



Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Consultation & Engagement Outcomes Report

NOVEMBER 2017

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This document is preliminary unless approved by a Director of City Plan Strategy & Development

CERTIFICATION

This report has been authorised by City Plan Strategy & Development, with input from a number of other expert consultants, on behalf of the Client. The accuracy of the information contained herein is to the best of our knowledge not false or misleading. The comments have been based upon information and facts that were correct at the time of writing this report.

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL (PROVIDED SEPARATELY)

Appendix	Report	Prepared by
A	Example community stories	City Plan Strategy and Development
B	Strategic Plan Consultation Results - Newcastle area	Advocate for Children and Young People
C	GNMP Consultation & Engagement Methods Report	City Plan Strategy and Development

1. Introduction

The NSW Government is committed to planning for the future housing, jobs, infrastructure and environmental needs of its regions. To deliver this commitment, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) released the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 in October 2016.

Action 1.1 of the Hunter Regional Plan required the NSW Government to prepare a Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan (GNMP). The GNMP project commenced in late 2016, and consists of 3 main stages: investigation and drafting; exhibition; and preparation of a final plan. A project team was formed to establish an evidence base for planning and prepare a long-term plan for the GNMP area. The GNMP project team is a multidisciplinary team of third party providers, led by the Department.

As part of the GNMP project team, City Plan Strategy and Development (CPSD) assisted the Department to develop and implement a robust engagement program to inform the draft GNMP. The purpose of this program was to raise awareness of the GNMP project, collect and update information about the GNMP area, and provide stakeholders and the broader community an opportunity to contribute to the formulation of a draft vision and strategic directions for the GNMP area. The GNMP project team engaged with stakeholders and the broader community between February and August 2017 to provide inputs into the draft GNMP for public exhibition.

This report summarises the outcomes of the consultation and engagement program undertaken to prepare the draft GNMP:

- Section 2 describes the methods applied to engage stakeholders and broader community;
- Section 3 provides a high-level analysis of the feedback collectively provided by stakeholders and the broader community; and
- Section 4 presents thematic feedback provided by stakeholders in workshops and targeted meetings.

Supplementary information is provided separately, including:

- Examples of community stories, collected through pop-up sessions held across the GNMP area, which are provided in **Appendix A**;
- Strategic Plan Consultation Results collected within the Newcastle area by the Advocate for Children and Young People, which is provided in **Appendix B**; and
- Engagement and analysis methods applied by the GNMP project team, which is provided in **Appendix C**.

2. Methodology

The tools and techniques applied to engage stakeholders and the broader community, and to document and analyse feedback are described in **Appendix C** to this report. This section provides a summary of those methods, to provide a context for the feedback presented.

2.1 Overview

The Department ran concurrent stakeholder engagement and community outreach programs between February and August 2017 to elicit feedback that would assist with preparing the draft GNMP for public exhibition. Separate techniques were applied to engage with:

- Internal stakeholders, including selected NSW Government agencies;
- Local Government, with separate considerations for engaging with: council staff; council executive teams; and elected politicians, including the council joint organisation;
- Business and Industry, with separate considerations for engaging with: anchor institutions and operators, such as the Airport, Port of Newcastle and University of Newcastle; and broader business and industry representatives; and
- Local community members, including people who live, work or visit the area.

Engagement techniques included:

- briefing sessions, where Department staff were invited to provide information about the GNMP project;
- targeted meetings and workshops, used to collect and test baseline information from key stakeholders; and
- community outreach program, used to raise awareness about metropolitan-level planning, and get feedback about the GNMP area from the broader community.

2.2 Briefing sessions

Department staff provided briefings about the GNMP project to the following organisations:

- Hunter Councils;
- Cessnock Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle, Port Stephens and Singleton Councils;
- Hunter Water
- Property Council of Australia
- UDIA Hunter Regional Chapter;
- Hunter Business Chamber;
- Dantia - Lake Macquarie City Economic Development Company, and
- Other business and industry representatives

Feedback provided was general in nature and is not specifically presented for analysis in this report.

2.3 Stakeholder workshops and targeted meetings

The GNMP project team facilitated several stakeholder workshops and targeted meetings with key stakeholders between February and July 2017. These provided a forum for raising awareness about the GNMP project, and collecting and reviewing evidence in line with baseline studies undertaken by the Department, or consultants working on their behalf.

Five workshops were held over four days, as summarised in Table 1.



Table 1: Summary of stakeholder workshops

Workshop	Target group	Attendance
Project Launch 28 February 2017	Community members, councils, business leaders and government agencies	75 people registered attendance
Opportunities and challenges for the metropolitan area 27 April 2017	Industry	25 people registered attendance
The vision and objectives of the GNMP, and alignment with local planning initiatives 28 April 2017	Local Government	14 people attended
Preliminary considerations from economic research 5 July 2015	Combined Local Government and Industry	55 people registered attendance 30% Local Government 70% Industry
Preliminary considerations from housing research 5 July 2015	Combined Local Government and Industry	55 people registered attendance 30% Local Government 70% Industry

2.3.1 Local government workshops

Staff from councils within the GNMP area were invited to participate in a series of workshops, which provided feedback from the Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle, Port Stephens and Singleton local government areas (LGAs). This list of councils reflects the boundary of the GNMP area as it was defined in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036. Further consultation was undertaken by the Department to refine this boundary, which will be presented in the draft GNMP for public exhibition.

The local government workshops brought together staff from all LGAs to collectively discuss specific issues, focussing on:

- the vision and objectives of the GNMP, and alignment with local planning initiatives (28 April 2017); and
- preliminary considerations from housing and economic research (5 July 2015, combined with Industry and Agency stakeholders).

2.3.2 Industry and Agency workshops

Industry and Agency representatives were invited to participate in a series of workshops, focussing on:

- opportunities and challenges for the metropolitan area (27 April 2017); and
- preliminary considerations from housing and economic research (5 July 2015, combined with Local Government stakeholders).

Collectively, these workshops were attended by various individuals representing over 30 organisations.

Stakeholder feedback was recorded at each workshop by facilitators provided by CPSD and the Department. This feedback was consolidated and catalogued to allow thematic analysis, which is presented in Section 4 of this report.

Additional feedback provided by council, industry, or agency stakeholders directly to Department staff or their consultants outside of the workshop forum has not been included in the analysis presented in this report, but will still be considered by the Department.

2.3.3 Targeted meetings

Department staff, or consultants working on their behalf, also held several other meetings to discuss site- or issue-specific matters with key stakeholders, including:

- Port of Newcastle
- Newcastle Airport
- University of Newcastle
- Venues NSW
- Crown Lands

These meetings included discussion of matters that may be commercially sensitive, and feedback has not been publicly presented for analysis, but will still be considered by the Department to prepare the draft GNMP for public exhibition.

Additional feedback provided by stakeholders directly to Department staff or their consultants outside of the workshop forum has not been included in the analysis presented in this report, but will still be considered by the Department. This feedback may include detailed consideration of local matters.

2.4 Community outreach

A series of open-invitation public events and pop-up sessions were held between February and August 2017 helped raise public awareness about the project, and provided an opportunity to collect feedback about people's expectations and aspirations for metropolitan-level planning in Greater Newcastle.

2.4.1 Public events and publications

Community information session

The Department launched the GNMP project at a community event at Fort Scratchley, in Newcastle East, on 28 February 2017. Seventy-five community, business, industry, and government members attended the event, with presentations made by industry experts including:

- Chris Isles, Place Design Group;
- Brian Haratsis, MacroPlan Dimasi;
- Garry White, Chief Planner, NSW Department of Planning; and
- Professor Greg Clark, Global Adviser on Cities.

Public lecture

On 5 July 2017, the Department held a public lecture, at the University of Newcastle's NeW Space building in Newcastle City Centre. Professor Greg Clark was the keynote speaker and the Department launched Professor Clark's report *Metropolitan Strategic Planning: Case Studies Report for Greater Newcastle, NSW* at the event. The lecture provided an overview of metropolitan strategic planning from cities with similar characteristics to Greater Newcastle. The event was attended by 80 people.

2.4.2 Pop-up sessions

A series of pop-up sessions provided people with an opportunity to hear more about the GNMP project, and to participate in a "map your story" exercise that was designed to demonstrate the metropolitan nature of the Greater Newcastle area.

Each event was facilitated by a representative from CPSD along with representatives from the Department who were responsible for preparing the draft GNMP. Several events were also voluntarily attended by Council planning officers, providing support and advice to community members with respect to local planning matters.

In total, 129 stories were collected. Short summaries of each event, along with selected stories, were published on the Department's website. Examples stories are provided in Appendix A.

2.4.3 Engaging young people

Young people were identified as a priority engagement cohort in the preparation of the GNMP, noting the long-term nature of the plan. This demographic was reasonably well-represented in the pop-up sessions described above. Several of the community events where pop-up sessions were held were attended by schools, providing young people an opportunity to map their own stories. Parents also included their children in the 'map your story' exercise at each of the events.

CPSD also consulted the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP), who provided advice on youth engagement objectives and methods, as well as an overview of feedback recently received from over 80 children and young people living in Greater Newcastle area. This advice will be used to formulate targeted engagement initiatives that will be undertaken with children and young people once the draft GNMP is on exhibition. The feedback gathered by ACYP from young people in the GNMP area is detailed in Appendix B, and summarised in Section 0 of this report.

Table 2: Summary of pop-up sessions completed, in chronological order

Target group	Event / location	Date completed	Comment
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities	Hunter Multicultural Services Expo Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre, Lambton	Wednesday 24 May 2017 10am - 2pm	23 stories collected Around 50 people stopped for information
Indigenous communities	NAIDOC Family Day Murrook Culture Centre, Williamstown	Friday 7 July 2017 10am - 2pm	21 stories collected Around 35 people stopped for information
Visitors and travelling residents	Newcastle Airport, departure lounge	Friday 7 July 2017 4pm - 7pm	7 stories collected Around 15 people stopped for information
Newcastle LGA	Newcastle City Farmers Market	Sunday 16 July 2017 7am - 1pm	22 stories collected Around 50 people stopped for information
Port Stephens LGA	MarketPlace Raymond Terrace	Thursday 20 July 2017 4pm - 7pm	15 stories collected Around 30 people stopped for information
Lake Macquarie LGA	Stockland Shopping Centre, Glendale	Thursday 26 July 2017 4pm - 7pm	15 stories collected Around 15 people stopped for information
Cessnock LGA	Corner Charlton and Cooper Streets, Cessnock	Saturday 29 July 2017 10am - 2pm	10 stories collected Around 20 people stopped for information
Maitland LGA	Maitland Aroma Coffee and Chocolate Festival	Saturday 12 August 2017 10am - 4pm	16 stories collected Around 50 people stopped for information

3. High-level summary of feedback

There was **strong support for metropolitan strategic planning, leadership and coordination**. Stakeholders and community members welcomed the opportunity for a single document to provide a shared, long-term vision that could assist with coordinating various services. Discussions in this regard focused on the opportunity to establish a unifying story for Greater Newcastle that recognises the diverse local characteristics within.

Most people recognise the advantage afforded by Greater Newcastle's proximity to Sydney, but are resistant to it becoming an outer suburb of Sydney. There was support for maintaining Greater Newcastle as a self-reliant and resilient place. Several strengths were identified in this regard, particularly in relation to:

- **Global gateways.** The opportunities created through the Port and Airport are well-recognised, and both gateways have demonstrated growth potential.
- **Centres of Excellence.** In addition to knowledge industries associated with health and education, people also recognised Greater Newcastle's talent and performance in manufacturing and technology, defence and aerospace, and events as nationally-relevant.

People **identified with the boundary** proposed for Greater Newcastle, as they tend to live, work and play across several local government areas. There was some debate around the extent of the boundary at the northern and western fringes. Over the course of the engagement program, Kings Hill, Medowie, Nelson Bay and Singleton (township) were each nominated to be included in the Greater Newcastle area for the purposes of metropolitan strategic planning.

People also identified with the **Strategic Centres** already nominated in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 as the places they tend to go to most often to access employment, retail or other services. There was support for a **network-based approach to planning for centres** throughout the metropolitan area, noting the complementary role each centre plays in people's day-to-day lives. Fassifern, Swansea and Belmont were also nominated as potentially being Strategic Centres. Local Government stakeholders sought more information about the purpose of, and criteria for identifying Strategic Centres, as opposed to other centres.

Stakeholder workshops did not focus heavily on issues relating to the **natural environment and open space**, but these were raised voluntarily by stakeholders and were strong topics of interest to the broader community. The area's outstanding and diverse natural environments are highly valued, easily accessible from urban areas, and are an important feature of people's lifestyle.

Several people sought advice about how planning controls could **better protect existing natural areas**, with concerns raised about the risk of urban growth eroding the amount or quality of natural spaces available within the city, including beaches, forests, and parks. There was also concern that open spaces, particularly in established areas, would become increasingly congested as the population grows.

Housing growth, diversity and affordability was consistently identified as an essential strategic planning consideration. Housing to accommodate seniors, students, visitors and low-income earners were viewed as requiring additional considerations, or specific metropolitan strategies. People were supportive of more medium-density or apartment-style living in established areas in-principle, particularly as these reduce the need for further greenfield development, but want more effort given to designing quality places.

Transport-related matters featured strongly across all groups for various reasons. Transport considerations were seen important to supporting other outcomes, including making the area more attractive for visitors, and more efficient for an increasingly mobile workforce.

People find it relatively easy to get around, but recognised that Greater Newcastle is currently car-dependent. There was strong support for establishing a **metropolitan-wide public transport network** to provide more convenient connections between major centres. This includes support for the future extension of the light rail from Newcastle City Centre to other parts of the metropolitan area.

The broader community also identified **walking and cycle paths** as a high priority. People were interested to understand how the GNMP could support the delivery of a more integrated path network, including considerations for longer-distance routes to make active travel a genuine commuting option.

The challenge of encouraging residents and visitors to choose sustainable transport modes more often was widely recognised. People cited **awareness, safety and convenience** as important to encouraging this change. Suggestions for improvements that would support this transition included park-and-ride facilities near public transport stops, improved customer information and services on public transport networks, and end-of-trip facilities.

Other infrastructure considerations were also raised, with separate considerations for **enabling infrastructure** required to support the physical development of projects and **community infrastructure** typically associated with health, education and recreation. Local Government and industry stakeholders were particularly interested in the tools and programs proposed to coordinate enabling infrastructure, such as the Urban Development Program, Employment Lands Development Program, and Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution. Feedback from the broader community identified concerns that investment in community infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, libraries, parks and sports facilities was not keeping pace with the rate of growth. All groups sought greater transparency around the future prioritisation and allocation of infrastructure funding.

Finally, the need for **greater coordination and leadership** was raised across all stakeholder groups and the broader community. Several people identified poor governance as the cause of failures associated with previous plans or strategies applying to the Lower Hunter. The governance model established to deliver the GNMP is expected to be one of the strongest areas of interest for stakeholders as well as the broader community.

4. Thematic stakeholder feedback

This section presents stakeholder feedback collected from workshops and targeted meetings, where it can be publicly reported. The feedback has been consolidated and presented thematically, utilising an analysis framework described in **Appendix C** to this report.

Statements presented in this section reflect feedback provided in collective forums across multiple events, and cannot be attributed to any single individual or organisation. Every effort has been made to maintain the intention of statements made, as they were recorded. Assertions, including trends, statistics, or other data offered by stakeholders have not been investigated further to confirm accuracy in this report, but may have been investigated further by the Department.

4.1 Purpose and scope

A summary of stakeholder feedback as to the purpose of the GNMP, and what it has the potential to influence is provided below:

- Businesses and industry groups see the GNMP as an opportunity to brand and market the City.
- Local government staff consider the GNMP to be a coordinating document, that:
 - Raises awareness about common and cross-boundary issues;
 - Assists with standardising some Local Government policies and processes (e.g. funding local infrastructure);
 - Identifies how Local Governments should implement or otherwise deal with State-level interests within the GNMP area; and
 - Provides greater certainty about the State Government's commitments for investing in infrastructure that supports growth.
- All stakeholder groups broadly agreed that the GNMP should:
 - Detail actions to address or progress ideas that have been described or proposed in previous forums or strategies, but never implemented. Specific examples given are provided in Table 3;
 - Set clear priorities and points of differentiation that are specific to the GNMP area, noting that Greater Newcastle can't be good at everything; and
 - Establish an agreed framework of baseline data upon which to form decisions.

Table 3: Examples of unresolved issues from previous plans or strategies, as noted by stakeholders

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Overarching economic strategy▪ Integrated public transport system▪ Feasibility of urban renewal corridors▪ Poor or no governance / leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Population growth projections▪ Urban development program▪ Employment lands development program▪ Special Infrastructure Contributions Plan
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4.1.1 GNMP boundary

The Department sought stakeholder feedback on the proposed boundary of the metropolitan area. For context, the Hunter Regional Plan identified a preliminary boundary for the metropolitan area that broadly extends from Morisset and Swansea in the south to Newcastle Airport in the north, and from Newcastle City Centre in the east to Cessnock (township) and Branxton in the west.

- Stakeholders recognised the challenges in establishing a boundary, recognising that the boundary influences:
 - The collection and analysis of data, both historic and future;
 - The eligibility of specific locations to receive or otherwise benefit from funding allocated to the metropolitan area; and
 - The extent to which stakeholders are included in metropolitan-level planning and decision-making.
- Stakeholders nominated the following as potential candidate areas for inclusion:
 - Kings Hill / Medowie residential areas, noting their social and economic links to Raymond Terrace and the Airport/RAAF base, as well as the infrastructure requirements to service planned growth;
 - Nelson Bay, noting communities throughout the Tomaree Peninsula rely on services located in Greater Newcastle; and
 - Singleton (township), noting more convenient connections afforded by the Hunter Expressway, and the role of this centre in catering for housing demands generated from both urban (city-based) and rural (valley-based) industries.

4.2 Vision

Stakeholder feedback that could be used to establish the overarching vision statement in the GNMP is provided below:

- Greater Newcastle is already developing as a globally-recognised brand. In addition to a well-established reputation as a coal port city, it is now growing as a tourism/lifestyle destination, and an origin of specialist products and services.
- Greater Newcastle is already a self-reliant place, and should continue to be viewed as such, rather than a regional city north of Sydney.
- The area is already considered to be starting to change.
- Signature experiences that contribute to the lifestyle, and attract visitors include the city beaches, vineyards, industrial harbour views, sporting events, and cultural experiences. Stakeholders identified the following were currently under-recognised opportunities that could feature more strongly in the metropolitan area's 'brand':
 - Lake Macquarie (the waterbody);
 - Indigenous tourism;
 - Specialised manufacturing; and
 - Festivals.

4.3 Housing

Stakeholder feedback relevant to housing development within the GNMP area was complex, several sub-themes emerged from discussions. General feedback is presented below, along with specific considerations for the following sub-themes: infill development; greenfield development; medium-density housing; and housing needs for specific demographics.

Feedback provided in this section may relate to specific locations, and should be read in conjunction with place-based considerations, presented in Section 4.8.

4.3.1 General feedback

Stakeholders agreed:

- The GNMP should provide some commentary or consideration in relation to housing supply and demand issues.

- Housing demand issues should consider the influence of neighbourhood amenity on creating the type of places where people want to live, as well as the migration trends of people moving into and within the metropolitan area.
- A Metro-wide infrastructure plan is required to coordinate funding and delivery.

Discussions indicated the following trends or speculations, or other queries which would need to be substantiated by data:

- There is a high degree of variability in housing prices across the GNMP area.
- A major component of housing costs is considered attributable to various levies imposed by current State and Local planning and development requirements, which influences housing affordability.
- Greater Newcastle provides a lower return on housing developments than Sydney, which influences the type/quality of developers investing in the area.
- Migration trends of people moving into and within the metropolitan area are currently unclear. Further evidence to consider factors motivating people's housing choices would be appreciated.
- Government-imposed levies currently make up a significant proportion of the overall cost of development, and may unduly be inflating the cost of housing.

Other specific matters raised include:

- The success of the mine grouting fund established to assist developers in delivering projects in Newcastle City Centre should be closely monitored. The geographic extent of this fund should also be reviewed, as it may be relevant for projects in other areas. Specific references were made to Merewether.

4.3.2 Infill housing development

- Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Council staff identified that substantial growth within their LGAs will rely on infill development, and advise their Councils are likely to advocate for a stronger focus on actions that facilitate infill in and around centres.
- The locations of urban renewal corridors identified in previous strategic planning documents were considered appropriate. Considerations for specific corridors are discussed elsewhere in this Report.
- Stakeholders considered the following to be ongoing challenges for delivering infill housing development in Greater Newcastle, noting many of these challenges are inter-related:
 - Mine subsidence. The mine grouting fund established to assist developers in delivering projects in Newcastle City Centre was well-received, and stakeholders would like the geographic extent of this fund to be reviewed, and possibly expanded.
 - General project feasibility. Further information or consideration of project costs, particularly including government-imposed levies, was requested.
 - Relative affordability of housing in greenfield release areas. Further information or evidence was requested to consider the price differential between housing in established areas and housing in greenfield release areas.
 - Land banking (purchasing vacant or underutilised sites with a view to selling for a profit after re-zoning or other development approvals), particularly in Newcastle City Centre. Stakeholders would like more information about how planning can encourage investment to stimulate development commencements.
 - Neighbourhood amenity. Further information or consideration was requested in relation to the role of neighbourhood amenity on creating the type of places

where people want to live, and whether this is a motivating factor in people choosing where to live (e.g. urban or fringe).

- Planning controls. Some stakeholders identified LEP and DCP controls established to promote renewal, particularly outside Newcastle City Centre, need to be reviewed and updated, in light of the above considerations.

4.3.3 Greenfield housing development

- Stakeholders agreed that all delivery of new housing in all Greenfield areas is heavily reliant on the provision of infrastructure. A Metro-wide infrastructure strategy or plan is considered essential to coordinate funding and delivery. Issues relating to infrastructure are discussed separately in this Report.
- Land banking (purchasing vacant or underutilised sites with a view to selling for a profit after re-zoning or other development approvals) is considered a barrier to growth. Stakeholders would like more information about how planning can encourage investment to stimulate development commencements.
- Each LGA raised distinct concerns in relation to Greenfield housing developments:
 - Maitland - contains largest concentration of Greenfield housing allocations in GNMP, but growth is piecemeal and predominantly contingent on infrastructure delivery.
 - Cessnock - concerned that the LGA will become the next Maitland (land zoned but not effective supply / reliant on infrastructure)
 - Lake Macquarie - Greenfield housing growth is currently focused in the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie Western Corridor, which is considered to be 'infrastructure-poor.'
 - Newcastle - there is only one Greenfield area in the LGA (forming part of the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie Western Corridor), and it is relatively isolated.
 - Port Stephens - there is only one large Greenfield area in the LGA (Kings Hill), and it is contingent on infrastructure.

4.3.4 Medium density housing

- Stakeholders considered the following to be ongoing challenges for delivering medium density housing in Greater Newcastle:
 - Dispersed 'supply' of land zoned for medium-density; and
 - Market preference for torrens title lots.
- Discussions indicated there has been an increased take-up of medium-density housing in greenfield areas, which would need to be substantiated by data

4.3.5 Demographic submarkets

Stakeholders identified there is a general lack of consensus, coordination or data to inform decision making in relation to housing needs for the following demographic submarkets:

- Social housing;
- Affordable housing;
- Student accommodation, particularly noting the re-location of University activities from Callaghan into the City Centre;
- Seniors housing, particularly noting there has been a recent shift in developers' preferred locations for seniors housing from the urban fringe into centres; and
- Visitor accommodation.

4.4 Employment

Stakeholder feedback relevant to economic development or employment within the GNMP area is presented below, along with focused comments for sub-themes relating to employment within specific sectors, including: tourism; manufacturing; retail; and healthcare.

Feedback provided in this section may relate to specific locations, and should be read in conjunction with place-based considerations, presented in Section 4.8.

4.4.1 General feedback

- Stakeholders agreed that Greater Newcastle:
 - Is already transitioning its economy to become less reliant on traditional sectors such as mining; and
 - Will continue to benefit from universities, which provide pathways towards more sustainable development (research and innovation).
- Several stakeholders consider Greater Newcastle to already be, or have the potential to be nationally-recognised as a Centre of Excellence in the following sectors:
 - Health (already identified in the Hunter Regional Plan);
 - Education (already identified in the Hunter Regional Plan);
 - Manufacturing;
 - Defence; and
 - Events, including sporting and other cultural events.
- Stakeholders identified the following as general challenges to economic development within the GNMP area:
 - Lack of coherent vision or brand for the area;
 - LGAs currently compete, rather than partner, for grant funding; and
 - Lack of overarching economic strategy, noting there are many strategies that have been previously prepared by others, but there has never been a Metro-wide consensus on priorities.
- The following assertions were raised by several stakeholders, which would need to be substantiated by data:
 - There is a lack of visitor accommodation across the GNMP area;
 - The Air BnB model is already popular and growing;
 - There are a limited number of caravan parks that genuinely cater to visitors;
 - There is a chronic skills shortage in some sectors (e.g. manufacturing) - and this is more about quality than quantity; and
 - Jobs growth in recent years has been associated with casual or part-time work (predominantly in retail, tourism, health care and education).
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider:
 - What are the place-based considerations for Centres of Excellence (e.g. health precinct)?
 - What is the influence of technology on employment?
 - Do we anticipate jobs to become more, or less dispersed within the GNMP area?
 - How is high-speed broadband connectivity expected to influence employment?

- Are there opportunities to re-purpose former heavy industrial areas (e.g. mines, power stations, aluminium smelters, gas works, etc.)?
- What are specific considerations for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), noting their needs are different from larger institutions and centres?
- Has Greater Newcastle experienced a brain drain? If so, what sectors are expected to be most affected?
- How reliant are Greater Newcastle's main employment sectors (e.g. health, education and defence) on political decisions?

4.4.2 Tourism

- Stakeholders considered the following to be competitive advantages to development within the tourism sector:
 - Newcastle Airport, noting the expansion to provide international services;
 - Port of Newcastle, noting the expansion/diversification of cruise ship services;
 - Lake Macquarie, though this area may currently be underutilised;
 - Proximity of the Hunter Valley Vineyards;
 - Indigenous tourism products, though this sector is still underdeveloped and underpromoted; and
 - Cultural and sporting events, noting this sub-sector is growing.
- Stakeholders identified the following as challenges to development within the tourism sector:
 - Lack of cohesive vision or brand;
 - Lack of 'critical mass' of visitor accommodation;
 - Lack of connectivity and poor sense of arrival at global gateways;
 - The area is perceived to be secondary to Sydney; and
 - The climate means tourism is highly seasonal; several stakeholders suggested more events-based tourism would assist in stabilising this.
- Council staff identified 'health tourism' as an important, but overlooked component. This relates to patients, and their families, coming into the Metro area to receive specialist treatment, noting John Hunter Hospital and Charlestown as current hotspots for these visitors.
- The following assertions were raised by several stakeholders, which would need to be substantiated by data:
 - There is a lack of visitor accommodation across the GNMP area;
 - The Air BnB model is already popular and growing; and
 - There are a limited number of caravan parks that genuinely cater to visitors.

4.4.3 Manufacturing

- Business and Industry stakeholders considered Greater Newcastle to already be a Centre of Excellence in manufacturing and technology, but feel the area is not nationally recognised as such.
- Stakeholders considered the following to be competitive advantages to development within the manufacturing sector:
 - Well-established sector, and local skills base; and
 - Same time zone as Asia.

- Stakeholders identified the following as challenges to development within the manufacturing sector:
 - Lack of cohesive vision or brand; and
 - Lack of local capital, which means the area relies on its ability to attract larger companies from elsewhere.
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider how the GNMP area can better promote international business development opportunities in manufacturing and technology?

4.4.4 Retail

- Stakeholders agreed the major retail centres, at the Metro-level, to be those listed below. Specific considerations for each centre are presented in the Place-based considerations theme.
 - Kotara, including the shopping centre operated by Scentre Group and associated Homemaker's centre;
 - Charlestown Square, operated by GPT;
 - Stockland's Glendale shopping centre; and
 - Stockland's Green Hills shopping centre in East Maitland.
- Stakeholders also referred to other existing retail destinations, as listed below:
 - Cardiff; and
 - Warners Bay/Hillsborough Road.
- The following assertions were raised by several stakeholders, which would need to be substantiated by data:
 - All major retail centres are currently expanding;
 - Shopping centres at Kotara and Charlestown are more constrained than centres at Glendale and Green Hills; and
 - The overwhelming majority of retail centres, including both major centres and other retail destinations, are not conveniently accessible by public transport.
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider the expected influence of online shopping on traditional shopping centres in the GNMP area.

4.4.5 Healthcare

- Stakeholders agreed there is already a major health corridor connecting existing facilities within Greater Newcastle. This was identified as extending from John Hunter Hospital to Belmont, with major centres as listed below;
 - John Hunter Hospital campus (including Newcastle Private Hospital and HRMI) with nearby Calvary Mater Hospital;
 - Charlestown, which is considered an ancillary area to John Hunter Hospital (e.g. follow-up consulting rooms and health visitor accommodation);
 - Warners Bay, noting the private hospital; and
 - Belmont, noting the public hospital.
- Most stakeholders agreed East Maitland is a suitable location for the proposed new hospital, noting recent lobbying by local politicians for it to be re-located to Kurri Kurri or Cessnock. This is discussed in more detail in the Place-based consideration theme.
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider the expected influence of an aging population on growth in aged care services - are people aging in place or re-locating?

4.5 Transport

Stakeholder feedback relevant to transport systems within, or associated with, the GNMP area is presented in this theme. Comments made in relation to sub-themes for specific modal network considerations are also provided for: freight, public transport, roads, and active travel.

Feedback provided in this section may relate to specific locations, and should be read in conjunction with place-based considerations, presented in Section 4.8.

4.5.1 General feedback on transport

- There is concern that State-level planning has previously been limited to the Newcastle LGA, particularly the City Centre.
- All stakeholder groups recommended that the GNMP should either include, or align with a transport strategy that:
 - Is Metro-wide;
 - Considers transport modes other than private vehicles (roads); and
 - Provides a basis for establishing a metro-wide network of park-and-ride facilities, as a basis for changing modes.
- Transport considerations were recognised as important to supporting other outcomes, including:
 - Establishing Greater Newcastle as an attractive 'destination' for visitors, and businesses; and
 - Supporting SMEs, noting they rely on transport efficiencies.
- All stakeholder groups asked that the GNMP provide more information/clarification in relation to:
 - The role of Glendale as a transport interchange; and
 - Aligning/adapting the Metro area's transport systems with any future High Speed Rail proposal.

4.5.2 Freight

- All stakeholder groups acknowledged that:
 - The Port of Newcastle plays a central role in determining the freight task for the GNMP area;
 - The Port of Newcastle offers several competitive advantages, compared with other ports around Australia; and
 - Throughput of containers at the Port of Newcastle is expected to increase in future, which will have implications for land use and transport planning across the Metro area, and beyond.
- All stakeholder groups asked that the GNMP provide more information/clarification in relation to dealing with congestion along all freight corridors, generally, and the future transport and land use implications of road freight to the Port via Hexham and Industrial Drive, specifically.
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider the potential future freight task arising from growth at the Airport.

4.5.3 Public transport

- Stakeholders identified that public transport networks within the GNMP did not currently meet the needs or expectations of its communities, noting service improvements were required across all modes to entice people to use public transport.

- The Newcastle Light Rail project was a popular issue of interest, noting the following:
 - Most stakeholders feel Stage 1 is inadequate to address genuine public transport needs. This first stage is considered an urban renewal / urban activation pursuit; and
 - Light rail extensions along existing urban renewal corridors are supported.
- The following assertions were raised by several stakeholders, which would need to be substantiated by data:
 - Major destinations and Metro-area anchors are not currently directly accessible by public transport, or convenient to active transport modes. Examples given include the Airport, Hospitals (specifically John Hunter Hospital).
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider:
 - Keolis Downer, as the private network operator - specifically their role and relationship with State agencies in future network planning and delivery;
 - Government commitments to improve public transport connectivity to the Airport; and
 - Public transport options/priorities to improve connectivity between core/established centres and outlying/emerging areas Metro-wide. This is considered particularly important for visitors, as well as students and the general workforce. Specific outlying/emerging areas nominated included Branxton and Kurri Kurri.

4.5.4 Roads

- Several stakeholders expressed concern about State Roads cutting through all major urban centres. This appears to reflect conflicts between managing roads for safety and providing suitable urban amenity.

4.5.5 Active Travel

- Stakeholders would like the GNMP to set a basis for establishing a regional path network.

4.6 Enabling Infrastructure

This theme presents stakeholder feedback in relation to infrastructure required to enable new development projects to proceed. There were no sub-themes identified.

A summary of key issues that emerged is provided below:

- Regardless of the mechanism, there was general support to providing a "network solution" to growth, including land requirements, to deliver enabling infrastructure.
- The Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) project, which is a separate project being led by the Department, was a popular topic of interest, noting:
 - General support for a cost-recovery model that forward-funds infrastructure;
 - Need to agree the criteria for prioritising infrastructure projects in relation to location-specific requirements;
 - Need for further evidence on risk to establish reasonable bond rates for developers;
 - Separate considerations are required for infill and greenfield developments; and
 - Further consideration is required in relation to infrastructure design standards, noting the potential to realise cost-savings or greater returns on investment.

- The Integrated Infrastructure Planning Tool, developed by Hunter Development Corporation, and presented to attendees at the Housing Workshop was received positively.
- Enabling infrastructure was perceived as a major factor to the timely and cost-effective delivery of housing in greenfield release areas. This is relevant, to varying degrees, in each LGA.
- More information or consideration was requested in relation to the flow-on effects of how unlocking housing in one greenfield release area may catalyse or otherwise support other outcomes, such as:
 - In areas where housing is being delivered across several landholdings; or
 - Growth or renewal of established centres, with specific reference made to Raymond Terrace.
- Business and Industry stakeholders identified they will continue advocating for the following:
 - Seed funding, to assist with 'unlocking' key development sites; and
 - Geographic expansion of the area to which the mine grouting assistance fund applies.
- Business and Industry stakeholders would like the GNMP to set a basis for Councils to establish consistent approaches to planning for, funding and scheduling the delivery of local infrastructure within the Metro area. Council staff also broadly supported this request. Specific examples included value-sharing agreements for infill projects.

4.7 Natural environment and resources

This theme presents stakeholder feedback relevant to considerations for the natural environment and natural resources within the GNMP area. It covers a range of complex and disparate issues, with stakeholder feedback provided in relation sub-themes for waste, energy, water, and mining.

This theme was not an intended focus of discussion at any of the workshops, but was voluntarily raised as an issue of interest by stakeholders. Whilst it does not feature as a dominant feedback area in this report, it is recommended that DPE consider the issues raised in more detail within the GNMP.

4.7.1 General feedback

- Most council staff support the GNMP establishing a long-term urban footprint to manage sprawl.

4.7.2 Waste

- The following assertions were raised by several stakeholders, which would need to be substantiated by data:
 - Landfills servicing the GNMP area are currently 30 years ahead of schedule;
 - Off-site / illegal dumping of waste is a prominent issue for all LGAs.

4.7.3 Energy

- Stakeholders would like more information to consider the expected influence of smaller-scale energy generation. Specifically, what are the opportunities or commitments to establish district-level energy networks?

4.7.4 Water

- Most stakeholders were already aware of the Lower Hunter Water Plan, which identifies considerations for the GNMP's water supply.
- Port Stephens Council staff noted that most the GNMP's water supply sources are located within their LGA, including Grahamstown Dam, and the Tomaree and Tomago sandbeds. The management areas relating to these cover a significant amount of land, and this is considered one of several limiting factors for locating and managing growth within the LGA.
- Business and Industry stakeholders consider the delivery of Hunter Water network improvements as traditionally influencing the location and rate of growth within Greenfield / Urban Release Areas Metro-wide.
- Stakeholders would like more information to consider the expected role of private water network operators on the delivery of infrastructure.

4.7.5 Mining

- Remediation of old mine sites in the Lower Hunter was recognised as an opportunity to achieve environmental and urban outcomes.
- Stakeholders recommended a synoptic plan (like that prepared for the Upper Hunter) could be developed for the metropolitan area to specify the future land use potential of mining lands.

4.8 Place-based considerations

This theme presents stakeholder feedback for specific locations. These are grouped around place-based considerations for terms nominated in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036, including:

- Global Gateways;
- Centres of Excellence;
- Strategic Centres; and
- Urban Renewal.

4.8.1 Global Gateways

The Global Gateways are the Port of Newcastle and Newcastle Airport.

Stakeholders recognised Greater Newcastle is already developing a global brand, which is supported by the advantages afforded through the Global Gateways. In addition to a well-established reputation as a coal port city, it is now growing as a tourism/lifestyle destination, and an origin of specialist products and services.

Port of Newcastle

- Stakeholders recognised that the Port is starting to transform, noting:
 - Transition in energy from coal to alternatives;
 - Opportunities to increase containerisation;
 - Capabilities to double throughput with increased diversity; and
 - Expansion of cruise ship terminal and visitor facilities (by end of 2018).
- The Port's catchment is considered to expand from the Hunter to the Queensland border. Locational advantages include:
 - Rail to berth access, which isn't offered in other ports;
 - Coal Chain Coordinator; and
 - Limited congestion on routes to/from Port compared with other ports.

- Stakeholders felt there were greater opportunities to leverage awareness of Port capabilities and branding. Other Barriers to growth were identified as:
 - Planning approvals process, particularly assessment times, which make it difficult to respond quickly to change (e.g. not keeping pace with industrial changes); and
 - Limitations on containers.
- Newcastle City Council would like greater coordination in relation to planning for urban areas surrounding the Port, and related infrastructure such as the heavy rail line.

Newcastle Airport

For context, Newcastle Airport is jointly owned and operated by Newcastle and Port Stephens Council. It has a 20-year masterplan in place, which outlines development to accommodate growth, including a greater volume of passengers and the introduction of international flights.

- Several insights were provided in relation to the current and future commercial airport services, including:
 - Passenger movements indicate Newcastle Airport currently functions more as an origin airport than a destination airport;
 - Business travel is affected by coal price;
 - The masterplan seeks to increase the proportion of inbound passengers (business and leisure visitors);
 - There is sufficient capacity to increase the number of civil and defence aircraft movements;
 - The opportunity to provide air freight services is currently limited by the strength of the runway.
- Transport was identified as an area for improvement, noting:
 - The location of the Airport makes it a 'one-way peninsula', which was interpreted as meaning it is not situated along an interregional road (e.g. Pacific Highway) or otherwise on a direct route between major destinations;
 - Lack of awareness / branding of public transport options, and mis-alignment of service timetables (air and bus) appears to limit public transport usage; and
 - The above collectively lead to an over-reliance on car parking, which makes up a substantial portion of the developable land.
- The suitability and availability (zoning) of land for development around the Airport was identified as a significant barrier to growth, noting:
 - Passenger growth figures suggest similar rates to Gold Coast Airport, which has twice the land area set aside; and
 - Further work is required to address local drainage issues on land already zoned for development;
- Other barriers to growth identified were:
 - The Airport operates as a small business, which makes access to capital difficult; and
 - The current lack of critical mass around an identifiable tourism product for Greater Newcastle makes it difficult to attract major operators.
- The co-location of Newcastle Airport at RAAF Base Williamstown presents challenges and opportunities, noting:
 - This area accommodates the highest concentration of jobs in Port Stephens LGA, and possibly within the region;

- The need to improve visitor arrival and wayfinding infrastructure (e.g. bi-lingual signage), to make it more accessible and inclusive;
- The role of the area as a Centre of Excellence in Defence and Aerospace;
- Competition between defence and manufacturing industries and visitor-oriented services on land available for development.
- Stakeholders would like more information about:
 - The expected impact of Badgerys Creek Airport on future role/function of Newcastle Airport; and
 - The flow-on effect of increasing employment at the Airport for housing demand in surrounding areas.

4.8.2 Centre of Excellence

This theme presents feedback in relation to Greater Newcastle's potential to be a Centre of Excellence.

For context, the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 identified an aim to develop a national knowledge Centre of Excellence for Health and Education in Greater Newcastle, providing world-class research into medical technologies, agricultural productivity, renewable energy and mining services (p 8). This relates to locations where institutions and complementary services can cluster, noting existing clusters around: John Hunter Hospital; University of Newcastle (Callaghan Campus); and Newcastle City Centre's Civic Precinct.

A summary of feedback is presented below:

- A Centre of Excellence in Education was strongly supported, noting:
 - The potential for universities to assist in providing greater pathways towards more sustainable development, through research and innovation; and
 - Expansion of the University into the City Centre has catalysed placemaking and renewal outcomes;
- Stakeholders would like more information in relation to forecasted growth in the number of students living in the metropolitan area, and the demand for student accommodation;
- A Centre of Excellence in Health was also strongly supported, noting that, in addition to John Hunter Hospital, health clusters are also recognised at:
 - Charlestown, which also plays a role in accommodating health visitors, who make up a significant proportion of overnight stays;
 - Warners Bay;
 - Belmont; and
 - East Maitland, which is expected to be an emerging cluster around the new hospital.
- In addition to health and education, stakeholders also suggested the metropolitan area should be recognised as a national Centre of Excellence for:
 - Manufacturing and Technology, with stakeholders noting the existing strengths in this sector are not promoted well. Several clusters were referred to, including around the Port, Tomago, and Beresfield/Black Hill.
 - Defence and Aerospace, noting clusters emerging around RAAF Base Williamstown; and
 - Events, with regional-level events tending to focus around Newcastle City Centre, Broadmeadow and the Vineyards.

4.8.3 Strategic Centres

This sub-theme presents stakeholder feedback on the term 'strategic centres', and specific centres identified in the Hunter Regional Plan or otherwise nominated by stakeholders.

For context, the Hunter Regional Plan identified thirteen (13) Strategic Centres in the Lower Hunter area, which broadly corresponds to the Greater Newcastle area boundary. Direction 23 of the Hunter Regional Plan states that Strategic Centres will be the focus for population and/or economic growth over the next 20 years, and the Hunter Regional Plan set a target for 95% of people within the Region to live within 30 minutes of a Strategic Centre by 2036.

A summary of key issues that emerged is provided below:

- In relation to centres of any description, stakeholders agreed on the following:
 - The metro area consists of multiple centres, which reflect the coalescence of historic towns and villages;
 - It is more advantageous to focus housing and employment growth into existing centres;
 - Metropolitan-level planning offers an opportunity for centres across multiple LGAs to complement each other, rather than compete with one another; and
 - A common challenge facing several strategic centres relates to their locations fronting State Roads, with implications for safety and placemaking.
- Several stakeholders were uncertain about the intent of, or process for nominating Strategic Centres. They requested this concept be more explicitly addressed in the GNMP, including the criteria used to nominate any Strategic Centres.
- Three additional centres - Fassifern, Swansea, and Belmont - were nominated by stakeholders as potentially being Strategic Centres.
- In relation to the concept of Strategic Centres, stakeholders also requested clarification or greater direction for the following:
 - Is the plan seeking to move away from a centres hierarchy towards a network of centres? If so, what does that mean for Local Government strategies and LEPs that have been established based on a hierarchical approach?
 - How can land use planning assist with prioritising growth to within Strategic Centres, noting the success of any centre relies on its ability to reach a critical mass?
 - What is the approach to locating more jobs closer to where people live? A specific example given was whether it was a higher priority to create jobs at the Airport, or in Central Maitland?
 - Who has jurisdiction for drawing the boundaries of Strategic Centres (presumably as opposed to other centres)?
- Other considerations for centres raised by stakeholders include:
 - What impacts are expected from the transition toward autonomous/driverless vehicles, noting Newcastle is a test location for this technology?

Stakeholders provided the following location-specific feedback in relation to Strategic Centres, noting not every Strategic Centre was discussed.

Central Maitland

- Recent investment has successfully established the centre as a destination / experiential area rather than just a shopping centre;
- Strategic basis for growth may have changed from previous strategic documents, moving away from the area as a focus for residential growth.

Charlestown

- Considered a regional shopping centre;
- Also considered regionally important to the health narrative, noting several health specialists operate via Charlestown and John Hunter Hospital (patients attend clinics in Charlestown for follow-up appointments) and the area is also a popular location for 'health visitors' overnight stays;
- Recent upward trend in food and beverage businesses;
- Limited take-up of office space;
- Some recent interest in medium- and high-rise housing, suggested by recent DAs; and
- The topography and State Road present challenges for growth.

East Maitland

- Supportive of the concept of this Strategic Centre relating to the shopping centre and new hospital site;
- Supportive of a precinct-level approach to planning for health facilities and ancillary services, including incorporating this into the urban context (similar to Bendigo) rather than exclusively a health campus; and
- Considered to be the right location for growth, given public transport access - including heavy rail station - which makes it convenient for people coming from other parts of the Hunter Valley.

Glendale-Cardiff

- Broadly, the area is considered to compete with Broadmeadow in terms of accessibility, and its potential role as an interchange offering the ability for people to transfer between different modes of transport;
- Council will continue to advocate for a railway station to be located at Glendale as part of the Glendale Interchange Project;
- Further coordination and collaboration required between State Agencies, and between State and Local Governments with respect to the Glendale Interchange Project;
- There are similarities between Glendale and Erina Fair with respect to retail;
- Cardiff industrial area is currently in a state of transition, with many industrial occupiers moving to Beresfield;
- The area is not subject to mine subsidence, which provides a locational advantage to accommodate taller buildings than other Strategic Centres;
- There is significant residential growth occurring nearby (e.g. Pasminco), which is expected to improve the local demographic and make the centre more attractive for a range of occupiers (retail and other services); and
- The area should be considered a suitable candidate location for major retailers, such as Costco and Ikea.

Kotara

- Considered to be more diversified than other strategic centres;
- Its locational advantage is its local demographic, making it an easy location to market and attract retail operators;
- Land constraints limit its ability to expand further outward;
- The recent rooftop development is winning awards and setting benchmarks for leisure, and is a model for similar projects throughout Australia; and
- There are synergies between Kotara and Tuggerah, with respect to retail.

Morrisset

- Point of difference to other GNMP centres is that it is within the reach of Sydney commuters (less than 1-hour travel by train), and it has closer social and economic ties to the Central Coast;
- Has been considered an 'emerging' centre since it was initially recognised in regional strategies;
- Accommodates a surprising amount of medium density housing (townhouses and attached villas) when compared to other areas;
- Requires more investment in community facilities.

Raymond Terrace

- Perceived to service a low socio-economic area, as compared with other centres;
- Heavily constrained by flooding;
- The impetus for renewal is currently unclear, with some speculations for opportunities arising from employment growth at the Airport or residential growth at Kings Hill.

4.8.4 Urban Renewal

This sub-theme relates to stakeholder feedback on priority locations for urban renewal.

For context, the Hunter Regional Plan broadly supports urban renewal, but only specifies priority locations at:

- Newcastle City Centre; and
- Urban Renewal Corridors, which are not explicitly listed but are indicated on Figures 14 and 15. As mapped, urban renewal corridors relate to:
 - Newcastle City Centre to Adamstown (along Bruncker Road)
 - Newcastle City Centre to Broadmeadow (along Tudor Street)
 - Newcastle City Centre to Mayfield (along Maitland Road)
 - Cardiff to Edgeworth (along Main Road)
 - Charlestown to Belmont (along the Pacific Highway).

A summary of key issues that emerged is provided below:

- Stakeholders supported urban renewal that aligns with public transport network changes to drive growth and further demand for public transport. There was also general recognition that the public transport network is undergoing substantial changes. Based on this, stakeholders sought further consideration or clarification in relation to the following:
 - Is there any way for Local Government to get access to proposed network changes earlier in the process, or to have greater input to strategic network planning?
 - How was the Charlestown to Belmont corridor selected, noting that the remaining corridors generally correspond to those identified in the 2006 Lower Hunter Regional Strategy?
- The Broadmeadow and Mayfield corridors were anticipated to be the 'next wave' of renewal, noting substantial progress in the delivery of new projects in Newcastle City Centre. For these areas, stakeholders noted:
 - Contamination issues will need to be resolved;
 - Opportunities to expand the light rail network from the city centre along these corridors are strongly encouraged; and
 - Planning controls should be reviewed and updated for these areas.

- With regards to the remaining corridors, stakeholders requested the GNMP provide further information in relation to the intent for land use in each corridor.
- Land banking (purchasing vacant or underutilised sites with a view to selling for a profit after re-zoning or other development approvals) is considered a barrier to renewal in the City Centre and other parts of the City. Stakeholders asked for more information about how planning can encourage investment to stimulate development commencements.

4.8.5 Other places

Unresolved issues for several other locations were raised for discussion:

- Hunter Economic Zone, noting the numerous constraints influencing the future land use potential, including biodiversity;
- Previously proposed Freight Hub around Beresfield and Black Hill, noting the changing needs of freight industries could potentially change the nature of activities accommodated in this area; and
- Relatively new release areas, including Huntlee, Kings Hill and Cooranbong, in relation to the ongoing infrastructure requirements to enable development.

Several areas were identified as having previously unrecognised growth potential, including:

- Lake Macquarie, relating to the waterbody. The lake was considered an underutilised asset with opportunities for more water-based activities to stimulate landside developments, including commercial and residential uses; and
- Several rural or semi-rural locations as potential urban release areas, including Wallalong and the Tomaree Peninsula.

Two areas were identified as experiencing population growth 'by stealth', suggesting a need for more coordinated planning:

- Hunter Valley Vineyards; and
- Stockton/Fern Bay.

Several industrial locations were identified potentially suitable for re-development to accommodate urban uses, subject to remediation:

- The Comsteel site at Waratah;
- Other former industrial sites around Broadmeadow and Mayfield; and
- Former mine sites, particularly those with existing rail connections (e.g. Stony Pinch and Donaldson).

4.9 Governance

This theme presents to stakeholder feedback in relation to governance considerations. It includes feedback on governance models, as well as issues relating to the integration of various jurisdictions or services.

While this theme was a popular area of interest, stakeholders were more curious about what the ultimate governance arrangement would be, rather than providing specific requests or examples.

- Stakeholders recognised an effective metropolitan-level governance model will be required to deliver the outcomes specified in the GNMP, noting:
 - A historic lack of leadership and coordination;
 - Need for local government partnerships; and
 - Support for a model like the Greater Sydney Commission.
- The following delivery mechanisms were raised for discussion

- Infrastructure planning and coordination, at State and Local levels. This included discussions in relation to several projects and programs, including the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund (HIIF), proposed Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC), proposed Hunter Urban Development Program, and proposed Hunter Employment Lands Development Program.
 - Planning controls, including SEPPs, LEPs and DCPs. Joint review and alignment were considered necessary to address inconsistencies. It was also recommended that new controls, such as DCPs, should be reviewed after 1-2 years to consider effectiveness.
- There was strong support for an agreed monitoring framework and regular reporting of metropolitan-level targets or benchmarks, including in relation to:
 - Population growth, with specific considerations for demographic sub-markets including seniors and students;
 - Migration data;
 - Housing growth and diversification;
 - Employment growth and diversification; and
 - Visitor data.
- There was general recognition that several services provided by Local Government will need to be more closely aligned, including:
 - Growth forecasting and monitoring, noting each LGA utilises different methods;
 - Strategies and plans, noting each LGA has a different 'suite' of documents applying;
 - Infrastructure, including joint applications for grant funding and standardising methods for collecting development contributions; and
 - Local planning controls, including LEPs and DCPs.

4.10 Other matters

This theme consolidates miscellaneous stakeholder feedback that did not otherwise relate to themes identified above:

- The GNMP should address the paradigm of the "centre of the city" versus the City Centre, noting that the traditional City Centre is situated on a peninsula;
- Greater recognition should be given to Local Aboriginal Land Councils as major landholders, particularly in Newcastle City Centre; and
- Meaningful stakeholder and community engagement should form part of the ongoing metropolitan-level planning process. Several stakeholders noted that local practitioners and communities had lost trust in State and Local governments to deliver on commitments, and would view the GNMP from a point of opposition.

5. Community feedback

Feedback from the broader community was predominantly collected through the pop-up sessions described in Section 2.4.2. Over 100 personal stories were shared through the "map your story" exercise at eight separate events. This section presents the predominant topics of discussions heard across each event, with specific consideration of feedback elicited from harder to reach groups. Facilitators' summaries of each story collected were provided to the Department in October 2017, as demonstrated in Appendix A.

5.1 Common themes

The stories shared at the pop-up sessions demonstrated that the local community is already using Greater Newcastle as a metropolitan area, even though it has never previously been referred to as such. Each story demonstrated that most people have economic (e.g. job or specialist service), social (e.g. friends and family) or other personal (e.g. I just like going there) connections that span all of the LGAs considered to form part of Greater Newcastle.

Community feedback was strongly supportive of looking at planning issues in a collective way to get a better outcome for everyone. In most cases, people were surprised that was not already standard practice.

The common topics raised for discussion at the pop-up sessions, regardless of location or demographic, are summarised below:

- Transport.
 - Want more convenient public transport options available;
 - Strongly supportive of a metropolitan-level consideration of how to make this network work better.
- Quality of public and open spaces
 - Strong interest in how the GNMP can support delivery of more integrated walking/cycling paths, including considerations for longer-distance routes to make active travel a genuine commuting option;
 - Strong support for initiatives that better protect the amount and quality of natural spaces available within the city, including beaches, forests, parks, etc;
 - Concern about the erosion of open space, or congestion of open space as the population grows.
- Neighbourhood design
 - Supportive of more medium-density or apartment-style living in established areas, but don't feel many recent examples demonstrate good on-the-ground outcomes;
 - Want more effort put into designing quality places.
- Newcastle versus Sydney
 - Many feel Newcastle has consistently lost out to the attention and investment given to Sydney;
 - Newcastle is perceived as very different to Sydney, and people want to retain that point of difference;
 - Strong support for the idea of metropolitan-level planning, but not if it brings what are perceived to be Sydney outcomes, such as congestion, high-rise everywhere, erosion of open space, etc.

5.2 Issues unique to harder to reach groups

Targeted feedback was elicited from four harder to reach groups:

- Children and young people were reasonably well-represented in each of the pop-up sessions. The ACYP also provided a summary of relevant feedback from children and young people in relation to the built environment (provided at **Appendix B**);
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities were the target audience at the Hunter Multicultural Services expo;
- Indigenous communities were the target audience at the Murrook Culture Centre's NAIDOC family day; and
- Visitors were the targeted audience at Newcastle Airport.

The issues raised by people in these groups were consistent with those described in the overview above. A summary of issues that appeared to be unique to each target group is provided below. These issues are not intended to be reflective of any singular group, given the small sample size.

5.2.1 Children and young people

Common topics of discussion at each of the pop-up events and as summarised by the ACYP included:

- Access to, and facilities associated with recreational and social activities, and community facilities. Sports clubs, concerts, festivals, parks, pools, beaches, libraries and cinemas were all highly valued. The limited availability and quality of some facilities or specific locations were raised as concerns;
- Transport. Proximity of bus stops and the ability to ride bikes to school was seen positively. Complaints were raised in relation to the cost and reliability of public transport, the quality and continuity of bike paths, and road safety; and
- The appearance and management of public spaces. Concerns were raised in relation to safety, cleanliness of public toilets, litter and graffiti, public smoking, and wi-fi connectivity.

Other issues discussed also included climate change, waste management and recycling, and the cost of living.

5.2.2 Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)

CALD individuals appear to rely more on multiple centres to access additional services, including language and education support services. Transport between centres was a popular topic of discussion, with several complaints about the indirect nature of bus routes leading to unduly long travel times.

5.2.3 Indigenous

The NAIDOC event elicited location-specific, rather than community-specific views from participants. Discussions centred predominantly on Raymond Terrace, with issues associated with limited public transport connections and a lower-level of service provision compared with other centres.

The feedback also revealed the value people place on locally accessible 'green' spaces. Nearly every participant recalled spending time each week at a beach, park or local fishing spot close to their house. Many felt relatively small upgrades to improve safety, provide better connections, or offer fitness equipment, would go a long way to improving their health and enjoyment of these spaces.

5.2.4 Visitors

Most of the participants at the Airport event were Greater Newcastle residents, which is reflective of the Airport's current role as an origin, rather than a destination, facility.

All participants at the Airport event noted poor public transport connections to the Airport made it difficult to get to Newcastle City (or elsewhere) without relying on a taxi, friend or family member.

Visitors also noted there was limited access to visitor information, including online information. This suggested there was no recognisable singular source of information on which people relied when deciding what to do during their visit.