



Background Paper

Ku-ring-gai 2032

Community Strategic Plan Review



June 2022

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Korean

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شهرداری کورینگای (Ku-ring-gai Council)

در ساعات کاری، دوشنبه تا جمعه از ساعت

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These languages were chosen as they are the most widely spoken by Ku-ring-gai residents indicated by ABS Census data 2011 and 2016.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

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Photography

Photographs featured in this plan include entrants in various Ku-ring-gai Council photography competitions, and contributions from members of the community and staff. Thank you to all of the talented photographers featured.

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Purpose

This Background Paper provides further information on:

- issues and challenges that will influence the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area into the future and informs this review of the Community Strategic Plan
- the results of recent community consultation and engagement which has asked residents and businesses what they think about the current Community Strategic Plan and what they think are the challenges and opportunities for Ku-ring-gai in the next 10 years and beyond
- a summary of community engagements and consultations undertaken by Council since 2018 (when the previous Community Strategic Plan was adopted). This engagement has covered significant and diverse matters affecting the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area and is both relevant and contemporary.

Acknowledgements

Ku-ring-gai Council would like to thank the community and other stakeholders for their ideas, expertise and commitment.

Introduction

Ku-ring-gai community strategic plan

The Community Strategic Plan is prepared and revised in consultation with the community. It provides Council with the strategic direction needed to align its services, policies and programs with community needs and priorities, as well as state and regional planning priorities.

It also acts as a guide for local organisations in their planning and delivery of services for the area and opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with Council.

Integrated planning and reporting

The NSW Government requires local councils to deliver their community vision and objectives through long, medium and short-term plans, known as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. This promotes best practice strategic planning across NSW councils to ensure a more sustainable local government sector. Diagram 1 below illustrates the hierarchy of plans within the framework and their relationship to state and regional planning

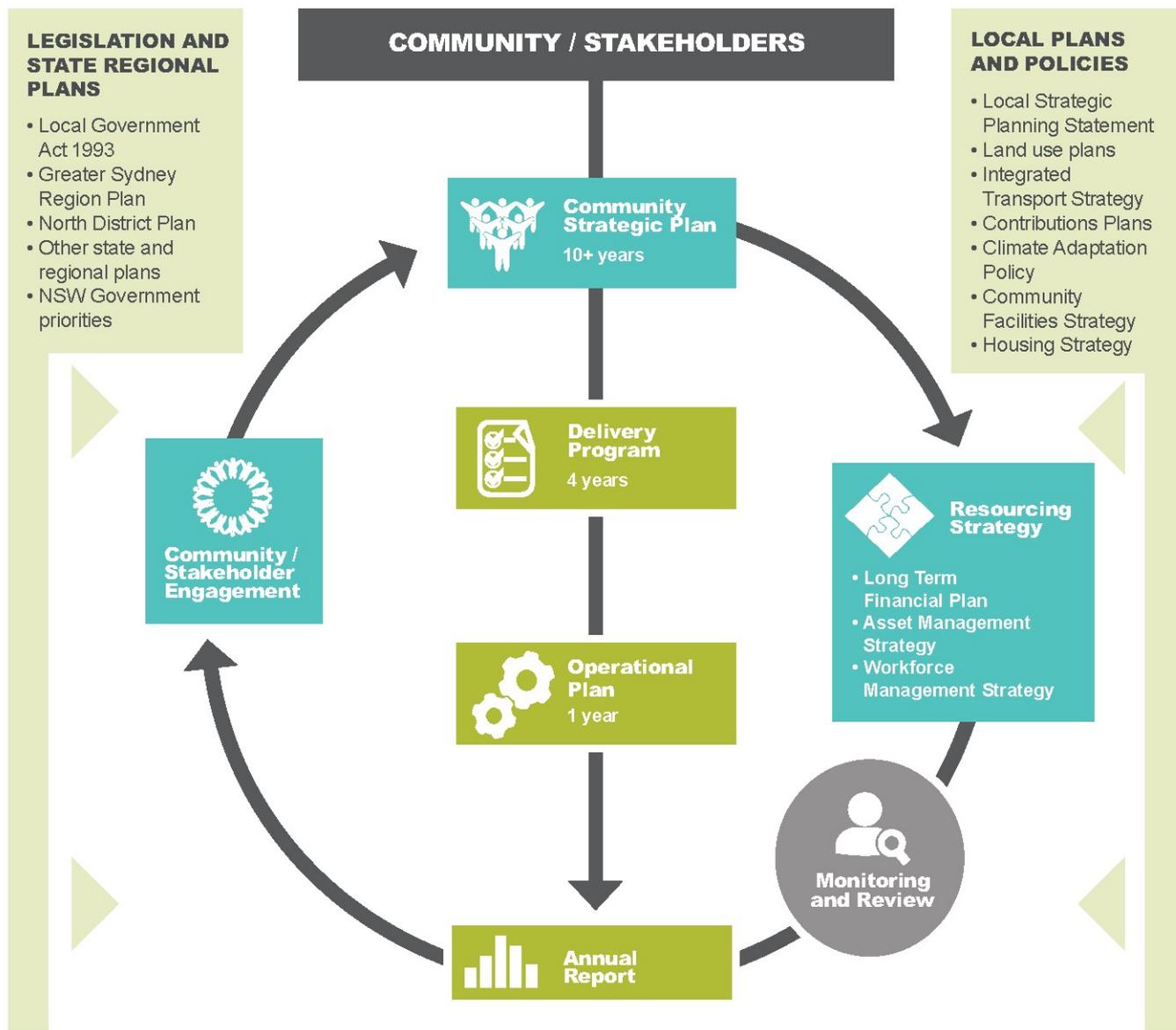


Diagram 1: Integrated and planning reporting framework

Reviewing the plan

The *Local Government Act, 1993* requires councils and communities to review their Community Strategic Plan (CSP) following election of a new council. The review must be informed by:

- an 'End of Term' report prepared by the outgoing council which looks at the implementation and effectiveness of the current CSP in achieving its objectives over the previous council's term
- an assessment and update of information about the local area that informed the original CSP, including a stock-take of issues, pressures and trends affecting the area. This is to be undertaken by the incoming council
- an assessment of key state, metropolitan, regional and local policy settings and directions that influence decision-making for the local area
- engagement with the community to identify key issues, challenges and opportunities impacting on the area over the long term and how they might be addressed.

The review provides the Ku-ring-gai community and Council with the opportunity to revisit the current CSP and the Plan's long-term objectives to ensure they reflect contemporary community thinking, needs and expectations and take account of new challenges and trends.

Challenges and opportunities



Theme 1: Community, people and culture

A healthy, safe and diverse community that respects our history, and celebrates our differences in a vibrant culture of learning.

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Ensuring arts, cultural and community facilities, infrastructure and outdoor spaces are fit for purpose and meeting growing demand and community expectations
- Maintaining a strong sense of community, and addressing emerging issues including loneliness and isolation, mental health and domestic violence
- Responding to demographic change and population growth, aging population and removing barriers to young people, marginalised and diverse groups
- Responding to the impact of COVID-19 on community wellbeing, and building resilience to future disruptions and emergencies
- Building on strong volunteering culture, and maintaining positive relations between government agencies, community groups, service providers and council
- Supporting housing choice, affordability and balancing community, regional and metropolitan demands
- Working with agencies and community groups that support community safety and health practices
- Strengthening community connectedness through communication, engagement activities and events



Theme 2: Natural environment

Working together as a community to protect and enhance our natural environment and resources.

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Improving native bushland and waterways, protecting our biodiversity and striking a balance between usage and conservation
- Enhancing and protecting our tree canopy and green corridors
- Leading on global challenges, including climate change responses, net zero emission targets, sustainable resource management and waste reduction
- Increasing urbanisation and population growth and managing the impact of development
- Making better use of technology to improve environmental outcomes
- Responding to legislative changes and building strong partnerships with external providers, agencies and venues



Theme 3: Places, spaces and infrastructure

A range of well planned, clean and safe neighbourhoods and public spaces designed with a strong sense of identity and place.

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Balancing demands for growth whilst retaining the visual character of the area
- Ensuring community buildings and facilities are accessible, resilient and fit for purpose
- Costs and challenges in delivering upgrades to local centres, sports, recreational and other facilities
- Shifts in legislation and policy and impact of changing development contributions on planned social infrastructure
- Costs of delivering new infrastructure, upgrading ageing infrastructure, high community expectations, increasing demand and ongoing maintenance costs
- Managing complexities in zoning, development assessment, compliance and regulation, including impacts on heritage and natural environments



Theme 4: Access, traffic and transport

Access and connection to, from and within Ku-ring-gai provides safe, reliable and affordable public and private travel, transport and infrastructure.

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Improving mobility by reducing congestion and providing a more integrated and accessible network
- Understanding changes in transportation usage and technology, and how these are likely to impact on our region
- High cost of commuter parking, responding to increasing demand and considering innovative ways to integrate transportation across the region
- Coordinating across state and local government and multiple projects



Theme 5: Local economy

Creating economic employment opportunities through vital, attractive centres, business innovation and technology.

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Supporting local businesses and a strong local economy to provide and attract quality jobs
- Clarifying long-term objectives for business, employment and jobs growth in Ku-ring-gai
- Considering where and how council can have a positive impact on economic and employment outcomes
- Quality and amenity of local commercial and retail centres
- Attracting visitors to events, heritage and natural attractions and balancing community expectations and infrastructure demands
- Cost and complexity of town centre improvements and major projects



Theme 6: Leadership

Ku-ring-gai is well led, managed and supported by ethical organisations which deliver projects and services to the community by listening, advocating and responding to their needs

Strategic challenges and opportunities

- Limited capacity to raise revenue while demands and costs increase, maximising commercial and community benefits from asset recycling
- Improving engagement and partnership with different stakeholders, community groups and residents; communicating the implications of major projects and policies on resources
- Influencing and responding to funding reforms and policy changes at the State and Commonwealth level and responding to state and regional plans
- Building organisational capability (people, skills, technology and processes) and remaining agile in a complex and changing environment
- Setting clear service levels in line with community expectations and financial constraints
- Innovation and embracing new technologies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of operations and service delivery
- Improving communication channels – delivering information in the right way at the right time

Community engagement and consultation

Consultation and engagement in Ku-ring-gai

Proactive consultation and engagement with our community has been fundamental to Ku-ring-gai Council's planning and decision-making for many years. It is only through effective and meaningful engagement that outcomes can be achieved which are genuinely responsive to community views and needs.

The benefits of this engagement cannot be overstated as it allows Council, residents, local businesses, other levels of government and stakeholders to understand issues, differing views and needs. As a result of these efforts, decisions and outcomes are better informed.

Community engagement and consultation for the review and development of the draft community strategic plan has been guided by Council's Community Engagement Policy as well as an engagement strategy that outlined specific communication and engagement activities to be undertaken for this review.

Responding to COVID-19

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic Council modified engagement actions with the Ku-ring-gai community to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements and to take account of the significantly shortened timeframe available to review the community strategic plan, resulting from the deferral of the local government elections to December 2021.

While this limited face to face engagement approaches, alternative online engagement tools and digital technology were used to ensure the community's voices were considered in the review and development of a revised community strategic plan.

Community engagement strategy

The Community Engagement Strategy outlines how Council will communicate and engage with the Ku-ring-gai community and other stakeholders to review its strategic directions and priorities for the future of Ku-ring-gai.

The purpose of the strategy is to outline the objectives, principles and actions Council will undertake to ensure that the community and relevant stakeholders are able to access, participate and have input into the review of the Ku-ring-gai Community Strategic Plan. The strategy also builds on our existing engagement processes to ensure that is consistent with Council's overarching Community Engagement Policy.

Objectives and principles

The objectives of the community engagement strategy are to:

- confirm whether the existing long term, strategic objectives of the community strategic plan reflect the needs and priorities of the community and other stakeholders over the long term
- assess new and emerging challenges and opportunities for the community and other stakeholders and whether modified or new strategic objectives are needed to address these
- build on our current vision and aspirations for the area from consultations undertaken since the current plan was prepared
- build an understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Ku-ring-gai and the role and ability of Council to affect local issues and change, as in some cases Council has limited ability to directly implement community wishes due to regulatory, political, and economic constraints.
- employ an engagement methodology which captures the views of our already engaged and mobilised community as well as harder to reach stakeholders
- tap into local knowledge and expertise.

Key stakeholders

The important relationship between Council and our stakeholders is illustrated in diagram 2 below.



Diagram 2: Relationship between Council and its stakeholders

Based on our review of demographic and household characteristics, economic characteristics and other groups the following key stakeholder groups have been identified:

- residents and property owners
- business community - local business and industry (owners, operators and staff) and business groups (eg Chambers of Commerce)
- community organisations and groups
- non-government organisations – including service providers and those supporting special needs and CALD groups
- government organisations – service providers, government agencies, neighbouring councils, Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, emergency services (NSW Police, State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire and Rescue etc)
- visitors – people visiting the local area
- internal stakeholders – Councillors and staff

Engagement principles and practice

Council is committed to robust and transparent consultation practices, where all affected community stakeholders have an opportunity to participate. This approach is underpinned by the following social justice principles and best practice consultation and engagement:

Social Justice Principles

- **Equity** - There is fairness in decision making and prioritising and allocation of resources.

- **Access** – All people have fair access to services, resources, and opportunities to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.
- **Participation** – Everyone has the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- **Rights** – Everyone’s rights are recognised and promoted.

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum in diagram 3 illustrates that a variety of engagement techniques will reflect the IAP2 spectrum including:

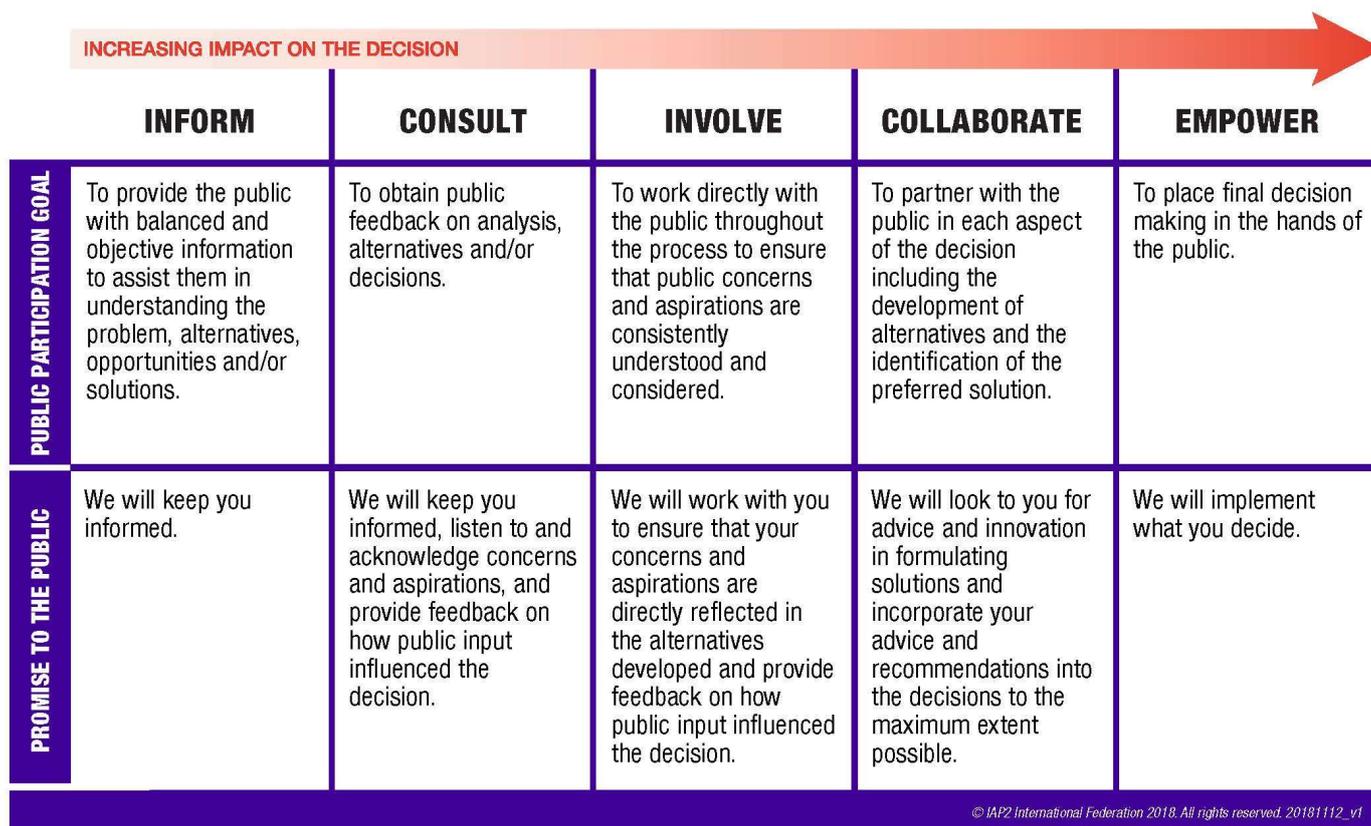


Diagram 3: The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum

Priorities for action

Engagement with the community has been focused on the following:

- **Listening to our engaged community** Ku-ring-gai has an informed and aware community. We will ensure that the knowledge and opinions of our already engagement community are captured and used to inform the review.
- **Making participation as accessible as possible to obtain a representative viewpoint** Within the limitations of the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions the strategy includes actions to make participation as accessible as possible to encourage involvement.
- **Hearing from the harder to reach** The strategy seeks to provide opportunities for engagement with groups we do not usually hear from. These groups include young people, CALD groups, people with disabilities and other special needs groups.

- **Working with our partners and other stakeholders** The review will also involve the business community, government agencies, not for profit organisations, service providers, peak bodies and local community and sporting groups.
- **Building on the past** Any future directions will be informed by our previous strategic directions, results of recent community consultation, and understanding of the changing nature of our demographic, socio economic and physical circumstances.

Engagement actions

Community and stakeholder consultation and engagement is planned to occur in two key phases as outlined below.

Phase 1: Communication and Engagement

Phase 1 involved communication and engagement actions to inform the community and stakeholders of the review and a range of opportunities for participation. This included:

A. Online engagement portal/hub - December 2021 to March 2022

Open to all residents and ratepayers, Council's online engagement portal/hub hosted a range of engagement tools including a survey, online discussion, and ideas walls to hear from the community about the challenges and opportunities in Ku-ring-gai.

The online survey was widely advertised through Council's e-news, social media, events promotions and media releases. Priority issues were identified from the survey for further community forum discussions.

Information provided on the online engagement portal/hub included:

- overall vision of the community strategic plan
- background information including key existing strategic goals and targets
- links to relevant documents for further reading
- a survey to verify/test current directions and identify new and emerging issues, and capture other feedback, ideas and concerns.

B. Resident survey - December 2021 to March 2022

Residents were invited to provide their views on the current community vision contained within the Community Strategic Plan as well as current and future challenges and opportunities. Priority challenges and issues identified from the survey provided the basis for two community forums.

C. Business survey - December 2021 to February 2022

As part of an annual survey of the Ku-ring-gai business community local businesses were invited to provide their views on current and future challenges and opportunities in Ku-ring-gai.

D. Youth group – January 2022

This was a youth led, Council supported project (guided by Council's youth officer) to look at current challenges and opportunities from a youth perspective. It was a finite project delivered by a recruited group of young people and focused on challenges and opportunities in Ku-ring-gai as perceived by young people and possible solutions for consideration in longer term planning.

The process was designed by youth, for youth aged 15 – 18 years. Key questions addressed included:

- What are the important issues for youth in the Ku-ring-gai area
- What issues are emerging that we need to plan for from a youth perspective
- How do council's current strategic goals align with matters identified in the points above

The youth group was advertised through Council's youth groups, website and schools.

E. CALD groups - March 2022

Two face to face workshops were held with Chinese and Korean speaking resident groups to discuss and identify challenges, future aspirations and opportunities.

F. Community forums and webinar - March 2022

- 1) Two face to face community forums (one recruited and one self-selected) were held to identify and discuss participant views on:
 - The current community vision contained within the Community Strategic Plan
 - Priority issues identified through the online resident survey
 - Other issues, challenges and opportunities
 - Emerging issues that Council needs to consider or discuss

- 2) An online webinar was held on Zoom and delivered by Council staff. Participants were self-selected and invited to join the session via Council's website and social media. Participants discussed:
 - Background information regarding each of the priority areas identified from earlier consultations
 - Achievements over the past 4 years
 - Council's role in addressing the issues
 - A Q&A session

G. Community survey - April 2021

Ku-ring-gai Council commissioned an independent survey of community attitudes and perceptions regarding Council's delivery of a broad selection of services and facilities. A key objective of the research was to identifying community priorities for the Ku-ring-gai local government area.

The research involved a telephone survey of 503 recruited participants, sample weighted by age and gender to reflect the 2016 ABS Census data for Ku-ring-gai.

Phase 2: Public exhibition and feedback

Timeframe: 3 May to 30 May 2022

In Phase 2, Council will exhibit, seek feedback and assess community and stakeholder comments on a draft revised Community Strategic Plan (CSP) that has been prepared following the Phase One consultation and engagement. Separate to exhibition of the CSP, Council will also exhibit a revised Long Term Financial Plan (part of Council's Resourcing Strategy), a draft 4 year Delivery Program and a one year Operational Plan for 2022 – 2023.

Phase 2 engagement will identify the key outcomes of Phase 1 Engagement and how these have been taken into account in the development of the draft CSP and associated documents. The exhibition will be delivered via Council's online engagement platform with the following tools used:

- Summary of the draft plans
- Function for online written submissions
- Links to exhibited plans and supporting information

For those who may not have access to the technology required to participate in engagement online, there are hard copy options available on request.

Recent community engagement

The following table shows the recent community engagement, with over 1000 participants and respondents:

Engagement project	Type of engagement	Participants/ respondents
Online resident survey (December 2021 – March 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey • social media and e-news • Project webpages • media releases 	185
Online business survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey • social media and e-news 	300
Youth group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person workshop 	6
Cultural and linguistically diverse groups (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person discussion groups 	25
Community forums (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person workshops 	35
Community information night	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar online briefings and Q and A session 	16
Community research (into priorities and importance/satisfaction with services - April 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative recruited and telephone survey 	500+
	Total	1067

Building on past community engagement

Extensive community engagement undertaken over the last 4 years has also informed the review of strategic directions and priorities for the future of Ku-ring-gai. This included engagement on significant planning and policy areas.

The following provides a selection of community consultation and engagement in the period 2018 – 2021 (between the adoption of the current Community Strategic Plan and the local government election in December 2021). The majority of the examples were completed before implementation of the COVID-19 restrictions. From March to June 2020, consultation and engagement was fully online through Council's webpage, social media platforms and the new Life Online web-based portal.

Engagement project	Type of engagement
Community engagement policy (2021)	• surveys • interviews • media release • e-news • online advertising • direct mail • Council's online engagement platform
Local character study (2021)	• online survey • online interactive mapping tool • newspapers • e-news • Facebook • website • direct mail • online engagement platform • consultation webinar • print and online advertising • newsletter • direct emails • social media • media releases
Launch of Net Zero Communities program (2021)	• face to face community workshop • online community workshop • focus group workshops for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, strata/independent living communities, school leaders and local businesses.
Lindfield Village Hub (2021)	• statistically representative telephone survey • retail and library surveys • recruited and opt-in workshops • community bus tour (including place score) • community drop-in information sessions • youth workshop • library workshop
Heritage Strategy (2021)	• e-news and website advertising • social media • Council's online engagement platform
Public Domain Plans (2021)	• Council's online engagement platform • e-news and website advertising • social media
Access and Disability Inclusion Plan 2020-2024 (2020)	• website • e-news • proactive engagement with residents with a disability • engagement with local and regional disability service providers, regional disability networks, newspapers • online consultation • print and online advertising • newsletters
Draft Housing Strategy (2020)	• online and hard copy survey • community sounding board • focus groups • community workshops • stakeholder interviews • social media and e-news • project webpages • media releases
Waste Strategy (2020)	• recruited telephone survey • online survey • social media and e-news
Play space strategy (2020)	• online and hard copy survey • newspapers • e-news • Facebook • website • direct mail • online engagement platform • online discussion forum • community workshop
Home based business research (2020)	• online survey
Recreation in Natural Areas Strategy (2019)	• recreational groups survey and workshops • environmental groups survey and workshops • community forum
Robert Pymble Park landscape masterplan (2019)	• online and print survey • community information session • social media • e-news
St Johns Avenue, Gordon upgrade - Eat Street style urban improvements (Phases 1 and 2) – (2019)	• face to face meetings • online survey • discussion forum • business workshop • pop-up park

Local Strategic Planning Statement (2018)	• online and hard copy survey • online discussion forum • drop-in information sessions at libraries • social media and e-news • media releases
Continuation of the environmental levy (2018)	• recruited survey • recruited workshop • information sessions • online survey and forum

Summary – results of engagement

Key priorities for the next 10 years identified from the community engagement included:

- protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- making it easier and safer to move around Ku-ring-gai
- managing new development, for example higher densities, while preserving the area's character
- keeping the character and ambience of the area
- protecting our heritage
- effects of population growth and change – on infrastructure, services and facilities
- improving access to services and facilities by youth, residents from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disabilities
- addressing the needs of older residents
- providing more opportunities for social interaction and celebrating our diversity
- providing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities – roads, footpaths, drainage, public toilets, etc
- providing parks and playgrounds
- improving access to public transport.

Results of the review of the Community Strategic Plan

The results of our review of the community strategic plan (CSP), including community engagement and consultation, reaffirmed the following community priorities as follows:

- providing facilities and services for our changing population
- providing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities
- protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- long term planning and managing new development
- preserving the area's character
- accessibility and moving around Ku-ring-gai.

In addition, the following areas were identified for greater focus:

- improving community connectedness
- removing barriers to participation in community life
- addressing the needs of young people, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disability
- expanding Council communication to a wider audience
- celebrating Ku-ring-gai's diversity.

Review of Ku-ring-gai's vision statement

The CSP's vision statement is an important component of the plan. It is aspirational, sets the tone for the plan and supports a sense of shared ownership and purpose. The current vision statement was originally included in Council's 2013 CSP.

As part of the review of the CSP, residents were asked for feedback on the plan's current vision statement. Suggestions focused on making the statement more contemporary and relevant to Ku-ring-gai now and into the future, particularly incorporating the need for inclusiveness and connectedness, as well as reaffirming the importance of the natural environment and heritage.

A revised statement is included in the draft CSP for community comment.

Internal consultation

Councillors have been briefed on legislative and IP&R requirements for all NSW councils.

Workshops were held with councillors and senior management to review the results of community engagement, including challenges and opportunities for Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years, and to develop the community vision and the long term objectives for the community and Council.

Consultation has also taken place across the entire organisation in reviewing the current CSP and developing appropriate performance measures for long term objectives.

Next Steps

Community engagement and consultation undertaken for the review of the Community Strategic Plan also informed preparation of a Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Further opportunities will be provided for community input as part of the public exhibition of the documents. This will include:

- Availability of the plans and supporting information on Council's website and community engagement portal along with an executive summary with Korean and Modern Chinese translated versions.
- An invitation to the community to make written submissions via website forms and/or email/mail to Council.
- Promotion of the exhibition as follows:
 - Direct email - to those who have participated in the engagement process so far
 - E-newsletters
 - Newspaper advertisements - Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Post, Bush Telegraph, Sydney Observer and North Shore Times
 - Social Media Posts - LinkedIn, Facebook, Next Door and Mayors Facebook
 - Media releases
 - News item on Council's website homepage
- Advertising of the exhibition and opportunity for the community to make comments – in Council facilities and other locations around the local government area.
- Advice sent directly to relevant government agencies, community organisations and affiliated groups, CALD groups, business groups, local representatives and neighbouring councils.

Evaluation and monitoring

Evaluating the engagement methods

Council will evaluate the engagement process post-completion. Evaluation will provide valuable feedback on the best methods for engaging with groups in a particular area or the most appropriate times or venues. These findings will inform future engagement processes.

Providing feedback to the community

At the conclusion of the second engagement phase a report will be prepared to Council including assessment of submissions received during the public exhibition period with recommendations for any changes to the draft exhibited plans. A document addressing feedback will also be published on Council's website.

Appendix

Results of engagement

Resident online survey

December 2021 to March 2022

185 responses

Rating the current vision

While most residents thought the vision was still good to excellent, there were also many suggestions for improvement. The following provides a selection of comments made:

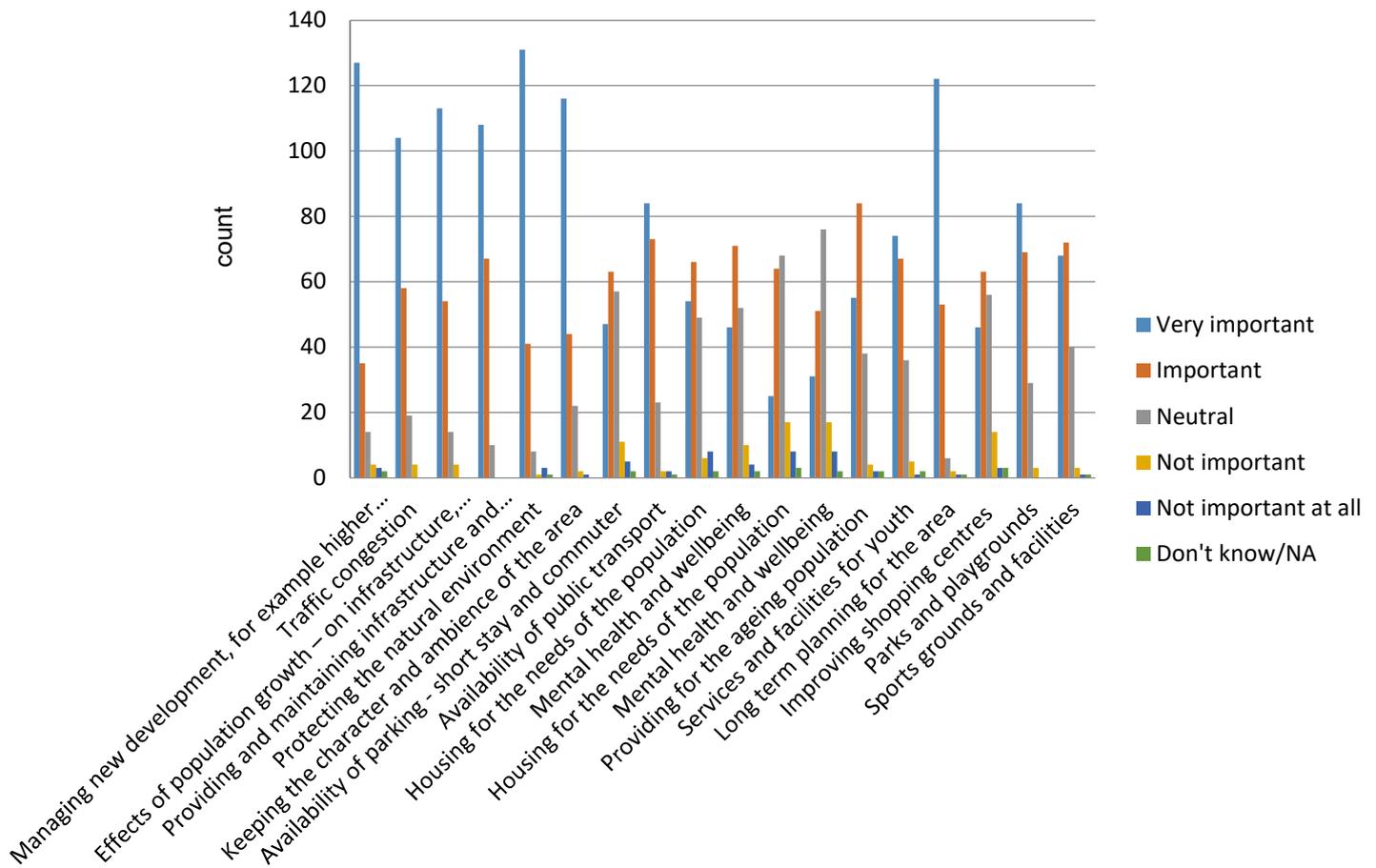
- Making wording more specific to Ku-ring-gai today and into the future
- Mention community
- Stronger words needed – preservation rather the conservation
- Add in 'diverse', caring and compassionate
- Maintaining the character of the area
- Include the word 'inclusive', honouring aboriginal culture, enhance rather than conserve
- Add more future focus – ie vibrancy to create positive outcomes
- Preserve the natural environment that was a hallmark of the area
- Smart and progressive rather than 'creative'
- Needs the word 'connected'
- A balance between open spaces and building developments
- Include 'Improve the liveability of the area'
- Include 'improve inclusiveness and participation within the community'
- Add 'conserve our important built heritage'
- Acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the land
- More focus on 'unity, working together and sharing goals'
- Need a vision that inspires and reflects the changes taking place in the world. Need terms that reflect the world's focus on diversity and inclusiveness, technological advances, and a greater emphasis on nature positive activities. Ie a more current and future focused vision whilst acknowledging the lovely environment that we have created. Not a call to maintenance.
- Include multiculturally yet diverse community with mutual respect; continue our commitment to protect the environment for the health and wellbeing of future generations

Priorities

Based on the results of an independent survey undertaken in 2021 residents were asked to rank the following issues in priority order:

- Managing new development, for example higher densities
- Traffic congestion
- Effects of population growth – on infrastructure, services and facilities
- Providing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities – roads, footpaths, drainage, public toilets, etc
- Protecting the natural environment
- Keeping the character and ambience of the area
- Availability of parking - short stay and commuter
- Availability of public transport
- Housing for the needs of the population
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Providing for the ageing population
- Services and facilities for youth
- Long term planning for the area
- Improving shopping centres
- Parks and playgrounds
- Sports grounds and facilities

Recent feedback from the community identified a number of priority issues for Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years when asked to rate the importance of these priorities below when considering expectations of a high quality of life in the future.



Most Important ratings

The 7 highest 'very important' ratings were for:

- Protecting the natural environment
- Providing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities – roads, footpaths, drainage, public toilets, etc
- Managing new development, for example higher densities
- Long term planning for the area
- Keeping the character and ambience of the area
- Effects of population growth - on infrastructure, services and facilities
- Traffic congestion

Other priority areas

Residents were asked to identify any other priority areas that they thought were important. These have been grouped under like headings as follows:

Protecting the natural environment

- Maintain established trees and plant new ones

- The natural bush and tree canopy
- Protect the natural environment
- Not just protecting but improving the local environment.
- Conservation and extension of our tree canopy and bushland to assist with climate change
- Need to ensure we maintain the natural beauty of our bushland.
- Strong importance on protecting the environment

Housing

- Need more medium density townhouses and duplex style dwellings rather than high density units
- Need more diversity of housing types
- Remove red tape and streamline approval processes
- Affordable housing for key workers and long-term residents who become homeless
- More medium density rather than reliance on high density

Population growth and development

- Support building height limits to mature Sydney blue gum or Blackbutt
- Transition interface between high density and low density
- Manage population growth to avoid overpopulation
- The key will be to get the balance right. No further development before issues of environment, congestion and services etc are addressed. Priorities are critical.
- Excessive high density buildings affecting character and ambiance.

Sustainability and climate change

- Net-zero council and community activities need to be front and centre, not only protecting the natural environment.
- Sustainability climate action
- More solar run free EV charging stations
- Recycle soft plastics
- Sustainability should underpin everything
- Better recycling of soft plastics
- Reducing council carbon emissions
- Make it easier to install solar panels
- Sustainability should be a key word used in everything Council does in Ku-ring-gai LGA. Educating and inviting people of all ages to live a sustainable life and what it means exactly. The reasoning behind it is to protect the natural environment as much as possible, reducing congestion and pollution by promoting public transports and focusing on having the best facilities to invite commuters to use public transport, increasing facilities to attract young families (playground, park, sport, education etc) while taking care of the ageing population with a special focus on mental health.
- Climate action - make Ku-ring-gai carbon neutral by 2035
- Focus on recycling, renewables

Centres

- Complete the Lindfield Hub
- Improve shopping centres in the LGA
- Urban renewal for our local centres which are in a state of decay
- More dining options
- Revitalise Turramurra
- There is not enough evening social activities
- Allow for greater dining/entertainment precincts in local areas
- More al fresco dining options. Revamp of St Ives Shopping Centre and Mona Vale Road facing shops
- Community centres for people to gather outside of their homes. Night life would be great for families and older people
- Improving the shopping centres in the municipality

Liveability

- Improve the area's liveability – need cafes, bars nightlife, cultural and cosmopolitan character too – critical to attracting and retaining the next generation of young residents and families beyond just relying on the beautiful environment and good schools

Community facilities and infrastructure

- Provide more cultural facilities and theatre opportunities eg Marian Street Theatre
- Maintaining libraries and community assets
- Encourage spaces and facilities for positive congregation of younger residents
- Trying to attract younger families into the LGA with infrastructures such as playgrounds, educational facilities around the protection of the environment, modern parent rooms in shopping centres.
- Infrastructure that will attract more young families into the area

Community connectedness

- More events and facilities that bring all Ku-ring-gai citizens together
- More community gardens needed for apartment dwellers
- Bringing our community together - better spaces to connect
- More community events on our greens and in our playgrounds. Better use of branch libraries (better branch libraries in general).
- Community building - events and facilities that bring all Ku-ring-gai citizens together

Council services

- Providing quick and quality services which Council provides eg GIPA requests, assessing DAs, waste services.
- Facilitate more community engagement and representation
- Improved communication on progress on major projects

Traffic and access

- Addressing traffic congestion, especially around schools at peak times
- Connecting suburbs and communities across KU and other LGA's
- Reduce traffic congestion in St Ives

Active transport

- Need better walking and cycling connectivity
- Need better walking and transport networks
- More safe cycling infrastructure
- Bike paths. Provisions for e-scooters. Charging stations.

Recreation and open spaces

- Bring our community together with better spaces
- Need more skateparks
- Faster action to revitalise St Ives Village Green

Heritage and character

- Conserve our heritage homes
- Keep the character and ambience of the area, while providing new buildings for housing and shopping
- Preserving our mid-century architecture
- Retain the character of St Ives
- Protect heritage of Rosedale Farm (Dorset & Rosedale Rd, St Ives) from further development and save for community and green space.
- Conservation of our heritage homes and buildings, Ku-ring-gai's built environment
- Preservation and enhancement of what makes Ku-ring-gai so special. Our English gardens.
- Only Ku-ring-gai has the precious European and deciduous trees and gardens

Challenges over the next 10 years

Residents were asked what are the main challenges that they believe need addressing in the area, when considering Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years?

The main response from residents was effectively managing development and related matters (e.g. provision of new infrastructure, traffic facilities and open space). Not all residents were opposed to new development.

Other comments provided by residents regarding the main challenges facing Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years included:

- Increasing building densities, particularly around shopping centres
- Increasing population
- Accessible housing for young families
- Overdevelopment
- Too much high density development that will destroy the character of the area
- Increase focus on sustainable development, environmental maintenance
- Adapting to climate change
- Maintenance of our current infrastructure and community facilities
- More commuter parking near train stations
- Infrastructure and transport
- More cultural facilities – no effective theatre
- Housing challenges – need open space for new flats
- The move to medium density housing
- Developing a truly diverse (especially ethnically diverse) and inclusive community with representation from a wide range of multicultural backgrounds
- Not more high-rise
- Ageing population – need to attract younger families
- Protection of natural environment while growth occurs
- Loss of natural landscape
- Not enough infrastructure for population growth – roads etc but also sports fields, community buildings
- Maintaining the unique environment
- More emphasis on composting and recycling to reduce general waste
- Balancing the provision of services and facilities as the demographics change
- Maintaining the tree canopy
- More youth move out of the area which is too tailored for the elderly
- Conserving the natural spaces and making them more accessible
- More street trees
- Providing and maintaining infrastructure
- Retaining open space for recreational purposes
- Ensuring holistic views are heard - protecting the environment but also providing places for youth
- Not enough for young people to do.

Key opportunities over the next 10 years

Residents were asked what they viewed as key opportunities for Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years. Comments included the following:

- Replace aged trees and excessively tall trees with more reasonable tree cover
- Keep apartment buildings to 5 storeys
- Keep Ku-ring-gai as the most liveable area in Sydney and beyond
- Plant more trees
- Shuttle buses so less cars
- Medium sized parks in most locations
- Tapping into the valuable skills of our residents and new arrivals
- Child care centre in Turramurra hub
- Complete upgrade to the Marian Street Theatre
- Improved shopping strips
- Council taking a more active role in empowering and enabling community engagement
- Improve the Turramurra shopping centre and library
- Hub projects would enliven the area
- Biodiversity
- A more participative residential population
- Revitalised local centres – enhancing local shopping/eating precincts
- Create a sustainability hub – where people can bring various items - like Artarmon
- Proper community hubs and facilities that meet the needs of our children and younger families – new libraries and community centres
- Provide real alternatives to strata and high density development by allowing subdivision and redevelopment of excessively large block sizes
- Maximise use of sporting ovals as there is no more space for new ones
- Revitalise the key hubs as planned
- Investment in public spaces like the Lindfield Village Hub
- Revitalise commercial precincts along the Pacific Highway
- All development to include greenspace to cover needs of an increasing population
- Surveys in shopping centres to include youth.

Business online survey

December 2021 to February 2022

366 responses

Challenges over the next 10 years

As part of the annual business survey local businesses were asked for their views on the main challenges that they believe need addressing in the local government area? (When considering Ku-ring-gai's local economy, business and employment over the next 10 years)

Responses included the following:

- Implications of more people working from home
- Lack of vitality of most of Ku-ring-gai's local centres
- Reducing red tape for approvals for businesses
- Access to business support and networking hubs
- Availability of affordable housing – cost of housing – for workers
- Engagement of younger people in decision-making
- New and improved infrastructure and parking for Ku-ring-gai's population growth
- Need for improved telecommunication infrastructure
- Lack of entertainment
- Better engagement and trust between Council and residents and businesses
- Streamlining the DA process - too complicated
- More parking near railway stations
- Improving public transport, especially to remote locations like St Ives
- Improved access to public transport
- Protecting Ku-ring-gai's tree canopy
- Ensuring development is sympathetic to the environment
- Better traffic management and rapid public transport to decrease road congestion and parking problems
- More youth programs that assist in workforce readiness
- Improved responsiveness from Council - usually very slow to respond
- Council to engage more openly and directly with businesses and constituents
- Maintaining the character of the area
- High costs of commercial rents.

Opportunities over the next 10 years

Businesses were asked what do you think are key opportunities that would benefit the area over the next 10 years? (when considering Ku-ring-gai's local economy, business and employment)

Responses included the following:

- Complete the Gordon eat street that was planned
- Facilitate local business hubs
- Implement green programs
- Facilitate affordable housing for lower paid workers
- Continue with the Council program to support local businesses – it's very good
- Put information on local businesses at the top of google search
- Attract younger professionals to the area
- Look at the potential for hybrid working and how that might impact business in the future
- Consider how people will be working and interacting in the community in the future
- Harnessing the knowledge and skills of the local population
- Less red tape
- Improve the infrastructure
- More bus services to enable access to trains without driving
- More community friendly events
- Traffic lights at St Ives Showground
- Local centres with vibrant restaurants and cafes
- Business service hubs
- More promotion of go local, particularly employment
- Treat rate payers and businesses as partners not inconvenient complainers
- Better road access and parking facilities so that businesses can attract both local residents and those further afield
- Improved traffic, parking and accessibility
- Capitalise on local opportunities, make the area a destination that is unique
- Develop 'commercial villages' that are attractive for businesses and customers with pleasant spaces and activity opportunities
- Improved public transport and connections between east and west of the highway
- More parking near the stations
- Improve the local centres that are outdated, unappealing and have limited green spaces and parking.

Youth group workshop

January 2022

What is important to young people

Youth leader attendees were asked what matters to them and what they value. Responses included the following:

What matters to you?

- The environment
- Being able to share views and opinions, while respecting and acknowledging other peoples
- Engagement with community activities – making the most of opportunities
- Being treated equally
- Respect for problems past and present
- A sense of belonging and equality
- Equal rights for minorities and acknowledging and accepting people who are different to you

What do you value?

- Feeling like our voices and opinions matter
- Being able to have my voice heard
- Support networks – communities, friends, family, school
- Respect and inclusion
- Free mental health support in communities
- Environments where all people are equal no matter their race, religion, sexuality or gender

Challenges of living in Ku-ring-gai

Attendees were asked what they think are the key challenges facing Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years. Responses included:

- Importance of Ku-ring-gai's zero net emissions goal - should be 2030, although 2040 is more realistic
- Younger age groups are the ones that will need to address the impacts of climate change, energy, changing employment, world change and uncertainty
- Need to preserve the future for our kids
- How will Council and the community address common problems – what about community days to sort issues out?
- How will you hear young people? Can there be more opportunities to reach out to schools, information on opportunities and what's going on for younger people
- What opportunities are there to work in Ku-ring-gai?
- How will you attract young people to stay in the area?
- Can places be made more suitable for young people to use?

Opportunities for Ku-ring-gai

Attendees were asked what they think are opportunities for Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years from their perspective. Responses included:

Local activities

- More things for young people to be involved in
- More action on climate change
- Need spaces to hang out – but not structured
- A lot of facilities are designed by older people and don't meet their needs
- Feeling part of the whole community through events
- Need for common places to go beyond school
- More opportunities to meet people – eg events and in groups
- Need night-time events – eg bands, art installations
- Youth hub – stalls
- Need more spaces targeted in bars, cafes, restaurants, youth hubs could have different days targeted to their age groups
- Art centre – need more targeted art exhibitions
- Ku-ring-gai too focused on old people spaces – need more cafes
- Need career and work experience programs reinstated – bring in industries

Communication

- More information needed on what's happening in area. Unaware of the sustainability programs and climate change agenda
- Social media – an app that gives information to young people
- Provide more information into the schools
- Community expo – that schools can attend
- Need more targeted messaging

More involvement of young people in decision-making

- Youth advocacy days
- Address generational gap
- Have community days eg park planting days where you can discuss issues and seek feedback
- Create opportunities for young people to 'make their mark'
- Recommend school projects on topics useful to Ku-ring-gai

Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Groups

March 2022

Participants were asked about the positive aspects of living in Ku-ring-gai.

Responses included:

- We are happy with the environment – clean air and trees
- Community facilities (like Gordon Library) are excellent
- We have everything we need here
- There is good transportation, especially bus and trains
- We have good neighbours
- We are planning to stay in the area
- There are good schools to choose from
- The neighbourhood is really friendly
- The village like atmosphere of the area

Participants were asked about aspects of Ku-ring-gai that could be improved.

Responses included:

- We need more parks and facilities for the growing population
- More street cleaning of leaves to stop drains overflowing
- Removing barriers to communication for people where English is their second language
- Improved translation opportunities when dealing with Council
- Would like more exercise facilities for older people or all ages
- Better street lighting is needed in some areas and streets – too dark at night and do not feel safe
- Need more restaurants and shops to make the centres livelier
- Need more spaces for community performances, choirs etc
- More opportunities for residents to meet and interact
- Need to improve facilities, particularly toilets

Participants were asked what are emerging or future issues over the next 10 years

Responses included:

- Need long- term planning to be more consistent with the local character
- The number of new apartments is ruining the look of Ku-ring-gai
- More street lighting will be needed as the area is very dark and bushy
- Exercise apparatus is needed on walking tracks for all ages
- Faster responses needed to the area's changing demographics
- Availability of aged care for CALD residents
- Too much street parking around units leading to congestion
- Improved personal safety
- Everything will get too crowded if the population continues to increase
- Housing prices are too high
- More facilities and parks need to be designed for adults rather than just children
- Preserving the character of the area

Community forums

22 and 28 March 2022

Participants were asked to respond to two questions under 5 priority areas:

- identify any issue, challenge or opportunity
- what action could be taken to address the above

Long term planning and managing new development

Identify any issue, challenge or opportunity

- Providing housing choices to meet the needs of a changing population
- Improving local neighbourhood centres
- Manage new develop without destroying our heritage
- Need more stringent controls on dwelling site coverage
- Need a more stringent private certification process
- Poor quality of many apartment buildings
- Over development
- Lack of carparking for apartments
- Too many over 55's dwellings and child care centres – need housing for younger adults
- Highrise is isolating for residents and will lead to future slums
- Capacity for council to complete major projects in a timely fashion
- Create a middle size/density housing resource – between large houses and apartments
- Update the local centres – not enough restaurants, etc

What action could be taken to address the above

- More opportunities for townhouse and villa style complexes
- Upgrade the key business centres
- Pressing need to improve the local centres - need for more medium density housing for all ages – not just over 55's
- Minimum amount of parking per apartment
- Need for conducive lifestyle for apartment dwellers
- Need for Lindfield hub to commence urgently
- Provide community facilities that suit most age groups
- Need better quality apartments with opportunities for residents to interact
- Grow council's financial capacity and resources and build capability. Rate increase?
- Adopt a housing strategy approved by the Department of Planning
- Subdivide larger blocks so that younger families can afford to buy and build

Protecting the natural environment

Identify any issue, challenge or opportunity

- Preparing the bush and National Park for fire seasons – especially for houses backing on to them
- Maintenance and improvement of walking trails – many worn and dangerous
- Too much waste going to landfill – larger collection items could be recycled
- Residents don't know enough about the local environment
- Preservation of Indigenous sites
- Recycling bins needed in Gordon parks
- More community gardens

What action could be taken to address the above

- Improved walking trails would attract more young people and visitors to use them
- Introduce different collection types similar to e-waste
- Lobby government for legislation on packaging
- More education on responsible disposal
- More communication needed directly to households to educate residents about fire preparation, water saving initiatives etc – similar to the flyers that Sydney rail send to residents about upcoming works
- More education campaigns on recycling etc
- Educational signage explain importance of sites
- Rebates for owners who maintain native trees
- Use any wasted space for community gardens

Providing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities

Identify any issue, challenge or opportunity

- Need for review of the capacity of road drainage to cope with increased rainfall
- Capacity of stormwater system to deal with excess rain events
- Adequate street cleaning and removing leaves from gutters
- Maintenance of costly sports fields

What action could be taken to address the above

- Applying for appropriate grants
- More efficient project management for some works
- More maintenance needed to old drainage systems
- Adequate funds to ensure all infrastructure is maintained to acceptable standards
- Reoptimizing and repurposing sporting facilities to meet current and future demands
- A few more synthetic sportsgrounds
- Build more playgrounds on the south side of Gordon
- Build footpaths where there are none

Traffic congestion and moving around Ku-ring-gai

Identify any issue, challenge or opportunity

- Provide more parking around train stations
- More frequent public transport so residents do not need to drive
- More charging stations for electric cars
- More bike lanes
- Pacific highway congestion
- Need more footpaths and bike lanes
- Improve safety access to railway stations
- Increase parking for all-day commuters
- Ensure adequate parking and access to library in proposed Lindfield hub
- Look at bridge over the highway at Lindfield
- Traffic congestion around schools and childcare centres at peak times
- Improve traffic flow through Gordon and Turramurra
- Need linked cycle routes as difficult to work out safe routes
- Traffic congestion in and around train stations

What action could be taken to address the above

- Accelerate footpath construction
- Provide more commuter parking
- Hub plans should include adequate parking and easy access
- Provide clearway through Gordon all day as adequate customer parking available for businesses
- Create network of linked cycle routes
- Make footpaths wider so people can socially distance
- Improve traffic congestion at intersection of Werona Ave and McIntosh street
- Provide footpath in Darley Street, which is dangerous for pedestrians
- Need more places for pedestrians to cross arterial roads
- Rationalise the amount of traffic signage in the area especially small quiet roads
- Opportunities for smaller community buses to compliment current bus options (eg from St Ives village centre) especially for disabled people
- Create parking hubs from which motorists can catch a bus for the rest of their journey
- Provide more off-street parking at the St Ives village centre
- Need more EV charging hubs
- Adjust priority for traffic at some intersections with arterial roads, as it is difficult to get onto some roads

Providing services for the community

Identify any issue, challenge or opportunity

- Transport challenges for the elderly who want to remain mobile
- More information needed on services available to the community
- Not enough marketing of services that council provides
- Elderly transport needed for the area – many residents are over 80/85 and are unable to drive
- Providing services and programs that women like doing – art music cooking, sewing history for
- Waiting times for collection of larger household goods for disposal is 3 months - this is too long a waiting period for a once a month collection
- Provide inclusive services for all – eg CALD groups
- How to communicate services for the elderly who may be isolated
- Engaging with our ageing residents and assisting them to live well and take care of their properties
- Not enough activities for teens

What action could be taken to address the above

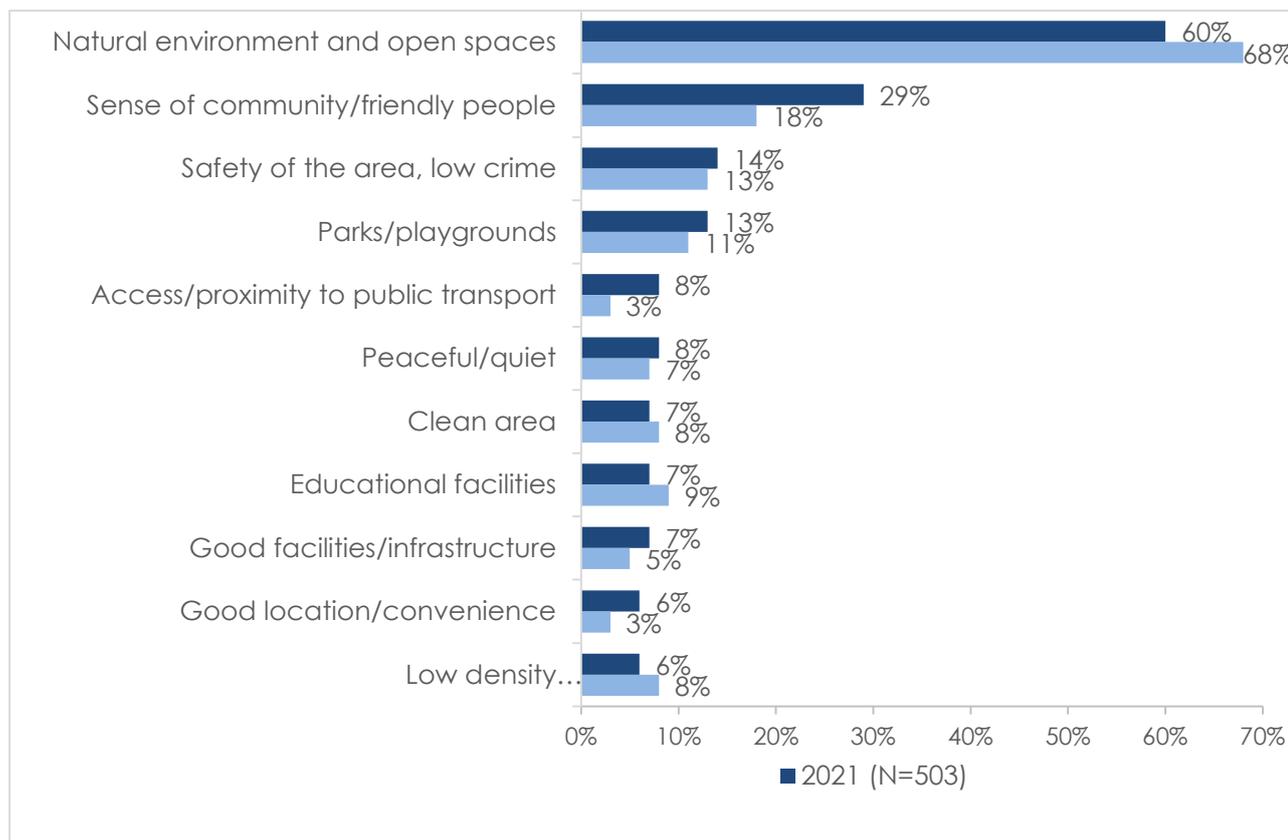
- Expand community transport
- What channels are there for residents to connect to each other
- What volunteering options are available especially for youth?
- Creation of a small business zone
- Make information on different services, clubs and connections available to older residents
- More local transport for elderly around the LGA
- Information on volunteering options
- More accessible opportunities to promote local community activities to residents – all ages
- Increase frequency of larger household good collection
- Send out information with the rates notice, have more community noticeboards
- Assistance services needed for elderly
- Opportunities for more sharing of school facilities

Community survey research

April 2021

Strengths of Ku-ring-gai

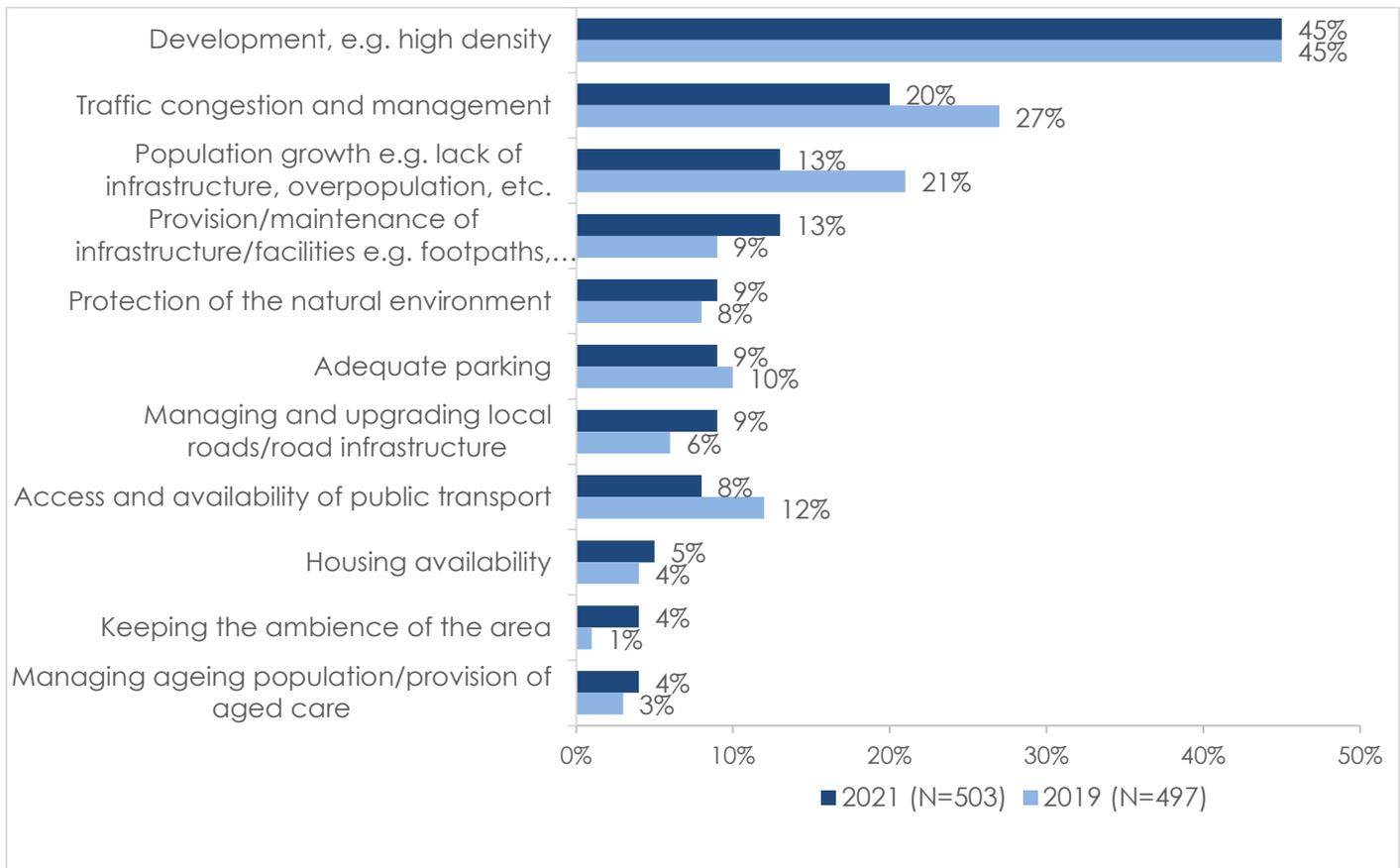
Residents were asked: Thinking generally about living in the Ku-ring-gai area, what do you feel are the strengths of the local area?



Highest priority issues

Residents were asked: Thinking of the next 10 years, what do you believe will be the highest priority issues within the Ku-ring-gai area?

Ku-ring-gai residents believe that managing development is the highest priority issue within the area over the next 10 years. Traffic congestion and management was also commonly mentioned as a priority.



Ku-ring-gai's Unique Visual Character and Identity

Residents were asked: How important is it for Council to maintain Ku-ring-gai's unique visual character and identity?

88% of residents believe it is important/very important for Council to maintain it's unique visual character and identity. Level of importance follows an upward trend with age.

Moving in and Around Ku-ring-Gai

Residents were asked: Overall, how satisfied with you with the ease of moving in and around the Ku-ring-gai LGA?

90% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the ease of moving in and around the Ku-ring-gai LGA, with commitment to "very satisfied" significantly increasing since 2019.

Quality of Life

Residents were asked: Overall, how would you rate the quality of life you have living in the Ku-ring-gai area?

Quality of life in the Ku-ring-gai area is high, with the majority (98%) of residents rating their quality of life as good, very good or excellent. Results are above the LGA Metro benchmark.

Contact us

For assistance or information regarding any of Council's services or facilities please contact us.

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