

Positively PENRITH

Thrive Penrith

OPEN
Penrith and St Marys 24-Hour Economy Strategy
2025-2029

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

investpenrith.com.au



Nagana Birrung event, The Joan, Penrith 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Darug and Gundungarra people who are the traditional owners in which Penrith Local Government Area is situated. We also pay our respect to elders past, present and emerging, and to the First Nations people living in our community today.

Good evening, Penrith

"A good city is like a good party — people stay longer than really necessary, because they are enjoying themselves"

- Jan Gehl, ***Cities for People (2005)***

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Winter Solstice event, City Park, Penrith 2025

1 Message from Penrith City Council

Now is the time to shape vibrant 24-hour City Centres

The City of Penrith is undergoing rapid and significant change. It is transforming to become a vibrant, world-class city with quality amenity, connected to a diverse range of opportunities for employment, leisure and lifestyle.

Penrith City Council is creating a shared vision to shape a dynamic 24-hour economy in the Penrith and St Marys City Centres, through strong partnerships with local businesses, venue operators, City Centre Corporations and our community.

A 24-hour economy will be important to our City's future by generating more jobs close to home, more revenue for businesses and a more captivating after dark experience for residents and visitors. Our community and visitors value a range of offerings by day, and after the sun goes down, including events, activities and diverse businesses that cater to a wide audience. With a compelling and expanding dining, beverage, entertainment, arts and cultural scene to build from and a growing accommodation sector - we are ready to help shape a 24-hour economy in our two key city centres.

Penrith has a target to attract an additional 2,000 new jobs by 2031 in the Tourism, Hospitality and Events, Sports and Recreation industry cluster.

Major projects including Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport and the transformation of St Marys are game changers. They will propel visitation to the city centres of Penrith and St Marys by day and by night, generating a significant demand for a local 24-hour workforce.

Council plays a crucial role in identifying opportunities and addressing challenges to further develop our city's 24-hour economy. This Strategy and Action Plan builds on Council's strong leadership, and effective collaboration, to drive forward placemaking, activation, events and marketing to cultivate a vibrant 24-hour economy.

By leveraging the diverse talent, expertise and perspectives of businesses, venue operators, the community, and government, Council aims to create an environment where businesses can thrive; art, cultural and entertainment activities can flourish; and the community can enjoy a vibrant, safe and connected 24-hour experience.

We are ready and able to shape a vibrant 24-hour economy here in Penrith City and look forward to sharing this journey with you.

2 About our Strategy

OPEN is Penrith City Council's 24-Hour Economy Strategy for our city's two key strategic centres, Penrith and St Marys.

This strategy builds on the successes and learnings from the Penrith City Centre Night Time Economy Strategy (2015), one of the very first night-time economy strategies in New South Wales.

Understanding the key drivers, aspirations and opportunities of both Penrith and St Marys, this Strategy takes a place-based approach to respond to the unique characteristics, businesses and communities of each centre. It will also respond specifically to their particular strengths, challenges and opportunities to continue to develop at night.

OPEN is informed by our resilient local businesses and community. It details a number of strategies and actions to build a safer, more diverse and thriving 24-hour economy in Penrith and St Marys.

OPEN symbolises our approach to developing our City at night – **open** to opportunities, **open** to new ideas and **open** in our engagement with business and community.



Penrith Producers event, Triangle Park, Penrith 2021

Six strategic priorities have been identified to guide the development of the Penrith and St Marys 24-Hour Economy Strategy.

Strategic Priority	Goal	Focus
Facilitating vibrant precincts	Penrith and St Marys are attractive, activated night-time centres of diverse activity	**Physical infrastructure and placemaking** • Placemaking initiatives • Activations and events
Coordinated planning for future 24-hour precincts	Penrith and St Marys are forward planned to accommodate active night-time economies now and into the future	**Planning and regulation** • Precinct identification • Development controls • Sound management
Fostering strong collaboration	Our local businesses are engaged with Council and our City Centre Corporations to drive positive growth in our 24-hour economy	**Stakeholder relationships** • Business engagement • City Centre Corporations • Strategic industry engagement • Community engagement
Enhancing Penrith and St Marys' reputation as late night destinations	Penrith and St Marys are sought after 24-hour economy destinations for investment and visitation	**Marketing and promotion** • Place branding and marketing • Investment attraction
Connecting Penrith's Neon Grid	Our 24-hour economy precincts are easy to get to and easy to get home from	**Transport and infrastructure** • Public transport • Parking, taxis and rideshare • Precinct connectivity
A leading 24-hour economy	Council is a trusted voice and advocate for developing the 24-hour economy	**Advocacy and partnerships**

Success will be measured by the following key industry indicators (from 2023 baseline):

- Increase in economic output and turnover
- Increase in establishments and jobs

We have collaborated with key stakeholders including local businesses, industry groups, government agencies and community representatives to build this Strategy. Progress will be reported annually. This Strategy supersedes the Penrith Night Time Economy Strategy adopted by Council in 2015.

3 Thrive Penrith

The **Thrive Penrith** Framework is an overarching vision for the key strategies that support Council's economic and cultural development for a prosperous and vibrant community. The Framework will be the driver to connect Council's 24-Hour Economy, Economic Development, Visitor Economy and Cultural Strategies. The Framework aims to enhance collaborative action and link the opportunities and experiences across Penrith to improve planning and implementation of projects, and deliver the economic, social and cultural priorities across the local government area.

Thrive Penrith reflects and strengthens the intent of Council's Strategic Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).

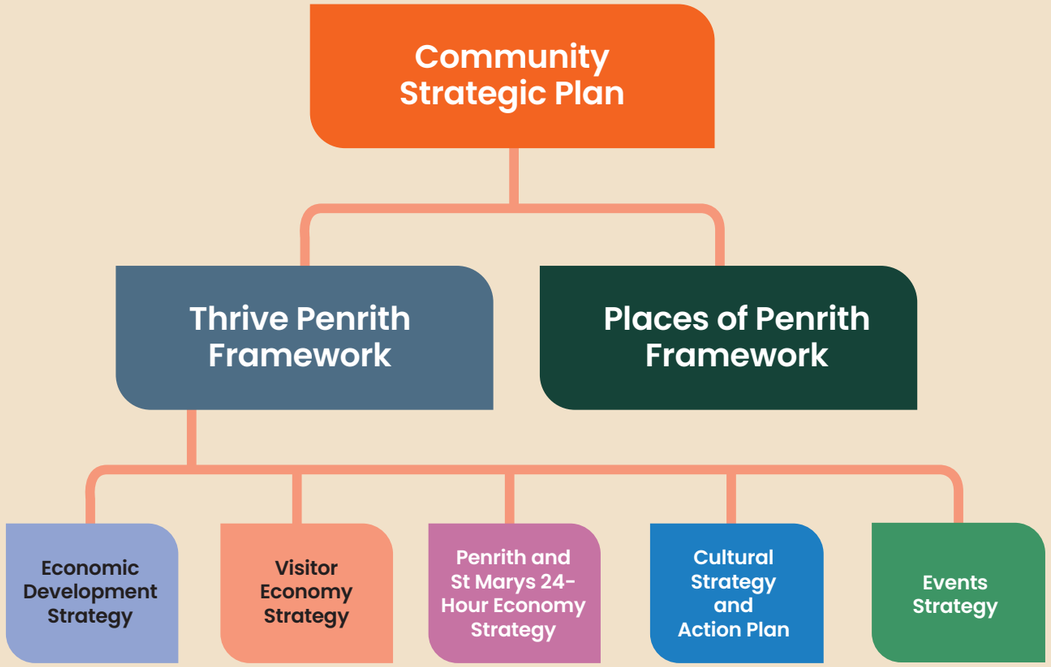
Council's Community Strategic Plan Penrith 2036+ identifies our community's future aspirations for the city. Based on a strong people and place led framework, it looks beyond the next 15 years. Penrith 2036+ sets out long-term community outcomes and strategies building future readiness.

'Thrive Penrith' is complemented by **'Places of Penrith'.**

Places of Penrith encompasses a suite of city-shaping strategies in line with the Planning Priorities outlined in the Penrith LSPS and the Western City District Plan. Places of Penrith is a strategic framework that will establish the vision and direction for our city, provide direction on areas of change, and create better places for our community to connect, play, learn, work and live. This Framework recognises and responds to the challenges and opportunities facing Penrith, and the need to balance growth with protecting the environment and preserving our cultural heritage.



Yandhai Nepean Crossing, Penrith



Council's role

The role of Penrith City Council is to coordinate a strategy and projects that will grow our 24-hour economy. These will be in line with the objectives, strategies and commitments of the NSW Government.

This Strategy has been developed as an initiative of Council. Council's role will be one of ongoing coordination, advocacy, support and delivery. Implementation will be in partnership with key stakeholders, local businesses and our community.



Woodriff Plaza, Penrith

4 What is the 24-hour economy?

When we talk about a 24-hour economy, the focus is on how we make our economy just as vibrant, productive and diverse in the night as it is throughout the day.

There are four distinct time periods that form part of the 24-hour economy (see adjacent diagram)[1].

This Strategy focuses on activities that take place as the traditional 'business day' ends which are the evening, night-time and late night economy between 6pm to 6am. This is made up of a broad range of industries. These include **'core businesses'** such as restaurants, cafes, pubs, bars, theatres, festivals, markets and live music; and **'non-core' or supporting businesses**, including transport, retail, service industries, educational establishments and gyms.

The aim of the OPEN: Penrith and St Marys 24-Hour Economy Strategy is to consider the particular needs of the city during each of these periods of the night in order to target actions to these time periods as necessary – **thereby taking a 24-hour approach.**

Day-Time Economy
6am to 6pm

Evening Economy
6pm to 9pm

Night-Time Economy
9pm to 2am

Late Night Economy
2am to 6am

[1] NSW Government, Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy (2020), 'What is a 24-hour Economy?'

Why develop a 24-hour economy strategy?

As the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA) continues to grow, so too does its 24-hour economy.

A robust 24-hour economy contributes to the LGA, creates a sense of place and strengthens community wellbeing.

This growth and transformation comes with enormous opportunities and challenges for our city's 24-hour economy and are key drivers in why the 2025-2029 Strategy has been developed.

One significant opportunity is the opening of Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, with first flights scheduled for 2026. Once operational, the new airport will drive day and night-time tourism across our centres and generate a significant demand for a local 24-hour workforce.

Connecting to Western Sydney International Airport is the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport railway line, with its first stop at St Marys.

With this significant and rapid change for St Marys, Council has developed the St Marys Town Centre Master Plan. The Master Plan is a long term vision to guide the development of St Marys over the next 20 years to manage the growth, while preserving the local character. The 24-hour economy plays a significant role in this long-term vision to create a vibrant and thriving town centre.

Other opportunities include State Government led programs such as the Uptown Accelerator Program, Purple Flag Accreditation Program and Special Entertainment Precincts, which provide other conduits for Council to drive this strategy and associated actions.

It is integral we understand and respond to the opportunities and challenges in developing the 24-hour economy to meet the needs of our local community and growing visitor population, particularly as precincts begin to establish and grow.

Our key drivers for developing this Strategy include:

- Activating our key centres
- Driving visitation and encouraging overnight visitation
- Driving economic activity in our centres
- Promoting investment
- Foster business innovation
- Planning our cities for the future
- Fostering community safety
- Increasing job creation across sectors
- Enhancing connectivity between precincts
- Foster cultural activity in our centres

Our city's 24-hour economy

The Penrith LGA is an emerging 24-hour economy that has seen significant recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2023, the Penrith LGA's core 24-hour economy experienced an increase in sales turnover and employment.

Penrith LGA's core 24-hour economy[2]

Measure	Change from 2022-23	% of total
714 establishments	+ 0%	4% of all businesses
Sales turnover of $571 million	+ 20%	2% of total sales turnover
Employees 4,195 people	+ 5%	6% of all employment

24-hour economy sub-sectors[2]

Penrith's core 24-hour economy is centred on a healthy and growing food culture, which exhibits strong signs of growth in both entertainment and beverage offerings.

Measure	Change from 2022-23	% of total core 24-hour economy
450 food businesses	+ 3%	63%
237 entertainment businesses	- 5%	33%
27 beverage businesses	+ 0%	4%

Vibrancy reforms

As part of the NSW Government's commitment to the 24-hour economy, a range of vibrancy reforms have been introduced to boost NSW's night economy, benefiting live music, dining, and creative sectors and workers, and bringing vibrancy back to NSW's night-time economy and community[3].

The first round of vibrancy reforms were passed through NSW Parliament in November 2023 and include the following six areas of change:

1. Sensible venue sound management and incentives for live entertainment
2. Vibrant, coordinated precincts
3. An activated outdoors including dining and street festivals
4. Empowering the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner to deliver a sustainable, thriving night-time economy
5. Streamlined contemporary licensing
6. Improving the night-time sector for workers



Hospitality worker in Penrith

[2] Core 24-hour economy industries include food and beverage and entertainment
[3] Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner



St Marys Lights Up event, St Marys 2023

5 Building the Strategy

A collaborative approach

Council consulted with our community, our City Centre Corporations, local businesses, industry, government agencies and key stakeholders to prepare this Strategy and Action Plan to unlock potential opportunities and respond to future challenges. Over 30 organisations and 1,400 community members shared their insights, knowledge and aspirations for Penrith and St Marys through knowledge consultation, conversation, workshops, interviews and business visits.

During these conversations, we were told that our community values a diversity of different experiences when they go out, including events, activities and diverse businesses that cater to a wide audience. There was a recognition of the role of Council in setting a vision for 24-hour economy precincts across the centres, and the necessary conditions to enable growth and investment.

Stakeholders recognised the importance of city-shaping infrastructure such as the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport and Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport as catalysts for transformation in the St Marys Town Centre.

Community consultation activities

Pop-up engagements and YourSay survey

- 1,448 respondents
- Survey: 342 respondents
- Pop-up engagements: 1,148 respondents

Workshop and forums with businesses in the city centres and precincts

- Workshop: 26 business participants in hospitality and retail
- Business Forum: 65 business participants in hospitality, retail, entertainment, property and development (NSW Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner engaged in the business forum)

Dedicated workshops and briefing sessions with key local stakeholders

- Penrith CBD Corporation
- St Marys Town Centre Corporation
- Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Penrith Performing & Visual Arts

Stakeholder interviews

- Penrith CBD Corporation
- St Marys Town Centre Corporation
- Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Penrith Performing & Visual Arts
- Access Committee
- Multicultural Working Party

What we heard

Community and business feedback captured through the preparation of this Strategy has identified several key priorities for both the Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre. These barriers and challenges reflect the unique nature of both centres and their differing maturity levels.

Common barriers and challenges reported across both centres include:

Perceptions of safety

Perceptions of safety is a recurring challenge and provides a significant barrier to access across both centres. Despite a number of recent physical improvements and lighting upgrades, more interventions are needed to connect precincts together and facilitate safe passage within our centres. Safety is a top priority for community and businesses after dark.

Limited business mix and activity

While there is a hospitality offering in High, Woodriff and Riley streets which continues to grow and innovate, Penrith City Centre lacks the business mix that complement this offering to encourage long dwell times. In St Marys, the business mix is limited to largely takeaway restaurants and convenience retailing.

Activity drop-off

A limited offering translates to activity drop-off, particularly during the night-time and late night economy where only a select handful of businesses in the centres are open.

Public transport connectivity

Both precincts have barriers in their connectivity via public transport to our residential centres and beyond. Both centres have limited bus services to nearby neighbourhoods and are infrequently serviced by rail at night. This drives consumer sentiment that Penrith and St Marys can be challenging to access at night for those without a car.

Limited spaces to connect and socialise

Both Penrith and St Marys have limited open public space within close proximity to areas of late night activity. Activated, safe and vibrant open public spaces provide community benefits to foster social connections and opportunities to socialise.

Marketing and branding

Significant marketing and branding are required to support the establishment of a 24-hour economy in both centres and drive visitation.

There are also a number of 'needs' specific to each Centre and opportunities identified to help address these.

Penrith City Centre

Need	Opportunity
Performance and creativity outlets Encourage live performances and cultural offerings in the city centre	• Promotion of street performance as an activation in the city centre • Working with local businesses to promote small-scale cultural activity within venues
Proactive management As the 24-hour economy in Penrith continues to grow, active management will be required including street cleansing and sound management	• Collaboration with Penrith CBD Corporation, local businesses and key stakeholders on management strategies for the city centre as it grows
Connectivity between precincts Clusters of activity in the City Centre are spread out and not well connected	• Placemaking interventions that support legible and active movement corridors across the centre
Awareness The 24-hour offering of the Penrith City Centre is increasingly well known locally, but less so outside of the region	• Working collaboratively to amplify awareness of the city centre's compelling offering beyond our residents through marketing and branding campaigns

St Marys Town Centre

Need	Opportunity
Clustered precinct The current offerings in St Marys are too spread out to be walked easily. Definitive precincts and clustering businesses within these precincts is essential	• Work with the St Marys Town Centre Corporation, property owners and real estate agents to encourage new businesses to establish in dormant areas
Residential catchment Urban renewal, and by default new residents, are needed to grow the residential catchment	• Work with Council's Development Services team leveraging on Council's St Marys Town Centre Master Plan
More opportunities to stay and dwell The current public domain is not considered attractive to stay and dwell in St Marys at night	• Working with local businesses to expand outdoor dining opportunities along Queen Street
Perception as a destination The perception of St Marys as a late night destination requires attention with more marketing required	• Sharing stories and consumer information about St Marys businesses open at night

A place-based approach

Placemaking is an important tool in building connections between people and places, creating personal attachment and fostering a sense of identity.

Placemaking is a key driver in the creation of vibrant places and is a critical tool in establishing our 24-hour economy. An investment in the assets that connect people to places is essential to support safe, quality and attractive places that then builds attachment, increases dwell time and increases spend and revisitation.

Placemaking can be broken down into three main categories:



St Marys Lights Up event, St Marys 2022

Physical

Tangible interventions that are used to visually enhance public spaces. They can be small, tactical interventions such as creative lighting and seating or more structured interventions such as public domain master planning.

Strategic

The overarching framework and guiding principles that underpin placemaking. These are specific to each locality and aim to create and cultivate quality places.

Creative

Temporary initiatives including events, activations, art installations and interactive displays that engage community and bring people together to build connections.

Each of these tools are instrumental in building a strong 24-hour economy and are considered in tandem with each other to cultivate thriving night-time precincts.

6 Measuring 24-Hour Precincts

This Strategy recognises the unique characteristics of Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre and the differing stages of development of their 24-hour economies.

Penrith City Centre has a number of smaller sub-precincts of late trading activity across the City Centre, while the St Marys Town Centre is currently establishing its 24-hour business mix.

Understanding the current stage of development of each centre is important to best understand what is needed to support their respective growth over the coming years. The classifications are split by the level of intervention needed by Council to help encourage the growth of the 24-hour economy across both respective centres.

Stages of development

Stage 1: Emerging

Council intervention is required for accelerated short-term growth

- A small number of **3-4 businesses open past 6pm**
- Businesses **close before the 'night time'** at around 9-10pm
- Only draws in a **local crowd**
- Often the **same land use** such as restaurants



Stage 2: Growing

Council intervention is required for accelerated short-term growth

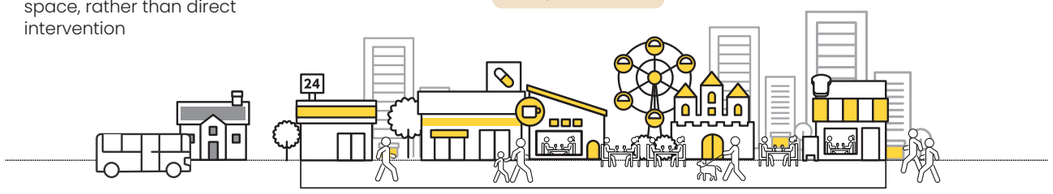
- A collection of **more than 9 businesses open past 6pm**
- **Limited diversity,** such as restaurants, pharmacy etc
- Majority still **close at 9pm**
- Only draws in a local crowd, but with **a noticeably livelier presence in the public domain**



Stage 3: Established

Council's role is to support and manage the space, rather than direct intervention

- A large group of **over 20 businesses open at night**
- **Noticeably diverse,** or a high concentration of one type of business (e.g. Eat Street)
- **Most businesses open to at least 10pm,** with multiple open to midnight
- Draws in **visitors from across the region**



For precincts in the Emerging and Growing phase, direct intervention by Council and other stakeholders is likely needed to ensure the precinct maintains and improves its liveliness and ambience. This can be through interventions such as activations, providing grants and implementing certain planning controls.

As a precinct matures into the Established and Destination phase, Council's role changes from not only providing interventions, but by directly managing the space. This is often through supporting businesses by monitoring issues and providing waste and cleansing, safety, public transport provision and sound management.

7 Penrith's Neon Grid

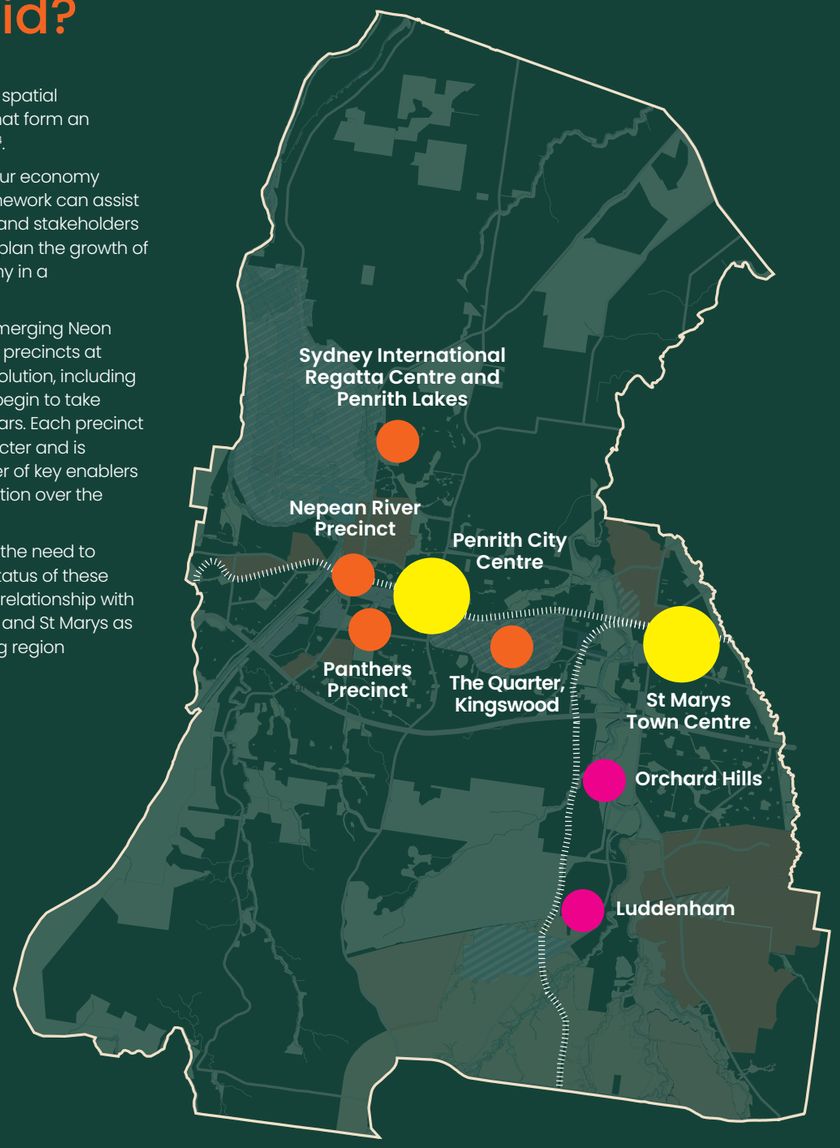
What is a Neon Grid?

A 'Neon Grid' refers to the spatial framework of precincts that form an area's 24-hour economy[4].

Understanding the 24-hour economy through a Neon Grid framework can assist government, businesses and stakeholders to map, benchmark and plan the growth of Penrith's 24-hour economy in a holistic manner.

The Penrith LGA has an emerging Neon Grid, with a mix of diverse precincts at varying stages of their evolution, including future precincts that will begin to take shape over the next 10 years. Each precinct has its own unique character and is underpinned by a number of key enablers that will shape their evolution over the coming years.

Central to this Strategy is the need to understand the current status of these precincts, as well as their relationship with the key centres of Penrith and St Marys as part of a broader, growing region of activity.



[4] NSW Government, Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy (2020)

Neon Grid precincts:

Precinct	Precinct type	Neon Grid enablers	
Penrith City Centre	Growing	• Connections to Parramatta and Sydney CBD via T1 Western Line • Proximity to future Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport • Future population growth	
St Marys Town Centre	Emerging	• Connections to Parramatta and Sydney CBD via T1 Western Line • Connections to Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport from St Marys via Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport (2026) • Rapid-transit connections north-south via Sydney Metro • Future population growth • Proximity to existing and emerging 24-hour industrial uses	
The Quarter, Kingswood	Emerging	• Nepean Hospital re-development and The Quarter Medical Research Precinct • Proximity to Western Sydney University – Werrington Campus • Future population growth	
Sydney International Regatta Centre and Penrith Lakes	Emerging	• Proximity to existing and emerging 24-hour industrial uses	
Panthers Precinct	Growing	• Penrith Stadium re-development • Improved future transportation connections via Mulgoa Road • Future population growth	
Nepean River Precinct	Growing	• Future hospitality offering • Improved future transportation connections via Mulgoa Road	
Orchard Hills and Luddenham	Emerging (future)	• Rapid-transit connections north-south via Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport • Future population growth	

8 Penrith City Centre



High Street, Penrith

The Penrith City Centre is a **growing** 24-hour economy precinct.

The City Centre has a number of identified sub-precincts with distinct physical attributes, public spaces and business mixes that cater towards different demographics of locals and visitors.

Our vision for the Penrith City Centre

Penrith City Centre will be well placed to grow its existing late night economy and position itself as the night-time destination of choice in Western Sydney.

Current profile of Penrith City Centre:

Penrith City Centre

	Description	Current State	Desired State
Day-Time Economy 6am to 6pm	Penrith is a recognised destination for retail, services and hospitality within Western Sydney and as a service centre for the Blue Mountains and Central West.	Established	Established
Evening Economy 6pm to 9pm	Penrith has a growing evening economy with a focus on hospitality and leisure offerings. Primary activity clusters are in the High Street, Woodriff Plaza, Riley Eat Street, and Cultural and Civic precincts.	Growing	Established
We are here			
Night-Time Economy 9pm to 2am	Penrith's night-time economy offering is emerging, with numerous venues open past 9pm particularly in the High Street and Woodriff Plaza precinct.	Emerging	Growing
Late Night Economy 2am to 6am	There are few businesses open across the Penrith City Centre during this time.	Emerging	Growing



High Street and Woodriff Plaza

Status: Growing

As the High Street and Woodriff Plaza precincts intersect, it has an increasingly lively late night economy.

The Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner's Uptown Grant Program has amplified opportunities for High Street and Woodriff Plaza as the future economic corridor for late-night entertainment in the heart of Western Sydney. Through this program, Penrith's business collective have formed the Valley Entertainment Precinct to amplify Penrith's High Street and Woodriff Plaza precincts into vibrant going-out hubs in the heart of the Penrith City Centre.

There are proportionately high levels of participation within these precincts with 24 out of 42 businesses contributing to the night-time economy, however there is limited diversity in the offering with the majority of businesses being restaurants.

The High Street and Woodriff Plaza precincts each have unique characteristics.

High Street Precinct

Public domain upgrades to parts of High Street have created a highly walkable precinct with a diversity of stores and businesses. An increasing number of businesses are opening later with late night businesses primarily being restaurants. Several arcades connect the rear car parks to High Street, while the urban renewal of Union Lane has helped to breathe new life into the precinct, attracting a consistent crowd.

Woodriff Plaza Precinct

Characterised by two clusters of activity along Woodriff Street and to the rear of Henry Street, a number of popular restaurants and trendy bars have moved into the locality. Memory Mall arcade adjoins the sub-precinct, however, does not have any late night businesses operating within it. Memory Park also sits within the sub-precinct and is largely used as a space for passive daytime recreation and select night-time events and activations.



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• High Street public domain upgrades • Judges Place Car Park and Union Lane • Local high-rise development	• Established main street with numerous existing businesses unlikely to consider opening later • While walkable, the length of the precinct may seem daunting to visitors	• Improved wayfinding and connection between High Street and Union Lane • Ongoing place branding • Lighting and public art projects • Extension of High Street public domain upgrades



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• High Street public domain upgrades • Woodriff Lane creative lighting project • Memory Park streetscape upgrades	• Vehicle intersection (Woodriff Street and High Street) may make outdoor use towards High Street undesirable • Separation of clusters by Allen Place car park • Internal arcades of Memory Mall are undesirable late night offerings and have potential safety issues	• Continue to build the growing cluster of activity to the rear of Henry Street • Activations within Woodriff Lane, Allen Place car park and City Park to connect Woodriff Street and Henry Street • Supporting local businesses to grow their venue offerings • Encourage late night diversification and extended operating hours • Lighting and public art projects

Triangle Park

Status: Emerging

Centrally located on the spine of activity in the Penrith City Centre, the Triangle Park sub-precinct benefits from a wider pedestrianised section of High Street and a public plaza with an in-built stage and seating. The sub-precinct includes a range of local and unique food and beverage offerings with outdoor dining.

There are proportionately low levels of participation within the precinct with only 11 out of 43 businesses contributing to the night-time economy. There is also limited diversity in the offering within the precinct with only five of the 11 businesses being restaurants.



Summer Nights event, Triangle Park, Penrith 2021



Riley Street dining options, Penrith

Riley Eat Street

Status: Growing

The well-established and vibrant Riley Eat Street precinct is a highly pedestrianised road which connects the west and east of Westfield Shopping Centre and adjoins Penrith Station to the south. The precinct consists entirely of restaurants and cafes which are open until 10pm most nights of the week. These premises benefit from the significant patronage of the Westfield Shopping Centre and proximity to Penrith Station.

There are proportionately high levels of participation within the precinct, however with all businesses being restaurants or cafes, this provides a low diversity of business offering.

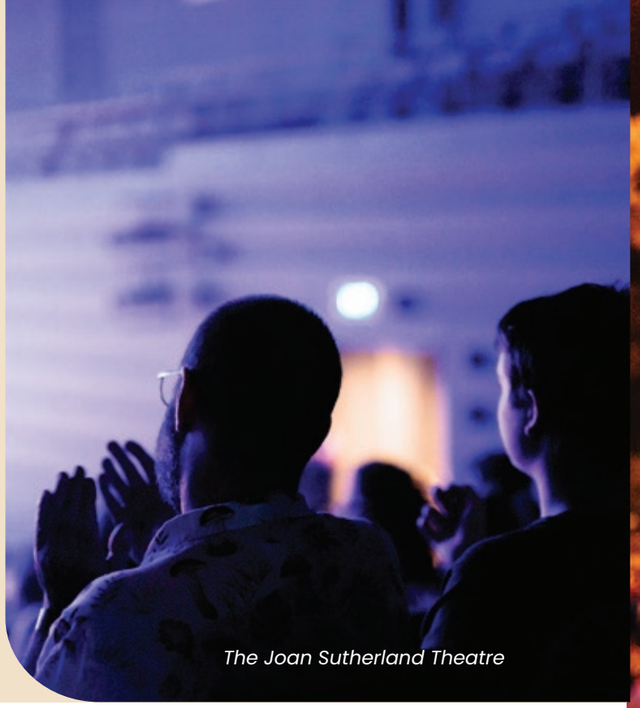
Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• Triangle Park upgrades with seating, stage and amenity • High Street public domain upgrades	• Very low levels of businesses open at night with the small number of late night businesses closing by 10pm • Restaurants are fairly dispersed within the precinct • High levels of professional and service-based retail offerings which close by 5pm	• Activations within Triangle Park • Lighting and public art projects • Diversification of night-time offerings • Cultural programming

Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• Westfield upgrades	• Limited opportunities for further expansion of restaurants along Riley Street • Higher rents in comparison to High Street	• Further collaboration with Westfield for activation within pedestrianised spaces • Lighting and public art projects • Future proposed development in Westfield

Cultural and Civic

Status: Emerging

The Penrith City Centre benefits from significant cultural and civic assets adjoining the Westfield Shopping Centre. These assets, including The Joan Sutherland Theatre (The Joan) and Penrith City Library, have the capacity to bring people into the city and create activity which can spill over into different parts of the city. The Joan provides modern performing arts facilities with a concert hall, drama theatre and performance studios, generating significant capacity for visitation and hosts an extensive calendar of events throughout the year.



The Joan Sutherland Theatre



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• Public domain upgrades to The Mondo (civic plaza)	• Located on the edge of the City Centre • Reliant on events at The Joan to create night-time activity • Poor pedestrian connections • Poor interface between The Mondo and Westfield Shopping Centre	• Activations within The Mondo • Lighting and public art projects • Signage upgrades

Open Streets event, Woodriff Street, Penrith 2023

9 St Marys Town Centre



Queen Street, St Marys

The St Marys Town Centre is an **emerging** 24-hour economy precinct.

Sub-precincts have been established within the St Marys Master Plan, helping to leverage the centre's night-time potential, with primary business conducted in the heart of the Town Centre. The mix of businesses cater towards different demographics of locals and visitors. The majority of St Marys' night-time activity will likely occur within the corridor to the south of St Marys Station.

Our vision for the St Marys Town Centre

St Marys Town Centre will begin to develop from an early evening to late night economy with an evolving hospitality and service offering. Council's St Marys Town Centre Master Plan plays a significant role in the evolving 24-hour economy to create a vibrant and thriving town centre.

Current profile of St Marys Town Centre:

St Marys Town Centre

	Description	Current State	Desired State
Day-Time Economy 6am to 6pm	St Marys is a growing service centre with a variety of retail, hospitality and everyday services in a convenient location, meeting the needs of local residents.	Growing	Destination
Evening Economy 6pm to 9pm **We are here**	St Marys has a growing evening economy through a selection of hospitality businesses.	Growing	Established
Night-Time Economy 9pm to 2am	St Marys has an emerging night-time economy with the majority of businesses in the precinct closed by 9pm.	Emerging	Growing
Late Night Economy 2am to 6am	There are a very small number of businesses open in St Marys between these hours.	Emerging	Emerging



Arrival and Departures

Status: Emerging

With the impending arrival of the 24-hour Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, and new Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport, St Marys Station will be a 24/7 precinct that achieves a one-centre approach. It delivers a transport interchange that enhances local and regional public transport access and connectivity to St Marys and creates transformational change within the precinct.



St Marys Train Station


Queen Street, St Marys

Commercial Core

Status: Emerging

A vibrant day and night commercial hub that integrates employment, retail, hospitality and professional services with efficient transport connections making it a key destination for business and leisure activity. This precinct will act as a primary late night destination providing food and drink options for workers, whilst also maintaining 24-hour businesses for shift workers coming to and from the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• St Marys Metro – Western Sydney Airport construction including the station forecourt (to open 2026)	• Anti-social behaviour concentrated in and around the existing train station precinct	• New wayfinding and connection • Lighting and public art projects • Increased active and passive surveillance • Potential activation of underutilised and vacant shopfronts and buildings



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• Public domain upgrades to Queen Street	• Reported damage to properties to the South of the station • Limited night-time offering and diversity	• Preserve and enhance ground level retail activity, including businesses associated with the night-time economy • Lighting and public art projects • Clustering of night-time venues along Queen Street and to the station

Town Centre Core

Status: Emerging

The Town Centre Core is the heart of St Marys Town Centre and contains the following sub-precincts.

Entertainment and Eat Street Living

An authentic mixed-use precinct offering places to live, work, shop, dine and gather in the core of the Town Centre.

Green Spine Living

A pedestrian and cyclist focused green spine that enhances connectivity between the Town Centre Core and adjacent South Creek Park flanked by well-designed low to mid-rise apartments.

Civic Heart

The central gathering place for the St Marys community featuring a new Central Park and future community hub with high quality, flexible and multi-purpose spaces amongst mixed-use development.



Completed Improvements	Challenges	Opportunities
• Public domain upgrades to Queen Street • St Marys Central Park Project (due to open 2026)	• Unless late night businesses and activities are clustered, the precinct could feel empty • Limited night-time offering and diversity • Perceptions of safety when accessing rear car parks at night	• Potential future community hub • Improved walkability and permeability between sub-precincts via public domain upgrades • Lighting and public art projects • Cluster night-time businesses and activities down Queen Street and to the station • Enable a diverse Eat Street through ground floor retail activations and creation of intimate spaces in laneways • Promote creative industries (makerspaces, artist studios), commercial office spaces, restaurants and food retail industries and community services supported by residential uses



Queen Street, St Marys

10 Our Strategic Framework



St Marys Lights Up event, St Marys 2023

The six strategic priorities of this Strategy focus the attention of Council and its strategic partners to foster a safe, diverse and vibrant 24-hour economy across Penrith and St Marys.

As they complement each other, these should be read in conjunction with the priorities and actions outlined in Council's other Thrive Penrith strategies, including the Penrith Economic Development Strategy 2023-2031, Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2030, Cultural Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2031 and forthcoming Events Strategy 2025-2030.

Our Vision

Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre will be safe, vibrant and diverse 24-hour precincts that meet the current and emerging needs of our local communities and visitors.

Penrith City Centre will be well placed to grow its existing late night economy and position itself as the night-time destination of choice in Western Sydney.

St Marys Town Centre will begin to develop from an early evening to late night economy with an evolving hospitality and service offering.



Winter Solstice event, City Park, Penrith 2025

Penrith and St Marys 24-Hour Economy Strategy Objectives

These objectives have been established to guide the development of the Penrith and St Marys 24-Hour Economy Strategy, and to assist in measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of this plan.

The six objectives are:

- Penrith and St Marys are attractive, activated night-time centres with diverse activity precincts
- Penrith and St Marys are forward planned to accommodate active night-time economies now and into the future
- Our local businesses are engaged with Council and our City Centre Corporations to drive positive growth in our 24-hour economy
- Penrith and St Marys are sought after 24-hour economy destinations for investment and visitation
- Our 24-hour economy precincts are connected and easy for all to access
- Council is a trusted voice and advocate for developing the 24-hour economy

Strategic Priorities and Actions

The following six priorities and associated actions intend to meet the growing and emerging needs of the Penrith and St Marys' 24-hour economies over the next five years. Council's role will be one of two:

- **Deliver:** The primary driver of change and lead agency in the delivery of actions. These actions will be funded from existing resources where available or external funding opportunities identified.
- **Collaborate:** Working, supporting and partnering with a variety of stakeholders to enable the delivery of actions and elevate the needs of our stakeholders by using our platform and relationships with external bodies including government and industry.

There are a number of projects that are currently outside the resources available for delivery with no known or committed funding source. These projects are shaded in blue in the following tables of each strategic priority. These projects will be considered for delivery should funding become available through future grants or other opportunities.



Open Streets event, Woodriff Street, Penrith 2022

Strategic Priority 1

FACILITATING VIBRANT PRECINCTS

Objective:

Penrith and St Marys are attractive, activated night-time centres of diverse activity.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
1.1.	Investigate placemaking interventions that enhance connections between activity areas within the Penrith City Centre	Deliver	Medium
1.2	Investigate placemaking interventions that enhance connections between activity areas within the St Marys Town Centre	Deliver	Medium
1.3	Conduct periodic studies of movement within the Penrith and St Marys night-time centres to drive data centred decisions for placemaking and track increased vibrancy over time	Deliver	Medium
1.4	Identify opportunities to expand the availability of outdoor dining throughout the centres to support business activation of the public domain	Deliver	Short
1.5	Continue to develop and deliver a night-time events and activation program within the Centres	Deliver	Ongoing
1.6	Encourage street performance within the Centres at night	Deliver	Ongoing
1.7	Work with stakeholders to elevate the live music scene within the Penrith LGA	Collaborate	Short

Placemaking Interventions

Placemaking interventions can be defined as either physical or creative.

Physical interventions can be used to visually enhance public spaces including creative lighting, wayfinding and seating, or more structured interventions such as public domain master planning.

Creative interventions can include events, activations, art installations and interactive displays that engage community and bring people together to build connections.

Night-Time Live Performance Partnerships Program

Penrith City Council trialled a Night-Time Live Performance Partnerships Program in June 2025 in the Penrith City Centre. The program provided opportunities for live music in venues and public spaces to create a sense of vibrancy through cultural and performance offerings across our city during the night time.

Council worked together with local musicians and matched them with hospitality businesses to provide access to live music and encourage restaurants to open late at night. Additionally, Council worked with property owners to keep arcades open and activate the thoroughfare with live performances. This provided a sense of safety and vibrancy as people walked through the City Centre at night time.



Penrith Producers event, Triangle Park, Penrith 2023



Restaurant on Riley Eat Street, Penrith

Strategic Priority 2

COORDINATED PLANNING FOR FUTURE 24-HOUR PRECINCTS

Objective:

Our city is forward planned to accommodate active 24-hour economies now and into the future.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
2.1.	Identify suitable 24-hour economy precincts as part of the master planning process for the Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre	Deliver	Short to Long
2.2	Explore the development of precinct-specific controls that support diverse 24-hour activity precincts across the Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre	Deliver	Medium
2.3	Work with the NSW Government to investigate potential areas within the Penrith LGA that could qualify as a Special Entertainment Precinct	Collaborate	Medium
2.4	Work with the NSW Government to investigate potential areas within the Penrith LGA that could qualify as a Purple Flag Accredited District	Collaborate	Medium to Long
2.5	Explore the addition of a night-time activity clause on Section 10.7 (5) property certificate notifying new residents of their proximity to existing and planned night-time economy precincts	Deliver	Medium
2.6	Proactively plan for areas of 24-hour activity as part of newly formed communities across the Penrith LGA	Deliver	Ongoing

Special Entertainment Precincts

A special entertainment precinct can be a venue, street or area where councils set and manage amplified music levels through a sound management plan. Councils can create a precinct by amending their planning controls in the Local Environmental Plan. This lets councils set localised noise criteria and compliance procedures for licensed venues[5].

A Special Entertainment Precinct has been successfully trialled in Enmore Road, Enmore within the Inner West Local Government Area.

As part of the implementation of this Strategy, Council will seek to engage stakeholders to identify appropriate areas for the potential application of a Special Entertainment Precinct.

Purple Flag Accreditation

Purple Flag is an internationally recognised marker of excellence in nightlife, demonstrated by the precinct adhering to the program's core principles:

- **Wellbeing** – welcoming, clean and safe
- **Movement** – a secure pattern of arrival, circulation and departure
- **Appeal** – a vibrant choice and rich mix of entertainment and activity
- **Place** – a stimulating destination and vibrant place
- **Strategic Alignment** – a clear aim and a common purpose

Purple Flag was launched by the NSW Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner in 2023. There are currently four Purple Flag Accredited Districts in New South Wales – the YCK (York, Clarence and Kent Streets) precinct in the Sydney CBD, Parramatta Central Business District, Haldon Street in Lakemba, and Illawarra and Marrickville Roads in Marrickville.[6]

Through the implementation of this Strategy, Council will seek to engage stakeholders to gauge interest in pursuing Purple Flag Accreditation for a precinct/s in the Penrith LGA.

[5] Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Special Entertainment Precincts
[6] Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner



Night-Time Live Performance Partnerships Program, Penrith 2025

Strategic Priority 3

FOSTERING STRONG COLLABORATION

Objective:

Our local businesses are engaged with Council and our City Centre Corporations to drive positive growth in our 24-hour economy.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
3.1.	Explore opportunities to provide support to local businesses to trial new concepts and ideas that diversify and enhance the 24-hour economy	Deliver	Ongoing
3.2	Work collaboratively with local businesses to build capacity to incorporate cultural programming within venues	Collaborate	Ongoing
3.3	Provide opportunities for interested businesses to meet and collaborate on 24-hour economy initiatives	Collaborate	Ongoing

Case Study: City of Parramatta Night-Time Economy Diversification Grants

City of Parramatta Council launched the Night-Time Economy Diversification Grants in 2019 to support Council's vision of the city as a thriving 24-hour destination. Local businesses and cultural and community organisations have been awarded grants of up to $10,000 to support in delivering programs and events that diversify the City of Parramatta's night-time offerings.

Working alongside Council, grant recipients have been able to program distinct cultural and performance activities across the Parramatta Local Government Area to trial new and innovative concepts.



Real Festival event, Penrith 2023

Strategic Priority 4

AMPLIFYING PENRITH AND ST MARYS' REPUTATION AS A DESTINATION

Objective:

Penrith and St Marys are sought after 24-hour economy destinations for investment and visitation.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
4.1.	Work collaboratively with local hospitality venues and accommodation providers to market and promote the city's 24-hour economy	Collaborate	Ongoing
4.2	Investigate Council-owned facilities and services that could support extended operating hours	Deliver	Medium to Long
4.3	Explore opportunities to maximise activation of the Penrith City Centre following the re-development of Penrith Stadium	Collaborate	Medium to Long
4.4	Identify opportunities to support night-time events through Council's event sponsorship program	Deliver	Ongoing

The Valley Entertainment Precinct

Driven by local businesses, the Valley Entertainment Precinct shows the power of business collectives building a 24-hour economy precinct in the Penrith City Centre. Launched in 2025, local pioneers are amplifying Penrith's reputation as a destination for entertainment in the heart of Western Sydney[7].

The Valley Entertainment Precinct captures the heart of the Penrith City Centre, promoting the many offerings across High Street and Woodriff Plaza, highlighting the bars, dining and entertainment from this micro-precinct.

Initiatives such as the Uptown Grant Program by the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner have fostered opportunities to fast-track growth in precincts into vibrant going-out hubs, led by local business communities[8].

[7] The Valley Entertainment Precinct
[8] Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner



High Street, Penrith

Strategic Priority 5

CONNECTING PENRITH'S NEON GRID

Objective:

Our 24-hour economy precincts are connected and easy for all to access.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
5.1.	Investigate lighting interventions within the Penrith and St Marys Centres that improve safe connections between precincts in the centres	Deliver	Ongoing
5.2	Work with the NSW Government and other stakeholders to enhance point to point connectivity across the Penrith LGA	Collaborate	Ongoing
5.3	Investigate the need for dedicated taxi ranks and rideshare pick up zones in the centres	Collaborate	Short to Long

Case Study: Secure Taxi Ranks

Secure taxi ranks form a key part of a safer late night transport network, with security onsite to support those getting home from a night out. Secure taxi ranks can be seen across Greater Sydney, in centres such as the Sydney CBD, Parramatta, Newtown, Sutherland, Manly, Cronulla, Coogee, Kings Cross and Hornsby.

There is one operational secure taxi rank in the Penrith City Centre on Belmore Street, outside Penrith Station, operational from 10:30pm to 5am, Fridays and Saturdays.

Feedback from stakeholders has identified the need to investigate additional secure taxi ranks and other point to point connections between our centres and neighbourhoods later at night.

As part of the implementation of this Strategy, Council will work with stakeholders to identify appropriate areas for taxi ranks and rideshare pick-ups close to activity, for visitors to get to and from our centres safely and more efficiently.



St Marys Lights Up event, St Marys 2023

Strategic Priority 6

A LEADING 24-HOUR ECONOMY

Objective:

Council is a trusted voice and advocate for developing the 24-hour economy.

NO.	ACTIONS	COUNCIL'S ROLE	TIMEFRAME
6.1.	Collaborate with stakeholders to work to change the narrative and perception of the 24-hour economy in Western Sydney	Collaborate	Ongoing
6.2	Maintain and expand Penrith's leadership role in the 24-hour economy through continued participation in peak forums	Collaborate	Ongoing
6.3	Identify strategic opportunities to work with the NSW Government on 24-hour economy initiatives	Collaborate	Ongoing

NSW Night-Time Economy Councils Committee

Penrith City Council is a member of the NSW Night-Time Economy Councils Committee, which was formed in 2016 as a mechanism for collaboration, knowledge sharing, advocacy and capacity building.

The Committee works to enhance the collective voice and capability of local government to respond to new challenges and opportunities in developing the 24-hour economy and advocate on behalf of Councils to the NSW Government on matters of joint importance, such as regulatory and planning reform.



Open Streets event, Woodriff Street, Penrith 2023

11 Measuring our Success

The success of the Penrith and St Marys 24-hour Economy Strategy will be measured through aggregated 24-hour economy data, turnover, establishment and jobs growth and annual reporting of the implementation of actions outlined in this plan. Additional measures to capture place health and movement will be developed as part of the execution of the Strategy.

CURRENT INDICATORS	2016	2023	2031 (5% annualised growth target)
Core 24-hour economic turnover	$434M	$571M	$640M
Core 24-hour establishments	502	714	801
Core 24-hour jobs	3,605	4,195	4,721

Sources: Measuring the Australian Night-Time Economy (Ingenium Research), Tourism Research Australia, REMPLAN and economy.ID

FUTURE INDICATORS	
Place Health Measures (to be identified)	A baseline to be established in FY 26
Movement Measures (to be identified)	A baseline to be established in FY 26

Summer Nights event, Triangle Park, Penrith 2021



Real Festival event, Penrith 2023

12 Conclusion

OPEN: Penrith and St Marys 24-hour Economy Strategy 2025 – 2029 sets out a plan to build safe, diverse and vibrant 24-hour precincts across the Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre. Consultation with key stakeholders, site audits and macro-economic data revealed both challenges and opportunities for the 24-hour economy in a post-COVID world.

Council will work with our partners across the 24-hour economy – local operators and businesses, our City Centre Corporations, Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce, government, investors and our community to achieve this goal.

The 24-hour offering of the Penrith LGA is growing strongly as new businesses continue to be attracted to our area. Penrith and St Marys are at different stages of growth in their 24-hour economies, which requires different approaches that are place specific.

With increased focus on the development of the 24-hour economy from the NSW Government, there is strong opportunity for Penrith and St Marys to leverage on the benefits of this forward momentum.

Progress will be reported annually with a review of the Strategy in early 2029, which will assess the impacts of the opening of the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport and Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport and the anticipated visitor mix across both centres.



ROAM Festival event, Penrith 2022



Winter Solstice event, City Park, Penrith 2025

There's never been a more exciting time to be in Penrith.
Talk to us about building the 24-hour economy together.

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

Economy and Marketing Team

Civic Centre
601 High Street
Penrith NSW

Phone: 02 4732 7777
Email: thrive@penrith.city

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

investpenrith.com.au