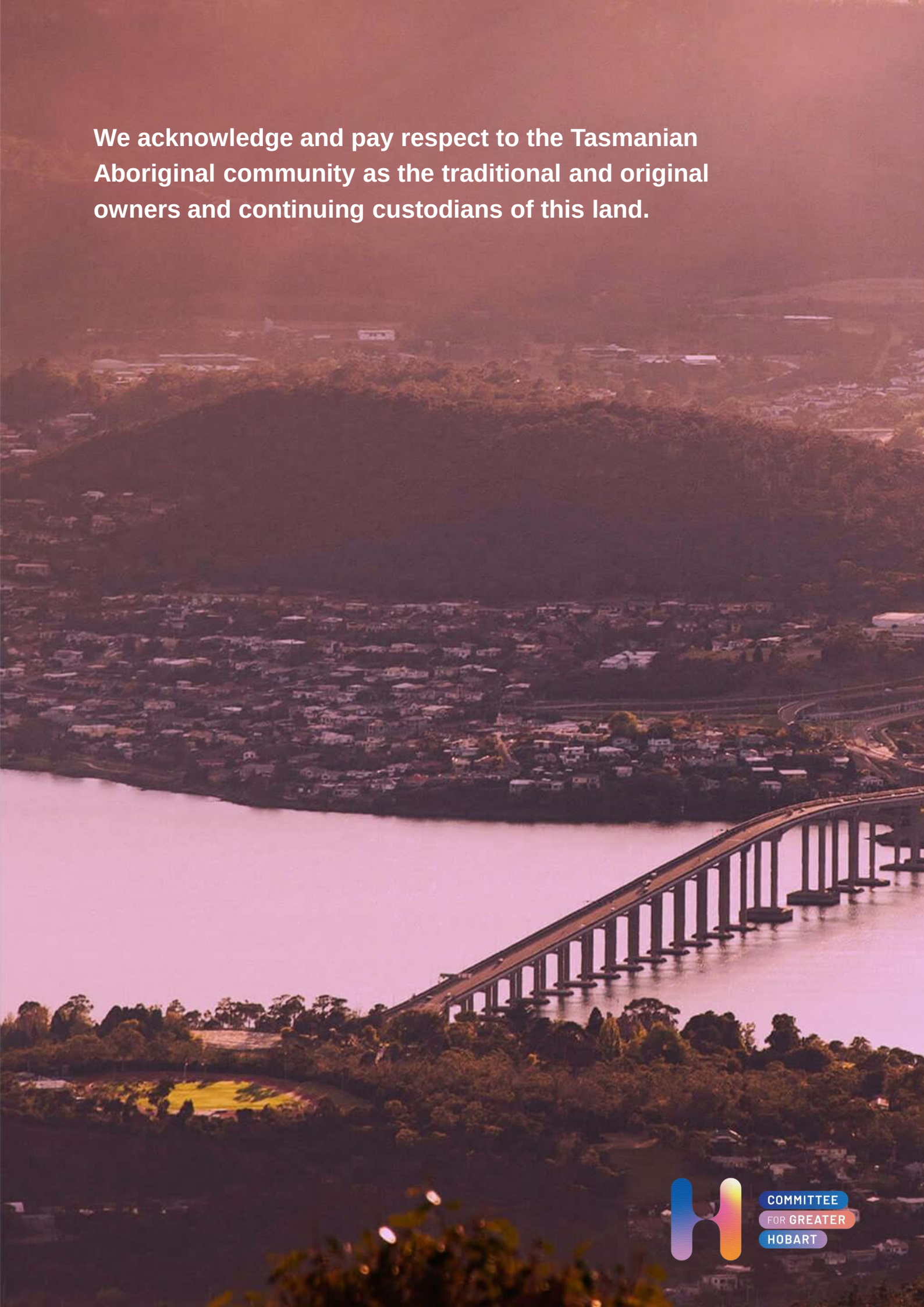


COMMITTEE FOR GREATER HOBART

Liveability Considerations for Greater Hobart

Submission to the 2024-25 STRLUS review

December 2024



We acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land.

COMMITTEE FOR GREATER HOBART

A message from Uncle Rodney Dillon

- Aboriginal elder and activist



Uncle Rodney with his grandchildren Ochre and Arlo

Acknowledging our history and our culture that's come before us is important. Our people didn't live here for 60,000 years by accident. They lived here for 60,000 years because they planned ahead and they protected and looked after things.

Thinking about the importance of planning, whether it be for environmental changes, or how we go ahead in the future, and understanding what we need in certain areas, we need to put in strong laws about looking after the ancient history of this place.

As an Aboriginal person, the steps of protection, of looking after the history, are important. Your 200-year history is important. Our 60,000-year history is important as well. If you'd been speaking to the Rodney Dillon of 40 years ago I would have told you that mine was more important than yours. And perhaps I might have been right, perhaps I might have been wrong, but today I see both of them are important.

Unless I can acknowledge that your history and your culture's important; how do I get you to understand how important mine is to me? As we get older, we understand that a bit better, and the importance of us working together.

How do we, as a group of people, preserve the truth of history? It was only a few years ago we recognised that we took the babies off Aboriginal people, and we displaced them off their land. But we haven't come to an agreement on how we all work together in the future, and how we go ahead with a planning system that involves that ancient history, and the 200 years of history together.

We need to have good solutions that recognise all the history of this place, and when we do the planning, we understand that we preserve all history and all culture that's in those areas.

For the good of our people, the long-term good of our people, this is like the leaders of the Aboriginal groups, the nations, coming together and making decisions for the future.

I just think you need to see the importance in that.

Uncle Rodney welcomed us to Country at the Greater Hobart Liveability Forum on 15 October 2024.

STRLUS Steering Committee **11 December 2024**

STRLUSupdate@hobartcity.com.au

The Committee for Greater Hobart would like to thank the Tasmanian Government, the Department of State Growth and the Southern Tasmanian Councils for the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the review of the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS).

The Committee believes that the STRLUS has a central role to play in the future of our region, and to support the preparation of this submission we convened the Greater Hobart Liveability Forum, commissioned research, and supported and authored a number of opinion pieces to encourage greater awareness and discussion in the community regarding the importance of strategic planning and the themes being considered.

It is widely known that a lack of cohesive, collaborative regional planning can have intergenerational social and environmental consequences through disconnected communities, increasing pressure on scarce resources and services, degradation of our environment and climate risks, and access challenges to already stretched essential amenities and services. It also contributes to lost opportunities for the Tasmanian economy.

The Committee acknowledges the complexity of all of these intersecting issues, and the challenges of addressing this through a planning system that has a lack of overall coordination and has had a lack of policy and strategic focus for more than a decade.

At this point in time there isn't a clear 'owner' of Tasmania's planning system and its various components. Responsibility is split across different functional areas and, in some instances, across State Government agencies.

It is particularly challenging for the development of regional strategies without clarity on the overarching Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs) that should be guiding the process and engagement. The Committee would appreciate further discussion on the status of the draft TPPs.

We are also open to providing any additional advice and support the STRLUS Steering Committee and the Tasmanian Government may need to progress in finalisation of the STRLUS on behalf of our members and the collaborators who have engaged with us.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Keryn Nylander

Executive Director, Committee for Greater Hobart

Our process for compiling this submission

To help inform our submission, the Committee has engaged with a broad cross-section of interested parties from across the community and used their feedback on the current status of liveability in Southern Tasmania and advice on opportunities for improvement.

On 15 October 2024 the Committee convened the Greater Hobart Liveability Forum - a gathering of 100 members, business leaders, state and local government representatives, community groups and young people to discuss the opportunities to improve liveability in the region. The forum provided a platform to have input into the STRLUS, as well as increase the understanding of the role urban planning plays in key liveability benchmarks including climate, population, housing, mobility and wellbeing.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the STRLUS Working Group for their assistance in capturing discussions and outcomes on the day, which are detailed in the attached Liveability Considerations for Greater Hobart report, which forms part of this submission.

We have summarised our feedback under the seven ‘region shapers’ from the STRLUS State of Play report, which were a key part of the framework for the Liveability Forum.

In addition, as a result of our work and feedback from members, Forum participants and key stakeholders, the Committee will be considering the following themes related to the future liveability of Greater Hobart:

1. **Engage diverse voices to create a vibrant culture and respect for Country.**
2. **Investigate ways to diversify the supply of housing, especially through consideration of “density done well”.**
3. **Improve liveability, including vibrant villages and townships.**
4. **Build fit-for-purpose data to inform planning.**

Period of dynamic change – demographics, economy and climate

The Committee notes that the STRLUS was declared in 2011 and has had minimal updates in the past 13 years. In that time there have been significant changes in our population, demographics, land use, climate and the economy, especially following the impacts of COVID. It is essential, therefore, that the STRLUS is a flexible and dynamic document to ensure it is tracking and adapting to external factors - such as climate change - instead of these factors driving the future liveability of the region.

As part of preparing this submission, we commissioned research by Workforce Demographer Lisa Denny into the Southern Tasmanian region's population age structure – the distribution of its community by age and sex – and projected change over time.

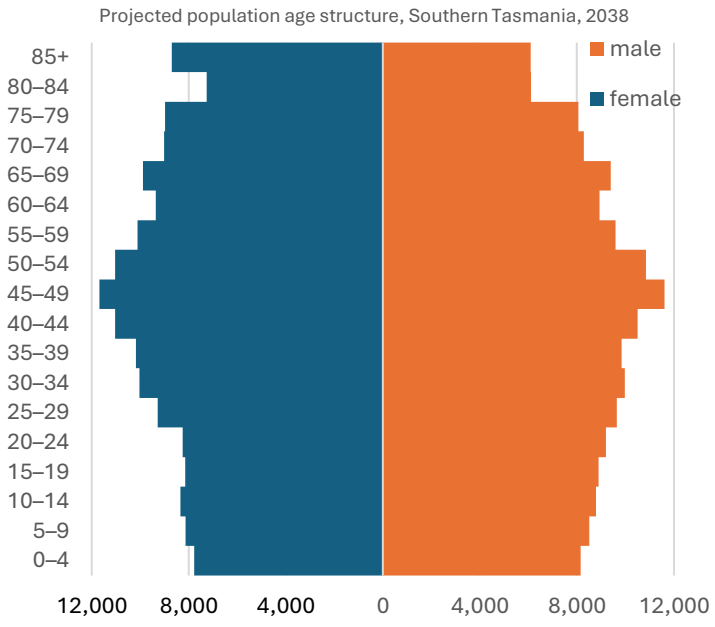
It is important to note that projections are not forecasts – they are an assessment of what would happen to a population if assumed levels of the components of population change (births, deaths and migration), based on recent history, were to occur throughout the projection period. In other words, they are not locked in stone – we can influence/chart a different course and impact our future.

Dr Denny's research found that, while the Southern Tasmania region is projected to grow by 32,000 people over the next 15 years at an average rate of 0.72% per annum, almost half (45%) of this growth will be in the population aged between 65 and 84 years of age, and 25% in the population aged 85 or older.

"Based on the age structure, which reflects stages of life, a population will have different needs in terms of services, infrastructure and amenities," she said in her report. "Population age structures, and how they change over time, can also reflect the broader needs of the population and help inform policy development in terms of investment in services, infrastructure, amenities and other liveability qualities, as well as land use planning."

Southern Tasmania - 2038 projected population

	2023	2038	Change (no.)	%
Population	297,586	329,586	32,114	10.8 0.72 pa
0-14 years	16.4%	15.1%	886	2.8
Working age	63.7%	60.1%	8,691	27.1
65-84 years	17.6%	20.3%	14,531	45.2
85+	2.3%	4.5%	8,007	25.0

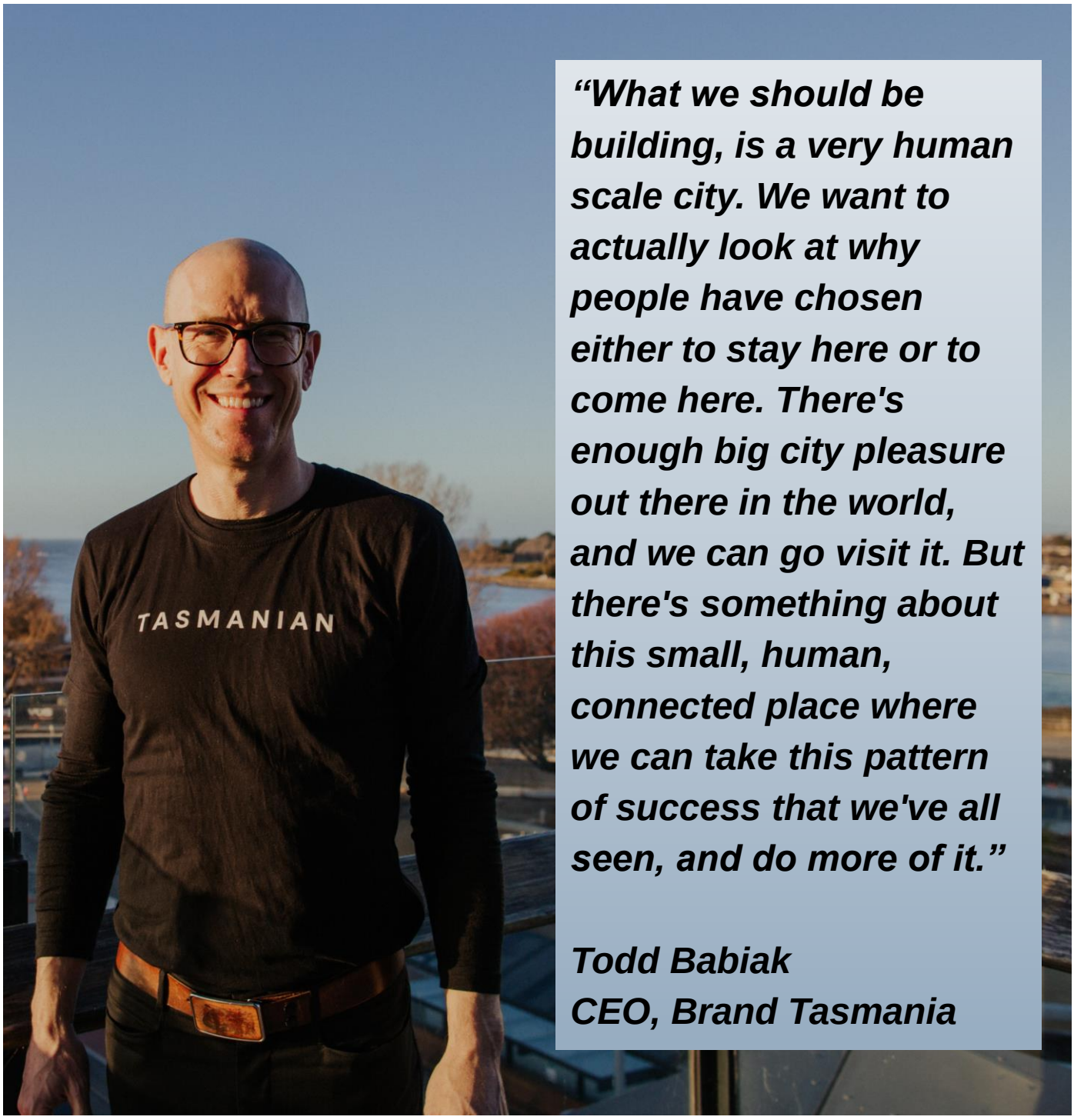


Source: ABS, Regional Population, 2023; Tasmanian Treasury, Population Projections, 2024

Intergenerational vision connecting beyond land use is needed

Since our launch last year we have heard in a number of forums and conversations the challenge our businesses and communities are having in attracting and retaining young people.

Our Youth Workshop, a gathering of students from seven schools across the Greater Hobart area along with members of the Tasmanian University Student Association, explored the major themes affecting our region and what the priorities should be from the perspective of our youth. When asked to vote on their top three concerns, a consensus emerged around public transport, access to services, and the environment and climate – all of which can be influenced by the STRLUS.



"What we should be building, is a very human scale city. We want to actually look at why people have chosen either to stay here or to come here. There's enough big city pleasure out there in the world, and we can go visit it. But there's something about this small, human, connected place where we can take this pattern of success that we've all seen, and do more of it."

Todd Babiak
CEO, Brand Tasmania

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	1	**Planning for the Region is grounded in an understanding of, respect for, and connections to culture, history and Country**

The most significant and powerful message we have been privileged to hear was from Uncle Rodney Dillon, who welcomed us to Country at our Greater Hobart Liveability Forum.

As part of his welcome, Uncle Rodney said:

“Don’t underestimate the importance of your meeting here today and understanding where we go in the future.

“Our people didn't live here for 60,000 years by accident. They lived here for 60,000 years because they planned ahead and they protected and looked after things.

“As an Aboriginal person, the steps of protection, of looking after the history, are important. Your 200-year history is important. Our 60,000-year history is important as well.

“Unless I can acknowledge that your history and your culture’s important; how do I get you to understand how important mine is to me? As we get older, we understand that a bit better, and the importance of us working together.”

The Committee is deeply aware of the importance of Culture and Country in how we move forward and how we engage with all members of the community to build a more inclusive and sustainable future.

It is the Committee’s view that an Aboriginal perspective should inform the overarching approach to the development of the STRLUS. It is a perspective that should flow through each element of the plan, informing approaches to managing land and resources.

A longer time horizon and genuine engagement that involves First Nations communities in a fundamental way, with consideration given to Tasmanian Aboriginal people leading the STRLUS review process, should be considered.

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	**2**	**Land use and economic activity respect, protect and respond sustainably to the Region's unique natural environment**

The Region's unique natural setting is one of its key strengths. It is the underpinning component of our liveability and the reason many people choose to stay, or move, here.

Brand Tasmania research shows that there are mainlanders who desire what Tasmania offers: a life with a slower pace, where they can flourish and thrive with a more balanced lifestyle. They long for an environment with beauty and nature at one's doorstep, a boutique economy that is inviting to entrepreneurs, climate leadership, and a strong sense of community.

The research also shows arise in environmental concerns, with 62% of Australians expressing a higher appreciation for clean air and a pristine environment and just over half (57%) indicate a greater importance placed on sustainable living and being environmentally friendly; particularly amongst those aged under 45 years of age.

Some of the region's major employers have told us they frequently cite our natural environment and the lifestyle it supports is a key "selling point" to when trying to attract new employees from interstate and overseas.

The planning system needs to protect and enhance our natural and cultural assets and attributes and ensure that our key strengths are not eroded for current and future generations. This needs to be supported by strong evidence and data to guide decision making for the region.

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	**3**	**Communities across Southern Tasmania are safe and resilient to natural hazards and climate change.**

The impact on our environment, and the subsequent increase in risk from natural disasters such as bushfire, flooding and landslides from heavy rain, cannot be underestimated.

Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (RECFIT) research projects in the next 75 years there will be an increase in extreme weather events such as frequency and intensity of storms, coastal erosion and inundation, longer fire seasons and more days of high-range fire danger, an increase in summer temperatures and more heatwaves, an increase in drought conditions in some parts of the state, and river flooding in some catchments.

We have already seen an increase in extreme climate and weather activity in the past 10 years, including significant bushfire seasons, unprecedented marine heatwaves and prolonged droughts.

The State Government's TasAlert website enables users to map the natural hazard information for where they live, including bushfire, coastal erosion and inundation, and landslide. A quick search shows a large amount of Greater Hobart's bushland areas listed as bushfire-prone or at risk of the impact of bushfire (smoke and embers) - an alarming amount of which is increasingly accommodating residential development.

This also has implications for the insurability of parts of the region, and risks associated with these issues need to inform decisions about appropriate locations for growth. A report by the Swiss Re Institute, released in early December, says that globally, insurers are expected to pay out more than $US135 billion ($A210 billion) as a result of natural disasters in 2024, driving an expected increase of 17% in losses for the insurance industry.

People living in more urbanised areas are also seeing the impacts of increased temperatures. A Menzies Institute for Medical Research report^^ shows a 9 per cent increase in deaths in Tasmania during low-intensity heat waves.

University of Tasmania research** shows that LGAs such as Glenorchy are at high risk of heat-related deaths due to low levels of tree cover, higher use of brick and concrete in construction, and higher levels of social vulnerability due to socio-economic factors and population age. The research also shows the presence of trees in neighbourhoods can reduce air temperatures by as much as 10 degrees and over roads by up to 20 degrees.

Tasmania has a greater proportion of elderly people, a greater proportion of those living with a chronic health condition, and the highest proportion of those living in disadvantaged regions, when compared to other Australian jurisdictions.* It is therefore vital that there is a balance between liveable neighbourhoods, vibrant communities, a growing economy and an environment more resilient to risk.

In considering urban growth the STRLUS must consider how Greater Hobart becomes a more resilient and compact city, especially considering the risks of climate driven events and impacts on insurability and liveability.

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	4	**Communities in the Region are sustainable, connected and diverse.**

Being Tasmanian is about connectedness and community, and that's a real positive. The negative is that it is difficult to become part of the community in the current way in which we live. A lack of vibrant, connected villages and townships, with limited access to social and networking services, means newcomers to the state struggle with connection.

In her research report, Dr Lisa Denny wrote that the characteristics of a place that support wellbeing and quality of life are significant in attracting and retaining people in communities.

"As interstate and international migration plays a larger role in population change in Tasmania, and the shape of population age structures within the state, perceived and actual liveability will become even more important for communities and their future sustainability," she wrote.

Brand Tasmania research has shown that Tasmania is known as 'friendly, but not welcoming'. We need to change that and one of the key opportunities is through better land use planning to create connected, diverse communities.

We can invite people, all people, and especially our Aboriginal community and our young people, to help us solve these problems.

Long-term, integrated planning for a sustainable and efficient transport and mobility network that responds to the region's settlement pattern as well as its changing demographics must be central to STRLUS.

A more diverse, vibrant, and liveable range of housing options is critical to support population growth and demographic shifts in our "villages", as well as central Hobart. This includes consideration of "density done well", and the critical coordination with plans to accommodate and support local employment, education, health and social opportunities including a vibrant night-time economy.

We must ensure that "under represented voices" have greater opportunity to be included and to drive considerations for long term planning for our region. In particular this must include young people, new Tasmanians, Aboriginal people, older people and those living with disability.

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	5	**Social services and infrastructure are planned and delivered to support a growing and changing community.**

Workforce Demographer Lisa Denny told attendees at the Liveability Forum that while planning for growth has traditionally focused on critical infrastructure planning for more people, liveability factors across the lifespan now need to be embedded in the planning process.

“Based on the age structure, which reflects stages of life, a population will have different needs in terms of services, infrastructure and amenities,” she says. “The factors that both determine, and contribute to, liveability will differ by LGA. These population age structures need to be planned for in terms of housing, education, health services, transport, recreation and other liveability factors that attract, retain or deter people from the respective communities.

“The further away from services, employment and quality education that a Local Government Area (LGA) is, and the older the population, the more volatile the age structure and the more vulnerable the community is to poor liveability factors.”

An understanding of the needs of the Region’s future population in terms of sustainable and high quality community facilities and services as well as access to health and education must be considered in the planning of villages and settlements.

Incorporation of diverse perspectives, including youth and multicultural voices, should inform planning for places across the region in order to support population growth and demographic shifts.

As population projections are not forecasts but an assessment of what would happen if nothing changed in the community, consideration should be given to land use planning that takes the current population projections into account and opportunities to positively impact the future.

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	6	**Employment and economic clusters are accessible and transport networks support how, where and why people and goods move.**

The future design of our transport and mobility network needs to enable economic activity whilst providing cost-effective and efficient solutions for communities and certainty for the necessary investment.

Careful planning (at regional and local 'village' levels), engagement and implementation are crucial to ensure equitable benefits, mitigate environmental concerns, and address potential community displacement.

Multi-modal transport options that have been configured by cities in other countries demonstrate the need to consider the growth of cities over time, and configured to the particular needs of those communities through long-term plans.

In its submission to the Keeping Hobart Moving draft plan consultation earlier this year, the Committee made the following key recommendations that are relevant to the STRLUS planning process:

- **Assess the economic feasibility of different mobility options, considering factors like construction costs, operational expenses, and user affordability.**
- **Ensure seamless connections across different modes of transport, including public transport, cycling, walking, small wheeled and small electronic transport devices, and car-sharing.**
- **Encourage developers to create compact, walkable, and transit-oriented communities with access to amenities. Incentivise this approach to make it more attractive.**
- **Consider employees' access to housing with safe, affordable, and timely transportation to work as a key factor in industry attracting and retaining employees and in helping them to optimise their health and wellbeing and productivity over time.**
- **Collaborate with businesses, residents, and community groups to develop solutions that optimise people's capacities to meet their needs.**
- **Incentivising the use of sustainable modes of transport is essential for achieving broader environmental and congestion reduction goals.**
- **Planning for supply chain resiliency for freight and strategic goods also needs to occur to support the region's economy.**

Our feedback on the STRLUS

	7	**The Region's economy leverages its unique strengths and provides a stable base for employment growth and diversification.**

Southern Tasmania is rich in innovation and opportunity. Our proximity to the Southern Ocean and Antarctica position us as a place of global and national research significance. We are home to the Australian Antarctic Division, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) research vessel RV Investigator has its home port in Hobart.

The University of Tasmania is nationally and internationally recognised for its research and the positive contributions it makes in maritime, marine and Antarctic studies; medicine, health and wellbeing; aquaculture and agriculture; climate and renewable energy.

The region also has a long and rich history of creativity and innovation – from boat building to food and wine to information technology and engineering.

Supporting economic growth and development in ways that reflect the region's distinctive profile will be crucial to enable our people to access opportunities and to sustain the region's population and help reverse the impacts of our aging profile.

It is also important that small businesses and operators are able to access the resources and skills they need to prosper. This means being able to attract the right entrepreneurial talent as well as access to appropriate spaces and technology.

Consideration should be given to the changing needs of the region's economy and how the STRLUS can be flexible in enabling greater economic diversity and our entrepreneurial culture to continue to flourish.

Incorporating youth voices as part of planning for economic activities should also occur; understanding their aspirations and ideas about opportunities and emerging trends can bolster productivity.

Conclusion

A sustainable, vibrant, productive and inclusive Greater Hobart means a strong Tasmania.

Greater Hobart - defined in statistical terms as the Clarence, Glenorchy, Hobart and Kingborough councils as well as the core population areas in Brighton, Derwent Valley, Sorell and the Huon Valley - accounts for about 44% of Tasmania's Gross State Product. The concentration of major business, government, education and health institutions and industries in the region, in comparison to the rest of the state, clearly defines its role as the central driver for the Tasmanian economy.

Economist Saul Eslake's independent review into state's finances, released in August 2024, found that Tasmania remains Australia's poorest state, measured by per capita gross product, and in 2022-23 the gap widened to the biggest margin in 32 years. Tasmania's productivity rate is 20% below the national average, but productivity growth is the key driver of real wage growth and raising living standards over the long term.

Tasmania has an opportunity to leverage its unique strengths, and address the barriers, to make our region liveable and loveable for all of its residents. Strengths such as the innovation and creativity borne in part from our location, our environment and our history and culture.

The Committee for Greater Hobart was founded on the belief that we, as residents and businesses of Greater Hobart, need to do more to help make our region a vital, inclusive and connected place to live.

As an independent voice free from political or special interest, we have stepped in to facilitate discussion between government, businesses and the community – something that we identified as lacking but is essential to building a better future for all of the region's residents.

The updated STRLUS has the potential to have a fundamental effect on the liveability of our region - particularly community and culture, housing, jobs and transport. But it is important that there is clarity of oversight and accountability in planning for the long-term future of our community, outside of electoral cycles and across local government boundaries.

The Committee is committed to playing a central role in bringing together stakeholders, businesses and residents across the region to collaborate to shape our future.