

Cessnock

Signage Strategy



MOIR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Project Objectives
- 1.3 Report Overview & Structure
- 1.4 Literature Review
- 1.5 Existing Planning Framework
- 1.6 Australian Standards
- 1.7 TASAC
- 1.8 Signage Strategy Process
- 1.9 Stakeholder and Community Involvement

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 Regional Context
- 2.2 The Hunter Region
- 2.3 Cessnock LGA

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Road Hierarchy
- 3.2 Access Points
- 3.3 Towns
- 3.4 Key Tourist Points
- 3.5 Vineyards District

4. SIGNAGE STRATEGY 5. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Principles of Good Signage
- 4.2 Pictograms
- 4.3 Signage Family
- 4.4 Themes and Inspiration
- 4.5 Gateway Signs
- 4.6 Suburb Entry Signs
- 4.7 Street Signs
- 4.8 Community Facility Entry Signs
- 4.9 Community Facility Information Sign
- 4.10 Town Centre Information Sign
- 4.11 Walkway/Cycleway Sign
- 5.1 Implementation Program
- 5.2 Placement Principles
- 5.3 Maintenance
- 5.4 Installation Recommendations

1

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Project Objectives
- 1.3 Report Overview & Structure
- 1.4 Literature Review
- 1.5 Existing Planning Framework
- 1.6 Australian Standards
- 1.7 TASAC
- 1.8 Signage Strategy Process
- 1.9 Stakeholder and Community Involvement

2

CONTEXT

3

ANALYSIS

4

SIGNAGE STRATEGY

5

IMPLEMENTATION

1.1 Introduction

Signage is a powerful tool for communities to develop a strong brand for their region, create a positive first impression for visitors, provide important information about an area and aid navigation and way-finding. The Hunter Valley Wine Country Strategy was adopted by Cessnock City Council on 18th February 2015

This Signage Strategy has been developed by Moir Landscape Architecture (MLA) for Cessnock City Council to provide guidance on the planning, design and installation of signage in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). It is intended to facilitate the development of well designed and positioned signage that reflect the values of the region and communicates a strong brand identity.

Legible and consistent signage plays an important role in the streetscape and can improve peoples understanding and experience of their environment. A hierarchy of signage has been developed to inform and direct pedestrians and motorists around the Cessnock Local Government Area.

The physical signs presented in this Strategy are just one tool which people use to navigate and are a component of a broader wayfinding system which includes websites and phone apps, printed maps, marketing material and vehicle GPS systems.

This Strategy is to be read in conjunction with the Hunter Valley Wine Country Signage Strategy which deals specifically with tourism signage for the wine region. The Hunter Valley Wine Country Signage Strategy is a joint project between Cessnock City Council and Singleton Council.

1.2 Project Objectives

The main objective of this Signage Strategy is to guide well designed and positioned signs to improve vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding throughout Cessnock Local Government Area and enhance the image and branding of Cessnock. Specific objectives include:

- Improve wayfinding to destinations within Cessnock LGA.
- Ensure that signage is compatible with the desired visual character of Cessnock LGA.
- Ensure signage is installed in suitable locations.
- Ensure signage is of a high quality, design and finish.

1.3 Report Overview & Structure

<h3>BACKGROUND</h3> <h1>1</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INTRODUCTION PROJECT OBJECTIVES BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS PROJECT PROCESS STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT 	<p>The first section of this Strategy provides an overview of the project, its objectives and development processes.</p>
<h3>CONTEXT</h3> <h1>2</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REGIONAL CONTEXT STUDY AREA 	<p>Part two outlines the context of the study area including a contextual overview of the Cessnock LGA in relation to surrounding regions.</p>
<h3>ANALYSIS</h3> <h1>3</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REVIEW OF EXISTING SIGNAGE CESSNOCK LGA FEATURES 	<p>Analysis of the region was undertaken through a number of site visits, desktop investigation and consultation with Council staff. This analysis was used to identify opportunities and constraints and assisted in guiding the concept development process.</p>
<h3>SIGNAGE STRATEGY</h3> <h1>4</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRINCIPLES OF GOOD SIGNAGE SIGNAGE FAMILY SIGNAGE TYPES 	<p>Section four outlines the family of new signs that are proposed for the Cessnock LGA. The proposed signs utilise an appropriate and consistent visual communication system to convey messages quickly and effectively. The signs reflect the character of Cessnock LGA and provide a unified approach to design elements in terms of materials, appearance, graphics and colours.</p>
<h3>IMPLEMENTATION</h3> <h1>5</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLACEMENT PRINCIPLES REMOVAL AND UPGRADE PROGRAM MAINTENANCE INSTALLATION RECOMMENDATIONS 	<p>Part five provides recommendations on the installation of the new signs including the removal and upgrade of existing signs, priorities for the installation of new signs, placement principles and ongoing maintenance recommendations.</p>

1.4 Literature Review

The following documents have been reviewed as part of the preparation of the Cessnock LGA Signage Strategy and the information contained in these documents has been taken into consideration in the development of the Signage Strategy.

- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 - Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64)
- Tourist Signposting Manual, Roads and Maritime Services and Destination NSW
- Cessnock City Council Local Environment Plan 2011
- Cessnock City Council Development Control Plan 2010
- Cessnock 2023 Community Strategic Plan
- Cessnock CBD Masterplan, Sept/Oct 2012
- Sustainable Cessnock - Cessnock CBD Business and Marketing Plan, August 2009
- Cessnock Chamber of Commerce Business Plan, 2011-2012
- Branxton Urban Design Framework, Andrews Neil Urban Design Group 2010
- Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism Business Plan, 2011-2012
- Vineyards District Community Vision Community Consultation Report
- Cessnock Social and Cultural Plan
- Draft Cessnock City Economic Profile, Strategy and Action Plan 2013 -2018
- Hunter Visitor Economy Draft Destination Management Plan, July 2013

1.5 Existing Planning Framework

1.5.1 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY NO. 64 - ADVERTISING AND SIGNAGE (SEPP64)

SEPP64 has been prepared under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (The EP&A Act) to introduce comprehensive provisions to ensure that outdoor signage is well located. It applies to all types of signs and advertisements that advertise or promote goods services or events and any structure or vessel that is used for the display of signage that is permitted under another environmental planning instrument and is visible from a public place or reserve. It does not include signage that is 'exempt development' under another environmental planning instrument or traffic signs. It applies to the whole of the state of NSW.

1.5.2 CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL LEP 2011

The Cessnock *Local Environment Plan 2011 (LEP 2011)* is a legal instrument that imposes standards to control development.

The Cessnock City Council *LEP 2011* defines signage types which are exempt from Council's consent under 'Schedule 2 Exempt Development' of the *LEP*. Exempt development may be carried out without the need for development consent under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act).

The *LEP 2011* covers private and commercial signs, including temporary signs for special events and political advertising.

1.5.3 CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL DCP 2010

Cessnock City Council's *Development Control Plan (2010)* contains two sections that specifically relate to outdoor signage.

Part D5 contains guidelines on outdoor signage applicable to the construction, erection, placement, alteration, illumination, relocation, attachment, painting or repainting of all existing and proposed advertising structures that are visible or likely to be visible from any public place, public road or adjoining property whether fixed or mobile. It applies to all areas covered by the DCP and includes including specific provisions for signage on land that buffers the Vineyards District.

Part E: Specific Areas, E.3 Vineyards District applies to land in the Vineyards District as identified in the DCP (2010). Appendix 5 contains a *Signage Code for the Vineyards District* which focusses specifically on the requirements for signage within this defined area.

1.5.4 CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL VINEYARDS DISTRICT SIGNAGE SYSTEM POLICY

Cessnock City Councils *Vineyards District Signage System Policy* is a guide to the **design**, materials and siting of advertising structures and signs in the Vineyards district which extends **across** both Cessnock and Singleton Council areas. The Policy defines the components of the existing Vineyards signage system and is intended to achieve an appropriate style and standard of signage for the Vineyards District.

1.6 Australian Standards

Design and installation of outdoor road signage is to be in accordance with relevant Australian Standards including:

- AS1742 - 2010 Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices Set
- AS1743 - 2001 Road Signs - Specifications
- AS2890 - 2009 - Parking Facilities Set

1.7 TASAC

Tourist signposting for installation on State Roads in NSW is assessed by the *Tourist Attraction Signposting Assessment Committee (TASAC)*. TASAC is represented by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), Tourism NSW and the NSW regional tourism organisations.

TASAC has overall responsibility for the planning and implementation of tourist signposting systems and aims to ensure that adequate, consistent signposting is provided to visitors within the framework of a total statewide tourist information system.



1.8 Signage Strategy Process

1. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS PHASE

The research and analysis phase of the project included a review of the existing signage within the Cessnock LGA. A thorough site analysis, photographic survey, desktop review of existing documents and meetings with relevant council staff and stakeholders were undertaken during this phase.

2. DEVELOP OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The constraints and opportunities of the study area were identified through a combination of site analysis and stakeholder workshops. These formed the basis of the Signage Strategy's objectives and recommendations.

3. DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PHASE

The development phase of the project involves development of signage concepts and draft recommendations for the design and installation of the signs. The draft Signage Strategy will be developed and refined in conjunction with feedback from Community and Stakeholder Meetings.

5. REVIEW OF DRAFT SIGNAGE STRATEGY

Stakeholders will have an opportunity to review the Draft Signage Strategy and provide input into its development prior to finalisation of the document.

6. SIGNAGE STRATEGY FINALISATION

The Signage Strategy will be finalised in accordance with responses from the community, stakeholders and Council staff.

1.9 Stakeholder & Community Involvement

The success of the development and implementation of the Signage Strategy requires a strong alliance between Council and stakeholders. The consultation process is about effectively involving key stakeholders and the general public in the decision making process and consultation formed an integral component of the Signage Strategy development.

An interactive consultation program was developed to ensure the needs of the community and stakeholders were addressed. Each consultation provided feedback and additional insights to influence the next step in the development process. Stakeholder workshops held over the course of the Signage Strategy development phase included meetings with tourism operators and local businesses, Council staff and Councillors.

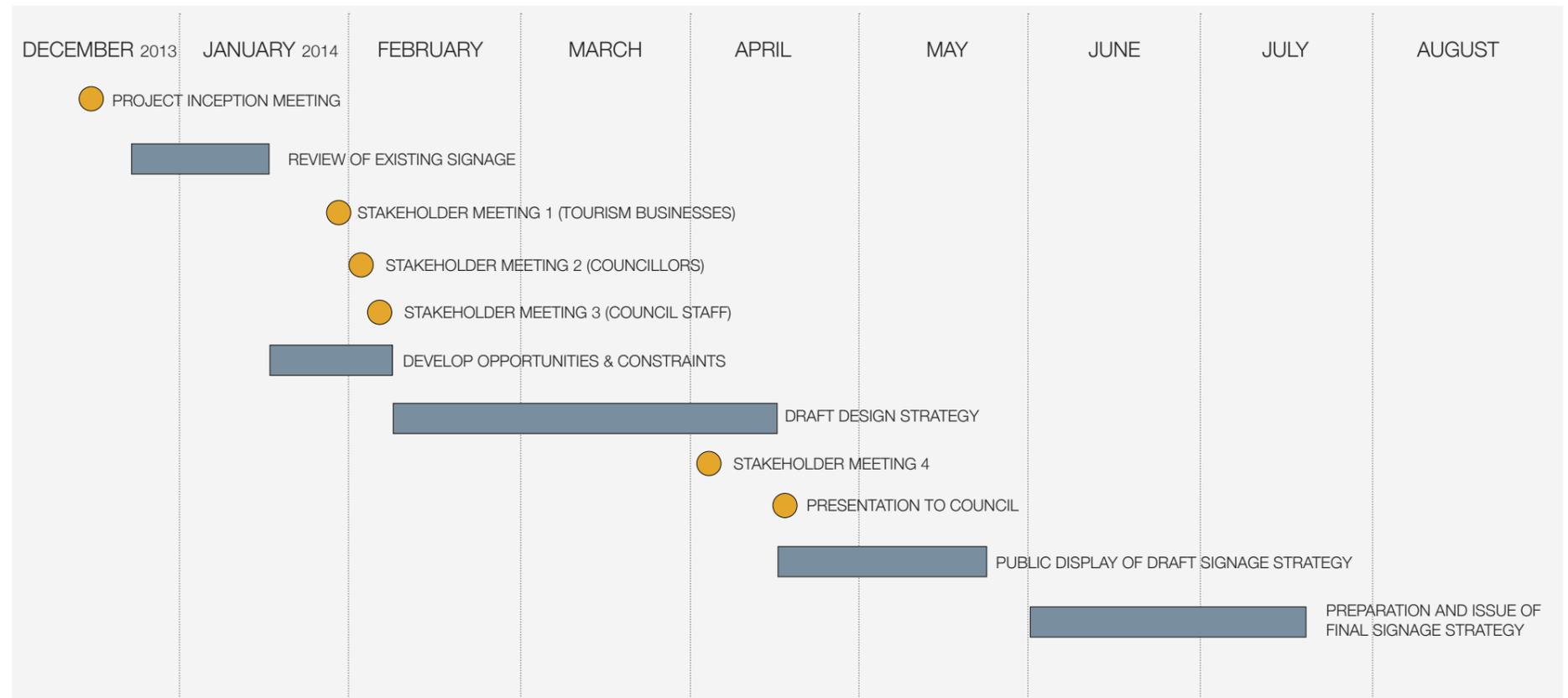


FIGURE 1. Signage Strategy Project Timeline

1

BACKGROUND

2

CONTEXT

2.1 Regional Context

2.2 The Hunter Region

2.3 Cessnock LGA

3

ANALYSIS

4

SIGNAGE STRATEGY

5

IMPLEMENTATION



2.1 Regional Context

Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) is located in the Hunter Region on the east coast of New South Wales, approximately 150km north of Sydney and 40km west of Newcastle. The Hunter Region is bordered with the Central Coast Region and Sydney to the south, the Mid North Coast Region to the north, the New England/North West Region to the north-west and the Central West region to the west.

The Hunter Region contains one of the largest river valleys on the New South Wales east coast, with the Hunter River flowing through its heart. The diverse landscapes of the region include rivers, lakes, beaches, harbours, rural landscapes, mountains, flood plains, cities, towns and villages. Cessnock LGA is bounded to the south-west by the rugged escarpments of the Broken Back Mountain Range (part of the Great Dividing Range) with many of the region's vineyards lying in the foothills of this distinctive landscape feature.



FIGURE 2. Regional Context Plan

2.2 The Hunter Region

The Hunter Region is defined by 11 Local Government Areas (LGAs) comprising Cessnock, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Upper Hunter, Port Stephens, Great Lakes, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Dungog and Gloucester. The region can be divided into two Upper Hunter and Lower Hunter sub-regions. Cessnock, Newcastle, Maitland, Port Stephens and Lake Macquarie LGAs comprise the Lower Hunter sub-region.

The Hunter Region is the most populous regional area in Australia and is the fastest growing region in New South Wales outside of the Sydney metropolitan areas. The main industries in the Hunter Region are coal mining, agriculture, viticulture, tourism, horse breeding, electricity production, dairy farming and beef cattle farming and associated service industries.



FIGURE 3. The Hunter Region

2.3 Cessnock Local Government Area

Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) covers an area of approximately 1950 square kilometres including rural town and village areas. A significant portion of the LGA consists of state forest and national park with the Watagan, Sugarloaf and Broken Back mountain ranges providing a bushland backdrop to the LGA. The highly scenic rural areas are primarily used for grazing, farming and viticulture.

Cessnock town centre is the main administrative, retail and service centre for the LGA while Kurri Kurri is an important secondary retail centre and the industrial heart of the LGA. Smaller towns such as Wollombi have developed their own distinctive character based on heritage, natural beauty and lifestyle opportunities.

For the first half of the last century mining was the primary source of employment in the LGA however changes to industry, including increased automation and the introduction of sophisticated equipment has led to the closure of many of the mines in the area. Evidence of the area's mining and industrial history is very much evident across the LGA and is still reflected in the demographics of the population, however as mining activity has declined and growth in the wine industry has increased, the region has developed as a major tourist destination which is visited by over one million national and international visitors every year.

Light and commercial industry form an increasing component of the areas economic development and the region also supports a strong beef and poultry industry. Emerging industries include research and development, resource and waste management, boutique food and beverage production and arts and creative industries.

Much of the architecture in the residential villages surrounding Cessnock consists of original miners cottages which have endured since the early 20th century and exude a country charm that characterises much of the LGA.

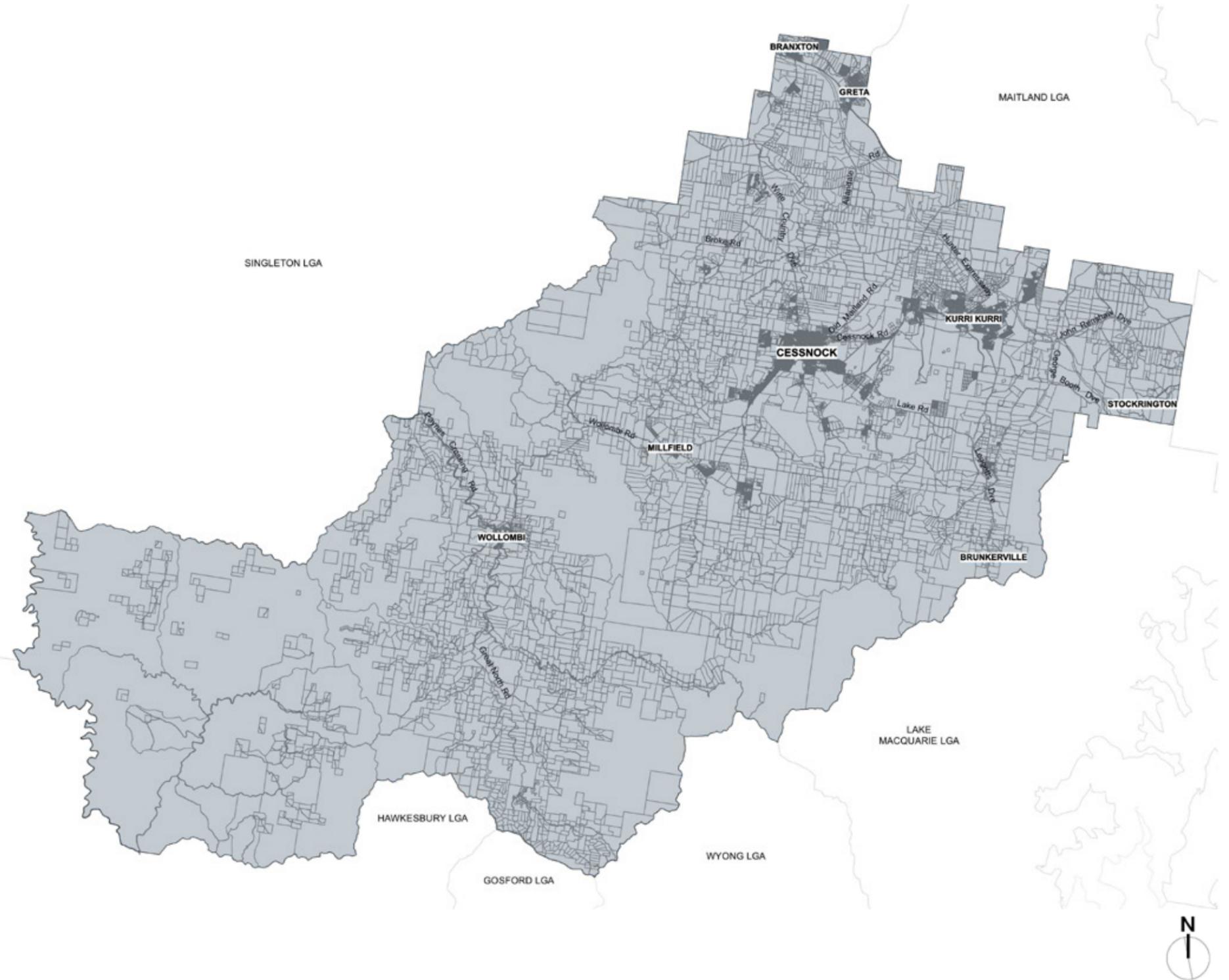


FIGURE 4. Cessnock Local Government Area

1

BACKGROUND

2

CONTEXT

3

ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Road Hierarchy
- 3.2 Access Points
- 3.3 Towns
- 3.4 Key Tourist Points
- 3.5 Vineyards District

4

SIGNAGE STRATEGY

5

IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Cessnock LGA Road Hierarchy

Cessnock LGA is highly accessible by road, from Sydney, Newcastle and the New England area and the recent opening of the Hunter Expressway (M15) has meant that commute times to Cessnock have significantly decreased. Visitors to Cessnock LGA are predominantly reliant on travelling by car however rail connections are available to Newcastle and Sydney.

The New England Highway (A43) runs across the northern section of the LGA through the townships of Greta and Branxton before continuing north-west towards Singleton and on to Brisbane.

The B82 (Leggetts Drive, Lake Road and Wine Country Drive) traverses the LGA in a south-east - north-west direction passing through the townships of Brunkerville, Mt Vincent, Elrington, Kearsley, Aberdare, Cessnock, Rothbury, North Rothbury and Branxton.

John Renshaw Drive (B68) is an access road from Newcastle, passing through the townships of Buchanan, Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Neath.

Tourist Drive 33 runs through the rural heart of the LGA between Branxton in the north and Wollombi in the west before heading south through Bucketty towards Calga and Sydney, following what were historically some of the most important roads in NSW before the construction of modern freeways.

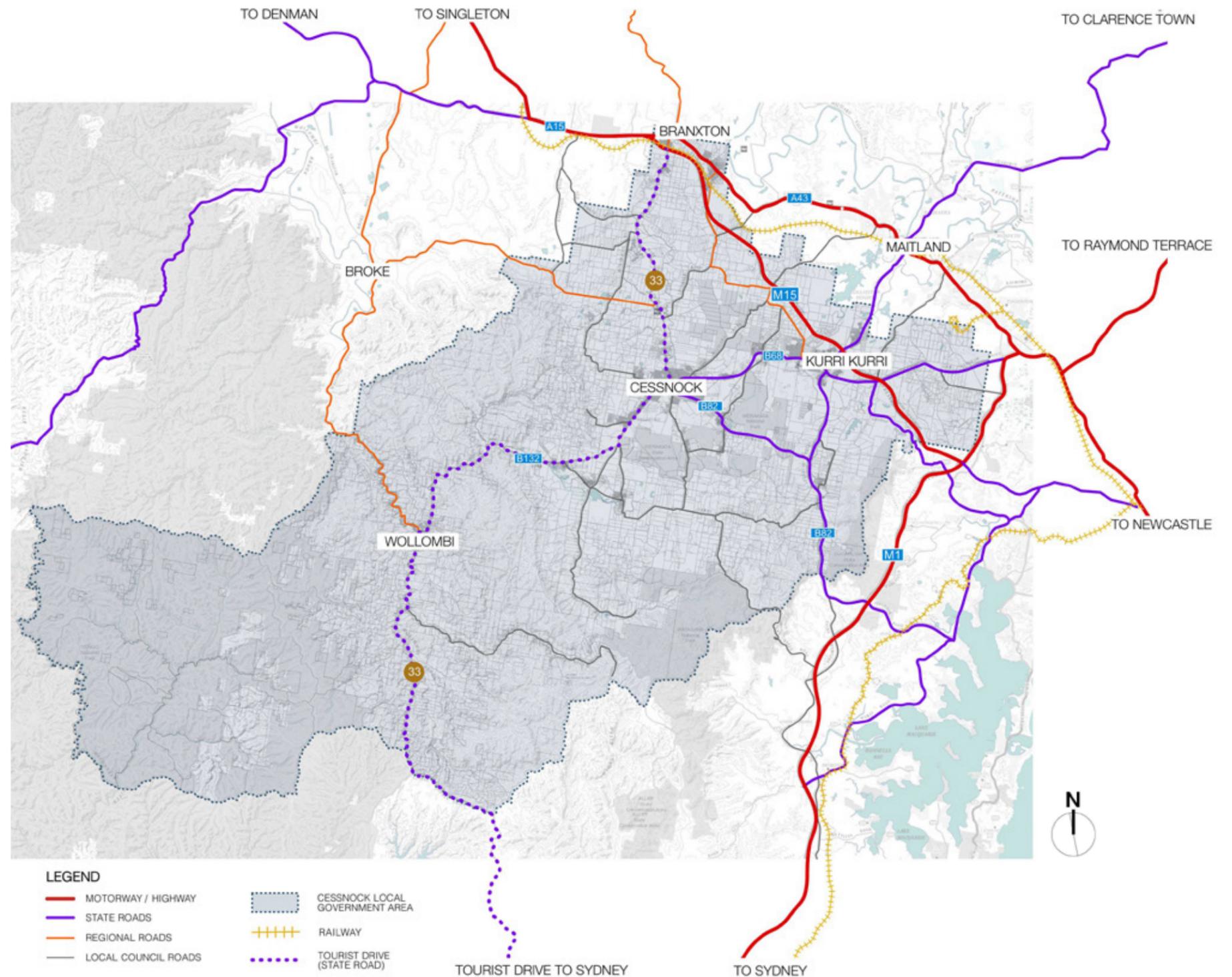


FIGURE 5. Cessnock LGA Road Hierarchy

3.2 Cessnock LGA Access Points

Visitors traveling from Sydney typically approach Cessnock LGA via the M1 Motorway, either taking the Freemans Waterhole exit and traveling along the B82 through the rural and residential areas of Freemans Waterhole, Brunkerville, Mulbring and Kearsley or more recently by continuing north along the Pacific Motorway (M1) to the Hunter Expressway (M15). The Hunter Expressway provides interchanges with direct access to the LGA at the M1 Pacific Motorway/ Newcastle Link Road, Buchanan, Kurri Kurri, Loxford, Allandale and Branxton.

Visitors from Newcastle approach from the east via the Hunter Expressway, George Booth Drive or John Renshaw Drive while the main access points from the north is through Maitland, Branxton or Singleton.

Another popular access point for visitors is via Tourist Drive 33 which enters Cessnock LGA at Laguna in the south and winds through the LGA to Branxton.

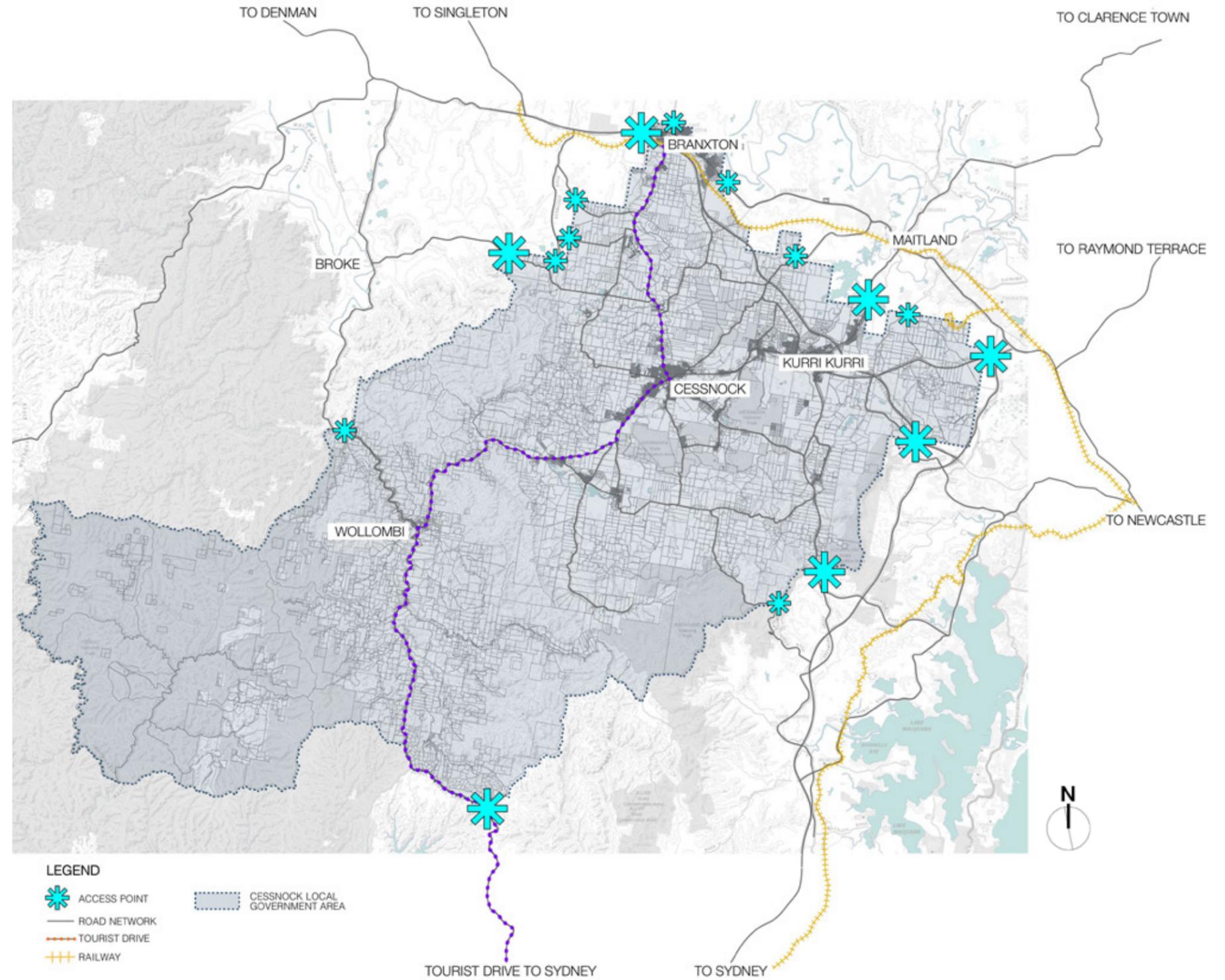


FIGURE 6. Cessnock LGA Access Points

3.3 LGA Towns

There are a total of 57 towns, villages and localities within the Cessnock LGA including Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Aberdare, Abermain, Abernethy, Allandale (part), Bellbird, Bellbird Heights, Big Yengo, Bishops Bridge (part), Black Hill, Branxton, Brunkerville, Buchanan, Bucketty (part), Buttai, Cedar Creek, Cliftleigh (part), Congewai, Corrabare, East Branxton, Ellalong, Elrington, Four Mile Creek, Greta, Greta Main, Heddon Greta, Kearsley, Keinbah, Kitchener, Laguna, Lochinvar, Lovedale, Loxford, Millfield, Moruben, Mount View, Mount Vincent, Mulbring, Neath, North Rothbury, Nulkaba, Olney, Paxton, Paynes Crossing, Pelaw Main, Pelton, Pokolbin, Quorrobolong, Richmond Vale, Rothbury, Sawyers Gully, Stanford Merthyr, Stockrington, Sweetmans Creek, Weston and Wollombi.

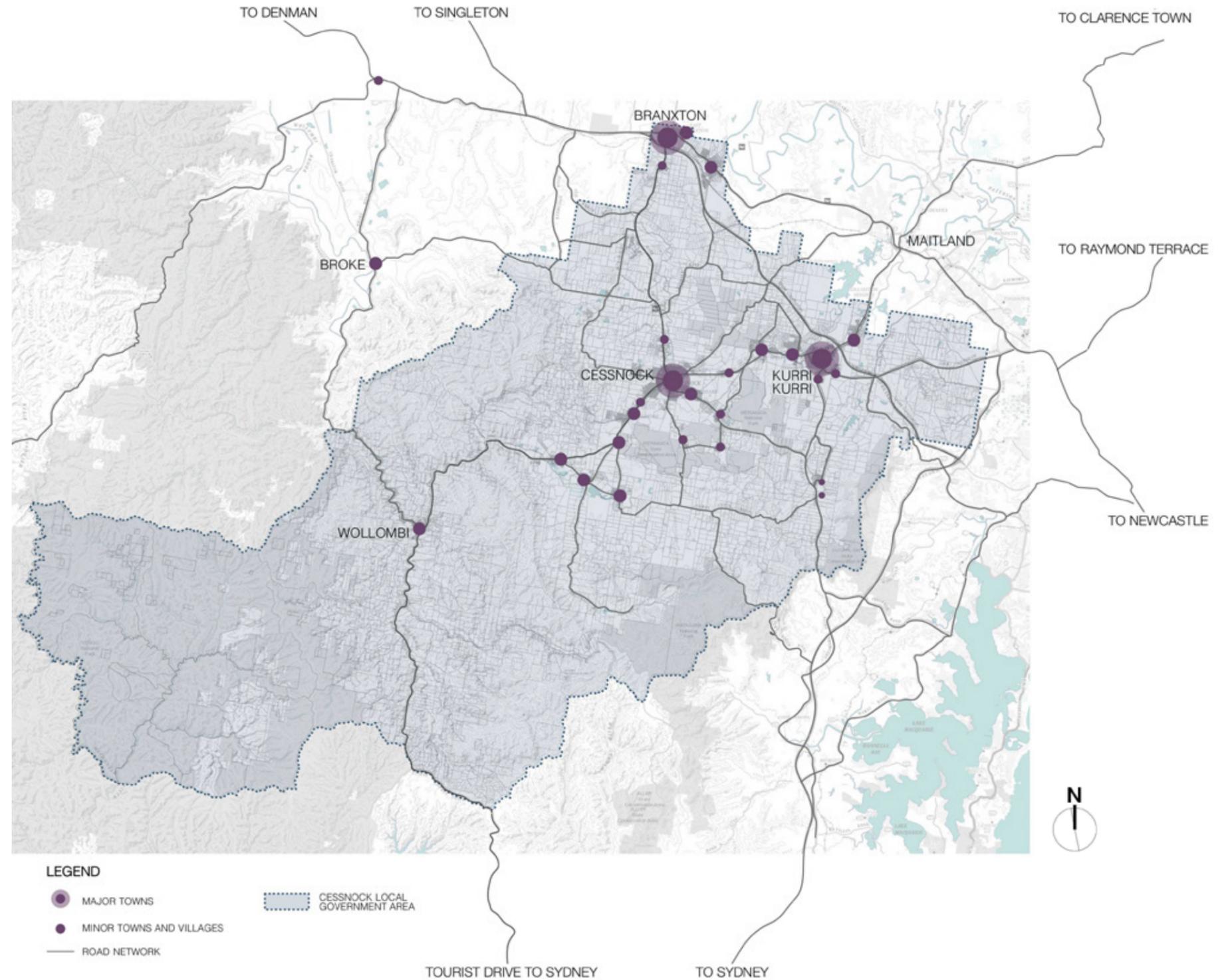


FIGURE 7. Cessnock LGA Towns

3.4 Key Tourist Points

Tourism facilities are broadly spread out across the LGA although many of the regions key attractions are connected along Tourist Drive 33 which runs through the centre of the Cessnock LGA in a north-south direction. The major visitor destination in the Cessnock LGA is the vineyards district and its associated range of wineries, attractions, accommodation and events. There is a Visitor Information Centre located along Route 33, approximately 6km north of Cessnock.

The charming village of Wollombi is another popular tourist destination with a relaxed country character and picturesque setting. It is a popular point from which to explore the historic Great North Road which was built by convict labour between 1826 and 1836 to connect Sydney with Newcastle and the Upper Hunter Valley. Remnants of the road remain visible at certain points along Tourist Drive 33 and are an important aspect of the regions historical tourism.

Kurri Kurri offers a range of attractions for visitors but is best known for its historical murals which depict the history of the area and its annual nostalgia festival which attracts over 40,000 people to the region.

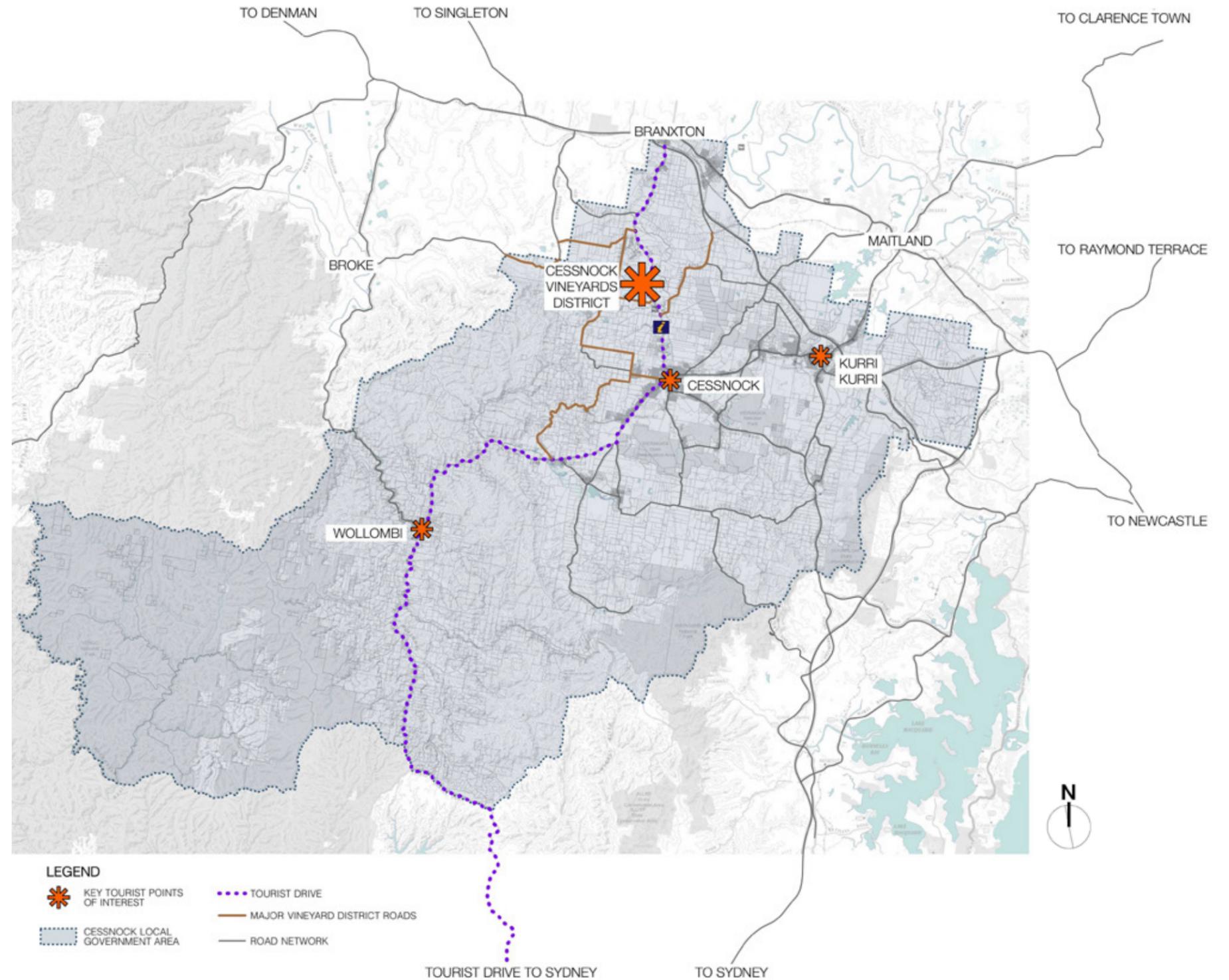


FIGURE 8. Key Tourist Points

3.5 Vineyards District

Distinct boundaries of the Hunter Valley wine region are not rigidly defined and extend across Local Government Areas (LGAs) including Cessnock, Singleton and Muswellbrook, however the Cessnock LGA Vineyards District is generally considered to be centered around the areas of Pokolbin/Rothbury, Mount View, Cessnock, Wollombi Valley, Dalwood and Lovedale/North Rothbury. Wineries and associated tourism facilities are also found in the Broke Fordwich and Around Hermitage areas and as far north as Muswellbrook and Denman. Over 150 wineries are represented across the Hunter Valley wine region.

The Cessnock LGA Vineyards District comprises a cluster of wineries, vineyards, restaurants and hotels, guest houses and galleries, tourism attractions, golf courses and museums. An extensive calendar of events regularly attracts visitors to the region for concerts, festivals, markets, dining experiences, tours and other major attractions.

As the wine region spans local Council areas a separate Signage Strategy has been prepared for tourism signage in the Hunter Valley Wine Country area as a joint strategy between Cessnock and Singleton Council's.

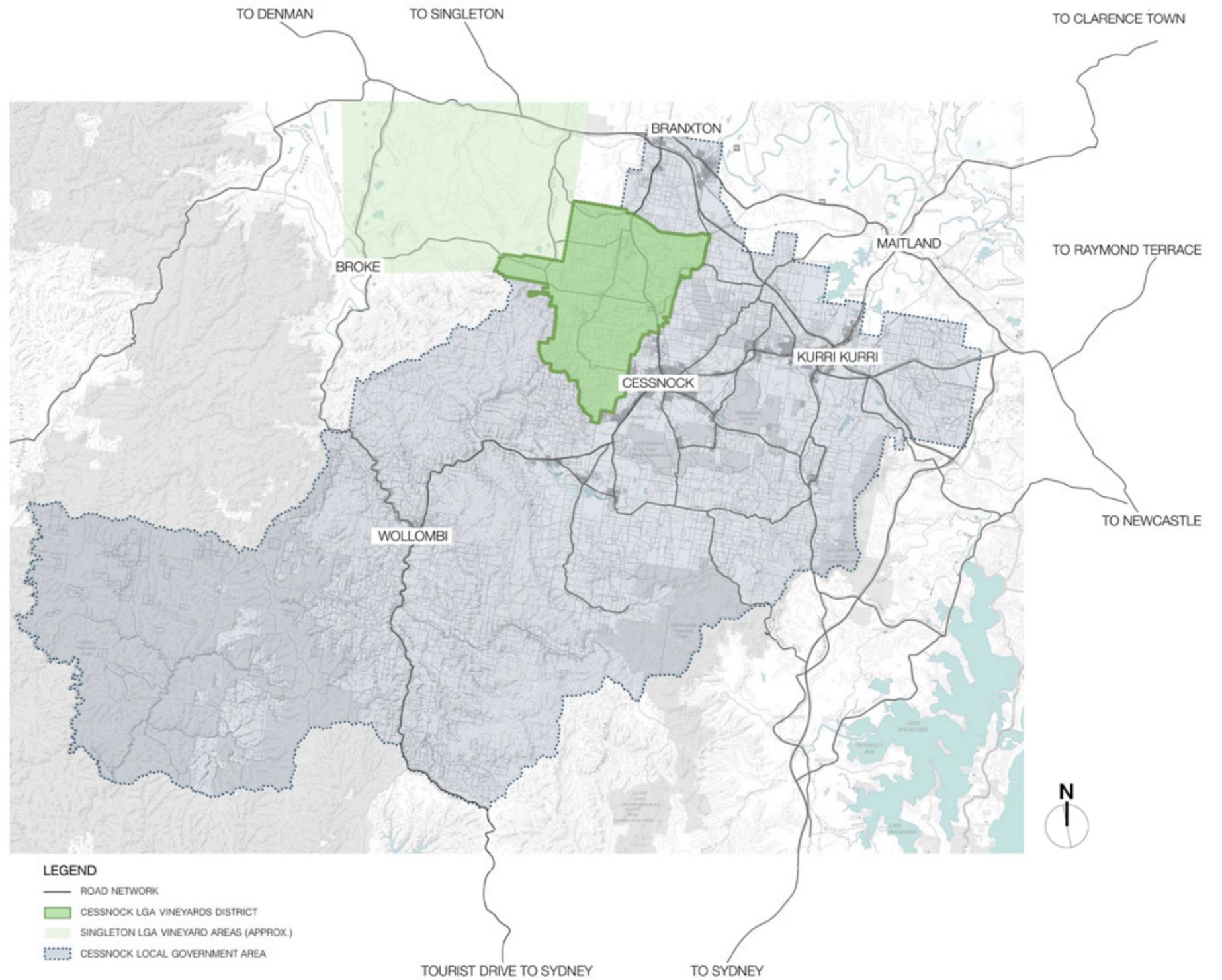


FIGURE 9. Vineyards District

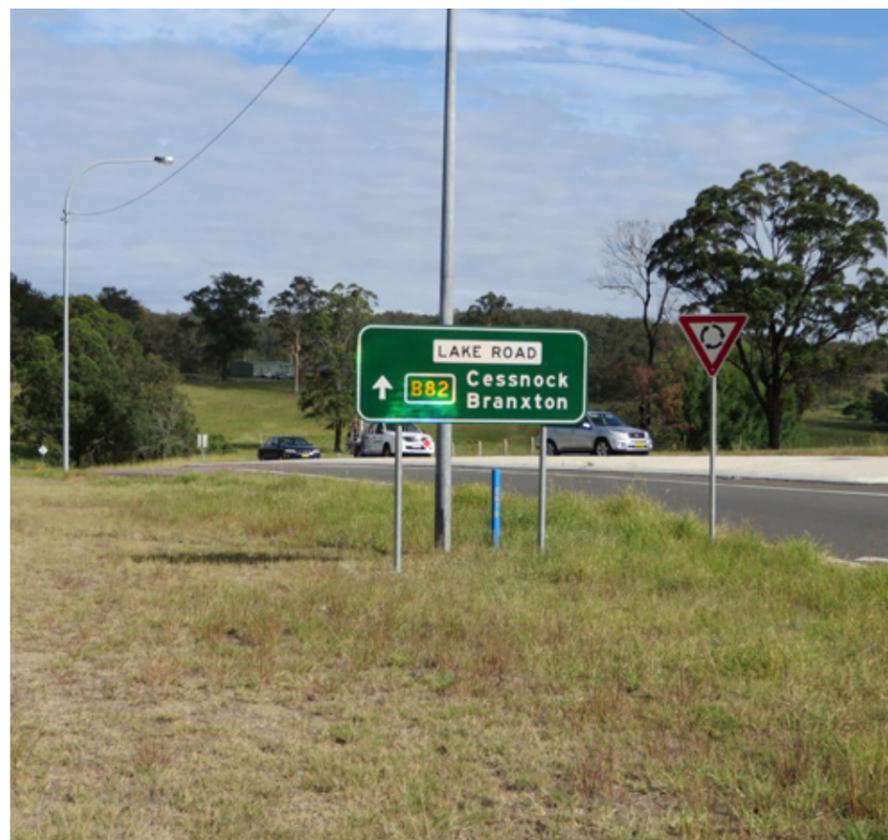
3.6 Review of Existing Signage

A review of existing signage in the Cessnock LGA has identified a real need to improve signage in the LGA. Existing signage is inconsistent, lacks a coherent hierarchy, is dated and poorly maintained and inadequate for effectively guiding people around the LGA. Fragmented branding does not communicate a strong identity to visitors and does not reflect the high value destination the Cessnock LGA represents.

Existing signage within the Cessnock LGA can be loosely categorised into six sign types including:

- Gateway entry signage
- Street signage
- Tourist directional signage
- Visitor information and interpretive signage
- Community facility signage
- Private and commercial signage

Descriptions of these signage types are described in the following pages.



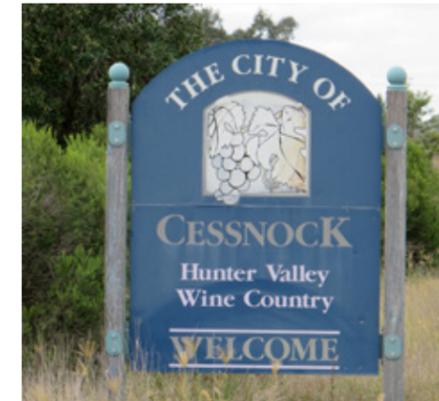
Examples of existing signage in Cessnock LGA

GATEWAY ENTRY SIGNAGE

Gateway signs indicate a transition between one area and another. They are used to welcome visitors to a region or town and farewell them on their departure. Gateway signs reassure visitors that they are in the right place and create a feeling of arrival.

Gateway signs are used throughout the Cessnock LGA at the entry to many towns and suburbs. Existing signs lack prominence in the landscape and visitors do not experience a strong sense of arrival in the LGA as there is little hierarchy between signage welcoming visitors to the LGA and signage at the entry to the various suburbs.

Existing gateway signs are typically constructed as a steel panel with an arched top, mounted on either timber or steel posts, although variations do occur. Graphics which represent the various towns are often displayed on the signs. A standard mid-blue colour has been used with some consistency however the variations in materials and styles presents a multitude of variations of the Cessnock LGA brand and can be confusing for visitors.



STREET SIGNAGE

Street signs are used to identify road names throughout the region.

The majority of street signs are pole mounted steel blades with non retro-reflective white text on a blue background or black text on a white background. The signs feature the Cessnock City Council logo on a central arch above the street name. There are also a small number of illuminated street signs in Cessnock town centre which contain black text on a white background.

Pole mounted blade signs are also used extensively throughout the LGA to point to community facilities such as churches, halls, parks and public toilets. These are commonly blue with white text but variations were noted.

There is a lack of uniformity in the existing street signage and a clear need to develop a consistent signage style for the entire LGA.



TOURIST DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

Directional signs guide visitors to the various services and attractions available in the area. They often contain arrows, symbols and distance information to direct visitors to their destination.

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) in conjunction with Destination NSW have published guidelines on standard tourist signposting that can be used to identify key attractions in a tourist area. These signs have a brown background with a white font. Blue, white and yellow directional signs are used to direct visitors towards the region's Visitor Information Centre. The condition of these signs varies across the LGA with several noted to be faded and in need of replacement.

Directional signs are also used by Council on local and regional roads to inform visitors about facilities and services available in the area. These are typically located near rest areas and visitor information services.



VISITOR INFORMATION AND INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE

Visitor information is presented in various formats including maps, directories with contact details for local businesses, clubs and attractions in the area. Interpretive signage is occasionally provided to tell a story about a place's history and features.

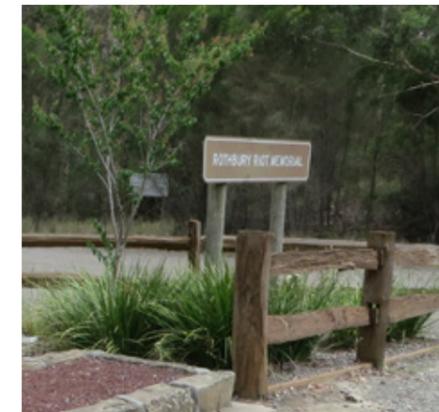
The construction and content of existing signage varies from sign to sign and there are no consistent elements which visually connect the various signs as part of a broader signage scheme. Information signs and maps were generally found to be outdated, poorly maintained and in some cases vandalised, with some exceptions.

Information signs are typically located on roadsides and in public reserves and access to the signs is often poor. Uneven ground surfaces and a lack of formal pathways leading to the signs makes accessing the information difficult.



COMMUNITY FACILITY SIGNAGE

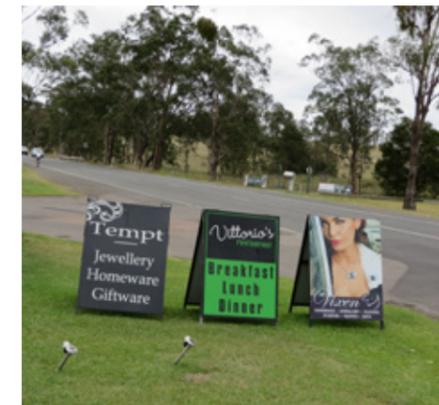
Community signs identify public facilities such as parks and reserves. They are also used to provide information about community services and initiatives such as events, community programs and civic guides. Community facility signs are typically located in the public domain and have traditionally been installed on an ad-hoc basis utilising a variety of different materials and designs. Existing signs do not present as a unified brand for the LGA which results in an inconsistent representation of information.



PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE

Private and commercial signs are used by businesses to promote their products and services and come in a wide variety of formats. Signage clutter was noted in some areas where businesses compete for commercial exposure and a proliferation of signs has developed over time.

The design and installation of private and commercial signage is controlled by Council's Development Control Plan 2010 in accordance with State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 64 - Advertising and Signage. The design of private and commercial signage is beyond the scope of this signage strategy.



1

BACKGROUND

2

CONTEXT

3

ANALYSIS

4

SIGNAGE STRATEGY

- 4.1 Principles of Good Signage
- 4.2 Pictograms
- 4.3 Signage Family
- 4.4 Themes and Inspiration
- 4.5 Gateway Entry Signs
- 4.6 Suburb Entry Signs
- 4.7 Street Signs
- 4.8 Community Facility Entry Signs
- 4.9 Community Facility Information Sign
- 4.10 Town Centre Information Sign
- 4.11 Walkway/Cycleway Sign

5

IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Principles of Good Signage

High quality wayfinding signs play an important role in the streetscape, providing information about facilities and attractions and guiding people to their destination. A good wayfinding system is built on clarity, legibility and consistency to help people orientate themselves in unfamiliar environments. Well designed signs can complement the environment, provide useful information and aid navigation, however poorly designed and inappropriate signs can detract from the overall quality of an area and the environment.

The signs presented in this Strategy represent the physical components of a larger way finding system which include websites, printed maps, vehicle GPS systems and phone applications. Although these components are beyond the scope of this Strategy they are an integral part of the visitor wayfinding experience and a consistent approach to the presentation of all sources of wayfinding information is required.

The key principles guiding the design of the Cessnock LGA signage are:

- Hierarchy
- Legibility
- Context
- Content

Hierarchy

Wayfinding signage should be presented in a systematic and sequential way to guide people on their journey into and around the region. Many visitors to the region will pre-plan their journey and arrive with a specific destination in mind while others do little pre-planning and require additional guidance on arrival to navigate and plan their experience.

The proposed signage system proposes a clear hierarchy of signs for motorists and pedestrians from the external approaches to the LGA through to the suburbs and town centres.

Context

Signage should positively contribute to the visual character of the area by drawing on themes and inspiration from the surrounding landscape, people and history of the area. Responding to these cues will ensure the signage system is meaningful to the community and visually compatible with the surrounding landscape.

Each sign has been designed at a scale that is appropriate to its context using durable materials that require minimal maintenance that can withstand environmental impacts. Proposed materials have been selected for their durability, availability and longevity.

Individual signs are to be positioned in the landscape to be clearly visible on approach and in a safe location for users to read and understand the information.

Legibility

The signage must be recognised as part of an identifiable system and reinforce the overall identity of the Cessnock LGA. People will look for consistency between signs from one point to the next on their journey. The components of the signage system have been designed to work together to communicate a strong identity through consistent materials, finishes and colours.

To be effective, wayfinding maps needs to stand out and be easy to read. They should be highly visible and use consistent colour coding and symbols. Fonts should be clear and easy to read with good contrast between the text and the background panels.

Content

Fonts, graphics and messages used on the signs must be clear, accurate and easy to understand, communicating non ambiguous messages and quality wayfinding advice.

Information is to be presented with clarity and accuracy at an appropriate scale to enable people to read and understand the content, whether from a moving vehicle or as a pedestrian. Important content such as location information is to be presented in braille and tactile format at the pedestrian scale to enable access by all users.

4.2 Pictograms

Imagery can help people to visualise their journey and make effective wayfinding decisions. Pictograms are a way to communicate large amounts of information in a single graphic representation without creating language barriers. While signs with a lot of text can be complex and difficult to read from a moving vehicle pictograms can be used to convey information quickly and concisely. When used in combination with text they are a valuable way of helping people make sense of an unfamiliar environment.

Council has a standard suite of pictograms which are used to display information quickly and effectively. A selection of these symbols are shown opposite.

As overuse of pictograms can cause confusion, the number of pictograms used should be carefully considered for each installation.

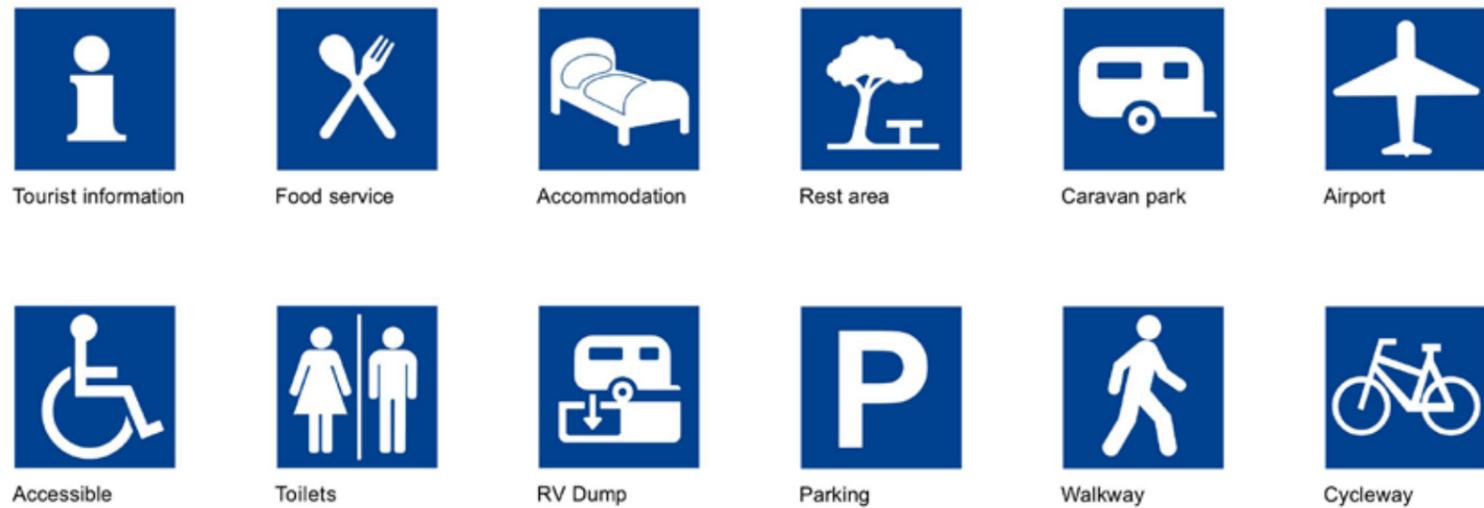


FIGURE 10. Examples of standard information pictograms

4.3 Signage Family

The Cessnock LGA signage family comprises seven sign types including:

1. **GATEWAY ENTRY SIGNS** to welcome motorists to Cessnock LGA and the Hunter Valley.
2. **SUBURB ENTRY SIGNS** to identify entry to towns and suburbs within Cessnock LGA.
3. **STREET SIGNS** to identify street and suburb names at road intersections and to direct pedestrians to key facilities within town centres.
4. **COMMUNITY FACILITY ENTRY SIGNS** to identify entry to community facilities such as parks and reserves.
5. **COMMUNITY FACILITY INFORMATION SIGNS** to provide information about facilities and services available in the town or facility.
6. **TOWN CENTRE INFORMATION SIGNS** to help pedestrians navigate through town centres.
7. **WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY SIGNS** to identify walking and cycling routes within the LGA.

These signs will work in combination with standard Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) directional signs.

4.4 Themes and Inspiration

The rural, viticultural and industrial landscapes of the Cessnock LGA provide a number of cues to inform the design of the signage system and the signage family has been designed to compliment the surrounding landscape and reflect the relaxed atmosphere that characterises the area.

Cessnock LGA is surrounded by rolling green hills, fertile soils and clear blue skies. The rugged Broken Back mountain range provides a spectacular backdrop to the region and the mountain ridge line has been referenced in the concept design.

The selected materials reflect the rural and industrial character of the district but are applied as a contemporary design solution. Materials such as rammed earth, steel, timber and coloured concrete are robust options that are in keeping with the character of the region and communicate a simple welcoming feel.



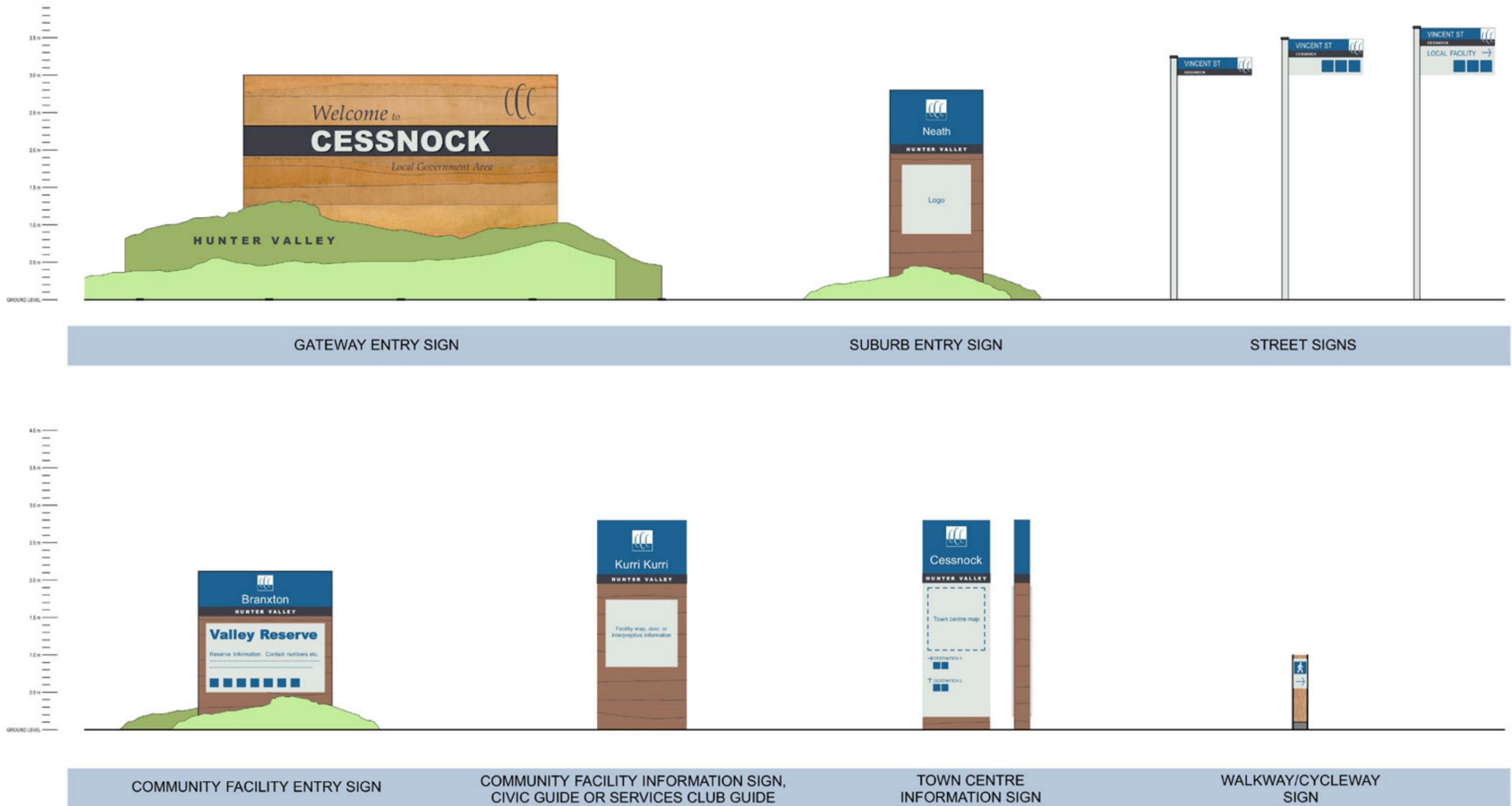


FIGURE 11. Signage family

4.5 Gateway Entry Signs

PURPOSE

To welcome visitors to the Cessnock Local Government Area and signify arrival.

CONTENT

- Welcome message
- Hunter Valley branding
- Cessnock City Council logo
- “Thanks for visiting - Please drive carefully”

STYLE

Curved wall.

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

WALL:

Curved rammed earth wall.

LETTERING:

Brushed laser cut stainless steel.

LETTERING HOUSING:

Curved Universal I Column recessed into wall.

MOUNTAIN RANGE FEATURE:

Laser cut stainless steel with two-pack finish.

LIGHTING:

Uplighting directed towards sign.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Perimeter entry points on major entry roads. Refer to **Figure 12** for proposed locations.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.

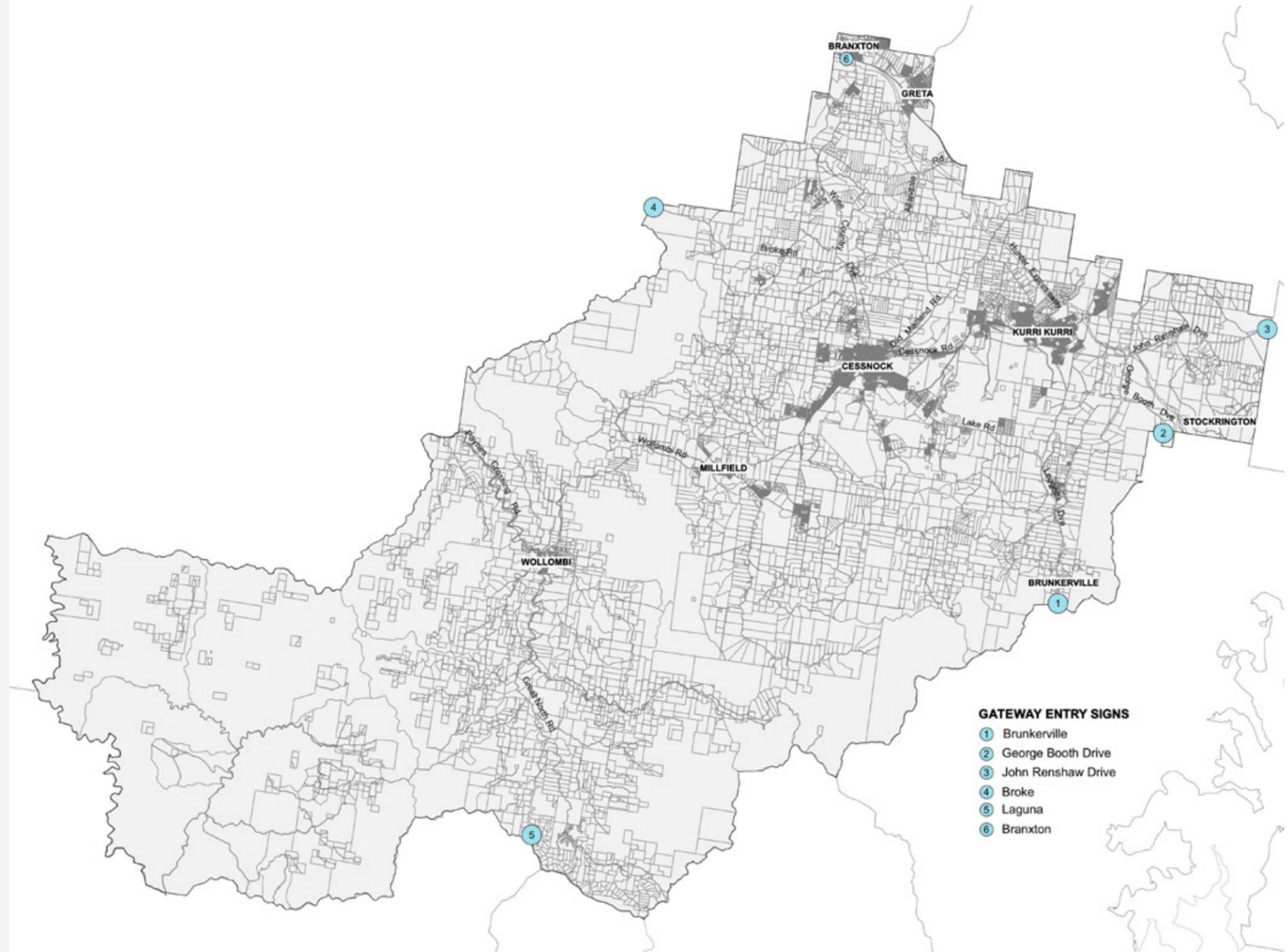


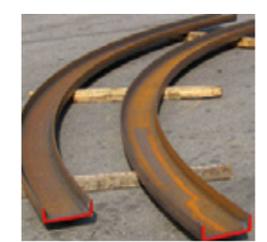
FIGURE 12. Proposed locations for Gateway Entry Signs



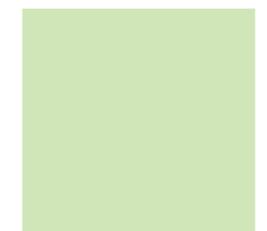
PROPOSED PLANTS



PROPOSED MATERIALS



PROPOSED COLOURS



GATEWAY ENTRY SIGN

4.6 Suburb Entry Signs

PURPOSE

To identify entry to suburbs within the LGA.

CONTENT

- Suburb name.
- Hunter Valley branding.
- Suburb logo.
- Council logo.
- “Thanks for visiting - Please drive carefully”

STYLE

Pillar sign.

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

CORE:

Coloured formed concrete with layered horizontal pattern to mimic rammed earth.

HEADER PANEL:

Powder coated aluminum.

INFORMATION PLATE:

Powder coated aluminum.

MOUNTAIN RANGE FEATURE:

Laser cut stainless steel with two-pack finish.

MOUNTING:

Ground mount.

LIGHTING:

Uplighting directed towards sign.

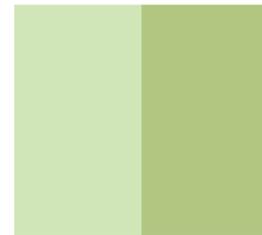
PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Perimeter entry points on major entry roads.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.
- Provide feature landscaping around base of signs to visually anchor them to the ground plane.

PROPOSED MATERIALS



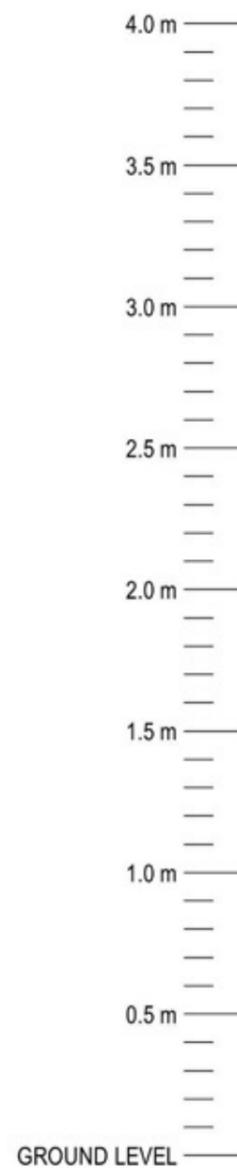
Layered coloured concrete



Laser cut stainless steel



Powder coated aluminium



Front view

Side view

SUBURB ENTRY SIGN

4.7 Street Signs

PURPOSE

To identify street names and direct people to community buildings and facilities throughout the LGA.

CONTENT

- Street name.
- Suburb name.
- Provide additional panel with pictograms and directional information to local facilities where required.

STYLE

Finger sign on dedicated pole.

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

POLE:

100 RHS with steel cap.

SIGN BLADE:

Double sided 6mm thick powder coated aluminum.

LETTERING:

Retro-reflective white text.

MOUNTING:

Pole mount.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- All road intersections.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.

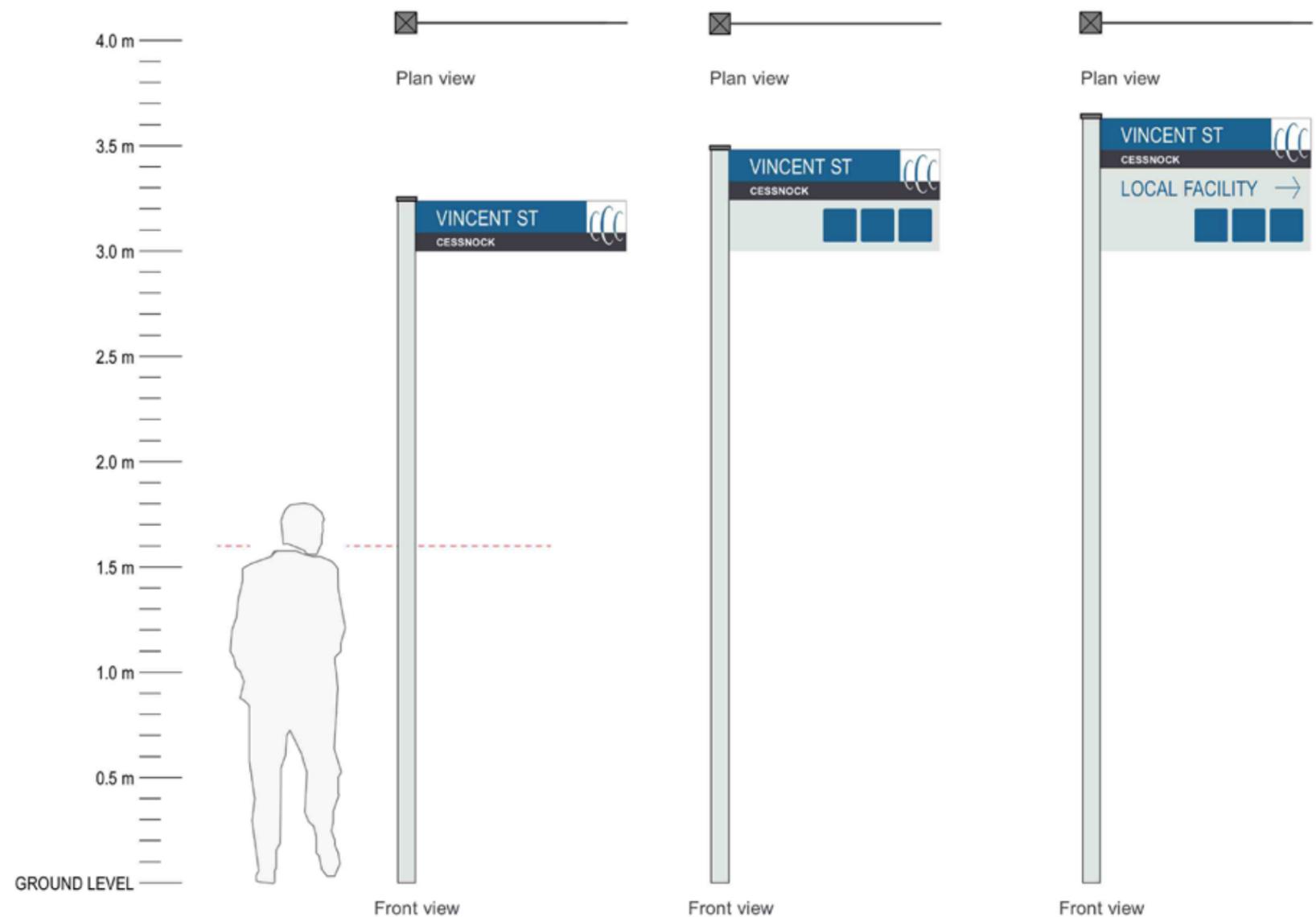
PROPOSED COLOURS



C:83, M:37, Y:6, K:6

C:74, M:66, Y:48, K:16

C:8, M:4, Y:5, K:0



STANDARD STREET SIGN

STREET SIGN WITH PICTOGRAMS

STREET SIGN WITH LOCAL FACILITY INFORMATION

4.8 Community Facility Entry Signs

PURPOSE

To welcome visitors to community facilities such as parks and reserves.

CONTENT

- Suburb name.
- Hunter Valley branding.
- Council logo.
- Facility name.
- Facility information (Contact numbers, opening hours etc).
- Pictograms to identify facilities available (Toilets, walking trails etc).

STYLE

Free standing sign

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

CORE:

Coloured formed concrete with layered horizontal pattern to mimic rammed earth.

HEADER PANEL:

Powder coated aluminum.

INFORMATION PLATE:

Powder coated aluminum.

MOUNTAIN RANGE FEATURE:

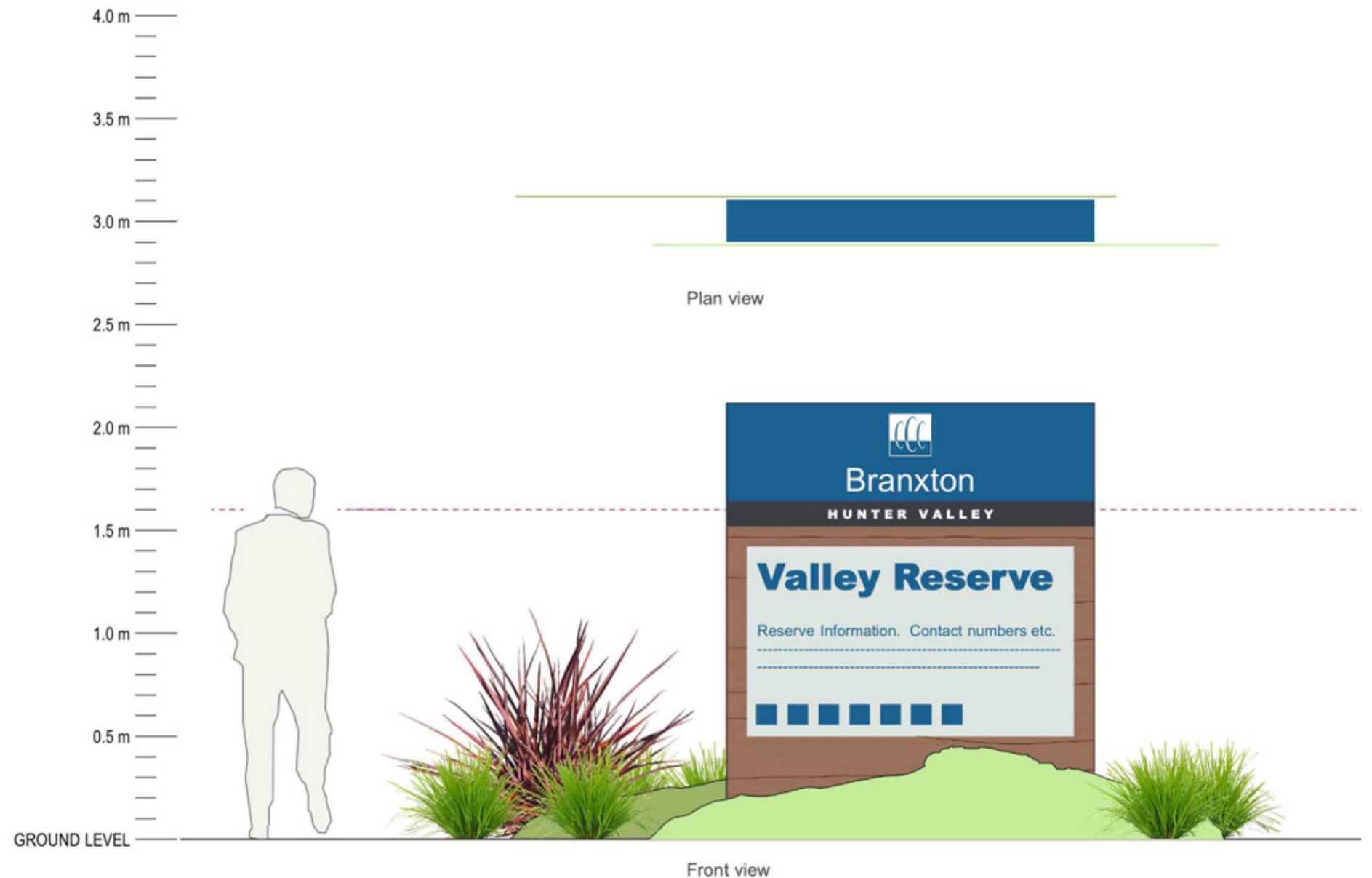
Laser cut stainless steel with two-pack finish.

MOUNTING:

Ground mount.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Locate at entry to community facility.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.
- Allow adequate milling space around the sign.



COMMUNITY FACILITY ENTRY SIGN

4.9 Community Facility Information Signs

PURPOSE

To provide information about community facilities, service clubs or local history.

CONTENT

- Suburb name.
- Hunter Valley branding.
- Council logo.
- Information such as a facility map, civic guide, service club information, contact details, interpretive information or other relevant community information to suit specific requirements.
- Key information provided in braille and tactile format.
- “Thanks for visiting - Please drive carefully”

STYLE

Pillar sign

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

CORE:

Coloured formed concrete with layered horizontal pattern to mimic rammed earth.

HEADER PANEL:

Powder coated aluminum.

INFORMATION PLATE:

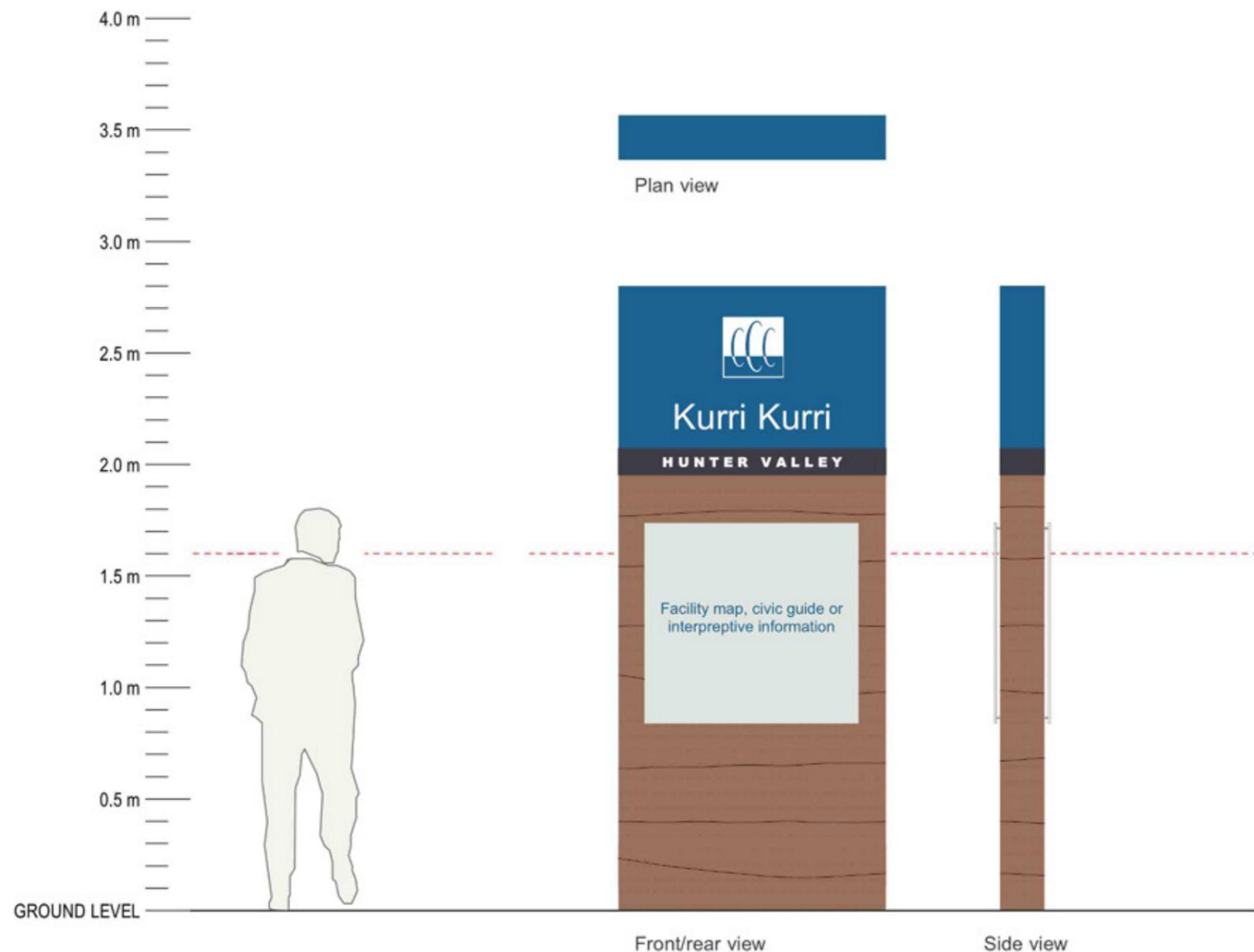
Powder coated aluminum.

MOUNTING:

Ground mount.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Placement will vary depending on use.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.
- Allow adequate milling space around the sign.
- Provide an even ground surface around the base of the sign and a pathway from the nearest parking area or footpath.
- Place at predictable points along a path of travel.



COMMUNITY FACILITY INFORMATION SIGN,
CIVIC GUIDE OR SERVICES CLUB GUIDE

4.10 Town Centre Information Signs

PURPOSE

To direct pedestrians to key facilities within town centres such as car parks, shopping centres, community buildings and public toilets.

CONTENT

- Town name.
- Hunter Valley branding
- Town centre map.
- Directional information to public facilities such as car parks, public toilets, parks and community buildings (facility name, directional arrow and relevant pictograms).
- Key information provided in braille and tactile format.

STYLE

Pillar sign.

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

CORE:

Coloured formed concrete with layered horizontal pattern to mimic rammed earth.

HEADER PANEL:

Powder coated aluminum.

INFORMATION PLATE:

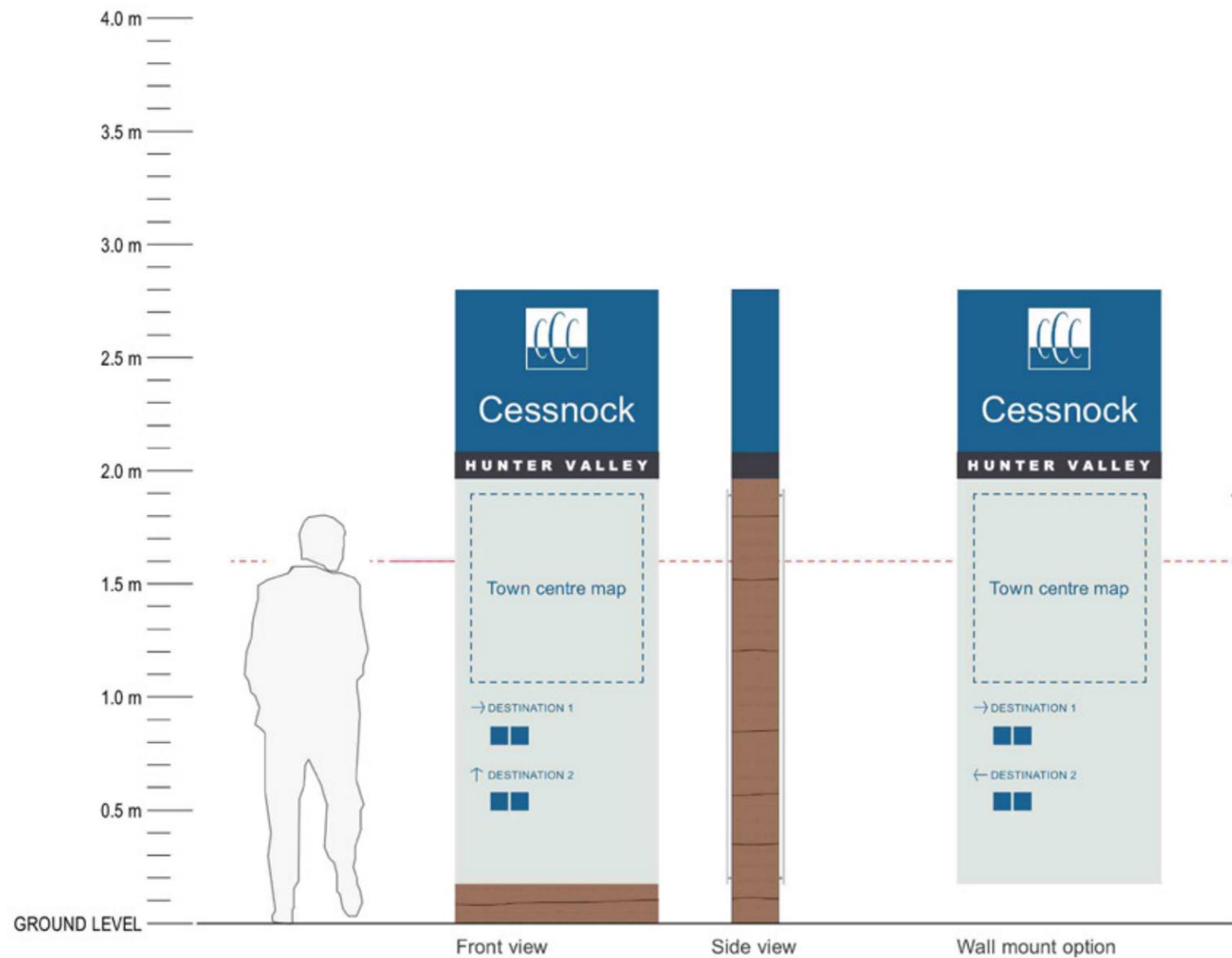
Powder coated aluminum.

MOUNTING:

Ground mount or wall mount.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Locate near major pedestrian intersections adjacent to the kerb or in a central location in pedestrian plazas.
- Position to be clearly visible on the approach.
- Allow adequate milling space around the sign.
- Do not obstruct pedestrian movement along the sidewalk.



TOWN CENTRE INFORMATION SIGN

4.11 Walkway/Cycleway Signs

PURPOSE

To provide wayfinding information along walking trails and cycleways throughout the LGA.

CONTENT

- Pictograms and arrows.
- Council logo.

STYLE

Ground mount sign.

MATERIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

COLUMNS:

200 Universal I Column.

INFILL PANELS:

Hardwood timber or modwood timber composite.

INFORMATION PLATES:

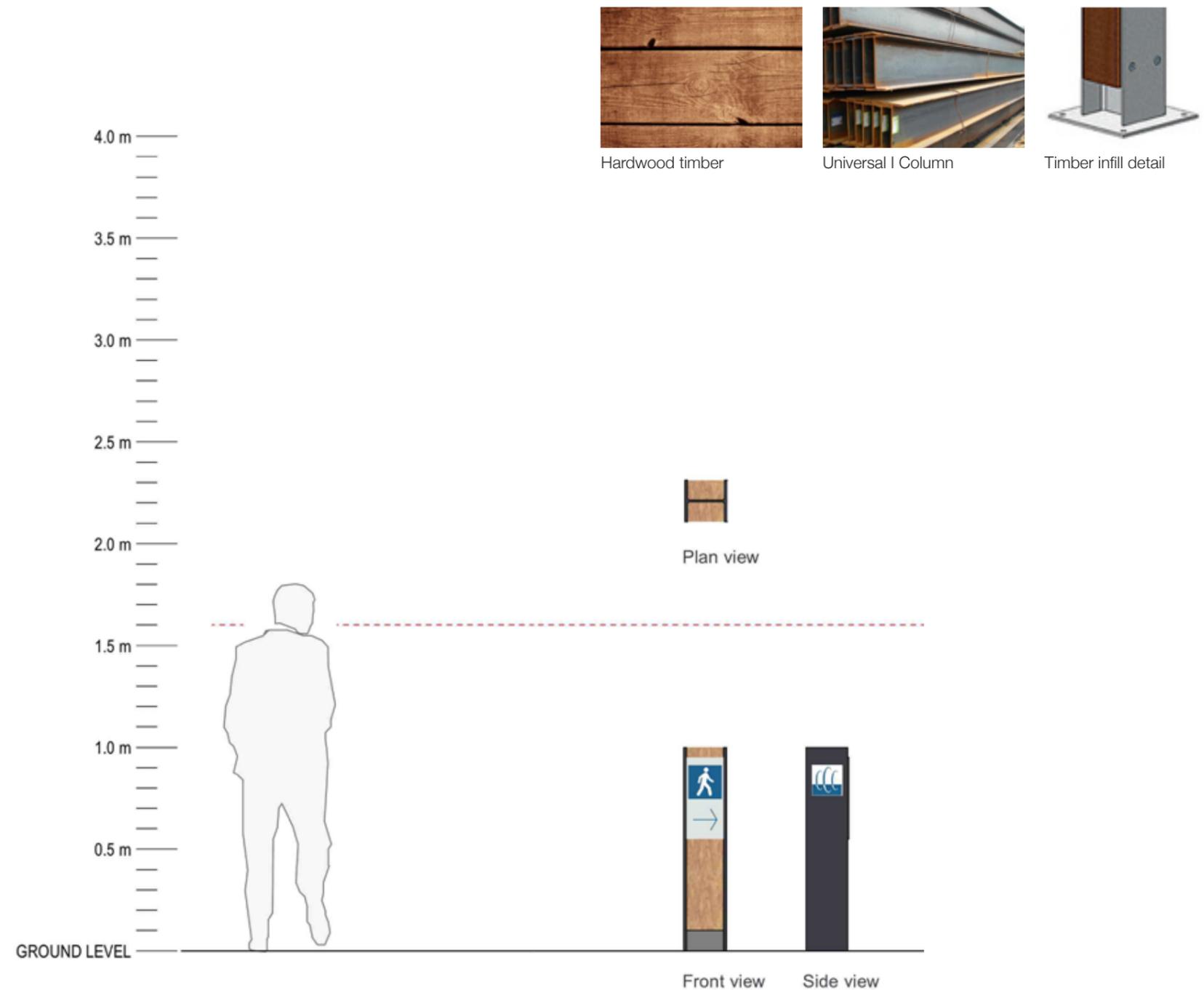
Powder coated aluminum.

MOUNTING:

Ground mount.

PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Locate signs at path junctions or decision points.
- Ideally locate sign on left of approach.



WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY SIGN

1

BACKGROUND

2

CONTEXT

3

ANALYSIS

4

SIGNAGE STRATEGY

5

IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 Implementation Program
- 5.2 Placement Principles
- 5.3 Maintenance
- 5.4 Installation Recommendations

5.1 Implementation Program

5.1 AUDIT

- Conduct a detailed audit of existing signage within the LGA.
- Identify specific locations where new signs are required.
- Liaise with RMS to review the condition of existing tourist signposting and identify signs that need to be upgraded.

5.2 DETAILED DESIGN

- Engage an accredited road safety auditor to consider the location of all proposed signs to be located in roadways in terms of their impact on road safety.
- Liaise with local business chambers and other relevant stakeholders to develop suitable logos for each suburb.
- Undertake detailed design of signage concepts and prepare a Technical Manual with specifications and details for each signage type, including font styles and colours.

5.3 REMOVAL OF EXISTING SIGNS

Removal of existing signs should coincide with the installation of replacement signage. Refer to 5.4 for further recommendations on the removal of existing signage.

Unauthorised private signs on public land should be removed within a period of 60 days following Council's adoption of the Signage Strategy.

5.4 INSTALLATION

Due to funding constraints it may not be possible to install the entire family of signs simultaneously. Prioritising installation with an implementation program for installing the signs is highly recommended.

HIGH PRIORITY

Indicates signage which is important for effective way-finding and should be installed as quickly as possible. High priority should be given to signs which enhance the sense of arrival in Cessnock LGA and improve safety in the LGA.

MEDIUM PRIORITY

Signage that may be installed after high priority works have been completed or as replacement signs are installed on an as needs basis. Medium priority should be given to upgrading street signs and improving pedestrian way finding in town centres.

LOWER PRIORITY

May be undertaken after the completion of medium priority works or on an as needs basis.

To get a proper idea about how the signs will look and function it is recommended that full size prototypes be developed where possible.

5. PLANNING INSTRUMENT UPDATES

The following documents are to be updated to reflect the recommendations in this Strategy:

- Cessnock City Council DCP Part D, Chapter 5 - Outdoor Signage.

5.2 Placement Principles

The following placement principles are provided to maximise appropriate sign positioning while minimising the number of signs required.

- Signs should be placed so they are clearly legible to motorists and pedestrians. They should not be placed where they can cause obstruction to visibility or create a cluttered roadside environment.
- Road signs should be placed where they are visually prominent in the landscape to allow drivers time to read and comprehend the message of the sign and have time to react accordingly.
- Each potential sign site must be assessed for its own merits to allow for a considered installation.
- To minimise clutter it is preferable to have a single sign post at intersections rather than multiple posts.
- Sign blades on street signs should point in the direction of travel.
- Maintain adequate setback from the kerb in accordance with Australian Standards.
- People will look for consistency between signs from one point to the next on their journey. Pedestrian signs should be sited close to pathways and allow sufficient milling space to enable people to access and read the material. Where possible, pedestrian signs are to be positioned on the left hand side of approach.
- Important information for pedestrians such as detailed maps should be placed at eye level (approx. 1600mm high).
- Position signs for easy access by maintenance personnel.

5.3 Maintenance

Although the signage family has been designed to minimise the need for maintenance, from time to time it will be necessary to undertake maintenance activities to ensure the signs remain fit for purpose.

It is recommended that Council implement a regular program of Maintenance for all new signs as detailed below.

AUDIT SYSTEM

It is recommended that Council maintain a GIS database for all new signs installed including the sign location, sign type and installation date. These signs should be audited regularly to check for damage, vandalism or removal.

UPDATING INFORMATION

Information provided on tourist maps and directories invariably dates and changes. It is recommended that maps and directories be reviewed bi-annually to check the accuracy of information provided.

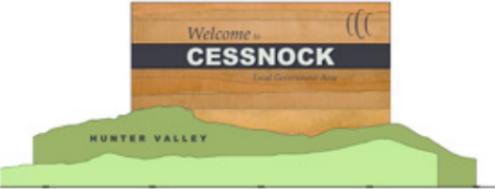
REPLACEMENT SIGNS

Where signs are vandalised, damaged or removed they should be promptly replaced.

GRAFFITI REMOVAL

Removal of graffiti should be undertaken using solvents which have been tested prior to use on the sign.

5.4 Installation Recommendations

SIGN TYPE	PRIORITY	INSTALLATION RECOMMENDATIONS
GATEWAY ENTRY SIGN 	HIGH	It is recommended that all Gateway Entry Signs be installed simultaneously. Existing gateway signage is to be removed.
SUBURB ENTRY SIGN 	HIGH	It is recommended that all Suburb Entry Signs be installed simultaneously. Existing suburb signage is to be removed.
TOWN CENTRE INFORMATION SIGN 	MEDIUM	It is recommended that Town Centre Information Signs be installed as a staged implementation, one town at a time.
STREET SIGNS 	MEDIUM	A gradual replacement of street signs is recommended. In order to achieve economies of scale it is recommended that areas be identified for upgrade and new signage progressively rolled out across the LGA. Where individual replacement signs are required, old signs are to be removed and new signs installed.

SIGN TYPE	PRIORITY	INSTALLATION RECOMMENDATIONS
COMMUNITY FACILITY SIGN 	LOW	It is recommended that Community Facility Signs be installed on a case by case basis (one facility at a time) with priority placed on high use facilities and facilities where existing signage is not fit for purpose.
COMMUNITY FACILITY INFORMATION SIGN 	LOW	It is recommended that Community Facility Information Signs be installed on a case by case basis with priority placed on areas where current signage is inadequate.
WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY SIGN 	LOW	Walkway and cycleway signage should be installed on a needs basis. Simultaneous installation along an entire route is strongly recommended to avoid confusion and a 'piecemeal' approach.



This page left intentionally blank