



8 October 2025

To All Councillors

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Council Chambers, on Wednesday, 15 October 2025 at 6.30pm, for the purposes of transacting the undermentioned business.

AGENDA:

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(3)	RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE , OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO-VISUAL LINK	
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‡ - Denotes that Report is for notation only.



Principles for Local Government

Exercise of functions generally

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by Councils:

- a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e) Councils should work co-operatively with other Councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

Council's Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence
- Teamwork

Our Community's Vision

Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community need.

Cessnock – thriving, attractive and welcoming.

Our Community's Desired Outcomes

- A connected, safe and creative community.
- A sustainable and prosperous economy.
- A sustainable and healthy environment.
- Accessible infrastructure, facilities and services.
- Civic Leadership and effective governance.



Council Code of Conduct

Council adopted its current Code of Conduct on 23 October 2024. This Code provides details of statutory requirements and gives guidance in respect of the way in which pecuniary and conflict of interest issues must be disclosed. Councillors took an oath or affirmation at the commencement of their term of office under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and are therefore obligated under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage their conflicts of interest.

Generally, the Code outlines the following issues:

1. Councillors are under an obligation at law to disclose any interest they may have in any matter before the Council as soon as practicable and to refrain from being involved in any consideration or to vote on any such matter where required and out outlined in the Code of Conduct.
2. Councillors must disclose any interest in any matter noted in the business paper prior to or at the opening of the meeting.
3. The nature of the interest shall be included in the disclosure.
4. Councillors shall immediately and during the meeting disclose any interest in respect of any matter arising during the meeting which is not referred to in the business paper.
5. All disclosures of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
6. All disclosures of interest shall as far as is practicable be given in writing.
7. Any member having a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest shall leave the meeting and remain absent while the subject of the interest is being considered by Council.
8. The meeting shall not discuss any matter in which a Councillor has a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest while the Councillor is present at the meeting.



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**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2025,
COMMENCING AT 6.30PM**

PRESENT: His Worship the Mayor, Councillor D Watton (in the Chair) and Councillors Dixon, Grine, Harrington (via AV Link), Hill, Jurd, King, Lea, Madden (via AV Link), Mason, Palmowski, Pascoe and Hawkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Development Services Manager)
Director Corporate and Community Services
Director Works and Infrastructure
People and Culture Manager
Chief Financial Officer
Acting Development Services Manager (Development Services Coordinator)
Development Engineering Coordinator
Communications & Engagement Manager
Community Engagement Officer
Help Desk Support Officer
Senior Business Support Officer – Council Services

The Acknowledgement of Country was presented by Mayor Watton

The Prayer was presented by Pastor Amanda Francis

**ATTENDANCE BY
AV LINK**

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Hill
Seconded: Councillor Mason

227

RESOLVED that Council permit Councillor Madden and Councillor Harrington to attend the 17 September 2025 Ordinary Council meeting by audio-visual link.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Grine
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea
Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES:

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea
 Seconded: Councillor Pascoe

228
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 August 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI9/2025

SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.

PE25/2025 – DA 8/2024/530/1 proposing the erection of a dwelling and ancillary swimming pool – Councillor Harrington declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that a relative owns a property in close proximity to the building envelope of the proposed development. Councillor Harrington advised that she would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the conflict does not influence her in carrying out her public duties because she is committed to acting in the best interest of the community, and she makes decisions based solely on the merits of the matter and in accordance with Council's policies, procedures and statutory obligations.

WI9/2025 – Draft Waste Management Policy - Councillor Jurd declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that family work at the waste depot. Councillor Jurd advised that she would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the conflict will not influence her in carrying out her public duties because while her family work there, the Draft Waste Management Policy has nothing to do with their role.

PE24/2025 – DA 8/2024/533/1 Dwelling, Tourist & Visitor Accommodation, Function Centre, Restaurant or Café, and Ancillary Wellness Centre, Infrastructure Works, Signage and Landscaping – Councillor Pascoe declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she believes one of the applicants may own a business that is a member of the Business Chamber of which she is the President. Councillor Pascoe advised she would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as this will not affect her ability to make judgement in relation to the DA.

PETITIONS

Nil

ADDRESS BY INVITED SPEAKERS

Speakers	For/Against Recommendation	Report	Page No.	Duration
David Landsberry	Against	PE24/2025 - DA 8/2024/533/1 Dwelling, Tourist & Visitor Accommodation, Function Centre, Restaurant or Café, and Ancillary Wellness Centre, Infrastructure Works, Signage and Landscaping	35	3 mins

EXTENSION OF TIME

Moved:

Councillor Lea

Seconded:

Councillor Hawkins

229

RESOLVED

That an extension of time of one minute be granted to David Landsberry to complete his presentation.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Grine
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

EXTENSION OF TIME**Moved:**

Councillor Jurd

Seconded:

Councillor Palmowski

230

RESOLVED

That a further extension of time of one minute be granted to David Landsberry to complete his presentation.

FOR**AGAINST**

Councillor Grine
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (13)**Total (0)****CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Justin Hamilton	For	PE24/2025 - DA 8/2024/533/1 Dwelling, Tourist & Visitor Accommodation, Function Centre, Restaurant or Café, and Ancillary Wellness Centre, Infrastructure Works, Signage and Landscaping	35	3 mins
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PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE24/2025

SUBJECT: DA 8/2024/533/1 DWELLING, TOURIST & VISITOR ACCOMMODATION, FUNCTION CENTRE, RESTAURANT OR CAFÉ, AND ANCILLARY WELLNESS CENTRE, INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, SIGNAGE AND LANDSCAPING

Councillor Pascoe declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she believes one of the applicants may own a business that is a member of the Business Chamber of which she is the President. Councillor Pascoe remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
231
RESOLVED

1. **That:**

- (i) **Development Application No. 8/2024/533/1 proposing construction of a dwelling (to be used as a manager's residence), tourist and visitor accommodation, function centre, restaurant or café, and ancillary wellness centre, infrastructure works, signage and landscaping at 509 De Beyers Road Pokolbin be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained in Enclosure 2.**

- (ii) **The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), and consideration of community views are as follows:**
 - **The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011)*.**
 - **The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010); any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.**
 - **The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form for the site.**
 - **The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.**
 - **Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council**

has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.

- (iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

2. That Council notifies in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Hill	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (11)	Total (2)

CARRIED

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBO OR INDIVIDUALLY WITH NOMINATED EXCEPTIONS

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
232
RESOLVED

That having read and considered the reports in the agenda related to items

OFFICERS REPORTS

GMU2/2025	Review of Council's Organisation Structure	32
CC59/2025	Media Policy	61
‡ CC61/2025	Investment Report - August 2025	64

Council adopt the recommendations as printed in the business papers for those items.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM9/2025

SUBJECT: REGIONAL MOTIONS FOR 2025 NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
233

RESOLVED

1. That Council endorse the regional motions prepared by the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) and their lodgement to the 2025 Local Government NSW Annual Conference (23-25 November 2025).
2. That Council directly lodge endorsed regional motions to Local Government NSW by the closing date of 30 September 2025.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM10/2025

SUBJECT: WASTE LEVY REVIEW

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton

234

RESOLVED

That Council write to the NSW Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC, the Member for Cessnock, Mr Clayton Barr MP, the member for Upper Hunter, Mr Dave Layzell MP, and the member for Maitland, The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP, seeking that Cessnock City Council be reclassified from a Metropolitan Levy Area (MLA) to a Regional Levy Area (RLA).

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM11/2025

SUBJECT: HUNTER TRANSMISSION PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Councillor Lea left the meeting, the time being 07.32 pm

Councillor Lea returned to the meeting, the time being 07.34 pm

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
235

RESOLVED

1. That Council note that staff are preparing and will lodge a submission on the Hunter Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the due date of 24 September 2025.
2. That Council acknowledge the community's concerns, which have been listened to and incorporated into Council's submission.
3. That Council request that a copy of the final submission be circulated to Councillors once lodged.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU9/2025

SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY

Nil

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT NO. GMU2/2025

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
236

RESOLVED

1. That following review and consultation with the Interim General Manager, Council has determined that the existing three (3) directorate organisational structure under the General Manager will remain.
2. That the senior staff positions within Council remain unchanged being the General Manager, Director of Corporate and Community Services, Director of Planning and Environment and the Director of Works and Infrastructure.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE25/2025

SUBJECT: DA 8/2024/530/1 PROPOSING THE ERECTION OF A DWELLING AND ANCILLARY SWIMMING POOL

Councillor Harrington declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that a relative owns a property in close proximity to the building envelope of the proposed development. Councillor Harrington remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Hawkins
237
RESOLVED

1. That:

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2024/530/1 proposing the erection of a dwelling and ancillary swimming pool on Lot 136 DP No. 1243665 William Street Paxton be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained within Enclosure 2 and the following additional condition which is to be inserted under the heading 'Before Issue of an Occupation Certificate for the Dwelling'

'Prior to the issue of an OC for the dwelling, the Private Certifier>> is to be provided with evidence that an application for house numbering has been approved by Council ensuring that the dwelling is addressed to the street frontage of which access is proposed for emergency and service providers'.

- (ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), are as follows:

- The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the C2 Environmental Conservation zone under the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011*;
- The proposal is consistent with the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies;
- The proposal is compliant with the relevant provisions under the *Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010*;
- The proposal incorporates adequate measures to ensure the development does not result in any adverse impacts on the natural and built environment;

- The site is considered suitable for the proposed development; and
- The development proposal is considered to be in the public interest.

(iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Hill	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (11)	Total (2)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC54/2025

SUBJECT: DRAFT CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY 2025-35

MOTION

238

Moved: Councillor Hill

Seconded: Councillor Lea

RESOLVED

That Council place the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC55/2025

**SUBJECT: MINUTES OF THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
1 AUGUST 2025**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
239

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee meeting held 1 August 2025 be adopted as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

FOR

Councillor Grine
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (10)

AGAINST

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King

Total (3)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC56/2025

SUBJECT: ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR - 2025/2026

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor King **Seconded:** Councillor Mason
240
RESOLVED

1. That Council elect a Deputy Mayor for a term of office of 12 months and notes the annual fee applicable to the term of the appointment was set at \$1,200.
2. That Council elect a Deputy Mayor by Open Voting.

The Director Corporate & Community advised the meeting that two nominations had been received those being Councillors Harrington and Hill.

Voting was conducted between Councillors Harrington and Hill by way of a show of hands.

The result of the vote is as follows:

For Councillor Harrington – Councillors Dixon, Jurd, King, Mason, Pascoe, Watton and Harrington

For Councillor Hill – Councillors Grine, Hill, Lea, Palmowski, Hawkins and Madden

3. That Council note the declaration of the Returning Officer that Councillor Harrington is elected as Deputy Mayor for the term of office 17 September 2025 to the day prior to the Ordinary Council meeting in September 2026.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC57/2025

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEES FOLLOWING CASUAL VACANCY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor King **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
241

RESOLVED

1. That Council appoints Councillor King as member and Mayor Watton as alternate member to the Austar Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee for the current Council term.
2. That Council appoints Councillor King to the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel as an alternate member for the current Council term.
3. That Council appoints Councillor Jurd to the Council Initiated Awards Committee as an alternate member for the current Council term.
4. That Council notes the dissolution of the Local Traffic Committee following changes to the Transport for NSW delegation to councils.

Councillor Hawkins left the meeting, the time being 08.04 pm

Councillor Hawkins returned to the meeting, the time being 08.06 pm

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Grine
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea
Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC58/2025

SUBJECT: DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 24/25FY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Grine
242

RESOLVED

1. That Council formally refer the draft Financial Statements to Council's external auditor, the Audit Office of NSW, to provide an opinion and report to Council.
2. That Council authorise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager and Responsible Accounting Officer to sign the Statement by Councillors and Management for the General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.
3. That Council fix the date of 19 November 2025 as the date for the public meeting to present the audited Financial Statements and the Audit Reports for the year ended 30 June 2025, and that Council's external auditor be requested to be present to answer questions.
4. That the Interim General Manager be delegated authority to seek an extension of time for lodgment of the Financial Statements to the Office of Local Government should the need arise during finalisation of the audit.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (1)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC59/2025

SUBJECT: MEDIA POLICY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
243
RESOLVED

That Council adopts the revised Media Policy.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC60/2025

SUBJECT: RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Grine

Seconded: Councillor Lea

244

RESOLVED

That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC61/2025

SUBJECT: INVESTMENT REPORT - AUGUST 2025

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Lea

Seconded: Councillor Hill

245

RESOLVED

That Council receives the Investment Report for August 2025 and notes that:

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$98,167,716.**

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC62/2025

SUBJECT: PUBLIC EXHIBITION - REVISED CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Grine
246
RESOLVED

1. That Council places the revised Code of Meeting Practice on public exhibition for a period of 28 calendar days.
2. That Council adopts the revised Code of Meeting Practice the day after the public submission period of 42 days concludes, if no unresolved submissions are received.
3. That Council rescinds the Code of Meeting Practice 2024 and adopts the Code of Meeting Practice 2025 with effect from 31 December 2025.

FOR

Councillor Grine
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (12)

AGAINST

Councillor Madden

Total (1)

CARRIED

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI9/2025

SUBJECT: DRAFT WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Councillor Jurd declared a Non-Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that family work at the waste depot. Councillor Jurd remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Grine **Seconded:** Councillor Dixon
247

RESOLVED

1. That Council places the draft Waste Management Policy 2025 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
2. That, if no relevant submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the draft Waste Management Policy 2025 be considered final and adopted.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI10/2025

SUBJECT: NAMING OF NEW NETBALL FACILITY AT BOOTH PARK, KURRI KURRI

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Grine
248
RESOLVED

1. That Council endorse the proposed naming of the new netball facility within Booth Park, Kurri Kurri, adopting the name “Molly Worthington Netball Facility”.
2. In line with the Geographic Names Board Place Naming Policy, the Board be notified of the Netball Facility name to ensure the name, position and origin is recorded in the Spatial Services’ Digital Topographic Database and the name shown on maps, where relevant.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN12/2025

SUBJECT: MANAGEMENT AND USE OF THE LAND KNOWN AS BRANXTON RV CAMP

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor King
249
RESOLVED

1. That Council engage in open communication with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) (and other parties as required including but not limited to neighbouring residents) to explore potential management and land use opportunities for the area known as the Branxton RV Park.
2. That the General Manager present a report to Councillors at a future meeting outlining the outcomes of these discussions and recommended next step.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Grine	
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor King – Foodbank Fresh Food Pop-Up

On Thursday 11 September, despite the rainy weather, I attended the Foodbank Fresh Food Pop-Up held in Kurri Kurri and delivered by Joblink Plus. From my best judgement, around 6.5 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables were made available free of charge to members of our community.

It was a bittersweet experience. On one hand, I am very grateful to Joblink Plus for bringing such generosity to our community and it was heartening to see a strong turnout of people taking advantage of the opportunity. On the other hand, it is also a sobering reminder of how tough times currently are for many local families.

I wish to sincerely thank everyone who played a part in organising and delivering this initiative. Their efforts made a real difference to those in need and demonstrated the strength of compassion and support within our community.

Mayor Watton - MAYORAL SUMMARY – 21 August to 17 September 2025

20 August	Cessnock Men's Probus Club
22 August	2CHR Interview
26 August	Cessnock Business Chamber Networking Event
27 August	Meet the Mayor event at Wollombi
	Cessnock Hospital Re-development update
	Korreil Wonnai Aboriginal Education Consultative group - 2025 Kurraburra Awards
28 August	RFBI Kurri Kurri Masonic Village - 30 Year Celebration – Speech
30 August	STOMP Festival – Official Welcome
31 August	Cessnock Hockey Turf Opening
4 September	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting
5 September	Jenny Aitchison - meeting with Mayor & Councillors
11 September	Aboriginal Students Wiyala Public Speaking Competition - Guest Judge
11 September	Floodplain Risk Management Committee Meeting
14 September	28th Annual Memorial Day Service - MEU – Wreath
17 September	Citizenship Ceremony – this was the largest Citizenship Ceremony ever held for Cessnock with 55 new Citizens

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 08.51.pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on 15 October 2025

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

Disclosures Of Interest

Report No. DI10/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Corporate Governance Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.

SUMMARY

The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Local Government Act, 1993 regulate the way in which Councillors and nominated staff of council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public trust.

The Act prescribes that where a member of Council (or a Committee of Council) has a direct or indirect financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council (or Committee), that interest must be disclosed as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting and the reasons for declaring such interest.

As members are aware, the provisions of the Local Government Act restrict any member who has declared a pecuniary interest in any matter from participating in the discussions, voting on that matter, and require that member to vacate the Chamber.

Council's Code of Conduct provides that if members have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed. The Code also provides for a number of ways in which a member may manage non pecuniary conflicts of interest.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM12/2025

General Manager's Unit



MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM12/2025

SUBJECT: VACANCY IN CIVIC OFFICE - RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR ROSA GRINE

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the vacancy in civic office and that the NSW Electoral Commission is currently conducting a countback process to fill the casual vacancy in Ward D.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Resignation of Councillor

Councillor Grine formally advised the Interim General Manager of her resignation from Council on Monday 22 September 2025. Ms Grine indicated that this was not a decision taken lightly and that employment commitments meant that she was unable to continue to commit the time to the role of Councillor.

Countback process

Council staff are now liaising with the NSW Electoral Commission to progress the countback process. Council unanimously resolved in October 2024 that should a Councillor resign in the first 18 months of this term, a countback election would take place.

A countback process does not require voters of Ward D to return to the polls and a by-election is not required. The NSW Electoral Commission will contact all unelected Ward D candidates to confirm their interest in being elected to Council. If there is only one eligible candidate, that candidate is elected. If there are multiple eligible candidates, a countback election is conducted based on votes from the election in Ward D in September 2024.

Information about the countback process is available on the NSW Electoral Commission website: <https://elections.nsw.gov.au/elections/how-counting-works/countback-elections>

Acknowledgement of contribution

The resignation brings to a close Ms Grine's participation on Cessnock City Council, having been first elected as a Ward D Councillor in 2021, as a local community member who is passionate about better facilities, local opportunities for our youth and for local families. Councillor Grine worked towards having better sporting grounds and community facilities for all. Councillor Grine contributed to several internal and external committees during her tenure in addition to supporting Council civic events such as citizenship ceremonies, Australia Day Awards and Freeman of the City Presentations.

Ms Grine has thanked the community, Council staff and fellow Councillors for their support and collaboration during her time of service.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM12/2025

General Manager's Unit



On behalf of Councillors and staff, we thank Ms Grine for her contribution as a Councillor and we wish Ms Grine well in her future wherever that may take her.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Motions of Urgency

Report No. MOU10/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Corporate Governance Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now indicate if there are any matters of urgency which they believe should be conducted at this meeting of Council.

SUMMARY

Under Clause 9.3 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors. This can only happen if a motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting, the Mayor rules that the business is of great urgency and the business notified in the agenda for the meeting has been disposed of.

Only the mover of such a motion can speak to the motion before it is put.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU3/2025

General Manager's Unit



SUBJECT: *CHRISTMAS CLOSURE 2025*

AUTHOR: *People and Culture Manager*

SUMMARY

Council offices, including Libraries, have traditionally closed between Christmas and New Year, with staff available for emergency situations. Christmas falls on a Thursday this year, which will result in staff returning to work on a Friday. The Executive Leadership Team have decided to extend the shutdown by one day, and reopen on a Monday rather than a Friday.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes its offices, including Libraries and Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) will close from 12 noon Wednesday, 24 December 2025 and reopen on Monday, 5 January 2026.

BACKGROUND

Council has traditionally closed its offices, including Libraries and PACC, between Christmas and New Year, with staff available for emergency situations.

REPORT

If the usual shutdown period applied, Council offices would reopen on Friday 2 January 2026. As it is a quiet period, the Interim General Manager, together with the Executive Leadership team, have decided that Council offices, including Libraries and the PACC will close from 12 noon Wednesday, 24 December 2025 and re-open on Monday, 5 January 2026.

Listed below is a breakdown of applicable Public Holidays and Office closure dates:

Thursday, 25 December 2025	Christmas Day (Public Holiday)
Friday, 26 December 2025	Boxing Day (Public Holiday)
Monday, 29 December 2025	Office, Libraries and PACC closed
Tuesday, 30 December 2025	Office, Libraries and PACC closed
Wednesday, 31 December 2025	Office, Libraries and PACC closed
Thursday, 1 January 2026	New Year's Day (Public Holiday)
Friday, 2 January 2026	Office and Libraries closed

Council will notify members of the community of the Council Christmas closure by way of notices in local print media, Council's website and all Council's social media outlets. In addition, notices will be posted in Council's Administration Building, Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries and PACC.

There will be limited operational staff rostered to work over the Christmas shutdown period.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU3/2025

General Manager's Unit



OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

N/A

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report links to the community's desired outcome outlined of *Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*.

N/A

b. Other Plans

N/A

CONCLUSION

Council offices, including Libraries and PACC, will close from 12 noon Wednesday, 24 December 2025 and re-open on Monday, 5 January 2026.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



SUBJECT: ***DRAFT INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS - POST EXHIBITION***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Strategic Planning Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the outcomes from the public exhibition of the Draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan (**Enclosure 1**) and the Draft Cessnock Section 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan (**Enclosure 2**), and to seek Council's endorsement to adopt the plans.

During the exhibition period, six submissions were received. The issues raised in the submissions, which are summarised in the body of this report, have led to several minor amendments to the Draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council adopt the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan and the draft Cessnock Section 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan.**
- 2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the draft plan, of Council's decision.**

BACKGROUND

On 19 March 2025, Council considered Report PE5/2025, which sought endorsement to publicly exhibit the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan and the draft Cessnock Section 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan (draft infrastructure contribution plans) together with the Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan Options Paper. The report also recommended seeking a Ministerial Direction to increase the contributions cap from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for the proposed Loxford and Huntlee local catchments.

At that meeting, Council resolved to place the draft plans on public exhibition for a minimum period of forty (40) days and requested that a further report be presented at the conclusion of the exhibition period, addressing any submissions received.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The draft infrastructure contributions plans and options paper were publicly exhibited from 28 March 2025 to 9 May 2025. The options paper has not been enclosed in this report however can be viewed on [council's website](#). A total of six (6) submissions were received during the exhibition period. All submissions related specifically to the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



The Submissions Issues Report (**Enclosure 3**) provides a summary of all the issues raised during the exhibition period, along with Council's responses and recommendations against each of the issues raised. The key issues raised in the submissions can be summarised as follows:

- The costings of projects appear excessive.
- Projects listed in the works schedule do not appear to have a nexus.
- Request for Council to enter into a Cross Boundary chapter with Singleton Council.
- Inclusion of further cycleways facilities.
- Hierarchy of multipurpose centres appears to be incorrect.
- Lot yields appear to be high.
- Land acquisition valuations do not appear to be in accordance with the *NSW Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act*.
- Background analysis of demographics does not appear to have supporting documentation.
- Exemptions for registered not for profit community housing providers.

As a result of the feedback received, Council staff have made several amendments to the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan, as outlined below:

1. Revise the development yield for the Loxford Local Catchment from 1,485 to 1,365. This reflects the yield adopted in the Cessnock Urban Growth Management Plan for the Loxford Local Catchment.
2. Amend land valuations to reflect updated valuation.
3. Amend the development types on page 12 by removing aged care facility and replacing it with residential care facility and adding boarding houses and hostels to receive a 50% discount.
4. Updating the levies for each catchment.
5. On page 19, include a paragraph in relation to the Ministerial Direction approval to increase the cap for Bellbird North, Loxford and Huntlee.
6. On page 38, add a paragraph to provide links to the background demographic data.
7. On page 54, amend reference to the Hunter Regional Plan, from 2036 to 2041, in the reference section.
8. Include a paragraph in relation to thresholds and contributions at the beginning of the works schedule on page 58. Apportionment and totals has been removed to avoid confusion
9. Amend "Miller Park – New BMX/MTB Pump Track" to "Miller Park Play Space" at OS4.
10. Amend "Headleigh Park" to "Hedleigh Park" at OS18.
11. Amend "four local parks" to "three local parks" at OS24 and amend the project costs accordingly.
12. Amend "Drain Oval" to "Mount View Park" at OS34.
13. Amend the multipurpose centres for Loxford and Bellbird North Local Catchments to Kurri Kurri District and Cessnock District Catchments accordingly.
14. Amend items RW18, RW19, RW20, RW21, RW28, RW30, RW32, RW34, RW35, and RW27 description from "right turn bays" to "right turn bans."
15. Amend items RW22, RW26, RW33, RW42, and RW47 by removing Rural West.
16. Amend mapping references for OS34 and OS24 and OS25 on ages 90 and 91

The approval to increase the cap to \$30,000 for Loxford Local Catch and Huntlee Local Catchment has been gazetted by the Government and came into effect on 4 July 2025.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



Council notes that major reviews of the plans will take place every four (4) years in line with Council elections; however, that if the need arises for amendments to the works schedule in line with long term capital works or in relation demographics, such reviews will take place earlier than noted in the plans.

OPTIONS

1. Support the recommendation that Council adopt the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan and the draft Cessnock Section 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan.

This is the recommended option.

2. Not support the recommendation, for the following reasons:

(To be provided by Council).

This option is not recommended. Council's existing City-Wide Infrastructure Contribution Plan contains 227 items, with a cost-escalated value of at least \$537 million.

CONSULTATION

The review of the CWICP Works Schedule involved consultation with the following sections of Council to refine the existing CWICP Works Schedule:

- Councillor workshop
- Executive Leadership Team
- Open Space and Community Facilities Team
- Community and Cultural Development Team
- Infrastructure Team
- Development Services Team
- Building Services Team
- Management Team
- UDIA – external workshop

The draft infrastructure contributions plans were publicly exhibited from 28 March 2025 to 9 May 2025. Exhibition material was available to the public on Council's "Have your Say" website, Cessnock City Library, Kurri Kurri Library and Council's Administration Building. Further notification was provided to all Hunter Councils and surrounding Councils, UDIA, Property Council, Building Professionals Board, Cessnock Council Developers Forum, all major URA Developers within Cessnock area, and Council's social media.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The review aligns with Delivery Program Action 4.1.7 - continue implementation of the Section 7.11 City Wide Infrastructure Contributions Plan.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



b. Other Plans

In reviewing the CWICP consideration has been given to the relevant legislation, Ministerial Directions, policies, practice notes, planning circulars and regional and local strategies. The relevant regional and local strategies considered are:

- Hunter Regional Plan 2041.
- Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- Housing Strategy.
- Urban Growth Management Plan.
- Traffic and Transport Strategy.
- Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan.
- Cycling Strategy.

The priority strategic planning actions contained in these strategies are to:

- encourage/incentivise infill development and higher density,
- encourage diverse housing typologies, including affordable living, and
- reduce contributions in existing urban areas.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Reviewing the plan has several benefits for Council including:

- being easier to read and interpret;
- reducing financial risk to Council;
- reducing the risk of legal challenge by providing up-to-date data, including revised Works Schedule and costings;
- aligning with current local and regional strategic plans;
- enabling Council to impose conditions of consent on development to collect the applicable funds required from development to meet its share of the cost of delivering infrastructure; and
- updated works and costings outlined in the Works Schedule.

b. Financial Implications

The financial implications for the draft infrastructure contribution plans have been set out in the Local Infrastructure Contribution Plans Options Paper which has been reported to Council and was available for exhibition.

c. Legislative Implications

The review of the CWICP has been carried out in accordance with Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, which relate to development contributions.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



d. Risk Implications

The high risk of developers under-reporting the true cost of residential development.

Council will need ensure that the cost of development reported with each application for a dwelling, secondary dwelling, dual occupancy, multi-dwelling development and residential flat building, etc. is accurate. A review of development applications to Council has revealed that the estimated cost of works provided in a large number of applications grossly underestimates the true value of building works. This will be a problem if Council is looking to migrate to a Section 7.12 infrastructure contributions plan for the existing urban areas (strategic centres), as the value of works is a critical factor in determining the contribution levy for each development.

The high risk of infrastructure costs escalating at a rate above CPI

The cost of labour, materials and infrastructure increased significantly following the COVID-19 pandemic and at rates significantly higher than CPI. Should the cost of labour, materials and infrastructure continue to rise at a rate higher than CPI, the burden of the additional cost will be borne by Council and not infrastructure contributions. Regular review of the plans will be undertaken to address this risk.

The moderate to high risk that the forecast residential dwelling yield is not achieved

While the most current information available to Council was used to assess the various options outlined in the Options Paper, forecasting demographics is not an exact science and is subject to many factors outside of Council's control. If the projected dwelling and population yield is not achieved, Council will not receive the value of contributions anticipated.

The moderate risk that contributions may have already been paid at the subdivision stage

There is a risk that contributions may have been paid at the subdivision stage for some of the future dwelling yield anticipated by the Options Paper. This is particularly true in relation to allotments within the major URAs, e.g., Bellbird North. A single dwelling cannot be charged contributions again if contributions were levied at the subdivision stage for the allotment on which the dwelling is proposed to be constructed. It is extremely difficult to quantify the number of future dwellings this may apply to. This may impact the contribution income anticipated by the Options Paper between 2021 and 2035.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE26/2025

Planning and Environment



CONCLUSION

Council's draft infrastructure contributions plans were publicly exhibited from 28 March 2025 to 9 May 2025. A total of six submissions were received during the exhibition period. The draft plans have been amended to address the relevant issues raised in the submissions. This report seeks Council's endorsement to adopt the draft infrastructure contribution plans.

ENCLOSURES

- 1** 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan
- 2** 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan
- 3** Contributions Plan Submissions Table

SUBJECT: ***DRAFT VINEYARDS PLACE STRATEGY AND
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN - POST EXHIBITION***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Strategic Planning Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement to adopt the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy (the 'Draft Strategy') and the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Development Control Plan chapter (the 'Draft DCP').

The Draft Strategy and Draft DCP provide guidelines for planning proposals and development in the Cessnock Vineyards District. The draft documents reflect the outcomes of the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 ('the HRP'), are consistent with the principles of Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement 2031 ('the LSPS'), and reflect the intent of the 2012 Vineyards District Community Vision Statements, and the 2024 Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association (HVWTA) Advocacy Statement on Land Use Planning. Preparation of the Draft Place Strategy and Draft DCP has involved substantial community input, gathered over several years.

The Draft Strategy and Draft DCP were exhibited between 28 March 2025 and 9 May 2025 and resulted in 24 public submissions and 8 government agency responses. Various amendments have been made to the exhibited version of the Draft Strategy and Draft DCP to address the relevant matters raised in the submissions and agency responses.

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That Council adopt the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy and Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Development Control Plan chapter.**
2. **That Council notify submission makers of the Council's decision.**
3. **That Council write to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure seeking its endorsement of the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy.**

BACKGROUND

The Cessnock Vineyards District is located to the northwest of the Cessnock Town Centre and is primarily zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots (see **Figure 1**). The Cessnock Vineyards District is the major component of the broader Hunter Valley Wine Region, which is the nation's oldest, continuous wine growing area and is internationally recognised for producing premium wines. The broader Hunter Valley Wine Region includes land at Broke, Fordwich, Pokolbin and Belford in the Singleton LGA and land in the Upper Hunter Valley.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE27/2025

Planning and Environment



In addition to viticulture and agriculture, the Vineyards District supports a variety of tourism developments, including cellar door premises, tourist accommodation, restaurants and cafés, and cultural and recreational facilities and events. Establishing a planning framework for the Vineyards District is challenging due to the diverse land uses, the area's long viticultural heritage, the need to preserve scenic character and amenity, and the potential for land-use conflict with agriculture. Any planning framework for the Vineyards District must encourage a harmonious balance between agriculture, scenic amenity, biodiversity and tourist and other non-agricultural development; all of which are critical to the established character and economic viability of the Vineyards District.

Figure 1 - The Cessnock Vineyards District



Planning and Environment

Report No. PE27/2025

Planning and Environment



A draft local planning framework for the Cessnock Vineyards District was reported to Council in April 2022 (PE24/2022). The framework proposed amendments to the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011* (LEP 2011) and a new DCP chapter, containing local character statements. Council resolved to proceed with the Planning Proposal and DCP, which was subsequently submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment (now Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure) ('the Department'). Following a review of the Planning Proposal, the Department requested substantial amendments, including the integration of another rezoning proposal Council had been progressing, and an economic study. Council submitted a revised version of the Planning Proposal in response, but the introduction of the HRP, which designated the Vineyards District a Regionally Significant Growth Area (RSGA), added further complexity and required the preparation of a separate Place Strategy.

Despite ongoing discussion with the Department and additional revisions, the Planning Proposal had, by mid-2023, diverged significantly from its original intent. With further departmental requests proving potentially costly for Council and offering limited benefit, Council was unable to meet the Department's requirements, and the Proposal was effectively terminated.

The Department initiated a Place Delivery Group (PDG) in late 2023 to progress a Place Strategy for the Vineyards District, but soon after withdrew from leading the process due to staffing changes, leaving Council responsible for preparing the Draft Place Strategy from early 2024.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Preparation of a planning framework for the Cessnock Vineyards District has involved extensive community engagement over several years, including through the Cessnock Vineyards District Community Reference Group ('the CRG'), a community survey, and consultation linked to the LSPS. Despite the evolving strategic requirements from the Department, including the introduction of the HRP, the requirement for a Place Strategy, and opposition to giving statutory weight to local character statements in the LEP, the desired outcomes for the Cessnock Vineyards District have remained consistent.

In early 2024, Council assumed responsibility for preparing a Draft Place Strategy that aligns with the HRP strategies and outcomes, the policy framework endorsed by Council in 2022 for the Vineyards District (PE24/2022), and a range of relevant local strategies and studies. The Draft Place Strategy (**Enclosure 1**) identifies four strategic character areas: important agricultural land, important environmental land, visually sensitive landscapes, and the existing Tourist Centre and major tourist nodes. Each area has associated planning priorities and character statements.

The Draft Place Strategy outlines future land use principles that support the primacy of viticulture, focus intensive tourism in recognised nodes, restrict residential intensification, and minimise land use conflict. It includes future actions to refine mapping and improve active transport infrastructure. Complementing the Strategy is an updated Draft DCP Chapter (**Enclosure 2**), originally reported to Council in 2022. The DCP Chapter introduces clearer and more enforceable density provisions for tourist and visitor accommodation, new controls for larger-scale developments, and a range of other controls to guide design outcomes.

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The Draft Strategy and Draft DCP were exhibited between 28 March 2025 and 9 May 2025 and resulted in 24 public submissions and 8 government agency submissions. The key issues raised in the public submissions and agency recommendations are summarised in **Table 1** and **Table 2** respectively, including a brief summary of the amendments made to address the key submissions and recommendations. A more comprehensive summary of public submissions and Council's response is provided at **Enclosure 3**.

The majority of the submissions received focused on particular aspects of the Draft Strategy, rather than the Draft DCP. As a result, most of the amendments described in **Table 1** and **Table 2** were made in relation to the Draft Strategy.

Minor amendments to the Draft DCP were required to clarify particular development controls and ensure consistency with the final Draft Strategy. This included removing development controls relating to the proposed Tourist Centre, pending the preparation of a masterplan and possible rezoning of that area in the future. The masterplan for the Tourist Centre is expected to provide far greater guidance in relation to the extent and development within that area, including specific development controls.

Table 1: Summary of Key Issues Raised by the public during exhibition

Key Issue	Resultant Amendment
Tourist development in the Hunter Valley is reducing agricultural land, threatening viticulture and rural identity.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to acknowledge the reduction in the area of planted vines in the Hunter Region over time, including the broad factors that have contributed to this trend.
The Draft Place Strategy overlooks the local economy, particularly the wine tourism economy, which is the key economic driver in the area.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to include a section relating to the contribution of the wine and tourism sector to the local economy, and acknowledge that tourism is overwhelmingly the key economic driver in the Cessnock Vineyards District.
The Draft Place Strategy should expand the Tourist Centre and major tourist nodes to various parcels nearby to support future larger scale tourism growth and investment in the region.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to clarify that the extent of the proposed Tourist Centre is indicative and that a masterplan must be prepared for the Tourist Centre as part of any landowner-led rezoning proposal. Furthermore, that the establishment of additional tourist nodes within the Vineyards District is not supported.
The Draft Place Strategy overlooks the economic potential of Cessnock Airport and fails to integrate key infrastructure, such as the Lovedale Link, into its planning.	The Draft Place Strategy has been amended to recognise the economic potential of the Cessnock Airport Precinct and the importance of aligning future planning with key infrastructure projects, such as the Lovedale Link Road. The Draft Strategy now includes a commitment to prepare a Master Plan for the Airport Precinct. Future Planning Directions for the Airport Precinct have also been incorporated into the Place Strategy to help guide Master Plan outcomes.

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The Draft Place Strategy limits the potential of small-scale, innovative wine tourism by focusing on large vineyard plots, missing opportunities for boutique wineries and diverse experiences that could boost the region's economy.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to outline the rationale for broadly maintaining the 40-hectare minimum lot size, as outlined in the 2017 RMCG Vineyards District Study and clarify that, subject to a review of important agricultural land in the Vineyards District, it may be necessary to retain, or where appropriate, increase the minimum lot size to protect land critical to viticulture.
Acknowledge The Vintage development as key to managing residential pressure, supporting tourism, and preserving viticultural land, while updating planning provisions to allow for its growth as a high-amenity lifestyle community that sustains local businesses year-round.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to acknowledge the historical role of The Vintage in reducing demand for residential subdivision in the Vineyards District. However, in the future this role will be better carried by planned release areas, such as Lovedale Farm, Huntlee and the broader Anambah to Branxton Urban Release Area, Government Road and Bellbird North.
The Draft Strategy fails to address the threat of vineyard land being converted to rural residential areas, risking economic and landscape integrity, and needs proactive tourism investment and land use diversification to preserve viticulture.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to acknowledge the growing threat of vineyard land being converted into large rural residential holdings.
The Draft Place Strategy 'SWOT Analysis' should be replaced with a clear statement of land use, economic, and environmental challenges to better support viticulture and tourism.	The SWOT Analysis in the Draft Vineyards District Place Strategy has been replaced with a discussion relating to the key land use, economic and environmental challenges confronting the Vineyards District and with a focus on planning issues that need to be addressed to support viticulture, tourism, and rural character.

Table 2: Summary of Key Issues Raised by Government Agencies during exhibition

Key Issue	Resultant Amendment
The Place Strategy needs to set out the additional studies and evidence required to support the planning actions and master planning required to support the future rezoning of the proposed Tourist Centre.	The Draft Strategy has been amended to detail the studies and master planning required to justify the proposed Tourist Centre rezoning. In addition, several of the planning actions have been amended to provide greater details regarding their context and intended outcomes.
The EPA supports balancing growth and noise management at Cessnock Airport through regulatory oversight, a proposed 200m buffer, updated planning controls, and use of noise guidelines to minimize land use conflicts.	The Place Strategy has been amended to remove reference to a strict 200m buffer surrounding the Airport, and a more general reference to planning proposals and development within one kilometre of the Airport Precinct being carefully assessed to ensure they do not impede current or future Airport uses, minimise noise impacts, and avoid potential encroachment.
The Place Strategy highlights the importance of waterways and recommends aligning land use changes with NSW Water Quality Objectives to support long-term catchment health.	The Draft Place Strategy has been amended to acknowledge the NSW Water Quality Objectives (WQO) as a necessary requirement of and future planning proposals relating to the Cessnock Vineyards District.

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Conservation Programs Heritage and Regulation Group (CPHR) requests clearer criteria and ground-truthed mapping for Important Environmental Land to support strategic planning and align with HRP 2041, ensuring development certainty and streamlined assessments.	The Draft Place Strategy has been updated to clarify how the Important Environmental Land and vegetation/wildlife corridors were mapped, including the data sources used to inform the mapping.
The Draft Strategy should be revised to fully address flood risk requirements under LEP Clause 5.22, ensuring all developments posing life-risk or evacuation challenges in flood-prone areas are properly assessed and planned for.	The 'flooding' section of the Draft Place Strategy has been updated to better acknowledge the intent of cl.5.22, Special Flood Considerations, of the Cessnock LEP.
Council should align cycleway planning with TfNSW's Cycleway Design Toolbox and ensure infrastructure on freight routes meets safety and design standards to manage conflicts between cyclists and heavy vehicles.	TfNSW's Cycleway Design Toolbox has been included in the planning proposal consistency measures table.

OPTIONS

1. Support the recommendation that Council adopt the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy and Draft Vineyards District Development Control Plan, notify those individuals and government agencies that provided comments during the exhibition period, and seek endorsement from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure in relation to the Place Strategy.

This is the recommended option.

2. Not support the recommendation, for the following reasons:

(To be provided by Council).

This option is not recommended. Council's existing policy framework is out of date and is not sufficiently flexible to appropriately regulate the range of development that is currently permitted in the Vineyard's District.

CONSULTATION

Vineyards District Community Reference Group

In April 2019, the CRG was established by Council to provide local knowledge and advice regarding possible changes to the local planning framework relating to the Vineyard's District. The CRG includes representation from Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association, Parish of Pokolbin, Around Hermitage, Lovedale Chamber of Commerce, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Property Council of Australia, Singleton Council, landowners, vignerons, property developers, wine tourism professionals and town planning consultants. The CRG achieves a broad representation of views relating to the Vineyard District.

Several meetings of the CRG have occurred since 2019, including most recently on 4 March 2025, and have culminated in the preparation of this report and draft local policy framework for the Vineyards District. The CRG has assisted in the development of the community survey, and the draft development objectives and controls for the Vineyards District. The CRG also provided critical feedback regarding the LCS approach.

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Based on feedback provided by the CRG, it became evident that the most useful approach to manage development in the Vineyard's District is an assessment of the compatibility of the development against strategic areas, i.e. similar natural, physical and built attributes of the land.

Vineyard's District Community Survey

For a period of six weeks in August and September of 2019, Council conducted a community survey relating to the Cessnock LGA Vineyard's District. The survey primarily focused on two questions:

1. What things presently add value to the character and amenity of the Vineyard's District?
2. What things should there be more or less of in the Vineyard's District?

In answering these questions, respondents were able to select from a predetermined list of features relevant to the Vineyard's District. A total of 454 people responded to the survey. The features most highly valued by respondents were grape vines, cellar doors and scenic views. The least valued features were residential housing estates, short-term rental accommodation and shops. The results of the community survey assisted in the development of the LCS and amendments to the LEP.

Consultation on the Draft Vineyards District DCP has also occurred with staff from Council's Environmental Planning staff, Development Services Team, and Environmental Health Team.

Councillors were briefed on the Draft Place Strategy and Draft DCP on 12 March 2025.

Public Exhibition

The Draft Strategy and Draft DCP were publicly exhibited between 28 March 2025 and 9 May 2025 and resulted in 24 public submissions and 8 government agency submissions.

During this time, a Have Your Say project page on Council's website provided detailed project information and FAQs along with the draft exhibition materials and the responsible officer's contact details for any enquiries. Hard copy exhibition material was placed on display at Council's administration building and Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries.

Two community drop-in sessions were held during the exhibition period, the first at Cessnock Library on Wednesday 9th of April between 4pm – 6pm and a second held at Pokolbin Hall on Monday 14th April between 3pm and 5pm. Approximately 60 people combined attended the two drop-in sessions.

A notice with exhibition details was placed in the e-newsletter distributed by Council's Economic Development team to 3.5k subscribers. An email notification advising of the exhibition with a link to the project page was sent to Council's Developer Forum, including more than 40 local development and planning industry stakeholders and the Urban Development Institute of Australia.

The Have Your Say project page had 863 visitors during exhibition. Three posts were published on Council's Facebook page with details on the exhibition and drop-in information sessions. These posts received over 5800 views and were shared 7 times.

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In early April 2025, staff engaged with the Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association (HVWTA) regarding the Draft Place Strategy and DCP, presenting the key elements of the documents and encouraging the group to provide comments and feedback during the public exhibition period. Following exhibition, additional engagement took place with HVWTA representatives to inform them of how Council had addressed their feedback, including proposed amendments to the Draft Strategy.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

A Sustainable and Healthy Environment: Objective 3.1 Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment and the Rural Character of the Area.

b. Other Plans

Hunter Regional Plan 2041

The Hunter Regional Plan 2041 (HRP) is a 20-year land use plan for the Hunter. The HRP was prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment (now the Department of Planning, Housing and Industry) and draws from each Hunter council's Local Strategic Planning Statement. The HRP sets the strategic land use framework for continued economic growth and diversification in the Hunter and aims to unlock sustainable growth opportunities and investments, as well as housing choice and lifestyle opportunities for the community.

The HRP recognises the Cessnock Vineyards District as a 'Regionally Significant Growth Area', primarily to acknowledge the ongoing pressure in the area for non-agricultural development, the tension between agriculture and tourist development, and the need for stronger mechanisms to manage that pressure and tension to bring about a balance between working vineyards, tourist and other non-agricultural development.

The HRP identifies the following Place Strategy outcomes for the Cessnock Vineyards District:

1. Strategic agricultural land
 - Ensure non-agricultural development avoids land use conflict with existing and future agricultural uses.
 - Locate residential subdivision and other development incompatible with the vineyards' rural landscape and scenic amenity in centres.
2. Tourism node investigation area
 - Identify a tourism node and consolidate larger scale tourism developments in this location.
 - Development is sympathetic to the rural amenity and the local character of the area.
 - Connect walking and cycling networks from the tourism node to tourism activities and landscape features.
3. Visually significant areas
 - Support non-agricultural development with suitable infrastructure and accommodate it in the landscape setting.
 - Ensure the siting, bulk, scale and built form of non-agricultural development is suitable for the setting.

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- Ensure development on land adjoining scenic areas is sympathetic to landscape values and view corridors from the vineyards.

Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036

The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 (GNMP) sets out strategies and actions to drive sustainable growth across much of the Lower Hunter Region. The GNMP applies to the majority of the Cessnock LGA Vineyard's District. The draft local planning framework is consistent with strategies 6 and 13 of the GNMP, which seek to promote tourism and protect the rural amenity outside urban areas, respectively.

Local Strategic Planning Statement (2036) (LSPS)

The LSPS is a high-level strategic document that sets the planning direction for the LGA until 2036. The LSPS implements relevant actions from the HRP and the GNMP as well as Council's own priorities as set out in the Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2027 and other adopted plans and strategies. The LSPS will shape how the LEP and the DCP evolve over time and will guide how population growth and development are managed in the LGA. The draft local planning framework for the Vineyard's District is consistent with planning priorities 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 26 and 27 of the LSPS.

Vineyards Vision Statement

The draft local planning framework reflects the intent of the Vineyards Vision to recognise and protect the primacy of the vineyards agricultural land use in the Cessnock RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone, while supporting compatible forms of tourist development.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

This Report has regard to the provision of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and associated Regulations.

b. Financial Implications

The cost of this project is funded from Council's Strategic Land Use Planning budget.

c. Legislative Implications

Guidelines for development in the Cessnock LGA Vineyard's District are presently set out in chapter E.3 of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (the DCP). While several amendments have been made to the Vineyards District DCP chapter over the years, a comprehensive review has not occurred since the chapter's initial adoption, over 20 years ago, on 2 December 1998.

The new planning framework for the Vineyards District is set out in the Draft Place Strategy and is based on the DPE's LCS approach to planning areas that have a distinctive or unique character. The LCS for the Vineyards District is contained in a Draft DCP chapter.

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d. Risk Implications

New and amended development objectives and controls are proposed in the Draft DCP for the Cessnock Vineyards District. When the new DCP comes into effect, the new objectives and controls will apply to new development applications lodged within the Cessnock Vineyards District.

The draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters have strong linkages to the draft Vineyards District DCP Chapter. It is recommended that the draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters are adopted at the same time as the exhibition of the Draft Vineyards District DCP Chapter and Draft Vineyards District Place Strategy. If this does not happen there is a risk of Council adopting inconsistent controls.

The draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters are subject to a separate report.

e. Environmental Implications

The Draft Vineyards DCP contains provisions that seek to enhance outcomes for land that contains important biodiversity or corridors for fauna movement. Development in this strategic area is subject to specific development controls to reduce potential impacts on vegetation and encourage replanting to strengthen existing habitat.

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

This report recommends that Council adopt the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy and Draft Vineyards District Development Control Plan, which have been amended following public exhibition.

It is considered that the Draft Place Strategy and DCP provide appropriate and contemporary guidance for development outcomes in the Cessnock Vineyards District. The Draft plans are consistent with the HRP outcomes for the Cessnock Vineyards District, while reflecting the HVWTA Advocacy Statement on Land Use Planning, the 2012 Vineyards District Community Vision Statements, and the principles of the LSPS relevant to the Vineyards District.

ENCLOSURES

- 1** Draft Vineyards District Place Strategy
- 2** Draft Vineyards District Development Control Plan Chapter
- 3** Comprehensive Summary and Response to Public Submissions and Agency Advice

SUBJECT: ***DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN CHAPTERS -
'TOURIST ACCOMMODATION ON RURAL AND
CONSERVATION LANDS' AND 'SIGNAGE AND OUTDOOR
ADVERTISING' - POST EXHIBITION***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Strategic Planning Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of feedback received during public exhibition of the above draft chapters of the Cessnock Development Control Plan (DCP) and seek Council endorsement for their adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council adopt Draft Chapter 'D4 Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and Draft Chapter 'D5 Signage and Outdoor Advertising' of the Cessnock Development Control Plan.**
- 2. That Council notify in writing the submission makers of Council's decision.**

BACKGROUND

Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011* (CLEP) and Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP). This is being undertaken in stages.

The two current draft DCP chapters, 'Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' (Enclosure 1) and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' (Enclosure 2) have been reviewed and follow on from the completion of Rural and Conservation zones LEP amendments.

The above draft DCP chapters were endorsed to be placed on public at the Council Meeting held March 19 2025 (PE6/2025). Details on the outcome of the public exhibition can be found in the *Consultation* section of this report.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' DCP chapter

The draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' DCP chapter provides development controls for camping grounds, tourist and visitor accommodation and eco-tourist facilities on land zoned RU2 Rural Landscape, C2 Environmental Conservation, C3 Environmental Management and C4 Environmental Living.

The draft chapter guides the development of small-scale tourist accommodation. These uses are important to supplement farm income, to support the restoration and maintenance of environmental assets and to showcase the Cessnock region.

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The draft chapter includes revised development controls covering the following:

1. Site analysis
2. Rural character and design
3. Landscaping
4. Servicing, access and safety
5. Car parking
6. Biodiversity
7. Heritage

Proposed density rates for accommodation have been amended in the draft DCP chapter for consistency with revised zone objectives for the rural and conservation zones and to ensure that rural tourist development is genuinely small-scale. The proposed rates match the densities permitted by the NSW Government's agritourism planning framework under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* which share similar aims to the current draft chapter.

By reducing the allowable density of rural tourist accommodation, the benefits of tourist development can be balanced with the potential impact that development in rural areas may have on neighbours, rural roads and the community.

Draft 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP Chapter

The draft 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' chapter provides development controls for signage and advertising, noting that in many instances a wide variety of signage and advertising can be carried out as exempt or complying development under the provisions of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* [Codes SEPP]. The draft chapter refers to the standards of the Codes SEPP for the relevant development controls for applicable signage types. The DA process allows a merit-based assessment, meaning proposals that do not meet the numerical standards included in the Codes SEPP have a degree of flexibility during DA assessment.

For signage types not covered by the Codes SEPP, the draft chapter includes general signage controls applying to all assessable signage, along with specific controls for particular signage types, this includes provisions on:

1. Permissible signage locations
2. General signage controls
3. Specific signage controls

OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

1. Support the recommendation that Council endorse the two draft DCP Chapters of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 – 'Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising'.

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This is the recommended option.

2. Not support the recommendation, for the following reasons:

(To be provided by Council).

This option is not recommended.

CONSULTATION

The preparation of these draft DCP chapters included consultation with and input from Council's Strategic Planning, Development Services, Building Services, and Regulatory Services Teams.

The draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters were placed on exhibition for 42 days between 28 March and 9 May 2025.

During this time, a Have Your Say project page on Council's website provided detailed project information and FAQs along with the draft exhibition materials and the responsible officer's contact details for any enquiries. Hard copy exhibition material was placed on display at Council's administration building and Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries.

Two community drop-in sessions were held during the exhibition period, the first at Cessnock Library on Wednesday 9 April between 4pm – 6pm and a second held at Pokolbin Hall on Monday 14 April between 3pm and 5pm. Approximately 60 people combined attended the two drop-in sessions.

A notice with exhibition details was placed in the e-newsletter distributed by Council's Economic Development team to 3.5k subscribers. An email notification advising of the exhibition with a link to the project page was sent to Council's Developer Forum mail list, including more than 40 local development and planning industry stakeholders and the Urban Development Institute of Australia.

The Have Your Say project page had 334 visitors during exhibition. Three posts were published on Council's Facebook page with details on the exhibition and drop-in information sessions. These posts received over 5800 views and were shared 7 times.

Draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands'

Two submissions were received in response to the draft DCP chapter. These are summarised and addressed in Enclosure 3.

Minor amendments have been made to the draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation in Rural and Conservation Lands' DCP chapter in response to submissions received.

The height limit of 9 meters has been retained from the exhibited draft as this height allows for smaller building footprints than could be achieved if a single storey height limit was imposed. However, an additional control has been added to the draft DCP chapter that limits the height of buildings to at least 5m below the highest ridgeline of any hill within 100m of the building. This control is intended to ensure buildings do not dominate the landscape.

Draft 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising'

One submission from an industry group was received in response to the draft DCP chapter. Issues raised are summarised and addressed in Enclosure 4.

Minor amendments have been made to the draft 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapter to reflect the submissions.

This includes the separation of the definitions and permissibility for *pole or pylon* signs and *post supported signs (previously post, pole or pylon signs)*. *Post supported signs* are retained as a smaller-scale free standing sign of up to 2m in height and 2m² in signage area and as permissible within the rural, employment, business, industrial, mixed use, special purpose and recreation zones.

Pole or pylon signs are proposed to be subject to the development standards contained within the Codes SEPP, permitting up to 6m in height and 8m² in signage area. These are retained as permissible in employment, business, industrial, mixed use and special purpose zones, consistent with the Codes SEPP. *Pole or pylon signs* are now proposed to be prohibited in the rural zones; however, they are proposed to be permissible as part of a service station development. This would facilitate *pole or pylon* signs at service stations in the RU5 Villages zone, as service stations are a permissible use in this zone.

An additional control has been added specifying that large scale developments, including wineries, tourist and accommodation precincts and multi-tenancy shopping developments shall prepare a signage strategy to co-ordinate signage across the site. This will be assessed on merit against the general signage objectives and controls within the draft DCP, the impact of the signage on the established character, or future desired character of the area; and integration of the signage with buildings and other landscape elements.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The proposal is consistent with the following objective of the Community Strategic Plan 2036.

A Sustainable and Healthy Environment: Objective 3.1 Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment and the Rural Character of the Area.

b. Other Plans

The proposal is consistent with the following planning priorities of the Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Planning Priority 8: Our rural land is protected from incompatible development.

Planning Priority 17: Our lands of environmental value are protected and enhanced.

Planning Priority 21: Developments minimise environmental impacts and respond to site environmental characteristics and natural hazards.

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IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

If adopted, the two draft DCP chapters will replace the existing chapters titled 'D4 - Purpose Built Rural Tourist Accommodation' and 'D5 – Outdoor Signage'.

The draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters have strong linkages to the draft Vineyards District DCP Chapter (subject to a separate report). It is recommended that the adoption of the draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters occur concurrently with the adoption of the Draft Vineyards District DCP Chapter and Draft Vineyards District Place Strategy.

b. Financial Implications

Resources to prepare, exhibit and make the DCP Chapters are provided by Council's Strategic Land Use Planning budget.

c. Legislative Implications

The provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* have been considered in preparing this report.

d. Risk Implications

As identified above, it is recommended that the adoption of the draft 'Tourist and Visitor Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' DCP chapters occur concurrently with the adoption of the Draft Vineyards District DCP Chapter and Draft Vineyards District Place Strategy. If this does not occur there is a risk of Council adopting inconsistent development controls.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil.

f. Other Implications

Nil.

CONCLUSION

The provisions included in the draft *Tourist and Visitor Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands* DCP chapter manage the scale and density of development and ensure that tourism accommodation does not adversely affect sensitive rural environments or place unreasonable demands on services and infrastructure.

Additionally, the draft *Signage and Outdoor Advertising* DCP chapter provides effective signage controls to ensure that businesses are protected against signage clutter or inappropriate signs that negatively impact the streetscape, or impede the safe movement of road users or pedestrians.

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Consultation has been carried out to ensure the views of the community and industry stakeholders were considered prior to the finalisation of these drafts. It is recommended Council adopt the draft amended DCP chapters.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 Chapter D4 Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Land
- [2](#) Chapter D5 Signage and Outdoor Advertising
- 3 Summary of Submission - Chapter D4 Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands
- 4 Summary of Submissions - Signage and Outdoor Advertising

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC65/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***DRAINAGE EASEMENT REQUEST - GEORGE JEFFERY PARK KEARSLEY***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Chief Finance Officer***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to obtain an updated Council approval to grant an easement for drainage purposes benefiting private land and burdening Council owned land known as George Jeffery Park at 24 Congewai Street, Kearsley.

A prior iteration of this easement was authorised by Council on 23 October 2019 (CC88/2019). Due to a minor plan amendment and on the advice of the Office of Local Government (OLG), reaffirmation of the 2019 decision is required.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council consents to granting an easement for drainage purposes burdening Council land, being George Jeffery Park (lot 2882 DP 1158212) and benefiting 80 Caledonia Street, Kearsley (lot 156 DP 755215);
2. That Council delegates the General Manager to negotiate compensation payable for the easement in accordance with independent valuation.
3. That Council authorises the General Manager to execute all documentation related to granting the easement and compensation payable.

BACKGROUND

As part of DA 8/2019/787/1, the applicants are proposing an easement which will affect George Jeffery Park. George Jeffery Park is Council owned community land and managed by Council's Open Space & Community Facilities unit. Strategic management and use of the park is governed by the Generic Parks Plan of Management.

In accordance with s46 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Council may grant an estate in respect of community land for the purposes of providing pipes under the surface of the ground for the connection of premises adjoining the community land to a public utility provider. An easement is classified as an estate for the purposes of the Act.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The applicants are seeking an easement for drainage purposes which will affect George Jeffery Park at 24 Congewai Street, Kearsley. A location plan is provided at **Enclosure 1**. The easement is required to connect land proposed for development at 80 Caledonia Street to Hunter Water underground sewer infrastructure in Congewai Street and will have minimal impact on the land. Council's Asset Manager was consulted and advised the proposal will not limit future upgrades or recreation opportunities for the site. A survey plan of the proposed pipeline easement is enclosed for Council's information at **Enclosure 2**.

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Corporate and Community Services



All costs associated with creation of the easement, construction and ongoing maintenance of the pipeline will be the responsibility of the benefiting property owner/s. A qualified valuer was engaged to provide a valuation report and an amount \$5,250 plus GST was assessed as compensation payable for the encumbrance to Council land (**Enclosure 3**). The applicant will be required to pay the compensation prior to approval to register the plan.

Should the recommendation be adopted by Council, easements over community land must be dealt with as an 'estate' and the provisions of section 47 of the Act apply. That is, approval to grant any estate exceeding twenty-one years, which includes a perpetual easement, requires the consent of the Minister for Local Government.

Council on 23 October 2019 (refer to Report CC88/2019) previously authorised the plan for the easement, however due to a minor plan amendment and subsequent advice from the OLG reaffirmation of the 2019 decision is now required.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

Principal Recreation Planner
Principal Property Specialist
Chief Financial Officer

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is linked to Council's Operational Plan "Accessible Infrastructure Services and Facilities, specifically flooding and drainage" and "Civic Leadership and Effective Governance in respect to compliance with legislation.

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

Assessed compensation will be received and all costs associated with creating the easement, valuation and installing sewer infrastructure will be borne by the benefiting property owner.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC65/2025

Corporate and Community Services



c. Legislative Implications

Section 46 of the Act provides that Council may grant a lease, licence or other estate in respect of community land for the purposes of providing pipes under the surface of the ground for the connection of premises adjoining the community land to a facility of the Council or other public utility providers.

Section 377 of the Act provides that compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of an easement is a matter that cannot be the subject of any delegation by the Council and must be authorised by a resolution of Council.

Section 47 of the Act provides that any estate, in this case being a perpetual easement, proposed to be granted over community land involves making an application via OLG to the Minister for consent to grant the estate. Making application to the Minister is a non-delegable function of the Council and must include an excerpt of the Council resolution.

d. Risk Implications

The benefiting property owner is responsible for the preparation and registration of documents identifying the easement. An application for ministerial consent to grant the easement will be made subject to Council authorisation.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The requested easement is required to satisfy a condition of consent in DA 8/2019/787/1. The easement will burden a portion of George Jeffery Park and connect a proposed development of neighbouring 80 Caledonia Street Kearsley to the sewer main. Council is authorised to grant easements affecting public land in accordance with s46 of the Act, subject to ministerial consent.

ENCLOSURES

- 1** Enclosure 1 _ George Jeffery Park Location Plan
- 2** Enclosure 2 _ George Jeffery Park Easement Survey Plan
- 3** Enclosure 3 _ Skelton Valuation George Jeffery Park

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC66/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *ANNUAL DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS IN WRITTEN RETURNS*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to table the annual returns received from designated persons and Councillors for the period of 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 in accordance with the Code of Conduct (the Code).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the tabling of the annual disclosures of interests in written returns the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025, in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

BACKGROUND

Part 4 of the Code governs matters concerning disclosures of interests in written returns. Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged by Councillors and designated persons and to table them at a meeting of Council.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

In accordance with Clause 4.21 of the Code, a Councillor or designated person must make and lodge a return within three months of becoming or ceasing to be a Councillor or designated person, 30 June each year, and or becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose.

Clause 4.8 of the Code provides that designated persons are:

- (a) *The General Manager;*
- (b) *Senior staff for the purposes of section 332 of the Act;*
- (c) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of staff of the council or a delegate of the council and who holds a position identified by the council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions under this or any other Act (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or delegate and the person's private interest;*
- (d) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of the council) who is a member of a committee of the council identified by the council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of the council's functions under this or any other Act (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.*

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

Designated persons were provided the [Self-Help Guide](#) from the Office of Local Government to assist them in the completion of their returns.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Completion of the written returns for the period links to the community's desired outcome of "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*", and in particular, it links to:

- Strategic direction 5.3.4 within the Delivery Program 2025-2029 – provide efficient and effective regulatory systems, and
- Strategic action 5.3.7c within the Operational Plan 2024-2025 – *Manage Council's corporate governance in accordance with regulations.*

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged and clause 4.25 requires the General Manager to table such returns at the first meeting of Council after the last day the returns are required to be lodged.

b. Financial Implications

N/A

c. Legislative Implications

N/A

d. Risk Implications

Failure by a Councillor or designated person to lodge a written return of interest may constitute a breach of the Code.

e. Other Implications

Tabling the register of written returns and allowing access to it demonstrates Council's commitment to openness and transparency, and is a crucial element of Council's civic leadership and effective governance.

CONCLUSION

Tabling of the register of returns satisfies Council's requirements under the Code.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC67/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *INVESTMENT REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2025*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and Council's Investment Policy (the Policy) requires a monthly report to Council detailing all money invested.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Investment Report for September 2025 and notes that:

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$93,412,710.**

BACKGROUND

A monthly report to Council detailing money invested as per the Act, Regulation and Policy.

REPORT

Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer

The Responsible Accounting Officer has certified that this report is produced in accordance with Clause 212 of the Regulation and that all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Policy.

General Investment Commentary

Council officers monitor and manage the cash and investment portfolio by taking into consideration credit ratings of financial institutions, interest rates offered for periods of investment, counterparty exposures and cash flow requirements.

Following assessment of projected cash flow requirements, surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Policy. Investment returns of the portfolio to the end of September 2025 are exceeding budget.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



Investment Portfolio Information

Table 1 Total cash and investments held by Council as at 30 September 2025

Invest No	Financial Institution Investment Held With	Invest Type	Interest Coupon Term	Maturity	Current Coupon Rate	Par Value \$'000
	Commonwealth Bank	CASH			3.25%	6,459
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.60%	36,041
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.50%	752
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	562
1527	Suncorp Bank	TD	302	19-Nov-25	5.05%	5,000
1528	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	05-Nov-25	4.70%	3,000
1532	National Bank	TD	209	25-Nov-25	4.32%	5,000
1533	National Bank	TD	270	10-Feb-26	4.33%	2,500
1534	Bank of Queensland	TD	275	05-Mar-26	4.20%	6,000
1535	Bank of Queensland	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.30%	2,500
1536	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	07-Jan-26	4.30%	5,000
1537	Suncorp Bank	TD	365	03-Jun-26	4.14%	4,000
1538	Suncorp Bank	TD	299	21-Apr-26	4.24%	2,500
1539	AMP Bank	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.45%	2,500
1540	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	28-Jan-26	4.37%	2,000
1541	Suncorp Bank	TD	272	30-Mar-26	4.30%	3,000
1542	National Bank	TD	365	10-Sep-26	4.20%	2,000
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,599
TOTAL						93,413

Table 2 Level of funds held and the percentage invested with financial institutions

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	9,500	19.15%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	17,500	35.29%
AMP Bank	BBB+	15%	2,500	5.04%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	15,500	31.25%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,599	9.27%
TOTAL			49,599	100.00%

In accordance with the Policy, figures in Table 2 above exclude cash and at call balances in Council's main operating account held with the Commonwealth and AMP banks.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC67/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Investment in NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp)

TCorpIM Funds are unit trusts. Distributions are made annually and are automatically reinvested into the fund to buy additional units. As this investment is held for medium to long-term capital appreciation, gains or losses will only be realised on redemption of the investment.

The September 2025 unrealised return was a gain of \$49,588 or 1.07% (1.69% annualised).

Table 3 NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (August 2025)

	10 years (% pa)	7 years (% pa)	3 years (% pa)	1 year %	FYTD %	1 month %
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.35	4.13	6.75	7.74	1.62	1.07
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.75	5.19	5.91	4.57	0.73	0.37
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.40)	(1.06)	0.84	3.17	0.89	0.70

-

Table 4 Investment types, risk, amount and percentage invested compared to total.

Investment Type	Risk Assessment		Amount	% Of
	Capital	Interest	\$'000	Portfolio
Term Deposits	Low	Low	45,000	48.17%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	43,814	46.91%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,599	4.92%
TOTAL			93,413	100.00%

Table 5 Comparison of interest rates, earnings and balances this year to last year

Performance Measures	This Year	Last Year
Investment Portfolio Average Interest Rate (year to date)	5.06%	5.54%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.62%	4.50%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$296,663	\$299,461
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$908,666	\$888,825
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$687,500	\$687,500
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,500,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	2.80%	2.76%

Investment and Cash Balances (Par Value) #	This Year	Last Year
Opening Balance as at 1 July	\$97,128,204	\$83,084,775
Closing Balance as at 30 September	\$93,412,710	\$78,223,696

* BBSW 90-day Bank Bill Reference Rate (performance measure as per Council's Investment Policy)

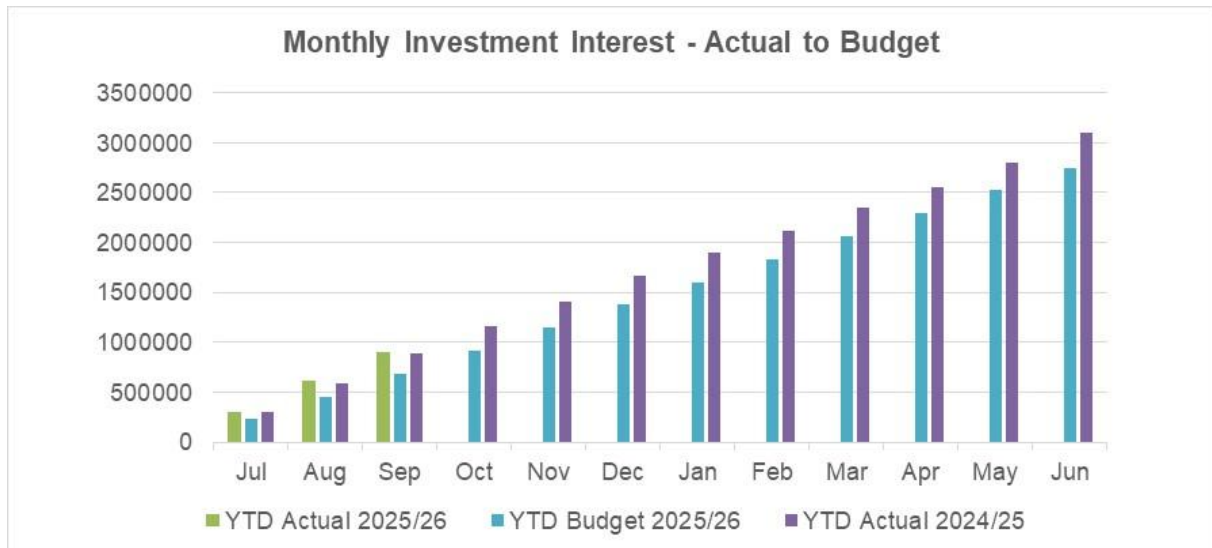
^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC67/2025

Corporate and Community Services

**Graph 1** Actual interest earned compared to revised budget and actual interest last year**Table 6** Internal and external restrictions over cash and investments held

Month End Totals \$'000	Sept 2025	Aug 2025	Jul 2025	Jun 2025	May 2025	Apr 2025
External Restrictions	85,511	89,117	81,418	87,214	75,097	65,828
Internal Restrictions	7,020	8,198	7,349	9,823	9,671	3,450
Total Restrictions	92,531	97,315	88,767	97,037	84,768	69,278
Unrestricted	882	853	94	91	399	942
Total Cash & Investments	93,413	98,168	88,861	97,128	85,167	70,220

*The restricted funds shown above for July to September are provisional and are subject to change through the financial statement process. This will only be final once audited and published in the annual financial statements. Material changes will be advised to Council.

CONSULTATION

- Director Corporate and Community Services
- Acting Chief Financial Officer
- Finance staff

STRATEGIC LINKS**a. Delivery Program**

Investment returns are an integral part of funding for future services and community expectations within the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report is a part of Council's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the investment policy and budget. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*" and more specifically links to strategic direction:

5.3.2: Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent;

5.3.3: Our Council is financially sustainable.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC67/2025

Corporate and Community Services



IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

b. Financial Implications

Investment returns are included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Amendments are affected through the Quarterly Budget Review process. Investment portfolio performance is detailed within the report with comparisons to prior year and budget.

A portion of the portfolio and its associated investment income is restricted as it relates to funds from developer contributions, payments in advance for grant projects, Domestic Waste Management, and stormwater management income to be applied to specific purposes and not available for general operational projects.

c. Legislative Implications

This report meets Council's statutory obligations under the Act and Regulation.

d. Risk Implications

Investment risks are detailed within this report.

e. Other Implications

There are no environmental, community, consultative or other implications to this report.

CONCLUSION

The report details investments held at month end and meets Councils reporting obligations.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC68/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The enclosure contains pending actions from previous meetings as well as completed actions for period 10 September 2025 to 7 October 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 Completed
- 2 Outstanding

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI11/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: *UPDATE OF COUNCIL'S CEMETERY POLICY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Open Space and Community Facilities Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of an updated Cemetery Policy to be placed on public exhibition following a scheduled three-year periodic review and to maintain consistency with recent changes to cemeteries legislation.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council places the draft Cemetery Policy 2025 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
2. That, if no relevant submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the draft Cemetery Policy 2025 be considered final and adopted.

BACKGROUND

Under the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013 (NSW)* (the Act) and *Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulation 2014* (the Regulation), Council as a 'Cemetery Authority' is required to establish policies and procedures in regard to the control of the management and operation of Council's cemeteries.

Council's Cemetery Policy outlines the overall principles that underpin how Council manages its cemeteries in order to comply with legislative requirements and to provide a dignified and responsive cemetery and memorialisation service to the community.

The Cemetery Policy was originally adopted in 2003 and has been subject to periodic review, with the most recent update approved in 2022. Recent legislative changes under the *NSW Cemeteries and Crematoria Amendment Act 2025* have introduced updated obligations for NSW Cemetery Authorities.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The draft Cemetery Policy incorporates changes made to NSW cemetery legislation, including updated references and recent changes that permit the interment of animal remains in human burial sites. The changes made to NSW legislation are understood to be addressing community demand for companion animal remains to be buried with their owners. The updated policy allows for interment of cremated animal remains, provided they are interred within an approved ash interment container.

It is proposed to exhibit the draft Policy for 28 days during October and November to allow the community time to review and provide comments. At the conclusion of the exhibition period, if no relevant submissions are received, the draft Policy will be considered final and adopted. If required, a further report will be presented to Council summarising details of the submissions received and any subsequent changes proposed to the draft Policy before seeking adoption.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI11/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Hard copies of the draft Policy will be exhibited at Council's Administration Building, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock Libraries and electronic copies will be available via Council's Together Cessnock engagement portal.

OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

- Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
- Communications and Engagement Manager
- Vegetation and Civic Spaces Coordinator
- Open Space and Community Facilities staff.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This update to the Cemetery Policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired objectives as per Council's Delivery Program:

- Objective 1.2.6a: Review and Update the Cemetery Strategic Plan

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The adoption of the draft Cemetery Policy will result in an amendment to Council's Policy Register and any relevant forms and other documents.

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

As a Cemetery Authority and operator, Council is required to be consistent with the requirements of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013* (NSW).

d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI11/2025

Works and Infrastructure



f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure Council maintains consistency with the requirements imposed on Cemetery Authorities, as required by the NSW *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013* (NSW). If endorsed by Council, the Draft Policy will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days prior to being adopted and the existing policy rescinded.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) Draft Cemetery Policy

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN13/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN13/2025

SUBJECT: ***IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EMAIL NOTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR RESIDENTS***

COUNCILLOR: ***Jessica Jurd***

MOTION

That Council, establish an opt-in email notification system for residents based on their location. This system would provide timely information regarding:

- 1. Development Applications, Residents would receive updates on DAs in their area, ensuring they are informed about proposed developments that may affect their community, while helping with the cost of notifications, we could reach a bigger area, while keeping it cheaper.**
- 2. Upcoming Events: Notifications about local events, community gatherings, and Council initiatives would be shared to encourage participation and engagement.**
- 3. Promote the new system through existing Council communication channels to maximise participation.**

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 15 October 2025.

RATIONALE

This will enhance communication and improve communication between the Council and residents, fostering transparency and community involvement. It will keep the community informed about relevant developments and events; we empower them to engage more actively in local decision-making processes. An opt-in system based on location ensures that residents receive information that is pertinent to them, avoiding information overload and increasing relevance.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

DELIVERY PROGRAM:

Our community vision: Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by effectively meet the community needs.

Sgd: Jessica Jurd
Date: 3 October 2025

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN13/2025

General Manager's Unit



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

Council currently offers an email mailing list for current news/matters that can be subscribed to via <https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/News/Cessnock-City-newsletters>. Council also sends out a number of other email eDMs on a range of subjects, such as; Waste & Environment, Cessnock City Libraries, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock, Strategic Planning, Advance Greater Cessnock, etc., and each can be subscribed to via the link above.

Upcoming events, notifications about local events, community gatherings, and Council initiatives etc., are currently shared publicly via Council's social media platforms, news outlets and via Council's website at [News | CCC](#).

Currently residents are able to check Council's DA Tracker or [Application Tracker | Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment](#) online at any time to see what development is taking place in their local area. There is also a website available that offers email alerts of 'planning applications or planning proposals near you' at <https://www.planningalerts.org.au/> where people can subscribe to be alerted via email of any development applications in the area that they nominate. To improve awareness of these services, the links could be advertised on Council's website.

Public notification of development applications is required to be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Participation Plan (CPP) which is regulated under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The adopted CPP establishes the timing and method of notification to be undertaken and would not be able to be replaced with an 'opt in' email process. Rather than replace the existing notification process, the 'opt in' email would be an additional process. For Councillors information, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Planning System Reforms) Bill 2025* has been recently introduced in Parliament and as part of the reforms, the Bill proposes replacing local CPPs with a single State-wide community participation process.

If Council would like to pursue an 'opt in' system where residents can subscribe in one single place (rather than multiple areas) to receive Council notifications/news Council's current platforms and applications would need to be interrogated to determine capacity, capability and cost for a single source.

Alternate Recommendation

That the General Manger investigate and report to Council on a single opt in email notification system for residents for notification of development activity, events and Council notifications, outlining existing systems in operation, the feasibility of a single system, legislative requirements, benefits and limitations, resource and cost implications.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN14/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN14/2025

SUBJECT: *INVESTIGATION OF COLLABORATION WITH CESSNOCK JAIL FOR COST SAVING INITIATIVES*

COUNCILLOR: *Jessica Jurd*

MOTION

1. That Council, investigate with the relevant staff/committee to conduct research on the logistics, costs, and potential benefits of a collaboration with Cessnock Jail for any potential cost saving opportunities & helping with the rehabilitation for our community, without jeopardising any current jobs within our staff.
2. That Council arrange a meeting with representatives from Cessnock Jail to discuss the possibilities of such a partnership.
3. This partnership could include, but is not limited to, the following areas:
 - A) Mowing and Maintenance Services: Utilizing inmates for lawn mowing and maintenance of public spaces, which could reduce costs associated with hiring external contractors.
 - B) Manufacturing of Community Infrastructure: Exploring the feasibility of the jail producing essential items such as street signs, street poles, and garbage bins at a lower cost than current suppliers.
4. Present findings and recommendations to the Council for further consideration.

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 15 October 2025.

RATIONALE

This initiative stands to benefit both our Council and Cessnock Jail significantly. Partnering with Cessnock Jail could lead to substantial cost savings for the Council, enabling us to redirect funds to other essential community projects. Additionally, this collaboration can install a sense of community responsibility and aid in the rehabilitation of inmates, positively impacting their reintegration into society. By leveraging local resources, we can also enhance sustainability and lower our transportation costs.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN14/2025

General Manager's Unit



DELIVERY PROGRAM:

Our community vision: Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by effectively meet the community needs.

Sgd: Jessica Jurd

Date: 3 October 2025

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

In line with our Procurement Policy, Council conducts its procurement activities in a socially, economic and environmentally sustainable way that aims to provide value for money, the best possible outcomes for the community and the environment in accordance with Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Separate contracts are in place for the mowing of Council Cemeteries, Community Halls, Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre and Cessnock Airport:

- The mowing contract for Council's Cemeteries and Community Halls is due for renewal in June 2026
- The mowing contract for the Hunter Valley Visitor Information is due for renewal in February 2026
- An expression of interest is currently out for the mowing of Cessnock Airport closing on 21 October 2025.

Council is supportive of a competitive tender process and would encourage Cessnock Correctional services to submit a tender when maintenance contracts are due for renewal.

Officers recently engaged with a representative from Corrective Services Industries (CSI) in September 2025 initially in regards to print services following an approach through the Mayor. Whilst Council has an established panel of suppliers for the services that CSI can provide, an invitation was made to and subsequently CSI registered on Council's Social Procurement Panel on VendorPanel, so enabling Council staff to seek quotes from CSI as they are on a vetted panel with insurances etc as per the Procurement process.

Council has historically installed one brand of rubbish bin (and other street furniture and signs) throughout our CBD/open space areas not only from an asset management perspective but so there is a consistent palette of furniture around the LGA. This street furniture has also stood up well in regards to vandalism. Council staff would be open to discussing with Cessnock Correctional Services the style/types of rubbish bins or other street furniture/signs that could be provided and the pricing of these.

Council is supportive of discussions with Cessnock Correctional Services and Council staff can reach out to the appropriate representatives to understand services which may be able to be provided, and ensure appropriate procurement processes are followed. This would form the basis for a report to Council for consideration.

This information has been previously shared with the Mayor.

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN14/2025

General Manager's Unit



Alternate recommendation

That the General Manager investigate and provide a report on Council on logistics, resource implications, potential benefits and/or limitations of a collaboration with Cessnock Correctional Centre for the provision of selected maintenance services and procurement opportunities for goods able to be produced at the Centre.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN15/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN15/2025

SUBJECT: *ADVERTISING, SPONSORSHIP AND NAMING RIGHTS PROGRAM*

COUNCILLOR: *Quintin King*

MOTION

1. That Council investigates and develops a framework for the introduction of a tasteful advertising and sponsorship program across selected council assets, such as street furniture, facilities, and public infrastructure.
2. That Council explores opportunities to market naming rights for major council venues, facilities, and events, with a view to securing multi-year agreements.

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 15 October 2025.

RATIONALE

Advertising concessions and naming rights are established revenue-generating tools in local government, with measurable financial returns and service enhancements. Council's across Australia have demonstrated the benefits of these arrangements, including:

- City of Sydney – Street furniture concession delivering revenue and upgraded public amenities.
- Byron Shire Council – adopted a naming rights policy to leverage value from community assets.
- Townsville – secured major revenue through stadium naming and sponsorship agreements.

Introducing a similar program in our LGA has the potential to deliver substantial new revenue streams, reduce the burden on rate payers, and enhance the standard of facilities and services available to the community.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Existing operational budget – investigate feasibility only.

DELIVERY PROGRAM:

6. Civic leadership: “Ensure council is financially sustainable and effectively manages its assets and resources.”

Sgd: Quintin King

Date: 3 October 2025

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN15/2025

General Manager's Unit



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

Bus shelters advertising was most recently considered by Council, in particular Report W122/2022 on 20 April 2022 and Report W149/2022 on 20 July 2022. The latest report provided information in regards to legislative provision, potential revenue opportunities and interdependence on associated policies and strategies, and Council unanimously resolved:

That Council notes that the display of advertising in transport corridors is generally restricted and is permissible only with development consent in strictly confined cases, as provided in *State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021*, and *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

A copy of this report is provided at *Enclosure 1*.

In relation to advertising sponsorship, naming rights and major events portfolio, the following information is provided.

- City of Sydney operates under different legislation specific to the City of Sydney and design and manufacture their own street furniture et al.
- Small cost invested in any lease with revenue limited and often below market rates to encourage reasonable use.
- Council sporting facilities, in the main are for localised sport organisations, not national sports which would provide for increased opportunities for revenue generation, such as from regularly hosting, for example, an NRL team in the way that Townsville, Newcastle or Wollongong do.
- Council has only recently taken over running of 2 more significant events being Nostalgia and Stomp, both of which were as the direct result of financial imposts for the organisations which previously held the events.
- Cost implications to run/resource events. Costs to run these events will need to be adequately factored into any future budgets if Council elects to continue providing them. It is too early to advise as to the return on investment, as the final actual costs and returns is not known.

This information has been previously shared with the Mayor.

Alternate Recommendation

That the General Manager investigate and report to Council on implications, resource requirements, projected returns on investment and any logistical impacts for existing users of relevant Council facilities for an advertising, sponsorship and potential naming rights program for Council facilities.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) Report W149/2022 - Bus Shelter Advertising

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN16/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN16/2025

SUBJECT: *CHARLTON STREET - NEW PARKING RULE*

COUNCILLOR: *Quintin King*

MOTION

1. That Council revoke the new front to kerb parking rule recently changed on Charlton Street Cessnock.
2. That Council seek alternative solutions to meet the intended purpose of the change.

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 15 October 2025.

RATIONALE

Following the recent change to parking rules on Charlton Street, a number of residents have contacted myself and other Councillors to express their concerns regarding the front-to-kerb parking requirement. Many were unaware of the change and were caught off guard when they received fines for reverse parking in the same manner they have done for many years.

I have also been made aware of a petition, which has already gathered around one hundred signatures, calling for this rule to be revoked on the grounds that it is not practical for this particular location. In addition, residents have written to council outlining a number of alternative solutions that could achieve the same intended outcome.

On behalf of the community, I request that council review this change and give due consideration to adopting a more appropriate and practical approach for Charlton Street.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Traffic facilities / General funds

DELIVERY PROGRAM:

4.2 Improve our road network. – which includes: “ensure our existing road network remains contemporary and meets our community’s needs.”

Sgd: Quintin King

Date: 3 October 2025

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN16/2025

General Manager's Unit



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

The parking change was made at the request of the community. The pedestrian space (kerb to kerb) is less impeded by the front of a vehicle than the rear of a vehicle. Considering the number of large dual cab utes and SUV's within our LGA, they usually have an extended overhang from back of the tyre to tip of tow bar.

Council officers investigated early in 2024 (before the Local Traffic Committee (LTC) report in August 2024) and have images that show how a person in a wheel chair is restricted from using the pedestrian space because of vehicles overhanging in to the pedestrian space. They have been observed using the travel lane/roadway to navigate to their destination.

Wheel stops were investigated and it was found that they reduce the length of the car park internally, making the swept paths of vehicles entering and exiting parking spaces very difficult to maneuver and adversely impacts aisle widths and car park movement. Further, parallel parking was considered, however, this impacts parking numbers and reduces parking capacity by nearly 70% in that location (25 spaces + 2 accessible down to 8 spaces + 2 accessible).

From a cost perspective the installation of signs to control the way vehicles are parked is more cost effective and practical. There are similar areas in our LGA and throughout NSW where the same treatment has been used successfully.

Local Traffic Committee Recommendation:

A detailed investigation was conducted by T&T and a report prepared for the LTC committee. The report includes the public consultation and associated CCC Comms social media campaign specifically in relation to this matter. Feedback was documented and considered within the report presented to voting members of the LTC.

The recommended changes were noted by the elected Council as being approved under sub delegation, October 2024.

Since that time, TfNSW has changed the local traffic delegations and the Local Traffic Committee no longer operates under the same regulations.

Revoking the current parking restrictions would leave the area unregulated and will lead to confusion by community members if there is no alternate arrangements in place at the same time. Any changes that may occur in the future would need to go through a community awareness campaign.

For these reasons Recommendation 1 in the Notice of Motion is not supported.

Alternate Recommendation

That the General Manager investigate alternative solutions to address concerns in relation to pedestrian safety and parking arrangements on Charlton Street and report to Council before the end of 2025.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report