



# Social Impact Assessment

29-35 Grey Street, Clarence Town NSW 2321

17 January 2024

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

AAP Consulting has been engaged by Williams River Steel (the Proponent) to prepare a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for a Development Application (DA) to lodge with Dungog Shire Council to build a new bar, dining and function centre at Lot 1, 3 & 20 Sec 3 DP 758250, 29-35 Grey Street, Clarence Town NSW 2321 (the Proposal).

The site is currently zoned E1: Local Centre and R1: General Residential and is currently primarily vacant except for a single story rendered brick building that is located on the southeast section of Lot 1. The total site area is 5837m<sup>2</sup> and is on the corner of Grey Street and Queen Street.

This report presents an analysis and assessment of the proposal's social context. In lieu of an existing SIA Policy within Dungog Shire Council, this assessment has been prepared by a suitably qualified author with reference to industry-leading practice, including the now NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Social Impact Assessment Guideline (February 2023). In doing so, it considers the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and a best practice approach for SIA.

## 1.2 Key features of the Proposal

As noted, the site is primarily vacant, except for a single-story building on the corner of Grey Street and Queen Street. This building will be retained and used as a hair and beauty salon. This will not be part of the proposed licenced premises.

Surrounding the site is a mix of commercial, retail, community infrastructure and residential buildings, including the St Johns Anglican Church (opposite the site). Other nearby businesses and services include the IGA supermarket, Erringhi Hotel, local newsagency, medical centre and veterinary clinic.

A detailed layout of the Proposal is provided in the Statement of Environmental Effects (Williams River Street, November 2024).

**Table 1.1 Key features of the proposal**

Features	Description
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A restaurant with bar and dining areas, comprising 12 tables indoors and a further 5 tables in the courtyard</li> <li>• A function centre with seating for approximately 110 people</li> <li>• 'Back of house' areas including kitchen, storage, and amenities</li> <li>• Car parking and landscaped areas</li> </ul>
<b>Parking and pick up points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking to the rear of the site (total of 43 car parking spaces, including two accessible spaces)</li> <li>• Accessible carpark will be in accordance with the requirements of AS2890.6-2009. Off street Parking for people with disabilities</li> <li>• Designated courtesy bus standing space directly adjacent to the main / carpark entry</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry to the premises via Grey Street and exit via Queen Street</li> </ul>

Features	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated loading dock at the rear of the building for trucking deliveries and loading</li> <li>• Pedestrian access via a dedicated accessible footpath from Grey Street</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During function service (Friday or Saturday evening): up to 200 people and 9 staff on-site.</li> <li>• During typical operating hours: up to 60 people and 6 staff on-site.</li> <li>• In terms of legal capacity, assessment has been based on the nominated seating layout of 254 persons and 183 persons in outdoor spaces including the beer garden – total 337 persons plus staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access Control: clear access points, appropriate signage</li> <li>• Surveillance: good visibility, appropriate lighting of external areas</li> <li>• Territorial Reinforcement: clear delineation between public and service areas</li> <li>• Activity and space management: maintenance of car parking and landscaped areas</li> </ul>
<b>Hours of operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday – Thursday 12pm – 12am (Midnight)</li> <li>• Friday/ Saturday 12pm – 12am (Midnight)</li> <li>• Functions will possibly slightly increase these hours, with weekend breakfast being an option (no alcohol served).</li> </ul>

**Figure 1-1: Location of the Proposal**



## 2 Existing social context

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### 2.1 Strategic context

A review of local and regional community plans has been undertaken to identify community values and aspirations in the social locality and to understand the consistency of the project with applicable strategic planning policies. A summary of findings as they relate to this proposal has been identified as follows:

- **Emphasis on mixed, inclusive communities:** The *Hunter Regional Plan 2041* highlights the importance of developing mixed, inclusive communities with access to various local services. This suggests recognising the need for social cohesion and accessibility to amenities for all residents, including food and beverage businesses.
- **Promotion of 15-Minute Neighbourhoods:** The *Hunter Regional Plan 2041* advocates creating 15-minute neighbourhoods where daily needs are accessible within a short distance, including shopping, dining and entertainment.
- **Economic Development Priorities:** The *Dungog Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032* includes a focus on local economic development to ensure commercial and retail areas are diverse and well patronised, with increased local employment opportunities. Community feedback collected as part of the development of Dungog Shire's Community Strategic Plan indicated that residents enjoy the rural lifestyle and peace and quiet of the area. There was felt to be a strong sense of community, with a rich natural environment that was considered a great place to raise children. Significantly, one of the priorities identified by residents was an increase to and improved services, facilities and infrastructure and more employment opportunities, which aligns with the Proposal. On the flipside, residents were also concerned about managing the growth of the area and developments, including long term planning to support jobs and growth.
- **Supporting Local Business:** The *Dungog Economic Development Plan 2022-2026* identifies the objective of making it easier to start and grow a business as a priority under industry reforms.
- **Development of Event Venues:** The *Dungog Destination Management Plan 2021-2026 identifies* the need to develop new venues for larger events and weddings.

### 2.2 Social locality and baseline

This section describes the social context without the Proposal. It documents the existing social environment, conditions, and trends relevant to the Proposal and defines characteristics of the communities within the proposal's social locality, including any vulnerable groups. The social baseline provides a point of comparison – it can be used as a reference against which to measure the proposal's impacts as it develops and/or to determine the adequacy of existing facilities (Vanclay, 2015).

An investigation into the social locality has been undertaken to inform this assessment. As per the SIA Guideline (DPHI, 2023), there is no prescribed meaning or fixed, predefined geographic boundary to a social locality; rather, each project's social locality is determined depending on its nature and impact.

Defining the social locality begins with understanding the nature of the proposal, the characteristics of affected communities, and how positive and negative impacts may be reasonably perceived or experienced by different people within the community. This proposal has a relatively focused social locality and has been determined based on consideration of:

- The nature and scale of the Proposal and its associated activities
- The characteristics of the Clarence Town community and how positive and negative impacts may be reasonably perceived or experienced by different people, including those vulnerable or marginalised
- The potentially affected built or natural features near the proposal that have social value or importance.

For this assessment, the suburb of Clarence Town (ABS area code: SAL10919) has been used as the geographical area of best fit. Dungog Local Government Area (LGA) and New South Wales (NSW) state averages as appropriate, and key indicators are summarised in the following section.

## 2.3 Characteristics of the social locality

Clarence Town is a small rural town located approximately 50 km north of Newcastle and within the Dungog LGA in NSW, Australia. It is a small, picturesque town situated on the banks of the Williams River characterised for its historic charm, scenic surroundings, and strong sense of community.

It has had steady population growth. According to the 2021 Census, Clarence Town had a population of 2,265, reflecting a 36% increase from 2011. This growth may be attributed to its appeal as a quiet, family-friendly community with proximity to larger urban centres like Newcastle.

The town has a predominantly Australian-born population (89.5%), with 95% speaking only English at home. Clarence Town has a median age of 39, and a higher proportion of couple families with children (47.2%) compared to the NSW average (44.7%). The population includes a slightly higher percentage of individuals aged over 50 (38.1%) than the NSW average (35.8%). Health and community engagement are notable, with 14.6% of residents participating in voluntary work, and 33.4% providing unpaid childcare—higher than both the Dungog LGA and NSW averages.

Clarence Town offers essential amenities for the surrounding rural areas such as a supermarket, hardware store, bakery, and a veterinary clinic. Its historic Erringhi Hotel and heritage-listed sites highlight its connection to the region's rich history. The town is also a gateway for outdoor activities, with the Williams River providing opportunities for kayaking, waterskiing, fishing, and picnicking.

Employment in Clarence Town reflects its regional setting, with 62.7% of the population participating in the labour force and a low unemployment rate of 3.4% compared to the NSW average of 4.9%. The primary industries of employment include social assistance services, coal mining, and grocery stores. The town has a median household weekly income of \$1,934, higher than the Dungog LGA average (\$1,485), and housing costs such as rent, and mortgage repayments are generally more affordable than state averages.

Housing in Clarence Town primarily consists of separate houses (97%), with an average of 3.5 bedrooms and 2.8 people per household. Most homes are either owned outright or with a mortgage,

and only 9.3% of dwellings are rented. The town has a high percentage of family households (81.9%) compared to the NSW average (71.2%). Additionally, 91.9% of private dwellings were occupied on census night, a higher rate than both the Dungog LGA and NSW averages.

Education levels in Clarence Town are similar to those in the broader Dungog LGA but slightly lower than NSW averages. Despite this, the town exhibits strong social cohesion, affordable living conditions, and a family-oriented demographic profile, making it an attractive place to live within the Hunter region.

The key characteristics of the population of Clarence Town and the Dungog Shire LGA as of the 2021 Census are presented in the following table.

**Table 2.1 Characteristics of Social Locality**

Clarence Town SAL 2021	Dungog Shire LGA 2021
<b>People</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The population in 2021 was 2,265, compared to 1,667 in 2011, which demonstrates an increase by approximately 36% over the ten year period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The population for 2021 was 9,541, compared to 8,318 in 2011, a smaller increase in comparison to the SAL of approximately 15% over the ten year period</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The population has a median age of 39 with a higher percentage of couple families with children when compared to NSW (47.2% compared to 44.7%)</li> <li>There is a slightly higher proportion of people aged over 50 than the NSW average (38.1% compared to 35.8%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Almost half of the population is over 50, with a median age of 46. 40.6% of families are couple families with children</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overwhelmingly Australian born (89.5%) and 95% speak only English at home, with a minimal multicultural population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like Clarence Town, 89% are Australian born, and 94.6% speak only English at home</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just over a fifth of the population (21.5%) have one long term health condition, while 60.1% had no condition</li> <li>8.2% had two health conditions, higher than NSW (5.7%) but comparable to Dungog LGA (8.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21.9% of the population had one long-term health condition, similar to Clarence Town, while 59% had no condition</li> <li>8.3% had two or more health conditions, noticeably higher than NSW</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14.6% of the population does voluntary work through an organisation or group, slightly higher than NSW</li> <li>A significantly higher proportion of the population provided unpaid care for child/children compared to Dungog LGA and NSW (33.4% compared to 28.3% in Dungog LGA and 25.3% in NSW)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19.5% of the population did voluntary work through an organisation or group considerably higher than the NSW average, while 28.3% provided unpaid care for child/children</li> </ul>
<b>Employment and income</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62.7% of the community is in the labour force, with 54.6% working full time Clarence Town also had a lower unemployment rate (3.4%) when compared to NSW (4.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>58.7% of the community is in the labour force, similar to the NSW average (58.7%) and lower than Clarence Town (62.7%). Of those in the labour force, just over half work full-time</li> </ul>

Clarence Town SAL 2021	Dungog Shire LGA 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Social Assistance Services was the top industry of employment (2.9%), followed by Coal Mining (2.7%) and Supermarket and Grocery Stores (2.4%) likely reflecting local employment opportunities. Public transport was not used as a method to travel to work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised) was the top employment industry (3.9%), reflecting the agricultural base in the area, followed by Coal Mining (3.2%) and Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) (2.8%)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just over a fifth of those people employed (21.1%) were technicians and trade workers, followed by professional (14.8%) and Clerical and Administrative Workers (13.5%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like Clarence Town, 18.3% of workers were technicians and trade workers, followed by Managers (15.9%) and professionals (14.8%)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median household weekly income (\$1,934) substantially more than Dungog LGA (\$1,485) matched with:</li> <li>a lower proportion of households with 'less than \$650 weekly income' (12.4% compared to 18.7% of Dungog LGA and 16.3% of NSW)</li> <li>a slightly higher proportion of households with 'more than \$3,000 weekly income' compared to Dungog LGA (24.1% compared to 19.2%) while similar to NSW (26.9%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median household weekly income (\$1,485) substantially lower than Clarence Town matched with:</li> <li>a higher proportion of households with 'less than \$650 weekly income' (18.7%)</li> <li>a slightly lower proportion of households with 'more than \$3,000 weekly income' than NSW and Clarence Town (19.2% compared to 26.9% and 24.1%)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median weekly rent of \$365, lower than the NSW average (\$420) with:</li> <li>53.4% of households have rent payments less than or equal to 30% of income (similar to Dungog LGA and the Rest of NSW)</li> <li>30.1% of households have rent payments of more than 30% of income (slightly lower than Dungog LGA and the Rest of NSW)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median weekly rent of \$300, with:</li> <li>52.6% of households having rent payments less than or equal to 30% of income</li> <li>32.3% of households having rent payments more than 30% of income</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median monthly mortgage repayments of \$1,993 (lower than NSW) with:</li> <li>72% of households have mortgage payments less than 30% of income</li> <li>12.8% have mortgage repayments more than or equal to 30%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median monthly mortgage repayments of \$1,820 (lower than Clarence Town and NSW with:</li> <li>71.1% of households have mortgage payments that are less than 30% of their income (similar to NSW and Clarence Town)</li> <li>14.4% of households have mortgage payments more than or equal to 30% of income (similar to Clarence Town and lower than NSW)</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education levels were generally lower than in NSW but similar to Dungog LGA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education levels were similar to Clarence Town but lower than NSW, with 15.3% of the population having tertiary education</li> </ul>
<b>Housing and mobility of residents</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>784 private dwellings, of which 91.9% were occupied on census night, slightly higher than Dungog LGA and NSW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 3,578 dwellings in the LGA, of which 10.4% were unoccupied on census night, similar to NSW</li> </ul>

Clarence Town SAL 2021	Dungog Shire LGA 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dominant dwelling type is separate houses (97%), with an average of 3.5 bedrooms and 2.8 people per household</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>97% of dwellings were separate housing, and 1.5% were semi-detached or townhouses</li> <li>There were 3.3 bedrooms per dwelling, with an average of 2.5 people per household</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>81.9% are family households, higher than NSW (71.2%)</li> <li>16.4% of households are single or lone persons (lower than Dungog LGA of 24.2% and NSW 25%).</li> <li>There are only 14 group households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>74.4% are family households, and 24.2% are single or lone person households</li> <li>1.4% were group households</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of the households containing families, almost half (47.2%) are couple families with children (higher than Dungog LGA 40.6%), and 42.7% are couple families with no children</li> <li>9.7% are one parent families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of the households containing families, a lower percentage are couple families with children compared to Clarence Town (40.6% compared to 47.2% in Clarence Town)</li> <li>Almost half are couple families without children (higher than Clarence Town's 42.7%)</li> <li>12.6% are one parent families, which is like NSW (15.8%)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only 9.3% of dwellings are rented, just over half are owned with a mortgage, and a slightly over a third are owned outright</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slightly more rentals when compared to Clarence Town, but significantly less than NSW (15% in the LGA compared to 32.6% in NSW)</li> <li>A higher proportion are owned outright compared to Clarence Town and NSW (41.8% in the LGA compared to 34.9% in Clarence Town and 31.5% in NSW)</li> <li>53.7% are owned with a mortgage</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage

The social baseline has also investigated the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) for Clarence Town. IRSD is a general socio-economic index summarising information about the economic and social conditions of people and households within an area. IRSD only includes measures of relative disadvantage. A low score indicates a relatively greater disadvantage. For example, an area could have a low score if there are many households with low income, many without qualifications, and many in low skilled occupations.

A high score indicates a relative lack of disadvantage. For example, an area may have a high score if there are few households with low incomes, few people without qualifications, and few people in low skilled occupations.

The Clarence Town SAL has a SEIFA IRSD Decile score of 6, indicating a relative lack of disadvantage. Deciles divide a distribution into ten equal groups. In the case of SEIFA, the scores are divided into ten equal groups. The lowest scoring 10% of areas are given a decile number of 1, the second-lowest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 2 and so on, up to the highest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 10.

## 2.5 Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder analysis has been undertaken to identify communities and stakeholders interested in the Proposal, including any group or individual that might have an interest and/or be impacted by the proposed construction and post-construction operations (refer Table 2.2). This included a desktop review of the area, two site visits on 15 December 2024 and 12 January 2025 and a review of consultation undertaken for the Dungog Shire's Community Strategic Plan.

The analysis for this study also identified a range of essential social infrastructures that underpin the population's social wellbeing. Given the nature of the Proposal, it is not considered applicable to undertake a thorough audit and mapping of social infrastructure. It is assumed for this SIA that the local population will not increase because of the Proposal, as many of targeted users will already be living within the social locality (refer Table 2.3).

**Figure 2-1 Looking west towards the Proposal site from the adjacent St Johns Anglican Church (image taken 15 December 2024 by AAP Consulting Pty Ltd)**



**Figure 2-2 Looking west towards the intersection of Queen Street and Grey Street (image taken 15 December 2024 by AAP Consulting Pty Ltd)**



**Table 2.2 Stakeholder groups**

Name	Type
<b>Nearby neighbours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landholders, businesses and residents adjacent to the Proposal, including directly adjacent neighbours or those that share a boundary that are most likely to be directly impacted by the construction and operation of the Proposal</li> </ul>
<b>Wider community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People visiting the existing businesses and community facilities within the social locality</li> <li>Those people residing or working in Clarence Town and surrounds that would be potential users of the Proposal</li> <li>Local business and service providers (refer Table 2.3)</li> </ul>
<b>Elected representatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayor and Councilors, Dungog Shire Council</li> <li>Local Member for the Upper Hunter</li> </ul>
<b>Local Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General manager and officers, Dungog Shire Council</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dungog Fire Station</li> <li>NSW Police and Ambulance</li> </ul>
<b>Road and public transport users</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road users travelling along Queen and Grey Streets, light and heavy vehicles, local taxis, buses, transport operators, pedestrians and cyclists.</li> </ul>
<b>Education and childcare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarence Town Preschool</li> <li>Clarence Town Public School</li> <li>Dungog Public School</li> <li>Dungog High School</li> <li>St Joseph's Primary Dungog</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3 Social infrastructure and businesses surrounding the Proposal**

Name	Type	Approx. distance from the Proposal
<b>Shine Hair and Beauty</b>	Business (retail)	The site
<b>St John's Anglican Church</b>	Place of worship	adjacent
<b>Clarence Town medical centre</b>	Community services (health)	adjacent
<b>Williams River Veterinary Clinic</b>	Business	30m south
<b>Erringhi Hotel (accommodation)</b>	Business (hospitality and accommodation)	40m south
<b>Clarence Town Home Hardware</b>	Business (retail)	150m south
<b>Lovey's IGA</b>	Business (supermarket)	170m north
<b>Clarence Town Newsagency</b>	Business (retail)	170m north
<b>Clarence Town School of Arts</b>	Community infrastructure	170m north
<b>Erringhi Bakehouse</b>	Business (retail)	350m north
<b>Clarence Town Bowling Club</b>	Business (recreation and hospitality)	400m east
<b>Clarence Town Skate Park</b>	Community infrastructure (recreation)	400m east
<b>Clarence Town Swimming Pool</b>	Community infrastructure (recreation)	450m south

Name	Type	Approx. distance from the Proposal
Clarence Town Public School	Community services (education)	450m
Clarence Town Presbyterian Church	Place of worship	550m
Williams River Holiday Park	Recreation and short stay accommodation	750m

## 2.6 Vulnerabilities and opportunities within the social locality

Analysing demographic profiles is essential for identifying groups that may be disproportionately affected by vulnerabilities and opportunities within a community. This understanding can inform targeted strategies that address challenges while leveraging community strengths. Based on the data collected to inform the social baseline, the following vulnerabilities and opportunities have been identified in Clarence Town and the surrounding Dungog Shire region.

### 2.6.1 Vulnerabilities

- **Aging Population:** A significant proportion of Clarence Town's population is over 50 (38.1%), with a median age of 46. This indicates an ageing demographic that may face increased healthcare needs, social isolation, and mobility challenges. The community may struggle to meet the demands for healthcare services and support for elderly residents.
- **Health Conditions:** Approximately 21.5% of the population in Clarence Town reports having one long-term health condition, and 8.3% have two or more conditions, which is higher than the state average. These health challenges could strain local healthcare resources and require additional support services to assist affected individuals.
- **Lower Educational Attainment:** The population of Clarence Town has lower levels of tertiary education compared to NSW (only 15.3% of the population in Dungog LGA have tertiary education). This could limit access to higher-paying jobs, reducing economic mobility and making it harder for residents to take advantage of emerging employment opportunities.
- **Income Disparities and Employment Vulnerabilities:** While Clarence Town has a relatively low unemployment rate (3.4%), the median household income is still lower than the NSW average. The local economy relies heavily on industries such as agriculture and coal mining, which can be vulnerable to economic downturns, leading to job insecurity for some households.
- **Housing Affordability:** While median rent is lower than the state average, a significant proportion of renters (30.1%) spend more than 30% of their income on rent, indicating housing stress. This may affect residents' overall financial stability and limit their ability to invest in other necessities such as healthcare, education, or savings.
- **Limited Public Transport:** Public transport use is low in Clarence Town, which could be a barrier to mobility for residents, particularly the elderly, people with disabilities, and those without access to private vehicles. Lack of transportation options can lead to social isolation and hinder access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment.

### 2.6.2 Opportunities

- **Community Volunteering and Engagement:** A high proportion of Clarence Town's population engages in voluntary work (14.6%). This reflects a strong community spirit that can be harnessed for local initiatives, enhancing social cohesion and fostering resilience. Volunteerism can also be a resource for addressing some of the community's challenges, such as supporting elderly residents or aiding in local infrastructure development.
- **Economic Development Potential:** The relatively low unemployment rate and strong local workforce participation (62.7%) provide an opportunity to develop initiatives focused on upskilling residents and promoting local job creation. Targeting agriculture, tourism, and construction industries could help diversify the economy and provide long-term employment opportunities.
- **Housing Initiatives:** With a relatively high proportion of homeownership, especially outright ownership (41.8%), there is an opportunity to explore affordable housing initiatives that could benefit renters and first-time homebuyers. Addressing housing affordability could improve living conditions and enhance community stability, particularly for low-income households.
- **Leveraging rural strengths:** Clarence Town's rural setting and agricultural base can be an asset, offering opportunities for economic development in sectors such as agriculture, eco-tourism, and sustainable farming. Local businesses could be supported through targeted initiatives that enhance skill development and employment opportunities in these areas.

By focusing on these opportunities, Clarence Town can enhance its strengths while addressing vulnerabilities, creating a more resilient and sustainable community for its residents.

## 3 Social impact comment and assessment

### 3.1 Approach to SIA

SIA is an approach to predicting and assessing the likely consequences of a proposed action in social terms and developing options and opportunities to improve social outcomes. Without a SIA policy specific to Dungog Shire Council, the approach used to inform this SIA draws on the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Social Impact Assessment Guideline (February 2023). In doing so, it considers the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and a best practice approach for SIA. The approach is outlined in the following table.

**Table 3.1 Approach to SIA**

Approach	Summary of approach
<b>Developing a community profile (social baseline)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the local social context, including a demographic profile of the suburb of Clarence Town based on 2021 ABS Census data, crime data and relevant trends.</li> <li>Desktop review of community and social infrastructure surrounding the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Identifying potential social impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the likely social impacts for different groups in the social locality. This approach included stakeholder mapping and analysis and identification of likely social impacts for different groups.</li> <li>Consideration of social impact categories as defined in the NSW SIA Guideline (February 2023). These social impact categories prompt the consideration of social impacts, noting that some projects may have impacts in all these categories, but others may only have a few (refer to Table 3.2).</li> </ul>
<b>Social risk assessment and identification of mitigation, enhancement, and management measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess the potential impacts, a risk assessment was carried out to determine the overall significance rating of the potential social impacts. This SIA has adopted the Social Impact Significance Matrix from the NSW Social Impact Assessment Guideline – Technical Supplement (February 2023) (refer Appendix 2 and Figure 3-1).</li> <li>As part of this risk assessment, consideration was given to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The likely population to be affected</li> <li>The timing of the potential social impact</li> <li>The potential impact characteristics (extent, duration, scale, sensitivity)</li> <li>The potential level of significance of the potential social impact, considering the likelihood and magnitude of the potential social impact.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Assumptions and limitations</b>	<p>There are several limitations to this SIA Report, including assuming that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The key findings of the background studies and technical reports are accurate, and the findings of this report are based on the information available at the time of writing.</li> <li>Social data available for the social locality accurately reflects the community's demographic profile. Some totals or percentages used in the social baseline may not exactly match due to the way that totals are calculated between variables.</li> </ul>

Approach	Summary of approach
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary data sources have been produced using various methodologies with assumptions and limitations. To ensure the data is credible and robust, official (e.g., Government) sources have been prioritised, and limitations have been noted where relevant.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2 Social impact categories (DPE, 2023)**

Categories	Definition
<b>Way of life</b>	How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day
<b>Community</b>	Community composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, and people's sense of place
<b>Accessibility</b>	How people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation
<b>Culture</b>	Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings
<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	Physical and mental health, especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, access to open space and effects on public health
<b>Surroundings</b>	Ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity
<b>Livelihoods</b>	People's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business
<b>Decision-making systems</b>	Including the extent to which people can have a say in decisions that affect their lives and have access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms

**Figure 3-1 Table 6, Social impact significance matrix, Social Impact Assessment Guideline - Technical Supplement (NSW DPE, February 2023)**

		Magnitude level				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level		Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
<b>A</b>	<b>Almost certain</b>	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
<b>B</b>	<b>Likely</b>	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
<b>C</b>	<b>Possible</b>	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
<b>D</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
<b>E</b>	<b>Very unlikely</b>	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

### 3.2 Identification of likely social impacts

Table 5.1 defines the likely social impact to people resulting from the Proposal and how they fall within each social impact category. Per the SIA Guidelines (DPHI, 2023), some proposals may have impacts in all the categories listed in Table 3.3 but others may only have a few.

For the Proposal, the categories of accessibility, community, surroundings, health and wellbeing, livelihoods, culture and way of life have been assessed as applicable to the assessment.

The table also identifies other related technical studies undertaken to inform this DA. These related technical studies are relevant given they predict, for example, noise or traffic impacts, which is relevant to the SIA report in terms of examining how people might experience any impact relating to the proposed change.

**Table 3.3 Likely social impacts**

Social impact description	NSW SIA Impact categories	Impacted people or stakeholder groups	Supporting technical assessments (where applicable)	Impact Id and report reference
Increased social opportunities for local residents through a community gathering space (+)	Community Health and wellbeing	Residents, local community groups	Not applicable	SI 01 Section 3.3
Increase in traffic and congestion due to the new bar, dining and function centre during peak operating hours (-)	Way of life Accessibility	Local residents, visitors, businesses in the area	Traffic Impact Assessment, Amber Organisation Pty Ltd, August 2024	SI 02 Section 3.3.2
Noise and disturbance from events, especially during night-time operations (-)	Way of life Health and wellbeing Surroundings	Local residents, primarily those closest to the site	Noise Assessment, RAPT Consulting, September 2024	SI 03 Section 3.3.3
Potential disruption to local heritage and character (e.g. proximity to St John's Anglican Church and residential character) (-)	Culture Surroundings	Local residents, cultural groups and nearby businesses	Statement of Heritage Impact, Contemporary Heritage, September 2023	SI 04 Section 3.3.2
Potential strain on public health and safety due to alcohol related harm or social issues (-)	Health and wellbeing	Vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, families), general public Local residents	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Williams River Steel, January 2025	SI 05 Section 3.3.5
Job creation in hospitality, catering and event management sectors (+)	Livelihoods	Local job seekers, local business	Not applicable	SI 06 Section 3.3.6

### 3.3 Social impact comment and assessment

#### 3.3.1 (SI 01) Increased social opportunities for local residents through a community gathering space

The proposed venue has the potential to enhance social opportunities for Clarence Town residents by providing an additional gathering space. This venue will host various events, ranging from casual dining and private functions to larger community gatherings, offering a space for socialising, cultural activities, and community engagement. While Clarence Town already has existing venues, such as the local pub and bowling club, this development will provide a complementary option, further diversifying the community's offerings and catering to broader social preferences.

The proposed development aligns with the Hunter Regional Plan 2041, which highlights the importance of fostering inclusive communities with access to diverse local services. Additionally, it supports the Dungog Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022–2032 by addressing the need for enhanced services, facilities, and infrastructure, while also meeting the community's aspirations for social and economic development. The Dungog Destination Management Plan 2021–2026 further identifies the need for larger event venues, and this proposal directly addresses that gap by providing infrastructure that supports both local and regional events.

Research demonstrates the significant role community hubs play in promoting social well-being and cohesion. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2020) highlights that such spaces contribute to fostering social connections and improving mental well-being by reducing isolation. This venue has the potential to meet these objectives by providing a gathering space accessible to all residents, including those who may not currently utilise existing facilities. Furthermore, offering a variety of venues and events enhances community engagement by catering to diverse social preferences (Social Impact Institute, 2022).

In the lead-up to opening, it is recommended that the proponent undertakes community consultation to gather feedback on the types of events and activities the community would like to see. This will ensure the venue complements existing spaces and addresses local social needs. In addition, the venue should host a variety of events to cater to different social groups, such as family-friendly activities, cultural celebrations, and community gatherings, alongside private functions and casual dining.

Accessibility is essential, and the venue should be designed to cater to people with disabilities and mobility limitations to ensure inclusivity. There is also an opportunity to collaborate with existing venues, such as the local pub and bowling club, to host joint events that promote community integration and tourism. Potential initiatives could include collaborative festivals, entertainment programs, and community-wide events that bring residents and visitors together.

**Table 3.4 Impact and benefit assessment: Noise and disturbance from events, especially during night-time operations**

People	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Residents, local community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community consultations to identify diverse events</li> <li>Accessible venue design</li> <li>Promotion of inclusive programming.</li> </ul>	Possible / moderate = medium social benefit

### 3.3.2 (SI 02) Increase in traffic and congestion due to the new bar, dining and function centre during peak operating hours

The proposed bar, dining, and function centre at Clarence Town, is expected to generate an increase in traffic compared to the existing environment, and a demand for parking, particularly during peak operating hours such as weekends and evenings. This could result in potential social impacts such as traffic congestion, inconvenience for residents and other businesses, and pressure on existing parking infrastructure. Local stakeholders—such as residents, commuters, and neighbouring businesses—may have concerns about the additional vehicle movement and reduced parking availability. These impacts could affect the quality of life, public safety, and community cohesion in the area.

Amber Organisation Pty Ltd conducted a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) in August 2024, which indicated that the proposed development would generate approximately 59 vehicle trips during peak hours, equating to an average of one vehicle movement every minute. The TIA concluded that the surrounding road network can accommodate the increase in vehicle movements without any adverse impact to traffic operations or safety (pg. 17).

The site will feature 43 on-site parking spaces, including two accessible spaces. The demand for parking, based on relevant Development Control Plan requirements, is estimated to be 168 spaces. The TIA highlights that there are approximately 173 available on-street parking spaces within 150 meters of the site, which is considered adequate to meet the demand generated by the development. (pg.18).

Access to the site will be via Grey Street and Queen Street, with appropriately designed crossovers to facilitate safe vehicle movement. Waste collection and delivery will be managed through dedicated internal accessways for small and medium-sized trucks. The TIA concludes that the development's impact on traffic and parking is expected to be minimal, with no significant concerns regarding safety or operational efficiency for the surrounding road network. (pg.18).

From a social perspective, the development's impact on traffic congestion and parking availability is expected to be manageable. The increase in traffic and parking demand is not expected to disrupt current traffic flow or significantly affect local residents or businesses. While there may be some inconvenience for residents and businesses, the availability of on-street parking and the provision of well-designed access points should help mitigate these impacts.

- **Shuttle Bus Service:** A shuttle bus service during peak hours (e.g., weekends and evenings) could alleviate parking pressure by encouraging patrons to use public transport or leave their vehicles at home.

- **Signage and Communication:** Clear signage directing patrons to available parking spaces should be installed. Information regarding parking availability could also be communicated via the venue's website and promotional materials.
- **Public Transport Accessibility:** Patrons should be encouraged to use available public transport options, particularly for larger events or functions.

By implementing these measures, the development can reduce the likelihood of traffic congestion and parking issues, ensuring that the surrounding community is minimally affected by the increased activity generated by the proposal.

**Table 3.5 Impact and benefit assessment: Increase in traffic and congestion due to the new bar, dining and function centre during peak operating hours**

People	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Local residents, visitors, businesses in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shuttle bus service</li> <li>• Signage for parking</li> <li>• Encourage use of public transport.</li> </ul>	Unlikely / minor = low social impact

### 3.3.3 (SI 03) Noise and disturbance from events, especially during night-time operations

The Proposal may generate noise and disturbance, particularly during nighttime operations such as events and live music. This may lead to social impacts such as disruption to the peace of local residents, especially those living near the venue. Noise generated from patrons, music, and operational equipment could affect community satisfaction, potentially diminishing the quality of life and well-being. These disturbances may be more noticeable during late-night hours, especially on weekends and during peak periods.

The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA), conducted by RAPT Consulting in September 2024, concluded that noise compliance goals can generally be achieved, with minor exceedances predicted during nighttime operations (10 pm – 12 am) for the nearest residential property (pg.30). The NIA found that mechanical plant noise is expected to comply with the required noise trigger levels during all times of day, including night. For patron and music noise, the assessment predicts a small 2 dB(A) exceedance during nighttime hours, which could cause disturbance for nearby residents.

To mitigate this, the NIA recommends reducing outdoor music levels by at least 3 dB(A) after 10 pm. The NIA also suggests managing noise during patron departures by training staff to monitor noise levels and address complaints promptly. Additionally, steps such as lowering bass music levels (particularly 125Hz and below) and adhering strictly to the approved operating hours are advised.

From a social perspective, while the proposed venue will likely comply with noise goals, minor disturbances are anticipated, particularly during night-time operations. However, by implementing the recommended noise management strategies, these impacts can be minimised. To further mitigate potential noise-related social impacts, the following measures are recommended:

- **Music Level Control:** As recommended by the NIA, outdoor music levels should be reduced by 3 dB(A) after 10 pm to avoid exceeding noise limits and disturbing nearby residents. Special attention should be given to keeping bass levels low.
- **Patron Noise Management:** Staff should be trained to encourage patrons to minimize noise, particularly when leaving the venue. This includes reminding patrons to leave quietly and ensuring no excessive noise from conversations, vehicles, or other disturbances after events
- **Signage and Public Awareness:** Install signage in outdoor areas to request patrons to respect the local community by keeping noise levels down after 10 pm.
- **Complaints Management:** Establish a formal complaints management system to address noise-related issues in a timely manner. A Complaints Register should be maintained, and if necessary, meetings with neighbours should be scheduled to resolve ongoing concerns
- **Noise Monitoring:** Regular noise monitoring should be conducted to ensure compliance with noise standards, particularly during night-time operations.

These measures will reduce the likelihood of noise-related disturbances, ensuring that the development remains socially acceptable.

**Table 3.6 Impact and benefit assessment: Noise and disturbance from events, especially during night-time operations**

People	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Local residents, primarily those closest to the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music level control</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Complaints management</li> <li>• Periodic noise monitoring.</li> </ul>	Possible / minor = medium social impact

### 3.3.4 (SI 04) Potential disruption to local heritage and character (e.g. proximity to St John's Anglican Church and residential character)

The Proposal is located in close proximity to a number of heritage buildings, including the Erringhi Hotel (21-23 Grey Street), the Clarence Town War Memorial (27 Grey Street), and the Clarence Town Former Post Office (32 Grey Street). It is also adjacent to St John's Church (not heritage listed), which has been in this location since at least 1906 as a brick building.

Based on the findings of the Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) (Contemporary Heritage, September 2023), the proposed development at 29-35 Grey Street, Clarence Town, demonstrates sensitivity to the local cultural sites and character of the area, especially in relation to the St John's Anglican Church and the surrounding historic precinct. The SoHI concludes that the development will improve the functionality of the site without detracting from the contribution of existing buildings to the Clarence Town Grey Street Precinct Conservation Area (pg. 23). It is considered that the Proposal is designed to be a modern infill commercial development that respects the area's character, blending with the historical context while introducing new infrastructure for the community.

Research into the impact of new developments on culturally significant areas highlights that sensitive design and community consultation can help maintain local identity while accommodating modern development (Heritage and Community Planning, 2020). This Proposal, with respectful design adjustments and commitment to minimising visual and physical disruptions, should preserve the sense of place and cultural continuity for local residents. Additionally, ongoing community consultation during the final design and construction process will ensure that local cultural values are upheld, and concerns related to potential disruption to the local character are addressed.

The Proponent should engage with Council and local stakeholders during the final design and construction, to ensure the development aligns with community values and addresses any concerns regarding the local character and cultural sites. Noise management strategies, as discussed in Section 3.3.3, should also be implemented, especially during events or late-night operations, to minimise impact on the church and surrounding residential areas.

**Table 3.7 Impact and benefit assessment: Potential disruption to local heritage and character (e.g. proximity to St John’s Anglican Church and residential character)**

People	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Local residents, heritage groups, community stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive design to respect local heritage and character, particularly regarding St John’s Church and the surrounding historic precinct</li> <li>• Consultation during final design and construction</li> <li>• Minimisation of visual and physical disruptions during development</li> <li>• Noise management strategies during late-night operations and events</li> </ul>	Unlikely / moderate = low social impact

### 3.3.5 (SI 05) Potential strain on public health and safety due to alcohol related harm or social issues

As defined by the SIA Guidelines (DPHI 2023), the social impact category "surroundings" includes aspects such as ecosystem services, public safety and security, and the use of the natural and built environment. The proposed bar, dining, and function centre could introduce new safety concerns for the surrounding community due to increased social activity, particularly during late-night operations. These impacts may influence both the perceived and actual safety of local residents. However, the establishment could also provide a venue for community interaction, especially if it aligns with local demand.

A review of BOCSAR crime data shows that crime rates within the Dungog LGA have remained stable, and Microburbs rates Clarence Town as 10/10 for safety based on crime statistics (Microburbs, 2024). While new developments can sometimes lead to uncertainties or antisocial behaviour, they are subject to regulation through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and Liquor and Gaming NSW requirements.

The CPTED assessment conducted by Williams River Steel (January 2025) indicates that crime rates in the Dungog LGA from July 2022 to June 2024 were stable, with a notable 50% reduction in malicious property damage. Crime levels in the area remain well below the state average.

To mitigate alcohol-related social impacts, the Proponent is expected to comply with Liquor and Gaming NSW regulations for obtaining a General Bar Licence. It is also crucial for the Proponent to implement a comprehensive Venue Management Plan that clearly outlines the following security measures:

- Employing trained staff to ensure responsible alcohol service and adherence to legal drinking age requirements.
- Implementing strategies to minimise public disturbance, such as limiting queues, managing patron behaviour during peak departure times, and helping with transport.
- Incorporating security features, including surveillance cameras and adequate lighting, to address antisocial behaviour.

Given the application of CPTED principles, security measures, and regulatory compliance, it is anticipated that the proposal will effectively mitigate risks associated with crime and antisocial behaviour. While it cannot be guaranteed that the proposal will eliminate the potential for negative impacts on community safety, the likelihood of an increase in crime or adverse effects on safety is considered low due to the controlled environment and proactive measures in place.

**Table 3.8 Impact and benefit assessment: Potential strain on public health and safety due to alcohol-related harm or social issues**

People	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, families), general public Local residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with Liquor and Gaming NSW regulations for alcohol service</li> <li>• Adherence to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles</li> <li>• Implementation of a comprehensive Venue Management Plan, including security measures (e.g. surveillance cameras, lighting, crowd management)</li> <li>• Trained staff to ensure responsible alcohol service</li> <li>• Strategies to minimise public disturbance during peak times (e.g. queues, transport assistance)</li> </ul>	Unlikely / minor = low social impact

### 3.3.6 (SI 06) Job creation in hospitality, catering and event management sectors

The Proposal has the potential to create new employment opportunities in the hospitality, catering, and event management sectors within Clarence Town and Dungog LGA. Currently, the town has limited larger-scale hospitality establishments, and the introduction of this venue could provide a much-needed source of employment for local residents, particularly in sectors that are currently underrepresented in the area.

Clarence Town, with a population of 2,265 as of 2021, primarily sees its workforce engaged in agriculture, retail, and public administration. Employment opportunities in hospitality, catering, and event management are relatively scarce, and rural areas like Clarence Town often face challenges in diversifying their job markets. The operation of the proposed venue is expected to create a variety of positions across different roles, including:

- Kitchen and food preparation staff: chefs, kitchen hands, and dishwashers.
- Bar and waitstaff: bartenders, servers, and event coordinators.
- Security and maintenance staff: security personnel and cleaners.
- Management and administrative staff: venue managers and event planners.

The Proposal aligns with the Dungog Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022–2032, which emphasises the importance of creating local employment opportunities to stimulate economic growth. The Proposal could contribute to a more diverse and resilient local economy by addressing the gap in hospitality-related jobs. Furthermore, it supports the Dungog Economic Development Plan 2022–2026, which prioritises making it easier to start and grow businesses and fostering economic development across the region.

In addition to direct employment at the venue, there is potential for indirect job creation across the local economy, including:

- Local suppliers: Increased demand for produce and beverages from local farms and food providers.
- Transport services: Enhanced patronage may public transport operators or other transport options (i.e. shuttle bus service).
- Retail businesses: Increased foot traffic from venue visitors could benefit nearby retail and service providers.

The venue's capacity to host events such as weddings, conferences, and community functions could also create opportunities for local contractors and service providers, including event planners, photographers, and other support staff. These activities align with the Dungog Destination Management Plan 2021–2026, which identifies the need for venues that can support larger events to boost local tourism and economic activity.

The positions created by the venue will likely range from entry-level roles to skilled positions, offering opportunities for young workers, those transitioning from other industries, and residents seeking local employment. By providing on-the-job training and skill development, the Proposal could support long-term workforce capacity building in Clarence Town.

By attracting local and regional visitors, the venue has the potential to stimulate spending in Clarence Town, particularly in accommodation, food, and retail. Additionally, the hosting of events is expected to draw visitors to the town, further benefiting local businesses and contributing to the broader regional economy.

While the overall potential for job creation is notable, the extent of economic growth will depend on the venue's operational model, the demand for events, and its ability to attract visitors from outside

the immediate area. Ongoing monitoring and analysis will be required to assess the full impact as the project progresses.

**Table 3.9 Impact and benefit assessment: Job creation in hospitality, catering and event management sectors**

People:	Project-specific mitigation/enhancement measures	Residual impact significance
Vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, families), general public Local residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment creation in hospitality, catering, and event management roles</li> <li>• Training and skill development programs for local workers</li> <li>• Priority for hiring local residents</li> <li>• Support for local suppliers and transport services</li> <li>• Increased foot traffic benefiting nearby retail and service businesses</li> <li>• Opportunity for local contractors and service providers to participate in events</li> </ul>	Likely / moderate = medium social benefit

## 4 Social impact summary

The SIA for the proposed bar, dining, and function centre venue at 29-35 Grey Street, Clarence Town, evaluates the potential social effects on local stakeholders, addressing both positive and negative impacts while suggesting strategies for mitigation.

The Proposal is expected to provide local benefits, such as job creation in the hospitality, catering, and event sectors. It also offers a new venue for community events and gatherings, potentially enhancing local vibrancy. These economic and social benefits are tempered by the need to address potential disruptions to residents, especially regarding noise and traffic. Noise and Venue Management strategies are recommended to mitigate these concerns.

Key to the success of the proposal will be the implementation of targeted mitigation measures that address concerns such as noise, traffic, and public safety. Proactive measures to ensure transparency and alignment with local values will help ensure the project contributes positively to the community.

In summary, while the proposed venue offers potential for positive social impacts through economic growth and community engagement, it also presents risks due to potential disruptions. The SIA underscores the importance of implementing proactive measures to minimise disruptions and enhance the project's contribution to the local community.

**Table 4.1 Summary of residual social impact**

Social impact description	Impacted people or stakeholder groups	Project-Specific Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impacts pending implementation of project specific measures
SI 01. Increased social opportunities for local residents through a community gathering space	Residents, local community groups	Community consultations, accessible venue design, promotion of inclusive programming	Medium social benefit
SI 02. Increase in traffic and congestion due to the new bar, dining and function centre during peak operating hours	Local residents, visitors, businesses in the area	Shuttle bus service, signage for parking, encourage public transport use	Low social impact
SI 03. Noise and disturbance from events, especially during night-time operations	Local residents, primarily those closest to the site	Music level control, staff training, signage, complaints management, periodic noise monitoring	Medium social impact
SI 04. Potential disruption to local heritage and character (e.g. proximity to St John's Anglican Church and residential character)	Local residents, cultural groups and nearby businesses	Sensitive design, consultation during final design, minimisation of disruptions, noise management	Low social impact

Social impact description	Impacted people or stakeholder groups	Project-Specific Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impacts pending implementation of project specific measures
SI 05. Potential strain on public health and safety due to alcohol related harm or social issues	Vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, families), general public Local residents	Compliance with liquor and gaming regulations, CPTED principles, Venue Management Plan, security measures	Low social impact
SI 06. Job creation in hospitality, catering and event management sectors	Local job seekers, local business	Employment creation, training programs, priority for local hiring, support for local suppliers	Medium social benefit

## Appendix 1: References

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### Technical Assessments

- Amber Traffic and Transportation Direction (August 2024), Traffic Impact Assessment Report, 29, 33 and 35 Grey Street, Clarence Town

- RAPT Consulting (September 2024), Noise Assessment – 29 Grey Street Clarence Town, NSW, prepared for Williams River Steel Investments
- Contemporary Heritage (September 2023) Statement of Heritage Impact, Contemporary Heritage
- Williams River Steel (January 2025), Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

## Appendix 2: Social impact risking methodology (NSW SIA Guideline)

The following tables are derived from the SIA Guideline (DPHI 2023) and were adopted as the risking methodology for this assessment.

### Defining magnitude levels for social impacts

Magnitude level	Meaning
<b>Transformational</b>	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, amenity, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community
<b>Major</b>	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time or affecting many people in a widespread area
<b>Moderate</b>	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time or affecting a group of people
<b>Minor</b>	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable
<b>Minimal</b>	No noticeable change experienced by people in the locality

### Defining likelihood levels of social impacts

Likelihood level	Meaning
<b>Almost certain</b>	Definite or almost definitely expected Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time or affecting a group of people
<b>Likely</b>	High probability
<b>Possible</b>	Medium probability
<b>Unlikely</b>	Low probability
<b>Very unlikely</b>	Improbable or remote probability

### Dimensions of social impact magnitude

Dimensions		Details Needed to Enable Assessment
<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Extent</b>	Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? e.g., near neighbours, local, regional, future generations).
	<b>Duration</b>	When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g., over particular project phases) or permanent?
	<b>Severity or scale</b>	What is the likely scale or degree of change? e.g., mild, moderate, severe)

Dimensions		Details Needed to Enable Assessment
	<b>Intensity or importance</b>	How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter, whether it is rare/unique or replaceable, the extent to which it is tied to their identity, and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change.
	<b>Level of concern/interest</b>	How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

### Social impact significance matrix

Likelihood	Magnitude Level				
	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
<b>Almost certain</b>	Low	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
<b>Likely</b>	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
<b>Possible</b>	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
<b>Unlikely</b>	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
<b>Very unlikely</b>	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium