



Ku-ring-gai Council

Introduction

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Indigofera Australis

“Sustainability is a word that we have been hearing a lot about. It is now permeating government public policy pronouncements and documents, and it presents, I suggest, an opportunity to re-examine what previous generations in Ku-ring-gai have left to us, the present generation – and that is, of course, an extraordinary legacy...”

“...Sustainability requires that we...together with the descendants of the Aboriginal people...are trustees, and the onus is on us, the responsibility is on us, for the sake of the next generation...”¹

Giles Tabuteau, 2007

Ku-ring-gai to global is the first sustainability vision report representing a continuation of much of the past work of citizens and the Council. Residents, volunteers, Councillors and staff members have a long history of caring for the local community and environment. They have researched, planned and worked to protect Ku-ring-gai’s exceptional natural environment and community. To assist in reinforcing this position, the Ku-ring-gai to Global slogan and associated symbol has been developed with the intention that it can be used by Council, local businesses, community organisations and individuals to demonstrate a cohesive approach to sustainability.

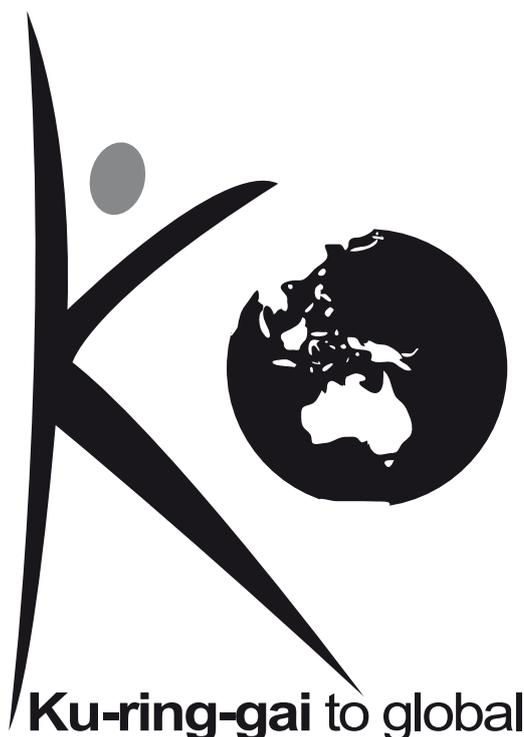
Sustainability is not a new phenomena but rather a contemporary term that encapsulates past and present practices of long term planning and management in all sectors. In Ku-ring-gai we define sustainability as:

The ability to maintain a good quality of life for future generations, which relies upon a fair, just, and dynamic community, healthy and diverse environment, and an active and stable economy.

An important aspect of sustainability is accepting that natural and human systems are interconnected. Achieving and maintaining these systems begins in our work place, backyard, schools, neighbourhoods and parklands.

We now have greater knowledge of the limits of Earth’s resources and the implications of technology on the future of the planet. We understand the need to modify our consumption patterns, adopt alternate sources of energy, limit our uses of non renewable resources and that climate change is upon us. For these reasons it is imperative that Ku-ring-gai adopts a sustainable direction and commences a program of change to secure the future for our children and the environment.

There are four commonly accepted sectors of sustainability: social, environmental, economic and governance. Council reports on these sectors in what is known as the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL). This approach has been incorporated in Council’s Annual Report and Management Plan.



Ku-ring-gai to Global logo.
Ku-ring-gai Council 2007.

The term *environmental sustainability* is given to principles and practices that aim to reduce the environmental impact while meeting the needs of the present without compromising that of future generations (Brundtland, 1987; Earth Charter Initiative, 1997). Environmental sustainability seeks to improve human welfare by protecting, conserving, restoring and assisting natural ecosystems and environmental processes necessary for supporting life.

Social sustainability is concerned with creating balance in human systems. It focuses on the cohesion of community for mutual benefit and working towards social equity, tolerance and care irrespective of age, ability, income or culture. Social sustainability is linked with quality of life and the protection of the environment in the common interest of humanity (Earth Charter Initiative, 1997; Goodland, 2002).

Economic sustainability addresses the maintenance of capital, while being able to sufficiently reduce and manage consumption patterns. It involves achieving sustainable levels of consumption and production by accounting for resource and energy efficiency, benefit-cost, equity and technological advancement (Earth Charter Initiative, 1997; Goodland, 2002).

Governance is concerned with the values, policies and procedures that Council adopts to provide ethical, democratic and accountable outcomes, while engaging the community and representing citizens. (LGASA, 2007; VLGA, 2007).

Discussions with our community in 2007 provided the basis upon which this vision report was created. A total of 264 residents participated in this process, describing and discussing their visions and ideas for a sustainable Ku-ring-gai. These are summarised in Chapter 4 of this report.

A new generational model of consultation was adopted. This involved residents from the age of 9 through to 99 years participating in sustainability visioning through individual interviews, focus



Crowd at Australia Day celebrations, 2008.
Ku-ring-gai Council.

groups and intergenerational forums. The age based methodology was used as a means of capturing the changing perspectives and views of individuals at different stages of their lives. This method lays the foundation for designing future sustainability programs and aims to build stronger connections within local communities where people of all ages are respected for their contributions. Importantly this approach ensures young people have a voice in the decision making processes that affect their futures.

The vision, values and principles which have emanated from the community discussions are described in Chapter 5 of this report. They capture the essence of community concerns and aspirations for the next 25 years of Ku-ring-gai's future.

Ku-ring-gai's aim is to address global, national and regional issues with the main concentration of efforts being locally based. Council has committed to researching sustainability strategies for Ku-ring-gai's suburbs over the next nine years which will celebrate each suburb's distinctive identity, social and environmental attributes and address the challenges.

1 Refer to Appendix 8.1 for the full transcript.

