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Kiama Growth and Housing Strategy

Leading Growth for Good

Draft for exhibition - July 2024



Draft Growth and Housing Strategy **Public Exhibition Engagement Report**

October 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Kiama Municipal Council acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people on Dharawal country as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Municipality is located. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our community.

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Introduction

Kiama Council is committed to developing a culture of meaningful community and stakeholder engagement to achieve better and more sustainable outcomes for the Kiama Council area.

The Draft Growth and Housing Strategy (Draft Strategy) is being prepared based on these principles and aims to hear from a wide range of community members and stakeholders.

The Draft Strategy is a framework for how we can best accommodate growth and ensure sustainable and responsive delivery of housing for our community over the next 20 years.

On 19 March 2024 Council endorsed the Growth and Housing Strategy Engagement Schedule, and throughout April, May and June 2024, a range of community and stakeholder engagement activities were carried out to gather feedback to inform the Strategy. The community and stakeholder engagement feedback were summarised into an Engagement Report which was reported to Council on 18 June 2024. A copy is available on Council's website.

The Draft Strategy was prepared based on community and stakeholder input, as well as studies and an evidence base. The Draft Strategy was endorsed for public exhibition at the Ordinary Council meeting on 16 July 2024.

The Draft Strategy was placed on public exhibition between 19 July and 16 August 2024. This Engagement Report presents a summary of the community and stakeholder feedback received during the public exhibition of the draft strategy.

Our engagement with community and stakeholders on the Draft Growth and Housing Strategy will continue through the further development and finalisation of the strategy. We will continue to gather feedback and actively engage with community members and other stakeholders to ensure that the Growth and Housing Strategy is an accurate reflection of our community and stakeholders.

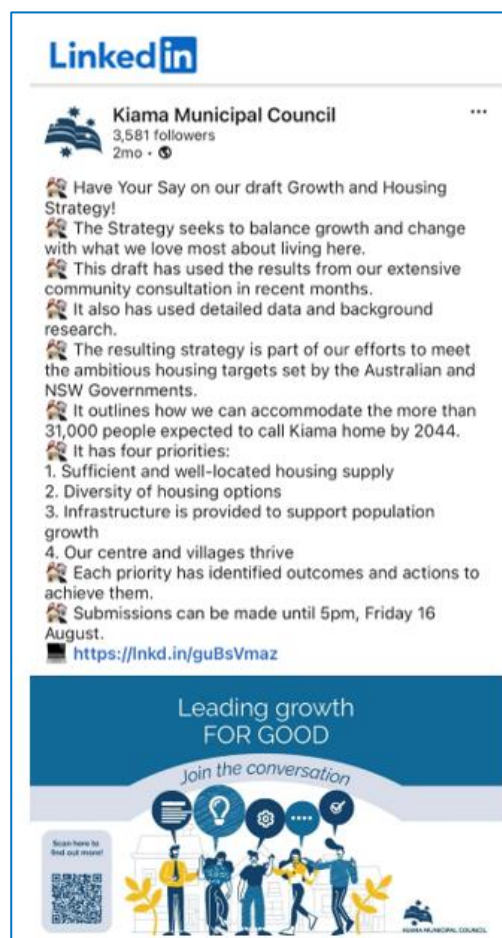
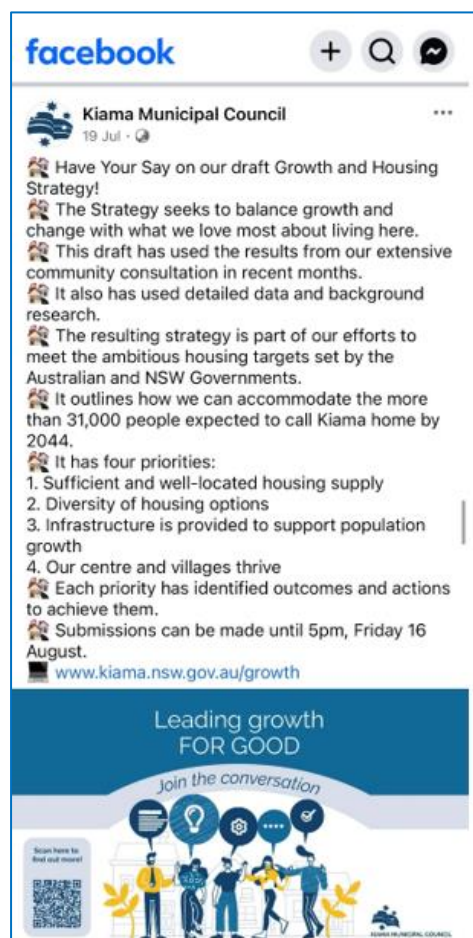


What we did

Public Exhibition of Draft Strategy

The Draft Growth and Housing Strategy was on public exhibition for 28 days between 19 July and 16 August 2024. The exhibition included:

- ✓ The Draft Strategy and supporting information were placed on the Your Say page of the Kiama Council website.
- ✓ The Landowner / Developer Expression of Interest was re-opened.
- ✓ Notifications were placed on Council's social media including Facebook and Linked in.
- ✓ A targeted notification email was sent to all stakeholders who had participated in previous engagement activities, or who had registered their interest in the development of the strategy.
- ✓ Formal notification inviting comments was sent to relevant state government agencies.
- ✓ A media release was issued to the public on 19 July 2024.
- ✓ Staff attended community pop ups in Kiama and Jamberoo.
- ✓ Staff visited Kiama High School for additional youth engagement.
- ✓ Staff responded to customer enquiries via phone and email.



What we heard – summary

There was significant community and stakeholder feedback received during the exhibition period, which has been broken down into the following groups for the purpose of presenting the information in this report:

- Written submissions from individuals and organisations – 125 received.
- Written submission from individuals (form submission) – received 235 times.
- Written submissions from state government agencies – nine received.
- Landowner / Developer Expression of Interests – six additional received.
- Community Pop Ups and High School visit – direct and indirect feedback.

A summary of key feedback included:

“It's not quite as straightforward as saying I support or object to the growth & housing strategy - I support parts, and I object to parts.”

“The community unanimously supports brownfields sites such as the redevelopment of the Bombo Quarry.”

“I am concerned about the lack of essential infrastructure, such as water and sewage systems, and increased traffic congestion.”

“The proposed growth levels are too high and do not align with the community's values.”

“Kiama should seek special status due to its environmental, agricultural, scenic, and tourism assets.”

“I strongly oppose development on agricultural land, which is vital for feeding livestock, which in turn feeds the community.”

“I support infill development in the town centres, as long as there is infrastructure to support it and that it provides housing for older, single and younger people.”

“The overall message is a call for more cautious, well-planned development that considers the unique characteristics and infrastructure limitations of Kiama.”

What we heard - detail

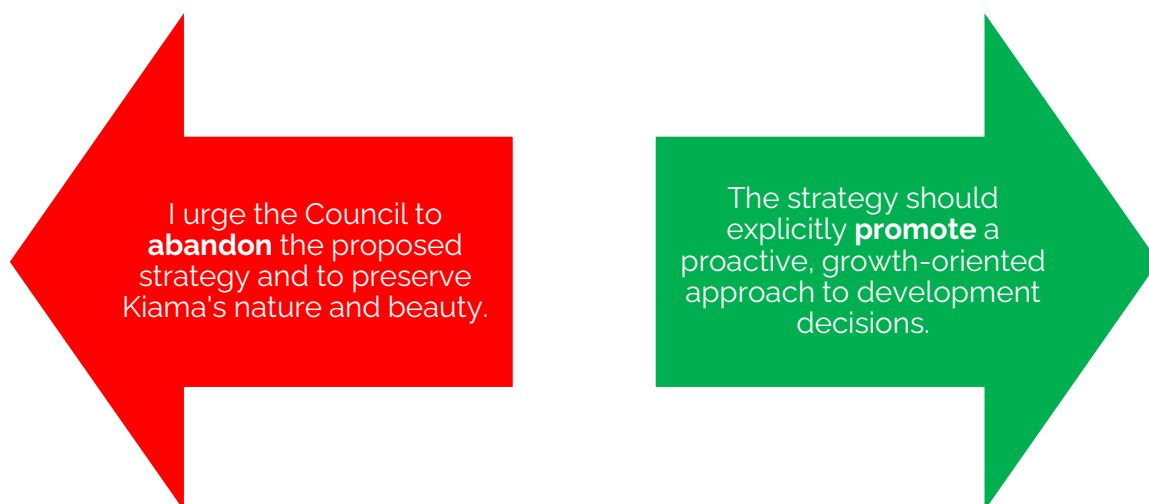
Written Submissions – Individual and Groups

During public exhibition 125 written submissions were received from individuals, groups and organisations. The submission content has been reviewed and considered in full, and a summary of the themes raised is provided below.

Overall feedback

Overall, there was support for the development of a Growth and Housing Strategy to guide development in the Kiama LGA over the next 20 years. There were, however, concerns that the Draft Strategy does not adequately protect environmental and agricultural land or address the impact on infrastructure of the planned additional housing. Many submissions noted that the Draft Strategy could be improved and strengthened in these areas.

The challenge of balancing growth with protecting the natural areas was acknowledged, with feedback on both ends of the scale, and in between.



Greenfield development

The current proposed development areas target virtually all greenfield areas near Kiama's CBD for development, which is considered excessive and unnecessary. Any growth on Kiama's western boundary must be comprehensively master planned by Council (with state agencies and community representatives) to avoid fragmented, developer-led planning outcomes.

The State Governments housing targets set for the Kiama LGA are considered excessive and an exemption should be sought based on the environmental, agricultural, scenic, and tourism assets of Kiama.

Many community members are concerned about the scale of the proposed developments.

There is also concern around the timing for delivery of greenfield developments, given that development in South Kiama is already planned. It is suggested that we should wait to see how the town copes with this development before proceeding with others, and first focussing on improving the town's infrastructure.

Infill development

The existing planning controls within the existing urban footprint should be reviewed to increase density in areas with existing infrastructure. This review should consider offering floor space ratio (FSR) and height bonuses for lot amalgamation to encourage redevelopment.

Infill development needs to be balanced with increased pressure on existing services and infrastructure. There is concern that existing infrastructure cannot support increased density.

High density is unnecessary in Kiama and only low and medium density should be permitted.

Consider easing regulations so that landowners can add more diverse lower-cost housing such as granny flats and tiny homes.

I am all for infill development and an increase to housing density, especially in the town centre.

Increased housing density in the Kiama and Gerringong Town Centres is supported, provided it results in affordable housing for single-person households, older people, and young people, rather than being used for tourist accommodations or holiday homes.

The Height of Building control for E1 zoned land should be reviewed, as the proposed low and mid-rise housing policy reform will result in adjoining R3 land having a higher height limit, thereby making the E1 sites less flexible and unlikely to maximise the Floor Space Ratio.

Reducing the minimum lot size or permitting additional dwellings for rural land could increase dwelling supply without changing the areas character or requiring additional infrastructure.

The NSW Government Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles could be adopted to encourage higher density around Kiama and/or Gerringong train stations.

Urban Sprawl

Many submissions oppose the rezoning of additional greenfield sites including Kiama West, the Riversdale Road Investigation Precinct and the Dido Street Precinct for residential development. It was argued that the existing plans, such as the 2020 Kiama Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) already provide sufficient areas for growth over the next 20 years. Rezoning additional lands would unnecessarily destroy valuable agricultural land, harm the environment, and compromise Kiama's unique character.

Key concerns include:

- Preservation of natural landscapes, rural heritage, and agricultural lands.
- Avoiding overdevelopment, urban sprawl, and infrastructure strain.
- Protecting environmentally sensitive areas like the Spring Creek Wetlands.
- Ensuring a buffer between rural land use and urban development,

These submissions support the development of Bombo Quarry as a self-contained suburb, noting it as an appropriate housing solution that doesn't require expanding Kiama's boundaries.

Some submissions reject the notion that the Riversdale and Dido precincts should be included in development plans just because they adjoin Bombo Quarry.

The scenic and ecological qualities that make Kiama unique should be preserved. A sea of residential developments from Greyleigh to Bombo would detract from the area's appeal.

Population and Dwelling projections

It is alarming that the growth rate for Kiama (1.6%) is so high, especially compared with neighbouring LGAs that have large land release sites and more potential for high rise buildings

The population projections are based on REMPLAN (2023) data which is not current publicly available, and it is therefore hard to understand the assumptions.

The population and dwelling projections (RMEPLAN, 2023) do not align with the NSW Governments targets of 900 dwellings by 2029. The Strategy should be clear on how this target can or will be met, and if it can't be met Council should advise the NSW Government.

Infrastructure

There are no legislative guarantees for supporting infrastructure to be provided with new developments.

Sewer capacity is a significant issue, and the Council should collaborate with Sydney Water to address this, particularly at Bombo Sewerage Treatment Plant. Inadequate sewer capacity should stop new greenfield development to avoid limiting infill development in Kiama.

The current state of Kiama's infrastructure, particularly in the CBD, is already struggling on weekends and public holidays. There are issues with roads, parking, water, power, and sewerage that need to be addressed before further development proceeds. This is vital to ensure there are no negative impacts on tourism, visitors or the quality of life for residents.

New developments should also uplift infrastructure for existing residents to avoid disparities in service quality at urban-rural boundaries, ensuring infrastructure equity and community support.

Council should create an integrated infrastructure delivery plan, supported by regional and local developer contributions, to ensure that infrastructure benefits the entire community and avoids fragmented, self-servicing facilities.

All future developments should include a "infrastructure check list" so that its clear which infrastructure needs to be upgraded, the scope of works and the funding needed. This may include utilities, water and sewer, transport and parking, flood mitigation as well as social infrastructure such as medical services, aged care, education facilities and libraries.

The Strategy could provide more clarity on how infrastructure can or will be funded through local development contributions, and how the NSW Government can increase its role in investing in infrastructure to support growth in Kiama.

Having clear and interrelated strategies for both housing and infrastructure is a good strategic planning approach.

Housing targets should not be aspired to without careful understanding of essential supporting infrastructure such as water, sewerage, schools and open spaces.

Employment Lands

Employment lands are needed to support planned additional residential development, however careful consideration in relation to the quantity and location to ensure the established commercial and tourist character of the Kiama Town Centre is not undermined.

Opportunities for light industrial may be difficult due to steep grades and flooding constraints.

The urban form of any community must include adequate lands where people, residents and business owners can locate businesses or enterprises. Without the inclusion of business and employment lands the urban form is not complete.

The forecast population means we need to start planning for more business, commercial, retail and employment lands now, so that Kiama remains a viable place to live and work in the future.

The creation of communities needs to be about generating spaces and places where community cannot just live but can also work and play. The strategy omits this detail.

Protect the natural environment, waterways and wildlife

Council is urged to preserve the area's natural beauty, protect endangered species and heritage sites, and listen to the community and tourists who value Kiama's unique landscape. Expanding the western boundary for more housing would be a "travesty" and is unnecessary given the existing developments already approved.

The green agricultural lands of Kiama should be retained to maintain the beauty and character of Kiama and protect a diverse range of fauna and flora species that live in these environments.

The Jerrara Dam Reserve is a crucial biodiversity area and should be protected in the Strategy.

The proposed growth levels are too high and do not align with the community values. The area's unique green hills meeting the sea makes Kiama unique. While growth is acceptable, it should be moderate, and community supported. They suggest focusing development on areas like Bombo Quarry and Bombo Headland, while preserving the Riversdale Precinct and West Kiama as rural land. The submission emphasises the ecological and aesthetic value of the land, highlighting its unique volcanic geology, rich soils, and biodiversity.

Protect agricultural land

The proposed developments on agricultural land in Kiama are strongly opposed, as the land is vital for feeding livestock, which in turn feeds the community. The submission emphasises the fertility of the land and the presence of heritage dry stone walls, which developers may not preserve.

Kiama's well-watered volcanic soils are among the most fertile in the country. Jamberoo once had the highest milk production and Gerringong the highest butterfat content per hectare in the State. We need to protect the high-quality soils of Kiama, Jamberoo and Gerringong as a resource for future food production will become even more important with climate change.

Housing growth and protection of agricultural land should be considered in conjunction. There is concern that rezoning agricultural lands becomes inevitable once identified in a strategy.

Kiama's unique environmental values

Kiama's environment is defined by its volcanic geology, topography, soils and high rainfall. These attributes create dramatic scenic landscapes, rich agricultural soils, productive farmlands and scientifically important biodiversity. Its biological values include subtropical rainforest, endangered ecological communities, freshwater wetlands, vegetation harbouring endangered plant species. This should be factored into any growth targets for Kiama.

The scenic values of Saddleback Mountain, the ridges and valleys are regionally significant, and the proposed urban expansions will impact these views.

The Spring Creek Wetland is home to several threatened species including frogs and birds. The sustainability of the Spring Creek freshwater and saline wetlands is susceptible to sedimentation and sewerage contamination from urban expansion in its catchment.

Heritage value

The heritage and character values are at serious risk from the over development proposed.

There are over 360 dry stone walls, constructed between 1860 and 1940 across Jamberoo, Foxground and Kiama. They have been described as 'rare rural landscape features of the region with historic, aesthetic, and scientific value based on their regional significance'.

Heritage receives only a brief mention in the document (p.37). Maintaining the heritage feel of our towns, as well as preserving listed heritage items is vital. We also have a number of heritage conservation areas, and we need a statement from Council that these will be protected, and unsuitable higher density not allowed in them.

Sustainable development

Developers should be encouraged to construct both sustainable and energy efficient housing. This may include alternative energy sources such as solar power and community batteries.

Any urban development should incorporate biodiversity conservation and revegetation in its designed, potentially using Planning Agreements to negotiate and secure this outcome.

The use of the word 'sustainable' should be clarified. How will the impact of supporting significant population growth have on the climate change threat be managed.

Ageing population

The Council's efforts in planning for Kiama's future growth are appreciated, but the strategy requires further attention to the needs of our rapidly ageing population. With over 42% of residents aged 55 and over, the strategy must prioritise housing diversity, accessible transport, cultural engagement, and healthcare services to ensure a vibrant, inclusive community.

Housing options should include downsizing opportunities and ageing-in-place modifications, while transport plans need to enhance public transport accessibility and pedestrian infrastructure. Culturally, the strategy should support community programmes that reduce social isolation among older adults. Additionally, expanded healthcare facilities and home care services are essential to meet the growing demand.

Housing Affordability (ie the cost to buy or rent a dwelling)

The efforts to increase housing supply are welcomed, but it is argued that more needs to be done given the severe housing crisis in the area, which has the most unaffordable housing in regional NSW. As a first-time homebuyer, the impact of rising property prices is driven by holiday homes listed on Airbnb, making it difficult for locals to afford housing. It is suggested that short-term rentals should face higher rates to discourage listings and call for more diverse housing options, particularly affordable apartments.

The planning system could be used to improve the diversity of housing tenure and price point.

There is a need for more affordable housing not just for young people and keyworkers, but for all cohorts including working families, divorcees and retirees. The Strategy could be strengthened by identifying how we deal with these affordability issues.

A measure for housing affordability may be 'are any rentals affordable to the lowest 40% income cohort?' which is where key workers including hospitality workers may sit.

It is noted that increasing housing supply does not itself address housing affordability.

Affordable Housing (ie rental housing provided by a Community Housing Provider to low- and middle-income earners)

Affordable housing should be encouraged in all new development sites, with 5% and 25% targets mentioned.

The Strategy could provide more clarity on the current affordable housing dwellings in Kiama.

Consider the use of inclusionary zoning to deliver affordable housing.

Despite higher than average income levels and homeownership rates compared to other regions in the State, there remains a significant demand for affordable housing within the LGA. The Strategy should articulate how and where the growth will occur to meet the needs for Social and Affordable rental housing with detailed plans set out to achieve targets.

The delivery of more affordable housing therefore needs to be a core focus of the draft Strategy to ensure that growth in Kiama supports broader social and economic objectives and meets the needs of a broad range of households. This can be done by establishing clear targets, working collaboratively with Community Housing Providers and other organisations, improving access to low or no cost land, establishing an affordable housing contributions scheme, supporting feasibility through planning controls and discounting fees and charges.

Tourism

The Kiama LGA is a popular tourist destination, recently awarded Australia's Best Town (2023) and NSW Tourist Town of the Year (2024). The widespread acknowledgement of the beauty of Kiama, its village atmosphere and rolling green hills is fundamental to its tourism value.

The reliance on tourism should stop. the increased use of STRA for tourist accommodation (instead of motels) is significantly impacting on rental housing and housing prices.

Short term rental accommodation (STRA)

The impact of the increasing use of housing for short term rental accommodation was noted throughout submissions, and that this is having a significant impact on rental housing availability and housing prices. It was suggested that this should be restricted to favour long term rentals.

The Strategy should provide more details on STRA and should also propose solutions on how this can be limited, so that any new houses built are lived in by residents of Kiama.

Council should put planning controls in place to limit the number and frequency of STRA.

Implementation

Council is encouraged to work with Industry groups on additional Developers Forum which would include Council, Industry, and key delivery agencies providing contemporary updates on local planning matters including infrastructure capacity and need.

Council should work with industry to track, monitor and review its quarterly performance against the Growth and Housing Strategy, to ensure tier classifications are kept updated.

In addition to the annual dwelling completion tracking, it is recommended that the Strategy be reviewed every five years to ensure it is reflective of current trends and development rates.

The development of an Infrastructure Advocacy Strategy will be a useful tool to advocate for grant funding. This should also align with the timing of the revised Urban Development Program and the Infrastructure Opportunity Plan (IOP) for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven.

Other comments

- The Actions and Implementation Plan needs to be strengthened. Rather than "council will consider doing..." the Actions should be clear on who, what and when.
- Unused State or Commonwealth owned land could be suitable for housing.
- The four identified priorities should be the focus of review and further consideration.
- The REMPLAN, 2023, data is unavailable. *Note: This is now available on the website.*

Feedback on proposed development sites:

The following feedback was received in relation to the proposed development sites:

Bombo Quarry Precinct

There was a consensus of support for the redevelopment of Bombo Quarry as the ideal location for additional housing that is required in the Kiama LGA. It is close to foot, car and train transport, the main highway, recreational activities and is protected from the weather elements (winds) that the higher areas of Kiama experience.

The timeframe attributed to Bombo Quarry should be revised to a 15–20 year timeframe, to more accurately reflect it as a significant opportunity for long-term growth.

Dido Street Precinct

The Dido Street Precinct includes both zoned and unzoned (ie proposed) land.

The Jamberoo Road / Dido Street intersection access is blocked in every significant rain event due to significant flood water. Any development of this area would only increase water flow and the potential to increase emergency incidents relating to this area, and also inhibit the ability of emergency responders accessing west of Dido Street.

This particular development is centralised on a creek and increasing hardscape and density around it would again lead to flooding issues, not to mention a self sustaining sewerage treatment plant proposed by the developers. Flood waters will then turn to hazardous incident.

Riversdale Road Precinct

The development planned for Riversdale Road should be reconsidered, as it would destroy the local farmland, disrupt the close-knit community, and harm the area's natural beauty and wildlife. There are also concerns about the lack of essential infrastructure like water and sewage systems, the area's vulnerability to strong winds, and the already strained roads.

The area's ecological and visual attributes have not been adequately considered, despite being linked to broader development plans.

A well-planned transition between rural and urban areas, particularly along Riversdale Road, is essential to maintain Kiama's character. Rezoning of adjacent smaller lots should be considered to assist with this transition.

Jamberoo – Golden Valley Way Stage 2

Numerous submissions were received in support of the Jamberoo Stage 2 development, most on the basis that this would provide a new pre-school for the area (the existing pre-school has flooding issues and needs to be re-located in the next 2-3 years). The submissions followed a public meeting where the developer presented plans for the site and proposed that there would be a donation of land to Jamberoo Community Preschool if the development was approved. It was also noted however, that the housing strategy does not support a short-term solution to the Jamberoo preschool services and that land has not been allocated or a solution proposed that delivers a site for a local Jamberoo preschool.

Development of this site is supported by the community as it will provide a second entry/exit from Jamberoo Rd, which has previously been a concern.

The ability to provide extra housing in Jamberoo is considered to support more families to be able to enter the beautiful Jamberoo community and increase commercial activity in the area.

This site should be moved from a long-term to a short-term development strategy.

Elambra West (48 and 86 Campbell Street, Gerringong)

The land at 48 and 86 Campbell Street in Gerringong is prime agricultural land that needs to be protected through appropriate planning controls. The site has not been included in strategic planning documents such as The Gerringong Charette (1995), Kiama Urban Strategy (2011). The Kiama Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020) includes 48 Campbell Street as a 'potential urban expansion area' only. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 refers to agricultural lands in Gerringong attracting both residents and visitors and that they should be protected and enhanced.

Kiama West (Springside Hill)

Although the Kiama West (Springside Hill) site is not included in the Draft Growth and Housing Strategy several (30) submissions were received objecting to this proposed development site.

West Kiama (Springside Hill) is a controversial proposal which has not been supported by Council. However, it remains a current proposal and is not going to 'go away'. It should be mentioned in the document, even if Council choose to give reasons why it is not supported in the housing targets.

The current West Kiama (Springside Hill) proposal is strongly opposed due to several significant issues, including inadequate sewer servicing, poor access, questionable urban design, and poor outcomes for the Spring Creek riparian corridor.

The Springside Hill proposal lacks proper access, poses safety risks, and would significantly impact Kiama's visual integrity and rural character. There would be a strain on infrastructure, potential flooding, and increased traffic in residential areas. The Springside Hill development is unnecessary and driven by profit motives rather than community benefit. Council is urged to reject this proposal and focus on the Bombo Quarry development, which is a better fit for Kiama's future.

It was also noted that although this site was discussed in the 16 July 2024 Council Report, the site was not included in the Draft Strategy, which may have given a false impression that the proposal was not progressing, when in fact the site is the subject of a rezoning review lodged with the State Government and to be considered by the Southern Regional Planning Panel.

Other sites

No submissions were received on the following sites that are included in the LSPS:

- Sites noted as immediate land supply
- South Kiama Urban Release Area
- Lot 1 Riversdale Drive, Kiama Downs

No objections were received on these sites being included in the Strategy:

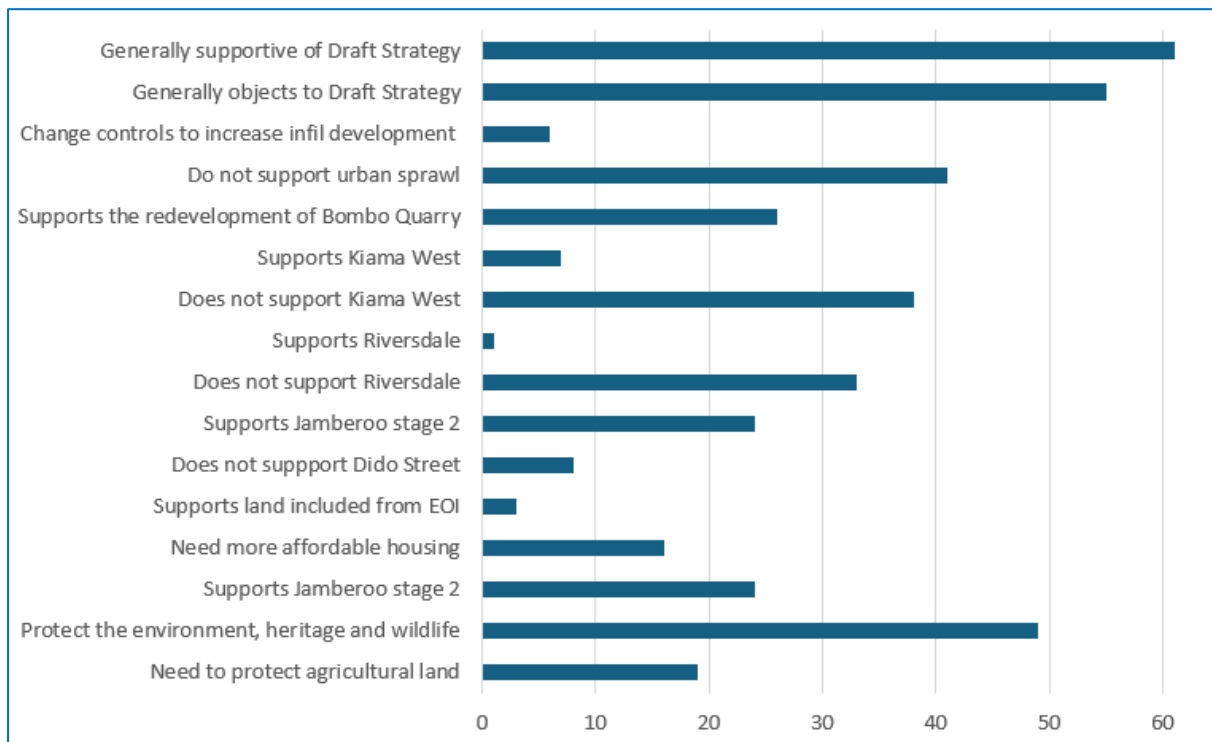
- 2 Caliope Street, Kiama
- 25 Cole Street, Kiama

The following feedback was received in relation to the Council catalyst sites:

- Kiama Library – The suggested rezoning of the Kiama library site seems premature. The Kiama Library and Community College serves as an important education hub, with educational, community and economic benefits. If this site is rezoned, then the community will lose this valuable community asset within the Kiama Town Centre.
- Havilah Place - The residential aged care facility that is currently unused could be repurposed for temporary or affordable housing.

The themes that appeared in the individual written submissions are shown below:

Figure 1 Summary of submissions by theme – individual submissions



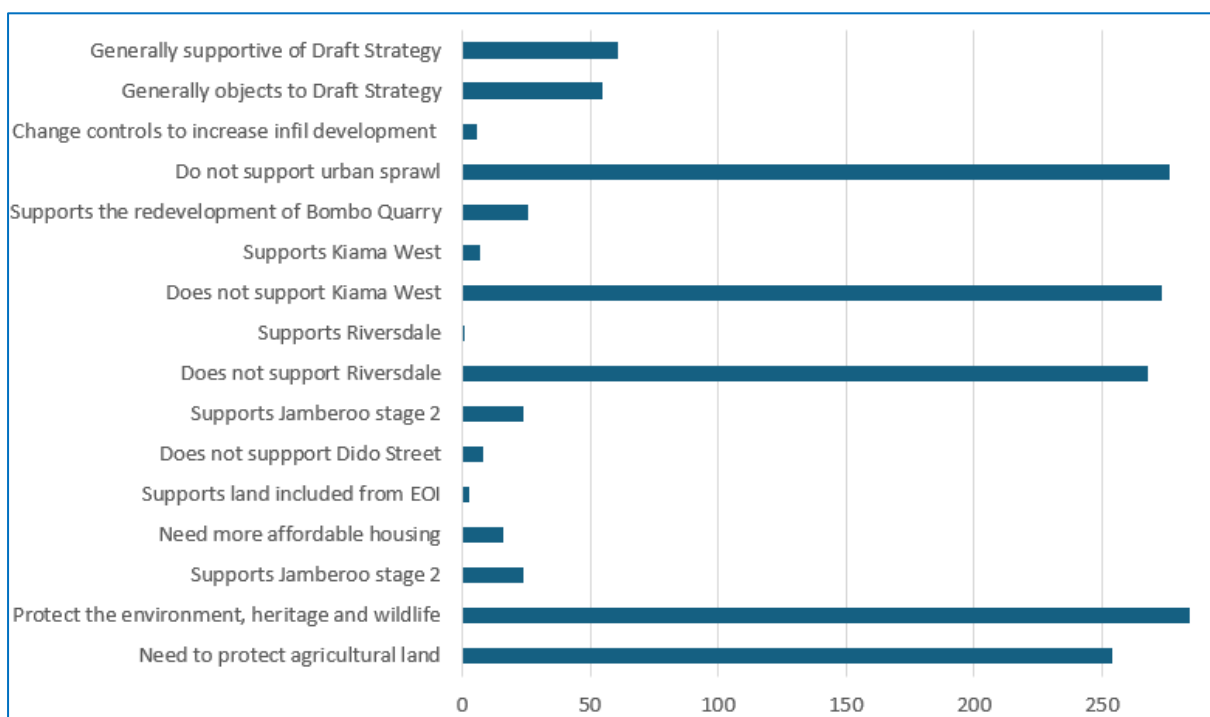
Written Submissions – Form submission

A form submission was received 235 times. A 'form submission' is submitted by individuals, and therefore counted separately, however this is a duplicate submission. The form submission noted, in summary, the following:

- The proposal to rezone the West Kiama site or the Riversdale Road Precinct through developer proposals is not supported.
- The greenfield land identified in current strategic planning documents, along with changing height and density rules in the town centres, is sufficient to accommodate growth over the next 20 years.
- The communities' non-negotiable principles are:
 - Maintain natural landscapes, green rolling hills, rural scenic lands, cultural heritage.
 - Provide natural boundaries between the urban interface and surrounding land.
 - Growth should not destroy the coastal rural character and liveability of Kiama.
 - Need to prevent overdevelopment, pressure on infrastructure and urban sprawl,
 - Maintain and protect the high value agricultural and environmental lands.
 - Deliver new developments located close to services and public transport.
- The rezoning of the Kiama West site or the Riversdale Road Precinct would fail these principles. These lands should be retained for their significant environmental, agricultural, scenic and heritage values.

The themes that appeared in the individual submissions (Figure 1) combined with the themes raised on the form submissions are shown at Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Summary of submission by theme – individual, group and form



Written Submissions – State Government Agencies

The role of state government agencies in delivering growth and housing outcomes is vital in ensuring that adequate servicing and infrastructure is provided at a state level to support growth. The engagement and collaboration will therefore be ongoing, both through direct consultation with agencies and through the Illawarra Shoalhaven Urban Development Program (UDP).

The Draft Strategy was sent to 14 state government agencies, with 9 responding. A summary of the feedback is provided below.

Endeavour Energy

Endeavour Energy provides electricity supply to the Illawarra and South Coast of NSW. Due to rapid industry changes, they are working to help deliver a clean energy future where smart meters, batteries and solar enable customers to generate, store and sell back electricity into the grid.

The following documents were provided for reference:

- Standard Conditions for Development Applications and Planning Proposals, 2023.
- Land Interest Guidelines for Network Connection Works, December 2022.
- Mains Design Instruction MDI 0044 'Easements and Property Tenure Rights'.

These documents will assist in the understanding of the electricity distribution requirements related to the Council's role in managing growth and planning to accommodate and support proactive delivery of housing for our expected population growth in future years.

Overall, Endeavour can supply additional electricity and is focussing on renewable energies.

NSW Government - Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has reviewed the draft strategy and is supportive of the approach of encouraging development towards infill development and housing density changes in urban areas and discouraging development in areas of environmental constraint

The DCCEEW remains available to support the strategy moving forward where required.

NSW Government - Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)

Kiama Municipal Council is congratulated on preparing the Draft Strategy and Council's important commitment to strategically plan for and deliver much needed housing in the Kiama local government area (LGA) over the next 20 years is supported by DPHI.

The DPHI is generally supportive of the draft Strategy, subject to the following comments which have been collated from various teams within the Department. Addressing these comments is particularly important if the Department is to endorse the final Strategy.

- The Draft Strategy includes population and dwelling projections based on REMPLAN 2023. The DPHI recommends that the Strategy uses the DPHI 2022 population and dwelling projections. DPHI will release updated projections later in 2024.
- In the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (page 13) it mentions Collaboration Activity 8 'Work with KMC on the development of a Local Housing Strategy'.
- Define the terms immediate, short, medium, and long term used in the Strategy.

- Include a table summarising the estimated dwelling yield from each of the proposed development sites, which demonstrates how the five-year target will be met from both infill and greenfield dwellings, including any assumptions. Where the dwelling target is not projected to be met, identification of additional potential housing sites should be considered.
- Estimated dwelling yields from all infill sites should be provided in the Strategy, along with more information on the projected infill dwellings expected outside of the sites identified in the Strategy. This could be estimated based on the historical split between greenfield and infill dwellings provided in the Kiama LGA.
- The Bombo Quarry vision (page 65-67) is supported. It should also be noted that the vision contributes to the completion of Action 9 in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 and that future engagement on a vision for the future masterplan of the site will be completed in subsequent planning activities by the proponent group.
- The Dido Street Precinct (page 68) is noted as a short to medium term timeframe, however this should be carefully evaluated given a Development Application to subdivide the land was refused by the Southern Regional Planning Panel on the basis of a lack of flood free access in an emergency and potential impacts of blasting from the nearby quarry.
- This section states "A high-level analysis has been undertaken and sites for inclusion have been identified." Some discussion around key site-specific environmental constraints (or lack of) and infrastructure is recommended for inclusion in Table 5 and Table 6 of the Strategy. It may be useful to identify key technical studies likely to be required to support any future planning proposals for these sites and that where there are multiple landowners, a wholistic coordinated and strategic approach to redevelopment and infrastructure provision is required.
- Consultation on the Draft Strategy and particularly new potential housing sites/areas identified within should be undertaken with Key NSW Government agencies and service providers, and any comments from these stakeholders should be addressed and used to inform the final Strategy. It is strongly recommended this be undertaken prior to seeking the Department's endorsement of the final Strategy. *Council Note: This was completed and consultation with all NSW Government Agencies will be ongoing.*
- The comment regarding the State Governments priorities for investment or funding for local infrastructure (page 45) should be removed, as the NSW Government has previously (and is currently) undertaking a significant amount of work through the Illawarra Shoalhaven Urban Development Program to identify infrastructure opportunities to contribute to the delivery of housing throughout the region.

NSW Government - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Agriculture and Biosecurity (DPI)

Housing and land-use strategies that concern rural and agricultural lands are important for determining the future of these lands and the agricultural industries that depend on them. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) commended the strategy's commitment to protect agricultural lands and to establish appropriate transitions between urban and rural lands.

The adaptive reuse of the Bombo Quarry site is a good opportunity to meet housing needs while limiting direct impacts to agriculture.

A precautionary approach to the 6 additional greenfield investigation areas is recommended to avoid speculation and expectation of the rezoning of this land prior to the appropriate strategic planning and assessment considerations.

Following the Departments completion of the draft State Significant Agricultural Land (SSAL) mapping it is recommended that an LGA-wide appraisal of agricultural land and industries be a fundamental part of the identification process for further greenfield sites. Ideally, this would take the form of a Rural Land use Strategy as per Planning Priority 8 of the Kiama LSPS. This would allow the highest quality agricultural land to be protected, and loss of agricultural land, in general, to be limited to that required to account for dwelling projections. Additionally, appraisal of dairy and other agricultural industries would assist in establishing appropriate separation and buffering between these and residential land uses.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development collaborates and partners with stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment and looks forward to working with Council as the Draft Strategy is finalised and implemented.

NSW Government - Heritage NSW

The Kiama LGA includes 13 state listed heritage items, 153 local heritage items and Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. These heritage items have a diverse range of heritage values, and it is recommended that care be taken to avoid or mitigate impacts to these heritage values.

The Draft Strategy is supported as it aspires to protect, conserve and re-activate the diverse range of heritage items in the Kiama LGA, while noting the challenges in balancing the protection of environmental heritage values with the need for increased housing and tourism.

As development and growth occurs, the potential impacts of development on heritage items need to be considered. In relation to historic archaeology, proponents should undertake investigations to assess the likelihood of relics and subsequent management requirements. In relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage, assessments should be undertaken to inform the identified investigation areas.

NSW Government - Transport for NSW (TfNSW)

The preparation of a housing strategy that considers future infrastructure need is supported.

In regard to the future investigation areas west of Kiama and the Princes Highway (M1), preliminary high level traffic analysis indicates that there will not be enough capacity on the M1 to support the additional traffic generated by the homes and that many kilometres of additional lanes would be required to maintain an acceptable flow of traffic.

There are currently no plans or funding for such upgrades, and rather, measures to reduce vehicular trip generation from the land releases areas on the M1 must be explored, identified and, ideally, formalised as part of a land use and transport structure plan before individual planning proposals proceed. Other initiatives to reduce traffic impacts include:

- Provide services within sites to reduce peak our trips to schools, shops, parks etc.
- Provide strong pedestrian and cycling links to Kiama and surrounding areas.
- Develop local road and bus connections that negate the need to use the M1.
- Identify opportunities to make public transport more attractive.

All traffic generating developments and rezonings will need to have a detailed transport impact assessment prepared to quantify the impacts and to support proposed solutions

Ongoing collaboration between TfNSW, Council and DPHI to discuss the Housing Strategy and potential ways forward is supported.

NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)

The NSW RFS appreciated the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Kiama Growth and Structure Plan. As an essential stakeholder in community safety and emergency

management, the NSW RFS is committed to ensuring that growth and development plans align with best practices in bush fire safety in accordance with *Planning for Bush Fire Protection*.

The NSW RFS noted that much of the Kiama LGA is identified as bush fire prone land. Strategic planning needs to ensure that future residential and special fire protection purpose land uses are only located in appropriate areas to minimise the risk to life and property from bush fire attack. It is recommended the Greenfield Development section of the Strategy include statements to ensure future planning proposals and subdivisions located on or in proximity to bush fire prone land adequately address *Planning for Bush Fire Protection*.

The preparation of a Strategic Bush Fire Study (SBFS), as part of the preliminary studies undertaken for any planning proposal, should occur where land is in proximity to bush fire risks. The SBFS shall be in accordance with the *Strategic Planning Principles of Planning for Bush Fire Protection* to ensure only appropriate development occurs in areas where bush fire hazards exist.

The SBFS addresses considerations which should inform the suitability of a site (and its surrounding location in the landscape) for the proposed land uses in consideration of strategic access networks, proposed densities and likely internal and external impacts of bush fire..

NSW State Emergency Services (SES)

The NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) is the agency responsible for dealing with floods, storms and tsunamis in NSW. This role includes, planning for, responding to and coordinating the initial recovery from floods. As such, the NSW SES has an interest in the public safety aspects of the development of flood prone land, particularly the potential for changes to land use to exacerbate existing flood risk or create new flood risk for communities in NSW.

Consideration of flooding issues is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy as set out in the Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 (the Manual) and supporting guidelines, including the Support for Emergency Management Planning and relevant planning directions and circulars relating to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*.

The Kiama LGA is vulnerable to a number of natural hazards including flooding, coastal erosion and inundation as identified in the draft Kiama Growth and Housing Strategy. There is flood risk across the LGA, particularly around the north and west of Kiama town centre, near Surf Beach in Kiama, north and west of the Werri Lagoon in Gerringong, and along the Werri Creek towards the Gerringong town centre.

In summary, the SES:

- Recommend that the Kiama Growth & Housing Strategy, and associated planning processes are underpinned by robust constraints, analysis, studies and technical documents for flooding and coastal hazards, to inform appropriate land use planning and risk management.
- Recommend the consideration of climate change in flood modelling using the best available science for climate risk assessments. This risk information should be shared, to enable other organisations, such as NSW SES, to plan for extremes in climate events and sequences.
- Support the non-negotiables that resilient housing is built in appropriate locations free from hazards and risks.
- Recommend including other Government policies and plans such as the NSW Coastal Design Guidelines 2023 developed by the Department of Planning and Environment <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/coastal-and-marine-management/coastal-design-guidelines>.

- Recommend site design and flood risk management that reduces the impact of flooding and minimises any risk to the community. The following resources provide useful guidance:
- Reducing Vulnerability of Buildings to Flood Damage
- Designing Safer Subdivisions
- Managing Flood Risk Through Planning Opportunities

The NSW SES would be interested in receiving future correspondence regarding the Strategy.

Sydney Water

The ability to plan and deliver for additional capacity is dependent upon certainty around where and when growth will occur. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Urban Development Program (UDP) Housing Supply Pipeline data will help to clarify proposed growth area and servicing needs in the Kiama LGA. Infill development, through the Low to Mid Rise housing reforms and existing permissibly can generally be accommodated in most existing systems, however additional investment may be required.

Ongoing collaboration between Sydney Water, Council, the UDP and Developers will be essential to ensure that the proposed new greenfield development sites and all medium and long-term development is adequately planned and serviced.

Other state government agency referrals

It is noted that the following State Government Agencies did not provide a response on the Draft Growth and Housing Strategy, but will continue to be engaged with:

- Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council (ILALC)
- NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- NSW Health
- Schools Infrastructure NSW
- Subsidence Advisory NSW



Developer Expression of Interest (EOI)

During the first round of EOIs, a total of 35 Expression of Interests (EOIs) were received.

During the second round of EOIs an additional six were received.

To ensure a fair and equitable process, all the EOIs received during both rounds will be assessed by the project review team in accordance with a probity plan and based on the criteria set out in the EOI submission form and other relevant criteria.

Due to confidentiality only the sites that are assessed to have strategic merit will be included in the Draft Growth and Housing Strategy.

Community Pop-ups

As part of the Community Engagement Strategy implementation, regular community pop-ups are held each month, with staff from various departments attending to discuss current projects.

Council staff reached a number of community members at community pop-ups:

- Wednesday 7 August 2pm to 4pm, Kiama Farmers Market
- Thursday 8 August 3pm to 5pm, Jamberoo IGA.

The feedback from community pop-ups is reflected in the submissions received.



Youth Consultation – high school

Council staff from planning, community services and community engagement visited Kiama High School on Thursday 8 August during first break.

This was an important part of the engagement process with the youth, as it allowed them to see how their feedback had been used and the document that it informed.

It was also an opportunity to present some key features of the draft strategy, such as the principles and objectives, and get further thoughts and feedback from the students. The initial workshops were held with students from Years 11 and 12 and these students were interested and engaged. As this visit was in the quad during lunch break, it allowed all students to be engaged and to discuss the project with Council staff.

Figure 3 Youth ranking of growth and housing needs



The parents and carers of the Kiama High School students have also been kept updated on the Growth and Housing Strategy preparation through school newsletter updates.



Next steps

The next steps in the preparation of the Growth and Housing Strategy are:

1. Update the Draft Strategy

The Draft Growth and Housing Strategy will be updated based on community and stakeholder feedback (including this summary report and full responses) and EOIs.

2. Council endorsement for exhibition

A revised Draft Strategy will be reported to Council seeking endorsement for public exhibition at a meeting in February 2025, with a recommendation to the effect that:

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the revised Draft Strategy for exhibition for a period of 28 days.*
- 2. Report back to Council with a further report including an engagement summary and any proposed changes, and a Final Strategy for adoption.*

3. Public Exhibition of Draft Strategy

Following endorsement by Council, the revised Draft Growth and Housing Strategy will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days which will provide the community and stakeholders with another opportunity to provide feedback. During the exhibition period Council staff will continue to actively engage with the community and stakeholders.

4. Consideration of feedback

Feedback and insights from the exhibition period will be collated alongside data already gathered during the engagement period to finalise the Strategy.

5. Council endorsement for adoption

The final Strategy will be reported back to Council for adoption, including an engagement summary, outlining how feedback received during the consultation phases shaped and informed the Strategy.

6. Adoption

Following endorsement of the final Strategy by Council it will be formally adopted. A copy will also be sent to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces for endorsement as Kiama Municipal Council's Local Housing Strategy.

7. Implementation

Once adopted, the Strategy will be implemented. This will include things such as a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) review, Development Control Plan (DCP) review, and advocacy for strategically identified sites to be included on Sydney Water's program.

For more information and updates on the Growth and Housing Strategy preparation, visit:

www.kiama.nsw.gov.au/growth