

Department of Planning, Housing
and Infrastructure



Draft Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy

April 2025



View of Mount Keira / Djerra summit
from Robertson's Lookout.
Credit: Nick Cubbin/DCCEEW.
Artwork on this page by Nikita Ridgeway.





Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Government acknowledges that the Wollongong Health Precinct stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge this land as Dharawal and Wodi Wodi Country and recognise the many different clans and family groups that have lived, worked, visited and cared for this Country for over 65,000 years.

Aboriginal people are the first peoples of Australia. Until the arrival of settlers, the economy was sustainable, and threatened primarily by natural hazards that were met with resilience gained from generations of life on Country. The Aboriginal economy was tied to the land, which provided spiritual, cultural and physical sustenance.

Colonisation forcefully dispossessed Aboriginal people of their land, displaced communities, and damaged Country.

This land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

In developing the Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy, we aim to establish meaningful and collaborative relationships with Aboriginal people. We want to shift to a Country-centred approach, respecting, recognising and empowering Aboriginal knowledge in planning processes at a strategic level.

We show our respect for Elders past, present and future through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, work to provide places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

We commit to helping support the health and wellbeing of Country by valuing, respecting, and being guided by Aboriginal people, who know that if we care for Country – it will care for us.¹

We acknowledge that more work is needed beyond the strategy to inform how we care for Country and ensure Aboriginal people, hold a strong voice in shaping the future for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

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Draft Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy

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Acknowledgements

We wrote this document in collaboration with agencies across the NSW Government, including NSW Health, Transport for NSW, and TAFE NSW, as well as Wollongong City Council.

We acknowledge all the contributions others made during this process and thank them.

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Image on cover: Wollongong Public Hospital and its surrounds.

Ministers' foreword



The Hon. Paul Scully MP

Member for Wollongong
Minister for Planning and
Public Spaces

The Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy is an exciting opportunity to deliver world leading and innovative health care, improved connection to Wollongong Station, new and enhanced open public space, and new affordable housing choices.

The Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy establishes a framework to guide long term decision making for this important part of Wollongong. The strategy recognises that we need a higher level of patient centred healthcare and research potential, capable of accommodating an evolving and expanding population.

As the Illawarra Shoalhaven region grows to 575,000 people in 2041, it's never been more important to get these crucial planning steps right. We need to make sure we have enough housing, jobs closer to where people live, and easily accessible community services.

The strategy aims to provide a balance between what is needed to support the future of health care for the region and planning for more homes locally.

The NSW Government have planned for over 4,000 more homes to be delivered by 2050 in this precinct focused around Wollongong Train Station.

In planning for this future, we have a responsibility to enhance the delivery of health care, transport and open space for our community. This means all levels of government working together, with industry professionals, education providers, and culturally and linguistically diverse community organisations.

In implementing this strategy, we will work closely with First Nations organisations to empower their leadership in decision making and design services for their communities.

The NSW Government will continue to work as one - investing in and delivering much needed improvements to Wollongong Public Hospital and Wollongong Train Station over time, and TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus expanding its training offering and unlocking future research potential with education providers, such as the University of Wollongong, and clinical research organisations.

The NSW Government will also work closely with Wollongong City Council to deliver on our ambitions for more high quality public open space that supports our growing community.

We recognise that this strategy will be delivered in stages.

The development of the strategy has benefited from the input from residents, clinicians, transport providers and other organisations. Each have recognised the importance of better planning outcomes for the Wollongong Health Precinct will help to deliver better outcomes for patients, their families, residents, health workers while improving the functioning of this important part of Wollongong.

I thank the community and stakeholders for their ideas in the development of this important strategy.



The Hon. Ryan Park MP

Member for Keira

Minister for Health

Minister for Regional Health

Minister for the Illawarra
and the South Coast

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is on the cusp of vast and transformative change through significant infrastructure projects that will not only enhance the District's capital footprint, but also the capacity to delivery high quality services.

There is currently more than \$1 billion in the infrastructure pipeline for local facilities, which will deliver world class projects including the brand new Shellharbour Hospital, a new community health centre at Warrawong, the redevelopment of the Shoalhaven Hospital campus and significant upgrades at both Wollongong and Milton Ulladulla Hospitals.

But as we look to the future, we know the work needs to go further. Wollongong and surrounding areas have a growing population, and our health services need to better support the community as it grows and ages.

The Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy is an unprecedented opportunity to help transform the health of the communities of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Local healthcare and facilities need to continue to deliver world class, accessible hospitals. We also need to think beyond the walls of a hospital to address the deeper challenges of health and wellbeing of our community.

This strategy also gives our region an opportunity to become a leader in research that prioritises local needs and addresses real, local challenges as well as become a centre of excellence, a place where clinicians, researchers, educators and from across the world are drawn to.

The strategy is underpinned by a rapidly growing population within the region and is also being driven by the region's increasing connectivity with Sydney's south west, also a rapidly growing community.*

As we know, Health is one of the two fastest growing sectors for federal spending and the Illawarra is on track to become an epicentre for health, research, innovation and training.*

The importance of partnerships between health, research, education and industry to innovate and accelerate change in healthcare cannot be understated. We need to build shared local goals and work alongside one another for our shared communities.

This is an important era for our community, one where we can start working on the possibilities a project like the Wollongong Health Precinct will do for all of us.

The future opportunities that the Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy will unlock for our community and the broader health system is something I am so proud to be a part of.

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The strategy at a glance

About the strategy

The Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy provides direction on the future of the land generally west of the South Coast Rail Line. The precinct includes a mix of health, educational and residential related land uses, with Wollongong Public Hospital, Wollongong Private Hospital and Wollongong Day Surgery acting as anchors to the health industry in the precinct.

Over the next 25 years, the Wollongong Health Precinct will leverage institutions such as TAFE NSW, the University of Wollongong and others to grow innovation, working alongside long established health precincts across NSW, Australia and globally to create our point of difference.

The strategy:

- provides a long-term plan extending to 2050
- acts as a guide to inform future development and amendments to planning controls
- outlines strategic planning directions to inform public and private investment, and
- can be drawn on to enable the community, businesses and investors to make informed decisions that will help realise the vision for the precinct.

The strategy will be implemented over several years, with collaboration required from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (department), the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD), Health Infrastructure, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Technical and Further Education (TAFE) NSW, Wollongong City Council and private sector partners.

Vision

The vision sets the direction for the Wollongong Health Precinct as it undergoes substantial changes as a place. It refers to our shared vision about what the health precinct will be known for by 2050. It draws together the aspirations outlined within the 'big moves' and structure plan.

Wollongong Health Precinct is a leader in regional based healthcare and research, complemented by partnerships in health, education, training and business. The Precinct is collaborative in form and function, with its services and places supporting healthy, sustainable and inclusive communities.

A Vision for Wollongong Health Precinct to 2050

Big moves

The 'big moves' break the vision down into 5 specific ideas. These will spark changes that unlock the health precinct's potential. They are deliberately ambitious and require ongoing commitment and coordination to deliver by 2050.

Big Move 1: A research and education hub helping to shape a sustainable and innovative health system

Big Move 2: A connected and active 'city west'

Big Move 3: An accessible and inclusive transport network helping us to move with choice

Big Move 4: Improved services to support an interconnected and innovative workforce

Big Move 5: A connected, green and vibrant public domain anchored by a network of welcoming communal meeting places.

Structure plan

The structure plan (Figure 1) sets out an overarching framework for the health precinct. It sets a plan for the future with indicative movement and open space networks, land use and future connectivity structures.

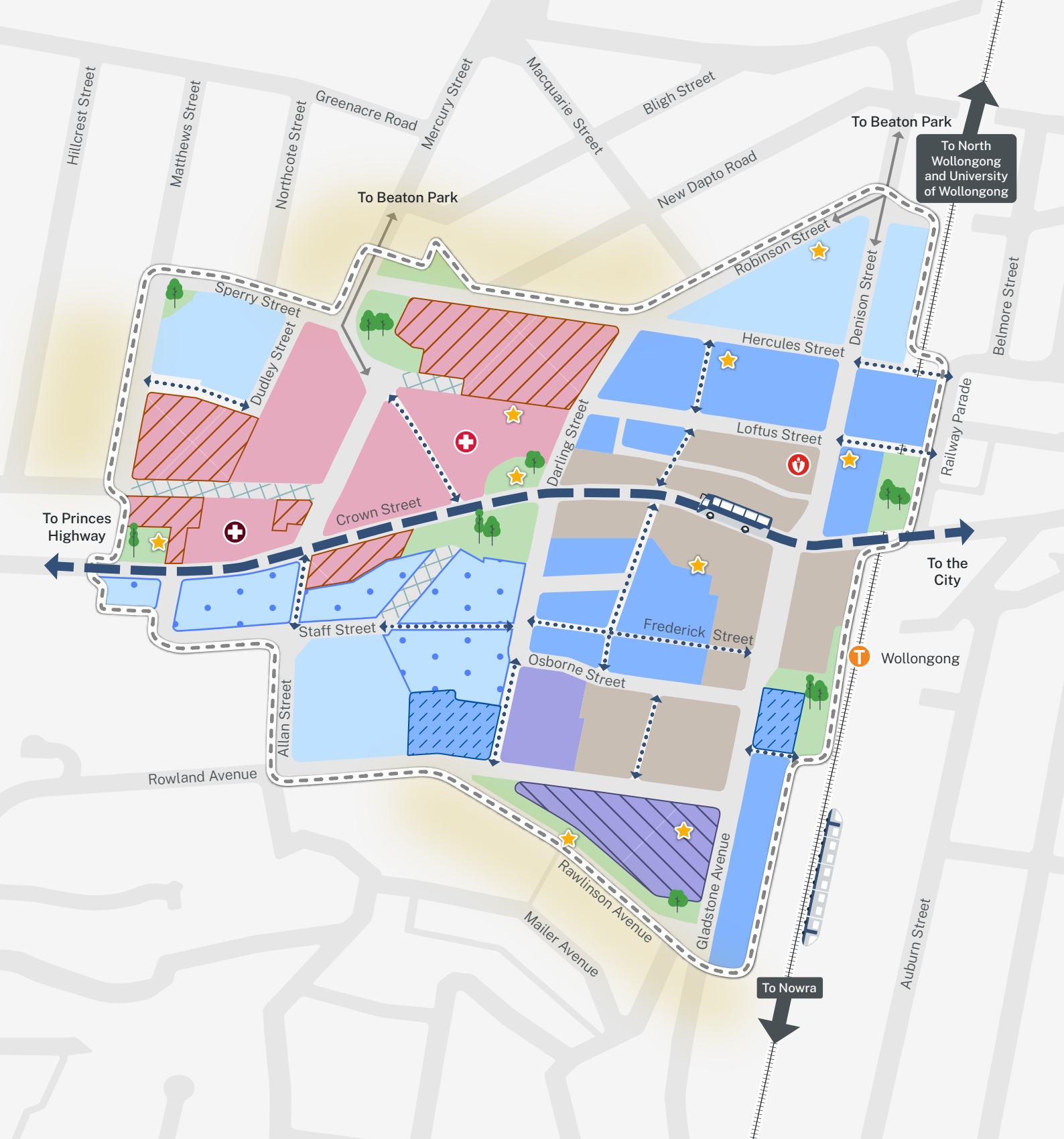
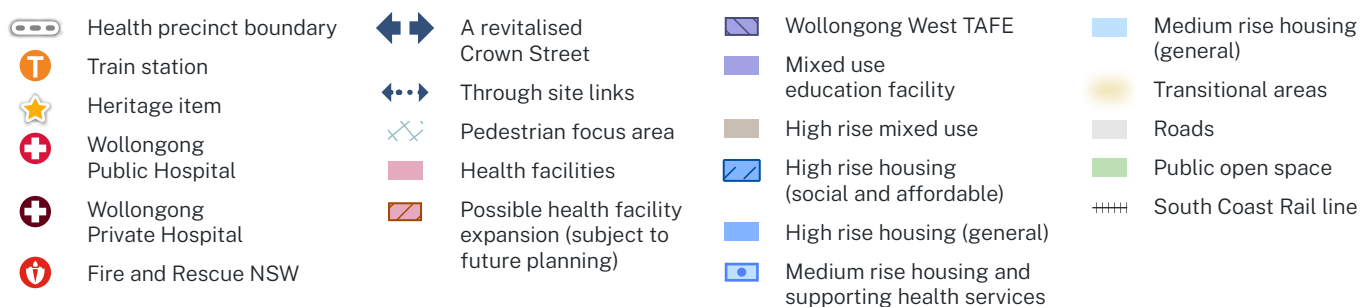


Figure 1: Wollongong Health Precinct structure plan



Other key terms to understand

Core principles

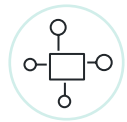
These statements reflect what the community and stakeholder feedback want the Wollongong Health Precinct to look like. The 3 themes are a guide for those applying the strategy to ensure projects for the precinct reflect our collective ambition for it.



Principle 1:
Healthy and sustainable



Principle 2:
Country, people and place



Principle 3:
Collaboration and innovation

Success metrics

These are goals that define how a 'successful' precinct will look in the context of each big move. Evaluating the health precinct against the success metrics helps us decide if the big moves have achieved their goals. They draw directly from the core principles.

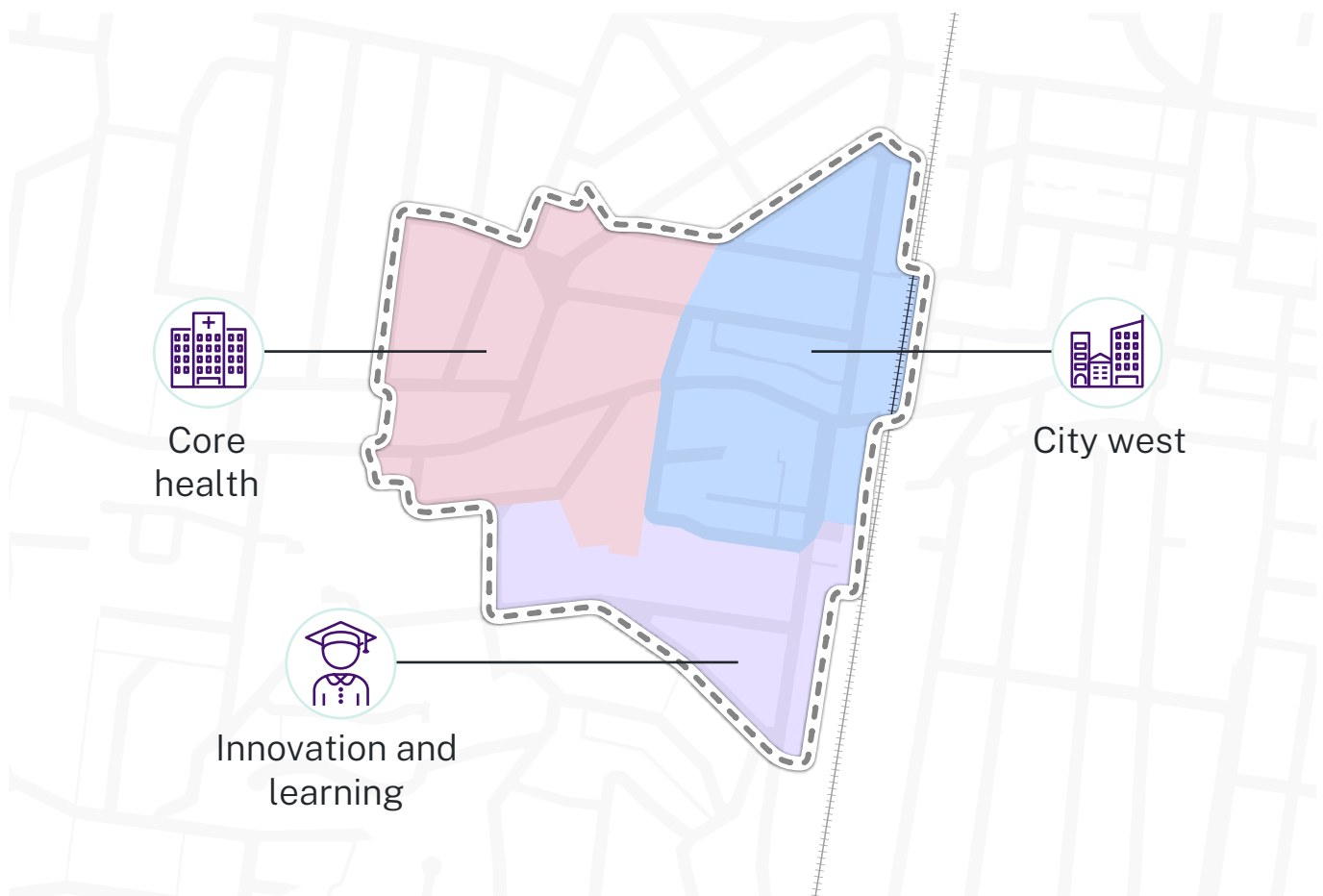
Actions

The actions describe how the NSW Government will progress and carry out the strategy. The scope of these actions may change over time to resolve or coordinate government efforts to realise the desired place outcomes.

Sub Precincts

The Wollongong Health Precinct can be divided into 3 distinct areas, with their own character and identity. These areas are called 'sub precincts' (Figure 2), as they have substantially different roles today and in the future.

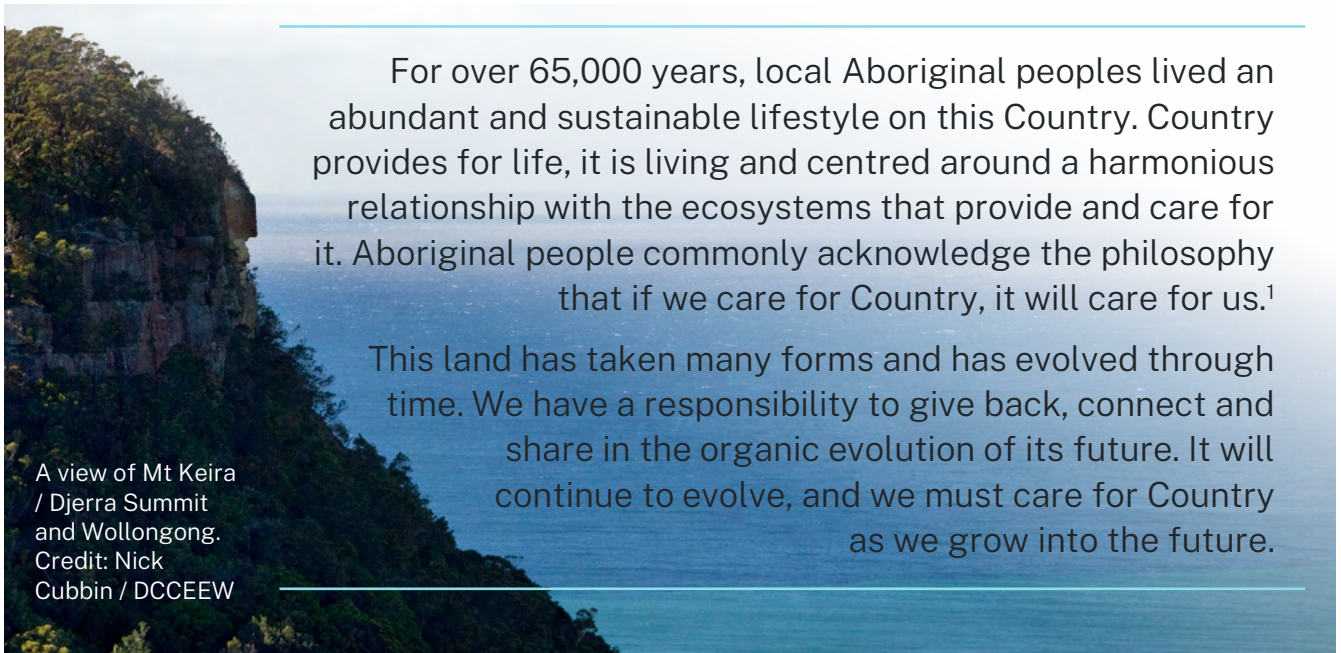
Figure 2: Wollongong Health Precinct sub precincts



1.

Introduction

Wollongong is rapidly growing and changing. It is attracting public and private investment that will increase housing supply and choice, deliver new employment and economic opportunities, and improve public spaces, infrastructure and services.



A view of Mt Keira
/ Djerra Summit
and Wollongong.
Credit: Nick
Cubbin / DCCEW

For over 65,000 years, local Aboriginal peoples lived an abundant and sustainable lifestyle on this Country. Country provides for life, it is living and centred around a harmonious relationship with the ecosystems that provide and care for it. Aboriginal people commonly acknowledge the philosophy that if we care for Country, it will care for us.¹

This land has taken many forms and has evolved through time. We have a responsibility to give back, connect and share in the organic evolution of its future. It will continue to evolve, and we must care for Country as we grow into the future.

The future Wollongong Health Precinct is on Dharawal Country. It will play a key role in supporting Wollongong City Council's vision for a connected, innovative and progressive city. Anchored by major health institutions, its future will be shaped by partnerships in the research and education sector. The precinct will showcase its ability to care for local communities and have national impact through research and innovation.

Today, the health precinct complements the region and city as an important destination of both health services and employment. However, it faces challenges. We forecast that there will be significant growth in the region, that will lead to more economic and employment opportunities, and will continue to increase pressure on health and the surrounding infrastructure.

Planning for a better future

Strategic planning will help guide how the health precinct can be better connected, vibrant and activated. We need to provide new open spaces, upgrade critical public infrastructure and enhance the areas we stay within and move between to better connect our neighbourhoods. We need to ensure that we have a workforce that is supported and empowered to enrich the lives of the community. There must also be enough housing for the people who want to work, live and visit the health precinct, even if it is for short periods.

This place-based strategy provides a suite of proposed directions and priorities. These are informed by broad stakeholder input and what we have learned about the place, its community and connection to the rest of Wollongong. The strategy creates an aspirational, long-term vision for the health precinct, setting the scene for possibilities in line with this long-term approach.

What is a place-based strategy?

Place-based strategies focus on the characteristics of a place that people value, and how best to protect and enhance these characteristics as a place grows and changes. We develop place-based strategies for key areas of NSW to bring all the parties involved together to collaborate on an agreed vision for an area's future.

This ensures that more people can help shape the future of places that mean a lot to them. It also means public investment is better targeted to benefit more people.

What is a health precinct?

Health precincts in NSW have emerged as locations that integrate health, research, education, and innovation. These precincts are significant economic drivers for the region and help to advance healthcare outcomes, as well as foster community development.

Health precincts are strategically developed areas anchored by health institutions that hold partnerships with universities and local organisations. They form part of an existing network of neighbourhoods, open space and transport systems to support communities. They can also include supporting uses such as retail and housing land uses.

Applying this strategy

This strategy will be relevant for many different people; however, its main purpose is to provide strategic direction for how land is used in the health precinct.

The Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy is Action 1 of the *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041*. The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure oversees its overall implementation. Multiple organisations, institutions and industry professionals will deliver key actions and tasks as outlined in the action plan at the end of this document.

Consider and apply the guidance in this strategy when referencing it or relying on it for strategic justification.

Our intent

The strategy aims to:



Identify and address key economic, social, and environmental issues to build a strong case for change, ensuring that the planned improvements genuinely benefit the existing place, community and areas of need.



Set up a platform for multiple stakeholders to collaborate to expand on the precinct's vision as a model for service-driven precinct partnerships.



Identify the opportunities for change, where it capitalises on local strengths and challenges, and solves local issues that are important for the city to thrive.



Promote the health precinct as a hub of innovation, research, healthcare and community needs, based on access to key services, infrastructure and the city centre.



Guide the location and type of new development in a way that meets expectations and balances the creation of new services, workplaces, open spaces and more homes to enhance the area's strategic offering.



Set a modern approach to deliver for the region:

- strong sustainability outcomes
- design quality
- active transport provision
- urban greening
- improvements to public and open space.



Guide future development proposals to provide certainty for investment decisions that are in keeping with the final strategy, setting out the public benefits we encourage investors to contribute towards.

The approach to developing the strategy

Timeline

The need for the strategy was identified in 2019 when the then Department of Planning and Environment, explored the concept to build on the longstanding ambition of ‘Metro Wollongong’, the metropolitan centre of the Illawarra Shoalhaven region under the regional plan.

This strategy also responds to competing development pressure in the Wollongong City Centre. It aims to give the health industry in the area greater long-term certainty for its future, as it was growing in this location and reaching capacity in service delivery.

The timeline on the right summarises the process to date from the release of the *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan*.

Wollongong and its surrounds



2021

The NSW Government released the regional plan, setting the region's strategic framework for the next 20 years. Objective 1 outlined the need to 'Enhance the growth potential of the health precinct', with Action 1 to develop this strategy.

The NSW Government initially explored the constraints and opportunities for the land we now refer to as the Wollongong Health Precinct. This report identified challenges in using and upgrading existing public infrastructure, such as Wollongong Public Hospital and Wollongong Station.

2022

The NSW Government did more analysis of growth options for public infrastructure in the precinct. This stated the need for agencies to collaborate more on a shared precinct ambition, and to start engaging with community.

2023

The Department released a discussion paper to start community and stakeholder engagement and explore what people value and what needs to change. *Shaping the Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy* outlined some of the precinct's known strengths and challenges and established potential principles and directions.

2024

The Department reviewed feedback on the discussion paper. We published an *Engagement Outcomes Report* on our website.

The Department has since completed relevant technical analysis to inform this strategy.

2025 and beyond

Following public consultation, the NSW Government will finalise the strategy.

Implementation of the strategy will commence following its finalisation.

Research and analysis

Below is a summary of the research that informed the strategy.



Strategic context

Examining international, national, state and local strategic policies framed the future needs, trends and changes that health precincts need for their transformation. We reviewed case studies applicable to the health precinct to support this.



Demography

Exploring demographic and economic data gave a baseline for the types of jobs, economic dispersal and population information specific to the health precinct.



Heritage

The heritage study evaluated the significance of environmental and built heritage items across the health precinct to establish a set of priorities for future strategic land-use planning. We drew mainly from a review of existing material prepared by Wollongong City Council.



Flooding

Considering Wollongong City Council's flood modelling for the local area gave us a preliminary analysis of land constraints and directions needed for future development.



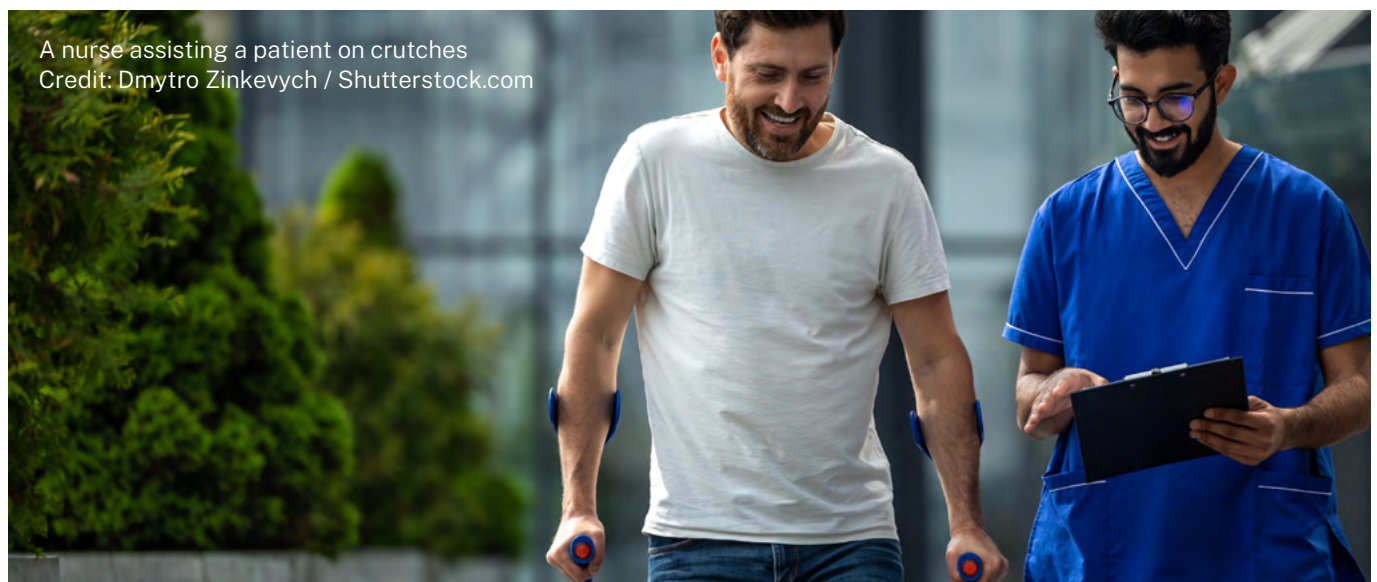
Transport

Using the Movement and Place framework, we analysed the function of the precinct's streets and connections to assess the social, economic and environmental sustainability of each street. This analysis set the general assumptions for future transport planning.



Open space

Drawing from the Public Spaces Charter, we analysed the types of public open spaces needed to ensure there was planning for green infrastructure and enough tree canopy coverage.



Early engagement

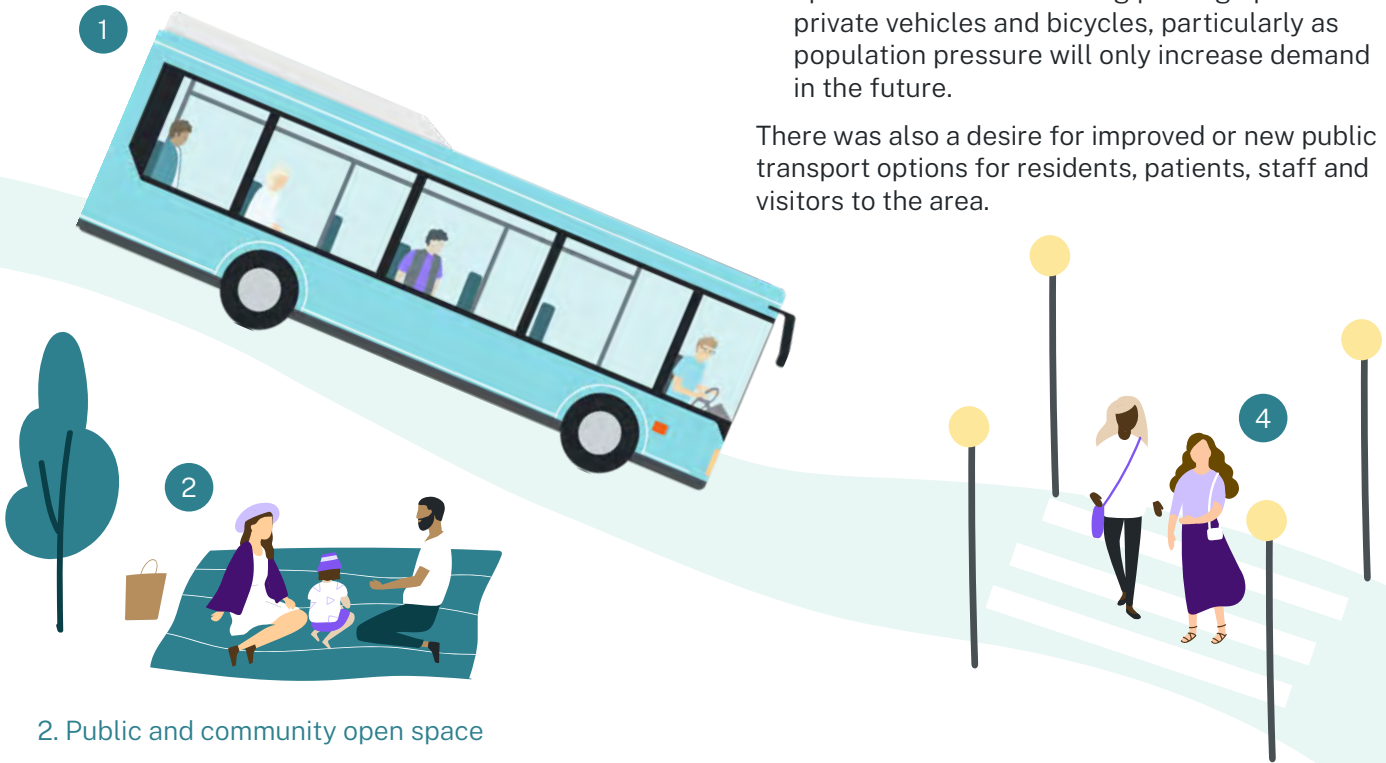
As part of the early engagement we did with community and other stakeholders, we prepared a report that outlined what we heard in response to a discussion paper. The feedback guided the development of this strategy. We heard the following priorities to address:

1. Parking and transport

Many community members and stakeholders identified parking and transport as significant issues for the strategy to address. They wanted to see substantial improvements in the:

- ability to access the site via public transport or walking and cycling improvements
- optimisation of the existing parking options for private vehicles and bicycles, particularly as population pressure will only increase demand in the future.

There was also a desire for improved or new public transport options for residents, patients, staff and visitors to the area.



2. Public and community open space

Community and stakeholder submissions valued the discussion paper's focus on public and community open space. They expressed a strong desire to improve public and community open space within the area. They also wanted communal places to eat and relax, particularly for residents and healthcare workers.

3. Key worker employment and housing supply

Feedback on the discussion paper saw the need for promoting healthcare employment opportunities, supported by better amenities. An existing and future shortfall of staff was identified by some respondents if strategies were not carried out to bring in more workers. People also wanted more key worker housing within the area so staff can live close to their employment or for short-term accommodation to support families or individuals receiving care.

4. Public safety

Feedback from community workshops and surveys recognised that residents and healthcare staff feel unsafe in certain areas of the precinct. Many submissions wanted improved amenities and revitalisation of existing infrastructure to improve perceived and actual safety, including in entrance areas to major destinations, such as Wollongong Station and Wollongong Public Hospital.



5. Health and community services

The community would like to see a significant expansion of general and specialist healthcare services and supporting community services such as childcare and aged care facilities. Feedback identified barriers to healthcare access for certain user groups, such as culturally and linguistically diverse communities.



2.

Defining change

This section discusses the information that has informed the development of this strategy, setting out what we are seeking to achieve under the vision.

Starting with Country

Note: The department developed this section and its graphics after engaging with members of Aboriginal communities in the region and local Aboriginal organisations. We also reviewed published research done by others who have engaged with the area's Traditional Custodians and Elders over time.

What is Country?

Country encompasses everything. It includes both living and non-living elements. It holds everything within the landscape, including Earth, Water and Sky Country, as well as people, animals, plants, and the stories that connect them.¹

Over millennia, this Country has changed substantially, responding alongside the evolution of animal and plant species, an everchanging climate, and the influence of human-kind. We are all, always on Country, and there is often a collective understanding that there are many stories and histories that reflect the deep connections that Aboriginal people hold to this land.

A recording of oral histories has emphasised that there are 5 histories that led to the Illawarra as we know it today.² These histories reflect carefully recorded memories, views and stories of the family groups, Elders and Traditional Owners that share these connections.

Starting with Country can recognise that where there are unknowns, there can be a process of shared learning on a collective way forward for a better future, acknowledging what was and what lives on.

Elements of significance live on in the sky, mountains and waterways, widely acknowledged by the Dreamtime stories of Djeera (Mount Keira) and the 5 islands off the coast, Jumbulla (Mount Kembla) and Merrigong (the escarpment). However, the ways that our cities have been developed over time was guided by the traditional knowledge of Country, where the roads of today reflect the traditional travel paths of Aboriginal communities. In the Wollongong Health Precinct, Crown Street represents one of these important locations.

Reflecting on the significance of the area along this travel route, the traversing of waterways and ridgelines means that the top of the hill, where Wollongong Public Hospital is located, could be assumed to be a likely significant site for Aboriginal communities, playing a role in community life and the movement of people between the coast and the mountains as the seasons change.

Our understanding of change comes about as we reflect on and openly explore the past. But as we learn, we need to understand that the significance of Country means many things to many people, and while this may not be known about specific places, we should explore how Country sits as part of the bigger picture of our places.

Closing the Gap

Our planning is informed by a wider context of Aboriginal rights recognition, social policy, legislation and research. Internationally, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have helped to create a momentum which give voice to Aboriginal and other First Nations peoples in the development of policy.

Adopted by all levels of government, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap sets out clear targets for improving the overall health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities. There are 5 priority reform areas that the NSW Government focuses on:

- formal partnerships and shared decision making
- building the community controlled sector
- transforming government organisations
- shared access to data and information at a regional level
- economic prosperity, business growth and employment.

Including these policies, including Closing the Gap, in our practice, directs all that we do when planning for, delivering and running the services within the Wollongong Health Precinct. It means empowering organisations to form meaningful, community-driven, local partnerships. It ensures that the Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations are locally driven, funded appropriately and supported in their own decision making.

Healthy Country

Healthy Country as defined by the Connecting with Country Framework, describes healthy, interconnected natural ecosystems, supported by regenerative practices based on Aboriginal knowledge.

Environmental sustainability is a critical priority for the urban environment, and increasing awareness and knowledge are influencing design. For example, providing space for water and using topography can better connect people physically and visually to significant places for reflection or the re-awakening of memories that form part of Country.

Environmental sustainability is also a critical priority for the built environment. As we learn more about the Country we are on, we need to understand the original state of the natural environment as well as the social and cultural importance of place. Providing space for water, sky, soil and biodiversity supports the creation of a living place, and can bring many health, social and climatic benefits¹.

Strategic planning and future development offers the opportunity to reawaken the memory of place, especially in areas that are substantially changed from their pre-contact landscapes.

Community ambitions

When engaging with the Aboriginal community as we developed this strategy, the following matters were the most important for the health precinct.

- We need to plan for places that are inclusive of a lifecycle of health and social care. This includes:
 - cultural competency and literacy in service models
 - discrete spaces that create meaning to different peoples at different stages of life
 - opportunities for regeneration in the landscape elements
 - spaces to gather
 - spaces to practice culture, particularly ceremony and end of life care.
- Language should be at the forefront of how we frame Country and the places we plan for, particularly using Aboriginal names where determined suitable by community.
- Places need to reflect the different purposes they serve and should reflect the scale to support culture and community.

Healthy community

Many people in the community have paved the way to create a better life for future generations through healthcare.

Building on this, organisations such as the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service have also played a core role in supporting a healthy community. In the last 40 years, the service grew from its establishment at Coomaditchie and has:

- met the individual health care needs of the local Aboriginal community
- showed leadership in cultural safety
- provided a safe space for Aboriginal communities to see their identity and cultural heritage reflected in the design of the services and places they visit.

These services can be supported by others, such as the Local Health District's Aboriginal Chronic Care Unit. The unit works across the region to improve access to health services for Aboriginal people with or at risk of developing chronic health conditions, including cardiovascular disease.

Organisations with strong community representation within their services help to provide trust, respect and dignity in health care as they highlight the individual needs of local communities through a cultural lens.

We heard during early engagement of the need to provide spaces that centre around life, and especially to support communities through sorry business. This both reflects the need for spaces that can be readily accessed and designed in a way to support communities coming together, as well as the cultural awareness of staff and practices within services. Providing these aspects within healthcare practice culture highlights how a connection to Country goes beyond what we build.

Cultural heritage

Understanding the region's history goes beyond considering a timeline. While it is understood that Aboriginal people were always on this continent from the beginning of time, there are recordings that have demonstrated this through modern methods of estimation, such as carbon dating.

- 20,000 years ago and beyond: Guided by knowledge, local Wodi Wodi speaking clans camped in well understood locations, most of which were culturally significant, including Bass Point.
- Between 5,000 and 8,000 years ago: Once the sea levels rose following the last ice age, Dreamtime stories highlight how the Five Islands were once joined to Hill 60 at Port Kembla.



Figure 3: Areas and matters of cultural significance.

Figure 3 highlights areas and matters of cultural significance. We have come to understand these through our engagement with community over time and a review of published material.

1. **Djeera and Jumbulla:** Both women's and men's sites respectively, are deeply connected to the Dreamtime stories that led to the creation of this Country. Holding deep relationship to Five Islands, they are a presence and reminder of cultural obligations to care for Country and live by Lore.
2. **Merrigong and Five Islands:** Referred to as the Illawarra range, or the escarpment, Merrigong is deeply connected to the Dreamtime stories of the local area, holding connections to the Five Islands and Djeera, who were considered the daughters of the West Wind – Oola-boola-woo³.
3. **Songlines:** Clan's always travelled along a songline or storyline, which was a pathway travelled by a creative spirit when bringing this Country into existence. Songlines helped to connect communities to food, shelter and family, acting as a map and a calendar to this land. There are many songlines that follow waterways and reflect the movement of people across the seasons.
4. **Animals and Lore:** Humpback whales (among other animals) hold important lore in the form of stories. They teach the importance of the enduring connection to the water and the promises made between their ancestors and the Elders in community. The annual migration of this species is a constant reminder of their connection, which is a totem to many Aboriginal people.
5. **Plants and seasons:** All the cycles of life, death, fertility and reproduction are related to each other and the seasonal cycle of moving between and around this Country. The Dharawal Calendar, highlights January to March as Gadalong Marool (hot and dry). It is signalled blossoming of the wattle and the violent storms and heavy rain that discouraged camps near creeks and rivers.

The precinct today

The place

Figure 4 shows what we refer to as the Wollongong Health Precinct.

- The precinct is bounded by the South Coast Rail Line, connecting local communities via public transport to the South Coast and Wollongong Central Business District
- It incorporates the Wollongong Public and Private Hospitals which support specialist medical and surgical care, mental health and drug and alcohol services, ambulatory care, and allied health services, as well as medical research and education facilities
- It includes land surrounding Wollongong Public Hospital, capturing the extent and fall of 'Hospital Hill' to the north and south
- It provides a transition from core health services and the Wollongong CBD to surrounding residential communities.

View from the North western corner of the precinct, featuring Wollongong Public Hospital



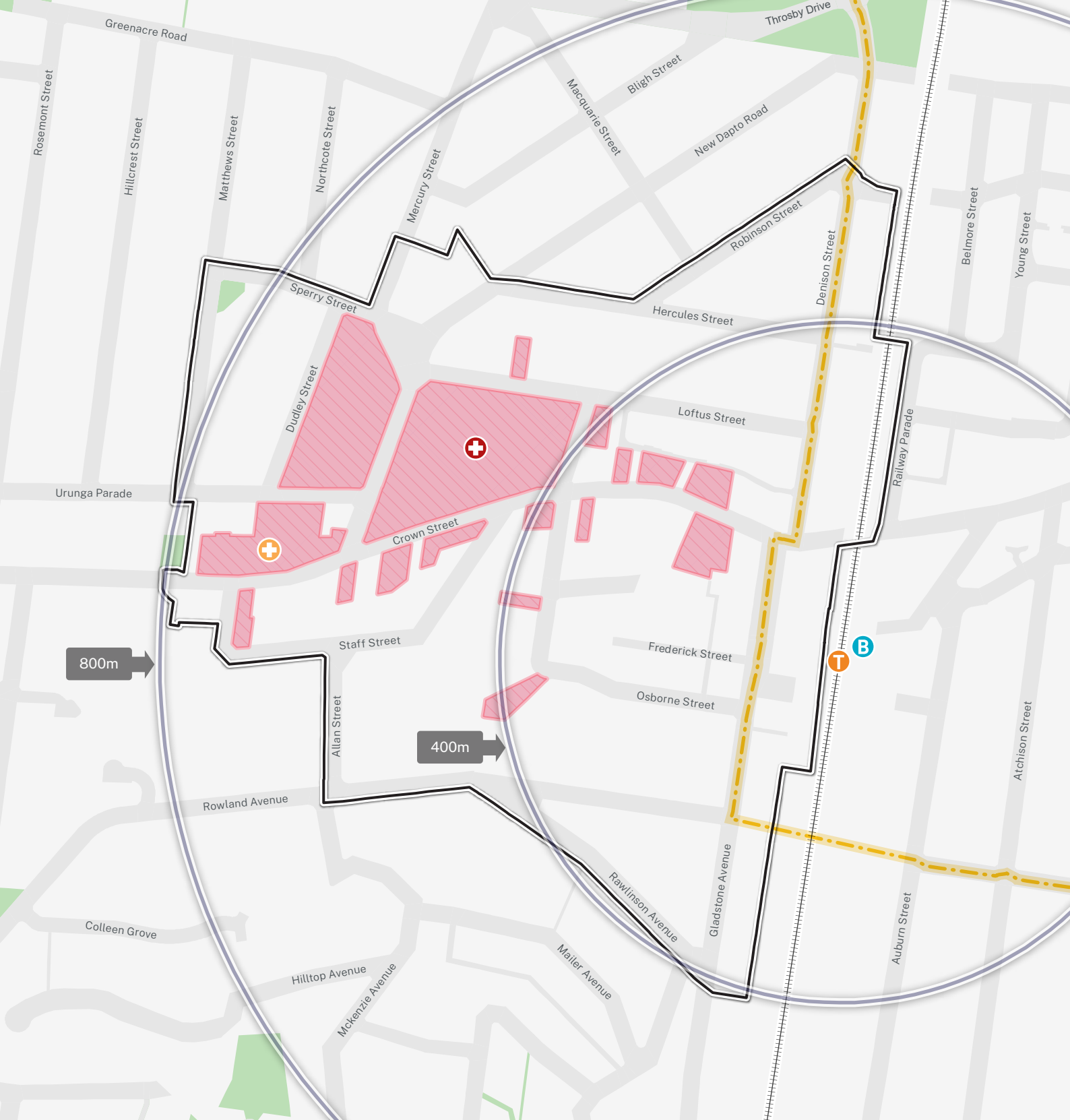


Figure 4: Wollongong Health Precinct overview

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|------------|
| | Health precinct boundary | | Health related land uses | | Roads |
| | Wollongong Private Hospital | | Wollongong CBD | | Open space |
| | Wollongong Public Hospital | | South Coast Rail line | | |
| | Bus stop | | | | |
| | Train station | | | | |

The people



Population

- The current population of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region is 422,000⁴
- The region is set to grow by about 153,000 people (36%) by 2041⁵
- Wollongong local government area has more than half of the region's population at 225,000⁴
- The suburb of Wollongong (including the health precinct) is the most densely populated area in the region, at 37 people per hectare⁶
- By 2041, about one in 4 people in the region will be aged 65 years and older⁴.



Residents

- About 3,500 people live within the precinct
 - About 65% are families with one or more children⁴
- There are more than 1,600 homes in the precinct⁴
- About 350 residents work in the health care sector⁷
- About 6% of residents need help with core activities because of factors such as disability, long term health conditions or old age⁴.



Employment

- Over 4,100 jobs in the precinct are in the health care sector⁷
 - These account for about 70% of all jobs in the precinct
 - Almost 3,000 of these jobs are at Wollongong Public Hospital
 - This is almost 5% of the total workforce in the Wollongong local government area.
- The precinct contributes over \$900 million in economic output from the collective industries in the area, such as health care, retail, public administration, construction, real estate services and education and training⁷



Health

There are significant health inequities within the geographical boundaries of ISLHD. While most of our population enjoy a comparatively high standard of living, nearly 1 in 5 people within our region live in an area that is more disadvantaged than 95% of the state. We know that these are the groups who often need healthcare most and this is reflected in the increasing need and demand on services.

A third of our community live with long-term health conditions and we are ageing at a higher rate than the NSW state average.

Of the people in the region, there are indicators of chronic and acute health conditions:

- 63.6% of people are overweight or obese
- 2.7% have a formally diagnosed mental health condition
- 32.6% have one or more health condition
- 12.2% of people smoke
- 36.2% drink alcohol at a level that may bring long term risk
- 11.7% experience high psychological distress
- 10.4% of children are considered vulnerable to future health risks.
- 20% of all workers in the Wollongong local government area are employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector – significantly above the state average of 14.8.

Health Services in the region

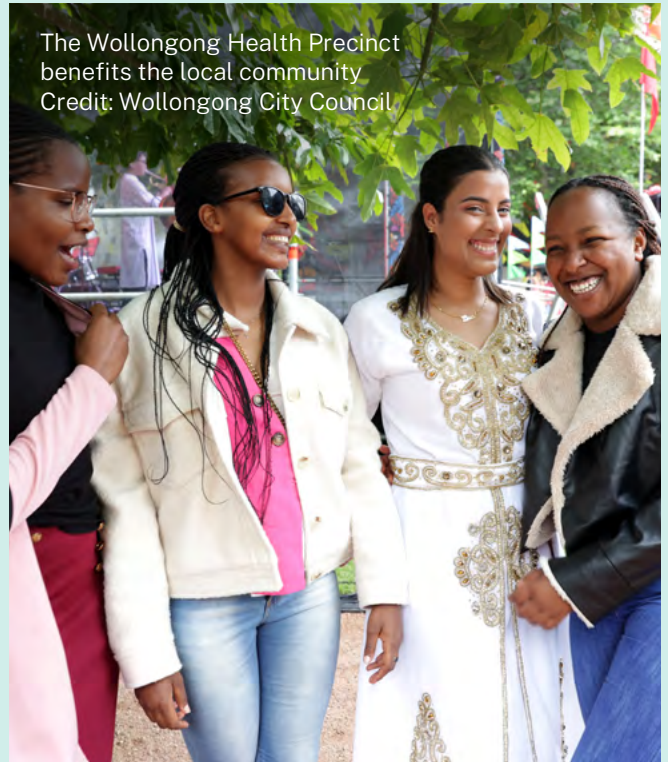
Operationally, Wollongong Public Hospital is the principal referral hospital in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

In 2023-24 Wollongong Public Hospital had:

- 74,600 emergency department presentations
- 56,00 inpatient admissions
- 15,000 surgeries.

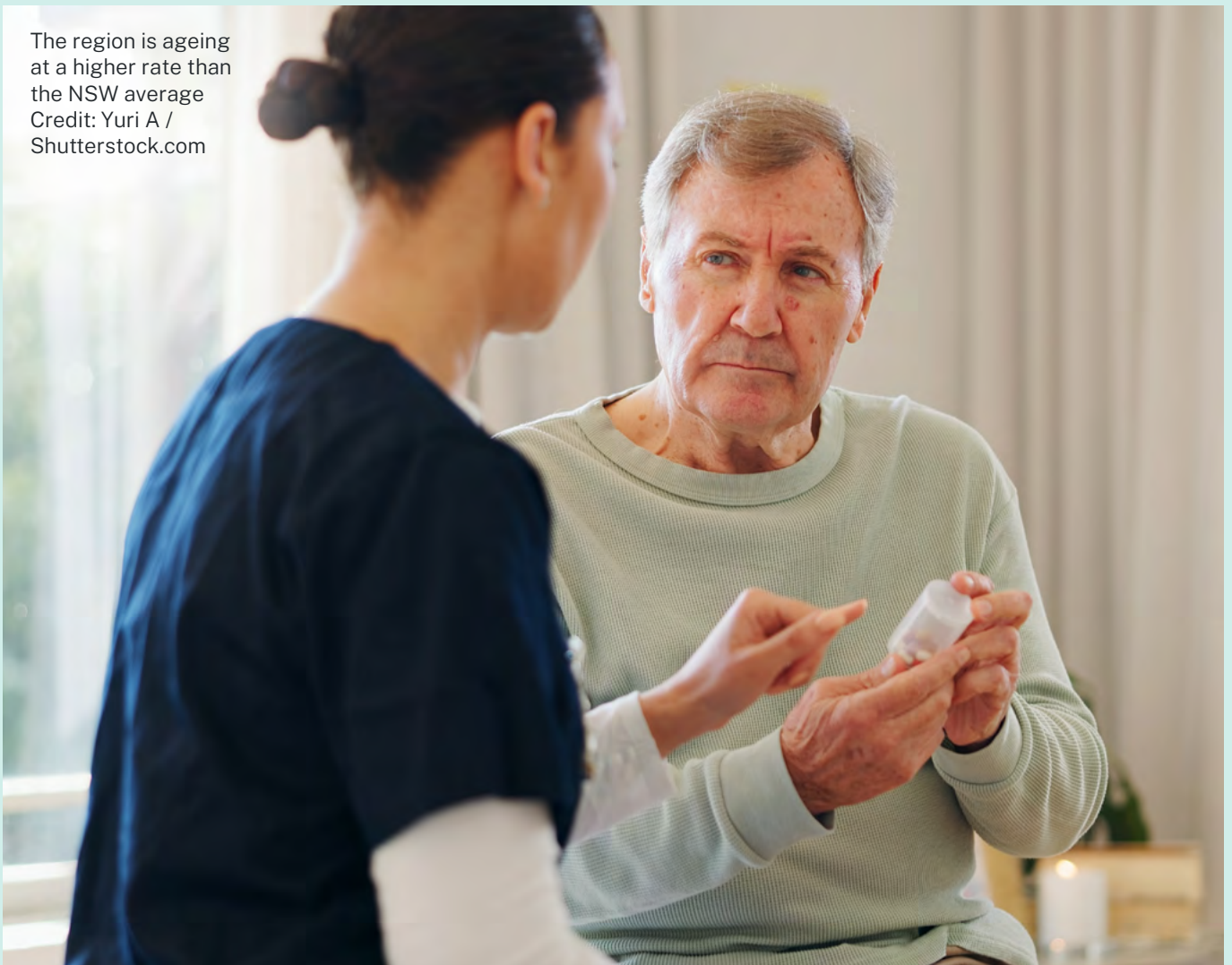
In addition to Wollongong Public Hospital, Wollongong Private Hospital and Wollongong day surgery provide a range of major and specialist services.

By 2031, it is expected that there will be 25,000 more admissions across the region, and an additional 39,000 emergency department presentations.



The Wollongong Health Precinct benefits the local community
Credit: Wollongong City Council

The region is ageing at a higher rate than the NSW average
Credit: Yuri A / Shutterstock.com



Thinking strategically

Health, education and research

Planning for a health, education and research network that is inclusive, accessible innovative and community focussed.

Health, education and research go hand in hand when defining the long-term role of the Wollongong Health Precinct. The future of health consists of innovative, personalised, and person-centred healthcare, that utilises research and technological advances to deliver a world-class healthcare system.

To keep pace with our communities needs and continue to make our health care system equitable for all, we need healthcare practitioners, researchers and industry partners working together to address emerging problems, harness innovation and improve health care delivery.

‘Health precincts’ have emerged as an important model providing care as we move toward a future where rapid medical and technological advances will drive increases in the quality of life and overall lifespan, as well as transforming core delivery of health care.

Successful health precincts provide attractive co-located facilities that foster the connection of health care, training, education and research to address community needs -Wollongong Health Precinct will do this. Many of the keys to success are already here, where we can build upon existing investments in health infrastructure, local amenities, education, research and training pathways, and a foundational transport system.

Existing health infrastructure, such as Wollongong Public and Private Hospitals, will need to be upgraded to support and enable an integrated health system in the region.

The health precinct will enhance an integrated health system in the region that supports the local community through:



ambulatory care and outpatient spaces to provide services to the community out of hospital



hospital services that focus on the future to provide improved access to the health services the community needs. This will include a focus on emergency services, inpatient settings, theatres and mental health services



being digitally enabled to support changes in models of care, support patients in the community and at home, and connect services on site to hospitals across the region and state



developing greater capability for research and clinical trials to enable research that benefits the local community and attracts new staff to the region



enhancing the workforce that is skilled and right for the level and types of health care services that will be provided



being resilient and sustainable to cope with the changing environment and future climate risks.



Workforce development

Precincts thrive on specialist skills, expert knowledge, available technology, flexible spaces, an environment that encourages innovation and the spread of knowledge creation. Supporting and maintaining access to these requires a continuous and collective effort.

Precincts are aiming increasingly to build the capacity of local communities so they can be part of the innovation economy and benefit from it over the long term. The precincts that have successfully built a substantial base of jobs and business capabilities have focused on building local talent early on in their development.

There must be a focus on how to:

- attract local talent, services and skills
- innovate to solve local challenges
- provide inviting amenities and open community spaces
- enable more training and workforce development programs
- create worker owned businesses
- partner with local schools and employers
- connect local governments more deeply with community.

To support a shift in healthcare delivery, we need to build a clearer and sustainable pipeline in the health workforce. We must also continue to invest in research to enhance the services skills and capabilities of the industry.

The health precinct will draw on research to address 3 core aspects of the workforce:

- workforce supply that builds on the skills base, talent mix and career pathways

- workforce relationships and enterprise that create the networks and know-how to turn ideas into growth businesses
- localised workforce benefits for surrounding communities.⁸

Institutions such as TAFE NSW and the university sector, will play a vital role in training and educating the next generation of health care professionals across multiple sectors.

Prioritising research capability

Successful health precincts use partnerships with the research and education sectors to improve on health care delivery at a local and national scale.

As both research and technology will play an increasingly critical role in the future, enhancing partnerships with tertiary institutions is vital to the success of the health precinct. Health precincts also rely on universities being fully engaged. They need to offer innovative courses in technical and entrepreneurship areas to excite existing or future businesses to invest.

The University of Wollongong's primary campus is about 2km north-west of the precinct. It offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs and carries out world-leading research that is strongly aligned to teaching programs. University-led research initiatives have helped solve real health issues in the local area, including creating 'dementia-friendly communities' and developing chemotherapy treatments with less severe side effects.^{9, 10}

Other tertiary institutions will also play a key role for growing the research capacity of the health precinct, which will unlock its future.

Housing and community-centred places

Thinking about how our city provides places to support community life.

The Wollongong local government area will grow to accommodate over 73,000 more people by 2041, putting pressure on the region to provide more well-located housing. The health precinct is well placed to deliver a significant increase in diverse and affordable housing in an area supported by existing infrastructure. However, housing in this area needs to complement the underlying and enabling health services that are regionally significant.

Housing diversity plays a key role in enabling sustainable and resilient cities, as well as combatting the ongoing housing challenge. City centres, including Wollongong, are typically densely populated. However, parts of the city, including the health precinct, are in the midst of this transition from remnant single dwellings to mid-and high-rise residential developments.

The health precinct enjoys direct connections within 400-800m of the Wollongong Station and has great potential for high quality, well designed housing and higher density living. This is desirable as it unlocks more affordable housing close to existing infrastructure like shops, open space, and facilities such as the public hospital.

The health precinct, as a gateway to the Wollongong City Centre, is well-placed to provide a transition between low and high density living. The *Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023* identifies the need for greater housing diversity, which can be considered in its variety of forms in Figure 5.

Where we have medium-and high-density areas, we also need supporting infrastructure and access to public transport. During community and stakeholder engagement for this project, we heard that the area also needs shopping and food areas, childcare, aged care, and more health specialists if more people were also to move to the area.

Higher housing density also encourages people to walk and be active¹¹ by providing more destinations, connections, and amenities. Increased density must also be supported by open and green spaces that are attractive and functional for healthy community life, as emphasised by the *National Housing Accord*. Key stakeholder and community feedback has reinforced this focus on providing green and open spaces, as this was one of the most important observations shared by residents, staff, and patients.

Figure 5: Low, mid-rise and high rise development types



The benefits of community social spaces are well documented, with quality green and open spaces and more walkable city blocks being an integral part of creating healthy, sustainable, and resilient neighbourhoods.¹²

Centralised open spaces also often act as a 'centre of gravity' within a precinct, attracting leisure uses and more investment surrounding them¹³. Figure 6 shows the successful Tumbalong Park in Darling Harbour. This area has a range of land uses and activities completely designed around a centralised green space that acts as a powerful magnet for visitors and investments.

Providing these community-centred places forms a crucial part of the strategy, especially as the precinct currently lacks public open and green spaces.

Increasing the opportunities to walk freely, unimpeded by buildings or private access is also important to supporting community life, adding permeability and greater connectivity. These all contribute towards improving walkability and creating more inviting areas,¹⁵ encouraging healthier lifestyles and enabling alternative access routes for shops, services, and recreation. Collectively, these initiatives help to ensure places and community areas are safe.

Increased housing density will increase demand for shopping, eating and other commercial services. The benefits of expanding these activities, as outlined by the Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy, include more foot traffic, increased community connectedness, new commercial opportunities, re-use of neglected spaces, and cultural activation which makes a city's distinctive. This will create new destinations and points of interest and support the changing demographics of future visitors and residents.

The expected focus on learning and innovation and the increase in affordable and well-located housing, will attract more students and families to the area. This will increase the need for commercial services, and supporting the local economy. These residents, especially families, will increase the need for everyday services and infrastructure.

Providing housing choice, amenity and community spaces within this precinct for its future users is vital.

Figure 6: Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour. Credit: Placemaking NSW



Movement and access

Thinking about how we move and experience places.

The ease of movement across places and the availability of quality public transport is directly linked to higher quality of life, liveability, and employment opportunities. In cities, there is an established link between accessibility and equality.¹⁶ Providing public and alternative transport options to connect users to key destinations in and around the health precinct will reduce carbon emissions, and support safe, resilient and sustainable communities.

Several state and local strategies inform the future of transport and access across the region giving details of focus areas, goals, and regional challenges. This includes:

- *Future Transport Strategy*, which guides transport planning and investment across NSW
- *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan*, which drills down to issues affecting the Illawarra Shoalhaven region
- *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan*, which aims to improve the existing transport and access routes to create a smart, connected, and accessible place that supports a healthy and active community
- *Integrated Transport Strategy and Movement and Place Plan* – Wollongong City Council's plan for the city centre - which has a strong focus on sustainability, multi-modal transport, and convenient active travel options.

Over the next 20 years, the region needs to undergo a major transformation in the ways people and goods move within, and between other regions to meet the goals of state and council policies. If car use continues at its current level in the Wollongong local government area, there will be a 21 percent increase in added travel time because of increased traffic and an extra 13 percent more cars driving to the city centre by 2036. This will result in more pollution and congestion.

The region's population will continue to grow and continued reliance on this form of transport will not be sustainable. Increased use of cars is linked to a range of health and wellbeing issues such as obesity¹⁷ and potential cardiovascular disease risk¹⁸. Conversely, using active forms of transport is strongly linked to improved physical health¹⁹ and linked to better mental health²⁰.

The health precinct must be accessible and available to all residents and visitors, including people who may not have access to a private vehicle.



Bus stop at Wollongong Station
Credit: Transport for NSW

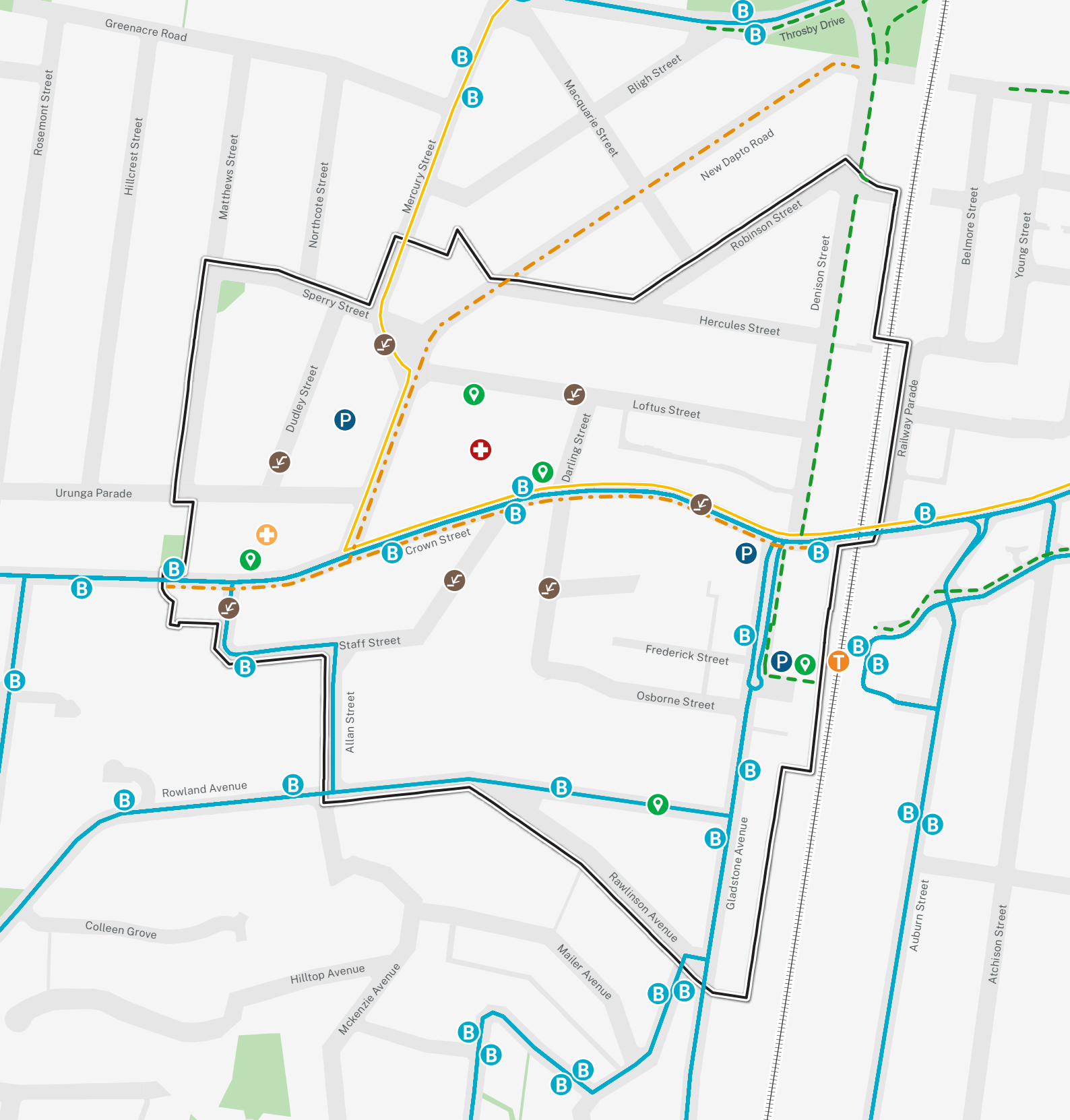


Figure 7: Wollongong Health Precinct transport network

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Health precinct boundary | Key destination | Free bus route |
| Wollongong Private Hospital | Parking | Cycleway |
| Wollongong Public Hospital | Train station | Proposed cycleways |
| Bus stop | South Coast Rail line | Roads |
| Steep topographic fall | Bus route | Open space |

Overcoming the financial and spatial barriers for all community members who access or live in the health precinct is another key factor in our drive to provide alternative, cheaper, and more inclusive transport options. However, different use groups will still need to use cars, particularly where individuals cannot easily access services by walking or cycling for all or part of their trip.

Data from Transport for NSW shows that this part of Wollongong is one of the most visited areas during weekdays. However, visitors to the health precinct rarely travel to other parts of the city centre. Many may not have the physical capacity or desire to spend any more time in public and away from the comfort of their home. This highlights the potential lack of cross-over between the health precinct and other destinations in the city centre.

It is clear the need for the health precinct must offer alternatives to private vehicle transport. The precinct needs immediate attention to enable this shift and increase walking and cycling, and public transport opportunities. We need better connections to the other key areas of Wollongong, and solutions that will support projected population growth and increasing demand for healthcare services.

Currently, most people accessing the health precinct choose to travel by private vehicle for the convenience and flexibility, and limited public transport options. They may travel at irregular hours, for example to visit loved ones, and attend appointments, or they may be uncertain of the length of their stay. The choice to travel by car puts a strain on road networks and already limited parking. Residents and visitors have cited this as a major problem.

While the goal is to encourage people to access the precinct by public transport, it will be important to provide enough parking within the precinct as driven by the needs of specific services, such as hospitals. This will ensure that initiatives in the strategy such as the adaptive re-use of existing parking infrastructure, and better footpaths and pedestrian/cycling infrastructure do not create more stress on parking availability.

Considering future population growth, projected patient numbers and current overreliance on private vehicles, providing public and alternative transport options is critical for the precinct's future. We recognise this will take long term commitment, investment and scalable change.

Children using kick scooters and parents walking in a shared pedestrian path.
Credit: Transport for NSW



Figure 8: Amenity factors contributing to increased walkability



Adapting and thriving as our world changes.

The Illawarra-Shoalhaven region is rich in natural assets. It is known for its beautiful beaches, subtropical rainforests, rivers and waterfalls, wetlands and mangroves. These natural wonders make the region a growing location for people wanting to move away from urbanised cities and connect with nature, improving their health and wellbeing. However, this also introduces more challenges as the region increasingly addresses the effects of climate change impacts including:

- sea level rise and tidal inundation
- increased rainfall intensity and waterway flooding
- more frequent and intense bushfires
- increasing temperatures and hot days.

A sustainable and resilient approach to climate change is critical to ensuring our region continues to thrive in the future.

The *Paris Agreement* and the NSW Government's *Net Zero Plan* highlight the urgency and importance of an immediate response to climate change and provide sustainable principles to guide development. They inform many of the state and council policies that we draw upon in this strategy, ensuring we improve the biodiversity, resilience, and sustainability of the precinct. Many of our interventions and strategies incorporate the principles of these 2 documents and key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Climate projections for the Illawarra Shoalhaven region show average temperature will increase, rainfall patterns will change, and fire danger will likely increase in the coming decades²¹.

The health precinct must adapt to be resilient in the face of these challenges. As outlined in the *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan*, sustainability is becoming a core focus of the region. To achieve it, we must collaborate to reduce emissions, support clean air, promote eco-friendly transport and increase green spaces and canopy coverage.

Council's *Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037* and the NSW Government's *Biodiversity in Place* framework also have ambitions to increase the quality and quantity of vegetation and green areas in the Wollongong local government area. This includes a target of 35 percent to 40 percent urban canopy coverage. Applying these frameworks in precinct design will identify biodiversity typologies across the precinct and opportunities to enhance vegetation and green spaces, through interventions like understorey planting or green walls.

Flooding affects some areas of the health precinct. These are mostly concentrated in the north and south where the land falls. Flooding in these areas is worsened in times of heavy rainfall where overland flooding happens, and when drainage networks cannot cope with the volume of rainfall, especially in areas with little to no vegetation.

Flood risk requires us to ensure we locate future buildings and services appropriately to minimise the effects of any potential floods on the built and natural environments. This means ensuring critical high-care and high-use areas are in flood-free zones so they can continue to provide service during flood events. This will ensure the precinct can be resilient in the face of future climate adversity, and the healthcare needs of the region will always be accessible.



North Wollongong Beach
Credit: Kramer Photography

The Wollongong Health Precinct provides us an opportunity to show leadership in the priority areas of the NSW Health Net Zero Roadmap 2024–2030. The precinct will be designed and run in a sustainable way to reduce the effect of healthcare on the environment and the community.

Priorities for this area include:



Increasing community health and ambulatory care access and options, with virtual care flexibility, to reduce ill health and the need for more intensive subacute and acute care.



Co-locating all maternity and paediatric services under the one roof, improving the experience and clinical outcomes for all patients and supporting the first 5-years of infancy.



Identifying low-value care practices that do not contribute to patient outcomes or resource efficiency.



Continuing to strengthen evidence-based practices and sustainability training for effective and resource-efficient care.



Building partnerships with universities, research institutions, and technology companies.



Expanding virtual care services to support flexible models that allow for delivery of patient care in the community.



Designing new buildings and the services within the precinct that are informed by internationally recognised design methods for promoting ecologically sustainable development.



Applying sustainable procurement policies that prioritise products and services that contribute to the net zero goals, as well as financial and social sustainability.



Adopting best practices for managing medical and general waste, ensuring minimal environmental impact and compliance with standards.



Carrying out measures for conserving energy and water, including energy-efficient fixtures and water-saving and recycling technologies.



Monitoring and reporting progress towards achieving net zero targets and reducing emissions, using performance metrics aligned with local and state policies.

3.

A vision for
Wollongong
Health
Precinct 2050

Wollongong Health Precinct is a leader in regional based healthcare and research, complemented by partnerships in health, education, training and business. The precinct is collaborative in form and function, with its services and places supporting healthy, sustainable and inclusive communities.



Panoramic view of Wollongong

Core principles

The vision guides the precinct's future. It is what the collective actions and initiatives outlined in this strategy strive to achieve and turn into community and organisational outcomes by 2050. Building on the vision, the 3 core principles shape the way we work, develop land and design spaces.

When evaluating consistency with this strategy, governments, organisations and individuals must show what actions they have taken to deliver on each principle. These principles are to be considered and applied in conjunction with:

- actions identified under the precinct's big moves (from page 37)
- the precinct's structure plan and the intended land use outcomes (from page 50)
- guidance for individual sub precincts (from page 58).



Principle 1: Healthy and sustainable

A precinct where the built and natural environments are interconnected, health and wellbeing are supported, and the needs of diverse communities are met.

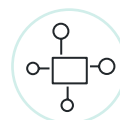
- Ensure the provision of high quality health care and services that are adaptable to meet present day and future needs
- Create an environment that supports physical, mental, and social health for individuals across all stages of life, with a specific focus on the ageing population
- Ensure people are able to age in place, and live healthy lifestyles that suit their needs
- Promote health and wellbeing with how people access, use and move throughout the precinct
- Ensure the precinct is resilient to natural hazards and respond to climate change
- Provide housing diversity that suits the needs of the region's changing demographics.



Principle 2: Country, people and place

A precinct that recognises the connections of First Nations peoples to Country, aiming to contribute towards a vibrant and liveable city.

- Co-design spaces and opportunities for First Nations communities to realise self-determination
- Embed places and spaces that accommodate and welcome cultural practices that care for Country.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the significance of Country and community as a way of learning, thinking and acting
- Provide places for people which create vibrancy, spaces for people to move freely, and support the environment to grow and thrive
- Recognise the spaces that create experiences of arrival and departure, ensuring the precinct is accessible to all
- Encourage infrastructure and community services that bring people together and promote safety and caring for others
- Provide health services that meet the needs of all users.



Principle 3: Collaboration and innovation

A precinct where community, healthcare, business, research and education, and government work together to lead innovation in the health and education sectors.

- Seek out partnerships with individuals and organisations that can deliver good outcomes for the precinct
- Establish world-leading practices in industry to support innovation and promote learning and creativity, improving the transfer of knowledge
- Promote inclusion in how health services operate, how we 'age in place,' and how we design public spaces
- Plan for precinct-wide shared service strategies to avoid unnecessary duplication and inefficiency of services over time
- Promote partnerships that complement the delivery of health services in the precinct and provide new and diverse employment opportunities.

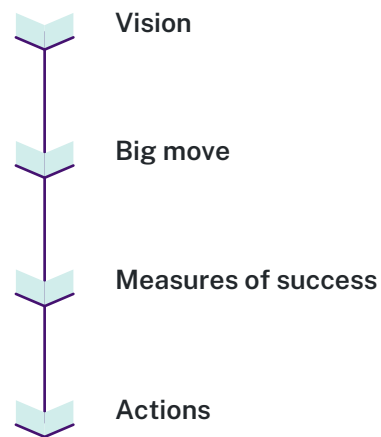
Big moves

This strategy proposes 5 ‘big moves’ to unlock the potential of the future Wollongong health precinct. These offer exciting opportunities to bring the vision for the precinct to life. They are purposefully ambitious and require ongoing commitment and coordination to deliver over the next 25 years.

Each big move considers the core principles outlined in the previous section and uses them as measures of success. These measures are examples of what good looks like in response to these big moves.

As the big moves are applied to the structure plan (see next section), they will require further investigation to define the timing, needs or any further changes to precinct outcomes. The actions listed are our commitments to help get us there.

Figure 9: The relationship between the vision and our actions



North west corner of Wollongong Public Hospital



Big move 1 - A research and education hub helping to shape a sustainable and innovative health system

Medical research at Wollongong Public Hospital



Measures of success



Healthy and sustainable

3.1 Buildings and spaces are designed to meet the anticipated future needs of health care research, drawing from emerging technology, engineering and artificial intelligence.



Country, people and place

3.2 Research examines, displays and guides the uptake of solutions to the individual health challenges of the local communities across the region.



Collaboration and innovation

3.3 The precinct attracts and keeps international talent to support a growing and specialised research sector.

The future of research, innovation and digital advances holds immense potential for transforming the delivery of healthcare. Continued investment in research, technology and innovation will help the industry progress and bring about real, meaningful change.

Over the coming decades, institutions such as the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District will use data and analytics to transform their ability to deliver personalised and effective care. Research and innovation will be critical to improving safety and quality outcomes, improving experiences for patients and the community and building a financially sustainable healthcare system.

Research creates exciting new opportunities for prevention, diagnosis and treatment and builds the evidence base for improving patient experience and delivering the best care possible.

The health precinct has the potential to enhance collaboration and innovation in the health, research and training sectors. This will draw on the co-located public and private health services, relationships with research partners, and the close ties between Wollongong Public and Private Hospitals and the University of Wollongong and other university partners.

The precinct's capacity for innovation, along with a growing workforce and student base that is supported by a range of pathways for collaboration, including graduate programs for emerging healthcare practitioners, promote Wollongong as a highly desirable place to live and work.

A medical researcher undertaking research in a lab



The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District is developing a business case to establish a research institute, which will support the advancement of research for the region. This will be centred around the following priorities:

- **Community health** – research will be prioritised into areas of need for the community
 - Accessibility: the community will be able to access clinical trials closer to home and take part in world-leading research.
- **Clinical optimisation** – research that optimises the delivery of its clinical services
 - Research into practice: embedding research into service delivery by co-locating research and clinical facilities allowing research findings to become clinical practice.
 - Sustainability: development and implementation of integrated care models that emphasise preventative care, efficient resource use, and sustainable healthcare practices.
- **Partnership** - for regional, rural and remote research, clinical trials and collaborative groups
 - Interdisciplinary collaboration: collaboration between clinicians, researchers, educators, and industry partners, to drive innovation in healthcare delivery, research, and education.
 - Education and workforce: an integrated environment for training healthcare professionals, and exposure to innovative research and clinical practices, to prepare them for the future in healthcare.

The institute case, in the long term will need to translate these priorities into a defined specialisation for which the region wants to be known for. This will give its stakeholders a clear focus and direction.

For the precinct to become nationally significant, it needs to increase its capabilities in talent attraction, workforce development and business investment initiatives. Because of its increasing focus on skills provision in the Illawarra, TAFE NSW will have a growing role in supporting the workforce pipeline. As TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus needs investment over the coming decades, it is in a prime location to lead the advancement and specialisation of the regions core jobs.

TAFE NSW is committed to supporting growth in the education and training industries at its Wollongong West Campus as a collaborator and partner. The Wollongong West Campus will be a hub for both business and health skills. This will mean expanding its offerings to a mix of online and in person courses, clustering specialist skills on campuses to focus on the local and regional health industry, and supporting the growth of the research sector.

Research into the links between the built environment and the causes of underlying health issues can help improve health outcomes for community²⁷. Additionally, innovations in medical science and engineering are changing how we treat cancer, apply genetic and stem cell research, and treat other life threatening illnesses in our communities, as led by the University of Wollongong. Both research and innovation are needed for Wollongong Health Precinct to advance.

As the precinct develops, buildings will need to cater for the evolving needs of healthcare, including the role of research and technology. Where buildings are not shared spaces, considering the digital licensing and data permissions between clinical practice and research is important to improve the service outcomes. This means that the digital infrastructure within the precinct should be adaptable and designed to share information freely, transparently and carefully considering personal safety and privacy.

When designing shared spaces, we need to also be working with the Aboriginal community-controlled sector and providing spaces for non-profit health-affiliated organisations, as well as other community organisations such as those that support culturally and linguistically diverse organisations. Increased presence of these organisations not only helps to improve the relationships between practitioners, researchers and specialists, but also supports the process of community learning and models of preventative care.

Now

Highly competitive research environments and workforce shortages are impacting on the ongoing delivery of health service needs and act as a barrier to innovate in the healthcare sector.

2050

Leadership in the education and research sectors have made the Illawarra Shoalhaven region a key destination for regional workforce development and innovation. This is built upon initiatives from universities, TAFE NSW and others to increase skills in the jobs needed beyond 2050.

Getting us there

Action: Explore partnerships between tertiary institutions and the NSW Government to set up a greater university presence in the precinct.

Action: Establish governance and formal arrangements to create a research institute that complements the growth of the research sector.

Action: Update the planning framework to give incentives to grow the presence of community organisations, health related charities and allied health uses in the precinct.





Outdoor seating at The Illawarra Hotel, Wollongong
Credit: Wollongong City Council

Measures of success



Healthy and sustainable

4.1 New development has increased the diversity of housing across the precinct, providing more affordable homes for people.



Country, people and place

4.2 New development and public open spaces are designed with advice from local culturally and linguistically diverse community groups and provide opportunities for gathering, enhanced safety and caring for others.

4.3 New development incorporates services and uses that cater to the needs of a 24-hour workforce.



Collaboration and innovation

4.4 Promotion of partnerships with individuals and organisations lead to strategic investment decisions in city shaping infrastructure.

The health precinct will play a vital role in strengthening the growth of Wollongong. To do so, however, it needs to contribute more to the city centre. Its form and function must also connect better to the city²⁸.

The health precinct as we know it today is characterised as the area west of Wollongong Station. While proximity to Wollongong station presents opportunities for the area, the South Coast Rail Line creates a physical divide and is a barrier to greater connectivity.

Creating stronger physical connections to the city centre will allow people to move with more freedom to, from and within the health precinct. It starts with improving the Crown Street corridor to create a safer and more welcoming gateway towards the city centre. This means growing the 'place' function of Crown Street and how that might change over time to:

- support greater uptake of walking, cycling and public transport options
- manage the movement of private motor vehicles and heavy vehicles

- encourage shops, cafes and other retail uses to open out onto the street, creating a hub of activity along this corridor throughout the city centre including at night.

As the area transforms over time, new crossing points over the train line to the north and south of the station will give pedestrians and cyclists greater freedom to choose how they move through the city. New crossing points will connect more people to housing, jobs and the diversity of education, cultural and lifestyle opportunities Wollongong has to offer. This also provides new opportunities for open space and commercial development.

A major driver of the area's transformation will be providing more housing in the right locations, particularly in the area between the public hospital and train station. This is where we can use the services and transport already available in the area to provide greater housing choice. The planning framework will need to include incentives to support the provision of affordable housing in private development and joint ventures with registered community housing providers.

Between 2014 and 2019, almost 2,000 new multi-unit dwellings were developed in Wollongong. This was driven by demand from young, professionally qualified people looking to live near jobs and cultural activities. It was also driven by students, medical interns and key health workers looking for low-cost housing, and older people who want easy access to health care and other services.

By providing greater housing choice, particularly high-rise apartment living or different dwelling types for seniors living, key workers and students, the health precinct can foster an ecosystem of supporting uses. These will attract and retain key workers, and add a level of population that encourages a vibrant night life.

More housing must also be supported by the services residents and workers need for everyday life. This includes child-care, restaurants and cafes, supermarkets, pharmacies and hairdressers. These services are just as important as establishing cultural facilities celebrate the arts and live music. The collective investment in these services reinforces a thriving night life and can provide a greater sense of public safety.

The combination of greater housing choice, new and improved physical connections to the city centre and increased lifestyle services, will create an area for people to come to, stay in and enjoy.

Now

An area that feels isolated and disconnected from Wollongong's commercial core, sports and entertainment precinct and foreshore.

2050

New connections across the South Coast Rail Line and high quality and diverse development have increased the number of people living and working in the area, promoting a vibrant atmosphere for the city across the day and night.

Getting us there

Action: Explore options to allow development over the South Coast Rail Line to create new ways for people to move in and out of the city centre.

Action: Work with council to improve public safety, walking, cycling and general public amenity along main pedestrian thoroughfares, including to and from Wollongong Station.

Action: Explore incentives in the planning framework to support providing more social and affordable housing, and community and lifestyle services in the right locations.

Big move 3 - An accessible and inclusive transport network helping us to move with choice



Measures of success



Healthy and sustainable

5.1 Services within the precinct are accessible for vulnerable groups. Visitors, staff and patients use improved footpaths and active transport facilities.

5.2 Over 25% of residents within the precinct use public or active transport for travel to work, shopping and recreation.



Country, people and place

5.3 End-of-trip active transport facilities and public transport hubs are anchors for activated streets, which visitors, workers and residents enjoy for recreational use.



Collaboration and innovation

5.4 Key government stakeholders have worked together to design, plan and deliver high-quality public transport that is used by a diverse array of groups and users.

The health precinct currently presents a difficult-to-access area that forces many visitors to use private vehicles to access its essential services. The combination of large impassable blocks; a street network that puts the needs of drivers over pedestrians and cyclists and limited access via public transport leaves many people with few viable options but to drive.

These feelings are more challenging given the precinct's topography, which makes moving throughout the health precinct difficult for people of all ages and abilities. Only the free 'Gong Shuttle' provides reliable and affordable transport for communities in the area.

Successful precincts allow people to pass through them, and have access to a wide range of transport initiatives that allow visitors to move with choice. The benefits of public transport for users' health and wellbeing are well-known,¹⁸ for example, contributing to more active lifestyles and reducing cardiovascular disease

risk. More transport options also reduce spatial disadvantage and enable fair access to centres of vital services, shopping and recreation for all community members²⁹.

The future transformation of the health precinct will make new destinations and key areas easily accessible through a variety of new public and active transport services. Initiatives to encourage public transport use through infrastructure, such as new park and ride facilities and a new or improved bus services connecting major areas across the Illawarra could provide equity and greater choice for people to move with certainty. Dedicated cycleways, shared zones and the end-of-trip facilities to go with them will give people safety and freedom of choice. Pedestrian links through the blocks in the health precinct will increase walkers' and cyclists' ability to move through the area.

People will still need to park vehicles within the precinct at various times. Expanding parking facilities will be considered on its merits, proportionate to the upgrade of public infrastructure. However, the priority will shift as the transport network changes to focus on alternatives to cars. The area can take advantage of its proximity to the city centre through stronger connections with other transport routes, including regional links through a more regular South Coast Rail Line.

People will be empowered by new walking, cycling and public transport choices. The area will become a destination with a comfortable, safe and reliable network connecting it to the city. These networks will enable local opportunities for businesses and workers to enjoy the amenities of the revitalised health precinct.

Now

An area that prioritises cars over walking and cycling, with public transport needing more investment to support uptake.

2050

Re-thinking the approach to transport planning has created a place where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can access the services they need through a range of transport options.

Getting us there

Action: Develop a strategic business case to increase the frequency of buses, including the free 'Gong Shuttle', and services between Wollongong, Warrawong, and Shellharbour.

Action: Investigate opportunities to implement the Wollongong Station Master Plan and implement public transport options in other locations, including park and rides in places well-connected to Wollongong Station and established public transport interchanges.

Action: Work with council to deliver and improve walking and cycling infrastructure consistent with the precinct's structure plan, and relevant strategic plans.

Big move 4 - Improved services to support an interconnected and innovative workforce



Medical administration
Credit: TAFE NSW

Measures of success



Healthy and sustainable

2.1 Delivery of new and improved transport services and infrastructure make it easier to move through the city and helps provide for the needs of diverse user groups.



Country, people and place

2.2 Any upgraded infrastructure improves the access, use and service outcome for individuals and organisations, particularly multicultural community groups.



Collaboration and innovation

2.3 Promotion of partnerships with individuals and organisations leads to strategic investment decisions in city shaping infrastructure.

2.4 Setting up precinct-wide shared services avoids unnecessary duplication and inefficiency of services.

Successful health precincts leverage partnerships with private health, research institutes, industry, education providers and community services to support and promote innovative health service delivery.

Investment in state infrastructure, particularly health precincts, sparks renewal in urban areas^{25, 26}. The future health precinct has 3 major public service anchors – Wollongong Public Hospital, TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus and Wollongong Station - which bring people to the area and will be major drivers of its transformation over time.

Wollongong Public Hospital is the regions principal referral hospital, specialising in a range of complex services to support the growing and ageing population. A key opportunity for the region is growing the research capabilities within the public hospital, driven by the growing chronic health needs and advancements in medicine.

These factors elevate Wollongong Public Hospital as the leading hospital within the region to support the growing and ageing population. One part of the future opportunities for the region and the public hospital is to grow its research potential, driven by the chronic health needs facing the growing population, and advancements in medicine that helps treat severe illnesses.

Despite the present opportunities, the hospital is running at near capacity. Strategic upgrades are needed to ensure it can continue to play its core role into the future. Pending further capital investment, NSW Health will prepare a detailed master plan for an upgraded public hospital. This will outline the priorities for a potential future hospital redevelopment.

Upgrading Wollongong Public Hospital will also require considering the future growth in private health care and any future expansion of Wollongong Private Hospital.

Providing world-class patient centred care for the region goes beyond delivering upgraded health infrastructure – it is also about the workforce.

The network of TAFE NSW campuses across the Illawarra is diverse. However, it needs significant, ongoing investment in maintenance and renewal, particularly where the buildings and structures are no longer fit for purpose.

TAFE NSW has an opportunity to improve educational outcomes within the Illawarra region. In particular, it can improve education in the health and wellbeing, business and IT, and foundational skills areas, by providing contemporary learning facilities, clustered close to the relevant student catchments and industry partners.

Major investment in other infrastructure and employment industries, such as in the Port of Port Kembla will also help to shape the future role of the health precinct and how these institutions foster innovation.

Investment in these services has less impact if not supported by infrastructure to support how people move within and to the precinct. Wollongong Station is a key transport hub and an important point of arrival for the Wollongong City Centre. The station and surrounds have been identified as a site that requires a targeted upgrade to enhance the character and sense of place of the site.

Wollongong Station is in the heart of Wollongong at a key “gateway” location: on Crown Street between the commercial core precinct and the health precinct. Crown Street links these 2 precincts and the foreshore. Wollongong Station also improves access for TAFE NSW students and other visitors to the precinct.

When coordinated efficiently and effectively government investment can play a leading role, alongside industry to improve the qualities of places for our current and future communities.

Now

Infrastructure is running at near capacity and is challenged in supporting the service needs of a growing and ageing population.

2050

A series of improvements and upgrades to health, education and transport infrastructure has created a place that promotes investment and, relationships.

The precinct enhances the productivity and liveability experiences of those who live in, work in and visit the area.

Getting us there

Action: Prepare an infrastructure delivery and sequencing plan to guide future development proposals in meeting the precinct vision.

Action: Set up a precinct-wide investment prospectus to guide and promote investment that builds on from the strategic government investment.

Action: Finalise strategic and statutory planning to define the extent, sequence and future of identified public infrastructure (including the implementation of Wollongong Public Hospital Master Plan and Wollongong Station Master Plan, once funding is allocated for its staged delivery).

Big move 5 - A connected, green and vibrant public domain anchored by a network of welcoming communal meeting places

Example of a public open space



Measures of success



Healthy and sustainable

1.1 People choose to engage, visit and stay in the public domain because it celebrates and allows for people to connect to the landscape and community.



Country, people and place

1.2 Active and diverse public spaces meet the accessibility needs of all users.

1.3 The design and outcomes of the public domain reflect the significance of Country and provide spaces for inclusion to celebrate culture.



Collaboration and innovation

1.4 Government, industry and community have worked together to design, plan for, deliver and maintain the precinct's green spaces and communal meeting places.

The Wollongong Health Precinct currently lacks the type of public and green spaces that make people who live in, work in and visit the area feel safe and welcome, and give the precinct a sense of place. This takes away from its potential to be a place of relaxation, care and respite.

The public domain is perceived as currently uninviting because of a combination of:

- few public open spaces
- tree canopy coverage of less than 20 percent
- a street network puts the needs of drivers before those of over pedestrians and cyclists.

The health precinct's topographic challenges worsen these feelings, which make moving throughout the area difficult for people of some ages and abilities.

Visual and physical exposure to green and blue spaces improves our wellbeing^{22, 23}. Improving the quality of our streets to keep more trees and planting can support these spaces. When we combine other design elements of the street, such as streetlights, with social activities within and around the street environment, the community's perception of safety and comfort can drastically improve²⁴.

As the area transforms into a future health precinct, it will be supported by a network of greener and more people friendly spaces and streets. These will create a safe, interactive, and better-connected public domain.

Now

An area that lacks public spaces and high-quality streets that make people feel safe and welcome and give the precinct a sense of place.

2050

Investment in 'green infrastructure' has created a network of spaces where residents, workers and visitors can come together and enjoy some of Wollongong's most spectacular landscape elements.

Getting us there

Action: Develop a strategic business case to support investment in the new green infrastructure planned for the precinct.

Action: Explore creating a community facility as part of the precinct's 'central park' during detailed planning.

Action: Prepare an infrastructure delivery and sequencing plan to coordinate the introduction of new green infrastructure to create a series of green streets and through site links connecting homes and workplaces.

Action: Work with industry, government agencies and the development sector to establish green infrastructure consistent with the precinct's structure plan.



Example of a public open space

Structure plan

The structure plan is the spatial representation of the vision for the health precinct leading to 2050 (refer to Figure 10). It outlines the key structural elements including unique place characteristics, where investment is needed to spark future growth, and future revitalisation opportunities across the area. We expect that this area will change greatly over the coming years and decades. Gradual changes we will see in this area will continue the growth of Wollongong as an innovative and creative city in the heart of the Illawarra.

The structure plan outlines a series of residential neighbourhoods, anchored by a mixed-use spine along Crown Street, with jobs, retail uses, vibrant streets and regional public transport links. These high amenity, walkable neighbourhoods, will each be supported by local services (for example, corner shops and cafes), community infrastructure and open space, within a 15-minute walking catchment.

Opportunities for employment, cultural and arts production will be included across the precinct as it capitalises on its connection to the city centre and broader region. This will include spaces for Aboriginal businesses, cultural practice and technology. This responds to needs the community expressed during engagement.

An example of public open space



Local services like cafes will support high amenity, walkable neighbourhoods
Credit: Aleksandrs Muiznieks/ Shutterstock.com

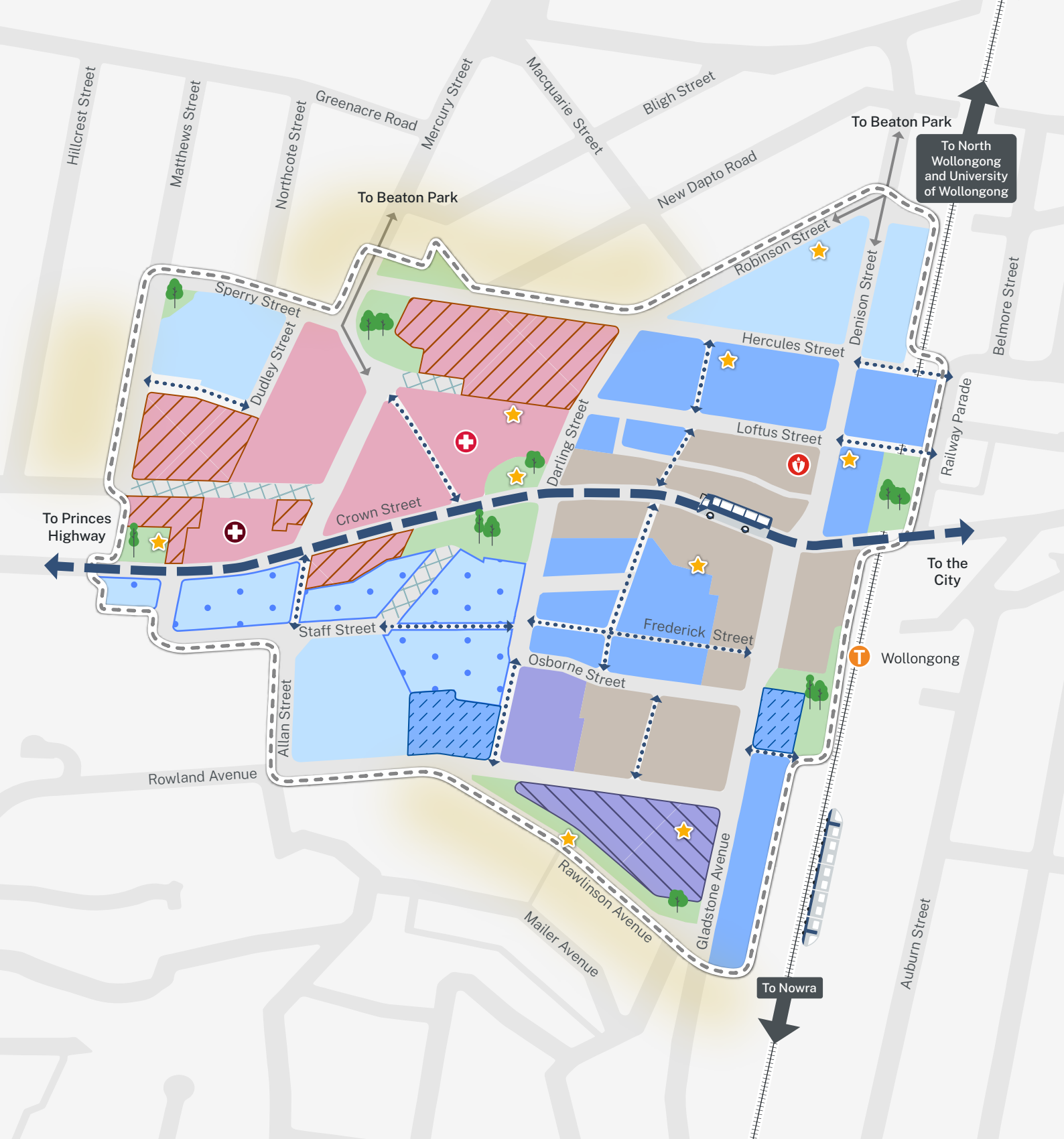
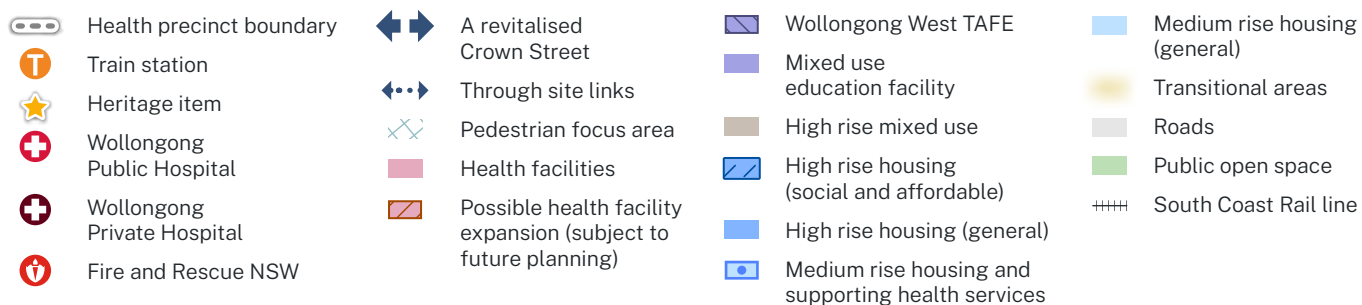


Figure 10: Wollongong Health Precinct structure plan



Key terms in the structure plan include:

Public open space

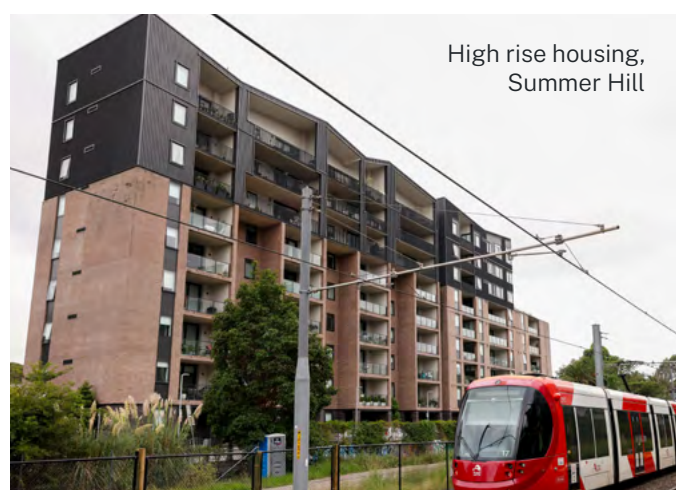
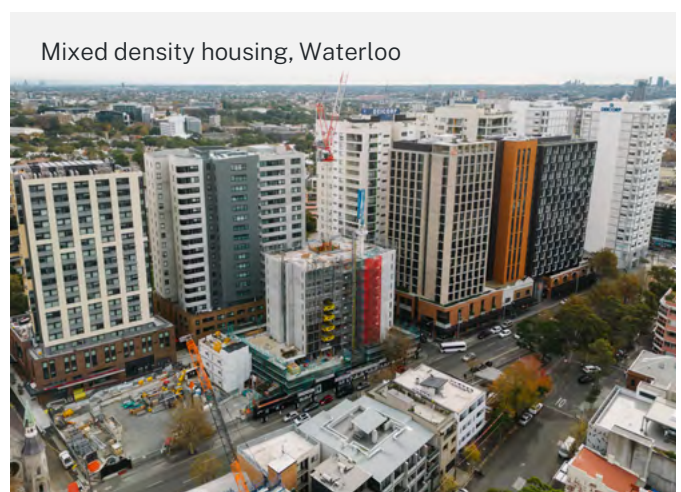
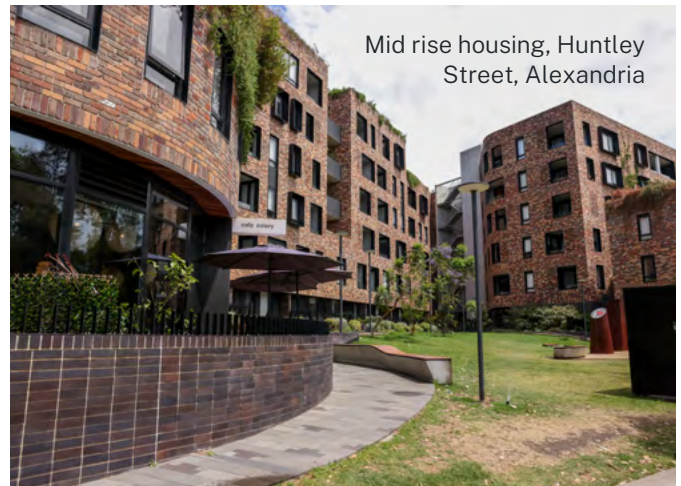
As we could deliver public open space in multiple ways, this was the biggest opportunity for the precinct. The structure plan highlights 4 core locations for new plazas or green open space. These are complemented by green through-site links that will better connect people to the places they need to go, all while adding a degree of comfort. Because of the topography of the precinct, there are unique opportunities to integrate open space with new development.

Public open space in the precinct may take many forms, including paved public plazas or forecourts around key destinations, grassed areas with seating and trees, or local playgrounds where suited to the surrounding land uses.

Housing

There are several housing types that we wish to encourage in the precinct. Our forecast housing projections as discussed in the next section advocate for delivering higher percentages of 3- to 4-bedroom units in the precinct.

- **Social and affordable housing** reflects good locations that could provide greater proportions of this housing type. Increasing this housing type could provide more opportunities for key workers and students to live within the precinct. Added development capacity through revised planning controls could help to make this housing type more viable.
- **High rise housing** reflects a change in development type to capitalise on the proximity to infrastructure and the city centre. It is outside of important view lines.
- **Medium-rise housing** reflects where there is an appropriate transition of apartment-style housing types across the city, towards low-rise types, such as terraces and dwelling houses.



Transitional areas

These are areas which will likely have scope or capacity for change as the precinct develops over time. These areas have important visual and amenity relationships with neighbouring development, including future health facilities or commercial, education, office and training spaces.

Transport

To achieve the vision for the precinct, we need to change and upgrade our streets and the connections between them to encourage people to actively walk and cycle. The next section discusses how some of these changes could be made to support each sub precinct.

- **Crown Street Spine:** refers to the important movement and place function that Crown Street will continue to play. Activation at the street level from new development will support opportunities for outdoor dining, improved safety and places to stop and rest.
- **Through site link:** refers to new publicly accessible connections through street blocks that focus on pedestrian and cycle movements. Shorter block lengths help to make areas easier to move between and encourages more people to walk and cycle.
- **Public plaza or pedestrian focused area:** refers to where speed limits will be reduced. The area will have shared use of the road by pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicle users.



Heritage

The area contains many locally listed heritage items, known both for their physical and social significance. Some of the mature trees in the area are local landmarks and will be kept, some into broader open space for public benefits. Built heritage requires a clear strategy for how the heritage significance will be interpreted throughout new development or protected to ensure its enduring values can be improved into the future. Examples are highlighted below.

- Heritage items along Crown Street could complement nearby or existing public open space and provide a strategy for the adaptive re-use of built forms for local retail purposes.
- Various heritage items at Wollongong public hospital could allow us to highlight the social significance of the site.
- Adaptation and renewal of buildings at TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus should recognise their purpose and long-term role for skills delivery in the Illawarra and recognise the features of significance as viewed from publicly accessible areas.

Mixed use education facility

These are locations we consider have the best opportunities for targeted education and research spaces that combine and support health services. It could support learning and innovation by bringing together health care professionals, researchers, educators and students to share knowledge resources and expertise.

Possible health facility expansion

This defines what could be the best locations for future public or private health facilities. We will explore these sites more in subsequent planning activities. They could also be developed for purposes such as aged care, short term accommodation for hospital workers and visitors, or supporting health services, integrated with high density development.

4.

The future
health precinct

The structure plan represents a concept for the future of the precinct, requiring long term commitment and change management. Developing the health precinct can take many forms under the planning framework. However, there are critical challenges and opportunities that we should capitalise on to deliver this strategy.

The health precinct will be recognised as having different neighbourhoods that have distinct features to support a resilient economic future and industry innovation.

Three new neighbourhoods are proposed as 'sub precincts'. We defined these areas by their composition of land use types, relationship to state significant infrastructure, and the boundaries set by the local road network. The sub precincts are referred to in Figure 11 as:

- Core health
- Innovation and learning
- City west.

While each sub-precinct has a key role to play, the activities that will be delivered across each should be flexible and fluid. Services will be built according to what best meets the communities needs through accessible, co-located and collaborative design and the relationship between the different sub-precincts. Over time, partnerships will evolve between organisations in these sub-precincts, and it will be these partnerships that will become important in the future development of the Health Precinct.

To realise this transformation and prioritise the actions from the 'big moves', we have set design

criteria (on page 56) for the precinct based on the existing urban setting and long-term needs of the area. These criteria are supported by specific outcomes which are defined in the following sections for individual sub precincts.

We expect that the surrounding lands outside of the overall health precinct boundary will change over time to take up the highest and best use of land as defined by market factors. This change will be guided by planning processes carried out by others.

Future planning applications

When concept planning for future development, apply the information in this section. This section informs future planning applications, including planning proposals and development applications.

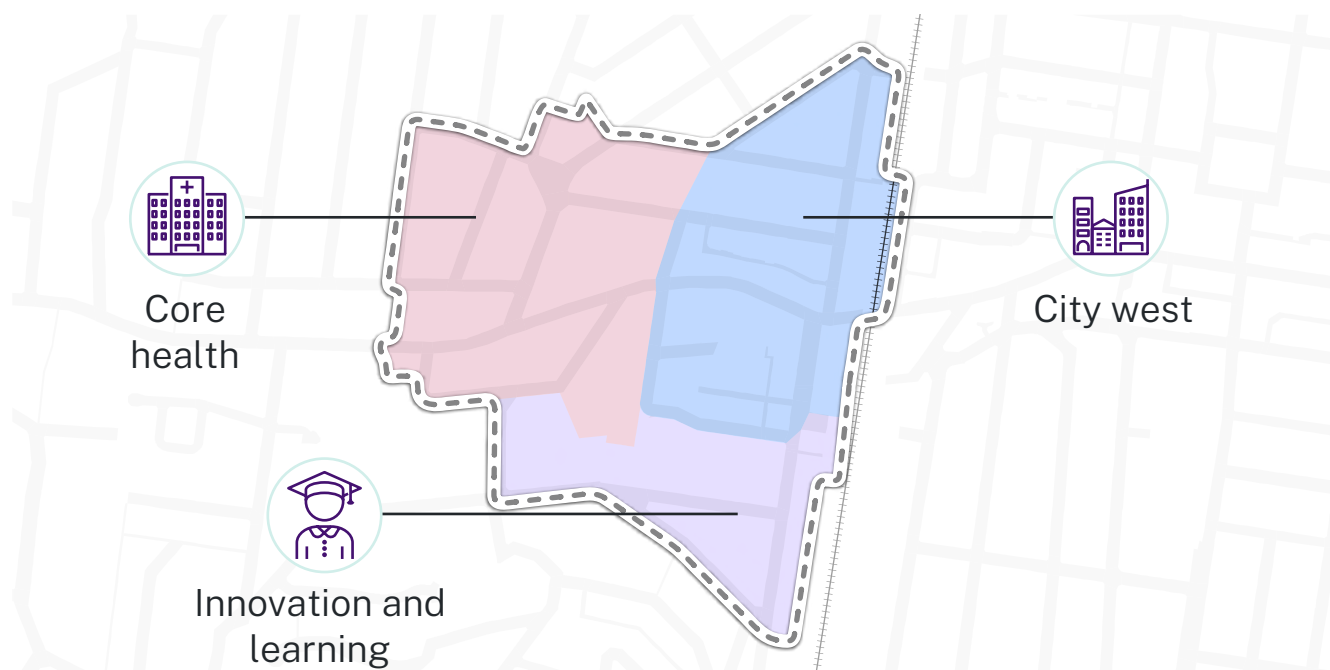
Conceptual graphics and projections

The graphics and projections referred to in this section are conceptual. They represent how future development could evolve under a future planning process that references this strategy.

The Department will carry out separate planning alongside Wollongong City Council to amend the planning framework to unlock the added potential capacity.

Development seeking to apply this strategy must also apply the provisions of the relevant environmental planning instrument when a development application is being prepared.

Figure 11: Wollongong Health Precinct sub precincts



Precinct design criteria



Public open space

- Ensure open space is inviting, accessible, diverse and comfortable, fostering opportunities for active lifestyles and social connections.
 - Ensure visual and physical connectivity between the open spaces and through-site access to link them to each other and to the wider area.
 - Ensure open space design considers and embraces the topography of the neighbourhood.
 - Ensure there is no net loss of tree canopy across the precinct.
 - Aim for the following canopy targets:
 - Residential based land uses 40%.
 - Employment related land 35%.
 - Open space 45%.
 - Protect solar access to public open space, with winter solstice protection for a minimum of 4 consecutive hours per day.
 - Use appropriate design features on taller buildings to minimise the effect of wind on the public domain.
-



Housing and land use

- Consider mixed-use buildings with cultural, educational or school, health and community facilities as well as residential and commercial uses.
 - Encourage a diversity of apartment types, sizes and layouts to accommodate households of all ages, abilities, sizes and needs, including those with demands on space and acoustic privacy because of working from home.
 - Utilise provisions in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 to deliver additional social and affordable housing, increased mixed tenure developments and provide move homes for key workers and students.
-



Transport

- Prioritise connectivity, walkability, and cycling opportunities through effective urban design, including by:
 - creating street networks that people can pass through and that give people direct access to centres, with a clear hierarchy of street types to support different activities
 - promoting activity at the street level to grow business activity and improve the feeling of public safety
 - co-locating community infrastructure with retail uses and public transport stops
 - connecting shops, public facilities, and public transport stops to surrounding areas with direct routes for walking and cycling.
 - Protect key movement corridors that are identified as public transport routes.
-



Heritage

- Integrate adaptive re-use in the design of heritage items, including to:
 - communicate the history and earlier uses of a building to current and future occupants and visitors
 - explain how and why changes have been made
 - highlight how the development creates a sense of continuity from the past to the future.
-



Street frontage (general)

- Consider weather protection and clear identifiable entrances.
 - Prioritise building frontages that create human scale and are busy and active. They should address open space to bring activity and connections, and to provide passive surveillance.
-



Building design (general)

- Avoid single-site buildings. Aim for series of buildings around courtyards that allow through-site links.
 - Promote the consolidation of 2 or more lots to more efficiently use available planning controls.
- Use changes in scale and built form to create architectural interest and diversity and improve the relationship with the public domain.
- Ensure design responds to context, character, culture and Country.
- Promote architecture that puts people first, including how they experience a building at street level and how public areas and buildings interface.
- Encourage innovative, creative and high-quality building design that contributes positively to the public domain and defines streets and public spaces.
- Achieve high-level sustainable development baseline targets.
- Ensure there is adequate separation between buildings to give the most direct sunlight to adjoining properties.
- Provide variation in built form and heights to ensure appropriate interface with neighbouring development sites.



View impact (general)

- Manage building height within the corridor's identified in Figure 12 to ensure new development does not compromise views of culturally significant locations from the public domain.



Figure 12: Important view corridors



Core health sub precinct

The core health sub precinct will be the collaborative epicentre of health and hospital services and care within the precinct, anchored by public and private health facilities. Growing to meet the needs of the communities of 2050, the services provided at these facilities will evolve to link service to education, research and training to health practice.

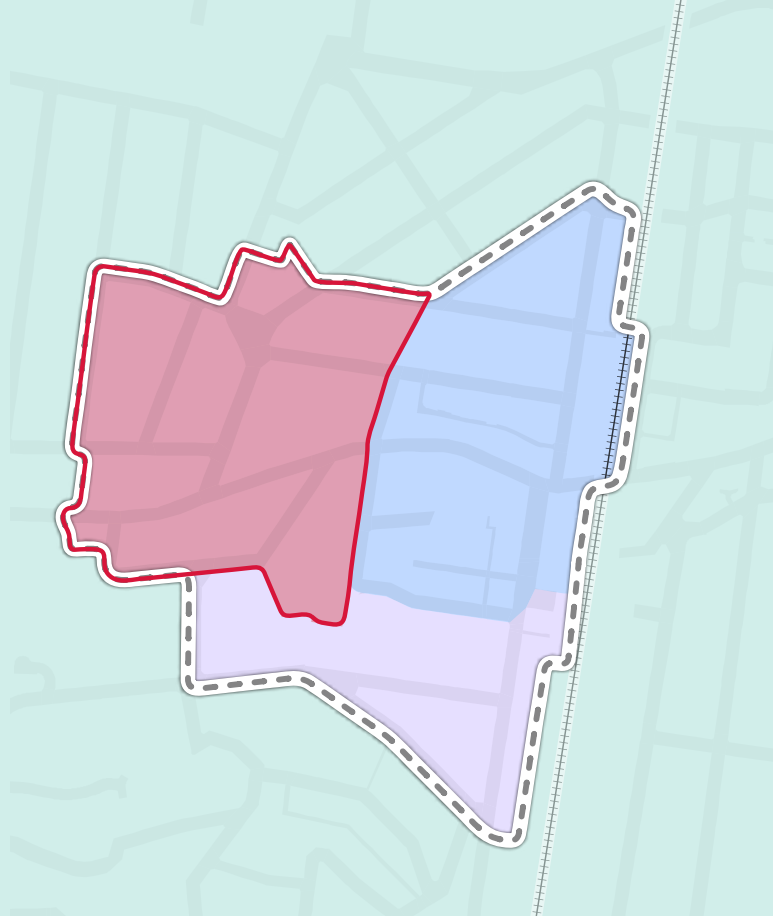
The sub precinct is bound by Sperry and Hercules Streets in the north, Matthews Street in the west, Staff Street in the south, and Osborne and Darling Streets in the east. There is a relationship to Crown Street, which acts as a main thoroughfare into and out of the city along the ridgeline.

This sub precinct has a key focus on delivering health services and will continue to deliver the region's highest acuity and most complex health care. By concentrating hospital resources in one area, the sub precinct can facilitate collaboration among providers and improve overall community health outcomes.

North of Crown Street, future health facilities establish new connections to Wollongong Public Hospital to improve operational efficiency. However, south of Crown Street will need to carefully manage and protect important views south of the city.

Future health facilities: Health facilities or health-aligned facilities in the precinct can be defined in many ways. For the purposes of this strategy, when we use these definitions, we consider the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009, which could support the establishment of:

- health services facility (including a medical centre, community health service facilities health consulting rooms and a hospital)
 - This land use also commonly includes within these terms: ambulatory care services, research spaces, and primary care providers, such as general practitioners and urgent care services.
- early education and care facility
- educational establishment.



Opportunities and challenges for the future

The development of this sub precinct is likely to be led by major institutions or industries, which will spur the growth of the city. At the time of drafting this strategy, there is already an emerging interest and competition between health-related land uses and high-density residential ones. In some locations, both land uses (health and residential) can co-exist, where not compromising the long-term intent and aspiration for this area.

The precinct structure plan highlights the intended purposes of land in the sub precinct. It recognises that changes to the planning framework are needed to manage potential land use conflicts, or risks to the improvement of health services that are beneficial to the city and region.

The precinct structure plan identifies the best potential location for future health facilities, which could take the form of public or private investment. There could be a range of benefits for joint ventures between the private and public sector to develop land with co-located and connected facilities, to improve the operational outcomes for community focused care.

Over time, Wollongong Public and Private Hospitals, and other private health care providers, may look to expand beyond their current footprint and landholdings. In the case of Wollongong Public Hospital there needs to be substantial reorganisation of the main hospital site to ensure its



internal and external movements create a seamless and efficient way of accessing healthcare.

Any upgrades to Wollongong Public Hospital outside of its boundary would require open and transparent discussion with landowners, and those with a legal interest in future defined locations. This process will be guided by the Wollongong Public Hospital Master Plan. Acting on this master plan would be subject to future planning and future funding.

The community have told us there is a significant lack of public open space around institutions that bring people to the area. We have identified the best potential locations for new public open space; the NSW Government will work with the affected landowners on the timing and sequence of delivery. Public open space may be delivered as part of development activity and contributions planning processes over time. Some may require a more considered approach. Land that we intend to acquire for public open space will be defined in with subsequent changes to the planning framework.

Major health developments will continue to generate the underlying demand for car parking, which will need to be incorporated into their planning to meet ongoing operational requirements. Other development that is not health-related requires a gradual culture shift in the precinct to limit the needs for vehicle use and subsequent need for car parking.

Initiatives could explore enforcing maximum car parking rates. There could also be investment in

public transport services and walking and cycling infrastructure to encourage this change. As other areas grow around the sub precinct, visitors and residents should have an expectation to use and access public transport or other services to reduce reliance on private vehicles.

While this sub precinct has an underlying focus on using land for health purposes, some areas could have capacity for other purposes including housing. Housing delivered in this precinct should integrate with health-related land uses in the form of shop top housing. It should outline the continued tenure, street activation and public domain improvements to reinforce this area as a highly accessible, convenient and a great place to live.

Alternative options could explore short stay accommodation targeted at key workers or families visiting relatives who are receiving treatment in health facilities. This direction is to ensure a network of health services are promoted and reinforced in this area.

We expect some existing developments will stay within this area based on the ongoing tenure and existing development approvals. New development should consider the surrounding context and its ability to complement the precinct's desired outcome. Redevelopment of mixed-use or strata-titled sites must appropriately engage leaseholders, tenants and owners, as well as apply other applicable regulations when preparing development proposals.

At a glance



By 2050, there could be:



Almost
2,000
more people living here



Approximately
450
more homes (+150 increase
from the current capacity)



Almost
7,000
more jobs in the
sub precinct

Immediate priorities for the next 10 years

- Completed strategic business case work to confirm infrastructure delivery mechanisms, timing and sequence.
- Start of initial upgrade to Wollongong Public Hospital on existing assets (subject to the completion and outcome of the above strategic business case).

Over the next 20 years

- New public open space delivered.
- Growth in health-related jobs by 3,000 new roles as a result of new development and services.
- Start of the broader Wollongong Public Hospital planned upgrades (subject to the completion and outcome of the above strategic business case).
- Growth in private health services.
- Establish a greater university presence, ideally offering shared, neutral spaces.

Beyond the next 20+ years

- New central open space delivered along Crown Street.
- Reconfiguration of road networks to reduce through vehicle movements around health service developments.

Desired outcomes

Proposed development within this sub precinct must consider these specific matters when applying this strategy. It must be guided by the precinct structure plan to proportionately manage, protect and deliver collective public benefits. These outcomes are to be applied as well as the precinct-wide design criteria.

Public domain

- Development surrounding open space should enhance views to culturally significant locations from the public domain.
- Where located near or adjacent to heritage item, the design of the space should integrate the qualities of significance for that heritage item.
- New public open space should be integrated with other development types and car parking where appropriate.
- Item 1 on page 60 - Provide a minimum of 11,500sqm of public open space across the sub precinct.

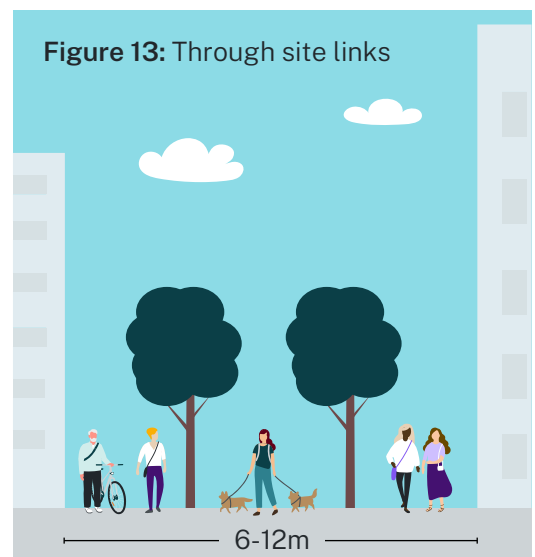
(Right) A real-life example delivered as Embarkation Park in Potts Point, NSW where open space has been delivered on top of a car park, utilising vertical stacking of land uses to resolve topographical challenges. Credit: City of Sydney



Transport

- New cycle infrastructure is to be provided along New Dapto Road and Crown Street, linking proposed through-site links.
- Refer to item 2 on page 60 – Explore options to improve the New Dapto Road - Loftus Street intersection to improve user safety and walkability, and to create a new entrance to the health precinct from the north.
- Item 3 on page 60 – Figure 13 highlights an example of how new development could provide through site links (6-12m in width) to make it easier to walk and cycle through the sub precinct.

Figure 13: Through site links



Land use and building considerations

- Development south of Crown Street should enhance views to culturally significant locations.
- Developments fronting Loftus Street, Crown Street and any through site links must provide an active frontage.
- Any bridges over streets should be of a quality design and height to limit the effect on views from the public domain, but also allow for the functionality of proposed services.
- Item 4 on page 60- Deliver new housing products such as short stay accommodation, or shop top housing with a health-related land use, showing how it contributes to nearby health facilities.

(Right) An example of an active frontage integrated with pedestrian through site links





Innovation and learning sub precinct

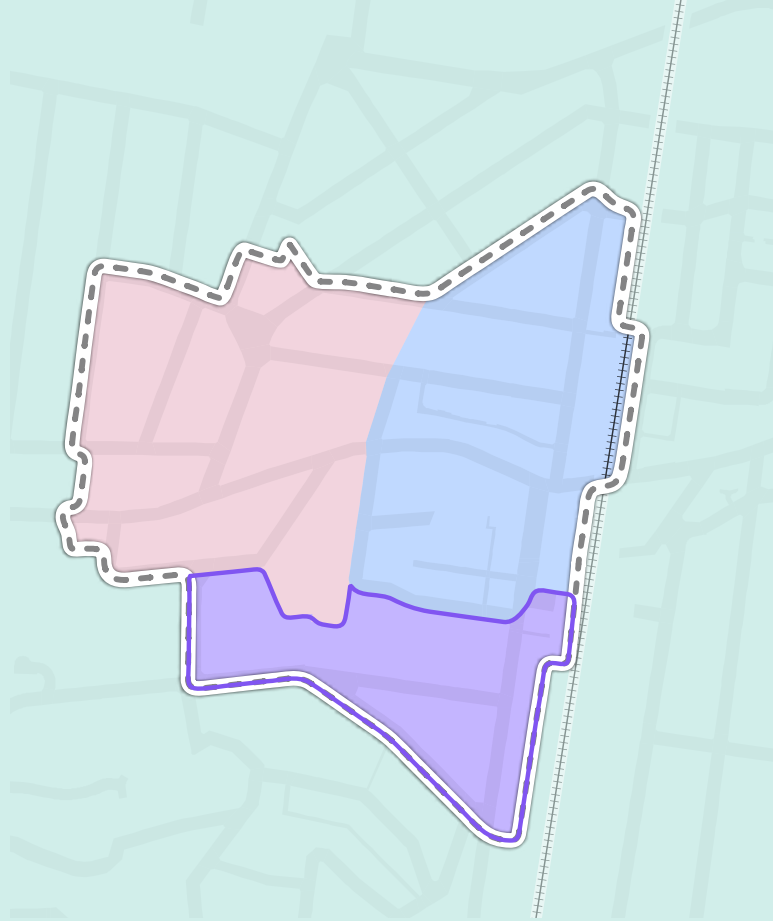
The Innovation and learning sub precinct will focus on fostering education, creativity, and technological advancement. This sub precinct will be designed to promote innovative collaboration, learning opportunities and skill development for health care workers to support the regions health, education and research needs into the future.

The sub precinct is bound by Rawlinson and Rowland Avenue in the south, Allan Street in the west, Osborne Street in the north and the South Coast Rail Line (and Gladstone Avenue) in the east.

The anchor of the sub precinct is TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus, which is a short walk from one of the precincts other anchor sites, Wollongong Station. Rowland and Gladstone Avenues are the primary movement corridors within the sub precinct, connecting people to the Wollongong CBD and surrounding residential areas.

TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus is surrounded by homes which creates a neighbourhood character distinct from the rest of the precinct. It provides an important transition from the higher densities that characterise the City West sub precinct.

Translating research into real world results will be a catalyst for innovation. The precinct will support innovation and further aim to commercialise science and technology (research) as a way of making findings and products widely available and enhancing the financial viability of the precinct.



Opportunities and challenges for the future

TAFE NSW's renewal of the Wollongong West Campus will transform the site into a flagship urban campus. It will be a health and business hub offering more specialist courses to support industry growth, and the growth of the research sector. This provides an opportunity for TAFE NSW to act as an enabler for tertiary education providers to co-invest in development at this location.

Redevelopment of TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus will also be complemented by introducing new tertiary education establishments and allied health services within walking distance of one another and the Wollongong Public Hospital which will offer an accessible option for workplace based learning.

These land uses should also be enabled by setting up a research institute that will drive the focus and conversation about the growth of the research sector. Investment in these projects will create opportunities for public and private health institutions to partner with universities and other education providers to create shared spaces for learning and research. Maintaining close physical connections between operational health services, research and learning will be critical to the precinct's success.

The precinct structure plan identifies the best potential location for these uses, situated between Osborne Street and Rowland Avenue.



Student nurse and teacher
Credit: TAFE NSW

This strategic location could take advantage of the proximity to TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus, Wollongong Station, and Wollongong Public Hospital.

Investment in these projects will create opportunities for TAFE NSW and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District to partner with tertiary institutions, creating shared or dedicated spaces for university-led learning and research in the precinct.

Upgrades to Wollongong Station, including extending the existing public plaza south of the platforms, will create more open space for pedestrians to rest and wait. It will also increase opportunities for formalised kiss-and-ride and taxi spaces.

To promote better urban planning around train stations, we encourage development to take on mixed-use forms, particularly where shop-top housing is applied to bring together education-based facilities, allied health services, office

space and retail offerings alongside housing. However, this type of development should consider the overall need for commercial development in the city centre to avoid an over-saturation of the property market.

Other strategic sites identified within the sub precinct could support greater dedication of social and affordable housing. Development bonuses would be applied to these sites to ensure there are enough offsets to support a mixed tenure of housing, without burdening individual lots with added costs without a comparable uplift.

The potential precinct concept in the map on page 64 highlights that the current size of lots across the area is a barrier to delivering greater density. Many individual lots would have to consolidate with other strategic locations to access the height and floor space controls that we consider are possible in the precinct. This requires coordination and collaboration with multiple people and industry partners to bring this vision to life.

At a glance



By 2050, there could be:



Almost
3,000
more people living here



Approximately
700
more homes (+150 increase
from the current capacity)



Almost
700
more jobs in the
sub precinct

Immediate priorities for the next 10 years

- Update the planning framework to give:
 - incentives to increase the presence of community organisations, health related charities and allied health uses in the precinct
 - appropriate and complimentary transitional land uses in areas adjoining the precinct.
- Completed strategic business case work to confirm infrastructure delivery mechanisms, timing and sequence.
- Start of TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus upgrades.

Over the next 20 years

- Establish a research institute which is easily accessible to health and research aligned staff.
- Establish a greater university presence in the precinct, ideally utilising shared or dedicated neutral space within mixed-use education facilities.
- Reconfigure of road networks to support the delivery of new public open space and promote more walking and cycling.
- New public open space delivered.

Beyond the next 20+ years

- Growth in health, research and education-related jobs by approximately 500 new roles as a result of new development and services.

Desired outcomes

Proposed development within this sub precinct must consider these specific matters when applying this strategy. It must be guided by the precinct structure plan to proportionately manage, protect and deliver collective public benefits. These outcomes are to be applied as well as the precinct-wide design criteria.

Public domain

- Additional open space and community uses are to be delivered as part of major redevelopment in the precinct, including at TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus.
- Development fronting open space should activate the ground floor to make efficient use of open space and improve passive surveillance.
- A western forecourt could be established at Wollongong Station to improve amenity for those entering and leaving the station and onto Osborne Street (Figure 14).

The southern forecourt area (Figure 14) to Wollongong Station should be designed as an extension of the expanded public plaza proposed in the *Wollongong Station Master Plan*, creating a 'green gateway' to the health precinct and Train Station.

- Item 3 on page 64 - Close Rowland Avenue to southbound traffic to create a new green public space for the sub precinct and reduce private vehicle movements.

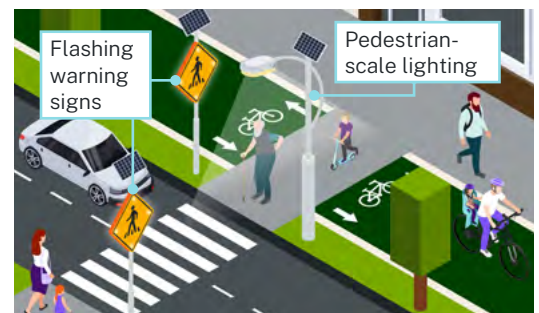
Existing heritage listed trees along Rowland Avenue are to be integrated into new public open space.



Figure 14: Proposed western forecourt for Wollongong Station

Transport

- New cycling infrastructure is to be provided along Gladstone and Rawlinson Avenues, linking proposed through site links.
- The Rawlinson and Rowland Avenues intersections with Gladstone Avenue are to provide safe crossing points to link pedestrians and cyclists to Wollongong Station.
- Item 1 on page 64 - New pedestrian through site links are to be provided as part of new development between Allan Street and Gladstone Avenue to improve walkability and connections into other sub precincts.



(Above) Example of safe crossing points

Land use and building considerations

- Redevelopment of TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus is to sensitively integrate heritage items in accordance with an appropriate heritage interpretation strategy.
- Developments fronting Gladstone Avenue are to provide an active frontage as part of mixed-use development with land uses to grow education and training-based uses.
- Future over rail crossings have a strong physical connection to proposed street network and through-site links.
- Protect the view corridor south of Crown Street by concentrating development density and height within 200-300m of Wollongong Station, consistent with the precinct design criteria. Development within the view corridor is to undertake a view impact assessment to demonstrate how existing views from the public domain are protected.
- Item 2 on page 64 - Additional social and affordable housing is provided in locations best served by infrastructure.



(Above) Shop top housing provided within this area should reinforce education and health-based land uses, as well as retail uses closer to Wollongong Station.



City west sub precinct

The city west sub precinct will grow to reinforce the prominence of the Wollongong City Centre, providing a neighbourhood of high amenity for key workers, families and visitors. High rise and mixed-use development will maximise the use of public transport in the area, supporting the population to grow substantially.

The sub precinct is bound by Robinson and Hercules Streets in the north, Darling Street to the west, Osborne Street to the south and the South Coast Rail Line in the east.

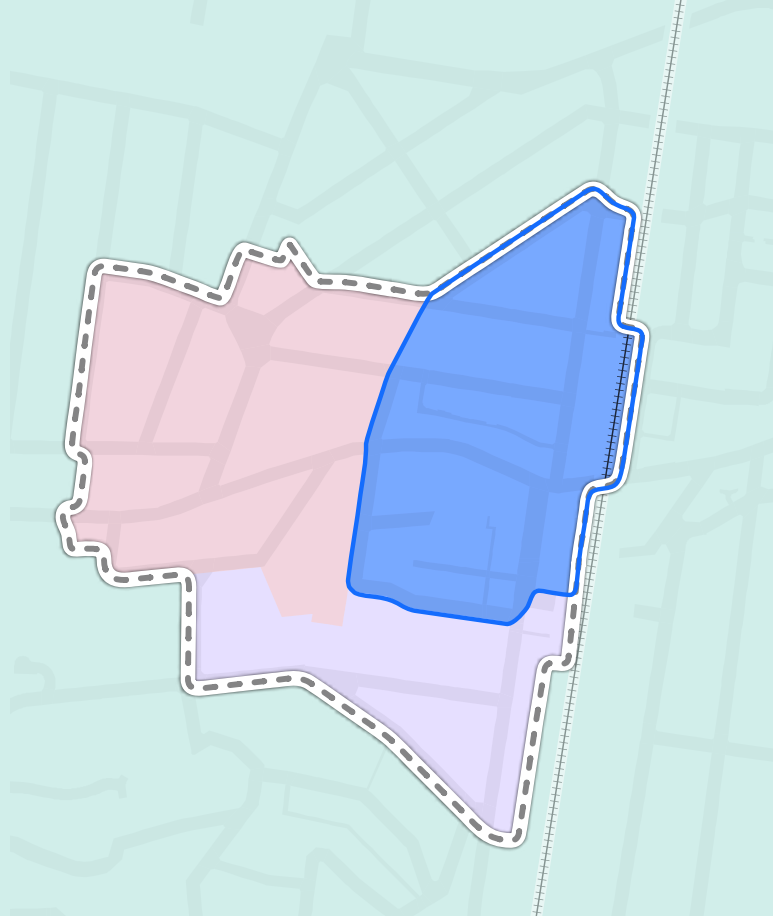
The area is mainly characterised by a mix of housing and retail uses of a predominantly high density. This is demonstrated by a range of high towers capitalising on the amenity of the area and potential view capture. New housing provides a diversity in apartment types, encouraging families to consider alternative forms of living.

A range of community health services are located within this sub precinct, including Wollongong Community Health Centre and some allied health services within the Piccadilly Centre near the train station.

Crown Street acts as an active corridor where people can get access to the shops, restaurants and other general services that supports day to day life. Additional high quality open space throughout the area gives much needed amenity for people to use throughout the year, with access to Beaton Park; a feature which supports walking and cycling to a broader open space network.



Locals utilising the bike paths
Credit: Transport for NSW



Opportunities and challenges for the future

On the western edge of Wollongong City Centre, this sub precinct is already going through change. Provisions within the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 have supported the development industry to take up capacity in the planning controls.

This will likely continue, with Crown Street taking on a more mixed-use form. Some of this may require changes to the planning controls to ensure the proportion of commercial land uses are enough but does not undermine development within the broader city centre.

Local community have identified an opportunity to improve the access to, and experience of Wollongong Station. Transport for NSW have completed a masterplan for the Train Station and its immediate surrounds to explore:

- a new and improved entry and forecourt off Crown Street
- revitalised entry and drop off points within public plazas to the east and the west of the station
- end of trip facilities for those cycling, walking or travelling to the station by bus.

This will help to stimulate development opportunities surrounding the station. Development adjacent to the station should consider its role in providing greater proportions



Globe Lane, Wollongong.
Credit: Wollongong City Council

of social and affordable housing, particularly by using available bonus provisions.

It will be important to consider the future of community health and primary care within this sub precinct. These services will be ideally located in areas with high population density close to public transport, and felt safety will maximise the impact of community health service delivery.

A key opportunity site close to the station is the Piccadilly Centre. Activating this site could take advantage of joint venture opportunities with NSW Government agencies, and we will review planning controls to confirm redevelopment is viable.

The area will be categorised by the principle of ageing in place. This will create a residential neighbourhood that supports people as they age, allowing them to live comfortably and independently in the same place throughout different stages of life.

Other opportunities include building over the South Coast Rail Line Building over the rail line by utilising part of the 'cutting', needs to consider the management of rail freight movements along this corridor. However, this can provide new opportunities to connect to and from the city centre, provide open space, and more development capacity.

We intend for this sub precinct to provide the services and housing types to encourage more families to move into the area. To do this, we need to provide:

- a greater mix of 3- and 4-bedroom apartments, rather than studio or 1-bedroom units
- new open space opportunities
- shops and other local amenities like hairdressers, restaurants and childcare.

Crown Street will be important to the success of this vision, providing necessary retail and commercial uses. Focusing these facilities on a 'central high street' will increase people in the area and can help improve public safety during the day and night.

There are several challenges which need innovative resolution to support this future. For example, some street blocks to the north and south of Crown Street are long and discourage walking and cycling. Providing new publicly accessible through-site links, lifts or other mechanisms can help people to move around, particularly when there is steep topography.

Providing basement car parking can be cost prohibitive to new development. Development should explore ways through design excellence, land use mix and active frontages, to support the delivery of car parking where necessary and improves public amenity.

Like other parts of the precinct, lot sizes are small, but when consolidated, can facilitate a more efficient use of planning controls. Consolidating lots north of Crown Street provide opportunities to use a dual frontage to enhance development potential and public domain improvements.

At a glance



By 2050, there could be:



Almost
10,000
more people living here



Approximately
3,100
more homes (+700 increase
from the current capacity)



Almost
2,800
more jobs in the
sub precinct

Immediate priorities for the next 10 years

- Update the planning framework to provide:
 - for a mix of social, affordable and market housing
 - for appropriate and complimentary transitional land uses in areas adjoining the precinct.
- Complete strategic business case work to confirm infrastructure delivery mechanisms, timing and sequence
- Enhancements to community health services in Wollongong.

Over the next 20 years

- Reconfigure road networks to improve pedestrian access and safety and promote more walking and cycling.
- Start of construction of over station and over rail development.

Beyond the next 20+ years

- Redevelop Wollongong Station multi-storey commuter car park.
- Delivery of new public open space.

Desired outcomes

Proposed development within this sub precinct must consider these specific matters when applying this strategy. It must be guided by the precinct structure plan to proportionately manage, protect and deliver collective public benefits. These outcomes are to be applied as well as the precinct-wide design criteria.

Public domain

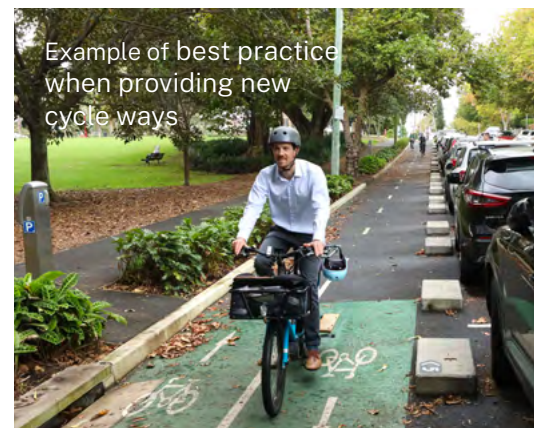
- Additional open space and community uses are to be provided within major redevelopment in the precinct.
- Local streets are to be upgraded to re-prioritise allocated road space to support more people to walk and cycle. Local roads / intersections such as the Denison Street intersection could support partial reallocation to pedestrians (Figure 15).
- Item 3 on page 68 - North of Jubilee Bridge, build over the South Coast Rail Line to create a new green public space for the sub precinct and create additional pedestrian links to the Wollongong City Centre.
- Over rail development north of Crown Street should be designed as an extension of the open space and arrival plaza for Wollongong Station south of Crown Street, creating a 'green gateway' to the health precinct and Wollongong City Centre.



Figure 15: Proposed Denison Street intersection

Transport

- Item 4 on page 68 - Pedestrian through site links to improve walkability and connections into other sub precincts and beyond are to be provided to connect Osborne Street with Crown Street and Gladstone Avenue, and Loftus Street with Crown Street and Hercules Street.
- On street parking should be time limited along streets such as Osborne Street and supported by wider footpaths to promote activation of the ground floor and improve passive surveillance.
- New cycling infrastructure is to be provided along Crown Street, Gladstone Avenue and Denison Street, linking proposed through site links.



Land use and building considerations

- New development along Crown Street should be mixed-use development with land uses to complement the role of Crown Street as a gateway for the precinct.
- Additional social and affordable housing is to be provided in locations best served by infrastructure.
- Protect the view corridor south of Crown Street by concentrating development density and height within 200-300m of Wollongong Station.
- Item 1 on page 68 - Shop top housing provided within this area should reinforce education and health-based land uses, as well as retail uses closer to Wollongong Station.
- Active frontages should only generally be provided in areas identified for mixed use development.
- Item 2 on page 68 - New development between Loftus Street and Hercules Street should explore consolidation to capitalise on a dual frontage and access mid-rise housing controls, providing an appropriate transition to surrounding residential areas.



5.

Guiding change

Delivering the strategy will happen in different ways. This section is about the different processes that will be carried out to guide change into the future and the role of governance in achieving the health precinct's vision.

Governance

The Wollongong Health Precinct Steering Committee has overseen the preparation of this strategy and has provided input into the core aspects of the vision. This Committee includes membership from the:

- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- NSW Health
 - Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
 - Health Infrastructure
 - Ministry of Health
- Transport for NSW
- TAFE NSW
- Wollongong City Council.

Further collaboration between state agencies, council and industry will drive the implementation of the strategy.

A tailored approach will be developed to secure the economic vitality of the area and improve the quality of the health precinct as a place and drive local innovation and outcomes. We give more information on these processes in the next section 'Implementation'.

Delivering the strategy requires considered involvement from relevant stakeholders including the NSW Government, council, education institutions and community services that display leadership in their field and cohort. Any future governance will have to:

- work together to identify shared goals and objectives
- investigate custodial representation within the governance frameworks and structures to build an ongoing respect and care for Country
- foster a collaborative or networking environment with companies in the health precinct
- coordinate activity between state agencies to maximise public sector benefits and investment
- communicate ongoing public investment and initiatives in and around the area to attract industry and business
- introduce whole-of-precinct sustainability initiatives, including multi-utility hubs, net-zero emission strategies, green and active streets, and improved building performance

- use innovation and partnership approaches to provide local and regional infrastructure including funding and financial models for new open space and social infrastructure
- investigate shared parking, parking pricing, transport management associations
- alternative freight arrangements, car sharing and ride sharing, and preparations for autonomous vehicles to encourage increased active and public transport use.

Approach to building partnerships

To initiate effective and long-term precinct governance, the stakeholders with a defined interest need to form collaboration agreements, such as a memorandum of understanding. This will help to establish a single, unified and integrated precinct governance framework upheld by committed partners and collaborators.

Partnerships will evolve and mature over time and be built upon a clear, united vision for what the institutions aim to achieve. This vision for a partnership and what they deliver needs to explain the unique specialisation of the service within the precinct, its brand and attraction to grow investment, and how it positions itself to compete on a local, national or international scale.

Partnerships should also seek to then expand their relationships across different sectors within and across precincts. These relationships could support a network of work programs that support and enable the vision within the precinct.

These work programs need to be evaluated against the benefits anticipated. This strategy can be used as an enabler, baseline and measure for the potential benefits of various precinct partnerships.

Implementation

Finalising the strategy is the first step to realising the vision for the health precinct. It sets the large-scale goals and aspirations for what we want to see in the future.

Amending the planning framework

To carry out the strategy we will first have to change the planning framework.

Amending the planning framework is critical to ensuring that landowners and those with an interest in the land know what the intended outcomes are for the precinct. This process involves reviewing current land use zones, maximum building heights and controls for floor space (among others) to identify where proposed changes in potential development capacity are necessary.

We have modelled various scenarios on how the precinct may evolve over time. Our assessments as described through this document reflect the potential highest and best use of land.

We will also consider requirements for minimum lot sizes to encourage lot consolidation for greater development potential, as well as added local provisions and design excellence. These will ensure there are development incentives for the outcomes we envision for the precinct.

Similarly, this process would identify land for acquisition and controls relating to the allocation of land to deliver the desired public open space and infrastructure upgrades.

These collective changes aim to give developers and landowners clarity about what is possible and the expectation for the land use mix in this area.

Public consultation

The process of amending the planning framework will include relevant technical analysis, in keeping with what is outlined in the next section 'Enabling strategic investment'.

This is to suggest draft planning controls in enough detail to permit for us to prepare an explanation of intended effect. We would then consult the community, so the community and other stakeholders can have their say on the proposed controls.

After publicly exhibiting the draft planning controls, we will review them to incorporate feedback. We will then apply the revised planning controls through a 'self-repealing' state environmental planning policy (SEPP). The self-repealing SEPP will amend planning controls in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009.

Infrastructure contributions

Analysis we completed as part of this process will consider the added development potential possible under planning controls. We will ensure that new development makes fair and proportionate contributions to local and regional infrastructure needed to support development, residents, workers and visitors.

A planning agreement can be considered in place of, or in addition to, a development contributions plan and arrangements to contribute to regional infrastructure. Any planning agreement must, as a minimum, offer to arrange for delivery of the infrastructure needed to support the relevant sub precinct's development. This includes a proportionate contribution to any whole-of precinct infrastructure that may be provided in another sub precinct.

Enabling strategic investment

The NSW Government continues to face growing expense pressures on the services and infrastructure that is funded. These pressures are primarily driven by population growth, population ageing, and increasing public expectations for services and infrastructure that reflect changing societal preferences and technological advances. Continued productivity growth is also necessary to drive the NSW economy, to support the prosperity of households and to maintain government revenues and investment in services and infrastructure.

To continue supporting outcomes that matter to people in an increasingly constrained fiscal environment, governments will need to continually rethink and redesign systems, services and infrastructure to achieve outcomes efficiently and effectively.

In the health precinct, there is a range of different services and infrastructure that needs upgrading to reach the vision to 2050, including Wollongong Public Hospital, TAFE NSW's Wollongong West Campus and Wollongong Station. The detailed planning for these sites is at different stages. However it must be coordinated and directed, as each site contributes to the shared outcomes and benefits the health precinct brings.

To turn the vision into a reality, we need to collectively move agencies into delivery. The NSW Government will do more work through its planning and strategic business case process to collate, prioritise and sequence the above, as well as define the:

- supporting local, regional and state infrastructure needs, as influenced by the above infrastructure upgrades,

- overall transport assumptions and scalable changes necessary to maximise the use of transport infrastructure,
- design and management of new public open space and other infrastructure,
- infrastructure costings and the public benefits associated with a shortlist of options, and
- development contributions to enable new infrastructure works.

These assessments, among others, form the basis to progress a strategic place-based business case for the health precinct. This strategy is the fundamental first step, setting out the strategic merit and case for change.

This process makes clearer what we need to do to support the health precinct's future.

Implementing the strategy will require the collective effort of many stakeholders.



An overview is provided below, which draws from [Infrastructure NSW's Investor Assurance Framework](#).



The NSW Government collectively confirms and justifies the need for investment.



A strategic assessment confirms the components of the project, along with risks and options required to deliver the proposed upgrades.



Individual agencies:

- prepare business cases to deliver their components of the precinct to provide sufficient information to provide a decision to invest
- commence the procurement of services to guarantee the delivery of the proposed infrastructure and services
- commence the delivery of the proposed infrastructure and services.



Operate, monitor and evaluate the collective benefits to the precinct as a whole, as a result of the upgrade and investment in infrastructure and services.

When it has finalised the strategy, the NSW Government will continue to progress the above process for the health precinct. This will take time and considered effort from multiple stakeholders and will draw from the involvement of the precinct governance as described in the previous section.

Action plan

There are several actions we will complete as part of this complex project that will contribute to and inform the strategic business case process outlined above. Some actions are interdependent on one another. We will progress them at the relevant stages when we have more information and the decision points.

These actions will be implemented to deliver the strategy. At the time of drafting this strategy, the acronyms are defined as:

- Department – Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
- NSW Health – Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, Health Infrastructure and the Ministry of Health.

The following actions are not presented in any order of preference and will be sequenced by the responsible agency as part of its planning processes.

Action	Description	Lead	Support
1	Explore partnerships between tertiary institutions and the NSW Government to establish a greater university presence in the precinct.	NSW Health and TAFE NSW	Wollongong City Council
2	Establish governance and formal arrangements to create a research institute that complements the growth of the research sector.	NSW Health	TAFE NSW and Wollongong City Council
3	Update the planning framework to give incentives to grow the presence of community organisations, health related charities and allied health uses in the precinct.	Department	Wollongong City Council
4	Explore options to allow development over the South Coast Rail Line to create new ways for people to move in and out of the city centre.	Transport for NSW	Department
5	Work with Council to improve public safety, walking, cycling and general public amenity along main pedestrian thoroughfares, including to and from Wollongong Station.	Transport for NSW	Department and Wollongong City Council
6	Explore incentives in the planning framework to support providing more social and affordable housing, and community and lifestyle services in the right locations.	Department	Wollongong City Council
7	Develop a strategic business case to increase frequency of buses, including the free 'Gong Shuttle', and services between Wollongong, Warrawong and Shellharbour.	Transport for NSW	Department and Wollongong City Council
8	Investigate opportunities to implement the Wollongong Station Master Plan and implement public transport options in other locations, including park and rides in places well-connected to Wollongong Station and established public transport interchanges.	Transport for NSW	Department and Wollongong City Council
9	Work with Council to deliver and improve walking and cycling infrastructure consistent with the precinct's structure plan, and relevant strategic plans.	Transport for NSW	Department and Wollongong City Council

Action	Description	Lead	Support
10	Prepare an infrastructure delivery and sequencing plan to guide future development proposals in meeting the precinct vision.	Department	Transport for NSW, NSW Health, TAFE NSW, Wollongong City Council
11	Set up a precinct-wide investment prospectus to guide and promote investment that builds on from the strategic government investment.	NSW Health and TAFE NSW	Department, Transport for NSW, Wollongong City Council
12	Finalise strategic and statutory planning to define the extent, sequence and future of identified public infrastructure (including the implementation of Wollongong Public Hospital Master Plan and Wollongong Station Master Plan. once funding is allocated for its staged delivery)..	NSW Health, TAFE NSW, Transport for NSW	Department, Wollongong City Council
13	Develop a strategic business case to support investment in new green infrastructure planned for the precinct.	Department	Wollongong City Council
14	Explore creating a community facility as part of the precinct's 'central park' when undertaking detailed planning.	Department	Wollongong City Council
15	Prepare an infrastructure delivery and sequencing plan to coordinate the introduction of new green infrastructure to create a series of green streets and through site links connecting homes and workplaces.	Department	Wollongong City Council
16	Work with industry, government agencies and the development sector to establish green infrastructure consistent with the precinct's structure plan.	Department	Wollongong City Council

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Postal Address:
Department of Planning,
Housing and Infrastructure
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Street Address:
4 Parramatta Square
12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150