

Section 6 Determining a Settlement Hierarchy

This section of the Strategy establishes a contemporary Settlement Hierarchy for the City based on size, function, urban form and social characteristics of the settlement (Adopted by Council in 2008).

6.1 Determining a Settlement Hierarchy

The first step in determining or protecting the character of a place is to understand its role and relationship with other towns and villages. Formally establishing the relationships and roles of settlements is achieved through the creation of a settlement hierarchy which establishes an order of significance of urban areas.

Various strategic documents attempt to establish a settlement hierarchy for Shoalhaven at either a local or regional scale. The NSW Coastal Design Guidelines and the South Coast Regional Strategy identify the importance of hierarchies at a regional scale, to establish the current and future importance or role of each place within the region and the local area, and provide a framework for planning the distribution of population and infrastructure. Because Shoalhaven has such a dispersed settlement pattern, very high dwelling vacancy rate, and a variety of settlement landscapes (from rural to urban to coastal), the strict application of a hierarchy based on size or function alone is not appropriate. This Strategy establishes a hierarchy based on size, function, urban form and social characteristics of the settlement.

Establishing a settlement hierarchy assists in identifying the roles and characteristics of the Region's settlement areas, the way they relate to themselves, and how they relate to other settlements in the wider region and beyond. A settlement hierarchy also helps existing and prospective residents understand the current and likely levels of community service facilities and infrastructure, and each settlement's role in a regional context.

Council's current settlement policy is to have three major urban centres based in the north, centre and south of the local government area. These are Nowra-Bomaderry (the principal urban centre), Milton- Ulladulla, and the consolidation of a centre based on the existing centres of Jervis Bay and St Georges Basin, respectively.

The South Coast Regional Strategy prepared by the State Government has also designated those areas of the City which are classified as Major Regional Centres and Major Towns. These include Nowra Bomaderry as a Major regional Centre and Ulladulla, Vincentia as Major Towns and Sussex Inlet as a Town. It is these areas which the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure have indicated are to contain the majority of Shoalhaven's future growth, consistent with existing plans or strategies.

The Shoalhaven Housing Strategy (2006) reinforces the need for a clear hierarchy of centres, and discourages increased population growth in towns and villages of insufficient size to support basic services, particularly sewerage.

Strategic and community planning for the City has been based on the 5 planning areas. These planning areas provide a lead settlement and a surrounding periphery of settlements. The five planning areas correspond to the 5 key centres of the City including Nowra/Bomaderry, Culburra Beach, Jervis Bay / St. Georges Basin, Sussex Inlet and Milton/Ulladulla.

The 5 planning areas have been useful in enabling planning to occur on the basis of settlements linked because of economic function, service provision and to a lesser extent, geographical conditions. However, while the 5 planning areas provide clear administrative boundaries, they do not address two very important issues about how settlement patterns have developed in Shoalhaven. Firstly, the 5 planning areas do not recognise that a clear hierarchy of settlements exist in terms of the order in which goods and services are provided and the different economic catchments that exist for these various settlements. Secondly, the 5 planning areas do not recognise the extent to which settlements in Shoalhaven are clustered together and the interactions that occur within these clusters.

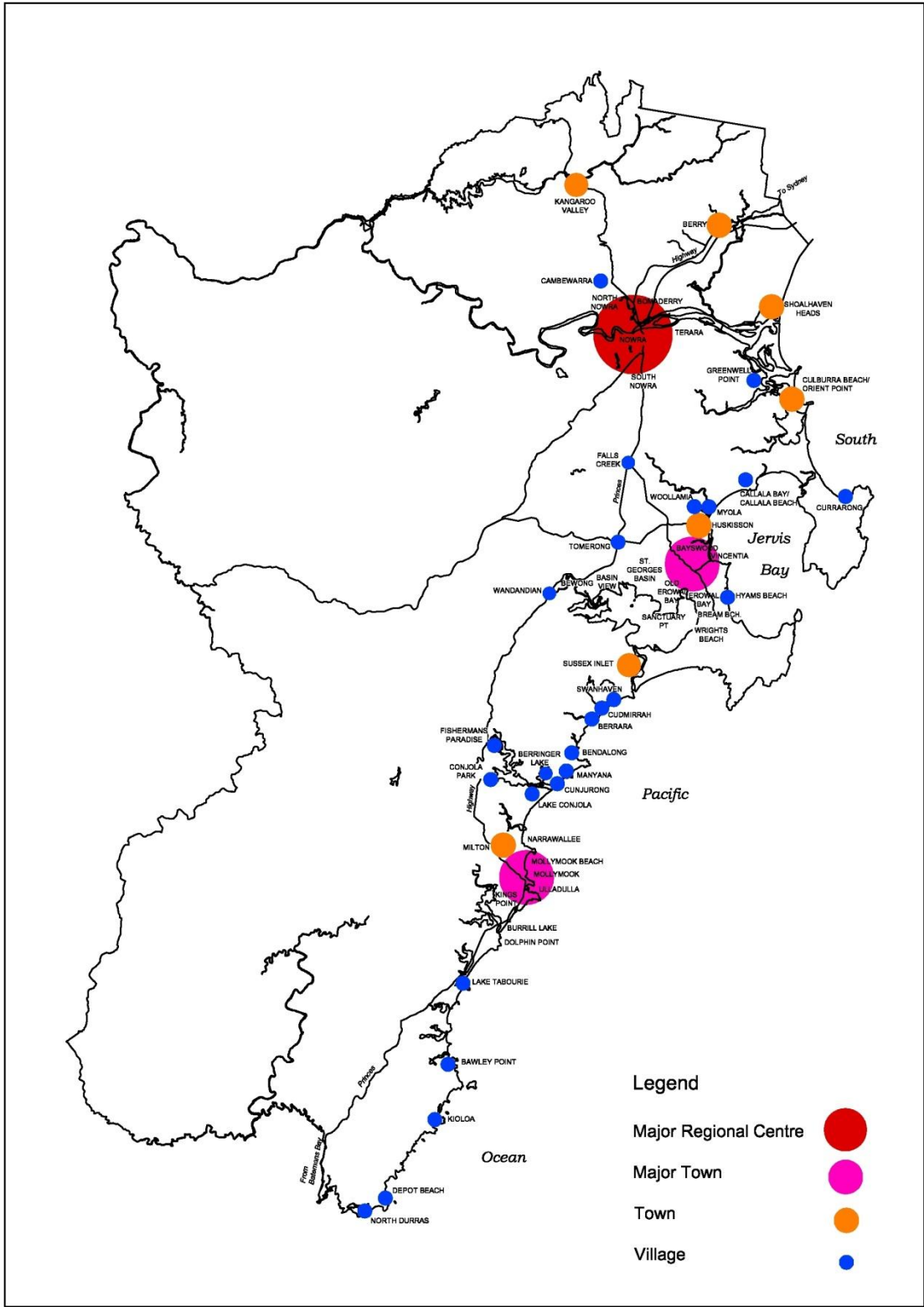
A hierarchy of settlements arises because the economic and administrative functions of some settlements exceed that of other settlements. Nowra-Bomaderry functions as the high order administrative and regional centre, followed by Ulladulla and then Sussex Inlet and Vincentia. The economic and administrative importance of a centre will often be influenced by its population and links to smaller centres.

6.2 Shoalhaven Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Attributes	Growth Considerations
Major Regional Centre	<i>Nowra-Bomaderry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional service centre • Range of urban environments within a series of suburbs (eg North Nowra, Nowra, Worrigea etc) • Very low vacant dwelling rate • High population with lower median age • Higher range of services and commercial activities • Administrative service centre for government • Focus for employment activity and employment lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must emphasise role as a regional centre • Urban form needs to be managed to connect suburbs • New housing to provide choice, eg low density for new families, medium density for young and the elderly • Range of housing styles to provide for affordable and adaptable housing • Protect CBD from inappropriate development and improve public domain • Dwelling types to provide for potentially higher/increasing densities
Major Town	<i>Ulladulla (includes Burrill Lake, Dolphin Point, Narrawallee, Mollymook and Kings Point), St Georges Basin District (includes St Georges Basin, Sanctuary Point, Basin View, Erowal Bay, Old Erowal Bay), Vincentia (including Bayswood)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban form and structure – some agglomeration of settlements • Connections with smaller settlements • High population with lower medium age • Low vacant dwelling rate • Focus for commercial, economic and government services/activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must emphasise the urban form around commercial centres • Public domain improvements vital to focus form of centres • Road and development network to provide appropriate pedestrian linkages to commercial centres • Environmental and scenic values to be protected • Dwelling types mix of low and medium densities

Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Attributes	Growth Considerations
Towns – Coastal Town	<i>Shoalhaven Heads, Culburra Beach/Orient Point, Greenwell Point, Huskisson, Sussex Inlet</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid sized urban settlements, distinctive boundaries for urban complexes • High median age • Medium vacant dwelling rate • Some commercial activity and some services via outreach/council provision • Tourist development potential via caravan parks, resort style developments and other tourist specific developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development within settlement boundaries must be compatible with existing building forms and subdivision pattern • Outward expansion of settlements must protect and maintain landscape vistas for their visual and cultural heritage values • Minimise adverse impacts in terms of hazards and environmental values • Commercial development to enrich tourism potentials
Towns – Rural Town	<i>Milton, Berry, Kangaroo Valley</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low to mid sized urban settlements • Urban centres with tourist values associated with heritage and landscape values • Mainly tourist/commercial activity • Development activity needs to protect existing building form and subdivision pattern • Development activity needs to protect landscape views and vistas from town centres • Higher median age • Lower vacant dwelling rate • Tourist potential via specific tourist development (motel, resort, B&B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development to focus and strengthen commercial centres • Public domain improvements to clearly identify commercial centres • Increased housing choice through diverse housing styles to reduce impact of aging population structure • Tourist development potential exists in settlements through higher densities • Outward expansion to recognise sensitivity of environment and hazard issues

Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Attributes	Growth Considerations
Villages – Coastal Village	<i>Greenwell Point, Callala Bay/Callala Beach, Currarong, Myola, Hyams Beach, Cudmirrah/Berrara, Bendalong, Manyana, Cunjurong, Berringer Lake, Lake Conjola, Conjola Park, Lake Tabourie, Bawley Point, Kioloa, Depot Beach, North Durras</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small settlements • Few services, commercial activity limited to typically general stores • High vacant dwelling rate • Medium to high median age • Tourist accommodation limited to holiday homes and caravan parks (some large and extensive) • Population growth accommodated through absorption of vacant housing rather than specific outward growth (some exceptions apply) • Development activity focused on re-scaling of existing housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development controls to protect existing character. • Development controls to protect environmental values and hazards • Expansion proposals for settlements to address availability/provision of commercial activities and community services • Expansion of settlements requires expansion to coastal urban centre type (population and services provision) and not to proceed unless that scale can be reached and justified in terms of population need and environmental impact
Village – Rural Village	<i>Cambewarra, Falls Creek, Bewong, Tomerong, Wandandian, Fishermans Paradise</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural villages • Small settlements • Few services, mainly general stores, some rural services • Predominately residential, little tourist activity, low vacant dwelling rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural villages can provide focus for rural lifestyle residential development • Expansion of villages to consider protection of surrounding rural landscapes • Development within villages to protect low density character



SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY



Scale 1 : 50000
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Map 4 Settlement Heirarchy