



# Sustainability & Resilience Strategy

# 2022



**KEMPSEY**  
Shire Council

## Acknowledgement of Country

Kempsey Shire Council acknowledges the land of the Thunggutti/Dunghutti Nation.

We pay respect to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the role of emerging leaders to continue to guide us in the future.

We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the need to change practices to be inclusive.

This land always was and always will be Thunggutti/Dunghutti land.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**This Sustainability and Resilience Strategy outlines a clear future direction and a pathway to improving sustainability at a local level.**

In response to an increasing need to live sustainably, Kempsey Shire Council has committed to developing a sustainability and resilience strategy. The focus of the strategy will be on the environmental components of sustainability with consideration given to the social and economic interactions that also exist.

The strategy has been developed considering:

- Community ideas and aspirations identified during community engagement workshops
- Detailed research on each theme
- Experience from other local government areas
- Up to date knowledge of key trends, data and issues that affect Council and the community

Through 3 key themes, Council and the community can work towards improved sustainability, lead by example, and improve collaboration and engagement on sustainability issues. Each theme has an objective, focus areas, goals and actions that will enable implementation of the strategy. Council will continue to consider sustainability across all its operational activities including buildings, fleet, infrastructure, and planning. For areas outside of Council's control, community actions have been identified where Council can support or advocate for community driven change.

The themes and associated focus areas are:

## Leadership

Education and training, engagement, communication, capacity building, transport, events, and procurement

## Environment

Climate change, energy efficiency, waste and water resources, renewable energy, and the urban environment

## Community

Capacity building, education, local business, stakeholder support, and collaborative projects

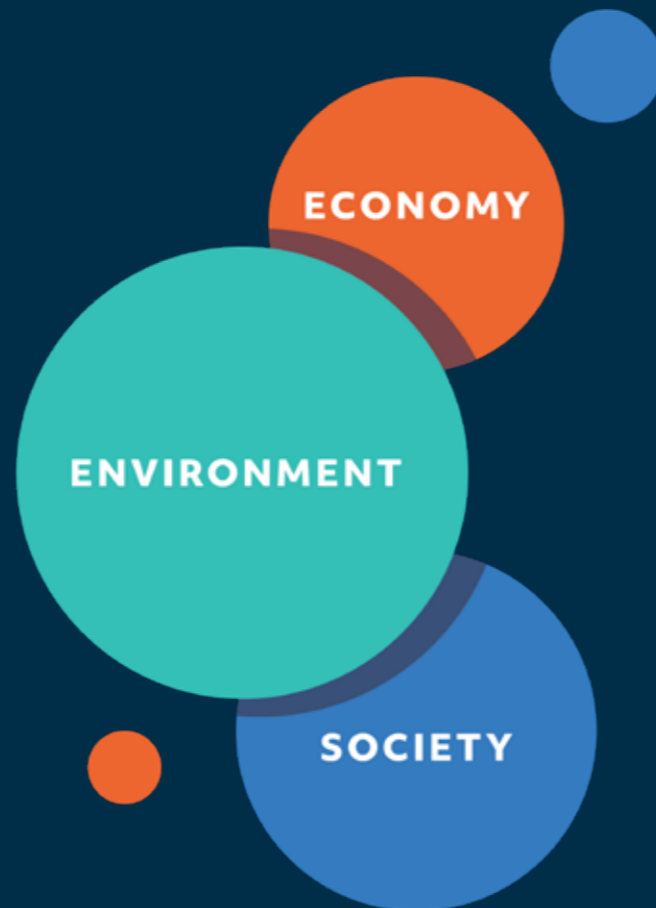
Incorporating the concept of sustainability and resilience into the culture, spirit, and actions of our community will better prepare us for a changing climate and challenging future. To reach the goals in this document, there needs to be strong collaboration between Council, all levels of Government, local business and the community.

## INTRODUCTION

### What is sustainability and resilience?

Sustainability is being able to sustain our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainability is often described as having 3 pillars, or components – the economy, society and the environment. It is important to recognise each of these components separately but also consider how they interact with each other and affect overall sustainability.



Resilience is often termed as the capacity of a natural system, individual or community to recover successfully from change, challenges or difficulties

Being both sustainable and resilient will enable us to exist with abundant yet renewable resources and also be prepared for change so we can maintain our ability to thrive in the environment we will experience now and in the future.

# What is environmental sustainability?

The strategy focuses on environmental sustainability and how it integrates with social and economic sustainability.



Environmental sustainability is responsibly interacting with the planet to maintain natural resources and avoid jeopardising the ability for future generations to meet their needs.

(UN World Commission on Environment and Development)

For example, environmental sustainability is about maintaining:



- the quality of **human life** while living within the carrying capacity of the earth's supporting ecosystems



- the capabilities that the **natural environment** has, to maintain the living conditions for people and other species (e.g. clean water and air, a suitable climate)



- the aspects of the environment that produce **renewable resources**



- the functioning of **society**, despite non-renewable resource depletion



- the **quality of life** for all people, the liveability and beauty of the environment



# Why should we have a strategy?



To learn from the past, act in the present for solutions in the future for a self sufficient, cooperative and proactive community that protects the diversity of our natural environment.

Anonymous - 2021 Community Sustainability Survey

There is significant opportunity to improve environmental sustainability and resilience by influencing things such as sustainability in homes, sustainable planning, implementing best practice resource use and management, providing community and business education, and delivering collaborative sustainability programs.

There is a growing focus on sustainability and at a local level, our region has directly felt the impacts caused by extreme weather events and environmental changes. Council has also resolved to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 which is in line with the current NSW target and is supported by the NSW Net Zero Plan Stage 1 (2020-2030).

**The strategy will provide a platform to initiate and guide action that will improve environmental sustainability at a local scale. The actions within the strategy will benefit the community and the environment by:**



- improving our use of resources and



- raising levels of education and awareness of sustainability issues.



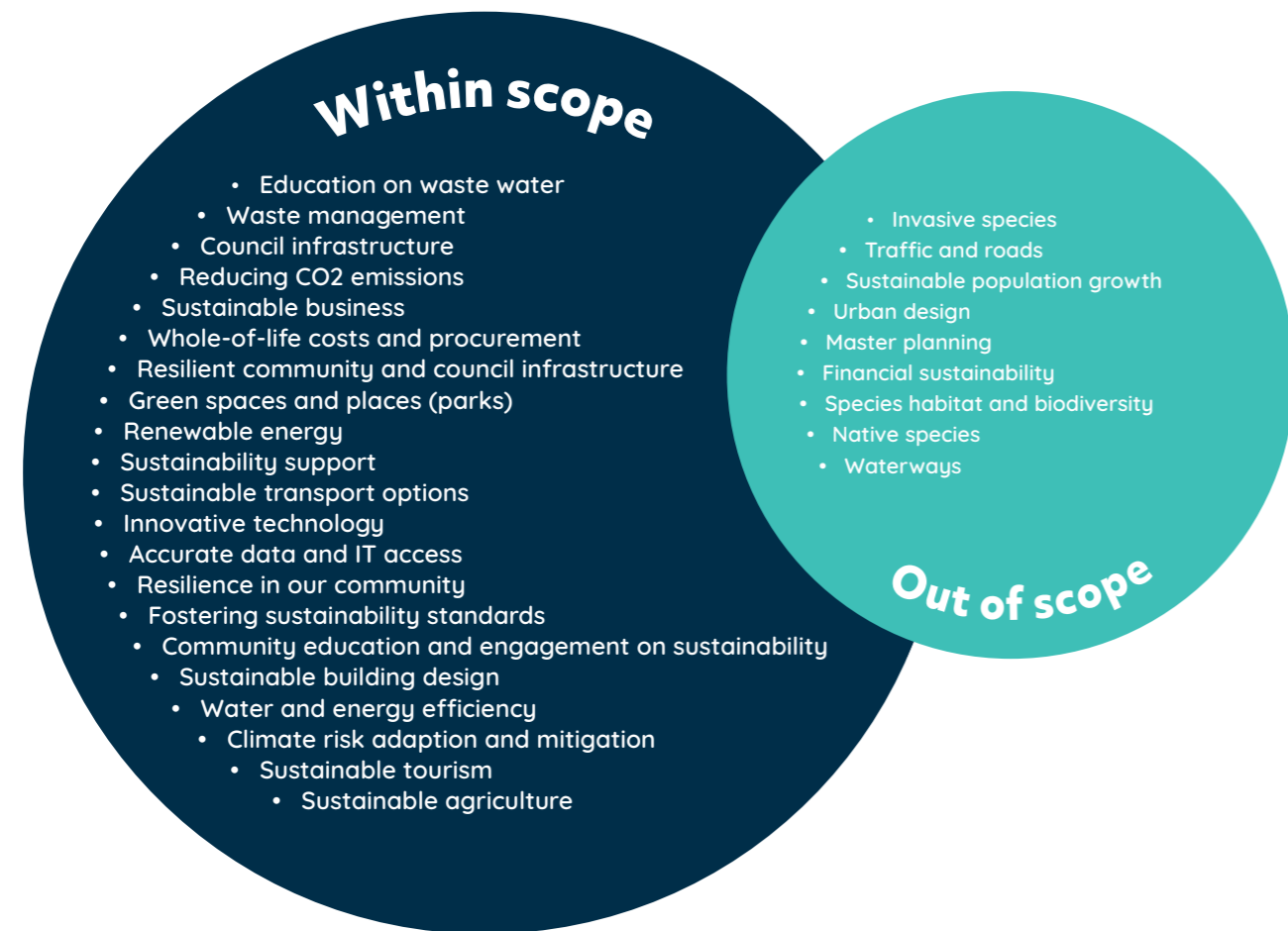
- reducing costs by improving efficiency and living more sustainably,



- supporting renewable energy technologies,

The strategy will inspire action and leadership on key local sustainability issues and contribute towards the broader targets set by State and Federal Governments.

# What is the scope of the strategy?



Determining the scope of a sustainability and resilience strategy is a vital step in the planning process. To be effective, strategies must be realistic and achievable which means including the most relevant issues but also leaving some out. Topics are not left out because they are less important but more so because they are covered in other existing strategies such as SStructure plans, Master plans, our Financial sustainability strategy and Biodiversity Strategy for example.

A scoping process includes careful consideration of subjects, what they mean and what they will require. This diagram above outlines topics that have been identified as being within scope for the sustainability and resilience strategy.



**By understanding the context and defining the scope of a strategy, the actions outlined in the strategy will be more realistic, achievable, and targeted to promote on-ground action at a local level.**

# SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN THE KEMPSEY SHIRE

What does our community want?

Recent community engagement in Kempsey Shire has identified that these issues are important to our community:



Education and information



Preparing for climate change



Liveability and resilience of urban areas



Communication and collaboration



# You told us...

**'I have young children and I worry about future generations having a healthy planet to live on'**

'Council and Community inspiring and supporting each other to take practical steps towards a simpler and more cooperative future'

'Everything we do has an impact, we are all responsible'

**'We can make it happen through strong leadership, practical innovative ideas, community and working together'**

'I must take personal responsibility for the choices I make and their impact on the planet and our limited resources'

'We need to care enough for each other to make decisions that are sustainable and increase our community resilience'

'Let's ensure the natural and cultural values of our Valley are maintained to be enjoyed for future generations'

**'We need to ACT NOW!!'**

'I care about the state of my home, my town, the Macleay Valley, our world and would like to continue to enjoy the quality of life we have into the future'



## **Vision of the Sustainability and Resilience Strategy**

Our vision for sustainability and resilience is:

**Working together to build an environmentally sustainable Kempsey Shire, creating urban and rural areas that are better prepared for a changing climate and building a more resilient and adaptable community.**

# Strategic alignment

This strategy will co-exist and interact with other relevant strategies and will help deliver on their objectives. These are some of the strategies and reports that have been considered in the planning for our local sustainability and resilience strategy:



## National

The National Climate Resilience and Adaption Strategy, Australia's response to the Paris Agreement details 3 objectives to enable more effective adaptation across Australia:

- Drive investment and action through collaboration
- Improve climate information and services
- Assess progress and improve over time

## State

In NSW, various strategic frameworks support the development of a sustainability and resilience strategy. Significant policies and initiatives include:

- The Net Zero Plan Stage 1 2020-2030
- The Climate Change Policy Framework
- The NSW Electricity Strategy (2019)
- The NSW Government Sustainability Policy
- The NSW Transmission Infrastructure Strategy
- The NSW Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Plan (2019)
- The EPA NSW Waste and sustainable materials strategy 2041
- The NSW Water Strategy (2021)

## Local

Local government has a close connection to the immediate environment and the surrounding community which means they are well placed to work towards environmental sustainability via direct action and working with the local community.

In 2019, Council resolved to support the development on overarching sustainability strategy along with an action plan to guide Council and the community to achieve tangible outcomes in the years to come.

Council also has a range of strategies and plans that outline priorities and provide an internal framework for the delivery of an environmental sustainability and resilience strategy. These include:

- The Community Strategic Plan: 2042 Your Future
- The Long Term Renewable Energy and Water Strategy (2020)
- The Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)
- The Biodiversity Strategy (2021)
- The Kempsey Shire Council Waste Strategy (in development)
- The Coastal Management Program
- The Lower Macleay Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plan

## International

Internationally, there are three primary drivers for urgent action on climate and sustainability:

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which came into force on 1 January 2016 and call on action from all countries to end all poverty and promote prosperity while protecting the planet
- The Paris Agreement where signatory countries agreed to work to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, and given the grave risks, to strive for 1.5°C Celsius
- The 6th IPCC Special Reports on Climate Change

## KEY THEMES FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Priority themes for the sustainability and resilience strategy have been informed by extensive research and alignment with existing State and National sustainability frameworks. The themes will identify main areas of focus for both Council and the community and allow for a realistic range of actions to be generated that will contribute to these targets.

The outcomes of this strategy will be achieved through 3 key themes:



### Theme 1: Leadership

#### Focus Areas:

- Education & training
- Engagement
- Communication
- Capacity building
- Transport
- Events
- Procurement

#### Objective:

Lead by example in addressing Council's operational impacts regarding sustainability and raise staff awareness of their roles in environmental sustainability with regard to procurement, transport and events.



### Theme 2: Environment

#### Focus Areas:

- Climate change
- Energy efficiency
- Waste & water resources
- Renewable energy
- Urban environments

#### Objective:

Work together to manage and enhance our natural and urban environments to become more resilient to the likely impacts of climate change.



### Theme 3: Community

#### Focus Areas:

- Capacity building
- Education
- Local business
- Stakeholder support
- Collaborative projects

#### Objective:

Building the capacity of the community to live more sustainably.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Actions from the Sustainability and Resilience Strategy will be integrated into Council's four-year delivery program and implemented via Council's annual Operational Plan. Considerations such as external funding opportunities, internal resourcing requirements, project business cases, Council's priorities and sustainability goals will help determine which actions are undertaken each year.

The delivery of this Strategy will continue to be shaped by future studies, innovation and technology developments. The Strategy will be reviewed regularly.

## Timeframes

The timeframes identified in this strategy align with Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement:

**Short-term – 2 years**  
**Medium-term – 3 to 5 years**  
**Long-term – 10+ years**  
**Ongoing**

## Resourcing

Funding the Sustainability and Resilience Strategy will align with Council's procurement policy and the legislative framework prescribed by the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2001.

It is important to note that while funding is not identified as an individual theme of the Strategy, it is essential to implement the actions identified for each of the goals identified within the key themes. Successful implementation of the Sustainability and Resilience Strategy requires adequate financing and staff resourcing. It is therefore imperative to consider how the identified actions will be financed. Council has identified the following financial sources to fund the sustainability actions outlined in this strategy:

1. Council's existing budget – projects and initiatives allocated funding based on annual operating plan budgets which would include funding sourced from the Environmental levy
2. Grant funding – external funding sources from state and federal governments and public trusts

The funding required to implement actions in this Strategy occur at three levels and are aligned with Council's procurement Policy.

**Low (\$)** - less than \$10,000

**Medium (\$\$)** - \$10,000 to \$50,000

**High (\$\$\$)** - greater than \$50,000

# Our strategic action plan

## Theme 1: Leadership

This theme will focus on actions that will help Kempsey Shire Council become a more sustainable organisation. We can make direct changes to our operations and inspire others to do the same. We can reduce our costs, improve efficiency, save our precious resources, and adapt to climate change and its impacts.

**Objective: Lead by example in addressing Council's operational impacts regarding sustainability and raise staff awareness of their roles in environmental sustainability with regard to procurement, transport and events**

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
L.1. Increase the capacity of staff and encourage behaviour change through sustainability education and climate change awareness	L.1.1. Implement staff education that improves understanding of environmental sustainability and climate change, especially relating to the impacts and opportunities to incorporate sustainability best practice initiatives into their role	Short-term	\$
	L.1.2. Provide NABERS and/or Green Star certification training to relevant Council staff when required	Medium-term	\$\$
	L.1.3. Investigate joining initiatives such as the Cities Power Partnership and other programs to demonstrate leadership and gain access to key knowledge and information to support the switch to clean energy and improved sustainability	Short-term	\$
	L.1.4. Build industry and staff understanding of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD), Urban Heat Island (UHI) and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles by implementing education and training opportunities	Medium-term	\$\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
L.2. Provide resources to improve education and communication on environmental sustainability projects using varied approaches	L.2.5. Communicate Council's environmental sustainability achievements to staff and the community to demonstrate community leadership and progress of initiatives. This will include an Annual Report Card and Council's Communicate Council's environmental sustainability achievements to staff and the community to demonstrate community leadership and progress of initiatives. This will include an Annual Report Card and Council's Annual Report	Short-term	\$
	L.2.6. Share regular news, updates, modelling and data on sustainability and climate specific to our Council region	Short-term	\$
	L.2.7. Continue to build our Macleay Sustainable Schools Network and seek external funding and resource opportunities for school sustainability projects	Ongoing	\$
	L.2.8. Actively seek information on grants, education or other opportunities that will support community and local business to act more sustainably	Ongoing	\$
	L.2.9. Encourage and support real estate agents and landlord associations to provide sustainability information and advice to tenants, holiday renters and new homeowners	Short-term	\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
L.3. Improve the efficiency of Council's fleet through adoption of technology, innovation, and behaviour change	L.3.10. Develop and utilise an electric vehicle readiness plan for the Council's fleet and regularly assess the EV market to identify and act on the tipping points for introducing EV's into our fleet	Short-term	\$\$
	L.3.11. Investigate the potential for electric vehicle charging infrastructure for Council and the Community and invest where and when appropriate	Short-term	\$\$\$
	L.3.12. Support the delivery of the recent Kempsey Shire Council's Fleet Strategy (2020)	Medium-term	\$
L.4. Promote and plan for sustainable transport	L.4.13. Investigate opportunities for encouraging alternative modes of transport through Council's future land use strategy and structure plan developments	Ongoing	\$
	L.4.14. Support the objectives of the Kempsey Shire Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP), specifically contributing to a healthy, active and liveable community and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	Long-term	\$
	L.4.15. Using prescribed guidelines, support the movement of freight within our LGA using higher capacity vehicle types in order to reduce the number of heavy vehicle trips to reduce emissions, fuel usage and road pavement deterioration	Long-term	\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
L.5. Improve staff understanding of their procurement responsibilities	L.5.16. Undertake sustainable procurement training to increase staff capacity when making purchasing decisions and increase awareness of Council's procurement policy with regard to sustainability	Short-term	\$\$
	L.5.17. Support the roll out of a social and sustainability procurement guide to Council staff	Short-term	\$
L.6. Integrate sustainability and circular economy principles into procurement practices	L.6.18. Implement where possible, recycled and alternative sustainable materials across Council facilities and operations including new developments, infrastructure and asset maintenance	Medium-term	\$\$\$
	L.6.19. Develop a process that will ensure all Council tender and contract documentation include sustainability specifications and prepare standard clauses to be contained in tender processes	Medium-term	\$
	L.6.20. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a council dividend reinvestment fund (i.e., revolving energy fund) from cost savings accrued from sustainability programs and initiatives implemented by Council	Short-term	\$\$
L.7. Reduce the environmental impact of Council's events	L.7.21. Commit to hosting sustainable events and wherever possible reduce the overall environmental impact of Council events	Short-term	\$
	L.7.22. Develop sustainable event guidelines and a sustainable event checklist that includes waste minimisation strategies and use of recycled and recyclable materials	Short-term	\$

## Theme 2: Environment

This theme will focus on the interactions with the natural environment and managing the associated impacts caused by these interactions. The community and Council can lead by example and support each other to become more resilient to a changing climate, increase the use of renewable energy, and improve water and waste management practices.

### Objective: Work together to manage and enhance our natural and urban environments to become more resilient to the likely impacts of climate change

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
E.1. Maximise energy efficiency across Council buildings and facilities	E.1.1. Continue to implement the long-term renewable energy and water strategy (LTREWS). Funds will be allocated for the recommendations in the LTREWS based on energy reduction, business cases considering greenhouse gas reduction and cost benefits	Ongoing	\$\$
	E.1.2. Continue to retrofit remaining streetlights with energy efficient lamps, ensuring upgrades are consistent with best practice technology	Short-term	\$\$\$
	E.1.3. Ensure all maintenance and upgrades across Council facilities incorporate energy efficient options (e.g. LED lighting, solar PV systems) and incorporate smart technology where feasible	Ongoing	\$\$
	E.1.4. Promote and implement where possible the use of passive energy conservation solutions such as green walls, green roofs, natural lighting, natural ventilation and solar shading across Council sites and encourage their use within the community	Medium-term	\$\$\$



Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
E.2. Increase the generation and use of renewable energy across Council buildings and facilities	E.2.5. Continue to implement the LTREWS, specifically regarding the installation of solar PV systems	Ongoing	\$\$\$
	E.2.6. Investigate the feasibility of battery use by Council in association with renewable energy systems to reduce grid-connected energy consumption	Medium-term	\$
	E.2.7. Continue to investigate feasibility of purchasing renewable energy through power purchasing agreements & other sustainable energy alternatives	Short-term	\$
E.3. Recognise the increased risks associated with climate change and integrate these into Council's activities (in conjunction with the existing Coastal Management Program and Lower Macleay Flood Risk Assessment and Management Plan)	E.3.8. Complete an organisational climate change risk assessment and adaptation strategy (prevention and mitigation) including actions for implementation to moderate harm or harness benefits	Medium-term	\$\$
	E.3.9. Develop a process to embed climate change risks and adaptation planning into organisational plans, strategies, registers and asset management approaches	Medium-term	\$\$
	E.3.10. Undertake climate risk and adaptation training for Council staff	Medium-term	\$\$
	E.3.11. Integrate climate change considerations into relevant strategic plans, master plans, and site development plans in order to protect assets from climate change impacts	Medium-term	\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
E.4. Increase community preparedness for the predicted impacts of climate change	E.4.12. Provide up to date and relevant information on the latest climate modelling and trends	Short-term	\$
	E.4.13. Share education resources to inform the community on the causes, impacts and potential adaptation measures they can take to prepare for a changing climate	Short-term	\$
	E.4.14. Promote strategies and actions on how our community can reduce the impact of extreme weather	Short-term	\$
E.5. Develop best practice planning that will guide waste management	E.5.15. Support the development and implementation of a new Kempsey Shire waste management strategy in line with the new EPA guidelines that will guide Council's approach to waste management	Short-term	\$
	E.5.16. Identify and implement circular economy initiatives	Medium-term	\$\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
E.6. Maximise water efficiency across Council buildings and infrastructure	E.6.17. Continue to implement the LTREWS including the utilisation of the energy and water management system to help monitor and understand water consumption	Ongoing	\$\$
	E.6.18. Include best practice water sensitive urban design and integrated water cycle management principles and tools within relevant capital works and asset renewal projects	Medium-term	\$\$
	E.6.19. Undertake a water efficiency audit across Council sites and facilities and identify problematic sites and sites that can also achieve long term significant reductions in water use	Short-term	\$
	E.6.20. Ensure all maintenance across Council incorporates water efficient options and smart technology (smart meters) where feasible and update the water and sewer standards where appropriate	Ongoing	\$
E.7. Maximise the water efficiency of homes, schools and businesses	E.7.21. Promote education programs and communication materials with the community on ways to reduce water use and encourage re-use and storage of water	Short-term	\$
	E.7.22. Provide education materials and resources focussing on stormwater and wastewater issues	Short-term	\$\$
	E.7.23. Work with and encourage the community and industry to be water smart, and continue community education about water efficiency	Ongoing	\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
E.8. Reduce the exposure to heat within urban environments	E.8.24. Investigate impacts associated with the urban heat island effect (UHI), and support initiatives to either mitigate the impacts, or where unavoidable, increase the resilience and adaptability of communities within these areas	Medium-term	\$\$
	E.8.25. Develop a Street Tree Policy for Kempsey Shire for Council owned and managed land to provide guidance for the care, control and management of trees in road reserves and public places (Links to Action 1.3.2 Biodiversity Strategy)	Short-term	\$

## Theme 3: Community

This theme will focus on the community and how they can live in a more sustainable way. Kempsey Shire Council can support the community to increase their awareness of environmental sustainability, the numerous impacts on the environment, understand how they can live sustainably and increase collaboration and connection within communities.

Objective: Building the capacity of the community to live more sustainably			
Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
C.1. Support the community to live more sustainably	C.1.1. Work with stakeholders to deliver education programs and workshops that help build resilience in the community i.e., coping with extreme heat, improving energy & water efficiency, emissions reduction and coping with natural disasters	Short-term	\$\$
	C.1.2. Develop and distribute a sustainable home checklist to all residents to reduce household running costs whilst improving the environment	Short-term	\$
	C.1.3. Promote local, state and nationally available environmental rebates to assist with the installation of sustainability products and services (i.e. solar hot water, photovoltaic solar systems, rainwater tanks, water saving devices)	Short-term	\$
	C.1.4. Pilot a sustainability leaders short course program to start building community capacity and a community of practice for environmental sustainability	Medium-term	\$\$
	C.1.5. Collaborate with local groups, business and industry	Short-term	\$
	C.1.6. Continue to support and foster local sustainability community initiatives through Council's Community Grants program	Ongoing	\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
C.2. Support local business and community groups to initiate collaborative projects and strengthen their approach to environmental sustainability	C.2.7. Investigate opportunities to work with local business and external stakeholder groups that will focus on actions outlined in this strategy e.g. waste reduction, renewable energy production, water and energy efficiency	Medium-term	\$\$
	C.2.8. Investigate existing sustainability programs, initiatives, or leadership opportunities that could be adopted that will strengthen support for local stakeholders and advance sustainability in the region	Short-term	\$
	C.2.9. Develop a collection of case studies based on other relevant local government area (LGA) sustainability projects that will assist the development of local and collaborative projects e.g., Community solar and battery initiatives and promote them within our community	Medium-term	\$\$
	C.2.10. Seek opportunities that will support our local agriculture industry to become more environmentally sustainable	Medium-term	\$
	C.2.11. Introduce a range of environmental sustainability awards for staff, business, citizens and community groups to incentivise community driven change e.g., staff awards, business awards	Medium-term	\$\$

Goal	Actions	Implementation	Funding
C.3. Help community reduce greenhouse gas emissions through planning, reduction in energy consumption, and an increase in the uptake of renewable energy	C.3.12. Facilitate installation of electric vehicle charge stations by local business by providing planning guidance, case studies, advice and information on grant opportunities	Short-term	\$
	C.3.13. Investigate available programs and inform the community of opportunities to support energy efficiency and installing renewable energy amongst residents and businesses	Short-term	\$
	C.3.14. Support local community groups undertaking climate change education and activities to improve residents' wellbeing	Short-term	\$\$
	C.3.15. Explore opportunities to bulk buy solar PV for council, residents, and businesses	Medium-term	\$
	C.3.16. Explore feasibility of providing sustainability information to new tenants, social housing residents & homeowners by working with local real estate agents & owners corporations	Short-term	\$
	C.3.17. Develop a net zero plan for the Kempsey Shire Community	Long-term	\$\$\$





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