
ITEM NO	: 4.3
SUBJECT	: DRAFT COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (PROPERTY STRATEGY)
STRATEGIC OUTCOME	: COUNCIL IS FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE
ACTION	: COUNCIL DEVELOPS COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT GENERATE ALTERNATE SOURCES OF INCOME/REVENUE (E.G. PROPERTY PORTFOLIO)
REPORTING OFFICER	: LISA MISCAMBLE

Ref:493526

PURPOSE

This report provides the outcome of the community consultation process undertaken as part of the exhibition and finalisation of the Community Infrastructure Plan (CIP) and sets out the next steps.

The CIP was prepared to provide Council and the community with a clear picture of Council's property portfolio and provide a cohesive strategy on how it should be managed. The Strategy also outlines the prioritisation of future expenditure regarding our assets in order to provide for existing and future community needs.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That the Community Infrastructure Plan be renamed as the Property Strategy reflecting community feedback and be adopted.
3. That Council commence the next phase of detailed investigations and consultation on the Arts and Cultural Hub (the former depot site) and the Village Green (Gladesville Road and Figtree Park site).
4. That a further report be provided to Council following detailed investigations and associated financial modelling.
5. That Council write to individuals and organisations who provided a response during the public exhibition period to advise of the outcome and next steps.

BACKGROUND

Council's Long Term Financial Plan projects ongoing and increased deficits. This is clearly not sustainable. In order for Council to provide for the needs, wants and aspirations of for our community Council needs to address these projected deficits.

Council's Fit for the Future Improvement Proposal 2015 (p 144 – 145) contained a number of property related initiatives including:

Partial Road Closure and Proposed Subdivision – Serpentine Rd, Hunters Hill: Council is considering a proposal to close part of an unmade road, aggregate the part closed with adjoining Council land and dispose of the resultant lot created by subdivision. Preliminary notification to residents has been undertaken and survey work commenced. The proceeds may be expended on Capital Works such as Roads, Parks and Reserves and Community Facilities and Buildings. Alternatively, Council may decide to retire some or all of the debt raised to fund the Footpath Improvement Program.

6 Pittwater Road (Early Childhood Centre): This site is located in the Ryde City Council area and adjoins the Gladesville Library. There is a possibility that the City of Ryde Council (CoR) may seek an opportunity to re-develop their substantial land holdings in this area in conjunction with the Gladesville Masterplan and it would be logical that this site is included in any future proposals. CoR has recently commissioned consultants to consider development options for the site. Proceeds from sales, or revenue earned, could be used for strategic re-investment to fund ongoing initiatives including capital works.

40, 42, 44, 46& 48 Gladesville Road, Hunters Hill: These sites have been re-zoned within the Hunters Hill Village Masterplan for the purpose of using a potential redevelopment opportunity to construct new and significantly improved community facilities and car parking. The LEP for Hunters Hill Village has been gazetted and plan for a potential development strategy is being developed and will be placed on public exhibition in 2012. Proceeds from sales, or revenue earned, could be used for strategic re-investment to fund ongoing initiatives including capital works

To assist in the progression of these initiatives Council at its meeting held on 25 June 2018 resolved:

1. *Hunter's Hill Council re-establish the Committee in order to provide recommendations to Council with regards to:
 - I. *Evaluating Council's property assets to determine if they are providing community benefit;*
 - II. *Developing strategies for the future of Council's assets;*
 - III. *Investigating opportunities to invest/reinvest in property assets.**
2. *The Property Advisory Committee consist of three (3) councillors and three (3) community members;*
3. *Hunter's Hill Council advertise for community members to join the Property Advisory Committee as soon as is practicable;*
4. *The inaugural Property Advisory Committee Meeting for this term of Council be held in early August.*

Due to the retirement of the former General Manager and subsequent appointment of the new General Manager the PAC was not formed until the first quarter of 2019, following an expression of interest process within the local community.

Further to ensure that a strategic view was taken to Council's property holdings it was agreed that a Property Strategy would be developed. This was flagged in late 2018 in the report of the 12 December 2018 where it was again highlighted there was a need to look for additional revenues to supplement rates income. As part of this report it was highlighted:

'...the options presented are only one measure that is required. There is a need to look at both expenditure and revenues over the coming 12 – 18 months. In relation to expenditure this will include reviewing organisational practices to streamline processes and harness technology to drive business improvement and efficiency; developing a property strategy; expansion of shared services as well as actively pursuing grant opportunities'.

In response to this, the Sustainable and Thriving Strategy was developed that brought together these elements into a cohesive framework to guide Council to take actions to be financially sustainable and thrive into the future. Attachment 1 sets out the framework.

This Strategy provides for:

- Operational changes that can be incrementally implemented to drive down expenditure and increase revenues. Over the past 2 years this has included:
 - An ongoing review of fees and charges to identify opportunities for new fees and fee increases to equitably recover costs and maintain service standards. For example, a development application compliance levy was introduced in 2019/20, resulting in additional income of \$156,000 in that year.
 - Investment in improved technologies to support more customer-friendly systems and drive organisational change and efficiencies. For example a recently introduced online, paper-light development application assessment system has resulted in improved customer experience and at the same time achieved efficiencies.
- Three big moves that will significantly move the dial on Council's finances and reduce the existing heavy reliance on rates revenue, these are:
 - preparation of the Digital Asset Management Plan (DAMP) to give council a clear picture of asset conditions and costs to bring them up to an acceptable standard. We have implemented an industry-leading asset management system. Completion of the DAMP, last year, now gives Council a more rigorous assessment of the condition of our infrastructure assets than previous systems that relied heavily on desk-top estimates. The system enables more precise modelling of condition outcomes at different investment levels.
 - implementation of shared services, including the move to a shared depot with Lane Cove Council. Shared services have provided opportunities to improve service delivery and reduce costs; a good example is the agreement with Lane Cove Council (LCC) to share library. The shared library service alone has saved Council \$350,000 every year, equivalent to around 3.5% of rate income.
 - the development of the Community Infrastructure Plan (Property Strategy). The development of a Property Strategy (CIP) is aimed at optimising Council-owned properties and land capable of development, sale or lease, for community benefit.

Financial outlook

The Property Strategy is one element of Council's long-term financial plan to reduce the reliance on rates revenue and to reduce Council's ongoing expenditure maintaining ageing and no longer fit for purpose assets.

Council's long-term financial plan projects an ongoing deficit. This is in spite of implementing a range of operational initiatives as outlined above. An updated long-term financial plan will be presented to the May 2021 Council meeting as part of the draft 2021/22 Operational Plan and Budget.

In the 2019 – 2020 financial year Council did return a positive financial result, as a result of operational changes made and the significant boost of a one-off payment of \$1m following the successful contract negotiations in 2019 for the supply of bus shelters and associated advertising.

The development of the new Digital Asset Management Plan (DAMP) has resulted in a clear understanding of the level of investment required to maintain and renew Council's assets.

Further the re-valuation of Council's assets, as reported to Council on 15 March 2021, as part of the end of December 2020 budget review, highlighted that the re-valuation process has resulted in an increase in the value of our asset base resulting in an associated increase of over \$1.1m in depreciation costs. This increase in depreciation costs is now reflected in Council's operating result and must be funded to ensure assets remain at an acceptable standard.

Property Advisory Committee

The Property Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed following an EOI process within the local community. The PAC, in concert with the Council, worked over a 12-month period to develop a Community Infrastructure Plan (Property Strategy), through a series of workshops and briefings and drawing on the relevant information from research, studies and other strategic documents developed over the past 15 years.

The result was the draft Plan (CIP) that was placed on public exhibition to seek feedback and specific feedback on the visions for the 3 community hubs, to inform the next phase of detailed planning and consultation.

This Plan will form one of the foundations to support Council to be financially sustainable into the future as well as support broader social outcomes.

At a meeting of the Property Advisory Committee held on 8 April 2021 when considering the CIP (Property Strategy), the PAC, made the following resolution that:

1. *Council develop a policy and a set of principles for the assessment of remnant lands and include a flow chart to set out clearly the process (including associated community consultation); seek legal advice in relation to the protections to be afforded under zoning, easements and covenants. These principles to be referred to the Property Advisory Committee prior to adoption by Council.*
2. *Hubs / Precincts: Following the testing of visions for each precinct through the exhibition of the CIP that Council:*
 - *Building on current feedback and associated reports, move to detailed consultation on each precinct to develop a masterplan for exhibition and feedback.*
 - *Provide a further report on the communication and engagement plans in relation to the Precincts to ensure detailed consultation occurs and all options are considered for each site.*
 - *Refine the financial modelling based on feedback received to inform future consultation.*
 - *Provide a detailed project plan to Council and associated financial modelling for Figtree Park to take into account the \$4.75m in public legacy funding pending the outcome of the grant application. Noting that no detailed plan has been adopted for the park and that the following principles have been put forward to the Department of Planning to guide the expenditure of the grant if successful:*
 - *Improving linkages to the park*
 - *Expansion of open space*
 - *Improved playground facilities*
 - *Provision of toilet facilities*
 - *Creation of a public plaza*
 - *Proposed works to align with future options for the site*
 - *A detailed community engagement program will be undertaken prior to adoption of any plan*
3. *For each hub / precinct, develop a flow chart and timeline for each phase of the project.*

REPORT**Feedback from the public exhibition period October – November 2020**

At the conclusion of the exhibition period the following responses and website views were recorded:

- 311 people filled in the People and Places Survey
- 255 people commented and responded to the interactive People and Places maps
- 327 people filled in the CIP survey
- 42 people wrote individual submissions
- 9 submissions were made by organisations including:
 - Hunters Hill Trust
 - Hunters Hill Croquet Club
 - Hunters Hill Bridge Club
 - Hunters Hill High School P&C
 - Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill
 - Holy name of Mary Parish
 - Hunters Hill Sailing Club
 - Hunters Hill Public P&C
 - Villa Maria PS

There were 1,325 webpage views.

The Consultation Report, contained in the **Attachments**, provides a summary of the feedback from the exhibition period and responses for each component of the Plan. These responses will be incorporated into future analysis of individual sites and form the basis of future community engagement. Where appropriate the Property Strategy has incorporated community feedback, but in general the Consultation Report should be read in conjunction with, the now named Property Strategy as actions are implemented.

General Feedback Themes

The table below provides the general themes and response to these:

<i>Feedback</i>	<i>Response</i>
<p><i>Confusion over the purpose of the draft Plan</i></p> <p>There was concern that if the Plan was to reflect all community facilities, then other non-Council facilities should be included.</p>	<p>The Plan has been renamed to the Property Strategy to more clearly identify the Plan as relating solely to the range of property Council has and simplified to only reflect Council owned properties and refer to other planning document which support broader community facilities and groups who own and / or manage these.</p>
<p><i>Concern that Council would be raising rates to pay for the hubs</i></p>	<p>The Hub proposals are intended to contribute to the financial sustainability of Council by providing revenue generating opportunities and / or achieving operational efficiencies.</p> <p>The exhibition of the draft CIP, in particular in relation to the Hubs was to seek feedback on the draft visions in terms of opportunities and</p>

	<p>concerns to assist in the next phase of detailed planning.</p> <p>In response, the Plan has been amended to highlight the financial imperatives and links to Council's overall financial sustainability objectives.</p>
<p><i>Lack of understanding of the process</i></p> <p>There was concern that what was provided was fait accompli. This was particularly in relation to the 2 Hubs, now referred to as Precinct at Figtree Park / Gladesville Road and the Heritage / Cultural Hub / Precinct on the corner of Alexandra St and D'Aram St.</p>	<p>The public exhibition of the Plan was to seek initial community feedback, as part of a phased approach.</p> <p>The Plan set out to define a vision for these precincts, which will now be further tested and refined through further community engagement, financial modelling and reported back to Council.</p>
<p><i>Request for more detail around the 3 hubs</i></p>	<p>It is an iterative process.</p> <p>Phase 1 was to seek broad community feedback on the concepts.</p> <p>In the short term, feedback on the hubs in Alexandra Street and Figtree Park / Gladesville Road Hunters Hill will be used to inform detailed master plans, which will be the subject to an extensive community consultation and engagement program.</p>
<p><i>Existing community groups and churches concerned that Council's properties would compete with their facilities and confusion around the scope of the Community Infrastructure Plan</i></p>	<p>The Plan has been simplified to solely focus on Council owned properties and buildings and referring to the other relevant documents for broader facility and social planning. These facilities are captured in the 2009 Community Facilities Strategy and associated actions incorporated into Council's Delivery Plan and annual Operational Plan.</p> <p>In addition, during the exhibition period some church based and community groups sought financial assistance from Council to assist them in the maintenance and renovation of their facilities. In response to this Council has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sought information from the groups about the facilities available and launched these on the Venu App to assist in promoting their facilities for greater hire and as a consequence revenue generation • Propose to implement a schedule of shining a spot light on these facilities through the e-new and monthly paper newsletter.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided information to these groups of appropriate funding sources, including Council's annual community grants program as well as relevant State and Federal Government funding programs.
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Specific elements of the Property Strategy

The Property Strategy has 4 elements:

1. 3 Precincts:
 - a. Village Green (Gladesville Road/Figtree Park, Hunters Hill)
 - b. Arts, Cultural and Heritage, (Town Hall, Administration Centre, Museum, Depot and Council Chambers, Hunters Hill)
 - c. Lifestyle and Wellbeing (Former Henley Bowling Club)
2. Council owned properties in Gladesville:
 - a. 4 Pittwater Road, Gladesville
 - b. Cowell St Carpark, Gladesville
3. Leases and licenses
4. Remnant lands

The Strategy provides a broad overview, which is broken up into short (1-3 years), medium (3-5 years) and long term (5 years+) goals. However, as project plans for each Precinct are developed and/or additional opportunities arise, Council may be in a position to deliver additional projects identified through the development of the Community Strategic Plan and associated strategies.

1. Precincts

a) Village Green (Gladesville Road/Figtree Park, Hunters Hill)

Vision

The Village Green will be a place where community facilities and services will be centralised and will provide a renewed focus on activity. This will be a place for all ages, attracting students from nearby schools, older residents from nearby seniors housing and residents generally from across Hunters Hill.

Residents and visitors will regularly visit the new contemporary library and council administration centre. The Park will be activated and in use across the day from early morning to evening. The Precinct will be a vibrant place that contributes to the life of the Hunters Hill community and lifestyle.

The creation of the Precinct will strengthen local economic development.

Opportunities

- Improving and activating Figtree Park
- Providing quality accommodation for community service organisations
- Accommodating Council's Administration
- Accommodating a contemporary library
- Allowing for income producing commercial space
- Accommodating community meeting space/s
- Resolving access and safety issues along Gladesville Road by reducing the number of driveways
- Accommodating flexible working spaces

- Activating/opening up Figtree Park to encourage greater use and longer stays
- Accommodating a residential component (for downsizing)
- Energising Hunters Hill Village through activation and public art
- Supporting local business activities

Community Feedback

The general community feedback on the Village Green was centred on:

- More detail required on proposal: *This will be supplied during Phase 2 of community consultation*
- Built form, traffic and parking raised as issues to be addressed: *These matters will be addressed during the master planning of the site and placed on public exhibition*
- Open and green space and trees should be retained and expanded: *Agreed, there will be no loss of public open space*
- Relocation of library and Administration Centre received mixed responses: *These concepts will be further tested during Phase 2 community consultation*

Some of the ideas raised during consultation included the following:

- Provide bicycle parking
- Include edible gardens
- Have a youth focus
- Aboriginal Cultural Walk near Clarkes Point
- Provide connective pathways to access hubs across the municipality
- Encourage growth of the tree canopy to reduce urban heat
- Look at grant opportunities
- Ensure there are accessible amenities / facilities for people with disability, parents, children and the elderly
- Provide flexible workspaces and spaces for community groups to rent
- Drop in centre for young people
- Council to partner with other organisations in the hosting of musical events, noting that spaces such as All Saints Church were designed for such purposes

b) Arts, Cultural and Heritage, (Town Hall, Administration Centre, Museum, Depot Hunters Hill)

Vision

The vision for this site is to celebrate the culture and heritage.

The site is already home to Hunters Hill Music Club, art gallery and an expanded Hunters Hill Museum, which will celebrate our heritage.

The performance space will be contemporary and offer a unique experience. The Town Hall already hosts the annual Hunters Hill Art Exhibition and Young in Art, with improved facilities there is an opportunity to expand this offering increasing the utilisation of the Town Hall.

Opportunities

- Improving the amenity to adjoining owners
- Improving amenity and facilities for community groups, e.g. Hunters Hill Music Club
- Retaining the cultural hub of the Town Hall, Council Chambers and Museum while relocating the administration functions of Council to Hunters Hill Village to boost local economic development and achieve operational efficiencies, in particular in relation to Library operations

- Using the administration section of the building for commercial leasing/offices
- Developing an arts and cultural precinct which includes an art gallery, museum, offices or commercial leasing
- Determining whether the existing office accommodation can be retrofitted for future use or does there need to be consideration of a 'new' build?
- Working with other organisations and businesses within the vicinity with an arts and cultural focus
- Accommodating a residential component for downsizing or retirement living that is in keeping with the surrounding character

Community Feedback

The general community feedback on the Heritage and Cultural Precinct was centred on:

- Impact on adjoining properties: *This will be addressed in any future master plan for the precinct.*
- Relocation of the Administration Centre and questioned whether this was necessary: *This concept will be further tested during Phase 2 community consultation.*

Some of the ideas raised during consultation included the following:

- Ensure the restoration of heritage sites to promote a sense of community and attachment to place
- Continue to lease community venues to not-for-profit groups at an affordable price and sharing spaces
- Collaborate with the local public school to help design this space to encourage community ownership among younger people
- Utilise the theatre, music club and art gallery to host community events
- Investigate traffic and parking solutions

c) Lifestyle and Wellbeing (Former Henley Bowling Club)

Vision

The vision for the Henley Precinct will grow organically. Initially, Council will undertake an EOI to determine a variety of short-term mixed uses.

Over the longer term it is anticipated that the precinct will lend itself to services and facilities that support health and lifestyle, such as:

- Increased and improved access to open space
- Improved community and recreational facilities offering contemporary multipurpose spaces.
- New facilities, which will incorporate commercial aspects that will enable revenue raised to be rolled back into the asset maintenance and renewal of the buildings as well as the broader precinct of Gladesville Reserve, Betts Park and Henley Community Centre.

Opportunities

- Constructing a synthetic field with a shared sports and community facility
- Improving amenities for sporting activities including storage, change rooms, etc.
- Considering gym/café to service users and local sporting clubs as part of the new amenities
- Relocating the current cricket pitch either elsewhere on the site or subject to agreement relocate to another site
- Providing a café / restaurant to service visitors to the reserve

- Providing meeting rooms to cater for community groups with associated back of house facilities such as kitchen and amenities
- Staging produce / craft markets
- Continuing to host a community garden
- Providing infrastructure to enable the staging of outdoor music / cultural events
- Delivering a community playground
- Continuing to lease buildings to the preschool and child care with a potential for increased child care
- Upgrading public amenities
- Increasing access to the waterfront
- Considering potential for residential development with a sustainable focus

Community Feedback

The general community feedback on the Lifestyle and Wellbeing Precinct was centred on:

- The concept of an urban farm supported: *Agreed.*
- Support from some sections of the community for synthetic field: *This is a separate matter is contained in a further report on this Council business paper.*

Some of the ideas raised during consultation included the following:

- Minimise one of the three carparks to increase active transport options, e.g., bike racks and shared paths
- Carpark under synthetic turf
- Engage with the local community and schools to test future ideas for the site such as outdoor movies
- Install outdoor gym equipment for all ages, including signage and shade
- Encourage yoga classes and tai chi in outdoor shaded areas
- Improve connections to the Wharf and throughout the reserve by expanding the existing tracks
- Installation of nature-based play equipment
- Move the Hunters Hill Croquet Club to Henley
- Upgrade cricket nets

Next steps for Precincts

Following the testing of visions for each precinct through the exhibition of the CIP (Property Strategy), Council is now able to:

1. Move to detailed consultation on each precinct to develop a masterplan for exhibition and feedback, taking into consideration current feedback
2. Provide a further report on the communication and engagement plans in relation to the Precincts to ensure detailed consultation occurs and all option considered for each site
3. Refine the financial modelling based on feedback received to inform future consultation

It should be noted that Council has applied for a \$4.75m grant through the NSW Governments Public Legacy Fund for the Village Green (Gladesville Road/Figtree Park Hunters Hill) Precinct. As part of the ongoing planning for this site a detailed project plan will be presented to Council with associated financial modelling, if and when Council is successful with this application.

It should also be noted that no detailed plan has been adopted for the Village Green Precinct and that the following principles have been put forward to the Department of Planning to guide the expenditure of the grant, if successful:

- Improving linkages to the park
- Expansion of open space
- Improved playground facilities
- Provision of toilet facilities
- Proposed grant funded works to align with future options for the site.

Once the outcome of the grant application is known, and if successful a detailed community engagement program will be undertaken prior to adoption of any plan and the staging of any work.

2. Council owned properties in Gladesville

Vision

The Council owned sites of 6 Pittwater Road Gladesville and the Cowell St Carpark will contribute to and act as a catalyst to the reactivation of the Gladesville Commercial Centre.

The Gladesville Commercial Centre will be renewed and revitalised, with a mixed-use urban centre. It will be the primary centre and commercial hub for the wider area, providing a full range of retail services and entertainment to the community. The Town Centre will offer a modern, convenient environment that respects the past and where people will love to be. It will have high quality mid-rise apartment living, meeting a range of housing needs. It will be a desirable and sustainable place to live.

The focal point of the Centre will be a renewed Gladesville Shopping Centre and public spaces between Massey Street and Cowell Street.

The redevelopment of the shopping centre with increased commercial space and residential apartments in well - designed buildings, will be the catalyst for renewal, place-making and urban design outcomes throughout the broader Gladesville Centre. (Hunters Hill LSPS)

Opportunities

- Developing a hub specifically to meet the needs of children and families; occasional care and long day care.
- Investigating commercial lease areas, outdoor areas, etc. Partnering with the City of Ryde and tapping into their property opportunities.
- Supporting the Gladesville Masterplan.
- Improving traffic and parking in and around the commercial centre.
- Linking open spaces and improving pedestrian access.
- Supporting the community by offering a range of social opportunities via the provision public spaces with adequate seating and public art.
- Supporting commercial entities via a range of business and employment opportunities.

Community Feedback

There were not a lot of responses in relation to the Gladesville sites, however of the responses that related to Gladesville there was a clear and strong desire for Council to expedite the master planning for the Gladesville area.

Some of the ideas raised during consultation included the following:

- Provide green space
- Provide open space
- Connect spaces and make sure access meets the needs of people with disability
- Make sure the developer includes community places and spaces

- Install public art
- Include community seating and meeting places
- Partner with the City of Ryde Council to ensure the commercial area is consistent in both LGAs

Next steps for Council owned Properties

Council is currently preparing a masterplan for the Gladesville Commercial Centre and the Cowell St Carpark is an integral component in the plan to ensure appropriate open space and public domain are created through any redevelopment. As part of the ongoing planning for the area, any reduction of parking on the Cowell St Carpark will need to be provided within any new development.

6 Pittwater Road is located within the City of Ryde. Services provided from the site are valuable and will be relocated to any new development within the Hunters Hill Council area with appropriate planning and negotiation. Council will continue to work with the City of Ryde to look at options to achieve the highest value for the site.

3. Leases and Licences

Council has leases and licences for a range of facilities. Some are leased or licenced to private for-profit operators and others to community-based organisations. These include leases with groups for use of the Hunters Hill Sailing Club, child care services, general community use, Council properties (residential house) and Community centre.

Next steps for Leases and Licences

It is important that all leases and licences are reviewed and kept up to date. As part of the ongoing leasing and licencing of buildings, a review of outgoings and maintenance costs will be undertaken to ensure that as a minimum these costs are recouped ensuring that the capacity of community groups to pay is taken into consideration.

4. Remnant Land

Council holds many small parcels of land such as unformed roads, road reserves and drainage easements. These parcels are often not required by Council but can have significant value to an adjoining owner. An up to date list of these sites is required.

It would then be possible to have a systematic approach to the assessment of each site where surplus sites sell at fair market value. Disposal will need to be treated sensitively to protect community rights such as view corridors or access to the water.

Next steps for Remnant Lands

Prior to any possible sale Council will adopt a policy and set of principles for the assessment of remnant land and include a flowchart to set out clearly the process (including associated community consultation), seek legal advice in relation to protections to be afforded under zoning, easements and covenants and will be referred back to the Property Advisory Committee for review prior to formal adoption by Council.

CONCLUSION

Council has a responsibility in the provision of use of its buildings to ensure that it achieves best value for the community both in terms of social and financial outcomes. As highlighted in Councils Fit for the

Future Improvement Proposal submitted in 2015, management of Council's property portfolio will be a key element in supporting the future financial sustainability of the Council.

Council has undertaken many studies over many years on specific sites and properties. This Property Strategy consolidates these studies, ideas and aspirations and sets out a vision, principles and strategic approach to the management Council's properties.

FINANCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no direct financial impact on Council's adopted budget as a result of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no direct environmental impact on Council arising from Council consideration of this matter.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no direct social impact on Council arising from Council consideration of this matter.

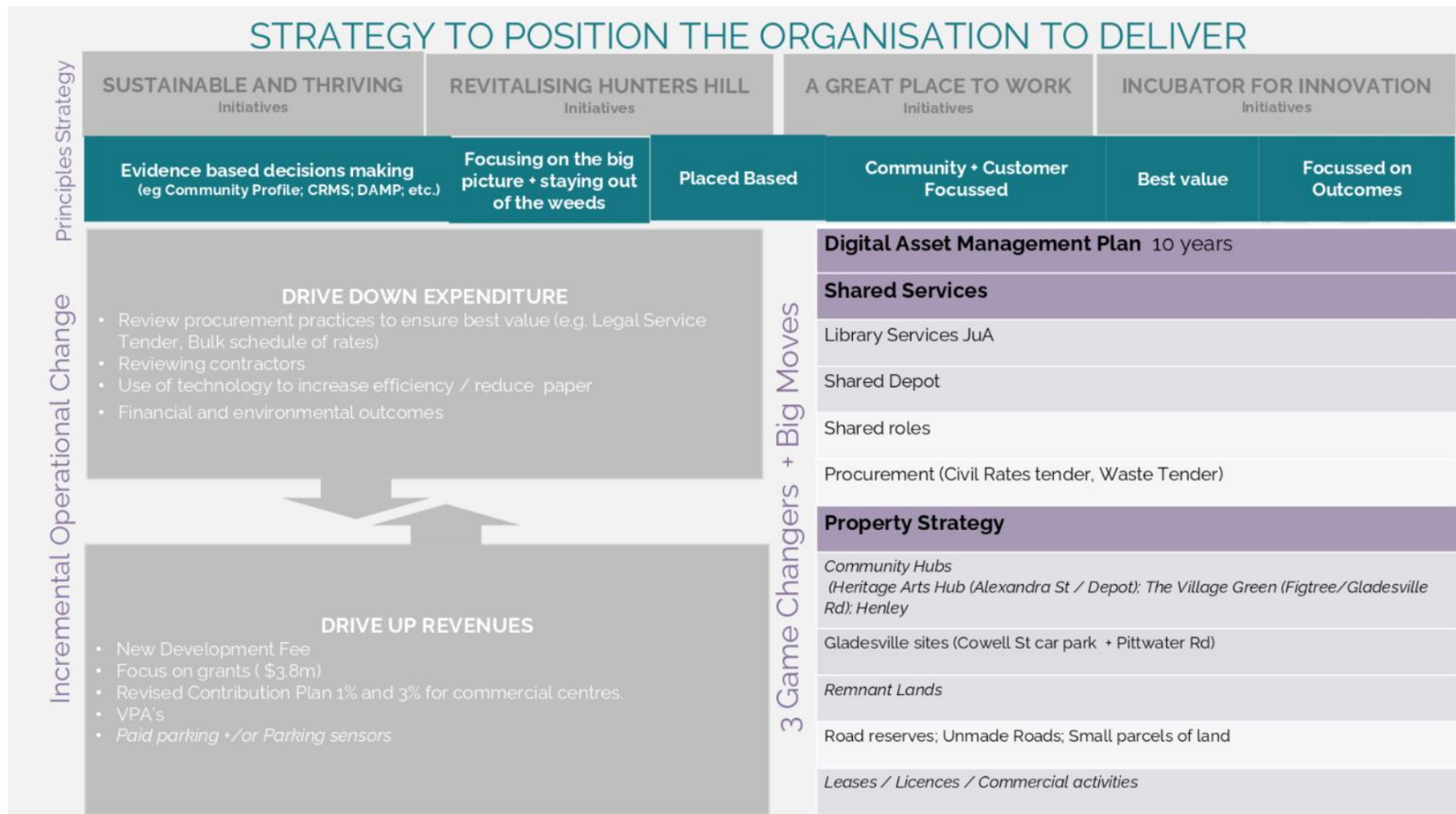
RISK ASSESSMENT

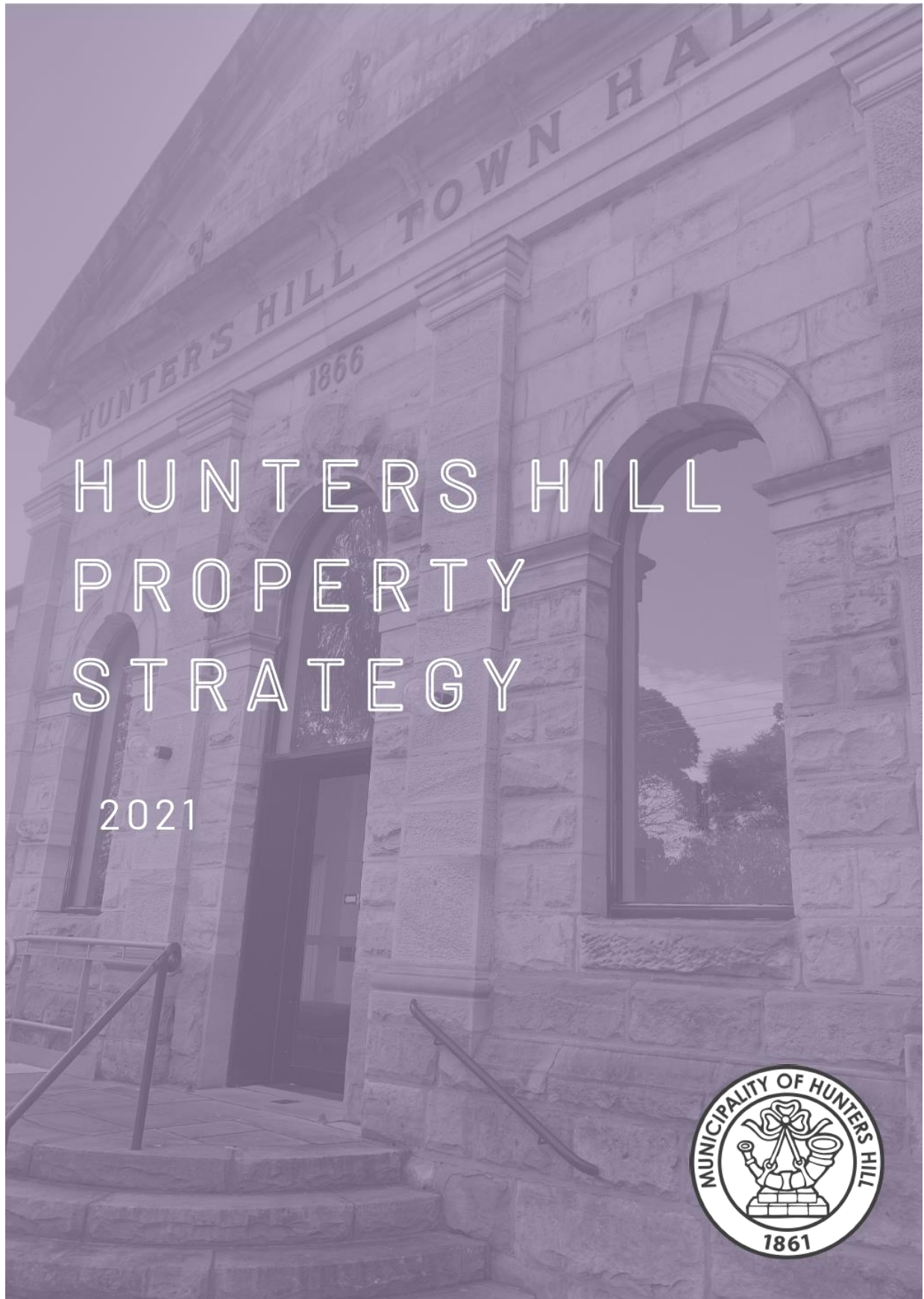
There are no direct or indirect risks impacting on Council arising from consideration of this matter.

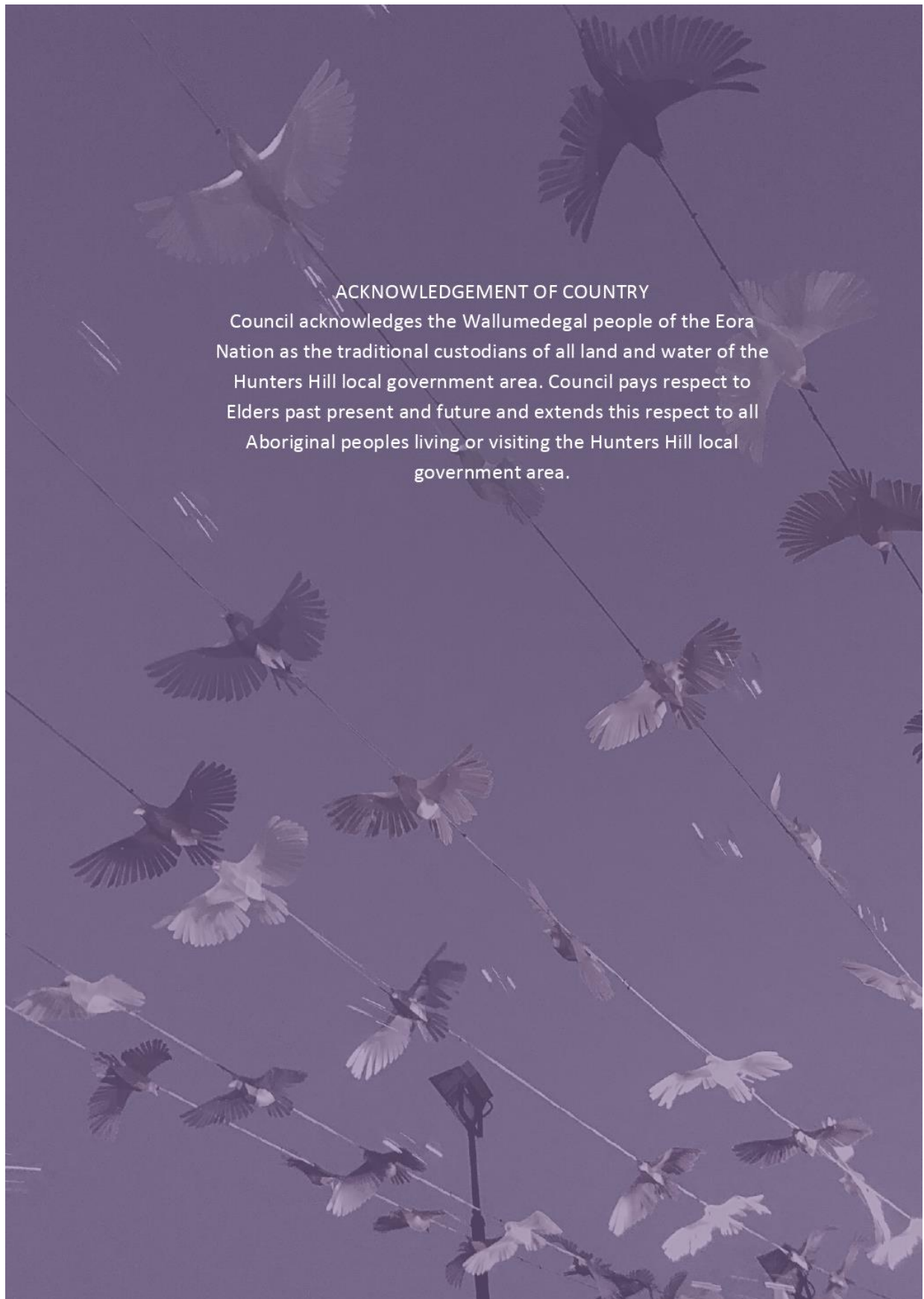
ATTACHMENTS

1. Sustainable and Thriving Strategy [↓](#)
2. Hunters Hill Property Strategy 2021 [↓](#)
3. Consultation Outcomes Report [↓](#) - *Under Separate Cover*
4. Survey and community submissions on the draft Community Infrastructure Plan - *Under Separate Cover*
5. Survey People and Place results - *Under Separate Cover*

STRATEGY TO POSITION THE ORGANISATION TO DELIVER





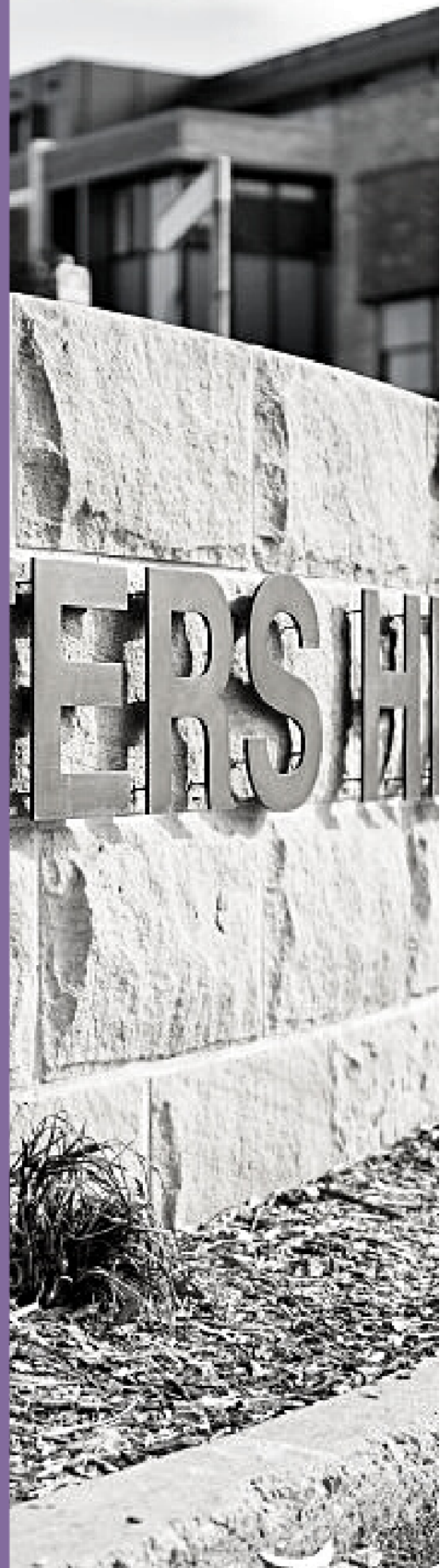


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council acknowledges the Wallumedegal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of all land and water of the Hunters Hill local government area. Council pays respect to Elders past present and future and extends this respect to all Aboriginal peoples living or visiting the Hunters Hill local government area.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is faced with a number of issues requiring capital expenditure in the near future. This includes expenditure on community assets, such as roads and footpaths, as well as providing better accommodation for its community service organisations.

At the same time, Council's financial options are limited. Revenue comes primarily from rates, which, because of rate capping has little opportunity for growth. An option for Council is to use its property portfolio more commercially, whilst still balancing community needs.

This Strategy advocates such an approach and aims to give both Council and the community confidence that property dealings, will be both well intended and well managed and respectful of the Hunter's Hill heritage.

This Strategy highlights some opportunities, which will allow Council to leave a legacy of valuable community assets. It also sets out some principles to guide the Strategy and proposes initial steps forward in terms of the Precinct projects.

Council has a small but important property portfolio which can be categorised as:

1. Three Precinct projects
2. Council owned properties in Gladesville
3. Leased or licenced properties
4. Remnant lands

This Strategy does not include facilities provided by others. Planning for the overall provision of community and recreation facilities is contained in other Council strategies. Implementation of these strategies is undertaken through Council's Delivery Plan and annual Operational Plan.

These strategies include the 2009 Community Facilities Strategy and the 2013 Hunters Hill Recreation Strategy.

The Property Strategy is a key initiative to assist Hunter's Hill Council to be sustainable and thrive into the future.

2.

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Our facilities are ageing and in many cases no longer fit for purpose.

Our Council buildings were constructed between 1866 and 2003. There has been minimal renovation and upgrade undertaken over the years. Facilities are generally underutilised due to either their condition and/or location. These facilities no longer suit the communities vast needs and need to be brought into the 21st Century to support the evolving needs of our community.

Over time, service delivery models have changed, as have community needs and expectations. There has been a shift to multipurpose facilities that are co-located, providing economies of scale and form places where people can meet and enjoy a range of activities and services.

We need to be able to provide improved community infrastructure to meet and satisfy the needs of our current residents, as well as provide for the future generations of Hunters Hill in a sustainable manner.

This means that the delivery of new community infrastructure needs to be funded, as well as ensuring that there are ongoing revenues for the maintenance and renewal of these assets over time.

The 3 key drivers for the Strategy are the need to:

1. Diversify Council's revenue base to support financial sustainability into the future
2. Respond to changing demographics and community needs
3. Reflect contemporary practice and provide fit for purpose facilities



2.1

NEED TO DIVERSIFY COUNCIL'S REVENUE BASE TO BE SUSTAINABLE INTO THE FUTURE



The NSW rate peg determines the maximum percentage amount by which a council may increase its general income for the year. Approximately 68% of Hunter's Hill Council's revenue comes from rates and annual charges, compared to the NSW State average of approximately 45%.

The long-standing rate pegging regime in NSW means that the opportunity for Council to substantially increase its income is limited. Council needs alternative funding to be sustainable and reduce reliance on rate increases.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan forecasts ongoing and growing deficits.

Council's management of its small but valuable property portfolio will be an important component of the overall financial strategy, for example, where Council can keep the proceeds from the sale of surplus roads, rather than return them to the Crown, it must spend this money on roads. This could therefore reduce the impact on general revenue for increased road renewal expenditure.

Funds could be directed to one-off projects that upgrade assets that have higher than normal public use, such as a footpath outside a school which contribute to an overall improved asset condition rating.

While there may be exceptions, the overall suggested strategic approach is to reinvest sale proceeds, other than from roads, into income-producing assets that inject on-going annual revenue into the budget and support the provision of community buildings that are fit for future purpose.

It is prudent for Council to diversify its sources of revenue, with one option to invest in income producing property.

2.2

RESPOND TO CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

Community buildings must be designed and managed to ensure they effectively support changing community needs and priorities. There is a significant and growing number of young families (48%) as well as an increasing number of elderly people residing in Hunters Hill.

The age structure of Hunter's Hill Council residents provides key insights into the level of demand for age based services and facilities, such as childcare, over 60 year olds housing, a library, sporting and recreational facilities.

There is an opportunity through the Property Strategy to address the need for more appropriate community spaces, and at the same time delivering on financial imperatives.

There is already a shift from traditionally passive lifestyle choices for the over 60 year olds, to what is now considered active lifestyle choices. There is a growing trend across NSW for downsizing into accommodation that is centralized and convenient to community facilities and services, but still provides for independent living.

There is an opportunity to respond to needs identified in housing strategies for greater diversity of dwelling types, particularly for people seeking to down size or seeking smaller quality dwellings on sites such as the former Council depot site (corner of Alexandra St and D'Aram St Hunters Hill) and in the Village Green/Gladesville Road site in Hunters Hill Village.

This is not only reflective for the ageing, but is also a growing move for younger people and families seeking a more simplistic lifestyle. The popularity of urban developments, such as Harold Park in Glebe, which provide the fusion of independent living, active and passive recreation coupled with amenities within a short stroll, are meeting a growing need.

The trends in housing for young professionals and those entering the property market for the first time revolve around affordability, sustainability, livability and simplicity. Young people are looking for better design through a balance of indoor and outdoor living, such as apartments connected by green space and restaurants and cafes.



‘Purpose-built homes in retirement communities that are well located and designed to enable older Australians to be happy, independent and socially engaged is an important goal – but not one that our planning systems are well placed to achieve.’

(Property Council of Australia - The 5 A's of Retirement Living
- towards proactive planning policy)

It is not only housing trends that are changing. There has also been a distinct shift in how people work. There is a greater emphasis on work life balance, more collaboration and flexible workspaces. There has recently been a dramatic increase in remote working and working from home, which is set to continue.

This coupled with technological improvements and a new focus on wellness means that more people are either working from home or wanting to work in flexible office spaces, such as being able to hire an office or desk space for a day or a week, or going to shared spaces such as libraries, which are now offering areas for collaboration and contemplation.

The rise in more liveable homes and workspaces and the need for sporting and recreational facilities that are better designed and more energy efficient will become the norm throughout NSW. At a local level, councils such as Hunter's Hill will need to ensure that planning and building regulations enable this push for appropriate and sensitive infrastructure for all age groups.

It is anticipated that the Hunters Hill local government area will continue to grow at a similar rate in the next five years, with continued infill medium density developments along Victoria Road and in other retail centres such as the Hunters Hill Village and Boronia Park Village Centre.

2.3

REFLECT CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE AND PROVIDE FIT FOR PURPOSE FACILITIES

Legislative Changes

The legislative requirements governing delivery of asset based building services are extensive and continually evolving. This is particularly so in the areas of Disability Access, Health and Safety.

Stage One of the Town Hall renovation has been undertaken to address WH&S and accessibility matters, as well as major repairs to the roof and air conditioning. Further upgrades are still required to deliver contemporary catering facilities and performance spaces.

Sydney Community Services delivers a comprehensive range of services from four modest cottages on Gladesville Road. A community centre, used by a number of organisations, is also located within these premises. These are much needed valuable community services and should be accommodated in fit for purpose buildings.

Connected to Public Space, Pedestrian and Cycleways and Public Transport

Current best practice requires community facilities that are accessible to the entire community by being centrally located and linked to the public domain.

Connections to transport links, pedestrian and cycleways also support community access across all age groups and abilities and a sustainable and healthy community.

Best practice is that facilities should be located in activity nodes and on main streets, providing good access to residential populations, and contributing to a vibrant and safe street life.

Move to Multi-Purpose and Flexible Spaces

There is an increasing expectation that assets will be available for multiple purposes and uses. This supports a focus on maximising utilization and developing a more sustainable asset base. This is a shift away from single use, single user buildings, which Council has historically constructed.

Single purpose or standalone facilities are defined as being designed and built for one particular purpose or function, and to be used by one specific target group or service only. Single purpose facilities can be costly to maintain and are often underutilized and under-activated.

Spaces are now being designed to be flexible and adaptable depending on the program or activity. This is important given the ongoing cyclical nature of communities (particularly in relation to changes in demographic mix).

Current best practice in designing community facilities is to provide a range of different functions, in the one building by co-locating services as part of an overall Hub or Precinct.

Co-locating services within one facility involves shared or joint use of facilities and often the integrated delivery of some services.

Co-location enables:

- pooling of resources to provide better facilities
- concentration of compatible services and facilities to create a community focal point
- improved access and safety for users who can access a range of services at a single location
- integrated and innovative delivery of services
- efficient use of land, for instance through shared, rather than separate, parking areas

The benefit of co-locating facilities and services within community hubs is that it supports the integrated, efficient use of facilities, builds social networks, encourages service users to use other facilities and services co-located on site, and reduces the number of private vehicle trips made to enhance sustainability.

Community hubs or precincts can include a range of community, commercial, and retail functions. Facilities that support community functions, events and gatherings, such as kitchen facilities, storage facilities, indoor and outdoor space are usually part of community hubs / precincts.

The Hub model will demonstrate that maintaining and operating a multipurpose facility is more financially viable over the long term than other more separate and divergent models of facility provision.

Place making and Community Identity

Successful community facilities provide important gathering places for people and are focal points for community activity and catalysts for social interaction.

They contribute to the creation of active public spaces that support a sense of belonging and identity.

Community hubs create places for people to gather and interact with each other. When located in or with retail and commercial uses they also serve to promote local economic development in village centres by acting as an attractor for people.

It is important that community facilities have a civic quality, sense of stability and level of amenity that marks them as an important place in the community.



Image: Coal Loader - Waverton



Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability

Image: Oran Park Library

Sustainable community facilities are increasingly being used to showcase sustainable building methods and design. Sustainable design of community facilities include newly constructed facilities or those that can be incorporated into building upgrades and renovations.

An example of this is the newly constructed Oran Park Library in the Camden LGA, which is in the heart of the Oran Park Civic Precinct and provides a place of community development and information, education, and recreation. The library has been described as a 'community living room: where people of all ages, abilities and interest come for relaxation and entertainment, to experience history and culture, to play and create, to connect and communicate'. The exterior and interior are unique to the area and include: a new high-tech open library, a sessional services office for community support and a community centre to foster art, culture, and community activities. Externally, there is an outdoor landscaped area that is used for library activities and a civic plaza in front of the building for outdoor public events. This facility was delivered through a voluntary planning agreement (VPA).

Another example of sustainability is adaptive reuse. The principle of adaptive reuse relates to not building something new unless there are no suitable options within the existing asset base that can be adapted or rejuvenated to meet the identified community needs for space. These projects can be on a grand scale, such as the use of historic buildings for galleries and museums, or simple and low key.

Co-location of services through the community hub model reduces asset and service costs as organisations and community groups can have their own space in a wider complex; they may share a foyer, meeting rooms and amenities with other tenants, therefore significantly reducing lease and operating costs.

As part of any new project Council may wish to deliver, it is essential that operational efficiency is examined together with options to derive recurrent income to offset annual maintenance/running costs.

3.

BACKGROUND

3.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND RESEARCH

Council's Community Infrastructure has evolved over many decades and has not always been guided by a strategic approach.

Council's property portfolio includes land and buildings that are used for direct service delivery by Council, delivery of community based services by not-for-profit organisations, recreational and sporting pursuits, commercial activity and car parking.

Improved facilities, present an opportunity to improve the public value derived from these assets. This can be achieved through improved utilisation and financial performance.

The following diagram illustrates the various studies and plans that have been developed by Hunter's Hill Council over the past 15 years.

The Property Strategy draws on the relevant elements of this work.

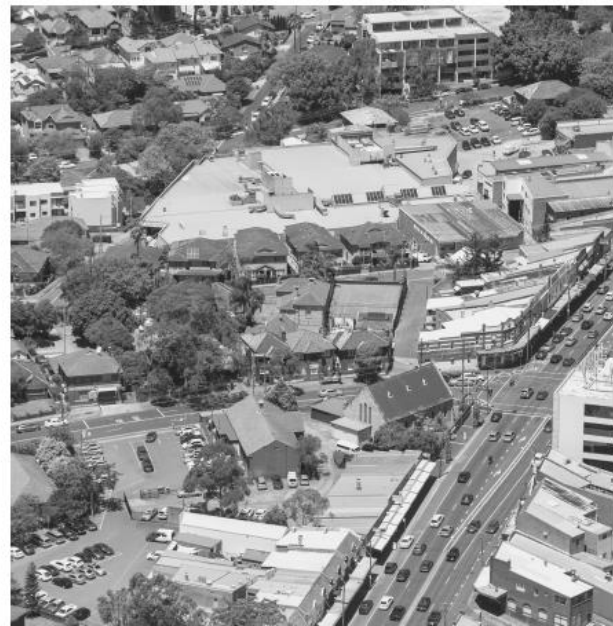
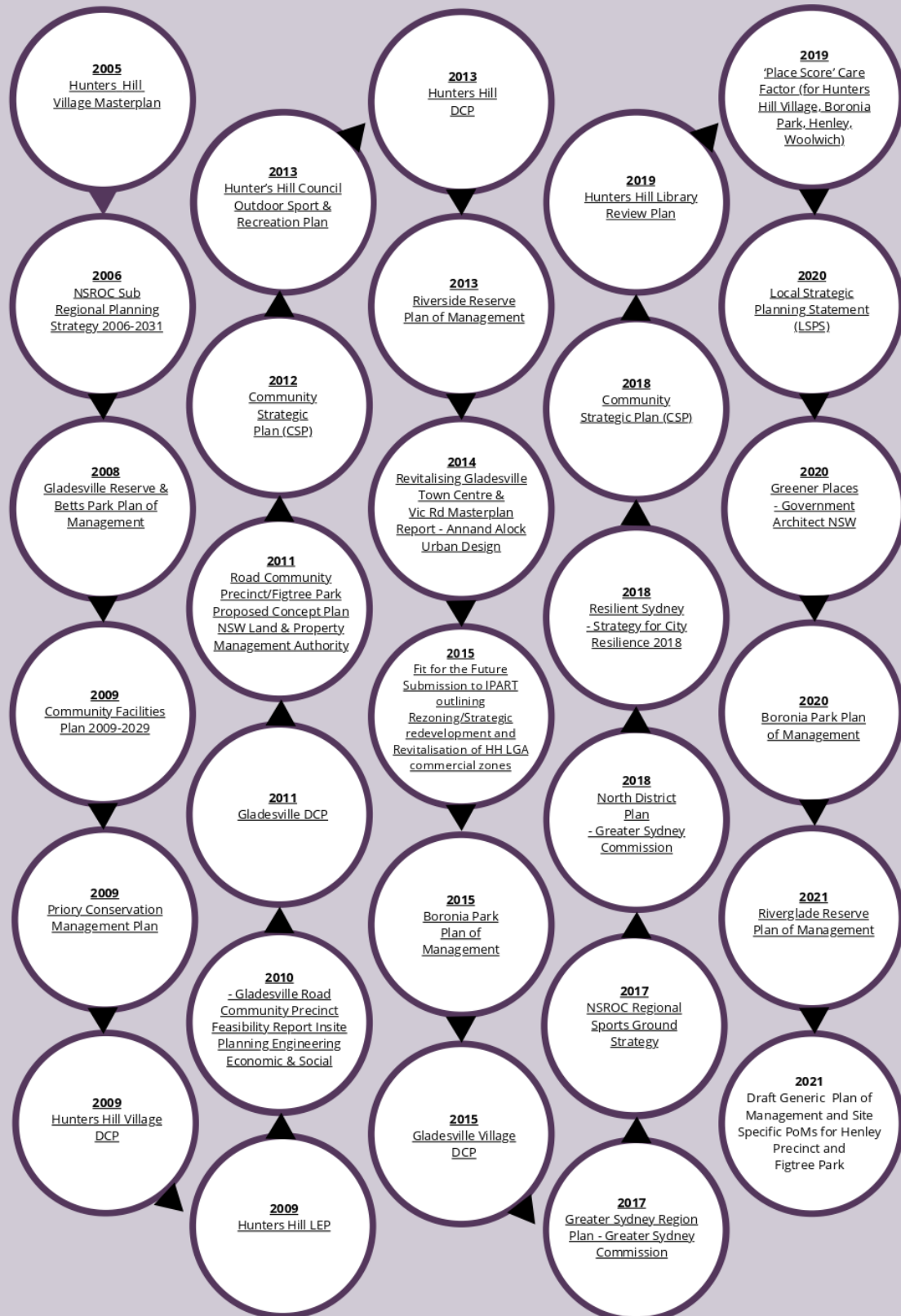


Image: Gladesville Commercial Centre

FROM 2005 TO PRESENT RELATED REPORTS, PLANS & STRATEGIES



3.2 PROPERTIES

Hunter's Hill Council owns a small but valuable property and community buildings portfolio.

Council's Property Portfolio consists of:

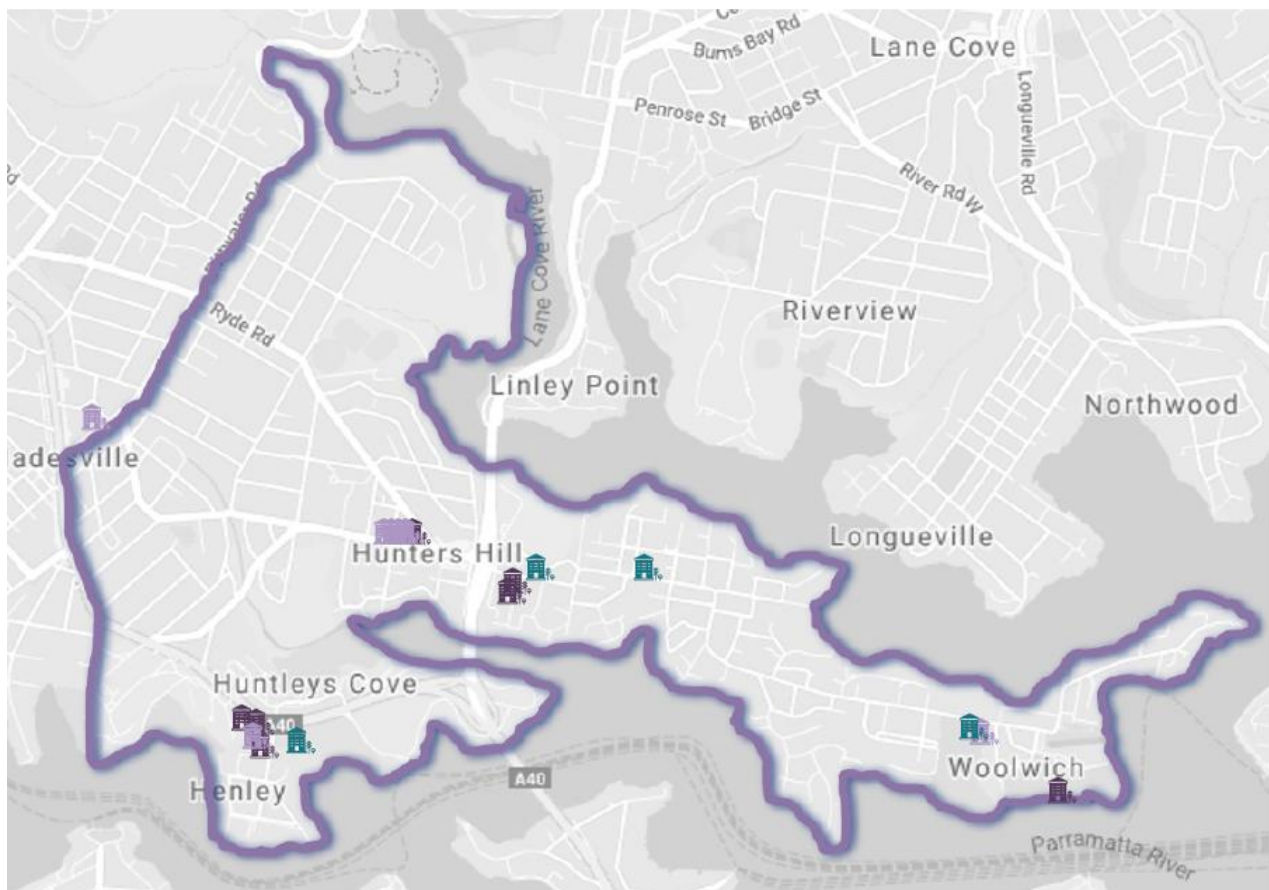
- Council's Administration Centre and Council Chambers and associated facilities, together with the former Council Depot
- Childcare buildings
- Community buildings
- Heritage listed buildings on Crown land, for example, The Priory
- Council carparks

However, there are also some small remnant sites consisting of former road reserves and unmade roads.

To support financial, social and environmental sustainability it is essential that Council's property portfolio is structured to maximise operational effectiveness, efficiency, financial performance and community benefit, and that Council maximises the value of appropriate properties.

Council's properties are managed in accordance with relevant legislation including:

- Local Government Act
- Crown Land Act
- Roads Act
- Real Property Act
- Retail Leases Act





To support Council's long term financial sustainability, Council needs to generate additional funds and diversify its revenue base to reduce the reliance on rate income.

Balanced with this is the challenge for Council to raise sufficient funds to deliver improved facilities to service the community.

One opportunity is to release the value and potential of its property portfolio to meet the needs of the Hunters Hill community.

This involves:

- Identifying non-ownership alternatives to property solutions.
- Owning property – knowing what property is owned and why it is owned by Council.
- Managing property – knowing that the property is fulfilling its purpose.
- Investing in property – capturing the benefits of growth for the community.
- Releasing property – making informed choices about when and why to dispose of property for which Council and the community has no further purpose.
- Buying property – identifying what property is needed so that the right purchase decisions are made at the right time, and the necessary resources (including lifecycle costs) can be planned in advance.

Recommendations will consider the appropriate and equitable consolidation, rationalisation, construction, disposal, upgrade, reconfiguration and acquisition of property and social infrastructure to meet the existing and projected needs of the community.

4.

KEY ELEMENTS

1

3 Precincts

- Village Green Precinct (Gladesville Road/Figtree Park, Hunters Hill)
- Arts, Cultural and Heritage Precinct (Town Hall, Administration Centre, former Council Depot Hunters Hill)
- Lifestyle and Wellbeing Precinct (Henley)

2

Council owned properties in Gladesville

- 4 Pittwater Road, Gladesville
- Cowell St Carpark, Gladesville

3

Leases and Licenses

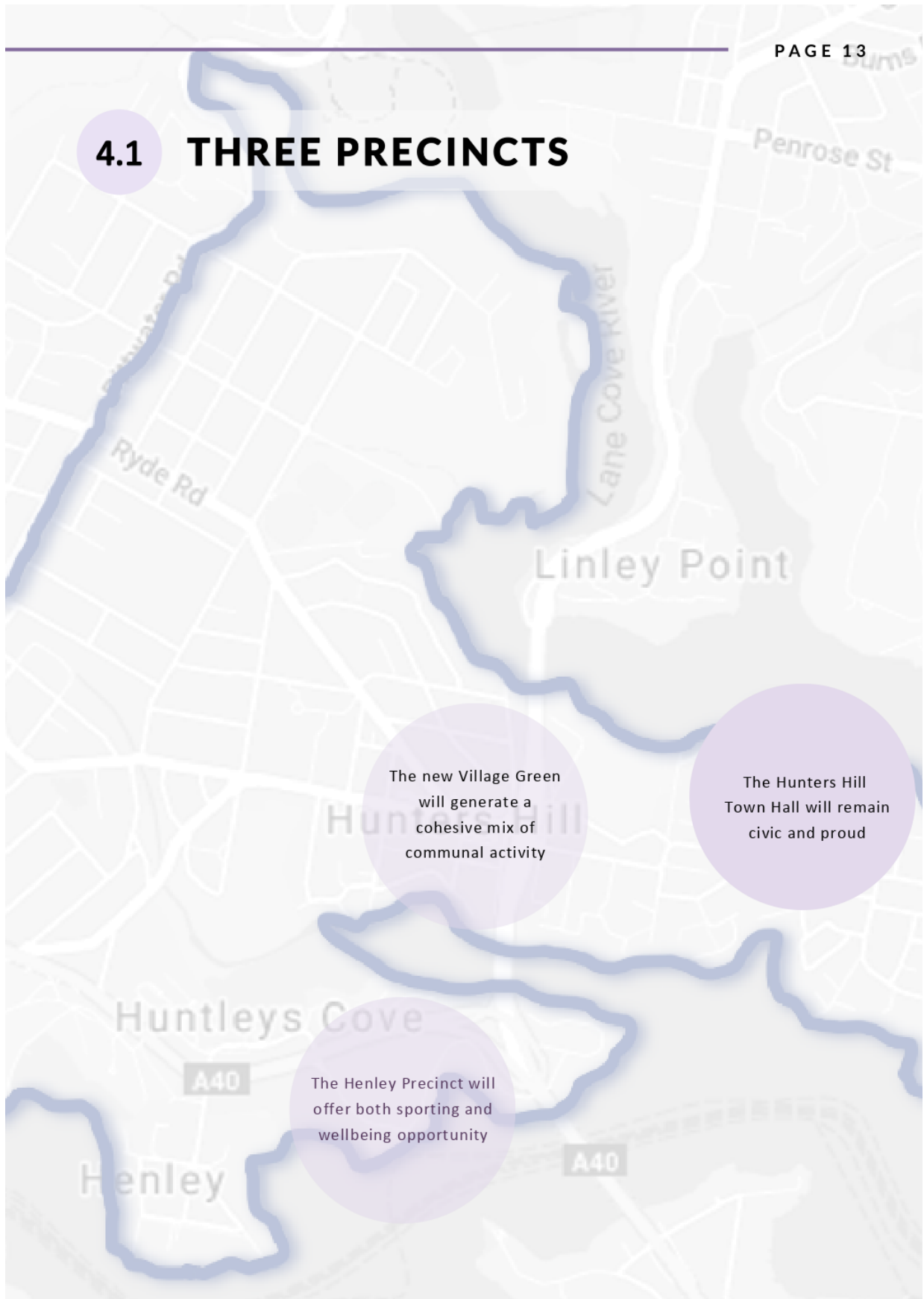
- Leased properties
- Licensed properties

4

Remnant Land

- Road reserves, Drainage easements, Air space

4.1 THREE PRECINCTS



These Precincts will be activated across the day ... imagine...



The Precincts are places that provide a range of services, activities and programs that are integrated.

It is through the creation of the 3 Precincts that Council intends to generate positive financial and social outcomes. This can be achieved by integrating services, programs and activities within a multipurpose community facility or an integration of a range of activity generating uses, including: community and cultural facilities, shops, transport, and public parks.

The Precincts support service delivery opportunities, place making, community capacity building and financial sustainability.

Each Precinct will have its own personality that builds on existing uses and strengths and provides a unique offering but at the same time still fits within the urban character of Hunters Hill.

This Strategy provides a broad overview, which is broken up into short (1-3 years), medium (3-5 years) and long term (5 years+) goals. However, as project plans for each Precinct are developed and/or additional opportunities arise, Council may be in a position to deliver additional projects identified through the development of the Community Strategic Plan and associated strategies.

Outcomes to be delivered

This Strategy aligns with, and responds to the Community Strategic Plan, Council’s 2009 Community Facilities Plan, 2019 Library Services Review recommendations and the Local Strategic Planning Statements, all of which outline key community and social outcomes, including:

- 1 Supporting the financial sustainability of Council and sustainable models of asset delivery
- 2 Innovative services and assets that meet current and future community needs
- 3 A sustainable built environment that accommodates a growing population
- 4 Well-used community and civic facilities
- 5 Improved community service delivery

These precincts will be activated across the day ... imagine...



- For the development
- For the future of Council



- Promoting health and wellbeing (Physical and mental health)



- Applying Ecologically Sustainable Design Principles
- Promoting resilience



- Connecting the community
- Inclusive for all



- Year round lively experience
- Activities surrounding spaces



- Respecting the past
- Celebrating the future



Image: Green Square Library

VILLAGE GREEN PRECINCT

(COMMUNITY AND CIVIC FOCUS - GLADESVILLE ROAD/FIGTREE PARK, HUNTERS HILL)

Site

The Village Green is located within the boundary of Matthew Street, Gladesville Road and Ryde Road.

This site has a mix use of green space, community service buildings, businesses, shops and limited parking. Council also has care, control and management of Figtree Park.

Timeframe

Short

The need to plan for a new Library, accommodate Community Services, activate Figtree Park and provide opportunities for business, prioritises this key project for commencement within the next 1-3 years.

History

Figtree Park was transferred to Council in an exchange by the Department of Education for an equivalent area of Boronia Park at the corner of Park Road and High Street in 1954. The site had previously been known as Figtree Playground because a playground had been located on the site.



Image: Marrickville Library



46 Gladesville Rd is a weatherboard cottage built by Council in 1956 to house Overseer David Dorn and his family. The family vacated the property in 1981 and another Council staff member took up residence for several years. It was then adapted and upgraded by Council to provide office space for Gladesville Community Aid.

The Gladesville Rd Community Centre, 44 Gladesville Rd was built in 1965 and was originally used as the Hunters Hill Senior Citizens Hall. A games room was added to the building in 1973.

The brick cottage of 42 Gladesville Rd came under the control of Council, which was already tenanted when Figtree Park was created.

The Hunters Hill Women's Bowling Club held a lease of about 2575sq.m of Figtree Park from 1959. The bowling green and clubhouse were located along Matthew Street.

Hunter's Hill Council owns 48 Gladesville Road, which is privately tenanted.

Vision

The Village Green will be a place where community facilities and services will be centralised and will provide a renewed focus on activity. This will be a place for all ages, attracting students from nearby schools, older residents from nearby seniors housing and residents generally from across Hunters Hill.

Residents and visitors will regularly visit the new contemporary library and council administration centre. The Park will be activated and in use across the day from early morning to evening. The Precinct will be a vibrant place that contributes to the life of the Hunters Hill community and lifestyle.

The creation of the Precinct will strengthen local economic development.

Precinct Images



Image: Kiora Place - Double Bay



Image: Marrickville Library



Image: Coal Loader - Waverton

Opportunities

- Improving and activating Figtree Park.
- Providing quality accommodation for community service organisations.
- Accommodating Council's Administration.
- Accommodating a contemporary library.
- Allowing for income producing commercial space.
- Accommodating community meeting space/s.
- Resolving access and safety issues along Gladesville Road by reducing the number of driveways.
- Accommodating flexible working spaces.
- Activating/opening up Figtree Park to encourage greater use and longer stays.
- Accommodating a residential component (for downsizing).
- Energising Hunters Hill Village through activation and public art.
- Supporting local business activities.

Considerations

- Ensuring Crown Land support.
- Ensuring provisions for Sydney Community Service and seeking their feedback/support.
- Ensuring that there is no net loss of public open space.
- Effective traffic management and parking provisions.
- Incorporating accommodation, commercial or residential components.
- Demonstrating financial sustainability.
- Accommodating existing services, such as Meals on Wheels.
- Incorporating future uses and enabling evolution.

Imagine this...

- Kiora Place – Double Bay
- Fred Kelly Place – Five Dock
- Harboard Diggers
- Marrickville Library
- The Coal Loader - Waverton
- Green Square Library



HERITAGE AND CULTURAL PRECINCT

(HUNTERS HILL TOWN HALL, COUNCIL'S
ADMINISTRATION CENTRE AND DEPOT)

Site

The Hunters Hill Town Hall and Council Administration is located on the corner of Alexandra and D'Aram Streets, Hunters Hill.

Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Council's have entered an agreement to share Depot services from a site in Lane Cove. The former Hunters Hill Depot site in D'Aram St is now vacant.

Timeframe

Medium

The prioritisation of the Village Green Precinct will trigger planning for the Heritage and Cultural Facilities Precinct. It is anticipated that this key project will commence within the next 3 years.

History

The original Hunters Hill Town Hall was completed in 1866 and was significantly enlarged and improved in 1902. The building was further adapted in 1938 when the Council Chamber was added, and again in 1967 with the addition of the Hunters Hill Museum. The Town Hall was used for congregational church services from 1868 until the Congregational Church was built in 1878. And, for seven years between 1890 and 1897 the Town Hall was used as a Ladies Grammar School.



The infamous Town Hall fire of 1978 was thought to have been caused by possums eating through wiring. The damage was so severe that \$1.2 million was spent on rebuilding the Town Hall and its offices. Fortunately, much of the front facade of the Town Hall was saved, but little else remained. In 1988 there were further additions to the administrative centre.

Behind the Town Hall and Administration Centre was Council's Depot. The Depot garage was built in 1982. The corner lot of 9 Madeline Street was purchased by Council in 1954 and included as part of the Depot. The construction of the garage and store required the acquisition of part of the rear yards of No. 11 and No. 15 Madeline Street, which occurred in 1980.

On the corner of Alexandra and D'Aram Streets is the War Memorial and WW1 restored Howitzer cannon. The site pays homage to those who have lived in Hunters Hill and fought in the wars.

Vision

The vision for this site is to celebrate the culture and heritage of Hunters Hill.

The site is already home to the Hunters Hill Music Club, art gallery and an expanded Hunters Hill Museum, which will celebrate our heritage.

The performance space will be contemporary and offer a unique experience. The Town Hall already hosts the annual Hunters Hill Art Exhibition and Young in Art, with improved facilities there is an opportunity to expand this offering increasing the utilisation of the Town Hall.



Image: Hunters Hill Museum



Image: Camden Museum

Opportunities

- Improving the amenity to adjoining owners.
- Improving amenity and facilities for community groups, e.g. Hunters Hill Music Club.
- Retaining and strengthening the cultural hub of the Town Hall, Council Chambers and Museum while relocating the administration functions of Council to Hunters Hill Village to boost local economic development and achieve operational efficiencies, in particular in relation to Library operations.
- Using the administration section of the building for commercial leasing/offices.
- Developing an art and cultural precinct, which includes an art gallery, museum, offices or commercial leasing.
- Determining whether the existing office accommodation can be retrofitted for future use or does there need to be consideration of a 'new' build?
- Working with other organisations and businesses within the vicinity to support the arts and cultural focus.
- Accommodating a residential component for downsizing or retirement living that is in keeping with the surrounding character.

Considerations/ Influences

- Redeveloping parcels of the site, eg the former depot site whilst remaining sympathetic to the Town Hall heritage.
- Incorporating a sustainable financial return.
- Determining the feasibility of a 99 year lease.
- Ensuring that any developments on the site are compatible and complimentary to surrounding uses

Imagine this...

- Camden Library and Museum
- North Parramatta Heritage Precinct
- Arthur Boyd Centre



Image: North Parramatta Heritage Precinct



Image: Camperdown Commons

LIFESTYLE AND WELLBEING PRECINCT

(HENLEY)

The site is approximately 8.45 Ha and includes:

- Former Bowling Club constructed in the early 1960's
- Amenities Building constructed in the early 1970's
- Riverside Pre-School constructed in 2001
- Cricket/Soccer Field
- Remnant bushland and harbour foreshore
- Netball/Basketball Court
- 3 onsite Carparks
- Green Waste Centre
- Community Garden
- Reverse vending machine
- Accessible ferry wharf and associated covered walkway
- Skatepark

Timeframe

Short

Test ideas from the consultation period and use these to enable a vision to evolve organically with an Expression Of Interest for an operator to activate the site - taking a place and curatorial approach, which includes existing site partners and attracting new partners.

It is anticipated that this key project will commence within the next year

Medium

It is anticipated that this key project will commence within the next 5 years with review of the site and engagement of an urban designer or architect to bring the community vision to life.

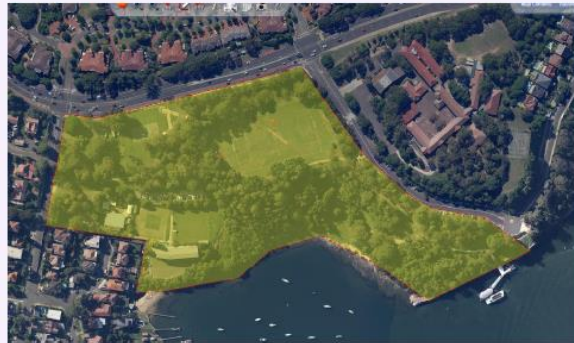


Image: The Greens - North Sydney



Image: The Canopy - Lane Cove

History

Originally known as Blandville, Henley now rests in a quiet enclave on the Parramatta River. Henley has a mix of schools, sandstone homes, sports fields and community buildings, including:

- Henley Community Centre (previously Henley Bowling Club)
- Henley Cottage
- Riverside Pre School
- Henley Long Day Care Centre
- Gladesville Reserve
- Skate park and basketball courts
- Community Garden

Huntleys Point is a small suburb adjacent to Henley and facing the Parramatta River. Huntleys Point is characterised by sandstone residential properties, Riverside Girls High School and the Huntleys Point Wharf, which ferries passengers up and down the Parramatta River to the Sydney CBD.

Gladesville Reserve was dedicated for public recreation in 1920. It is approximately 8.5 hectares of which 3 hectares is bushland. It was originally in two lots. The northern lot, closest to Victoria Rd (DP 100085940) was dedicated as a Hospital for the Insane in 1895. Council became trustee in July 1960.

The remaining lot (DP 1017546903) was vested in seven (7) trustees until November 1958 when trusteeship was transferred to Council. The Henley Community Centre (previously the Henley Bowling Club) is located on this part of the Reserve. The Bowling Club suffered from declining membership and bowling ceased on the site in 1999. The land and improvements were the subject of a 20 year lease with Henley Bowling and Recreation Club Co-operative Limited. The lease expired in November 1996.

Council undertook an Expression of Interest process for a new leasee for the building. However, Henley Bowling and Recreation Club Co-operative Limited continued in the building until July 2008 when Council took possession of the building following their liquidation. Since this time the building has been upgraded and managed by Council as the Henley Community Centre.

In May 1996 a small section of the Reserve (which was a disused green of the Henley Bowling Club) was separately gazetted as a preschool site. Council then constructed Riverside Preschool on the site following an extensive community fundraising campaign.

Hunter’s Hill Council was appointed Trustee of Henley Cottage in 1983. The Cottage was originally part of the Hospital for the Insane. Following significant restoration as a Bicentennial project the Cottage was leased.



Image: Brewery Craft Markets

As required, Council completed Plans of Management for the Reserve in July 1998, September 2004 and has recently prepared a revised draft Plan of Management, which is intended to be exhibited in the first half of 2021.

Vision

The vision for the Henley Precinct will grow organically. Initially, Council will undertake an EOI to determine a variety of short-term mixed uses.

Over the longer term it is anticipated that the Precinct will lend itself to services and facilities that support health and lifestyle, such as:

- Increased and improved access to open space.
- Improved community and recreational facilities offering contemporary multipurpose spaces.
- New facilities, which will incorporate commercial aspects that will enable revenue raised to be rolled back into the asset maintenance and renewal of the buildings as well as the broader precinct of Gladesville Reserve, Betts Park and Henley Community Centre.



Image: Catalyx



Image: Camperdown Commons

Opportunities

Facilities and associated uses:

- Constructing a synthetic field with a shared Sports and Community Facility.
- Improving amenities for sporting activities including storage, changerooms, etc.
- Considering a gym/café to service users and local sporting clubs as part of the new amenities.
- Relocating the current cricket pitch either elsewhere on the site or subject to agreement relocate to another site.
- Providing a cafe/restaurant to service visitors to the reserve.
- Providing meeting rooms to cater for community groups with associated back of house facilities such as kitchen and amenities.
- Staging produce/craft markets.
- Hosting a community garden.
- Providing infrastructure to enable the staging of outdoor music/cultural events.
- Delivering a community playground.
- Continuing to lease buildings to the Preschool and child care with a potential for increased child care.
- Upgrading public amenities.
- Increasing access to the waterfront.
- Considering potential for residential development with a sustainable focus.

Considerations/ Influences

- Activating the site to meet the needs of a broader cross section of the community.
- Determining the most appropriate adaptive reuse for the Henley Community Centre (Bowling Club building) to enable the site to develop organically.
- Creating connectivity through the entire site for active and passives paces.
- Ensuring cohesion through a mix of commercial and community spaces.
- Challenging topography constraints, particularly at the back of the site. However, there may be opportunities to include a residential or similar development.

Imagine this...

- The Greens at North Sydney
- Calabria Bowling Club Manlyvale (bowling, Futsal, pizza, salsa)
- Camperdown Commons



Image: The Grounds - Alexandria



Image: Calabria Bowling Club



Image: The Canopy - Lane Cove



Image: The Canopy - Lane Cove



4.2 COUNCIL OWNED SITES IN THE GLADESVILLE COMMERCIAL CENTRE

Sites

The Gladesville Commercial Centre incorporates the area from Pittwater Road to Cowell Street, incorporating 4 Pittwater Road (Gladesville Occasional Care) and the Signal Hill Carpark. It is located on the western edge of the Hunters Hill municipality and is made up of two commercial areas, being; Victoria Road shopping strip, and Gladesville Shopping Village. The Victoria Road Commercial Centre is a mix of one and two storey buildings that present to Victoria Road and are used for shops and commercial purpose like retail, restaurant/café, office-based business and health/wellness businesses.

The Gladesville Shopping Village is accessed along Massey Lane and Flagstaff Street and is a one-roof shopping centre characterised by a supermarket as an anchor tenant with variety shops and commercial spaces used for retail, restaurant/café and health/wellness businesses. The two commercial areas each operate as standalone shopping areas with little integration between the two areas or contribution to the public domain or sense of place.

Gladesville Shopping Village is located behind the Victoria Road shopping strip. Council provides a public car park to provide access to shops and businesses (Cowell Street) and there is public parking provided in the shopping centre.

The Gladesville Commercial Centre is currently subject to a Masterplan.

Vision

Council owned sites will contribute to and act as a catalyst to the reactivation of the Gladesville Commercial Centre.

The Gladesville Commercial Centre will be renewed and revitalised, with a mixed-use urban centre. It will be the primary centre and commercial hub for the wider area, providing a full range of retail services and entertainment to the community. The Town Centre will offer a modern, convenient environment that respects the past and where people will love to be. It will have high quality mid-rise apartment living, meeting a range of housing needs. It will be a desirable and sustainable place to live.

The focal point of the Centre will be a renewed Gladesville Shopping Centre and public spaces between Massey Street and Cowell Street.

The redevelopment of the shopping centre with increased commercial space and residential apartments in well - designed buildings, will be the catalyst for renewal, place-making and urban design outcomes throughout the broader Gladesville centre (Hunters Hill LSPS).

History

1 Cowell Street was purchased by Council in 1974. At that time, the adjoining property, known as Seymour’s Yard was leased by Council with the option to purchase. In 1978, the purchase was completed and the carpark constructed.

Council also purchased lots in Flagstaff Street in 1958, 1960 and 1967 with all 3 lots being used as a carpark. Over the years there has been changes to rights of way and the development of the Gladesville Shopping Centre.

10 Cowell Street was purchased by Council in 1973 to house Gladesville Community Aid (who had previously occupied 6 Pittwater Road), but by the early 1990’s the building could no longer meet the need of residents and Gladesville Community Aid moved to Gladesville Road, Hunters Hill.

Since 1999 the Gladesville area has been targeted as an area needing revitalization by both Hunter’s Hill Council and the City of Ryde, in addition to the State Government’s strong push to see housing increased along major transport routes.

Description

There are two sites that Council owns within the Gladesville Commercial Centre:



- Cowell St Car Park: This site provides parking for local retail at present, but following the Gladesville Master Plan exercise, may have potential for redevelopment in association with adjacent land holdings.
- 4 Pittwater Road Gladesville: This site is in the City of Ryde and adjoins land owned by the City of Ryde. The Centre currently accommodates a community based occasional care centre. The centre is in need of updating. It is surplus to Hunter’s Hill Council requirements and options to realise its value will be investigated, whilst still retain occ in the area.

These two sites offer an opportunity to be considered with the overall master planning work that is under way in Gladesville.

The site at 4 Pittwater Road will need to be considered in partnership with the City of Ryde.

Opportunities

- Developing a hub specifically to meet the needs of children and families, occasional care and long day care.
- Investigating commercial lease areas, outdoor areas, etc.
- Partnering with the City of Ryde and tapping into their property opportunities.
- Supporting the Gladesville Masterplan.
- Improving traffic and parking in and around the commercial centre.
- Linking open spaces and improving pedestrian access.
- Supporting the community by offering a range of social opportunities via the provision public spaces with adequate seating and public art.
- Supporting commercial entities via a range of business and employment opportunities.

Considerations/Influences

- Partnering with the City of Ryde to determine an outcome for 4 Pittwater Road, Gladesville.
- Partnering with the adjoining land owners to champion a sustainable vision for Gladesville.
- Supporting the community through the provision of improved open space, transport, access, heritage and social infrastructure.

Imagine this....

- Merrifield, Victoria
- Surry Hills Village
- Stockland, Balgowlah



Image: Parramatta Civic Centre

4.3

LEASING AND LICENSING OF COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES

Council provides use of its building under leases, licences and casual and regular hire:

- Leases involve exclusive use of a property.
- Licences involved shared use of facility, where groups have access at certain times.
- Casual and regular hire arrangements are in place for use of community facilities and halls.

Council has several properties where community and recreational facilities are provided or could be provided.

Each of these properties have opportunities to expand the recreational opportunities available through improved facilities, such as expanded club houses, which can be used by a variety of community groups.

With minor leases and licenses, it is proposed to develop a policy to recoup outgoings and maintenance where practicable. This would need to be handled sensitively, recognising the community benefit of these leases and taking into account the capacity of community groups to pay.



Image: The Priory - Gladesville



Image: Hunters Hill Sailing Club

4.4

REMNANT LAND

Council holds many small parcels of land such as unformed roads, road reserves and drainage easements. These parcels are often not required by Council, but can have significant value to an adjoining owner.

Through an updated remnant land site list it will then be possible to have a systematic approach to the assessment of each site where surplus sites sell at fair market value. Disposal will need to be treated sensitively to protect community rights such as view corridors or access to the water.

In such circumstances it may be necessary to impose covenants on title.

Following assessment of a parcel of remnant land a report will be presented to Council outlining the assessment and recommended way forward. This report will address, where required and appropriate, registering of easement and right of way and other encumbrances that will protect community interest.

5.

NEXT STEPS

5.1

PRINCIPLES

Hunter's Hill Council has a small, but valuable, property portfolio, capable of making a significant financial contribution to improved services for our residents.

Understandably, communities are generally concerned when governments dispose of, or develop their property. These concerns relate to 'why' the organisation is developing its property, the outcomes of development and how the funds raised will be used.

It is therefore important to set out some ground rules to guide the implementation of the Strategy.

Key Principles

Before any financial benefits are achieved, projects that involve the development or sale of Council-owned property must:

- Prove they will deliver a net community benefit.
- Abide by probity principles to ensure procedural fairness and value for money.
- Demonstrate best practice in sustainability and urban design, where it is a development project.
- Ensure there has been effective community engagement.

5.2

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Contractual arrangements shall ensure that the Key Principles outlined in this strategy as well as the particular vision and objectives for the project are delivered to the extent practicable.

A detailed budget for each Precinct Project is not possible at this stage. It requires a set of concept plans for each project, building costs, site valuations and ongoing running costs. Some initial high level work indicates that this program is achievable.

Feedback from the first phase of consultation on the draft Community Infrastructure Plan, now referred to as the Property Strategy, will inform the concept plans for each Project.

Council has a high dependence on land rates as a source of income and property activity is seen as a way of helping to reduce this, as well as providing funding for projects and programs that might otherwise fail to make it through the budget process.

It's important that the funding released through property activity is used sustainably, providing benefits for many years beyond the projects that generated the funds.

To achieve this, certain principles need to apply:

- All revenue and expenditure relating to property development activities are channeled through Council's Property Development Reserve (PDR).
- The allocation of funds from the PDR is in accordance with Council Long-term Financial Plan and ratified as part of the annual budget setting process, or at other times as opportunities arise.
- One-off revenue from property sales should not be allocated to operational expenditure unless that expenditure is also of a one-off nature.
- Opportunities to produce on-going, annual revenue from property development projects should be explored and taken up where appropriate to help reduce Council's reliance on land rates for maintaining and improving service levels.

Determining Sustainable Funding Options

As each project identified in this Strategy is progressed, a comprehensive funding plan will be produced, which will be presented to Council for consideration.

Given the dual financial impact of rate capping and asset renewal, Council will need to deal with the increasing expectations of the community for the assets they use, private benefit versus community benefit for users, level of subsidy or equitable sharing of costs for provision of assets and the need to rationalise both facilities and levels of support provided.

The following funding options can be assessed against each project:

Sale or Long-Term Lease

Sale or long-term leasing of land will only be considered in special circumstances and after public consultation. Assessment of land for sale or lease will consider the current state and use of the land, the services under the land and the possible future uses for the land including green corridors, open space, car parking, pedestrian ways, etc.

Continued Maintenance

Ongoing funding must be made available to maintain Council's current and future property portfolio (industry standard would be an annual allocation in the order of 1.5-2% of the portfolio's value, excluding land value). Property maintenance is cyclical, and it is recommended that a Property Maintenance Reserve be established, and an annual allocation be made from Council's budget to enable maintenance to be planned and the need for large irregular funding requests eliminated.

5.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Property Strategy is a living document that will be reviewed to ensure it meets objectives in a changing environment.

As the various elements of the Strategy are implemented there will be clear and consistent communication to ensure that the community and key stakeholders are aware of and are appropriately consulted.

Council will develop a plan for each project which will have applied its Communication and Engagement Policy which is based on the IAP2 international framework.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.



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