

# HUNTER

## Regional Transport Plan

March 2014



The new state  
of business



**Hunter Regional Transport Plan**

March 2014

ISBN: 978-1-922030-50-4

© State of New South Wales through  
Transport for NSW, 2014.

**Transport for NSW**

18 Lee St, Chippendale NSW 2008.

**Disclaimer**

While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of printing, the State of NSW, its agents and employees, disclaim any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon the whole or any part of this document.

## CONTENTS

MINISTERS' MESSAGE	2
YOUR REGION	3
DELIVERING CHANGE	8
CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN	20
ACTIONS IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN	21
PUTTING THE CUSTOMER FIRST	24
TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE HUNTER REGION	27
TRAVEL WITHIN THE HUNTER REGION	32
TRAVEL IN MAJOR TOWNS AND CENTRES	41
TRANSFORMING NEWCASTLE	46
IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY	68
WE LISTENED	69



## MINISTERS' MESSAGE

When we came to government, one of our first priorities was to develop a clear direction for transport in NSW over the next 20 years.

The *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* was released in December 2012 to provide a comprehensive blueprint for the future, complete with more than 220 short, medium and long term actions.



To support the Master Plan, we recognise that the state's 10 regional centres have more specific local transport needs and priorities which should be considered and planned for.

The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* outlines specific actions to address the unique challenges of the area and includes the things you told us were important to you during consultation in 2012.

The plan looks at population changes in the Hunter region and considers the fact that it has the largest regional workforce in NSW, with more than 80 percent of the population living in the towns and cities of the Lower Hunter. The Hunter region is also home to the world's largest coal export port in Newcastle. The plan builds on the expected growth of freight and exports in the region.

With major investments including the completion of the Hunter Expressway, and a commitment of \$15 million to deliver improved road connections at Glendale, the *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* ensures Hunter region residents will have better connections to jobs, study and town centres – now and into the future.

The Hunter region will also benefit from increased public transport services around new residential areas including around Branxton, Huntlee, Maitland, Catherine Hill Bay and North Cooranbong as well as improvements on the New England Highway to address congestion and safety issues.

We are also investing in a new vision for Newcastle, unlocking the enormous potential of the state's second largest city. Light rail for Newcastle is a transformative transport project which will help to change the way that Newcastle functions, and contribute to the overall goal of the urban revitalisation strategy – to reinvent a modern city, and a diverse, vibrant and attractive place for business, visitors and locals.

We understand the importance of providing a better transport system in Newcastle, for future growth and development, that will not only have benefits in Newcastle, but will change the Hunter region for the better.

Thank you to the community who took the time to contribute to this planning process. We look forward to working with you as we continue to improve and develop our state's transport system.

**Gladys Berejiklian**  
Minister for Transport

**Duncan Gay**  
Minister for Roads and Ports

## YOUR REGION

Transport in the Hunter region is focused on north-south movements along the east coast and through Newcastle on the Main North rail line and the M1 and Pacific Highway corridors, and east-west connections through Maitland and beyond via the Hunter Valley Rail network, and the New England and Golden highways.

The Hunter region is diverse. It comprises eleven local government areas, including the more urban landscape of Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle and Port Stephens in the Lower Hunter, and the more rural and dispersed Upper Hunter, comprising Dungog, Gloucester, Great Lakes, Muswellbrook, Singleton and the Upper Hunter Shire.

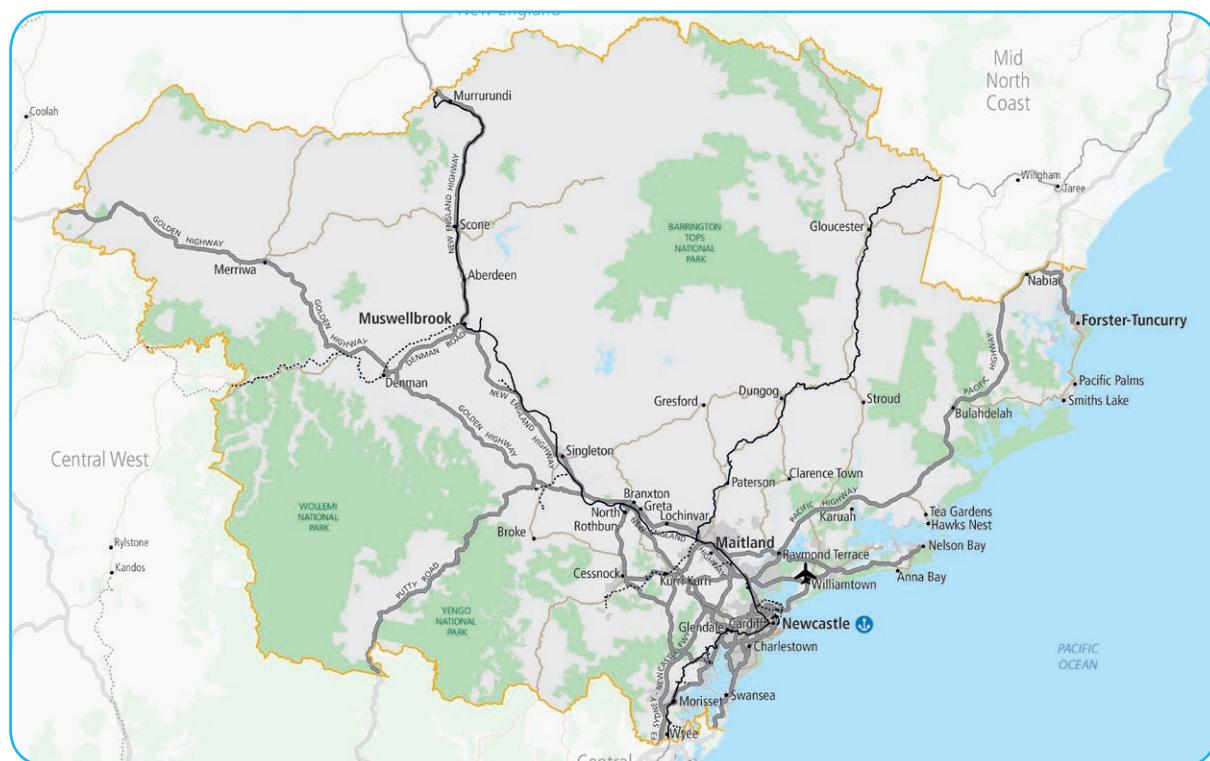
As the Hunter's regional city, Newcastle is the second largest city in NSW, and the seventh largest urban area in Australia.

The Hunter region has a population of approximately 643,000 residents (2011) and the largest regional workforce in NSW. The region is experiencing above average population growth increasing by one percent per annum between 2001 and 2011 – the same as the state average, but above the regional average of 0.7 percent.

The population is concentrated along the coast, and the corridor between Newcastle and Maitland. Around 84 percent of the Hunter region's population live in the towns and cities of the Lower Hunter and more than half in the Local Government Areas of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. The Upper Hunter is characterised by smaller and more dispersed settlements.

As the Hunter region's regional city, Newcastle is the second largest city in NSW, and the seventh largest urban area in Australia. Considerable

**Figure 1** The Hunter region



- Rail with passenger services
- Freight-only rail
- Waterways
- National and state roads and highways
- Regional roads
- National parks
- Urban area
- Town or city
- ✈ Airport with commercial passenger services
- Port





work is currently underway to drive urban renewal, and to reinvent Newcastle as a modern, vibrant and attractive city.

Light rail will be delivered in the Newcastle city centre, as part of a package of initiatives to improve the city's economy, accessibility and connectivity, and the quality and attractiveness of the public domain. The revitalisation of the city centre will encourage development and draw more residents and employment opportunities into the CBD, providing a catalyst for further investment in the Hunter region.

Regional centres in the Hunter region, particularly the Newcastle metropolitan area and along the New England Highway corridor, provide the main trip attractors for employment, education and health facilities, such as the University of Newcastle, TAFE Hunter Institute and John Hunter Hospital.

Topographical features, such as the Hunter River with its floodplain and wetlands, and large areas of conservation reserve such as Barrington Tops, provide a challenge for transport provision.

Customers in the Hunter region told us that it is important to plan for the revitalisation of Newcastle, improved transport connections within the region and an accessible, customer-focused public transport system. They also emphasised the importance of improving the way freight is transported, and improving safety and security on the transport networks.

Key transport challenges include an ageing population, high levels of private car use, and balancing freight and passenger transport needs.

The region's population is ageing. The proportion of children under 15 years has fallen from 21 percent to 19 percent between 2001 and 2011, while the proportion of people aged 65 years and over has increased from 15 percent to 17 percent in the same period. This has an impact on the types of transport services that need to be provided in the region, with an ageing population needing to access health and aged care services in regional centres.

With approximately 20 percent of NSW businesses outside Sydney located in the Hunter region, the efficient movement of people and goods is important to the wider productivity of NSW.

The regional economy is strongly focused on the services sector. Major employment sectors include healthcare and social assistance (14 percent), retail (12 percent), manufacturing (10 percent), accommodation and food services (eight percent), education and training (eight percent), and construction (seven percent).

Most areas in the Hunter region have higher levels of social disadvantage than the NSW and regional NSW medians. Great Lakes, Gloucester and Cessnock Local Government Areas are the most disadvantaged areas within the region, while those of Singleton, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie are the least disadvantaged.

Transport services that provide access to education and employment opportunities, health facilities and services can address social disadvantage.

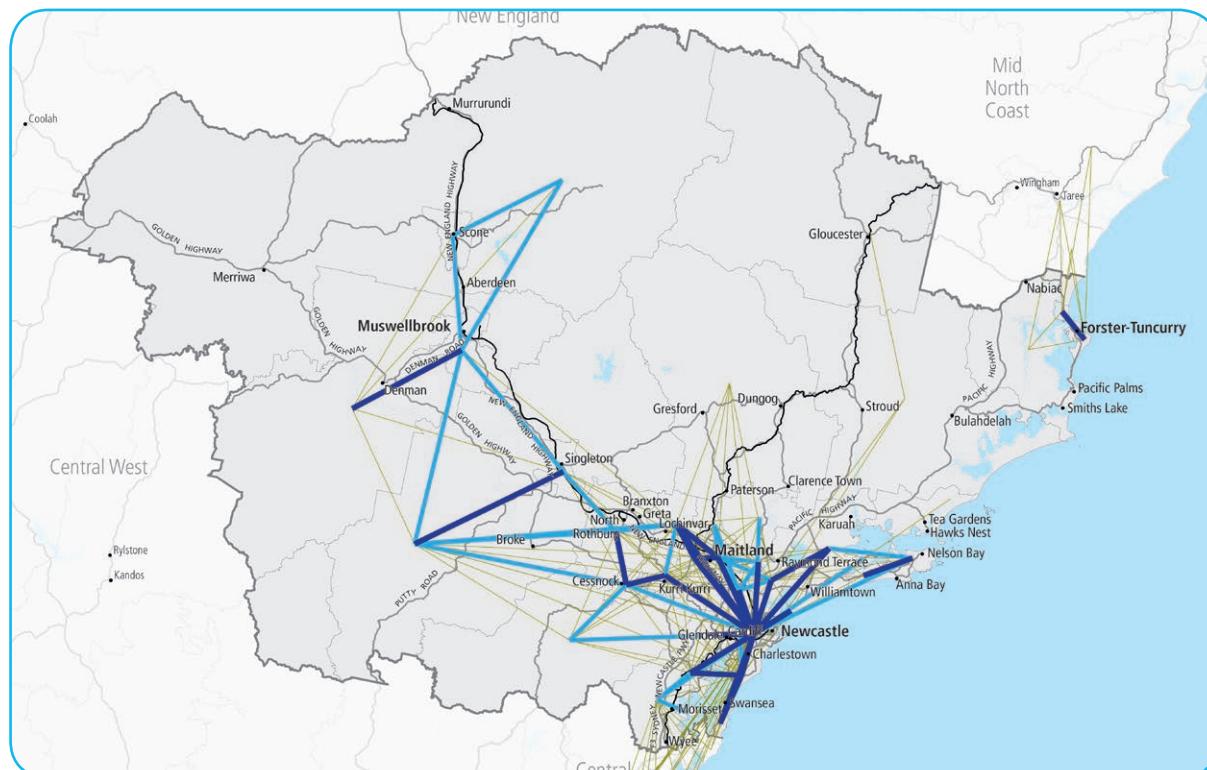
Car is the primary mode of transport for residents across the Hunter region. Limited public transport options are provided outside of higher density settlements, impacting on access to health services, education and employment in the larger centres for residents in the smaller towns and villages of the Hunter region. This presents challenges for the young, families on low incomes, the elderly and those with disabilities.

The region has a high level of employment self-containment with about 95 percent of journeys to work starting and finishing in the region. Destinations for travel to employment outside of the region include the Central Coast and Sydney. People also travel into the Hunter region for work from the Central Coast, Sydney and the Mid North Coast regions.

The vast majority (91 percent) of journeys to work are made by car, either as a driver or passenger. This proportion is consistent with other NSW regions, but there is a significantly greater reliance on car travel than for the Sydney region, particularly for Newcastle as the region's major regional city.

In NSW 2021, the NSW Government has set a target to increase the share of commuter trips made by public transport to and from the Newcastle CBD to 20 percent by 2016.

**Figure 2** Journey to work origins and destinations in the Hunter region



Daily journey to work trips 2011 (By SA2 with Newcastle zones grouped)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— 101-500</li> <li>— 501-1000</li> <li>— 1001-18585</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Rail with passenger services</li> <li>— Region boundary</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— National and state roads and highways</li> <li>— Locality boundary (SA2)</li> </ul> |
|---|---|--|

Travel to work is focused on the Hunter region's centres. The highest proportion of trips take place within the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie local government areas. Key travel patterns between centres are shown in Figure 2, including:

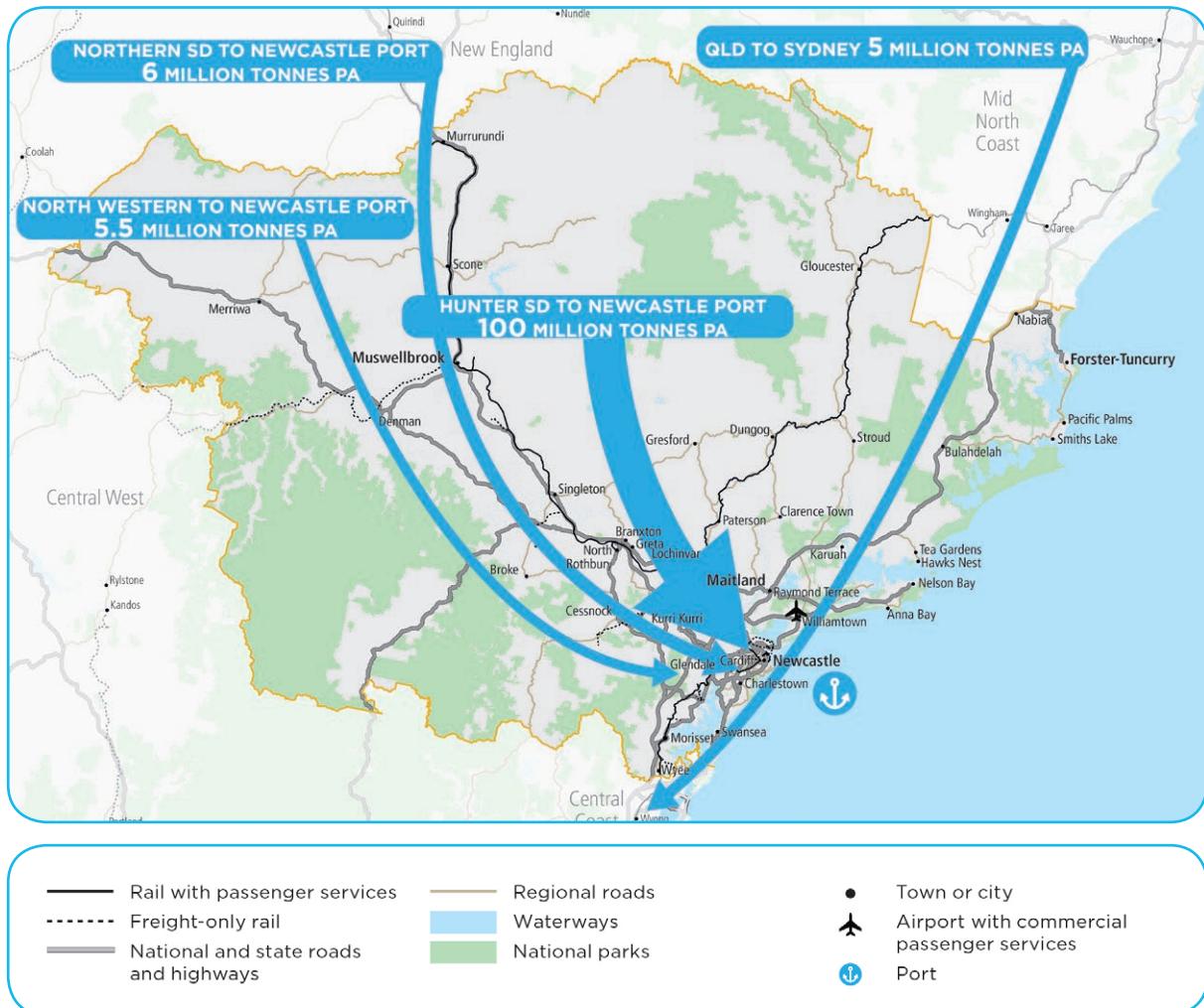
- Lake Macquarie to Newcastle LGA
- Maitland to Newcastle (New England Highway)
- Raymond Terrace to Newcastle (Pacific Highway)
- Lake Macquarie to Wyong (M1 Pacific Motorway)
- Cessnock to Newcastle, Maitland (Cessnock Road) and Singleton (Wine Country Drive)
- Maitland to Singleton and Port Stephens LGA (New England Highway).

The Hunter region has a diverse freight task, with a range of industry supply chains, including the coal mining industry, the wine industry and other industrial producers, for both local and longer distance transport.

The Hunter region transport system provides for major interstate freight flows, particularly between Sydney and Brisbane, while also catering for local and inter-regional freight movement, as shown in Figure 3.

Newcastle Port is the world's largest coal export port and is expected to continue to grow. The port's other major trades include alumina, petroleum, fertilizers, grains, cement, woodchips and steel. Coal exports through the Port of Newcastle reached 142 million tonnes in 2012-2013, increasing from 120 million tonnes in 2011-2012. The Port will be leased by the

**Figure 3** Freight flows in the Hunter region



NSW Government in 2014, with \$340 million of the proceeds directed towards a new vision for transport in the Newcastle CBD.

The Coastal Harbours of the Hunter region, which include Raymond Terrace, Nelson Bay, Tea Gardens and Tuncurry, cater for the commercial fishing industry, local tourism and recreational boating and provide a departure point for charter boats. A limited amount of freight is transported through these coastal harbours.

By 2031, the freight task in NSW is projected to nearly double, with greater growth predicted for the Hunter Valley rail corridor. It is important that the right network capacity is provided to enable efficient freight movements and support productivity.

The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor program, which is being jointly funded by the NSW and Australian governments, will lift rail freight

carrying capacity between Newcastle and Sydney by 50 percent, from 29 to 44 freight trains each day. This will help to accommodate the expected increase in freight volumes.

Tourism is an important trip generator for the region. The Hunter region received approximately 7.8 million visitors per annum during 2010-11, of which 5.4 million per annum were day visitors. The top three areas visited were Newcastle CBD, Cessnock and Singleton LGA, while the Hunter Valley had the highest number of regional overnight trips in NSW (987,000 trips).

While some regions experience high seasonal peaks, the Hunter region attracts a fairly consistent tourist demand throughout the year. However, demand may be localised seasonally, with coastal areas experiencing higher summer peaks, and significant events drawing tourists to locations throughout the region.

The tourism sector provided approximately 11,000 jobs, which was seven percent of the state tourism employment market in 2011.

Newcastle Airport, located approximated 25 km north of Newcastle at Williamtown, is the main airport in the region. Direct flight destinations include Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Ballina. There were 1.2 million annual passenger movements through the airport in 2010-11, which is expected to increase to 2.2 million by 2030-31.

Port Stephens Council has recently approved the development application to more than double the size of the terminal at Newcastle Airport. When completed, it would have capacity to increase domestic passenger flow from the current 1.2 million to a potential five million annually, as well as provide infrastructure to allow for international flights.

The specific population, employment and land use characteristics of the Hunter region have implications for the transport network, as follows:

**Table 1** Transport implications of regional characteristics

Characteristics	Transport implication
Population growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater travel demand as population increases</li> <li>Requirement for managing demand and operations as a priority, with eventual expansion of infrastructure and services to meet this demand, as required</li> </ul>
Ageing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater demand to travel for healthcare, medical and recreation reasons and less demand for travel to/from work and within peak periods</li> <li>Need for more specialist transport services to cater for limited mobility and to reduce social isolation</li> <li>Need for research and pilot projects to determine the best ways to transition people from cars to public transport and to community transport to reduce car dependency</li> </ul>
Population concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concentration of population in Newcastle and adjacent coastal areas leads to local congestion</li> <li>Inter-regional movements, particularly during holiday periods, impact on local networks during peak commuting times and at the beginning and end of holiday periods</li> </ul>
Road safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedestrian casualty crashes are clustered in the Newcastle urban area, in the urban areas along the New England Highway from Hexham to Maitland, and in the townships of Cessnock, Singleton and Nelson Bay</li> <li>Heavy vehicle crashes are concentrated in the Newcastle urban area, from Newcastle to Branxton along the Pacific and New England highways, around the M1 Pacific Motorway interchanges with the Pacific and New England highways and the surrounds of Muswellbrook</li> </ul>
Major existing and future freight movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freight growth will require delivery of the right network capacity and configuration to enable efficient freight movements, meet capacity and complexity needs, support productivity and operate in a sustainable way</li> </ul>
Domestic and international tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing importance of access to Newcastle Airport</li> <li>Increase in demand and congestion on strategic and local road network during peak holiday travel periods</li> </ul>



## DELIVERING CHANGE

Some of the initiatives already underway in the Hunter region include:

- 
- Commitment of \$340 million from the sale of the Newcastle Port to build light rail in Newcastle city centre as part of the NSW Government's vision for Newcastle
  - Newcastle and the Hunter region will benefit from \$40 million to improve the safety and reliability of the rail network, including replacing sleepers, renewing bridges and modernising overhead wiring
  - A new timetable was implemented in October 2013 with a focus on reducing timetable complexity, and revising the stopping patterns to better reflect customer demand. Under the new timetable, the Newcastle/ Hunter Line has seen 40 new weekly peak express services, 105 extra weekly services between Sydney and Newcastle and a weekly Sydney journey time saving of up to 155 minutes
  - Delivery of 92 Oscar cars now in service on the Central Coast and Newcastle line
  - Completion of the Hexham Passing Loop and construction of the Gosford Passing Loops project as part of the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Program. The program is aimed at reducing the potential for delays with freight and passenger trains operating on the same network between Sydney and Newcastle
  - The Pacific Highway upgrade at Bulahdelah was completed, improving safety for motorists on the highway and for the Bulahdelah community
  - The completion of the 40 kilometre Hunter Expressway will provide a new east-west connection between Newcastle and the growing Lower Hunter and is one of the biggest road infrastructure projects to be built in the Hunter region
  - As part of the Transport Access Program, we have upgraded Cardiff Station, including new lifts and a new station building
  - Completed accessibility upgrades at Scone, Singleton, Greta, Dungog and Hamilton, with one under construction at Wallarobba
  - The introduction and expansion of quiet carriages on the Central Coast and Newcastle line
  - A refresh of all 200 of the popular intercity V Set carriages on the Central Coast and Newcastle line
  - The introduction of NSW TrainLink which operates services to the Hunter and for the first time provides a dedicated organisation focused on improving services for our rail customers in regional NSW
  - Addition of bus connections from Cessnock to Morisset Station to significantly reduce the travel time to Sydney

- Delivering 11 new buses in the Hunter region as part of the 2013-14 budget, including two buses under the Growth Buses Program servicing two new routes from Kurri Kurri to Maitland, and Aberglasslyn to Rutherford
- Investing \$27.8 million towards 58 buses to replace aged buses in the outer-metropolitan areas of Newcastle and the Lower Hunter, as well as Wollongong, Central Coast and the Blue Mountains
- Real time bus apps now available to be used by Newcastle customers
- Planning for a ramp access upgrade to Dungog Station which will deliver accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure where it is needed most
- Completion of ramp and accessibility upgrades at Hamilton, Singleton, Greta and Scone, and a station upgrade at Cardiff
- The Hunter region will benefit from close to \$1.2 million for the Community Transport Program in the Hunter region, as part of \$7.5 million in funding to local providers across the state
- An acceleration of the school zone flashing lights program, to ensure every school in NSW has a set of flashing lights by December 2015
- Investing \$208 million over the next decade to install seatbelts on almost 1,700 dedicated school buses as part of a suite of initiatives to improve school bus safety in regional NSW.



The NSW Government is committed to putting the customer first. For the regions, this embodies a commitment to a transport system that:

- Provides more reliable services
- Gets people in NSW's regions where they need to go.

## 2012-13 HUNTER ROAD NETWORK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

For the 2012-13 financial year we spent \$66.8 million on upgrading and maintaining over 1,000 kilometres of major roads in the Hunter region including works on pavement and corridors. We also spent \$37.5 million on upgrading and maintaining over 470 bridges in the Hunter region.

We provided \$4.2 million to the local councils within the Hunter region to assist with road restoration after natural disaster damage and \$23.4 million for maintenance and improvement of their road networks.

The works undertaken on major roads and bridges included resurfacing over 1,100,000m<sup>2</sup> of roads and rebuilding 166,000m<sup>2</sup> of roads at a cost of \$13.4 million and \$19.4 million respectively.

Other major works undertaken in the Hunter included replacement of the Aberdeen Bridge over the Hunter River, upgrade of the Dunmore Bridge over the Paterson River at Woodville, repairs of the Tarean Road over the Karuah River and the deck of the Putty Road Bridge over Wollombi Brook at Bulga, as well as maintenance and operation of Hexham Bridge over the Hunter River on the Pacific Highway.

## Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grant Scheme

LGA	Improvement	Year	Cost (\$)
Cessnock	Cessnock Public Transport Improvements Program	2011-12	109,632
	Provide, upgrade and improve seating, shelters, signage and disability access at 25 locations	2012-13	202,000
Port Stephens	Public transport infrastructure compliant with disability standards	2011-12	160,000
	Bus shelter modification - modify existing bus shelter for use by people with a disability, including installation of tactile tiles and adjustable seating for wheelchair use	2011-12	7,500
	Additional public transport infrastructure compliant with disability standards at 20 locations- concrete hardstands and path connection, tactile indicators, lighting, signage and seating	2012-13	105,000
	Public transport infrastructure compliant with disability standards at 38 locations- concrete hardstands and path connection, shelter, tactile indicators, lighting, signage, seating, "J" poles	2012-13	178,500
Upper Hunter	Provide solar-powered lighting and signage at Scone Station/ bus interchange to improve safety and amenity	2011-12	17,708
Gloucester	Billabong Bus interchange upgrade at Denison Street	2012-13	15,000
Maitland	Bus shelter installation at nine locations	2012-13	120,000

## Transport Access Program

Focus Area	Location	Projects	Completion date	Status
Station Upgrades	Aberdeen	Resurfacing parts of the car park and road	June 2012	Open to public
	Cardiff	Station upgrade, including new lifts and new station building. Finishing works continue	June 2013	Open to Public
Interchanges	Cardiff	Interchange upgrade	Anticipated late 2014	Planning
	Maitland	Interchange upgrade	Anticipated June 2015	Planning
Easy Access	Dungog	Ramp access upgrade	November 2013	Open to Public
	Greta	Ramp access upgrade	April 2013	Open to Public
	Hamilton	Ramp access upgrade	March 2013	Open to public
	Scone	Accessibility upgrade	May 2013	Open to public
	Singleton	Ramp access upgrade	March 2013	Open to public
	Wallerabba	Ramp access upgrade	April 2014	Commenced construction

## Traffic Management and Road Safety Program

LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
<b>Road Safety</b>				
Cessnock	Safety improvements on Newline Road and Six Mile Road in Eaglton	2011-12	Completed	132,000
	Improve safety by upgrading Wine Country Drive and associated local roads in Pokolbin	2012-13	Completed	985,019
	Install line marking on Branxton Road, Littlewood Road and Tuckers Lane in North Rothbury	2011-12	Completed	123,491
	Safety works including clearing trees and hazards within road clear zone, road widening, strengthening of the existing pavement and sealing along the Old Maitland Road in Cessnock	2012-13	Completed	1,106,000
	Traffic safety works on Wollombi Road in Pelton	2012-13	Completed	847,000
	Improve curve realignment in Wine Country Drive and 290 metres west of Thomas Street in North Rothbury	2011-12	Completed	544,462
	Install round about on Lake Road and Leggetts Drive in Mulbring	2011-12	Completed	1,291,727
	Install shoulder widening, clearing of trees and hazards within road clear zone, installation of guard fences on existing box culverts and advance warning signage along Sandy Creek Road in Quorrobolong	2012-13	Completed	983,000
	Install safety barrier on Freemans Drive in Freemans Waterhole	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	300,000
	Install safety barrier on George Booth Drive in Richmond Vale on the curves 300 metres north and 200 metres south of Echidna Drive	2013-14	Commenced November 2013	250,000
	Safety works in Wine Country Drive and local roads in Branxton	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	215,000
Maitland	Install median and roadside safety barrier on the New England Highway, 250 metres East of Church Street in Maitland	2012-13	Completed	295,838
	Install a median safety barrier along the New England Highway, between St Helena Close and the bottom of the cutting to the north of Oswald Lane	2011-13	Completed	7,423,765
	Install safety barrier on Raymond Terrace Road near Haussman Drive in East Maitland	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	2,500,000
Dungog	Safety works with realigning and widening corner, install guideposts and fog lines along Clarence Town Road in Dungog	2010-11	Completed	160,000
	Safety works on Clarence Town Road in Dungog	2010-11	Completed	200,000





LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Gloucester	Install shoulder widening, curve realignment, signage, reseal, barrier in Thunderbolts Way and Giro Road, 3 km north of Giro	2012-13	Completed	450,000
Great Lakes	Install safety barrier on Pacific Highway near Coolongolook River, Coolongolook	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	700,000
	Install safety barrier on the Pacific Highway at North Arm Cove	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	750,000
Muswellbrook	Install traffic signals on New England Highway near William Street Muswellbrook	2011-12	Completed	183,226
	Install pedestrian fencing on New England Highway in Muswellbrook	2011-12	Completed	118,487
	Install median safety barrier in existing overtaking lane on the New England Highway, south of Hebden Road, in Muswellbrook	2012-13	Completed	347,311
	Install kerbside guardrail northbound on New England Highway, South Hebden Road to Lemington Road Ravensworth	2010-11	Completed	206,298
Port Stephens	Install safety works in Edderton Road, Muswellbrook	2013-14	Commenced March 2014	439,000
	Install wire rope on the Pacific Highway, The Bucketts Way, at Talbots and Gates, Twelve Mile Creek	2012-13	Completed	391,896
Port Stephens	Safety improvements along Pacific Highway on Bucketts Way in Port Stephens	2010-11	Completed	622,000
	Safety improvements in Masonite Road south of Pacific Highway in Tomago	2010-11	Completed	322,000
	Install median safety barrier at Richardson Road and Grahamstown Road in Raymond Terrace	2012-13	Completed	1,366,358
	Install medians at T-junction, widen shoulder, and upgrade signage and linemarking at Clarencetown Road, from Butterwick Road to Brandy Hill Road, in Woodville and Seaham	2012-13	Completed	158,000
	Install raised median islands with additional give way sign (include street lighting) and improve left turn deceleration at the Pacific Highway and Medowie Road in Ferodale	2012-13	Completed	402,154
Port Stephens	Widen shoulder, install guardrail and upgrade linemarking on Gan Gan Road between Nelson Bay Road and Frost Road in One Mile and Nelson Bay	2012-13	Completed	227,000
	Install median safety barrier at Pacific Highway between Rangers Road to Adelaide Street in Ferodale	2011-12	Completed	399,500
	Improve the road realignment, install guardrail, signs and line marking Gan Gan Road between Eucalyptus and Reflection Drive	2011-12	Completed	161,350
Port Stephens	Widen shoulder on outside of curve, improve delineation at Marsh Road and Nelson Bay Road in Salt Ash	2011-12	Completed	167,525



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
	Improve curve realignment on Nelson Bay Road, 850 metres west of Avocado Farm, Bobs Farm	2010-11	Completed	413,132
	Improve road realignment and widen shoulders at Nelson Bay Road, 600 metres west to 500 metres east of Boyces Track in Bobs Farm	2010-11	Completed	454,190
	Install shoulder widening, guardrail delineation-signage and line marking at Grahamstown Road 1km east of Richardson Road in Medowie	2010-11	Completed	120,450
	Safety works including improving line marking and signage on Pacific Highway from Bucketts Way to Talbots Trail in Twelve Mile Creek	2010-11	Completed	362,689
	Improve sight distance, widen shoulder, remove roadside hazard, guardrail, re-surfacing and signage of the southern section of the curve at Clarendon Road and 1.2km north of Dixon Street in Seaham	2010-11	Completed	370,450
	Safety works in Stockton Street and Tomaree Street in Nelson Bay	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	122,000
	Upgrade road safety on East Seaham Road in East Seaham	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	196,000
	Safety works on Pacific Highway and Medowie Road in Ferodale	2013-14	Completed	158,000
	Safety works in Gan Gan Road between Nelson Bay Road to Frost Road in Port Stephens	2013-14	Commenced October 2013	188,000
Singleton	Safety works on Golden Highway and Broke Road in Mount Thorley	2011-12	Completed	160,680
	Safety works along New England Highway north of Golden Highway in Whittingham	2011-13	Completed	3,875,849
	Install median safety barrier at the New England Highway from Hebdon Road to 15km north of Ravensworth	2012-13	Completed	145,444
	Install roadside guardrail in south bound and widen shoulders on Putty Road, 1km south of Old Convict Road, Howes Valley	2012-13	Completed	591,557
	Install median wire rope barrier along New England Highway between Lindsay Street and Swain Street in Lower Belford	2012-13	Completed	185,261
	Minor safety works on the New England Highway, Dalton Avenue and Howe Street in Singleton	2011-12	Completed	428,000
	Install safety barrier on the New England Highway near McInerney Road in Camberwell	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	600,000



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Lake Macquarie	Safety works along M1 Pacific Motorway (F3), 420 metres length north of Slatey Creek in Holmesville	2011-13	Completed	186,372
	Safety works along M1 Pacific Motorway (F3), 1.2km length north of Newcastle Link	2011-12	Completed	343,811
	Safety works along M1 Pacific Motorway (F3), north of Palmers Road in Freemans Waterhole	2011-12	Completed	658,779
	Safety works along Freemans Drive, 1 km south of Palmers Road, Freemans Waterhole	2010-11	Completed	131,386
	Install wire rope on median and a raised median on The Esplanade between Five Islands Road and Thompsons Road in Speers Point	2012-13	Completed	568,076
	Install safety barriers between the M1 Pacific Motorway (F3) and the bridge over Burkes Creek to 500 metres north of Killingworth	2012-13	Completed	180,000
	Install median barrier along Main Road and Anzac Parade in Toronto	2012-13	Completed	300,377
	Extend guardrail north of the intersection, install curve alignment markers at Wangi Road and Summerhill Drive in Wangi Wangi	2012-13	Completed	165,078
	Install safety works in Wangi Road between Eucalypt Close to Excelsior Street in Lake Macquarie	2012-13	Completed	1,211,112
	Install safety works in Myall Road and Fifth Street in Cardiff	2012-13	Completed	153,000
	Contribute to the Cardiff main street revitalisation project (election commitment)	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	2,200,000
	Install safety barrier on M1 Pacific Motorway (F3) near Mandalong Road in Morisset	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	300,000
	Install safety barrier on M1 Pacific Motorway (F3) near Palmers Road in Freemans Waterhole	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	250,000
	Install safety barrier on Pacific Highway south of Gommera Street in Blacksmiths	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	176,000
	Install safety barrier, road shoulder and linemarking on Wakefield Road in Wakefield	2013-14	Completed	526,000
	Safety improvements at Cameron Park Drive, George Booth Drive	2013-14	Completed	399,704
	Safety works in Main Road and Anzac Parade in Toronto	2013-14	Completed	150,000
	Safety improvements between Pacific Highway and Flowers Drive in Catherine Hill Bay	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	250,000



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Newcastle	Minor safety works on Sandgate Road and Astra Street in Shortland	2011-13	Completed	199,558
	Minor safety works on Industrial Drive south of Ingall Street in Mayfield	2011-12	Completed	356,339
	Safety works along the New England Highway from Tarro bridge	2011-12	Completed	221,437
	Safety works along the New England Highway 220 metres north of Hexham bridge	2011-12	Completed	123,178
	Install pedestrian fencing on Turton Road and Lambton Road to Griffiths Road in Broadmeadow	2011-13	Completed	271,961
	Install pedestrian fencing along Albert Street in Seahampton	2011-12	Completed	154,717
	Install safety barrier, median and remove utility poles on Industrial Drive and the Pacific Highway in Mayfield West	2012-13	Completed	401,995
	Install safety barrier in median and remove utility poles in clear zone at Industrial Drive and the Pacific Highway in Mayfield	2012-13	Completed	630,253
	Safety improvements on the New England Highway north of Tarro bridge	2012-13	Completed	328,657
	Tarro rail overbridge, New England Highway (minor safety works)	2012-13	Completed	365,891
	Install pedestrian signage and improve pedestrian facilities, reinforce with raised pedestrian thresholds and kerb extensions, replace pedestrian crossing with a signalised mid block pelican crossing at King Street between Union Lane and Watt Street, Newcastle	2012-13	Completed	300,000
	Install median safety barrier on the Pacific Highway in Sandgate, north of Wallsend Road	2012-13	Completed	352,502
	Minor safety works in Brunker Road between Glebe Road and Lockyer Street in Adamstown	2011-12	Completed	101,000
	Install safety barrier on Industrial Drive, north of Elizabeth Street in Tighes Hill	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	250,000
	Minor safety works at Scott Street, Bolton Street and Watt Street in Newcastle	2013-14	Commenced January 2014	144,000
	Minor safety works at Beaumont Street and Donald Street in Hamilton	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	210,000
	Minor safety works at Glebe Road and Kenrick Street, Union Street and Farquhar Street in Newcastle	2013-14	Commenced December 2013	225,000
	Safety works in King St between Union Lane and Watt Street in Newcastle	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	423,000



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Upper Hunter	Safety works resulting from decommissioning fixed speed camera on the New England Highway in Murrurundi	2013-14	Completed	281,596
	Install safety works on the New England Highway four kilometres North and 1km South Turnaville Road in Scone	2013-14	Commenced November 2013	200,000
<b>Bus priority on strategic corridors</b>				
Cessnock	New England Highway Branxton bus stop	2012-13	Completed	186,717
<b>Active transport</b>				
Maitland	Construction of an off-road cycling and walking path along the southern side of Les Darcy Drive (New England Highway) through Maitland Park (520 metres)	2012-13	Completed	244,000
Port Stephens	Provision of mid block pedestrian refuge on Nelson Bay Road outside the Bayway Village	2012-13	Completed	374,484
Singleton	Improve pedestrian crossing facilities at New England Highway and York Street, Singleton (two signalised crossings and kerb ramps)	2011-13	Completed	159,088
Lake Macquarie	Improve pedestrian facilities on Macquarie Drive in Eleebana (new pedestrian refuge and kerb extension)	2012-13	Completed	100,058
	Extension of Swansea cycleway: construction of an off-road cycling and walking path through Osmond Reserve, along the Lake Macquarie foreshore	2011-12	Completed	200,000
	Cycleway - Bareki Road, Eleebana: construction of an off-road walking and cycling path along the western foreshore of Lake Macquarie (400 metres)	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	250,000
	Design of on-road and off-road cycleway provisions from the existing Lake Macquarie foreshore path, Speers Point to the existing Glendale-Wallsend off-road walking and cycling path, Glendale	2013-14	Anticipated start May 2014	200,000
	Fernleigh Track extension: strategic concept development of cycleway provisions connecting the Fernleigh Track and the Pacific Highway cycleway (Belmont)	2013-14	Commenced October 2013	100,000



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Newcastle	New England Highway Tarro rail overbridge cycleway: construction of a path and road shoulder widening along the southern side of the New England Highway (90 metres)	2012-13	Completed	100,000
	Contra flow cycleway stage 1 – Pacific Highway Merewether: design and construction of an off-road walking and cycling path along the western side of Scenic Drive from Sun Hill Drive to the Pacific Highway (150 metres); and the southern side of the Pacific Highway from Scenic Drive to Gun Club Road (550 metres) in Merewether (700 metres)	2012-13	Completed	212,712
	Hannell Street pedestrian/cycle: construction of a mid-block traffic control to signalised shared crossing of Hannell Street at the southern abutment of the bridge over Throsby Creek, Wickham (32 metres)	2012-13	Completed	367,097
	Contra flow cycleway stage 2 – Pacific Highway Merewether: Design and construction of a 3 metre wide asphalt and concrete off-road walking and cycling path along the western side of Scenic Drive from Sun Hill Drive to the Pacific Highway (150 metres); and the southern side of the Pacific Highway from Scenic Drive to Gun Club Road (550 metres) in Merewether (700 metres)	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	500,000
	Turton Road and Lambton Road, Broadmeadow: upgrade pedestrian crossing facilities at existing signalised intersection	2013-14	Commenced October 2013	250,000
	Provide additional lanes on New England Highway between Racecourse Road and Regiment Road in Rutherford	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	2,000,000
Maitland	Upgrade the New England Highway between the hospital and railway station roundabouts in Maitland (Election Commitment)	2013-14	TBA	41,710,000
Muswellbrook	Install right turn phase, at the New England Highway and Sydney Street in Muswellbrook	2012-13	Completed	515,936



LGA	Projects	Financial year	Status	Cost (\$)
Lake Macquarie	Macquarie Road and Munibung Road (minor works)	2011-12	Completed	103,465
	Main Road and Minmi Road, Glendale (minor works)	2011-13	Completed	307,466
	Hillsborough Road and Crockett Street, Cardiff	2011-13	Completed	786,957
	Install traffic signals at Fairfax Road and The Esplanade, in Warners Bay	2013-15	Commenced July 2013	5,000,000
	Provide additional lane on approach and departure to traffic signals at Toronto Road and Enterprise Way, Toronto	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	2,000,000
	Cary Street, (Morisset-Wallsend) in Toronto	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	1,000,000
Newcastle	Tourle Street in Kooragang stage 1 (minor works)	2011-12	Completed	551,580
	Tourle Street in Kooragang stage 2 (minor works)	2011-13	Completed	1,304,312
	Permanent Variable message signs Bennetts Green	2011-12	Completed	226,502
	Install traffic signals at Griffiths Road and Chatham Road in Hamilton North	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	1,000,000
	Griffiths Road and Lloyd Road, Lambton	2013-14	Commenced July 2013	1,000,000
	Investigation in improvements for Adamstown railway level crossing	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	100,000
	City Road between Scenic Drive and Alice Street	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	200,000
	Install incident response shed Hexham on Pacific Highway	2013-14	Commenced August 2013	100,000
	Install variable message signs on Cormorant Road in Kooragang	2013-14	Completed	350,000
<b>Road freight safety and productivity</b>				
Singleton	Upgrade Rix Creek rest area on New England Highway	2012-14	Completed	2,766,082
	Upgrade facilities in Singleton Regional Livestock Market	2013-14	Commenced September 2013	114,400
	Upgrade of the abattoir facilities at Whittingham	2013-14	Commenced January 2014	176,095
Upper Hunter	Upgrade Murrurundi rest area on New England Highway	2012-13	Completed	202,049
	Upgrade rest area in Cassillis on Golden Highway	2011-13	Completed	215,632
<b>Road Railway level crossings</b>				
Gloucester	Railway level crossing improvement program - installation of boom gates at Phillips Street in Wingham	2012-13	Completed	1,182,149

## Better Boating Program

LGA	Improvement	Year	Cost (\$)
Dungog	Williams River Boating Facilities Requirement Study, Clarence Town	2012-13	18,000
Gloucester	Landers Crossing kayak launch, Gloucester (Barrington River)	2012-13	15,000
	Old Bowman Farm Road kayak launch, Gloucester (Barrington River)	2012-13	16,750
	Relfs Road kayak launching ramp, Barrington River	2011-13	35,000
	Gloucester District Park Kayak Launch	2013-14	22,000
Great Lakes	Bulahdelah Myall river camp wharf, Bulahdelah – Myall River	2012-13	25,000
	Coomba Aquatic Gardens new pontoon, Wallis Lake	2012-13	50,250
	Forster harbour boat ramp upgrade, Forster	2012-13	112,500
	Pacific Palms boat ramp upgrade - Wallis Lake	2012-13	32,500
	Marine Drive eastern wharf upgrade, Tea Gardens – Myall River	2012-13	6,500
Lake Macquarie	Swansea wharf pontoon	2011-12	82,088
	Eleebana boat ramp carpark upgrade, Warners Bay (Lake Macquarie)	2011-12	138,000
	Thomas Humphries Reserve boating facilities upgrade, Swansea	2013-14	210,000
Musswellbrook	Boat Ramp Improvements at Lake Liddell	2013-14	24,232
Newcastle	North Stockton pontoon (additional funding 2)	2012-13	82,263
	North Arm Cove Waterfront Amenity Improvements	2013-14	31,375
	Williams Rivers Boating Access at Seaham Study	2013-14	12,500
Port Stephens	Lemon Tree Passage aquatic infrastructure upgrade- Port Stephens	2012-13	40,000
	Shoal Bay boat ramp carpark upgrade	2011-12	182,500
	Hinton Pontoon Replacement	2013-14	25,000



## CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN

Regional NSW has transport needs and challenges that are distinct from those in the Sydney Metropolitan Region. The *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* identified the major transport challenges facing regional NSW as:

- Delivering better transport links to and within regional cities
- Improving accessibility through a better mix of transport options across regional NSW
- Providing convenient, reliable and safe travel in regional areas by modernising and making best use of our transport networks – especially bus, rail, ferry and taxi services

- Making sure our state roads in the regions support the needs of customers, communities and regional industries
- Finding workable transport solutions that will preserve the vitality, amenity and character of country towns
- Making walking and cycling easier and safer and giving customers choice when travelling within their towns
- Facilitating access to vital services for an ageing regional NSW population and people with disabilities
- Identifying and preserving key transport corridors.



## ACTIONS IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS FOR THE HUNTER REGION (NEWCASTLE) IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN

#### Short term

- The Hunter region's growth will occur around Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Maitland. The Growth Centre Roads Program will support this growth, including delivering the Newcastle Inner Bypass, Newcastle Link Road and Newcastle Road corridor improvements. Capacity improvements will improve travel time reliability and support an expansion of bus services.
- We will strengthen bus operations in the region's major centres, as well as connections between these centres, through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines. Emerging customer needs will be reflected in all bus contracts.
- To increase the proportion of commuter trips on public transport to Newcastle centre, we will progressively implement Strategic Bus Corridors to provide high quality bus services that reflect demand and land use change. The Strategic Bus Corridors will be modelled on the successful implementation of these services within Sydney.
- *Sydney's Rail Future* and the development of the *Country Passenger Rail Services Strategy* and the creation of NSW Trains will improve rail services between Newcastle and Sydney and benefit the Central Coast. We will reduce travel time between Newcastle and Sydney.
- We will develop a Port Growth Plan for the Port of Newcastle.
- We will work with Newcastle City Council on a transport strategy for the CBD that will assist in meeting the NSW 2021 target of increasing commuter trips by public transport to 20 percent by 2016.
- Stage 1 of the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor will reduce interactions between freight and passenger services, and result in more reliable operations. Planned upgrades will remove the most serious bottleneck on the east coast. The program comprises four key projects: Gosford Passing Loops, North Strathfield Rail Underpass, Epping to Thornleigh Third Track and the Hexham Passing Loop (completed in 2012). Once completed, the new infrastructure will lift the corridor's carrying capacity by 50 percent, from 29 to 44 freight trains each day.

#### Medium to longer term

- We will continue our investment in the Newcastle road network to address capacity constraints that impact on travel time reliability and public transport operations.
- We will continue to deliver the Newcastle Inner City Bypass.
- We will continue to enhance and expand bus services and Strategic Bus Corridors to reflect demand and land use change.
- The development of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass and Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Stages 2 and 3 will add freight capacity, reduce freight transit times and alleviate key level crossing delays.





## SPECIFIC ACTIONS FOR THE HUNTER REGION (REGIONAL) IN THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN

### Short term

- The Hunter Expressway (M15) will provide a new east-west connection between Newcastle and the growing Lower Hunter, and is one of the biggest road infrastructure projects to be built in the Hunter region. It will alleviate road congestion on the lower New England Highway (A15) between Newcastle and Maitland, and provide greater reliability for freight and passenger travel on the New England Highway (A15).
- In conjunction with the Hunter Expressway (M15), we will upgrade the link between the M1 Pacific Motorway/Hunter Expressway (M15) interchange and Broadmeadow in Newcastle.
- We have committed \$15 million to support Lake Macquarie City Council to deliver improved road connections at Glendale, improving access to the Stockland retail centre and surrounding growth areas for all modes of transport, including buses, taxis and private vehicles.
- Enhanced bus services into the Lower Hunter will complement the enhancements made to the Newcastle bus system. The renewal of bus contracts will provide an opportunity to review and update Bus Service Planning Guidelines to deliver enhanced services in the region's centres that reflect changes in the urban environment and that are consistent with emerging customer needs.
- We will identify opportunities to enhance local bus services in the Upper Hunter to provide a real alternative to private vehicle travel, with a focus on improving travel times, service frequency and integration, passenger information and comfort.
- The competition for track access in the Hunter Valley is acute and will require resolution if rail is to fulfil its potential in the region. We will work with stakeholders to develop an agreement that supports the timely and efficient movement of coal and freight, and supports our objectives for passenger rail.
- We will consider how best to reduce freight movements in Scone, including evaluating various options to eliminate the rail level crossing between the New England Highway (A15) at Kelly Street and the Main North Railway Line at Werris Creek.



## Medium to longer term

- To ensure freight moves efficiently, we will consider extending the M1 Pacific Motorway to Raymond Terrace. We will also consider how best to reduce the impacts of freight movements on centres such as Muswellbrook and Singleton.
- New England Highway (A15) upgrades will address safety and congestion issues as they emerge.
- We will implement improvements on the New England Highway (A15) at Scone and Aberdeen to improve pedestrian facilities and create safer environments.
- We will protect and plan for the construction of the strategic rail freight corridor at Fassifern and the Hexham rail bypass.
- We will work with community groups, regional transport coordinators, local councils and local bus operators to continue to enhance the public transport system.
- We will increase public transport service levels and coverage as new residential areas and associated demand develops, including around Branxton, Huntlee, Maitland, Catherine Hill Bay and North Cooranbong.
- We will develop a strategy to address the constraints on rail operations in the Lower Hunter.
- The Bridges for the Bush Program will upgrade or replace timber bridges at Glennies Creek, Williams River and the Patterson River.

## PUTTING THE CUSTOMER FIRST

The NSW Government is committed to putting the customer first by delivering a transport system that:

- Delivers a safe, clean and comfortable public transport environment
- Provides a safer road transport system
- Provides integrated timetables and more frequent and reliable public transport services to match customer needs
- Reduces travel times for all travellers
- Enables businesses and services to operate efficiently and prosper in regional areas
- Provides more reliable services
- Gets people in NSW's regions to where they need to go.

This plan will ensure that the transport system in the Hunter region meets the needs of the community. It does this by responding to the goals expressed by the community, tackling the transport challenges in the region and addressing the implications of the expected changes to the region over the next 20 years.

The plan will pursue this vision by developing actions around the three key themes of:

- 1 Providing better transport services
- 2 Ensuring effective regulation
- 3 Improving transport infrastructure

The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* will improve the customer experience for travel to and from other regions, within the region, within towns and centres, and for visitors to the region.

Demand management and infrastructure solutions focused on the region's road network will enable customers to reach their destination more reliably and more safely. Public transport users will see service improvements and better connections to key destinations.

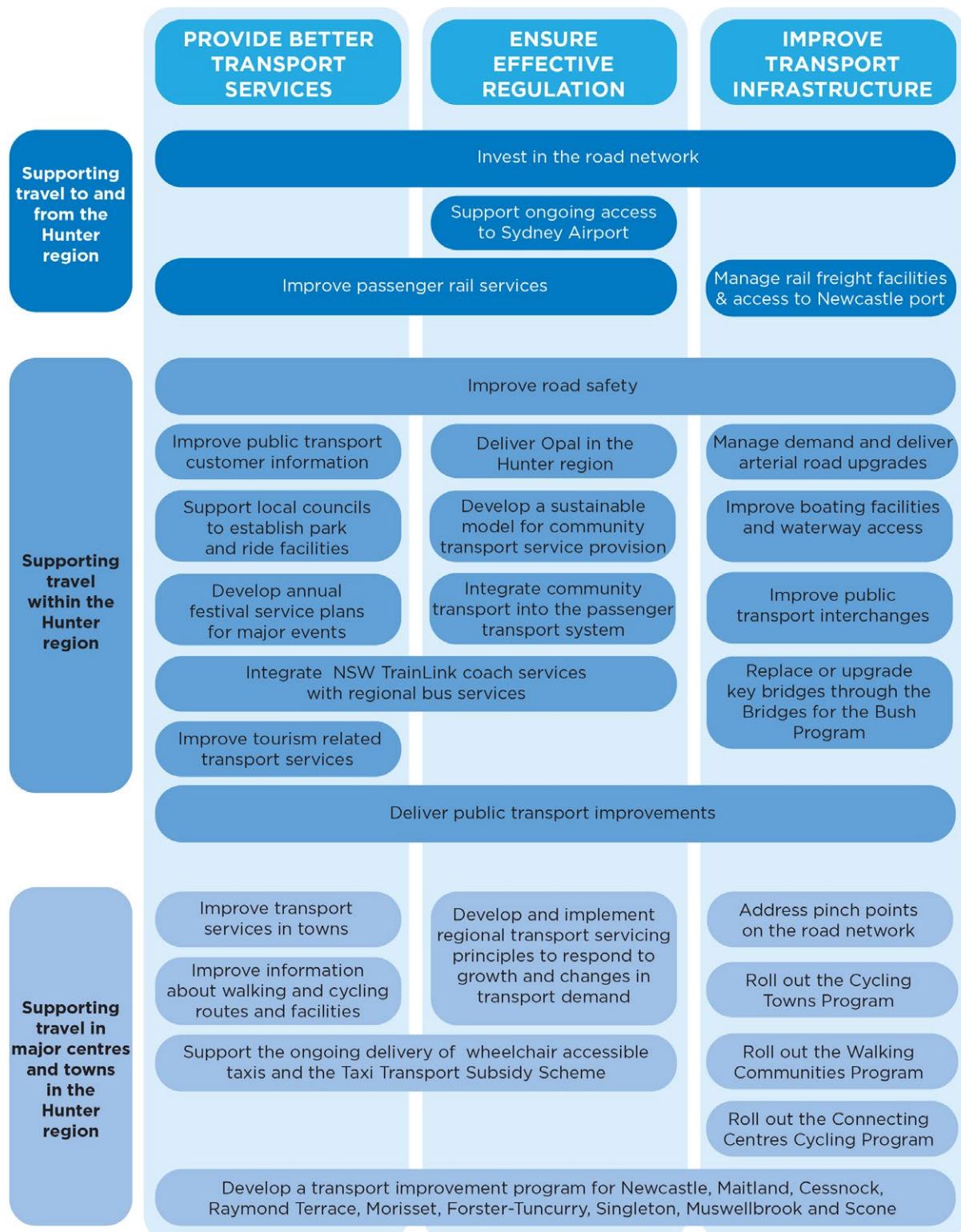
This plan includes actions and projects that will deliver better transport services, ensure effective regulation, and improve transport infrastructure over the short (0-5 years), medium (5-10 years) and long (10-20 years) term.

### WHAT YOU TOLD US

You told us that there is a common set of goals for transport in regional NSW. While the priority of these goals will vary for each specific region, these goals are:

- Improving accessibility to transport for everyone
- Making sure that the transport solutions for the regions support growth and development, whilst protecting the viability and amenity of centres and towns
- Appreciating the importance of intra and inter regional connectivity
- Recognising the growing freight task and its impact
- Recognising the importance of air travel
- Addressing cross-border connectivity issues.

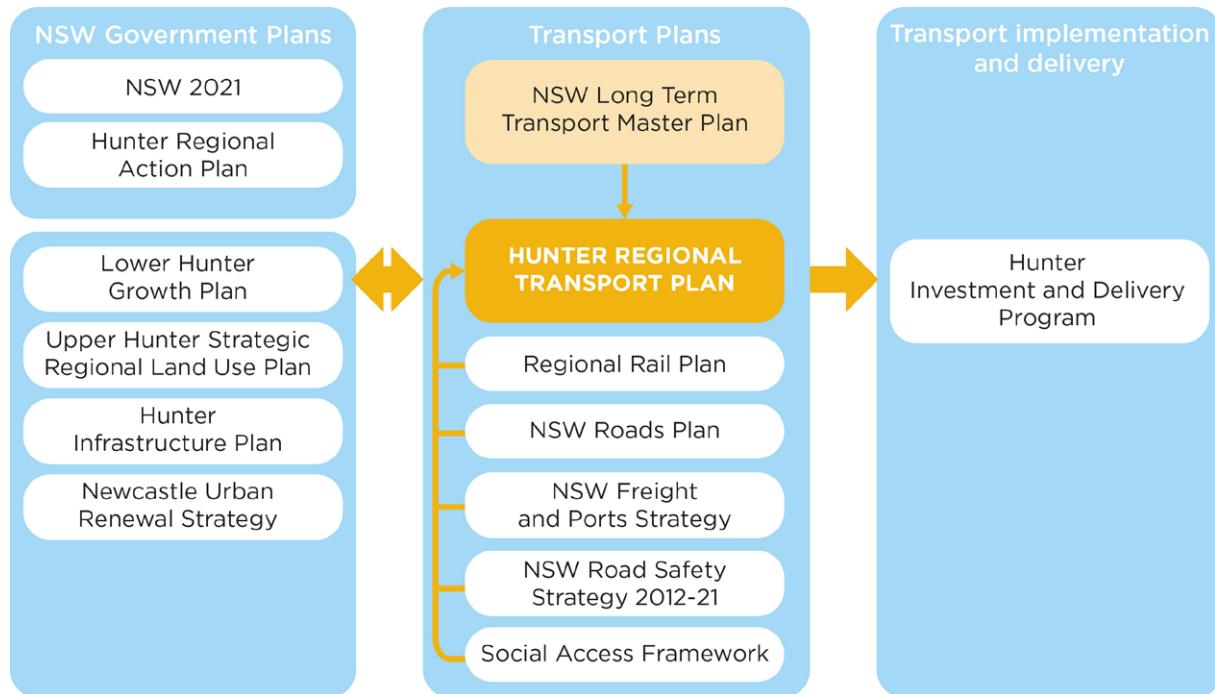
**Figure 4** Themes and actions summary



The *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* sets the strategic direction for transport in the state. The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* provides more detail for the region.

The Regional Transport Plans link to other Government plans including *NSW 2021*, *Hunter Regional Action Plan* and the *Lower Hunter Regional Growth Plan* and *Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan*.

**Figure 5** Inter-relationships of plans



## TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE HUNTER REGION

The Main North rail line provides passenger and freight rail capacity to and from the region.

Air services are focused on Newcastle Airport with flights to and from Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, Gold Coast and Ballina.

Travel to and from regions outside of the Hunter region is concentrated in three corridors, as shown in Figure 6:

- M1 Pacific Motorway/A1 Pacific Highway corridor south to the Central Coast and Sydney regions and north to the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers regions
- New England Highway corridor to the New England region. The New England Highway corridor from Wallangarra to Newcastle

caters for major commodity movements, such as wheat and coal to Newcastle Port, together with passenger movements to and from the New England region

- Golden Highway corridor to the Central West. The Golden Highway is expected to become a critical freight corridor, with inbound mining freight flows forecast to exceed the levels currently seen on the new England Highway by 2031.

Employment in the Hunter region is relatively self-contained, with 95 percent of the employed population living and working in the region. Employment destinations outside of the Hunter include the Central Coast and Sydney, each attracting about two percent of the region's residents for work.

**Figure 6** Major corridors to and from the Hunter region





Transport challenges for travel to and from the Hunter are:

- Peak period congestion on the road network
- Competing needs of local and through traffic for north-south journeys
- Frequency and speed constraints of intercity rail service between Newcastle and Sydney
- Capacity on shared rail for freight and passenger tasks
- Growing freight task on the road network, travelling with general traffic.

Addressing these challenges is important if we are to improve inter-regional connectivity.

The Newcastle Port Corporation has forecast coal exports from the Port of Newcastle to grow to in excess of 250 million tonnes per annum by 2020. We need to provide for this growing freight task, while recognising the impact it will have on regional towns.

We will address this challenge by providing better connections between the Hunter region and Sydney for both passengers and freight.

Actions supporting travel to and from the Hunter includes measures to:

- Invest in the road network
- Improve passenger rail services
- Invest in freight rail infrastructure
- Identify and protect corridor for high speed rail
- Support the ongoing provision of flight slots at Sydney Airport for regional NSW.

Our actions will focus on making the most of our existing assets by managing demand and operations as a priority. Expansion of infrastructure and services will be planned for over time, in line with growth in population and industry within the region.



## The road network

### Action: Invest in the road network

#### North-south connections

We are committed to maintaining a high-quality road corridor between Sydney and Brisbane along the east coast to support anticipated growth along the corridor.

The M1 Pacific Motorway and the A1 Pacific Highway can suffer from considerable congestion associated with daily peak periods and holiday periods when many people travel into and through the region to reach coastal destinations to the north.

We will:

- Upgrade the M1 Pacific Motorway/Weakleys Drive intersection
- Plan for the widening of Weakleys Drive
- Plan for the extension of the M1 Pacific Motorway to Raymond Terrace to ensure efficient freight movement
- Plan for Hexham widening on the A1 Pacific Highway commencing in 2013.

The NSW and Australian Governments have committed \$8 billion for the period 2009 to 2016 for Pacific Highway upgrades. Construction is currently underway.

The remaining single carriageway sections of the Pacific Highway will be upgraded, followed by the upgrade of the Pacific Highway from Failford Road to Triton Road at Possum Brush. This is planned for construction in the longer term. Such upgrades will improve safety and travel times for motorists on the highway.

The Australian and NSW governments have each committed around \$405 million to deliver the missing link between the M1 Motorway (F3) at Wahroonga and the Hills M2 Motorway at West Pennant Hills. The M1-M2 link will feature twin motorway tunnels with two lanes in each direction, and a northern interchange connecting with the M1 (F3), the Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills Road.

It will provide a motorway standard link between the Hunter and locations including Sydney, Parramatta and Greater Western Sydney, improving access for Hunter commuters. It will also enable residents in the Hunter to travel from the M1 (F3) to Canberra and Melbourne without passing a set of traffic lights.

Transurban and the Westlink M7 shareholders issued a Request for Tender for the design and construction of the project to a shortlist of three parties and the tendering period closed at the end of November 2013. A decision to proceed with the project will be made following the close of the tender period.

#### East-west connections

We will evaluate various options to eliminate rail level crossings between the New England Highway (A15) and the Main North rail line at Kelly Street in Scone and at Werris Creek Road in Werris Creek.

We will work in partnership with the Australian Government to reduce the impact of freight movements in Scone, including evaluating various options to eliminate the rail crossing with the New England Highway (A15) at Kelly Street.

We will also consider how best to reduce the impacts of freight movement on centres in the New England Highway corridor, including bypasses of Muswellbrook and Singleton.

We will enable efficient movement of road-based travel along the New England Highway corridor by:

- Widening the Gowrie Gates railway underpass in Singleton
- Delivering heavy duty pavement construction with wide median treatment on the New England Highway in the Upper Hunter
- Planning for the duplication of the New England Highway from Belford to the Golden Highway
- Planning the Singleton bypass
- Planning the Muswellbrook bypass.





## Rail and coach services

### Action: Improve passenger rail services

We will work to reduce public transport travel time between Newcastle and Sydney and to support rail services with an integrated bus service.

The new timetable changes and modern signalling technology will deliver faster travel times and greater travel reliability between Newcastle and Sydney.

The establishment of NSW Trains is an opportunity to review current services (both rail and coach) to ensure they better meet customer needs within the Hunter region.

We will focus on better integration, improved connections and more frequent services that meet travel needs across the whole region. A long term plan for regional rail is being developed to set the future strategy.

A NSW Trains fleet management strategy will address future needs, including better utilisation, speed improvement, fleet replacement and growth strategies.

The potential introduction of premium carriages and a booking system that matches fares with demand will allow a differentiated service offering for customers.

We will work with police, train crew and station staff to improve safety at stations and on our trains.

### Action: Invest in freight rail infrastructure

The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor is a critical link in the movement of interstate and regional freight, as well as domestic coal movements to power stations on the Central Coast.

The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Stage 1 Project is a \$1.1 billion joint program of works with the Australian Government to improve access and reliability for freight trains travelling between North Strathfield and Broadmeadow. The program currently comprises four key projects; a rail freight underpass at North Strathfield, a third track between Epping and Pennant Hills, passing loops at Gosford, and the now completed passing loop at Hexham. Delivering this new infrastructure by 2016 will lift the corridor's carrying capacity by 50 percent, from 29 to 44 freight trains each day. This will help to accommodate the expected increase in freight volumes.

Investment in rail upgrades will support the efficient movement of rail-based freight through the Hunter region, including:

- Wyong to Newcastle Coal Rail Enhancement Program – passing loops at Awaba
- Planning for the Adamstown level crossing
- Progression of planning for Stages 2 and 3 of the Northern Sydney Freight Corridor including the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor
- Corridor identification and protection for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor.

## Air services

### Action: Identify and protect corridor for high speed rail

Exploration of high speed rail between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, via Newcastle and Canberra, provides an opportunity for the Hunter region. Opportunities to be considered include convenient connections to regional and local public transport services.

Potential high speed rail services between Newcastle, the Central Coast and Sydney would affect considerable change through the coastal areas of the region.

High speed rail would dramatically cut travel times between Newcastle and Sydney with consequent impacts on residential and commercial development.

We will continue to work with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure and the Australian Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development to protect a future high speed rail corridor between Brisbane and Sydney.

### Action: Support the ongoing provision of flight slots at Sydney Airport for regional NSW

Air travel allows for quick and direct capital city connections to be maintained from the Hunter region. Newcastle Airport maintains 300 flights per week to the centres of Sydney, Brisbane, Ballina/Byron Bay, Gold Coast and Melbourne.

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) has been a part of the Hunter since the late 1930s. The RAAF base at Williamtown is the nation's main fighter pilot training base and shares its runway facilities with Newcastle Airport. Newcastle airport has grown at an annual average of around five percent. It has potential to further expand, and along with the increasing need for support services at the Williamtown RAAF Base, this is expected to generate employment in aviation related service industries.

Regional flight slots at Sydney Airport determine the convenience of air travel for regional communities accessing Sydney by air. We will support maintenance of the 20 percent of flight slots allocated to regional NSW services and will seek a greater allocation in the peak periods.

We will work with Port Stephens Council on parking at, and transport services to and from, Newcastle Airport to support the increase in airport capacity.

We will also support ongoing access to Newcastle Airport by the 145 and 210 bus services.



## TRAVEL WITHIN THE HUNTER REGION

Travel within the region is focused on four corridors providing connections between regional centres and Newcastle, as illustrated in Figure 7.

### New England Highway corridor

This corridor connects Newcastle, Maitland, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Scone. The Hunter Line provides a passenger rail service between these centres, and the corridor also supports freight movements to Newcastle Port

from the Hunter coalfields. This corridor also accommodates longer distance trips to the New England region.

### A1 Pacific Highway corridor (north of Newcastle)

This corridor connects Newcastle, Raymond Terrace, Port Stephens and the Great Lakes region, which includes Forster-Tuncurry. It also accommodates longer distance travel between the Hunter and Mid North Coast regions.

**Figure 7** Main corridors for travel within the Hunter region



**Pacific Highway corridor (south of Newcastle)**  
South of Newcastle, the Pacific Highway (state route 111) connects Newcastle to Charlestown and Swansea, before joining the M1 Pacific Motorway at Warnervale Interchange.

#### M1 Pacific Motorway corridor

This corridor links the Lake Macquarie LGA, through Morisset and Wyee. The Central Coast and Newcastle line from Sydney to Newcastle provides a rail service in the M1 Pacific Motorway corridor.

Transport challenges for travel within the Hunter region are:

- Accessibility to regional facilities, such as education, health, jobs and Newcastle Airport
  - High car dependency and limited public transport between major towns centres, particularly in the lower density settlements of the Upper Hunter
  - Road congestion and safety
  - Population distribution, with concentrations along the east coast and to Maitland, with more dispersed settlement inland
  - Providing transport services and infrastructure in growth areas outside of major centres
  - Freight capacity constraints on the road and rail networks
  - Impact of freight transport on towns
  - Improving connections between smaller towns to regional centres
  - The lack of a single comprehensive source of public transport information in parts of the Hunter region.
- Addressing these challenges is important to support economic growth and productivity, regional development and reduce social disadvantage.
- The actions to support transport within the Hunter region include measures to:
- Manage demand and deliver arterial road upgrades
  - Improve road safety
  - Improve boating facilities and waterway access
  - Replace or upgrade key bridges through the Bridges for the Bush Program
  - Deliver public transport improvements
  - Integrate NSW TrainLink coach services with regional bus services
  - Deliver Opal in the Hunter region
  - Improve public transport customer information
  - Improve public transport interchanges
  - Ensure adequate community transport services are provided
  - Improve the integration of community transport services into the passenger transport system
  - Develop a sustainable model for community transport service provision
  - Support local councils to establish park and ride facilities
  - Develop annual servicing plans for major events
  - Improve tourism related transport services
  - Identify and protect future transport corridors.





## Improving transport within the Hunter region

### Action: Manage demand and deliver arterial road upgrades

Roads are the main transport infrastructure connecting the region. We will look to introduce policies and programs directed towards managing demand. These will include peak demand management, travel behaviour change and system-wide policies.

We will investigate new or enhanced infrastructure will be investigated to achieve our broader transport objectives and goals.

We will deliver a program of arterial road construction and major road upgrades as population and employment growth boosts the demand for road travel, bus services and freight transport. We will also upgrade major highways and other state roads.

Public transport and freight transport rely heavily on the road network, and understanding the needs of all road users is critical to prioritising infrastructure investment in the region.

In the short and medium term we will:

- Deliver upgrades to MR217 Five Islands Road / Toronto Road
- Plan for MR527 Main Road (Cardiff to Glendale) upgrades
- Plan for MR674 Hillsborough Road (Warners Bay to Charlestown) upgrades
- Duplicate Nelson Bay Road (Tourle Street to Stockton Bridge and Bobs Farm to Anna Bay).

We will continue to monitor population growth and new developments, their impact on transport networks and their transport requirements.

### Action: Improve road safety

We will deliver rural highway upgrades, and address black spots and safety across the rural road network.

Rural highways in NSW have historically been constructed as two-lane roads, built to standards now superseded and of inadequate strength to support larger High Productivity Vehicles (HPVs). General wear and tear means that some highways cannot be repaired easily, while poor alignment on sections of the network contributes to vehicle crashes and lower operating speeds. In some locations, rural highway bottlenecks can cause unsafe overtaking practices.

We will deliver actions including localised road duplication where required, or more frequent and longer overtaking lanes. More frequent and better heavy vehicle rest areas will assist in making the journey safer, and maintain compliance with driver fatigue regulations.

This program will deliver substantial benefits to connectivity, improved safety and more efficient movement of freight.

The following Hunter region locations are on the black spot program:

- M1 Pacific Motorway (Sparks Rd to 1.2 kilometres north, Jilliby)
- M1 Pacific Motorway (250 metres to one kilometre south of Mandalong Road, Morisset)
- M1 Pacific Motorway (Mandalong Road to one kilometre north, Morisset)
- M1 Pacific Motorway (Palmers Road to 700 metres north, Freemans Water)
- New England Highway (Hebden Road to 1.5 kilometres north, Ravensworth)

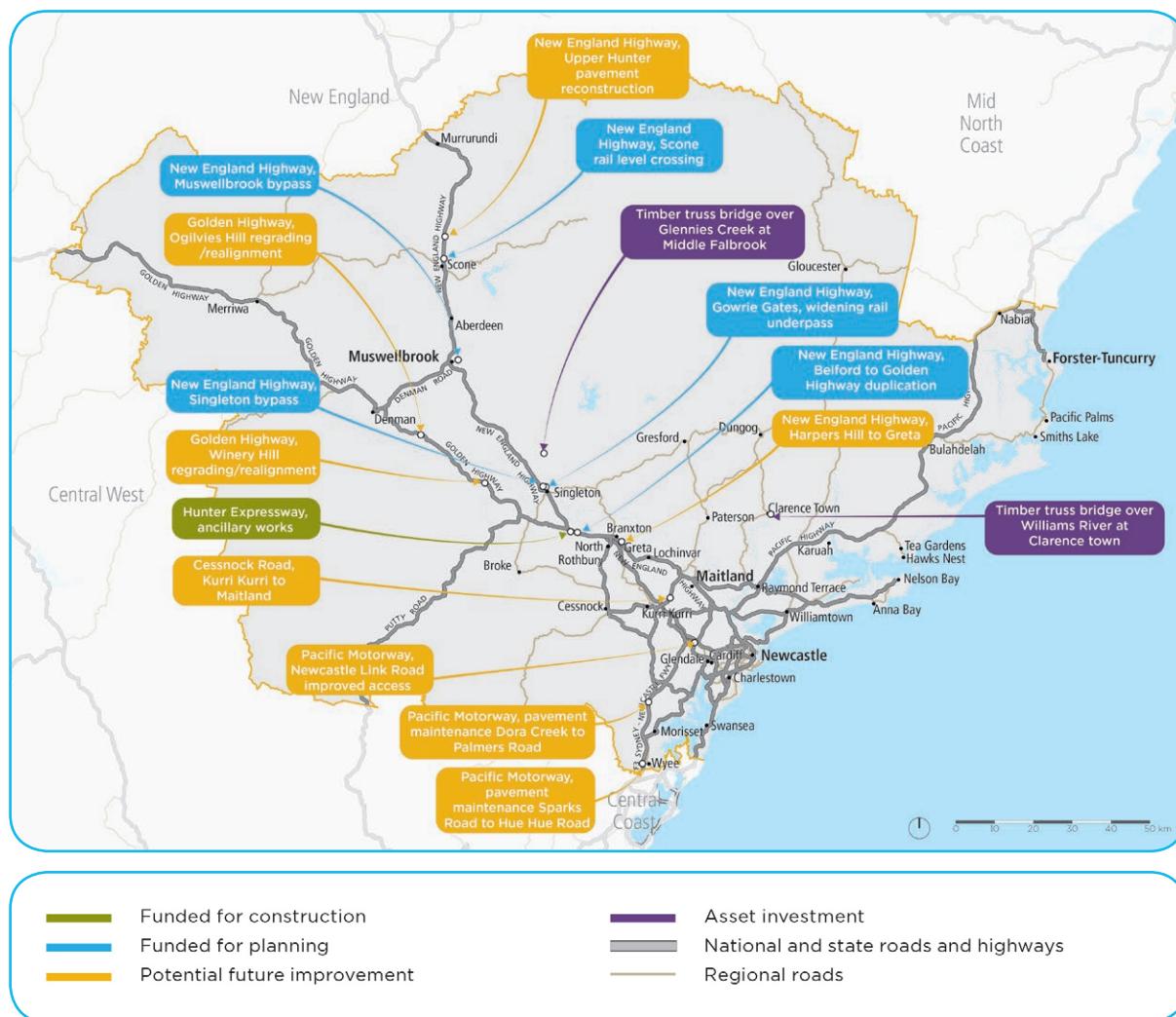
- New England Highway (four kilometres north and one kilometre south of Turanville Road, Scone)
- A1 Pacific Highway (150-300 metres south of Flowers Drive, Catherine Hill Bay)
- A1 Pacific Highway (Coolongolook River to two kilometres south, Coolongolook)
- Industrial Drive (10-350 metres north of Elizabeth Street, Tighes Hill).

In addition to specific black-spot treatments, the *NSW Road Safety Strategy 2012-21* will address more systemic challenges. This strategy recognises that road geometry is only part of the challenge and it aims to achieve safer vehicles, safer speeds and safer people, in addition to safer roads.

Young people (17-25 years old) are over-represented in fatalities and casualty crashes. Since July 2013, the Safer Drivers Course has been available to provide learner drivers with driving strategies, such as speed management, gap selection, hazard awareness and safe following distances, so they are more prepared when they drive unsupervised on their provisional licences.

Other programs including targeted safety works, rural highway upgrades, major arterial road upgrades in growing areas, and bypasses of town centres will contribute to major improvements in road safety.

**Figure 8** Potential road improvements in the Hunter region





## Action: Improve boating facilities and waterway access

We will develop a new Boating Infrastructure Partnership Program to build on the Roads and Maritime Services' successful Better Boating Program. The new funding program will provide grants to local councils and will be informed by a comprehensive audit of waterways to identify priority boating safety, access and infrastructure projects.

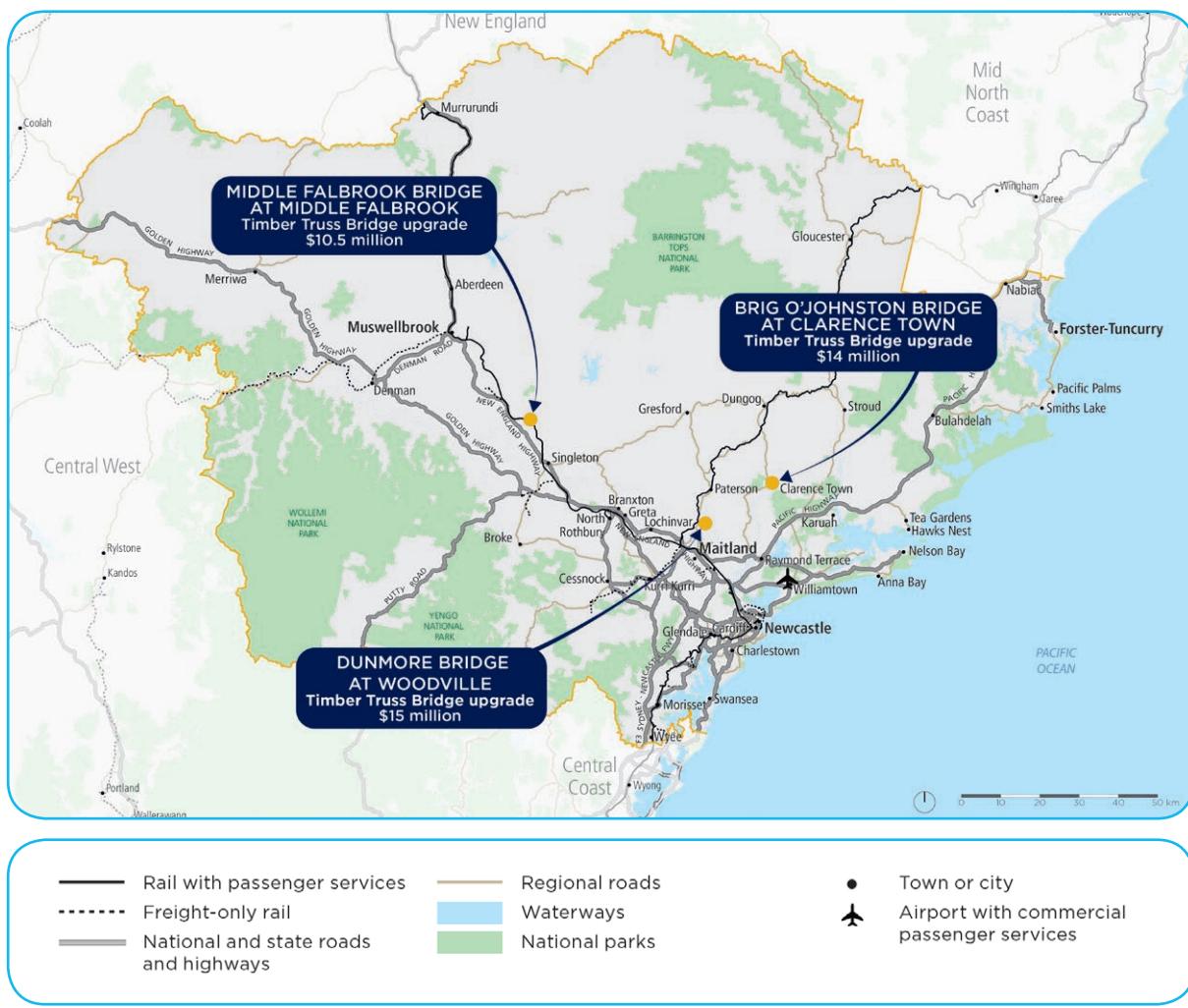
## Action: Replace or upgrade key bridges through the Bridges for the Bush Program

The Bridges for the Bush Program is a NSW Government commitment of \$145 million to upgrade or replace regional bridges to improve the resilience and freight capacity of the regional road network.

The upgrade of bridges in the Hunter region will also provide ongoing safe service levels and includes (Figure 9):

- \$14 million upgrade of the Brig O'Johnston Bridge
- \$15 million upgrade of the Dunmore Bridge
- \$10.5 million upgrade of the Middle Falbrook Bridge.

**Figure 9** Bridges for the Bush program in the Hunter region



## Action: Deliver public transport improvements

We will deliver customer service improvements to increase public transport use in urban areas.

While travelling by car will continue to be the most convenient way to travel for many people in the region, there are opportunities to increase public transport use in the urban areas.

We will enhance rail passenger services through timetable, fleet and targeted track improvements. Regional station upgrades and access improvements will be delivered as part of the Transport Access Program.

We will work in partnership with local bus operators to improve bus services. We will work with bus operators to develop routes and timetables which improve services for customers. We will develop a service framework that matches routes, coverage, hours of operation and vehicles with specific local needs.

Bus services provide the majority of public transport services for travel within the Hunter region. These regional bus services provide connections to, and between, the region's major centres, towns and villages. We will also respond to growth and development by improving service levels to meet demand. In the Hunter region, considerable development is expected in areas including Huntlee, Greenhills, East Maitland, Medowie, Kings Hill and Wallalong.

Our new framework for inter-town buses will target improvements designed to:

- Improve the frequency and hours of operation for inter-regional routes
- Define base service requirements for village to town services, including at least morning, afternoon and early evening return trip opportunities
- Consolidate routes to increase the range of destinations provided without the need to transfer between services
- Create a connected network of intra-regional services supported by local services within each centre and by connections to smaller villages.





## Action: Integrate NSW TrainLink coach services with regional bus services

We will review timetables and service levels for train and coach services as part of the long term plan for regional rail. This will identify opportunities to incorporate improved intra-regional connectivity in addition to long distance train connections.

Coach services are primarily part of a system that provides for travel to destinations outside the region. However, in using the major roads in the region, they also make connections to major centres. The long term plan for regional rail will advance planning for the integration of these services.

We will aim to use coach services as part of the regional bus system as well as serving travel to destinations outside the region.

We will investigate the potential for NSW TrainLink coach services to pick up and set down at multiple key destinations in the major towns and cities. These might include the airport and the main shopping centre as well as the traditional stop at the railway station.

We will examine opportunities to:

- Realign rail and coach timetables to improve connections and service frequency
- Improve the range of travel opportunities
- Improve customer access to printed and electronic timetable and travel information for regional rail and coach travel
- Improve the integration between local and regional bus services and NSW TrainLink train services across the region.

We will invest in improvements to the NSW TrainLink fleet to improve service levels and customer experience. Actions will include:

- Reviewing fleet maintenance and stabling locations to improve overall reliability and availability of the fleet
- Ensuring the current NSW TrainLink fleet receives maintenance to ensure reliability
- Fleet replacement to help boost flexibility in the design of services and offer greater passenger comfort. This will be managed in line with a *NSW TrainLink Fleet and Maintenance Strategy* that will program future rolling stock investment.

## Action: Deliver Opal in the Hunter region

The Opal electronic ticketing system is scheduled to be rolled out across Sydney, the Hunter region, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains by the end of 2014. Opal will provide an easy, convenient and fast new way of travelling on public transport.

## Action: Improve public transport customer information

We will improve web based customer information for the Hunter region.

We will develop an integrated and comprehensive source of transport timetables, maps, fares and information to replace and update the Country Transport website, and to help customers understand options for travel in and around the Hunter region.

## Action: Improve public transport interchanges

Interchanges are an important part of the public transport network.

We will ensure that major transport interchange points across NSW are assessed and benchmarked against interchange standards. We will develop a program of interchange improvements works to ensure that our interchanges meet customer needs.

We will make interchanging between public transport services easier by taking a customer-centred view.

We will work to integrate public transport services by:

- Ensuring major interchanges are clean, well lit, with comfortable seating, and shelter for passengers
- Ensuring that services are available at interchanges
- Coordinating timetables to make interchange seamless between all modes, including buses, trains and ferries (where applicable)
- Improving wayfinding, signage and the physical cues people use to find their way around interchanges
- Improving customer information including service information, ticketing and timetables
- Making it easier to pay for, and interchange between, services by rolling out the Opal electronic ticketing system in the Hunter region.

## Action: Improve the integration of community transport services into the passenger transport system

Taxi services and community transport provide flexible transport options, which supplement route bus and rail services. These modes remain particularly important for people in more isolated areas, who require access to social facilities such as healthcare, education or leisure activities.

We will work with community transport providers, taxi operators and bus operators to help deliver a fully integrated transport system for the Hunter region. This integration effort will focus on how we can deliver the most appropriate type of service for the Hunter region. We will investigate broadening flexible or demand responsive transport solutions and work to identify locations best suited to such services.

We have allocated \$7.5 million for the Community Transport Program in the 2013-14 budget.

## Action: Develop a sustainable model for community transport service provision

Along with integrating community transport into the overall transport service offering, we will work with local organisations, councils and the Australian Government to ensure the long term viability of the community transport sector. We will investigate options that allow the transport task to be carried out by the providers who are best placed to do so, regardless of mode.

With a growing and ageing population and in response to individually-based service delivery that will flow from reforms such as DisabilityCare Australia, we will work with our customers and providers to ensure an appropriate level of service is provided in an operationally sustainable manner.





### Action: Support local councils to establish park and ride facilities

We will support local councils to identify locations for and to establish a methodology for the delivery of park and ride facilities.

Park and ride facilities can assist people to park their car before joining public transport services or sharing car trips with other people for travel into city centres, to workplaces, or to major events.

For example, a successful park and ride facility is currently operating from Newcastle Stadium for travel to the John Hunter Hospital, while informal car-to-car transfer occurs in some locations such as Nelson Bay Road.

### Action: Develop annual festival servicing plans for major events

We will work with local councils and festival organisers to develop service plans to encourage public transport use to connect to festivals and other special events, such as sporting events, in Hunter region.

Festival and event service plans will be developed in conjunction with local councils, festival organisers and transport providers (including airports).

Service Plans will outline the services required for festivals and events and will outline the responsibilities of all parties.

Transport for NSW will work with stakeholders to assess the viability of providing additional major event transport in regional NSW for large scale events, such as major sporting fixtures at Hunter Stadium. Building on the integrated ticket being provided for the 2015 AFC Asian Cup, we will investigate the potential for a wider roll out of integrated tickets for sporting and other events. This investigation will consider the costs and benefits of providing additional transport services as well as the most effective way of providing these services.

### Action: Improve tourism related transport services

The influx of visitors during holiday periods puts temporary pressure on transport systems and services. There is an opportunity to develop a holistic approach to providing transport services for holiday periods through initiatives such as branding public transport services, raising awareness of travel options through brochures and websites, and seasonal transport options, such as holiday bus services or park and ride services. Cross-regional connections will also be considered and provided, if demand requires.

With local councils, we will investigate opportunities to use seasonal parking fees to subsidise better local tourist public transport services, drawing on the experience of other tourist areas around Australia.

### Action: Identify and protect future transport corridors

We can improve the future delivery of infrastructure through long-term planning to identify and protect transport corridors. Integration of land use and transport planning will allow us to provide the right transport services and infrastructure where and when they are needed in line with growth and development.

We will develop regional transport infrastructure programs to identify long-term corridor needs, and protect these corridors through the planning system in collaboration with local government.

## TRAVEL IN MAJOR TOWNS AND CENTRES

Centres and towns in our regional areas are the focal points for communities. They provide jobs, shops, entertainment and health care services, and require good transport services for people to travel to and within them. The scale of the transport challenges and the type of transport customers need varies with the size of the centre or town.

Larger places need integrated public transport networks which connect to each other. They need public transport services throughout the day and road networks that are safe and efficient. Smaller places need more flexible transport solutions that make best use of the transport assets.

Homes and jobs in the Lower Hunter are focused in urban centres (Figure 9):

- Newcastle, the Hunter's regional city and NSW's second largest city.

The Major Regional Centres of:

- Maitland
- Cessnock
- Raymond Terrace
- Charlestown.

And the emerging Major Regional Centres of:

- Glendale/Cardiff
- Morisset

There are four major towns in the Upper Hunter:

- Forster-Tuncurry
- Singleton
- Muswellbrook
- Scone.

City and town transport systems play an important role in meeting day to day transport needs with more than 80 percent of Hunter region residents living in these cities and centres.

The Upper and Lower Hunter are increasingly connected, with people choosing to travel between these areas for work or housing choices.

Transport challenges for travel in the major towns and centres of the Hunter region are:

- Road safety
- Impacts of road congestion in urban areas
- Coverage and frequency of public transport services, particularly in areas of more dispersed settlement
- Revitalisation of Newcastle CBD and transformation of public transport systems in the CBD
- A growing and ageing population
- Personal safety and security on public transport.

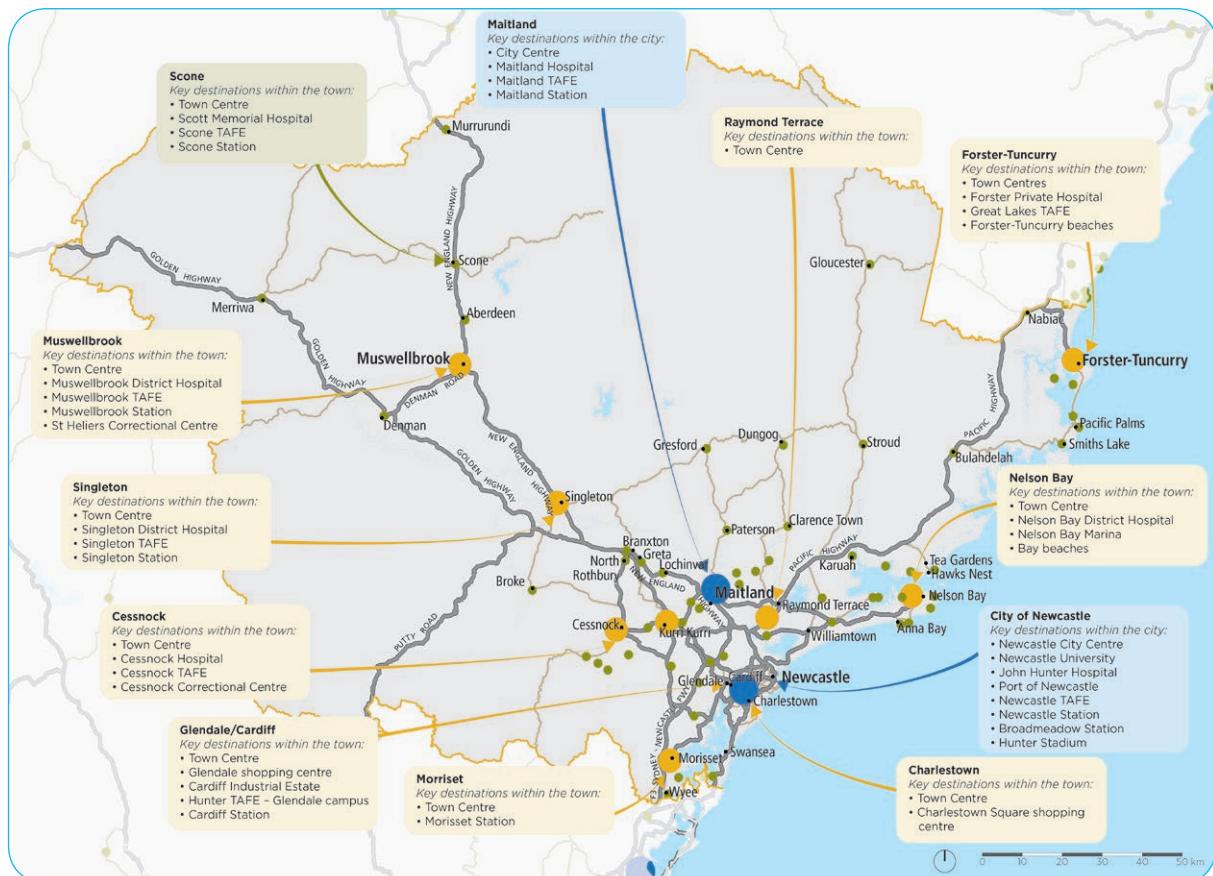
Addressing these challenges will be important to improve liveability, accessibility and the quality of public transport services within the towns and cities.

Actions that will support travel in major centres of the Hunter region include measures to:

- Address pinch points on the road network
- Improve transport services in towns
- Develop and implement regional transport servicing principles to respond to growth and changes in transport demand
- Support the ongoing delivery of wheelchair accessible vehicles and the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme
- Roll out the Walking Communities Program
- Connecting Centres Cycling Program
- Roll out the Cycling Towns Program
- Improve information about walking and cycling routes and facilities
- Deliver a new transport vision for the Newcastle city centre.



**Figure 10** Major centres and towns in the Hunter region



#### Existing Population by Town (Urban Centre Locality)

- Less than 10,000
  - 10,000-30,000
  - Greater than 30,000
- National and state roads and highways  
Regional roads

## Improving transport in our towns and centres

### Action: Address pinch points on the road network

We will work with local councils and to develop solutions for addressing localised congestion points on the road network. We will align local environmental planning with transport goals.

Addressing the congestion impacts of the increasing geographic footprint of towns in the region requires an integrated transport planning response that includes improvements to bus services, walking and cycling. Pinch points create additional congestion during peak tourist season when traffic volumes increase significantly. It is not efficient to build additional

road capacity for a limited period of the year. This issue is best addressed by specific management plans during tourist peaks.

### Action: Improve transport services in towns

Over the next few years, we will renew bus service contracts across NSW, working closely with operators to improve the services we provide to our customers.

We will work with local transport operators and councils to develop transport service improvement programs for the major towns of the Hunter region.

Service improvement programs will focus on serving the unique characteristics of each of the towns. In each of these towns there are opportunities to improve the accessibility of bus services, improve service frequencies and improve the attractiveness of public transport.

### Action: Develop and implement regional transport servicing principles to respond to growth and changes in transport demand

Urban centres in our regional areas are the focal points for communities. They provide jobs, shops, education and health care and require good transport services for people to travel to and within them. The type of transport service passengers need depends on the size, needs and characteristics of the centre.

Regional transport servicing principles will provide a strategic framework to service the travel needs of regional centres, major towns and towns. These principles will inform servicing strategies that will be regularly updated to meet the individual travel needs of each town. In turn, the strategic framework will inform the development of integrated transport service planning guidelines in the Upper Hunter and future upgrades of the Outer Metropolitan integrated transport service planning guidelines in the Lower Hunter, as well as the contracting of transport services.

We will work with local transport providers to develop and apply the regional transport servicing principles to put the customer first and will continue to work to broaden the range of services to meet local travel needs, with similar service standards applied to towns of broadly similar size and urban form.

In the Upper Hunter, the regional transport planning principles will update the current service guidelines for town services which set a clearly defined target for service coverage (that 85 percent of households within the town are within 400 metres of a bus route), without setting the span of service hours or route frequencies, weekend or late night servicing requirements.

We will examine opportunities to categorise town routes in accordance with their function and the markets they serve, rather than by distance from the town centre. The principles will simplify the current arrangements where separate guidelines apply where the terminus of a route is less than two kilometres from the town centre, compared to those where the terminus is more than two kilometres from the centre.

Through the process of contracting bus services we will identify short-term priorities for each major town or city including changes to services. Beyond the five year horizon, we will identify medium to longer-term service and infrastructure needs, including identifying potential regional strategic corridors and opportunities for the introduction of supporting infrastructure such as additional bus priority measures.

In the Lower Hunter, we will continue to strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines.

Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

### Action: Support the ongoing delivery of wheelchair accessible vehicles and the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme

The 24 hour nature of the taxi network and its ability to provide an immediate response to individual needs provides opportunities not afforded by bus and other transport services.

To ensure that this service is available across the community, we will continue to support the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles in the taxi fleets in towns in the Hunter region.

We will maintain the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme and support the better availability of services on weekends and outside core business hours.



## Walking and cycling

Many regional towns in NSW are ideal for walking and cycling for transport. Almost 90 percent of people in regions live within easy walking or cycling distance of a local centre, with access to shops, schools, and workplaces.

Wider streets, lower traffic volumes and safe routes in regional centres will make walking and cycling safer and more convenient transport options.

We will work to ensure that any transport project or land use development includes appropriate provision for walking and cycling from the design stage.

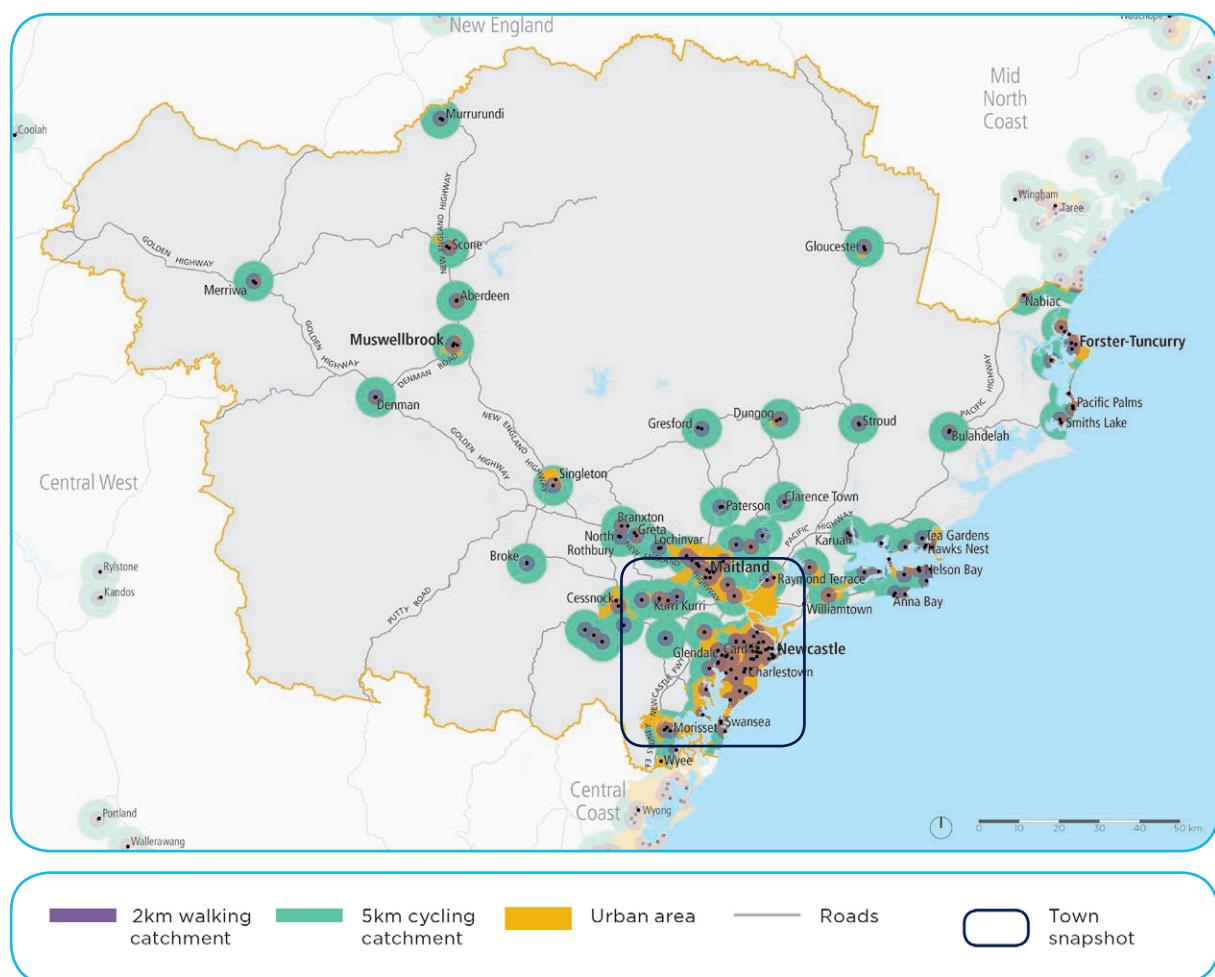
We will also assist councils to integrate walking and cycling into their ten-year Community Strategic Plans to ensure there is more provision for walking and cycling and promote this approach with Regional Organisations of Councils.

### Action: Roll out the Walking Communities Program

The Walking Communities Program will deliver state infrastructure investments and contribute to local government initiatives to help boost rates of walking.

We will provide dedicated funding to help local councils improve walking infrastructure within two kilometre catchments of centres and transport interchanges.

**Figure 11** Hunter walking and cycling catchments

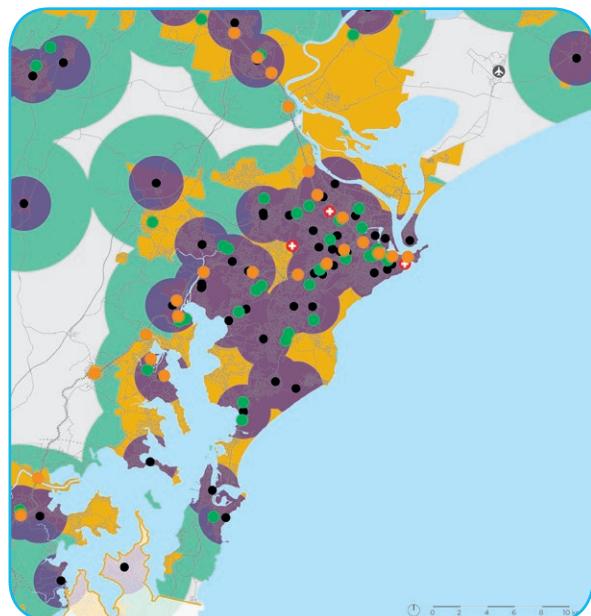


## Action: Connecting Centres Cycling Program

We will work with councils and other stakeholders to identify bicycle network gaps and pinch points in the five kilometre catchments that surround regional towns.

The Connecting Centres Program will help councils to complete local cycle networks to regional centres in partnership with local councils. We will also work with councils and bicycle user groups to get more people riding on this network and provide better information to customers.

**Figure 12** Newcastle walking and cycling catchments



- 2km walking catchment
- 5km cycling catchment
- Urban area
- Roads
- Local centre
- Education (University, TAFE, High School)
- Hospital
- Rail Station
- Airport

## Action: Roll-out the Cycling Towns Program

The Cycling Towns Program will focus bicycle infrastructure provision and encouragement in a small number of regional centres with the aim to rapidly increase rates of cycling in these areas.

Two regional centres will be selected for initial investment in the Cycling Towns Program by the NSW Government in partnership with councils, the bicycle industry and bicycle users. Candidate towns must demonstrate that a range of destinations are within easy cycling distance from their residential centres. They will require political support, and a commitment to maintain new infrastructure and complementary promotion measures.

Cycling Towns Programs may include bicycle network construction and bicycle parking facilities, complemented by local government funded encouragement programs, and support for tourist routes and information for visitors.

## Action: Improve information about walking and cycling routes and facilities

We will get people walking and cycling more by promoting the benefits of active transport, improving customer information, and developing guidelines and resources for local government. This will include improved online resources, such as trip planning, as well as other programs to promote walking and cycling for transport.

We will also continue to sponsor events and community programs, such as NSW Bike Week, which promote active transport.



## TRANSFORMING NEWCASTLE



At the centre of the state's second-largest metropolitan area is the Newcastle CBD, a key destination for people throughout the Hunter region. The CBD is a focus for retail, tourism, and government services, and is increasingly attracting business, education and residential development.

Major transport links into the city centre are shown below.

**Figure 13** Rail and bus network into Newcastle City Centre



In 2013, the NSW Government announced a new vision for Newcastle, with significant investment to support urban revitalisation and the delivery of a modern transport system.

A new light rail system is at the centre of plans to revitalise the city, encourage development and improve urban amenity in the Hunter's major regional city.

<b>\$340 million</b>
from the lease of the Port
<b>\$460 million</b>
total investment in Newcastle
<b>\$690 million</b>
Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund

### Investing in the future of Newcastle

The NSW Government's new vision for Newcastle is a significant investment in the future of the city.

A centrepiece of the 2013-2014 NSW Budget is the NSW Government's strategy to drive economic growth and renewal of Newcastle.

A 99-year lease of Newcastle Port will unlock resources that can be used to accelerate and extend the vision for a revitalised Newcastle.

Of the proceeds, \$340 million will be directed towards a new vision for Newcastle in addition to the \$120 million the Government has already committed to the revitalisation project.

The funds will be coordinated through the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund (HIIF), taking the amount invested in the HIIF to \$690 million.

\$10 million of these funds will be allocated to explore the potential for the Newcastle city centre light rail project to be the basis for light rail linking the CBD with surrounding suburbs, beaches and the broader Hunter region.

This is the third light rail project under this Government and will be a critical part of the revitalisation of Newcastle as a modern city – fast-tracked through the lease of the Newcastle Port.

### Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy

In December 2012, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure released the *Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy*. The Strategy outlines a range of initiatives and an implementation plan to revitalise Newcastle over the next 25 years.

The Strategy proposes a framework for the city to grow and identifies initiatives to improve the city's economy, access, connections and the quality and attractiveness of the public domain, all of which are catalysts for encouraging development.

The *Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy* identifies a balanced and integrated transport network as an important component to the city centre's urban renewal, and in creating an active and liveable city centre.

Central to the *Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy* is the decision to remove the heavy rail line between Wickham and Newcastle, reconnecting the city to its foreshore. Removing the train line will reconnect the city to one of its greatest assets, improve public space and amenity, stimulate private development activity in the city centre, and make it easier to move around the CBD.

The delivery of light rail will further support this decision, providing an efficient transport solution for a modern and connected city centre.

### Action: Transforming transport in the CBD

Wickham has been selected as the location for the removal of the heavy rail line and the creation of a new multi-modal transport interchange through detailed analysis and assessment.

The new, fully-accessible interchange will encourage more people to travel by public transport into the city centre with all bus, heavy rail, light rail and taxi services located on one level for easy customer interchanges.

The Wickham interchange will provide the greatest potential for urban revitalisation at the centre of the emerging business district within the Newcastle CBD, with 11 hectares of unfragmented land located within 400 metres of the interchange.

Light rail in Newcastle will support the city's renewal – improving connections between the city centre and the waterfront with up to 11 new road and pedestrian crossings to the foreshore, increasing public transport choice and connecting people to Newcastle's pristine beaches.

Starting at the Wickham transport interchange, light rail services can be provided at a high frequency – all day, at least every 10 minutes. Light rail stops will provide access to key city centre destinations including the Honeysuckle and Civic precincts, Queens Wharf, Hunter Street Mall and Newcastle Beach.

The first stage of the proposed network will operate between Wickham and the beach and will be designed with a view to future expansion.

Community consultation is now underway on potential light rail route options extending from Wickham, through to Newcastle Beach at Pacific Park.

We are working with the community to discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by each option, to ensure that we deliver the best light rail solution for Newcastle.

As we plan for the first stage of light rail for Newcastle, we are at the same time investigating how the light rail could be extended in the future. Planning work will consider how to better connect with key destinations and activity centres, such as Hunter Stadium; the University of Newcastle at Callaghan; Charlestown Square; John Hunter Hospital; Mater Hospital and Newcastle Airport.



### Key decisions – transforming Newcastle's city centre

- Reunite the city centre with the foreshore and build a new transport interchange
- Deliver the first stage of light rail in the Newcastle city centre
- Investigate long term light rail network.



## Newcastle and its metropolitan centres

Newcastle is the largest metropolitan area in NSW outside of Sydney, with a metropolitan population of 321,400. It is the predominant urban area within the region but consists of multiple centres, such as Newcastle CBD, Charlestown and Glendale/Cardiff. The metropolitan area is indicated in Figure 14 and covers parts of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens LGAs.

Public transport use is low with bus and rail trips accounting for only around three percent of all travel. Commuting trips to the Newcastle city centre originate predominately from within the Newcastle metropolitan area. There is an opportunity to increase public transport use within the metropolitan area by making bus routes more direct, improving service frequency, and through better integration of services and timetables.

In addition to the Newcastle CBD, the metropolitan area contains two other Major Regional Centres: Charlestown and Glendale/Cardiff.

Charlestown is a Major Regional Centre approximately ten kilometres from the Newcastle CBD. It is the major commercial centre in the Lake Macquarie LGA and is a hub for road-based public transport services, like buses. Numbers of dwellings can be expected to increase in the next decade. A master plan has been developed to guide the development of the centre, including a new transport interchange and improved bus, cycle and walking connections.

Glendale/Cardiff is an emerging Major Regional Centre located approximately 15 kilometres from the Newcastle CBD. Along with Charlestown and Morisset, Glendale is seen as one of the three major centres in the Lake Macquarie LGA. The Glendale Shopping Centre and the Cardiff Industrial Estate are the main trip attractors in the centre, with the Cardiff Industrial Estate a major employment area in the Hunter region. Expected growth includes 6,200 jobs and 4,000 dwellings.

### Action: Deliver road upgrades

We will deliver the Newcastle Inner City Bypass, Newcastle Link Road and Newcastle Road corridor improvements. Capacity improvements will improve travel time reliability and support an expansion of bus services.

We have committed \$15 million from the Hunter Infrastructure Fund towards the construction of the Pennant Street Bridge and associated roads at Glendale to improve access to the retail centre and surrounding growth areas.

We are working with Lake Macquarie City Council to develop transport access to the new town centre and progress design of the road bridge and associated roads to ensure work does not inhibit future development of a rail interchange at the site.

We will continue to monitor transport patronage and requirements for the new town centre, and will consider the need for development of a rail station in the longer term.

**Figure 14** Potential road improvements in the Hunter region





## Action: Support revitalisation of Newcastle city centre

We will work with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Hunter Development Corporation, UrbanGrowth NSW and Newcastle City Council to create a vibrant regional city.

We will support Newcastle City Council to implement a suite of local initiatives supporting a functional and efficient transport including:

- Promoting a shift to public transport in the city centre
- Creating a connected pedestrian and cycling network
- Providing dedicated bicycle lanes in Hunter Street

- Improving the efficiency of the road network
- Managing the impact of car parking.

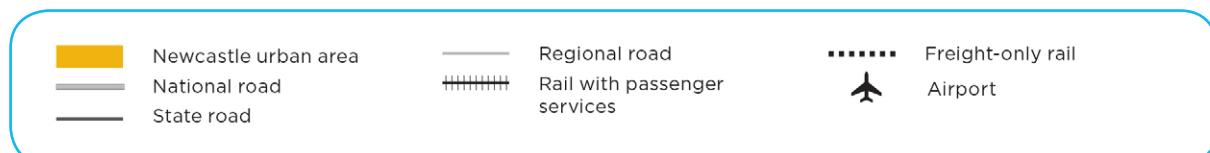
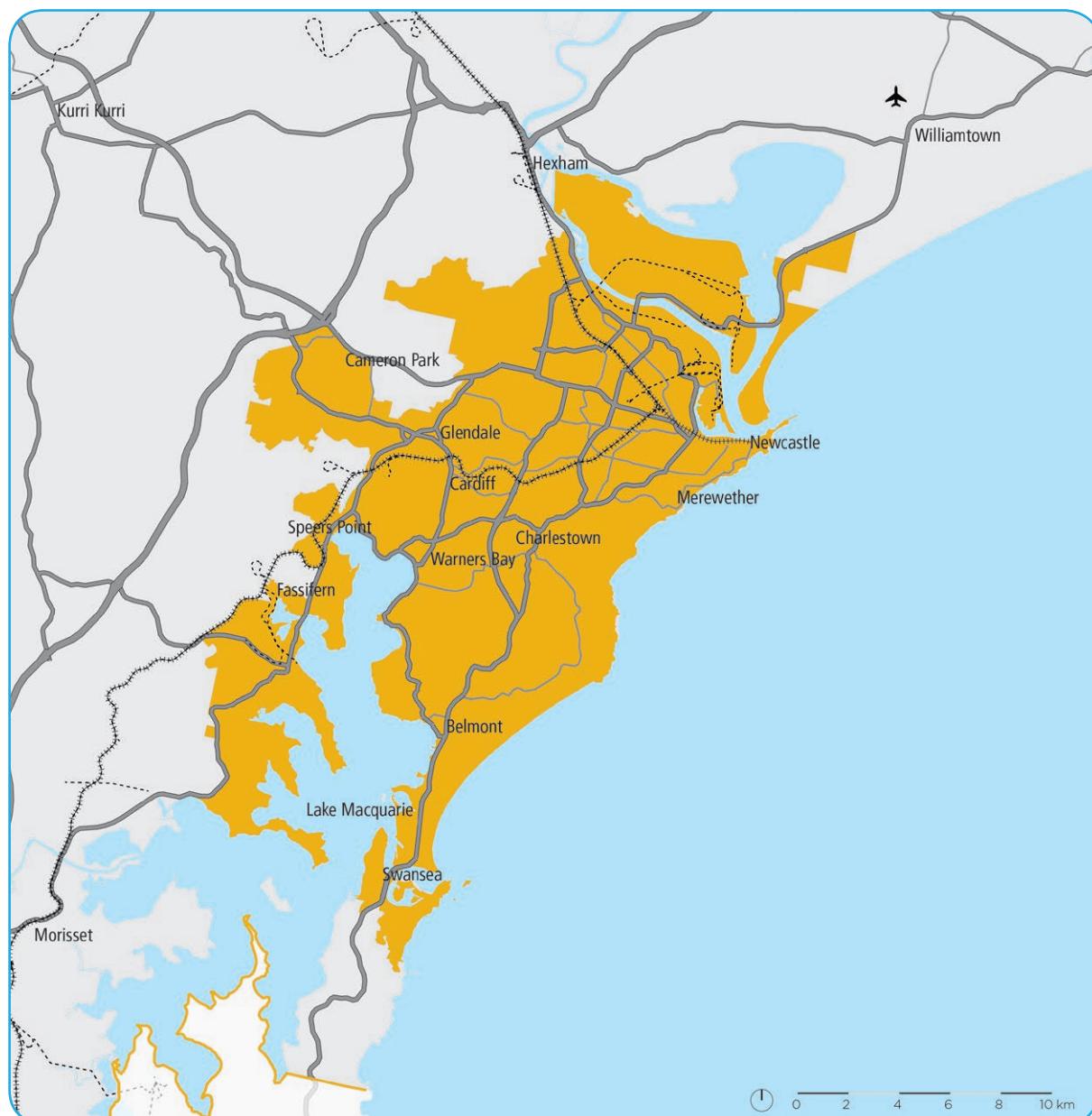
We will also work with Newcastle City Council on a transport strategy for the CBD to assist in meeting the NSW 2021 target of increasing commuter trips by public transport to 20 percent by 2016.

## Action: Improve road capacity

We will continue our investment in the Newcastle road network to address capacity constraints that impact on travel time reliability and public transport operations.

We will consider how light rail will best be integrated with the road network in the Newcastle city centre and beyond.

**Figure 15** Newcastle urban area





## Maitland

Maitland is located 35 kilometres northwest of Newcastle and is an important destination for employment and regional facilities.

The current population of the urban centre is about 70,000 people. Population growth in Maitland is above the average for NSW, with an average growth rate of over two percent each year.

The increasing demand for housing is placing pressures on the local transport system, resulting in peak period road congestion, a need for public transport services to new urban areas, and road and rail freight impacts in the urban area.

A wide range of facilities is located in Maitland, including primary, secondary and tertiary education, retail and leisure centres, and healthcare, including Maitland Hospital.

Bus and rail trips in Maitland account for around three percent of travel. There is an opportunity to increase public transport use, by improving service frequency and speed.

We can also encourage public transport use through better promotion of services and through improved integration of services and timetables. For example, promotion of travel to the Newcastle CBD by rail as competitive to car travel, particularly for journeys to work in peak periods.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Maitland City Council has prepared a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and a Bike Plan, and is reviewing these strategies. Council is also seeking to ensure that walking and cycling networks are integrated into new developments.

We will support the implementation of better facilities for walking and cycling, including the provision of cycle parking facilities at transport interchanges, centres, schools and hospitals. Maitland City Council also has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms.

### Action: Improve public transport services

There is a major opportunity to make better use of public transport infrastructure in Maitland. We will work to improve transport interchanges and to integrate services and timetables.

We will work with Maitland City Council to progress planning for the upgrade of Maitland Transport Interchange. We will also support improvements to the accessibility to and from the bus stops at the Green Hills shopping centre.

We will strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines. We will investigate what community transport and flexible transport options can be added to the Maitland network to enhance the reach of services and enlarge the potential passenger base.

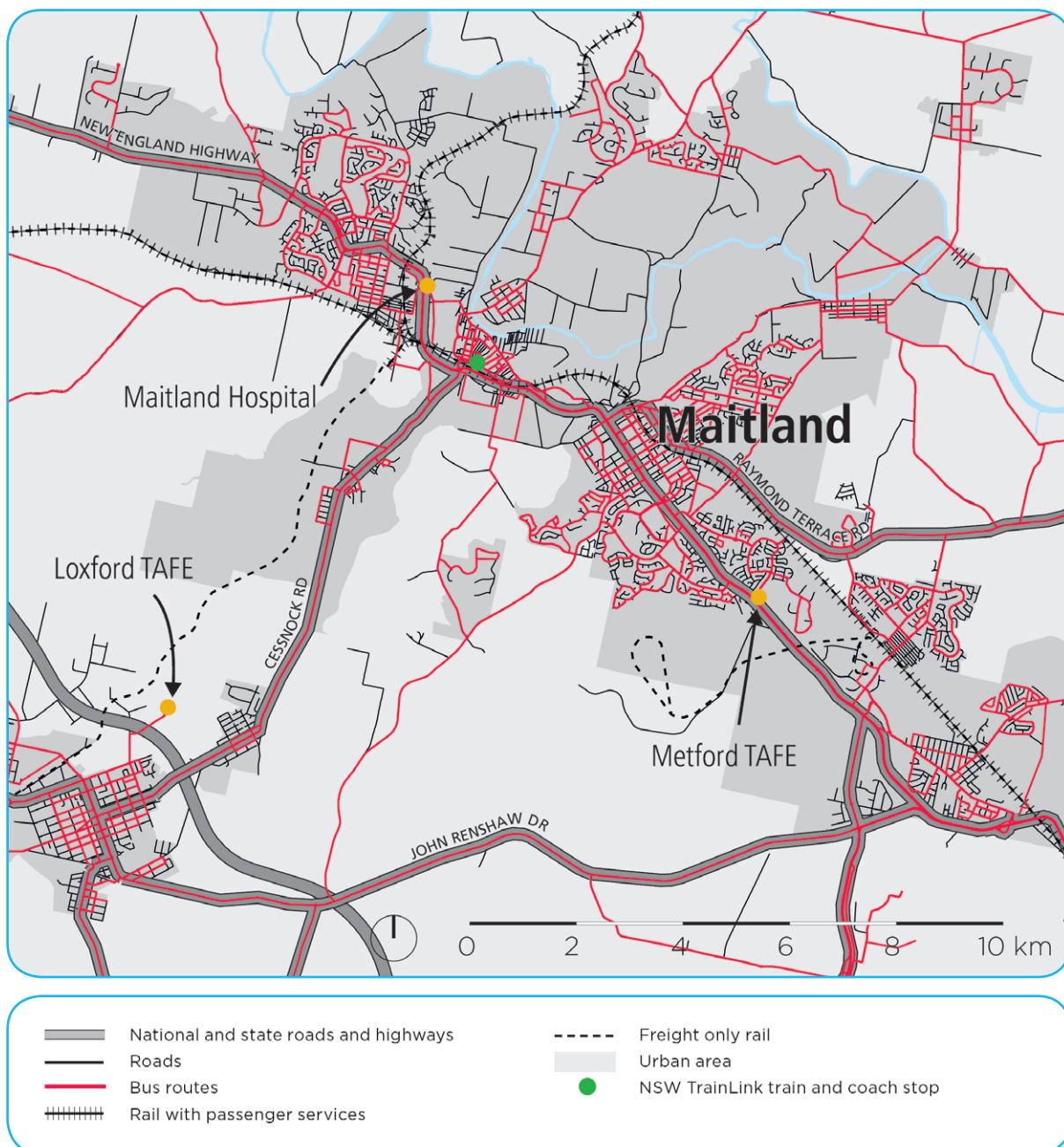
Maitland City Council has proposed re-opening the South Maitland Rail Line to passengers, with the provision of new stations. The costs and benefits of this proposal are not included in the *Maitland Integrated Land Use and Transport Strategy*. South Maitland Rail Line is a privately owned and operated railway line used to transport freight. Providing passenger services and station infrastructure would be expensive and the benefits may not outweigh the costs. Transport for NSW will review the potential for customer services on this rail line against other options, such as providing a revised bus network.

### Action: Manage road capacity and safety

The New England Highway passes through Maitland carrying high volumes of both freight and car traffic. Congestion is experienced during extended peak periods, which can start as early as 6:30am. Maitland City Council is investigating options for a southern bypass which would relieve the road network through the centre of Maitland.

A strategic roads plan is required to understand how the Hunter Expressway will influence travel needs in Maitland, and what

**Figure 16** Maitland town centre



supporting infrastructure is needed to manage travel demands in the urban centre. Transport for NSW will work with council to better understand these needs.

We will have committed \$45 million to achieve safety and traffic flow improvements through the upgrade of the two five-leg roundabouts on the New England Highway in Maitland, with construction to commence in 2013.

We will work with major employers, including mining companies, to make the most of the transport system through transport management associations or our workplace travel plan processes. This could include employer-led initiatives, park and ride services, better public transport information or car share schemes.



## Cessnock

Cessnock is the gateway to the Hunter Valley vineyards region, which includes Pokolbin, Lovedale, Rothbury and Branxton. About 20,000 people live in Cessnock's urban centre, and the population is growing at around one percent each year.

Cessnock has a range of facilities within the town, including a main street with retail and leisure facilities. There are primary schools, secondary schools, a TAFE for tertiary education and Cessnock District Hospital.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Cessnock City Council is reviewing its bike plan to identify priority infrastructure and policies to increase opportunities for cycling, including a network of potential cycle routes between communities such as Branxton, Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Hunter Valley vineyards. Cessnock also has a network of disused rail lines which could provide opportunities for regional active transport links.

We have identified a range of funding options to support local government to implement cycling routes and parking facilities, and have also established a review process to evaluate the potential use of disused rail lines for walk and cycle trails.



### Action: Improve public transport services

We will review the public transport network to understand current service provision and requirements going forward.

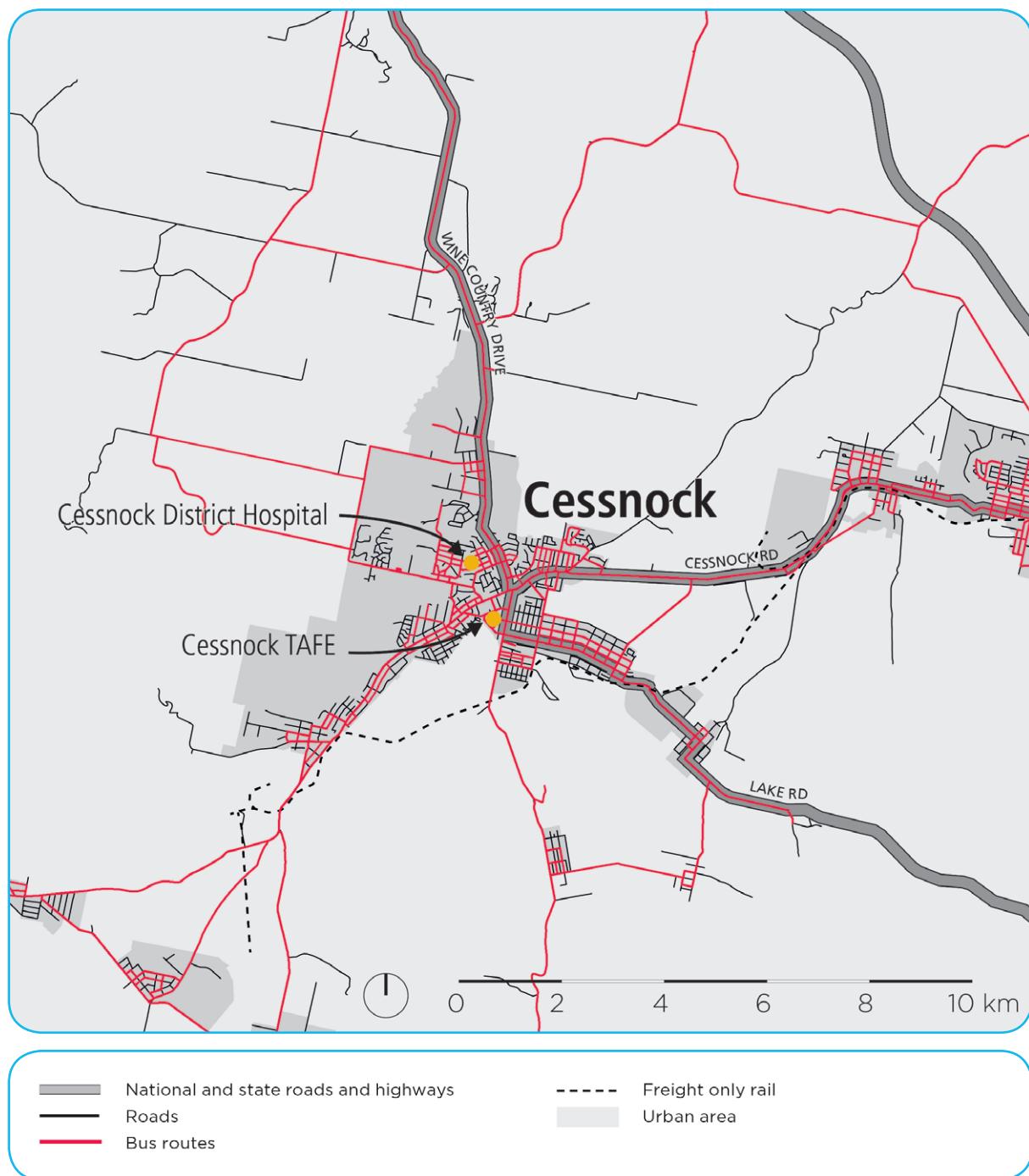
We will strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines. Improved access to and from employment and tourist destinations in the Hunter Valley wine region will be investigated.

Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

### Action: Manage road capacity and safety

Upon the completion of the Hunter Expressway, we will continue to work with Council to monitor road capacity and network safety in the Cessnock LGA.

**Figure 17** Cessnock town centre





## Raymond Terrace

Raymond Terrace is situated on the Pacific Highway, about 25 kilometres from Newcastle CBD by road. Its urban centre had a population of 13,200 in 2011.

Raymond Terrace has a large shopping centre, with a range of commercial, professional and government services. Its location on the Pacific Highway gives access to long-distance coach services and NSW TrainLink coaches running between Taree and Newcastle.

A local bus service provides transport within Raymond Terrace on weekdays and Saturdays, while a service is also provided to Newcastle seven days a week.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Transport for NSW supports the implementation of better facilities for walking and cycling, including the provision of cycle parking facilities at transport interchanges, centres, schools and hospitals. Port Stephens Council also has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms.

### Action: Improve public transport services

Long-distance coaches between Brisbane and Sydney stop on the Pacific Highway, while regional coach services to Newcastle use kerbside stops in Adelaide Street on the edge of the town centre. Within the town centre, there is a small area in Sturgeon Street which is designated as a bus terminal used by local buses. There is a lack of bus shelters and passenger facilities at these locations.

We will support Council in planning for a transport interchange within Raymond Terrace, and review options for a park and ride facility.

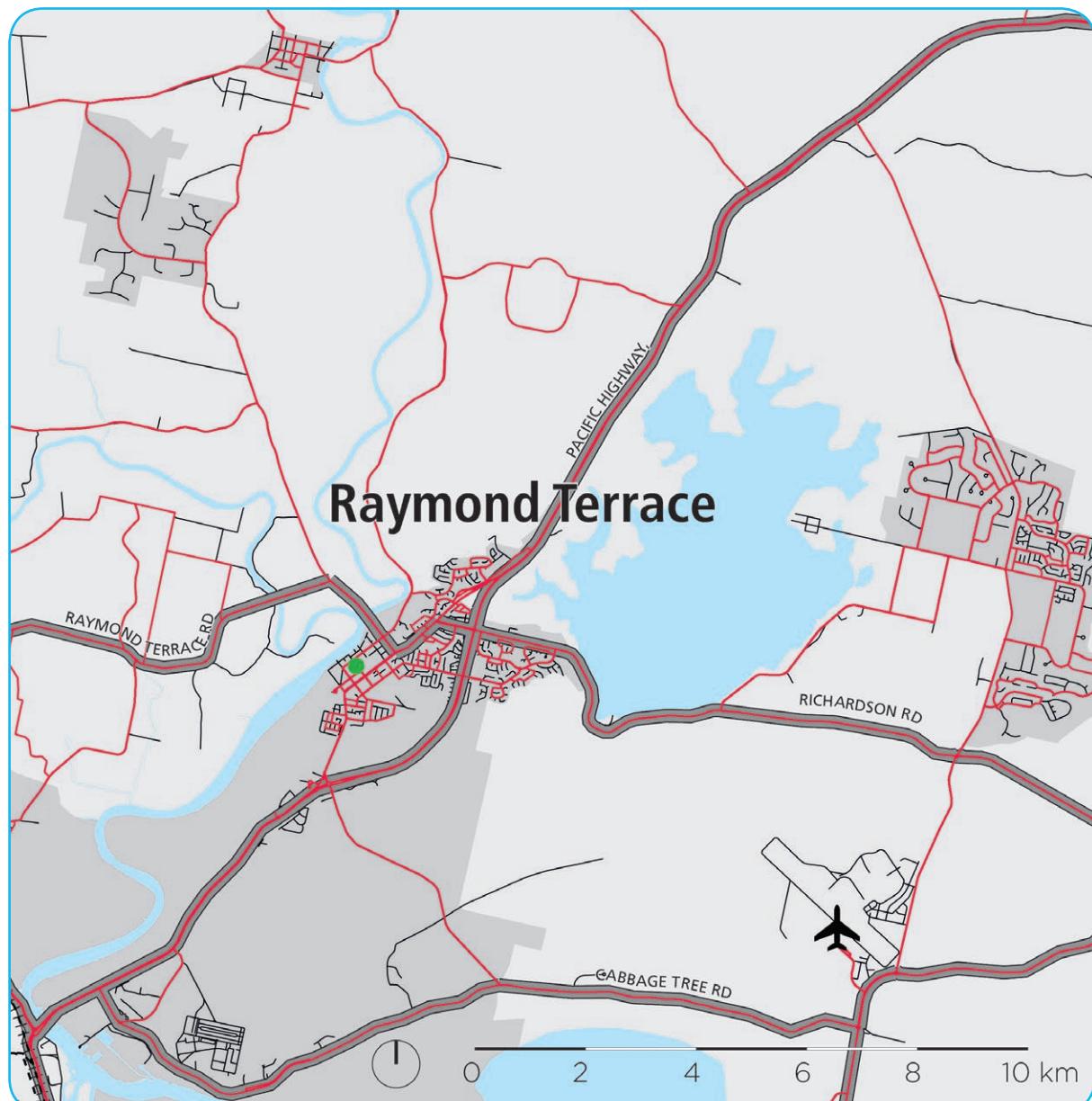
We will strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines.

Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

### Action: Manage road capacity and safety

We will work with council to manage and improve state roads, such as William Bailey Street, and Pacific Highway intersections, such as at the new Kings Hill development.

**Figure 18** Raymond Terrace town centre



**National and state roads and highways**  
**Roads**  
**Bus routes**  
**Rail with passenger services**

**Urban area**  
**Airport**  
**NSW TrainLink train and coach stop**

Transport  
**MASTER  
PLAN**

**Regional  
Transport  
Plan**

## Morisset

Morisset and Cooranbong combine to form an urban centre with a population of approximately 17,000. Morisset is an emerging regional centre.

Morisset is accessed off the M1 Pacific Motorway at the Mandalong Road interchange. It has a range of retail and commercial facilities, with a large retail and industrial area located close to the M1 Pacific Motorway/Mandalong Road interchange. There are a number of primary and secondary schools. Education, healthcare and manufacturing are the main employers in the area.

Morisset Station provides access to train services to Sydney and Newcastle on the Newcastle and Central Coast Line. It also provides access to NSW TrainLink services to Maitland and towns further north on the Main North rail line.

The station also acts as a bus interchange for three bus routes – two serving the Morisset Peninsula and one running to Cooranbong. These bus service timings are integrated with the NSW TrainLink trains arriving and departing the station.



### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Lake Macquarie City Council has prepared a *Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan and a Cycling Strategy 2021*. In addition to the existing on and off road cycleways in Morisset and the Morisset peninsula, a number of proposed on road cycleways are proposed. Lake Macquarie City Council is also seeking to ensure that walking and cycling networks are integrated into new developments.

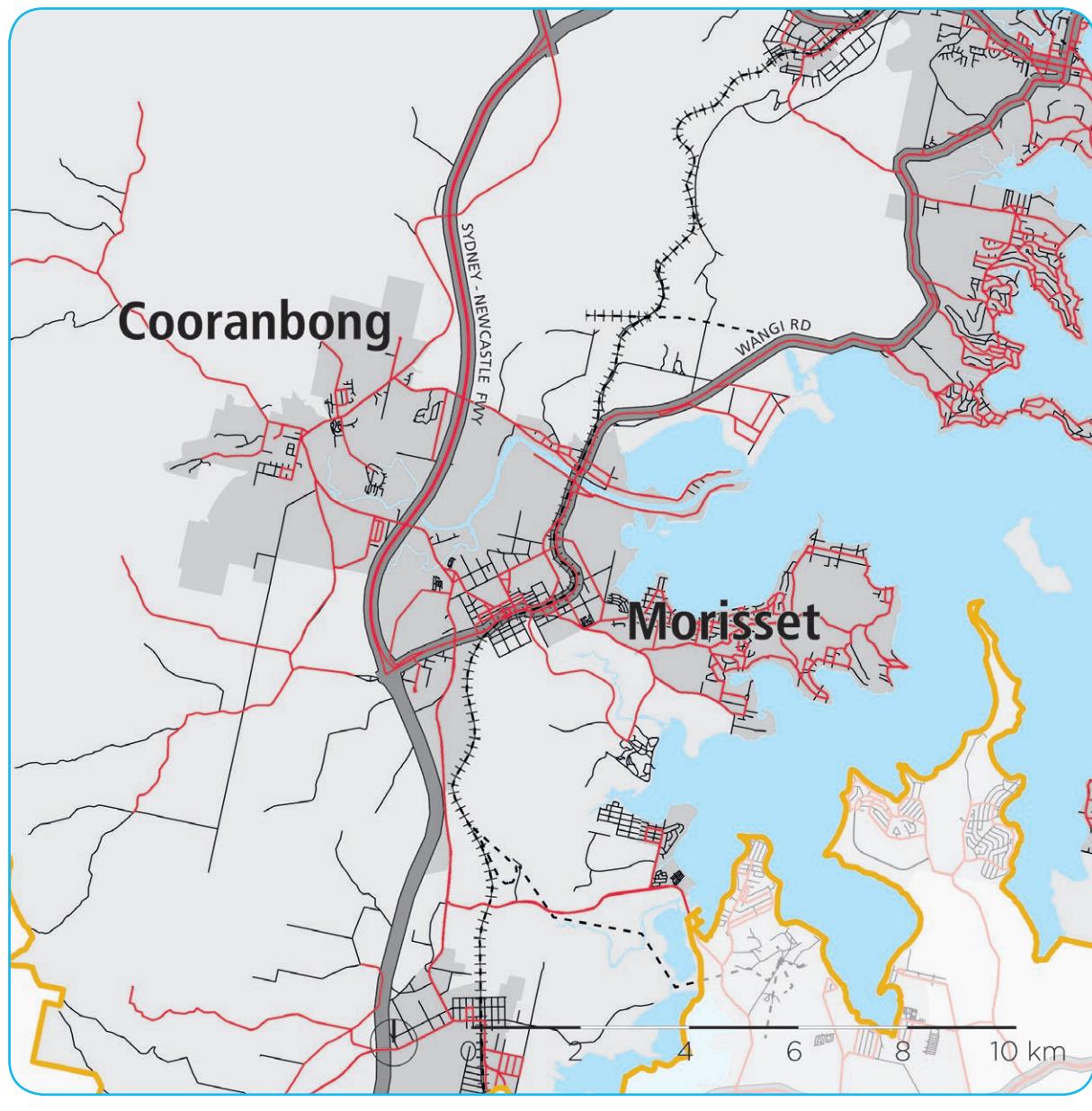
We will support the implementation of better facilities for walking and cycling, including the provision of cycle parking facilities at transport interchanges, centres, schools and hospitals. Council also has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms.

### Action: Improve public transport services

We will strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews in the context of the current *Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Planning Guidelines*. Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

Improved public transport services will be provided for new developments in the Cooranbong area to meet demand.

**Figure 19** Morisset town centre



National and state roads and highways  
Roads  
Bus routes

Rail with passenger services  
Freight only rail  
Urban area



## Forster-Tuncurry

Forster and Tuncurry are at the northern boundary of the Hunter region, in the Great Lakes LGA. Forster is the larger town with a population of about 13,700, while Tuncurry has a population of about 6,000.

The Great Lakes is a major tourism destination, characterised by lakes, beaches and national parks. The population of Forster-Tuncurry roughly doubles during the summer holiday period, generating a significant income for the region but placing pressure on transport systems and social infrastructure.

The NSW Government is planning for the development of HealthOne Forster-Tuncurry, adjacent to the Forster Private Hospital, within a local health precinct that includes several other primary and ancillary health services.

Education options in Forster-Tuncurry include primary schools, secondary schools and the North Coast TAFE Campus in Tuncurry. There is a choice of shopping centres, including the main street and retail shopping centres.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Forster-Tuncurry has a relatively high cycling and walking journey to work mode share. Great Lakes Council has prepared a cycling and walking strategy, and is implementing a wayfinding strategy.

Great Lakes Council has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms. Programs could include providing end of trip facilities at transport hubs, education precincts and centres or through assistance with ‘missing links’ in active transport networks.

### Action: Improve public transport services

We will examine opportunities to simplify current arrangements in order to better meet the needs of our customers. This will include categorising town routes in accordance with their function and the markets they serve, rather than by distance from the town centre.

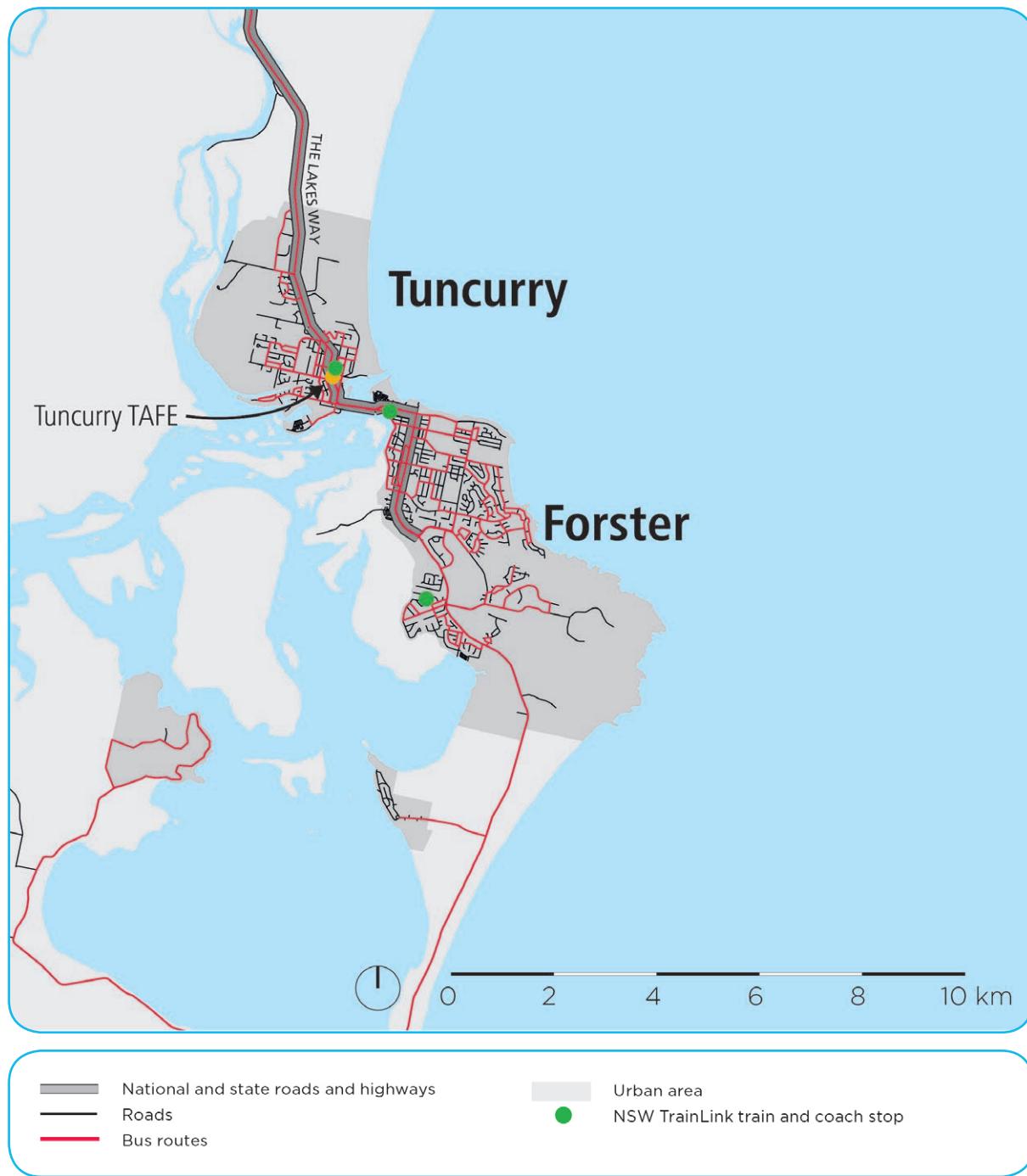
Increasing traffic on the Lakes Way north of Tuncurry indicates greater demand for travel to and from Taree. Exploration of increasing bus services on this route will be considered.

### Action: Manage tourism-related travel

The influx of visitors during holiday periods puts temporary pressure on transport systems and services at peak periods. There is an opportunity to develop a holistic approach to providing transport services for holiday periods through initiatives such as branding and awareness, holiday service patterns, pricing options, or park and ride services.

We will work with Great Lakes Council to understand how a holiday transport program could be developed and implemented in Forster-Tuncurry.

**Figure 20** Foster and Tuncurry town centres



## Singleton

Singleton is located 80 kilometres north-west of Newcastle, on the New England Highway, adjacent to the Hunter River. Approximately 14,000 people live in Singleton's urban centre, making it the largest town in the Upper Hunter.

Major industries around Singleton include coal mining, electricity generation, vineyards and agriculture. These industries provide jobs for people living in and around Singleton, and create specific opportunities for transport provision.

As the largest town in the Upper Hunter, Singleton has a range of retail, leisure, healthcare and education facilities (including primary schools, secondary schools and the Hunter Institute of TAFE campus). Singleton District Hospital provides a range of health services to the community of Singleton and the surrounding district.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

Singleton Council prepared a Bike Plan in 2009, defining a series of actions to establish a safe, connected cycle network in Singleton.

Singleton Council has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms.

### Action: Improve public transport services

We will examine opportunities to simplify current arrangements in order to better meet the needs of our customers. This will include categorising town routes in accordance with their function and the markets they serve, rather than by distance from the town centre.

Route services in Singleton are operated under contract by Hunter Valley Buses on weekdays and Saturdays. An integrated network plan is available, and services connect major facilities, including schools, Singleton District Hospital and Singleton Station. Services operate between 9am and 5pm and are accessible for all users.

We will strengthen bus operations through network and timetable reviews. Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

As new housing in Singleton has emerged in The Heights, bus services have been enhanced. We will continue to ensure that new residential developments are considered for bus service enhancements.

### Action: Manage road capacity and safety

The New England Highway passes through the centre of Singleton, and investigations have been undertaken to understand the need, and potential options, for a bypass around the town.

We will continue to work with council to develop the proposal to widen the Gowrie Gates rail underpass.

### Action: Support efficient workplace travel planning

Approximately 20 percent of the Singleton workforce works in the mining industry. Some mines are major employers with up to 1,000 people on-site at a time.

We will work with major employers to help define options for travel plans, which seek to reduce private car use where appropriate. Options could include park and ride opportunities, with buses scheduled to meet shift times.

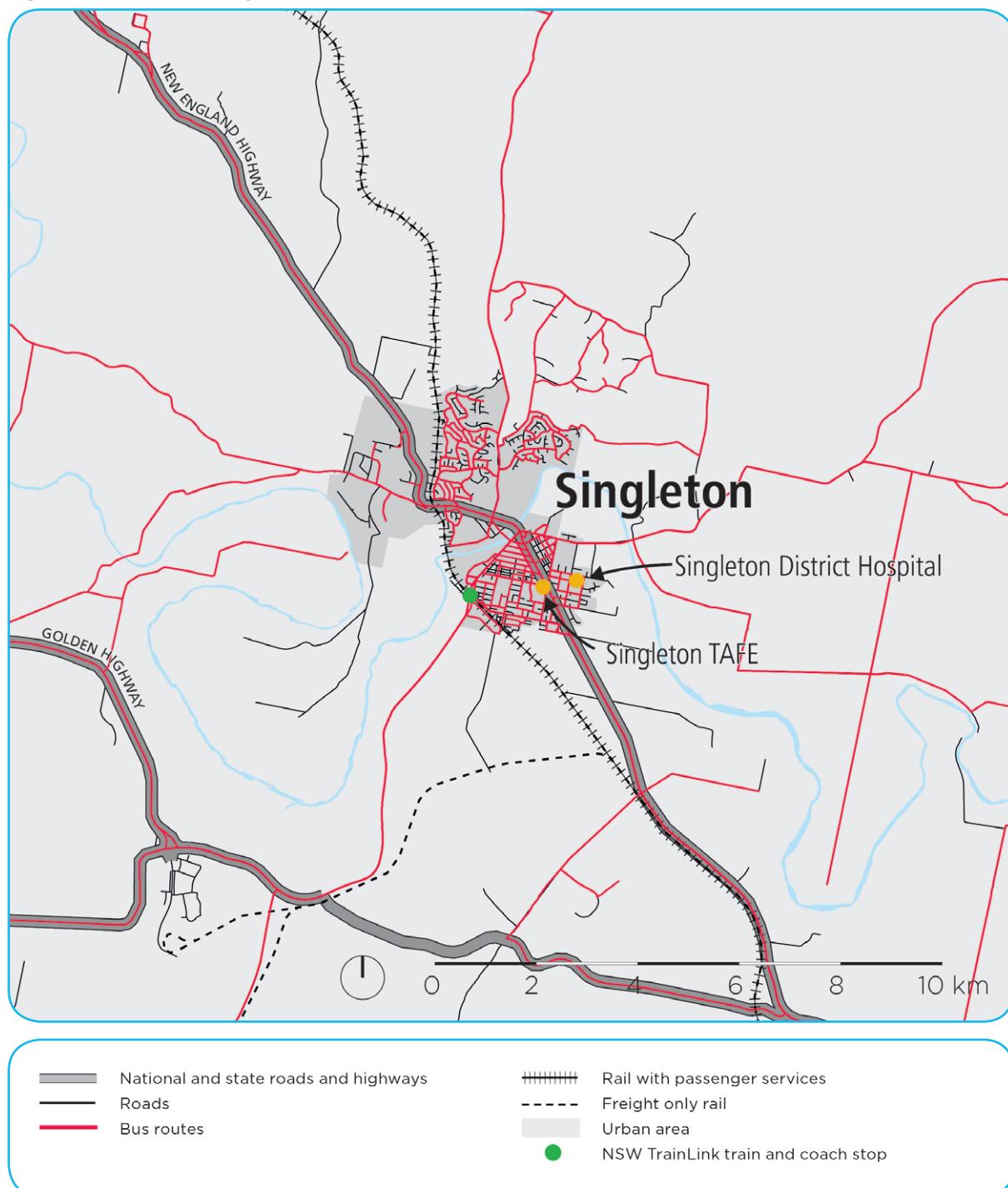
### Action: Improve access to Singleton Station

We are working to improve the quality of transport interchanges, including Singleton Station, to make sure that they meet the needs of all customers, including people travelling to John Hunter Hospital for healthcare.

Through the Transport Access Program, work completed at the station in February 2013, included improved ramp access. Further work to upgrade footpath surfacing and provide tactile tiles will occur in the short term.



**Figure 21** Actions for Singleton





## Muswellbrook

Muswellbrook is located about 50 kilometres northwest of Singleton, and it had a population of 11,200 in 2011.

The town centre is situated on the New England Highway at the junction of the three main rail corridors that form the Hunter Valley Coal Chain (Main North, Ulan and Hunter rail lines). Muswellbrook Station provides passenger services via the Main North rail line.

Town bus services are provided, with links to Scone, Aberdeen and Denman. Denman Road links to the Golden Highway which provides access to the Central West region.

A large number of coal mines surround Muswellbrook and two power stations (Liddell and Bayswater) are located south of Muswellbrook. These industries provide jobs for people living in and around Muswellbrook.

There is an increasing amount of mining-related, heavy vehicle traffic through Muswellbrook and on the local roads surrounding Muswellbrook.

### Action: Improve opportunities for walking and cycling

We support the implementation of better facilities for walking and cycling, including the provision of cycle parking facilities at transport interchanges, centres, schools and hospitals.

Muswellbrook Shire Council also has opportunities to seek support for new links through our funding mechanisms.

### Action: Improve public transport services

We will examine opportunities to simplify current arrangements in order to better meet the needs of our customers. This will include categorising town routes in accordance with their function and the markets they serve, rather than by distance from the town centre.

We will work with council and the bus operator (Reg Osborne Pty Ltd) to respond to community needs with the aim of increasing the passenger numbers. Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

### Action: Manage road capacity and safety

The New England Highway passes through the centre of Muswellbrook, and a heavy vehicle bypass would help to alleviate the impacts of road freight.

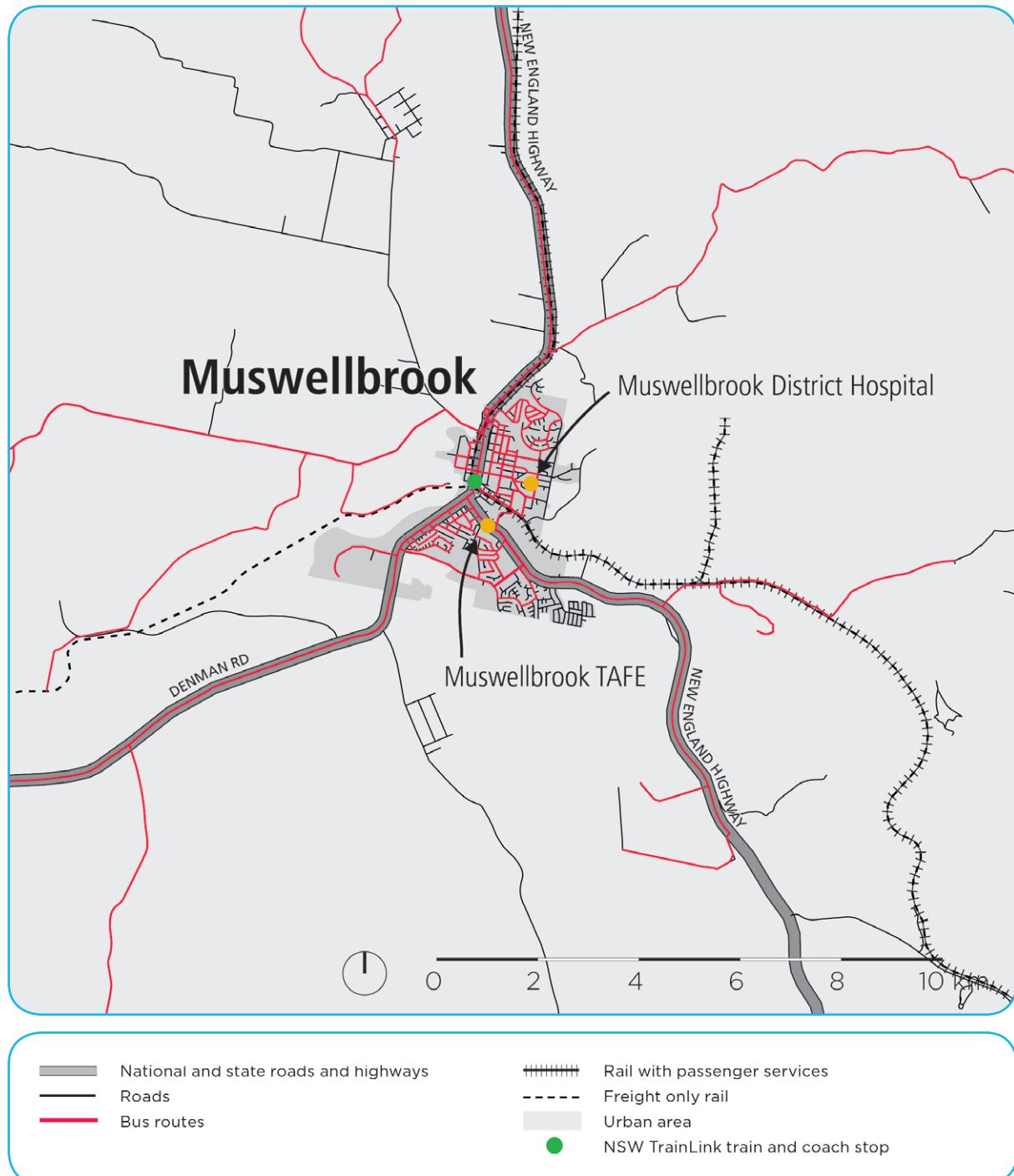
We will work with Muswellbrook Shire Council in reviewing the need for and developing possible concepts for a bypass.

### Action: Support efficient workplace travel planning

Approximately 14 percent of the Muswellbrook LGA workforce works in the mining industry. Some mines are major employers with up to 600 people on-site at a time.

We will work with major employers to help define options for travel plans, which seek to reduce private car use where appropriate. Options could include ride share, or park and ride opportunities, with buses scheduled to meet shift times.

Figure 22 Actions for Muswellbrook



## Scone

Located within the Upper Hunter Shire, Scone is located about 25 kilometres north of Muswellbrook on the New England Highway. The population of Scone's urban centre was approximately 5,000 in 2011.

Scone, known as the horse capital of Australia, has a renowned equine industry. It has a range of retail and commercial facilities situated on the New England Highway. An industrial area is located on the northern edge of the town.

Facilities include a range of primary schools, secondary schools, a TAFE campus specialising in equine and rural studies, and Scott Memorial Hospital.

Scone Station provides access to the Hunter Line with services running between Scone and Newcastle. One train in the morning, and two trains in the evening, arrive and leave Scone. School bus services operate in the area and a long-distance coach service between Sydney and Brisbane stops in Scone.

### Action: Improve public transport services

We will examine opportunities to simplify current arrangements in order to better meet the needs of our customers. This will include categorising town routes in accordance with their function and the markets they serve, rather than by distance from the town centre.

We will work with Upper Hunter Shire Council and the bus operator (Reg Osborne Pty Ltd) to respond to community needs with the aim of increasing the passenger numbers. Opportunities for community transport and flexible transport improvements will be investigated to identify ways we can extend the reach of the public transport system and make it more flexible for customers.

### Action: Scone freight strategy

The New England Highway passes through the centre of Scone. We will work in partnership with the Australian Government to reduce the impact of freight movements in Scone, including evaluating various options to eliminate the rail level crossing with the New England Highway (A15) at Kelly Street.

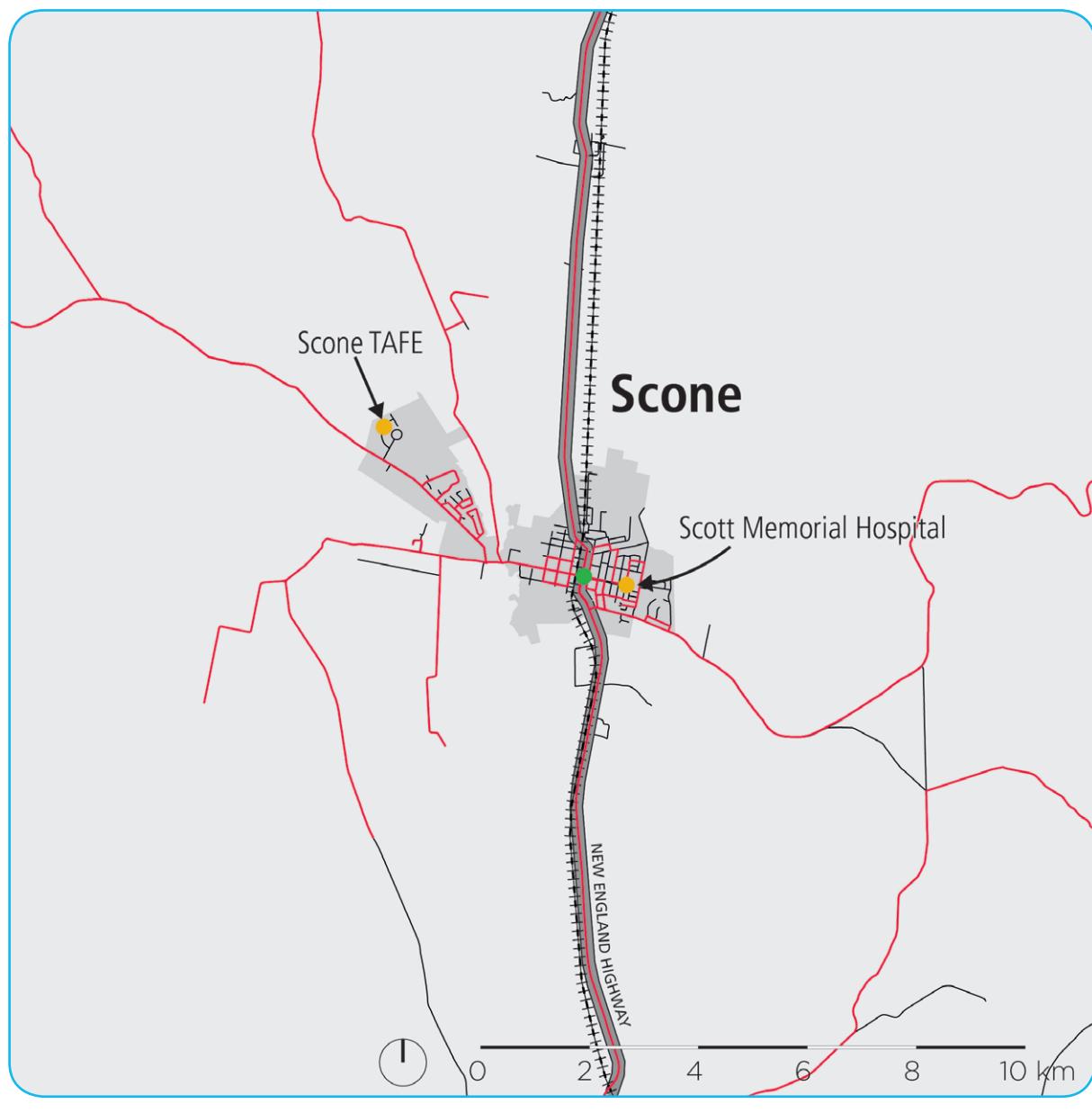
### Action: Improve access to Scone Station

Transport for NSW is working to improve the quality of transport interchanges, including Scone Station, to make sure that they meet the needs of all customers.

Improvements to Scone Station commenced in March 2013, and include resurfacing and levelling the footpath and line-marking the accessible car parking space.



**Figure 23** Actions for Scone



## IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

An Implementation and Delivery Plan will be developed to support this Regional Transport Plan.

This will provide the detail to inform how the Regional Transport Plan is being delivered.

As well as the Implementation and Delivery Plan, the NSW Government will continue to invest in transport infrastructure as part of our ongoing investment program.

### Investing in the region

Delivering improvements to transport will require sustained investment. This investment will come from the NSW Government, from local councils and from the Australian Government in major projects.

Transport for NSW will continue to work in partnership with local government and the Australian Government on delivering transport improvements.

### Delivering for the region

The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* supports the *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*, released in December 2012.

The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* is as much about planning and investing for the long term as it is about short term action. Work is already underway and detailed planning and design on many of these projects has already commenced. In addition, we will continue to work to identify and prioritise actions for the future, so that they may be delivered as funding becomes available.

The *Hunter Regional Transport Plan* will provide detailed inputs to shape the *Lower Hunter Regional Growth Plan* and *Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan* being developed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

Inputs will include future road corridor definitions and other programs to support future changes in land use, population and development.

The NSW Government is working hard to ensure that our regional land use and transport plans are aligned, ensuring the greatest benefit from our investment and for our transport customers.

### Taking action

Consistent with the *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*, Transport for NSW will focus on delivering the *Hunter Regional Transport Plan*.

This focus on delivering the planning will include:

- Providing an annual update of the Regional Transport Plan, including detailed reports on the progress of implementing the initiatives contained in this plan
- Reviewing the Regional Transport Plan every five years
- A commitment to ensure decisions are founded on a solid evidence base
- Continued collaboration with Hunter Councils, Hunter Regional Development Australia and other stakeholders to support delivery of the Regional Transport Plan and to respond to future planning needs
- A commitment to extensive community engagement and customer consultation as we develop the initiatives in the Plan.

## WE LISTENED

Our commitment to customers involves listening to people in the Hunter region. The feedback we have includes the extensive consultation that informed the *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* and direct customer feedback through the Household Travel Survey for the Lower Hunter and a pilot of the Regional Household Travel Survey in the Lower Hunter.

### NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan

More than 1,200 submissions were received during the development of the *NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan* including specific submissions identifying transport issues in the Hunter region.

A Regional Forum was held on the 13 April 2012 in Newcastle with over 100 members of the community in attendance following the release of the *NSW Long Term Master Plan Discussion Paper*. In addition, meetings were held with local, state and Australian government representatives during mid 2013.

Specific suggestions were made throughout this consultation process to improve transport within the Hunter region, included:

- A transport system to support growth, development and urban amenity in the Newcastle city centre
- Views on the future rail line in Newcastle city centre

- Opportunities for improved transport connections to and from Newcastle and within the Hunter region, especially to destinations such as Newcastle Airport and the University of Newcastle
- A need to plan for new communities through initiatives like the Newcastle Inner City Bypass, Newcastle Link Road and Newcastle Road corridor improvements
- Road congestion on the lower New England Highway between Newcastle and Maitland and greater reliability for freight and passenger travel on the New England Highway
- Improved intercity connections and reduced travel times between Newcastle and Sydney on both the road and rail corridor
- The need for a customer-focused transport system that is quick, reliable, affordable and easy to use, with an integrated ticketing system
- Better separation of passenger and freight train lines to improve reliability, and encourage road freight onto rail, to reduce road congestion
- The need for better passenger security on public transport services.



## HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEY RESULTS

The Lower Hunter is part of the annual Household Travel Survey. In 2012, Transport for NSW undertook a Regional Household Travel Survey Pilot to help us understand what influences the transport decisions of people in the regions, including the Upper Hunter. This survey was a pilot with a relatively small sample size. However, the results provide insight that informed this plan.

While there was some variation in trip purpose between the Upper and Lower Hunter, the reasons for travel were reasonably consistent. In the Hunter region the main reasons people travel are for social and recreational purposes (28–31 percent of trips) and shopping (24–25 percent). Trips to work are important but are only 13 and 11 percent of trips in the Lower and Upper Hunter.



**For more information, visit [www.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au)**

