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**CCL 27/09/2022 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT SOCIAL
INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

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INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

ITEM-76 **Attachment A:** Draft Social Infrastructure Strategy

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Bringing our people together

Newcastle Draft Social Infrastructure Strategy

2022 - 2026



Acknowledgement

City of Newcastle acknowledges that we operate on the grounds of the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land and waters, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.



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Lord Mayor Foreword

City of Newcastle (CN) recognises that investment in quality social infrastructure is essential for the health, social wellbeing, and economic prosperity of our city. It plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, background, and abilities, and a city's overall prosperity and liveability.

Through our Social Infrastructure Strategy (SIS), we identify these social and economic benefits that equitably delivered, and sustainably managed social infrastructure will bring to our individual community members and our community as a collective, whilst outlining contemporary challenges, emerging needs and opportunities we face.

The SIS will inform the planning, investment, negotiation and delivery of social infrastructure for our city. It outlines our high priority directions and actions, and acts as a decision-making tool for which future social infrastructure demand is assessed, planned and social delivered – allowing us to guide our commitment for investing in, partnering and delivering public places.

Meeting community needs and aspirations for our city's social infrastructure will require a whole-of-community and whole-of-government response involving greater coordination, cooperation, and partnership between each level of government, community sector and industry to address unmet need and alleviate pressure on existing services and infrastructure. It will steer CN to undertake this work through an 'integrated approach' - working better, together.

Thank you to those who have assisted to inform the development of the strategy, and to the many who contribute to Newcastle's array of valued social infrastructure, enhancing our city's overall liveability daily. I look forward to championing the implementation of this strategy over the next four years.

Councillor Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor of Newcastle

Our Newcastle

Community Strategic Plan – Newcastle 2040

Newcastle is a liveable, sustainable, inclusive global city

Newcastle 2040 is CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and is the highest level of planning we undertake at the local government level. *Newcastle 2040* is a shared community vision, developed as a guide to inform policies and actions throughout the city for the next 10+ years. For those who live, work, play and study in Newcastle, this vision sets the direction for how we want our city to grow. With direct input from a wide cross-section of the community, it represents what we value in our city and what we want to prioritise.

In 2040, Newcastle will be a liveable, sustainable and inclusive global city. We will celebrate our unique city and protect our natural assets. We will optimise opportunities and build resilience in the face of future challenges. We will champion inclusion so that everyone is valued, and we will encourage innovation and creativity. As we make our way towards 2040, we will work together to achieve our vision by building trust and collaborative relationships.

To guide us forward, we will focus on four themes that emerged from our shared planning process. These themes work together in harmony to deliver our vision for Newcastle as a place for everyone.



Newcastle at a glance

Our population¹

Newcastle population 2022
173,356

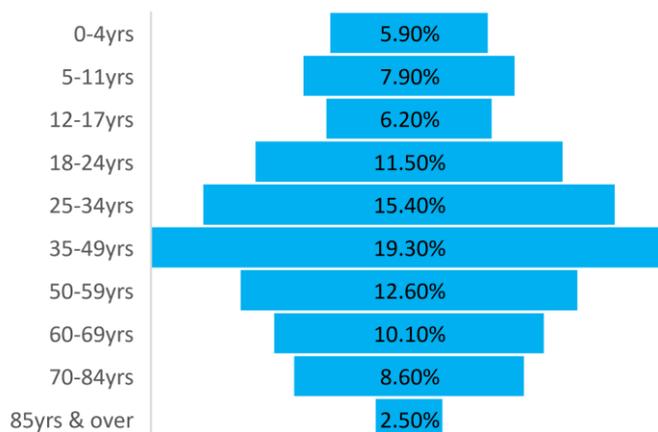
Population by 2041
202,049

Greater Newcastle population 2021
608,700

Population by 2041
699,200

Estimated annual population growth rate **1%**

People



i. Planning NSW Population Projections, forecast.id

Median age

Newcastle	37	
NSW	37.9	

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

Newcastle	3.5%	
NSW	2.9%	

Born overseas

Newcastle	13.9%	
NSW	27.6%	

Speak a language other than English

Newcastle	10%	
NSW	25.1%	

134 different languages spoken at home – most widely spoken included Mandarin, Macedonian, Italian, Greek, and Arabic. Languages spoken with greatest need for translation included Arabic, Mandarin, Swahili, Persian/Dari and Tibetan.

Number of people living with disability

Newcastle	5.9%	
NSW	5.4%	

Defined as people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability or long-term health condition.

How we are growing and changing

Forecast population growth

Our city is growing and changing. Newcastle's population is forecast to grow by more than 40,000 people by 2041, placing increased pressure on social infrastructure (SI) and driving demand for new infrastructure, particularly in high growth areas such as Maryland–Fletcher–Minmi, Wallsend–Elernmore Vale, Newcastle–Cooks Hill and Mayfield–Warabrook.

Diversity across our places

Newcastle is a large city and our communities differ from place to place. Fit-for-purpose planning is important because different places, communities and activities have unique needs and challenges. The quality, ease of access and experience of SI varies across different places and types of infrastructure, particularly for vulnerable groups of people and in fast-growing and older areas.

Change in age profile

There is population growth across all age groups; however, between 2016 and 2041, the highest growth will be in:

- Parents and homebuilders, 35–49 years: +8,519 (28%)
- Seniors, 70–84 years: +6,946 (52%)
- Young workforce, 25–34 years: +6,041 (24%)

Growth in number of dwellings

The number of dwellings in our area will increase from 69,245 to 88,747 (an additional 19,502 dwellings), particularly in the high-growth areas of Maryland–Fletcher–Minmi, Wallsend–Elernmore Vale and Newcastle–Cooks Hill.

Changes in housing type

While growth in the west will mainly be through single dwellings, in areas such as Newcastle City Centre, Mayfield (Maitland Road), and around Broadmeadow, Adamstown and Hamilton Stations, growth will be in apartments. As well as increased density, this will result in a need for public facilities that provide spaces to connect outside of the home, and for public open space that functions as a 'backyard' for apartment residents.

Our global commitment

The SDGs underpin our work



In September 2015, 193 countries committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals provide a global roadmap for all countries to work towards a better world for current and future generations.

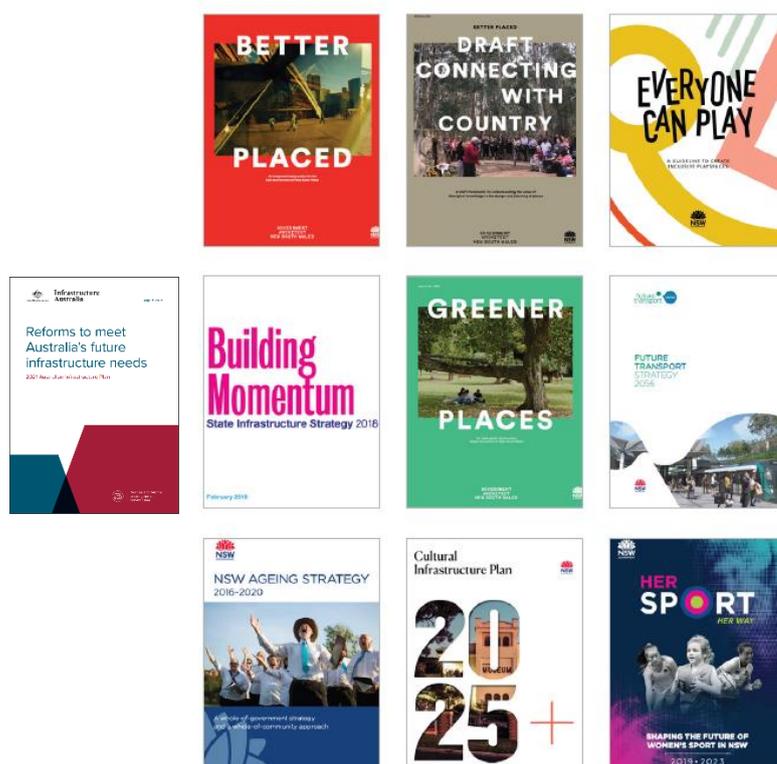
CN immediately declared our support and intention to deliver the SDGs and began proactively implementing action and engagement. We are committed to contributing to the achievement of the SDGs and have been working towards increasing and improving our contribution to this shared global vision.

The SDGs are significant and will take time to achieve. However, it is important to recognise the steps we are taking to progress these goals. Of the 17 SDGs, the SIS has core alignment with SDG Goals 3, 4, 9, 10, 11 and 17, as outlined below.

SDG		How is it addressed in the SIS?
	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	The Strategy prioritises high-quality, comfortable public spaces such as parks, community centres, and recreational blue and green grid links to support our community in improving health and wellbeing outcomes.
	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	The Strategy prioritises community access to lifelong learning opportunities through libraries and access to quality early education, care and school services for children.
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	The Strategy prioritises industry innovation through improved access to technology and new approaches to delivery such as co-location, sharing and partnership.
	Reduce inequality within and among countries	The Strategy prioritises more equitable access to universally designed and affordable SI, particularly for our more socially, economically and transport-disadvantaged residents.
	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	The Strategy prioritises understanding the unique needs of all members of our community, ensuring they have access to the basic social services they need to reach their full potential.

	<p>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>To realise the priorities of this Strategy, Newcastle has many opportunities to partner with other agencies such as the University of Newcastle (UoN), Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (HCCDC), the Department of Education, local non-government organisations (NGOs), and community, cultural and sporting groups.</p>
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Our policy drivers



Access to high-quality public spaces, including SI, is critical to social, economic and environmental sustainability. Infrastructure Australia's *2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan* highlights the growing recognition of the role effective SI assets and networks play in supporting the social and economic wellbeing of all Australians.

The *2021 NSW Public Spaces Charter* states that public spaces unlock a broad range of benefits that enrich our lives. Quality SI should be accessible, comfortable and activated.

The Infrastructure NSW *Cultural Infrastructure Strategy 2016* notes that Newcastle needs cultural infrastructure to support its growth into a global city, and identifies the expansion of the Newcastle Art Gallery as a key regional project.

These strategies indicate that over the coming years, the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) will see growth and opportunities for SI outcomes, including in Newcastle City Centre, Broadmeadow/Hunter Park and Callaghan. Growth along the urban renewal corridors of Waratah, Hamilton–Georgetown, Lambton, Newcastle City Centre, Adamstown–Kotara, Merewether and Minmi will also create opportunities for SI.

City of Newcastle

The SIS is interrelated with several CN strategies and plans, including some required under legislation such as the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 or the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

- Community Strategic Plan: Newcastle 2040
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Local Housing Strategy 2020
- Fern Bay and North Stockton Strategy
- Section 7.11 and 7.12 Development Contributions Plans 2022
- Draft Local Social Strategy 2022 - 2026
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 - 2026
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 - 2024
- Economic Development Strategy 2021 -2031
- Library Strategy 2019-2029
- Strategic Sports Plan 2020
- Dogs in Open Space Plan 2019

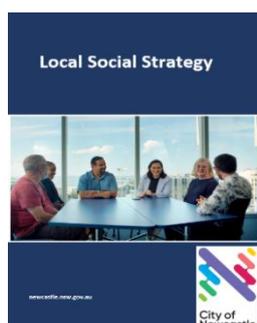
Our *Community Strategic Plan: Newcastle 2040* has several relevant objectives, including:



- Priority 1.1 – Enriched neighbourhoods and places
- Priority 1.2 – Connected and fair communities
- Priority 3.4 – City-shaping partnerships
- Priority 4.1 – Inclusive and integrated planning.

As outlined in our *Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)*, high-quality SI supports our evolution from a regional city at the heart of the Hunter into a smart, liveable and sustainable global city. Key priorities include:

- Priority 1 – Prioritising active transport in our city
- Priority 4 – Greening our neighbourhoods
- Priority 8 – Planning for growth and change in catalyst areas, strategic centres, urban renewal corridors and housing release areas
- Priority 9 – Sustainable, healthy and inclusive streets, neighbourhoods and local centres.



In our draft *Local Social Strategy*, our people are placed at the centre of a vision for a socially just and inclusive Newcastle for all. The Strategy seeks to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encourage community connection and participation, celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthen community health and wellbeing. Key priorities include:

- Priority 1 – Equitable communities
- Priority 2 – Inclusive communities
- Priority 3 – Connected communities
- Priority 4 – Healthy communities.



The Library Strategy 2019-2019 outlines a long-term vision for a world class library service in Newcastle — anywhere, anytime, open and accessible 24/7. The Library Strategy also focuses on building and information technology to guide future library infrastructure development to ensure it meets the needs of a continuously adapting and evolving city. The Strategy identifies a need for CN to invest in lifelong learning, community participation and co-location, enhanced library spaces, and digital transformation. Physical infrastructure is one element of the long-term vision expected by the community aligned to improved community service points, and flexible service delivery options.



The Strategic Sports Plan address future demand, and inform the ongoing supply, maintenance and upgrade of sporting infrastructure with consideration to current and future needs of the community, other adopted strategies and City of Newcastle’s financial capacity and sustainability.”



The Liveable Communities focus area of our *Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022 – 2026* is about creating opportunities for social participation, improving the quality of personal interactions and ensuring equivalent access to places, spaces and information. There is a direct relationship between the SIS and the DIAP through the continued focus on access and inclusion for all members of our community in the public places and spaces across Newcastle.

Our role

We are just one of many agencies that have a role in SI outcomes. All levels of government (federal, state and local), industry, NGOs and the private sector have various responsibilities for the funding, planning and delivery of SI.

CN contributes to SI through our community and cultural facilities, libraries, recreation and open spaces, services and programs. Along with delivering and maintaining physical places and spaces, CN s advocates for public benefit through local policy, planning and regulatory frameworks as well as supporting business innovation, investment and industry growth.

Depending on the activity being undertaken, CN's role can include the following:



Leadership

Identifying key community issues and stakeholders to respond where appropriate



Research and strategy

Developing an evidence base to better understand, plan and advocate for the community, and developing policies and plans that respond to community needs



Connections

Identifying and connecting different contributors to encourage innovation, maximise social outcomes and support social cohesion



Advocacy

Drawing on our research and partnerships to advocate for our community to other levels of government and amplify the work of our local partners



Partnerships and grants

Partnering with organisations and communities to achieve shared goals, including through grants



Delivery

Designing and delivering programs and initiatives that align with key strategies, plans and community needs, ensuring community engagement and involvement



Capacity-building

Unlocking capacity within the community by equipping people with the skills they need to achieve social outcomes



Infrastructure

Planning and delivering places and spaces that promote social connectivity, inclusion and a sense of belonging

Benefits and trends of social infrastructure

Social infrastructure is what brings our people together. It is the places, spaces, services and programs where connections are made, where we learn and grow, and where we stay active and healthy. For many of us, these places are our second home.

Hard and soft infrastructure

Infrastructure Australia (Australian Infrastructure Audit, August 2019) defines SI as: ‘... the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities. It helps us to be happy, safe and healthy, to learn, and to enjoy life. The network of social infrastructure contributes to social identity, inclusion and cohesion and is used by all Australians at some point in their lives, often on a daily basis.’

Successful SI relies on the availability of facilities and spaces for services, programs and activities. It includes:



Hard infrastructure: streets, footpaths and urban public places where social connection and exchange happens. Facilities or physical structures where social, cultural and recreational services, programs and activities are delivered or operate



Soft infrastructure: Services and programs that are delivered via hard SI

Hard Social Infrastructure		Soft Social Infrastructure
<p>Public places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets and footpaths • Civic spaces and town squares • Community hubs, centres and halls • Community meeting and gathering spaces • Libraries • Cultural facilities (museums, galleries, theatres) • Emergency service facilities • Hospitals • Justice and courthouses • Early childhood education and care • Schools • Tertiary (TAFEs and universities) • Co-working facilities 	<p>Public spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports spaces/fields • Parks • Natural bush spaces (including environmental reserves) • Beaches, lakes and rivers • Public recreation facilities within open spaces • Swimming pools, ocean baths, splash areas • Surf clubs • Playgrounds • Recreation courts • Skate/BMX/leisure parks • Community gardens • Outdoor exercise equipment • Dog exercise areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community, cultural and recreational services, programs and events that contribute to wellbeing and connection, learning and education, cultural development, emergency services, health and social justice • Provides equitable opportunities for all to access social welfare and community services providers, as well as individual activities and programs

Why social infrastructure matters

The way we plan, deliver and enable our social infrastructure will play an important role in improving equity, accessibility and connectivity across Newcastle. Social infrastructure provides many benefits to the city and its people.

<p>Liveability</p> <p>Liveable places have great access to SI that enables lifelong learning, creative expression, and supports social and cultural networks.</p> <p>SI contributes to and strengthens the vitality, identity and character of urban centres¹. It is ideally situated on landmark sites with distinctive architecture and quality design. Local stories and culture can be ingrained in the building fabric to assist in fostering community identity and ownership. In high-density communities, SI improves liveability significantly by having an important role as ‘community living rooms’, ‘community backyards’ and ‘break-out spaces’¹.</p> <p>1 Infrastructure Australia, ‘Social infrastructure’ in <i>Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019</i>, 2019</p>	<p>Education and economic growth</p> <p>SI is instrumental in supporting local businesses: it creates new job opportunities; provides spaces and services that promote learning and development of people; provides spaces for co-working, networking and entrepreneurship; and it activates urban centres.</p> <p>Libraries, arts spaces and multipurpose urban spaces invite local and tourist participation, in turn generating economic outcomes. This type of investment can provide a revenue stream and stable employment to support local economies in regional areas.²</p> <p>When located in town and strategic centres, SI such as libraries and multipurpose community centres are a significant attractor, increasing visitation to retail offerings.</p> <p>2 McDougall, A. and Savage, G., <i>Dollars, Sense and Public Libraries: The Landmark Study of the Socio-economic Value of Victorian Public Libraries</i>, Melbourne: State Library of Victoria, 2011</p>
<p>Community connection and resilience</p> <p>SI helps to bind people and neighbourhoods together to build social capital, social cohesion and community wellbeing. Research indicates that social connection leads to happier and healthier communities³. SI also builds resilient communities. As 100 Resilient Cities has identified, communities need to be prepared for a range of shocks, stresses and emergencies such as climate change impacts or pandemics.</p> <p>SI provides the places, services and programs that keep us safe, supply information and build social connections during these situations. This has been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, where SI (such as health services; education facilities; volunteer, cultural and social welfare organisations; and local community groups and centres) has been critical in the local community response.</p> <p>3 Greenberg, M., ‘Does Being More Social Make Us Happier?’, <i>Psychology Today</i>, 2019</p>	<p>Health and wellbeing</p> <p>SI encourages the public to be physically active and promotes a lifestyle beneficial to mental and physical health. Studies have shown that natural environments such as green and blue spaces contribute to improved mental health, and that increased physical activity reduces anxiety, depression and psychological stress⁴. Access to public open space, close to where people live, is associated with increased physical activity in all age groups⁴.</p> <p>4 Dadvand, P., et al., ‘Green Spaces and General Health: Roles of mental health status, social support, and physical activity’, <i>Environmental International</i>, 2016</p>

Innovation and best practice trends

A networked approach

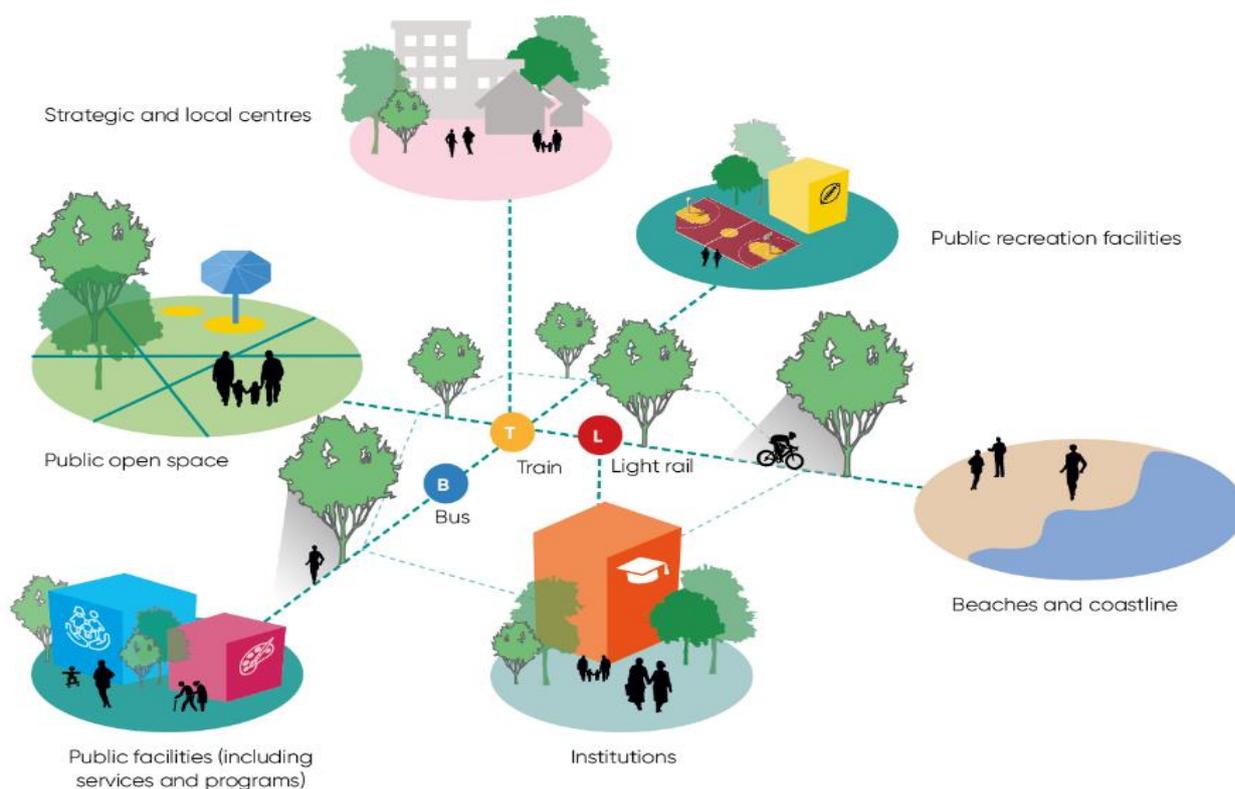
Planning SI as part of a network means that public places, spaces, services and programs all work together across a neighbourhood, catchment or region. In geographically dispersed areas such as Newcastle, the approach involves the provision of LGA-wide or district public facilities in larger strategic centres, with smaller satellite public places and spaces in local centres providing spaces for outreach services.

Social infrastructure operating as a network

Increasing the capacity of what we have: 'Making it work harder'

Before any new SI is planned, local government is increasingly reviewing the capacity of what they already have. This involves asking the question: 'Can existing infrastructure be extended or improved, or is new investment needed?', and identifying opportunities for repurposing SI that is well located and has the capacity to become modern, flexible and multipurpose.

In the context of unprecedented population growth and increasing community expectations, improving the capacity, efficiency and performance of existing SI will need to be a priority to meet



demand. Opportunities exist to make smaller, more incremental investments where significant capacity enhancements can be delivered through existing infrastructure. This could include placing synthetic turf on hard sports fields or repurposing ageing infrastructure with modern technology to increase amenity and utilisation.

Co-location within community hubs

The term 'co-located hub' refers to the integration of public space, community facilities and services in one location or building to foster more social connections and provide better access to a wider range of services (or a 'one-stop shop' for users), as well as a more cost-effective way of delivering and operating these services. Integrating and co-locating SI within community hubs helps to create key gathering points within a community with a variety of offerings.

The 'co-located hub', also known as 'community hub' approach is a way to integrate services, improve community outcomes, facilitate greater partnerships and reduce the cost of delivering stand-alone facilities. Community hubs provide opportunities to attract a range of users, increase access to services and generate critical mass for essential services like public transport.

Multipurpose, shared and flexible design

Multipurpose and flexible SI has been a trend for some time, particularly for new buildings. They support a range of different services and programs being delivered at once, as well as allow a space to change over time in response to changing needs. The demand for multipurpose spaces will be accelerated with retrofitting of existing infrastructure to accommodate a range of essential activities.

Shared use of social infrastructure

Sharing existing SI has significant potential to maximise the use and efficiency of public spaces and buildings for community benefit. Sharing space may decrease the need to build new facilities that replicate already existing infrastructure. Work is currently being undertaken to explore shared-use arrangements with schools in Newcastle, and how to increase usage of facilities that are currently underutilised or only available to a single user group.

Going up: stacked and rooftop social infrastructure

SI is commonly co-located within multi-level or stacked buildings, within mixed-used developments, and on rooftops of commercial, residential or community buildings. In higher-density areas, where land values are high and land is scarce, SI can be delivered on rooftops, using smaller footprints (or land area) by building up. This includes rooftop sports and recreation courts, cultural participation and exhibition spaces in high-rise buildings, and multi-level community hubs.

Public-private partnerships and cross-sector collaboration

Public-private partnerships allow governments and the private sector to work together and share resources to plan, deliver and manage major projects. Such partnerships usually have the public interest at heart and can deliver increased value for money and improved community outcomes. Mixed-use developments, undertaken in partnership, could see the delivery of SI as part of residential (including affordable housing), commercial and community developments.

Emergence of new funding models

New funding models are emerging to bridge the gap between traditional funding sources and the real cost of SI. In addition to the initial capital expenditure required to construct new or expand existing places, spaces and services, there are significant costs associated with management of SI (e.g., general upkeep, maintenance and repairs) and recurring operational costs (e.g., resourcing, staffing and service delivery).

New funding models range from partnership arrangements such as 'shared beneficiaries funding' through to physical approaches such as the 'community hub' model.

Revenue to offset asset management costs

SI including public footpaths, parks, libraries and leisure centres is typically delivered and maintained by government, where funding comes from taxes, rates or other income streams. At a local level, asset management costs may also partially offset by income generation, such as hire fees. Increasingly, the management of assets such as community facilities relies on revenue methods that generate reliable and increased sources of income to improve financial viability and sustainability.

Environmental sustainability

SI offers opportunities for local government to lead by example, demonstrate new sustainable materials and technologies, and deliver leading practice projects with an educational role. Environmentally sustainable SI typically has lower operating costs and is more financially viable and sustainable to operate. Environmentally sustainable development can also be about locating facilities to promote walking/cycling, use of public transport, and multipurpose sites requiring only a single trip, all of which have a positive impact on fostering healthy, active communities.

New technologies

Community facilities need to be planned to maximise the contribution of and access to new technologies, including those supporting service delivery, creative industries, learning and community-building. Examples such as Wi-Fi accessibility should be considered as part of the infrastructure's design. Digital technology can also assist in capturing and sharing data for more informed decision-making associated with the performance, design, planning and delivery of SI.

Our strategy

Social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing. It benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

The way we plan, design, manage and activate SI affects how we connect to it and how we value our experience using it. Recent events (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) have highlighted that SI, such as community facilities, parks, playgrounds, sports fields and cultural spaces, are more important than ever for supporting the development of social capital, maintaining quality of life, and developing the skills and resilience that thriving communities need. This is especially true for our most vulnerable communities across Newcastle.

The SIS and associated four-year action plan aims to create a blueprint for how CN will play its part in responding to SI challenges and opportunities in our communities. Through research and community development principles, community engagement, and continued investigation and asset planning, CN will review these priorities annually and balance them against available resources in decision making.

Vision

An equitably distributed, sustainably managed and inclusive network of public places and spaces, services and programs, contributing to a liveable, sustainable and inclusive global Newcastle.

Purpose

This SIS outlines CNs future priorities for SI provision. It is a decision-making tool through which future demand is assessed, invested in, planned for and delivered. The SIS will:

- Support an integrated strategic approach to the provision of contemporary SI, in partnership with neighbouring councils and other levels of government, the local community and other key stakeholders including the private sector
- Improve coordination and fairness in decision-making around SI investments, resourcing and equitable delivery
- Position us for collaborative funding opportunities and partnerships
- Realise the delivery of quality SI across the LGA that will meet the needs of our future population and enable the delivery of community activities, programs, services and events for all.

Our strengths



We are a metropolitan centre with metropolitan-level social infrastructure



We have high-quality metropolitan-level cultural infrastructure



We have beautiful natural areas and public open spaces



We recognise the potential for new social infrastructure to be delivered through city growth



Our social welfare services network is strong and connected



We are committed to improved wellbeing and liveability for our community



We have great sporting and recreation infrastructure and a large network of users



We activate, program and encourage high utilisation of staffed public facilities.



We have opportunities for innovation, partnership and collaboration

Our challenges



There is inequitable distribution of existing social infrastructure



Inequality is an issue in our community



some of our existing social infrastructure is not fit for purpose



Many of our libraries and community centres are single-purpose and not centrally located



Some of our facilities are ageing and have competing maintenance and capital upgrade investment needs to meet modern standards which is difficult and costly



Our local and district-level parks need improved amenities and facilities for diverse uses



There is a lack of informal and inclusive social infrastructure for young people



Our ageing population and residents with disability need universal access to our social infrastructure



Our residents in the west need improved public transport to access social infrastructure



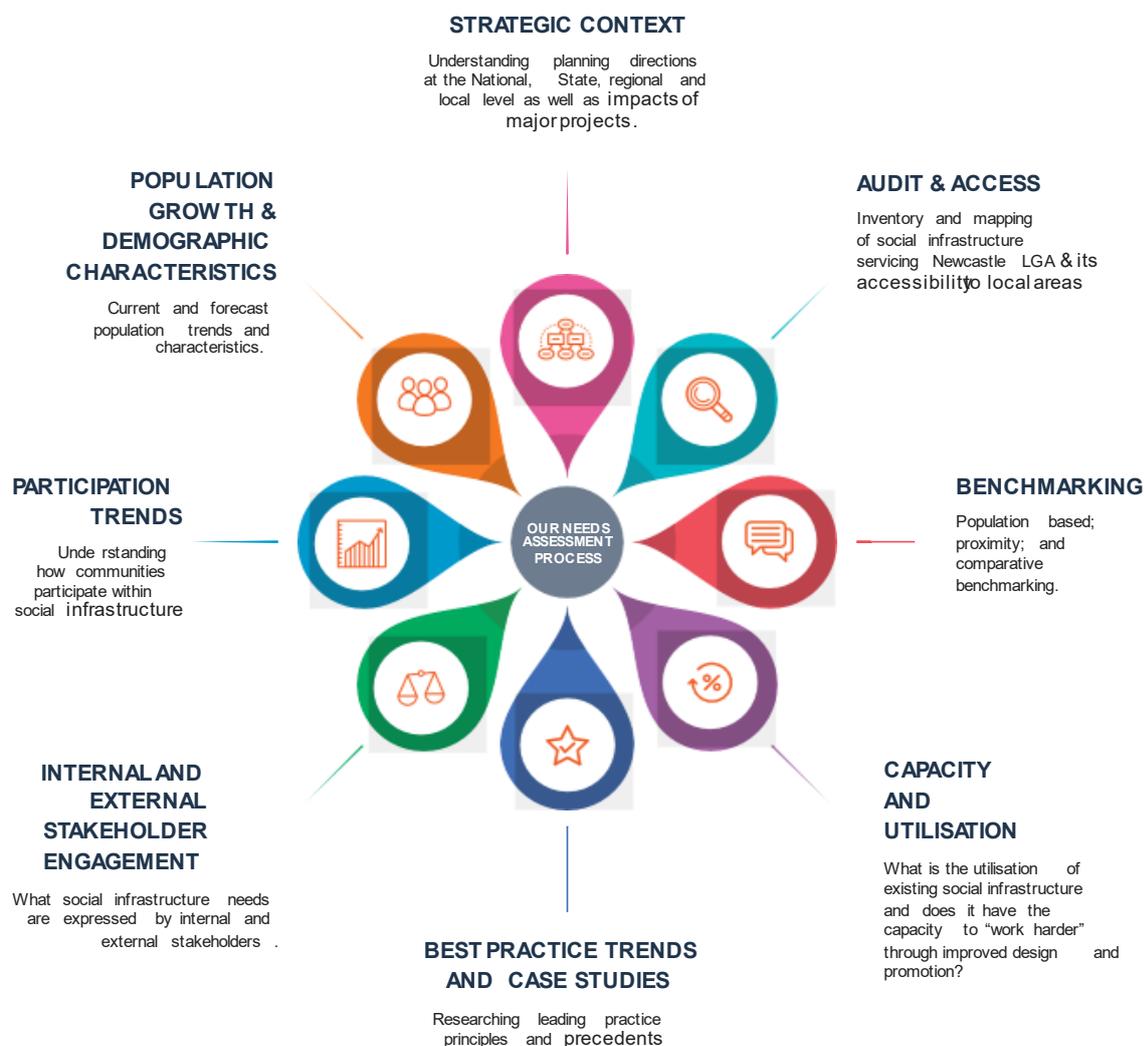
Population growth will require new social infrastructure provision



We have competing needs from local to metropolitan level, with finite resources

Our approach

The development of the SIS has been informed by community and stakeholder engagement, detailed analysis of population forecasts, service planning benchmarks and participation trends, forming a systematic needs assessment. A high-level summary of the assessment approach and key insights identified are summarised below:



Considerations

Recalibration

Within the first four years, the plan sets foundational processes and ‘gears up’ for a cultural shift in the provision of SI into the future. Key changes include:

- Reframing the approach to the delivery of SI by working in a more integrated way through the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) process
- Building another layer of evidence through additional planning and economic analysis of community centres and halls, identify a strategic approach to realise a network of co-located hubs of SI.
- Increasing clarity on how to leverage and manage partnerships for delivery
- Monitoring the changing approach and role of SI at a federal and state level
- Responding to specific changes to revenue streams, such as Section 7.11 and 7.12, and the ever changing grants landscape.

Integrated and prioritised

An integrated approach means collaborating to achieve common goals. For the SIS, this is necessary for the achievement of the strategic priorities over the short, medium and longer term. It requires different levels of government, agencies and organisations to understand the multiple objectives each are trying to achieve and to transparently observe, understand, contribute to, and support one another’s plans.



Figure 17 – Prioritisation Framework

Integration also means planning and delivering better results, together. Moving from isolated, asset-by-asset or sector-by-sector approach and siloed planning and decision-making. An integrated approach for the SIS, will take the form of increased collaboration within CN and also improved working relationships with key groups and stakeholders for outcomes in our community.

This approach allows us to be more adaptive when assessing priorities for investment. It helps us look beyond the financial implications alone to consider a range of important factors and ensure we are making decisions not just because we can, but because it’s the right thing to do. When considering and prioritising an investment we will use tools and methods that ensure the following questions are considered.

Funding and delivery

Although funding of SI has historically been the domain of state and local government, there is an increasing trend across Australia to utilise partnership approaches and other innovative funding contributions to better align infrastructure provision with community needs.

Several funding mechanisms are available to deliver the range of facilities, places and spaces communities require. In addition to the initial capital expenditure required to construct new or expand existing places, spaces, there are additional, often significant costs associated with management of community facilities and assets (such as general upkeep, maintenance and repairs), as well as recurring operational costs relating to resourcing, staffing and service delivery. Planning for community infrastructure often fails to take into account the ongoing costs associated with providing a facility, space or service, and/or an agreed level of community subsidisation which can have a substantial impact on long-term financial sustainability.

CN will leverage a variety of funding and delivery mechanisms to realise better outcomes for the community, both independently and by supporting other stakeholders to do the same. These include:



State and local government taxes, rates and charges, which can be used to provide infrastructure that is considered necessary for the effective functioning of society



Annual adopted budgets, which already allocate funding for social infrastructure purposes including the maintenance, upkeep and upgrade of our existing assets



Federal and state government grants in a range of categories, which are made available to communities, local government and NGOs towards the provision of infrastructure and programs



Partnerships, sharing or joint ventures, which can involve a commercial partner gaining rights to develop government-owned land in return for the construction of social or other infrastructure, sometimes associated with a cash payment. Partnerships may also be formed with other Government agencies.



Developer incentives and contributions, imposed via strategic plans or conditions of approval, which can be utilised to fund certain components of public space community infrastructure and usually include land, works and/or payments towards the provision of infrastructure



Voluntary infrastructure agreements between amenable parties, which can be utilised to provide land, facilities and/or costs associated with the provision of infrastructure



Asset recycling allowing for reinvestment in new or better-fit infrastructure. Strategic assessments and community consultation will allow CN to further consider the usefulness of existing facilities to the communities they serve



Harnessing opportunity for community outcomes by applying SIS priorities in decision making processes (eg when unexpected opportunities arise)



Making our assets work harder, taking what we already have and making it work better for our community



Supporting our community to increase access, use and enjoyment of Newcastle's places and spaces.

Our priorities



Priority 1 – Equitable distribution for growth and resilience



Priority 2 – Quality and adaptive places to play and stay



Priority 3 – Community capacity building and inclusion



Priority 4 – Governance, partnerships and collaboration



Priority 1: Equitable distribution for growth and resilience

- Objectives**
- 1.1 Plan for and support an equitably distributed network of local, district and LGA-wide social infrastructure hubs, building upon local centres hierarchy
 - 1.2 Prioritise social infrastructure investment in areas with current gaps, forecast urban renewal and population growth, and areas of high socio-economic disadvantage
 - 1.3 Improve access to and between social infrastructure, through public transport advocacy, blue and green grid and recreational connections

Indicator	Measure by CN/other	Data source
Equitable distribution	Green area (hectare) per planning district as agreed benchmarks	SIS Audits SI condition assessments
	Proportion of community space sqm2 by type per district as agreed benchmarks (target: trending up)	SIS Audits SI condition assessments
	Overall liveability and wellbeing score for Newcastle	CN Liveability and Wellbeing Survey
Access to SI (distribution and programme related affordability)	Proportion of user group types	CN booking data
	Subjective: Community satisfaction with access to social infrastructure	CN Community Satisfaction survey

- Links to CSP**
- 1.1.1 Great spaces
 - 1.2.1 Connected communities
 - 1.2.3 Equitable communities
 - 1.2.4 Healthy communities
 - 1.3.1 Connected cycleways and walking networks
 - 1.3.4 Effective public transport

- Links to other CN strategies/plans**
- Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020
 - Local Housing Strategy 2020
 - Fern Bay and North Stockton Strategy 2020
 - Strategic Sports Plan 2020
 - Parkland and Recreation Strategy 2014
 - Newcastle Transport Strategy 2014
 - Local Centres Public Domain Strategy

Why is this priority important?

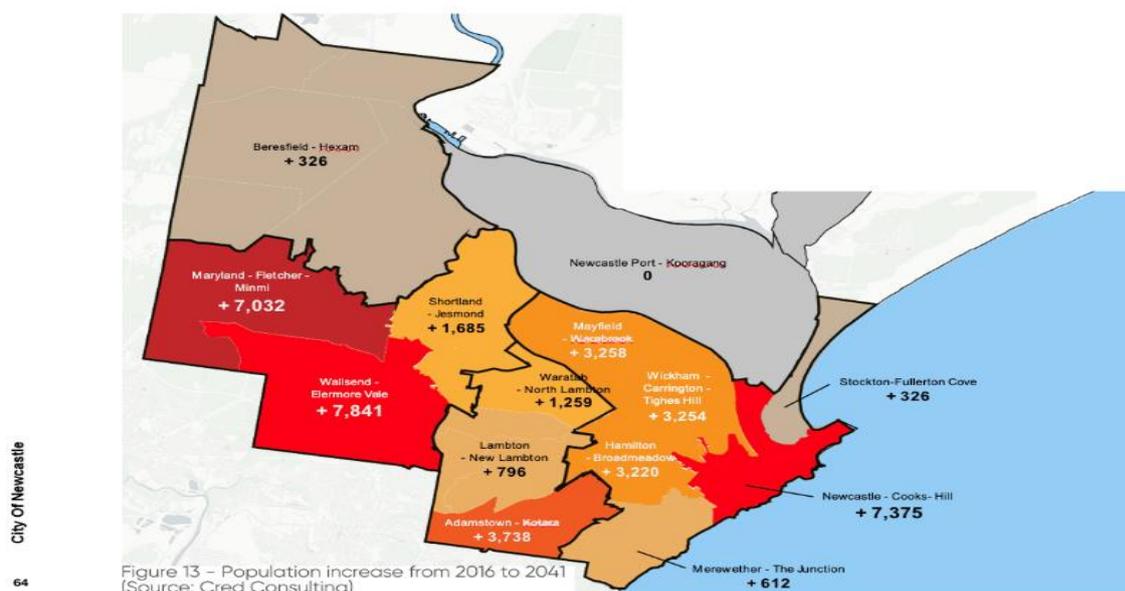
Social infrastructure builds resilience

There are three ways communities can build resilience: physical, social and economic. Public places and spaces provide community focal points that can anchor people together, including in times of crisis (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic; floods). The services, programs and activities housed within these public places and spaces connect people and strengthen community resilience.

Addressing inequitable distribution through new social infrastructure in growing areas

While some areas of Newcastle currently have good access to SI, others do not. There is a higher provision in the more established East (excluding Stockton) and Central Districts, and less provision in the growing West and North-West Districts. Some of our suburbs (such as Wallsend, Elmore Vale, Maryland, Minmi and Fletcher) require further planning and feasibility assessment to identify ways to make improvements to existing SI which can achieve more for the community and also realise a variety of pathways to respond to the SI requirements needed to service the forecast growth.

Our community told us that more equitable distribution of SI is one of their highest priorities. An absence of SI means that those without access – particularly in more socio-economically and transport-disadvantaged areas such as Minmi, Jesmond and Wallsend – have fewer places to meet, fewer active community organisations, and a lack of connections to quality metropolitan places in our city centre. This can inhibit their capacity to respond to challenges or enable collective action and community resilience.



Operating as a network

Best practice trends (including the NSW Government's *Public Spaces Charter*) show that SI is more commonly being planned to operate as part of a network of public facilities, open spaces, streets and services that work together to meet a broad range of community needs across a neighbourhood or district. This approach avoids duplication and provides a complementary range of offerings. In geographically dispersed areas such as Newcastle, the approach includes the provision of district public facilities in larger strategic centres, with smaller satellite public facilities in local centres providing spaces for outreach services.

An emerging SI network would build upon existing spatial structures and hierarchies such as the hierarchy of local centres and the expected growth corridors. SI exists in these locales at present, and we will build upon what already exists for the benefit of the community.

Locating our social infrastructure in the right places

The location of SI is one of the primary determinants of function and usage. Planning SI to maximise community participation means locating it close to public transport and walking/cycling networks in key activity centres for visibility and integrating it with surrounding land uses such as open space and recreation.

The NSW Government has set a priority to increase the proportion of homes in urban areas within 10 minutes' walk of quality green, open and public spaces by 10% by 2023. Our streets provide the links between these spaces and walking, and cycling are our most popular recreational activities. Improving our blue and green grid and active recreational links will extend and improve the SI network, increasing utilisation of our SI and active transport opportunities.

CN's integrated approach will capitalise on existing processes such as public domain renewal, land use planning and transport planning processes to ensure SI adds critical mass in urban environments across the city.



Indicative networked social infrastructure in Newcastle



Priority 2: Quality and adaptive places and spaces

- Objectives**
- 2.1 Improve the capacity, flexibility and amenity of our existing public facilities, parks and open spaces
 - 2.2 Support public facilities, public parks and open spaces to work harder and adapt to multipurpose and/or co-located places and spaces
 - 2.3 Champion and progress innovative projects that realise contemporary social infrastructure design, respond to community need and participation trends and harness the benefits of technology

Indicator	Measure by CN/other	Output
Quality of SI (programming, amenities, adaptability, aesthetics, active/passive)	# of our SI achieving embellishment standards framework	SI condition assessments
	# of our SI achieving agreed service planning levels	CN service planning
	Subjective: Community satisfaction with quality of SI they access (average out of 100)	CN Community Satisfaction survey
	Subjective: Satisfaction with our green and blue spaces	CN Community Satisfaction survey
Co-location/ Multifunction	Proportion of SI adapted to co-located/multifunctional	SIS audit CN condition assessments
	# of community hubs	CN asset register

- Links to CSP**
- 1.1.2. Well-designed places
 - 1.4.1 Emerging technologies
 - 2.1.3 Resilient urban and natural areas
 - 1.4.2 Digital inclusion and social Innovation
 - 3.3.2 Promote Newcastle as a major arts and cultural destination

- Links to other CN strategies/plans**
- Library Strategy 2019 – 2029
 - Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 - 2026
 - Parkland and Recreation Strategy 2014
 - Strategic Sports Plan 2020
 - Dogs in Open Space Plan 2019
 - Draft Service Asset Plans

Why is this priority important?

Improving the quality and amenity of what we have

While we need to plan new SI to address growth, we first need to assess potential in what we already have. Where existing SI is well located and has the capacity to become modern, flexible and multipurpose, there may be opportunities for renewal or upgrade. This must be considered in the context of growth and increasing community expectations to improve the capacity, efficiency and performance of our SI as a priority.

When considering renewing or upgrading the quality and capacity of our existing SI, the following four key attributes should be unlocked to achieve a broad range of benefits:

They are accessible

Am I able to get there?

People can engage in activities there

Am I able to play and participate?

The space is comfortable and looks inviting

Am I welcome? Am I able to stay?

It is a sociable place

Am I able to connect?

tle

Source – NSW Public Spaces Charter (2021)

Our community told us there are opportunities to improve existing SI. For example, some of our community spaces are not fit out with amenities such as air conditioning, storage for regular hirers or kitchen facilities to increase use and functionality. Ageing, poor-quality and single-purpose assets can be a maintenance burden and are less frequently utilised than quality SI that is fit for purpose. While many of our local community halls/centres are not fit for purpose and need some improvement, they are still reasonably well utilised, indicating that they are important community spaces. Currently, our community centres and halls are small and single-use, and 60% of our libraries are less than 300m² in size. This limits their ability to be flexible multipurpose spaces and to deliver the kinds of programs and services expected of modern community spaces and libraries.

'Within Newcastle, there is quality open space to enjoy. However, these sport, play and open space areas could be better optimised to 'work harder' for the community.

Harnessing opportunities

The SIS framework provides guiding principles for CN to respond to opportunities. On occasion, opportunities with potential community value emerge that are not anticipated or driven by CN's direct involvement. The SIS framework allows CN and its partners to work through any 'windfall' or

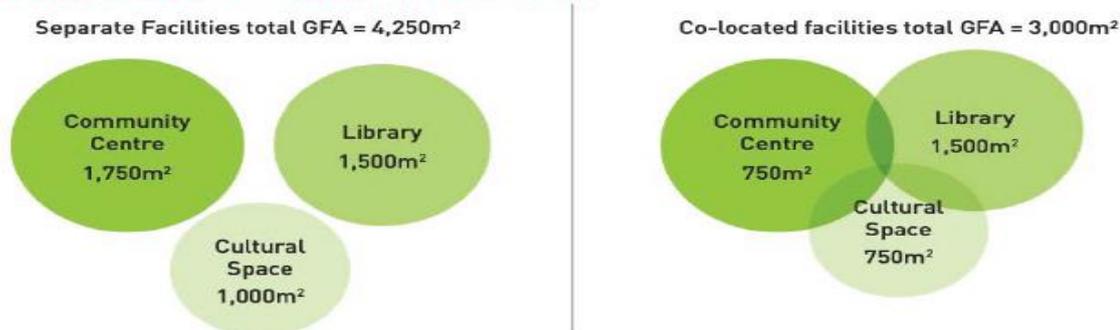
unforeseen opportunities with SIS principles and priorities at hand. Ongoing evidence-gathering, consultation and data analysis similarly builds CN's capacity to respond.

Co-located and multifunctional spaces

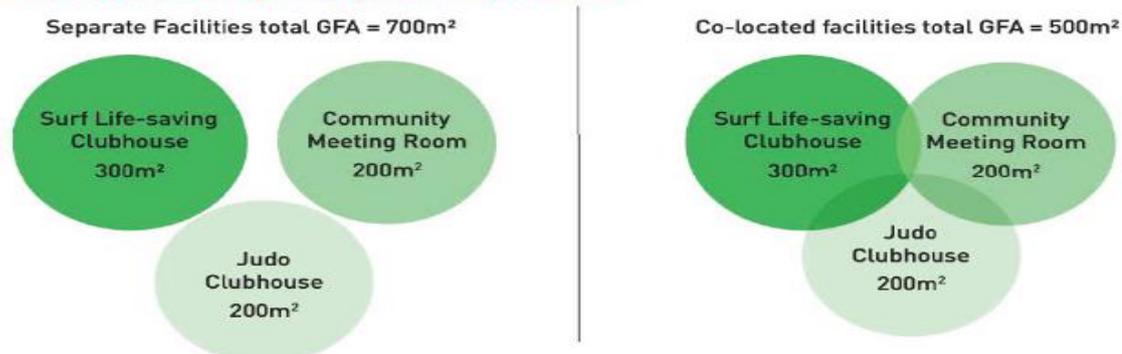
'Co-locating' our SI and creating more multipurpose spaces for a range of activities will increase capacity and create a more economically, environmentally and socially sustainable networks. Multipurpose facilities can be adapted as community needs and interests change and co-locating a range of uses in one space reduces the floor space and maintenance required. New models such as stacked buildings and mixed-used developments, will be explored as opportunities for SI. This responds to the increasing density in our city, where land values are high and land is scarce.

Co-location can take a number of forms, including models where multiple, independent, services are accommodated under the one roof; shared accommodation, service and administration models; and precinct or campus style developments, where multiple services are located in separate accommodation within the one, common, site. The image below, provides an indication of the opportunities for savings in scale, measured in Gross Floor Area (GFA), that can be gained through co-location of both 'foundation' and 'supporting' SI. This includes the co-location of leisure and recreation places and spaces with community and cultural facilities, as well as the inclusion of spaces for groups that historically occupy separate facilities (for example seniors, youth) within multi-purpose community hubs.

EXAMPLE OF CO-LOCATION – 'FOUNDATION' FACILITIES



EXAMPLE OF CO-LOCATION – 'SUPPORTING' FACILITIES



Maximised contribution of new technologies and sustainability treatments

Community facilities should be planned to maximise the contribution of new technologies, including those supporting service delivery, creative industries, learning and community-building. Examples such as Wi-Fi accessibility should be considered as part of the infrastructure's design. Digital technology can also assist in capturing and sharing data to help inform decision-making associated with the performance, design, planning and delivery of SI.

Similarly, projects for new SI or asset renewal should reflect sustainability principles to ensure efficient and low impact operations. When planning new assets or renewal, CN applies a range of sustainability principles to ensure efficient and low impact operations, consistent with our climate action goals

Intergenerational spaces

Community engagement results indicate a need for more spaces that support intergenerational use (e.g. adventure play for families with children, places for parents to sit and chat, places for young people to hang out and places for seniors to exercise), as well as more spaces for informal and unstructured social and recreational activities (such as multipurpose courts, rebound walls and gathering spaces).



Priority 3: Community capacity-building and inclusion

- Objectives**
- 3.1 Ensure equitable and transparent fees alongside sustainable revenue streams
 - 3.2 Inclusive and welcoming social infrastructure designed, managed and programmed for all in our diverse community to enjoy
 - 3.3 Enhance social connections, community participation and capacity building facilitated through our social infrastructure
 - 3.4 Continue to engage with our communities around their social infrastructure needs and inform and involve them in decision making

Indicator	Measure by CN/other	Output
Community capacity building and inclusion	Subjective: Perceptions of feeling part of local community and that Newcastle is welcoming of diversity	CN satisfaction survey
Fees and charges affordability	Proportion of user group types (community rate verses corporate rate)	CN booking data
Community engagement	# of people engaged around their SI needs Subjective: Do you feel there are opportunities to have a real say on SI projects that are important to you?	CN data CN Community Satisfaction Survey

- Links to CSP**
- 1.2.1 Connected communities
 - 1.2.2 Inclusive communities
 - 1.2.3 Equitable communities
 - 1.2.4 Healthy communities
 - 1.4.2 Digital inclusion and social innovation
 - 3.3.1 Nurture cultural and creative practitioners
 - 3.3.3 Culture in everyday life
 - 4.2.1 Genuine engagement

- Links to other CN strategies/plans**
- Draft Local Social Strategy
 - Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2026
 - Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 - 2024

Why is this priority important?

Great SI is accessible to all people in the community. It can help all people feel welcome and connected, providing opportunities to meet with neighbours, family and friends. The 2021 *NSW Public Spaces Charter* prioritises public spaces as free, open and welcoming for people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and abilities to use and enjoy. But for Newcastle, there is increasing evidence that while social and economic disadvantage increases, participation in community programs decreases, with some of our residents having less money to spend and others being unable to access what they need.

Genuine engagement

CN has a strong commitment to involving our community in decision making through genuine engagement and informing our community about CN programs, services and projects, the SIS will continue this commitment.

Responding to diversity

Our community is diverse, with different groups needing different programs and services and having different abilities to access what they need. CN through the SIS and Local Social Strategy sets a road map for ensuring that diversity and difference is celebrated and respected, and that diverse communities have equal opportunities to access our places and spaces in ways important to them.

Transparent user fees and charges

Transparent, fair and consistent fees and charges for our SI is important to enable community groups to deliver programs and services independently.

The availability of free, informal SI for the community to access informally is particularly important in the more socially and economically disadvantaged areas of Wallsend, Elernmore Vale, Minmi and Jesmond, including exercise equipment, walking paths, community gardens, play spaces, active youth hubs and multipurpose courts.

Accessible, inclusive places and spaces

While we may have an abundance of natural areas, for ageing residents and people with disability, these may be difficult to access. We need to consider how we universally design our public spaces to include everyone. Local services also told us that improvements are needed to the support infrastructure connecting to our public facilities and open spaces, including our beaches (e.g. footpaths, parking, ramps, paths from bus stops all the way to local centres, etc.).

The SI is directly linked with CN's Disability and Inclusion Access Plan (2022-2026) which aims to increase and improve accessibility of public spaces and to embed inclusion and accessibility principles in our planning. A focus area for the SIS is improving access or connections between our public facilities and open spaces, including our beaches (e.g. parking, ramps, and paths between bus stops and local centres).



Priority 4: Governance, partnerships, and advocacy

- Objectives**
- 4.1 Integrate planning, governance and decision making to better align social infrastructure investment with evidence-based needs and prioritisation and support delivery through diverse and sustainable revenue streams
 - 4.2 Improve social infrastructure data capture and technology systems, aimed at increasing user experience, utilisation and organisational insights
 - 4.3 Pursue diverse funding and partnerships to share opportunity and support delivery
 - 4.4 Champion support for our current and projected social infrastructure needs to positively influence decisions within political, economic, and social spheres

Indicator	Measure by CN/other	Output
Integrated SI provision	Establish common principles for place-based, cross-agency SI provision	CN booking software CN SI condition assessments
Data insights	Establish an internal SI governance framework and embed 6 monthly reporting to the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee. Increase CN-owned SI capacity and utilisation data capture	CN data
Diverse funding and partnerships	CN GIS capacity leveraged ongoing SI planning spatial analysis and modelling Partnership toolkit created # and value of diverse funding # of partnerships	

- Links to CSP**
- 3.4.2 Government relations and advocacy
 - 4.1.1 Financial sustainability
 - 4.1.2 Integrated planning and reporting
 - 4.2.1 Genuine engagement
 - 4.3.3. Data innovation and insight

Links to other City of Newcastle strategies/plans

- Section 7.11 and 7.12 Development Contributions Plan 2022
- Service Asset Plans

Why is this priority important?

Governance and culture

Supported by a governance framework to oversee the Strategy's implementation, we will move towards a new way of thinking about SI, transforming our skills, capabilities and culture around sustainable, integrated SI provision.

Delivering great SI requires the expertise and assistance of many within CN. We know there is still significant work to be done to reach the best possible outcomes for our community in terms of evidence-based needs, resource sharing and prioritisation. We will collaborate within our organisation to prioritise what we need, and with our external partners in the planning, delivery and management of SI. These partners include all levels of government (federal, state and local), industry, NGOs and the private sector, who all play a role.

Throughout the life of the action plan, twice yearly progress reports will be provided to the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee.

Data insights and system improvements

Through improved data capture and system improvements, we aim to enhance CN's capacity and capability around long-term service and infrastructure planning. Investment in systems and data to improve our knowledge and insights about SI will lead to more targeted investments, greater value and outcomes.

Partnerships and advocacy

Meeting community needs and aspirations for our city's SI will require a whole-of-community and whole-of-government response involving coordination, cooperation, and partnership between each level of government, community sector and industry to address unmet need and alleviate pressure on existing services and infrastructure. Partnerships and advocacy are critical to achieving the Strategy's priorities and actions and moving towards new models that service the needs of our community fairly and viably.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

*Action from other CN adopted strategies and plans

Priority 1. Equitable distribution for growth and resilience				
Objective	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	CSP Priority
1.1 Plan for and support an equitably distributed network of local, district and LGA-wide social infrastructure hubs, building upon local centres hierarchy	1.1.1 Prepare a Community Hubs Strategic Plan	Year 1-2	Strategy and Engagement Infrastructure and Property, City Wide Services	1.2.1, 1.2.3
	*1.1.2 Ensure planning for new public open spaces includes provision for improved links to existing park infrastructure or addresses new infrastructure requirements as a result of high future growth areas.	Ongoing – Our Budget	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1, 1.2.4
	*1.1.3 Prepare a Play Spaces Action Plan to guide planning and delivery of a diverse network of play spaces across the LGA	Year 3-5	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1, 1.2.4
	*1.1.4 Continue to implement the Outdoor Exercise Facility Action Plan 2018	Ongoing – Our Budget	Parks and Recreation	1.2.4
	*1.1.5 Continue to implement the Dogs in Open Space Plan 2019	Ongoing - Our Budget	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1
1.2 Prioritise social infrastructure investment in areas with current gaps, high socio-economic disadvantage and forecast population growth	1.2.1 Continue to negotiate for social infrastructure provision in the land use planning system, specifically in the West District, and in urban renewal corridors and urban release areas such as Wallsend and Minmi	Ongoing - Our Budget	Governance City Wide Services Strategy and Engagement	1.2.3
	*1.2.2 Plan the delivery of new sports fields, court surfaces and parks to meet the needs of the growing population in the West District.	Ongoing – Our Budget	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
	*1.2.3 Investigate the provision of a temporary/pop-up community space for a library kiosk in the West District. .	Year 1-2	Libraries and Learning	1.2.3, 3.3.3
	1.2.4 Advocate for Social Infrastructure outcomes in the planning and design of the Broadmeadow Place Strategy and Hunter Park, Broadmeadow, including investigation of sport, recreation, community and cultural places and spaces	Ongoing	Governance City Wide Services Strategy and Engagement	1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.3.4, 3.3.3
	*1.2.5 Work with State Government to plan for a new regional level competition aquatic centre including social infrastructure to service local community needs	Ongoing	Parks and Recreation	1.2.4
1.3 Improve access to and between social infrastructure , through public transport advocacy and blue/green grid recreational connections.	1.3.1 Undertake public and active transport analysis to support planning (and advocacy) and enhanced connections to LGA social infrastructure.	Ongoing	Governance Strategy and Engagement	1.3.1, 1.3.4
	1.3.2 Continue to plan for the long-term delivery of a blue-green-grid network of improved walking and cycling connections to District and Regional level parks, natural areas, and Newcastle's beaches.	Ongoing	Governance	1.3.1

Priority 2. Quality and adaptive places and spaces				
Objective	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	CSP Priority
2.1 Improve the amenity of our public facilities and open spaces for increased utilisation	2.1.1 Complete condition assessment reports for CN-owned social infrastructure buildings	Year 1 -2	Infrastructure and Property City Wide Services	1.1.2, 1.2.3, 1.4.1, 2.1.3
	2.1.2 Develop and implement a tiered embellishment standards framework for all local, district, LGA/metropolitan level community centres/halls, and sport, parks and recreation places and spaces	Year 3 -5	City Wide Services Strategy and Engagement Infrastructure and Property	1.1.1.
	*2.1.3 Continue to implement CN Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 actions 7 and 11 of continuous access improvement upgrades to CN-owned places and spaces	Ongoing – Our Budget	Infrastructure and Property City Wide Services	1.2.3
2.2 Improve our public facilities and open space as quality multi-purpose and co-located central hubs	*2.2.1 Prepare masterplans for Newcastle's District and Metropolitan level parks to function as multi-purpose co-located spaces that include community facilities and amenities to support intergenerational, informal and formal uses.	Ongoing – Our Budget	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1, 1.3.1, 2.1.3,
	*2.2.3 Investigate opportunities to activate Wheeler Place as an extension of Civic Theatre and City Hall through cultural programming	Year 1-2	Civic Services	1.1.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.3.1
2.3 Champion innovative projects that realise contemporary social infrastructure design, utilisation and management	*2.3.1 Investigate opportunities in West District for a new district-level multi-purpose leisure centre.	Year 1-2	Parks and Recreation	1.1.1, 1.2.4
	2.3.2 Create a suite of resources to demonstrate innovative and contemporary social infrastructure to aid land use planning, concept design and delivery of projects	Year 1-2	Strategy and Engagement	1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
	2.3.3 Contribute to social infrastructure provision through innovative energy efficient products and technologies and integrated solutions that minimise environmental impact	Ongoing – Our Budget	Strategy and Engagement	2.1.1

Priority 3. Community capacity-building and inclusion				
Objective	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	CSP Priority
3.1 Ensure equitable and transparent fees, charges alongside sustainable revenue streams	3.1.1 Review CN fees and charges for public places and spaces hire.	Year 1 -2	Strategy and Engagement Governance City Wide Services	1.2.3, 4.1.1, 4.2.3
	3.1.2 Investigate opportunities at CN Newcastle Venues for increased local level community and cultural participation.	Year 3 -5	Civic Services	1.2.3, 3.3.1, 3.3.3
3.2 Inclusive and welcoming social infrastructure managed and programmed for everyone in our diverse community to enjoy	3.2.1 Increase awareness of how to book CN community centres and halls	Year 1-2, Year 3 -5, Year 3-5	Civic Services, Library Services, Strategy and Engagement	1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 4.2.1, 4.2.3
	3.2.2 Facilitate increased delivery of community support programming in CN community hubs, centres and halls, prioritised in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage and forecast population growth, and in line with management agreements (needs prioritisation through Local Social evidence base).	Year 3 -5,	Strategy and Engagement	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4
3.3 Enhance community capacity and social capital facilitated through our social infrastructure	3.3.1 Collaborate with our Aboriginal communities to plan for culturally appropriate gathering and connection spaces that can be enhanced/established	Ongoing - Our Budget	Strategy and Engagement	Reported against Local Social

Priority 4. Governance, partnerships and advocacy				
Objective	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	CSP Priority
4.1 Integrate planning, governance and decision making to better align SI investment with evidence-based needs and prioritisation delivered through diverse and sustainable revenue streams	4.1.1 Update the CN Community Assets and Open Space (CAOS) Policy 2017 to align with the strategy principles, hierarchy recommendations and functional guidance.	Year 1 -2	Strategy and Engagement	4.3.1
	4.1.2 Report annually on SIS progress to the CN Liveable Cities Advisory Committee	Ongoing – Our Budget	Strategy and Engagement	4.1.2
	4.1.3 Continue to work with NSW emergency services around utilisation of CN-owned social infrastructure in crisis events such as natural disasters	Ongoing – Our Budget	Governance, Strategy and Engagement	2.1.3, 4.2.3, 4.3.1
	4.1.4 Review and update community centre and halls management agreements to enable positive outcomes for local communities and disadvantaged groups	Year 1	Infrastructure and Property	4.3.1
4.2 Improve social infrastructure data capture and technology systems, aimed at increasing user experience, utilisation and organisational insights	4.2.1 Develop and implement data systems and analytic framework for CN-owned social infrastructure to monitor and improve capacity, utilisation and community benefit	Year 3 -5	Strategy and Engagement	4.3.2, 4.3.3
	4.2.2 Leverage CN GIS to support ongoing spatial analysis and modelling (eg site analysis, transport modelling) to underpin social infrastructure planning.	Year 1 -2	Strategy and Engagement	4.3.3
4.3 Pursue diverse funding and partnerships to share opportunity and support delivery	4.3.1 Prepare a prospectus of social infrastructure opportunities and demonstrate CN's readiness for partnerships and shared uses	Year 3 -5	Strategy and Engagement	4.3.1
	4.3.2 In line with the asset planning framework, facilitate grant readiness program (eg program of concept design ready projects).	Year 3 -5	Strategy and Engagement Parks and Recreation Library Services Museum Civic Services Governance Infrastructure and Property	4.1.2, 4.3.2
	4.3.3 Develop and implement a tool kit for use by CN Staff leveraging and maintaining successful partnerships.	Year 3 -5	Strategy and Engagement	4.3.1, 4.3.2
	4.3.4 Investigate opportunities to increase access to non-Council owned community spaces for public use through shared and joint use arrangements and agreements and equitable fees and charges	Year 1-2, Year 3 -5,	Strategy and Engagement City Wide Services	4.3.1
4.4 Advocate for our current and projected social infrastructure needs to positively influence decisions within all political, economic, and social spheres	4.4.1 Prepare an advocacy roadmap which sets a strategic approach to social infrastructure advocacy for the city	Annually – Our Budget	Strategy and Engagement	3.4.2

Appendix 2 - Catchment planning and Demographics Analysis

The SIS takes a catchment approach to the assessment and planning of SI. This approach aims to reflect, where possible, patterns of community preference in accessing services and facilities, along with groupings of planning catchments that are socially and geographically aligned. (For example, best practice library provision indicates that local government should seek to develop larger district facilities and, as a result, serve the needs of a catchment area larger than one or 2 suburbs.)

The Strategy's catchments are based on the following SI hierarchy, with the lowest-level planning catchments aligning with other CN strategies and land use hierarchies (including the *Newcastle Local Housing Strategy and Local Centres Hierarchy*). Planning catchments utilise the Australian Statistical Geography Standard Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2, one to 2 suburbs, average of about 10,000 people) functional areas.

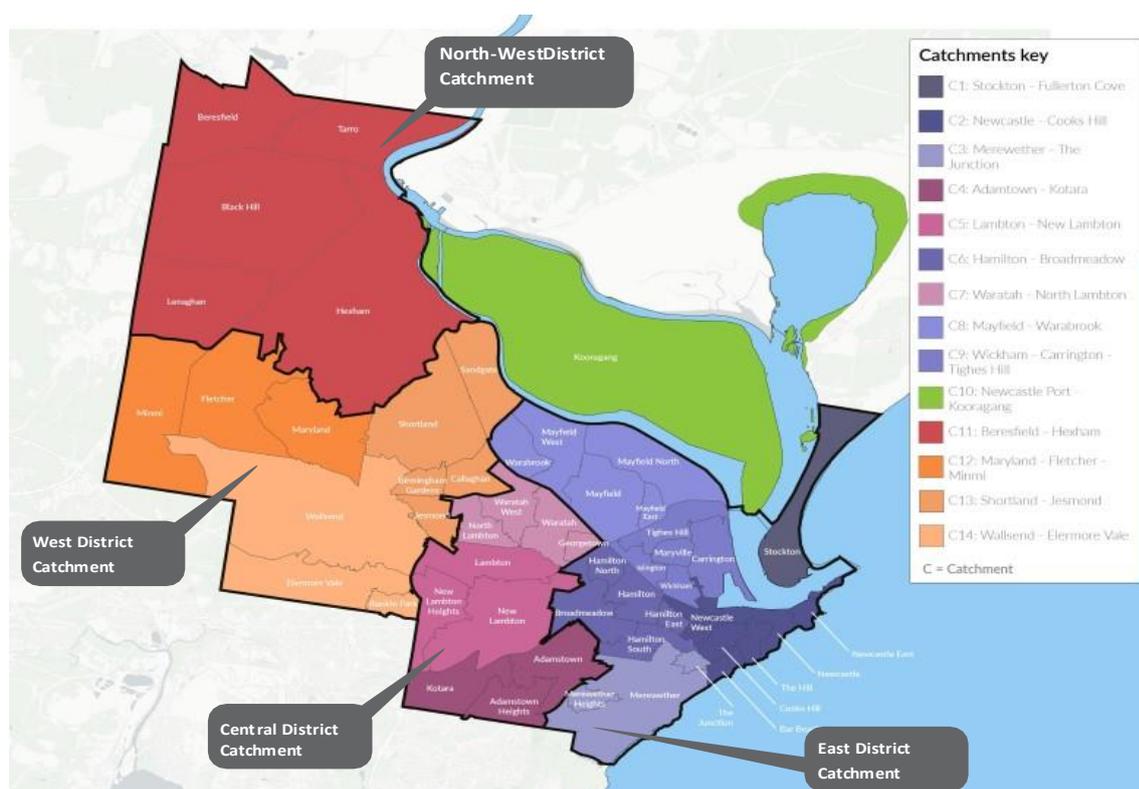
When combined with standards of provision and population-based benchmarks, the SI hierarchy enables assessment of comparative under-supply or over-supply of social

infrastructure. Various provision standards and benchmarks were employed when determining catchments' future needs and potential gaps related to SI. Population-based benchmarks were used to give an indication of the number and size of items of SI that will ideally be provided if opportunity exists. Many of the SIS standards of provision rates and benchmarks are well accepted as industry standards.

Metropolitan level facilities (Greater Newcastle Region)		District level facilities (District catchment level)	
Location	Major centres/significant opportunity sites	Location	Town centres/significant opportunity sites
Catchment	200,000+	Catchment	25,000 to 50,000+
Description	Provides the premier civic and cultural spaces to serve the large metropolitan area, with a wide range of social and cultural facilities and services. These are staffed facilities.	Description	Provides multipurpose flexible social infrastructure that services district catchments and multiple planning catchments. These should be staffed facilities.
May include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major civic centres Major cultural centres 	May include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District library Multipurpose community centre Indoor leisure centre (wet/dry) Performing arts centre or exhibition space Smaller scale sports stadiums/ infrastructure
LGA level facilities (City of Newcastle LGA)		Local level facilities (planning catchment level)	
Location	Major centres/significant opportunity sites	Location	Small centres/opportunity sites near transport
Catchment	100,000 to 200,000	Catchment	Up to 20,000
Description	Provides flagship social infrastructure that services the LGA wide population wide range of social and cultural facilities and services. These are staffed facilities.	Description	Small scale local facilities. These may not be staffed and used mostly for outreach and neighbourhood activities.
May include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International/national/State level sporting infrastructure Large cultural production space 	May include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community halls Link/mobile library



NB: SI in adjoining areas outside Newcastle was also included in the assessment. The SIS aims to ensure that all planning catchments have access to local-level SI at a minimum.



Planning catchments and district catchments in our LGA

What social infrastructure do the demographics indicate is needed?

Increasing residential population

Rapid growth areas such as Maryland–Fletcher–Minmi, Newcastle–Cooks Hill and Mayfield–Warabrook and increasing density in areas such as Newcastle City Centre, Mayfield (Maitland Road), and around the Broadmeadow, Adamstown and Hamilton Stations is increasing demand for ‘third spaces and open space that functions as a ‘backyard’ for apartment residents.

Socially and economically disadvantaged residents

There is significant disparity in relation to social and economic disadvantage across the LGA, with the West and North-West Districts’ planning and growth considering concentrations of highly disadvantaged areas (Shortland, Birmingham Gardens, Wallsend, Jesmond) and how they can benefit through quality SI. People living in these areas have poorer outcomes for their older residents (on the Index of Wellbeing of Older Australians [IWOA]), higher proportions of residents

needing assistance, lower internet access, higher unemployment and higher proportions of children and young people. Barriers to participation for lower socio-economic groups may include cost, lack of time or transport access. Ensuring SI is affordable, accessible and in proximity to public transport will support participation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

In 2016, 3.5% of the total Newcastle population identified as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (NSW=2.5%). The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are the traditional custodians of the land and waters of the Newcastle LGA. Future planning for the LGA can recognise, celebrate and learn from Aboriginal connection to Country within the design and activation of SI (particularly open space and cultural facilities), especially in areas with higher-than-average aboriginal populations such as Carrington, Maryland and Beresfield–Tarro.

Culturally and linguistically diverse people

While Newcastle has a relatively low proportion of residents from non-English-speaking backgrounds, there have been increasing numbers of residents from overseas, particularly in areas such as Jesmond (a high of 38% in 2016), Birmingham Gardens–Callaghan (likely university students), Warabrook and New Lambton. The top emerging non-English languages were Chinese languages, Malayalam, Persian/Dari and Vietnamese. SI can facilitate cross-cultural relationships and new connections for recently arrived residents, as well as access to Settlement Services and English language classes. Culturally diverse residents may also have a range of cultural and recreational interests that SI should respond to, including demand for activities such as badminton, swimming, outdoor ping pong, dancing and walking in the evenings. We also know that indoor recreational facilities and courts are in higher demand from culturally diverse communities.

Living with disability

In 2016, 9,197 people (or 5.9% of the population; NSW=5.4%) in Newcastle had a '*profound or severe disability*', defined as people "needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability, long term health condition (lasting six months or more) or old age". While Newcastle and NSW have similar proportions of residents reporting a need for assistance with day-to-day activities, some planning catchments of the LGA have higher populations of people in need of assistance, including Shortland–Sandgate, Wallsend, Jesmond and Warabrook. Universally accessible and inclusive public spaces should be a priority across the LGA, but there is also a need to consider social programs and services that are accessible to people living with disability located in areas with high need.

Young people and workforce/students

We have a high population of young people, including students and young workforce-aged residents, and our community has prioritised a need for libraries and parks, leisure centres and recreation facilities, and more spaces (particularly free spaces) that support intergenerational use (e.g. adventure play for families with children; places for parents to sit and chat; formal and informal places for young people to hang out).

Children and families

Newcastle has a similar proportion of children to regional NSW but showed an increasing number of family households between 2011 and 2016. In some areas such as North Lambton, Beresfield–Tarro, Maryland and Tighes Hill, there are higher proportions of one-parent families. Children and families need access to quality early education and care services (including long day care, preschool and out-of-school-hours care), primary school, and school holiday programs including arts, cultural, technological and recreational programs. Children and families need access to open space and

recreation facilities for play, exercise and relaxation. Future planning should consider the needs of families with children, including: open spaces that can host celebrations; accessible facilities located near public transport or parking; accessible play spaces suitable for different ages and abilities; and dedicated parents' rooms in public amenities. Australian Early Development Census data also tells us that in some parts of the LGA, there are higher-than-average proportions of children who are developmentally vulnerable, with particularly high numbers in Jesmond, Waratah, Beresfield, Hamilton and Hamilton East indicating a need for access to high-quality early education and care as well as family support services in these areas.

Diverse genders and sexualities

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) people and communities represent a diverse and often underrepresented population. They are estimated to be between 4,000–15,000 people in Newcastle (*Social Strategy 2016–2019*). This community needs access to safe spaces to connect, but also access to support services.

Homelessness and risk of homelessness

Homelessness in Australia remains a significant issue. On Census night in 2016, an estimated 116,427 people were staying in temporary or emergency accommodation or in severely overcrowded dwellings, or 'sleeping rough' (ABS 2018). This translates to a national homelessness rate of 50 persons for every 10,000 enumerated in 2016, a rise (5%) from 48 persons in 2011 and 45 persons in 2006 (ABS 2018). From a SI perspective, people sleeping rough or at risk of homelessness need access to social welfare services, safe and accessible amenities (showers, toilets, laundry facilities), air-conditioned spaces during extreme heat events, and places and spaces in our city that are welcoming for all.

Older people

Newcastle is an area of families, but also has an ageing population. Between 2011 and 2016, the population aged 65+ grew by 20% and is forecast to increase by more than 30% by 2041. Areas such as Beresfield–Tarro, Merewether Heights, Rankin Park, Warabrook and Waratah have the highest proportions of older people in the LGA. Participation in social, cultural and recreation activities bring many benefits as people age, including improved health and wellbeing and social connection. There will be increased need for SI that supports activities for older people, such as creative and performing arts participation and viewing, gentle exercise (e.g. swimming and walking), and access to libraries and lifelong learning.

SI should also be universally designed so it is accessible as people become frailer. Accessible connections to local parks and services are also important. The IWOA also indicates that there are significantly low wellbeing levels in several planning catchments; older people in these areas will need access to social services and programs, including social outings, meals and Home and Community Care services.

Appendix 3 – What our community told us

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Community engagement summary



“Social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing, and that it benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities”
(LMM 25/06/2019)

In 2019, the City of Newcastle Council (CN), acknowledged the importance of having appropriate and quality social infrastructure to support growth.

Engagement activities

To understand current and future social infrastructure needs, CN partnered with Cred Consulting to engage community members and stakeholders. Engagement with the community and stakeholders including government agencies, University of Newcastle, local social welfare and community service providers, and City of Newcastle teams, and ran between 5 November and 30 November 2020, and included:

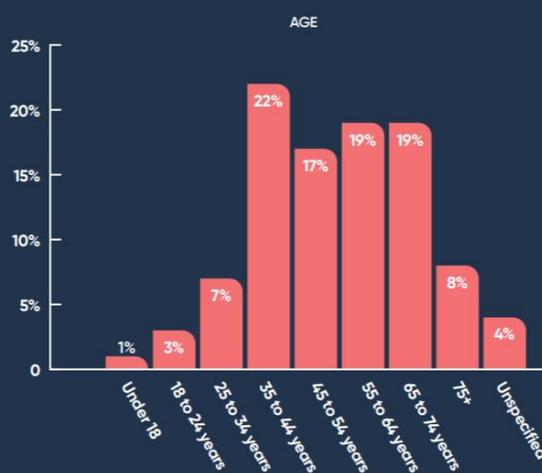
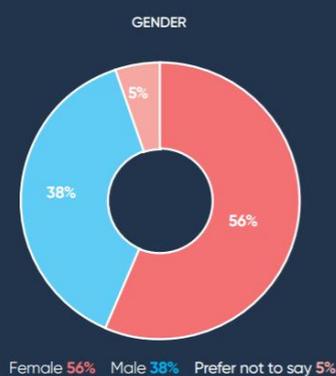
Online surveys

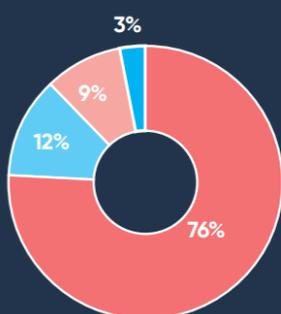
via the *Have Your Say* page on the CN website

Community survey

- 213 participants
- 91% live in the Newcastle local government area (LGA)

Demographics





Service provider survey

34 participants

- Not for profit, for purpose of social enterprise: **76%**
- Commercial: **12%**
- Social group, club or Incorporated body: **9%**
- Other type: **3%**

Online interactive map

via social pinpoint



301 pins dropped across City of Newcastle LGA

Stakeholder interviews

via video and phone call

External stakeholder services meetings

7 meetings

NSW Government Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation

NSW Government Department of Communities & Justice

NSW Government Department of Education

NSW Government Venues NSW

University of Newcastle

The Canopy

Mercy Services

Internal stakeholders

5 meetings

Open Space and Recreation

Aquatic Services

Community Planning and Development

Property and Facilities

Culture, Civic, Libraries, Child Care



Key findings

Social infrastructure is highly valued and utilised by the community



97% of survey respondents agreed that for Newcastle, having access to public open space and recreation facilities is important.

94% of survey respondents agreed that having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important.



Libraries (**65%**), cultural and arts spaces (**63%**), and community health centres (**41%**) were the most utilised community facilities among survey respondents, and in terms of public open space respondents are more likely to utilise footpaths (**85%**), parks (**82%**) and walking trails (**67%**) in Newcastle LGA.

Participants highlighted that community facilities and public open spaces will continue to play an important role as the population grows and changes, and to support community health and wellbeing outcomes.



'Keeping things pleasant, functional, and affordable are the big three. These are vital spaces for the community and our services'

Engagement respondent feedback

Social infrastructure should be affordable for everyone to use and hire

- Across engagement activities, participants indicated free or affordable spaces are a key outcome for great community facilities and open spaces and would like to see more services, activities and programs that are free or affordable for the community to participate in.
- Service providers suggested affordable spaces and facilities are highly important to continue to deliver programs and services to the community.
- Service provider survey respondents would like to see more spaces that are easily hireable, and in particular, Council-owned facilities available for hire at a subsidised or community rate.

'Really need to be affordable. COVID-19 has highlighted the equity issues across the city and some places are just too expensive for groups to use, particularly groups from lower socioeconomic areas'.

Engagement respondent feedback

Improving access to social infrastructure that is equitably distributed is a high priority

'Programs need to be as inclusive as possible, and provide comfortable and easy activities'

Engagement respondent feedback

- A range of social infrastructure that is accessible, inclusive, and welcoming to all members of the community including age, abilities, and cultures is a key priority.
- Survey respondents indicated they were more likely to travel to community facilities and open space and public recreation facilities by car, commenting there is a lack of frequent, reliable, and connected public transport options to travel across the LGA, and few accessible public parking at facilities.
- 30% of respondents indicated they would like to see community facilities and open space and public recreation facilities fairly distributed across Newcastle, with consideration given for areas or people in need and particularly further distributed outside of Ward 1 (Newcastle CBD). Services also highlighted the need for increased access to social infrastructure in the growing Western Corridor where there is also increasing social disadvantage.

Increasing capacity and flexibility of Newcastle's social infrastructure

- Multipurpose, flexible, and adaptable community facilities and public open spaces that accommodate for a wide range of activities and interests was a top priority for participants.
- Contributors to the interactive map indicated there is a growing demand for flexible multi-purpose spaces, expressing a need for co-located community and recreational spaces that supports the increase in young families in some areas across the LGA.
- Opportunities to better improve public open spaces (streets, beaches, parks) for social and recreational and informal participation, including internet connectivity, improved amenity, and intergenerational spaces.



Improve the quality of what we already have to increase use and activation

- Participants would like to see improvements to existing social infrastructure to increase community use and activation.
- Across all engagement activities, respondents expressed a strong need for additional and improved amenities across community facilities and open spaces and public recreation facilities, with priorities focussing on accessible public toilets, change rooms, bubblers, more trees, shaded seating and table areas, lighting at night to activate spaces, increasing bins and waste facilities to reduce littering, and improved surfacing of pathways to support active transport and recreation links across the LGA.
- Increased maintenance of open spaces, particularly surfacing of footpaths and pathways to improve safety, accessibility and create connected networks across the LGA for active transport and recreational use. Similarly, survey respondents and contributors indicated parks, sports fields and courts are a priority, acknowledging increasing participation trends in formal sport, particularly in female memberships.

'Spaces need to be multipurpose and managed not purely as venues, but understanding the role they play in wellbeing driven by community development'

Engagement respondent feedback



'CN needs to build trust with local community groups and the community and recognise the benefits these groups provide. This can be achieved through low-cost spaces'.

Engagement respondent feedback

Partnership, collaboration and sharing

- Stakeholders suggested that there are opportunities for CN to work in partnership with the large number of services, government agencies and major institutions to plan for and deliver great social infrastructure to meet future demand. This includes in growth areas such as the Western Corridor, Newcastle CBD, and Hunter Park; through sharing social infrastructure with schools and universities; and working with services to improve access to spaces to deliver outreach services and programs in planning catchments disconnected from transport or social infrastructure provision.

(Source: Cred Consulting)

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ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

**CCL 27/09/2022 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT SOCIAL
INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

ITEM-76 **Attachment B:** Social Infrastructure Strategy Engagement
Report

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Social Infrastructure Strategy

Community Engagement Report



Social Infrastructure Strategy

Community engagement summary



“Social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing, and that quality social infrastructure benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities”

(LMM 25/06/2019)

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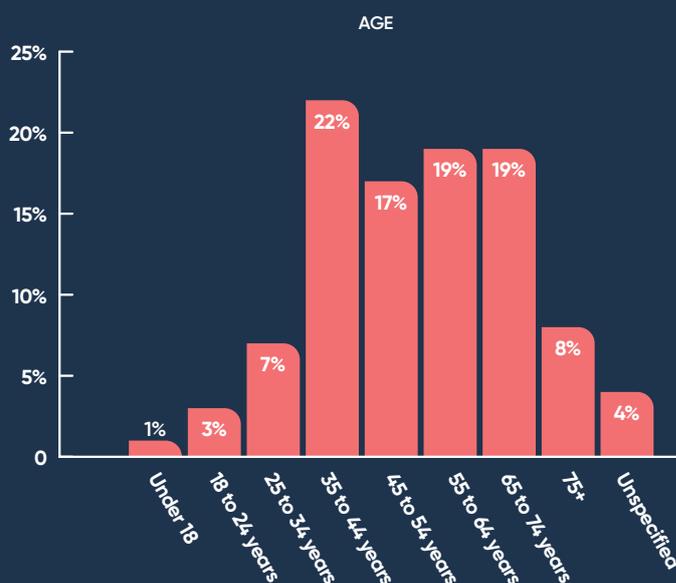
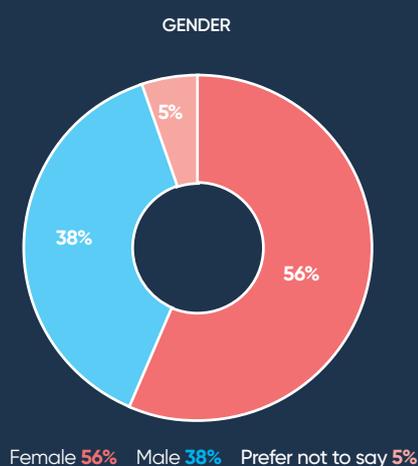
Online surveys

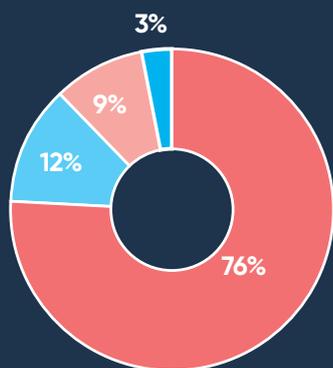
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Increasing capacity and flexibility of Newcastle's social infrastructure

- Multipurpose, flexible, and adaptable community facilities and public open spaces that accommodate for a wide range of activities and interests was a top priority for participants.
- Contributors to the interactive map indicated there is a growing demand for flexible multi-purpose spaces, expressing a need for co-located community and recreational spaces that supports the increase in young families in some areas across the LGA.
- Opportunities to better improve public open spaces (streets, beaches, parks) for social and recreational and informal participation, including internet connectivity, improved amenity, and intergenerational spaces.



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Partnership, collaboration and sharing

- Stakeholders suggested that there are opportunities for CN to work in partnership with the large number of services, government agencies and major institutions to plan for and deliver great social infrastructure to meet future demand. This includes in growth areas such as the Western Corridor, Newcastle CBD, and Hunter Park; through sharing social infrastructure with schools and universities; and working with services to improve access to spaces to deliver outreach services and programs in planning catchments disconnected from transport or social infrastructure provision.

The following report was prepared by Cred Consulting on behalf of City of Newcastle

Prepared for: Community, Strategy, and Innovation,
City of Newcastle

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Social Infrastructure Strategy
Stage 1 Engagement Report

City of Newcastle
December 2020



Report title: Social Infrastructure Strategy -
Stage 1 Engagement Report

Client: City of Newcastle

Version: Draft V1

Date: 9 December 2020

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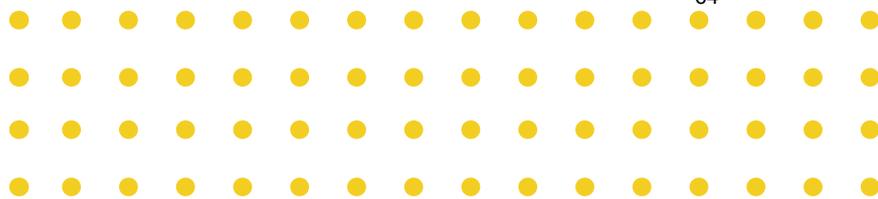


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1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of findings from Stage 1 community engagement completed in November/December 2020 to inform the development of the City of Newcastle Social Infrastructure Strategy Needs Assessment Report. The purpose of engagement was to understand the current and future social infrastructure needs based on feedback from a range of internal and external stakeholders including Council staff, the broader community, service providers, industry stakeholders and government agencies.

1.1. About the Social Infrastructure Strategy

Newcastle is Australia's seventh largest city and the capital city of the Greater Newcastle area. Over the past two decades Newcastle has transitioned to an innovative city focused on leading the way as it transforms into the next generation. During this time, the population of the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) has grown with significant growth in its western corridor and inner-city areas and continued growth is forecast. In 2019, the City of Newcastle Council (CN), acknowledged the importance of having appropriate and quality social infrastructure to support growth, passed a resolution (LMM 25/06/2019) that:

"Social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing, and that it benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities"

To enable CN to effectively plan for and deliver the social infrastructure the Newcastle community needs, CN engaged Cred Consulting to deliver a Social Infrastructure Strategy (SIS). The SIS will identify priorities for existing and future social infrastructure needs to 2041.

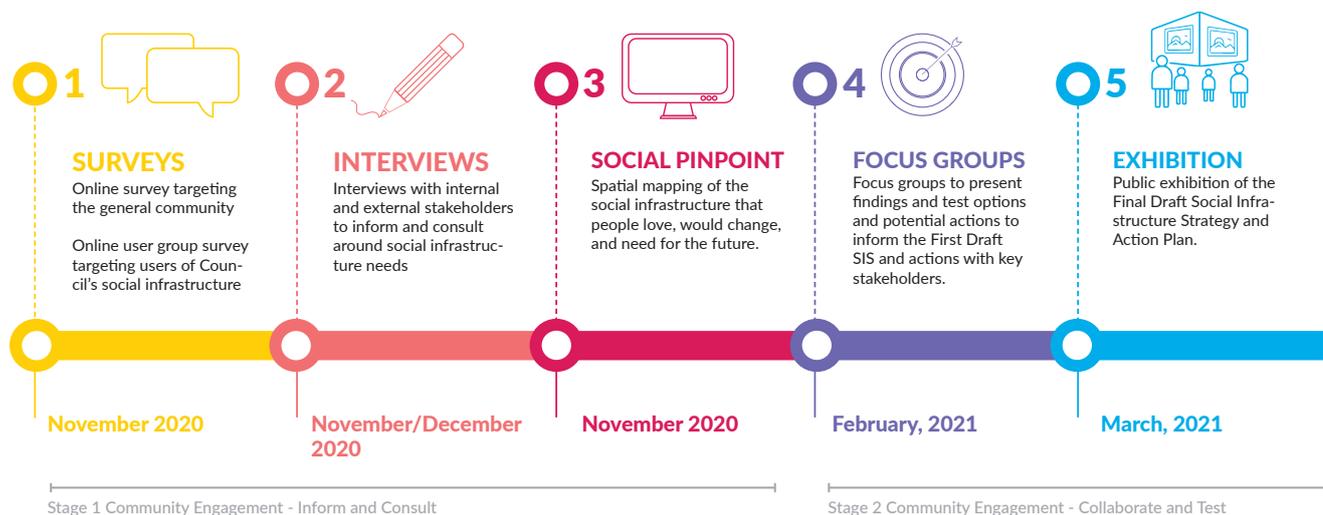
1.2. Purpose of this report

Engagement with community stakeholders is an important part of understanding current and future social infrastructure needs. This report provides a summary of engagement completed to inform the CN SIS Needs Study, which will form the evidence base for the SIS Strategy.

The objectives of the community engagement delivered for the CN SIS were to:

1. Discover resident, user group, service provider, industry and internal Council stakeholder current and future needs and priorities for social infrastructure (including public facilities and public open space and recreation facilities and the services and programs within them) for the Newcastle LGA, to inform future planning and provision.
2. Understand what a successful SIS looks like.
3. Understand what the broader community & user groups value about social infrastructure and its benefits.
4. Capture the views of a wide range of community members from diverse age groups, abilities, and geographical areas.
5. Enable more community awareness, through the engagement and planning process, of existing social infrastructure.

1.3. Engagement timeline



1.4. Summary of engagement activities

Between 5 November and 30 November, 2020, engagement was delivered to inform the current and future social infrastructure needs of the City of Newcastle community. Engagement activities delivered are detailed in Table 1. The engagement delivered below forms Stage 1 engagement with further engagement in Stage 2 to test needs and inform the SIS.

Table 1 - Overview of consultation activities

Type	Date	Location	Participants
Online surveys			
Community survey	5 November - 30 November 2020	CN Have Your Say Page	213
Service provider survey	5 November - 30 November 2020	CN Have Your Say Page	34
Online interactive map			
Have your say in shaping social infrastructure Social Pinpoint Interactive Map	5 November - 30 November 2020	https://newcastle.mysocialpinpoint.com/community-survey#/#/	301 contributors
Stakeholder interviews			
External stakeholder services			
Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation	18 November, 2020. 3.30pm to 4.30pm	Online via Microsoft Teams	2
Department of Communities and Justice	19 November, 3pm to 5pm.	Online via Microsoft Teams	2
The Canopy	27 November, 2020. 12.30pm to 1.20pm	Online via Microsoft Teams	1
University of Newcastle	27 November, 2020. 11.30 am to 12.30pm.	Online via Microsoft Teams	1
Mercy Services	9 December, 2020, 10am to 11am	Phone interview	1
Venues NSW	8 December, 2020, 9am to 9.30am	Phone interview	1
Department of Education	16 December (to be completed)	Online via Microsoft Teams	1
Internal stakeholders			
Open space and recreation	9 November 2020. 9.30am - 11am	Online via Microsoft Teams	4
Community Development and Programs	9 November 2020. 11am - 12.30pm	Online via Microsoft Teams	8
Property and Building Services	10 November 2020. 11am - 12.30pm	Online via Microsoft Teams	3
Culture and Civic	13 November 2020. 10.30am - 12pm	Online via Microsoft Teams	5
Pools and parks	9 November, 2020, 9.30am to 11am	Online via Microsoft Teams	2

What we heard



Social infrastructure is highly valued and utilised by the community

Community engagement participants told us they value and highly utilise social infrastructure across the Newcastle LGA.

The majority of survey respondents agree that for Newcastle, having access to public open space and recreation facilities is important (97%), and having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important (94%).

Libraries (65%), cultural and arts spaces (63%), and community health centres (41%) were the most utilised community facilities among survey respondents, and in terms of public open space respondents are more likely to utilise footpaths (85%), parks (82%) and walking trails (67%) in Newcastle LGA.

Participants highlighted that community facilities and public open spaces will continue to play an important role in the Newcastle LGA as the population grows and changes, and to support community health and wellbeing outcomes.



Improving access to social infrastructure that is equitably distributed is a high priority

Across engagements activities, accessibility and inclusion to social infrastructure is a key priority for participants now and into the future. Participants told us they would like to see a range of social infrastructure that are accessible, inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community including age, abilities, and cultures and equitably distributed across the LGA. Opportunities to include social infrastructure included universal design principles.

Survey respondents indicated they were more likely to travel to community facilities and open space and public recreation facilities by car, commenting there is a lack of frequent, reliable and connected public transport options to travel across the LGA, and few accessible public parking at facilities.

Having equitable access to social infrastructure across the LGA to was a top priority for participants, with 30% of survey respondents indicating they would like to see community facilities and open space and public recreation facilities fairly distributed across Newcastle, with consideration given for areas or people in need (benefiting everyone) and particularly further distributed outside of Ward 1 (Newcastle CBD). Services also highlighted the need for increased access to social infrastructure in the growing Western Corridor where there is also increasing social disadvantage.



Social infrastructure should be affordable for everyone to use and hire

Across engagement activities, participants indicated free or affordable spaces are a key outcome for great community facilities and open spaces.

Participants would like to see more spaces, services, activities and programs that are free or affordable for the community to participate in.

Service providers also indicated affordable spaces and facilities are highly important to continue to deliver programs and services to the community. Service provider survey respondents would like to see more spaces that are easily hireable, and in particular, Council-owned facilities available for hire at a subsidised or community rate.



Increasing capacity and flexibility of Newcastle's social infrastructure

Multipurpose, flexible community facilities and public open spaces that accommodate for a wide range of activities and interests was a top priority for participants. In the surveys, there was an expressed desire for shared community and recreation facilities, that can accommodate and adapt to the changing needs and interests in the community.

While there was lower participation in skate/BMX parks and spaces from survey respondents, contributors to the interactive map indicated there is a growing demand for flexible multi-purpose spaces, including outdoor surfacing that is suitable for increasing trend in rollerskating as well as co-located spaces that support the increase in young families in some areas across the LGA, expressing a need for co-located community and recreational spaces that support parents and their children.

Opportunities to better improve public open spaces (streets, beaches, parks) for social and recreational and informal participation was also identified. This includes internet connectivity, improved amenity and intergenerational spaces - with a focus on needs for more spaces for young people.



Improve the quality of what we already have to increase use and activation

Across engagement activities, participants would like to see improvements to the quality of existing social infrastructure to increase community use and activation.

In particular, participants expressed increasing amenity across all types of social infrastructure is important when planning for future spaces and facilities in the Newcastle LGA.

Across all engagement activities, respondents expressed a strong need for additional and improved amenities across community facilities and open spaces and public recreation facilities, with priorities focussing on accessible public toilets, change rooms, bubblers, more trees, shaded seating and table areas, lighting at night to activate spaces, increasing bins and waste facilities to reduce littering, and improved surfacing of pathways to support active transport and recreation links across the LGA.

Many contributors to the interactive map indicated they would like to see increased maintenance of open spaces, particularly surfacing of footpaths and pathways to improve safety, accessibility and create connected networks across the LGA for active transport and recreational use. Similarly, survey respondents and contributors indicated parks, sportsfields and courts are a priority, acknowledging increasing participation trends in formal sport, particularly in female memberships.



Partnership, collaboration and sharing

Stakeholders suggested that there are opportunities for CN to work in partnership and collaboration with the large number of services, government agencies and major institutions to plan for and deliver great social infrastructure to meet future demand.

This includes in growth areas such as the Western Corridor, Newcastle CBD, and Hunter Park; through sharing social infrastructure with schools and universities; and working with services to improve access to spaces to deliver outreach services and programs in planning catchments disconnected from transport or social infrastructure provision.

2. Online community survey findings

A total of 213 people responded to the community survey which was available online via Council's Have Your Say page from 5 November to 30 November 2020.

2.1. Snapshot of findings

- Of survey respondents, 94% indicated having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important.
- 97% of survey respondents also indicated for Newcastle, having access to public open space and public recreation facilities is important.
- Survey respondents indicated libraries and cultural arts spaces were the most commonly used facilities in the Newcastle area.
- To achieve great outcomes, respondents indicated community facilities should be accessible and inclusive for all regardless of their ability, age or income, free or affordable, and multi-purpose, accommodating a range of uses and community needs and adaptive to changing requirements.
- Across both community facilities and services and public open space and recreation facilities, the top three priorities for future as indicated by respondents include equitable access and inclusion to these facilities across the LGA for everyone in the community to enjoy, affordable and well-maintained spaces, and multi-purpose and flexible spaces that cater to a range of users and interest groups.
- Respondents are more likely to travel to community facilities and services and public open space and recreation facilities by car, and typically spend 10-15 minutes traveling to these spaces respectively.
- Survey respondents value access to public open spaces and recreation facilities, with the majority of respondents indicated they use footpaths and streets (for running and walking), parks and walking trails.

2.2. Survey respondent profile

In total, the online survey received 213 responses. The following provides a snapshot of the respondent profile.

Demographic indicators

- Almost all of survey respondents live within the Newcastle LGA (91%), with the top suburbs including:
 - Newcastle (9%)
 - New Lambton (6%)
 - Mayfield (6%)
 - Merewether (5%), and
 - Wallsend (5%).
- The majority of survey respondents were female (56%), with 38% male and 5% preferred not to say.
- There was a relatively older age profile of survey respondents, with the largest group reflected in working-aged adults aged 35 to 44 years (22%), followed by:
 - Aged 55 to 64 years: 19%
 - Aged 65 to 74 years: 19%
 - Aged 45 to 54 years: 17%

2.3. Community facilities, services and programs

Using community facilities in Newcastle

Respondents were asked in a normal year, outside COVID-19 period, which community facilities do they use in Newcastle.

Overall, the majority of survey respondents indicated they use libraries (65%), closely followed by cultural and arts such as museum, gallery, theatre (63%). Respondents also indicated they use community health facilities (41%), community centres and halls (36%), and community participation and development spaces (e.g. playgroups, social get togethers) (36%).

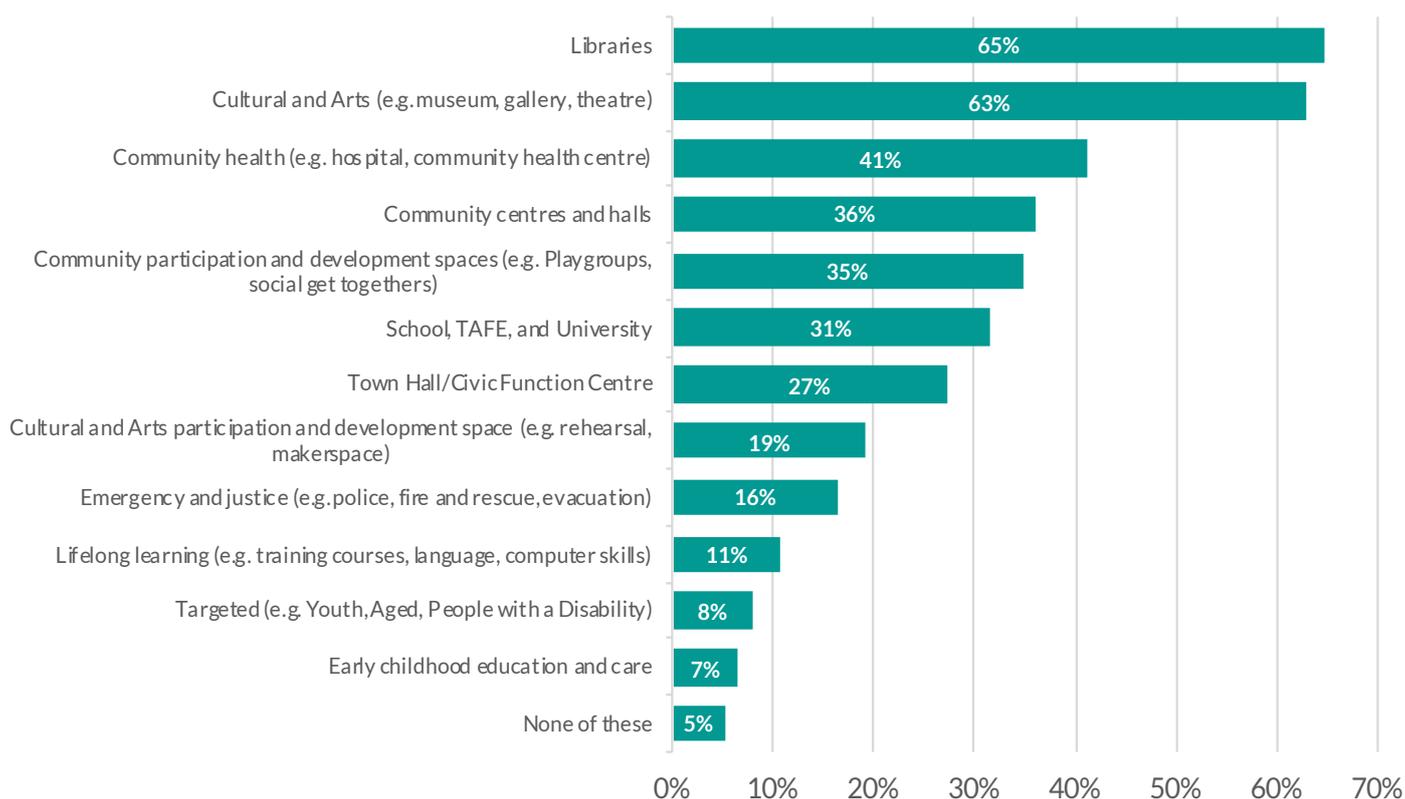
Community facilities used the least by survey respondents were early childhood education and care (7%), targeted facilities (8%) and lifelong learning facilities (11%). 5% of survey respondents indicated they did not use any of the community facilities listed.

Other community facilities used by respondents include churches with concert facilities (e.g. grand piano) like Christ Church Cathedral, community spaces at Kurraka Reserve, Fletcher places with volunteering opportunities and Lake Macquarie Live Steam Locomotive Society.

Respondents also indicated they use other community facilities, with comments having a strong focus on open space and recreation facilities, including :

- Parks, open green spaces and playgrounds (14)
- Beaches, ocean pools/baths and foreshores (11)
- Sporting fields and courts (9)
- Shared and separated paths and cycleways (7)
- Skate parks (4)
- Community gardens (2)
- Communal dance spaces with live music, i.e. The Station, Worth Place, and
- Amenities including public toilets.

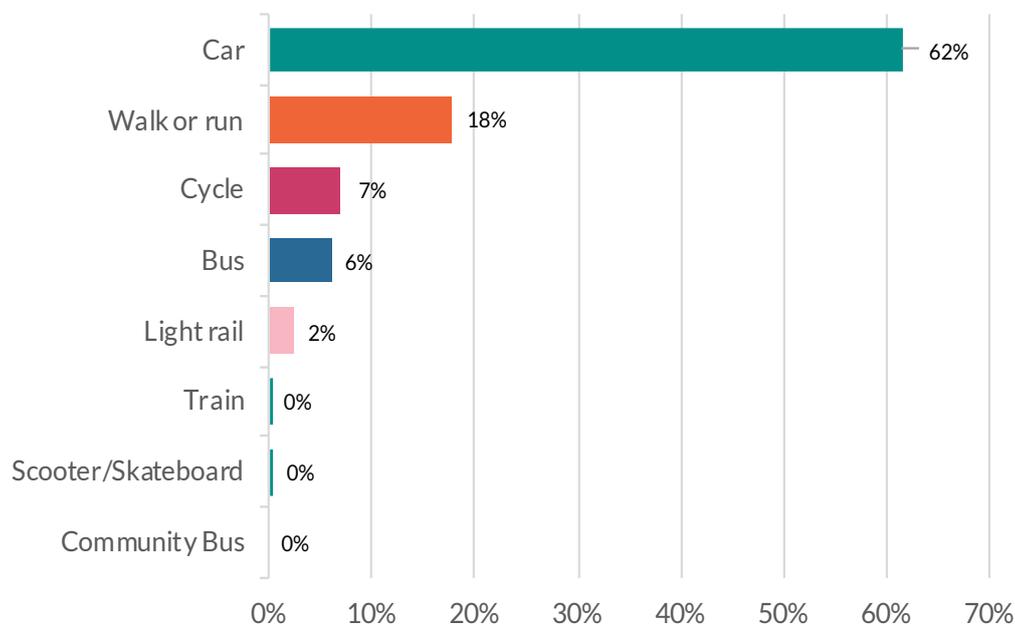
Figure 1 - Community Facilities and Services In a normal year (outside COVID-19 period), which community facilities do you use in Newcastle?



Most respondents travel to our local community facilities or services by car

The majority of respondents are more likely to travel to their local community facility or service by car (62%). This was followed by walking or running (18%), cycling (7%) and by bus (6%).

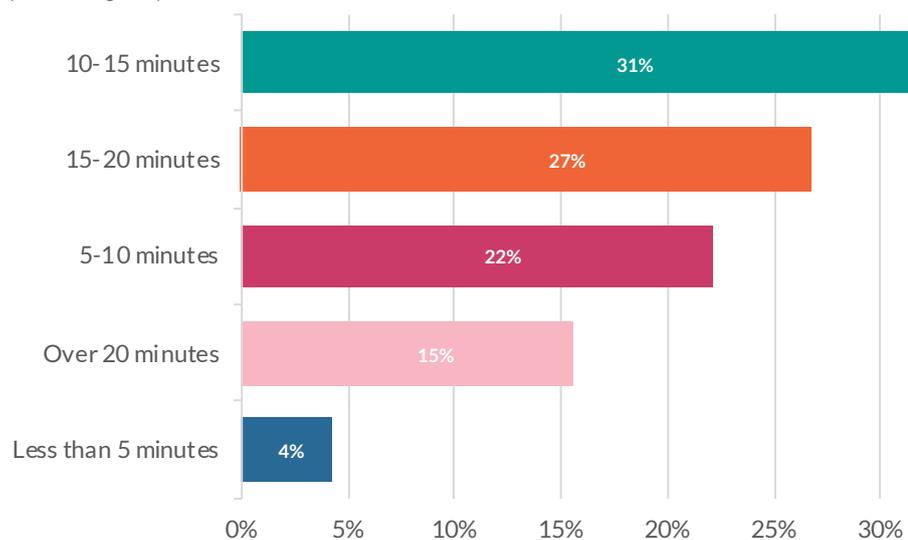
Figure 2 - How do you typically travel to the community facilities you use regularly?



Most respondents spend 10-15 minutes travelling

Respondents were more likely to typically spend 10-15 minutes travelling to their local community facility or service (31%), followed by 15-20 minutes (27%) or 5-10 minutes (22%).

Figure 3 - What is the typical travel time (using above mode) for you to get to the community facilities you use regularly?



Access and opportunities to quality community facilities

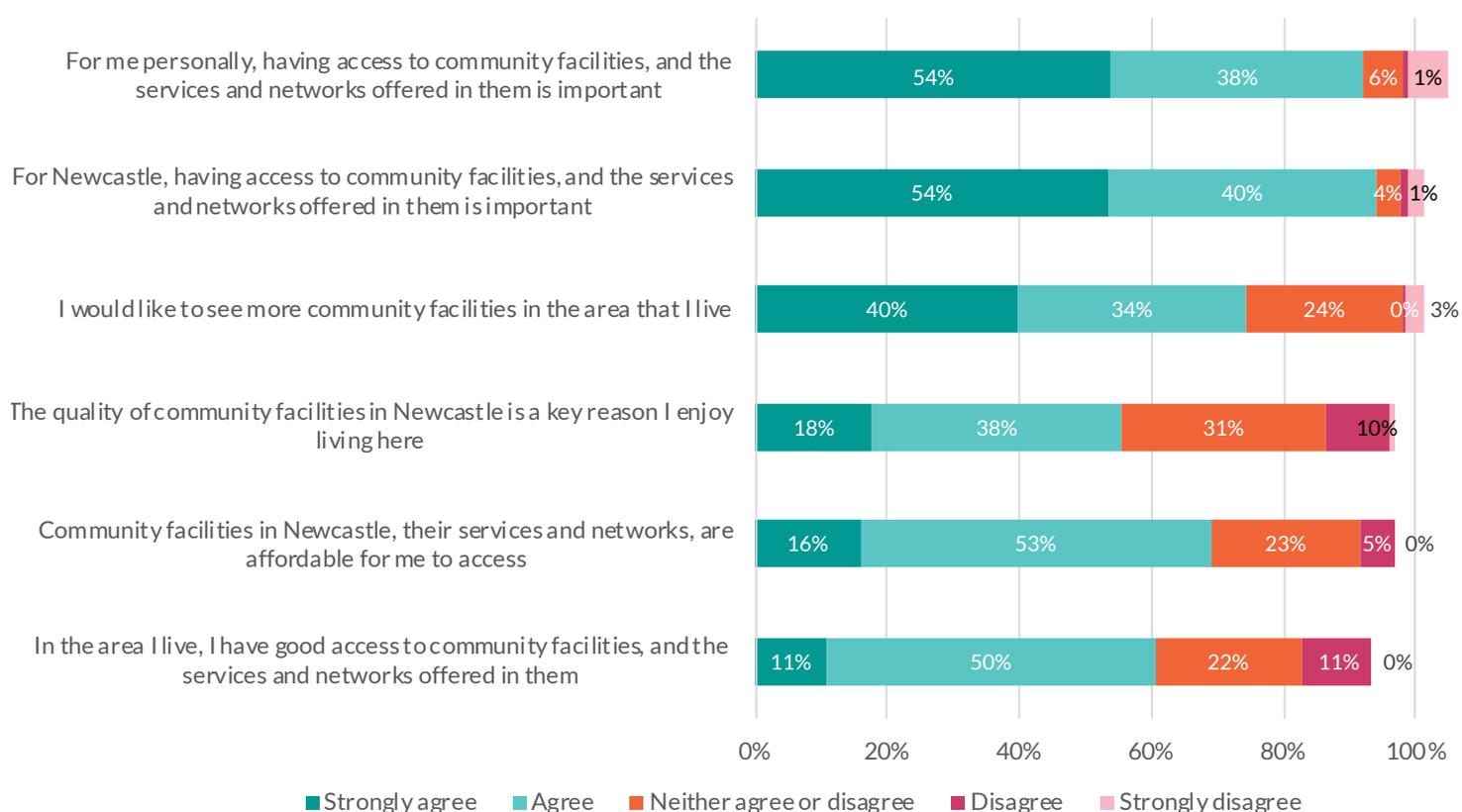
As shown in Figure 4, respondents were more likely to 'Strongly agree' or 'agree' that:

- For Newcastle, having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important (94%)
- Personally, having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important (92%), and
- They would like to see more community facilities in the area that they live in (74%).

Respondents were least likely to agree that:

- In the area I live, I have good access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them (11%)
- The quality of community facilities in Newcastle is a key reason why they enjoy living here (10%), and
- Community facilities in Newcastle, their services and networks, are affordable for me to access (5%).

Figure 4 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Top three important outcomes for great community facilities

As shown in Table 2, the top three most important outcomes for great community facilities are:

- Accessible and inclusive for all regardless of their ability, age or income (39%)
- Free or affordable (36%), and
- Multi-purpose, accommodating a range of uses and community needs and adaptive to changing requirements (32%).

Table 2 - In your opinion, what do you see as the three most important outcomes for great community facilities?

Outcomes for great community facilities	% of respondents
Accessible and inclusive for all regardless of their ability, age or income	39%
Free or affordable	36%
Multi-purpose, accommodating a range of uses and community needs and adaptive to changing requirements	32%
Fairly distributed across Newcastle, with consideration given for areas or people in need (benefiting everyone)	30%
Well planned and managed (social, economic, environment and governance)	22%
I feel safe there	20%
Are spaces for me to enhance my health and wellbeing	18%
Providing spaces for me to socialise and connect with friends/family/community	18%
A pleasant look and feel	17%
Close to public transport	17%
The activities/services/networks interest me	16%
I feel welcome there	9%
Providing spaces for me to participate and contribute	8%
Co-located or close to key essential services or other facilities	8%
They are spaces for me to learn and develop	5%
Supporting the delivery of the community service system (e.g. meals on wheels)	5%
I don't know	0%
They are not important	0%

Top three priority community facility or service needs that should be addressed for our area

Respondents were asked what they see as the three priorities for community facilities, services and networks that should be achieved for Newcastle and/or their community now or into the future.

Similarly to the previous question, the top three priority community facility or service needs that should be addressed include:

Equitable access and inclusion for everyone in the community (177 comments)

Respondents indicated they highly value community spaces, and would like to see community facilities services and networks that are accessible, inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community including age, race and abilities.

Many respondents noted there is currently a lack of accessible community facilities and services, particularly in areas that are further out from the city centre of Newcastle, and would like to see community facilities and services spread more equitably in surrounding suburbs in the LGA.

“Ensure that community facilities, services and networks are fairly (both in terms of quantity and quality) distributed across a geographic area so that people have equal or close to equal access.”

Respondents also expressed travel to community facilities and services needs to be addressed now and into the future. Many respondents indicated access to parking at facilities and services is important, particularly access to disabled parking.

“Sufficient Parking close by so people with disabilities can access them. We could not get a park near civic theatre for my mum so paid \$100 for nothing. Won't be going again.”

“Secure and easy parking. One of the biggest deterrents for me is not being able to park anywhere close to where I wanna be in Newcastle for recreational activities.”

Other respondents also emphasised the need for affordable and frequent public transport options to enable people to travel to community facilities and service providers. Respondents would like to see reliable, frequent, and direct public transport connections to community facilities and services.

“If we need to get somewhere close, we still need to catch two different buses with young kids. And wait a long time in between. The effort to get somewhere leaves us staying at home.”

“Easily accessible via public transport, and affordable public transport, I think the light rail is expensive for such short distance, great for the \$0.20 or so if you have come by bus or train but not \$2 just for it.”

Multi-purpose, flexible and well maintained community facilities that meet our needs (101 comments)

In the future, respondents indicated they would like to see community facilities that are multi-purpose, flexible and well maintained.

Respondents acknowledged the need for community facilities that cater to a range of users and interest groups, and ensuring with a growing, diverse population that community facilities and spaces can address the needs of these groups. Community spaces that are efficient in use, well-designed and can offer a variety of activities, programs and services is important for the Newcastle area.

“Spaces that are really well designed to be multi-use , including outside - future-proof as much as possible.”

“Multi use facilities rather than single use.”

“Variety of services suited to most interests and age groups.”

Affordable and easily hireable community facilities and services (76 comments)

Many respondents indicated they would like to see affordability of community facilities and services addressed in the future.

Respondent indicated a need for subsidised or free community programs and services participate in such as fitness classes or local events. Community facilities and programs that are affordable or free are important within the local community, particularly within lower socioeconomic areas.

Some participants also expressed they would like to see affordable and subsidised community facilities to hire.

“Really need to be affordable. Covid-19 has highlighted the equity issues across the city and some places are just too expensive for groups to use, particularly groups from lower socioeconomic areas.”

“Free access or readily affordable entrance fees stratified for different groups and located in places that are readily accessible by public transport or car.”

2.4. Public open space and recreation facilities and services

Using public open space and recreation facilities in Newcastle

Respondents were asked in a normal year, outside COVID-19 period, which open space and public recreation facilities they use in Newcastle.

Overall, the majority of survey respondents indicated they use footpaths and streets for running and walking (85%), closely followed by parks (82%).

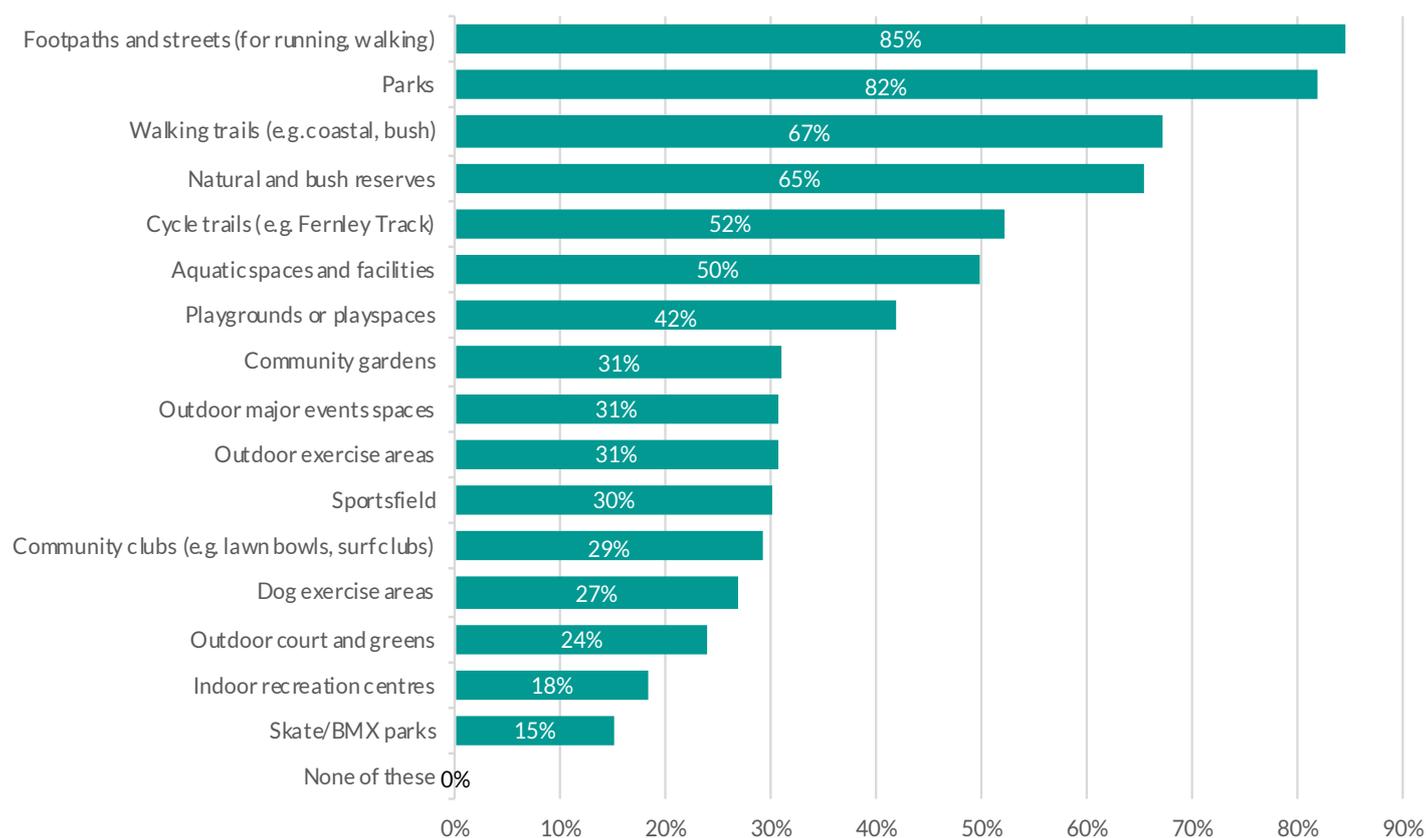
More than two thirds use walking trails (67%), natural and bush reserves (65%), cycle trails (52%) and aquatic spaces and facilities (50%).

Respondents were least likely to use skate/BMX parks (15%), indoor recreation centres (18%) and outdoor court and greens (24%), however this may be due to the older age profile of survey respondents.

Respondents also indicated they use other open space and public recreation facilities in Newcastle, including:

- Beaches and ocean baths (6 comments)
- Aquatic pools
- Cycling as active transport, particularly around Hamilton, and
- Bar Beach tennis practice wall.

Figure 5 - Open space and public recreation facilities In a normal year (outside COVID-19 period), which open space and public recreation facilities do you use in Newcastle? Please select all that apply.



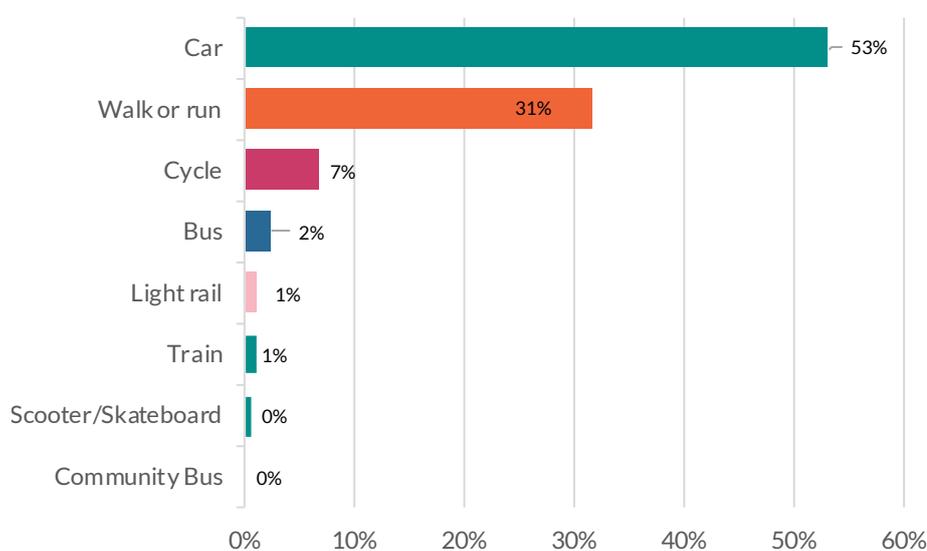
Most respondents travel to open space and recreation facilities by car

The majority of respondents are more likely to travel to the open space and recreation facilities they regularly use by car (53%). This was followed by respondents travelling by foot - with one in three respondents (31%) indicating they typically walk or run.

In addition, 7% of respondents cycle to their open space and recreation facilities, and 2% travel by bus.

Other ways respondents travel to open space and recreation facilities include a mix between active and public transport, and roller skating. One respondent indicated whilst preferring to walk, they have to take the bus on hot days with young children even though bus routes are unreliable.

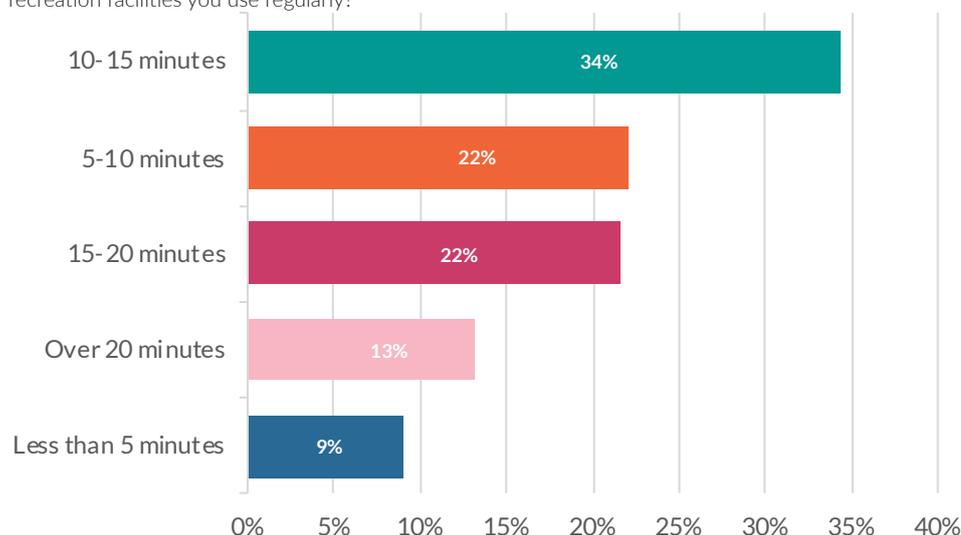
Figure 6 - How do you typically travel to the open space and public recreation facilities you use regularly?



Most respondents spend 10-15 minutes travelling

Respondents were more likely to typically spend 10-15 minutes travelling to the open space and recreation facility they use regularly (34%), followed by 15-20 minutes and 5-10 minutes (22% respectively).

Figure 7 - What is the typical travel time (using above mode) for you to get to the open space and public recreation facilities you use regularly?



Access and opportunities to quality open space and public recreation facilities

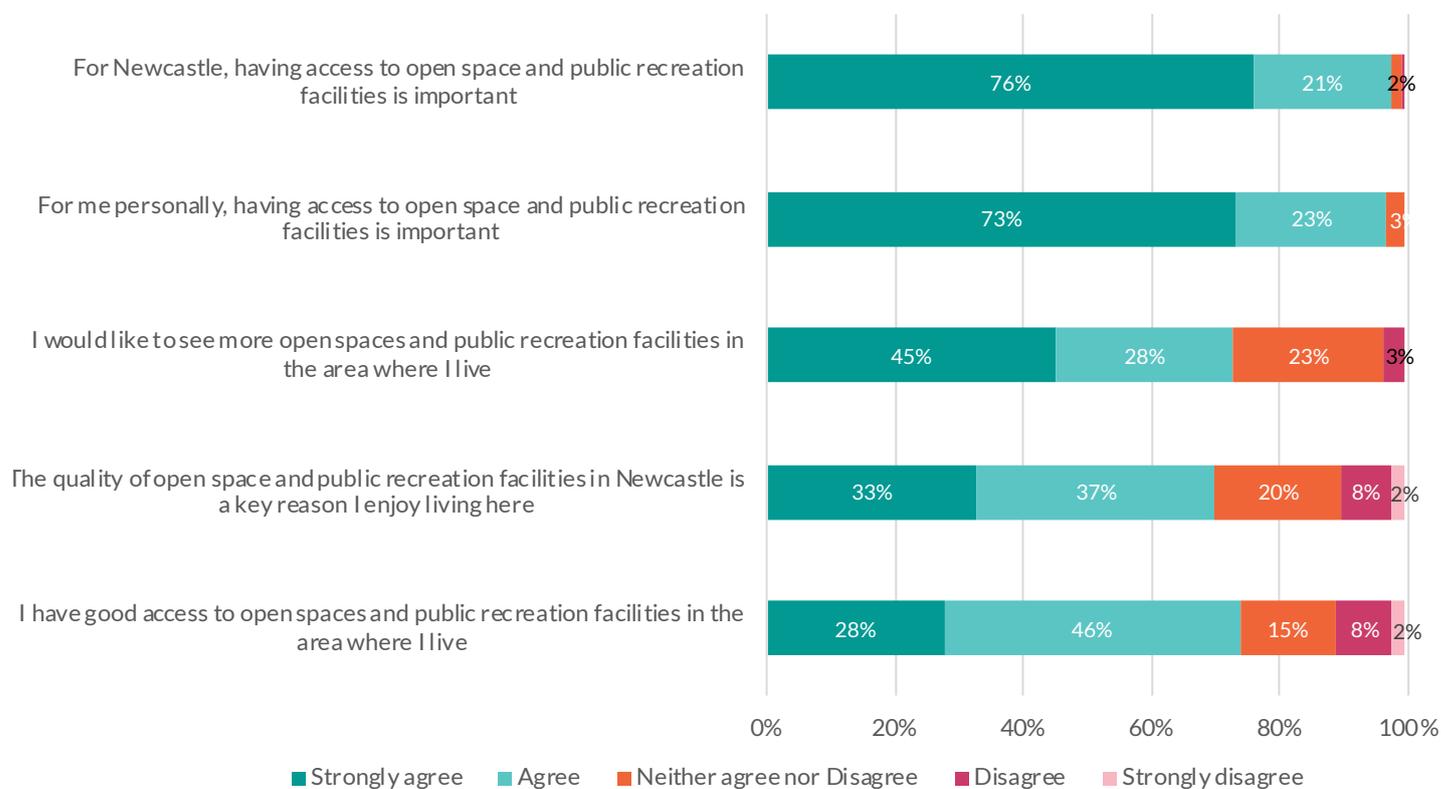
As shown in Figure 8, respondents were more likely to 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree' with the following statements

- For Newcastle, having access to open space and public recreation facilities is important (97%)
- Personally, having access to community facilities, and the services and networks offered in them is important (92%), and
- I would like to see more community facilities in the area where I live in (74%).

Respondents were more likely to 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the following statements:

- I have good access to open spaces and public recreation facilities in the area where I live (10%)
- The quality of open space and public recreation facilities in Newcastle is a key reason I enjoy living here (10%), and
- I would like to see more open spaces and public recreation facilities in the area where I live (3%).

Figure 8 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Top three important outcomes for great open spaces and public recreation facilities

As shown in Table 3, the top three most important outcomes for great open space and public recreation facilities are:

- Accessible and inclusive for all regardless of their ability, age or income (41%)
- Free or affordable (40%), and
- Enhance my health and wellbeing (31%).

Table 3 - In your opinion, what do you see as the three most important outcomes for great open space and public recreation facilities?

Outcomes for great open spaces and public recreation facilities	% of respondents
Accessible and inclusive for all regardless of their ability, age or income	41%
Free or affordable	40%
Enhance my health and wellbeing	31%
Fairly distributed across Newcastle, with consideration given for areas or people in need (benefiting everyone)	30%
They have a pleasant look and feel	28%
I feel safe there	27%
Well planned and managed (social, economic, environment and governance)	23%
Provide spaces for me to socialise and connect with friends/family/community	22%
The activities/services/sports interest me	15%
Close to public transport	10%
Co-located or close to key essential services or other facilities	8%
I feel welcome there	6%
Are spaces for me to participate and contribute	6%
They support the delivery of providers and services (e.g. PT sessions, formal sports bodies)	6%
Spaces for me to learn and develop	5%
I don't know	0%
They are not important	0%
They are not important	0%

Top three priority open space, sport and recreation needs that should be addressed for our area

Respondents were asked what they see as the three priorities for open space, sport and recreation needs that should be achieved for Newcastle and/or their community now or into the future.

The key themes that emerged from comments relating to respondents top three priorities for open space, sport and recreation needs are summarised below.

Increased amenity and maintenance of our public open spaces and recreation facilities (183 comments)

The majority of respondents indicated they would like to see improved maintenance of public open spaces and recreation facilities across the LGA, including:

- Regular trimming, weeding and leveled surfacing of open grassed areas and sports fields
- Regular removal of rubbish and replenish overfilled bins
- Increased cleanliness and access to public toilets, with opportunity to provide signage to indicate nearest public amenities, and
- Ensure adequate disability access to open spaces, particularly wheelchair access.

“Maintain them and make them safe and inviting for all.”

“Be well maintained, tidy and safe with good facilities like toilets, seating, trees for shade.”

Many respondents would also like to see increased amenity to make open spaces more accessible and enjoyable to use, including:

- Increased lighting to improve sense of safety and nighttime activation, particularly in parks, skate parks and playgrounds
- Additional toilets that are accessible for everyone
- More shade provided by trees, shade structures and picnic shelters
- Increased seating and tables, for relaxation or social get togethers, and
- Additional water bubblers and fountains for people and their pets.

“Useable public spaces with seating, lighting and shade.”

“Facilities like bins and water (for humans and animals).”

Accessible public open spaces for everyone to enjoy (129 comments)

Respondents value their public open space and recreation facilities in the Newcastle area, noting that these spaces are important for the local community to support health and wellbeing, participate in informal and formal sporting, and provide opportunities to connect to nature.

Many respondents indicated they would like to see improved accessibility to open spaces and recreation facilities, including:

- Increased, frequent and reliable public transport connections to open spaces across the LGA, particularly for people living in the outer suburbs of the CBD
- More parking near and around open spaces and recreation facilities particularly for people with disability, and
- Increased nighttime access to recreation facilities.

“Make them accessible to all people, regardless of demographic their background, this include consideration of geographic locations of such spaces”

“They should be easily accessible, with good public transport, and via walking or bike paths.”

“Accessible and inclusive - accessible footpaths and play equipment which caters to the entire community.”

Diverse and multi-purpose recreation facilities (124 comments)

Respondents would like to see more recreation facilities that cater to a range of interests, ages and abilities including:

- More outdoor skate parks
- Additional rollerskating rinks and outdoor surfacing that can support roller skating
- More playgrounds for a range of age groups
- Water parks and play elements, and
- Outdoor fitness stations and exercise equipment.

Respondents would also like to see multi-purpose and flexible open spaces and recreation facilities to support a range of demographics and activities. Respondents commented there is an opportunity for co-located recreation facilities, for example outdoor gyms next to playgrounds to support parents and children, Respondents would also like to see well-designed spaces that accommodate a range of users, increasing shared spaces and minimising conflict between different user groups.

“More co-use facilities, like Fearnly Dawes, where different sports can co-exist without too much drama.”

“Provide a range of uses at these facilities where possible (eg basketball/netball court, playground, picnic benches) to cater for a range of demographics.”

3. Online service provider survey findings

CN distributed a survey to organisations delivering services and programs across the Newcastle LGA. 34 services responded to the survey, which was also available online via Council's Have Your Say Page.

Services who participated in the survey represented a range of government not for profit and commercial organisations include:

- Not for profit, for purpose of social enterprise: 76%
- Commercial: 12%
- Social group, club or incorporated body: 9%
- Other type: 3%

3.1. Snapshot of findings

- Services who participated represented a broad range of social, cultural, seniors, and welfare organisations. The majority service the Newcastle LGA or broader Hunter region and service more than 1,000 people.
- 71% of services have identified an increase in demand for services over the past 5 years mostly due to increasing disadvantage (including unemployment), improved communications and promotion of services, an ageing population and increasing social isolation.
- Of survey respondents, 88% used a community centre or hall for delivery of their programs and services including Council community centres and halls, scout and guide halls, and church halls. 35% of respondents use parks, streets and other free and informal public spaces.
- Inclusivity and affordability were high priority outcomes for social infrastructure. The five most important outcomes for future community spaces is to deliver services and programs are that they are accessible and inclusive for all - regardless of their ability, age or income; They are free or affordable; People feel welcome there; They are spaces for people to contribute; They have a pleasant look and feel.
- The most important considerations for planning future social infrastructure included: Planning to ensure adequate and quality social infrastructure that responds to changing and emerging community needs; Safe, fun, socially connected and multipurpose environments; Affordable and low cost access; Clean well maintained and comfortable with air conditioning and heating; Transport connectivity to the suburbs.

Services and programs mostly provided within the Newcastle area

As shown in Figure 9, in a normal year (outside Covid-19 period), services who responded to the survey delivered a broad range of service and program types. Of those who responded, the most common types of services and programs were:

- Socialising (44%)
- Older people (35%)
- Support service (35%), and
- Health, mental health, alcohol and drug (29%).

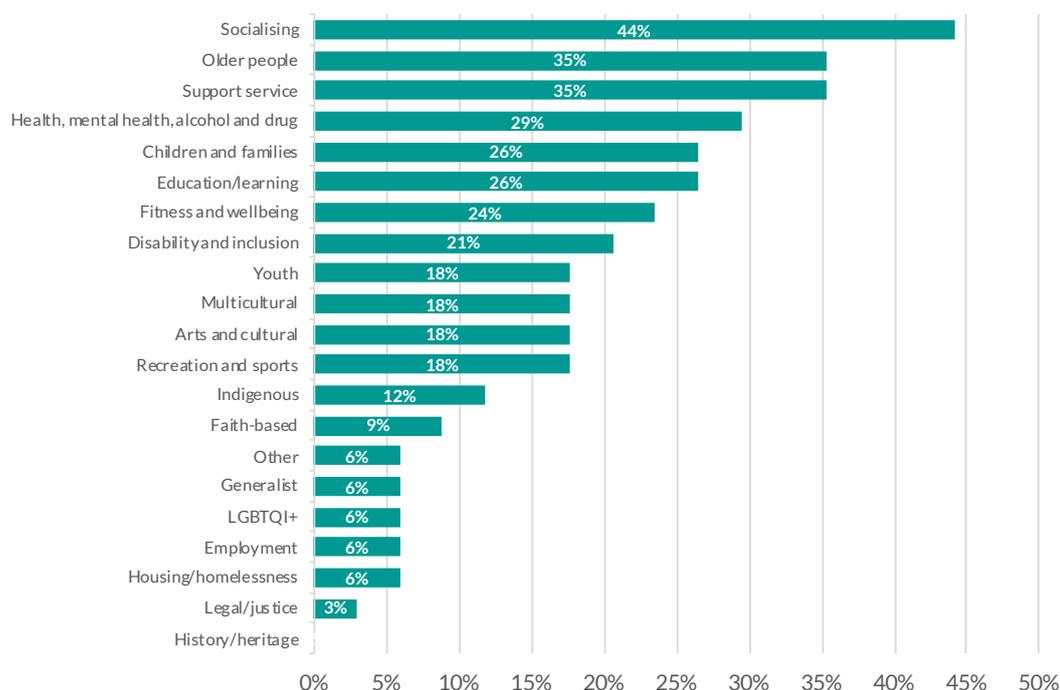
Respondents provided further information about the services and programs they provide which demonstrate the breadth of services across the area.

- We provide a safe and welcoming place with nourishing meals for aged and disability clients.
- Under our community development program, we seek to work in partnership with agencies to improve coordination of community outcomes that reflect local needs.
- In our Men's Shed, we hold healthy moves programs, a meal deliver services and have a cafe on site.
- Our government agency provides services to vulnerable children and families. We need accessible spaces within local communities to support people without transport, and spaces that are affordable so that cost does not become a barrier to service delivery.
- The Newcastle Men's Shed provides outreach in a non-confrontational space for men, but particularly through

mentoring for men who may be disadvantaged due to lower educational levels or other barriers.

- Newcastle U3A is a self help organisation for seniors which runs 4 x 8 week terms from February until December with typical sessions lasting 1.5 hours.
- Novacastrian Quilters provide members the opportunity to learn a new skills, socialise with those with like interests. We make about 200 quilts a year for John Hunter Hospital, for local refuges, for domestic assault unit and many other charities.
- We provide services to teach visually impaired people to get out and about independently. Often it is the barriers, such as, lack of transport options or well designed transport, lack of safe road crossings, challenges with the pathways and the general publics misunderstandings, and not the individual that has the biggest impact on ones ability to travel outside their home in the community.
- The Embroiderers Guild Newcastle Branch has man older ladies and would love a space with air conditioning good light and car parking. We are currently in the Community Hall in New Lambton.
- We support Indigenous business start ups and help Indigenous businesses grow with capacity building services and access to capital. The Newcastle region has seen many new and expanding Indigenous businesses and this growth offers a great opportunity to closing the gap in disadvantage.
- We supply meals to the elderly, disable and there carers. We also supply outings, social activities, have a chat program and other social interaction activities.
- We also do wellness checks on our clients.

Figure 9 - Type of services or programs provided by survey respondent



During a normal year and across all your programs and services, approximately how many people does your organisation (service or group) support?

As shown in Table 4, the majority of service providers support over 1,000 people across their organisation (50%). 3% of respondent services provide 500-1,000 people a year.

Table 4 - How many people does your service support?

Number of People	Percentage
0-99	29%
199-199	9%
200-499	9%
500-1000	3%
1000+	50%

Which of the following best describes the location (catchment) for your services and programs?

As shown in Table 5, the majority of survey respondents service the entire Newcastle LGA (56%).

Table 5 - Catchment of services and programs

Area servicing	% of respondents
Newcastle LGA	56%
Hunter Region (exluding Newcastle)	9%
Broader Regional Areas	15%
State-wide	18%
Did not answer	3%

Which suburbs in the Newcastle local government area are your services or programs offered?

A total of 19 respondents answered this question. Of respondent that answered this question, services or programs offered are evenly distributed across the LGA (58% respectively).

Number of people that your organisation supports

As shown in Table 6, the majority of respondents (71%) indicated the number of people their organisation supports increased over the past 5 years (outside of Covid).

Table 6 - Has the number of people that your organisation supports increased, stayed the same, or decreased over the past 5 years (outside covid-19 period)?

Change in # of people	% of respondents
Increased	71%
Stayed relatively the same	15%
Decreased	12%
Did not answer	3%

Reasons why respondents think this is, include:

Services indicated that following reasons for why they think service demand has increased in the past 5 years:

- There is an ageing population and an increasing demand for social connection (4 comments)
- There is an increasing unemployment rate (2 comments)
- There is a greater diversity of services and service options (2 comments)
- Improved communications promoting services and programs that are available (2 comments).
- A growing need in the community (2 comments)
- Funding from the Government for programs and services (1 comment)
- During the Covid restriction period, the demand for services and programs has increased given higher unemployment rates and increased social isolation (1 comment). This aligns with another comment regarding increasing number of people feeling vulnerable, hardship and cost of living leading to increased demand for services (1 comment)
- Increased trust with our service (1 comment), and
- Hard work (1 comment).

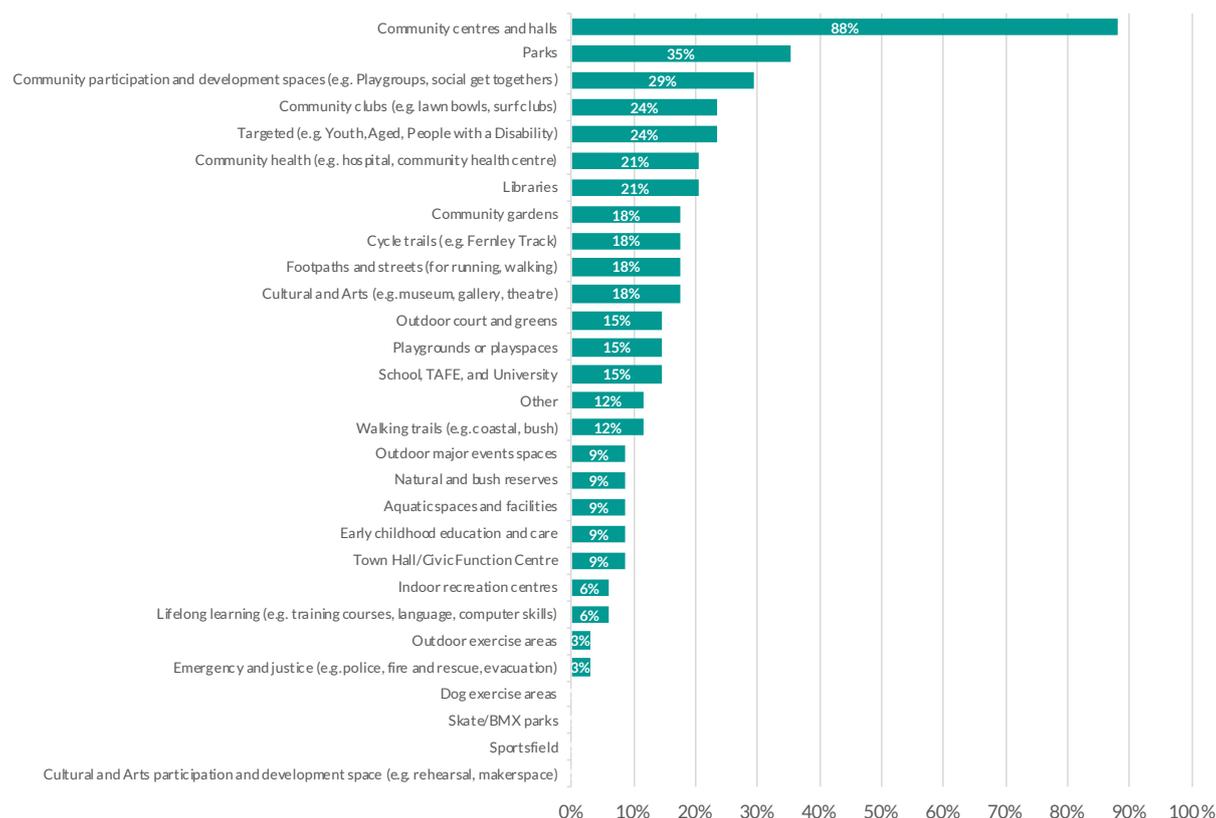
Services indicated that following reasons for why they think service demand has decreased in the past 5 years:

- Transport issues for the elderly not being able to get to services and programs (2 comments)
- Limited car parking (2 comments)
- High rents and costs associated with running the programs out of Council buildings this increases the program delivery fee and it becomes harder for participants to afford the program (1 comment), and
- A competitive market, with services competing for the same funding (1 comment).

In a normal year, which community spaces, places and facilities do you use to deliver your programs and services in Newcastle?

Survey respondents indicated that 88% of programs and services were delivered in community centres and halls across Newcastle. This was followed by parks (35%) and community participation and development spaces (e.g. play groups) (29%).

Figure 10 - Types of spaces, places and facilities in Newcastle that programs, services and facilities are delivered



Name and location of the community space respondents mainly use to deliver their programs and services in Newcastle

Survey respondents identified a number of spaces across the LGA that they regularly use to deliver programs and services. Commonly used spaces included:

- Seniors centres including Mayfield Senior Citizens, Adamstown Seniors Hall
- Maryland Neighbourhood Centre/Hunter Life Education
- Clients meet in parks and public spaces and service uses libraries for meetings - mainly Wallsend
- Hunter Multicultural Communities
- Halls - including Henry Park Scout & Guide Halls, Georgetown Guides Hall, Wallsend Pioneer Memorial Hall, Mayfield Star Hall, Henderson Park Hall. One service also uses 5 school halls, and 5 church halls.
- Community centres including Elernmore Vale Community Centre, Carrington Community Centre, New Lambton, Maycare, Alice Ferguson Community Centre
- University of Newcastle
- Blackbutt Reserve.
- During Covid, one service used the commercial kitchen at the museum and would like to extend this use.

Three most important outcomes for great community spaces

Respondents indicated the three most important outcomes for great community spaces are:

- Accessible and inclusive for all, regardless of their ability, age or income (65%)
- Free or affordable (56%), and
- People feel welcome there (41%).

Table 8 - What do you see as the three most important outcomes for great community spaces?

Most important outcomes for great community spaces	% of respondents
They are accessible and inclusive for all, regardless of their ability, age or income	65%
They are free or affordable	56%
People feel welcome there	41%
They are spaces for people to participate and contribute	24%
They have a pleasant look and feel	21%
They are spaces for people to socialise and connect with family/friends and community	18%
They are spaces for people to enhance health and wellbeing	18%
They are close to public transport	15%
They are equitably distributed across Newcastle, having consideration for highest need	9%
They are co-located or close to key essential services or other facilities	6%
They are planned and managed from a quadruple bottom line perspective	6%
They support the delivery of services and programs	3%

What are the most important considerations for CN to consider

Table 7 - Can you tell us anything else that you think is important for CN to consider when planning for community spaces, and the services and programs within them, for the next 10 to 20 years?

Priority consideration	# of comments
Planning to ensure adequate and quality social infrastructure that responds to changing and emerging community needs	6
Safe, fun socially connected, and multipurpose environments	5
Affordable and low cost access to community facilities	5
Clean, well maintained, and comfortable with air conditioning and heating	4
Transport connectivity to the suburbs	3
Inclusive and interactive for people with disability (particularly in areas with higher populations of people with disability) - including awareness of vision and hearing impairment, and disabled parking	3
Build trust with community groups and the broader community and enable their participation and engagement	2
Build local partnerships with the wider community	1
Creating a space for Indigenous and minority groups to be visible	1
Environmentally sustainable infrastructure including solar	1
Clear hire rules for Council venues and improved relationships between Council and hires	1
Consideration of the arts in future social infrastructure	1

Top three priorities for community spaces that should be achieved for Newcastle now and into the future

When asked what respondents see as the three priorities (e.g. needs, gaps, principles, outcomes, etc) for community spaces that should be achieved for Newcastle now and into the future, key themes that emerged from responses included:

- Increased maintenance and improved amenities (31 comments):
 - More shade and shelter
 - Good lighting and equipment to use
 - Access to facilities including public toilets, and
 - Heating and cooling units to support spaces during different weather seasons.
- Accessible community spaces (28 comments):
 - Equitably distributed across the LGA
 - Inclusive designs for different interest groups, such as people with disability or seniors
 - Increased public transport connections and parking, particularly for people with disability
 - Shared usage of spaces, and
 - Multi-purpose, flexible spaces, including indoor and outdoor facilities and amenities.
- Affordable and easy-to-hire spaces and facilities (16 comments)
 - Low cost rental fees
 - Free or community rate spaces from the City of Newcastle
 - Easy processes and systems to book spaces and facilities and
 - Access to under-utilised or unused council spaces, including commercial kitchens.



4. Great public spaces interactive map

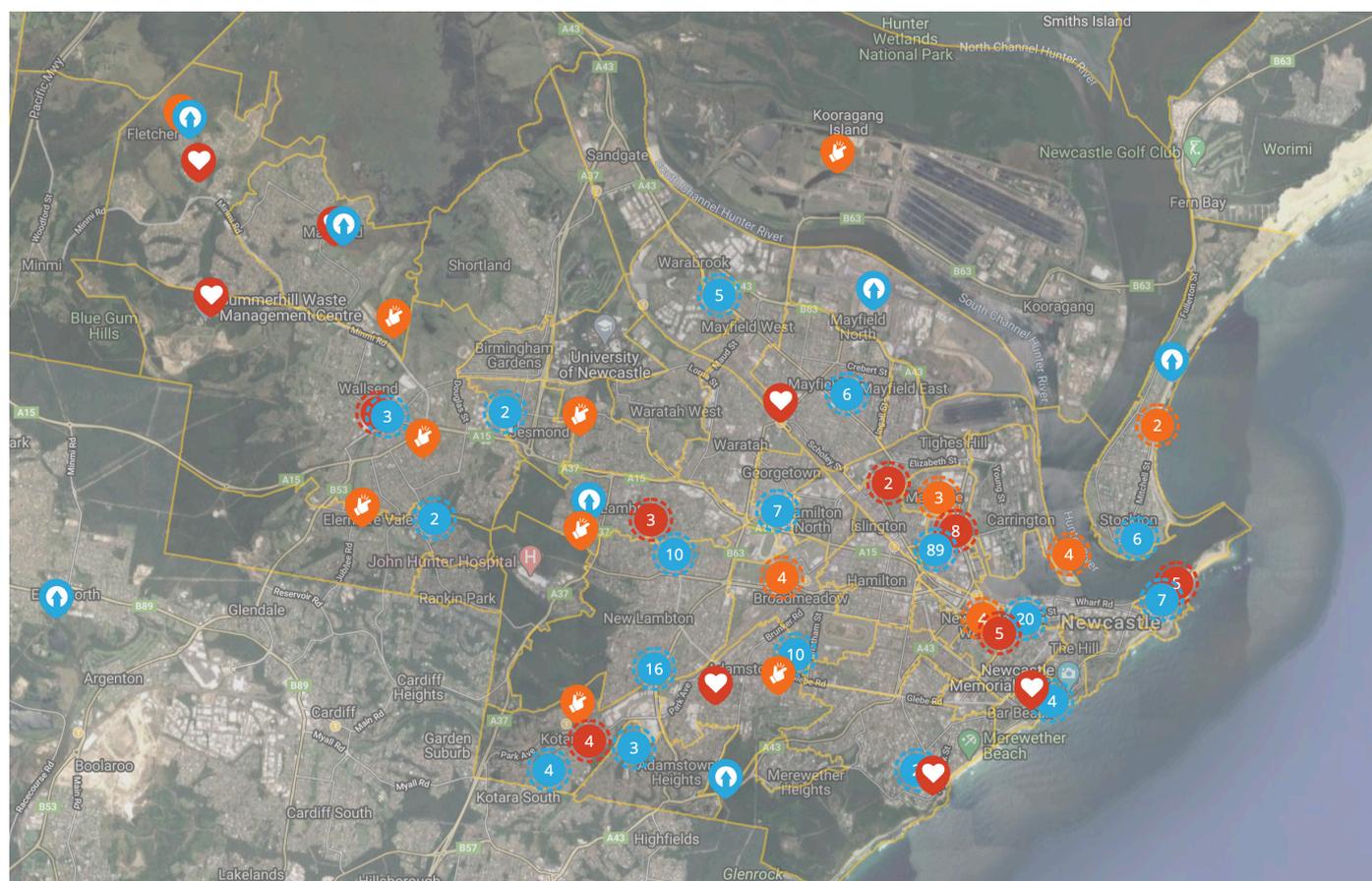
Contributors were asked to provide place-based feedback across the City of Newcastle LGA by dropping a virtual pin on a map. They could choose to comment on their favourite community space, make a comment on community spaces that need improvement, and/or share their ideas and suggestions for new community spaces we need.

In total, 301 pins were placed on the map. Please see Appendix 1 for contributor responses by Catchment.

4.1. Overall findings across all catchments

- Open space and recreation facilities are highly valued and utilised.
- Expressed need for improved amenity and upgraded recreational facilities across open spaces in Newcastle LGA to support community use and increase capacity including trees and shade, seating and tables for social gatherings, BBQ facilities.
- Increasing demand for shared open spaces and public recreational facilities to support changing demographics and needs of the community.
- Additional amenity to support utilisation of open spaces including adequate lighting at night, accessible toilet facilities, change rooms for both males and female, upgraded sports facilities including clubhouses, canteens and grandstands.

Figure 11 - Interactive map of Newcastle LGA with contributors responses



4.2. Findings by planing catchment

Catchment 1: Stockton - Fullerton Cove

Across Catchment 1, many contributors would like to see improvements to open spaces including:

- Improvements to Griffith Park, Stockton including additional lighting particularly at night, removal of the black mesh around the skate park to improve visibility into the park, additional shared paths for cycling, and additional skate spaces to accommodate advanced skaters.
- Additional public amenities and water facilities at Little Beach
- More trees at Pitt Street Reserve
- Improved maintenance and surfacing of pathways along Shipwreck walk to support recreation and active transport
- Revitalise Stockton Beach by replenishing sand dunes, managing high tide waters spilling onto the roads, more seating facing the water and additional BBQ facilities
- Increased public amenity including chairs, seating and shelter at Stockton Wharf
- Opportunity for publicly accessible water park in Stockton, and
- Opportunity to create a looping bike track by extending existing track between Corroba Oval and Hunter Water.

Catchment 2: Newcastle - Cooks Hill

Across Catchment 2, many contributors would like to see improvements to open spaces including:

- More designated skating areas/bowls a range of ages and experience levels
- Resurfacing Yuelarbah Track to improve pedestrian safety, particularly near Bar Beach Club House
- Additional dog drinking bowls attached to water fountains along the length of foreshore footpath
- Additional public amenity at the Newcastle Ocean Baths, in particular toilets and drinking fountains for people and their pets, and improved surfacing of pathways between the Ocean baths and Newcastle Beach Pavilion, particularly for roller skaters
- Increased amenity along and opposite Nobbys Beach, including lighting, bins and dog drinking taps, as well as opportunity for additional basketball courts
- Increased amenity including bins, lighting and seating at Little Birdwood Park
- Opportunity to create a picnic area and playground at the National Park
- Improved accessibility to sporting facilities at Newcastle Sports Ground, particularly toilets and change rooms for female players
- Increased maintenance of AA Park and Church Walk Park including removal of rubbish and regular weeding of grassed areas, and
- Opportunity for more diverse and interactive exhibits at Newcastle Museum.

Contributors expressed general improvements across this catchment. In particular, improved surfacing of footpaths, addition of dedicated cycleways, outdoor water features in open spaces, more dog parks, more green open spaces close to the CBD, additional seating and tables along the foreshore to enjoy the scenery and views were highly commented by contributors.

Catchment 3: Merewether - The Junction

Across Catchment 3, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities and open spaces, including:

- Upgrades to the exterior building of Alice Ferguson Community Centre
- Refurbish commercial kitchen at Henderson Park Hall, and
- Additional public amenities and water bubblers at Glenrock.

Catchment 4: Adamstown - Kotara

Across Catchment 4, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities and open spaces and recreation facilities including:

- Extend and continue Fernleigh Track as a separated walking and cycling path to link Broadmeadow, city centre and beaches
- Opportunity for a volleyball courts for shared use at Myers Park
- Improve access to parking at Adamstown Seniors Centre to support visitation
- Improvements and additions to Hudson Park, such as surfacing, drainage and irrigation of sportsfields at Hudson Park, preventing access onto the fields by cars, and opportunity for outdoor fitness stations
- Additional rubbish and waste bins at Kotara Park
- Replace amenities block, improve canteen and increase amount of change rooms to cater for increasing memberships, particularly for female players at Lugar Park
- Upgrade exterior of the Nesbitt Park club house
- Addition of recreation spaces across the catchment, such as:
 - Wall-ball spaces for community recreation activities such as tennis or soccer, particularly for young families
 - Skate park, and
 - Cycle track.

Catchment 5: Lambton - New Lambton

Across Catchment 5, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities including:

- Increased opening hours at Lambton Library to support access to a range of visitors and users
- Ensure New Lambton Community Centre retains its creative space, particularly to support older community members
- Opportunity for a larger library than New Lambton Library to support a range of programs, activities and events

Contributors would also like to see improvements to public open spaces and recreation facilities across Catchment 5 including:

- Opportunity for basketball half court at Lambton Park
- Improved and/or expand Lambton Park Playground
- Expand equipment at Lambton Park Tennis Centre, with opportunity to utilise the stage for music performances on the weekend
- Upgraded amenities at Alder Park such as providing fencing all-year round to improve shared use of field, and addition of outdoor fitness equipment for all age groups
- Upgrade and refurbish of Adler Park Sports Club to attract more visitors and increase capacity
- Additional shelter, and picnic and BBQ facilities at Blackbutt Nature Reserve
- Removal of car access onto Ford Oval by adding bollards
- Upgrade change rooms at Novocastrian Park, particularly to make them accessible for females
- Upgrade amenities at Regent Park to support different sporting codes, as well as additional fencing of the park
- Improve surfacing at Richard Ford Netball Courts to provide space for roller skating when not in use
- Desire for electric vehicle charging station at Richley Reserve, and
- Additional lighting at Smith Park, as well as a clubhouse to support and promote recreation for a range of age groups.

Catchment 6: Hamilton - Broadmeadow

Across Catchment 6, contributors would like to see improvements in public open spaces and recreation facilities, including:

- Opportunity at the Broadmeadow Roundhouse for a railway museum, heritage interpretation centre and/or community cultural hub in the Broadmeadow roundhouse, to expand on Newcastle's rich industrial heritage
- Suggestion to close the racecourse to minimise anti-social behaviour and animal cruelty
- Support increasing trend of roller skating with an indoor and/or large sheltered area with smooth surfacing at the Showground Exhibition Centre, and
- Improvements to Smith Park by upgrading amenities and sports facilities, additional lighting to increase capacity and utilisation at night, and additional dog amenities including water taps.

Catchment 7: Waratah - North Lambton

Across Catchment 7, contributors would like to see improvements public open spaces, including:

- Additional amenity in Waratah Park including water bubblers and taps, more trees for shade and shaded seating near the sportsfield, daily maintenance of rubbish bins and increased monitoring and enforcement of park rules by rangers, and
- General upgrades to Pilkington Street Reserve Playground to support increase of young families in the area.

One contributor expressed they value the community spaces at John Gebhardt Centre including the community garden, Men's Shed and cafe.

Catchment 8: Mayfield - Warabrook

Across Catchment 8, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities and public open spaces, including:

- Upgraded and additional change rooms for female players at Dangar Park, as well as a grandstand and bench seating
- New play equipment at Mayfield Bowling Club to create family friendly environments
- Improve quality of sportsfield surfaces at Stevenson Park, with Field 2 a priority
- Continue upgrades to Stevenson Park Playground, and
- Additional car parking at Warabrook Community Centre to improve accessibility. Opportunity to move this centre into Mayfield area.

Catchment 9: Wickham - Carrington - Tighes Hill

Across Catchment 9, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities and public open spaces, including:

- General upgrades to Carrington Foreshore Playground and surrounds, with additional lighting along footpaths
- Upgrade of Carrington Foreshore car park
- Continue resurfacing of Carrington Mangrove boardwalk
- Accessibility to Dyke Point, with opportunity for additional wharf to attract visitors
- Additional shelter and water bubblers at Grahame Park Playground
- Additional seating and shade cover at Mount Carrington
- Additional cycling path and lighting at Throsby Creek to support users
- Improve facilities, including toilets at Hawkins Oval
- Additional seating and accessible public spaces at Wickham Beach

Many contributors expressed a need for major upgrades to Passmore Oval and Wickham Park & Oval, with similar themes emerging at each location including:

- A new grandstand within close proximity to the playing field
- Upgraded toilet facilities, as they are currently outdated, unsafe and at capacity
- Upgraded and additional changerooms facilities to support increasing utilisation and to particularly support female players
- Refurbishment of canteens, and
- Resurfacing and increased maintenance of grounds.

Catchment 10: Newcastle Port - Kooragang

One contributor indicated they would like to see more public spaces and facilities for families and children to visit at Koorang Island.

Catchment 11: Beresfield - Hexham

Please note there were no pins dropped by contributors in this catchment.

Catchment 12: Maryland - Fletcher - Minmi

Across Catchment 12, contributors would like to see improvements to public open spaces including:

- Additional and improved lighting on fields and pathways at Kurraka Reserve to increase nighttime activation
- Additional amenities particularly change rooms including female-friendly facilities, and increased shading and seating
- Opportunity to convert underutilised courts at Kurraka Reserve Tennis Courts into netball courts, and
- Improved drainage, additional lighting and timekeeper spaces at Bill Elliot Oval.

Catchment 13: Shortland - Jesmond

Across Catchment 13, contributors would like to see improvements to community facilities and public open spaces including:

- Additional lighting at Heaton Park
- Increase size of Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre to support utilisation and demand, increase capacity to deliver programs and activities, expressed need for more storage space, greenery, and shade above play equipment area.

Catchment 14: Wallsend - Elmore Vale

Across Catchment 14, contributors would like to see improvements to public open spaces including:

- More inclusive, creative play equipment at Elmore Vale Park Playground that is suitable for younger children, and
- Additional lighting at Federal Park and Wallsend Skate Park to increase activation at night.

5. Stakeholder interviews

5.1. About the stakeholder interviews

Stage 1 engagement including stakeholder interviews with:

Internal stakeholders:

- 5 x Council internal teams from across Council departments
- 7 x external stakeholders:
 - 2 x NGOs including The Canopy and Mercy Services
 - 4 x NSW Government Agencies including Department of Community and Justice; NSW Department of Planning; Venues NSW; Department of Education (to be completed)
- 1 x University of Newcastle

5.2. Overall findings

Across all stakeholder interviews, the following key findings emerged:

- Future social infrastructure should be multipurpose, flexible and co-located. Working toward higher quality spaces that “work harder” and can support a number of activities in the one space, will create more sustainable outcomes.
- There is increasing demand for social support services from socially disadvantaged communities, which has become stronger during Covid.
- Planning is needed to enable delivery social infrastructure to support growth across the Western Corridor, and in areas with existing and growing social disadvantage. This needs to take into consideration the poor transport connections in Newcastle’s Western planning catchments
- We need to respond to demand for informal recreational spaces that can be used in an unstructured way by all community (age, culture, gender), not just for formal and structured sports and services. There is a need to provide spaces and places for young people to engage in positive activities, particularly for those who aren’t participating in team sports.
- We need social infrastructure that is accessible not just in strategic centres but at the local level so that people without cars or money can access outreach services delivered in satellite facilities locally.
- Council’s social infrastructure should deliver social equity, social justice and people focused outcomes. This includes improved our public spaces, beaches and access points to community facilities, parks and beaches so that they are universally designed, accessible and be accessed by people of all ages and abilities.
- Some commonly suggested elements of a best practice future multipurpose community facility would include a kitchen (for classes and catering), storage space that could be shared by regular hirers, office space for on-site services to manage the space, and be universally designed.
- There are opportunities to work in partnership and collaborate with State Government Agencies and major institutions (such as the University of Newcastle) to plan for and deliver new social infrastructure to address growth, but also to improve access to social infrastructure provided by them (e.g. University of Newcastle campuses).

External stakeholders

5.3. Key findings by stakeholder group

Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)

- DCJ fund service delivery of community programs from universal services to neighbourhood centres. DCJ work within children, young people, families and communities to identify needs and support the community. A number of social infrastructure services funded by DCJ operate out of Council social infrastructure facilities.
- DCJ mainly works with vulnerable groups taking a targeted approach and a focus on early intervention. Some emerging issues include the gentrification of parts of Newcastle causing people to shift further west.
- Services operating out of Council social infrastructure facilities are funded for a maximum 5 years and the funding priorities is vulnerable communities including children aged 0 to 5 years, young parents and Indigenous people.
- Some constraints currently for service delivery across the LGA is the cost of DCJ funded services for the hire of Council facilities sometimes being prohibitive. It was noted that Council libraries are providing spaces for small groups to meet for free.
- The halls in more remote areas are important for the delivery of outreach services, but need to be affordable and accessible, including for agencies to meet and network and collectively address emerging social issues.
- Some halls have restrictions placed on them around noise and opening hours which limits their ability to deliver programs for young people such as band nights.
- Moving forward it is important to deliver multipurpose spaces as part of co-located community hubs so that multiple services can be delivered for local people in the same location, and services can share resources. DCJ encourages funded services to co-locate with each other to also support warm referral across one client service to another. Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre is an example of where this is already working.
- Western Growth Corridor is a high priority area for improved social infrastructure and people will need services that are close by and easily accessible - people from Fletcher should be able to access services and programs in Fletcher, not have to travel to Newcastle.
- There are also opportunities to provide social infrastructure services for new arrivals through cooking programs, community meals, and so kitchens are an important.
- It is also important to engage the community in design or future social infrastructure. In particular, Indigenous communities should drive the design of public facilities for their communities, and there should be more visibility of indigenous culture in all public spaces to ensure they are welcoming to Indigenous communities.

Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation

- Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (HCCDC) aims to strengthen global gateways to the Hunter and Central Coast by creating diverse and sustainable regional economies, with thriving communities and leading metropolitan cities at their hearts.
- HCCDC sits on the City of Newcastle Liveable Cities Advisory Committee which aims to provide advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identification of challenges and opportunities, about urban planning, heritage, safety, affordable housing and healthy and connected urban systems within the Local Government Area (LGA).
- HCCDC identified opportunities for CN to work collaboratively to deliver leading practice social infrastructure outcomes in growth areas, including future greenfield and urban developments.
- They identified opportunities as part of the Hunter Sports Precinct.
- Other future opportunity areas include the interchange site in Honeysuckle including for education/school outcomes, and Minmi which is a priority area for future social infrastructure and to look at how to work collaboratively across all levels of Government and the private sector as part of a PIC (Place Based Infrastructure Compact).

University of Newcastle

- University of Newcastle (UN) has two campuses across the Newcastle LGA including Callaghan Campus and Newcastle CBD (Nuspace and Honeysuckle in the future).
- UN's campuses are designed to be permeable spaces - that the community can access and for everyone to use. A goal of their Community Strategic Plan is to bring the community into their campuses.
- NUspace is proving to be a very popular space as it is an attractor to the area and can suit multiple needs at the one time "People can be with others, without being with others" Students like to come together and study along - because they like knowing there are other people around.
- Honeysuckle will commence operations from 2021 including a collaborative creative industries space (production/recording) - and top level innovation hub. Aim is that the building will be open at the ground level with public open space. UN is hoping to have shelters in the public space where activities can be curated and community events held. They are also proposing night time uses to activate the area. They want the CBD campuses to connect with the broader CBD and to flow as a precinct and link to Civic. TPI house site opposite University House near Civic Park will be a public and community focussed building.
- UN provides a number of social infrastructure facilities

that are used by the community including libraries, sporting facilities, Conservatorium of Music Concert Hall, Nuspace (which is very popular with the local community) and the Forum. The Forum has an Olympic Pool and indoor courts that are used by the community if they are member of the facility. The Forum Olympic Pool is used by a large number of Newcastle's schools for their swimming competitions as there are no other Olympic sized pools in the LGA. UN is doing an upgrade of the pool. The Jets lease one of the sporting fields part of the Forum facility.

- Callaghan Campus has plans to demolish some buildings on site which will improve public open space that can be publicly accessible. The University also has promoted the many walks in natural areas that can be done on campus.

The Canopy

- The Canopy has been operating for 32 years as a Not for Profit service. It is mostly based in the Western Growth Corridor. It has a community development arm and managed eight community centres on behalf of CN and Lake Macquarie's Councils. It provides a full continuum of services targeting early intervention (parenting programs, information, case work) and at the other end intensive family preservation programs where they work closely with a number of families referred to them by DCJ - where children are at risk of being removed due to significant child protection issues.
- The Canopy enjoys managing Council facilities through a lease arrangement, and this arrangement is central to them being able to deliver services and programs to local communities. As a localised services, the programs and activities offered will be guided by the identified needs of the entire community and all age groups taking an Asset Based Community Development Approach. The Canopy is not funded to manage or maintain facilities, this has been done within the management agreement funding - the more bookings, the more funding.
- Under their leasing agreement with CN The Canopy gets a management fee paid from the CN for the management of those buildings - the more bookings, the greater the management fee. The Canopy is responsible for maintenance but CN makes all capital improvements.
- The Canopy uses small programs, or soft entries, that will draw people into their facility - e.g. free bread or food packages at Maryland Neighbourhood Centre. They have entered into an agreement with Wesley Mission who hire a space to deliver financial literacy and budgeting advice.
- Some barriers for CN's residents is that they want to access services that are local. For more disadvantaged residents who are time poor, they only have a window of school hours (9am to 2.30pm) to access services. So if they have to travel into Newcastle CBD on the bus, and bus times are limited, they do not have the time. Spaces for delivery of outreach services that are locally accessible are really important. The Western Growth Corridor has problematic public transport.
- There are two major trends occurring at the moment that impact on social infrastructure needs. 1) There is continuing gentrification driven by housing affordability which is going further west. People are moving to areas like Maryland which has more affordable rental accommodation. Bordering this area are new greenfield areas of Fletcher and Sanctuary and soon to be Minmi. These areas will have product for 2nd and 3rd homebuyers. There is increasing mental health issues, and much reported higher levels of family and domestic violence and an increase in mental health issues. 2) They are seeing an increase in demand for services across the board, with higher concentrations of more vulnerable residents.
- Consideration needs to be given to removing barriers which currently exist to maximising the delivery of services / activities across the Newcastle LGA. In relation to onsite storage and staff office space, an additional barrier which currently exists is CN facility management policy which prohibits hirers of spaces in community centres/halls from storing equipment / resources in the facilities. This is on the basis that CN wants the facilities to be shared spaces and offices etc be treated as 'hot desk' spaces. This makes complete sense on philosophy of multipurpose facilities, but in practice is a barrier. Canopy regularly have to decline expressed interest from really worthwhile community organisations wishing to hire spaces in CN facilities. These booking requests relate to community organisations wanting to locate staff and deliver programs / activities to meet local resident needs but the organisation requires storing equipment/resources onsite, which CN prohibits making it impractical.
- Future needs include: buildings that are multipurpose so a whole range of activities can be happening at the one time (e.g. Fletcher); Location centrally near other services and public transport; staffed/managed facilities that are activated with people and programs; better marketing and promotion of what exists; focus on the Western Corridor.

Mercy Services

Mercy Services delivers residential aged care, and HACC services across Greater Newcastle. They manage the Mayfield Senior Citizens Centre where they were relocated after the Elder Citizens Centre in the CBD closed. Mercy Services also runs a Community Transport Programs. Mercy Services identified the following needs and opportunities for improving social infrastructure outcomes across Newcastle LGA:

- For delivery of aged and disability programs a great community space would include a hall and office space, parking for mini buses and drop off/pickup, and a good quality kitchen. The kitchen at Mayfield needs improvement and restricts how many people can be served at lunches.
- Social services are now able to provide their programs in spaces and places throughout Newcastle, not just in a day care centre. This means that there are opportunities for CN to improve access to its public facilities, public open space, beaches and other public spaces to enable more services and programs to be delivered in them. For examples, mats on beaches to allow people in wheel chairs to get onto the beach.
- The future focus could be on access and mobility. Mobility is a big issue across Newcastle for people who are less mobile and need good access to a private or public transport to get places.

Venues NSW

Venues NSW are working on the Hunter Park precinct which will see improved provision of regional level sporting infrastructure in Broadmeadow as well as increased housing and workers within the 60ha site. Future regional level sporting infrastructure is proposed for Hunter Park including and indoor Olympic pool, entertainment centre, sportsfields and stadium, and adventure playground. All existing uses would remain. This is a long term plan without detailed feasibility completed.

Internal stakeholders

5.4. Key findings by stakeholder group

Open space and recreation

- Need to ensure that we are getting the open space and recreation facilities we need as a result of planning proposals and developer contributions. Identifying the criteria for good open space outcomes through development will be useful and also the priorities for Council across a range of social infrastructure needs.
- Need to clarify CN's role in terms of events in public spaces, and in particular the area's capacity to manage events at the local to regional scale. Need to prioritise what public space areas should be used for, and designed to accommodate (e.g. informal recreation v major events).
- Need to ensure that we are delivering local social infrastructure outcomes (such as local parks) for our residents living in high density apartments in Newcastle/ Newcastle East.
- Important to understand the future vision for Broadmeadow and if it is planned to be a multipurpose precinct delivering on a range of local to regional needs. There is currently no regional level public swimming pool for competition servicing the Hunter Region.
- CN's ocean baths are ageing and need maintenance.
- There is an opportunity to re-imagine the social infrastructure we have to deliver multipurpose outcomes that everyone can access (e.g. surf clubs, parks).
- There is an identified gap in indoor recreation facility provision and there may be a need for indoor recreation facility (indoor pool, recreation centre) at a district level to service the Western Corridor.
- Need to consider the most appropriate location for regional facilities in terms of parking demand traffic impacts etc.
- A priority for open space is accessibility and making sure everyone has equitable access to open spaces.
- resource sharing.
- There are also opportunities to look at our existing stock of social infrastructure facilities, and how it can be transformed as multipurpose.
- There is high unemployment in some areas with corresponding higher lack of internet connectivity - an important future role of Council social infrastructure facilities is to support digital inclusion. This could also include outdoor spaces that are digitally connected.
- Spaces for delivery of youth programs and services are important - particularly since closure of the Loft. For the future having outside, informal and flexible free spaces for young people will be important.
- Need for safe spaces for the LGBTQI around the City.
- Young people have expressed a desire for cultural spaces that they can activate themselves - this could be indoor or outdoor. There is an increasing issue with young people being pushed out of the city and in many public spaces.
- There is a gap in social infrastructure West of Wallsend with an opportunity to improve access to libraries in particular.
- Consideration should also be given to history and heritage as a cultural asset – around the rail yard and carriages Property and Building Services. Having a cultural precinct seems to happen in Laman Street, would be good to see this happen further out west. Having a space to present history and story, as well as more storage facility.

Community Development and Programs

- Community Development and Programs deliver social infrastructure programs across a range of social infrastructure facilities. They also deliver temporary events outside the libraries and other venues.
- They take a partnership approach to delivery working with the community and local providers and with other Council departments.
- A future focus for social infrastructure is to take a multipurpose, multi-visit, multi-outcome approach, and where possible co-locate social infrastructure facilities and services. There are opportunities to be smarter with collaboration and bringing in multiple tenants into one facility which can be more cost effective and better for

Culture and Civic

- Newcastle Museum is the largest local government museum in Australia. The museum delivers a high number of programs and events and exhibitions, but also facilitates informal use through the Museum Park (such as skaters - which is an exhibition of living culture). The Museum also has an internal playground inside the venue (LGBTQI + space). Looking at improving the external space with lighting, and to make it feel welcoming and friendly for all groups (from teens to seniors).
- The Civic Theatre was built in 1929 and there is a lot of scope for it to be used more by the community for community uses and to develop it more for local theatre. The Theatre also provides a space for young people to perform all-ages music events.
- Civic Hall has opportunities for improved activation and use and improved opportunities for connection to Wheeler Place.
- Fort Scratchley Function Centre was originally intended as a multipurpose community centre but is mostly used for functions and events. There are opportunities to re-imagine this space to deliver local programs such as mums and bubs and parent's yoga and exercise. Fort Scratchley is also a museum.
- The Newcastle Gallery has a vision to be refurbished and to increase community programs there. The Gallery has collaborated with Create NSW and has a 3 year program of events based on strong community relationships. Plans for the future include expansion of the exhibition space and a dedicated education and programming space, and kitchen/catering space to support events. The Art Gallery has a Youth Advisory Group who deliver programs regularly.
- It's really important to quantify the services and programs that are delivered out of Council's community and cultural spaces and to demonstrate their value. There are competing costs for ongoing maintenance and improvements that need to be considered.
- There are opportunities for improved social infrastructure in Honeysuckle and potentially creating a cultural precinct.
- There is a gap in social infrastructure outcomes for young adults with most of these needs being addressed through sport and recreation, but not through community and cultural programs - particularly for marginalised youth. There is a high need for places that young people are welcomed and respected - "you are welcome in our city and welcome to use our spaces".
- Social Infrastructure - if it's done right, leads to economic prosperity in the Newcastle in terms of an improved night time economy, family and friends connection, civic centre economy - and is an attractor for more visitors to the city.

Property and Building Services

- Asset managers for CN's physical assets. The team manages 22 buildings including 6 surf clubs. It is estimated that many of CN's community halls are in poor condition.
- There may be opportunities moving forward to re-imagine some community spaces (such as surf clubs) as multipurpose community spaces, with CN managing building maintenance. Considering anchor tenants for future management is also an option.
- The future of social infrastructure should be multipurpose and multi-use facilities.
- The main future gaps are multipurpose facilities, new social infrastructure in Minmi; planning for the future of surf clubs; and planning to support the effective maintenance of Council facilities - potentially through the provision of facilities that are fit for purpose.

Pools and parks

- CN owns 5 inland pools. Four are leased to BlueFit and one is managed by CN (Beresfield).
- Lambton is classified as a regional pool and gets 4 x the visitation of other pools. On average pools are 50 years old.
- Council patrols 6 beaches - 3 are on the stretch between Mereweather and Barre Beach. Other beaches are Newcastle, Nobbys, Stockton. Council patrols at all beaches.
- Direction is needed around the future of CN's inland pools.
- Future challenges include:
 - Maintaining existing pools to an improved standard so that they have modern technology, and can be heated to be open 12 months of the year.
 - Keeping on top of increasing maintenance costs so that we can not just retain what we have but improve the quality, capacity and activation of these important public spaces.
 - Keeping up with increasing demand for safe beaches. There are increasingly more people who can't swim. Our lifeguards patrol the ocean pools too. There are more CALD visitors. More residents. And Covid has meant more people are using outdoor parks and pools.
- Opportunities include:
 - Lift the standard of parkland through improved design and facilities
 - Lift the standard of sports grounds to support the big sports audience & so that they can deliver the best services possible. Make sports fields work harder - consider introducing synthetic fields in high use areas
 - Need a passive open space strategy and a beaches strategy - similar to the Sports Infrastructure Study - that will sit under this SIS.
 - Make our premier parks work harder e.g. Federal Park, Centennial Park, King Edward park, Gregson park (this is currently getting a masterplan), Jesmond, and Lambton Park

- Improved amenities block, including improved amenities for women as Newcastle like the rest of NSW is seeing increased participation by women, and
- Potentially improving one of Council's pools to become a 12 month pool which is heated and can be used all year round. Needs to be regional level and support water polo which is huge in Newcastle.

Appendix 1

The tables below provide a summary of comments from the Great Public Spaces Interactive Map by Catchment.

Catchment 1: Stockton-Fullerton Cove				
Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Stockton	Griffith Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The temporary cafe (2 comments) A good example of a new community space (2 up votes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional lighting, particularly at night to improve safety (2 comments; 5 up votes), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along the cycling track between ferry wharf and 16 ft skiff club, and from the wharf to Lions Park Removal of planted native shrubs and palms to improve safe walking access The view of Stockton from Newcastle is dark and foreboding for visitors and locals Remove black mesh around the skate park to open up the space and create visibility for parents whose children are using the skate park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote other bike rides around Stockton, to sightsee, visit other places and eateries Skate spaces for more intermediate and experienced skaters
	Little Beach			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public amenities and water facilities for visitors and the community to use
	Pitt Street Reserve		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More trees (1 up vote) 	
	Shipwreck Walk		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve maintenance and surfacing, and continue path along Shipwreck Walk (2 up votes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional paths with smooth, flat surfacing that are suitable for all kinds of transport and hobbies (2 up votes)
	Stockton Beach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revitalise Stockton Beach from the end of Stone Street to past Corroba Oval, particularly replenishing sand dunes and managing high tides spilling onto the road (2 up votes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seating facing the ocean views, similar to Birubi sandstone blocks Additional BBQ facilities
	Stockton Wharf			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs, seating and shelter for community use and watch over the harbour
General comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for a publicly accessible water park, particularly as the weather is getting hotter. One contributor indicated having a water park in open green spaces, along the foreshore near public amenities, for children to enjoy, while parents and carers can also recreate outside is important (1 up vote) Opportunity to create a looping bike track by extending existing track between Corroba Oval and Hunter Water (1 up vote) 				

Catchment 2: Newcastle - Cooks Hill

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Bar Beach	Bar Beach Skate Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional skating section for intermediate skaters (2 likes) Additional section for children and beginners (2 likes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for variety of skate bowl sizes to cater for a range of users (2 likes)
	Yuelarbah Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open green space adjacent Yuelarbah Track car park to sit and relax (2 up votes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resurfacing of the track to improve pedestrian safety, particularly near Bar Beach Club House (5 up votes) 	
Cooks Hill	99 Tooke Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to home, clean and accessible 		
	General comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved maintenance and cleanliness of streets from leaves and debris, and resurfacing of footpaths (5 up votes) Improved footpath surfacing on Darby Street (3 up votes) 			
Newcastle East	Foreshore Park Skate Park and walking path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since it has been drained, the pond has become a much loved/used space for skating. Suitable for beginners and children as it is away from the road, and acts as a social connector. Opportunity to further support by resurfacing the space (3 comments; 11 up votes) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional dog drinking bowls attached to water fountains along the length of foreshore footpath
	Newcastle Canoe Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable for young kids Accessible and available parking Beach is clean Satisfied with the service 		
	Newcastle Ocean Baths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full of charm, rustic, and a space to watch the world go by (2 up votes) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve surfacing of pathways between the Ocean baths and Newcastle Beach Pavilion, particularly for roller skaters (2 comments; 7 up votes; 1 down vote) Upgrade and improve toilet facilities Additional dog drinking fountains
	Nobbys Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meeting place, with smooth open pathways to utilise (2 comments; 8 up votes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional bins along the track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional basketball hoops opposite Nobbys Beach, as well as lighting to cater for demand (6 comments) Additional dog drinking fountains Additional bins along the walk around from Nobbys to King Edward Park

Newcastle West	Little Birdwood Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional bins, lighting at night and upgrade of seating (2 up votes) Manage antisocial behaviour at night (2 up votes) 	
	National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional basketball courts have been successful. Great spot for community interaction in playing casual pickup games (4 up votes) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for a picnic area and children's playground (6 up votes) Opportunity to create an urban meadow with native plants
	Newcastle Sports Ground		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve accessibility to sporting facilities on sportsfield No. 5 including toilets and change rooms, particularly for female players (2 comments; 3 up votes) 	
	<p>General comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter Street footpaths and road surfaces are excellent quality where the tram line has been installed but between Union St and Hannell at the road and footpaths are in complete disrepair (8 up votes) Additional cycleway linking The Junction to King Street (6 up votes) Opportunity to landscape median strips (5 up votes) Recent art installations in King Street are well liked, and have improved some old run down buildings (4 up votes) Additional Council bins along King street as litter is left from the nearby fast food stores regularly, as well as installing a rail in the 1m gap between the Western side of the Travelodge and the canal bridge to help prevent shopping trolleys being pushed into the canal and improve public safety for young children (2 up votes) More safe, open and green community space is needed at the west end of King Street to support the growing population living in apartments. Burwood Park is not suitable for this. (2 up votes) Retain open spaces, they are highly utilised and create a connected pathway to other places in town 			
Newcastle	AA Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve maintenance of park including rubbish, weeds and broken bamboo trees (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to create a well-utilised pocket-park Opportunity for kiosk
	Museum Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking through this space. It creates a pleasant connection from Hunter street to the foreshore (1 up vote; 1 down vote) 		
	Church Walk Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved maintenance including weeding of grassed areas, as well as listing the park on Council App. 	
	83 Newcomen Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional railings and footpaths (4 up votes) 	
	Newcastle Museum		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for more diverse, interactive exhibits (4 up votes) 	
	<p>General comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved footpaths and dedicated bike path along King Street (8 up votes) Improvements to paths along Stony Point including resurfacing as they not accessible for wheelchairs, dangerous for a variety of hobbies such as roller skaters. Include separated pedestrian and cycling lane. (2 comments; 7 up votes) Opportunity at the new station area along Watt Street for a mix of permanent and temporary market stalls, restaurants and cafes in the city and close to public transport (2 comments; 4 up votes; 2 down votes) Opportunity to create an outdoor water feature along green open areas on Honeysuckle Drive for children to use such as sprinkles built in ground (3 up votes; 1 down vote) Opportunity for a dog park in open green space opposite intersection at Honeysuckle Drive, Wright Lane and Workshop Way (2 up votes; 2 down votes) A Wickham Ferry Wharf to connect to Stockton and Queens wharf (1 up vote) Value Newcastle Breakwall, however closure of Newcastle Breakwall could have been better planned to be done in the winter months Opportunity for bush regeneration and landscaping, as well as additional formal seating in open green space at Bogey Hole along York Drive (2 comments; 1 up vote) Additional seating, tables and chairs near the Ferry Terminal for community to sit and watch the harbour Regularly pressure clean paving 			

Catchment 3: Merewether - The Junction

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Merewether	Alice Ferguson Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuable centre for seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional maintenance and upgrades to the exterior of the building 	
	Glenrock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children enjoy riding at Glenrock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional amenities and water supply to support increased visitation and utilisation (2 up votes) Opportunity for investment to improve this space to reach its potential 	
	Henderson Park Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well loved hall and open green space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbish kitchen 	
	Merewether Ocean Bath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open grassed section above the pools (1 up vote) 		

Catchment 4: Adamstown - Kotara

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Adamstown	Ferneleigh Track		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend Ferneleigh Track as a continued, separated cycleway to link Broadmeadow, city centre and beaches (2 comments; 7 up votes) Complete footpath at the end of Ferneleigh Track along Bailey Street and along Fourth street to Wood Street for pedestrian safety 	
	Laneway Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The play equipment, garden, and its location in a laneway rather than a main road. 		
	Myers Park			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of volleyball courts for community and formal sporting uses (1 up vote)
	Adamstown Seniors Centre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to parking to support community use and visitation of the centre, including seniors and artists 	
	General comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support biodiversity and wildlife by planting flora in under-utilised open green spaces 			
Adamstown Heights	Hudson Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home ground of the Kotara Bears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of the sportsfields, particularly improvements to surface, drainage and irrigation Prevent access onto the field by cars that damage the grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional fitness station and exercise equipment, particularly for adults
Kotara	Blackbutt Nature Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oasis in the City, a place of harmony and tranquility (5 up votes) 		
	Kotara Park			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More rubbish and waste bins, particularly as there are none near the train station or in the park
	Lugar Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace amenities block, improve canteen and increase amount of changerooms to cater growing football (soccer) club and increasing memberships , particularly for female players (2 comments; 2 up votes) 	
	Nesbitt Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public open space accessible to the community (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior of Nesbitt Park club house, including repainting the building using Kotara South FC colour scheme (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for public art such as a mural on the bare walls of the Club House (1 up vote)
	General comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of wall-ball spaces for community recreation activities such as tennis or soccer, particularly for young families (1 up vote) Addition of a skate park (1 up vote) Addition of a cycle track, particularly near Styx creek, Park Avenue or further up the track near Princeton Avenue (1 up vote) With more young families moving into Kotara, there is an increasing demand for formal and informal recreation spaces. One contributor indicated sporting grounds and amenities need to be improved to cater for the increasing demand. Support biodiversity and wildlife by planting flora in under-utilised open green spaces 			

Catchment 5: Lambton - New Lambton

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Lambton	Lambton Library		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase opening hours to support accessibility and cater to a range of users (2 up votes) 	
	Lambton Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The playground, and very well used sports fields. It is a gorgeous place to walk around with beautiful gardens and trees. (2 up votes) The park is the centre of the community. It is always well maintained (2 up votes) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for basketball half court (2 up votes)
	Lambton Park Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a true central location for Newcastle residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An improved and expanded playground / play area to replace existing, similar to one built for Stockton recently. 	
	Lambton Park Tennis Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand play equipment (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to offer the stage for live musicians on weekends for free, to attract more people to the park (1 up vote) Events including food vans and a stalls to add to the community spirit (1 up vote)
	Lambton Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a great place to take the kids on holiday or weekends and they have a lot of fun on the waterslide and water game area often meeting other kids they know. (1 up vote) 		

New Lambton	Alder Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating of amenities, fencing that can exist all year round so football and athletics can co-exist, and ideally a duplication of the Fearnly Dawes facility at Cooks Hill. (1 up vote, 1 down vote) outdoor exercise equipment for adults and children, along with bat ball court at Alder park, plenty of space to be utilised 	
	Alder Park Sports Club		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "old bowlo" is in real need of an update, more than just a coat of paint, but real change to the venue to attract new people. Something along the lines of the Calabria Club in Sydney would work quite well. (1 up vote, 1 down vote) 	
	Blackbutt Nature Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolute Jewel of NCC - important place for maintaining local habitat; but also great attraction to show tourists, great for locals to walk in etc... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackbutt Nature Reserve (corner of Mahogany road & Aldyth Street) needs public facility - Shelter, picnic and or bbq facility 	
	Ford Oval		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars belonging to people who play football are frequently being driven onto the grasses area to park even when ample street parking exists. The grassed area is frequently damaged by this. The area needs a fence or bollards 	
	New Lambton Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a great space and well used. I have seen lots of older people using this space. Full to the brim with embroiders doing their creative thing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please dont take away a creative space for older people, where else can they go? 	
	New Lambton Library		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bigger library that can run activities like plant or seed swaps, informed talks or lectures on everything from local history to council rules and regulations, to what is Agenda 21 and how is it being implemented in Newcastle? How will life be in the coming unit dwelling technocracy when we have no civil rights left? Local wildlife talks or basic art classes and lots more events for kids in the school holidays like little drama and talent shows they can perform or sing at and parents can watch. 	
	Novocastrian Park Playground		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilities at Novo are in major need of a refurb. The change rooms are not friendly for women to access on their game days, they're barely usable for the men. (1 up vote) 	
	Regent Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejuvenation of the amenities so that they can be used when football and cricket are on. Fencing of the park, a white picket fence made of high impact plastics, would suit the ground and the area. It would then make the park safe for school use during the week, and then soccer and cricket use on the weekend. (1 up vote) 	
	Richard Ford Netball Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great to skate on but the asphalt is rough and wearing away. The fact that most of the time it's empty means it can serve rollerskates/bladers too. (1 up vote) 	
	Richley Reserve		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV charging station, to be used by people at the park. 	
	Smith Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> smith park need lights and clubhouse for sport to be able to continue to grow and promote healthy lifestyle for both senior and junior players. keeping everyone active and social and mental well being of all community by getting out and enjoying sport in this pandemic and beyond. (1 up vote) 	
General Comments				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop some perennial & annual flower seeds in the less used areas, to provide some sort of habitat for bees & insects. 				

Catchment 6: Hamilton - Broadmeadow

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Broadmeadow	Broadmeadow Roundhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is located conveniently to public transport and has good vehicular access. Rail and maritime heritage are the foundations of European Newcastle 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for a railway museum, heritage interpretatin centre and/or community cultural hub in the Broadmeadow roundhouse, to expand on Newcastle's rich industrial heritage (2 comments) Suggestion for skilled ex-trades people to restore and maintain the locomotives housed here. Potential to supply local locomotives for Hunter Valley Steamfest when it resumes post-coronavirus. The closest things are LMLSLS; Richmond Vale, but there are so many people in Newcastle for whom these are too far away to get to regularly to volunteer and visit (2 up votes) Potential to develop an entertainment venue replacing the present showground facility, with an opportunity for increased utilisation by the performing arts school adjacent to the site.
	Newcastle Racecourse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure of the racecourse to minimise anti-social behaviour and animal cruelty (2 up votes, 3 down votes) 	
	Showground Exhibition Centre			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With an increasing trend in roller skating, there is an opportunity for an indoor and/or large sheltered area with smooth surfacing for roller skaters (2 up votes)
General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressed need for speed bumps along Dumaresq Street to minimise speeding and improve safety (2 comments; 1 down vote) Opportunity to plant perennial and annual flower seeds in the underutilised open space areas, to support habitats for bees and insects. 				
Hamilton North	Smith Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large, well utilised park for a range of sporting codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve amenities and sporting facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional lights to support sporting and recreational groups, and increase capacity and utilisation particularly at night (6 comments; 4 up votes) Dog amenities including water taps.
	General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently Denison Street between parkway and Tudor Street is hot, dry and barren. Opportunity to plant street trees for urban cooling (1 up vote) 			

Catchment 7: Waratah - North Lambton

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Georgetown	Waratah Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional shaded seating near the sports fields and trees for shade (1 up vote) Increased monitoring and enforcement of park rules by rangers, particularly for children and dogs (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional water bubblers with taps for dog water Daily maintenance of bins and rubbish removal
North Lambton	Pilkington Street Reserve Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only play area within close walking distance to North Lambton. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade to support increase of young families in the area (2 up votes) 	

Catchment 8: Mayfield - Warabrook

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Mayfield	Dangar park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dangar Park the home of East Rugby Club needs new change sheds which includes a woman's shed. I would also like to see a grand stand added so people can cheer our Easts on. Would also like to see the bench seat put back as it was vandalised (2 down votes) We need new play equipment located at the Bowling Club end of the block in Carrington Street. This would help create a family friendly space similar to at Carrington where people can gather at the club to eat and children have access to a playground adjacent. The current position for the playground is too close to the main roads (1 up vote) 	
	Mayfield Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well used space, particularly by seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade the roof to rectify leaks 	
	Webb Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shade for play equipment and regular cleaning of equipment due to night time activities (vomit/drugs/rubbish) (1 up vote) 	
	General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to improve small green spaced and use for multicultural food market stalls like it has been done once before Establish and improve cycleways connecting Mayfield to Throsby creek with designated cycleways (1 up vote) 			
Mayfield West	Stevenson Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the playing surfaces needs to be improved, making Feld 2 a priority (2 up votes) We had a really good opportunity to re-purpose turf from MacDonald Jones Stadium here. Please consider this an annual sustainable option for any community sporting field in the area. That turf would have been a much higher quality than what we currently have. It would be good to have an annual seasonal plan for looking after the field (weed and feed) that the community knows about. Don't leave it up to volunteers to maintain or make calls to NCC. Water tanks around the park are essential. 	
	Stevenson Park Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such a great new playground at Stevenson Park, now needs funding for the next phases of the project developed over the last 3 years. Let the community know how to help NCC move this along. (2 comments;1 up vote) 		
	Warabrook Community Centre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult space to get to. Needs car parking facilities. Opportunity to move this centre into the Mayfield Area 	

Catchment 9: Wickham - Carrington - Tighes Hill

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Carrington	Carrington Foreshore and boat ramp		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrington Foreshore playground and the general area could use a spruce up. Lighting would be good for evening walkers/runners (4 up votes) Carrington boat ramp and foreshore area has the potential to be such a lovely spot. Unfortunately the car park area and foreshore is unappealing and very due for an upgrade. This stretch seems to be one of the only spots left on the water that has not had a face-lift. Additionally the rocks pose a danger to children (1 up vote) Lighting is needed all the way along the Carrington foreshore for safety of a night and to match that on the other side in Wichman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A retainer, some seats and some minimal effort landscaping could turn this into a great area. It is what people see as they drive into Carrington.
	Carrington Mangrove boardwalk		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement of the old timber walk needs to be completed as only half was done a few years ago. The information signs on wildlife need replacing due to vandalism. 	
	Dyke Point			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access to Dyke Point. Add a ferry wharf and it could be a public recreation space like Cockatoo Island in Sydney. (1 comment; 15 up votes)
	Grahame Park Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrington kids favourite place. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter and water is a much needed addition though
	Mount Carrington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fantastic waterfront location with much potential (1 up vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mount Carrington is a fantastic community space which children and animals love to run around but it needs some vast improvement with maintenance works and the addition of seating and overhead cover. A structure like those at Bar Beach would be perfect with some additional bench seating (5 up votes) 	
	Pumphouse			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the pumphouse location with outdoor seating and parklands with the anticipation of future waterfront access would be a popular location for locals but also visitors and cruise ships (4 up votes)
	Throsby Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I love us sing Throsby creek cycleway (1 up vote) 		
<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pebblecrete path between Elizabeth St Bridge and Carrington Bridge is so rough it can only be used by cyclists and walkers. Make it smoother and wider so all community members can use it for recreation, particularly for roller skaters. Currently, skating is possible along the Islington Park path from the TAFE, however this ends at this section with trucks passing it is dangerous. I love being able to skate from Tighes Hill to Nobbies. (2 up votes) 				
Maryville	Islington Park Cricket Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meeting place and well used park for young and old from near and far. (2 up votes) 		

Maryville	Throsby Creek			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional bike path on the other side of Throsby Creek (Tighes Hill side) to create a loop for families. Lots of people walk this as a loop but the Tighes Hill side is overgrown and rocky so not suited to bikes, scooters, prams etc. The number of people that use the existing bike path suggests that this would be worthwhile. (1 up vote) The Throsby Creek path between Hannell Street and Lewis Street does not have any lighting and does not feel safe. Upgrading the path, including lights, expanding the width and new kids equipment on the side of the path would greatly improve the community space. The improved community space would effectively connect Mayfield and Islington to Maryville / Wickham / City and enable a community space corridor for the northern city suburbs. (8 up votes)
	<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a coffee shop along this bike track (Northumberland Street next to Throsby Creek) (2 down votes) 			
Tighes Hill	TAFE NSW - Newcastle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAFE is a marvellous place to learn and have fun making things. And a wonderful place to see one's friends (2 up votes, 1 down vote) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs better organisation and management to work as a business, not a government run institution, seeing as it does not seem to get enough from the government to run it. Instead of worrying about not getting enough funding, we need to realise that if smaller, less well equipped private companies can do it, such a well equipped and huge institution should do it (2 up votes, 1 down vote) 	
Wickham	Croatian Wickham Sports Club		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General upgrades to the Sports Club and its facilities (15 comments; 10 up votes) Upgrade the granstand, it is currently outdated, falling apart and unsafe with the wooden floors that are a trip hazard (10 comments; 3 up votes) Upgrade toilet facilities, including additional accessible toilet (8 comments; 4 up votes) Upgrades to the canteen, including larger spaces and increased hygiene (7 comments; 5 up votes) 	
	Hawkins Oval		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilities here are sub-par, especially when compared to other sporting grounds in the region. The small toilet facility is dark and dingy, and a little bit scary to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area could use a bronze statue of the great "bubba" Coleman. Bubba is a local legend around passmore and hawks, Newcastle rugby. To save money use a picture from 2002 rather than the current 2020 model. This would also only need about half the bronze as he was heaps fitter in those days (2 up votes, 3 down votes)
	Passmore Oval			
	Wickham Beach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wickham waterfront and marina has great paths and lighting and access however could be improved with more useable public spaces and seating 	
Wickham	Wickham Oval			
Wickham	Wickham Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wickham Park needs urgent funding to bring it up to an acceptable standard if it's to be a showcase recreation and sporting area we can be proud of. Of particular need is funding to update the antiquated facilities at Passmore Oval. 	

Catchment 10: Newcastle Port - Kooragang

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Kooragang	Kooragang Island			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhere on Kooragang island for families with interested children to go and watch all of the marvellous machinery working. (1 up vote)
Mayfield North	BHP Land (51 hectare parcel of land)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHP land should be utilised to build an international convention centre in partnership with NSW government and private sector... Needs to have a Hotel adjunct... It is a BIG thing missing from our City!!!! (2 down votes) 	
	General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities haven't change since I started rugby there in 1999,grandstand,change rooms,canteen 			

Catchment 11: Beresfield - Hexham

Please note there were no pins dropped by contributors in this catchment.

Catchment 12: Maryland - Fletcher - Minmi

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Fletcher	Kurraka Reserve Playground		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Improvement to lighting, both sporting and pathways would encourage greater after dark sporting and engagement events in this area. <p>A shared use (netball, football, cricket) female friendly change rooms would encourage greater participation of female sports in the area.</p> <p>Shaded seating - a severe lack of shaded seating in the area. Local spectators from the area, which can easily number over +200 people on a sporting weekend, have no shaded seating." (1 up vote)</p>	
	Kurraka Reserve Tennis Courts			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversion of existing underutilised tennis courts to competition level netball games that can be held under lights, activating after dark sports in the local area. (1 up vote)
	Kurraka Sanctuary Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local sense of community, great for local sports that engage the local community in a accessible, inclusive way. 		
Maryland	Bill Elliot Oval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home to the Wallsend West Newcastle AFL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home To the Wallsend West Newcastle ARFC - ground needs drainage improvements, along with improvements to ground use, such as coaching boxes and & timekeeper spaces. Plus year to year maintenance, such as lightening - globes need replacing) 	
	General Comments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western corridor sports facility to cater for population growth & higher grades of competition (piece of land behind 'Safe 'n' SOUND Self Storage Wallsend) (1 down vote) 	

Catchment 13: Shortland - Jesmond

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Jesmond	Heaton Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heaton Park needs lighting for use of various sporting needs, (1 up vote) 	
	Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre is an ideal place for the community to meet regularly when wanting to hangout with others, financial support , mental health, employment, and several other basic needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good location next to a shopping centre. Can be a busy little place at times as it is in a lower socio-economic area. Needs to stay - need to have something in the area. The centre is way too small to support the local community and the available space is limited for several programs to run at the same time. Storage space is also an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesmond neighbourhood centre would be an ideal meeting place as it supports many of the local community. A second story extension, shed and more greenery would be ideal for the community to regularly visit as a drop in centre for tea, coffee, a chat and to tender the current garden for herbs and vegetables to take home and start a second garden bed. A shade above the swings would also be ideal for the children accessing the playground. It is an ideal location central to the shopping centre an

Catchment 14: Wallsend - Elmore Vale

Suburb	Place	I love..	Improve..	New..
Elmore Vale	Elmore Vale Park Playground		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs updating so when the younger kids use the equipment they can reach the stuff easily, and its interesting for them to be more creative. (1 up vote) 	
	General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When removing houses due to flooding, instead of having vacant land place some playing equipment and seating for parents (open space next to 12 Watkins Rd) 			
Wallsend	Federal Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighting required on road side to improve access for various sports on such a large open space. Better utilisation. (1 up vote) 	
	Summerhill Waste Management Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summerhill is a very interesting place to go & visit not only when dumping or recycling unwanted goods. It is very educational and great fun watching all of the machinery. (1 up vote) 		
	Wallsend Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wallsend library - fantastic, free, inclusive, something for everyone, all ages & abilities, variety of free or cheap programs 		
	Wallsend Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenities needs replacing at Wallsend Park to cater for female football & cricket players, coaches & volunteers. Wallsend skate park needs lights so it can be used at night 	
	Wallsend Skate Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A great place for kids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wallsend skate park needs lights so it can be used at night 	
	General Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We love going to Bunnings for all of our shopping needs, we go most weeks. (Bunnings) (1 up vote) 			