



GREATER Newcastle Metropolitan Plan

2036





Acknowledgement

NSW Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to all Elders past, present and future.

September 2018

© Crown Copyright, State of NSW through its Department of Planning and Environment 2018

Disclaimer

While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure this document is correct at the time of printing, the State of NSW, its agents and employees, disclaim any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance or upon the whole or any part of this document.

Copyright notice

In keeping with the NSW Government's commitment to encourage the availability of information, you are welcome to reproduce the material that appears in Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036. This material is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0). You are required to comply with the terms of CC BY 4.0 and the requirements of the Department of Planning and Environment. More information can be found at: <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Copyright-and-Disclaimer>.

Cover image:

The Olive Tree Market in Civic Park, Newcastle
courtesy of Little Kite Photography for The Olive Tree Market

Foreword



Greater Newcastle is emerging as one of Australia's most dynamic and vibrant metropolitan cities.

After its proud industrial heritage as a mining and steel city, it is evolving into a service, creative and knowledge city. Significant investment has revitalised the city centre, boosted tertiary education, health and medical innovation, and seen the emergence of a nationally significant defence and aerospace industry.

Greater Newcastle will increasingly attract business and skilled workers from across Australia and the Asia-Pacific with its business flexibility and enviable coastal lifestyle around some of the best beaches in the country. As national and international investment grows, so will the metropolitan area's identity as a global leader in the new economy, entrepreneurship and technological innovation.

The first ever *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* builds on our dynamic and entrepreneurial city centre, strong industrial employment base, diversified economy and desirable lifestyle. It capitalises on extensive investment from State, Commonwealth and private partners by coordinating and linking places and ideas. It also responds to changing global economic trends, including new smart technologies, creative and sharing economies, and global connectedness.

A strategic approach to metropolitan planning in Greater Newcastle will help realise the vision set out in the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* to be the leading regional economy in Australia, with its heart being a vibrant new metropolitan area.

Metropolitan cities succeed and perform best when all tiers of government collaborate with business, industry and the community to deliver a shared vision for their city. Collaborative governance arrangements across Greater Newcastle will support the delivery and implementation of the *Metropolitan Plan* to ensure it delivers on this vision as Australia's newest and emerging economic and lifestyle city, that is connected with northern NSW and acknowledged globally as dynamic, entrepreneurial, desirable and a national leader in the new economy.

Thank you to all the individuals and groups who provided feedback on the draft Plan during its public exhibition in late 2017 and 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ARoberts'.

Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing
Special Minister of State

Nobby's Lighthouse and Hunter River in Newcastle, courtesy of Destination NSW



Contents

A Metropolitan Plan for Greater Newcastle	5
Greater Newcastle’s Past, Present and Future	6
Vision	11
Five Elements Shaping Greater Newcastle	12
Delivering Strong Leadership to Shape Greater Newcastle	14
Outcome 1: Create a workforce skilled and ready for the new economy	17
Outcome 2: Enhance environment, amenity and resilience for quality of life	29
Outcome 3: Deliver housing close to jobs and services	39
Outcome 4: Improve connections to jobs, services and recreation	47
Catalyst areas for Greater Newcastle	52
Newcastle City Centre	54
Beresfield–Black Hill	56
Broadmeadow	58
Callaghan	60
East Maitland	62
John Hunter Hospital	64
Kotara	66
Newcastle Port	68
North West Lake Macquarie	70
Tomago	72
Williamtown	74
Local Government Area Narratives	76
Appendix A: Considerations for Planning Proposals	80
Glossary	81
Endnotes	83

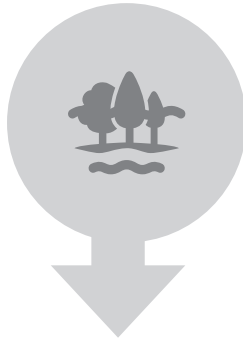
HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036

Goals

The leading regional economy in Australia



A biodiversity-rich natural environment



Greater housing choice and jobs



Thriving communities



GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2036

Outcomes

Create a workforce skilled and ready for the new economy

Enhance environment, amenity and resilience for quality of life

Deliver housing close to jobs and services

Improve connections to jobs, services and recreation

Strategies

- 1** Reinforce the revitalisation of Newcastle City Centre and expand transformation along the waterside
- 2** Grow the airport and aerospace and defence precinct at Williamstown
- 3** Increase domestic and global trade capabilities at Newcastle Port
- 4** Grow health precincts and connect the health network
- 5** Expand education and innovation clusters
- 6** Promote tourism, major events and sporting teams on the national and international stage
- 7** Respond to the changing land use needs of the new economy
- 8** Address changing retail consumer demand
- 9** Plan for jobs closer to homes in the Metro frame

- 10** Create better buildings and great places
- 11** Create more great public spaces where people come together
- 12** Enhance the Blue and Green Grid and the urban tree canopy
- 13** Protect rural amenity outside urban areas
- 14** Improve resilience to natural hazards
- 15** Plan for a Carbon Neutral Greater Newcastle by 2050

- 16** Prioritise the delivery of infill housing opportunities within existing urban areas
- 17** Unlock housing supply through infrastructure coordination and delivery
- 18** Deliver well-planned rural residential housing areas
- 19** Prepare local strategies to deliver housing

- 20** Integrate land use and transport planning
- 21** Prepare for technology-enhanced mobility changes that improve connectivity
- 22** Create higher speed connections to Sydney to encourage new employment opportunities
- 23** Protect major freight corridors

A Metropolitan Plan for GREATER Newcastle

As Australia’s seventh largest city and global gateway for northern NSW, Greater Newcastle faces a new future with investment in aviation, transport, education, health and tourism.

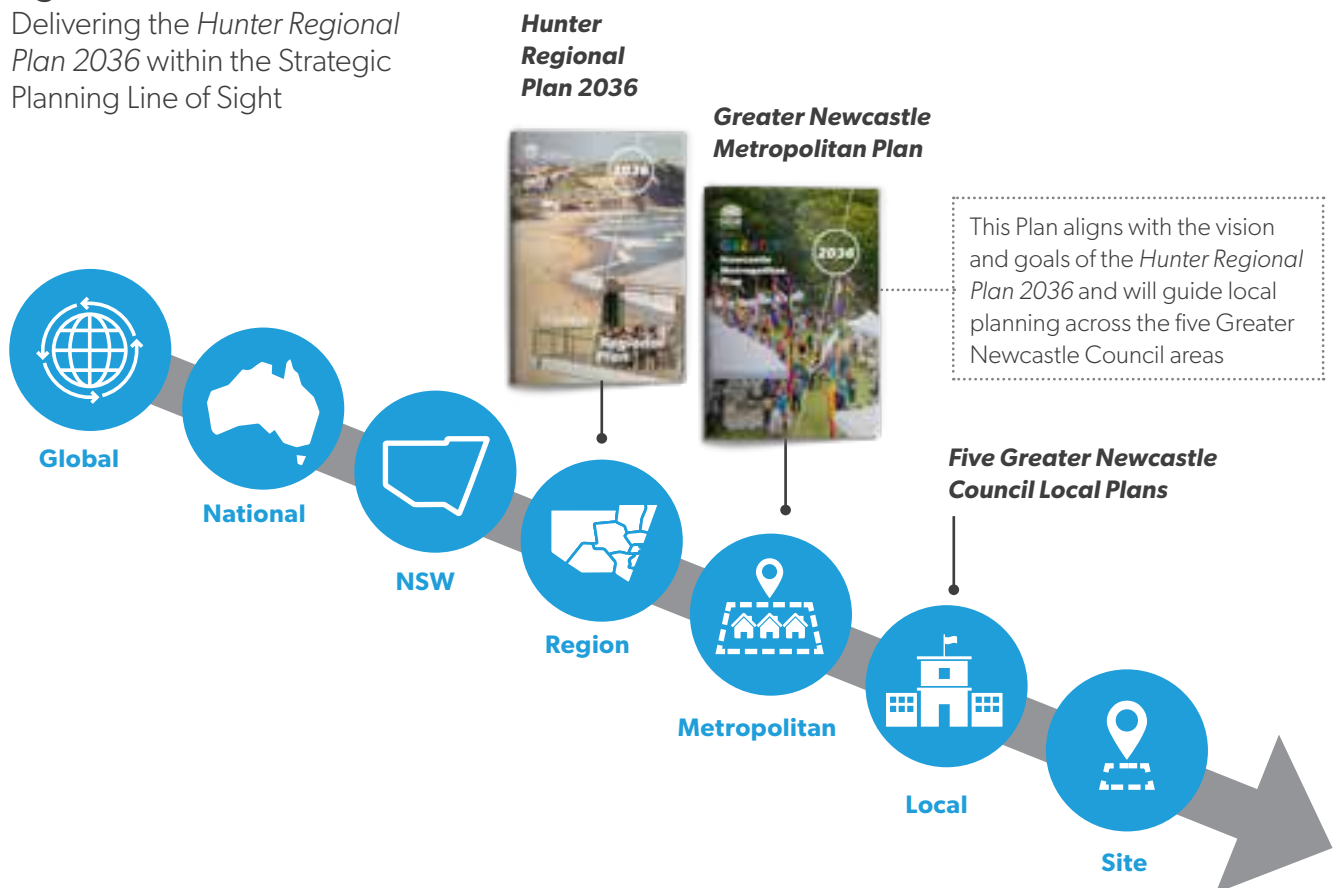
This first-ever Metropolitan Plan for Greater Newcastle, and first for a non-capital city in Australia, aims to capitalise on this investment through a collaborative approach.

The Plan sets out strategies and actions that will drive sustainable growth across Cessnock City, Lake Macquarie City, Maitland City, Newcastle City and Port Stephens communities, which together make up Greater Newcastle.

The Plan also helps to achieve the vision set in the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* – for the Hunter to be the leading regional economy in Australia with a vibrant new metropolitan city at its heart.

Figure 1:

Delivering the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* within the Strategic Planning Line of Sight



GREATER Newcastle's Past, Present and Future

After a successful period of economic restructure, increased investment and enhanced lifestyle opportunities, Greater Newcastle is emerging as one of Australia's most dynamic and vibrant metropolitan cities.

Locomotive engine being repaired outside the Hydraulic Engine House, Carrington, courtesy of the Snowball Collection



Newcastle, East end, coal loader c. 1875, courtesy of the Newcastle Library Collection

Growing from a mining and steel city

Before European settlement in the 1790's, the Awabakal and Worimi people lived on the land in Greater Newcastle for at least 40,000 years. They continue to have long standing connections with the land, community and culture.

Greater Newcastle is one of Australia's oldest sites of European settlement, becoming the first location for coal mining and export in Australia.

Separate townships were established, reaching up the Hunter River, around Lake Macquarie and into the valleys around Cessnock and Maitland. This was heavily influenced by the development of national transport networks, linking the city to centres and towns reaching up the Hunter Valley and along the east coast of Australia. The subsequent development of heavy rail and road networks to support the port created the transport systems that service Greater Newcastle and the Hunter.

The Newcastle Steelworks began operation in 1915 and grew to be the largest integrated steelworks in Australia. The scale of the operations shaped transport and industrial planning, along with providing a proud manufacturing and technical skill base reflected in the continued engineering specialty at the University of Newcastle.

Stewarts and Lloyds Pty Ltd tube mills, courtesy of the Newcastle Library Collection



Transitioning to a service, creative and knowledge city

This industrial heritage is directly influencing the city's transition today. Around \$650 million is being invested in the revitalisation of the city centre.¹ As a base for start-up businesses, Greater Newcastle's inner-city suburbs are increasingly home to creative and innovative small businesses operating from refurbished industrial and manufacturing workshops.

The tertiary education sector, anchored by the University of Newcastle, is expanding. Investment in the landmark NeW Space campus is complemented by Japan's Nihon University choosing Greater Newcastle as its first campus in Australia. This is part of the new international focus for inner city education in Greater Newcastle.

The John Hunter Hospital is the principal referral hospital for the Hunter and northern NSW. The \$470 million investment in the new Maitland Hospital, budget funding for improvements to the Calvary Mater and John Hunter Hospitals, together with additional investment in private hospitals, is further enhancing Greater Newcastle's health network. The Hunter Medical Research Institute is a world-class institute that attracts top medical specialists and collaborates with leading institutions and industries to better prevent and treat serious illnesses.

Williamtown will be the main defence base for the maintenance of advanced Joint Strike Fighters (F-35) operated by countries in the Asia Pacific. A defence and aerospace industry has emerged from links between universities, Newcastle Airport and the Royal Australia Air Force (RAAF) Base. This will be further driven by international flights to New Zealand and South-East Asia, and the new Newcastle Cruise Terminal at Newcastle Port.

The extent and scale of State, Commonwealth and private investment planned or underway in Greater Newcastle demands a metropolitan approach to coordinate and link places and opportunities together.

Lee Wharf and The Boardwalk, Honeysuckle



Transitioning



Metropolitan





An emerging metropolitan city with global appeal

Greater Newcastle's recent economic renaissance indicates that it has both the capacity and resilience to respond to global megatrends of change and the competitive pressures they pose. Globalisation has made Greater Newcastle more integrated with the world economy and this trend is set to continue. Growth in China and India will increase demand for resources and resource-related engineering services, food and beverage manufactures, education, tourism and health services from those countries.

New transport technology will be another key opportunity for Greater Newcastle due to the development of what is possibly the world's first automated vehicle (AV) implementation strategy supported by the NSW Government, that will leverage its strengths in advanced manufacturing and aeronautical engineering.

Greater Newcastle is well positioned with its aeronautical, defence and smart technology sectors to develop niche manufacturing and technology to be able to leverage AV early adopter status. If this is managed well, Greater Newcastle will be able to export to Australia and the world, high value AV technology, goods, and services.

Any successful metropolitan city needs a vibrant lifestyle, an engaged community confident in their culture, and the capacity to build local, national and global connections. These elements exist in Greater Newcastle, and will be optimised if growth is well planned and coordinated.

A planned approach will improve infrastructure and land use sequencing to capitalise on the opportunities for new economy jobs and support housing for the growing population. This approach will also improve connectivity and transport choices for Greater Newcastle's communities.

This *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* is justifiably ambitious. It builds on the city's dynamic and vibrant city centre, its strong industrial employment base, diversified economy and lifestyles. It responds to changing global economic trends, such as new smart technology, creative and sharing economies, the ageing population and global connectedness.

These trends directly link to the developing specialisations in health and the aged care sector, education, defence, tourism and research. Investment in these nationally and internationally focused industries will be ongoing.

Greater Newcastle will showcase successful urban transformation by bringing people back to the Newcastle city centre, connecting to its beaches, lakes and rivers, and enhancing the unique heritage, parklands and wineries. This will help to achieve the vision as one of Australia's most dynamic and vibrant metropolitan cities and sets the foundation for a confident and optimistic outlook. It will also provide a template for continued transformation across other parts of the metropolitan area, including Broadmeadow, North West Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Central Maitland, Charlestown and Raymond Terrace.

Clockwise from below: Riverlights Multicultural Festival in Maitland, courtesy of Maitland City Council; Surfhouse Restaurant, Merewether, courtesy of Destination NSW; Newcastle Jets playing at McDonald Jones Stadium in Newcastle; Yachts moored in Lake Macquarie; Newcastle Airport; Grape vines at Tyrrell's Wines, Pokolbin







Figure 2:
Greater Newcastle Vision 2036



Vision

Australia’s newest and emerging economic and lifestyle city, connected with northern NSW and acknowledged globally as:

- **dynamic and entrepreneurial, with a globally competitive economy and the excitement of the inner city and green suburban communities**
- **offering great lifestyles minutes from beaches or bushland, the airport or universities, and from the port to the lake**
- **a national leader in the new economy, with smarter cities and carbon neutral initiatives, and with collaborative governance that makes it a model to others in creating and adapting to change.**

Five Elements Shaping GREATER Newcastle

Five elements will shape Greater Newcastle into a dynamic and entrepreneurial city with a globally competitive economy and a great lifestyle, framed by wineries to the waterfront.

Figure 3: Greater Newcastle





1. Metro heart

Newcastle City Centre is at the heart of Greater Newcastle. It extends from the coastline at Nobbys Head to the emerging commercial hub at the Newcastle transport interchange at Wickham. From the closing of the steelworks and earthquakes in the 1980s, through the cycles of the mining industry, Newcastle City Centre has consistently evolved.

Both public and private investment and planning through *Revitalising Newcastle* and the *Urban Transformation and Transport Program* are set to enhance the City Centre's appeal. People will be returning to live and work, connecting the city to its waterfront with public spaces like the Bathers Way coastal walk and the Anzac Memorial Bridge.

Educational investment and the influx of new creative businesses into sought-after urban areas will encourage entrepreneurship and help to create a vibrant and diverse culture at the metro heart.

2. Metro core

The metro core sits east of the Pacific Motorway and is bound by the blue edges of the Harbour, the northern shores of Lake Macquarie and the Pacific Ocean. People living in the metro core will enjoy a cosmopolitan lifestyle focused around strong local communities, jobs and services, with a range of recreational opportunities in parks and reserves between the coast and adjoining hinterland.

With nearly two-thirds of Greater Newcastle's homes and jobs, the metro core is well positioned for improved integration of transport and services through intensification of activity. Many residents live within 30-minutes of their work place or centres providing services for their daily needs. More transport options to these centres, including cycle paths, buses and trains will bring these places closer together.

The renewal and revitalisation underway in the metro heart will spread along major transport corridors of the metro core as far as Warners Bay and Belmont. This will integrate the new economic and knowledge centres at John Hunter and Calvary Mater hospitals and the University of Newcastle, with the renewal opportunities at the Throsby Precinct of Newcastle Port, North West Lake Macquarie and Broadmeadow.

3. Metro frame

Greater Newcastle is framed by an arc of cities and towns from southern Lake Macquarie to Cessnock, Branxton, Maitland and Raymond Terrace. These centres are located by the water or the bush and have a strong identity, high amenity and a sense of place. They will become more closely connected with each other, to the metro core and metro heart.

It is also home to Central Maitland – a growing administrative and civic centre for the metro frame, and East Maitland – an emerging health and retail service centre. These strategic centres are some of the fastest growing in regional NSW that will continue to provide housing, jobs and services for communities across the metro frame.

Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Morisset and Raymond Terrace will also provide local housing and jobs opportunities, and will be designed to maintain the coastal and green outlooks, improve access to open space and retain the identity of places that collectively form Greater Newcastle.

4. Trading hubs

Greater Newcastle is the only place in regional NSW where the national road and rail trade routes intersect with an international trade port. The trading hubs and routes converge near Tomago and Beresfield–Black Hill, the trade link of the metropolitan area.

Greater Newcastle's trading hubs include Beresfield–Black Hill, manufacturing sites at Tomago, Cardiff, Newcastle Port and surrounding port lands, the Newcastle Airport at Williamtown and emerging locations along national road and rail trade routes.

There are opportunities to better connect trade movements across NSW and nationally via the Pacific Motorway, New England Highway, Hunter Expressway, national rail network and the proposed Lower Hunter Freight Corridor. This also reduces the volume of freight trains through urban areas. Large sites around the trading hubs are dedicated for freight and logistics, capturing the opportunity from improved connectivity. Newcastle Port and the Newcastle Airport also provide international trading opportunities.

5. Iconic tourism destinations

Home to nationally and internationally significant tourism destinations and events, a visit to Greater Newcastle leaves lasting memories of the area's amenity, natural environment, heritage and lifestyle. Visitors, residents and students are attracted to Greater Newcastle's diverse sporting and event venues, such as Surfest and Supercars with a ribbon of surf beaches, unique waterways and world heritage listed national parks. The cluster of vineyards and wineries add to Greater Newcastle's tourism appeal and make it an important economic and lifestyle city.

Delivering Strong Leadership to Shape GREATER Newcastle

Collaborative partnerships

Metropolitan cities succeed and perform best when all tiers of government collaborate and work together with business, industry and the community to deliver a shared vision for their city.

Collaborative governance arrangements across Greater Newcastle will support the delivery and implementation of the Metropolitan Plan.

This approach includes:

- a collaboration agreement between the NSW Government and the five Greater Newcastle councils to coordinate funding and sequence growth opportunities
- drawing on the newly established Committee for the Hunter to advise on metropolitan-scale collaboration between community, industry and government
- stronger engagement with young people and community groups who do not typically get involved in strategic planning.

These collaborative partnerships will help coordinate planning for growth, optimise opportunities for transformation, and drive the emergence of Greater Newcastle as a metropolitan city on the global stage.

Hunter Development Corporation will lead the collaboration, implementation and monitoring processes, with support from the Department of Planning and Environment. Progress on implementing the Plan will also be reported to other existing governance bodies, such as the Hunter Regional Leadership Executive.

This Plan's forecasts of population, housing and employment growth of Greater Newcastle also provides a platform for councils to collaborate with the Commonwealth on inter-governmental agreements.

Delivery focused

To deliver the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036*, all levels of government, the private sector and the community will need to work together.

The Implementation Plan provides details of how councils and other relevant planning authorities will give effect to the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan* and includes actions to:

- assess development applications with reference to the outcomes of this Plan
- prepare local planning strategies, including local housing strategies
- prepare or amend development control plans, including comprehensive master planning
- prepare planning proposals consistent with the actions in this Plan.

The objectives of the Ministerial Directions listed in Appendix A were considered in the preparation of the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036*. A Planning Proposal may be inconsistent with the terms of these Ministerial Directions if it is in accordance with the actions in this Plan.

The Implementation Plan provides details of seven implementation programs that identify work to be completed within the first two years of implementing this Plan, as well as ongoing work by local and State governments that contribute to implementing the Plan. These programs work towards progressing multiple actions from this Plan and the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*.

Monitoring and review

Annual reporting on the Metropolitan Plan will be included in the reporting on the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*.

Implementation of the Metropolitan Plan will be monitored and reviewed to ensure achievement of the vision and outcomes of the Plan every 5 years, or as necessary.

Professor Greg Clark's advice on governance

Professor Greg Clark, an expert on global cities, provided advice and insights from metropolitan planning in other cities of similar size and features to Greater Newcastle, including:



Bilbao, Spain



Cardiff, Wales



Gothenburg, Sweden



Halifax, Canada



Malmö, Sweden



Portland, USA



Waterloo, Canada

Professor Clark advised that these cities provide a powerful example to Greater Newcastle of how improved metropolitan collaboration has coincided with a rise in population, better planning and management of land, increased investment in infrastructure and urban renewal, land use and density changes, reduction in long-term structural unemployment, increased the rate of entrepreneurship, and improved economic performance relative to the rest of the nation.²

Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution

The Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) will set out the State infrastructure and development contributions to support the growth and development of Greater Newcastle and the wider Hunter. The Hunter SIC will help deliver the goals of the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* and this Metropolitan Plan, and will replace the *draft 2011 Lower Hunter Special Infrastructure Contribution Plan*.

The SIC will define a fair and appropriate financial contribution that new development should make towards the cost of State infrastructure.

The SIC will provide certainty to the development industry on the obligations arising from the development process. It will also significantly streamline and simplify the development assessment process by replacing the existing system whereby contributions are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment is developing the SIC.

Hunter Expressway, Hunter Valley



The Queen Elizabeth ship arriving in Newcastle Port. Increased tourism in Greater Newcastle will help grow the new economy. Image courtesy of Fivespice Creative.



Outcome 1:

Create a workforce skilled and ready for the new economy

Greater Newcastle's diversified and resilient economy will expand on strengths in health, education, defence, tourism and the creative sectors of the new economy. The University of Newcastle, Newcastle Airport and Port and the John Hunter Hospital are key metropolitan assets providing opportunities to further grow the service economy and support ongoing transition.

Being part of the Asia Pacific and centrally located on the eastern seaboard of Australia positions Greater Newcastle to grow industries and to attract firms and skilled workers from many areas.

The 'Global Gateways' of Newcastle Port and Newcastle Airport provide enormous opportunity for increased connections and movement of people and goods directly to the Asia Pacific. This direct international connectivity coupled with lifestyle, education opportunities and proximity to Sydney positions Greater Newcastle to make the most of increasing demand for goods and services from Asia.

Newcastle Airport at Williamtown is one of the largest combined defence and civilian aerodromes in Australia. Increased flight activity will build towards an aspiration of 5 million passengers annually by 2036 to support new international services to locations across the Asia Pacific. Major upgrades to the RAAF Base to accommodate new Joint Strike Fighters (F-35) will create a cluster of economic activity and new jobs. Greater Newcastle's growing capabilities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics will service these activities.

These gateways mean Greater Newcastle will attract increased domestic and international tourists through its iconic tourist destinations, including through increased accessibility and promotion of the world-renowned vineyards at Pokolbin, surf beaches, vibrant city centres and daytime and night-time cultural experiences.

Newcastle City Centre is an important catalyst for a vibrant and internationally-facing Greater Newcastle. It will accommodate corporate headquarters, key institutions and shared amenities. Continued revitalisation, improved transport connectivity, and high-quality buildings and places will attract new small business start-ups, and encourage established businesses to open new outposts.

Greater Newcastle will become a major university city, with campuses for a diverse range of international universities. The University of Newcastle and Nihon University will continue to make the education and training sector a key source of growth in Greater Newcastle's economy, with this sector relatively stronger than the equivalent sectors in Greater Sydney and other regions in NSW.

Greater Newcastle provides many of the health services for northern NSW via John Hunter Hospital, specialised oncology services at the Calvary Mater Hospital, faculties at the University of Newcastle, and medical research leadership at the Hunter Medical Research Institute. Greater Newcastle was also a trial region for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. These facilities and initiatives will expand research, medical professionals and specialist health services to position Greater Newcastle as a national health services hub.

Proximity to Sydney provides opportunities for industry specialisation for goods and services to Australia's largest market. Greater Newcastle can build on its economic independence so that it complements, rather than competes with Sydney.

While direct access to world markets provided by its port and airport is a great advantage for Greater Newcastle, significant numbers of domestic and foreign tourists access the regional market from Sydney, along with significant volumes of trade. The combination of the new Hunter Expressway (HEX) and North Connex will increase that access, as would potential future investment in faster or high-speed passenger rail, and new freight rail capacity.

Proximity to Sydney will grow domestic visitation, with increased international visitors expected due to investments in Newcastle Airport and the new Newcastle Cruise Terminal. National sporting and cultural events, like Surfest, Supercars, international sporting games and nationally touring artists at venues in the vineyards and Newcastle will continue to bring Greater Newcastle to the global stage.

Continuing a history of innovation

Greater Newcastle and the broader Hunter has historically demonstrated expertise and innovation across a range of industry sectors. Building on its comparative strengths, Greater Newcastle will be an environment attractive to entrepreneurs and conducive to innovation. Responding to Macro Plan Dimasi's *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Strategy – Economic Prospects to 2036*³, the Metropolitan Plan will strengthen connections between people, education and employment.

In particular the Metropolitan Plan will facilitate a skilled workforce by:

- providing access to diverse, quality education providers who themselves have strong linkages to existing and emerging industry sectors
- providing creative, affordable work spaces close to home
- providing quality physical and virtual infrastructure connecting Greater Newcastle to the world
- providing a high amenity environment with an enviable lifestyle, where you can work and play.

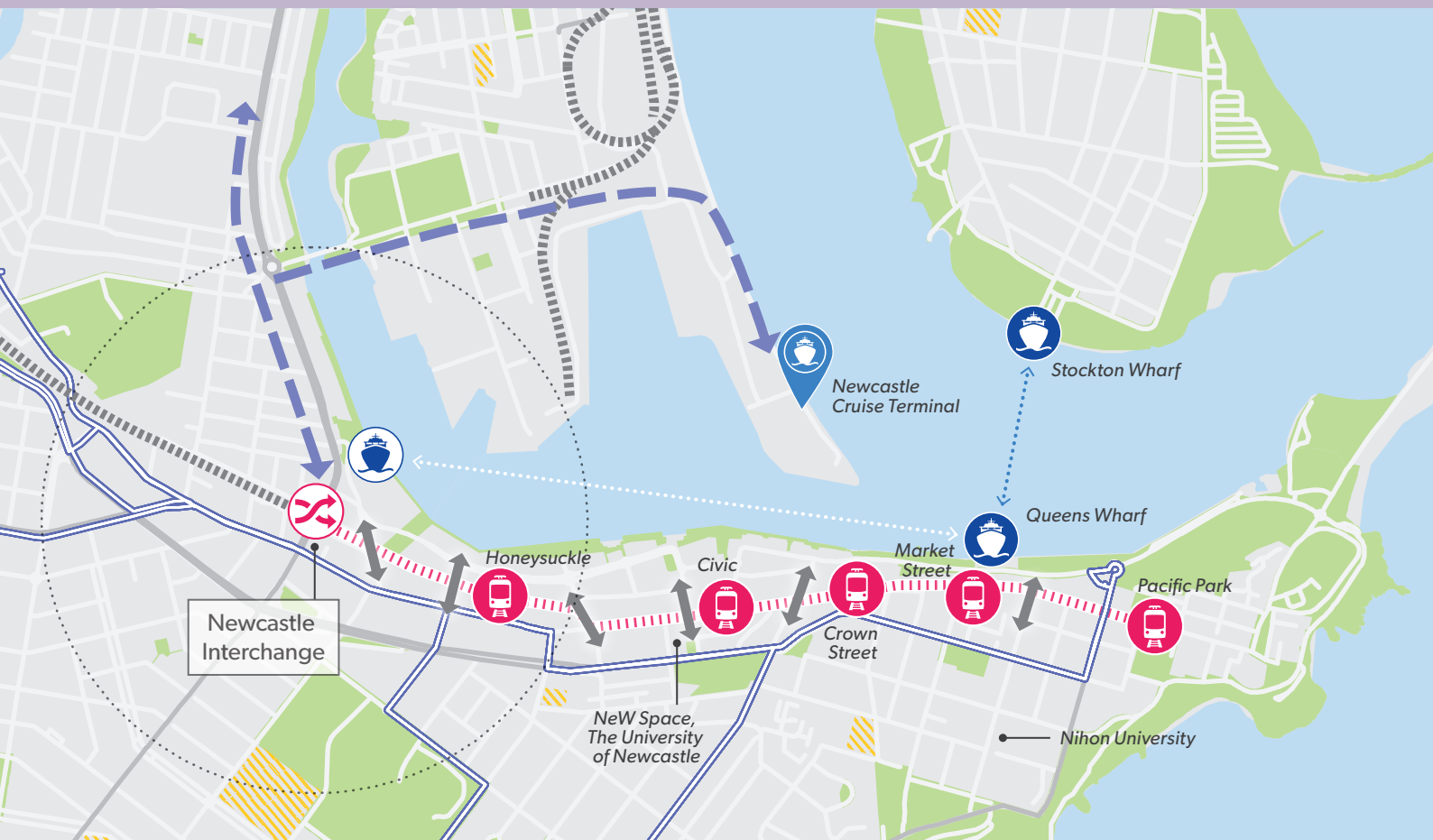
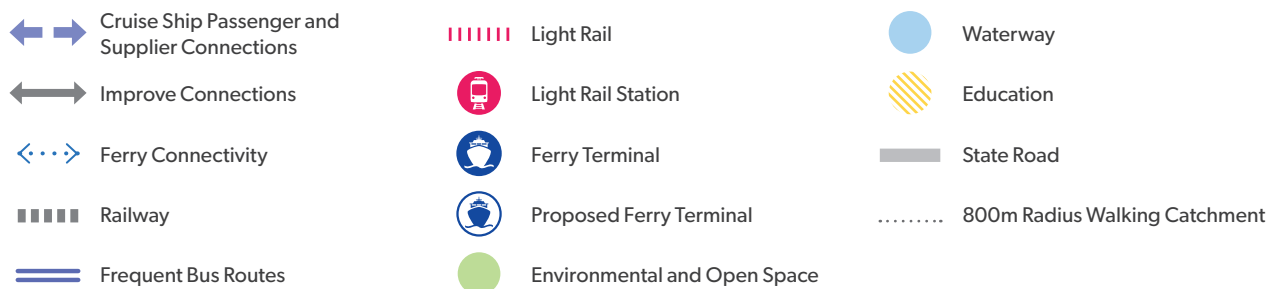


Figure 4: Connectivity
Newcastle City Centre
2018



Strategy 1

Reinforce the revitalisation of Newcastle city centre and expand transformation along the waterside

Newcastle City Centre has undergone significant transformation following infrastructure investment in the Newcastle Light Rail and Newcastle Interchange. Public investment of over \$650 million is strengthening connections between the city centre and the waterfront, creating job opportunities, providing new housing and delivering attractive public spaces connected to public transport.

This program is facilitated by Hunter Development Corporation, in partnership with Transport for NSW and in collaboration with Newcastle City Council, the community, industry and local business to shape the revitalisation of the city centre and attract people, jobs and tourism.

The revitalisation program is linking with investment in the University of Newcastle NeW Space campus and the new Newcastle law courts. These projects demonstrate the growing confidence in Greater Newcastle as a city in which to invest. The next stage of the city centre's revitalisation will leverage off the multi-modal Newcastle Interchange at Wickham – forming a core of activity with new corporate spaces, tourism and lifestyle amenities.

The focus for new jobs is the attraction of national corporate headquarters, expansion of tertiary education, tourism, small business and the services to support an additional 4,000 dwellings and accommodation for students, as well as new hotel developments.

Activating and connecting the transport interchange to the waterfront will boost the waterfront as a desirable place to live and relax. It is being showcased to a global sporting audience during surf events and Supercars, bringing the attractive lifestyle to the attention of new and returning visitors. Activities and events, such as the Market Street Lawn, will continue to provide greater amenity for residents, workers and visitors.

Collectively, these initiatives will drive creative and innovative business industries to the city centre and raise the profile and brand of Greater Newcastle.

Actions

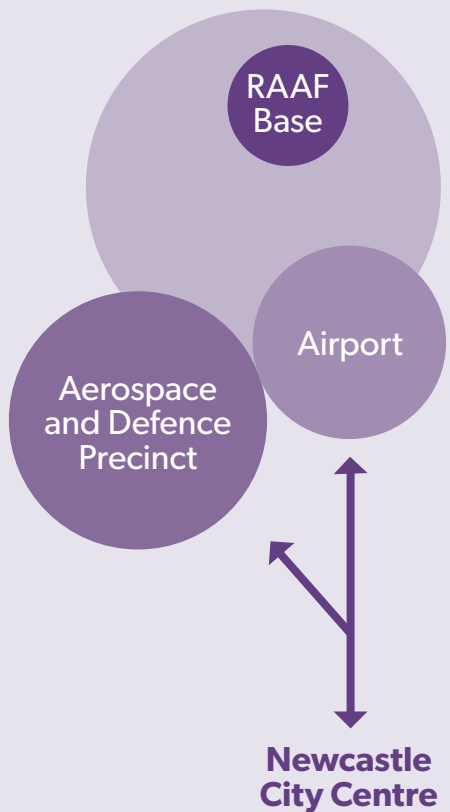
- 1.1** Hunter Development Corporation, through the *Revitalising Newcastle Program*, will:
 - coordinate the delivery of frequent and reliable travel to and through the city centre via the Newcastle Light Rail, Newcastle Bus Interchange and Newcastle Interchange
 - provide opportunities for new housing for workers and students
 - transform sites for public open space, new shops and residential opportunities and connecting the city to the waterfront
 - activate the waterfront by improving pedestrian, cyclist and public transport safety, amenity, access and connectivity to the waterfront.
- 1.2** Hunter Development Corporation will reinforce the role of the city centre in providing professional, financial and office employment by increasing commercial floor space in the West End to enable growth and relocation of businesses.
- 1.3** Newcastle City Council will align local plans to enable continued investment in Newcastle City Centre that is consistent with this Plan.



The boardwalk at Honeysuckle Precinct, Newcastle



Top: Williamstown Aerospace Centre, courtesy of Williamstown Aerospace Centre Holdings; Bottom left: Pilots at Williamstown RAAF Base, courtesy of Lockheed Martin; Bottom right: F-35 Lightning II at Williamstown RAAF Base, courtesy of Lockheed Martin



Passengers

1.2m **→** 2.6m
2016 2036



Jobs

5,300 **→** 8,300
2016 2036



Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) squadron base

Transport



25-minute drive



45-minute bus ride
(Improved public transport connections to be investigated)



Strategy 2

Grow the airport and aerospace and defence precinct at Williamtown

Williamtown will increase its role as a nationally significant aviation and defence hub, with a major role in the Asia Pacific. The precinct will leverage the investments in Newcastle Airport, the RAAF Base and the Williamtown Defence and RAAF Airport Related Employment Zone (DAREZ).

The RAAF Base employs over 3,500 people and will be the primary location for the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) squadron. It will also be the maintenance facility to service these advanced fighters from countries across the Asia Pacific.⁴

By 2036, it is projected that Newcastle Airport will fly a minimum of 2.6 million passengers annually, with aspirations for this to be 5 million passengers annually by 2036. The anticipated growth and expansion of passenger flights will need to be supported by improved public transport connections between the Airport and Newcastle City Centre, as well as runway surface and freight handling capacity upgrades. New opportunities will also arise from these improvements, including being able to undertake maintenance of domestic and defence aircraft.

The operational airspace of Williamtown will also be protected to enable its ongoing growth.

The DAREZ is connected to the Airport and this presents a rare opportunity to build a nationally significant and unique industry cluster that is a catalyst for expansion of science, technology and manufacturing industries.

Feasibility and additional master planning work will explore potential air freight opportunities and maximise opportunities associated with defence manufacturing and maintenance of the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) squadron. This will need to address development costs for drainage and environmental management that is currently a limitation on investment. A measured response that accelerates development and maximises total benefits over costs will be developed to drive further investment.

Actions

2.1 Newcastle Airport, the Hunter Development Corporation and Port Stephens Council will:

- work with Transport for NSW to develop a travel demand management plan for the Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone and options for optimising movement, place outcomes and minimising congestion
- provide development-enabling infrastructure and address environmental constraints to facilitate the growth and development of the Williamtown Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone for aerospace and defence industries and associated complementary uses.

2.2 Transport for NSW will:

- identify transport corridors that can cater for improved bus services to Williamtown to support increased worker and passenger movements
- work with Port Stephens and Newcastle City councils to align local plans to protect transport corridors and ensure proposed changes in land uses minimise the cumulative impact on the operation of the road network.

2.3 Port Stephens Council will:

- protect the Williamtown aerospace and defence precinct from inappropriate land uses (including bulky-goods retailing)
- in consultation with Newcastle Airport and the RAAF, prevent residential development near the airport and limit residential development in areas affected by aircraft noise (including areas below flight paths)
- align local plans to facilitate the growth and change at the Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone over time.

2.4 Newcastle Airport, Transport for NSW and Port Stephens and Newcastle City councils will investigate transport improvements between Williamtown, Newcastle City Centre and other destinations in the metro frame.

Strategy 3

Increase domestic and global trade capabilities at Newcastle Port

Greater Newcastle is well positioned to capitalise on rising global demand for goods, with Newcastle Port offering capacity to increase direct links into global trade networks.

Coal represents 91% of the value of exports, with 161 million tonnes of coal shipped in 2016.⁵ The capacity for manufactured goods and primary products to be exported will be expanded by diversifying port activities to enable agricultural businesses in the Hunter and wider NSW to more easily and efficiently export directly to Asia.

The Department of Industry is coordinating the \$2.64 million upgrade from the Restart NSW program for the Carrington Shipyard Slipway to reactivate Greater Newcastle’s potential as a major ship repair and maintenance site.

Industrial areas near the Port include the employment lands at Mayfield, Carrington, Kooragang Island and Walsh Point. Planning decisions will consider the adaptation of the port to respond to changing global freight demands, and opportunities of port-side infrastructure and availability of land.

The recent establishment of the Newcastle Cruise Terminal strengthens Newcastle Port as an international cruise ship destination and secures the long-term future of cruise shipping in the Hunter.

Cruise shipping will grow as an expanding tourism industry for Greater Newcastle. Home porting, where ships start and finish their destination, will deliver additional economic value via more cruise ships, more interstate and international visitors and an opportunity for local businesses to supply goods and services to ships.



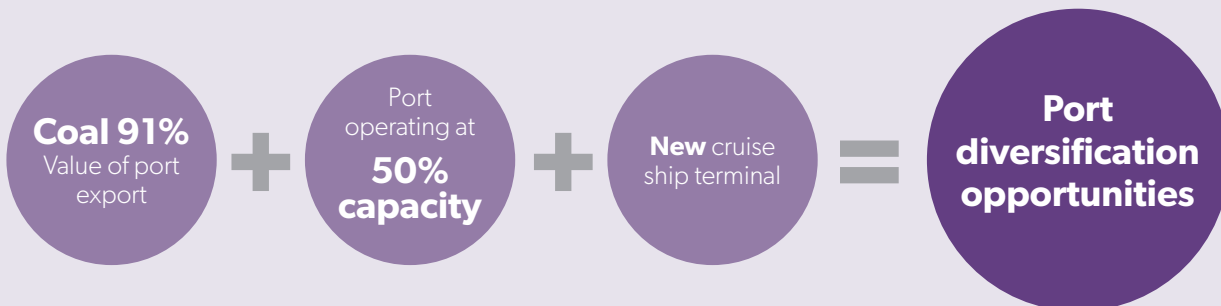
Wind turbines at Mayfield

Actions

- 3.1** The Department of Planning and Environment, working with the Port of Newcastle, will facilitate the diversification of activities at Newcastle Port to adapt to changing global demand for trade and tourism through the Three Ports State Environmental Planning Policy.
- 3.2** The Port of Newcastle will:
 - work with the Hunter Development Corporation to build capacity of the Newcastle Cruise Terminal as a home port
 - work with Transport for NSW to provide public transport connections between Newcastle Port and Newcastle City Centre to service visitors and workers of the Newcastle Cruise Terminal.

Newcastle Port

2016



Strategy 4

Grow health precincts and connect the health network

The John Hunter Health Precinct is Greater Newcastle's busiest health precinct, and is the tertiary referral hospital for northern NSW, as well as providing private hospital services and one of two forensic services within NSW. The Precinct provides education, training and medical research facilities through a partnership between the Local Health District, University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute.

The Local Health District will finalise plans to grow the John Hunter Health Precinct and connect the region's health network, while also progressing plans to develop the new Maitland Hospital at East Maitland for which \$23.5 million of the total \$470 million investment is allocated.

A number of private hospitals are also expanding and will provide future job opportunities. Growth in health and medical research in Greater Newcastle will build on these investments. These will be the diverse health services for a globally competitive city.

Additionally, Greater Newcastle's ageing population will be supported through improvements to aged care facilities, community-based health services and the introduction of private providers of care and wellness for older residents.

Figure 5: Major Health Precincts in Greater Newcastle



- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Cessnock | 9. Charlestown |
| 2. Kurri Kurri | 10. Toronto and Gateshead |
| 3. East Maitland | 11. Belmont |
| 4. Raymond Terrace | 12. Morisset |
| 5. John Hunter | |
| 6. Calvary Mater Waratah | |
| 7. Lingard Merewether | |
| 8. Warners Bay | |

Actions

4.1 Hunter New England Health and the private health sector, working with Greater Newcastle councils and Transport for NSW, will:

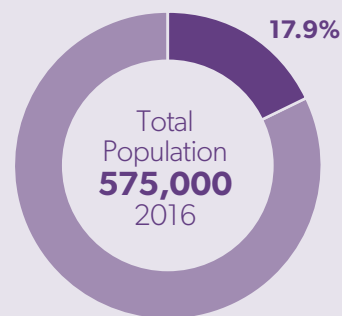
- facilitate the development of allied health, education, training, hotels, aged care services and research facilities at the John Hunter and East Maitland health precincts, strategic centres, and other major health precincts
- respond to public transport and road network improvements, and manage parking
- locate all new major health facilities in strategic centres, existing major health precincts or in locations that have a high level of public transport connectivity such as railway stations.

4.2 Greater Newcastle councils will amend local plans to:

- facilitate complementary land uses within proximity of health precincts
- prioritise planning for seniors housing and aged care services close to frequent public transport and within centres.

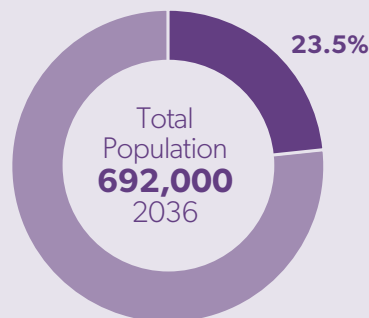
Ageing Population

2016-2036



Total Population
575,000
2016

102,800
population aged 65
and over in 2016



Total Population
692,000
2036

163,100
population aged 65
and over in 2036

Strategy 5

Expand education and innovation clusters

Greater Newcastle will be one of Australia's major university cities with a number of international education and research institutions clustered throughout the metropolitan area. A skilled workforce and a range of international universities will attract new business and institutions to Greater Newcastle.

Newcastle City Centre will grow on the back of education, tourism and proximity to Sydney. The University of Newcastle NeW Space campus is revitalising Newcastle City Centre and the arrival of Nihon University will create a new use for the former Newcastle Court House.

Knowledge and talent creation will be encouraged as the economy transitions to jobs focused on the new economy and technological innovation. Universities will promote growth in other industries, particularly when research is connected to other institutions. This includes emerging innovation and research clusters specialising in engineering, energy and medical research.

Vocation education providers (including TAFE) will also support the development of a skilled workforce by developing training clusters that complement regional economic strengths in hospitality or viticulture at Cessnock. The NSW Government is also committed to future enrolment growth for primary and secondary education, including funding for planning of the Newcastle Education Precinct.

Actions

5.1 Greater Newcastle councils will ensure local plans:

- facilitate complementary land uses that diversify metropolitan education and innovation clusters, including research institutions, related business and student housing
- respond to and encourage development of new education and innovation clusters in strategic centres and on brownfield sites.

5.2 Hunter Development Corporation, the Department of Planning and Environment and Department of Premier and Cabinet will develop a prospectus and market Greater Newcastle to research institutions, innovative business, and national and international universities, with the target of four universities in Greater Newcastle by 2036.



Clockwise from above: University of Newcastle NeW Space campus, courtesy of Office of Regional Development; The Matildas, courtesy of Grant Sprule; Bitter & Twisted Festival in Maitland Gaol, courtesy of Maitland City Council; Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources, courtesy of Murray McKean Photography (supplied by UoN)

Metroplitan education and innovation clusters

- Callaghan – University of Newcastle
- The Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources and nearby CSIRO Energy Centre at Steel River
- The Newcastle City Centre – NeW Space campus, UoN expansion, future Nihon campus and Three76 Innovation Hub
- New Lambton Medical Precinct – John Hunter Hospital and Hunter Medical Research Institute
- Williamtown – emerging DSA-18 defence, security and aerospace hub
- Charlestown – Charlestown Innovation Precinct (ChIP)
- Avondale College at Cooranbong
- NSW TAFE Hunter Institute with nine campuses in Greater Newcastle





Strategy 6

Promote tourism, major events and sporting teams on the national and international stage

Greater Newcastle will be promoted for its high amenity, natural environment, heritage and great lifestyle, which will grow visitor numbers to the metropolitan area.

The iconic tourism destinations, major events and supporting major sporting teams are essential parts of the identity and branding of Greater Newcastle.

Global gateways at Newcastle Airport and the Port of Newcastle have expanding capacity to welcome more visitors to Greater Newcastle and the Hunter. Improved higher speed connections to Sydney will also make it quicker and easier for tourists to travel north for the wide range of experiences on offer in Greater Newcastle. Northern and western transport connectivity improvements will also help to grow the number of visitors.

Existing iconic tourism destinations, such as Newcastle City Centre, the internationally renowned vineyards and wineries around Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Nelson Bay to the north of Greater Newcastle are drawcards, with opportunities for additional tourism infrastructure like more diverse visitor accommodation, easier transport connections and packages of events and activities.

Larger and more frequent festivals and events as well as live music will attract more tourists. Retaining and enhancing the places where these occur, as well as making access and transport easier, will enable more visitors and local communities to enjoy and participate in cultural and entertainment activities.

New opportunities to develop tourism experiences include the recreational amenities of Lake Macquarie and the coastline, national parks, and cultural tourism in the historic river and mining towns of Maitland, Cessnock and Raymond Terrace, and villages such as Morpeth, Wollombi and Catherine Hill Bay. Greater Newcastle's residents can benefit from the new offerings as well as increased local employment opportunities as tourist numbers increase.

Actions

- 6.1** Hunter Development Corporation, in collaboration with Greater Newcastle councils and other major stakeholders, will:
 - establish the identity and brand of Greater Newcastle as an internationally recognised metropolitan city
 - promote the competitive advantages of Greater Newcastle to domestic and international markets to enable coordinated growth of health, education and tourism sectors.
- 6.2** Destination NSW, through its Regional Conferencing Unit, will support growth of the conferencing sector to target opportunities, identify capabilities and undertake promotional activities to grow the market.
- 6.3** Greater Newcastle councils will align local plans to:
 - increase flexibility for new tourism proposals (buildings, hotels, spaces, and activities) within strategic centres, throughout the metro core including Stockton, and rural and environmental areas in the metro frame that do not affect the environmental features, viticulture or other agricultural industries, or natural amenity
 - enable major events in strategic centres and other suitable locations along with the development of hotels, event and conference capacity
 - support the live music and performance sector by identifying and protecting areas with strong traditions of live music and performance, and by supporting areas where urban and cultural amenity can be improved by live music and performance activity.

Strategy 7

Respond to the changing land use needs of the new economy

Greater Newcastle's industrial and heavy manufacturing past, along with its lifestyle appeal, international connectivity and communications infrastructure provides a competitive advantage for new economy jobs.

A positive legacy of Greater Newcastle's industrial and heavy manufacturing past is land and infrastructure in large holdings in central locations. Examples include the Hydro site at Kurri Kurri close to the Hunter Expressway, with electricity transmission infrastructure, Throsby Basin employment lands adjoining Newcastle City Centre and the West Lake Macquarie former power station sites at Wangi Wangi, Munmorah and Vales Point (still operational).

Vacant or underutilised sites in the Throsby Basin and elsewhere in the metro core are already being used for emerging creative industries and new start-up manufacturing opportunities. These new businesses are refurbishing old warehouses in once industrial inner-city suburbs. This reflects the important contribution that small business is already making to the Greater Newcastle economy.

Development of the Greater Newcastle Employment Lands Prospectus will ensure economic opportunities are leveraged and new investment attracted to the region.



Pumphouse School of Design, Wickham, courtesy of Fivespice Creative

Actions

7.1 Greater Newcastle councils will align local plans to:

- build capacity for new economy jobs in areas well serviced by public transport and close to established centres by:
 - enabling a greater range of employment generating uses in appropriate industrial and business areas
 - responding to the challenge of balancing the vibrancy of a night-time economy with residential amenity
 - encouraging more home-based business, home-based industries and small business (under two employees plus residents) in residential areas.
- ensure an adequate supply of employment land, including industrial zoned land, to cater for demand of urban services in accessible locations.

7.2 The Department of Planning and Environment, working with Newcastle City and Lake Macquarie councils, will:

- review the role of former manufacturing land in the metro core to determine potential for new business, housing or open space
- plan for the relocation of heavy industries away from urban areas to industrial precincts including Beresfield, Tomago and other suitable locations.

7.3 Hunter Development Corporation, working with the Department of Planning and Environment, will identify, catalogue and re-use brownfield sites and buildings to continue regeneration and revitalisation, promote creative industries, innovation and entrepreneurship, and attract additional anchor institutions and cultural facilities.

7.4 Hunter Development Corporation, working with the Department of Trade and Investment, will develop an Employment Land Prospectus.

7.5 Maitland City Council will develop Rutherford as a focus of mining support and connection to the Upper Hunter, while also being responsive to planned future land uses.



Strategy 8

Address changing retail consumer demand

The retail sector is Greater Newcastle's second largest employer and services a wide catchment extending to the Upper Hunter and northern NSW.

At the same time, the retail sector is subject to changing consumer behavior and new technologies such as on-line retailing. These trends are likely to change retail land use needs in the longer term, particularly in strategic centres where there is a high concentration of retail activity such as Kotara, Greenhills, Glendale and Charlestown.

There is a need to continue to diversify retail focused centres, and provide a better mixture of activities where people can live, work and play without getting into a car. Redevelopment opportunities that deliver street activation, improved amenity and mixed uses, in places like Kotara and Greenhills, will enable the gradual transformation of these places into mixed use town centres.

The role of smaller centres in providing retail, food and other services will continue to be important. The success of main street centres, such as Darby Street and Beaumont Street in Newcastle and Warners Bay Esplanade, demonstrates the value in enabling mixed use pedestrian retail centres. Ongoing public domain improvement and main street master plans will support improvements to smaller centres.

Future locations of bulky good or big box shops will require careful planning to ensure they are in the right locations. Councils, working with the Department of Planning and Environment, will identify appropriate locations for these land uses, taking into account technological changes which will also impact distribution and influence locations for warehousing and logistics.

Actions

8.1 Greater Newcastle councils will:

- align local plans to enable diversity of uses in larger retail centres including housing, offices and recreation and adapt to changing retail activities
- undertake public domain improvements to respond to the Movement and Place framework (an integrated land use and transport planning tool used by the NSW Government to improve the liveability of places).

Strategy 9

Plan for jobs closer to homes in the metro frame

Greater Newcastle has a range of well-established strategic centres across its metropolitan area which have the potential to accommodate significant growth in the economy and become important residential, employment and entertainment precincts.

Cessnock, Central Maitland, Kurri Kurri and Raymond Terrace are emerging city centres that provide convenient access to jobs for the rapidly expanding surrounding communities. They also contain the highest diversity of economic activity, in addition to providing a wide range of services and historic civic functions. These strategic centres will continue to play a critical role in the economic development for the metro core and metro frame.

Increasing the numbers of jobs within and near the emerging city centres will assist in meeting the goals in the *Hunter Regional Plan 2056*, and reduce work related travel and congestion across the metropolitan area. Planning for jobs closer to homes becomes vital as the surrounding population grows, especially in the metro frame.

To support job growth, there is a need to attract new business investment that builds on existing strengths of these centres and to leverage opportunities in industries experiencing growth, including health and higher education. This will reinforce economic resilience of Greater Newcastle through maintaining a high diversity of employment.

An adequate supply of commercial office space for business is required in city centres, and will need to be monitored by councils to meet growing demand. Additionally, flexibility for businesses in surrounding residential zones, and the growth of shared work spaces will respond to changing workplace demand.

Actions

9.1 Greater Newcastle councils, with support from the Department of Planning and Environment, will undertake a commercial floorspace audit of strategic centres and develop job and housing targets for each strategic centre.

9.2 Greater Newcastle councils will:

- amend local plans to promote more shared workspaces for start-ups in strategic centres
- enable small business growth in residential zones close to centres and transport connections.



Outcome 2:

Enhance environment, amenity and resilience for quality of life

Greater Newcastle is one of the few places in Australia where the benefits of living in a metropolitan city overlap with coastal, rural and natural environments. Residents can easily access world-class education, national sporting teams, a range of entertainment options and higher-order health services in an urban area interspersed with beaches, bushland, waterways, and open space.

Most residents can access open space and recreation opportunities within a 10-minute walk of their home.⁶ Access to open space and recreation networks will influence the quality of life of the growing metropolitan city. Where sites and facilities form part of a broader network, they will offer better walking and cycling connections, and wider urban ecology benefits.

This Plan applies the environmental directions and actions in the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* to invest in conservation (including biodiversity offsets) that will protect, and where possible, enhance habitat connections.

The arc of centres in the metro frame offer a diverse range of settlements with their own unique character and identity. This Plan seeks to preserve the local character of places, enhance the built environment and renew and create great places.

While Greater Newcastle enjoys a usually benign natural environment, the area is subject to natural hazards. A changing climate is influencing the severity and occurrence of storms, floods, drought, and coastal erosion and inundation.

Resilience to natural hazards ensures that people, property, infrastructure, the economy and the environment can cope with the shocks and stresses these events create, while also allowing communities to quickly 'bounce back' when events occur.

Growth brings the opportunity to build a community resilient to natural hazards through risk-responsive land use planning, resilient building design, incorporation of evacuation planning into development, and consideration of disaster recovery in forward planning.

Green infrastructure outcomes

These outcomes capture the key considerations relating to green infrastructure and the built environment:



conservation of the natural environment



increased access to open space



improved connectivity to promote active and healthy living



increased urban greening to ameliorate climate extremes.

Source: *Draft Greener Places*, Government Architect New South Wales <http://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/policies/greener-places>

Strategy 10

Create better buildings and great places

Great places have a clear sense of identity and connection that reflects shared community values and a focus on public areas and green spaces. Residents value Greater Newcastle's diversity of natural landscapes and enjoy lifestyles based on a range of social, recreation and sporting opportunities.

Greater Newcastle's heritage is fundamental to its cultural economy. Regeneration of heritage assets through adaptive re-use will deliver unique and exciting places, along with opportunities for investment and jobs.

Adaptively-reusing heritage buildings will help to retain the distinctiveness of Greater Newcastle's neighbourhoods and celebrate their history and character. This is particularly important in neighbourhoods undergoing renewal and change.

Recognising that every place and every community has its own character, the task of maintaining, renewing and creating great places will rely on local expertise, insight and participation. The stories, experiences and expression of local residents generate the sense of place, which can meet the many and varied liveability needs of diverse communities.

Councils will continue to grow centres with the support of the Department of Planning and Environment, with master planning identifying the public domain improvements and enabling infrastructure needed to support growth.

As an example, Newcastle City Centre is a showcase for place-based urban renewal and revitalisation. The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy is reshaping the city centre into a vibrant, economically successful city. Newcastle Interchange and the Newcastle Light Rail is continuing the revitalisation, including the creation of Market Street Lawn.

Maitland and Cessnock have also adopted place-based strategies for urban renewal and revitalisation focused on bringing people together. Their success is shown in the landscape design award for The Levee in Central Maitland as a regular event space for food, culture and history festivals.

The Government Architect NSW has prepared *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for NSW*, which includes Design Objectives for NSW. The objectives are applicable at any scale from cities and towns, landscapes, open spaces or individual building, depending on the nature of the project, problem or opportunity.

Actions

10.1 Greater Newcastle councils will:

- improve amenity of centres and urban renewal corridors through placemaking initiatives that strengthen the connection between people and the places they share
- enhance the design quality of the built environment by implementing the Design Objectives for NSW in local plans and developing local character statements for centres and urban renewal corridors undergoing renewal and revitalisation
- promote innovative approaches to the creative re-use of heritage places, ensuring good urban design preserves and renews historic buildings and places.

Design Objectives for NSW

Better fit:

contextual, local and of its place

Better performance:

sustainable, adaptable and durable

Better for community:

inclusive, connected and diverse

Better for people:

safe, comfortable and liveable

Better working:

functional, efficient and fit for purpose

Better value:

creating and adding value

Better look and feel:

engaging, inviting and attractive

Source: *Better Placed*, Government Architect New South Wales
<http://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/thinking/integrated-design-policy/introducing-better-placed>



The Levee, Maitland, courtesy of Maitland City Council

Strategy 11

Create more great public spaces where people come together

Art and culture make a city stimulating, memorable and contribute to the beauty of a city. Thriving art and culture are great indicators of a city's pulse and will be a palpable presence throughout Greater Newcastle.

Greater Newcastle's iconic tourist destinations and scenic landscapes from Nobbys Lighthouse to Mount Sugarloaf connect the contemporary urban environment with natural and historic landscapes. Great public spaces will preserve links to Greater Newcastle's Aboriginal, colonial, migrant and merchant heritage and culture, and create opportunities for tourism and recreation.

Lake Macquarie, its waterfront and the coastline has helped shape Greater Newcastle and are essential to the identity, liveability and prosperity of the city. The Hunter River also represents a significant water's edge parkland. These areas will be protected from encroachment of development that impacts open space and diminishes the natural landscape setting.

Greater Newcastle contains natural features that are important to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal communities. The significant value of these assets will be conserved while also respecting the Aboriginal community's right to determine how they are identified and managed.















Greater Newcastle also offers a range of sporting grounds and facilities for organised sport as well as active passive recreation. The NSW Government has allocated \$5 million in a partnership with Newcastle City Council to redevelop the South Newcastle beach skate park. Enhancing access to sport and recreational facilities will encourage healthy activity and connectivity.

Actions

- 11.1** Greater Newcastle councils with support from the Department of Planning and Environment, will:
- create and activate public spaces in the strategic centres that are suitable for community events like markets, festivals, commemorations and assemblies
 - enhance community access to sporting, recreational, cultural and community services and facilities
 - implement a public art strategy that addresses:
 - the history of place, storytelling, interpretation and cultural expression
 - how art and culture can be used to improve economic growth and community cohesion.
 - provide public lookout places that maintain views to iconic buildings and vistas
 - protect and enhance waterfront parkland areas
 - identify, protect and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage, historic heritage and maritime heritage.
- 11.2** The Department of Planning and Environment will develop a Cultural Infrastructure Strategy for Greater Newcastle.



Figure 6: Blue and Green Grid
2018

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Metro Frame |  Centre |  State Road |
|  Biodiversity Corridor |  Environmental and Open Space |  Metropolitan Park, Reserve, Memorial |
|  Existing Blue and Green Grid Connections |  National Park |  Lookout |
|  Improve Blue and Green Grid Connections |  Waterway |  Metropolitan Sport Facility |
|  Strategic Centre |  Regional Road | |

Strategy 12

Enhance the Blue and Green Grid and the urban tree canopy

Greater Newcastle's Blue and Green Grid creates the connections and networks linking open spaces and waterways urban parks, bushland, farms, waterways, drinking water catchments, lakes and beaches.

The Blue and Green Grid presents opportunities for healthy lifestyles, protection of environmental qualities of water catchments and secure potable water supplies required for a growing population.

Councils are planning to expand Blue and Green networks and develop and support metropolitan scale areas at Speers Point Park; Lake Macquarie and Hunter River foreshore areas; the Fernleigh Track; Blackbutt Reserve; Blue Gum Regional Park and the Bathers Way walk. Planning is also underway on the proposed Richmond Vale Rail Trail, which will link communities in the metro core to Kurri Kurri.

Greening must be integrated into local planning and balanced with safety priorities. Too often, trees and greening are an afterthought in the planning and design of urban areas. In some cases, such as along transport corridors, concerns about the safety risks presented by trees can result in tree pruning and removal or the limitation of new plantings.

Councils will continue to increase tree canopy cover and permeable surfaces when planning for urban revitalisation in the city centre and metro core.

Greater Newcastle can improve its urban tree canopy by establishing and maintaining canopy trees along transport corridors, green buildings (roofs, facades and walls) and new plantings in open spaces — including parks, waterway corridors, school grounds and utility easements — together with the provision of a public open space network across Greater Newcastle.

Actions

- 12.1** Greater Newcastle councils with support from the Department of Planning and Environment, will:
- improve access to open space, recreation areas and waterways so that 90% of houses are within a 10-minute walk of open space
 - enhance Greater Newcastle's Blue and Green Grid by implementing the Green Infrastructure Outcomes of the Greener Places policy to integrate water sensitive urban design principles in local plans
 - make a cooler Greater Newcastle by greening urban areas, buildings, transport corridors and open spaces to enhance the urban forest
 - enhance nature based tourism through protection and promotion of natural assets such as Lake Macquarie and the Hexham Wetlands.
- 12.2** Greater Newcastle councils will identify local blue and green corridors and continue the rehabilitation of waterways.
- 12.3** The Department of Planning and Environment will work with the Office of Environment and Heritage and Greater Newcastle councils to ensure the long-term protection of regionally significant biodiversity corridors through strategic biocertification.
- 12.4** The NSW Office of Sport will develop a Greater Newcastle sport and recreation facilities plan.
- 12.5** The Department of Planning and Environment will pilot a Metropolitan Greenspace Program in the Greater Newcastle area.

The boardwalk in Lake Macquarie





Vineyards in Pokolbin

Strategy 13

Protect rural amenity outside urban areas

Rural areas in Greater Newcastle have a wide range of environmental, social and economic values. These rural areas need to be carefully planned for the future to provide a secure long-term future for productive and sustainable agriculture.

Agricultural production will continue to be integral to the supply of Greater Newcastle's fresh food, including milk from the Hinton area, vegetables from the Morpeth area, fruit from orchards in West Lake Macquarie and meat from grazing and intensive farming at Cessnock. Other farming can expand its export focus, including grapes and wine from the Pokolbin area.

Urban development is generally not consistent with the values of the rural area, therefore agricultural land needs to be protected in the long term. The management of urban release areas will provide a long-term supply of land for the growth of Greater Newcastle and minimise unplanned expansion of urban uses into the rural area.

Regulating minimum lot size requirements for rural zones will enhance the viability of the agricultural sector, maximise production efficiencies and support the delivery of local fresh foods by limiting land fragmentation. Limiting dwellings in rural zones will also help to avoid potential land use conflicts with agricultural activities.

Encouraging greater diversity in the agricultural sector through agritourism and the processing and packaging of produce and associated retail services will make the sector more sustainable. Boutique commercial, tourist and recreation activities that do not conflict with primary production offer similar opportunities. Careful management is required in the Cessnock Vineyards to ensure a balance between rural landscape, tourism and viticulture is maintained.

In addition to agriculture, some areas within Greater Newcastle have existing mining operations. Land use planning needs to respond to the lifecycle of mining operations, and manage impacts of mining on rural and urban areas in accordance with actions in the *Hunter Regional Plan 2036*.

Actions

13.1 Greater Newcastle councils will align local plans to:

- enable the growth of the agricultural sector by directing urban development away from rural areas and managing the number of new dwellings in rural areas
- encourage niche commercial, tourist and recreation activities that complement and promote a stronger agricultural sector, and build the sector's capacity to adapt to changing circumstances
- protect and preserve productive agricultural land to support the growth of agricultural industries and keep fresh food available locally.

Strategy 14

Improve resilience to natural hazards

It is difficult to completely avoid all risks associated with natural hazards. Within built-up urban areas, risk-responsive land use zoning and planning controls can minimise risk exposure and improve the built environment's resilience to natural hazards. These requirements consider climate change through mapping and development controls.

The cost of reconstruction and recovery, and the disruption to people's lives and economic productivity following a natural hazard event are as significant as the immediate impact. A resilient city anticipates the flow-on effects of hazard events and plans proactively to minimise this disruption through adaptation of its urban systems and settlements.

New buildings and places in Greater Newcastle must embrace resilience in design through efficient use of water and energy and by responding to projected changes in natural hazards, including higher temperatures and increased bushfire danger.

Incorporation of evacuation planning into strategic land use planning and development control will minimise risk to life, while reducing the burden on emergency management personnel during and following natural hazard events, including earthquakes. Future planning will take account of evacuation processes where practicable.

The Blue and Green Grid will build resilience to natural hazards by complementing other natural hazard policies for flooding, storm surge, coastal erosion and sea level rise.

The Blue and Green Grid also contains natural vegetation that can be subject to bushfire. These lands will be carefully managed to avoid encroachment by urban development to minimise bushfire risk.

Actions

- 14.1** Greater Newcastle councils will apply the following principles to land use planning and development assessment decisions:
- employ risk-responsive land use controls so that new development does not occur in high risk areas
 - ensure coastal dependent development mitigates natural hazards and incorporates resilience measures that have triple bottom line benefits
 - prevent intensive urban development in the Blue and Green Grid
 - ensure the planning for urban development adjoining or interfacing with the Blue and Green Grid addresses the impact of extreme events.
- 14.2** The Department of Planning and Environment will work with Greater Newcastle councils to plan for a changing climate by:
- ensuring major redevelopments include a natural hazard risk assessment that incorporates climate change parameters and mitigation/adaptation measures
 - ensuring planning for road upgrades of critical linkages considers sea level rise and flooding, and incorporates resilient design and materials to reduce reconstruction and recovery costs
 - developing a methodology to incorporate evacuation considerations into strategic, precinct and site based planning
 - developing policies to achieve the NSW Government aspirational target of net zero emissions by 2050.
- 14.3** The Department of Planning and Environment will work with Maitland City Council to investigate and develop safe evacuation for Central Maitland during flood events.

Newcastle Earthquake

The 1989 Newcastle Earthquake was one of the most serious natural disasters in Australia's history. The earthquake claimed 13 lives and 160 people were hospitalised. 50,000 buildings were damaged (approximately 40,000 of these were homes), and 300 buildings were demolished.

It left a damage bill estimated to be about \$4 billion and an estimated total economic cost of \$18.7 billion in 2015 dollars. Should another earthquake occur in populated areas, it would cause significant damage, economic losses and potential casualties.

While there is no reliable way to predict if or when another earthquake could occur in any Australian city, good building practice may be the single, most important, long-term factor in reducing economic losses and casualties from earthquakes. Lessons learnt from Newcastle can improve the resilience of other Australian cities.

Houses with solar panels on their roofs at Cameron Park, Lake Macquarie



Strategy 15

Plan for a Carbon Neutral Greater Newcastle by 2050

The NSW Government, through the *Climate Change Policy Framework*, has set an aspirational target for New South Wales to achieve net-zero emissions. Greater Newcastle can take a lead in achieving this target and mitigating against climate change.

Many actions in this Plan support the *Climate Change Policy Framework*⁷, including integrating land use and transport, which can help reduce the carbon footprint of urban areas.

Advances in the design of buildings can make them more energy efficient and reduce costs for owners. However, there is a need to extend these principles to more than just individual buildings, and apply low carbon initiatives to wider precincts. New development has the potential to be low carbon demonstration projects, whether it be through low carbon infrastructure for new development or retrofitting as part of infill redevelopment.

There is expertise and infrastructure available in Greater Newcastle to support the movement towards renewable energy. Investigations are already underway to transform Vales Point into a renewable energy precinct. This demonstrates how these sites and other heavy and general industrial lands will continue to be places of employment, and their future role will be to nurture globally competitive growth segments in Greater Newcastle.

Actions

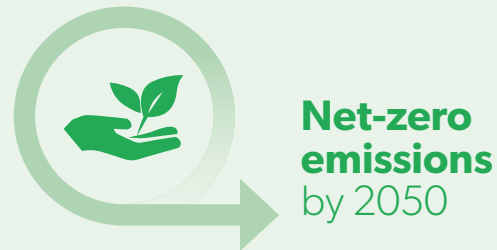
15.1 Greater Newcastle councils will align plans to encourage initiatives to re-use power generating sites for renewable energy generation and re-purposing of electricity distribution infrastructure in West Lake Macquarie and other suitable locations with existing infrastructure.

15.2 Greater Newcastle councils will:

- work towards reducing resource consumption and waste generation
- identify neighborhoods that may be suitable for establishing a low carbon precinct as a demonstration project.

15.3 The Department of Planning and Environment, working with the Office of Environment and Heritage will work towards certification of Greater Newcastle as carbon neutral by 2050.

NSW Target



Solar panel technician



