

General Manager
Ku-ring-gai Council
Locked Bag 1006
Gordon NSW 2072

9th May 2019

Dear Mr McKee,

**Ku-ring-gai Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement
(Northern Sydney Local Health District Submission)**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the draft of the Ku-ring-gai Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). Health Promotion (Northern Sydney Local Health District) is committed to ensuring that the built environment has a net-positive impact on the health and well-being of individuals and the wider community.

We recently had the pleasure of meeting staff from the Council's planning team at the LSPS assurance workshops held by the Greater Sydney Commission. We were impressed with the Council's inclusion of 'Health' in its overall vision statement and also noted the strong commitment to improve movement networks, prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and provide open green space. This is also evident throughout the Council's Community Strategic Plan 2038¹.

There is a growing body of evidence on the built environment and its impact on the health of a community². The UNSW City Futures Research on Healthy Built Environments², identifies three key domains related to healthy place making which include getting people active, connecting and strengthening communities and providing healthy food options.

Local strategic planning statements should be used as an opportunity to reconcile population forecasts and infrastructure delivery priorities, build greater social connection and equitable access to healthy food, and address locally occurring clusters of health disadvantage. Therefore, as an overall recommendation, we recommend that these health-related domains are addressed throughout the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).

For this submission, we have provided our responses to the key questions posed to the community by the council. We have also made specific recommendations as relevant to the components of the LSPS. This is listed in Table 1 on page 3.

Issues that should be addressed through the strategic planning statement

Improving transport and infrastructures which support active travel

Residents in Ku-ring-gai remain dependent on cars as the main mode of transport to work with 49.9% using cars to get to work. Whilst this trend is decreasing, walking or cycling to work has remained static at 2.3% and 0.6% respectively³. In NSW, there has also been a decline of about 42% in children's active transport participation rates to/from school between 1971 and 2013⁴. Increased access to buses and trains services as well as bike and pedestrian paths are key to the creation of a well-connected and accessible community. The resulting increase in community connectedness and physical activity levels (and reduced car dependence) offers both health benefits (such as decreased risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes) and environmental benefits². Reduction in private car usage will

¹ Ku-ring-gai Council (2018) Community Strategic Plan 2018- 2038

² Kent, J., Thompson, S.M., and Jalaludin, B., Healthy Built Environments: A review of the literature, Sydney: Healthy Built Environments Program, City Futures Research Centre, UNSW. Available at <https://cityfutures.be.unsw.edu.au/research/city-wellbeing/city-wellbeing-resources/literature-review/>

³ Australia Bureau of Statistics (2016) Census of Population and Housing, Method of travel to work

⁴ Active Healthy Kids Australia (2015). The Road Less Travelled: The 2015 Active Healthy Kids Australia Progress Report Card on Active Transport for Children and Young People. Adelaide, South Australia: Active Healthy Kids Australia.

also have a positive impact on traffic congestion and reduced carbon emissions.

Housing Choice

Previous Council community engagement indicated that residents are seeking greater housing choice in the Ku-ring-gai area. The North District Plan⁵ identifies that Ku-ring-gai LGA will experience one of the largest projected increases in the 65 - 84 age group, children under 4 years of age and school aged children.

Providing diverse housing choices at different price points, close to amenities such as schools will allow families to stay in the area and preserve social support networks. Increasing medium density, mixed-use developments that include retail and residential, and are well connected to pedestrian paths, bike paths and public transport, will support social connections and reduce traffic congestion⁶.

What do you believe we should be providing more of or actively encouraging in Ku-ring-gai to improve the amenity and liveability of the area?

Improving walkability and open spaces

Public Open Spaces which are well designed with well-connected movement networks between key amenities can promote physical activity, social connectedness and increase liveability². It is recognised that neighbourhood designs that are most likely to promote community connections are mixed use and pedestrian oriented, which is associated with increased physical activity.

Walkable local centres which offer a broad range of shops and services and contain lively urban village spaces and places where people can live, work, shop, meet and spend leisure time, can increase both retail activity and property values⁷.

Provision of amenities which are inclusive and appeal to a diverse range of users from children to older people can foster intergenerational interaction and strengthen community.

Green Spaces

There is strong evidence that increasing green space and vegetation in public spaces provide physical and mental health benefits.⁸ This important feature of Ku-ring-gai, along with its urban tree canopy should be retained and protected. Where possible, public pocket parks should be identified in denser residential areas, which will provide additional quality open spaces for the local and surrounding communities.

Provision of mixed use community spaces (eg. community centres, playgrounds, outdoor gym equipment, skate parks, community gardens and sporting fields) will accommodate multiple users of open space, including passive recreational users to encourage physical activity. Cycling and walking infrastructures should be provided as well as the provision of shade with tree canopies.

Healthy Food environment

The built environment can influence healthy food and drink choices². Future planning and policies should consider how it could increase community's access to affordable fresh fruit and vegetables and minimise exposure to fast food outlets and fast food advertising. Future development and land use should consider its impact on agricultural land for local food production, the provision of spaces for local food production, community gardens and growers' markets.

General Comments - Please find over page in Table 1, the LSPS structure suggested of the Department of Planning and Environment and specific health recommendations under those headings.

⁵ Greater Sydney Commission (2019)| North District Plan <https://www.greater.sydney/north-district-plan>

⁶ Garden F, Jalaludin B, Impact of Urban Sprawl on Overweight, Obesity and Physical Activity in Sydney, Australia, *Journal of Urban Health* 2009; 81(1): 19-30

⁷ National Heart Foundation of Australia (2011) Good for Busine\$\$: The benefits of making streets more walking and cycling friendly. Discussion Paper

⁸ UNSW Lancet Series, Urban design: an important future force for health and wellbeing, 2016

Table. 1

NSW Department of Planning & Environment Guideline for LSPS ⁹ with NSLHD Health Promotion Recommendations			
	LSPS Content	Possible sources and inputs	<u>Recommendations from NSLHD Health Promotion</u>
20 Year Vision	<p>Vision captures the future desired state for the local area and high-level outcomes that give effect to the higher order strategic plan.</p> <p>Planning priorities and actions in the LSPS should aim to achieve the future desired state and outcomes stated in the vision.</p>	<p>Community participation / engagement activities to articulate the local vision.</p> <p>Community strategic visioning process conducted as part of the Community Strategic Plan could help inform the 'planning vision'.</p> <p>The relevant district or regional plans.</p>	<p><i>Include in the vision or broad overarching goal, 'community health and well-being' or 'a healthy community'</i></p> <p><i>Other Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL) keywords which could be considered and are listed below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health(y) - should be in context of HEAL, and not related to primary health care or general environmental health</i> • <i>Healthy food / eating Active- should be in context of HEAL</i> • <i>Active and or Connected communit(ies)</i> • <i>Active living</i> • <i>Exercise</i> • <i>Physical(ly) (activit(ies))</i> • <i>Behaviour - should be behaviour in context of HEAL (eg healthy or active living behaviour)</i> • <i>Wellbeing or Wellness - in context of HEAL, and not related to primary health care or disease prevention generally</i>
Strategic Context	<p>Explain the basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters.</p> <p>Recommendation: This section should introduce the LGA, including the impact of local geography, profile and defining characteristics, regional context, the key economic, social and environmental issues, and the key opportunities and challenges to achieving the 20-year vision.</p> <p>The strategic context should include a temporal discussion of the issues that is past, present and future.</p>	<p>Inputs to help inform context include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant regional strategic plan and district plan, including vision statements and objectives • aspirations for the future of the LGA and the strategic objectives identified in the council's Community Strategic Plan • other endorsed public documents identifying or supporting strategic planning for the LGA • demographic, housing, transport and economic trends. <p>Opportunities for regional / district collaborations of research / assessments should be considered.</p>	<p><i>Under social context consider inclusion of population health data and trends such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>expected growth of older population compared to other LGAs</i> • <i>expected growth of young people compared to other LGAs</i> • <i>Trends in mode of travel to work by private vehicle, public transport and active transport</i> • <i>Trends in physical activity participation e.g. % of residents who report insufficient physical activity</i> • <i>Residents reporting good or excellent health</i> • <i>Residents reporting a disability requiring assistance</i> • <i>Number of unpaid carers</i> • <i>Community strength e.g. rate of volunteering or community safety</i> <p>Public documents for reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Government Architect NSW Policies - Better Placed, Greener Spaces https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/</i> <p>Collaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider collaborations with the Local Health District for both health infrastructure planning and population health and social planning</i>

⁹ NSW Dept of Planning & Environment (2018) Local Strategic Planning Statement (Guideline for Councils) <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Guidelines/local-strategic-planning-statements-guideline-for-councils-2018-06-12.pdf>

<p>Planning priorities</p>	<p>Local planning priorities are to be consistent with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategies identified in regional plans (relevant to LGA) • planning priorities in district plans (relevant to LGA) • main priorities for the future of the LGA identified in council's Community Strategic Plan. <p>Recommendation: Local planning priorities can be grouped within the document around themes, to provide structure and context.</p> <p>Themes should cover the key issues identified by the council to deliver the 20-year vision as outlined in the strategic context.</p>	<p>The council should also have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified areas of State, regional or district significance, relevant to the LGA (eg. planned precincts and growth areas) • other public documents endorsed by council identifying planning priorities for the LGA (eg. local housing and infrastructure strategies, centres plans, industrial strategies, growth plans, retail, etc) • housing outcomes including the local housing strategy and in Greater Sydney 0-5, 6-10 and 20-year housing targets • any updated/new State Government policies. <p>Theme groupings may be around key areas of action related to land uses, transport and infrastructure, directions identified in strategic and community plans, or under broader economic, social and environmental headings.</p> <p>Sub-themes may assist in identifying the actions necessary to implement the planning priorities (eg. 'Environment' theme may be broken into sub-themes such as biodiversity, climate, natural resources, resilience and risks etc).</p>	<p><i>Planning Priorities could align with the North District Plan and incorporate active living and healthy eating. Examples could include:</i></p> <p>Collaboration & Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Planning for connectivity and public transport between growth centres, schools, employment centres, education precincts, recreational facilities E.g. Pymble Business Park, SAN Hospital</i> • <i>Walking and cycling strategies should incorporate strategies to increase active travel to work and school</i> • <i>Identify opportunities for shared use of facilities to support physical activity e.g. open spaces at schools, retirement villages,</i> • <i>Optimise the use of existing infrastructure e.g. reconfiguration of open spaces or lighting to support more recreational use</i> <p>Livability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify opportunities to improve walkability within the LGA, in particular between key destinations, maintain quality of surrounding footpaths to support walking and place activation</i> • <i>Ensure planning of public and private spaces prioritises pedestrians and cyclists and movement networks</i> • <i>Identify place-making approaches in local strategic centres which deliver healthy, safe and inclusive places.</i> • <i>Provide diverse housing options in walkable mixed-use areas which can cater to an ageing population</i> • <i>Enforcement of Smoke-free and Alcohol free zones in public spaces</i> <p>Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improve active transport, including walkability in and around metropolitan, strategic and local centres</i> • <i>Active Travel Plans are developed for education precincts, economic centres and strategic centres</i> • <i>Support mixed land use to integrate residential, retail and commercial with public transport and active travel infrastructure</i> <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Describe the current quality and quantity of open space, as well as access to open space, and any areas of deficiency</i> • <i>Identify priorities and locations to orientate growth development towards green infrastructure such as open space</i> • <i>Improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from private vehicles by encouraging active transport, public transport or shared car programs</i> • <i>Protect and retain urban tree canopy cover, including a shade tree program for Council parks, public open spaces and movement networks</i> • <i>Ensure green streetscapes are required as part of new developments through planning controls</i>
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<p>Implementation</p>	<p>The statement must set out the basis on which the council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The LSPS could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation strategy (with timeframes) • Performance indicators and other success measures • Monitoring and reporting methods for implementing actions • LSPS Review (at least 7-year review) • Community feedback and continuous improvement opportunities (ie. measures the council will take to ensure the LSPS remains responsive, relevant and local) • Assumptions eg any government funding needed / secured. 		<p>Consider incorporating indicators suggested in the following resources which relate to Healthy Eating and Active Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Healthy Built Environment Indicators² (UNSW)</i> Link • <i>Addressing active living and healthy eating through local council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework: A Guide prepared by the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living¹⁰</i> Link
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¹⁰ Premier's Council on Active Living (2015) Addressing active living and healthy eating through local council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework: A Guide prepared by the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living <https://www.nswpcalipr.com.au/the-integrated-planning-and-reporting-ipr-framework/>

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the Ku-ring-gai LSPS. Should you have any queries about this submission please contact me at Ryde Hornsby Health Promotion Unit on 8877 5148 or email queeny.stafford@health.nsw.gov.au. We look forward to continuing our work with Ku-ring-gai Council to support projects that benefit the health, wellbeing and safety of the community.

Yours sincerely,

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