



Key Findings

- The State Government's North Subregional Strategy identifies a dwelling target for Hornsby Shire of 11,000 new dwellings by 2031.
- The provision of 11,000 dwellings is consistent with Council's obligations for the provision of housing since 1994.
- The North Subregional Strategy identified that the provision of dwelling opportunities should be focussed around centres and public transport, facilitate a mix of housing, and should assist improve the economic viability and amenity of local centres.
- Council's existing planning strategy for the provision of housing is encapsulated in the Hornsby Shire Local Environmental Plan (HSLEP) 1994. Based on analysis of housing potential under existing strategies, there is existing capacity for 4,500 dwellings.
- Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Planning for the preparation of this Housing Strategy. The Memorandum of Understanding identifies the aims and objectives of the Housing Strategy and includes a timeframe which requires completion of the Housing Strategy by March 2009.
- The Memorandum of Understanding includes objectives to promote a concentrated housing form over a dispersed housing form to minimise impact on the environment, and to retain potentially productive agricultural and environmentally sensitive land by maintaining the existing boundaries of urban areas and not encouraging expansion into the rural areas.
- This Housing Strategy identifies opportunities to ensure an additional 2,600 dwellings over the next 10 years. A future strategy to achieve the remaining target of 3,900 dwellings will be required to be progressed in a similar manner to the current Strategy. Centres and precincts not selected as part of this Housing Strategy may have a role in fulfilling longer term housing targets.

- Selection of precincts should be informed by community needs and preferences, environmental constraints, infrastructure, and housing forms (low density neighbourhoods with some higher density targeted centres and precincts).
- The planning controls and rezonings arising from the Housing Strategy will be implemented through Council's Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan, to be finalised by 2011.
- The population of Hornsby Shire has increased by 13,901 over the 10 years since 1996. The population of Hornsby is aging, with the largest increased in age structure occurring in the age groups of 35-49, 50-59 and 60-69.
- Hornsby Shire is at a point in the suburb lifecycle where mature family households and emerging empty nesters will continue to increase in numbers in most of the established residential areas.
- During the 1996 to 2006 period there were very few one bedroom dwellings added to Hornsby Shire's dwelling stock. It is possible that inadequate supply of this dwelling type is slowing down the transition of "old lone person" households out of the family home.
- Hornsby Shire appeals to families who are already on the housing ladder and have older children of school age, rather than younger couples looking to purchase a family for the first time and who are likely to start a family.
- There is demand from younger and older age groups to consume higher density format dwellings, which is in accordance with the increase in the emerging smaller household groups.
- Of all low and moderate income households in the private rental market in Hornsby Shire, 62% are in housing stress. Of all low and moderate income households that are purchasing housing in Hornsby Shire, 64% are in housing stress.
- To address the issue of affordability, Council should provide a diverse mix of housing options to meet future demographic needs in the Hornsby area.
- The planning controls for the Housing Strategy should increase the minimum requirement for the provision of adaptable dwellings in multi-unit housing to 30% to encourage older residents to relocate from larger dwellings and enable them to "age in place".
- Housing opportunities should be provided through a range of densities (medium, medium-high and high density) incorporating a mix of housing types, including a new form of five storey development not currently facilitated by the Hornsby Shire Local Environmental Plan.
- Increased residential densities should be encouraged close to employment centres, pedestrian networks, shopping facilities, parks, service provisions and public transport.
- Medium density multi-unit housing should only be located in areas with opportunity for large site consolidation to maximise opportunities for landscaping, underground car parking and consolidated vehicular access.
- Selection of precincts for multi-unit housing should include consideration of topography and aspect to maximise solar access and minimise cut and fill.
- To minimise the visual impact of multi-unit housing, building controls should be introduced to ensure adequate setbacks, building separation and provision of quality landscaping.

- The zoning of precincts for multi-unit housing should reflect the full development capacity of the precinct.
- Precincts for multi-unit housing should avoid monotonous design elements and incorporate architectural design treatment to improve the aesthetics of the built form.
- To ensure sympathetic colour schemes, building controls should incorporate colour palettes.
- Detached dwellings are the dominant form of housing in Hornsby Shire, with some areas having little or no alternative accommodation. Council should continue to provide housing choice in the form of multi-unit housing to allow older residents to downsize, and to allow young couples or singles to enter the property market. Allowing older residents to downsize will also assist to free up detached dwellings for families.
- Key infrastructure providers have indicated that existing services, with any necessary future augmentation, will be able to sustainably service future development, provided it is distributed largely within the existing residential areas clustered around the railway stations.
- Epping should be deferred from consideration for the provision of multi-unit housing as part of the Housing Strategy. The Department of Planning is coordinating the Epping Town Centre Study in conjunction with Hornsby and Parramatta Councils, RailCorp, Roads and Traffic Authority and Ministry of Transport.
- Areas subject to environmental constraints, such as bushfire and significant biodiversity, should be avoided when considering potential locations for the provision of multi-unit housing.
- Increasing population will increase demand for non peak period recreational travel, having implications for Pennant Hills Park, Berowra Waters and Brooklyn. The Pacific Highway and rail infrastructure to the north have potential spare capacity.
- There is existing demand for local parks, specialty parks and sportsgrounds. Additional housing will increase demand for these facilities.
- Pennant Hills requires a consolidated approach and detailed masterplanning for the entire centre, which is outside the scope of the current Housing Strategy. Traffic, biodiversity and heritage constraints severely limit or prohibit increased residential density for precincts within Pennant Hills.
- The following potential housing forms should be considered for identified precincts: Medium Density Multi-Unit Housing (typically townhouses), Medium-High Density Multi-Unit Housing (typically 3 storeys), High Density Multi-Unit Housing (typically 5 storeys) and High Density Multi-Unit Housing (typically 8-10 storeys).
- Five storey housing should be promoted as the preferred form of multi-unit housing for the majority of the identified precincts.
- The following dwelling yields should be applied to the current Housing Strategy:

Housing form	Yield (dwellings/ha)
Townhouses	55
3 storey multi-unit housing	65
5 storey multi-unit housing	75
8-10 storey multi-unit housing	90

- The theoretical dwelling yields for precincts identified under the 1998 Housing Strategy provide a conservative and attainable estimate when applied to the current Housing Strategy.
- The detailed evaluation undertaken in precinct selection has led to the exclusion of precincts extensively constrained by traffic, biodiversity, heritage, infrastructure and topography. This ensures minimal constraints which would otherwise reduce overall dwelling yields in precincts proposed to be progressed.
- Traffic modelling shows that, the overall traffic impact of additional housing for selected precincts is minimal, since the projected trips will not be concentrated in one area simultaneously but will be generated over a ten year period (i.e. being the time frame for the proposed Housing Strategy) in centres across the Shire that already have a well developed network of roads. Most improvements required will be at critical junctions and along sections of the main road network where existing traffic volumes are already approaching unstable flows.
- Urban Design analysis has confirmed that the recommended height and form of housing for each precinct is appropriate, from an urban design perspective in the context of the precinct.
- The progression of precincts under the current Housing Strategy is proposed on the basis of an 80% take-up rate.
- The DOP has confirmed that the yield assessment has been undertaken on a sound basis and that the use of historical yields and economic feasibility work demonstrate that the proposed yields will be achieved by landowners and developers over time.
- Twenty-five (25) precincts should be progressed across 10 centres from Berowra in the north to Carlingford in the south.