



**C R
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NEWCASTLE OCEAN BATHS REVITALISATION STAGE 2 AMENDED SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AUGUST 2026

**CITY OF NEWCASTLE
COUNCIL**

Amended Social Impact
Assessment for the
Newcastle Ocean Baths
Revitalisation Stage 2

CRED CONSULTING ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS ON WHICH WE LIVE AND WORK.

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AUTHOR	S. Kerridge-Creedy and L. Ball	REVIEWED BY	S. Reilly CEO 7 August 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

About the Amended Development Application

This Amended Social Impact Assessment (Amended SIA) has been prepared by CRED Consulting on behalf of City of Newcastle Council (CN) to support an Amended Development Application (DA2025/01321) for Stage 2 revitalisation works (the proposal) for the Newcastle Ocean Baths, located at Shortland Esplanade, Newcastle (the site).

This Amended SIA amends the SIA originally completed by Urbis (20 November 2025) in response to feedback received from CN's Development Assessments team and public submissions received during the DA's public exhibition period. The DA has also been updated to respond to feedback received.

Amendments to the proposal

The amendments to the DA include the following:

- Revised roof profile to provide greater light and ventilation while also providing a more restrained architectural style
- A revised amenities layout to provide more space within the amenities and locate Accessible facilities closer to the pool ramp.
- Revised operation of the café to ensure that in the event an alcohol licence is granted by the relevant authority alcohol is consumed only within the café space.
- The roof top café terrace has been removed.
- Revised canoe pool sea wall arrangement to maintain the original seawall alignment.
- Reduced extent of tiered seating along the canoe pool sea wall to expose more of the original sea wall material.
- Revise distribution of public domain furniture across the site to reduce potential pinch points.

Strategic considerations

The strategic planning context identified the following considerations for the proposal:

- Balance active transport priorities with equitable access for all users.
- Protect and reflect the site's existing community value and cultural connections.

- Manage growth in visitation without compromising local amenity and character.

Community profile

The current and future community profile revealed the following considerations for the proposal:

- Plan for an ageing population and growth in lone person households.
- Passive surveillance and lighting should be prioritised given the site's crime profile.
- High volunteering rates suggest potential for community stewardship of the site.

Site and locality considerations

The following groups are likely to experience direct or indirect impacts to varying extents:

Moderate direct impacts: People living and working within the immediate vicinity of the site are more likely to be impacted by construction activities and on a regular basis by the operation of the facility. These people are also more likely to experience impacts to their established sense of place and connection to the facility.

Multitude of direct and indirect impacts: Those visiting Newcastle's beaches is mostly local with over half of all visits originate from within the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie region. Therefore, frequent visitors to the Newcastle Ocean Baths are likely to experience direct and indirect impacts to various multitudes depending on the frequency of visitation and connection to place.

Consultation findings

The DA public exhibition feedback revealed the following new considerations for the proposal:

- Alcohol licensing and commercialisation of the pavilion are key community concerns.
- Heritage and social value are closely tied to the open-air design of the existing change rooms.
- Safety and accessibility concerns related to the design of the proposed change rooms.

Amended Social Impact Assessment

The amended social impact analysis identifies the key impacts relating to how the proposal's amendments respond to community concerns raised during public exhibition. These impacts primarily relate to the previous DA's proposed design of the change rooms, the proposed commercial operations on site, as well as safety and inclusivity concerns regarding the service of alcohol on site (subject to a formal liquor licencing application by a future café operator to Liquor and Gaming NSW).

Overall, the Amended DA's social impact is assessed as generally positive. It is evident that design improvements have been incorporated to maintain the highly valued character of the change rooms, improve safety outcomes for users of the amenities block and reduce the extent in which alcohol can be served within the pavilion (subject to a formal liquor licencing application by a future café operator to Liquor and Gaming NSW).

Where appropriate, additional recommendations have been provided to ensure that CN continues to undertake community consultation and that potential impacts on diverse user groups are considered and managed long term.

Key recommendations include the implementation and regular review of the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan (Operational Management Plan), mitigations recommended in the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Report (CPTED Report), and communication protocols with external stakeholders to regularly check the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

An overview of the amended social impact analysis, ratings, proposed mitigation and enhancement measures and responsibility for implementation is outlined in Table 1 overpage. Additional SIA recommendations are provided in Section 6 to further mitigate or enhance the identified social impacts.

Table 1. Amended social impact analysis summary (Source: CRED Consulting, 2026)

SOCIAL IMPACT	LEVEL OF IMPACT PRE MEASURES*	MITIGATION OR ENHANCEMENT MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MITIGATION	LEVEL OF IMPACT POST MEASURES*
Design development				
Impacts on community trust and participation in decision-making processes	Low negative	Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement via physical and digital two-way communication channels.	City of Newcastle	Medium positive
Preserving the heritage character of the Newcastle Ocean Baths	Low positive	Maintenance and restoration of the pavilion's physical heritage through façade restorations, interpretive signage and maintaining the landmark qualities of the pavilion. Supporting heritage related groups and events within the bookable community space.	City of Newcastle Local community groups	High positive
During construction				
Impacts on community access to the Newcastle Ocean Baths due to construction and construction traffic	Low negative	Mitigation measures will be explored in consultation with the appointed construction company at the Construction Certificate stage.	City of Newcastle Appointed construction company	Low negative
Increased activation and use of the Newcastle Ocean Baths by diverse user groups	Medium positive	Upgraded bathrooms and change rooms, a standard accessible toilet, family/universal amenities and a changing place facility with MLAK. Proposed F&B premises to support a local business and provide offerings at a range of price points. Low-barrier access to booking the community space. Implementation of the Operational Management Plan and CPTED Report recommendations.	City of Newcastle Future F&B business operator	High positive

SOCIAL IMPACT	LEVEL OF IMPACT PRE MEASURES*	MITIGATION OR ENHANCEMENT MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MITIGATION	LEVEL OF IMPACT POST MEASURES*
Impacts on physical accessibility for diverse user groups of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion	High negative	Upgraded bathrooms and change rooms, including a standard accessible toilet, family/universal amenities and a changing place facility with MLAK. Regrading of the upper concourse and pavilion floors. Implementation of the Operational Management Plan. Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement and complaint management procedures.	City of Newcastle	High positive
Impacts on accessibility of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion for culturally diverse groups	Medium negative	Implementation of the Public Art Strategy. Restricting the service of alcohol within the F&B indoor seating areas (subject to a formal liquor licencing application by a future café operator to Liquor and Gaming NSW).	City of Newcastle Local Aboriginal artists Future F&B premises operator	High positive
Impacts on accessibility to small community spaces that are complimentary to the primary recreation use of the Newcastle Ocean Baths	Medium positive	Multipurpose design and fittings of the community space to support a range of activities and groups. Low-barrier (financial and technological) access to booking the community space. Physical and operational separation of the community space from the F&B premises.	City of Newcastle	High positive
Access and safety impacts from car and cyclist traffic during operation	Low negative	Bike storage racks. Regrading of the upper concourse and pavilion floors. F&B premises improving the pavilion's interface with the public domain and pedestrians accessing the pavilion.	City of Newcastle	Low positive

SOCIAL IMPACT	LEVEL OF IMPACT PRE MEASURES*	MITIGATION OR ENHANCEMENT MEASURES	STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MITIGATION	LEVEL OF IMPACT POST MEASURES*
Water safety risks from alcohol induced disorderly behaviour	Medium negative	Implementation of Operational Management Plan and CPTED Report recommendations. Improved lifeguard tower. Responsible service of alcohol at the F&B premises. Ongoing community and stakeholder engagement and complaint management procedures.	City of Newcastle Future F&B premises operator	Low negative
Reduced safety risks through design changes to amenity facilities	Medium negative	Implementation of Operational Management Plan and CPTED Report recommendations. Amended design and layout of change rooms and toilets.	City of Newcastle	High positive
Impact on community pride as Newcastle Ocean Baths is enhanced as a regional destination	Medium positive	Inclusion of a variety uses on site to support increased activation and visitation. Celebrate the heritage significance of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion through design and events. Ongoing monitoring of utilisation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths and the future community space.	City of Newcastle	High positive

*This rating is based on the NSW Government's SIA Guidelines for State Significant Projects (2026) social impact significance matrix. Refer to Appendix 1 for more information.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND APPROACH

This Amended Social Impact Assessment (Amended SIA) has been prepared by CRED Consulting on behalf of City of Newcastle Council (CN) to support an Amended Development Application (DA2025/01321) for Stage 2 revitalisation works (the proposal) for the Newcastle Ocean Baths, located at Shortland Esplanade, Newcastle (the site).

This Amended SIA amends the SIA originally completed by Urbis (20 November 2025) in response to feedback received from CN's Development Assessments team and public submissions received during the DA's public exhibition period. The DA has also been updated to respond to feedback received.

This Amended SIA assesses social impacts of the proposal's revised design development and additional mitigation measures that respond to newly identified community concerns. It recommends ways to contribute to social sustainability, maintain site character, and deliver public benefits. It evaluates positive, neutral, and negative social impacts, and suggests enhancement and mitigation measures.

1.2 PROPOSAL BACKGROUND

Newcastle Ocean Baths Revitalisation Stage 1 Works

The Newcastle Ocean Baths were constructed in the early 20th century and have provided residents and visitors to Newcastle with a free public swimming facility since that time. The Newcastle Ocean Baths are iconic to Newcastle's coastline and almost a century later are still popular. However, due to the harsh nature of the coastal environment, the pavilion, promenade and pools are rapidly ageing and required upgrades to continue to provide the community with a safe, fit for purpose facility.

In 2021, CN proposed to upgrade these facilities so they could continue to operate as an important community facility (the Stage 1 works). Stage 1 entailed works to the ocean pool, including updates to pumps, the pool floor, pool access ramps, and minor upgrades to the promenade, site facilities, and shade areas. The Stage 1 works were completed in December 2023. The pool is now operational.

Newcastle Ocean Baths Revitalisation Stage 2 Works (Previous DA)

The Stage 2 works, which this proposal relates to, is seeking consent for the conservation and revitalisation of the site's pavilion buildings, including the heritage façade, as well as upgrades to the public domain. In November 2025, CN prepared and lodged DA2025/01321 for Stage 2 works. During the DA's public exhibition period, the DA received 263 public submissions and a request for additional information from CN's Development Assessments team. Additional feedback was also received from CN's Urban Design Review Panel and Heritage NSW.

The DA has undergone design and operational changes in response to this feedback. This Amended SIA assesses the social impacts associated with the revised DA described below.

1.3 AMENDED PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The changes to the DA include the following:

- Revised roof profile to provide greater light and ventilation while also providing a more restrained architectural style

- A revised amenities layout to provide more space within the amenities and locate Accessible facilities closer to the pool ramp.
- Revised operation of the café to ensure that in the event an alcohol licence is granted by the relevant authority alcohol is consumed only within the café space.
- The roof top café terrace has been removed.
- Revised canoe pool sea wall arrangement to maintain the original seawall alignment.
- Reduced extent of tiered seating along the canoe pool sea wall to expose more of the original sea wall material.
- Revise distribution of public domain furniture across the site to reduce potential pinch points.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

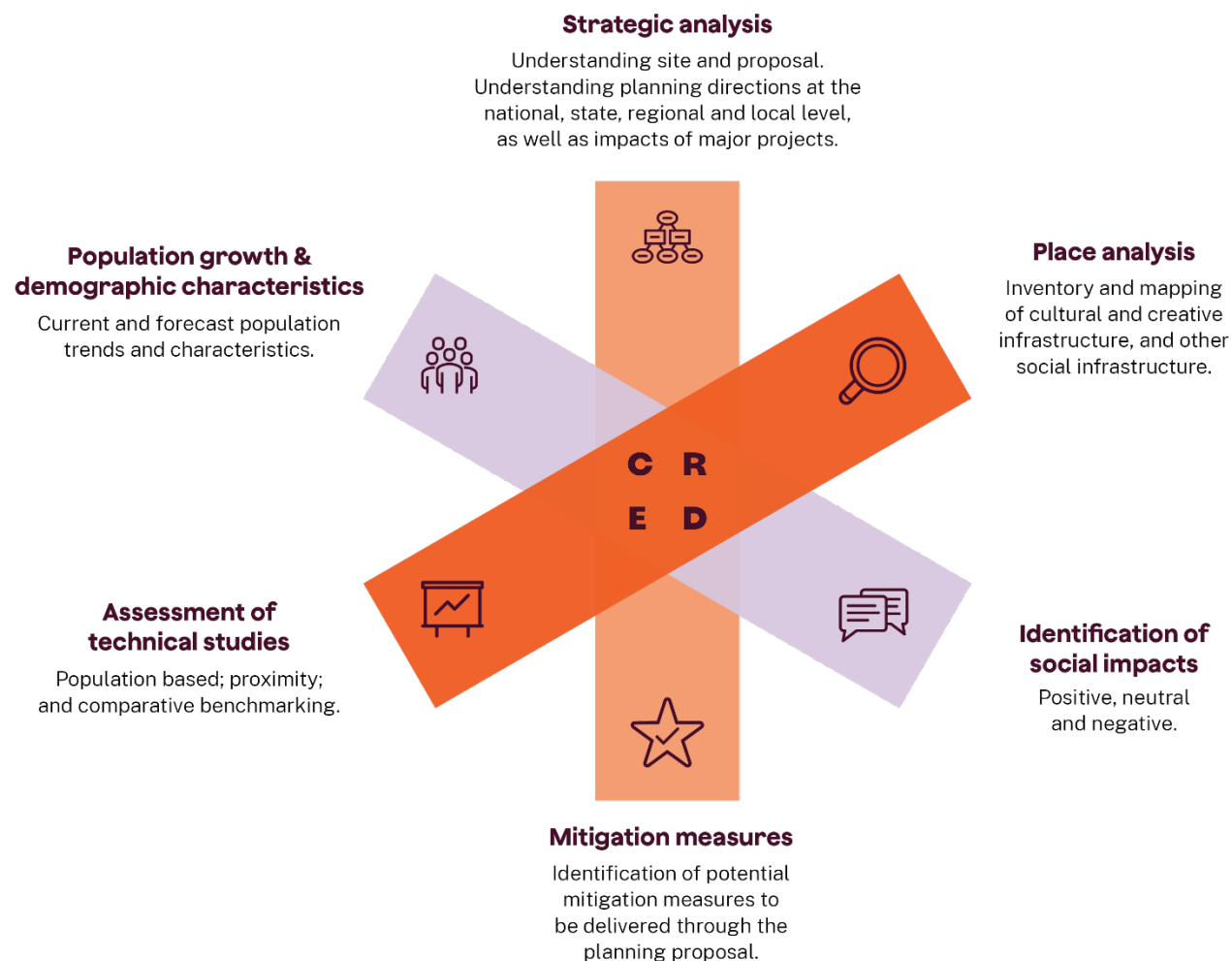
This SIA has been prepared in accordance with the CN *Development Control Plan (DCP)* (2023) Section C8 Social Impact, with guidance from the *Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects* and *Technical Supplement* (DPHI, 2026), hereinafter referred to as the 'SIA Guideline' and 'SIA Technical Supplement'.

1.5 METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

The following has been undertaken to prepare this SIA, including:

- **Introduction (this section):** Introduces the proposal, purpose and scope of this report
- **Strategic planning context:** Review of regional and local planning and policy for social impact, social infrastructure and open space implications.
- **Place analysis:** Review of the surrounding land uses and utilisation data to the Newcastle Ocean Baths
- **Community profile:** Current and forecast community profile of the Newcastle community
- **Consultation and public exhibition feedback:** Community consultation feedback, engagement with CN representatives and public exhibition submissions
- **Identification of social impacts and mitigation measures:** Identification of social impacts of the proposal and potential mitigation measures to be delivered.

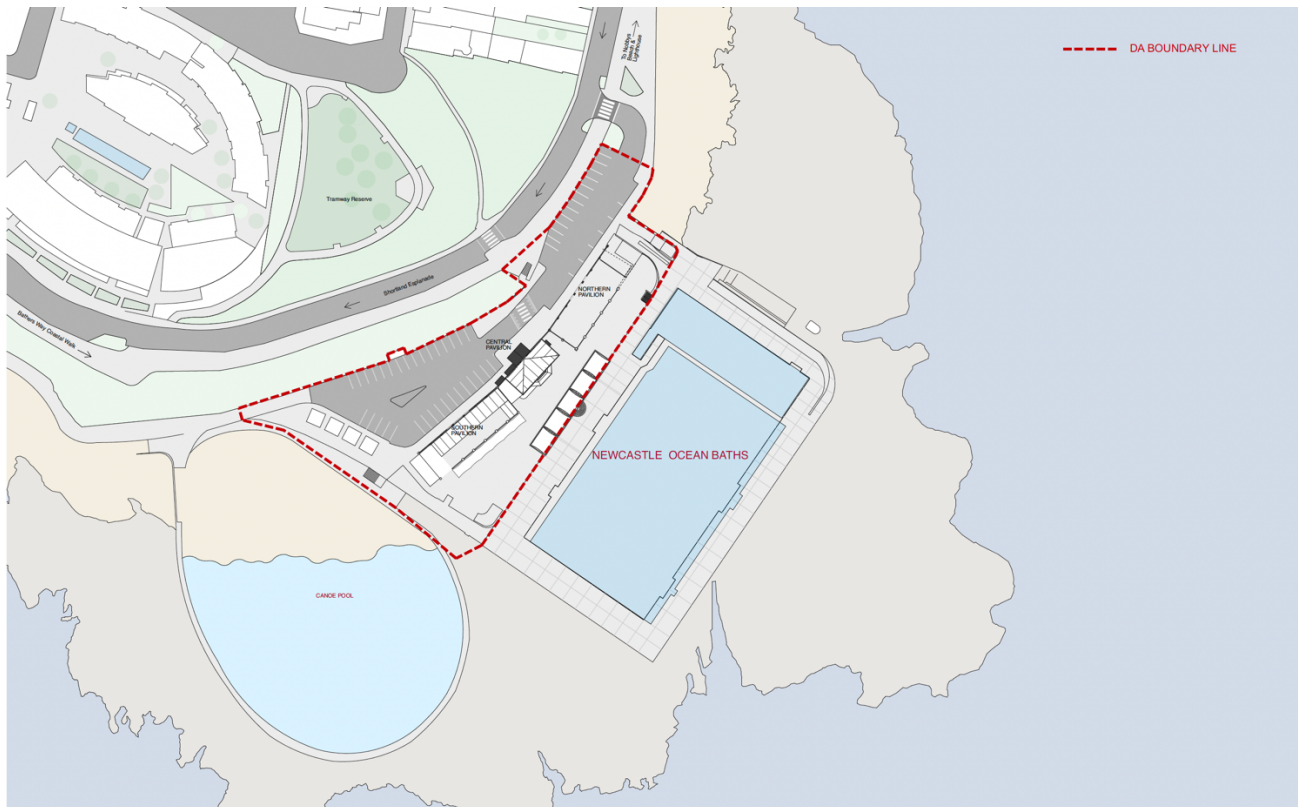
Figure 1. Social impact assessment methodology (source: CRED Consulting)



1.6 SITE OVERVIEW

The site is located at 30 Shortland Esplanade, Newcastle and is on Awabakal Country. Various recreational and open space areas neighbour the site, including the Newcastle Canoe Pool and Newcastle Beach to the south, and Cowrie Hole and Nobbys Beach to the north.

Figure 2. Site identification (Source: TZG, 2026)



1.7 SOCIAL LOCALITY

The social locality is the area of social influence of the development and considers:

- scale and nature of the project
- who may be affected by the project
- marginal groups who may be affected
- built or natural features on/near the project
- relevance of social, cultural and demographic trends, and
- the history of the proposed project and area.

For the purposes of this Amended SIA, the likely impacted areas and communities are outlined below.

Social locality

The Newcastle Ocean Baths is a popular tourist destination with visitors often travelling from Greater Sydney, Regional NSW and the ACT. Therefore, the broader social locality and communities that may be impacted by long-term operational changes cannot be defined by geographic boundaries. However, the following groups are likely to experience direct or indirect impacts to varying extents:

- **Moderate direct impacts:** People living and working within the immediate vicinity of the site are more likely to be impacted by construction activities and on a regular basis by the operation of the facility. These people are also more likely to experience impacts to their established sense of place and connection to the facility.
- **Multitude of direct and indirect impacts:** Those visiting Newcastle's beaches is highly local with over half of all visits originate from within the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie region. Therefore, frequent visitors to the Newcastle Ocean Baths are likely to experience direct and indirect impacts to various multitudes depending on the frequency of visitation and connection to place.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

A review of relevant state and local policies was undertaken to understand the strategic context of the proposal and any potential impacts (positive and negative). The strategies reviewed are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Strategic planning context review (Source: CRED Consulting, 2026)

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT
NSW Government
- Greater Sydney Commission, The Six Cities Region Discussion Paper (2022) - Infrastructure NSW, State Infrastructure Strategy (2022) (SIS) - NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan (2018) - NSW Department of Planning and Environment, Hunter Regional Plan 2041 (2022) - State Environment Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 (Housing SEPP) - State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017 (Education SEPP) - Transport for NSW, Future Transport Strategy (2022) - Department of Planning and Environment, Hunter Regional Plan 2041 (2022)
City of Newcastle Council
- City of Newcastle Council, Community Participation Plan (2019) - City of Newcastle Council, Community Strategic Plan: Newcastle 2040 (2025) (CSP) - City of Newcastle Council, Development Control Plan (2023) (DCP) - City of Newcastle Council, Economic Development Strategy (2021) (LSPS) - City of Newcastle Council, Newcastle Local Housing Strategy (2021) - City of Newcastle Council, Social Strategy 2030 (2023)

2.1 KEY THEMES

The review of strategic plans is summarised key themes of relevance to the Newcastle Ocean Baths revitalisation works below.

Integrated and connected transport

Strategic planning places emphasis on the creation of efficient, accessible, and sustainable transport networks, including fast rail, public transport, active transport options, and a reduction of private vehicle dependency. The DCP acknowledges that well-functioning movement networks help create vibrant, socially connected, and inclusive communities.

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'15-minute cities' are championed by the Hunter Regional Plan, which advocates for access to cafes and restaurants, community facilities, sport and recreation facilities, educational facilities, local shops and services, natural green space, and public open space to all communities.

Active transport is prioritised in the LSPS, with an acknowledgement that this form of transport encouraged healthy lifestyles. The DCP seeks to make active transport the preferred method of transport for Newcastle residents. This is accompanied by a recommendation that developments incorporate shaded, efficient, and safe active and public transport options to reduce private vehicle dependency. The DCP does not recommend increased parking provision, suggesting this directly results in increased traffic flow and congestion, thereby reducing the level of service for all modes of transport.

Inclusive communities

Strategic planning for the region envisions the development of inclusive neighbourhoods with access to recreation facilities, open space, amenities, services, and infrastructure. Inclusive communities are considerate of diverse user groups, particularly those who may be underrepresented in the planning process. These groups include First Nations, LGBTQIA+, gender diverse, people with a disability or long-term health condition for example.

The Six Cities Plan advocates for embedding a First Nations voice in the planning process, thereby ensuring the aspirations of First Nations Peoples are recognised and embedded in planning for the future. Further, the Newcastle LSPS recognises and respects the continued relationship between Aboriginal people and the land.

The Community Participation Plan identifies the importance of community participation in planning activities, and prioritises the inclusion of diverse community members, including people with a disability.

The CSP further champions inclusion, advocating for every person to participate in the social, economic, civic and cultural life of the community. This includes an objective to create and maintain vibrant, inclusive, and well-designed public spaces.

Liveability, health, and wellbeing

There is a strong commitment among planning authorities to enhance liveability through the creation of well-design public spaces, green and blue corridors, and ensuring access to essential services and recreational facilities. This approach encourages healthy lifestyles through the promotion of active transport, access to green spaces, and community engagement in cultural and recreational activities.

The Six Cities Plan envisions inclusive places that are linked to existing and planned infrastructure enabling dynamic centres where active and public transport become the preferred choice for travel. This is supported by the Future Transport Strategy, which aims to enhance liveability through the provision of greener, safer, more liveable 15-minute neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods will feature wider footpaths cycle lanes, street trees, and lower speeds to improve access to nearby shops and services. The Hunter Regional Plan further supports the concept of 15-minute cities, where accessible services and amenities support inclusive and vibrant communities.

The SIS underscores the importance of joined-up planning for efficient investment, which is particularly important to develop cohesive infrastructure in economic precincts.

The Hunter Regional Plan identifies the importance of enhanced access to recreational facilities connected to open spaces. It also notes that connecting recreational spaces with waterways can draw from the area's heritage to create attractive spaces.

There is demand and opportunity for the provision of recreational opportunities. Swimming has been identified as one of the most popular recreational activities in Newcastle. There is high demand for aquatic facilities, which is projected to grow into the future, per the Parkland and Recreation Strategy.

Tourism

The Economic Development Strategy emphasises the role of major events and targeted support for the tourism sector in driving growth, with the visitor economy experiencing notable increases in visitation. Natural and coastal assets are identified as key tourism priorities, reinforcing the region's competitive advantage.

The Hunter 2041 plan recognises the importance of water quality to sustaining tourism and highlights the need for activities that cater to both domestic and international visitors. The plan promotes diverse tourism experiences that complement the natural landscape.

2.2 WHAT DOES THE STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT MEAN FOR THE PROPOSAL?

Balance active transport priorities with equitable access for all users

The proposal is well located in proximity to active transport which is aligned with several local and state government policies. However, the proposal will need to balance these considerations with access requirements for people with disability, older visitors, families with young children, and those travelling from further afield. Therefore, the proposal's design has considered accessible parking, and safe, well-lit walking and cycling connections, so the pavilion remains accessible for all types of users, regardless of physical ability levels.

Social impacts related to '*Impacts on physical accessibility for diverse user groups of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion*' is assessed in Section 6.

Protect and reflect the site's existing community value and cultural connections

The Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion is already valued by long-standing local users, including regular swimmers and informal community groups, and sits within a landscape connected to First Nations heritage. Early engagement with these groups has informed the proposal's design development (refer to Section 5) to ensure existing functions and design elements of the pool are retained where possible, and new opportunities to better acknowledge the site's First Nations heritage.

Social impacts related to '*Preserving heritage character of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion*' is assessed in Section 6.

Manage growth in visitation without compromising local amenity and character

Given the strategic aspirations for the site appeal to function as a tourist destination and local recreation asset, the proposal should plan for increased visitor numbers without creating overcrowding, congestion, or loss of the pavilion's local, everyday character.

Social impacts related to '*Impact on community pride, as Newcastle Ocean Baths is enhanced as a regional destination*' is assessed in Section 6.

3. PLACE ANALYSIS

3.1 PLACE CONTEXT

The site is located within Newcastle East suburb, immediately east of Newcastle CBD. The suburb is largely characterised by public open spaces along the foreshore and high-density residential along Shortland Esplanade, northwest of the site.

Newcastle East is relatively well serviced by public open spaces and facilities. These comprise of ocean swimming areas including Cowrie Hole, Soldiers Baths, Nobbys Beach and Newcastle Beach, local parks including Tramway Reserve, Parnell Place Park, Foreshore Park and Camp Shortland, and community facility Fort Scratchley Function Centre.

Despite this, there is an identified need for additional community facility floorspace within Newcastle. Specifically, the Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment prepared by CRED Consulting (2021) identifies demand for a new community facility, equivalent of 1,434sqm GFA, to meet the needs of the Newcastle – Cooks Hill (inclusive of Newcastle East) catchment population in 2041.

Figure 3. Regional context map (Source: Urbis, 2025)



3.2 NEWCASTLE OCEAN BATHS UTILISATION DATA

This section provides an overview of Newcastle Ocean Baths utilisation data to identify and understand key user groups and trends. CN utilises human movement data to gain deeper insights into the utilisation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths, including the number of visits, demographics of visitors, and purpose and duration of visits.

The data, collected between 1 January 2022 and 31 May 2025 (the study period), indicates the following utilisation trends:

- The total visitation over the study period is estimated to be 569,310 visits.
- Visitation is sustained at higher levels on weekdays. A consistent early-morning spike around 6am is evident across all seasons, highlighting the popularity of the Newcastle Ocean Baths for fitness activities before work and school hours.
- The dwell times are clustered around 20 minutes, reflecting the use of the Newcastle Ocean Baths for shorter, utility-style visits such as lap swimming or walking the break wall.
- Majority of visitation to Newcastle's beaches is highly local with over half of all visits originate from within the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie SA4. However, there are smaller flows from Greater Sydney, Regional NSW, and the ACT. Notably, Western Sydney contributes almost one in ten visitors. These patterns demonstrate that Newcastle beaches serve as an everyday community asset for local residents, as well as a regional destinations drawing significant numbers from neighbouring LGAs and regions.

While the data is accurate and objective, it has some limitations. The data relies on mobile devices and may not capture groups with children without phones or swimmers whilst in the water, the data represents only a sample of the community, and the data cannot describe factors such as the competency or groups, activities, and swell and other hazards.

4. COMMUNITY PROFILE

A demographic profile identifies the demographic and social characteristics of a proposal's likely social locality. This is an important tool in understanding how a community currently lives and that community's potential capacity to adapt to changes arising from a proposal.

4.1 CURRENT POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

A current demographic profile has been developed for the Newcastle-Cooks Hill area ('the local area') and the Newcastle LGA. This demographic profile is based on demographic data from the following Australian Bureau of Statistics' (2021) Census of Population and Housing, Profile.id, Rental Affordability Index (2024) and Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR).

Population and age

- In 2021, there were **12,805 people in the local area**, representing 7.6% of the Newcastle LGA population (total of 168,873 people).
- The local area was characterised by a **young population**, with the largest age group comprising people aged 25-29, representing 12.0% of the local population. This was a higher proportion than Newcastle LGA.

Culture and diversity

- There was **some cultural and linguistic diversity** in the community, with 12.0% of households speaking a non-English language in the local area and 12.4% in Newcastle LGA.
- There were slightly **fewer people in the local area born in Australia** (78.2%) compared to Newcastle LGA (80.8%).
- The local area had a **lower proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people** (2.8%) compared to Newcastle LGA (4.4%).
- The **proportion of people born overseas increased** from 13.9% in 2016 to 14.8% in 2021.

Crime profile

BOCSAR data gathered between April 2025 and March 2026 indicates that:

- Newcastle LGA had **higher incidences** of the following offences compared to NSW averages: non-domestic assault; robbery; sexual offences; theft; malicious damage to property; against justice procedures; disorderly conduct; drug offences; and intimidation, stalking, and harassment.
- The site was in a hotspot for theft and malicious damage.

Health

- There were a slightly higher proportion of people with no long-term health conditions in the local area (58.5%) than in the Newcastle LGA (56.2%).
- The three most common long-term health conditions in the local area were mental health conditions (including depression or anxiety) (11.5%), asthma (8.5%), and arthritis (8.1%).

Educational institution attending

- There were a smaller proportion of people in the local area attending primary (14.5%) or secondary (13.4%) school, compared to Newcastle LGA (23.8% and 18.2% respectively).
- There were a greater proportion of people attending a tertiary institution in the local area (47.7%) than Newcastle LGA (33.9%).

Volunteering

- There were a higher proportion of people in the local area who did voluntary work through an organization or group in the last 12 months (17.6%) compared to Newcastle LGA (13.9%).

4.2 FUTURE COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

A future demographic profile has been developed for the Newcastle LGA based on Forecast.id population forecast data. Key future community characteristics include:

- **Steady population growth:** By 2046, the population of Newcastle LGA is anticipated to grow to 205,445 persons, reflecting an increase of 21.7% between 2021 and 2046.
- **Lone persons households:** In 2021, the dominant household type was 'lone person households (29.3%) in Newcastle LGA. This household type is forecast to experience the most amount of growth (+5,498 lone person households) and remain the dominant household type (29.7%) in 2046.
- **Elderly population:** Between 2021 and 2046, senior residents aged 70 to 84 years old are forecast to experience the most significant population growth in Newcastle LGA (+8,495) increasing from 9.2% to 11.7% of residents.
- **Retaining young families:** Parents and homebuilders aged 35 to 49 years old are forecast to experience the second largest population growth between 2021 and 2046 (+8,168), remaining the dominant service age group in Newcastle LGA.
- **Increased residential density in Newcastle City Centre:** The largest population increase of 88.35% is anticipated to occur in the Newcastle City Centre, a geographical small area comprising Newcastle- Newcastle East- Newcastle West suburbs and the Newcastle Ocean Baths.

4.3 WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY PROFILE MEAN FOR THE PROPOSAL?

Plan for an ageing population and growth in lone person households

While the immediate local area comprising a relatively young population, Newcastle LGA is forecast to see significant growth in residents aged 70 to 84 and lone person households remaining the dominant household type. The proposal considers ageing users through accessible design (level access, seating, rest points, accessible amenities) and its role as a social and community touchpoint for people living alone, who may rely more heavily on shared public spaces for connection and wellbeing.

Social impacts related to '*Impacts on physical accessibility for diverse user groups of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion*' and '*Impacts on accessibility of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion for culturally diverse groups*' are assessed in Section 6.

Passive surveillance and lighting should be prioritised given the site's crime profile

The site is located within a hotspot for incidents of malicious damage to property, with Newcastle LGA recording above-average rates for several types of crime offences. Given the pavilion's likely use during dawn, dusk, and other low-activity periods, the proposal considers CPTED principles, such as clear sightlines and lighting, to support both actual and perceived safety.

Social impacts related to '*Reduced safety risks through design changes to amenity facilities*' are assessed in Section 6.

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High volunteering rates suggest potential for community stewardship of the site

The local area has a notably higher rate of volunteering compared to the Newcastle LGA average, indicating a community with a strong desire for civic participation and shared ownership of local assets. This presents an opportunity for the proposal's community meeting space to support volunteers, local community groups or not-for-profit organisations. This meeting space can support these groups to deliver events or activities that are complimentary to the site's primary recreation functions or heritage significance.

Social impacts related to *'Impacts on accessibility to small community meeting spaces that are complimentary to the primary use of the facility'* are assessed in Section 6.

5. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A SIA is required to describe appropriate, justified and meaningful consultation that was undertaken at a reasonable period of time before submitting application, as per the SIA requirements in the CN DCP 2023.

This Chapter summarises the community and stakeholder consultation undertaken by CN to inform the preparation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths Stage 2 proposal. This includes community feedback received during public exhibition to inform the revised proposal that relates to this Amended SIA. This includes:

- A review of CN's engagement objectives, strategy and findings to demonstrate that appropriate, justified, and that meaningful consultation was undertaken and is suitable for consideration within the SIA
- A summary of targeted SIA consultation undertaken by Urbis Social Planning for the previous SIA, including a meeting with CN representatives to gain additional insights into potential social impacts associated the proposal

A summary of community submissions received during the proposal's public exhibition period.

5.1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS REVIEW OF COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement findings are necessary inputs for SIA. The purpose of this Section is to review and summarise the relevant community engagement findings collated by CN to inform the SIA.

Since March 2020, CN has had an established has had an established Community Reference Group (CRG) which was formed through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. This CRG has had seven meetings to date and has played a vital role in shaping and refining both Stage 1 and of the ocean baths upgrades and Stage 2, which is the subject of this SIA. The CRG comprises representatives from key user groups, accessibility advocates, the local business community, and Aboriginal representatives, ensuring a broad and inclusive range of perspectives. Through ongoing engagement, the CRG has provided valuable insights and feedback that have informed design decision and enhanced outcomes for the community.

CN undertook broader community engagement between 17 June and 5 August 2024 as part of the *We Love Our Coast* campaign. The engagement informed the community about the many technical, financial, social, environmental and heritage considerations and gathered feedback on the Stage 2 concept designs to guide design refinements.

Community engagement strategy objectives

It is understood from the CRG meeting information and the broader *Newcastle Ocean Baths Stage 2 Consultation Report February 2025* that community engagement between 17 June and 5 August 2024 was undertaken to achieve the following objectives:

- Contribute to the planning of facilities that balance the needs of all users of the Newcastle Ocean Baths.
- Inform the broader community of project objectives, status and outcomes of the project.
- Inform the community on projects under the 'We Love Our Coast' banner.

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- Inform, educate and consult with the community on plans for Stage Two of the Newcastle Ocean Baths revitalisation.
- Deliver authentic engagement opportunities for the community to have their say.
- Deliver open and transparent engagement tools that allow the community to collaborate and discuss thoughts, ideas and opinions.
- Reach a diverse group of community members and encourage them to participate in the consultation activities.
- Provide clear information on the negotiables and non-negotiables for Stage Two of the Newcastle Ocean Baths revitalisation.
- Provide an opportunity for the community to directly engage with subject matter experts across CN on the projects that are important to them through the We Love Our Coast events.
- Use the information collected to inform refinements to Stage 2 of the Newcastle Ocean Baths revitalisation.

A review of the consultation findings indicates that the community engagement activities realised the objectives, noting that efforts were made to capture feedback from diverse community members.

Engagement approach

The broader engagement approach designed and delivered by CN for the Newcastle Ocean Baths Stage 2 was complemented by the *We Love Our Coast* campaign and incorporated a CRG meeting (meeting 6). The campaign formed an overarching brand and banner to build awareness about the community engagement activities and feedback channels. CN reports that the campaign resulted in almost 1 million touchpoints including social media impressions, website page views, e-newsletters issued, flyers distributed, attendees at events and other activities.

Features of the community engagement approach included:

- Have Your Say webpage
- Flyers and onsite signage
- Social media
- Video flythrough
- e-Newsletters
- Media release
- Partner campaign (promotion via Newy with Kids)
- Pop-up stalls
- Drop-in information sessions
- Feedback channels included:
 - Interactive concept plan that used an online platform to allow participants to place digital comments onto rendered images and view the comments left by others
 - An online feedback form
- Mail, email and phone feedback channels were also available. Mail and phone feedback channels were not used and just two free form emails were received

CN acknowledges that feedback received through these engagement activities were opt-in and therefore is not necessarily representative of the broader community's views.

Stakeholder categories

The consultation report prepared by CN does not identify specific stakeholder categories. It is assumed that most feedback came from community members, with a high proportion likely to be existing pool users.

CN undertook consultation across electronic channels and traditional channels. While demographic data was not collected, most responses were received through these digital channels. Digital engagement methods can sometimes skew participation towards younger audiences.

CN's promotion of the consultation was also weighted towards electronic channels. However, additional engagement via physical signage, flyers, and media coverage may have helped reach less tech-savvy pool users and community members.

Some respondents expressed frustration that the survey format limited opportunities for detailed feedback. A small number chose to provide more substantial input via email.

Summary of engagement outcomes

Feedback received during the dedicated community engagement window spanned more than 20 themes, with the layout and design of change rooms and amenities for pool users attracting the highest volume of feedback. Urbis has sought to understand the various concerns and considerations within the key feedback themes as inputs for the SIA. These are captured in the following table.

Table 3. Summary of engagement outcomes (Source: Urbis, 2025)

FEEDBACK THEME	FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS
Layout	Functionality and positioning of key facilities Consideration: ensuring that the positioning of change rooms, lifeguard facilities, and other amenities supports efficient movement, safety, and accessibility will be critical.
	Change room design and user experience Consideration: the move from communal change rooms to individual cubicles raises questions about capacity during peak times, gendered facility placement, and safety — particularly visibility of entries/exits. Balancing privacy, throughput, and safety should be a priority.
	Accessibility and inclusive design Consideration: the location and integration of accessible facilities, including proximity to accessible parking and ramps, must be optimised. This is not only a compliance matter but also a key factor in ensuring equitable access for all users.
	Retail (food and beverage) and community floorspace allocations Consideration: the location of the café/kiosk in relation to change rooms, exposure to weather, and the proportion of space allocated to food and beverage, community or change facilities.
	Pedestrian and cyclist flow and deck space Consideration: ensuring adequate space along the promenade and upper deck for pedestrians and cyclists to avoid congestion and conflict between user groups.
Change rooms/amenities	Capacity of facilities Consideration: reduced change space and potential waiting times during peak use.
	Ventilation and lighting Consideration: adequate airflow and light with the new roof design.

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	Privacy and security Consideration: issues with shared entries and preference for wider, more visible access from the pool side.
	Group and accessible use Consideration: spaces suitable for families, groups, and people with accessibility requirements.
	Comfort and amenities Consideration: size of spaces with more benches and hooks for convenience.
Community space	Community space use Consideration: option for use by swimming clubs and community groups, but concerns about private hire, commercialisation, and preference from some for more change room space.
	Flexibility and boundaries Consideration: movable wall between food/beverage and community space may allow encroachment by commercial uses.
	Terrace/ balcony purpose Consideration: access and view impacts from the hill above the baths.
	Parking and user experience Consideration: potential impacts on parking availability and convenience for pool users.
	Alcohol service Consideration: mixed views on whether alcohol should be available, with some supporting a bar/restaurant model and others opposed.
Other	Core purpose and accessibility Consideration: the Baths should be maintained as an inclusive public recreation and swimming facility, ensuring equitable access for all users.
	Commercial activity and character Consideration: balance food and beverage offerings with community expectations, avoiding over-commercialisation and protecting the heritage and character of the site.
	Heritage retention and integration Consideration: retain and respect the historic façade and other heritage elements, while integrating modern design sensitively.
	Seating and shading Consideration: provide adequate, well-located, and sheltered seating for individuals, families, and groups, without obstructing views or reducing usability.
	Accessible facilities and movement Consideration: ensure accessible toilets, change rooms, showers, and pathways are well located, easy to navigate, and connected to parking and pool access points.
	Parking and transport flow Consideration: address limited parking capacity, improve disabled parking proximity, and manage pedestrian and cyclist movement safely.
	Canoe pool integration Consideration: preserve the heritage and usability of the Canoe Pool, ensuring seating, shade, and access are well integrated with the Baths.
	Storage and active transport amenities Consideration: provide secure lockers, sheltered bike parking, and facilities for mobility devices to support diverse transport modes.

	Maintenance and durability Consideration: design change rooms, amenities, and materials for ease of cleaning and resilience against coastal conditions.
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*This category acknowledges that the layout, change rooms and amenities and the community spaces were the three big issues captured through the community engagement; however, there are many other significant considerations.

Key implications of community engagement

Community engagement to inform a social impact assessment is required to:

- **Identify stakeholders**
Clearly define who may be affected — directly or indirectly — by the proposal. This includes residents, user groups, local businesses, cultural and heritage groups, and vulnerable or under-represented populations.
- **Gather diverse perspectives**
Use engagement methods that reach a wide cross-section of the community, avoiding bias towards certain demographics. This often means combining digital tools with face-to-face methods, targeted outreach, and accessible formats.
- **Provide clear, accessible information**
Ensure participants understand the proposal, its potential impacts, and the scope of the assessment. Information should be presented in plain language, with visual aids where helpful.
- **Enable meaningful input**
Offer opportunities for people to provide detailed feedback, not just quick responses. This can include workshops, drop-in sessions, interviews, and open-ended survey questions.
- **Document and analyse feedback**
Record input accurately, identify recurring themes, and note differences in views between stakeholder groups. This analysis should inform the SIA’s assessment of potential social impacts.
- **Close the loop**
Report back to the community on how their feedback has been considered and, where possible, incorporated into the project design or mitigation measures.
- **Address equity and inclusion**
Ensure engagement processes are accessible to people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and those without easy access to digital platforms.

In short, for an SIA, community engagement must be inclusive, transparent, and robust, so the assessment reflects the real social dynamics and priorities of the people who will live with the outcomes.

Community engagement checklist and assessment

This table assesses the community engagement and consultation approach against relevant criteria, specifically in terms of the quality of inputs for the SIA.

Table 4. Community engagement checklist and assessment (Source: Urbis, 2025)

CRITERIA	STATUS	COMMENT
Stakeholder identification and mapping	Complete in full / satisfied	CN applied a comprehensive communication campaign to promote consultation channels and undertook stakeholder identification to inform the development of the engagement strategy. This

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		included the identification of CN internal stakeholders, committees and reference groups, and external stakeholders and target groups, such as community members and groups, local businesses, and vulnerable groups. Note that the feedback wasn't necessarily representative of the community, but it did capture diverse, dissenting and disparate sentiments and suggestions. Feedback from the CRG was not highlighted but it is understood that a dedicated reference group has been consulted from the preliminary project stages through to the completion of the concept design.
Inclusive engagement methods	Complete in full / satisfied	Despite being heavily weighted towards digital consultation channels, the combined communications and consultation approach was inclusive and comprehensive. The CRG selection process was also undertaken based on stakeholder identification to ensure diverse community participation.
Clear and accessible information	Complete in full / satisfied	The communication and consultation material was complemented by clear renders and visual depictions of the concept, making it easy to understand. Note that CN's 'Have your say' webpage is compliant with Australia's Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and CN's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2026. Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) were also available throughout engagement activities, consistent with CN policy.
Opportunities for detailed feedback	Complete in full / satisfied	Community members provided feedback that substantial and/or long form feedback was not encouraged. It is acknowledged that the community were invited to provide feedback via email, which CN received and reported on. It is also noted that the online form provided the option for document uploads and did not have a character limit on open response boxes.
Targeted outreach	Complete in full / satisfied	CN undertook targeted engagement with the following CN committees and advisory groups: • CN Public Art Standing Committee • CN Access and Inclusion Standing Committee • CN Infrastructure Strategic Advisory Committee It is important to identify and contact disability advocacy organisations, seniors' groups, youth organisations and culturally diverse community leaders about potential impacts, social considerations and opportunities.

Transparency and trust-building	Complete in full / satisfied	CN communicated the feedback received in succinct and accessible outcomes reports, although these reports did not explicitly indicate how the engagement outcomes may inform the SIA.
Feedback analysis and reporting and Closing the loop	Complete in full / satisfied	Refer to CN: We Love Our Coast Newcastle Ocean Baths Stage 2 Consultation Report February 2025 for collation of feedback themes and reporting.
Equity and accessibility	Complete in full / satisfied	Communications and engagement were accessible, participation in consultation was free of charge and did not require specialist knowledge.

Conclusion of community engagement review

The review of community engagement undertaken by City of Newcastle indicates that the process was comprehensive, particularly in terms of the communication campaign, which effectively highlighted the potential impacts of the proposed changes and provided clear opportunities for community feedback.

There is strong community interest in the layout and design of the change rooms. This presents an opportunity for CN to clearly explain the rationale for introducing cubicles and moving away from the open-plan concept, as well as the decision to include roof cover. Communicating the safety and security considerations that informed the design choices will be important.

A significant concern has also emerged around the potential for the pools to be commercialised, or over-commercialised. While this sits outside the scope of the SIA, it is noted that CN may wish to outline the economic and financial realities, including the need for an investment of this scale to deliver some financial return.

Questions remain about construction staging and how the pool will remain in use during the works. These details have not yet been clearly communicated and could have notable social impacts, depending on the staging approach. Ongoing communication with the CRG and vulnerable user groups is recommended as the staging plan develops and potential impacts become clearer.

Finally, engagement with diverse user groups and stakeholders who may be disproportionately or significantly affected should continue throughout the planning, design and delivery phases.

5.2 TARGETED SIA ENGAGEMENT WITH CITY OF NEWCASTLE COUNCIL

This section provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement approach to directly inform the original SIA. Targeted SIA engagement is crucial for SIA practitioners to validate desktop research findings and to understand what is essential to a community and how they perceive the proposal may potentially impact them or their community.

City of Newcastle SIA interview summary

Urbis Social Planning undertook a targeted stakeholder interview with CN representatives from their community, aquatic, property services and project planning teams on 6 November 2025. The purpose of this interview was to gain insights and perspectives on the local context and community, potential social impacts (both positive and negative), and any enhancement measures (for positive impacts) and mitigation measures (for negative impacts). A summary of the feedback received is provided in the table below.

Table 5. City of Newcastle SIA interview summary (Source: Urbis, 2025)

FEEDBACK THEME	FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS
Accessibility and inclusivity	• The Newcastle Ocean Baths are highly valued by the local community. • Free access to the Newcastle Ocean Baths is valued by users. • The Newcastle Ocean Baths are used by people of all ages. • The Newcastle Ocean Baths are more accessible than local beaches, especially for less confident swimmers and people with disabilities. • There is currently one accessible toilet, which has been identified as an issue partially driving the proposed revitalisation. The proposal includes the provision of gender-neutral accessible bathrooms and changing facilities. • There are existing challenges associated with physical accessibility to the site which is partially driving the proposal. The site currently has a steep slope at the Newcastle Ocean Baths entrance, which has been identified as an issue. As part of the proposal, the promenade will be regraded to comply with gradient standards. • There is a strong sense of community ownership over the Newcastle Ocean Baths by some members of the community. It is important that the upgrades welcome all members of the Newcastle community. • Existing signage at the Newcastle Ocean Baths communicates safety risks in English and pictograms. Signage also includes a QR link to safety information in other languages.
Social and community value	• There is a strong sense of community amongst frequent users, with groups meeting regularly to swim together. • The Newcastle Ocean Baths serves as an important third space that is not tied to commercial activity and facilitates incidental social interactions for the community. • Individuals aged 55 and over were identified as a key user group in the mornings, and families and young adults in the afternoons. • Almost all demographic groups utilise the Newcastle Ocean Baths. Celebrating diverse users of the Newcastle Ocean Baths was noted as an important consideration to avoid possessive use of the space. • People use the Newcastle Ocean Baths as a meeting point and outdoor community space to gather. • Community events, such as the New Annual SOAK, facilitates community pride in the Newcastle Ocean Baths. They also diversify the Newcastle Ocean Baths' uses by supporting cultural and recreational events that utilise the existing grandstand seating. However, there are event safety concerns requiring consideration, including crowding, water safety, and alcohol related behaviour. • There is a historic and cultural identity of the Newcastle Ocean Baths as a Newcastle icon.
Safety and operations	• Lifeguards currently work during summer, between 9am and 5pm. Lifeguard duty hours should be periodically reviewed to ensure they align with patterns of use and community needs.

FEEDBACK THEME	FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS
	• Ongoing maintenance and monitoring of water quality should be responsive to levels of activity at the Newcastle Ocean Baths to ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for users. • The Newcastle Ocean Baths currently attracts antisocial behaviour from older teenagers. This includes vandalism and reckless use of e-bikes in a way that impacts the enjoyment of the space. Activation and diversity of users is a deterrent to this behaviour. • Bathrooms are closed in the evening and reopened by cleaners early in the morning. However, the bathroom's open ceilings mean that out of hours access cannot be prevented entirely. • Non-swimmers are increasingly using the baths, increasing water safety concerns.
Infrastructure and condition	• The northern pavilion is currently unused and in disrepair. • The amenities and facades of the pavilions are in poor condition and in need of renewal. • The existing kiosk space is not operational, which also results in a lack of activation with the street interface.
Economic and tourism potential	• Successful commercial operations could contribute to community vibrancy and boost local businesses through increased foot traffic as a result of the revitalisation. • The revitalisation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths has the potential to make the area a regional destination, therefore boosting tourism.
Access and transport	• Despite the existing car park, parking limitations are a barrier to use. Light rail access is available near the site, though driving is generally favoured in Newcastle. • Beaches that are easier to commute to by car may be favoured by the community over the Newcastle Ocean Baths, due in part to limited parking. • The provision of bike racks at the site is intended to promote active transport usage, though cluttered e-bikes and reckless use are currently causing accessibility and nuisance issues for the operation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths.

5.3 SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS TO THE PROPOSAL

The initial Development Application for Stage 2 works was placed on exhibition from 4 December 2025 to 27 January 2026, with a total of 262 submissions. These submissions comprised of the following:

- Five community group submissions, including Friends of Newcastle Ocean Baths, Newcastle East Residents Group, Newcastle West Community Group, Hunter Community Forum, and Hunter Branch of the National Trust.
- 257 individual community submissions, including one duplicate response.
- The types of community submissions received included:

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- 14 submissions supporting the proposal.¹ Respondents acknowledged the need to repair and maintain the pavilions but raised that the free to use nature of the baths were important to them. Two supporters objected to closing the change room roofs.
- 248 submissions objected to the proposal.

A summary of the feedback received is provided below by key theme.

Table 6. Public exhibition submissions feedback summary (Source: CRED Consulting, 2026)

FEEDBACK THEME	FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS
Concerns related to alcohol licensing being permitted within the proposed food and beverage facility	• An objection to the proposed licensing and subsequent use of alcohol at the site was raised by 162 submissions. • Submissions identified the existing nature of the baths as calm, family-oriented, and safe for children, and believed that the use of alcohol at the site may increase the chance of aggressive or disorderly behaviour. Other alcohol related behaviour concerns included late night noise due to late operating hours, and risk of people feeling uncomfortable at the baths due to feeling like they're being watched by café patrons. • It was also noted that the licensing at the site may exclude some users from the baths, including cultural and religious groups who avoid alcohol, diminishing the inclusive nature of the site. • Submissions raised concerns about the increased safety risks for swimmers affected by alcohol, including risks of drowning.
Concerns related to the commercialisation of the pavilion	• There was a sentiment among respondents that the free and inclusive history and nature of the baths was an important factor in the use and enjoyment of the space. There were 125 objections to the perceived commercialisation of the baths. • There was a sentiment among submissions that the baths are a historic community and family recreation space with a strong focus on affordability, accessibility, and inclusion for the use of the community regardless of social status or income. • Objectors identified the non-commercial nature of the baths as an important factor in their value, noting it as an example of public infrastructure without a need to create profit. • There were concerns that the commercialisation of the site through the provision of a café would result in the exclusion of lower-income users.
Lack of support for the proposed closed roof change rooms	• The existing open-air design of the pavilions is important to the community, with 121 respondents objecting to the proposed enclosure of the space with roofing. • Respondents identified the open roof as an important and iconic heritage factor of the site, with many invoking stories of the open air change rooms being a feature of their lives for many years. • The encouragement of air flow due to the open roof was believed by respondents to prevent mold, mildew, and damp conditions.

¹ Two submissions which selected 'support' did not support the proposal in their content and have been considered objections for the purpose of this SIA.

FEEDBACK THEME	FEEDBACK CONSIDERATIONS
	• Respondents suggested that the open roof allowed them to feel a greater connection to nature while using the space.
Lack of support for the internal layout of the bathroom and change rooms	• There were 55 submissions that raised objections to the proposal based on the layout or size of the bathrooms and change rooms proposed. • Concerns raised included enclosed spaces and limited sight lines in the proposed change rooms, thereby reducing safety for users. • Respondents raised that the change rooms can already be crowded, especially when used by school groups, and that a reduction in size of the change rooms would limit their usefulness.
Concern that the proposal may exacerbate existing traffic and parking issues	• There were 72 submissions that raised concerns about already poor traffic and parking conditions at the baths. • Respondents raised that people generally use the baths for short periods of time, therefore circulating out of the car park fairly quickly. There were concerns that the café will encourage longer stays and less circulation in the car park.
Concerns regarding the loss of visual and social heritage of the pavilion	• There was a sentiment among respondents that the redevelopment was inconsistent with visual and social heritage of the site, referenced in 90 objections. • Respondents raised that the heritage of the site was closely linked to working class history, with the baths being a space for free outdoor recreation for people of all incomes. This objection was linked to the sentiment that the proposal was changing the purpose of the baths and would result in overcommercialisation. • The open change room roofs were a heritage aspect of the baths that were highly valued by the community.
Suggestions to deliver an alternate commercial premises	• Preference for a smaller, unlicensed kiosk was raised in 51 submissions, noting it would be a more appropriate commercial premises for the site. • Community submissions suggested that a small premises selling coffee, hot chips, and healthy food would be more appropriate to support users of the baths without becoming over-commercialised.
Lack of trust in the planning system	• There were 17 submissions that objected due to feeling that the planning process had not adequately considered their feedback on the proposal during its design development. Some of the respondents shared concern that the proposal has changed the use of the site to an extent that is no longer permissible under local planning controls.
Concerns regarding universal accessibility	• Submissions raised that the proposal was not sufficiently accessible, particularly for people with disabilities. • Some respondents raised that the physical access was insufficient (including limited accessible parking and access inside change rooms), while others suggested that the perceived change in purpose of the proposal would exclude people with disabilities from using the space.

5.4 WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK MEAN FOR THE PROPOSAL?

Alcohol licensing and commercialisation of the pavilion are key community concerns

Alcohol licensing (162 submissions) and broader commercialisation of the site (125 submissions) were the two most objected to elements of the proposal, together forming most feedback received. Respondents consistently linked these concerns to a desire to preserve the baths as a free, inclusive, and family-oriented space accessible to all income levels. In response to this feedback, the proposal has revised where the service of alcohol will be permitted for future operators seeking to gain a liquor licence. This means the future operators of the proposed café will only be able to serve alcohol indoors, rather than outside as well. The proposed kiosk will remain alcohol free. Acknowledging that CN is not proposing or approving the sale of alcohol onsite and that it is the responsibility of the future café operator to apply for a liquor licence from NSW Liquor and Gaming.

Social impacts related to *‘Water safety risks from alcohol induced disorderly behaviour’* is assessed in Section 6.

Heritage and social value are closely tied to the open-air design of the existing change rooms

The proposed enclosure of change rooms with a roof was strongly objected to (121 submissions), with respondents describing the open-air design as central to the site's heritage character, ventilation, and connection to nature. This concern was echoed in broader objections regarding loss of visual and social heritage (90 submissions). Design responses should prioritise retaining open-air elements where feasible or clearly demonstrate how heritage character will be preserved if enclosure is necessary.

Social impacts related to *‘Preserving the heritage character of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion’* is assessed in Section 6.

Safety and accessibility concerns related to the design of the proposed change rooms

Submissions raised concerns about reduced sightlines and safety in the proposed change rooms (55 submissions), insufficient capacity for peak use such as school groups, and inadequate accessibility for people with disability, including limited accessible parking and internal access. These concerns, combined with objections regarding traffic and parking impacts (72 submissions) and a perceived lack of genuine consideration of community feedback (17 submissions), highlight new considerations to inform the revised internal layout and accessibility of the proposed change rooms.

Social impacts related to *‘Reduced safety risks through design changes to amenity facilities’* is assessed in Section 6.

6. SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This section summarises the social impact assessment of the proposal, during construction and once operational. An analysis is provided in this section. Table 7 provides an amended assessment of the potential social impacts of the revised proposal as well as potential enhancement measures to maximise positive social impact and mitigation measures to address negative social impacts. For information on how to read this SIA table, please see Appendix 1.

6.1 ASSESSMENT APPROACH

In accordance with the Newcastle DCP and SIA Guideline (DPHI, 2026), the assessment approach predicts and assess social impacts identified in the social baseline. This includes an evaluation of the likelihood and magnitude of each identified social impacts, with and without impact mitigation or benefit enhancement measures applied. These measures can take various forms and may be incorporated by the proponent into the design, planning, construction, or operational stages of the proposed development.

In the absence of a likelihood and magnitude assessment framework within the Newcastle DCP, each impact is assessed following the risk assessment methodology applied in the SIA Guideline and Technical Supplement (DPHI, 2026). This results in the significance of each potential social impact being assessed by comparing the magnitude of the impact against the likelihood of the impact occurring.

This methodology and associated assessment parameters are outlined in Appendix 1.

Social impacts

Social impact assessment is a method for predicting and assessing the consequences of a proposed action or initiative before a decision is made. SIA refers to the assessment of the potential social consequences (positive, negative and neutral) of a proposed decision or action.

The following social impact categories, adopted from the NSW Government Social Impact Assessment Guideline (March 2026), have been considered to prepare this Amended SIA:

- Way of life, including how people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day.
- Culture, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, practices, obligations, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings.
- Health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, access to open space and effects on public health.
- Community, including composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, resilience, and people's sense of place.
- Accessibility, including how people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private, or not-for-profit organisation.
- Surroundings, including ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity.
- Livelihoods, including people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business.

- Decision-making systems, including the extent to which people can have a say in decisions that affect their lives, and have access to complain, remedy and grievance mechanisms.

Some projects may have impacts in all these categories, while others may only have a few.

6.2 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Section provides an assessment of the key impacts of the projects. The following table includes:

- The identified social impacts (positive and negative).
- The affected stakeholders.
- The period of impact (design, construction or operation).
- The likelihood and magnitude of each impact.
- A rating of the unmitigated/unenhanced impact (negligible, low, medium or high) utilising the SIA Guideline Technical Supplement 'Social impact significance matrix'.
- The impact mitigation and benefit enhancement measures incorporated.
- Recommendations relating to the ongoing monitoring, review and update of social impacts anticipated to have a residual social impact.

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Table 7. Amended social impact analysis table (Source: CRED Consulting, 2026)

SOCIAL IMPACT AND LOCALITY	UNMITIGATED ASSESSMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT ASSESSMENT	MONITORING, REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Design development			
Impacts on community trust and participation in decision-making processes Social locality: community members that participated in engagement activities to inform the proposal's design development	The ability for community members to contribute to decision making systems that effect their daily lives and places of significance is a key social impact consideration. During consultation, CN noted there is a strong sense of ownership over the Newcastle Ocean Baths by the Newcastle community. This is evident through the strong community participation during the proposal's design development and its public exhibition period. Across both stages of community consultation, feedback related to the re-design of the existing pavilion, particularly the open air-change rooms were consistently received. These spaces are highly valued by existing users and the proposed changes to these spaces received significant objection by the community during public exhibition. A reason for these objections was the feeling that the community's initial feedback was not adequately considered within the proposal's design development. These objections indicate the community may have reduced feelings of trust in the local planning system as a result. It is acknowledged that the proposed upgrades to the change rooms and bathrooms are key driving factors for the pavilion's revitalisation to ensure universal accessibility and usability for all users.	Ensuring people are effectively informed and receive opportunities to provide feedback about development changes is critical to reduce feelings of uncertainty and fear in the community. A significant level of engagement has been undertaken (refer to Section 3) with the local community and stakeholders. Community feedback has informed the proposal's design refinement process, including considerations relating to the F&B offering, upgraded lifeguard facilities, and accessible amenities. Significate changes to the design have been incorporated following community feedback throughout the design process. Revisions to the design were made during concept design, moving from concept to DA. The design is now being amended in response to submissions received throughout DA exhibition period. After each revision, communications were undertaken to inform the community what changes had been undertaken and why. Upon submission of the DA and subsequent exhibition period, numerous submissions were received from the community along with feedback from Heritage NSW and CN's Urban Design Review Panel. As a result, changes were made to the roof, the layout of the	It is recommended that CN continues to proactively engage with the local community. This could include the distribution of physical and digital communication materials that enables two-way communication. It is recommended that CN continues to inform the community of the changes that have been incorporated into the design as a result of community feedback. In addition, continued engagement with significant external stakeholders, such as Friends of Newcastle Ocean Baths, is recommended.

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SOCIAL IMPACT AND LOCALITY	UNMITIGATED ASSESSMENT	MITIGATION / ENHANCEMENT ASSESSMENT	MONITORING, REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS
	However, despite CN's intention for the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths to become an inclusive space for all members of the diverse community, the resistance to change and impacts on the community's feelings of trust in decision making processes and sense of ownership over the site is also acknowledged. Social impacts on increasing universal accessibility as a result of the proposal are assessed further in the assessment of '<i>Increased accessibility for diverse user groups of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion</i>'. The unenhanced impact is assessed as low negative, due to the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	amenities and the canoe pool. These changes will be communicated to the broader community through a comprehensive communications campaign. The enhanced impact is assessed as medium positive, due to the possible likelihood and moderate magnitude.	
Preserving the heritage character of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion Social locality: Community with a strong connection to the heritage significance of the site	The Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion has an extensive heritage significance. The site is registered as an item of state significance per the NSW Heritage Act 1977 and the Newcastle LEP 2012. The Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by TZG (2025) notes that the site demonstrates the importance of beach culture and swimming as a sport and recreational activity. They also have significance for demonstrating changing social values and morality as an early example of government funding providing mixed bathing. In addition to its historical significance, the site is highly valued by the local community. Its cultural significance is evident in the engagement outcomes. Significantly, community submissions raised that the	The revitalisation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion would not only improve the accessibility and usability of the site for the community, but it would also result in the preservation of the heritage significance of the site. The Heritage Interpretation Strategy (TZG, 2025) demonstrates that the revitalisation would result in the conservation of the inter-war stripped classical/art-deco façade, including the reinstatement of a monochromatic colour scheme. In addition to maintaining the heritage features of the site, upgraded amenities, including the bathrooms, F&B, and bookable community space, ensures the heritage site can be used and celebrated by the local community.	It is recommended that CN host a community open day of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths to celebrate the heritage and history of the site for the community.

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	heritage of the site is closely linked to working class history, with the baths being a space for free outdoor recreation for people of all incomes. The current state of the site is in poor condition, with the empty façade of the north pavilion being supported by props, and some windows in the southern pavilion covered by wooden boards. Therefore, due to the existing poor condition of a site of heritage significance, the unenhanced impact is assessed as low positive, due to the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	The inclusion of interpretive signage with text, graphics, and a historical timeline throughout the site will further provide the community with the opportunity to engage with the history of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion. The proposed revitalisation and upgrades to amenities are designed to ensure the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion continues to operate as a place of recreation for the community. It is intended to celebrate Australia's identity, the culture of swimming and beachgoing, and maintain landmark qualities as an icon of Newcastle. As the revitalisation will result in the restoration and improved usability of the heritage significant Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion, the enhanced impact is assessed as high positive, due to the moderate magnitude and likely likelihood.	
During construction			
Impacts on community access to the Newcastle Ocean Baths due to construction and construction traffic Social locality: Neighbouring residents and frequent visitors to	During construction it is possible that there will be impacts to the surrounding road network and access to the site due to construction and construction traffic. As such, the unmitigated impact is assessed as low negative, due to the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	Maintaining safe, public access to the Newcastle Ocean Baths during the Stage 2 construction activities was noted as a priority by CN. At this stage, mitigation measures to achieve this outcome is unknown and will need to be explored in consultation with the appointed construction company at the Construction Certificate stage.	It is recommended that CN continues to proactively engage with the local community. This could include the distribution of communication materials that educates visitors on their active and public transport options on information

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the Newcastle Ocean Baths		Therefore, the mitigated impact remains as low negative , given that mitigation measures have not been identified at this stage.	noticeboards or online platforms. At the Construction Certificate stage, it is recommended that a Construction Management Plan be prepared. It should include: A signage strategy that ensures visitors are directed with safe and direct routes to the ocean pools, if access remains. Construction grievance management measures, including two-way communication channels for community members to communicate complaints or concerns relating to construction related amenity impacts.
During operation			
Increased activation and use of the Newcastle Ocean Baths by diverse user groups	The Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion is a highly valued and free to access recreation and cultural asset for the Newcastle community. While the site is highly utilised, in recent years the pavilion has been increasing underutilised with the closure of the northern pavilion and café premises.	The provision of renewed bathrooms and change rooms, including a standard accessible toilet, family/universal amenities and 1 changing place facility with MLAK, would improve accessibility outcomes and attract diverse user groups to the Newcastle Ocean Baths.	The CN's Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan will continue to be reviewed annually or following any significant operational changes. Updates will be

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Social locality: Newcastle community and visitors to the Newcastle Ocean Baths	Community and stakeholder feedback described the pavilion as being in poor condition and that the site's sloping gradient contributes to reduced accessibility to the ocean baths through the pavilion. These observations are key drivers for the proposed revitalisation of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion. The amended proposal aims to address these issues through the provision of a refurbished pavilion which will improve the overall accessibility and function of the pavilion's bathrooms and change rooms, lifeguard towers, and F&B premises. Further, the amended proposal includes the addition of a multipurpose community space and formalised shaded seating areas. It is acknowledged that free access to the site would also be retained at the Newcastle Ocean Baths and that hire fees would only apply to the proposed community space within the pavilion. The CPTED Report prepared by DWC (2026) also expects that the proposal would further enhance activation on the site and in the surrounding area. However, noting that ongoing site management would be required to support appropriate site management. Considering the above, the proposal would likely increase activation on the site by introducing a greater diversity of uses, user groups and increasing the average length of stays at the Newcastle Ocean Baths. The unenhanced impact is assessed as medium positive, given the likely likelihood and minor magnitude.	The provision of a F&B premises designed to support the operations of a successful, local business. The inclusion of a café and kiosk will support a greater variety of food and drinks at various price points, supporting socio-economic inclusivity. This would also enhance the site's role as a destination for social and community purposes, in addition to recreation uses. It is also acknowledged that the F&B premises will also provide CN with a source of income that will support the ongoing maintenance and operations of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion. The provision of a multipurpose community space managed by CN in accordance with their Community Building management Framework, which includes booking fees based on activity and group types. Further, the ongoing booking management by CN would ensure equitable access to this space, providing in person or online booking options. These enhancement measures remove potential barriers from accessing this space and minimise risk of a small number of community groups or businesses monopolising the space. The implementation of the Operational Management Plan would ensure that the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion is well maintained and regularly cleaned to ensure a safe, clean and healthy environment for all user groups.	informed by operational feedback, incident reports, and community input to ensure the Newcastle Ocean Baths are being managed appropriately. It is recommended that the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan incorporates the space management recommendations outlined in the CPTED Report (DWC, 2026) to ensure appropriate site management practices encourage regular use and reinforces strong community territorial cues.

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		The enhanced impact is assessed as high positive , given the likely likelihood and major magnitude.	
Impacts on physical accessibility for diverse user groups of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion Social locality: Visitors with reduced mobility, such as people with disability and older adults	The Newcastle Ocean Baths plays an important role as a recreational facility for the Newcastle community. However, accessibility issues may deter visitors with diverse needs or impact their enjoyment of the space, including families and people with disabilities. CN noted during consultation that the Newcastle Ocean Baths are more accessible than local beaches, particularly for less confident swimmers and people with disabilities. Community submissions raised the inclusive culture at the baths, noting their use by people of all ages and abilities. Despite this, there are existing limitations to the physical accessibility of this site. This includes a non-compliant gradient to enter the pavilion, and no adult change facility, which limits the accessibility for some users. These issues were raised during community consultation. As such, the unenhanced impact is assessed as high negative, due to the moderate magnitude and likely likelihood.	The proposal aims to address the limited accessibility at the site. This includes the provision of renewed bathrooms and change rooms, including a standard accessible toilet, family/universal amenities and a changing place facility with MLAK, which will improve the usability of the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion for people with a need for these facilities. This includes a changing place facility with specialised equipment designed for people with high accessibility needs. The changing place facility would be secured by a Master Locksmiths Access Key (MLAK) to minimise risk of misuse or vandalism of the facility. In addition, two family change rooms have been included which contain a shower, a toilet and space for changing, providing an opportunity for families with small children to use the amenities without needing to go into the gendered amenities. The regrading of the existing upper concourse and pavilion floors would improve access for people with different physical abilities and now provide a compliant pathway from the accessible parking spaces through to the amenities and into the pool. Accessible parking	It is recommended that the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan considers management practices associated with the accessible toilet, family/universal amenities and a changing place facility with MLAK. It should ensure that these facilities are well maintained and that the MLAK is readily accessible to visitors who require access to the changing place facility. As outlined in the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan, it is recommended that an incident register and complaint management procedures are implemented to monitor and manage visitor and neighbourhood complaints. The complaints register should be reviewed regularly, and targets should

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		has also been reviewed and re-aligned to ensure compliance with the standard. Operational requirements including hours of operation, cleaning, waste disposal, responsible service of alcohol and operational requirements of the community space will be formalised in the Operational Management Plan, ensuring the facility remains fit for use and operates effectively. As such, the enhanced impact is assessed as high positive, due to the moderate magnitude and likely likelihood.	be implemented to trigger ad-hoc reviews of the Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan.
Impacts on accessibility of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion for culturally diverse groups Social locality: Visitors with cultural or religious customs that impact their level of comfort in places where alcohol is served	The Newcastle Ocean Baths plays an important role as a recreational facility for the Newcastle community. However, accessibility issues may deter visitors with diverse needs or impact their enjoyment of the space, including people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. CN noted during consultation that there is existing signage at the baths that communicates safety risks in English and pictograms, as well as a QR link to the same information in other languages. Some community submissions raised that the inclusion of a licensed café at the site may exclude people from cultural and religious groups that don't feel comfortable in areas where alcohol is served.	The proposal aims to be welcoming to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Public Art Strategy outlines an intention to engage Aboriginal artists to contribute to public art and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage on the site. In response to community submissions received during public exhibition, CN intends to restrict the future F&B premises to serve alcohol within the café's indoor seating areas (subject to a formal liquor licencing application by a future café operator to Liquor and Gaming NSW). This will allow for greater staff surveillance and RSA management over guests. This will also further separate the ancillary uses and the alcohol	As outlined in the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan, it is recommended that an incident register and complaint management procedures are implemented to monitor and manager visitor and neighbourhood complaints. The complaints register should be reviewed regularly, and targets should be implemented to trigger ad-hoc reviews of the Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan.

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	As such, the unenhanced impact is assessed as medium negative , due to the minor magnitude and likely likelihood.	consumption from the primary function of the ocean baths. As such, the enhanced impact is assessed as high positive , due to the moderate magnitude and likely likelihood.	It is recommended that CN continues to proactively engage with the local community. This could include the distribution of communication materials that educates visitors on the site's new access arrangements and support services that are available.
Impacts on accessibility to small community spaces that are complimentary to the primary recreation use of the Newcastle Ocean Baths Social locality: Local community members, groups or organisations seeking a meeting space for small gatherings	CN's Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment (CRED Consulting, 2021) identifies demand for a new community facility, equivalent of 1,434sqm GFA, to meet the needs of the Newcastle – Cooks Hill (inclusive of Newcastle East End) catchment population in 2041. Specifically, it was recommended that community facilities are located adjacent to storage facilities and amenities with direct access to external spaces for expansion of activities outdoors when conditions allow. The proposal would provide a new, bookable community space with a small kitchenette, storeroom, and supporting amenities, comprising approximately 72.2sqm. This would meet a portion of the identified demand for community facilities and is aligned with the design recommendations outlined in the Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment (CRED Consulting, 2021). Further, community and stakeholder feedback highlighted the benefits of co-locating a community	The proposed community facility has a multipurpose design and fittings aligned with the recommended design within the Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment (CRED Consulting, 2021). This would maximise utilisation of the space by accommodating a range of user group needs. CN has observed that groups currently use the Newcastle Ocean Baths as a meeting and event space, and the inclusion of a bookable space would formalise the capacity of the space to host these groups. CN intends to provide discounted community facility hire fees for community groups. The ongoing booking management by CN, including options to book online or in person, would ensure equitable access to this space. This would also minimise risk of a small number of community groups or businesses monopolising the space.	The CN's Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan will continue to be reviewed annually or following any significant operational changes. Updates will be informed by operational feedback, incident reports, and community input to ensure the Newcastle Ocean Baths are being managed appropriately. It is recommended that further consideration be given to the management and advertisement of the proposed community space. This should include regular reviews of booking systems to

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	facility space with the existing function of the Newcastle Ocean Baths. Specifically, it was acknowledged that it already functions as a community gathering space, both for recreation activities and regular social and community group gatherings. The proposed community facility would provide an opportunity to formalise these existing functions for regular user groups while attracting additional users to the site. Despite this, there was some community sentiment that the community space may operate as an extended function room of the café. This raised concern that community space is not aligned with the site's primary function as a recreation facility and that it would contribute to the further privatisation of the space. It was also noted that the cost of booking this space may potentially exclude people based on socio-economic or cultural factors. Considering the above, the unenhanced impact is assessed as medium positive, given the likely likelihood and minor magnitude.	The community space is proposed to be physically separated and operated separate to the café, and strictly no alcohol will be permitted to be used in the community space. The F&B premises will be operated by a future business and the community space will be managed by CN. Considering the above enhancement measures, the enhanced impact is assessed as high positive, given the likely likelihood and moderate magnitude.	understand who the frequent user groups are, and to identify opportunities to accommodate a greater diversity of user groups. It is recommended that CN host a community open day of the revitalised Newcastle Ocean Baths, including the community facility, for the community to familiarise themselves with the space and to gain more information on how to access it.
Access and safety impacts from car and cyclist traffic during operation	The proposal would likely have an impact to traffic and transport during operation. During consultation, the community noted that the existing environment facilitates pedestrian and cyclist conflicts. Specifically, it was noted that the proposal should include adequate space along the promenade and upper deck for pedestrians and cyclists to avoid	Bike storage racks are proposed to reduce the likelihood of visitors informally cluttering their bikes at the site and creating physical barriers to the pavilion. The proposed regrading of the upper concourse and pavilion will also support improved physical access to the site from the street, once operational.	It is recommended that CN continues to proactively engage with the local community. This could include the distribution of communication materials that educates visitors on their active and public transport

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Social locality: Visitors to Newcastle Ocean Baths and local residents	congestion and conflicts. CN also observed that cluttered bikes and reckless use of e-bikes were causing accessibility and nuisance issues for the operation of the facility. CN noted that despite the existing car park, parking limitations were a barrier to use at the site, and that people may be inclined towards visiting beaches with more parking provision instead of the site. Community submissions also raised that traffic and parking were existing issues, and there was a sentiment that the proposal may result in an exacerbation of these issues. The provision of parking at the site is not proposed to change as part of this DA. As such, the unmitigated impact is assessed as low negative, due to the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	The proposed location of the F&B premises would enhance the pavilion's interface with the public domain and pedestrians passing the site. Therefore, the mitigated impact is assessed as low positive, given the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	options on information noticeboards or online platforms. At the Construction Certificate stage, it is recommended that a Construction Management Plan be prepared. It should include: A signage strategy that ensures visitors are directed with safe and direct routes to the ocean pools, if access remains. Construction grievance management measures, including two-way communication channels for community members to communicate complaints or concerns relating to construction related amenity impacts. A Green Travel Plan that encourages construction workers to utilise active and public transport others to minimise impacts on the local road network during construction.

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Water safety risks from alcohol induced disorderly behaviour Social locality: Visitors to the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion and F&B premises	The safety of users of the Newcastle Ocean Baths and pavilion is an important social impact, particularly considering swimming related risks including injuries and drowning, and antisocial use of the site particularly at night. The site is currently attended by lifeguards who work during summer, between 9 am and 5 pm. During community engagement and public exhibition period, some community members raised concerns about the application for the F&B premise at the site to be licensed. There were concerns that this could result in unsafe or antisocial behaviour, and increased risks of drowning. It is acknowledged that this proposal will facilitate the operation of a F&B premises, but any request to obtain a liquor licence will be subject to a formal application by a future café operator to Liquor and Gaming NSW. Therefore while the approval of this DA may impose conditions of consent, it cannot approve or refuse the café's ability to serve alcohol. As such, the unenhanced impact is assessed as medium negative, due to the possible likelihood and moderate magnitude.	As noted in the CPTED Report (DWC, 2026), the land use itself instils a sense of community, ownership, and promotes a well-cared for asset. It is anticipated that the proposed upgrades will further enhance activity in the area, activating the currently unused elements of the site through the inclusion of addition land uses such as F&B and hireable community space. This increased activation is likely to deter anti-social behaviour identified by CN. To mitigate safety risks associated with the service of alcohol at the proposed F&B premises, CN's Newcastle Operational Management Plan and complaint management procedures include mitigation measures to ensure the future F&B premises licensee and staff would comply with their legal and social obligations in relation to the responsible service of alcohol. This includes demonstrating a committed to providing a safe environment for patrons, staff and the local community. Refer to CN's Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan for the complete list of alcohol-related risk mitigation measures. The improved lifeguard tower is likely to result in improved safety outcomes, ensuring maximised visibility over people using the ocean pools. As such, the enhanced impact is assessed as low negative, due to the possible likelihood and minimal magnitude.	The CN's Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan will continue to be reviewed annually or following any significant operational changes. Updates will be informed by operational feedback, incident reports, and community input to ensure the Newcastle Ocean Baths are being managed appropriately. This includes a review of operational management measures that relate to the responsible service of alcohol within the proposed F&B premises. It is recommended that the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan incorporates the recommendations outlined in the CPTED Report (DWC, 2026) to ensure appropriate site management practices are aligned with patterns of use and community needs.

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Reduced safety risks through design changes to amenity facilities Social locality: Visitors to the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion	The safety of users of the Newcastle Ocean Baths is an important social impact, particularly considering sun safety, theft, and antisocial use of the site particularly at night and in change rooms. CN noted that the change rooms are closed in the evening and reopened by cleaners early in the morning, but that the open ceilings mean that out of hours access cannot be prevented entirely. CN also noted that there were some instances of crime and antisocial behaviour at the site, particularly at night. During public exhibition, some community members raised that concern that the proposed change rooms reduced sight lines compared to the existing design and may result in increased opportunities for concealment. Since receiving this feedback, CN has amended the proposed design of the changeroom facilities. As such, the unenhanced impact is assessed as medium negative, due to the possible likelihood and minor magnitude.	Since receiving feedback on the proposed design of the amenity facilities during public exhibition, CN has amended the proposed design of the changeroom facilities to minimise safety risks. Specifically, the change rooms roof form has been revised to create a more open feel to the change rooms, and the amenities layout has also been amended to improve sight lines and circulation in the space. As noted in the CPTED Report (DWC, 2026), the amended design and layout of the change rooms balance an “open” feel to these spaces to incorporate more light and ventilation without compromising privacy and avoiding concealment and entrapment spaces. Overall, it assesses these spaces as appropriate from a CPTED perspective, and that they would not compromise the overall high levels of surveillance achieved within and around the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion.	The CN's Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan will continue to be reviewed annually or following any significant operational changes. Updates will be informed by operational feedback, incident reports, and community input to ensure the Newcastle Ocean Baths are being managed appropriately. It is recommended that the CN Newcastle Ocean Baths Operational Management Plan incorporates the recommendations outlined in the CPTED Report (DWC, 2026) to ensure appropriate site management practices are aligned with patterns of use and community needs.

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		As such, the enhanced impact is assessed as high positive , due to the likely likelihood and moderate magnitude.	If significant complaints relating to theft of personal items are reported, it is recommended that CN considers opportunities to install secure lockers for visitors to store their personal items while using the Newcastle Ocean Baths.
Impact on community pride, as Newcastle Ocean Baths is enhanced as a regional destination Social locality: Newcastle residents or individuals with a sense of pride over the Newcastle Ocean Baths and visitors	Newcastle Ocean Baths regularly attracts visitors from across Newcastle and the broader region, including Greater Sydney. This demonstrates the current role of the Newcastle Ocean Baths as a regional destination. During consultation, CN acknowledged that beyond its usual function as Ocean Baths, the success of recent events at the Newcastle Ocean Baths, specifically New Annual SOAK, demonstrates the site's capacity to support cultural and recreational events at a regional scale. This event's success also highlighted the Newcastle community's pride and readiness to participate in events that celebrate community assets. However, it was acknowledged that formalised events are challenging to deliver at the site given safety risks associated with crowding, water safety and alcohol related behaviour. The proposal provides an opportunity to further formalise the site's capacity to function as a regional destination through increased accessibility, higher quality facilities and overall activation. It is expected	The proposed upgrades to the Newcastle Ocean Baths pavilion and surrounds would enhance the variety of uses and functions that could be supported on site, such as regional events or activities. Further, the improved lifeguard facilities would likely enhance existing event management practices, from a water safety perspective. The proposed upgrades and revitalisation work of the site's heritage features, as per the Statement of Heritage Impact (TZG, 2025) further celebrates the site's cultural significance and iconic design. This is likely to attract a range of individuals and groups who appreciate and value the site's heritage significance. The enhanced impact is assessed as high positive, given the likely likelihood and moderate magnitude.	CN should continue to monitor utilisation trends of Newcastle beaches, including the Newcastle Ocean Baths. This tool is valuable to understand where visitors are travelling from, the average length of stay and the overall quantity of visitors at different times of year. When feasible and appropriate, it is recommended that CN provides low barrier access to the proposed community space, particularly for local businesses, cultural and creative industries, sport and recreation groups, and other

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	that this would increase tourism and the number of regular visitors from the regional area, generating broader economic and social impacts. The unenhanced impact is assessed as medium positive, given the possible likelihood and moderate magnitude.		community groups or organisations.

APPENDIX 1

HOW TO READ THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TABLE

This Social Impact Assessment uses the Department of Planning and Environment's Social Impact Significance matrix to assess the social impact of the Planning Proposal.

A combination of subjective and objective information inputs was used to complete this assessment - including individual experiences, community perceptions and technical information such as demographic and benchmarking analysis.

SIA assesses the 'likelihood' and 'magnitude' levels of social impacts of a proposed development. This assessment is undertaken for all social impacts, including neutral, positive and negative social impacts.

'Likelihood' refers to the probability of the impact occurring.

'Magnitude' refers to the likely significance of the impact and considers multiple characteristics, including:

- *Extent*: The volume of people expected to be affected and their relative location to the proposal.
- *Duration*: The timeframe and frequency of potential social impacts.
- *Severity or scale*: The degree of change from the existing condition as a result of the impact.
- *Intensity or importance*: The extent to which people or an environment can adapt to change or mitigate the impact.
- *Level of concern/interest*: The level of interest or concern among the people affected.

The 'likelihood' and 'magnitude' levels of the social impacts are then assessed to determine overall level of social impact, using the 'Social Impact Significance Matrix', which is included in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Social impact significance matrix (source: SIA Guideline for State Significant Projects)

		MAGNITUDE LEVEL				
		1	2	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A	Almost Certain	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Very high
B	Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very high
C	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E	Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium



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