

Abermain



The village of Abermain is located between the village of Neath and township of Weston.

Cessnock Road and the former South Maitland Railway corridor separate the village into two parts.

Abermain comprises predominantly low-density housing and supports some business and retail activity located along the centre core on Cessnock Road.

The village, along with Greta, is one of the larger villages in this project.

Figure 1: Abermain Village Extent

The village is predominantly zoned R2 Low Density Residential zone; however, there are some pockets of RU2 Rural Landscape north of Harle Street, R5 in the southern portion of the village and B1 Local Centre along the centre core on Cessnock Road. The mapped minimum lot size is generally 450m².

Social Environment¹

The village area has a relatively high population, with the predominant household composition being couples, with or without children. The village has a high rate of either home ownership, owned outright or being purchased.



**Total
Population:**
2,337



**Indigenous
Population:**
7.1%



Median Age: 37



**Average Weekly
Household
Income: \$1,185**



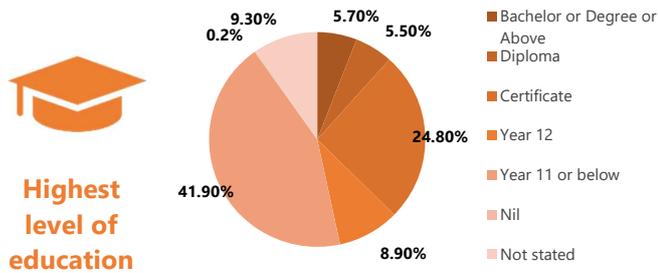
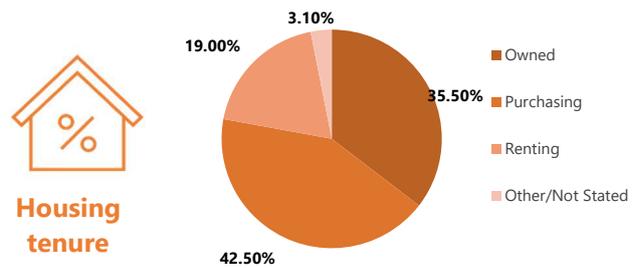
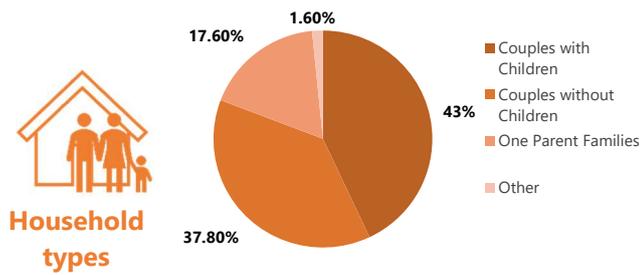
**Average Weekly
Rent: \$280**



**Average
Monthly
Mortgage:
\$1,367**

¹ ABS 2016 Quick Stats (https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC10010?opendocument), accessed 14 October 2021

Abermain



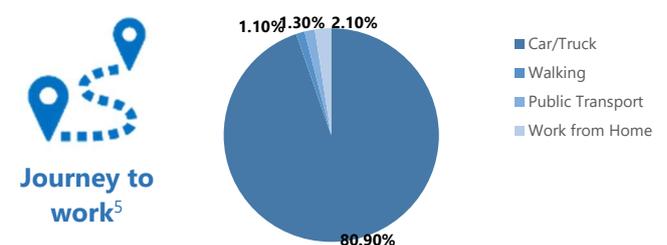
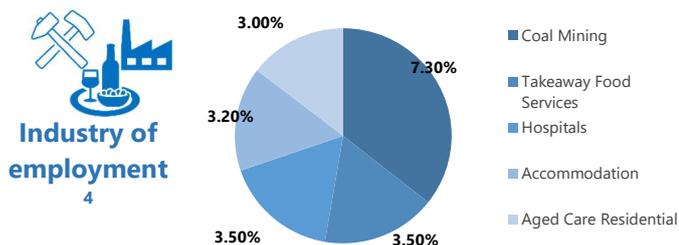
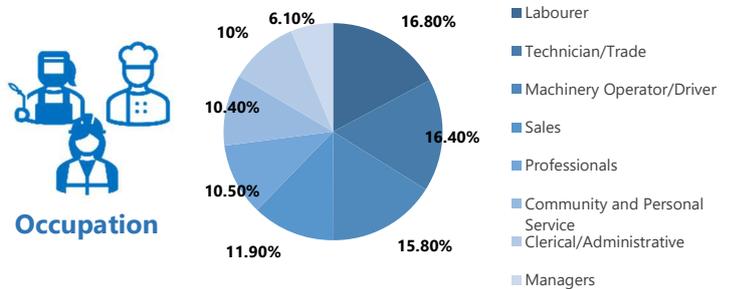
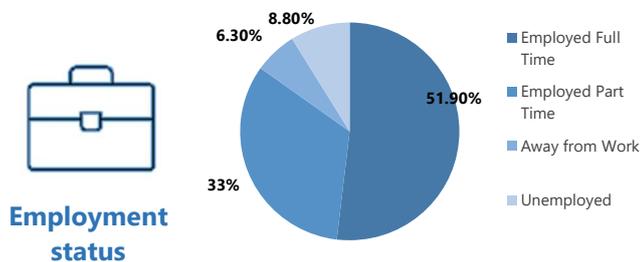
SEIFA (IRSD) Index Score²

924

Economic Environment³

Over half of the residents of Abermain (aged over 15 years) are employed in a full-time occupation, with a further third of the population participating in part-time employment.

Occupations with the highest employment are labourers and technicians or trades. Most people (greater than 80%) travelled to work by private vehicle.



Local businesses include pubs, service stations, a pharmacy and a takeaway food and drink premises. There is a high vacancy rate of the shops in Abermain

² The Socio Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is a general socio-economic index that summarises a range of information about the economic and social conditions of people and households within an area. This index includes only measures of relative disadvantage. A low score indicates relatively greater disadvantage in general. A high score indicates a relative lack of disadvantage in general (Source: [Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas \(SEIFA\), Australia \(cat. no. 2033.0.55.001\)](https://censusofpopulationandhousing.gov.au/2017/2017-socio-economic-indexes-for-areas-seifa), accessed 14 October 2021)

³ ABS 2016 Quick Stats (https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC10010?opendocument), accessed 14 October 2021

⁴ Top responses only

Abermain



Plate 1: Examples of businesses and services (from top left to right) vacant retail premises with pharmacy in background, former newsagency, Abernethy Hotel, Denman Hotel, Sir Edgeworth David Community Centre with retail premises in background, service station, service station, former post office)

Built & Natural Environment⁵

Aboriginal Heritage

Prior to European occupation, there is evidence that Aboriginal people lived and moved across the landscape. Whilst higher densities of artefacts can typically be found along lower slopes and creek lines, scatters have been found on all landforms, which indicates a 'background scatter' of occupation across the region, irrespective of landform, with sporadic areas of intense or repeat usage⁶.

Many landscape features can be linked to the intangible cultural heritage values. Many of these have been impacted over time by European settlement. For the Abermain locality, this includes the former South Maitland Railway line/corridor, the location of which was a songline/travel route for the original inhabitants, which has a link with the Pelaw Main Learning Place⁷. The Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) also owns Land in the locality.

Additionally, localities with high elevations provide views and vistas to other significant places have been obstructed by development, as have access to, and quality of natural waterways and natural vegetation.

Landscape, Vegetation & Constraints

There remain significant view corridors from the higher areas of the village (such as Grafton, Goulburn, Tamworth, and Armidale Streets) to Kurri Kurri and higher vegetated landscapes around Pelaw Main and east of Hebburn Road (Figure 2 and Plate 2).

⁵ ABS 2016 Quick Stats (https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC10010?opendocument), accessed 14 October 2021

⁶ Virtus Heritage 2021, *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study*, Cessnock City Council

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Abermain

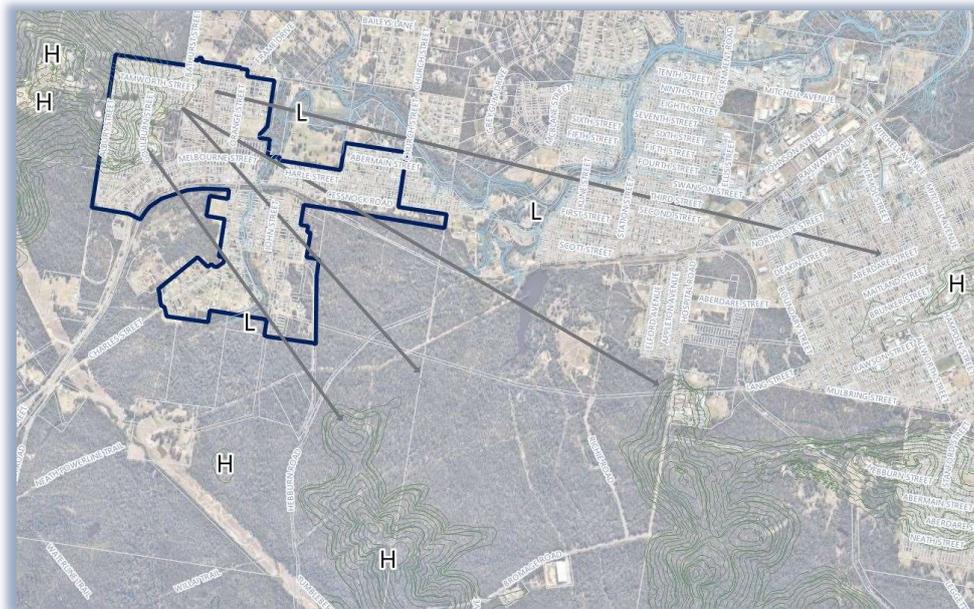


Figure 2: Significant View Corridors



Plate 2 (from top to bottom) View from Centenary Park toward western end of Lang Street, View from Goulburn Street toward high elevations east of Hebburn Road, View from Tamworth Street to Kurri Kurri

Vegetation cover within the village area is moderate (at approximately 28% canopy cover) and located predominantly in parks, or within riparian corridors (Figure 3). There are limited street tree plantings, with most vegetation and plantings occurring within the private domain or on vacant allotments.

However, the village area is framed by bushfire prone vegetation, some of which is also identified as being flood prone (Figure 4). Vegetation in this locality comprises Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs) including the Kurri Sand Swamp Woodland (south of the South Maitland Railway corridor) and Lower Hunter Spotted Gum-Ironbark Forest EECs.

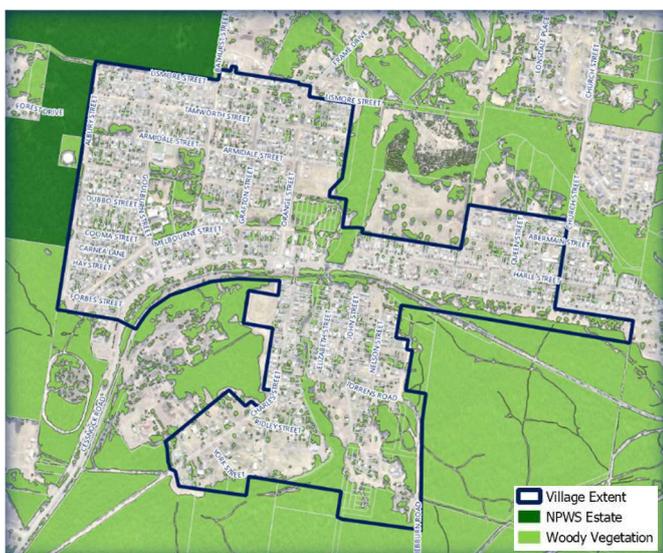


Figure 3: Vegetation Cover

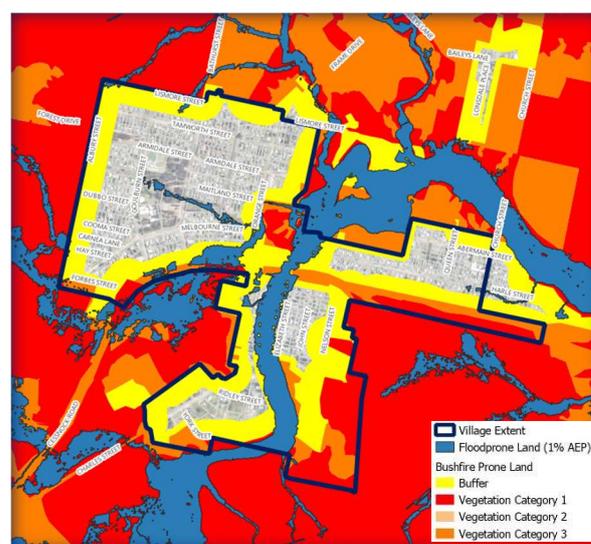


Figure 4: Bushfire Vegetation Categories and Flood prone Land

Abermain

European Heritage

The built environment of Abermain is strongly influenced by its post-colonial heritage.



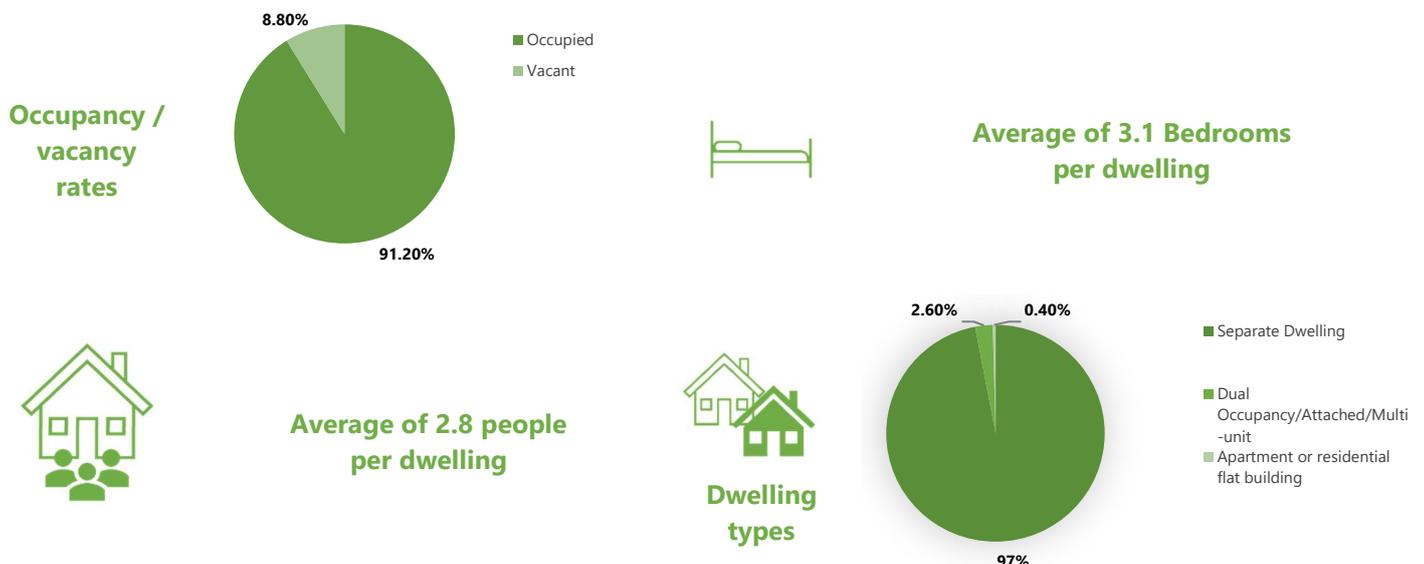
Figure 5: Heritage Items in Abermain



Plate 3: Examples of heritage items (from above left to right) sandstone kerb and guttering, South Maitland railway bridge / line fencing, ANZAC memorial, former South Maitland Mines Rescue building.

The establishment of Abermain as a village is linked to the opening of Abermain Colliery in 1903. The first mineworkers of the area lived in unplanned clusters of dwellings. Not long after, a government subdivision of land on the northern side of the South Maitland Railway corridor occurred, followed by the establishment of local businesses in 1904 (including the former Kurri Kurri Co-op), and the establishment of Abermain Public School in 1905⁸.

Built Form & Density



⁸ Pike, Walker and Associates 1992-93, City of Cessnock Heritage Inventory Study (Abermain School Inventory Item Sheet Ref. No 217)

Abermain

Local streets are wide, with a grid-like subdivision pattern, incorporating mid-block laneways (unformed).

Many dwellings are representative of the era of establishment of the village, including small, fabricated workers cottages with hipped roofs and bungalows. The predominant dwelling type is single detached dwellings.



Plate 4: Examples of dwellings

Residential subdivision and development expanded further north, with the most recent areas of development appearing within the north west of the village area around Armidale Street Road reserve.

New large lot residential development has since occurred north-east of the village area along Bathurst Street and Frame Drive.

South of Cessnock Road, the average lot size is larger at approximately 840m² and the net residential density is approximately 7.4 dwellings per hectare. North of Cessnock Road, the average lot size is approximately 745m² and the net residential density is approximately 9.2 dwellings per hectare. There are more vacant allotments in the south of the village area than in the north which affects density.

In both localities, dwellings are located towards the frontage of lots, however, in the south of the village, many lots comprise large outbuildings (garages, sheds etc.).

There is some evidence of higher density development occurring, with two multi dwelling developments located on Armidale Street, and some secondary dwellings.

Abermain

Servicing

The northern area of the Abermain Village is serviced by reticulated water and sewerage infrastructure, as is the southern area. However, sewerage infrastructure does not extend much farther south of Torrens Road, nor to those properties on Nelson Street. These properties rely on on-site wastewater management systems for effluent disposal.

All parcels within the area have general waste, green waste and recycling collection services.

Stormwater is managed by a series of formal and informal drainage features, discharging into local watercourses.

Street lighting is at regular intervals throughout the area.

Connectivity

The village is connected to Neath, Weston, Lovedale and the Hunter Expressway by local and State Road connections.

The connection to the Hunter Expressway from Cessnock Road, via Orange Street and Frame Drive) is likely to be highly utilised. Signals have recently been installed in this location to manage vehicle movements. A Weston Bypass connecting to the Hunter Expressway should alleviate this impact, however in the interim; Abermain will be a key entry point into the Local Government Area (LGA).

Bus services generally operate from approximately 5:15am to 7:15am at hourly intervals, and 30 minute intervals during the am and pm peaks, with connections to Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Maitland Station and the Greenhills shopping centre (via Heddon Greta) in

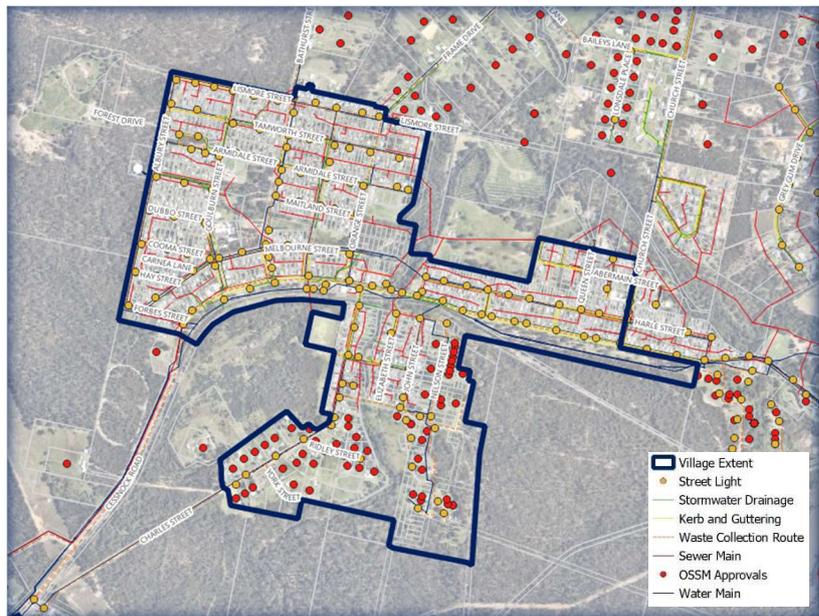


Figure 6: Servicing within Abermain

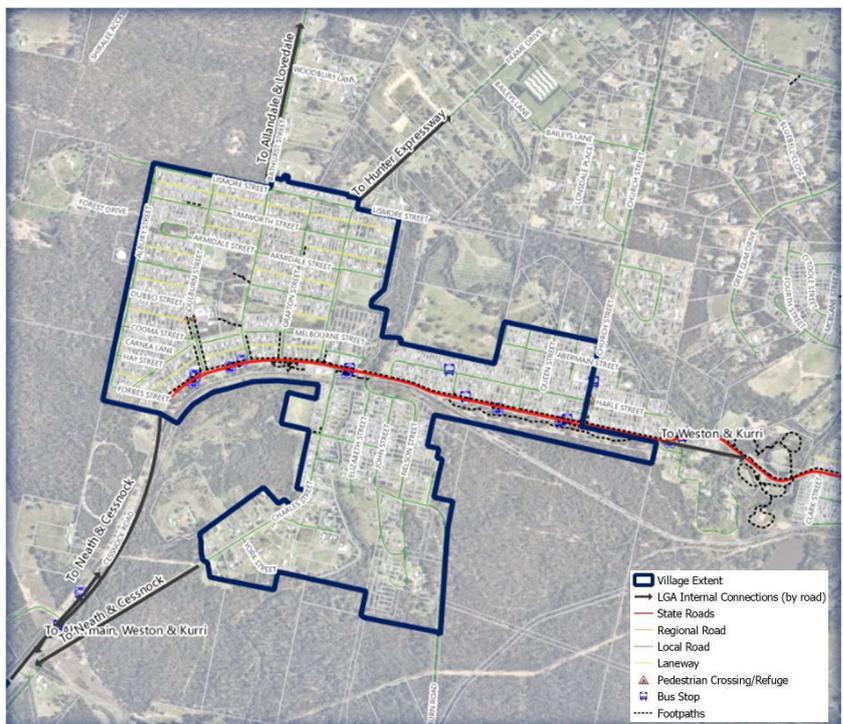


Figure 7: Connectivity within and Beyond Abermain

Abermain

the Maitland LGA on weekdays. Similar, but slightly reduced services operate during weekends⁹. The area is heavily reliant on private vehicles¹⁰.

There are footpaths in local parks but few formal footpaths within residential areas. Notwithstanding, the network of local streets and laneways provide high levels of permeability.

Whilst footpaths, shared pathways and cycleways extend from Weston to the western extent of the area via the local parks, there is limited connection between the northern and southern side of Cessnock Road and the two separate areas of the village. Only one formal crossing of Cessnock Road exists, located at the intersection of Orange Street and Cessnock Road. The only pedestrian access to the southern area of the village is via Charles Street.

Open Space and Public Domain

Open space in the form of lineal local parks bounding the former South Maitland Railway corridor and the eastern village extent along Swamp Creek are key features of the village. Abermain Centenary Park is a large local play space comprising natural bushland and provides a buffer to Abermain Public School and the Abermain Bowling and Recreation Club.



Plate 5: Examples of Open Space in Abermain (from left to right) shared path Bailey Park, pedestrian bridge over Swamp Creek, Armidale Street Road Reserve, and Howe Park

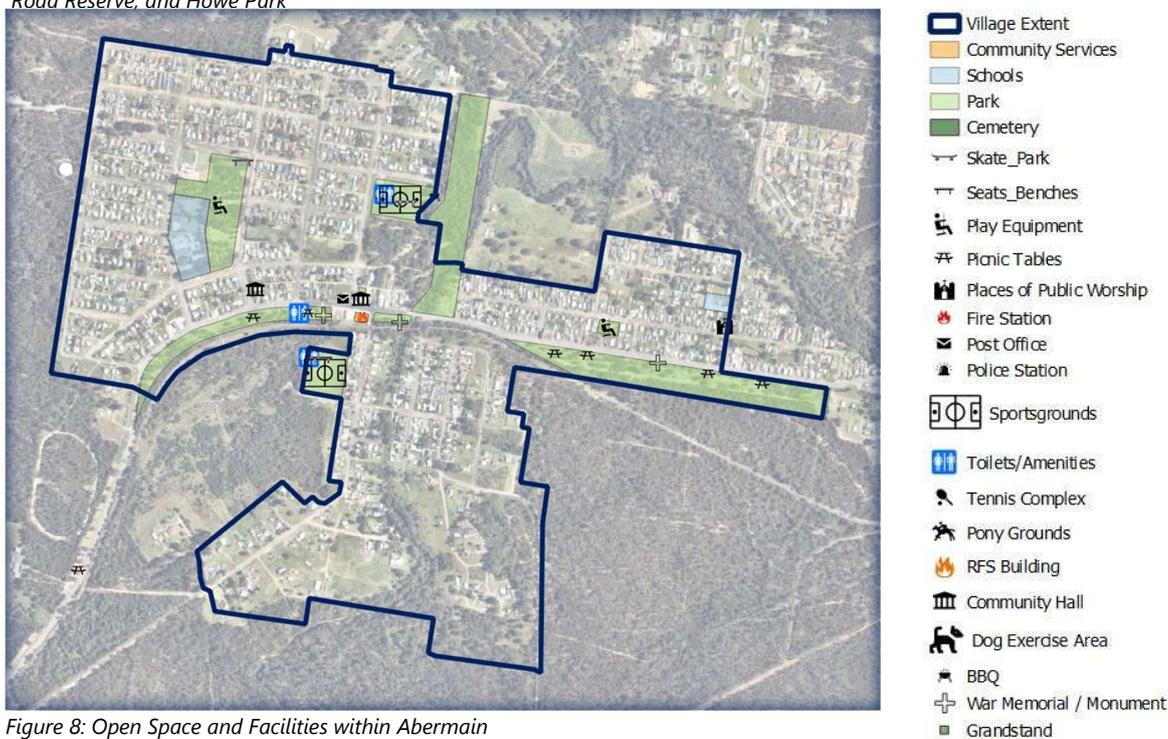


Figure 8: Open Space and Facilities within Abermain

⁹ Rover Coaches Route 164, 166, 171 and 172 Timetable https://www.rovercoaches.com.au/client_images/2199050.pdf, accessed 18 November 2021

¹⁰ The average motor vehicle ownership is 1.9 vehicles per dwelling (https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC10010?opendocument), accessed 14 October 2021

Abermain

These areas of local space are key features within the public domain of Abermain, particularly the groves of large trees within Jefferies and Baileys Park which provide amenity, but also offering a shaded refuge during hot weather. There are also a number of feature gardens in these parks; some well maintained but others less so. Vegetation within the Harle Street Playground is sparse and does not have a specific theme. A summary of the existing open space areas and facilities / embellishments is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Recreation Facility Inventory¹¹

Name	Hierarchy	Area	Facilities / Embellishments
Bailey Park	Passive (Green Corridor)	7.54 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Path ▪ Sheltered picnic bench and tables
Edgeworth David Park	Passive (Pocket Park)	0.25 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Car park ▪ Hedging ▪ Lighting ▪ Path ▪ Pedestrian bridge ▪ Public art (mural)
Harle Street Playground	Local Park	0.24 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bench Seat ▪ Playground
Jefferies Park	Local Park	1.06 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fencing ▪ Memorial ▪ Paved path ▪ Playground ▪ Public toilet ▪ Sheltered picnic bench and table
Centenary Park	District Park	3.69 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bench seat ▪ Fencing ▪ Path ▪ Playground ▪ Water bubbler
Abermain Soccer Ground (Orange Street Oval)	Local Sportsground	1.62ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amenities building ▪ Car park ▪ Floodlighting ▪ Fencing ▪ 1 soccer field ▪ 1 junior soccer field ▪ 1 basketball half court ▪ 2 mini soccer fields
Howe Park	Local Sportsground	1.61 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amenities building ▪ Bench seating ▪ Fencing ▪ Floodlighting ▪ Irrigation ▪ 1 rugby league field ▪ 1 turf cricket pitch

The village comprises a number of murals part of the "Towns with Heart" incorporating the Kurri Kurri Murals Project. Murals are located on the Abermain Bowling Club and on the former post-office/newsagency.

Fencing to separate the public and private domain within the village is not uniform, and comprises a range of materials, including masonry, timber paling, colourbond and galvanised mesh.

¹¹ Cessnock City Council Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2020

Abermain

There is some evidence of a street tree-planting theme, including bottlebrush (*Callistemon sp.*) in some road reserves, as well as some vegetation being representative of the vegetation preferred during the early 1900s including large palms and willows. Road reserves within newer areas are generally devoid of street trees.

Road name signs are inconsistent with the current signage strategy.

Planned Public Domain Facilities / Embellishments and Works Projects

An audit of existing Council strategies and plans has been prepared to identify works which are currently being undertaken (or have recently been completed), and those planned. Additionally, the audit has identified key principles for the delivery and supply of services and infrastructure, which may assist in identifying additional public domain projects.

Where practicable these are identified on Figure 9, but are listed in full in Table 2. The location of the planned improvements is indicative only, and may alter subject to further planning and design. Timing for delivery is also affected by funding availability.

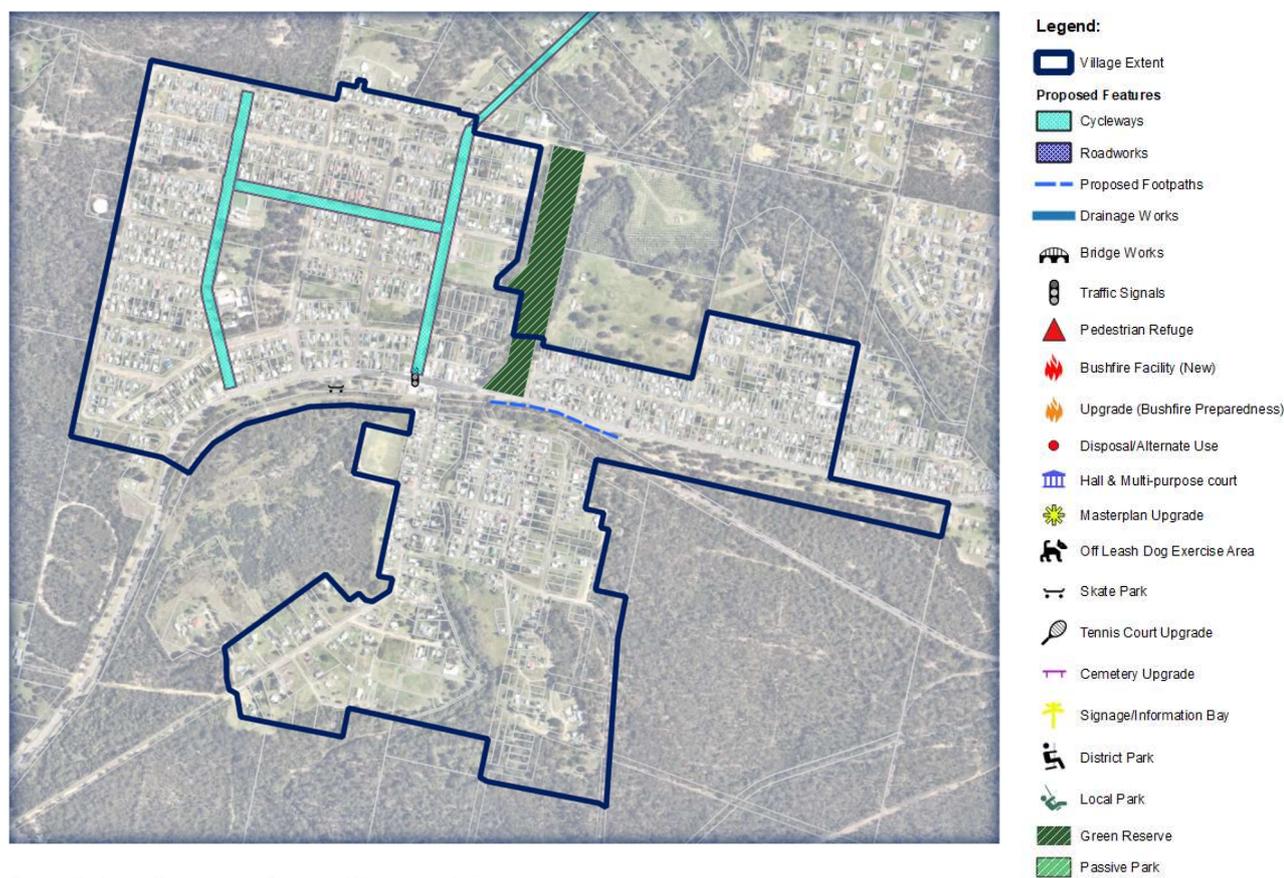


Figure 9: Audit Outcomes - Planned Works and Infrastructure

Table 2: Audit Outcomes – Planned Works, Infrastructure and Principles

Category	Strategy / Plan	Action
Community Facilities	Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2016	The Abermain School of Arts facility be preserved as a multi-purpose centre that primarily delivers services to an aged population
Cycleways / Paths & Trails	2021 - 2022 Operational and Delivery Plan	Investigate the feasibility of the Abermain to Weston link recreation trail
	Traffic and Transport Strategy 2018	Cycleway connection from Kurri Kurri to Cessnock - Cessnock Road, Abermain
	Trails Strategy 2020	Enhance and develop the trail and support infrastructure between Cessnock and Kurri Kurri and promote as an integral part of a wider trail network.
		Investigate options to extend the Chinaman's Hollow and Maybury Peace Park trail west to meet the existing trail between Date Ave, Weston and Abermain.
	Cycling Strategy 2016 / City Wide Local Infrastructure and Contribution Plan 2020	New district on-road connection on Hart Road/Gingers Lane/Frame Drive – Hunter Expressway to Lismore Street
	Cycling Strategy 2016 / City Wide Local Infrastructure and Contribution Plan 2020	New district on-road connection on Orange Street – Lismore Street to Cessnock Road
	Cycling Strategy 2016 / City Wide Local Infrastructure and Contribution Plan 2020	New local off-road path on Goulburn Street – Lismore Street to Cessnock Road
	Cycling Strategy 2016 / City Wide Local Infrastructure and Contribution Plan 2020	New local off-road path on Armidale St - Goulburn St to Orange St.
	Trails Strategy 2020	Assess the feasibility of developing recreational trails which link the Secondary Trailhead at Log of Knowledge Park to other towns/ destinations across the LGA (e.g. to Cessnock; the Vineyard District; various heritage sites, National Parks). Consider opportunities to use historic rail corridors.
Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (2016)	New section of path between Elizabeth Street and Alfred Street	
Floodplain Management	2021 – 2022CFC Capital Works Program	Flood Mitigation – Phase 3 Construction
Land Use Planning	Urban Tree Canopy Policy 2021	Develop an Environmental Strategy that aims to create an interconnected Urban Tree Canopy across the Cessnock LGA to assist in climate mitigation and adaptation, reducing the urban heat island effect, improving health and wellbeing, supporting healthy urban ecosystems, improving soil moisture and water quality and providing links to green spaces;
	Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2020	Develop a local character statement for each town to inform place activation and development
		Develop heritage colour and material palette options for buildings along the main street, which integrates with the street furniture and signage strategy.
		Improve the visual amenity of public domains and commercial centres by implementing masterplans in Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton and other strategic locations.

Category	Strategy / Plan	Action
		Utilise street pole banners in activation areas to promote upcoming activity, events, landmarks to community and visitors.
		Review the permissible uses within the environmental and rural land use zones to ensure economic activities associated with nature-based tourism are included.
Open Space	Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan 2019	Retain management of Crown Reserve Lot 8081 DP 114288 (177 Cessnock Road) and develop for a Green Corridor
		Obtain ownership of Crown Reserve Pt Lot 2 DP 1239939 (27A Charles Street) for Howes Park (LS4)
Recreation Facilities	Skate and BMX Strategy / City Wide Local Infrastructure Contribution Plan 2020	Construct a Skate Dot or Spot (comprising 3-5 elements) in Jeffries Park between 100 – 150m ²
Recreation Buildings / Amenities	2021 Capital Works Program	Orange Street Oval Food Premises Compliance (Recreation Buildings Renewal Program)
	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021 - 2025	Improve the accessibility of public spaces and facilities
Transport	Disability Inclusion Action Plan	Support safe and accessible transport options
Roads and Drainage	2021 Operational and Delivery Plan	Develop Sandstone Kerb and Gutter Policy, Procedure and Conservation Management Plan (3.1.7.b)
	Kurri Kurri District Strategy 2018 / Traffic and Transport Strategy	Lobby State Government to upgrade the intersection of Orange Street and Cessnock Road Orange Street / Cessnock Road - install traffic control signals
Signage	Capital Works Program	Installation of Signage, Information and Parking Bay Jeffries Park
	Cessnock LGA signage Strategy	Suburb Entry Signs: It is recommended that all Suburb Entry Signs be installed simultaneously. Existing suburb signage is to be removed.
		Street Signs: 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.