



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL



Sustainability Action Plan *2020*

Acknowledgement of Country

Cumberland City Council acknowledges the Darug Nation and People as Traditional Custodians of the land on which Cumberland City is situated and pays respect to Aboriginal Elders both past, present and future.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

Cumberland City Council acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples living in the Cumberland Local Government Area and reaffirms that we will work closely with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to advance reconciliation within the area.

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Summary

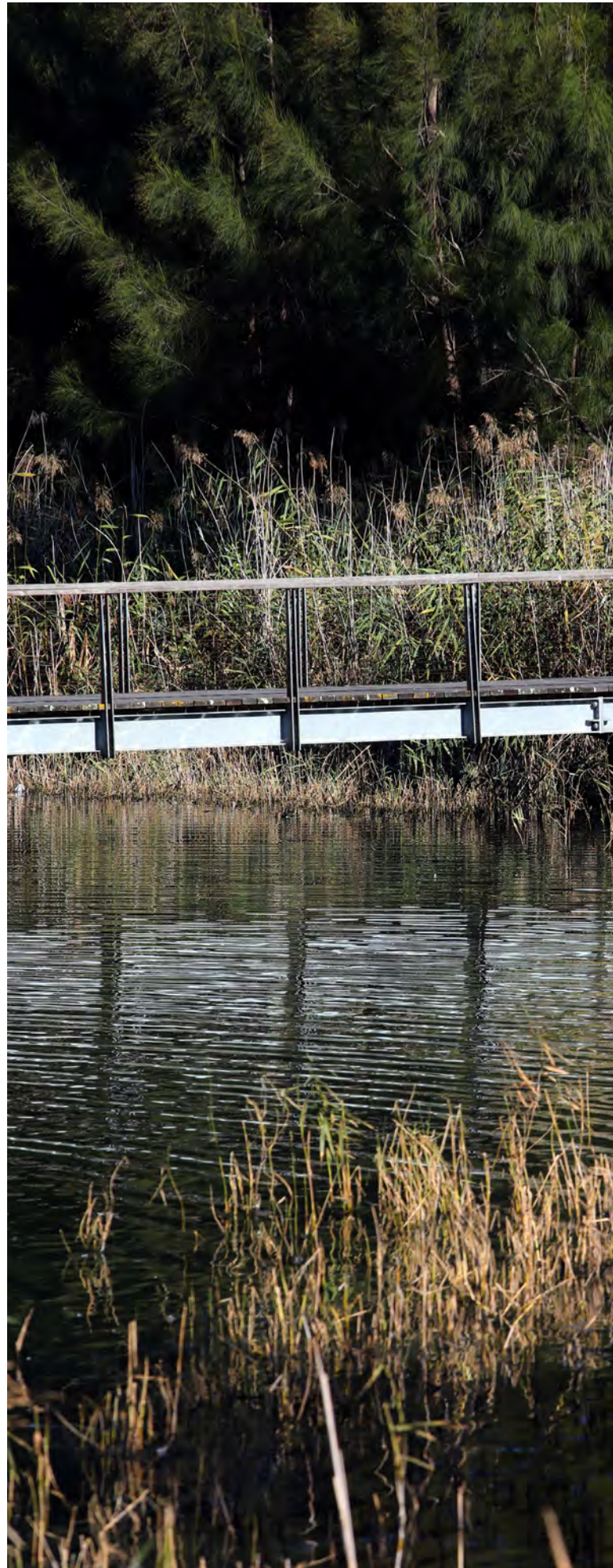
The Sustainability Action Plan aims to enhance the quality of life in Cumberland through the key focus areas identified in Council's Environmental Management Framework. This plan identifies actions that are drawn from existing Council documents and reinforce the role of Council as a leader in sustainability through three main focus areas with key goals and actions.

The Sustainability Action Plan is about integrating sustainability into our decision making and balancing short term priorities with longer term need. This plan will capture the benefits of environmental actions and builds on a strong history of action by Council in the area of sustainability, providing a solid foundation for continuous improvement into the future and outlines key actions for implementation.

These actions contribute to a common environmental vision:

Cumberland City Council will lead by example to deliver a clean, green and sustainable environment for current and future generations.

Cumberland City is:





Background

A Sustainability Action Plan is a planned approach for Council to promote and enhance environmental sustainability. A Sustainability Action Plan will place significant value on the operational and action level rather than focusing on the 'bigger picture' strategic directions.

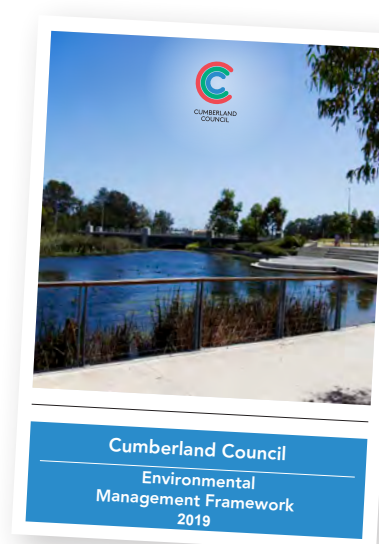
Actions in the Sustainability Action Plan reflect the themes identified in Council's Environmental Management Framework. These themes are:

- Biodiversity
- Waste & Litter
- Energy & Water Efficiency
- Water & Air Quality
- Corporate Sustainability

The Environmental Management Framework has been developed through a rigorous research and engagement process and provides the background for the actions in this plan.

The Sustainability Action Plan forms an extension of this work and is designed for:

- ensuring that Council meets the needs of the community as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan
- developing and reporting on outcomes
- environmental planning and strategy
- implementing environmental projects and initiatives



What does sustainability mean to us?

Sustainability is about protecting and enhancing what we have so that future generations can maintain their quality of life and delivering services to increase our resilience now and into the future. Sustainability is a holistic approach to managing the environment and aims to balance between environmental protection, economic practices and social responsibility.

There is no universally accepted definition of sustainability but was introduced as a concept in the Brundtland Report, also called Our Common Future. This report was released in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) and first introduced the concept of sustainable development as *“development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* and described how it could be achieved.

Since then, the definition of sustainability has evolved to include environmental, economic, social and governance. These are known as the four pillars of sustainability, as all four need to be applied to decisions and actions to achieve sustainability. A big part of this means using our resources wisely, such as

our natural environment, water and fossil fuels, and modifying the way we do things every day so that we can enjoy our City as it changes and grows.

We do this by considering and balancing the environmental, economic, social and governance impacts of our decisions. The focus areas of a clean and green city, a resilient city and a responsible city follow the below principles:

- Lead by example in identifying opportunities to support sustainability
- Recognise that current actions and policies have an environmental impact for future generations
- Protect the natural environment and value the importance of a diverse and healthy ecosystem
- Involve Traditional Custodians and the community in decisions and actions that affect them



A clean and green city

Improving the natural environment as well as maintaining the local amenity is important for community wellbeing in terms of aesthetics, recreation, health and spirit.

Cumberland City Council lies within the Cumberland Plain Woodland. The natural vegetation of this landscape is Grey Box and Grey Box-Ironbark Woodlands. Today the woodland exists only in fragments and is easily threatened by weed invasion, mowing, soil compaction and litter. Litter includes items like cigarette butts, food scraps, bottles and packaging. But littering isn't just ugly – it is an environmental problem. Littering pollutes our waterways, streets and parks and causes environmental damage. We are all responsible for the cleanliness of the places we visit and we must put our rubbish in the bin or take it with us.

Cigarette butts are the most littered item in NSW. They are a huge threat to the cleanliness of our streets, to waterways and to aquatic life. When cigarette butts are left on the ground to decompose, they release toxic substances into the soil and water. Even after the paper and tobacco breaks down, the filter can remain for up to 12 years.

Local resident participating in Council's native bee hive program

A clean city is welcoming and promotes pride in place and a green city connects us to nature and community through play, sport and social interaction.

Key initiatives by Council

- installation of enviropoles to capture and recycle cigarette butts
- street art and street theatre to engage community and raise awareness about litter
- installation of nesting boxes to provide habitat for birds in the absence of tree hollows
- distribution of native beehives that help promote biodiversity, pollination and green corridors
- participation and promotion of annual national events, such as Clean Up Australia Day and National Tree Day
- implementing the community plant giveaway program to promote planting and benefits of trees
- hosting Return and Earn facilities on selected Council sites



A resilient city

Resilience means striving to maintain liveability of the community and being able to cope with stresses and shocks placed on a city, such as extreme heat and weather events, transport congestion and housing affordability.

An emerging issue is a changing climate. We need to consider this, as much of what we do and how we live depends on the climate. A changing climate may also impact on our natural environment.

How we respond to a changing climate is important because of the risks that comes with it. Depending on where we live in the world, the effects can vary. For example, if you live in bushland, the risk may be bushfires. If you live near the beach, it may be flooding. This may mean loss of homes and businesses, loss of life, pressure on our infrastructure, loss of income and increasing insurance costs. It also affects government, businesses and the community, internationally and locally, as decisions need to be made about how to respond.

A resilient city is one that recognises risks and plans for the future in an appropriate way.

Key initiatives by Council

- completion of a research project with Western Sydney University to benchmark micro climates across Cumberland City
- commencement of the 'UV-Smart and Cool Playgrounds' project for the first playground in NSW
- review of planning controls to support a more resilient City
- commencement of the 'Heat Smart' project with Western Sydney Region of Councils
- investigation of the feasibility of electric vehicles for Council's fleet
- hosting a community citizen science project to inform work on a resilient city



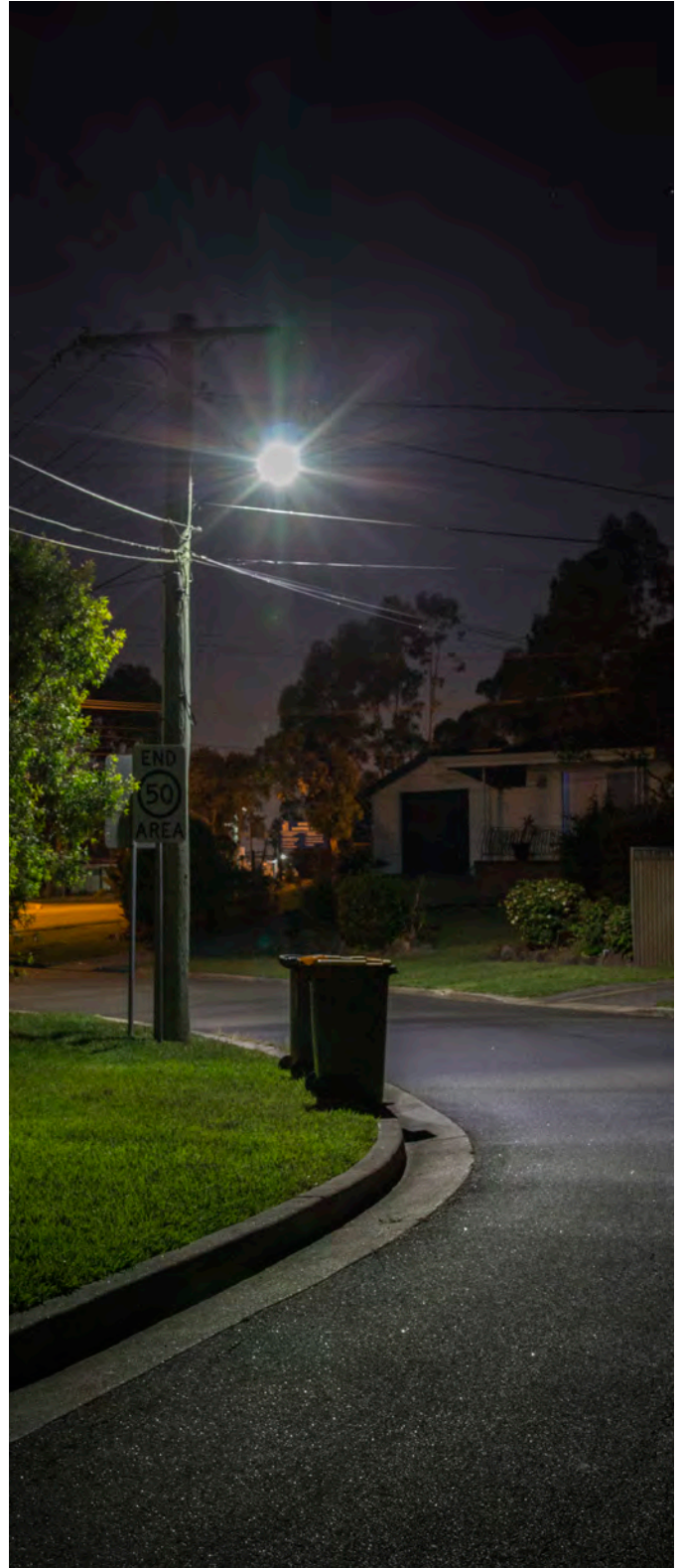
A responsible city

Sustainability is ongoing and can only continue to progress if the community, businesses and government lead by example. For local government, this means prioritising environmental issues and implementing actions where it can create positive outcomes for the community within the resources available. It also means educating the community to promote behaviour change and create a sense of responsibility.

A responsible city is one that looks at internal operations and identifies opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce emissions, while also reducing pressure on Council resources and infrastructure used by the community.

Key initiatives by Council

- replacement of car park lighting with over 500 LED lights with motion sensors, resulting in a reduction in energy usage of 60%
- installation of 21 energy efficient hot water systems (solar and heat pump) across 12 park amenities blocks, youth centres, community centres, function centres and administration building
- installation of 100kW of solar panel systems on youth centres, libraries, function centres, children's centres and community centres
- replacement of 940 old mercury vapour streetlights with energy efficient LEDs
- installation of SmartMeter data loggers to track water consumption on Council assets
- installation of stormwater harvesting systems at two major sporting fields
- investigation and feasibility of purchasing green energy
- hosting a community energy forum for residents
- development and implementation of energy savings and water efficiency initiatives on Council assets
- energy and water monitoring software to monitor and measure consumption across Council assets



LED street lights in Woodpark (Photo: Serge Golikov)

Implementation and tracking success

Decisions about prioritising environmental sustainability actions are made with considerations to risk, meeting Council’s policy, strategic and legislative commitments and whether actions represent value for money to Council and the community.

The table opposite summarises how Cumberland City Council will work towards sustainability.

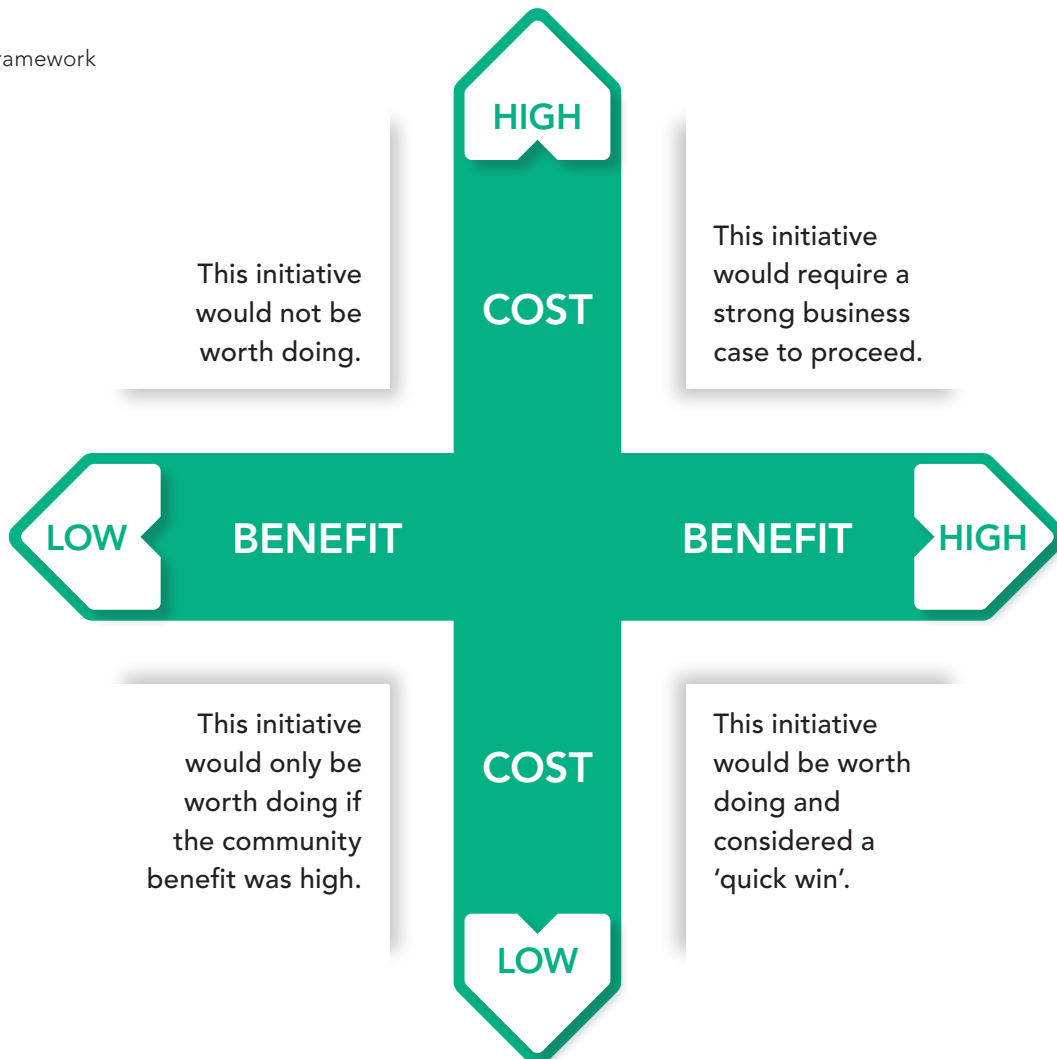
The key initiatives identified in the Action Plan are by no means exhaustive but a sample of some of the dynamic projects and programs that have been commenced or implemented. These are in addition to ongoing maintenance works and upgrades to our

City, which are reported as part of Council’s processes. At the time of this plan, many initiatives were being investigated or are underway as part of Council’s ongoing commitment to reduce its environmental footprint.

This Action Plan will be reviewed annually and existing reporting processes will be utilised for reporting on actions.

For all organisations, sustainability is a work in progress. As demands on our City grow, so does the need to strive even further for sustainability.

Cost Benefit Framework



Key Focus Areas	Actions		Indicators
A CLEAN AND GREEN CITY	1.1	Implement strategies and initiatives that enhance the natural environment and improve amenity	Priority actions from the Cumberland Biodiversity Strategy 2019, Cumberland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018-2023 and the Cumberland Environmental Health Strategy 2020-2024
	1.2	Support education and programs that promote biodiversity and reduce our environmental footprint	Priority actions from the Cumberland Biodiversity Strategy 2019 and Cumberland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018-2023 Community and Council participation
A RESILIENT CITY	2.1	Reduce urban heat impacts through regional projects	Priority Actions from Western Sydney Region of Councils (WSROC) 'Turn Down the Heat' Strategy Recommendations from the 'Benchmarking Heat Across Cumberland Council' research report
	2.2	Review planning instruments and controls to support a resilient city	Local Strategic Planning Statement Local Environmental Plan Development Control Plan
	2.3	Identify climate risks and implement adaptation initiatives	Climate change risk assessment
A RESPONSIBLE CITY	3.1	Identify water and energy efficiency opportunities and implement projects to reduce consumption	Benchmarking data from AZility monitoring software State and Federal emissions targets Cities Power Partnership (CPP) pledges Western Sydney Region of Councils (WSROC) Western Sydney Energy Program recommendations Actions from Council's strategies, programs and plans
	3.2	Investigate opportunities to embed sustainability values into operations, improve capacity and provide internal education	Priority actions from the Cumberland Biodiversity Strategy 2019 and Cumberland Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018-2023 Internal training opportunities Corporate sustainability opportunities



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