



# LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENTS

Guideline for Councils





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## Overview

In March 2018, amendments to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) introduced new requirements for councils to prepare and make local strategic planning statements.

Local strategic planning statements (LSPS) will set out

- the 20-year vision for land use in the local area
- the special characteristics which contribute to local identity
- shared community values to be maintained and enhanced
- how growth and change will be managed into the future.

Councils will show how their vision gives effect to the regional or district plan, based on local characteristics and opportunities, and the council's own priorities in the community

strategic plan it prepares under local government legislation.

Informed by the strategic and community planning work undertaken across regions, districts and local government areas, the LSPS will be the key resource to understand how strategic and statutory plans will be implemented at the local level.

Please visit [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Environmental-Planning-and-Assessment-Act-updated](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Environmental-Planning-and-Assessment-Act-updated) for more information on local strategic planning statements and other planning legislation updates.



## Purpose of this guideline

This guideline provides information for councils, the community and other stakeholders on the contents of a local strategic planning statement, how it is made, and how it is implemented.

The guideline provides councils with a suggested process to help develop their first statement. Whilst the guideline applies across the state, different councils and regions have different resources and needs.

The Department will support regional councils with their technical or practical needs. The Greater Sydney Commission will assist councils in the Greater Sydney region.

Councils will be provided with supplementary information on the tools, data and resources available.



# Contents

## Purpose of an LSPS

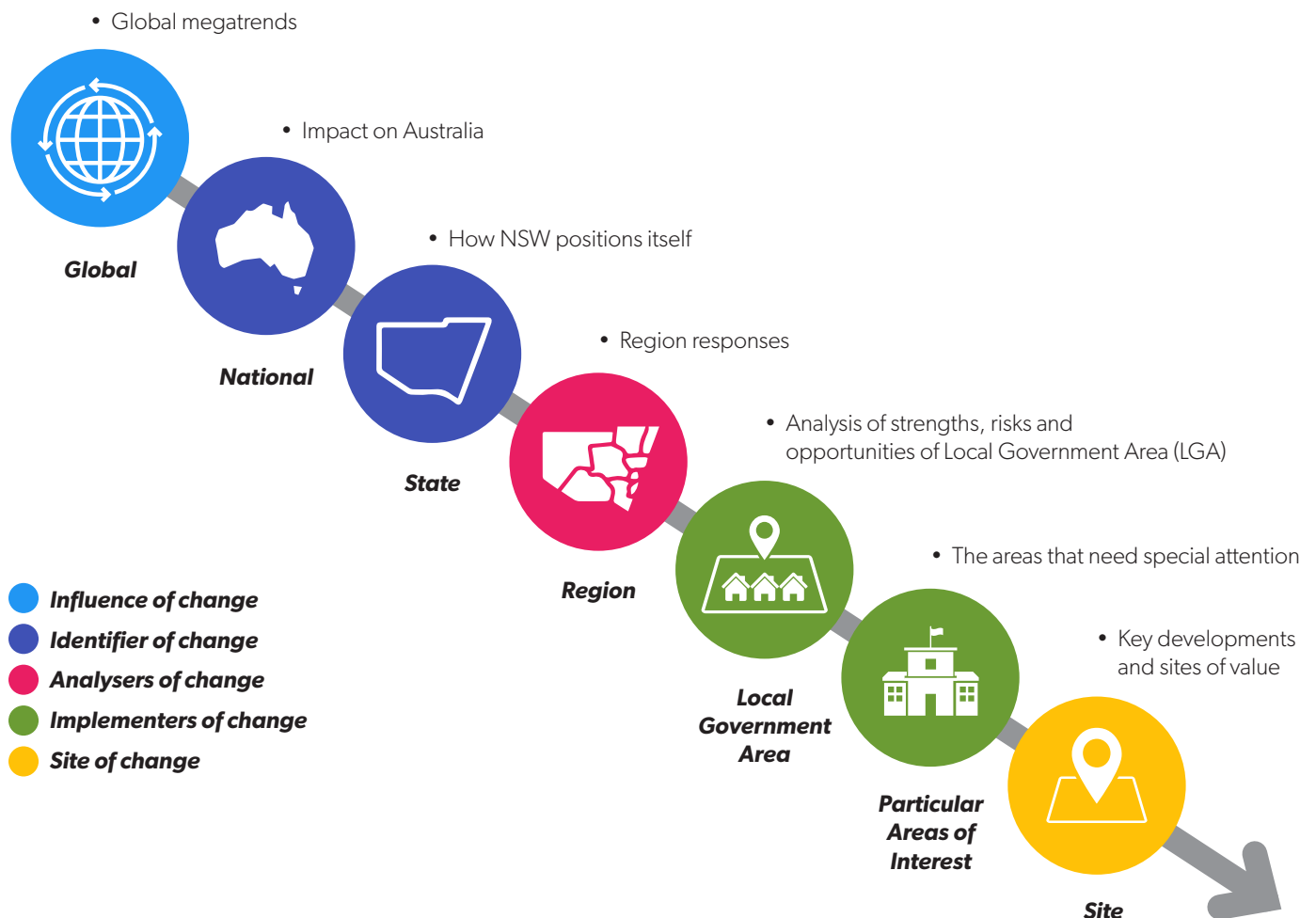
Local strategic planning statements will be a pivotal tool for local strategic planning in NSW. They will inform local statutory plans and development controls, and give effect to regional and district plans. The LSPS can also identify where further strategic planning effort may be needed.

The statements will act as a unifying document. Drawing together and summarising planning priorities identified through State, regional, district and local strategic work. They provide the local context and local-scale expression of actions and priorities from these plans.

In practice, the statements will shape how the local environmental plan (LEP) and development control plans (DCP) evolve over time.

Councils, in consultation with their communities, will determine the priorities for their area, informed by and consistent with other applicable strategic plans. Developing actions that respond to and build on the place and community's strengths and potential.

The LEP will deliver the council and community's plan and actions from the district and regional plans. This is supported by other tools such as contributions plans, place based planning strategies, growth management strategies and investment in infrastructure.



## Strategic-led planning

Local strategic planning statements will shift the NSW planning system into a **strategic-led planning framework**. The statements provide a clear **line-of-sight** between the key strategic priorities identified at regional or district spatial scales and the finer-grained planning at local, centre and neighbourhood scales.

The statements provide a **bridging point** to ensure that regional and district priorities are placed within a clear local context and tailored to the unique economic, social and environmental characteristics of the local government area.



The statements will be the primary resource to express the desired future for the LGA as a whole and for specific areas. This will guide and indicate what significant changes are planned for the LEP and DCP to deliver the vision. The LSPS will identify the need for further local strategic planning effort such as precinct and master planning, local character statements, and local housing and infrastructure strategies. Thus an LSPS should be seen as evolutionary where identified actions result in future refinements to the plan.

Importantly, the LSPS allows councils to translate their strategic planning work into local priorities and actions. In turn this informs the review and development of future strategic plans at the district and regional level. This **feedback cycle from local to regional planning** ensures that the **line-of-sight** between the different levels of spatial planning **works both ways**.

Lessons learnt through local strategic planning can strongly influence the planning and delivery of infrastructure and services, and patterns of planned growth at the broader district and regional scales.

The LSPS will assist councils in their consideration of infrastructure needs to support growth. This will promote transparency and clarity by identifying upfront the strategic infrastructure priorities for an area, which can then be delivered through a range of methods such as government funding or planning agreements.

The LSPS will also assist regional councils to plan for needs associated with significant population change or transformation in local employment opportunities.

# What should the LSPS include

## 20-year vision

An LSPS will be a succinct and easy to understand document that will allow community members to contribute to and understand the future direction of land use in their area. This future direction should be framed in the LSPS as a **20-year vision** for the LGA, which builds on the 10-year vision in council's Community Strategic Plan.

Importantly, it must be a **planning vision**, emphasising strategic land use, transport and

environmental planning, clearly demonstrating how the area will change to meet the community's needs in 20 years' time.

The 20-year vision may be derived from a community strategic visioning process conducted as part of the Community Strategic Plan prepared under the *Local Government Act 1993*, or from a separate engagement process.

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## Legal requirements

The statements are to identify the planning priorities for an area and explain how these are to be delivered and implemented.

The legal requirements for an LSPS outlined in section 3.9 of the EP&A Act include:

(a) **Context** - the basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters

(b) **Planning priorities** - the planning priorities for the area that are consistent with any strategic plan applying to the area and (subject to any such strategic plan) any applicable community strategic plan under section 402 of the Local Government Act

(c) **Actions** - the actions required for achieving those planning priorities

(d) **Implementation** - the basis on which the council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.



## Scope and structure

The statements may be simple or more complex depending on the requirements of the LGA, but should be in plain English with images, graphics and maps to assist in explaining the outcomes. They are envisaged to be relatively short, succinct documents, with the detailed analysis in the relevant informing strategies.

The LSPS should not simply repeat all the actions from a region/district plan, but present council's priorities and give guidance to the LEP.

Each statement will include a **20-year vision** of future land use and address the **legal requirements** listed above. Depending on council's priorities and actions, the statement could be structured around:

- economic, social and environmental matters
- land use themes such as housing, employment, infrastructure, agriculture, transport / connectivity, tourism, social, cultural and community facilities, open space and recreation, and the environment
- objectives and priorities identified in council's Community Strategic Plan relevant to land use planning
- strategic goals and directions / actions identified in the relevant regional plan
- district priorities (in Greater Sydney) or directions such as infrastructure and collaboration, liveability, productivity and sustainability

## Visualising priorities

The LSPS is an important messaging document for councils and their communities, in that it provides the 20-year vision for planning in the LGA and the direction to achieve that. It should clearly demonstrate what the planning priorities and actions are, how they fit within a local context and where they are located.

A map should present an overview of where the planning priorities lie within the LGA and indicate where future strategic planning work and potential change may occur.

- local geography, including wards, suburbs or other spatial distinctions.

The table at Attachment A provides a suggested outline of the content for the LSPS and how the document could be structured.

Councils should develop their local strategic planning statement as a single document for the whole council area.

The context for a ward based approach will become apparent from the scoping stage. If needed, the LSPS will outline why a fine grained approach is necessary and appropriate, based on the circumstances relevant to the area, such as distinctive features or character, significant industry or agriculture.

For council areas that are divided into wards, each Councillor of a ward is to be given the opportunity to engage and participate in the shaping of the planning priorities and actions relevant to their ward. Any ward-based priorities and actions must align with the planning priorities relevant to the whole council area, as expressed in the higher-order strategic plan/s and the local strategic planning statement.

It should identify those areas that require a finer grain analysis, such as a town centre, precinct or other area requiring further strategic planning investigation, development control plan or other tailored response.

Individual elements, such as housing or particular wards, could be indicated in additional maps and diagrams.

# LSPS process – Aligned and Collaborative

The legislation does not prescribe a set process for councils to prepare and make their LSPS, however, the Secretary may issue such requirements in future.

The following pages suggest a process which councils may follow to develop and implement their LSPS. It is intentionally flexible to allow councils to develop their own process based on their needs, the currency and availability of source material and the resources they have.

In general, the LSPS process comprises four stages:

- Scoping
- Testing
- Finalisation
- Implementation.

Each stage involves **alignment** with other strategic planning activities at the local, regional and state-level. The LSPS should 'give effect to' the regional or district plan. It delivers the actions in the relevant regional or district plan through councils' local plans.

The context for a ward based approach, as part of the planning system, should come from the process followed during the scoping stage. The LSPS will outline why a fine grained approach is necessary and appropriate, based on the circumstances relevant to the area, for instance distinctive features or character, significant industry or agriculture.

The LSPS is supported by **collaboration** across regions, between local and state government, and between different agencies, and engaging with the community and stakeholders.

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## Next steps

The Department and in the Sydney metropolitan region, the Greater Sydney Commission, will work closely with councils throughout the process to assist with the development of their LSPS.

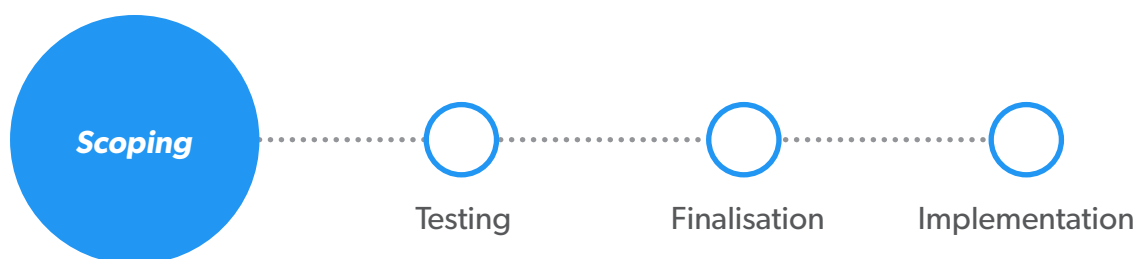
Councils will be advised of the resources and data available to support preparation of the first LSPS, for example strategic planning tools, datasets and mapping.

Councils should contact the Department at [legislativeupdates@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:legislativeupdates@planning.nsw.gov.au) for further information on local strategic planning statements or specific requests.

Please visit the Department's website at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Environmental-Planning-and-Assessment-Act-updated](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Environmental-Planning-and-Assessment-Act-updated) for information.



## Stage 1 – Scoping



The scoping stage should commence as soon as practical and involves:

1. **Collation** – assembling the relevant strategic and community plans applying to the LGA. This includes consideration of:

- regional and/or district plans
- community strategic plans
- council's strategies and policies such as local housing, growth, infrastructure and employment strategies
- council's LEP and its review
- growth plans and other strategic planning studies
- council's demographic profile, ABS or Department of Planning data.

2. **Issue identification** – understanding local issues for consideration in the LSPS. This may include engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community, dependent on council's consultation arrangements to understand community preferences and aspirations.

3. **Analysis, synthesis and gap assessment** – understanding how the strategic inputs apply in the local context. How they relate to each other, their currency, and identifying any tensions or inconsistencies between each piece of strategic work, with a particular focus on how local economic, social and environmental characteristics affect their relevance and importance.

4. **Vision setting** – identifying the main strategic initiatives that resonate across each piece of strategic work. Identifying areas within the LGA that are a key focus for change (or projected change), and identifying knowledge gaps that require further investigation.

It is crucial that this draws on the knowledge and views of councillors, community leaders and stakeholders to directly inform the community vision and key priorities during the scoping stage.

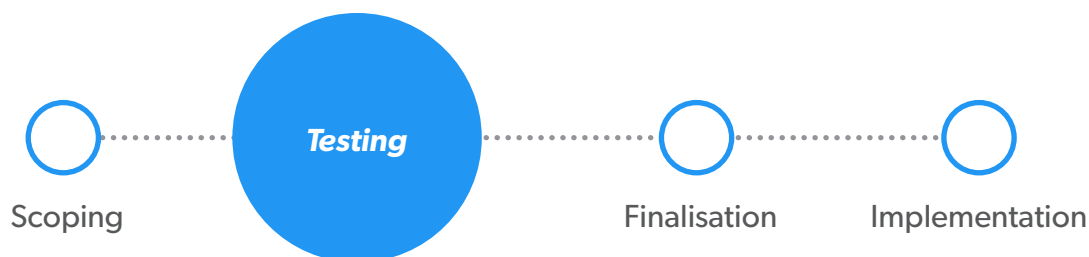
Councils should plan and if possible, commence the community consultation and engagement activities needed to develop the vision and LGA planning priorities.

As part of this, councils should consult with the Local Aboriginal Land Council to understand and incorporate relevant future strategic land use planning outlined in the Community Land and Business Plan.

5. **Prioritisation** – The main outcomes from this stage should include a preliminary list of planning priorities for further investigation at the next stage, and identification of additional strategic work necessary to inform and support the development of the LSPS.

Relevant actions, gaps and inconsistencies can be laid out using a simple table.

## Stage 2 – Testing



This stage develops, tests and refines the preliminary findings from the scoping stage, including the local vision, planning priorities and actions. Councils will develop a draft LSPS addressing the legal requirements. This may include a number of different options or scenarios depending on the relevant priorities.

This involves:

1. **Targeted analysis** – undertaking essential strategic work identified through the gap analysis to inform the development of specific priorities in the LSPS.

2. **Strategy development and assessment** – the development of a draft LSPS and assessment of options (scenarios) as required. Tasks will likely include:

- preparation of a local housing or employment strategy
- establishment of 6-10 and 20-year housing targets for councils in Greater Sydney
- industrial and urban services land review
- growth and change management plans, relevant to the key changes projected for the next 20 years based on demographic change such as housing, retail, industrial and commercial needs, jobs and centres, accessibility, tourism, social, cultural or community infrastructure, environment, rural or agricultural uses.

3. **Local infrastructure assessment** – councils should identify the infrastructure response to projected population change such as additional education facilities, health, transport and open space needs.

4. **Consultation** – testing preliminary findings, assumptions and options with the community and a broad range of stakeholders. This may include seeking specific feedback on targeted priorities and actions, such as options to identify possible future growth areas or options for revitalisation in key localities.

5. **Prepare draft LSPS for exhibition** – revising the draft LSPS by incorporating feedback of targeted strategy work, consultation and exhibition activities, narrowing options and isolating key areas of local priority.

The main outcome from this stage is a draft LSPS.

## Stage 3 – Finalisation



To assist finalisation of the LSPS, councils may develop supporting material to explain the priorities identified in the draft, options considered and reasons for final choices.

This stage involves:

**1. Approval of draft LSPS and exhibition**

– councils will need to resolve to exhibit their draft LSPS, with the minimum exhibition time of 28 days. Councils may choose to increase the exhibition period depending on the complexity of the proposed changes and other associated studies / timeframes.

**2. Finalisation of draft** – council reviews submissions and makes modifications to planning priorities and actions for the LGA as required. Any incomplete strategic work or unresolved planning issues can be identified in the final LSPS as further work to be undertaken in the LSPS action plan.

**3. Making the LSPS** – the final LSPS is to be approved and made by council. The EP&A Act includes provisions for ward-based councils to seek endorsement by councillors of a ward on provisions in the LSPS relating to their ward.

The Department may issue guidelines in the future prescribing how an LSPS must be made. Guidelines or Secretary's Requirements may also be issued to outline processes for having an LSPS endorsed by the relevant strategic planning authority in the event that ward councillors do not endorse the statement. That is the Greater Sydney Commission for Greater Sydney councils and the Department for all other councils.

Once an LSPS is made, it becomes a consideration when preparing LEPs. Of note, planning proposals must justify any proposed changes to LEPs, including indicating whether the changes will give effect to the relevant LSPS.



## Stage 4 - Implementation



Implementation of the LSPS will be an ongoing program of works until it is reviewed, which must occur at least every seven years from it being made.

Implementation includes:

1. **Implementing priorities and actions** – of the LSPS including necessary changes to statutory plans and development controls, council’s infrastructure funding and delivery programs and finer grained strategic planning (e.g. DCPs, masterplans etc).

2. **Alignment with related work** – LSPS used to inform the basis of any amendment to the LEP, CSP review, and review of regional and district plans. Future strategic planning work by councils should support priorities within the LSPS and address knowledge gaps.

3. **Monitoring and review** – undertaking monitoring and reporting as outlined in the LSPS, regularly seeking community feedback and identifying continuous improvement opportunities, and reviewing the LSPS within seven years.

The LSPS is intended to be a live policy – rather than a static document, fixed at one point-in-time. In addition to being reviewed at least every seven years, the statement should be revised on an ongoing, as-needs-basis, to ensure that it continues to reflect the community’s views on the future desired state for the local area and ensure it remains responsive, relevant and local.

Revisions to the LSPS may be required in response to significant changes within the LGA, such as announcements on centre revitalisation, new infrastructure investment and employment opportunities, significant changes in projected population growth or changes to the relevant higher order strategic plan.

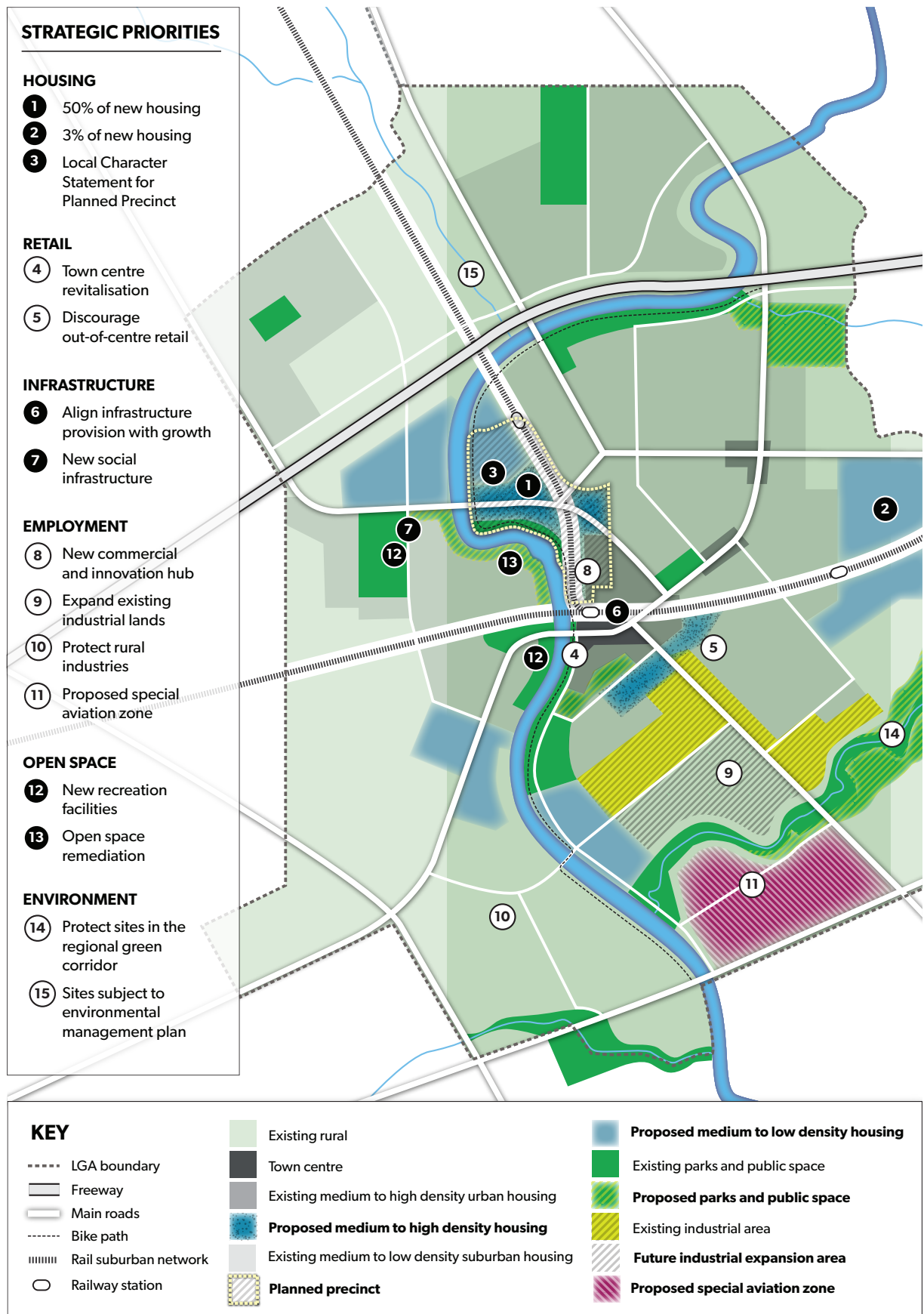
## Attachment A - Suggested structure for a Local Strategic Planning Statement

	LSPS Content	Possible sources and inputs
<b>20 Year Vision</b>	<p>Vision captures the future desired state for the local area and high-level outcomes that give effect to the higher order strategic plan.</p> <p>Planning priorities and actions in the LSPS should aim to achieve the future desired state and outcomes stated in the vision.</p>	<p>Community participation / engagement activities to articulate the local vision.</p> <p>Community strategic visioning process conducted as part of the Community Strategic Plan could help inform the 'planning vision'.</p> <p>The relevant district or regional plans.</p>
<b>Strategic Context</b>	<p>Explain the basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This section should introduce the LGA, including the impact of local geography, profile and defining characteristics, regional context, the key economic, social and environmental issues, and the key opportunities and challenges to achieving the 20-year vision.</p> <p>The strategic context should include a temporal discussion of the issues, that is past, present and future.</p>	<p>Inputs to help inform context include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant regional strategic plan and district plan, including vision statements and objectives</li> <li>• aspirations for the future of the LGA and the strategic objectives identified in the council's Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>• other endorsed public documents identifying or supporting strategic planning for the LGA</li> <li>• demographic, housing, transport and economic trends.</li> </ul> <p>Opportunities for regional / district collaborations of research / assessments should be considered.</p>
<b>Planning priorities</b>	<p>Local planning priorities are to be consistent with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategies identified in regional plans (relevant to LGA)</li> <li>• planning priorities in district plans (relevant to LGA)</li> <li>• main priorities for the future of the LGA identified in council's Community Strategic Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Local planning priorities can be grouped within the document around themes, to provide structure and context.</p> <p>Themes should cover the key issues identified by the council to deliver the 20-year vision as outlined in the strategic context.</p>	<p>The council should also have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified areas of State, regional or district significance, relevant to the LGA (eg. planned precincts and growth areas)</li> <li>• other public documents endorsed by council identifying planning priorities for the LGA (eg. local housing and infrastructure strategies, centres plans, industrial strategies, growth plans, retail, etc)</li> <li>• housing outcomes including the local housing strategy and in Greater Sydney 0-5, 6-10 and 20-year housing targets</li> <li>• any updated / new State Government policies.</li> </ul> <p>Theme groupings may be around key areas of action related to land uses, transport and infrastructure, directions identified in strategic and community plans, or under broader economic, social and environmental headings.</p> <p>Sub-themes may assist in identifying the actions necessary to implement the planning priorities (eg. 'Environment' theme may be broken into sub-themes such as biodiversity, climate, natural resources, resilience and risks etc).</p>

	LSPS Content	Possible sources and inputs
<b>Action plan</b>	<p>List actions required to achieve planning priorities, having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategies and actions for achieving regional objectives identified in regional plans (relevant to the LGA)</li> <li>• actions to achieve planning priorities identified in district plans (relevant to the LGA)</li> <li>• strategies for achieving strategic objectives (as they relate to land use planning) identified in council's Community Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>The action plan provides the strongest link between strategic and statutory planning, and should indicate how council's LEP and DCP work will accommodate the planning priorities for the LGA. The statement should also include planning-related actions arising from the community visioning work undertaken for the CSP.</p> <p>LSPSs identify planning tools and levers that can give effect to the planning priorities. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEP amendments to provide for projected housing and employment needs, open space, heritage and local character protections etc</li> <li>• Master planning processes for specific centres and locality-based DCPs</li> <li>• Further research and preparation of local housing or infrastructure strategies</li> <li>• Develop local character statements and/or urban design frameworks</li> <li>• Local infrastructure priorities</li> <li>• Coordinate community input to planning work for planned precincts within the LGA.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>These actions may be grouped together as an action plan within the statement, or they may sit with the associated planning priority under the various themes within the document.</p> <p>In either case, there must be a clear relationship between the identified planning priorities and the related actions.</p>	
<b>Implementation</b>	<p>The statement must set out the basis on which the council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.</p>	<p>The development, monitoring and review of LSPS should be aligned to other council planning processes including the LEP review and IP&amp;R framework under the Local Government Act.</p> <p>Of note, the LSPS should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform the review of the council's LEP, including directing key changes to the instrument</li> <li>• be recognised within the council's CSP as the primary tool for implementing the CSP strategic objectives related to land use planning</li> <li>• inform the development of local infrastructure plans and management of contributions schemes.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>The LSPS could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation strategy (with timeframes)</li> <li>• Performance indicators and other success measures</li> <li>• Monitoring and reporting methods for implementing actions</li> <li>• LSPS Review (at least 7-year review)</li> <li>• Community feedback and continuous improvement opportunities (ie. measures the council will take to ensure the LSPS remains responsive, relevant and local)</li> <li>• Assumptions eg any government funding needed / secured.</li> </ul>	
<b>Mapping</b>	<p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Include a structure plan for the LGA depicting key areas and themes, and locations where the priorities and actions are to be implemented.</p> <p>Indicative sub-maps and illustrative images, graphics, tables etc.</p>	<p>Statements could include finer detailed maps focussing on key initiatives, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• localities where land use changes are proposed</li> <li>• areas affected by other major actions</li> <li>• images derived from the strategic housing tool</li> <li>• quotes / images from other community consultation, other documents, aspirational future images etc.</li> </ul>



## Attachment B - Sample Map



*For illustrative purposes only.*

