

2024



# FAIRFIELD CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Fairfield City Council acknowledges the Cabrogal of the Darug Nation as the traditional custodians of the Fairfield Local Government Area and pays its respects to its Elders both past, present and emerging.

# Strategy at a Glance



## Our Vision

Fairfield City, an energetic and culturally rich community in Western Sydney, aspires towards a future where economic development acts as a driving force for positive transformation, generating opportunities for all individuals and cultivating a sense of pride and prosperity. Anchored in values of inclusivity, sustainability, and communal strength, our vision propels us towards a prosperous tomorrow. Through strategic investments in Fairfield's potential, we will pave the way for an economy that thrives on resilience and embraces diversity at its core.



## Why Fairfield

Fairfield is in a unique position as it looks to capture the opportunities connected to the Western Sydney Airport, its integral role as part of Australia's third largest economy (Western Sydney), it being a manufacturing powerhouse and its authentic and diverse culture.



## Our Priorities

To achieve our vision this Economic Development Strategy for Fairfield City establishes four core priorities:

- Supporting Small Businesses and Creating Local Jobs
- Industry Development
- Visitor Economy
- Creating Vibrant Precincts



## Our Action Plan

The action plan outlines detailed actions that Council will undertake over the short, medium and long-term to assist in achieving our priorities and the tasks associated within the priorities. Our actions will be updated every four years and monitored annually.

# Executive Summary

Fairfield City is embarking on a transformative journey to realise its economic potential, recognising the local economy as a key strategic priority in the 2022-2032 Fairfield City Plan.

Economic development is fundamental to improving the quality of life for our residents. As one of Sydney and NSW's most disadvantaged Local Government areas, our focus is on building a stronger, more resilient local economy to provide greater opportunities for our diverse community.

The Economic Development Strategy is aligned with the Fairfield City Plan, outlining a framework and strategic directions to turn the community's economic aspirations into reality.

Historically, we have seen this through Fairfield's economic evolution, from agriculture to manufacturing and now to a more diversified economy positioned as a critical player in the Western Sydney economy. With over 200,000 residents spread across 100 square km, Fairfield's production has exceeded \$12 billion a year, demonstrating significant growth over the past decade.

However, challenges persist, with an above-average unemployment rate and prominent levels of disadvantage (see appendix 1) highlighting the need for effective policies to stimulate higher incomes and stronger job prospects locally.

Critical issues, including limited locally based Government job opportunities, transportation challenges, and supply chain disruptions, have been identified. The strategy outlines four key priorities to shape Fairfield's economic future, with a special emphasis on precinct development and enhancement, including realising the full manufacturing potential of the Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate and fostering the night-time and visitor economy.

Fairfield is well placed to capitalise on significant opportunities presented by upcoming projects in Western Sydney including the Western Sydney International Airport and surrounding Aerotropolis.

Effectively capitalising on these opportunities, and others, in a complex economic environment whilst retaining and supporting our existing business and resident community will be instrumental in Fairfield's future economic success.

Our Economic Development Strategy is focused on what the community has told us: that the City's future should be characterised by community wellbeing, improving infrastructure and places and a strong & resilient local economy.



# Fairfield City & Greater Sydney



# Our Priorities



## Supporting Small Businesses and Creating Local Jobs

- ✓ Business Training, Programs and Workshops
- ✓ Vocational Skills and Micro-credentials
- ✓ Digital Support and Resources for the Business Community
- ✓ Attract Business Investment and Relocation of Government Jobs



## Industry Development

- ✓ Food & Beverage
- ✓ Manufacturing, Industrial and Transport
- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Circular Economy



## Visitor Economy

- ✓ Night-Time Economy
- ✓ Tourism
- ✓ Major Events to Celebrate and Promote Fairfield
- ✓ Fairfield Showground



## Creating Vibrant Precincts

- ✓ Prairiewood
- ✓ Fairfield City Centre
- ✓ Cabramatta and Canley Corridor

## Macroeconomic Context

The economic landscape post COVID-19 is vastly different to before. Since 2020 the Australian economy has been struck by a continuous set of external economic shocks. From disruptions to global supply chains, collapsed migration and border closures, chronic staff shortages, a shift in commodity exports, global conflicts, structural change in major trading partners like China and increased inflation.

One of the outcomes of these shocks, combined with high Government debt levels and projected lower Government spending, is that we face a more challenging investment environment. For the first time in decades, more direct investment capital now leaves Australia than is coming the other way, including from the US.

At a national level, the outlook for growth in the Australian economy is modest at best. Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook in January 2024 noted that

**“the forecast growth of 1.3% in calendar year 2024 would be the weakest since the early 1990s recession.”**

With inflation dropping in 2024 the primary challenge for the country will not be lowering the rate of inflation; the national economic challenge will be lifting the rate of growth. There are some policy positions on the horizon to bolster business confidence and tackle some structural challenges.

The Federal Government’s new Migration Strategy released in late 2023 will impact a range of industries, including construction, aimed at tackling the challenge of a shortage of skilled workers. The recently announced Future Made in Australia policy seeks to invest in Australia’s domestic manufacturing capability – a sector of significance for Fairfield City.

In developing this Economic Development Strategy, Fairfield City Council understands that economic growth is expected to remain subdued, pressure on household budgets from interest rate rises will weigh on consumption and with the NSW State budget facing debt pressure we understand that heavy lifting is needed at a local community level to ensure economic growth and employment outcomes are prioritised for the Fairfield community.



Sun’s Fresh Farm, Horsley Park

# Fairfield City Economy



Fairfield's economy has grown significantly over the past two decades, bringing local levels of production to more than \$12 billion annually.

As well as a high-value centre of production, Fairfield City's local economy affords significant opportunities for workers and businesses:

- Fairfield's economy supports more than 18,000 businesses. About two-thirds of these businesses are in construction, logistics, property services, retail, professional services or manufacturing
- Fairfield's economy supports more than 58,000 jobs. More than half of these jobs are found in manufacturing, health care & social assistance, education, retail or construction.

Most economic activity in Fairfield occurs privately, independent of direct Government influence or direction. A wide and growing range of large, independent markets, close to home, affords Fairfield's residents the chance to pursue higher standards of living.

In 2023, Fairfield's local economic production was equivalent to more than \$58,000 per local resident.

Put another way: the local economy generates a significant amount of corporate and personal income, potentially available to local workers & business owners to secure and prosper from.

## THE FAIRFIELD CITY ECONOMY AT A GLANCE



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics and National Institute of Economic and Industry Research data

The figure below depicts the variation in profile since 2015 across industries and three different measures of economic expansion:

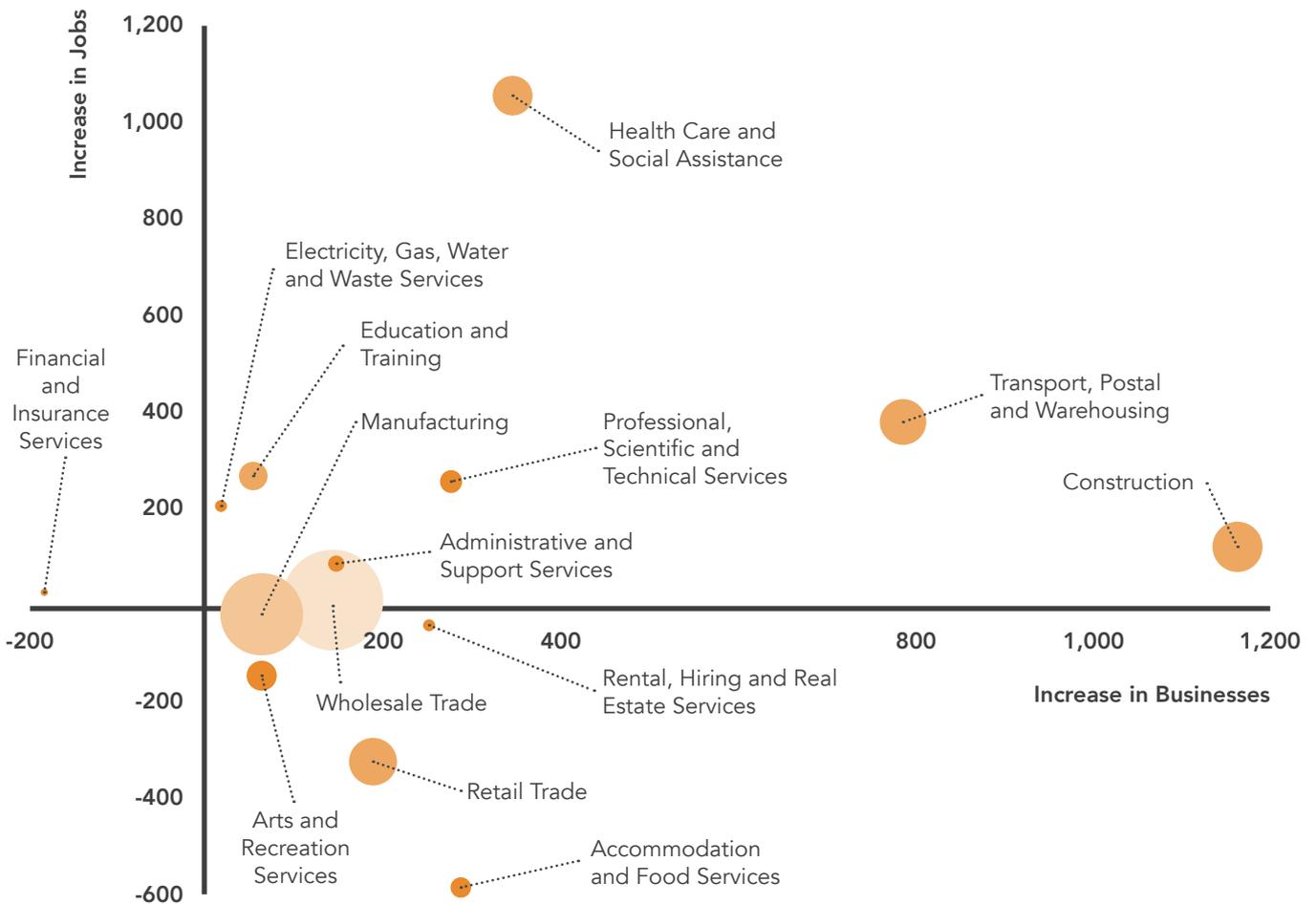
- Measure one is net increase in businesses in an industry** - specifically, how many more local businesses in each sector in June 2022 than in June 2015. The further to the right a 'bubble' on the chart is, the more additional businesses Fairfield has gained.
- Measure two is net increase in local jobs in each industry** - specifically, the number of local jobs identified in each sector in the 2021 Census against 2016 Census levels. The further up the page a 'bubble' is, the greater the increase in local jobs in the sector.
- Measure three is net increase in local production by industry** - specifically, the change in output for each sector in 2020-21 when measured against their 2015-16 levels. The larger the 'bubble', the greater the increase in local production.

A review of the figure below reveals some key features and target industries:

- Stand Out Industries** - For any of the three measures, the net changes tend to be concentrated in a handful of industries. This can be seen in the numerous small 'bubbles' clustered very close to where the axes intersect.
- Business Creation** - The net increase in businesses is heavily concentrated in two sectors. Construction is the leading contributor, with transport, postal & warehousing, next best. Together, these industries have seen a combined net increase of 2,000 local businesses in seven years.
- Job Creation** - Health Care & Social Assistance is the stand-out sector for net job creation. Net job gains in this sector are nearly three times the levels of transport, postal & warehousing.
- Production Expansion** - Manufacturing & Wholesale Trade led the expansion in local production, accounting for more than a billion dollars a year of additional local production value.

GROWTH IN OPPORTUNITIES BY INDUSTRY, 2015 TO 2022

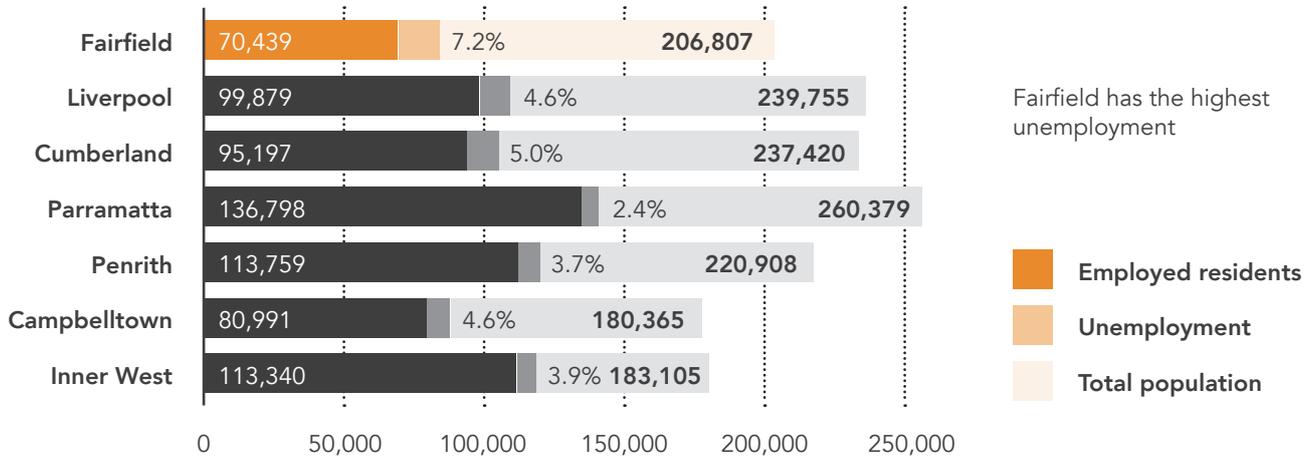
### Fairfield City Growth Measures by Industry, 2015 to 2022



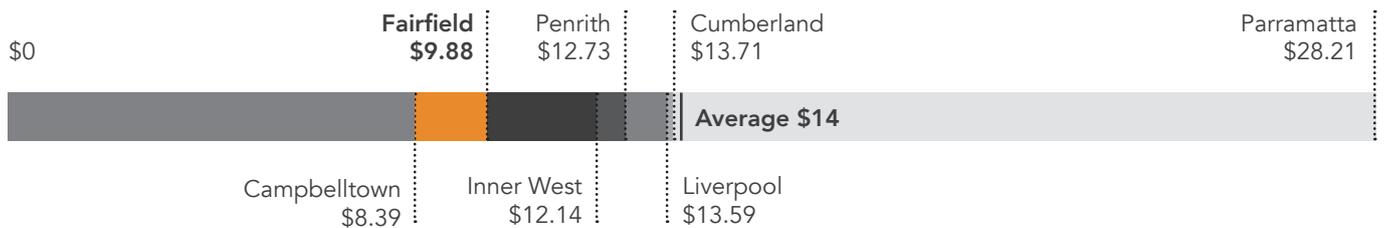
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics & National Institute for Industry & Economic Research data

# How we Compare to our Neighbours\*

## Economic Indicators

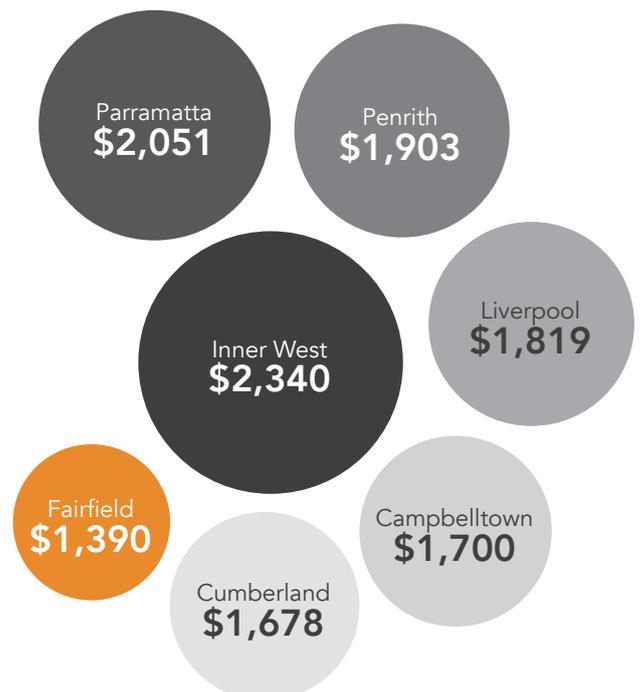
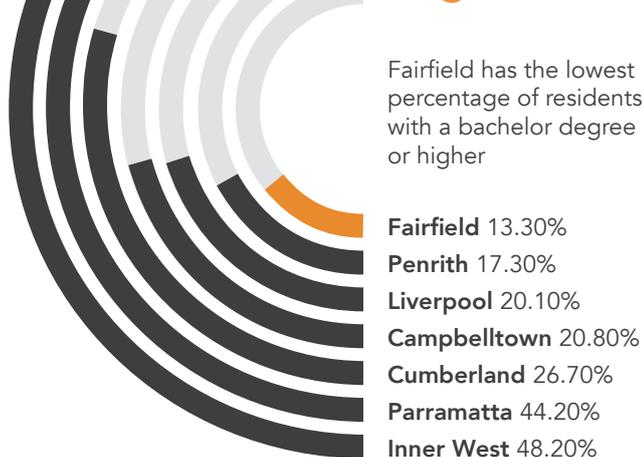


## Gross Regional Product (\$ billions)



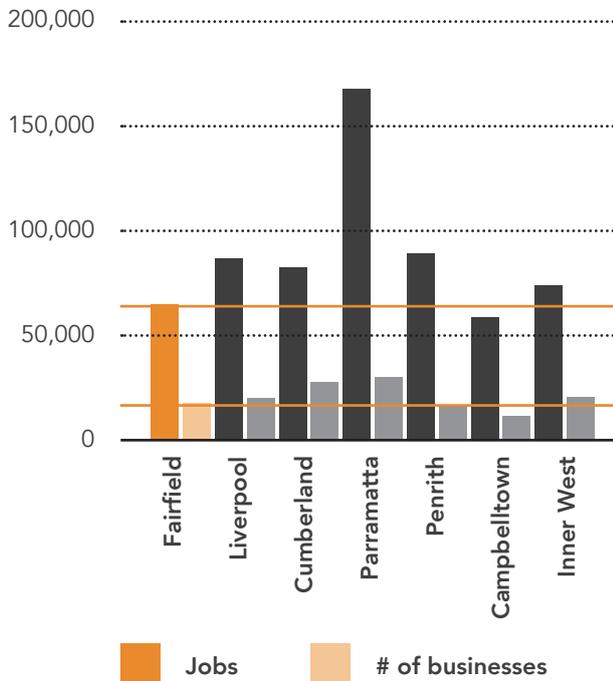
## Median Weekly Household Income

### Percentage of Population with Bachelor Degree or Higher



\*The comparable Councils were selected based on those Councils with similar sized populations west of the Sydney CBD.

## Jobs and # of Businesses



## Largest Industry

Only Fairfield and Cumberland have industry creating jobs. The other Councils rely on Government funded jobs as their largest industry

### Manufacturing

Fairfield & Cumberland Councils

### Health care and social assistance

Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith, Campbelltown & Inner West Councils



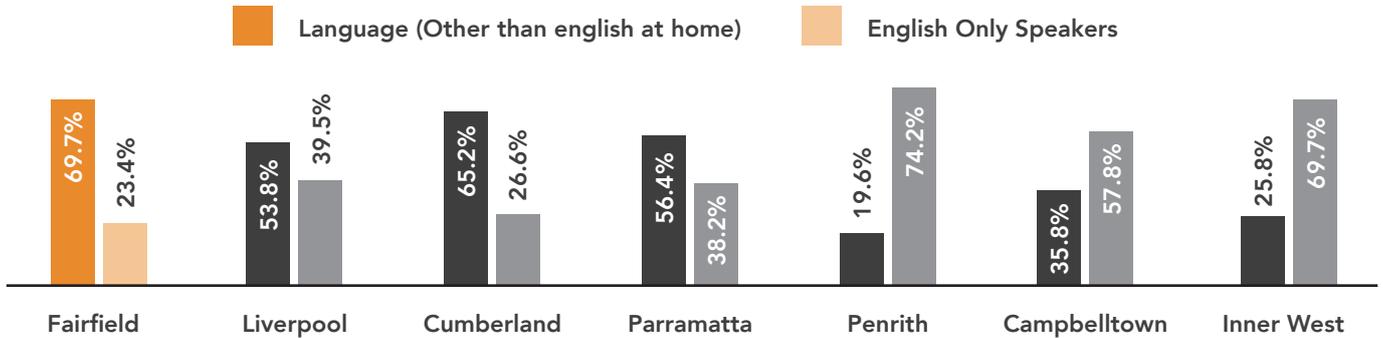
Cello Liqueur

# How we Compare to our Neighbours\*

## Social Indicators

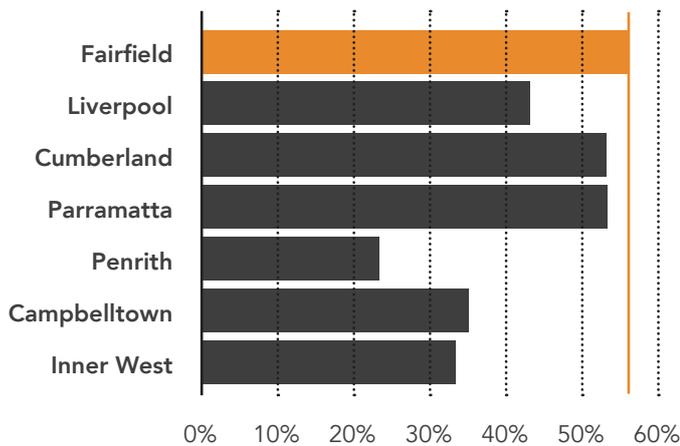
### Language

Highest percentage of non-English speakers and lowest percentage of English only speakers



### Overseas Birthplace

Highest percentage of overseas born residents



### Land Size



### Top two countries of birth

Fairfield's top two countries of birth account for the highest percentage of total population than comparable Councils

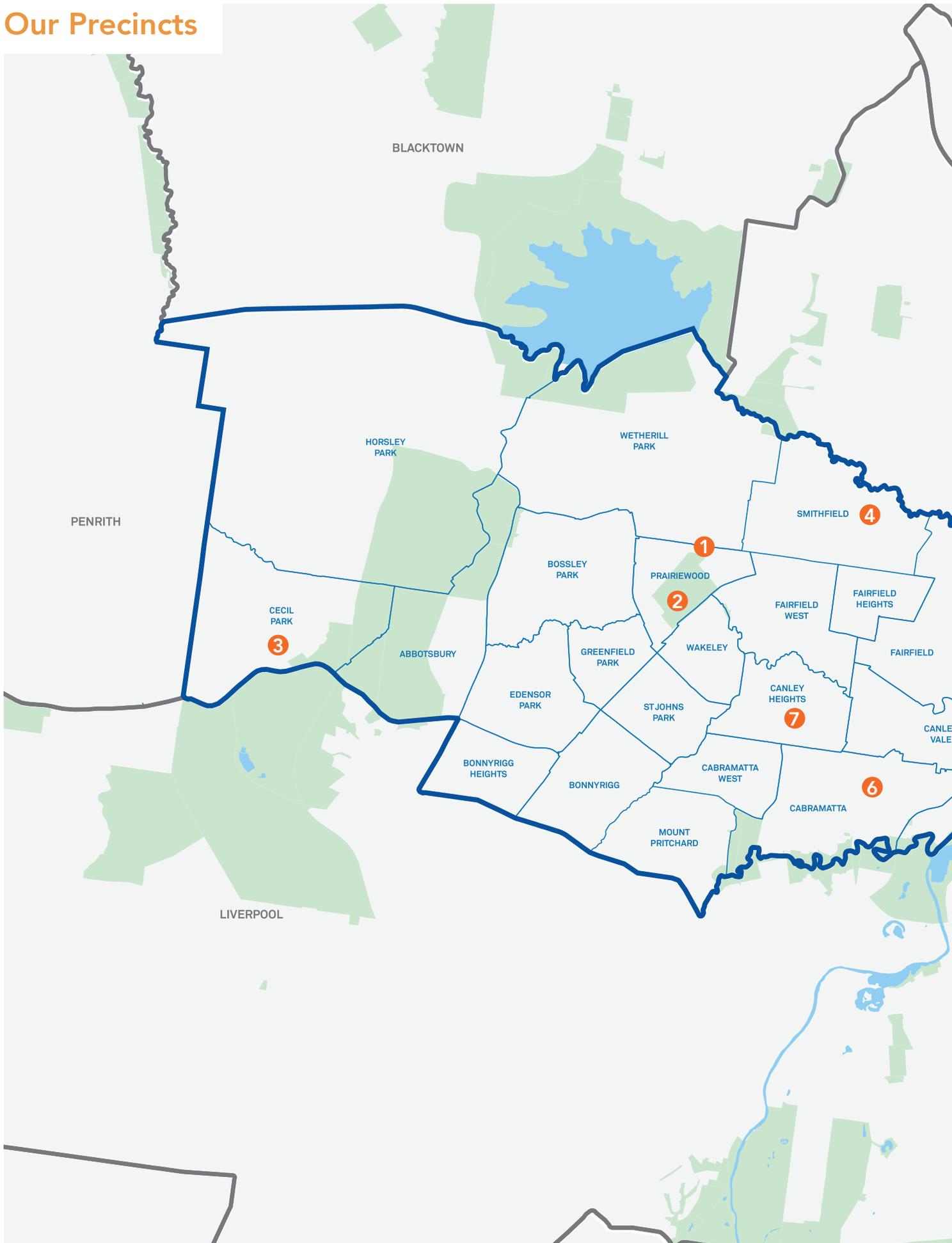
	Bangladesh	China	India	Iraq	United Kingdom	Vietnam	Total
Fairfield				12%		16.3%	28.3%
Liverpool				6.1%		3.6%	9.7%
Cumberland		6.6%	8.5%				15.1%
Parramatta		11.3%	11.3%				22.6%
Penrith			3.1%		3.2%		6.3%
Campbelltown	3.1%		3.9%				7.0%
Inner West		3%			5.4%		8.4%

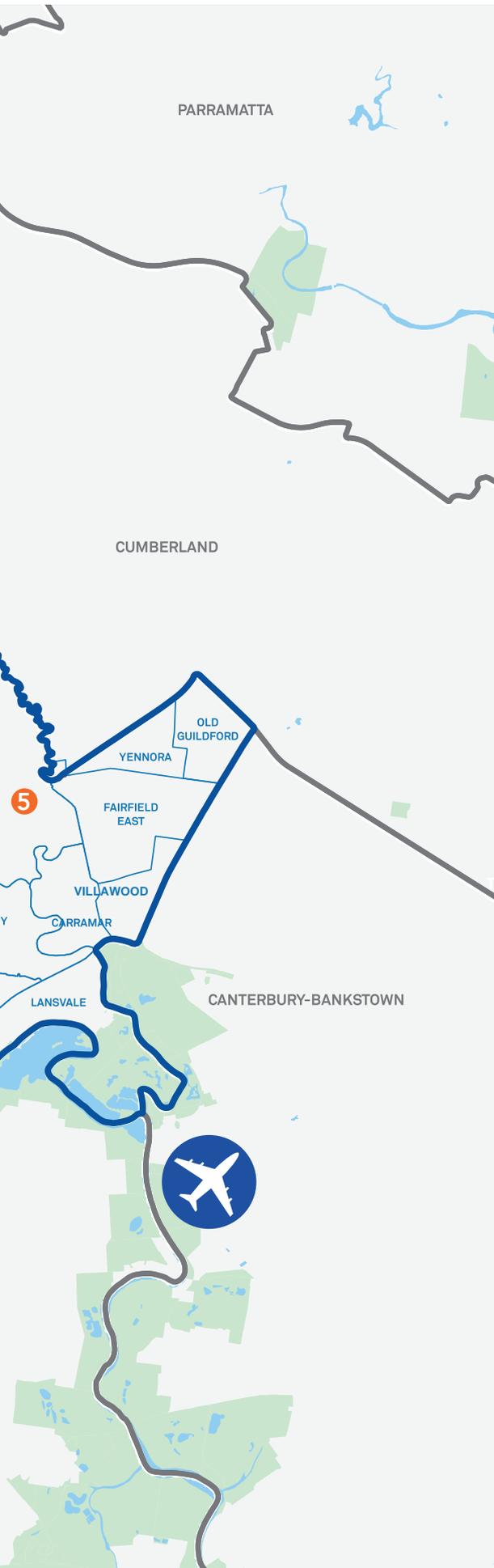
\*The comparable Councils were selected based on those Councils with similar sized populations west of the Sydney CBD.



Watt Khemarangsaram Cambodian Buddhist Temple

# Our Precincts





## 1. Prairiewood

This Precinct is especially notable for its development potential for housing and employment.

- Consists of more than 100Ha of publicly owned land for scoping new housing and community, cultural, educational and health precinct opportunities.
- Provides 2,800 jobs and generates \$250 million a year in local production.

## 2. Fairfield Showground

The Fairfield Showground has potential to improve its position as a sporting, cultural and entertainment precinct.

- Has a variety of exhibition spaces including a 10,000 sqm undercover roof area
- New 17,000 sqm event space with undercover and outdoor facilities.

## 3. Cecil Park

Ideal location for other major infrastructure to support the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis

- Draft Structure Plan for the Horsley Park/Cecil Park UIA could unlock land for future housing 10 minutes from the Airport.
- Comprises of 1,575 hectares, potential for over 20,000 dwellings.

## 4. Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate

Sydney's most significant manufacturing precinct generating over \$2.6 billion a year

- Close proximity to M4 and M7.
- 960 hectares in size, Smithfield Wetherill Park has over 2,600 businesses and generates 18,000 jobs.

## 5. Fairfield City Centre

Fairfield features a wide range of services, cultural, dining, food facilities and infrastructure.

- Close to public transport and T5 Cumberland line to Parramatta.
- Generates more than 2,550 jobs and \$270 million a year in local production.

## 6. Cabramatta Town Centre

Cabramatta is known for its food culture but also supports a wide variety of services and social amenities.

- The heart of South East Asian food culture and fresh food, Cabramatta hosts the Moon Festival every September, attracting 80,000 visitors.
- With T3 and T5 train line connections to Parramatta, Liverpool, Sydney CBD, Bankstown, and Campbelltown, Cabramatta is highly accessible. It generates over 2,300 jobs and \$258 million annually in local production.

## 7. Canley Corridor (Canley Heights & Canley Vale)

The Canley Vale – Canley Heights precinct is one of seven precincts that make up two-thirds of Fairfield's population growth and dwellings.

- Canley Vale Road is the central hub of Canley Heights' and Canley Vale's bustling dining precinct, featuring a hip night-time vibe with bars for Gen Z, and family-friendly options in Canley Heights.
- Canley Vale is easily accessible with a nearby railway station and is within a 15-minute walk to Cabramatta. Canley Heights offers convenient car parking in adjoining laneways.

# Key Advantages

## Culture

- Fairfield City is a dynamic and inclusive community celebrated for its cultural and natural diversity.
- With a rich mix of ethnic backgrounds, the City hosts vibrant cultural events, fostering unity among residents.
- Fairfield City's harmonious blend of cultural and natural elements not only defines its character but also creates an inviting and dynamic locale, promoting community pride.



## Geographic and Natural Endowments

- Central geographic position in Greater Sydney & east coast markets
- Western Sydney Parklands
- Extensive blue-green grids
- Georges River frontage
- Positioned to benefit from substantial investment in the Aerotropolis



## Built Endowments

- M4, M7 & M12 Motorways
- T3 & T5 rail lines
- Fairfield, Cabramatta, Prairiewood & other centres
- Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate



## Human Endowments

- Deep labour pool to draw on for manufacturing
- Large, growing markets
- Entrepreneurial outlook
- Strong community unity & identity
- Multicultural



## Institutional Endowments

- Central to Sydney's manufacturing cluster
- Proactive Council
- Strong business investment community
- Large public landholdings

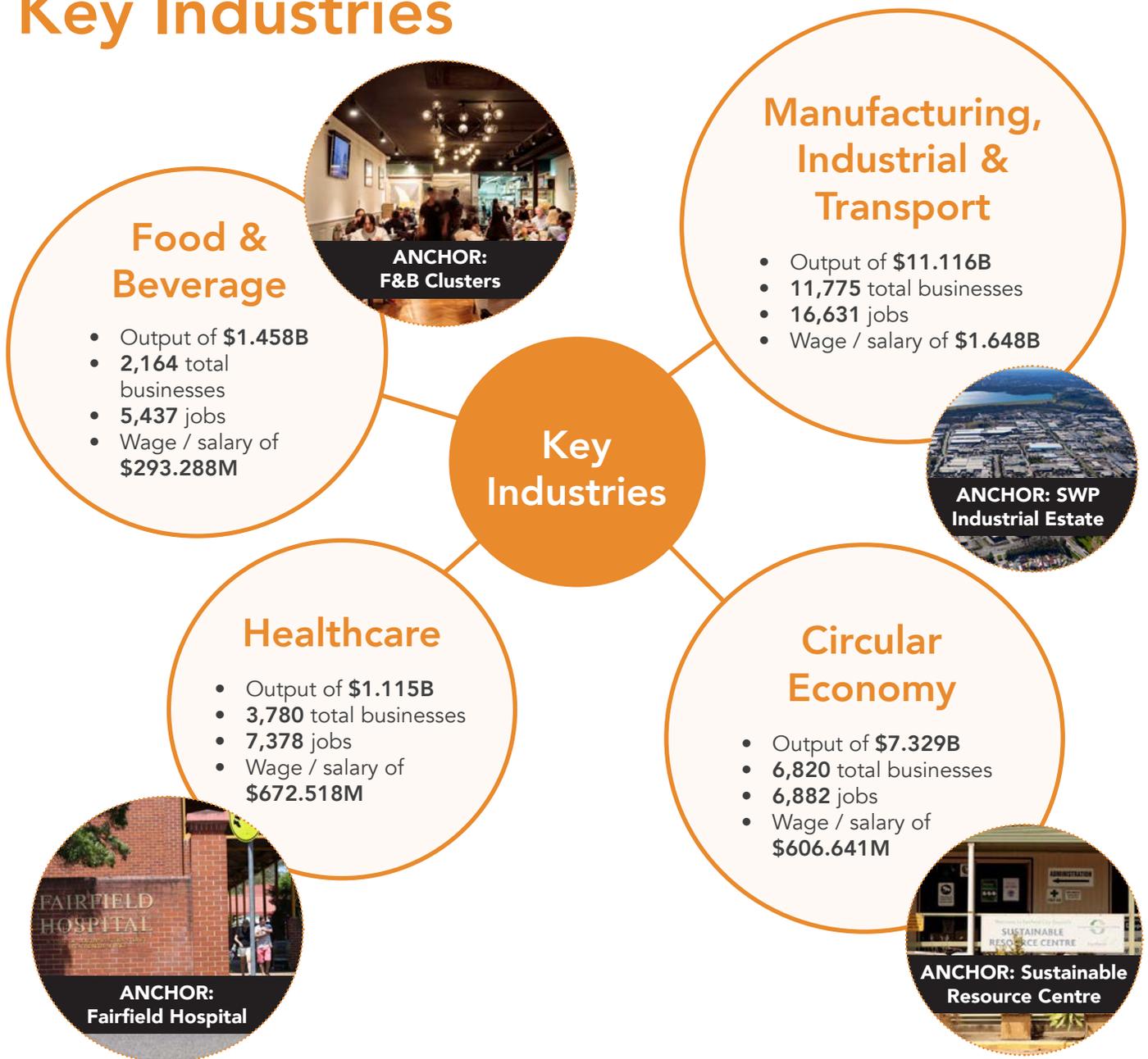


## Business Support Infrastructure

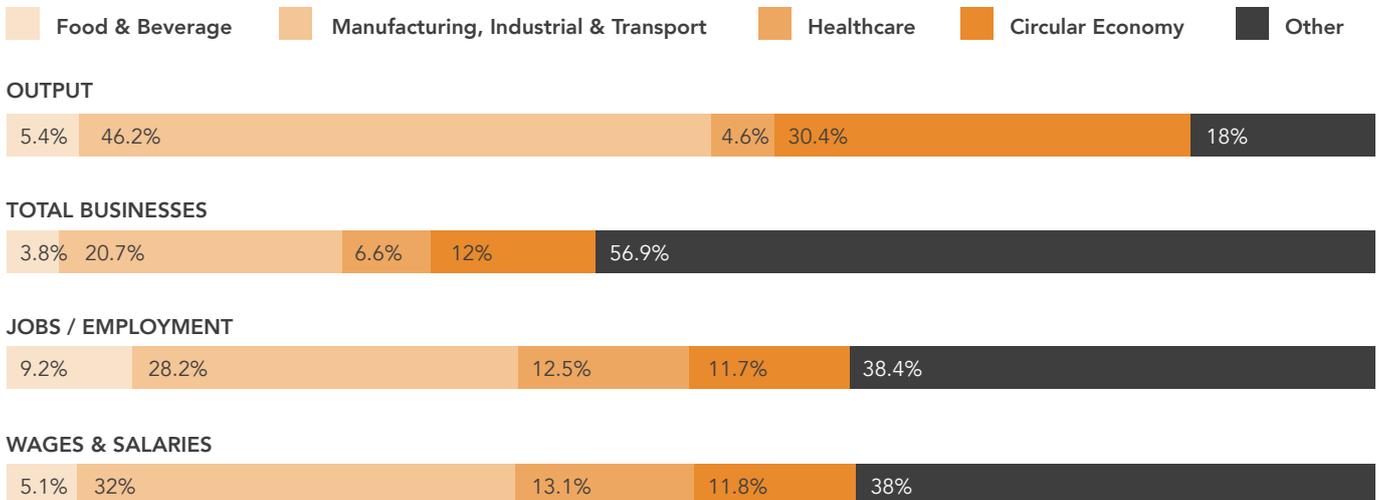
- Fairfield City HQ is a purpose-built dedicated space in the heart of Fairfield. It offers business start-up co-working spaces, workshops, and business networking events and opportunities.
- Fairfield City Business online support
- Business Awards
- Business programs and forums



# Key Industries



## Sector contributions to total



# The Action Plan



Cabramatta Moon Festival, John Street Cabramatta

Priority 1 – Supporting Small Businesses and Creating Local Jobs	Action	Timeline
	Assist Small and Medium Size businesses grow and scale through training, programs and workshops	Ongoing
	Promote vocational and prevocational training to support a future ready workforce	Short - Medium
	Partner with industry and Government to promote employee job opportunities in the four priority industry clusters	Short - Medium
	Deliver digital resources and tools for local businesses to leverage through Fairfield City Business website	Ongoing
	Share grant opportunities with local businesses to encourage economic resilience and business investment	Ongoing
	Update the Fairfield City Council Investment Prospectus 2019 to showcase key information and investment opportunities in Fairfield LGA	Medium
	Advocate for the relocation of NSW and Federal Government jobs to Fairfield LGA	Short - Long
	Deliver local activations in town centres that drive economic prosperity to local businesses	Ongoing
	Prioritise new models of skill training, such as micro-credentials, to support local businesses and industry to increase competitiveness and increase local employment	Short - Medium

	Action	Timeline
Priority 2 – Industry Development	<b>Industry 1: Food &amp; Beverage</b>	
	Deliver the Fairfield Food Forum and grow it to become the Council’s leading B2B event	Ongoing
	Map capabilities to support industry growth and market entry	Short
	Promote and advocate for Western Sydney’s largest food and beverage manufacturing industry	Ongoing
	Integrate food and beverage businesses with the Major Events and Place Activations run by Council	Ongoing
	<b>Industry 2: Manufacturing, Industrial and Transport</b>	
	Foster a Smithfield-Wetherill Park Chamber of Commerce	Medium
	Promote and advocate for the Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate	Ongoing
	Create a ‘Manufacturing in Fairfield Prospectus’ that analyses what made manufacturing in Fairfield so competitive and what the future of manufacturing will look like for the LGA	Medium
	Advocate to State and Federal Government for Manufacturing business support	Ongoing
Deliver micro skilling programs for the manufacturing sector	Short - Medium	

Action

Timeline

**Industry 3: Healthcare**

Create a healthcare precinct, surrounding Fairfield Hospital, with industry and government that leverages the Fairfield Hospital Upgrade to attract relevant specialist healthcare providers

Long

Attract and advocate for healthcare support and adjacent businesses and investment

Medium

**Industry 4: Circular Economy**

Identify and obtain funding support for the Sustainable Resource Centre

Ongoing

Share grant and subsidy opportunities with businesses to encourage the adoption of circular economy practices

Ongoing

Support collaboration between industry, Government, education and business to promote innovation and unlock growth in the circular economy

Ongoing



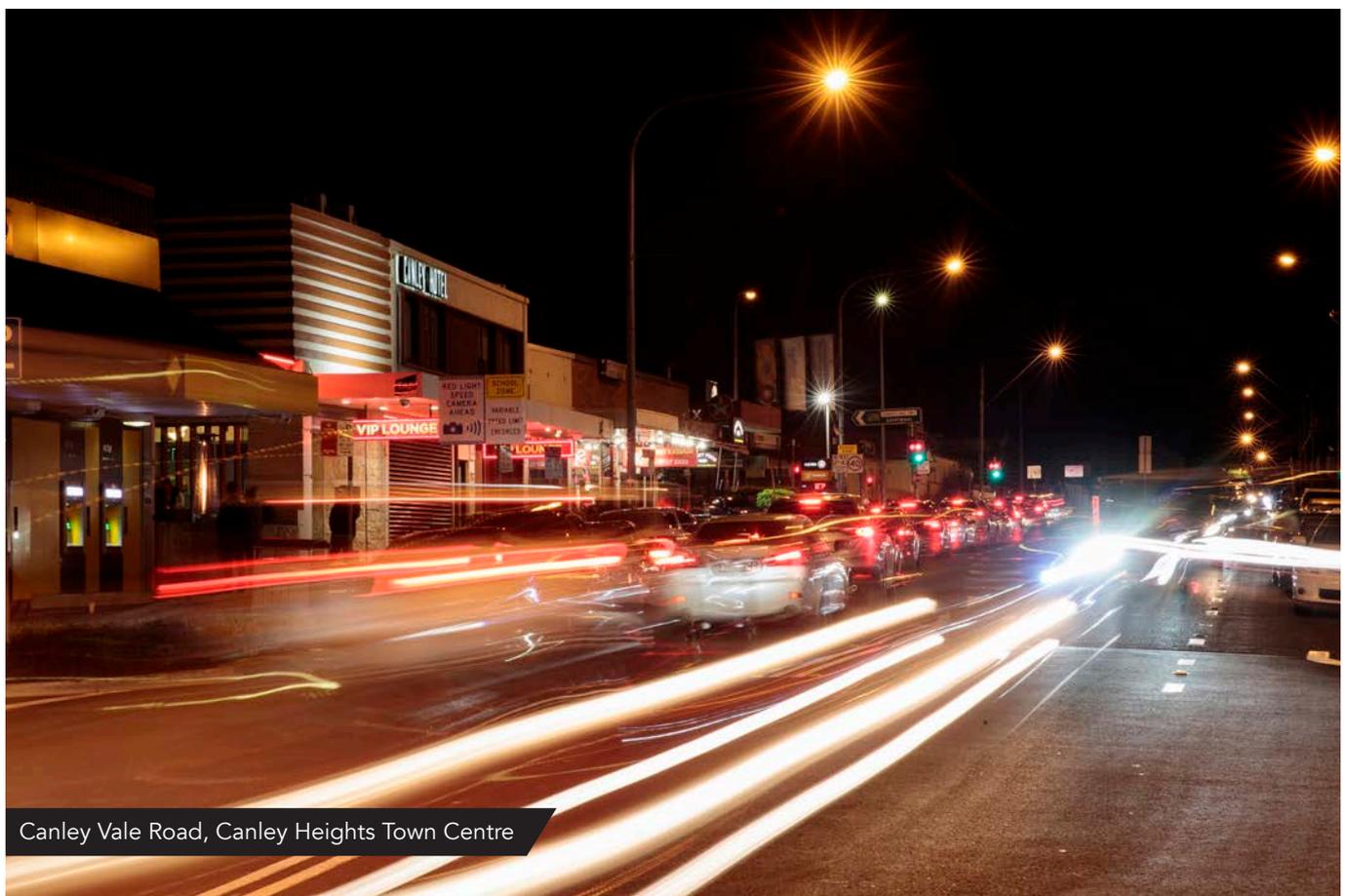
Sustainable Resource Centre

	Action	Timeline
Priority 3 – Visitor Economy	Create a Visitor Economy Strategy encompassing the 24-Hour Economy, Tourism and Major Events (Festivals)	Medium
	Collaborate with the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner to create a vibrant and safe night-time economy through grants, streamlined regulations and business support	Ongoing
	Deliver a Special Entertainment Precinct	Short - Medium
	Advocate to, and work closely with, Destination NSW to promote Fairfield as a Tourism Destination in the lead up to the opening of the Western Sydney Airport in 2026 and beyond	Ongoing
	Create a vibrant, safe and culturally inclusive night-time economy by establishing a working group, identifying and promoting our night-time economy precincts and working in partnership with the local Police	Medium
	Grow and Promote our Major Events to be events of significance at a State and National level	Ongoing
	Grow Moon Festival to be one of the largest, culturally unique, free festivals in the country	Ongoing
	Advocate to key Government Stakeholders and partners, including Destination NSW, Create NSW, Investment NSW, and Multicultural NSW, to position Fairfield as a tier 1 choice for major events	Ongoing
	Assess the viability of a town centre to be considered for a Purple Flag	Medium

Priority 4 – Creating Vibrant Precincts

Action	Timeline
<b>Prairiewood Precinct</b>	
With over 100Ha of publicly owned land, scope and advocate for new land uses that could include residential areas, enterprise corridors, and community, cultural, educational and health precincts	Ongoing
Continue to scope and further develop a sporting, entertainment and cultural precinct associated with Fairfield Showground and Leisure Centre	Long
Advocate for Prairiewood’s potential as a mass transit gateway	Ongoing
Advocate for economic outcomes associated with the proposed Western Sydney Freight Line	Ongoing
Transport Infrastructure - East-West Rail Connector linking the Western Sydney Airport and Parramatta via Prairiewood	Long
<b>Fairfield City Centre</b>	
Attract a Government anchor tenant to locate to the Fairfield City Centre	Ongoing
Deliver culturally sensitive place-based strategies and activations to unlock investment, facilitate economic growth and support the local community	Medium
Seek to create a cultural hub within the Fairfield City Centre	Long
Engage and partner with landowners, developers and State Government to deliver connected, timely and sufficient support of employment land	Ongoing
Leverage Fairfield City HQ and continue to create more spaces for business start-ups and social enterprises	Ongoing

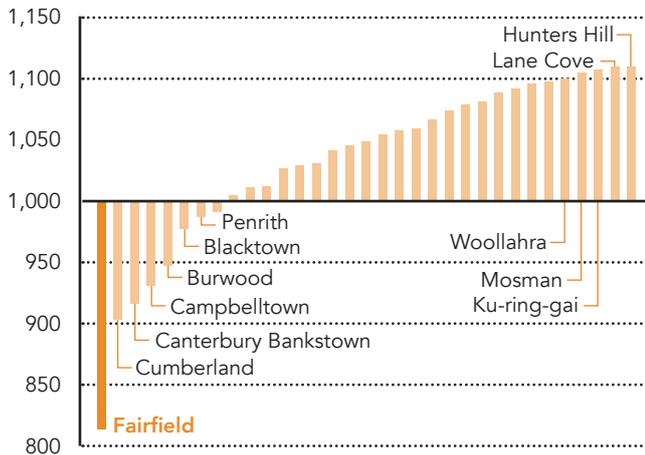
	Action	Timeline
Priority 4 – Creating Vibrant Precincts	<b>Cabramatta, Canley Heights &amp; Canley Vale</b>	
	Continue to grow and support these areas as a food and cultural hub	Ongoing
	Support significant public domain and streetscape upgrades to enhance its active transport, tourism and major event potential	Ongoing
	Deliver a Special Entertainment Precinct	Short - Medium
	Obtain increased financial support to grow this region as a Festival Hub	Short - Medium
	Develop the Cabravale Wellness Centre	Medium



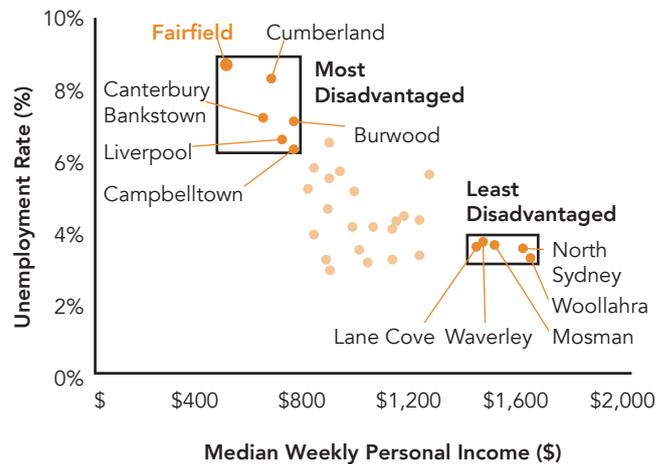
# Appendix 1

## The importance of economic development to the communities of Fairfield City

SEIFA Relative Disadvantage Scores for Sydney LGAs, 2021



Sydney's Most & Least Disadvantaged LGAs: Labour Market Outcomes



Fairfield's extent of disadvantage can be difficult to understand or convey simply.

The best broad measure of disadvantage is the Australian Bureau of Statistics' SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, upper right. A score of 1000 reflects the average level of disadvantage for Australia. Most of Sydney's 33 LGAs have scores of 1000 or above, and so reflect below average disadvantage. Fairfield's disadvantage score is 814, not just well below the rest of Sydney, but even below the very small remote communities of NSW's far west.

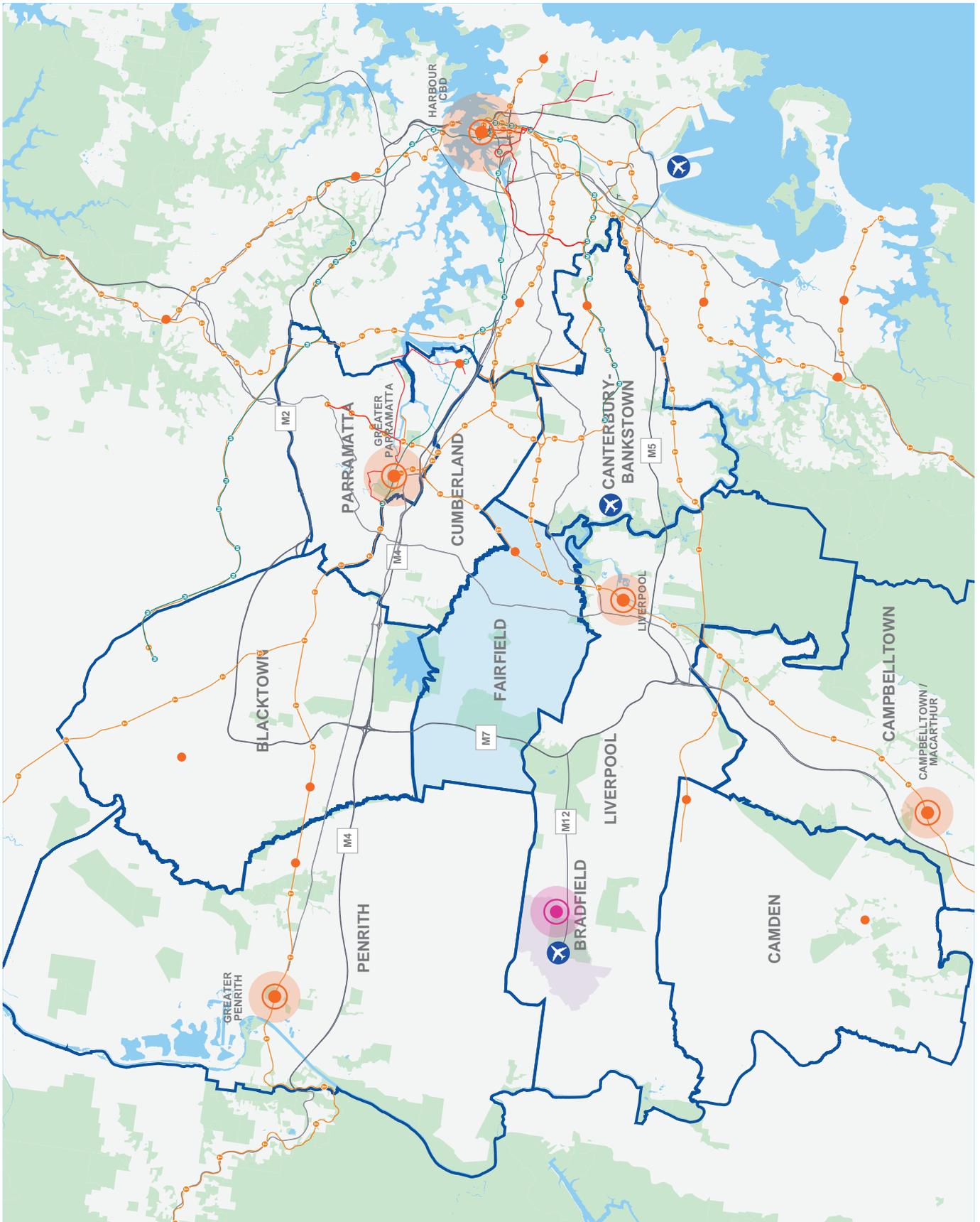
While SEIFA uses many broad measures, practical differences can be clearer when limited to a few metrics in narrow policy areas - like jobs & incomes, lower right in the second chart.

Fairfield's workers do not access work or earn as readily as those elsewhere. The second chart shows Fairfield's workers face much higher unemployment rates & much lower median incomes than workers in the other 32 LGAs:

- Sydney's five least job market disadvantaged areas have median incomes of \$1,400 to \$1,600 a week, about \$1,000 a week more than Fairfield
- Even the five next most job market disadvantaged LGAs have median incomes 30% to 50% above Fairfield's (or about +\$200 a week)
- Workers in Fairfield are about 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than the five areas facing the least job market disadvantage
- On average, Fairfield's workers are 23% more likely to be unemployed than the workers in the five next most job market disadvantaged areas.

## Appendix 2

### Fairfield: The Centre of Greater Sydney



## Contacts

For more information on the Economic Development Strategy, or to receive a copy of the document in an alternative format, please contact Fairfield City Economic Development team via the methods below.



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