

# Heritage Strategy

2020-2030



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City of  
Newcastle

## **Acknowledgment**

City of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and recognise that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession. City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to addressing disadvantages and attaining justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

## **Our Global Commitment**

In September 2015, Australia was one of 193 countries to commit to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals were developed by the United Nations to provide a roadmap for all countries to work toward a better world for current and future generations.

Newcastle is a United Nations City, with a CIFAL research institute at the University of Newcastle. City of Newcastle has adopted the SDGs and New Urban Agenda as cornerstones for our strategic direction. All stakeholders, including governments, civil society and the private sector, are expected to contribute to the realisation of these goals and we as leaders of our City are committed to driving this forward.

## **Production**

Newcastle Heritage Strategy 2020-2030 was prepared by City of Newcastle

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# 1.0 Introduction

In New South Wales, the responsibility for managing and regulating cultural heritage is split between the state and local government. Local government has responsibility for local heritage, through environmental planning instruments, regulatory services and community engagement activities.

The Heritage Strategy is a strategic framework to guide City of Newcastle's (CN) approach to the management of heritage matters in the Newcastle local government area over the next ten years. It is drawn from its parent document the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 (CSP) (City of Newcastle, 2018) and the Newcastle Heritage Policy 2013.

Consultation with the community has told us that the Newcastle community has strongly expressed its aspiration that moving towards 2030, local heritage will be valued, enhanced and celebrated.

This heritage strategy allows CN to articulate a framework for achieving this vision and to meet its statutory obligations and community expectations for regulating and managing local heritage. It also supports alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda developed by the United Nations, the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and contemporary heritage guidelines for local government required by the NSW Heritage Council.

The Heritage Strategy identifies actions and services that when implemented are commensurate with the Newcastle Heritage Policy, best practice, legislative responsibilities and community expectations. It thus identifies the vision statement for heritage at CN, sets out the context, identifies the core themes and the objectives, outcomes and measures of these themes.

*'Conservation is the application of common sense, to the common problems, for the common good.'*

**Gifford Pinchot (1910)**

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**Note:** The Heritage Strategy is the heritage component of CN's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R). The priorities and actions of the Heritage Strategy's Action Plan are aligned with the CSP and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the vision for heritage established in this strategy and the four principles of the Newcastle Heritage Policy.

Implementation of the actions and tasks identified in the Action Plan of the Heritage Strategy will be monitored through the IP&R Framework. To align actions with the framework, tasks are identified as commencing within one year to four years.

The Action Plan will be reviewed every 12 months as actions and tasks are completed and to reflect changes in Federal, State or Local priorities as well as resources and budgets.

As the Action Plan is a live document, which aligns with CN's delivery plan, it is not appended to this Strategy.



**THE LIFE OF SYDNEY**

**SYDNEY'S SIBERIA**

**IN 1797,**

which brought original residents to the first convict settlement and created the Sydney story.



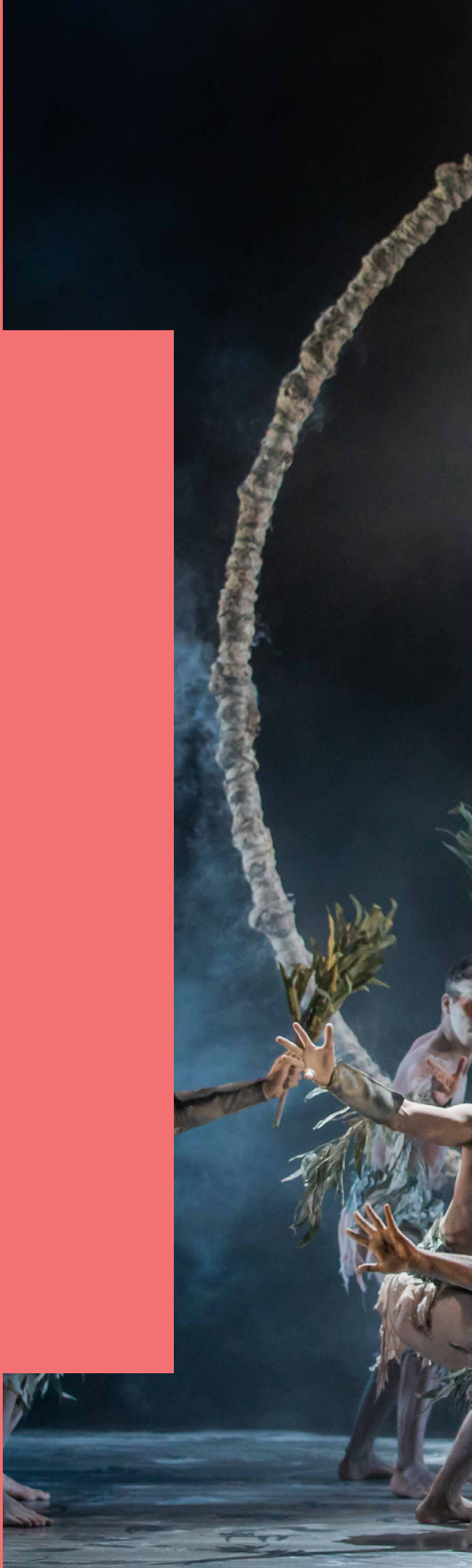
# 2.0 Vision

**The vision for heritage in Newcastle is:**

In 2030, the City of Newcastle will be a leader in local government heritage management by providing outstanding services to the community in a manner which is economically and environmentally sustainable and respects the diversity and significance of local heritage to the people of Newcastle.

The City of Newcastle's heritage assets under its care and control will be well regulated and managed with identification, preservation, conservation, celebration and promotion of the city's rich cultural heritage, based on the principles of the Burra Charter and best practice.

Thereby reinforcing the city's attractiveness as a heritage tourism destination and strengthening its reputation as a smart, liveable and sustainable global city.





# 3.0 Historical context

## 3.1 Aboriginal cultural heritage

The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are descendants of the traditional custodians of the land situated within the Newcastle local government area, including wetlands, rivers, creeks and coastal environments. It is known that their heritage and cultural ties to Newcastle date back tens of thousands of years.

The traditional boundaries of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples run along the coast between the Hawkesbury and Manning rivers. Inland they run as far as the traditional tidal flow of the many lakes, rivers, creeks and streams flowing inland. The Lore tells us that as far as the salt pushed was the extent of the saltwater peoples' land. Mountain ranges, brooks and creeks make up the borders with the Darkinung and Wonnarua.

These encompassing lands were made up of numerous Nurras, family clan group areas. Each Nurra had ceremonial, story and marriage obligations to each other.

These obligations formed the binding relationships between all peoples of this language group, as well as strengthening ties with neighbouring language groups. Gathering on regular occasions to pay respect to the Dreaming Spirits, the country and each other, through ceremony, song and dance. By doing so the people ensured that the Lore was maintained and passed on continuously.

*'Mulubinba, the site of 'Newcastle.'*

**Lancelot Threlkeld (1834)**

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*Muluubinba* is the traditional name for the people. Its name is attributed to a local sea fern that was traditionally harvested as a food crop. In breaking down the word, it translates to: 'muluu' the name of the sea fern 'bin' is plural and 'ba' place of meaning - the place of many sea ferns.

This area is where the modern-day Foreshore, Honeysuckle and CBD are currently situated.

Evidence of continuous and extensive Aboriginal occupation of Newcastle is reflected in the recent archaeological records. Multiple sites containing Aboriginal objects have been uncovered and documented throughout the local government area. This has included but is not limited to sites in Black Hill, Fletcher, Maryland and Shortland in close proximity to *Burragihnbihng* (Hexham Swamp), in Hunter Street Newcastle West, Wolfe Street The Hill, a shell midden at *Meekarlba* (Honeysuckle), and a tool making site at the Convict Lumber Yard on Scott Street.

Traditional names and stories of many of Newcastle's landmarks and well-known places are still in use today.

*Whibayganba* (Nobbys Headland) is the final dwelling place of the Kangaroo that broke Marriage (skin) Lore. Our skin Lore was one of the most important and stringent Lores regarding marriage, community structure and obligations. The Kangaroo Man had forcibly taken a Wallaby Woman, knowing that consequence of his actions was death, he fled from the rest of the people. Trying to outrun them he headed towards the coast, upon reaching the coast he used the cover of a thick fog to escape to Whibayganba. There he was forever trapped by the clever people within the island. An everlasting reminder to all of the punishment that comes with breaking Lore.



*'Indeed, every remarkable point of land, every hill and valley in the territory, has its native name, given, as far as can be ascertained from particular instances, from some remarkable feature of the particular locality...'*

Lang (1834)

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Walter PRESTON *Corroboree, or dance of the natives of New South Wales, New Holland* 1820 hand coloured engraving on paper 38.0 x 56.9cm Purchased 1971 Newcastle Art Gallery collection



Joseph LYCETT *The Sugar Loaf Mountain, near Newcastle, New South Wales* 1824 hand coloured etching and aquatint on paper 17.1 x 27.0cm Purchased 1968 Newcastle Art Gallery collection

Walter PRESTON Newcastle,  
*Hunter's River, New South Wales*  
1820 hand coloured engraving on  
paper 30.8 x 46.0cm Purchased 1971  
Newcastle Art Gallery collection



Large numbers of clan groups were known to have lived along the river and coast, around the wetlands and hinterlands. Living a settled life managing and farming their lands according to their cultural and family obligations and the Lore, carefully moving with the seasons and for ceremonial necessities.

The care and respect that was maintained to the whole environment was the essential fundamental force binding everything and everyone that existed on this *Burrai* (land).

There were eight seasons traditionally, dictated by the predominant wind that blew for that season. With each season there was a change in camp, this was done to not exhaust the flora and fauna that sustained daily life for that area. This is a managing practice that was given to the people in the Dreaming to ensure the sustainability of the land for all those that followed.

The seasons also coincided with the cycles of the local flora and fauna, environmental indicators that also told the people it was time to move to the new camp. The warmer months were generally spent by the coast, with the annual mullet run a key time to maintain kinship and connections by celebrating and paying respect for the life sustaining mullet through feast and corroboree. *Burrabihngarn* (Stockton) was the traditional place for this. Corraba oval is the location and is named after this important seasonal event.

In the cooler months' life was predominately lived at the inland camps. Emu, kangaroo, wallaby, bandicoot and various other land animals made up the diet. Utilising the abundance of land diet in the cooler months to maintain the Lore.

Hunting of these larger animals was a whole clan affair. Starting at the break of dawn to strategise the best place to secure the food for the clan. A valley or gully was chosen where those animals were known to congregate, and the plan was put into place. The location and terrain dictated what method would be utilised to maximise the catch. The use of large nets was commonplace on these hunts. Made from the various barks that were available, these nets were set in place, the women and children were deployed at the other end of the valley/gully and upon the given signal, would proceed toward the netted end making as much noise as possible to flush the targeting game towards the nets. Staged at various points around the netted end were the men waiting with *Gamai* (hunting spear) and *Waddy* (club). The success of the hunt was executed with the knowledge that was passed down through generations of practice.

One of the only reasons a break in these seasonal customs was enacted was the unexpected beaching of a whale. The migratory patterns of all animals were known, with our cooler seasons being the indicator that the whales were fulfilling their cycle. An eye was always kept on the coast in case a beaching had taken place.

*'At night Jack, Burigon King of the Newcastle Tribe, with about 40 men women and children of his Tribe came by Capt. Wallis's desire to the Govt. House between 7 and 8 o'clock at night, and entertained with a carrauberie [sic] in high stile of Half an Hour in the grounds in the rear of Govt. House...'*

**Lachlan Macquarie (1818)**

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When this did occur, messengers were sent to all the clans from the language group. Making sure that the whale was not wasted, a corroboree and feast was organised to pay respect and celebrate the life of that whale and then make sure that everything that could be utilised was done so. Distributing the edible, the tool making and ceremonial aspects of the whale equally among those who attended.

Equally the Lore dictated that the trees, shrub and grassland was treated with the same respect. The Burrai was cultivated and managed to a degree that is not commonly known today. Every part of each Nurra was deliberately set up to ensure the continuation of all life. The balance of old growth canopy forests, rolling grasslands, sub-tropical rainforests, wild bushland, swamp marsh and rolling dunes was key in maximising the sustainability of all the people. For without the numerous environments to provide life for all flora and fauna, the people could not and would not survive.

It is this relationship, and more importantly the connection to the land that was one of the most fundamental aspects of traditional life. It is the reason why Burrai is looked upon as the Mother. Nurturing and providing the essential necessities for all to survive. It is why the people considered themselves children of the land, bound to it eternally in gratitude and thanks for it is the lifeblood of existence.

Fire was another essential element of traditional life. Its day to day use played an important role for the sustainability of life. As a heat and light source in the camps of a night, a cooking source for the various water game, land game and vegetables that was obtained throughout the day. It had a role in the numerous celebratory corroborees, not only as a light source but also its use to add to the visual effects of those dances, of the stories in particular, and to bring a dramatic and emphatic point to them. The importance and respect given to fire cannot be understated as it played an extremely significant role in the Women's and Men's Lore ceremonies.

Fire not only sustained life but was also a giver of life. Utilised seasonally to burn the Burrai specifically for the promotion of life. There are many indigenous plant species that require fire to germinate, when those plants were at that stage in their cycle, it was an indicator for the people that it was time to burn the land. The burning was done at different times of the year depending on when those specific sections required it. As well as clearing the excess fuel loads to minimise the effects of bush fires, it promoted regrowth that was vital in sustaining the animal occupants of the Burrai.

A story has been passed down regarding the first-time fire was utilised and equally then recognised for its life-giving properties.

*'The spot where these coals are found is clear of tree or bush for the space of many acres, which are covered with a short tender grass, very proper for grazing sheep, the ground rising with a gradual ascent, intersected with vallies, on which wood grows in plenty, sheltered from the winds, forming the most delightful prospects.'*

**Grant (1803)**

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'... we found trees incrustated (sic) with oysters, and the shore covered to a great depth with oyster-shells, from which lime might be made on the spot, should it at any time be required for the purposes of building'.

Grant (1803)

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It was a time when Gu-in, the male lore giver, was uniting the clans. Giving the kinship and obligation Lore to the people. Before this time the clans kept to themselves, moving about the land in a nomadic way. Gu-in had noticed a beautiful woman in a neighbouring clan, wanting to speak to her he attempted to engage with this particular clan only to have them scatter on his approach. After numerous failed attempts at contact, the last involving a failed chase through the thick scrub, Gu-in decided to burn the bush in order to make his chase easier in the future. The people fled the fire and kept away from that burnt area for a period of time, when they returned they had noticed the abundance of regrowth that had occurred. The following year they waited for the regrowth to occur again, it didn't. The people then thought back and realised that it was the fire that caused the regrowth. The land was burnt again and has been done since that time to ensure life is sustained.

Fire was used in the manufacturing of the tools. Whether it was to harden the *Gunnai* (yamstick), *Tarama* (hunting boomerang) or *Kotara* (club) or used to soften the grasstree gum when binding the *Muuting* (fishing spear) or *Bako* (stone axe).

The simple yet effective construction methods of the numerous tools used for everyday life was quite ingenious. Utilising the natural environment to the best of their knowledge to achieve the most productive tool for whatever the task may have been.

One of the best examples was the construction of the *Kattal*, *Kuueeyung* (traditional bark canoe).

A tree was selected, with attention paid to the uniformity of the bark, bore holes and knots were not wanted. A section of 15-20 feet by 3-4 feet was then carefully cut, done at the right time of year to maximise the survivability of the tree and to make the bark removal as easy as possible. Once the bark has been secured, the ends are then continually run back and forth across the fire. This was done to heat the water and sap contained in the bark to a point where the bark then becomes malleable. The ends are then folded to create a concertina type shape, once the right shape is formed the ends are secured with a vine and traditional bark rope. To complete the construction *Pitu* (pipe clay) was then used to seal the gaps in the ends to make the vessel watertight.

Not only were they used as a means of transportation in the harbour, lake and rivers but also as a way of securing fish to feed the people.

Women used *Yirawaan* (fishing line) and *Birriwuy* (fishing hook). The line was made from the treated bark of the kurrajong tree, the hook made from various sea and oyster shells.

Men used the *Muuting* (fishing spear). A four-pronged spear made from the stems of the *Minmai* (gymea lily), *Pumirri* (grass tree) and *Teekura* (iron bark tree).

'...the quantity of oyster shells on the beaches inland is beyond conception: they are in some places for miles...These are four feet deep...'

Paterson (1801)

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*'At the entrance of Newcastle there is a small high island, called by the English Nobby's Island... a tradition that it is the abode of an immensely large Kangaroo which resides within the centre of the high rock, that occasionally he shakes himself which causes the Island to tremble and large pieces to fall down...'*

**Threlkeld (1855)**

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Roles were designated equally among the men and women. With each sex, and then person given a specific role within the community upon their transition to adult life. Each role was given equal status, no special position was attributed to any of the given roles as everyone's particular skill was recognised as essential in maintaining harmony and balance within the clans. By maintaining and enforcing the equality of each role, traditional life was able to continue for hundreds of thousands of years.

These roles were specified to ensure that the balance of the community was, first and foremost, the fundamental core of community life. An ideology that was given to ensure the success and continuation of a successful surviving community.

The dreaming stories were then used to emphasise and maintain this balance. From childhood to elder the continued revising of the Lore stories throughout life were used to reinforce the Lore and importance of family and community.

A group of elderly knowledge holders were the upholders of the Lore, as well as the deliverers of punishment for breaking the Lore. Punishments were dealt out in front of the whole clan, number of clans and also in front of the two larger groups depending on the severity and example that had to be set.

The care and attention that was given the elderly and the youth was of great importance. The elders were the holders of the knowledge, the children were the future and as such significant importance was given to these two groups for the sustainability of the Lore.

Knowing when, how, what time and the correct way to live sustainably was all governed by Lore. The intimate knowledge of all the environment was passed on through dance, song, story and ceremony.

The Awabakal people were the first peoples in the world to recognise the use of *Nikkin* (coal) as a fuel source. Knowledge that was handed down in the form of story.

A volcanic eruption had taken place, creating a very large hole in the earth. From this hole, a darkness emitted, covering the land and blocking out the sun. The old people sent word out to all the neighbouring clans, asking them to gather so they could figure out how to bring the sun back, because they knew the sun was important for the life cycle of all living things. It was decided that the darkness had to be stopped and the hole had to be plugged. The women, men and children then set out to collect branches, leaves, bark, rock and sand to fill the hole and stop the darkness. Continually walking over the fill, they had gathered. This was done for a number of years, compressing the flames and the darkness together. This is how coal was formed. The name of this place is *Kintirrabin* and located at modern day Redhead.

*'Between 60 and 70 natives (men, women, and children) came in here without spears, and manifested the most friendly dispositions. I fell (sic) in with a party some distance up the river who seemed to oppose our landing. I ordered the boat to pull from them and called to some in their knoes (canoes), one of which had paid us a visit. We landed with him, and soon had an interview with his friends, about 30 men, women, and children, but many of them trembled when they shook hands with me. They saw we would ground the boat, and two of them came after us and paddled before us in their knoes (canoes) to show us the deep water, then push the boat over a small bank of mud.'*

**Dr Mason (1801)**

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Language was specific to the country it came from, identifying not only your geographical location but also your relationship and connection to that country.

Key to both the Awabakal and Worimi peoples is the language. Both are distinct to the identity of the peoples and the land they were custodians to.

The relationship between the two is evident for all to see, indicating and reinforcing the kinship and ceremonial ties that the two peoples maintained. This kinship is binding in the fact that both languages are saltwater languages. The extent of their use is maintained through all lands of the saltwater people. Dialect differences were evident in the further reaches of the tidal flow, but they still belonged to the saltwater. Making up the traditional balance of the language group with the two freshwater languages.

Thanks to the efforts of a growing number of dedicated people the two languages are spoken again. Thought at one stage to be gone forever, the reawakening of the traditional tongue is taking place as it is now once again being used and taught.

Being utilised not only for revitalisation but to uncover long unanswered questions about the Lore, stories and ceremony that been thought long forgotten.

The use of language again has had a positive effect on modern Awabakal and Worimi peoples with significant place names being revisited and recently dual names being officially implemented throughout the city.

**Whibayganba – Nobbys Headland**

**Tahlbihn – Flagstaff Hill (Fort Scratchley)**

**Burrabihngarn – Pirate Point (Stockton)**

**Yohaaba – Port Hunter**

**Coquun – Hunter River**

**Khanterin – Shepherds Hill (The Hill)**

**Toohrnbing – Ironbark Creek**

**Burragihnbihng – Hexham Swamp**

Work is now in progress to educate the whole community about the dual named sites and the traditional language history of Muluubinba – Newcastle.



Yolngu musician GAMBIRRA (performance) celebrating NAIDOC week at Newcastle Art Gallery, 2014.

The survival and growth of Muluubinba and then what became Newcastle can be attributed to Awabakal and Worimi peoples. Their intricate knowledge of the flora and fauna of this country was fundamental in the survival of those early settlers. The securing of food, water, bush medicines and building materials were vital in the establishment of the colony in those early years.

This process was then repeated as settlement spread to places like Wallsend, Raymond Terrace, Belmont, Maitland, Dungog, Cessnock and beyond.

Surviving what was the complete upheaval of traditional life with the onset of settlement, the forced assimilation of the following years through to the modern day is testament to the resilience and strength of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

The descendants of those people proudly and actively identify with, promote and protect their Lore, beliefs and languages through connection to country and each other and are now filling important cultural and modern-day roles across the Newcastle local government area.

The tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples continues to enrich and inform contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities of Newcastle and the Hunter region.

*“if we are to survive, let alone feel at home, we must begin to understand our country. If we succeed, one day we might become Australian”.*

**Bill Gamage -  
The Biggest Estate on Earth**

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## 3.2 The story of modern Newcastle

Following in the footsteps of the explorer Captain James Cook and his first voyage of 1768 to 1771, the First Fleet under Captain Arthur Phillip arrived in Botany Bay in January 1788 to establish a penal colony and the first European settlement in Australia.

For the next thirteen years, approximately 120km to the north of Sydney Harbour's penal colony, the coastline and harbour of what is now called Newcastle was the scene of escaping convicts, pursuing naval officers, off-course fisherman and official explorers. Such activity helped to publicise the deep-water port and rich coal seams on display in the surrounding cliffs. This included Lieutenant John Shortland who, in 1797, while pursuing a group of escaped convicts, landed and camped at the foot of what is now Market Street in Newcastle, was the first European to officially 'discover' the Coquun – a river which he named after Governor Hunter, and reported coal deposits. The following year enterprising traders began gouging small amounts of coal from the cliffs and exposed reefs by the seashore and selling it to Sydney. In 1801 a shipment of local coal, which was sent to Bengal, was Australia's first commercial export.

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The first recordings of contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans at Newcastle were notably hospitable. In November 1800, a gang of 15 convicts seized a sloop in Broken Bay and sailed north finding themselves at the Hunter River where their boat ran aground in bad weather at *Burrabihngarn* (Pirate Point, Stockton). Nine of the convicts were eventually captured and punished by Governor King's men. As for the other six – they were accepted and lived out the rest of their lives with a local Worimi clan group.

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Prior to and during the settlement of Newcastle, many colonial records documented the Awabakal and Worimi peoples, their association with the surrounding landscapes, and place names.

The missionary and scholar Rev. Lancelot Threlkeld documented a substantial sum of a local language (which was coined the name '*Awabakal*' by Rev. Dr. John Frazer in 1892) and different aspects of traditional culture of the Awabakal people from

1825 to 1859. Threlkeld referenced a link between the Aboriginal name '*Mulubinba*' (sic) and the name of the settlement called Newcastle.

Threlkeld obtained this information mostly through an interpreter he befriended, an Aboriginal man from Broken Bay named John Mander Gill (John M'Gill or Biraban). As a boy M'Gill was raised in the military barracks of Sydney working as an officer's houseboy. He arrived in Newcastle aged almost twenty with Captain Francis Allman who became the Commandant at Newcastle in 1824. The '*Muluubinba*' place name has become synonymous with the name for the current City of Newcastle.

Lieutenant John Shortland in 1797, was the first European to officially record the sites of Aboriginal camps at Newcastle and Stockton when mapping the Hunter River and noting those locations on his drawing of '*An Eye Sketch of the Hunter River*'. Captain Matthew Flinders when circumnavigating Australia in 1803, in some respect, provided the first dual name of an Aboriginal significant place at Newcastle by including on his map '*Chart of Terra Australia*' the word *Yohaaba*, the Aboriginal name for Port Hunter. This significant place name was given by Bungaree, an Aboriginal man from Broken Bay who assisted and advised Flinders during his epic voyage. Surveyor Sir Thomas Mitchell wrote *Whibayganba* above a sketch of Nobbys Island in his 1828 logbook. Another contemporary of Mitchell was surveyor Henry Dangar who captured many Aboriginal place names and prominently reproduced them on his survey maps of the Hunter region. Those names included *Tahlbihn* (Flagstaff Hill), *Burrabihngarn* (Pirate Point), *Toohrnbing* (Ironbark Creek), and *Burraghinhbihng* (Hexham Swamp). In 1834 J. D. Lang recorded the name of the Hunter River as '*Coquun*', the name conveyed to him by an Aboriginal man named Wallaby Joe whilst traversing the river. In 1858 Henry Taylor Plews recorded in a geology and mining report to London the word *Khanterin* above a diagram of the geology of Shepherds Hill. In 2016, supported by such information and following an application by the Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee to the NSW Geographical Names Board, the above eight significant geographical features within the Newcastle local government area had their Aboriginal name officially recognised and gazetted.



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In June 1801, in the first official exploring expedition, Colonel William Paterson reported to Governor King that a small settlement should be established for coal, boiling salt and burning shells for lime. He also noted that fish was in plentiful supply and further inland excellent pasture for cattle. In 1801, a convict camp called Kings Town (named after Governor King) was established at the mouth of the Hunter River (then also known as *Muluubinba* or Coal River) to mine coal and cut cedar. In the same year, what is thought to be the first coal mine in the Southern Hemisphere was established at Colliers Point, below *Tahlbihn* (Flagstaff Hill), and the first shipment of coal was dispatched to Sydney. However, this settlement closed less than a year later.

A permanent settlement at the mouth of the Hunter River began in March 1804, as a secondary place of punishment for recalcitrant convicts. The administration in Sydney, under Governor King, decided the site's isolation, combined with the hard manual labour of coal mining, lime-burning, salt-making, timber cutting, and construction work would make an ideal secondary penal colony for recidivists. The settlement was initially named Coal River, also Kingstown, and finally Newcastle, after England's famous coal port. The convicts were mostly Irish rebels from the Castle Hill convict uprising. Initially placed under the direction of Lieutenant Menzies and then from 1805 to 1808 Charles Throsby. The convict settlement rapidly gained a notorious reputation in the Colony as 'Sydney's Siberia' due to its striking similarities of extreme isolation and enforced manual labour also experienced in the Siberia of Imperial Russia. The regime was severe and the work arduous. By 1821 it became the major prison in NSW with over one thousand convicts.

Under Captain James Wallis, commandant from 1816 to 1818, a building boom began. Captain Wallis laid out streets, built the first church on the site of Christ Church Cathedral near an established Aboriginal camp, erected a gaol, and began work on the breakwater. In 1816, the oldest school still operating in Australia, Newcastle East Public School, was established at a site near to Christ Church Cathedral.

Newcastle's appearance and layout as a penal colony is well documented in paintings by convict artists such as Joseph Lycett and Richard Browne. Lycett proved to be an excellent chronicler of penal Newcastle, successfully capturing the shape, colour and development of the town in his paintings. His paintings, without romanticism or denigration recorded Aboriginal people living near Newcastle and their cultural practices such as hunting kangaroo and taking part in a corroboree. His work provides an important snapshot in time just before their way of life was profoundly altered by the growing European population.

During the time of the penal colony there were also many records of hostile encounters with local Aboriginal people. An altercation that attracted much attention was the killing of Burigon (alias King Jack), also known as the 'Chief of Newcastle'. Burigon was held in high esteem by colonial officials, including Newcastle's commandant Captain James Wallis who once described him as '*a brave expert fellow*'. Burigon was fatally injured on 27 October 1820 by a convict John Kirby and later died on 7 November. A Newcastle JP took accounts of the attack in which John M'Gill (Biraban) gave a deposition that he was with the party along with Burigon who took the escapees John Kirby and John Thompson prisoner, holding them overnight until the soldiers arrived. Biraban witnessed Kirby call Burigon over and immediately lashed out at him with a knife causing the fatal cut. Wallis, one of the constables who attended the party, corroborated Biraban's evidence. Consequently, convict John Kirby became the first European in Australia's history to be tried, convicted and executed for the murder of an Aboriginal person.



Joseph LYCETT *Inner view of Newcastle* c1818 oil on canvas 59.8 x 90.0cm Purchased with assistance from the National Art Collections Fund, London UK 1961 Newcastle Art Gallery collection

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With permanent and increasingly intensive European occupation of Newcastle in the early nineteenth century, Aboriginal people became dispossessed and displaced from their lands. Coupled with the introduction of alcohol and diseases, such as smallpox, the local population was significantly reduced, and their way of life profoundly altered.

From that time a series of measures applied across Australia to oppress and assimilate Aboriginal people. This included the 'Australian Frontier Wars' of 1788 to 1934 (for example the killing of 12 Wonnarua people at the Paterson River, Hunter Valley in February 1827). There was also the removal of people onto missions and reserves such as Threlkeld's mission at Ebenezer (Toronto) during the 1830s, which continued into the twentieth century with families relocated to the Platt's Estate at Waratah (recorded as being settled from 1937 until the last families were evicted and building structures demolished at the end of 1960).

In addition, the 'Stolen Generations' which, through various government policies between 1910 and 1970, forcibly removed Aboriginal children from their families. This has left a legacy of intergenerational trauma and loss that continues to affect the Aboriginal communities, families and individuals of Newcastle.

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Military rule ended in 1823 following the recall of Governor Macquarie to England and the release of the Bigge Report on the state of the colony. Prisoner numbers were reduced to 100 (most of these were employed on the building of the breakwater) and the remaining 900 were sent to Port Macquarie. Work on the Breakwater slowed, gradually ceasing, delaying its completion until 1846.

The great legacy of this period is the foundation of the modern city of Newcastle, which has continued to grow since 1804. Significant heritage sites associated with the convict period survive in the form of Macquarie pier and breakwater, the Convict Lumber Yard, Christ Church Cathedral and burial ground (Cathedral Park), Nobbys, King Edward Park, Bogey Hole, and Signal Hill within the Fort Scratchley Historic Site.

With the decision to declare Newcastle a free town, surveyor Henry Dangar was sent to Newcastle to re-design the street layout for public sale. In 1828 he laid out the town as a grid of three east-west and seven north-south streets, with a central axis at Christ Church, descending to a broad market at Hunter Street (now Market Square).

The width of Dangar's city blocks was 90 metres, compared to 200 metres in Melbourne and 500 metres in Adelaide. Dangar's streets were 20 metres wide, creating an enduring intimacy and human scale still evident in the layout of Newcastle. Even today, it is Dangar's town plan that gives Newcastle a human scale unseen in any other Australian city.

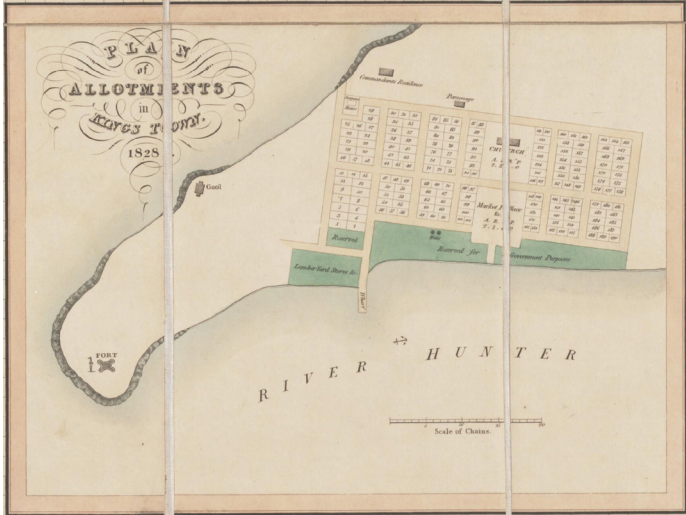
In 1828 the Australian Agricultural Company (AA Company) was given a 2000 acre parcel of coal bearing land in the inner section of Newcastle, and with it, a monopoly on the mining and export of coal. The land extended west from Brown Street to Hamilton and was to constrain residential development west of the city for years to come.

Several coal pits were sunk, commencing with the first private coal mine in Australia, the A Pit, just off Church Street, in 1828, followed by the B, C, D, E, F, and Sea pits. On 10 December 1831 the AA Company opened Australia's first railway in Brown Street to service the A Pit. Remains of the railway are kept in the collection of Newcastle Museum.

Between 1835 and 1850, the Australian Agricultural Company was involved in significant Australian historical law events relating to its monopoly and private railway access, instigated by Dr James Mitchell. Mitchell had purchased 900 acres of coastal land extending from the far side of Merewether ridge to Glenrock Lagoon – the Burwood Estate. In 1842, Mitchell announced he would build two railway tunnels, an Australian first, through Burwood Ridge (now Merewether Heights) and Merewether Beach. Remains of both of these tunnels and the railway can still be seen today.



Joseph CROSS Map of the Hunter River, and its branches, 1828. Newcastle Regional Library: Map also includes Henry Dangar's town plan of 1828





Group of men at Brown's Colliery, Minmi Ralph Snowball (no date). Newcastle Regional Library

Because the AA Company owned the land between the Burwood estate and the port, the company refused to allow Mitchell to transport coal by rail across its land. Mitchell successfully lobbied the Government which enacted the state's first private Act of Parliament, *Burwood and Newcastle Tramroad Act 1850*. This specifically allowed Mitchell to carry coal through Australian Agricultural Company land.

The breaking of the AA Company's monopoly led to the gradual subdivision of their land for residential development. Cooks Hill was subdivided from the 1860s, followed by Hamilton and Newcastle West. Hamilton South and residual swamp land, including National Park, were sold off in parcels from 1914.

A plethora of new coal mines opened from the 1850s on, becoming the basis for new townships – Merewether, Waratah, Minmi, Wallsend/Plattsburg, Lambton and New Lambton. Townships at Cooks Hill, Hamilton, Stockton, Carrington and Wickham were also establishing. In this manner, the urban development of Newcastle was unique, as it began as a series of independent coal mining villages, all feeding from the famous Borehole Seam, unlike Sydney which expanded outwards following the railways.

The period 1850–1860 saw unprecedented growth in Newcastle and the establishment of civic institutions. The first bank was opened in 1853, the Newcastle Borough Council in 1859, the first fire brigade in 1855 and a chamber of

commerce in 1856. Most significantly, the Great Northern Railway was opened between Maitland and Honeysuckle Point in 1857, making possible Newcastle's domination of the Hunter region.

Important civic buildings were built in the 1860s and an office of the Department of Public Works opened, symbolising the importance of the region to the economic conditions of New South Wales. On Hunter Street a court house, lock-up and post office were built, and the first part of Newcastle Railway station begun. Customs House was built, along with the Carrington Hydraulic power house and the modernisation of the port's coal loading facilities, facilitated by significant land reclamation of the harbour and links to the Great Northern Railway.

Australia experienced an economic boom in the 1880s. The city of Newcastle was growing and experiencing significant building activity and waves of immigration. The architecture matched the optimism of the time and throughout the city there was a flurry of construction. Architects who emerged at this time include Frederick Menkens, James Barnet (NSW government architect), James Henderson, Peter Bennet and Ernest Yeomans. These architects were responsible for the design of some of the city's finest buildings, such as the Centennial Hotel, the Frederick Ash building, St Andrews Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Tabernacle, Cohen Bond Store, Customs House, Earp Gillam Bond Store, Lance Villa, The Boltons and Jesmond House.

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Subdivision plan of Bar Beach, 1924. Newcastle Regional Library

Formalisation of coal villages as independent municipalities also occurred during this period. Wickham, Waratah, Lambton and Hamilton were incorporated in 1871, Wallsend and Plattsburg in 1874, Adamstown and Merewether in 1875, Carrington 1887, New Lambton 1888, and Stockton in 1889. Most built their own council chambers, a few of which survive including Wickham, Carrington and Lambton. A steam tram service was developed linking the inner city of Newcastle to Wallsend in 1887.

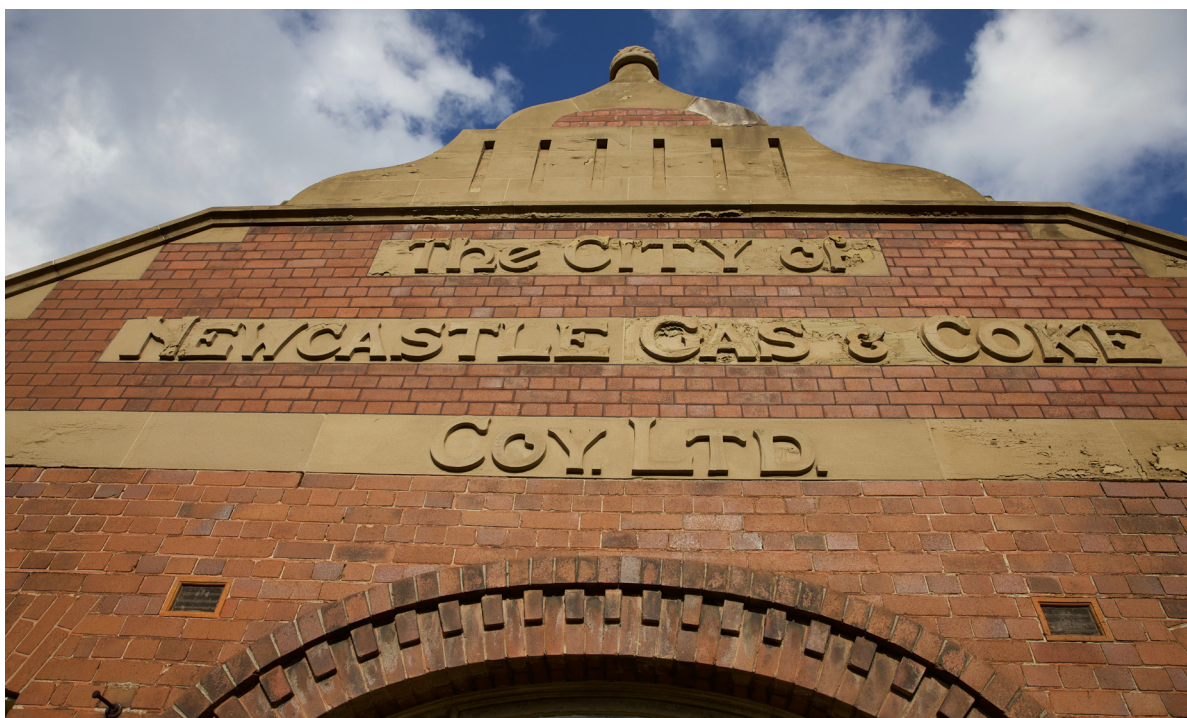
By 1901 the Borehole Seam was mostly worked out, leading to the closure of pits at Hamilton (1901), and Stockton (1907). Many of the villages became ghost towns. Subsequently, the Newcastle chamber of commerce lobbied government to diversify Newcastle's economy, by attracting new industries to the city. The situation improved when the state government announced the development of the state dockyard at Carrington and permitted BHP to build a steelworks on land at Port Waratah. Both of these initiatives began in 1913 and were soon expanding in readiness for the coming war.

By 1919, other heavy industries had established locally, including Commonwealth Steel, Rylands and Lysaghts. The outcome was a complete reconstruction of the local economy from a declining coal town, to manufacturing and heavy industry. Business in the city centre boomed and Newcastle was cemented as a major centre of retail, commerce and industry.

The modern city landscape took shape in the first three decades of the 20th century. Many architectural and cultural treasures were built such as the final stages of the Christ Church Cathedral, NESCA House, City Hall and Civic Theatre, the CML building, T&G, Newcastle Ocean Baths, Merewether Baths, BHP Administration building, and the sandstone banks in Hunter Street.

The general optimism through most of this period was briefly interrupted by World War I. However, a decade later it was more severely curtailed by the 1929 Great Depression, leading to unemployment estimated at 30% of the workforce and the establishment of shanty towns at Nobbys Beach, Stockton, Carrington, Adamstown, Lambton, Waratah and Hexham. The State Dockyard closed in 1933 but the steelworks gradually increased its production, leading the city out of the slump as the decade progressed.

By the start of World War II, Newcastle was the location of Australia's largest integrated steel making facility, surrounded by heavy industry, coal mines, a busy deep harbour for merchant ships plus shipyards and a floating dock. The task to defend these assets became known as Fortress Newcastle. This included RAAF radar stations at King Edward Park and Ash Island, a minefield across Newcastle's port entrance, tank traps along Stockton Beach, and heavy calibre guns at Shepherd's Hill, Fort Scratchley and Fort Wallace.



Newcastle Gasworks, 1 Chatham Road, Hamilton North

On the night of 7–8 June 1942 Japanese submarine I-21 bombarded Newcastle with about two dozen shells (one of the few shells that actually exploded damaged the houses in Parnell Place, with residents escaping uninjured). Fort Scratchley's 6-in guns returned fire, becoming the only coastal fortification in Australia to fire on an enemy vessel during the war.

The story of post-war Newcastle relates to urban infill that occurred on undeveloped land between the coal villages. Kotara, Adamstown Heights, Merewether Heights, Rankin Park and New Lambton Heights were subdivided and developed following 1945. This additional housing assisted with accommodating the wave of post-war immigration to Newcastle in the decades immediately following 1945. Providing homes and employment to people predominantly from the war-ravaged countries of Western Europe, notably the United Kingdom, Italy and Greece and refugees from Central and Eastern Europe escaping the expanded Soviet regime. In 1973 the Whitlam Government adopted a completely non-discriminatory immigration policy, effectively putting an end to the White Australia policy. This began the contemporary and more limited wave of predominantly Asian immigration to Newcastle and throughout Australia which continues to the present day.

The educational and health sector developed substantial regional facilities in Newcastle during the period, including the Rankin Park campus of the Royal Newcastle Hospital, expansion of the old Royal Hospital, and the establishment of the Newcastle Teachers' College, the Hunter Institute of

Higher Education (which later amalgamated with the University of Newcastle) and Tighes Hill TAFE.

The Newcastle earthquake of 28 December 1989 caused the loss of 13 lives and severely injured hundreds of people, particularly at the Newcastle Workers Club and Beaumont Street, Hamilton. There was also significant damage to buildings across Newcastle, with Hamilton and the CBD experiencing the worst destruction. This resulted in the demolition of many landmark heritage buildings including the Century Theatre, Broadmeadow and the George Hotel, Newcastle.

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In more recent times across Australia there has been an improvement to the rights and protection of Aboriginal people and their cultural assets. Key turning points included the 1967 referendum which modified the Australian constitution allowing Aboriginal people the right to vote in Commonwealth elections; the 1992 High Court of Australia decision on the Mabo Case, which declared the previous legal concept of '*terra nullius*' to be invalid and confirming the existence of native title in Australia; in February 2008 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd issued a public apology to members of the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian Government; and the recommendations of the 2017 '*Uluru Statement of the Heart*', if enacted and enshrined in the Australian Constitution, suggests a future where all contributions of Aboriginal culture and heritage is better recognised, respected, supported and protected by all of its citizens.

At the local level, in 1977 the City of Newcastle was the first city council in Australia to fly the Aboriginal flag, and in 2003 Newcastle commenced flying the Aboriginal flag permanently beside the Australian flag on City Hall and on display in Council Chambers. Shortly after the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1983, Local Aboriginal Land Councils held their first meetings, and in 1999 CN's Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee was established in response to Council's 1998 Commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of the City of Newcastle.

A major turning point for the City occurred in 1999, when BHP Steelworks Port Waratah closed. This closure heralded a decade of economic and social change from a heavily industrial base to a more diversified economy dominated by the healthcare, services and education sectors. At the same time, significant revitalisation of the harbour waterfront transformed the face of Newcastle with emerging residential development at Wickham and Honeysuckle. The CBD, which had been in decline since the 1970s, also continued its transition from a purely commercial hub to a residential, educational, tourist and recreational precinct.

Over the last decade this transition and CBD revitalisation process has accelerated with the truncation of the Great Northern Railway at Wickham and the construction of the Newcastle Interchange and light rail service to Newcastle Beach. This has facilitated a shift of the

commercial core from Hunter Street Mall and Civic precinct in the east to more intensively developed sites clustered around the new public transport interchange in the west. Notable recent changes to the former commercial core of the CBD in the east have included a new Court House, the establishment of a city campus for the University of Newcastle and an international campus for the Tokyo-based Nihon University, and the redevelopment of the Hunter Street Mall precinct into a luxury hotel, residential apartments and boutique retail. As the City grows, more intensive development has also rippled into the suburbs surrounding the CBD and beyond, increasing the population and incrementally changing the built character of suburban Newcastle. The suburbs of Minmi, Maryland and Fletcher are becoming more established in the outer west. This recent development activity has often involved the adaptive re-use of heritage items and led to the discovery of many European and Aboriginal archaeological objects, artefacts and relics; some of which are now on public display at Newcastle Museum.

*BHP Exhibit. Newcastle Museum*





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OF LOVE



# 4.0 Legislative context

## 4.1 State

In New South Wales, the responsibility for managing and regulating cultural heritage is split between the state and local governments. The NSW Heritage Council, assisted by Heritage NSW, has responsibility for items of state heritage significance listed on the State Heritage Register and for relics of state and local significance. Local government has responsibility for local heritage, through environmental planning instruments including Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans.

The State Heritage Inventory contains the State Heritage Register which lists items and areas that have significance to the people of New South Wales, while nationally significant places are listed on the National Heritage List administered by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy.

There are three legislative instruments that regulate cultural heritage in New South Wales:

1. NSW Heritage Act 1977
2. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979
3. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.

## New South Wales State Heritage Criteria

The NSW heritage assessment criteria encompass the four values of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013, which are commonly accepted as generic values by Australian heritage agencies and the heritage conservation sector:

Historical significance

Aesthetic significance

Scientific significance

Social significance.

The NSW state heritage criteria provide detailed performance measures to ensure there is a rigorous and unambiguous process for assessing heritage significance. These criteria were gazetted following amendments to the Heritage Act in April 1999.

## 4.2 Local

### Local Government Act 1993

The advent of the Local Government (LG) Act in 1993 established the legal framework in which local councils operate. Clause 8 of the LG Act specifically notes several elements of a Council's charter, including that it exercise community leadership and properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

These requirements guide the approach City of Newcastle takes in regard to cultural heritage. Clause 89 of the LG Act requires councils to take heritage matters into consideration when assessing a proposed activity:

### 89 Matters for consideration

- (3) ...in considering the public interest the matters the council is to consider include:
- (c) any items of cultural and heritage significance which might be affected.

### Environmental planning instruments

The principal tool guiding local government heritage management decisions are the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) provisions for heritage. These provisions are compulsory clauses which must be included in City of Newcastle's LEP.

Heritage items, heritage conservation areas and archaeological sites are listed in Schedule 5 of the Newcastle LEP (NLEP) and regulated through the provisions at Part 5 of the LEP.

As well as the LEP, there is an adopted development control plan, pursuant to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*. The Newcastle Development Control Plan (NDCP) provides detailed guidance for development in specific localities, such as heritage conservation areas. These deal with the treatment of fences, colour schemes, replacement of vegetation, setbacks and other factors that contribute to the heritage significance of an area. This guidance is also supplemented by the Heritage Technical Manual.

City of Newcastle prepared and adopted a City-Wide Heritage Study and an Archaeological Management Plan in 1997 (the Archaeological Management Plan was reviewed and updated in 2013) to identify the city's heritage items and areas of archaeological potential. The studies led to the inclusion of additional heritage items in the NLEP and the inclusion of guidelines in the NDCP. As of May 2020, there are around 700 individually listed items in the NLEP, including eight heritage conservation areas and twenty-three archaeological sites. The Heritage Study led to the adoption of a Heritage Policy in 1998 and its revision in 2013.

The statutory framework, standards and best practice principles, key documents, and influences on City of Newcastle's heritage services are presented graphically on the right.



## Heritage Strategy 2020-2030

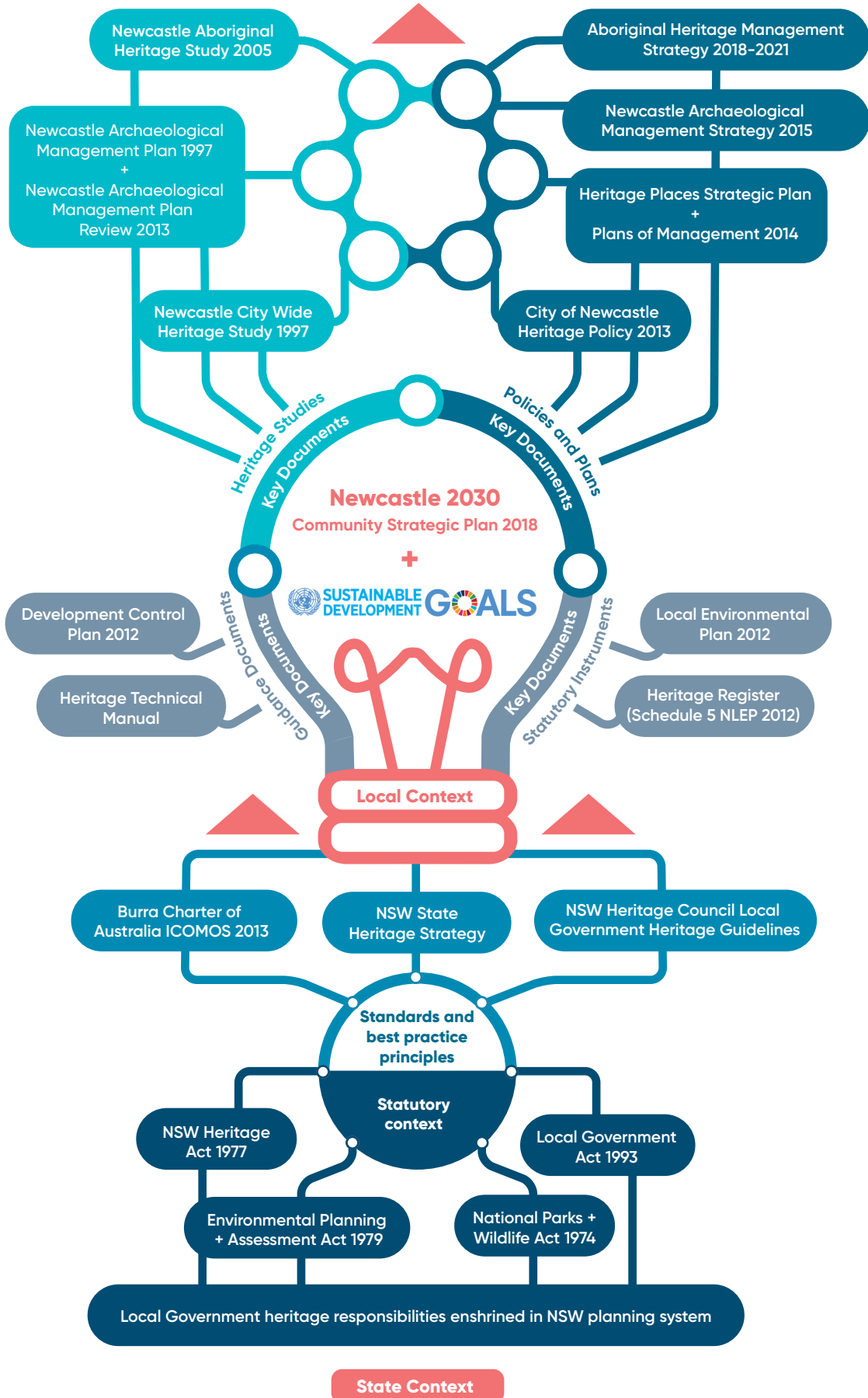


Figure 1 – Heritage Context/Key Influences

# 5.0 Key directions

## 5.1 Strategic directions for Aboriginal cultural heritage

Council adopted the Aboriginal Heritage Management Strategy in June 2018. The Strategy summarises previous work completed to understand Aboriginal peoples' association with the land around Newcastle; the current legislative framework around the management of Aboriginal sites; current initiatives across City of Newcastle to raise awareness and celebrate Aboriginal culture; as well as strategies and actions whereby City of Newcastle will meet community expectations and relevant legislative requirements, guidelines and codes. An important set of principles were articulated in the 2005 city-wide Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study carried through into the 2018 strategy which guides City of Newcastle's approach, as outlined on the right:



1. Aboriginal cultural heritage is to be recognised as a finite and valuable resource of the Newcastle Local Government Area.
2. Aboriginal community members are to be pivotal in the identification, assessment, and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, as it is primarily Aboriginal people who should determine the significance of their heritage.
3. Places of Aboriginal cultural value within the Newcastle Local Government Area are to be actively conserved and managed to retain those cultural values. Appropriate conservation action will vary according to the level of significance.
4. Aboriginal cultural heritage is to be actively managed during the development process, to ensure appropriate conservation and impact mitigation outcomes are achieved.
5. Compliance with relevant statutory controls, specifically the *National Parks and Wildlife Act (1974)* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)*, is to be required for all development and heritage programs.
6. Sustainable, ongoing management strategies for Aboriginal cultural heritage should be promoted within City of Newcastle and the broader community, through heritage training for City of Newcastle personnel and public interpretation programs.



Students at Lambton Public School  
Ralph Snowball, 1912.  
Newcastle Regional Library

## 5.2 Newcastle Heritage Policy

Council adopted an updated Heritage Policy on 25 June 2013. The policy is a statement of commitment to the principles of heritage conservation and contains strategies to achieve the vision of the 2030 CSP.

The Policy underpins the identification, preservation, conservation, celebration and promotion of the City's rich cultural heritage, based on the principles of the *Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS* (Australia ICOMOS, 2013) and best practice. The Policy recognises the importance and diversity of heritage, including: Aboriginal heritage; buildings; structures; precincts; streetscapes; monuments; memorials; moveable heritage; industrial and maritime relics; trees; archaeological sites and artefacts; items in institutional collections; and the cultural landscapes that comprise the environment of the Newcastle local government area.

### The four strategies contained in the Heritage Policy commit City of Newcastle to:

**Knowing our heritage** – enhancing our community's knowledge of and regard for local heritage items and places.

**Protecting our heritage** – Council will protect and conserve the City's heritage places for the benefit of everyone.

**Supporting our heritage** – Council will protect the integrity of heritage places by ensuring consistent and sympathetic uses, physical and aesthetic treatments and outstanding interpretations.

**Promoting our heritage** – Newcastle's significant heritage places are a unique historical resource and represent an asset for the continuing educational, cultural and economic enrichment of the region. Council will invest in the promotion and care of these assets as part of the City's economic and cultural development.

Each of these four commitments is to be implemented through actions over the ten years 2020–2030, along with the relevant CSP objective and SDG, are summarised in Section 7.0.

The Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2014, was adopted by Council in order to support the management of City of Newcastle's heritage listed parks and open spaces. Fourteen areas of community land with a heritage listing were included in the document, such as the Convict Lumber Yard,

Kauma Park, Fletcher to *Burragihnbihng* (Hexham Swamp)



Gregson Park, King Edward Park, Cathedral Park, Nobbys Headland and the Newcastle Ocean Baths. Although this document is in need of a strategic review, the adopted set of principles remain relevant and have been incorporated in the Action table (and summarised on the right).



**Continuity** - Newcastle's heritage places are integral to the City's identity and a rich resource with which to shape its future. City of Newcastle will protect and conserve the City's heritage for future generations.

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**Investment** - Newcastle's significant heritage places, and in particular the five convict sites (Nobbys Headland, Fort Scratchley, King Edward Park, Cathedral Park and the Convict Lumber Yard), are a unique historical resource in Australia and represent an asset for the continuing educational, cultural and economic development of the region. City of Newcastle will invest in this asset as part of the City's economic and cultural development.

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**Reconciliation** - City of Newcastle recognises that the City occupies an area inhabited for thousands of years by indigenous people of Australia. In fostering the common interests and shared futures of its residents, City of Newcastle will, in consultation with the Aboriginal community, acknowledge and present the indigenous heritage of the City along with the presentation and interpretation of its European heritage.

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**Integrity** - The integrity of heritage places can be undermined by inappropriate uses, unsympathetic structures, uncoordinated landscaping and visual presentation and inadequate interpretation. These can damage the fabric, aesthetics, ambience or meaning of heritage place. City of Newcastle will protect the integrity of heritage places by ensuring consistent and sympathetic uses, physical and aesthetic treatments and interpretation.

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**Urban open space as a public good** - Many of the City's heritage places are also urban open spaces. Urban open space is a valuable but finite and limited resource which is often under threat. City of Newcastle will protect its stock of urban open space as a public good for the use of future generations.

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**Public Access** - Heritage places in the care of City of Newcastle are community land or Crown land. These places and the facilities on them, should not be alienated from public access and use. City of Newcastle will ensure that heritage places on community and Crown land are not alienated from public use.

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**Equitable Access** - Heritage places in the care of City of Newcastle and facilities on them should be accessible to the public on an equitable basis. City of Newcastle will ensure equity of access through fair pricing policies (including where appropriate free entry), by providing physical access for people with a disability wherever this can reasonably be achieved and through the appropriate multi-use of facilities.

## 6.0 Emerging issues

The Australian Productivity Commission conducted an inquiry into the conservation of Australia's historic heritage in 2006. The Inquiry identified two emerging trends in heritage conservation - the greater shift to adaptive re-use over demolition; and the growth in heritage tourism. The Inquiry noted that rising levels of wealth, gentrification, advances in knowledge and education, and shifts in social attitudes could be expected to lead to changes in the way Australians view (and positively value) heritage buildings. It was concluded that into the future, this trend would lead to new positive approaches to heritage items and greater levels of private investment in heritage buildings.

Conserving heritage places has long been recognised for the economic and social benefits that are returned to the city, and recently, the environmental benefits in conserving buildings has been recognised outside the conservation sector. Conserving heritage buildings reduces energy usage associated with demolition, waste disposal and the manufacture of new materials and construction and promotes sustainable development by conserving embodied energy.

The Newcastle Heritage Policy 2013 (CN, 2013) has adopted a commitment to adaptive reuse and building renovation, in preference to demolition of heritage items and buildings in heritage conservation areas. Demolition of heritage buildings undermines the effort to create sympathetic and appropriately scaled infill development. Wherever possible, development controls should be designed to facilitate the retention, renovation and use of historic buildings to achieve a liveable and distinctive built environment.

It is worth noting that many older buildings constructed of timber, concrete or brick, have lower scale embodied energy than modern buildings of glass, steel and aluminium, and often lower operational costs owing to better thermal mass, verandahs, window and wall proportions, all of which support passive cooling and heating. Furthermore, one of the most important factors in reducing the impact of embodied energy is to design long life, durable and adaptable buildings, which are the characteristics of many heritage buildings.



Air Force Club (Wood Chambers), 129 Scott St, Newcastle





Kauma Park, Fletcher

The Productivity Commission Inquiry also noted that where historic heritage is conserved for tourism purposes, significant economic benefits will flow through the local economy. For example, hotels, shops, and restaurants may be established in historic precincts to cater for the tourism market. The development of tourism infrastructure can, in turn, bring benefits such as the income stream to fund repair and maintenance. This is relevant to Newcastle because there is both a viable tourism sector in the city, as well as a critical mass of heritage items that offer product to the tourism market. City of Newcastle's Destination Management Plan 2016-19 identifies heritage and history as one of the eight key tourism assets for Newcastle.

The Australian Heritage Commission investigated the economic value of tourism and heritage and found that heritage tourism is a significant contributor to the economic development of regional Australia (Australian Heritage Commission, 2001). In terms of Newcastle's role in the Hunter region, the City contains a critical mass of heritage items that offer tourism product, and many of these items are owned or managed by City of Newcastle.

Tourism and interpretative plans have been prepared to guide the development of such sites including the Convict Lumber Yard, City Hall, Bathers Way and Fort Scratchley Historic Site. Further investment in these sites will ensure Newcastle continues to grow its heritage tourism offering and maintains its reputation for unique and interesting heritage tourism experiences, which in turn delivers economic benefits to the region.

City of Newcastle has undertaken extensive research into the city's heritage, providing a robust and well-informed heritage management framework. Studies include: Newcastle City-wide Heritage Study; Aboriginal Heritage Study; Archaeological Management Plan; various urban design studies of the city centre; and several heritage studies of Cooks Hill, The Hill, Newcastle East and Hamilton South. These studies are the basis for best practice and sound governance, so the need to maintain the currency of these studies is important.

## 6.1 Implications for the Heritage Strategy

Newcastle has a rich cultural heritage that is being conserved and protected through City of Newcastle's Heritage Policy, the 2030 Community Strategic Plan, organisational governance, collecting institutions, external regulations and planning incentives. The community expects that City of Newcastle will continue to play a role in supporting a viable future for the city's heritage.

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In adopting the Heritage Policy 2013 and the actions in the 2030 Community Strategic Plan (2018), adaptive reuse and building renovation is substantially preferred to the significant demolition or façade retention of heritage items and conservation area buildings. Demolition of significant fabric of a place is generally not acceptable and removed significant fabric should be reinstated when circumstances permit. Development should retain, renovate, and re-use all the cultural significant interior and exterior of heritage buildings to conserve energy use and achieve a liveable and distinctive built environment. The Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy (2014 Update) also supports this principle.

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The way that our urban areas have historically developed means there will be a higher concentration of historic (and heritage) buildings close to the centre of suburbs and villages. At the same time, the planning framework and higher land values in the inner suburbs can place pressure on the heritage buildings within the inner city and village nodes. Paradoxically, there are latent opportunities to recycle, refurbish and upgrade heritage buildings while meeting density targets and revitalising the city at the same time.

Incentives for management of heritage places could be expanded beyond the existing zoning incentives in the local environmental plan to include floor space bonuses, additional height allowances or relaxation of car parking requirements where heritage items are kept. It would also be prudent to support more intensive development on such sites in exchange for positive heritage outcomes. The standard conservation incentives clause of the Newcastle LEP should be more readily used in development assessment by City of Newcastle to support such relaxation to planning controls where the outcome is in accordance with a heritage management document approved by the consent authority and clearly benefits heritage conservation.

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There is latent tourism potential in the city's major heritage items, City of Newcastle's moveable cultural heritage collections and the Aboriginal cultural heritage of Newcastle. These cultural and heritage assets can be further enriched as high quality tourism product, bringing economic benefits to the city.

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The environmental benefits in conserving buildings (regardless of heritage status) is another tool in managing the environment and new construction should be balanced with the environmental benefits of building conservation. Conversely, City of Newcastle development guidelines should offer innovative and high quality guidance on designing for long life, durable and adaptable buildings that offset the impacts of embodied energy and building waste that goes to landfill.

Technology is improving exponentially, providing increased opportunities for interpretation of heritage sites and places, using such techniques as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), often complementing rather than replacing more traditional forms of interpretation, to digitally interpret and reconstruct Newcastle's culture and history for visitors and the local community. There is also greater involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process, largely facilitated by the growth in electronic communications and social media. Heritage interpretation ideas should be explored during any community engagement process for CN assets projects and works and incorporated within the project at the concept design stage.

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Change is expected on the horizon at both the Federal and State levels of government with regards to improved recognition and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and increased involvement of Aboriginal people in decision-making. In May 2017 the 'Uluru Statement from the Heart' was released by delegates to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Referendum Convention. A potential turning point in the history of Australia, it called for and outlined a path for a 'First Nations Voice' in the Australian Constitution to allow Indigenous Australians a voice in the laws and policies that are made about them. It also recommended a 'Makaratta Commission' to supervise a process of agreement-making and truth-telling between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These recommendations for constitutional recognition are currently being worked through by the Commonwealth Government.

At the State level, Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation in NSW has been under review since 2010 to replace the relevant sections of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. During 2017 and 2018 the NSW government consulted with the public on the draft Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill (ACH Bill), with further targeted consultation carried out in early 2019 to refine the proposals in the draft Bill. If enacted, this new legislation is intended to provide a more respectful and contemporary understanding of ACH, create new governance structures that gives Aboriginal people legal responsibility for and authority over ACH, and improvements to the protection, management and conservation of ACH.



Newcastle Cathedral to Whibayganda (Nobbys Headland)

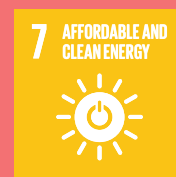


# 7.0 Strategic priorities and themes

## 7.1 Strategic priorities for heritage

### Four strategic priorities for heritage

**Knowing our heritage** Enhancing our community's knowledge of and regard for local heritage items and places



**Protecting our heritage** City of Newcastle will protect and conserve the City's heritage places for the benefit of everyone



**Supporting our heritage** City of Newcastle will protect the integrity of heritage places by ensuring consistent and sympathetic uses, physical and aesthetic treatments and outstanding interpretations



**Promoting our heritage** Newcastle's significant heritage places are a unique historical resource and represent an asset for the continuing educational, cultural and economic enrichment of the region. City of Newcastle will invest in the promotion and care of these assets as part of the City's economic and cultural development



# Knowing our heritage

<b>Priority/ Theme</b>	<b>Enhancing our community's knowledge of and regard for local heritage items and places</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>How do we get there?</b>	1.1 CN will review and update the city-wide heritage study, add new items and places to the heritage schedule of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan if warranted, and maintain the Newcastle heritage database of the State Heritage Inventory and the Collections Database to ensure that the diversity of the city's heritage is recognised and represented.
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>What does success look like?</b>	Newcastle's places and items of local heritage significance (CN's moveable cultural heritage collection, the City's heritage items, heritage conservation areas, archaeological relics and sites, and Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places) are comprehensively understood, identified and assessed against recognised thematic history.
<b>Links to the SDG</b>	<b>What Sustainable Development goals will be achieved with this strategy?</b>	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources</p> <p>15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species</p>
<b>Measures</b>	Heritage studies and investigations warrant an increased number of places and items of local heritage significance identified on the heritage schedule of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan.	
<b>Survey question</b>	Is the diversity of Newcastle's heritage buildings, places and objects sufficiently recognised and represented in the heritage schedule of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan and the heritage collections at CN's Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery and the Newcastle Region Library?	

# Protecting our heritage

<b>Priority/ Theme</b>	<b>City of Newcastle will protect and conserve the City's heritage places for the benefit of everyone</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>How do we get there?</b>	<p>2.1 CN develops and implements policy and guidance based on the principles of the Burra Charter and best practice to ensure there is a strong future for heritage items, heritage conservation areas, archaeological relics and sites, Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places.</p> <p>2.2 CN's cultural institutions to collect and conserve objects, artworks, papers, documents, photographs and oral histories which reflect Newcastle and the Hunter Region's unique heritage.</p>
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>What does success look like?</b>	Newcastle's heritage (CN's moveable cultural heritage collection, the City's heritage items, heritage conservation areas, archaeological relics and sites, Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places) is sufficiently protected and conserved with the development and implementation of CN's heritage conservation policy and guidance that is based on the principles of the Burra Charter and best practice.)
<b>Links to the SDG</b>	<b>What Sustainable Development goals will be achieved with this strategy?</b>	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.</p>
<b>Measures</b>	Decreased percentage of development approvals issued by CN related to contributory buildings in heritage conservation areas and heritage items proposing either comprehensive demolition or façade retention.	
<b>Survey question</b>	Is there an adequate balance between protecting and conserving Newcastle's heritage buildings and places, and enabling new development?	

# Supporting our heritage

**Priority/ Theme** **City of Newcastle will protect the integrity of heritage places by ensuring consistent and sympathetic uses, physical and aesthetic treatments and outstanding interpretations**

**Objective** **How do we get there?**

- 3.1 CN will support projects which will protect and restore the integrity of heritage places.
- 3.2 CN to lead by example by ensuring that heritage is given due consideration in CN projects and development assessment, with decision-making informed by community engagement and facilitated by CN staff training.
- 3.3 Integrate climate change and social equality measures into CN heritage policies, strategies and planning.

**Outcome** **What does success look like?**

Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of Newcastle’s heritage buildings and places under CN’s care and control.

**Links to the SDG** **What Sustainable Development goals will be achieved with this strategy?**

- 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.
- 7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
- 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.
- 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.
- 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.
- 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.
- 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

**Measures** The measure is increasing the baseline score of the survey question.

**Survey question** Is the conservation and management of Newcastle’s heritage buildings and places under CN’s care and regulatory control supporting the integrity of the City’s heritage?



# Promoting our heritage

Priority/ Theme	<b>Newcastle’s significant heritage places are a unique historical resource and represent an asset for the continuing educational, cultural and economic enrichment of the region. City of Newcastle will invest in the promotion and care of these assets as part of the city’s economic and cultural development</b>	
Objective	How do we get there?	<p>4.1 CN will increase promotion and awareness of the city’s Indigenous and European cultural heritage with updated content on CN’s electronic media, information and content provided in CN asset projects and works, community engagement, and through public exhibitions, shows and performances at CN’s cultural institutions.</p> <p>4.2 Increase the local community’s understanding and participation to conserve, enhance and celebrate Newcastle’s heritage places and cultural heritage by CN collaborating with stakeholders in activities which promote the economic, social and environmental benefits of heritage to the city.</p>
Outcome	What does success look like?	Newcastle is positively perceived by the local community and visitors for its wealth of heritage buildings, places and attractions. Increased awareness and participation by local communities to conserve, enhance and celebrate Newcastle’s heritage places and cultural heritage, thereby strengthening community capacity building, pride, cultural understanding and sense of place.
Links to the SDG	What Sustainable Development goals will be achieved with this strategy?	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.</p> <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public, private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.</p>
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of visits to Newcastle’s cultural institutions that house CN’s moveable cultural heritage collection (Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery, and the Local History Section of the Newcastle Region Library).</li> <li>• Increased number of clicks to pages of CN’s website, City of Newcastle App and Visit Newcastle website which interpret or celebrate Newcastle’s heritage.</li> </ul>	
Survey question	In the last 12 months have you attended a CN hosted event in Newcastle, or visited an exhibition or watched a performance at CN’s Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery, Civic Theatre or the Newcastle Region Library which interpreted or celebrated Newcastle’s heritage?	



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**Outcome**

- Newcastle's places and items of local heritage significance (CN's moveable cultural heritage collection, the City's heritage items, heritage conservation areas, archaeological relics and sites, and Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places) are comprehensively understood, identified and assessed against recognised thematic history.
- Newcastle's heritage (CN's moveable cultural heritage collection, the City's heritage items, heritage conservation areas, archaeological relics and sites, Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places) is sufficiently protected and conserved with the development and implementation of CN's heritage conservation policy and guidance that is based on the principles of the Burra Charter and best practice.
- Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of Newcastle's heritage buildings and places under CN's care and control.
- Newcastle is positively perceived by the local community and visitors for its wealth of heritage buildings, places and attractions. Increased awareness and participation by local communities to conserve, enhance and celebrate Newcastle's heritage places and cultural heritage, thereby strengthening community capacity building, pride, cultural understanding and sense of place.

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**Measures**

- Heritage studies and investigations warrant an increased number of places and items of local heritage significance identified on the heritage schedule of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan.
- Decreased percentage of development approvals issued by CN related to contributory buildings in heritage conservation areas and heritage items proposing either comprehensive demolition or façade retention.
- The measure is increasing the baseline score of the survey question.
- Increased number of visits to Newcastle's cultural institutions that house CN's moveable cultural heritage collection (Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery, and the Local History Section of the Newcastle Region Library).
- Increased number of clicks to pages of CN's website, City of Newcastle App and Visit Newcastle website which interpret or celebrate Newcastle's heritage.

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**Survey question**

- Is the diversity of Newcastle's heritage buildings, places and objects sufficiently recognised and represented in the heritage schedule of the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan and the heritage collections at CN's Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery and the Newcastle Region Library?
- Is there is an adequate balance between protecting and conserving Newcastle's heritage buildings and places, and enabling new development?
- Is the conservation and management of Newcastle's heritage buildings and places under CN's care and regulatory control supporting the integrity of the City's heritage?
- In the last 12 months have you attended a CN hosted event in Newcastle, or visited an exhibition or watched a performance at CN's Newcastle Museum, Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Art Gallery, Civic Theatre or the Newcastle Region Library which interpreted or celebrated Newcastle's heritage?

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