



Dear the General Manager,

Hornsby Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback on this strategy. The aim of Friends of Berowra Valley (FoBV) is to protect the natural landscape, heritage and biodiversity of Berowra Valley while making the valley more accessible to the community.

Specific support for sections

FoBV supports the Hornsby Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 but would like to add some specific support for some statements and comment on others.

Housing affordability and diversity

“However, Council will not consider the expansion of medium density zones unless the NSW Government provides an option to prepare local planning controls for medium density housing that is reflective of the landscape setting of the Shire”

We agree with this statement. Under current conditions there must be no expansion of medium density zones. Any further expansion of this zone must provide for deep soils, canopy cover, recreational space, and bush fire requirements.

The natural environment p23

“The urban forest, comprising of the trees within Hornsby’s urban areas and on rural lands, contributes significantly to the liveability, natural environment and prosperity of the Shire. These trees provide a myriad of benefits from shading, carbon storage, air pollution reduction, stormwater interception, habitat and food for wildlife, as well as contributing to the landscape character that the community value so highly. The urban forest is facing many challenges including urban densification, a changing climate, urban heat and canopy loss through removal of urban trees on private lands.”

We agree with this statement and do not want it altered or diluted.

What we heard from the community p26

“People love living in Hornsby Shire because of the natural environment, particularly the bushland, national parks, trees and green spaces. Consultation shows the community is passionate about protecting the region...

We agree with this statement.

“Rural character and landscape is protected” p 39

We agree with this statement and do not want any reduction in rural zonings in the Shire

Comments and suggested revisions

Guiding Principles

“Environmental

We will consider total water cycle management, preserving biodiversity, waste management, protecting environmental features, climate change impacts and initiatives, alternative energy sources, air quality, environmental impact of development and environmentally sound operation of assets.” p 11

This is a little confusing. Does it mean that council will consider the water cycle, consider preserving biodiversity, consider waste management, consider protecting environmental factors....

Our suggestion:

We will incorporate total water cycle management, preserve biodiversity, reduce waste, protect environmental features, reduce climate change impacts and develop initiatives, use alternative energy sources, improve air quality, reduce environmental impact of development and ensure environmentally sound operation of assets.

Key Challenges

Rate of population growth p18

“In the long term (2026-2036), population projections will require a potential 7,500 additional dwellings which Council anticipates will be provided through the revitalisation of the Hornsby Town Centre”. p18

Our suggestion:

In the long term (2026-2036), population projections will require a potential 7,500 additional dwellings which Council ~~anticipates~~ will ~~be~~ provided through the revitalisation of the Hornsby Town Centre.

Traffic and Transport p19

“The delivery of sustainable transport options including higher uptake of public transport and active transport (such as walking and cycling) in the Shire will be critical”. p19

We agree with this statement but it does not take into account the statement on p15 “ the largest increase in persons between 2022 and 2036 is forecast in the ages 85 and over”

The delivery of sustainable transport options including higher uptake of public transport and active transport (such as walking and cycling) in the Shire will be critical and Council will work with large retailers and public transport providers to make these services accessible to the elderly and disabled.

Climate change and environmental sustainability p 21

Friends of Berowra Valley would like reference to the recently developed Biodiversity Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy, and the Water Sensitive Hornsby Strategy in this section as they are vital components of Hornsby’s plans for environmental sustainability.

Resilience Planning p 22

FoBV would like the following alteration in this section:

“Future development planned for Hornsby to accommodate our growing population, jobs and housing will need to have sustainable urban design features to minimise potential increases in urban temperatures” and to be located in areas of low bushfire and flood risk.

Big Ideas p 27

FoBV are concerned about the statement:

“Becoming the sporting hub of Sydney’s north”

Increase in sporting activity always seems to be at the expense of the natural environment, including direct clearing, fragmentation, internal fragmentation, disruption to the water cycle, noise and night lights. The idea is worthy, but the execution must not cause any further damage to the natural environment.

Inclusive and healthy living p 34

“Provide diverse recreation and sporting opportunities in urban, rural and natural areas”

Friends of Berowra Valley do not consider that sporting activities should be located in natural areas. We would like the statement to read:

“Provide diverse recreation and sporting opportunities in urban, and rural ~~and natural~~ areas”

Resilient and sustainable p 36

FoBV is unsure why so many supporting strategies have been left out of this section.

We would like the inclusion of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, the Urban Forest Strategy, and the Water Sensitive Hornsby Strategy to be included as they all support a resilient and sustainable Hornsby.

Natural Environment p 38-39

“Transition to a water sensitive city”.

FoBV is concerned about the word “transition” as we would like it to have a more positive term.

“**Become** a water sensitive city” would be better.

“Maintain Canopy cover on Private land 33% by 2040.”

FoBV recommend that this target is increased to 50% to enable the full benefits of canopy cover for urban cooling and habitat provision to be reached.

“Increase Canopy cover over Streets 50% by 2040”.

FoBV is not sure if this means by 50% or to 50%. Either way it needs to be higher to give appreciable cooling of street temperatures



<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2017/feb/21/urban-heat-islands-cooling-things-down-with-trees-green-roads-and-fewer-cars>

“Canopy cover over Commercial zones 15% ”

Again, we are not sure if this means ‘to’ or ‘by’. FoBV would like the target increased to 30% by 2040. This target should allow for the high hard surface coverage and truck manoeuvrability in these areas.

Transition (**Become**) a water sensitive city.

No target is given for a decrease in water consumption. Why not? The water consumption per capita per day seems extraordinarily high. Could this be reduced by 50%?

“52% of monitored [freshwater] sites are healthy”

FoBV considers that there must be a target to increase the number of healthy freshwater sites to at least 75%. The health of freshwater creek in the Shire are integral to biodiversity conservation and recreational enjoyment of natural areas.

“92% of monitored [lower Hawkesbury River estuary] sites are healthy”

FoBV considers that there must be a target to increase the number of healthy estuarine sites to at least 95%. The health of the estuaries in the Shire are integral to biodiversity conservation and recreational enjoyment of natural areas.

Integrated and accessible transport p40

“Deliver, maintain and promote new footpaths, cycleways and shared paths for increased walkability and active transport.”

FoBV would like this altered to:

Deliver, maintain and promote new footpaths, cycleways and shared paths with **increased canopy cover** for increased walkability and active transport

Yours sincerely

Robin Buchanan

Vice President

Friends of Berowra Valley