

SUBJECT: LMM 25/06/19 - SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

MOTION

That City of Newcastle:

1. Acknowledges that social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing, and that quality social infrastructure benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.
2. Notes that an integrated planning approach to social infrastructure delivery is considered best practice.
3. Notes that local government significantly contributes to the provision of social infrastructure through our network of community assets.
4. Resources and develops a Social Infrastructure Strategy that provides for the funding, planning and delivery of social infrastructure in a strategic and coordinated way, particularly in the context of a growing and increasingly diverse population.
5. Considers in the development of the strategy the refurbishment and renewal of existing community assets as well as the potential development of new services, facilities and places.

BACKGROUND:

Social infrastructure is “the interdependent mix of facilities, places, spaces, programs, projects, services and networks that maintain and improve the standard of living and quality of life in a community¹.” Social infrastructure includes a wide range of services and facilities that meet community needs for education, health, social support, recreation, cultural expression, social interaction and community development². This includes schools, community centres, libraries and recreation facilities such as playgrounds, pools, sports fields and parks. Social infrastructure is now recognised as an essential component of well-functioning communities, has been described as the glue that holds communities together and assists in supporting the social determinants of health and wellbeing for communities.

There is growing international recognition that investment in social infrastructure is just as vital for economic prosperity as it is for social wellbeing as it plays an important role in bringing people together, developing social capital, maintaining quality of life and developing the skills and resilience essential to strong communities³. Quality social infrastructure benefits the entire community and plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

All levels of government (federal, state and local), the community, non-government organisations and the private sector have various responsibilities for the funding, planning and delivery of social infrastructure. Local government significantly contributes to the provision of social infrastructure through our networks of community assets. Community assets in

Newcastle need to be planned in a strategic and coordinated way, particularly in the context of a growing and increasingly diverse population.

¹ Department of Planning Western Australia, 2012

² NSW Health, *Healthy Urban Design Checklist*, 2009

³ QLD Department of Infrastructure, Office of Urban Management, *SEQ Regional Plan 2005-2026, Implementation Guideline No 5 – Social Infrastructure Planning*, Brisbane
<http://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/resources/guideline/ImplementationGuideline5.pdf>

The City of Newcastle is forecast to have a population of over 200,000 people by 2041⁴. This is an increase of an additional 37,000 people in the next 25 years, an increase of 21% from our current population of 166,984 people. Between 2016 and 2040, the age structure forecasts for the City of Newcastle indicate:

- a 20.0% increase in population under working age;
- a 39.6% increase in population of retirement age; and
- a 22.5% increase in population of working age.

Newcastle is emerging as one of Australia's most dynamic and vibrant metropolitan cities and in order to support this transition we need to ensure we continue to enhance and grow our inclusive community to be a smart, liveable and sustainable global city.

The development of a comprehensive Social Infrastructure Strategy for Newcastle would support the delivery of our Community Strategic Plan Newcastle 2030 strategic objectives and Sustainable Development Goals as well as assist in meeting the objectives of the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036.

A range of planning authorities and local government organisations across Australia have adopted an integrated social or community infrastructure planning approach as good practice. Examples include:

- Greater Sydney Commission - <https://www.greater.sydney/central-city-district-plan/liveability/city-people/providing-services-and-social-infrastructure-meet>
- City of Parramatta – Social Infrastructure Strategy (2017) <https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/2017-08/Draft%20Social%20Infrastructure%20Strategy%20-%20Full%20version.pdf>
- Wollongong City Places for people, Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028 <https://www.haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/places-for-people-wollongong-social-infrastructure-planning-framework-1>
- Tweed Shire Council - <https://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/CommunityInfrastructurePlanning>
- Cessnock City Council – Community Infrastructure Plan 2031 <http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/community/commstratplan>
- Victorian Planning Authority – Community Infrastructure Planning <https://vpa.vic.gov.au/strategy-guidelines/infrastructure/community-infrastructure-planning/>
- Geelong Social Infrastructure Plan 2014-2031 <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/sip/documents/item/8d4be3445779060.asp> x
- City of Fremantle: Community facilities Plan: Future Directions 2036 https://www.fremantle.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Communities%20Facilities%20Plan%20Future%20Directions%202036%20with%20appendices_.pdf

⁴ <https://forecast.id.com.au/newcastle>