



Welcome to the Northern Beaches

New business toolkit



northern
beaches
council

2 Welcome to the Northern Beaches

Congratulations on your decision to open or expand your business on the Northern Beaches! We know that people choose to run businesses on the Beaches for various reasons - whether they are seeking work/life balance, seeing an opportunity, or creating a new industry. Many business owners want to reflect our local community values and support our environment, while running their business here.

This toolkit details how Northern Beaches Council is here to guide you through getting your business up and running, as well as continuing to grow and thrive as part of the local vibrant economy. It contains information and links to relevant information you will need if you are running an established business, or just about to set up in our local area.

We would like to share some insights on local economic conditions and introduce you to key contacts and resources available within and outside of Council, to help you on your journey. If you need to talk to us about anything that is not covered, please contact Council and we will do our best to help you.

Key connections

Place & Economic Development Team - places@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

or call 1300 434 434

northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au



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to the monthly
Business Newsletter



The Northern Beaches is an extraordinary part of Sydney offering world-class beach and bushland experiences, with vibrant villages that reflect our contemporary coastal lifestyle, yet few realise the rich and diverse economic opportunities on offer.


Over the past 10 years, the Northern Beaches economy has maintained a steady average growth rate of 2% per annum. The unemployment rate has been consistently lower than the Sydney average; in December 2023 it was 1.8% compared to 3.7% for Greater Sydney. The sectors that contain the highest number of local jobs are: health care and social assistance, retail trade, professional, scientific and technical services, and construction.


Manufacturing and wholesale trade are responsible for half of our exports (33% and 18% respectively). Manufacturing output valued at \$3,915 million, is the second largest contributor to our Gross Regional Product (GRP), after “Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services”.


Approximately 33,000 businesses on the Northern Beaches equates to nearly one business for every three local jobs or one business for every four resident workers. There’s a high proportion of business owners among the resident workforce, and 60% of local businesses are sole traders and 30% are small businesses employing fewer than five staff.


In the recent Census, 6.1% of the workforce were working from home and were owners or managers, compared to 2.5% for Greater Sydney. The most common industry was professional, scientific and technical services (37%). The largest number of home-based businesses were in Warriewood, Mona Vale, Manly, Fairlight, Frenchs Forest and Brookvale.

Find out more about the Northern Beaches economic and community statistics at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

 Businesses 2022/2023	32,905
Professional, technical and scientific	21.6%
Construction	17.4%
Rental, hiring & real estate services	11.6%
Health care, & social assistance	6%

 Jobs 2022/2023	116,671
Health care, & social assistance	15.2%
Construction	13.6%
Retail trade	12.1%
Professional, scientific & technical services	10.4%

 Visitors 2022/2023	2,796,035
Domestic day trippers	2,323,233
Domestic overnight	472,803

 Spending (2023)	\$8.516B
Resident spend	\$6.685B
Visitor spend	\$1.831B
Top spending categories	
Dining and entertainment	20%
Grocery	20%
Professional services	10%
Origin of spending	
Local spend	78%
Visitor spend	22%
Time of spending	
Day-time spending (6am - 6pm)	62%
Night-time spending (6pm - 6am)	38%

* International visitor data at the LGA level is not available from the TRA from March 2020 to December 2022, due to the border closure impacts on sample sizes

Place and Economic Development Team

The Place and Economic Development Team is a group of skilled professionals that are here to help you. They can connect you with different parts of Council and the State Government to get your business up and running or solve a problem.

Place Coordinators

The Northern Beaches has five Wards - Pittwater, Narrabeen, Frenchs Forest, Curl Curl and Manly. There is a dedicated Place Coordinator for each Ward, each with a unique understanding of their area. They are regularly out and about in town centres checking in on businesses and identifying local issues.

Place Coordinators can be contacted at places@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

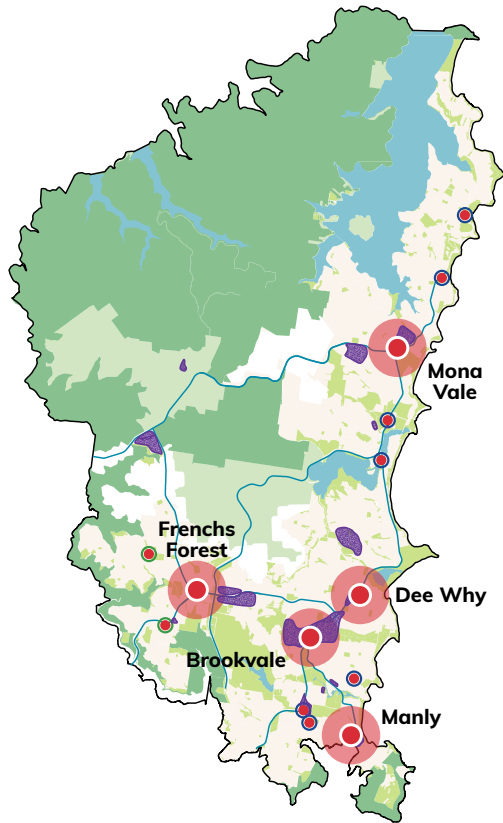
Beaches Business News

One of the best ways to stay up-to-date with what Council is doing to support businesses is by signing up to our monthly [Beaches Biz newsletter](#).



The Northern Beaches can be broken into five strategic precincts – Manly, Brookvale, Dee Why, Frenchs Forest and Mona Vale, and nine village centres – Avalon, Newport, Warriewood, Narrabeen, Freshwater, Manly Vale, Balgowlah, Forestville and Glenrose. There are also a range of smaller local centres.

Key	
<div></div> Urban area	<div></div> Strategic centre
<div></div> National park	<div></div> Coastal village
<div></div> Major public parkland/ bushland	<div></div> Forest village
<div></div> Public transport and active travel connection	<div></div> Employment hub



Manly is the visitor gateway to the Northern Beaches, accounting for a quarter of the international tourists to NSW. It features attractive frontages to the harbour and beach, iconic Norfolk Island pines and historic buildings. This is a cohesive precinct with retail and hospitality industries close to the beach, a thriving night-time economy and knowledge intensive industries near Manly Wharf.

Brookvale has the strongest concentration of employment on the Beaches and is home to the largest industrial precinct in Greater Sydney’s North District (at 86 ha). There is a wide mix of small businesses covering the construction and automotive industries, small scale manufacturing, wholesale trade and professional services. Brookvale is evolving into a place to work, create and innovate. The resurgence of the brewery scene in Brookvale, creative industries and specialist recreation functions, complement the centre’s broader economic function while providing places for workers, visitors and nearby residents.

Dee Why is on track to become a thriving cosmopolitan centre by the sea. It is a population serving mixed-use centre that offers housing, retail, civic service and commercial functions. It is one of the most densely populated, multicultural communities on the Beaches.

Frenchs Forest is transitioning to a strategic centre with a Health and Education Precinct anchored by Northern Beaches Hospital. The Frenchs Forest Business Park will build upon its 9,000+ existing jobs and support clusters of health services; specialised transport, postal and warehousing activity and growing advanced manufacturing activity including pharmaceutical and med-tech companies. The NSW Government's 2041 Place Strategy aims for Frenchs Forest to be a major driver of job growth and economic activity and a hub of knowledge-intensive jobs, innovation and service delivery. It plans for more than 2,000 new jobs within the new town centre, primarily in allied health, recreation, education and accommodation sectors.

Mona Vale is the contemporary, urban heart of the north of the Beaches, offering a local, coastal village atmosphere. It provides space for community, residential, retail, commercial, industrial and education uses and is expected to service an increasingly older population. Mona Vale's industrial area caters for industrial urban services and a thriving cluster of specialist marine manufacturing, wholesale and specialist trades that support Sydney's international sailing community.

The nine smaller village centres of Avalon, Newport, Warriewood, Narrabeen, Freshwater, Manly Vale, Balgowlah, Forestville and Glenrose offer community focused spaces with close connections to their natural environment.

Business and industrial parks - the larger non-centre employment precincts – include Warriewood Business Park, Cromer Industrial Park and Austlink Business Park in Belrose. These areas are focused on business-to-business economic activity, giving them a different character to other precincts. These areas are important to supply chains and enable the economic transition to high value opportunities that generate local high skilled employment including emerging advanced manufacturing and online retailing activity.



Across the Beaches there are five business chambers, providing a range of support and advice for their business communities. Chambers work to further the interests of businesses in the area or industry through advocacy, networking opportunities and various other member benefits.

Manly Business Chamber
manly.org.au

Warringah Chamber of Commerce
warringahchamber.com.au

Mona Vale Chamber of Commerce
monavalechamber.org

Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce
newportbeach.org.au

Avalon Palm Beach Business Chamber
avalonpalmbeachbusinesschamber.com.au



Council values the rich diversity of experiences that events can bring and recognises their connection to economic activity and community wellbeing. They contribute to quality of life by strengthening communities, providing unique activities and opportunities, building awareness of diverse cultures and identities, and acting as a source of community pride. Economically events enhance awareness of the Beaches, attract visitors, promote return business, and support local enterprise.

Hundreds of events take place across the Northern Beaches every year. These are delivered by Council, local community groups and event organisers. Events come in all shapes and sizes and each has a different purpose and adds value in its own distinct way. They range from small local place-based activations through to major events that attract thousands of visitors to our iconic destinations.

Find out more on Council's [What's On](#).

Community Placemaking Toolkit

We also want to empower the local business community to run their own events and programs to help revitalise their centres. We have prepared a [Community Placemaking Toolkit](#) to step you through how to put on an activation or deliver an initiative which benefits the centre.

How to get involved

To make events a success and ensure they benefit the local economy, we encourage businesses to participate where they can. This includes opportunities to put on special offers during events and through to sponsorship. Council regularly seeks expressions of interest from business to be involved.

Information on how to get involved in Council events will be promoted through the [Beaches Biz newsletter](#) as they arise.



Planning approvals for business: Guide to small business and the planning system

Have you checked that your business is a permissible use in the area you are planning to locate?

To assist businesses navigate the planning system, we have developed a [guide](#) which sets out the different pathways that apply to starting or growing a business. This guide explains three planning approval pathways that business owners are most likely to use before they open or expand their business. These pathways are:

- Exempt development (planning permission not required)
- Complying development (fast-tracked approval process by Council's building control team or an external certifier)
- Development application process (standard approval process by Council)

As you read through this guide, you might still find that you have questions, as sometimes some planning approval processes are more complicated than others. If this is the case, we always encourage prospective or existing business owners to get in touch to discuss their business circumstances.

You can do this by making an appointment at Council's website with either:

- [Our Planning Enquiry Officer](#)
- [Our Business Support Service](#)

Council have also developed a streamlined version of the standard [DA lodgement requirement form](#), to remove those supporting documents which are not generally required for small business development applications.



The Northern Beaches has a thriving food and beverage economy with a mix of high dining waterfront restaurants, cafes, small bars, pubs, clubs and pop ups across the region.

If you are looking to open a food business you will need to notify Council and appoint a food safety supervisor and meet Food Standard Code requirements set out by the NSW Food Authority.

Council also operates a 'Scores on Doors' food business hygiene rating program to promote food safety.

If your business is looking to serve alcohol, you will need to apply to [Liquor and Gaming NSW](#) for an on-premises licence.

Find out more on [how to start and register a food business](#).



Outdoor dining and footpath merchandise

We aim to support a vibrant streetscape that is safe and welcoming, attracting tourists and locals to visit, enjoy and return.

The appropriate placement and regulation of outdoor dining furniture and display of footpath merchandise that ensures safe and equitable access to the footpath can be achieved whilst supporting local businesses.

In order for a premises to have outdoor dining or merchandise displays on the footpath, NSW Government legislation sets out that the following approvals are required:

- All outdoor dining on the footpath requires approval under the Roads Act 1993
- All footpath merchandise displays on the footpath requires approval under the Local Government Act 1993
- Outdoor dining on community lands such as a park or reserve, or Crown Land for which Council manages, requires approval under the Local Government Act 1993.

If you are taking over from a business with an existing outdoor dining or merchandise approval, you will need to apply for a transfer of the approval. If you are not sure which approvals you need, please talk to Council at one of our Customer Service Centres, or call customer services on 1300 434 434.

Council does not allow unauthorised A-frames on public land. Council Rangers regularly patrol to ensure businesses are compliant regarding the placement of bins left in the public domain and unauthorised signage. If you're unsure about regulations or compliance rules, please get in touch with Council.

Find out more from the [Outdoor Dining and Footpath Merchandise Policy](#).

Council offers a range of grants which businesses may be eligible to apply for if they can demonstrate wider community benefits.

These include:

- Community Development Grants
- Environment Grants
- Art and Creativity Grants
- Event Grants and Sponsorship Program
- Placemaking Grants

Keep an eye out on future grant opportunities on the Council website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Grants Hub

Grants for businesses are offered by a broad range of State and Federal government departments and research organisations, and cover diverse activities including innovation, research and development, infrastructure, expansion into new markets, training and inclusive hiring projects.

Grant opportunities for local businesses can now be accessed through our platform [Grants Hub](#) for the Northern Beaches. Grants Hub provides a comprehensive listing of all grant and funding opportunities available Australia wide with tools and tips for writing great grant applications.

Access Grants Hub at Council's website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

In spending money on goods, works and services, Northern Beaches Council is committed to achieving value-for-money while being fair, ethical and transparent. The principles guiding all procurement activities are detailed in our Procurement Policy.

We are also working on a range of strategies to increase opportunities for small local businesses to work with Council.

Find out more on Council's website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Tenderlink and Vendor Panel

For larger Council contracts, we use Tenderlink and current opportunities can be accessed through our etendering portal Tenderlink. Visit Tenderlink to see current tender opportunities on Council's website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au



Business Chambers

Your local Business Chamber offers a range of support and advice for its members, including networking, training and advocating to local and state government.

Sustainability Business Network

We have a number of existing networks to bring together businesses with common interests. One of these is our Sustainability Business Network, which brings together businesses looking to connect and learn from each other, to achieve significant sustainability improvements.

We have created a toolkit to enable businesses to begin and expand their sustainability journey, reduce their carbon footprint and achieve sustainability targets, covering specific areas of high energy, waste, water and resource use.

There is also a map which acts as a directory to search for like minded businesses, share best practice and learn how other businesses make changes to improve sustainability.

Join our Sustainability Business Network today at Council's website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Culture Map Live

Another business network is our [Culture Map Live](#) which connects our creative community and plots the location of cultural and creative assets, such as public artworks, businesses and events, across the Northern Beaches.

Launched in November 2021, there are 1377 people and places on the map as of June 2024.

We invite creative businesses to join and explore this growing online creative community.

Get on the map at Council's website at northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Sustainability Business Network



Council offers a Business Support Service to help you navigate processes and access available support. It's a single point of contact to provide advice, support and ensure no matter what your question, we will do all we can to get you the most accurate information as soon as possible. Local businesses can access information on a range of topics, including insights on local economic conditions and how to access permits and approval processes.

Book an appointment with a Business Liaison Officer today at Council's website: northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Service NSW Business Concierge

Service NSW for Business makes it easier for businesses by connecting them to what they need to start, run and grow their business, and adapt and recover in times of change.

Service NSW for Business provides a 'one front door' for businesses to access NSW Government services, information and financial support, a suite of digital tools to access transactions across government and tailored case management and advice to support businesses to grow in the NSW economy. They have a dedicated Business Concierge for the Northern Beaches who is regularly on the ground talking to local businesses.

For more information go to service.nsw.gov.au or call 13 77 88.

The NSW Small Business Commissioner

It supports small businesses across NSW, speaking up on their behalf on issues that impact their ability to do business and working with governments, industry and the community to create a better business environment. It provides advocacy and mediation for small businesses and its website offers a range of resources for small businesses, translated into many different languages.

For more information go to smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au

Business Connect Program - Realise Business

Realise Business is Not-for-Profit, funded by all levels of Government and delivers the NSW Business Connect program for our local area, which means you can get advice from our highly experienced business advisors for a fraction of the cost of private business coaching.

Realise Business helps small business owners build confidence and capability through the provision of business programs, coaching, advising and events. Highly experienced in the business coaching and small-business sector, the Realise Business team have worked with more than 30,000 small businesses across Greater Sydney and NSW.



