STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK for SETTLEMENT and INVESTMENT

Central Coast Council

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The Institute for Regional Development
CRADLE COAST CAMPUS
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LANDSCAPE + SOCIAL RESEARCH

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Why a Framework for Settlement and Investment?

The Brief

In early 2008, the Central Coast Council recognised the need to take an integrated approach to land use policy, settlement management and infrastructure investment, and develop a plan to guide it towards a prosperous future. Council recognised the need to better understand what the realistic short, medium and long term future holds for the municipal and broader local area, and to be better positioned to make strategic settlement and investment decisions.

A Consultant's Brief was prepared in February 2008, to seek tenders for the preparation of a Settlement and Investment Strategy that would:

- Provide an analysis and understanding of the trends, drivers and forces influencing the future of Central Coast municipal area;
- Assess local capacity and potential for change, growth and development in response to such factors; and
- Inform Council's strategic decision making of the Council with respect to land use and sustainable land allocation, economic and community planning, and associated infrastructure development and investment.

The Tender submitted by the Consultants responded with an approach designed to provide an analysis and interpretation of key trends, opportunities and risks; contextualise these within current policies, plans, and practice; and provide policy guidance for Council, using a participatory process focused on strengthening the organisation's capacity to work at the cutting edge of contemporary planning and development practice. The final product takes the form of a Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment: a strategic framework capable of providing both future vision and current guidance to inform Council's settlement and investment decisions.

Challenges

The process of developing a strategic framework for settlement and investment in Central Coast highlighted three 'big challenges'. The challenges lay behind the original needs articulated in the Consultant's Brief, and emerged in key informant interviews and workshops. Ultimately, they have shaped of the Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment as a response to these three challenges.

Challenge 1: Council needs to Develop an Overall Strategic Focus

There are two aspects of this challenge that are particularly relevant.

Realise that Council can't do everything.

Despite political pressure to solve everything from potholes to unemployment, Local Governments are not structured or resourced to solve all problems. Trying to do so is a recipe for exhaustion, ineffectiveness and fiscal over-extension. Realising that Council can't do everything gives Council permission to focus on what it does best. A strategic focus requires that Council:

- Define and stick to core business.
- Don't waste time writing long visionary strategies that will never be implemented.
- Don't waste time on scattered opportunistic actions.
- Act where it will matter.

What Council does, it needs to do in a coordinated way

Coordination, both internally and externally, is a big challenge for many organisations. Time and other resources are wasted and many contradictions arise when activities and initiatives are carried out in a fragmented way, without reference to one another. At the same time, there are efficiencies to be gained from coordinating work among different players: duplication is avoided, tasks can be shared, and potential problems can be identified at an early stage. A strategic focus requires that Council:

- Coordinate and connect its various Council activities (e.g. economic development and land use planning).
- Contextualise its own activities within the activities of other organisations (e.g. regional recreational planning, natural resource management and municipal planning).
- Develop a rationale & sound basis for all decisions (e.g. justification for planning decisions and infrastructure investments).

Settlement and Investment decision-making needs a framework through which components can be linked, connected and effectively leveraged. It is also important that current stakeholders and the community are enabled so that their activities and achievements contribute to the 'bigger picture' in a coordinated way, and that their role in contributing to the 'big picture' is transparent.

Challenge 2: We Need to Understand that We Live in a Distinctive, Special Place

Previous Council documents and the current consultative process highlight a strong awareness that **Central Coast has distinctive, valuable attributes.** These include the area's lifestyle and liveability, the distinctiveness of its natural environment, landscape and climate, and its human, social and community assets. These give rise to specific challenges:

The challenge to *leverage* from the distinctive attributes of Central Coast without *degrading* them

Settlement and investment decisions are the field upon which bigger questions about 'development' are played out, with a range of entrenched positions and assumptions on all sides. The challenge for communities in distinctive places is to step outside the assumptions and re-conceive what 'development' means for them.

- It's not a choice between being 'anti (big) development' or 'pro (big) development'; there are a range of options for visioning the future look of landscapes, communities, infrastructure and industries.
- It's not a choice between being parochial or being a copycat – again, there are many options, and being aware of what is out there in other places does not imply the need to merely copy it at the loss of one's own distinctiveness.
- Rather, it's a question of consciously defining, cultivating, protecting, and growing the attributes that make this place unique.

The need to understand what attributes will drive future advantage

Decision makers need to be conscious of the area's attributes and characteristics, and what they mean in a regional, national and global context, in the face of inevitable change. It is the difference between 'flying blind' and strategically navigating a way forward in terms of:

- The area's resilience (ability to deal with shocks).
- Generating new economic opportunities (many of which may be as yet unforeseen).
- Sustainability and future liveability.

Challenge 3: Council Needs Guidance in how to IMPLEMENT its Strategic Focus

This is the operational end of the wedge: how to move from strategic vision to on-the-ground reality. This challenge has informed both the process and the final shape of the Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment.

Internally – the organisation needs better *capacity to implement strategies*

Capacity continually emerged as an issue within the consultations undertaken for this project – especially the need to develop capacity and skills within Council.

- Professional capability and confidence within Council (staff and councillors) need to be fostered, developed, empowered.
- Ditto for their 'reflective worldview' – their knowledge of what is 'out there' and ability to make informed choices.
- Ditto for the internal systems of the organisation (enabling, devolved, but focused on generating outcomes, grounded in core strategies and principles).

Externally – Council needs to understand how to *leverage its unique role*

- Positioning the Council as an organisation that enables rather than drives change.
- Growing Council's ability to develop and leverage strategic partnerships.

Meeting the Challenges

The *Strategic Framework For Settlement and Investment* is a tool for meeting the 'big challenges' facing Central Coast Council. It provides a strategic focus for the Council organisation (Challenge 1), one which describes and seeks to leverage the distinctiveness of the Central Coast to achieve its communities' own aspirations (Challenge 2). It then provides guidance on how to move from strategy to implementation (Challenge 3).

Settlement and investment decision-making needs a framework through which components can be linked, connected and effectively leveraged in a way that responds to community needs and aspirations, with a consistent set of messages about where and how investment will be channelled. The Strategic Framework For Settlement and Investment seeks to **build on what exists** in the Central Coast – the characteristics and values of this unique place and its people, in their larger context – and then to develop a set of **agreed, consistent and strategic foci for investment.** Finally, it provides a **tool** through which staff and community can inform decision-making, communicate the outcomes being sought, and negotiate change.

The Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment begins with what is, here and now in Central Coast, and then moves on to a vision of what could be – imagining a future, and stretching local talents to make it happen. First, we describe the particular characteristics and values of Central Coast as a place. We have sought to understand Central Coast in terms of both its objective characteristics (landscape types, demographic and economic data, and policy context), and in terms of the 'Qualities that Coasters Most Value'. Together, they paint a picture of a place that is unique, distinctive, and highly valued.

From there, we move on to the Strategic Framework itself, which is comprised of four **Platforms for the Future** and associated Strategic Directions and Outcomes. The four Platforms are launching pads for future economic and social development in Central Coast. They seek to leverage the area's unique attributes in ways that both respond to community aspirations and tap into opportunities that are increasingly apparent at national and global scale. These Platforms sit at the cutting edge of thinking about local economic development, competitiveness, and place-based development more broadly. Associated with these Platforms are a series of specific Strategic Directions and associated recommendations for Council – guidance for acting where it matters most.

The Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment – comprising Values, Platforms, Strategic Directions and Outcomes – is designed to provide overarching strategic guidance to Council decision-making across its portfolios. The Framework takes a place-based approach that recognises interconnections and opportunities in this place. It is intended to underpin the current *Central Coast Planning Scheme*, while providing a framework to inform and justify when changes and adaptations need to happen. It can be used similarly to inform and coordinate Council action in other areas, and it has been designed to support Council's Strategic Planning process. In its Strategic Plan, Council will formulate its specific on-the-ground responses to the Platforms and Strategic Directions contained in the Framework. The current document provides background information and suggested strategies to assist this process.

About Our Process

Source Data

This Strategic Framework is based on a number of different sources of information. In broad terms, our source data comprises:

- Existing plans, strategies and documents prepared by, or on behalf of, the Central Coast Council over the past 5 to 8 years. These include the documented outputs of all community-based consultations and planning processes during this period (e.g. Search Conference, Community Plans).
- State-wide policies and initiatives relevant to settlement and investment decision-making for Central Coast Council.
- Demographic and economic data from ABS, ABARE, etc.
- Workshops with key stakeholders in May, June and September 2008.
- Interviews with a number of individuals (key informants) within key industries, state government agencies and local government authorities.
- Discussions with Central Coast Council staff and councillors.

In addition, as part of the background research for this Framework, we undertook a landscape character type assessment of the Central Coast region. This was not intended to be a definitive landscape assessment, rather, the intent was to capture some of the physical attributes of the region that give the region its visual character, and to see to what extent distinctive 'landscape types' could be identified. This is a key step in identifying the factors that contribute to the region's *genius loci*, or 'sense of place'.

Analysis & Interpretation

A suite of issues and ideas arose from our initial reading of the existing Council plans, strategies and planning scheme. We identified strengths as well as various gaps and needs in terms of current planning and decision-making processes. We were also able to gain a good insight into the values and aspirations of the community and the Council in terms of where Central Coast wants to go in the future. An analysis of landscape types (see Appendix 1) helped illuminate how the physical distinctiveness of parts of the region can be utilised within a settlement and investment context to leverage a greater sense of attachment to place, identify appropriate development options that complement different landscape character types, and identify management and connectivity issues between different landscape types. A demographic and economic analysis of the Central Coast and its position in the wider region (see Appendix 2) highlighted other key issues and characteristics.

These preliminary analyses were presented to staff and community stakeholders at the first workshop in May 2008. The two presentations were designed as discussion-starters and to gain more in-depth understanding of the stories behind what our analysis of the data was telling us about landscape types, demographic characteristics and trends, and industry and employment data for Central Coast Council. Including a range of participants in this process allowed for a richer and more rounded interpretation of the data.

As a key tool for analysis, we described the different forms of capital that underpin the social, physical, economic and environmental fabric of all societies. The forms of capital are:

- **Social capital**: the social institutions, shared norms and processes that underpin our social fabric.
- **Political capital**: our ability to leverage political relationships to influence policy, resource allocation, etc.
- **Cultural capital**: our shared symbols, rituals, events, artistic expressions etc. that communicate and share meaning and experience
- **Human capital**: the knowledge, skills and experience of people within the community (and those we can access from outside the community)
- **Natural capital**: the soil, water, flora, fauna, climate, geology, landforms, rivers, coastlines, etc. that support, sustain and distinguish us as a place.
- **Financial capital**: the money that lubricates our economy and the value of the assets within the region.
- **Built capital**: the infrastructure that supports us as a society – our roads, railways, water, sewerage and power infrastructure, etc.

These 'capitals' are understood to be key resources, both in their own right, and as resources that communities can mobilise to achieve other goals. The capitals framework was the analytical tool used to organise findings from the review of Council documents – including a substantial base of community insights contained in these documents – and our own interviews with key informants. We then introduced the capitals framework into the first workshop, and asked workshop participants to complete a SWOT analysis of where the Central Coast Council region currently stands in each of the different forms of capital. This exercise was both a data-collection exercise and an ideas-generating experience, and it provided further insights into key local attributes and values. A full summary of the SWOT analysis is at Appendix 3.

The input from the first workshop led to the development of a set of principles to underpin settlement and investment decisions within the region. These were then tested and extended upon during a second community workshop in June. The second workshop highlighted further challenges, opportunities, and ideas, including the articulation of some of the key challenges that were identified earlier in this document. Through further consultations, readings, and discussions, the principles were consolidated into four Platforms, and the diverse range of ideas and recommendations were distilled into a set of related Strategic Directions. In a final workshop in early September 2008, participants were asked to articulate their future vision for Central Coast in the form of a 'story' or scenario, test the Framework against it, and then recommend indicators that Council can use to track progress over time.

Overall, the process of analysis and interpretation of the data, and the ultimate development of a Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment, has been the fruit of a dynamic mix of perspectives, insights, and expertise, from community participants, key informants, council staff, and consultants. The participatory nature of much of the process has given the consultants access to a range of perspectives and insights. This has both strengthened the document itself, and contributed to the larger process of building Council and community capacity to plan for the future on their own terms.

Central Coast : The Place and its People

Physical Landscape Characteristics

Central Coast Council has a diversity of landscape types, from rugged rocky coastlines to soft rolling hills of intense colour. The productive red soils and high rainfall of its agricultural landscapes provide an ever-changing patchwork of red, green and many other colours as crops change with the seasons.

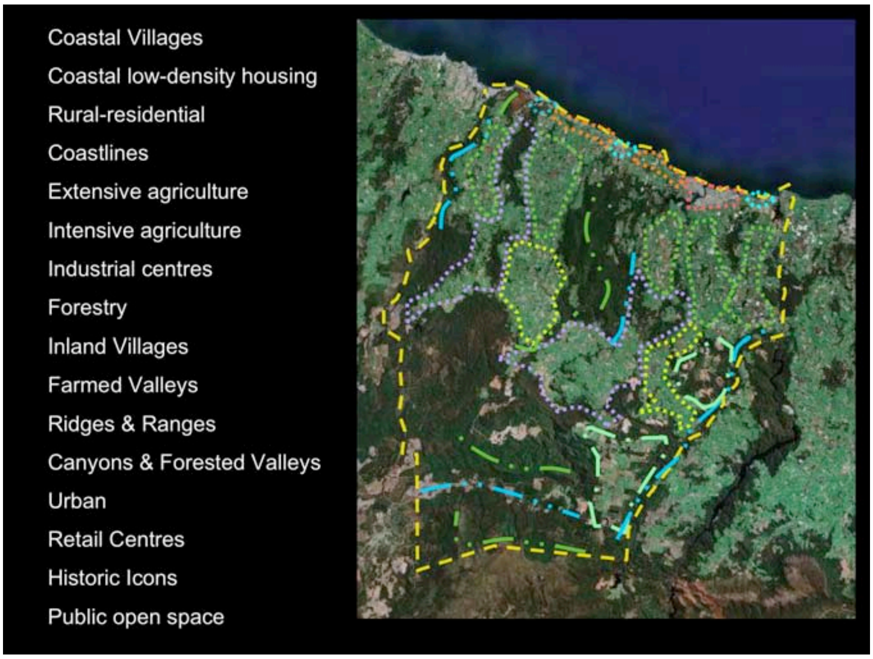
The villages and towns of the region each have their own unique character, with a varied architectural style and a mixture of public and private assets of varying size and character.

The forested ranges and canyons and remnant vegetation along the rivers and streams provide a visual reminder of the underlying naturalness of the Central Coast.

An analysis of landscape character types identified around 16 types in Central Coast (See Figure 1). Some of these are clearly distinguishable areas on the landscape (of varying sizes), some are linear (such as the Bass Highway corridor, ridgelines and canyons), and some are iconic points within the broader landscape.

This range of diverse landscape types means that residents, visitors, and those wishing to invest in the area, have considerable choice. A range of different environments is available for living, working and recreating. It is therefore important that existing landscapes, and the key qualities that give them their sense of place, are maintained and enhanced to maximise the opportunities that this level of choice provides.

- Figure 1: Landscape Types



(Full descriptions of landscape character types identified are in Appendix 1.)

Demographic Characteristics

The Central Coast Council area supports a population of about 20,000 people, with no great change over the last decade; it has the second-highest population in the region after Devonport, and nearly a fifth of the North West's total population. There is considerable movement of the population between Central Coast and neighbouring Council areas, and fifty-six percent of Central Coast households own two or more motor vehicles, well above the national and Tasmanian averages. Eighteen percent of employed Central Coast residents work in Devonport and 20% in Burnie; and over half of the Central Coast's working population works outside the LGA itself. At the same time, Central Coast attracts about 22% of its workforce from neighbouring LGAs.

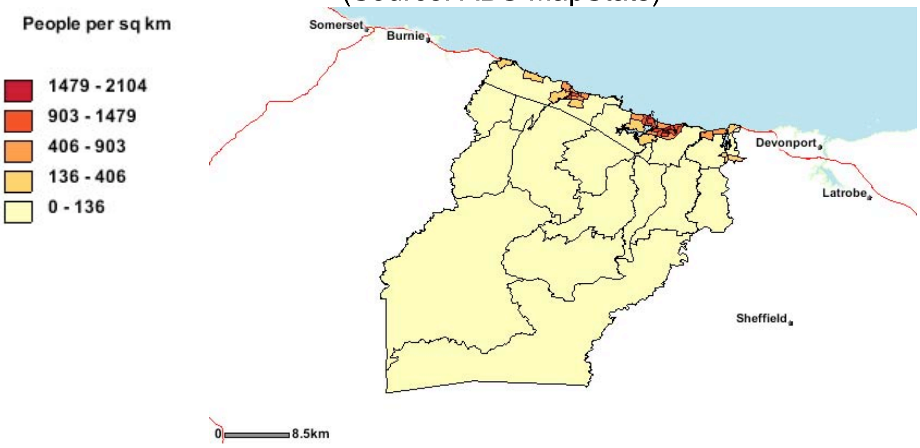
The median age of the Central Coast population is 42 (compared with 37 nationally), and the older population cohorts (age 65 and over) are the fastest growing, in line with many of the other LGAs in this region. Seventeen percent of the Central Coast population is now aged sixty-five or older. Meanwhile, 20% of Central Coast's population are children (down from nearly a quarter a decade ago); and 11% are youth aged 15-24. This means that at the same time as the population is certainly 'aging', nearly a third of the total Central Coast population are children and youth, and 40% of all households in the LGA include children. Turner's Beach has had the highest growth in the number of children in recent years, and Sulphur Creek, which attracts working families, is a growth area for both children and youth. The working-age population (25-64) comprises 52% of Central Coast's total population, and has grown slightly over the last decade.

Eighty-five percent of Central Coast's population live on the Coastal strip; the municipality's inland population is both smaller, and has decreased slightly over the last decade. Interestingly, however, there is proportionally more in-migration to inland areas than to coastal areas of the municipality. Figure 2 illustrates the population density in the Council area, demonstrating the sharp contrast between coastal and inland areas. The number of lone-person households in the LGA is growing (from 22% of all households in 1996, to 24% in 2006); 90% of lone person households comprise people aged 35 or over. Both the highest number and the largest proportion of lone-person households are in Ulverstone.

Sixty percent of Central Coast residents over age 15 are in the labour force, with a much higher labour force participation by men than women (again, similar to other municipalities in the region). While 65% percent of Central Coast men are in the labour force, only 52% of women are; and nearly twice as many women as men work part-time. Only 20% of women in the LGA work full time. Voluntary work is common across the population, and about 22% of those age 15 and over are involved in voluntary work (compare with 18% Australia-wide); 20% of men and 23% of women. Participation in recreational activities is high (83% of the population as at 2001), with roughly two-thirds of participation in non-organised activities like walking/ bushwalking, fishing, and swimming.

- Figure 2: Population density, Central Coast Council

(Source: ABS MapStats)



(More extensive demographic information is provided in Appendix 2.)

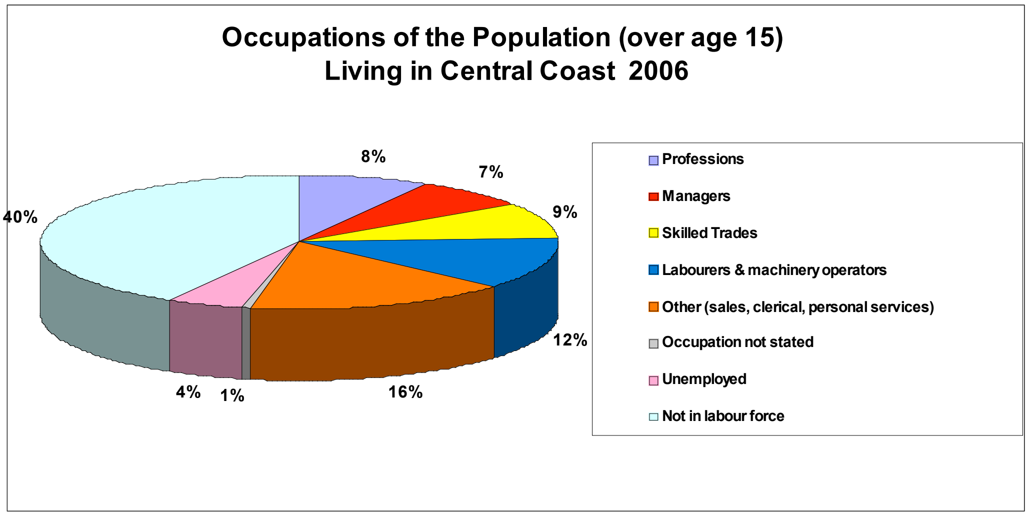
Economics and Industry

The dominant industries, and major employers in the region are food processing, manufacturing, health, community and educational services and agriculture. Manufacturing is the largest employing industry in Central Coast, as it is for the region as a whole, and food manufacturing is the largest published component. Manufacturing employs 14% of the Central Coast's resident population, with slightly less than half (44%) of these workers employed within the LGA itself. Overall, about 760 manufacturing workers are employed within the boundaries of Central Coast Council; 70% live locally, and 30% travel in from neighbouring council areas. The percentage of Central Coast residents employed in manufacturing has increased 28% between 2001 and 2006, even as the percentage employed in agriculture has decreased 18%. Of some concern is the fact that over half of Central Coast residents employed in the manufacturing industry (55%) hold no formal qualifications.

Retail trade is also a significant source of employment, particularly for women; 12% of all workers living in Central Coast, and 15% of working women, were employed in retail in 2006. Health care, social assistance, education and training are also major employers, together representing about 20% of the workforce. In 2006, agriculture directly employed only about 7% of the Central Coast workforce, but its indirect impacts on employment in manufacturing, service, and retail industries are clearly very significant. Overall, the patterns of employment by industry and gender are very similar between Central Coast and neighbouring council areas, with manufacturing being the top employer for men (employing about a fifth of all men), and health care and social assistance the top employer for women (employing about a fifth of all women). The range of occupations within the workforce is quite broad, as shown in Figure 3.

There are slightly over 1400 private sector businesses located in Central Coast. Most (81%) are microenterprises (businesses hiring fewer than 5 employees). Indeed, the majority (58%) of Central Coast businesses are very small, owner-operated enterprises that do not hire labour. Twenty percent of employed people living in Central Coast are either owner-managers, or work in a business their family owns. At the same time, there are a few big employers. While only 4% of Central Coast businesses hire 20 or more employees, these businesses represent around half of the total private-sector jobs base.

- Figure 3: Occupations of Central Coast's Resident Population



(Further information is provided in Appendix 2.)

Central Coast in its State and Regional Context

As a local planning authority, Central Coast Council must take into consideration its role in assisting regional authorities and State Government agencies implement their policies and strategies. But in doing so, it must also be cognisant of the limited financial and human capacity of Central Coast Council and the community to implement such strategies and policies. It is also Council's role to understand and act upon specifically local needs and opportunities, which may or may not be reflected in higher level policies. This means working in a very deliberative and strategic manner to coordinate and leverage its activities and investments with regional and State agencies, in ways that benefit all stakeholders.

At the State level, there are several policies and initiatives that are of particular relevance to the Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment. One is the 'Tasmania Together' initiative. Another is the State Government's Protection of Agricultural Land (PAL) policy, and its Coastal Policy. Finally, there are specific initiatives of the Department for Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) related to industrial land-use and investment, and to regional recreation planning.

The Tasmanian Government's **'Tasmania Together'** initiative sets broad, community-informed visions for Tasmania in 2020. The Tasmania Together vision, which emphasises lifestyle values in a unique natural and cultural environment, is very consistent with the values and objectives of the Central Coast Council and community. Tasmania Together includes 12 goals and 143 benchmarks. Many of these goals relate directly to the 'liveability' indicators proposed in this Framework. Importantly, reaching these goals and benchmarks requires partnerships and joint ventures with a range of public and private sector players. The 'Tasmania Together' framework thus opens opportunities for local Councils to work with others to achieve common goals.

Because of the central role that agriculture plays in underpinning the economic and social fabric of the region, State Government's **Protection of Agricultural Land (PAL)** policy is of key interest to Council. The regional community and the Council are very keen to protect and enhance the regions' agricultural productivity whilst ensuring the protection and enhancement of the region's land, water and biodiversity. The intent of the Protection of Agricultural Land (PAL) policy is to protect the productive capacity of Tasmania's agricultural industries and foster sustainable agriculture. The policy is currently under review by the State Government, with the aim of determining its effectiveness in terms of limiting rural-residential and small-lot subdivision, housing on small lots, and fettering.

Our analysis of the PAL policy in terms of its implications for settlement and investment in the Central Coast region has highlighted that the current policy makes various assumptions which may not necessarily be conducive to the development of innovative, alternative agricultural and food and fibre production and processing systems. The policy appears to be based on a traditional conception of farming and assumes an increasing industrialisation of farming. These assumptions reinforce the tenet of industrialised agriculture that larger farm sizes are more economically viable, and therefore more sustainable farm units. They overlook the options offered by alternative agricultural productions systems, based on more intensive value-added production systems (e.g. organic, biodynamic, new and gourmet crops), that may attract more employment opportunities, lifestyle advantages and economic prosperity whilst enhancing lifestyle, biodiversity and landscape values.

The coastline of Central Coast Council is a key asset. It represents an important part of the region's character and provides a wealth of recreational and landscape values. The State Government's **Coastal Policy** is a key instrument to ensure the ecosystem service and landscape values of the coastline are protected from inappropriate development and other threatening processes.

Economic development is clearly of interest and importance to Central Coast Council, and this is the primary mandate of the State government's **Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT).** The DEDT has recently completed an industrial land use strategy and at a State level the Rediplan strategy, which highlights the opportunities and advantages of doing business in Tasmania. In addition, the State government's Sport and Recreation arm sits within the DEDT, and this unit is in the process of developing a regional recreation strategy.

At a regional level, Central Coast Council is a member-council of the **Cradle Coast Authority**, the regional development authority for North-West Tasmania. Council is cognisant of the fact that with its limited resources, there are many advantages in working with neighbouring municipalities and other regional councils in pursuit of more consistent regional development outcomes, and to be proactive in responding to change that impacts upon the whole region. Specifically in terms of policy frameworks at regional level, the **Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management Strategy** and the incipient **Cradle Coast Regional Planning Process** are of particular relevance for settlement and investment planning at the regional level. The Cradle Coast Authority has also undertaken key initiatives in the **agri-food area** (e.g. food industry value-adding initiative, food and beverage strategy**)**, **tourism** and **transportation**, with settlement and investment implications.

The Cradle Coast Regional Planning Process is in its early stages as of the preparation of this report, with the goal of providing a common, coherent planning framework across the local municipalities of the region. By preparing its Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment, the Central Coast Council is now well positioned to engage in this broader context of regional planning.

The **Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management Strategy** was prepared by the Regional NRM Committee for North-West Tasmania (hosted by the Cradle Coast Authority) and accredited in 2005. The Strategy sets actions and targets in seven priority areas: Land, Water, Biodiversity, Coastal, Estuarine & Marine, Atmosphere, Cultural Heritage, and Community Capacity. As with all regional NRM initiatives, the ultimate success of this Strategy in improving the condition of natural resources within the region is entirely dependent upon leveraging better outcomes from underlying processes and agents of change. This means that there is at least equal onus on the organisations, authorities and groups within the Cradle Coast region to engage with and partner the Cradle Coast NRM Committee as there is for Cradle Coast NRM to take a lead on NRM issues. Good NRM outcomes in the region will be enhanced through the capacity and willingness of staff within Council, and other groups and authorities in the region, to communicate and engage with Cradle Coast NRM.

Qualities that Central Coasters most value

Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, a series of themes emerged about the qualities that Central Coast residents and businesses value about their community and lifestyle. This section describes these key qualities or attributes, highlighting their strategic importance as assets for Central Coast, and suggesting how they can be leveraged to add further value in the future.

Central Coast lifestyle and community

Central Coast offers its residents a particular kind of lifestyle – one which current residents value, and future residents may find attractive. Characterised by small, friendly active communities and a relaxed, affordable, and natural lifestyle, Central Coast contrasts itself to the stress, traffic, pollution, anonymity and high cost of life in many more urbanised landscapes. Some of the words used to describe the Central Coast lifestyle and community are:

Relaxed lifestyle
Iconic, intimate roadways and 'slow drives'
Strong sense of community
Outdoors lifestyle
Not too big
Friendly, caring community
Active – lots going on
Small town feel
Good services, close to home
Affordable housing

Recreational opportunities

Central Coast's location, nestled between Bass Strait and the northern ranges of the central Tasmanian plateau, and its forests, rivers and coastlines provide a wealth of opportunities for active and passive recreation. A good road network and a range of public infrastructure complement these natural assets and serve the needs of locals and tourists. Whilst some public assets need rationalising and updating to meet future needs, there is a good base from which to work. Coasters describe their recreational assets in terms of:

Great places for recreation such as Leven Canyon, Leven River, the fantastic beaches…
Public open spaces and parks and gardens
Open gardens
Great beach walks
Festivals and cultural events showcasing the regions creativeness
Family friendly environment and activities

Safety and belonging – a small town feel

The settlement pattern of Central Coast reinforces one of the main values that the community holds about living in the region – the 'small town' feel. The size and distribution of urban centres across the coastal strip and throughout the rural hinterland are very conducive to engendering a 'small town' living environment. This small town feeling engenders a sense of freedom and security, as well as ready access to facilities and shared social spaces. These physical attributes are complemented by high rates of community volunteerism and participation in a large range of community organisations, including service clubs, churches, youth groups, sporting and interest-based clubs. The small town feel is captured in observations such as:

The freedom to live without fear
Feeling safe and secure
Good access to community and commercial facilities
High levels of community engagement and volunteerism

Unsurpassed agriculture and food industries

Central Coast has some of the most fertile soils in Australia, complemented by a high rainfall and long sunlight hours – at the right time of the year – making the region increasingly valuable in terms of national and global food production under a changing climate. At the same time, the agricultural landscape is diverse, varying according to slope, soil type and micro-climate, enabling a wide range of food and fibre products to grown. The infrastructure for the agriculture and food processing in the region is also very good. Natural gas runs through the region (though not necessarily well connected); the Bass Highway and coastal railway line link the region to two ports and two airports (Burnie and Devonport); fresh water for processors and irrigated agriculture is in good supply. From this region, it is possible to have refrigerated trucks to Melbourne's markets and ports within 24 hours. Access to Bells Bay is also excellent, opening up weekly export opportunities to Asian markets. Coasters recognise the value of agriculture and associated food products manufacturing to their economy and their way of life:

Food bowl – the heart of vegetable industry
Heart of wine and food experiences
A developing organics sector
The fresh food – from the sea and land
A broad cross-section of food industries – a true cluster
All the players are present
Significant assets in terms of water, soil, sunshine hours

The clean green temperate experience

The mild climate of the Central Coast region is one of Tasmania's best-kept secrets. Tasmania is often perceived as being a cold place, but the tempering influence of Bass Strait and the shelter afforded by the central Tasmanian plateau from cold southerlies and south-westerlies make this part of Tasmania much more mild than southern Tasmania and far less prone to frosts than the North East. Combine these factors with very high annual hours of sunlight and few, if any, days over 30 degrees, and the region is a very comfortable place to live indeed. The clean, green temperate experience is expressed in terms of:

A relaxing green landscape

Access to coast and canyon habitats

The clean green landscape

Coast to canyon touring route

A region that breathes easily

Offers wonderful summer experiences - long days and wonderful evenings

Beaches and estuaries and flat water experiences

A place with character

Ulverstone, Penguin, Turners Beach, Forth, and other towns and localities within Central Coast each have a distinctive character. The character of these places is largely influenced by the relationship between the coastline, the rivers and ranges to the south. The major towns are distinguished by the dominant landforms within which they sit:

- Ulverstone: the Leven River estuary
- Penguin: nestled between the Dial Range and the coast
- Turners Beach: a broader, flatter landscape dominated by the floodplains of the Forth River.

Each of the main towns have subtle differences in their mix of architectural styles and street layouts, further adding to their distinctiveness. The size and pattern of the retail hierarchy of the region is consistent with the character of each place. The rural landscapes around the urban centres are similarly diverse, with subtle differences in landform, remnant vegetation and farming intensity. These landscapes have their own character, and are also important in providing a reference from which to distinguish other rural, urban, industrial, and predominantly 'natural' landscapes. There is a sense that the landscape is distinctive, and characterised by a refreshing variety:

Distinctiveness of landscape – the red and green patchwork of paddocks, forestry and bushland

The resilience of the soil

The hardiness of the coastline

Wharf experience

Future Vision

In the final workshop, in September 2008, participants chose some words around what a 'good future scenario' or future vision for what Central Coast might look like. This vision – crafted from the words of workshop participants – distils many of the elements of the qualities that Central Coasters most value, and paints a picture of what a future that intentionally cultivates those qualities might look like:

Central Coast, with its varied landscapes and accessible rivers and coastlines, provides an open door on nature. Our built environment fits the spirit and style of this unique place; we are like nowhere else. Our lifestyle is relaxed and inclusive, with a strong sense of community and well being. We have affordable housing, good facilities for all age groups including retirees, and child-friendly communities; we are a place for families. Our clever industries and productive rural resource support economically viable communities, part of a thriving region.

Building Platforms to launch into the future

Change is inevitable. Unforeseen challenges and opportunities will often come from drivers beyond the local area. These will have an impact on Central Coast's communities and industries, and influence Council's options and decisions about land use and investment. Some of the significant changes that we are experiencing now were not 'front of mind' ten to fifteen years ago: for instance, climate change, the increasing costs of fuel and other related products, water shortages over much of south-eastern Australia, and significant changes in lifestyle preferences (e.g. 'sea-change' and 'tree-change' phenomena) and modes of working (e.g. telecommuting). It is important to be well prepared for future challenges and be strategic in identifying the opportunities that change often brings with it.

The Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment is designed around four key Platforms that position Council to be on the cutting edge in terms of future trends and equipped to take a proactive approach to change. These Platforms can be thought of as 'launch pads for the future'. They simultaneously establish aspirational goals about where we need to be, and intermediate benchmarks to help guide decision making to ensure we get to where we want to be. The Platforms will:

- Guide decision-making and inform best practice.
- Provide the capability to proactively manage for change – both predicted and unforeseen.
- Enable us to feel confident in facing the future.

The idea of basing a strategic settlement and investment framework around *Platforms* is drawn from the current thinking about locality and regional development. Increasingly in the shift away from top-down approaches, the focus has been on building local/ regional development platforms and innovation systems. Such an approach is centred on two important considerations. First, global trends have local responses – things are experienced at the regional level and increasingly, local constituents look to their local government to solve the issues. Second, place attributes, including the quality and distinctiveness of local assets and the social and cultural qualities of communities, will determine the effectiveness and competitiveness of the local response. Thus while the platforms reflect the future "big picture" drivers, the critical concern is to strengthen the platforms in a place through the configuration and focus of local assets.

The idea of local development platforms is to draw on, build and enhance the configuration and reconfiguration of local assets. These platforms will reflect assets, skills and talent already embedded in the local place, and also help identify, in the broader regional/ global context, the gaps and potential which need development.

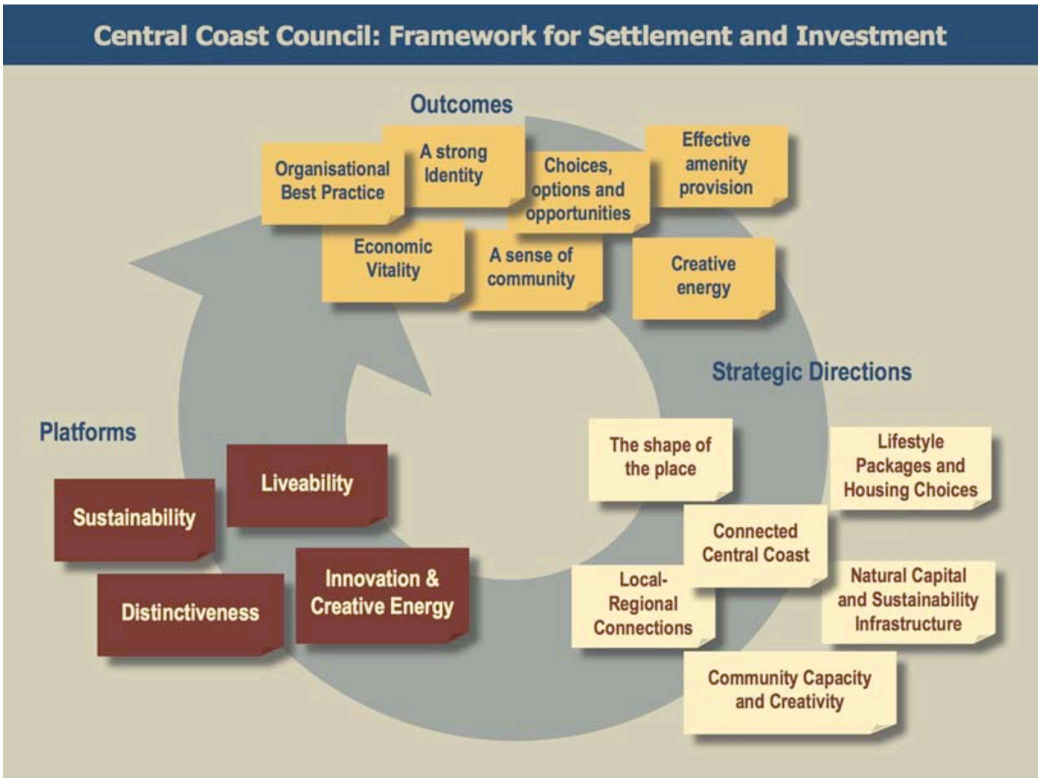
In our consideration of Central Coast – in the context of the North West Coast of Tasmania and beyond – we have identified four platform areas, which we consider will be critical for the future and to accommodate change already upon us. While the four Platforms are clearly interrelated, and there are inevitable overlaps in the themes and observations running through them, each Platform provides a vital point of focus to underpin settlement and investment decisions.

The four Platforms for the future are:

- Liveability
- Sustainability
- Innovation and Creative Energy
- Distinctiveness

These Platforms link to a set of Strategic Directions and outcomes to form the Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment (Figure 4).

- Figure 4: Settlement and Investment Framework



Platform 1: Liveability

Rationale for a liveability platform

Liveability is a holistic concept that encompasses notions such as quality of life, the 'character' of a place, the 'ease of living' in a place, the health and well-being of communities that live there, and the sense of security afforded by living and working in a given community.

There is a growing interest in liveability. In part this relates to the impact of climate change, rising energy and fuel costs and communities seeking to ensure that the places where they live and work support their well being. However, liveable places also attract skilled labour and investment thereby increasing the link between liveability and productivity. This being the case a strategic development platform for local government is to enhance, foster and "protect" liveability.

Broadly speaking we propose that these aspects of liveability coalesce around four key dimensions:

- Form and structure
- *Genius loci* (sense of place)
- Sociability
- Accessibility

Further, it is possible to develop a set of measurable indicators to track aspects of liveability, via a 'report-card' monitoring and evaluation process. By tracking liveability indicators, Council can assess the effectiveness of its tactical and operational decision-making, and the 'daily practice' of council staff, in achieving its strategic goals. Such a system would complement other regional and state reporting processes such as 'Tasmania Together' and the REDImap initiatives of State Government. (See suggested indicators under 'Outcomes').

Status in the Central Coast

One of the critical points about liveability is that many of the attributes recognized and desired by residents are within the jurisdiction of local government. Local government can really make a difference to the strength of its capability and capacity around liveability.

Liveability is closely connected to the values of lifestyle and community that Central Coast residents strongly value. What comes through clearly is that the qualities that define liveability closely align to what is already present and valued by the Central Coast community (see previous section):

- access to quality landscapes;
- recreational opportunities;
- 'clean and green' environments;
- affordable housing;
- creative and fun things to do;
- a sense of community and belonging; and
- access to good facilities.

Central Coast exhibits the qualities of the cool temperate coast which comprise consistent temperatures, small temperature range, good rainfall, well defined seasons and an exceptional summer experience. Current recreational and open space and community and cultural capital studies highlight key facilities such as the waterfront and wharf, showgrounds redevelopment, and a relatively high number of sporting venues, parks and coastal open space and local talent such as the *Slipstream Circus*.

Similarly the redevelopment in Penguin and the adoption of urban design guidelines highlight a growing capacity to ensure good design of liveable places to include a more holistic "lifestyle package" (i.e. walk to local parks, pathways to shops and schools, coastal parks and interesting and distinctive local experiences such as the Penguin Markets). Additional evidence of good basic assets for liveability include high levels of volunteerism, a large number of community groups and a concern to ensure access to "regional" scale resources such as the Leven Canyon and Dial Range.

Constructing advantage for Central Coast

This strategic framework affords the opportunity to reconfigure local resources as the basis for competitive advantage. Equally there are core processes and institutional arrangements which enable this to occur.

Clearly Central Coast has a number of desirable assets and attributes in regards to liveability. A liveability platform connects to **outcomes** in a range of areas. Most obvious are the outcomes for community strength: vibrant, active, diverse, connected communities where people want to be, and where there are a range of opportunities for people to interact, build relationships, participate, and support one another. Liveable communities demonstrate low levels of crime, high levels of community involvement (e.g. participation in a wide range of organisations, employment, volunteering, and recreation), and informal safety nets and supports in the community through which people can access help when they need it. These have flow-on benefits in terms of the well-being of community members and the dynamism and resilience of the community as a whole.

Less obvious, but important, are economic outcomes arising from liveability: the ability to attract skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and companies that see the benefits of locating in a highly liveable region. Like many areas we face skills shortages, a serious issue but one which sits beyond the remit of a local authority. However, there is plenty of evidence that 'place based' attributes – principally liveability and lifestyle – are very important to attracting skilled young workers, and many of these assets do fall within the provenance of a local authority. Liveability thus becomes a key platform through which a local Council can act strategically to promote future economic prosperity.

Finally, there are clear links between a liveability platform and environmental outcomes, as natural environments are often a key aspect of what makes a place 'liveable'. Clean air and water, natural landscapes, healthy waterways, native flora and fauna, and other features of a healthy environment are clearly among the features that make an area appealing and enhance the quality of life for those who live there. Recognising the contribution of environmental health to liveability emphasises another aspect of the value of environmental assets, assets which Central Coast has in abundance.

The four *dimensions of liveability* are detailed below. Each of the dimensions of liveability suggests ideas for particular strategies for Council. In the first instance these dimensions point the way of the future – they highlight what communities and investors are seeking. But we can also assess the gaps in current assets and work underway, and identify those aspects of liveability which need strengthening.

Form and structure of the region

This is the first dimension of liveability. In looking at the **form and structure of the region,** attention is given to way places sit in the landscape, the balance of the urban, rural and 'wild' natural landscapes, and the extent to which human needs are met (e.g. basic services, healthy environments) and accessibility is maintained within and between land uses. Of key importance is movement among places (e.g. vehicle traffic, foot traffic) and the location, accessibility and diversity of nodes of community life (retail, services, recreational areas and meeting-places). Land conversion and consolidation strategies are key tools that Councils can use for influencing the shape of settlements.

Creating successful places

The second dimension focuses on creating successful places – places with *genius loci* – that are a good 'fit' with their function, of a good size and scale, functional, safe, comfortable, healthy, accessible, diverse, vibrant. Successful places are generally inclusive rather than exclusive in their design, encourage social interaction rather than isolation, and are aesthetic and welcoming. Whether a town centre streetscape or a sports centre, well-designed and distinctive places contribute to liveability. There is a key role for local government in moving beyond piecemeal and opportunistic development approaches to focus on the role and function of places, and encouraging and allowing a range of activities to take place within them.

Sociability

The third dimension of liveability is about **sociability** - it is above all a cultural dimension which describes the social interactions, cultural expectations, limitations and opportunities in a particular community. How 'tight-knit' a community is, the extent to which it accepts or rejects newcomers, the acceptance and celebration of cultural diversity, the opportunities for interaction, the predominant cultural values, and the creativity and skills that are present in the community, all influence liveability. While many of these features are organic to particular communities, there is a role for local authorities in recognising and highlighting its community's strengths, and providing support and encouragement to those who would develop and extend them.

Accessibility

The final dimension of liveability is about **accessibility**; it is essentially a gauge of inclusiveness. How easily can different groups or sectors of the community – young people, the aged, low-income people, people with a disability, working mothers, and minority groups – access its places, facilities, and services? A highly car-dependent region such as North West Tasmania, with very limited public transport, creates accessibility issues for the aged, for young people without car access, and increasingly for those struggling to afford the rising cost of petrol. A retail centre where shops close at 5 pm on weekdays creates accessibility issues for full-time workers. A town centre full of high-end eateries and expensive boutiques may please some, but becomes inaccessible to others. Accessibility is central to liveability.

Given these four dimensions of liveability, what kinds of initiatives can a Council take to strengthen and leverage a liveability platform? Three specific areas are explored below.

Clear guidelines around the use and adoption of precincts.

There are a number of opportunities emerging for the Central Coast that can be pursued here. For example, emerging opportunities in agriculture would suggest local authorities develop concepts around Agricultural Precincts and Peri Urban precincts that allow for a more integrated approach to protecting and leveraging resources in changing agricultural landscapes. There is a need to accommodate and protect good quality soils in a way that is also cognizant of new forms of energy and water provision (e.g. local area schemes) and changing agri-food business models (such as shorter value chains) which require closer connections between consumer and producer. (See also the Innovation Platform).

Similarly, the concept of precincts has been used as a planning tool to foster and enhance industry clusters. The emerging link between liveable places and productivity points to a role for Central Council to support a range of environmental services and businesses which draw on local resources (wind and water) skills, and know how. (See also Sustainability Platform).

Greenways and corridors to provide linkages and accessibility

The audit of Central Coast liveability assets highlights a network of local parks, coastal areas and walkways and river walks that remain largely unconnected. The liveability/ lifestyle package of the Central Coast would be enhanced by not only developing a strategic plan to connect these elements within the local authority and across local authority boundaries.

Equally important is the strategic integration of these pathways and parks into 'Greenways', offering alternative movement options for local residents. When Greenways are linked to local schools, community facilities and residential areas it becomes possible for local developers to successfully develop and market a more comprehensive lifestyle package. As is outlined in the Sustainability Platform, the package is further enhanced through a variety of sustainable infrastructure initiatives. Central Coast Council can provide strategic direction to facilitate this kind of investment by developers.

Significant landmarks and nodes for community cultural activities

Liveability studies demonstrate the importance of key nodes and landmarks to enable community interaction around events and activities. Sometimes these landmarks are formal, while at other times the node may be multifunctional, providing destinations for recreation and relaxation (e.g. places along greenways, places to learn and share).

Platform 2: Sustainability

Rationale for a Sustainability Platform

Sustainability is a complex and multidimensional concept. Its utility in the context of a local government settlement and investment strategy can be most fully appreciated when *sustainability* is used in its most holistic sense, according to the definition adopted by the Brundtland Commission (formerly the World Commission on Environment and Development). Brundtland defined *sustainable development* as development that:

> *"meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".*

This definition thus implicitly argues for the rights of future generations to raw materials and vital ecosystem services to be taken into account in decision-making.

For the purposes of this sustainability platform, we have adopted some of the forms of 'capital' we utilised in our consultation process, as *dimensions of sustainability*. This recognises that sustainability necessarily encompasses economic, social and environmental issues (because each is dependent upon the other), and also reinforces the notion that building platforms requires attention to all forms of capital.

The five **dimensions of sustainability** that underpin this platform are:

- **Natural capital**: the soil, water, flora, fauna, climate, geology, landforms, rivers, coastlines, etc. that support and sustain us and distinguish us as a place.
- **Built capital**: the infrastructure that supports us as a society – our roads, railways, water, sewerage and power infrastructure, etc.
- **Economic capital**: the money that lubricates our economy and the value of the assets that accrue within the local economy and their contribution to the broader economy.
- **Human capital**: the knowledge, skills and experience of people within the community (and those we can access from outside the community)
- **Social capital**: the social institutions, shared norms and processes that underpin our social fabric.

In building a 'Sustainability' platform, Central Coast Council is building into its decision-making processes an implicit consideration of the environmental, social and economic sustainability of all development. In particular, it is recognising the need to consider the *resilience* of each form of capital over the long term. This requires making sure that its decisions build and strengthen, rather than diminish, each of the forms of capital. While many of the issues impacting sustainability are influenced by state-wide, national and global drivers beyond council control, Central Coast Council can work strategically to build a sustainability platform that strengthens the resilience of its capitals base in the face of an uncertain future.

Status in the Central Coast

In broad terms, the sustainability of the Central Coast in environmental, social and economic terms is good. The population is relatively stable, although aging in line with the national trend. Employment and economic growth indicators show relative stability. Water quality and quantity are very good and the quality of the soils is excellent. Indigenous flora and fauna is well represented, but is under various development pressures, especially on private land. Within reserves, there is pressure on indigenous flora and fauna, and key ecosystems, through inappropriate use and wilful and/or accidental damage.

The Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management Strategy provides an overall framework and targets for protecting and enhancing the core natural resource assets of the region. Cradle Coast NRM, Cradle Coast Water, UTAS, and other local and regional players have expertise in terms of water resource management, biodiversity conservation, community engagement through Landcare, Coastcare and Waterwatch, sustainable agriculture (soil and effluent management), pest plant and animal control etc. Meanwhile, local schools and universities are playing a large role in shaping the awareness, skills and mind-sets of future generations of Central Coasters. It is important that Council identifies how it can influence the development of this human capital by identifying common areas of interest and action.

Constructing Advantage for Central Coast

A sustainability platform will help Council identify challenges and opportunities arising from the many issues that affect environmental, social and economic sustainability. By shifting the focus away from polarised perspectives (conservation vs development), it will identify how threats to economic, social and environmental sustainability can be minimised and off-set through innovation, creativity and holistic planning and design. A sustainability platform will also enable Council and other stakeholders to identify proactive and innovative responses to global challenges such as climate change and ‘peak oil’, by focussing on how lifestyles, livelihoods and landscapes can be sustained under such changes.

There will be many positive benefits to the Central Coast as a result of climate change. The excellent soils, relative abundance of fresh water and favourable climate in this area will be even more valuable in the future as other food-producing regions in Australia and beyond become less productive. North West Tasmania is currently a significant food-bowl and this value will increase in the future. But with this opportunity comes a responsibility: it places more onus on the communities of Central Coast to manage our soil, water and biodiversity assets in a sustainable manner. At the same time, emerging resource challenges related to, for instance, the rising cost of fossil fuels create challenges and opportunities for businesses and residents in Central Coast. A Sustainability platform strategically positions Council to take a creative and proactive approach to ensuring the continuity of our resource base.

Climate change and the cost of fossil fuels are currently two of the “big issues” in the news, and together, they are increasing community awareness of sustainability issues, and engendering a willingness among the community to reduce our collective environmental footprint. The combined influence of these two factors – increasing awareness, and preparedness to act – provide a conducive setting within which Central Coast Council can take a proactive role in terms of sustainable development in the region. Importantly, however, Council's approach to 'sustainability' needs to move beyond simplistic bandwagoning, to take a holistic and creative approach to sustainability based on a deep appreciation of biophysical, social, and economic resources, their value, and their interrelationships. For instance, while most focus is currently on water cycle management and energy efficiency, these are only a small part of the story. There is a need to address broader biophysical, social and economic issues within a sustainability framework that sees each of these as intrinsically bound to current and future liveability of the Central Coast.

A holistic Sustainable Development Platform thus requires attention across the following five dimensions:

Natural capital

The natural resources (air, soil, water, biodiversity) that sustain us are of paramount importance to the capacity of the region to support us as a vibrant, successful community into the future. They must be conserved and enhanced by acknowledging their limitations, utilising them within their capacity, and not degrading them through contamination or loss from the region.

A focus on sustainability and the long-term resilience of natural capital has planning and practice implications for Council in the following areas and ways:

- Planning should be based on a whole of catchment approach, not just a consideration of individual development sites.
- Land use planning must take into account land capability. Development applications (especially for larger investments) should be able to justify not only the economic benefits of the development but also their social and environmental benefits and long-term sustainability.
- Council should consider the utility of overlays such as 'green zones' to delineate areas of special environmental quality that might have additional environmental protection controls.
- The impacts of climate change in terms of rainfall, runoff and sea-level changes need to be considered in all settlement and investment decision-making.
- Urban development needs to be responsive to local topography and landscape features – modify the development not the landscape.
- Involve Cradle Coast NRM, Parks and Wildlife and other key agencies with an interest in, and jurisdiction over, natural resource management.
- Engage appropriate specialist consultants and advisers to 'buy in' contemporary best practice.

Built capital

We have inherited a built environment that has evolved under a very different set of conditions with respect to energy costs and accessibility than is likely in the future. With increasing demand and reducing supplies of fossil fuels, and the lack of accessible alternatives in the short-term, our towns and transport infrastructure needs to adapt. Council needs to start demanding attention to these issues by regional and state authorities, and work proactively to incorporate appropriate responses into its own planning and urban design processes to ensure resilience in the face of change. Some of the key issues are:

- Decreasing our reliance on fossil fuels and increasing the adoption of renewable energy technologies.
- Designing transportation infrastructure to enable alternative forms of transport to co-exist. For example, no new roads should be built without incorporating safe cycleways.
- Encouraging flexibility in housing options designed around low energy living (in terms of heating/cooling and transportation between residence and work).
- Designing physical environments (including housing, urban design, public infrastructure) in accordance with sustainability principles.

A key objective of considering built capital from a sustainability perspective is the integration of lifestyle and business opportunities. While the creation of business and economic opportunities are largely beyond the remit of local government, key lifestyle aspects such as open space, community facilities and urban design are indeed within their remit, giving Council a key lever to influence environmental, social and economic sustainability. Key issues surround the form, structure and layout of neighbourhood units and villages, which focus upon either a mixed-use town centre or smaller neighbourhood hubs. It is important to have these neighbourhood-level units well thought through and integrated with other lifestyle opportunities including:

- Recreation resources such as open space networks built around natural features (rivers, wetlands, etc) and parklands
- Sporting facilities
- Education services
- Retail and commercial facilities
- Good quality community facilities and services.

Attention to these services will contribute to broader social sustainability outcomes in terms of providing safe environments and leading to long term health benefits for the local population.

Economic capital

Encouraging diversity and innovation is a key strategy to ensure the sustainability and resilience of regional economies. Council can contribute to this by making available land, resources and infrastructure that meet a range of needs. However, we must be strategic in how such resources are planned and allocated. One useful concept is that of developing ‘precincts’ whereby businesses at various levels in the value-chain co-exist within a region – not necessarily within one place, but linked through a region through physical, social and institutional connections or networks.

Developing successful precincts requires coordination and facilitation. It requires identifying strengths and weaknesses, across all the forms of capital we have been discussing in this Framework, and then putting in place mechanisms to bridge the gaps and make the connections. This may not necessarily be a role that Council takes a lead on, but it is certainly something that Council can instigate and encourage. Council can also help build resilient industries by facilitating access to expertise from within and outside the region.

Council also needs to consider its own financial sustainability and the ability of the projects and initiatives it instigates to sustain themselves in the long term. Proactively seeking new and innovative mechanisms to raise capital and fund key initiatives or facilities that have high leveraging power could be a justifiable expenditure of council resources.

Human capital

Whilst Council does not directly influence the values, skills and knowledge of residents, it can have an influence on the perceptions and values of communities through its planning processes and the provision of community facilities, infrastructure and open space. For instance, providing the 'soft' infrastructure within the region that meets the needs of young people (such as events, cultural opportunities etc.) will encourage people to stay and attract new people.

The process of developing this Framework for Settlement and Investment, and the community visioning processes that preceded this, have identified a range of values and qualities that the community believes will ensure the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the region. The Council can play a role in articulating these values, working through educational institutions and community groups. This is important in terms of helping the community understand the settlement and investment trajectory that Council is adopting, helping them understand how the activities of Council are contributing strategically to this overall framework, and building the capacity of the community to contribute to the building the Sustainability Platform.

Social capital

Building the Sustainability Platform will require attention to institutional processes and capacities at two scales – between Council and other institutions (e.g. regional and state agencies, neighbouring councils, NGOs and community groups), and within Central Coast Council itself. Across both of these scales, consideration needs to be given to extent of and mechanisms for the involvement of the broader community, and of council committees, in decision-making processes. Building relationships, in the context of a sound strategic framework, should ultimately streamline processes and build trust.

Rather than reinforcing the old pro- and anti-development dichotomies of the past, a sustainability platform sets out the ground rules for doing business within Central Coast Council. It acknowledges that good environmental, social and economic outcomes can be accrued through sound planning and design of new developments. By acknowledging and comprehensively measuring social, economic and environmental costs and benefits, measures can be taken in a holistic sense to offset the negative impacts in one dimension or area, with benefits in another dimension or area.

By setting out the ground rules clearly and concisely to business, and outlining the comparative advantages if they do business in this way, investors will have a sense of security that the 'goal posts' will not move. Taking this innovative approach also increases the likelihood of attracting the kinds of businesses and investors that the region wants – people with complementary values that will be here for the long term, not to make a quick buck by depleting local social and environmental capital and then leaving.

Platform 3: Innovation and Creative Energy

Rationale for a Innovation and Creative Energy Platform

The past three decades have seen a burgeoning of interest in the concept of 'innovation' and particularly, the link between innovation and economic growth. It is now broadly recognised that economic growth and competitiveness rest ultimately on *innovation performance* – even more so than on traditional factors such as the availability of capital and labour – and, that innovation is a *social process*, often involving collective and interactive learning, in particular social and institutional contexts. Thus, innovation is increasingly seen as a key feature of economic development – and some places seem to be better than others at encouraging it.

For a local Council, these insights raise questions and opportunities. First, there is considerable distance between Councils' traditional approaches to local economic development and these rather new and perhaps unsettling ideas. New ideas about innovation suggest that economic development can no longer be portrayed as a separate sphere from 'community' or 'social' concerns, or far away from 'cultural' or 'creative' questions. Rather, economic development is centrally influenced by the extent to which an area has, or might develop, a 'creative milieu' or 'entrepreneurial culture'. Contemporary ideas about entrepreneurship suggest that entrepreneurship is not necessarily a product of strong economic conditions; it is more reliant on social and human factors. This, in turn, creates opportunities for Councils, which have a range of tools that can be used to stimulate and facilitate creativity and innovation, and retain and attract entrepreneurial people.

An innovation platform is in many ways closely aligned with a liveability platform, in that both focus on the way that a place, in its physical and social settings, can encourage people to exercise, share and express their skills, and may attract people with a range of skills. Broadly there are several sets of resources which, when developed and enhanced, would seem to strengthen a locality's innovation platform. Harmaakorpi and Pekkarinen (2006) suggest five key capabilities:

- Innovative capability
- Learning capability
- Networking capability
- Leadership capability
- Forecasting capability

Status in the Central Coast

In Central Coast, there are a range of examples of innovative ability, both within and outside of business contexts. For example there are a range of companies in the area of agriculture and agricultural manufacturing (e.g. Dobmac Engineering, Webster's, Harvest Moon, and Clover Country Meats) who demonstrate innovative capacity. While the Census data highlight a relatively poor showing in terms of formal qualifications, the production capacity points to well developed know how and systems of informal and sharing of tacit knowledge across the locality. Alongside this informal learning, the Central

Coast Council has availed itself of the capabilities of the University of Tasmania's Cradle Coast Campus and programs of the Institute for Regional Development. Access to these local resources, such as the Regional Atlas, enables both local business and Council access to trend data, forecasting and detailed regional analysis and "myth busting".

The community consultation processes and prior work by Central Coast Council reveal a plethora of informal business networks across the region. The cluster of vegetable wholesaling and processing industries (e.g. Webster's, Harvest Moon, and Simplot) also points to a cluster of local knowledge and skills which is attractive to investors. The area has a strong list of local entrepreneurs, and alongside those living and investing in the area, the local culture has spawned other entrepreneurs and leaders.

Other research on innovation highlights three important characteristics. First, innovation in low and medium tech industries is generally centred around networking, design and iterative learning – and this is already happening in Central Coast. Second, local know how (about soils, climate, resources, skills and relationships and trust – i.e. place-based know how) provide important value add and are almost impossible to copy – again, these forms of know how are present in abundance in the Central Coast. Third, a culture of creative thinking, creative events and creative opportunities can foster innovation – and there is a high level of community engagement and creative activities in Central Coast.

Importantly – like attributes of liveability – these characteristics also fall within the ambit of local government. These are things which local government can strengthen and in so doing strengthen an innovation platform.

Constructing Advantage for Central Coast

When local resources are considered in the context of mega trends, several promising possibilities emerge to strengthen the Innovation Platform. We argue that the Innovation Platform be framed around 3 areas of advantage:

Environmental services – with a particular focus on water and energy

Looking first at energy and water, rising fuel prices and carbon emission along with climate change have placed severe pressure on the water reserves in Tasmania. As a consequence Hydro Tasmania has been unable to meet energy demand and has needed to source "dirty power" via Bass Link. From being a net exporter, Tasmania is now importing power. A number of local entrepreneurs have investigated the opportunities for locality based/ producer networks of energy generation using smaller wind turbines. The localised systems are not only meeting local industry needs but feeding power into the grid. Wind and water resources exist in the Central Coast and it is timely to re-evaluate the innovative opportunities. Previous efforts (e.g. Vestas) means that local know how and skills exist.

The development of innovative solutions, however, will require a rethink in regards to meeting planning requirements. The case study of Nichols in Latrobe Council – while very successful – highlights the difficulties when locating turbines on protected agricultural land. If these kinds of local energy generation initiatives were to be extended to incorporate groups of producers and business, there are wider implications for local councils to review the interface with current planning approaches and with PAL.

Similarly, efforts to capture more water and contribute to a Tasmanian Water Grid necessitate a platform to support innovation. As with energy generation, the significant gaps are in a dearth in planning mechanisms to accommodate innovative and creative resource production and use solutions.

Agri-food Production

Central Coast not only values its superior agricultural resources (soils, water, sunshine hours, growing season) but also strongly supports the skills and know how embedded in the area. The area boasts a cross section of agricultural industries including wholesale production for the large supermarket chains (e.g. potatoes, carrots, brassicas, onions, peas) but also vegetable processing through Simplot. Alongside these horticultural industries, the area also supports poppy production, dairy and beef.

However agricultural landscapes in the North West are transforming – through technology related to irrigation, soils biology and new plant varieties. Further, the industries/ producers in the Central Coast have recently been part of a large study on value chains. Value chain studies highlight the importance of thinking of agriculture well beyond the farm gate. Now more than ever, it is important to see agriculture as a value package which includes the consumers. Changing agri-food systems often bring a focus on *place* and *provenance*. Evidence from other localities (Hawkes Bay, NZ; Mornington Peninsula, Vic; Hawkesbury region, western Sydney) highlight the need for innovative responses to enable and strengthen innovation in these industries.

In some places this has resulted in a shift in thinking towards Agricultural Precincts – using a much more holistic approach as to what might constitute agricultural production. Increasingly closer links to the consumer and the need for short chains has implications for the range of activities on agricultural land (e.g. vineyards are more than grape growing; they require tasting, marketing, storage facilities, etc.). New research and value chain studies highlight new business models for agriculture which demonstrate the effectiveness of small farms with high value added production. Other evidence from research shows that smaller and parcels with high value added production bring new and different skills and investment base into the agricultural portfolio. Demand for these opportunities is already present in the Central Coast.

One again, however, the planning mechanism and state policy inhibit innovative solutions. Innovative planning arrangements would be those which simultaneously protect the agricultural use of the land but accommodate different business models and production systems. Attention to food futures and the changing spectrum of agri food production systems highlight promising possibilities and reveal gaps which need to be considered to strengthen the innovation platform for the Central Coast. Can Central Coast's competitive advantages in the agrifood area be developed further to deepen and strengthen the innovation platform for the Central Coast?

Creative Industries

As the industrial economy has evolved into the knowledge economy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, knowledge and creative thinking have become the hallmarks of successful places. Creative industries are *those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and* *exploitation of intellectual property.* The phrase *Creative Industries* (or sometimes *Creative Economy*) refers to a set of interlocking industry sectors, often defined as those that focus on creating and exploiting intellectual property products.

While creative industries have their origins in individual creativity, there are two keys to creative thinking which are significant to local governments. First, “place” or localized knowledge becomes very important to creative industries, because place often shapes new ideas with distinctive points of difference from elsewhere. Second, creative thinking and the spin-off of creative industries are best fostered when the there is an “innovative milieu” or culture which supports and fosters it. Importantly this innovative milieu is strongly embedded in and supported by a culture of learning (including learning outside of formal settings), and by a “thick” local institutional base around creativity – that is, a plethora of local organizations, events, groups and associations who foster exchange of ideas and “thinking outside the square”. It is for this reason that the Victorian Government, in its Department of Communities, has paid particular attention to encouraging a range of community based events and activities.

Creative industries emerge where new and innovative ideas are converted into business opportunities (whether in more traditional areas like art or design, or other areas like niche social, personal or business services). Stories from other regions and localities point to the presence of a culture which supports and stimulates ideas as a necessary ingredient to fostering creative thinking, small firm development and entrepreneurship. Liveability attributes will also tend to attract and retain creative people and creative industries. Central Coast is already rich in many liveability attributes, social capital, human capital, cultural capital, local institutions, and creative energy, and has a tradition of entrepreneurship. There is a role for local government in leveraging an innovation platform, both in encouraging and growing the area’s “innovative milieu” broadly, and specifically in facilitating, enabling, and showcasing the “creative industry” businesses which may emerge from it.

Platform 4: Distinctiveness

Rationale for a Distinctiveness Platform

Distinctiveness is about the qualities that make a place different from other places. These qualities may be physical (landscape, climate, infrastructure, etc.) or cultural (heritage, values, institutions, etc.). Particular qualities and combinations of qualities define an area's identity and how it is different from other places.

In a globalised world, distinctiveness is often lost as places copy their development trajectories from elsewhere, streetscapes fill with the same corporate names as everywhere else, and media-driven popular culture encourages a common set of tastes, opinions and values. Yet many of the qualities that Central Coasters value are ultimately about the *distinctiveness* and special character of their place, its geography and communities.

Building a distinctiveness platform will enable the Central Coast Council to recognise and build upon the qualities that distinguish this place, resulting in long-term competitive advantage in the global market for residents, tourists, businesses, and entrepreneurial thinkers.

But the distinctiveness platform will need to consider distinctiveness at different scales – the overall distinctiveness of Central Coast within its global, national and state-wide context, but also the distinctiveness of places within the region and Council area. It is important that each of the precincts, places and sub-regions within the Council area can maintain their own distinctiveness to develop their own competitive advantage and provide choice for residents and visitors.

The distinctiveness platform has four **dimensions**:

- The **physical attributes** of places themselves – the landscape character of a place, its built form and landscape setting within which it sits.
- The **spaces between the places** – distinctiveness is enhanced by maintaining spaces (usually of a different character) between places.
- The **cultural qualities** or the 'way of life' and sense of community within a place.
- The **activity** occurring within a place – the dominant land uses, events, ways of life that contribute to physical and cultural distinctiveness.

The distinctiveness platform in therefore inextricably linked with the liveability platform, but is distinguished by its focus on minimising homogeneity.

Status in the Central Coast

The landscape qualities of the Central Coast are distinctive in a national and global context. The region has a unique combination of rich volcanic soils, high rainfall, mild climate, forested ranges, canyons and rich farmland, all embraced by a rugged coastline. Our landscape assessment has also demonstrated that there is significant diversity within the region. And, each settlement has its own character due to the range of their size and architectural style.

The 'spaces between places' within the region are currently sufficient to maintain distinctiveness between, for example, each of the coastal towns and villages. The forested ranges also help define and distinguish between the different agricultural landscapes and between urban settlements and rural land uses.

Culturally, there is less diversity within the region, in that many of the characteristics of the community in terms of the high rates of volunteerism and participation in sports are universally high. But in comparison to other regions in Tasmania and other States, the Central Coast community can be distinguished from other regional communities by the high rates of involvement and participation and the extent to which recreational opportunities afforded within the region are taken up.

Within the region, the different land uses and industries and proximity to the neighbouring communities of Burnie and Devonport, add another dimension to the mosaic of life and landscape.

But it is the potential development trajectories afforded by the unique qualities of the region, in terms of its soils and rainfall, access to ports, technical expertise and the region's history in key industries, that will help define the distinctive characteristics of Central Coast in the future. These trends are pointing towards a future dominated by agriculture, horticulture and food processing. The Distinctiveness Platform equips Council with the ability to balance this trajectory with other factors and contributors to the regional economy, to enable it to diversify the economy and further enhance its competitive advantage.

Constructing Advantage for Central Coast

The Distinctiveness Platform recognises that it is possible to intentionally choose not to simply copy one's development models and trajectories from elsewhere. While copying others' models is easy enough to do, copy-cat development risks sacrificing a key source of competitive advantage. This is because places that are distinctive have a competitive advantage in the global market for residents, tourists, businesses, and entrepreneurial thinkers.

- Distinctiveness is one of the key current and future drivers of the tourism industry. People don't just travel to escape the routines of daily life. Tourists are increasingly looking for new experiences, and for places that are different and distinctive from other places they have travelled or from where they live.
- Similarly, many people are attracted to live in distinctive places – places that have 'character' and that demonstrate particular qualities that other places don't have.
- Places that intentionally cultivate and communicate their particular assets are also more likely to attract individuals and companies that are seeking these qualities. Such places 'stand out from the crowd' and create a unique niche for themselves in the global economy.

The tension around distinctiveness is that it is sometimes misrepresented as being provincial: as if distinctiveness could only be achieved by being 'untouched' by the modern world (either through ignorance or a stubborn unwillingness to engage with it). This is a common fallacy of development: that it is a homogenous, uni-linear process that must ultimately leave everyplace looking like everyplace else. A Distinctiveness platform challenges this fallacy. Being distinctive is not about cultivating an ignorance of other development trajectories and options – indeed, if people do not travel or experience other places, they will not necessarily appreciate the characteristics that distinguish their home. Rather, it is about strategically choosing what models to accept, reject, or entirely reinvent – in order to intentionally cultivate the particular qualities that make a place distinctive.

A local Council can potentially play a strong role in recognising a cultivating the distinctiveness of its area. Settlement and investment decisions, in particular, continually confront the challenge of how things should look and how they should change, with frequent pressures from both 'pro-development' and 'anti-development' elements. A Distinctiveness Platform steers between these false opposites. It is possible, and often desirable, to allow investment from national and multi-national corporations, giving locals and visitors the choice they are seeking – yet also possible, and necessary, to do so in a way that maintains and enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the region, and its various precincts and towns.

A closer look at the four dimensions of distinctiveness suggests particular directions for Council:

In terms of the **physical character of places**, there is a need to identify and maintain the qualities that distinguish that place. This does not mean that new developments need to be 'carbon copies' of existing buildings and infrastructure. On the contrary, places need to continue to evolve and remain fresh and vibrant. What is necessary is that good design principles are applied to new developments. The essence of the physical form and character of a place can be acknowledged and represented in new buildings and infrastructure. The scale, form and structure of new developments needs to be considered in relation to existing character.

In terms of maintaining '**spaces between places'**, it is important that each town and locality is able to remain a separate, distinguishable entity. This is especially important along the coastline where the value of water-view properties applies development pressures evenly along the coast. Fortunately, there are some land capability issues along the coast (e.g. land subject to land slips) that effectively limit the extent to which higher density housing can be accommodated along the coastline. Ribbon development along transport routes can inadvertently lead to a loss of 'spaces between places', limiting the opportunity to distinguish between localities and precincts. Maintaining 'spaces between places' is also important to enhance the experience of the region by tourists. Maintaining and enhancing a 'sense of arrival' in a place is vital to engendering a 'sense of place', and this an only be maintained by maintaining distinguishable landscape character between places.

Allowing each town or place to develop in niche areas can facilitate distinctive **cultural** qualities and **activities**. The Penguin Markets, for example, generate a unique form and intensity of activity, and contribute to cultural expression. Other towns and precincts need to build on their distinctive qualities to develop places of unique character and experience. For example, the Wharf precinct in Ulverstone will have a character that is quite different to Burnie and Devonport's wharf areas.

Implementing Strategies to 'join the dots'

The four platforms of the *Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment* provide a basis for action between council and all partners in the community – residents, business and industry and those in health, education and education and research (some of which have national and international links). To build these platforms and equip the Central Coast Council to proactively respond to the challenges ahead, we have identified six core Strategic Directions. These have been designed to draw upon and leverage current local assets, in a way that "joins the dots" to utilize and leverage the strengths already in place. This will ensure more effective outcomes from resources already invested and committed.

The six Strategic Directions are:

- Focus on the **shape of the place**
- Create a **connected Central Coast**
- Foster **local-regional connections**
- Build **community capacity and creativity**
- Create **lifestyle packages and housing choices**
- **Leverage natural capital** through **sustainability infrastructure**

Some of these Strategic Directions are about leveraging the assets already in place, others are about putting our energy into areas where there have been gaps. A common element across the themes is about growing our capacity to interact and have the confidence to move ahead. Another key element is the need to align our efforts with those of others to leverage greater success from a whole suite of existing, or underlying, processes and activities that are happening already.

The Shape of the Place

Strategic Direction

To develop a vibrant and liveable region, it is important to focus on the actual shape of development – nodes, corridors, and precincts – and ensure that the structures and settlement forms augment liveability and highlight the place's distinctiveness. A crucial element will be attention to *place making* and building distinctiveness.

Rationale

Spaces need to be physically located where they 'make sense' for their use. They need to be connected and arranged at a scale appropriate to their regional context and intended use. Successful place making ensures that the structure and form of development are a good 'fit' in terms of maintaining accessibility within and between land uses, building and enhancing community vitality, ensuring the sustainable use and management of natural resources, and ensuring that distinctive characteristics and assets are not lost. Enhancing liveability necessitates breaking the cycle of piecemeal development and infrastructure deficiencies which at present can inhibit and detract inward investment and settlement, and intentionally focusing on 'place making'.

Place making is successful when a place has a draw or 'gravitas' of its own over and above the draw of users who occupy the space. Successful places have a 'sense of place'. In particular, the public realm and associated semi public spaces provide the terrain for social interaction as well as a significant part of the community's transaction base. Community, affiliation and experience are all key components in place making. Local governments must assure an enduring and memorable public realm in order to maintain the distinctiveness of local places, instil vibrancy and build economic and social capital. It is legitimate, for instance, for local governments to create community spaces that are intended to encourage public forms of social life.

Suggested Strategies

Designing for Form and Structure

Designing for Form and Structure is about understanding and refining the nodes, corridors and precincts that comprise the overall design of the landscape.

The shape and intensity of residential subdivisions and development are significant factors influencing the liveability of places. Land conversion (release) and consolidation strategies are key tools for influencing the shape of settlement. Council needs to not only consider the quantity of land available for different kinds of uses, but to strategically target and coordinate the intensity of subdivisions to ensure vibrant communities within and between new subdivisions and existing retail and urban land uses. Where large regional-scale development occurs it needs a master planning approach.

Clear guidelines around the use and adoption of precincts need to be developed. There are a number of opportunities emerging for the Central Coast which can be pursued here. For example, transforming agricultural landscapes would suggest local authorities develop concepts around *Agricultural Precincts* and *Peri Urban Precincts* which allow for a more integrated approach to protect good quality soils, open up potential in new forms of energy and water resource provision (e.g. local area schemes), and respond to the opportunities opened up by changing agri-food business models such as value chains which require closer connections between consumer and producer.

There is a need for adequate open space and accessible wilderness space to provide recreational opportunities, help define 'spaces between places', and to provide essential ecosystem services (clean water, air, wildlife corridors, habitat, etc).

Designing for Experience and Relationships

Designing for experience and relationships is about paying strategic attention to how places are used.

A diversity of place/space types is needed (active, passive, public, private) so primary land uses should comprise a mix of compatible types, to enable a range of appropriate activities within each precinct/zone. Council should encourage and allow a range of activities to happen by managing for and resolving potential conflict between different activities.

Vibrant places need spaces for people to meet, watch, interact. Active street life and active street frontages have implications for urban design.

Liveability studies demonstrate the importance of key nodes and landmarks to enable community interaction around events and activities. Sometimes these landmarks are formal, other times the node may be multifunctional providing destinations for recreation and relaxation (e.g. places along greenways, places to learn and share).

There are opportunities for Council to work with state government to develop ways in which educational and other facilities can become centres that can cater for whole community rather than solely school age students. These centres can be the focus for community development.

Activity within key retail centres, parks and nodes of community life, such as the wharf and showgrounds, will be dependent upon ensuring there is proximity between these places and where people live. Council needs to take into consideration potential changes in mobility due to high fuel prices and/or an aging community to ensure key nodes of community activity are accessible from residential developments

Connected Central Coast

Strategic Direction

A second key Strategic Direction is to focus on the overall connectedness of Central Coast. Seek to enhance connectivity in how people *move* from place to place, how *accessible* places are to people, and the *connections* people are able to make with one another and the environment.

Rationale

While the 'shape of the place' is important, so is the movement that happens within it. The platforms of liveability and sustainability require a range of options for movement across the landscape: options which are accessible, enjoyable, of low environmental impact, and with a range of spin-off benefits – such as providing opportunities for social interaction, exercise, connection with the landscape, and contributing to a lifestyle experience. In turn, these kinds of creative connections both build and highlight the distinctiveness of the place (environment, community, lifestyle) while contributing to its innovative potential.

Suggested Strategies

Designing for a diverse range of movement patterns.

Deigning for a range of movement patterns must meet the diverse needs and desires of people in the community. This includes such things as:

- Accessible and practical public transport options.
- Functional local road network and parking.
- Walking and cycling opportunities.

Designing movement corridors to encourage activity and reduce environmental impact

- Minimize internal and local car trips by using networks of walking and cycling paths between generators and attractors such as parks, schools, shops, residential areas.
- Design for 'walking neighbourhoods' that integrate a mixture of complementary land uses in a walkable area. An arterial walking path can also serve as a public venue and gathering place, increasing social connectivity.
- Greenways encourage walking/ cycling (for transport and for recreation) and closer interaction with the natural environment.
- Design human movement corridors with sensitivity to animal movement and native vegetation.

Local-Regional Connections

Strategic Direction

Foster connections between Central Coast and its larger region, ensuring balanced access to, and coordination of, services and facilities at local and regional scales. Focus on maintaining the distinctive character of town centres and the local environment in their broader regional context.

Rationale

Local governments can no longer conduct their business in isolation. Increasingly local governments are being asked to collaborate and think regionally. Not only does this enable more efficient and effective delivery of services (e.g. water) but also ensures consistency and compatibility across local government borders and templates which reduce development and community costs.

The four Platforms are designed to strengthen Central Coast, but they must clearly dialogue with resources, opportunities, and responsibilities that are present in the larger regional context. Central Coast has resources and facilities – such as the Leven Canyon – which are of regional-scale significance; at the same time, there are resources and facilities in the larger region which Central Coasters access and enjoy. There is a need for Central Coast to collaborate across local government boundaries and work to ensure a balanced hierarchy of local facilities and regional 'nodes'.

Suggested Strategies

Focusing on the larger regional context of natural resource management activities

- Design local greenways networks to link to a broader 'greenways regional plan'.
- Coordinate with Cradle Coast NRM on Council NRM activities and to ensure connectivity of wildlife corridors, remnant vegetation, etc.
- Link to Council activities to Regional NRM Strategy, particularly in the context of land use planning, waterway management and waste management.
- Recognise that Leven Canyon, Dial Range, Leven and Forth Rivers and other key natural sites are of regional significance, thus Central Coast has the responsibility to ensure that all people across the region have access to these sites.

Reviewing and strengthening the retail hierarchy to highlight liveability attributes and distinctiveness

- A range of retail establishments with a range of products, price and quality levels and flexible opening hours are needed to attract a diverse range of consumers.
- There is need to document the type, size, location of existing and planned competitive retail facilities and districts, develop a hierarchy of facilities, spending, functions; and determine needs and supportable square footage of retail space.
- Ensure that new retail developments at local or regional scale promote liveability attributes and highlight the municipality's distinctiveness. Explore opportunities for mixed-use retail developments that emphasise lifestyle by combining retail with other activities and facilities. Such an approach developed with Education Tasmania / Tasmania Tomorrow, for instance, could be used to develop and embed lifelong learning. Such an approach with key local industries could be used to highlight the distinctiveness of local products and services.
- Ensure new retail developments embed aspects such as: connectivity and relationships to other areas, orientation to capture the advantage of the seascapes and coastal location, an environmentally focus and an authentic and a distinctive approach to design which reflects this place and its cool temperate climate.

Community Capacity and Creativity

Strategic Direction

Build capacity and creativity both within and beyond the Council organisation. Within Council itself, this is about achieving best Local Government practice (how to be efficient, effective, cutting edge) and developing the capacity and confidence to innovate. Beyond the Council organisation, this is about Council cultivating a culture that values and showcases creativity, encourages community-based solutions, stimulates innovation, and supports innovators in the community.

Rationale

It is increasingly recognised that regional and local development depends less on actions from afar (top-down government policy, external industry investment) and much more of the capacity of local people to recognise, build, and mobilise their assets. Council must look to strengthening its own capacity and that of its staff to be an innovative Council, while also encouraging, facilitating and supporting creative and entrepreneurial activity in the community: new community-based initiatives, new businesses, new solutions to problems, and new ways of doing things that leverage the platforms of liveability, sustainability, innovation and distinctiveness.

Suggested Strategies

Building the entrepreneurial capacity of Councillors and Council staff

- Strategic investment in learning for Councillors and staff.
- Cultivation of key partnerships (state government, CCNRM, NGOs, University, TAFE, schools….) and more effectively leveraging of existing ones (CCA) to achieve desired outcomes.

Facilitating creativity and entrepreneurship in the wider community

- Encourage, support and facilitate community events that enhance the creative attributes of Central Coast.
- Support the capacity of local community groups to generate creative solutions and enhance the area's liveability attributes.
- Provide showcasing opportunities for local entrepreneurs, artists, and creative groups.
- Recognise and leverage areas of current and emerging strength (e.g. industry clusters around food/ food processing, cutting edge research activities around new products and markets, artistic ability, etc.).
- Create an enabling and flexible institutional framework to facilitate new business opportunities. For instance, a one-stop shop for planning support; provision of advice and advocacy to local

entrepreneurs in their dealings with external agencies.

- Enable and facilitate new community-based activities, including minimising bureaucratic obstacles for community groups and non-profit organisations with innovative ideas.
- Cultivate and invest in spaces that stimulate creativity: e.g. physical spaces that encourage social interaction among different groups, learning, and sharing of ideas; open spaces and wilderness spaces.

Lifestyle Packages and Housing Choices

Strategic Direction

Investigate the opportunities for alternative housing choices, including housing that is intentionally connected to lifestyle packages.

Rationale

Different housing styles attract different market segments, and therefore a range of housing choices is desirable to attract a diverse population. Encouraging investment in residential developments that support Council's four key platforms of liveability, sustainability, innovation and distinctiveness is one good strategy to reinforce and leverage outcomes from these platforms.

Suggested Strategies

Developing lifestyle packages

- Connect residential planning to other key strategies around 'the shape of the place', connectivity, retail strategies, sustainability infrastructure, and community development.
- Recognise that successful residential developments are about more that houses; ultimately, they are about place-making, and they provide valuable opportunities to leverage and grow the distinctive attributes of a place.
- Incorporate 'sustainability infrastructure' into all new housing and urban design developments, paying attention to:
  - housing design in terms of passive and active solar heating, energy efficiency through good siting and design, etc.
  - Water-sensitive urban design – stormwater retention and filtration, reduce impacts of urban settlement on waterways, estuaries and coastlines, etc.
  - Energy-efficient urban design and transportation – consider consolidation strategies around key transport linkages and closer settlement near employment centres.
  - Landscape and public open space – design for multiple use, incorporate cycle ways, landscape management considerations.
- Develop 'local area plans' to steer the 'shape of the place' in a strategic and proactive manner.
- Develop 'multiple use' reserves around networks of open space – to meet natural resource management, recreation/connectivity objectives.
- Use appropriate species for parks and streetscapes, and encourage nurseries and garden designers to promote local native species and other plants with low water and fertiliser requirements.

Encouraging a creative approach to new housing development

- Recognise the need for diverse housing options beyond three bedroom houses.
- Understand the demand for rural residential housing and its connections to 1) rural productive activities (e.g. new forms of smaller-scale agriculture; which may provide sources of innovation) and 2) distinctive landscape attributes (e.g. bush blocks, sea views, open space; which can provide valuable liveability attraction).
- Recognise the need for connectivity and place-making in the design of new residential developments. Are there accessible retail, recreational, and other facilities? Are places walkable? Are there spaces for social interaction?
- Recognise the value of embedding sustainability attributes in the design of new housing and associated infrastructure.

Natural Capital and Sustainability Infrastructure

Strategic Direction

Invest in, and encourage investment in, innovative environmental sustainability infrastructure to leverage the opportunities offered by Central Coast's rich resource base, while ensuring that all Council-managed infrastructure is sustainable.

Rationale

Central Coast's natural capital is a key attribute of its liveability and distinctiveness. In an environment of increasing awareness of *limits*, in terms of energy, water, land capability and other key resources, there is an opportunity to both reduce unnecessary wastage, and leverage increasingly valuable resources more effectively. The emerging link between liveable places and productivity points to a role for Central Council to support a range of environmental services and businesses which draw on local resources (wind and water), skills and know how. At the same time, it is vital that urban design practices protect and enhance the unique natural environment of this place.

Suggested Strategies

Embedding a focus on *sustainability* and the *protection of natural capital* into all new developments and open space planning

- Take a whole of catchment approach, not just individual development sites; Involve Cradle Coast NRM and local volunteer groups, and engage appropriate consultants and advisers.
- Plan land use in accordance with land capability at all scales. Preserve the most productive land for the most productive uses.
- Protect and enhance remnant native vegetation. Protect and enhance habitat for rare and threatened species. Link areas of remnant vegetation and bushland reserves with wildlife corridors (e.g. via 'greeways').
- Protect and enhance waterways and riparian zones. Maintain water quality within waterways by controlling erosion and sedimentation from adjacent land uses and especially during construction/earthworks.
- Encourage the use of indigenous vegetation in parks and gardens to minimise water, fertiliser, pesticide and maintenance costs. When selecting exotic plants for streetscapes and public parks, select varieties that have low water and fertiliser requirements and site them in accordance with their preferred environments so that they thrive with minimal inputs.
- Use water resources efficiently and under a 'fit for purpose' policy: use the highest quality water for the most valuable uses and recycled and/or stormwater for low-value uses such as flushing toilets and

irrigation parks and gardens.

- Manage wastes in accordance with best practice and enable the community to 'reduce, reuse and recycle' as much as possible.

Facilitating private initiatives to build sustainability infrastructure

- Explore the possibilities for encouraging installation of water tanks to residential and commercial buildings and the use of this water for irrigation, flushing toilets, etc.
- Explore the possibilities for the use of recycled and grey water for domestic gardens and toilets and to irrigate public parks.
- Facilitate and enable appropriate private initiatives in sustainable energy capture (wind, solar etc.), e.g. through minimising unnecessary regulatory obstacles.
- Facilitate the establishment of new environmental services businesses.
- Encourage private initiatives to build sustainability infrastructure.

Outcomes

Outcomes to position for the future….

We believe that by building the four Platforms under this *Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment*, we can improve the quality of life for current and future generations, and position the Central Coast Council as a highly liveable place of great opportunity and options. The Platforms and associated strategic directions are intended to position Central Coast to achieve a vision of the future that capitalises on their most valued qualities:

> Central Coast, with its varied landscapes and accessible rivers and coastlines, provides an open door on nature. Our built environment fits the spirit and style of this unique place; we are like nowhere else. Our lifestyle is relaxed and inclusive, with a strong sense of community and well being. We have affordable housing, good facilities for all age groups including retirees, and child-friendly communities; we are a place for families. Our clever industries and productive rural resource support economically viable communities, part of a thriving region.

The Platforms equip Central Coast with a strong basis from which to leverage a range of positive **outcomes** to meet this vision. These outcomes can be expressed in terms of:

- Economic vitality
- A sense of community
- A strong identity
- A culture of innovation
- Choices, options and opportunities
- Effective and efficient provision of amenities, and
- Organisational best practice

These outcomes are clearly the realms of interest of Council, but most also have regional implications. Some are also a core responsibility of state and regional agencies. Such outcomes will only really be effectively achieved by working together, within and beyond the local community, either by drawing on the goodwill and expertise generated through informal networks or by establishing formal contractual collaborations and joint ventures.

This *Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment* provides a consistent and forward-looking strategic approach and supporting information to underpin Council decision-making for the future. It also provides a vehicle through which Council can communicate a transparent understanding of planning processes and decision making. Finally, it is intended as a "living document"; thus it is recommended to develop a set of indicators and a monitoring strategy to assess progress and change over time.

Indicators to Measure our Progress

How do we know if we are closer, or further from, a vision of the future that encapsulates the qualities Central Coasters most value? One way to chart our progress is to name and track indicators over time.

The following indicators from *Tasmania Together* were highlighted in our September workshop as particularly relevant to track – so long as they can be measured at local level:

- Participation of young people in community groups;
- Growth in the number (and diversity, and survival rate) of small businesses (or, of businesses more generally);
- Food production value added;
- Visitor numbers (by season);
- Percentage of people who feel safe in public places at night;
- Employment in cultural industries;
- House price to income ratio;
- Involvement in local community action;
- Percentage of land covered by native vegetation.

The following indicators suggested by the content of the *Strategic Framework* were also highlighted in the September workshop as providing important insights:

- Range, accessibility (and utilisation) of outdoor recreational spaces (beach, river, mountains, canyon, bushwalks, playing fields, parks, gardens…how diverse, how easy to access);
- Number and range of active local organisations and groups;
- Proportion of local produce that is value added locally;
- Proportion of land used for agri-food industries;
- Changes in usage patterns among different transport alternatives (private car, car pooling, public transport, cycling, walking);
- Length (km) of bicycle paths, walking tracks, etc. (by type/class), (and their connectivity across the wider region);
- Visual distinctiveness of town/ village centres;
- Visitation/use of special or iconic places;
- Parking accessibility (availability of car parks in main shopping areas during business hours);
- Bus accessibility (number / range of public transport runs);
- Quality of built recreational infrastructure;
- Air quality.

In addition, it was suggested that demographic indicators could be used to track evidence of liveability; for instance: the number of people coming to live in

Central Coast (as compared with the number of people leaving); the number of people coming here to invest in businesses; or the proportion of population in target age groups (e.g. young families).

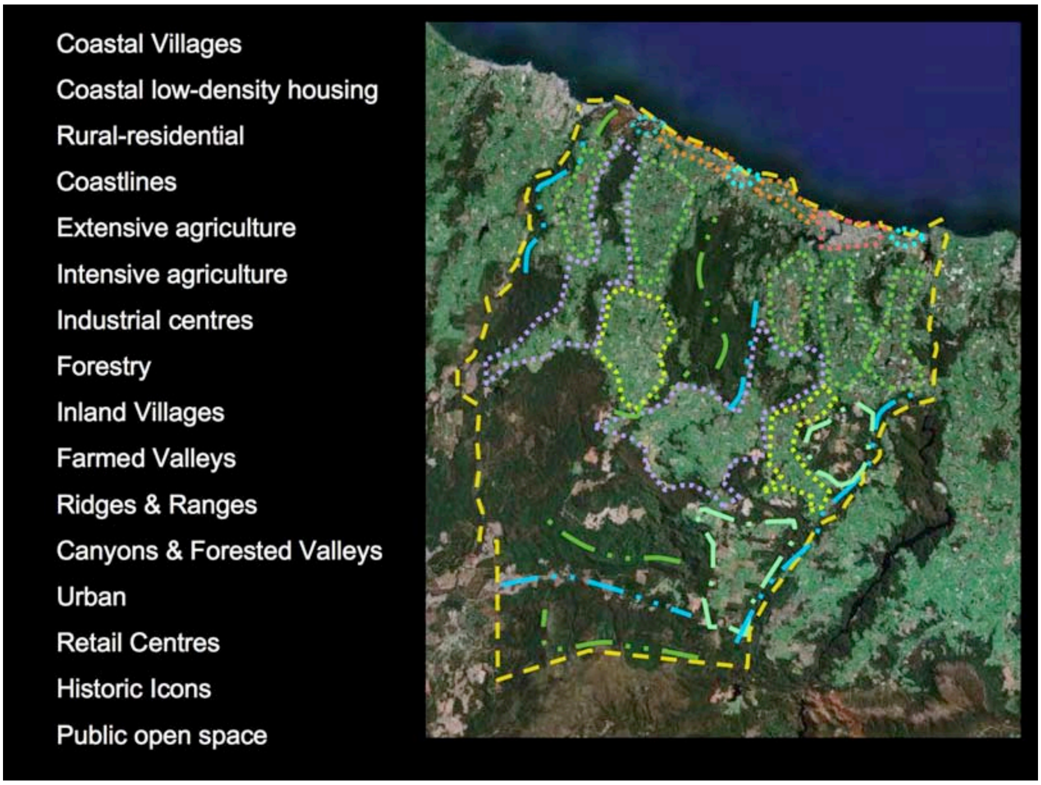
Council is encouraged to consider these and other indicators and develop a 'report card' system to track progress and change over time, with reference to the 'Qualities Central Coasters most value' and associated future vision, the key outcome areas, and the Platforms that have been designed to deliver them. There are three key considerations to take into account when designing a final set of indicators:

- ***How the data are to be gathered***. Some data are readily available, other data involve a cost to collect. How will the data be gathered, and how often? Will it be done in-house, or in partnership with another organisation such as the University?
- ***What the data will look like.*** Some data are available in quantitative form (numbers or percentages), other data must necessarily be qualitative (descriptive, often based on perceptions and impressions rather than hard numbers).
- ***The specific goal of collecting the data***. Is the goal to measure change in areas that Council should be influencing directly (e.g. public infrastructure, land use), areas that Council may influence indirectly (community participation, transportation useage patterns), and/or areas largely outside Council influence but which provide a gauge of overall trends (e.g. business health, housing prices)?

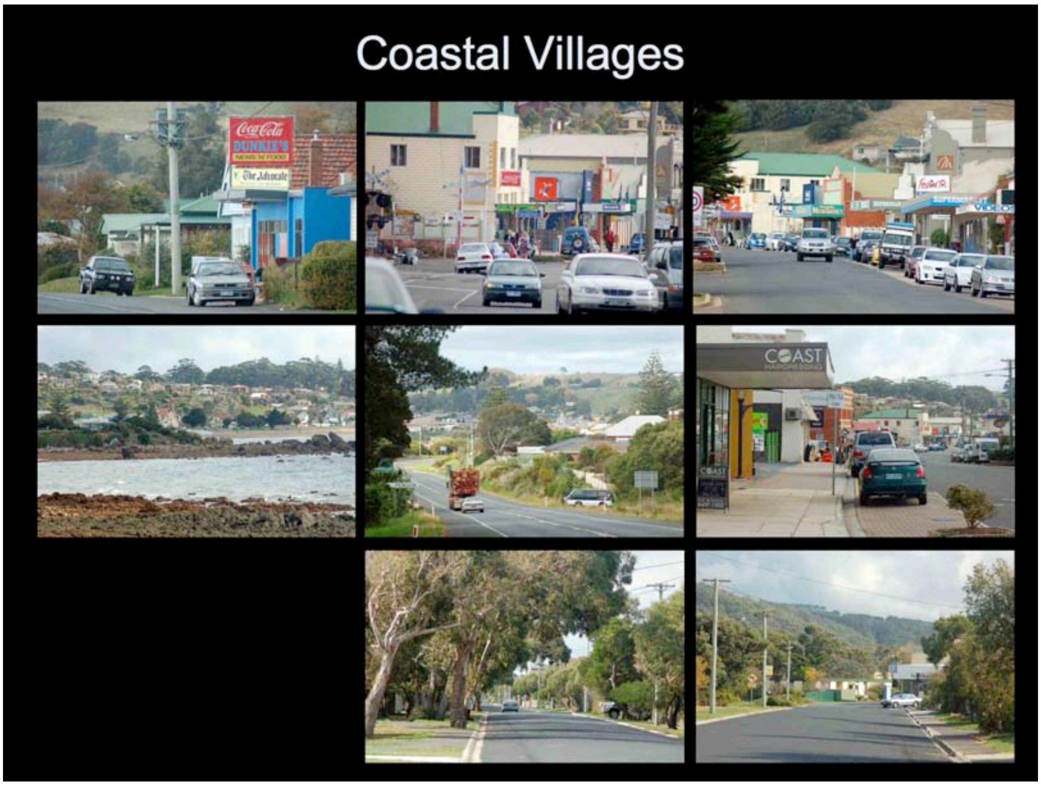
Appendices

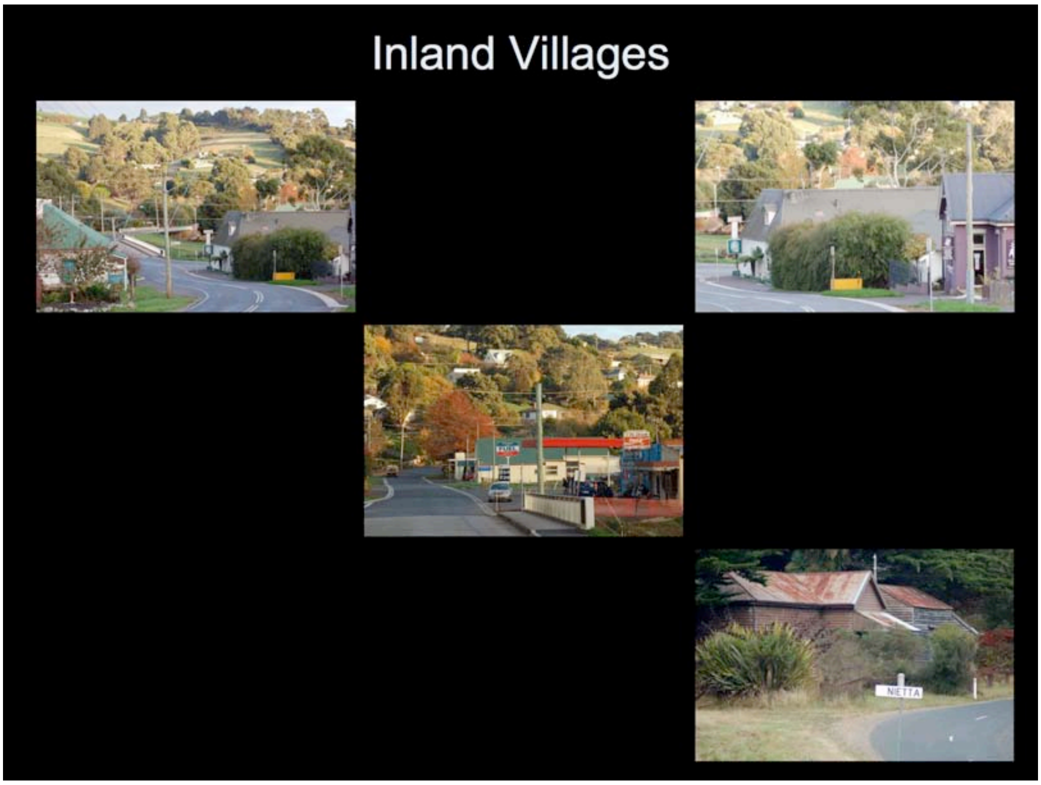
Appendix 1: Landscape Character Types

This Appendix comprises slides from a presentation made to participants in the first workshop conducted as part of the consultation process for the development of the Strategic Framework for Settlement and Investment. It presents an overview of the main landscape character types of the Central Coast Region and photo-montages to describe the key characteristics of each landscape type.

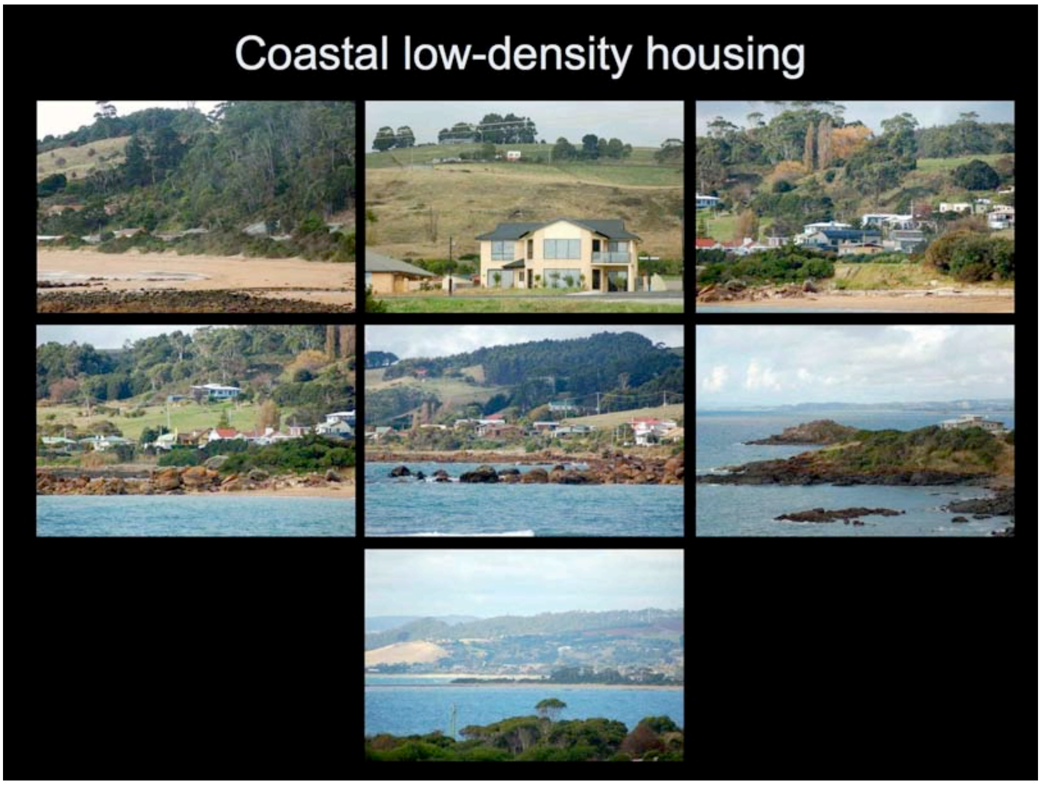


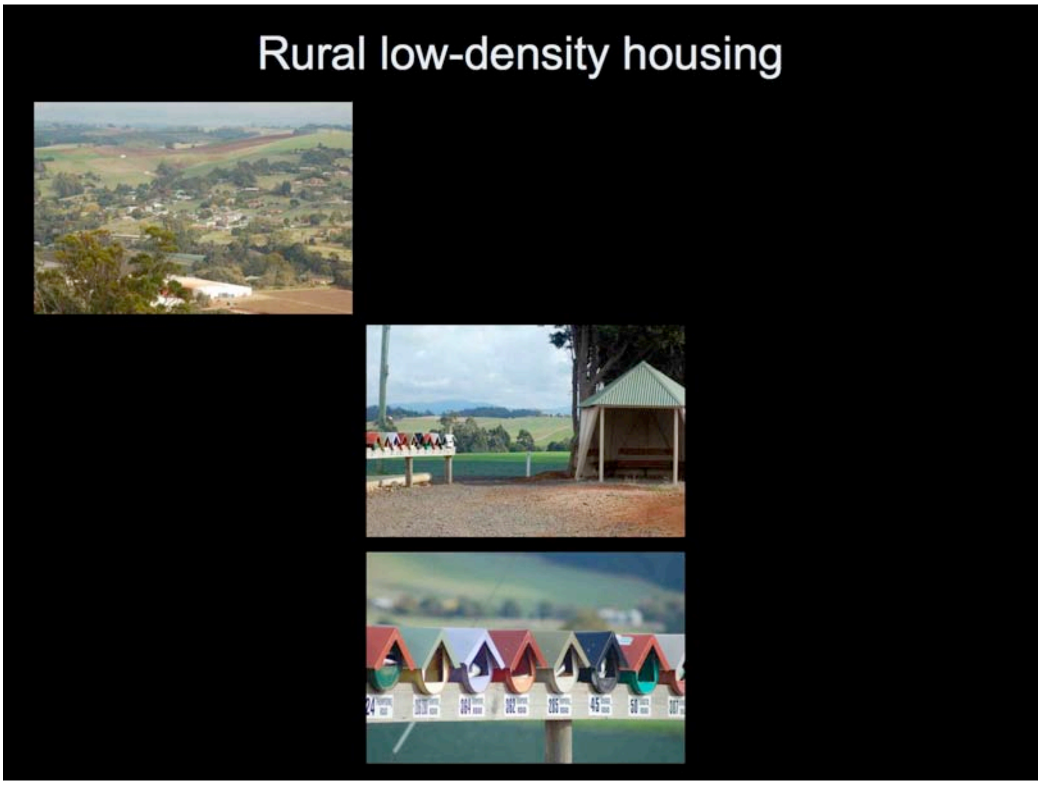

Coastal Villages

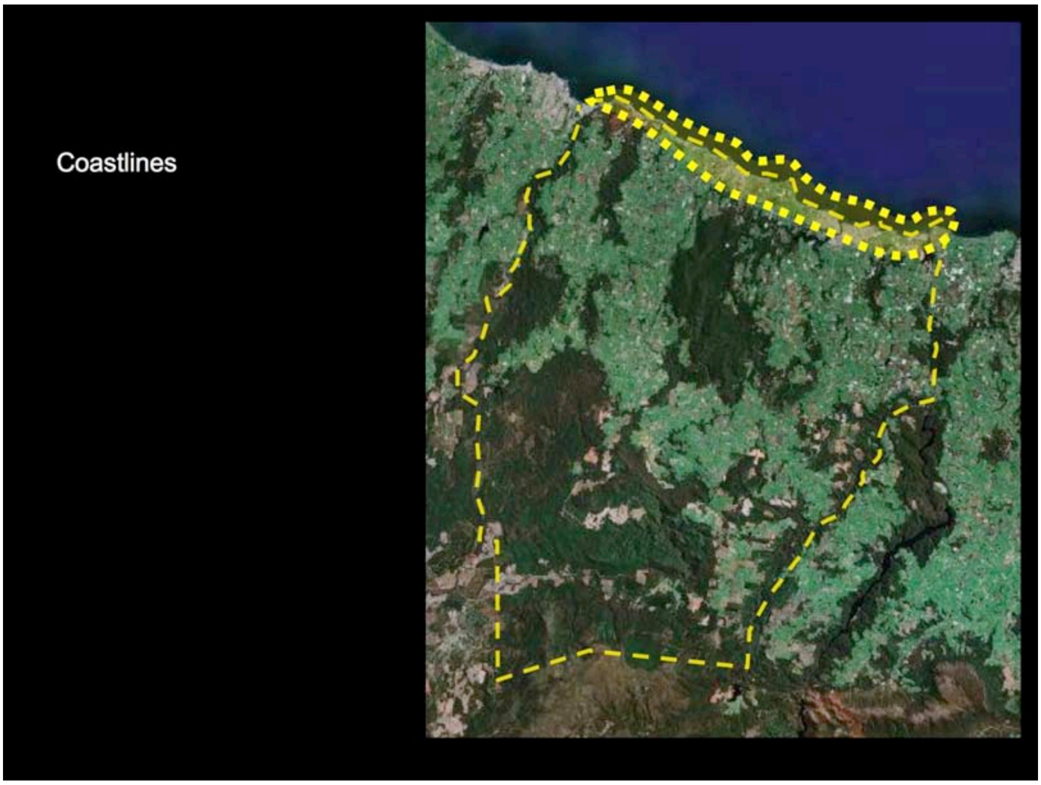

Coastal Villages


Inland Villages
NIETTA


Coastal low-density housing


Coastal low-density housing

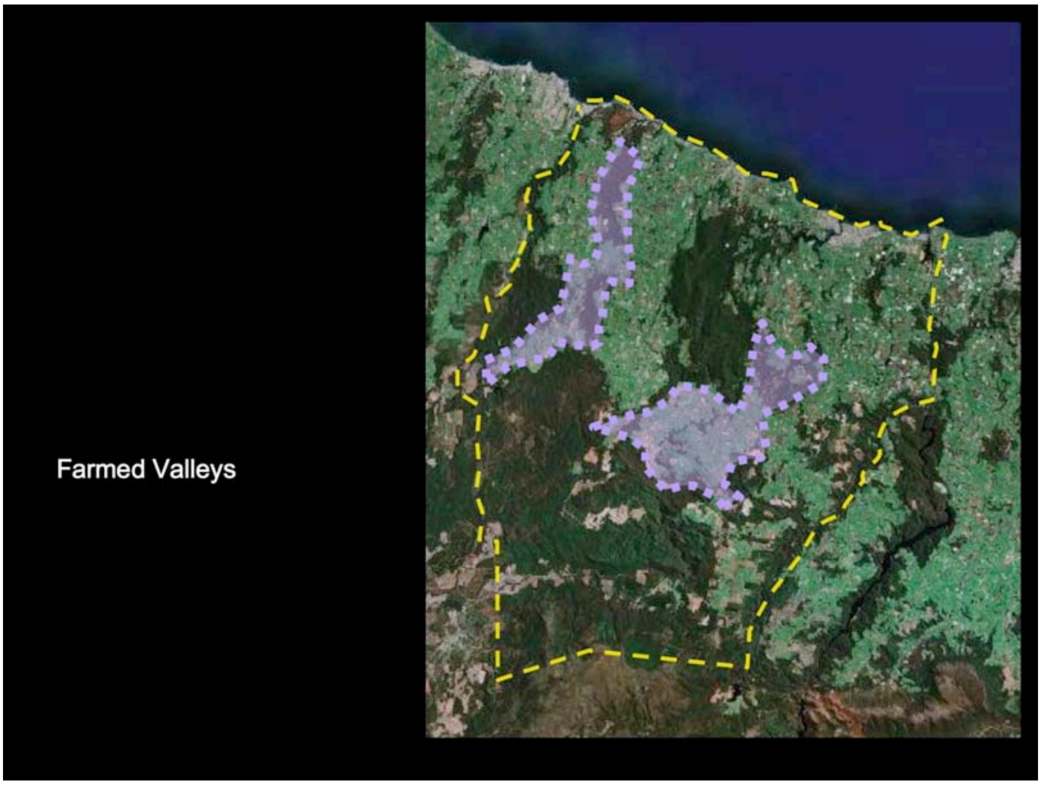

Rural low-density housing


Coastlines


Coastlines

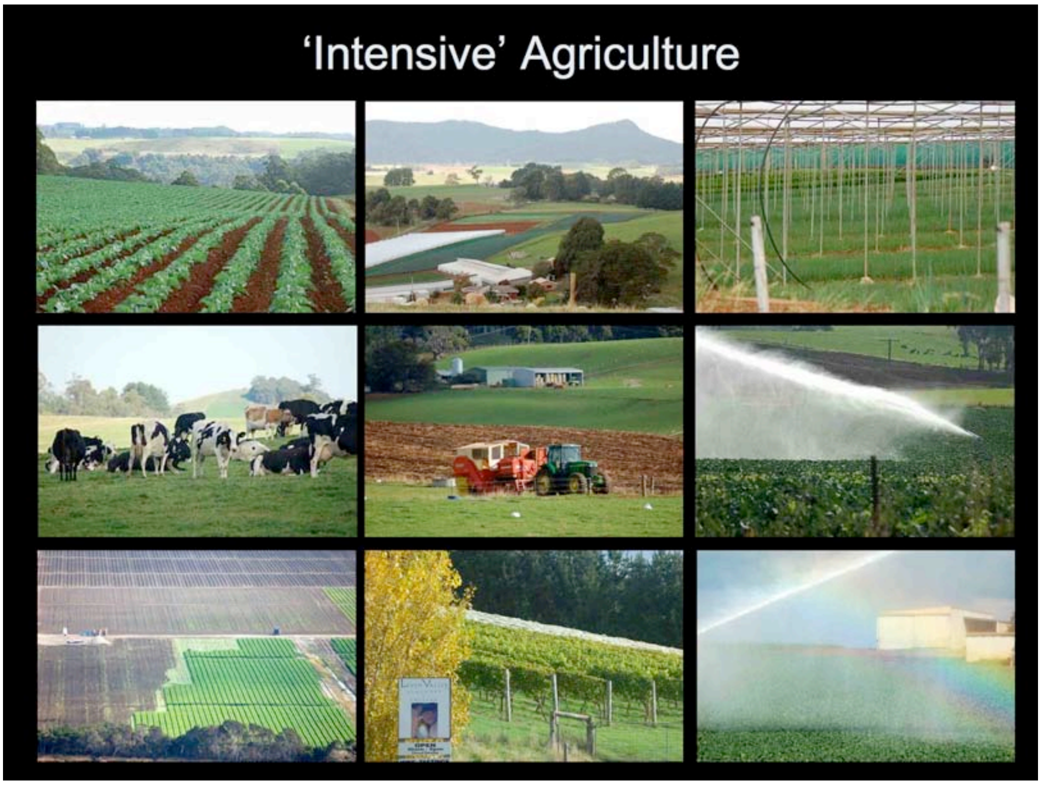

Estuaries

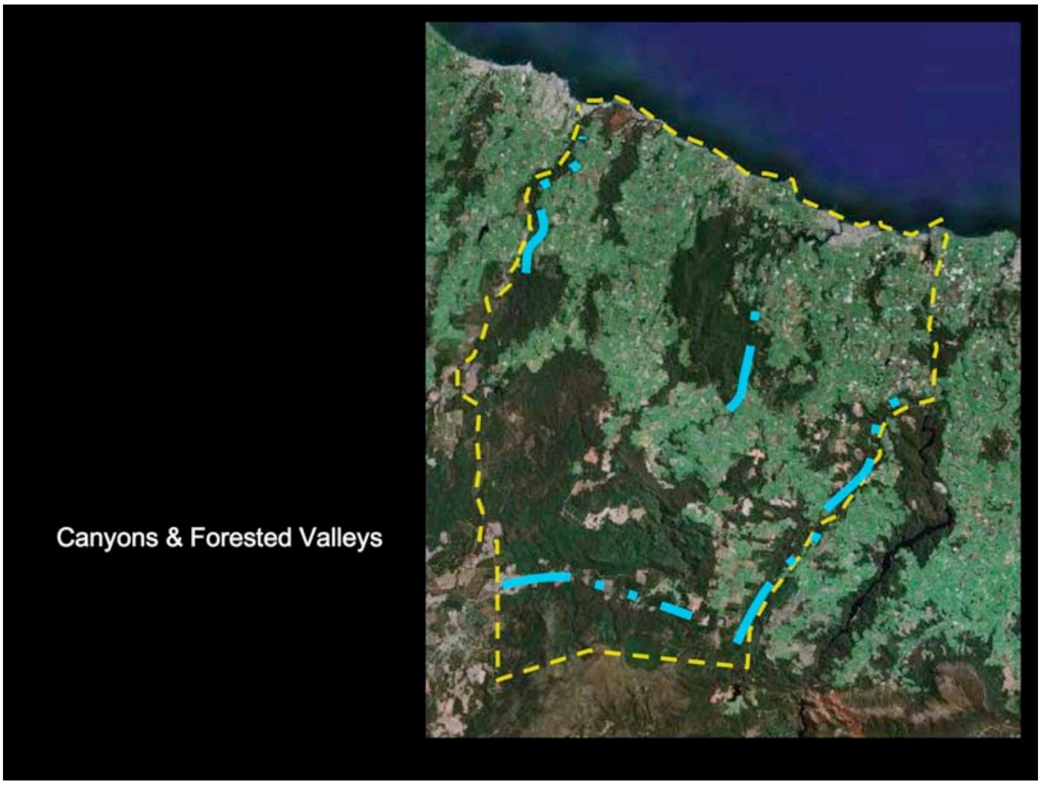

Extensive agriculture

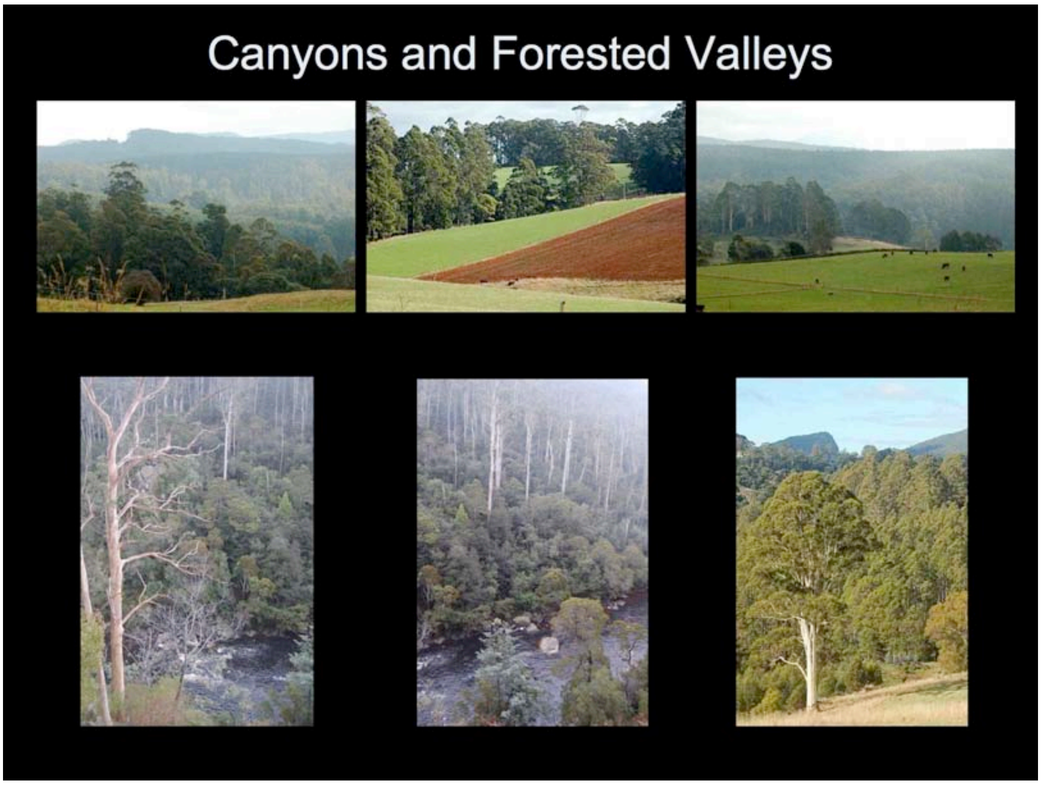

Farmed Valleys


‘Extensive’ Agriculture, farmed valleys

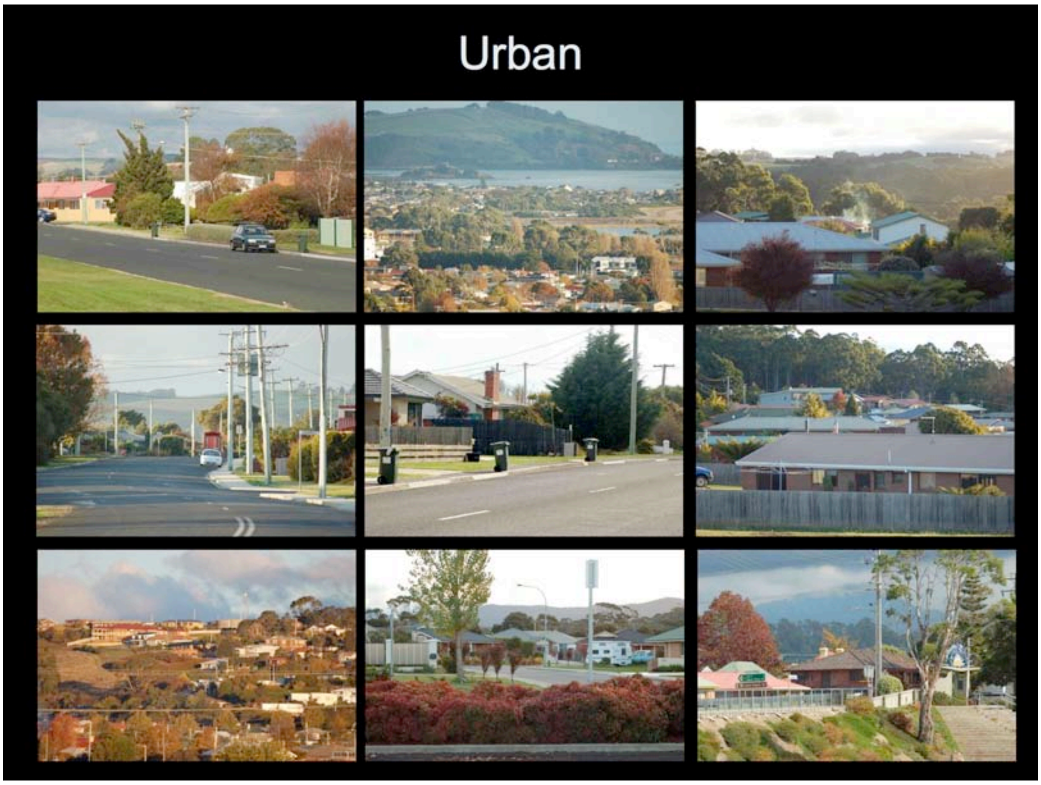

Intensive agriculture


'Intensive' Agriculture

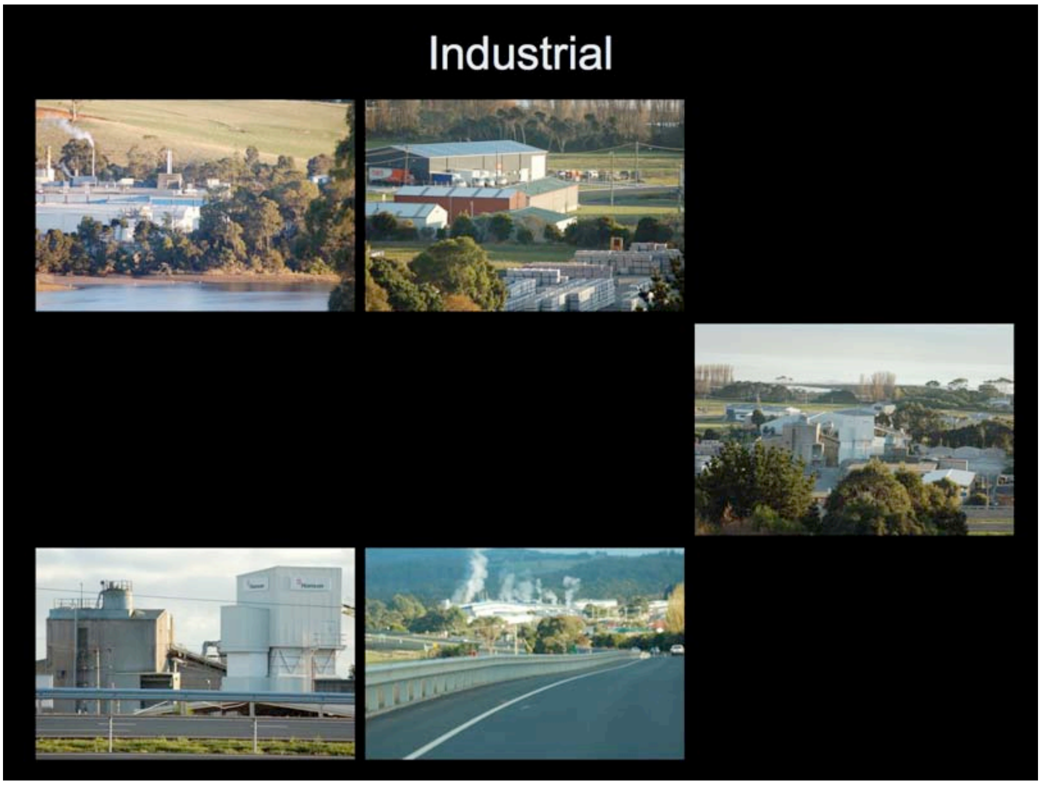

Canyons & Forested Valleys


Canyons and Forested Valleys

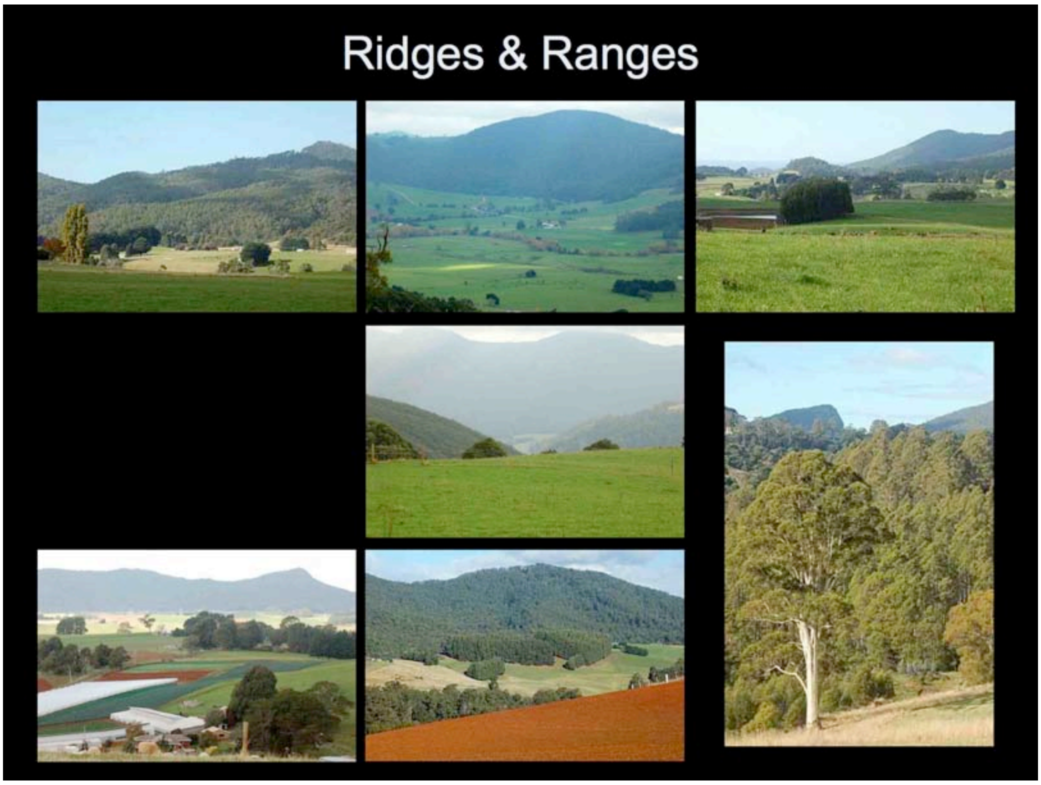

Urban


Urban


Retail Centres

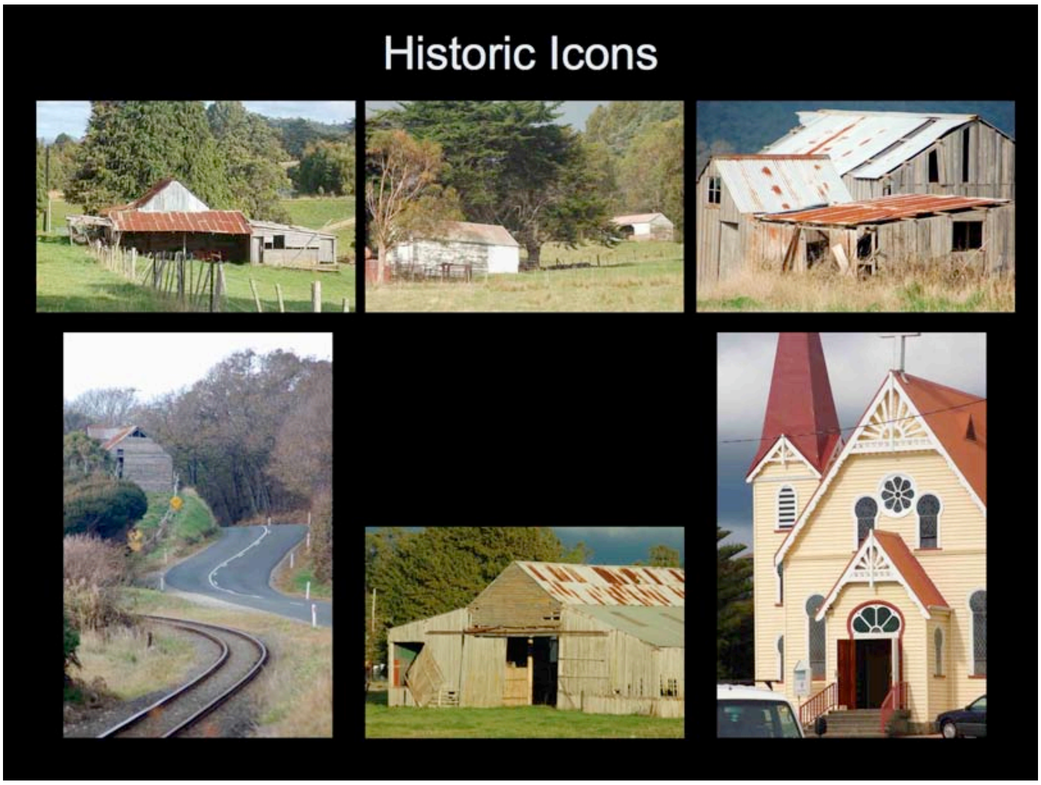

Industrial


Ridges & Ranges


Ridges & Ranges


Forestry


Forestry


Historic Icons

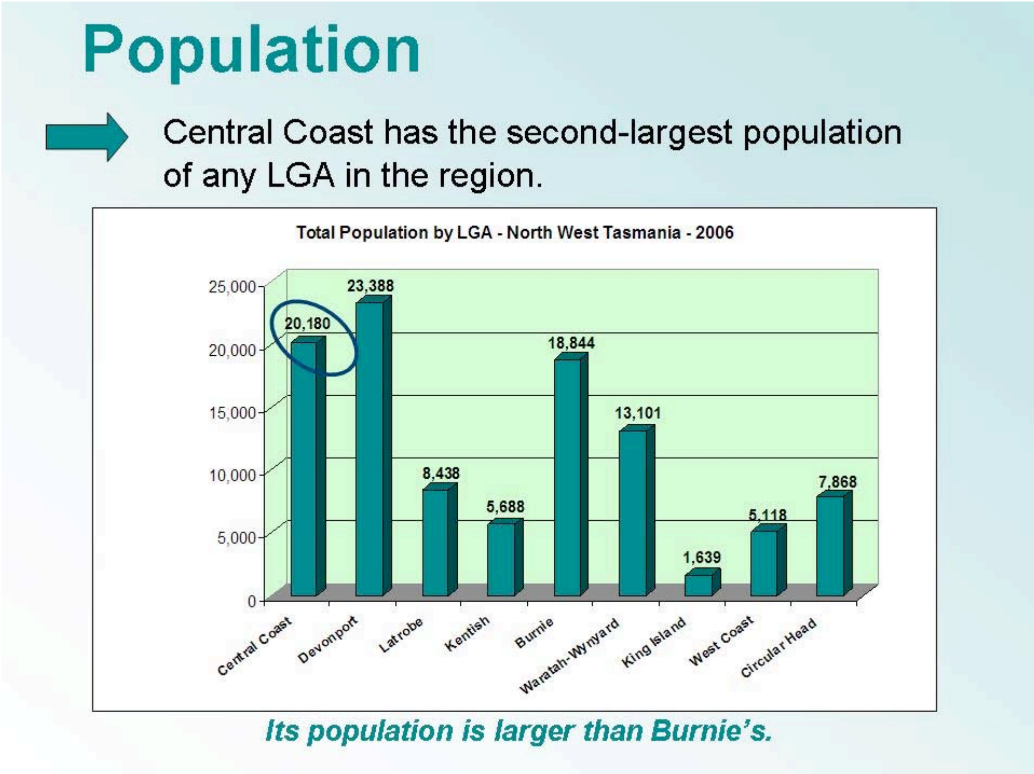

Public Open Space

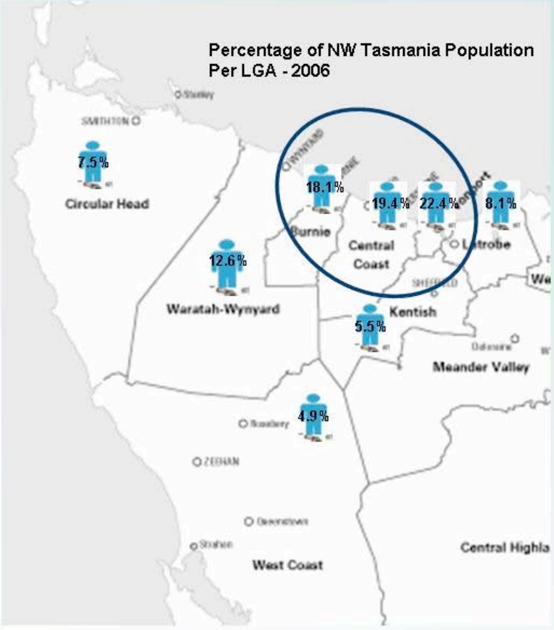

Highway


Community facilities
ULVERSTONE LEO CLUB

Appendix 2: Demographic and Economic Data

The following presentation from Workshop One provides data on population trends, residence patterns and housing, livlihoods and key industries, and a preliminary discussion of culture/ liveability in the Central Coast. Key Qualitative data from workshop participants is included in blue.


Population
Central Coast has the second-largest population of any LGA in the region.
Total Population by LGA - North West Tasmania - 2006
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
20,180
23,388
8,438
5,688
18,844
13,101
1,639
5,118
7,868
Central Coast
Devonport
Latrobe
Kentish
Burnie
Waratah-Wynyard
King Island
West Coast
Circular Head
Its population is larger than Burnie's.



Central Coast has nearly a **fifth** of the region's total population (19.4%).

60% of the total North West population lives in Central Coast, Devonport or Burnie.

By North West standards, you are a population hub!

And What Do the Borders Mean, Really?

Take note:

- Percentage of Central Coast residents who work in Burnie: **20%**
- Percentage of Central Coast residents who work in Devonport: **18%**
- Percentage of Burnie workers who live in Central Coast: **16%**
- Percentage of Devonport workers who live in Central Coast: **14%**

And also:

- Percentage of Central Coast workers who live in Devonport: **11%**
- Percentage of Devonport residents who work in Central Coast **6%**

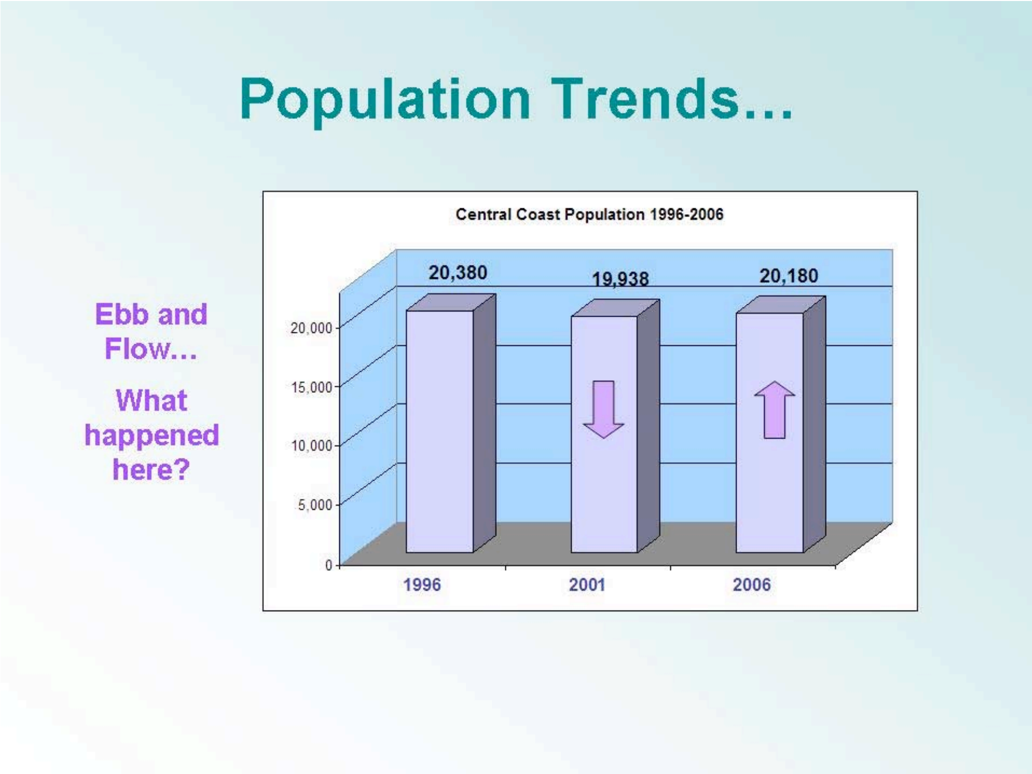
But interestingly:

- Percentage of Central Coast workers who live in Burnie: 5%
- Percentage of Burnie residents who work in Central Coast: 3%

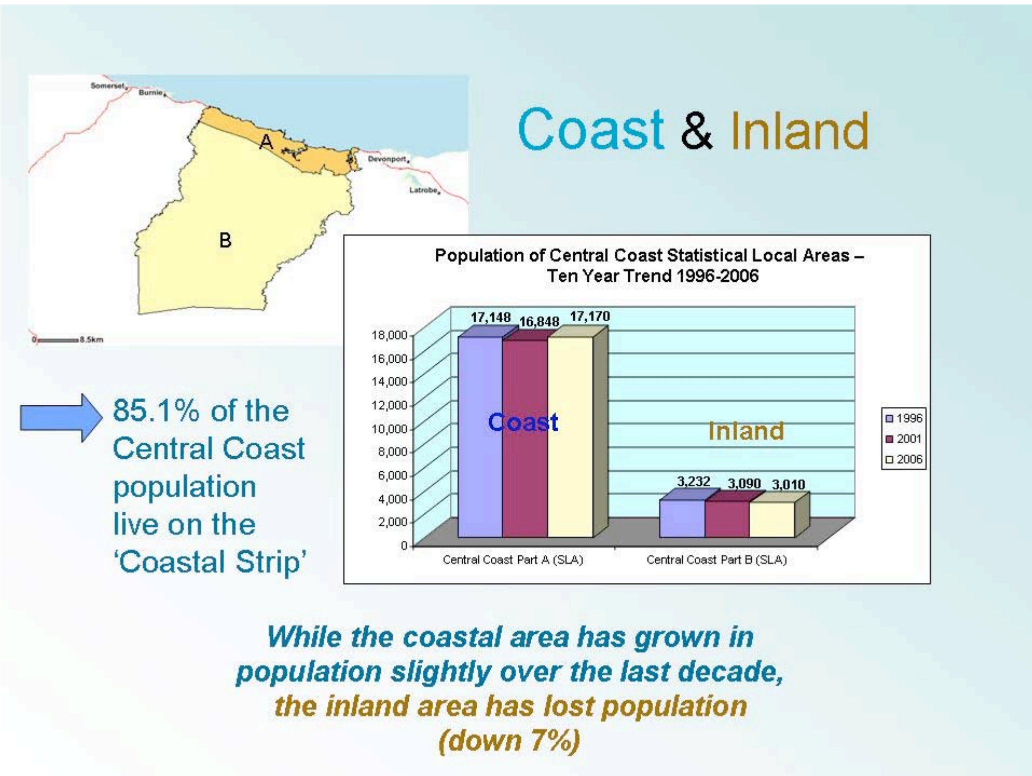
Data from 2006 Census, based on employed population only.

Percentage of households with two or more motor vehicles: 56%.
(Compare 52% Tasmania-wide, 50% Australia-wide)

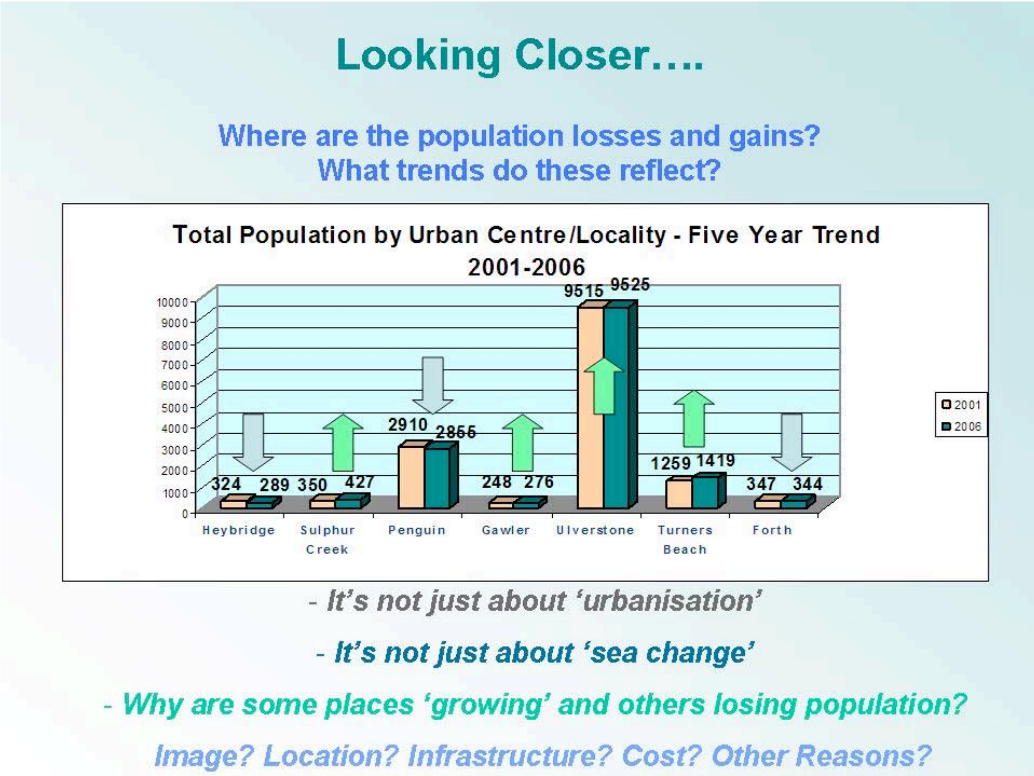
The figures may indicate that Central Coast has liveability advantages – people want to live here. Burnie historically had a negative image as a place to live, but this has been changing. High car ownership reflects poor public transport.



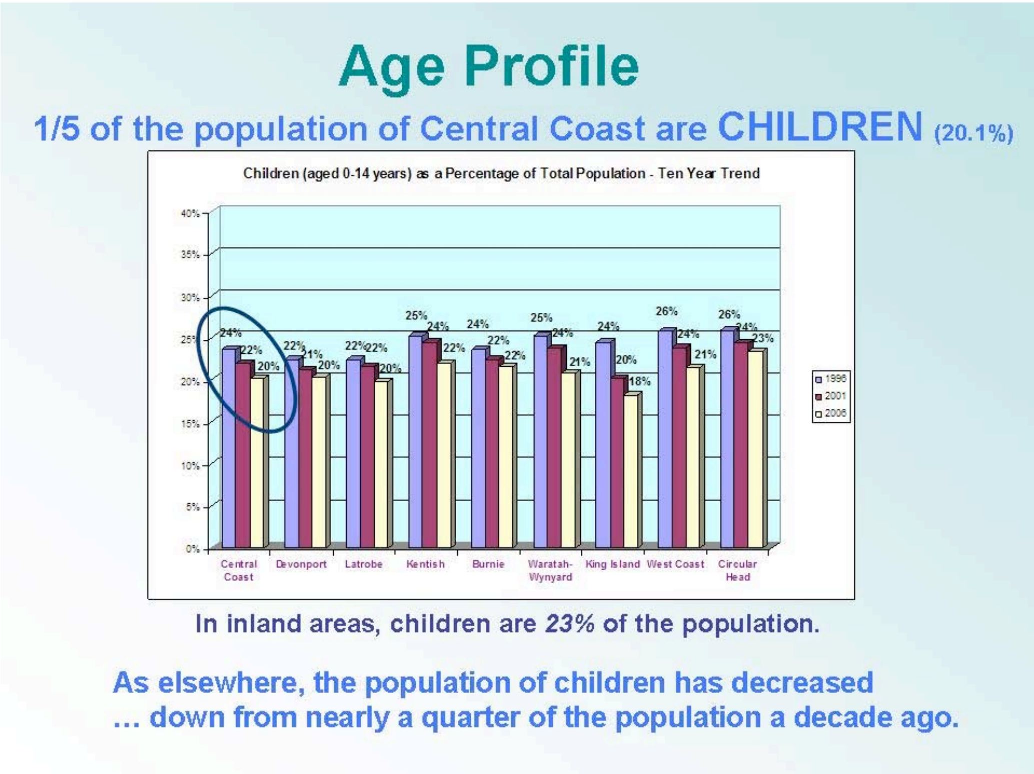
The impact of plant closures can be seeen in population loss in the late 1990s. There were large increases in house proces in the 2001-2003 period (see Real Estate Institute figures). Less expensive housing may have attracted baby boomers/retirees.



The inland figures may relate to the growth of forestry, farm consolidation, and/or fewer people being employed on farm.



New developments have been put in place in certain areas, e.g. Sulphur Creek, Turners Beach, Gawler. More building in Penguin is starting to happen now.



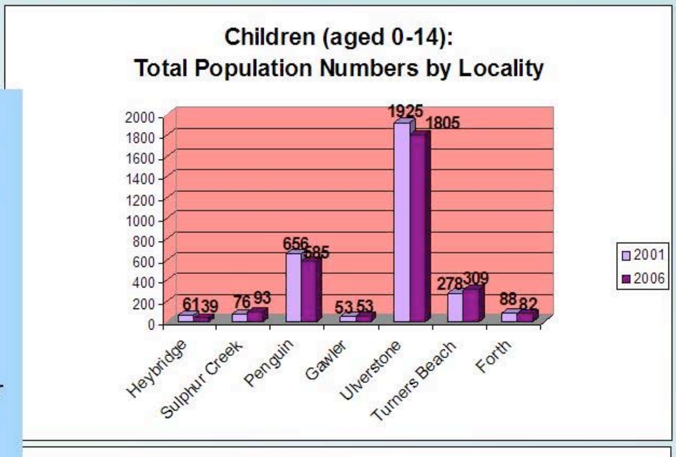
Looking Closer...

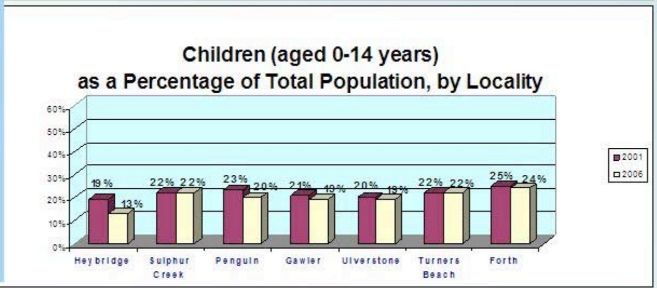
Ulverstone: Gained overall population, but lost children.

Gawler: Gained population, but the number of children stayed the same.

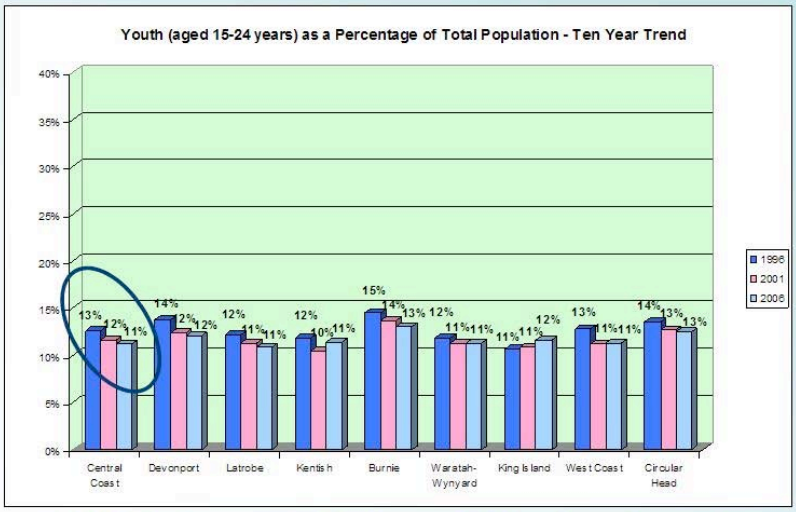
Heybridge and Penguin: Lost population, but lost children faster. **Heybridge** lost 22 children in a five-year period, **Penguin** lost 71. By 2006, children comprised only 13% of the population in Heybridge.

Sulphur Creek and Turners Beach: **Gained** children (at the same pace they gained population generally).





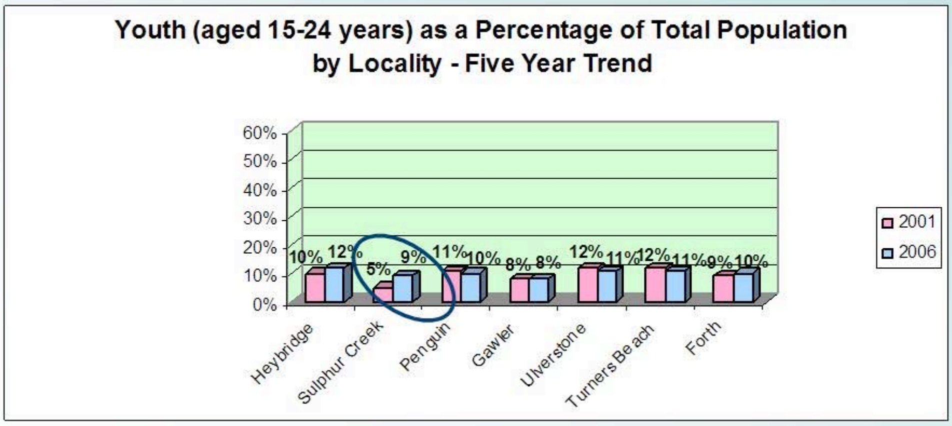
Only 11% of Central Coast's population are 'YOUTH'



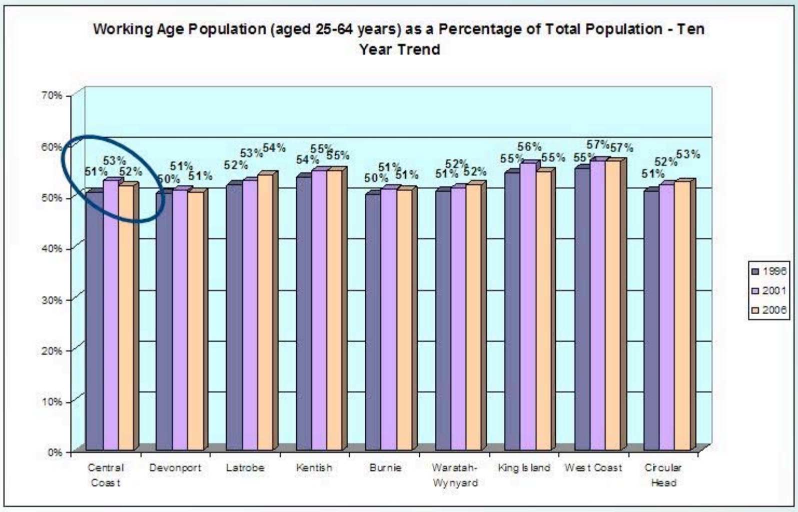
(11.2% - Down slightly from 12.6% a decade ago)

Population losses are not due primarily to 'Youth Leaving'. Losses in the 'Children' category have been more dramatic.

Youth are a small proportion of the population. But…there may be growth spots.

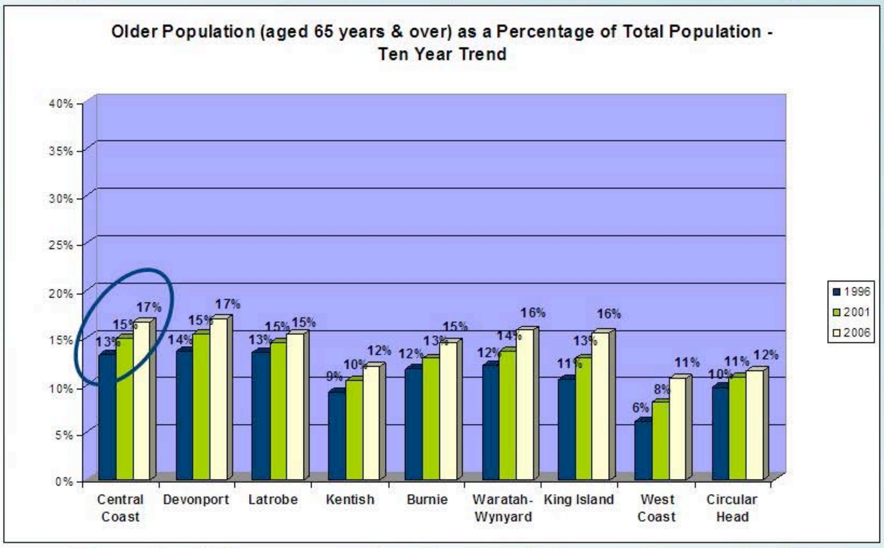


Slightly over half the Central Coast population is 'WORKING AGE'.



The Working Aged Population ***increased*** *over the decade.*
This was the case for most LGAs in our region

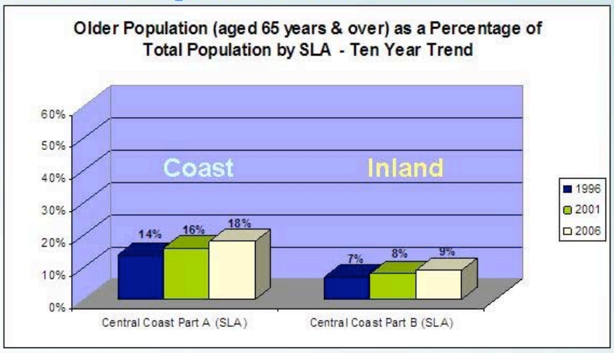
The 'OLDER POPULATION' has grown dramatically across the region.



The 25% increase in Central Coast is typical.

(From 2693 or **13.2% of the population** in 1996;
to 3376 or **16.7% of the population** in 2006)

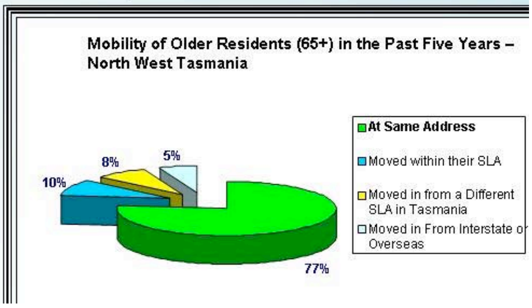
Don't assume that they all move to town…



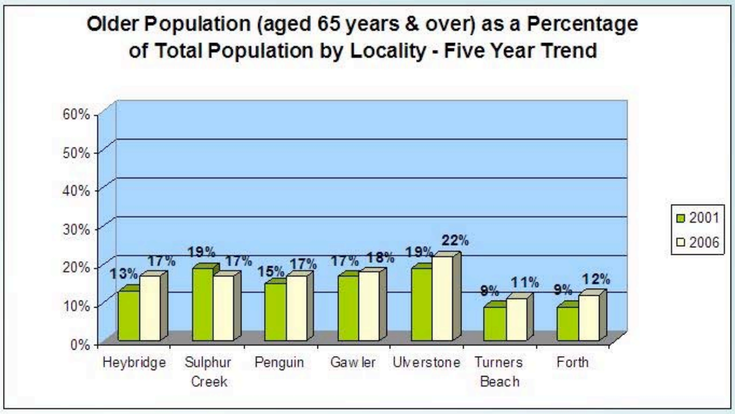
The older population is growing across the municipality.

And most older residents are 'staying put'.

Implications?:
For transport, services....



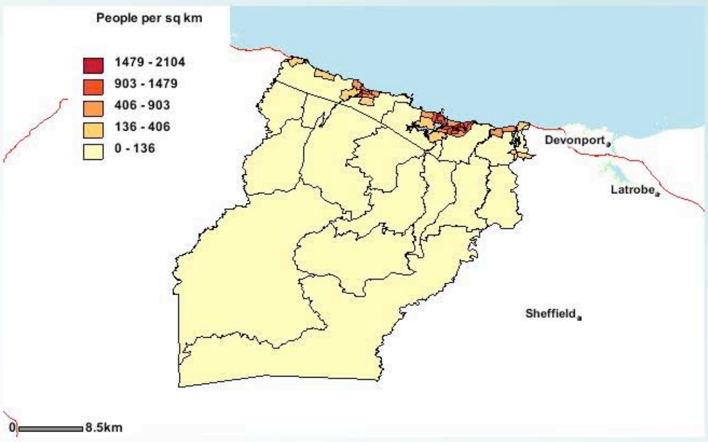
Looking closer…



- **Absolute numbers of older people have grown in every locality.**
- **Growth is most apparent in Heybridge, Forth and Ulverstone.**
- **Only in Sulphur Creek are older people now a smaller *percentage* of the population.**

Residence Patterns

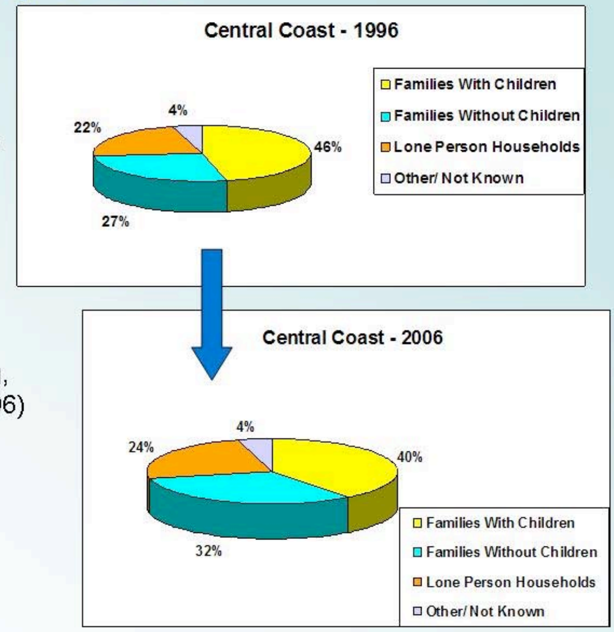
Central Coast Council
- Note the areas of highest population density (in red)



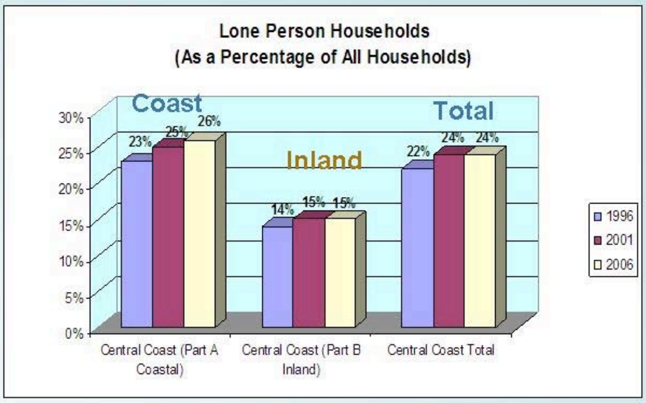
Household Composition

Trends:

- **Fewer households with children (but still 40% of all households have children)**
- **More couples without children.** (But don't assume these are all retirees…57% are working, compared with 51% in 1996)
- **More lone person households.**



- The number of **lone person households** in the municipality increased 283 (17%) over the decade 1996-2006.
- **Nearly a quarter of all households** in Central Coast (24.3%) are now lone-person households.



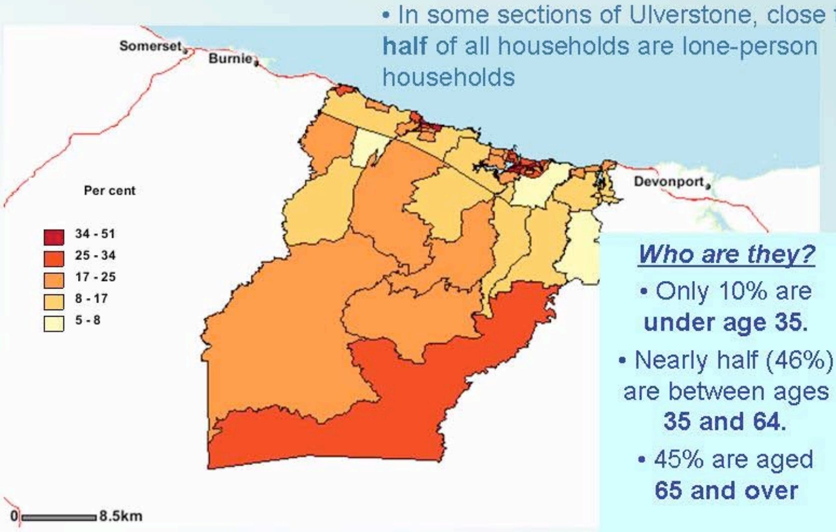
Lone-person households are spread throughout the municipality, but are concentrated in larger proportions (and numbers) on the coast.

Both the highest number and the largest proportion are in Ulverstone.

Comparisons with elsewhere? (Tasmania-wide, 26.9% of households were lone person households in 2006).

Location of Lone Person Households

- Primarily in certain coastal areas
- And far inland hinterland
- In some sections of Ulverstone, close to **half** of all households are lone-person households



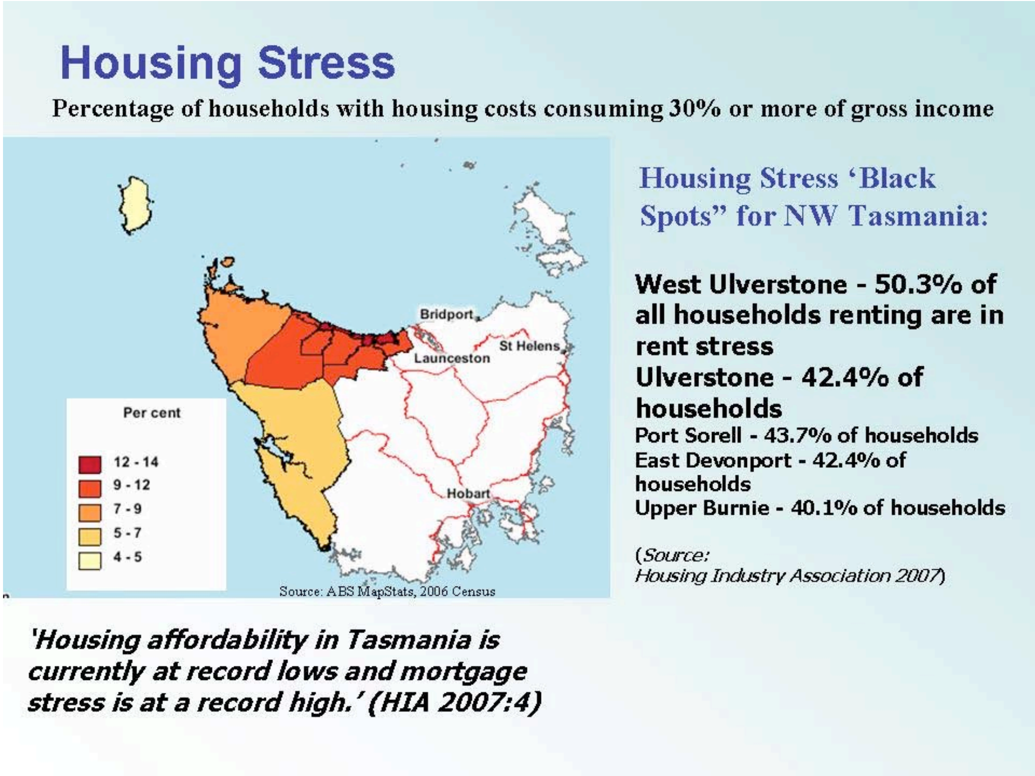
Who are they?

- Only 10% are **under age 35.**
- Nearly half (46%) are between ages **35 and 64.**
- 45% are aged **65 and over**

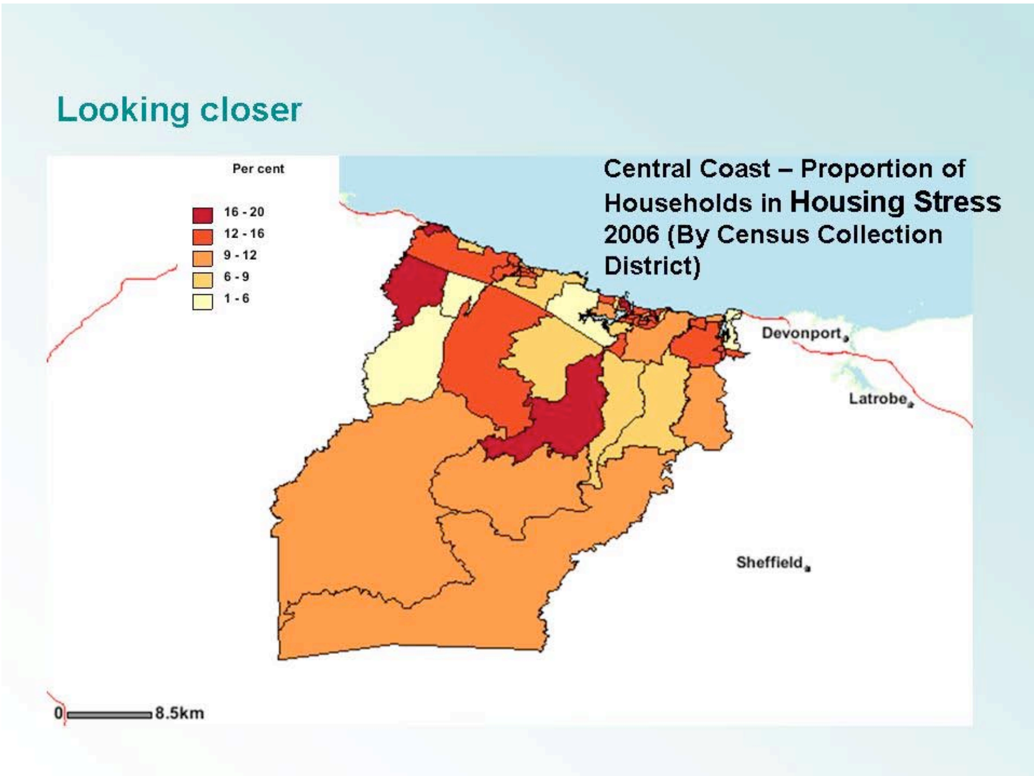
Housing Arrangements

- Most households, even lone person households, live in **houses**, often with **3 + bedrooms**.
- **88.4%** of all Central Coast households live in a **house** (not including townhouses).
  ~ This may be by **choice** (lifestyle, space, gardens, privacy)
  ~ or it may be by **necessity** (housing stock availability)
- **10%** of the Central Coast population live in **flats/ units or terrace houses**

> *96% of households with children live in houses*
> *70% of lone person households live in houses*
> *Nearly half (47.5%) of lone person households live in houses with 3 or more bedrooms.*

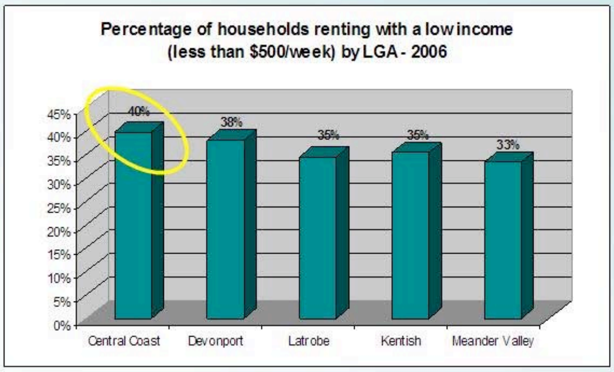


Could this be due to low incomes here?



Why inland in the Gunns Plains area? It could be a case of very small numbers creating an apparently large proportion. It could be a case of people being attracted to inexpensive housing in forestry areas. Issue: such rural housing is inexpensive, but also isolated, particularly given limited transport options.

Housing Stress and Renting



21% of all households in Central Coast are renting (2006 data).

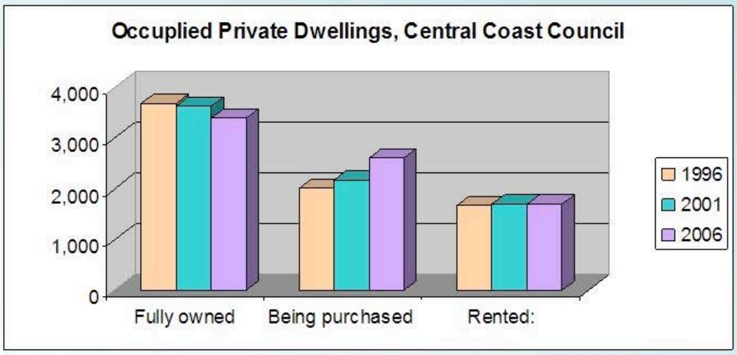
40% of households renting are low-income households.

*The number of households renting in **Heybridge** doubled between 1996 and 2006 (even as the population decreased).*

In most of the rest of the municipality, the number renting remained roughly the same.

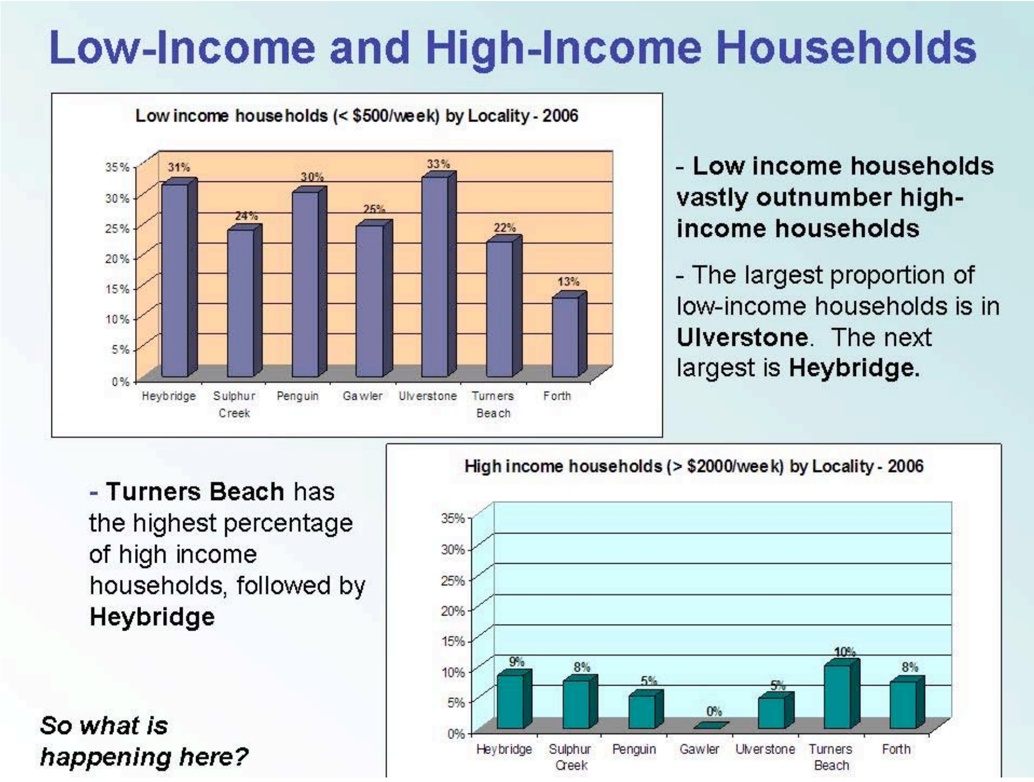
In Heybridge we have seen a movement from shacks to titled housing. This created economic pressures so some houses entered the rental market. Some owners have upgraded these properties.

Housing Stress and Purchasing a Home

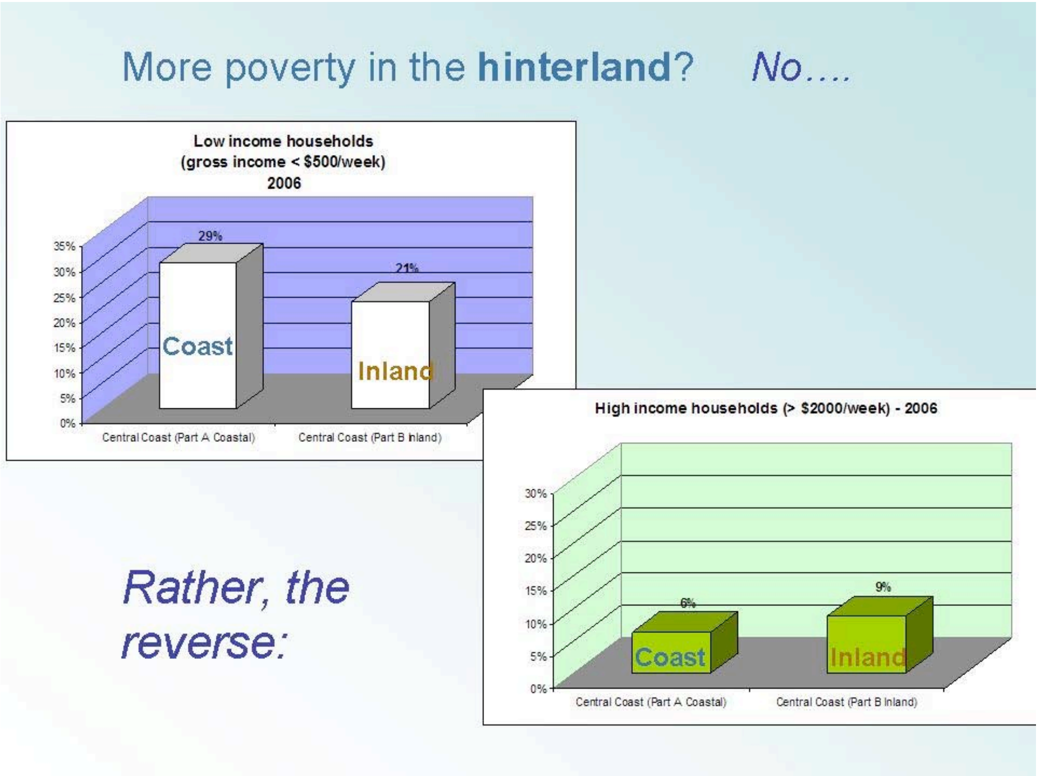


In the period 1996 – 2006, the number of fully owned dwellings in the LGA decreased.

During the same period, the number of dwellings being purchased has increased 30%.



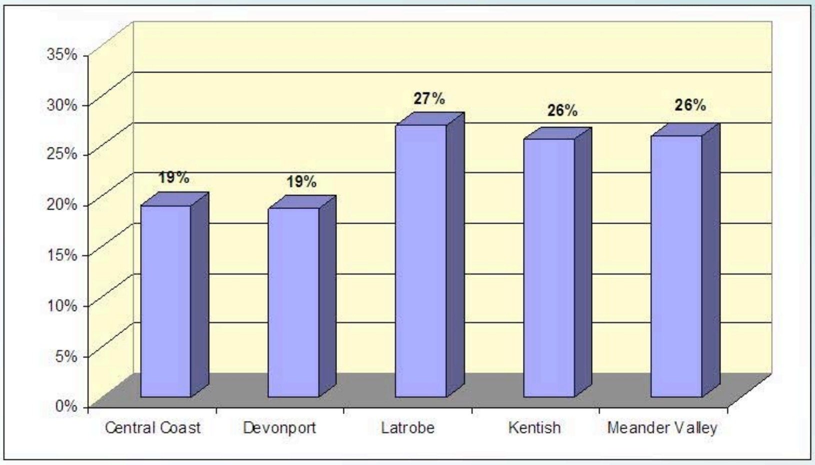
'Low income' group might include those who report low income for tax purposes.



Yes, but schools note there are clearly children/ families in poverty in the hinterland.

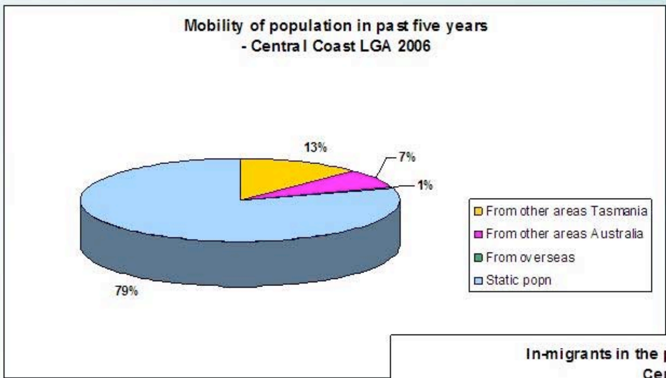
Mobility and In-Migration

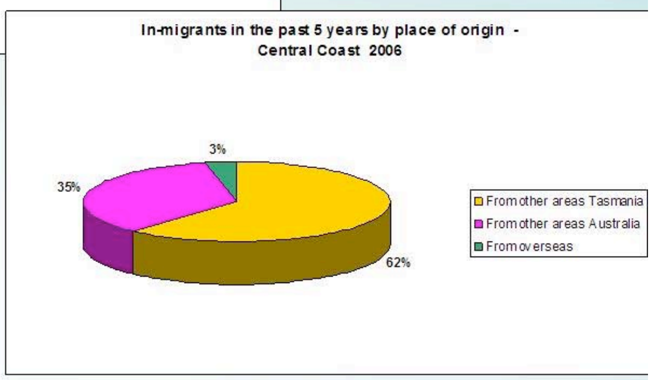
Percentage of the 2006 population that recently moved in from elsewhere (in the past 5 years):

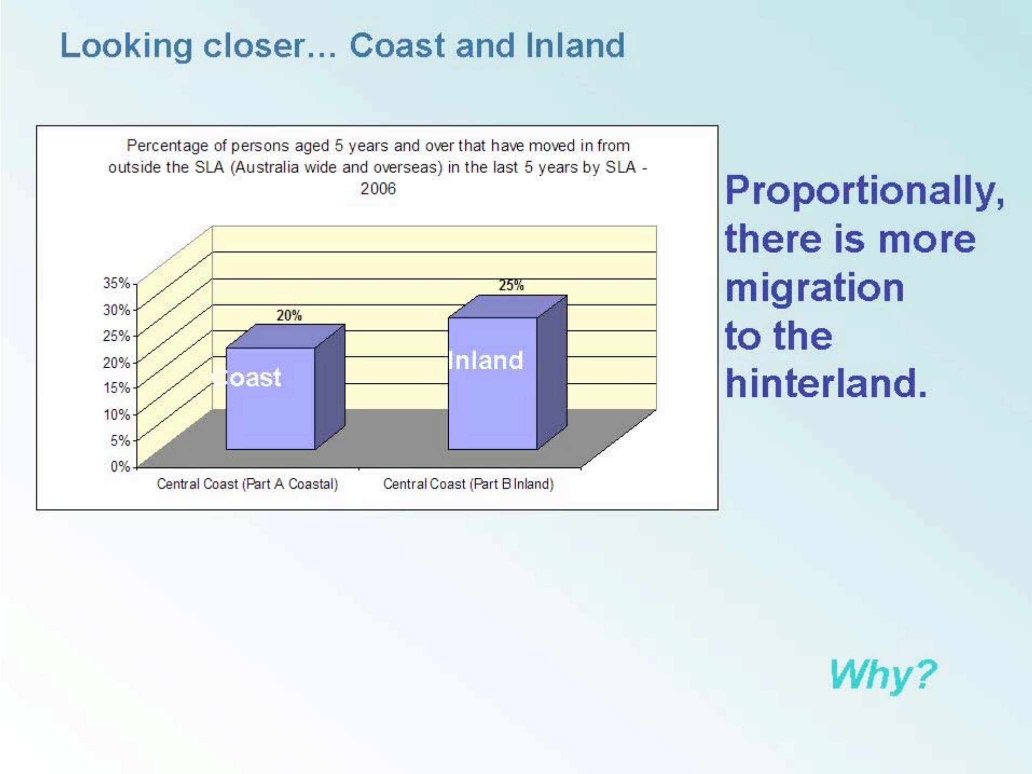


Other LGAs are attracting more outsiders in....

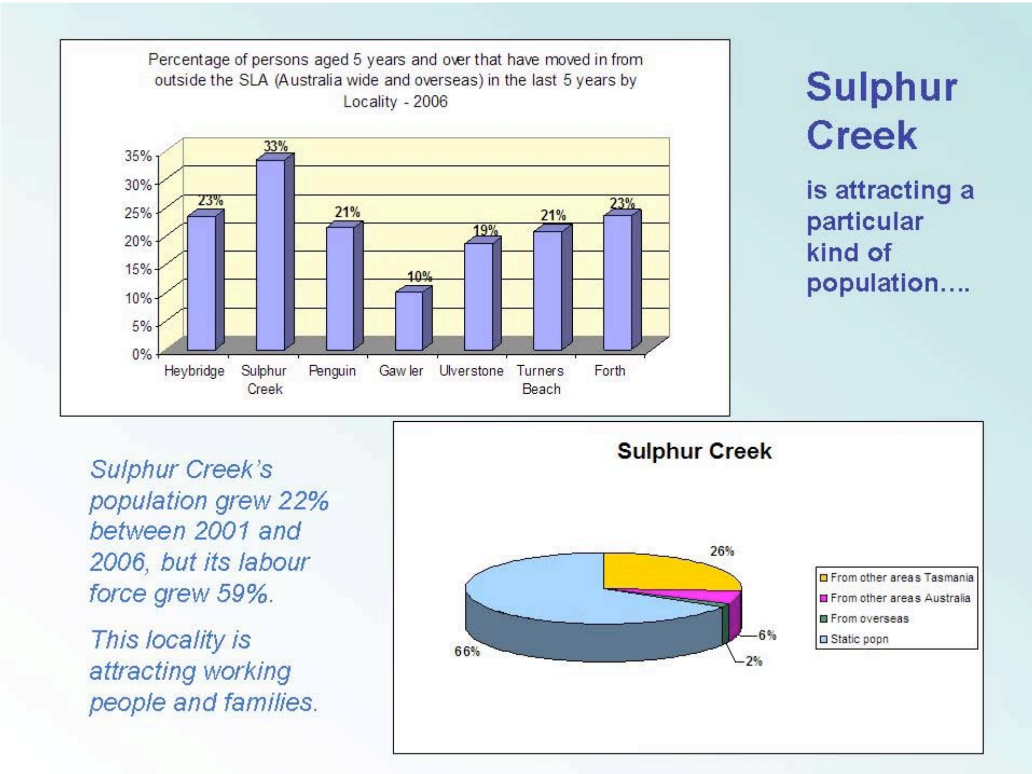
Who is moving in ... who is staying put?



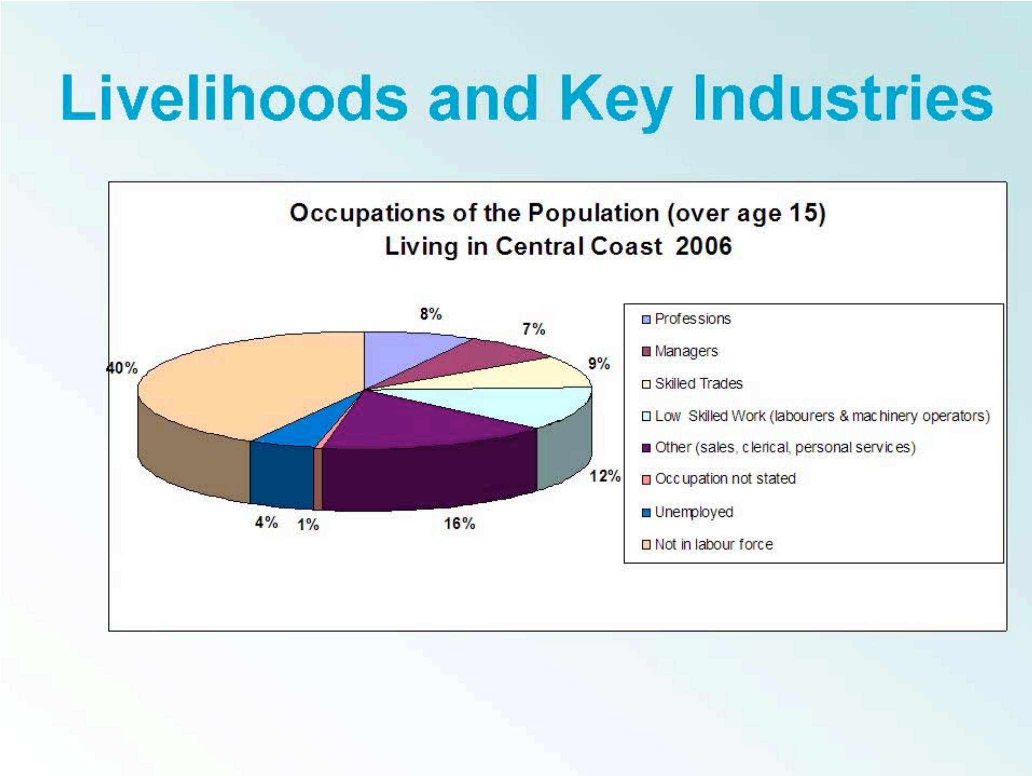




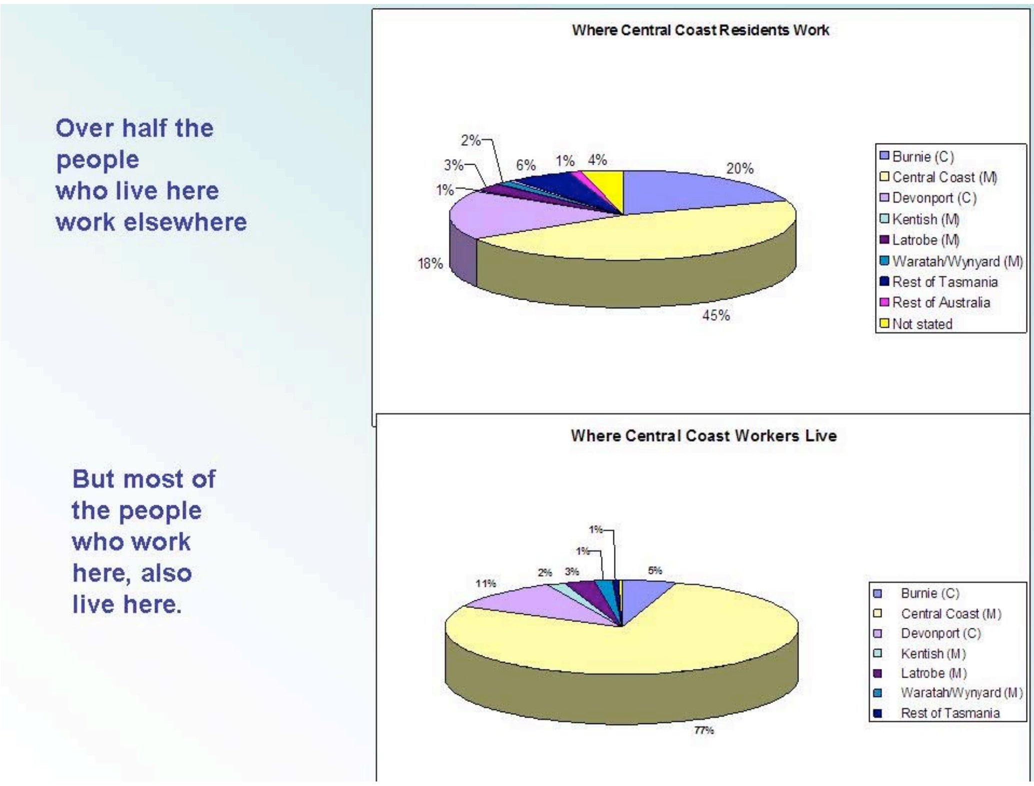
Perhaps 'tree change'? There is lifestyle appeal in inland areas – not everyone cares about being able to see the sea, or may be happy to see it from a distance.



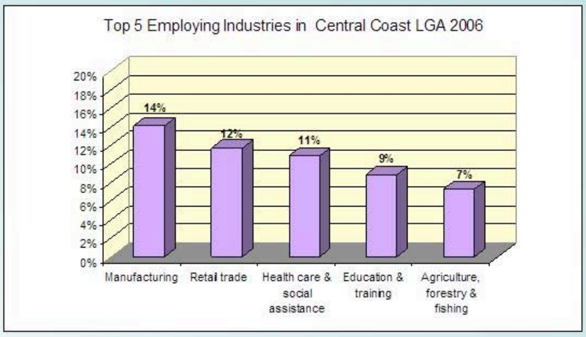
People like the small area feel/ community, this is an attraction for Sulphur Creek.



How do the labour fource figures compare with elsewhere? (Participation is slightly lower than elsewhere. Statewide, 37.4% are not in the labour force, nationally 33.1%)

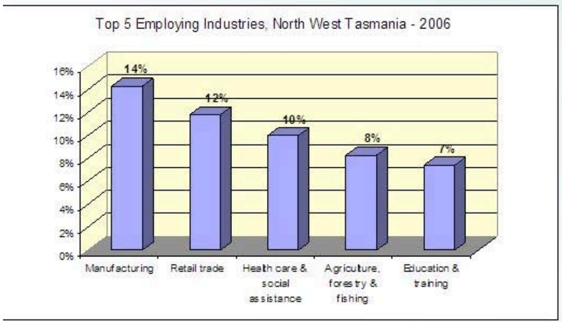


Key Employing Industries For Central Coast....



Not agriculture:

*Yet agriculture is clearly important. Much of the **manufacturing** in our region is **food-related.***



Similar to the Region as a whole

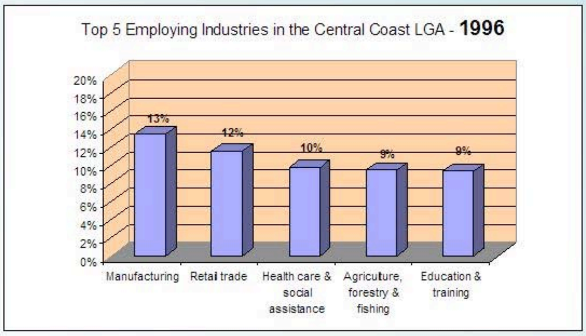
*Food Manufacturing is the largest published component of manufacturing in our region (**552.5 Million in** sales and service income)*

Agriculture is very important to the economy, many other businesses including the trades are linked to it.

And Indeed, Part of the Region as a Whole!

- ***1192 manufacturing workers are** living **in Central Coast***
- ***760 manufacturing workers are** working **in Central Coast***
- ***44% of the manufacturing workers who live in Central Coast LGA also work here (the rest don't... 25% work in Burnie, 17% work in Devonport, 5% work in Latrobe).***
- ***AND 30% of the manufacturing workers who work in Central Coast live elsewhere (in nearby LGAs).***

Over time…



Agricultural sector employment grew between 1996 and 2001, then **decreased sharply** after that

- from 734 people in 2001 to 599 in 2006.

This represents a decrease of 18% in five years.

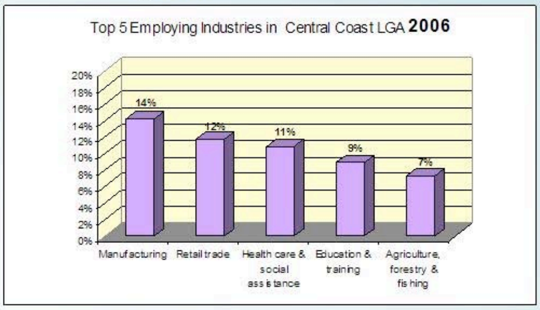
Manufacturing has increased in importance, particularly since 2001;

908 people were employed in manufacturing in 2001,

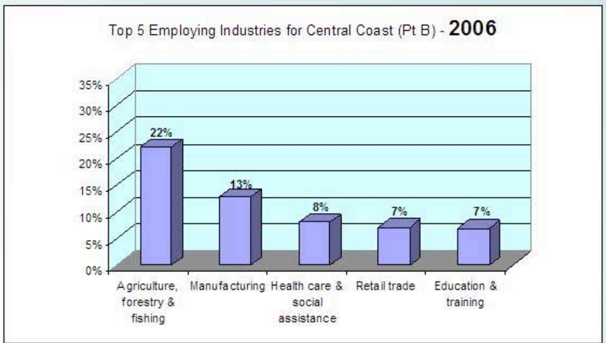
1164 in 2006

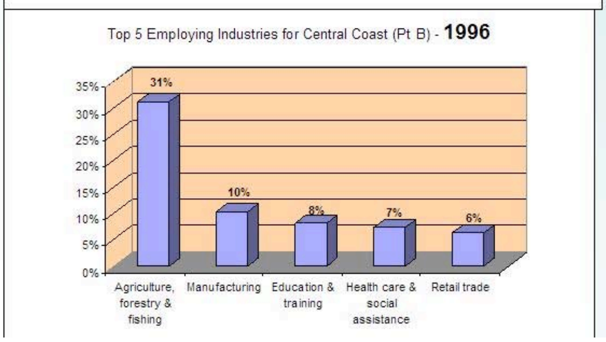
an increase of 28% in five years.

*Over the period 2001-2005, manufacturing employment in Sulphur Creek **doubled***



Inland… Agriculture is still the **main employer**, but shifts away from agricultural employment in the last decade are marked





More 'town jobs'?... Particularly for women?

A quarter of women living inland were employed in agriculture in 1996

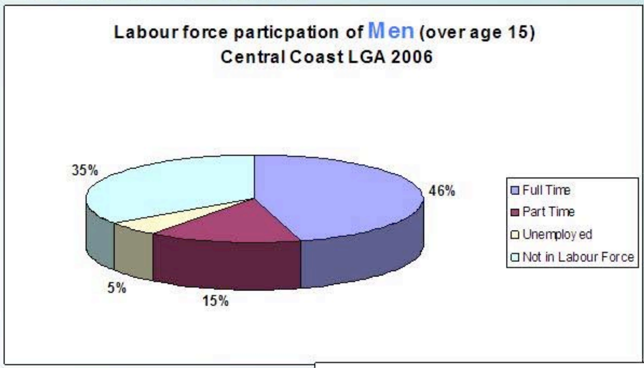
- but only **15%** in 2006.

There were 23% fewer women working in agriculture in 2006…

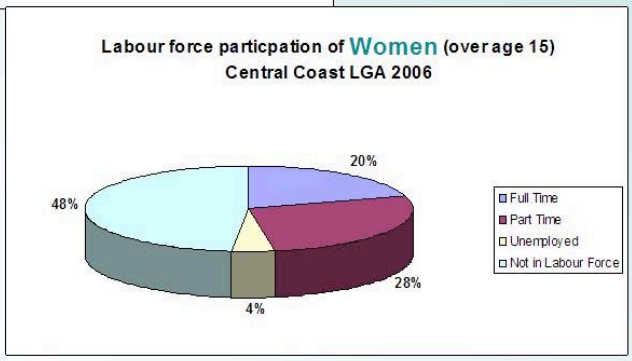
At the same time, there were 29% more women in the labour force!

Men's employment in agriculture has also decreased here (by about 17%).

Gender Matters

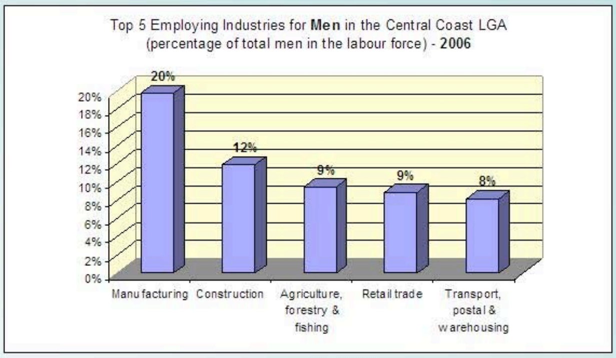


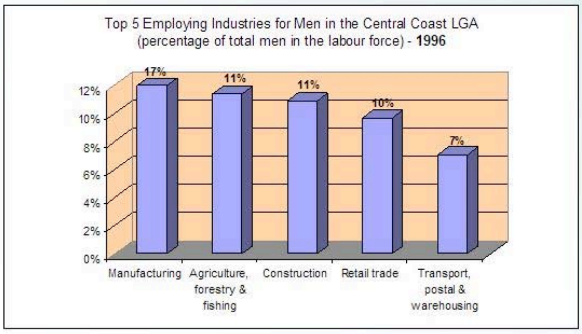
For Labour Force Participation…



…and for Industry involvement

Men, for instance, are heavily dependent on manufacturing industries for employment – 1 man in 5 now works in manufacturing





The number of men employed in manufacturing grew by nearly a third (32%) between 2001 and 2006.

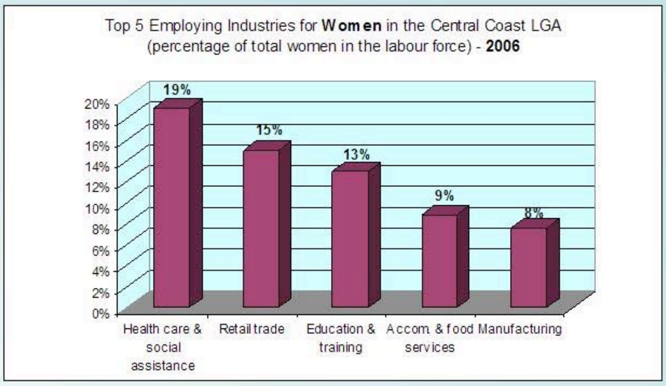
A decade ago, there was a more even balance of industries employing men.

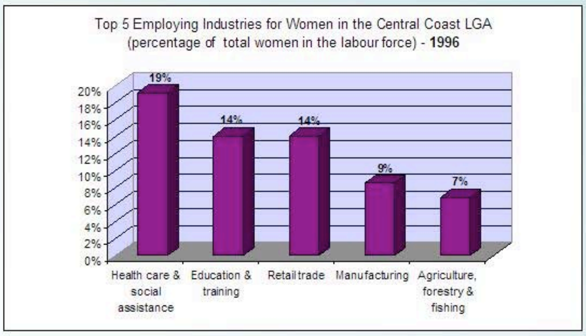
Women's employment profile is very different from men's. Health care and social assistance employs almost 1 in 5 women.

The number of women employed in health care and social assistance sector has grown 20% in the past decade.

Women's employment in retail has also grown significantly, up 28% in the last decade. (Men's employment in retail dropped over the same period.)

Retail is now the second largest industry of employment for women overall.





Top Employing Industries

Central Coast employment patterns for men and women are consistent with those of neighbouring LGAs

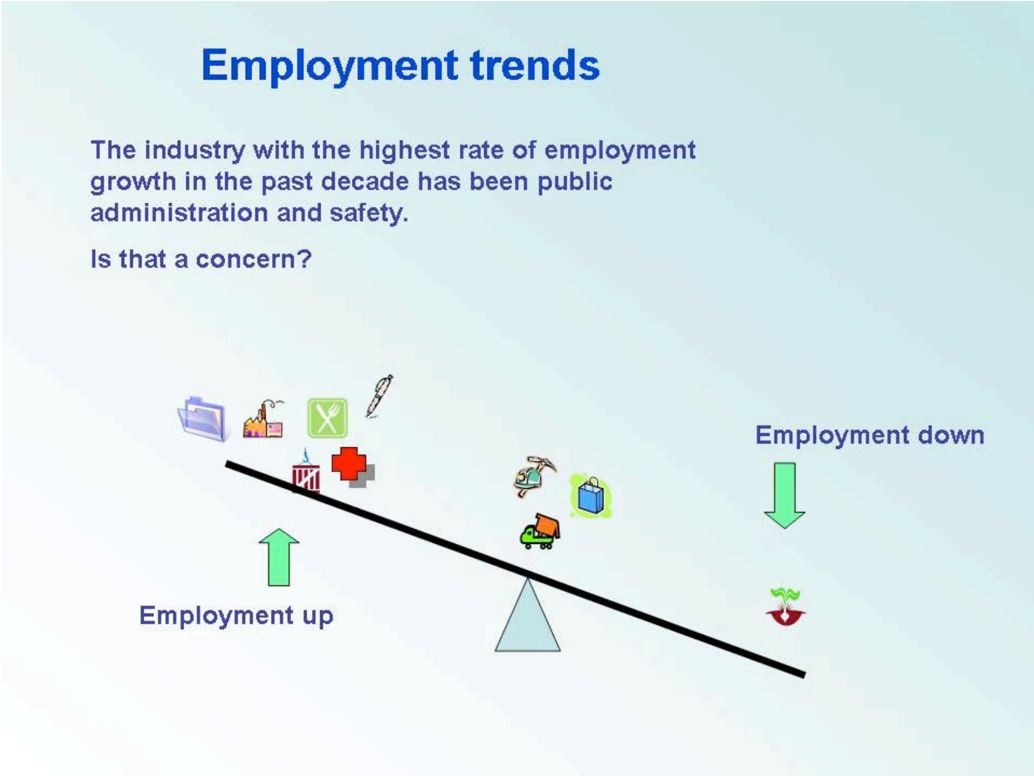
Manufacturing

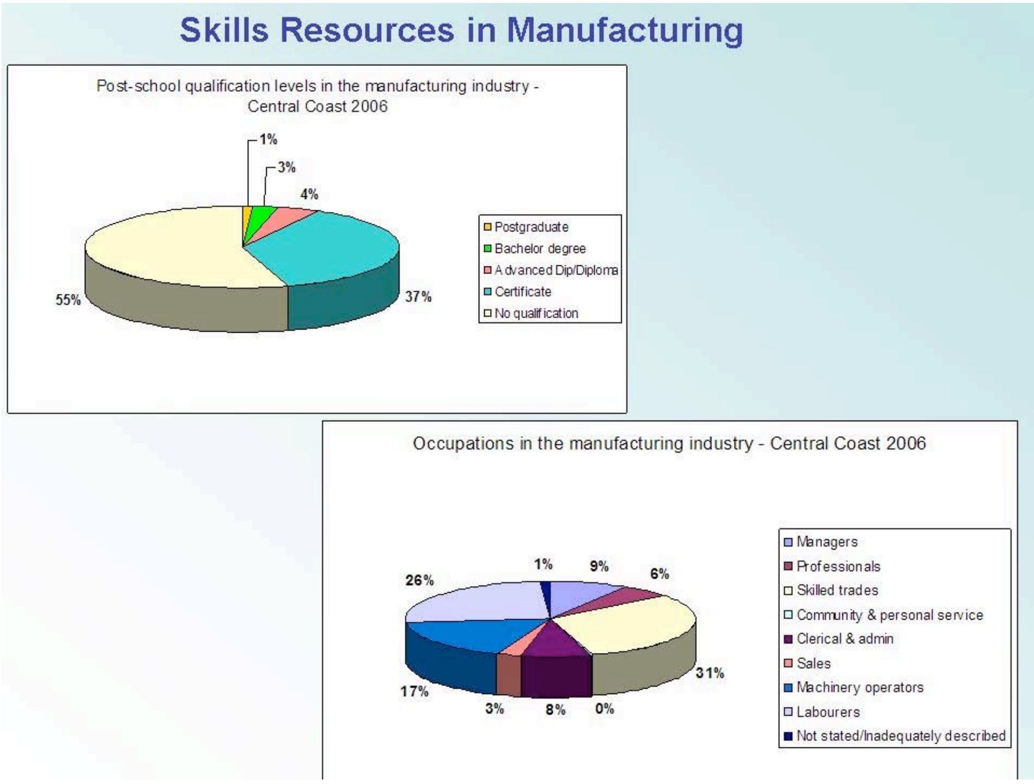
Health Care and Social Assistance

Accommodation and Food Services

Agriculture

Mining

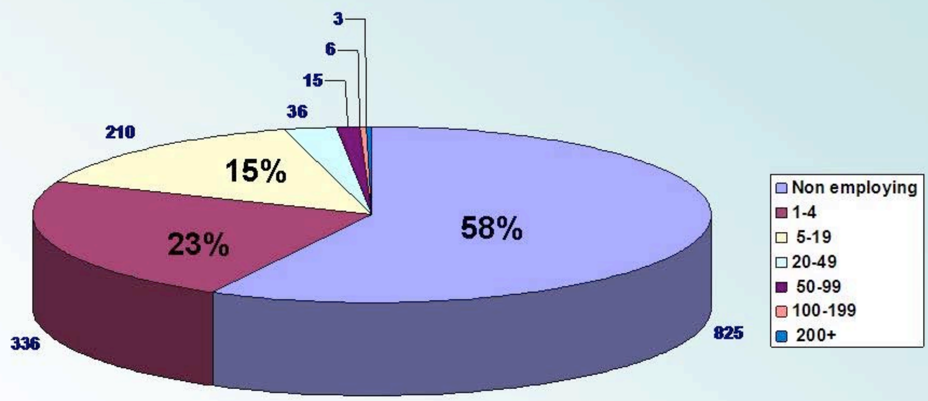

Employment trends
The industry with the highest rate of employment growth in the past decade has been public administration and safety.
Is that a concern?
Employment down
Employment up


Skills Resources in Manufacturing
Post-school qualification levels in the manufacturing industry - Central Coast 2006
1%
3%
4%
55%
37%
Postgraduate
Bachelor degree
Advanced Dip/Diploma
Certificate
No qualification
Occupations in the manufacturing industry - Central Coast 2006
26%
1%
9%
6%
31%
17%
3%
8%
0%
Managers
Professionals
Skilled trades
Community & personal service
Clerical & admin
Sales
Machinery operators
Labourers
Not stated/Inadequately described

Central Coast Business Profile

- *84% of employed people work in the private sector. This is in line with the figure Australia-wide.*
- *There are 1431 private-sector businesses in Central Coast*
- *Only 24 of these employ 50 or more people.*
- *Most (81% of businesses) are micro-enterprises*

Central Coast Business Profile



Of Total Businesses: 1431.

Total people employed = 8234.

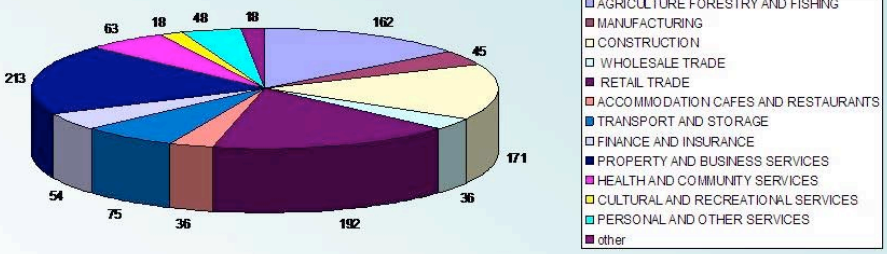
Estimate: around half work in businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

20% of all people employed are owner-managers or work in a business their family owns

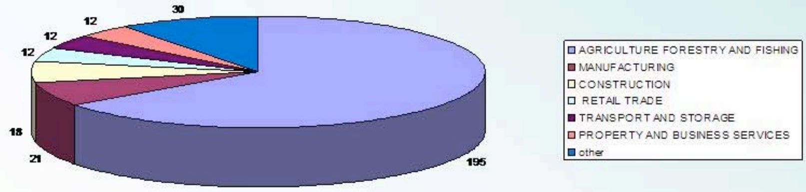
Most businesses in Central Coast (79%) are located on the coastal strip.

Note the breakdown of businesses by industry:

Coast



Inland



There is a need to separate the statistics for agriculture and for forestry.

Culture and Liveability

A few aspects:

- Natural Environment
- Infrastructure (roads, housing, energy, water…)
- Recreational and Leisure Opportunities
- Cultural Characteristics (tolerance? creativity? community?)
- Crime/ Safety

Many indices exist…. Most consider key areas like health, education and infrastructure. Many also look at climate and environment. Nearly all focus on *cities.* Each index reflects certain priorities and, indeed, value judgements.

- EIU Quality of Life Ranking looks at indicators such as: availability of consumer goods, availability of private education…

-Monocle Magazine's Quality of Life survey looks at things like: international long-haul airline connections, ease of getting a drink after 1 am!

So consider…

- **What for you is a 'liveable' community?**
- **What is present here?**
- **Absent here?**
- **At risk?**
- **What is a local government's role?**

Recreation Participation in Central Coast

- **83%** of the population of Central Coast participate in some form of sport/recreation (2001)
  - *Main motivations : health/ fitness, relaxation, and social interaction*
- Roughly **2/3** (65%) of this involves **non-organised activities** (similar for region as a whole)
  - *Across the region, **walking for exercise** by far the most popular activity (56% of sample), followed by **fishing** (21%), **swimming** (20%), and **bushwalking** (15%).*
  - *Particular implications for ensuring access to these activities …*
- About a third of people go outside the Central Coast LGA for their activity.
  - *The main reason, here as elsewhere, was to participate in competitions. However, nearly 20% of those travelling did so to access higher quality facilities (higher than any other LGA on the coast).*

Data from: Crisp Research 2001

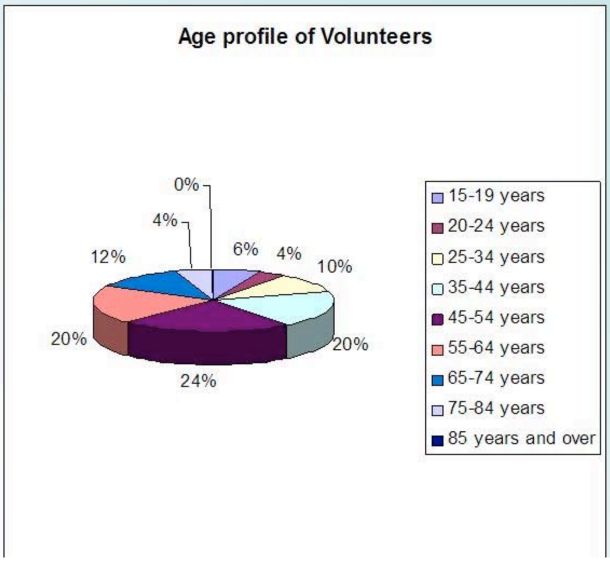
Volunteering

About 22% of the overall population (over age 15) in Central Coast is involved in volunteer work

(2006 Census)

Is there a 'culture of volunteering'?

What about informal 'helping out'?



Comparison with elsewhere? (State average is 20%, National average is 18%. Specific areas may be higher – e.g. King Island 31%).

Appendix 3: 'SWOT' analysis from Workshop One

SWOT Analysis Exercise for the different Forms of Capital in Central Coast

Political Capital:

Strength:	Political acumen – knowing where to go to when attempting to resolve State Government related issues.
Strength:	Central Coast Council – in recent years, the CCC has provided excellent opportunities for community input into planning for the future.
Threat:	Danger of people thinking that Central Coast needs to become more like other places, rather than valuing the qualities that make us distinctive and therefore attractive to potential residents as well as tourists.

Social Capital:

Opportunity:	Create lifestyle community
Strength	We have a very safe environment (low level of crime). Many mainland people come to live here because of this
Strength:	Volunteers – we have a large percentage of volunteerism within the community.
Strength:	We have a very close and caring community
Threat:	Aging population – need to invest in youth.
Weakness:	Polarisation in community around 'development' – middle ground of appropriate development should be strongly promoted.

Financial Capital:

Opportunity:	Financial Capital – make land available at the right price to encourage businesses like Bunnings, Myer, Aldi, etc..
Opportunity:	Resource sharing. Sharing of resources between other local councils and Cradle Coast Authority.
Weakness:	Council's decision to operate with little or no debt. This means projects are delayed until funding is available. Not completed when required.

Cultural Capital:

Opportunity	Promote cultural identity and historical context by story boarding access routes/roads.
Opportunity:	To group festivals/events under a themed promotional banner.
Opportunity:	Is there opportunity to achieve synergy from a coordinated art/woodwork/sculpture exhibition (NOT duplicating Deloraine craft show) – 3 or 4 venues; attractive prize money; an exhibition (items for sale) but not a craft show.
Opportunity:	Lots of creative, artistic and performing skills – need to showcase talents with, for example, a festival (e.g. largest circus organisation in Tas is based in Ulverstone). Attracts others to area. Could also have an 'artisans trail' so can view glass workers, woodworkers, etc.
Opportunity:	Further develop identity
Opportunity:	Roads – promote the 'Coast to Canyon' touring route
Strength	Recreation – Central Coast provides a wide range of recreational opportunities for families.
Strength:	Most festivals/events in 1st Quarter of the year.
Strength:	Recreational opportunities – wide range; organised and not organised; group or individual; diverse. Big liveability factor – made possible because of built, natural, cultural – important to retain and promote.
Threat:	Brand – what, how many, who, is theme good?
Weakness:	We have limited profile outside our region (in Tas) and no profile outside Tasmania. A good brand, but how do we get noticed.
Weakness:	Sporting facilities need to be rationalised

Built Capital:

Opportunity:	Roads: Highway has unused capacity. Traffic movement still relaxed. Story telling – cultural and historical elements to drives.
Opportunity:	Untouched river and waterfront area lends to development
Opportunity:	Wharf redevelopment: Opportunity to have: restaurants, boutique accommodation, cultural activities, water based activities.
Strength	Wharf: Possibly Ulverstone's major undeveloped asset. We have the opportunity of a lifetime to develop a hub which would be the heart and soul of the town.
Strength:	Parks and Gardens – well located public gardens. Private 'open gardens'.
Strength:	Water – ample, quality high. Presents future business opportunities – agriculture, tourism, recreational.

Strength:	Wide range of public halls and buildings.
Strength:	Roads – picturesque drives. Bring life to remote areas. Quality highways. Freedom and flexibility add to liveability.
Strength:	Roads: Generally, compared with other parts of Australia, the Central Coast LGA has well-surfaced roads – very few unsealed roads.
Strength:	Ulverstone's beach: expansive, clean, sandy, safe, easily accessible, the best beach in North. Tas.
Strength:	Roads – scenery, low traffic, generally good condition.
Strength:	Parks and gardens and sporting facilities – attractive and available, well maintained and should be in the future.
Weakness:	High cost of maintaining public halls and buildings.
Weakness:	Roads: Walking/cycling prohibitive – no new roads without walk and cycle ways. Dangerous as is.

Human Capital:

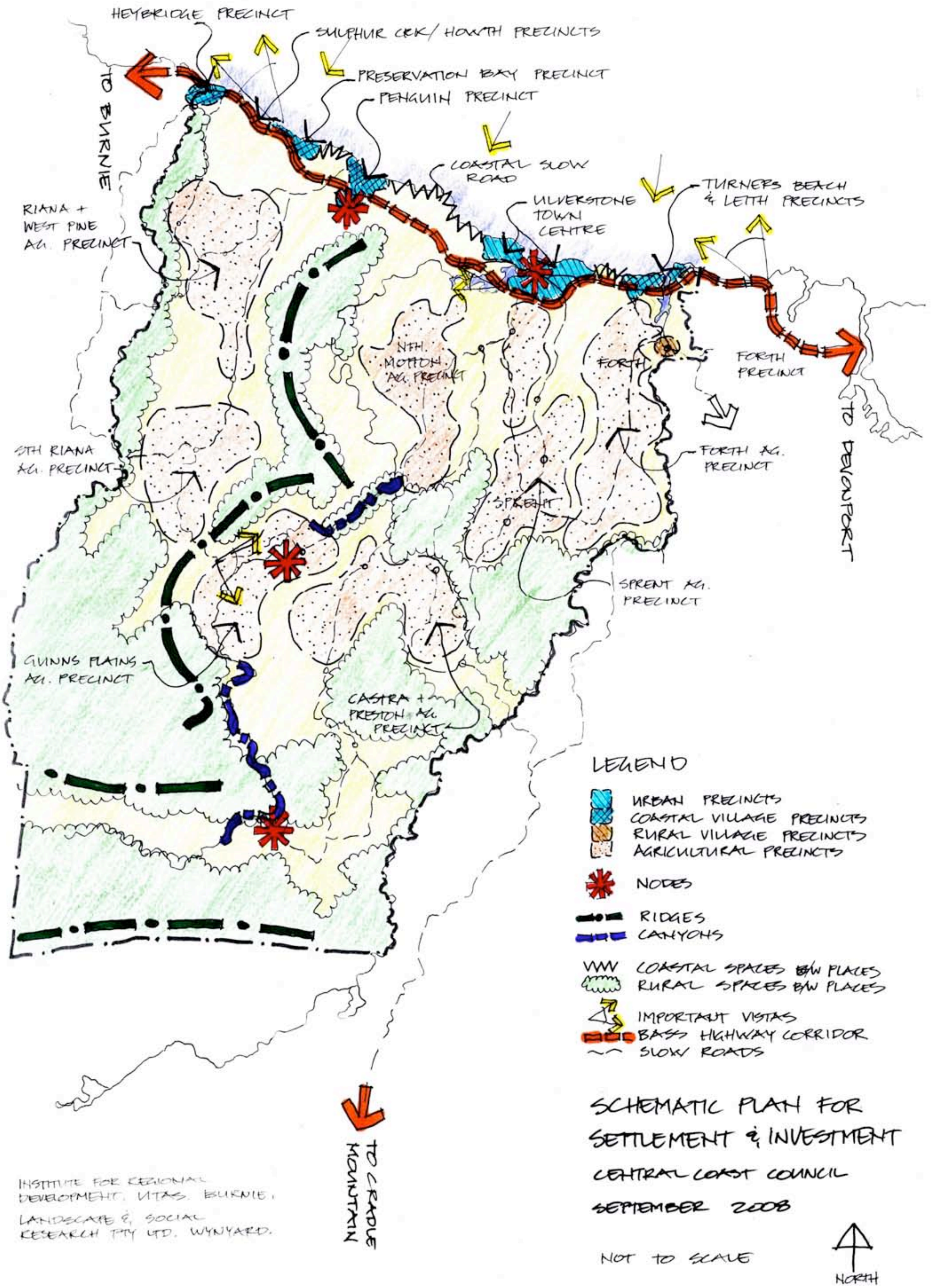
Opportunity:	(may exist already) Mentoring register – advertised contact for people looking to establish themselves
Strength:	Education – Schools providing for K to 10 are spread throughout the LGA – both public and private. Rural areas are quite well serviced by school busses. → an attraction for families wishing to relocate.
Strength:	People who are motivated
Strength:	Knowledge base
Strength:	Knowledge base – council has strong focus on training and higher education levels.
Weakness:	Creative thinking – do we harness, optimise? Diversity.
Weakness:	Ability to attract business investment – i.e. coffee shops, lounge bars open late, 7 days.
Weaknesses:	Education – although there are opportunities for post year 10 education in neighbouring LGAs, the lack of such facilities in Central Coast impacts on retention and further education ambitions.

Natural Capital:

Opportunity:	Air, Water, biodiversity, landscape – longer term possibilities massive.
Opportunity:	Coastline – the lovely coastal scenery when viewed from a boat provides potential for tourism ventures.
Opportunity:	Water availability: investment attraction opportunity, utilised?, capture, storage?; distribution; managed
Opportunity:	Improve access to coastline with walking/cycling tracks.
Opportunity:	Easy access walking tracks to the more beautiful, less accessible

	natural treasures – e.g. bottom of Leven Canyon.
Opportunity:	Promote region as pristine environment.
Opportunity:	Encourage small specialised organic crop growing to be marketed nationally at a premium price level.
Strength:	Accessible beaches and coastline
Strength:	Clean Green Band – harness, preservation, ?Brand?
Strength:	Ability to grow cool climate fruit and vegetables.
Strength:	Diversity and beauty of natural and built landscapes – need to evolve and develop retaining overall character and enhance it (and not detract from it).
Threat:	Air, soil, landscape, water, biodiversity – all magnificent – need to deal with negative weather perceptions as part of regional approach – protect native animals.
Threat:	Rural zonings will stifle small subdivisions.
Threat:	Inappropriate development destroying the natural assets, e.g. high-rise buildings, forestry. In the wrong place can negatively impact on the 'attractiveness' of the landscape.
Threats:	Plan to attract people back to rural areas – zoning issues etc.
Weakness:	Dial range is a special asset which has been degraded – a real opportunity.
Weakness:	Distance from major markets
Weakness:	Climate change – loss of coastal habitat
Weakness:	We don't know what we have

Appendix 4: Schematic Plan for Settlement & Investment


HEYBRIDGE PRECINCT
SULPHUR CRK/ HOWTH PRECINCTS
PRESERVATION BAY PRECINCT
PENGUIN PRECINCT
TO BURNIE
COASTAL SLOW ROAD
TURNERS BEACH & LEITH PRECINCTS
ULVERSTONE TOWN CENTRE
RIANA + WEST PINE AG. PRECINCT
NTH. MOTTON AG. PRECINCT
FORTH
FORTH PRECINCT
TO DEVONPORT
STH RIANA AG. PRECINCT
FORTH AG. PRECINCT
SPREYTON
SPRENT AG. PRECINCT
GUNNS PLAINS AG. PRECINCT
CASTRA + PRESTON AG. PRECINCT
LEGEND
URBAN PRECINCTS
COASTAL VILLAGE PRECINCTS
RURAL VILLAGE PRECINCTS
AGRICULTURAL PRECINCTS
NODES
RIDGES
CANYONS
COASTAL SPACES B/W PLACES
RURAL SPACES B/W PLACES
IMPORTANT VISTAS
BASS HIGHWAY CORRIDOR
SLOW ROADS
SCHEMATIC PLAN FOR SETTLEMENT & INVESTMENT
CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 2008
NOT TO SCALE
NORTH
TO CRADLE MOUNTAIN
INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, UTAS, BURNIE.
LANDSCAPE & SOCIAL RESEARCH PTY LTD, WYNYARD.