

Upper Hunter 2032



Acknowledgment of Country

**Ngayan marrungku paran
wiyān Wanaruah, mirumalikan
para ani parraykupa, ngatan
ngayan marrung wiyān
Ngarrakay paranpa yurakaykal
ngatan pangaykal.**

**We acknowledge the Wanaruah
people, traditional keepers
of this land, and we pay our
respects to their Elders, past
and present.**

Translation by
Aunty Sharon Edgar-Jones

Access, Equity and Inclusion Statement

The Upper Hunter Shire community and Upper Hunter Shire Council are committed to welcoming all people who choose to live, work or visit our region.

We welcome and celebrate diversity and believe it fosters growth.

Community connections are integral to everything we do.

We commit to build a sense of place and belonging in our community.

We will work collaboratively with the whole of the community to achieve the collective vision for the future.

We will acknowledge and address inequity, work to reduce and remove barriers and champion belonging in our community.

We understand inclusion and participation are key to building a strong community. Access and

inclusion make communities liveable for everyone.

We are committed to preserving the dignity of all people and to ensure services, facilities and public spaces are openly inviting and fully accessible.

Sustainability Statement

The Upper Hunter Shire community and Upper Hunter Shire Council are committed to improving sustainability outcomes in our region.

best practices around sustainability and celebrating the outcomes.

We value open spaces and creating opportunities for community to connect and enjoy the very best of the Upper Hunter Shire.

As well as setting targets to reduce emissions, we are acting to achieve our environmental goals and ensure the Shire remains a wonderful place to live, work and play.

We will work with and alongside the community towards implementing the

Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Mayor's Message | 5 |
| About the Upper Hunter | 6 |
| Integrated Planning and Reporting | 9 |
| Community Vision | 12 |
| State and Regional Context | 14 |
| What did the community say? | 15 |
| Priorities | 17 |
| Engagement | 23 |



Mayor's Message



I am proud to present to you the Upper Hunter Shire's Community Strategic Plan. Upper Hunter 2032 acknowledges the community's vision for what they would like the Shire to look like and be like in the future.

Developed following extensive consultation across the Shire, the Community Strategic Plan is a reflection of you, the Community. This is your document and one that we will work incredibly hard to focus on to bring your vision to life.

The community forums – held in many pockets of the Shire – showed the pride, enthusiasm and energy of our community. They illustrate why this community is so amazing. To walk around tables and sit and listen to what people had to say gave me the opportunity to understand where the community would like to see this Shire go and how much they love where they live.

Through the community engagement, we have developed five key community priorities that encapsulate the values and vision of the Upper Hunter community.

- Connected Community
- Protected Environment
- Thriving Economy
- Quality Infrastructure
- Responsible Governance

Upper Hunter Shire Council cannot deliver the outcomes alone. Building and fostering relationships with government agencies, non-government organisations, businesses and the community will be crucial to the success of the Community Strategic Plan. This plan belongs to the people of the Upper Hunter Shire and I encourage you to work with us to achieve it.

Cr Maurice Collison
Mayor

About the Upper Hunter Shire

Upper Hunter Shire is located in the Hunter region of New South Wales, about 250 kilometres north of Sydney. It is bounded by Liverpool Plains Shire and the Tamworth Regional Council area in the north, Gloucester and Dungog Shires in the east, the Singleton Council area and Muswellbrook Shire in the south and the Mid-Western Regional Council area and Warrumbungle Shire in the west.

The Upper Hunter Shire is a predominantly rural area and encompasses a total land area of about 8000 square kilometres, of which a large proportion is national park and nature reserves. Most of the rural area is used for grazing, dairy farming, horse studs and general farming.

The main township is Scone, with smaller townships at Aberdeen, Merriwa and Murrurundi.

The Shire is a major cattle, crop, goat, pig, poultry and sheep producer, has an increasing number of vineyards, an abattoir which supplies the Australian and overseas markets, and the best and friendliest rural community within easy travelling distance from Sydney and Newcastle.

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| ▲ | Land Area | 8,100km ² |
| ▲ | National Parks | 686km ² |
| 👤 | Population | 14,350 |
| 👜 | Labour Force | 5260 jobs |
| 🏠 | Annual Economic Output | \$1.733 billion |



Councillors



Cr Maurice Collison
Mayor



Cr James Burns
Deputy Mayor



Cr Allison McPhee



Cr Lee Watts



Cr Ron Campbell



Cr Sue Abbott



Cr Elizabeth Flaherty



Cr Adam Williamson



Cr Tayah Clout

Upper Hunter Shire Council consists of nine Councillors who have been elected by the Shire to represent the community for the next three years.

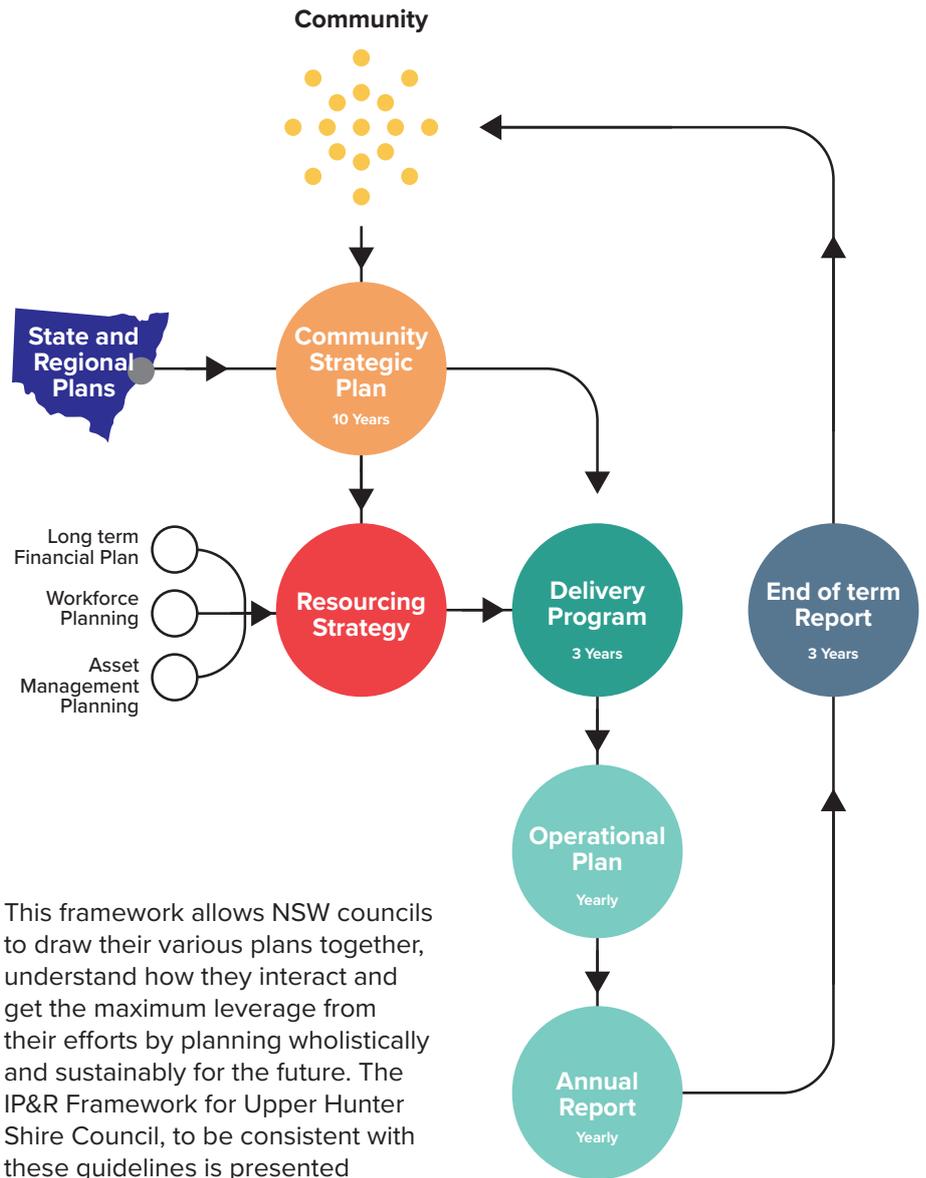


 Scone Horse Festival Parade

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Local Governments in NSW are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. In 2009, the Local Government Act was amended to create an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) requirement. A greater emphasis is placed on longer term planning with key elements including a Community Strategic Plan setting out the strategic directions (minimum of 10 years), Delivery Program outlining how Council will deliver on these directions (4-year period) and an annual Operational Plan. As at June 30, 2012, NSW councils are required to be working within the IP&R Framework.

The Office of Local Government provides guidelines and information to assist councils in meeting their requirements. The IP&R framework recognises that most communities share similar aspirations: a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live, a sustainable environment, opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for education and employment, and reliable infrastructure. The difference lies in how each Community responds to these needs. It also recognises that council plans and policies should not exist in isolation – that they are interconnected.



This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, understand how they interact and get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically and sustainably for the future. The IP&R Framework for Upper Hunter Shire Council, to be consistent with these guidelines is presented in the diagram.





Community Vision

A quality rural lifestyle in a vibrant, caring and sustainable community.

The Community Vision reflects what matters most to the people of the Upper Hunter. The vision was developed through consultation with community members. Strong partnerships with community members, groups, local businesses and State and Federal Government will be essential to successfully achieving the vision.



Upper Hunter 2032 is the Community Strategic Plan for the Upper Hunter LGA. It defines the community's vision and is our roadmap for the future. It brings together extensive community feedback to set key directions and priorities.

Developing the Community Strategic Plan for the Upper Hunter has been a unique opportunity to understand the aspirations and concerns of the community. Upper Hunter 2032 aims to enhance the day-to-day lives and opportunities of the community through effective decision-making,

planning and service delivery across all areas. The product of an extensive community consultation process, Upper Hunter 2032 has been built around five community priorities that reflect the needs and values of the people who live in our region.

These priorities will underpin our future work. The Council and the Community will be able to clearly see how we are working to achieve each of the Community's priorities as each with link to a key focus area, goals and strategic directions.

Connected Community

Developing and deepening connections of people to each other and their community.

Protected Environment

Ensuring the ongoing protection of our environment and natural resources.

Thriving Economy

Strengthening our vibrant industries and economy while seizing emerging opportunities.

Quality Infrastructure

Maintaining and developing our infrastructure network to meet the ongoing needs of our population.

Responsible Governance

Providing efficient and responsible governance in order to effectively serve the community.

State and Regional Context

As a community, it is important to take into consideration our place within the wider regional and state context, and the impact this has on our Shire. The initial development of the CSP and its subsequent review has taken into consideration key state and regional priorities.

The review has considered the State and Premier’s Priorities and the Hunter Regional Plan. Linking priorities to the State Government gives Council the opportunity to align strategies and develop stronger partnerships to deliver positive outcomes for the community.

| NSW Government Premier’s Priorities | Hunter Regional Plan Objectives | Community Strategic Plan Goals |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| A strong economy | Diversify the Hunter’s mining, energy and industrial capacity | Connected community |
| Highest quality education | Ensure economic self-determination for Aboriginal communities | Protected Environment |
| Well connected communities with quality local environments | Create a 15 minute region made up of mixed, multi-modal, inclusive and vibrant local communities | Thriving Economy |
| Putting customer at the centre of everything we do | Plan for “Nimble Neighbourhoods”, diverse housing and sequenced development | Quality Infrastructure |
| Breaking the cycle of disadvantage | Increase green infrastructure and quality public spaces and improve the natural environment | Responsible Governance |
| | Reach net zero and increase resilience and sustainable infrastructure | |
| | Plan for businesses and services at the heart of healthy, prosperous and innovative communities | |
| | Build an inter-connected and globally focused Hunter | |

What did the Community say?

👍 What do you like about the Upper Hunter Shire?

- Safe, friendly and relaxed lifestyle
- No coal mines
- Great country lifestyle
- Lovely community spirit
- Healthy lifestyle
- Beautiful environment
- Good support for ageing population
- Community spirit
- Great place to raise a family

👉 What does the future in the Upper Hunter Shire look like?

- Great the way it is
- Hopefully more people, more businesses and more attractions to bring visitors.
- Improved prosperity Shire wide
- New small businesses to open
- Keep families here
- Better housing plans

🚀 What are the game changers for the Upper Hunter Shire?

- Climate Change
- Tourism including day trippers from Sydney
- Mountain biking, restaurants, events and activities
- Renewable energy industry and community projects
- Water Park
- Food and wine
- Whatever opportunities arise to replace coal - batteries, very well. Create an equine tourism forte.
- Securing major employers

👎 What don't you like about the Upper Hunter Shire?

- The roads and infrastructure
- Improved roads
- Lack of tourism
- More activities for families
- More police
- Not enough medical services
- Scone-centric with other centres missing out
- More consultation
- Lack of shops
- Lack of options
- Lack of playgrounds and things for children to do
- Scone looks tired
- Lack of housing options
- Horse capital but limited opportunity for visitor interaction

🔧 What are the key improvements for the Upper Hunter Shire?

- Roads
- Capitalising on national parks to increase tourism
- Improved walking trails
- More support for businesses
- More health services, improved mobile and NBN services
- Treat all towns equally and individually
- Beautification of Kelly St, Scone
- Better communication and consultation
- Focus on bringing larger businesses to the area
- Increase tourism across the Shire
- Off-leash dog park



 Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces



Community Priorities

Council has identified five community priorities to guide Council's agenda.





A connected community

Developing and deepening connections of people to each other and their community.

Strategic Objectives

- 1.1 Advocate for and increase the availability and affordability of health services.
- 1.2 Work collaboratively to address social disadvantage.
- 1.3 Increase promotion of healthy lifestyle.
- 1.4 Enhance partnerships to maintain a safe community.
- 1.5 Advocate for, support and provide services and facilities for the community.
- 1.6 Provide and support a range of community events, festivals and celebrations.
- 1.7 Acknowledge and respect our Aboriginal culture, heritage and people.



 Flag Raising Ceremony, Scone



Protected Environment

Ensuring the ongoing protection of our environment and natural resources.



Strategic Objectives

2.1 Advocate for, facilitate and support programs that protect and sustain our diverse environment for future generations.

2.2 Encourage and support community participation to care for our environment.

2.3 Ensure all actions, decisions and policy response to natural hazards and climate change remain current.

2.4 Implement and regularly review Strategic Land Use Plans, Environmental Planning Instruments and Development Controls, which reflect the needs and expectations of the broad Community.

2.5 Provide efficient and effective advisory, assessment and regulatory services focused on being customer 'friendly', responsive and environmentally responsible.

2.6 Plan, facilitate and provide for a changing population for current and future generations.

2.7 Provide efficient and effective waste and recycling services and support improved waste minimisation and recycling practices.

2.8 Implement policies to ensure the protection of strategic agricultural lands, equine critical industry clusters, natural resources and heritage.



Thriving Economy

Strengthening our vibrant industries and economy while seizing emerging opportunities.

Strategic Objectives

- 3.1 Broaden and promote the range of business and industry sectors.
- 3.2 Encourage retail and commercial business to increase local employment opportunities.
- 3.3 Provide attractive and functional town centres and support revitalisation of the towns and villages including investment in built heritage and improvement of existing buildings.
- 3.4 Provide diversity in tourist attractions and experiences.
- 3.5 Promote the Upper Hunter's unique brand identity.
- 3.6 Facilitate and support increased and innovative tourism and marketing opportunities.

 Hunter Warbirds





Quality Infrastructure

Maintaining and developing our infrastructure network to meet the ongoing needs of our population.

Strategic Objectives

4.1 Provide for replacement, improvement and additional Community and open space infrastructure through investment, best practice and risk management.

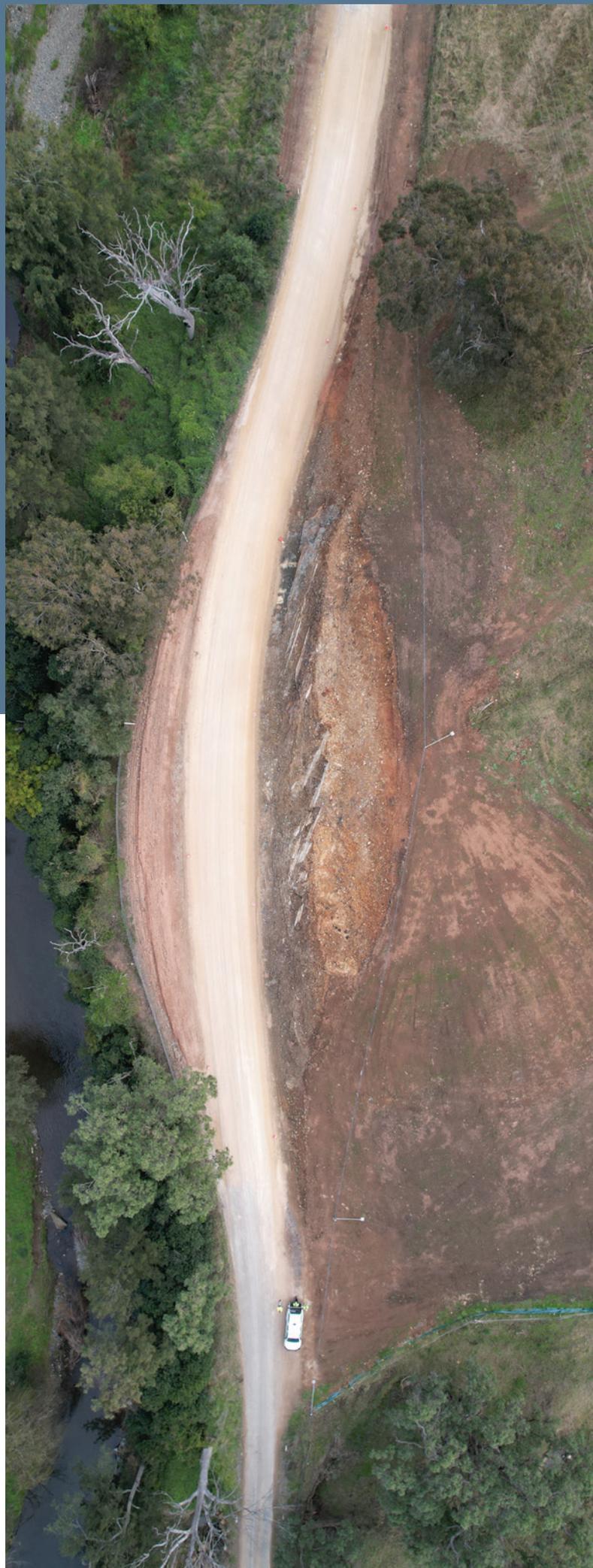
4.2 Provide inviting public spaces that are clean, green, properly maintained, well designed, encourage active participation, family friendly and accessible to all.

4.3 Provide safe and reliable water and sewerage services to meet the demands of current and future generations.

4.4 Upgrade and maintain the road network and bridges.

4.5 Advocate and improve access to communication services.

 Road cutting





Responsible Governance

Providing efficient and responsible governance in order to effectively serve the community.



 Mayor Cr Maurice Collison

Strategic Objectives

- 5.1** Effectively and efficiently manage the business of Council, while encouraging an open and participatory Council with an emphasis on transparency, community engagement, action and response.
- 5.2** Council is focused on innovation and continuous improvement to ensure a high quality of service which is aligned with business needs and community priorities.
- 5.3** Effective financial and asset management to ensure council's long-term sustainability.
- 5.4** Open and effective communication methods and technology are utilised to share information about Council plans, intentions, actions and progress.
- 5.5** Community is effectively engaged, can provide opinion and contribute to decisions that plan for the present and future of the Upper Hunter Shire.
- 5.6** Develop and maintain effective reporting systems that enable Council to measure and report on performance.
- 5.7** Effective management of risk underpins all Council decisions, service delivery and behaviours.
- 5.8** Develop leadership skills and build networks through a range of formal and informal opportunities.
- 5.9** Ensure Council is a great place to work by supporting Council employees in maximising their contribution.
- 5.10** Encourage and build strong partnerships between the Community, business and all levels of government to support implementation of the CSP 2032 and to deliver the Community priorities.
- 5.11** To participate and encourage regional coordination and planning between Councils and other organisations.
- 5.12** Provide timely and effective advocacy and leadership on key community issues and priorities.

Engagement

Despite the impacts of COVID, Council received significant contributions from the Community, helping inform our long-term strategic direction.

6



Community Meetings

124



Online survey submissions

15,500+



Social media reach

175



People attended face to face engagement activities

400



Visits to CSP website

Upper Hunter Shire Council

02 6540 1100

council@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au

UPPERHUNTER.NSW.GOV.AU