

Appendix H: Blue-Green Grid Framework

The Sydney Plan

August 2026
Version 1



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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Blue-Green Grid is an interconnected network of open spaces that link centres, transport hubs, waterways, and key residential and employment areas. It includes parks and reserves, waterways and wetlands, beaches and foreshores, and other open space assets connected through the public realm, creek corridors, paths, cycleways and transport routes.

The Blue-Green Grid supports Sydney's growth by improving recreation access, biodiversity, climate resilience and waterway health. At a regional scale, it provides recreation networks for residents and visitors from across Sydney. At a local scale, it delivers co-benefits including flood mitigation, improved air quality, more accessible open space, urban cooling, active transport and more walkable communities.

As Sydney grows and adapts to a changing climate, continued planning and investment are essential. Land-use planning should protect and expand open space and make sure the Blue-Green Grid is delivered in evolving and new urban areas. Consistent spatial data, mapping and monitoring are critical to coordinated decision making, targeted investment and prioritisation of future connections.

1.2 Purpose of this appendix

This appendix sets out Sydney's Blue-Green Grid framework and long-term vision for a cohesive network of Blue-Green Grid corridors that support a liveable, resilient and connected region.

To address the need for better coordination of approaches to Blue-Green Grid implementation, this appendix sets out:

- **objectives:** provide overarching direction and parameters for delivering the Blue-Green Grid
- **categorisation:** categorising corridors based on their function and to establish a starting point for discussions around delivery responsibilities
- **prioritisation:** identifies priority corridors for investment using methodology.

It should be used to:

- prepare local strategies and inform local strategic planning
- support coordinated infrastructure planning and sequencing for state and local government.

This appendix applies to all land within the Sydney region.

1.3 Governance

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) will lead the coordination of effort through leveraging cross-government programs and initiatives, identifying and prioritising open space and Blue-Green Grid projects, and undertaking regular monitoring and evaluation to track progress against the established benchmarks.

Councils will continue to play a key role in identification, planning, coordination, delivery and ongoing maintenance of corridors. The Department will continue to engage with councils.

Blue-Green Grid Committee

A new Blue-Green Grid Committee has been set up to drive the Blue-Green Grid program.

Chaired by Greater Sydney Parklands, the Committee brings together the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the Office of Strategic Lands, and major landowners including Transport for NSW and Sydney Water. It was established to provide leadership, build capacity for Blue-Green Grid outcomes across Sydney and support delivery of NSW Government initiatives.

Key responsibilities of the Committee are to:

- endorse prioritisation of Blue-Green Grid projects and recommend a coordinated program of works along key corridors
- review recommendations for new projects and priorities as part of the three-year review cycle for Blue-Green Grid priorities
- support delivery by councils, primarily through the coordination of State landowners.

2 Objectives

These objectives are to guide the design, implementation and delivery of the Sydney Blue-Green Grid.

The objectives of the Blue-Green Grid are:

- **connecting with Country:** adopt a Country-centred approach guided by Aboriginal people ensuring healthy outcomes for Country, culture and community
- **environmental stewardship:** protect, restore and enhance the natural environment by conserving sensitive habitats, improving water quality, and strengthening biodiversity, ecological connectivity and urban canopy
- **connectivity - a network of linear parks:** create a continuous and legible network of open spaces that connects key destinations, including parks, foreshores, beaches and schools, while supporting access to high-quality green space within 400m
- **climate resilience:** embed urban greening as a response to climate extremes by increasing tree canopy and green cover to mitigate urban heat and enhance environmental performance and amenity
- **active transport:** prioritise walking and cycling through safe, attractive and direct connections that support active living and reduce reliance on private vehicles
- **Integrated planning:** align Blue-Green Grid delivery with current and future transport corridors to maximise accessibility, connectivity and co-benefits across infrastructure systems
- **placemaking and economics:** design corridors as destinations, integrating public art, seating, and community focused spaces to enhance place identity, attract activity, and improve the value and feasibility of surrounding development.

3 Corridor categorisation

3.1 Sydney's Blue-Green Grid corridor categories

Blue-Green Grid corridors are categorised based on scale and open space function. All corridors in the core network have genuine potential to function as linear parks or open space corridors. The four categories are:

- primary corridors
- secondary corridors
- destination corridors
- local linkages.

The categories are important for establishing a starting point for discussions around delivery responsibilities. Blue-Green Grid corridors are generally aligned with natural and man-made linear infrastructure. As a result of this co-location, they can be largely on government land and easier to deliver. With careful planning, corridors can also have significant outcomes for biodiversity, resilience and water quality, and water catchment health.

Primary corridors

Primary corridors connect across large sections of the city, across multiple LGAs. Primary corridors:

- have major recreational open space potential and could function as regional or district-scale linear parks
- link major landscape features; rivers, wetlands, creek systems, and bushland
- collectively form the backbone of the Blue-Green Grid network
- require NSW Government coordination and policy protection due to their scale and cross-boundary nature.

A list of the primary corridors is provided in Section 5.1 below.

Secondary corridors

Secondary corridors have significant recreational open space potential at a district or local park scale. Secondary corridors:

- may cross LGA boundaries and require multi-agency coordination but are typically shorter and more localised than primary corridors
- provide important connections within communities rather than across the metropolitan area
- may be delivered with a mix of NSW Government coordination with councils, by a small collection of councils, or by a single council, depending on the context.

Destination corridors

Destination Corridors act similarly to regional parks, as they attract people from across Sydney, including tourists. Destination corridors:

- are considered “destination” Blue-Green Grid corridors and present major transformative opportunities for the city
- predominantly follow major landscape features such as coastlines, major rivers or ridgelines that have defined the development patterns of Sydney more broadly
- may be delivered by cross government partnerships including councils, state government agencies and the Federal Government, given their sizeable economic impact on local and regional economies.

A list of destination corridors is provided in Section 5.2 below.

Local linkages

Local linkages connect to primary and secondary corridors, providing local walking and cycling access through green streets and urban connections. Local linkages:

- are typically local in scale
- are an important final-layer of the network
- delivered by local councils.

Local linkages can include local walking and cycling routes, small parks, urban waterways, stormwater detention corridors, and other community-scale connections. Although they are not always classified as open space, they often function as access points connecting people to blue and green infrastructure, natural assets, and the broader active transport and wider Blue-Green Grid network.

3.2 Other Blue-Green Grid corridors

There are other sub-types of corridors that also have an important role in the broader Blue-Green Grid network. They have a complimentary role to the corridors included in the Sydney Plan and are important considerations in local and strategic planning.

Road, rail and active transport corridors

These corridors primarily provide active transport opportunities, with limited and small open space potential. They include major roads, rail corridors, and dedicated cycleway routes. While they do not function as linear parks, they are critical supporting infrastructure for the Blue-Green Grid network, improving accessibility and connectivity between open space corridors. They often provide essential access from urban centres to larger open spaces.

Tracks and trails corridors

Tracks and trails corridors are bushland trail networks, typically within large national parks, and generally away from population centres. Planning for these corridors focuses on legibility and breadth of bush trail networks rather than providing usable recreational open space within urban development areas. They are a valued and complementary part of the Blue-Green Grid but serve a distinct purpose.

These corridors provide opportunities to embed Connecting with Country principles, celebrate local identity and support cultural interpretation through landscape design, public art, storytelling and wayfinding that reflects Aboriginal cultural values, histories and ongoing custodianship.

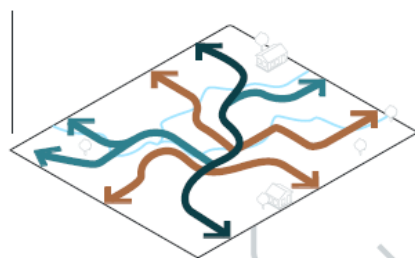
4 Corridor Prioritisation

Figure 1: Corridor prioritisation process

Corridor prioritisation

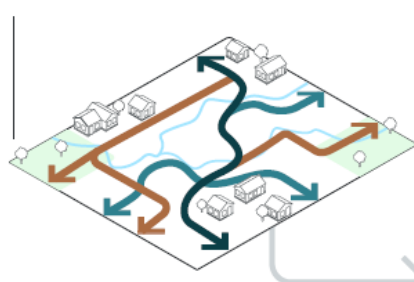
Categorisation

50+ corridors



Prioritisation

Connecting homes and district open space



Project list:

3x Priority 1 projects
3x Priority 2 corridors
3x Priority 3 corridors



Prioritisation (see Figure 1) focuses on primary corridors only, as these are the corridors with the greatest potential to address open space deficiency and provide new linear park opportunities. Identification of key Blue-Green Grid corridors will guide NSW Government funding decisions through mechanisms such as the Housing and Productivity Contribution, the Metropolitan Greenspace Program and the Greening Our City Program.

Prioritisation of projects will coordinate government effort and ensure investment is also targeted at areas of open space need. A whole-of-government process to prioritise corridors for development has been developed, with emphasis on:

- **improving access:** projects in areas of existing open space under-provision using the Department's new open space data.
- **targeting high growth areas:** where there has been significant rezoning activity and where fastest housing delivery is anticipated.
- **deliverability and value for money:** where large parts of the corridor are in government ownership.
- **strategic opportunity:** projects that connect large populations to district level open spaces.

The list of primary corridors will support the prioritisation of grant funding and be reviewed every 3 years, by the Blue-Green Grid Committee, to reflect corridor changes in context, housing growth and climate resilient priorities. Other local linkages should still be secured but the focus of the Department and the Blue-Green Grid Committee is on primary corridors. The Blue-Green Grid

Committee will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of a Blue-Green Grid delivery Plan and facilitating land use change to support the delivery of Blue-Green Grid corridors.

Councils generally lead detailed planning, mapping and delivery of local Blue-Green Grid connections, supported by state agencies. Many councils have already mapped extensive networks in local strategies, which should continue to be delivered through council programs, development contributions and voluntary planning agreements.

The priority corridors identified in section 4.1 align with an independent assessment of priority Blue-Green Grid corridors that included both primary and secondary corridors. The independent assessment identified 25 priority corridors, and this list was used to validate the shortlisted 9 priority corridors identified for project delivery.

4.1 Priority Corridors for project delivery

The Primary corridors were assessed to determine a priority corridor project list. The priority project corridors were identified based on a combined assessment of:

- forecast population growth to 2036: percentage population growth
- open space deficiency: both access to public open space of minimum 3,000 square metres (sqm) within 400 metres (m), and amount of open space per capita
- deliverability: amount of government owned land and/or land intended for divestment
- connectivity: impact of corridor as a regional connector.

The approach to prioritisation emphasises short term growth, deliverability and a more detailed consideration of open space deficiency alongside corridors role in improving the regional connectivity of the Blue-Green Grid.

Project list:

- **Priority 1:** projects for delivery within Blue-Green Grid priority corridors over the next 3 years
- **Priority 2:** priority corridors that require further investigation and planning, to inform a delivery program for 4-6-year timeframe
- **Priority 3:** longer term Blue-Green Grid initiatives for strategic planning and local council implementation or preservation, that align with longer term growth forecasts and Centres Framework as it applies to Sydney.

Table 1 below lists the priority projects for Sydney.

5 Blue-Green Grid list and map

5.1 Primary corridors list

Table 1: Sydney's primary corridors

No.	Corridor name	UDP area	Local government areas included
1	Salt Pan Creek (Priority 1)	Central	Canterbury-Bankstown, Georges River
2	Duck River (Priority 1)	Central	Canterbury-Bankstown, Parramatta, Cumberland
3	Powells Creek and Parramatta River to Cooks River Link (Priority 1)	Eastern (South)	Strathfield, Canada Bay <i>*Not a primary corridor but included due to significant land transfers and high deliverability opportunity</i>
4	Ropes Creek (Priority 2)	Western, Central	Blacktown, Penrith, Fairfield
5	Mill Stream to Botany Wetlands (Priority 2)	Eastern (South)	Randwick, Bayside
6	Rockdale Wetlands (Priority 2)	Eastern (South)	Bayside
7	Wiannamatta South Creek (Priority 3)	Western	Hawkesbury, Penrith, Liverpool, Camden, Campbelltown, Blacktown
8	Thompsons Creek and Moore Gully (Priority 3)	Western	Liverpool
9	Mount Annan to Rosemeadow (Priority 3)	Western	Campbelltown
10	Cooks River	Central, Eastern (South)	Canterbury-Bankstown, Strathfield, Burwood, Cumberland, Bayside
11	Parramatta River Foreshore to Sydney Harbour	Central, Eastern (South)	Parramatta, Canada Bay, Ryde, Hunters Hill, Inner West, Sydney
12	Toongabbie Creek and Blacktown Creek	Central	Parramatta, Blacktown
13	Eastern Creek	Central, Western	Blacktown, Fairfield
14	Nepean river and Harrington Forest to South Creek and Georges River	Western	Camden, Campbelltown

No.	Corridor name	UDP area	Local government areas included
15	Prospect Creek and Prospect Reservoir	Western, Central	Fairfield, Cumberland
16	Bunbury Curran Creek and Bow Bowing Creek	Western	Campbelltown
17	Georges River	Western, Central, Eastern (South)	Sutherland, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Wollondilly
18	Nepean River	Western	Hawkesbury, Penrith, Liverpool, Camden, Campbelltown, Wollondilly
19	Blaxland Creek and Surveyors Creek	Western	Penrith
20	Orphan School and Green Valley Creek	Western	Fairfield
21	Cabramatta Creek	Western	Liverpool, Fairfield
22	Warragamba Pipeline Open Space Corridor	Western, Central	Penrith, Blacktown, Fairfield
23	Hawkesbury River Trail	Western, Central	Hawkesbury, the Hills
24	Upper Canal	Western	Campbelltown, Camden, Liverpool, Fairfield
25	Sydney Harbour	Central, Eastern (North and South)	Sydney, Woollahra, Inner West, Canda Bay, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove
26	Wolli Creek and Bardwell	Central	Bayside, Canterbury-Bankstown
27	Lane Cove River and Lane Cove National Park	Eastern (North)	Ryde, Hornsby
28	Girraween Creek	Central	Parramatta, Cumberland, Blacktown
29	Penrith lakes to Western Sydney Parklands	Western, Central	Blacktown, Penrith

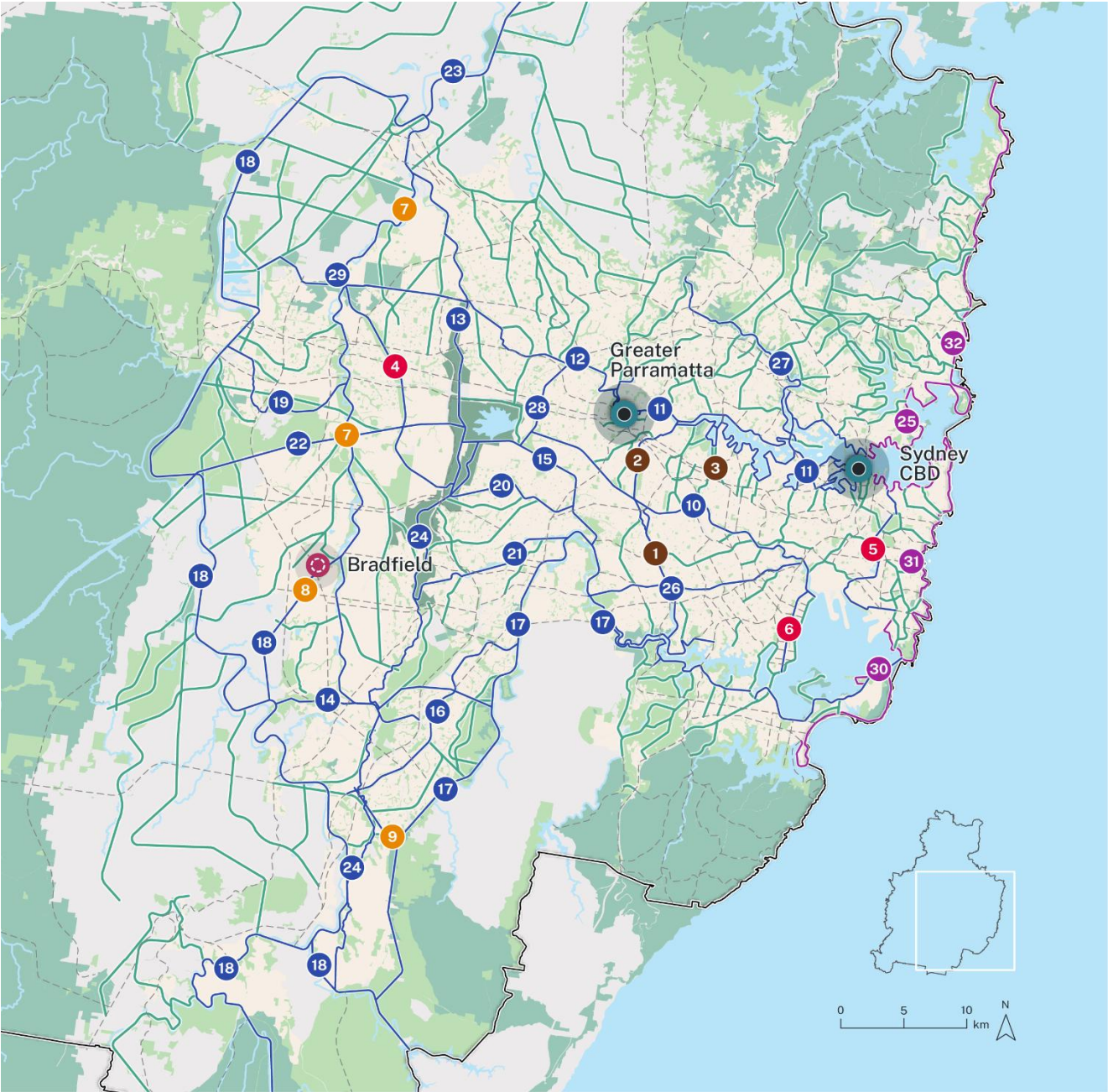
5.2 Destination corridors list

Table 2: Sydney’s destination corridors

No.	Corridor name	UDP area	Local government areas included
30	The Coastal Walk: Kurnell to the Royal National Park	Eastern (South)	Sutherland
31	The Great Coastal Walk: South Head to La Perouse	Eastern (South)	Randwick, Woollahra, Waverley
32	The Coastal Walk: Barrenjoey Head to Manly	Eastern (North)	Northern Beaches

5.3 Sydney region's Blue-Green Grid overview

Figure 2: Sydney region's Blue-Green Grid corridors



Blue-Green Grid corridors

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| — Sydney region boundary | Primary corridor | Draft urban growth area |
| ● CBD | Priority 1 | Western Sydney Parklands |
| ● Emerging CBD | Priority 2 | Green spaces and environmental lands |
| | Priority 3 | National parks and state forest |
| | Secondary corridor | Other uses including rural |
| | Destination corridor | |
| | Local linkages | |