

Liveable Cities Advisory Committee

Annual Report

2024



City of
Newcastle

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Acknowledgment of Country

City of Newcastle (CN) acknowledges its Local Government Area (LGA) sits within the Country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient relationships. We acknowledge the custodianship of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples and the care and stewardship they have performed in this place since time immemorial. We recognise the history of truth that acknowledges the impact of invasion and colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how this still resonates today.

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Cover Page:
Visualisations from Draft
Broadmeadow Place Strategy

Contents

Foreword from the Chair	4
Membership	5
Objectives of the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee	6
Summary of Key Items of Business Considered	8
Summary of Key Achievements	9
Liveable Cities Advisory Committee Working Parties.....	10
Summary of Performance and Governance	12

Foreword from the Chair

Councillor Dr John Mackenzie



It is with great pride that I present the 2024 Annual Report of the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee (the Committee) at City of Newcastle.

Throughout the past year, the Committee has continued to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our city. Our efforts have been firmly anchored in the values of our community, with a focus on preserving Newcastle's distinct character while promoting sustainable growth and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges such as housing affordability and climate change.

In 2024, the Committee concentrated on finalising the groundwork for the draft Broadmeadow Place Strategy, a landmark urban renewal initiative with the potential to transform not only the suburb but also set a new standard for urban planning across New South Wales and beyond. The Broadmeadow project presents an unprecedented opportunity to redefine urban spaces, turning former industrial lands into vibrant, interconnected hubs of housing, employment, and recreation.

Our collective vision for Broadmeadow is ambitious. We see it as a precinct that will deliver an increase in social, affordable, and diverse housing options, create new job opportunities, and provide accessible green spaces and community amenities. The project's scope and significance cannot be overstated—it has the power to reshape Newcastle's urban fabric and improve the quality of life for all residents.

I am incredibly appreciative of the dedication and expertise shown by the Committee members, whose contributions have been instrumental in the progress we have made. The insights and perspectives provided by our diverse group of experts, community representatives, and practitioners have enriched the Broadmeadow Place Strategy, ensuring it reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

As Newcastle continues to evolve, the guidance from this advisory group remains crucial. The Committee's focus on housing, accessibility, active transport, heritage, and environmental protection is integral to guiding our city toward a future that is not only sustainable and inclusive but also vibrant and prosperous. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the City of Newcastle's executive and staff for their unwavering support and shared commitment to making our city more liveable—and perhaps even more loveable—each day.

It has been an absolute pleasure to Chair the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee for the last 8 years and I would like to thank each of the Committee members past and current for their contributions, and everyone involved in facilitating these meetings.

Councillor Dr John Mackenzie
Chair - Liveable Cities Advisory Committee



Membership



Lord Mayor Councillor Nelmes

City of Newcastle
Lord Mayor



Councillor Dr John Mackenzie

City of Newcastle
Chair



Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk

City of Newcastle
Deputy Chair



Councillor John Church

City of Newcastle
Member



Michelle Bisson

City of Newcastle
Executive Director Planning and
Environment

Representatives from Stakeholder Organisations

Kristi Jorgensen

Regional Growth NSW Development
Corporation

Steve O'Connor

Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)

Michael Nolan

Home in Place

Thayaparan Gajendran

Newcastle University

Community Representatives

Sparrow Katekar

Community Representative

Kathleen Mee

Community Representative

Mark Kelly

Community Representative

Objectives of the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee

The Liveable Cities Advisory Committee to provide advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identification of challenges and opportunities, in relation to safe, healthy, liveable and connected urban systems within the Local Government Area (LGA).

Over the last year the key objectives were to:

- Provide advice on development of strategies that support urban policy and frameworks to achieve liveability objectives.
- Provide advice on the planning for integration of affordability, transport, infrastructure, environment, and safety and crime prevention strategies.
- Provide advice on the planning for integrated public and active transport services and oversee the implementation of City of Newcastle's (CN) traffic, parking and cycling management plans and operations.
- Consider and advise on environmental and sustainability planning.
- Provide advice on the protection and enhancement of heritage issues and design character.



Visualisations from Draft Broadmeadow Place Strategy

Summary of Key Items of Business Considered

Date of Meeting	Business Item
5 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Wide Heritage Study • Local Character • Planning Reform • Broadmeadow Place Strategy & State Led Rezoning • Broadmeadow Workshop • LCAC - Satisfaction Survey • LCAC Annual Report 2023 • LGBTIQA+ - City Liveability
4 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage review Camerons Hill update • Planning Discussion TOD SEPP and Low/Mid-rise Housing • Walking and Mobility Plan • Broadmeadow Place Strategy and First Move

Standing agenda items include:

- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
- Adoption of draft minutes and actions arising, and
- General Business

Summary of Key Achievements

Here's a summary of the key achievements of the Liveable Cities Advisory Committee for 2024:

1. **City-Wide Heritage Study:** The committee provided important feedback and comments with the commencement of the city-wide heritage study, identifying and preserving key heritage sites. This initiative will enhance the protection of historical and cultural assets, integrating them into future city planning and development.
2. **Local Character:** A significant focus was placed on maintaining the unique local character across neighbourhoods. The committee provided guidance and expertise feedback to ensure that new developments respect and enhance the existing character, fostering community identity and pride.
3. **Planning Reform:** The committee played a crucial role in CN's response with advocating for and implementing planning reforms that streamline development processes while maintaining high standards of liveability.
4. **Broadmeadow Place Strategy & State-Led Rezoning:** The committee provided key strategic input into the Broadmeadow Place Strategy, aligning it with state-led rezoning initiatives. This effort will assist in ensuring that the area's development is sustainable, well-integrated with public transport, and supportive of community needs.
5. **Broadmeadow Workshop:** A successful workshop was conducted. This collaborative event gathered valuable feedback and fostered a shared vision for the area's future and informed the draft Broadmeadow Place Strategy.
6. **Camerons Hill Heritage Review:** The committee completed a review of the Camerons Hill area, leading to the commencement process of protecting this key heritage significant area. This review was instrumental in balancing development pressures with heritage conservation.
7. **TOD SEPP and Low/Mid-Rise Housing:** The committee provided key feedback and comments to the drafting of CN submission of the Transport-Oriented Development (TOD) State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP), promoting low and mid-rise housing options near transport hubs.
8. **Walking and Mobility Plan:** The committee reviewed and provided expertise feedback with the development of our draft Walking and Mobility Plan, aimed at improving pedestrian infrastructure and mobility across the city. This plan prioritises walkability, safety, and accessibility, encouraging active transportation.

These achievements reflect the committee's commitment to creating a liveable, sustainable, and inclusive city.

Liveable Cities Advisory Committee

Working Parties

Development Control Plan Working Party (DCPWP)

The DCPWP was established early in this term with a 2022 resolution of Council, with a focus on ensuring our development controls are able to meet the needs of an increasing, ageing population, disability and mobility requirements, along with building resilience to increasing incidences of weather extremes like flood, stormwater, and extreme heat. These factors are even more important when considering the costs of poor quality or inaccessible built form are too often passed onto residents where the social gradient of housing quality is felt more deeply, like in our outer and sub-urban areas. Our development controls reflect Council's commitment to ensure a more liveable, healthier and cooler city, with dignity, equity and accessibility in building design, and responsible, and care-full environmental stewardship.

In December 2023 the modernised DCP was adopted as a resolution of Council (by a majority of Labor, and Greens Councillors), moving towards having increased footpath widths, and silver level universal design, increased building sustainability for certain developments, and biodiversity and deep soil requirements. I thank City of Newcastle staff and expert stakeholders including the Liveable Cities Committee for their input into this project. With the ongoing loss of private green space in increasing infill densification, an ageing population, mobility and disability needs, and the financial and thermal pressures from climate change, ongoing rounds of DCP modernisation to ensure controls apply equitably and to all dwellings will be necessary, to build a socially and environmentally resilient city that is liveable, fit for purpose and fit for the future.

Affordable Housing Working Party (AHPWP)

The principle of the 'right to the city' underpins the AHWP's approach to advising on the delivery of affordable housing in the city; AH as housing for all workers in the lowest income quintiles (households of low-to-moderate income), supporting models that deliver and manage AH in perpetuity, and 15% of AH on privately owned land, preferences for floor space (rather than monetary) contributions, leveeing contribution on sale price (value uplift) rather than construction (noting the differential capacity for different locations across the city to buffer AH contributions), and auditing, retaining and refurbishing Council-owned assets to create dynamic, liveable community spaces (for example with public space, childcare, libraries, creative workspaces) at ground level, and accessible, affordable and inclusive housing above.

These principles underpin our affordable housing developer contributions scheme (AHDCS) developed under the State Environment Planning Policy Affordable Housing (SEPP70). The AHDCS was resolved in December 2023 Council (via a majority of Labor, and Greens Councillors) to go to Gateway approval for further feasibility testing, prior to being placed onto public exhibition to seek our community's endorsement. An AHDCS is an opportunity to do our part in local government to address some of the growing intergenerational inequities in the provision and regulation of housing

as a human right, by requiring contributions for this critical social infrastructure as a condition of development consent in the city.

The relationships developed via the AHWP this term were key to our work with key stakeholders; local community housing providers to advise on affordable housing delivery by Council, CHIA to refine our AHDCS, the Hunter Tenants Union in resolving to support to abolish no grounds evictions, with state

government in our novel work to gift the former LAHC a grant to deliver more public housing in the city, conversations with the federal government over local possibilities to access the HAFF, with Homes NSW in their new direction for refurbishing (rather than demolishing) public housing estates and electrifying public housing, and with UoN in the last year's winning Masters of Architecture student project to develop 'Rail Bridge Row' for community and affordable housing presented to CN staff.

Cycling Working Party (CWP)

The cycling working party works to find traffic-calming solutions to ensure Newcastle is a cycling and pedestrian-friendly city. In this term we have delivered upgrades to cycleways and missing connections across the city, working with key community stakeholders to develop and refine plans for crossing improvements, enhanced cycling infrastructure, signalised intersections, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and connectivity. The *City of Newcastle Cycling Plan* guides the work of the CWP and sets out the foregoing plan for our wider cycleway network to continually improve cycling options, accessibility, and safety for pedestrians and cyclists commuting to and from work, education, leisure, or other activities in our city.

Much needed works have been delivered at locations including at Minmi, Fletcher, Islington, New Lambton and Newcastle CBD, to ensure connectivity within and between suburbs and key locations in the city, to continually enhance our community's well-being and ensure a healthier, more active lifestyle for residents. As well as localised improvements in this term of Council CN has also worked with surrounding local governments and our local community groups to develop the business case for the 100km 'Shiraz to Shore' recreational trail which spans five Council areas along a unique and picturesque route from the vibrant shores of Newcastle to the world-renowned vineyards of the Hunter Valley. CN staff have worked hard to seek funding from state government to deliver the much-needed upgrades to the Richmond Vale Rail trail which is the critical connective piece in the trail.

Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk
Chair DCPWP, AHWP

Summary of Performance and Governance

Date of meeting	Quorum achieved	Members in attendance	Agenda circulated to members	Declaration of conflicts of interest listed as agenda item	Minutes circulated to members and adopted by the Committee
5 March 2024	Quorate	Councillor Dr John Mackenzie (Chair), Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk, Michelle Bisson, Michael Nolan, Kristi Jorgensen, Sparrow Katekar, Thayaparan Gajendran, Mark Kelly	Yes	Yes	Yes
4 June 2024	Quorate	Councillor Dr John Mackenzie (Chair), Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk, Michelle Bisson, Michael Nolan, Kristi Jorgensen, Thayaparan Gajendran, Mark Kelly, Steve O'Connor	Yes	Yes	Yes
3 September 2024	Quorate	Councillor Dr John Mackenzie (Chair), Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk, Michelle Bisson, Michael Nolan, Kristi Jorgensen, Thayaparan Gajendran, Kathleen Mee, Steve O'Connor	Yes	Yes	Yes