



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

01 July 2025



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

RESPONSIBLE

WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.

We value transparent and meaningful communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.



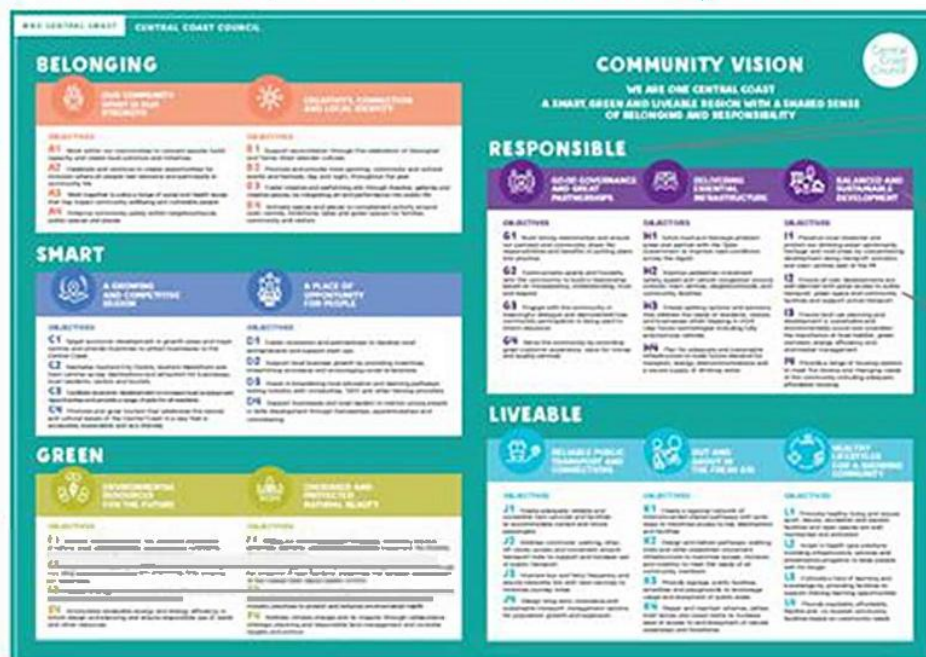
Good governance and great partnerships

G2 Engage and communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on trust, transparency, respect and use community participation and feedback to inform decision making

There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028 FRAMEWORK

All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.



Theme

Focus Area

Objective

Oath or Affirmation of Office

Councillors are reminded of their Oath or Affirmation of Office to undertake their duties in the best interests of the people of the Central Coast and Council and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities, and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act 1993*, or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgement. Councillors are also reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Disclosures of Interest

Councillors are reminded of their obligation under Council's Code of Conduct to declare any conflict of interest in a matter considered by Council.

Pecuniary interest: A Councillor who has a **pecuniary interest** in any matter with which the Council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the Council at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting. The Councillor must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting:

- a) At any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed, or
- b) At any time during which the Council is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

Non-Pecuniary conflict of interest: A Councillor who has a **non-pecuniary conflict of interest** in a matter, must disclose the relevant private interest in relation to the matter fully and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter.

Significant Non-Pecuniary conflict of interest: A Councillor who has a **significant** non-pecuniary conflict of interest in relation to a matter under consideration at a Council meeting, must manage the conflict of interest as if they had a pecuniary interest in the matter.

Non-Significant Non-Pecuniary interest: A Councillor who determines that they have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is **not significant** and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest it must also be explained why the conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.

Recording

In accordance with the *NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, you are advised that all discussion held during the Committee meeting is recorded for the purpose of livestreaming the public meeting and verifying the minutes. This will include any public discussion involving a councillor, staff member or a member of the public.

Meeting Notice

**The Economic Development Committee
of Central Coast Council
will be held in Function Room 2,
2 Hely Street, Wyong,
on Tuesday 1 July 2025 at 5:00pm,
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

1 Reports

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Membership

Cr John McNamara	Chairperson
Cr Jane Smith	Deputy Chairperson
Mayor Lawrie McKinna	Member
Cr John Moulard	Member
Cr Trent McWaide	Member
Cr Belinda Neal	Member
Cr Kyle MacGregor	Member
Cr Jared Wright	Alternate 1

John McNamara
Chairperson

ITEM 1.1

WELCOME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung Country, and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to these lands and waterways and extend this acknowledgement to the homelands and stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.

APOLOGIES

ITEM 1.2

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Chapter 14 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("LG Act") regulates the way in which the councillors and relevant staff of Council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public functions.

Section 451 of the LG Act states:

- "(1) A councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.*
- (2) The councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:*
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or*
 - (b) at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.*
- (3) For the removal of doubt, a councillor or a member of a council committee is not prevented by this section from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the councillor or member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in section 448.*

- (4) *Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting, if:*
- (a) *the matter is a proposal relating to:*
 - (i) *the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, or*
 - (ii) *the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, and*
 - (a1) *the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person (whose interests are relevant under section 443) in that person's principal place of residence, and*
 - (b) *the councillor made a special disclosure under this section in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.*
- (5) *The special disclosure of the pecuniary interest must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and must:*
- (a) *be in the form prescribed by the regulations, and*
 - (b) *contain the information required by the regulations."*

Further, the Code of Conduct adopted by Council applies to all councillors and staff. The Code relevantly provides that if a councillor or staff have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed as well as providing for a number of ways in which a non-pecuniary conflicts of interests might be managed.

Recommendation

That Committee members and staff now disclose any conflicts of interest in matters under consideration at this meeting.

Item No: 1.3
Title: Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting
Department: Corporate Services

1 July 2025 Economic Development Committee

Reference: F2025/00095 - D16902479



CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES



Recommendation

That the Committee confirm the minutes of the previous Economic Development Committee held on Tuesday 3 June 2025.

Summary

Confirmation of minutes of the previous Economic Development Committee held on Tuesday 3 June 2025.

Attachments

1   MINUTES - Economic Development Committee - 3 June 2025 D16877326



Central Coast Council

Economic Development Committee

Held in Function Room 2
2 Hely Street, Wyong
03 June 2025

MINUTES

Attendance

Members

Mayor Lawrie McKinna
Cr John McNamara, Chairperson
Cr Jane Smith, Deputy Chair
Cr John Moulard
Cr Trent McWaide
Cr Belinda Neal
Cr Kyle MacGregor
Cr Jared Wright

Status

Apology
Present
Present
Present (remotely)
Apology
Present
Apology
Present (remotely)

Councillor Guest

Deputy Mayor Doug Eaton OAM
Cr Margot Castles
Cr Sharon Walsh
Cr Helen Crowley

Present
Present
Present
Present (remotely)

Guest

Mike Ruzzene, Director Urban Enterprise
Rory Brown, Executive Director, Smart
Places, Cities and Active Transport,
Transport for NSW

Status

Present (remotely)
Present

Staff

Mel Smith, Director Community and
Recreation Services
Shannon Turkington, Acting Director
Environment and Planning
Sue Ledingham, Unit Manager Economic
Development

Status

Present
Present
Present

Minutes of the Ordinary Economic Development Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)

The Chairperson, Councillor McNamara, declared the meeting open at 5:02pm

That in accordance with clause 6.20 of the Code of Meeting Practice, remote attendance via audio visual link to the Economic Development Committee meeting on 3 June 2025, be granted to Councillor Wright and Councillor Moulard due to personal reasons, was *MOVED* by Councillor SMITH and *SECONDED* by Councillor MCNAMARA.

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

REPORTS

1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, and Apologies

5:04pm

The Chairperson read an Acknowledgement of Country Statement.

The Chairperson noted the written apologies of Mayor McKinna, Councillor MacGregor, and Councillor McWaide.

1.2 Disclosures of Interest

5:05pm

No disclosures of interest were disclosed.

1.3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

5:07pm

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor WRIGHT and *SECONDED* by Councillor MCNAMARA:
EDC12/25

That the Committee confirm the minutes of the previous Economic Development Committee held on Tuesday 6 May 2025.

CARRIED

FOR: CRS SMITH, MCNAMARA AND JW WRIGHT

AGAINST: NIL

Councillor Neal refrained from voting on this item as she was not in attendance at the Meeting held 6 May 2025.

Minutes of the Ordinary Economic Development Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)

1.4 Items Resolved by Exception

5:09pm

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor WRIGHT and *SECONDED* by Councillor NEAL:

EDC13/25

That the Committee determines the following items on the Economic Development Committee Agenda will be adopted without debate.

- a) Item 1.7 - Central Coast Food Manufacturing Innovation Hub - Occupation and Development of Ourimbah Site.***
- b) Item 1.8 - Industry into Schools Pilot Project.***

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.5 Presentation by Transport for NSW - Smart Central Coast Blueprint

5:11pm

Rory Brown from Transport for NSW gave a verbal presentation to the committee.

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor NEAL and *SECONDED* by Councillor Smith:

EDC14/25

That the committee defer the item to the next Ordinary Meeting of the Economic Development Committee on 1 July 2025.

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.6 Central Coast Visitor Accommodation Futures Study and Development Action Plan

5:32pm

Mike Ruzzenne, from Urban Enterprise, spoke to the Central Coast Visitor Accommodation Futures Study & Development Action Plan presentation.

A MOTION was *MOVED* by Councillor MOULAND and *SECONDED* by Councillor SMITH:

EDC15/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Defers this item to the Ordinary Economic Development Committee meeting on the 5 August 2025.***
- 2 Receives further information on how AirBnB is managed, and is compared to other Local Government Areas.***

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

Minutes of the Ordinary Economic Development Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)

1.7 Central Coast Food Manufacturing Innovation Hub - Occupation and Development of Ourimbah Site

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor WRIGHT and SECONDED by Councillor NEAL:

EDC16/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Notes the information provided in this update.**
- 2 Commends Central Coast Industry Connect on progress made on the design, approval, construction, and operation of an industry-leading best-practice food manufacturing innovation hub on the NSW Central Coast.**
- 3 Invites representatives of Central Coast Industry Connect to make a presentation on the scope of the proposed operations of the hub to a future meeting of the Economic Development Committee.**

1.8 Industry into Schools Pilot Project

RESOLVED by EXCEPTION on the MOTION of Councillor WRIGHT and SECONDED by Councillor NEAL:

EDC17/25

That the Committee notes the Industry into Schools Pilot Project report.

1.9 Night-Time Economy Action Plan 2025-2027

6:10pm

A MOTION was MOVED by Councillor MOULAND and SECONDED by Councillor WRIGHT:

EDC18/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Supports the draft Central Coast Night-Time Economy Action Plan 2025-2027 as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.**
- 2 Recommends that Council adopts the draft Central Coast Night-Time Economy Action Plan 2025-2027.**
- 3 Notes that annual updates of the implementation status of the Action Plan will be reported to the Economic Development Committee.**
- 4 Notes that further work and consultation is to be done on consideration of Terrigal as a Special Entertainment Precinct.**

Minutes of the Ordinary Economic Development Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

6.24pm

A PROCEDURAL MOTION TO CHANGE THE ORDER OF BUSINESS SO THAT Item 1.11 – Central Coast Airshow BE BROUGHT FORWARD AND DEALT WITH BEFORE Item 1.10 - Progressing the Warnervale Business Precinct – standing item was MOVED by Councillor SMITH and SECONDED by Councillor WRIGHT

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.10 Progressing the Warnervale Business Precinct - Standing Item

6.38pm

A MOTION was MOVED by Councillor MOULAND and SECONDED by Councillor NEAL:

EDC19/25

That the Committee receives and notes the contents of this report.

CARRIED

FOR: UNANIMOUS

1.11 Central Coast Air Show

6:24pm

A MOTION was MOVED by Councillor MOULAND and SECONDED by Councillor MCNAMARA:

EDC20/25

That the Committee:

- 1 Notes the extensive insight into staging of future events at Central Coast (Warnervale) Airport gained through the after-event review of the 2024 Central Coast Air Show.***
- 2 Acknowledges the resources and time needed to secure a suitable air show operator, gain the necessary approvals and undertake all necessary engagement with external stakeholders such as transport and emergency service agencies prior to staging future air shows on the Central Coast.***
- 3 Endorses in principle the holding of future air shows at Central Coast (Warnervale) Airport.***
- 4 Notes that the confidential attachment to the report be made available, with identifying information removed after legal review, with a view to releasing it as a public document.***

Minutes of the Ordinary Economic Development Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)

- 5 Notes that a workshop be provided to all Councillors in the next few months.**
- 6 Recommends that Council commences a process to select a suitable air show operator commence as soon as possible, with a view to holding an air show at a suitable time in the 2026-27 financial year.**

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**
FOR: CRS MCNAMARA, MOULAND AND NEAL
AGAINST: CR SMITH

The next meeting is to be held at 5:00pm on Tuesday 1 July 2025 at the Wyong Administration Building.

The Meeting concluded at 6:39pm

UNCONFIRMED

ITEM 1.4

ITEMS RESOLVED BY EXCEPTION

Recommendation

That the Committee determines the items on Economic Development Committee Agenda that will be adopted without debate.

Summary

In accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice, items that are dealt with by exception are items where the recommendations contained in the staff reports in the agenda are adopted without discussion.

ITEM 1.5

PRESENTATION BY TRANSPORT FOR NSW - SMART CENTRAL COAST BLUEPRINT (DEFERRED ITEM FROM JUNE 2025 MEETING)

PRESENTERS

Seldon Coventry – Acting Smart Places Program Lead
Sandy Burgoyne – Acting Director, Transport Modelling
Rory Brown – Executive Director, Smart Places

Item No: 1.6
Title: Progressing the Warnervale Business Precinct –
Standing item
Department: Environment and Planning



1 July 2025 Economic Development Committee

Reference: F2025/00095 - D16924213
Author: Breelle Varman, Senior Property Development Manager
Manager: Bill Ignatiadis, Unit Manager Commercial Property and Business Enterprise
Executive: Luke Nicholls, Director Environment and Planning

Recommendation

That the Committee receives and notes the contents of this report.

Report purpose

This report provides an update to the Economic Development Committee on the current progress of the Warnervale Business Precinct Master Plan.

Executive Summary

At the June meeting of the Economic Development Committee, a detailed report was presented outlining the history and strategic context of the Warnervale Business Precinct, including previous Council resolutions, completed and ongoing actions, and a forward timeline. This report serves as an update, summarising progress on the Master Plan since that time. Key updates include the initiation of technical assessments and preliminary consultant coordination activities. The Master Plan is progressing in line with the current delivery timeframe, with further updates to be provided as the project advances through planning and due diligence phases.

Background

The site was initially acquired during the 1970s–1980s as part of the broader Airport Lands acquisition works. At the time, it was purchased as part of a large parcel of land that runway was built over. By 1995, the then Council had progressed a Development Application (DA) for the establishment of a regional airport and concurrently sought to utilise the remaining land for a higher education facility. This vision included integrated residential and commercial uses, along with a botanic garden. Around this period, an external foundation approached Council expressing interest in developing a University Precinct on the site.

Historically, the site was also recognised as the Warnervale Federation Music Park from the 1970s through to the early 2000s. In the early 2000s, there was a growing aspiration for the area to host large-scale events, prompting a request for the provision of essential infrastructure such as water and electricity. In 2000, a formal geographic renaming of the site occurred, changing its designation from 'Warnervale' to 'Warnervale Federation Park.' It appears that the Country Music Association, which had a presence on the site, was disbanded at some point in 2003.

In 2013, further planning work was undertaken as part of Council's Warnervale Precinct 7A Structure Plan. Council resolved to endorse a Planning Proposal to rezone the land from 5(a) *Special Uses Zone* and 7 (a) *Conservation Zone* to an employment use zone formerly known as *Business Park - B7* and SP2 – *Infrastructure* for education purposes, which was supported by an economic study prepared by SGS Consultants. Council also engaged JBA and Cox Richardson to prepare an updated and integrated Education and Business Precinct Master Plan, which was presented to Council in 2014. The following resolutions were adopted:

- 961/14 *That Council place on public exhibition the draft Wyong Education and Business Precinct Masterplan for a period of 28 days once a "gateway determination" has been received.*
- 962/14 *That Council direct the General Manager to submit a further report to Council on the outcomes of the above process.*
- 963/14 *That Council authorise the General Manager to make representations to, and seek interest from, a wide variety of education providers to be part of Councils Education and Business Precinct.*

In line with these resolutions, a site-specific Planning Proposal was submitted to the Department of Planning in 2014, seeking to amend the Warnervale Education and Business Precinct zoning to increase Floor Space Ratio (FSR), building height, and permissible uses to enable greater development intensity. Notably, a 2011 study by the Allen Consulting Group, commissioned by the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation, advised that demand for a viable higher education facility was better suited to a location in the Gosford CBD rather than Warnervale. This position was echoed in the SGS economic report, which noted that a new university campus at Warnervale could fragment the market share of the University of Newcastle. Consequently, the planning proposal was not pursued, and Council formally discontinued the proposal in 2017 due to strategic inconsistencies.

In 2019, as part of Council's work to establish a conservation agreement over the Porters Creek Wetland (Resolution 1217/19), a subdivision of the Airport and the Warnervale Education and Business Precinct lands was proposed to facilitate the conservation arrangement. At the Council Meeting on 27 April 2020, the following resolution was adopted:

- 345/20 *B Progress the development of cleared land currently available and zoned Industrial or Business in the Warnervale area as an employment precinct*

focused around the following sectors: health, manufacturing, food production, renewable energy and/or waste.

c Engage the following:

- a A Project Manager with a proven track record, for an initial period of 18 months, to oversee the development of the employment lands*

In response to the resolution, a report was presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 June 2020 outlining a series of recommendations to progress the Warnervale Education and Business Precinct Master Plan. It was resolved that the matter be deferred to the newly established Warnervale Working Group for further consideration:

475/20 That in recognition of the establishment of the Warnervale Working Group as resolved by Council that this matter be deferred to allow consultation with the Working Group prior to a further report being provided to Council.

A refined report was subsequently prepared outlining the next steps for the Warnervale Precinct Master Plan, including:

- A feasibility study to determine the site's highest and best use.
- Completion of relevant planning studies.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Subdivision of the site in accordance with statutory requirements.
- EOs and MOUs with education and business to become anchor tenants.
- Engagement of a project manager to oversee the initiative.

This report was presented to the 28 September 2020 Council Meeting, resulting in the following resolutions:

999/20 That Council endorse the proposed concept plan for Warnervale Education and Business Precinct noting that this is not to be interpreted as an endorsement of, or acceptance of any of the content of Planning Proposal PP_2014_Wyong_012_00 and that this Concept Plan will be further developed independently of that proposal.

1000/20 That Council approve the industry and community exhibition and consultation of the concept plan for 28 days.

1.6 Progressing the Warnervale Business Precinct – Standing item (cont'd)

1001/20 *That Council approve the call for expressions of interest from business, industry and education providers to partner with the Warnervale Education and Business Precinct.*

1002/20 *That a further report to brought back to Council detailing the outcome of the expressions of interest*

Upon the conclusion of the Warnervale Working Group's term, a report was presented to the 13 April 2021 Council Meeting, which included the following directive regarding the Master Plan:

2 *Progress the development of Industrial or Business in the Warnervale area as an employment precinct and engage a project manager to oversee the development of employment lands.*

These works have been discontinued as Council's current financial situation has removed the necessary budget for these works. Council is in discussions with various government agencies to consider partnership arrangements to achieve the aspiration for these sites from other funding models.

With the additional action adopted:

99/21 *That Council wind up the Warnervale Working Group noting it has now completed its term as resolved by Council.*

Accordingly, the responsibility for progressing the Master Plan has been transferred to the Property Development team, formerly within the Innovation and Futures Unit, now known as Commercial Property and Business Enterprise.

Report

Recent progress on the Master Plan for the Warnervale Business Precinct includes the following key activities:

- Archaeological Assessment: Aboriginal heritage investigations are underway, with Expressions of Interest (EOIs) issued to relevant stakeholders.
- 3D Site Modelling: A computer-aided design (CAD) model based on survey data is in development. This model will support coordination of consultant inputs and allow for future built form and massing studies.

Geotechnical Investigations: Requests for geotechnical services to confirm soil profiles and rock depths to inform the bulk earthworks strategy have been issued. Council is currently awaiting proposals for evaluation and engagement.

Report

Recent progress on the Master Plan for the Warnervale Business Precinct includes the following key activities:

- Archaeological Assessment: Aboriginal heritage investigations are underway, with Expressions of Interest (EOIs) issued to relevant stakeholders.
- 3D Site Modelling: A computer-aided design (CAD) model based on survey data is in development. This model will support coordination of consultant inputs and allow for future built form and massing studies.
- Geotechnical Investigations: Requests for geotechnical services to confirm soil profiles and rock depths to inform the bulk earthworks strategy have been issued. Council is currently awaiting proposals for evaluation and engagement.

Timeline

- The project is progressing in accordance with the exhibited Operational Plan.

Stakeholder Engagement

Nil.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

This proposal has cost and revenue financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes the impact for this proposal.

Nil.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Theme 2: Smart

Goal C: A growing and competitive region

S-C3: Facilitate economic development to increase local employment opportunities and provide a range of jobs for all residents.

Risk Management

This report supports effective governance and transparency by providing regular updates to the Economic Development Committee on the progress of the Warnervale Business Precinct Master Plan. Regular reporting ensures that the project remains aligned with Council's strategic priorities and is responsive to evolving challenges. Identified risks such as funding availability, stakeholder coordination, and technical constraints are mitigated through staged planning, external engagement, and ongoing project governance.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

Preparation of the revised Master Plan will commence in the 2025–26 financial year. Completion is targeted for 2029, in line with the exhibited Operational Plan.

Attachments

Nil.

Item No: 1.7
Title: Quarterly Economic Indicators Report - Standing item
Department: Community and Recreation Services



1 July 2025 Economic Development Committee

Reference: F2025/00095 - D16889296
Author: Andrew Powrie, Business Economic Development Manager
Manager: Sue Ledingham, Unit Manager Customer Marketing and Economic Development
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

Recommendation

That the Committee notes the report on the latest Central Coast Economic Indicators.

Report purpose

To inform the committee on the latest statistics for the key economic indicators.

Executive Summary

At the April 2025 Economic Development Committee meeting a report was tabled on key economic indicators. This included data for the labour market, the property market and train passenger movements. This report provides updated data sets for those three (3) indicators along with the latest quarterly update on the business count for the Local Government Area.

Background

At the Economic Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 01 April 2025 there was an action:

'That the Economic Indicators Update Report be provided to the Committee on a quarterly basis'.

This report addresses that action with the updated economic indicators.

Report

Council sources a selection of data sets that are monitored and updated either monthly or quarterly.

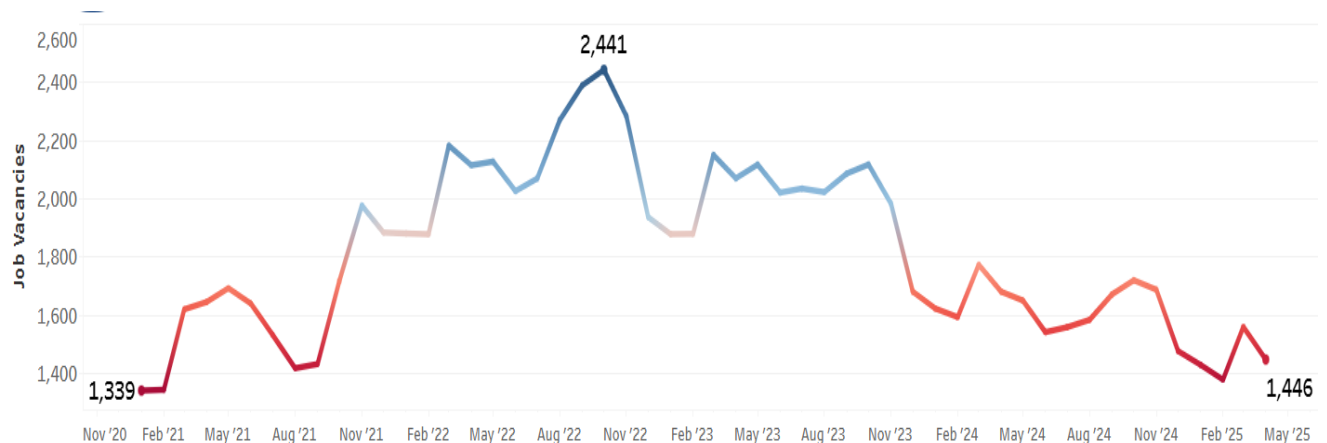
The following is an overview on the latest economic data for the labour market, the property market, total business count and train passenger movements for the LGA from Opal card data.

Labour Market:

- Jobs Advertised continue to sit at low levels compared to the high of October 2022. 1,446 online advertisements – April 2025. The monthly averages from November 2020 to May 2025 are presented in the Graph 1.

Graph 1

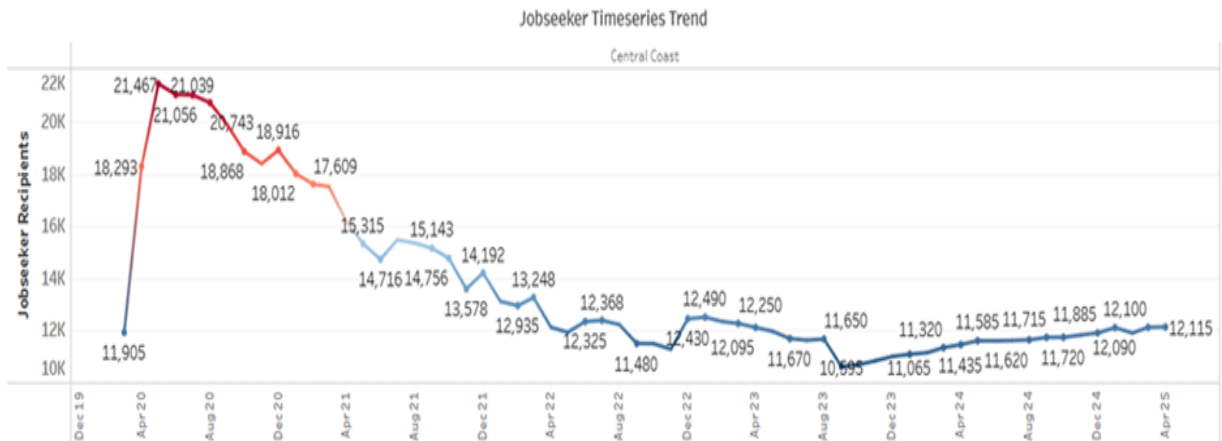
Central Coast Monthly Online Job Advertisements – May 2025



- Jobseekers and Youth Allowance recipients continue to hold a constant level. As can be seen in Graph 2, jobseekers increased from 12,100 in March 2025 to 12,115 in April.
- Youth Allowance recipients were 1,360 in April 2025 which matched the March data as noted in Graph 3. The monthly Jobseekers and Youth Allowances data from December 2019 to May 2025 are presented in the graphs below.

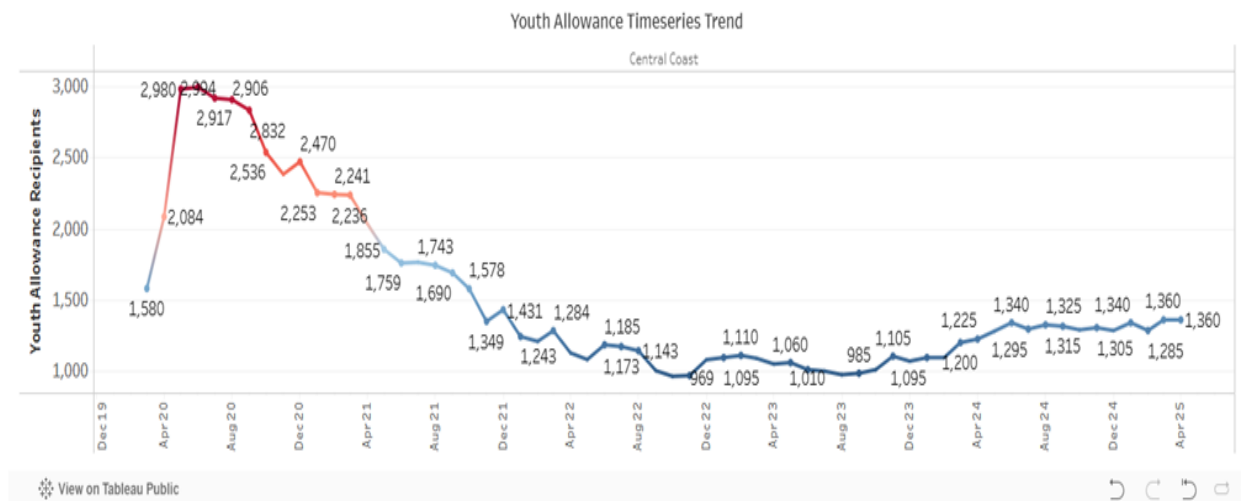
Graph 2

Central Coast Monthly Jobseekers – May 2025



Graph 3

Central Coast Monthly Youth Allowances – May 2025

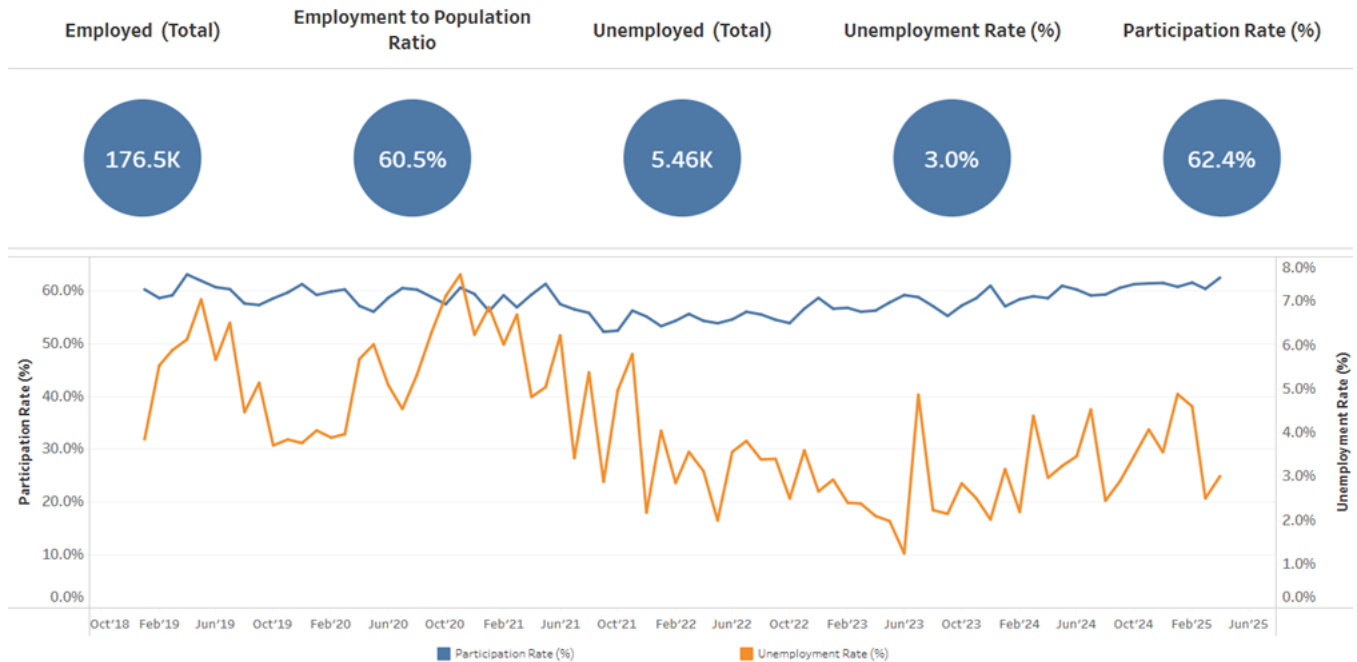


- Labour Force Participation increased to its highest level in over four years to 62.4% in April. The last two (2) labour Force Survey unemployment percentage data points have shown the lowest unemployment numbers, March 2025 2.5% and April 2025 3.0%, since August 2024. The monthly unemployment percentage and labour force participation data from December 2018 to March 2025 are presented in Graph 4.

Graph 4

Central Coast Monthly Unemployment / Labour Force Participation – March 2025

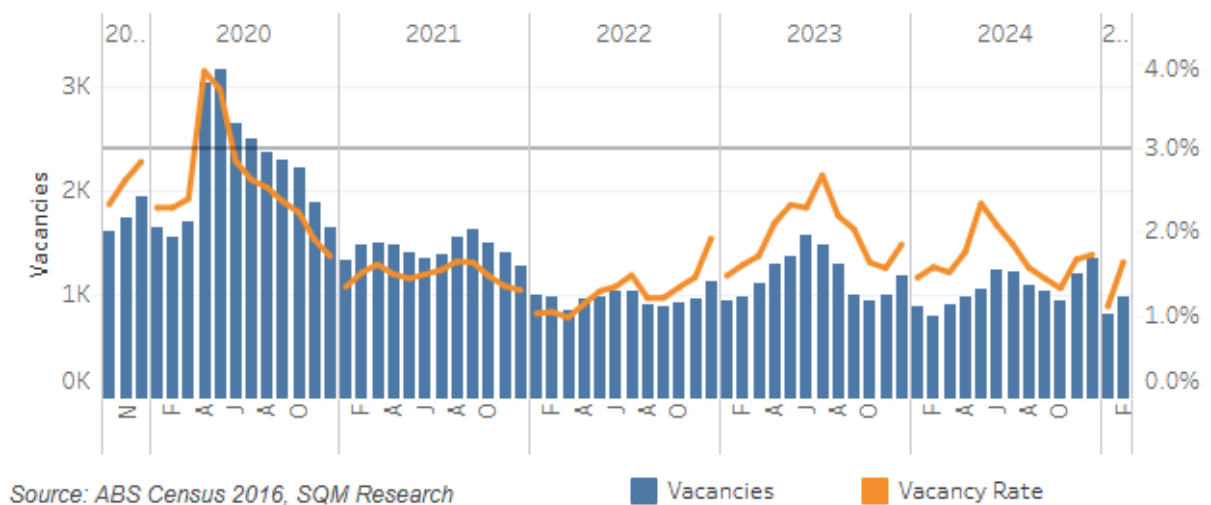
Labour force status by Labour market region (ASGS)

Property Market:

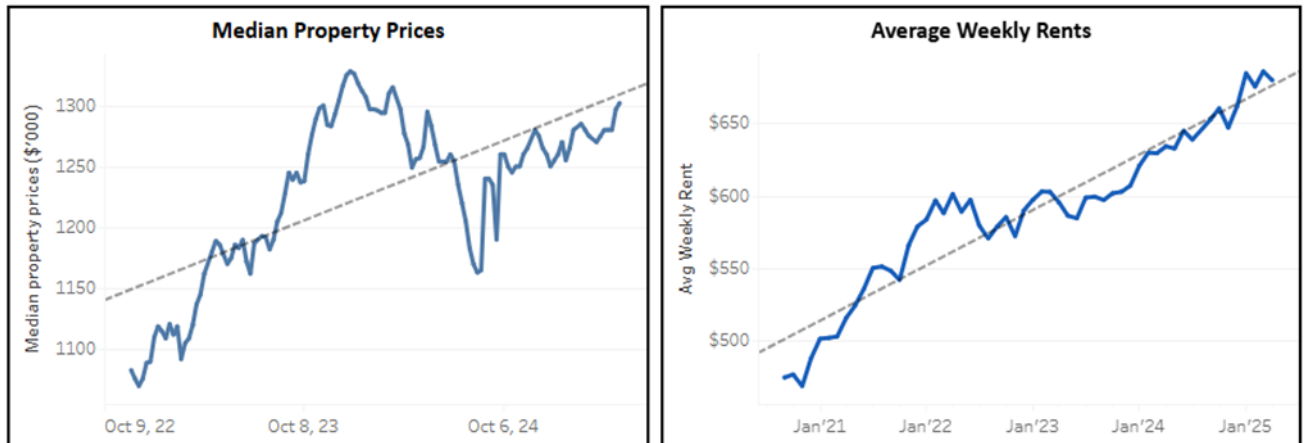
- Rental property vacancy rates continue to sit at very low levels. The latest data, February 2025, has the vacancy rate at 1.6% - 977 properties. The January 2025 number was 1.0% - 811 properties. The monthly vacancies and vacancy rates from October 2019 to March 2025 are presented in Graph 5.

Graph 5

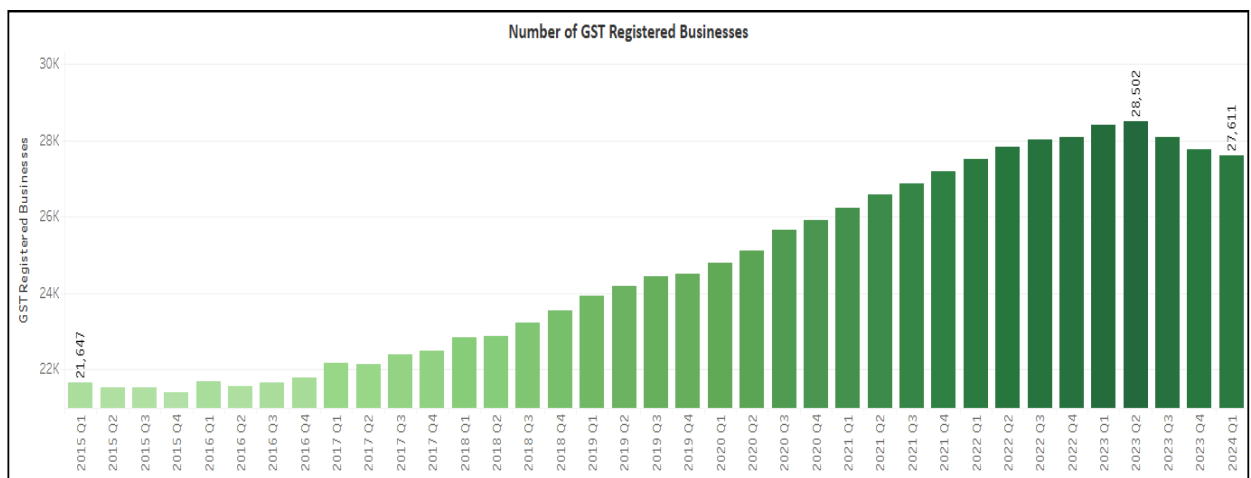
Central Coast Monthly Rental Vacancies – February 2025



- In Graph 6 the median house sale prices increased to \$1.3M in May 2025, the most significant increase since December 2024. The average weekly rental price was \$680 in April 2025, this level has been consistent since January 2025. The long term trends for both indicators have been a significant increase since COVID.

Graph 6**Central Coast Monthly Median House Prices /Weekly Rents – April/May 2025**Industry / Businesses

- GST registered businesses were down slightly for the 2024 Q1 (January to March) period. A total 27,611 compared to 27,764 in the October to December 2023 Q4 (October to December) period.
- Business numbers peaked in 2023 Q2 (April to June) at 28,502. The decline since then has been 891 businesses over the inflationary recession period as the cash rate increases occurred. The long term quarterly trend from 2016 is represented in the Table 1.

Table 1 - Central Coast Quarterly Businesses Count – 2016 – Q1 2024Opal Passenger Train Stations Trips

- Train trips across the four key Central Coast Stations: Gosford, Tuggerah, Woy Woy and Wyong, continue to sit significantly below pre COVID levels. The long term trends from 2016 by month are represented in the Graph 7.

Graph 7

Central Coast Train Stations Opal Passenger Movements – 2016 to March 2025



Further information on all data sets collected is available on the indicator dashboard on Council's website located at centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/business/opportunity-central-coast.

Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal.

Council contracts and external data scientist to gather data sets and develop dashboard with funding from the annual economic development operational budget.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

Theme 2: Smart

Goal C: A growing and competitive region

S-C3: Facilitate economic development to increase local employment opportunities and provide a range of jobs for all residents.

Risk Management

There have been no risks identified in the preparation of the report.

Critical Dates or Timeframes

Nil.

Attachments

Nil.