



4 May 2026

By email to: [regionalplanning@cradlecoast.com](mailto:regionalplanning@cradlecoast.com)

## Re: Cradle Coast Regional Land Use Strategy Review

Dear Regional Planning Team,

The Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Cradle Coast Regional Land Use Strategy (CCRLUS) Discussion Paper.

Having previously contributed to the review of the Southern and Northern Regional Land Use Strategies (STRLUS and NTRLUS), the Institute broadly supports a consistent state-wide approach to regional planning aligned with the Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs). However, we emphasise the importance of place-based responses that acknowledge the distinct economic, environmental and settlement characteristics of each region.

The Cradle Coast region has unique characteristics, including dispersed and multi-centred settlement patterns, a strong industrial, agricultural and resource-based economy, significant environmental and landscape values, and persistent socio-economic and housing quality challenges. The updated CCRLUS must address these conditions with targeted, implementable planning directions rather than relying solely on high-level strategic alignment.

### OVERARCHING POSITION

Consistent with our submissions to STRLUS and NTRLUS, the Institute supports:

- A clear spatial framework that directs growth to appropriate locations
- Stronger integration between land use, infrastructure, and transport planning
- A focus on housing diversity, quality, and design outcomes

To ensure climate resilience and environmental protection, and improve implementation mechanisms like monitoring and governance, the Cradle Coast needs tailored solutions. This includes smaller, dispersed population centres, infrastructure constraints over long distances, economic transition and workforce challenges, and strengthening regional identity and liveability.

## REGIONAL STRUCTURE AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The Discussion Paper identifies population change and settlement patterns as a key focus area.

### **Institute Position**

The Discussion Paper focuses on population change and settlement patterns.

The Institute supports reinforcing regional centres like Burnie, Devonport and Ulverstone, rather than replicating metropolitan growth models. However, the Strategy should clearly define a hierarchy of centres, including primary regional cities, secondary towns, rural and remote settlements, aligning with infrastructure investment, housing supply strategies, employment and services. It should avoid further low-density expansion that increases infrastructure costs, exacerbates car dependency and undermines town centre vitality.

The Cradle Coast needs consolidation and revitalisation, not just growth management. Incentives for infill and adaptive reuse in existing town centres, and planning mechanisms to address under-utilised or declining urban areas, are essential.

## HOUSING: BEYOND SUPPLY TO QUALITY AND LIVEABILITY

The Discussion Paper highlights housing demand and supply as a central issue.

The Institute emphasises that housing policy must move beyond quantitative supply to address design quality, energy performance, long-term liveability and adaptability for ageing populations. Evidence shows that 'affordable' housing in the region is often poor quality and thermally inefficient, leading to higher living costs.

In areas with limited access to services and transport, the CCRLUS should prioritise housing that suits its purpose, rather than just affordability. It should also ensure minimum design quality and sustainability and encourage medium-density and diverse typologies in key centres. Housing planning should also consider transport and services access.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT INTEGRATION

Infrastructure is crucial in the review. The Institute believes land use strategies should be infrastructure-led, not infrastructure-reactive. For the Cradle Coast region, transport systems are vital for economic productivity and community access due to its dispersed

settlement pattern. Poor integration between land use and transport can reinforce disadvantage.

The CCRLUS should align settlement growth with existing and planned infrastructure capacity, prioritise public and community transport connections between centres, support freight and logistics networks, and ensure infrastructure planning supports climate resilience and redundancy.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

The region's economy is changing with shifts in manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism.

The Institute suggests the strategy should move beyond land supply to actively support place-based economic development, diversify regional economies, and integrate education, industry, and innovation networks. Cradle Coast-specific recommendations include protecting and planning for industrial land, strengthening strategic centres as employment hubs, leveraging tourism and natural assets without compromising environmental values, and supporting knowledge-based and emerging industries through partnerships with institutions like the University of Tasmania.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The Discussion Paper identifies environmental hazards and climate risks as key drivers.

The Institute's strategy prioritises environmental protection and climate resilience to address risks.

Consistent with previous submissions, the Institute supports embedding climate adaptation and mitigation in planning, avoiding development in high-risk areas, and protecting biodiversity and landscape values. Coastal settlements are vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm events, and regional communities may lack capacity to respond to climate impacts. The Institute recommends clear spatial mapping of hazard areas, strengthened planning controls for coastal and flood-prone land, and climate-responsive design at building and precinct scales.

## GOVERNANCE, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ALIGNMENT

The CCRLUS must include clear implementation pathways, defined roles for state and local government, measurable indicators and monitoring frameworks, and address Cradle Coast-specific needs. Given the number of small councils and potential connectivity deficits, stronger coordination mechanisms are essential. The Institute recommends regional governance or coordination structures, improved data sharing and

evidence-based decision-making, and alignment with Tasmanian Planning Policies, infrastructure strategies, housing and economic development programs.

## DESIGN QUALITY AND THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE

The Institute emphasises that design quality is fundamental to achieving the Strategy's objectives.

The CCRLUS should:

- Recognise the role of architecture, urban design and landscape architecture in delivering:
  - liveable communities
  - economic value
  - environmental performance
- Embed:
  - design review processes
  - place-based design guidance
  - support for local design capability

The Institute emphasises the importance of design quality in achieving the Strategy's objectives. The CCRLUS should recognise the role of architecture and urban design in delivering liveable communities, economic value, and environmental performance, and embed design review processes, place-based design guidance, and support for local design capability.

The Institute supports reviewing the CCRLUS to align regional planning with current policies, address the unique challenges of the Cradle Coast, and create a coordinated, resilient, and liveable future. The updated Strategy should go beyond policy alignment and provide clear, place-based directions reflecting the region's realities.

The Institute welcomes continued engagement as the Strategy progresses to Phase 2.

Kind regards,



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