

HILLPDA CONSULTING

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

HILLPDA
CONSULTING

**PLANNING
CAPABILITY
STATEMENT**

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN
PLANNING, ECONOMICS AND
PROPERTY ADVISORY

MARTIN HILL, DIRECTOR

The successful revitalisation of an area draws upon the complex interrelations between strategic planning, commercial intelligence and economic knowhow. HillPDA's knowledge and experience in synergising these factors allows us to create the valuable difference.

Martin Hill - Planning Institute
of Australia NSW Planning
Champion 2019

ABOUT HILLPDA

HillPDA provides public and private sector clients with value adding and inno. Our experience ranges from informing regional-wide level planning frameworks for Government through to detailed site-specific investigations for developers, landowners and investors.

Our collaboration of disciplines and breadth of industry experience, coupled with our passions for our work and reputation, see us as an industry leader that delivers creative and commercially viable outcomes for our clients, in harmony with community needs and expectations.

Over the past 30 years, we have built our reputation as trusted independent advisors with an ability to bridge the understanding gap between economics and planning. We have also repeatedly demonstrated our ability to be innovative and creative thinkers.

This is evidenced by our policy work developing innovative ways to encourage affordable housing and value capture for funding of community infrastructure. We have also been innovators in econometric modelling including retail expenditure and employment land demand modelling.

We stand proud of our contributions to the industry in bridging the understanding gap between planning and economics.

Urban & Retail Economics
Planning
Valuation & Feasibility
Investment & Development
Advisory

HILLPDA IS A LEADING PROVIDER OF INDEPENDENT STRATEGIC PLANNING, ECONOMIC, DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY AND VALUATION SERVICES.

INDEPENDENT

We are an independent consultancy that provides unbiased and client focused advice in an ethical context. We remain independent from retainers and sales transactions, operating in an advisory role for both the government and private sector.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY

We offer the opportunity to draw upon the complex synergy between strategic planning, commercial intelligence and economic know-how. The HillPDA team comprises of social, urban and economic planners, property economists and property valuers thus providing the skills necessary to deliver realistic, practical and innovative solutions.

COMMUNICATION

We know that the best planning and economic strategies are the ones that are clearly communicated. We pride ourselves on delivering the highest quality documents that are legible, easily interpreted and graphically appealing.

MODELLING EXPERTS

We set the industry standard in bespoke modelling having developed methodologies and models that are recognised globally. Our models cross multiple disciplines and include EstateMaster (feasibility), the Affordable Housing Calculator, Housing Propensity Model and our Retail Expenditure Model.

COMMERCIALLY REALISTIC

Our multi-disciplinary firm enables us to deliver commercially grounded planning and economic solutions. We use our understanding and appreciation of the interrelationships between economics and planning, to create strategies that are not only innovative but are grounded by a strong evidence base with ethical justification.

COLLABORATION

We believe the best ideas emerge from working collaboratively with our clients and key stakeholders to leverage off local knowledge and build a partnership based on communication, trust and quality research. By forming strong relationships with our clients, we can combine our knowledge and work together towards more effective project outcomes.

THOUGHT LEADERS

We are at the forefront of industry best practices; we don't just follow best practice, we strive to create the 'next practice' as thought leaders and problem solvers. We undertake regular stakeholder engagement including industry and government workshops, surveys and seminars, allowing us to provide the knowledge that supports our clients and provide innovative and realistic solutions.

AS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIRM WE ENCOURAGE
COLLABORATION AND ADDING VALUE TO OUR CLIENT'S
PROJECTS BY BRINGING IN INSIGHTS FROM OTHER TEAMS.



Planning

HillPDA's planning team integrate commercial realism, innovation and deliverability when developing solutions to complex planning problems. Our experts in statutory and strategic planning, urban economics, stakeholder engagement and social infrastructure have been assisting the public and private sectors for over 30 years and have collectively earned a reputation for providing high quality and value-added services.

Our collaborative approach ensures the process is enjoyable, solutions are customised and ideas sharing is valued.

We make a positive change to the cities of the future. We collaborate with industry, government and communities to resolve issues and develop solutions to complex planning problems. Our industry leading approach to strategic planning is underpinned by economics and development feasibility testing. This makes our plans developable and responsive to market considerations, which ensures they will achieve the desired outcomes.

Get in touch:

Elizabeth Griffin - Principal
Liz.Griffin@hillpda.com

Elle Clouston - Associate
Elle.Clouston@hillpda.com



Urban and retail economics

Our property economics team offer a large range of urban and retail economic services which are supported by considerable experience, industry accepted in-house economic modelling tools and capabilities. Our comprehensive economic analysis and forecasts have helped our clients across the public and private sectors make better policy, strategy and property decisions.

Get in touch:

Adrian Hack - Principal
Adrian.Hack@hillpda.com

Valuation and feasibility

HillPDA provide industry leading feasibility testing and advisory services. Our services are supported by a strong research-based approach, application of industry endorsed proprietary software, EstateMaster, a deep understanding of the intricacies of financial problems and the ability to communicate complex issues in simple terms.

Get in touch:

Martin Hill - Director
Martin.Hill@hillpda.com

Investment and development advisory

HillPDA's development advisory team brings together a cross-section of backgrounds to deliver integrated and innovative solutions to even the most complex development issues. Our team has the expertise and capability to provide you with the strategic support that you need at all stages of the development and operation lifecycle.

Get in touch:

Virginia Hill - Associate
Virginia.Phillips@hillpda.com

OUR TEAM

PLANNING SPECIALISTS

OUR MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM OF STRATEGIC, STATUTORY, SOCIAL AND ENGAGEMENT PLANNERS DRIVE CHANGE ACROSS CITIES.



ELIZABETH GRIFFIN

PRINCIPAL

Liz.Griffin@hillpda.com



ELLE CLOUSTON

ASSOCIATE

Elle.Clouston@hillpda.com



ALEX PECK

SENIOR CONSULTANT

Alex.Peck@hillpda.com



WILL TZAIKOS

SENIOR CONSULTANT

William.Tzaikos@hillpda.com



JESSE ROWLINGS

CONSULTANT

Jesse.Rowlings@hillpda.com

Elizabeth Griffin - Principal - B. Arts (Geography), M. Urban Planning, MPIA

Elizabeth has over 25 years of planning experience including working in the State Government (Department of Planning and Environment) and running her own private practice. Her planning experience includes strategic planning, statutory planning and social planning. Elizabeth has been involved in a diverse array of projects for government bodies, private sector corporations, institutions and other organisations. Elizabeth has excellent written, management and communications skills.

Elle Clouston - Associate - B. Urban and Regional Planning, IAP2 accredited, MPIA

Elle is passionate about strategy development and stakeholder engagement. She has over 12 years of planning experience working in the public and private sectors in NSW and Qld. Elle's understanding of the link between feasibility, economics, and planning, enables her to deliver leading practice planning solutions. Elle has successfully project managed various large-scale projects and undertaken community engagement for complex strategies and impact assessments.

Alex Peck - Senior Consultant - B. Science, B. Social Science, M. Planning MPIA

Alex's academic background includes specialisations in planning, social sciences, public policy and environmental science. Alex's particular interest is in drafting and analysing policy, demographic analysis and social impact assessments. Alex is skilled in the use of geographic information systems, as well as visual and graphic design software.

William Tzaikos - Senior Consultant - B. Environment, B. DesArch

William specialises in housing policy, liveability assessment tools and land use strategy. He is currently undertaking the Master of Environmental Law at the Melbourne Law School. His versatile role at HillPDA spans the Melbourne and Sydney offices where he carries out demographic and planning research, impact assessment and policy development.

Jesse Rowlings - Consultant - B. Science, Human Geography (UOW), M. Urban And Regional Planning (Usyd - Current), Dip. Gov

Jesse assists in undertaking social impact assessments, strategy writing and research. He specialises in public policy and infrastructure with his previous roles as Assistant Water Planner at the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Policy Officer at the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

IT IS RARE THAT OUR PROJECTS ONLY INVOLVE PLANNERS. TO ENSURE A
HOLISTIC APPROACH WE FREQUENTLY COLLABORATE WITH:



NICHOLAS HILL
Land use demand,
forecasting and GIS



ADRIAN HACK
Retail and
economics



MARTIN HILL
Feasibility and
strategy



VIRGINIA PHILLIPS
valuation and
advisory

PLANNING TOUCHES
EVERY PART OF
HOW WE LIVE. WE
ARE CREATORS,
INFLUENCERS,
INNOVATORS,
NEGOTIATORS AND
PRACTITIONERS. WE
GUIDE THE FUTURE.

OUR SERVICES

EXPERIENCE & CAPABILITY

OUR FOCUS IS TO PROVIDE OUR CLIENTS ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS WITH VALUE-ADDING AND TIMELY SERVICES.

SOCIAL PLANNING

- Demographic analysis
- Social infrastructure needs
- Open and recreation space plans
- Liveability strategies

STATUTORY PLANNING

- Development applications
- Planning due diligence
- Planning proposals
- Independent assessments

STRATEGY

- Employment land
- Centre revitalisation
- Local housing
- Place-based plans

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- Business impact
- Social and economic impact
- Social impact statement
- Expert witness and peer review

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Asset portfolio appraisal
- Housing diversity and affordability
- Regional planning
- LEP and DCP amendments

RESEARCH AND POLICY

- Policy analysis
- Specialised research
- Development contribution plans
- Affordable housing policy

STAKEHOLDER

ENGAGEMENT

- Engagement strategy
- Facilitation
- Surveys
- Submissions analysis

SOCIAL PLANNING

Healthy and sustainable communities are driven by good planning and design. HillPDA compile and analyse qualitative and quantitative data to provide a variety of social planning services including demographic analysis, social infrastructure needs assessments, open space and recreation strategic planning and liveability planning.

Our approach to social planning has been developed through our diverse experience across the sector evolving from a foundation of industry standards and latest research. Through collation and analysis of demographic and engagement outcomes for social infrastructure delivery, HillPDA provide detailed recommendations that ensure sustainable outcomes.

Demographic analysis

Our cities and towns must respond to the needs of their people. Understanding these needs requires an objective view of who is living and working in the community. HillPDA provide detailed analysis of demographics to identify and understand how economic, social and development trends can impact decision making and strategic planning. This service is the cornerstone of our social planning service with a diverse range of private and public clients benefiting from our multidisciplinary offering in this space.

Social infrastructure needs

Healthy and sustainable communities are built on quality social infrastructure that provides positive outcomes for the people and equitable access for all. Through demographic analysis and engagement, HillPDA develop a thorough understanding of needs and values. These are used to inform comprehensive social infrastructure need assessments providing a guide for developers, councils and communities. The strategy highlights gaps and opportunities for infrastructure in their area with a focus on providing and improving vibrant, strong and socially sustainable facilities and spaces for the communities.

Open and recreation space plans

Open space and recreation are key elements of social infrastructure and require detailed planning to ensure they are meeting the social needs of the community and are economically sustainable. HillPDA can provide a robust plan for the future of open space and recreation in any community focusing on the function of each space. Our strategies use a multidisciplinary approach ensuring that all social and economic elements are considered. The resulting strategy provides actionable recommendations to enable practical application of the plan in the medium and long term.

Liveability strategies

Liveability strategies provide a framework to evaluate and capitalise on local identity, environmental and cultural values that are unique to places. HillPDA uses a methodology adapted from the RMIT Centre for Urban Research to assess the quality of life outcomes of land use policy. An assessment is made using national liveability indicators based on industry standard metrics for walkability, transport accessibility, open space provision, education, employment, housing affordability and access to food and alcohol. This quantitative assessment informs how rezoning, transport and infrastructure can be used to improve the liveability of the local community.

BURWOOD COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

Burwood Council

Burwood Council engaged Cred Community Planning and HillPDA to deliver the Burwood Community Facilities and Open Space Strategy. The Strategy informed and supported Council to plan for the provision and management of sustainable community facilities and public open space to address the needs of the current and future resident and worker population of the Burwood Local Government Area (LGA). The Strategy was an internal Council document to provide internal guidance for decision-making around community facilities and open space.

WEST SCHOFIELDS DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

CSR and Department of Planning and Environment

HillPDA were commissioned to undertake a demographic and social infrastructure assessment to identify existing and emerging community needs for the future West Schofield Precinct. HillPDA worked closely with the local council and the State Government to understand the future population expectations and the provision of services that would be required. HillPDA identified early in the process that there was a deficit in infrastructure delivery as the right provision was not being adequately provided with sites land banked early enough in the process. HillPDA recommended that specific sites be allocated to cater for the future population growth and delivery of housing both in the precinct and wider growth area.

NSW SCHOOL CLUSTERS

Department of Education

HillPDA was engaged to explore the demand and possible development options for school sites across NSW. We viewed the sites from an urban planning, social infrastructure demand and economics perspective. The assessments advised on planning and development options for future learning infrastructure, with due consideration given to financial viability, market dynamics and social implications of each option. The assessment enabled the Department to make more informed decisions regarding the strategic merit of each asset.

WENTWORTHVILLE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Private client

HillPDA was commissioned by a private client to undertake a Social Infrastructure Assessment to better understand existing and emerging community needs in the Wentworthville locality. The study established the community needs in the area to inform the nature of an on-site community facility to be dedicated to Council as part of the VPA. The assessment concluded that there was an existing and forecast gap in the provision of open space, sporting facilities, youth centres, childcare services, primary schools, libraries and police services in the Girraween – Westmead SA2. To inform the assessment HillPDA reviewed and consulted a range of sources including government policies and research, desktop surveys, industry studies, demographic research, and service providers.

ST LEONARDS - CROWS NEST INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

Department of Planning and Environment

HillPDA was commissioned to undertake an infrastructure audit and prepare a schedule of propose infrastructure works for the St Leonards- Crows Nest Area. The audit drew on other technical reports, infrastructure plans across all levels of planning and various development applications and voluntary planning agreements. Discussions with Lane Cove, North Sydney and Willoughby Council officers were undertaken to inform the infrastructure provision.

The schedule of proposed infrastructure works was developed to assist the NSW Government and relevant Councils to commence consideration of funding implications by identifying infrastructure needs of the area. Gaps and overlaps in existing information and planned infrastructure across the three local government areas and items that potentially overlap with items in existing capital work programmes and/or contribution plans were identified.



STATUTORY PLANNING

HillPDA planners are experts at analysing local and State planning controls and identifying clear and achievable planning pathways through the development process. We work with our clients to understand the vision and key requirements of their development and provide advice on how to obtain approvals that will deliver those requirements. We deliver results for our clients by preparing high quality reports and assessments that clearly explain how a proposal meets the relevant controls and work directly with regulators to ensure development approvals are reasonable and achievable.

HillPDA planners have a track record in project management. Our history of taking the lead on socially and environmentally complex projects make us well placed to lead specialist teams towards a positive planning outcome. Our professional involvement through the development process can improve development timelines, provide greater certainty and maximise development potential.

Development applications

HillPDA planners advise clients on strategies to progress a development proposal through the complex planning process. We work with clients with projects of any size, taking the time to understand the particular needs of a project and the best way to secure an approval. HillPDA offers a full range of planning and project management services, including representation at pre-DA meetings, technical specialist recruitment and management, planning assessments, lodgement, and post-lodgement/post-approval support. We work with both public and private developers to prepare statements of environmental effects (SEEs), reviews of environmental factors (REFs) and environmental impact statements (EISs).

Planning due diligence

Early expert advice regarding a site is critical to ensuring positive development outcomes. HillPDA planners provide professional planning advice and recommendations for concept development and early works. This ensures that designers understand the environmental, physical and design constraints of a site, as well as options for how to deliver ambitious projects. HillPDA planners also undertake detailed review of previous approvals and planning controls to understand the status of current uses on project sites. This process is commonly undertaken as part of the site acquisition process to ensure that potential acquisitions can confidently be made without hidden risks or exposures.

Planning proposals

Market demands can shift quickly, commonly more quickly than planning controls can react. Planning frameworks can become outdated, representing a future that is no longer anticipated or desired. HillPDA works with design and technical experts to develop controls that balance the needs of the natural, built, economic and social environments. HillPDA planners are experts in demonstrating how controls fit within the broader strategic planning frameworks and lead to development that best suit the needs of the community.

Independent assessments

HillPDA provides independent development assessment and in-house support for planning authorities, government agencies and large private enterprises. We work with clients to provide frank and confidential advice, with clear recommendations that are based on best practice.

HillPDA can also provide social impact assessments, economic impact assessments, social infrastructure studies and feasibility testing to support the above services.



PITT STREET RETAIL MODIFICATION DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Private client

HillPDA was engaged to lead a modification of a development consent for the refurbishment and fitout of several high-end retail tenancies. The original consent included an unachievable requirement for signage and required modification urgently due to construction timings, and was source of contentious during the original assessment. HillPDA undertook a review of project documentation, met with the approval authority and developed a new approach that was satisfactory to both the client and the authority. A project approval was secured for the client within three months of engagement, ensuring the project would go ahead with minimal impacts to budget or schedule.

PLANNING DUE DILIGENCE AND HIGHEST AND BEST USE

Property NSW

HillPDA was commissioned by Property NSW on various occasions to provide planning due diligence reports and highest and best use analysis for redundant sites in the NSW Government's property portfolio. This work was undertaken in various locations in metropolitan and regional NSW. The studies explored the planning and economic grounds for redevelopment including, where in scope, feasibility testing of potential scenarios. The planning due diligence reports and highest and best use planning and economic modelling of various land use scenarios assisted in informing Property NSW of the pathways for each site.

TOURIST RESORT STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT MODIFICATION

Local Aboriginal Land Council

A Local Aboriginal Land Council engaged HillPDA to prepare a State Significant Development modification application to a historical major project approval in regional NSW. The original application was secured when the land was part of Crown holdings, with the original applicant seeking a development that would significantly modify the surrounding environment and was highly contentious with surrounding communities.

HillPDA assisted the LALC in preparing a concept plan and scoping report for a more environmental-focused development. This included a full review of historical assessments, analysis of historical and current planning controls advice regarding supporting studies and management of technical specialists.

NORWEST PLANNING PROPOSALS

Private client

HillPDA led the preparation of two planning proposals in the vicinity of the new Norwest metro station in the Hills Shire Council. The planning proposals sought to lead the redevelopment of Norwest by adjusting controls to allow for the two sites to provide high quality transport-oriented mixed use development, while guaranteeing an increase in employment floorspace beyond current controls. HillPDA worked with the developer to identify and map proposed planning controls, review the relevant strategic documentation, prepare supporting technical reports and prepare a planning proposal that demonstrates the strategic and site specific merits of the proposal. We have also provided post-lodgement support throughout the assessment to meet the needs of council staff and leadership.

COBAKI DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

Private client

HillPDA supported the development of the concept plan and prepared the modification to the approved concept plan for a substantial development in northern NSW. The concept plan included new residential community, including 5,500 new dwellings, a new centre, schools, community facilities and open space. The modification sought to facilitate the introduction of a university campus to support the Southern Cross University. The proposed modification necessitated amendments to Tweed Local Environmental Plan 2014 (LEP 2014) and the adopted Cobaki Estate Development Code as well as changes to the instrument of approval and associated documents such as the Statement of Commitments (SoC). HillPDA prepared the Environmental Assessment (EA) that addressed the statutory requirements of Section 75W of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the project.

STRATEGY

HillPDA partners with business, government and communities to plan for the future of our cities. Our in-house think-tanks allow multi-disciplinary insights to be explored and translated into visions and strategies that are grounded in economic realities. Our strategies are innovative and tailored to local conditions. They often include realistic and implementable action plans that identify short, medium and long term priorities and responsibility. We design strategies to be implemented; not to sit on a shelf.

Urban revitalisation and place-based plans work best when they respond to the factors that influence local growth, prosperity and productivity. We can tailor planning controls to make development feasible while incorporating public benefit contributions that can stimulate investment to improve the public realm and local amenity.

Employment land

Securing a sustainable supply of employment land is a priority for responding to population growth and providing essential services and jobs. Leveraging our unique ability to draw on planning and economics expertise, we are able to build and test land use and development scenarios that align with market trends and strategic intent. Engagement with businesses and stakeholders is integrated into our planning approach to draw on local insights, nurture community ownership over plans and shape realistic and achievable strategies. Our strategies establish clear priorities, timeframes and responsibilities.

Centre revitalisation

We specialise in urban renewal and revitalisation strategies that respond to the factors that influence local growth, prosperity and productivity. We understand that a holistic, place-based approach is required for centre revitalisation and that it takes more than street tree planting to attract consumers back to a centre. We provide strategies that identify planning, design, economic and governance initiatives to lead to improved centre performance, community wellbeing and job retention.

Local housing

HillPDA has been working with government and the residential industry for more than 30 years. We are recognised for our understanding of how planning legislation, developer decisions and market trends can impact on the delivery of appropriate, affordable and diverse housing to meet community needs. We have worked with local government to develop long term strategies to manage housing growth in a way that balances housing need with environmental considerations and is supported by infrastructure delivery and liveability considerations.

Place-based plans

Place-based plans provide a tool to accommodate growth and protect valued environments at a local level. People are passionate about the communities they live and work in and a one-size-fits all approach to planning often does not work. Place-based plans enable opportunities to be identified that encourage investment, facilitate infrastructure delivery and prioritise community and stakeholder initiatives. Planning controls and actions can then be tailored to respond to stakeholder aspirations and deliver on the community vision.



MILITARY ROAD CORRIDOR PLACE BASED STRATEGY

North Sydney Council

HillPDA leveraged its experience in planning and economics to produce a strategy that not only included a comprehensive analysis of the subject sites, but acknowledged the changing wider context of the region, delivering a set of strategies with an eye to the long term. The action plan was supported by various case studies and options to assist in demonstrating how actions could be implemented on the ground. While the foundation of the study was an economic analysis, the strategy sought to identify place-based planning, economic and design interventions that would support longer term economic vitality and job retention in the centre.

HAWKESBURY LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Hawkesbury City Council

HillPDA undertook an extensive review of housing within the LGA, through detailed analysis of demographics, evaluating existing housing supply and predicting demand against targets set out by the Greater Sydney Commission. The strategy set a clear plan for housing for the next 10 and 20 years that aligned with broader strategic intent for the LGA. The final strategy provided council with a detailed understanding of the existing housing profile within the LGA, clearly identified areas where dwelling capacity was available, incorporated an in-depth review of potential housing typologies and a range of strategies to ensure that council's housing delivery targets could be met.

RYDE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

City of Ryde

HillPDA developed potential options for housing delivery to meet priorities of the North District Plan and Greater Sydney Regional Plan. Potential planning controls and policy outcomes were identified that would lead to development of dwellings to meet the needs of future populations while maintaining the character and values of the City of Ryde.

COFFS HARBOUR CENTRES AND EMPLOYMENT LAND STRATEGY

Coffs Harbour City Council

HillPDA provided a strategic framework to facilitate future employment growth within the municipalities centres and employment lands. HillPDA's strategy determined priorities and actions to accommodate and create opportunities for industrial, retail and commercial activities to 2040. The study included an analysis of recent market trends and drivers, identification of current supply and capacity, and projections of future floorspace/land requirements to accommodate additional growth required to meet employment/population targets.

STRATHFIELD INDUSTRIAL LAND STRATEGY

Strathfield Council

HillPDA undertook a review of industrial and higher order business zoned land within the Strathfield Local Government Area. The purpose of the strategy was to inform the Local Strategic Planning Statement and Local Environmental Plan review by understanding the role, function, supply and demand of employment land in the LGA. The Strategy considered employment in the context of the Eastern City District Plan and provided actions for supporting sustainable job growth.

PORT KEMBLA REVITALISATION PLAN 2050

Wollongong City Council

The Port Kembla Revitalisation Plan sought to establish a clear vision and implementation plan that would guide the revitalisation of Port Kembla Town Centre and Port Kembla suburb. All recommendations were targeted to benefit the existing local community while also encouraging and supporting economic productivity. Key tasks included commercial and retail demand modelling, feasibility analysis, floorspace surveys, impact assessment, economic and demographic analysis, residential market overview and strategy development. Example initiatives included a betterment program, consolidation of the retail core, increased residential density and attraction of anchor tenants, including a supermarket.



IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

HillPDA is uniquely placed to assess the impact of development proposals on the social, economic and business environment. Our expertise in stakeholder engagement, planning, and economics allows us to combine skills and knowledge across subject areas to prepare impact assessment reports that are top tier. We work with our clients to develop mitigation measures that minimise or avoid negative impacts and maximise the potential benefit of the development proposal.

HillPDA's strength in this field comes from its economic and commercial know-how, which allows the team to engage with and understand community, business and landowner interests so as to achieve realistic and practical outcomes. We are known for providing independent and evidenced-based assessments and peer-reviews that holistically consider the project components.

Social and economic impact assessments

A combined consideration of social and economic impacts can be useful in providing a more holistic appraisal of a project. A key element in assessments of this nature is the capacity to effectively weigh the significance of economic and social impacts or benefits. HillPDA's team of economists and planners have honed the critical skills required to produce a robust framework that strikes this balance. We have produced social and economic impacts assessment on projects ranging from local developments to large infrastructure projects across various sectors.

Social impact statements

A social impact statement is a descriptive summary of the existing environment and potential social impacts. They overview the core considerations of social impact and provide a more elemental statement of likely impacts arising from a project. The succinct statements are valuable in supporting development applications and planning proposals as they demonstrate an appreciation of the sensitivities within a community.

Business impact assessment

Increasingly the development assessment process requires an understanding of a project's potential impacts to local businesses. Businesses can be particularly sensitive to construction and are more financially exposed to changes in the environment. HillPDA are experts in assessing the potential impacts of major infrastructure projects on businesses. We understand the sensitivities and unique characteristics of business environments and can assist in defining management measures or altering project outcomes to reduce impacts to local businesses.

Expert witness and peer review

HillPDA's planners, property economists and valuers have extensive experience in acting as expert witnesses. Our experienced team can provide expert evidence at hearings and litigation trials on property economics, strategic land use and social, economic and retail impacts of proposals. The persuasive cases we deliver on behalf of our clients are underpinned by evidence that is well researched, commercially astute and of the highest standard. We are also able to provide peer review services, that deliver a balanced and objective review of an assessment, considering, scope, quantification and evidence considered for accuracy.

SYDNEY GATEWAY BUSINESS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Transport for NSW

HillPDA was the local business impact technical specialist manager on the WSP/GHD Joint Venture for the Sydney Gateway motorway project – CSSI project about 3 kilometres long adjacent to Sydney Airport. The motorway approval was particularly complicated by approvals both under NSW and Commonwealth legislation comprising a combined EIS/MDP. The local business and economic environment was complicated by the presence of major national and international business operators that significantly contribute to local and State economic productivity. Face-to face business surveys were undertaken to assist in scoping impacts and sensitivities.

NORTHSIDE GOSFORD PRIVATE HOSPITAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Private client

HillPDA was engaged to prepare a Social and Economic Impact Assessment to accompany an Environmental Impact Statement for consideration by NSW Department of Planning and Environment. The proposed development comprised the erection of an 11 storey private hospital including in-patient units, general practitioner clinics, radiology rooms, pathology room, intensive care unit, operating theatres and ancillary retail. The basement levels consisted of parking, waste storage and loading dock.

KEMPS CREEK WAREHOUSE AND LOGISTICS HUB - SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Private client

HillPDA was commissioned to assess the social impacts associated with the construction of a master planned warehousing and logistics precinct in Western Sydney. This assessment considered the impacts associated with the introduction of a new industrial precinct to a more rural area and the benefits that additional local employment and industrial activity could bring. Ultimately, an assessment was provided that concisely identified the social impacts arising from the proposal and proposed a range of mitigation measures to minimise risks.

SUPERMARKET PEER REVIEW - SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Waverly Council

HillPDA was engaged by Waverly Council to peer review a socio-economic impact assessment of a proposed local supermarket in Bronte. The evidence base and assessment in the SEIA were analysed by HillPDA's team of social planners and economists who prepared a detailed evaluation of the assessment, noting areas where more evidence was required and utilising our own modelling and assessment framework to provide objective appraisal of the assumptions underlying the social and economic assessment. Ultimately, council were provided with a concise, independent evaluation to inform their decision making.

WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PEER REVIEW

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils

HillPDA was engaged to undertake an independent review of the social and economic components of the environmental impact statement prepared for the Western Sydney Airport. The review considered relevant guidelines and identified potential gaps in the preparation, concerns regarding the validity of assumptions and conclusions and suggestions to improve the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures.

WESTCONNEX M4-M5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Sydney Motorway Corporation C/- Aecom

HillPDA was engaged to undertake a socio-economic and business impact assessment for the M4-M5 Link project. The report was prepared as a technical working paper to the environmental impact statement and was undertaken in accordance with the Roads and Maritime Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note and SEARs for the project. HillPDA acted as a technical advisor, working across all phases of the project including undertaking project coordination, design critique, community consultation and significance evaluation. HillPDA coordinated business and stakeholder consultation and ensured the assessment of impacts were independent.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

HillPDA has played a key role in many strategic planning projects that have changed the shape of our cities. Our strategic plans support economic growth, efficient cities and promote liveability. We have broad ranging strategic planning capabilities and are committed to creating better places for communities and businesses. Working across cities and regions we are able to provide clients advice on their property portfolios, undertake submission responses to new planning policy, draft planning controls and prepare regional planning documents.

The planning environment is constantly changing and evolving and it is important to keep abreast of the changes and draft outcomes that effectively respond to trends and best practice. Our approach to strategic planning is not to just replicate what has been done, but instead challenge existing approaches and recommend pathways or solutions that reflect thought-leadership.

Asset portfolio strategies

Understanding the current state and opportunity of property assets can support decision making and identify strategic and priority planning interventions. HillPDA has worked for a number of clients across the public and private sector, to review their property asset portfolios in line with organisational requirements and strategic plans. This has identified opportunities for clients to retain, repurpose, sell, redevelop or grow their assets. Dependent on the recommendation, appropriate pathways are then defined to support the next stage of implementation, such as options appraisal, potential feasibility testing or defining appropriate planning pathways.

Regional planning

Strategic planning at a regional level is important to provide a clear framework, line of sight and consistency for more place-based and local level planning. HillPDA has supported State Government and various Organisation of Councils in the development of high level strategic analysis and plans that respond to broader regional pressures or provide clarity for consistently addressing topics (e.g. affordable housing, infrastructure contributions, job delivery, industry attraction etc).

Submission responses

The strategic and statutory planning environment is constantly changing with new policies, planning legislation and studies continually emerging on public exhibition. HillPDA often works with clients to review the new material and identify the implications for a client. We then prepare a submission that poses support, potential alterations or merit-based objections to the new planning documentation.

LEP and DCP amendments

Effective strategic planning is often coupled with the need to translate strategies into planning controls within Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plans. This can often be a complex process with the need to holistically consider cumulative implications on factors such as the efficiency of built form design, development feasibility and planning flexibility. As a multi-disciplinary firm, we are well-positioned and versed in drafting controls and amendments to the planning framework.

ASSET PORTFOLIO STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Land and Housing Corporation NSW

The Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) sought comprehensive portfolio strategies for 9 Regional FACS Districts across NSW. The housing portfolio analysis and detailed action plans assisted LAHC to identify the economic imperatives and strategic opportunities to improve the overall location, quality and value of the LAHC regional housing portfolio. The portfolio strategies were developed collaboratively with the FACS District and LAHC stakeholders. Comprehensive economic modelling, strategic planning analysis and market appraisals ensured the action plans were realistic and could be implemented. The strategies were presented in a highly visual and graphic layout to ensure the message was clearly communicated.

LAND STRATEGY GREATER METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES TRUST

Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust

HillPDA was commissioned to prepare a land strategy to manage 18 active cemetery sites (approximately 380 ha of land) across three metropolitan regions (east, north and west) of Victoria. The report provides an overarching land strategy having regard to a detailed assessment of land supply and demand conditions and projections to 2051. The strategy was designed to inform decisions in relation to future land needs, focusing on quantum, location and timing of needs to meet cemetery demand. The project included assessment of the greater metropolitan region using a model developed for the project and creation of an interactive GIS tool to assist with site assessment. The project included assessment of the following topics: policy and strategy, location and capacity of sites, activity and demand analysis, alternative demand scenarios, potential land supply options, evaluation of options and strategy.

HOUSING PORTFOLIO STRATEGY

Aboriginal Housing Office NSW

HillPDA was engaged by the Aboriginal Housing Office to identify development opportunity in locations that were close to services and employment, that meet the needs of a diverse and changing tenant base, and reflect the cultural requirements of Aboriginal Housing. The purpose of the studies were to evaluate the existing portfolio of assets to identify immediate development opportunities, assets that could be swapped with LAHC to maximise the opportunity on a site and identify the assets that would require redevelopment or sale in the longer term, due to age and likely maintenance issues. Possible strategic locations for acquisition were also identified where there were strategic plans being drafted at the time.

SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE GREATER MACARTHUR SPECIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTION

Private client

HillPDA was invited by a private client to examine the reasonableness of a proposed Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) for greenfield development. HillPDA undertook extensive research into the appropriateness and fairness of the SIC and prepared a submission on behalf of the client that effectively responded to the matters.

NORTH COAST REGIONAL CITIES - EMPLOYMENT ANCHOR ANALYSIS

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

HillPDA undertook an employment anchors analysis for each of the regional cities, specifically relating to the sizeable employment anchors of major hospitals, airports and tertiary education campuses. HillPDA was able to provide a multi-scale analysis of the needs of regional cities throughout the region identifying priorities in a highly localised context, through to macro regional priorities. The thorough investigation of the roles of anchors in unique regional economies required the establishment of a solid basis for analysis before further investigation and consultation could be undertaken. The strength of this base was borne out in the quality and range of final recommendations.

A photograph of a modern building with a facade made of vertical wooden slats, showing a mix of light and dark wood tones.

RESEARCH AND POLICY

HillPDA provides expert research and advice to ensure that our clients decisions are supported by robust evidence. We combine professional expertise and research skills to bring an innovative, multi-disciplinary approach to solving complex problems in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Our planning, economics and feasibility experts can present complex information to clients in a way that they can understand. We work with governments, industry and not-for profit organisations to inform and support their decision making. Our advice has informed decisions regarding property, employment land, education, housing, health and infrastructure, including many city-shaping projects.

Policy and planning review

HillPDA is a highly respected policy and planning advisor to both government and non-government organisations. Our policy expertise spans strategic land use planning, infrastructure funding, asset management, urban renewal and governance. For 30 years, HillPDA has had substantial success influencing policy, through submissions as well as the formulation of new policy for government. Our team has representation on professional and industry committees and is constantly contributing to planning policy.

Specialised research

As independent experts we are often approached to undertake discrete research tasks or prepare specialist advice on topics for the private and public sector. This tailored research often supports the development of strategy, policy or decision making on themes such as, best practice approaches, case studies, market trends, land uses, planning process or economic factors. The research can be presented graphically or can be more in the format of an academic discussion paper or memo, dependent on the clients preference.

Development contribution plans

HillPDA prepares comprehensive studies and infrastructure supply and demand audits for local and State authorities to inform the formulation of development contributions plans. We combine our best practice project feasibility analysis, expert demographic modelling and social planning expertise to provide an evidence base for contribution planning. This gives authorities confidence in our recommendations for what infrastructure is needed and the reasonable apportionment of costs for future demand.

Affordable housing policy

HillPDA has been at the forefront of developing affordable housing policy since its inception. Today, we work with community housing providers, State and local authorities to develop evidence based policy that meets feasibility requirements for affordable housing delivery. Our approach of working with authorities to identify the best locations and mechanisms for delivery of affordable housing helps ensure that the needs of low to moderate income households and key workers are met. We provide services for all phases of affordable housing policy development. This includes demographic and spatial analysis to determine housing needs, stakeholder engagement, feasibility analysis, cost/benefit analysis, formal policy development and affordable housing scheme preparation.

SEPP REVIEW - STATE SIGNIFICANT PRECINCTS

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

The Department of Planning and Environment appointed HillPDA to assist in the review of planning provisions for certain State Significant Precincts. The project was part of the Department's program to review State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) to simplify and modernise the planning system. HillPDA reviewed the preliminary planning proposals including analysing the relevant planning instruments and relevant background documents. The current controls in each Local Environment Plan (LEP) were analysed to identify any issues and potential conflicts with the SEPP.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL ZONE REVIEW

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

The report was commissioned to inform and support the evidence base for the preparation of the State Retail Planning Policy Framework, reflecting the direction and advice contained in the REAC report. HillPDA developed a recommended planning framework with supporting analysis of the planning and economic implications. A costings matrix was also provided evaluating the impact of competing land uses and how this affected viability and highest and best use. Although not required as part of the original scope of works, HillPDA provided recommendations on consolidating the current zoning provision and uses.

RHODES EAST AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY

City of Canada Bay Council

The Affordable Housing Program and Policy was crucial in calculating and justifying the contribution rates and the delivery mechanisms available to Council and developers. HillPDA investigated three methodologies that could be used by Council and/or a private developers to calculate the contribution made towards affordable housing within Rhodes East. The report was used to support council's application to the DPE to allow an affordable housing contribution levy at Rhodes East.

YASS DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN

Yass Valley Council

HillPDA was commissioned by the Yass Valley Council to prepare new development contribution plans for the local government area (LGA). The plans were required to position Council to respond to population growth and growing demand for infrastructure. The existing development contribution framework had become increasingly outdated and complex, in part due to changes to council boundaries in 2004, with multiple contribution plans applying to the same LGA. The new development contributions plan that HillPDA prepared reflected current best practice and responded to the local situation.

STRATEGIC CENTRES BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

HillPDA was commissioned by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) to identify the key barriers inhibiting the economic growth of 15 strategic centres in Metropolitan Sydney and whether they would benefit from government intervention. The study had particular regard to how these centres would accommodate the investment and growth aspirations for Sydney's future. The study provided centre specific detail on the enablers and inhibitors of economic growth, a market snapshot of current investment and action plans for possible government intervention.

HOUSING DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

Camden Council

HillPDA was engaged by Council to investigate factors that may impact on the diversity of housing being delivered in the Camden LGA. HillPDA assisted Council in understanding the development economics under the current planning controls and market conditions of the different housing types. The study identified lessons learnt and what has and hasn't worked in urban release areas; prepared a framework or set of principles to guide planning for better built form outcomes and an increase in housing diversity; areas of innovation that Council should be exploring internally; and specific planning control interventions.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

HillPDA designs, facilitates and manages stakeholder engagement on behalf of government and private sector organisations. Our accredited and experienced team design effective engagement strategies and communications collateral as well as facilitating workshops and pop-up events.

We have a thorough working knowledge of the legislative requirements for community engagement. Through early involvement of stakeholders we achieve a shared understanding of concerns and values. Our project outcomes are enhanced by the involvement of the community, industry and government.

Engagement strategy

HillPDA provides detailed, robust and adaptable engagement strategies that enable any relevant community or stakeholder group to provide thorough and useful feedback on a matter. HillPDA provide engagement services in a variety of innovative formats that are flexible and adaptable to a community change such as COVID 19. Engagement strategies focus on identifying the community and key stakeholders to be targeted and find the best way for them to provide meaningful feedback. Strategies of this nature also include logistical planning for how and when to reach out to communities, highlighting key milestones in projects and how best to approach consultation at each stage of a project or study.

Survey reports

Surveys are a useful tool to quickly ascertain stakeholder perspectives about a subject. The structure of the survey can be tailored to utilise open or closed questions dependent on what level on the engagement spectrum is preferred and how much information participants may know about a subject. Surveys can be conducted face to face to increase participation rates, over the phone or via online platforms. Information captured is collated and analysed before forming a succinct and highly visual survey report.

Facilitation

Successful engagement is underpinned by thorough planning and strong facilitation. HillPDA has a team of expert facilitators that can effectively steer engagement activities, independently support ideas development, cut through cultural barriers and mediate difficult conversations.

We tailor engagement activities to respond to the audience in an open, transparent and interactive manner. We are able to facilitate engagement through a variety of technique including pop-up stalls, targeted interviews, round-table or focus group discussions and webinars.

Engagement outcomes reports

Community engagement outcomes reports bring together the findings of any engagement period analysing each element of engagement carried out. Outcomes reports compile raw data and highlight trends and key messages to be carried through to other technical reports. Such reports also make high level recommendations as to how key issues may be addressed based on feedback given throughout the engagement process. HillPDA provides engagement reports in a high quality graphic format that can be recirculated to the community to showcase transparency and encourage ongoing feedback circles.



WARRAGAMBA DAM BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY

WaterNSW

HillPDA was commissioned to undertake a business impact survey and subsequent report outlining businesses perceptions of a proposal to raise the height of the Warragamba Dam. The survey was designed to understand the perception of potential impacts to businesses in relation to:

- Construction of the project (specific to Warragamba, Silverdale and Wallacia communities)
- The operation of the proposal on upstream and downstream communities.

HillPDA drew on its experience in undertaking business engagement to develop an engagement methodology that effectively captured views from a diverse range of businesses in the targeted areas.

BERRIMA BRICKWORKS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Private client

HillPDA was engaged to carry out the community engagement process for the state significant development of a new brickmaking facility at New Berrima in the NSW Southern Highlands. The project team provided a detailed engagement strategy highlighting the most appropriate methods of engagement at the early stage of the project. The strategy also highlighted the hierarchy of stakeholders likely to be impacted by the development and provided targeted methods of engagement for each level of potential impact. HillPDA then carried out engagement through interviews, a survey, drop-in sessions and invited submissions to encourage the local community to participate in whatever way possible.

MARKETPLACE LEICHHARDT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Private client

HillPDA was commissioned to undertake a community engagement exercise to support the socio-economic impact assessment and development application for an extension of trading hours at Marketplace Leichhardt.

Scoping was undertaken in consultation with the client to inform the selection of engagement methods. A letterbox drop to neighbouring properties, an online survey and face to face interviews were conducted as part of the consultation. The engagement informed the scoping, assessment and mitigation of several impacts.

CYCLOPS LEICHHARDT ENGAGEMENT

Private client

HillPDA was commissioned to facilitate engagement activities to inform surrounding communities of the proposed development and enable an opportunity for participants to ask questions. Engagement was undertaken as part of the pre-development application process. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic rendered many traditional methods of engagement impossible. HillPDA's experienced team of planning and engagement specialists devised an alternate engagement approach, comprising a mailout, hotline, email inbox and interactive webinar with project specialists. The approach facilitated effective engagement in spite of these limitations, adding depth to the final report and positively contributing to the project.

KEMPS CREEK WAREHOUSING AND LOGISTICS HUB COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Private client

HillPDA was engaged to produce a Community Communication Strategy for a proposed Warehousing and Logistics Hub within the Mamre Road Precinct. The report included a detailed scoping of potentially affected stakeholders during construction and operation, which was then integrated into a structured plan for engagement at all project stages. Included was a description of methods and suggested engagement approaches as well as a framework for process monitoring and improvement. At all stages of the report, the HillPDA team consulted with the client to produce a strategy that was acceptable for the client, the wider community and consent authorities.

Sydney
02 9252 8777
Sydney@hillpda.com

Melbourne
03 9629 1842
Melbourne@hillpda.com

hillpda.com

HillPDA
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30 YEARS