



MIDCOAST
council



MIDCOAST CULTURAL PLAN 2036

JUNE 2021

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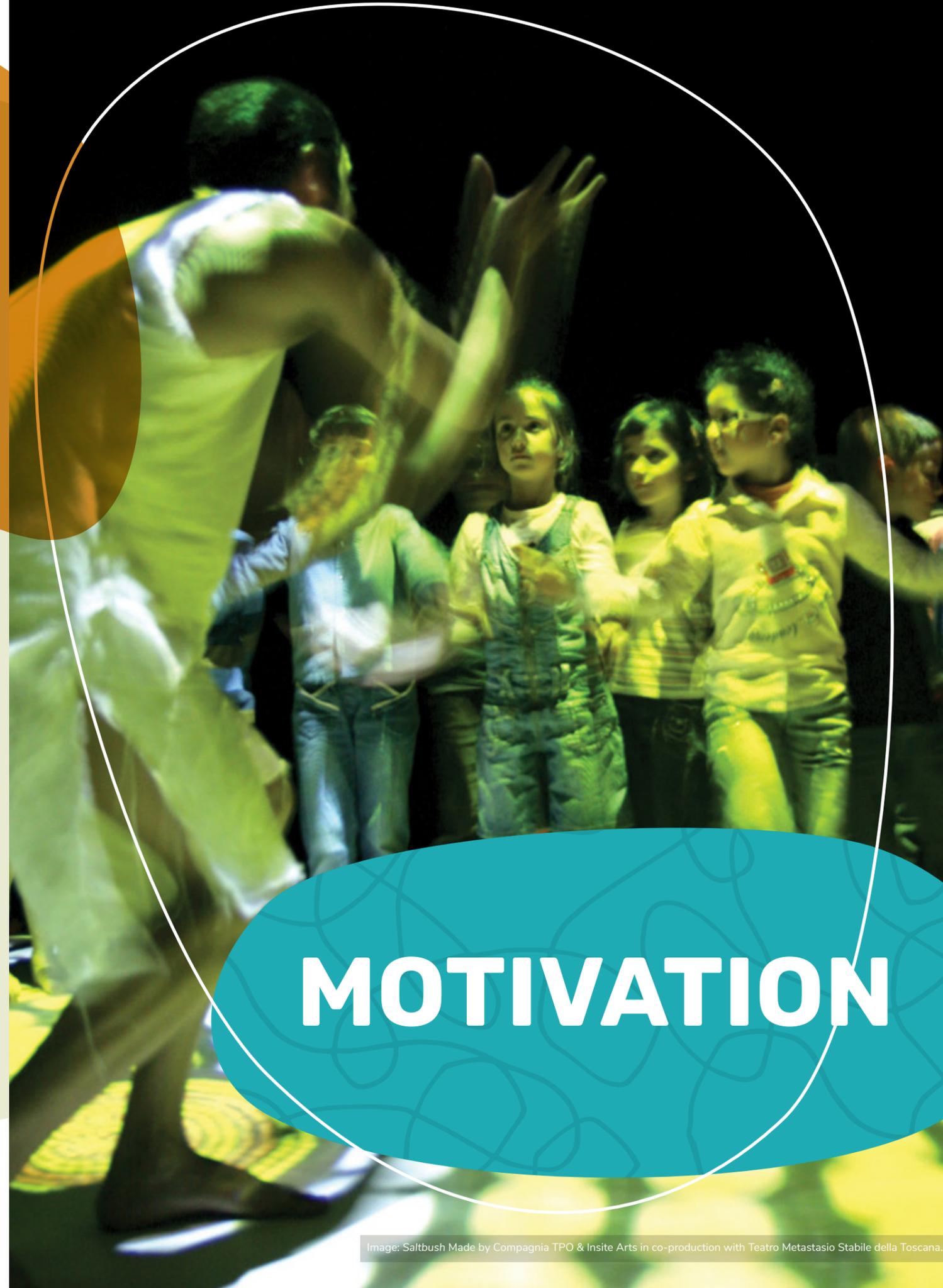
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, the Gathang-speaking people and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside in the MidCoast Council area. We extend our respect to Elders past and present, and to all future cultural-knowledge holders.

Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyila,
Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyiy#



Expressed in Gathang language. Refer to Appendix 1 for translation

Image: Waang Djarri Dancers

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



I am thrilled to present the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036, prepared through extensive engagement across our diverse community.

Over 900 people have already been actively involved in the process, testament to the growing interest in arts and culture on the MidCoast, and a strong desire to recognise the region's rich cultural heritage.

Our region is home to passionate artists, amazing regional cultural facilities and an expanding creative community. The MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 will set the long term direction supporting our vision of being a place of unique environmental and cultural significance, and addressing new challenges and opportunities for the region.

We know from research, and from recent experiences like the 2019 bushfires and the pandemic, that arts, culture and creativity are crucial elements of a healthy life and have profound healing and social capacities. It's the music, films, cooking, painting, games, drawing, books, photography and plays that have seen us through tough times and that continue to bring us together – and that keep us together, individually and as a community.

We also know from other places across Australia that arts and culture can help create a stronger sense of place and support local economies. This can be either directly in the creative industries, or indirectly through increased tourism where vibrant local places and cultural experiences can bring visitors to the region. In turn, this can help attract new residents and retain young people to the area by creating more educational and employment opportunities.

The personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of arts and culture are many - this Plan touches on them all in providing a holistic approach to delivering benefits for the whole community well into the future. The long-term is important: by defining the outcomes we are seeking, we can all work effectively together across various disciplines and professions so that arts and culture becomes visible and accessible in our everyday lives, for everybody.

THE COMMUNITY'S VISION

We strive to be recognised as a place of unique environmental and cultural significance. Our strong community connection, coupled with our innovative development and growing economy, builds the quality of life we value.

(MidCoast 2030 – Shared Vision, Shared Responsibility. Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2030)

Once in place, this Plan will provide the overarching framework that will ultimately drive specific, shorter term actions to progress our vision. We look forward to reporting on the planning and details associated with these shorter term projects as part of Council's annual business planning cycle.

I hope you will continue to be part of our journey of supporting and celebrating arts, culture and creativity in our everyday lives and welcome your feedback on this MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036.

Cr David West Mayor
MidCoast Council

OUR VISION

MidCoast is a place of unique environmental and cultural significance. Our creativity is inspired by the natural landscape and the resilience of our people.

We build on our artistic and cultural strengths, supporting each other and celebrating our creative sector.

Our shared history unites us and is nurtured by our storytellers, connecting the rich tapestry of places in the MidCoast region.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“ The benefits of culture reach far further than its intrinsic value of enriching our lives creatively and emotionally. Culture builds strong and cohesive communities, making them safer, healthier and happier, and helping them forge identities. It drives innovation across our economy. ”

THE HON. DON HARWIN MLC,
CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2025+

As the first of its kind, the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 is a foundational document that will help us build on our strengths and better support arts and culture across the region. We are well positioned to make MidCoast a vibrant and thriving region – without losing the diverse cultural flavours that make the area so special in the first place.

Our overall aim is to build on our strengths to deliver personal, social, economic and environmental benefits to the community through improved recognition and visibility of Aboriginal cultural heritage; expanded delivery of community arts and culture programs; creating welcoming places through revitalising town centres; and diversifying the economy to enable arts and creative enterprises to flourish.

This strengths-based approach does not ignore the challenges ahead. There is no doubt that climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, an ageing population, social isolation and deteriorating mental health are complex challenges that need careful and continuous attention. However, we also know that change is happening at a faster pace than ever – and so it is the ability to adapt and be resilient we need to focus on in moving forward.

The MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 is prepared around a central vision and four key themes that respond to community priorities identified in the engagement for this Plan, as outlined following. The Plan aligns with NSW Government planning priorities, namely the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and existing Council strategies and plans such as the Community Strategic Plan and the Destination Management Plan. It will be implemented and monitored in step with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, linking to the Community Strategic Plan, the Local Strategic Planning Statement and the Delivery Plan and Operational Plan.

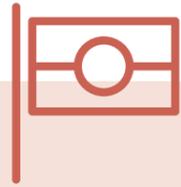
A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH



Connecting our Landscapes and Places

We acknowledge and leverage the rich and diverse natural areas across the region that continues to inspire and nurture our creative lifestyle.

- Our strong connection to our landscapes and places inspires creative expression
- The region is recognised for its natural beauty and diverse landscapes
- MidCoast is able to attract visitors and new residents who are drawn to the area's natural abundance



Celebrating our First Nations and Cultural Diversity

We create greater awareness of First Nations peoples' continuous connection to Country and enhance visibility of the region's cultural diversity that unifies and inspires community.

- The rich Aboriginal culture and language is a source of community belonging and identity
- A local community deeply inspired and enriched by the area's Aboriginal natural and cultural heritage
- A widespread community desire to learn more about diverse Aboriginal cultural heritage and expressions



Supporting our Creatives and Industry

Recognising the untapped potential of our local people and artistic talent, we nurture the vibrant creative community made up of individual artists, collectives and cultural practitioners who enrich the cultural fabric of our region.

- Community passion, creativity and resilience is the wellspring of our creative potential
- An extensive network of new, emerging and established artists and creatives
- Imagination drives activation and vibrancy of our shared spaces



Enhancing our Infrastructure and Spaces

We showcase our passion for arts and culture through enhancement of our shared spaces and a dedicated network of cultural facilities and services.

- Extensive existing cultural infrastructure including the Gallery, MEC, Libraries and volunteer run Museums
- Untapped potential to leverage community infrastructure (such as libraries) and special shared spaces
- A broad spectrum of arts and cultural offerings and events – from community-based events through to high-end cultural productions
- Townships and public spaces with unique character and heritage

SETTING THE SCENE



OUR REGION AND COMMUNITY

The MidCoast region has been home to the Gathang speaking people for over 60,000 years. Families living in our community today share a language with unbroken lineage and welcome different nationalities that now call the MidCoast home.

A large and diverse MidCoast region

The MidCoast contains 195 towns, villages and localities. Spanning an area of 10,052km², MidCoast Council is the largest Council area in the Hunter covering 30.5% of the region and 1.25% of NSW. Almost the size of Jamaica, it is a large and diverse area, ranging from beaches and coastline, to mountains and hinterland, with green spaces and national parks in between. This landscape is characterised by pristine waterways, striking scenery and an abundance of natural treasures.

The MidCoast is home to the Gathang speaking Aboriginal people, the Biripi and Worimi. We are a region rich in cultural pride and connection to the landscape and we embrace the spirit of reconciliation. The MidCoast has a population of approximately 93,800 people living in around 40,000 households. Unique to the MidCoast, there are two main population centres, Taree and Forster-Tuncurry, each with differing economic drivers. Taree offers a wide range of regional services and facilities that are utilised across our region, including the Manning Base Hospital, Taree Regional Airport, schools, and sporting, entertainment and cultural facilities. Large tracts of industrial land also support a focus on industry. In contrast, Forster-Tuncurry centres around lifestyle. Ideally located between the coast and lakes, both tourism and retirement living drive the economy. This has led to extensive shopping, entertainment and service facilities to support both residents and visitors.

There are rural and coastal centres that support the main centres - some are 'satellite suburbs', while others are self-reliant given their distance from the larger centres. These centres include Tea Gardens-Hawks Nest, Gloucester, Wingham, Hallidays Point, Harrington and Old Bar (see following). Our rural centres like Gloucester play a significant role for the economy and the industry they provide. In addition, there are a large number of villages and localities, each with their own unique character and qualities. Older towns and villages like Taree, Gloucester, Stroud and Wingham have an historic charm. They showcase heritage in their town centres, older neighbourhoods, some industrial buildings and facilities like halls, memorials and railway stations.

The population of the MidCoast is forecast to grow to 100,100 people by 2041, generating the need for approximately 8,000 more dwellings (DPIE, 2019). This is an estimated growth rate of 0.3% over a 25-year period. Much of this growth is expected to occur in or near our coastal towns and villages. The MidCoast is a popular location with many retirees moving from the Central Coast and the Sydney basin. They are seeking a 'sea change' or 'tree change', while still being close to Sydney and Newcastle. Most of our population growth has occurred in people aged 60 and over who make up 38.5% of our population. The median age of our population is 52, well above the National and State median of 38, making the MidCoast population one of the oldest in NSW.

While the region is a popular place for raising young children, who make up 19% of the population, we experience a sharp decrease in numbers of youth (aged 18 and over). Although educational opportunities are improving, there is still often a need for young people to leave the region to pursue higher education or employment opportunities. In our community, 6.9% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, more than double the State and National averages (2.9% and 2.8% respectively). There is significant opportunity to embrace Indigenous cultures and enhance the inclusiveness of our community. With 8.2% of our population reporting they need assistance with their day-to-day lives, we have higher than the NSW average of people living with a disability. Through our Disability Inclusion Action Plan, we are committed to continually seeking ways to improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of our community.

We also have a supportive community, with 20% of our population volunteering. The recent 2019 bushfire events showcased our incredible community spirit as we came together to assist those affected by bushfires. There are a number of challenges that impact on the socio-economic health of our community. With high levels of retirement and unemployment, and low levels of education attainment, the household incomes in the MidCoast are significantly lower than other regions. The MidCoast is the 25th most disadvantaged Council area in NSW (out of 131 areas) with a SEIFA index of 928. This increases the importance of planning to provide opportunities for job growth, accessibility across the region and housing affordability.



Location of MidCoast centres

10,052 km²  **POPULATION**
93,836
(ABSERP 2018)

192 km 
of coastline

32,343 LIBRARY MEMBERS  **651,549** LOANS
(FY 2019/20)

195 towns villages & localities

10 CHLORINATED POOLS

2 OCEAN POOLS 

58 FULL SIZE PLAYING FIELDS

13,225 TICKETS SOLD 

137 MANNING ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE EVENTS
(FY 2019/20)

VIBRANT SPACES AWARD WINNING PROGRAM 

2.1 MILLION VISITORS 

13 SKATE PARKS 

 **14 HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREAS**
487 HERITAGE ITEMS

 **26** SPORTING COMPLEXES

178 WORKSHOPS/EVENTS
(FY 2019/20)

MANNING REGIONAL ART GALLERY **13,174** VISITORS
(FY 2019/20)

18 EXHIBITIONS 

84 PLAYGROUNDS 



OUR CULTURAL PLAN - BACKGROUND

MidCoast Council has developed our first Cultural Plan to strengthen our creative community and invigorate our local economy.

The MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 is a roadmap for bringing our region to life by supporting and celebrating arts, culture and creativity in our everyday lives. It's a vision for where we want to be, and a framework for how to achieve a more creative and resilient MidCoast. Importantly, this Cultural Plan has been shaped by the stories and aspirations of the community and the local arts and cultural sector.

The Cultural Plan is an opportunity to create a foundation for further collaboration and motivation through inspirational and creative methods. Through this Plan, Council aims to instil a sense of hope and excitement in the community, particularly after the hardship of recent bushfires and drought. Further, Council recognises that arts and culture can be powerful mediums that provide comfort and healing. Engaging with culture has many benefits on both the individual and community level, including expanding knowledge and learning for individuals, supporting cohesion and community and individual health and wellbeing, encouraging community participation, and improving personal development such as increasing a sense of self or empowerment.

Project Objectives:

- To guide cultural investment and activity through a staged approach, aligned with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- To value the unique attributes of the Region and support the existing arts community and creative industry
- To acknowledge the potential for new income streams, identify funding opportunities, and acknowledge the importance of a diversified economy
- To recognise the need for a sustainable approach to ensure the viability of all new cultural infrastructure

Why is cultural planning important?

Australians frequently access and participate in arts and cultural activities and facilities, with over 80% of people in 2017-18 aged 15 and over attending at least one cultural venue or event within the last year, and over 50% of people attending at least one performing arts event. Additionally, over 95% of children participate in cultural activities such as playing music, singing, dancing, writing, and creative arts programs outside of school hours. This participation is evident in the MidCoast where the Manning Entertainment Centre and Manning Regional Art Gallery had 22,961 and 18,017 visitors respectively in 2017-18. Libraries across the MidCoast region had 387,251 visits and 11,711 attendees at various events in 2017-18. Culture is very much part of everyday life.

Cultural planning is underpinned by six key principles:

- Based on values
- Directed towards goals/pillars/strategic directions
- Focused on outcomes
- Informed by evidence
- Underpinned by a theory of change
- Constantly reviewed and evaluated



“ Culture encompasses diverse avenues of expression in architecture, arts, history, language, education, leisure, work and daily life. It’s all about our ability to ‘tell our story’ - an essential and defining human characteristic.”

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW

What is culture?

Culture is a shared experience that explains and entertains us – as individuals, families and groups. We find culture on the streets and down laneways, in our galleries, museums, libraries and venues, at built and natural cultural sites, sporting grounds, open spaces and in unexpected and surprising locations.

The word ‘culture’ can mean something different to everyone. Some may think of it as being associated with the arts or participating in a cultural experience like a festival or sporting match, for others it’s about language or tradition. For us on the MidCoast, and for the purposes of this Cultural Plan, we have defined culture as a mix of all those things – it’s a part of our everyday life, the way we live and the way we spend our time.

“ ‘Culture’ is defined as the production, distribution and participation in creativity by the New South Wales community and visitors, and the reflection and expression of its customs, traditions, heritage and social character.

It includes the visual arts, crafts, media arts, performing arts (music, dance, theatre, physical theatre), heritage, museums, archives, libraries, publishing, sound recording, film, audio visual, television, radio and digital arts. It also includes creativity in the public realm, such as the design of the built environment and public spaces.”

CREATE NSW, NSW CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2025+

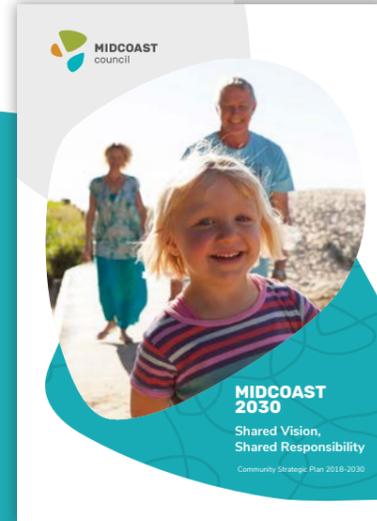
Our starting point

The MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 comes after a series of important documents, including the MidCoast Community Strategic Plan, Local Strategic Planning Statement, Destination Management Plan, Regional Economic Development Strategy and Disability Inclusion Action Plan as well as regional strategies and plans of organisations such as Arts Mid North Coast and Destination North Coast. This Cultural Plan 2036 links to the objectives and where relevant, the actions, outlined in these documents to ensure a consistent approach to planning for community. This collective momentum will help ensure gaps are filled and challenges can be overcome.



Community Strategic Plan

MidCoast Council's Community Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with the community in 2016 and 2017. The document includes a community vision and set of values that are guiding Council's planning and help to ensure this Cultural Plan 2036 is founded in what the community love most about the MidCoast area and recognise as being important for the future.



What is Cultural Planning?

The importance of cultural planning extends beyond arts and culture, recognising the broader lifestyle of residents, economic impacts and the experience of visitors. Cultural planning is about supporting the creative, artistic and cultural aspects of a place and the community. The MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 has a vision for where we want to be in 2036 and strategies for getting there.

As the first of its kind, the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 is a foundational document that will help us prepare for the coming years and better support arts and culture across the region. The cultural planning process is ongoing and may change over time. It will help Council identify where improvements can be made, what kind of things the community want to see and do more of to enhance the local cultural experience and reflect the diversity of the region.

Who benefits from this Cultural Plan?

Everyone. Our aim is that all residents, workers, arts organisations and visitors will reap the benefits of supporting culture across the MidCoast. This Cultural Plan includes objectives and actions that translate into opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. We want everyone to participate in, and contribute to, the culture of the MidCoast.

This Cultural Plan will benefit:

- Community members who participate in arts and cultural activities such as attending festivals or enjoying public art, visiting a museum, gallery, theatre or library, learning about our rich history, or being entertained or inspired about our future.
- The arts and cultural sector who are integral to the MidCoast identity and contributing to the health, wellbeing and economic development of our region.

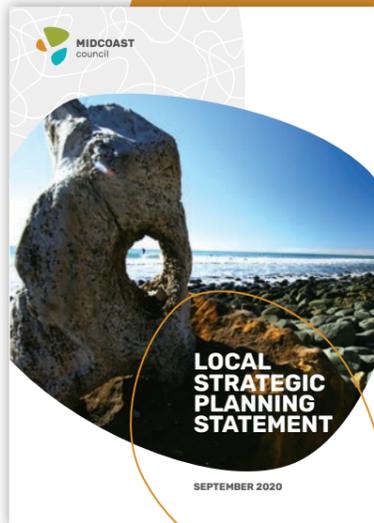
The benefits of engaging with culture are varied on both the individual and community level. Including:

- expanding knowledge and learning for individuals
- improving personal development such as increasing a sense of self or empowerment
- providing recreational experiences
- supporting social cohesion, and community and individual health and wellbeing
- encouraging community participation
- increasing liveability of an area
- enhancing economic benefits including job creation, capital growth and innovation across industries

Local Strategic Planning Statement

The planning statement provides a 20 year land-use vision for the MidCoast, outlining how growth and change will be managed to enhance the high levels of liveability, environmental amenity and rural character that characterises our region.

As cultural activity is undertaken in places and spaces across the MidCoast region, it's important this Cultural Plan considers and aligns with the Local Strategic Planning Statement. Further, outcomes from the Cultural Plan will also influence Planning Priority 4 – Place making our towns and villages, Planning Priority 5 – Connect people and places and Planning Priority 10 – Leveraging our lifestyle and amenity. As Council continues to implement the Cultural Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement over the coming years, it is envisaged greater opportunities can be achieved through a shared understanding of planning for culture.



What is Council's role?

MidCoast Council has a leadership role to support community participation in arts and culture and to achieve great outcomes through the delivery of this Cultural Plan. Council's role may involve one or more of the following:

Host Provide arts and cultural infrastructure to facilitate creative activity.	Partner Collaborate and work with creatives and community groups to reach greater goals together.	Facilitator Create networks and creative hubs to achieve impactful cultural outcomes.
Advocate Champion and celebrate the regions arts and cultural achievements.	Advisor Support, share and link our creative industries with the latest sector development.	Regulator Manage risks and assess impact to enable success for the sector.

Recognising that our cultural and arts practitioners are an important part of building our community identity and connecting our people, the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 seeks to improve relationships and partnerships. As part of this we acknowledge the contribution and hard work of our community and the arts and cultural sector to the cultural life of the MidCoast. We want to unlock potential investment to maximise the cultural impact across the region.

How the Cultural Plan fits within Council planning framework



“ We have an opportunity to positively impact our community with a sense of community pride and showcase all that is special in our region. ”

COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT

“ The MidCoast Cultural Plan aims to deliver benefits to the community through arts and cultural programs as well as diversifying the economy to support and enable arts and creative enterprises to flourish. ”

PAUL DE SZELL,
 COUNCIL'S DIRECTOR OF LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES,
 MIDCOAST COUNCIL

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

What do we stand for and what principles underpin this vision?

The following principles will enable us to deliver on our vision for the MidCoast and help guide our strategies and actions. The following table illustrates the link between the values identified by our community and the principles that will guide our plan.

Values (Community Strategic Plan)	Cultural Plan Principles
Our unique, diverse and culturally rich communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversity is our strength – the many towns and different backgrounds of people that make up our communities across MidCoast 2. Our places are for people – creating opportunities for community to gather, feel safe, take comfort and live their lives 3. Fit for purpose spaces and places – meeting the needs of the community and users, highlighting the uniqueness of the context, local stories and history
A connected community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Building bridges through culture – providing opportunities for sharing, caring and healing 5. Empowering locals – to achieve their potential and enable innovation, experimentation and collaboration
Our environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. 'Caring for Country' - sustainable land management practices and initiatives that honour Aboriginal knowledge systems and their cultural significance 7. Connected to nature – protecting and conserving our flora, fauna and natural systems to enable continued inspiration from our natural setting
Our thriving and growing economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Embracing our authentic destinations – during the day and at night for locals and visitors
Strong leadership and shared vision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Sustainable decisions - that are supported and can prove value for money 10. Common sense yet creative approach – from Council, partners and the community

The following pages provide an overview of what we heard through the consultation and the MidCoast region.



HOW WE ENGAGED

In 2020, more than 900 people participated in the two rounds of consultation for the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036.

This Cultural Plan has been shaped by the passion, ideas and feedback received by the community along with the generous time and guidance provided by the Cultural Plan Reference Group and Council staff.

Engagement methods





THIS IS WHAT WE HEARD

Top 4 priorities for culture across the MidCoast

- 1** **The natural landscape is an important part of our cultural identity**

The vast and diverse natural beauty of the region is a foundational component of the MidCoast's cultural identity. These landscapes are commonly viewed as cultural assets, through which the community come together, celebrate and learn. Providing greater opportunity to connect with and enjoy these important places is a major priority for the community.
- 2** **We want to celebrate Aboriginal stories and our rich heritage**

The unique cultural identity of MidCoast's towns and villages is informed by their rich history and connection to Aboriginal culture - the community wish to see these identities preserved and celebrated, and promoted across the region.
- 3** **Creatives want better access to learning opportunities**

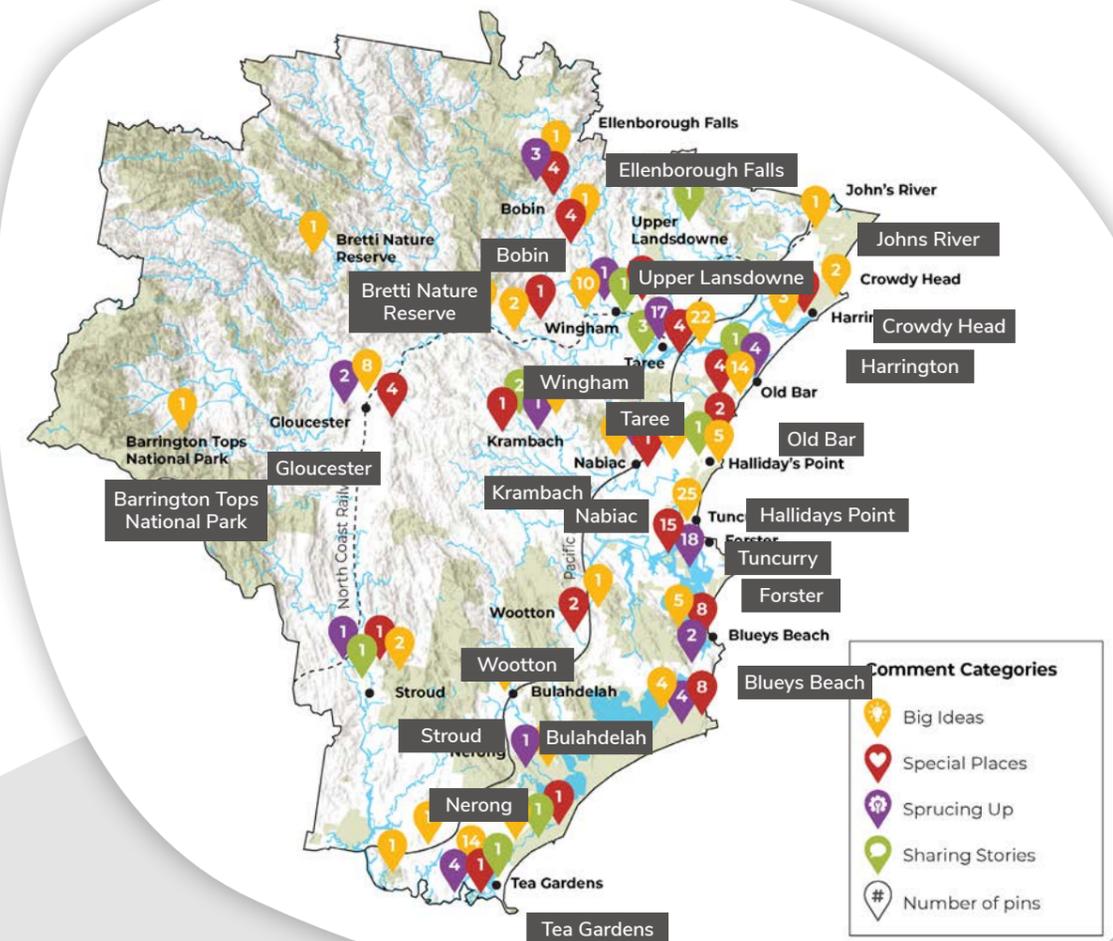
The need for greater opportunities to learn, grow and evolve is considered an urgent priority to achieving artistic excellence within the region, and building an ecosystem of activity that will establish the MidCoast as an area of cultural and artistic excellence. Residents wish to see greater opportunities to learn from each other, as well as accessing world class educational opportunities from outside the local government area.
- 4** **We can leverage our arts and culture for business and the economy**

MidCoast's proximity to two of Australia's major cities provides the unique opportunity to leverage arts and culture to generate economic activity in the region, while also supporting the health and wellbeing of the community. Arts and Culture were considered essential tools to help revitalise town centres, repurpose unused spaces, and attract economic activity to the region.

In summary, we have heard that...

- The beautiful landscapes of the MidCoast are part of our cultural identity
- We need to celebrate our strengths and the creativity and resilience of our people
- We want to engage with our rich history and Aboriginal culture
- We can make better use of our existing buildings and assets
- We want to learn and collaborate to drive artistic excellence
- Arts and culture have the power to drive our economy
- We need to make culture more visible in our villages and towns by supporting local talent
- We want Council to support the cultural and creative sector with a commitment to the actions outlined in this plan

Capturing input from across the MidCoast



“ It is unclear to me who you would get in touch with. There is no public face to arts and culture which is readily accessible or identifiable. ”

“ We have an amazing array of sporting, creative and amazing landmarks in our area that do not get enough publicity. ”

“ Using Gathang language in our business and council buildings and signage as they do in New Zealand. This reminds us of the historical and contemporary continuing culture of the Biripi. ”

OUR WAY FORWARD

OVERVIEW

The spirit of our people and the beauty and diversity of our natural landscape are two of our key strengths that make our culture unique. Across the LGA, a network of passionate community members, artists and creatives actively support arts and culture and help create greater awareness of the importance of creativity and storytelling in our everyday lives.

It is this grassroots foundation of the arts and a strong volunteer base that allows MidCoast to “punch above its weight” in providing diverse arts offerings and creating a strong local cultural identity. As a regional area with limited resources or cultural assets at its disposal, this collaboration with local artists, creatives, and the community is essential to the success of this Plan.

Our starting point for this Plan is that we need to build on what we already have rather than start from scratch. We need to make best use of existing resources (human, financial, or physical assets) to achieve our vision for the arts and culture and address future challenges.

This premise is at the heart of our strategic directions, described in the following as they relate to the Plan’s core themes of:

- Connecting our Landscapes and Places
- Celebrating our First Nations and Cultural Diversity
- Supporting our Creatives and Industry
- Enhancing our Infrastructure and Spaces

CONNECTING OUR LANDSCAPE AND PLACES

The MidCoast landscape is a foundational component of the region's heritage and identity, a meeting place for the community, a source of inspiration for creatives, and a focus for the expanding tourism industry. The community values the lifestyle on the MidCoast and loves the rural, quiet and relaxed nature of living in the MidCoast, and the proximity to work, cities, family and services. The MidCoast offers a relaxed lifestyle amongst a beautiful natural setting, with important metropolitan services and facilities offered nearby in Newcastle and Sydney.

The expansive MidCoast region uniquely stretches from the snow-capped mountains and waterfalls of Barrington Tops, into the network of rivers, streams and waterways that run past sites of Aboriginal significance in forest, bushland, lakes and beaches. The region promotes and celebrates its 195 towns, 58 National Parks and Reserves, 5 coastal lagoons, 1 marine park, 1 International recognised wetland (Myall Lakes) and the World Heritage listed Barrington Tops. Our residents are passionate about where they live with the landscape often the backdrop to a wide variety of festivals, events and cultural celebrations.

What we heard

Arts-led placemaking is a positive driver of local economies and a key component in creating a sense of vibrancy. It extends beyond the arts and influences the broader lifestyle of residents and the experiences offered and promoted to visitors.

Placemaking creates a strong sense of place and a deeper connection between the place and the individual. This enhances the retention of a skilled workforce, and is the cornerstone on which a region can promote its tourism offerings. The community view the diverse landscapes of the MidCoast to be its greatest asset, and increased opportunities to engage with it as the most untapped opportunity in the region. Providing increasing access and experiences within these assets in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner is considered a resilient future for the MidCoast economy.

Outcomes – what do we want?

- 1 Better promotion of our natural assets in a respectful and creative way
- 2 Authentic experiences and local stories shared across the landscape
- 3 Improved community health and wellbeing through good design and activation of public spaces
- 4 Enhanced village identities and character through creative placemaking
- 5 Active and vibrant town centres through programming
- 6 More interesting and attractive public spaces through creative expression and public art

Barrayga Djiranggaan Nyirun maray guunggu bathu maayngi[#]

“It would be great to see an initiative like Renew Newcastle to take place in the vacant shops, giving small start ups & creatives an opportunity to utilise the spaces for free until either a lease can be found or they turn a profit.”

SOCIAL PINPOINT PARTICIPANT

“Country is loved, needed, and cared for; and country loves, needs, and cares for her peoples in turn. Country is family, culture, identity. Country is self.¹”

“Culture embraces the outdoors, by day and by night, in the natural and the artificial environment. Spirituality is a connection between culture and nature.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

[#] Expressed in Gathang language. Refer to Appendix 1 for translation

¹ Meaning of land to Aboriginal people - Creative Spirits, retrieved from 'Seeing the Light: Aboriginal Law, Learning and Sustainable Living in Country', Ambelin Kwaymullina, Indigenous Law Bulletin May/June 2005, Volume 6, Issue 11

CONNECTING OUR LANDSCAPE AND PLACES

What is the strategy?	Implementation Areas	What does success look like?
<p>1.1 Improve connections to the natural environment – MidCoast's greatest asset</p>	<p>1.1.1 Identify key strategic locations for amenities upgrades that enable arts and cultural events and/or programming to be held</p> <p>1.1.2 Establish an online presence such as an interactive virtual map of significant sites in the region including way-finding, indication of accessibility, amenities on site, and activities on offer</p> <p>1.1.3 Enhance connection to MidCoast's abundant waterscape through visible and tangible links to headlands, riverbanks, lakes, beaches and valleys of regional significance</p> <p>1.1.4 Establish greater wayfinding and improved signage around and between town centres, natural assets, and sites of cultural significance</p>	<p>Improved community health and wellbeing through good design and activity of public spaces</p> <p>More interesting and attractive public spaces through creative expression and public art</p> <p>Community and Public spaces are activated with shared use of resources and public space.</p>
<p>1.2 Activate public spaces with arts, performance and creative programming</p>	<p>1.2.1 *Quick win* Incorporate arts programming for key civic and cultural events, such as New Years Eve and major sporting events</p> <p>1.2.2 Conduct an audit of the Vibrant Spaces Program to collect data on its impact and identify areas for enhancement</p> <p>1.2.3 Support the integration of existing arts trails by including their promotion in other events programming, such as arts festivals, heritage interpretation, or environmental awareness programs</p> <p>1.2.4 Provide clear guidelines and a framework for public art implementation for government, business and the community</p> <p>1.2.5 Continue to develop local community plans which include unique character statements that celebrate our towns and villages across the MidCoast LGA</p> <p>1.2.6 Create new opportunities for public art and activations to grow the visibility of creativity within our region</p>	<p>Better promotion and preservation of our natural assets in a respectful and creative way</p> <p>Authentic experiences and local stories shared across the landscape</p> <p>Enhanced village identities and character through creative placemaking</p> <p>Active and vibrant town centres through programming</p>



What can you do?

A collection of quick and simple ideas for residents and businesses of MidCoast:

- Connect with your local Landcare group and plant a tree
- Search and follow local community groups on Facebook
- Share inspirational examples of public art with friends and colleagues
- Learn more about the Council's Vibrant Spaces Program
- Participate in Council consultation
- Get involved locally and advocate for ideas and solutions that you are passionate about to help improve our cultural infrastructure
- Talk to your local Councillor
- Join your community Hall committee
- Join a local club or group

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST PEOPLES AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Through the development of the Cultural Plan, Council is committed to developing programs to improve the wellbeing of all MidCoast residents as well as facilitating reconciliation and fostering education between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal culture and heritage cannot be separated from the landscapes and natural heritage values of the MidCoast. It is from the natural environment that Aboriginal people draw their sense of identity, pride of place and belonging. And it is from the connection to land Aboriginal people offer their knowledge and art.

Any decisions or initiatives that touch on Aboriginal culture and heritage must go through culturally appropriate engagement protocols that recognise who can speak for Country and allow sufficient time for the Aboriginal community to consider anything that has to do with their culture and heritage. Here it is important to bear in mind that there is not one single representative organisation that can speak for all Aboriginal people in the area, and it is important to hear from traditional owners as well as Local Aboriginal Land Councils.

The cultural diversity of the region is expanding and changing with new groups of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples calling the region home. In 2016 9.3% of the population were born overseas and 3.6% of the population were from non-English speaking countries.

What we heard

The MidCoast community recognise the importance and richness of local Aboriginal heritage and the Gathang language, expressing a desire to engage further with the rich Aboriginal history on a day to day basis as well as through marked celebrations. Learning from and with Aboriginal people and groups was mentioned across all engagement activities. The community recognised that the places and landscapes that contribute to the character and lifestyle of current social groups carries wisdom and knowledge worth sharing and celebrating.

Outcomes – what do we want?

- 7 A shared sense that our region is on Gathang speaking country – the traditional lands of the Biripi and Worimi people
- 8 A cultural destination of choice by residents within the LGA and visitors from other parts of New South Wales, interstate and overseas
- 9 A mix of traditional and innovative methods to engage, experience and learn from Aboriginal culture
- 10 More opportunity for young people to learn and participate in caring for country
- 11 The cultural diversity of the MidCoast region informs a lively program of festivals and events
- 12 Greater trust between Council and our community to achieve a truly united one MidCoast

Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyila,
Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyiy
Birrby, Warrimay, Guringay barray#

“Aboriginal culture needs to be made more visible by creating more public art by Aboriginal artists, cultural signage in significant places and spaces.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

“Any cultural experience needs to be visible and available to the wider community. Telling the stories of the local Aboriginal people in public places with significant heritage would be a great start. Bring the stories to life with art for all to enjoy.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

“A recognition that our region is, and will continue to be, informed and shaped by many different cultures as people from diverse backgrounds add their unique contributions to our region.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT



CELEBRATING OUR FIRST PEOPLES AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

What is the strategy?	Implementation Areas	What does success look like?
2.1 Celebrating and increasing visibility of local Aboriginal heritage	2.1.1 Develop Aboriginal Cultural Walks connecting sites of significance, public art commissions and opportunities to share Care of Country knowledge 2.1.2 Educate the broader community of Gathang speaking country through signage and creative wayfinding 2.1.3 Support the local growth potential of Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Tourism with dedicated roles such as Aboriginal Creative Producer and Curator	More opportunity for young people to learn and participate in caring for country A shared sense that our region is on Gathang speaking country –the traditional lands of the Biripi and Worimi people
2.2 Creating opportunities to engage and learn	2.2.1 *Quick win* Contribute to the Aboriginal Action Plan 2.2.2 Establish a program of workshops about Aboriginal arts, culture, and management 2.2.3 Develop plans in partnership with key Aboriginal organisations for new cultural infrastructure dedicated to local Aboriginal culture, which could include exhibition spaces, keeping places and. cultural programs	Greater trust between Council and our community to achieve a truly united one MidCoast A mix of traditional and innovative methods to engage, experience and learn from different cultures
2.3 Ongoing and meaningful consultation	2.3.1 Consult with local Aboriginal communities to identify key stakeholders and clear pathways of communication for engagement on events, strategies and public arts opportunities 2.3.2 Support Aboriginal artists to tell their story and engage with community by engaging Aboriginal artists in key public art projects or programs	The cultural diversity of the MidCoast region informs a lively program of festivals and events A cultural destination of choice by residents within the LGA and visitors from other parts of New South Wales, interstate and overseas
2.4 Support different target audiences	2.4.1 Establish a group of internal Cultural Champions within Council to advocate for cultural outcomes and see the realisation of the Cultural Plan with representation from our diverse community 2.4.2 Identify and support the creative and cultural development of the MidCoast's diverse and multicultural story 2.4.3 Identify cultural activities for key demographics that will open up cultural and economic development opportunities	Celebrated diversity of the wide range of demographics that form the MidCoast community

What can you do?

A collection of quick and simple ideas for residents and businesses of MidCoast:

- Attend NAIDOC week events
- Include Acknowledgement of Country in your business and organisations events and learn its importance
- Attend an introduction to a Gathang language workshop
- Include Aboriginal organisations on your business email list or networking event
- Include Traditional Place names when sending or receiving a parcel
- Help an older resident setup Facebook or teleconference software
- Help a younger resident with their school work or interest area
- Invite new arrivals and migrants to your home or special event
- Use the preparation and eating of food as a vehicle for storytelling and a direct connection to cultural heritage



Left: Russell Saunders, image courtesy Julie Slavin

SUPPORTING OUR TALENTED CREATIVES AND INDUSTRY

Creative industries on the MidCoast are widely dispersed - a community who unites at venues and cultural infrastructure.

The Arts and Recreational Services sector is reported as contributing 366 FTE jobs in the MidCoast LGA, 56 of which are directly attributed to Creative and Performing Arts. While these 56 FTE Jobs only make up approximately 0.2% of MidCoast's jobs, it must be noted that this figure has remained stable from the 2006 to 2011 Census, despite the Regional NSW average trending downwards during that same time, and maintains a nearly equal gender distribution between Males and Females.

The MidCoast Council's current register of arts and creative organisations includes 63 different creative organisations across the LGA, with Taree containing the highest concentration of these groups, followed by Forster Tuncurry, and Wingham and Gloucester containing the highest per capita concentration. It should be noted that the geographical concentration of these organisations closely mirrors the tourism spending on the MidCoast, and further emphasises the importance of Arts and Culture to the Tourism sector, which is responsible for contributing 2,265 FTE jobs and \$202.4M in value added to the region.

What we heard

The community believes that the MidCoast already has the human capital needed to drive the economy forward, with the region home to qualified individuals who value creative thinking, and have made a conscious choice to make a sea/tree change with proximity to major cities of Sydney and Newcastle. The ability to provide formal and informal learning opportunities within the MidCoast region was recognised as an important asset to building a more resilient region, that is renowned for artistic excellence.

Outcomes – what do we want?

- 13 Increased reputation for MidCoast as a nurturing place for creatives
- 14 A well-resourced community and professional creative workforce
- 15 A region leveraging existing and new platforms for knowledge generation, cross-pollination of ideas and learning
- 16 Stronger networks across business, industry, education, arts and social sustainability
- 17 Growing clusters of new creative industries with local employment opportunities
- 18 New pathways to support, fund and contribute to the creative industries



“Regional and local and private spaces are integral to a sense of inclusion, stimulation, motivation and ability to share and express artistic viewpoints about the local community.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

Wakulda wuwang[#]

“Support local creative initiatives – not take them over.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

“Help support the volunteer drivers that initiate, motivate, communicate and get these programs off the ground at grass roots level.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

[#] Expressed in Gathang language. Refer to Appendix 1 for translation

Image: Roald Dahl's George's Marvellous Medicine shake & stir theatre Co Photo by Dylan Evans

SUPPORTING OUR TALENTED CREATIVES AND INDUSTRY

What is the strategy?	Implementation Areas	What does success look like?
<p>3.1 Greater educational opportunities</p>	<p>3.1.1 *Quick win* Develop a 'Business of Arts' toolbox informed by local experiences of professional artists/creative industries in the region, highlighting key opportunities to gain funding, career development and further training</p> <p>3.1.2 Investigate and consult with nationally significant arts and cultural organisations about the assets required to attract more touring or artist-in-residence programs</p> <p>3.1.3 Collaborate with Taree University Campus to maximise the learning opportunities of creative and cultural education by becoming a mentor or attending an open day event</p> <p>3.1.4 Hold a training course in website design and social media for artists to promote their work</p>	<p>Growing clusters of new creative industries with local employment opportunities and potential for multi-disciplinary collaboration</p> <p>A well-resourced community and professional creative workforce</p> <p>New pathways to support, fund and contribute to the creative industries</p> <p>Increased reputation for MidCoast as a nurturing place for creatives and grassroots initiatives</p> <p>Stronger networks across business, industry, education, arts and social sustainability</p> <p>A responsive region leveraging existing and new platforms for knowledge generation, cross-pollination of ideas and learning</p>
<p>3.2 Building an ecosystem of cultural activity</p>	<p>3.2.1 *Priority* Undertake an audit of existing artists, practitioners, and art and cultural organisations within the region</p> <p>3.2.2 Commission a business case to explore the potential for a Cultural Officer Position who will help lead the delivery of this Cultural Plan</p> <p>3.2.3 Facilitate collaboration between creatives and business chambers to create mutually beneficial events</p> <p>3.2.4 Increase support for initiatives which are advised and led by local creatives</p>	<p>A region which recognises and encourages part time creativity as full time expression</p>
<p>3.3 Promotion of Arts and Culture</p>	<p>3.3.1 Support new expressions of belonging, stories and connection to local places through the arts with a community arts program</p> <p>3.3.2 Identify opportunities for local artists and creatives to undertake design works for Council</p> <p>3.3.3 A Community Cultural Committee to champion local creatives, arts groups and organisations</p> <p>3.3.4 Showcase existing business on the Council's social media platforms which co-locate with cultural spaces through collaboration</p>	<p>A region which recognises and encourages part time creativity as full time expression</p>



What can you do?

A collection of quick and simple ideas for residents and businesses of MidCoast:

- Get to know a local artist
- Use local artists to help promote your business (online or offline)
- Buy something from a local artist - an artwork, music, sculpture...
- Participate in free workshops
- Get involved and advocate for ideas and solutions that you are passionate about
- Join a Chamber of Commerce
- Participate in local events
- Promote your organisation through the Vibrant Spaces program
- Visit your local Community Gallery
- Become a patron or financial donor to a local arts group
- Offer pro-bono professional services to a local arts group

Images, from top: Ali Haigh and Jada Stanley, MRAG.
Yvette Hugill in her studio, photo by Scott Calvin

ENHANCING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND SPACES

The role that Cultural Infrastructure must play in the community is evolving more rapidly than ever; as spaces that were once designated for artistic pursuits or cultural gatherings are now at the forefront of delivering programs that respond to the community's financial, social and health needs.

The MidCoast region is increasingly in need of welcoming, easily accessible, adaptable spaces that not only cater to artistic expression, but also respond to the growing health risks of social isolation in its ageing populations, increased frequency of mental illness in young people and the need to build a more resilient local economy.

What is considered cultural infrastructure?

Create NSW (Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+) defines cultural infrastructure as "buildings and spaces that accommodate or support culture" and includes both private and public spaces where the expression of customs, traditions, heritage and social character².

“The multi purpose use and availability of community spaces for creative sustainable initiatives. These could include short and long term availability of studios, workshops and a central location for conversations and events of sustainable interest.”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

Ganya marranggang[#]

² Create NSW, NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+
[#] Expressed in Gathang language. Refer to Appendix 1 for translation

Creative infrastructure can be classified in the following categories:

Community and participatory spaces	Commercial and enterprise spaces	Practice, education and development spaces	Performance and exhibition spaces	Festival, event and public spaces
Cultural infrastructure for 'active' participation and spaces with resources and facilities for active making, doing and skill-sharing These include: Libraries Maker spaces Cultural centres	Spaces for creative enterprise, including retail These include: Book stores Artist studios / shops	Cultural infrastructure for professional creative practice and art form development These include: Theatres Dance school Rehearsal rooms	Cultural venues and infrastructure for audiences or spectatorship These include: Music venues Museums Galleries	Spaces for temporary, unplanned or 'special event' cultural use in the public domain These include: Parks Outdoor event spaces Public art installations

What we heard

The community recognise that the MidCoast region has a reasonable provision of basic public and community spaces, but desires to see these assets upgraded to be more adaptable in use, and more accessible and welcoming to a diverse range of users and programs. The co-locating of groups and organisations from different sectors was also suggested by participants - seen as an essential ingredient to building a more collaborative and economically resilient MidCoast.

Outcomes – what do we want?

- 19 Shared understanding of need but also cost associated with cultural infrastructure
- 20 Upgraded cultural infrastructure to better accommodate fit for purpose uses
- 21 Innovative ways we can adapt existing buildings to new, creative uses (or supporting uses)
- 22 Co-locating cultural producers to maximise investment but also spark innovation
- 23 Digital infrastructure that helps creatives connect, make and produce new work (ie smart region)



“ Community storytelling is most powerful when ideas are focused through the lens of the lived culture of a place. Local institutions are often trustees and repositories of local story and have enormous potential to establish and invigorate socio-cultural and economic creativity. ”

ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANT

“ Increasing amount of empty buildings – both beautiful and derelict - which I think have to be considered as potential for startups or people looking for a bricks and mortar option for their business. It has great potential for creatives, which is proven to reinvest in community vibrancy and commerce. ”

SOCIAL PINPOINT PARTICIPANT

Image: Material Sound, MRAG by Rosie Smith Photography.

ENHANCING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND SPACES

What is the strategy?	Implementation Areas	What does success look like?
<p>4.1 Enhancing and adapting existing infrastructure for arts and culture</p>	<p>4.1.1 Identify and support the use of vacant and/ or underutilised Council buildings and private assets within town centers for creative and cultural purposes</p> <p>4.1.2 Showcase existing businesses which co-locate with cultural uses</p> <p>4.1.3 Align creative hubs and arts precincts with leisure, community, learning and local business to engage community and visitors</p> <p>4.1.4 Ensure the Manning Regional Art Gallery and Manning Entertainment Centre are well maintained, sustainable and meet industry standards</p>	<p>Innovative ways we can adapt existing buildings to new, creative uses (or supporting uses)</p> <p>Upgraded and accessible cultural infrastructure to better accommodate fit for purpose uses</p> <p>Co-locating cultural producers to maximise investment but also spark innovation</p>
<p>4.2 Strengthen our cultural and community hubs</p>	<p>4.2.1 Support and promote the important cultural experiences delivered by our museums and galleries</p> <p>4.2.2 Strengthen the viability Regional Gallery in acquiring additional works for the collection, helping to build audience engagement, education and strengthen the ongoing viability of the collection</p> <p>4.2.3 Establish policy and procedures for shared spaces in Community halls</p>	<p>Shared understanding of need but also cost associated with cultural infrastructure</p> <p>Digital infrastructure that helps creatives connect, make and produce new work (ie. smart region)</p>
<p>4.3 Leveraging and expanding the libraries network</p>	<p>4.3.1 Undertake investigations into establishing a road map and strategic plan for Taree and Wingham Libraries</p> <p>4.3.2 Improve Library technology and bandwidth to help delivery programs</p> <p>4.3.3 Investigate potential expansion of the Wingham Library and a plan for staffed branch at Old Bar</p>	
<p>4.4 Make culture easily accessible to all</p>	<p>4.4.1 *Urgent* Audit cultural infrastructure and audit signage (including regulations, places and wayfinding)</p> <p>4.4.2 Investigate potential sites and funding sources to deliver innovative ways to access arts and culture across the region</p> <p>4.4.3 Create a supportive network with industry leaders mentoring emerging creatives</p> <p>4.4.4 Amplify the voices of local creatives to recommend infrastructure which is suitable and best-placed for success</p> <p>4.4.5 Investigate opportunities to facilitate access to cultural exhibition and production spaces for younger demographics</p>	



What can you do?

A collection of quick and simple ideas for residents and businesses of MidCoast:

- Attend a show
- Help promote cultural activity
- Join your local library
- Volunteer at a local space
- Donate or offer works in-kind support
- Have a say when it comes to planning and growth matters
- Talk to your local Councillor
- Join a local club or group
- Join a Chamber of Commerce
- Participate in local events



Images, from top: Carnival of the Animals, Photo by Justin Nicolas, Atmosphere Photography, MEC. Circartus, A Touch of The Brush Wingham Akoostik Music Festival. Wingham Winter Solstice Lantern Walk image by Julie Slavin.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Council wants to support the continued cultural development of organisations, events and activities that contribute to ensuring that our community is diverse, resilient and connected.

We want the community to take the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 as a benchmark and opportunity for more creative and cultural development. The more people that get behind the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 the more strength the strategies and implementation areas will have. We encourage you to take part as much as you want and can. Talk about the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 with locals, get together and tell us how you want to make it happen.

Here are some easy ways you could get involved with the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036:

Join your community cultural or creative organisation	Join a history group
Acknowledge traditional place names and Gathang language in everyday life	Buy or commission an artwork from your local artist or pop-up gallery
Showcase your talent through the Vibrant Spaces program	Start planning a community mural using our Public Art Guidelines
Start a Neighbourhood Noticeboard	Continue the conversation and keep thinking bold
Comment on this Cultural Plan	Attend an event at the Manning Regional Art Gallery or the Manning Entertainment Centre
Document and talk to us about your great ideas for local events	Join your local Library
Join an amateur singing or actors group	Volunteer with an existing community arts organisation
Join a book group	Join a writers group



Image: Saltush Made by Compagnia TPO & Insite Arts in co-production with Teatro Metastasio Stabile della Toscana.

APPENDIX 1

Gathang is the language of the people known as the Birrbay, Warrimay and Guringay.

Years ago, Gathang speakers would have been multilingual, also speaking the languages of their neighbours. There are significant social relationships amongst Birrbay, Anaiwan (Nganyawana), Dhanggati and Gumbaynggirr peoples, including a shared set of marriage sections. The Guringay marriage sections are shared with the Wanarruwa, who spoke the language from the Hunter River and Lake Macquarie (HRLM), Darkinyung and Gamilaraay peoples.

The journey of the Gathang language is an exciting one with so many cultural knowledge holders leading the way for the future. To find out more the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative is a great place to start <https://muurrbay.org.au>

To connect with the Gathang Language Group about the protocols and processes around the language and uses please contact:

Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-op
14 Bellwood Road NAMBUCCA HEADS NSW 2448
Telephone: 02 6569 4294

<https://www.firstvoices.com/explore/FV/sections/Data/Pama-nyugan/Gathang/Gathang>

Gathang phrases with approximate English translation

Gathang language	English translation
Barrayga Djirangga	Pride in Country
Nyirun maray guunggu bathu maayngi	We will go to the river to get water
Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyila, Wanyimbu Wanyimbu Ganyiy	Always was always will be
Birrbay, Warrimay, Guringay barray	Biripi, Worrimi and Guringay Country
Wakulda wuwang	Number one work
Ganya marranggang	Beautiful house



Image: Worimi Dancers, MRAG image by Julie Slavin

APPENDIX 2 - GLOSSARY

Culture	The production, distribution and participation in creativity by residents, workers and visitors, and the reflection and expression of a place's customs, traditions, heritage and social character. Includes visual and performing arts, music, museums and galleries, the representation and animation of our history and heritage, libraries, craft, design, food, publishing, film, literature, digital and new media, television, interactive software, creativity in the public realm such as the design of public spaces, imaginative use of lighting and expressions of community identity through events and place-based celebrations. Source: adapted from Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+, Create NSW
Cultural Planning	Aims to assist in the realisation of a desired future, to provide a platform for the community's values and aspirations, and fuel social and economic development. Arts and culture has been found to play a significant role in the community with its contribution to community vibrancy, social cohesion, community capacity building and cultural identity and expression. When a strategic approach is taken in this area, the outcomes can be of even greater significance.
The Arts	The material ways we communicate cultural ideas and beliefs.
Cultural Development	Using arts and culture activities to engage the community and realise a desired future. It describes collaborations in a number of forms which can result in social and economic development outcomes.
Cultural Infrastructure	Private and public buildings and spaces that accommodate or support the expression of customs, traditions, heritage and social character (Source: adapted from Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+, Create NSW). Sometimes broken down as (Source: adapted from The City of Sydney): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces for 'active' public participation • Facilities supporting professional creative practice and artform development • Spaces for creative enterprise including retail • Cultural 'venues' for audiences or spectatorship / 'passive' public participation • Spaces for temporary, unplanned or 'special event' cultural use in the public domain
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Values:	Traditional values of Aboriginal people, handed down in spiritual beliefs, stories and community practices and may include local plant and animal species, places that are important and ways of showing respect for other people.
Aboriginal Place:	Locations recognised by the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment (and gazetted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974) as having special cultural significance to the Aboriginal community. May or may not include archaeological materials.

Appendix 2 - Glossary, Continued

Aboriginal Site:	The location of one or more Aboriginal archaeological objects, such as flaked stone artefacts, midden shell, grinding grooves, archaeological deposits, or scarred trees.
Placemaking	A collaborative approach drawing on the knowledge of the local community to deliver active, fun, inclusive and well-designed shared spaces to support happier and healthier communities. It acknowledges the interconnected nature of physical, cultural, ecological, economic and spiritual qualities of a place (Project for Public Spaces).
Creative Placemaking	The use of arts and culture by diverse partners to strategically shape the physical and social character of a place in order to spur economic development, promote enduring social change and improve the physical environment.
Resilience	<p>The capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience (Source: www.100resilientcities.org/cities/entry/sydney).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic stresses are ongoing or cyclical stresses that weaken the fabric and resilience of a community on a daily basis, eg. lack of housing affordability or employment opportunities. Acute shocks are the sudden, sharp events that threaten communities, such as extreme weather events like bushfires and flooding, infrastructure failure, water crises, or disease pandemics.
Public Art	A broad range of works of art approved or procured by Council located in a public space or in private spaces accessible to the public. May be permanent, temporary or ephemeral nature, and can include music, sound and light installations, sculptures, wall murals or street furniture.
Community initiated Art	Art that is conceptualised, led, and created by the community with Council approval.
Public Domain / Public Realm	Spaces that are visible, accessible, and used by the public, including public and private spaces.
Public Space	Spaces under the care, control and management of Council.
Street Art	Art created in streets designated by Council to revitalise spaces eg. laneways.



With thanks to...

Mayor, Councillors, General Manager and Council staff for their contributions and assistance, and for being cultural champions.

MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 Reference group

Gathang Language Group

Community members who provided feedback

All volunteers and their families who work tirelessly to bring the MidCoast to life

Online version available at: www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au



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