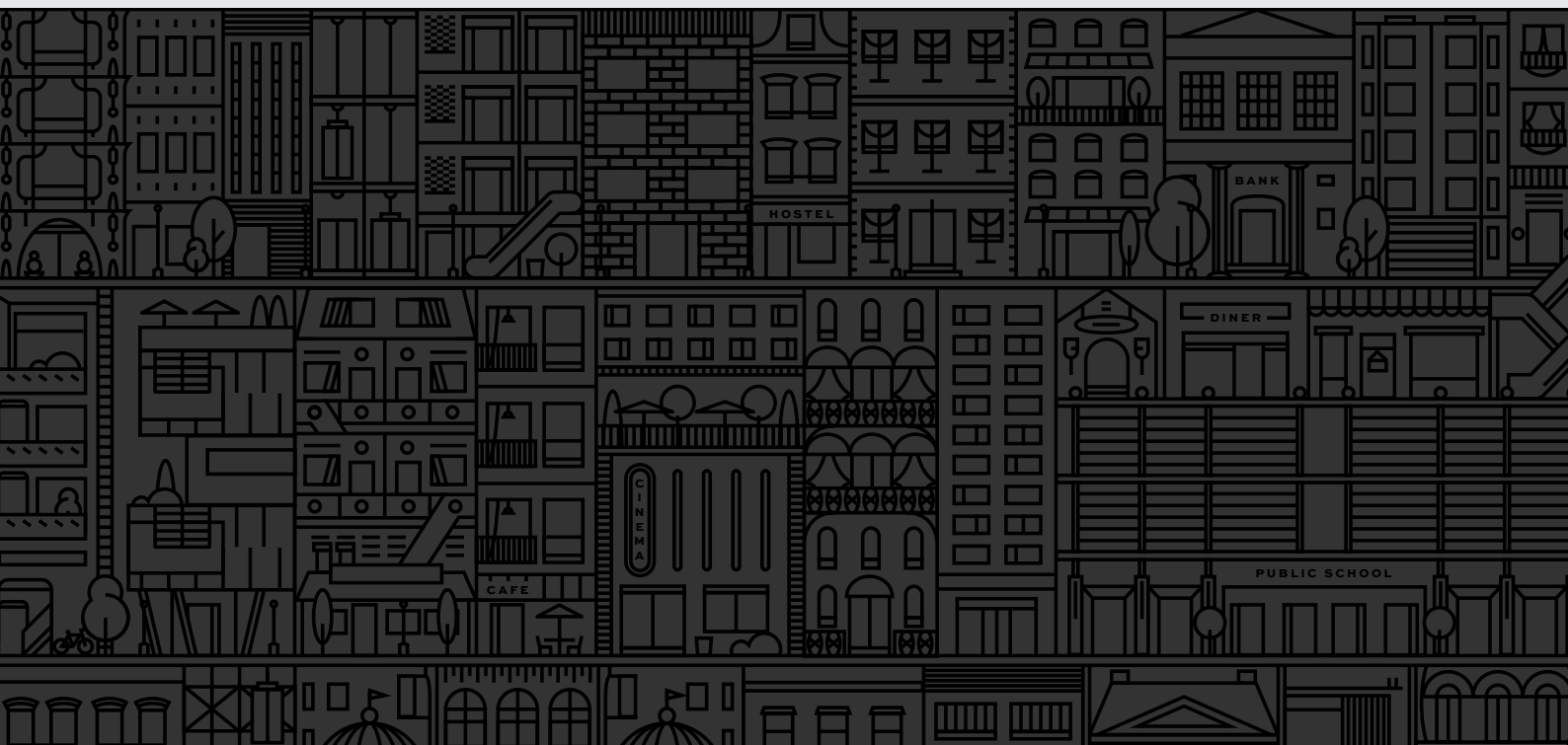


**TRADERS IN PURPLE**

KIAMA WEST

GROW THOUGHTFULLY



Hoyne  
Placebook<sup>®</sup>  
Report

## FOREWORD

# A natural partnership

For more than two decades Kiama has occupied a precious place in my family's hearts and in our lives. As long-time homeowners in the area, we are deeply aware of what makes this town so special, and we cherish the memories, experiences and friendships we have found here.

Many things distinguish Kiama, especially the landscape, where rolling green hills meet crashing blue waves. The township's well-established amenity and lively, engaged community simply add to its appeal. And, as Australia grows, it comes as no surprise to see this area experience extraordinary demand.

For some time now Traders In Purple has been fortunate to own a very special pocket of Kiama West. While we have treasured and enjoyed this land, we have also come to see that the township needs urgent access to it, to enjoy the shared use and shared benefits it can bring.

Together the people of Kiama and Traders In Purple have a remarkable, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Developed meticulously and purposefully, the land currently in our care could define the natural end to settlement in this location, adding a beautiful extension to our beloved seaside town.

Significant growth is underway in regional New South Wales and, inevitably, Kiama is part of that. The entire team at Traders In Purple wants to see the impacts of this growth produce positive results – beauty and benefits – for the community as it stands and for generations to come. Together we can avoid indiscriminate, inappropriate, and ultimately unhelpful development, opting instead for something that is community-based, landscape-led and highly tailored to this specific place and its people.

Traders In Purple is not your average “cookie-cutter” property group. One look at our slate of current and completed projects confirms our skills and understanding in terms of creating socially inclusive, environmentally sensitive, aesthetically brilliant places.

At Kiama West we want to provide solutions to current housing shortages and keep the locals local, by offering homes for key workers, social tenants, first home buyers, ageing residents, luxury lovers and more.

The approach we propose for Kiama West – a collection of bespoke buildings and spaces with an extensive, protected landscape – is born from much research, consultation, and forethought, combined with our own unique knowledge, respect and love for the area.

This is a highly personal undertaking for us, as a team and as individuals. With our roots firmly entrenched in this town, it is vital we produce a proud and meaningful legacy here. Our goal, which we will deliver from start to finish, is to see the people of Kiama live well and live sustainably. By paying close attention and fostering smart collaborations Kiama West can deliver not just new places to live but also new places to pursue education, recreation, and commerce. It can nurture local talent and support local industry, all the while protecting and celebrating the landscape and culture unique to Kiama.

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**GEORGE GEAGEA**

*Co-Director And Owner, Traders In Purple*

**ABOUT TRADERS IN PURPLE**

Traders In Purple has over 20 years of know-how in creating great places, setting a new standard in high-quality development with community-focused outcomes. Traders utilises dedicated teams of place makers, architects, planners, engineers and landscape specialists so that each one of its projects builds true neighbourhoods and has a positive effect on the landscape, local environment and the local community.

With expertise, knowledge, care and commitment, Traders In Purple is trusted in delivering high quality property and place outcomes, proudly delivering award-winning, beautiful, contemporary homes in iconic locations across Australia. The company's national portfolio spans a diverse spectrum of greenfield and urban renewal projects, including apartments, masterplan communities, mixed-use precincts, and hotels. Its team has a passion for improving the lives of people in the communities in which they work.

Traders In Purple is proud of its partnerships delivering projects with local and state government which include significant social benefit and affordable housing.

The Traders In Purple team is committed to building for purpose and place and has a reputation for the highest ethical standards. A property developer with a difference, Traders In Purple is proud to create excellence in community development on the NSW south coast, and right across Australia.

*Traders In Purple:  
Building for purpose  
and place.*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which this site is located, the Wadi Wadi people of the Dharawal nation, and pay our respect to elders past and present.

**CONNECTION TO COUNTRY**

As part of the ongoing placemaking and design process, Traders In Purple has committed to undertake engagement with the Illawarra Aboriginal Land Council and Indigenous representatives (including elders) to understand and respond to Country and create opportunities for empowerment for local First Nations people where possible.



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# Executive Summary

## *A natural extension of Kiama*

Kiama is one of Australia's regional jewels. Set in a picturesque hillside and coastal landscape, comprising rich 'built' heritage and social history, it's no wonder this remarkable place is in such high demand. But as population pressures soar nationally, so too does the strain on the township's existing population, leaving locals to face serious issues regarding housing affordability and inadequate community infrastructure.

With current population projections in sight, the NSW state government has requested that Council increase housing supply. This presents Kiama with a valuable moment to pause and consider the kind of growth it will welcome and encourage, and that will deliver the broadest benefits.

Kiama is a place with story and character, a place that has continually evolved, expanded and progressed in response to social, cultural, environmental and economic changes. Now, with access to the best contemporary thinking in terms of community building, sustainability, landscape and architecture design, inclusivity, urban design, placemaking and Connection with Country, Kiama can be the master of its own future.

Already integrated with Kiama Town Centre, this charming approximately 114-hectare wide pocket is strategically situated to promote safe east-west movement. By neatly bounding Spring Creek's riparian corridor it also provides the potential to be a natural edge to Kiama, protecting and preserving the broader hinterland. Approached correctly this will be the benchmark for development in the district, adding to the area's assets and appeal, improving life for current residents and driving opportunities for generations to come.

Carefully considered, planned and designed, this is a development created to respond to Country, celebrate and respect the surrounding landscape, increase local indoor and outdoor recreation options (including a

blue/green grid of walking trails), provide new opportunities and amenities for the entire community, and provide a mix of characterful housing types – including affordable solutions.

From community-led business spaces and initiatives to agricultural-focused education, not to mention support for the creative arts, this new neighbourhood can play a crucial role in Kiama's overall success as a self-sustaining regional hub, one that benefits from but does not rely upon Sydney.

Rather than opting for sub-standard, run-of-the-mill development, Kiama West can be an admired forerunner in Australian regional development, opting for an approach – and a project – based on enriching, inclusive and regenerative living with wide-ranging community benefits. Ultimately it can deliver necessary growth in a manner that serves as an exemplar for regional coastal development more broadly – a blueprint or model for comparable scale developments Australia-wide.

The project seeks to achieve alignment between the goals of government and community, and will achieve:

- Increased housing affordability within Kiama
- Adequate infrastructure for the community, with a focus on bespoke infrastructure solutions for Kiama, including a sustainable wastewater and sewer treatment facility
- Local employment and procurement opportunities for local contractors
- Preservation of local character with a focus on culture, visual amenity and rural landscape.

As a personally invested, community-minded team, Traders In Purple believe this Placebook demonstrates why this development could be the ideal addition to Kiama – its people and its story.

# Kiama – the place

# 01



## Kiama – connected and popular

*Often considered the gateway to the New South Wales south coast, Kiama is a beautiful, historic township with a growing population.*

The name Kiama is from its Wodi Wodi Indigenous name “Kiaram-a”, to which some sources give the meaning “where the sea makes a noise”, a reference to the famous Kiama Blowhole, a natural marvel that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors and day trippers. Kiama is also a place where the mountains touch the sea.

Indigenous Australians lived and moved through this area for thousands of years but, in terms of European settlement, Kiama’s harbour was visited in 1797 by the British explorer George Bass who, when he anchored offshore in December of that year, wrote of the “tremendous noise” this “subterraneous passage” produced.

An abundance of cedar drew the first Europeans to the area. People in Sydney required softwood for furnishings and, by 1815, timber was being shipped out from Kiama’s main beach, Black Beach. By the 1820s Kiama was supplying nine-tenths of the Sydney cedar market. From this status as a cedar port, Kiama evolved, and was proclaimed as a town in 1839 and a municipality in 1859 (enlarged by the inclusion of Jamberoo and Gerringong).

Kiama is in the Local Government Area (LGA) of ‘Kiama’. The LGA includes around 21 cities, towns, villages and localities including Kiama itself, plus Gerringong, Jamberoo, Gerroa, Kiama Blowhole, Bombo, Kiama Downs, Minnamurra, Kiama Heights, Werri Beach, Terragong Swamp Bridge, Omega, Tootawallin Gully, Jerrara, Rose Valley, Willow Vale, Curramore, Toolijooa, Foxground and Broughton.

It is close to crucial air links. The new Western Sydney Airport, Sydney International Airport and Sydney Domestic airport are all within a one and a half to two-hour drive. Closer to home, Wollongong Airport is only 13.7 kilometres away.

Nestled at the base of Illawarra’s hills, the town centre is edged by Kiama Train Station, Storm Bay and several popular beaches, coastal experiences and attractions. While Kiama serves an area of dairy and mixed farming, coal mining, and blue-metal (basalt) quarrying, its fine beaches and rocky coast also attract tourists. As a regional vacation gem, so close to Sydney, holidaymakers triple the population during summer months.

The latest estimated resident population in Kiama is 24,006 people. Between 2011 and 2021 this population increased by 3,200 people, reflecting a compound annual growth rate of increase of 1.4 per cent. Future growth forecasts suggest an additional 3,771 dwellings will be required by 2041 which the existing settlement will not be able to support.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Kiama was experiencing growth as people recognised and appreciated the town’s natural beauty and strategic connections to both eastern and western metropolitan Sydney. Located 122 kilometres from Sydney’s CBD, it is often considered the gateway to the New South Wales South Coast and has seen a large and continuing migration of people from Sydney and Western Sydney.



**1.1 CHARACTER – A CHERISHED SMALL TOWN**

The township of Kiama has a distinct local character and identity which has evolved through a combination of land, people, built environment, history, culture and tradition. This character influences how people engage with the place, how it looks and how it feels.

With its rich history, Kiama contains many historic buildings and references, both from Indigenous culture and from the last two hundred years of European settlement. The town itself contains well-preserved buildings from a range of eras including Georgian, Federation, Art Deco and Modernist. Examples include the 1886 terrace houses on Collins Street, built to house quarry workers, and the 1881 Pilot’s Cottage, once home to lighthouse pilots.

Kiama’s cherished “small town” character has experienced organic and incremental growth over the years. Its fine-grained street pattern is highly walkable, its low-rise form suggesting a place uninterrupted by large scale growth and development. An abundance of timber and brick materiality, as well as a dynamic colour range on facades and frontages, contributes to Kiama’s ‘old town’ character and nostalgic ambience.

Dramatic topography also plays a huge part in Kiama’s charm and, indeed, in its development and its image throughout time. Nestled between the base of the hills and edged by the coast, Kiama has developed a reputation for being a ‘surf town’ as much as it’s known as an agricultural, rural hinterland.

Made up of a peppering of rural residential lifestyle lots and agricultural activities, the Kiama hinterland is home to a

diverse community who value this setting for a range of reasons, including the appreciation of the landscape and natural environment. Its undulating topography and large tree canopies create a distinct appearance, reminiscent of the hills of Ireland or Wales. While agriculture was once an important industry, today the hinterland is adapting to play a new role in the regional economy.

**1.2 COMMUNITY – A CLOSE-KNIT VILLAGE FEEL**

In 2018 the Kiama Town Centre Economic Study identified that the average age of the population had increased by 28.3 per cent to 47 years (this is relatively high compared to metropolitan Sydney’s median age of 36 years old) and this trend was expected to continue. The Local Government Area (LGA) was forecast to grow by 5,100 to around 27,100 residents in 2036, an increase of 23 per cent.

At that time, it was noted that, to attract and retain younger working residents in this LGA, increased employment opportunities were crucial, as was the promotion of other lifestyle benefits of coastal town living.

The study noted higher than average household incomes, suggesting a greater proportion could be directed towards discretionary spending, increasing demand for retail space in the town centre.

The study also noted Kiama had an ageing population, with residents aged 60-plus forecast to make up 39 per cent by 2036, which will increase the demand for aged care and health related services.



**REGIONAL HOUSING TARGETS**

The Illawarra-Shoalhaven Region projected growth requires additional new housing supply to be maintained, with the Department of Planning and Environment projecting the requirement of around 58,000 dwellings in the region between 2016 and 2041.

The Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan projects that 2,850 additional houses are needed in Kiama between 2016 and 2036 to cater for demand. With population projections indicating an ageing population in Kiama, the town must increase its offering of smaller dwellings and apartments. Conversely, to encourage families to live in Kiama, traditional suburban homes must also be part of the local housing mix.

Findings of 2022 research conducted by GYDE Consulting for the Property Council of Australia reported mixed results on dwelling approvals in the Illawarra Shoalhaven as the region battles increased housing prices and tight buyer and rental markets.

With housing supply shortages in both the buyers and renters’ markets and housing completions not as high as hoped for, Michelle Guido, the Property Council’s Illawarra Regional Director, said, “We need all the support we can get from the NSW Government to support local councils to deliver the critical housing and infrastructure we urgently need.”

In November 2022 Regional Development Australia Illawarra spoke of the numerous major infrastructure projects slated for the region with construction and development to begin within the following 12 months. These projects need skilled workers to design, construct, operate and manage them and the workers need homes.

RDA Illawarra’s CEO, Debra Murphy, warned house prices may remain higher than many can afford, adding that the area lacked an “immediate housing solution for the skilled workers and trades needed to deliver planned infrastructure”. According to Ms Murphy, the Illawarra needs a gameplan that will deliver housing targets across multiple markets and at an affordable price.

# Local character snapshot



# Kiama - the stats



*47 is the average age of a Kiama Resident and 36 is Sydney's median age.*



*126% growth forecast for the LGA between 2021 and 2041.*



*5,000 workers from Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama LGAs commuted to Greater Sydney for work during 2020.*



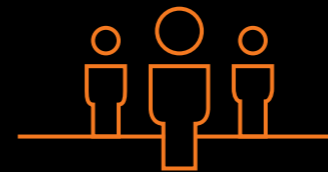
*\$23.9 billion was contributed to the State's economy by the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region in 2019.*



*3,771 additional dwellings needed in the LGA until 2041.*



*\$1,540,000 (July 2022) was the median house price in Kiama.*



*39% of Kiama residents will be 60-plus by 2036.*



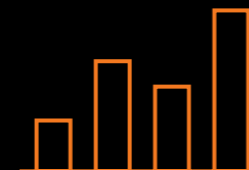
*43.9% was the jump in house prices recorded in the Kiama LGA in the year to Feb 2022.*



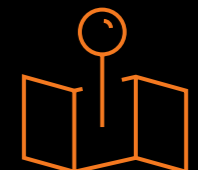
*62% of non-commuters would like to work from home 2 to 3 days per week.*



*85% of Illawarra commuters surveyed in 2021 said they'd like to work from home 3 to 5 days per week in the future.*



*2.4% was the regional rent surge in the year to August 2021 and 1.7% was where wage growth sat.*



*38% of the Illawarra region's workforce could work entirely remotely in the future, contributing \$4.1 million in spending across the region annually.*



**KIAMA COMMUNITY PRIORITIES**

Engagement to support the Kiama Town Centre Study has identified key community values, including:

**DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER****ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY****LOCAL BUSINESS / TOURISM****AGRICULTURE****VISUAL LANDSCAPE****FINANCIAL PROSPERITY****1.3 CULTURE – AN EXPRESSIVE COMMUNITY**

Research indicates that, until the global pandemic, employment growth in the creative industries grew at 2.9 per cent per annum nationwide, compared to the general rate of 1.6 per cent per annum. Illawarra, where Kiama is located, saw even faster growth, doubling the number of employees working in its creative industries to the point where it now has the second-largest number of creative industries employees of the NSW regional areas.

Home to dozens of cultural organisations and experiences, Kiama hosts a calendar of events, from live music to gallery exhibitions and festivals. Elevating several existing cultural buildings, plans exist to see the Town Centre become a “thriving, dynamic arts precinct, merging world class urban design with historic preservation and environmental sustainability in the heart of Kiama’s central business district”.

Underpinning Kiama’s creative industry is a deep heritage of indigenous art and culture – with cultural sites across the region, including ‘Queen Rosie’s’ house in the town centre, and a cultural site at Saddleback.

Kiama’s contemporary community culture is also reflected in the type of retailers and businesses found in its commercial neighbourhoods. Organisations such as ‘The Collective Beat’ have become synonymous with Kiama, representing a new business model that supports local creatives and entrepreneurs.

**1.4 ECONOMY – A PROSPEROUS REGIONAL JEWEL**

A region that includes the Port Kembla international trade gateway, the internationally respected University of Wollongong, plus significant centres of commerce and culture in Wollongong, Nowra and Shellharbour, the Illawarra Shoalhaven economy is crucial to the greater NSW economy.

Through sectors that include education, research and innovation, advanced manufacturing, health and aged care, defence, construction, retail, professional and financial services, the region contributed \$23.9 billion to the State’s economy in 2019 and boasts a skilled workforce, including around 23,000 residents who travel to Greater Sydney for work.

Now part of the Six Cities Strategy, and the subject of direct State Government focus, it will play an increasingly strategic role in the wider mega-region.

**“Council’s Vision:  
To be a strong vibrant  
economy outside of  
current holiday peaks  
with carefully managed  
growth and employment  
opportunities in tourism,  
agribusiness and other  
emerging industries and to  
capitalise on the region’s  
unique opportunities in  
digital connectivity.”**

**KIAMA REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
2018 – 2022**

## 1.5 KIAMA – A HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

### Wodi Wodi land

*From circa 80,000BC*

- Speakers of the Dharawal language, the Wodi Wodi are the First Nations custodians of the Illawarra. Dharawal speakers lived and live in the country from Botany Bay to the north, through Campbelltown and Moss Vale to the west, and south to the Shoalhaven River and Jervis Bay.
- The Minnamurra River was harvested for fish and shellfish over millennia, as evidenced by the many middens that line the riverbank, and nearby swamplands were home to a range of birds.
- There are also stone arrangements in the Jamberoo Valley and engravings in Foxground. The Bass Point campsites are possibly the oldest dated coastal campsites in NSW, with occupation going back 17,000 years.



### Agriculture, innovation and cooperation

*From 1830s*

- While the countryside around Kiama became synonymous with dairy farming, the 1830s to 1840s saw farmers experiment with various farming endeavours. Two local landowners, John Colley and James Robb (Riversdale) planted and harvested sugar cane but it never gained popularity with local farmers. The rainfall experienced in the region meant that rust (plant disease) was a continual problem. Wheat was also seen as an agricultural staple by 1859, and the municipality had several flour mills to process the crop.
- Dairy took the lead in the 1880s with visits and subsequent innovations from two prominent men in the field, leading to Kiama opening the first co-operative butter and cheese factory in Australia (1884), the Kiama Pioneer Butter Factory. The Kiama Pioneer Butter Factory was the first factory in Australia to make a shipment of butter to Great Britain. Only one month after the Kiama factory opened came the Jamberoo Dairy factory. Omega launched a butter factory in 1886 and Gerringong in 1888.
- Dairy farmers in Kiama were years ahead of the times with the invention of a butter box for transportation, use of refrigeration and pasteurisation and opening up the export market for Australian butter. By forming cooperatives, these farming visionaries also revolutionised their industry with Australia's first successful attempts at co-operative marketing.



### Exploration leads to European settlement

*From late 1700s*

- English-born surgeon and sailor George Bass is considered important in the early coastal survey of Australia. In 1797 he sheltered his whaleboat in Kiama harbour area and described the Blowhole as “a deep ragged hole and on one side of it the sea washed in through a subterraneous passage with a most tremendous noise”.
- The first European settlers were those men – often working for agents in Sydney - came to cut and ship out cedar. The countryside in the early 1820s was a sub-tropical jungle.
- In 1826 a site was reserved for the proposed townsite of Kiama but it was not until 1839 that the streets were surveyed and 1840 that the first allotments were sold.



### Dormitory suburb

*From 1930s*

- Eventually tourism has become Kiama's primary economic driver, especially during the very busy summer period, when the town's population can triple.
- Over time housing growth has seen Kiama take on the characteristics of a dormitory suburb, where people travel elsewhere to work. Since 2016 over 25% of residents in the Illawarra region commuted to locations outside the region (including Greater Sydney) for work purposes – the third highest proportion in the state.
- Kiama's coastal amenity, its proximity to Wollongong and Sydney, as well as improved transport links has increased the pressure on the local housing market. In 2017 the population of Kiama Municipality was 22,450. This represents a gradual increase of 2,641 people (13.33%) from the 2007 total of 19,809 people.



**Regionalism –  
the newest phase  
of Australian  
urbanism**

*Historically, there has been a measure of nostalgia around regional Australian living: small country towns populated by good honest folk, where scones are baked and sheep are dipped, where the local football club and the pub or RSL anchor communities. While these can be important and much-loved touchstones in rural living, such stereotypes undervalue the talent, diversity and innovation inherent to these places, and misrepresent the exciting and necessary future of regional development. Clinging to such outmoded thinking can reduce pathways for healthy, equitable, sustainable growth generally, and limit the opportunities for Australians already living or moving to the regions specifically.*

2.1

## The regions we need today

### REFRAMING THE REGIONAL MINDSET

Research by the Regional Institute of Australia (RIA) firmly points to the conclusion that Australia will be a stronger, more prosperous nation if our regions are stronger. To optimise growth in regions, the recommendations of the RIA's Building the Good Life: Foundations of Regional Housing include recognising that housing affordability is a major challenge for particular groups in rural and regional Australia. Produced to assist policymakers, industry and regional leaders, Building the Good Life stresses the need for a place-based approach when it comes to addressing the current pressures being felt in many regions.

For our regions to thrive we need to reframe our thoughts and preconceptions about them, looking at how they can contribute to overall growth and the economy, and acknowledging what they need to improve and sustain their own unique appeal.

These places are not historic markers, existing separately to the rest of the country. They are growing and productive centres, responding to climate change, attracting niche industry clusters and developing in response to Country. They are modern places, populated by modern people, dealing with the contemporary social, cultural and economic challenges humans face everywhere. It is short-sighted and imprudent to dismiss the role of regions and their dynamic centres when it comes to creating a big and successful Australia.

Back in 2018 the RIA took a deep dive into the status and recent development of Australia's "small city network". The conclusion was that this country has a "national network of small cities with the capacity for much stronger growth without the congestion and other costs that are locked into the development pathway for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth."

Nostalgic thinking about regional townships – "things were better in the good old days" – combined with an acceptance of lower standards – "living here automatically means fewer opportunities for health, education, employment and entertainment" – must be a thing of the past.

*"It is short-sighted and imprudent to dismiss the role of regions and their dynamic centres when it comes to creating a big and successful Australia."*

*Regional Institute of Australia*



**"Regional Australia is experiencing a moment in history like no other. In the decade to 2020, its population grew by an average of 76,500 people per annum. A life in the regions is now more attractive than ever before. However, as millions of Australians either choose to stay in the regions, or make the move, this surge in popularity brings with it growing pains that need to be addressed to accommodate the changing population trajectory in this country."**

**BUILDING THE GOOD LIFE**  
*Foundations of Regional Housing (2022)*

### GIVING THE REGIONS MORE

Best practice regional development will come from being able to look at resources and people already in place and recognising what unique assets exist and what can be done to create something more. This "more" element will become the things people want to invest capital in and the things people want to invest part of their lives in - by living there.

Done well, this crucial new phase of Australian urbanism can result in places offering everything we love in vibrant cities – great spaces, deeper connection to Country and heritage, all the services, plus entrepreneurial people creating new and exciting businesses and job opportunities – but will also offer affordable housing, reasonable commutes and good connectivity to larger centres and state capitals, not to mention the world more broadly.

According to Infrastructure Australia, key existing assets may include natural, economic or social assets which provide value, competitive advantage, and/or a point of difference for the region. Key regional growth industries are those which have a strong existing presence in the region and show potential for growth and/or to develop competitive advantage.

Together these regional strengths provide the basis for the development of regional competitive advantage. They are resources to be leveraged in the development of infrastructure responses.

## Economically, regionalism can deliver the following:



*Investment in new businesses and industries (including renewable energy, the creative sector, local manufacturing, and next generation agriculture and food enterprises)*



*Housing diversity and affordable housing to support workers*



*Good jobs and local opportunities for further education and hence, innovation*



*Retention of existing talent and generations and attraction of new talent*



*Investment in new businesses and industries (including renewable energy, the creative sector, local manufacturing, and next generation agriculture and food enterprises)*



*More small to medium businesses*



*Specialist concentrations of firms and skills (the emergence of niche sectors)*



*Globally competitive economies*



*Distinct tourism experiences*

Australia has a unique opportunity to catalyse and accelerate the growth of new industry across all sectors, transforming the country's energy, agriculture and food, healthcare and manufacturing sectors. Known as the fourth industrial revolution, industry has been described as the next wave of digital innovation creating a connected virtual world.

**“I predict a cultural shift of ‘e-change’ movement which could see the rise of new silicon suburbs or beaches in regional hubs as universal access to fast broadband drives a culture of entrepreneurialism and innovation outside our capital cities.”**

**BERNARD SALT**  
*Super connected lifestyle locations –  
The rise of the ‘e-change’ movement*

## 2.2 Accepting and harnessing socio-economic shifts

It goes without saying that the great diversity in Australia’s regional communities reflects unique geography, resources and history. For regions to prosper in the future, they need to identify what matters the most for them and act on these issues. They also need to acknowledge the most prevalent challenges or obstacles and act to mitigate these.

This country’s economic capability will be at its highest when we fully realise the potential of regional Australia. This necessitates increased investment in our regions.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Higher than expected population growth is affecting many of our regions, especially since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. With this increase, existing infrastructure needs to be evaluated to ensure that it’s going to remain viable and support the community’s development.

Things like housing, transport and residential infrastructure are key challenges and issues. Population growth must be matched with resources such as transport, wastewater solutions, access to schools, health services, mixed-use commercial spaces, retail hubs, cafes, and restaurants. Cities and regions that become lifestyle areas, offering a high quality of life all year-round, will be essential to the establishment of sustainable and thriving communities.

### HOUSING

Traditionally, housing costs in regional Australia were around half of those in our two largest cities. On average, housing in the regions is now 25 per cent more expensive than a year ago, and even more so in sought-after locations like Tasmania and the NSW South Coast.

More than ever, the regions need state and local governments to activate local housing markets through investment in housing stock and support for considered development. High rents and housing shortages can affect entire towns, making it difficult for some people to buy where they grew up, and forcing out essential workers. Every community needs critical workers who are not highly paid, like childcare workers, aged care workers, supermarket workers, hospitality workers.

Recent research on rental housing and homelessness from the University of NSW and Australian Council of Social Service has unveiled a rapid increase in rents from mid-2020, the fastest in over a decade. Those in the regions surged 12.4 per cent in the year to August 2021. By comparison, wage growth sat at 1.7 per cent.



## 2.3 A place-led approach to regional urbanism

The goal of place-led development (housing, community facilities, open spaces, services, programming, infrastructure) comes from a desire to meet local needs and, ideally, surpass expectations. It targets the specific circumstances of a place, takes into consideration the often-complex issues and opportunities in play, and has long-term benefits in mind. It should also complement the bigger picture of services and infrastructure. At its best, place-led development can support local people and organisations through partnerships and collaborations and lead to unique, organic and lasting positive outcomes for generations to come.

### CHARACTER

Understanding and respecting a region’s character or identity helps to encourage development with a unique voice or style, one that can be considered and applied (and adapted to suit changing needs and preferences) as time passes. When it comes to building and landscape architecture, this can produce wonderfully recognisable and distinct regional identities.

### BONDS

Forging connections between local communities and, on a larger scale, between neighbouring regions, has social, cultural

and economic implications and advantages. Connections can be interpreted as being both tangible (transport, infrastructure, wayfinding etc) and conceptual (social cohesion, meeting places, shared commercial interests etc). Building bonds within and between communities can produce meaningful outcomes. Towns can be connected through commercial partnerships (think product or industry-related trails such as winemaking, or landscape/adventure) or shared heritage themes, even though educational, training and employment links. Clearly defined and communicated connections can lead to new interest and fresh opportunities for communities.

### COLLABORATION

In 2015 a report titled Local Government Growing Regional Australia found a new and promising approach to regional economic development strategy was emerging, “drawing on collaborative advantage across public, private and community sectors.” The report suggested that this new mindset of collaboration involved a shift from hierarchical top-down processes to “place-based holistic” approaches that were evidence-based and supported by greater governmental co-operation.

Indeed, many regional communities are developing new ways of working together to create connections between places and people, exploring ideas and methods that foster positive change. Such collaboration is also useful when it comes to funding, strengthening arguments for projects that look beyond today’s needs and towards catalytic regional outcomes.

*Transformative regional initiatives with place-based holistic approaches share some common themes:*



A nuanced understanding of local culture and context (including traditional local design vernacular)



Physical and social connectivity



Collaborative networks across municipal borders



Respect for and integration of Indigenous heritage, landmarks and stories



Industry and knowledge clusters that complement those in surrounding towns or districts

## Strategic collaboration:

*How government is working to improve the regions.*



### Regional – Evocities

In New South Wales seven regional cities have joined together to form Evocities to “change perceptions of life in a regional city” and promote the cities’ “lower cost of living, strong career and business opportunities and enhanced lifestyle.” Launched in 2010 and sponsored by Qantas Link and the NSW state government, Evocities aims to encourage people to live, work and invest in Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga. Essentially a marketing campaign, this bottom-up initiative implemented locally joins geographically disconnected and diverse towns and cities, building a collective profile that can promote life beyond the metropolitan centres.



### Coastal – Regional Cities Victoria

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV), established in 2000, brings together the mayors and CEOs of the 10 major regional cities in Victoria, with the aim to “achieve real change in regional Victoria through policy development and active implementation of those policies.” Collectively, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga account for 10.8 percent of the population of Victoria, and the RCV focuses on developing infrastructure and increasing liveability by encouraging new industries and fostering workforce capacity through education.



### Pooled resources – North East Mountain Bike Project

The North East Mountain Bike Project, initiated by Northern Tasmania Development (NTD), has been a successful example of regional cooperation, creating a new tourism resource with the potential to make a significant contribution to the area’s economy. The project, now regarded as one of Australia’s leading mountain bike destinations, attracted \$3.4 million in federal and state government funding and \$1 million in cash and in-kind support from key stakeholders including Launceston City Council. To be eligible for this funding the project’s management model had to be altered significantly, a process which demonstrated the adaptability of the local and regional stakeholders and their ability to work together. The ultimate goal of the project is to develop world-class mountain biking experiences in northern Tasmania to attract local, national and international riders, while also providing community-based sport and recreation.



### Better development – The Mackay approach

Demonstrating its commitment to improving processes and working with the local community and development industry, Mackay Regional Council (MRC) has signed a Client Services Charter with the Mackay-Whitsunday Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) and implemented Development Reference Group forums. Reflecting a proactive and participatory approach to working with the development industry, the forums provide an opportunity for developers to work with council to resolve issues and find solutions to problems. A number of councils have instituted developer forums but the Mackay approach is distinctive in that the mayor and CEO attend these meetings, thereby ensuring a high level of accountability and demonstrating the degree of Council’s commitment to the process.

## 2.4

## Keeping pace with the e-change era

*Improvements in telecommuting are making the Australian dream of working from your coastal hometown easier than ever.*

Faster broadband is creating 'lifestyle towns' all over Australia. Those who may have once commuted to city centres from their residential locations can now maintain their jobs through telecommuting, a process well-known demographer Bernard Salt has described as an 'e-change'.

With regional-coastal Australia ideally positioned to support population growth and create more sustainable approaches to development, the ability to work remotely, either from your own home or a local business hub, is becoming mandatory.

Last year Mark Coster, CBRE's head of capital markets for the Pacific, told The New York Times, "Covid has fast-forwarded Australians' desire to be closer to the water and the result is that smaller but high-amenity towns are booming ... We're in the midst of a lifestyle shift movement, and we're going to see a lot more projects in these areas."

Kiama is a perfect example of an 'e-change zone' in NSW, matched in other states by places such as Victor Harbour, Kangaroo Island, St Helens, Busselton and Howard Spring.

Understanding what these evolving technological, sociological and employment trends mean for Kiama - and how they can and must be managed to provide opportunities for existing residents and ensure the town's continued prosperity - is crucial.

**As noted by the World Bank, "The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the critical importance of digital infrastructure, technologies, and services during times of crisis in enabling government, businesses, and society to continue to function. Beyond ensuring continuity and connectivity, digitalisation sets the foundation for a more resilient and inclusive economic transformation."**



### REMOTE WORKING AND THE ILLAWARRA

Traditionally, a challenge experienced by most regional areas has been a lack of high-skill job opportunities. Often this has led to the loss of younger people and entrepreneurial individuals to city centres. The ability to work remotely, however, is providing people with more flexibility now in where they live; many can work from anywhere.

2021 marked the first time in more than 40 years that population growth in the regions outstripped that of the capital cities. Regional NSW had the biggest inflow, adding 26,800 to the overall population.

A recent Infrastructure Australia report explained that an overhaul - involving all levels of government, communities and business - would be required to support the shifts that this e-change or remote working are creating.

With the onset of COVID-19, employment and working practices have been significantly disrupted. The Illawarra, with its large commuter workforce and proximity to Sydney, was always going to be impacted by the adoption of flexible and remote working practices. Given its high commuter workforce, previously relatively affordable housing, and natural amenity, the Illawarra region is an obvious magnet when it comes to this accelerated shift towards remote working. People who live here love it and would prefer to stay local and work as much as possible.

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics chief David Gruen, the shift to remote working will persist after the pandemic, despite efforts by employers to get workers back into the office. In March of this year he told The Australian Financial Review that the COVID-19 pandemic had sparked rapid growth in Australia's digital economy, evidenced by the widespread uptake of remote working and a shift toward shopping online.

Should hybrid working arrangements continue, Deloitte found this could result in an increase in the resident (and employed) population of the Illawarra region. Given the area's unique characteristics, it is just as attractive to employees seeking the local lifestyle and connectivity to Greater Sydney as it is to employers seeking to embrace regional working and gain access to a high-quality workforce.

The result is a new set of community expectations the town will need to meet. Existing residents in Kiama will expect the level of modern amenities and services required to support hybrid working (as will their employers). Businesses looking to establish or grow regional bases will expect Kiama to be equipped to support their operations and the needs of their employees. And, finally, new generations of Kiama residents - those deciding where to live long-term - along with people considering moving to the area, will have the same expectations.

In light of its research, Deloitte recommended businesses should engage with all levels of government, focussing on the following areas:

Investment in internet connectivity and reliability

Consideration of policies to better utilise community space

The development of office space through new builds and re-development of current space

Revisiting transport infrastructure optimisation with a more regionally distributed population

Planning policies to ensure the vitality of local and regional centres designed for an increase in people working regionally.



**In April 2021 Deloitte Access Economics released a report prepared for Business Illawarra to understand the shift towards remote working during COVID-19 and what that meant for employers. Deloitte discovered that approximately 38 per cent of the Illawarra workforce could work entirely remotely in the future. If 11,900 potential remote workers in the Illawarra worked remotely for an additional 1.3 days per week, that could contribute \$4.1 million in spending across the region annually.**

**THE DECENTRALISATION OF WORK  
IN THE ILLAWARRA, DELOITTE**

**COASTAL COLLABORATION CASE STUDY:  
THE G21 ALLIANCE**

In Victoria, the G21 Geelong Region Alliance is a collaboration between government, business and communities in Greater Geelong and the neighbouring municipalities of Queenscliff, Surf Coast, Colac Otway and Golden Plains.

From an alliance of more than 300 community leaders and specialists from the region, eight “pillar groups” were formed to address the region’s priorities, from the arts, culture and the environment to economics and transport.

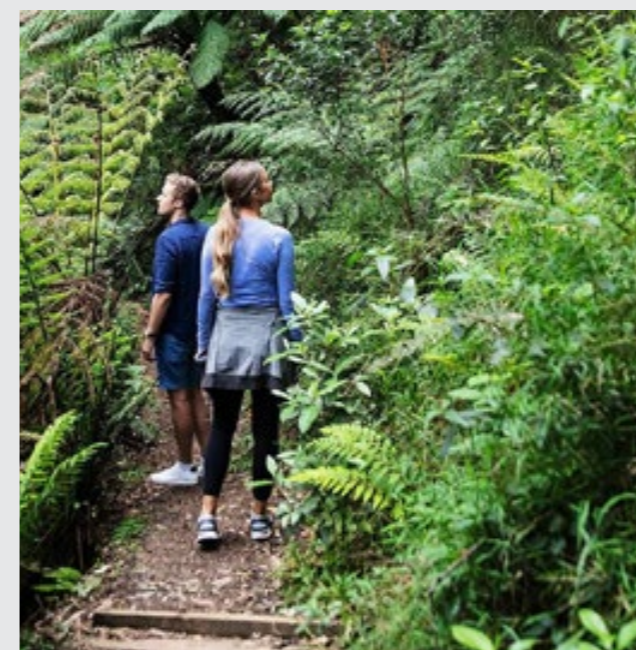
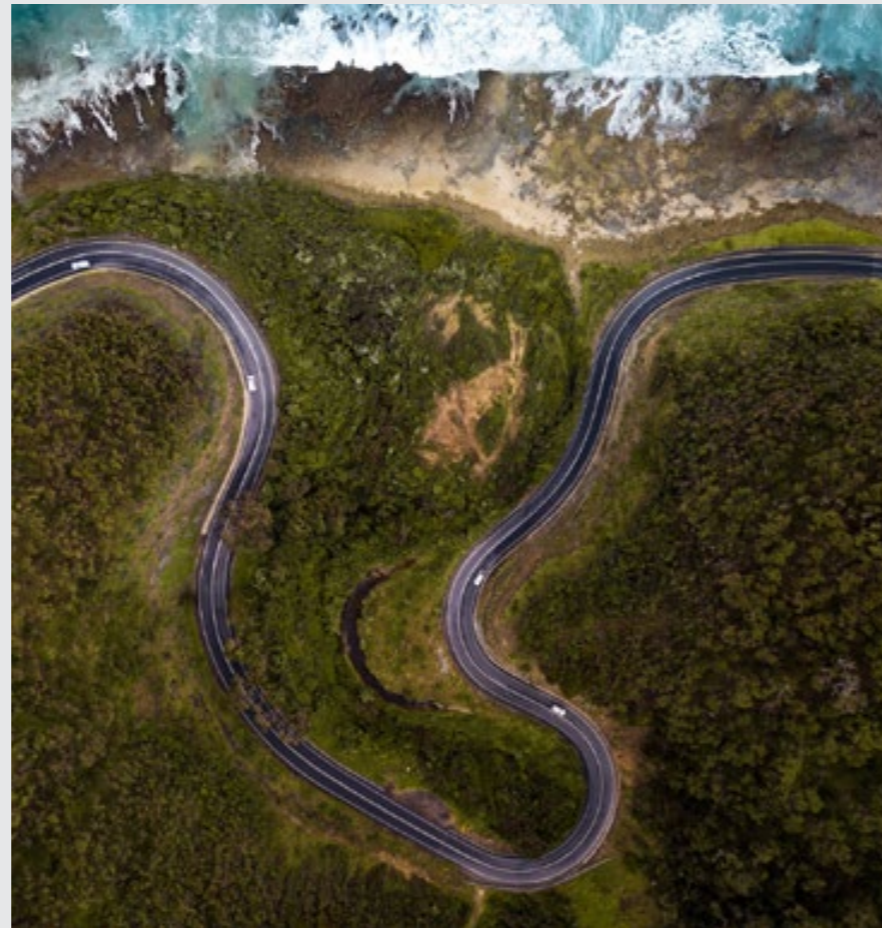
The G21 Alliance is the official Strategic Planning Committee for the region, facilitating engagement in the Geelong City Deal and negotiating for infrastructure projects across Geelong and the Great Ocean Road.

Since inception the G21 region has evolved, with a focus on identifying opportunities that draw on its unique strengths, including: a skilled and adaptable workforce, impressive education and training institutions, a network of respected cultural and creative institutions, innovative research and development linked to the tertiary education sector and industry, all within an environment recognised for its ‘liveability’.

An example of one accomplishment the G21 has achieved, with the help of its Alliance members over the past five years, is Stage One of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan which will see the Victorian Government invest \$9.8 million to improve bridges, look-outs and information technology along this highly visited stretch of the Great Ocean Road. This investment recognises the importance of the Shipwreck Coast for the state’s \$21 billion visitor economy. Stage One includes new world-class look-out structures at the Saddle and the Blowhole, a new pedestrian bridge over Port Campbell Creek in Port Campbell, and better telecommunications and Wi-Fi to enhance the experience for visitors.

*“The population of the G21 region, and Surf Coast in particular, has been increasing rapidly since 2016 ... This is why G21 is calling for a coordinated approach to make the most of the opportunity to build on the region’s famed liveability rather than detract from it.”*

**G21 CEO Guilia Baggio**





**The Regional Australia Institute identifies four groups of regional communities that capture both the diversity and the common challenges faced by regional Australians which they call the Foundations of Regional Australia.**



*Regional cities which are home to most regional Australians, have diverse economies and a wide range of services and can pursue city-style development without the congestion of our largest metropolitan areas.*



*Connected Lifestyle Areas which surround our major cities and are subject to significant population growth pressures but benefit from their connectivity to metropolitan areas.  
(Note: Kiama township pop, 8,000 and LGA 24,000.)*



*Industry and Service Hubs which are smaller than regional cities and more isolated than connected lifestyle areas but have populations over 15,000 and some economic diversity.*



*Heartland Regions which are the rural and remote areas of Australia. These areas are sparsely populated, and usually rely on one key industry for their economic opportunities.*

# 03

## Kiama – a pivotal moment



### Becoming a sustainable coastal township

*Promoting itself to the outside world today, Kiama prides itself on its “village vibe”, offering a mix of natural wonders, modern sophistication and the promise of escape. It boasts everything from spectacular ocean pools and cliffside running tracks to the annual New Year’s Eve Sky Show and agricultural show, not to mention various music and arts festivals (including the Kiama Jazz & Blues Festival), alongside world title surfing and bodyboarding competitions. No wonder more and more people have decided to call this place home.*

3.1

## Proactively responding to change

*Long considered a retirement living haven, the area is increasingly popular with families looking to embrace its coastal lifestyle.*

Having a number of good schools in the area, including the Illawarra Grammar School at Wollongong and Shellharbour Anglican at Dunmore, has been useful to this younger family cohort. Also increasing the area's appeal is the fact that Kiama is located at the southern end of the electric train line to Sydney's airport and CBD, providing good connectivity for those who need it. Given people's growing ability to telecommute, the 90-minute journey from Kiama to Sydney once or twice a week now seems less onerous.

The town has seen significant development in recent times, with a number of apartment developments and other housing projects either completed or in the pipeline.

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic increased interest in Kiama's already in-demand Kiama property market, with some buyers reportedly choosing it over the likes of Byron Bay.

CoreLogic's (February 2022) quarterly Regional Market Update showed Australia's 25 largest non-capital city regions continued to achieve unprecedented increases in value, with houses in the Kiama LGA recording the largest increase at 43.9 per cent, taking its median value to \$1,540,000 (as at July 2022).

Media reports have made much of this trend, stressing the appeal of the area in sentiments such as these, expressed in Domain.com.au in January of this year: "While sprinkles of a more cosmopolitan lifestyle are certainly present, Kiama retains the simplicity of yesteryear, revealing a close-knit community with no traffic lights in sight, tapping into people's primitive desire to return back to basics."

Unfortunately, such skyrocketing demand and resultant hefty price tags for homes, along with high level of short term rental accommodation, has had a distressing impact on the local community.



**“Land values have soared across the South Coast, with prices in the Kiama LGA rising by over 50 per cent.”**

**ILLAWARRA MERCURY JANUARY, 2022**

In August 2021 the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) reported that the pace of development was not keeping up with demand, leading to a critical shortage of greenfield housing extending throughout the region .

Six months later the UDIA reflected on the fact that the Kiama LGA was now experiencing the highest price growth of any suburb in all of NSW, describing this as an “alarming statistic for an area that would typically house essential workers, nurses, teachers, first responders as well as university students who just want an affordable home reasonably close to their place of work and study”.

By September 2021 the Illawarra Mercury ran with a headline saying “The Illawarra and Shoalhaven is at a crisis point, as the region faces a rapidly decreasing supply of serviced land for development.”

By February 2022 ABC Illawarra declared: “Home prices are rising faster in Kiama than anywhere else in Australia, fuelling a housing crisis where residents are forced to leave the area and in some cases are forced into homelessness.”

**NEW SECTORS = NEW INVESTMENTS**

With planned regional infrastructure investment, including an advanced manufacturing precinct in Port Kembla, an increasing number of professionals in the ‘knowledge economy’ is envisioned for Kiama. This factor has already been identified as relevant when it comes to planning for a new fine-grained town centre precinct, as has the fast growth the Illawarra region’s creative sector has experienced, bringing new creative industries and employees to Kiama and surrounds.

In recent history, the largest industries generating jobs in the region have been accommodation and food services, retail trade and health care, and social assistance. As Sydney continues to decentralise and investments are made into regional infrastructure, however, Kiama’s industry is expected to evolve, increasingly encompassing knowledge-focussed industries and first-class tourism facilities, plus businesses within the arts and cultural sectors - increasingly being ‘priced out’ of Metropolitan Sydney. Appropriate development of the Kiama West site can help ease the cost of housing in the LGA by virtue of delivering more supply.

**NEW GENERATIONS = NEW EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

Kiama’s growth in population has been driven by a few key factors, including the retirement of the ‘baby boomer generation’ seeking a sea-change, and the continuing ‘push’ factors from Sydney due to increasing house prices. The increase in demand for a regional town lifestyle has been further accelerated by the global pandemic and the opportunity to work from home. House values have soared in every capital city, and in regional and coastal towns too, as people who could work remotely moved on, leaving cities and lockdowns behind.

The Kiama LGA is forecast to grow by 5,100 to around 27,100 residents, an increase of 23 per cent. Increased employment opportunities and promotion of other lifestyle benefits of living in a coastal town has – particularly over the last few years – proven to attract younger working residents to Kiama. This indicates growing average household incomes, with a higher proportion that can be directed towards discretionary spending.

With characterful urban forms and a strong sense of community, it is important that regional towns like Kiama respond to demographic change with a considered approach that optimises precinct amalgamations to secure best practice open space and connectivity outcomes.

*Skyrocketing demand and resultant hefty price tags for homes has had a distressing impact on the local community.*



Advanced manufacturing

“As of 30 June 2022, the median property price for a house in Kiama was \$1,575,000.”

[YOURINVESTMENTPROPERTYMAG.COM.AU](http://YOURINVESTMENTPROPERTYMAG.COM.AU)



Local jobs



Co-working spaces

3.2

# Kiama – development already on the way

## SIX CITIES REGION - THE ILLAWARRA-SHOALHAVEN CITY

When it comes to the future growth of Kiama and wider Illawarra, a Bill has recently been passed to repeal the Greater Sydney Commission Act 2015 and replace the ‘Greater Sydney Region’ with the ‘Six Cities Region’. This region will include the Eastern Harbour City, the Central River City, the Central Coast City, the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City, the Western Parkland City, and the Illawarra-Shoalhaven City. The next Sydney strategic plan (due 2023) will include these six cities and is expected to include plans for a high-speed train connection to Wollongong, and potentially linking to Kiama.

The Federal Government’s City Deals program, implemented in 2015, was intended to foster collaboration between three levels of government and to encourage councils to work together to identify local economic development opportunities that form the basis of a negotiation for federal funding. City Deals are framed around key national priorities, including jobs, housing and sustainability, governance and regulation, innovation and digital opportunities.

In October 2020, Regional Development Australia – Illawarra (RDA Illawarra) launched a bid for a City Deal in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region, supported by local councils (including Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven), as well as the University of Wollongong, Shellharbour Hospital and Hindmarsh Park upgrade.

This deal secured \$470 million in investment into the region, establishing the creation of the Greater Cities Partnership which aims at establishing precincts that deliver a connected, diverse and resilient economy over the next decade.



Further funding is expected for new infrastructure and precinct development, including the Blue Highway Initiative which is expected to see the revitalisation of Kiama Harbour and the Kiama Arts and Culture Precinct, aiming to transform buildings and areas in Kiama Town Centre to create “a thriving, dynamic arts precinct, merging world-class urban design with historic preservation and environmental sustainability in the heart of Kiama’s central business district”. This currently includes the refurbishment and/or promotion of the Joyce Wheatley Community Centre as artist working spaces, CENTRAL Youth Services, Orry Kelly outdoor stage, and Kiama Arts Centre.

The raft of projects contained in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven City Deal all stem from a need to transform this regional economy. The strategic objectives of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven cities involve “creating 12,550 high-quality jobs in the next decade by delivering investment in key industries that attract new businesses and retain employees as residents in one of Australia’s



*“The end date for quarrying operations is uncertain and potentially some years away.”*

*Department of Planning and Environment September 2022*



most liveable regions”. The investment will also help drive the recovery of the bushfire-ravaged visitor-economy for the Shoalhaven where more than 80 percent of land area was impacted or burned.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (consisting of four member councils) describes the City Deal as “a roadmap to secure the future economic growth, prosperity and social stability of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven”.

## BOMBO QUARRY & KIAMA SOUTH

Bombo Quarry is a 108-hectare regionally significant site, recognised for its potential reuse for employment and residential needs. Situated two kilometres from the Kiama West site under discussion in this Placebook, Bombo is close to the M1 Motorway, the South Coast Rail line and Kiama town centre. As the quarry nears the end of its operational life, it has the potential to be transformed with new housing, workplaces, or recreational areas.

As of 1 September 2022, however, the Department of Planning and Environment has written to Kiama Municipal Council saying it understands the owners of Bombo Quarry are “not able to provide a timeline for ending quarrying operations at this stage”. The Department acknowledges Council’s need for a timeline to “plan more effectively for future growth in the Kiama local government area”. In his letter, Tim Raimond, Deputy Secretary, Planning and Land Use Strategy, said “the end date for quarrying operations is uncertain and potentially some years away” and “any future use of the site for housing or employment is unlikely to occur in the short to medium term”.

After Bombo Quarry, the Kiama South project is the second largest of proposed release areas. Situated just west of the Princes Highway, between Saddleback Mountain Road and Weir Street in South Kiama, proposal for the site comprises the construction of 444 residential lots.

*Regardless of ultimate timings with Bombo and South Kiama, these sites will not have the capacity to meet 2041 targets for housing supply; they remain only part of the solution.*

3.3

## Kiama – affordable housing crisis

*In May 2021 a Domain House Price Report saw desirable NSW lifestyle destinations “topping the list” for price surges in Australia’s regions, driven mostly by a COVID-19 desire to leave the big cities and relocate to less densely populated locations, and helped by growth in remote working. Back then, Kiama showed the next highest median house price growth behind Byron Bay, rising by 23.6 per cent year-on-year to a new median of \$1.1 million. A year later, Kiama’s media house price is closer to \$1.6 million.*

Less than two hours’ drive from Sydney, Kiama has become an attractive proposition to a range of buyers, including younger families, executives and business owners. This has pushed up prices in all price brackets of the local market, from entry-level properties to the higher end, as buyers vie for the limited homes available on the market.

As noted previously in this Placebook, CoreLogic’s (February 2022) quarterly Regional Market Update February showed Kiama had experienced the largest annual rise in home values of any of the local government areas analysed.

Kiama has a long history as an agricultural hub but in recent years its tourism industry has emerged as a key employer. The number of properties being used for short-term holiday accommodation has also increased. This has left people with roots in the area and people working in essential jobs such as nursing and teaching unable to find accommodation or afford what is available. By their nature, holiday rental rates far outstrip ordinary residential rents.

Last year Kiama’s local paper, The Bugle, declared “Kiama is facing a housing affordability crisis as the average house price passes \$1m and the average rental rises above \$600 per week.” Michele Adair, CEO of The Housing Trust, a Wollongong-based not-for-profit community housing provider, told the paper that business will face “a crisis in recruiting staff because there is nowhere nearby to live”.

A survey by housing reform advocacy body Everybody’s Home, which spoke with 666 voters in the seat of Gilmore, stretching from Kiama to Tuross Head, discovered that essential workers in the South Coast were paying up to 70 per cent of their income on rent, with just \$248 left over.



Townhouses/apartments



Houses



Cottages

“CoreLogic’s quarterly Regional Market Update February showed Kiama had experienced the largest annual rise in home values of any of the local government areas analysed.”

KIAMA REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018–2022

### RENTAL WOES

The 2022 Everybody’s Home campaign analysed the latest SQM Research Weekly Rents Index for combined units and houses and found asking rents across regional NSW had surged between \$17 and \$70 per week since November 2021. But on the South Coast things were even tougher, with rent hitting an “eyewatering high of \$595 per week – the highest compared with other regions”. For week ending 20 November 2022, Wollongong (including Shellharbour, Kiama) showed an “asking rent” of \$561.80, equating to an annual change in weekly rent of \$70 or 14.3 per cent.

In June 2022, Kiama and Shellharbour region had a rental vacancy rate of just 0.3 per cent, a decline from the beginning of 2022. This resulted in rental prices increasing substantially over a 12-month period. The compounding impact of rental rises can be seen across the last decade, with the area’s rents now 43 per cent higher than they were in 2012.

The New South Wales Government’s Department of Communities and Justice says the Illawarra Shoalhaven generally has a lower provision of private rental than Sydney and there is “a very clear need for more affordable rental accommodation to begin to address the significant demand supply imbalance, particularly for lower income households, the increasing number of seniors and frail aged and for students at the University of Wollongong”.



3.4

## Kiama – diverse housing to grow well

Earlier this year Infrastructure Australia released its first ‘Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps report’ which looked beyond Australia’s fast-growing cities to present evidence for increased investment in the regions. Born from the knowledge that Australia’s economic capability is highest when the potential of the regions is fully realised, it was developed through engagement with more than 1,000 stakeholders, including focused engagement in each region. By identifying challenges and opportunities, Infrastructure Australia’s aim was to encourage governments, industry and the community to come forward with solutions.

In the case of the Illawarra region, the report found that an increased and diverse housing supply was crucial to meet current and future population needs and “entice people to relocate to the region to take advantage of the changing nature of work”.

From a cultural point of view, diversification of housing is crucial to maintaining a varied and dynamic community where housing is affordable and accessible, with options including social/affordable housing and private rental housing. Participants in the report stressed the urgent need to address housing to improve liveability in the region.

Infrastructure Australia also found that, as demand for housing for rental and purchase increases, the market tightens for those on lower incomes, “students, people living on their own or seniors, especially when the number of smaller homes is limited”.

Reinforcing this message, Infrastructure Australia’s chief of policy and research, Peter Colacino, told the inaugural Infrastructure and Investment Summit (hosted by Business Illawarra in March 2022) that the Illawarra region was crying out for more housing, transport infrastructure and freight connections. Mr Colacino said that councils and communities needed to get behind medium density and affordable housing because “population growth in the Illawarra is expected to create demand for an additional 58,000 homes” by 2041.



He said the right mix was required, “particularly medium density housing and a mix of affordable and social housing in new releases”. Meanwhile, housing reform advocacy body, Everybody’s Home, highlighted the urgent need for affordable housing, declaring people on low and modest incomes were being pushed to the brink of homelessness.

Speaking at the same event, Romilly Madew, chief executive of Infrastructure Australia, said, “We’re seeing large organisations and governments change their approach to their workplace, and that means staff can be located anywhere in Australia ... That is an opportunity for our regions and, at the same time, it’s a challenge because we need to make sure that we have the right organisations and services in place.”

# Introducing Kiama West



## The next sustainable and exciting chapter

*The Kiama West site is situated along the section of Old Saddleback Road that connects mostly rural properties to the south with Kiama, between the intersection with Long Brush Road to Kiama's southwestern fringe. It covers around 114 hectares of land on the western urban fringe of Kiama and includes the Spring Creek watercourse.*

## 4.1

## The opportunity for Kiama West

*An exciting chapter.  
A remarkable place.  
A sustainable story.*

Kiama is a place that has provided constant but changing support and shelter to humans and wildlife across millennia. Now the township has a unique, literally life-changing opportunity. Fully cognisant of challenges to come and aware of the advantages that development can bring, this is the moment when Kiama can thoughtfully respond to its landscape while delivering the next sustainable crucial and exciting chapter in the story of this remarkable place.

This site, spanning the western edge of the existing town, will take design cues from the more established township, creating a meaningful sense of place. A strong theme underpinning its design will be a connection with nature, evidenced in every aspect, from outdoor recreation and community facilities to soft and hard landscape spaces, and even programming.

Much effort and creativity will be invested into amplifying and adding to the Kiama story, increasing a local sense of pride and ensuring visitors understand the heritage, beauty, dynamism and talent on offer here.

*Three key goals will underpin all design and programming for this project:*

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To create a legacy project that reframes regional development in Australia.

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To establish Kiama as a symbol of best practice coastal township development.

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To inspire new aspirations for wider Kiama, helping to define its future position and purpose.

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**“Astutely developing Kiama West gives all stakeholders in this community the opportunity to set the tone – and the standard – for forthcoming development, here and, potentially, in Australia more broadly. As the gold standard in regional development, it is not overstating things to suggest that Kiama will better master its own future and better contribute to the future of this country.”**

**TRADERS IN PURPLE**

4.2

## A location that supports sustainable growth

*This site represents Kiama's most suitable location for economical and sustainable growth and is ideally suited to accommodate homes, open space and community uses. Working with government and relevant stakeholders, Traders In Purple will create a place that respects and celebrates Country and helps provide much-needed infrastructure to meet community needs.*



### ALREADY UNIFIED

With existing connections to the town centre and train station, and located adjacent to infrastructure, the site is already integrated with Kiama Town Centre. Strategically situated crossings across the Princess Highway promote safe east-west movement and will encourage active travel. Traders In Purple is committed to working with local service providers and public transport operators to maximise integration and accessibility. As density typically delivers greater efficiencies and more choice, existing Kiama residents can anticipate increased convenience and ease of living.



### UNLOCKING SPACE AND BEAUTY

As Kiama grows, pressure is being increasingly placed onto the township's existing open spaces and community infrastructure. By unlocking what is potentially the South Coast's most beautiful regions for public access, existing and future residents can enjoy captivating views formed by undulating topography, a variety of new open spaces and access to pristine, natural green and blue features.

**WHAT IS A GREEN BELT?**

A greenbelt is an area of open or green space that forms the edge to urban development. It protects undeveloped wild or agricultural areas from being developed. Green belts have been used for thousands of years and are often defined by natural features such as hills, forests or creeks.



### CREATING TRANSITION

The site's size and shape are optimal for the development of a responsive and delicate transition zone between the urban character of the Kiama town centre to the rural surrounds. By including a range of typologies, embedded within greenery and open space, Kiama's townscape will finally enjoy a natural and gradual transition, providing residents with an urban-rural character and the normative behaviour patterns that support this.



### DEFINING KIAMA'S GREEN BELT

Spring Creek is Kiama's natural growth boundary, providing it with a 'greenbelt' to prevent limitless future sprawl. A thoughtfully created and meaningful township development that bounds Spring Creek's riparian corridor, this site will establish a defined boundary, so the community knows that this is where development ends.

# Place Vision

# 05



## What is the Place Vision

*The Place Vision statement synthesises Kiama West’s future opportunities into a unique, aspirational narrative. It defines the shared vision that can be championed by government agencies, asset owners, developers, business, and the community. It should be something that is always strived towards.*

**“We are committed to creating something exemplary with the Kiama West site. It will be a place from which other communities can draw inspiration.”**

**TRADERS IN PURPLE**

## Kiama West – grown at home

Whether located within cultivated farmlands, or against majestic oceans, Australia's regional towns have become more important than ever before. These places offer a historic backdrop to our ever-growing cities while simultaneously providing answers to a more thoughtful and sustainable future.

Guided by landscape and aspiring towards a more regenerative, healthy and inclusive township, the area currently known as 'Kiama West' represents a unique opportunity to create a place of character, stories, and connection to nature. This can be a place of opportunity, somewhere that supports the community's authentic roots and provides housing to assist its most vulnerable. By considering what best practice looks like, Kiama – this town on the cusp of change – can truly master its own story, one that regional Australia will strive to emulate.

5.1

# Kiama West Place Principles

The formation and use of Place Principles comes from the need to identify and commit to a set of priorities and values from the outset of any high quality, sustainable, responsive development and placemaking process.

As a company and as citizens, Traders In Purple believe visionary, considered and inclusive planning is crucial to growing a more sustainable and equitable Australia while retaining distinctive community and landscape characteristics and charms.

Place Principles are determined from the unique needs, preferences and features of a particular site and community. Ultimately, they represent a project's core values and can be referred back to again and again as proof points throughout the development process for all stakeholders.

With Kiama West, there is the opportunity to deliver necessary growth in a manner that becomes an exemplar for regional coastal development more broadly. Potentially, this project be used as a blueprint or model for comparable scale developments Australia-wide.

## Responsive



*Landscape-led and responsive to Country*

## Regenerative



*Enhance Country and create sustainable outcomes*

## Healthy



*Supports mental and physical wellbeing*

## Enriching



*A place for social and cultural connection*

## Characterful



*Celebrates history and identity*

## Inclusive



*Encourages equity and inclusivity*

5.2

## Benchmarks

### Residential that's sustainable in beautiful Gippsland

#### THE CAPE, Cape Paterson, Victoria

Developer Brendan Condon was visiting relatives in the small seaside village of Cape Paterson when an exercise session led to a vision for a regional housing project with a difference. Originally a cattle farm, the site was already cleared and provided a unique opportunity to build while restoring habitat.

Billed as Australia's first truly sustainable residential project, The Cape is situated approximately 90 minutes from Melbourne and a short drive from Phillip Island. Overlooking the spectacular Bunurong Coast and Bass Strait, residents can walk to beautiful unspoiled swimming and surfing beaches.



With 230 lots across the estate, homes at The Cape follow the development's design guidelines – a minimum 7.5-star energy efficiency rating and a 200-sq-metre limit on living space to restrict the footprint of the house and maintain the integrity of the landscape. Also in development is a \$2m community farm for residents to grow their own produce, which is expected to produce over \$150,000 worth of food annually. Overall, The Cape includes a sports precinct and community facilities, parks, kilometres of walking paths and NBN with optic fibre to every home.

Already generating more energy than it is using, The Cape aims to be a litmus test for the standard Australia needs to meet to combat climate change. All homes are also equipped to enable electric vehicle charging.



# Protecting land and people

## **HENDRICK FARM, Quebec, Canada**

Hendrick Farm’s mission is to exemplify best practices for combining land conservation and community development. Seeking to encourage a healthy lifestyle and sense of community, the plan preserves more than fifty per cent of the property as green space for recreation, gardening, social interaction and pedestrian connectivity. Five acres of land have been transformed into a park with community garden plots, fruit orchards, picnic tables and walking paths.

Rejecting car-dependence and embodying the best aspects of some of the world’s most sought-after neighbourhoods, this small, social community is located just fifteen minutes from downtown Ottawa. Hendrick Farm’s architectural code respects the natural environment and, by concentrating development, preserves the majority of land for greenspace.



A pre-existing agricultural precinct, including the commercial food structures, are now part of a mixed-use village centre that also includes convenience shops with housing above. Parking occurs on village streets and in shared space behind the buildings. While all residences at Hendrick Farm include luxuries of upscale contemporary homes, the entire development incorporates environmental stewardship in its vision.

## Heroing appropriate design

### SERENBE, Georgia, USA

An example of New Urbanism, located in Georgia's Chattahoochee Hill Country (and a 30-minute drive from Atlanta International Airport), Serenbe is characterised by its red clay earth, rolling hills and dense pine forests, as well as its dense neighbourhoods. In 1991 it was founded by Steve Nygren on a 24-hectare parcel of land, complete with a farm, and now contains housing and commercial ventures.

Serenbe's residences take cues from the canal houses of Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as minimal wood-clad homes from Scandinavia. Architectural styles include Arts and Crafts-style cottages, loft-style townhouses and sleek modern "boxes". The bulk of the residences face a common greenspace and trails.



The outer areas of Serenbe are left untouched, allowing nature to flourish, while a natural wastewater treatment system has been designed by Reed Hilderbrand. The community is comprised of four different neighbourhoods, or "hamlets" which are spread across the property in "serpentine omega forms". Also featured across the development are shops, restaurants, a hotel, horse stables, a farm, nature trails and pastures. Proximity to shops and services encourages walking.

# Spearheading sustainable living

## ELMSBROOK, NW Bicester, UK

Garden towns and cities are an idea from the past that could help us today preparing for a climate-changed future. Elmsbrook is a joint venture between property developers FABRICA (part of the A2Dominion Group) and Crest Nicholson. This one-of-a-kind, multi-award-winning eco-town already houses a thriving community of residents. It is one of 11 ‘One Planet Community’ schemes worldwide, based on 10 guiding principles to achieve sustainable living within the earth’s ecological limits.

Elmsbrook is a zero-carbon community, where each home has been built to high energy efficiency standards with photovoltaic solar panels adorning every roof, and it has a new Eco Business Centre, a state-of-the-art working space that’s the first non-domestic building to achieve Passivhaus Plus in the UK.



Part of the North West Bicester Masterplan, 40 per cent of the final development will be devoted to green spaces, including allotments, play areas, sports and recreational facilities, a country park and acres of interconnecting cycle and walking paths. Surrounded by the charming villages and undulating hills and valleys of Oxfordshire, Elmsbrook offers the very best of country living in a community also offering an electric car club, free bike rental, and free installation of electric vehicle charging points to residents who go electric within the first two years.

# The place opportunities

# 06



## Thought starters to inspire

*The Traders In Purple team is committed to sensitively reimagining Kiama West as a landscape-led, integrated community with a range of activations and opportunities for visitors and the local community. Inspired by precedents and mindful of global trends and local context, the following place opportunities are presented as thought starters for the future development of this site.*

# Homegrown story

*Kiama already has a strong arts and culture industry and proposed government investment into the local cultural precinct will only intensify the region's profile in this area. This development is perfectly positioned to help local business and talent maximise benefits and opportunities, providing additional assets to drive tourism related business initiatives.*

## Preliminary opportunities include:

Using and acknowledging traditional language for placemaking that honours Traditional owners, custodians and stewardship of Kiama, the Wodi Wodi of the Dharawal.

Utilising materiality throughout the site for built and natural forms.

Employ colour selections which reflect Ochres used by the Wodi Wodi and Dharawal in artwork and ceremonies honouring Culture and Customs.

Adding a picturesque, fit-for-purpose space for farmers and crafts markets.

Helping new and existing independent retailers (i.e. The Collective Beat) with access to new spaces and new audiences.

Boosting Kiama's profile as a "foodie" destination, through garden-to-table hospitality outlets as well as education/training for chefs, baristas and other hospitality professionals.

Preserving and celebrating Kiama's own story (Indigenous, European and beyond), sharing it more broadly through cultural loops and other elements in meaningful, entertaining, interactive and evolving ways. This includes celebrating Kiama's historic dry-stone walls.

Harnessing density to deliver greater efficiencies and more choice in terms of public transport and local services.



## CASE STUDY:

# The Farm

*Byron Bay, NSW*

The Farm is a destination restaurant, venue, bakery, garden and education centre on the outskirts of Byron Bay. It's also a 32ha working farm that harvests fresh, field-to-table fare for its own menus every day. Ultimately a collection of micro-businesses, The Farm goes beyond to inspire its community to lead healthy, sustainable lives. From a produce perspective, as much as possible is grown on site, sourced from what's in-season in-region. Real food is the concept that lends authenticity to the menu, while the Produce Store, Flowers at The Farm and The Bread Social all hero local production and craft.

- ✓ Independent retail
- ✓ Food tourism
- ✓ Picturesque
- ✓ Sustainable development
- ✓ Supporting local farmers and producers

**CASE STUDY:**

# Folkstone Creative Quarter

*Kent, UK*

In its October 2020 submission to the Standing Committee on Communication and The Arts, the Regional Australia Institute (RAI) found the cultural and creative sector has the potential to drive regional growth and should be considered in place-based economic planning, stating that “facilities to nurture the formation and growth of creative businesses in regional Australia need to be strengthened”.

In the United Kingdom, arts-led regeneration has been actively pursued in many coastal areas in the past 20 years, with several regional towns benefitting from high-profile, “cultural interventions”. In Kent in south-east England the port town of Folkstone is situated on the southern edge of the North Downs, at a valley between two cliffs. For most of the 19th and 20th centuries it was an important harbour and shipping port. Since 2001 work has gone into establishing a sustainable creative quarter here, aiming to engage the whole town in creativity through the proliferation of small-scale, local activity with deep community roots. Today the town is home to the Creative Folkestone Triennial (an arts festival held every three years) as well as the Folkestone Creative Quarter.

The Quarter is an “urban village” of designers, filmmakers, musicians, web developers and artists. It includes accommodation, studios, offices, and shops, making it a hive of activity. Visitors can enjoy watching artists paint in their galleries and sign up to classes run by skilled makers. Bars transform into micro-performance spaces and cafés buzz. Contributing to the reputation, infrastructure and economy of the town, Folkestone Creative Quarter is a playground for creative and digital businesses.

According to Alastair Upton, chief executive of Creative Folkestone, creative industries have been the fastest-growing part of the UK economy for the past 20 years. When discussing how creative industries help regional economies grow, Mr Upton explained that Folkstone needed to provide jobs for younger people in the area and said, “A lot of people left when they were in their late teens, and now they’re coming back, thanks to all the many opportunities here.”



- ✓ Independent retail
- ✓ Arts tourism
- ✓ Celebrating local stories
- ✓ Sustainable development
- ✓ Supporting local farmers and producers
- ✓ New spaces and audiences



**CASE STUDY:**

# Jack’s Point

*Ontago, NZ*

Nearly 400 stone walls have been listed as heritage items in the Kiama municipality. Reminders of the area’s strong farming history, many of the walls were constructed more than a century ago as paddocks were cleared. Much of the work is attributed to Thomas Newing, a prolific and skilled stone wall builder, who used local volcanic stone.

In New Zealand Jack’s Point is a development based on delivering 1,300 residential homes, a lakeside Village with accommodation, restaurants and shops, a luxury lodge and recreational amenities including a championship Golf Course.

The character of Jack’s Point, for both architecture and landscape, is shaped by the history of the land. The community’s design guidelines requires built forms to “be subservient to the wider landscape which takes in Central Otago’s farm heritage stone walls, rustic timber gates, open grazed farmland and native scrubland”.

Set amongst one of the most spectacular landscapes in the world Jack’s Point is an example of a sustainable approach to settlement, where only a small per cent of the total land area will be built upon. The environment, combined with an integrated design approach, continues to be the driving force in shaping the community.

- ✓ Celebrating Kiama’s historic dry-stone walls
- ✓ Celebrating local stories
- ✓ Sustainable development
- ✓ Picturesque

# New experiences

*The Kiama West site offers the chance to add high quality community infrastructure to the area at a time when it is much needed, but without the need to rely on public funding.*

## Preliminary opportunities include:

The sharing of Aboriginal culture to entice visitors and residents from the surrounds to use the facilities, pathways, walkways and open gathering spaces created, including:

- The honouring of stories, narratives, artwork, song lines of the Traditional Owners, Stories tellers and Knowledge Holders
- Integrating traditional site lines and song lines throughout the landscape that are in harmony with natural elements of Kiama and cohesive to the surrounding areas

Placemaking projects with Aboriginal designers and collaborators to ensure empowerment of the local voice

Adding to Kiama's renowned walking/cycling infrastructure by creating an agricultural walk to complement the existing coastal walk, with the option of café facilities for further appeal.

Introducing recreation trails for horse riding and/or mountain biking.

Adding to the district's cache of community or neighbourhood facilities and meeting places through new playing fields (dependent on investigation of topography), a gym and pool, half-size basketball courts, a 'Neighbourhood House' (community centre) and other wellness offerings – potentially delivered under a community title scheme.

Responding to the needs of those workers choosing to work close to home but not at home: co-working spaces and mini "satellite" offices.

Increasing convenience and service with a cluster of small local convenience stores and food outlets.

Opening the existing Greyleigh historical homestead up to more visitation by adding a small "green" public square for passive recreation, with small scale retail and hospitality.



## CASE STUDY:

# Village greens

*USA and Australia*

Versions of the "village green" appear throughout history, throughout countries and throughout communities. A traditional idea of the "green" involves a small, cosy, tranquil space positioned within the activity centre of a town or village. The reality is a variety of uses and appearances are counted as "greens", and can encompass woodlands, the customary sedate "green", wilder moorlands and sports grounds. They might even contain limited buildings or structures, small roads and walking paths. Over time a township might evolve and shift, or be absorbed into a larger settlement, so the "green" is found away from the community's busiest, most bustling hub. The "village green" is generally one to three blocks in size, as opposed to the "city park" which is typically a sprawling area of many acres, able to accommodate larger, more varied uses.

Lake Carolina's Village Green in South Carolina (US) is the perfect setting for a Saturday afternoon of shopping. Located in one of the district's most scenic spots, a small collection of quaint-looking shops cluster around the green itself, a place where many signature Lake Carolina events are held. Behind its quaint façade is a vibrant, modern commercial community, with buildings containing a mix of LiveWork facilities, featuring retail, small business and offices us on ground level, and residential above.

In the Queensland town of Logan the Logan Village Green, also home to the Village Green Theatre Group, is programmed to host everything from "gin and swing" dance afternoons to children's fitness events, heritage woodworking events, an eco-market and more. Facilities within this green include a playground, barbecues, picnic area, public conveniences and sports spaces.

✓ New neighbourhood facilities

✓ Small local convenience

✓ New meeting places

✓ Walks and café facilities

✓ New playing fields

**CASE STUDY:**

## Thrales End Farm & Business Centre

*Harpenden, UK*

A rural workspace for white collar workers, Thrales End Farm and Business Centre, Harpenden is a sought-after destination for small businesses to reside. Offices vary in size to suit the single person up to a 30 strong team. The offices are let on one to five-year tenancies. The Business Centre also has meeting rooms that can be rented by the hour or day. Farm owners, the Pigott family, are committed to enhancing the environment and biodiversity through regenerative farming and social delivery via its education charity, The Farmschool. As well as the offices spaces Thrales End Farm has branched out into the festival business, running sunflower, sweetcorn and pumpkin festivals in the summer months. The farm also has a school on site, delivering programmes on sustainability, healthy eating and regenerative agriculture.



✓ New neighbourhood facilities

✓ New coworking spaces

✓ New meeting places

✓ Wellness offerings

✓ Events

**CASE STUDY:**

## Cotyledon's food and craft market

*Newport, Wales*

Situated within 90 acres of beautiful gardens and parkland, Tredegar House is one of the architectural wonders of Wales and one of the most significant late 17th-century houses in the whole of the British Isles.

On the second Saturday of every month the Cotyledon Food and Craft Market is held at Tredegar House, with a variety of local traders serving visitors who browse the stalls for free. Traders sell everything from handmade soap to pies, cider, fresh eggs, cheese, pet treats and clothing.

A place shaped by the local community, Tredegar House and its surrounding gardens and parkland stand proudly at the heart of Newport's heritage. As well as the Saturday market, visitors can also pop into The Brewhouse Cafe for drinks, cakes and pre-packaged sandwiches to eat in or take away.

Small local businesses are also now opening on site. A recent arrival is Sero Zero Waste, nestled between a second-hand bookshop and the brew house cafe, occupying a grade II listed barn. The store sells refillable dry whole foods and local produce such as bread, baked goods, milk and British grown flowers.



✓ New neighbourhood facilities

✓ Small local convenience

✓ New meeting places

✓ Walks and café facilities

✓ Opening up a historical homestead



**CASE STUDY:****Participatory  
green spaces***Republic of Tatarstan*

Since 2015, the Republic of Tatarstan, part of the Russian Federation, has been revolutionising the way it designs urban green spaces with participatory design methods that involve the public, ecologists and architects. Tatarstan's Public Space Development Program has created or upgraded more than 420 projects throughout the republic, including parks, walkways, gardens and other kinds of landscaped areas. Among the outcomes is a romantically lit bike trail, plus a new pedestrian promenade featuring illuminated benches that surrounds Kazan's Kaban Lake.

Along with attracting young design talent averaging 25 years of age, this participatory design programme uses local manufacturers. Over 350 green spaces in Tatarstan have been developed using local resources and local designers and addressing local needs.




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✓ New neighbourhood facilities

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✓ Add to existing walk and cycle trails

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✓ New recreation options

**“Modern interest in environmentalism is driven by a yearning to... restore as much as possible of what we’ve destroyed, and to devise ways of reconfiguring our lives so that civilization as we know it can be sustained through our children’s lifetimes and beyond.”**

**DAVID OWEN**  
*Author, Green Metropolis*

# A green agenda

*Picturesque yet not reaching its full potential, this site can amplify Kiama's identity as a place where the country meets the coast. It can also support contemporary and future-forward iterations of agri-business and tourism and boost the district's green credentials. This is an opportunity for a landscape-led project to respond to and support Country, whilst also meeting the future needs of the local community.*

## Preliminary opportunities include:

Providing Kiama with a place that can attract and support a small constellation of related industries, potentially involving a business improvement district governance structure.

Increasing opportunities for Kiama's community to study close to home in education facilities involved in future-forward streams, including innovation, agriculture, the future of agronomy, sustainability and the circular economy.

Introducing new opportunities for eco-tourism, accommodation and events, including garden-to-plate hospitality venues, serving local produce and products.

Protecting and enhancing the region's rural character for future generations through the addition of small campuses specialising in horticultural or agricultural studies (satellites of larger universities or colleges and/or supported by small, private food and nutrition businesses and education bodies).

Improving and extending local zero waste capabilities through education and practical tools to help residents and businesses reuse and recycle.

Spearheading sustainable development for new builds in Kiama through development based on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles.



## CASE STUDY:

### FarmED

*Chipping Norton, UK*

The FarmED Centre in the heart of the Cotswolds exists to educate its community on sustainable practices and inspire reduced carbon footprints. Each of the site's buildings addresses different elements of a sustainability curriculum, with learning spaces for up to 500 and farm-to-kitchen demonstration rooms. The buildings are constructed from carbon-saving sustainable materials and arranged around a central courtyard to foster collaboration. FarmED's flexible event and conference spaces are surrounded by long paved paths and a wildflower meadow which acts as an important haven for insects and bees that pollinate the farm's crops.

- ✓ Enhancing rural character
- ✓ Eco-tourism
- ✓ Education facilities
- ✓ Sustainable development
- ✓ Specialist event hosting facilities

# Naturally inviting

*The site in question comprises land historically inaccessible to the public. The opportunity exists to open up 23 per cent of this Kiama West site (including access to the creek and ecological land) to offer recreation and educational opportunities to the community at large.*

**Preliminary opportunities include:**

- Deepening and amplifying Connection to Country through wayfinding, storytelling, educational markers, creative forms and more.

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- Creating the Spring Creek Open Space Corridor and introducing rehabilitation, revegetation, recreation and education.

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- Adding to Kiama’s existing active loops and routes with new ridge-to-creek walk and cycle trails.

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- Creating a cleverly-connected ‘Ridgeline Park’ that invites visitation for active and passive recreation, protects and celebrates views and adds new playground, picnic and relaxation areas to Kiama.

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- Integrate water features throughout the site.

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- Native planting to provide habitat for endemic fauna.



**CASE STUDY:**

## Kalbarri Skywalk

*Western Australia*

Kalbarri National Park is an iconic location, famous for its 80 kilometre gorge, coastal cliffs that plunge more than 100 metres to the ocean, striking wildflowers and many recreational activities. The Kalbarri Skywalk viewing platform cantilevers dramatically over the gorge, offering spectacular views across the traditional lands of the Nanda people. For the Nanda Traditional Owners, the facility showcases their culture and stories through interpretive and artistic elements. Visitors are greeted with an entry sign stating kaju yatka, the Nanda words for ‘sky’ and ‘to walk.’

Constructed from weathering steel, with foundations cut into rock, the platform’s path includes artwork by Nanda artists featuring depictions of the Beemara – the dreamtime rainbow serpent responsible for creating the park’s rivers, its winding form also reflected in the curved shape of the platform. Visitation to the Kalbarri National Park has increased by 40 per cent since the skywalk opened, with the park now attracting more than 275,000 visitors a year.

- ✓ **Eco-tourism**

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- ✓ **Education facilities**

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- ✓ **New trails**

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- ✓ **Celebrates views**

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- ✓ **Celebrates local stories**

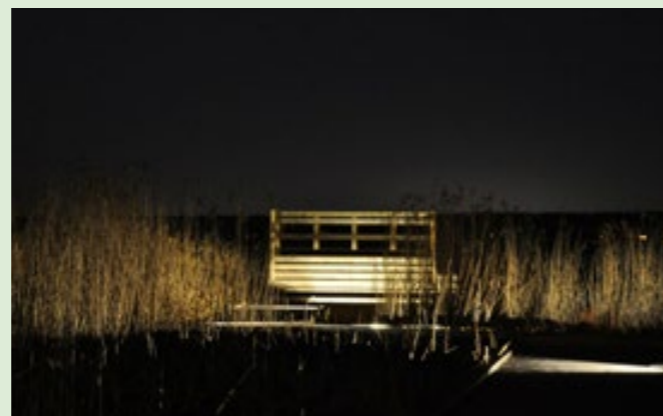
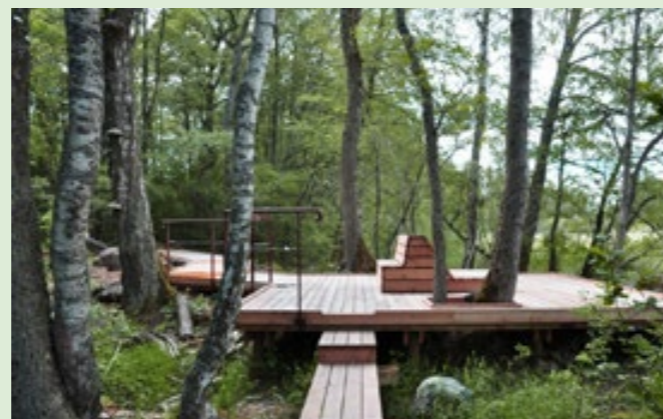
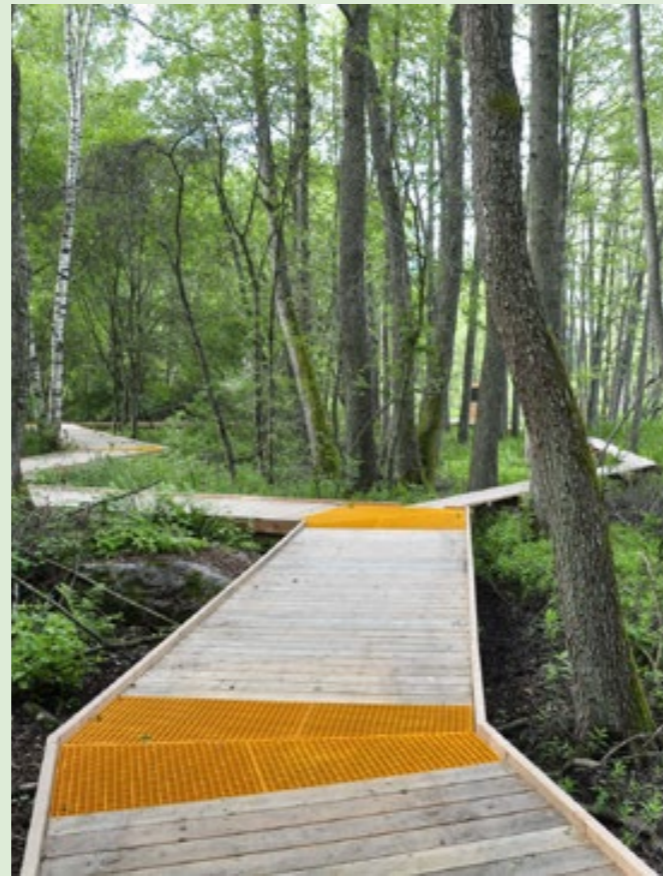
**CASE STUDY:**

# Riparian Forest Park

*Sweden*

Opening up pristine land to public access preserving the unique ecological qualities of the site can be a challenge. In Täby, north of Stockholm, the Arninge-Ullna Riparian Forest Park is a new form of neighbourhood park, created to combine biological conservation with the functions of an urban park, engaging with the city and nature as one intertwined entity.

Wooden walkways of varying width are used to improve accessibility to the forest, with platforms and jetty's providing vistas over the Ullna Lake. The park is lined by pillars and signs of weathered steel, backlit and engraved with ecological information and poetic descriptions of nature in the form of haiku-poems by Nobel laureate Tomas Tranströmer.



✓ **Passive recreation**

✓ **New trails**

✓ **Celebrates views**

✓ **Education**

**CASE STUDY:**

# Dark Sky Pad

*Canada*

Inspiring and entertaining yet gentle and discreet, gazing into the night skies creates connections with our natural world in its broadest sense. F Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people developed a number of practical ways to observe the sun, moon and stars to inform navigation, calendars, and predict weather and assign meaning and agency to astronomical phenomena, which informs law and social structure.

From a practical point of view, stargazing sites can be as basic or as ornamented as preferred, from dark reserve areas and areas to simply lie and watch, to small campsites or structures and programs linked to local or national observatories and astronomical organisations.

In Canada, 'The Dark Sky Preserve' – featuring The Dark Sky Pad - is a public space where anyone can setup their telescope and enjoy the evening skies. Amenities include parking, accessible washrooms, electrical service and picnic tables. Free events are held a few times each year with amateur astronomers there to provide context on what people are looking at.



✓ **Connection to Country**

✓ **Passive recreation**

✓ **Celebrates views**

✓ **Education**

# Welcoming

*NSW is experiencing a housing affordability crisis. With this project, Kiama can guarantee housing in a new neighbourhood of the highest standard and in keeping with local character. It can also provide specifically tailored, much-needed infrastructure solutions to benefit the entire community. Combined, this is an opportunity to set the bar for any future local projects and enhance civic reputation by producing a genuine blueprint for regional residential development nationally.*

**Preliminary opportunities include:**

Partnering with Community Housing Providers to give Kiama new, affordable low-rise dwellings.

Adding low density houses with local character to the area, including town homes and small lot 'hamlets'.

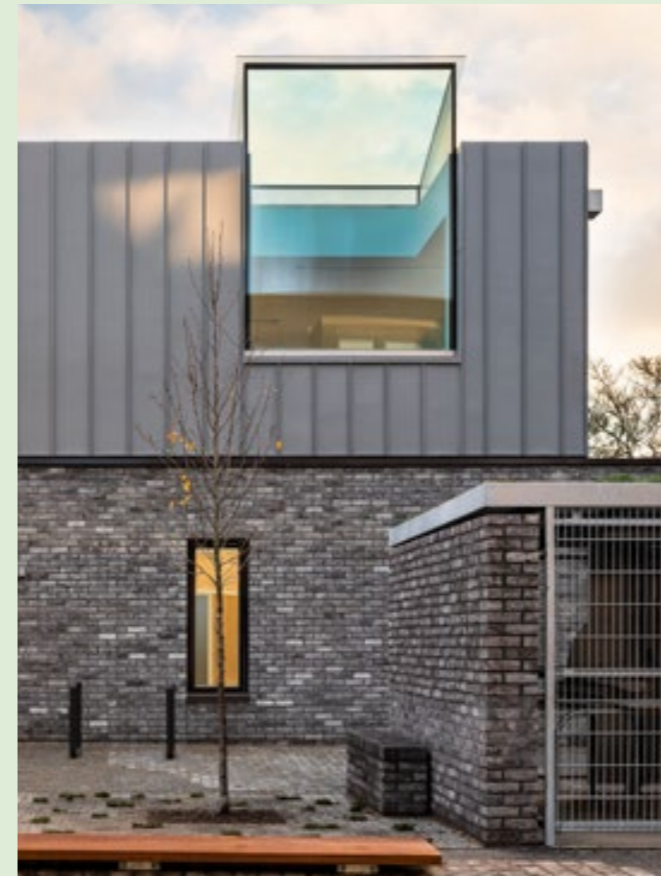
Offering choice to residents looking for large, semi-rural/eco-living lots in prominent visual locations.

Bolstering the supply of retirement living options in the area (potentially utilising land lease packages with amenities such as gym, pool, sauna etc).

Preventing loneliness, particularly for an ageing population, through new co-living residential options.

Supporting the "missing middle" by creating affordable compact living options.

Growing Kiama's talent and industry by utilising local architects and housebuilders.



**CASE STUDY:**

## Marmalade Lane

*Cambridge, UK*

Marmalade Lane is a sustainable neighbourhood of 42 award-winning homes with extensive community facilities and a sociable shared garden and car-free lane. It is the first developer-led cohousing scheme in Cambridge. Homes are contemporary versions of the townhouses and low-rise apartments traditional to Cambridge and are finished in one of four brick colours with generous porches, balconies and private gardens.

Working in close collaboration with resident group K1 Cohousing and involving two local authorities - Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Marmalade Lane was completed at a time when community-led housing is being recognised by the government as viable approach nationally for solving the current lack of supply in the housing market. A cohousing development, Marmalade Lane is the product of an innovative design process in which many residents were involved from the outset and now have a stake in the "common" parts and contribute to the management of the community.

The residents of Marmalade Lane come from all ages and walks of life and includes families with young children, retired couples and young professionals. There are many nationalities in the community and residents include both longstanding Cambridge residents and those who have moved from elsewhere to join the community.

The scheme is designed to exceptionally high environmental standards, using passive design principles, ensuring exceptional thermal efficiency and airtightness (and thus low energy bills for residents) and consistently high build quality.

✓ **Partnering with Community Housing Providers**

✓ **Affordable living options**

✓ **Sustainable development**

✓ **Low density with local character**

**CASE STUDY:**

# Key Worker Housing Development

*Eddington, UK*

Located in the city of Cambridge, UK, the Key Worker Housing development contains 232 affordable housing units and communal spaces for researchers and key university employees. Stanton Williams, the architectural firm behind the design of the homes, retail and public spaces, was shortlisted for both the 2021 RIBA Stirling Prize and the 2021 RIBA Neave Brown Award for this project.

The Key Worker Housing development is part of a wider masterplan in north-west Cambridge which is responding to a lack of affordable city housing. Alongside housing, the 150-hectare masterplan will also introduce academic facilities, public amenities, and open green space.

The project is characterised by its varied material finishes, including oak cladding and yellow bricks, which were chosen to reflect the “layering of architectural inventions over the centuries” throughout the English city. The linear plan of the 23,000-square-metre site sees each housing block given subtly different finishes, broken up by courts and squares that differ in scale and function in reference to the traditional materials and urban layouts of Cambridge.

At the eastern end of the site is an urban-feeling public market square surrounded by ground-floor retail units. At its western end, four large housing blocks wrap around a central, semi-public landscaped court. Cycling is actively encouraged. Dedicated single storey timber pavilions provide secure cycling storage and an opportunity for social interaction, to foster community building. The development includes site-wide rainwater harvesting and use of combined heat and power plants.



- ✓ Affordable living options
- ✓ Sustainable development
- ✓ Low density with local character
- ✓ Growing the local talent and industry



**CASE STUDY:**

# Ropes Crossing

*Blacktown, NSW*

Ropes Crossing is an example of a provider-led affordable housing development within a new master planned estate, delivered by a large-scale private proponent. Overall, Ropes Crossing will include a range of housing types, a commercial centre, community hub, primary school and a range of outdoor recreation spaces. This project sees BlueCHP, a not-for-profit community housing provider, working with the Department of Family and Community Services, and private sector partners. Affordable housing is ‘pepper potted’ throughout the community, with residences designed to be perfectly compatible with nearby homes and the overall neighbourhood. A firm commitment to developing a quality ‘middle range’ product that is attractive to tenants means these homes will retain marketability in the longer term. Of the 7,000 dwellings across the community, 2.4 per cent are made up of affordable housing dwellings.

- ✓ Community Housing Providers
- ✓ Affordable housing

# Conclusion

# 07



*With unfragmented ownership and existing connections to the town, Kiama West represents the town's one genuinely ideal chance to expand. By opening-up large portions of the approximately 114.7-hectare site to new public and community spaces, it presents an opportunity to celebrate and respect landscape and build new amenities for Kiama.*

The Traders In Purple team is deeply committed to working with the local community, Council, State Government, community housing providers and a range of other stakeholders to create an inclusive, enriching, and much loved new addition to one of NSW's most cherished regional towns.

In the end Kiama West can deliver necessary growth in a manner that becomes an exemplar for regional coastal development more broadly. This project has genuine potential to be used as a blueprint or model for comparable scale developments Australia-wide.

Through thoughtful development in Kiama West, Traders In Purple can support government in meeting its strategies, enhancing community prosperity and wellbeing. It will provide the following benefits:

Increased housing affordability within Kiama

New infrastructure for the community, with a focus on bespoke infrastructure solutions for Kiama including a sustainable wastewater and sewer treatment facility

Local employment and procurement opportunities for local contractors

Preservation of local character with a focus on heritage and culture

## Naturally inviting

*A potential natural edge to Kiama, protecting and preserving the broader hinterland.*

*44.2 hectares of parks and open space, almost 40% of the site.*

*Increase of tree canopy across the site, supporting local biodiversity with 77.7 hectares of trees on streets alone.*

## New experiences

*\$110m local government contribution towards open space and parklands, cycleways and other public infrastructure.*

*8 new access points providing easy access for amenity, open space and nature walks within the new community.*

*New playing fields and community facilities.*

*Active trails for horse riding/mountain biking.*

*2 kilometre nature walk along Spring Creek with scenic outlooks and public art.*

*Potential for the introduction of employment of co-working space aimed at local businesses.*

## A green agenda

*New opportunities for eco-tourism, accommodation and events.*

*Spearheading sustainable development for new builds in Kiama based on ESG principles.*

## Diversity wins

*An increased number of housing typologies to attract a diversity of residents.*

*A genuine commitment to the provision of affordable housing.*

## Other economic benefits

*Increased cultural economic benefits for Kiama and surrounds.*

*Economic uplift through increased employment and education opportunities.*

*Green industry contributions to NSW economy.*





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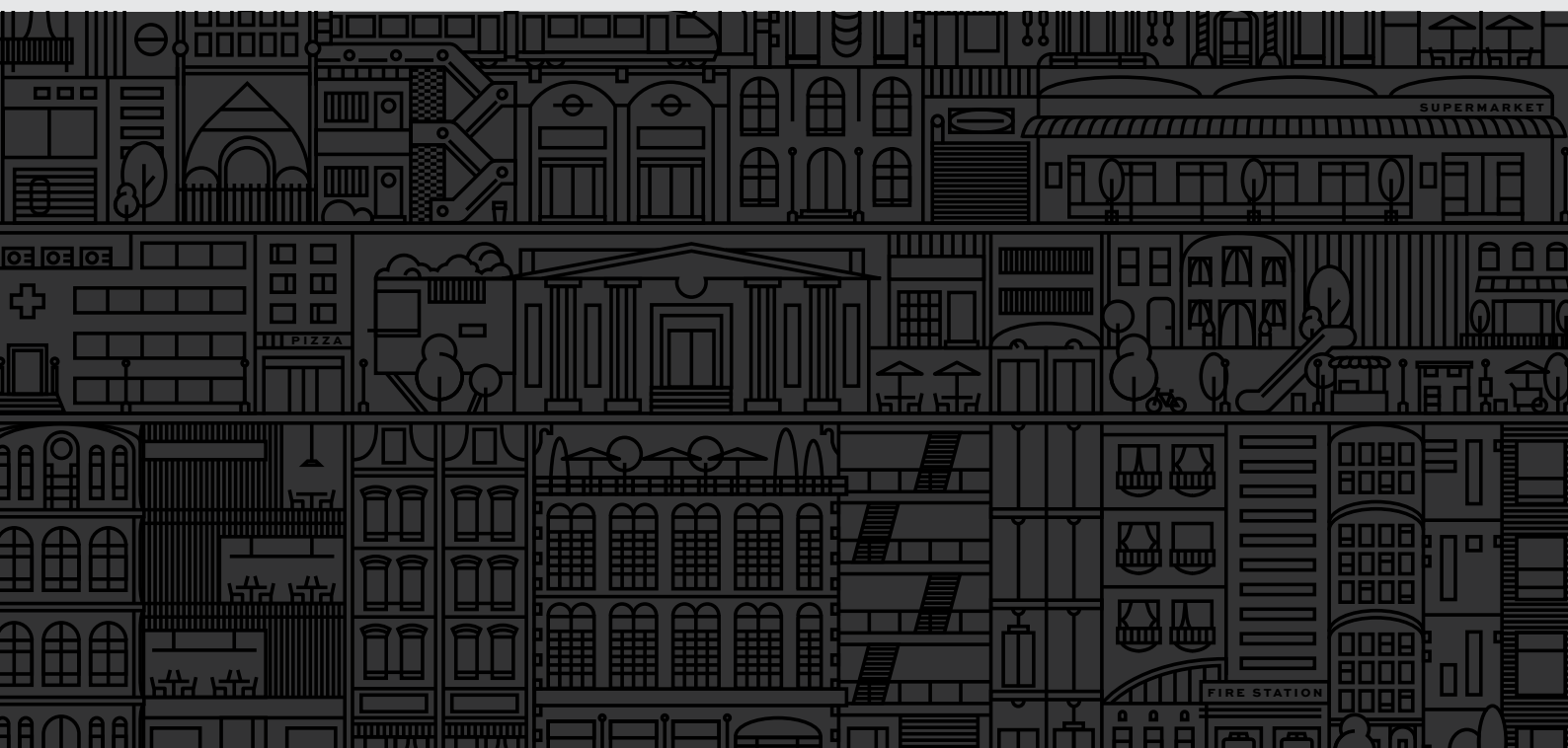
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**“Our vision for Kiama West is born from much research, consultation, and forethought, combined with our own unique knowledge, respect and love for the area.”**

**GEORGE GEAGEA**  
*Traders In Purple*

# Hoyne Placebook<sup>®</sup> Report



## **MELBOURNE**

102 Chapel St.  
St Kilda VIC 3182  
T 03 9537 1822

## **SYDNEY**

Level 5, 99 Elizabeth St.  
Sydney NSW 2000  
T 02 9212 2255

## **BRISBANE**

Level 14, 100 Edward St.  
Brisbane QLD 4000  
T 07 3144 2600