
Draft Hornsby Shire Rural Lands Strategy

Findings and Recommendations

July 2020





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SECTION 1

Overview



01 Overview

1.1 Project context

SGS Economics and Planning in partnership with RMCG have been engaged by Hornsby Shire Council to prepare a Rural Lands Study.

The Strategy provides key principles and recommendations for managing rural lands into the future and addresses obligations for rural lands prescribed by the State Government. It will set a strategic direction for rural areas and will inform amendments to the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and planning controls including the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and the Development Control Plan (DCP). It addresses relevant planning priorities from the North District Plan, including N18 Better Managing Rural Areas.

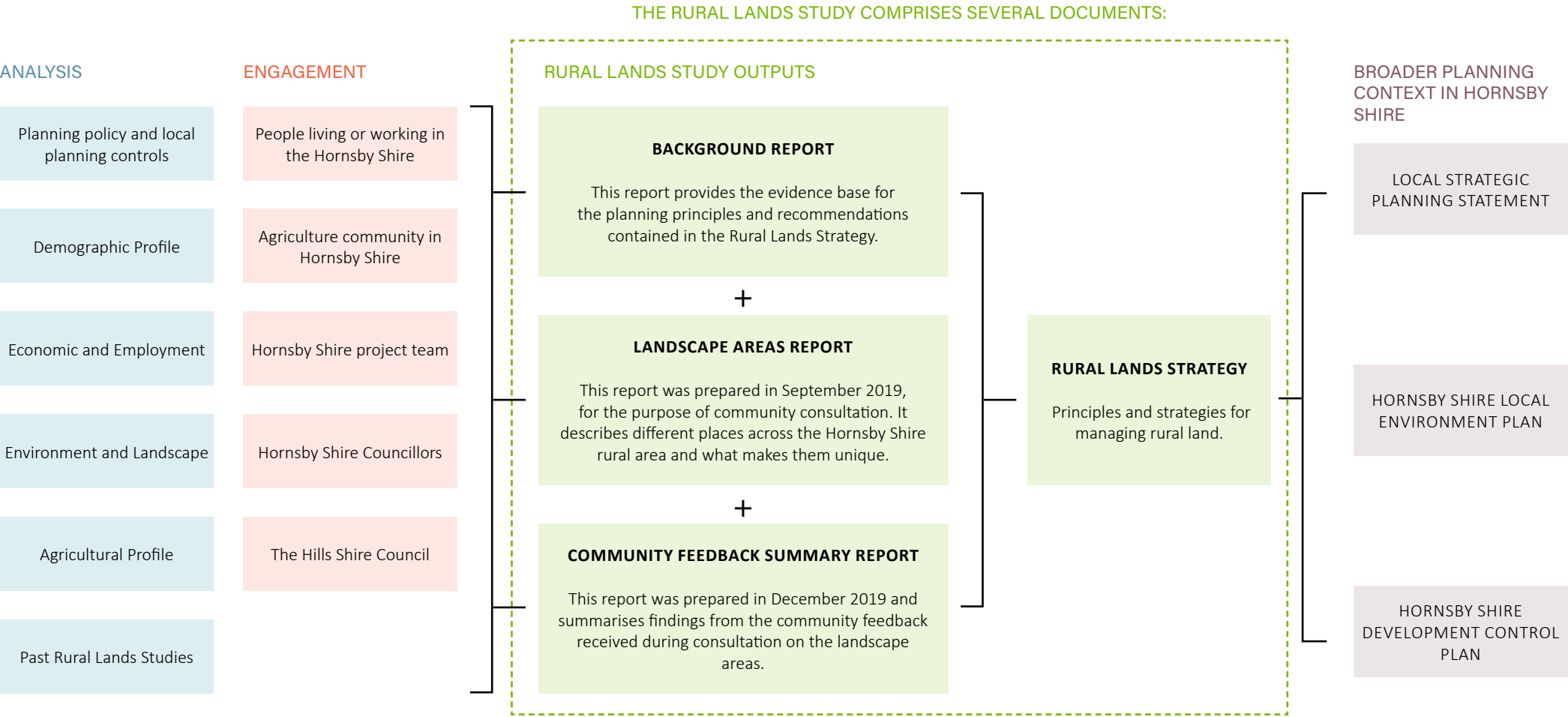
This project is one of several studies across the themes of Liveability, Sustainability, Productivity and Infrastructure, and Collaboration that were commissioned to inform preparation of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).

This project considers former studies and reviews undertaken over the past few decades. It has been prepared in the context of the Greater Sydney Region Plan (GSRP), the North District Plan, and the Hornsby Shire LSPS (recently endorsed by Council).

The Hornsby Shire Rural Lands Strategy includes:

- Retention of the Metropolitan Rural Area (MRA) as a key part of the GSRP.
- Drivers of change in agricultural and rural areas.
- A draft vision for Hornsby Shire's rural area.
- Principles for 'better managing rural areas' in Hornsby Shire.
- Recommendations for changes to planning controls in accordance with the established principles.

Figure 1: Project context





How to read this document

This report is divided into six sections:

Overview (this section)

- Contains an overview of the planning policy context in which this Rural Lands Study was prepared.

Drivers of change

- Reviews key trends in agriculture, rural areas as places to live, local challenges and opportunities that the Rural Lands Strategy is seeking to address.

A place-based approach

- Sets out the landscape areas approach.
- Contains a summary of the changes made of the landscape area boundaries and character statements following 2019 exhibition.

Vision and principles

- Presents a vision for the Rural Lands Strategy and sets out principles for planning in Hornsby Shire's rural area.

Recommendations

- Sets out place-based recommendations for each landscape area.
- Sets out recommendations for villages.
- Sets out general recommendations for Hornsby Shire's rural areas.
- Addresses other options raised by the community.

Implementation and next steps

- Sets out an implementation road map for the strategy recommendations.

1.2 Planning context

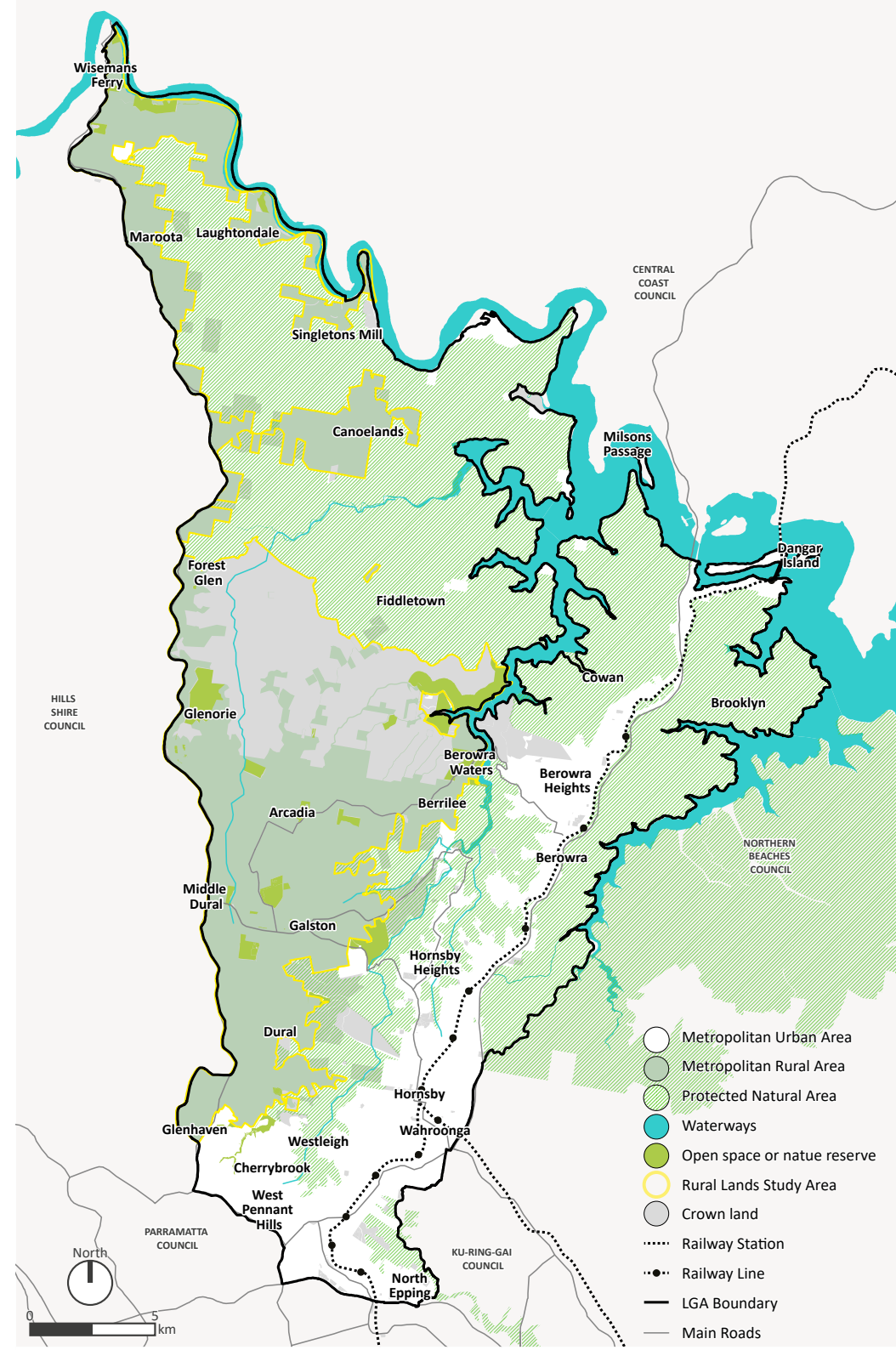
Planning at the State government level sets an agenda for ‘better management of rural areas’ across Greater Sydney. It advocates for a place-based approach, which has been adopted for the Hornsby Shire Rural Lands Strategy.

At the local level, Hornsby Shire’s Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) set out a framework for planning outcomes and other actions Council will take to manage activities in the rural area.

The LSPS includes strategies that may affect Hornsby Shire’s economic development, environmental management, and other considerations that are outside the LEP and DCP.

The LEP and DCP contain planning controls that directly relate to land use and development. They contain development standards and prescriptive measure to inform how development can occur within the rural lands.

The rural area in Hornsby Shire is designated as part of *Greater Sydney’s Metropolitan Rural Area* by the State government (see map at right).



Strategies for planning in the Metropolitan Rural Area

The following strategies are contained in the *GSRP* and provide further guidance to councils about the State Government’s expectation for planning in rural areas.

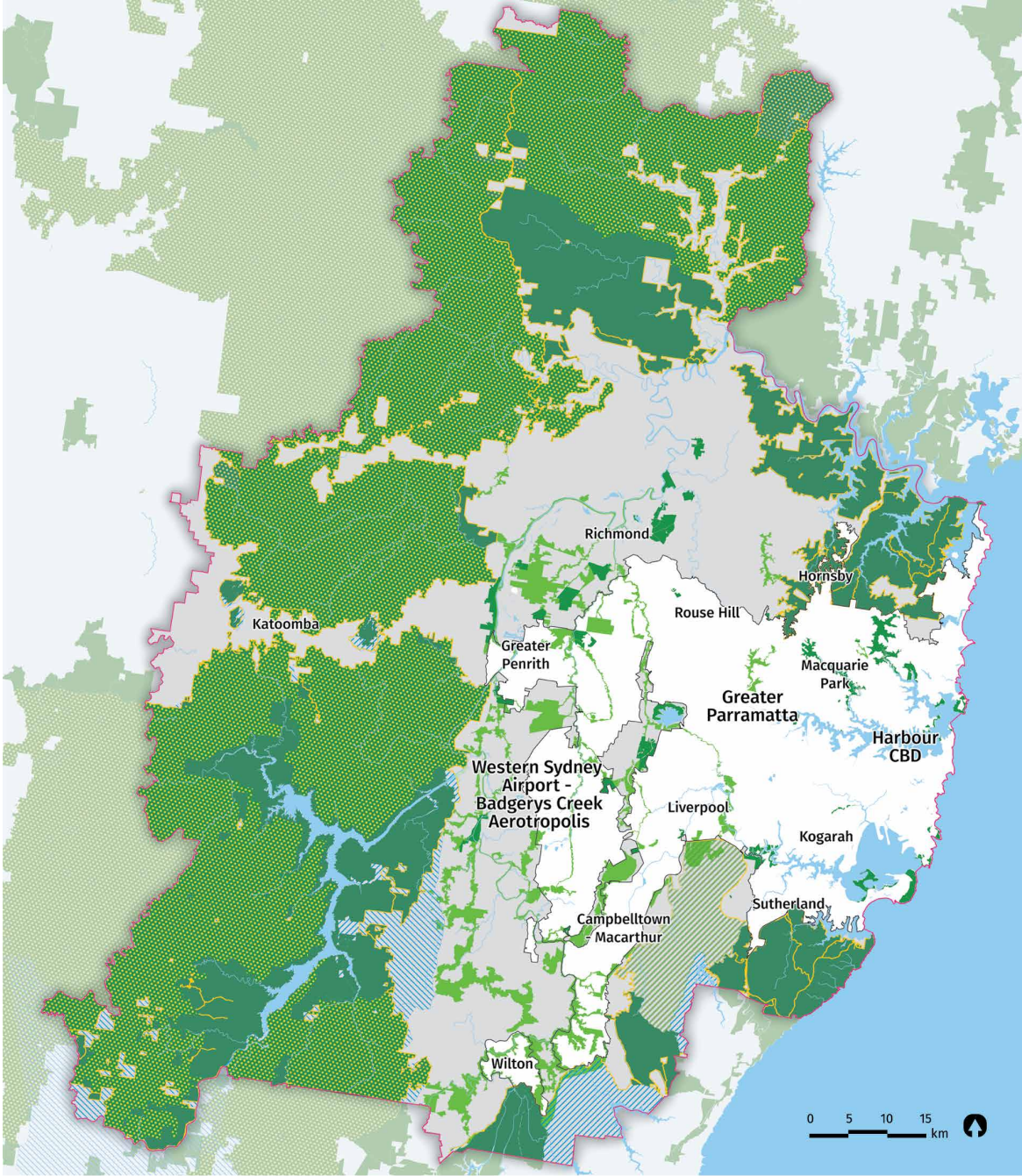
Strategy 29.1

- ‘Maintain or enhance the values of the Metropolitan Rural Area using place-based planning to deliver targeted environmental, social and economic outcomes.’

Strategy 29.2

- ‘Limit urban development to within the Urban Area, except for the investigation areas at Horsley Park, Orchard Hills, and east of The Northern Road, Luddenham.’

Source: Greater Sydney Region Plan, 2018.



Region Boundary	Protected Natural Area	National Parks and Reserves
Waterways	Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area	Biodiversity Investment Opportunities Cumberland Subregion
Urban Area	Water Catchment – No Entry	Water Catchment – Restricted
Metropolitan Rural Area	Holsworthy Military Reserve	

Actions from the North District Plan

Like the *GSRP*, the *North District Plan* contains actions that will guide council planning. The map at right is from the North District Plan, and shows the extent of the Metropolitan Rural Area, protected natural areas and open space across the district. The following actions are relevant to this Rural Lands Strategy and have informed its preparation.

Action 70

Limit urban development to within the Urban Area.

Action 69

Maintain or enhance the values of the Metropolitan Rural Area using place-based planning to deliver targeted environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Action 68

Enhance and protect views of scenic and cultural landscapes from the public realm.

Action 67

Identify and protect scenic and cultural landscapes.

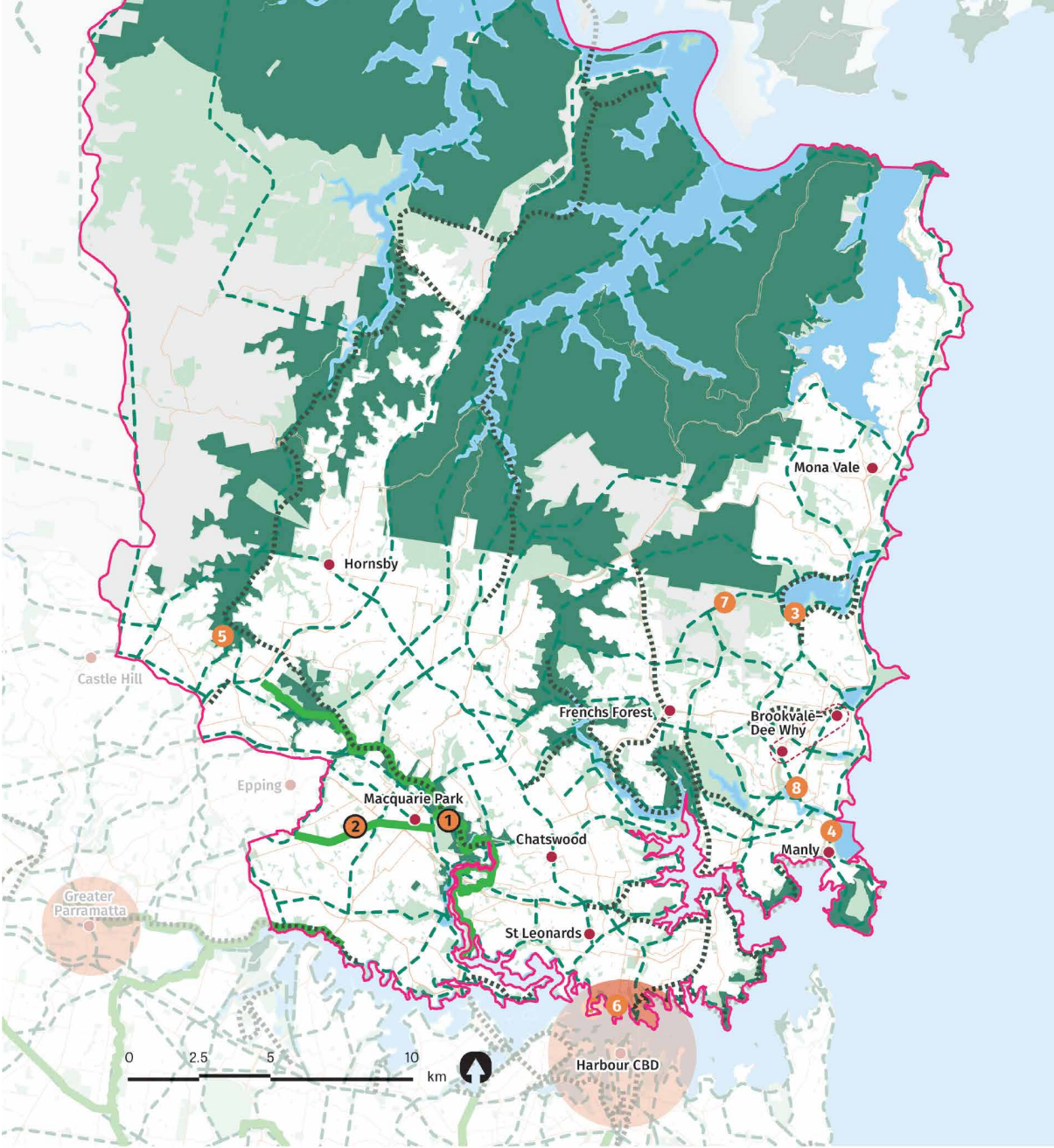
Action 56

Protect and support agricultural production and mineral resources (in particular, construction materials) by preventing inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas.

Action 55 (e)

When preparing plans for tourism and visitation, protect heritage and biodiversity to enhance eco-tourism.

Source: North District Plan, 2018.



	District Boundary		Green Grid Priority Corridor		Road
	Metropolitan Centre		Projects important to the District		National Parks and Reserves
	Strategic Centre		Other Green Grid Opportunities		Open Space and Reserves
	Metropolitan Rural Area		Existing Tracks and Trails		Waterways

SECTION 2

Drivers of change



02 Drivers of change

This section provides an overview of Hornsby's rural area from a demographic, economic and employment perspective. It outlines drivers of change that are the basis for planning policy recommendations later in the Strategy.

The Hornsby Shire LGA sits within the broader Greater Sydney Region, and is linked into markets and affected by broad trends that are affecting peri-urban areas around Australia. Those macro trends also impact how the local economy functions.

2.1 Peri-urban pressures

Hornsby Shire's rural area faces significant pressures:

- The proximity to Sydney City will continue to be a major determinant of land values, making expansion of commercial agricultural production prohibitively costly.
- Rural lands are now primarily in demand as rural lifestyle properties, with some semi-commercial or non-commercial agricultural activities.
- Tensions have arisen from increased pressure to subdivide land into smaller lots for rural lifestyle use, and increased demand for infrastructure such as sewerage, water, telecommunications, waste facilities and roads, with a parallel rise in possible land use conflicts due to noise, dust and odour emissions, as well as truck movements, that occur in rural areas.¹

2.2 Agriculture changes

A major challenge for Greater Sydney's peri-urban land is that the value of agricultural commodities produced, and the corresponding value of land, are 'expected to continue to decline in significance with a continuing shift in the share of fruit and vegetable production to other regions of NSW, where land is cheaper and inputs such as water are more readily available.' (AgEcon Plus, 2017, p.8).

According to the Ag Econ Plus *Values of the Metropolitan Rural Area* report, 'current minimum subdivision sizes are unlikely to result in increased agricultural production, since current fragmentation and land values (influenced by proximity to Sydney City) are already prohibitive for farm amalgamation or 'buy-in' for agricultural investors. (AgEcon Plus, 2017, p.8).

According to the agriculture assessment prepared by RMCG (refer to Background Report), agriculture in Hornsby Shire generated around \$21.7 million in 2015-16, around 0.2% of the state value of agricultural production (ABS, data supplied by Neil Clarke and Associates). The main commodity groups include ornamental horticulture (nursery, cut flowers and turf), meat (poultry, beef and lamb) vegetables and fruit and nuts.

Between 2005/06 and 2016/16 the gross value of agricultural production reduced by around \$15 million with most reduction in the value of ornamental horticulture. Horticultural production is spread across the Shire and livestock grazing occurs in the north.

¹These pressures were identified by AgEcon Plus in the report, *Values of the Metropolitan Rural Area*.



There were 463 jobs Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector jobs in Hornsby Shire in 2016, up from 313 in 2011 (ABS Census, 2011 and 2016). This represents around 0.6% of local employment for the whole LGA. Just under half of workers in the Hornsby Shire Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector, reside in the municipality while the remainder commute from adjoining municipalities.

In 2015-16, the profile of agricultural businesses within Hornsby Shire that contributed to the Australian Bureau of Statistics suggests that most are engaged in full-time farming:

- Involved in farming for 31 years.
- Average age between 55 and 60 years.
- Between 85% and 87% of income is generated by agricultural production on the holding.

Ornamental horticulture

- The Sydney basin ornamental horticulture industry produced 44% of the state industry gross value in 2015-16 of which Hornsby Shire contributed 11%.
- The ornamental horticulture industry is clustered in the Hawkesbury, The Hills and Hornsby Shire local government areas.
- The gross value of the industry has increased. The total area of production, mainly outdoor production, has reduced. The area of indoor production has remained steady.
- The gross value of the industry, area of production has increased over time and business numbers has remained relatively steady.
- Production has increasingly moved indoors with a reduction in outdoor production.
- Land within the rural zones ranges from moderate to low land capability. Land fragmentation, particularly in the southern parts of the study area, has reduced the suitability of the land for agriculture.

Trends affecting agriculture

Growers are continually innovating and adopting new technology and best practice management programs to optimize the use of land, ensure efficient use of resources and meet industry standards for the environment and biosecurity.

- Farming is becoming more diverse, in response to domestic consumption patterns, the need to remain profitable and sustainable.
- Modern farming is complex and utilises sophisticated technology and equipment and may involve the use of state-of-the-art irrigation and monitoring equipment, hydroponics, robotics and all-hours operation.
- Intensive agriculture (aquaculture, poultry farms, horticulture) is growing and provides a greater contribution to the economy than pastoral agriculture.
- More farmers are taking off-farm work, and the economic value of off-farm work is increasing; there is a shift from full-to part-time work in some places.
- Water, electricity and labour are significant costs, but critical inputs to intensive agriculture.



- In some locations water is becoming scarcer, and farming activities are changing in response to drier climatic conditions.
- Farm businesses and property sizes are increasing to achieve economies of scale and maintain productivity.
- Land in peri-urban areas is becoming too expensive for working farms to expand by buying more land, and they can't achieve the economy of scale to remain competitive.
- Local rural economies are diversifying, as rural land is used for more diverse purposes (such as tourism or recreation).
- Younger generations moving out of the industry and not wanting to take over the farm.

The industry is being challenged by:

- Encroachment of non-agricultural uses, particularly lifestyle dwellings, leading to land use conflict, higher production costs, constraints on farm operations.
- High land prices restricts capacity to expand farm footprint, thereby driving further intensification to maintain viable.
- Increased trespass, theft and damage to farm machinery and crops.
- Lack of a secure and affordable water supply.

Opportunities for local agriculture

- Value-adding to agriculture to tap into tourism opportunities associated with the proximity to Sydney and tourism attractions such as Wisemans Ferry. This includes pick your own, cafés selling farm produce, farming and cooking workshops, on farm accommodation.
- Production of high value boutique crops for Sydney restaurants and high-end markets (e.g. zucchini flowers, baby cucumbers).
- Demonstrate how gardens and greenlife can improve personal health and wellbeing.
- Respond to broader trends of house sizes increasing and domestic gardens shrinking by selling more indoor plants and outside shade trees that can reduce reliance on air conditioning/heating.



2.3 Demographic changes

- The Hornsby LGA population is forecast to increase by around 1 per cent per annum, from 154,490 people (2019) to 179,582 people in 2036.
- In the rural areas, Dural and the areas around Galston-Middle Dural are forecast to grow by 10.8 per cent and 24.2 per cent respectively from 2016 to 2036. Population around Arcadia, north and west to Wisemans Ferry will decrease by -1.5 per cent, or -61 people.
- Hornsby's rural population is ageing. The proportion of people aged 65+ increasing more quickly than in the urban parts of the LGA.
- Likewise, the proportion of lone person households in rural areas is expected to increase at a faster rate than urban areas. A decrease in two-parent households is expected to occur into the future, across both the rural and urban parts of the LGA.
- Population is not expected to grow significantly in Hornsby's rural areas; however, a small increase will occur.

Forecast population growth, 2016-2036

Geography	2016	2036	Change	Average annual growth rate	Growth rate
Hornsby Shire Council	147,661	179,582	+31,921	1.08%	21.62%
Urban area total	134,489	165,017	+30,528	1.13%	22.70%
Rural area total	13,171	14,564	+1,393	0.53%	10.58%
Rural areas					
Arcadia-North Western Rural	4,031	3,970	-61	-0.08%	-1.51%
Dural	5,658	6,268	+610	0.54%	10.78%
Galston- Middle Dural	3,482	4,326	+844	1.21%	24.24%

Source: SGS Economics and Planning based on .id Consultants, from ABS Census data, 2016.

2.4 Housing changes

- More and more people want to live in rural areas for a range of social, environmental and economic reasons.
- More people are living in rural areas for lifestyle reasons not related to farming. This increases the potential for land use conflicts.
- People pursuing a rural lifestyle often have amenity expectations that conflict with modern farming practices.
- Lifestyle residents are sometimes not prepared to pay for the cost of land management that comes along with living on a rural property. They may not realise that costs of managing land are often higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.
- There is more competition for rural land, affecting rural land prices and the capacity of farmers to expand their businesses and maintain productivity.
- Historic subdivision policies have resulted in fragmentation of rural land and a significant legacy of small rural lots, including lots less than 2ha.
- Landowners commonly have expectations they will be able to construct a dwelling or subdivide to create additional small rural lots. However, unrestricted development in the rural area has had significant consequences on rural/ agricultural activities, including increased land prices, divestment in farming operations and land use conflicts.
- Development must be managed to avoid conflicts with productive rural and environmental uses.
- There is renewed interest in part-time small-scale farming, but capturing new markets is challenging in an environment constrained by lifestyle properties.
- Most houses in the rural area are separate dwellings.
- There are a small number of townhouses, terraces and units in Galston village.
- Secondary dwellings were made permissible in Hornsby's rural areas in 2013. Since then 92 secondary dwellings have been approved in rural areas (2013-19). Subsequent to the Rural Lands Survey in 2014, Council increased the permitted size of secondary dwellings from 20% to 33% of the floor area of the principal dwelling.
- There are two Seniors Living developments in the rural area, one in Galston (135 independent living units, with an additional 74 beds in a residential aged care facility) and one in Glenhaven (181 independent living units). Other seniors living developments in Galston, Dural and Glenhaven have been granted development contest but have not yet been established.
- Hornsby Shire Council has strongly advocated to the State Government for changes to the Seniors SEPP that would prohibit seniors living developments on rural land.

Dwelling structure in the Hornsby Shire LGA and the rural area (2016)

	Separate house	Medium density	High density	Other	Total
Hornsby Shire LGA total	37,149	6,280	7,607	384	51,420
Rural area	3,841	415	37	123	4,416
Urban area	33,272	5,732	7,584	154	46,742
Rural areas					
Arcadia-North Western Rural	1,300	6	0	16	1,322
Dural	1,520	288	0	99	1,907
Galston-Middle Dural	1,021	121	37	8	1,187

Source: Profile.id

2.5 Supporting rural villages

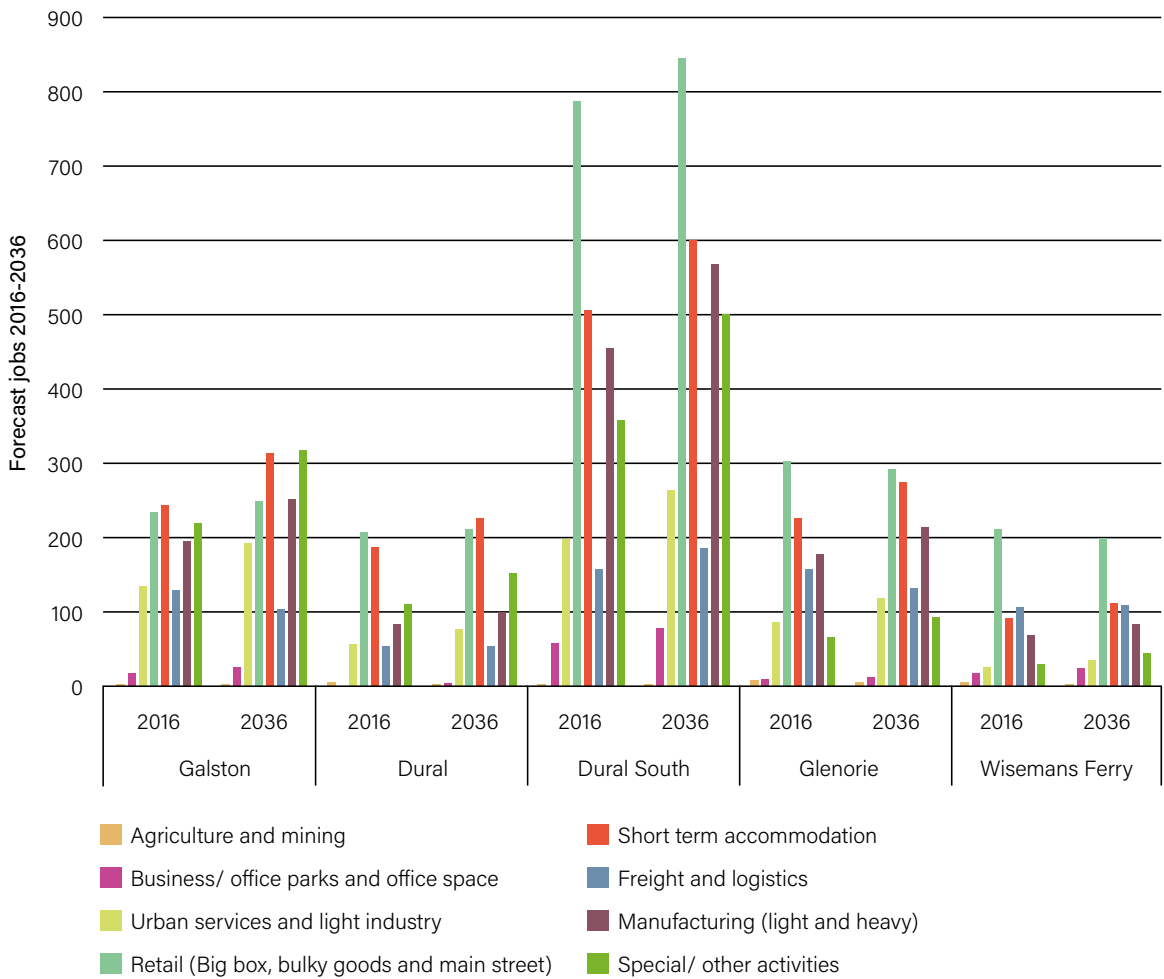
Rural towns and villages are distinct from urban areas as they have a largely population-serving role, in that they provide mainly for local needs.

Within the rural area, Hornsby has four key villages: Dural, Galston, Glenorie and Wisemans Ferry. The South Dural Service Centre is also located on the southern edge of this project’s study area. These areas are important to understand, given they play several roles within the broader rural area in Hornsby: as places to live, work, visit and access basic services people need to go about their daily lives.

The chart on the right shows most floorspace growth is likely to occur in South Dural Service Centre. This reflects its different role as an industrial centre that serves the nearby urban areas, while also accommodating some businesses that supply the rural area (although anecdotally, this has reduced over time).

The role each rural village plays as a service centre means some employment growth will occur over time, despite rural activities/ rural industries decreasing.

Figure 3: Estimated change in job numbers in Hornsby Shire’s rural villages, 2016-36

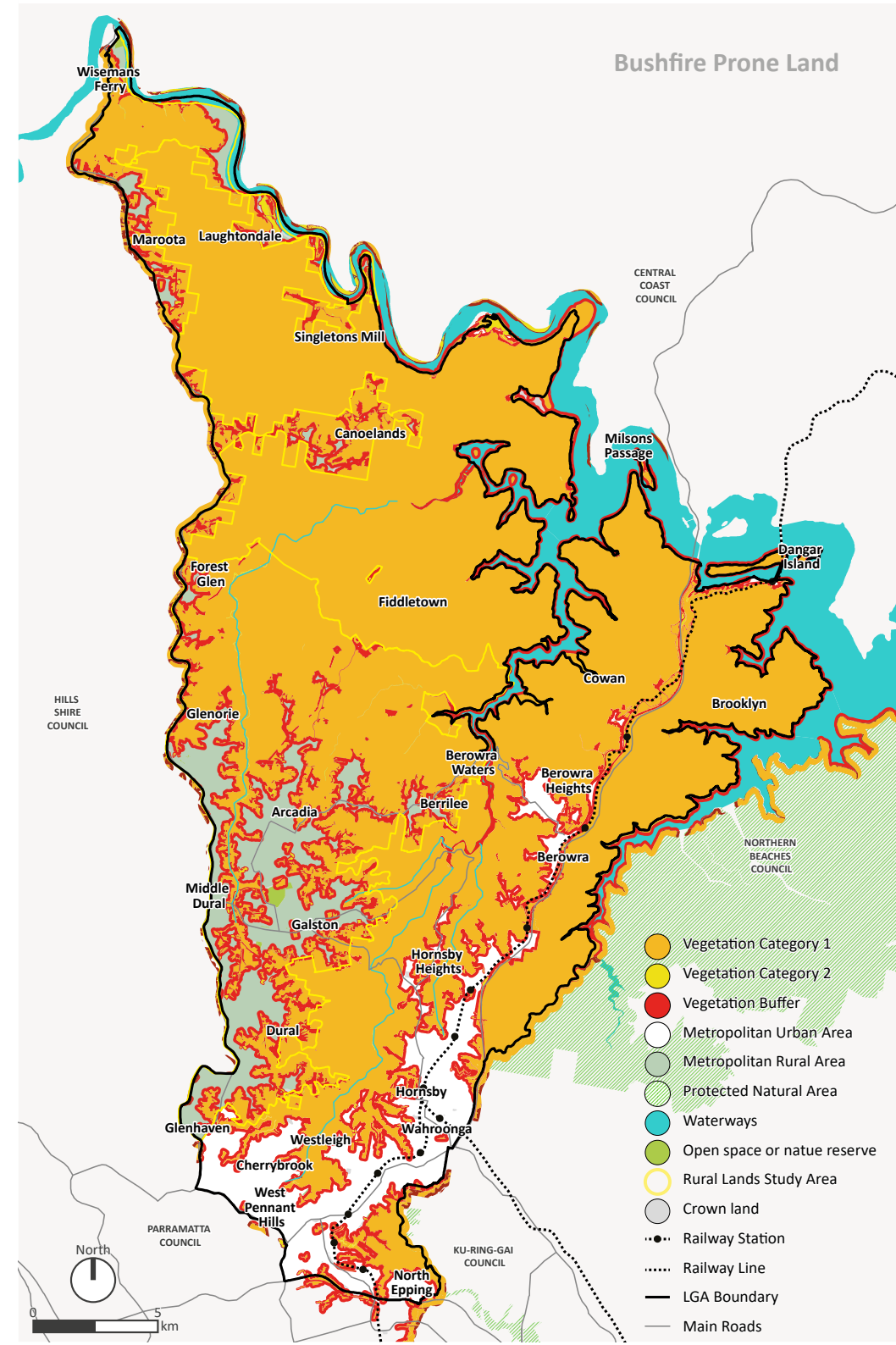


2.6 Balancing constraints

The pressures in rural areas need to be balanced with natural hazards and environmental constraints, including:

- Bushfire risk.
- Flood risk.
- Bushland and biodiversity.
- Water courses.
- Infrastructure.

These constraints are addressed in Chapter 3 of the background Report.





SECTION 3

A place-based approach

03 A place-based approach

3.1 Introduction

Objective 29 of the Greater Sydney Regional Plan, states ‘place-based approaches for landscape units within the Metropolitan Rural Area will help manage its environmental, social and economic values and maximise the productive use of the land.’ Actions of the North District Plan that are to be addressed as part of this strategy also require Council to:

- limit urban development in rural areas, and
- undertake place-based planning to deliver targeted environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Placed-based planning is a way to shape the future of our rural areas by concentrating on the look and feel of places, their form and their character, instead of focusing only on conventional categories of lands use, such as the suburb or zoning (for example).

The first step in a place-based planning approach is to establish ‘landscape areas’ and a character statement for each.

A **landscape area** is a place with shared characteristics such as landform, vegetation, land uses and other unique qualities. It is an area defined by the way a place looks and feels, and what makes it unique.

The following characteristics are considered when identifying landscape areas:

- The vegetation coverage and type.
- The topography of the land, geology and soil types.
- Patterns of development and lot sizes.
- Land uses (considering rural industry, agriculture, dwellings, commercial services, shops etc.).
- Heritage significance.
- Scientific, archaeological or environmental significance.
- Iconic views and important landmarks.

The identification of landscape areas and the place-based approach provides a framework for the Strategy to set out recommendations for each landscape area, considering the unique character and attributes of each area.

3.2 Landscape areas for Hornsby Shire

The consultant team identified thirteen draft landscape areas across the rural areas of Hornsby Shire, and prepared a character statement for each one.

The community was consulted to obtain feedback on the appropriateness of the draft landscape area boundaries and character descriptions. The landscape areas (as exhibited) are identified in the map at right. The Landscape Areas Report, published on Council's website in September 2019, was prepared for the purpose of consulting with the community and contains further information about the draft landscape areas.

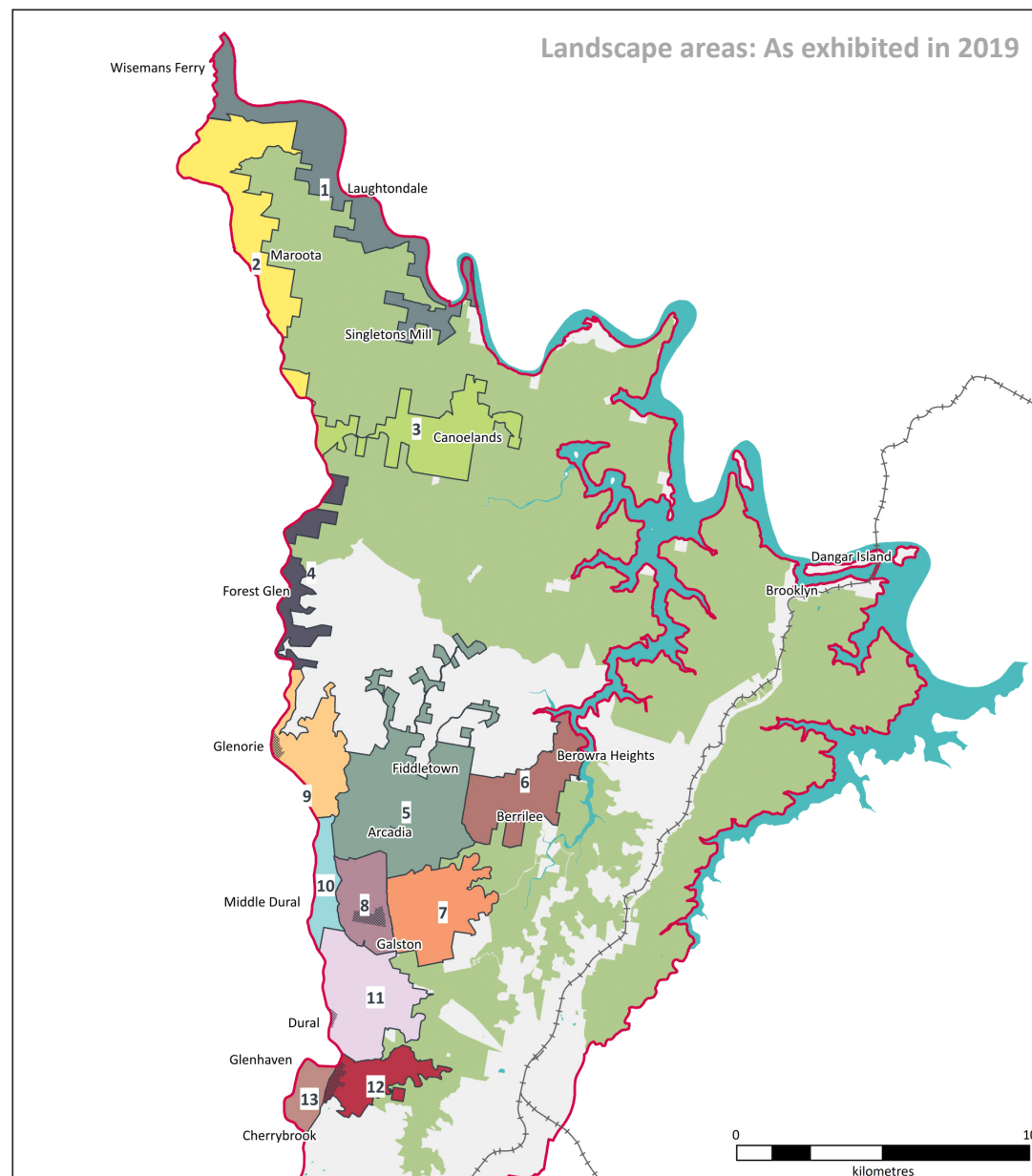
Since exhibition of the draft landscape areas in 2019, some changes have been made to the boundaries of three landscape areas, including of Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline, Berowra Valley South and Galston Plateau. The changes reflect community feedback that was received about the catchment and connection to Galston Village.

The boundaries of the other ten landscape areas have not changed since exhibition.

Boundary refinements were made based on the following considerations:

- Lot patterns and topography.
- Location of vegetation and creeklines.
- Physical proximity to the Galston village catchment.
- Community feedback about connection to the village.

The landscape areas (amended following community consultation) are indicated in the map overleaf (p. 23). Maps showing greater detail of the changes made to the landscape areas following exhibition are included under the relevant landscape areas in Chapter 5 (Recommendations).



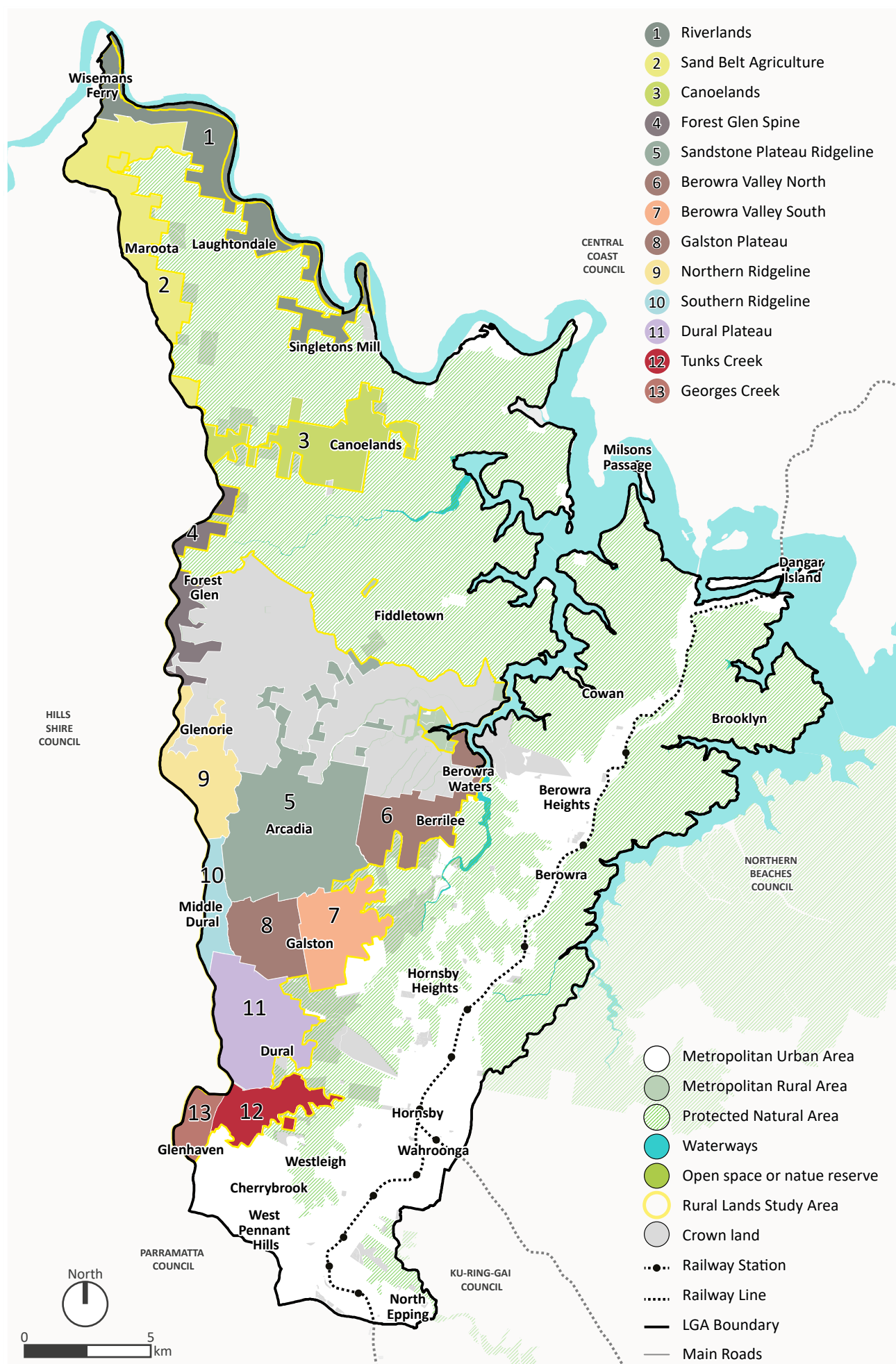
Legend

- Hornsby Shire boundary
- Draft landscape unit boundaries
- Rural village area
- National park or nature reserve
- Not included in study (crown land or urban area)
- Waterway
- Railway network

Draft landscape areas

- | | |
|---|---|
| [1] Riverlands | [8] Galston Plateau |
| [2] Sand Belt Agriculture | [9] Northern Ridgeline |
| [3] Canoelands | [10] Southern Ridgeline |
| [4] Forest Glen Spine | [11] Dural Plateau |
| [5] Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline | [12] Tunks Creek |
| [6] Berowra Valley North | [13] Georges Creek |
| [7] Berowra Valley South | |

Landscape areas: With changes following community consultation





3.3 Community consultation

Feedback received through the community consultation period showed that overall, people were generally supportive of the landscape area boundaries and character statements, however identified where refinements and improvements could be made. Feedback on the issues and opportunities showed that people are concerned about the impacts of development and land use transitions away from agriculture across the rural area. Some feel that agriculture is no longer viable in some parts of the rural area, where others want the rural zones and agricultural areas more strongly protected.

The feedback included strong opinions on the issue of subdivision, which included arguments both for and against reducing the minimum lot size requirements.

Environmental management such as bushfire and weed/pest control and waterway health were concerns, as well as the protection of critically endangered ecological communities, native vegetation, local biodiversity and significant trees. Community members highly value the feel of open spaces, bushland areas, views and greenery across the rural area.

The identification of key themes from people's feedback was further considered as work on the draft Strategy progressed.

More information on the findings from community consultation are presented in the *Feedback Summary Report*, available on Council's Future Hornsby Shire website.

3.4 Emerging themes

Across the community workshops, online surveys, general feedback forms from the community workshops, and letters/emails received by Council, several recurring themes emerged.

Those themes, and key points raised by community members across different engagement activities, are presented here.

	Rural feel	People value being able to access natural areas, national parks and green spaces.
	Subdivision	There were divergent views about further subdivision. This theme was recorded against submissions that were for and against subdivision.
	Environmental protection	The importance of environmental and native vegetation.
	Heritage	Heritage values across colonial buildings, archaeology and Aboriginal cultural heritage.
	Evolving land use	The variety of land uses that occur within the rural evolving land use areas.
	Land use and industry	The range of activities happening across the rural area in Hornsby Shire.
	Responsive landscapes	Feedback often highlighted additional detail that could be used to refine the draft descriptions.
	Catering for families and children	The need to plan for Hornsby Shire's ageing population across the rural area, including challenges like managing properties as people get older. Another aspect of this theme is creating opportunities to address housing affordability, or provide opportunities for young families to live in the area near, or with, their relatives.
	Infrastructure and development	Infrastructure constraints such as sewerage and roads, or the need to improve roads and other infrastructure to manage congestion or provide for some additional development in parts of the rural area.
	Tourism	Current and future tourism opportunities across the Hornsby Shire rural area.

SECTION 4

Vision and principles



04 Vision and principles

4.1 Introduction

Based on the background review, landscape areas report and community consultation, a draft vision and set of planning principles have been developed for the Hornsby Shire Rural Lands Strategy.

The vision and principles will guide planning for Hornsby Shire's rural area. They are the basis upon which recommendations have been made that may support for changes to Council's planning controls for managing rural land. That may include land use, agriculture, and landscape character outcomes across the different landscape areas.

4.2 A vision for Hornsby Shire's rural area

Hornsby Shire's rural area is valued for its unique landscapes, its biodiversity, and the lives it supports.

Primary production in the rural area is protected, and supported by opportunities for value-adding that leverage Hornsby Shire's farming, scenic landscapes, rural amenity and proximity to bushland.

Planning in the rural area manages environmental risk and development constraints.

4.3 Principles for managing Hornsby Shire's rural land

The following principles underpin this Strategy and provide a framework upon which planning and other recommendations have been made.

These principles support the vision, that primary production be protected within the Metropolitan Rural Area, while opportunities for economic development and tourism can be value-added on agricultural properties. The principles throughout this section can be considered by Council in any future proposals involving changes to planning controls in rural areas.

In the Hornsby Shire rural area:

- Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation.
- Activities on primary production land are flexible, allowing businesses that support productive agriculture to innovate and flourish.
- Hornsby Shire's rural area continues to grow as a visitor destination.
- Rural scenic landscape values are protected and enhanced.
- New development is designed and sited to support and enhance scenic values of the relevant landscape area.
- The character of rural villages is maintained as important local service and community nodes.
- Biodiversity and habitat areas are protected, and conservation measures are enhanced.
- Housing choice and housing diversity is provided rural villages.
- Housing is provided around villages where it can be connected to services and is supported by appropriate infrastructure.
- The transition between rural villages and nearby primary production land is managed.

Rural villages

- Protect and enhance the small scale and fine-grained village character of rural villages.
- Ensure appropriate buffer from village housing, to protect the operation of agricultural land to its optimal capacity (for example, spraying crops, dust, noise or odour emissions) Protect, maintain and enhance clearly defined green breaks around rural villages.
- Ensure appropriate buffer between village housing and productive agricultural activities.
- Locate any additional rural living opportunities in areas surrounding the villages.
- Preserve opportunities to locate rural service industry land uses in a district service centre such as Dural.

Defining village boundaries

Village boundaries will define the line between the rural town and village settlements, and broader rural areas.

As set out in the North District Plan, 'distinctive rural villages offer opportunities for people to live and work in an attractive and unique setting, close to a major city.' The GSRP emphasises that the amenity, environmental, economic and social values of the rural area are paramount. It discourages further rural-residential development, however limited growth may be considered where rural amenity, scenic landscape or biodiversity values could be created or protected.

To support the directions of the NDP and GSRP, an approach has been outlined that will define the line between the rural town and village settlements, and Hornsby Shire's broader rural area. Following the GSRP and NDP, the key considerations are:

- Encourage more compact and efficient urban settlement within the rural villages.
- Investigate the potential for rural villages to accommodate some additional housing, where there are no adverse impacts on preferred rural village character, and where the development maintains other values of the rural area. For example:
 - Protecting and/or enhancing biodiversity corridors and scenic landscapes.
 - Providing buffers to support investment in rural industries.
- Preserve non-urban breaks between villages by avoiding ribbon development along major roads.
- Safeguard conservation areas and productive agricultural land.
- Incorporate interface uses, measures and treatments to avoid land use conflict with rural uses.
- Enable affordable and sustainable infrastructure and service provision.
- Reduce land-use conflict at the urban/rural interface.

The recommended approach for defining town boundaries involves consideration of:

- Local topography and other natural boundaries (e.g. creeklines).
- Remnant vegetation.
- Preferred rural village character (e.g. roof forms, building materials and landscape treatments, dwelling siting/setbacks).
- Opportunities for establishing biodiversity.
- Extent of the existing transport network.
- Extent of the existing infrastructure.
- Avoid established rural uses, particularly primary production and extractive industries.
- Natural hazards including bushfire and flooding.
- Walking/cycling connections within and around the settlement (e.g. housing located within a safe 5-minute walk/400m distance from town).

It is important to note that the principles and approach for establishing village boundaries have been prepared in the context of the following directions, from the North District Plan:

- 'Maintaining and enhancing the distinctive character of each rural and bushland town and village is a high priority.
- Ongoing planning and management of rural villages will need to respond to local demand for growth, the character of the town or village and the surrounding landscape and rural activities.
- Rural and bushland towns and villages will not play a role in meeting regional or district scale demand for residential growth.¹²

¹²North District Plan, 2018, p. 106.



Environmental values in the rural area

This Strategy supports protection and further enhancement of environmental values in Hornsby Shire's rural area, as set out in other plans under its LSPS. Those relevant to this Strategy are:

- Protect and enhance significant environmental values including waterways and creek systems, State and regionally significant native vegetation, and Critically Endangered Ecological Communities.
- Once finalised and endorsed by Council, consider the recommendations of the *Biodiversity Strategy and Conservation Management Plan* that are relevant recommendations to rural land. Protect and enhance significant scenic landscape values.
- Enhance access to the National Parks that border the rural area, to allow promotion and share the value of these special places across Greater Sydney.
- Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone.
- Encourage sustainable land management practices that prevent, stabilise and reverse environmental degradation.

Agriculture

The ornamental horticulture sector, comprising the nursery, cut flowers and cultivated turf industries, is the largest sector by value of production in Hornsby Shire. There are clusters of activity around Middle Dural, Galston and Arcadia, which extend west into the Central City District (bordering The Hills Shire).

To protect and enhance agricultural values and the economic value of agriculture in Hornsby Shire, the principles for agriculture are:

- Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production. Support and protect other rural industries that are part of the agricultural supply chain, including services in rural villages
- Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry.
- Once finalised and adopted, consider the recommendations of the Climate Wise Plan that are relevant to rural areas.
- Leverage an increased focus on food security, where nurseries could supply starter plants for this sector.
- Leverage new forms of non-traditional advertising and other channels that provide the ability to target consumers in niche segments.
- Support ornamental horticulture for the role it plays in preventing, stabilising and reversing environmental degradation.
- Support opportunities for ornamental horticulture to improve in profitability by using in new technologies and better business practices, and through all stages of the supply chain working together more efficiently.
- Develop a strategy to support and develop high-tech and emerging industries in Hornsby Shire, including agribusiness and agri-tech industries.

Tourism

Based on community feedback and an examination of tourism activities in Hornsby Shire, this Strategy has identified an opportunity for this industry to be enhanced across the rural area. It is important that tourism activities support and enhance agricultural activity, and landscape values.

The principles below reinforce Hornsby Shire's draft *Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (2020-2025)*. They focus on leveraging the Shire's natural assets of the Hawkesbury River estuary, national parks and bushlands, as well as its agricultural areas.

- Ensure any tourism or visitor-related uses (function centres, garden centres, restaurants and cafés, markets, artisan food and drink premises) are ancillary and complement important primary production uses.
- Limit land use conflict by ensuring that there is adequate separation between the location of tourism and visitor related activities from primary production or mining uses, including by using vegetation buffers, site selection and design.
- Ensure tourism uses in rural areas are balanced with the sustainable management of the region's assets, particularly areas of high visitation including sensitive ecosystems and productive areas including biodiversity, water catchments and cultural heritage. Consider likely increases in traffic as a result of tourism uses, and requirements for provision of adequate infrastructure to support this use.
- Consider land and environment sensitivities when evaluating new tourism and visitor related land uses, including landscape and scenic qualities.
- Ensure businesses and stakeholders from Hornsby Shire's rural area are involved with Council's economic development facilitation efforts.

The Hornsby Shire Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

Several tourism-related opportunities for rural lands were identified in Hornsby Shire's draft *Economic Development and Tourism Strategy* and have synergies with the Rural Lands Study.

- Agri-tourism is an opportunity that requires further exploration (e.g. farmgate produce, road stop pantries, etc.). The potential for local produce brand development, tied into the Hornsby Shire tourism offer and established branding such as the Hawkesbury Harvest could be explored.
- There is potential to develop Hornsby Shire's rural product and support the sustainable development of the area's smaller towns and villages (for example, it was reported that there is strong demand for fruit-picking by visitors from the Greater Sydney area).
- Land use planning could be more flexible to support the potential for a variety of productive land uses, including ancillary uses (e.g. wholesale / retail produce shop fronts).
- Improve access to the Hawkesbury River through the delivery of appropriate support infrastructure, including public moorings and jetties, parking facilities and pump stations.
- Develop and implement a way-finding strategy for visitors as part of the destination management plan.
- Develop a regional events strategy with signature food and wine and culture-based events.
- Explore opportunities to further develop Hornsby Shire as a location of choice for cycle tourism, bush walking and active recreation.
- Further develop visitor experiences that celebrate Hornsby Shire's and the region's Indigenous and European histories and cultural heritage.
- As part of the draft Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, identify opportunities to facilitate the development of visitor accommodation in Hornsby Shire. Inform this activity with an audit of existing accommodation across Hornsby Shire and neighbouring areas.

It is recommended that Council give consideration to implementing these tourism related opportunities with the ED&T strategy.

4.4 Managing the transition/ interface between land uses

Interface issues will be avoided by ensuring land use change and development aligns with the following principles:

- Additional development, rural settlement and other development in rural areas should be sited and designed so they do not interfere with legitimate and routine land uses on adjoining lands.
- The most effective means of preventing land uses conflict is to plan for adequate separation between conflicting land uses.
- Buffers between incompatible land uses do not take the place of sound strategic planning though they do offer an added level of conflict risk avoidance.
- It is the responsibility of the encroaching development to provide the necessary setback and buffer to incompatible land uses. The extent of the buffer should not extend beyond the boundary of the property required to provide the buffer.

Types of buffers

- Separation buffers: Physical separation between land uses.
- Biological or vegetated buffers: Vegetation planting and physical landscaping works to reduce visual impact and potential for airborne-created conflict.
- Landscape and ecological buffer: Existing vegetation to reduce impacts from development, mainly on sensitive environments.
- Property management buffers: Use of alternative or specialised management practices at the interface between uses where there is risk of conflict.

SECTION 5

Recommendations



05 Recommendations

5.1 Overview of recommendations for Hornsby Shire's rural area

The recommendations for managing rural land are based on the planning principles established as part of the Strategy (in Chapter 4). Some key principles include:

- Retain and enhance opportunities for productive land use.
- Encourage ancillary land uses that support productive activities related to tourism.
- Limit further fragmentation of rural land.
- Plan for rural villages as great places that support the rural area.
- Respond to changing demographics by exploring where some houses could be located close to or within existing rural villages.
- Manage the interface between urban and rural areas, especially in the southern parts of the rural area near New Line Road and Old Northern Road.
- Ensure development respects and enhances identified landscape and biodiversity values across the rural area.

In developing the principles and recommendations, consideration was made to the community feedback received in relation to the values, issues and opportunities for each landscape area and the rural area as a whole, as outlined in the feedback summary report.

The recommendations in this chapter are broken into recommendations for each of the thirteen landscape areas plus general recommendations for the rural area as a whole. The final part of the chapter addresses other suggestions put forward by the community that have been considered.

An overview of the recommendations are as follows:

- Retain RU1 (Primary Production) and RU4 (Primary Production, Small Lots) zoning extent and include opportunities for additional land uses including Garden Centres, Markets, Restaurants and Cafés, Function centres and Artisan Food and Drink premises on sites where agriculture occurs.
- Retain RU2 (Rural Landscape) zoning extent and include opportunities for additional land uses including Restaurant and Cafés, Function centres and Artisan Food and Drink premises on sites where agriculture occurs.
- Retain E3 (Environmental Management) zoning extent.
- Support relevant actions of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, related to the rural area.
- Include opportunities for additional land uses in the SP3 Tourist zone, including Kiosks, Markets and Plant Nurseries.
- Prepare place plans for the rural villages.
- Investigate limited application of the E4 (Environmental Living) Zone around rural villages where service and infrastructure provision impacts on nearby primary production uses can be appropriately managed, and where scenic landscape values and biodiversity values can be protected.
- Review zone objectives for the RU1, RU2 and RU4 zone.
- Permit secondary dwellings up to a maximum square metre size.
- Permit roadside stalls to sell items from the site and the local area (rather than be restricted to adjoining properties).
- Include access handles in lot size calculations.
- Introduce DCP controls to set parameters for new additional land uses.

Demonstrating a nexus between agriculture and other uses

This strategy recommends additional land uses in the RU1, RU2 and RU4 zones on sites where agriculture occurs. To achieve this, any proposal for a prescribed use, would need to demonstrate a nexus between the new use and the agriculture occurring on the site.

The approach recommended for managing value adding activities in Hornsby Shire's rural areas is to prepare a Clause within the LEP, that requires applicants to establish a nexus, or relationship, between the proposed land use and agriculture.

Currently, the planning system allows ancillary uses. Ancillary uses provide necessary support to dominant activities or operation of a business. The NSW planning circular 'How to characterise development' (2013) advises:

- “If a component serves the dominant purpose, it is ancillary to that dominant purpose.
- If a component serves its own purpose, it is not a component of the dominant purpose but an independent use on the same land.”

Given the above, an ancillary use is slightly different to the term nexus.

The intent of including a new Clause for nexus uses is to allow the additional land use to operate at a larger scale than a typical ancillary use, enabling primary producers to capture value-adding opportunities to a greater extent. The policy would need to uphold principles for rural area planning. That is, the new use would be managed in concert with other provisions recommended in this Strategy—for example, ensuring that non-agricultural uses are designed in a manner sympathetic to identified landscape character, and that the scale of new uses will not limit or encroach upon primary production activities on nearby lots.

Usually, to establish a nexus between land uses a series of tests are applied. In some instances, demonstrating a nexus has been to show that one use is occurring in conjunction with the other. In a future LEP provision, such tests could include:

- What primary uses are set out in the current zoning, and is a primary use currently occurring on the site?
- On what basis would an additional land use be occurring, and how is it connected to the primary use?
- Assessment guidelines that enable Council to consider the implications of expected land use types on surrounding land uses—ensuring new uses will not encroach on the adjoining lots where primary production is occurring.

The methodology for determining nexus may require an applicant to:

- Define the primary use(s) and additional use(s) and explain how they will occur in conjunction with each other (e.g. site and land use management plan).
- Estimate the share (for example land take up, income generated) of the two uses.
- Outline infrastructure requirements of the proposed use(s).
- Demonstrate how the land use will be managed to limit interface or encroachment issues with adjoining properties.
- Provide design details demonstrating sensitivity towards rural and landscape character.
- Demonstrate the link or nexus (economic or otherwise) between the primary and proposed uses.

The proposal should address the links between the existing and proposed uses and demonstrate how the proposed uses are compatible given the site's context and zoning.

5.2 Place-based recommendations for Landscape Areas

This section outlines a preferred character statement and recommendations for each landscape area.

Changes were made to three of the landscape area boundaries (Galston Plateau, Sandstone Ridge Plateau and Berowra Valley South) and refinements were made to all character statements following feedback from the community and further investigations.

Recommendations in the landscape areas are based on the following considerations:

- The planning principles established as part of this Strategy (in Chapter 4).
- The values, issues and opportunities identified by the community for the landscape areas (as per the feedback summary report).
- How any recommendation would support the preferred character statement for the landscape character area.
- Consistency with the objectives and actions of the GSRP and NDP.

In this section, place-based recommendations are made for each landscape area and include the following information.

- **Preferred character statement:** Revised following Council and community feedback. Sets out a vision for key features of the area to be protected, maintained, enhanced or where some things may change into the future.
- **Changes to the landscape area boundary:** Details (if relevant) of how the landscape area boundary has changed since community feedback was collected.
- **Principles for this landscape area:** Planning principles that apply to the recommendations for this place.
- **Recommendations:** Proposed approach to policy in the LSPS, LEP and DCP.
- **Action:** Suggested change to the policy (as relevant).

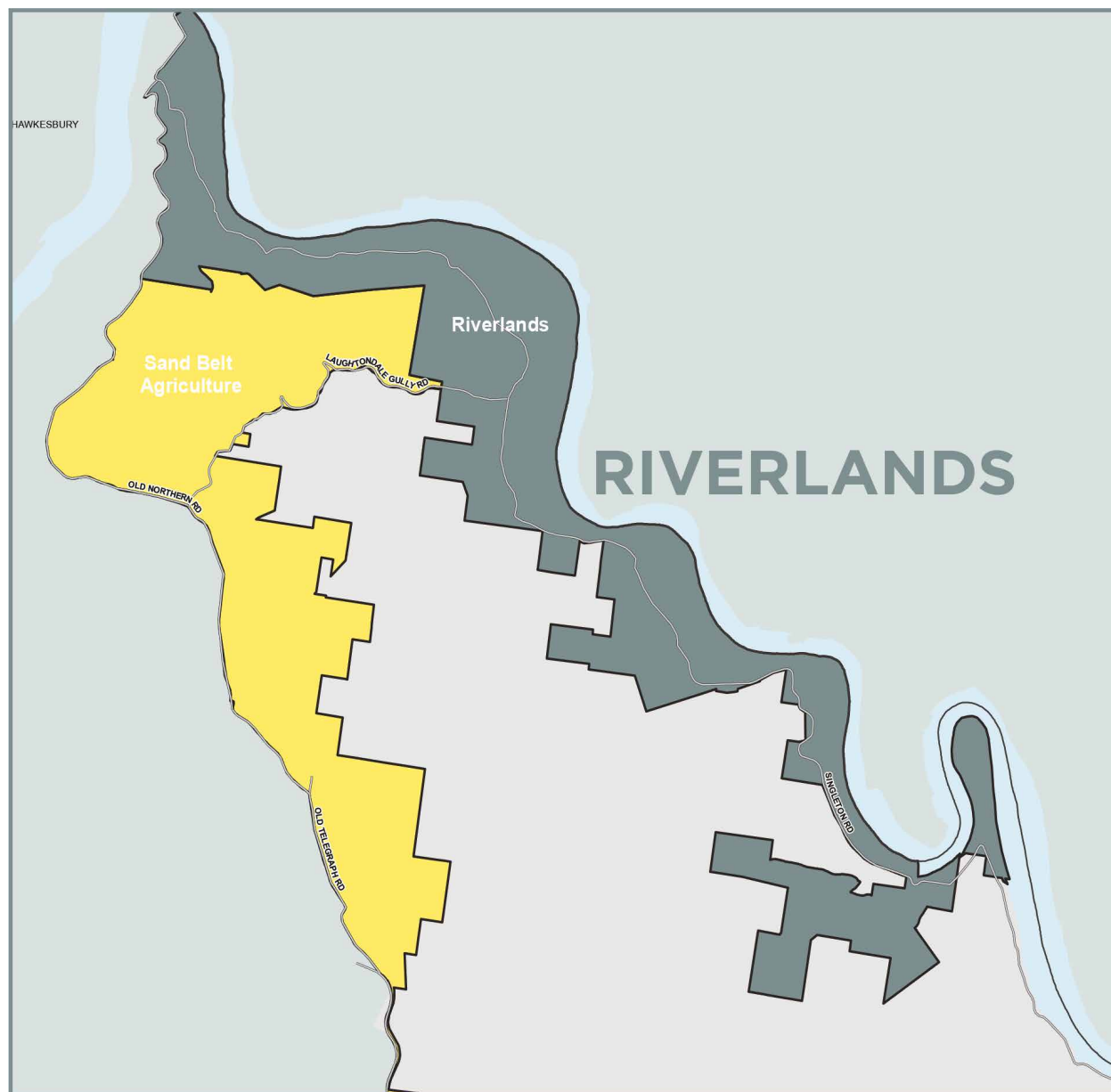
Riverlands

5.2.1 Riverlands

Preferred character statement

The Riverlands landscape area is highly valued for its remoteness, serenity and connection to the Hawkesbury River and riverine environment. A sense of seclusion is enhanced by a steep, sandstone escarpment and the boundary of the Marramarra National Park.

Opportunities to visit the wetlands, river and surrounding bushland are balanced with the need to protect biodiversity and manage flood risk across the landscape area.



Riverlands

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Biodiversity and habitat areas are protected, and conservation measures are enhanced	Retain E3 zone.	-	No change to the zone extent.
Further develop visitor experiences that celebrate Hornsby Shire's and the region's Indigenous and European histories and cultural heritage	Review land uses in the SP3 (Tourism) zone to support tourism (including eco-tourism), nearby farming and river activities.	Amend LEP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the SP3 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Kiosks — Markets — Plant nurseries.
Consider land and environment sensitivities when evaluating new tourism and visitor related land uses	Ensure any actions to enhance tourism are balanced with flood, fire and access/egress considerations.	Amend DCP	Assessment guidelines for tourism or commercial activities within the SP3 zone which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Protect landscape and biodiversity values — Balance flood and bushfire considerations.
Ensure tourism uses in rural areas are balanced with the sustainable management of the region's assets, particularly areas of high visitation including sensitive ecosystems and productive areas	Ensure any additional tourism or new agricultural activities also protect and enhance environmental values.		Amend DCP (Rural Land Uses) to include a clause covering commercial and retail terms, to ensure new development of this kind achieves outcomes that are sympathetic to rural character. Include tourism, landscape character and interface management principles, as prescriptive measures for tourism, retail and commercial activities in SP3.

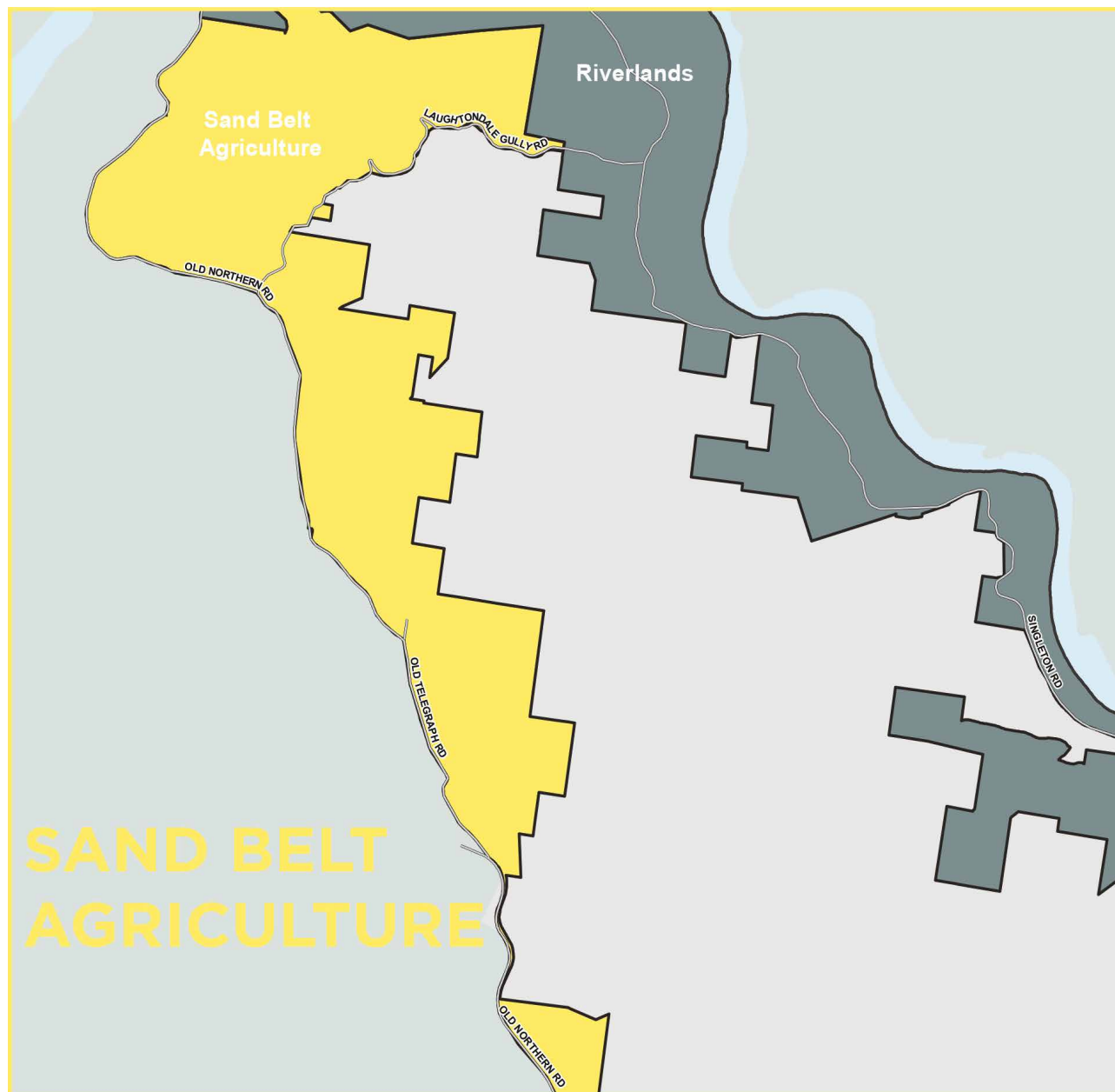
Sand Belt Agriculture

5.2.2 Sand Belt Agriculture

Preferred character statement

In the Sand Belt Agriculture landscape area, horticulture, cropping and sand mining define the rural character. This landscape area sits partly on the Maroota Sands landform, underpinned with very sandy soils and heathland-type vegetation reminiscent of a coastal setting. Biodiversity is highly valued in this location, including Turpentine-Ironbark and Peppermint Angophora Forests, and Scribbly Gum Woodlands.

Land rehabilitation is a priority in this area, where mining has ceased. Protection of flora and fauna is a priority.



Sand Belt Agriculture

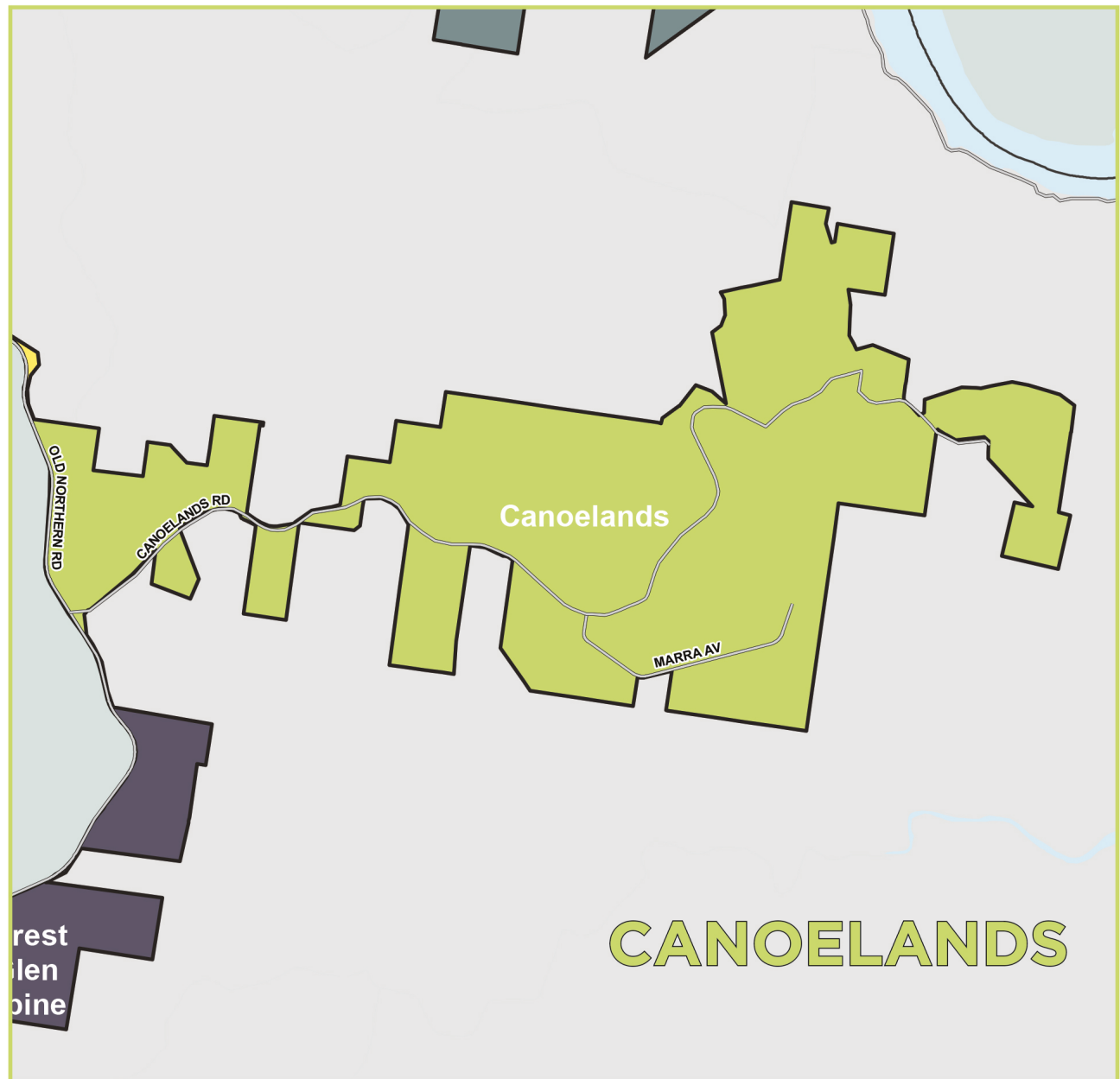
Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
<p>Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation</p> <p>Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone</p>	Retain RU1 and E3 zoning throughout this landscape area.	-	<p>No change to the zone extent.</p> <p>Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.</p>
Biodiversity and habitat areas are protected, and conservation measures are enhanced	Limit land clearing and ensure land remediation is undertaken once mining operations cease.	Update DCP	Expand desired outcomes of Clause 2.5.9 to the Hornsby DCP (Extractive Industries, Rehabilitation) to include principles related to protection of landscape character and environmental management set out in this Strategy.
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry</p>	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 zone, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or agri-business activities.	Amend LEP and DCP	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities:</p> <p>Permit the following land uses, with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Garden centres — Market — Function centres — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p> <p>Explore opportunities (LEP or DCP provisions) to include prescriptive measures that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p>

Canoelands

5.2.3 Canoelands

Preferred character statement

The Canoelands landscape area is framed by the Marramarra National Park and Marramarra Creek, which creates a dark green horizon against a patchwork of productive activities. Private properties and farmland are clustered around Canoelands Road. Agricultural activities are predominantly seasonal horticulture, with orchards and groves.



Canoelands

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	Retain E3 and RU1 zoning in this location.	-	No change to the zone extent. Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone			
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 zone, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or agri-business activities.	Amend LEP and DCP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities: Permit the following land uses, with consent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Garden centres — Market — Function centres — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises.
Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry			Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy. Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy. Explore opportunities (LEP or DCP provisions) to include prescriptive measures that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.
Protect and enhance significant environmental values including waterways and creek systems, State and regionally significant native vegetation, and Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEES)	Ensure development or new land uses are sensitive to the environmental and rural values of this landscape area.	Amend DCP	Biodiversity principle achieved through existing native vegetation controls. Update DCP to include objectives for new development or land uses to achieve outcomes that are sympathetic to the landscape character for this area.
Protect and enhance significant scenic landscape values			

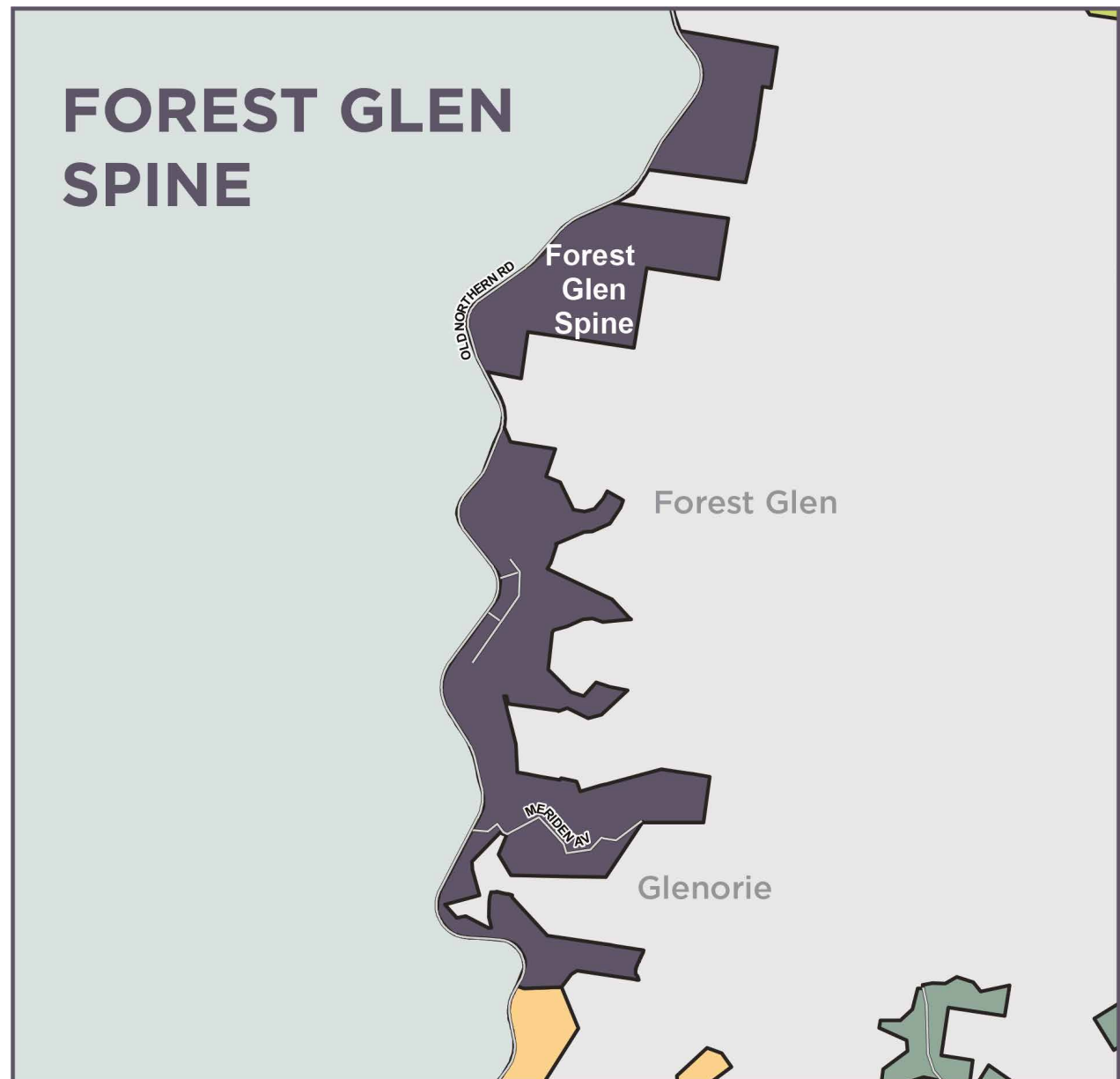
Forest Glen Spine

5.2.4 Forest Glen Spine

Preferred character statement

The blend of bushland and rural living is highly valued in Forest Glen Spine. This includes the presence of koalas and significant vegetation of the Peppermint Angophora Forests within valleys, and Grey Gum Scribbly Gum Woodland on ridgelines.

Views through this landscape area are short- and mid-range, enclosed or filtered through native vegetation. This landscape area forms part of the exposed sandstone ridgeline traversed by Old Northern Road. This landscape area provides a clear transition towards a more remote part of Hornsby Shire's rural area further north.



Forest Glen Spine

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Protect and enhance significant environmental values including waterways and creek systems, State and regionally significant native vegetation, and Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEES)	Retain E3 zone.	-	No change to the zone extent. Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone			
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 zone, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or agri-business activities.	Amend LEP and DCP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities: Permit the following land uses, with consent: — Garden centres — Market — Function centres — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises.
Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry			Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy. Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy. Explore opportunities (LEP or DCP provisions) to include prescriptive measures that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.
Minimise risks to people and property arising from natural hazards	Limit further subdivision in locations where bushfire risk is heightened due to poor access/egress and steep topography.	- Support related Strategy	No change to the LEP or DCP required. Consider any relevant recommendations of the Bushfire Management Plan as it relates to Hornsby's rural area, once finalised.

Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline

5.2.5 Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline

Preferred landscape character statement

The Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline is defined by two gentle ridges that sit between steep slopes down to the Colah Creek, Marramarra Creek and Still Creek valleys. Significant vegetation is a feature of the area, both important ecological communities and well-established planted gardens. The Turpentine-Ironbark and Peppermint Angophora Forest, and Bloodwood-Scribbly Gum Woodland vegetation communities are a significant feature of the Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline.

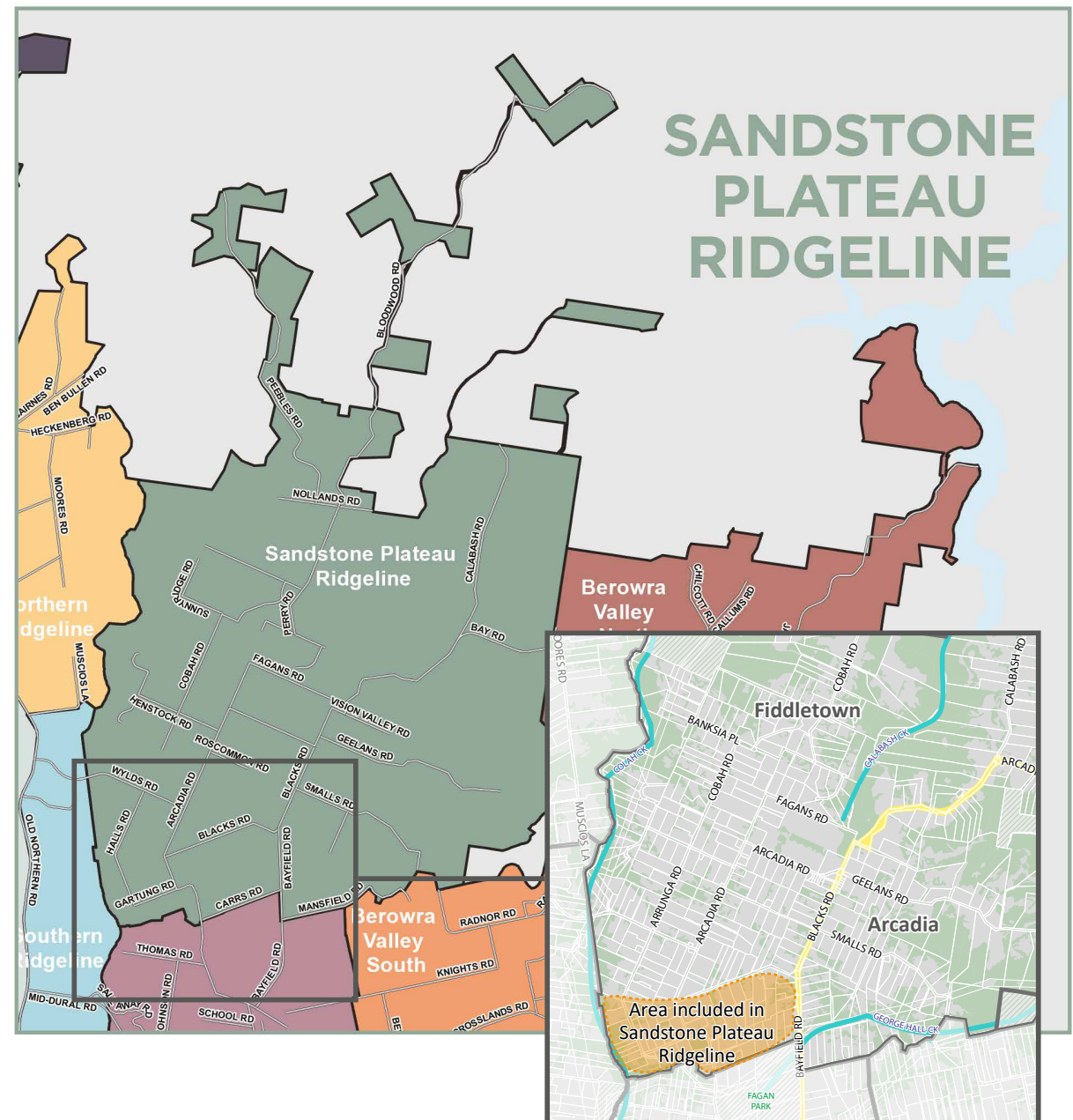
Rural lifestyle blocks are often characterised by large farmhouses and timber-and-railing fences.

Travelling through this landscape area, roads run along gentle slopes and then dip down into damp, well-forested gullies. Views across the area from higher points reveal rolling hills, where views over gullies connect to neighbouring ridgelines at eye level.

Changes to the landscape area boundary

The Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline boundary was updated following community feedback and further investigation. The boundary was amended to reflect the Galston village catchment. The review included consideration of lot size, topography and proximity of some lots in this landscape area, to Galston village.

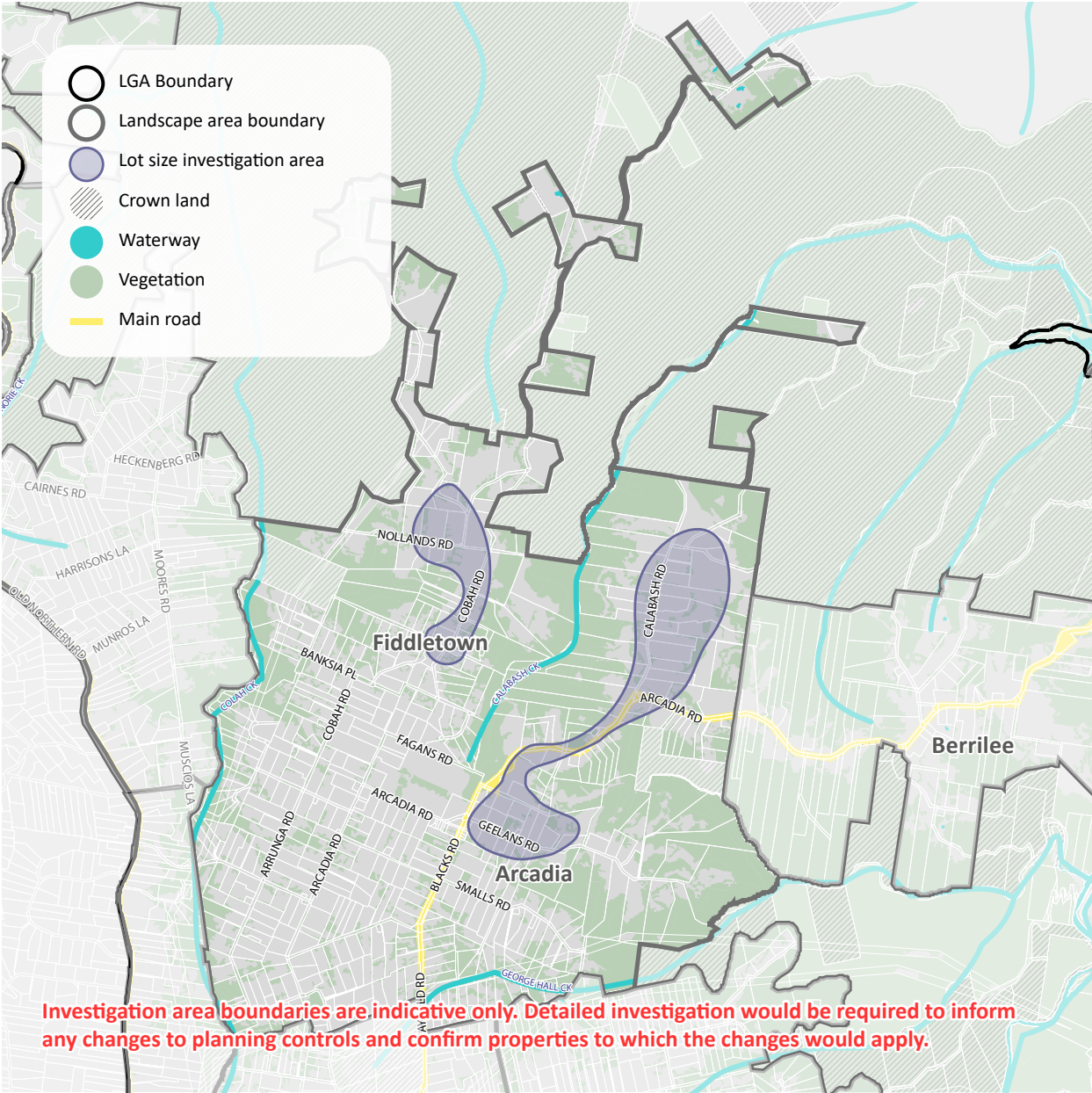
Part of the southern boundary was moved south (refer to map) to reallocate some lots from Galston Plateau into the Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline landscape area, based on vegetation, creeklines, lot size and topography.



Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	Retain the E3 zone.	-	No change to the zone extent.
Harmonise planning controls in this landscape area while seeking to protect and enhance significant scenic landscape values	Review the minimum lot size extent where minimum lot size transitions from 2 hectares to 10 hectares north of Arcadia and around Fiddletown.	Update LEP	<p>The landscape qualities in this area are defined by a settlement pattern of predominantly 2 hectare lot sizes which indicates the current minimum lot size has largely been realised. In part of the landscape area a minimum 10 hectare lot size applies, generally consistent with the RU1 zone.</p> <p>The preferred character in this location is based on picturesque rural ambiance, and the vegetation extent in the northern part of the landscape area is a key feature. Some further subdivision to a minimum lot size of 2 hectares may be appropriate in the investigation areas shown on the map, provided access/egress considerations, vegetation protection and bushfire protection can be maintained.</p> <p>Extension of the RU4 (Primary Production Small Lot) zone in line with any change to the minimum lot size map could also be considered.</p>
<p>Rural scenic landscape values are protected and enhanced</p> <p>Ensure any new development is designed and sited to support and enhance scenic values of the relevant landscape area</p>	Views over valleys from high points are a significant feature of this area; development should be designed and sited to preserve views and allow the topography and vegetation to feature.	Update DCP assessment guidelines	Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on identified landscape character, environmental and rural values, using the principles for agriculture, environment/ landscapes, and managing interfaces from this Strategy.
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry</p>	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 and RU4 zones, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or other accommodation, rural industry and agribusiness uses that would support ongoing flexibility of land uses that fulfil the purpose of the RU1 and RU4 zone.	Amend LEP and DCP	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 and RU4 zones, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>In the RU1 and RU4 zone, permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Garden centres (add to RU1) — Function centres — Market — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures to the relevant LEP or DCP clause that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p> <p>Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p>

Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline - Investigation area



Berowra Valley North

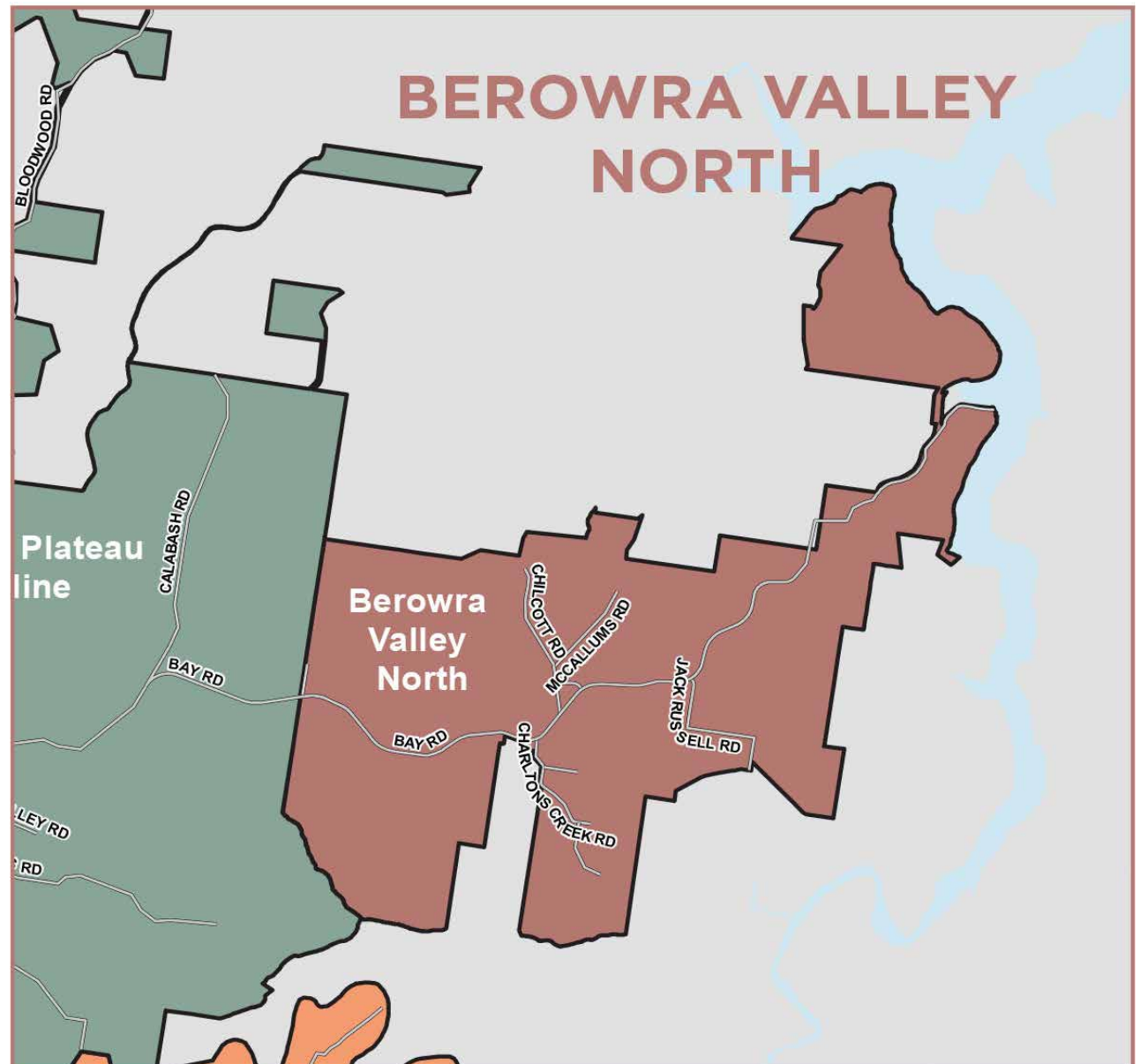
5.2.6 Berowra Valley North

Preferred landscape character

This landscape area contains the rural locality of Berrilee, connecting through to Berowra Waters and the river corridor. Access to this area is via Bay Road, and agricultural lots are clustered around this main road, with some smaller local roads branching into more densely forested valleys. Travelling through this area gives an experience of long-ranging views from high-points, with enclosed, short-range views to vegetation and farmland from lower points.

Descending east of Berrilee towards Berowra Waters, the landscape is marked by a transition to the Scribbly Gum Open Woodland, where Narrow-leaved Scribbly Gum Woodland and Peppermint Angophora Forest (along creeklines) defines vegetation communities to the west.

Travelling through this landscape area is one that provides an experience of changing landscape from rural area to river valley.



Berowra Valley North

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone	Retain E3 and E4 zoning	-	No change to the zone extent. Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 zone, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or agri-business activities.	Amend LEP and DCP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities: Permit the following land uses, with consent: — Garden centres — Market — Function centres — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy. Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy. Explore opportunities (LEP or DCP provisions) to include prescriptive measures that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.
Hornsby Shire's rural area continues to grow as a visitor destination	Enhance wayfinding and tourism related infrastructure to Berowra Waters.	- Support related Strategy	No change to the LEP or DCP required. Support recommendations from the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy as they relate to Hornsby's rural area, once finalised.
Minimise risks to people and property arising from natural hazards	Balance the scale new land uses with bushfire risk and management of traffic on Bay Road as single access/ egress point.	- Support related Strategy	No change to the LEP or DCP required. Consider relevant recommendations of the Bushfire Management Plan as it relates to Hornsby's rural area, once finalised.

Berowra Valley South

5.2.7 Berowra Valley South

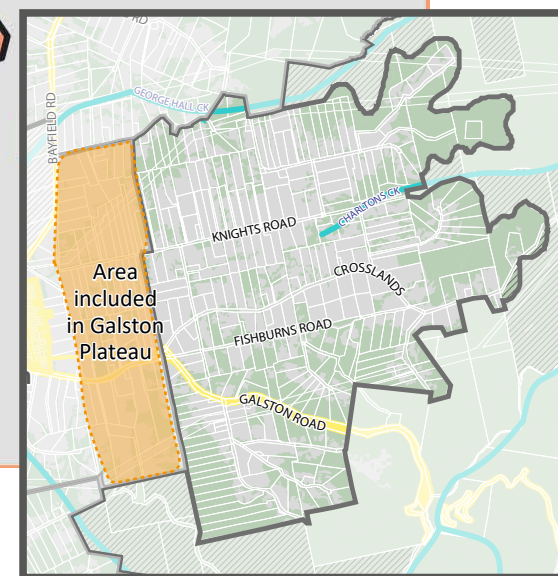
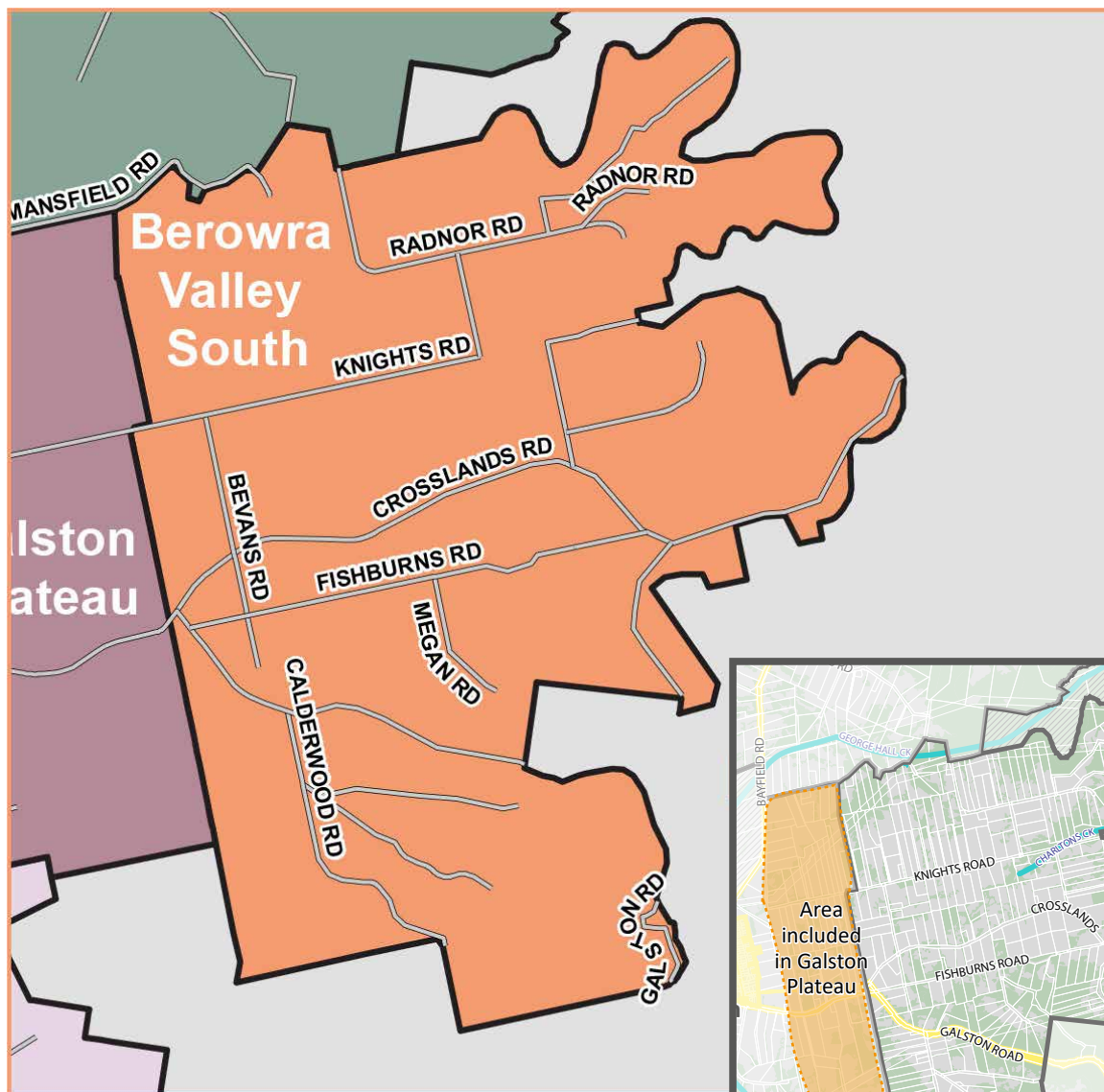
Preferred landscape character

The Berowra Valley South landscape area is one of gently rolling hills and lush vegetation. The precinct borders the Berowra Valley National Park, and several creek corridors (George Hall, Still, Charltons, and Berowra Creeks) traverse the area, lined with remnant native vegetation.

A feature of this area are narrow, local roads (such as Fishburns Road) which are framed with dense vegetation, creating long green viewing corridors which suddenly open out to paddocks and farmland beyond.

Changes to the landscape area boundary

The Berowra Valley South boundary was updated following community feedback and further investigation. The boundary was amended to reflect the Galston village catchment. The review included consideration of lot size, topography and proximity of some lots in this landscape area, to Galston village. The western boundary was moved east, resulting in some lots being changed to the Galston Plateau landscape area (refer to map).



Berowra Valley South

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone	Retain E3 zoned land.	-	<p>No change to the zone extent.</p> <p>Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.</p>
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry</p>	<p>Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU4 zone, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or other accommodation uses, and enhance connections to the Berowra Valley/access to natural areas.</p> <p>Support ongoing variety of non-urban uses in this landscape area that support nearby rural and urban places.</p>	Amend LEP and DCP	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU4 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>Permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Function centres — Market — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p>

Galston Plateau

5.2.8 Galston Plateau

Preferred landscape character

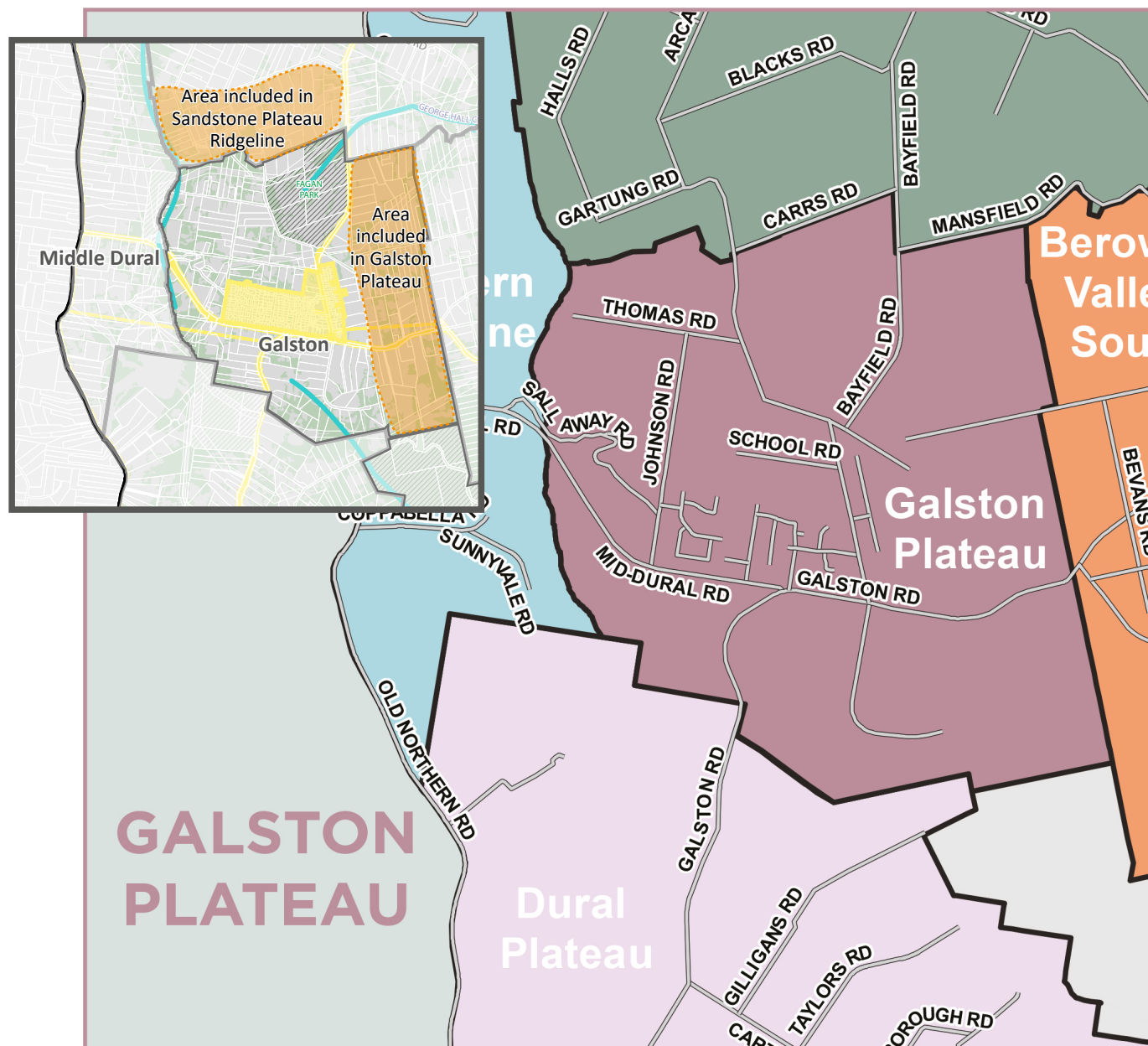
This landscape area is defined by low, rolling hills and valleys, featuring the significant Turpentine-Ironbark Forest vegetation community. In and around Galston, there is a sense of being at a high point, with wide skies and a sense of openness associated with rural places. Galston acts as a local service centre for the surrounding rural area, as well as supporting a small local population in-town.

Galston's immediate surrounds include several churches, and the well-known Fagan Park, a 55-hectare reserve and local tourist attraction which includes a bushland reserve and local walking track alongside botanic gardens.

Changes to the landscape area boundary

The Galston Plateau boundary was updated following community feedback and further investigation. The boundary was amended to reflect the connection to the Galston village catchment. The review included consideration of lot size, topography and proximity of some lots (previously in Berowra Valley South) to Galston village.

The eastern boundary was moved further east (refer to map). The northern boundary was moved south (refer to map) to reallocate some lots into the Sandstone Plateau Ridgeline landscape area, based on vegetation, creeklines, lot size and topography.



Galston Plateau

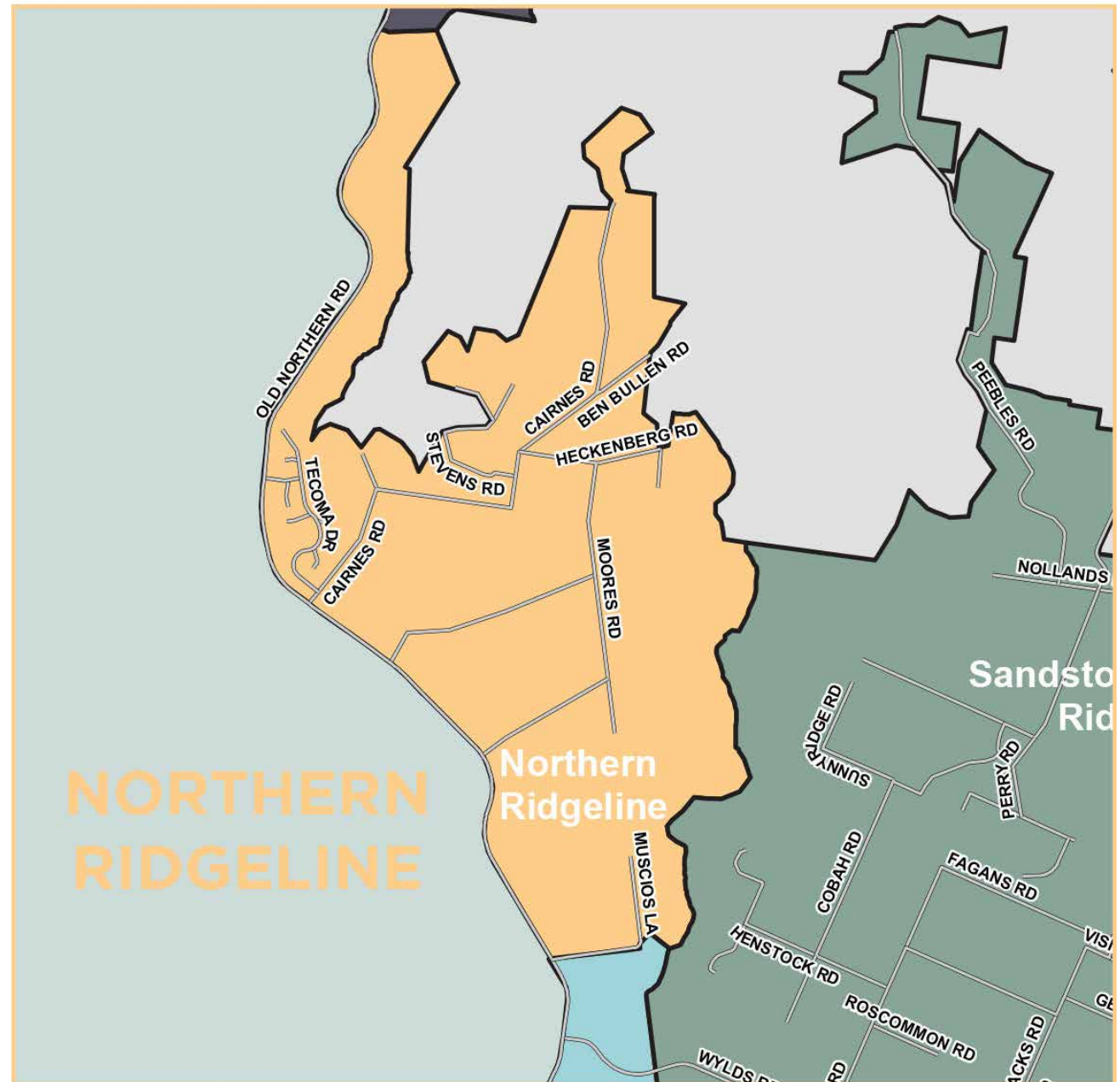
Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone	Retain land in the E3 zone.	-	<p>No change to the zone extent.</p> <p>Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.</p>
Investigate the potential for rural villages to accommodate some additional housing, where there are no adverse impacts on preferred rural village character, and where the development maintains other values of the rural area	<p>Investigate opportunities within 400m from the current residential zoned land around Galston village where the zoning of E4 Environmental Living could be introduced, provided land meets principles for place-based planning outlined in this Strategy.</p> <p><i>Refer to village map in Section 5.3.</i></p>	<p>Amend LEP</p> <p>Update DCP</p> <p>Prepare Galston Place Plan, based on principles from this Strategy</p>	<p>Further investigate land suitability within the investigation area to apply the E4 zone, facilitating some housing diversity located around the village. This may include an assessment of land capability and further collaboration with (for example) RFS and biodiversity teams.</p> <p>Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on principles in this Strategy for managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffer), landscape character outcomes for non-agricultural uses, and dwelling house controls.</p> <p>In the E4 area, it is recommended a minimum lot size ranging between 5,000sqm-10,000sqm be explored. Capacity for additional lots must consider significant vegetation and bushfire risk, alongside Council's requirements for on-site effluent disposal.</p> <p>This recommendation should form part of a place plan for Galston to confirm the town boundary to which the E4 zone would be limited.</p>
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry</p>	<p>Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU2 and RU4 zone, that would enable primary production activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or other accommodation uses, and enhance connections to the Berowra Valley and further north along Old Northern Road.</p>	<p>Amend LEP and DCP</p>	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU2 and RU4 zones, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>Permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Function centre — Market (in the RU4) — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Explore options for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p>

Northern Ridgeline

5.2.9 Northern Ridgeline

Preferred landscape character statement

The Northern Ridgeline landscape area sits across two bioregions: Cumberland and Yengo. The southern part of this landscape area has lower, rolling hills with views over wide valleys from Old Northern Road. The Glenorie rural town is in this landscape area and stretches along (predominantly the eastern side) Old Northern Road.



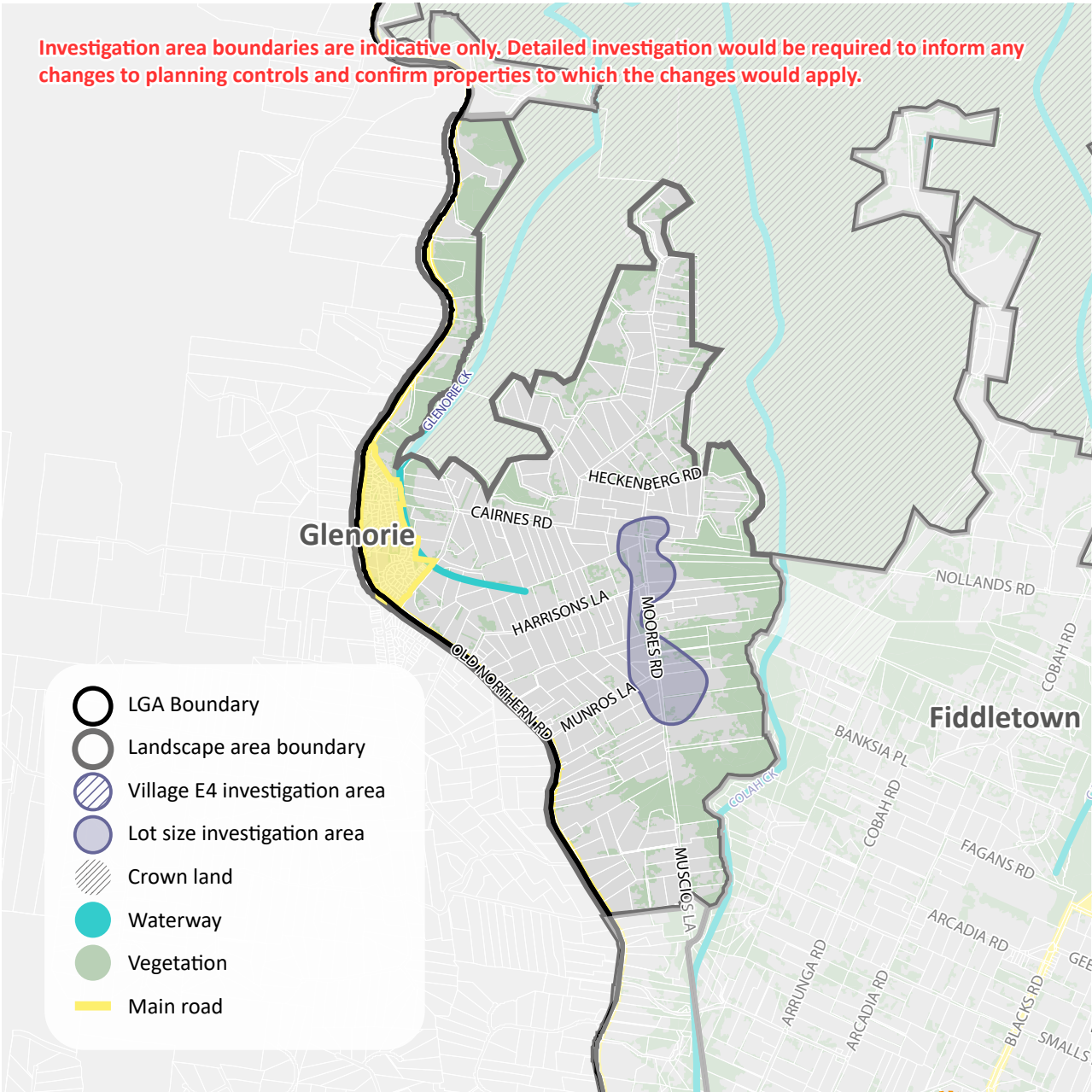
Northern Ridgeline

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone	Retain areas of E3 zone and avoid further development east of Glenorie Creek, which provides a natural eastern boundary to the town.		No change to the zone extent.
Investigate the potential for rural villages to accommodate some additional housing, where there are no adverse impacts on preferred rural village character, and where the development maintains other values of the rural area	Collaborating with the Hills Shire Council, investigate opportunities within 400m from the current residential zoned land around Glenorie village where the zoning of E4 Environmental Living could be introduced, provided land meets principles for place-based planning outlined in this Strategy. <i>Refer to village map in Section 5.3.</i>	Update LEP Update DCP	Further investigate land suitability within the investigation area to apply the E4 zone, facilitating some housing diversity located around the village. This may include an assessment of land capability and further collaboration with (for example) RFS and biodiversity teams. Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on principles in this Strategy for managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffer), landscape character outcomes for non-agricultural uses, and dwelling house controls. In the E4 area, it is recommended a minimum lot size ranging between 5,000 sqm-10,000 sqm be explored. Capacity for additional lots must consider significant vegetation and bushfire risk, alongside Council's requirements for on-site effluent disposal.
Harmonise planning controls in this landscape area while seeking to protect and enhance significant scenic landscape values	Review the minimum lot size extent where minimum lot size transitions from 2 hectares to 10 hectares in the south-eastern part of the landscape area	Update LEP	The landscape qualities in this area are defined by a settlement pattern of predominantly 2 hectare lot sizes which indicates the current minimum lot size has largely been realised. In part of the landscape area a minimum 10 hectare lot size applies, generally consistent with the RU1 zone. The preferred character in this location is based on picturesque rural ambiance, and the vegetation extent in the northern part of the landscape area is a key feature. Some further subdivision to a minimum lot size of 2 hectares may be appropriate in the investigation areas shown on the map, provided access/egress considerations, vegetation protection and bushfire protection can be maintained. Extension of the RU4 (Primary Production Small Lot) zone in line with any change to the minimum lot size map could also be considered.
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	If land to be investigated for E4 extends along Old Northern Road, consider how strip development could be avoided to ensure the sense of a non-urban break between villages can be preserved, establishing a clear town boundary and sense of arrival to the rural area.	Prepare Glenorie place plan, based on principles from this Strategy	This recommendation should underpin a place plan for Glenorie to confirm the town boundary to which the E4 zone would be limited.

Northern Ridgeline (continued)

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production.</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry.</p>	<p>Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU1 and RU4 zones, that would enable principal agricultural activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or other accommodation, rural industry and agribusiness uses that would support ongoing flexibility of land uses that fulfil the purpose of the RU1 and RU4 zone</p>	<p>Amend LEP and DCP</p>	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU1 and RU4 zones, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>In the RU1 and RU4 zone, permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Garden centres (add to RU1) — Function centres — Market — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures to the relevant LEP or DCP clause that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p> <p>Examine opportunities for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p>

Northern Ridgeline - Investigation area



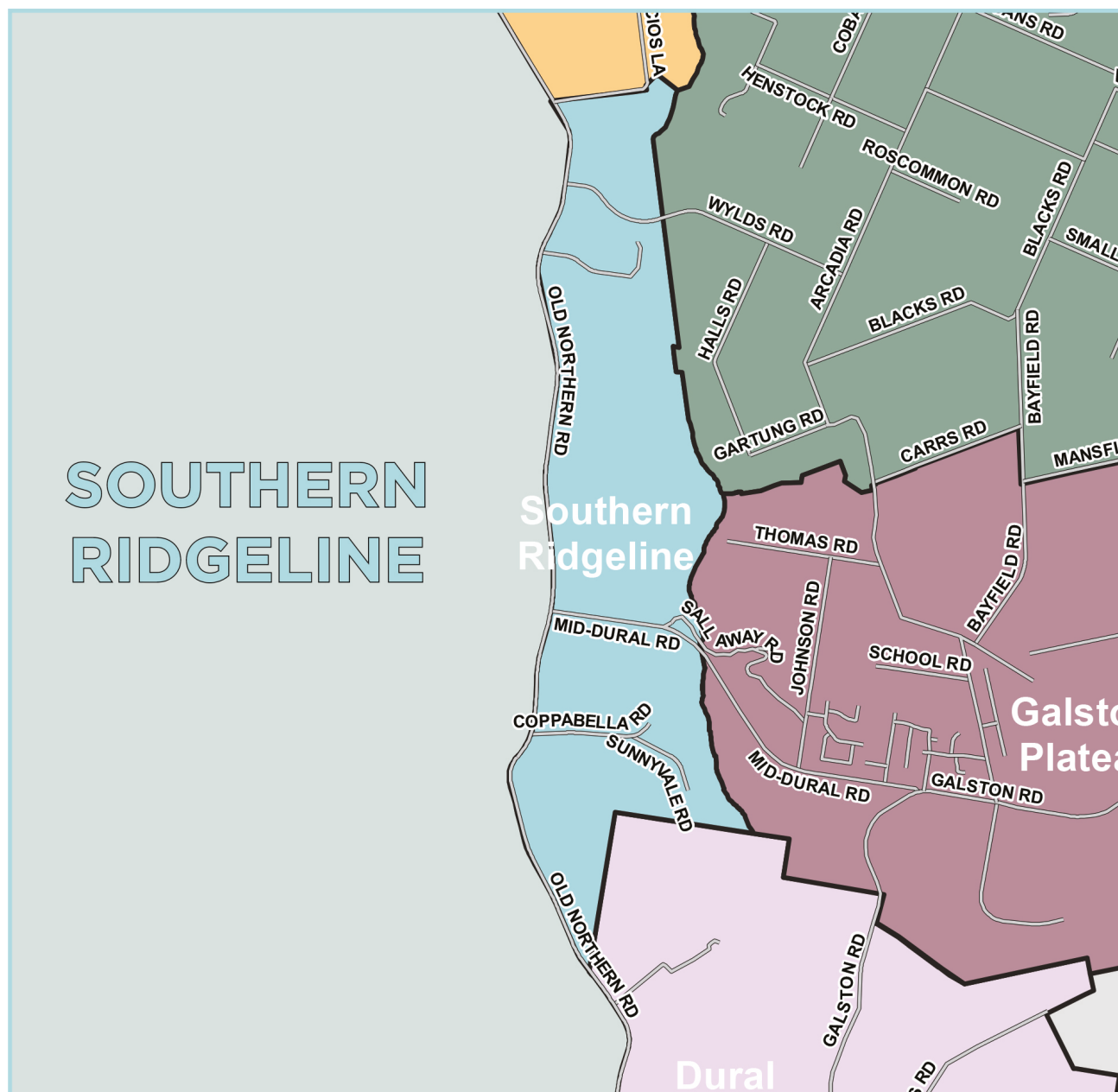
Southern Ridgeline

5.2.10 Southern Ridgeline

Preferred landscape character statement

This landscape is characterised by low, rolling hills and wide valleys. This affords panoramic views from Old Northern Road and other high-points, across valleys to the east and west of the landscape area. A feeling of big skies is a feature of the area.

In this location, land clearing has occurred and there is sparse vegetation along roadsides. When travelling along Old Northern Road, there is a sense of its connection to both peri-urban areas, as well as broader agricultural lands to the north.



Southern Ridgeline

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone.	Retain land in the E3 zone	-	No change to the zone extent. Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	Avoid further fragmentation throughout this landscape area that would result in strip development along Old Northern Road, undermining the sense of a green and rural break between villages	-	Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry	Explore additional permissible land uses in the RU2 and RU4 zone, that would enable primary production activities to be supplemented with (e.g.) tourism or other accommodation uses, and enhance connections to the Berowra Valley and further north along Old Northern Road.	Amend LEP and DCP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU2 and RU4 zones, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities. Permit the following uses with consent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Function centre — Market (in the RU4) — Restaurant, café — Artisan food and drink premises. Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy. Explore options for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy. Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.
Preserve non-urban breaks between villages by avoiding ribbon development along major roads	Collaborate with the Hills Shire Council to harmonise management of strip development and fragmentation along this section of Old Northern Road, due to its prominence along a ridgeline with wide vistas across the rural area	Update DCP	No change to the zone. Discourage Planning Applications that seek to extend non-agricultural uses along Old Northern Road outside the cluster of activity around Middle Dural Primary School. Update the DCP to include design guidelines for retail and commercial land uses that abut Old Northern Road based on the preferred landscape character. Encourage the selection of materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding landscape, as well as design and siting that situates buildings within the landscape. The use of vegetation to screen buildings and soften the interface with main roads is encouraged.

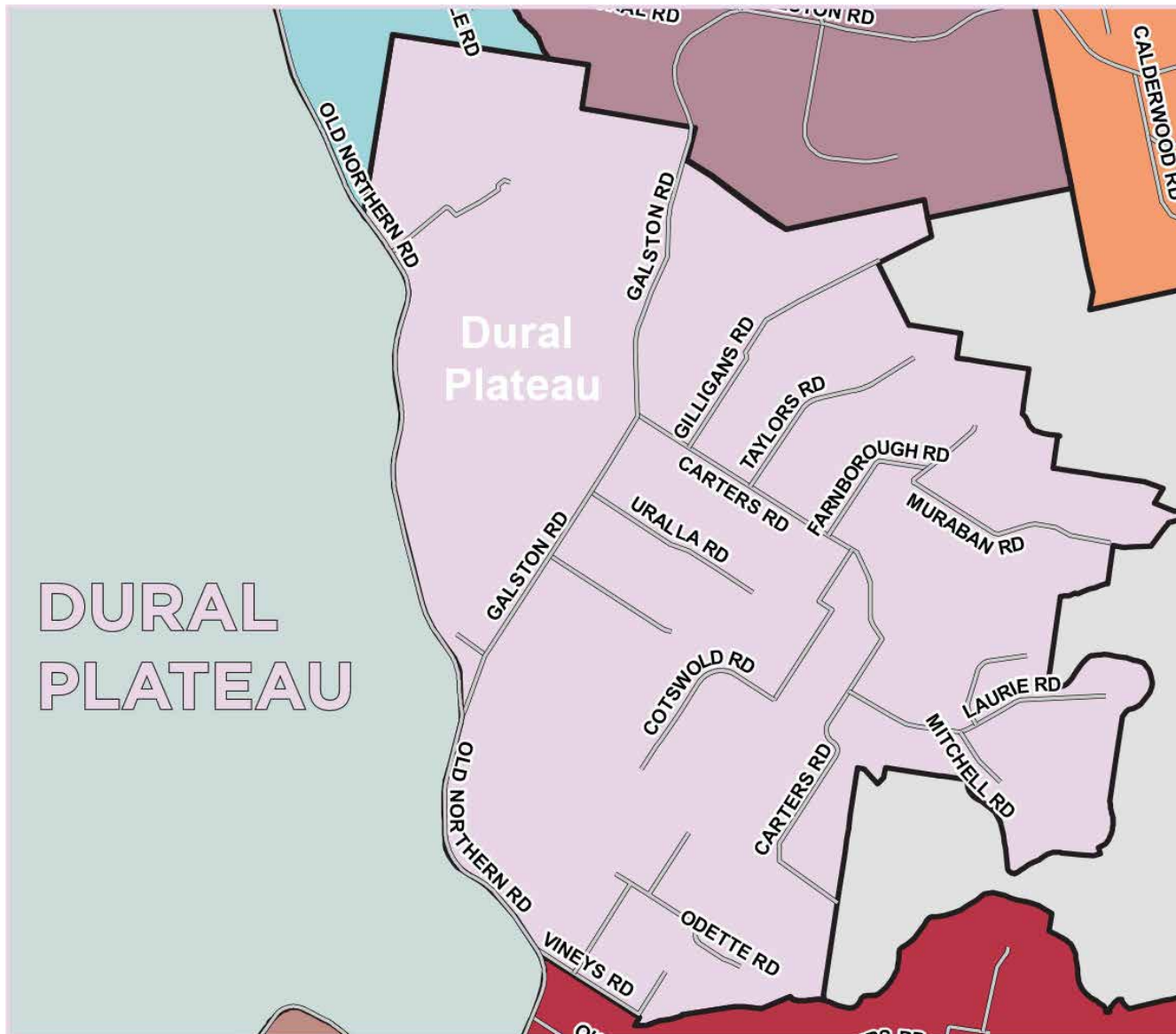
Dural Plateau

5.2.11 Dural Plateau

Preferred landscape character statement

The Dural Plateau landscape area encompasses diverse land use and settlement patterns. It is defined by low, rolling hills and wide valleys which support Turpentine-Ironbark and Peppermint-Angophora forest vegetation communities.

To the east, the underlying landform of the Dural Plateau reveals exposed sandstone valleys and deeper, yellow earths can be found.



Dural Plateau

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone.	Retain the E3 Zone.	-	No change to the zone extent.
Investigate the potential for rural villages to accommodate some additional housing, where there are no adverse impacts on preferred rural village character, and where the development maintains other values of the rural area	Collaborating with the Hills Shire Council, investigate opportunities within 400m from the current residential zoned land around Dural village where the zoning of E4 Environmental Living could be introduced, provided land meets principles for place-based planning outlined in this Strategy. <i>Refer to village map in Section 5.3.</i>	Update LEP Update DCP	Further investigate land suitability within the investigation area to apply the E4 zone, facilitating some housing diversity located around the village. This may include an assessment of land capability and further collaboration with (for example) RFS and biodiversity teams. Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on principles in this Strategy for managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffer), landscape character outcomes for non-agricultural uses, and dwelling house controls. In the E4 area, it is recommended a minimum lot size ranging between 5,000 sqm-10,000 sqm be explored. Capacity for additional lots must consider significant vegetation and bushfire risk, alongside Council's requirements for on-site effluent disposal.
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	If land to be investigated for E4 extends along Old Northern Road, consider how strip development could be avoided to ensure the sense of a non-urban break between villages can be preserved, establishing a clear town boundary.	Prepare a place plan for Dural, based on principles from this Strategy	This recommendation should underpin a place plan for Dural to confirm the town boundary to which the E4 zone would be limited. No change to the zone. Component of place plans for rural towns and villages, including Dural. Discourage Planning Applications that seek to extend non-agricultural uses along Old Northern Road outside the cluster of activity around Middle Dural Primary School.
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production	Explore opportunities for more flexible land uses that support primary production, including agribusinesses, rural industry and tourism.	Amend LEP and DCP	Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU2 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities. Permit the following uses with consent: — Restaurant, café — Function centre — Artisan food and drink industry.
Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry			Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy. Explore options for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy. Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.

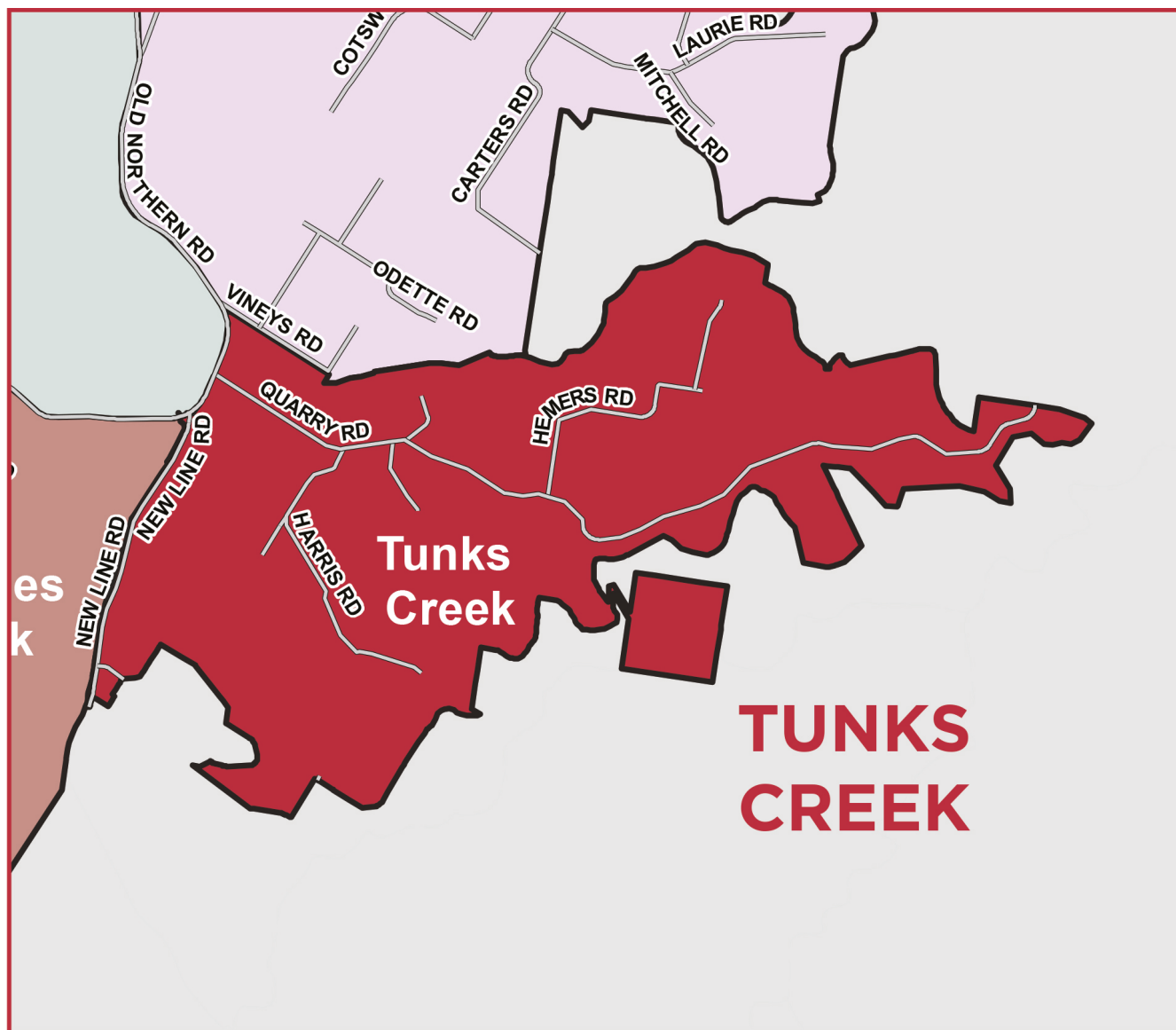
Tunks Creek

5.2.12 Tunks Creek

Preferred landscape character statement

The Tunks Creek landscape area is defined by sandstone landforms, supporting very tall trees including Blackbutt Gully Forest, Peppermint-Angophora Forest and Bloodwood Scribbly Gum Woodland vegetation communities. The Berowra Valley National Park to the east, and Old Northern Road to the west, form the boundaries of this area. To the south are the urban areas of Castle Hill and Cherrybrook.

In some places, views are enclosed with dense roadside vegetation, very tall trees and thick understorey. Flowering plants are frequently found, particularly in native vegetation patches on the fringe of the National Park.



Tunks Creek

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone	Retain E3 zone.	-	<p>No change to the zone extent.</p> <p>Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.</p>
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	Collaborate with the Hills Shire Council to harmonise management of strip development and fragmentation along this section of Old Northern Road and New Line Road, particularly related to the South Dural Service Centre.	-	<p>No change to the zone.</p> <p>Discourage Planning Proposals that seek to extend non-agricultural uses from the South Dural Service Centre beyond its current footprint, along Old Northern and New Line Roads.</p>
Areas for primary production are retained and protected from fragmentation	Encourage new development along Old Northern Road to reflect the rural character of the area, especially through landscape design, siting/setbacks and choice of materials.	Update DCP	Encourage the selection of materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding landscape, as well as design and siting that situates buildings within the landscape. The use of vegetation to screen buildings and soften the interface with main roads is encouraged.
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production	Explore opportunities for more flexible land uses that support primary production, including agribusinesses, rural industry and tourism.	Amend LEP and DCP	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU2 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>Permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Restaurant, café — Function centre — Artisan food and drink industry.
Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry			<p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Explore options for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p>

Georges Creek

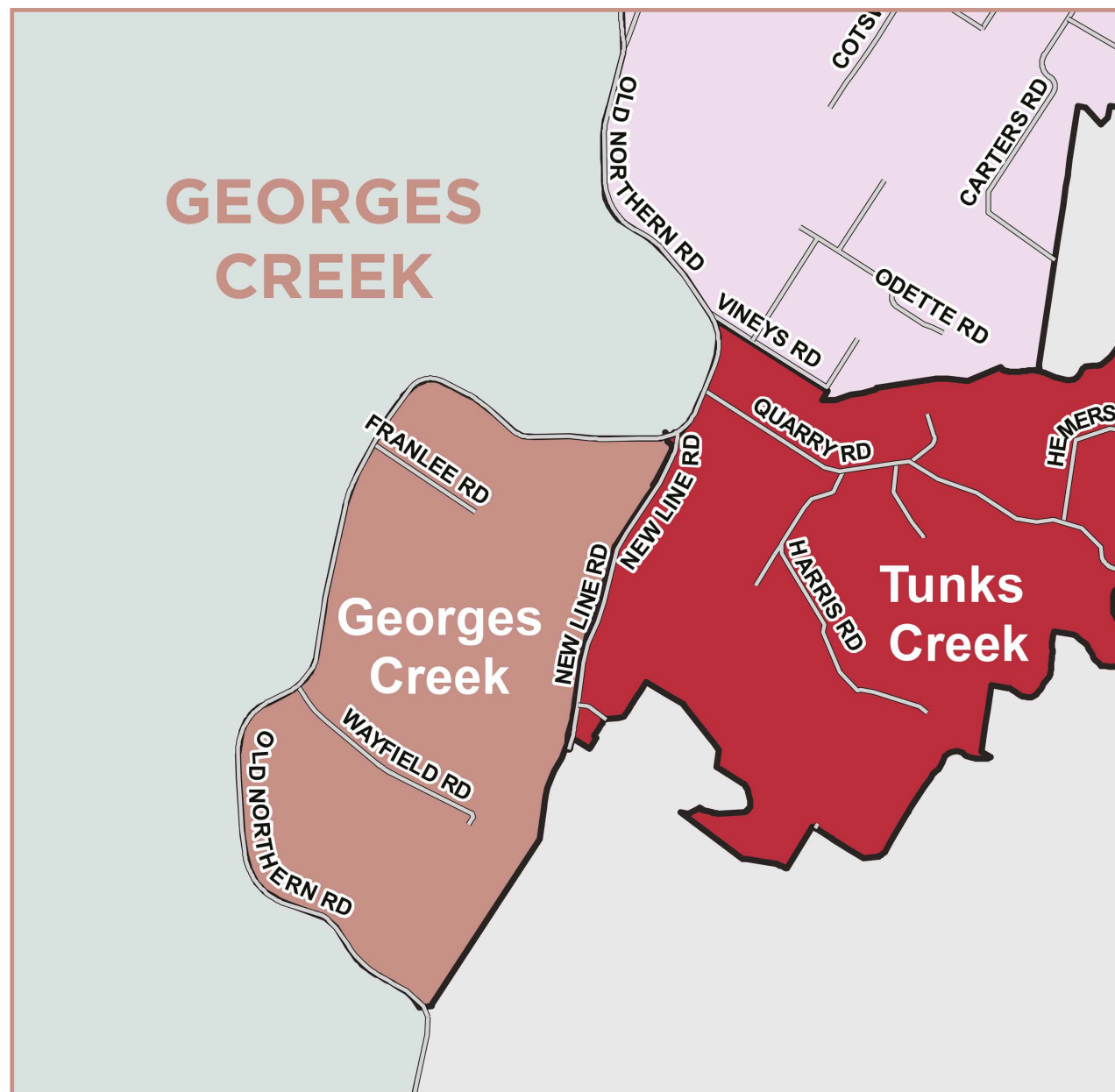
5.2.13 Georges Creek

Preferred landscape character statement

Georges Creek winds through this landscape area and provides a densely treed backdrop which lends a green and rural feel to the area. In this location, remnant native vegetation is tall, and the dominant vegetation communities are Peppermint-Angophora Forest and Scribbly Gum Open-woodland/Heath.

There is a wide variety of land uses in this landscape area, including urban services (garden centre, auto repairs), retirement living, and rural lifestyle properties. These activities are clustered along Old Northern Road and New Line Road, across from the South Dural Service Centre. The feel along main roads is one of mixed uses, while travelling down smaller local roads gives a sense of arrival in a rural lifestyle area.

The landscape area abuts nearby urban areas of Glenhaven and Castle Hill. The open space and scattered vegetation, marks a transition to Hornsby Shire's rural area.



Georges Creek

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential policy implication
Avoid further land fragmentation on lots covered by an Environmental Management Zone.	Retain E3 zone	-	<p>No change to the zone extent.</p> <p>Further fragmentation to be avoided by retaining current minimum lot size throughout this landscape area.</p>
Preserve non-urban breaks between villages by avoiding ribbon development along major roads	Collaborate with the Hills Shire Council to manage the boundary between this landscape area and urban areas to the west of Glenhaven	Update DCP	Update the DCP to include design guidelines for retail and commercial land uses that abut Old Northern Road and New Line Road based on the preferred landscape character. Encourage the selection of materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding landscape, as well as design and siting that situates buildings within the landscape. The use of vegetation to screen buildings and soften the interface with main roads is encouraged.
<p>Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production</p> <p>Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry</p>	Explore opportunities for more flexible land uses that support primary production, including agribusinesses, rural industry and tourism.	Amend LEP and DCP	<p>Consider the following uses, which may further support the purpose of the RU2 zone, provided any development to facilitate that use is in keeping with preferred landscape character, and where a nexus can be demonstrated between the land use and primary production activities.</p> <p>Permit the following uses with consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Restaurant, café — Function centre — Artisan food and drink industry. <p>Include objectives that retail and commercial land uses are to support primary production land use and must be designed and sited in line with tourism, interface and landscape principles in this Strategy.</p> <p>Explore options for a new clause (in the LEP or DCP) to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on establishing a nexus between non-agricultural land uses to primary production activities, using the principles for agriculture and managing interfaces from this Strategy.</p> <p>Add prescriptive measures (in the LEP or DCP) that require new or expanding land uses to be balanced with relevant infrastructure, including road upgrades.</p>

5.3 Rural villages

Rural villages are scattered within Hornsby Shire’s Metropolitan Rural Area. Rural villages are different from urban areas in that they provide mainly for local residential and servicing needs, as distinct from the needs of those living in metropolitan areas. The commercial centres or small strips support, and are supported by, surrounding agricultural areas.

There are four rural villages within Hornsby Shire’s rural area: Dural, Galston, Glenorie, and Wisemans Ferry. Three of these (Dural, Glenorie and Wisemans Ferry) share a boundary with The Hills Shire. The towns and villages play several roles within the broader rural area in Hornsby Shire: as places to live, work, visit and access basic services people need to go about their daily lives. It is therefore useful to provide recommendations for each of these towns and villages.

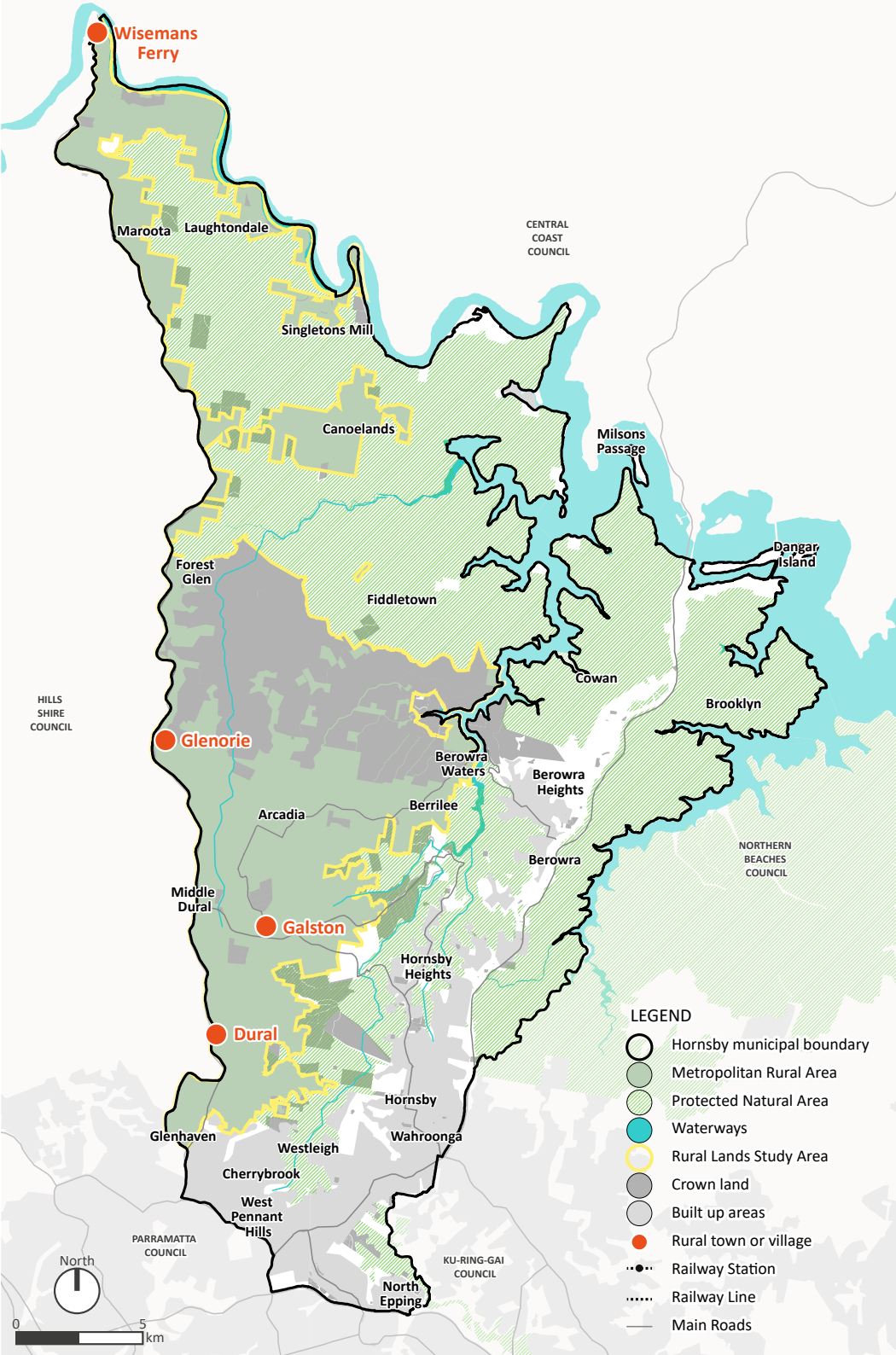
The GSRP, North District Plan and Hornsby Shire Rural Lands Strategy emphasise that urban development and residential development to accommodate population growth are not economic values of the rural area. However, where a positive landscape character, environmental outcome (for example, an enhanced biodiversity corridor) or where the development supports local villages, some rural residential development may be appropriate.

Although the rural population will not grow significantly compared to Hornsby Shire’s urban population, there will be some modest growth into the future. Hornsby Shire’s demographic profile is also changing, and in the rural area there will be a higher proportion of older people than in Hornsby Shire’s urban areas. At present, the rural area and rural villages have limited housing diversity to enable people to remain within their local community but move off rural properties.

The four rural villages have been reviewed to identify where further investigation could take place for housing in and around the existing centres, to provide housing diversity and support local villages. This would only be appropriate under the right conditions, provided those areas can meet principles set out in this section.

Ongoing social and economic viability of villages

The social and economic viability of Hornsby Shire’s rural villages has a strong link to the surrounding agricultural area. Many aspects of that viability are not solely linked to planning policy; they also relate to economic development, infrastructure and other market factors that attract business creation. Planning for the future of Hornsby Shire’s rural villages (set out in this section) contemplates allowing for some housing diversity (to cater for community needs), within town boundaries. The change in the village catchment may enable the towns and villages to take advantage of other opportunities that will enhance their role as service centres for the broader rural area.



Place-based planning for rural villages

This section sets out an approach for establishing a town boundary and identifying the conditions under which some rural living may be permitted around rural towns/villages, to support local villages and provide housing diversity in Hornsby Shire.

1

Investigate opportunities for rural living in limited locations, that meet the following criteria:

- Fragmented pattern of lot sizes and settlement.
- Less constrained by bushfire and flood risks.
- Not land with high capability for agriculture.
- Proximity to established settlements.
- Land use is mixed (not dominated by agriculture).
- Not in an Environmental Protection Zone.

2

Assessment of the investigation should consider more detailed assessment of:

- Servicing capability (water, sewer, drainage, roads).
- Significant environmental and landscape values.
- Land uses, including land use on adjoining land.
- Agricultural qualities.
- Hazards including bushfire and flood.

3

Development within investigation areas that meet assessment criteria and are approved for rural living should:

- Locate any houses close to existing rural villages.
- Houses should not be located in an area that is flood- or bushfire prone.
- Houses should be designed and sited to ensure it does not detract from environmental and landscape values.
- Be set back from adjoining uses that may pose a risk of off-site impacts including agriculture, extractive industries.

5.3.1 Dural

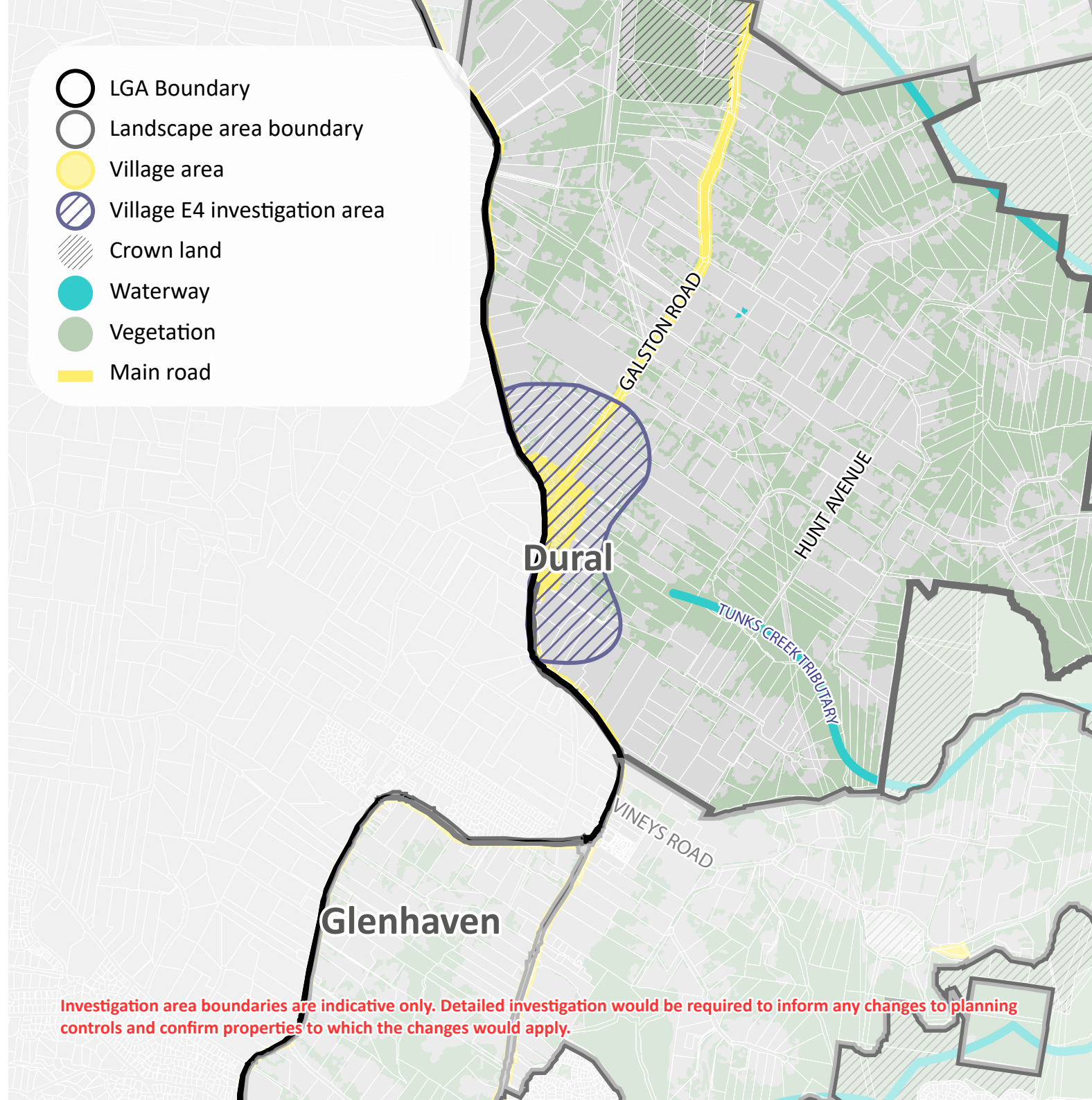
Dural is located on the peri-urban fringe of Cherrybrook. It is separated from Hornsby's urban areas by the Berowra Valley National Park and Berowra River valley. Driving through the town affords frequent views to long-range, treed horizons beyond the town. There is a sense of lush vegetation and rich soils throughout this area, which covers the Pennant Hills and Ridges landform type.

The village is spread out along Old Northern Road, with the main village centre located on the western side of Old Northern Road within The Hills Shire (zoned B1 Neighbourhood Centre) at the intersection of Galston Road, and significant activity further south on New Line Road. Due to the dispersed layout of the village, its character is intertwined with that of the surrounding Dural Plateau landscape area.

Dural village has a mixture of lot sizes around 500 to 2,500 square metres. Those smaller lots are located within the R2 Low Density Residential, and RU5 Village Zones. South of Dural village, there is also land zoned for B2 Local Centre, and IN2 Light Industrial (South Dural Industrial area). This area forms a business park and bulky goods retail/light industrial precinct on Old Northern Road, which services the surrounding rural and nearby residential areas.

There is opportunity to enhance the rural character of Dural village, reaffirm the village boundary and provide housing opportunities near the village centre.

-  LGA Boundary
-  Landscape area boundary
-  Village area
-  Village E4 investigation area
-  Crown land
-  Waterway
-  Vegetation
-  Main road



Investigation area boundaries are indicative only. Detailed investigation would be required to inform any changes to planning controls and confirm properties to which the changes would apply.

Recommendations for Dural Village

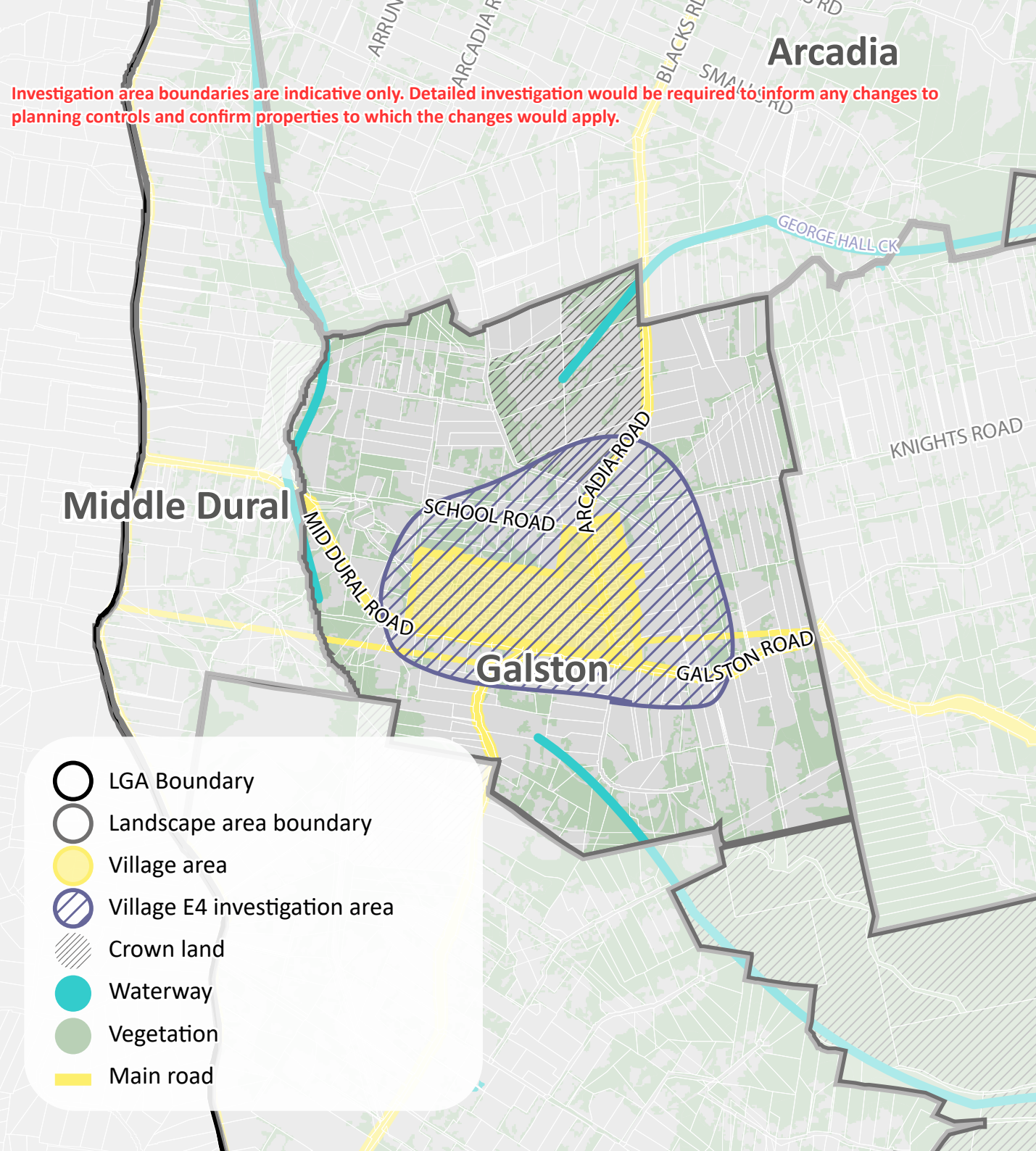
Principle	Recommendation	Future actions and investigations
Locate any houses close to existing rural towns and villages	Respond to changing demographics by examining housing locations in and close to the village centres, provided those areas are safe from bushfire risk and can be appropriately serviced.	Prepare a place plan for Dural village in line with the principles for determining village boundaries set out in this Strategy. Once prepared, incorporate the place plan to update the relevant section of the Hornsby Shire DCP.
	Ensure adequate transport and sewer infrastructure are in place to support housing or lots can support on-site waste water system	As part of place planning for Dural, apply the E4 zone to the investigation area following further consideration of significant vegetation, bushfire risk and servicing constraints. It is recommended that a lot size ranging from 5,000-10,000 sqm be considered, provided on-site wastewater management can be accommodated.
Housing should be designed and sited to ensure it supports and enhances village character	Ensure development occurs in places that do not undermine other values	Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffers) and rural village character outcomes.
Take a collaborative approach to managing townships that share a municipal boundary	Harmonise planning recommendations with The Hills Shire.	Continue to work with The Hills Shire to align policy around Dural village as it relates to the town boundary and possible E4 zoning around the town.

5.3.2 Galston

Galston Village is located to the north of Mid Dural Road. There are several population-serving shops for the residential and surrounding rural area, including an Aldi chain supermarket, post office, Galston public school, churches, a bank, newsagent, pharmacy and butcher.

The town centres around Arcadia Road, Galston Road and Mid Dural Road, with residential development behind. It has a low-scale built form with single storey dwellings on large lots. The area maintains a rural feel through the presence of very tall, significant trees and densely-treed horizons.

Land in the Galston rural village is zoned B1 Neighbourhood Centre and R2 Low Density Residential. The village is surrounded by RU4 (Primary Production Small Lots) to the north and east, and zoned RU2 (Rural Landscape) to the south west. Several lots close to Galston have a land area between 1 and 2 hectares, while the residential lots within the town vary in size between 250 and 1,000 square metres.



Recommendations for Galston Village

Principle	Recommendation	Future actions and investigations
Locate any houses close to existing rural villages	Ensure future character for Galston Village reflects its demographic trends	Prepare a place plan for Galston village in line with the principles for determining village boundaries set out in this Strategy. Once prepared, incorporate the place plan to update the relevant section of the Hornsby DCP.
	Ensure any new development within the town boundary has adequate infrastructure connection	As part of place planning for Galston, apply the E4 zone to the investigation area following further consideration of significant vegetation, bushfire risk and servicing constraints. It is recommended that a lot size ranging from 5,000-10,000sqm be considered, provided on-site wastewater management can be accommodated. Investigation would not seek to alter the extent or nature of the existing R2 residential zone around the Galston village shops.
Housing should be designed and sited to ensure it supports and enhances village character	Ensure housing development occurs in places that do not undermine other values	Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffers) and rural village character outcomes.

5.3.3 Glenorie

Glenorie is located on a ridgeline along Old Northern Road, and half of the town is located within The Hills Shire LGA. The rural town is arranged around Old Northern Road, with residential streets branching from the ridgeline down towards a nature reserve around Glenorie Creek, connecting to the Marramarra National Park. Remnant wet soil forests and well-vegetated horizons define parts of the residential area in Glenorie, which slopes down to a public recreation reserve on Tecoma Road.

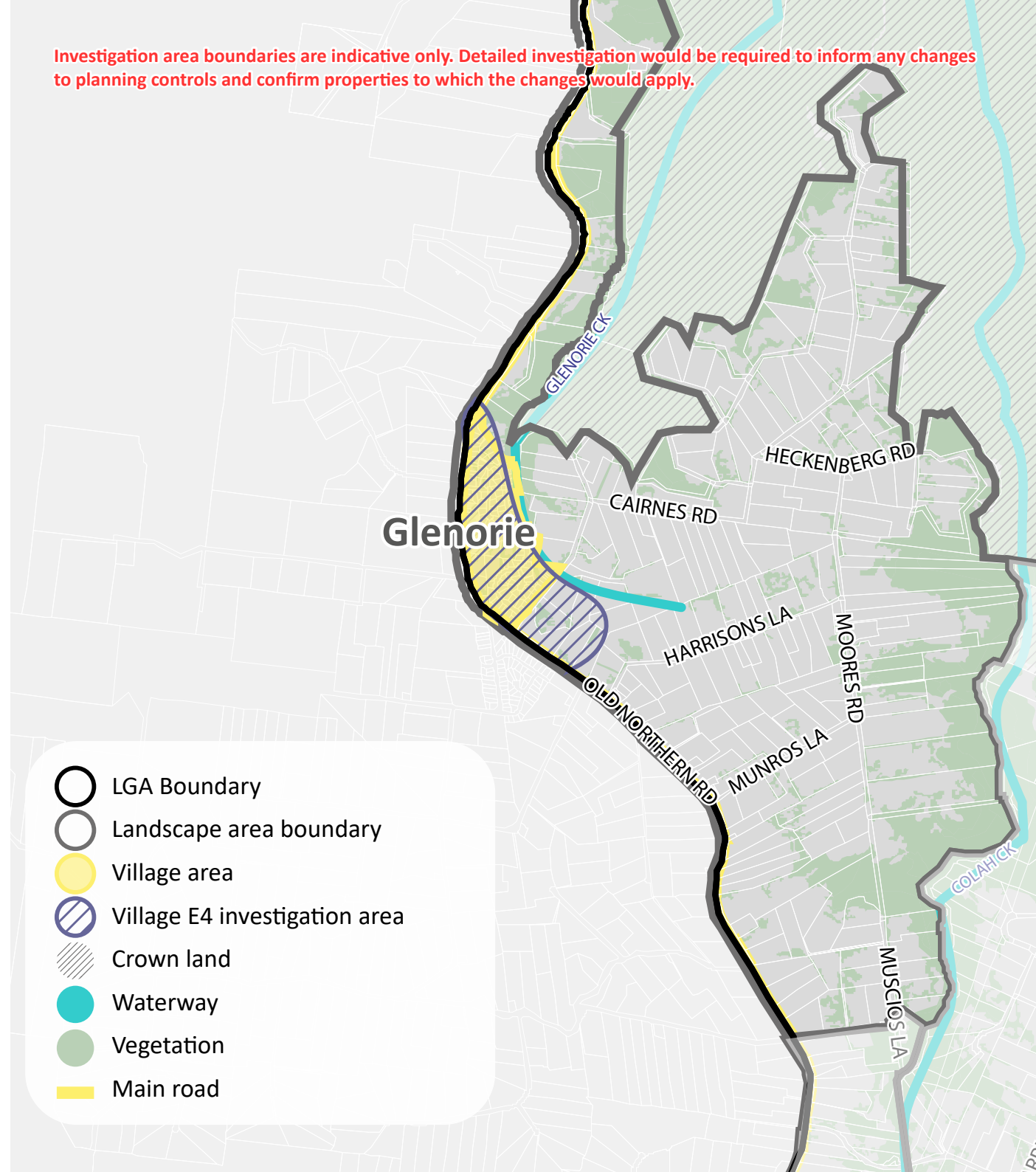
Along Old Northern Road, commercial uses include a medical centre, supermarket, the famous Glenorie Bakery, a veterinary clinic, Glenorie Public School and Glenorie Community Centre. The town is the largest rural service centre heading north before Wisemans Ferry.

Most residential lots on the east of Old Northern Road have an area around 500 to 1,000 square metres, while some larger lots front the highway with an area around 1,000 to 2,500 square metres. A natural town boundary is formed between Old Northern Road and the Glenorie Creek river valley, where an Environmental Protection Zone applies. Parts of Glenorie within the Hornsby Shire LGA are zoned for residential (R2 Low Density Residential), and this residential area is clustered around Old Northern Road, and sits below a steeply rising hill and conservation area to the east.

The Hills Shire Rural Lands Study identifies that Glenorie would benefit from revitalisation and a modest amount of residential growth. The Strategy also emphasises that The Hills Shire will collaborate with Hornsby regarding growth in Glenorie due to the location of important social infrastructure within Hornsby LGA.

The preliminary investigation area for Glenorie village as outlined in The Hills Shire Strategy generally aligns with the investigation area on the Hornsby side.

Investigation area boundaries are indicative only. Detailed investigation would be required to inform any changes to planning controls and confirm properties to which the changes would apply.



-  LGA Boundary
-  Landscape area boundary
-  Village area
-  Village E4 investigation area
-  Crown land
-  Waterway
-  Vegetation
-  Main road

Recommendations for Glenorie

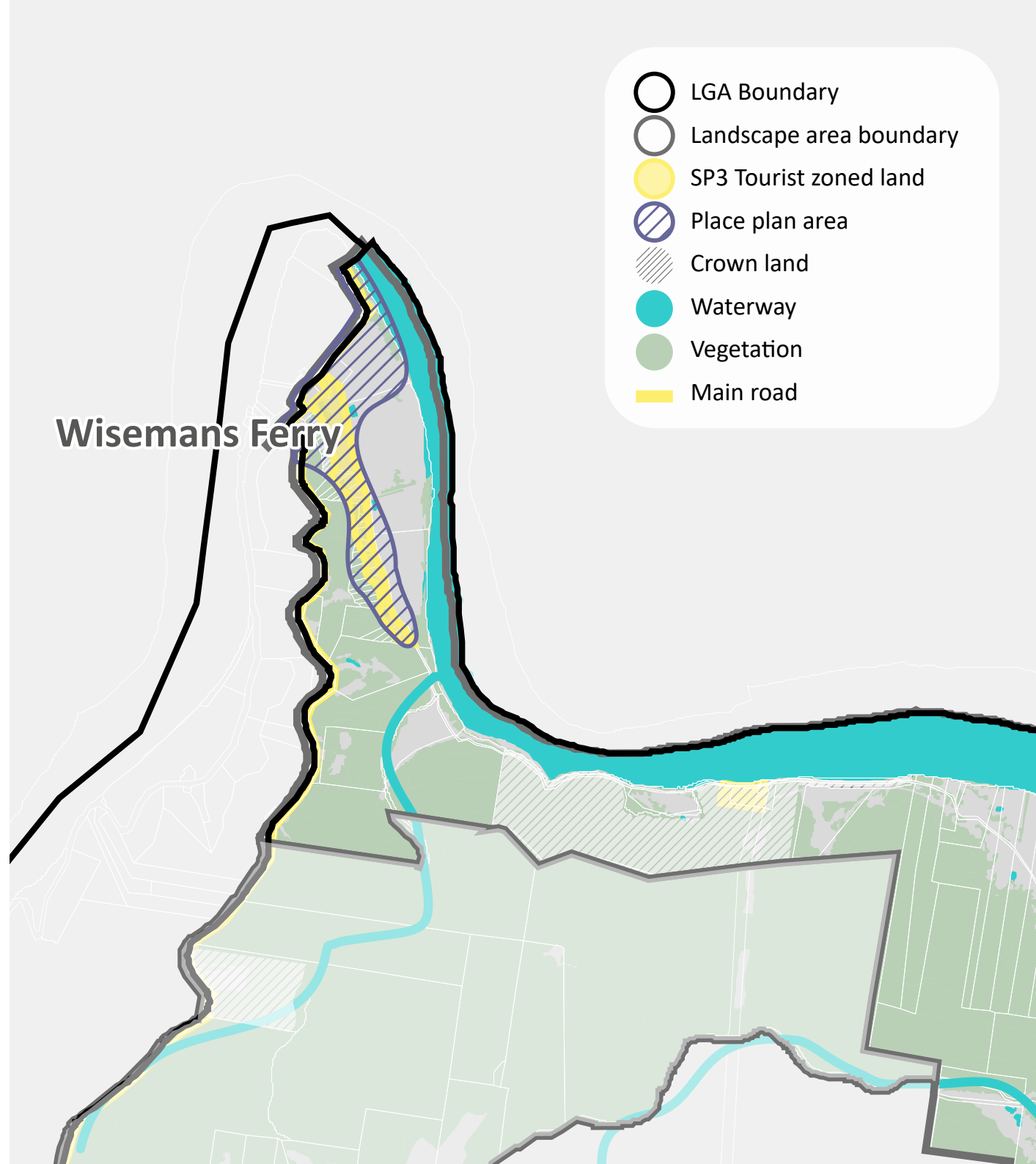
Principle	Recommendation	Future actions and investigations
Locate any houses close to existing rural towns and villages	Ensure that there is a balance between urban development and environmental and farmland preservation	<p>Prepare a place plan for Glenorie village in line with the principles for determining village boundaries set out in this Strategy. Once prepared, incorporate the place plan to update the relevant section of the Hornsby Shire DCP.</p> <p>As part of place planning for Glenorie, apply the E4 zone to the investigation area (outside the existing R2 zoned land) following further consideration of significant vegetation, bushfire risk and servicing constraints. It is recommended that a lot size ranging from 5,000-10,000sqm be considered, provided on-site wastewater management can be accommodated.</p>
Housing should be designed and sited to ensure it does not detract from environmental values	Ensure significant vegetation is protected	Update the DCP to include objectives and prescriptive measures based on managing land use conflicts, non-agricultural uses (buffers) and rural village character outcomes.
Housing should be designed and sited to ensure it supports and enhances village character	Retain rural village character	Collaborate with The Hills Shire Council for future place planning in Glenorie
Take a collaborative approach to managing townships that share a municipal boundary	Harmonise planning recommendations with The Hills Shire	Continue to work with The Hills Shire to align policy around Glenorie village as it relates to the town boundary and possible E4 zoning around the town.

5.3.4 Wisemans Ferry

Wisemans Ferry is a rural village located at the confluence of the Macdonald and Hawkesbury Rivers, at the north-western extent of the Hornsby Shire LGA. Like Glenorie, part of the town is located within The Hills Shire LGA, and only a small part of the B1 Neighbourhood Centre Zone applies within the Hornsby Shire LGA. The town contains a grocer, petrol station, post office, bowling club, restaurants, a campground, golf course, and Wisemans Ferry Public School. There are two river crossings over the Hawkesbury: Webbs Creek Ferry and Wisemans Ferry.

Wisemans Ferry slopes dramatically from the ridgeline at Old Northern Road down towards the river floodplain and there are few houses within the town centre itself. Rural residential development extends along Singleton Road, which follows the river course to the south-east and into agricultural lands on the river flats. The town is defined by views to the Marramarra National Park, which rises steeply to the south, and presents dark greens and browns of eucalyptus forests.

Land zoned SP3 Tourist zone extends from Wisemans Ferry Village to the south along Singleton Road for over one kilometre, which currently offers a range of land use opportunities under the HLEP that have not been realised.



Recommendations for Wisemans Ferry

Principle	Recommendation	Future actions and investigations
Protect and enhance environmental and scenic landscape values	Encourage tourism while taking important environmental values and natural hazards into consideration.	<p>Prepare a place plan for Wisemans Ferry and incorporate into the relevant section of the Hornsby DCP.</p> <p>Review zone purpose and objectives within the town, mainly SP3 land in Wisemans Ferry on the Hornsby Shire side.</p>
New development or activities should be designed and sited to ensure they support and enhance village character	<p>Maintain and enhance the feeling of remoteness and serenity of the area.</p> <p>Harmonise planning recommendations with The Hills Shire.</p>	Continue to work with The Hills Shire to align policy for any future place plans in Wisemans Ferry.
Take a collaborative approach to managing townships that share a municipal boundary	Harmonise planning recommendations with The Hills Shire.	Continue to work with The Hills Shire to align policy around Wisemans Ferry as it relates to the town boundary and place planning for the village.

5.4 General recommendations

The additional recommendations below affect the rural areas more broadly and are not specific to landscape areas.

Principle	Recommendation	Action	Potential Policy Implication
Additional development, rural settlement and other development in rural areas should be sited and designed so they do not interfere with legitimate and routine land uses on adjoining lands	Include the recently introduced optional Standard Instrument Clause 5.16 in the LEP to ensure consideration of existing rural uses when assessing applications for rural subdivisions and dwellings to avoid potential land use conflicts.	Amend LEP	The impact of applications for subdivision and new dwellings to existing land uses on nearby properties are addressed and include measures to avoid or minimise any incompatibility of land uses.
All principles identified	Use the relevant rural land management principles from this Strategy to update the rural zone objectives in RU1, RU2 and RU4 to reflect the opportunities for agricultural protection, a nexus between primary production value-adding activities, an enhanced focus on tourism and protection of rural character.	Amend LEP	Land use zone objectives reflect the intent of the rural zones to support value adding activities to primary production, tourism and protection of rural character. Applications for development would need to be consistent with the zone objectives.
Ensure any new development is designed and sited to support and enhance scenic values of the relevant landscape area	Pursue an amendment to the requirements for secondary dwellings under the Standard Instrument LEP so that secondary dwellings in rural areas are permitted up to a maximum square metres size regardless of the size of the principal dwelling.	Amend LEP and Standard Instrument LEP	Secondary dwellings in rural areas are permitted at a reasonable size without compromising rural landscape character. The size of a secondary dwellings permitted on a rural property is not determined by the size of the principal dwelling on the site.
Recognise and protect productive agricultural land, by limiting further fragmentation and exploring opportunities for rural businesses to value add with activities that are ancillary to, and support, agricultural production	Pursue an amendment to the requirements for roadside stalls under the Standard Instrument LEP so that roadside stalls are able to sell produce or locally made items produced on site and also from the local rural area (rather than be restricted to adjoining properties).	Amend Standard Instrument LEP and the Hornsby LEP	Road side stalls are permitted to sell items from the local area in addition to the requirement to sell produce from the site.
Provide for a range of tourism-related land uses that support the ongoing viability of the agricultural industry			
Primary production in the rural area is protected and supported by opportunities for value-adding that leverages Hornsby's farmland, scenic landscapes, rural amenity and proximity to bushland.	Pursue an amendment to the Standard Instrument LEP to allow for the area of any vehicular access handle on a rural property to be included in lot size calculations for subdivision applications.	Amend LEP Amend DCP	Vehicular access handles can be included in calculations for lot size areas on rural properties.
Improvements to the LEP for clarity	Pursue an amendment to the LEP to improve the wording around the requirements for attached Dual Occupancies that are permitted in rural areas.	Amend LEP	The requirements for attached dwellings in rural areas are clear.

5.5 Other matters

There were various suggestions made during the community consultation in 2019 and throughout the preparation of this Study. All suggestions have been reviewed and considered against the principles established as part of this Strategy. However, not all suggestions have resulted in recommendations within the Strategy. The table below addresses the key suggestions for changes put forward by the community.

5.5.1 Other suggestions we have heard

Suggestion	Comment
Subdivision – Reduce minimum lot sizes Suggestions were made for the minimum lot size prescribed in the LEP to be reduced. The minimum lot sizes suggested ranged from 1 acre (approx. 4000 sqm) up to 2ha. It was suggested that this would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — allow people to stay in the area who are unable to maintain a large property — allow people to age in place — attract young families — increase the population to support local schools, shops and generate employment — improve housing affordability. 	Current requirements under the LEP prescribe the minimum lot size. This approach to lot sizes has been reviewed as part of the Strategy, and in response to the submissions made in support of this being reduced. The principles established in Chapter 4 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>Avoid fragmentation of rural land</i> — <i>Locate housing opportunities close to villages, in locations less constrained by vegetation and bushfire risk.</i> — <i>Offer opportunities for value adding activities on rural lots through additional land uses being permitted</i> Based on the above, and the principles in the North District Plan, the recommendations of this Strategy are for further lot size investigations to occur in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Areas directly around the villages of Galston, Glenorie and Dural as mapped (Section 5.16.1 to 5.16.4) to consider possible lot sizes ranging from 5,000 to 10,000sqm — Areas of the Sandstone Ridge Plateau (parts of Arcadia and Fiddletown), and an area in the Galston Plateau as mapped (p. 75 and 81) to consider a possible reduction in the minimum lot size from 10Ha minimum to 2ha. The modest growth resulting from the above would support local villages and offer housing diversity whilst maintaining economic, social and environmental values of the rural area.
Subdivision - Concessional allotments It was suggested that concessional lots with dwelling entitlements should be permitted. A concessional lot is a small lot subdivided from a larger parent allotment, that is less than the minimum allotment size prescribed in a planning instrument and often contains a dwelling entitlement. The suggested reason for this option is that it would allow farms to sell off a portion of land to remain viable, offer opportunities for family to live nearby and allow for smaller easy to maintain lots.	Clause 4.2 of the HLEP 2013 permits subdivision smaller than the minimum lot size for the purpose of primary production. However, such lot cannot contain an existing dwelling and a new dwelling would not be permitted on the lot. Clause 4.2 is a compulsory clause under the Standard Instrument LEP and cannot be amended to permit a dwelling. Although Hornsby Council has never expressly permitted concessional lots with a dwelling entitlement under its planning instruments, other councils did in the past. It is understood that concessional lots were intended to provide for farm workers and family members. However, according to a NSW Government review in 2007, the provision resulted in the unplanned creation of rural residential lots, causing land use conflicts and increased demand for infrastructure and it was removed from LEPs across NSW by State Government legislation. Representatives from DPIE have confirmed that Clause 4.2 of the Standard Instrument reflects the intent of no longer permitting concessional lots with dwelling entitlements. On balance, the benefits put forward in favour of concessional allotments to support farms and families are outweighed by the disadvantages of this approach in terms of increased fragmentation of rural land and land use conflicts and are therefore not recommended. This matter is discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the Background Report.

Suggestion	Comment
<p>Subdivision - Secondary dwellings on a separate lot</p> <p>This suggestion was for secondary dwellings to be permitted to be subdivided off from land containing the principal dwelling, even if the lot size containing the secondary dwelling was less than the minimum lot size prescribed under the LEP.</p> <p>The suggested reasons for this option were that it would allow people to age in place, as people unable to maintain a large property could occupy the smaller lot containing the secondary dwelling; and it would provide opportunities to accommodate extended family on adjoining land.</p>	<p>Secondary dwellings are permitted in the rural areas under the HLEP 2013, to add value and flexibility to properties by creating space for elderly relatives, younger people who have not left home or for rental purposes. Subsequent to the Rural Lands Survey in 2014, Council increased the permitted size of secondary dwellings in rural areas from 20% to 33% of the principal dwelling size.</p> <p>Secondary dwellings are defined as being on the same lot of land as the principal dwelling and subdivision is not permitted. This definition is based on the Standard Instrument LEP.</p> <p>Permitting subdivision would change the categorisation of the land use, as a dwelling on its own parcel of land would not meet the definition of secondary dwelling and would be a 'dwelling house' in its own right.</p> <p>Small lot subdivision across the rural areas in an ad-hoc manner is inconsistent with the principles established in the Strategy to avoid fragmentation of rural land, land use conflicts and to locate housing opportunities close to villages.</p> <p>Secondary dwellings must be, by definition, located on the same lot of land as the principal dwelling.</p> <p>A recommendation of this strategy is for Council to convert the permitted size of a secondary dwelling from a percentage to a fixed square metre size. This would mean secondary dwellings would be permitted at a standard size regardless of the size of the principal dwelling. This would ensure dwellings of a modest size have the opportunity for a secondary dwelling that meets contemporary living standards, as well as avoiding excessively large secondary dwellings incompatible with rural character and scale.</p>
<p>Subdivision - Cluster Housing</p> <p>This suggestion was for cluster subdivisions to be permitted, which is an approach adopted by The Hills Shire Council.</p> <p>This involves the subdivision of a lot into small parcels grouped together on land that is not significantly constrained, in order to protect another portion of the site containing vegetation though a restrictive covenant and ongoing management.</p>	<p>The approach facilitates subdivision and development on sites constrained by bushland and bushfire risk. This option is inconsistent with the principles established in this strategy to locate housing opportunities close to villages, in locations less constrained by vegetation and bushfire risk.</p> <p>Siting a group of small lots close to vegetation may also lead to unintended consequences for the vegetation that is sought to be protected. Such impacts may result from clearing needed to establish bushfire asset protection zones (APZs), fire fighting trails and other development impacts.</p>
<p>Subdivision - Small lots around villages</p> <p>Suggestions were made for smaller rural lifestyle lots to be permitted around villages. It was suggested that this would provide options for people who no longer wish to maintain a large property and would support local villages.</p>	<p>The opportunities around local villages for additional housing have been considered. This Strategy recommends that further investigation be completed for the potential for areas close to rural villages to accommodate some additional housing, in locations less constrained by vegetation and bushfire risk, where there are no adverse impacts on preferred rural village character.</p>

Suggestion	Comment
<p>No further subdivision should be permitted</p> <p>There were views put forward that minimum lot size requirements should remain unchanged to prevent further subdivision, due to concerns related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Impacts on rural character — Environmental impacts such as bushland and habitats, water waters. — Inadequate road and sewer infrastructure to support additional population — Land constraints — Additional population in bushfire-prone areas results in tree removal (10/50), puts more lives and properties at risk. 	<p>The importance of maintaining rural character, protection of the environment, responding to bushfire constraints and the need for appropriate infrastructure are all recognised in the Study.</p> <p>The principles established in chapter 4 incorporate these considerations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>Avoid fragmentation of rural land</i> — <i>Rural scenic landscape values are protected and enhanced</i> — <i>Biodiversity and habitat areas are protected</i> — <i>Locate housing opportunities close to villages, in locations less constrained by vegetation and bushfire risk and supported by appropriate infrastructure</i> <p>In general, current lots sizes are recommended to be maintained. However, the Strategy does identify the need for lot size investigations to occur in areas directly around the villages of Galston, Glenorie and Dural and, for areas in parts of Arcadia/Fiddletown, consider a possible reduction in the minimum lot size from 10Ha minimum to 2ha.</p>
<p>Increase opportunities for home-based business and rural industries</p> <p>Suggestions were made for Council to relax planning controls for rural industries, which include controls for the number of people employed and floor area requirements.</p>	<p>Home based businesses and home industries are permitted across rural zones with development consent. A maximum floor area of 50 sqm is permitted for home businesses and 200 sqm for home industries. Up to 2 employees in addition to residents is permitted for each use as required under the Standard Instrument LEP.</p> <p>Planning controls to limit the scale of business or industry in rural areas is important for ensuring the amenity and character of rural areas is maintained and land use conflicts resulting from noise, dust, traffic etc. are minimised. Businesses that seek to expand beyond what is permitted in rural areas would need to consider locations that are zoned for industrial or business purposes.</p>
<p>Increase tourism and permit more land uses</p> <p>Suggestions were made for additional land uses to be permitted in rural areas to attract visitors. It was raised that the rural area offers great opportunities for fruit picking, eco-tourism, agri-tourism, cafés, function centres, accommodation, which should be considered. It was also noted maintaining the rural feel of the area is important for tourism.</p>	<p>In rural zones there are current opportunities for tourist related land uses including eco-tourism facilities, bed and breakfast accommodation and farm stay accommodation. In Wisemans Ferry there are opportunities for a range of commercial uses on land zoned SP3 Tourism (such as food and drink premises) however the potential has not been realised.</p> <p>The approach recommended in this strategy is to allow value adding activities to be permitted on sites where agriculture occurs. This would support primary production and leverage Hornsby Shire's farming, scenic landscapes, rural amenity and proximity to bushland. Additional land uses including restaurant and cafés, function centres, markets, garden centres and artisan food and drink premises are recommended to be permitted on sites where a nexus with agriculture is demonstrated.</p> <p>Another recommendation is for road side stalls to be able to sell produce from the site and local area, instead of being restricted to adjoining properties.</p> <p>It is also recommended that Council support the recommendations of the Economic Development and Tourism strategy as it relates to rural areas, including the preparation of a Destination Management Plan.</p>

Suggestion	Comment
<p>Seniors housing developments in rural areas</p> <p>Submissions raised concerns about the proliferation of seniors housing developments on rural zoned land.</p>	<p>Council's local planning controls do not permit retirement villages (seniors living developments) on rural zoned land. However, these developments are permitted under a State Policy which overrides Council's local planning controls. Under State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability), seniors living developments are permissible on land zoned for rural purposes so long as it adjoins land for urban purposes and meets other certain criteria outlined in the Policy.</p> <p>Hornsby Council has made numerous representations to the Minister and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment raising concerns about the proliferation of seniors housing in rural areas and has requested changes to the State Policy so that it does not apply in rural areas.</p> <p>Based on a review of proposal's lodged, it is evident that seniors living developments are generally medium density style developments ranging from 33 dwellings to over 200. This built form can detract from rural character. Seniors living development on rural land can result in land use conflicts with legitimate and routine land uses on adjoining lands and are inconsistent with principles of this strategy to protect areas for primary production from land fragmentation and the character of each landscape area. Furthermore, the rural area is not adequately serviced by infrastructure to support these forms of development.</p> <p>This strategy includes recommendations for investigations around the villages of Dural, Galston and Glenorie for rural lifestyle lots zoned E4 Environmental Living. These areas are not recommended to cater for any form of seniors housing developments. As the E4 Environmental Living zone is not land zoned for urban purposes, it will not further facilitate seniors housing under the State Policy.</p> <p>In the villages of Galston, Glenorie and Dural, there are areas zoned R2 Low Density Residential in which seniors living developments are permitted under the State Policy. This strategy includes principles for housing diversity in local villages but only where the character of villages is maintained. It is considered the scale of seniors living developments would likely compromise the character of villages and is therefore not recommended.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council continues to advocate for changes to the State Policy to ensure the seniors living developments are not permitted in inappropriate locations.</p> <p><i>Note: At the time of writing the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) made amendments to State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004 to prevent new proposals for seniors housing on land within the Metropolitan Rural Area of Greater Sydney. This policy reform is supported and as it will enable Council to protect and enhance the values of rural areas in line with the recommended principles of this strategy.</i></p>
<p>Vehicular access handles</p> <p>It was raised that the existing requirement to exclude a vehicular access handle when calculating lot size can result in applications for subdivision being not supported.</p>	<p>Currently the Standard Instrument LEP prescribes that the area of any accessway or the like be excluded for the purpose of calculating lot size in a proposal for subdivision. Whilst this is appropriate in urban areas, it is recognised that subdivision proposals in rural areas involve large lots, with the area of a driveway being substantial. Due to the large lots sizes, associated access handles could be included in the lot size calculation without compromising rural character and landscape settings.</p> <p>A recommendation of the strategy is for Council to pursue an amendment to the LEP to ensure the area of any access vehicular handle is included in lot size calculations on rural zoned land.</p>

5.5.2 Limitations of planning

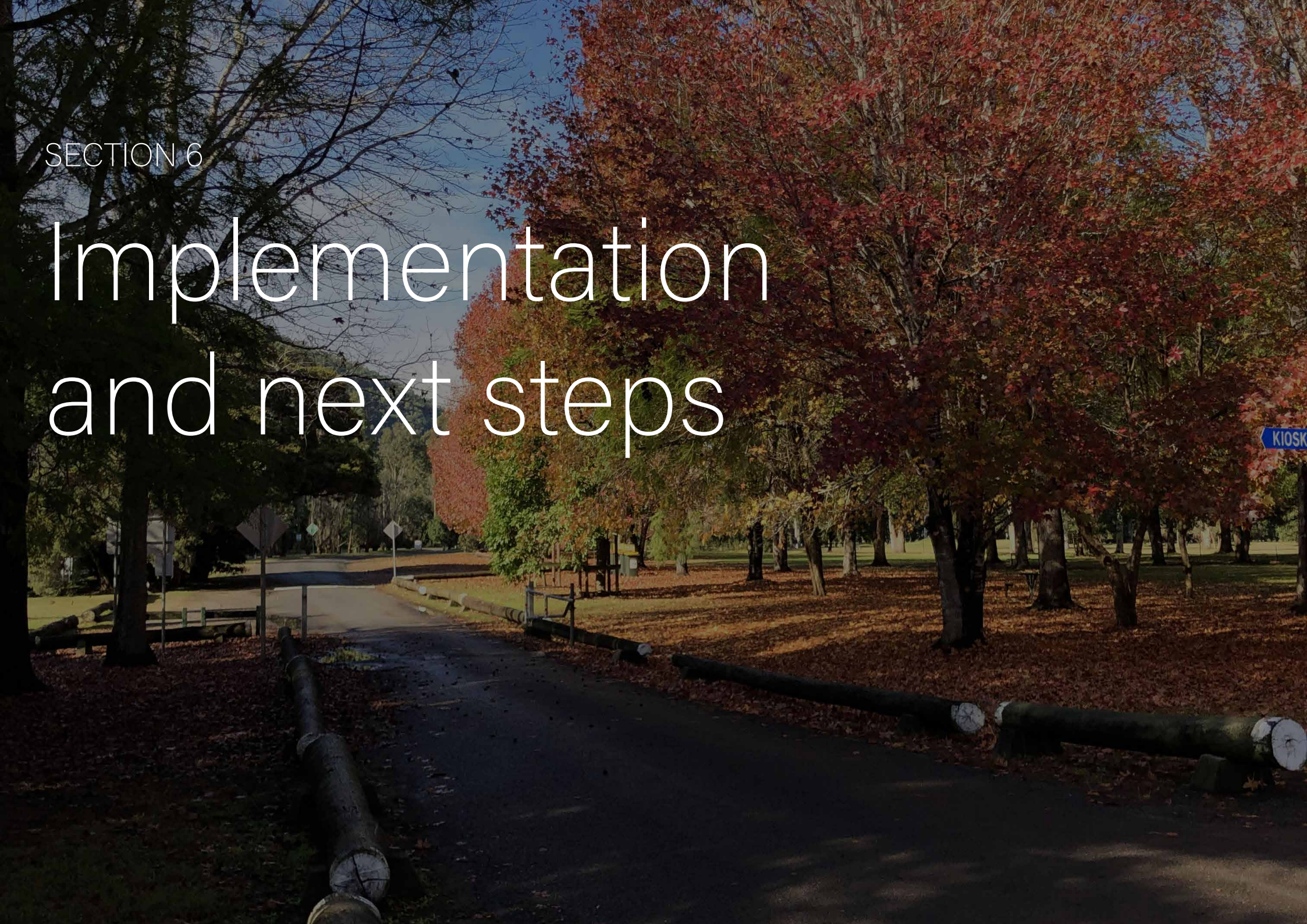
Alongside planning policy, Council has several other avenues for action that influence outcomes in the rural area. Other important influences include actions arising from the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, Employment Lands Study, Environmental Sustainability Strategy, along with service and infrastructure planning.

Planning controls can set parameters for land use, development, and some aspects of land management. They cannot drive new business formation, or community cohesion. However, clarity about future management of rural lands resulting from the Rural Lands Strategy would provide a strong signal to the market, and as a flow-on effect it would:

- Enhance certainty and viability for businesses looking to invest or reinvest in the rural area.
- Limit land speculation for non-rural uses by reaffirming the primary role of rural lands.
- Uphold the values of the Metropolitan Rural Area designation within the Greater Sydney Region Plan and North District Plan.
- Provide opportunities for the rural area to be promoted and enhance flexibility for economic development.

SECTION 6

Implementation and next steps



06 Implementation and next steps

6.1 Implementation

Once finalised, the vision, principles and recommendations set out in this strategy will inform future amendments to Council's LSPS, LEP and DCP.

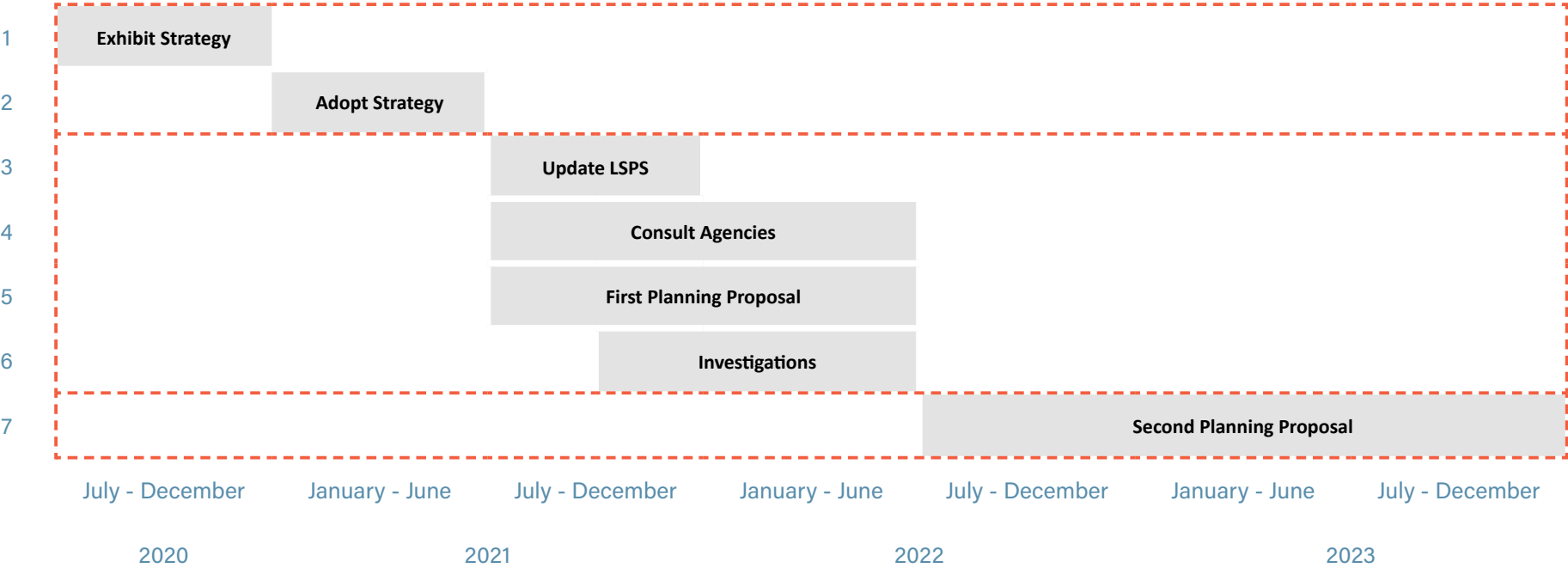
Some recommendations require further investigation before being progressed. Therefore, implementation will be staged as set out in the table and timeline overleaf.

- Hornsby Shire's rural area adjoins The Hills Shire, along Old Northern Road from Dural to Glenorie, and up to Wisemans Ferry. Those three rural villages are split between the Hornsby Shire/The Hills Shire boundary.
- Ongoing collaboration with adjacent local councils is important to ensure recommendations that may influence planning over boundaries is appropriate.

6.2 Implementation road map

	Milestone	Policy affected	Responsibility	Anticipated Timeline
1	Exhibit draft Strategy: Draft Strategy (this document) exhibited for community consultation	Draft Rural Lands Strategy	Council	2020
2	Adopt Strategy: Community feedback reviewed, final Rural Lands Strategy updated and adopted by Council	Final Rural Lands Strategy	Council	2020-2021
3	Update LSPS: Local Strategic Planning Statement updated to reflect recommendations from the Rural Lands Strategy	Hornsby LSPS	Council	2021
4	Consult with Agencies: Consult with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on changes to the Standard Instrument LEP to implement recommendations for secondary dwellings, roadside stalls, access handles and other changes relating to the nexus clause. Consult with other agencies including the RFS, RMS, Sydney Water, The Hills Shire and other relevant agencies for input into amendments to planning controls and areas for investigation in accordance with recommendations.	-	Council	2021-2022
5	Planning Proposal 1: Preparation of a Planning Proposal for amendments to the LEP for additional land uses and the nexus clause, changes to zone objectives, secondary dwelling sizes, changes to the access handle, attached dwelling clauses. DCP Amendments: prepare associated amendments to the DCP in accordance with the LEP changes	LEP and DCP	Council, with input from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Greater Sydney Commission	2021-2022
6	Investigations: Conduct review into the investigation areas outlined in the Strategy, including the E4 investigation areas, preparation of place plans for villages and the 2ha lot size investigations areas.	-	Council in consultation with The Hills Shire Council.	2021-2022
7	Planning Proposal 2: Preparation of a Planning Proposal for amendments to the LEP based on the outcomes of the review into the investigation areas. DCP Amendment- prepare associated DCP amendments for the LEP changes and incorporation of the place plans.	LEP and DCP	Council, with input from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Greater Sydney Commission	2022-2023
E	Public exhibition: Exhibit Planning Proposal 1, Planning Proposal 2 following Gateway Determinations and associated DCP amendments and report to Council for endorsement.	LEP and DCP	Council	Various
A	Advocacy: Continue to: — Advocate for changes to the Seniors Housing SEPP to ensure seniors living developments are not permitted on rural land. — Participate in the Sydney Peri-Urban Network of Councils.	Seniors Housing SEPP	Council working with NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Greater Sydney Commission	Ongoing

Implementation milestones





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