

CL26.220 Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056 - Finalisation

HPERM Ref: D26/360099

Department: Technical Services

Approver: Kevin Norwood, Director - City Services

Attachments:

1. Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
2. CISP Action Plan 2026-56 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
3. CRED Consulting CISP Peer Review Executive Summary (under separate cover) [⇒](#)

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056 (CISP)* (Attachment 1) and *CISP Action Plan 2026-56* (Attachment 2), noting the outcomes of community consultation, an independent peer review and supporting CISP documentation.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056 (CISP)* (including all appendices) and *CISP Action Plan 2026-56 (Action Plan)*, noting that:

1. The CISP and Action Plan sets a long-term strategic direction for community infrastructure and does not commit Council to the implementation of individual recommendations;
2. Any recommendation involving major capital works projects will be subject to a separate future Council decision and appropriate resource allocations;
3. Any recommendation involving asset divestment will be subject to additional future statutory processes and a separate future Council decision;
4. The CISP will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation, including annual reporting and comprehensive reviews at five-year intervals.

Community Strategic Plan:

- 1 Vibrant, active and safe communities
 - 1.1 Community life, civic engagement and community support
- 4 Transparent leadership with good governance
 - 4.2 Transparent leadership
 - 4.3 Effective collaboration and engagement
- 1.3 Active lifestyles
- 1.4 Safe behaviour and relationships
- 2 Sustainable environments and liveable communities
 - 2.2 Liveable neighbourhoods and sustainable development
 - 2.3 Safe built environment and business operations

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Delivery Program / Operational Plan:

- 1.1.1 Deliver plans and strategies which help to create an inclusive community and improve equitable access to opportunities
- 4.2.1 Provide support to the elected Council to enable effective leadership
- 4.3.2 Provide opportunities for the community to have genuine engagement on Council planning and decision making
- 1.3.1 Provide and maintain recreation and leisure facilities and programs to meet community needs
- 1.4.1 Support communities to become safer and more resilient through positive and effective planning, partnerships and programs
- 2.2.1 Facilitate sustainable development that considers current and future needs of our community and environment
- 2.2.3 Maintain liveability through provision of infrastructure, services and facilities across the city
- 2.3.1 Work with the community to build safe, resilient and connected neighbourhoods
- 4.3.1 Develop community trust and respect through transparent interactions and reporting

Background

The *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056* (CISP or CISP 2056) (Attachment 1) is a long-term plan which considers how community infrastructure will be used over the next 30 years. It provides an evidence-based framework to guide planning and decision-making for community infrastructure owned and / or managed by Shoalhaven City Council (Council). This includes aquatic facilities, sports fields and courts, parks and open space, cultural and entertainment venues, and community buildings available for hire.

The *CISP Action Plan 2026-56* (Action Plan) (Attachment 2) translates the strategic direction of the CISP 2056 into clear, prioritised actions. It includes 1,153 recommendations across 648 assets.

The current *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2017–36* (CISP 2017–36) was adopted in 2017. Following a full review, the CISP 2056 has been prepared to replace the existing plan.

Documentation

The Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056 and CISP Action Plan 2026-56 are supported by a suite of publicly available documents including the:

- Public Exhibition Summary Report 2026
- Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis 2026
- Comprehensive Community Engagement Summary Report 2025
- Community Infrastructure Audit 2024

Community consultation

A comprehensive program of engagement activities has been undertaken to inform the CISP Review.

The draft *Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056* and *CISP Action Plan 2026-56* were placed on public exhibition for four weeks from 20 April to 20 May 2026.

- A total of 2,456 survey responses were received during the public exhibition period 20 April – 20 May 2026

- Respondents provided feedback on an average of 12 draft CISP recommendations each, generating a total of 29,292 individual responses
- There was strong support for draft recommendations with 74% agreement, 11% neutral responses and 15% disagreement
- Council also received 116 written submissions via email

Further information about the community engagement program is outlined in the Community Consultations chapter of this report.

Peer review

The Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056, CISP Action Plan 2026-56 and supporting documentation have been independently peer reviewed by CRED Consulting (Executive Summary provided at Attachment 3) who found that:

- Council has applied a robust and evidence-informed methodology that is aligned with industry standards to prepare all documentation associated with the Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056.

Further information about the peer review process is provided in the External Consultations chapter of this report.

Evidence base

The CISP 2056 is informed by a comprehensive evidence base that includes:

- demographic analysis
- asset condition data
- utilisation and participation trends (including tourism)
- provision and proximity gap analysis
- facility performance assessments
- site investigations
- extensive community and stakeholder engagement

To ensure transparency, an open-source approach has been applied to data and information sharing throughout the CISP review, with the evidence and methodologies underpinning the CISP 2056 published across a suite of supporting documents, including the *Community Infrastructure Audit 2024* and *Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis 2026*.

The full suite of supporting documentation is published on the [CISP Review Project Page](#) on Council's website. Higher resolution versions of attachments to this report are also available on this page.

Adoption and implementation

Adoption of the CISP 2056 does not commit Council to implementing any specific recommendations. Rather, it signifies that Council will consider the plan's findings and recommendations alongside other relevant factors when making future decisions through its established governance, planning and community engagement processes.

Implementation of the CISP will be dependent on the availability of funding, with a significant reliance on grant funding assumed. While some projects identified in the CISP may remain unfunded for an extended period, others may be delivered sooner through community-led initiatives and partnerships that align with the plan's objectives.

The CISP assists decision making by detailing the full scope of investment required across the municipality to meet contemporary planning standards and community expectations,

helping to inform decisions on new initiatives, and will inform the assessment of opportunities to bring forward the delivery of specific projects.

Monitoring and evaluation

The CISP 2056 will be reviewed every five years, supported by annual progress reporting and ongoing community engagement regarding implementation progress, funding constraints and reprioritisation to ensure the plan remains responsive to changing community needs and organisational priorities.

Key components

Appendices A and B (ref. Attachment 1) are important components of the CISP 2056 as they provide the benchmarks that underpin recommendations and will serve as a high-level guide for future planning and project delivery. CISP benchmarks and embellishment standards have been adapted from industry norms to account for the City of Shoalhaven's unique settlement patterns and geography.

Appendix A: CISP Provision / Proximity Benchmarks for Community Infrastructure quantifies infrastructure needs by asset type and facility hierarchy using population ratios and travel-time standards.

Appendix B: CISP Embellishment Benchmarks for Community Infrastructure helps to define Council's standards for pools, sports facilities, parks, cultural facilities and community buildings, depending on their classification as regional, district or local facilities.

Risk Implications

The CISP 2056 provides an evidence-based framework to guide investment and rationalisation decisions for community infrastructure, including recommended project prioritisation for capital works expenditure.

A decision not to adopt the CISP 2056 presents the following risks:

- Council investment decisions may not be informed by the evidence base established through the CISP 2056, including the outcomes of comprehensive community consultation, potentially resulting in duplicated assets, inefficient allocation of resources, uneven service outcomes, and infrastructure investment that does not align with areas of greater community need or deliver optimal community benefit.
- The significant community input that informed the development of the CISP 2056 may not be reflected in future planning and decision-making processes, resulting in reduced stakeholder confidence in Council's commitment to evidence-based planning, transparent decision-making and meaningful community engagement.
- Council may fail to address key recommendations designed to improve financial sustainability, as outlined in the *AEC Final Report – Shoalhaven City Council Financial Sustainability Review 2023* (AEC Report).

Recommendation 11 recommends that a review be completed of Council's existing CISP 2017–36. If not delivered, this may result in diminished confidence in Council's commitment to implementation of AEC recommendations.

Risks associated with adoption of the CISP 2056 and Action Plan are:

- Community engagement and needs analysis has demonstrated that community expectations regarding the delivery of CISP-related infrastructure exceed Council's current funding capacity. This will place pressure on the balance of future budget allocations.

- There may be a misinterpretation of the CISP's purpose and status, resulting in a perception that Council is obligated to implement all recommendations rather than consider them through future planning, prioritisation and budget processes.

Internal Consultations

The review of the CISP has been prepared by Technical Services (City Services) and overseen by the CISP Review Project Control Group (PCG), an internal governance group consisting of department managers from Technical Services, Open Space & Recreation including Shoalhaven Swim Sport Fitness, Building & Property Services, Customer & Community Services, Tourism & Economic Development, Strategic Planning, and Media and Communications.

Extensive internal consultation has been undertaken with key staff responsible for the operation and management of in-scope facilities including aquatic facilities, sports facilities, parks, cultural venues and community buildings.

External Consultations

The CISP 2056 has been independently peer reviewed by CRED Consulting, a consultancy widely recognised for its work in community infrastructure needs assessments, and planning and engagement across diverse communities and projects.

CRED concluded that the CISP Review has applied a robust, evidence-informed methodology aligned with industry standards and undertook a comprehensive and transparent engagement process. The review further noted that, compared with other jurisdictions, Council provided a greater number of engagement opportunities and a more extensive body of supporting information to enable meaningful community participation. The Executive Summary to CRED's peer review report is provided at Attachment 3.

Additional peer review feedback was also provided by Shellharbour City Council and Wollongong City Council.

Community Consultations

The CISP is underpinned by one of the most extensive community engagement programs undertaken by Council. The program included a total of four engagement activities designed to enable the community to provide:

1. input into the development of the draft CISP, and;
2. an opportunity to review the draft CISP prior to finalisation.

A total of 7,904 survey responses were received across four phases of community consultation, including public exhibition of the draft plan, representing participation equivalent to approximately 7% of the City's population (noting that some individuals may have participated in more than one engagement campaign).

An overview of all engagement activities and feedback received is outlined in the *Public Exhibition Summary Report 2026* and *Comprehensive Community Engagement Summary Report 2025* published on Council's website and is available to view [HERE](#).

Draft CISP - public exhibition

The public exhibition of the draft CISP ran for a period of 23 days from 20 April to 20 May 2026 (inclusive). This formed the fourth and final community engagement activity undertaken in conjunction with this project.

The suite of exhibited documentation included:

- *Draft Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2056*
- *Draft CISP Action Plan 2026-56*
- *Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis 2026*

The public exhibition package was supported by:

- Online survey with interactive map
- Video explainer on how to use the survey with interactive map
- Frequently Asked Questions on the CISP Review Get Involved page

The public exhibition arrangements were notified via:

- Get Involved newsfeed update
- Notification to page subscribers
- Direct emails to over 600 stakeholders
- Media release
- Social media posts
- In-situ signage

Stakeholder information sessions were held at the Shoalhaven Indoor Sports Centre in Bomaderry, the Huskisson Community Centre, Huskisson, and the Dunn Lewis Centre, Ulladulla. A total of 118 community members attended across the three sessions.

A workshop with disability service providers was held at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, with 18 representatives in attendance.

Over 2,400 survey submissions and 116 email submissions were received during the public exhibition period. Survey feedback demonstrated strong support for the plan's strategic direction, with 74% agreement with draft recommendations, 11% neutral responses, and 15% disagreement.

A comprehensive Public Exhibition Summary Report is published on the [CISP Review Project Page](#) on Council's website.

Policy and Statutory Implications

The CISP is one of several key strategic documents that guide the development of Council's *Delivery Program & Operational Plan* (DPOP), as well as its broader resourcing strategies mediated by Council's Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO).

Once adopted, the CISP will inform Council's asset management functions, including the review of Asset Management Plans for in-scope asset classes, and guide updates to the asset hierarchy and organising framework within Council's Asset Register.

Adoption of the CISP may also lead to the development of more detailed, asset-specific strategies and policy documents, including a play space strategy.

Adoption of the CISP 2056 will supersede the existing CISP 2017-36 and respond to Recommendation 11 in the AEC Report to complete a new community infrastructure plan.

Financial Implications

The Action Plan identifies a significant investment program, including upgrades or renewal of 279 facilities through 597 capital projects valued at more than \$800 million over 30 years.

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While substantial, this investment reflects a comprehensive evidence-based assessment of Council's community infrastructure network, including asset condition, utilisation, demographic change, service gaps, and assessment of facility performance against benchmarks established through the CISP 2056 and reflecting contemporary industry standards and community expectations.

Given current budget settings, the projects identified in the Action Plan are intended to guide investment over the long term and will be delivered as funding opportunities and broader Council priorities allow. By identifying the full extent of infrastructure needs, the Action Plan establishes a clear evidence base for long-term planning.

A significant dependency on grant funds has been assumed for the implementation of the CISP. Limited funding will also be sourced from general revenue (rates), developer contributions, and other mechanisms.

Potential divestment

Whilst the CISP does not form part of Council's land sales strategy, it does identify future opportunities for further review, potentially to generate revenue and improve financial sustainability through potential divestment of a small number of community infrastructure assets.

The CISP includes 26 divestment recommendations, noting that all are subject to further feasibility assessments and many are contingent on ongoing monitoring of facility use and upgrades to nearby facilities.

Any divestment proposal progressed beyond feasibility studies would be subject to more detailed investigations, including a comprehensive review of legislative requirements and further community consultation in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* before coming to Council for decision.

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