

# ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT  
TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY  
STRATEGIC PLAN



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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Engagement Outcomes Report summarises the views and feedback from the community gathered during the comprehensive stakeholder engagement program conducted by Ku-ring-gai Council to inform the update of its Community Strategic Plan (CSP), due for implementation in 2025. The CSP seeks to guide the long-term vision and priorities of the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area (LGA), aligning community aspirations with strategic planning for sustainable growth, environmental preservation, and enhanced liveability.

The engagement program was designed to empower community members by providing them with a meaningful opportunity to share their voices and actively shape the future of Ku-ring-gai. By incorporating their insight, the program ensures that the community's vision and values will be deeply embedded in the Ku-ring-gai Community Strategic Plan, fostering a shared commitment to creating a better, more impactful future for the Ku-ring-gai LGA.

The community was engaged through a variety of methods, including community forums, surveys, telephone interviews, pop-up stalls, and digital tools. Engagement activities were designed to highlight key challenges experienced in the area, revealing that balancing urban development with heritage and environmental conservation, improving infrastructure, and supporting social cohesion, are the community's top priorities.



## Promotion Summary

The Communications and Engagement Plan outlined various engagement activities and their promotion through multiple platforms. These included media releases, council website updates, newsletters, bulletins, and social media posts. The promotions reached diverse audiences, maximising awareness of the project.



Media Release:  
30



Councils Community  
Engagement Portal:  
1,607



Newsletter (combined  
total across all types):  
85,927



Business Bulletin:  
21,978

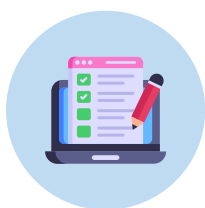


Social Media:  
17,000



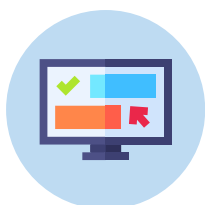
Overall total  
subscribers across all  
categories: 126,542

## Community Engagement Portal - Ku-ring-gai (13 Nov - 6 Dec)



### CSP Community Site

- 2941 Site Views
- 1322 Unique Views
- 6 Online Ideas Wall
- 135 Online Forum Registrations



### CSP Business Site

- 508 Site Views
- 285 Unique Views
- 35 Online Forum Registrations



### Total Engagement

- 3349 Site Views
- 1607 Unique Views
- 6 Online Ideas Wall
- 170 Online Forum Registrations

**Aware of engagement: 1,607    Contributed to engagement: 176**

## Overall Outcomes

The following key themes were identified during the engagement period and will help inform the updated draft Community Strategic Plan.



### Theme 1: Our Green Spaces

The Ku-ring-gai community deeply values its natural environment, including green spaces, parks, and bushland. Residents expressed concerns about the impacts of development on these cherished areas, calling for stronger protections, sustainable development practices, and proactive measures to address climate change, sustainability, and environmental equity.



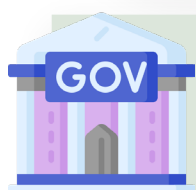
### Theme 2: Infrastructure and the Built Environment

Residents highlighted the importance of well-maintained infrastructure, such as roads, footpaths, and community buildings, alongside improved connectivity to transport hubs, schools, and shops. While opportunities exist to enhance public transport and active transport options, there are concerns about traffic congestion and the impact of development on the area's character. Calls for balanced, low-rise housing, vibrant town centres, and affordable housing options were also prominent.



### Theme 3: Community and Social Cohesion

The community values its strong sense of connection and belonging, with a focus on diverse housing options and improved access to community services for young people and older adults. Residents want to maintain a place where neighbours look out for one another and where formal and informal opportunities exist to meet, interact, and support one another.



### Theme 4: Transparent and Effective Governance

Participants expressed a need for greater transparency, accountability, and community involvement in Council decision-making processes. Residents want their voices heard and decisions to reflect the best interests of the community. Concerns about State Government influence on local planning were noted, with calls for stronger advocacy and opportunities for local input on key decisions.

## Engagement Highlights



**Community Forums:** Community Forums were attended by 99 participants across five sessions and three locations. The Forums provided a platform for identifying community aspirations, Key issues and challenges. Key themes raised during the sessions included urban development, the importance of protecting green space and the natural environment and the importance of transparent and open community engagement.



**Survey:** The survey captured the views of 181 residents, revealing a strong appreciation for Ku-ring-gai's environment, coupled with concerns about housing affordability, improved infrastructure, and more transparent governance.



**Interactive sessions:** Interactive sessions at local events captured informal feedback, emphasising the community's love for Ku-ring-gai's natural beauty and desire for improved infrastructure and sustainability.



**Online platform:** The online platform attracted over 3,000 visits indicating a high level of awareness of the project as well as effective promotion of the engagement program. The online platform provided key information about the review of the CSP, as well as engagement tools including a survey and ideas wall.



**Local businesses:** Local businesses identified challenges like operational costs and the need for additional marketing support, with suggestions for better networking opportunities and infrastructure improvements.

This report provides a robust foundation for updating Ku-ring-gai's CSP, ensuring the plan reflects community aspirations and equips Council to address the challenges of rapid urbanisation while preserving the area's unique character and natural assets. By prioritising sustainability, inclusivity, and proactive governance, Council can guide Ku-ring-gai toward a vibrant, resilient future.

### Next steps

Council will use the extensive feedback provided by the community and stakeholders to shape the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2025 - 2035. The draft CSP will be placed on Public Exhibition for review and comment in early-mid 2025, with a view to the final CSP being adopted by Council no later than 30 June 2025.

## 2. INTRODUCTIONS

### 2.1 ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

Ku-ring-gai Council is developing a new Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to address the evolving priorities of the community, aligning the current needs and future aspirations for the Ku-ring-gai LGA in the context of Sydney's planned rapid urban development.

Home to over 124,700 residents across 85 square kilometers, Ku-ring-gai is situated in Sydney's northeast. Known for its unique suburban charm and natural beauty, the area is framed by three national parks and abundant bushland, with much of its heritage and urban villages protected by conservation efforts. Its proximity to Sydney's CBD, just a 30-minute drive away, makes Ku-ring-gai a desirable location for young families and older residents alike.

Every four years, as part of its legislative obligations, Ku-ring-gai Council reviews its CSP to ensure policies align with the community's changing needs. This review period is a key opportunity to address the community priorities, needs and aspirations.

As the population continues to grow between now and 2035, shifting community priorities will require careful planning. Council has undertaken an extensive program of community engagement to test existing community feedback on the importance of balancing environmental preservation

and heritage protection with the need to provide diverse housing options, upgrade infrastructure, and support sustainable development for the growing community. Engagement activities also provided ample opportunity for the community to put forward new priorities, key issues and ideas to shape the future of the area.

To guide the development of the revised CSP, Ku-ring-gai Council has committed to engaging with community stakeholders, actively listening to their aspirations, concerns, and ideas for the area's future. The feedback collected will play a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction for Council and the community.

### 2.2 ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT

Ku-ring-gai Council is committed to providing opportunities for community input through engagement processes relating to planning decision-making for the future of Ku-ring-gai. The Community Strategic Plan engagement program forms part of a body of engagement relating to considerations for the future of the Ku-ring-gai LGA, with additional consultation projects occurring prior and concurrent to the engagement timeline of the CSP engagement, which will help to inform the new Community Strategic Plan to be implemented in 2025.



**2.2.1 ‘Better planning between Roseville, Lindfield, Killara and Gordon stations’**

During this period, Ku-ring-gai Council conducted open engagement on ‘Better planning between Roseville, Lindfield, Killara and Gordon stations’. This engagement process was in response to the NSW Government Transport Oriented Development (TODs) controls scheme which was introduced in May 2024 and rezones low-density areas within 400m of the stations for apartment buildings.

The engagement program invited the community to deliberate on five housing planning scenarios, to deliver the proposed level of housing required under the NSW Government’s TOD controls, while allowing the community to tweak how this supply should be delivered to suit Ku-ring-gai’s unique characteristics.

This report should be considered in the context of the TODs engagement, which is ongoing at the time of this

report. Efforts were made to clarify the difference in engagement scope between these two projects, aiming to minimise information cross-contamination, which was a governing criterion in the drafting of all communications materials.

**2.2.2 Community Research Survey 2024**

Ku-ring-gai Council undertook an engagement process to evaluate resident sentiment towards the current and future dynamics of Ku-ring-gai, including strengths of the area, concerns and indicators of wellbeing. This survey also sought to test satisfaction with Council’s performance. The research, conducted through telephone interviews, engaged 501 residents.



### 2.2.3 Lindfield Learning Village Engagement

In November 2024, Ku-ring-gai Council engaged with the youth of Ku-ring-gai through a Town Planning Incursion at Lindfield Learning Village. This engagement piece aligned with a Stage Four body of work on town planning and gave Council the opportunity to engage the students through educating them on planning processes, while also conducting workshop activities to better understand what the facilities and infrastructure the youth of Ku-ring-gai perceived as important for future growth of the region. This incursion engaged 187 students across Years 7 and 8.



# 3. ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND PARTICIPATION

## 3.1 ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The first phase of the 'Ku-ring-gai Community Strategic Plan - planning for the future' engagement process commenced on November 13 2024 and concluded on December 11 2024.

An Engagement Plan was designed to target participation from the community within the Ku-ring-gai LGA. This program was developed to gather input around issues impacting the community, identify ways to improve and build a foundation for Council to work with when developing the updated CSP.

## 3.2. ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This section details the engagement activities and purpose of each activity conducted in November and December 2024.

### 3.2.1 FACE TO FACE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

#### **Ku-ring-gai LGA Community Forums**

A series of community forums were conducted throughout the engagement period to gather insights and foster collaboration among the community. These forums provided an opportunity for community members to engage in meaningful discussions, share their ideas, and collaboratively work towards a vision for the future of

Ku-ring-gai.

Held across three locations within the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area (LGA) to ensure a good cross-section of the community had the opportunity to attend. The forums aimed to capture diverse perspectives by engaging the community in discussion. Through individual feedback and group activities, participants engaged in open dialogue and collective problem-solving to address local challenges and opportunities.

#### **Forum Schedule:**

- Forum 1: Ku-ring-gai Council, Gordon – Monday, 18 November 2024, 6–8 PM
- Forum 2: Ku-ring-gai Council, Gordon – Tuesday, 19 November 2024, 6–8 PM
- Forum 3: Turramurra Masonic & Function Centre – Thursday, 28 November 2024, 2–4 PM
- Forum 4: Turramurra Masonic & Function Centre – Thursday, 28 November 2024, 6–8 PM
- Forum 5: St Alban's, Lindfield – Saturday, 30 November 2024, 10 AM–12 PM

Three forums were open to the public via an opt-in process advertised on Council's website and social media. Two additional forums involved





### Forum Objectives:

- Provide community members with an avenue to discuss their priorities and concerns.
- Facilitate collaborative activities to identify shared goals and solutions.
- Gather feedback to inform the development of the revised Community Strategic Plan.



a targeted recruitment approach, inviting participants from a pre-existing Council database of community members who had previously expressed interest in engaging with Council.

### Business Forum

The Ku-ring-gai LGA Business Forum provided a platform for local business owners to share their perspectives on the current challenges and future aspirations for the LGA. Through interactive activities, participants discussed ways to enhance the local business environment and explored opportunities for collaboration. The Forum highlighted the importance of ongoing dialogue between businesses and council.

### Telephone Interviews

To ensure inclusivity and accommodation for community members, telephone interviews were offered as an alternative to those unavailable to attend scheduled forum sessions. Participants were asked similar questions to those at forum sessions, aimed at gathering consistent and equitable feedback. This approach enabled community members to share

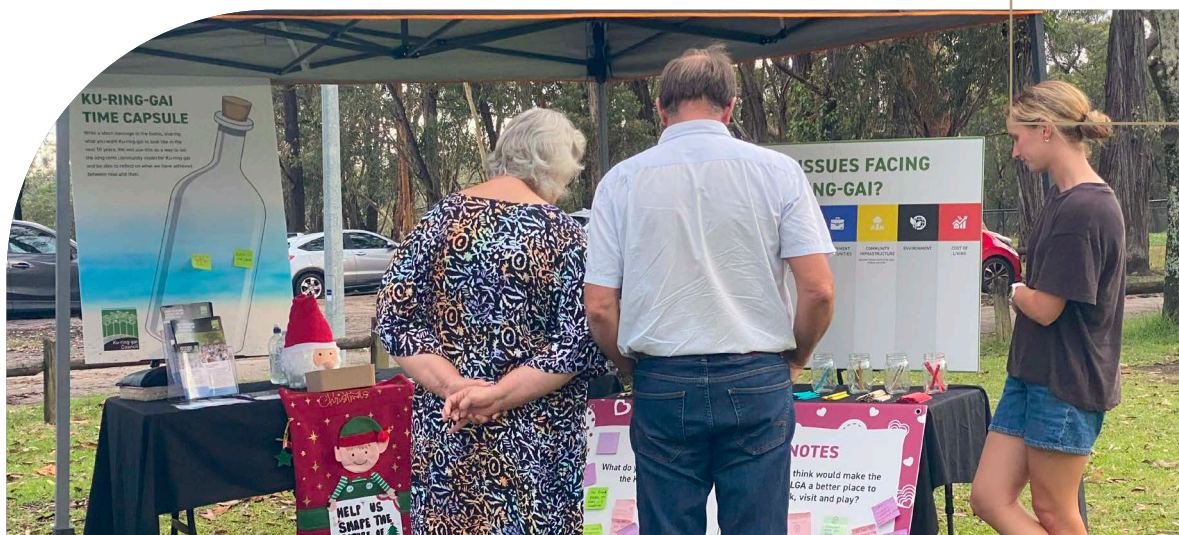
their perspectives and visions in a way that best suited their availability, creating additional pathways of engagement that were flexible and accommodating to their schedules.

### Pop-Up Information Stalls

During early December, the project team hosted informative pop up engagement at accessible and convenient locations, such as local organised events. The purpose of these pop-ups was to engage with and capture feedback from community members across the LGA in a fun and interactive way. Feedback collected from these pop up engagement activities provided valuable insights into challenges community members face, aspirations, priorities and personal concerns. Contributing to the understanding of community needs across the LGA.

Pop-ups stalls took place at the following locations:

- Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Park Run - Saturday 7 December 2024
- St Ives Showground Christmas Markets - Saturday 7 December 2024



### 3.2.2 ONLINE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Utilising the existing Council online engagement portal, Ku-ring-gai Your Say, this engagement hub acted as a centralised location for tailored engagement. This page linked to registration for opt-in forums, access to the online survey and the online idea and story wall. Targeting all community stakeholders, this digital hub aimed to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower the Ku-ring-gai community.

### 3.2.3 SURVEY (*Online & Hardcopy*)

The survey was crafted to gain a deep understanding of community experiences within the Ku-ring-gai LGA. It delved into key areas of residents' lives, including the challenges they encounter, the aspects they cherish about the area, and their vision for the future.

To capture a comprehensive range of feedback, the survey employed a variety of question formats. Rating scale and Likert scale questions quantified responses, while open-ended questions allowed for detailed and nuanced feedback.

To ensure inclusivity, hard copies of the survey were distributed at Council libraries and pop-up engagement stalls. This provided an accessible platform for all community members, regardless of their digital literacy, to share their perspectives and contribute to shaping the future of Ku-ring-gai.

## 3.3 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Engaging young people is vital for future planning in Ku-ring-gai. As part of the engagement that will help inform the CSP, Council conducted a Youth Survey to gather insights on wellbeing, youth services, and key issues for the area's future. Additionally, presentations and workshops at Lindfield Learning Village explored ideas and opportunities for youth engagement. These findings will help shape strategies to support young people and inform the upcoming Youth Forum in early 2025.

### 3.4 ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION

The engagement program was designed to foster inclusive participation and ensure a diverse range of voices were heard within Ku-ring-gai's communities. To achieve this, a multifaceted approach was implemented and online engagement hub and survey were available in languages other than English.

Promotional materials were disseminated through various formats, including print, digital, and social media, to reach a broad audience and ensure equitable opportunity to participate. Internal database recruitment was utilised to identify and engage specific demographic groups and stakeholders, such as businesses. Additionally, opt-in engagement opportunities were provided to allow individuals to self-select their participation, while recruited engagement strategies were employed to proactively invite individuals from underrepresented groups.

This combination of methods aimed to create a comprehensive and representative sample of community members, ensuring that the feedback captured accurately reflected the diverse perspectives of each sub-community within Ku-ring-gai. Engagement activities sought to engage these unique perspectives to collaborate and represent a holistic community voice.

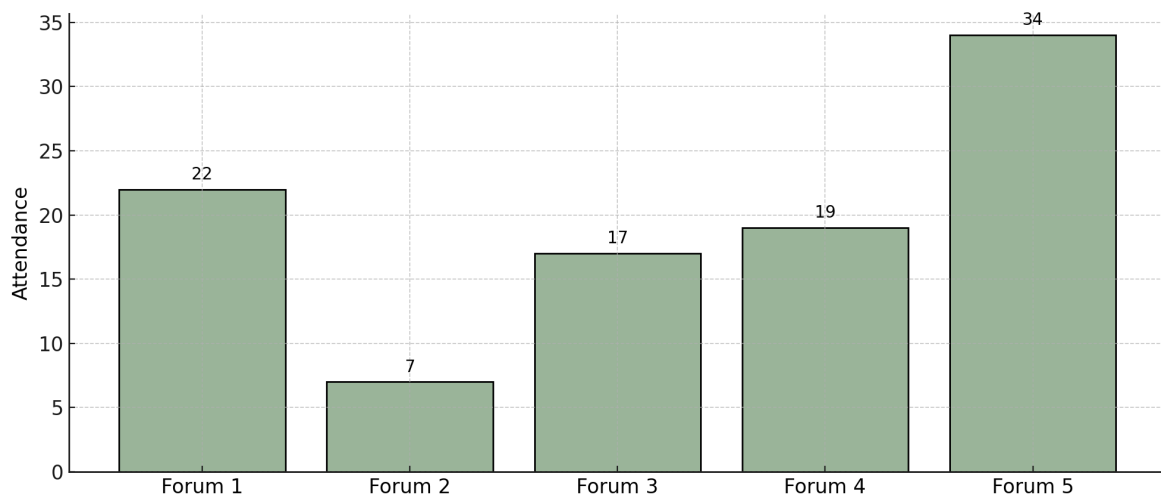
#### 3.4.1 PROMOTION OF ENGAGEMENT

A Communications and Engagement Plan outlined the engagement activities. These activities were promoted through various platforms including:

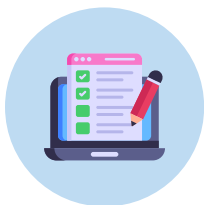
Category of Promotion	Type of Promotion	Date	Subscribers
Media Release	Notification of project to media outlets	13 November	Media outlets notified: 30
Council Website	Website project page	13 November - 6 December	1,607
Newsletter	Yoursay E-news	8 November	1,178
	Ku-ring-gai E-news	15 November	37,865
	Business Connections E-news	21 November	1,826
	Yoursay E-news	25 November	1,887
	Ku-ring-gai E-news	29 November	37,645
	Sustainability E-news	5 December	5,526
Bulletin	Business Bulletin (all registered ABNs in KRG from the Australian Business Register)	19 November	21,978
Social Media	Facebook post	18 November	17,000
Invitations	Recruitment invitations for engagement opportunities	Various	Unknown
Total reach from promotion			126,542

### 3.4.2 PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

#### Community Forum Attendance



#### Community Engagement Portal - Ku-ring-gai (13 Nov - 6 Dec)



##### CSP Community Site

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##### CSP Business Site

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##### Total Engagement

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**Aware of engagement: 1,607    Contributed to engagement: 176**



# 4. OUTCOMES

## 4.1 OVERALL ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

*WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY LOVE ABOUT KU-RING-GAI?*



### KEY THEMES

Over the course of the engagement period, the following identified themes were formed due to consistent feedback, this will be used to inform the updated draft Community Strategic Plan.



#### Theme 1: Our Green Spaces

The Ku-ring-gai community strongly values its natural environment, particularly its abundant green spaces, parks, and bushland. Residents expressed a deep appreciation for the area's leafy streetscapes, diverse wildlife, and opportunities for outdoor recreation. However, there is growing concern about the impact of development on these cherished natural assets.

Residents are calling for stronger protections for green spaces, including critically endangered forests, and the implementation of sustainable development practices that minimise environmental impact. They also want to see council take a more proactive approach to addressing issues such as climate change, sustainability, and social equity.



## **Theme 2: Infrastructure and the Built Environment**

Having fit-for-purpose and well maintained infrastructure including roads, footpaths, community buildings and adequate parking in close proximity to transport hubs is a top priority for the Ku-ring-gai community.

Connectivity between home and daily destinations including work, school and shops was a theme that emerged throughout all engagement activities. There is a strong link between road infrastructure, public transport and population growth that is recognised by the community. The natural geography of the area, with the Pacific Highway acting as a 'spine' presents issues such as pinch-points and congestion, but also opportunities to improve connectivity through improved parking, better public transport and active transport options.

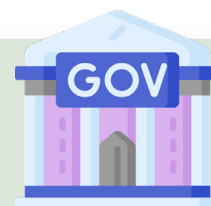
Conversations that centred on infrastructure and the built environment generally lead to discussions around a need to make housing more affordable, increased offerings of community services and facilities and a desire to make existing town centres more vibrant and attractive.

Generally speaking, participants expressed concerns about the impact of proposed development on the area's character and heritage, and a need for balanced, low-rise development that respects and is sympathetic to the local environment.



## **Theme 3: Community and social cohesion**

The Ku-ring-gai community values its strong sense of community and social cohesion. There is a desire for more diverse housing options and improved access to community services, particularly for young people and older adults was also apparent in conversations about how to bring people and communities together. Participants have a strong urge to continue to live in a place where neighbours look out for one another and where there are formal and informal opportunities to meet, interact and support one another.



#### **Theme 4: Transparent and effective governance**

Participants expressed a desire for more transparent and effective decision making by Council. Feedback from participants during engagement indicated a need for Council to be accountable to residents and to make decisions that are in the best interests of the community. There is a desire for improved community engagement and transparency from Council. Residents want to be more involved in decision-making processes and feel that their voices are being heard.

Residents noted concerns about the influence of State Government on local planning decisions and expressed a need for strong advocacy and an opportunity to have input on decisions that may impact the local community.

### **ACTIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUES RAISED BY THE COMMUNITY**

#### **Theme 1: Our Green Spaces**

- **Protect and enhance green spaces:** Introduce stronger protections for green spaces, including critically endangered forests and local parks.
- **Tree planting and canopy protection:** Support initiatives to plant trees and protect existing tree canopy to improve air quality and biodiversity.
- **Community engagement in environmental decision-making:** Involve the community in planning and decision-making processes related to environmental issues and encourage community gardens, community tree planting, working bees and similar initiatives.

#### **Theme 2: Infrastructure and the Built Environment**

- **Improve public transport:** Advocate for expanding public transport options, including bus services, train services, and active transport infrastructure.
- **Address parking issues:** Implement strategies to address parking shortages, such as building multi-storey car parks and encouraging carpooling.
- **Invest in road infrastructure:** Maintain and upgrade local roads to improve traffic flow and safety.
- **Promote sustainable development:** Encourage development that is sensitive to the local environment and respects heritage buildings and green spaces.
- **Affordable housing:** Support and advocate for the development of affordable housing options to address the needs of diverse community members.

### **Theme 3: Community and Social Cohesion**

- **Support local businesses:** Encourage the growth of local businesses to create jobs and enhance the local economy.
- **Provide diverse community facilities:** Invest in community facilities, such as parks, libraries, and recreation centres, to cater to the needs of all residents and to support future growth.

### **Theme 4: Transparent and Effective Governance**

- **Strengthen community engagement:** Increase opportunities for community participation in decision-making processes, such as public consultations and community forums.
- **Transparent decision-making:** Improve transparency and accountability in local government decision-making processes.
- **Community participation:** Encourage community participation in planning and decision-making through public consultations.
- **Effective communication:** Enhance communication between council and the community, including regular updates on council activities and projects.
- **Accountable leadership:** Ensure that elected officials are accountable to the community and prioritise the needs of residents.
- **Improve communication:** Enhance communication between council and the community through newsletters, social media, and community events. This includes reporting on the efforts made to

address key issues outlined in the CSP and KPI's.

## **4.2 FACE TO FACE ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES**

### *4.2.1 COMMUNITY FORUMS*

The Ku-ring-gai LGA Community Forums provided a platform for community members to discuss the current challenges, priorities and future vision for the LGA. Through collaborative discussions, key themes and actionable insights were identified to guide future planning.

A total of five community forums were held, two of which had recruited participants and three forums with opt-in participants.

#### **Recruited Community Forums**

A key element of the engagement process was recruiting community members to participate in forums. Participants were drawn from individuals who expressed interest in further involvement following Council's Community Survey conducted earlier in 2024. This more representative sample ensures a balanced reflection of Ku-ring-gai residents' views and aligns with the area's demographic profile.

#### **Opt-in Community Forums**

The purpose of the opt-in community forum was to provide an inclusive and accessible platform for residents to share their ideas, feedback, and concerns on key local issues. This approach encourages broader community participation.



During the forum the community was challenged through activities to discuss the following questions:

- ***What are the top issues facing the Ku-ring-gai LGA?***
- ***What do you think about the current state of Ku-ring-gai LGA (Where are we now?)***
- ***Where do you see the future state of Ku-ring-gai LGA (Where do we want to be?)***
- ***How do we get to the future state?***

### **Key Issues:**

Across the five forums, participants were invited to vote on the key issues they considered most important. The table below ranks these issues based on the number of votes received and provides an overview of the communities perspective of each issue and the potential strategies to address these issues. Each participant was allowed to vote on their 3 top issues.

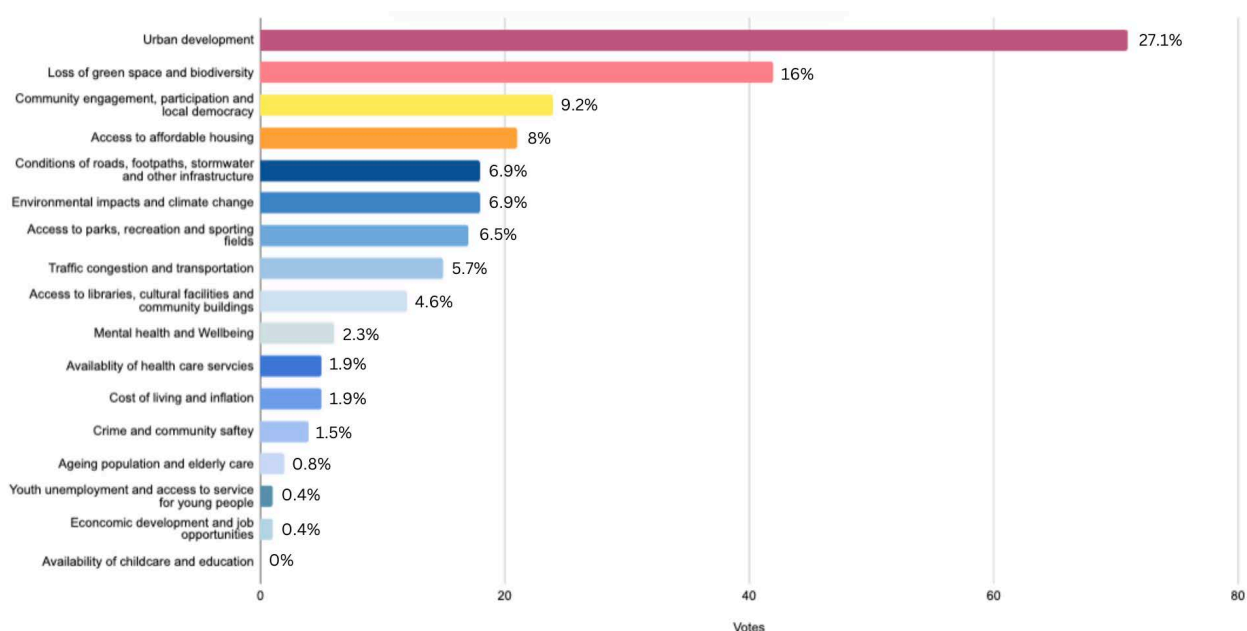
The top three Key Issues identified across the 262 votes were Urban Development, Loss of Green Space and Biodiversity and Community Engagement, and Participation in Local Democracy. These three issues accounted for over 52% of the votes, clearly signalling that they are of great importance to the community.

Rank	Key Issues	Overview
1	Urban Development	<p>Urban development emerged as the most pressing issue for the local community, garnering 27.1% of the votes. This significant concern highlights the need for urban development to be sustainable and mindful of key concerns such as housing, heritage conservation, and efficient public transport.</p> <p>To address these, the community has voiced that there needs to be a focus on balanced growth that preserves green spaces, incorporates more pedestrian access, and preserves heritage. It has been asked that council retains control over planning to ensure that development aligns with the long-term interests of the community.</p>
2	Loss of green space and biodiversity	<p>A substantial 16% of respondents expressed deep concern over the loss of green spaces and biodiversity. This underscores the community's desire within the community to protect and preserve green spaces. Retaining these spaces is vital for maintaining biodiversity and providing areas for recreational activities.</p> <p>Participants told us that actions should focus on identifying and safeguarding areas of ecological value, while integrating urban spaces with nature to enhance the environment and community wellbeing.</p>
3	Community engagement, participation and local democracy	<p>With 9.2% of the votes, there is a clear desire within the community for more transparency in planning and timely communication from council.</p> <p>The community they want to be involved in planning decisions, and when residents have a genuine role in the decision making process it fosters a sense of local democracy and allows the community to better shape its future.</p>

Rank	Key Issues	Overview
4	Access to affordable housing	<p>Affordable housing emerged as a significant concern, particularly for younger generations. At 8% of the vote, it's evident that strategies to address this issue are crucial.</p> <p>The community has told us that solutions should focus on addressing 'empty home syndrome' by converting vacant properties, expanding medium-density housing options, and supporting affordable community housing projects that are not exclusively social housing.</p> <p>Additionally, the community emphasised the need for developers to be incentivised to build affordable homes instead of luxury apartments. While this may not be an action Council can take directly, the community believes there is an opportunity for Council to advocate on their behalf for creative approaches to alleviate housing pressures.</p>
5	Conditions of roads, footpaths, stormwater and other infrastructure	<p>While this issue only received 6.9% of the vote it's clear that maintaining local infrastructure, particularly roads, footpaths, and stormwater management.</p> <p>The community has told us that addressing these issues requires a focus on active transport options, improving parking at stations, and ensuring proper stormwater management to prevent environmental harm. The community also highlighted the importance of infrastructure being adequate to meet both current and future needs.</p>
6	Environmental impacts and climate change	<p>6.9% of the community chose this issue in their top 3 issues. The community advocates for sustainable practices, including zero waste initiatives, clean power, and better battery storage options.</p> <p>The community discussed the benefits of Solar energy and community gardens as a key action in reducing environmental impacts, while initiatives like carpooling, particularly for private school students, could be encouraged to reduce reliance on private vehicles. The community highlighted the impact of urban development on the environment and the way it can be minimised by Council's efforts to implement strategies to control the impact.</p>
7	Access to parks, recreation and sporting fields	<p>Access to parks and green spaces, while valued, received 6.5% of the vote. The community still places importance on maintaining access to parks and recreational areas, which are essential for community health and well-being.</p> <p>The community discussed that these areas should be preserved and expanded, with a focus on providing space for both relaxation and active sports.</p>
8	Traffic congestion and transportation	<p>Traffic congestion, at 5.7%, is a concern for some residents. There is a call to reduce car dependency, with an emphasis on improving public transportation, adding more school buses, and ensuring parking spaces for commuters.</p> <p>The community suggested a clear transport plan is necessary to manage the increasing number of school students and ensure the local infrastructure keeps up with demand.</p>

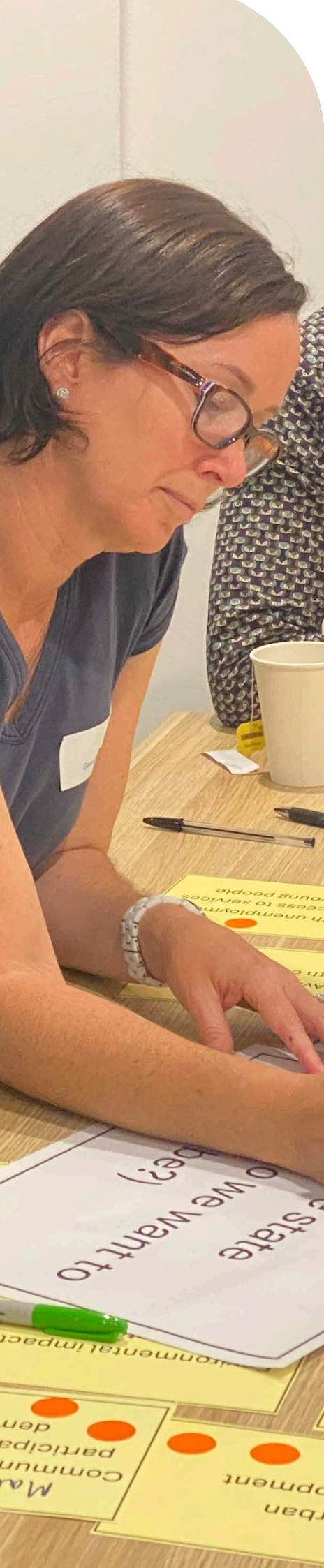
Rank	Key Issues	Overview
9	Access to libraries, cultural facilities and community buildings	<p>At 4.6% of the vote, while not a major issue, the community seeks improvements in library facilities and calls for better maintenance of street trees and foliage.</p> <p>There was also debate from the community around funding, with some suggesting that services such as the Marion Street Theatre should be self-funded, allowing for a reduction in council spending and, in turn, reduced rates for residents. To oppose that there were many in favour of Marian Street Theatre and a call for more cultural events and facilities that celebrate diversity, inclusion and arts.</p>
10	Mental health and wellbeing	<p>Mental health and wellbeing support was seen as a relatively small issue at only 2.3% of the vote. Anecdotally, forum participants explained that they had ranked this issue lower as it was dependent on other aspects of society. They suggested that, if these top priorities could be addressed, mental health outcomes would drastically improve. Notably, mental health metrics were perceived as dependent on maintaining adequate green space, access to parks, as well as reducing financial pressures.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the community calls for greater support and services to address this issue. This could include expanding mental health resources, improving access to counselling services, and creating safe spaces where residents can seek help and connect with others.</p>
11	Availability of healthcare services	<p>Access to healthcare, particularly GP appointments, is a concern but only accounted for 1.9% of the votes.</p> <p>The community suggests that more healthcare professionals should be encouraged in the area to ensure timely access to care. Improving the availability of healthcare services can significantly enhance residents' overall well-being and quality of life.</p>
12	Cost of living and inflation	<p>The rising cost of living and inflation are a concern, with a call for more tailored and specialised programs within council's scope.</p> <p>However, with only 1.9% of the vote the community believes that this issue mainly falls outside the remit of council and the government should take more responsibility for addressing these issues, rather than relying on local council initiatives alone.</p>
13	Crime and community safety	<p>Crime and safety only received 1.5% of votes although there was discussion around the potential implementation of neighbourhood watch groups if concerns for crime and safety grew.</p> <p>There was also a recognition that some aspects of law enforcement are the responsibility of the state government, and a more coordinated effort between the state and local authorities could be implemented to improve safety in the community.</p>

Rank	Key Issues	Overview
14	Ageing population and elderly care	The aging population only received 0.8% of votes, although it is evident that Ku-ring-gai has an older population. To support that there was conversation around ensuring that there are enough aged care centres and accessible retirement villages to meet future demand. Adequate planning and resources should ensure older residents have access to the care they need.
15	Youth unemployment and access to service for young people	Youth unemployment received 0.4% of the votes, although, through discussion, there was an element of concern around support for youth employment and services aimed at young people. This also relates to other issues, including affordable housing options and services that could be provided through accessible places such as libraries, which can serve as spaces for young people to connect and access job-related resources.
16	Economic development and job opportunities	Economic development and job creation received 0.4% of the votes. However, the community stressed that although it was not ranked highly, they maintain that local councils should foster economic growth. There was an emphasis on State Government playing a crucial role in creating business parks and supporting industries that generate job opportunities for local residents, suggesting that it was out-of-scope for Council and therefore ranked lower.
17	Availability of childcare and education	There were no votes for availability of childcare, however there was discussion around availability of childcare services and educational facilities to meet the needs of families in the community and growing population. This will support both working parents and young people in accessing the resources they need to succeed. The community was very proud and appreciative that the LGA contains numerous high-quality schools, which they believed was an immense contributor to the area's high liveability rank. Participants were able to compare their superior educational access to other LGA's, hence why they believed it was not an issue for Council to focus on, as first-class systems have already been established.









Below is a summary of the key outcomes from each forum based on the activities:

## **FORUM 1 - MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2024**

### **Current State**

Feedback from participants indicated that some current engagement practices on specific issues are unrepresentative. There is a general frustration with the lack of involvement in the decision making process and transparency from Council.

There was discussion around outdated infrastructure, particularly in terms of parking at train stations during business hours and limited active transport options. The ageing population, composed largely of asset-rich but income-poor residents, is also a point of concern.

The community feels their influence has been undermined by the State Government, with concerns around planning and communication on key issues such as traffic congestion, expensive housing, and the loss of green spaces and built heritage.

### **Future State**

The community envisions a future that attracts more young families and supports a mixed-generation population. This future state includes active transport infrastructure, affordable and plentiful housing, and a variety of denser housing types and smaller land lots whilst preserving the beauty and environment of Ku-ring-gai.

There is a clear desire for a more inclusive and representative approach to community engagement, with access to public information and data. The future also includes density around transport hubs and town centres while maintaining the integrity of the community's heritage and green spaces. The community seeks a council with retained planning powers and greater transparency, providing clear updates on strategic plans and their progress.

## FORUM 2 - TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2024 (RECRUITED)

### Current State

This group highlighted several positive aspects of Ku-ring-gai, such as its green spaces, informed and well-educated community, and safe place to live. Concerns were raised about public transport options, with a need for more school buses and rideshare services. They point to housing affordability and low-density development as significant challenges, noting that house prices have become unaffordable for many.

There is also concern about the pressures of development in bushfire-prone areas without clear plans in place. Additionally, main roads and urban facilities, particularly in areas like Linfield and St. Ives, are at capacity. The group perceives current council spending as misaligned with community priorities, with too much focus on special interest groups rather than broader, more inclusive needs.

### Future State

The group envisions a future where Ku-ring-gai retains its leafy, green character while addressing the need for more affordable housing. They see the potential for more medium-sized homes without significantly increasing housing density, preserving the area's charm. They advocated for better road infrastructure over the next decade and more options for public transport but with the support of free parking to encourage use of trains and buses. Importantly, they hope for the creation of culture and arts facilities, funded through self-sustaining models, and emphasise the need for a variety of affordable housing options. Development should be carefully managed, with restrictions on the size of homes to maintain the community's character.

## FORUM 3 - THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2024

### Current State

This group was concerned about the current state of Ku-ring-gai's infrastructure, and a lack of visible progress on waste reduction and energy efficiency. Despite having significant tree cover, there is a noticeable depletion of trees and a lack of transparency regarding council decisions. The group expresses frustration over there being not enough community engagement and the perception that council actions do not align with the priorities of the residents. The development process is viewed as being driven by profits, with developers having too much influence over planning decisions. This has led to a lack of action on preserving natural

spaces, enforcing environmental rules, and maintaining infrastructure. The community also feels a sense of uncertainty about the future and the direction of the local government.

#### Future State

This group envisions a future where Ku-ring-gai is a model of sustainability, with zero waste and zero carbon emissions. They call for the preservation of the tree canopy and the establishment of community gardens supported by council to promote biodiversity. The future state includes smart, lively town centres that cater to all age groups and are focused on creating spaces for families, teenagers, adults, and the elderly. There is a strong push for varied housing options, including affordable housing for local workers and downsizing options for empty nesters.

The desire for the future includes a more engaged and inclusive local government, with clear communication and a vision based on community consultation. Other goals include the revitalisation of infrastructure, improved parking and public transport, more recreational facilities, and a commitment to environmental protection. They are particularly focused on maintaining green spaces and ensuring that future development is aligned with sustainable, community-driven values.

### FORUM 4 - THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2024 (RECRUITED)

#### Current State

This group expresses concern about state government, and the loss of local planning control to the state. They feel that development is inevitable but must be managed thoughtfully to preserve the character of the region. The group highlighted several issues such as overdevelopment, lack of commuter parking, and poorly maintained infrastructure, including roads and footpaths. While they appreciate the area's heritage properties, parks, green spaces, and strong sense of community, there is growing concern that these assets may be compromised by unchecked development. They also emphasise the importance of maintaining community values and supporting services like Meals on Wheels, community transport, and libraries.

#### Future State

The group envisions a future where the existing environment is preserved, and development is considerate of the region's character. They advocated for development to be concentrated along major roads, such as the Pacific Highway,

rather than in smaller side streets, to protect residential areas and green spaces. The development of the Lindfield hub should include adequate parking and contributions, while heritage properties and parks should be maintained. The group calls for low to medium-rise buildings, underground commuter parking, and a focus on maintaining the area's natural beauty, including green spaces and parks. They also envision a variety of housing options, including townhouses and villas, as well as more cafes and restaurants to create a vibrant, healthy community. The focus should be on improving infrastructure, reducing traffic risks, and ensuring community involvement through better engagement and town hall meetings.

## **FORUM 5 - SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2024**

### **Current State**

This group values Ku-ring-gai's natural beauty, including its green spaces, leafy areas, and access to bushland and parks, but also acknowledges the challenges facing the area. They feel that community facilities are lacking, and many residents struggle with poor access to public transport and roads that are already at capacity. While they appreciate the current sense of community and safety, they are concerned about the loss of heritage due to unsustainable development pressures, including inadequate protections for critically endangered forests and unregulated development. The group also voiced frustration with the lack of effective community engagement and the overdevelopment of areas without clear planning or consideration of long-term impacts. The overall feeling is that while the area remains peaceful and green, its character is at risk from unchecked urbanisation.

This group envisions a future where Ku-ring-gai maintains its unique character, preserving green spaces, tree canopies, and heritage sites while accommodating responsible growth. They advocated for low-rise, sympathetic urban development that enhances the area without overshadowing its natural beauty. The future state includes more affordable housing, better roads and infrastructure, and improved public transport options to accommodate a growing population. Culture and arts facilities should be expanded, with a focus on community-driven spaces, such as a performing arts centre. There is also a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability, including measures to protect critically endangered forests, increase tree canopy coverage, and ensure that new developments are environmentally responsible. This group also calls for greater community engagement, with residents actively involved in decisions and planning.



#### 4.2.3 TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The telephone calls delivered key insight into the key challenges and priorities of community members for the Ku-ring-gai LGA. As these sessions were created for community members unable to attend forum sessions, the questions asked remained the same as forum activity 1:

- 1. What do you love about living in Ku-ring-gai?*
- 2. What would a perfect future look like for Council and community in ten years?*
- 3. What is one key deliverable you want to see from Council in the next 4 years?*

A summary of the feedback as gathered below:

The feedback from the telephone interviews highlights the Ku-ring-gai community's deep appreciation for the area's natural beauty, green spaces, safety, and family-friendly environment, with well-regarded schools and shopping centres. However, there are consistent concerns about the state of local infrastructure, including roads, footpaths, stormwater systems, and the Pacific Highway, alongside calls for better public transport options and improved council communication. Rising costs of living, particularly council rates and access to affordable solar energy, were noted as significant challenges. Some participants expressed a desire for more cultural and social activities, particularly for young people, to create a more vibrant and engaging community. Overall, residents value Ku-ring-gai's charm but see opportunities for improvement in infrastructure, affordability, and community engagement..







#### 4.2.4 BUSINESS FORUM

The Ku-ring-gai LGA Businesses Forum provided a platform for local Businesses owners to discuss the current challenges, priorities and future vision for the LGA. Through collaborative discussions, key themes and actionable insights were identified to guide future planning.

During the forum the community was challenged through 3 activities to discuss how Ku-ring-gai council can better support local businesses.

Key themes emerged, including the need for increased support, better infrastructure, and stronger community engagement. This forum provided a valuable platform for networking and collaboration among local businesses and highlighted the importance of ongoing dialogue between businesses and council.

#### ACTIVITY 1

In this first activity the participants were asked these three questions:

- 1. *What do you love about living in the Ku-Ring-Gai LGA?***
- 2. *What would a perfect future look like for Council and community in 10 years?***
- 3. *What is the one key deliverable you want to see from Council in the next 4 years?***

The responses to these questions have been summarised below:

##### **What do you love about living in the Ku-Ring-Gai LGA?**

- **Natural Environment:** The serene natural environment, including parks and green spaces, attracts customers and employees.
- **Community:** The strong sense of community fosters loyalty and supports local businesses.
- **Infrastructure:** Convenient public transport options, particularly train access to the city, benefit both businesses and employees.
- **Local Amenities:** The availability of essential services and amenities attracts customers and improves the quality of life for business owners.
- **Architectural Character:** The unique architectural character of the area can attract customers and enhance the local brand.

### **What would a perfect future look like for Council and community in 10 years?**

- **Business-Friendly Environment:** More support for small businesses, including reduced red tape, streamlined approvals, and access to funding.
- **Business networking Events:** More spaces / events for local businesses people to network and knowledge share.
- **Improved Infrastructure:** Better parking options, improved road infrastructure, and enhanced public transport to facilitate easier access for customers and employees.
- **Community Engagement:** More community events and initiatives to attract customers and foster a sense of community.
- **Preservation of Character:** Maintaining the area's unique character to attract visitors and customers.
- **Diverse Economy:** A more diverse range of businesses, including retail, hospitality, and professional services, to cater to a wider range of customers.

### **What is the one key deliverable you want to see from Council in the next 4 years?**

- **Business Support:** Initiatives to foster business growth, such as mentoring programs, workshops, and networking events.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Addressing parking shortages, improving road infrastructure, and enhancing public transport to facilitate easier access for customers and employees.
- **Community Engagement:** Organising community events and initiatives to attract customers and foster a sense of community.
- **Sustainable Development:** Balancing development with environmental considerations to maintain the area's appeal.
- **Preservation of Character:** Protecting the area's unique character and heritage to attract visitors and customers.





## ACTIVITY 2

In the second activity, the participants were split into groups and tasked with discussing and answering the question;

### ***What are the most important issues for businesses in Ku-Ring-gai LGA?***

The responses have been summarised below:

#### **Business Visibility and Marketing**

- Many businesses lack a strong online presence, hindering their ability to attract customers.
- Insufficient marketing efforts and brand awareness.
- Few opportunities for businesses to connect and collaborate.

#### **Operational Costs and Economic Challenges**

- Increasing costs for food, supplies, labor, and energy.
- The impact of economic factors, such as interest rates and inflation, on business operations.
- Difficulty in accessing government grants and support programs.

#### **Infrastructure and Development**

- Insufficient parking, particularly for customers and employees.
- Limited infrastructure, such as roads and public transport, impacting business operations.
- A need for more vibrant town centers with diverse retail and dining options.
- Regulatory and Policy Challenges
- Complicated regulations and red tape hindering business growth.
- Insufficient support for small businesses, particularly in terms of planning and development approvals.

#### **Community and Workforce**

- Changes in consumer behavior and preferences due to an aging population.
- Difficulty in finding skilled workers and attracting talent to the area.
- Lack of support and opportunities for young entrepreneurs.



### ACTIVITY 3

Activity three required participants to provide their feedback through these four questions:

- 1. What can council do to support local business?***
- 2. What other ideas have you seen work well to support local businesses?***
- 3. How would you like council to engage with businesses?***
- 4. Is there anything council can do to support your staff?***

The responses to these questions have been summarised below:

The community has highlighted several ways Council can support local businesses. Key suggestions include organising networking events, workshops, and forums to foster collaboration, as well as creating and promoting comprehensive business directories. Providing shared workspaces or co-working spaces, along with mentorship programs and training sessions, were identified as essential initiatives. Additionally, exploring financial support options such as grants and loans, improving infrastructure like parking and public transport, and hosting community events to attract visitors were seen as important actions to boost the local economy.

Other ideas shared by the community include collaborating with neighbouring councils to share resources and best practices, which could amplify the impact of business support efforts. Promoting community engagement through events, and exploring new ways to facilitate networking and financial incentives were also considered effective measures.

The community expressed a preference for regular communication between Council and businesses through established channels, as well as a consultative approach that involves businesses in decision-making processes. Proactive support, using online platforms for collaboration, and organising regular networking events were suggested to enhance engagement.

To further assist local businesses, the community recommended Council focus on staff development and well-being. Key suggestions include offering training opportunities, providing mental health resources, ensuring adequate employee parking, and collaborating with local organisations to deliver additional support and resources.

#### 4.2.5 ONLINE COUNCILLOR WORKSHOP

Four councillors were interviewed to provide insights into the key issues and priorities for the Ku-ring-gai community. Their feedback will help inform the development of a plan that aligns with the community's needs and aspirations. The feedback provided is summarised below.

##### **Key Issues and Priorities**

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Preserving green spaces, heritage sites, and natural beauty.
- **Community Well-being:** Fostering social connection and cultural vibrancy.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Improving public transport, roads, and essential infrastructure.
- **Affordable Housing:** Addressing the need for housing options.
- **Economic Development:** Supporting local businesses and employment opportunities.

Councillors raised concerns about inadequate public transport, increasing traffic congestion, and maintaining social cohesion within a diverse community. Councillors highlighted their role in addressing these challenges through advocacy, community engagement, and strategic planning to ensure the community's long-term needs are met.

#### 4.2.6 POP-UP INFORMATION STALLS

Pop-up engagement across the Ku-ring-gai LGA, gathered a range of community insights. These pop-ups were held on Saturday 7 December at the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Park Run and St Ives Showground Christmas Markets. Across the two pop-up, two activities were designed and presented to community members to gain feedback in an interactive and sociable way.

##### **Activity Summary**

##### **Ku-ring-gai Love Notes**

The Ku-ring-gai Love Notes activity was designed to gather community feedback on what they love about the LGA and how it could be improved. This was achieved through two pop-up stalls at the KRG Wildflower Park Run and St Ives Showground Christmas Markets.

**Key Themes from What people love about Ku-ring-gai:**

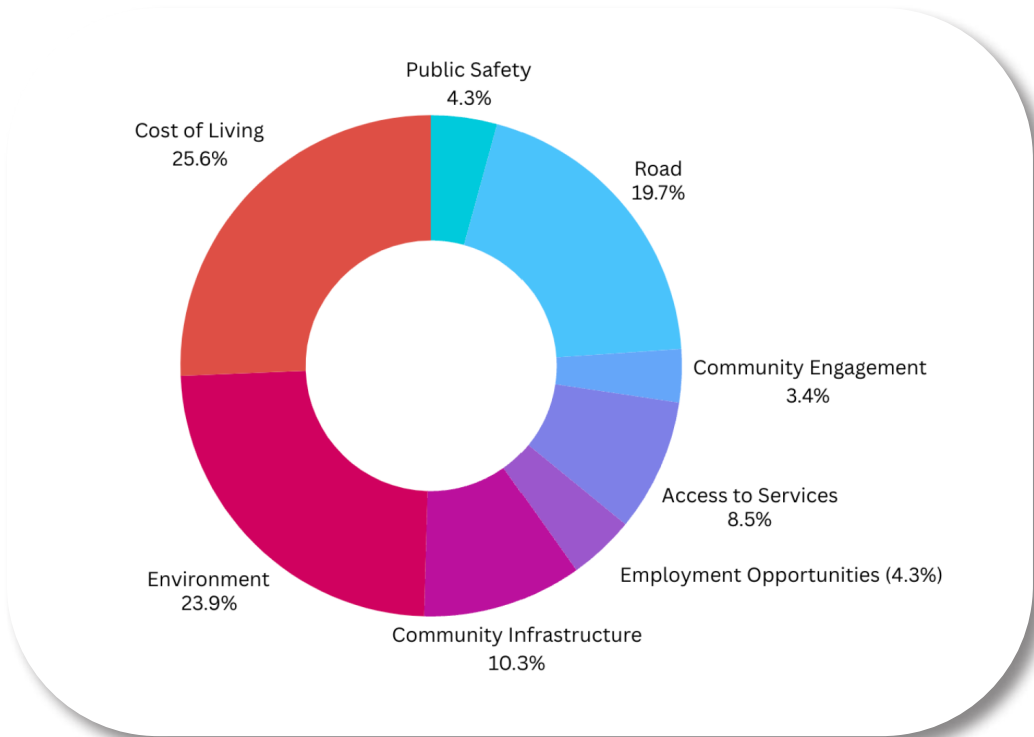
- Natural Environment: Bush land, nature, trees, wildlife, parks, and green spaces.
- Community: Friendly people, strong community spirit, and a sense of belonging.
- Infrastructure: Good transport options, heritage homes, and well-maintained streetscapes.

**How to improve Ku-ring-gai:**

- Infrastructure: Improved public transport, better road infrastructure, increased parking, and better cycling and walking paths.
- Community: More youth and health services, increased diversity, and better community engagement.
- Environment: Preservation of natural areas, protection of Indigenous heritage, and sustainable development practices.
- Economy: Support for small businesses, attraction of skilled workers, and affordable cost of living.

**Biggest Issue facing Ku-ring-gai?**

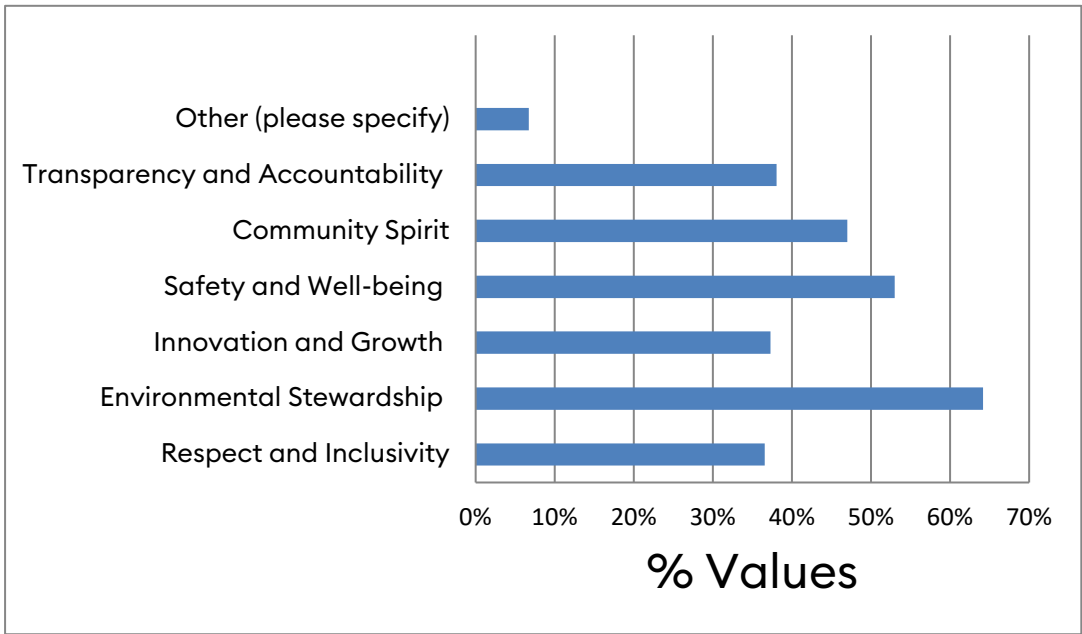
This activity encouraged participants to identify the most pressing challenges they face in the Ku-ring-gai LGA, offering a clear snapshot of community priorities, guiding resource allocation and focus areas for the next Community Strategic Plan (CSP) period. Below is a summary of the results:



4.3 ONLINE ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Survey

**Q1. What values do you believe are most important to our community? Please select up to three options or write your own:**



**Q2. In one sentence, describe what you envision our community should look like in the future. (Example: A thriving, eco-friendly community with a strong local economy and vibrant public spaces)**

**One-Sentence Summary:**

Ku-ring-gai residents envision a thriving, eco-friendly, and inclusive community that balances sustainable development, environmental stewardship, and vibrant public spaces while preserving the area’s heritage, natural beauty, and strong sense of community.

**Paragraph Summary:**

The survey responses reveal that Ku-ring-gai residents prioritise a future community characterised by sustainability, inclusivity, and a strong connection to nature. Key themes include environmental stewardship, eco-friendly practices, vibrant public spaces, and a balance between development and the preservation of the area’s heritage and natural assets. Residents emphasise the importance of green spaces, accessible amenities, and a harmonious blend of residential, commercial, and recreational areas. A thriving local economy, improved transport options, and support for diverse housing needs are highlighted as priorities. The vision also reflects a desire for a safe, connected, and culturally rich community that values its unique character and supports well-being for all.

### **Q3. What qualities do you think make our community unique or special?**

#### **One-Sentence Summary:**

Ku-ring-gai's unique qualities are defined by its abundant greenery, tree canopy, natural environment, heritage homes, strong community spirit, safety, and a balance of open spaces with low-density housing, all fostering a welcoming and tranquil lifestyle.

#### **Paragraph Summary:**

The community of Ku-ring-gai is celebrated for its unique blend of natural beauty, characterised by extensive greenery, a rich tree canopy, and close proximity to national parks and bushland. Residents value the area's heritage homes, large blocks of land, and low-density housing that preserve its character and charm. The community spirit, defined by friendliness, inclusivity, and care, stands out as a unifying trait. Accessible amenities such as parks, schools, and transport options, along with a safe and peaceful environment, make it an ideal place to live. Ku-ring-gai's role as "Sydney's Lungs," with its environmental focus and preservation efforts, underscores the community's pride in its natural and cultural heritage, which residents are keen to protect amid modern development pressures.

### **Q4. When you imagine our community's future, what inspires you most?**

#### **One-Sentence Summary:**

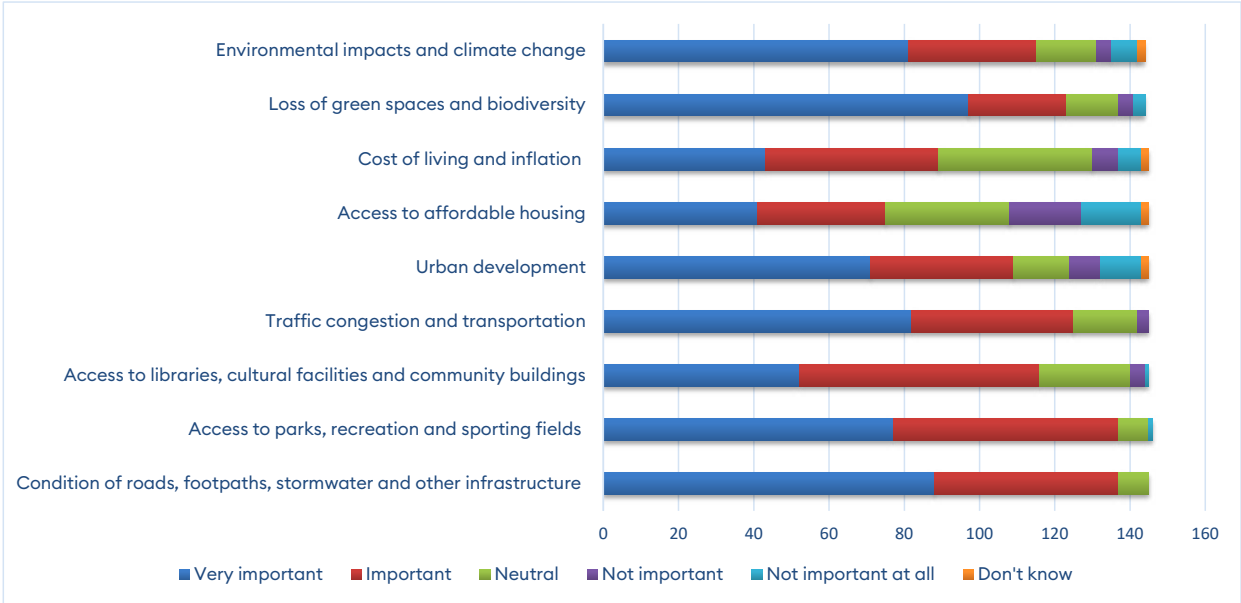
Ku-ring-gai's future inspires residents through the preservation of its natural environment, tree canopy, and heritage, combined with thoughtful and sustainable urban development that balances community needs, green spaces, and modern infrastructure.

#### **Paragraph Summary:**

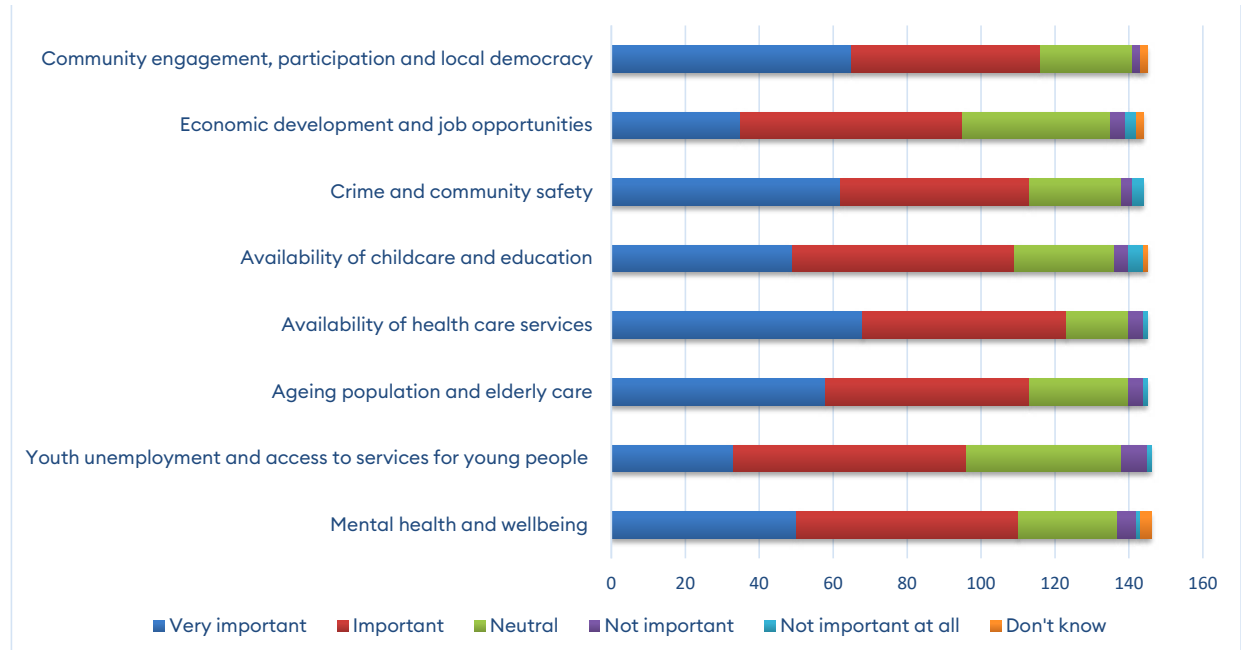
Residents of Ku-ring-gai envision a future that preserves the area's unique natural environment, including its tree canopy, open green spaces, and heritage architecture, while fostering sustainable and well-planned urban growth. Many are inspired by the potential for creating eco-friendly, vibrant town centres with improved public transport, modernised amenities, and cultural hubs that promote community connections. There is hope for a future that balances development with environmental stewardship, supporting diverse housing options and ensuring affordability for younger generations. However, concerns about overdevelopment, population growth, and the loss of Ku-ring-gai's character temper this optimism. The community aspires to a future that fosters inclusivity, sustainability, and respect for its natural and built heritage while embracing thoughtful innovation and infrastructure improvements.



**Q5. Part 1 - Were interested in hearing what you think are the most important issues facing our community. Please rate the following.**



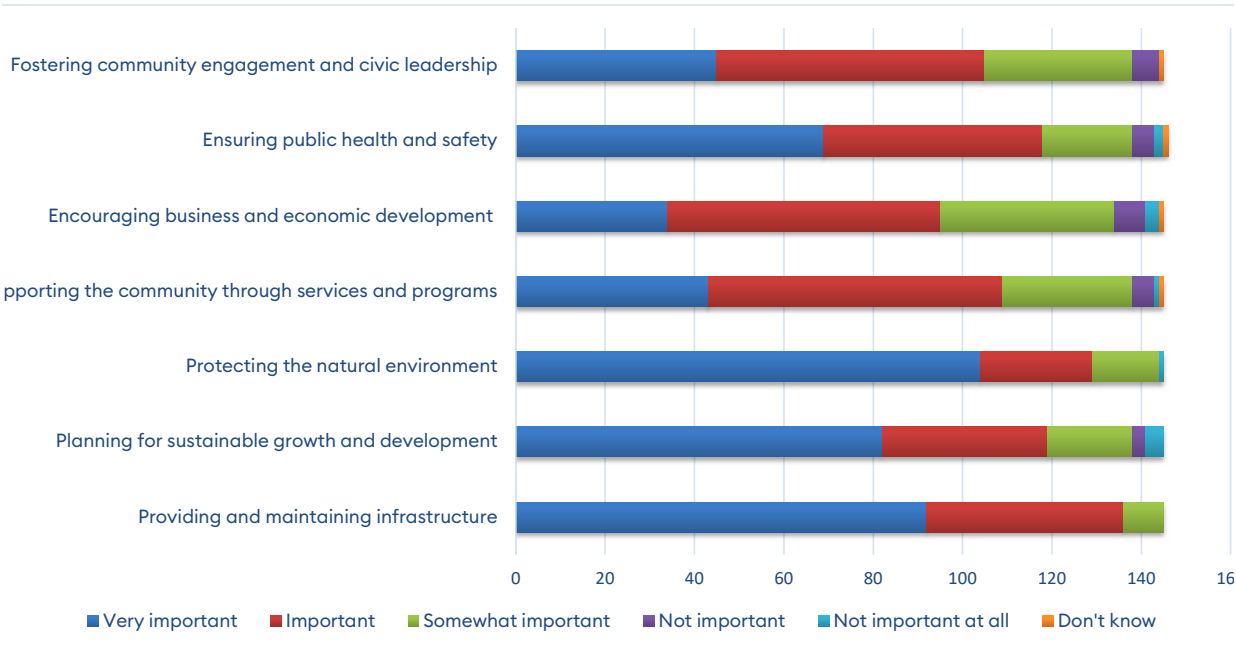
**Q6. Part 2- Were interested in hearing what you think are the most important issues facing our community. Please rate the following.**



**Q7. Are there any emerging trends or changes that we should consider as a community? (Examples might include population growth, changes in job markets, shifts in technology, etc.)**

The emerging trends and changes highlighted by Ku-ring-gai residents emphasise the critical challenges of population growth, housing affordability, and climate change. Many residents express concern over the impact of high-density development on the area’s green spaces, tree canopy, and community character. There is a strong call for sustainable urban planning that integrates affordable housing, efficient transport options, and green infrastructure while preserving the natural environment and heritage. Technological advancements, such as renewable energy and electric vehicles, are viewed as opportunities to enhance sustainability. The aging population, shifts in work practices like remote working, and the need for inclusive, adaptable public spaces are also key considerations. The community aspires to balance growth with thoughtful infrastructure improvements, ensuring equitable access to education, health, and recreational facilities while fostering cultural diversity and environmental stewardship.

**Q8. Thinking about where we want to be in 10 years, what goals or objectives should our community work towards? Please rate the following.**



**Q9. For the highest priority areas you selected in the previous question, what specific improvements or actions would you like to see?**

Residents prioritise protecting Ku-ring-gai's natural environment, including its tree canopy, green spaces, and biodiversity, while ensuring sustainable growth through thoughtful planning and infrastructure improvements. Specific actions include limiting high-density developments, enhancing public transport and cycling infrastructure, improving roads and footpaths, and expanding community amenities such as parks, playgrounds, and sports facilities. There is strong support for preserving the area's heritage and character, promoting renewable energy and recycling initiatives, and integrating affordable housing options near transport hubs. Residents emphasise the need for smart development that balances population growth with environmental preservation, community well-being, and maintaining Ku-ring-gai's unique charm and livability.

**Q10. Are there any additional goals you would like to suggest for our community? If yes please outline here.**

Residents suggest a wide range of additional goals for Ku-ring-gai, emphasising the need to balance development with the protection of the area's natural environment, heritage, and community character. Key priorities include fostering sustainable practices such as zero waste initiatives, increasing tree canopy protections, and supporting renewable energy adoption. There is strong advocacy for enhanced community facilities, including multi-sport precincts, performing arts centres, and more spaces for community events, markets, and multicultural celebrations. Calls for improved infrastructure include better roads, footpaths, cycling lanes, and parking solutions, alongside targeted development near transport hubs to preserve suburban character while meeting housing needs. Residents also highlight the importance of supporting local employment, addressing housing affordability for young families and essential workers, and ensuring open and transparent governance. Cultural diversity, education on environmental conservation, and improved recreational and public spaces for all ages round out the community's vision for a vibrant and sustainable future.

**Q11. What would success look like if we achieve the vision we've discussed in this survey?**

Success for Ku-ring-gai is envisioned as a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable community that balances growth with the preservation of its natural environment, heritage, and unique character. Key indicators of success include a well-maintained tree canopy, green spaces, and biodiversity, alongside thoughtfully planned developments such as medium-density housing near transit hubs that align with the area's architectural charm. Residents seek improved infrastructure, including safer roads, better public transport, and pedestrian-friendly town centres, while supporting local businesses and cultural amenities. Affordability, accessibility, and community cohesion are central to the vision, ensuring that people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can thrive. A focus on environmental stewardship, sustainable energy, and equitable housing policies underpins the goal of maintaining Ku-ring-gai as a desirable, vibrant, and harmonious place to live for generations to come.

**Q12. Do you have any other feedback or ideas to help us plan effectively for the future? If yes please detail below.**

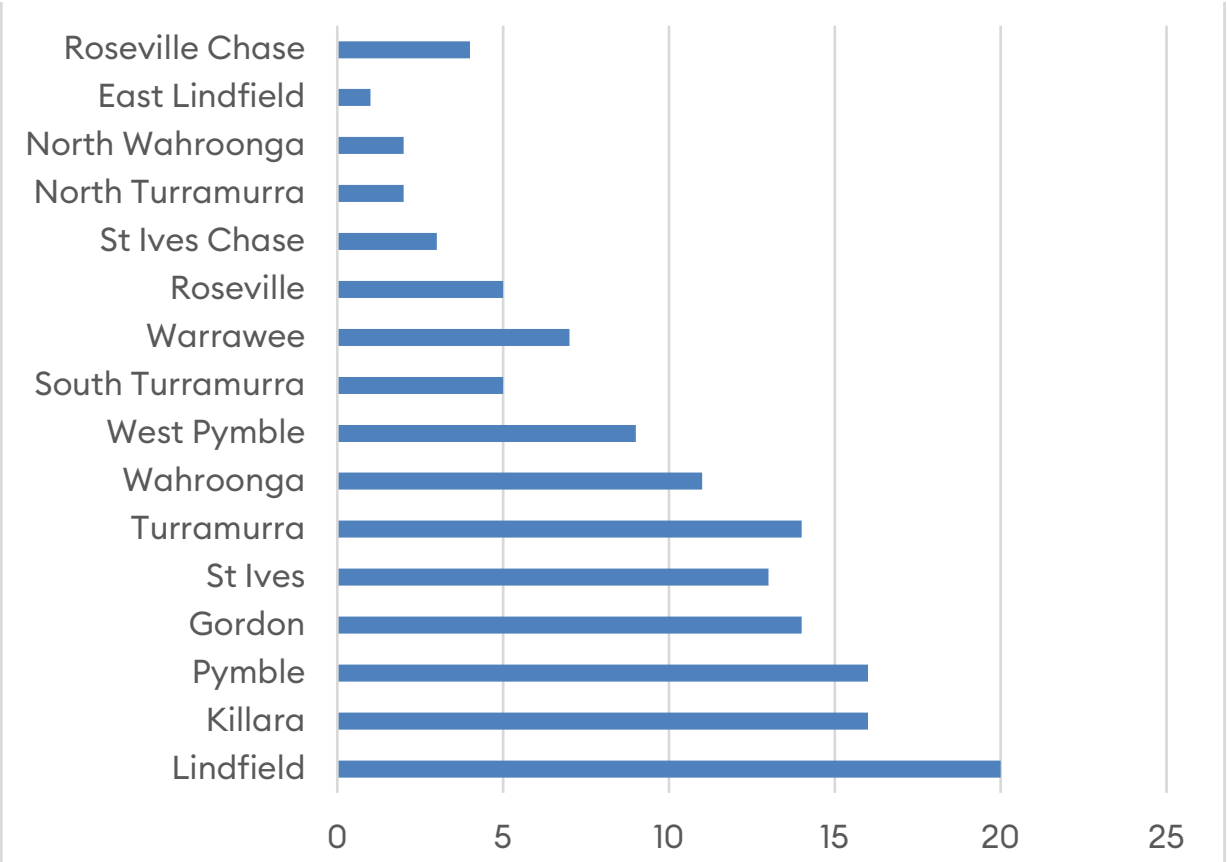
Residents suggest a range of ideas to help Ku-ring-gai plan effectively for the future, with a strong emphasis on preserving the area's natural environment, heritage, and unique character. Key suggestions include implementing stricter protections for tree canopy and green spaces, improving transparency in council decision-making, and prioritising sustainable urban planning. There is significant support for low-rise, thoughtfully planned developments near transport hubs, alongside better waste management solutions, renewable energy adoption, and enhanced public amenities like parks, playgrounds, and sporting fields. Calls for improved public engagement highlight the need to involve diverse community voices, including young people and highly educated local volunteers, in decision-making processes. Practical suggestions include better public transport options, clear long-term planning strategies, and addressing parking and infrastructure needs. Ultimately, residents seek a balanced approach to development that respects the area's heritage while supporting thoughtful growth and fostering a cohesive and vibrant community.



**Q13. What kind of information would you like to receive from Council about how progress is being made towards these goals and objectives?**

Residents want regular, transparent updates via email, newsletters, social media, and the council website. They prefer concise, measurable progress reports on goals, milestones, and outcomes, with suggestions for quarterly or semi-annual updates. Case studies, success stories, and opportunities for in-person engagement are also encouraged to keep the community informed and involved.

**Q14. What suburb do you live in?**



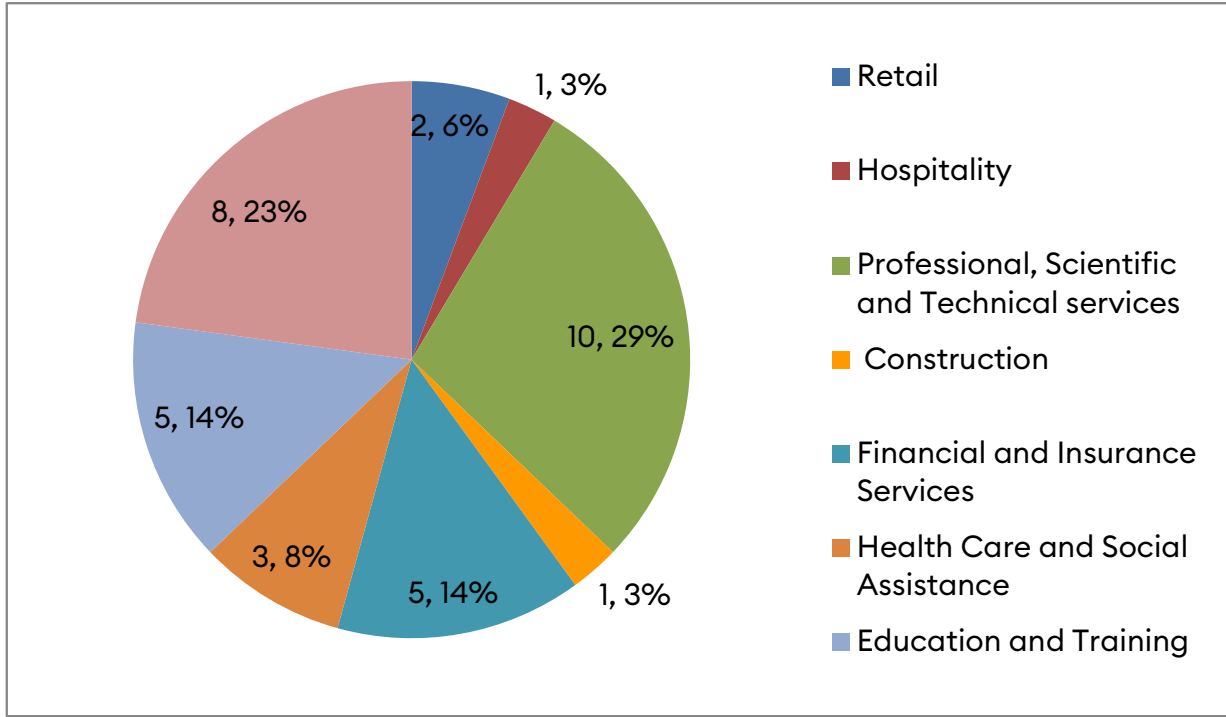




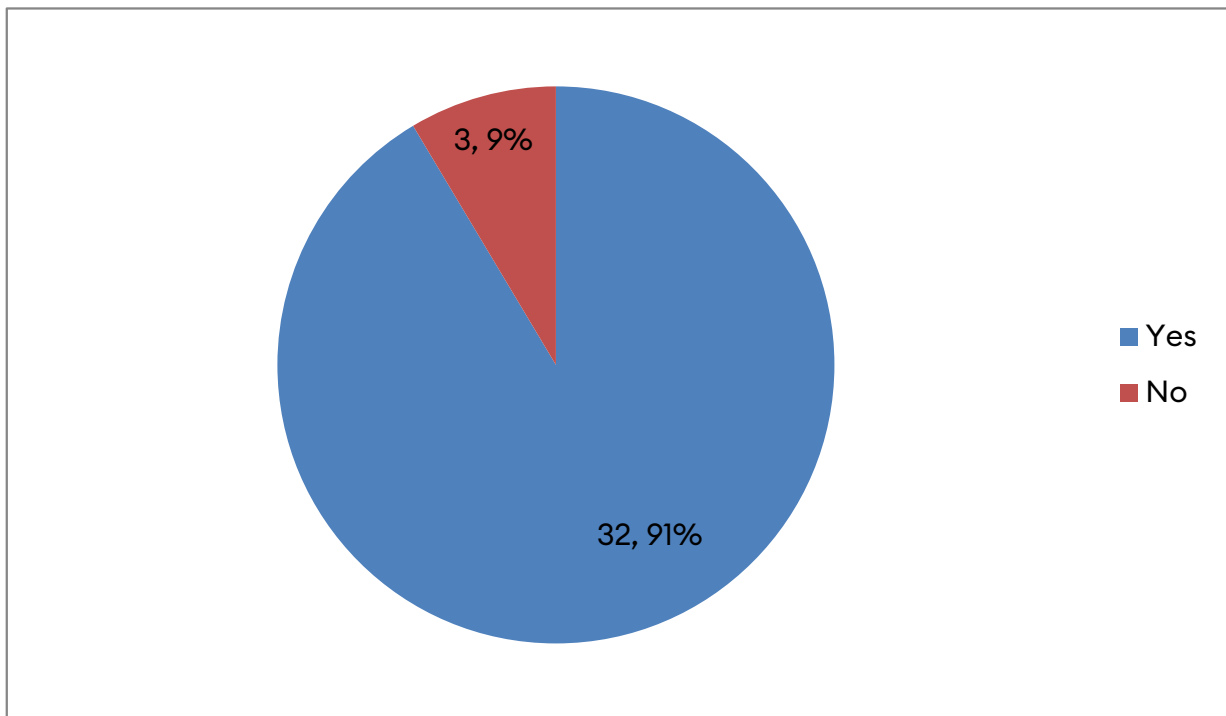


## Business Survey

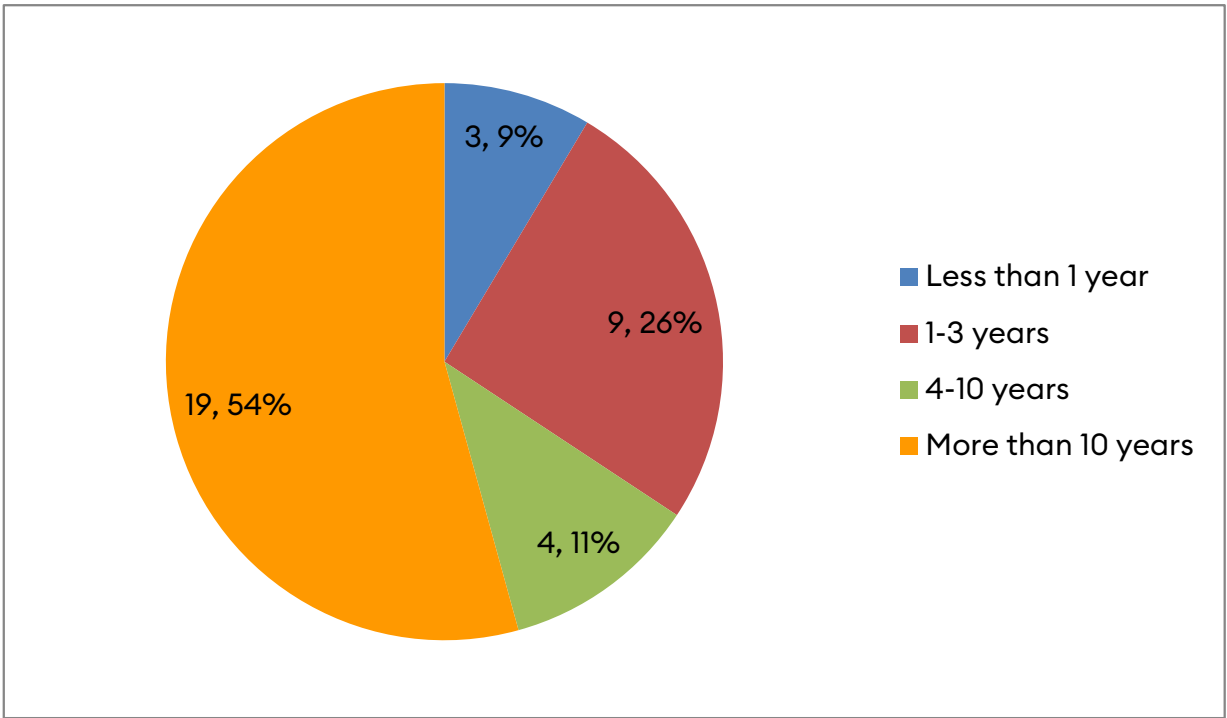
### Q1. Which industry does your business operate in?



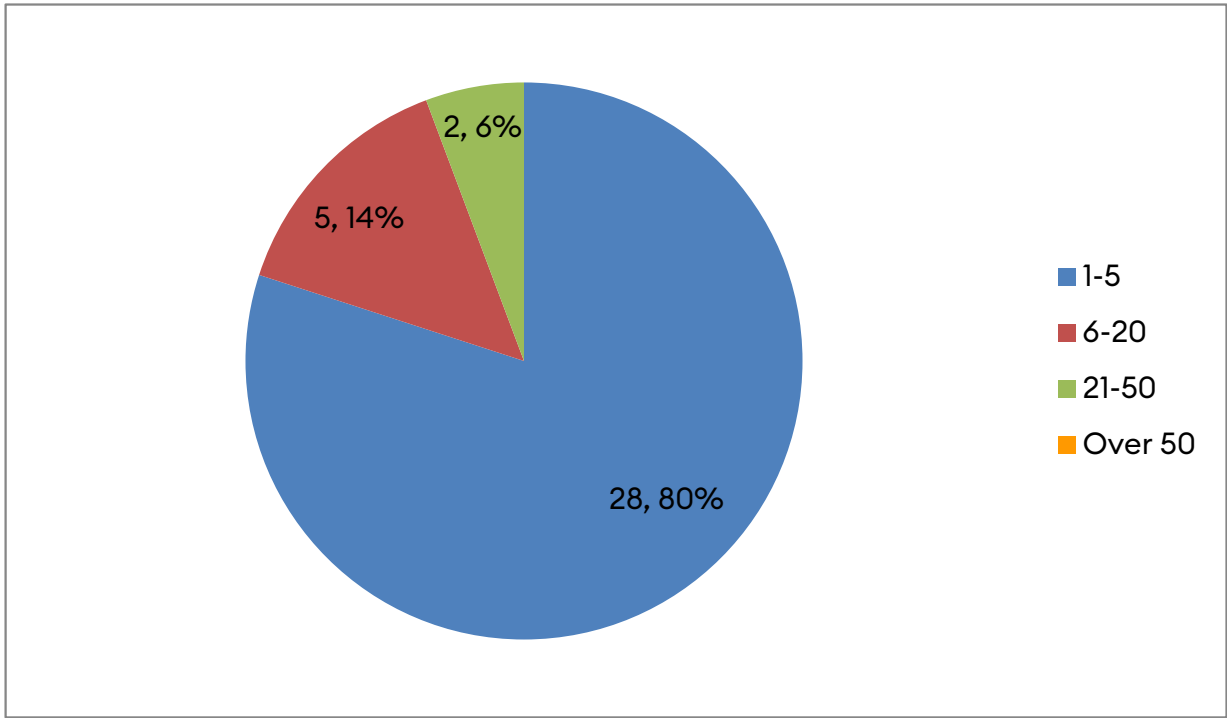
### Q2. Is your business based or operates in Ku-ring-gai?



**Q3. How long has your business been operating in Ku-ring-gai?**

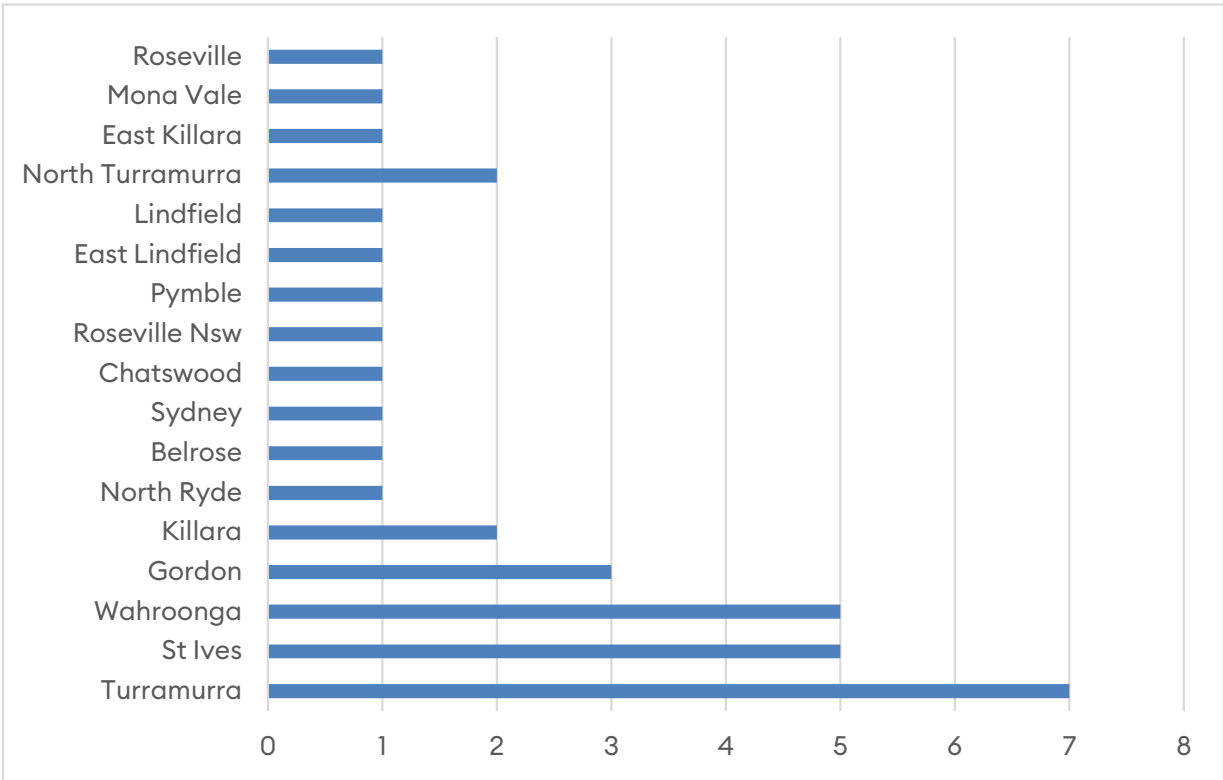


**Q4. How many employees does your business have?**

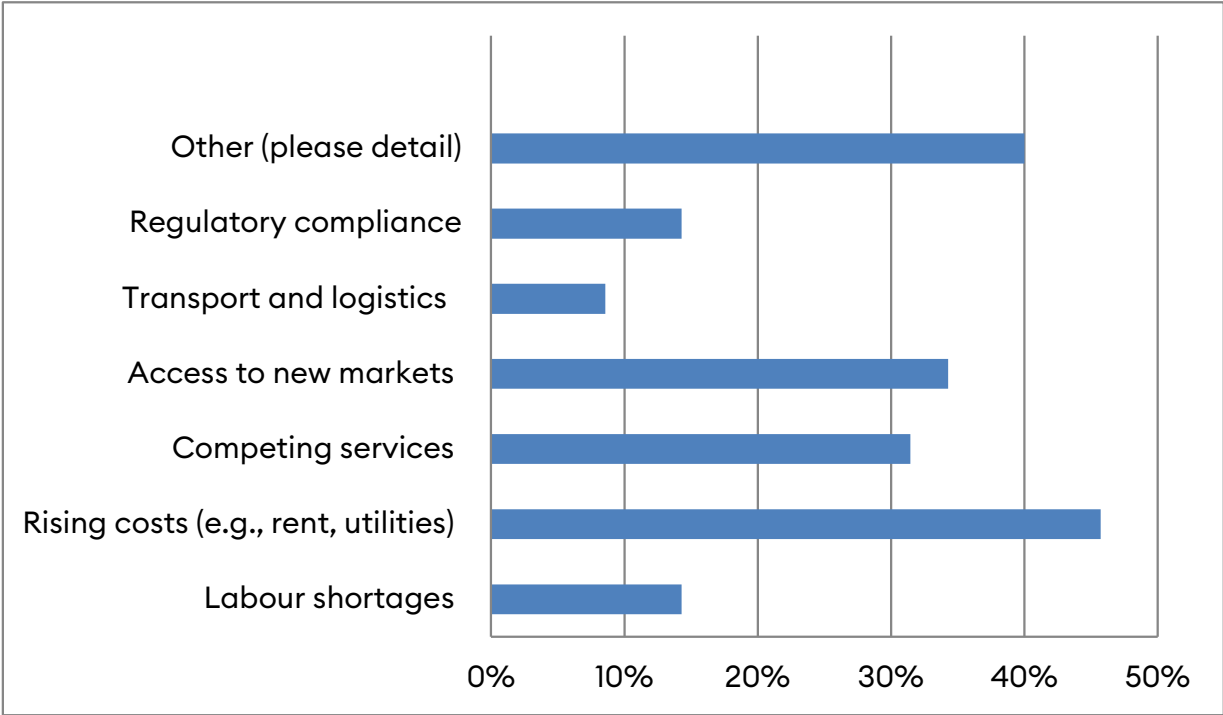




**Q5. What suburb is your business registered in?**



**Q6. What are the biggest challenges your business is currently facing? (please select top 3)**



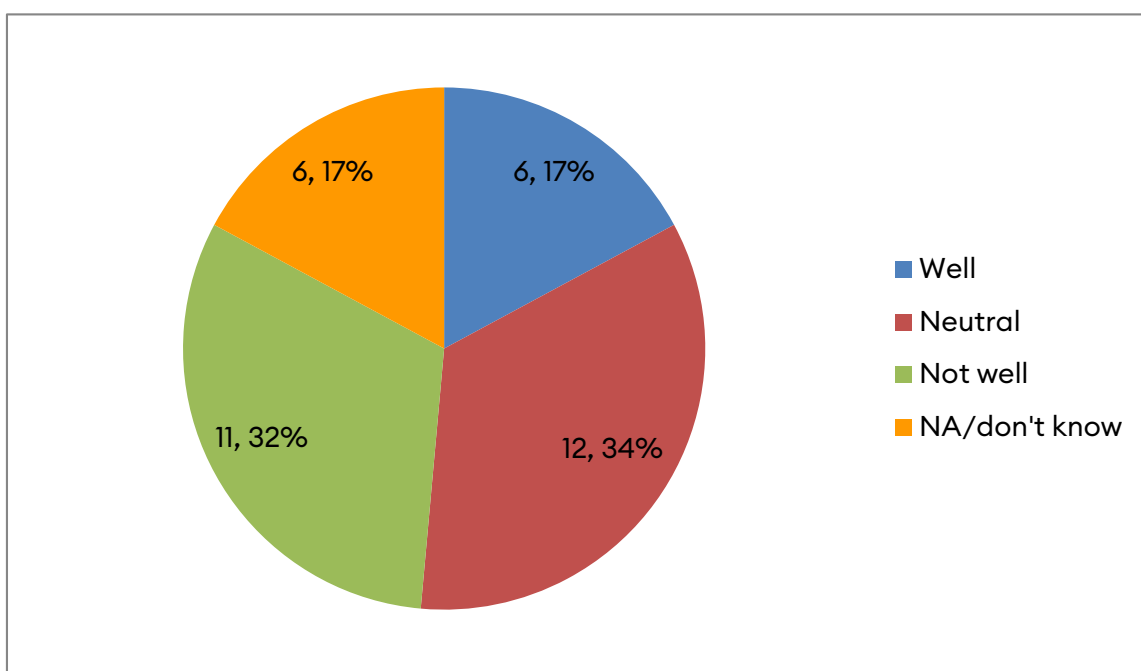
### Q7. How do these challenges impact your day-to-day operations?

Businesses in the area face significant operational challenges, including rising costs for wages, supplies, and commercial rentals, which compress margins and force difficult cost-cutting measures. Limited market access and increased competition, particularly from large corporations, hinder growth and profitability. Compliance and federal legislation add administrative burdens that reduce time spent on revenue-generating activities. Additionally, difficulties in finding skilled staff and accessing local networks or support services further impede expansion. These issues lead to reduced productivity, constrained growth opportunities, and in some cases, difficulty sustaining business operations.

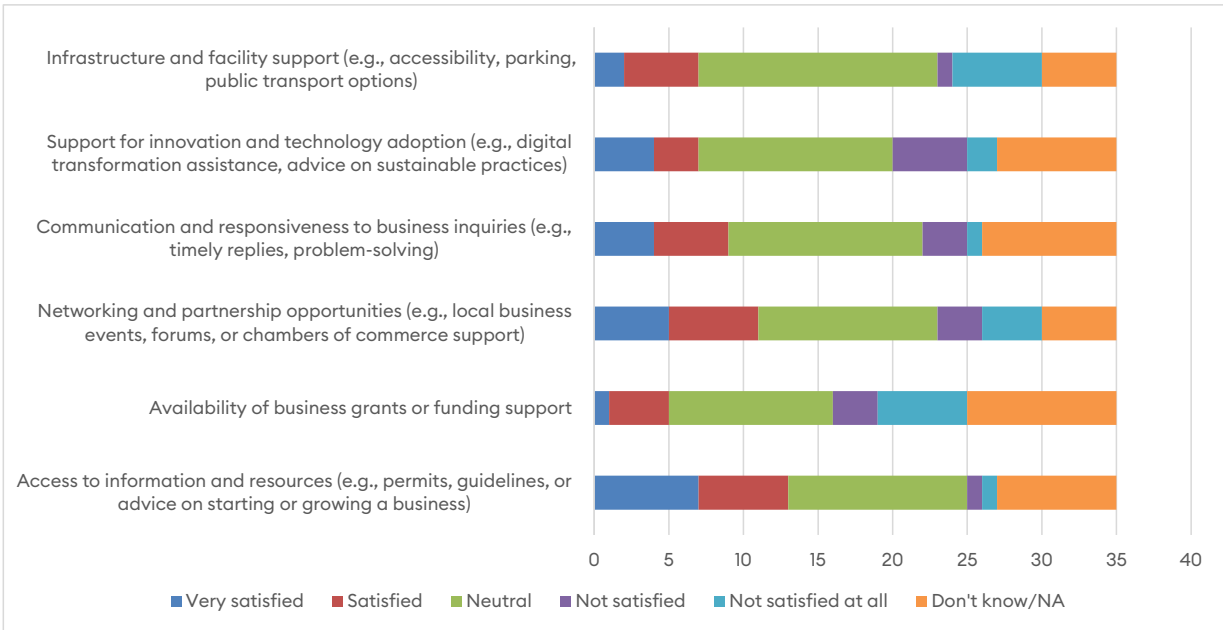
### Q8. What do you believe Council's primary role should be to support your business?

Businesses believe Council should play a supportive role by improving local infrastructure, creating networking opportunities, and promoting local enterprises. Suggestions include an online business directory, hosting educational seminars, and facilitating shared workspaces or business hubs. Many emphasised the need for streamlined approval processes, greater visibility for small businesses, and lobbying for policy changes that benefit local industries. Others highlighted the importance of maintaining attractive, well-maintained areas, increasing transport services, and offering grants or guidance for startups. Some businesses feel self-reliant but appreciate Council's interest in fostering a thriving business environment.

### Q9. How well do you believe Ku-ring-gai council supports your business?



**Q10. Please indicate your satisfaction with the following relating to Council:**

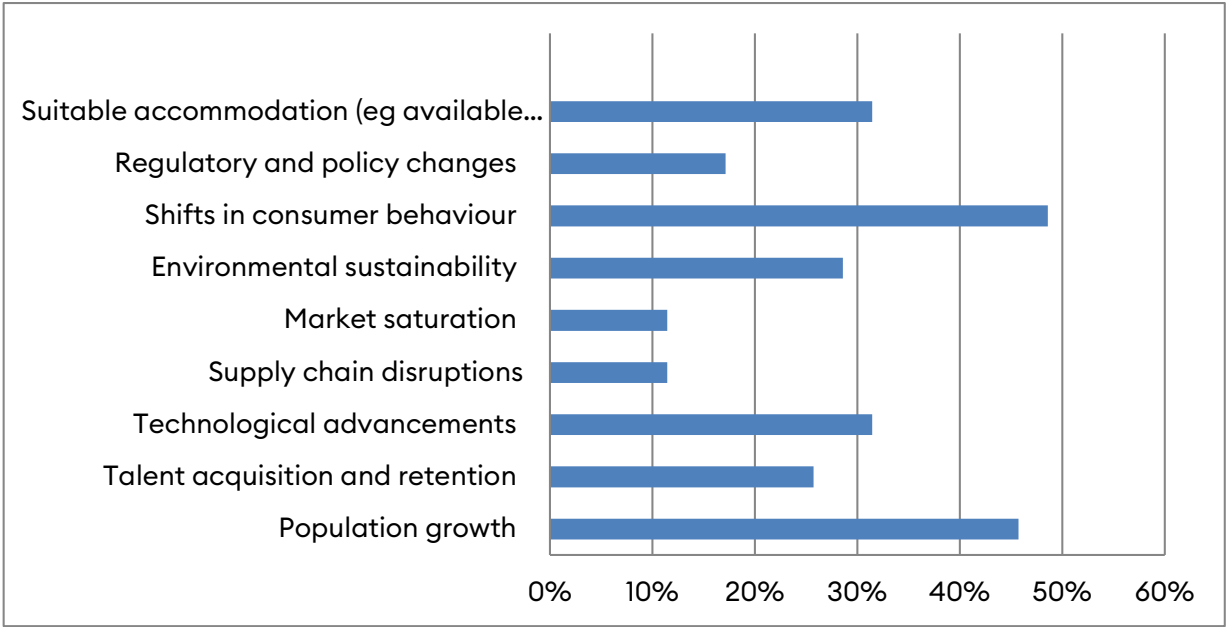


**Q11. Tell us one thing council could do better to support local businesses.**

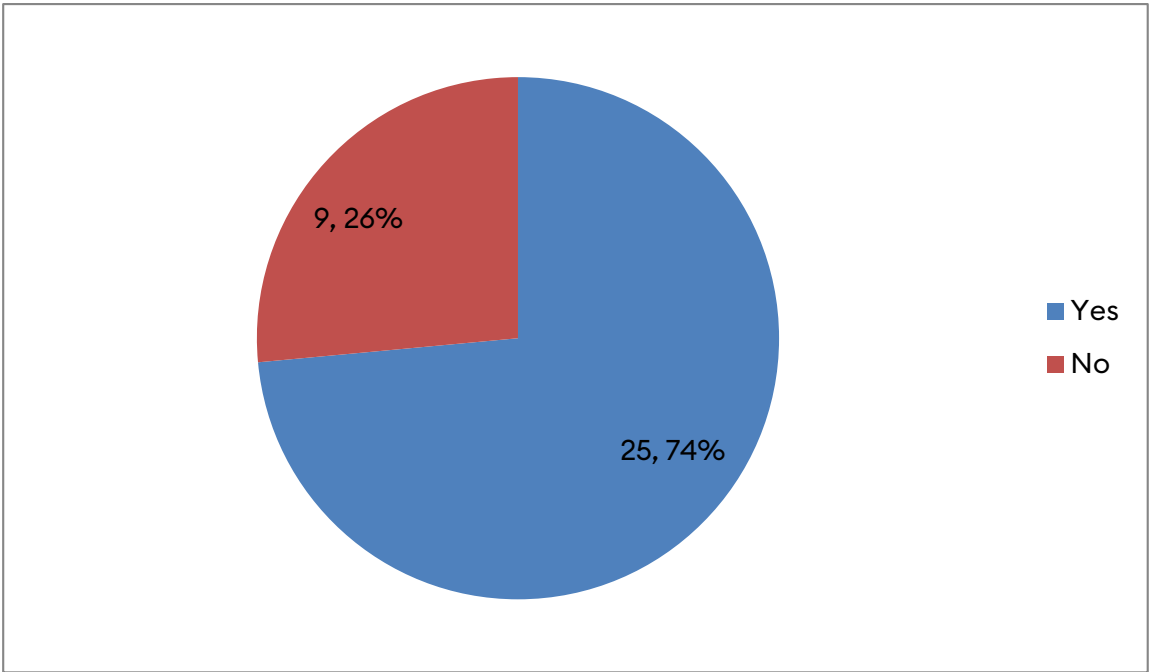
**Top 5 Suggestions:**

- **Establish Co-Working Spaces and Business Hubs:** Create shared workspaces in key areas like Gordon and Turramurra to support startups and small businesses.
- **Improve Electric and Internet Infrastructure:** Ensure reliable power and internet access, with priority repairs for business disruptions.
- **Develop a Local Business Directory:** Host an online directory on the Council’s website to promote local businesses and make them more discoverable.
- **Streamline Development Applications:** Speed up approval processes for development applications and change of use, targeting a seven-day turnaround.
- **Host Networking and Educational Events:** Facilitate regular networking opportunities, business mixers, and seminars to connect businesses and foster collaboration.

**Q12. What challenges do you foresee for businesses in Ku-ring-gai over the next 10 years? (Multiple choice; select up to 3)**



**Q13. Is there anything Council can do to support your business overcome any of these?**





**Q14. When thinking about the Ku-ring-gai area what do you think are the biggest opportunities business can take advantage of in the next 3-5 years?**

Businesses in Ku-ring-gai see significant opportunities in leveraging population growth, creating well-designed co-working spaces, revitalising town centres, and improving local networking and collaboration. Enhanced infrastructure and sustainable practices are also viewed as key areas to explore.

**Top 5 Suggestions:**

- **Leverage Population Growth:** Expanding services and adapting to a growing and younger demographic with more dynamic town centres and tailored offerings.
- **Develop Co-Working Spaces:** Introduce affordable and accessible co-working spaces in key areas like Gordon and Turramurra to foster collaboration and innovation.
- **Revitalise Town Centres:** Invest in mixed-use developments, pop-up stores, and incentives for landlords to reduce long-term vacancies, creating vibrant community hubs.
- **Enhance Networking Opportunities:** Facilitate regular networking events and collaboration between local businesses, councils, and chambers of commerce.
- **Focus on Sustainability:** Promote green retailing, eco-friendly practices, and sustainable infrastructure as a point of differentiation and growth.

#### **4.4 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES**

Engaging young people plays an important role in future planning. As part of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP), council undertook two initiatives:

- **Youth Survey:** Gathered insights on wellbeing, youth services, and matter important to the future of Ku-ring-gai.
- **Presentation and workshops at Lindfield Learning Village:** Explored youth engagement, and ideas for the future.

These findings will shape strategies to support young people and inform the Youth Forum in early 2025.

## HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS

### Youth Survey

Undertaken September to November 2024, 443 surveys completed

46% felt positive about the future; 34% were neutral; 21% felt negative.

**Optimism:** Education opportunities, family, and community connections.

**Concerns:** Housing costs, cost of living, climate change, technology impacts, and inequality.

Aspirations: Staying in Ku-ring-gai for family and community; leaving for housing and jobs.

### Lindfield Learning Village Workshops

In November 2024, council staff engaged 180 Year 7 and 8 students through presentations and workshops. 110 students provided feedback on:

1. **Improving Youth Engagement:**
  - Use social media, incentives, and school-based, interactive methods.
  - Ensure engagement is accessible, meaningful, and impactful.
2. **Future Priorities:**
  - Environment and climate change.
  - Housing affordability and transport access.
  - Youth support, facilities, and mental health resources.
3. **Making Ku-ring-gai Better for Youth:**
  - More social spaces, better transport, and improved community facilities.
  - Focus on inclusive initiatives and infrastructure.

Broadly, these outcomes align similarly with those of the wider community. As discussed, more in-depth work around the topics raised will be addressed at the youth forum in early 2025.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

Council will use the extensive feedback provided by the community and stakeholders to shape the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2025 - 2035. The draft CSP will be placed on Public Exhibition for review and comment in early-mid 2025, with a view to the final CSP being adopted by Council no later than 30 June 2025.







  
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