

The Agenda

AUGUST 2026

GEBC
GOSFORD ERINA BUSINESS CHAMBER
growing local business



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

GOSFORD 2040 – Chapter Two Planning for More Than Growth



DAVID EVERS

In my previous editorial, I suggested the Central Coast needs a vision that looks well beyond election cycles and annual budgets.

A vision that asks one simple question:

What do we want the Central Coast to become by 2040?

The release of the Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) provides an ideal opportunity to continue that conversation.

The Gosford Erina Business Chamber welcomes the work undertaken by Central Coast Council in preparing the Draft LSPS. It is an important strategic document that recognises Gosford as the Regional Capital and begins to establish the framework for how our region will grow over the next two decades.

The Chamber was pleased to contribute to the consultation process through a formal submission, which reinforced many of the priorities we have consistently advocated over recent years.

These are not new ideas.

They are the culmination of many years of advocacy by local businesses, community leaders and organisations that understand the enormous potential of the Central Coast.

Over the past two years, the Chamber has consistently called for:

- a clear **Gosford 2040 Vision** that extends beyond short-term planning cycles;
- stronger recognition of Gosford as the Regional Capital and economic heart of the Central Coast;
- investment in commercial office development to create professional employment opportunities;

- expansion of the Health and Education Precinct around Gosford Hospital and the University of Newcastle;
 - better utilisation and expansion of employment lands at Somersby;
 - revitalisation of the Gosford Waterfront and city centre;
 - activation of a vibrant night-time economy and Special Entertainment Precinct;
 - improved transport connections, parking and CBD accessibility;
 - faster and more predictable development approval processes; and
 - infrastructure investment that supports both population growth and business investment.
- Many of these themes now appear within the Draft LSPS.

That is encouraging.

It demonstrates that long-term advocacy, undertaken collaboratively and constructively, can help shape the future direction of our region.

But planning documents naturally answer the question of **where** growth should occur.

The more important question remains:

What kind of region are we trying to create?

Growth, by itself, should never be the objective. Prosperity should be.

The Central Coast is expected to continue growing over the next twenty years. More people will live here. More homes will be built. New communities will emerge.

Yet none of those outcomes automatically creates a stronger economy.

Without more jobs, we simply create more commuters. Without investment, we become a larger dormitory region.

Without a thriving city centre, we continue losing talented young people to Sydney, Newcastle and other regional cities.

That is why the Chamber believes the next chapter of the Central Coast story must focus squarely on economic ambition.

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Building Australia's Leading Regional City

Every successful region has an economic heart. For the Central Coast, that heart is Gosford.

Not because every business belongs there, but because every successful region requires a city where commerce, education, health, culture, government and innovation come together.

Around that heart sit complementary economic centres.

Somersby has the capacity to become one of New South Wales' premier industrial and logistics precincts.

Erina continues to evolve as one of the State's strongest regional retail and commercial centres.

Our Hospital Precinct is already one of the largest regional health campuses in Australia.

The University of Newcastle has established a transformational presence in Gosford that will continue to grow.

Together these assets create something unique.

The Chamber has long described this as the **Southern Growth Corridor**—stretching from Somersby through Gosford to Erina.

This corridor already generates a significant share of the Central Coast's economic output. With coordinated planning, infrastructure and investment, it can become one of regional Australia's most productive economic corridors.

Planning for Opportunity

One issue the Chamber highlighted in its submission was the need to create greater opportunities for younger generations.

For too long, many of our young people have completed school or university only to discover that the career they aspire to simply does not exist locally.

Housing is only part of the equation. We must also create careers.

By 2040, the Central Coast should aspire to generate thousands of additional jobs in professional services, technology, advanced manufacturing, health, education, tourism and innovation.

That requires commercial office investment.

It requires industrial land.

It requires universities, TAFE, research and entrepreneurship.

Most importantly, it requires confidence.

Businesses invest where there is certainty.

Developers invest where there is vision.

Communities prosper where leadership is consistent.

The Next Chapter

The Draft LSPS is an important milestone.

It provides a framework.

Now we need to provide the ambition.

The Chamber will continue advocating for projects that support this vision—including commercial office growth, waterfront revitalisation, improved transport, stronger education and health precincts, activation of the CBD, protection of employment lands and investment in the infrastructure that underpins long-term prosperity.

These priorities have guided our advocacy over recent years, and they

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Rebranding Gosford – Challenging Perceptions, Exploring Possibilities



Property Council of Australia Hunter & Central Coast Regional Director, Stephen Crowe

GEBC's July Members Breakfast at Gosford RSL Club saw an attendance of 56 members and guests hear Guest Speaker Property Council of Australia's Hunter & Central Coast Regional Director, Stephen Crowe speak on the importance of branding in respect to towns and cities.

He asked the question; What will Gosford look like in 2024?

Will the population growth exceed expectations, will the ageing trend be reversed, will the economy diversify and the visitor economy grow and will it be a true regional CBD capital?

He made the point that while the future is never certain it is possible to find a way to create the future you want.

"Gosford has a number of significant challenges, but equally, it has some incredible advantages and opportunities," he said.

Essentially, for the government and private sector to believe in our story we need to understand it and believe in it too.

Mr Crowe was involved in the development of Newcastle Airport which 20 years ago was an unloved tin shed that grabbed its opportunity and is now an international airport. That was about having a sound business plan and never giving up in promoting the idea.

A brand is the promise of value that differentiates a product or place from another. "For Gosford, your brand is what people think, feel and say about your community when you are not in the room," he said.

A unified brand has stronger recognition, builds greater trust and credibility and is easier to market. "Your brand acts as a compass to for customer choice, including where people invest their money."

In conclusion he said "words matter":

- Gosford could be tired and run down OR be perfectly placed to have it all,
- Developers might say, either that's too hard OR its super easy in Gosford, and
- Investors might say, it's too tough to do business here OR prosper in Gosford.

Finally, he asked what needs to happen next:

- Find a champion,
- Build investment partners,
- Engage with stakeholders,
- Define the aspirations, and
- Build a simple cohesive narrative.

GOSFORD 2040 – Chapter Two Planning for More Than Growth CONTINUED

will continue to guide it in the years ahead.

The Central Coast It is having the courage and commitment to realise it.

That is the conversation the Chamber intends to keep leading.

David Evers
President

Seven Months in: voco Gosford marks a new era for Gosford



voco® Gosford General Manager Bjoern Noeldner

Since opening its doors in December 2025, voco Gosford has quickly become the Central Coast's most talked-about accommodation and function venue.

As the region's first new 4.5 Star hotel in 20 years, the 130-room property has brought a fresh energy to the heart of Gosford.

In just seven months, guests and the local community have embraced the six dining and bar venues from the upscale rooftop restaurant and bar Astra with panoramic views and a Japanese-inspired menu to Paolo's Pizza and Pasta and Archie's Sports Bar on the ground floor.

The hotel's 700 square meters of function spaces are being well patronised for corporate events, product launches as well as weddings and other events.

We are also seeing a steady rise in corporate event enquiries, which is a great sign.

Commenting on their success to date voco® Gosford General Manager Bjoern Noeldner, said, "we're not quite where we want to be yet, but the progress is clear, and it points to growing demand for our function and event spaces, which are some of the most diverse and impressive on offer at the Central Coast.

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CENTRAL COAST

For your Diary

Chamber members will note that for the next 6 months we have moved to Breakfast Meetings.

AUGUST BREAKFAST MEETING

Guest Speaker: Superintendent Darryl Jobson, District Commander, Brisbane Water Police District
Topic: Review of Crime and Social issues in Gosford CBD
Where: Gosford RSL Club, West Gosford
When: 19th August, 2026
Time: 7.30am to 9.00am



SEPTEMBER BREAKFAST MEETING

Guest Speaker: Dan Powrie, General Manager Delivery, High Speed Rail Authority
Topic: Update on progress with the Sydney Newcastle High Speed Train project.
Where: Gosford RSL Club, West Gosford
When: 23rd September, 2026
Time: 7.30am to 9.00am

EVENING NETWORKING MEETINGS

GEBC members at our July Networking evening at Tommy's Café
Following the success of our first in June Our July evening at Tommy's Café was

another success.

We have scheduled further events each month through to the end of this year at Tommy's Café and include guests interested in meeting Chamber members and Directors.

AUGUST NETWORKING EVENING

Where: Tommy's Café, Gosford Waterfront.
When: 12th August 2026
Time: 5.00pm to 7.00pm

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER NETWORKING EVENINGS WILL BE AT TOMMY'S CAFÉ ON THE 2nd WEDNESDAY IN THE MONTH

Myrtec chooses Gosford to expand on Central Coast



David Hasell Myrtec Business Development Manager

Newcastle based managed IT services and technology advisory company Myrtec has opened a shop front office in Gosford CBD.

Providing flexible, contract-free IT support, cyber security and cloud solutions for small and medium businesses Myrtec opened an office in the Element building Erina two years ago.

The move proved to be successful and with a growing client base Myrtec have now moved into larger shopfront premises at Suite 2, 283 Mann Street, Gosford.

Commenting on the move David Hasell Myrtec Business Development Manager said, "After enough attending numerous business events talking about the rebirth of Gosford it became clear to me that Gosford is the place to be. With multiple clients already here it just makes sense".

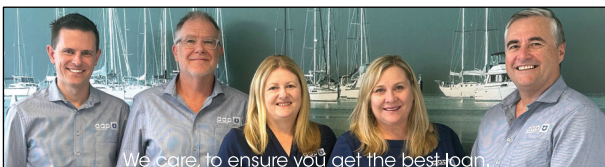
Chamber welcomes new member

Obiquitech Business: AI consultant Contact: Alec Tucker Location: Mt White

Become a member of GEBC today!

The GEBC is inviting business owners in Gosford and Erina to join their community and enjoy a range of resources and support, including networking events, workshops and advocacy for the local business community. Membership offers discounts on events and workshops, access to exclusive member-only resources, and the opportunity to connect with like-minded business owners to build a stronger local economy.

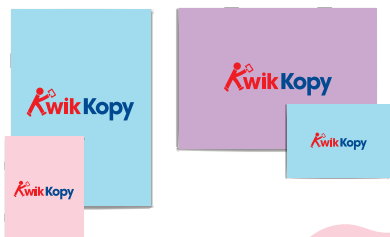
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