



CESSNOCK
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN
PART E: SPECIFIC AREAS



**E.19:
BRANXTON TOWN CENTRE**

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E19.1.1 Overview

This chapter of the Cessnock Development Control Plan (CDCP) 2010 provides specific controls for development within the Branxton Town Centre.

Branxton is a small township with a distinct heritage character and rural landscape setting. Its main street, Maitland Street, forms part of the old New England Highway. A number of heritage buildings address the street.

There are two significant changes that have occurred or are occurring in the area that have implications for the Branxton Town Centre.

Until recently, the centre had serviced passing trade associated with the New England Highway. Since the opening of the Hunter Expressway, there has been a significant reduction in traffic volumes. However, this has contributed greatly to the amenity of the centre and provides opportunities to reclaim the corridor for more people-friendly activities and functions.

The second major change in the area is the development of the Huntlee Town Centre. Branxton has been the focus of commercial and social activities for the broader sub-region. The Huntlee Town Centre comprises a mixed use area of approximately 200 hectares. Plans indicate that the centre will provide a range of uses including retail, service industries, bulky goods, commercial, entertainment, residential, educational and community. The size and diversity of uses at Huntlee will service the Branxton Sub-regional Area. However, Branxton has a unique streetscape that contains many heritage buildings. With appropriate treatment, Branxton will become a very attractive and unique centre.

E19.1.2 Vision for the Branxton Town Centre

The vision for the Branxton Town Centre is that, by 2041:

Branxton is a vibrant village centre that continues to build upon its strength as an important heritage town in the Hunter Valley. It has developed an attractive and active main street that is encircled and supported by a compact urban form, respecting its unique heritage and rural setting.

It is a local place of commerce, innovation, history and recreation.

E19.1.3 Chapter Objectives

The objectives of this chapter are to:

1. Revitalise the main street of Branxton (Maitland Street);
2. Increase connectivity to and within the Town Centre;
3. Improve approaches and gateways;
4. Strengthen relationships to recreation areas;
5. Rationalise parking;
6. Respond to unique heritage and rural setting; and
7. Enable and encourage future development.

E19.1.4 Application

This chapter forms part of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 and applies to the Branxton Town Centre, identified in Figure 1.

This Chapter was adopted by Council on 19 June 2019.



Figure 1: Branxton Town Centre

E19.1.5 Purpose of this Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to provide specific standards for development within the Branxton Town Centre.

Council will consider the provisions of this chapter in determining development applications. Council, at its discretion may consent to an application that departs from the provisions of this chapter. Where this occurs, applications should be accompanied by comprehensive justification that supports the variation.

E19.1.6 Relationship to other plans and chapters of the Cessnock DCP 2010

This chapter should be read in conjunction with all relevant chapters of the CDCP 2010, including:

- Chapter C.1 Parking and Access
- Chapter C.6 Access and Mobility
- Chapter C.8 Social Impact Assessment and Crime Prevention through Environment Design (CPTED)
- Chapter C9: Development on Flood Prone Land (Note 3.8 of this chapter applied to Branxton Commercial Precinct)
- Chapter D.2 Urban Housing
- Chapter D.3 Industrial Development
- Chapter D.5 Outdoor Signage
- Chapter D.8 Temporary Events

- Chapter D.9 Outdoor Dining
- Chapter D.12 Heritage Conservation and Design Guidelines

Where there is an inconsistency between this chapter and other chapters of CDCP 2010, the provisions of this chapter prevail. If a development application has been made before the commencement of this chapter in relation to land to which this chapter applies and the application has not been finally determined before that commencement, the application must be determined as if this chapter had not commenced.

E19.1.7 Structure Plan

The Structure Plan map at Figure 3 identifies the basic development principles that apply to development in the town centre.

Objective

- (a) Development and associated works contribute to the achievement of the strategic vision for the Branxton Town Centre.

Control

1. Development is generally consistent with the structure plan at Figure 3.



Figure 2: View along west along Maitland Street from Anvil Creek Bridge.



Figure 3: Structure Plan

E19.1.8 Design Quality: Addressing the Street and Public Domain

Objectives

- (b) To provide fine grain, high quality tenancy frontages that address the street and public domain in a positive manner.
- (c) To minimise and ameliorate the effect of blank walls to the street and public domain.
- (d) To reinforce street edge conditions that contributes to local heritage character.

Controls

1. Entries to retail and commercial premises are to be legible and accessible from the public domain.
2. Development with a blank wall is not acceptable. If no other design outcome is possible due to site constraints, walls are to minimise size and impact and be complimentary to the streetscape.
3. Corner buildings fronting a laneway or publicly accessible through-site link are to be designed to include elements that open out to or overlook the laneway (e.g. windows, entrance points, articulation, murals).



Figure 4: Public domain, laneway and through site treatments. Intersection of Maitland and Clift Streets and John Rose Avenue.

E19.1.9 Active Frontages¹ and Awnings

Objectives

- (a) To promote lively, active streets in the Branxton Town Centre.
- (b) To ensure that development contributes to the quality, activity, safety and amenity of streets and the public domain.
- (c) To provide for comfortable pedestrian environment through the provision of awnings.
- (d) To contribute to the vitality of streets by maximising entries and display windows to retail uses and minimising blank walls.

Controls

1. Active frontages are to be provided in the locations nominated on the Active Frontages Map at Figure 5.
2. Active frontages are to be designed in accordance with the following criteria:
 - a. The ground floor level is at the same level as the footpath.
 - b. At the minimum, 70% of the ground floor frontage is to be transparent glazing.
 - c. Foyer spaces are not to occupy more than an 8m-width of a street frontage.
 - d. Enclosed glazed shopfronts are preferred to open shopfronts, except for food and drink premises, which are encouraged to provide open shopfronts.

¹ **Note:** An active frontage is not required for any part of a building that is used for any of the following:

- a. entrances and lobbies (including as part of mixed use development);
- b. access for fire services; and
- c. vehicle access.

- e. Security grilles may only be fitted internally behind the shopfront and are to be fully retractable and at least 50% transparent when closed.
- 3. Verandahs or awnings are to be provided on all required active street frontages, as indicated on the Active Frontages Map at Figure 5.

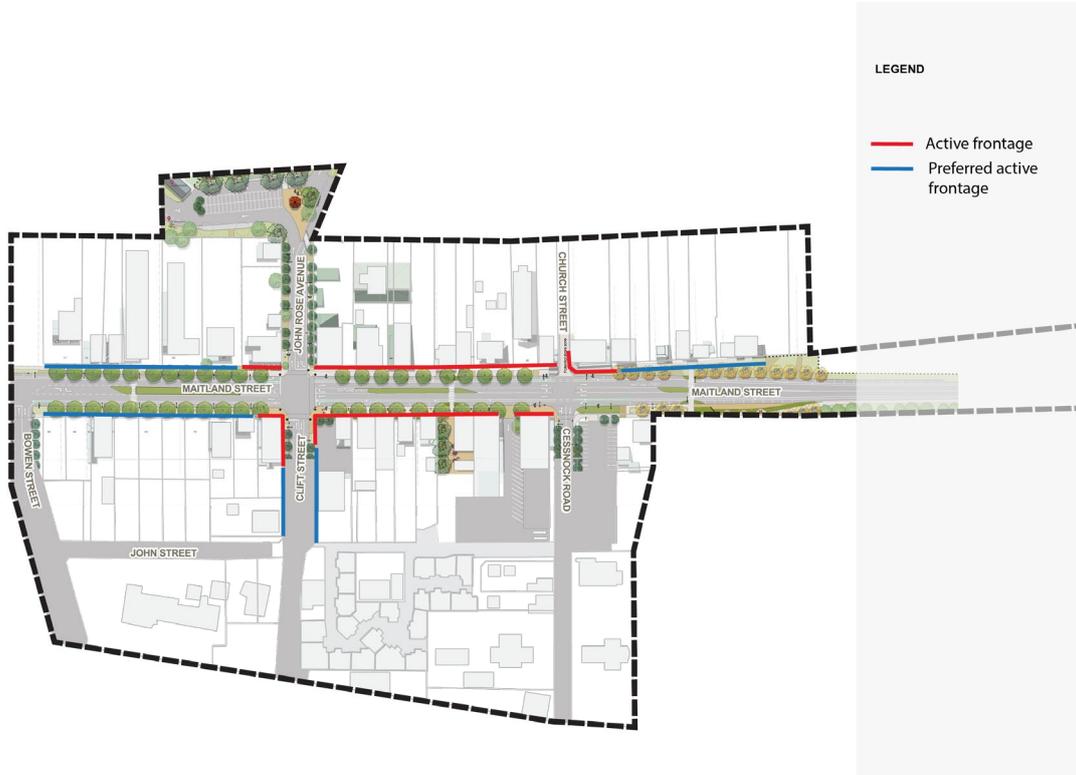


Figure 5: Active Frontages Map



Figure 6: Maitland Street. View east along Maitland Street.

E19.1.10 Building Materials, Finishes and Colours

This Section applies to both heritage and non-heritage buildings within the Branxton Town Centre.

Objectives

- (a) To encourage building materials, finishes and colours that create a finer texture and adds visual interest to streetscape.
- (b) To encourage use of sustainable building materials and methods.

Controls

1. Developments are to use a combination of colour and texture to provide visual interest in building facades (e.g. use colour to articulate vertical proportions of buildings or building entries).
2. Building materials and finishes should be reflective of or complimentary to the built heritage in the centre.

E19.1.11 Signage

Objectives

- (a) To ensure signage is respectful of the heritage setting of the town and the era and architecture of the building.
- (b) Signage not dominate the building or streetscape.

Controls

1. Development within the heritage conservation area shall be accompanied by a signage strategy that is approved by Council's Heritage Architect.

E19.1.12 Built Form and Setbacks

Objectives

- (a) To achieve strong, consistent built form definition of streetscapes and all other areas of public domain.
- (b) To ensure a well-scaled public domain that prioritises pedestrian over vehicular use.
- (c) To ensure that the scale, modulation and façade articulation of development responds to its context.
- (d) To ensure development reinforces the existing and desired character of the Braxton Town Centre.
- (e) To avoid significant overshadowing of parks, public streets and places.
- (f) To ensure roads and access arrangements integrate pedestrian and cyclist access, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, and are suitable for the nature and volume of traffic in the Town Centre.
- (g) To create a legible street environment with a good human scale.

Controls

1. Development shall be within 20% of the average setback of buildings on each side. If there is no building on one side; within 20% of the other building. If there are no buildings, generally consistent with the streetscape.
2. Each building facade is to be well articulated to differentiate between the base, middle and top.
3. Building design shall reflect design elements of the established buildings in the streetscape; including roof pitch, bulk and scale, materials and verandahs.
4. Side setback should maintain the rhythm of the buildings in the street.

E19.1.13 Height in Storeys

Objective

- (a) To ensure the height in storeys of development reinforces the desired character of the Branxton Town Centre.
- (b) To protect view corridors within the Branxton Town Centre to the surrounding rural setting.

Controls

1. Building heights should be within 20% of the average height of the adjoining buildings.
2. If there is an adjoining building on one side or the building is on a corner, the building height is within 20% of the adjoining building.
3. If there is no adjoining building the maximum height of the building is 8.5 metres (2 storeys).
4. Taller buildings may be considered on the corners of Maitland Street where it is demonstrated that the building design contributes positively to the streetscape.

E19.1.14 Parking and Access

Objectives

- (a) To provide adequate car parking to meet the needs of the Branxton Town Centre.
- (b) To ensure that car parking requirements for commercial and retail uses in the Huntlee and Branxton Town Centres are comparable.
- (c) To encourage economic growth within the town centre by providing alternatives to providing car parks in certain circumstances.
- (d) To facilitate development at the rear of lots along Maitland Street (South) between Cessnock Road and Clift Streets.
- (e) To prioritise pedestrians movement along Maitland Street between Cessnock Road and Clift Street.

Controls

1. Retail and commercial development in the town centre is to provide on-site parking generally in accordance with Table 1.

Table 1: Car parking requirements for retail and commercial premises.

Use	Requirement
Retail uses	1 space per 25m ² GFA for supermarkets and discount department stores 1 space per 50m ² for all other retail uses
Commercial	1 space per 50m ²

2. All other development in the town centre is to provide on-site parking generally in accordance with Part C.1 Parking and Access.

3. Where car parking cannot be achieved on the site or it is undesirable because of impact on heritage or streetscape, council will consider entering into a Planning Agreement to contribute to car parking facilities or access improvements (for example; bus, cycle or walking facilities) elsewhere in the town centre.
4. Driveways are not permitted on active frontages (refer to Figure 5) unless there is no alternative, and it is justified that the driveway would have no unacceptable impacts on pedestrian safety.
5. Car parking at the rear of properties along Maitland Street (south) between Cessnock Road and Clift Street should be constructed from boundary to boundary and in a manner that allows vehicular movement between one property and the next. Rights of way should be established on titles that provides legal access across these properties².



Figure 7: Indicative integrated parking solution and development opportunity area at the rear of buildings - Maitland Street (Southern side).

E19.1.15 Pedestrian and Bike Network

Objectives

- (a) To prioritise pedestrian and bicycle access, connectivity and safety in the town centre.

² Note: To achieve the significant public domain plan improvements along the southern side of Maitland Street between Cessnock Road and Clift Streets it is desirable to close vehicular accesses to four properties. Alternative arrangements to provide access to the rear of these lots will need to be in place to before works can commence. Council is committed to work with landowners of these sites to achieve the proposed integrated parking solution.

- (b) To ensure that development is consistent with the Cessnock Bicycle Strategy 2016.
- (c) To promote cycling through the strategic placement of bike storage facilities in the public domain.

Controls

1. Provision of cycleways and public bicycle parking facilities is to be consistent with the Cessnock Bicycle Strategy 2016.
2. Bicycle parking facilities are to be designed in accordance with the Australian Standard AS2890.3 (2015): Parking facilities Bicycle parking.

E19.1.16 Public Open Space and Landscaping

Objectives

- (a) To integrate high quality landscaping into the built environment of the Branxton Town Centre.
- (b) The public landscape should create visual interest and character that is interconnected to public open space.

Controls

1. Development is to be generally consistent with the Branxton Town Centre Public Domain Plan.

E19.1.17 Sustainable Development and Water Sensitive Urban Design

Objectives

- (a) To apply principles and processes in the private and public domain that contribute to Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD).
- (b) To reduce the environmental impacts of development.
- (c) To reduce the causes and impacts of the urban heat island effect.
- (d) To increase the resilience of development to the effects of climate change.
- (e) To reduce the use of potable water.
- (f) To minimise waste.
- (g) To improve biodiversity.
- (h) To promote Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), including the restoration of urban drainage systems, waterways and canals.

Controls

1. For non-residential development, all new water fittings and fixtures (e.g. showerheads, water tap outlets, urinals and toilets) are to be the highest Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) star rating available at the time of development.

2. Non-residential development is to be designed to minimise the need for active heating and cooling by incorporating passive design measures related to glazing, natural ventilation, thermal mass, external shading and vegetation.
3. Lighting for streets, parks and other public domain spaces to be provided as part of a development should be energy-efficient lighting, such as LED lighting.
4. Development is to be designed so that the flow of pollutants from the site due to stormwater is reduced.
5. Developments 1,000sqm or greater in area are to be accompanied by a Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) Report outlining the measures to be incorporated in the proposal. WSUD techniques shall improve the quality of water entering the waterways (e.g. porous pavements, rain gardens and infiltration trenches).