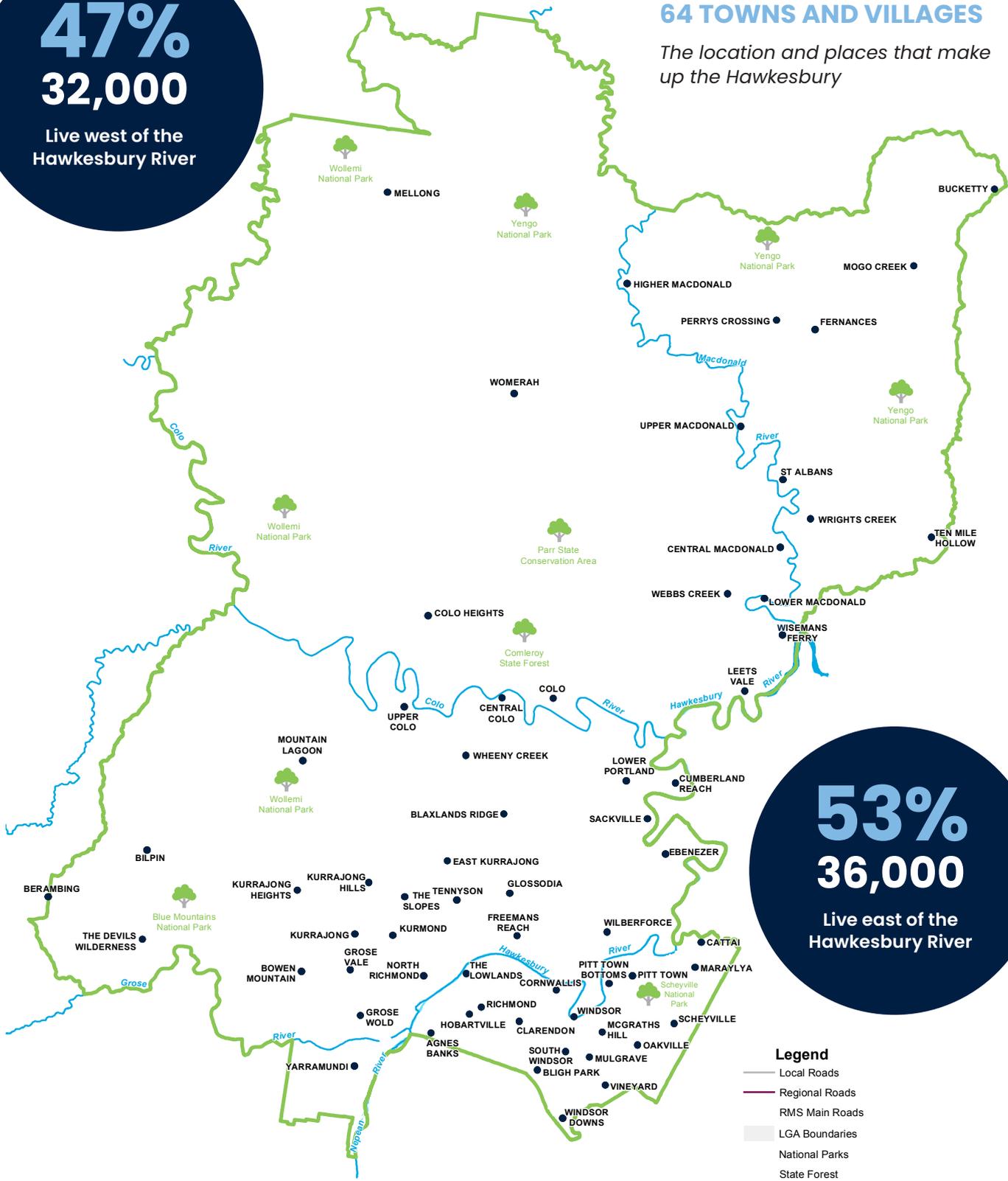
St Albans, established in the early 19th century, remains a charming village steeped in colonial history, accessible via winding roads or the Webbs Creek and Wisemans ferries. Colo, with its scattered rural properties and pristine natural surroundings, is similarly reliant on limited road access, reinforcing its strong connection to the land and river. These townships, with their sense of seclusion and deep historical roots, continue to embody the resilience and self-sufficiency that have long defined the Hawkesbury's rural communities.

These historical and cultural assets are actively being used by our community to support cultural expression, tourism and economic activity. They remain integral to the future identity and continuing stories of the Hawkesbury.

**47%**  
**32,000**  
Live west of the  
Hawkesbury River

**64 TOWNS AND VILLAGES**

*The location and places that make up the Hawkesbury*



**53%**  
**36,000**  
Live east of the  
Hawkesbury River

**Legend**

- Local Roads
- Regional Roads
- RMS Main Roads
- LGA Boundaries
- National Parks
- State Forest
- Rivers

# OUR REGION – KEY CENTRES

Windsor, Richmond, North Richmond, and their surrounds serve as the economic and service hubs of the Hawkesbury region, playing a crucial role in connecting the area to Greater Sydney and the expanding northwest corridor. Positioned within the Western Parkland City framework, these centres are becoming increasingly important for regional growth, infrastructure development, and service provision, particularly as major Western Sydney infrastructure projects create new opportunities for the Hawkesbury.

While Windsor and Richmond continue to experience modest population growth, largely constrained by flooding risks, there remains a strong imperative to balance development with the protection of their distinct semi-rural, heritage rich character. Aligning with broader state and metropolitan planning frameworks, growth in these centres must be effectively managed and supported by infrastructure delivery.

Strategic investment in transport, housing, health and employment opportunities must complement heritage conservation and local identity celebration, reinforcing Windsor and Richmond as thriving yet distinct urban centres within the evolving Sydney landscape.

## ECONOMIC AND SERVICE HUBS

As the primary service centres for the Hawkesbury, Windsor and Richmond provide critical healthcare, education, retail, and professional services to both urban and rural populations. Hawkesbury District Hospital, based in Windsor, is the region's key medical facility. Its integration with the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District acting as the major local service provider, ensures that residents have access to advanced medical care.

Education and research institutions, including Western Sydney University – Hawkesbury Campus and TAFE NSW Richmond, position the region with key learning opportunities in agricultural, veterinary, and environmental sciences. Richmond's proximity to RAAF Base Richmond also strengthens its strategic role in defence, emergency response, and aviation-related industries, contributing to local employment and economic diversity.

## TRANSPORT AND GROWTH

Windsor and Richmond's strategic location along the Greater Sydney rail network (T1 North Shore and Western Line) and key arterial roads, including Windsor Road, Hawkesbury Valley Way and Bells Line of Road, ensures connectivity to the Sydney metropolitan area. However, ongoing population growth in the North West Growth Area, growing congestion and future demands necessitate transport upgrades and regional connectivity enhancements.

A key infrastructure priority is the Richmond Bridge duplication project, a NSW and Federal Government initiative aimed at improving traffic flow, safety, and flood resilience along the key corridor between Richmond and North Richmond. The project will deliver a second bridge crossing over the Hawkesbury River, easing congestion and providing a vital transport link for the region.

With Richmond and Windsor serving as gateways to the Blue Mountains and Central West NSW, continued infrastructure upgrades are critical for supporting economic activity and ensuring regional accessibility. This also includes well planned streetscape upgrades that enhance appeal, walkability and accessibility, attracting more visitors and supporting local businesses.

## CULTURAL AND HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Despite their linkages to Greater Sydney's expansion and growth, our key centres retain their historic character and cultural identity, with Windsor's heritage precinct and Richmond's colonial-era streetscape forming a key part of the region's tourism and liveability appeal. Investments in heritage conservation, restoration and adaptive reuse of historic sites support both the visitor economy and local community identity.

Key facilities including the Deerubbin Centre, Regional Museum and Richmond Library, serve as important places for learning and cultural expression, while heritage buildings and places including Windsor Mall, Richmond Park and Thompson Square serve as key tourism drivers.



Image: Bowman Cottage, Richmond



Image: Deerubbin Centre, Windsor

# OUR REGION – TOWNS AND VILLAGES

The outlying regions of the Hawkesbury, including St Albans, Colo, Bilpin, Bowen Mountain, Blaxlands Ridge and surrounding rural villages, play a distinct role in the region's environmental sustainability, cultural heritage, and primary production. These areas complement the key centres by prioritising conservation, eco-tourism, and rural industries, maintaining the Hawkesbury's identity as a region where nature, history and their stories are deeply intertwined.

Internet connectivity and communications are more challenging in these regions, highlighting the importance of traditional engagement and messaging services.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND RURAL IDENTITY

The St Albans and Colo areas are characterised by vast national parks, river systems, and agricultural lands, with communities deeply connected to land stewardship and environmental conservation. The Macdonald River, Colo River, and the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment support the region's agriculture, recreation, tourism, and biodiversity, while Wollemi and Dharug National Parks protect endangered ecosystems, including the world-famous Wollemi Pine.

Minimal growth policies ensure these areas remain low density, ecologically sustainable, and historically intact, supporting farming, eco-tourism, and heritage and lifestyle conservation and enhancement that preserves their identity.

The historic villages, Aboriginal heritage sites, and colonial-era landmarks of these regions remain fundamental to the cultural identity of the Hawkesbury. St Albans, in particular, retains one of the most intact examples of an early Australian settlement, with efforts focused on preserving these important artefacts. Ebenezer Church remains Australia's oldest surviving church (built in 1809).

Community led initiatives, including heritage festivals, environmental conservation projects, and volunteer driven emergency response teams, reflect a strong local identity and resilience.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

Despite their natural beauty, these regions face significant infrastructure challenges, particularly in relation to road accessibility, ferry reliance, telecommunications and emergency services access.

The impact of recent flooding events (including the 2021 and 2022 Hawkesbury-Nepean floods) re-highlighted vulnerabilities in evacuation routes, bridge access, and power supply reliability, prompting calls for improved emergency planning and investment in flood-resilient infrastructure. Major infrastructure recovery projects including the Upper Colo Bridge, Settlers Road and Greens Road highlighted the cost and lengthy impacts of damaged infrastructure in these areas.

Ensuring improved road and verge maintenance, upgraded bridges, and reliable emergency response capabilities is critical for both resident safety and economic stability in these remote areas.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE

Eco-tourism is a major economic driver attracting visitors to historic inns, bushwalking trails, kayaking routes, campsites and boutique farm stays. The Settlers Arms Inn in St Albans, established in 1836, remains a key landmark, drawing heritage tourists and weekend visitors seeking an escape into the region's convict-era history and natural serenity.

Sustainable industries and agribusiness, including organic farming, beekeeping, and artisan food production, contribute to the region's economic fabric while maintaining its low impact development approach. These activities demonstrate that rural industries can thrive without compromising the area's environmental integrity. Visitation is important to supporting these businesses and should for a key component of economic and tourism strategies.



Image: Settlers Arms Inn, St Albans



Image: Pioneer Village, Wilberforce

# OUR REGION – OUR ENVIRONMENT

## RICH NATURAL LANDSCAPES

The Hawkesbury is defined by its rich natural landscapes, diverse ecosystems, and strong cultural connections to land and water. Encompassing approximately 2,776 square kilometres, the region is home to extensive national parks, fertile floodplains, and iconic waterways that have shaped the identity of its communities for thousands of years. The environment is a source of livelihood, recreation, visitation and cultural heritage, making its preservation a priority for the future sustainability of the Hawkesbury.

These natural assets also bring with them the most significant challenges faced by the Hawkesbury, with floods and bushfires posing ongoing risks to communities, infrastructure and local industries. Managing these challenges requires a balance between resilience-building initiatives, sustainable land management, and proactive disaster preparedness.

## CONNECTIONS TO LAND AND WATER

For over 40,000 years, the Dharug and Darkinjung peoples have lived in the Hawkesbury, maintaining deep spiritual and physical connections to the land and waterways. The Hawkesbury River, known as Dyarubbin to the Dharug people, has been central to their way of life, providing food, transport, and a foundation for cultural practices.

The many tributaries of the Hawkesbury, including the Colo, Macdonald, Nepean, and Grose Rivers, also hold great significance, supporting traditional fishing, gathering, and ceremonial activities. Evidence of this enduring relationship is seen in the rock engravings, scarred trees, and archaeological sites that remain throughout the landscape. Today, these connections continue to be respected and acknowledged as vital elements of the region's heritage, guided by descendants and elders who still live here in the Hawkesbury.

## BIODIVERSITY

The Hawkesbury's environment is characterised by its extraordinary biodiversity, including vast areas of protected national parks and reserves that contain critical ecosystems, habitat corridors and rare and threatened species. Wollemi National Park, part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, covers a large portion of the LGA and is renowned for its rugged sandstone cliffs, deep gorges, and the globally significant Wollemi Pine.

The Blue Mountains, Yengo, and Cattai National Parks further contribute to the region's ecological richness, providing critical habitat for native flora and fauna. These parks also offer valuable opportunities for outdoor recreation, nature-based tourism and education.

## WATERWAYS

Waterways are at the heart of the Hawkesbury's environmental and economic landscape. The Hawkesbury River system sustains a variety of uses, from agriculture to agri-tourism, and remains a focal point for recreation and community life. The floodplains and surrounding valleys provide some of the most fertile agricultural land in New South Wales, supporting industries such as turf farming, orchards, market gardens, and livestock grazing. Sustainable land management practices are increasingly important in balancing productivity with conservation, ensuring the long-term health of these vital natural resources.

## A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONSERVATION

Protecting the Hawkesbury's natural environment is a shared responsibility. With increasing pressures from urban development, climate change, and extreme weather events such as flooding and bushfires, it is critical to implement sustainable planning and conservation strategies.

Collaborative efforts between Council, local communities, Indigenous custodians, State and Federal Government and environmental organisations are essential to preserving the Hawkesbury's unique landscapes for future generations.



Image: Macdonald River, St Albans

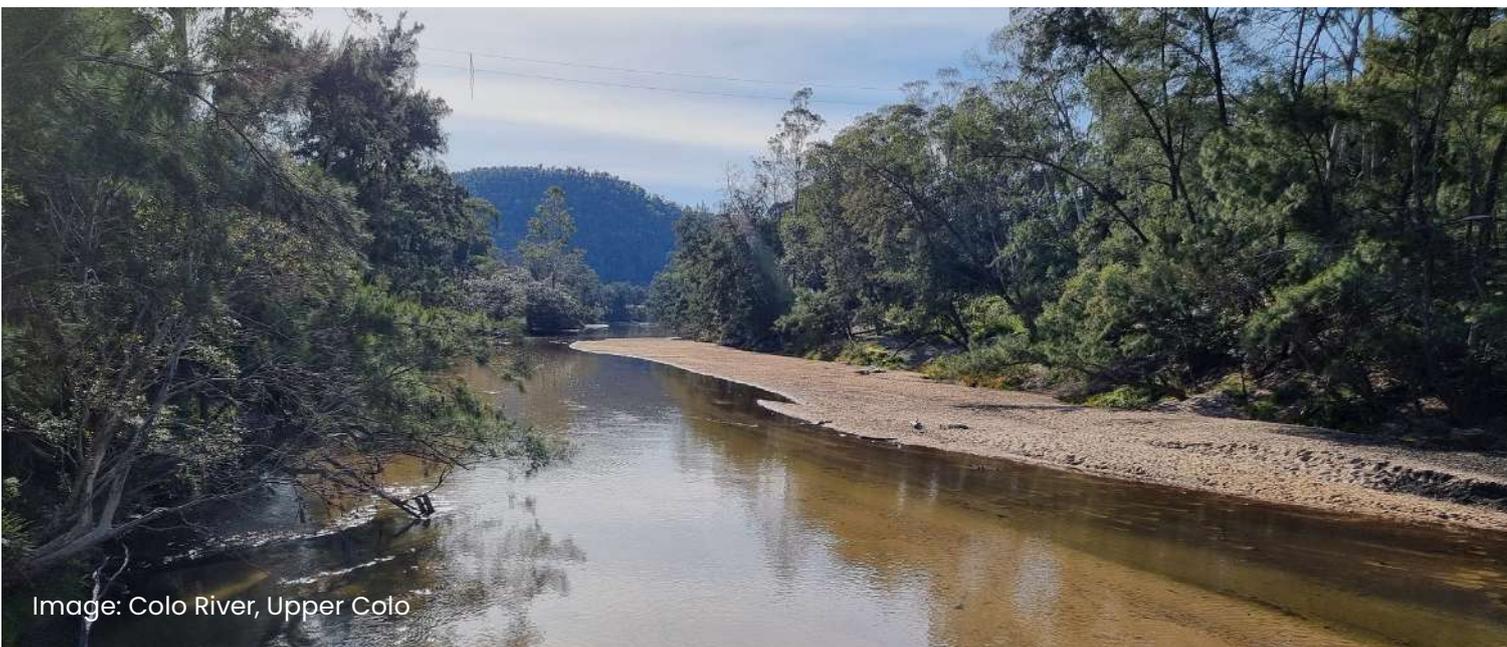


Image: Colo River, Upper Colo

# OUR PROFILE

The Hawkesbury's changing demographics are characterised by an ageing population, limited youth retention and evolving community needs. As younger residents move away for work and education, workforce sustainability is impacted, while an ageing population increases demand for healthcare and aged care.

Cultural diversity is continuing to increase, providing opportunities for new cultural expression and learning. This includes our growing understanding and relationships with our Aboriginal community.

The Hawkesbury has low unemployment and strong supportive industries which continue to grow, including construction, health care and social assistance. Volunteering is also a key feature of our community with 13% participating, displaying a willingness to support each other.

Understanding these ongoing shifts and leveraging opportunities requires careful strategic and service planning, as well as sustainable growth to support our community.

## OUR PEOPLE



**68,704**  
**POPULATION**  
(Average growth  
2018-2023 = 0.35%)

**39**  
**MEDIAN AGE**

**2,776km<sup>2</sup>**  
**LAND AREA**

**4.8%**  
**FIRST NATIONS  
PEOPLES**

**24.55**  
persons per km<sup>2</sup>  
**POPULATION DENSITY**

**13.3%**  
**BORN OVERSEAS**

## OUR HOUSEHOLDS



**24,054**  
**TOTAL  
HOUSEHOLDS**

**70%**  
**PURCHASING/  
OWN THEIR  
HOME**

**35.2%**  
**COUPLES WITH  
CHILDREN**

## OUR ECONOMY



**7,597**  
**LOCAL  
BUSINESSES**

**3.2%**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT  
RATE**

**31,424**  
**LOCAL  
JOBS**

**\$4.53B**  
**GROSS REGIONAL  
PRODUCT**

**27.6%**  
**VOCATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS**

**27.5%**  
**EMPLOYED IN  
CONSTRUCTION OR HEALTH**

*Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing*

# IMAGINE OUR FUTURE HAWKESBURY...





## GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hawkesbury's expansive geography, combined with flood and bushfire risks and community desire to carefully manage growth, presents unique challenges for infrastructure, land use, and future development. Despite forecasted population growth being relatively low compared to Greater Sydney, Hawkesbury remains an important regional hub. Windsor and Richmond will continue their roles as the primary economic and service centres and outlying areas as attractive lifestyle, recreation and tourism locations.

Although large-scale growth is constrained by environmental and planning controls, targeted residential developments will accommodate some future population growth. Vineyard is set for the most significant transformation, growing to over 1,700 homes, while Glossodia's Jacaranda development and North Richmond's Redbank community will contribute around 560 and 1,400 new dwellings, respectively.

Beyond the town centres, Hawkesbury's rural areas—including St Albans, Colo, and Bilpin—will remain vital to the region's identity, offering unique opportunities in eco-tourism, primary production, and agritourism. As demand grows for locally sourced food and sustainable tourism experiences, these areas are well-positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities.

Hawkesbury's environmental assets will be key to the region's future, with strengthened protections ensuring that flood-resilient infrastructure and sustainable land management safeguard Hawkesbury's diverse landscapes. By prioritising responsible growth and investment, the region can continue to thrive as both a key link between Greater Sydney and regional NSW and a community that preserves its unique character, liveability, and environmental significance.



Image: Windsor Bridge, Windsor

# OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is critical in ensuring that the vision, priorities, and long-term objectives of this plan were developed by Hawkesbury's residents, businesses, and stakeholders.

A significant engagement program was undertaken from March 2024 - May 2025 to inform the CSP review. The program was designed to align directly to Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy, to ensure an effective cross section of stakeholders were provided the opportunity to input.

The engagement activities focused on exploring future focus areas, priorities, challenges and opportunities for the Hawkesbury, as well as major changes experienced over the previous four years, including those related to natural disasters.

The CSP aims to effectively acknowledge and balance a wide range of perspectives on future challenges and opportunities. A key priority was ensuring outlying communities had the opportunity to provide input.

The results and insights from the engagement process directly informed the creation of the key elements of this plan.

## COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY 2023 (400 RESPONSES)

Every two years, Council conducts an independent telephone survey with a randomly selected cross-section of Hawkesbury residents, ensuring a representative mix of gender, age groups, and locations. The survey gathers insights on Council's service delivery and residents' experiences of living in the Hawkesbury.

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## CSP REVIEW SURVEY ONLINE (150 RESPONSES)

Council developed a survey on its Your Hawkesbury Your Say engagement hub to ask key questions about the effectiveness of the previous CSP, priorities for the future and recent events.

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## HAWKESBURY SHOW ENGAGEMENT (500 ENGAGED)

Hundreds of stakeholders including visitors, residents, emergency services, businesses, volunteers and staff took part in an exercise to *Imagine a future Hawkesbury* at the Hawkesbury Show 2024, writing down their major priorities and opportunities for the future. This was followed up at the 2025 Show while the plan was being exhibited, having people write down their biggest priority under a Strategic Direction and placing it on the Hawkesbury map.

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## CSP FUTURE FORUM FOCUS GROUPS (4 SESSIONS)

The Future Forums were held in St Albans, Colo, Windsor and Kurrajong. The forums brought together community leaders, key delivery partners, businesses, residents and other key stakeholders to workshop major priorities and opportunities for the future.

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## TARGETED WORKSHOPS AND CONSULTATIONS

A range of workshops, working groups, best practice reviews and smaller engagement opportunities with volunteer groups, staff and Councillors brought unique insights into the priorities of various groups.

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## PUBLIC EXHIBITION

The Draft CSP was placed on public exhibition from the 18 March 2025 - 7 May 2025. The submissions received validated the previous engagement activities and confirmed the CSP was strongly reflective of the priorities and outcomes expressed by the Hawkesbury Community throughout the consultation and development of the Plan.



Image: Hawkesbury Show CSP Engagement

# OUR INSIGHTS – MAJOR THEMES

Throughout the engagement process clear themes emerged, highlighting key focus areas for the CSP to centre on. Many of these themes were present in the previous CSP and throughout a range of recent engagement activities run by Council.

It is also important to distinguish the differences in the roles played by Richmond and Windsor in contrast with outlying areas including St Albans, Bilpin and Colo. Although the priorities and major themes are relatively similar across the region, the specific opportunities and challenges vary across these communities. The below summary captures the major items:

## ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road repairs and upgrades</li> <li>• Major infrastructure to support growth and connectivity including Richmond Bridge</li> <li>• Evacuation routes including ferries</li> <li>• Telecommunications in outer areas</li> <li>• Reliance on roads for transport</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic congestion through Richmond</li> <li>• Need for better public/active transport</li> <li>• Access to shopping centers and medical services</li> <li>• Road safety and verge mowing</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## MANAGING DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively plan growth around urban areas</li> <li>• Protect Hawkesbury’s rural character and rich heritage</li> <li>• Respect and enhance identity and economic opportunities including tourism</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing affordability and access</li> <li>• Insurance and ongoing economic costs</li> <li>• Housing choices</li> <li>• Advocacy, support and leadership</li> <li>• Emergency services support</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## RESILIENCE AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for flood and fire preparedness and environmental conservation</li> <li>• Evacuation linkages and emergency communication</li> <li>• Wellbeing and resilience of community</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connectivity – geographic and interpersonal</li> <li>• Information linkages and access in remote communities</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respecting and valuing our environmental assets</li> <li>• Utilising these assets to enhance tourism and economic activity</li> <li>• Protecting our history and heritage and telling our stories</li> <li>• Respecting our colonial history</li> <li>• Effective waste management and reuse</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecological balance and protection of environments and habitat</li> <li>• Understand, protect and restore heritage-listed buildings</li> <li>• Protecting and embedding Indigenous cultural stories</li> <li>• Designing our future assets with long-term environmental resilience</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## COMMUNITY LIVEABILITY AND SERVICES

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of local services including healthcare, shopping and entertainment/arts/ events</li> <li>• Access to community and support services</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifestyle choices being maintained</li> <li>• Ageing populations and support</li> <li>• Facilities, playgrounds, recreation and sport</li> <li>• Local business and opportunities</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

What is the CSP?



Integrated Planning & Reporting  
Community to represent their main  
strategies for achieving  
written by Council

OUR HAWKESBURY 2045 // HAVE YOUR SAY

Imagine a future Hawkesbury that...

Caters for MORE People  
With different abilities!  
♡



OUR HAWKESBURY 2045 // HAVE YOUR SAY

Imagine a future Hawkesbury that...

We keep our Rural  
aspect!

Image: Hawkesbury Show CSP Engagement

# HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

Our Hawkesbury 2045 has been structured to address four key Strategic Directions that cover the full spectrum of social, cultural, economic, environmental and leadership related areas.

These translate what our community has told us into a clear, high level plan.



**GREAT PLACE  
TO LIVE**



**SUSTAINABLE  
ENVIRONMENTS  
AND HISTORY**



**THRIVING  
ECONOMY**



**EFFECTIVE  
LEADERSHIP**

The four Strategic Directions break the goals down into distinct themes. Each of the Strategic Directions are displayed separately, providing detailed information on the underlying Guiding Principles, Delivery Partners, Community Indicators and Strategies.

The below section explains each element of the plan to help understand how to read and interpret each Strategic Direction on the coming pages.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A Guiding Principle is a foundational value or approach that shapes decision-making and actions. It provides a framework to ensure that initiatives align with broader goals and community sentiment towards their priorities.

## STRATEGIES

A Strategy is a targeted action or approach designed to achieve the outlined goals. It provides a clear pathway for implementation, guiding efforts to address challenges, leverage opportunities, and support long-term community outcomes. Strategies are delivered by a range of Delivery Partners.

## COMMUNITY INDICATORS

A Community Indicator is a measurable item used to assess progress toward strategic goals or monitor trends related to the Strategic Direction. It helps track social, economic, and environmental items, ensuring that Strategies can be assessed for their effectiveness and that a clear picture of the Hawkesbury's current state can be quantified.

## DELIVERY PARTNERS

A Delivery Partner is an organisation, agency, or stakeholder responsible for contributing to the implementation of the strategies, key projects or actions. They play a vital role in collaboration, resource allocation, and helping to achieve shared community goals.

# OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 GREAT PLACE TO LIVE



## WHAT IT MEANS

Hawkesbury is a region of vibrant towns and villages, each with unique strengths, opportunities, and character. This strategic direction focuses on creating accessible, connected, and resilient communities where people feel safe, supported, and engaged.

By investing in our places, spaces, and infrastructure, we help create thriving communities that embrace cultural identity, sustainable growth, and a strong sense of belonging. Through collaboration and empowerment, we ensure that Hawkesbury remains a great place to live.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### ***Vibrant Places and Spaces***

Vibrant towns and villages foster community connection. The Hawkesbury is safe, accessible and enjoyable for residents and visitors.

### ***Thriving People***

A diverse range of healthy living options are promoted with access to local services, recreation, sport, facilities and green spaces.

### ***Connected and Accessible***

Integrated transport networks, accessible public spaces, and effective communication that meet the needs of all people.

### ***Resilient and Prepared***

Strong disaster mitigation, evacuation routes, and connected communities that understand challenges and plan together.

### ***Healthy Identity***

A Hawkesbury that celebrates and protects its unique identity, acknowledges and values its diverse people and stories.

## OUR STRATEGIES

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.1 | Collaborate with and empower the community to be resilient  |
| 1.2 | Encourage, educate and enable our community to be safe and healthy                                      |
| 1.3 | Create opportunities for partnerships, connection and collaboration                                     |
| 1.4 | Invest in our places, spaces and infrastructure to support thriving, prepared communities               |
| 1.5 | Enrich our local identity by enhancing connection to our unique stories, landscapes and places          |
| 1.6 | Effectively manage sustainable growth that contributes to the overall health of the Hawkesbury          |
| 1.7 | Create connected transport options and networks that are integrated, safe and cater for different needs |

## COMMUNITY INDICATORS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Satisfaction</li> <li>• Community Health Indicators and Outcomes</li> <li>• Socio economic advantage and disadvantage</li> <li>• Crime Rates and Statistics</li> <li>• Volunteering</li> <li>• Indigenous Outcomes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Internet Connectivity</li> <li>• Average Travel Time / Travel Modes</li> <li>• Community Facilities</li> <li>• Building Approvals</li> <li>• Housing Diversity</li> <li>• Social Cohesion, Wellbeing and Belonging</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## DELIVERY PARTNERS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkesbury City Council</li> <li>• NSW Police</li> <li>• NSW Reconstruction Authority</li> <li>• Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District</li> <li>• Reconciliation Australia</li> <li>• The Parks</li> <li>• NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>• Transport for NSW</li> <li>• Local Community Services Providers</li> <li>• Local Volunteers</li> <li>• Universities, TAFE, and other Registered Training Organisations</li> <li>• Resilient Sydney</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry (DPHI)</li> <li>• Western Sydney Regional Organisation Of Councils</li> <li>• Peppercorn Services</li> <li>• Hawkesbury Sports Council</li> <li>• Local Schools and Education Providers</li> <li>• Local Sporting Groups</li> <li>• NSW Department Communities and Justice</li> <li>• PCYC Hawkesbury</li> <li>• NSW Health</li> <li>• Sydney Water</li> <li>• State Emergency Services</li> </ul> |
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# STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS AND HERITAGE



## WHAT IT MEANS

Hawkesbury is a region deeply connected to its natural landscapes and rich heritage, where history and environment shape the identity of our communities. This strategic direction focuses on safeguarding our cultural and environmental legacy through responsible management, collaboration, and informed decision-making.

By respecting the knowledge of our people, preserving historic places and traditions, and leading positive change, we ensure that future generations inherit a thriving and sustainable region. By protecting our waterways, nurturing biodiversity, and working together as custodians of the land, we strengthen the heart of our Hawkesbury.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### ***Rich History***

Places, traditions and cultural practices are respected and enhanced. Identity and deep connection to our country and people helps us learn and build on our knowledge.

### ***Environmental Leadership***

Meeting our climate responsibilities, collaborating on key issues and using informed, evidence based decision-making to protect and enhance environmental outcomes.

### ***Stronger Together***

Communities, partners, neighbours and knowledge holders work together to improve outcomes for our environment. We acknowledge and respect the Dharug and Darkinjung peoples who were the first people to care for the region, and continue to care for it today.

### ***Healthy Waterways***

Respecting the Hawkesbury River and its tributaries as the lifeblood of our region which is intertwined with our stories and lifestyles. Being adaptive with its changing needs and influences.

## OUR STRATEGIES

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 2.1 | Value, protect and enhance Hawkesbury's heritage and historic assets  |
| 2.2 | Enrich collaborations through connection to nature, environments and heritage                                   |
| 2.3 | Build understanding of the importance of a healthy environment to social and economic wellbeing                 |
| 2.4 | Empower the Hawkesbury to make sustainable choices  |
| 2.5 | Invest in actions that support healthy environments, waterways and ecosystems                                   |
| 2.6 | Develop our understanding of the Hawkesbury's contribution to changing climate and invest in mitigation actions |

## COMMUNITY INDICATORS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Satisfaction</li> <li>• Water Quality</li> <li>• Tree Canopy</li> <li>• Emissions (Council and Community)</li> <li>• Water Usage (Council and Community)</li> <li>• Urban Heat</li> <li>• Hazard Reductions</li> <li>• Natural Capital</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality</li> <li>• Waste - Industrial/Commercial/Residential</li> <li>• Energy Consumption (Council and Community)</li> <li>• Threatened Species Protection</li> <li>• Coastal Management</li> <li>• Protected Areas / Heritage Sites</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## DELIVERY PARTNERS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkesbury City Council</li> <li>• Reconciliation Australia</li> <li>• The Parks</li> <li>• NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>• Transport for NSW</li> <li>• Local Volunteers</li> <li>• NSW Department of Primary Industries</li> <li>• NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW)</li> <li>• Heritage Council of NSW</li> <li>• Aboriginal Organisations/Traditional Owners</li> <li>• NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry (DPHI)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkesbury River County Council</li> <li>• Western Sydney Regional Organisation Of Councils</li> <li>• Local Schools and Education Providers</li> <li>• Heritage Groups</li> <li>• Environmental Groups</li> <li>• WIRES</li> <li>• Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>• Sydney Water</li> <li>• Greater Sydney Local Land Services</li> <li>• Universities, TAFE, and other Registered Training Organisations</li> <li>• Sustainability Advantage</li> </ul> |
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# STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 THRIVING ECONOMY



## WHAT IT MEANS

Hawkesbury is a region of innovation, opportunity, and local enterprise, where businesses, tourism, and creative industries drive economic growth while preserving our unique character. This strategic direction focuses on fostering a thriving economy that supports local businesses, encourages circular practices, and promotes the Hawkesbury as a premier destination to visit, work, and invest.

Through investment in our roads and vital infrastructure, tourism, and cultural activation, we strengthen connections between our towns and villages, ensuring equitable access to opportunities. By supporting local artists, businesses, and sustainable practices, we cultivate an economy that is innovative, inclusive, and future focused.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### ***Build Better***

Local roads and infrastructure are strengthened through effective planning and investment that enables them to stand the test of time, improving connectivity, safety and resilience.

### ***Local Opportunities***

An economy that champions local people, celebrations, resources and providers. It supports and advocates for opportunities to develop creative economies and bring people to the Hawkesbury.

### ***Connected Infrastructure***

Safe and efficient transport networks that reduce congestion and strengthen regional connectivity.

### ***Circular Economy***

Resource efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable practices that maximise value and minimise impact.

## OUR STRATEGIES

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 3.1 | Invest in and advocate for our roads and transport infrastructure  |
| 3.2 | Support our local businesses to be innovative, sustainable and connected                                       |
| 3.3 | Promote the Hawkesbury as a great place to visit, work and invest  |
| 3.4 | Enhance the unique qualities and connectivity of our towns and villages to contribute to a thriving Hawkesbury |
| 3.5 | Invest in local artists and creators to enrich Hawkesbury's identity and economy                               |
| 3.6 | Create opportunities for place-making celebrations, events, activations and cultural expressions               |

## COMMUNITY INDICATORS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Force</li> <li>• Unemployment Rate</li> <li>• Community Satisfaction</li> <li>• Gross Regional Product</li> <li>• Local Jobs and Employment</li> <li>• Education Levels</li> <li>• Retail Expenditure</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitation</li> <li>• Public Transport Utilisation</li> <li>• Road Safety</li> <li>• Vacancy rates</li> <li>• Major Infrastructure Project Spend</li> <li>• Waste</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## DELIVERY PARTNERS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkesbury City Council</li> <li>• NSW Reconstruction Authority</li> <li>• The Parks</li> <li>• NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>• Transport for NSW</li> <li>• Local Community Services Providers</li> <li>• Local Volunteers</li> <li>• NSW Department of Primary Industries</li> <li>• Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Sydney Regional Organisation Of Councils</li> <li>• Local Schools and Education Providers</li> <li>• Local Businesses</li> <li>• Royal Australian Air Force</li> <li>• Universities, TAFE, and other Registered Training Organisations</li> <li>• Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport</li> <li>• Destination NSW</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP



### WHAT IT MEANS

Strong, accountable, and inclusive leadership is the foundation of a thriving Hawkesbury. This strategic direction focuses on driving collaboration, bold decision making, and community driven governance to ensure sustainable and impactful outcomes.

By embracing shared responsibility, we empower leaders at all levels within Council, government, businesses, and the community to work together, guided by the Community's vision for the Hawkesbury. Through informed choices, dynamic leadership, and meaningful engagement, we build trust, resilience, and a culture of empowerment.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### ***Shared Responsibility***

Collaboration, accountability, and collective action build a resilient and connected community that achieves its goals.

#### ***Inspiring Choices***

Through knowledge, resource sharing and education our people are empowered to make choices that contribute to a sustainable future for the Hawkesbury.

#### ***Guiding and Empowering***

Strong outcomes for our community, economy and environment through evidence-based planning, clear targets, and ongoing evaluation.

#### ***Dynamic and Adaptable***

Robust systems that enable a thriving and sustainable future. Responding to challenges and opportunities with agility to create a community that grows and evolves.

## OUR STRATEGIES

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 4.1 | Provide representative, responsive and accountable governance                                     |
| 4.2 | Foster diverse, inclusive and informed community leadership                                       |
| 4.3 | Establish strong leadership networks and engagement to collaborate across shared responsibilities |
| 4.4 | Support a strong local Council that delivers on its values and commitments                        |
| 4.5 | Invest in engagement and evidence gathering that supports good decision making and advocacy       |
| 4.6 | Empower bold decision making for a sustainable Hawkesbury   |

## COMMUNITY INDICATORS

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Community Satisfaction | • Community Engagement Rates |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|

## DELIVERY PARTNERS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawkesbury City Council</li> <li>• Destination NSW</li> <li>• NSW Reconstruction Authority</li> <li>• Reconciliation Australia</li> <li>• The Parks</li> <li>• NSW Rural Fire Service</li> <li>• Transport for NSW</li> <li>• Resilient Sydney</li> <li>• Sydney Water</li> <li>• NSW Environment Protection Authority</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Sydney Regional Organisation Of Councils</li> <li>• Universities, TAFE, and other Registered Training Organisations</li> <li>• Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport</li> <li>• NSW Department of Primary Industries</li> <li>• NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW)</li> </ul> |
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Image: Windsor Terrace & Town Centre





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