

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the palawa/Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of lutruwita (Tasmania) and their enduring custodianship of this island.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present and to all Aboriginal people who live and work in Southern Tasmania today.

We honour their stories, songs, art and culture and their aspirations for the future of their people and these lands.

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1. Executive summary

Background

The Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) is a long-term framework to guide the region's growth and development while preserving its natural and cultural values. In response to population growth and evolving economic, social, and environmental conditions, the twelve local governments of Southern Tasmania are working with the Tasmanian Government State Planning Office to update the STRLUS. The first step in the update process was the release of the State of Play report, which consolidates data and insights on a range of issues affecting the region.

Community and stakeholder consultation is key to informing the STRLUS. There are two rounds of feedback, the first shares the State of Play report and focuses on gathering feedback to inform the draft STRLUS. The second round involves feedback on the draft STRLUS, which will be available for public exhibition in late 2025.

Purpose of the report

This consultation report synthesises insights gathered in round one of the consultation, including extensive community engagement, expert feedback, and internal collaboration to inform the development of the STRLUS. It reflects diverse perspectives, prioritising the voices of the community and stakeholders to ensure that the strategy effectively responds to the region's evolving needs.

Methodology

The STRLUS consultation used a variety of engagement methods to ensure broad participation and capture diverse perspectives. A community survey collected quantitative data and direct feedback, while conversation toolkits allowed community members and organisations to host their own discussions. Pop-up events provided access to the survey and information, and ideas boards online and in council offices encouraged spontaneous input.

A dedicated website, shapingtasmania.com.au, has been set up for the project. The State of Play and background information along with engagement materials, including the survey, ideas board and toolkit, were available on the website. These methods ensured the consultation was accessible, flexible, and responsive to the region's diverse communities. The State of Play report, along with Ideas boards, were made available in Council offices

Key Findings

Key themes across engagement mechanisms include:



Respectful to Nature

There is also a strong focus on environmental sustainability, with respondents advocating for policies that promote green infrastructure, renewable energy, and climate resilience.



Accessible and Connected

A recurring theme was the need for improved transport links, particularly in terms of regional connectivity. Respondents emphasised the importance of reducing congestion in key urban areas and improving public transport networks to better serve both urban and rural communities. Many respondents highlighted a need for more sustainable transport options, including cycling and walking paths.



Economically Strong

Feedback highlighted the need for strategic regional development that balances economic growth with environmental preservation. Respondents expressed a desire for policies that support local industries and create job opportunities, particularly in the emerging sectors of renewable energy, technology, and tourism.



Supportive, Inclusive and Equitable

Respondents emphasised the importance of inclusivity and ensuring that planning processes cater to all community members, especially vulnerable and marginalised groups. Respondents identified housing affordability and accessibility as major issues, with a clear demand for more affordable housing options. There was strong support for initiatives that promote social equity, such as, affordable housing, and equitable access to services.

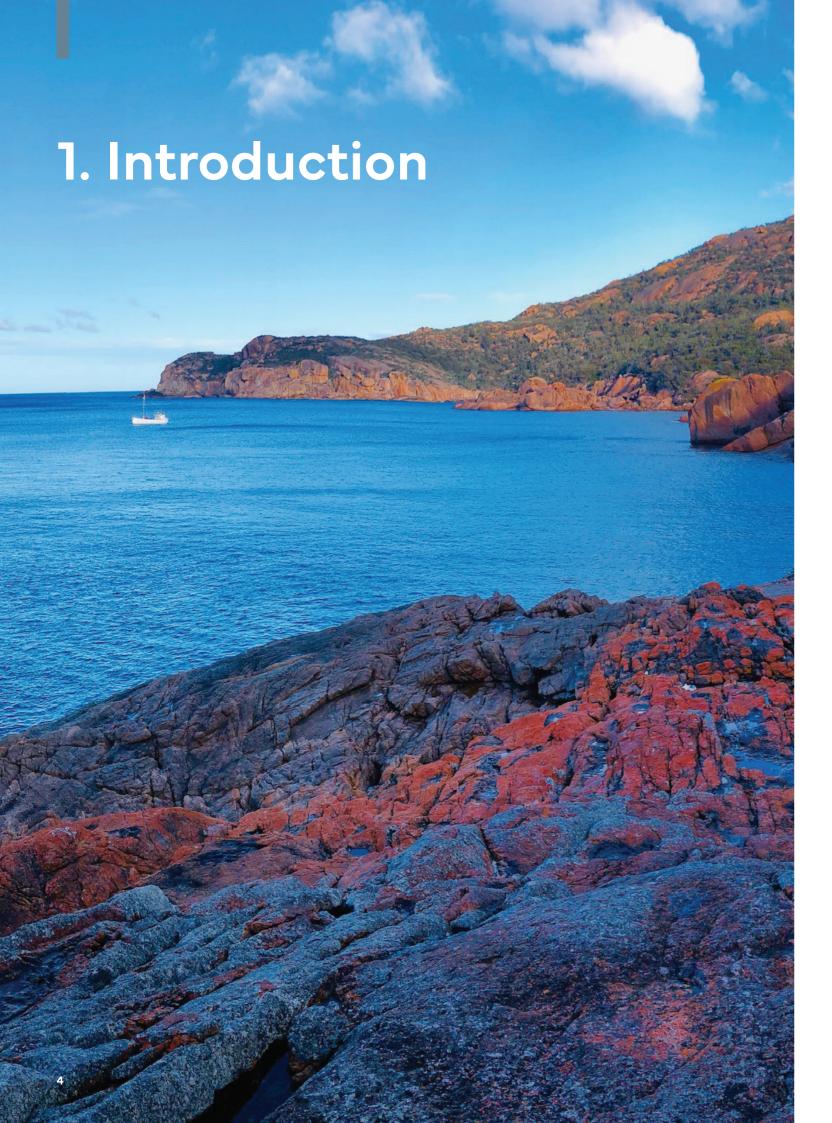


Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Respondents expressed a desire for more transparent and participatory decision-making processes. They called for ongoing consultation and feedback loops throughout the implementation phase to ensure that the STRLUS remains responsive to the evolving needs of the community.

Next steps

The feedback received will now be considered in the update to the STRLUS.



2.1. Project background

The STRLUS is a long-term framework designed to manage and guide growth, development, and change across the region, while safeguarding its natural resources and values. Since the initial preparation of the STRLUS, Southern Tasmania has experienced significant population growth and evolving economic and social conditions, prompting the need for an update to the STRLUS. Additionally, the introduction of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme and the proposed Tasmanian Planning Policies are changing the planning landscape, making it necessary to revisit and revise the strategy.

The STRLUS is being updated through a collaborative process involving the twelve local governments of Southern Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government State Planning Office. This update will ensure the strategy continues to meet the region's needs and aspirations, balancing growth with environmental protection.

Regional land use strategies serve as long-term plans that help guide sustainable growth, protect natural resources, and ensure communities thrive. The STRLUS aims to provide for the region's future by promoting sustainable growth in cities, towns, and villages, while protecting the natural environment for future generations. It also plans for climate change resilience, sustainable economic development, and seeks to ensure the delivery of necessary infrastructure in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Importantly, the strategy ensures that the region's heritage is preserved to strengthen its identity for the future.

The STRLUS does not address local-level issues or commit to government spending or project delivery. Instead, it provides the broader framework that guides planning and decision-making for local governments and state agencies.

The first step in the update process was the release of the "State of Play" report, which consolidates data and insights on a range of issues affecting the region. This report identifies key challenges and opportunities, outlining the drivers of growth and change within Southern Tasmania. It provides valuable insights into the region's unique character, community values, and the issues that need to be addressed in the updated strategy.

Early consultation, informed by the State of Play findings, began in September 2024 and concluded in December 2024. This report highlights the feedback gathered during this time and will be incorporated into the draft STRLUS, where appropriate to do so. The draft STRLUS will then be made available for public exhibition in late 2025, offering an opportunity for the community to provide further feedback before the strategy is finalised

3. Engagement approach

3.1. Engagement objectives

The primary objectives of the STRLUS consultation were to ensure that the update of the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) reflected the diverse views, priorities, and needs of the region's communities. The consultation aimed to engage a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including residents, local government, service providers, and peak bodies. By providing accessible, inclusive engagement opportunities, the consultation sought to:

- Provide those who live in Southern Tasmania with the opportunity to contribute to strategic land use planning.
- Build community capacity through education and sharing knowledge, including understanding need and the decision-making processes.
- Build community understanding of the value, role and function of strategic land use planning.

3.2. Methodology

The STRLUS consultation employed a diverse range of engagement methods to ensure broad participation and capture a wide variety of perspectives. These methods were designed to be flexible, accessible, and inclusive, catering to the needs of different community members and groups across the region.

3.2.1. Promotion

To encourage participation, a targeted communication strategy was implemented to raise awareness of the consultation process. This included digital and traditional media outreach, such as social media posts, email newsletters, and local media coverage. Additionally, all relevant materials, including the survey and conversation toolkit, were available on a dedicated website, shapingtasmania.com.au, ensuring easy access to information and updates throughout the consultation period. The State of Play was made available in all Council offices, with notices to encourage stakeholders to be involved in consultation.

3.2.2. Engagement activities

The consultation incorporated several methods to reach a broad range of participants:

- Community Survey: A comprehensive survey was distributed to gather quantitative data and direct feedback from residents and stakeholders.
- Conversation Toolkits: These toolkits enabled community members and organisations to host their own discussions, ensuring that the consultation reached those who were unable to attend formal sessions.
- Submissions: Including through an ideas board on the website and direct emails to the project team.
- Pop-up Events: Pop-up events were held at key locations throughout the region to engage passersby, provide information, and encourage participation in the survey and gather ideas.
- Ideas Boards: Ideas boards at pop-up events, online and in council offices to encourage spontaneous contributions from both staff and visitors, offering another avenue for engagement.

These activities were designed to be flexible and responsive to the community's needs, ensuring that input could be gathered from a diverse range of voices.

3.3. Limitations

While the consultation sought to be inclusive and comprehensive, there were some limitations to the process.

- Limited Reach in Some Areas: Despite efforts to engage a broad cross-section of the community, certain groups may not have been fully represented, particularly those in more remote areas or with limited access to digital tools.
- Engagement Fatigue: As consultation efforts across
 the region increase, there is the potential for some
 individuals and groups to experience engagement
 fatigue, affecting their willingness or ability to
 participate.
- Scope of Input: The consultation focused on highlevel regional issues, which may have limited the depth of discussion around more specific, localised concerns

These limitations were acknowledged, and efforts were made to mitigate them through diverse engagement methods, including digital and in-person options, and by providing multiple avenues for feedback.

4. Summary of participation







25 Ideas (online)

410
Ideas (Council Boards
and Pop ups)

5. Engagement findings



This section presents the key themes from all the different data sources, including the survey, submissions, conversation toolkits, and ideas boards. To note, conversation toolkits are grouped with submissions as this tool was used more for broad feedback from groups and individuals. Analysis of the feedback together provides a more complete picture of what people have shared through the consultation. Where relevant, insights that were specific to one tool or another are highlighted. Sentiments have been summarised throughout the section, rather than including verbatim comments, unless they are highlighted by quotation marks. The broad themes are aligned to the region shapers in the State of Play.

5.1. Making sure Southern Tasmania remains a great place to live

The initial survey question highlighted below, provides overarching feedback regarding what respondents felt was key to ensure Southern Tasmania remains a great place to live as the population changes. As depicted in figure 1, respondents highlighted the importance of protecting the natural environment, which emerged throughout feedback across region shapers.

Figure 1. How do we make sure Southern Tasmania remains a great place to live as the population changes



Further themes that emerged from feedback related to this topic are outlined below.

Affordable Housing Mechanisms

The need for affordable housing was a central issue in the consultation. Respondents expressed strong support for mechanisms such as Specific Area Plans and developer incentives that encourage the inclusion of affordable housing in new developments. Some participants even suggested rent caps or incentives for landlords offering long-term leases at affordable rates, as these could help alleviate rising rental costs. Some respondents suggested introducing disincentives for leaving homes and shacks empty, helping to alleviate housing pressures without contributing to urban sprawl.

Balancing Development and Affordability

Consultation respondents also highlighted the growing need for age-appropriate and accessible housing, emphasising that housing strategies should align with the region's demographic trends. Some submissions challenged the assumption that just increasing supply leads to affordability, instead calling for targeted solutions, such as housing designed for seniors and other specific groups, to ensure diverse and inclusive options for all community members.

Infill Development and Urban Renewal

When it came to new housing developments, many advocated for focusing on infill development in areas with existing infrastructure. Submission respondents emphasised that more focus should be placed on brownfield and greyfield redevelopment to make efficient use of existing infrastructure. It was stated that this would help avoid the challenges of urban sprawl, such as traffic congestion, strained public services, and environmental degradation.

Respondents emphasised the need for housing strategies that consider the broader regional and statewide context, ensuring alignment with long-term sustainability. They also called for more robust community consultation, independent planning authorities, and opportunities for public appeals to ensure decisions reflect community needs rather than developer interests.

5.2. Protecting Southern Tasmania's Environment and Keeping Communities Safe

Public Transport and Accessibility

Public transport accessibility, frequency, and reliability were significant concerns, especially in suburban and regional areas. Many respondents advocated for a variety of transport solutions, including ferries, light rail, and smaller buses tailored to rural contexts. As one survey respondent noted, improving public transport options should align with housing developments to ensure accessibility for all.

Improving cycling and walking infrastructure was another priority. Respondents highlighted the need for safer, more connected cycling routes and pedestrian-friendly spaces. As one respondent suggested, creating separated bike paths and pedestrian-friendly areas, along with reducing speed limits in certain areas, would significantly improve safety for those using active transport.

Accessibility and inclusivity in transport and urban planning were also important themes. Respondents emphasised the need for planners to consider the needs of people with mobility issues or disabilities. Some suggested subsidising transport options for elderly and vulnerable populations to ensure equitable access to public transport.

Mixed-Use Development and Localised Living

Mixed-use development was widely supported as a means to reduce car dependency and foster localised living. Respondents argued that decentralising jobs and services closer to housing would reduce the need for long commutes and make communities more connected. As one submission respondent pointed out, better integration of transport and land use planning is necessary to create walkable, sustainable communities.

Community Engagement and Planning

Many respondents expressed frustration with the current planning processes and called for more meaningful community engagement. As one survey respondent stated, "Adopting better consultation methods is crucial for ensuring that all voices are heard in the planning process." There was a strong desire for more face-to-face discussions and for decision-makers to engage directly with the transport and housing challenges facing communities.



As indicated in figure 2 below, protecting native habitats and ecosystem and promoting sustainable towns and villages were seen as key to protecting Southern Tasmania's environment and keeping communities safe.

Figure 2. How should we protect Southern Tasmania's environment and keep our communities safe? (select your top two)



Further themes that emerged from feedback related to this topic are outlined below.

Integrated Development Outcomes

A key theme was the integration of land use, housing, and environmental sustainability. Respondents strongly advocated for a holistic approach to development that considers ecological protection alongside housing needs. As one submission respondent pointed out, the STRLUS could benefit from aligning with established sustainable community rating tools such as Green Star Communities and BREEAM Communities, which integrate sustainability across multiple dimensions, including ecological protection, diverse housing, and community health.

Further to this, respondents emphasised the importance of aligning land use policies with demographic trends. A submission respondent recommended disaggregating demographic cohorts, such as younger and older populations, to optimise spatial outcomes and improve infrastructure planning. This was seen as vital for ensuring that development addresses the specific needs of a growing and ageing population.

Social Infrastructure Equity

The need for better alignment between population growth and social infrastructure was another major concern. Respondents called for more strategic investment in infrastructure to support new developments. As one submission respondent noted, focusing on areas that provide the highest return on investment would help ensure that communities are adequately served by schools, healthcare facilities, and other essential services, promoting equity across regions.

Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection

Many respondents emphasised the need to protect Southern Tasmania's cultural and natural heritage while planning for growth. One submission respondent stated that it is essential to preserve the unique character of communities and safeguard environmental assets. Some respondents called for a halt to the expansion of industrial fish farming in sensitive waterways and promoting small-scale, regenerative on-land agriculture as a more sustainable alternative. Additionally, many advocated for transitioning salmon farming to landbased, recirculating systems to preserve Tasmania's pristine waters and protect the state's environmental reputation.

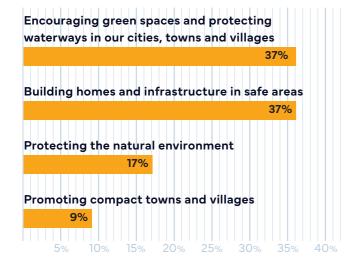
Development in High-Risk Areas

There was significant concern about the environmental risks associated with development in high-risk areas such as flood zones and land slip zones. Many respondents advocated for restrictions on development in these areas to prevent environmental degradation and safeguard biodiversity. As one survey respondent noted, "Protecting our natural spaces should be the backbone of land use planning." This sentiment was echoed across both survey and submission responses, highlighting the importance of preserving untouched natural areas in the face of development pressure.

5.3. Preparing Cities, Towns and Villages for Climate Change

Figure 3 indicates the importance of green spaces and protecting waterways, as well as building homes and infrastructure in safe areas as key to preparing communities for climate change.

Figure 3. How can we prepare our cities, towns and villages for climate change? (select up to three)



Further themes that emerged from feedback related to this topic are outlined below.

Green Spaces as Climate Mitigation

Respondents identified green spaces as a critical strategy for mitigating the impacts of climate change. Several submission respondents suggested using green spaces to address urban heat islands and manage flood risks. For example, transforming stormwater-prone areas into dual-use open spaces or creating coastal green spaces to combat erosion risks were proposed as climate adaptation measures. One survey respondent remarked, "Green spaces can do more than beautify they're vital for managing stormwater and cooling urban areas." The need for stronger accountability in funding green infrastructure was another theme. This would help ensure that developers contribute to climate adaptation efforts, as one submission respondent pointed out, and strengthen the overall resilience of communities to climate impacts.

Respondents also called for urban design that integrates both climate adaptation and mitigation measures.

Particularly in areas facing high risks of inundation and erosion, urban areas need to be planned with resilience in mind. Several participants stressed the importance of building infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather events, which was seen as essential to the long-term sustainability of the region.

Climate-Responsive Urban Design and Infrastructure

Resilient infrastructure, including renewable energy systems, was a significant area of focus. Many respondents advocated for prioritising infrastructure upgrades that could withstand extreme weather events and incorporating renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, into new developments. As one submission respondent noted, "Tasmania must lead the way in using nature-based solutions to combat climate change."

Educate and Encourage Community Responsibility

Many respondents stressed the importance of community education and shared responsibility in addressing climate change. They called for initiatives to inform the public about risks, preparations, and proactive actions to build resilience. Additionally, there was support for promoting small-acreage self-sufficiency, as well as programs that empower communities to protect and manage their local environments.

5.4. Growing our local economy

As indicated in figure 4, creating places that keep skilled workers in the region and protecting rural resources were determined as top priorities for growing the local economy.

Figure 4. How can we help our local economy grow? (select your top two)





Further themes that emerged from feedback related to this topic are outlined below.

Economic Diversification and Resilience

There is strong support for shifting away from reliance on traditional industries like tourism and agriculture, with an emphasis on fostering innovation in emerging sectors such as green technology, sustainable agriculture, and waste management. One survey respondent pointed out, "We really need to diversify away from tourism and farming". The need for supporting small businesses and secondary processing industries is also critical, as one survey participant stated, "Businesses are key for financial stability of any community" (Survey respondent). Additionally, many called for greater focus on providing training and upskilling young people in particular to address workforce shortages.

Liveability and Community Infrastructure

Improving liveability was highlighted as essential for retaining a skilled, working-age population. Key infrastructure gaps were identified in health, education, and public transport, with many respondents advocating for better connectivity to reduce car dependency. One survey respondent commented, "We need better public transport options and infrastructure to make the region more liveable and reduce reliance on cars". A recurring theme in the responses was the importance of creating vibrant, connected communities through investment in community spaces, with one survey respondent noting, "Investing in parks, recreation, and community spaces is critical to building a place where people want to live and raise their families".

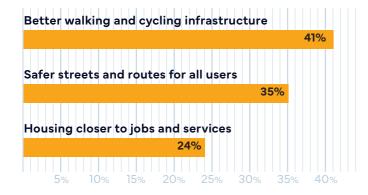
Population Growth and Workforce Retention

The need to attract and retain a working-age population to address labour shortages and ensure future economic prosperity was consistently raised. Respondents stressed the importance of quality education and job opportunities in retaining younger generations. One survey respondent stated, "If we want to retain young people and attract new talent, we need to ensure good job opportunities and high-quality education". There were also concerns about over-reliance on retiree populations, with one respondent suggesting, "We should not rely too heavily on retirees; we need young, working-age people to drive our future economy". There were calls for both targeted population growth strategies and ensuring that growth does not outpace infrastructure or environmental protections.

5.5. Encouraging Active Travel and Public Transport

Better walking and cycling infrastructure and safer streets were indicated as the top two priorities for encouraging active transport as depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Acknowledging that urban areas will have more transport options than rural or remote towns and villages how might we encourage more journeys by walking and cycling or public transport? (select your top two)



Further themes that emerged from feedback related to this topic are outlined below.

Strategic Housing Placement and Transport

Many respondents recognised the importance of placing housing closer to jobs and services to support public and active transport systems. A submission respondent highlighted that this would create the critical mass needed for effective public transport options. As they explained, integrating housing with transport hubs would enable a more sustainable and connected urban environment.

Building on this, several respondents suggested that transport-driven urban renewal could be a solution to congestion and urban sprawl. A submission respondent recommended linking emerging transport systems, such as bus rapid transit and ferries, to urban development opportunities. This would create more integrated land use and transport planning, helping to alleviate congestion, particularly in the Greater Hobart region.

Short-Term Improvements in Active Travel Infrastructure

In addition to long-term strategies, respondents across the consultation called for short-term improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure. Enhancing underutilised streets and aligning these upgrades with local government asset management strategies was seen as an effective way to improve active travel options. Many respondents emphasised the need for these improvements to be integrated into existing infrastructure plans to maximise their impact.

Equity in Transport Access

Equitable access to transport infrastructure was another significant concern. As one submission respondent explained, prioritising underserved communities and ensuring affordable transport options is essential for reducing disparities in access. The need for affordable, accessible public transport was a recurring theme, especially for vulnerable populations.

Respondents highlighted that regional areas, such as the Huon Valley and South Arm, require significant improvements in public transport options. Many argued that enhanced regional services would be key to fostering a more connected, sustainable future. As one survey respondent noted, "Connecting land use planning with transport investment is essential to reduce congestion and improve liveability."

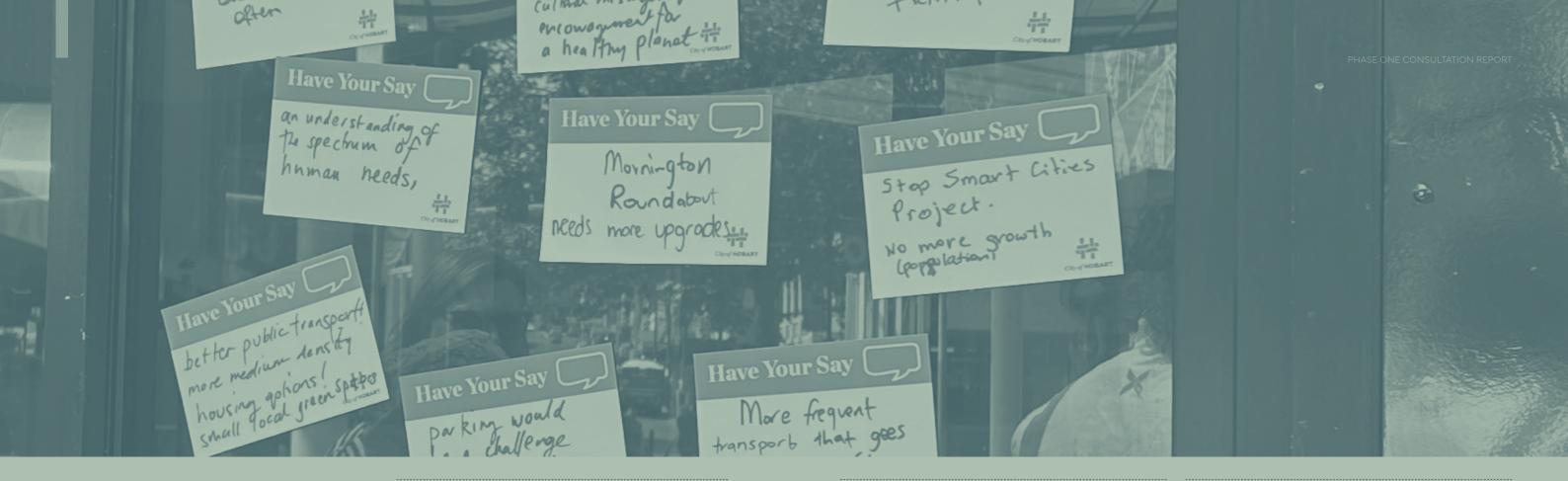
5.6. Additional feedback

In terms of governance, a several respondents suggested reducing the number of councils from 29 to around six, which proponents argued could streamline governance, improve decision-making, and enhance resource allocation. This would allow for better coordination of development and infrastructure projects, reducing fragmentation and confusion across local councils.

There were also concerns about inconsistencies in the STRLUS, particularly regarding the natural value ratings in Kingborough, which some felt did not align with broader environmental priorities. Respondents called for clearer definitions of terms like "significant increase" and "immediate locality" to avoid ambiguity and ensure consistent planning decisions. Furthermore, the importance of professional input and evidence-based decision-making was highlighted, particularly in light of recent decisions that appeared to overlook expert advice, such as those related to the Local Provisions Schedule.

In terms of housing supply, there was strong support for continuing the identification and development of new public housing, especially following the completion of the Huntingfield project. Respondents also noted that growth in areas such as Southern Beaches, driven by infrastructure projects in Sorell and surrounding areas, calls for a reassessment of low-growth assumptions. This suggests a need to realign housing and infrastructure strategies to meet the increasing demand in these areas. Several submissions requested extensions to the urban growth boundary. The urban growth boundary is the spatial extent of growth as identified in the STRLUS. The need for a comprehensive up to date planning system including State Planning Policies was also noted.





5.7. Ideas wall

The ideas wall located across Council sites and online asked 'What will make southern Tasmania a better place to live?'. The summary of this feedback captured below highlights many similarities as to the feedback provided through submissions and survey responses. To note, public transport was the most common response, with approximately one-third calling for improved public transport.

1. Public Transport and Connectivity

- Significant demand for better, more frequent, and reliable public transport, including buses, trains, and light rail.
- Integrated transport systems, park-and-ride facilities, and improved accessibility for elderly and disabled residents.
- Reduction in car dependency to address congestion, pollution, and parking challenges.

2. Housing Affordability and Diversity

- Strong concern over high housing costs and lack of affordable options, particularly for youth, single parents, and low-income households.
- Calls for more diverse housing types, including medium-density housing, public housing, and housing for aging-in-place.

3. Climate Change and Environmental Protection

- Emphasis on addressing climate change impacts, conserving natural environments, and protecting agricultural and marine ecosystems.
- Suggestions for sustainable practices, green waste education, and increased tree planting.

4. Community and Social Infrastructure

- Desire for more community spaces, social activities, and events that foster connection and inclusivity.
- Better facilities for youth, such as recreational centres, sporting opportunities, and skill-building programs
- Support for place-based services, including healthcare, libraries, and local markets.

5. Health and Wellbeing

- Concerns about access to healthcare services, particularly for the elderly and rural communities.
- Need for improvements in the health system, including mental health services and specialist care (e.g., trans health).
- Encouragement of healthy living through community gardens, recreational facilities, and access to green spaces.

6. Jobs and Economic Opportunities

- Calls for more local job and training opportunities, particularly for youth and people with disabilities.
- Support for small businesses, commercial opportunities, and local living to boost regional economies.

7. Recreation and Lifestyle Amenities

- Suggestions for more parks, swimming pools, bike paths, and destination facilities for families and youth
- Improved high streets and urban areas with more attractions, food options, and cultural activities.

8. Governance and Community Engagement

- Concerns about cohesive and accountable governance at the state and local levels.
- Need for better communication around development and decision-making processes.
- Requests for streamlined councils and improved collaboration between organisations and governments.

9. Transport Infrastructure

- Calls for better road networks, bikeways, footpaths, and cycling infrastructure to ensure safe and active transport options.
- Specific concerns about dangerous road conditions and infrastructure gaps in rural and suburban areas.

10. Safety and Security

- Concerns about crime, break-ins, hooning, and unsafe roads, with calls for stronger policing and community safety initiatives.
- Focus on fostering safer, more welcoming communities.

6. Next steps

The feedback received will now considered in the drafting of the update to the STRLUS. Feedback will be shared with the twelve Southern Tasmanian Councils and relevant Tasmanian Government departments for their consideration. A summary document will be prepared to demonstrate how the feedback has been considered.

It is anticipated that the draft update to the STRLUS, STRLUS 2050, will be publicly exhibited in late 2025, for a period of not less than 60 calendar days. The community will be notified of the public exhibition period via notices in the newspaper and on the following websites project: Shaping Tasmania, Planning in Tasmania, and Council websites. Stakeholders who have registered for updates will be informed via email. The draft STRLUS 2050 will be available on the project website and in Council offices.

During this time representations in relation to the draft STRLUS 2050 may be made to the STRLUS update team. At the end of the public exhibition period a representation report responding to the representations received must be provided to the Minister for Planning. Amendments may be made to the draft STRLUS based on representations received and advice from the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Following any amendments the Minister for Planning may declare the final STRLUS 2050 in accordance with the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1973.

If you wish to be kept informed, please register for updates on the project website shapingtasmania.com.



Appendix A – Survey demographics

