ballina
shire council

Place and Public Realm Framework

2025

![ballina shire council]

TABLE OF
CONTENTS

introduction

The Place and Public Realm Framework provides direction for the development of high quality, comfortable, environmentally sustainable streetscapes and public open spaces that balance the needs of the community and contribute to a quintessential, local, **sense of place**.

This Framework outlines a vision for the public realm in the Ballina Shire.

OBJECTIVES

Key objectives of the Place and Public Realm Framework are to:

- Describe the key geographical characteristics that contribute to sense of place in the Ballina Shire.

- Identify principles and objectives to guide the design and management of the public realm.

- Outline the next steps to support implementation.

- Establish commitments by which Council will advance towards the vision.

The Place and Public Realm Framework applies to all work in the public realm regardless of the authority or the provider implementing the work.
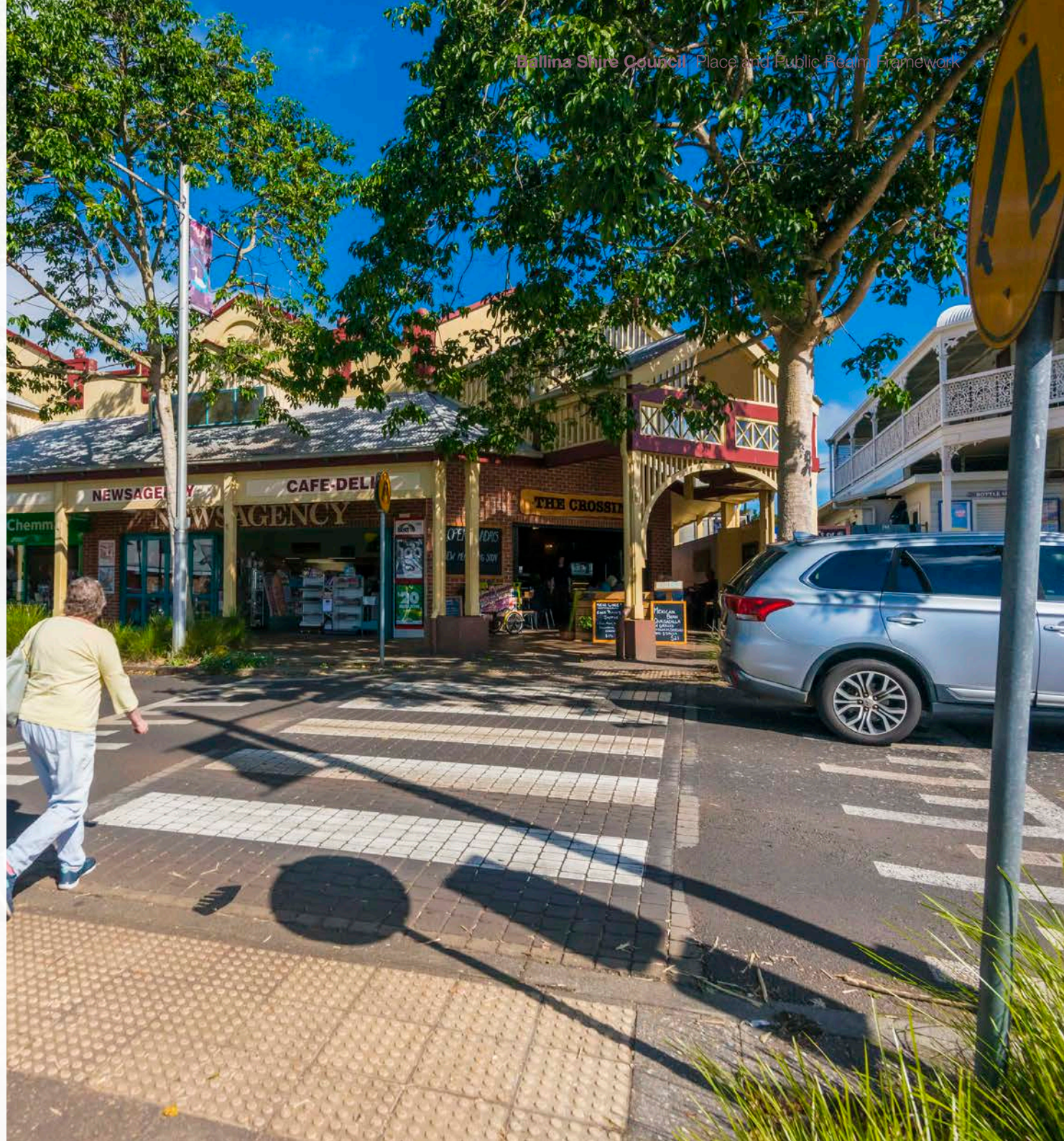
vision

To manage the amenity and function of the public realm to achieve connected, healthy and prosperous communities and environments.

This means:

better connected pedestrian and cyclist routes through and between our towns and villages and easy ways to find and follow them

greener streets that are cooler and more comfortable

a strong **sense of place** for each locality supported by design and local storytelling

community vibrancy to activate and celebrate our places

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC REALM?

The public realm belongs to everyone.

The public realm is the collective communal part of cities and towns, with shared access for all. It is the space of movement, recreation, gathering, events, contemplation and relaxation. The public realm includes streets, pathways, rights of way, parks, accessible open spaces, plazas and waterways that are physically and visually accessible regardless of ownership[1].

The Place and Public Realm Framework focuses on three different types of public realm that Council has the most control over: roads and streets, open spaces, linear corridors or greenways. These three public realm types make up most of the public land managed by Council.

THE ROLE OF LAND WITHIN THE PUBLIC REALM

As population growth and urban development occurs, it is important that the public realm provides quality environments for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

Safe and efficient access to destinations and services within the network is a key function of transport corridors in the public realm.

A well designed public realm can promote social interactions, physical activity and recreation opportunities, support vibrant community spaces, encourage community pride, provide a sense of belonging and deliver mental health benefits [2].

Through an interconnected system of landscape, water and ecological links, design of the public realm can improve biodiversity and water quality, manage urban heat and protect environmental and cultural heritage.

Public realm improvements support economic development, particularly local businesses that activate places, such as café's, restaurants and retail shops, boosting the visitor economy, benefiting locals and creating jobs.
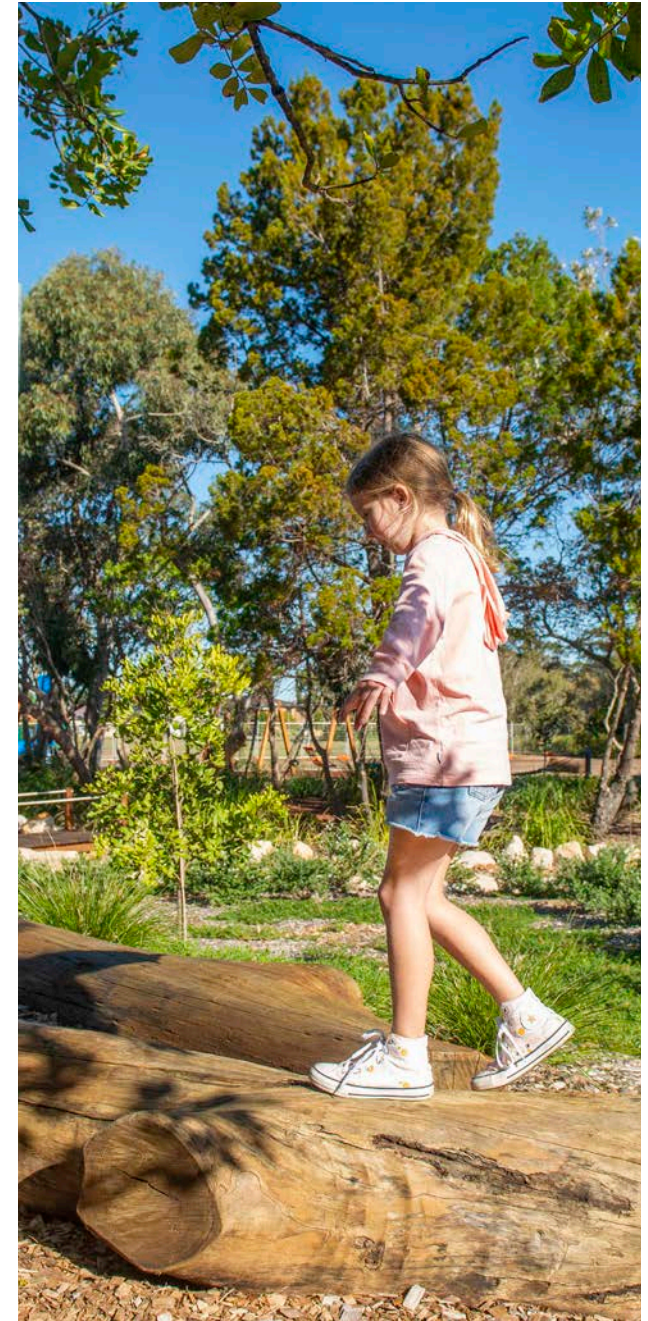
1   *Better Placed, NSW Government Architect*

2   *Healthy Active by Design, The Heart Foundation*

OUR LOCATION

The Ballina Shire is located in the Northern Rivers region of NSW, the traditional country of the Bundjalung people.

Our main town and commercial centre is Ballina, which is supported by smaller towns and villages including Alstonville, Lennox Head, Wardell and Wollongbar. There are also a number of smaller villages and localities in the rural hinterland.

49,943
population in 2025 forecast to increase to 62,308 in 2046

700
hectares of open space

492 km²
land area

179 km
of footpaths

818 km
of streets

To Brisbane

NEWRYBAR

To Byron Bay

KNOCKROW

LENNOX HEAD

TINTENBAR

TEVEN

SKENNARS HEAD

CUMBALUM

To Lismore

WOLLONGBAR

EAST BALLINA

ALSTONVILLE

BALLINA

WEST BALLINA

BRUXNER HIGHWAY

SOUTH BALLINA

PACIFIC HIGHWAY

EMPIRE VALE

WARDELL

To Grafton & Sydney

0   5
kilometres

POLICY CONTEXT

The Place and Public Realm Framework is not a standalone document. It works with other strategic and statutory documents that guide planning, design and works within the Ballina Shire.

State and Regional Strategies and Priorities

Community Strategic Plan
10+ year focus

Local Strategic Planning Statement

Destination Management Plan

Place and Public Realm Framework

Lennox Head Strategic Plan

other Council plans

Delivery Program
4 year focus

Operational Plan
1 year focus

Quarterly Reporting

Annual Report
1 year focus

State of the Ballina Shire Report
4 year focus

Community Engagement Strategy

ongoing monitoring and review

PHASES OF WORK

PHASE 1

The Place and Public Realm Framework supports the coordination of projects and processes that deliver more comfortable, vibrant and sustainable public spaces in the Ballina Shire.

This Framework provides a clear vision of what Council wants to achieve in the public realm.

The next phases reinforce delivery and outcomes are summarised below.

This diagram shows the strategic work necessary to deliver the vision of the Place and Public Realm Framework.
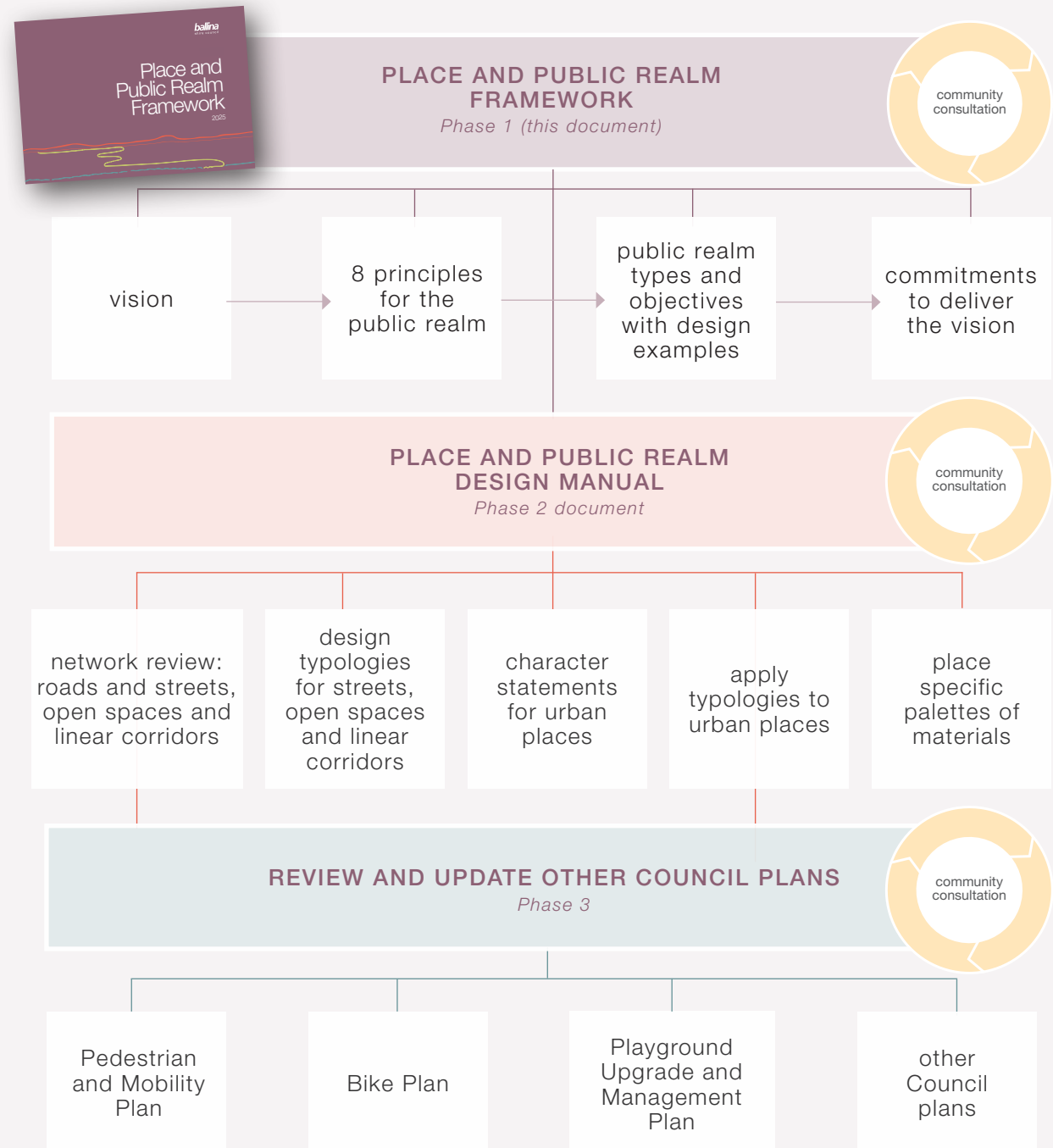
PHASE 2

Prepare a Place and Public Realm Design Manual that will include:

- Network review to confirm sub-types for streets, open spaces and linear corridors

- Design typologies for each sub-type, for example local park

- Apply typologies to urban places

- Establish place specific palettes of planting, finishes and furniture for public realm elements.

PHASE 3

Update Council's strategic documents relating to pedestrian and cycling access and design in open spaces such as the Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP), the Bike Plan, and the Playground Upgrade and Management Plan (PUMP) to reflect the priorities, typologies and design palettes determined in Phases 1 and 2.

8

PLACE AND PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK
Phase 1 (this document)

community consultation

| vision | 8 principles for the public realm | public realm types and objectives with design examples | commitments to deliver the vision |

PLACE AND PUBLIC REALM DESIGN MANUAL
Phase 2 document

community consultation

| network review: roads and streets, open spaces and linear corridors | design typologies for streets, open spaces and linear corridors | character statements for urban places | apply typologies to urban places | place specific palettes of materials |

REVIEW AND UPDATE OTHER COUNCIL PLANS
Phase 3

community consultation

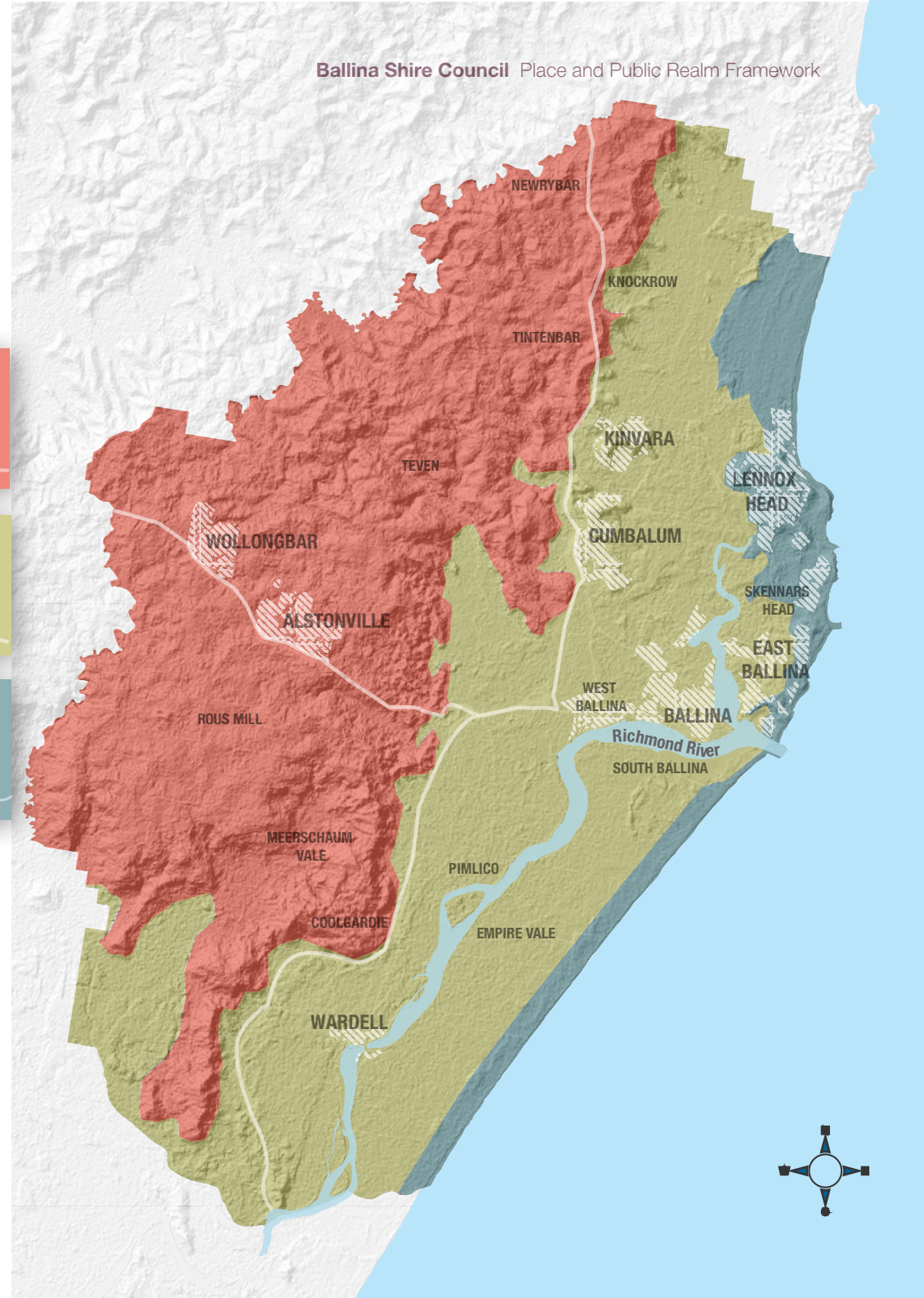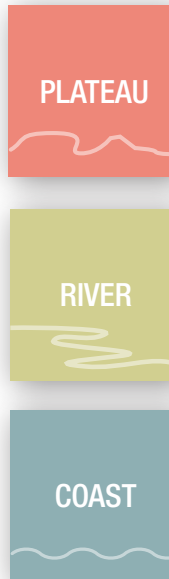| Pedestrian and Mobility Plan | Bike Plan | Playground Upgrade and Management Plan | other Council plans |

geographic character of Ballina Shire

The geographical structure of river floodplains, the plateau hinterland and wild coastline shape the character of the Ballina Shire today.

The Place and Public Realm Framework and associated Design Manual will enhance the local character of each of these areas, and differentiate them from each other.

Since European settlement from the 1840s, lands and waters in the Ballina Shire have endured broad scale changes. There are however, enduring geographical features and characteristics that have guided development of the area and will continue to influence future development.

PLATEAU

RIVER

COAST

NEWRYBAR

KNOCKROW

TINTENBAR

KINVARA

LENNOX HEAD

TEVEN

CUMBALUM

WOLLONGBAR

SKENNARS HEAD

ALSTONVILLE

EAST BALLINA

WEST BALLINA

BALLINA

ROUS MILL

Richmond River

SOUTH BALLINA

MEERSCHAUM VALE

PIMLICO

COOLGARDIE

EMPIRE VALE

WARDELL

PLATEAU

Earliest European settlement in the Shire was driven by cedar cutter camps from the 1840s. These were established on the Alstonville plateau red basalt soils which sustained the Big Scrub.

The land of the red soils, now mostly cleared of its original vegetation, supported dairying on the plateau. Large areas of the plateau remain as State Significant Farmland although dairying has mostly given way to beef cattle and horticultural enterprises.

Remnants of the Big Scrub exist today giving a sense of the land before settlement.

The red soils of the plateau support a leafy local character in Alstonville, Wollongbar and rural villages and hamlets.

Elevated, the plateau features as an escarpment in the landscape, visible from the river and coastal plains.

RIVER

The alluvial soils of the Richmond River and North Creek provided places for landing, areas for settlement and cropping. From the 1840s Ballina emerged as a central settlement supported by maritime activity.

From a place of spiritual connection and belonging for Bundjalung people; to primary transport routes for colonists; to treasured natural recreational playgrounds and fragile aquatic ecosystems; the Richmond River and North Creek characterise Ballina, West Ballina and Wardell.

Kinvara and Cumbalum, while elevated, have important connections to their wetland surroundings.

The river and floodplain are characterised by adaptability to sporadic inundation.

COAST

Coastal areas such as Lennox Head began to develop as holiday destinations in the early 20th century. After World War II more housing was established in the Lennox village. To this day the coastal strip attracts recreation visitors.

Strong demand for coastal housing has brought planned estates to fruition supported by new infrastructure.

Sandy soils and coastal breezes of the coastal strip characterise parts of East Ballina, Skennars Head and Lennox Head.

Sensitive coastal ecological communities are under pressure from high visitation. The coastal strip is vulnerable to coastal erosion, shaped by the ocean currents off the east coast.

key considerations

BUDGETS FOR PROJECTS, UPGRADES AND MAINTENANCE

Ballina Shire Council, as a regional Council, manages much larger areas of public land with a smaller rate base than metropolitan councils. Budgets for public realm projects, upgrades and maintenance are tight.

While budget constraints may be a reason not to embellish public lands, constrained budgets are a compelling reason to ensure public realm precincts are designed holistically and to include the important principles of this framework at design phase. Including good design upfront can reduce costs in the long term.

CLIMATE CHANGE

As a result of our changing climate, low-lying areas located on the Richmond River floodplain may experience more frequent inundation, associated with sea level rise, storm and flood events.

Bushfire risks on the plateau are expected to increase as the North Coast region is projected to continue to warm by 0.7°C in the near future (2020-2039) and about 2°C in the far future (2060-2079) compared to recent years (1990-2009). The number of high temperature days is projected to increase.[1]

Designing our towns and villages to be comfortable for people far into the future means strategically cooling and greening streets and selecting species resilient to the environmental risks in each locality.

LOW DENSITY URBAN STRUCTURE/CAR DOMINANT CULTURE

The Ballina Shire development pattern is generally one of low density. Low density urban structure is one of car dominance, as housing and destinations are spread over large areas.

Car dominance sets up priorities that become self-fulfilling. To provide better pedestrian and active travel environments, the balance between priority of vehicles and pedestrians requires adjusting.

VIBRANCY

Vibrancy in the public realm means the number of people out and about.

Low density housing and car dominance presents some challenges for vibrancy. Getting people out of their homes into urban places requires design for comfort, sense of place and community gatherings. This supports local economic development, safety, social cohesion and wellbeing.

Access to natural waterbodies for recreation is a major attractor of vibrancy in the public realm in the Ballina Shire. From our forested waterfalls, spectacular tidal rivers and world class surf beaches, design is to facilitate access and maintain a natural aesthetic to allow people of all ages to enjoy the Shire's natural beauty.

PLACE PLANS

Ballina Shire Council has a long running program of Place Plans. Community aspirations from place plans have informed this Place and Public Realm Framework.

Local character, community values and aspirations are documented in Council's Place Plans. They continue to guide strategic actions within each village or town.

For smaller localities, strategic directions are outlined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement.

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1   *North Coast Climate Change Snapshot 2014*

principles
for the public realm

Each place, with it's own distinct character, is to be fostered as part of a connected, prosperous, and healthy Shire.

As a regional area, Ballina Shire balances urban aspirations with a distinctly biodiverse and rural context with intact evidence of continued Aboriginal culture within the Bundjalung nation. The balance of these values in the design of the public realm will strengthen sense of place and reinforce the attractiveness of the Shire.

The Place and Public Realm principles apply to all design, construction and management processes and procedures undertaken within the public realm by Ballina Shire Council and where private developments intersects with public land.

1 The public realm is **comfortable, safe** and **attractive**.

2 The public realm articulates a **cohesive identity** and **sense of place**.

3 The public realm is **legible, inclusive** and **family friendly**.

4 The public realm encourages **community participation**.

5 The public realm is **appropriate, durable** and **adaptable**.

6 The public realm is **connected** and **integrated**.

7 The public realm achieves **environmental sustainability** and **resilience**.

8 The public realm supports community **vibrancy** and **wellbeing**.

1 the public realm is **comfortable, safe** and **attractive**

Design enhances the human experience of the place. The public realm is inviting, comfortable, feels safe, and is visually attractive. Greener, cooler streets and greenways, and diverse open spaces contribute to places enjoyed by people of all ages, cultures, and abilities, and are used during different times of the day and year.
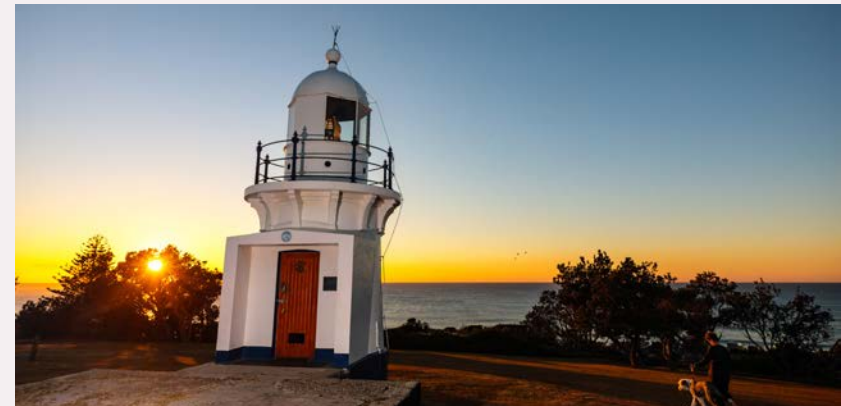
2 the public realm articulates a **cohesive identity** and **sense of place**

Land in the public realm in the Ballina Shire encompasses the river floodplains, the hinterland plateau and the coastline. Highlighting endemic nature, surrounding local features and landmarks, culture and stories provides a cohesive identity to articulate a strong sense of place for each of our towns and villages.

3 the public realm is **legible, inclusive** and **family friendly**

The public realm is for everyone, catering for different ages and capabilities. Generally, what is good for the very young is also good for the very old and everyone else in between. Places in the public realm are easy to find, access, use and navigate through and a sense of fun is present in design.

4 the public realm encourages **community participation**

People are the magic ingredient that make the public realm come to life. Investment in the public realm is realised when the community uses it. The community are co-creators in the public realm; design should make the most of this.
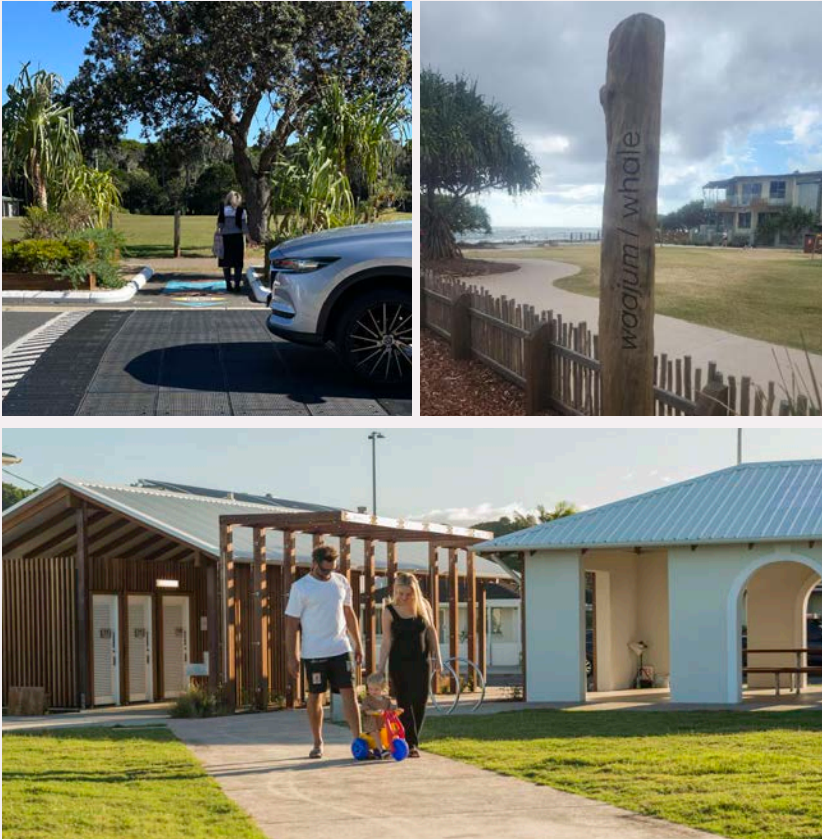
5 the public realm is **appropriate, durable** and **adaptable**

Design in the public realm is appropriate for the place in which it sits and suits the local natural environment. Public realm elements look good and perform well over time. Design considers multiple uses of the space allowing for adaptability to changing community and environmental dynamics. Temporary solutions can be tested before designs are finalised.

6 the public realm is **connected** and **integrated**

The public realm is part of a well planned network of spaces, services, and facilities. Our towns and villages are well connected and accommodate mixed modes of transport with an increasing priority on pedestrians, cycling and micromobility.

7 the public realm achieves **environmental sustainability** and **resilience**

Design and management of the public realm values and improves the natural environment. Decision making puts environmental sustainability first. Design addresses the future needs of the public realm to achieve longevity and improved water quality, biodiversity, waste management and low carbon footprint outcomes.

8 the public realm supports community **vibrancy** and **wellbeing**

The public realm supports dynamic community life, allowing for collaboration and involvement of local communities and businesses to activate and celebrate places within our towns and villages, sustaining vibrancy and boosting community wellbeing.

public realm *types*

ROADS AND STREETS

Roads and streets make up the greatest area of public land within the public realm in the Ballina Shire. The design of roads and streets has a significant impact on the quality of the places around them and determines whether places are more easily accessed by car, bikes, e-bikes, on foot or micromobility devices such as a mobility scooter or skateboard.

Everyone uses roads and streets; they are public places. They connect people to destinations and attractors and therefore determine how a place is experienced.

Roads and streets can do more than simply accommodate vehicles at the highest possible speed. Especially in more densely populated, urban places where people walking, cycling and staying is good for local businesses, crime prevention and a sense of social cohesion and vibrancy.

Roads and streets are an integral part of our 'blue and green grid' connecting landscape, and the movement of water and species. Road and street design has a role in enhancing biodiversity, storing carbon and water management.

Roads and streets are not the same. Streets facilitate local access as well as being comfortable places for the

community to spend time, typically with speeds under 60km/h. Roads are avenues that enable people to save time and to move goods. Typically roads have higher speeds, over 60km/h.

The name of a street does not always reflect its function; its place in the network and speed are a better indication of whether it is a road or street. This Place and Public Realm Framework is primarily concerned with streets with a speed of 60km/h or less.

Local jurisdictions across the world are exploring ways to deliver more value to the community through better design of roads and streets. Transport for NSW is embracing this change, recently releasing the Design of Roads and Streets Manual (DoRaS). The DoRaS includes a methodology to identify different types of streets in the network. Each street (sub) type is then designed according to it's role for all road users in balance with it's place values.

This methodology will be used to review the network and develop design typologies within the Place and Public Realm Design Manual.
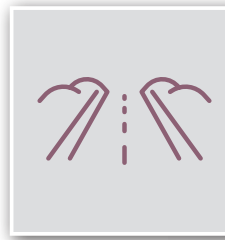
OBJECTIVES
ROADS AND STREETS

A Improve pedestrian and cyclist amenity, comfort and safety within and between towns and villages.

B Prioritise pedestrian and cycling connections on selected routes accessing destinations.

C Design streets in key civic or open space precincts so they can be easily adapted and closed for events and activities.

D Reinforce local character and the endemic environment in the design and management of streets.

E Retrofit and design to constrain physical speeds on selected streets.

F Protect natural areas and waterbodies from the impacts of roads and streets.

G Utilise road reserves to support connectivity of flora and fauna in the Shire.

H Incorporate deep planting zones into streets and corridors.

The following design examples show specific design solutions that could be applied to achieve these objectives. Each design solution is linked to the objectives it achieves by the letters below it.

| Planted median strip reinforces arrival avenue and softens and cools the area	Shade trees cool the street and path and there are places to rest in the shade	Street trees offset from overhead powerlines provide shade, visual amenity and ecological value	Raised threshold pedestrian crossings make it easy for everyone to cross the road	Feature tree to cool the area and create a landmark	Pedestrian refuges and patterned paving slow vehicle speeds and provide a safe, visible crossing point	Understory planting improves biodiversity and softens the ground plane	Extra wide continuous shared path accommodates bikes and pedestrians comfortably
A E G	A D G	A D E G H	A B E	D G	A D E	D G	A B

objectives delivered
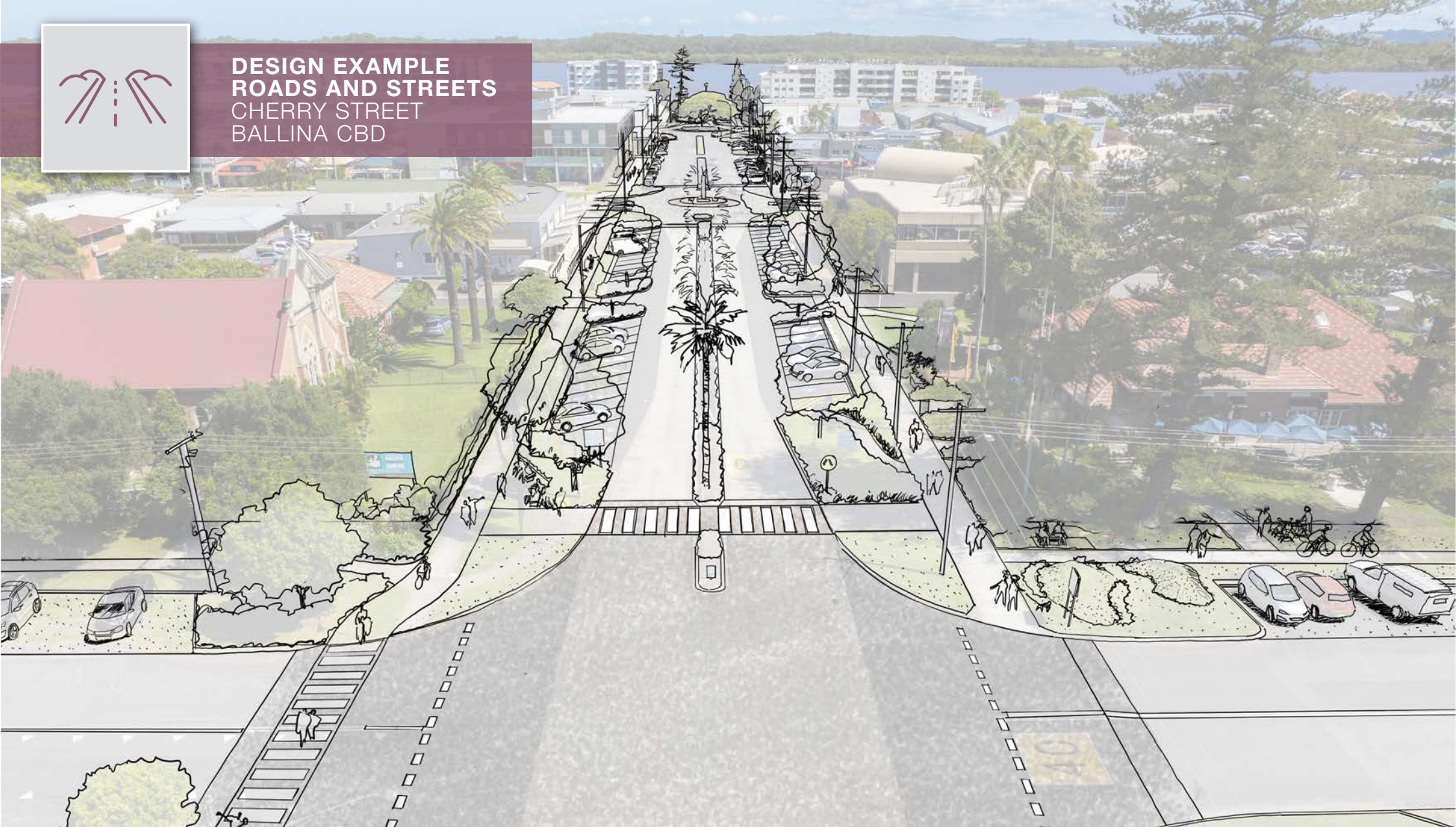
Extra wide continuous shared path accommodates bikes and pedestrians comfortably

A B

Raised threshold pedestrian crossings make it easy for everyone to cross the road

A B E

Places to rest in the shade

A D G

Public art by local artists

D

Street trees offset from overhead powerlines provide shade, visual amenity and ecological value

A D E G H

Visual connection to water is maintained

D

Planted central median strip reinforces sense of arrival and softens and cools the area

D E G

Mounds in the verge add interest and provide informal places to sit or meet

D

Frequent and convenient places to park your bike, close to destinations

A B

Raised intersection treatment signals a slow speed environment and entry to CBD

C E

objectives delivered

OPEN SPACES

The Ballina Shire has an extensive network of highly valued open spaces providing opportunities for formal and informal, active and passive recreation. There is more than 700 hectares of public open space across the Ballina Shire, including 389 hectares of parks.

Ballina Shire's open space network includes recreation parks, sports parks and natural areas including bushland conservation areas, beaches and waterways. All open spaces deliver multiple functions and benefits for the community including providing access-ways for people and other species. They are green 'lungs' cooling the urban environment, areas for filtering water within the catchment and places for social interaction and recreation.

The demographics of Ballina Shire influence the nature of demand for open space. The Shire has an ageing population with a preference towards passive recreation options within open space such as walking, cycling and social use. Additionally, families require sport and active recreation options suitable for both younger and older children to meet the demand of the growing population into the future.

In addition to the provision of sport and recreation facilities, the Shire's open spaces support a range of natural areas, including some of high environmental conservation significance. The Shire's coastal locations, entrance to the Richmond River and its estuarine tributaries are highly valued open space areas for their scenic beauty and provision of lifestyle recreation opportunities. 'Big Scrub' rainforest remnants in the hinterland provide destinations drawing in locals and visitors alike.

Open spaces within each town or village are important places for community events and interaction. Design supports their function as gathering spaces. Improving cycling and pedestrian access to these spaces and infrastructure to support their use is a priority.

The intention is to achieve spaces that 'support increased dwell time', within a well-connected variety of existing and future open spaces, fulfilling multiple objectives including active recreation, social interaction and environmental biodiversity.

OBJECTIVES
OPEN SPACES

A Fulfill multiple functions within the open space network including active and passive recreation, social interaction, water management and biodiversity.

B Function as refuges of cool natural shade during summer and provide places to access warm sun in winter through planting and seating arrangements.

C Feature adaptable, flexible infrastructure that can accommodate a variety of community gatherings and events, where appropriate.

D Improve legibility and access to open spaces for all visitors regardless of how people arrive.

E Feature local stories, cultural elements, geography and plants, contributing to a cohesive local identity and sense of place.

F Well serviced with facilities to support people to stay and use public space.

The following design examples show specific design solutions that could be applied to achieve these objectives. Each design solution is linked to the objectives it achieves by the letters below it.

Natural areas are restored and access is managed

A B D F

Raised threshold pedestrian crossing makes it easy to cross the road and links to park tracks that welcome people into the open space

A B D

Wayfinding and signage tell local stories and help people find local treasures

A D E

Event services infrastructure (power and water) are built into open spaces and streets adjoining or intersecting open spaces to support activation and events

C C

Formalised beach access is welcoming and protects natural areas

C A D F

Formalised carparking protects trees and creates shaded grassed areas for public use

D A B F

Bike parking provided at key nodes and access locations

A D F D

Places to rest along the shared path

A D F D

objectives delivered

LINEAR CORRIDORS / GREENWAYS

Linear corridors provide exceptional opportunities for off road pedestrian and cycling connections, multi-functional open spaces and opportunities for continuous habitat. There are linear corridors in most of the towns and villages in the Ballina Shire, and some of them already function as off-road movement connections.

Linear corridors can be made up of linear parks, crown land, access ways, paper roads, utility land, natural areas and edges, and drainage corridors. Connecting these different types of public land can deliver improved local access and amenity and improve the pedestrian and cycling network overall.

Like other public realm types, linear corridors deliver multiple outcomes. Pedestrian and cycling connections provide active and passive recreation opportunities. These can integrate with utility functions such as drainage, and can deliver ecosystem opportunities such as native vegetation regeneration. Not every section of a linear corridor will do everything, the context of the place will determine which sections of linear corridors do what.

Where linear corridors do intersect with the road network, priority for pedestrians and cyclists is indicated through design.

Corridors offer unique opportunities for local storytelling to link with wayfinding, providing people with environmental and place context as well as orientation.

OBJECTIVES
LINEAR CORRIDORS/ GREENWAYS

A Provide off road movement corridors connecting with open spaces, the broader road and street network and destinations.

B Continuous and highly valued, with services and embellishments complementary with active travel and recreation.

C Support biodiversity, habitat and catchment management within linear corridors.

D Linear corridors are designed as important destinations for recreation and active travel.

E Reinforce local character and sense of place.

F Space is available to the wider community for public purposes, providing green areas that break up the urban built environment.

The following design examples show specific design solutions that could be applied to achieve these objectives. Each design solution is linked to the objectives it achieves by the letters below it.
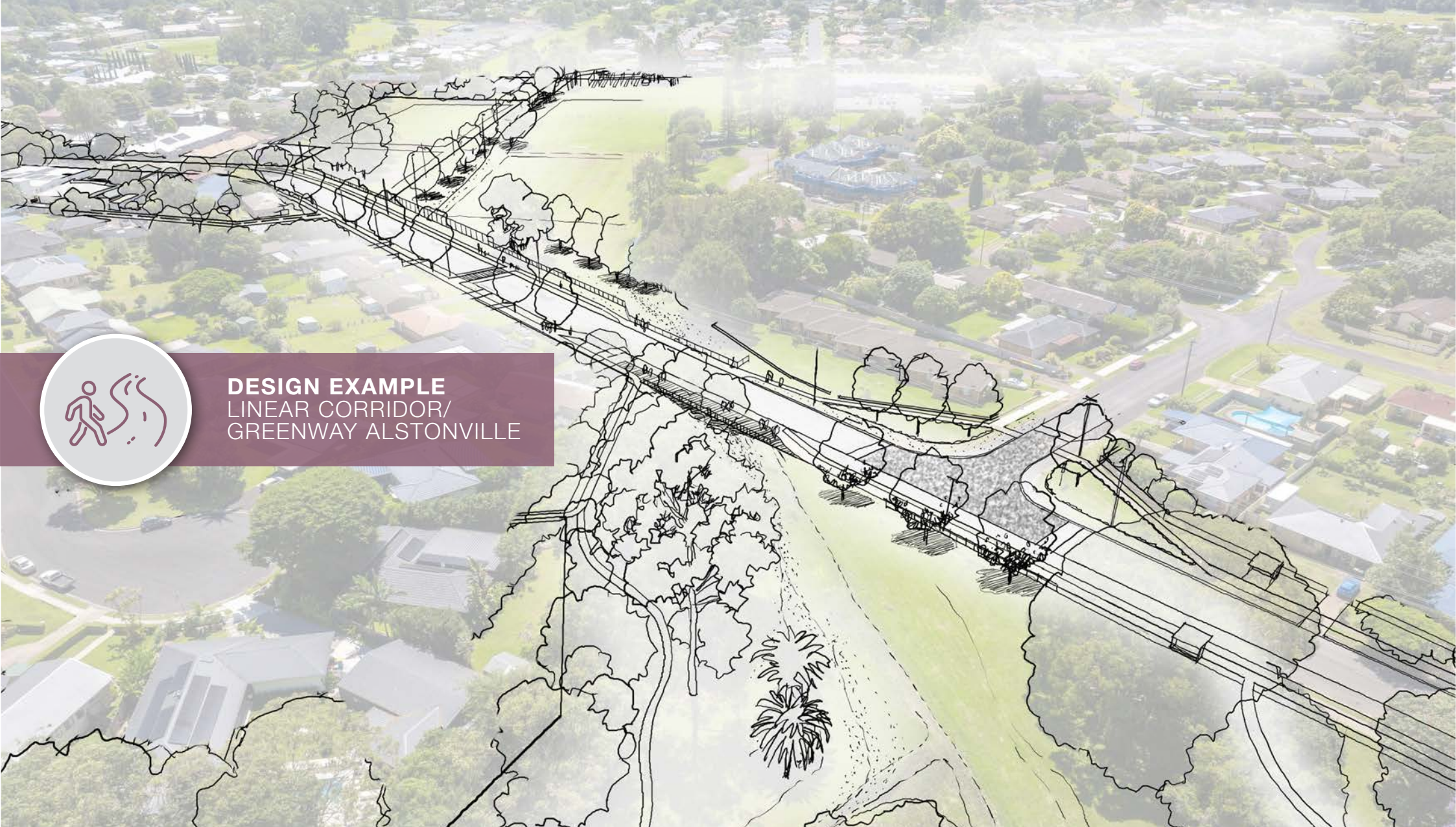
**DESIGN EXAMPLE
LINEAR CORRIDOR/
GREENWAY ALSTONVILLE**

Formalised off road, pedestrian and cycle paths connect to destinations make it easy to get around

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓓ Ⓕ

Open spaces are connected by raised threshold pedestrian crossings making it easy to cross the road

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓐ Ⓑ

Interpretive signage shows pedestrian and cycling connections and features local place stories

Ⓔ

Linear planting in corridors contribute to habitat connectivity

Ⓒ

Off street pathways provide safe movement corridors and short cuts through residential areas

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓕ

Textured road treatment signals slower speeds approaching the pedestrian crossing and the village centre

Ⓔ

Boardwalk over drainage corridor widens shared path, making it easy and pleasant to walk into the village

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓓ Ⓐ Ⓑ

objectives delivered

DESIGN EXAMPLE
TANAMERA DRIVE
ALSTONVILLE

There are ways to short cut through the street network on off-road pathways or corridors

A B D A

Shared path is continuous and unbroken by driveways

A B

Shaded pathway makes walking and cycling much more pleasant

A B D

Extra wide shared path accommodates bikes and pedestrians comfortably

A B

Pedestrian refuges and patterned paving slow vehicle speeds and provide a safe, easily visible crossing point

A B E

Naturalised drainage corridor supports biodiversity and water management

C

Reducing road carriageway with planting slows traffic coming into the area and improves amenity

D E G H

objectives delivered

implementing the vision

Achieving Council's vision for the public realm will take many years. The following commitments will advance us towards the vision.

VISION

	better connected	greener streets	strong sense of place	community vibrancy
Increase number of raised threshold pedestrian crossings or shared zones on key streets	●			
No net loss of Council owned land within a linear corridor	●			
Increase dedicated cycle lanes within and between towns and villages	●			
Increase proportion of 3m wide paths	●			
Increase bike and e-bike parking in towns and villages	●			
No net loss of trees in the public realm due to Council capital works		●		
Increase endemic plants and canopy cover in key streets		●		
Increase in areas dedicated to planting and pedestrian priority			●	
Increase in place specific design that reflects and reinforces local character and identity			●	
Increase in Council approved public events				●
Increase the dwell time of people in the public realm				●

BETTER CONNECTED

pathway to implementation

COMMITMENT	NEXT STEPS
Increase number of raised threshold pedestrian crossings or shared zones on key streets	Identify key pedestrian and cycle routes within and between urban places. Review forward capital works program to identify opportunities for installations.
No net loss of Council owned land within a linear corridor	Map linear corridors. Include trigger for review of Place and Public Realm vision and principles in property disposal process.
Increase dedicated cycle lanes within towns and villages	Identify key pedestrian and cycle routes within and between urban places. Develop street typologies for cycle routes. Review Bike Plan to incorporate priority cycle routes and typologies based on Place and Public Realm principles.
Increase proportion of 3m wide paths	Identify key pedestrian and cycle routes within and between urban places. Develop street typologies for pedestrian routes. Review Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP) to incorporate priority pedestrian routes and typologies based on Place and Public Realm principles.
Increase bike and e-bike parking in towns and villages	Identify bike and e-bike parking hubs relative to key destinations. Review forward capital works program to identify opportunities for installations.

GREENER STREETS

pathway to implementation

COMMITMENT	NEXT STEPS
No net loss of trees in the public realm due to Council capital works	Incorporate vegetation management plans into Project Management Framework. Establish a register of urban tree plantings.
Increase endemic plants and canopy cover in key streets	Identify locations for street trees and microforest plantings. Establish criteria for balancing urban tree planting with infrastructure in public realm.

STRONG SENSE OF PLACE

pathway to implementation

COMMITMENT	NEXT STEPS
Increase in areas dedicated to planting or pedestrian priority	Review forward capital works program to identify opportunities for implementation. Document basic design standards to pedestrian and greens space infrastructure.
Increase in place specific design that reflects and reinforces local character and identity	Establish furniture, lighting, surface and planting lists, pallets and design standards.

COMMUNITY VIBRANCY

pathway to implementation

COMMITMENT	NEXT STEPS
Increase in Council approved public events and outdoor dining	Identify key event precincts. Streamline operational approval processes for preferred event precincts, including traffic control and waste management.
Increase the dwell time of people in the public realm	Audit key open spaces for accessibility and infrastructure to support dwell time. Establish levels of infrastructure for key streets to encourage adaptable uses of the road reserve. Review levels of infrastructure and embellishment for open spaces.

glossary

Endemic vegetation refers to vegetation that is native to the Northern Rivers region.

Deep planting is an 'in-ground' area of a specific width and breadth that is dedicated to landscaping and can sustain large subtropical shade trees.

Dwell time is the amount of time people spend in a specific place.

Linear Corridor is a long, sometimes narrow area of public land that can be used for drainage, asset protection or recreation, or in some cases multiple uses. They are often adjacent to natural areas such as waterways, coastlines or bushland reserves.

Micro-forest plantings are densely planted, small scale ecosystems that mimic the natural processes of a larger forest. They are designed to have high biodiversity, and offer may benefits including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat and urban cooling.

Micro-mobility refers to small, lightweight, usually single-person vehicles for short-distance travel in urban environments.

Raised threshold pedestrian crossing is where the level of the pedestrian crossing is raised to be the same as the footpath, so there is no requirement for pedestrians to step down onto the road to cross.

Typologies categorise urban spaces according to the similarity of their essential characteristics and provide design objectives and example designs to achieve them.

Vibrancy In the context of urban design refers to the dynamic and engaging atmosphere of a place, characterised by the levels of human activity, diversity and accessibility.

Wayfinding encompasses all the ways in which people orient themselves in spaces and navigate from place to place.

BALLINA SHIRE
PLACE AND PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK
2025-2035

ballina shire council