



# *Sustainable Wollongong 2030*

A Climate Healthy City Strategy

## **SNAPSHOT**



## *Vision:*

*Together, we're creating a healthy and sustainable future for all. Wollongong is a thriving low waste, low emissions city, in harmony with its environment.*



## *Aboriginal Heritage:*

The area we know today as Wollongong was originally inhabited by the Dharawal (Tarawal or Thuruwal), who remain the Traditional Custodians of this land.

Our natural environment sustained our local Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers. They lived in harmony with the local environment and they lived seasonally, within the climatic conditions and food availability.

This connection to Country, way of living and leaving only footprints is something inherent in traditional Aboriginal culture and is something that we have integrated the development of this strategy.

Wollongong has a proud Aboriginal community that encourages everyone to learn about and celebrate local cultural traditions.



## *Why Sustainability?*

To us, environmental sustainability is about enhancing our way of life whilst minimising our impact on our natural systems.

Protecting our environment is essential if we want to create a sustainable city, support the liveability and prosperity of our region and leave a positive legacy for future generations.

## *Why do we need this Strategy?*

This Strategy supports our 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration, adoption of emissions reduction targets for Council and the city, and other works under the Global Covenant of Mayors and Cities Power Partnership program.

This Strategy provides a high-level strategic direction that consolidates all of our environmental priorities, goals and sustainability outcomes into one document.

We have a collective role to play in improving the sustainability of our community and environment.

We have big challenges ahead of us, but this provides us with exciting opportunities to improve the way we do things to enhance quality of life for all.



## How was this Strategy developed?

In developing this Strategy, we held a series of engagement activities to gain community input. We asked our community what was important to them in terms of sustainability, why it was important and what we as a community could do.

The information gathered was used to produce the six key priority areas in this Strategy, which are interdependent and impact or influence each other.



**Figure 1:** Key priority areas that are key to a Sustainable Wollongong.

Each priority area has a goal that describes what a sustainable Wollongong looks like and a series of sustainability outcomes for us to strive towards to achieve the goal.

It is envisaged that these goals and sustainability outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of a series of high level strategic actions. These strategic actions have been developed at a high level to provide flexibility to the program managers in achieving and delivering on their intent, particularly as technology, practice, understanding and the organisation evolves.



**Figure 2:** Sustainability Strategy framework



## Links to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global strategy agreed to by the United Nations General Assembly which form a blueprint to create a sustainable future for everyone. There are 17 interconnected goals for 2015-2030, including 10 directly relevant to sustainability and climate change as shown in Figure 3. Each of the priority areas also reference the SDGs that they will help achieve.



**Figure 3:** Sustainable Development Goals directly relevant to sustainability (*United Nations 2020*)

## How will actions be implemented?

The majority of these actions will be implemented through existing strategies, plans and programs. Where there are gaps in our current programs, high level actions have been identified for consideration. Supported actions will be included in our Delivery Program

and Operational Plan for resourcing and implementation.

The following pages explore the six Priority Areas and associated actions in the Strategy that will help to create a Sustainable Wollongong.







# *A city whose Council shows leadership*

**Environmental and climate leadership underpins Council decision-making and service delivery which inspires the same in others**

## **SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES**

- Council projects and operations incorporate sustainable design, procurement, construction and delivery practices
- Council projects and operations showcase environmental technologies and support local businesses
- Actions within this Strategy are being implemented effectively
- Reduced emissions from Council operations, including increased energy from renewable sources
- Our community is supported to reduce emissions
- Council's planning instruments actively encourage sustainable development
- Council staff have the knowledge, skills and capacity to make decisions to reduce the environmental impact of Council's operations

## **HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:**

- **L1** Advocate for policy changes at state and federal government levels to reduce plastics packaging
- **L2** Review and pursue opportunities for resource recovery associated with Council operations
- **L3** Incorporate sustainability principles, requirements and standards into all decision-making and operations
- **L4** Review and update development controls and associated policy to encourage environmentally sustainable development
- **L5** Advocate for stronger sustainability requirements in Federal and State Government planning controls
- **L6** Advocate for increased investment in an improved, integrated and sustainable transport system within the region
- **L7** Celebrate and promote Council's efforts and achievements in improving the sustainable outcomes of its services and operations



*Wollongong City Council tree management*



*Wollongong Botanic Garden Rainforest Collection*





# *A city that works together*

**Together we protect our environment, reduce emissions and increase our resilience to climate change**

## **SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES**

- Continued and increased access to, and a high level of engagement in, community sustainability engagement, education and volunteer programs
- Aboriginal culture and connection to country forms part of the process for developing new programs, policies and plans
- Businesses and industry within Wollongong are exploring and adopting environmentally sustainable technologies and opportunities
- All communities are resilient to the impacts of climate change, including those most vulnerable

## **HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:**

- **T1** Continue to coordinate and expand Council's community environmental programs, events and sustainability initiatives
- **T2** Investigate opportunities to increase the sustainability of local businesses
- **T3** Prepare and deliver environmental and waste education plans to promote positive sustainable behaviour
- **T4** Develop and strengthen partnerships to enhance the development of green technologies
- **T5** Pursue opportunities to encourage businesses, industry and the community to adopt environmentally sustainable practices
- **T6** Work with our Aboriginal community, organisations, Elders and groups, to learn and understand their traditions and cultural connection with our environment
- **T7** Recognise and celebrate sustainability improvements achieved by individuals, schools, businesses, and community organisations



*Water dragon in Wollongong Botanic Garden*



*Puckey's planting day volunteers (Yours & Owls 2018)*





# A low emissions city

**We will achieve net zero emissions by 2030 for Council operations and together we will achieve net zero emissions by 2050 for the city**

## SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES

- Increased investment in renewable energy
- Increased proportion of energy obtained from renewable sources
- Reduced energy consumption and emissions for Council and the city
- Improved access to and utilisation of sustainable transport
- Reduced emissions from Whytes Gully Landfill

## HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:

- **E1** Review, adopt and incorporate sustainable building design and performance standards for all new and refurbished Council buildings and facilities
- **E2** Continue to work towards the emissions reduction targets through ongoing climate change mitigation planning
- **E3** Continue to pursue commitments and actions under the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, including equitable access to energy
- **E4** Progressively install additional landfill gas capture infrastructure at Whytes Gully Landfill
- **E5** Work towards the achievement of pledges under Council's Cities Power Partnership membership



*EV charging station Wollongong*



*Residential solar panels*



*Beaton Park Leisure Centre solar panels*





# A city in harmony with our environment

**Our ecosystems and waterways are enhanced, our urban areas are cooler and greener and our community is connected to our natural environment**

## SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES

- Increased tree canopy and vegetation cover to provide shade and reduce heat intensity, 35% canopy cover in urban areas
- Increased opportunities for active and passive recreation in public open space to improve the health and wellbeing of our community
- Increase in the populations / extent and condition of ecosystems within our city
- Reduced pest and weed species / populations in our city
- Increased opportunities for active transport, such as walking and cycling within our city
- Increased access to sustainable locally produced fresh food
- Improved flood and stormwater management through water sensitive design and infrastructure

## HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:

- **H1** Delivery of Environmental Education Programs and key strategic events with focus on biodiversity
- **H2** Aim to increase seed banking vulnerable local species with partner agencies
- **H3** Continue support for the Botanic Garden Greenplan Nursery
- **H4** Continue to participate in the South-East NSW Bioregion Group threatened species conservation programs
- **H5** Continue to implement the Illawarra District Weeds program
- **H6** Continue to implement the vertebrae pest management programs
- **H7** Continue to implement, and plan to expand, the Natural Areas Management Program
- **H8** Increase the community's knowledge of locations and availability of low cost and free meals
- **H9** Increase local food system resilience through supporting local agencies in their response to food security
- **H10** Continue to support the establishment of community gardens on appropriate public spaces through the Community Gardens Policy
- **H11** Ensure that sufficient and high-quality open space are planned for and delivered throughout the city
- **H12** Beaches and Lake Illawarra under the NSW Beachwatch and estuary health monitoring programs
- **H13** Develop a landscape succession guideline to improve vegetation climate resilience



*Keira Corridor - Puckey's Reserve*





# *A low waste city*

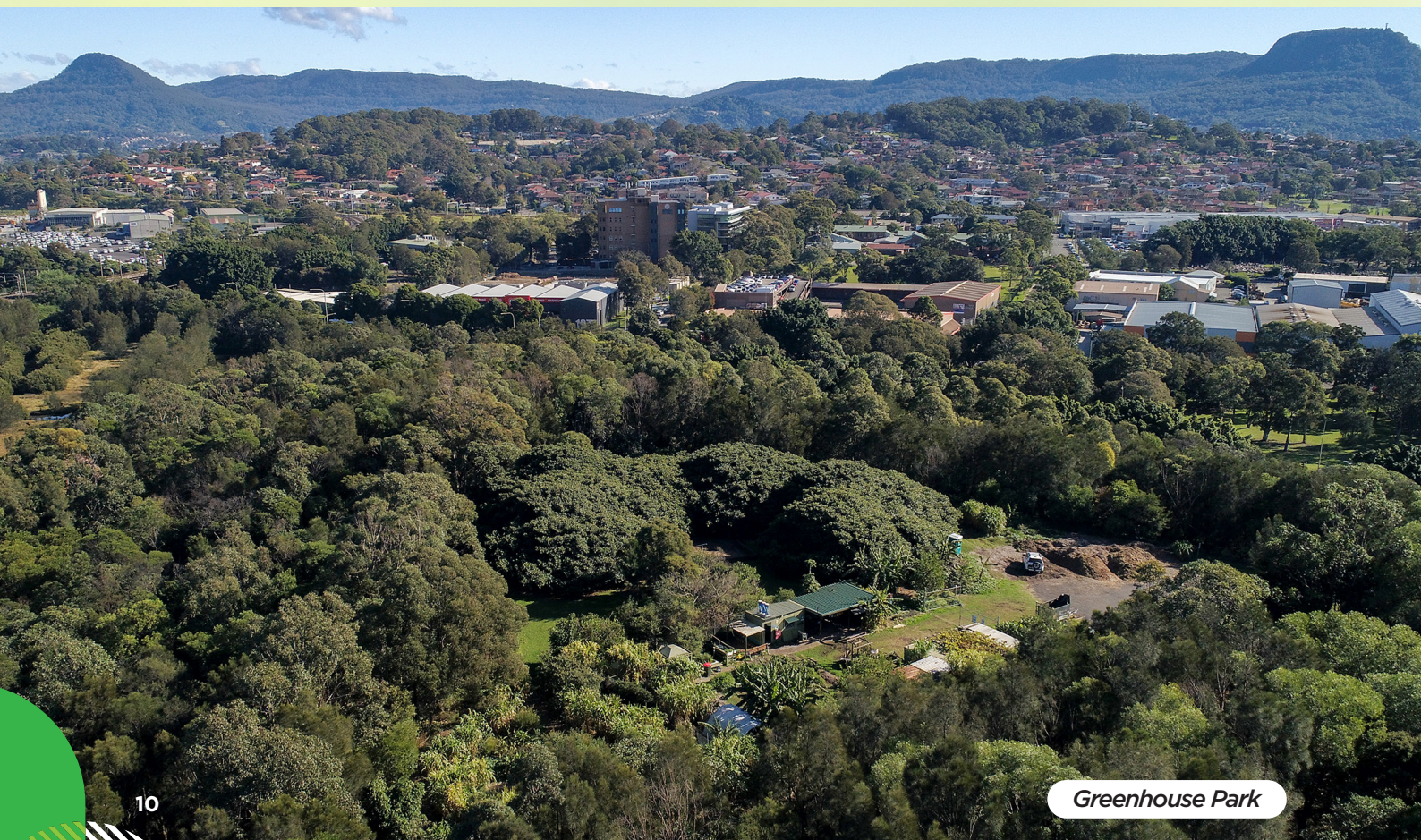
**Our community only take what they need, reuse and recycle what they can and are aware of the resources that they consume**

## **SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES**

- Reduced amount of waste, including food waste and garden organics, sent to landfill both from the community and from Council operation
- Reduced use of single-use plastics in the city
- Decreased litter and illegal dumping around the city
- Increased amount of material recovered for re-use and recycling
- Reduced waste produced from events across the city

## **HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:**

- **W1** Deliver the Waste Wise Events program for Council events, in alignment with the Single-Use Plastics Management Policy
- **W2** Develop a Sustainable Events Guideline for event managers and stallholders to avoid and reduce waste, and reduce water and energy consumption of events
- **W3** Continue to roll out the Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) program across the city
- **W4** Coordinate Council's community environmental programs







# *A climate and water resilient city*

**Our infrastructure and community can adapt to the impacts of a changing climate and water is valued as a vital natural resource**

## **SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES**

- Improved capacity of our community to adapt to climate change
- Improved capacity of our natural ecosystems and waterways to adapt to climate change
- Reduced heat intensity of our urban areas
- Reduced potable water consumption for Council facilities and the city
- Increased life expectancy of Council assets
- Decreased risk to the community and natural environment from natural disasters such as bush fires, floods and storms

## **HIGH LEVEL ACTIONS:**

- **C1** Continue to implement the Asset Protection Zone (Bushfire) Management Program
- **C2** Continue to implement the Natural Areas Management Program
- **C3** Update the Water Sensitive Urban Design chapter in the DCP
- **C4** Investigate opportunities to improve the climate resilience of all new and refurbished Council buildings and facilities
- **C5** Update asset management plans to include climate change provisions
- **C6** Plan for the provision of effective blue and green infrastructure through strategic urban planning processes



**Wollongong Water Recycling Facility irrigates JJ Kelly Park**





Artwork by Allison Day, Coomaditchie Artist

## *How we will know if the strategy is making a difference?*

Accountability to the community and other key Council stakeholders will be demonstrated through Council's Annual Reporting Framework.

We are also developing a 'Sustainability Dashboard' to measure the outcomes of the programs that we implement, not just the outputs and share this information with the community.

## *Working Together*

We have worked closely with the community to understand your thoughts and concerns as well as identify the most important and effective opportunities for us to pursue.

Council cannot achieve the goals in this Strategy on its own. The community, businesses and industry have an important role to play in creating a better Wollongong for

all. We are committed to providing education, support and advice to these groups to reduce their emissions and environmental impact.

Together we can work to make our urban and natural environment more resilient to climate change and other environmental challenges.

**For more information, to subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong Newsletter and to read the Sustainable Wollongong 2030 Strategy go to [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/about/environment](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/about/environment)**