

**Tea Gardens
Hawks Nest**

Conservation & Development Strategy

Volume 1 – Strategy
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This Strategy was prepared by the Strategic Planning Department of Great Lakes Council and Acacia Environmental Planning Pty Ltd. The authors of the Strategy do not live in the study area and have no pecuniary interests in the study area.

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Why Prepare a Strategy?

Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest

The twin towns of Tea Gardens and Hawks Nests are located on the north shore of Port Stephens, about 2½ hours north of Sydney, in the Great Lakes Council local government area. The communities began as holiday destinations - visitors enjoyed access to Port Stephens, the Myall River and the Myall Lakes.



Tea Gardens and Hawks Nests are located on a low-lying coastal plain in a basin between the Pacific Ocean and a ridge to the west. The Myall River separates the communities and is spanned by the Singing Bridge. The bridge is named for the sound that it makes during strong winds.

Hawks Nest and Tea Gardens function as service centres for the area generally bounded by Port Stephens to the south, the Myall Lakes National Park to the north and the Pacific Highway to the west. The area also attracts many visitors who come to enjoy natural features, including waterways, beaches and Myall Lakes National Park. Both towns have frontage to the Myall River, and Hawks Nest has direct access to the northern shore of Port Stephens.



Each town has a unique character and accommodates different housing markets. Hawks Nest has a leafy informal setting created by trees adjacent to roads, many low scale buildings, low density and grassed road edges and drains. It plays more of a tourist role than Tea Gardens as shown by a high residential vacancy rate and large population increases during holidays. In recent years Tea Gardens has emerged as the main growth area for permanent living. The streetscape is more formalised, and buildings have a contemporary appearance.

During the last twenty years, many property owners have chosen to live permanently in Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest and the permanent population has grown steadily. More recently, residential developments like Myall Quays, Banksia Estate, and the Shearwater development have substantially expanded the supply of land for residential use, and the permanent population continues to grow.

Improvements to the Pacific Highway will reduce travelling times between Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest and Sydney. Interest in development in Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest is growing, particularly for large, comprehensive developments.

A Question of Limits

Council decided to start the rezoning process for several large development sites in the early and mid 1990s. At about the same time, Council recognised that there was a need for a broad strategy to set a conservation framework and to guide development. Public authorities such as the then Department of Planning and the National Parks & Wildlife Service raised concern that future developments could have harmful effects on the environment, including loss of native plants and animal habitat, and that Council needed to consider regional issues before the rezonings could proceed.

In response to these concerns, Council decided to bring forward the *Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Conservation and Development Strategy* (the *Strategy*). Once stakeholders, the community and public authorities agree on the Strategy, rezonings can be finalised and future development can proceed with greater certainty.

For this Strategy, Council will rely on opportunities for conservation and development, based on the existing condition of the study area, biophysical features and planning policies. This approach identifies areas that are suitable for development and areas that should not be developed. It is likely that the reasons why certain areas should not be developed will become more important in the future. Accordingly, the areas that are suitable for development will form the limit of development for the foreseeable future.



Study Area

The study area for the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest Conservation and Development Strategy is shown in Figure 1.

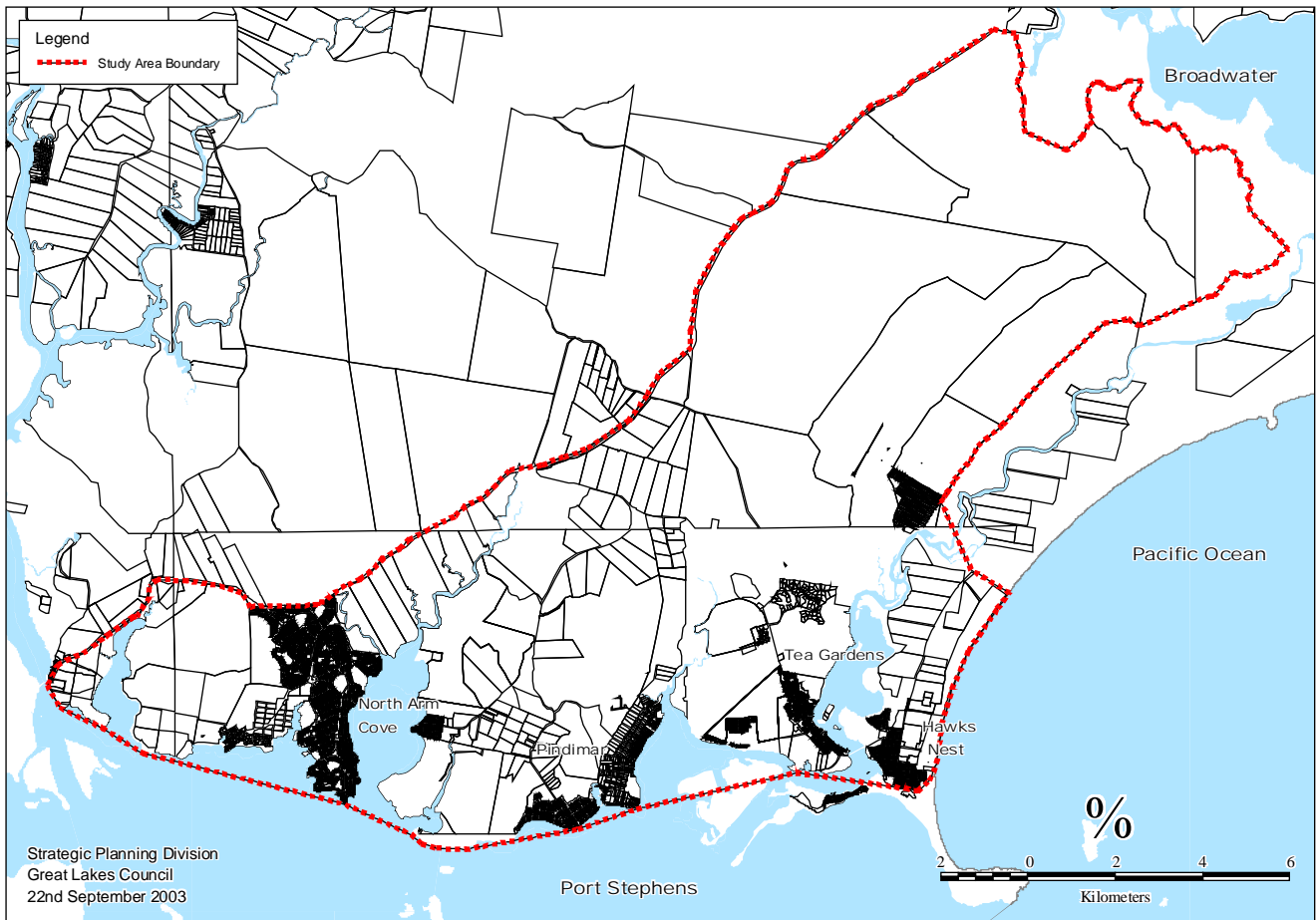
The study area boundary is based on three factors:

- The Pacific Highway presents a major barrier to development due either to the complexity of providing interchanges, or to the restrictions on creating new access points to the Pacific Highway.
- Exclusion of large areas owned or managed by public authorities, such as Myall Lakes National Park.
- Identification of conservation opportunities and wildlife corridors, having regard to Myall Lakes National Park and other high conservation value areas within and beyond the study area.



Council recognises that many important issues, such as regional conservation, economic forces and changes to transportation, exist outside of the study area. Where practical they are considered in the Strategy.

Figure 1 Study Area Boundary



Goals & Objectives

Goals

The Strategy's goal is to guide conservation and development in the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest area for the next 20 to 30 years. The Strategy will provide three important outcomes:

1. Greater certainty for the community and developers about areas that can sustain development, and areas that should be conserved.
2. A reduction in ad hoc decision making.
3. An improved appreciation by Council and the community of the bigger picture, so that decisions are not made in isolation.

Objectives

To address concerns raised by public authorities and the community, Council defined seven objectives that the Strategy must satisfy:

1. Create a conservation framework that identifies and conserves important habitats and linkages.
2. Identify land that is suitable for future urban living.
3. Give the providers of public facilities and services information to help them plan new infrastructure.
4. Promote orderly and efficient growth that is consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and the objects of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
5. Indicate preferred land uses in development and investigation precincts.
6. Identify guiding principles for future development.
7. Provide greater certainty in the rezoning process to all stakeholders.

The Strategy will become the blueprint that Council will use to balance social, economic and ecological interests in the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest area.

North Arm Cove and Carrington are not included in development or investigation precincts. In 1996, Council re-affirmed its commitment to the *Hunter Coastal Urban Settlement Strategy* (NSW Government 1994). It recommends that these areas be excluded from urban development due to the costs of providing essential services and the extent of land fragmentation.

Land Capability & Suitability

Capability

Activities that change the physical environment, such as landform, drainage, vegetation, habitats or waterways and creeks have the potential to cause impacts that are recognised or accepted as harmful, or in some cases prohibited by legislation. Other activities, such as conversion of land from one use to another may result in adverse and unintended social and economic impacts.

This Strategy uses constraint mapping to identify land with one or more constraints to development. Council has identified thirteen broad capability constraints that limit development. Each constraint has an associated set of criteria that define thresholds of development. Land that is least constrained is preferred for future development. Capability constraints are combined and shown in Figure 2.

Ecologically Sustainable Development

The use of constraints in this Strategy recognises important principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD):

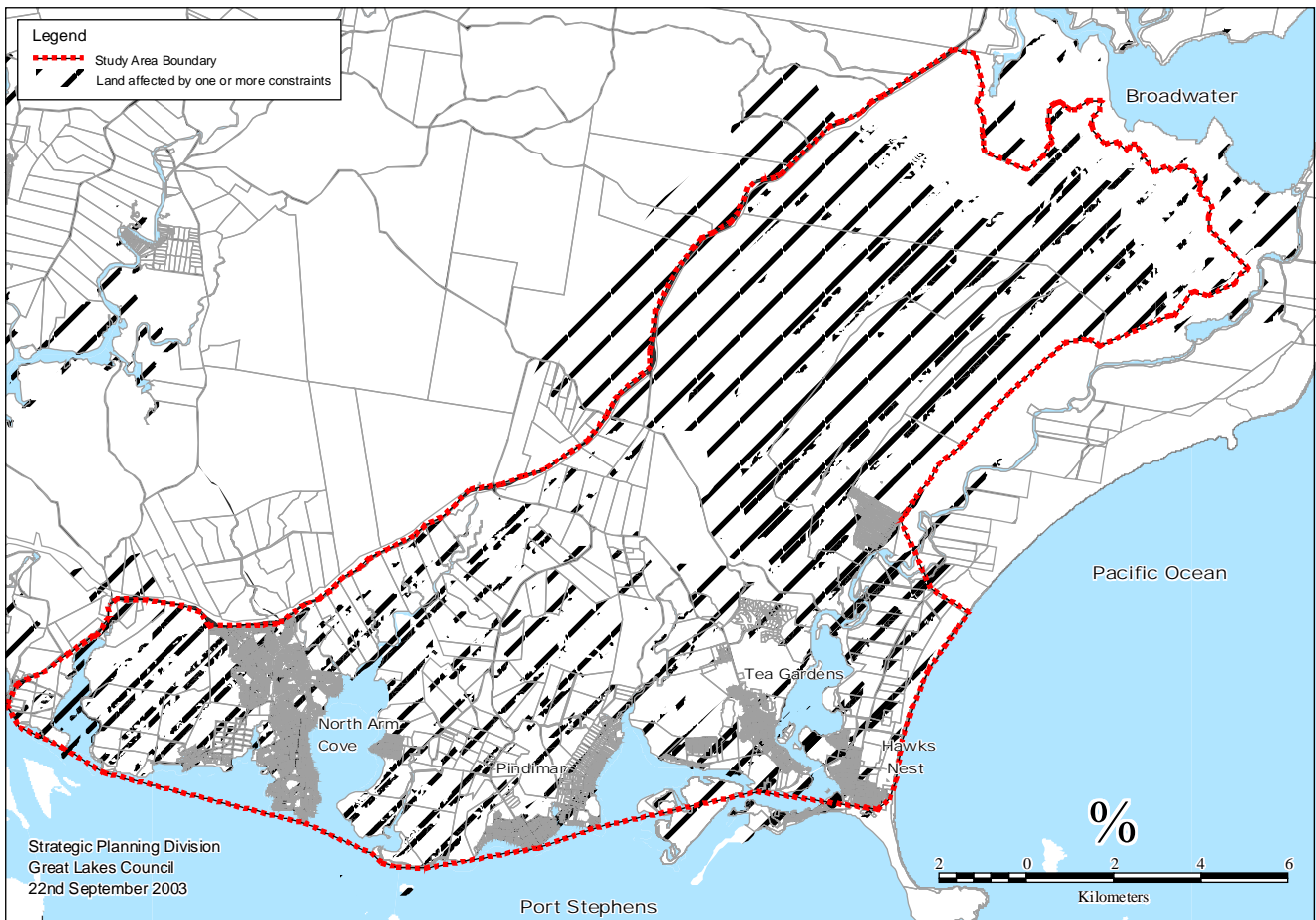
- Conserve biological diversity and ecological integrity.
- Maintain or enhance the health, diversity and productivity of the environment for future generations.
- Consider environmental resource pricing for comparison with social and economic resources when determining management options.

There are benefits to supporting sustainable growth, including economic and social as well as indirect environmental benefits:

- Increased efficiency and economies of scales when providing infrastructure and community services.
- Increased diversity of economic base for the community.
- Compact growth with well-defined urban growth limits.

Development of land where few or no ecological constraints exist, such as within the precincts identified in the Strategy, can take development pressure off land in other areas where there are greater ecological constraints.

Figure 2 Combined Capability Constraints



Suitability

Most capability constraints are based on bio-physical characteristics - they identify land that does not have capability for urban development. Suitability addresses additional characteristics that take in socio-economic and community considerations. Suitability issues can only be managed at additional cost, both individually and to the community, or loss of values held worthwhile by the community.

For this Strategy, there are five suitability issues that determine if land should be included in an urban development precinct:

- The degree of isolation from existing centres that provide community and social services and facilities.
- The desire to minimise fragmented development and inefficient servicing that would occur if many small development precincts were scattered throughout the study area.
- The practicality of providing access to unconstrained land.
- Consideration of other values that are held to be economically or aesthetically important, such as land with high agricultural potential, or land with high scenic value.
- Proximity to offensive uses or activities, such as sewerage treatment plants, landfills, quarries and mines. Buffers or setbacks to these activities must be provided so there is no conflict with adjoining development.

Land that has few or no capability constraints would not be suitable for inclusion in a development precinct if it were isolated from existing centres, too small to justify servicing, or costly to provide with safe and practical access.

The costs of establishing new centres or small towns is significant and would not be an effective use of Council's, public authorities' or the community's limited resources.

Precincts

One of this Strategy's objectives is to identify suitable land for urban living. Three areas, called *precincts*, satisfy capability constraints and suitability criteria. Precincts form the foreseeable limits of development in the study area. They are shown in Figure 3.

Myall River Downs—Urban Development Precinct

Based on the findings to date, the Myall River Downs precinct could provide up to 110 ha of land for development, of which about 10 ha could be used for retail or industrial uses, and the remaining 100 ha would be used for residential and rural residential development. At an average density of seven lots per hectare, the potential supply of land at Myall River Downs would be about 700 urban lots. A buffer to the existing Tea Gardens landfill will have to be maintained until it is closed in about five years. After it is closed, the site will become a waste transfer station.

North Shearwater—Mixed Development Precinct

Due to its proximity to Myall Quays and the ability to extend access and services from Myall Quays, this precinct has potential to accommodate tourist and urban development. Tourist development could also be appropriate closer to the Myall River. The North Shearwater precinct has an area of about 120 ha. Council estimates that up to 300 urban lots could be developed, with the remaining land used for tourist-oriented development.

A fauna movement corridor will need to be provided along the Myall River. This will provide a link between the high habitat area at Myall Quays to the south and the undisturbed vegetated land to the north of the North Shearwater precinct.

Myall Way—Investigation Precinct

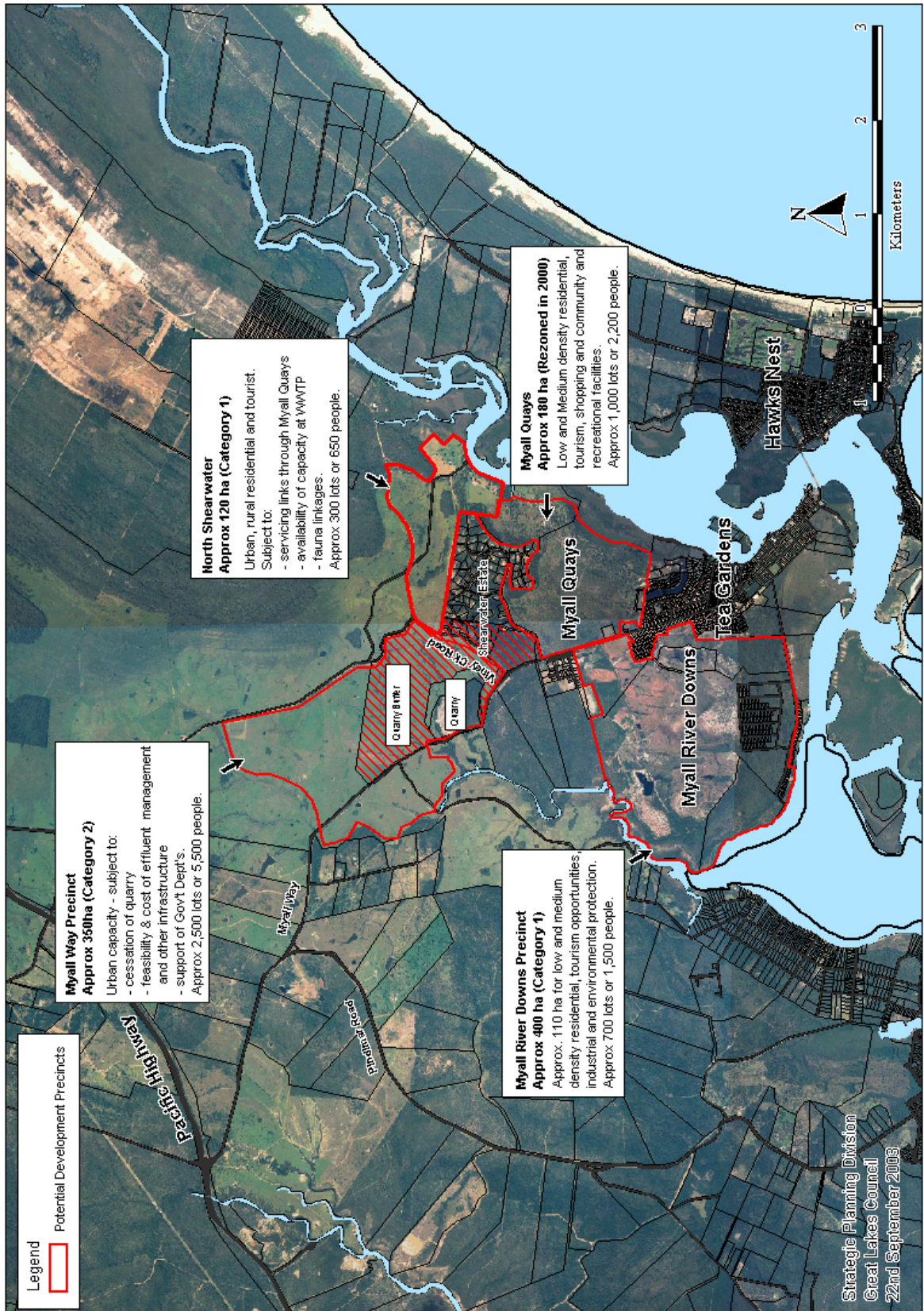
Land adjoining Myall Way, north and west of the existing quarry, has few capability constraints and is held by a small number of owners. The Myall Way precinct is about 300 ha and could accommodate about 2,400 urban lots.

The major limitation to development of this precinct is the availability of effluent disposal capacity at the Hawks Nest WWTP. Until it is known how much effluent management capacity would be available to development outside of the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest basin, this Strategy will show the Myall Way area as an investigation precinct. Identification of this precinct indicates that if any intensification of development is proposed in this area, it should be for urban uses. Three additional matters will need to be addressed if there is a commitment to develop this precinct:

- Urban design and community-building.
- Transport and accessibility.
- Visual impacts, particularly with regard to maintenance of the scenic quality along the Myall Way road corridor.



Figure 3 Precincts



Precinct Categories

The precincts have been divided into categories that reflect the degree of certainty of development occurring in them. In Category 1 precincts:

- There is a relatively high degree of certainty that development can occur in most of the precinct due to a lack of capability or suitability constraints.
- NSW Government departments will generally support development in these areas.
- The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources will delegate authority to Council to rezone land in the precincts in accordance with this Strategy.

In Category 2 precincts, there is a lower degree of certainty of development occurring than in Category 1 precincts. Category 2 precincts will require additional investigations to show that they can be serviced effectively. These precincts will require innovative solutions to ensure the environmental features within and adjoining these areas are not compromised. The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources is unlikely to delegate authority to Council to rezone land in these precincts. However, they will have support in principle subject to the findings of additional investigations.

The Myall River Downs and North Shearwater precincts are in Category 1. The Myall Way precinct is in Category 2.

North Hawks Nest

Council has resolved that future development at North Hawks Nest is limited to an area of about 50 ha (excluding bushfire buffers) east of Mungo Brush. Development could occur only if all landowners work cooperatively to achieve a conservation and development plan and if they can obtain the Minister's endorsement for a master plan required under *State Environmental Planning Policy No 71*.

In the interim period, Council has also resolved to rezone the entire North Hawks Nest study area to environmental protection and to only allow one dwelling per property. For these reasons, North Hawks Nest is unlikely to add to the land supply in the study area and is not shown as a development precinct.

Growth

Based on the lot supply, Council has prepared population estimates, for winter and peak periods, using development/building approval data. The winter population represents the permanent population in August; the peak population represents the holiday population during December and January.

Low, medium and high estimates of population between 2001 and 2031 are shown in Table 1. The population increases significantly during the Christmas and Easter holidays. Low, medium and high growth rates of peak population between 2001 and 2031 are shown in Table 2.

Table 1 Anticipated Permanent (Winter) Population

Location	Dev Trend	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Tea Gardens	Low	1,372	1,973	2,551	3,085	3,920	4,509	5,454
	Medium	1,372	2,137	2,862	3,598	4,649	5,413	6,606
	High	1,372	2,293	3,207	4,111	5,379	6,317	7,759
Hawks Nest	Low	1,173	1,225	1,237	1,416	1,578	1,783	1,997
	Medium	1,173	1,229	1,254	1,416	1,578	1,783	1,997
	High	1,173	1,237	1,254	1,416	1,578	1,783	1,997
Total	Low	2,545	3,198	3,789	4,500	5,498	6,292	7,451
	Medium	2,545	3,366	4,116	5,013	6,228	7,196	8,603
	High	2,545	3,530	4,461	5,526	6,957	8,100	9,756

Table 2 Anticipated Peak (Holiday) Population

Location	Dev Trend	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Tea Gardens	Low	1,757	2,500	3,232	3,907	4,655	5,355	6,095
	Medium	1,757	2,707	3,625	4,557	5,521	6,428	7,384
	High	1,757	2,904	4,062	5,207	6,388	7,502	8,672
Hawks Nest	Low	2,806	2,909	2,939	2,989	2,998	3,080	3,162
	Medium	2,806	2,919	2,979	2,989	2,998	3,080	3,162
	High	2,806	2,939	2,979	2,989	2,998	3,080	3,162
Total	Low	4,564	5,408	6,170	6,896	7,653	8,435	9,258
	Medium	4,564	5,626	6,603	7,546	8,520	9,508	10,546
	High	4,564	5,843	7,040	8,196	9,386	10,582	11,834

Guiding Principles

Buffers

Coastal wetlands, waterways and creeks are environmentally sensitive areas. They are susceptible to a range of pollution impacts that affect water quality, vegetation, fauna movement and drainage. Visually important land is also sensitive to development and changes to landform.

Council will adopt the following responses in determining suitable buffers to wetlands, waterways and creeks, and management of visually important areas:

- Coastal wetlands - 50 to 100 m buffer, depending on condition of the wetland and effectiveness of other protection measures.
- Waterways and creeks - minimum 25 m buffer to riparian zone.
- Visually important areas - variable buffers to Myall Way and along the Port Stephens foreshore to preserve scenic character and public access to foreshores.

Urban Development

Compact Neighbourhoods

Council will negotiate with developers to achieve higher minimum average density targets in new developments. Council will also require that development density is distinctly varied and that neighbourhoods in development precincts are separated by open space or other natural elements to avoid monotonous uniformity and provide discernible edges to neighbourhoods. Higher density development should be located near activity centres such as shops or transport nodes and interchanges.

Height Limits

Council will review its policies for controlling height and bulk. It will consider whether existing controls are adequate or whether more stringent controls are needed.

Mixed-Use Development

Council will encourage developers to provide mixed-use developments where residential accommodation is provided with appropriate-scale business or tourist development. Council will also encourage developers to provide neighbourhood shops that are conveniently located so that they can be accessed on bicycle or by walking from residential neighbourhoods.

Design Qualities

Council will encourage developers to implement designs that strengthen the links between the businesses, and public use and access:

- Restaurants, cafes and other similar businesses should adopt designs that work with adjacent public land and promote outside activity and interest.
- Façade and wall treatments should encourage adjacent public activity and long walls with little relief or variation in alignment must be avoided.
- Developers should include public spaces in their designs that become activity centres, with businesses surrounding the public space, so that public use and social interactions are maximised and become community focus points.
- Developers should adopt design principles that build on existing views, provide landscaping and shade, and relegate car parking to places other than main street frontages.

Consolidation

There is likely to be little benefit gained from promoting increased residential densities in existing neighbourhoods. Most lots are too small to accommodate further subdivision without adversely changing neighbourhood character. Consolidation would also place additional pressure on habitat in Hawks Nest which would further harm the endangered Koala population in Hawks Nest.

Employment

Council will support employment, such as tourism, ecotourism, commercial businesses and industry by ensuring that its strategic planning and development control policies and plans do not discourage employment-generating developments.

Tourism

Tourist and ecotourist developments are suited to locations with high scenic amenity and environmental qualities, provided that they do not compromise them. Council will support development proposals that provide a range of tourist or ecotourist accommodation where permanent occupation would be likely to degrade environmental qualities in the long term.

Open space

Council will require developers to separate residential neighbourhoods by sensitive use of linear parks, open space or other natural features. Separation will contain sprawl and reduce the perception of uniformity and monotony.

Water Quality Maintenance

Council will require developers to implement best-practice water quality maintenance controls in new subdivisions. As a policy position, Council will require that pre-development water quality is maintained or enhanced in post-development runoff.



Implementation

Myall River Downs

Guiding principles for Myall River Downs are shown in Figure 4. They are based on interim findings from the environmental study. In particular, high conservation value habitat that fringes the south and west boundaries of the precinct are sensitive to indirect impacts from development. Recent investigations have culminated habitat for the Squirrel Glider being protected. These and other areas that are considered to have high habitat value will be zoned for environmental protection. In areas that are not constrained, Council will encourage higher residential densities than are now found in other parts of Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest to minimise ecological impacts and increase economic development efficiencies. It may also be appropriate to allow low density residential or tourist development as a buffer between land with conservation value and residential development.

A public landfill is located to the north of Myall River Downs and will be converted to a waste transfer station by 2008. A 600 m buffer surrounding the landfill will apply while it is in operation. A buffer will also apply to the waste transfer station but Council will determine its limits at the time that the landfill is closed. The release of land at Myall River Downs will have to be staged so that no development occurs in the landfill or waste transfer station buffer.

The waste transfer station buffer would reduce residential development yield at Myall River Downs. However, it may be possible to relocate the waste transfer station to another suitable site that is acceptable to Council provided it does not involve additional costs to Council.

The proposed industrial area in Myall River Downs requires further investigation of suitable industrial and/or bulky goods retailing developments to ensure that amenity is maintained in nearby residential areas.

North Shearwater

Guiding principles for the North Shearwater will be based on managing changes to ecological and scenic qualities, protecting the wildlife corridor between Shearwater and the Myall River, providing acceptable access to Viney Creek Road, and responding to varied landforms. Council will also determine appropriate lot sizes and housing densities. Smaller lots will be permitted at North Shearwater where they can be connected to reticulated sewer. Figure 5 shows guiding principles for this precinct.

Council will only consider rezoning land in this precinct if it is satisfied that there is sufficient demand to justify its release.

Myall Way

In the event that there is whole of government support for this precinct, more detailed master planning will need to be undertaken to establish guiding principles for the development of this area. Important matters that will need to be resolved include, but are not limited to:

- Urban design and community or place-building.
- Transport and accessibility.
- Visual impacts, particularly with regard to the maintenance of the scenic qualities along the Myall Way road corridor.
- Publicly-provided services and facilities.

This area will primarily accommodate permanent residents. Tourists are more likely to be attracted to Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest because it is closer to tourist beaches and the Myall River.

Figure 4 Guiding Principles for Myall River Downs

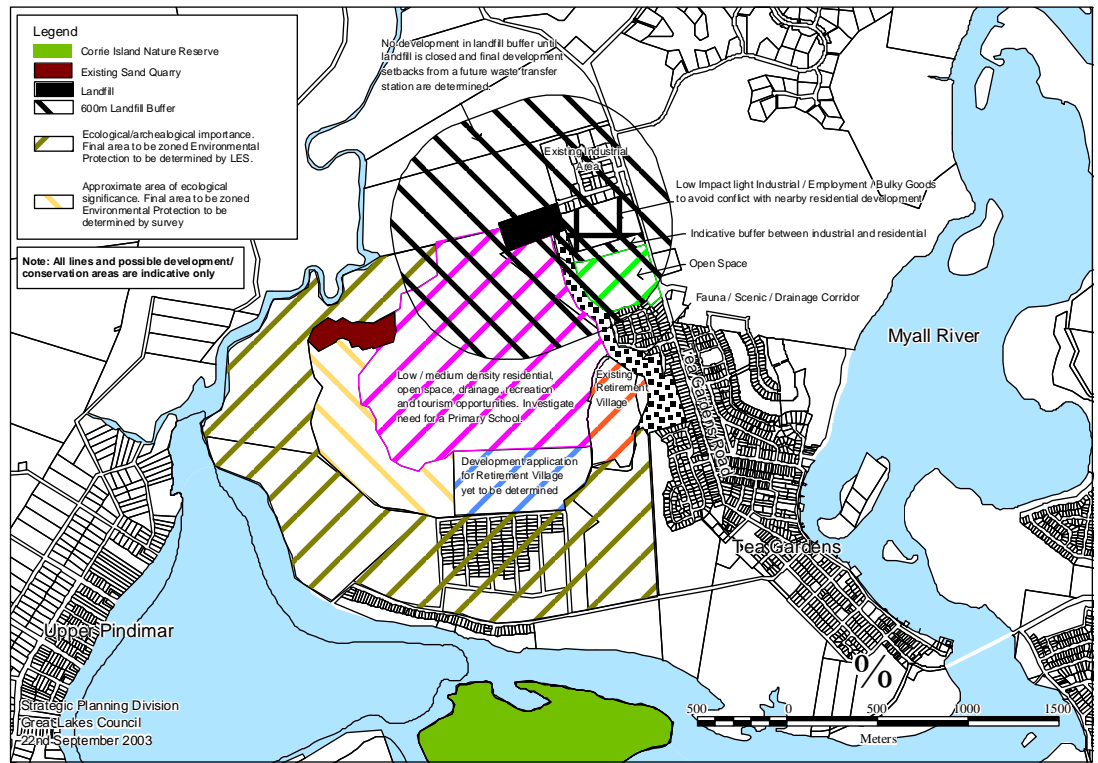
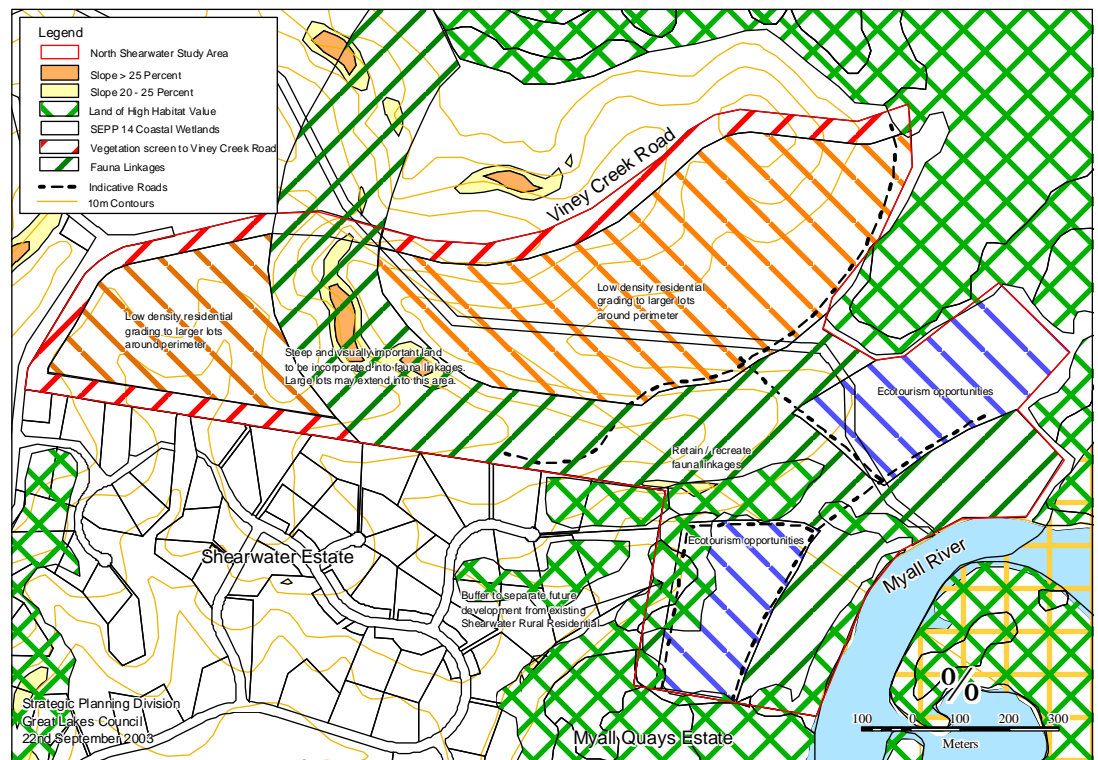


Figure 5 Guiding Principles for North Shearwater



Conservation

This Strategy identifies areas that have important natural features. These features include land with high habitat value, fauna movement corridors, wetlands, drinking water aquifers and riparian corridors. There are other areas that should be conserved because of their scenic qualities or importance for maintenance of water quality. The conservation framework in this Strategy outlines how Council will conserve and protect these features.



Conservation Model

The conservation model that Council has adopted would:

1. Add biodiversity principles and definitions to the LEP.
2. Amend existing environmental protection zones (in terms of objectives and what is permissible) in the LEP (Council has commenced this process by broadening the scope of the 7(a) zone so that it applies to more than just wetlands and littoral rainforests).
3. Identify ecological/landscape settings to show important natural features that occur in different areas.
4. Add biodiversity conservation incentive provisions, including development bonuses (linked to financial program, such as NSW Nature Conservation Trust acquisition).
5. Add provisions to manage riparian areas.



Biodiversity

Council proposes to expand the preliminary and policy sections of the LEP. It would:

- Revise the aims and objectives to of the LEP to reinforce the importance of integrating land, vegetation management and water issues to achieve ecologically sustainable development and maintain the character and environmental values of the locality.
- Identify principles for land and water management and biodiversity conservation.
- Identify the national and regional planning context.

Environmental Protection

A revised conservation hierarchy that distinguishes between *protection* and *conservation* will assist considerably with the establishment of a natural resource management framework. *Protection* is the more restrictive term and would be applied to areas where knowledge is highly developed and where assessments recommend that development potential be restricted or prohibited. *Conservation* is less restrictive and would enable greater development opportunities.

In the first step, Council will amend the LEP is to create a new primary 7(a) Environmental Protection zone to replace the current 7(a) zone. This new zone can be applied progressively to land as studies show that the land is of high environmental value and land uses should be restricted.

Ecological Settings

Ecological/landscape settings will identify features of the land that are important to manage. They would:

- Augment zones by identifying natural features of importance.
- Identify areas where ecological/environmental issues are likely to arise and must be considered in the development application process. At some stage, Council may use settings to determine whether certain activities, such as clearing, construction of dams and alteration of drainage regimes, require consent.
- Identify areas of caution for development and rezoning.
- Identify development application requirements and assessment procedures more specifically.
- Describe more accurately the natural values of the land.

Land use zones reflect broad land use strategy and identify development purpose and potential (especially the provision of infrastructure). Zones are marked on a map. Ecological settings reflect desired ecological functioning and values. They may, in the future, operate as development constraints because additional actions require consent. The consideration of development applications in different settings will vary.

Ecological/landscape settings will be mapped and overlay the LEP's land use zones.

The Strategy

Spatial Strategy

The Myall River Downs and North Shearwater development precincts, the Myall Way investigation precinct, and land in existing residential zones in Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest, are the places where development can occur under this Strategy. Council expects that these precincts are likely to form the limits of development in the long term. Consequently, land in the three precincts should be considered a finite and scarce resource that must be effectively used. Council must encourage development that not only meets current market aspirations, but that will also meet the future needs of the community.

Development at North Hawks Nest will be limited to an area east of Mungo Brush Road if two conditions can be met:

- Landowners cooperatively identify and agree to appropriate conservation and development outcomes.
- Landowners prepare a master plan under *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 71* that is endorsed by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

Land that is not included in a precinct is burdened by one or more capability constraints or is unsuitable. As long as land that has few or no constraints to development is available in the three precincts, remaining areas should not be considered for development.

Council will not support rezoning areas outside of the three precincts to allow land uses that would compromise environmental features, including urban-scale development, small lot rural residential development connected to reticulated sewer, or other uses that may have significant impacts or create an uneconomic demand for public facilities and services.

Conservation Model

Council will implement the conservation model and liaise with public authorities and interested parties while preparing it.

Development Assessment

In considering development applications within the study area of this Strategy, Council will ensure that development impacts and outcomes are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Strategy, and with its guiding principles. Council will also use the conservation framework of this Strategy when considering threatened species impact assessments for development in the study area.

Timing

In principle, Council will support rezoning and development of all land in the Myall River Downs and North Shearwater precincts provided the landowners are prepared to fund the necessary studies, master plans and infrastructure. However, Council will not support any rezoning until it has accepted the findings of relevant environmental studies.

Myall River Downs

After the environmental study is finalised, Council will consider its recommendations and ensure that it is consistent with this Strategy. Council will require the developer to prepare master plan that includes a development release strategy. The master plan must show how development will satisfy the objectives of this Strategy and avoid oversupply.

Provisions will be included, either in the master plan or the amending LEP, that restrict development in each stage until the developer has satisfied Council that the environmental performance and design outcomes of preceding stages are satisfactory. Staging must ensure that no development occurs in the landfill buffer while the landfill is still in operation. The buffer to the waste transfer station will be determined at the time that the landfill is closed.

North Shearwater

Council will support with rezoning studies for the North Shearwater precinct only when it is satisfied that there is sufficient demand for lots in this area.

Myall Way

Development in the Myall Way precinct is more complicated due to infrastructure and land use issues that must be resolved. Council is prepared to consider this area at any stage provided that relevant government stakeholders support its development and the community is not burdened by the costs of providing infrastructure to and within the precinct. The developers of the precinct will need to prepare master plans and development control plans to provide detail on proposed development outcomes.

Implementation

This Strategy contemplates growth in population from about 2,500 in 2001 to about 8,600 by 2031 (provided that the Myall Way precinct proceeds). To accommodate growth of this magnitude, existing public services and facilities will need to be extended, and other facilities not presently established may need to be provided. If Council is to successfully implement this Strategy's recommendations, it will need to undertake further actions. Council will prepare the following studies as funding and resources become available.

Action	Summary	Priority
Retail Study	A study to examine retail trading in the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest study area and the rationalisation of retail land use controls.	High
Industrial Study	A study to assess the role of Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest in providing regional industry, the future demand for industrial development and if additional land is required, the areas where such development could be located.	Medium
Open Space Needs Study	A study to provide open space that meets the needs of a range of age groups.	High
Employment Study	Council will investigate means to encourage employment creation in the study area as a means to diversify the local economy and support a wider range of age groups.	Medium
Water Transport Study	A study on the costs and feasibility of providing a public wharf to accommodate a large passenger ferry service between the study area, Port Stephens and Newcastle.	Low
Health Care	Council will liaise with public authorities which have responsibility for providing a range of community and health care facilities to encourage their establishment in Tea Gardens or Hawks Nest.	High
Public Safety	Council will maintain liaison with the NSW Police Service and the NSW Ambulance Service to advocate the provision or extension of these services as the population grows.	Medium
Education	Council will encourage the Department of Education and Training to investigate the need for additional educational facilities to accommodate the increase in population.	High
Health Services	Council will encourage the Department of Health to investigate the need to provide additional services, or expand existing services, to accommodate the increase in population, and in particular age groups over 60.	High
Housing	Develop urban design and housing needs strategies for the identified urban development precincts and for the residential and shopping area of Tea gardens in the vicinity of the Myall River foreshore.	Medium

Action	Summary	Priority
Infrastructure	Council will coordinate with MidCoast Water the timing of development that creates a need for reticulated sewer and water services.	High
	Council will provide an onsite effluent disposal exclusion buffer with a radius of 1,000 m from the bore fields north of Tea Gardens, which will not affect current activities.	Medium
	Council will also establish land use controls to limit uses to those that are compatible with maintaining surface water and groundwater quality within the groundwater recharge area.	Medium
	Council will maintain an existing 400 m exclusion buffer around the Hawks Nest waste water treatment plant, and a 100 m buffer to limit groundwater use near the plant.	Low
	Council will liaise with Country Energy and Telstra on the timing of development that creates a need for reticulated electricity and telephone services.	Medium
	Develop/revise strategies for the provision of Council provided services and facilities, including community facilities, open space, roads and cycleways.	High
	Council will pursue funding including grants, general funds and s94 contributions for the provision of facilities identified in the strategies above.	High
Fauna Corridors	Council will identify fauna corridors that need to be provided/rehabilitated within, to and from the study area.	High Medium
	Conservation	Council will implement the conservation model. Council will liaise with public authorities and interested parties in preparing the conservation model.
Environmental monitoring	Development a set of parameters, protocols, and procedures for the monitoring of the impact of development upon the health of the environment	High
	Council will ensure that development impacts and outcomes are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Strategy, and with its guiding principles.	High
Myall River Downs precinct	Finalise the draft Local Environmental Study and prepare a draft Local Environmental Plan and master plan for the part of the site suitable for urban development.	High

Action	Summary	Priority
North Shearwater precinct	Commence more detailed studies for this area when the landowners indicate their willingness to provide the necessary funds for investigations and when Council is satisfied that there is demand for the release of land in this area.	Medium
Myall Way precinct	Council will commence discussions with the landowners and Government Departments on the future of this area and, if appropriate, develop a work program for the studies and investigations discussed in this strategy.	Low