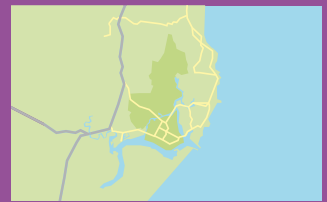
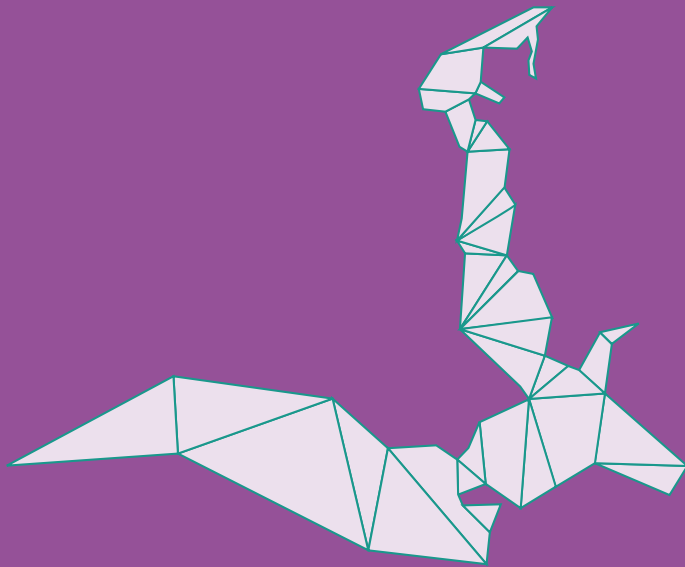


lennox head planning and environmental study

2023

ballina
shire council

An abstract graphic composed of various shades of purple and white, forming a complex, multi-faceted geometric shape that resembles a stylized mountain range or a series of overlapping planes. The lines are white, and the areas between them are filled with different tones of purple, creating a sense of depth and movement.



Our design rationale for this document is based on a conceptual interpretation of its contents. To symbolise the strategic community approach, we have used segmented shapes to represent the elements of the community that fit into the geographic focus – Ballina. Together, the shapes form the Ballina River map. Every element impacts on the challenges, direction and ultimately the future of its entire form – our community. We hope you enjoy the journey and the view.

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MAPPING

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table of contents

01	STRATEGIC OVERVIEW 8
	1.1 First Nations 8
	1.2 Climate change and resilience planning 8
	1.3 Place making 8
	1.4 Local character 9
	1.5 Lennox Head - Settlement 9
02	LENNOX HEAD 11
	2.1 Planning History 11
	2.2 Strategic planning framework 13
03	ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE CHARACTERISTICS OF LENNOX HEAD 19
	3.1 Environmental characteristics 19
	3.2 Heritage characteristics 25
04	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS 32
	4.1 Geographical boundaries of Lennox Head and Skennars Head 32
	4.2 Demographic profile 34
	4.3 Population growth, household size and housing supply 35
	4.4 Housing Tenure 40
	4.5 Population Change 2023 - 2043 42
	4.6 School enrolments 45
	4.7 Employment Sector Change 46
	4.8 Crime Statistics 47
05	COUNCIL'S INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM 48
	5.1 Transport model 48
	5.2 Road projects 49
	5.3 Car parking 50
	5.4 Community facilities and open space 50
06	COMMUNITY VISION 52
	6.1 Pre-study Community Engagement – What did we do? 52
	6.3 Community Vision 59
	6.4 Councillor briefings 60

table of contents

(continued)

07	VISION ELEMENT 1 LOCAL CHARACTER, 'VILLAGE FEEL' AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY61
	7.1 Relative density and walkability..... 61
	7.2 Human scale, built form..... 62
	7.3 Social cohesion and recreation..... 63
	7.4 Local neighbourhood character..... 65
	7.5 A Network of Neighbourhoods..... 66
	7.6 Special places..... 67
08	VISION ELEMENT 2 MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT68
	8.1 Local cultural heritage68
	8.2 Wild coast.....69
	8.3 Rural amenity.....70
	8.4 Habitat connectivity.....70
09	VISION ELEMENT 3 ENCOURAGE A STRONG DIVERSE COMMUNITY.....72
	9.1 Connections between neighbourhoods.....72
	9.2 Footpath access.....76
	9.3 Regional housing pressures.....80
	9.4 Housing choice.....80
	9.5 Minimum dwelling requirements.....81
	9.6 Strategic Urban Growth Areas..... 81
10	VISION ELEMENT 4. FOSTERING DIVERSE, LOCAL ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES 88
	10.1 Futureproof Local Centres..... 88
	10.2 Employment lands investigation..... 89
11	CONCLUSIONS THE WAY FORWARD 90
	Population overview 90





executive summary

A review of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan was identified as a priority in Councils' Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2040. The Lennox Head Planning and Environment Study provides all the source material for the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan 2023-2043. Four months of community engagement activities has informed this study and the draft Strategic Plan.

Council's place-based plans aim to provide localised actions and priorities to guide Council activities. The previous Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 laid the framework for a series of land releases in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area. Most of the identified land releases are now underway or complete. Some areas investigated for urban land release were found to be inappropriate due to ecological values or fractured land ownership.

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is in the midst of a population boom as new subdivisions are delivered to market. Growth areas in the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan 2023-2043 were all previously identified in the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 and included in the Ballina LEP 1987. There are no new proposed urban release areas in the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

Land with ecological value has been identified within the Ballina LEP 1987 for protection and enhancement. As an area with a diverse range of plant community types, preserving native vegetation and enhancing habitat connectivity through regeneration projects is an ongoing priority.

Local cultural heritage of the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area stretches back to around 60,000 years. Recent discoveries of many sites and artefacts show there was a long occupation of this area before European colonization. This Study includes Nyangbal and Bundjalung language and a timeline documenting changes to the area.

The 2008 Ballina Shire-wide Community Heritage Study identified a number of significant post settlement sites such as dry stone walls that have since been protected in Council's planning framework. Work is still to be done in recognising, acknowledging, and celebrating Nyangbal and Bundjalung connections to Lennox Head and Skennars Head.

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is forecast to see a 36% increase in population from 2023 to 2036. Beyond that, forecasts depend on additional land available for urban subdivision. Council's infrastructure planning to support this population growth is outlined in this Planning and Environment Study. Major relevant road projects are the North Creek Bridge and the Hutley Drive connection to North Creek Road. Community facilities and open spaces are being delivered and upgraded.

The community vision, synthesised from four months of community engagement activities is:

"Lennox Head and Skennars Head will maintain the coastal, village feel, through a network of connected, well serviced neighbourhoods each with its own local character, complementing Lennox village. Our respect for First Nations and Australian cultural heritage and our natural environment ensures we maintain our wild coast, rural amenity and habitat connectivity. Council and the community will make strategic choices to provide mixed income housing, local employment opportunities, recreation and transport to meet the needs of existing and future generations."

This Planning and Environment Study provides the background information to the vision, the vision objectives and the actions within the Draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

strategic overview

Lennox Head is a well-loved part of the Ballina Shire. Council aims to complete a new strategic plan for Lennox Head by the end of 2023. The Lennox Head Strategic Plan will outline the vision for the area over a 20 year horizon, developed with the local community to guide and prioritise Councils' activities and investment in the Lennox Head area.

1.1 First Nations

Council recognises the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area as part of the Bundjalung Nation. As the first people to inhabit this land the Nyangbal people of the Bundjalung Nation cared for the lands and waters of the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area for thousands of years. The connections that Nyangbal people have with the lands and waters of Lennox Head are continuing despite interruption. The Lennox Head Strategic Plan seeks to recognise and strengthen Aboriginal cultural connection to the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area.

The Heritage Act 1977 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 guide the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW. In recent years many significant artefacts have been found in many locations in and around Lennox Head. These discoveries highlight the recent history of Aboriginal occupation and custodianship of the Lennox Head area. Cultural protocols govern knowledge and stories in Bundjalung culture, guiding access to knowledge. Council is working to develop a partnership with local Nyangbal people to determine important sites and stories for the Lennox Head area and appropriate protocols for sharing them.

1.2 Climate change and resilience planning

Climate change, natural hazards, risk management and resilience planning are a primary consideration and inform Council's approach to strategic place planning. For the Lennox Head area, coastal erosion and increased fire and flood risk due to increasing extreme weather events are key concerns.

Community cohesion is seen as a key strength in responding to climate change risks and impacts, and recovering from weather events influenced by climate change.

The Coastal Zone Management Plan – Ballina Coastline guides Council activities to manage beach erosion, shoreline recession and coastal inundation. The Lennox Head Strategic Plan will refer to The Coastal Zone Management Plan – Ballina Coastline for threshold triggers and mitigation actions.

1.3 Place making

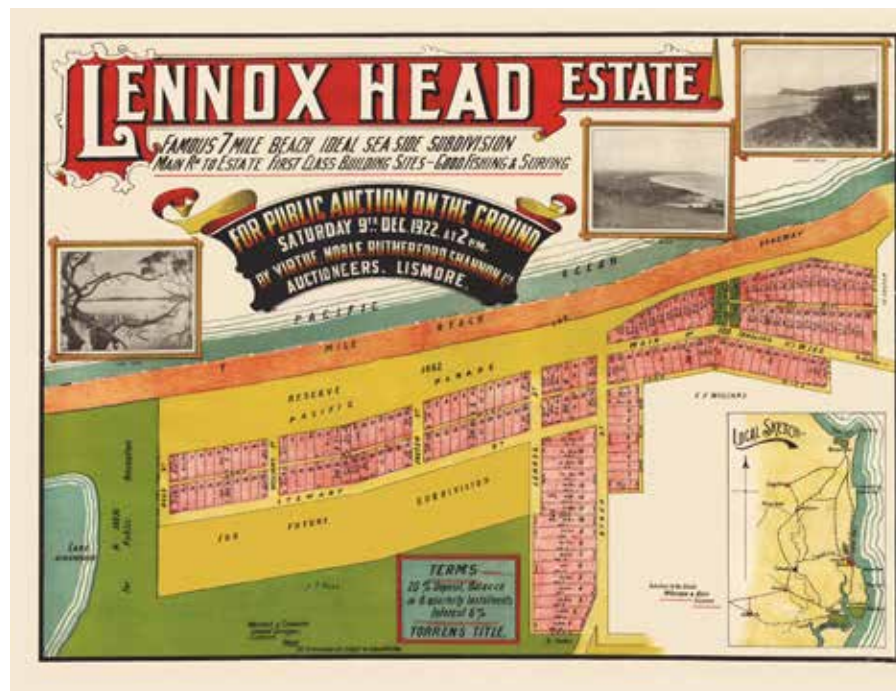
Placemaking is an overarching idea and a hands-on approach for improving a place. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution¹.

Placemaking seeks to involve local communities. It is centered on observing, listening to and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular place in order to understand their needs and aspirations for the place and their community as a whole.

With a focus on the way people use places, placemaking prioritises activity and vitality, and ideas that encourage this can be tested to guide long term design. The involvement of the local community in this process can begin to influence infrastructure prioritisation and design.

¹ "What Is Placemaking?" Project for Public Spaces, 2007, <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>

Figure 1
Image of first official land release in Lennox Head
1922



1.4 Local character

Articulating the local character of places is a new opportunity available to local Councils. By identifying key aspects of local character, Councils can strengthen planning controls and provide guidance for design of public infrastructure.

Character statements in place plans will provide context for land use planning controls to assist in the assessment of proposals. The intent is to ensure that aspects of local character values identified by the community are protected, maintained or enhanced by future development.

A local character analysis was done prior to the initial community consultation to inform community survey design. The plan area was divided into different neighbourhood areas each with their own distinct characteristics and identity.

Walking and driving assessments were completed by staff, the categories and characteristics observed were then included in the local character survey. The outputs from the survey and the information from the staff assessments have informed the local character statements within the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

1.5 Lennox Head - Settlement

Lennox Head is a sea-side village located 11km north of Ballina, 20 km south of Byron Bay and approximately 37.5 km east of Lismore.

As part of the Bundjalung Nation, Lennox Head has been a significant place for local Aboriginal people consisting of camps, ceremonial sites and walking tracks which are still evident today.

Where Lennox village is today was a permanent camp, home to Bundjalung people. Every 6-7 years large gatherings of people were hosted. These gatherings were for teaching lore and initiation.

The Lennox Head area was deemed a 'safe space' in big rains.

There are unacknowledged massacre sites between Lennox Point and Sharpes Beach. There is archeological evidence of significant cultural sites including Bora rings, burial grounds, Women's sites and middens in the Lennox area².

From 1842, freed convicts who logged the then abundant cedar trees, established small colonies in Ballina and Upper North Creek. Others commenced to farm the area after the 1861 Roberston Land Bill allowed free selection of crown land. By the 1900s Lennox boasted a school, an Anglican church, a public hall and a post office.³

Development of Lennox Head village followed the Lennox Head Estate land auction of 1922.

² K. Cook and C. Binge, personal communication, 20 July 2022

³ Lennox Head Village Heritage Trail, 2023, lennoxheadheritage.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/heritage_trail_brochure_village_final-1.pdf

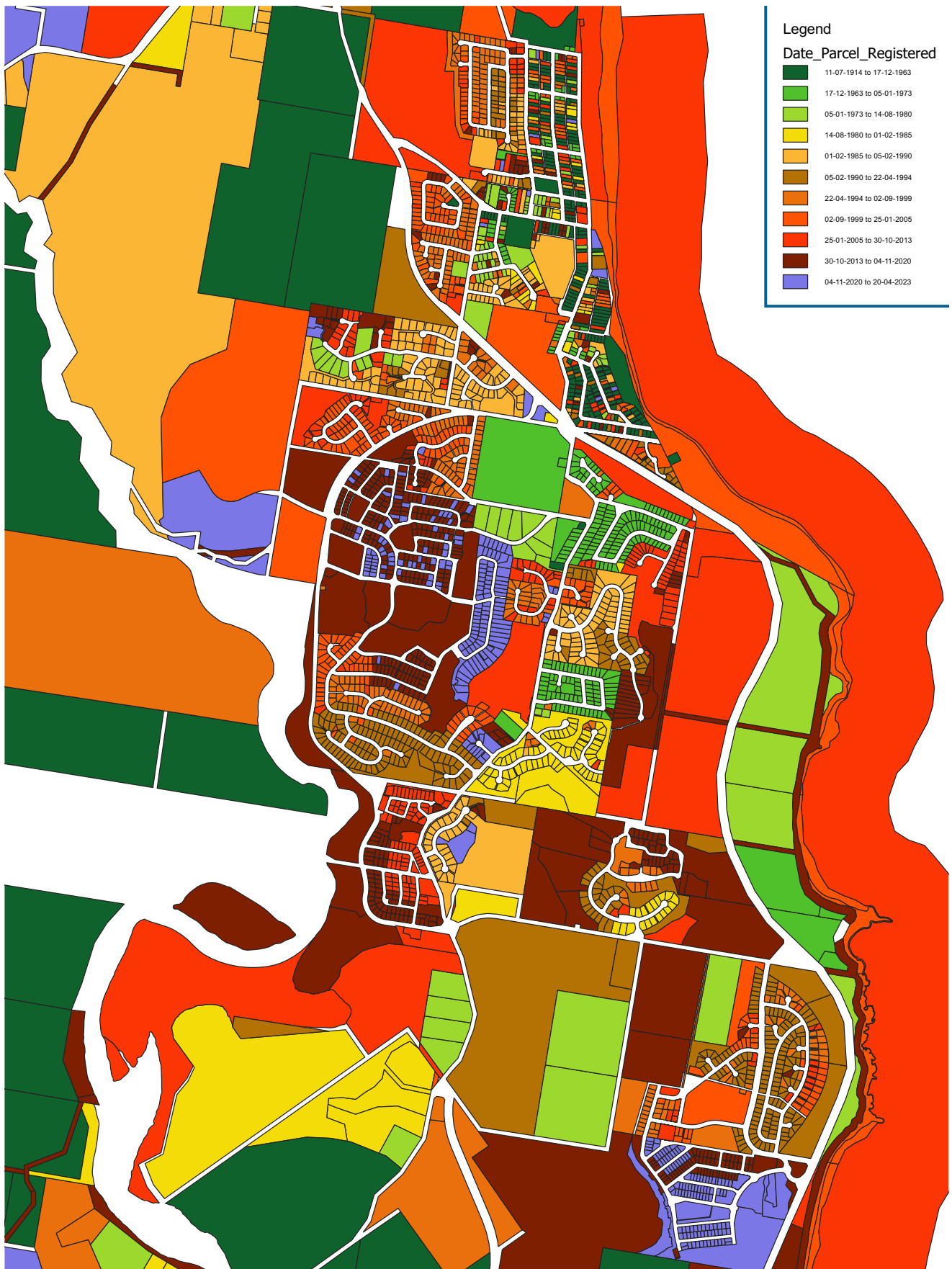


Figure 2 - Subdivision History of Lennox Head

lennox head

2.1 Planning History

Lennox Head is an area undergoing rapid change consisting of the original village area and extensive newer suburbs located to the west and south of the original village.

2.1.1 Subdivision History of Lennox Head and Skennars Head

After the first official land release in Lennox Head in 1922, there have been many subsequent land releases and subdivisions creating new suburbs, extending the residential area known as Lennox Head and Skennars Head. This is shown in the map on page 10 which also shows the dates of registered parcels.

2.1.2 Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002

Council worked with the local community to develop the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan adopted in 2002.

Major issues considered during the making of this plan included lifestyle and village atmosphere, the environment, the Lennox Head village centre, population growth and community infrastructure. A rigorous consultation approach underpinned the plan. Most of the actions have been completed and have become part of local planning instruments.

Progress on actions from the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 was reported to Council at its 23 September 2021 Ordinary meeting.

2.1.3 Lennox Head Structure Plan 2004

In 2004 the Lennox Head Structure Plan was prepared to facilitate land releases, infrastructure provision and environmental protection outlined in the 2002 Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan.

Several studies were prepared to progress principles outlined in the 2002 Strategic Plan, and to guide land releases. These studies included an Environmental Protection Zone Review, a Landscape and Visual Analysis, a Community Facilities and Open Space Needs Analysis, Service and Trade Centre investigations, an Urban Water Management Strategy, a Review of the Arterial Road Network, and Bushfire Hazard Mapping, among others.

The Lennox Head Structure Plan 2004 included a summary map showing constraints, land release areas and important transport connections. Progress on actions from the Lennox Head Structure Plan 2004 was reported to Council at its 23 September 2021 ordinary meeting.

The new Strategic Plan for Lennox Head seeks to maintain many of the planning principles and ideas within the Lennox Head Structure Plan 2002, albeit with some refinement for the 2023 -2043 period.

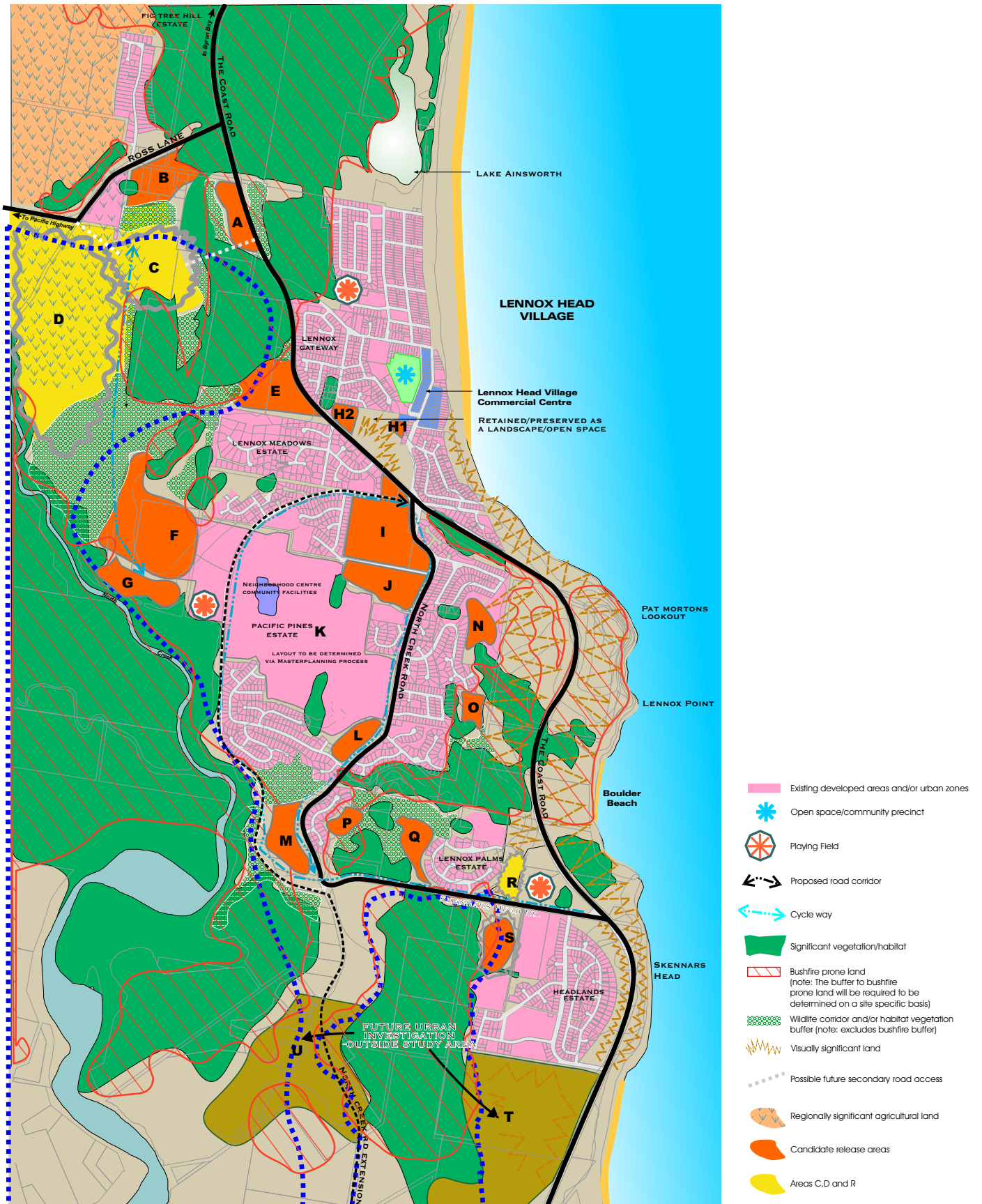


Figure 3 - Lennox Head Structure Plan Summary Map

2.2 Strategic planning framework

2.2.1 North Coast Regional Plan (NCRP 2041)

NCRP 2041 was prepared by the NSW Government and released by the Minister for Planning in December 2022.

Lennox Head is identified to deliver housing and employment lands over the next 20 years, as in the previous NCRP 2036.

2.2.2 North Coast Regional Plan (NCRP 2036)

NCRP 2036 was prepared by the NSW Government and released by the Minister for Planning in March 2017.

Lennox Head is referenced within the NCRP 2036 as being a local centre. The plan supports the investigation of employment lands to increase jobs at Lennox Head, south of Ross Lane near The Coast Road, with the amenity of the coastal strip providing lifestyle and economic opportunities. Investigation areas are highlighted in the Lennox Head area for future housing. Opportunities to expand nature-based tourism places and enhanced visitor experiences is especially encouraged for Lennox Head.

The NCRP 2036 also requires each Council within the region to develop local growth management strategies, as was the case with respect to the State Government's previous 2006 Far North Coast Regional Strategy (FNCRS). Local Growth Management Strategies are the means through which housing needs and ageing in place strategies are addressed.

The NCRP 2036 set dwelling targets for Ballina Shire to accommodate an additional 2550 dwellings to the year 2036. The previous FNCRS set a target of an additional 8400 dwellings across the Ballina Shire into the period 2006 to 2031. The NCRP does project the shire population to increase to 45,850 and dwellings to increase from 19,107 in 2006 to 22,000 by 2036.

2.2.3 North Coast Urban Design Guidelines 2008

The North Coast Urban Design Guidelines assist Councils to assess the existing positive attributes of their own settlements and outlines principles and strategies for managing environmentally, economically and socially sustainable settlement growth.

Relevant principles to guide coastal settlement consolidation:

- Maintain the strong character of the formal street grid to reinforce visual and physical connections to the coast and water bodies.
- Maintain and protect the natural coastal environment; prevent any further growth in areas of unstable coastal conditions.
- Concentrate new development in the town core in preference to outward expansion.
- Define boundaries around the settlement to limit outward expansion.
- Maintain public open space and public access along waterways; set development back from environmentally sensitive areas; prevent privatisation of foreshore.

2.2.3 Ballina Shire Growth Management Strategy (BSGMS)

The BSGMS was adopted by the Council on 26 July 2012 in response to the requirements contained within the 2006 Far North Coast Regional Strategy (FNCRS 2006). Providing analysis on the capacity of zoned land within the shire for residential and employment lands and what is required to meet FNCRS 2006 dwelling targets, the BSGMS identified candidate release areas as necessary for meeting residential dwelling targets in Lennox Head.

2.2.4 Ballina Shire Economic Development Strategy 2019 (BSEDS 2019)

The BSEDS commercial and industrial hierarchy identifies Lennox Head as a district centre servicing surrounding suburbs for local convenience. A neighborhood shopping center at the EPIQ estate complements the retail mix of the Lennox village. An area for light industrial uses on the northern side of Lennox is to be investigated as per direction from the North Coast Regional Plan 2036.

2.2.5 Ballina Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

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.

Following public exhibition, the Ballina Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (BSLSPS) was adopted by Council at its Ordinary meeting held on 28 May 2020.

The BSLSPS confirms that the increase in population and dwellings forecast in the NRCP 2036 will be accommodated largely in existing zoned residential release areas in Lennox Head. Additional potential for residential lots exists within identified Strategic Urban Growth Areas (SUGA).

Of the approximately 118 ha of undeveloped SUGA designated land in the Ballina Shire, 81 ha occurs within the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area. A significant portion of the SUGA designated land is constrained by biodiversity values, flooding, and bush fire risk. This is why estimated lot yields are below the 15 dwellings per ha designated in the NCRP 2036.

2.2.6 Ballina Local Environmental Plan 1987 (BLEP 1987)

The BLEP 1987 is still in force over the 7(d) Environmental Protection (Scenic/ Escarpment) Zone, 7(f) Environmental Protection (Coastal Lands) Zone, 7(l) Environmental Protection (Habitat) Zone within the Plan area.

These areas are nominated as a 'Deferred Matter' in the Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 (BLEP 2012). The following extract from the originally gazetted Ballina LEP 1987 zoning map shows the 7(d), 7(f) and 7(l) Zones within the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area.

1. Table 2-1 Excerpt from Ballina Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement

Ballina Shire Residential Land Supply Estimate July 2019

LOCATION	POTENTIAL GREENFIELD RESIDENTIAL ZONED LOTS	GREENFIELD AREA (HA)	POTENTIAL LOTS ON SUGA LAND	SUGA AREA (HA)	POTENTIAL INFILL LOTS TO 2040	TOTAL NUMBER POTENTIAL LOTS
Lennox Head	849-979	84 ha	52-80	20 ha	126-483	1027-1542
Skennars Head	400	44.7 ha	244-457	61 ha	21	665-878
TOTAL	1249-1379	128.7	296- 537	81 ha	147-504	1692-2420

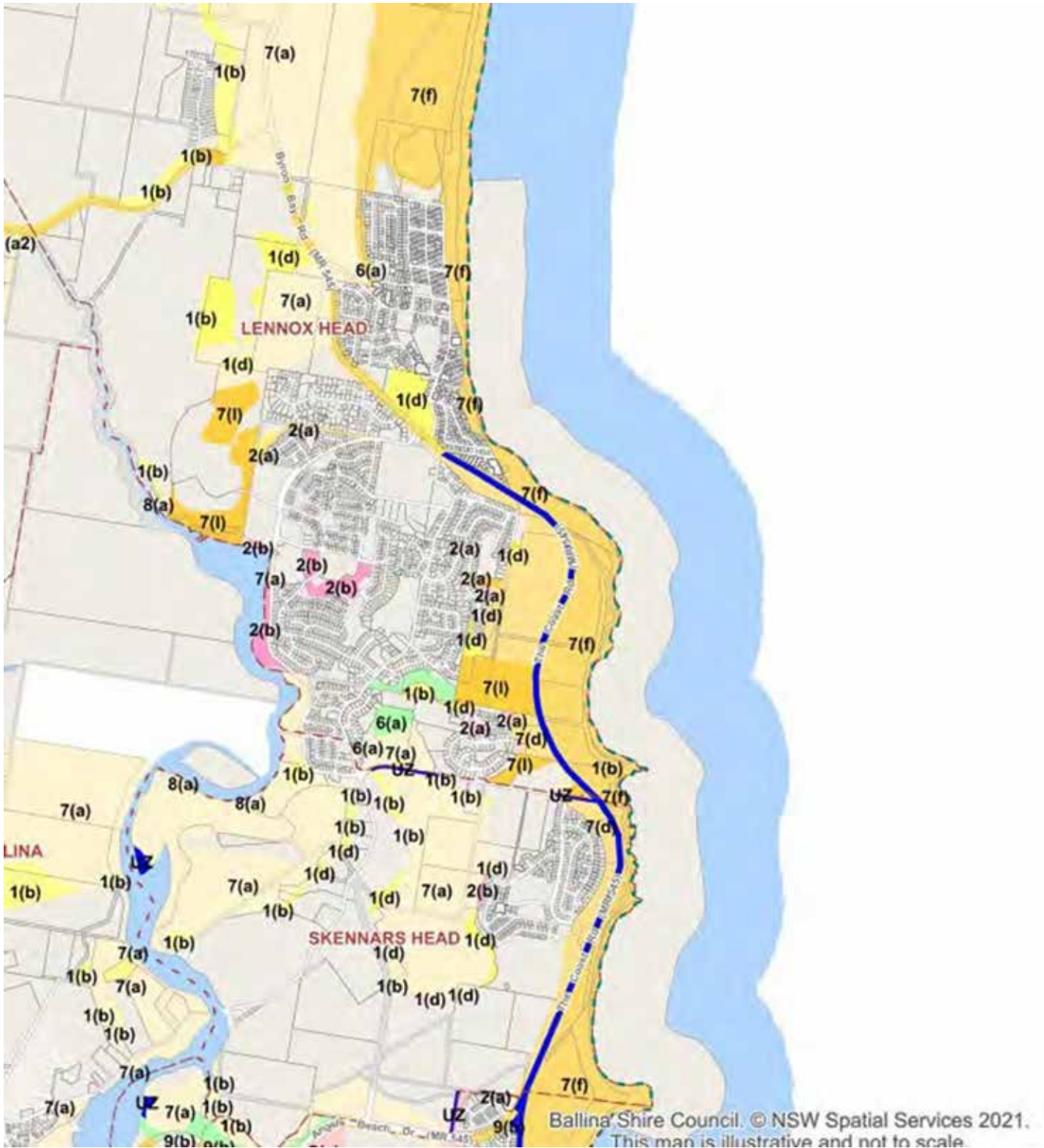


Figure 4 - Extract from Ballina LEP 1987 as gazetted showing the location of the 7(d), 7(f) and 7(l) Zones

2.2.7 Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 (BLEP 2012)

BLEP 2012 contains the legislative provisions through which land use planning is regulated in Lennox Head. Provisions of relevance include a 9 metre building height limit in Lennox Head village, EPIQ Estate and the Meadows; and an 8.5 metre limit in Skennars Head and Fig Tree Hill. There are a variety of lot sizes within the Plan area from 300sqm in the urban subdivisions through to 40 hectares in rural areas.

In schedule 5 of the BLEP 2012, the following heritage items in Lennox Head are listed for protection.

Table 2-2 Ballina LEP 2012 Listed Lennox Head Environmental Heritage Items

Lennox Head	Dry Stone Walls (walls known as “wall a” and “wall b” on former “Henderson Farm”)	Hutley Drive and Henderson Lane	Lots 1 and 2, DP 1070446
Lennox Head	Fig tree (planted by Ted Henderson in 1947 on former “Henderson Farm”)	Hutley Drive and Henderson Lane	Lot 1, DP 1070446
Lennox Head	Norfolk Island Pines	Hutley Drive and Henderson Lane	Lot 1, DP 1070446
Lennox Head	Historic Norfolk Island Pines	North Creek Road	Lot 233, DP 1104071; Lot 11, DP 627149
Lennox Head	Lennox Head War Honour Roll (moveable heritage item housed at Lennox Head Community Centre)	Park Lane	Lot 473, DP 729088
Lennox Head	Dry Stone Wall (wall known as “wall d”)	North Creek Road (Tara Downs)	Lot 31, DP 715304

2.2.8 Ballina Shire Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP 2012)

DCP 2012 Chapter 3 Urban Subdivision contains specific requirements relating to subdivision within Aspects Estate and Elevation Estate, and to the Skennars Head Expansion Area. Part 5.1 of Chapter 3 contains planning objectives for the Aspects Estate and Elevation Estate, Lennox Head which include providing for the integrated development of the Skennars Ridge residential area. Planning controls guide subdivision of land in a manner which recognises and protects biodiversity values of the land and locality, including the Ballina Nature Reserve.

Part 5.7 of Chapter 3 contains the planning objectives for the Skennars Head locality, to facilitate the development of the Skennars Head expansion area for the purpose of residential development, open space, neighbourhood shopping facilities, and associated environmental works, public amenities and infrastructure. A non-urban inter-urban break is to be established to provide clear separation of Skennars Head and East Ballina.

DCP 2012 Chapter 4 Residential and Tourist Development contains specific requirements for residential and tourist development within the Coastal Grove Estate, the Aspects Estate and Elevations Estate, 16 Tara Downs, and Blue Seas Parade, Lennox Head.

DCP 2012 does not contain specific provisions relating to industrial development in the Lennox Head Strategic plan area.

DCP 2012 Chapter 6 Commercial Development provides a framework under which development proposals, which require Council's development consent, must be considered. This will have relevance to commercial development in appropriately zoned land outside the area defined in DCP 2012 Chapter 6 Commercial Development Lennox Head.

DCP 2012 Chapter 6 C Commercial Development Lennox Head applies to all E1 zoned land in Lennox Head and specific precincts shown on the Lennox Head Village Centre Precincts Map, outlining Council's requirements for commercial development. The provisions in this Chapter prevail over those in chapter 1, 2, 2a and 2b where there is an inconsistency.

Where there is an inconsistency between provisions in chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d and 7, Council will determine which provisions will apply based on consideration of the strategic planning framework for the land the subject of the application, statutory considerations, relevant planning objectives and the nature of the proposed development.

The provisions of Chapter 8 Other Uses apply in conjunction with those in this chapter but prevail in the event of an inconsistency unless otherwise specified. The provisions of this chapter prevail over the general provisions in Chapter 6 in the event of any inconsistency.

The Wildlife Corridors map (Sheet WC_001_080) shows land identified as regionally significant for habitat connectivity. The extract below shows the extent of wildlife corridors within the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area.

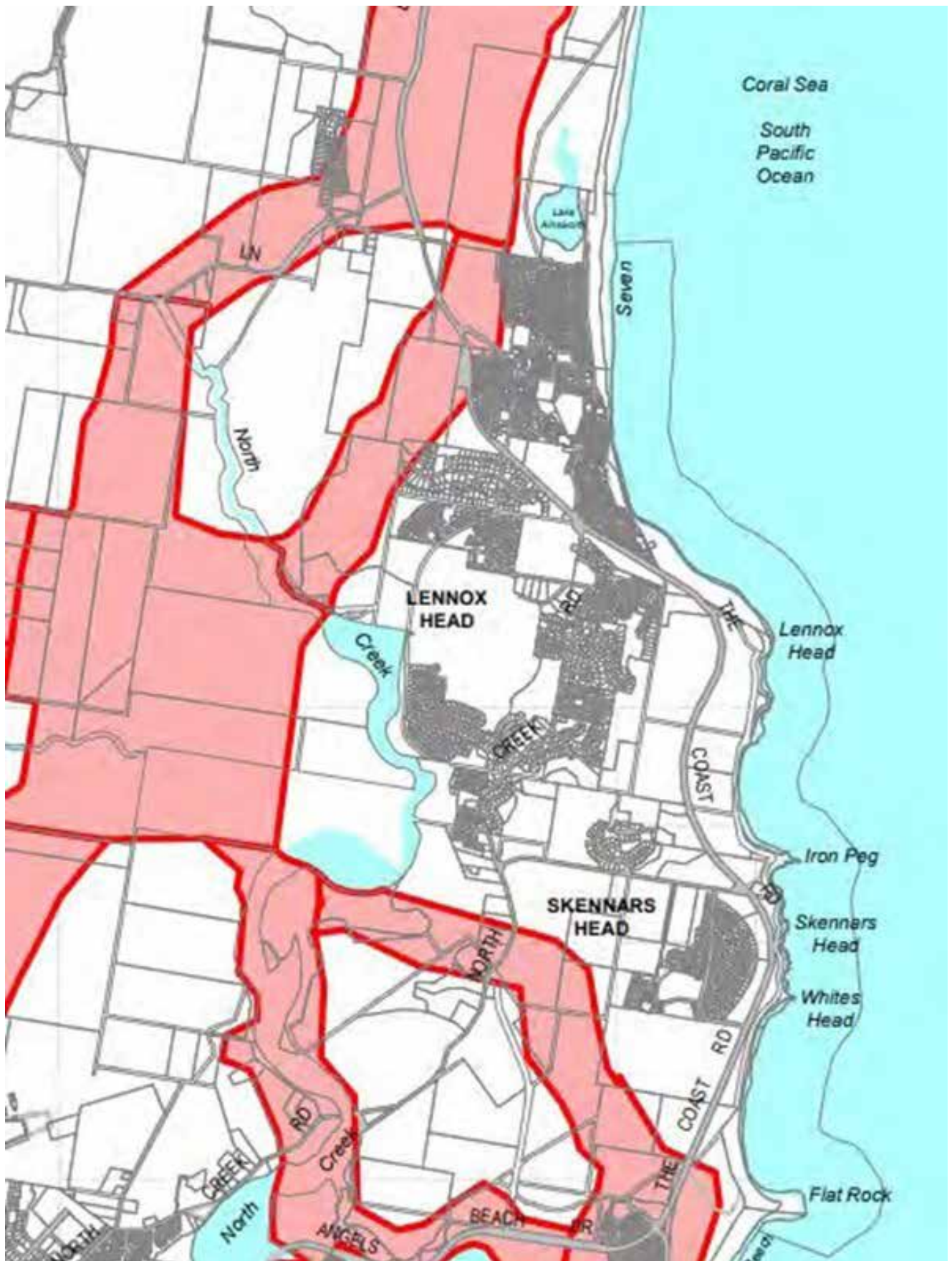


Figure 5 - Excerpt from Wildlife Corridors map (Sheet WC_001_080) within Ballina Shire Development Control Plan 2012

environmental and heritage characteristics of lennox head

3.1 Environmental characteristics

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is located at a latitude of 28.80 degrees south and a longitude of 153.46 degrees east. The area is bordered by a wild coastline between Broken Head to the north and Sharpes Beach to the south, extending east to North Creek.

The area is characterised by a visually prominent landscape comprising scenic headlands and beaches, coastal escarpments and 24 different plant community types.

3.1.1 Biodiversity

A diverse range of ecosystems and species occur across the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area. It is bordered to the north by coastal heathland and to the west by Ballina Nature Reserve that is part of a regional network of protected wetlands. The variety of soils and plant communities within the Plan area support a plethora of endemic flora and fauna species.

3.1.1.1 Plant Community Types

Plant Community Types are the finest level in the NSW vegetation classification hierarchy. They identify and describe recurring patterns of native plant species assemblages in relation to environmental conditions (soil, temperature, moisture and other factors). The following Plant Community Types occur within the Plan area on Page 20:



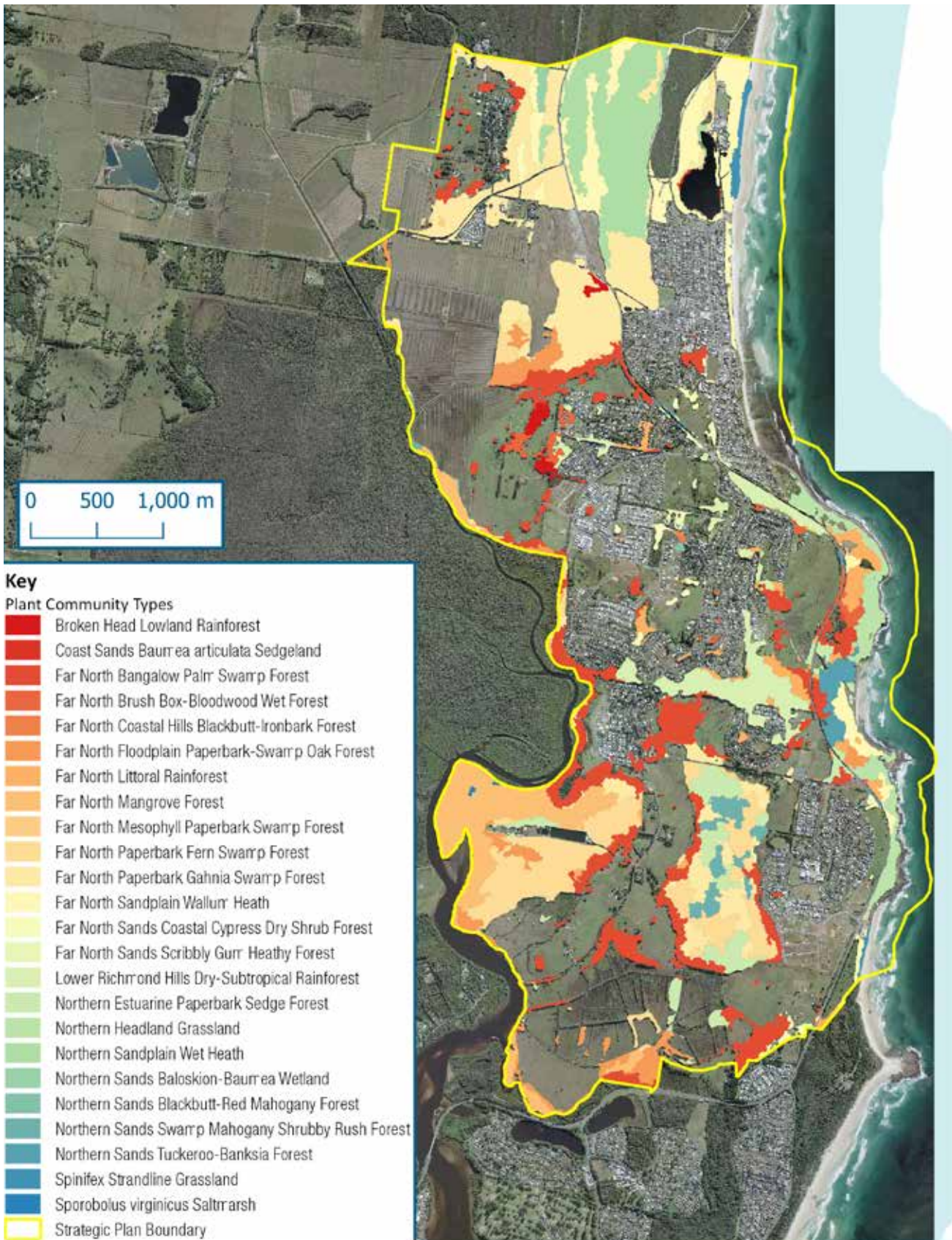


Figure 6 - Plant Community Types

* Source State Vegetation Type map extracted 21st February 2023. The State Vegetation Type Map is a regional scale map of each of the three levels of the NSW vegetation classification hierarchy. It maps the distribution of each Plant Community Type.

3.1.1.2 Threatened Fauna Sightings

NSW BioNet is the repository for biodiversity data products managed by the Department of Planning and Environment. BioNet aims to improve biodiversity outcomes by enabling the community and government to proactively manage and enhance biodiversity in NSW through comprehensive, credible and robust data and information.

The information in Table 3-1 is sourced from BioNet and shows sightings of threatened fauna within the LHSP area since the 1770s.

* Source: BioNet Atlas extracted 21st February 2023 (more than one sighting).

NB: The BioNet Atlas is not a comprehensive inventory of all species, nor of all locations of species in NSW.

Table 3-1 Threatened Fauna Sightings within the LHSP study area

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	TOTAL NO. SIGHTINGS
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian Bittern	2
<i>Calidris alba</i>	Sanderling	12
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Red Knot	4
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Curlew Sandpiper	9
<i>Calyptorhynchus lathamii</i>	Glossy Black-Cockatoo	2
<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Loggerhead Turtle	14
<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	Greater Sand-plover	2
<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	Lesser Sand-plover	9
<i>Crinia tinnula</i>	Wallum Froglet	30
<i>Dasyurus maculatus</i>	Spotted-tailed Quoll	2
<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>	Black-necked Stork	7
<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	Sooty Oystercatcher	40
<i>Haematopus longirostris</i>	Pied Oystercatcher	20
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	46
<i>Hieraetus morphnoides</i>	Little Eagle	5
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	White-throated Needletail	16
<i>Irediparra gallinacea</i>	Comb-crested Jacana	12
<i>Lichenostomus fasciogularis</i>	Mangrove Honeyeater	4
<i>Litoria olongburensis</i>	Olongburra Frog	7
<i>Miniopterus australis</i>	Little Bent-winged Bat	7
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	Eastern Curlew	11
<i>Pandion cristatus</i>	Eastern Osprey	48
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	Koala	19
<i>Planigale maculata</i>	Common Planigale	4
<i>Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis</i>	Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern subspecies)	2
<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	Grey-headed Flying-fox	13
<i>Ptilinopus regina</i>	Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove	6
<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Little Tern	35
<i>Thersites mitchellae</i>	Mitchell's Rainforest Snail	3
<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	Terek Sandpiper	3



3.1.1.3 Threatened Flora Sightings

The information in Table 3-2 is sourced from BioNet and shows sightings of threatened flora within the LHSP area since the 1770s.

Source: BioNet Atlas extracted 21 February 2023 (more than one sighting).

NB: The BioNet Atlas is not a comprehensive inventory of all species, nor of all locations of species in NSW.

Table 3-2 Threatened Flora Sightings within the LHSP study area

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	TOTAL NO. SIGHTINGS
<i>Acronychia littoralis</i>	Scented Acronychia	9
<i>Archidendron hendersonii</i>	White Lace Flower	7
<i>Arthraxon hispidus</i>	Hairy Jointgrass	4155
<i>Cryptocarya foetida</i>	Stinking Cryptocarya	10
<i>Eleocharis tetraquetra</i>	Square-stemmed Spike-rush	1291
<i>Fontainea oraria</i>	Coastal Fontainea	35
<i>Macadamia tetraphylla</i>	Rough-shelled Bush Nut	25
<i>Phaius australis</i>	Southern Swamp Orchid	2
<i>Pterostylis nigricans</i>	Dark Greenhood	2
<i>Rhodamnia maideniana</i>	Smooth Scrub Turpentine	4
<i>Tinospora tinosporoides</i>	Arrow-head Vine	14

3.1.2 Wildlife corridors

Council's Development Control Plan maps regional wildlife corridors. Vegetation connectivity and habitat is of primary concern in these corridors. Strategic Urban Growth Areas must consider this at the initial project stage, allowing for adequate buffering to vegetation and planning for connectivity. Infrastructure projects within the Plan area such as the North Creek Bridge and Hutley Drive connection must consider impacts on biodiversity and wildlife corridors in the pre-design phase, to minimise impacts and maximise opportunities for habitat connections.

3.1.3 Coastal erosion

Coastal erosion is a primary risk to the Lennox Head area, particularly in the context of climate change. Erosion recession estimates were last completed in 2011 and sit within the Ballina Coastline Coastal Zone Management Plan 2016. This Plan outlines hazard lines, contains details of constructed rock walls and beach management works over the previous decades and outlines long term management actions.

Council is currently reviewing the methodology by which coastal erosion impacts are modelled. This new methodology will present new information to be considered in the preparation of an updated Coastal Zone Management Plan.

3.1.4 Flooding

Low lying lands within the Plan area are mapped as Flood Hazard Areas, low, medium, high and extreme. After unprecedented flooding in the region in 2022, Council is updating flood modelling information to better understand the flood risks in the shire based on recent events. During the 2022 floods the role of North Creek and surrounding wetlands and rural lands as flood storage was evident.

North Creek is a shallow water ecosystem stretching from the marine dominated shoals adjacent to Ballina, through the upper estuarine swamps of the Ballina Nature Reserve, to the extensive freshwater floodplain of Newrybar Swamp. This waterway forms the northeast

arm of the Richmond River estuary and separates East Ballina from Ballina Island.

The upper North Creek catchment comprises mostly agricultural land use (cane, grazing and increasing areas of macadamia) which is located in the upper parts of the catchment (behind Lennox Head and below Newrybar). The hydrology of this area has been modified by extensive drainage works and levee construction. The Union Drain enters the upper reaches of North Creek and the Newrybar Levee lies north of Ballina Nature Reserve. The urban areas of Ballina including several industrial estates are situated in the lower reaches. The Ballina Wastewater Treatment Plant discharges treated wastewater to North Creek Canal.

The Lennox Head Cultural Centre operates as an Emergency Evacuation Centre during the large flooding events within the Ballina Shire. The maintenance of this function is an important part of emergency flood response for the Ballina Shire.

3.1.5 Water quality

Council has been involved in the Beachwatch Monitoring Program with the Department of Planning and Environment which has monitored and reported on recreational water quality for over a decade.

The program aims to provide regular and reliable information on recreational water quality to enable the community to make informed decisions about where and when to swim. Council monitors water quality weekly at the following swimming sites in the plan area from November to February each year, following the national water quality guidelines:

- Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Head
- Seven Mile Beach, Lennox Head

Lake Ainsworth is categorised as a typical acidic freshwater coastal dune lake and covers an area of 12.4 hectares. It's managed by NSW Crown Lands and the southern end reserve is managed by Ballina Shire Council. Lake Ainsworth is an important recreational and environmental asset and remains a key visitor destination in the Ballina Shire.



The coastline within the Lennox Head Plan area extends from Seven Mile Beach, along to Boulders Beach and Sharpes Beach. These beaches are receiving environments for surrounding storm water catchments. Water quality at these beaches is a combination of flow from the Richmond River and stormwater from localised catchments.

Council is progressively undertaking improvements to stormwater management systems in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head locality. When undertaking works projects, Council considers the possible improvements to stormwater infrastructure with an aim to improve water quality overall. These options are considered in relation to maintenance requirements,

budget constraints and site-specific issues such as groundwater levels.

Works undertaken around Lake Ainsworth have incorporated water sensitive urban design features to reduce the pollutants entering the lake. The measures installed include swales, grass cell parking bays and infiltration pits in carparks. The recent Lennox Village Vision upgrades include water quality based stormwater infrastructure improvements to improve the quality of the water discharging at Seven Mile Beach.

3.2 Heritage characteristics

3.2.1 First Nations cultural heritage 'Guriiaabuu' – since the beginning.

Bundjalung people have been present in what is now the Lennox Head area for an extensive period of time.

Bundjalung oral history of Country has been told, sung and danced for generations, with each generation being taught 'belonging to Country'.

There are many stories on Country that tie in landforms such as rivers and mountains and ranges, ocean and the sky. Each story holds significance in Bundjalung history.

Bundjalung people, specifically Nyangbal people of the Bundjalung Nation call Ballina area and Lennox Head area 'HOME'.

Nyangbal people call South Ballina 'duggangalii' and East Ballina and beyond to the north 'Ngathanggalii'

First contact 1850s

Documented massacres of Aboriginal people occurred including a poisoning at South Ballina in 1854 and the East Ballina Massacre of 1856. Stories say that the mob was pushed out off country. Nyangbal People still visited and maintained connection to the Lennox Head area.

Relocation to Cabbage Tree Island 1860s – 1920s

Cabbage Tree Island Aboriginal Community was established in the 1880s by the local Aboriginal people. Aboriginal Community lived and worked for local farmers and were self-sufficient.

North Creek Midden sites were destroyed over a period of time and its materials used to build North Creek Road and bridge ramps.

The Aborigines Protection Act 1909 led to Cabbage Tree Island being made an Aboriginal Mission. A mission manager was appointed to oversee the movements and employment of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal children were removed from their families.

Cabbage Tree Island men were enlisted as solidiers to fight in World War 1.

Life at Cabbage Tree Island 1920s – 1950s

Cabbage Tree Island Rugby League Football club was established in 1929. Cabbage Tree Island Cricket team was playing country cricket matches against various other teams in the district.

Land Rights era 1960s – 2010

1967 referendum 'yes vote' gave recognition to Aboriginal people as citizens and the right to vote. The first Aboriginal Co-op in Australia was established at Cabbage Tree Island in 1963 – named 'Nambaging Aboriginal Co-op'.

There is a local story of Nyangbal elders who were camped out at Seven Mile Beach, being forced off the beach by police in the 1960s. The *Aborigines Protection Act* was repealed in 1969.

Formal protection of one of the last remaining coastal bora rings in Lennox Head occurred in 1972. The *Aboriginal Culture Heritage Act* and the *Parks and Wildlife Act* passed in 1974.

The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* passed in 1983. Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council was also established in 1983.

Cultural Heritage discoveries 2010 - today

Numerous culture and heritage studies have been conducted on the North Creek Midden sites.

An axe head found at Lennox Head Public School in 2018 prompted a full cultural heritage project on site. Many culturally significant sites were found on the school site, prompting the NSW Department of Education to acquire a new school site in the EPIQ Estate of Lennox Head.

Looking forward 2021 – 2043

The future will see Aboriginal dual naming of places, cultural signage and more storytelling of the landscape. It is hoped there will be a better understanding of the local language, customs and stories of Country.



3.2.2 Post- European settlement cultural heritage

Post-European settlement can be broadly summarised into several eras.

Early settlement 1850s to 1860s

The time of the timber getters. Land was self-selected, before land grants were available. Lands close to the coast were less attractive for timber extraction but were taken around North Creek initially.

Early agriculture 1860s to 1920s

After the Roberston Land Act in 1861, formal land grants were available and taken up for crops, cane and raising cattle. Land clearing was widespread as the coastal heath was seen as having little value. Dry stone walls were constructed around this period, from rocks found on-site, to demarcate boundaries between properties.

In 1882 North Creek School was established on the edge of what was the Henderson Farm. It was close to North Creek so local children could come to the school house on punts and boats along the creek. The schoolhouse was moved up to the ridge on North Creek Road in 1897 due to damp, rot and pest infiltration.

Lennox Head Estate 1920s – 1950s

Lennox Head Estate land release occurred in 1922 and created 185 lots and established an ideal seaside

subdivision offering good fishing and surfing. The Lennox Head - Alstonville Surf Lifesaving Club was established in 1927.

Building in the new coastal subdivision was slow, impacted by the Depression and World War 2. It wasn't until the late 40s and 50s that houses began popping up and filled in the lots that were created in 1922.

Coastal village 1960s – 2010

During this era Lennox Head became known as a surfing destination. The Tea Tree Fence was built in 1967 in response to a big storm season. North Creek Bridge was decommissioned, and The Coast Road was sealed in 1977. New land releases in the 70s and 80s extended the Lennox Head village to North Creek Road and in the 90s Fig Tree Hill, Amber Drive, Montwood Drive, Tara Downs and Henderson Drive subdivisions were created.

Subdivisions of this era all relied on vehicle transport, whilst pedestrian permeability was considered, sometimes as an afterthought, transport by vehicle dominated subdivision design during this time.

2010 – now

New land releases west of North Creek Road and south of Skennars Head has brought a new wave of families and retirees to the area. Increasing enrolments at the primary school resulted in the search for a new primary



school site which was announced in mid 2023 to be located in the EPIQ Estate in Lennox Head.

The Covid-19 pandemic revolutionised work from home opportunities, removing 'access to employment' as a barrier for settling in the Lennox area.

Land releases continue to be designed primarily for vehicle transport. As the population grows the village is feeling the pressure of more cars.

North Creek Bridge is to be reinstated to take pressure off The Coast Road and manage traffic inflow to Ballina Island.

Looking forward 2021-2043

Population will grow as land release areas fill up.

Looking after special places and improving connections between the neighbourhoods will be a key focus.

3.2.3 Ballina Shire Wide Community Based Heritage Study 2008

A heritage study investigates the history of a local government area and identifies items and places of heritage significance associated with this history. The Ballina Shire Wide Community Based Heritage Study identified several items and places within the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area. Naturally evolved places including Skennars Headland, Lennox Headland, north Lennox Head heath, Lake Ainsworth, Boulder Beach

littoral rainforest and North Creek are recommended for protection in the Ballina Local Environmental Plan (BLEP) and for promotion of their natural heritage values within the community.

Dry stone walls are identified in the Lennox Head / North Creek and Skennars Head areas and listed in the BLEP 2012 as items of local heritage significance. Other items, such as the Iron Peg at Boulder Beach are recommended to be recognised in the DCP 2012 and for promotion within the community.

3.2.4 Landmarks of Lennox – The Tea Tree Fence

The following article, prepared by Robyn Hargrave, was published in *The Lennox Wave*, August 2016. Robyn Hargrave has agreed to the text being incorporated within the draft Lennox Head Planning and Environmental Study.

In June 1967, cyclonic seas ripped about 25 metres of sand and vegetation from Lennox Head beach. For a short time, the sea broke through an eroded section of the dunes into Lake Ainsworth.

With more storms forecast, residents took action. On 2 July 1967, some 100 concerned citizens supported Bill Tresise's proposal that a fence of closely packed tea tree poles be constructed from the 'break through' area near Lake Ainsworth south along the beach to Byron Street.

While the Ladies' Committee provided food and hot drinks for the 50 or so volunteer workers, the community (including adjoining Councils) committed to six weekends of hard labour.

'It was backbreaking work,' said John Burrows, a volunteer on the fence and still living in Lennox Head. 'And we had some awful winter weather.'

The 8,000 poles were around 3.5 metres in length and had to be sunk about two metres into the sand. A high pressure water jet blasted a hole and within seconds each pole was manhandled into place before sand recompacted. Large stabilising rocks were placed behind the fence which was extended by (then) Tintenbar Shire Council northwards to the National Fitness Camp (now Department of Sport and Recreation).

Anxious eyes later watched during big tides and rough seas. To everyone's joy, sand built behind the fence until it was completely covered.

'This might seem extraordinary today, but 50 years ago we had to do it to save our beach,' said John Burrows.

Sources: Secombe, M.E., From 'North Creek to Lennox Head', Potts, A (ed), *Richmond River Historical Society Inc Bulletin No. 162*, Lismore, 1997; *The Northern Star*, 28 August 1967.



Figure 7 - The completed tea tree fence c1967, photo courtesy of Malcolm Lowe



Figure 8 - 2021 view of beach dune over location of the tea tree fence, photo courtesy of J Stebbing

3.2.5 Bundjalung language revival

Language is an integral part of cultural heritage, passed from one generation to the next. Due to historical factors, Nyangbal and Bundjalung language has been impacted. Language revival is an important part of maintaining Nyangbal cultural heritage.

Working with local Nyangbal Elder and language teacher, Ricky Cook and Nyangbal Goorie man and knowledge holder, Marcus Ferguson, the following words were provided for inclusion in the Lennox Head Strategic Plan. Inspired by the community vision 'word clouds' that came out of the community consultation, these are Nyangbal and Bundjulung words relevant to the community vision.

The Aboriginal language words presented here are based on the broader Bundjalung language and include some words specific to the Nyangbal of the Lower Richmond. As such some spelling and pronunciation may vary from the neighbouring language dialects.

Local Aboriginal language teacher Rick Cook suggests the following pronunciation of short and long vowels:

SHORT VOWELS

- a** - as in <but>
- e** - as in <pet>
- i** - as in <pit>
- u** - as in <cut>

LONG VOWELS

- aa** - as in <palm>
- ee** - as in <there>
- ii** - as in <bee>
- uu** - as in <school>

3.2.6 Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System

The Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) holds over 100,000 recorded Aboriginal sites and over 14,000 archaeological and cultural heritage assessment reports.

Part of Council's due diligence obligations is to conduct a search of the AHIMS to identify registered Aboriginal objects within the Plan area. The search on 8 February 2023 returned 125 registered Aboriginal heritage sites within the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area.

Aboriginal heritage sites within the Plan area include middens, open camp sites, burials, ceremonial grounds, stone quarries, and ceremony and dreaming sites. This information is not available to the public.

BUNDJALUNG WORDS

ning	quiet
dalngang	calm
ngumbiny munay	village feel
jaagan	family
bugle naa	friendship
gawungan	beautiful
bungle naa	friendly
mundjindi	protect
magi	simple
nyaa	look
maanda	touch
yahn	sit
jaaguun	environment
nguung	hot
warring buwiyen	cool breeze
yelgan	sun
jali	tree
galbilii	grass
marrung	birds
yanbalay gulgan	walking track
guung	water
gawang	lake
guygam/ gawgam	beach
duungam/ duumgan buugaam	waves/surf

BUNDJALUNG COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL WORDS

ngamgirr / bawur jaaguun	headland
duugangulli	hills
gawang	rain
warring	cold
nguung	hot
guung	water
yarung	salt
duungam	waves/surf
guygum	beach/sand
buurragaa or buurgaa	ocean/sea
bidjagang	shell
mibiny	sea eagle
buubii-ee	sea turtle
duuganum	pippies
gubble	snake
deeriyaa	seagull
gwandi	dolphin dreaming
wagang	dolphin
jalum	fish
waajum	whale
waajum	shark
gambar	old man banksia
jambinbin	pandanus
jaaguun	land Country

demographic characteristics

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head communities have undergone significant change in recent years.

The demographic data used throughout this chapter has been provided by demographic forecasting company .id¹. To understand the changes of the last five to ten years we draw on the Community Profile component of the Ballina Shire Council .id platform. To forecast changes for the next 20 years we draw on Population Forecast data from the .id platform.

¹ Ballina Shire Community Profile, 2023, profile.id.com.au/ballina

4.1 Geographical boundaries of Lennox Head and Skennars Head

There is close alignment between the Community Profile data areas (below left) and the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area (below right). Where there are slight variances between the boundaries these variances will not change the data in any significant way.

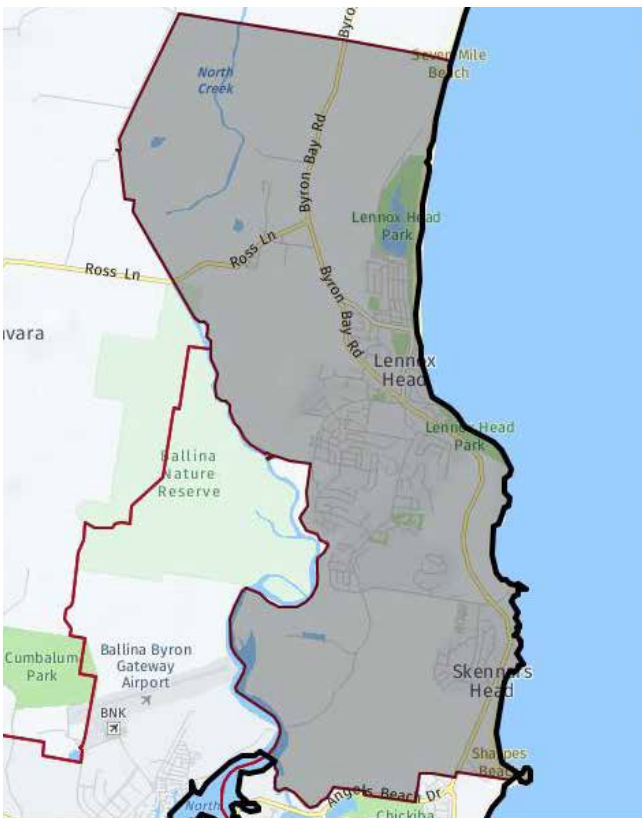


Figure 9 - Community Profile ID data area

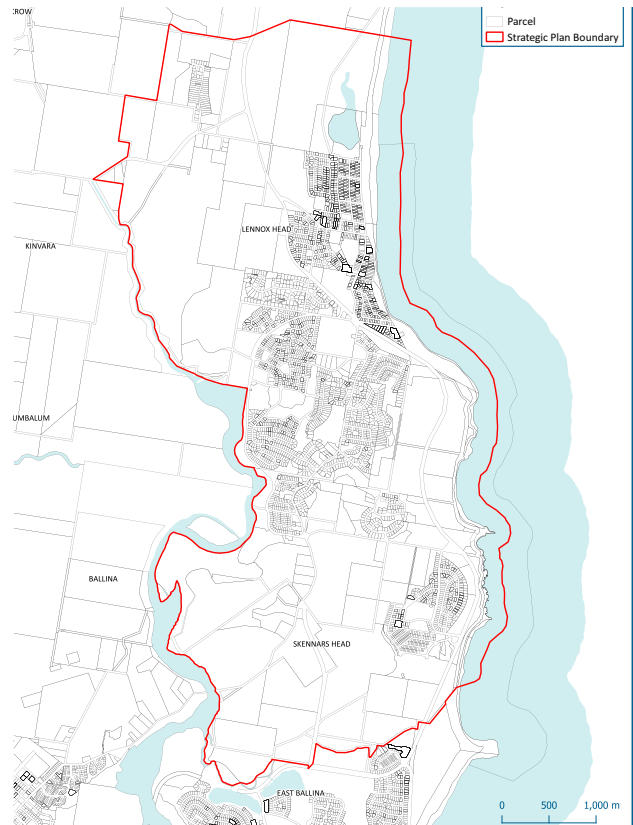


Figure 10 -Lennox Head Strategic Plan area



There is also close alignment between the Population Forecast data areas (below left) and the Lennox Head Strategic Plan area (below right). The Population Forecast data separates Lennox Head from Skennars Head, data sets for both areas need to be considered.



Figure 11- Profile ID Forecast areas

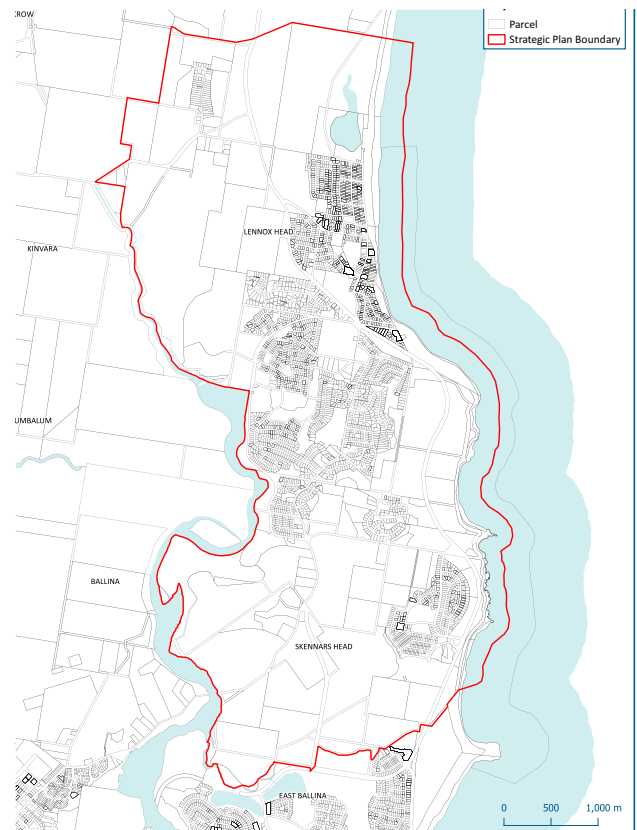


Figure 12- Lennox Head Strategic Plan area

4.2 Demographic profile

Table 4-1 below presents a summary of key Census data for 2021 and how this compares with 2011. This is followed by a commentary relating to the planning implications of some of this data and suggestions relating to how emerging issues may be considered through planning policy.

Table 4-1 Community demographic profile – comparison Lennox Head and Skennars Head 2011 - 2021

CHARACTERISTIC	LENNOX HEAD & SKENNARS HEAD 2021	LENNOX HEAD & SKENNARS HEAD 2011
Population (usual resident)	8983	7293
Population over 17	6917	5363
Elderly (85+)	120	86
Number of dwellings	3799	3196
Dwelling Type - separate house	2748	2225
Dwelling Type - medium density	975	760
Average household size	2.57	2.60
Housing tenure – fully owned	40.3%	37.2%
Housing tenure - mortgage	32.7%	34.6%
Housing tenure - renting	21.6%	23.3%
Household type – lone person	672	524
Household type – couples no children	1029	777
Car ownership – no car	1.6%	2%
Car ownership – one car	30.7%	35%
Car ownership – two cars	43.1%	44.6%
Car ownership - 3 or more cars	20.2%	14.1%
Method of Travel to work – car as driver	57.1%	66.9%
Work from home	20.5%	7.3%
Need for assistance with core activities	5.2%	3.7%
Employed	96.7%	93.5%
Unemployed	3.3%	6.5%
Labour participation rate	66.1%	65.3%

4.3 Population growth, household size and housing supply

Data available at domain.com.au/suburb-profile/lennox-head-nsw-2478

In the 10 year period to 2021 the Lennox and Skennars population increased by approximately 18.8%. Over the same time new dwellings increased by 15.8%. It is notable that most of this growth occurred between 2016 and 2021 (15%). Despite housing supply keeping relative pace with population growth, the Lennox and Skennars area experienced strong price pressure particularly in the last few years. During the same period interest rates fell to record lows.

Access to finance, new housing meeting the market and a revolutionary shift towards working from home due to the COVID 19 Pandemic resulted in an influx of new residents to the Lennox and Skennars area amidst skyrocketing property prices. See Figure 13, below.



Figure 13 - Median house price data Lennox Head 2018 - 2022

For Ballina Shire as a whole, most new arrivals between 2016 and 2021 have come from within NSW. Whilst there have been a comparable number of arrivals from Queensland, out migration has resulted in a net loss to Queensland.

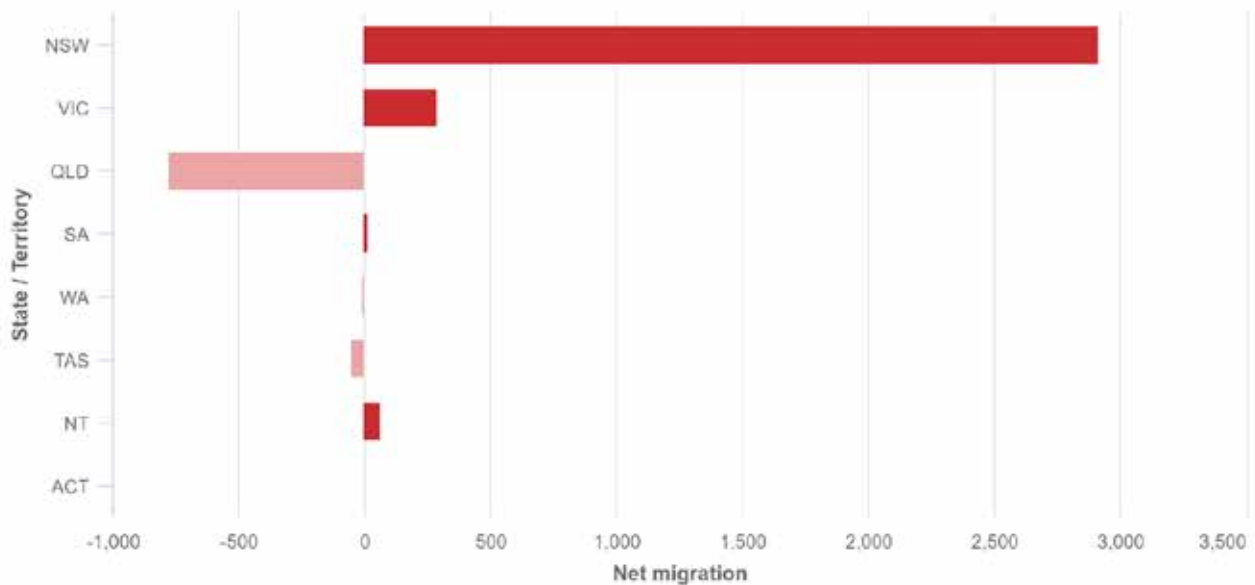
There was a slight decrease in average household size, from 2.6% to 2.57% over the 10 year period to 2021. Figure 15 shows the increase in 1 and 2 person households within the plan area. This indicates increased demand for smaller dwellings containing 1 and 2 bedrooms. The data, however, shows that in the 10 years to 2021 only a small increase in 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings occurred (see figure 16) and a much larger

increase in 3, 4 and 5 bedroom dwellings occurred.

The increase in working from home over the same period is notable, from 7.3% to 20.5%. Whether this trend continues remains to be seen. From a planning perspective if the household size is falling then there may be increased demand for dwellings to support these smaller households, however the work from home trend may mean that households favour extra bedrooms to accommodate workspaces within the home.

Population movement by State/Territory

Ballina Shire



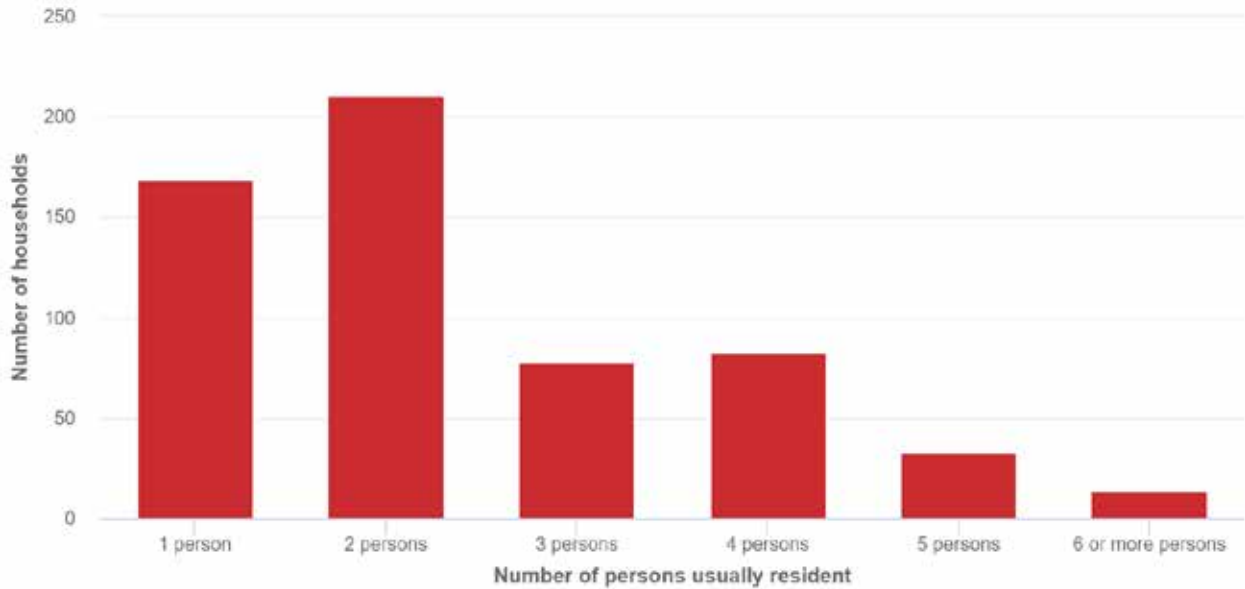
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).



Figure 14 - Population movement by State/ Territory, Ballina Shire 2016-2021

Change in household size, 2011 to 2021

Lennox Head - Skennars Head



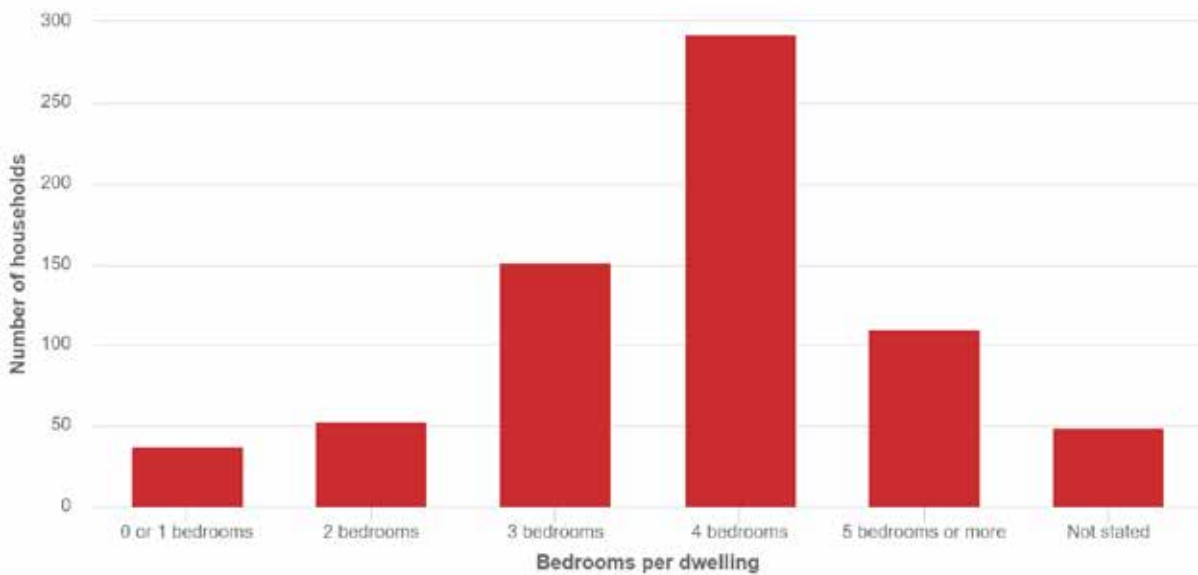
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

Figure 15 - Change in household size 2011 -2021 Lennox Head and Skennars Head

Change in number of bedrooms per dwelling, 2011 to 2021

Lennox Head - Skennars Head



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

Figure 16 - Change in number of bedrooms per dwelling, 2011 – 2021 Lennox Head and Skennars Head

While the work from home trend could have some impact on households needing extra space, as discussed above, the mismatch between household size and dwelling stock could indicate the following:

- Dwelling stock not meeting needs of current occupiers
- Increased rent and purchase costs
- Lack of capacity to downsize within the local area.

With the significant growth in population in the 10 years to 2021 most age groups have seen an increase, except for secondary schoolers (12-17years). The most significant changes in age structure in the Lennox and Skennars population between 2011 and 2021 were in

the following age groups:

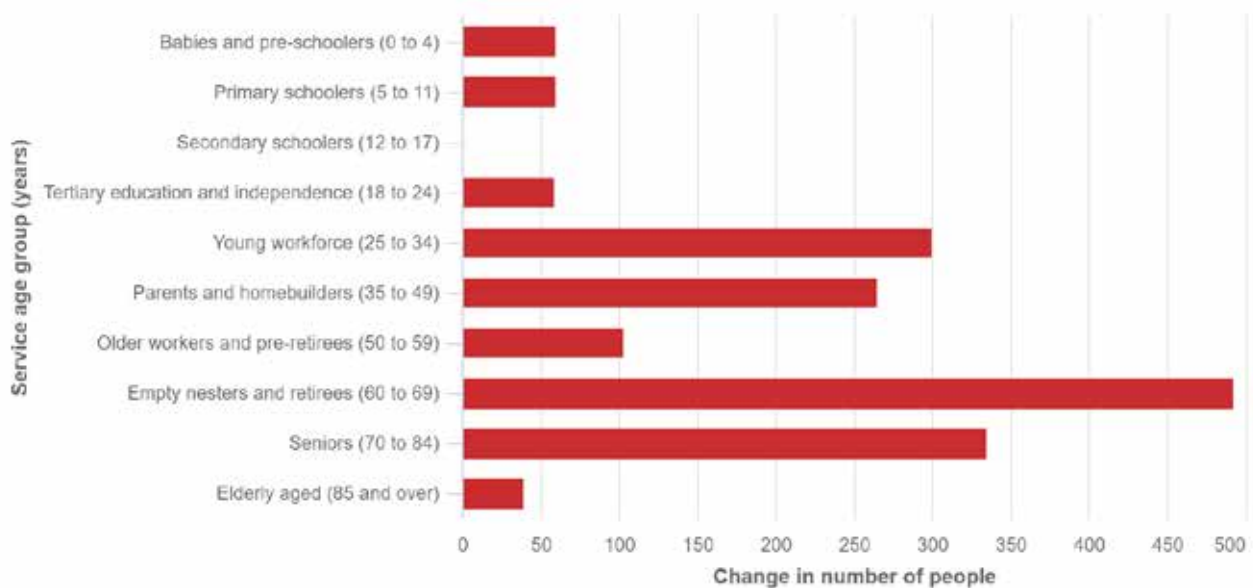
- Empty nesters and retirees (478 people)
- Seniors (373 people)
- Young workforce (264 people)
- Parents and homebuilders (233 people)
- Primary schoolers (97 people)

Overall, 23% of the population was between 0 and 17 years and 25% of the population was between 60 and 85 years old in 2021.

The growth in population over 60 years old indicates a strong need for retirement living and the ability to downsize within the area.

Change in age structure - service age groups, 2011 to 2021

Lennox Head - Skennars Head - Total persons



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).



Figure 17 - Change in age structure – service age group, 2011 to 2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

4.3.1 Retirement and Aged Care Accommodation

There is some provision of retirement living within the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area. Sanctuary Lennox Head on Ross Lane is an existing manufactured home estate providing 96 units available to over 55s. Gem Life has an approval for a site on Skennars Head Road for 147 retirement living units with construction not yet commenced.

The deficiency of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings in the recent housing stock indicates that opportunities to downsize within the plan area will become increasingly limited.

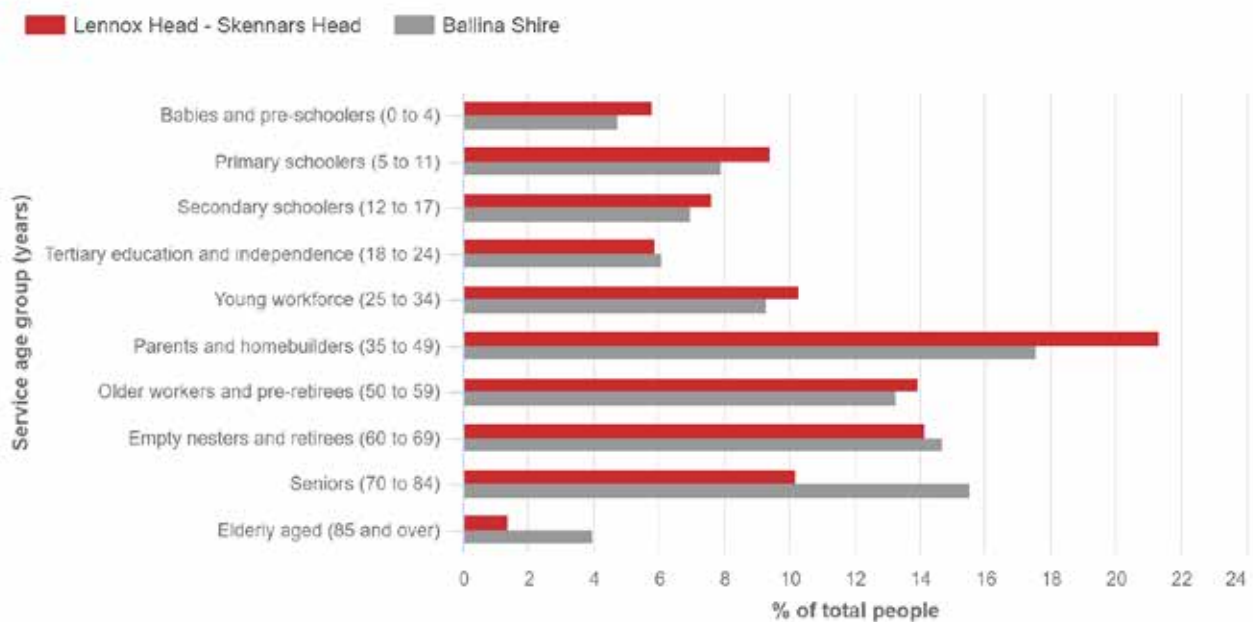
There is no aged care accommodation within the Plan area. As the population continues to age, increasing the number of people over 85, aging in place will emerge as an issue in the area.

Supporting people to stay in their homes longer is well recognised to be an optimal choice for people as they age. Ensuring suitable, accessible, housing stock located close to services is a compelling rationale for maintaining and encouraging medium density housing within Lennox village and around local centres.

Access to community facilities will be important social infrastructure to support ageing in place in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area.

Age structure - service age groups, 2021

Total persons



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).



Figure 18 - Age structure – service age groups, 2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

4.4 Housing Tenure

The housing tenure data shows that home ownership in Lennox and Skennars (40.3%) is close to the Ballina Shire average (39.7%). The number of persons owning their own home without a mortgage has increased by 21% between 2011 and 2021 compared with a very small increase (0.03%) shire wide. This may be an indicator that new arrivals have sold property elsewhere to relocate to the Lennox and Skennars area.

The number of people renting in the area has increased, however the number of renters as a proportion of total households has declined from 23.3 % in 2011 to 21.6% in 2021. This proportional decline can also be seen shire wide from 27.6% in 2011 to 25.6 in 2021. The number of people renting in the Lennox and Skennars area (21.6%) is less than the Ballina Shire (25.6%).

See Figure 19 and 20 for housing tenure data for the Lennox and Skennars area extracted from the 2021 Census.

Housing tenure, 2021



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

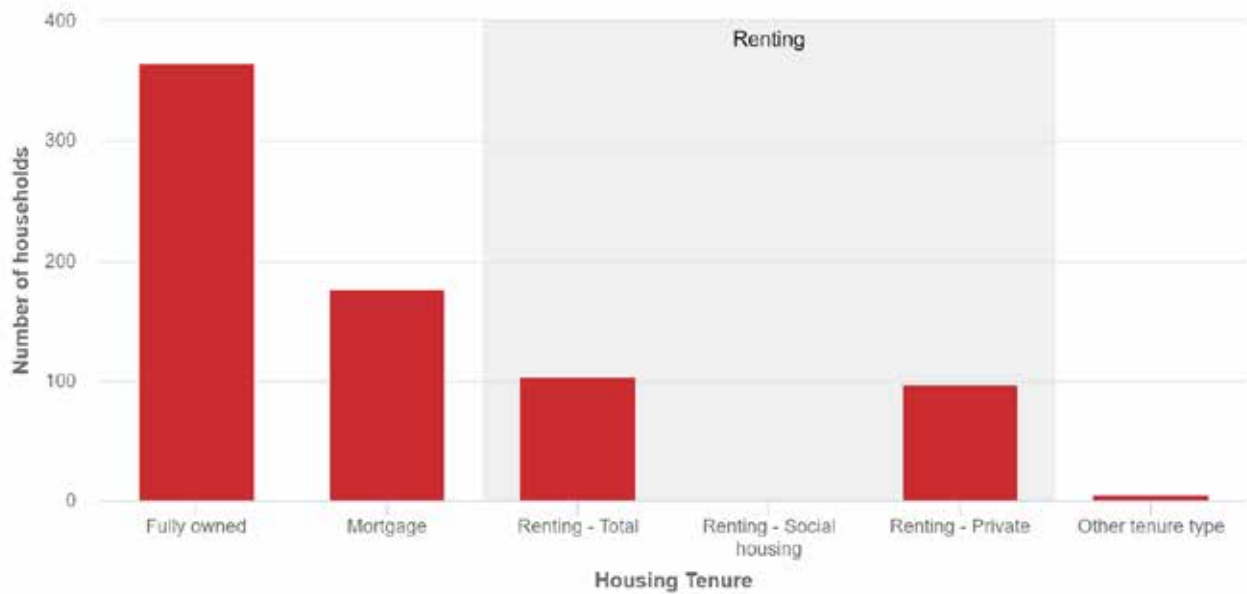
.id informed decisions

Figure 19 - Housing Tenure, 2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head



Change in housing tenure, 2011 to 2021

Lennox Head - Skennars Head



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

Figure 20 - Change in Housing Tenure, 2011-2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

4.5 Population Change 2023 - 2043

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is undergoing demographic change and growth consistent with the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 and Lennox Head Structure Plan 2004. See population forecasts through to 2036 below.

Forecast id figures are not available to 2043. In the absence of further forecasts, we can use the capacity of residential zoned land in the plan area and the average occupancy rate (2.57) to estimate the ultimate population based on available, vacant, zoned land.

Table 4-2 Population forecast, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

LOCALITY	2023 EST POP.	2026 FORECAST POP.	2031 FORECAST POP.	% CHANGE PA	2036 FORECAST POP.	% CHANGE PA	TOTAL CHANGE	% TOTAL CHANGE
Lennox Head	7,908	8,354	9,140	1.82%	9,974	1.76%	+2,066	26.12%
Skennars Head	1,462	1,776	2,296	5.27%	2,771	3.83%	+1,309	52%
TOTAL	9,370	10,130	11,436		12,745		+ 3,375	36%

Table 4-3 Population forecast based on remaining vacant, zoned land, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

LOCALITY	REMAINING VACANT ZONED LAND (HA) 2021-22	POTENTIAL DWELLING YIELD: 8 DU/ HA	POTENTIAL DWELLING YIELD: 15 DU/HA	ESTIMATED MAXIMUM POPULATION RANGE
Lennox Head	65.5	539.44	1011.5	1,386 - 2,599
Skennars Head	28.7	276.8	519.0	711 - 1,333
TOTAL	94.2	816.24	1530.5	2097 - 3932

The ultimate estimated population, in Table 4-3 includes the population forecasts to 2036. These figures do not include land within the Strategic Urban Growth Areas of Ballina LEP 2012.

Council does not control the timing of when zoned land is released to the market. Figure 21 shows the variance of actual population in relation to forecasts.

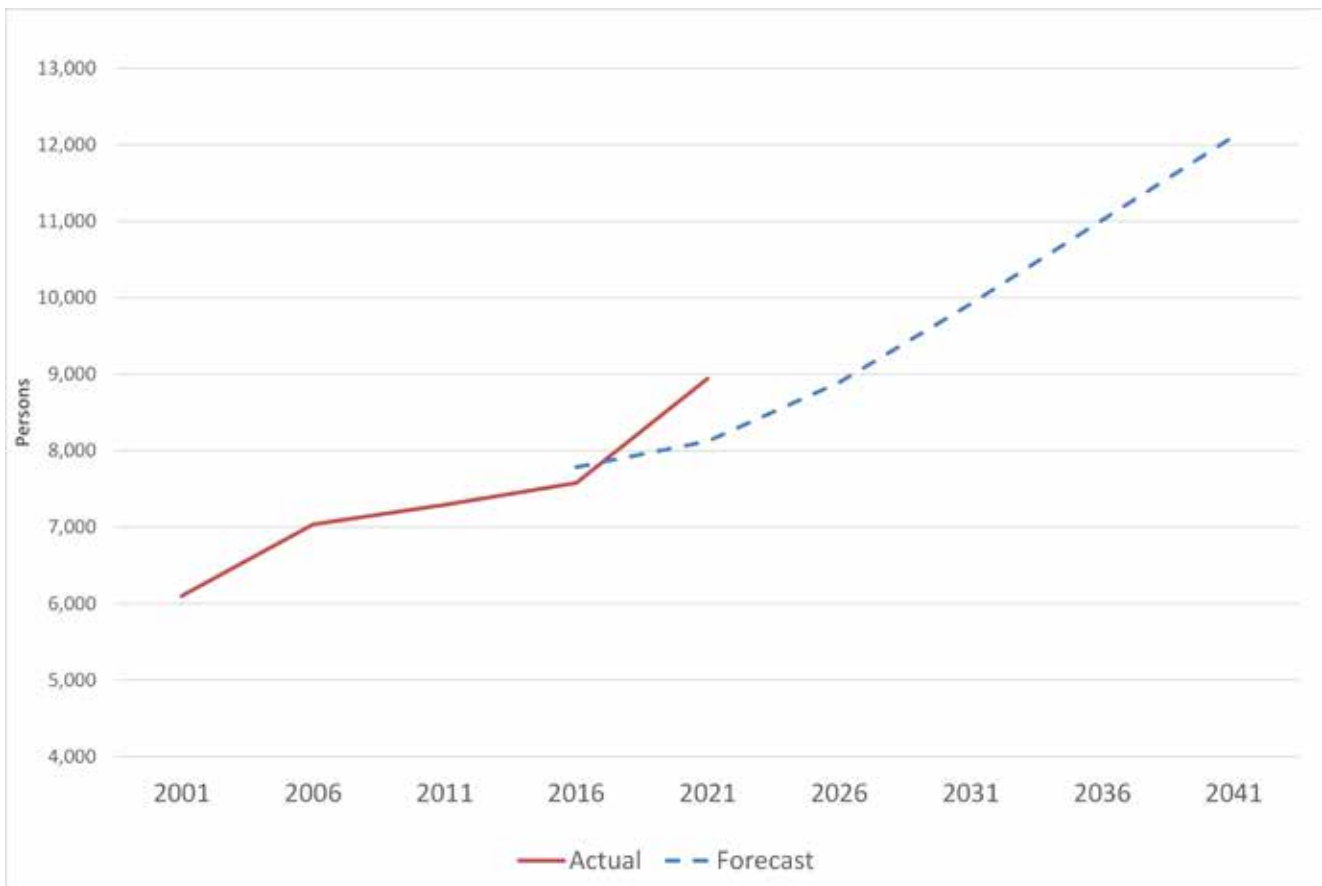


Figure 21 - Actual and Forecast population growth 2001 – 2041, Lennox Head and Skennars Head
Source: Ballina Council Land Audit data

Couples with dependents will continue to be the dominant household type across the plan area, lone person households are set to increase by 49%, the largest increase of any household type. This increases the need for smaller dwellings to be provided within the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area over the next two decades.

A forecast 52% increase in preschoolers, 50% increase in primary schoolers and a forecast 54% increase in secondary schoolers indicates the future need for future preschool, primary school and high school facilities in the area.

Table 4-4 Age group years forecast to 2036 for Lennox Head and Skennars Head area

AGE GROUP YEARS FORECAST LENNOX HEAD AND SKENNARS HEAD	2021	2036	CHANGE (NUMBER)	CHANGE (%)
Babies (0-4)	535	815	280	52%
Primary schoolers (5-11)	884	1,329	445	50%
Secondary schoolers (12 – 17)	699	1,077	378	54%
Tertiary education and independence (18-24)	513	761	248	48%
Young workforce (25-34)	921	1,259	338	36%
Parents and homebuilders (35-49)	1,950	2,783	833	42%
Older workers and pre-retirees (50-59)	1,254	1,573	319	25%
Empty nester and retirees (60-69)	1,227	1,485	258	21%
Seniors(70 -84)	879	1,455	576	65.5%
Elderly aged (85 and over)	106	208	102	96%
Total persons	8,959	12,745	3786	42%

Table 4-5 Household types forecast to 2036 for Lennox Head and Skennars Head

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	2021	2036
Couples with dependents	1,133	1,579
Couples without dependents	1,081	1,491
Lone person households	682	1,018
Single parent family	338	464
Group households	143	185
Other families	71	96

4.6 School enrolments

School enrolments have increased over the last decade. Enrolments for Lennox Head Public School are shown in the table below for available years.

In 2021 the catchment area for Lennox Head Public School was reduced to the Lennox village area only, excluding new areas west of The Coast Road. A new public primary school site in the EPIQ estate of the Lennox Head area was announced in July 2023 with a plan to relocate the primary school from the village within the next 3-5 years.

Total enrolment numbers for Holy Family Catholic Primary School for 2020 was 416 and 2021 was 419 students.

Table 4-6 Enrolments for Lennox Head Primary School 2013 - 2022

STUDENTS	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Boys	185	189	197	202	204	222	250	250	250	255
Girls	141	139	137	146	171	196	227	243	248	237
Total	326	328	334	348	375	418	477	493	498	492

4.7 Employment Sector Change

Over the ten-year period to 2021 part time employment increased (41.7%) and full time employment increased (22.5%). In 2011 6.3% of the Lennox Head and Skennars Head population was unemployed, in 2021 that has fallen to 3.3%, This decline is also evident in the Ballina Shire and reflects change in the national unemployment rate from 5.2% in 2011 to 4.6% in 2021.

The major industry categories in which Lennox Head and Skennars Head residents were employed in 2021 are shown in Figure 22. Changes to industry sectors providing employment in the period 2011 – 2021 are shown in Figure 23.

Health Care and Social Assistance provides the most employment for residents in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area in 2021. It is also the sector that

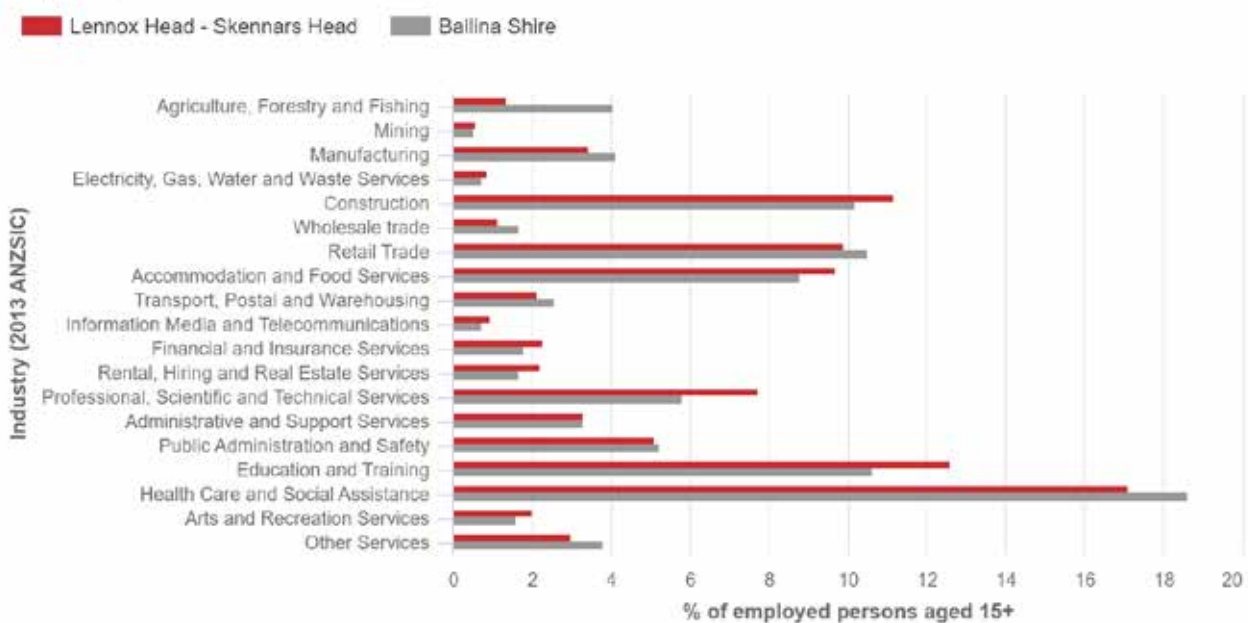
has grown the most jobs for local residents between 2011 and 2021. Education and training is the next biggest industry that residents of Lennox and Skennars are employed within, followed by Construction, which employed an additional 190 people in the area between 2011 and 2021.

The increase in Health Care and Social Assistance can be attributed to population growth in the Region but also the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in 2013.

The growth in construction jobs is most likely related to local population growth. Only the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Mining and Manufacturing sectors and to some extent the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry, are not reliant on population growth for continued growth.

Industry sector of employment, 2021

Total employed persons



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

Figure 22 - Industry sector of employment, 2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

4.8 Crime Statistics

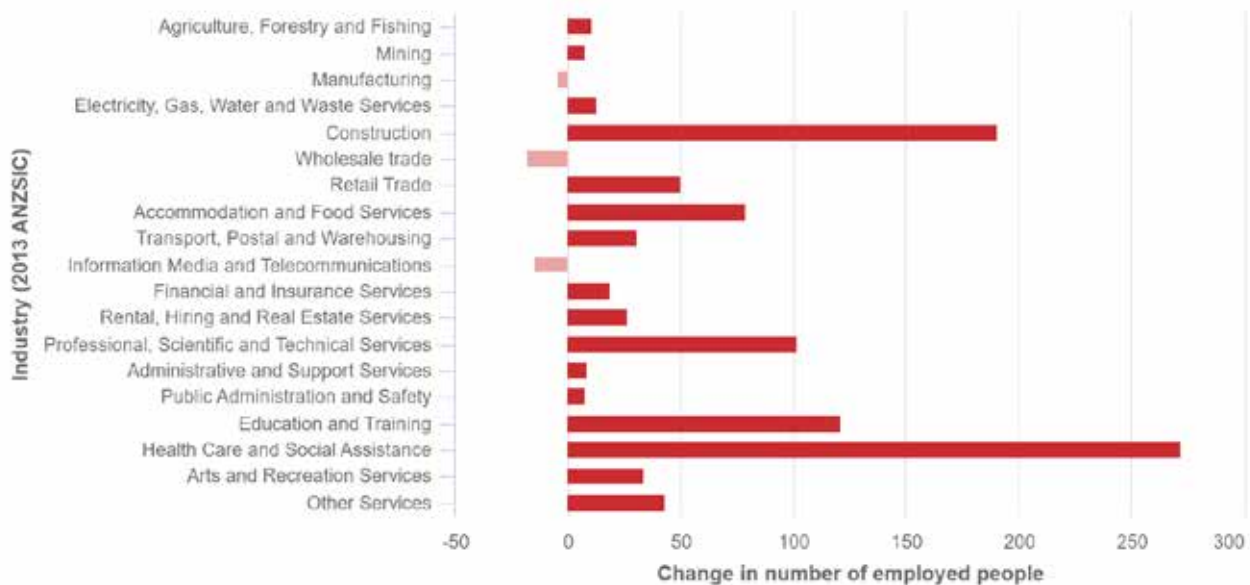
A review of NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research for Lennox Head and Skennars Head shows:

- Low incidences of domestic assaults and robbery
- Very low incidences of break and enter offences
- Higher incidence of motor vehicle theft particularly around Byron Street
- Very low incidences of malicious damage to property.

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head areas have very low rates of crime compared to other locations in the region and the state.

Change in industry sector of employment, 2011 to 2021

Lennox Head - Skennars Head - Total employed persons



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

Figure 23 - Change in industry sector of employment, 2011 – 2021, Lennox Head and Skennars Head

council's infrastructure program

Council's infrastructure program for the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is ongoing. A range of delivery mechanisms bring together transport and community facilities and open space infrastructure for the area.

For example, Council has delivered two new roundabouts on The Coast Road in recent years to better connect and service new residential areas in Lennox Head and Skennars Head.

New sports fields have been delivered adjacent to the EPIQ shopping centre in Lennox Head in 2020/21. The Coastal Shared Path from Lennox Headland to link up to Sharpes Beach was completed 2020/21.

These infrastructure items have been funded by a combination of developer infrastructure contributions, Council budgets and grant funding.

The continuing provision of infrastructure is limited by the cap on developer contribution charges imposed by the State Government. Council's plans for infrastructure investment in the plan area is outlined in this section of this report.

5.1 Transport model

Council's planning for major road projects is underpinned by a vehicular transport model. The model predicts future traffic volumes. The latest model Council commissioned in 2014/15 has a time horizon to 2036. This was a four-step strategic model consisting of steps for trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and traffic assignment to individual roads.

The model used population, business and industry forecasts to predict traffic volumes on major roads within the shire in the year 2036.

Three scenarios were run into the traffic model. First a calibration run on the 2014 road network, to adjust and calibrate model parameters to align the model output with measured 2014 volumes. At that time, there were 10,000 – 13,000 vehicle movements per day on The Coast Road between Lennox Head and Angels Beach.

The second scenario tested used forecast 2036 population generated traffic on the 2014 road network with no network improvements. This scenario estimated 14,457 – 20,562 vehicle movements per day on The Coast Road.

The third scenario tested used forecast 2036 population generated traffic on an improved road network that included all road network projects provided in the Ballina Shire Roads Contribution Plan. The most relevant was the North Creek Road and Bridge connection, the Hutley Drive Connection and western arterial (connecting North Ballina and West Ballina). This scenario estimated 10,871-11,687 vehicle movements per day on The Coast Road. In the third scenario, the increased traffic volumes between Lennox Head and Ballina have been partly diverted to the North Creek Road connection.

Two lane roads (one lane each way such as The Coast Road) have a nominal capacity of around 18,000 vehicles per day. Where future volumes are identified to exceed this capacity, Council plans for upgrading to dual lanes each way.

The traffic modeling confirms that the North Creek Bridge and to a lesser extent the Hutley Drive connection avoid the need to widen The Coast Road to four lanes to deal with forecast population growth. The North Creek Road and bridge connection also diverts traffic away from the congested parts of Ballina Island (Bangalow Road and Kerr Street) by enabling traffic to/from the Lennox Head area to directly access North Ballina (industrial area and airport) and via the proposed western arterial direct access to West Ballina

Table 5-1 Summary of traffic model scenarios

SCENARIO	POPULATION, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSUMPTIONS	ROAD NETWORK ASSUMPTIONS	EXISTING AND MODELLED TRAFFIC VOLUMES – COAST ROAD, LENNOX HEAD TO ANGELS BEACH	
			LENNOX HEAD TO SKENNARS HEAD	SOUTH OF SHARPES BEACH
Scenario 1	Existing in 2014	2014 network	10,000	13,000
Scenario 2	Forecast for 2036	2014 network	14,457	20,562
Scenario 3	Forecast for 2036	All network upgrades including: - North Creek Bridge - Hutley Drive Connection - Western Arterial	10,871	11,687

5.2 Road projects

Based on the traffic modeling outlined above, two road projects are strategically important for the future of Lennox Head and Skennars Head neighbourhoods and the efficiency and resilience of the entire Ballina traffic network.

5.2.1 North Creek Bridge

The reinstatement of the North Creek Bridge and associated works to the Skennars Head roundabout is road infrastructure scheduled for delivery between 2019 - 2028. The consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the design of the Bridge is a priority.

Opportunities for cycle lanes to be included in this project will be fully investigated.

Further consultation with the local community in relation to detailed design will be required.

5.2.2 Hutley Drive connection

The Hutley Drive connection completes Hutley Drive as a circuit linking two sections of North Creek Road. The southern end of Hutley Drive will act as a feeder road to North Creek Road dispersing traffic from existing residential areas, improving traffic impacts for specific streets.

Environmental impacts of the Hutley Drive connection are significant and need to be properly considered in detailed design. Opportunities for pedestrian and cycling connections as part of this project should be investigated.



5.3 Car parking

Council undertook a carparking audit in the Lennox village area in December 2019 and January 2020. The results from the audit showed:

- There are over 589 spaces available to the public, many of these are underused due to lack of signage.
- There were over 100 vehicles parked closest to the village centre for 6 hours or more, indicating that owners of these vehicles either live or work in the village centre.

The current Lennox Village Vision upgrades to the Lennox village will result in a reduction of approximately 19 carparks. This is to achieve better pedestrian access within the village.

In the long-term, consideration must be given to traffic coming from outside the plan area. Places like Cumbulum and Kinvara are, or will be marketed on their proximity to Lennox village. Lake Ainsworth, Seven Mile Beach and to some extent Lennox village businesses, will continue to attract visitors from a subregional catchment.

At the time of writing, Council's Lennox Head Village Centre Car Parking Contributions Plan 2004 has been exhausted. All contributions under this plan have been collected and all associated carparking is in the process of being delivered.

Whilst in the immediate term Council maintains that parking in Lennox village is adequate, in the longer term a new plan for parking provision is required.

Other initiatives such as timed parking, formalisation of spaces further from the village centre and access to technology allowing monitoring of real-time availability of spaces are also underway.

5.4 Community facilities and open space

Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Needs Study 2022 identifies the following community, cultural, public open space, and recreational needs. These needs are linked to the demands of an increasing population and future participation trends.

Table 5-1 excerpt from Ballina Shire Open Space and Community Needs Study 2022

IDENTIFIED NEED	LOCATION	RATIONALE	TIMING
Expanded Library at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural Centre	Catchment 2 Lennox Head	Explore options to provide an expanded library space at the Lennox Head Community and Cultural Centre, aiming to expand the library to a minimum size of 900m ² , an additional 365m ² (based on population benchmarking to 2045).	Long term
Audio visual upgrades at Lennox Head Cultural Centre	Catchment 2 Lennox Head	Improve lighting audio and staging requirements to host bigger events. Install automatic tiered seating.	Medium Term
Library technology upgrades	All catchments	The role of libraries and their services is changing, with access to technology, a future role, and important particularly for low income residents.	Ongoing
More spaces for creative community participation	Catchments 1 & 2 Ballina and Lennox Head	There are limited creative spaces for the community to participate in arts and cultural activities at a local level across the LGA. Through renewal of community assets, ensure that facility design caters for a range of uses, including arts and craft (wet areas, loading docks, extraction etc).	Ongoing
Open Spaces and Recreation Facilities			
Explore opportunities for local/informal BMX spaces	All catchments	Ballina Shire Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan 2020 identified this was one of the top sports in the LGA. Current facility (Duck Creek) isn't easily accessible for young people.	Ongoing
New and Upgraded playgrounds	All catchments	As per the Playground Upgrade and Management Plan. In addition, benchmarking indicates that planning for additional playgrounds through to 2045, particularly in catchment 3 & 4 (Cumbulum and Wollongbar / Alstonville).	Short term and long term
1 Outdoor fitness equipment	All catchments with priority for Catchment 2 Lennox Head	Participation trends indicate a high demand and seniors equipment is becoming increasingly popular. Benchmarking indicates demand for an additional one station.	Medium term
1-2 Outdoor multipurpose courts	Catchments 1 and 2 Ballina and Lennox Head	Participation trends indicate a high and increasing demand for informal multipurpose courts. An additional 1.4 courts are needed based on benchmarking.	Short term

community vision

6.1 Pre-study Community Engagement – What did we do?

Council's pre-study community engagement began in May 2022, calling for community representatives to sit on the Community Reference Group. Eighteen community members were selected to form the group ensuring a variety of representation between genders, age and areas within the plan.

Over the four-month initial community engagement phase, five advertisements were placed and three editorials appeared in *The Lennox Wave*. Three project updates were featured in Council's *Community Connect* publication. Several emails were sent to those subscribed for project updates. Twenty-five social posts were shared on Council's Facebook and Instagram accounts, each with a reach of over 1000 people.



Figure 24 - Example of social media post promoting the Community Reference Group for the Lennox Head Strategic Plan

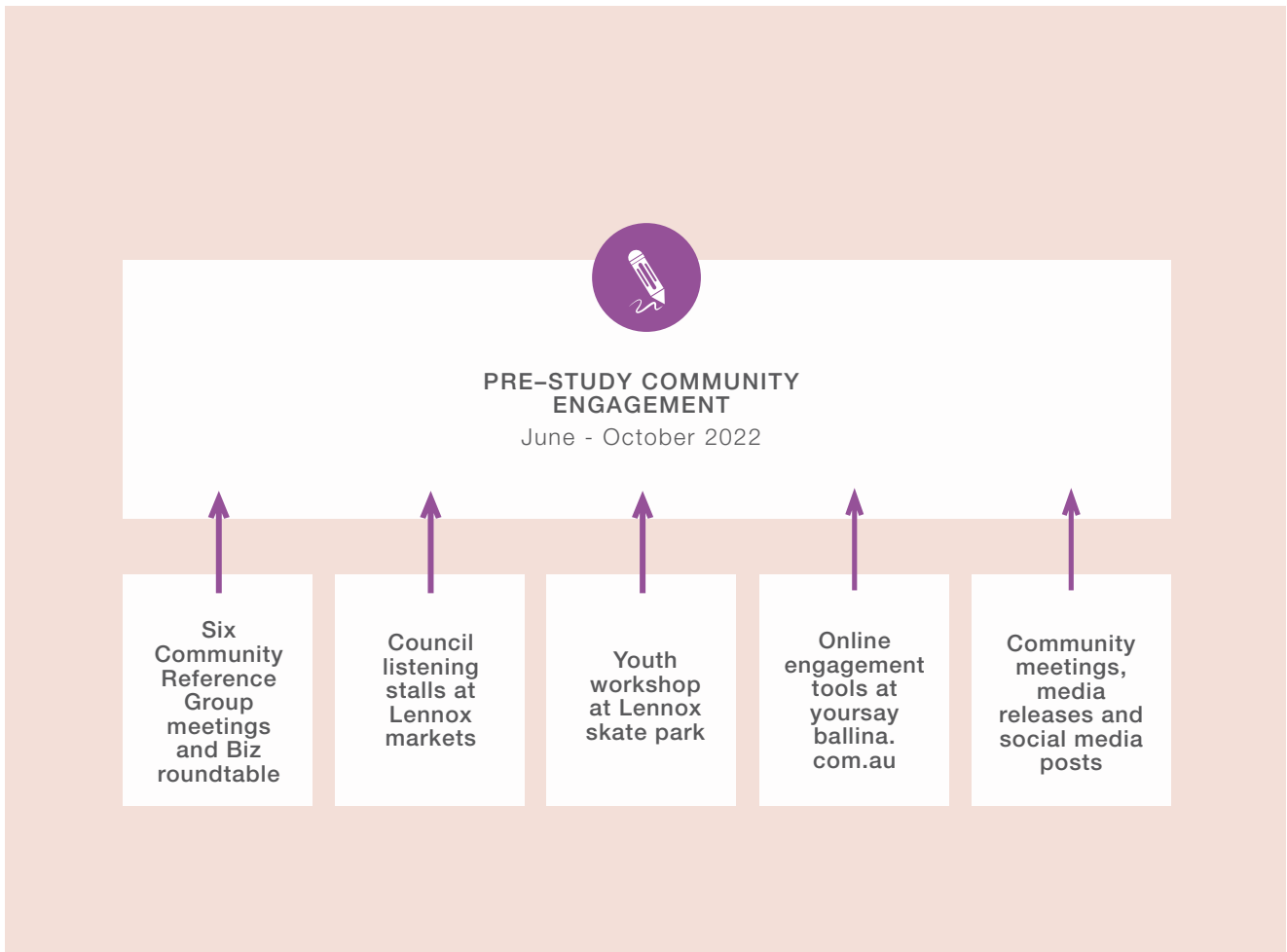


Figure 25 - Calendar of community engagement events

6.1.1 Community Engagement Activities

A calendar of events designed to reach and involve a variety of stakeholders was delivered over a four-month period between mid-June to mid-October 2022.

6.1.2 Face to face activities

Business Roundtable - a partnership with Lennox Chamber of Commerce. Forty local business people attended a breakfast briefing about the plan and participated in visioning activities, assessing business to business needs over the next 20 years.

Community Reference Group - Community members were invited to nominate for the Community Reference

Group (CRG). Eighteen members were selected to represent a range of ages and cover different parts of the plan area. CRG members participated in six two-hour workshops over 5 months.

Listening Stalls at Lennox Head Markets -

Conversations with 110 people at markets stalls exploring issues such as affordable housing, future growth potential, habitat protection, water quality and more.

Youth workshop - 50 young people participated in the workshop held at Lennox Skate Park, exploring how they see the future of Lennox Head and Skennars Head.



6.1.4 Participation Numbers

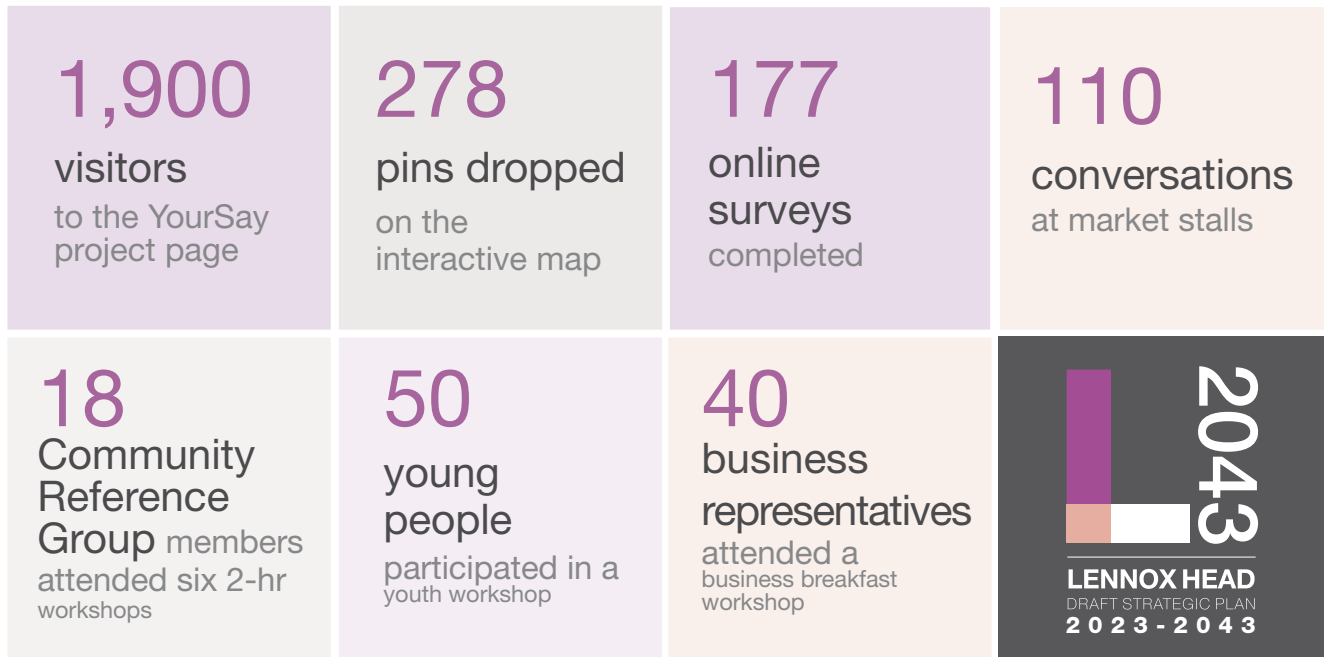


Figure 26 - Community engagement participation numbers



Figure 28 - Word cloud - the community's vision for the next 20 years



6.4.3 Youth Workshop

The Youth workshop was held at the Lennox Head Skate Park. The workshop focused on the use of Williams Reserve and to a lesser extent other open spaces in the Lennox and Skennars area. Below is a summary of the comments from the workshop:

Table 6-1 Youth workshop summary

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS AND CLARIFICATION
How old will you be in 20 years?	mid 20s to mid 30s	
Do you see yourself living in Lennox Head in 20 years?	Yes - one third of participants No - one third Maybe - one third	It's a good place to be. It will be too expensive to live here.
How often do you use Williams Reserve?	Every two days - half of participants Once a week - a quarter of participants Once a fortnight - a quarter of participants	
How do you use Williams Reserve now?	Skate park Making jumps in the trees Playing cricket Friday night football Markets	
What would you like to see at Williams Reserve?	Bigger skate park Pump track (with dirt jumps/ BMX) More shade especially for parents at the skatepark Seating Junior skate and bike area for little kids Basketball Court Water slide Look after trees Bike path around the edge Gaming centre/arcade Electric hire scooters Pond with fish/Japanese garden/chill spot Tennis courts	Most Most Most Most A few About half A few A few A few A few A few One One
What other parks/ spaces do you use?	EPIQ sports fields Lake Ainsworth	Nothing there – no toilets. Clean the lake. More rope swings. Pontoon in the lake. Inflatable water park at Lake Ainsworth.
Other ideas	Ocean tide pool Beehives	

6.4.4 Special Places

The online mapping tool showed the places that are special to a broad range of the community and the community aspirations for them:

The Boat Channel

This area provides access to the most protected area of Seven Mile Beach for swimming, a community gathering place, especially for families.

- Consider the visual impact of stormwater infrastructure.
- This area needs toilets, showers and improved carparking.

Lennox village shops and parks

The village heart, made up of the village shops, the Lennox Head Cultural Centre, coastal parks and Williams Reserve.

- Maintain low rise village shops with a mix of small and large tenancies.
- Improve access to Lake Ainsworth along the coastal reserve without losing the sense of 'wild coast'.
- On Williams Reserve, maintain some sports, improve seating and shade, investigate carparking options, and acknowledge, protect and enhance significant vegetation and cultural heritage.

Lake Ainsworth

A well-loved community gathering place with connection to the coastal reserve, a significant site for the Bundjalung Nation.

- Investigate ways to tell both pre- and post-settlement stories of this place.
- A continued role for the Lennox and Alstonville Surf Club to provide services to the community.

Lennox Headland and Pat Moreton Lookout

An iconic landmark with a breathtaking view.

- A highlight of the Coastal Path with Aboriginal significance.
- A demonstration site for coastal vegetation regeneration.
- A stopping point for travellers.
- Investigate potential for Bundjalung renaming of the lookout.
- Improve the carpark.
- Link up tracks to improve accessibility.

Sharpes Beach

An important destination on the Coastal Path, local beach for Skennars Head, an extension of the wild coast feel of Skennars Head.

- This area needs toilets, showers and improved carpark.

6.3 Community Vision

The vision in the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 was as follows.

“The seaside village atmosphere and environmental heritage of Lennox Head will be retained and enhanced as the community works together to provide for the needs of existing and future generations.”

In 2022 our community has a vision for the future of Lennox Head and Skennars Head to 2043:



“

Lennox Head and Skennars Head will maintain the coastal, village feel, through a network of connected, well serviced neighbourhoods each with their own local character, complementing Lennox village. Our respect for First Nations and Australian cultural heritage and our natural environment ensures we maintain our wild coast, rural amenity and habitat connectivity. Council and the community will make strategic choices to provide mixed income housing, local employment opportunities, recreation and transport to meet the needs of existing and future generations.

”

6.4 Councillor briefings

Since the community engagement activities have concluded there have been two Councillor briefings held. The first on 6 December 2022 reporting back on findings from the pre-study community engagement. The second Councillor briefing was held 5 June 2023 to present the draft community vision and discuss proposed actions in the Draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan 2023-2043.

Specific issues raised at the second Councillor briefing, 5 June 2023, in relation to proposed actions within the Draft Plan are summarised in the table below.

Table 6-1 Youth workshop summary

ISSUE/ACTION	COUNCILLOR COMMENTS	STAFF RESPONSE
Public transport	Investigate the inclusion of a driverless bus trial.	Strategies for driverless buses to be investigated at shire wide level.
Movement/wayfinding strategy	To include area between Lake Ainsworth and Lennox village.	Included.

vision element 1. local character, ‘village feel’ and sense of community

Maintain the ‘village feel’

‘Maintain the village feel’ was the strongest sentiment expressed by community members who participated in the community consultation activities. For the Lennox Head and Skennars Head context, the following elements contribute to the ‘village feel’:

- Relative density and walkability
- Human scale built form
- Social cohesion and recreation
- Valuing local character
- Network of Neighbourhoods
- Special Places

7.1 Relative density and walkability

A village, by definition, has more dwellings closer together, than the area around it. Density is a feature of village life, and it enables another key ingredient, walkability.

Walkability is central feature of village living. Being able to access community gatherings, basic services and recreation on foot or by bicycle is at the heart of what it means to live in a village.

Having dwellings close together and close to services makes walking and cycling more viable for more people.

The village core is the focus of the settlement and is the most multi-functional and active area and it contains some shop-top housing, infill development and development along the main streets. The village decreases in density and landuse variety outwards from the village centre. This change of density creates a sense of destination and ‘leads’ the visitors into the village core.¹

¹ GeoLINK – Villages Paper: Ideas for Managing Future Growth 2003

In the 1950s – 1970s this would have been true of Lennox Head village, however with recent surrounding development the walkability of the village is now under threat.

Lennox village is at risk of losing density around the core commercial centre. Recent development along Byron Street has not delivered the number of dwellings allowed for in the medium density zoning. Instead, prime sites within 400sqm of the commercial centre have only delivered dual occupancy development.

If this trend of low density, so close to the village core is allowed to continue, it is likely the Lennox village will become a wealthy enclave with a high proportion of short-term rental accommodation. To access services and facilities in the village, people will drive from surrounding neighbourhoods, this will require more land, both public and private, for additional carparking.

The impact of this car reliant development pattern is a poorer pedestrian environment within the village and between surrounding neighbourhoods.

To reverse this trend of low density around the village core, Council needs to investigate barriers and enablers to the delivery of medium density housing in the village. This work should take into account land values, lot size and configuration, age of building stock and appropriate development controls (such as carparking rates, building heights and design requirements) to stimulate the delivery of more medium density housing in the village core.

Council to investigate planning controls to require minimum residential floor area within Lennox village commercial redevelopments.

This should be done as a priority. SUGA areas within the Plan area should not be progressed until more medium density development is being delivered in the village centre. This approach should be applied to other local centres within the Plan area as the building stock matures.

7.2 Human scale, built form

During community consultation activities a range of views were gathered from the community about preferred densities. During workshops and face-to-face conversations there was broad acknowledgement of the benefits of consolidating density (more dwellings) closer to the village centre, however survey results clearly expressed a preference for human scale, built form.

Human-scale built form means different things in different settings and locations.

7.2.1 Lennox village commercial centre

As articulated in Council's Development Control Plan the Lennox village commercial centre is characterised by relatively narrow shopfront width, fine grain tenancies with transparent frontages. Details such as awnings articulate one shopfront from the other and shopping activity is clearly visible from the street.

Pedestrian permeability from beachfront, through the shops to Williams Reserve is to be maintained and created where possible.

Review precinct C within Chapter 6C of the Development Control Plan to take the emphasis off vehicular access to this precinct. Pedestrian access and pedestrian traffic needs to be reconsidered in this precinct.

Ballina LEP 2012 states a general height limit for the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area of 9 metres including the E1 Local Centre zone. Building height refers to the vertical distance from ground level (existing) the highest point of the building. 9 metres can accommodate three storeys but the internal ceiling heights are compromised to achieve this outcome.

An LEP amendment is proposed to change the height limit in the Lennox village to 10 metres to allow for better internal building design outcomes. This will have an incremental effect on the Lennox village streetscape. This change to building height could be considered for other local centres in the Plan area subject to further site assessments.

To allow for improved design outcomes it is suggested that Council consider increasing the maximum building height for the E1 Local Centre zone in Lennox village to 10 metres. This will maintain village design within community expectations while allowing improved design outcomes and redevelopment viability for older buildings in the centre. Upper storeys should be set back from the street while providing opportunities to overlook the street and interact between street level and upper storeys.

7.2.2 Low density residential

Low density residential development is well underway in many of the recent subdivisions in the Plan area. Concerns are emerging about the lack of private open space being provided on residential lots, particularly smaller lots. Rear set backs are often deferring to the Building Code of Australia provisions (0.9 metre) . This is not providing adequate private open space for low density residential development.

Improve private open space in Low Density neighbourhoods through an investigation of rear and side setbacks.

7.3 Social cohesion and recreation

Social cohesion is about having strong bonds between individuals and institutions within a society, resulting in positive quality of relationships that are rooted in equal and just treatment, respect, and care for one another. Social cohesion is an important foundation for cooperation towards shared outcomes¹.

Village life is arguably about community connections and networks. This often comes down to having opportunities for people to get to know each other.

¹ Cred Consulting, Building Social Cohesion: A resource for local government, 2022

Research shows that connected communities with strong networks, trust, social spaces and bonds recover quicker from adversity².

Rapid population change can have a negative impact on social cohesion. The Lennox Head and Skennars Head community has grown by approximately 1400 people in the last 5 years, a 15% increase in total population. This is a significant increase for any coastal village.

Population forecasts show a further 23% population increase in Lennox Head and an 86% population increase in Skennars Head from 2021 to 2036.

Access to community facilities and open space is an important enabler of social cohesion. Supporting local community groups to establish, grow and make use of facilities and open spaces is a key way that Council can support social cohesion in areas undergoing demographic change.

7.3.1 Access to community facilities

The management of the Lennox Head Cultural Centre was the subject of specific feedback during the community consultation. There was a sense from general conversations at market stalls and from Community Reference Group workshops that the Cultural Centre is not accessible enough to the general community. In the transition of the building becoming a cultural centre, the community has lost a community centre.

During the 2022 flood events the Lennox Cultural Centre served as community centre and evacuation centre. This function provides support to people from surrounding areas and is an important part of the shire's disaster resilience.

² Resilient Cities Network, Social Cohesion: A practitioners guide to measurement challenges and opportunities, 2019

Council will continue to review use of land occupied by Club Lennox, relative to community needs and open space requirements.

Club Lennox is a Council owned facility leased to a local sports club. It is a family friendly club offering sports activities, gathering and fundraising spaces for the local community.

New facilities become available to the community because of growth and development. An example of this is the EPIQ Playing Fields and associated facilities adjacent to the EPIQ Supermarket. Flooding issues have delayed community use of the new facility.

7.3.2 Access to open space

Public open space was an important theme emerging from the community consultation. People strongly expressed the value of wild open spaces that support ecological values. Open space for active recreation also is very important to the people of Lennox Head and Skennars Head.

Maintaining some formal sport on Williams Reserve is very important to the local community. Many sectors of the community see the potential of other public recreation uses for this prime piece of open space in the Lennox village heart. An expanded skate park, a formalised bike track, more space for markets, improved seating and shade are some suggestions.

Given the demographic change underway in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area, Council sees the importance of the visibility of formalised sport in the Lennox village in welcoming, especially young people, to the area. The regular activation of Williams Reserve from club activities adds to the local character of the village in many ways.

There are many pressures on Williams Reserve because of population growth. Unofficial use of the western side of the reserve for bike jumps threatens ecological and cultural heritage values of this area. Cricket games in this centralised location present safety issues for this busy well loved place.

Council to extend the presence of rugby activities on Williams Reserve for another 10 years.

Update a Plan of Management for Williams Reserve to explore sharing this open space between some formalised Rugby and other complimentary recreation uses.

Council to review the goals and values of Council controlled open spaces and community facility assets provision to support social cohesion in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area.

7.4 Local neighbourhood character

The local character of the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is defined by elements which include:

- A green, wild coastline, with subtle pathways and unimpeded ocean views
- Residential neighbourhoods buffered by rural lands and amenity
- Local centres with a mix of tenancies
- Low rise development
- Relaxed, friendly community
- Large areas of well-connected native vegetation
- Special places such as Lennox Headland, Lake Ainsworth, The Boat Channel, Sharpes Beach, Lennox village shops, Williams Reserve

The residential areas feature three distinct types, defined by topography and period of development.

- The sandy flats between the ocean, wetlands and heathlands where the first residential areas in Lennox Head village originated.
- Northeast facing slopes below and above The Coast Road including east Lennox, structured streets with larger residential lots and many battle-axe lots. Double storey buildings are common and some duplex and apartment complexes set into the hillside.
- West facing lots on ridges, hillsides and flats looking to coastal wetlands and the escarpment. Larger allotments are evident on ridgelines with west Lennox and Skennars Head residential area lot sizes getting smaller, the newer the estate.

Important points of arrival to Lennox Head and Skennars Head are as follows:

- The northern arrival into Lennox Head features the coastal heathland either side of Byron Bay Road. After the Ross Lane roundabout, an unimpeded view to a large stand of Norfolk Pines on North Creek Road ridge gives a sense of local topography and vegetation. Rural views west to the escarpment are peppered with native wetland vegetation. The turn off to Lennox village features a rustic, human scale,

Local character statements are to be outlined in the Lennox Head Strategic Plan to inform future development and infrastructure projects. Articulating arrival moments, important vistas and landmarks, sensory experiences of different locations and qualities local people hold dear.

adaptable sign that changes regularly spruiking local events. At this point we know we are in Lennox Head. The speed on The Coast Road remains at 80km/h, treating this area as the vehicular bypass to Lennox Head even though it is no longer a bypass; The Coast Road now is situated in the centre of the neighbourhoods of Lennox Head.

- Arrival from the south features the avenue of Norfolk Pines along The Coast Road, mirrored by a green canopy along the coastal strip revealing ocean views over Sharpes Beach to Skennars Headland. Skennars Head Reserve provides a welcoming playground nestled within the local centre.

With the first sight of the ocean, we know we have left the river mouth and are in the Skennars Head area.

- Arrival from the west begins at the exit from the Pacific Motorway as we wind down Ross Lane over the escarpment. As we descend to the flat lands of rice, cane and melaleuca wetlands, we are in the vicinity of Lennox Head. Signage to local services hint at our urban surrounds as rural vistas merge into residential areas and speed limits adjust until we arrive at the Ross Lane roundabout framed by the coastal heath.

Local character statements assist developers, governments and designers to understand qualities valued by local communities.

7.5 A Network of Neighbourhoods

In order to maintain the ‘village feel’ of Lennox and Skennars, surrounding neighbourhoods must become a network of connected, well serviced places. Each already has its own local character to be enhanced by future development and Council activities. Those that are of a larger size will have a local centre for convenience shopping and services such as Skennars Head and EPIQ Estate.

The list of distinct neighbourhoods surrounding Lennox village is as follows:

- **North Lennox** – Fig Tree Hill and surrounds
- **West Lennox** – EPIQ Estate and surrounds
- **East Lennox** - east of North Creek Road to Skennars Head Road
- **Skennars Head** – east of North Creek Road and south of Skennars head Road to East Ballina
- **North Creek** – west of North Creek Road to North Creek

Within each of these areas Council will investigate opportunities for placemaking, improving access to facilities and open spaces. When planning for future open spaces and facilities, Council will spread these between this network of neighbourhoods to encourage connections and sharing to alleviate some pressure on Lennox village.

Deliver a wayfinding/movement and place plan for Lennox Head and Skennars Head to encourage better use of existing community assets, accessed via active travel between neighbourhoods.

This will involve incorporating opportunities for storytelling, discovery and active recreation with a focus on improving access and legibility whilst enhancing local character.

The plan should consider design guidelines and material palettes, reconsideration of speed limits, wayfinding signage, points of interest along active travel routes and shade that connect and enhance facilities (including schools), centres and open spaces. This action is related to the Movement and Place, and Public Realm Strategies listed as actions to commence in 2023/24 in Council’s Delivery Program and Operational Plan.



7.6 Special places

Special Places identified through community consultation include: The Boat Channel, Lennox Shops and Parks (including Williams Reserve), Lake Ainsworth, Lennox Headland and Pat Moreton Lookout and Sharpes Beach.

The local character assessments also identified special places that could be enhanced for the enjoyment of locals and improve discovery along walking and cycling routes. These include: Williams Reserve including the western side, viewpoints opposite water tower, and the area around retention pond opposite EPIQ supermarket.

Council to maintain a works schedule of improvements for special places to manage population pressures on these places.

These works are to be consistent with design guidelines, material palettes and local character statements.

vision element 2 maintain and enhance our cultural heritage and natural environment

8.1 Local cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is the heritage we have inherited: our legacy, our memories, physical places, objects, intangible beliefs and practices, and so much more. Intangible heritage can often be associated with particular tangible cultural heritage (Blue Shield International theblueshield.org/why-we-do-it).

Cultural heritage is shared, however different groups of people celebrate with and connect with different cultural heritage. In this report we are particularly focused on 'local cultural heritage', acknowledging that this encompasses different groups and their relationship to the plan area at different points in time.

Local cultural heritage incorporates Nyangbal cultural heritage relating to the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area, colonial heritage associated with the settlement of the area and several waves of cultural change experienced in this place. Local cultural heritage is always evolving.

How we value, recognise, celebrate and respect local cultural heritage, influences local identity, local character and the visibility of cultural groups within the community.

Ideas to value local cultural heritage in the plan area are as follows:

Investigate Aboriginal 'dual naming' opportunities for new housing estates and major landmarks in the plan area.

Explore opportunities for recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites within the area (e.g. the western side of Williams Reserve and Pat Moreton Lookout, Lennox Headland).

Engage effectively with local Aboriginal community stakeholders when rezoning land for urban purposes.

8.2 Wild coast

The coastline of the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is an iconic feature, incorporating a variety of plant community types, rocky foreshores, lookouts, headlands, rambling green cliff edges, sandy and rocky beaches. Valued by locals and visitors for its wildness, the care of this coastline must balance access with the unspoiled, natural amenity.

Council will establish appropriate material palettes to guide design of infrastructure (such as tracks, lookouts, signage, seating etc.) for places within the Coastal Reserve that respects and enhances the experience of the natural environment.

Renowned for being one of the best right-hand point breaks along the east coast of Australia and across the world, Lennox Head was declared a National Surfing Reserve in 2007/8. The reserve also includes the reef and sand bank breaks along Seven Mile Beach, and point breaks of Boulders Beach and Flat Rock.

Water quality in this area is profoundly influenced by the Richmond River, when large rains further up the catchment travel downriver, the negative impact on water quality can be seen.

Council to continue to discharge its' responsibilities under the Coastal Reserve Management Plan

The southern end of the Byron Bay Marine Park, covering waters off Seven Mile Beach to Lennox Headland, falls within the Plan area.

Council to continue to manage this area in line with the Marine Estate Management Act 2014.

8.3 Rural amenity

Rural lands within the plan area act as important inter-urban buffers. Whilst rural production is still active on some of the remaining parcels of original farms of the area, rural lands have been maintained for the rural and scenic amenity these lands provide residential neighbourhoods or due to being low lying and flood prone.

Important lands for providing inter-urban buffers are:

- Condon Hill, Coast Road, Lennox Head - allowing for existing residential zoned land on the northern end.
- Rural lands between Blue Seas Parade and The Coast Road - an inter-urban buffer should remain between residential development and The Coast Road.
- The Stewart land (Aureus Estate), The Coast Road, Skennars Head - a green belt should be maintained between East Ballina and Skennars Head to provide visual separation and retain individual urban identities of the two settlements.

(Lennox Head Landscape and Visual Analysis, 2003).

Lennox Head and Skennars Head are coastal settlements within a rural setting. The Strategic Urban Growth Area at North Creek Road provides opportunity for some pockets of residential development surrounded by remaining rural farm land.

8.4 Habitat connectivity

Council and community efforts to revegetate habitat areas and ecological communities on public land through grant funding, Landcare projects and compensatory projects have achieved great outcomes for the coastal reserves, areas of significant urban bushland and wildlife corridors.

Future opportunities for significant revegetation projects will rely on compensatory projects, grant funding and collaboration with private landowners. Land identified as wildlife corridors and being ideal for habitat connectivity should prioritise revegetation projects.

Figure 29 shows the extent of natural restoration projects overlayed with wildlife corridors within the plan area.

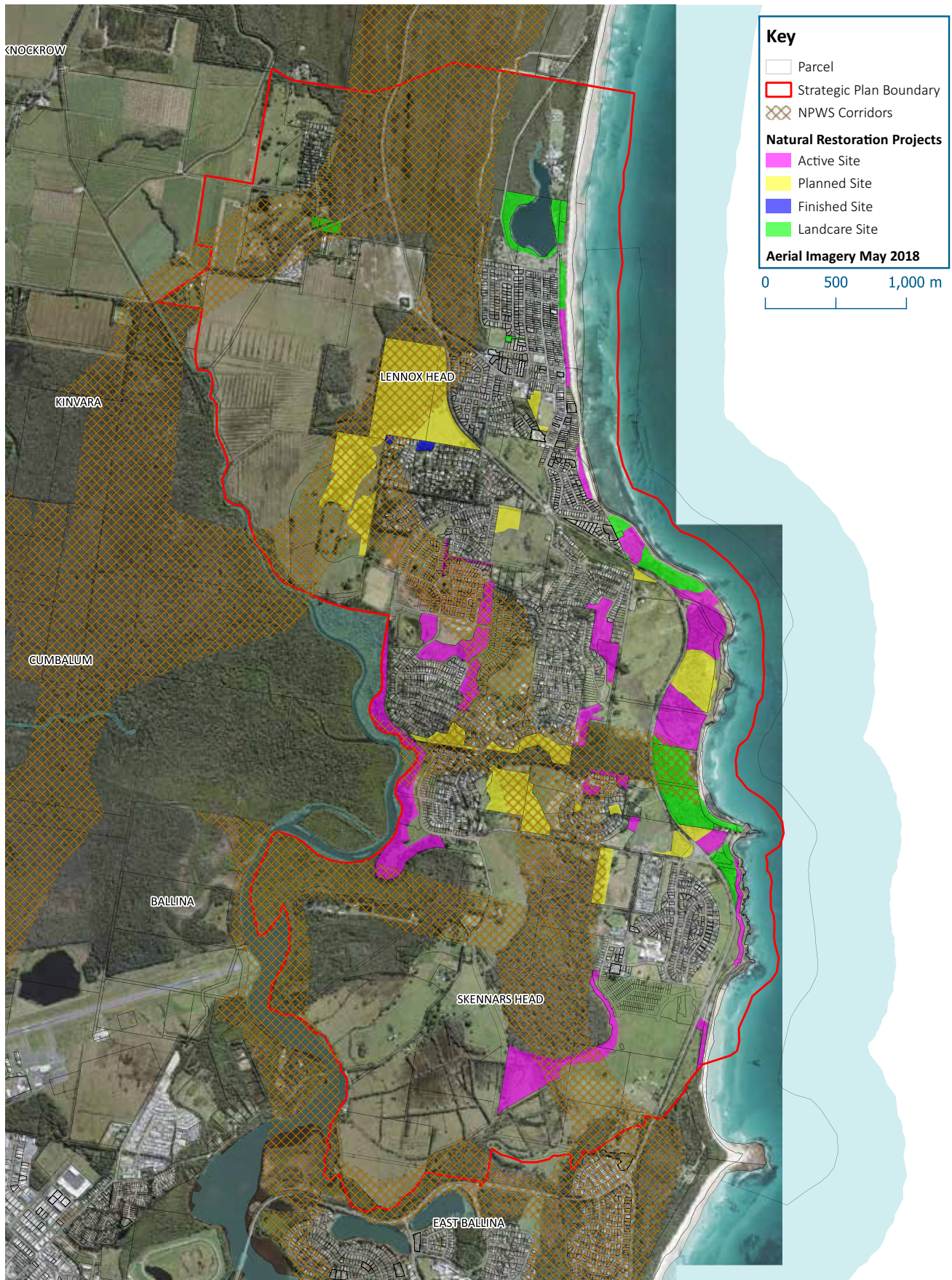


Figure 29 - National Parks and Wildlife, Wildlife corridors and Council's Natural Restoration Projects

vision element 3. encourage a strong diverse community

9.1 Connections between neighbourhoods

To become a 'network of neighbourhoods', physical connections particularly for walking and cycling need to be improved. Infusing each neighbourhood within the Plan area with the 'coastal village feel' means ensuring walkable places that are connected by shared paths.

This vision is articulated in the Ballina Bike Plan 2017 as shown in Figure 30. Purple circles show additional links to be included, see rationale below.

Active travel on foot or by bike was a priority in the community engagement results from both face-to-face and online activities. The perceived need for more carparking in Lennox village also indicates active travel needs to be improved in the Plan area. Every local car trip that can be avoided improves, but doesn't necessarily solve, carparking supply in Lennox village.

E-bikes present a great opportunity to make active travel more accessible and appealing to more people and is increasing as a mode of transport within Lennox Head and other urban areas of Ballina Shire.

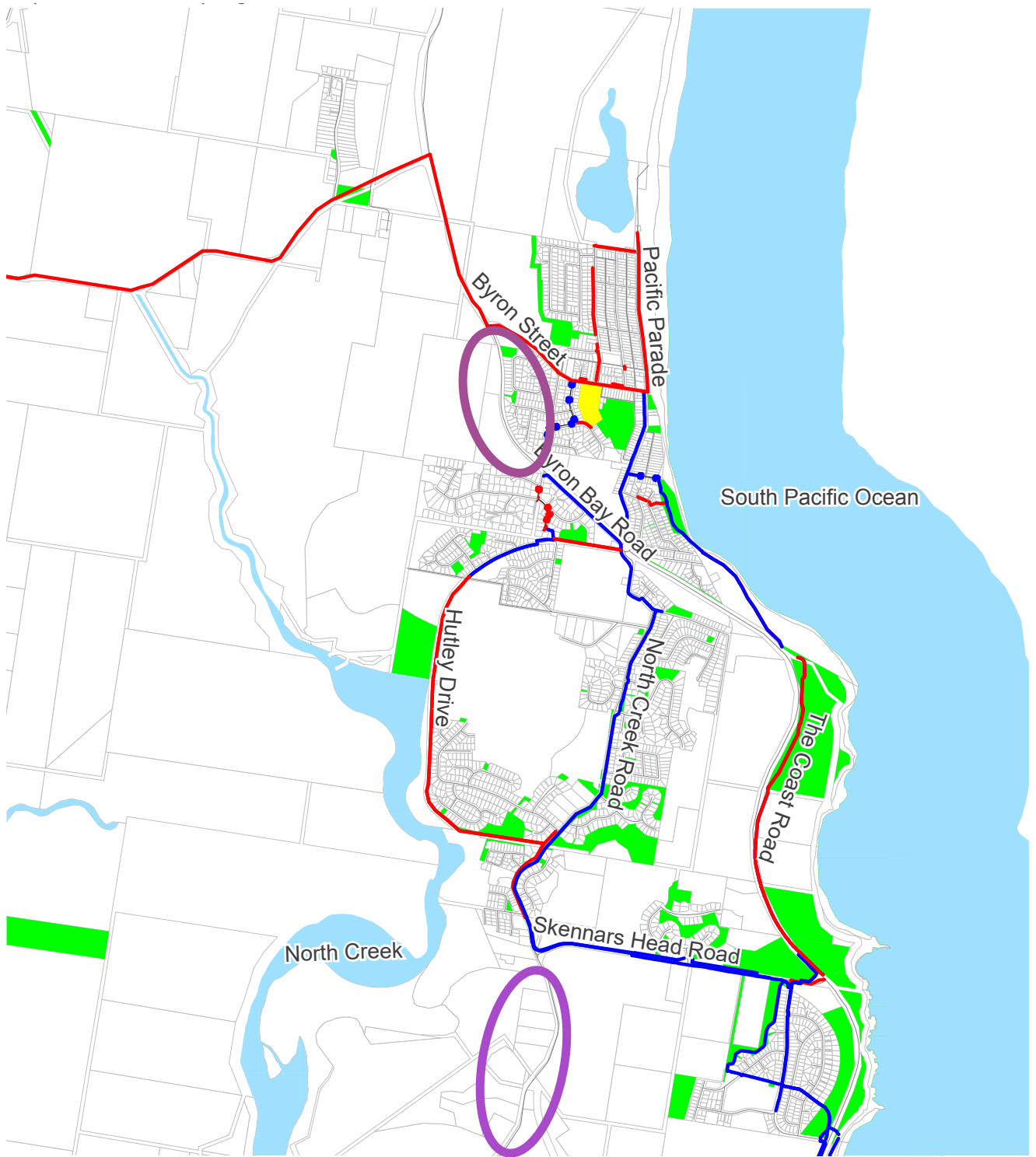
Council's Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) lists projects identified in the Ballina Bike Plan (2017) plus footpath projects to improve accessibility of local streets.

The shared path projects in these plans are important for achieving active travel connections between neighbourhoods within the Plan area particularly:

- The Ross Lane shared path
- Byron Street shared path
- Hutley Drive extension shared path

There are other projects that should be added to the PAMP list to improve connections between the neighbourhoods in the Lennox and Skennars area. A shared path connection should be extended on North Creek Road from Skennars Head Road to connect to North Ballina as part of the North Creek Bridge project.

New requirements for cycling infrastructure within the Lennox shops to allow for e-bike transport between neighbourhoods to the village.











-  Proposed new shared paths
-  Existing shared path
-  Proposed shared path
-  Existing on-road
-  Proposed on-road
-  Open space
-  Education/school
-  Waterway

Figure 30 - Lennox Head's cycling environment and identified missing links

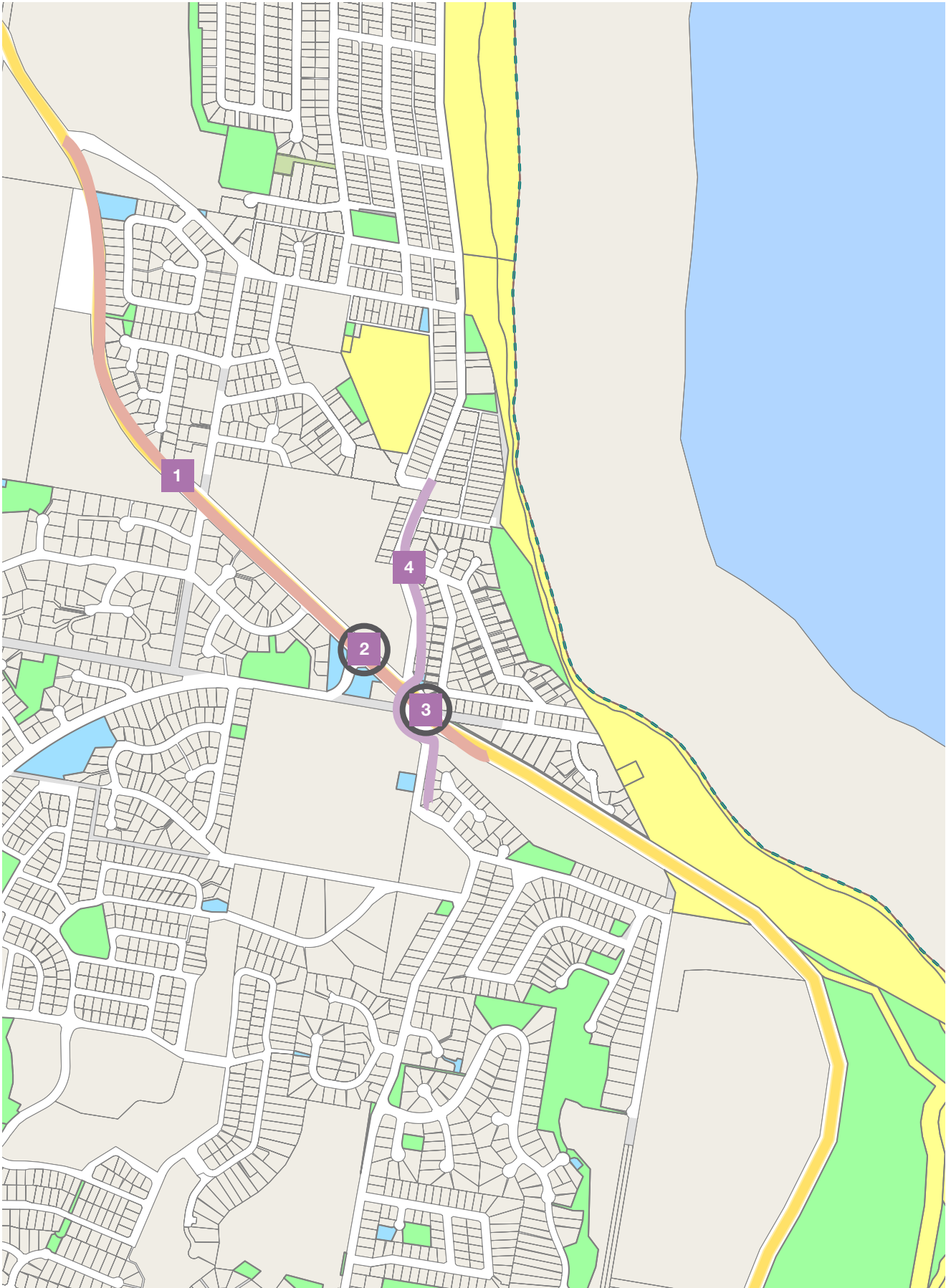


Figure 31 - Projects to be included in the PAMP

Rationale

1

The Coast Road, originally built as a bypass to Lennox Head, is now in the middle of the locality as neighbourhoods to the west have developed. There are six existing pedestrian linkages through connecting neighbourhoods to The Coast Road between and including Byron Street and Ballina Street.

Improving pedestrian and cycling safety and amenity on this stretch of The Coast Road can be achieved by reducing the speed limit between Byron Street and Ballina Street to 60 km, and by making improvements and extensions to existing shared paths to link to the proposed future Ross Lane shared path connection. This will leverage existing infrastructure to improve connections between neighbourhoods on either side of The Coast Road.

2

Hutley Drive roundabout is relatively new, lacking shade and amenity for cyclists and pedestrians.

Clearer legibility for pedestrians and cyclists in this area could be achieved by shade and signage to encourage them up to the North Creek roundabout for crossing.

3

North Creek Road roundabout should be the primary crossing point for cyclists and pedestrians in this area, particularly on the northern side.

This could be achieved by shade, signage and infrastructure, bringing elements from the village design to indicate continuity. The Southern side of this roundabout would benefit from bush regeneration on the eastern side of The Coast Road to create a canopy tunnel as a stunning entrance to the Lennox locality, encouraging motorists to slow down.

4

South end of Ballina Street is the most obvious access for pedestrians and cyclists from east and west Lennox into Lennox village. There are limited options here for path widening.

Speed reduction of vehicles through traffic calming and formalising the Allens Parade roundabout should be a priority.

9.2 Footpath access

Footpaths provide safe access within and between residential areas. Users of footpaths include pedestrians, people in mobility scooters and wheelchairs, and people who push prams and trolleys. It was not until the mid-1990s that pedestrian connectivity was considered as part of new subdivisions. Newer subdivisions within the plan area are well serviced with footpaths.

Council addresses pedestrian access issues in the PAMP, which was last reviewed in 2018/19. There are a number of projects identified for the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area to improve the walking and cycling network in the area, incorporating all proposed projects from the Ballina Bike Plan 2017. See Figures 32, 33 and 34.

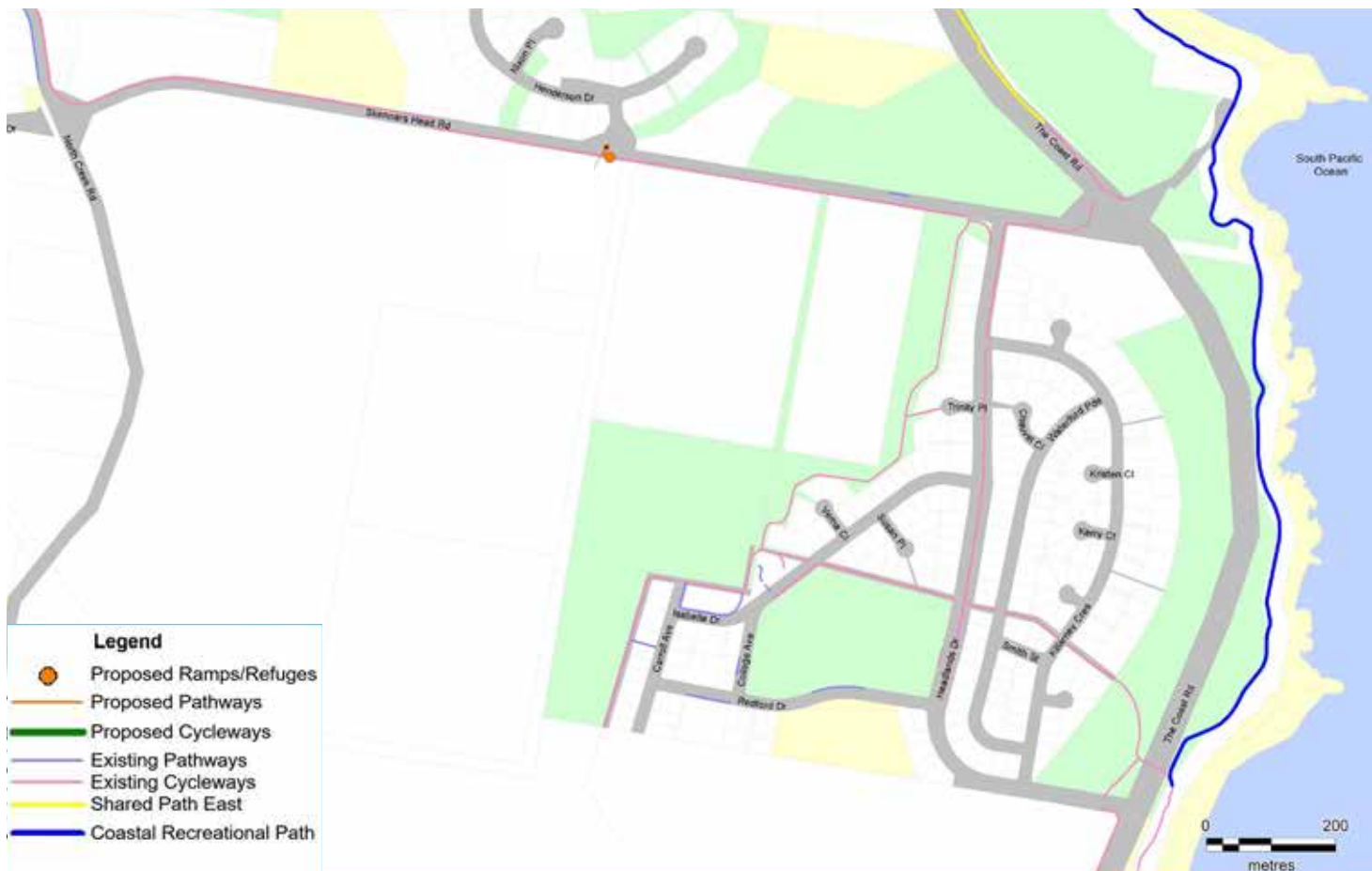


Figure 32 - Skennars Head PAMP delivery program 2018/19 to 2026/27

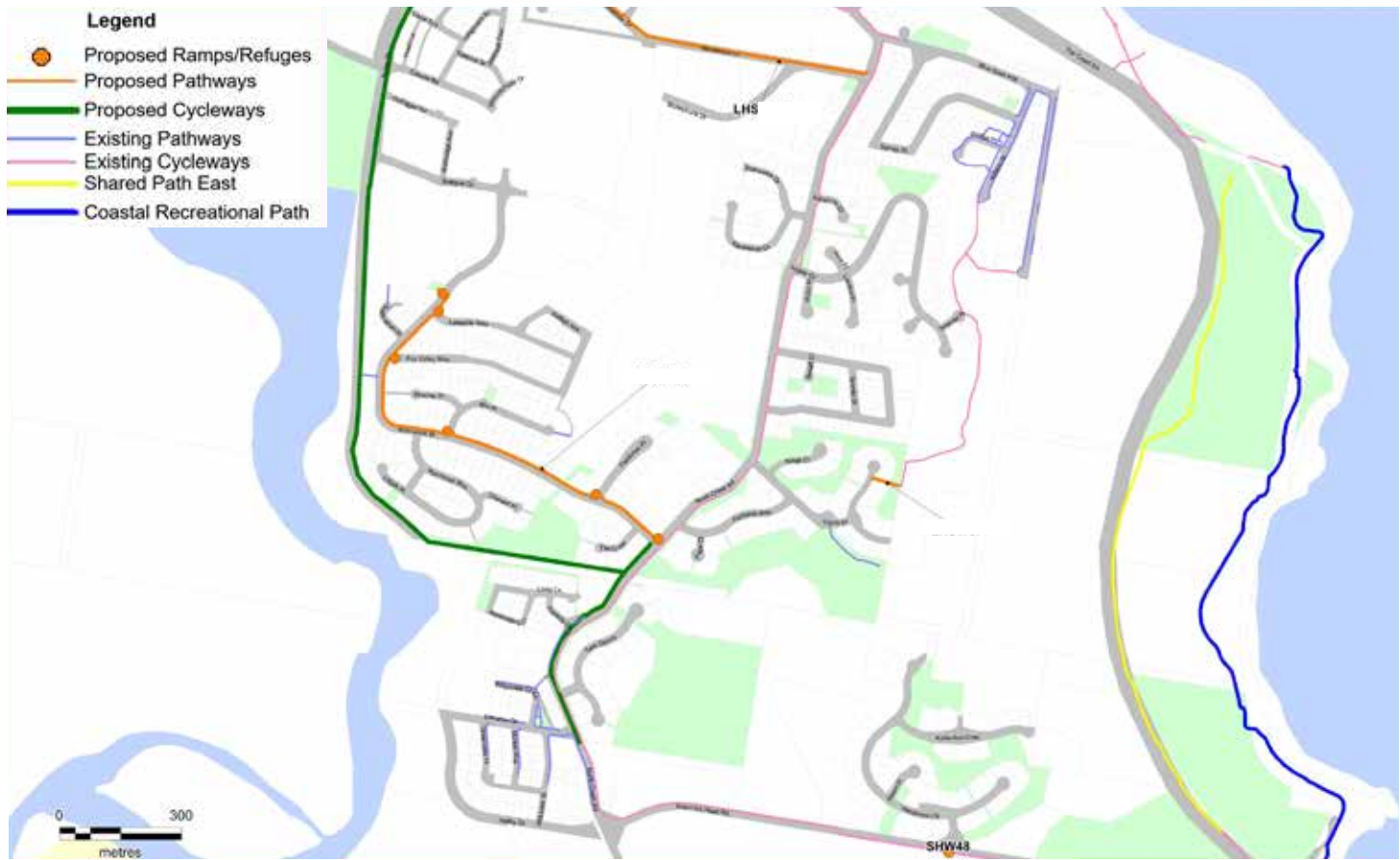


Figure 33 - Lennox Head South PAMP delivery program 2018/19 to 2026/27



Figure 34 - Lennox Head North PAMP delivery program 2018/19 to 2026/27



9.3 Regional housing pressures

Housing supply for the North Coast Region is planned for in the North Coast Regional Plan.

“We expect that over the next 20 years we will need a minimum of 41,300 extra homes to meet the needs of the growing population. We will also need housing that provides for visitor accommodation and replacement homes for those destroyed by floods and other natural disasters”¹.

The regional plan includes a goal that 40% of new housing by 2036 will either be multi- dwelling housing (e.g. apartments, town houses and villas) or small lot housing.

The North Coast region was heavily impacted by the bushfires of 2021 and the record floods of 2022. Many existing dwellings on the North Coast have been damaged or destroyed by these extreme weather events.

“This has had a direct impact on the supply of housing in the region and the demand for rental housing leading to an affordability crisis in the immediate term” (Rental Affordability Snapshot Anglicare North Coast 2021.²)

9.4 Housing choice

There is a supply of zoned residential land in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area. Scope for 1249-1379 lots exists in residential zoned land within the Plan area. Whilst the land is already zoned for residential development, Council has no levers to control the timing of this supply. The private market determines when this land is released to the market.

Large areas of the Lennox village have been zoned as medium density, with limited uptake. There are many barriers to the delivery of infill development. Existing

Investigate planning controls to enable the delivery of medium density dwellings close to local centres (Lennox village, EPIQ supermarket and Aureus local centre).

Investigate development of Council land in the EPIQ Estate for housing for local key workers.

strata development and ad hoc development of dual occupancies and granny flats make redevelopment less viable. Age of building stock, and lot size and shape all impact viability of medium density development.

Maintaining current dwelling densities in the Lennox village will maintain the ‘village feel’. Having people living within walking distance to shops and services is an important aspect of village life.

Based on the forecast increase in lone person households, this Plan will seek to increase dwelling densities in the Lennox village, whilst ensuring existing densities are not lost.

The demand for small (1 and 2 bedroom) dwellings close to services will come from the increase in people over 60 who do not have the need for three and four bedroom homes.

Short term rental accommodation will likely always be a part of the housing market in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area. Enabling a balance between the need for tourist accommodation with the needs of the community (i.e. permanent housing stock, preservation of neighbourhood amenity etc.) will continue to be a priority for Council.

¹ North Coast Regional Plan 2041

² Anglicare North Coast – Rental Affordability mini report, 2022, anglicarenorthcoast.org.au

Council will investigate an LEP clause to enforce minimum dwelling number requirements for existing medium density sites proposed for redevelopment.

Council to monitor Short-Term Rental Accommodation within the Plan area and the broader region to allow for responses to any major changes in the regulatory environment or the market.

9.5 Minimum dwelling requirements

As the increase in lone person, ageing households begins to bite, the demand for smaller houses close to services will increase. Due to increasing land values there is a possibility that the Lennox village area will become an exclusive enclave of holiday homes rather than a vibrant, mixed income, multigenerational village.

Demand for coastal property is on the rise. There are no new release areas of coastal property, walking distance to the beach, in the shire. As the appeal of well serviced coastal property only gets greater, demand for land in Lennox village and to some extent Aureus will continue to grow. This has been seen in premium locations such as Wategos Beach in Byron Bay.

A risk exists whereby the location becomes so sought after that owners purchase dual occupancies, or even small unit blocks and revert them back to one large dwelling. Loss of existing density in Lennox village would go against the desired principles and goals for ageing in place, housing affordability and village vibrancy.

9.6 Strategic Urban Growth Areas

A number of Strategic Urban Growth Areas (SUGA) fall within the Plan area. All of these were identified in the Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategy 2002 and were subsequently included in the Ballina Local Environment Plan 2012.

All SUGAs were recently reviewed by Council, and as of May 2023, the following SUGAs in the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area will be retained and mapped in the Ballina LEP 2012 Strategic Urban Growth Area Map.



Ross Lane and The Coast Road

Area: 61.9 hectares

Background: Initially identified in mid 1990s Urban Release Strategy. Identified in the Lennox Head Structure Plan as having potential for urban development, open space and environmental management purposes.

Current Zoning: RU2 Rural Landscape



Byron Bay Road , Lennox Head

Area: 6.7 hectares

Background: Initially identified in mid-90s Urban Land Release Strategy. Subjected to urban investigations in association with “Henderson Farm” planning proposal (2007). Area omitted due to presence of Hairy Joint Grass. Retained as SUGA on the basis that ecological issues may be resolvable (subject to offsetting).

Current Zoning: RU1 Primary Production and RU2 Rural Landscape



Stonehurst Drive, Lennox Head

Area: 11.1 hectares

Background: Identified for urban investigation since 1980s. Considered in the Lennox Head Structure Plan (2004) and retained for urban investigation

Current Zoning: RU1 Primary Production and RU2 Rural Landscape



West Lennox Palms

Area: 10.7 Hectares

Background: Initially identified in mid-90s Urban Land Release Strategy. Residue of adjacent residential estate (Lennox Palms Estate).

Current Zoning: RU1 Primary Production



Ballina Headlands Holiday Park, Skennars Head

Area: 6.6 hectares

Background: Initially identified in the mid 1990s Urban Land Release Strategy. The site has been occupied (since at least the 1980s) by the (now) Ballina Headlands Holiday Park, which includes many permanent occupants.

Current Zoning: RU2 Rural Landscape



North Creek Road, Skennars Head

Area: 61.5 Hectares

Background: Initially identified in the mid 1990s Urban Land Release Strategy.

Current Zoning: RU1 Primary Production

vision element 4. fostering diverse, local economy and employment opportunities

Future employment growth within the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area is reliant on:

- Sustained population growth
- Local centre development viability
- Employment land availability

Lennox Head and Skennars Head currently hold 11% of the jobs in the Ballina Shire in 2021 and contributes \$198.5M value add to the broader economy¹.

10.1 Futureproof Local Centres

There are three local centres within the plan area. Lennox village commercial centre, EPIQ shopping centre and the Aureus retail precinct. The vibrancy and viability of these centres is important for ensuring diverse, local employment opportunities

Change of Use applications within employment zones should be investigated to determine opportunities for more development to occur as Exempt and Complying development.

Council has a role to ensure development capacity can be serviced by adequate carparking, and that carparking does not become a development constraint on the provision of new commercial floor space.

¹ Ballina Shire economic profile 2023 economy.id.com.au/ballina/employment-locations

10.1.2 Car parking

Car parking and local centre viability is a complex relationship. Getting people out of their cars and walking down the main street is good for local businesses. When carparking is too convenient, people can park directly in front of the business they are visiting, and may not walk past other businesses in the street. This is not beneficial for businesses as they lose the pedestrian passing trade opportunities and it decreases the viability of local centres.

Improving pedestrian and cycling connections between neighbourhoods, and the experience of bringing a bicycle or an e-bike into the village is important for the future vibrancy and viability of Lennox village.

As surrounding development areas are populated, such as Cumbulum Urban Release Area Precinct B at Kinvara, and the other SUGAs listed above become developed, vehicular traffic to local centres will inevitably increase.

In preparation for this, Council should investigate appropriate sites to provide carparking within or on the periphery of the Lennox Head village commercial area.

In the short to medium term, carparking to support commercial activities in Lennox village will need to be provided on commercial sites. It is possible that consolidation of lots within the commercial area of Lennox village would enable the efficient delivery of public underground carparking. It is recommended that Council completes this investigation in combination with Action 4.

Investigation of proposed SUGA area for employment land uses, considering flooding and environmental impacts and cultural heritage constraints. This work should also consider the potential appropriate mix of uses.

Council to investigate planning incentives to encourage lot consolidation to enable more efficient delivery of public, underground carparking on commercial redevelopment sites within Lennox village.

Any proposal for employment uses in this area must minimise the visual impact of the development from surrounding transport routes.

10.2 Employment lands investigation

Employment lands identified in the North Coast Regional Plan 2036 and the North Coast Regional Plan 2041 at Ross Lane present a significant opportunity for the area. Subject to further investigations regarding potential flooding and cultural heritage, employment lands in this area will enable more local jobs.

Proposed employment land provides the potential for local businesses to benefit from light industrial floor area for creative and food manufacturing activities that reinforce the coastal village atmosphere of the Lennox area. A diversity of businesses that add to local services and the visitor experience economy could be accommodated.

As a Strategic Urban Growth Area these lands will sit within the Ballina Local Environment Plan 2012 until an application for further investigation comes to Council in the form of a Planning Proposal. At this stage further investigation of constraints will be undertaken.

conclusions the way forward

Population overview

The Lennox Head and Skennars Head area has been inhabited by Aboriginal people for an extensive period of time. In 1922 the creation of 185 lots catalysed the growth of Lennox Head to the thriving township it is today.

In 2001 the Lennox Head and Skennars Head area had a population of 5,967. The Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan 2002 and the Lennox Head Structure Plan 2004 identified suitable land for urban release and outlined planning and infrastructure necessary to accommodate new housing.

By 2011 the population had increased to 7,293, as subdivisions were approved and made available to the market. By this time the occupancy rate of each dwelling had reduced from

2.66 people per dwelling in 2001, to 2.60 in 2011, this means less people living in each dwelling.

In 2021, more subdivision areas from the 2002 plan have been approved and delivered. In 2021 the population was 8,983 and the occupancy rate had fallen to 2.57 people per dwelling.

This study has concluded that growth potential within the existing urban areas of Lennox Head and Skennars Head will result in a population of approximately 11,467 to 13,302 by 2043. This forecast does not include identified Strategic Urban Growth Areas within the plan area. No new Strategic Urban Growth Areas are proposed within the Draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan 2023-2043.

To achieve the Community Vision, actions within the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan 2023-2043 focus on maintaining the 'village feel' through a network of well serviced, connected neighbourhoods, respect for the natural environment and cultural heritage and through strategic choices to provide mixed income housing, recreation and transport for current and future generations.



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