



2031: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE
Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan

Cessnock Local Government Area



Prepared by Cessnock City Council 2015/16

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Plan is to strategically consider future community facility needs across the Cessnock Local Government Area and for such planning to be considerate of expected population growth. Cessnock City Council is aware that the Local Government Area's population is expected to considerably increase within the near future. The 2011 Census recorded a population of 50,840 people. By 2031, the resident population within the Cessnock Local Government Area is expected to reach a minimum 68,364 to a maximum 101,987 people. Given this expected population growth it is important for Council to strategically plan and ensure the adequate availability of key community facilities. In planning for an increased population, this Plan will provide strategic direction for future community facilities up until 2031.

This Plan is consistent with the desired outcomes articulated in *Cessnock 2023* (the community strategic plan for the Cessnock Local Government Area). It is particularly relevant to the aspiration to be 'a connected, safe and creative community' and the underpinning objectives to promote social connections; strengthen community culture; promote safe communities; and foster an articulate and creative community.

Community Facilities Considered within this Plan

Cessnock City Council holds a large property portfolio to support the effective delivery of the broad range of services it provides for the people who live, work in and visit the Cessnock Local Government Area. Community facilities infrastructure is an important part of this portfolio that Council uses to provide both direct and indirect services.

Community facilities that are considered within this Plan are defined as indoor spaces used to engage people in social, welfare, cultural, arts or healthy lifestyle related activities and programs. At the time of drafting the Plan, Council owned and/or was the Reserve Trust Manager of over 40 community facilities which are listed in the Appendix (Section 10). To summarise, the Plan considers the following types of community facilities:-

- community halls
- multi-purpose community centres
- youth centres
- early childhood facilities, including preschool, child care and dedicated play group spaces
- indoor recreation facilities
- spaces for seniors and disability programs
- public art gallery spaces
- performing arts centre
- civic centres
- libraries
- cultural centres
- museums
- residential aged care services *
- general practitioner medical services *

**Note: Although Council does not own such facilities, they are considered in this Plan given they are essential for the community.*

Geographic Planning Areas

Within this Plan, community facility needs are considered from the perspective of a) local government area wide initiatives and b) four smaller planning areas. These four smaller planning areas have been selected given their links to public transport routes, access to services and facilities and proximity to nearest commercial districts.

As a result, the four smaller planning areas used within the Plan are:-

- Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area
Includes Kitchener, Kearsley, Quorrobolong, Lovedale, Pokolbin
- Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area
Includes Neath, Abermain, Weston, Mulbring, Heddon Greta and Clifftleigh
- Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area
Includes North Rothbury
- Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West
Includes Ellalong and Bucketty

Section 1.7 discusses further the geographic planning areas.

Methodology Used to Determine the Action Strategies

In developing the Plan and in formulating its action strategies, the following methodology was applied:-

- An analysis of the demographic profile for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and the planning areas within. A demographic profile can provide key insights into the level of demand for services and facilities and via the use of timeline data, helping to understand how that demand is changing. Census data was predominantly used for the demographic profile.
- Review of current Cessnock City Council strategic plans that discuss community infrastructure requirements (see Section 1.2). The value in considering already adopted strategic plans is that community consultation routinely occurs and within these documents there are likely to be strategies for community infrastructure owned by Cessnock City Council. Where a link is made with an already adopted Cessnock City Council strategic plan it is referenced within this Plan.
- Community planning benchmark standards to population ratios were applied and can assist to strategically place community infrastructure in locations where it is needed. In determining future community facility needs, action strategies are considered from the perspective that the facility predominantly services either a small township, a planning area or is an area wide facility, which services the entire local government area.
- Population forecasting for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and its smaller planning areas occurred up until 2031. Population forecasting assists to understand the potential

service needs of future communities. Despite the best attempts to accurately forecast using sound methodology, it must be advised that there are many variables and hence projections may not always be a reliable indicator. Given this, please note that Population Projections within this Plan (Section 3) are a guide only.

- Stakeholders were engaged in the development of this Plan. This assisted in understanding the capacity of current community facilities and their ability to service an increased population. Cessnock City Council, the not for profit sector, the private sector and state and federal governments are all key stakeholders in ensuring that adequate and appropriate space is available to the community.
- A review of current community facilities provided information on their location, the services they provide, ownership details (i.e Council as owner or Council as Reserve Trust Manager) and asset condition. This analysis assisted in understanding whether existing community facilities have the capacity to service a growth population up until 2031 and identifying potential facility type gaps.

Findings

It was found that Cessnock City Council, in servicing its current population, has a good supply of community infrastructure. It was also noted that there are varying types of community infrastructure allowing for a variety of services and operational functions. For example it was found that Cessnock City Council owns and/or is the Reserve Trust Manager for at least 40 community facilities. The history in how Cessnock City Council was provided with this supply includes:-

- a legacy of mining, for example the Richmond Main complex.
- historical rationalisation of service from both local and state government, for example the former Greta Courthouse and adjacent police station, former Greta Council Chambers and Crawfordville Hall, which was originally a school building.
- commercial enterprises which ceased over time, for example the Kurri Kurri Co-operative Store, now the Kurri Kurri Community Centre and Kurri Kurri Library.

As such, the current supply of community facilities was found to be predominantly single function type community facilities with the exception of Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and Kurri Kurri Community Centre/Kurri Kurri Library. It was also found that although the overall community infrastructure stock is ageing, most facilities are habitable spaces and many have the capacity to remain functional (assuming continued adequate maintenance levels) up until 2031.

Council's Strategic Property Review provides a good opportunity to investigate for rationalisation facilities that are under utilised and whose functions instead could be co-located within future multi-purpose buildings. For example it was found that the Cessnock Local Government Area has an extensive stock of community hall facilities. Community hall facilities are a good example of a standalone facility that has minimal uses in comparison to a building that is multi-purpose in design. In

enquiring with hall management committees about their usage it was found that some facilities were well patronised and some were not. One facility within the Local Government Area for instance had an average weekly usage of three hours. It is therefore recommended that Council move towards a position of ceasing the construction of standalone community halls. Instead, community hall type space should be incorporated into the construction of new multi-purpose community centres. For example, a future multi-purpose community centre could in its design offer flexible and diverse spaces that allows within the same building operations such as neighbourhood type community services, a youth space, a senior's space, a disability program area and community hall type space.

In moving towards a more contemporary model for the delivery of community infrastructure that is multi-purpose in design, as opposed to single purpose built facilities, community infrastructure decisions need to be based on four strategic community planning hubs. The four planning hubs recommended are a) Cessnock and surrounds, b) Kurri Kurri and surrounds, c) Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and surrounds, d) Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West. This geography is demonstrated further within the Plan at section 1.7. If Council does not consider community facilities from such planning areas and rather continues to consider from a small locality perspective, it runs the risk of further constructing small single purpose built facilities. Community facilities that have a single function risk being used by a small population group and subsequently the facility can become underutilised and potentially not viable to operate.

As mentioned, Council has at present a good supply of community infrastructure yet some is of ageing condition. With ageing stock and in reflecting on the history of how Council acquired some of the facilities, it was necessary to understand the heritage status of community facilities. At least ten facilities were found to be of heritage status and some of these require the space to be re-activated given its current minimal use. Hence, it may not be always necessary to construct new multi-purpose facilities but rather look for opportunities to revitalise ageing community infrastructure precincts. An example of this is the precinct at Greta where in the one location there are four buildings, three of which are heritage listed. Some of the facilities in the precinct have minimal use, but are of heritage value and are important to the Cessnock Local Government Area in terms of its landscape and history. Another example is the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre which is operational only a few days per week. It has a key location within central Cessnock.

Overall it was found that with an increased population forecast for the Cessnock Local Government Area, there will need to be a more current and effective model implemented in terms of the design and delivery of community facilities. Future community facilities will need to be multi-purpose in design, be sustainable and financially viable, offer flexible spaces and accommodate a variety of activities to ensure they are well used within the community.

Action Strategies

In planning the needs of future communities in regards to community facility requirements, this Plan's vision is to have strategically located, accessible, sustainable facilities that are multi-purpose in design and be places to connect communities, promote community wellbeing and engagement. In total the Plan has 23 action strategies and each in some way reflect the Plan's vision.

Section Seven entitled 'Action Strategies' lists the 23 action strategies and commences on page 100. In summary, the following strategies are detailed within the Plan:-

Generalist Strategies – Applicable to all Planning Areas

Strategy	
1.	Identify opportunities to rationalise single purpose facilities and consider the sale of any surplus infrastructure.
2.	All Council owned facilities available for hire (including those trusted to Council by the Crown) to be better promoted on the Council website and should include pictures of the facility (both inside and outside) and indoor room space dimensions.
3.	When assessing residential planning proposals for community infrastructure needs, the four community planning hubs are to be:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessnock and surrounds • Kurri Kurri and surrounds • Branxton, East Branxton, Greta surrounds • Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West
4.	Future community hall space to be integrated into newly constructed multi-purpose centres as opposed to being standalone facilities.
5.	All newly constructed multi-purpose community centres should seek to include areas for neighbourhood centre type activities, youth and community hall spaces and areas for seniors and disability programs.
6.	In line with community need, continue to support the expansion of early childhood facilities across the Cessnock Local Government Area.
7.	With any new library design, it should be determined if it is feasible to include the co-location of at least one community museum exhibition space.

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area

Strategy	
8.	The inclusion of art gallery space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre to be investigated and should include a determination as to whether the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre should be a space primarily for arts and cultural services.
9.	A business plan to be developed for the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre including the feasibility of establishing a commercial kitchen and revitalisation of the facility as a key arts and cultural centre.
10.	By 2031, provide in total two multi-purpose community centres in the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. At the present time the planning area has one facility and is located within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. However, if the existing community centre activities were to be relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, a second multi-purpose community centre will need to be constructed.
11.	An expanded library facility will be required within the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. The current library site has constraints in regards to expansion; hence an alternative location will need to be investigated.

Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and Surrounds Planning Area

Strategy	
12.	Given an ageing population, the Abermain School of Arts facility be preserved as a multi-purpose centre that primarily delivers services to an aged population.
13.	Investigate the feasibility of expanding the intended minimum 30 place child care facility earmarked for the Cliftleigh residential development and as part of the investigation consider if it can service Heddon Greta and surrounding localities.
14.	A strategic planning process to occur for the Richmond Main precinct. This investigation should consider opportunities to revitalise the precinct, along with understanding the condition of existing infrastructure at the site.
15.	Investigate the feasibility of constructing an indoor recreation space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park) as opposed to construction within the Cliftleigh residential development.
16.	A master plan to be developed for Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 and surrounding Kurri Kurri Community Centre precinct to determine if it can be expanded to accommodate increased space for library services.
17.	When combining the Cliftleigh and Heddon Greta localities, the population by 2031 is projected to be a minimum of 7,500. During the life of this plan, flexible community space will be required. The size required for flexible community space could be a minimum of 328m ² .

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury Planning Area

Strategy	
18.	<p>A master plan which considers place activation and revitalisation be developed for both:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DP 758474 (Lot 1,2,11,12), total land area of 4,070m² – the site is occupied by Greta Pre-school (heritage listed), Greta Courthouse (heritage listed), Former Greta Council Chambers (heritage listed) and Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall, and • DP 627860, DP 1137953 (Lot 1 & 2), total land area is 7280m² – the site occupied by Branxton Pre School, Branxton Community Hall and Branxton Play Group.
19.	The proposed library at Huntlee (as listed in the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement) be reviewed to determine if it can be the main administration headquarters for library services.
20.	Construct one multi-purpose community centre in the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area (is listed in the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement). The multi-purpose community centre should include a dedicated youth space.
21.	In conjunction with the above master plan for DP 627860 and DP 1137953 (see above: strategy 18) it should be determined if the planning area has excess community hall facilities given the increase in stock expected with the Huntlee residential development.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West Planning Area

Strategy	
22.	Given population growth, developer contributions are required for the construction of a minimum 50 place multi-functional early childhood centre that allows for both child care and pre-school programs.
23.	A precinct master plan be developed for Millfield Crawfordville Hall and its surrounding lands, to include the provision of an early childhood centre. By 2031, an early childhood facility to be provided servicing the Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and surrounds planning area.

New Community Infrastructure Proposed within the Plan

In considering the above action strategies, and more specifically any required new community infrastructure, the Plan proposes the following:-

- Increased early childhood services, namely child care and pre-school programs to accommodate up to an additional 582 licensed places across all four planning areas within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Within the Plan, all four planning areas are earmarked for service growth and this has been formalised via Section 94 Plans or Voluntary Planning Agreements associated with proposed developments. It should be mentioned that within the Cessnock Local Government Area, Council is not the only provider of child care and pre-school facilities, owning approximately 40% of the infrastructure. The number of actual centres to be constructed by Council is dependent on the continued involvement of the private sector. Historically, local government has provided facilities for early childhood services. In recent times and in some localities, the private market has satisfied demand and consequently some Councils have withdrawn their role in early childhood services. A gap evident and not yet serviced by the private market is the Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West planning area and is noted in the Cessnock City Council Early Childhood Care and Pre School Services: An Analysis of Current and Future Services within the Cessnock Local Government Area (2014). It is recommended that this locality during the life of the Plan be provided with a minimum 50 place centre in the township of Millfield.
- Construction of at least two additional multi-purpose community centres (minimum size 900m² per facility), with one required in the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area and the other within Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area. An additional multi-purpose community centre may also need to be developed in the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area, if the current neighbourhood centre activities are relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. Multi-purpose community space (minimum size 328m²) is also required for construction in the Cliftleigh/Heddon Greta locality and should be co-located with other community infrastructure.
- Construction and/or expansion of a total three libraries. The Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 found that both the Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library are at capacity in terms of space, do not meet the current needs and will not meet the needs of future growth population. It was also found that the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area will require a library branch to accommodate its growing population. This is likely to be required during the life of this Plan and forms part of the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement.

- Construction of an indoor recreation facility within the Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area. This planning area is fortunate to have a superior indoor aquatic centre (Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre) consisting of pools, gym space, a café and other ancillary areas such as first aid and store rooms. However, the facility does not have indoor space large enough for sports such as basketball, cricket, netball, volleyball and other like leisure activities. This planning area during the life of the Plan will require the construction of indoor leisure space similar to the Greta Arts and Sports Hall.

In addition to new community infrastructure, there are a number of existing key community precincts identified for capital revitalisation. These precincts are a) Richmond Main, b) Branxton Precinct (the site comprises the Branxton Pre School, Branxton Community Hall, and Branxton Play Group), c) Greta Precinct (the site comprises the Former Greta Council Chambers, Former Greta Courthouse, Greta Pre School and Greta Arts and Sports Hall). Costs for these projects are unknown, and are subject to the outcome of a planning process for each precinct.

Budget and Financial Implications for New Community Infrastructure

With the Cessnock Local Government Area requiring during the life of this Plan a minimum two additional multi-purpose community centres, a flexible community space (within the Heddon Greta/Cliftleigh area), construction and/or expansion of three libraries, construction of an indoor recreation sports hall and preschool/childcare facilities in all four planning areas, the approximate construction cost is \$21,000,000 (see section 5.2 for cost breakdowns per facility type and assumes each preschool/childcare facility is licensed for 50 places). In addition the fit out costs for these new facilities are estimated to be \$12,500,000. Note: some of these facilities and their required funds have already been secured via Voluntary Planning Agreements or Section 94 Agreements (see section 6.4.1 for more information). Voluntary Planning Agreements or Section 94 Agreements as a funding source can only be used for community facilities that are required as a consequence of development/s which increase population. In terms of land acquisition costs, under this Plan, already owned Council land is considered along with land negotiated as part of new residential land development.

In addition to the above facilities, is the potential requirement for further early childhood facilities to be provided by Council across the Cessnock Local Government Area if service levels are not met by the private sector. It is estimated that a 50 place child care facility costs (construction only) approximately \$762,750. Likewise, if an additional multi-purpose community centre were to be developed in the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area, for example due to the current neighbourhood centre activities being relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, a new facility is estimated to cost \$1,962,000. Please note that this cost could be less if Council were to use an existing building and readapt its use as a multi-purpose community space. For example, an option is proposed within this Plan (outlined on page 108) which explores the current Cessnock Library site as a future multi-purpose community centre. This scenario is proposed given that the Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 identifies that the existing Cessnock Library facility requires an expanded space and its current site may be restricted in terms of expansion opportunities.

Resourcing the Plan for Both New Infrastructure and Revitalised Precincts

To action the Plan, it is important to consider how it will be resourced. Aligning the Plan's action strategies with Council's future four year Delivery Plans, annual Operational Plan and long term financial plan is essential. This ensures the Plan is embedded within Council's long term strategic planning process and remains a strategic goal of Cessnock City Council.

In supporting future sustainable growth, this Plan recognises that it is not financially viable in the long term to maintain and own a large number of single purpose facilities. It is noted within the Plan that Council owns many single purpose facilities. If Council deems any of these facilities surplus to need and sells them, the funds from such sales should be used to assist in the resourcing of new or expanded community infrastructure.

Voluntary Planning Agreements and/or Section 94 Contributions are another funding source for new or expanded community facilities. Other opportunities to resource the Plan include both state and federal government grants and partnerships with government or non-government organisations. To assist with ongoing maintenance of community buildings, Council should continue to consider income generating models which include social enterprise, co-location with commercial and/or residential premises along with appropriate hire and lease fees or sale of floor space.

It should also be noted that the not for profit sector and the private sector also provide a range of community facilities within the Local Government Area and include for example early childhood services, medical centres, residential aged care and indoor leisure centres (for instance the Cessnock PCYC facility). The private and not for profit sector also have a role in actioning the Plan and should be encouraged to construct facilities in accordance with the Plan's findings.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to strategically consider future community facility needs across the Cessnock Local Government Area and for such planning to be considerate of expected population growth up until 2031.

Cessnock City Council is aware that the Local Government Area's population is expected to considerably increase within the near future. The 2011 Census recorded a population of 50,840 people. By 2031, the resident population within the Cessnock Local Government Area is expected to reach at minimum 68,364 to a maximum of 101,987 people. Given this expected population growth it is important for Council to strategically plan and ensure the adequate availability of key community facilities.

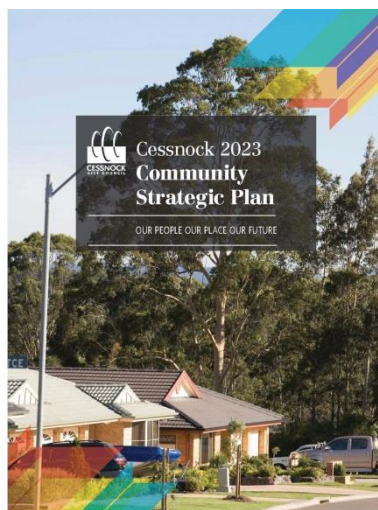
At the time of developing the Plan, Council owned or was the Reserve Trust Manager for numerous buildings including fifteen community halls, two neighbourhood centres (both located in multi-purpose centres), one youth centre, eleven early childhood facilities, two buildings utilised solely by aged and disability services, two libraries (one co-located with a neighbourhood/community centre) one art gallery space, a performing arts centre, two cultural centres and one indoor recreation facility. It is important to note that although Council may be the owner or Reserve Trust Manager of these facilities, it does not necessarily mean that it is also the operator. Where such situations occur, the facility is either managed by a Section 355 Committee comprising volunteers or Council has in place either a lease or a license agreement with external organisations, and independent of Council, services are delivered from the facility.

In addition to Council providing community facilities, the state government, the not for profit sector and the private sector all provide and own community facilities within the Cessnock Local Government Area. All facilities irrespective of their ownership are important community assets and provide a key role in meeting the social, welfare, cultural, arts and health needs of the community. As a result, all facilities irrespective of ownership will be considered providing they fall within the definition of a community facility as listed in section 1.3.

1.2 Relationship to Cessnock City Council's Strategic Planning Documents

The Plan has been developed to action outcomes of the 'Cessnock 2023'; the Community Plan for the Cessnock Local Government Area.

In developing Cessnock 2023, Council undertook a comprehensive program of community consultation activities. As an outcome, Cessnock 2023 is categorised into five broad priority areas. One of the five priority areas is for 'A Connected, Safe and Creative Community'. This priority area lists an objective to 'Develop a strategic plan for social welfare and community facility needs across the Local Government Area' (objective 1.2.2).



In addition to Cessnock 2023, other Cessnock City Council Plans were consulted and have assisted in developing this Plan's action strategies. The Plans consulted include:-

- Cessnock CBD Masterplan (2012)
- Aquatic Needs Analysis (2014)
- Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024
- Early Childhood Care and Pre School Services: An Analysis of Current and Future Services within the Cessnock Local Government Area (2014)
- The Provision of Residential Aged Care Services and Care Packages within the Cessnock Local Government Area (2014)
- Cessnock Local Government Area Economic Development Strategy (2014)
- Asset Management Strategy 2011 – 2020
- Draft Asset Management Plan (Buildings)
- General Community Use (Community Facilities) Plan of Management
- Draft Engineering Guidelines for Construction (2013)
- Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (2009)
- City Wide Settlement Strategy (2010)
- The recently expired Social and Cultural Plan (2009-2014); Places, Spaces and Faces

1.3 Definition of Community Facilities

Community facilities play an important role in bringing people together, connecting communities and encouraging active living. For the purpose of this Plan, community facilities are defined as indoor spaces used to engage people in social, welfare, cultural, arts or healthy lifestyle related activities and programs. In keeping with this definition the Plan will consider the following types of community facilities;

- community halls
- multi-purpose community centres
- youth centres
- early childhood facilities, including preschool, child care and dedicated play group spaces
- indoor recreation facilities
- spaces for seniors and disability programs
- public art gallery spaces
- performing arts centre
- civic centres
- libraries
- cultural centres
- museums
- residential aged care services (see note below)
- general practitioner medical services (see note below)

Note:

The Discussion Paper 'Provision of Residential Aged Care Services and Care Packages within the Cessnock Local Government Area' identified by 2031 the population for people aged 70 years and over is expected to grow by 95%. Additionally, within the Cessnock Local Government Area medical practitioner services have historically experienced a shortage and when compared to state averages, the area has a higher incidence of many concerning health issues. Given these matters, residential aged care services and general practitioner medical services are discussed in the Plan.

1.4 2031: Strategic Vision for Future Community Facilities

The Cessnock Local Government Area will have strategically located, accessible and sustainable facilities that are multi-purpose in design, and will be places to connect communities, promote community wellbeing and engagement.

1.5 Principles for Future Community Facilities

- Community facilities will offer services that meet the needs of the community.
- Community facilities will be designed to require minimal maintenance, be environmentally sustainable along with financially viable to operate.
- Community facilities will be multi-purpose, offer flexible spaces and accommodate a variety of activities.
- Community facilities will be co-located with other community infrastructure and/or community spaces.
- Community facilities will be safe places that set a precedent within the local area for high-quality design.
- Community facilities will be designed to align with the community's local identity.
- Community facilities will be equitable and strategically located across the Cessnock Local Government Area planning areas.
- Community facilities will be managed in consultation and in partnership with key local organisations, not for profit organisations and community groups.

1.6 Current Community Facilities

As identified below, there are at least 17 different types of community facilities within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Of the 106 community facilities, Council is owner or Reserve Trust Manager for 40 of these facilities.

Please note: the Appendix in Section 10 identifies the location of the facilities owned by Cessnock City Council and facilities where Council is the Reserve Trust Manager.

Facility Type	Description	Total within LGA	Council Owned	Service Area Catchment of Facility
Community Halls	Unstaffed hall facilities that provide space for meetings, events, functions and activities. Note: The Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall has been counted as both a community hall and indoor recreation centre.	23* (at least)	15*	Local Township and/or Village
Early Childhood Facilities	Services that provide formal education and/or care of children including preschools, day care and vacation care.	21	9*	Local Township and/or Village
Playgroup	Facilities that provide play group activities for young children.	2	2	Local Township and/or Village
Education	Facilities such as public and private primary and secondary schools and TAFE.	31	0	Ranges from Local Township and/or Village to Entire LGA
Youth Centre	Dedicated spaces where youth based activities are undertaken.	3	1	Planning Area Hub ¹
Multi-purpose Community Centre	A facility with multiple functions and spaces that can be adapted to the needs of the community. Within the facility, neighbourhood centre type activities are often included.	2	2	Planning Area Hub ¹
Men's Shed/Community Sheds	A facility that provides an opportunity to engage, share skills, participate in programs and learn.	3	0	Planning Area Hub ¹
Indoor Recreation Facility	A public indoor facility that provides spaces for health, fitness and recreation activities and includes PCYC programs. Note: The Greta Arts and Sports Hall has been counted as both a community hall and indoor sports centre.	3*	2*	Planning Area Hub ¹
Medical Practitioner Services	A facility that provides general medical practitioner services and allied health services.	multiple	0	Planning Area Hub ¹
Cultural Centre	A facility where people can engage, participate and showcase arts, crafts and hobbies.	5	5	Planning Area Hub ¹
Library	Facilities that provide library services.	2	2	Planning Area Hub ¹ /Entire LGA
Aboriginal Neighbourhood Centre	A facility that provides neighbourhood centre type activities to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community.	1	0	Entire LGA
Aged and Disability Services	Facilities such as day care centres and services that deliver federal and state government home and community care programs.	3 (at least)	2	Entire LGA
Health	Facilities that provide health services and includes hospitals and community health centres.	4	0	Entire LGA
Art Gallery	Facilities with a prime focus on providing opportunities for artists to display art work.	1	1	Entire LGA
Museum	A facility used to exhibit historical, artistic objects or other items of cultural interest.	2	1*	Entire LGA
Performing Arts Centre	A facility that provides space for theatre based cultural performances and events.	1	1	Entire LGA and Neighbouring LGA's
TOTAL		106*	40*	

*Note: A facility has been counted twice given its multi-function use. However within the 'Total' it is counted as 1 facility only.

¹ For a definition of planning area hub, see section 1.7 (overleaf).

1.7 Community Planning Hubs

The Cessnock Local Government Area comprises over 50 townships and villages. This includes both gazetted suburbs and those that are for example, informally defined given a local or historical context. Given the limitations of smaller rural locality data (in terms of population size and the development of an analytical Community Profile), Census results within this Plan will be grouped into four geographical planning areas.

In determining these four planning areas, consultation occurred with service providers from the Cessnock Local Area Planning Team. The Cessnock Local Area Planning Team (now dissolved) was a consultative group with membership comprising local welfare, health and social service providers. The Cessnock Local Area Planning Team when preparing for the 2011 Census Release (at that time) considered how best to represent the social profile on the Cessnock City Council website. Matters that were considered from a community planning perspective in determining a preferred geography included public transport routes and connections within and external to the Cessnock Local Government Area, access and proximity to community services and recreation facilities and likely nearest commercial centre. In adapting this consultation process to this Plan, four wider geographical areas were later determined.

As a result, these four community planning areas are:-

- Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area
Includes Kitchener, Kearsley, Quorrobolong, Lovedale, Pokolbin
- Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area
Includes Neath, Abermain, Weston, Mulbring, Heddon Greta and Cliftleigh
- Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area
Includes North Rothbury
- Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West
Includes Ellalong and Bucketty

In considering the four planning areas, the 2011 Census results indicate that the highest concentration of population within the Cessnock Local Government Area was attributed to the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. The second most populated planning area was the combination of Kurri Kurri, Weston and Abermain followed by Greta, Branxton, East Branxton and North Rothbury. The rural west area comprising Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi, Laguna and surrounding villages was the least populated planning area.

To understand better the geography, in particular the four community planning areas that will be used throughout this Plan, the map overleaf may be of assistance. Recommendations made within the Plan will be considered from the perspective of each of the four planning areas.

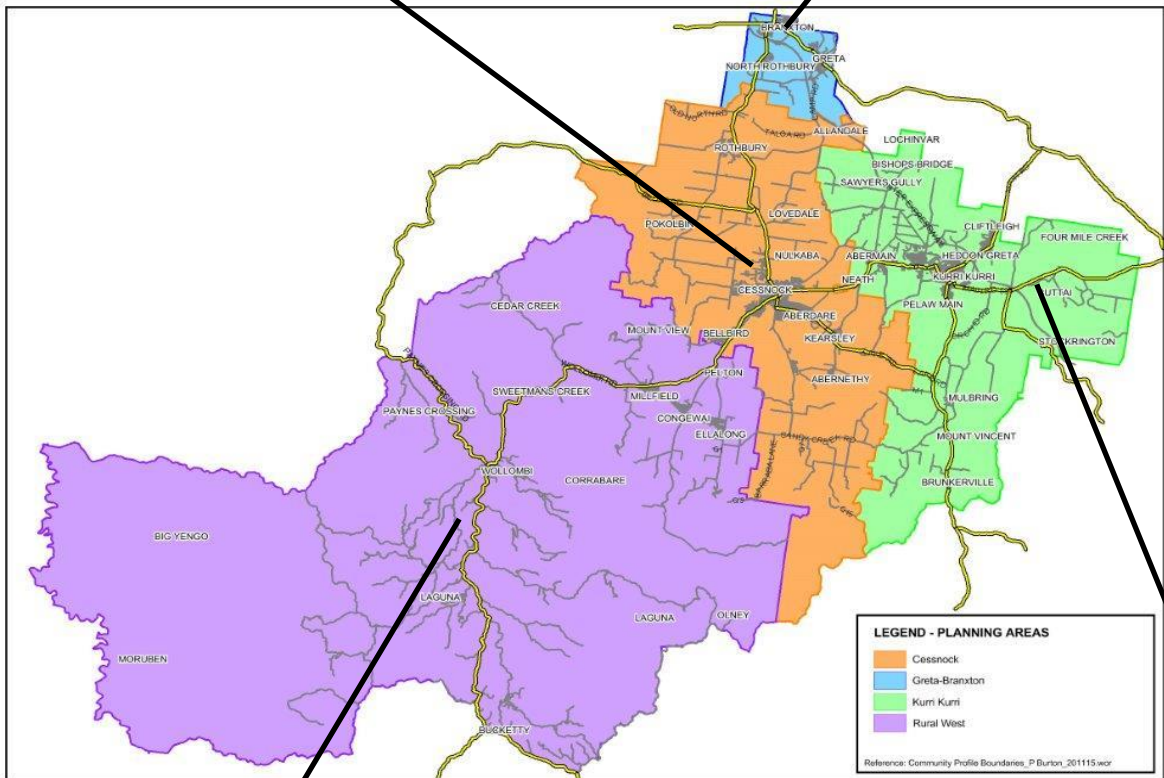
Overview of Community Planning Hubs and Key Demographics

Cessnock and Surrounds

- Total Population = 22,505
- Median Age = 41years
- Average Household Size = 2.6 people
- Total Population Growth between Census Years 2006 and 2011 = 1,405

Branxton – East Branxton – Greta – North Rothbury and Surrounds

- Total Population = 5,937
- Median Age = 33 years
- Average Household Size = 2.8 people
- Total Population Growth between Census Years 2006 and 2011 = 1,283



Millfield – Paxton – Ellalong Wollombi – Laguna and Surrounds

- Total Population = 3,851
- Median Age = 44 years
- Average Household Size = 2.4 people
- Total Population Growth between Census Years 2006 and 2011 = 383

Kurri Kurri, Abermain, Weston and Surrounds

- Total Population = 17,954
- Median Age = 38 years
- Average Household Size = 2.7 people
- Total Population Growth between Census Years 2006 and 2011 = 1,104

Please note: Of the 50,840 population recorded at 2011 Census, 593 people did not identify a location.

SECTION TWO
Community Profile



2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

2.1 The Age Profile and its Relationship to Lifecycle Stages

The age profile of residents within the Cessnock Local Government Area can provide key insights into the level of demand for services and facilities. Through the identification of an age profile, the population can be distributed into categories which are somewhat reflective of typical life-stages. Age categories can provide a good indication of the level of demand for services at different lifecycle stages and can also demonstrate, via the use of timeline data, how that demand is changing. In demonstrating this, the below table provides an overview of the age profile and is grouped from the perspective of key service age groups and associated typical life stages. Furthermore, Census data for 2006 and 2011 is compared.

Age Profile - Service Age Groups							
Cessnock Local Government Area	2011			2006			Change
Service Age Group (years)	Number	%	Regional NSW %	Number	%	Regional NSW %	2006 to 2011
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	3,803	7.5	6.3	3,032	6.6	6.1	+771
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	4,861	9.6	9.0	4,856	10.5	9.7	+5
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	4,316	8.5	8.2	4,176	9.0	8.8	+140
Tertiary education & independence (18 to 24)	4,402	8.7	8.1	3,864	8.4	8.0	+538
Young workforce (25 to 34)	6,266	12.3	10.4	5,555	12.0	10.8	+711
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	9,967	19.6	19.5	9,698	21.0	20.9	+269
Older workers & pre-retirees (50 to 59)	6,821	13.4	13.9	6,310	13.7	13.6	+511
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	5,629	11.1	11.9	4,219	9.1	10.3	+1,410
Seniors (70 to 84)	3,912	7.7	10.3	3,776	8.2	9.8	+136
Elderly aged (85 and over)	863	1.7	2.3	713	1.5	1.9	+150
Total Population	50,840	100.0	100.0	46,199	100.0	100.0	+4,641

The age profile suggests that the Cessnock Local Government Area when compared to Regional New South Wales has a higher percentage of younger population groups. For instance, the Cessnock Local Government Area has:-

- Larger percentage of 'babies and pre-schoolers' (0 to 4 years) (7.5% compared to 6.3%)
- Larger percentage of 'primary schoolers' (5 to 11 years) (9.6% compared to 9.0%)
- Larger percentage of 'tertiary education and independence' (18 to 24 years) (8.7% compared to 8.1%)
- Larger percentage of 'young workforce' (25 to 34 years) (12.3% compared to 10.4%)

When compared to Regional NSW, the Cessnock Local Government Area has a lower percentage of people in the older age groups. For instance, the Cessnock Local Government Area has:-

- Smaller percentage of 'empty nesters and retirees' (60 to 69 years) (11.1% compared to 11.9%)
- Smaller percentage of 'seniors' (70 to 84 years) (7.7% compared to 10.3%)
- Smaller percentage of 'elderly aged' (85 years and over) (1.7% compared to 2.3%)

When comparing 2006 Census with 2011 Census, the Cessnock Local Government Area population increased by 4,641 people or an approximate growth of 9.65%. This represents an average annual population growth of 1.9% during the five year Census period, suggesting that the Cessnock Local Government Area is a fast growing community. Note: the annual population growth for Australia was 1.6% and 1.1% for New South Wales between Census Years 2006 and 2011.

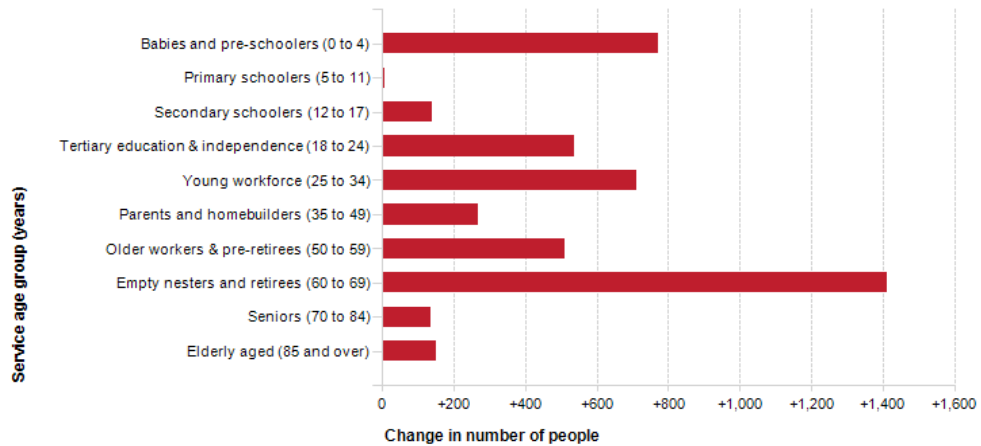
In understanding further this population growth, the largest increase in service age groups within the Cessnock Local Government Area between Census 2006 and 2011 were:-

- 'Babies and pre-schoolers' (0 to 4 years) (+771 persons)
- 'Tertiary education & independence' (18 to 24 years) (+538 persons)
- Young workforce'(25 to 34 years) (+711 persons)
- 'Empty nesters and retirees' (60 to 69 years) (+1,410 persons)

The following chart provides an overview of change in age structure between Census Years 2006 and 2011.

Change in age structure, 2006 to 2011

Cessnock City



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



2.2 Total Population Growth within the Planning Areas

Of the total population growth between Census Years 2006 and 2011 (n = 4,641) 4,175 people identified their full residence when completing the Census and hence were recorded as residing in one of the four identified planning areas. In undertaking an analysis of population growth data, it is identified that in the five year period 2006 to 2011, the planning area Greta, Branxton, East Branxton and surrounds grew by 27% (+ 1,283 people). Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi, Laguna and the Rural West grew by 10.7% (+ 383 people) and the planning areas of Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and their surrounds equally grew by 7% (or + 1,405 and +1,104 respectively).

2.3 Median Age for Planning Areas

The Age Profile suggests that the Cessnock Local Government Area has a relatively young population, with the average median age being 37 years. In comparison, Regional New South Wales recorded a slightly higher median age at 41 years.

When considering the median age within the four planning areas, Kurri Kurri and its surrounds recorded a median age of 38 years, which is close to the average median age of the Cessnock Local Government Area. Cessnock and its surrounds, recorded a higher median age at 41 years and Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and surrounds recorded an even higher median age at 44 years. In assessing the median age within each of the four planning areas, it is determined that the Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury areas had a much younger median age at 33 years. Given this data, an assumption could be made that this planning area is attractive for people who are in the lifecycle years of 'Young Workforce' and 'Parents and Homebuilders'.

2.4 Number of Households

Of the 17,098 households within the Cessnock Local Government Area, the planning area of Cessnock and surrounds had 7,006. Kurri Kurri and its surrounding townships had 6,822 households and the Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area had 2,139. Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi, Laguna and surrounds recorded 1,131 households.

2.5 Average Household Size

The planning area for Cessnock and its surrounds recorded 2.6 people per dwelling which is identical to the Cessnock Local Government Area average. Kurri Kurri and surrounds recorded a slightly higher average of 2.7 people per dwelling.

In building a social profile for the four planning areas within the Cessnock Local Government Area, the assumption that Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury is an attractive locality for young families is also evident when considering data for average household size. For instance, this planning area recorded an average of 2.8 people per dwelling. This is higher when compared to all four planning areas.

On the reverse side, Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and surrounds recorded the least number at 2.4 people per dwelling. At first glance this result combined with a higher median age could suggest that this community is ageing. However, it is acknowledged that Ellalong, Paxton and Millfield have a demography distinct from Wollombi, Laguna and Bucketty. For example, in analysing the social profile results further, it was found that the townships of Millfield, Paxton and Ellalong are attractive to 'parents and homebuilders' (35 to 49 years) and have a younger population when compared to Wollombi, Laguna and its surrounds whereby 'older workers and pre-retirees' (50 to 59 years) are more prevalent.

2.6 Income

An analysis of household income in the Cessnock Local Government Area as at Census 2011 compared to Regional New South Wales shows that there was a larger proportion of high income households (those earning \$2,500 per week or more) and a lower proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$600 per week). Overall, 13.8% of the households earned a high income and 25.5% were low income households, compared with 11.3% and 27.2% respectively for Regional NSW.

When understanding high levels of household income within each planning area, 21% of households in Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury earn over \$2,500 per week. The Cessnock and surrounds planning area comprised 17% of households. Paxton, Millfield, Wollombi and Rural West area had 15% and the Kurri Kurri planning area had 11%.

In terms of low levels of household income within each small planning area, 30% of households within the Cessnock planning area earn less than \$600 per week as did 28% in Paxton, Millfield,

Wollombi and the Rural West area. The Kurri Kurri planning area had 25% of households and 15% within Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury and surrounds.

Weekly household income, 2011



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 (Enumerated data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



2.7 Migration into the Cessnock Local Government Area

Between the 2006 and 2011 Census years, it was identified that the net migration into the Cessnock Local Government Area was 1,570 people. Of these people, 275 or 18% were aged 5 to 11 years. This result most likely links to net migration for the 'young workforce' (25 to 34 years) and 'parents and homebuilders' (34 to 49 years) whereby the result was 1,056 people or 67% migrating into the Cessnock Local Government Area. Please note that migration data is not available for children aged 0 to 4 years.

Of the net migration figure of 1,570 people, approximately 50% came from the neighbouring Local Government Areas namely Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton. Interestingly, the Cessnock Local Government Area has a higher rate of unemployment when compared to all of these neighbouring Local Government Areas. For instance, the unemployment rates as at December 2015 for Cessnock was 14.2%, Singleton 7%, Lake Macquarie 6.4%, Maitland 9.2%, Muswellbrook 12.3% and Newcastle 7.2% (source: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Small Area Labour Markets – December Quarter 2015).

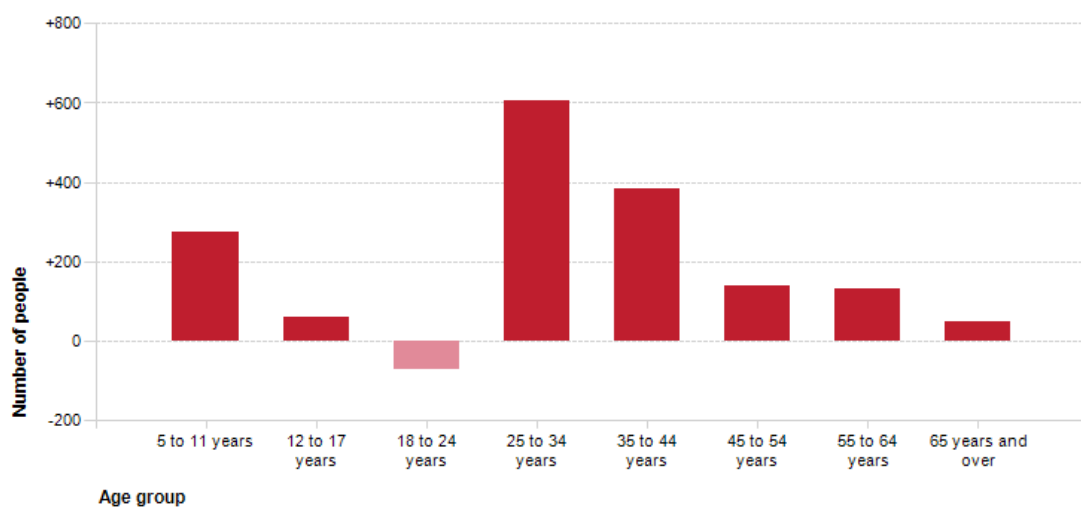
Given this, a potential factor in relocating to the Cessnock Local Government Area may not necessarily be attributed to solely securing local employment opportunities, but could also have a relationship to affordable housing options. In comparison to the neighbouring Local Government Areas, which are all geographically close in proximity, the Cessnock Local Government Area could be perceived as having affordable house prices. For example, at the time of preparing the Plan,

the average house price for the Cessnock Local Government Area was lower when compared to neighbouring Local Government Areas. It may be plausible that the proximity of the Cessnock Local Government Area to high employment areas within the Hunter, combined with (somewhat perceived) more affordable house prices has attracted over the recent 5 year period, increased numbers of families wishing to relocate to an affordable area.

The below chart provides an overview of net migration between Census Years 2006 and 2011.

Net migration by age group 2011

Cessnock City



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 (Usual residents data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



SECTION THREE 2031: Population Projections



Above: Interior of Cessnock Performing Arts Centre

3. POPULATION PROJECTIONS

3.1 Population Projections for 2031

Population projections can be of some assistance in forecasting the potential service needs of future communities. Despite the best attempts to accurately forecast using sound methodology, it must be advised that there are many variables and hence projections may not always be a reliable indicator. Given this, please note that the below population projections within this section are a guide only.

The City Wide Settlement Strategy (2010) advises that by 2031, the Cessnock Local Government Area total population could be approximately 76,000 people. However, if the average 1.9% per annum growth that was experienced by the Cessnock Local Government Area between Census Years 2006 and 2011 were applied through until 2031, the total population would be around 70,000 people.

The Department of Planning in 2014 issued data projecting that the Cessnock Local Government Area population in 2031 could be 66,400. Please note: the Department of Planning population projection does not take into consideration new residential land rezoning.

When considering land rezoning and residential development within the Cessnock Local Government Area, the revised projected population estimated by Cessnock City Council as at 2014 for the year 2031, is a minimum population of 68,364 people and a maximum population of 101,987 people. The section below provides an overview for how this forecast was calculated.

3.2 Population Projection Methodology and Findings

Using the available demographic information it is possible to implement a methodology that could assist to forecast a Cessnock Local Government Area population to a twenty year projection (2031) for each of the four community planning areas. To do this, the following indicators have been used:-

- Estimated current population as at Census 2011.
- Percentage of population within each of the four planning areas.
- An estimate of where future population growth may be evident, according to proposed urban release areas documented in the City Wide Settlement Strategy.
- Average household size of the Cessnock Local Government Area.
- Average age expectancy.

The table indicates the projected population change between Census 2011 and 2031 within the four community planning areas and considers residential land rezoning.

	Planning Area Definition as at 2011 Population	Census 2011 Population	Projected 2031 Population	Projected 2031 Population
			Minimum Growth	Maximum Growth
Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area	Regional Hub Multiple neighbourhoods located within an area that is identified as the major centre for residents within the Local Government Area. The population indicator would be 20,000 or more people.	22,505	28,720	40,263
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	Sub Regional Township Townships located near to each other with a total combined population between 10,000 and 20,000 people.	17,954	20,877	26,305
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area	Mid-Sized Township Neighbourhoods located near to each other comprising a total combined population of 5,000 people to 10,000 people.	5,937	14,017	29,000
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Small Rural Village Small rural villages comprising a population of up to 5,000 people.	3,851	4,750	6,419
TOTAL		50,247	68,364²	101,987²

² Source: Cessnock City Council, Community Planning Unit (current as at August 2015).

3.3 Key Population Projections by 2031 – A Summary

- The Department of Planning advises by 2031 the Cessnock Local Government Area population is projected to be 66,400 people³. This represents a total growth of 24% from Census 2011 population data. However, Cessnock City Council estimates the minimum growth to be slightly higher at 68,364 people with a maximum growth of 101,987 people.
- Given past trends for the Cessnock Local Government Area, it is likely to continue being an attractive place for families to relocate. Hence, it is important that early childhood services and facilities for young people are considered and well planned. For instance, it is expected that children aged 0 to 4 years will increase by 26%, or rather an additional 1,426 children³. For children aged less than 15 years the increase is expected to be 26%, or rather an additional 2,950 children³. Please note: these increases could be greater, as the Department of Planning population projection does not necessarily take into account new residential land rezoning.
- People aged between 15 to 64 years will increase by 13.7%, an additional 4,700 people³. Please note: this increase could be greater, as the Department of Planning population projection does not necessarily take into account new residential land rezoning.
- People aged 65 years and over will increase by 100%, an approximate growth of 7,250 additional people³. In meeting the needs of this population group, the local government area is likely to require increased aged services.
- The Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning area is earmarked for considerable population growth and is expected to transition from a mid-sized township to a sub-regional township. This area will require considerable community infrastructure development and/or revitalisation. Types of community infrastructure that will be required within this locality include a multi-purpose community centre, library, increased early childhood services and youth space.
- Infrastructure development such as the Hunter Expressway is likely to attract an increased population to townships located near to entry/exit ramps such as the Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area and Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and surrounds planning area.

³ Source: *Your Future New South Wales to 2031: Population, Household and Dwelling Projections*, (NSW Government, Planning and Infrastructure).

SECTION FOUR

Community Infrastructure

Current Situation & Future Community Facility Needs



Above: Exterior of Branxton Community Pre School

4 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE - CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS

The aim of this section is to ensure that facilities are strategically planned for and appropriately placed within the Cessnock Local Government Area. It also aims to ensure that community facility requirements match community needs for the locality. Within this section, recommendations are made from the perspective that the facility predominantly services either a neighbourhood/village, planning area, or rather services multiple planning areas and therefore is an area wide facility, for example services the entire Local Government Area.

Methodology of the Plan in Determining Community Infrastructure Needs

In determining the recommendations for each type of community facility, the following methodology has been used:-

- An analysis of the demographic profile for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and the planning areas within.
- Review of current Cessnock City Council strategic plans that discuss community infrastructure requirements.
- Application of community planning benchmark standards and population ratios. As a result, a minimum and maximum range is provided for most community facilities.
- Key stakeholder consultation findings.
- Population forecasting for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and the planning areas within for 2031 and is listed in the below table.
- An understanding of current community facilities including their location, the services they provide, ownership details (i.e Council as owner or Council as Reserve Trust Manager) and asset condition.

Planning Area	Projected 2031 Total Population	Projected 2031 Total Population
	Minimum Growth	Maximum Growth
Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area	28,720	40,263
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	20,877	26,305
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area	14,017	29,000
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	4,750	6,419
TOTAL	68,364⁴	101,987⁴

For early childhood services, a benchmark standard using two ratio methods was calculated. These were the generic per total population range and secondly the calculation which uses a 0 to 4 years population (see section 4.1). The population forecast for 2031 for children aged 0 to 4 years is listed in the below table.

Planning Area	Projected 2031 Population for 0-4 Years
Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area	2,677
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	2,070
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area	1,660
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	449
TOTAL	6,856⁴

⁴ Source: Cessnock City Council, Community Planning Unit

4.1 Early Childhood Facilities

Definition

Early childhood services are defined as those which provide formal education and/or care of young children and include preschools and long day care.

Community Planning Standards

Widely accepted community planning standards suggest the following benchmarks,

- Child Care Centre required for every 4,000 to 8,000 population or 1 place for every 5 to 7 children aged 0 to 4 years.
- Pre School facility required for every 3,000 to 5,000 population or 1 place for every 5 to 7 children aged 0 to 4 years.

Please note: These standards are based on the provision of actual facilities/centres. Given this, Family Day Care services (since they operate from residential homes) are omitted from this Plan. Also, benchmark standards could not be located for playgroups, nor out of school hours care.

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, there were over 25 early childhood services including centre based child care, family day care, pre-school, occasional care, vacation care and other ancillary services.

Council itself is a stakeholder in the provision of early childhood services and historically has provided these facilities in the absence of the not for profit sector or commercial market. Council owns and or is the Reserve Trust Manager of a total 9 pre-school and child care facilities (including out of school hours and vacation care) and 2 playgroup facilities. These early childhood facilities are located on land that is either owned by Cessnock City Council or Council is the Reserve Trust Manager of the facility. Note: The Discussion Paper 'Early Childhood Care and Pre School Services: An analysis of Current and Future Services within the Cessnock Local Government Area (2014)' lists these facilities, including facility size and number of licensed places. In recent times, the private sector has been active in expanding early childhood facilities in some planning areas.

The list below identifies number of facilities per planning area (irrespective of ownership).

Dedicated Pre School Facilities	
(Total Number = 10)	
Planning Area	Number of Facilities
Cessnock and Surrounds	6
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds	2
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	2
Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi	0

Please Note: The Mobile Pre School service utilises three shared community facilities (for example, halls) in Millfield, Mulbring and the previous Wollombi Public School. Given this, and for the

purpose of this Plan, these facilities are not counted in the above table given they are not dedicated facilities for the sole purpose of providing pre-school services. They are however included when discussing number of licensed places.

Dedicated Centre Based Child Care Facilities	
(Total Number = 9)	
<i>Please Note: Some services offer a Pre School Program</i>	
Planning Area	Number of Facilities
Cessnock and Surround Planning Area	3
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	4
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury Planning Area	2
Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi Planning Area	0

Other Dedicated Facilities	
(Total Number = 6)	
Planning Area	Number of Facilities
Cessnock and Surround Planning Area	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koe Nara – Schools as Community 	
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Prelude Early Intervention Centre • Kurri Kurri Playgroup • Out of School Hours and Vacation Care (operates from the Kurri Kurri Ambulance Practice Hall and Council is the Reserve Trust Manager) • Lower Hunter Temporary Care – Kurri Kurri (Vacation Care for children with a Disability) 	
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury Planning Area	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branxton Playgroup (operates from a Council owned facility) 	
Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi Planning Area	0

Application of Community Planning Standards

Licensed Places

At the time of developing the Plan, the Cessnock Local Government Area had approximately 940 licensed places. Of these, 800 were centre based places and 140 places were in private homes (family day care model).

When applying the standard of 1 centre based place for every 5 to 7 children aged 0 to 4 years (includes pre-school, child care and occasional care places, but excludes family day care), it suggests that the Local Government Area should have a minimum of 550 to a maximum of 770 licensed places. This result could indicate that the number of centre based licensed places within the Local Government Area (n=800) exceeds the suggested standard by at least 30 places.

Number of Facilities

In relation to the standard for number of child care facilities per total population (as opposed to applying the licensed places standard), it suggests the Local Government Area should have at least 6 to 12 facilities. The result of 9 child care facilities within the Local Government Area falls within mid-range of the standards.

When applying the standard for pre-school facilities, the benchmark suggests a range of 10 to 17 facilities. The Local Government Area recorded 10 which is towards the lower end of the range however is still within accepted planning standards.

Application of Standards to the Planning Areas

The following table identifies the application of community planning standards in respect to the four planning areas. It demonstrates that within the Cessnock Local Government Area, some planning areas are likely experiencing shortages for licensed places (includes both pre-school and child care programs) whilst other areas may have a surplus.

Defined Geography (Population as at Census 2011)	Application of Community Planning Standards as at 2011 Census	2031 Requirement
Cessnock and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 9 Total Licensed Places = 321 Result: At least 7 facilities and a maximum of 13 should be provided within the planning area or 229 to 320 licensed places. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require an increase of at least 153 to 215 licensed places.
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 6 Total Licensed Places = 313 Result: At least 6 to 10 facilities should be provided within the planning area or 190 to 260 licensed places. SURPLUS OF LICENSED PLACES	The planning area would require an increase of at least 52 to 101 licensed places.
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Existing Number of Facilities = 4 Total Licensed Places = 126 Result: At least 2 to 4 facilities should be provided within the planning area or 87 to 121 licensed places. SURPLUS OF LICENSED PLACES – HOWEVER EXPANSION REQUIRED (SEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER EXPLANATION))	The planning area would require an increase of at least 166 to 227 licensed places.
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Existing Number of Facilities = 0* Total Licensed Places = 40 (Pre-school only and is a visiting service to Millfield and Wollombi) Result: A mobile preschool service visits Wollombi and Millfield. At least 37 to 51 licensed places are required. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS FOR PRE SCHOOL SERVICES ONLY	This planning area will require an increase of at least 27 to 39 licensed places. A permanent minimum 50 place early childhood facility is recommended for construction within this Plan.

Recommendations by 2031

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Areas

Within the planning document, 'Early Childhood Care and Pre School Services: An Analysis of Current and Future Services within the Cessnock Local Government Area'(Cessnock City Council, 2014), a lack of long day care services for children aged 0 to 3 years was an issue being experienced and with population growth could be further exacerbated. It was recommended within that planning document that service enhancement occur for long day care and in particular be targeted to children aged 0 to 3 years.

The review noted that the eastern side of the Central Cessnock planning area does not have an early childhood facility. Population growth is expected within that locality given land rezoning has occurred in the previous five years. It is essential that all future residential releases within this eastern locality and the entire planning area consider the implication and need for early childhood service development. It should be mentioned that the Bellbird North residential land release includes as part of its planning contribution the construction of a new early childhood facility.

Please Note: During late 2014 and mid-2015, two approvals were granted to the private sector for a 128 licensed place centre at Wine Country Drive, Lovedale and a 104 licensed place centre at Vincent Street, Cessnock. At the time of drafting this Plan, both centres had not commenced construction.

Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Areas

In undertaking an analysis of pre-schools and child care services within the Kurri Kurri and Surrounds planning area, it is believed that the required number of pre-schools and child care facilities currently exceed the suggested planning standards. Given this, and based on current population, service expansion in the immediate future is not required. However service growth should be further determined in situations where residential land rezoning is proposed.

In terms of planning for future growth, two planning approvals have been granted for the release of approximately 2,000 residential lots of land (approximately 5,000 people) within the Heddon Greta and Cliftleigh areas. These two land releases make provision for early childhood service expansion and this includes a centre earmarked for construction at Cliftleigh and a contribution to increase the number of licensed places within the planning area. This service expansion combined with current service availability, places this planning area in a good position to meet the needs of the community over the life of this Plan (assuming both developments proceed as per their proposal).

Additionally and at the time of drafting this Plan, the owners of the previous 'Hydro' aluminium manufacturing plant were intending to seek residential land rezoning for up to 1,900 lots. Of these lots, approximately 1,300 could be located within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Requirements for early childhood services will need to be reviewed as part of the assessment process.

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and Surrounds Planning Areas

The analysis of pre-school and child care services for the planning area has found that the number of facilities and licensed places is within accepted standards. However for this planning area, the neighbouring townships that fall within Singleton and Maitland City Council areas also need to be considered when determining early childhood service needs. For example, townships that need to be considered include Leconfield, Dalwood, Lambs Valley, Stanhope, Elderslie, Lower Belford and Lochinvar. As at Census 2011, these rural localities had a total population of 104 children aged 0 to 4 years. Furthermore, these townships often use both Greta and Branxton to access early childhood services. If these additional 104 children are added to the existing population of 606 children (as recorded for this planning area and attributed to the Cessnock Local Government Area) the total population for 0 to 4 years would be 710 children. This would indicate the planning area requires 101 to 142 places (it has 126 places).

It is noted that this planning area has a higher rate of families and a younger median age when compared to Cessnock Local Government Area averages. In comparing the 2006 and 2011 Census periods, it was also the fastest growing planning area within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Given the planning area's social profile and with it providing early childhood services for some rural localities within the Singleton and Maitland Local Government Area's it is determined that immediate service expansion is required for both pre-school and childcare services.

Additionally, in terms of a future population, this planning area is earmarked for considerable growth given the approval of the 'Huntlee' residential land release. It is therefore essential that all future residential release within this planning area consider the implication and need for service expansion for all early childhood services. It should be mentioned that the Huntlee residential land release includes as part of a planning contribution for Stage 1 the construction of an early childhood facility.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounds Planning Areas

Limited early childhood services are available within the planning area apart from the mobile pre-school service and a playgroup in Wollombi. As population grows within this planning area, enhanced service development will be required for early childhood services. It is therefore recommended that as the population grows, service development occur for a combined minimum 50 licensed place early childhood facility that allows for pre-school programs, child care and out of school hours care (including vacation care if at all possible).

Given this future need, it is important that all Planning Proposals for residential urban release consider the needs of families and children in regards to early childhood services. If this is not to occur, the risk will be that the planning area's future population growth will place considerable strain on other early childhood services located within the Local Government Area (most likely Central Cessnock due to proximity). In terms of an appropriate location for a multi-functional early childhood facility the preferred location would be Millfield given its central location to Paxton and Ellalong as well as the Wollombi, Laguna and Bucketty townships.

Section 6.4 of this Plan provides an overview for how community infrastructure which includes early childhood facilities could be funded.

4.2 Multi-Purpose Community Centres

Definition

A multi-purpose community centre is a public space that has multi-functional uses and delivers a wide range of services to many different population groups within the Local Government Area.

Multi-purpose community centres often include combinations of formal meeting and function rooms, community office accommodation, recreation and leisure group activity space, education training rooms and specific purpose activities such as neighborhood activities, youth programs and playgroups. In terms of size, a multi-purpose community centre should be at least 900m² in size.

Please note: a multi-purpose community centre is also often referred to as a neighbourhood centre. Within these guidelines the term 'multi-purpose centre' will be used from this point forward but its definition should also be considered as including neighbourhood centre type activities.

Community Planning Standards

Widely accepted community planning standards suggest that a multi-purpose community centre should be provided for a population of 15,000 to 20,000 people.

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, there were 2 multi-purpose community centres in the Cessnock Local Government Area. These were:-

- Cessnock Performing Arts Centre (has a multi-purpose centre within the facility)
- Kurri Kurri Community Centre

Note: Prior to the construction of the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, a multi-purpose community centre operated at 206 Vincent Street, Cessnock. Services ceased operating from the building in 2009 given their relocation to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The heritage listed building remains vacant.

If the community planning standards for an approximate population of 50,840 people (as was the population at Census 2011) are applied, Cessnock City Council should own between 2 and 3 multi-purpose community centres. At the present time, the number of existing facilities is within the prescribed standards.

Application of Community Planning Standards

The following table identifies up until 2031 the application of community planning standards in respect to when a multi-purpose community centre is required. It also provides a comment as to whether the planning area is within planning standards or alternatively experiencing a gap in service.

Defined Geography (Population as at Census 2011)	Application of Community Planning Standards as at 2011 Census	2031 Requirement
Cessnock and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 1 2011 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require 1 additional facility; however 2 in total may need to be constructed (see recommendations below).
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 1 2011 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require an increase of 0.2 to 0.6 of a facility.
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Existing Number of Facilities = 0 2011 Result: At least 0.3 to 0.4 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require 1 facility.
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Existing Number = 0 2011 Result: At least 0.2 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require 0.3 to 0.4 of a centre. The construction of a facility is not feasible or required.

Recommendations by 2031

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area

Cessnock, by 2031, will require an additional multi-purpose community centre to service not only its planning area population, but also the population attributed to the neighbouring population of Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and surrounds. However, the planning area may require an additional centre.

The reason why two multi-purpose community centres are possibly required when the planning area already has one in existence is due to this Plan's recommendation that the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre by 2031 become a facility which has a key focus in providing arts and cultural services. Given this, Council should commence planning for two new multi-purpose community centres. Preferable locations would be the Cessnock Central Business District for one centre and the Bellbird/Cessnock West area for the second given its proximity to the small rural villages of Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong and the Rural West. The Bellbird North residential development includes the construction of a small neighbourhood community centre (approximately 500m²). This proposed facility in time should be investigated as to whether it could

form part of a staged development as a larger, second multi-purpose community centre (Cessnock City Council's draft design guidelines suggest a floor space of 900m²).

If it were considered feasible that an art gallery space be included within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, the impact would be that the existing neighbourhood centre activities would need to relocate from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre to another premises. Potential opportunities for the neighbourhood centre's relocation could include the occupation of the existing art gallery site (16 Vincent Street, Cessnock), however considerable expansion and modification would be required. A further option could be relocation to the current Cessnock Library site. This option is suggested given the Cessnock Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 makes the observation that the existing Cessnock Library facility is at capacity in terms of space. An opportunity expressed within this Plan is for a new library to be considered for construction on the green space area opposite the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre (see map on page 108). If this were to happen, this could result in the existing Cessnock Library facility becoming vacant. If this proposal were to eventuate, the existing Cessnock Library facility should be investigated as a possible location for a multi-purpose community centre.

Council's draft Engineering Guidelines suggest that a multi-purpose community centre should be at least 900m² in floor space and should:-

1. Directly adjoin other key social and/or commercial infrastructure.
2. Be positioned on a local or collector road and have pedestrian and cycle way connectivity.
3. Be near to existing and/or proposed public transport routes.

It is observed that the existing Cessnock Library facility would meet these initial criteria. Note: the Cessnock Library floor space size is 1070m².

Kurri Kurri and Surrounding Areas

The Kurri Kurri Community Centre building sits on two lots and has a prime location within the township. For example, the facility is near to public transport routes, is co-located with the Kurri Kurri Library and is adjacent to the centrally positioned Kurri Kurri Rotary Park. With the facility's key location, it is recommended that during the life of this Plan, it remain as the key multi-purpose community centre for the planning area. When considering the population growth earmarked for the planning area, it is likely the Kurri Kurri Community Centre (neighbourhood/community centre program area), during the life of this Plan, will continue to have capacity to meet the growth population.

There is the potential to expand the building, given that the rear of the premises Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 (lot size 789m²) is owned by Cessnock City Council. On this lot is car parking and a small brick veneer garage used by the Kurri Kurri Base, Cessnock District VRA Rescue Squad. Strategic consideration is required to further explore if the site can accommodate facility expansion. Prioritising the use of the space will be required given the rear lot size is small. This Plan recommends that the library be the priority for expansion. The rationale for library services being the priority is that, given its smaller footprint size within the existing building when compared to the community centre program area, the existing library is at capacity in terms of space. Given this potential opportunity, this Plan makes the recommendation that the precinct be allocated funding

to develop a master plan. Its purpose should be to explore opportunities for expanding the library facility taking into consideration Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 whilst still achieving co-location with the Kurri Kurri Community Centre.

In developing the Plan, it was noted that there is no multi-purpose community space available within the localities of Cliftleigh or Heddon Greta. These localities are earmarked for population growth and by 2031 the population is projected to be a minimum of 7,500 (includes population projected for Hydro Lands – and is subject to approval). Given the lack of identified community space within the locality, during the life of this plan flexible community space will be required. The size for such space could be a minimum 328m². The required design of such space should be investigated and opportunities for co-location could include for example, the intended child care facility and/or sporting precincts.

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and Surrounding Areas

Council is aware that this planning area is likely to experience considerable growth by 2031 and as a result, could transition from a mid-sized township to a sub-regional township. If this were to occur, this planning area would require the construction of one multi-purpose community centre. It is essential that planning commence for the eventual construction of a centre to meet the expected growth in population. It is understood that the Huntlee residential development site includes the construction of a multi-purpose community centre which will include a library, youth centre and a neighbourhood centre.

If to consider the suburb of Greta, Council owns four buildings (three of which are heritage listed) and all four are co-located on a 4,070m² precinct. The four facilities at the precinct are Greta Pre-school (heritage listed), Former Greta Courthouse (heritage listed), Former Greta Council Chambers (heritage listed) and Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall. The location of the facilities is an advantage given at least two have street frontage on the New England Highway. The other two facilities have their entrance on the adjacent street, namely Water Street.

Of these four facilities, all are of ageing condition with the exception of the Greta Arts and Sports Hall which was constructed in 2005. In terms of facility usage, the Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall has experienced increased bookings, however the facility does have capacity to accept more. The Pre-school facility is currently leased to a community pre-school provider and offers 20 licensed pre-school places. However, it is an ageing, small facility. Likewise the two New England Highway street frontage buildings over time have become less utilised which could be a result of their ageing condition.

From a community planning perspective, the ageing precinct requires strategic consideration, exploring how the site can be re-activated and become a future, key community facility hub. With both recent and expected population growth for this planning area and the precinct's key location, there is opportunity to review each facility's use and consider a vision for the precinct. This Plan therefore makes the recommendation that the precinct, comprising all four facilities, be allocated funding to develop a master plan for the site, exploring opportunities to revitalise and re-energise the community space.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounding Areas

This planning area, although likely to experience growth, is not expected to require a multi-purpose community centre. However, it is likely that this population would utilise the services of the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area and should be considered in that planning area's service needs. Given this, Bellbird is suggested as a strategic location for Cessnock's second multi-purpose community centre.



*Above: Cessnock Performing Arts Centre
The right side of the building is the neighborhood centre*



Above: Kurri Kurri Community Centre

4.3 Community Halls

Definition

Community halls are used by many different population groups within the Local Government Area. They provide space for a range of activities such as art, social and recreational programs and functions.

Generally, community hall buildings are smaller in size when compared to a multi-purpose community centre and have a different role and function. For instance, a multi-purpose community centre would usually comprise multiple permanent tenants that deliver formal social welfare and human service programs and have multiple office accommodation, meeting rooms, training rooms and specific purpose program rooms all within the same building. In comparison, a community hall offers less space and usually includes bathroom/change room facilities, a kitchen, small storage room, entry foyer (small) and one large open space hall area.

These two community spaces also vary in size. Within the Cessnock Local Government Area, community halls are on average 300m² in size, whereas multi-purpose community centres are at least 900m² in size.

Community Planning Standards

Widely accepted community planning standards suggest that a community hall should be provided for a population of 6,000 to 10,000 people.

Existing Facilities

At the time of developing the Plan, Cessnock City Council owned or was the Reserve Trust Manager for at least 15 community halls.

In applying the community planning standards for a population of 50,840 people (as at Census 2011) Cessnock City Council should own approximately 5 to 9 community halls. However, the application of such planning standard has limitations when applied to small rural neighbourhoods where often the size of the population is small yet the geographical distance between the rural townships are large.

One must also be also mindful that there are many other venues within the Cessnock Local Government Area that provide similar space to a community hall, such as function rooms within a local licensed club, church halls and school halls. The Cessnock Performing Arts Centre within its building also has program space that is comparable to a community hall.

Application of Community Planning Standards

The following table provides an analysis for the application of community planning standards and is presented within the context of planning areas. It also provides a comment as to whether the planning area is within standards, exceeds planning standards or alternatively experiencing a gap in service.

Defined Geography (Population as at Census 2011)	Application of Community Planning Standards as at 2011 Census	2031 Requirement
Cessnock and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 4 2011 Result: At least 2 to 4 facilities should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total, 4 to 7 halls.
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 4 2011 Result: At least 2 to 3 facilities should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS <i>(Please Note:- a facility is leased to the not for profit sector as an out of school hours care facility)</i>	The planning area would require in total, 3 to 6 halls.
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Existing Number of Facilities = 3 2011 Result: At least 1 to 2 facilities should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total, 2 to 5 halls.
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Existing Number = 4 2011 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS <i>Please Note: - given the rural location of these townships, the application of a per population benchmark has limitations.</i>	The construction of a new community hall is not feasible or required.

Review of Community Hall Usage

In addition to using a per population standard for assessing future community hall facilities, existing community hall stock was also reviewed. The aim of this review was to determine current usage and capacity for increased bookings. Furthermore, the review of community hall usage will also assist to validate or alternatively discount the above findings which indicate the Cessnock Local Government Area is already well supplied with community halls and has the ability to provide for an increased population.

Methodology

Between February 2014 and April 2014, hall management committees were asked to complete a ten question written survey. In summary, the survey sought to understand:-

- type of activities occurring within the community hall
- community hall usage, including weekday, weeknight and weekend usage
- availability for further bookings
- five year trends for hall bookings
- the time required to manage a community hall

Consultation

Written surveys were returned for all 15 facilities and are listed in the below table. Please note that not all respondents answered each question.

Facility and Address	
Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area	
Bellbird Community Hall	Wollombi Rd, Bellbird
Kearsley Community Hall	22 Allandale Street, Kearsley
North End Hall	Church Street, Cessnock
Pokolbin Community Hall	McDonalds Road, Pokolbin
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	
Abermain Plaza Hall	3 Bathurst Street, Abermain
Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall	112 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri
Kurri Kurri Senior Citizens Hall	132 Barton Street, Kurri Kurri
Weston Civic Centre	Station Street, Weston
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Area	
Branxton Community Hall	35 Bowen Street, Branxton
Greta Arts & Sports Community Hall	1 Water Street, Greta
Former Greta Council Chambers	98 High Street, Greta
Rural West Planning Area	
Crawfordville / Millfield Community Hall	Crawford Ave, Millfield
Ellalong Community Hall	39 Onley Street, Ellalong
Laguna Community Hall	Main Rd, Laguna
Wollombi Community Hall	Maitland Rd, Wollombi

Findings and Analysis

Question 1: Estimated Weekly Hall Usage

Please provide an estimate of the number of hours per week that the hall is used. Please note: the estimate can be based on a regular week during the school term?

For this question, data was provided for all 15 community halls. In the analysis of this question, an assumption has been made that community halls are operational from 9am to 9pm weekdays and 8am to 12am Saturday and Sunday. Hence, there is a total of 1,380 hall hours provided within the Cessnock Local Government Area or alternatively per hall this is 92 hours per week.

Findings:

- The average weekly use of each hall facility was 15 hours.
- In terms of a minimum and maximum range, the least amount of weekly hall usage was 3 hours and the maximum was 60 hours and was recorded at the Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall.

Please note that the Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall is licensed to the Kurri Kurri Community Centre and delivers regular licensed child care services, hence its usage and purpose differs to other centres. Given this, the facility with the second highest weekly usage should be considered and was Kurri Kurri Senior Citizens Hall at 32 hours per week.

Estimated Weekly Usage Hours	
Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area	
Bellbird Community Hall	4 Hours
Kearsley Community Hall	4 Hours
North End Hall	13 Hours
Pokolbin Community Hall	27.5 Hours
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	
Abermain Plaza Hall	14 Hours
Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall	60 Hours
Kurri Kurri Senior Citizens Hall	32 Hours
Weston Civic Centre	4 Hours
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Area	
Branxton Community Hall	8.5 Hours
Greta Arts & Sports Community Hall	12 Hours
Former Greta Council Chambers	3 Hours
Rural West Planning Area	
Crawford / Millfield Community Hall	16 Hours
Ellalong Community Hall	6 Hours
Laguna Community Hall	12 Hours
Wollombi Community Hall	10 Hours
TOTAL	226 Hours

SECTION ONE: REGULAR BOOKINGS

Note: Questions 2 to 5 are about regular hall bookings. These questions focus on groups that have a permanent, regular booking.

Question 2: Regular Bookings and Usage

Please list the groups/organisations that have regular hall bookings. Please indicate the day of the week and booking time for each group?

For this question, activities were grouped into themes and assisted to determine when halls are being used and alternatively when halls are vacant.

Findings:

- In order of prevalence the regular bookings were for:-
 - Passive and active health programs, i.e. martial arts, yoga, tai chi, aerobics
 - Social groups/political parties/youth programs
 - Licensed early childhood services (pre-school, out of school care)
 - Respite services/community care programs
 - Art and culture programs
- In total there were 48 regular bookings across all community hall facilities per week.
- The minimum range was 1 regular booking per hall to a maximum range of 9 regular bookings per hall each week.

Weekday Use – Total Hours (excludes weeknights)

For this analysis, an assumption has been made that during the weekday, the hall is available for bookings from 9am to 5pm. Therefore total booking hours could be up to 8 hours per day, per facility.

Based on the sample, there were 13 respondents that identified the day and time of week for regular bookings, hence the total hours available was 520 hours.

Findings:

- Regular weekday bookings for all community halls totalled 60 hours per week. Therefore actual hall usage was 12% and there is capacity for a further 460 hours of hall bookings.

Weeknight Use – Total Hours (excludes weekends)

For this analysis, an assumption has been made that during the weeknight, the hall is available for bookings from 5pm to 9pm. Therefore total booking hours could be up to 4 hours per day, per facility.

Based on the sample of 13 community halls, the total hall hours available is 260 hours.

Findings:

- Regular evening bookings for all community halls, totalled 78.5 hours per week. Therefore actual hall usage was 30% and there is capacity for a further 181.5 hours of hall bookings.
- This result suggests that community hall usage is more frequent during weeknights as opposed to weekdays.

Planning Areas - Regular Bookings

This analysis assumes that a regular booking can occur sometime within the 92 hours made available per hall, each week. Please note: the below data excludes Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall given it is licensed to Kurri Kurri Community Centre for out of school hour's care.

Planning Area	Current Usage	Actual Usage Hours/ Total Hours Available (Per Week)
Cessnock and Surrounds (n=4)	7%	27/368
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds (n=3)	16%	46/276
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury (n=3)	9%	23.5/276
Rural West (n=4)	11%	42/368
TOTAL HOURS	-	138.5/1288 hours

Please note: 'n' refers to the number of respondents for that question.

Question 3: Booking Trends

In thinking about the past five years, has the hall seen a greater demand for regular bookings?

For this question, 14 responses were provided. The aim of this question was to consider trends for hall usage and subsequently could later assist to inform future community hall design requirements.

Findings:

- Of the 14 respondents, 5 (36%) had noted a greater demand for regular bookings.

Question 4: Booking Trends

If to consider trends for regular hall bookings over the past five years, has the hall seen greater demand for certain types of activities?

For this question, 13 responses were provided. The aim of this question was to again consider trends for hall usage and subsequently could later assist to inform future community hall design requirements.

Findings:

- Only 3 respondents (21%) noted a greater demand for certain types of activities. These activities were predominantly passive and indoor health programs, for example yoga, aerobics, youth programs

Question 5: Booking Declines

Has the hall over the past five years seen less of a demand for certain types of activities?

For this question, 13 responses were provided. The aim of this question was to again consider trends in activities where hall usage had declined.

Findings:

- Of the 13 respondents, only 2 (15%) had seen less of a demand for certain types of bookings. Examples noted were youth programs, dancing and community groups.

SECTION TWO: ONE OFF HALL BOOKINGS

Note: Questions 6 to 9 are about one off hall bookings. Meaning people who seek to use the hall for their one off function, for example parties, events etc.

Question 6: One off Bookings Usage

In the past twelve months, how many bookings have been for one off functions and could include parties, celebrations etc.

For one off bookings, an assumption has been made that the community hall is operational 48 weeks per year. Hence, potentially there is 48 weekends which could be available for one off bookings.

Findings:

- Of the 12 respondents, the total number of one off bookings in the past 12 months was 246 and of these 222 (90%) were for a Friday, Saturday or Sunday.
- Based on the above finding this is equivalent to each hall being booked 19 weekends per year.

Given this, there is capacity for a further 29 weekends of bookings per year for each hall. However it was noted that management committees had made a decision to either accept one off bookings for example parties and birthday celebrations or not to accept such events. For example, Kurri Kurri Senior Citizens Hall recorded only 3 one off weekend bookings whereas on the other end of the scale, the Pokolbin Hall had 45 one off weekend bookings.

It should be noted that Council is respectful and supportive of the decisions made by individual management committees to either accept or not accept certain types of bookings. It should also be noted that Council is not the only provider of community hall space, and parties could be held at for example licensed premises or other community halls owned by not for profit organisations.

Planning Areas – One off Bookings

As mentioned, for one off bookings an assumption has been made that the community hall is operational 48 weeks per year. Hence, a minimum standard applied for the below table is one booking for the entire Friday evening, Saturday, Sunday; meaning each hall has the capacity for 48 bookings per year.

Planning Area	Current Usage	Actual Bookings/ Actual Total Hall Availability (Per Year)
Cessnock and Surrounds (n=4)	63%	121/192
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds (n=3)	15%	21/144
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury (n=2)	39%	37/96
Rural West (n=3)	30%	43/144

Question 7: Increased Demands for One off Bookings

In thinking about the past five years, has the hall seen a greater demand for one off bookings?

The aim of this question was to determine if there had been greater demand for one off bookings.

Findings:

- Of the 13 respondents, 9 (69%) had noted a greater demand for one off bookings over the past five years.

Question 8: Increased Activity Demands for One off Bookings

If to consider trends for one off hall bookings over the past five years, has the hall seen greater demand for certain types of activities?

The aim of this question was to determine if there had been greater demand for certain type of activities.

Findings:

- Of the 13 respondents, 12 (92%) had seen greater demand for certain types of activities. Examples noted were parties and other gatherings, dance classes and community events.

Question 9: Decreased Activity Demands for One of Bookings

Alternatively, has the hall over the past five years seen less of a demand for certain types of activities?

The aim of this question was to determine if there had been less demand for certain types of one off bookings.

Findings:

- Of the 13 respondents, only 1 (8%) had seen less of a demand for certain types of activities. Examples noted were school and sports presentation, protest meetings and parties.

SECTION THREE: HALL MANAGEMENT

Question 10: Estimated Monthly Hall Management

Please estimate as an average total per month, how much time both you and the Committee spend on managing the hall.

Respondents were asked to consider management requirements such as hall bookings, financial requirements, maintenance scheduling etc.

Findings:

- Of the 12 respondents, the time spent on hall management ranged from a minimum of 3 hours per month (Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall) to a maximum of 35 hours per month (Weston Civic Centre).
- In total, 192 hours per month is being used to manage 12 community halls and this is an average of 16 hours per month per hall.
- In managing 15 community halls, the role is equivalent of 1.6 FTE or alternatively, each community hall on average requires 4 hours of dedicated management per week.

Recommendations by 2031

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area

This planning area already has a considerable number of community hall facilities that are either owned by Council or by organisations external to Council and include licensed premises, schools

and church halls. Additionally, Cessnock City Council owns the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and within its building has space comparable to a community hall.

When considering current usage and in evaluating the need for future community halls, it is suggested that the current facilities will continue to be suffice up until 2031. For example within this Plan, of the 368 weekly hours available for hall bookings, only 27 hours are attributed to regular bookings. For one off weekend bookings, the planning area has the capacity for a further 71 bookings throughout the year.

Given the considerable capacity for further community hall bookings, it is recommended that the construction of additional new community halls be discouraged. Rather it is preferable that new community hall type space instead be co-located within a multi-purpose community centre. Such design will assist to achieve integration which is the essence of this Plan. Otherwise community need for a new standalone facility will need to be demonstrated and should include an investigation that considers nearby comparative infrastructure (whether owned by Council or external to Council); the hall's intended purpose, a business plan and its envisaged use.

Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area

This planning area has a considerable number of community hall facilities that are either owned by Council or owned by organisations external to Council and include for example licenced premises, schools and churches. In terms of current usage of Council owned community halls, the Kurri Kurri Planning Area is similar to the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area in that it has capacity to accept considerable further bookings both during weekdays, weeknights and weekends. In evaluating the need for future community halls, this planning area is likely to be within planning standards up until 2031.

It is noted that there is considerable residential development confirmed for both Heddon Greta and Cliftleigh. Within this locality and under a Voluntary Planning Agreement, there is provision for a fully funded Arts and Sports Hall with one basketball court similar to the facility at Greta along with a partially funded community space (please note: further section 94 contributions or voluntary planning agreement funds are required for the construction of a complete facility).

In regard to the arts and sports hall facility, it is recommended in this Plan that an investigation occur to determine if it could instead be re-located for construction at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic facility. This would assist in co-location of like facilities, offer more sustainable facility management options and would assist the Kurri Kurri Aquatic facility to be a key recreational hub. For the partially funded community facility, consideration should be given as to whether the funds could be used towards the suggested 328m² flexible community space recommended in this Plan for the Cliftleigh - Heddon Greta area (see page 42). The intended use of this facility would need to be considered in the facility's design process. It is recommended that the placement of the facility be near to other shared community assets (for example childcare facilities and/or sporting precincts).

Branxton, North Rothbury, Greta and Surrounds Planning Area

The communities of Branxton and North Rothbury are expected to experience considerable population growth as a result of the Huntlee residential development. Depending on the

planning area's actual growth, the total number of community halls required by 2031 could range from at least 2 to 5 facilities. It is noted that the planning area currently has three Council owned community halls and at the time of drafting this Plan, exceeded the suggested planning standards for community halls.

For this planning area, it is recommended that any future additional proposals for community halls be carefully considered from the perspective of community need and should include an analysis of nearby existing infrastructure, the intended hall's purpose, and envisaged use. It would be preferable in the future that any new community hall type space, be instead located within a multi-purpose community centre and not be a stand-alone building. Alternatively, if additional community hall facilities are to be constructed, the planning area should be reviewed to determine if there is an excess of community halls and whether any older stock within the planning area is surplus to Council's needs.

It is noted that the Former Greta Courthouse facility (which is located in a historical precinct with three other facilities) is likely to require during the life of this Plan considerable works for it to remain a habitable space. From a community planning perspective, this ageing precinct requires strategic consideration, exploring how the site can be re-activated and become a future, key community facility hub. With both recent and expected population growth for this planning area and the precinct's key location, there is opportunity to review this facility's use and consider a wider vision for the precinct. This Plan therefore in Section 4.7 makes the recommendation that the precinct, comprising four facilities, be allocated funding to develop a master plan for the site, exploring opportunities to revitalise and re-invigorate the space.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounds Planning Area

Based on the application of community planning standards to the population, there is a surplus of three community halls within the planning area. However given the planning areas rural landscape, these smaller villages are often located at considerable distance and have a small population base. Alternatively it may be more appropriate to use a distance indicator as opposed to a population base indicator. A distance indicator for example could be that residents within small rural villages have access to a community hall facility and in terms of location, for the majority of residents, it is at a distance of no more than twenty minutes normal drive time from the home.

This planning area, although likely to experience some growth, is not expected to require any additional community hall facilities given it is well provided for. For example, the planning area has 327 hours per week of hall hours still available for bookings and this includes weekdays, weeknights and weekend bookings. However it is important to ensure that existing facilities continue to undertake sound maintenance and necessary upgrades to be able to service an increased population.

Below: Pokolbin Community Hall



4.4 Youth Centres

Definition

Youth centres are safe spaces that aim to attract young people usually aged between 12 and 18 years. Youth centres provide an opportunity to deliver a diverse range of services and activities and could include, for example, counselling and support services, structured and semi structured activities, education programs and safe spaces for people to socialise. In terms of size, a habitable size for a youth centre (total indoor floor space) should be at least 200m².

Community Planning Standards

Widely accepted community planning standards suggest that a youth centre should be provided for a population of 10,000 to 20,000 people, or 1 youth centre per 3,000 people aged 12-18 years.

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, there were 3 youth centres within the Cessnock Local Government Area. Of these 3 services, Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service is the only service and facility owned and operated by Cessnock City Council. The other 2 services are owned and managed by Kurri Kurri Community Centre and Youth off the Streets, Weston.

In applying the community planning standard of 1 youth centre per 3,000 people aged 12 to 18 years (5,047 people), the Local Government Area should have at least 1 youth centre.

In applying the standard that a centre should be provided for a population of 10,000 to 20,000 people, the requirement would be at least 2 facilities to a maximum of 5.

In summary, the results indicate that the number of existing facilities within the Cessnock Local Government Area exceeds one community planning standard (1 youth centre per 3,000 people aged 12 to 18 years) and interestingly falls within a second planning standard when using the indicator of 1 facility per a population of 10,000 to 20,000 people.

Application of Community Planning Standards

The following table provides an analysis for the application of community planning standards and is presented within the context of planning areas. It also provides a comment as to whether the planning area is within standards or alternatively is experiencing a gap in service.

Defined Geography (Population as at Census 2011)	Application of Community Planning Standards as at 2011 Census	2031 Requirement
Cessnock and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 1 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total, 1 facility.
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 2 (owned and operated independent of Council) Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total, 1 facility. Additional facilities are not required (subject to not for profit providers continuing their operations). See recommendations for further information.
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Existing Number of Facilities = 0 Result: At least 0.6 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require the construction of 1 facility.
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Existing Number = 0 Result: At least 0.4 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The construction of a facility is not viable or feasible.

By 2031, the population for young people aged 12 to 18 years within the Cessnock Local Government Area is projected to be 6,255 people (approximate 26% increase). If the planning standard of 1 youth centre per 3,000 people aged 12 to 18 years is applied to the forecasted 2031 population rate, the requirement would be for at least 2 youth centres in total within the Local Government Area. If the standard of 1 youth centre for every 10,000 to 20,000 people is applied, the requirement could be at least 3 to 6 centres.

Recommendations by 2031

Cessnock and Surrounding Areas

By 2031, Cessnock will continue to require one youth centre and the service should aim to service not only its own planning area population but also the neighbouring population attributed to the planning area for Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi and Laguna. The rationale for this is that this rural planning area does not have enough population to trigger the construction of its own facility.

At the present time, the existing Council owned youth centre operates from a standalone building in the residential suburb of Aberdare. The vision by 2031 is for the service to be co-located within a multi-purpose community centre. Given this, it is recommended that Council relocate its existing youth centre to a multi-purpose community centre that is recommended within this Plan for construction.

In terms of design and location for a future youth space, it should:-

- Be a dedicated youth space that seeks to engage young people
- Be co-located within a multi-purpose community centre
- Directly adjoin other key social and/or commercial infrastructure
- Be positioned on a local or collector road and have pedestrian and cycle way connectivity
- Be near to existing and/or proposed public transport routes

If co-location was to eventually occur, the existing youth centre facility should be reviewed to determine if it is surplus to Council's needs or alternative future uses should be explored. Alternatively, partnerships could be considered with other services that operate indoor and/or recreational space. For example, Council is aware that the Cessnock PCYC Club itself has a vision for the future and this includes engaging and attracting increased youth. Hence, there may be opportunities to collaborate with this organisation in expanding services to young people.

Kurri Kurri and Surrounding Areas

If the current not for profit providers continue to deliver youth services from their own dedicated youth spaces, additional facilities will not need to be constructed. If this situation were to change, a suitable space will need to be planned for. This situation should be monitored during the life of this Plan.

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and Surrounding Areas

Council is aware that this planning area is likely to experience considerable growth by 2031 and as a result, could transition from a mid-sized township to a sub-regional township. If this were to occur, this planning area would require the construction of a youth centre. It is essential that this area commence planning for the eventual construction of a youth facility and it be co-located within a multi-purpose community centre. It is noted that the Huntlee residential development includes the construction of a youth space within the intended multi-purpose community centre. If this development were to proceed, this infrastructure gap would be addressed.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounding Areas

This planning area, although likely to experience growth, is not expected to require a youth centre. However, it is likely that this population would utilise the services of the Cessnock and surrounds planning area.



Above: Exterior of the Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service



Above: Interior of Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service

4.5 Indoor Recreation Facilities

Definition

Indoor recreation facilities for the purpose of this Plan are defined as either Council owned or not for profit indoor spaces that provide opportunities to engage in health, fitness and sports/recreation programs. Within this Plan, pools are excluded and are documented in the Aquatic Needs Analysis. Also excluded from this analysis is commercial fitness centres.

Community Planning Standards

Cessnock City Council's planning standards suggest that an indoor recreational facility should be provided for a population of 10,000 to 20,000 people.

Existing Services

At the time of drafting the Plan, the Cessnock Local Government Area had 3 indoor recreational facilities. Of these facilities, Cessnock City Council owned 2 and Cessnock PCYC owned 1. The table below provides an indicator of where these facilities are and a brief description of their core space.

Indoor Recreation Facilities	
(Total Number = 3)	
<i>Please Note: PCYC is not owned by Cessnock City Council</i>	
Planning Area	Number of Facilities
Cessnock and Surround Planning Area	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre includes 2 full size basketball courts, meeting rooms • PCYC (not owned by Council) includes rock climbing wall and gymnasium 	
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nil facility 	
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury Planning Area	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall includes 1 full size basketball court 	
Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi Planning Area	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nil facility 	
TOTAL	3

Application of Community Planning Standards

The following table provides an analysis for the application of community planning standards and is presented within the context of planning areas. It also provides a comment as to whether the planning area is within standards or alternatively is experiencing a gap in service.

Defined Geography (Population as at Census 2011)	Application of Community Planning Standards as at 2011 Census	2031 Requirement
Cessnock and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 2 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total at least 2 to 4 facilities. Given existing facilities, the construction of an additional facility is not required.
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Existing Number of Facilities = 0 Result: At least 1 facility should be provided within the planning area. DOES NOT MEET PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total at least 1 facility. The construction of an expanded indoor space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre is recommended for investigation.
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Existing Number of Facilities = 1 Result: At least 0.6 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. EXCEEDS PLANNING STANDARDS	The planning area would require in total 1 facility. The construction of an additional facility is not required.
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Existing Number = 0 Result: At least 0.4 of a facility should be provided within the planning area. WITHIN PLANNING STANDARDS	The construction of a facility is not required during the life of this Plan.

Recommendations by 2031

Cessnock and Surrounding Areas

Given the considerable floor space of the existing Council owned Cessnock Indoor Sports Centre and the externally owned and operated PCYC facility, additional facilities are likely not required. For Council in managing its building it is important to ensure that the existing facility has a maintenance program in place to sustain its ability to service an expanded population.

In considering the new Cessnock PCYC facility, its organisation has provided residents of and visitors to the Cessnock Local Government Area with an exciting opportunity to further participate and engage in active programs. The premises provide high quality gymnasium space and an indoor rock climbing wall.

Kurri Kurri and Surrounding Areas

This planning area is fortunate to have a superior indoor aquatic centre consisting of pools, gym space, a café and other ancillary areas such as first aid and store rooms. The facility does not have indoor space large enough for sports such as basketball, cricket, netball, volleyball and other like leisure activities. This planning area during the life of the Plan will require the construction of indoor leisure space similar to the Greta Arts and Sports Hall.

The Clifleigh residential development as part of its planning agreement includes the construction of a 750m² indoor facility and its design specifications advise the construction of one basketball court. However, given the Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre is located near to an existing skate park and has direct links to outdoor open space accommodating sports such as cricket, rugby league and soccer, this precinct instead should be investigated to determine if the proposed indoor recreation centre could instead be constructed and attached to the existing Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre. Attaching the space to the existing facility would be in keeping with the principles of this Plan in terms of co-location and could also assist Council to manage the asset given the aquatic and fitness facility is operated by an external provider.

Given opportunities for improved access, facility management and co-location, an action strategy has been included in the Plan to investigate the feasibility of constructing an indoor recreation space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park) as opposed to the residential area of Clifleigh.

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and Surrounding Areas

The Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall was constructed in 2005, hence as a community facility it is still in relatively good condition. Despite the considerable expected growth earmarked for the planning area, this facility should place the community in a good position to be provided with a suitable indoor recreational space throughout the life of this Plan. In achieving this, Council must ensure that the existing facility has a maintenance program in place to sustain its ability to service an expanded population.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounding Areas

This planning area, although likely to experience growth, is not expected to require an indoor recreation facility. As an alternative, and it is acknowledged that it is a much smaller space in comparison, the locality has access to a number of community halls that could be suitable for some indoor lifestyle, recreation and health programs.



Above: Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall



Above: Inside view of Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall



Above: Exterior of Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre



Above: Exterior of Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre

4.6 Facilities for Aged and Disability Services

Definition

Facilities required for this population group include day care centres, space for social programs and federal and state government community care type programs.

Community Planning Standards

Community planning standards for seniors centres and program areas for people with a disability could not be sourced.

It is estimated that by 2031, people aged 70 years and over residing within the Cessnock Local Government Area, will increase by 95%. This represents a growth of an additional 4,500 people.

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, Cessnock City Council had 2 dedicated facilities for the co-ordination and delivery of formal programs for populations that are aged and/or people who have a disability. These facilities are leased to services external to Cessnock City Council and are identified in the below table.

Property Name	Address	Function
Abermain School of Arts	Cessnock Road, Abermain	Cessnock City Council is the Reserve Trust Manager of the facility. It is leased to Coalfields Neighbourcare for the purpose of co-ordinating and delivering services to people who are primarily aged. The facility also provides space for the operation of a day care centre.
Property not named	22 Allandale Road, Cessnock	A residential style building leased to a not for profit disability day program service.

Cessnock City Council also owns 28 North Avenue, Cessnock (previous use was a Senior Citizens Hall) however has not been used for operations since 2008. In 2008, the group occupying the space re-located to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The building at 28 North Avenue, Cessnock is a small, single purpose facility. It requires considerable works for it to be fit for purpose and therefore it is recommended in this Plan that the Strategic Property Review assess its worth to determine if it is surplus to Council's needs.

Recommendations by 2031

The Abermain School of Arts building is considered to be a multi-purpose space that provides and co-ordinates a range of services for the aged population. Given the envisaged aged population increase, and the facility's function as a multi-purpose space, the facility should be preserved throughout the life of this Plan as a facility servicing the needs of an aged population. This does not mean necessarily that existing leases should be automatically granted (once expired) throughout the life of this 2031 Plan. What it does mean however, is that organisations operating from the facility should primarily be delivering services to an aged population.

In regards to the 22 Allandale Road property, it is a single purpose facility and is leased to a not for profit, disability day program service. This Plan's recommendation is that Cessnock City Council consider the feasibility of rationalising single purpose facilities as part of the Strategic Property Review. Given this, an investigation for this property should occur to determine if it remain a Council owned asset or instead its function be incorporated into the design of a multi-purpose community centre earmarked within the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. As part of this investigation, the asset management costs along with the current and future building condition of this facility should be considered.

*Right:
Abermain School of Arts*

*The facility operates as a
multi-purpose facility for
aged persons*



*Right:
22 Allandale Road, Cessnock*

*The facility is leased to a
disability service provider*



4.7 CULTURAL FACILITIES

Performing Arts Centre, Art Gallery, Libraries, Museums and Other Cultural Facilities

Definition

It is important that communities have access to public spaces that can deliver and showcase civic events and celebrate the arts and culture.

Such facilities are often provided to cater for the needs of not necessarily a small planning area but rather an entire Local Government Area population and in some cases neighbouring Local Government Areas. These facilities are usually minimal in number. These spaces could include performing arts centres, art galleries, cultural centres and civic centres.

Community Planning Standards

Widely accepted community planning standards suggest the following:-

- Performing arts centre should be provided for a population of 50,000 to 120,000 people
- Art gallery should be provided for a population of 30,000 to 150,000 people
- Civic centre should be provided for a population of 30,000 to 120,000 people

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, Council owned or was the Reserve Trust Manager for the following spaces:-

- Cessnock Performing Arts Centre which opened in 2008 and includes a 466 seat theatre and a number of meeting rooms and a neighbourhood centre co-located on the premises
- Art gallery space at 16 Vincent Street, Cessnock (the tenant of the building is the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery operated by an independent not for profit community group)
- Marthaville Arts and Crafts Cultural Centre (located in the suburb of Cessnock)
- Wollombi Cultural Centre
- Richmond Main Railway Museum (located near to Kurri Kurri)

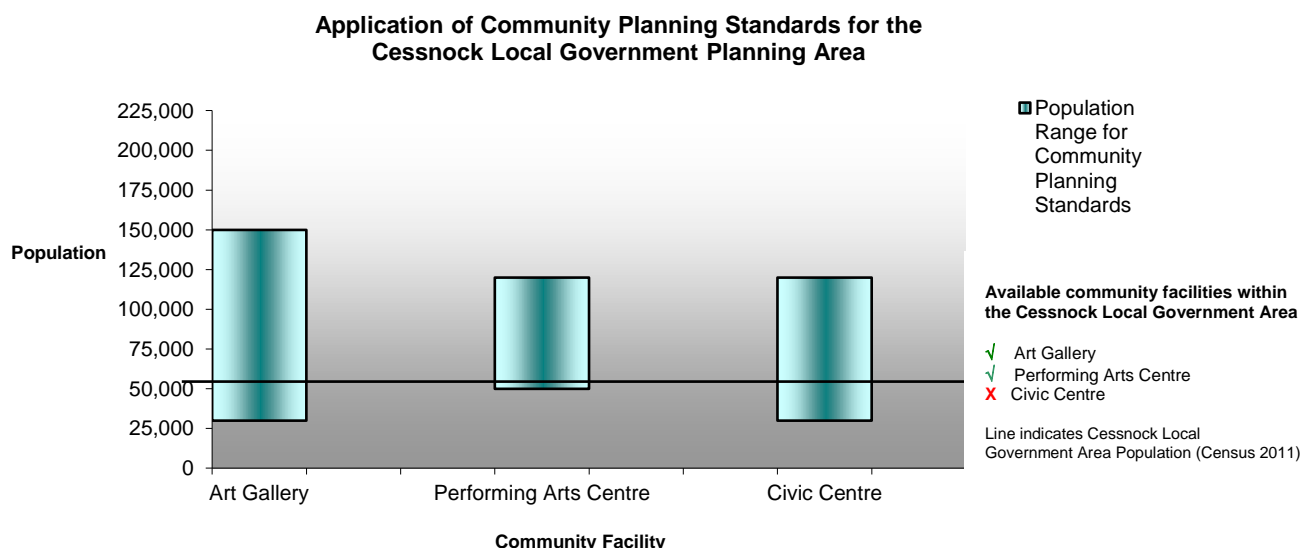
Other cultural facilities not owned by Cessnock City Council include:-

- Sir Edgeworth David Museum (located on the grounds of Kurri Kurri High School)
- Wollombi Endeavour Museum
- Tourism related, privately operated art gallery and craft centres

Application of Community Planning Standards

If the community planning standards for an approximate population of 50,840 people (as was the population at Census 2011) are applied, Cessnock City Council is within standards for an art gallery and a performing arts centre. At the present time the area does not have a civic centre, however the population required for such facility is between 30,000 to 120,000 people.

The below chart reflects both the minimum and maximum population range for area wide community facilities and provides a comparison to the Cessnock Local Government Area population (as at Census 2011).



Unfortunately, planning standards could not be found for cultural centres and are omitted from the above chart.

Recommendation by 2031

Civic Centre

Based on the application of community planning standards for facilities that service the entire Local Government Area, it is recommended that a civic centre be not included as required during the life of this Plan. This recommendation is based on an expected minimum population for 2031 being approximately 68,364 with the standard suggesting the requirement for a civic centre being provided somewhere between the population range of 30,000 to 120,000 people. At the time of writing the Plan, alternate venues within the Cessnock Local Government Area have the ability to provide space for large gatherings.

For example, the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre has the ability to cater for not only theatre based performances but also many seated civic events. In situations where greater space is required for civic events, the local area is fortunate to have a number of privately owned licensed

premises (local Clubs) with large spaced auditoriums. Additionally, in terms of outdoor civic space, Cessnock City Council is fortunate to have a first class regional sportsground (constructed in 2004) and has the capacity to seat 1,400 people within its grandstand. Please note: a civic centre would be a considerable financial cost to Cessnock City Council if it were to be constructed.

Art Gallery Space and Cessnock Performing Arts Centre

The Cessnock CBD Masterplan (2012, EO8, page 39) has an action to 'investigate the opportunity to expand the Art Gallery and include a local heritage museum and/or café'. It is recommended that as part of this investigation, it also be considered as to whether art gallery space should instead relocate to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The rationale for this investigation is that the co-location of like facilities can better position services to be innovative and responsive to community need. For example, the integration and concentration of compatible services can offer ease of access for users and has the ability to attract people of diverse ages, cultural backgrounds, abilities, income levels and interests.

Richmond Main

Richmond Main is a cultural asset of significant size that is of historical importance and includes numerous buildings in varying structural conditions. The site was historically a colliery and many of the buildings were constructed in the early 1900s. The mining operations at its peak during the 1920s employed over 1,200 people. In 1967, the colliery ceased operations.

The site was eventually transferred to Cessnock City Council and is occupied by the Richmond Vale Railway Museum (a volunteer not for profit organisation formed in 1979 to preserve the site). Richmond Main includes a mining museum (operated out of the Colliery Administration building) and a railway that allows for the operation of a tourist train to Pelaw Main and return during numerous Sundays throughout the year.

Given the significant size of the precinct, its historical importance and the structural decline of its buildings, Richmond Main requires a strategic planning process to further explore its asset condition and potential future uses. It is recommended that a strategic planning process be implemented focusing on how the site can be maintained and strengthened as a unique cultural asset within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

Wollombi Cultural Centre and Marthaville Arts and Culture Centre

The Cessnock Local Government Area has two designated cultural centres with one located in Cessnock and the second located in Wollombi. The Cessnock facility is called Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre and is located at 200 Wollombi Road, Cessnock. The facility was once a residential home and is the oldest timber sawn home in Cessnock. Given its history, the facility is heritage listed.

Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre for some time has been exclusively an arts and cultural centre and this continues to be its current use. The facility sits on an approximate 2000m² lot and has the ability to host a wide variety of events, exhibitions and activities. Primarily its current use is for the display and sale of a wide range of crafts made by residents of the local area. The operational

hours however are limited, at two days per week, from 10am to 4pm, Friday and Saturday. The facility is managed by a volunteer section 355 management committee.

One of the benefits of the facility is that it has prime location within the Cessnock Central Business District. This also presents a challenge in that the facility is located in a busy area of town and on street parking during peak business hours can be minimal. Vehicle access is also challenging given the facility entrance is near a busy roundabout.

Although the facility is of single purpose use, it is recommended that Council retain the ownership of Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre given its key location and its heritage listed status. However in terms of its future use, it is undetermined if it is viable to continue the facility's exclusive use as an arts and crafts centre with operational hours currently at two days per week. Given the facilities key location, opportunities for additional use are recommended to be considered during the life of the Plan. For example, the facility could consider the inclusion of a commercial kitchen, where community members and or groups book the space, similar to how one would book a community hall space, and produce food products such as biscuits and preserves which could be later sold by the producer at markets or food retail establishment. The inclusion of a commercial kitchen would assist to expand the types of facilities available to the community and could assist producers to meet the health requirements needed for the eventual on sale of food. Alternatively, the inclusion of a commercial kitchen could open up further opportunities for commercial rent for the establishment of a small café and/or a function centre allowing for on-site catering. It is recommended that such uses be further explored with the facility's Management Committee to assist in determining feasibility and/or the identification of other opportunities.

The Wollombi Cultural Centre is a small sized crown land property managed by Council and operated by the Wollombi Cultural Centre Management Committee. The facility is available for hire for exhibitions or other cultural/arts related functions. Given the presence of this facility, additional Council owned cultural centres are not required for construction within this planning area during the life of the Plan.

Library Services and Museum Exhibition Space

- Cessnock Library

In respect to Cessnock Library, the Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 identifies that the facility floor space will need to be increased to accommodate the current and expanded future population. The current library site has constraints in regards to expansion and an alternative location is likely to be required for the facility to offer greater floor space.

Preferably the Cessnock Library should remain in a location that is within the Cessnock Central Business District. An approximate one acre parcel of land (over 4000m²) owned by Cessnock City Council sits adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and has Vincent Street frontage. This parcel of land initially was earmarked as Cessnock's Civic Park. The CBD Masterplan explores the option for Civic Park to be constructed on either this space, or alternatively located on the grounds of Cessnock Tafe. The Masterplan considers both options however it makes the determination that the preferred location is the grounds of Cessnock Tafe. This therefore could make available the green space area at the intersection of Vincent Street and Aberdare Road, and given its size and location near to the above mentioned potential cultural hub (i.e. Cessnock Performing Arts Centre

and the potential inclusion of art gallery space) a potential site for a new Library. If Civic Park is not to be constructed on the corner of Aberdare Road and Vincent Street, Cessnock, the site should be investigated to determine if it is a suitable location for a new Cessnock Library and within the floor space, have included an allocated area for museum exhibitions. Please note: the site for investigation contains a heritage listed building (206 Vincent Street, Cessnock). The building up until 2009 operated as a neighbourhood centre.

The existing Cessnock Library facility could later have a future use as a multi-purpose community centre (existing library facility is 1,070m²). Council's draft design guidelines for multi-purpose community centres, suggests that their floor space should be at least 900m². This facility would be of adequate size to accommodate a multi-purpose community centre.

- Kurri Kurri Library

The Kurri Kurri Library service is located within the Kurri Kurri Community Centre building which occupies two lots. Its total floor space (library component only) is 560m². It has prime location within the Kurri Kurri township, for example, the facility is located within the Kurri Kurri commercial shopping district, is near to public transport routes and is adjacent to the central Kurri Kurri Rotary Park and Kurri Kurri Public School. Given the co-location of the Kurri Kurri Library with the Kurri Kurri Community Centre service, there is limited opportunity to expand the library space using only the existing building foot print.

The Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 advises that the Kurri Kurri Library is at capacity in terms of available space. In meeting the requirements of future population growth, the precinct itself requires strategic consideration to explore how the site can be expanded to accommodate increased space for expanded library services.

There is the potential to slightly expand the facility, given at the rear of the Kurri Kurri Community Centre, Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 (lot size 789m²) is owned by Cessnock City Council. Currently on this lot is car parking and a small brick veneer garage used by the Kurri Kurri Base, Cessnock District Rescue Squad. It should be noted that a laneway separates the Kurri Kurri Community Centre building with Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 which could impact on the facility expansion design. With this in mind and in ensuring future population needs are met, this Plan makes the recommendation that the precinct be allocated funding to develop a master plan for the site and to explore opportunities for expanding the library facility.

- Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury Planning Area Future Library Needs

At the time of drafting the Plan, the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta area does not have a library facility. The Voluntary Planning Agreement for the Huntlee Residential Development does make the provision for a library. The library proposed is approximately 2000m² and would be co-located with a youth centre and a neighbourhood centre. In the design process for any new library it should be determined if the facility could include space for a small community museum. It should also be determined at the time of drafting the design, if this facility could be the main headquarters for library operations given it would offer more space than the current Cessnock Library (which is approximately 1,070m² in size).

Greta Historical Precinct Area

In terms of heritage, the Greta Central Business District has a number of key community facilities of historical importance. In one precinct alone, Council owns three buildings and is the Reserve Trust Manager for another (in total, three buildings are heritage listed) and all four facilities are co-located. The location of the facilities is an advantage given at least two have street frontage on the New England Highway. The other two facilities have their entrance on the adjacent side street. The four facilities at the precinct are Greta Pre-school (heritage listed), Former Greta Courthouse (heritage listed), Former Greta Council Chambers (heritage listed) and Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall. The total size of the precinct is 4,070m².

Of the four facilities, all are of ageing condition with the exception of the Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall which was constructed in the previous ten years. In terms of facility usage, the Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall has experienced increased bookings, however the facility does have capacity to accept more. The Pre-school facility is currently leased to a community pre-school provider and offers 20 licensed pre-school places. It is an ageing and small facility. Likewise the two New England Highway street frontage buildings over time have become less utilised which could be a result of their ageing condition.

From a community planning perspective, the ageing precinct requires strategic consideration, exploring how the site can be re-activated and become a future, key community facility hub. With both recent and expected population growth for this planning area and the precinct's key location, there is opportunity to review each facility's use and consider a vision for the precinct. This Plan therefore makes the recommendation that the precinct, comprising all four facilities, be allocated funding to develop a master plan for the site, exploring opportunities to revitalise and re-invigorate the space.



*Above: Former Greta Courthouse,
Fronts onto the New England Highway*



*Above: Former Greta Council Chambers
Fronts onto the New England Highway*



Above: Art gallery (16 Vincent Street, Cessnock) currently tenanted by the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery



Above: Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre



Above: Cessnock Performing Arts Centre



Above: Wollombi Cultural Centre

4.8 OTHER FACILITIES REQUIRED BY THE COMMUNITY (EXTERNAL TO COUNCIL)

4.8.1 General Practitioner Medical Services

Definition

Medical centres for the purpose of this Plan are defined as facilities that provide space for general medical practitioners to deliver primary health services.

Community Planning Standards

At the time of drafting the Plan, the national average was 1 general practitioner (full time equivalent) to 1,400 people.

Existing Services

The Cessnock Local Government Area at the time of drafting the Plan had approximately 33 (full time equivalent) medical practitioners.

In applying the standards to the 2011 Census population, the Cessnock Local Government Area should have 36 (full time equivalent) medical practitioners. This would suggest a shortage of at least 3 medical practitioners. However, with an average population growth at 1.9% per annum (between Census years 2006 and 2011) the 2014 shortage is likely to be at least 4 general medical practitioners. Note: In applying community planning standards, 2014 population projections have been used to better understand current gaps in medical practitioner services.

Application of Community Planning Standards

To understand further the general practitioner to population ratios for the Cessnock Local Government Area, the following table lists the townships according to their Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA). This geographical classification system is used predominantly by the Federal Government to determine the level of support and monetary incentive that is payable to general medical practitioners. Please note: A Major City - Remoteness Area 1 Classification provides nil federal financial incentives for attracting and retaining medical practitioners. *Note: At the time of drafting the Plan the ASGC-RA as a model of classification was being replaced, however the classification remains current until a new model has been developed.*

Townships	ASGC-RA Classification	Population Projection as at January 2014 (Approximate)	Doctors Full Time Equivalent	Actual Ratio	Shortage of Doctors as at 2014
Cessnock and surrounds	Inner Regional - Remoteness Area 2	23,606 people	20	1 : 1,180	Surplus of 3.1*
Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and surrounds	Major City - Remoteness Area 1	18,833 people	8	1 : 2354	Shortage of 5.5
Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury	Inner Regional - Remoteness Area 2	6,226 people	5	1 : 1,245	Surplus of 0.6
Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West	Inner Regional - Remoteness Area 2	4,036 people	0	Nil Service	Shortage of 2.8*
CESSNOCK LGA TOTAL	-	52,701 people	33	1:1597	Shortage of 4.6

Please note: An asterisks (*) suggests that these planning areas for the purpose of General Practitioner Medical Centres should be considered together. If the 'Cessnock and Surrounds' planning area and the 'Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West' planning area are combined the actual result would be a surplus of 0.3 full time equivalent position.

Recommendations by 2031

The availability of general practitioner medical services is an important community issue and in terms of service provision and access, some townships within the Cessnock Local Government Area are experiencing a concerning shortage of General Practitioners.

Cessnock and Surrounding Areas

This planning area at face value exceeds the accepted ratio of 1 general practitioner to every 1,400 people. However, the result should be read in conjunction with the planning area of Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West, as this community is likely to be accessing medical services in the Cessnock and Surrounds planning area. When combining the results for these two communities, the ratio is almost equal to the national average of 1: 1,400. Given this, it is suggested that the Cessnock and surrounds planning area itself is attracting medical practitioners. It is thought that within this planning area the private sector will determine when growth is required and accordingly will increase medical services and centres independent of Council.

Kurri Kurri and Surrounding Areas

In analysing the above data, Kurri Kurri and its surrounding areas are experiencing a critical shortage of general practitioners. This situation is concerning and is further exacerbated given this locality has a Major City - Remoteness Area 1 Classification. As such, a Major City Classification attracts few financial incentives from funding bodies. However when compared to areas within the Cessnock Local Government Area that have funding provided given their Inner Regional

Remoteness Area 2 Classification, interestingly most of these areas are close to acceptable ratio levels.

A not for profit medical organisation was recently provided with federal funds to construct a medical centre at Kurri Kurri. At the time of drafting the Plan, the medical centre had only just commenced its operations. This will be of great assistance in providing clinic space for both medical practitioners and allied health professionals in delivering service to residents within this planning area. However this planning area is expected to experience considerable growth and in recent years two residential subdivisions have been provided approval for a total of almost 2,000 lots. This could result in an additional 5,000 residents once all lots are constructed and the population could be greater if to consider the residential proposal for the Hydro lands (subject to approval). For this planning area it is important that there is an adequate provision of medical centres for health professionals to deliver vital services.

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and Surrounding Areas

This planning area is at acceptable levels. Given this, it is suggested that the planning area itself is attracting medical practitioners. It is thought that within this planning area the private sector will determine when growth is required and accordingly will increase medical services and centres independent of Council.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Surrounding Areas

Ideally, this planning area would have a facility for medical practitioners to deliver a service, given that the planning standards suggest at least two doctors may be required. However, it is noted that the nearby Cessnock and surrounds planning area is likely providing service to these rural residents. Given the expectation that rural residents are required to visit a key service hub, for example Central Cessnock, for basic requirements such as shopping and bill paying, it would be reasonable to assume that medical services could also be visited as part of this process. Community transport services could be of assistance for people in this planning area with transporting people from their home to medical appointments if they were without a vehicle or licence.

4.8.2 Residential Aged Care Facilities

Definition

Residential aged care services administered in accordance with the Aged Care Act 1997, including residential high and low level care (previously called nursing home and hostel) and aged care packages.

Community Planning Standards

The 'Living Longer, Living Better Aged Care Reform Package' (Department of Health and Ageing, 2012) advises an Australian Government benchmark of 113 subsidised residential aged care and community care packages (including extended care packages at home) per 1,000 of the population aged 70 years and over.

Within this benchmark, the aim is for:-

- 44 of the total 113 places to be residential high care places (previously referred to as nursing home level care)
- 44 to be residential low care places (previously referred to as hostel level care)
- 25 places to be community care packages and/or extended care packages at home

Existing Facilities

At the time of drafting the Plan, the Cessnock Local Government Area had 4 aged care facilities and 5 services providing aged care packages (some packages are administered by a regional service provider).

All services are owned and operated by either the private sector or not for profit sector. Of the 4 aged care facilities, 3 operate within the Cessnock and surrounds planning area and the remaining facility operates within the Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area.

Application of Community Planning Standards

The application of benchmark formulas to the Cessnock Local Government Area is represented in the following table. Please note: the application of the Department of Health and Ageing formula is based on the 2011 Census population data which suggests the Cessnock Local Government Area had 4,775 residents aged over 70 years. Population projections for people aged 70 years and over are outlined within the table overleaf. This forecasting is important given the expectation that the Cessnock Local Government Area will experience a considerable increase in aged persons (70 years and over) by 2031.

Cessnock Local Government Area Population Aged 70 Years and Over	High Level Care Subsidised Places	Low Level Care Subsidised Places	Estimated Community Packages
Number of current places within the Cessnock LGA	290	301	119
Current benchmark as per Department of Health and Ageing Formula	210	210	119
Projected need for residential care in 2031 with estimated population being 9,300 people	409 Shortfall of 119 Places	409 Shortfall of 108 Places	232 Shortfall of 113 Places
FINDINGS	Could require an additional 119 places by the year 2031.	Could require an additional 108 places by the year 2031.	Requires immediate service expansion.

Recommendations by 2031

The Cessnock Local Government Area in the near future will require increased funding to enable the expanded delivery of formalised care options within the home. To enable this, it is necessary that Council and service providers advocate for the immediate increase in Federal funding for the purpose of expanding formalised care options, including community care packages and extended aged care home packages.

It is also important that neighbouring Local Government Areas explore service needs in respect to residential aged care. The rationale for this is that at the present time the Cessnock Local Government Area has, in comparison, a higher number of high level and low level care places per population over 70 years. As a consequence, it is likely that services within the Cessnock Local Government Area are assisting to meet residential aged care service gaps being experienced in other localities within the Lower Hunter Area. This situation in the long term is not sustainable and could disadvantage the residents of the Cessnock Local Government Area in terms of ease of service access if service expansion were not to occur in other localities across the Lower Hunter (source: *Discussion Paper: The Provision of Residential Aged Care Services and Care Packages within the Cessnock Local Government Area, authored by Cessnock City Council*).

In planning for the Cessnock Local Government Area's expected population growth for people aged 70 years and over, it is encouraged that aged care service providers consider the need and capacity for residential care service development and expansion within the Cessnock Local Government Area. The findings from this Discussion Paper suggest that between 2021 and 2031 the Cessnock Local Government Area may experience a significant gap for both low and high level residential aged care services if expansion were not to occur (note: this assumption is based on the application of the Federal planning benchmark formula 88 residential places per 1,000 of the population aged 70 years and over).

SECTION FIVE

Summary: Future Community Facility Needs



Above: Greta Pre School

5.1 Summary of Findings for Future Community Facility Needs

To determine community facility needs, the methodology included:-

- An analysis of the demographic profile for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and the planning areas within.
- Review of current Cessnock City Council strategic plans that discuss community infrastructure requirements (see Section 1.2).
- Community planning benchmark standards to population ratios were applied and can assist to strategically place community infrastructure in locations where it is needed.
- Population forecasting for both the Cessnock Local Government Area and its smaller planning areas occurred up until 2031.
- Stakeholders were engaged to understand the capacity of current community facilities and their ability to service an increased population.
- A review of current community facilities provided information on their location, the services they provide, ownership details (i.e Council as owner or Council as Reserve Trust Manager) and asset condition.

Below is a summary of findings per community facility type.

5.1.1 Community Halls

- The Cessnock Local Government Area is well supplied with community hall space and this includes those owned by Council, the State of NSW (for example schools), the not for profit sector (from example RSL Halls and Scouts), the private sector (for example licensed premises) and sufficient private function space within, for example, the tourist areas of Pokolbin and Lovedale.
- It is recommended that any future additional proposals for community halls be carefully considered from the perspective of community need and should include an analysis of nearby existing infrastructure, the intended hall's purpose, and envisaged use. It would be preferable in the future that any new community hall type space, be instead located within a multi-purpose community centre and not be a stand-alone building or alternatively be part of a staged development which allows the space to be expanded in the future. Alternatively, if additional community hall facilities are to be constructed, the planning area will need to be reviewed to determine if there is an excess of community halls and whether any older stock within the planning area is surplus to Council's needs.

5.1.2 Early Childhood Facilities

- Based on benchmarking standards for centre based child care and pre-school programs, an additional 398 to 582 licensed places will be required within the Cessnock Local Government Area by 2031. It is noted within the Plan that all four planning areas are earmarked for service growth and this has been formalised via either section 94 plans or Voluntary Planning Agreements associated with a proposed development.
- Immediate expansion is required for the Central Cessnock and Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning areas. This includes expansion for both child care and preschool programs.
- Service development for a minimum 50 place multi-functional early childhood service is required for the Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and surrounds planning area.
- The Avery's Village residential development (Heddon Greta) in its Section 94 Contributions Plan provides an allocation for child care. It should be investigated to determine if the child care centre proposed for the Cliftleigh residential development can be expanded to increase the number of licensed places and accommodate the needs of Heddon Greta and surrounding localities.

5.1.3 Multi-Purpose Community Centre

- It is recommended that by 2031, the Cessnock and surrounds planning area will require in total, two multi-purpose community centres. Potentially, and if to follow the recommendations of this Plan, the existing neighbourhood centre will need to be relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre to an alternative venue within the Cessnock Central Business District. A possible option could be the existing Cessnock Library facility (if this service was to relocate). The second facility should be located on the western side of Central Cessnock, for example the Bellbird area.
- The Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and surrounding areas are likely to experience considerable growth by 2031, and as a result, could transition from a mid-sized township to a sub-regional township. If this were to occur, this planning area would require the construction of a multi-purpose community centre and is earmarked as part of the Huntlee residential development.
- To support community connections, all future multi-purpose centres should include space for neighbourhood centre type services and activities.
- Given the lack of identified community space within the Heddon Greta – Cliftleigh area, a flexible community space will be required. The size for such space could be a minimum 328m². The required design of such space should be investigated and opportunities for co-location could include for example, the intended child care facility and/or sporting precincts.

5.1.4 Seniors Centre

- In catering for an expected growth in population for people aged 70 years and over, it is recommended that space be included within future multi-purpose centres to provide a range of activities that meet the needs of this population group.

5.1.5 Disability Services Facilities

- Space for disability programs should be co-located within multi-purpose community centres.

5.1.6 Youth Centre

- Future youth centres should be co-located within multi-purpose community centres.
- The Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and surrounding areas will require, by 2031, the construction of a youth space. It is recommended that the youth space be co-located within the proposed multi-purpose community centre, earmarked for the Huntlee residential development.
- In regards to the Central Cessnock and surrounds planning area, it is recommended that Council relocate its existing youth centre to a multi-purpose community centre that is recommended within this Plan for construction. The existing youth centre facility, once the construction for a multi-purpose community centre is complete, should be reviewed to determine if it is surplus to Council's needs.

5.1.7 Indoor Recreation Facilities

- The Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre is located near to key recreation assets and this includes a skate park and outdoor open space accommodating sports such as cricket, football and soccer. Given the recreation assets that already exist in this precinct, it is recommended that it be investigated to determine if an indoor recreation facility, for example a sports hall could be constructed and located at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre site.

5.1.8 Performing Arts Centre

- The neighbourhood centre space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre should be reviewed. It is recommended that any future tenure of the space instead have synergies with the arts and cultural services. This could include the provision of art gallery space.

5.1.9 Art Gallery

- The appropriateness of relocating art gallery space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre should be investigated. If the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery were to vacate its existing

premises, the site should be investigated to determine its future usages, including if it is surplus to need.

5.1.10 Cultural Centres

- It is important that Council retain the ownership of Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre given its key location and its heritage listed status. However in terms of its future use, it is likely to be not viable to continue the facility's exclusive use as an arts and crafts centre with operational hours currently at two days per week. Given the facility's key location, opportunities for additional usage are to be considered and it is recommended that a business plan be prepared.

5.1.11 Libraries

- An expanded library facility will be required within the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. Given this, it needs to be determined if the current Cessnock Library facility can expand its floor space, or alternatively if a new location will be required. Preferably the Cessnock Library should remain in a location that is within the Cessnock Central Business District. A potential suitable site for investigation is the corner of Vincent Street and Aberdare Road (Lot 1 DP 772229, Lot 1 DP 956157, Lot 1 and 2 DP 902558, Lot 1 and 2 DP 956505, Alt A and B DP 356041 (total land space 4140m²). Please note: the site for investigation contains a heritage listed building (206 Vincent Street, Cessnock). The building up until 2009 operated as a neighbourhood centre and is currently vacant.
- There is the potential to expand the Kurri Kurri Library considering that land at the rear of the premises, Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 (lot size 789m²) is owned by Cessnock City Council. It should be noted that a laneway separates the building with Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 which could impact on the facility expansion design. With this in mind, the precinct should be allocated funding to develop a master plan and the purpose be to explore opportunities for expanding the library facility.
- The Voluntary Planning Agreement for the Huntlee Residential Development makes the provision for a library. The proposed library is approximately 2000m² and is to be co-located with a youth centre and neighbourhood centre. It should be determined at the time of drafting the design if this facility is to be the main headquarters for library operations given that it would offer more space than the current Cessnock Library (which is approximately 1070m² in size).

5.1.12 Museums

- In the design process for any new library it should be determined if the facility could include an allocated space for temporary museum exhibitions.

5.1.13 Revitalise Ageing Precincts

- Cessnock City Council is the owner or Reserve Trust Manager of two key ageing precincts and both have numerous heritage listed buildings located at the site. These two precincts are located at Richmond Main (a former colliery and ceased operations in 1967) and Greta where there are four community facilities located on land totalling 4,070m². Given the ageing condition of many of the buildings at both precincts it is recommended within this Plan that these precincts undergo a strategic planning process and explore how they can be revitalised and reinvigorated to become key community spaces of the future.
- At Branxton, DP 627860 and DP 1137953 (Lot 1 and 2) have a total land size of 7280m². The buildings and/or services at the site include Branxton Pre School, Branxton Community Hall and Branxton Playgroup. Many of these buildings are owned by Cessnock City Council. However given the ageing condition of some of the buildings, it is recommended that a masterplan be developed for this precinct exploring how it can be revitalised as a key community hub within the planning area.

5.1.14 Aged Care Facilities (Note: Service Provision and Facilities are External to Council)

- Based on benchmarking standards for residential care places, by 2031 an additional 119 places are required for high level care and 108 places for low level care.
- An additional 113 community care packages will be required by 2031.

5.2 Table Summary - Current and Future Needs for Community Facilities within the Cessnock Local Government Area

* Denotes that not all facilities are owned by Cessnock City Council.

*Source: Rawlinsons (2014, Edition 32). *Australian Construction Handbook* (Preschool/Childcare Centre page 79, 6.2.1; Multi-purpose Community Centre page 68, 1.1.1; Indoor Recreation Facilities page 100, 11.6; Libraries page 69, 1.2.5). Construction costs include plumbing, electrical (includes light fittings), sewer connection, fire equipment, telephone and communications. Costs exclude GST.

Facility	Standard of Provision	Current Supply as at 2014	Benchmark Standard/Range as at 2014	Surplus/Shortage as at 2014	Requirement by 2031	Service Area Catchment of Facility	Indicative Construction Costs Per Facility as at 2014 ^x	Estimated Fit Out Costs Per Facility	Land Size
Pre School/ Child Care Centres	1 place for every 5 to 7 children aged 0 to 4 years	800 places*	550 to 770 places	Surplus of at least 30 places	398 to 582 additional licensed places required across the Local Government Area	Local Township and/or Village	\$762,750 (per 50 place facility)	\$300,000	0.4Ha
Community Halls	1 facility per 6,000 to 10,000 persons	15 (at least)	6 to 9	Surplus of at least 6 halls	No additional facilities required	Local Township and/or Village	Future construction not recommended	N/A	N/A
Multi-purpose Community Centres	1 facility per 15,000 to 20,000 persons	2	2.5 to 3.4	Shortage of at least 0.5	Additional facilities required for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessnock and surrounds planning area • Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning area • Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area will require a flexible community space at Heddon Greta/Cliftleigh (minimum size 328m²). 	Planning Area Hub	\$1,962,000 (per 900m ² facility)	\$600,000	0.1 to 0.5 Ha
Youth Centres	1 facility per 3,000 people aged 12 to 18 years	3*	1.7	nil	No additional facilities required, but existing Council owned youth facility should co-locate within a newly constructed multi-purpose community centre	Planning Area Hub	Sole purpose youth facility not recommended	N/A	N/A
Indoor Recreation Facilities	1 facility per 10,000 to 20,000 persons	3*	2.5 to 5	nil	Facility required for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area 	Planning Area Hub	\$1,687,500 (per 900m ² facility)	\$400,000	0.1 to 0.2Ha
Libraries	1 facility per 30,000 (branch library) 1 facility per 15,000 to 20,000 persons (satellite library)	2	2	nil	Facilities required for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning area • Cessnock and surrounds planning area (replacement facility) Facility expansion required for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurri Kurri Library 	Planning Area Hub/ Entire LGA	\$4,670,000 (both at 2,000m ² per facility) \$2,335,000 (per 1,000m ² facility)	\$4,000,000 \$4,000,000 \$2,000,000	0.4Ha 0.1 to 0.2 Ha
Art Gallery	1 facility per 30,000 to 150,000 persons	1	0.3 to 1	nil	No additional facilities required, but could be co-located with other community infrastructure.	Entire LGA	Stand alone art gallery not recommended	N/A	N/A
Civic Centre	1 facility per 30,000 to 120,000 persons	0	0.4 to 1.7	nil	No additional facilities required	Entire LGA	Facility not recommended	N/A	N/A
Performing Arts Centre	1 facility per 50,000 to 120,000 persons	1	0.4 to 1	nil	No additional facilities required	Entire LGA and Neighbouring LGA's	Additional facilities not recommended	N/A	N/A

5.3 Land Acquisition Requirements

Section 5.2 provides an outline of the types of new facilities required by 2031 and includes indicative costs along with suggested facility size and land size. In summary, the following new community infrastructure is proposed within the Plan:-

- Increased early childhood services, namely child care and pre-school programs to accommodate up to an additional 582 licensed places across all four planning areas within the Cessnock Local Government Area. It should be mentioned that within the Cessnock Local Government Area, Council is not the only provider of child care and pre-school facilities, owning approximately 40% of the infrastructure. The number of actual centres to be constructed by Council is dependent on the continued involvement of the private sector. It is unable to be determined at this stage the number of facilities required to be constructed by Council during the life of this Plan and would be subject to gaps in the private market. A gap currently evident is the Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West planning area as noted in the Cessnock City Council Early Childhood Care and Pre School Services: An Analysis of Current and Future Services within the Cessnock Local Government Area (2014). It is recommended that this locality during the life of this Plan be provided with a minimum 50 place centre in the township of Millfield. In addition to this planning area, it is noted that all other planning areas have secured either Voluntary Planning Agreement or Section 94 funds to increase licensed child care places and/or new facilities. In such circumstances where new facilities are proposed, with the exception of Millfield, land acquisition is considered as part of the developer contribution.
- Construction of at least two additional multi-purpose community centre (minimum size 900m² per facility), with one required in the Cessnock and surround planning area and the other within Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area. An additional multi-purpose community centre may also need to be developed in the Cessnock and surrounds planning area, if the current neighbourhood centre activities are relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. Multi-purpose community space (minimum size 328m²) is also required for construction in the Cliftleigh/Heddon Greta locality and should be co-located with other community infrastructure.
- Construction and/or expansion of a total three libraries. The Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 found that both the Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library are at capacity in terms of space, do not meet the current needs and will not be able to meet the needs of future growth population. It was also found that the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning area will require a library branch to accommodate its growing population. This is likely to be required during the life of this Plan and forms part of the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement.
- Construction of an indoor recreation facility within the Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area. This planning area is fortunate to have a superior indoor aquatic centre (Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre) consisting of pools, gym space, a café and other ancillary areas such as first aid and store room area. However, the facility does not have indoor space large enough for sports such as basketball, cricket, netball, volleyball and other like leisure activities. This planning area during the life of the Plan will require the construction of indoor leisure space

similar to the Greta Arts and Sports Hall. This Plan recommends that the indoor recreation facility earmarked for the Cliftleigh residential development be instead investigated for possible relocation and co-located with the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre.

In considering the above proposed new facilities, it is necessary to consider land acquisition costs and Plan for how land can be secured at minimal cost to Council. The table on page 89 advises if land will need to be acquired for the construction of these new facilities. If to follow the strategic directions of the Plan, Council will not need to set aside funds for land acquisition. Rather provision has been made for either new facilities to be constructed on Council owned land or for the purchase of land to be either funded or dedicated via section 94 contributions or voluntary planning agreements.

Note: The Strategic Property Review will also consider land acquisition costs and plan for how land can be secured at minimal cost to Council.

Land Acquisition Requirements for Community Facilities

Facility Type	Requirements by 2031	Number of Facilities Required	Land Acquisition Notes	Is Future Land Acquisition Required?
Early Childhood Facility	Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and Laguna area	A minimum 50 place early childhood centre is required for construction in Millfield and its design should allow pre-school programs, child care and out of school hours care.	A precinct master plan be developed for the lands surrounding Millfield Crawfordville Hall to include the provision of an early childhood centre. It is noted that much of this land is crown land and Cessnock City Council is the Reserve Trust Manager.	No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.
	Kurri Kurri and surrounds area	An early childhood centre is required for the Cliftleigh/Heddon Greta area. Its design should allow pre-school programs, child care and out of school hours care.	The facility including the provision of land has been provided for in the Cliftleigh Planning Agreement.	No. Land dedication has been provided for in the Cliftleigh Planning Agreement.
	Cessnock and surrounds planning area	An early childhood centre is required for the Bellbird North area. Its design should allow for pre-school programs, child care and out of school hours care.	As part of the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan, the developer is required to provide 0.4Ha of land.	No. Land dedication has been provided for in the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan.
	Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning area	An early childhood centre is required for the Branxton/North Rothbury area. Its design should allow pre-school programs, child care and out of school hours care.	The facility including the provision of land has been funded through developer contributions for Huntlee.	No. Land dedication has been provided for in the Huntlee Planning Agreement.
Multi-purpose Community Centres	Cessnock and surrounds planning area	An additional facility is required and an existing facility may need to be redeveloped to accommodate neighbourhood centre activities.	As part of the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan, the developer is required to provide 0.25Ha of land to accommodate a facility that is 500m ² . However, it is preferable that a multi-purpose community centre be at least 900m ² . If the Cessnock Library was to be constructed adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, the redundant library facility could be used as a multi-purpose community centre.	Possible land size increase required. Land dedication has been provided for in the Bellbird North Section 94 Plan. No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.
	Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area	A flexible community space is required to be constructed within the Heddon Greta/Cliftleigh area. The size required could be minimum of 328m ² .	A 750m ² indoor recreation facility has been provided for in the Cliftleigh Planning Agreement. This plan recommends investigating the feasibility of constructing this facility at instead the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park).	No. Land dedication has been provided for in the Cliftleigh Planning Agreement.
	Branxton, East Branxton, Greta planning area	A centre is required to be constructed within the planning area.	The facility including the provision of land to be funded through developer contributions for Huntlee.	No. Land dedication has been provided for in the Huntlee Planning Agreement.
Libraries	Cessnock and surrounds planning area	The Cessnock Library is at capacity in terms of available floor space. The plan recommends determining if the Library should be constructed on Council owned land adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre.	Cessnock City Council owns the following lots, Lot 1 DP 772229, Lot 1 DP 956157, Lot 1 and 2 DP 902558, Lot 1 and 2 DP 956502, Alt A and B DP 356041, Lot 6 Sec 1 DP 758002 (total land area 4140m ²).	No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.
	Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area	The Kurri Kurri Library is at capacity in terms of available floor space. The plan recommends determining if the Library should be constructed and/or expanded on Council owned land adjacent to the Kurri Kurri Community Centre.	Cessnock City Council owns Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 (total land area 789m ²).	No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.
	Branxton, East Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury planning area	An approximate 2000m ² facility is required to be constructed within the planning area.	The facility including the provision of land to be funded through developer contributions for Huntlee.	No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.
Indoor Recreation Facility	Kurri Kurri and surrounds planning area	A facility is required to be constructed within the planning area.	The plan recommends investigating the feasibility of constructing an indoor recreation space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park).	No. Under this proposal, land acquisition is not required.

SECTION SIX 2031: The Strategic Vision



Above: Greta Community Facility Precinct Area

6.1 Achieving the Strategic Vision for Future Community Facilities

When planning the needs for future communities in regards to community facility requirements, the Plan's vision is to have strategically located, accessible and sustainable facilities. They should be multi-purpose in design and this includes being a place to connect communities, promote community wellbeing and engagement.

In achieving such vision and in meeting the needs of future communities in regards to community facility requirements it is recommended that:-

- The Plan to be aligned with Council's future four year Delivery Plan, Operational Plan and long term financial plan. This will ensure that the Plan is embedded within Council's long term strategic planning processes and remains a strategic goal of Cessnock City Council.
- Community infrastructure decisions to be based on four strategic community planning hubs, i.e. Cessnock and surrounds; Kurri Kurri and surrounds; Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and surrounds; Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West.
- Single purpose built community facilities be investigated for rationalisation and instead co-locate services within future multi-purpose buildings or where appropriate seek to construct required new facilities near to existing community infrastructure.
- Maintain where possible existing community hall facilities, however cease constructing future standalone community halls. Instead, community hall type space should be incorporated into the construction of new multi-purpose community centres or co-located with other community facilities.
- Ensure all future multi-purpose community centres include neighbourhood services, a youth space, a senior's room/disability program area and community hall type space.
- In meeting the needs of an increased population, continue to collect where appropriate developer contributions for new community facilities as recommended within this Plan.
- Cessnock City Council has a number of community assets. Therefore it is important to continue collecting Voluntary Planning Agreement funds and Section 94 Contributions for community infrastructure that already exists but which needs to be expanded to provide for future populations.
- Look for opportunities to revitalise ageing community infrastructure precincts along with facilities of heritage value which currently have minimal use but are important to the Cessnock Local Government Area landscape and history.
- Where service provision is not being met by the private market, continue to collect developer contributions for early childhood services. However, Council is not to operate the actual service but instead plan for this role to be undertaken by the not for profit sector.

6.2 Future Design Directions For Community Facilities

Community facilities are important for connecting communities. They provide spaces where people from diverse backgrounds and interests can interact, be supported, engage in learning and participate in social and recreation programs.

In the past, Council has constructed predominantly single function type community facilities. However with an increased population forecast for the Cessnock Local Government Area by 2031 it provides great opportunity to re-consider more current and effective models for delivering community facilities.

Best practice strategies in recent times have seen a push towards more multi-purpose centres as opposed to single function facilities. Multi-purpose facilities have the ability to pool community resources, offer expanded services and in terms of operations are likely to be more economically and environmentally sustainable to operate than facilities with a single function.

In terms of achieving best practice, when planning new or expanded community facilities the following design principles should be considered:-

- Community facilities that have a single function risk being used by a small sized population group and subsequently the facility can become underutilised and potentially not viable to operate. Facilities should therefore be multi-purpose with a design that allows for a diverse range of services, programs and activities. The ability to offer a variety of functions places the facility in a better position to attract people of diverse ages, cultural backgrounds, abilities, income levels and interests.
- Multi-purpose facilities should be designed so that services can operate and co-locate on the one site. The co-location of services places the facility in a better position to be innovative and responsive to community needs. It also promotes the integration of services and promotes ease of access for the user when there is a concentration of compatible services. They should also be designed to offer a range of programs to the community seven days per week. This mixed use also promotes the facility as a space for the entire community as opposed to stereotyping it as a facility available only to a particular population group.
- A multi-purpose community centre should be designed so that it can be a focal point for community connections. In situations of new development, it may be beneficial to place the community facility in adjoining localities to benefit the wider community hub. This may also mean that the facility is placed outside the boundary of a new development. Such placement could assist to integrate older communities with new emerging communities.
- It is not always beneficial to construct a new facility. Opportunities for expansion and/or refurbishment to existing facilities may provide greater opportunities for connecting communities rather than constructing a new centre in a poor location.

- Community facilities should be in locations where key public activity occurs. For example near to commercial areas, libraries, public transport routes, early childhood facilities or other community facilities such as existing community halls. This promotes both convenience and access by offering a one stop shop for users and helps create within the community a central hub for activities.
- It is necessary to plan a multi-purpose facility that can financially sustain itself. When designing multi-purpose facilities, consider opportunities for income generating activities with services or activities that have synergies with community type activities and social enterprise models. This includes for example the inclusion of cafes, professional services such as legal, financial, counselling or other related business services and government agencies in addition to traditional neighbourhood, social, welfare and health type services. In addition to having a Plan of Management for community facilities, in some instances a business plan may be required.
- When designing the floor space for multi-purpose community centres, it should be considered if the facility requires a dedicated site management role. If determined as required, the design of the facility should include the provision of office accommodation for the role. To fund the position, opportunities for cost recovery include lease and hire fees and income from social enterprise initiatives. In managing the facility, the development of a site specific management plan is essential and will assist to determine the operational model of the facility.
- Environmentally sustainable building design principles should be considered for both new buildings and existing buildings that require embellishment. The building design should seek to minimise energy use and seek to include renewable energy options. Opportunities for water use reduction and waste water recycling options should also be considered. Waste minimisation strategies and the inclusion of an on-site waste separation and recycling space should be investigated when designing both new and expanded public buildings.

6.3 Example of a Multi-Purpose Community Facility

City of West Torrens (South Australia)
Total Population – 57,525 people (2011 Census)

Thebarton Community Centre



Image sited on website
<http://indaily.com.au/design/2013/06/14/heritage-small-project-and-sponsors-awards/>

Below: Floor Plan of Thebarton Community Centre

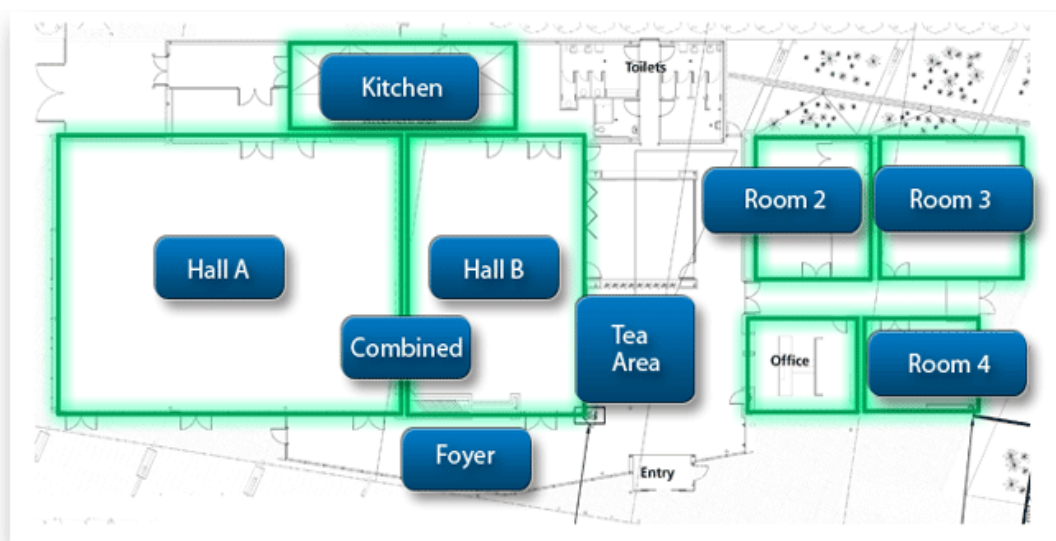


Image sited on website
http://www.westtorrens.sa.gov.au/Services/Recreation_arts_lifestyle/Thebarton_Community_Centre

6.4 Resourcing the Plan and Asset Management

To action the Plan, it is important to consider how it will be resourced. Aligning the Plan's recommendations with Council's future four year Delivery Plans and annual Operational Plan is essential. This ensures the Plan is embedded within Council's long term strategic planning process and remains a strategic goal of Cessnock City Council.

In supporting future sustainable growth, this Plan recognises that it is not financially viable in the long term to maintain and own a large number of single purpose facilities. Hence, multi-purpose facilities are recommended throughout the Plan. It is noted within the Plan, that Council owns many single purpose facilities. Best practice indicates that single purpose facilities do not support strong connected communities. If Council deems these facilities surplus to need and sells them, the funds from such sales should be used to assist in the resourcing of new or expanded community infrastructure.

Developer contributions are another funding source for new or expanded community facilities in locations where there is new population growth. Other opportunities to resource the Plan include both state and federal government grants and partnerships with government or non-government organisations. To assist with ongoing maintenance of community buildings, Council should continue to consider income generating models which include social enterprise along with appropriate hire and lease fees.

It should also be noted that the not for profit sector and the private business sector also provide a range of community facilities within the local government area and include for example early childhood services, medical centres and indoor leisure centres (for instance the Cessnock PCYC facility). Hence, the private and not for profit sector also have a role in actioning the Plan and should be encouraged to construct facilities in accordance with the Plan's findings.

Please note: In summary, the actioning of the Plan's strategies is subject to securing the above income and/or grants and the involvement of the not for profit and private sector.

*Right:
Previous Cessnock Pensioner
Hall*

*The facility is no longer fit
for purpose*



6.4.1 Section 94 Contributions and Voluntary Planning Agreements Commitments

Section 94 Contribution Plans and Voluntary Planning Agreements are a funding source for new or expanded community facilities in locations where there is new population growth. These funds cannot be used to alleviate current infrastructure shortfalls for existing communities where no new population growth is evident.

Section 94 Contribution Plans and Voluntary Planning Agreements have been consulted to identify new or expanded infrastructure proposed for the Cessnock Local Government Area. In terms of the management of future facilities provided to Council as an outcome of a Section 94 Contribution Plan or a Voluntary Planning Agreement, a decision will be made in time to determine if they will be managed by Council or rather leased or licensed to external operators. Please note, the below infrastructure is subject to each development proceeding.

Central Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area

Location	Total Lots	Community hall	CPAC contribution	Early Childhood facility	Indoor sports hall contribution	Library contribution	Neighbourhood centre contribution
Bellbird North	3,500 lots		√	√ construction of new facility	√	√	√ Construction of new 500m ² facility
Government Road Cessnock	370 lots	√ Upgrades to North End Hall	√		√	√	
Nulkaba Section 94 Plan	693 lots	√ Upgrades to North End Hall	√		√	√	
Kitchener	1,000 lots		√		√	√	√

Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area

Location	Total Lots	Community program facility	CPAC contribution	Early childhood facility	Indoor sports hall	Library contribution	Non defined local community facility
Heddon Greta (Kurri Auto's)	130 lots		√			√	√
Cliftleigh	930 lots			√ construction of 30 place facility	√ construction of 750m ² facility (equivalent to one basketball court)	√	
Heddon Greta (Avery's Village)	960 lots	√ apportionment for small facility	√	√ apportionment for 100 place facility		√	

Branxton, East Branxton, Greta Planning Area

Location	Total Lots	Cessnock indoor recreation facility	Community hall contribution	CPAC contribution	Early childhood facility	Library contribution	Neighbourhood centre	Youth centre
Greta (Anvil Creek)	1,364 lots	√ upgrades	√	√		√		
North Rothbury Branxton (Huntlee)	5,400 lots		√ construction of new 500m ² facility		√ construction of a new facility	√ construction of new facility*	√ construction of 500m ² facility*	√ construction of youth facility*

Note: The symbol * as referenced for the Huntlee residential development, refers to these facilities being co-located.

Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West Planning Area

Location	Total Lots	Community hall contribution	CPAC contribution	Indoor sports facilities	Library contribution	Non defined local community facility
Millfield (Mount View)	164 lots	✓ upgrades to local hall	✓	✓ upgrades to indoor recreation facility	✓	
Millfield (Rose Hill)	100 lots		✓	✓	✓	✓ partial contribution

If any of the above existing developer contribution plans are reviewed, this Plan should be taken into account when determining infrastructure requirements.

6.4.2 Asset Management of Community Facilities

Asset management is a comprehensive process of monitoring and maintaining infrastructure at an agreed level of service, in a financially sustainable manner. It seeks to achieve an outcome whereby the community is provided with infrastructure that is fit for purpose.

To assist with asset management planning, using the current condition scores of assets (either derived on site or via desktop assessment), Cessnock City Council utilises 'MyPredictor Modelling Software' to forecast the future condition of assets/buildings using an assumed continuation of existing levels of expenditure. MyPredictor Modelling can also provide an estimate of the required levels of expenditure to maintain the current condition of Council's assets at a relatively stable condition, over a set period of time. The table below further explains condition scores.

Facility/Element Condition		Remaining Life (%)	Description
1	New	100%	Newly constructed, no visible signs of deterioration or very slight condition decline, or rehabilitated back to an "as new" facility.
2	Good	80%	Early stages of deterioration. Functionality, performance and service ability slightly impaired if at all.
3	Fair	60%	Obvious deterioration. Functionality and serviceability affected and maintenance costs rising.
4	Poor	40%	Deterioration severe and starting to limit serviceability. Maintenance costs high and pointing towards rehabilitation. Risk associated with deterioration would also be increasing.
5	Very Poor	1-20%	Deterioration severe with severe serviceability problems. Requiring rehabilitation immediately or no longer serviceable and provides extreme risk in leaving asset in service.
End Of Life		0%	Condemned buildings/assets out of service.

In regards to community facilities (meaning community facilities defined within this Plan) at least three in 2013 had a condition score of poor. If to consider a twenty year projection at the current expenditure level, MyPredictor Modelling forecasts that by 2033 a further three facilities related to this Community Infrastructure Plan could also be in poor condition.

Consequently, the strategies within this Plan are particularly mindful of these community facilities at risk of conditional decline. In such instances where a condition score is currently poor or during the life of this Plan is likely to decline to become poor or very poor, it is proposed within this Plan that the facility be either revitalised or alternatively be investigated to determine if it should be disposed.

6.4.3 Average Yearly Maintenance Costs by Facility Type

To ensure that community facilities are fit for purpose, it is essential that they be well maintained. With this in mind, it is important that maintenance costs are well considered when proposing a new community facility. Based on Cessnock City Council historical data, the table below provides an estimate of the maintenance costs per facility type (excludes operational costs). The maintenance costs assume that each community facility has a 100 year condition life and the estimate below is therefore an average per annum cost for that facility during its service life (meaning some years will require expenditure greater than the per annum average, whilst other years it could require less expenditure).

Facility	Estimated Maintenance Costs (cost is per facility, per annum and excludes operational costs)
Pre School and Child Care Centres	Note: In most situations the organisation that has a lease or license agreement for the facility is responsible for maintenance costs. However if Council was to have this responsibility, the cost could be \$15,000 per annum.
Community Halls	\$15,000 per annum
Multi-purpose Community Centres	\$30,000 per annum
Youth Centres	\$10,000 per annum
Indoor Recreation Facilities	\$15,000 per annum
Libraries	\$30,000 per annum (Note: estimate is based on combined maintenance costs for both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries).
Art Gallery	\$10,000 per annum
Performing Arts Centre	\$37,000 per annum

SECTION SEVEN Action Strategies



Above: Exterior of Cessnock Performing Arts Centre
(includes Cessnock Neighbourhood Service)

7.1 Community Facility Action Strategies 2016-2031

Note: ongoing indicates these strategies are to be considered throughout the life of the Plan
Short Term 2016 to 2019
Medium Term 2016 to 2024
Long Term 2016 to 2031

7.1.1 Generalist Strategies – Applicable to all Planning Areas

Strategy	Timeframe	Opportunities and Limitations
1. Identify opportunities to rationalise single purpose facilities and consider the sale of any surplus infrastructure.	Short Term	There are a number of single purpose community facilities that could be investigated for rationalisation, as part of the Strategic Property Review.
2. All Council owned facilities available for hire (including those trusted to Council by the Crown) to be better promoted on the Council website and should include pictures of the facility (both inside and outside) and indoor room space dimensions.	Short Term	This Plan has identified that Council has a considerable range of diverse community facilities.
3. When assessing residential planning proposals for community infrastructure needs, the four community planning hubs are to be:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessnock and surrounds • Kurri Kurri and surrounds • Branxton, East Branxton, Greta surrounds • Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West 	Ongoing	Community planning hubs provide an opportunity to capitalise on community connections and transport routes. It also minimises risks in duplicating community facilities.
4. Future community hall space to be integrated into newly constructed multi-purpose centres as opposed to being standalone facilities.	Ongoing	Provision of space will be dependent on the design of the multi-purpose community facility.
5. All newly constructed multi-purpose community centres should seek to include areas for neighbourhood centre type activities, youth and community hall spaces and areas for seniors and disability programs.	Ongoing	Provision of space will be further determined by the needs of the population within the community hub planning area. Opportunities present for CYCOS to be re-located within a newly constructed multi-purpose community centre.
6. In line with community need, continue to support the expansion of early childhood facilities across the Cessnock Local Government Area.	Ongoing	In recent times, the private market has been active in expanding early childhood services within some planning areas of the Local Government Area.
7. With any new library design, it should be determined if it is feasible to include the co-location of at least one community museum exhibition space.	Ongoing	This Plan identifies the need for expanded libraries at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri and a new library in the Branxton area (Huntlee residential development).

7.1.2 Strategies - Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area

Strategy	Timeframe	Opportunities and Limitations
<p>8. The inclusion of art gallery space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre to be investigated and should include a determination as to whether the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre should be a space primarily for arts and cultural services.</p>	Short Term	<p>The Samaritans Information Neighbourhood Centre currently occupies space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre.</p> <p>In this investigation an alternative option as documented in the CBD Masterplan (action strategy E08) should also be considered 'Investigate the opportunity to expand the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery (<i>in its current location</i>) and consider to include a local heritage museum and café/restaurant'.</p>
<p>9. A business plan to be developed for the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre including the feasibility of establishing a commercial kitchen and revitalisation of the facility as a key arts and cultural centre.</p>	Medium Term	<p>The business plan should consider both short and long term uses and focus on how Council can maintain and strengthen the role of the facility as a unique cultural asset.</p>
<p>10. By 2031, provide in total two multi-purpose community centres in the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. At the present time the planning area has one facility and is located within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre.</p> <p>However, if the existing community centre activities were to be relocated from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, a second multi-purpose community centre will need to be constructed.</p>	<p>Long Term</p> <p>Long Term</p>	<p>The Bellbird North residential development includes the construction of a 500m² neighbourhood centre. This facility could form part of a staged development for a second multi-purpose community centre.</p> <p>Existing Council owned buildings could provide a relocation opportunity and could include relocation to Cessnock City Library (relates to strategy below).</p>
<p>11. An expanded library facility will be required within the Cessnock and surrounds planning area. The current library site has constraints in regards to expansion; hence an alternative location will need to be investigated.</p>	Long Term	<p>If a civic park is not to be constructed on the corner of Vincent Street and Aberdare Road (is not recommended in the Cessnock CBD Masterplan) the following Council owned lots could be investigated as a potential location for a new library: Lot 1 DP 772229, Lot 1 DP 956157, Lot 1 and 2 DP 902558, Lot 1 and 2 DP 956502, Alt A and B DP 356041, Lot 6 Sec 1 DP 758002 (total area 4140m²). Please note: the site for investigation contains a heritage listed building (206 Vincent Street, Cessnock). The building up until 2009 operated as a neighbourhood centre.</p>

7.1.3 Strategies - Kurri Kurri, Weston, Heddon Greta and Surrounds Planning Area

Strategy	Timeframe	Opportunities and Limitations
<p>12. Given an ageing population, the Abermain School of Arts facility be preserved as a multi-purpose centre that primarily delivers services to an aged population.</p>	Ongoing	The current service delivers a wide range of diverse programs to the aged client group.
<p>13. Investigate the feasibility of expanding the intended minimum 30 place child care facility earmarked for the Cliftleigh residential development and as part of the investigation consider if it can service Heddon Greta and surrounding localities.</p>	Ongoing	The Avery's Village residential development (Heddon Greta) in its Section 94 Contributions Plan provides an allocation for child care.
<p>14. A strategic planning process to occur for the Richmond Main precinct. This investigation should consider opportunities to revitalise the precinct, along with understanding the condition of existing infrastructure at the site.</p>	Short Term	The plan should focus on how Council can maintain and strengthen the role of the facility as a unique cultural asset within the Local Government Area.
<p>15. Investigate the feasibility of constructing an indoor recreation space at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre site (Margaret Johns Park) as opposed to construction within the Cliftleigh residential development.</p>	Medium Term	<p>The Voluntary Planning Agreement for the Cliftleigh residential development includes the construction of a small indoor recreation facility (basketball court).</p> <p>The Margaret Johns Park precinct already has an indoor pool, skate park and open space for sports such as cricket, soccer and football and could provide a co-location opportunity.</p>
<p>16. A master plan to be developed for Lot 1, Sec 19, DP 758590 and surrounding Kurri Kurri Community Centre precinct to determine if it can be expanded to accommodate increased space for library services.</p>	Medium Term	The Kurri Kurri Community Centre is in a key location within the Kurri Kurri Central Business District.
<p>17. When combining the Cliftleigh and Heddon Greta localities, the population by 2031 is projected to be a minimum of 7,500. During the life of this plan, flexible community space will be required. The size required for flexible community space could be a minimum of 328m².</p>	Long Term	<p>At the time of drafting the Plan, there was no community space at Cliftleigh or Heddon Greta.</p> <p>Opportunities for co-location include for example, the intended child care facility and/or sporting precincts.</p>

7.1.4 Strategies - Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury Planning Area

Strategy	Timeframe	Opportunities and Limitations
<p>18. A master plan which considers place activation and revitalisation be developed for both:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DP 758474 (Lot 1,2,11,12), total land area of 4,070m² – the site is occupied by Greta Pre-school (heritage listed), Greta Courthouse (heritage listed), Former Greta Council Chambers (heritage listed) and Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall, and • DP 627860, DP 1137953 (Lot 1 & 2), total land area is 7280m² – the site occupied by Branxton Pre School, Branxton Community Hall and Branxton Play Group. 	Short Term	These sites are key precinct areas and both contain a number of Council owned community facilities and have at least one facility in ageing condition.
<p>19. The proposed library at Huntlee (as listed in the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement) be reviewed to determine if it can be the main administration headquarters for library services.</p>	Medium Term	The proposed library facility at Huntlee is expected to be 2,000m ² . Whereas the current Cessnock Library is much smaller and is 1,070m ² . The Kurri Kurri Library is smaller again at 560m ² .
<p>20. Construct one multi-purpose community centre in the Branxton, East Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury planning area (is listed in the Huntlee Voluntary Planning Agreement). The multi-purpose community centre should include a dedicated youth space.</p>	Long Term	The Huntlee residential development includes the construction of community space and comprises a neighbourhood centre, library and youth centre.
<p>21. In conjunction with the above master plan for DP 627860 and DP 1137953 (see above: strategy 18) it should be determined if the planning area has excess community hall facilities given the increase in stock expected with the Huntlee residential development.</p>	Long Term	The Branxton Community Hall has a commercial kitchen and is used by Meals on Wheels. At least one of the new community facilities in Huntlee should include a commercial kitchen fit out.

*Right:
Branxton Community Hall Precinct*

The site includes a pre-school, play group and community hall.



7.1.5 Strategies - Millfield, Paxton, Wollombi, Laguna and Rural West Planning Area

Strategy	Timeframe	Opportunities and Limitations
<p>22. Given population growth, developer contributions are required for the construction of a minimum 50 place multi-functional early childhood centre that allows for both child care and pre-school programs.</p>	Ongoing	Opportunities near to the Millfield Crawfordville Hall should be considered and will assist with developing a community hub.
<p>23. A precinct master plan be developed for Millfield Crawfordville Hall and its surrounding lands, to include the provision of an early childhood centre. By 2031, an early childhood facility to be provided servicing the Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Wollombi and surrounds planning area.</p>	Medium Term	Millfield has been identified as the most central location within the Planning area.



*Left:
Millfield Crawfordville Hall
and surrounding precinct.*

SECTION EIGHT TO ELEVEN Appendixes



Above: Exterior of Pokolbin Community Hall

SECTION EIGHT

Appendix Recommendations for the Central Cessnock Planning Area and its links to the Cessnock CBD Masterplan

Cessnock City Council in 2012 embarked on a major planning project to develop a Cessnock Central Business District (CBD) Masterplan. In developing the Masterplan significant community consultation occurred with key community stakeholders, interested community members, council officers and Councillors. On 12 December 2012, Cessnock City Council adopted the Cessnock CBD Masterplan, a long term, 20 year strategic plan. The Masterplan outlines 65 initiatives. The Masterplan and its initiatives have been considered in line with the recommendations for the Cessnock and surrounds planning area.

A comparative analysis of both the Masterplan and this Plan's recommendations, have identified a similar strategic approach for community infrastructure within the Cessnock CBD, including improving the efficiency of infrastructure provision within the Cessnock CBD.

In regards to social infrastructure within the Cessnock CBD, the below table identifies action strategies as listed within the Masterplan. A comment is also provided in italic font for how this strategy aligns with the recommendations made within this Plan.

Item	CBD Masterplan Action Strategy
E08	<p data-bbox="451 1265 1439 1435">Investigate the opportunity to expand the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery and consider to include a local heritage museum and a café/restaurant. Combining/co-locating multiple uses in this cultural hub or heritage centre would create a stronger destination/attraction for tourist and increased revenue sources.</p> <p data-bbox="451 1476 1439 1758"><i>Comment: This community infrastructure plan supports the co-location of a cultural hub. However it recommends that an investigation occur to determine the feasibility of an art gallery space being co-located at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre as opposed to the existing Art Gallery facility being expanded. This co-location of cultural assets would assist to develop a cultural hub within the Cessnock CBD. In regards to museum space, within any new library design it should be determined if it is feasible to include the co-location of at least one community museum space.</i></p>

Item	CBD Masterplan Action Strategy
UF3	<p data-bbox="451 396 1461 533">Develop a detailed brief/study for re-development of the Council Administration building into a 2-3 level Council hub. Investigate the inclusion of a larger Cessnock City Library (2,000m² – 2,500m²) with active frontages to Vincent and Cooper Streets and access to quality open space.</p> <p data-bbox="451 573 1461 958"><i>Comment: An approximate one acre parcel of land (over 4000m²) is owned by Cessnock City Council and is adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and has Vincent Street frontage. This parcel of land initially was earmarked as Cessnock’s Civic Park. However the CBD Masterplan explores the option for Civic Park being constructed on this space, or alternatively located on the grounds of Cessnock Tafe. The Masterplan considers both options, however it makes the determination that the preferred location is the grounds of Cessnock Tafe. This therefore would make available the green space at the intersection of Vincent Street and Aberdare Road area and given its size and location near to the proposed mentioned cultural hub (i.e art gallery space within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre) could be a suitable site for a new Library.</i></p> <p data-bbox="451 1001 1461 1173"><i>The existing library facility could be then used as a multi-purpose community centre/neighbourhood centre (existing library facility is 1,070m²). Council’s draft design guidelines for a multi-purpose community centre suggest that their floor space should be at least 900m². Hence the facility size would be adequate for such change in use.</i></p> <p data-bbox="451 1216 1461 1352"><i>Note: In regards to the re-development of the Council Administration building, Cessnock City Council at its Ordinary Meeting on the 20 March 2013 resolved ‘that no further funding be allocated for a new Council Administration Centre in this term of Council’.</i></p>
PD1	<p data-bbox="451 1397 1461 1496">Investigate the opportunity to partner with the TAFE to develop central parklands, which could incorporate a playground, water sensitive urban design measures and opportunities for community gardens.</p> <p data-bbox="451 1538 1461 1711"><i>Comment: As mentioned in the above comment, the outcome of this action would make available the parcel of land initially earmarked for Civic Park (corner of Vincent Street and Aberdare Road – opposite the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre). This community infrastructure plan recommends that this area (known as Civic Park) instead be considered as Cessnock’s new library and museum space.</i></p>

The below diagram provides a proposal for the Cessnock CBD area only and demonstrates its links to the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.

Existing Use:
Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre

Potential Future Uses:
 Continue to be an Arts and Cultural Centre with the inclusion of a commercial kitchen.

The site to be reactivated as a key cultural asset.

Existing Use:
Cessnock Regional Art Gallery

Potential Future Uses:
 Art gallery space could be investigated for co-location within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre.

Upon relocation, this facility could be sold to assist finance the construction costs of other required community infrastructure.

Existing Use:
Cessnock City Library

Potential Future Uses:
 Community multi-purpose centre, and would include designated space for neighbourhood centre programs.

Existing Use:
Cessnock City Council Administration Building

Potential Future Uses:
 Continue to be the Cessnock City Council Administration Building and is recommended in the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.

Existing Use:
Cessnock TAFE Grounds (not a Council owned facility)

Potential Future Uses:
 Central or civic park and is recommended in the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.

Existing Use:
Cessnock Performing Arts Centre (includes Neighbourhood Centre program areas).

Potential Future Uses:
 Continue to be the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, however art gallery space could be accommodated in what was the neighbourhood program area.

Neighbourhood centre programs could be accommodated in the existing Cessnock Library site (assumes a new library will be constructed).

Existing Use:
 Two Council owned facilities (one is a private car detailing business and the other is a defunct neighbourhood centre). The site also has significant land parcels of green space. The total size is over one acre (4,000m²).

Potential Future Uses:
 Construction of new Cessnock City Library and could include museum space.



SECTION NINE

Appendix Community Facilities – Design Specifications

COMMUNITY FACILITIES – DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

In determining what type of community facility is required and what type of spaces should be included within the design it is necessary to undertake a sound strategic planning process.

Matters that need to be considered in the design of a new community facility prior to it being constructed include but are not limited to:-

- An understanding of current population and projected population estimates for the locality and wider planning hub. This will assist to understand potential facility usage and placement.
- Understanding of the demographic profile for the locality and wider planning hub. This will assist to understand what type of spaces should be included in the design. Where development is near to other local government area boundaries, consultation should occur with these Councils to understand the operations and service mix of nearby facilities and any proposed facilities.
- Mapping of neighbouring community services and facilities and could include for example youth, children, disability and aged care services along with an understanding of public transport routes. This information will assist to understand what types of spaces are required within the facility including what service groups/organisations may use the space.
- Identification of special needs within the locality including any significant community or cultural issues. This could assist in the design of a building that is complimentary to the local history and cultural characteristics of the community.
- It is necessary to undertake a thorough community engagement and consultation process at the initial project conception stage. Community engagement and consultation should involve potential user groups (includes sporting, community and cultural groups), welfare and human service providers and community representatives. Engaging with stakeholders at the initial project conception stage provides vital information for what type of facility should be constructed along with the type of spaces required within the facility.

Overall Design Specifications

A community facility should be designed in accordance with the following specifications:-

- The architectural language of the building should serve to identify it as a community facility.
- It should provide a welcoming and friendly environment that reflects the diverse range of activities it will house.
- It should be centrally located, easily accessible, located along public transport routes and near to where key public activity occurs for example near to other community facilities.
- Adequate parking facilities including accessible parking and bicycle racks must be included in the facility design.

- The building design should be multi-purpose and flexible so that it can be adapted to accommodate a variety of purposes and a changing demography.
- As a community facility, the design should aim to set a precedent within the local area for high-quality design and construction.
- The appearance of the building in both form and materials should respect that of its context, and serve to integrate it into the surrounding natural and built environment.
- It should incorporate the principles of environmentally sustainable design, and include water reticulation and re-use, passive solar design wherever possible and incorporate elements of thermal mass to moderate internal building temperatures.
- To encourage the minimisation of crime opportunities post the development phase, the building design must incorporate crime prevention through environmental design principles.
- With the construction of any new community facility, options for social enterprise models should be considered. For example a social enterprise model that incorporates both a commercial space and a neighbourhood centre type activity could assist to raise income for ongoing building maintenance and expansion.

Specific Design Specifications

The overall objective of the specifications is the construction of a safe, habitable space that achieves a design that allows for optimum use of the facility and is economically viable to operate.

The below specifications must be incorporated into the building's design:-

- The design should accommodate full occupancy of the facility – i.e. allows for activities to be undertaken in all areas of the community facility simultaneously.
- The building must comply with all current and applicable Acts, Regulations, Building Codes and Australian Standards. Compliance with Building Code of Australia requirements is to be designed for each habitable space independently – i.e. a user must have compliant egress (for example) from a single habitable space independently with subsequent access restricted to associated circulation and amenities. Compliant egress must not be reliant on access to other habitable spaces.
- The building must maximise natural ventilation and opportunity for natural heating and cooling.
- Windows are to allow for natural ventilation, preservation of views and sunlight penetration to accord with reasonable energy control. The building design must maximise natural light penetration into all internal areas rather than relying on skylights to ameliorate poor design.
- Roof, ceiling and walls are to be insulated for sound control.
- The roof water from the building is to be collected and stored for reuse in flushing of toilets and garden irrigation.
- As a public facility, the building must be laid out to incorporate a high level of passive security and be constructed from resilient, damage-resistant materials.
- An equipment room providing a centralised space for the housing of telecommunications should be included in the design of community facilities.
- Telecommunications should be designed to meet the activities intended for the facility and be flexible and adaptable to future needs.
- Minimum maintenance finishes are essential.

- In encouraging shared use amongst community groups, adequate storage areas are required within the design.

SECTION TEN

Appendix Council Owned or Managed Facilities Considered in this Plan

Early Childhood Facilities

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Land Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Aberdare Pre School	58-60 Cessnock Street, Aberdare	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Bellbird Pre School	19 Kalingo Street, Bellbird	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Cessnock Multi-purpose Centre	5 Dudley Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Out of School Hours Vacation Care	112 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	N/A
Hunter Prelude Early Intervention Centre	131 Northcote Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri Early Childhood Centre	107 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Weston Pre School Inc	22 Scott Street, Weston	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Planning Area			
Greta Pre School	1 Water Street, Greta	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	Heritage Listed
Branxton Pre School	35 John Street, Branxton	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Play Groups

Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Kurri Kurri Play Group	107 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Planning Area			
Branxton Play Group	35 John Street, Branxton	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Multi-Purpose Community Centres

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Neighbourhood centre space is provided within the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre	198-202 Vincent Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Kurri Kurri Community Centre is co-located with the Kurri Kurri Library	245 -251 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed

Youth Centres

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service	49D Aberdare Road, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Indoor Recreation Facilities

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre	105 Mount View Road, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Planning Area			
Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall	1 Water Street, Greta	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Community Halls

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Bellbird Community Hall	Wollombi Rd, Bellbird	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kearsley Community Hall	22 Allandale Street, Kearsley	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	N/A
North End Hall	Church Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Pokolbin Community Hall	126 McDonalds Road, Pokolbin	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	Heritage Listed
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Abermain Plaza Hall	3 Bathurst Street, Abermain	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall	112 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri Senior Citizens Hall	132 Barton Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Weston Civic Centre	69 Station Street, Weston	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Area			
Branxton Community Hall	35 Bowen Street, Branxton	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Greta Arts and Sports Community Hall	1 Water Street, Greta	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Former Greta Courthouse	98 High Street, Greta	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed
Rural West Planning Area			
Crawfordville / Millfield Community Hall	Crawford Ave, Millfield	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	Heritage Listed
Ellalong Community Hall	39 Onley Street, Ellalong	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Laguna Community Hall	3734 Main Rd, Laguna	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Wollombi Community Hall	2895 Wollombi Rd, Wollombi	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Facilities for Aged and Disability Services

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Property not named	22 Allandale Road, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Abermain School of Arts	209 Cessnock Road, Abermain	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	Heritage Listed

Cultural Centres

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre	200 Wollombi Road, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed
Cessnock Gem and Mineral Club	Stephen Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Richmond Main	Main Road 135, Leggett's Drive, Richmond Vale	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed
Greta, Branxton, North Rothbury Planning Area			
Former Greta Council Chambers	96 High Street, Greta	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed
Rural West Planning Area			
Wollombi Cultural Centre	2888 Wollombi Road, Wollombi	Crown Land - Council is Reserve Trust Manager	N/A

Library Services

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Cessnock Library	65-67 Vincent Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area			
Kurri Kurri Library	245-251 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed

Performing Arts Centre

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Cessnock Performing Arts Centre	198-202 Vincent Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed

Art Gallery

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Art gallery, currently occupied by the Cessnock Regional Art Gallery	16 Vincent Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A

Museum

Kurri Kurri and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Richmond Main	Main Road 135, Leggett's Drive, Richmond Vale	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed

Other Buildings Not Currently In Use

Cessnock and Surrounds Planning Area		Ownership Status	Heritage Status
Former Senior Citizens Centre	28 North Avenue, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	N/A
Former Cessnock Neighbourhood Centre Services ceased operating from the building in 2009 given their relocation to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The building remains vacant.	206 Vincent Street, Cessnock	Cessnock City Council	Heritage Listed

SECTION ELEVEN

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