



Wollongong City Council

Environmental Sustainability
Strategy 2014 - 2022

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Purpose of this document

Wollongong is a place of natural beauty and ecological diversity. Bordered by sandy beaches and flanked by the sharp rise of the Illawarra Escarpment, visitors and residents alike enjoy its many bushland and beachside attractions. We want to ensure that as Wollongong grows, the natural areas which make it unique are looked after and the community's quality of life continues to improve.

We must embrace a sustainable future by addressing environmental issues and integrating environmental management into all business decisions. This Environmental Sustainability Strategy (Strategy) identifies the key strategies and objectives we want to work towards to protect Wollongong's environment. While this document concentrates on Council activities to improve the local environment, it also sets a platform for the community and stakeholder partnerships and actions that will help us deliver on our vision:

"From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community."

This Strategy references Council's Sustainability Commitments and builds on the actions identified in Wollongong 2022: Community Strategic Plan. By consolidating environmental priorities and goals we will create a shared understanding and better integration of environment sustainability into decision-making and operations. This Strategy sets a strong environmental direction for Wollongong, identifying the priority actions Council will take and highlighting what the Community can do to work with Council in achieving its goals.

Wollongong's traditional custodians

The original Aboriginal inhabitants of the Wollongong area are the Dharawal (also spelt Tarawal or Thuruwal) people. The Dharawal people lived on the coastal areas of Sydney between Broken Bay/Pittwater, west to Berowra Waters, south to Parramatta and Liverpool and extending from there [and along the south-east coastline], into the Illawarra and Shoalhaven districts. The traditional language of this tribe was also known as Dharawal and this was spoken from Sydney in the north to as far south as Bega.

Another tribe are the Wodi Wodi, a sub-group of the Dharawal. The Wodi Wodi people occupied the southern part of the Dharawal area with several camp sites around Lake Illawarra including Berkeley and Hooka Creek. Aboriginal people moved freely throughout the region and shared resources with their near neighbours without fear of trespassing.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the Illawarra region is made up of many diverse cultural and political groups and organisations. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also identify themselves according to their cultural and national identities.

The Illawarra region has many different nation groups - Traditional Custodians.

- Korewal Elouera Jerrungarugh Tribal Elders (KEJ)
- Wadi Wadi Coomaditchie Aboriginal Corporation
- Wodi Wodi Elders Corporation
- Wodi Wodi Traditional Custodian Corporation

Other nation groups residing within the Illawarra region include but are not limited to the Yuin, Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi, Bundjalung, Dunghutti and Gumbayggir Nations.

Cultural identities are extremely important for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They represent different heritages, languages, cultural practices, spiritual beliefs and geographic areas.

Whilst the Illawarra is made up of three Local Government Areas, Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama, it is important to acknowledge and respect that for Aboriginal people these boundaries do not reflect the cultural boundaries of the local Aboriginal community.

Our Sustainability Commitment

Our Sustainability Commitments are set out in the Community Strategic Plan Delivery Program as the basis for how Council shall undertake its operations and services. Sustainability has been commonly defined as “*meeting the need of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (Our Common Future, World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

Our Sustainability Commitments set out how Council will work to protect the local environment, reduce the use of natural resources and support a high quality of life for present and future generations. Through its Sustainability Commitments, Council will demonstrate leadership, responsible planning and decision-making to minimise the local and global impacts of our actions. We will also work in partnership with the community, stakeholders and other government organisations.

Environmental sustainability

- a) We respect our natural resources and will work to protect and enhance these for current and future generations;
- b) We value our natural biodiversity and will work to protect and enhance local native habitat;
- c) We treasure our coastal areas and waterways and will work to maintain their health and special qualities;
- d) We will not undertake any actions that have a potential risk to cause serious harm to the community or the environment even in the absence of scientific certainty (the precautionary principle);
- e) We recognise the importance of access to fresh, local and sustainably produced food.

Social-cultural sustainability

- a) We respect universal social justice and will work to improve community well-being and quality of life;
- b) We value social equity and believe that services, facilities and community amenities should be accessible and equitable;
- c) We support equal rights and constructive engagement with the community in decision-making;
- d) We will actively involve people from diverse linguistic, cultural and spiritual backgrounds.

Economic sustainability

- a) We will use resources efficiently and responsibly and reduce our ecological footprint;

- b) We support sustainable asset management principles;
- c) We understand the impact of poverty on quality of life and will work to address disadvantage in our community;
- d) We value a strong local economy and will encourage the use of local businesses and resources in our operations;
- e) We believe in local economic growth that respects our natural heritage and values and will foster sustainable and green economic opportunities.

Governance

- a) We value sustainability leadership and will demonstrate how sustainability can be practically implemented;
- b) We believe that sustainability should be intrinsic to all decision-making and will incorporate it as a fundamental component of all Council processes;
- c) We support understanding of the importance of sustainability and will improve sustainability awareness throughout Council and the community; and
- d) We recognize the importance of issues beyond our borders and aim to create a balance between local and global issues.

In addition to Our Sustainability Commitment, Council has an Environmental Sustainability Policy. The policy provides a definition of sustainability, objectives, policy statement and a set of environmental sustainability principles, which will guide Council's decision making processes.

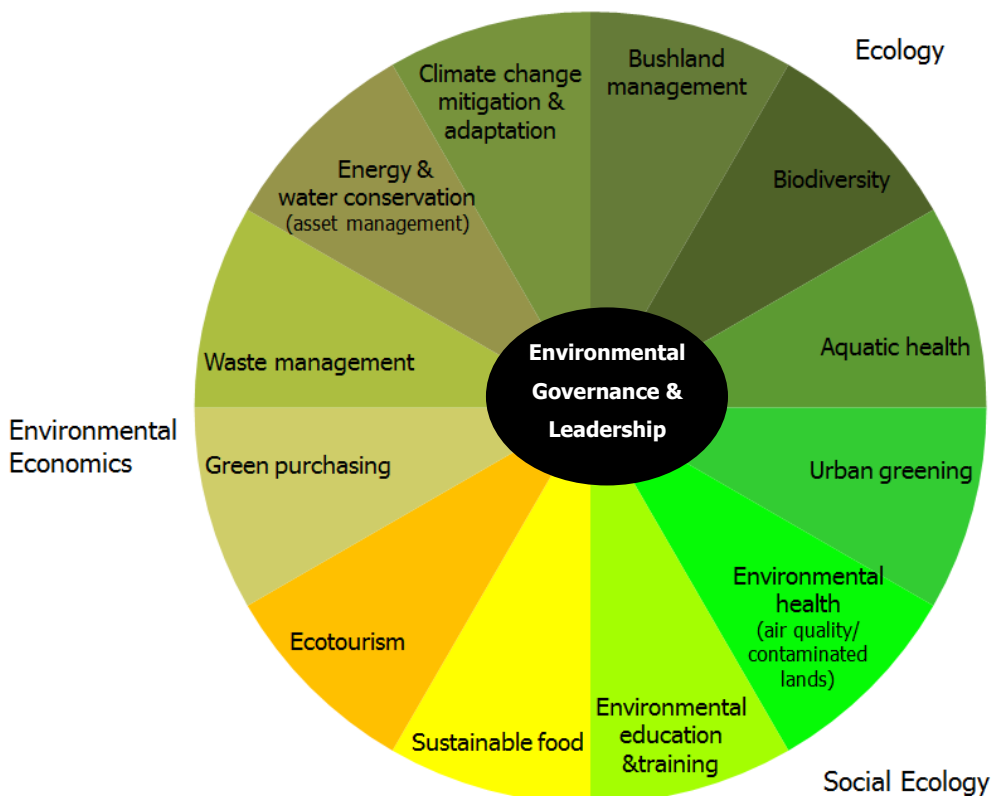
Delivering Environmental Sustainability

Why environmental sustainability?

This Strategy has been prepared to meet the priority action within *Delivering Wollongong 2022* to “Develop and implement an Environmental Sustainability Policy and Strategy”. In delivering on this action Council is preparing an overarching Environmental Sustainability Strategy that will be supported by a comprehensive set of actions in a supporting Environmental Sustainability Plan. The Strategy will provide the direction and priorities to guide Council’s environmental programs in alignment with Wollongong 2022. It incorporates Council’s existing environmental plans and policies and will ensure that environmental sustainability outcomes are supported in future documentation.

Sustainability has become an all-encompassing term that can be applied to all of Council’s operations, services and interactions with the community. In order to create a focused, practical document, the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Plan concentrate on Council activities which will lead to a measurable improvement in Wollongong’s environment. Council understands however that delivering environmental sustainability requires consideration of associated economic, social and governance issues. Figure 1 illustrates the spectrum of environmental sustainability issues covered by the Strategy and Plan.

Figure 1: Environmental Sustainability Spectrum



What are our priority areas for action?

Five Focus Areas have been identified that Council will address to improve Wollongong's environmental sustainability.

- 1 Protecting our natural assets
- 2 Reducing our ecological footprint
- 3 Improving our urban environment
- 4 Creating a healthy future
- 5 Showing leadership and sustainable governance

These Focus Areas encapsulate the key environmental goals in Wollongong 2022 in addition to Council's Sustainability Commitments. There are strong linkages between the Wollongong 2022 goals, our Sustainability Commitment and each of the Focus areas in this Strategy. By delivering the actions and strategies in each Focus Area we will achieve the goals in Wollongong 2022 and our Sustainability Commitment. Table 1 illustrates the linkages between the Focus Areas, goals in Wollongong 2022 and our Sustainability Commitment. Each of the Focus Areas are inherently linked and delivery of actions in one Focus Area will have a positive impact in delivering the actions and goals in all of the other Focus Areas. The true essence of sustainability means that you need to ensure consideration of social, economic and governance issues in addition to environmental issues.

Table 1 – Linkages between the Focus Areas in this Strategy, goals in Wollongong 2022 and our Sustainability Commitment.

Focus Area	Wollongong 2022	Sustainability Commitment
Protecting our natural assets 	Community Goal 1: We value and protect our environment (Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.4)	Environmental sustainability a), b), and c).
Reducing our ecological footprint 	Community Goal 1: We value and protect our environment (Objective 1.3) Community Goal 2: We have an innovative and sustainable economy (Objective 2.4)	Environmental sustainability a). Economic sustainability a) and b).
Improving our urban environment 	Community Goal 1: We value and protect our environment (Objective 1.6) Community Goal 6: We have sustainable, affordable and accessible transport (Objectives 6.1, 6.2)	Economic sustainability b). Socio-cultural sustainability a) and b).
Creating a healthy future 	Community Goal 1: We value and protect our environment (Objective 1.5) Community Goal 5: We are a healthy community in a liveable city (Objectives 5.1, 5.3, 5.5)	Environmental sustainability d) and e). Governance d).
Showing leadership and sustainable governance 	Community Goal 4: We are a connected and engaged community (Objective 4.2) Community Goal 2: We have an innovative and sustainable economy (Objective 2.4)	Governance a), b) and c). Socio-cultural sustainability d).

Link to State and Regional Plans

The NSW government has a ten year strategic business plan, NSW 2021. One of the five strategy areas is 'Strengthen our Local Environment and Communities', Specifically Goal 22 – Protect our natural environment. The Illawarra/South Coast Regional Action Plan sets out the State Government's vision and short term actions for the region. The major focus of the Regional Plan is to improve regional transport, however priority environmental actions are identified in the plan covering areas such as waste avoidance, illegal dumping, pest management and climate change. This Strategy

responds to the environmental priority actions identified in the NSW 2021 and the Regional Action Plan.

Our approach

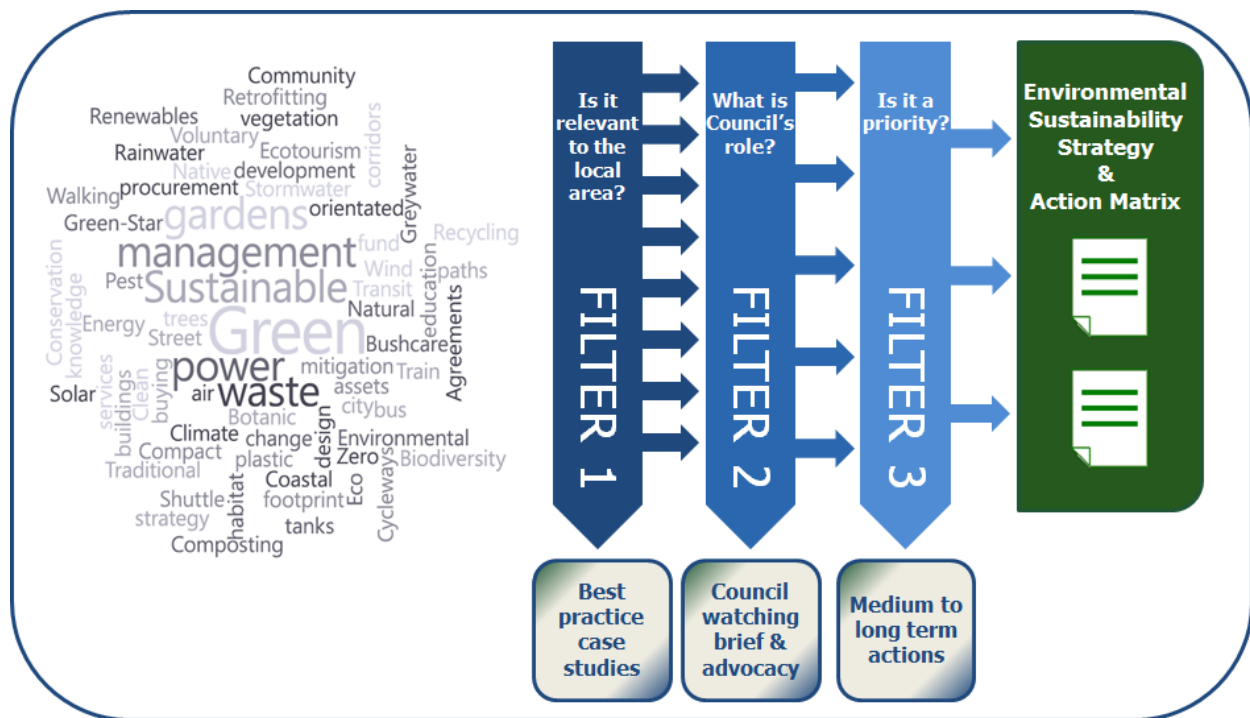
This Strategy establishes the Focus Areas and Strategies that Council will deliver in alignment with Wollongong 2022. The Plan identifies priority actions that Council will deliver in 2014-17.

Accountability to achieve the environmental sustainability outcomes identified in this Strategy and Plan are tied directly to Council's Delivery Program and Service Plans.

The identification of the 5 focus areas, strategies and priority actions have been developed through consultation with staff and community stakeholders as well as through a gap analysis of Council's existing environmental policies and plans. The strategies and priority actions have been reviewed utilising the following filters (illustrated in Figure 2):

- ❖ Does the action specifically address an environmental issue that is of concern to Wollongong residents (filter 1)?
- ❖ Is the action under the control or influence of Council or does Council have an important advocacy role to play (filter 2)?
- ❖ Are there resources available to implement the action or is it of sufficient priority that Council will consider reviewing its budget and/ or staff allocation to support implementation? (filter 3)

Figure 2: Environmental Sustainability Priority Action Filter



Implementation of actions listed in this document requires an all-of-Council approach and commitment by the executive, senior management and staff to be effectively implemented.

What is the role of Council?

Council cannot bring about all of the changes required to improve the sustainability of Wollongong on its own. Council may play a range of roles to make the changes necessary for sustainability improvements, for example regulator, service provider, facilitator, partner or advocate. Council's primary role is to provide sustainability leadership and to pursue the visions and interests of our community.

There are numerous programs and services that council does provide, or may choose to in the future, to improve the sustainability of Council operations and the region as a whole. There are, however, many issues that are outside the direct responsibility or control of Council and as such Council may take an advocacy or partner role, rather than an implementation role.

Actions contained within the Environmental Sustainability Plan indicate whether Council has an implementation, facilitation or advocacy role. Key partners have also been identified, where appropriate.

Strategic framework

How to use this document

This Strategy creates a framework to deliver and assess the performance of environmental sustainability actions that will be implemented by Council and supported by the community. It consolidates our environmental sustainability priorities across the organisation and promotes more efficient planning over the short and longer term. The Strategy directly references and integrates with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The Strategy is divided into five focus areas. For each Focus Area there is:

- ❖ **Where are we now?** – A concise summary of actions, programs and policies that have been implemented to date by Council and current issues that affect each focus area;
- ❖ **Where do we want to be?** – the long term aspiration for the Focus Area and how Council intends to measure progress over the life of the Plan and strategy, in relation to specific **environmental strategies** and **targets**;
- ❖ **How are we going to get there?** – A clear statement of the **importance of this Focus Area** and a brief description of the strategies that we are going to implement to achieve our goals;
- ❖ **How will we know when we get there?** – A range of targets and indicators have been developed to assist in determining how Council is going in achieving the goals of each Focus Area;
- ❖ **What is Council doing?** – new priority actions, in alignment with Wollongong 2022, that Council will implement; and
- ❖ **What can I do** – Actions that the community can do to help achieve our environmental sustainability goals.

Implementation

This document identifies environmental sustainability targets and priority actions to be achieved in alignment with the Wollongong 2022 Community Strategic Plan.

Effective implementation of this Strategy requires a robust reporting and monitoring framework that aligns with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. Targets and Indicators have been identified for each of the environmental strategies identified in the Focus Area to support integration with the Delivery Program monitoring and reporting process. All of the priority actions, listed in the Strategy, are incorporated into Service Area Business Plans. These contain performance measures which are reported on annually.

It is intended that this Strategy is reviewed in alignment with Wollongong 2022 and the associated Plan is reviewed and updated annually as part of a continuous improvement process and to feed into the Delivery Program annual planning framework.

Each of the four year targets identified in this Plan will be developed based on the following criteria:

- a) **Specific:** targets are clearly written and well defined. They provide a clear assessment of the desired performance outcomes
- b) **Measurable:** targets are capable of being evaluated so that there is tangible evidence of progress or not towards the outcome. This includes access and cost-effectiveness of data
- c) **Achievable:** targets are realistic (in terms of timeframe and objective) and the resources (such as funding, personnel, skills and knowledge) available for implementation of required actions
- d) **Reliable:** data for targets is easy to interpret and resistant to bias or deviation over time
- e) **Relevant:** targets should be relevant to the people responsible for achieving them and aligned with associated strategies and goals.

Responsibility

The Environmental Strategy and Planning (ESP) Division of the Planning and Environment Directorate implements programs, services and facilities that support sustainability goals and the enhancement of the natural environment. ESP is responsible for the development of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Plan. They will monitor and report on delivery of the Strategy and priority actions.

A number of the identified priority actions will be implemented by the ESP team however actions will also impact on the work programs of other areas of Council. The Strategy is intended to be integrated into service plans across the organisation and strengthen the integration of environmental sustainability throughout all Council decision-making and operations.

A number of the actions in this Strategy and in the Plan require, or would benefit from, the support and expertise of external partners. Working with neighbouring councils, other government agencies, non-government organisations and the Wollongong business and residential community will be a key aspect of the implementation of this Strategy.

Focus Area 1: Protecting our natural assets

Where are we now?

Wollongong Local Government Area is biologically diverse and contains a high number of ecological communities (17), native plants (29 species) and animals (80 species) that are listed in the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995). In order to protect this biological diversity Council is prioritising the protection and rehabilitation of environmentally sensitive lands and providing significant resources to support education and management measures. Nevertheless, an increasing population, development pressures, urban pollutants and incursions by pests and weeds pose an on-going threat to Wollongong's natural assets.

Our diverse and unique natural assets have a high amenity value and are important to our community not only for their intrinsic value but also for their recreation and tourism value. There is approximately 2100Ha of natural areas on community land in the Wollongong LGA and less than 5% of this is under active management (via contract or Bushcare restoration sites). Approximately 45% of the LGA is covered by forest or woodland vegetation and there are 12Ha of wetlands with make up less than 1% of all vegetation types in the LGA.

Environmental protection zones (identified in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009), planning controls and bushland management activities are the major tools used by Council to protect native habitat in Wollongong. Urban land release areas, such as West Dapto and the proposed Yallah-Marshall Mount development (situated at the foothills of the Illawarra Escarpment and coastal floodplain) are being carefully planned to ensure future habitat connectivity and preservation of environmentally sensitive lands.

Other major planning documents that support Council's bushland management goals are the *Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan* (IESMP) adopted in 2006 and the *Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy* (2011). The Biodiversity Strategy, prepared in collaboration with Shellharbour and Kiama Councils, details a five-year Action Plan to deliver on priority regional bushland issues. Most of the priority actions in the IESMP have been completed. A focus for Council is to continue implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and to build on key actions already undertaken such as:

- ❖ Restoration works at sites identified as High and Highest Biodiversity priority
- ❖ A range of education programs and resources for volunteers and residents

- ❖ Development of the Illawarra Bushland Database which centralises important flora survey data across the Illawarra for public access and use by a range of stakeholders (see: <http://bushlands.southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au>)
- ❖ Development of the Grow Local: Illawarra Native Garden Guide.

Council has a significant existing program of bushland works. There are nearly 100 bushland sites under management and restoration via contractors as well as 60 Bushcare sites that are rehabilitated through community volunteers. Bushcare volunteers are supported with an annual thank-you celebration and regular access to workshops on plant and weed identification, restoration techniques, and the safe use and handling of herbicides. Council also recognises the valuable contribution that other volunteer environmental groups, such as Landcare, make in improving our local environment.

Council is also undertaking a major weed and pest management program with a focus on feral deer, Myna birds, and rabbits. This complements the Illawarra/South Coast Regional Action Plan funding for pest management on national parks and reserves. Council's natural resource management programs also compliment the South East Catchment Action Plan (CAP); which was developed in partnership with all levels of government and local communities to identify priorities and actions for natural resource management. Wollongong Botanic Garden, Nursery and annexes are another significant resource for Wollongong. The Botanic Garden Nursery provides 80,000 plants per year for Council's contractor and volunteer Bushcare sites as well as providing discount native plants and exotics for the public through the Greenplan program. The Botanic Gardens Discovery Centre also forms an important community sustainability, waste management and biodiversity education facility. Greenhouse Park, a former landfill site, continues to be rehabilitated and is used as an environmental demonstration/education site for community and school groups. A master plan is currently being developed for the future of Greenhouse Park, and will include BBQ's and picnic shelters, lookouts, community garden, outdoor kitchens and composting.

To address the health of its waterways, Council has developed Management Plans for all of the major estuaries under its management responsibility. These contain actions to improve estuary water quality and ecological health. Issues which impact the health of all our waterways include stormwater pollution, sedimentation, erosion, illegal waste dumping and weed invasion. In addition to waterways, Council recognises the importance of Lake Illawarra as a natural asset and popular recreation and leisure destination. The impact of development around the Lake has affected the health of the aquatic ecosystem over time.

Council also has access to stormwater levy funding to finalise stormwater management plans and incorporate priority actions into the Stormwater Asset Management Plan.

A major environmental concern for the community is the Coal Seam Gas exploration licences that cover a wide area of the Illawarra. Council made a formal *submission to the NSW Parliamentary Coal Seam Gas Enquiry* to request greater consideration of the potential environmental impact on water catchments and groundwater resources through the release of contaminated water.

Where do we want to be?

Through the implementation of key programs and activities our goal is to achieve an *identified improvement in ecosystem health*, including improved bushland condition at priority sites and green corridors.

How are we going to get there?

We are committed to managing the region's natural assets and protecting our local plant and animal species. Our goal is to conserve Wollongong's ecological diversity and to retain the intrinsic value of our unique natural assets. Wollongong's natural assets include local bushland sites, our coastal beaches and headlands, wetlands, rivers and streams as well as the native plants and animals found in our parks and backyards. Our Botanic Garden and annexes also provide an important resource to support the conservation of Wollongong's natural environment.

Continuing to implement priority actions from the Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy, Dune Strategy, Estuary management Plans and Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan; in addition to growing the bushcare program, active community participation and rehabilitation works will enhance and protect our unique natural areas and waterways. Fostering community and government partnerships will enable engagement through participation and develop a sense of pride within the community.

Affordable housing will continue to place pressure on our natural environment as our population grows. A key to achieving balance between new land development in Wollongong and the natural environment will be accurately identifying and protecting high conservation value bushland sites. One option to protect environmentally important lands in new development sites is the NSW Government's Biodiversity Certification program. This provides an assessment process for identifying high conservation value lands within development growth areas. Through the scheme, high conservation value areas are identified for conservation upfront, and impacts to lower conservation value areas are offset through 'improvements or maintenance' of biodiversity values in other areas.

Climate is another challenge for Wollongong. It has the potential to cause major impacts on our natural assets through increased frequency and severity of storm events and the threat of more intense bushfires. There is also the potential for climate change to modify the habitat and range of

local species. Green corridors provide important escape routes during fires and an opportunity for local animals and plants to migrate into a diverse range of habitats. They have been identified in the Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy and it is important that they are protected from development as part of Council's strategic planning process.

How will we know if we get there?

Council has identified a number of targets and indicators to measure our progress toward our goal of:

identified improvement in ecosystem health , including improved bushland condition at priority sites and green corridors.

Strategy	Target	Indicator
Strategy 1. Supporting community involvement in biodiversity conservation	Improved condition of Bushcare sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer hours (GHP and Bushcare) • Number of trees planted • Botanic Garden Nursery plants produced • Botanic Garden Nursery plants distributed
Strategy 2. Delivering on-ground management and protection of high value ecological sites, threatened species and ecosystems	Improved condition of priority Council natural bushland sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sites under active management • Number of high value sites under active management • Percentage of high value sites under active management
Strategy 3. Engaging with partners to deliver on biodiversity conservation	Reduction in pest species on public lands Reduction in invasive weeds on public lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of work undertaken in natural areas
Strategy 4. Ensuring Council policies, procedures and operations protect natural assets	No reported environmental incidents caused by council operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of reviews undertaken of Council policies, procedures and operations
Strategy 5. Protecting the health of local waterways	Reduction in pollution incidents reported and logged including days that the EPA classifies the beaches as unsuitable for swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality of beaches • Water quality of Lake Illawarra • Perception of litter on beaches

What is Council going to do?

Strategy 1. Supporting community involvement in biodiversity conservation

We will implement programs and events that encourage the community to be actively involved in the enhancement of our natural areas; such as Bushcare and backyard biodiversity programs.

Strategy 2. Delivering on-ground management and protection of high value ecological sites

We will implement priority actions from the Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy and Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan to enhance and protect our natural environment.

Strategy 3. Engaging with partners to deliver on biodiversity conservation

We will pursue partnerships with external organisations to improve biodiversity conservation, including programs to reduce pests, weeds and littering in bushland areas and waterways.

Strategy 4. Ensuring Council policies, procedures and operations protect natural assets

We will implement programs and procedures to reduce the impact of Council's operations and activities and to achieve priority actions from the Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy.

Strategy 5. Protecting the health of local waterways

We will implement priority actions from the Estuary Management Plans, Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy and Dune Strategy to protect the health of local waterways and dunes; including advocating against Coal Seam Gas mining in our local catchments.

What can I do?

- ❖ Keep your cat indoors and control your dog around native animals and birds.
- ❖ Plant native plants in your garden in order to create sheltered habitats for wildlife. You can get inspiration from the Grow Local: Illawarra Native Garden Guide available free to be downloaded from the Wollongong Council website: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au



- ❖ Remove environmental and noxious weeds from your garden – see the Weeds of Illawarra information on the Wollongong Council website.
- ❖ Join a local Bushcare group – there's sure to be a group operating near you! (See the Council website for details).
- ❖ Don't feed native wildlife.
- ❖ Attend a Myna Bird control course or one of the many environmental education workshops held at the Botanic Garden Discovery Centre.
- ❖ Get out and enjoy Wollongong's natural areas – there are guided walks provided by the Botanic Garden or just follow your feet along our many coastal walks.
- ❖ Be aware of where your stormwater drains go to - don't let harmful chemicals, paints or detergents go down the drain.
- ❖ Pick up your dog poo.
- ❖ Report any pollution or waste dumping that you see- Email Council or call them on (02) 4227 7111. You can also contact the EPA on 131555.
- ❖ Subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter by emailing sustainability@wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Focus Area 2: Reducing our ecological footprint

Where are we now?

Human impact on the environment is commonly referred to as an 'ecological footprint'. An ecological footprint is generally defined as the amount of land required to supply resources used and to deal with the waste emitted by an organisation's or individual's utilisation of goods and services.

When you calculate an ecological footprint you generally look at the amount of:

- ❖ Energy used in electricity generation;
- ❖ Energy, water and resources used in the manufacturing of products and goods;
- ❖ Fuel consumed in the transportation of people and goods;
- ❖ Water used for drinking (potable) and non-drinking (non-potable) purposes; and
- ❖ Waste created that is either disposed of at landfill or emitted into the atmosphere (for example – greenhouse gas emissions).

The consumption of energy, water and the earth's base resources will affect the quality of life and opportunities available for future generations. Some of the key areas to address in minimising our ecological footprint include:

- ❖ Reducing overall energy consumption of our assets and investigate opportunities to move from non-renewable and high greenhouse gas emission fuels (such as coal and gas) to renewable and low emission energy sources (such as solar energy) in the future;
- ❖ Increasing water efficiency and reducing the use of potable water for non-potable uses particularly during periods of low rainfall; and
- ❖ Reducing the amount of waste going to land fill and seeking to avoid waste, then reuse and recycle as many resources as possible.

Implementing priority actions from Council's *Water and Energy Savings Action Plan (WESAP)* has assisted in improving energy efficiency and reducing potable water use at Council's highest energy and water using facilities. For example Council's Administration Building has reduced its energy consumption by 60,000 kWh/per month and its potable water consumption by 50% over the last three years.

Planning controls through the Wollongong Development Control Plan is one of Council's principal tools to encourage energy and water efficient developments and to encourage improved resource recovery. These complement national Building Code of Australia (BCA) standards and state-wide BASIX residential performance measures. We would like to move beyond these standards and encourage environmental innovation in public and private building design and construction.

A growing number of tenants and building owners, including the State and Federal Governments, require buildings to reach a minimum environmental performance standard (under NABERS and/or Green Star) as part of new commercial tenancy agreements. There are currently four GBCA Green Star rated commercial buildings in Wollongong. In addition, the University of Wollongong's Sustainable Buildings Research Centre and the Transformational Technical Training facility, at TAFE NSW's Illawarra Institute at Yallah are aiming for a high level of environmental building performance and a minimum five (Australian best practice) Green Star rating.

One of Council's primary responsibilities is waste management. We collect and dispose of approximately 100,000 tonnes of waste each year at our Whytes Gully facility. While we primarily handle residential waste (split into garbage, recyclable and garden organics streams), we also manage (but do not pick-up) commercial and industrial wastes. Demolition or building waste is not accepted at Council's landfill facility.

A Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2012-2022 was prepared to support the community and Council in transitioning towards sustainable waste management. A review of the document is currently underway to incorporate targeted actions to improve resource recovery.

The Federal Government aims to achieve a 5 per cent reduction in domestic greenhouse gas emissions compared with 2000 levels by 2020. One of the initiatives it has introduced, the Clean Energy Act (2011) and associated regulations aims to reduce emissions by setting a price on carbon. The Act (2011) requires liable facilities, emitting over 25,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, to purchase emissions permits. Council's landfill facility, Whytes Gully, is a liable facility under this Act (2011). Council has commenced the evaluation and begun implementation of actions, such as gas flaring, to reduce our emissions liability profile*.

Community education is another major component of our waste management strategy. Waste wise workshops and events, an annual *Waste Information Kit* and a *Sustainable Events Guidelines* have been implemented to encourage sustainable community waste behaviour. There are also a number of

* In addition to meeting its current legislative requirements, Council is monitoring the progression of the Clean Energy Legislation (Carbon Tax Repeal) Bill (2013) through parliament. The organisation has commenced work on establishing the organisational implications if the Bill (2013) is passed and the proposed Direct Action Plan implemented.

innovative direct community engagement projects such as Operation Nappy to encourage the use of cloth nappies and collaboration between Housing NSW, Office of Environment and Heritage and Council to improve resource recovery at select Housing NSW multi-unit dwellings within Wollongong.

Wollongong's extensive natural areas and parklands are easily accessible for people to illegally dump residential and other waste. We use a combination of ranger patrols, cameras, participants in the Corrective Services Community Partnership program and physical infrastructure (fencing and gates) to reduce the impact of illegal waste dumping on our environment. Dumping of potentially contaminated material and car bodies are of particular concern and there is potential to tackle this issue through the formation of Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Squads.

Where do we want to be?

Through the implementation of key programs and activities our goal is to achieve an *identified reduction in Council's and the community's environmental impact*, including reducing energy and water consumption and waste generation.

How are we going to get there?

We will reduce our impact on the local and global environment by reducing water, energy and resource use and reducing the amount of waste that we generate. We will focus on Council assets and operations that we have control over, but will also seek to support the community to reduce its own impact on the environment.

We have implemented several cost-effective energy and water savings in Council's Administration Building and there is significant scope to incorporate improved energy and water efficiency standards, guidelines and practices in designing, maintaining or constructing Council's other building assets. This can primarily be done through the implementation of priority actions in the recently updated Water and Energy Savings Action Plan (WESAP). We will also continue to track the energy and water consumption at all of our major facilities. It will be important to communicate any lessons learnt to other staff and to the community, with the use of commercial and residential buildings alone accounting for over 20% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

We would like to move beyond the BCA standards and BASIX requirements and encourage environmental innovation in public and private building design and construction. Council will develop mechanisms to encourage developers to innovate in terms of green building design, construction and operation. Council is a member of the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) and we will be trialling the Green Star Performance Tool program in Council's Administration Building.

Council's *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2012-2022* is currently being reviewed and implementing priority actions, in addition to delivering comprehensive waste education programs, will be integral in reducing the amount of waste that is sent to landfill.

How will we know if we get there?

Council has identified a number of targets and indicators to measure our progress toward our goal of: *identified reduction in Council's and the community's environmental impact, including reducing energy and water consumption and waste generation.*

Strategy	Target	Indicator
Strategy 1: Reducing the environmental footprint of Council's operations.	Reduction in City Footprint – Council Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumption • Fuel consumption • Water consumption • Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Strategy 2: Reducing resource, energy and water use through sustainably developing and retrofitting Council's built assets	Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations Reduction in potable water use from Council operations Reduction in energy (electricity and gas) use from Council operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse Gas emissions • Energy consumption • Fuel consumption • Water consumption • Percentage of scheduled projects implemented • Percentage of projects implemented
Strategy 3: Encouraging community action to reduce resources, energy and water use	Reduction in City Footprint – Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Waste Service data • Energy Consumption • Water Consumption

What is Council going to do?

Strategy 1: Reducing the environmental impact of Council's operations.

We will implement policies and programs to reduce the environmental impact of Council's operations, activities and purchases. Implementing priority actions from the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy will assist in reducing waste, from Council operations, sent to landfill.

Strategy 2: Reducing resource, energy and water use through sustainably developing and retrofitting Council's built assets

We will implement policies, programs and priority actions from the Water and Energy Savings Action Plan, to improve and monitor the performance of Council's built assets by reducing energy and potable water use.

Strategy 3: Encouraging community action to reduce resources, energy and water use

We will work with the community to reduce their impact on the environment by holding events and promoting courses offered by government and non-government organisations, to give people and organisations knowledge and practical skills to make important behavioural changes.

What can I do?

- ❖ Save on heating and cooling bills by installing insulation in your roof.
- ❖ Save energy and money by turning off appliances at the wall socket.
- ❖ Sign up to an accredited GreenPower provider or put solar panels on your roof.
- ❖ When you need to change your appliances or hot water system – look at their energy and water rating to pick the most efficient model.
- ❖ Put in a rain water tank than can be used for your garden and if possible plumb it in to your toilet and washing machine.



- ❖ Fix all dripping taps and leaks as soon as possible.
- ❖ Use mulch in the garden and compost all of your food scraps and garden waste.
- ❖ Think before you throw out – can it be repaired, reused or donated. The Giant car Boot Sale (see the Council website : www.Wollongong.nsw.gov.au) provides an excellent opportunity to make cash out of your unwanted items or to pick up a bargain.
- ❖ If you need to renovate – make it an opportunity to also green your home.
- ❖ Avoid extra packaging and bring a reusable shopping bag when shopping.
- ❖ Take part in our 'Love Food, Hate Waste' program by visiting Council's website: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/services/sustainability/Pages/LoveFoodHateWaste
- ❖ Subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter by emailing sustainability@wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Focus Area 3: Improving our urban environment

Where are we now?

Almost 90% of Australians live in urban areas making it one of the most urbanised countries in the world. Cities use resources (particularly energy, water, food and materials) far in excess of their productive capacity and in return produce significant volumes of waste that impact both land and water environments. There is growing recognition that urban centres need to become more energy and water efficient, reduce waste generation and reduce dependence on private vehicle use.

A number of town planning approaches have been developed to encourage increased urban sustainability. These share a number of common principles including an emphasis on:

- ❖ Place based communities that encourage a sense of connection and meet basic needs;
- ❖ Compact, mixed use and pedestrian orientated town centres with narrow, active frontages;
- ❖ Locating activities and higher density residential development in accessible places;
- ❖ High quality civic spaces including green open space and village squares as shared community spaces;
- ❖ Pedestrian orientated design with narrow streets, wide, shaded footpaths and creative parking strategies that integrate rather than divide sites; and
- ❖ Flexibility, design and a diversity of housing forms.

Council has prepared, or is in the process of preparing, town and village plans for a number of town centres including: Port Kembla, Thirroul, Warrawong and Figtree and Unanderra. The Wollongong region, with the majority of its villages connected by the southern train line, provides an ideal urban canvas for the application of sustainable urban principles as part of its city and town planning process.

There are further opportunities to deliver improvements in Wollongong's urban centres through a sustainability review of the Development Control Plan 2009. Supporting green roofs and encouraging the use of light coloured building and street materials can have a surprisingly significant impact on people's comfort levels.

One of the key difficulties in developing a sustainable transport model for Wollongong Council is the low residential density and high level of car ownership. Decreasing car prices in real terms makes it less and less likely that residents will shift from private car ownership to public transport. Research confirms that Wollongong car ownership and traffic on the F6 Freeway to Sydney is increasing while

there is little increase in rail patronage to Sydney. The lack of a frequent or reliable rail and bus services are also a major deterrent to public transport usage in the region.

Nevertheless, Council is undertaking a number of major capital works to improve pedestrian and cycle linkages in the area. The City of Wollongong Bike Plan 2014-2018 provides the strategic direction for bicycle facilities in the City and identifies current and proposed cycleway routes. It is due for a review and an Active Transport Reference Group, which includes Councillors and the community, has been formed to oversee the review of the Plan as well as to promote walking and public transport in the local government area.

Where do we want to be?

Through the implementation of key programs and activities our goal is to achieve an *identified improvement in the sustainability of the urban environment*, including urban greening and increases in active transport.

How are we going to get there?

We are committed to creating environmentally sustainable urban centres that improve the quality of life of local residents at the city and neighbourhood scale. A focus is to implement programs to reduce private car use and transition towards more sustainable transport options such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Wollongong's coastline and the escarpment provide natural barriers to urban development. With a growing population and increased development in the Wollongong area, there is a significant challenge between meeting the demand for affordable housing and minimising the impact of new development on the local environment. Identifying opportunities for medium to high density buildings is increasingly important in order to protect remaining bushland areas in Wollongong and to reduce the need for new housing projects in undeveloped areas.

Key areas for increased density are around existing transport nodes, in particular the train line (Helensburgh, Thirroul, Bulli, Woonona, Bellambi, Corrimal, Fairy Meadow, Dapto etc.) as well as within central Wollongong. Along with ensuring that new development incorporates a high level of sustainability such as energy and water efficiency, it is important that the existing character of Wollongong's coastal towns and villages is retained.

Improving the sustainability of Wollongong's urban centres can be achieved through developing and promoting sustainable building policies and processes to facilitate sustainable building design for both Council and private buildings. Supporting green roofs and encouraging the use of light coloured building and street materials can increase sustainability and aesthetics in urban areas. Developing an

urban greening and street tree strategy will also improve visual amenity, provide shade and other environmental benefits (such as cooling, filtering pollutants and reducing storm water flows).

One of our major goals is to reduce individual car use through advocating increased public transport in the region and promoting walking and cycling. Since 1997, Council has been a member of the Illawarra Transport-Taskforce (T-Team) (a combination of State Government agencies and Local Government) that has developed a series of Regional Transport Plans for consideration by the State Government. As part of the current NSW Transport Master-planning process a new Regional Transport Strategy for the Illawarra is being prepared.

Updating the Bicycle Plan and improving access to public transport and active transport options (pedestrian and cycling) will provide more opportunities for the community to leave the car at home and use more sustainable means to get to work, shopping or recreational activities.

How will we know if we get there?

Council has identified a number of targets and indicators to measure our progress toward our goal of:

identified improvement in the sustainability of the urban environment, including urban greening and increases in active transport.

Strategy	Target	Indicator
Strategy 1: Creating sustainable urban centres	Increased quality and diversity in the City Centre and major urban centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the controls for urban development within major towns/centres Satisfaction with the quality of major urban centres Public Space rating for City Centre
Strategy 2: Creating high amenity and sustainable urban streetscapes	Increased functionality and attractiveness in the City Centre and major urban centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the functionality and attractiveness of major urban centres Public Space rating for City Centre
Strategy 3: Increasing accessibility and services for pedestrians and cyclists	Improved bicycle and pedestrian access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of footpath and shareway projects completed Percentage of scheduled cycleway/shareware upgrades completed
Strategy 4: Working with partners to improve access & reliability of public transport	Increased usage of public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of users per bus stop. Number of users per station Patronage of free bus
Strategy 5: Working with staff to reduce dependence on private vehicles	Increased usage of public transport and cycling by staff to and from work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of staff commuting by public transport Number of staff commuting by active transport

What is Council going to do?

Strategy 1: Creating sustainable urban centres

We will implement programs and policies to assist planners and developers in creating liveable urban centres, such as sustainable building guidelines.

Strategy 2: Creating high amenity and sustainable urban streetscapes

We will create high amenity and sustainable urban streetscapes through a number of programs and policies, such as urban greening and street tree strategies.

Strategy 3: Increasing accessibility and services for pedestrians and cyclists

We will improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists by implementing priority actions from the Wollongong Bicycle Plan and Asset Management Plan – Transport.

Strategy 4: Working with partners to improve access & reliability of public transport

We will work to develop an integrated transport network in collaboration with key agencies and partners to improve access and reliability of public transport.

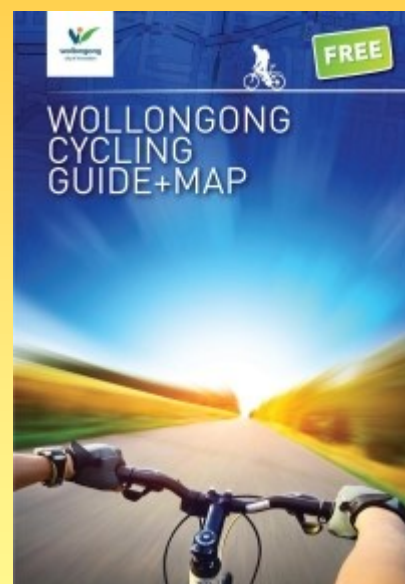
Strategy 5: Working with staff to reduce dependence on private vehicles

We will work with staff to encourage green transport options such as car-pooling, public transport and cycling; including the installation of additional bicycle parking racks for staff.

What can I do?

- ❖ Improve your health and reduce your fuel bill by walking or bicycling to do short trips rather than using the car.
- ❖ Create car pool communities with other families to reduce individual school and activity runs.
- ❖ Walk or bicycle with your children to School or use the School bus program.
- ❖ Take advantage of Wollongong's great cycle paths to refresh rusty bicycling skills or to just enjoy the scenery (free guide and map available on the Council website:

www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au



- ❖ Adopt your local verge and street trees and report to Council if there is a need to replace any diseased or dying plants.
- ❖ Be active in your local community precinct and neighbourhood groups.
- ❖ Subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter by emailing sustainability@wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Focus Area 4: Creating a healthy future

Where are we now?

Key issues for Wollongong residents include management of contaminated lands, air quality, bushfire and flooding risk and food access and security. Climate change is also an important environmental issue for community well-being, particularly in respect to the potential for increased storms, bushfires and heatwaves.

Despite the presence of strong coastal winds to mix and disperse air flows, the Wollongong region can experience poor air quality. A major pollution source is the presence of local heavy industry and also from the use of heavy vehicles in transporting materials. Many of the worst polluting sources in Wollongong have been closed down.

The NSW Government is the regulator of most of the major air polluting industries in Wollongong while Council is the regulator of small to medium sized operations that are a source of air pollution. Every year, we deal with a high number of air pollution complaints related to residential, commercial and industrial premises. At a planning level Council is also seeking to remove high traffic volumes from residential areas, and from high density public spaces such as city centres. We can also work with the State Government to limit the impact of high traffic volumes on sensitive environments such as schools and hospitals.

As a planning regulator, Council has a responsibility to establish guidelines and assessment criteria for most small to medium enterprises. The Development Control Plan identifies planning objectives of reducing soil, air and water pollutants and guidelines for control at both the construction and operational stage of developments. We also have a direct enforcement role in ensuring that new developments do not expose the community to contaminated soils, dust and other particulate pollution.

Indoor air quality, which is largely determined by ventilation and indoor sources of emissions, can also impact on public health, in some cases the impact is greater than the air quality of large, industrialised cities. Given we spend up to 90% of our lives indoors it is important to understand the causes and effects of indoor air pollutants.

We are also aware of the need to tackle the challenge of climate change. Under preliminary NSW Government and University of New South Wales projections for 2050 and 2100[†], it is predicted that, over the next forty years, the Illawarra region will become warmer (1 to 3°C) and experience a substantial increase in summer rainfall. Sea levels are already rising, changing flood patterns and increasing coastal inundation and erosion from storm swells. Wollongong has been subject to major bushfires and storms and it is likely that these will increase in severity and frequency in the future.

In 2009, Council commissioned a *Climate Change Risk Assessment Study* and a *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan* as part of the Illawarra Climate Change Risk Assessment project. This project was funded by the 2007–2008 Australian Government’s Local Adaptations Pathways Program. These studies identify the key risks to Council and community property, infrastructure and services caused by predicted climate change and identify the actions required to manage these risks now and in the future.

Flood Management and Coastal Zone Management plans as well as an *Illawarra Bushfire Risk Management Plan* have also been undertaken to better prepare the region for the impacts of climate change.

Improved access to healthy and nutritious food is another important element of Wollongong’s healthy future. As part of the Environmental Trust funded Illawarra Biodiversity & Food Project, we have developed an *Illawarra Food Strategy* in association with Kiama and Shellharbour Councils. The key areas identified in the Strategy for action are:

- **Planning and Infrastructure** amendments to support food security and access to local food including preservation of agricultural lands and modifying planning schemes to encourage urban agriculture
- **Community Capacity building** to increase community access to healthy food, skills, knowledge and resources and to celebrate and grow a regional food culture
- Enhancement of **Local Food Production and Consumption** to grow the local food economy and the number of local producers
- Exhibit **Good Food Governance** by providing leadership, undertaking research and information exchange and improving policy frameworks.

[†] Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW. *Summary of Climate Change Impacts Illawarra Region 2008*.
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/climatechange/08508Illawarra.pdf>

Council has established a number of fruit tree groves on community land as part of its *Grow Local* program. Funds from the program have also been used to support three new 'Living Classroom' school kitchen gardens.

Where do we want to be?

Through the implementation of key programs and activities our goal is to achieve an *identified decrease in environmental risk*, including cleaner air, soil and water, reducing hazards and improving access to fresh sustainable food.

How are we going to get there?

We are committed to addressing the environmental issues that have the potential to impact on the physical health of Wollongong residents. Council will take on an advocacy and educational role for issues that we cannot influence directly but are important to improve the health of Wollongong residents, such as outdoor air pollution. We further recognise the importance of indoor air quality on the community's health and will promote the importance of improvements in indoor air quality both in the community and for Council facilities.

Wollongong has a history of heavy industry which has left a legacy of contaminated soil in some areas of the region. Council will develop and implement programs to identify and reduce the risks of contaminated land for current and future generations. We will also continue to implement priority actions from the Climate Change Adaptation, Bushfire Management, Flood Risk Management and Coastal Zone Management Plans to reduce the risk from severe storm events and bushfires. This includes keeping informed of the latest scientific information about climate change and updating our emergency responses.

Given Australia's growing obesity epidemic, we support improved access to fresh, sustainable food and increasing the capacity of local food production, Council will work with neighbouring councils and local stakeholders to implement priority actions from the Illawarra Food Strategy and Action Plan.

How will we know if we get there?

Council has identified a number of targets and indicators to measure our progress toward our goal of:

identified decrease in environmental risk, including creating a healthy environment, hazard reduction programs and improving access to fresh sustainable food.

Strategy	Target	Indicator
Strategy 1: Creating a healthy urban environment	Decreased number of complaints in relation to air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of days where pollution concentration exceeds environmental guidelines • Number of sites in contaminated lands register • Satisfaction with the quality of the local environment and neighbourhoods
Strategy 2: Supporting healthy indoor environments	Increase in satisfaction with personal wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of personal wellbeing, standard of living and health
Strategy 3: Reducing risk to people and assets due to major climate events	Maintenance of asset protection zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of asset protection zones maintained
Strategy 4: Improving access and availability to fresh and sustainable foods	All households are within 30 minutes of a food store by active transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household access to food stores

What is Council going to do?

Strategy 1: Creating a healthy urban environment

We will implement programs and policies to improve the health of our urban environment such as by developing a contaminated lands management plan and register.

Strategy 2: Supporting healthy indoor environments

We will deliver programs to support the community and Council in reducing common indoor air pollutants, by green cleaning and ensuring adequate ventilation.

Strategy 3: Reducing risk to people and assets due to major climate events

We will implement priority actions from the Bushfire Management, Coastal Zone Management, Floodplain Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation Plans to reduce risks caused by extreme weather events.

Strategy 4: Improving access and availability to fresh and sustainable foods

We will implement Priority Actions from the Illawarra Regional Food Strategy and Community Gardens Policy to improve access to fresh, sustainable food.

What can I do?

- ❖ Save on money and chemicals by using natural cleaning products such as bicarbonate soda, lemon and vinegar.
- ❖ When renovating an old house be careful of the possible presence of lead paints and asbestos – and consider using low-toxic paints and materials.
- ❖ Install an outside flue with any gas heaters.
- ❖ If you have an open fire - burn only dry, well-seasoned wood that has been split properly and maintain your chimney.
- ❖ Don't backyard burn – it is illegal and creates unnecessary pollution.
- ❖ Avoid using chemical pesticides and herbicides –take any oils or chemicals to the Drop Off days organised by the Office of Environment and Heritage.
- ❖ Purchase locally grown produce.
- ❖ Whether you live in an apartment, town house or house, grow food at home. Access the *Grow Local: Illawarra Edible Garden Guide* on Council's website: www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au



- ❖ Form a community garden group with neighbours. Council's *Community Land Management Policy* provides the details on how this can be achieved.
- ❖ Assist your school to have a vegetable garden to show where food comes from.
- ❖ Attend a community workshop on topics such as permaculture, composting and water efficient gardening at the Botanic Garden Discovery Centre.
- ❖ Keep chickens in your backyard – information on how is available on Council's website.
- ❖ Subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter by emailing sustainability@wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Focus Area 5: Showing leadership and sustainable governance

Where are we now?

Environmental leadership and enhancing Wollongong's quality of life for present and future generations are clearly articulated in the *Wollongong 2022: Community Strategic Plan*. In the statement of purpose, Wollongong 2022 identifies social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues (the quadruple bottom line) as being central to the document.

We have also included Our Sustainability Commitment into the *Delivery Program 2012-17 and Annual Plan 2014-14*. The intent of this commitment is to "*provide consistent understanding, communication and application of sustainability principles throughout Council.*"

The development of this Environmental Sustainability Strategy has allowed Council to review its environmental program areas and identify high priority actions. New strategic directives and initiatives identified in the Strategy reflect Community Strategic Plan objectives as well as existing strategies and policies developed by Council. It is intended that this Strategy be considered in the development of any new Council policies and plans.

Embedding the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and priority actions into organisational reporting, monitoring and decision-making processes will ensure our commitment to implementation. This includes developing sustainability targets and key performance indicators that can be reported within Council's End-of-Term report and Annual Reports.

Where do we want to be?

Through the implementation of key programs and activities our goal is to achieve an *identified change in organisational environmental sustainability practice*, including integration, monitoring and reporting of delivered actions in the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

How are we going to get there?

Council will demonstrate leadership and good governance in environmental sustainability throughout its operations and services. This Strategy and priority actions are the first step but a continued focus on environmental sustainability requires the support of all sections of Council and the community. Relevant priority actions will be incorporated into the Delivery Program and reviewed and reported on annually.

In addition, we are focused on reducing the environmental impact of Council operations and decision making processes through policy and program development.

A key aspect of our environmental sustainability approach is community education. We are developing an education strategy to provide a coordinated approach to Council’s existing education services and to identify new priorities for community, school, business and Council education programs. The aim will be to ensure that all sectors of the Wollongong community, including Council staff, are aware of how their home, work and recreational activities impact on the environment and what can be done to reduce these impacts.

How will we know if we get there?

Council has identified a number of targets and indicators to measure our progress toward our goal of:

identified change in organisational environmental sustainability practice, including integration, monitoring and reporting of delivered actions in the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Strategy	Target	Indicator
Strategy 1: Promoting and encouraging sustainable action by Council staff	Increased awareness of environmental sustainability amongst Council staff	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants in workshops Completion rate of e-learning modules Number of environmental champions <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of issues of the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter produced Number of subscribers to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter
Strategy 2: Ensuring effective implementation, evaluation and reporting of the Environmental Sustainability Plan	Increased implementation and reporting of environmental sustainability actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage quarterly reporting on annual plan actions Number of reports to Environment and Sustainability Reference Group
Strategy 3: Supporting improved integration of environmental sustainability into Council policy, programs and operations	Increased assessment of environmental impact of projects	Number of Council reports that include a completed Ecological Sustainability section

What is Council going to do?

Strategy 1: Promoting and encouraging sustainable action by Council staff

We will celebrate environmental successes with the community and encourage a shift in culture toward even more sustainable behaviours.

Strategy 2: Ensuring effective implementation, evaluation and reporting of the Environmental Sustainability Plan

We will ensure that relevant priority actions from the Environmental Sustainability Plan are incorporated into the Delivery Program and are reviewed and reported on annually.

Strategy 3: Supporting improved integration of environmental sustainability into Council policy, programs and operations

We will ensure that the principles of environmental sustainability are integrated into Council decision making processes.

What can I do?

- ❖ Get involved in local groups and organisations that are seeking to improve Wollongong's environment.
- ❖ Have Your Say in the Council's annual community survey and on issues or plans raised for community consultation. For more information on current community consultation activities visit Council's website:
www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au



- ❖ Know your local Councillor and be active in your neighbourhood precinct committees.
- ❖ Demonstrate environmental sustainability leadership in your home.
- ❖ Be an environmental sustainable champion at your workplace.
- ❖ Subscribe to the Sustainable Wollongong newsletter by emailing sustainability@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Glossary of Terms

Wollongong 2022	Wollongong 2022...Our Community Strategic Plan
ESP	Environmental Strategy and Planning Division of Council
LGA	Local Government Area
IESMP	Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan
WESAP	Water and Energy Savings Action Plan
kWh	Kilowatt hour – a measure of electricity consumption/generation
DCP	Development Control Plan
BCA	Building Code of Australia
GBCA	Green Building Council of Australia
NABERS	National Australian Built Environment Rating System
SoE	State of the Environment