



Central Coast Council

Greening Central Coast Strategy

SEPTEMBER 2021

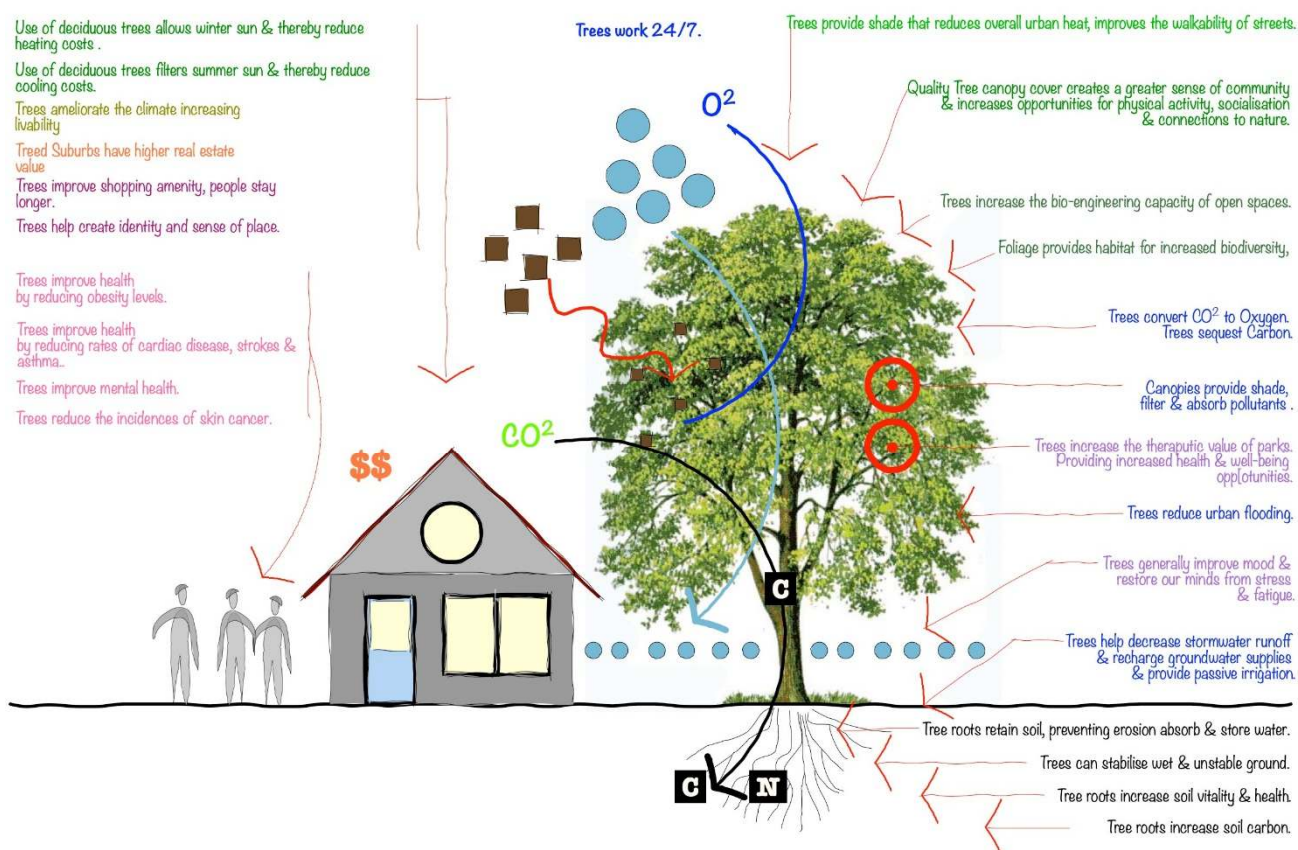
TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE BENEFITS OF URBAN GREENING	1
CANOPY COVER IN CENTRAL COAST	2
CANOPY COVER PRIORITIES.....	3
OBJECTIVES	5
Objective 1: Enhancement.....	5
Objective 2: Identity	6
Objective 3: Landscape	7
Objective 4: Community	8
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	9
Objective 1: Enhancement.....	10
Objective 2: Identity	11
Objective 3: Landscape	12
Objective 4: Community	13
GLOSSARY.....	14
BIBLIOGRAPHY	15

THE BENEFITS OF URBAN GREENING

It is well documented that trees are intrinsically beneficial and essential to the health and well-being of the individual and community. These benefits are not only achieved through access to wilderness and naturalistic opportunities but also by a single tree in a park or street.

Urban trees shade street and buildings and reduce the amount of heat absorbed by dark surfaces such as streets. Trees in urban areas have traditionally been valued for their role in creating attractive streets, parks and gardens.



Some of the Benefits of Urban Trees.

Trees can also provide a range of environmental benefits, as carbon sinks absorbing carbon from the atmosphere, improving air quality, reducing stormwater flows and absorbing nutrients that can pollute waterways.

In the last two decades, research has indicated that urban trees also provide substantial environmental, economic and social benefits. Increasingly, urban trees have been viewed as critical infrastructure, protecting and enhancing community health and well-being.

CANOPY COVER IN CENTRAL COAST

The LGA as a whole has an existing canopy cover of 54.6%, which is a healthy level of vegetation. The LGA spans from the sea to the mountains, incorporating some significant areas of natural beauty and unique topography. Canopy cover is dominated in the upper catchment of the LGA by natural environmental assets (21%), production native forests (12%), and plantation forestry (8%). Arguably the most productive soils in the State are found in this LGA, but are deprived of canopy cover.

Approximately 90% of the urban development in Central Coast is confined to the coastal strip with a canopy cover of 31.33% (including private land). This is where the greatest impact on pre-European canopy cover has occurred, with almost 50% of cover modified by around 200 years of development.



The Precinct of Ulverstone, the fourth lowest in total canopy cover.

Given that generally, the major impact of canopy reduction is within the urban precincts, these settlement areas of the LGA need to be specifically assessed to quantify the canopy extent now and hence, identify the areas where canopy cover needs to be increased.

The chosen urban precincts included in this Strategy are:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| . Ulverstone; | . Forth; |
| . Penguin; | . Sulphur Creek; |
| . Turners Beach; | . Preservation Bay; and |
| . Leith; | . Heybridge. |

The average canopy cover of these precincts drops significantly from the coastal strip of 31.33% to just 18.9% (excluding private land).

CANOPY COVER PRIORITIES

The priorities for increasing precinct canopy cover in streets, Crown open space and Council open space have been identified.

Both Leith and Heybridge have the highest total canopy cover, but an absence of Council owned open space.

Sulphur Creek and Preservation Bay are restricted by linear development along a main road, which was once a state highway and would have precluded any significant plantings.

Ulverstone is also very low in canopy cover, however with the increase in new housing developments, there is opportunity to increase street canopy.

The lack of Council owned open space in Leith, Sulphur Creek, Preservation Bay and Heybridge is the primary cause of the low canopy cover and will lack focus for implementation.

Access to Crown Land by licence or lease contributes significantly to the canopy cover across most precincts, creating the “treed” perception. However, most of this land is coastal foreshore located and does not provide benefits throughout the wider community.

Canopy Cover Priority Areas				
PRECINCT	Total Canopy Cover	Street Canopy	Crown Open Space Canopy	Council Open Space Canopy
Ulverstone	12.48%	6.52%	54.05%	6.17%
Penguin	21.13%	16.33%	14.77%	29.77%
Turners Beach	11.45%	12.52%	54.51%	6.45%
Leith	30.03%	36.51%	59.74%	N/A
Forth	26.18%	22.99%	80.19%	19.21%
Sulphur Creek	6.02%	2.53%	30.42%	N/A
Preservation Bay	5.89%	3.40%	25.72%	N/A
Heybridge	38.34%	32.54%	28.10%	N/A
Average	18.9%	16.67%	43.44%	7.70%

* N/A = Council does not own Open Space in this precinct

Implementation Priorities	0-20%	High	20-30%	Medium	30% plus	Low
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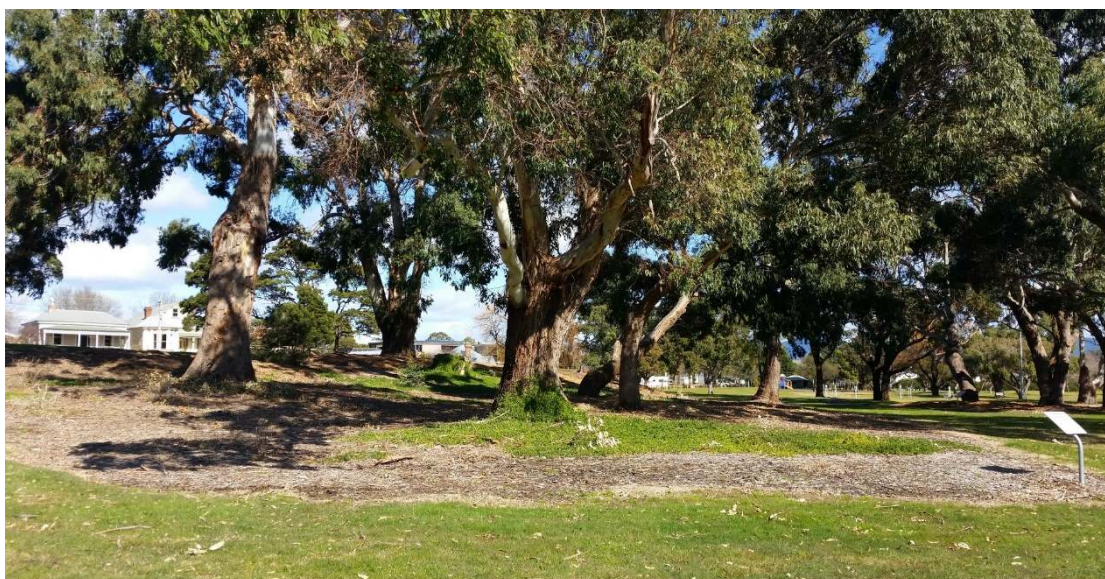
LGA *	54.60%
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STRATEGY VISION

Increase Central Coast's Green Infrastructure to enhance its unique identity, landscape and lifestyle.

To achieve the vision for an increase in Central Coast's Green Infrastructure to enhance its unique identity, landscape and lifestyle, an aspirational target of 30% canopy cover by 2030 has been set and will be delivered through four key objectives and 18 priority actions.

30% canopy cover by 2030



Canopy cover in an open space environment.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Enhancement

To achieve a positive increase in canopy cover to the built/urban environment.

Increasing canopy cover is the single simplest way of addressing the concerns and impacts of climate change and accommodating the effects of development. The Central Coast is blessed with a rich and diverse hinterland, but the coastal strip is where most precincts have developed and this area is now seeing the biggest decline in canopy cover.

Objective 1 Actions:

Action 1.1

- Develop planning permit conditions that facilitates the deliverance of Green Infrastructure outcomes.

Action 1.2

- Establish a baseline data set to identify canopy cover and prioritise planting areas.

Action 1.3

- Develop planting palettes that consider climate adaptability and are “fit for site”.

Action 1.4

- Update relevant Council Plans to align with the Greening Central Coast Strategy.

Action 1.5

- All tree removals to be replaced and guided by the planting palette.

Objective 2: Identity

Enhance and conserve our cultural and landscape character.

Our landscape has shaped the culture of the people and their lifestyle. From the awe-inspiring canyons to the glistening beaches, our unique landscape provides the foundations for the community's physical, mental and economic well-being.

Objective 2 Actions:

Action 2.1

- Liaise with local indigenous Australian community groups to develop an understanding of areas of cultural significance.

Action 2.2

- Identify the landscape character for each open space and precinct through a planting palette that enhances "place".

Action 2.3

- Develop a schedule of sites that exhibit best practice in key areas of Green Infrastructure.

Action 2.4

- Identify areas of scenic significance and incorporate into planning overlays.

Objective 3: Landscape

To develop a network of green infrastructure that protects and increases our biodiversity.

The greater the diversity of our landscape, the greater the benefits to both the ecosystem and its inhabitants, and the better it is able to cope with and absorb change. The landscape is the sum of its parts and in this context, more is better.

Objective 3 Actions:**Action 3.1**

- Prioritise increasing canopy cover along the Central Coast Shared Pathway Network.

Action 3.2

- Establish a biodiversity index and apply to key Green Infrastructure areas.

Action 3.3

- Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan to identify at risk vegetation communities including riparian areas.

Action 3.4

- Develop Landscape Guidelines for nature strips and encourage community “ownership”.

Action 3.5

- Increase Green Infrastructure in Central Business Districts (CBDs).

Objective 4: Community

Increase community knowledge, awareness, appreciation and value of Green Infrastructure.

Achieving a positive increase in Central Coast's Green Infrastructure requires a coordinated approach with the local community through information sharing, active participation, embracing change and take positive steps to create liveable precincts of the future, today.

Objective 4 Actions:**Action 4.1**

- Develop a Marketing Plan including digital opportunities to highlight positive, 'good news stories' and to promote the Green Infrastructure message.

Action 4.2

- Develop a Green Infrastructure Steering Group.

Action 4.3

- Support, encourage and celebrate community groups involved in Green Infrastructure initiatives.

Action 4.4

- Support Green Infrastructure awards program participants and celebrate sustainability and biodiversity achievements.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Objective 1: Enhancement

To achieve a positive increase in canopy cover to the built/urban environment.

Objective 1 Implementation:

ACTION	BUDGET	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1.1 Develop planning permit conditions that facilitate the deliverance of Green Infrastructure outcomes.	\$1k					
1.2 Establish a baseline data set to identify canopy cover and prioritise planting areas.	\$5k					
1.3 Develop planting palettes that consider climate adaptability and “fit for site”.	\$10k					
1.4 Update relevant Council Plans to align with the Greening Central Coast Strategy.	Internal					
1.5 All tree removals to be replaced and guided by the planting palette.	\$10k p.a.					

Action Priority for Implementation ■ High ■ Medium ■ Low

Objective 2: Identity

Enhance and conserve our cultural and landscape character.

Objective 2 Implementation:

ACTION	BUDGET	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
2.1 Liaise with local indigenous Australian community groups to develop an understanding of areas of cultural significance.	Internal					
2.2 Identify landscape character for each open space and precinct through a planting palette that enhances “place”.	Internal					
2.3 Develop a schedule of sites that exhibit best practice in key areas of Green Infrastructure.	Internal					
2.4 Identify areas of scenic significance and incorporate into Planning Scheme Overlays.	\$20k					

Action Priority for Implementation ■ High ■ Medium ■ Low

Objective 3: Landscape

To develop a network of green infrastructure that protects and increases our biodiversity.

Objective 3 Implementation:

ACTION	BUDGET	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
3.1 Prioritise increasing canopy cover along the Central Coast Shared Pathway Network.	\$20k					
3.2 Establish a biodiversity index and apply to key Green Infrastructure areas.	\$15k					
3.3 Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan to identify at risk vegetation communities including riparian areas.	\$30k					
3.4 Develop Landscape Guidelines for nature strips and encourage community "ownership".	Internal					
3.5 Increase Green Infrastructure in CBDs.	TBC					

Action Priority for Implementation



High



Medium



Low

Objective 4: Community

Increase community knowledge, awareness, appreciation and value of Green Infrastructure.

Objective 4 Implementation:

ACTION	BUDGET	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
4.1 Develop a Marketing Plan including digital opportunities to highlight positive, 'good news stories' and to promote the Green Infrastructure message.	Internal					
4.2 Develop a Green Infrastructure Steering Group.	Internal					
4.3 Support, encourage and celebrate Community Groups involved in Green Infrastructure initiatives.	Internal					
4.4 Support Green Infrastructure Awards Program participants and celebrate sustainability & biodiversity achievements.	\$20k					

Action Priority for Implementation



High



Medium



Low

GLOSSARY

Baseline	The extent of the data/element (canopy) at the time of writing the Strategy.
Canopy	Any greening element (primarily trees) greater than 3m in height.
Canopy Cover	The area of ground underneath/covered by the canopy of a tree.
Council	Central Coast Council.
Greening	All vegetation including grasslands, turf, shrubs, thickets, single trees and forests.
Green Cover	The area of ground covered by any of the greening elements.
Green Infrastructure	All of the vegetation that provides environmental, economic and social benefits such as clean air and water, climate regulation, food provision, erosion control and places for recreation. Nature-based solutions.
Planting Palette	A list of plant species selected for a specific area.
Precinct	An area with similar characteristic or specific selected criteria.
Strategy	Greening Central Coast Strategy.
Street Tree	Species taller than 3m in height with a single trunk and clear stemmed to at least 2.7m with a defined canopy.
Tree	Vegetation taller than 3m in height with a trunk or trunks and a defined canopy. Includes deciduous, evergreen, native, or exotic.

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