

Newcastle City Centre Parking Strategy

April 2017



REVITALISING
NEWCASTLE

NSW
MAKING IT HAPPEN

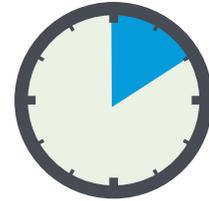
PARKING IN NEWCASTLE

The numbers today



11,374

spaces in Newcastle city centre and city fringe



2,500

spaces empty at peak time (12-2pm)
= **78%** occupancy



Opportunity to improve management of current parking supply, increase parking in the west end, and investigate park and ride

2019 changes



1,200

people per hour:
Light Rail capacity



Opportunity for new technology solutions and car sharing



Better public transport including faster, more direct buses



Reduced demand for parking

Transport project impacts



4.2%

Transport project-related parking impact
= **475** spaces



2.45%

196 spaces identified for creation
- reducing impact to just **279** spaces

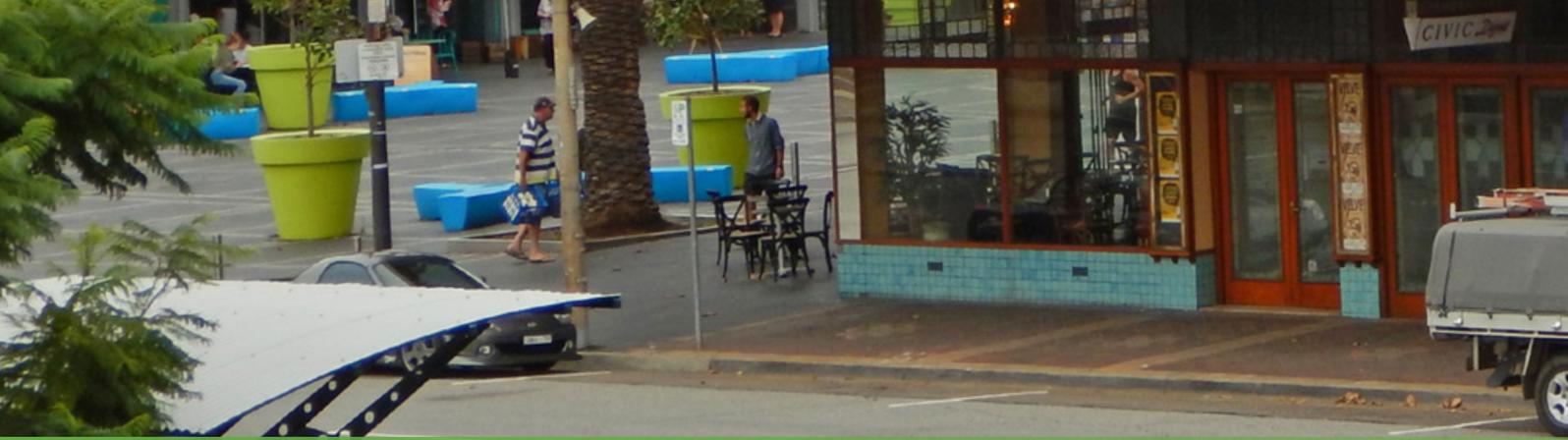
WHAT THE STRATEGY SETS OUT TO DO

The Newcastle City Centre Parking Strategy sets out a series of principles and opportunities for parking in the Newcastle city centre. These findings broadly align with findings of previous studies performed by or for Newcastle City Council and other parties over the past three years.

The emphasis for the future of parking in Newcastle, as is the case for cities across the world, should be to better utilise existing supply through applying a demand management approach while increasing public transport patronage.

Satisfying parking demand at any cost is clearly unsustainable and would put Newcastle at odds with global trends for parking, transport and liveability in growing cities.





PRINCIPLES: DELIVERING THE VISION

Newcastle City Council, through the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan (Revised 2013), sets out a clear vision for the ‘Connected City’ it would like Newcastle to be. While acknowledging that private vehicles are currently the transport mode of choice for most residents, the Council has recognised that improved public transport is vital to the ongoing health of the city, as are active transport modes such as cycling and walking.

The importance of effective, efficient and safe public transport systems offering quality of service (measured by reliability, frequency and convenience) are also identified by Council as key drivers of a connected city.

The plan, which was developed by and is ultimately owned by Council and the community, sets out a number of ideas for the future to achieve this, including integrated light rail, establishing park and ride areas, and removing parking on selected road arteries to make room for active and public transport.

These ideas, in addition to the directions contained in previous parking studies performed by Newcastle City Council, form part of the basis for the principles outlined in the Newcastle City Centre Parking Strategy that follow.

It is acknowledged that parking and the local road network are ultimately a local government responsibility, just as public transport and the state road network are the responsibility of state government to maintain and run.

The principles and opportunities contained within this strategy will ultimately be actioned by Council, while the NSW Government has committed to significant improvements to public transport in the city from early 2018, after Newcastle Transport takes over services in July 2017.

‘We see a future that is less dependent on cars...’

Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan Newcastle City Council, 2013



Principles to improve parking in Newcastle are:

Principles	
<p>1: People access, not parking supply, drives business activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Good parking policy is about managing demand › Future increases in supply should be moderate and focused on customer and business needs › Turnover should be improved through progressive relocation of all day parking outwards from the centre › It is vital to better utilise current supply
<p>2: Prioritise short stay, high turnover parking over long stay, low turnover parking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Utilise on street parking for short stay use only › Reduce time-limits for on-street to maximise efficiency and turnover
<p>3: Parking must support overarching transport objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Progressively increase use of public transport to reduce parking demand › Incentivise increased provision of parking by private sector operators › Cap off-street parking supply in city east › Discourage west to east commuter car trips through the city centre › Intercept cars before entering city centre

Significant improvements are coming to Newcastle that will see it transition into a more liveable, connected and sustainable city.

Newcastle will soon have a world class integrated public transport system, futureproofed active transport networks, and more efficient traffic networks that support buses, taxis, commercial vehicles and private vehicle movements.

This strategy highlights opportunities for Newcastle to embrace innovation in parking and transport options, in keeping with the benefits being delivered by Revitalising Newcastle and the innovation agenda being pursued by Newcastle City Council, the University of Newcastle, and the NSW Government.

OPPORTUNITIES: HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Delivering on these principles will require subtle changes to parking policy as well as a commitment to investigating new technologies and delivery methods outside of the CBD, as public transport improves.

A long term approach is required, however action is required in the short, medium and long term of Council's Connected City vision is to be met.

Opportunities	
1: Parking Hierarchy, Price & Parking Revenue Reinvestment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Strategically addressing current imbalance between long and short stay parking, to support business outcomes, while at the same time taking a strategic view on the pricing applied to parking including how parking-related income is reinvested within the six city precincts. › Opportunity also exists for Newcastle City Council to investigate increasing supply at the western end of the city centre, by incentivising the private sector or through joint venture-style development.
2: Park & Ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continuing to investigate options to establish park and ride locations outside the city centre, including aligning these locations wherever possible to the review of bus and ferry routes to be undertaken by Newcastle Transport ahead of 2018.
3: Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continuing to investigate technology-based solutions to manage parking, including improvements to wayfinding, dynamic pricing, and increasing ease of payment.
4: Car Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › One car share vehicle can replace up to 12 private vehicles, reducing demand for parking and helping to ease traffic congestion. › Car sharing schemes are commonplace in major cities around Australia and the world.

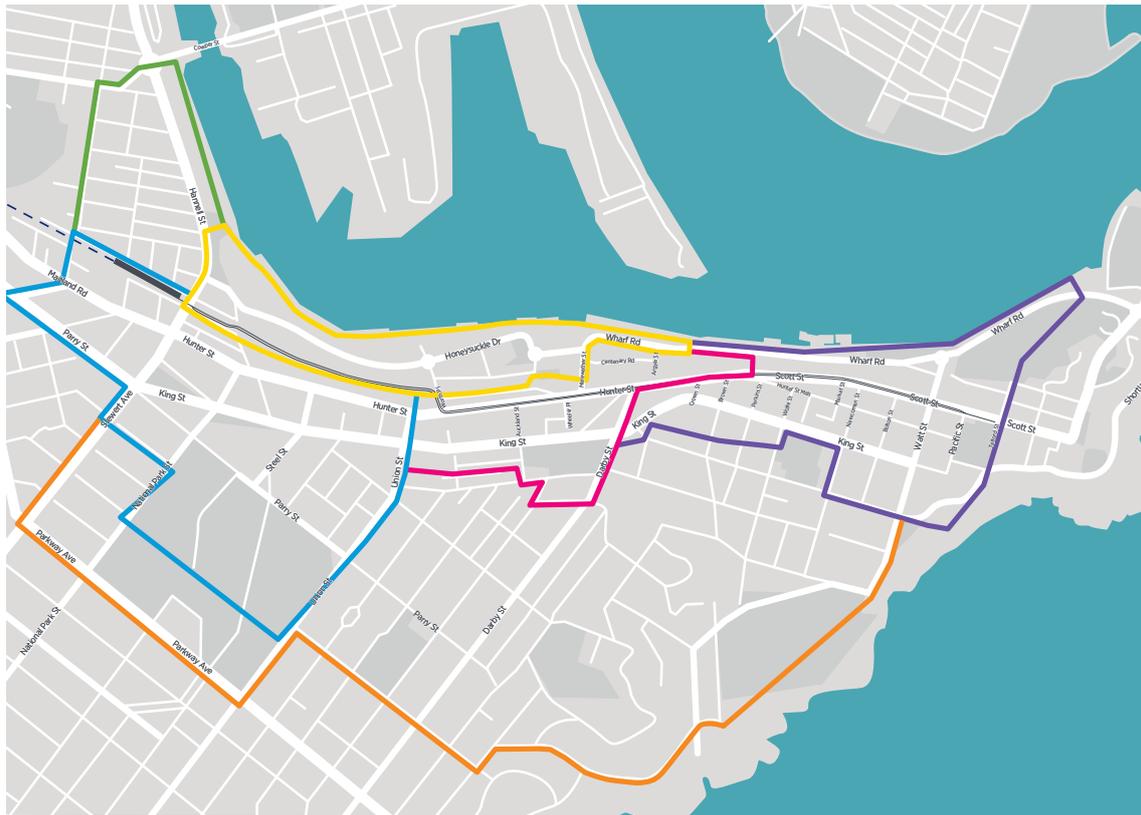
These opportunities align with and support the general directions contained within the parking study conducted for Council in 2014/15, which identified that parking issues in Newcastle were predominantly management rather than supply related.

In response, Council endorsed short, medium and long term visions for parking in the city centre which emphasised more efficient use and provision of available parking (by 2017), provision of cost effective parking as a travel demand management tool (2018 and beyond), and finally achievement of a travel culture change favouring use of public transport, walking and cycling by 2022.

These opportunities also generally align with parking-related policy commitments and actions contained in Council's Newcastle Transport Strategy (2014).

WHAT WE INVESTIGATED: THE AREA

Existing parking supply within the city centre is distributed across six key precincts, each with its own character in terms of parking type, demand, and management approach. These precincts were determined based on their being a reasonable walking distance from the perimeter to a corresponding point in the city, as well as locations known to be favoured by city workers.



Legend		Precincts					
	Light Rail		CBD Fringe		East End		West End
	Heavy Rail		Civic		Honeysuckle		Wickham

The majority of all-day parking by CBD workers occurs in the **East End, Honeysuckle, West End** and **CBD Fringe**, with a variety of off-street paid parking (**East End/Honeysuckle**) and on-street unpaid parking (**CBD Fringe/West End/Wickham**) being utilised.

On-street parking in **Civic, Honeysuckle, East End**, and the **West End** are timed, paid parking managed by Newcastle City Council.



PARKING PERFORMANCE: IN NEWCASTLE TODAY

Parking management is most effective when implemented as part of an integrated, system-wide approach to managing transport demand. Sustainable transport objectives such as supporting increased travel by public and active transport can only be achieved if the supply and management of parking makes such transport options more attractive.

In the investigation area, 73% of the parking supply is long-stay and 27% short-stay, whereas global trends indicate a preference for an equal balance between short-stay and long-stay to support business and city vibrancy.

This oversupply of long-stay parking, combined with a public transport system that is about to be improved, leads to a preference for private vehicle transport over other modes and, by extension, perceived pressure on available parking supply.

Influences on Newcastle's parking supply currently include:

- › Private vehicle transport is the preferred mode for commuters, comprising 91% of all journeys to work in Newcastle and the wider Hunter region;
- › Parking demand in the CBD has grown slightly in recent years, however occupancy remains at manageable levels and will continue to be so once light rail construction commences;
- › Parking policies being applied to the city have generally remained unchanged for many years and have focused on providing parking supply to meet unrestricted growth in demand;
- › The parking dynamic in the city changed with the removal of the former heavy rail line, leading to far greater north-south pedestrian flow than was possible before the truncation;
- › Some off-street parking (particularly in the Honeysuckle precinct) is approaching capacity, while nearby parking (such as 8P parking at National Park) is vastly under-utilised;
- › As the CBD has migrated west, supply has not kept pace, with 50% of the current parking supply located in the eastern third of the city centre, which leads to a concentration of east-west vehicle trips across the city and associated traffic implications in morning and afternoon peaks.

These insights and more have been factored into development of the parking directions in this strategy.



FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND: WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE

Parking supply has fluctuated in line with changes in Newcastle's City Centre over recent decades, as have the management approaches applied to parking in the CBD.

This natural evolution will continue in the years to come, over and above the changes relating to improvements to transport infrastructure. Anticipated changes include:

	Change	Reason
2017	247 potential temporary (up to five years) spaces created	V8 Supercars track works
2018	Newcastle Transport implements overhauled bus and ferry timetable	
2017-19	196 spaces created	New spaces identified in strategy development (Steel Lane, Worth Place and the Boat Harbour car park)
Early 2018	254 spaces removed	Closure of Lee Wharf temporary car park
2018	365 new spaces created	Gibson Street car park expansion
Late 2018	189 spaces removed	Closure of Wright Lane temporary car park
2019	Light Rail services start	
2020	297 spaces removed	Closure of Throsby Wharf temporary car park

Should these opportunities and impacts be realised, the number of spaces within the investigation area in 2021 is anticipated to be 10,967 spaces, a reduction of 407 spaces on 2016 levels (or 3.58% of current supply).

THE GAME CHANGER: REVITALISING NEWCASTLE

The NSW Government is investing over \$500 million in the Newcastle City Centre via the Revitalising Newcastle program. Newcastle Light Rail is one of Revitalising Newcastle's key deliverables.

The program also includes other major transport and urban renewal projects underpinned by six key principles:



- **BRINGING PEOPLE BACK TO THE CITY CENTRE**

Re-imagine the city centre as an enhanced destination, supported by new employment, educational and housing opportunities and public domain, that will attract people.
- **CONNECT THE CITY TO ITS WATERFRONT**

Unite the city centre and the harbour to improve the experience of being in and moving around the city.
- **HELP GROW NEW JOBS IN THE CITY CENTRE**

Invest in initiatives that create jobs, with a focus on innovative industries, higher education and initiatives to encourage a range of businesses to the city centre.
- **CREATE GREAT PLACES LINKED TO NEW TRANSPORT**

Integrate urban transformation with new, efficient transport to activate Hunter and Scott Streets and return them to thriving main streets.
- **CREATE ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Leave a positive legacy for the people of Newcastle. Ensure that new public domain and community facilities can be maintained to a high standard into the future.
- **PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HERITAGE AND CULTURE**

Respect, maintain and enhance the unique heritage and character of the city centre through revitalisation.

ABOUT NEWCASTLE LIGHT RAIL

Newcastle Light Rail will provide a frequent, reliable and comfortable journey through Newcastle's city centre, connecting key activity precincts and revitalising the CBD's once thriving main streets.

The 2.7km system will carry up to 1,200 people an hour through six stops in total, beginning at the Newcastle Interchange at Wickham and running through the city centre to Pacific Park, just 200 metres from Newcastle Beach.

Newcastle Light Rail will integrate with a vastly improved public transport system. The new operator of Newcastle Transport will take over existing services on 1 July 2017, overhaul bus and ferry timetables in early 2018, and will operate light rail when services start in early 2019.

Transport for NSW engaged extensively with the community on the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for Newcastle Light Rail, which was on display during April-May 2016 and garnered approximately 400 submissions. This Parking Strategy was a key commitment made by Transport for NSW in response to feedback provided in the REF process.

ABOUT THIS PARKING STRATEGY

Transport for NSW has developed the strategy with the assistance of Bitzios Consulting, one of Australia's leading independent, specialist traffic engineering and transport planning consultancies.

The strategy draws upon studies into parking and transport performed by Bitzios and others for organisations including Newcastle City Council and Newcastle Now business improvement association.

This strategy quantifies the impact of Newcastle light rail, its associated roadworks, and Newcastle Interchange on parking supply in the city centre, within the context of broader parking supply in the city centre and its immediate surrounds.

It seeks to understand the balance between parking supply and demand, giving careful consideration to Newcastle's needs during this time of change the transition being facilitated by the Revitalising Newcastle program.

The strategy also sets a direction, in keeping with global trends on parking provision within cities such as Newcastle, for Newcastle City Council to consider as they plan future parking supply and management of parking in the city centre.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

A number of strategies and plans influenced this strategy. These included:

- › Hunter Regional Plan 2036 – NSW Government (2016)
- › Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy – NSW Government (2012 and 2014 update)
- › Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan (Revised 2013) – Newcastle City Council (2013)
- › Newcastle Transport Strategy – Newcastle City Council (2014)
- › Newcastle City Centre and Surrounding Suburbs Parking Study – Luxmoore Parking and Safety for Newcastle City Council and Newcastle Now (2015)
- › Newcastle Railway Corridor, Review of Parking Patterns – Luxmoore Parking and Safety for Newcastle City Council (2016)
- › Connecting Newcastle: Our urban renewal vision – Newcastle City Council (2016)

For more information about the
Newcastle City Centre Parking Strategy,
the Revitalising Newcastle Program or Newcastle Light Rail
visit revitalisingnewcastle.nsw.gov.au

