

AMENDED SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



21 & 22 BURNHAM CLOSE THORNTON

NEW GENERATION BOARDING HOUSE

PREPARED FOR
ZOE MAY PTY LTD

PREPARED BY




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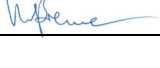
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSESSMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE CLIENT

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared without prejudice for Zoe May Pty Ltd to accompany a Development Application (DA 18/1394) to Maitland City Council and updated following a Section 34 Conference held on 5 November 2021. It relates to the operation of a New Generation Boarding House (the boarding house).

1.2 STUDY OVERVIEW

This report presents a social impact assessment of the key issues, benefits and potential impacts of the proposed redevelopment of 21-22 Burnham Close, Thornton (the Site) for the purpose of a New Generation Boarding House. Where potentially adverse socio-economic impacts are identified, this analysis will provide input into further refinement of the concept in order to reduce the potential for impacts on existing uses and members of the proposed new community. As Maitland City Council has no adopted policy framework in relation to social impact assessment (SIA), the International Principles for Social Impact Assessment and best practice have been used.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR SIA

'Social Impact Assessment includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment.' International Principles for Social Impact Assessment (May 2003), International Association for Impact Assessment).

It is unilaterally accepted that social impacts are a change to one or more of the following:

- People's way of life
- Their culture
- Their community
- Their political systems
- The environment
- Health and wellbeing
- Personal and property rights
- Fears and aspirations

(International Principles for Social Impact Assessment (May 2003), International Association for Impact Assessment).

Evaluating social impacts is a proactive stance to development and seeks to achieve better development outcomes, not just the identification or amelioration of negative or unintended outcomes. SIA is not simply a knee-jerk response to justify a proposal in response to public objections received during a notification process undertaken as a consequence of a policy directive of the Council. SIA is also not based on speculation, fear or ignorance but is a framework based on analysis, monitoring and assessment.

Having a process that includes evaluation of the social impacts as an integral part of the planning process therefore allows a Council to make decisions within its strategic planning system with the view to create a cohesive, connected, caring, safe and equitable community. The lack of a framework will result in ill-informed decision-making and poor planning outcomes, shifting to suit NIMBYISM and political persuasion. Conversely, an established social impact evaluation framework allows a Council to:

- Ensure social impacts are considered as part of its decision-making process;
- Enhance consistency and transparency in its assessment of the social impacts of proposed development;
- Maximise positive social impacts and minimise negative social impacts of land use plans and development; and
- Base Council decision making on developments that meet environmental, social and economic sustainability outcomes.

The last few years have seen an increased awareness and application of SIA in decision-making, however there are an increasing number of local councils who do not have an informed, policy or statutory context upon which to base their assumptions or assessments. It is important to note that Maitland City Council does not have a specific Social Impact Assessment policy or provisions contained within any DCP.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Accepted social impact evaluation practices enable data to be obtained from various resources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the existing community environment and how the proposed development may impact or alter this environment.

This process has been adopted for this assessment, with the data facilitating an assessment of the potential impacts on the local community. The methodology included:

- Identifying features of the Site and surrounding area

- Undertaking a strategic assessment of relevant policy measures and planning documents.
- Generating Demographic Profiles of both the Sutherland community and the wider community from statistics on the Sutherland Shire City Council website and the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data.
- Identifying the potential social impacts of the proposal.
- Identifying the Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Score and assessing how this translates into housing stress.
- Considering any options to the proposal.
- Recommending any mitigation measures (where necessary).

This SIA has been prepared generally in accordance with the principles and framework identified in the International Association for Impact Assessment's (IAIA) Social Impact Assessment Guidelines (2003) and the publication, *Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for Assessing and Managing the Social Impacts of Projects* (April 2015) and best practice social impact assessment guidelines used by an ever growing number of Councils in NSW who have adopted an SIA framework to help guide decision-making.

1.5 REPORT OUTLINE

Aside from this Introduction, this report contains:

- A description of the Site, its immediate surroundings and the wider area in general (Chapter 2 – The Site and Surrounds).
- An outline of the broad policy context, including the NSW State Government's strategic planning framework and key Sutherland Shire Council policies and strategies (Chapter 3 – Social Policy Context).
- An analysis of the demographic profile of the communities surrounding the Site, to determine existing characteristics and to assist in identifying community needs and interests in relation to the proposed development (Chapter 4 – Outline of Demographics).
- A summary of existing social infrastructure and service provision in this area (Chapter 5 – Existing Community Resources).
- An outline of key social issues, benefits and impacts of the proposed development and potential mitigation measures (Chapter 6 – Social Impact Evaluation).
- Conclusions drawn with respect to the potential or actual social impacts of the proposed development (Chapter 7 – Conclusion).

1.6 BACKGROUND

DA 18/1394 was lodged on 08/06/2018 for the demolition of two existing dwellings and construction of four, three storey buildings for use as a New Generation Boarding House. The application was notified to the surrounding area between 25 June 2018 and 9 July 2018, with 56 submissions being received by Council. On-going discussions with Council resulted in a number of modifications to the proposal, with a full set of amended plans and supporting documentation submitted on 9 February 2021.

The application was duly placed on public notification on 12 April 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days until 26 April 2021. In response to the amended plans, a total of thirty (30) submissions were received with twenty-seven (27) opposed to the DA and three (3) in support.

The DA was reported to Council and was refused on 8 June 2021, with the Applicant initiating proceedings against Council on 9 July 2021. A formal Section 34 Conciliation Conference was held on 5 November 2021 wherein further design amendments were discussed and ultimately incorporated into the current iteration of the development. These changes are documented on the submitted plans and in the Statement of Environmental Effects.

Relevantly, at its meeting on 22 October 2019, Council also considered a Notice of Motion regarding the application of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009 and multi-dwelling housing. Council resolved as follows:

"THAT

- 1. Council officers investigate and report back on potential planning design and development controls which will support high quality multi-unit housing (including but not limited to residential apartments, serviced apartments and boarding houses) to ensure new development reflects the character of the locality and is consistent with the built form and density identified in Councils Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.*
- 2. Council write to the appropriate government Minister and department seeking changes to the Affordable Housing Rental SEPP being applied to regional and rural areas of NSW."*

Over two years have now passed and it does not appear that this report has been forthcoming during that time. It is noted however, in the Conclusion to Item 10.8 of the Agenda for the Council Meeting of 27 October 2020, that the Group Manager Planning and Environment states:

"The Maitland Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+ identifies the need to prepare a Local Housing Strategy which will investigate and respond to housing diversity and choice, housing affordability and will include a strategic review of current land use zones and development standards. As part of this strategic review the permissibility of boarding houses and the need for boarding houses within Maitland will be considered to ensure that boarding houses are located in areas which promote good outcomes for all of the community.

It is recommended that Council review boarding houses as part of the preparation of the Local Housing Strategy."

It is noted that subsequently, Council resolved to "review the permissibility of Boarding Houses as part of the Housing Strategy". As part of this process, Council have embarked upon a three-stage process to prepare a Local Housing Strategy involving the following:

- Stage 1: Establish an evidence-base to identify the local housing requirements
- Stage 2: Undertake Land Use Opportunities & Constraints Analysis
- Stage 3: Preparation of Local Housing Strategy

Council's Strategic Planning staff have advised that Stage 1 and Stage 2 works are currently underway with a draft strategy expected to be placed on public exhibition in late 2021, however this has not yet occurred. The consideration and approval of this application will not jeopardise the activities or processes being undertaken at the strategic level towards a robust, evidence-based Local Housing Strategy.

2 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing structures on the Site and construct a New Generation Boarding House containing 31 boarding rooms, with associated communal facilities, parking and landscaped areas, as well as an on-site manager's residence.

In general, the amended development will comprise:

- 31 x double boarding rooms, of which Rooms 11 and 31 are accessible rooms.
- A manager's residence.
- Two (2) communal laundries - one on each level.
- Communal gardens/ outdoor spaces on each level and a communal living room on the upper level.
- Pedestrian access points off both Burnham Close and Taylor Avenue.
- A stair well at the main entrance and a stair well and lift core located centrally and serving both levels plus the basement car park.
- 30 car parking spaces including two disabled spaces, one dedicated electric vehicle space, one car share space, a dedicated Manager's car space and three visitor spaces.
- 7 x motorcycle parking spaces and 8 x bicycle rack spaces.
- External and internal bin storage areas.
- A utility room.
- Landscaped open space areas for use by residents with provision for generous deep soil zones.

A detailed description is provided in the Statement of Environmental Effects.

2.2 NEW GENERATION BOARDING HOUSES

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009 (ARHSEPP) was introduced on 31 July 2009. The intent of the ARHSEPP is to facilitate the increased supply and diversity of affordable rental and social housing in NSW. It covers housing types including in-fill affordable housing, along with secondary dwellings (granny flats), boarding houses, group homes, social housing and supportive accommodation.

A boarding house provides a form of low-cost rental accommodation for a wide range of occupants, which can include single people, retirees, students and young couples.

Boarding houses are not dwellings but they are a form of 'residential accommodation'. Residents of a boarding house pay for a periodic right to occupy premises, but do not get the premises to themselves. In a boarding house, there is more sharing of space between residents, and more control exercised over the premises by the proprietor, than there is in a privately rented dwelling.

The term 'boarding house' used in the ARHSEPP relates to a building that:

- is wholly or partly let in lodgings;
- provides lodgers with a principal place of residence for three months or more;
- may have shared facilities such as a communal living room, bathroom, kitchen or laundry; and
- has rooms, some or all of which may have private kitchen and bathroom facilities, that accommodate one or more lodgers.

The ARHSEPP facilitates both the traditional form of boarding houses, as well as New Generation Boarding Houses, of which the proposal is. The concept of a traditional boarding house is somewhat stigmatised by the perception of the of a run-down "halfway house", characterised by single rooms with shared kitchens, common rooms and amenities in the inner city, filled with drunken old men, paedophiles, drug users or the disabled.

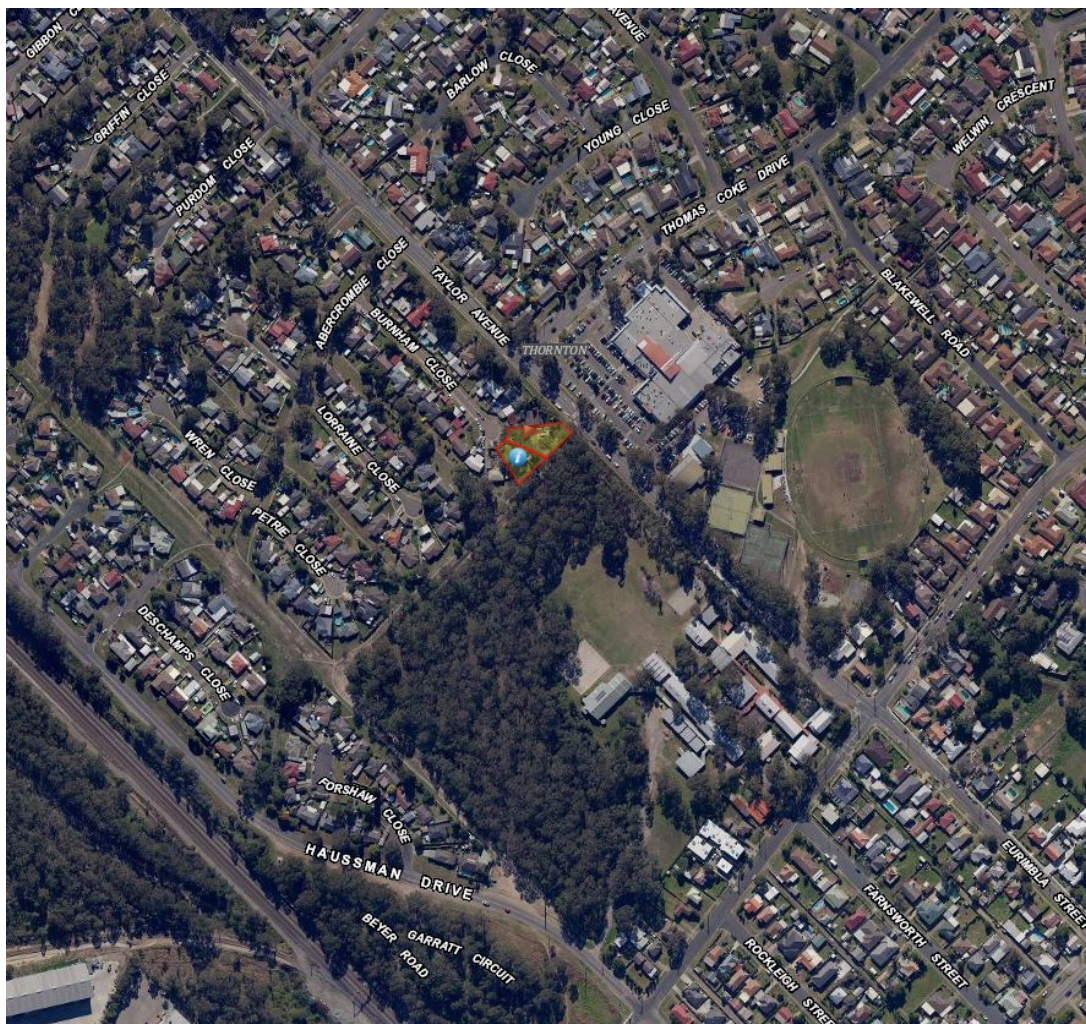
The concept of the "New Generation Boarding House" introduced by the ARHSEPP in 2009 provides an alternative to the vernacular. This form of boarding house includes private bathrooms and/ or food preparation facilities, with many being self-contained rooms, not unlike a studio or micro apartment.

3 LOCALITY AND THE SITE

3.1 THE LOCALITY

Thornton is located within the local government area of Maitland City Council. The suburb is split by the New England Highway running north west to south east through the suburb. Thornton is predominantly zoned R1 General Residential however also consists of a range of public recreational areas and local centres within the suburb. Thornton has public transport accessibility including bus stops and a railway station adjacent to Thornton Road catering for passengers travelling to Newcastle, Maitland, Scone and Dungog.

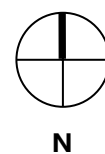
FIGURE 1: LOCALITY AERIAL VIEW



SOURCE SIX MAPS 2020



AERIAL OF SUBJECT SITE & SURROUNDS



3.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

SITE CONSTRAINTS

The subject site is zoned R1 General Residential according to the Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 (MLEP). Although the site is affected by Class 5 acid sulphate soils, no other natural hazards, such as mine subsidence or bushfire affectation, have been identified.

Key features of the Site are identified in Table 1 and Figure 2 below.

TABLE 1: SITE FEATURES

FEATURE	DETAILS
Topography	The Site falls approximately 2.8m from its frontage to Taylor Avenue down to the south western boundary in a relatively consistent fashion.
Site Layout and Built Form	Each property contains a single storey dwelling house with No. 19 also containing a car port and two small sheds.
Landscape	Both allotments contain extensive grassed areas with scattered trees and small landscaped beds in varying condition. The trees identified by the Arborist note a range of native and exotic species.
Vehicle Access	Both allotments have vehicular access via a conventional driveway and gutter crossing off Burnham Close.
Pedestrian Access	Pedestrian access is available directly from both Burnham Close and Taylor Avenue. Access is also available to the pedestrian pathway running along the southeastern boundary of the Site. Immediately adjacent to the Taylor Avenue frontage is a pedestrian crossing, which facilitates access to Thornton Shopping Centre.
Utility Services	The Site is currently serviced by potable water, electricity, sewage and telecommunications.

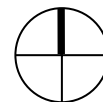
FIGURE 2: SITE AERIAL VIEW



SOURCE SIX MAPS 2020



AERIAL OF SUBJECT SITE



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In the wider context, the key features of the area are discussed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: SURROUNDING CONTEXT

ASPECT	COMMENT
Surrounding Context	Predominantly zoned R1 General Residential with tracts of RE1 Public Recreation to the west and to the east (Thornton Park). Immediately to the north east lies the Thornton Shopping Centre, which is zoned B2 Local Centre. Further to the southwest lies the Hunter Railway Line and a tract of bushland (zoned E3 Environmental Management). The eastern section of the Thornton Industrial Estate, zoned B5 Business Development lies further to the south.

ASPECT	COMMENT
Public Transport	<p>The nearest bus stops are located on both sides of Taylor Avenue approximately 30m to the south east of the pedestrian crossing. Bus services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 189 – Greenhills Stockland to Thornton <p>Additional bus stops are located approximately 100m to the north near the intersection of Taylor Avenue and Thomas Coke Drive. Bus services at these stops include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 182 – Rutherford to Thornton via Maitland ▪ 189 – Greenhills Stockland to Thornton <p>The nearest train services to the Site are provided on the Hunter Line accessed from Thornton Station (approximately 870m southeast). The 189 bus service connects with Thornton Station.</p>
Educational Facilities	<p>Thornton Public School (front gate is approximately 250m to the south-west along Taylor Avenue)</p> <p>Aspect Hunter School is located 700m to the south</p>
Public Recreation Facilities	<p>Unnamed park approximately 300m to the west</p> <p>Thornton Park approximately 300m to the east</p> <p>A & D Lawrence Oval approximately 780m to the north east</p>
Local Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thornton Shopping Centre immediately opposite the Site on Taylor Avenue to the north ▪ Stocklands Greenhills Shopping Centre approximately 6.4km to the northwest ▪ Tenambit Shopping Centre approximately 6.1km to the northeast ▪ Thornton Industrial Estate approximately 1.8km to the south.

3.3 SITE AND LOCALITY PHOTOS – DECEMBER 2020

PHOTO 1: LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM THOMAS COKE DRIVE AT THE SITE



PHOTO 2: LOOKING WEST AT NO.21 FROM PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY



PHOTO 3: LOOKING WEST AT NO.22 FROM PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY



PHOTO 4: LOOKING SOUTH AT NO.19 BURNHAM CLOSE FROM TAYLOR AVENUE



PHOTO 5: LOOKING WEST AT THE SITE FROM TAYLOR AVENUE



PHOTO 6: LOOKING SOUTHWEST AT NO.21 FROM TAYLOR AVENUE



PHOTO 7: LOOKING SOUTHWEST AT PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY AND THORNTON PUBLIC SCHOOL GROUNDS



PHOTO 8: STREET PRESENCE - LOOKING NORTH AT 17 BURNHAM CLOSE.



PHOTO 9: LOOKING EAST FROM BURNHAM CLOSE AT NO. 17 AND 19



PHOTO 10: LOOKING EAST FROM BURNHAM CLOSE AT THE SITE.



PHOTO 11: LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM BURNHAM CLOSE AT THE SITE.



PHOTO 12: LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM BURNHAM CLOSE AT 20, 18 AND 16



PHOTO 13: LOOKING WEST FROM BURNHAM CLOSE AT 16, 14 AND 12



PHOTO 14: STREETSCAPE LOOKING NORTHWEST ALONG BURNHAM CLOSE.



PHOTO 15: LOOKING NORTHEAST AT THORNTON SHOPPING CENTRE.



PHOTO 16: LOOKING NORTHEAST AT THORNTON LIBRARY.



3.4 STAKEHOLDERS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSAL

The following are community groups and organisations which represent key sectors of the local community who may be affected, either positively or negatively by the planning proposal:

- Maitland City Council.
- Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- Residents and workers within the study area.
- Thornton Industrial Estate businesses.
- Thornton Shopping Centre.
- Thornton Public School.
- Department of Community Services.
- Utility providers (i.e. Ausgrid, Hunter Water, Telstra, AGL).
- Staff at Thornton Train Station.

4 SOCIAL POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 OVERVIEW

The social policy context is dominated by detailed local strategies aimed primarily at affordable housing and employment, supported by relatively new, regional-led strategies. These initiatives are focussed largely on building a regional economy, employment, transport and housing. In a statutory context, the Site is subject to the controls contained within the Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 (MLEP 2011) and the Maitland Development Control Plan 2011 (HDCP 2011). Neither of these documents contain any explicit controls aimed at New Generation Boarding Houses.

4.2 STATE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING) 2009 – (ARH SEPP)

This policy provides a range of incentives that make it easier, quicker and cheaper to build affordable housing in NSW. When affordable housing development is proposed and complies with strict design and planning criteria within the SEPP, a consent authority cannot refuse the development application on those grounds.

The very existence of a State-wide policy clearly establishes there is a need for affordable forms of housing, such as the proposed New Generation Boarding House. The SEPP includes incentives and criteria to increase the supply of affordable housing, such as FSR bonuses and relaxation of development requirements such as parking, open space, solar access and the like. A full assessment of the proposal against the ARH SEPP (and other relevant statutory matters) is contained in the Statement of Environmental Effects.

The policy also includes provisions to restrict the reduction of affordable housing, by allowing the charge of mandatory contributions for any development that proposes to reduce the overall supply of affordable housing.

THE HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036

The Hunter Regional Plan 2036 (HRP) focuses on population and employment growth, complemented by proposed infrastructure to facilitate the region's growth over the next 20 years. Although the strategy is only a statement of intent, it affects the entire Hunter region, not just the Lower Hunter under the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-2036.

The HRP establishes four goals, each with a series of directions and actions to achieve a vision of a leading regional economy, with a vibrant new metropolitan city at its heart.

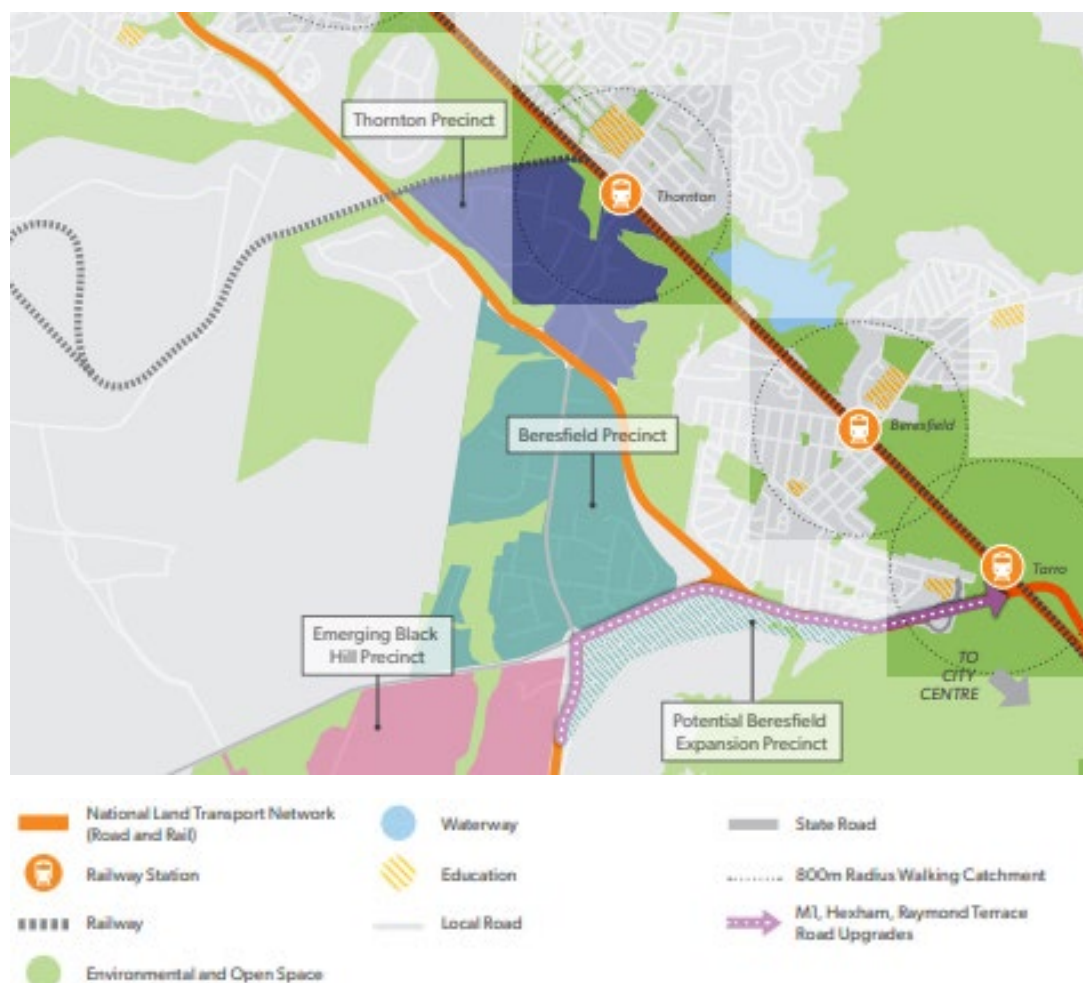
Newcastle will provide global gateways to maximise exports and tourism and provide a centre of excellence for health and education. The Goals, Directions and Actions of the HRP, as they relate to the proposed development, are addressed in Table 1 of Appendix A as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

THE GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2036

The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 (GNMP) is a companion to the Hunter Regional Plan and sets out strategies and actions that will drive sustainable growth across Cessnock City, Lake Macquarie City, Maitland City, Newcastle City and Port Stephens communities, which together make up Greater Newcastle. The Plan also helps to achieve the vision set in the Hunter Regional Plan 2036.

The Site is located outside the Beresfield – Black Hill Catalyst Area, but within the catchment for Thornton Train Station, as shown in Figure 3 below.

FIGURE 3: THE GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2036



Source: Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036

This Catalyst Area is intended to develop the light industrial, manufacturing, logistics and freight capabilities of the area (Beresfield, Thornton and Black Hill).

Like the HRP, the GNMP is also based around four Outcomes, supported by a series of strategies and actions. These Goals, as they relate to the proposal are addressed in Table 2 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

The proposed redevelopment within close proximity of a local shopping centre and public transport options, will facilitate additional housing choice and dwelling yield in an area close to public transport, services and employment opportunities within a Catalyst Area.

4.3 COUNCIL POLICIES AND PLANS

MAITLAND URBAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

The Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2001-2020 (2010 Edition) or simply, the MUSS, provided the framework for the long-term urban growth in the Maitland LGA. The primary focus of the MUSS is the investigation, sequencing and management of land release for residential and employment land uses. The adopted policy position is to 'maintain a 10 to 15 year supply of zoned land' for both residential and employment lands. Generally, the MUSS aims for land supply to include:

- Maintain a 10 to 15 year supply of zoned residential land.
- Provide a range of housing styles and lot sizes, guided by liveable urban design and efficient infrastructure provision.
- Respond to household and population changes, including ageing population and smaller households, in identifying and planning for new urban development.
- New development must be supported by necessary infrastructure, including utilities, transport, water cycle management, recreation, social and community services.
- Avoiding areas subject to environmental constraints such as flooding.

The aims of the MUSS, as they relate to infill development, include:

- Infill development should comprise 15% of all new dwellings in Maitland.
- Consolidation and redevelopment of centres to be consistent with the identified investigation areas and the stated hierarchy of centres.
- Development must respond to appropriate planning controls and specific design criteria which will be further investigated.

- New development must be of a scale which ensures the character of centres and other infill areas is enhanced.

These Aims, as they relate to the proposal are addressed in Table 3 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

MAITLAND LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT 2040+

The Maitland Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+(LSPS) sets out a 20-year plan integrating land use, transport and infrastructure planning for the future of the LGA. It outlines how growth will be sustainably managed into the future. The LSPS explains how state and regional plans such as the Hunter Regional Plan 2036, the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036, and Council's other strategic plans will be implemented in the LGA.

Section 5.0 of the LSPS identifies 18 local planning priorities within the four themes of people and places/ economy/ environment and infrastructure, including:

1. *Plan for diverse and affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing and changing community*
2. *Support sustainable housing growth by balancing greenfield and infill housing.*
3. *Support a place-based planning approach to guide better planning and urban design outcomes for our centres and neighbourhoods.*
5. *Preserve and enhance the distinctive local character of our centres and neighbourhoods.*
6. *Plan for healthy, culturally rich and socially connected communities.*
16. *Improve access to, from and within the city, and encourage public and active transport to connect people and places.*

The priorities, as they relate to the proposed development, are addressed in Table 4 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

MAITLAND 10+ COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

The Maitland 10+ Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is also a statutory requirement to prepare a dynamic, mid-range strategic planning guide for the social, environmental, economic and civic issues faced by the people of Maitland. It is presented in five overarching themes with statements on what the Maitland community would like to see occur over a 10-year period as well as how that will occur. The CSP is supported by Council's three year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan.

The five themes of the CSP focus on people, the built and natural environments, the economy and leadership and collaboration. The relevant themes and actions as they relate to the proposal are detailed in Table 5 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

MAITLAND DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 (REVISED) AND MAITLAND OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020/21

The Delivery Program is Council's statement of intent for the current term of Council. It is supported by an annual Operational Plan, which states Council's planned operational actions and capital works program, and how they will be funded. Over the 2020/21 period, the Delivery Program focus will continue to meet the objectives set out in the Delivery Program 2018-2022, which respond to the aspirations of the Maitland +10 Community Strategic Plan. These, according to the Delivery Plan, include improved transport connectivity, local jobs and businesses, and access to local services, activities and facilities.

The relevant actions as they relate to the proposal, are detailed in Table 6 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

ACTIVITY CENTRES AND EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS STRATEGY

This strategy outlines Council's approach to identifying and strengthening its activity centres and employment clusters. Although not particularly relevant in a social policy context, the Site's proximity to the Thornton Town Centre and the connection to residential development, as well as the strategies to provide promote employment and services to the community is. The Strategy identifies Thornton as a Town Centre that has a high level of accessibility, given the proximity to Thornton Train Station.

The Strategy identifies a number of Key Policy Objectives, with two being particularly relevant to the proposal as follows:

- Encourage a well designed public domain with spaces for people to meet and mingle and a high quality built form with active ground floors to enhance the safety and overall pedestrian experience; and
- Encourage the development of higher density residential dwellings in and around the centre to offer a range of housing size and types within a highly accessible location.

These Key Policy Objectives are addressed in Table 7 of Appendix A, as part of the Strategic Assessment contained in Section 7.1 of this report.

5 OUTLINE OF DEMOGRAPHICS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The outline of demographics consists of data drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, specifically the 2011 and 2016 Census data and the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Score.

The statistical analysis aims to provide an understanding of the socio-demographic context of the surrounding area, with the following indicators used to form the basis of the analysis:

- Population;
- Indigenous residents;
- Ancestry;
- Employment status and industry sector of employment;
- Age profile;
- Median weekly income;
- Dwelling type;
- Dwelling structure;
- Housing tenure;
- Household size; and
- SEIFA Score.

An understanding of the socio-demographic context can provide insight into the possible characteristics and needs of the development's future community and assist the planning to take account of, and respond to, the surrounding social conditions. This will support opportunities for the proposed land uses, and the new community itself, to integrate, both physically and socially with the surrounding area.

This chapter also includes an outline of key existing community facilities in the surrounding area. Understanding existing facility provision and capacity and the identification of any gaps, has informed the assessment of social issues, benefits and impacts in the following sections of this report.

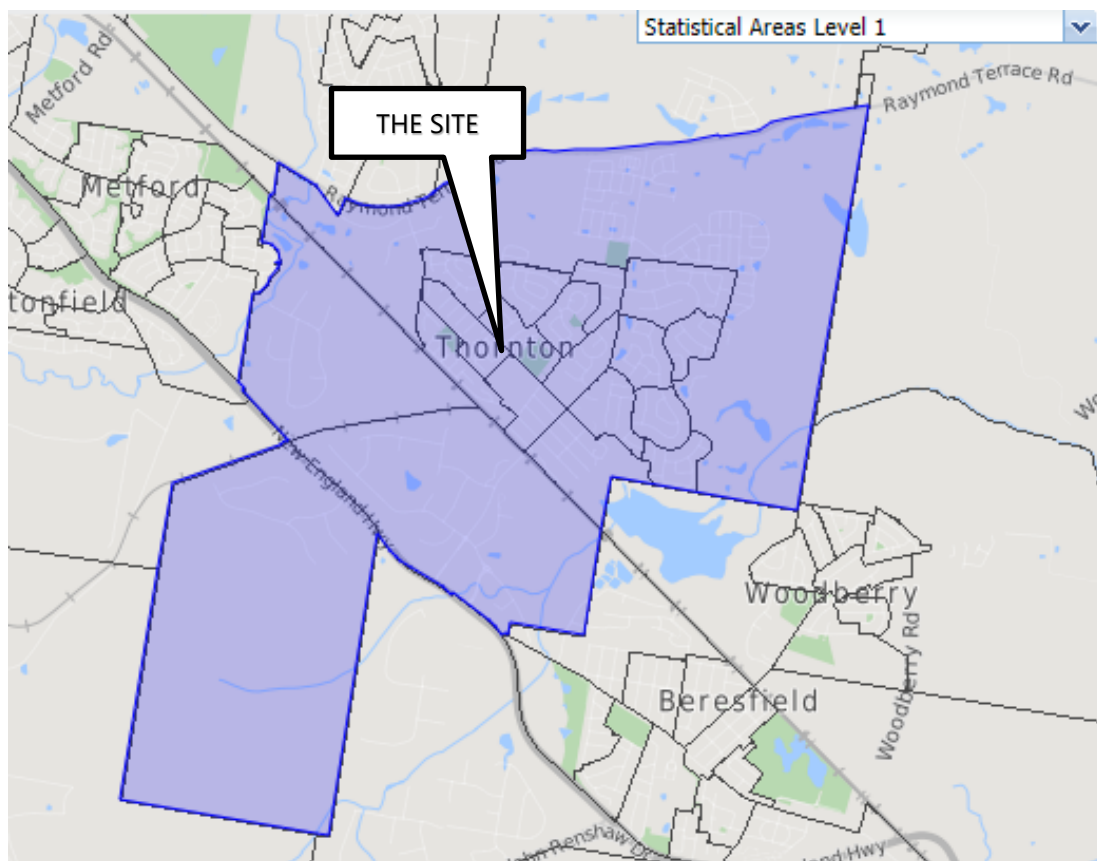
5.2 CENSUS DATA

The following population profile is based on data extracted from census data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from the 2011 and 2016 census' for the Maitland

Local Government Area. From a statistical point of view, this is classed as an SA3 (or Statistical Area 3), which is comprised of five smaller areas, known as Statistical Area 2 or SA2's. The Site is located within the Thornton-Millers Forest SA2. This is further broken down into smaller census units, including the Thornton State Suburb Code (SSC13851), as shown in Figure 4, below. The Thornton SSC is used as the Study Area in this assessment, primarily because the smaller statistical SA1 structure (SA1 1111819) is deemed to be too fine-grained, the Site is located at the periphery of that area and it is not representative of the local contextual relationship surrounding the Site (Refer to Figure 5 below). The use of the SSC as a baseline provides a better comparison in the context of the wider Local Government Area.

It is also noted that the spatial area of the Study Area increased from 11.4km² to 16.6km² between the two census periods, while the Maitland LGA, remained static at 391.5km².

FIGURE 4: EXISTING THORNTON SSC SHOWING SA1 AREAS



Source: ABS Quickstats 2021

According to the 2016 Census, this SSC has a population of 8,062 people. The SSC was used to provide a statistical baseline in accordance with ABS statistical structures.

FIGURE 5: SA1 1111819



Source: ABS Quickstats 2021

5.3 POPULATION

As previously noted, the Thornton SSC had a population of 8,062 residents at the 2016 census, up from 7,862 residents in 2011. In the Study Area, 49.6% were males while 50.4% were females. In comparison, the LGA had a population of 77,305 people at the 2016 census (up from 67,478) of which 48.8% were male and 51.2% were female (previously 48.9% and 51.1% respectively during the 2011 census).

Between 2011 and 2016 there was an increase of just 200 residents to the Study Area (2.48%), compared to 9,827 residents in the LGA (or 12.71%). Of that increase, the gender distribution remained relatively unchanged.

As shown in the following tables, Table 3 identifies the current Maitland LGA population statistics, while Table 4 examines those statistics for the Study Area.

TABLE 3: MAITLAND LGA POPULATION

MAITLAND LGA POPULATION	2011		2016		CHANGE 2011 TO 2016
	NO.	%	NO.	%	
Males	33,004	48.9	37,736	48.8	+4,732
Females	34,473	51.1	39,571	51.2	+5,098
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population	2,355	3.5	4,087	5.3	+1,732
Language Spoken at Home – English only	62,917	93.2	70,392	91.1	+7,475
Non-English Language Spoken at Home	1,137	4.7	1,592	5.6	+455
Total Labour Force (Persons over 15)	32,829	48.7	37,435	48.4	+4,606
Unemployed	1,641	5.0	2,741	7.3	+1,100
Median Personal Income	\$562	-	\$644	-	+\$82
Lone Person Households	5,185	21.5	5,948	21.7	+763

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

According to the dwelling and population projections provided by the Hunter Research Foundation Centre (2018), the population of the LGA has risen by 15% between the 2011 and 2016 census periods and 9% between the 2006 to 2011 periods. Projections between 2016 and 2041 from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DoP&E 2019), anticipate that the number of people living in the Maitland LGA is expected to rise from 79,050 people to 104,700 people, or by 25,650 people (24.5%). This equates to an annual average increase of 1.4% out to 2026, slowing to 0.7% by 2041. In comparison, the NSW State Average Growth Projection to 2041 by LGA is also 1%.

TABLE 4: STUDY AREA POPULATION (THORNTON SSC)

THORNTON SSC	2011		2016		CHANGE
POPULATION	NO.	%	NO.	%	2011 TO 2016
Males	3,929	49.9	3,996	49.6	+67
Females	3,933	50.1	4,068	50.4	+135
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population	190	2.4	325	4	+1,732
Language Spoken at Home – English only	7,421	94.4	7,541	93.7	+120
Non-English Language Spoken at Home	137	5.6	167	6.3	+30
Total Labour Force (Persons over 15)	4,258	54.1	4,316	53.5	+58
Unemployed	178	4.2	244	5.7	+66
Median Personal Income	\$660	-	\$702	-	+\$42
Lone Person Households	313	12.2	362	13.4	+49

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

5.4 INDIGENOUS RESIDENTS

At the 2016 Census, the Indigenous population in the LGA was 2,355 people or 5.3% of the total population, representing an increase of 1,732 Indigenous residents from 2011 to 2016. In terms of the Study Area, the 2016 Census identified 325 Indigenous residents or 4% of the total population, representing an increase of 1,732 Indigenous residents from 2011 to 2016.

People who predominantly identify with the Wonnarua Nation comprise the bulk of the local Aboriginal population.

Within the Maitland LGA, most sites of Aboriginal Cultural Significance consist of findings from old campsites, art works, markings and culturally significant sites. Previous studies have indicated campsites usually have a close association with waterbodies with artefacts found normally within about 55m of such locations. The Site

is not located on or within immediate proximity to any key Aboriginal Sites. A search conducted on 17 December 2019 of the AHIMS Web Service revealed that no Aboriginal Sites or places have been declared within the local area, depicted in Figure 6 below. Given this, the development per se, will not have any significant adverse impacts on the local Aboriginal community.

FIGURE 6: AHIMS Search Area



Source: AHIMS WebServices Search 2021

5.5 ANCESTRY

Ancestry is a good measure of the total size of cultural groups within an area, regardless of where they were born or what language they speak.

As shown in the following tables, Table 5 identifies the current ancestry statistics for both the Maitland LGA and the Study Area.

TABLE 5: ANCESTRY

POPULATION	2011		2016		CHANGE
	LGA	STUDY AREA	LGA	STUDY AREA	STUDY AREA 2011 - 2016
Australian	31,216	3,940	35,238	3,908	-32
Australian Aboriginal	204	23	419	31	+8
Chinese	446	28	581	65	+63
Croatian	100	20	119	15	-5
Dutch	819	99	933	84	-16
English	28,559	3,265	33,901	3,568	+303
Filipino	351	40	524	78	+38
French	214	18	244	19	+1
German	3,180	324	3,652	383	+59
Greek	228	21	305	37	+16
Hungarian	123	14	120	23	+9
Indian	296	39	592	29	-10
Irish	7,305	669	9,542	935	+266
Italian	806	108	1,123	150	+42
Korean	42	3	55	13	+10
Lebanese	71	5	86	8	+3
Macedonian	57	4	78	6	+2
Maltese	170	20	213	21	+1
Maori	227	16	352	47	+31
New Zealander	391	57	490	46	-11
Polish	684	84	742	76	-8
Russian	123	13	149	17	+4
Scottish	6,370	772	8,371	915	+143
Serbian	43	12	54	10	-33
Sinhalese	3	0	-	-	-3
South African	180	17	234	21	+4
Spanish	155	26	189	29	+3
Sri Lankan	-	-	63	6	+6
Turkish	7	3	19	8	+5
Vietnamese	19	3	79	10	+7
Welsh	459	49	597	78	+29
Other	2,178	219	3,183	289	+70
Not stated	4,004	385	4,336	263	-122

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

In 2011, the ancestry of the Study Area was predominantly of Australian, English, Irish, Scottish German and Italian. This did not change in the 2016 census although there were noticeably less people within the Study Area with Australian and Serbian ancestry.

5.6 EMPLOYMENT

The Study Area had a level of employment that was better than both the LGA and State figures. At the 2016 Census, the level of unemployment in the Study Area was 5.7%, against 7.3% for the LGA and 6.3% for the State. Table 6 below reveals the employment status of people in the labour force within the Study Area in the context of the LGA.

TABLE 6: EMPLOYMENT STATUS (PERCENTAGES)

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	2011		2016		CHANGE
	STUDY AREA	LGA	STUDY AREA	LGA	2011 TO 2016 (STUDY AREA/LGA)
Full-time(a)	61.9	60.1	59.0	57.3	-2.9/-2.8
Part-time	27.4	29.1	31.1	30.6	+3.7/+1.5
Away from work	6.5	5.7	4.2	4.8	-2.3/-0.9
Unemployed	4.2	5.0	5.7	7.3	+1.5/+2.3

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

Within the labour force in the Study Area, there appears to have been a trend towards a decrease in full time employment and a corresponding increase in part time employment and unemployment. The Study Area, when compared to the wider LGA appears to have fared slightly better with respect to the rate of employment.

Perhaps in line with the change in levels of employment, most local industry sectors contracted, with the exceptions being the health care, defence and mining sectors. The top sectors of employment in the Study Area are shown in Table 7 below. Noticeably, school education ceased to be an important industry sector while in the Study Area (as opposed to the LGA), employment in Defence rose. This is because of the proximity of Thornton to the Williamstown RAAF base. Within the LGA, the mining sector expanded noticeably, correlating to the growth in the western parts of the LGA and mining activities within the Singleton and Muswellbrook LGAs.

TABLE 7: INDUSTRY SECTOR BY OCCUPATION (TOP RESPONSES AS PERCENTAGES)

	2011		2016		CHANGE
	STUDY AREA	LGA	STUDY AREA	LGA	2011 TO 2016 (STUDY AREA/ LGA)
Cafes, Restaurants, and Takeaway Food Services	4.7	4.6	3.3	2.9	-1.4/-1.7
School Education	3.8	4.7	-	-	- #
Supermarkets and Grocery Stores	3.6	2.9	2.9	2.8	-0.7/-0.1
Defence	3.2	-	3.5	-	+0.3/-
Hospitals	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.5	-0.2/+0.4
Coal Mining	-	5.3	3.5	6.2	-/+0.9

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

(NB: "-" = data not available. # indicates the sector declined to the extent that it did not rank within the top cohorts)

5.7 AGE PROFILE

The Census population of the LGA in 2016 was 77,305, living in 30,583 private dwellings with an average household size of 2.7. In comparison, the census population of the Study Area in 2016 was 8,062, living in 2,912 private dwellings with an average household size of 2.9. Refer to Table 8 below.

Overall, the age structure of the study area is relatively stable, however a slight increase in the over 55's age cohorts would appear to be trending between the two census periods. This is perhaps a reflection on the correlation between the age of the housing stock in the Study Area and the population who may be tending to age in place. Across the LGA, similar patterns are emerging with the distinction of an increase in the 20-24/ 25-29/ 30-34 year age cohorts as more new housing estates are being developed which are attracting young couples and families with primary-school aged children. This will only continue as more estates within Chisholm and to the north of Thornton are developed for primarily, detached 3-4 bedroom dwellings in conventional greenacre subdivisions.

TABLE 8: AGE PROFILE

	2011				2016				
Age	Study Area	%	LGA	%	Study Area	%	LGA	%	Change (Study Area)
Median age	34	--	36	--	35	--	36	--	+1
0-4 years	634	8.1	5,043	7.5	607	7.5	5,761	7.5	-0.5
5-9 years	624	7.9	4,838	7.2	644	8.0	5,869	7.6	+0.1
10-14 years	619	7.9	4,940	7.3	597	7.4	5,271	6.8	-0.5
15-19 years	615	7.8	4,839	7.2	570	7.1	4,943	6.4	-0.9
20-24 years	510	6.5	4,197	6.2	513	6.4	4,808	6.2	-0.1
25-29 years	492	6.3	4,258	6.3	530	6.6	5,248	6.8	-0.1
30-34 years	550	7.0	4,391	6.5	522	6.5	5,327	6.9	+0.5
35-39 years	613	7.8	4,764	7.1	553	6.9	5,006	6.5	-0.9
40-44 years	664	8.4	4,816	7.1	590	7.3	5,175	6.7	-1.1
45-49 years	609	7.7	4,575	6.8	586	7.3	5,129	6.6	-0.4
50-54 years	573	7.3	4,547	6.7	568	7.0	4,847	6.3	-0.3
55-59 years	458	5.8	4,040	6.0	552	6.8	4,687	6.1	+1
60-64 years	360	4.6	3,670	5.4	441	5.5	4,155	5.4	+0.9
65-69 years	200	2.5	2,691	4.0	341	4.2	3,786	4.9	+1.7
70-74 years	149	1.9	2,017	3.0	207	2.6	2,766	3.6	+0.7
75-79 years	99	1.3	1,589	2.4	140	1.7	1,922	2.5	+0.4
80-84 years	60	0.8	1,211	1.8	61	0.8	1,330	1.7	0
85 years and over	32	0.4	1,053	1.6	39	0.5	1,280	1.7	+0.1

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

5.8 MEDIAN WEEKLY INCOME

Median income is a representation of the labour force participation rates for both individuals and households. Details of the Median Household Incomes for both the Study Area and LGA are provided in Table 9 below.

TABLE 9: STUDY AREA MEDIAN WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	2011		2016		CHANGE
	STUDY AREA	LGA	STUDY AREA	LGA	2011 TO 2016 (STUDY AREA/LGA)
Personal (\$)	660	562	702	644	+42/+82
Family (\$)	1,738	1,555	1,768	1,664	+30/+109
Household (\$)	1,629	1,292	1,647	1,415	+18/+123
Average Household Size (people)	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.7	-1/0

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

Analysis of the median household income levels in the Study Area in both 2011 and 2016 compared to the LGA and the State show that this is noticeably higher in Thornton and has risen across the two census periods. This infers a greater ability to earn higher than average incomes.

5.9 DWELLING TYPE

Details of the type of dwelling for both the Study Area and LGA are provided in Table 10 below. The residential built form often reflects traditional growth patterns of broadacre subdivision over more compact urban forms and policy initiatives (or the lack thereof) to facilitate denser forms of housing around public transport nodes or employment centres.

TABLE 10: DWELLING TYPE

	2011		2016		CHANGE
	STUDY AREA	LGA	STUDY AREA	LGA	2011 TO 2016 (STUDY AREA/LGA)
Separate house	2449	21263	2585	23848	+136/+2585
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	110	1485	100	2435	-10/+950
Flat, unit or apartment	6	1187	15	607	+11/-580
Other dwelling	0	158	0	108	0/-50
Not stated	3	4	3	381	0/+377

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

Both Census periods demonstrate that detached housing is by far the dominant form of dwelling type across the Study Area and the LGA, with less diversity on offer as other types of dwellings actually decreased as a whole, during that time. A lack of diversity within the housing market could preclude access to people with different family structures or stage of life, force people out of the local housing market or create an artificial barrier for lone person or small family households. Alternatively, a homogenous housing product caters for a particular cohort, resulting in less variation in the demographic and consequently, targeted services and facilities.

The negative trends observed in most categories are interesting and possibly portray an inaccurate picture of the nature of the available housing stock. It is possible that the definition or interpretation of what constituted each type of dwelling (excluding separate houses) changed and therefore, significant contrary changes occurred in a numerical sense. Categorisation aside, what is clearly evident is that separate houses are the dominant form of housing, both in the Study Area and the LGA and that this form of accommodation simply is not available in the Study Area and declining as a whole across the LGA.

5.10 DWELLING STRUCTURE

Details of the structure – or number of bedrooms in each dwelling for both the Study Area and LGA are provided in Table 11 below. Not surprisingly, given the vernacular of detached dwellings within both the Study Area and LGA, the number of bedrooms reflects the type of housing that dominates the suburban landscape.

TABLE 11: DWELLING STRUCTURE

2011 THORNTON	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS								
	NONE/ BEDSITS	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6+ BR	NOT STATED	TOTAL
Separate house	0	8	63	956	1,229	156	19	17	2,448
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	0	12	69	18	6	0	0	6	111
Flat, unit or apartment:	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	6
Other dwelling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dwelling structure not stated	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Total	0	20	135	974	1,241	156	19	23	2,568
2016 THORNTON	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS								
	NONE/ BEDSITS	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6+ BR	NOT STATED	TOTAL
Separate house	0	10	62	970	1,298	185	37	28	2,585
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	0	5	78	21	0	0	0	4	100
Flat, unit or apartment:	0	6	4	0	0	0	0	3	15
Other dwelling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dwelling structure not stated	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	0	19	143	993	1,298	185	37	35	2,703

2011 LGA	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS								
	NONE/ BEDSITS	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6+ BR	NOT STATED	TOTAL
Separate house	16	142	1,545	10,029	7,953	1,150	177	251	21,263
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	3	164	792	416	53	11	0	45	1,484
Flat, unit or apartment:	12	375	517	204	20	3	0	54	1,185
Other dwelling	16	46	55	24	4	0	0	13	158
Dwelling structure not stated	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	6
Total	47	727	2,912	10,676	8,030	1,164	177	363	24,096
2016 LGA	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS								
	NONE/ BEDSITS	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6+ BR	NOT STATED	TOTAL
Separate house	16	158	1,377	10,023	10,164	1,443	245	421	23,848
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	7	282	1,205	792	79	3	3	65	2,435
Flat, unit or apartment:	6	253	271	32	12	0	3	27	607
Other dwelling	15	27	13	32	17	0	0	6	108
Dwelling structure not stated	0	46	176	26	18	0	3	100	381
Total	46	770	3,042	10,905	10,283	1,451	248	621	27,374

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

The data from both Census periods show that overwhelmingly, in both the Study Area and the wider LGA, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings make up the bulk of all dwellings. In the Study Area at both Census', just 0.7% of all dwellings had 1 bedroom or less, while 4 and 3 bedroom dwellings made up 50% and 39% of the total dwellings, respectively at the 2016 Census. There were no "other dwelling" types or dwellings that were bedsits or studios within the Study Area. Within the wider LGA, a similar trend is evident with predominantly 3 and 4 bedrooms dwellings overly represented within the data, however 2.9% of dwellings had 1 or less bedrooms in 2016, down from 3.2% in 2011.

The average household size within the Study Area fell between the census periods from 3.0 to 2.9, while in the LGA, it stayed stable at 2.7 persons. Likewise, the average number of people per bedroom across both the Study Area and LGA fell uniformly from 1.1 persons to 0.8 persons between Census periods. This, viewed in the context of overall population and dwelling stock increases suggests a slight disparity between dwelling size and the number of people residing within them. Notwithstanding this, housing stock remains heavily geared towards detached 3- and 4-bedroom dwellings with very little diversity in the housing provided.

5.11 HOUSING TENURE

Housing Tenure data also provides insights into an area's socio-economic status as well as the role it plays in the housing market. Table 12 below provides a breakdown of housing tenure within both the Study Area and the LGA.

TABLE 12: HOUSING TENURE

STUDY AREA	2011	2016
Owned outright	669	750
Owned with a mortgage (b)	1,410	1,340
Rented:		
• Real estate agent	238	318
• State or territory housing authority	48	36
• Person not in same household (c)	94	105
• Housing co-operative/ community/ church group	0	9
• Other landlord type (d)	67	98
• Landlord type not stated	7	6
<i>Total</i>	<i>454</i>	<i>565</i>
Other tenure type (e)	8	6
Tenure type not stated	28	40
Total	2,569	2,703

LGA	2011	2016
Owned outright	7,434	7,902
Owned with a mortgage (b)	9,576	10,479
Rented:		
• Real estate agent	3,562	5,137
• State or territory housing authority	1,386	1,349
• Person not in same household (c)	1,018	1,094
• Housing co-operative/ community/ church group	89	91
• Other landlord type (d)	312	318
• Landlord type not stated	87	87
<i>Total</i>	<i>6,454</i>	<i>8,073</i>
Other tenure type (e)	143	257
Tenure type not stated	489	666
Total	24,096	27,374

NOTE:

(b) Includes dwellings being purchased under a shared equity scheme.

(c) Comprises dwellings being rented from a parent/other relative or other person.

(d) Comprises dwellings being rented through a 'Residential park (includes caravan parks and marinas)', 'Employer - Government (includes Defence Housing Authority)' and 'Employer - other employer'.

(e) Includes dwellings being occupied under a life tenure scheme.

Source: ABS QuickStats and 2011, 2016 Census data

In the Study Area at the 2011 Census, 80.1% of all private dwellings were owned outright or owned with a mortgage and 17.6% were rented. By contrast, within the LGA, 70.6% were owned outright or with a mortgage and 26.8% were rented.

At the 2016 Census, within the Study Area, the percentage of dwellings owned outright or with a mortgage declined to 70.6%, with an increase in the proportion of rental properties to 20%. In terms of the wider LGA, the percentage of all properties either owned outright or with a mortgage declined to 67% while rentals rose to 29.5%.

In terms of change, there was a noticeable decline in home ownership and an increase in rental properties across the census period. Ownership within the Study Area remains quite high, but appears to be in decline, with a corresponding rise in the number of rental properties.

With respect to "housing stress" (the negative impacts for households with insufficient income to secure adequate housing), an analysis of the monthly housing loan repayments and rental payments of households in the Study Area compared to the LGA shows the following key elements emerging:

Mortgages:

- There was a slightly larger proportion of households paying moderately high mortgage repayments (\$1,800- \$2,399 per month or more) within both the Study

Area and the LGA, as well as a greater proportion of households with low mortgage repayments (less than \$1000 per month).

- The median monthly mortgage repayment in the Study Area changed from \$1,800 to \$1,733 while in the LGA it remained static at \$1,733 between the two Census periods.
- Some 6.6% of households are classified as being in Household Stress within the LGA, where 30% or more have mortgage repayments that are 30% or more of household income. Within the Study Area, some 8.5% of households are in Housing Stress.

Rents:

- Analysis of the weekly housing rental payments of households within the Study Area and the LGA shows that there was a greater proportion of households paying high rental payments (\$400 per week or more) and a smaller proportion of households with low rental payments (less than \$150 per week) in the LGA.
- The median weekly rent in the Study Area changed from \$265 to \$259 while in the LGA it changed from \$259 to \$320 between the two Census periods, indicating a greater demand for rental properties.
- Some 11.1% of rental households within the LGA are classified as being in Household Stress, where 30% or more have rent payments that are 30% or more of household income. Within the Study Area, some 5.4% of renting households were in Housing Stress.

All of these factors indicate an evident demand for affordable housing within both the LGA, as well as the Study Area, with opportunities for larger contributions towards the overall housing stock through newer estates as Chisholm and surrounding areas are built.

Homelessness:

According to data compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than 116,400 people were classified as being homeless within NSW on Census Night in 2016. Within the Hunter Valley, a total of 1747 people were considered homeless, representing a 12% rise in numbers across the two Census periods. Locally within the LGA, some 13.8% of the population experienced homelessness. There are a range of complex issues around homelessness, however a key factor is the availability of suitable housing.

Data published in 2016 by Shelter NSW (*Vote Home: Housing the People of Barton*, May 2016) indicates that the long wait-times by those seeking social housing (10+ years for

both 2 and 3 bedroom units) could be a contributing factor in the number of homelessness and high demand for social housing.

5.12 SEIFA SCORES

Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a dynamic suite of four indexes drawn by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from each Census as a summary measure to rank geographic areas nationally in terms of their relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. That is, relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage is generally defined in terms of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society. These indexes are:

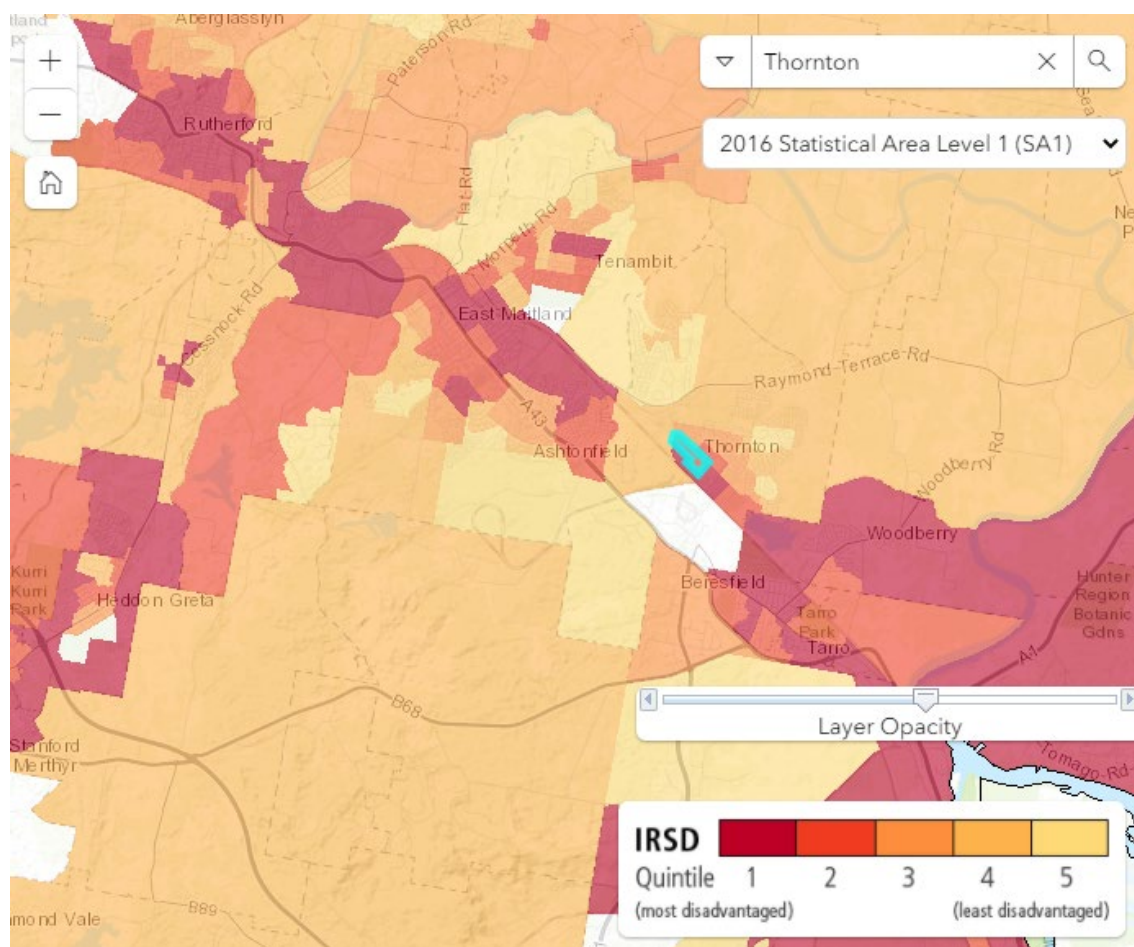
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage-Disadvantage (IRSD)
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSAD)
- Index of Education and Occupation (IEO)
- Index of Economic Resources (IER)

Each social index summarises a slightly different aspect of the socio-economic conditions in an area and is given a score which measures how relatively 'advantaged' or 'disadvantaged' that area is compared with other areas in Australia. SEIFA scores are also not absolute and do not capture all aspects of advantage or disadvantage. In the 2016 Census, a total of 16 measures were used to construct the Index of Disadvantage and 25 were used to construct the Advantage/ Disadvantage index. SEIFA Scores are also unsuitable as a measure of change over time in the level of advantage or disadvantage between areas as the components selected each Census can (and have) changed to reflect the dynamics of society.

Notwithstanding this, according to the 2016 SEIFA scores, the Maitland LGA had a SEIFA IRSD Score of 983 according to the ABS, or 56%. For Thornton as a suburb, it was 965, whereas for the Small Area SA1 1111819, it was 947. The National SEIFA IRSD Score in comparison was 1001.9 while the State score was 1001.0 (45%). A percentile of 56 indicates that approximately 56% of Australia's suburbs have a SEIFA index lower than this area (more disadvantaged), while 44% are higher.

When shown in a map, SEIFA Scores can identify spatial patterns, as demonstrated in Figure 16 below. Areas with lower SEIFA Scores are generally along the older settlement areas of Rutherford, Maitland, East Maitland, Metford and Beresfield.

FIGURE 16: SEIFA INDEX OF RELATIVE SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE (IRSD) ACROSS THE SURROUNDING AREA

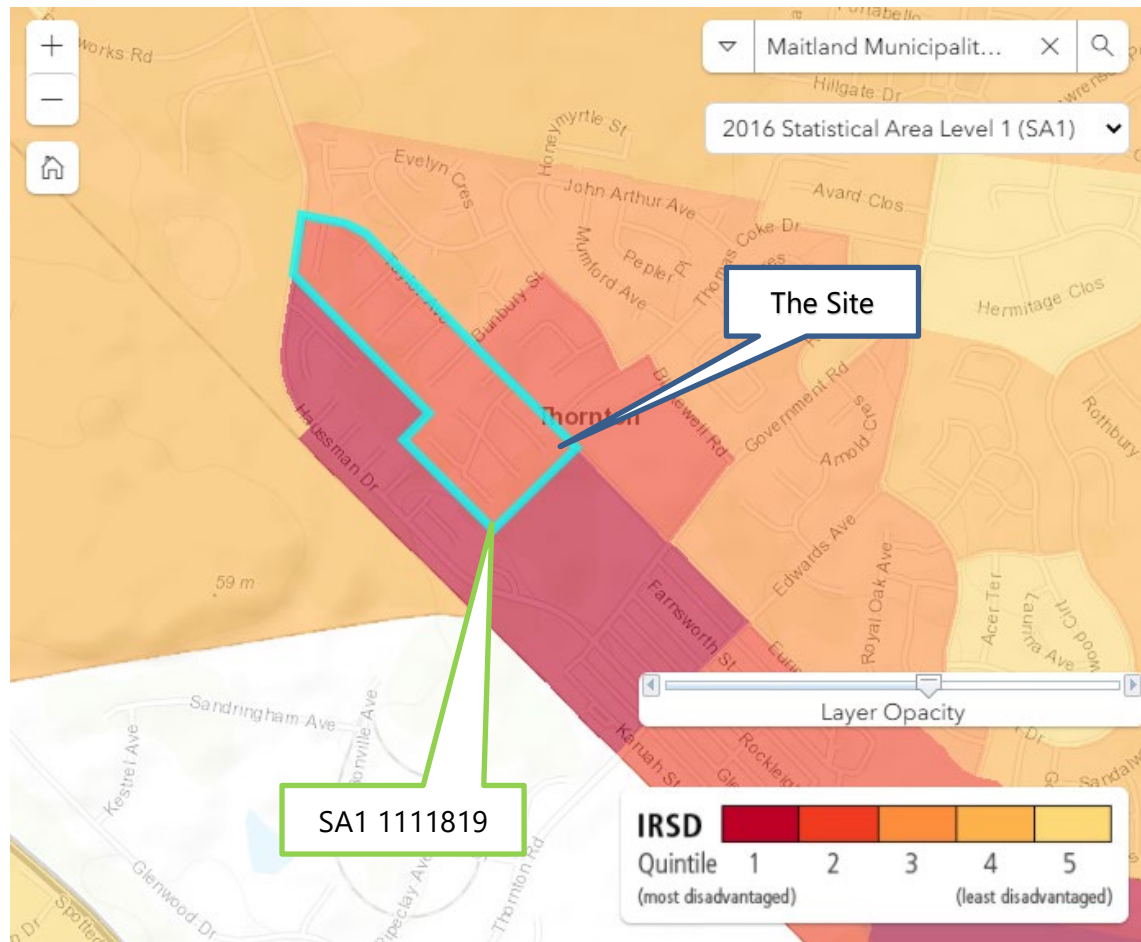


Source: ABS 2016 Census data

The low SEIFA Score also needs to consider some of the factors that contribute to the level of relative disadvantage. These generally relate to income, education, employment, occupation and housing variables with other factors relating to people, families or dwellings adopted. Specifically, factors relating to dwelling size and structure, low or high rents/ mortgages, vehicle ownership, family size/ structure and marital status make significant contributions to the relative level of advantage or disadvantage.

The low SEIFA score for the Study Area emphasises the need for both affordable housing and alternative forms of housing to the vernacular, which is identified in Section 7 below. It also emphasises the need for housing located in close proximity to a range of commercial, health and community services, as well as social services, which can have positive social outcomes.

FIGURE 17: SEIFA INDEX OF RELATIVE SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE (IRSD) – THE SITE, SA1 AND STUDY AREA



Source: <https://atlas.id.com.au/georges-river/maps/socio-economic-disadvantage>

6 EXISTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This section considers the provision and availability of various existing community facilities, open space and other relevant facilities and services in the area surrounding the Study Area, that could address some of the needs of the future residents of the Site.

6.1 CHILDCARE FACILITIES

Children and young people are not allowed to reside in a Boarding House. Accordingly, the proposal will not have any implications in terms of accommodating additional childcare numbers as a result of additional people living within the development.

6.2 SCHOOLS

Likewise, although the Site immediately adjoins Thornton Public School, the proposal will not have any implications in terms of accommodating additional educational facilities or resources as a result of additional people living within the development.

6.3 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community services as well as facilities operated by Maitland City Council in closest proximity to the Site include:

- Thornton Library.
- Beresfield and District Community Care Inc.
- Midsupport.
- Newlake Health Services.
- Harry Meyn Foundation.
- Songbird.

Most services are located either in and around the Greenhills Shopping Centre some 6km to the northwest or the Maitland CBD.

6.4 ALLIED HEALTH AND WELFARE

Other allied health and welfare services within the local area include the following:

- Maitland Private Hospital
- Thornton Chiropractic and Natural Remedies
- Providence Medical Centre
- Marjorie Carpenter Psychologist

- Thornton Physiotherapy
- Access EAP Psychology
- Dr Alan Lightbody
- Thornton Dental

6.5 RELIGION

Religious sites located in the surrounding locality of the Site include:

- Thornton Church of Christ
- The Hub Church
- St Michael's Anglican Church
- St Mary and St George Church

6.6 CLUBS AND SPORTING ASSOCIATIONS

Also located nearby the site are a number of clubs, often associated with sporting facilities and associations, including:

- Thornton Netball Centre
- Wellfit Personal Training
- Justin Norris Swim Academy
- The Empire Dance Company
- Start to Finish Fitness
- Bounce Tennis Academy
- Thornton Cricket Club
- Thornton Junior Football Club

6.7 MAJOR OPEN SPACES AND PARKS

The Site is in close proximity to a number of parks and open spaces containing both active and passive facilities, walking paths and playgrounds, with key facilities including Thornton Park and Tennis Centre, located approximately 330m to the east. The Somerset Sports Fields are located some 1.5km to the east, while the A & D Lawrence Oval is located approximately 900m to the north along Thomas Coke Drive.

6.8 TRANSPORT

The nearest bus stops are located approximately 30m to the southeast of the pedestrian crossing over Taylor Avenue and approximately 70m to the north in Thomas Coke Drive near the intersection with Taylor Avenue. Bus services include:

- 182 – Rutherford to Thornton to Hurstville via Maitland/ East Maitland/ Ashtonfield
- 189 – Stockland Green Hills to Thornton via Chisholm

The 182 service also connects with Thornton, Victoria Street, Maitland and Telarah Train Stations. Thornton Station, located approximately 800m to the south is the closest train station to the Site. Passengers can use the Hunter Line to access Newcastle and Hamilton Stations and from there access services to Sydney and the Central Coast.

6.9 COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Although the Client has advised that the target market for the New Generation Boarding House is for older people who are no longer engaged in the workforce, consideration has been given to a scenario where a working age population occupied the development. The Site is located within close proximity to key local employment areas in Beresfield and Thornton Industrial estates. It also has easy access to public transport (bus and rail), which provides access to Maitland town centre and the Greenhills shopping centre as well as the public and private hospitals. The Hunter Railway Line also provides access to Newcastle, the Central Coast and Sydney as well as Muswellbrook and Singleton.

The proposal also offers an alternative form of accommodation for junior medical staff at the Mater, John Hunter and Maitland Hospitals to the traditional fixed-period rental accommodation. Junior doctors undertake regular rotations through different areas of medicine and this can often mean rotating through the local public hospitals or moving to other hospitals within the State. A facility such as this provides flexible short-term accommodation without the complications of a fixed-term rental apartment, should they even be available. As demonstrated in the tables above, the predominance of detached dwellings means that there are very few alternatives that suit people in these circumstances.

In light of the proximity to significant employment generators and good access to public transport links, the proposal, if occupied by working-age people, will provide affordable accommodation for a locally-employed workforce, promoting economic growth and prosperity for residents and the local economy.

7 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The key impacts of the proposed development, alternatives and mitigation measures are discussed below.

7.1 STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

There are a number of strategies in place that the proposed development is consistent with, both at a State and local level. These documents, identified in Section 4 of this report, contain a number of themes, directions, priorities and actions aimed at accelerating infrastructure and housing supply, improving housing choice, providing an acceptable level of residential amenity and associated support services to support the different forms of residential accommodation. A detailed assessment of the proposal against these strategic planning documents is contained in Appendix A.

Overwhelmingly, the proposal is consistent with the direction of the multiple layers of strategic planning controls that apply to the Maitland Local Government Area. There is a demonstrated need for the proposal and alternative forms of accommodation to the vernacular detached 3-4 bedroom dwelling as the population of the Study Area show signs of aging beyond the median age of the area and LGA.

7.2 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Summary: Potential for adverse short-term impacts but manageable with conventional controls.

Construction of the proposed development would be expected to create some short-term impacts, such as noise, dust and vibration, heavy vehicle movements and possibly minor traffic delays. The constraints of the Site and surrounding area are such that careful management will be needed to prevent inconvenience to surrounding residents and businesses, harm to the environment, congestion or cause environmental stress levels to rise.

To this end, a Construction Management Plan (CMP), addressing both environmental and traffic issues will need to be prepared and reviewed by the Consent Authority, as well as include engagement with local stakeholders. The CMP will also need to consider the needs of other stakeholders, such as the adjacent school.

Appropriate conditions can be included in any subsequent development consent for the development.

7.3 OPERATIONAL/ ON-GOING NOISE

Summary: Potential for adverse short-term impacts but manageable with conventional controls.

As noted above, it is anticipated that the demolition and construction phases of the development over the expected timeline will have the potential for acoustic impacts. The EPA hours of operation and standards will be followed to ensure noise pollution is minimal and management plans can be prepared and implemented. Council is also expected to impose its standard conditions of consent regarding construction noise on any approval.

In an operational sense, the Site is immediately adjacent to a town centre and adjacent to main road and rail corridors and therefore any on-going noise-related impacts will be within the limits anticipated for such a development. These too can be managed by way of the Plan of Management and standard conditions of approval. It is also observed that there is a preconceived notion that boarding houses are a source of noise and antisocial activities. Given the target market of older people, this is not anticipated to be beyond the scope of normal management practices.

The acoustic assessment (submitted under separate cover) provides a more comprehensive analysis of acoustic impacts, however any impacts can be considered reasonable within the context of the development.

7.4 CONTAMINATED LAND AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

Any contamination or hazardous materials identified on the Site will require removal in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards and EPA Guidelines. Removal of contaminated land and/ or hazardous materials will result in a safer, cleaner environment, as well as fewer opportunities for exposure to the community. Given the on-going residential use of the premises, it is unlikely that major contaminants likely to pose a serious risk of harm to the environment are present on the Site.

7.5 HOUSING

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The development will provide the first and only example of this kind of accommodation outside of Central Maitland and in particular, within Thornton. The development will improve the diversity of housing in the area, by expanding the mix of housing types and subsequently improving social diversity. The Census data demonstrates that as the population of the Study Area ages and the household size declines, the larger detached

dwellings become increasingly unsuitable for older people. The desire to age in place in smaller dwelling sizes where community ties are strongest, conflicts with the significant lack of anything but 3-4 bedroom detached dwellings. The proposal provides a mechanism that addresses these issues in part by providing an alternative to the vernacular.

It is also well-documented that housing stress is a significant concern, particularly for lower income households and in regional areas. An alternative form of accommodation contributes to alleviating a stressed housing and rental market as seen through the moderately high number of residents in the LGA and the Study Area currently renting, as observed through ABS data trends.

The Council of Australian Governments outlined the ability of increasing housing supply to put downward pressure on housing prices under the Housing Supply and Affordability Report in August 2012. The provision of an alternative form of residential accommodation will support efforts to improve housing affordability, given the growth rate of the Thornton and Chisholm areas.

Considering the construction of the SEIFA IRSD measures, it would be reasonable to anticipate that additional boarding rooms that would primarily accommodate singles and couples in the young workforce and empty nesters, which demonstrated the greatest increase in numbers in the Study Area during the last two Census periods (Refer to Table 7). The small household size coupled with life stage and predominate type of dwelling would ideally benefit older people, who would like to age in place but cannot afford to maintain a large detached dwelling.

Census data and the Centre for Affordable Housing cite an increase in three and four bedroom dwelling stock in the LGA, combined with an increase in couple and single person households, increase in the number of people in private rental, and the high volume of people on the Commonwealth Rental Scheme leading to a significant gap between supply and demand for affordable housing. The Maitland LGA has approximately 91% of very low income rental households in housing stress than the average for the Rest of NSW (87%), while the LGA (at 59%) is the only Hunter LGA with a higher proportion of low income households in rental stress than the Rest of NSW average (54%).

The proposal will contribute to the alleviation of a stressed housing market by providing a form of housing that simply is not available. The Council of Australian Governments outlined the ability of increasing housing supply to put downward pressure on housing prices under the Housing Supply and Affordability Report in August 2012. The provision of an additional 31 boarding rooms will support efforts to

improve housing affordability, given the growth rate of the Study Area. In addition, the form of accommodation proposed is rarely found in the LGA and non-existent outside Central Maitland.

7.6 CRIME AND SAFETY

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The safety and security of the area is satisfactory, with no major venues likely to attract unruly behaviour. The nature of the proposal is in keeping with the adjoining areas and will not have any adverse impacts on the residents. The proposal will however provide greater opportunities for passive surveillance from boarding rooms that overlook the street and communal spaces, such as the pedestrian walkway along the eastern boundary.

The design of the development also incorporates fundamental Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Measures such as opportunities for passive surveillance, defined public and private spaces, territorialism, legible entry points and ease of navigation through the Site, and provision of a public domain interface that provides opportunities for social interaction and a sense of connection, have been embodied in the design. Additionally, the applicant proposes to install additional security measures such as key-card access, motion-sensitive lighting and CCTV.

A detailed CPTED assessment has also been provided under separate cover. This assessment provides an analysis of crime statistics of various types of offences within the LGA as a whole and Thornton, utilising the NSW Crime Tool and statistics from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR). This assessment demonstrates that the safety and security of the development proposes no significant adverse impact on social cohesion or integration.

7.7 COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES/ SERVICES

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The dominant and emerging household size and life stage, coupled with access to transport, services and facilities indicate the proposal would be most suited to the young workforce and empty nester cohorts. Bearing this in mind, the scale of the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the local services and facilities in the Study Area and the wider community in general. The locality maintains good access to education, medical, religious sites, transport and community services, providing good amenity for incoming residents.

The Site is also within close proximity to the Thornton recreation area, which is the closest local parks for active and passive recreational activities and social interaction with other residents.

Developer contributions levied across the future residential development will also be available to Council to provide or augment community facilities to meet anticipated demands.

7.8 CULTURAL VALUES/ BELIEFS

Summary: Neutral impacts.

The development does not comprise any elements which may detract from the locality's cultural values or beliefs of the existing or future populations. The development is not located on any key European heritage or Indigenous sites and the proposal will remain consistent with the cultural principles of the community. The area maintains a wide range of cultural and religious services and facilities, as discussed in Section 5 of this report above.

7.9 COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND CONNECTEDNESS

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The proposal will not have an adverse impact on community identity, cohesion or connectedness. If anything, any impacts will be positive. The development concept provides spaces (including landscaped areas and the paved driveway) that would allow people living on the Site to interact and connect with each other in a casual manner, to identify with each other as neighbours and develop relationships and community bonds. People on the Site will interact with each other by taking out or collecting their bins and the mail, by walking to the local park, shops or library and greeting each other, or through socialising in the communal areas and open space facilities.

The private resident communal areas will provide facilities that will allow for a range of social settings and experiences. A number of communal spaces are proposed that cater for different settings and residents and activities.

There is no expectation that the proposed development or boarders would create friction within the community, once built. The Thornton community displays diversity across cultural backgrounds, age and income levels, household types, occupation and so on. It is likely that a portion of incoming residents will move from nearby areas and as such who have a desire to age in place and would have similar broad characteristics to residents living elsewhere within the LGA or surrounding areas.

The proposed development will assist in evolving the community identity of the Study Area, as a safe, integrated and friendly neighbourhood. Given that there are no other New Generation Boarding Houses (or any other type of boarding house) within Thornton, it is unlikely that “pockets” of similar accommodation forms will occur.

7.10 HUMAN HEALTH

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

In terms of whether the proposal will have an impact on human health, the answer is yes, however it will be a positive impact. The Site's noise, air quality and safety aspects will not comprise any detrimental concerns to the community. Appropriate management strategies can be implemented to address these matters during the demolition and construction phases, which will be relatively temporary in the wider context.

The development provides opportunities for both passive and active recreation (in private open spaces), with landscaped areas and communal spaces where people can interact with one another. The proposal will provide ready access to the established pedestrian network and, given the proximity to transport and facilities, promote walking as the preferred mode of transport. In terms of overall amenity, the proposal will satisfy the design requirements contained in the applicable planning controls to deliver a high-quality human-scaled development. This will ensure the future occupants have adequate access to natural light, ventilation and privacy, resulting in a high level of internal amenity.

In terms of the public domain, both the overall design and ground level interface with the building will have a positive effect and will provide a suitable level of amenity and visual interest.

The Site is also well connected to health and recreation facilities as well as and public open space areas to promote a variety of physical recreation, health and wellbeing. Access to public transport and employment opportunities as well as facilities to promote physically active modes of transport will not be adversely impacted.

7.11 ACTIVE TRANSPORT OPPORTUNITIES

In terms of active transport opportunities and networks, the existing pedestrian network in the vicinity of the Site enjoys a good level of overall amenity. The Site also provides direct pedestrian access to the Thornton Shopping Centre on the opposite side of Taylor Avenue.

In terms of cycling infrastructure, there are limited on-road cycling facilities in the local area that combine to link the site with local destinations and no known formal end of trip facilities within the nearby public facilities.

The proposal will provide high-quality and safe pedestrian permeability with a focus on the public domain fronting Taylor Avenue, Burnham Place and the adjoining pedestrian network.

7.12 SOCIAL EQUITY

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The proposal will not prevent access to housing or employment for all members of society, regardless of life-stage, or level of ability, providing a much-needed form of accommodation that is non-existent within Thornton and represents a very small percentage of the overall housing stock in the LGA (Refer to Section 5 of this report). Overall, the development has no significant impact on the social equity of the surrounding area.

7.13 THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSAL

Summary: Overall positive impacts.

The fact that there is a State Environmental Planning Policy that aims specifically to facilitate a range of affordable housing options makes it perfectly clear that there is a need for such forms of housing. New Generation Boarding Houses provide an alternative form of accommodation for a specific (and in this case, unrepresented) portion of the market. This segment of the population is no less deserving of a safe, well maintained and high quality place to live than any other segment.

The low SEIFA Score for both the LGA and the Study Area (refer to Section 4.7 above) and emerging demographic trends emphasises the need for affordable housing, both within the LGA and the Study Area. This is further supported by information from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Centre for Affordable Housing, and the research conducted by the University of NSW's City Futures Research Centre for Shelter NSW (2019), which indicates the following:

- There were only 1043 registered boarding houses in the State as at August 2018, providing accommodation for 16,196 residents, or, excluding student -only boarding houses, 940 general boarding houses containing 12,400 residents.
- More than one quarter of all boarding houses are located in just 1 LGA – the City of Sydney, with the top 10 LGAs accommodating some 73% of all boarding houses. Only two regional areas (the City of Newcastle and Wollongong City Councils) are within the top ten LGAs.
- Maitland City Council has only two registered boarding houses currently in operation, both of which are in Central Maitland (Marli Accommodation Services P/L at 205 High Street Maitland and Centennial House at 9 Bourke Street Maitland).
- Older people aged 60 years and over living in boarding houses comprise some 11% of all residents. As shown in Table 8, people aged 60 years and over in the

Study Area comprised 15.3% of the population. Almost all age groups in this cohort experienced increased growth, while many other younger cohorts generally decreased in size.

- At the same time, the number of predominantly 3 and 4 bedrooms dwellings far outweighed the number of smaller dwellings or other forms of accommodation with a significant loss of smaller dwelling types (refer to Table 10).
- The occupation of the workforce of the Study Area is trending towards key workers in accommodation/ food services and health care/ social assistance, who are reliant on living in close proximity to employment opportunities and transport options, having regard to the income profile of the Study Area and wider LGA.
- The LGA has experienced an increase in the number of low-income households and the number of low-income renters between 2011 and 2016.
- The LGA has experienced a significant loss of affordable housing between 2011 and 2016 with high proportions of lower income private rental households in housing stress.
- The need for well-planned and designed boarding house accommodation within the LGA has been recognised and reaffirmed in recent decisions by the NSW Land and Environment Court, including:
 - Cosmic Endeavour Pty Ltd v Maitland City Council [2020] NSWLEC 1206.
 - Church Block Pty Ltd v Maitland City Council [2020] NSWLEC 1479.

7.14 ALTERNATIVES

Several alternatives exist to the proposal which have been analysed as part of this assessment. Not all alternatives will be desirable to all parties when considered in the context of market factors, practicality, timelines, economic viability or in a strategic sense. They include:

- No development.
- Redevelopment in an alternate or lesser format.
- Redevelopment in the form of a three storey residential flat building.

BASE CASE

The Base Case scenario envisages the proposal being built as proposed.

ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO DEVELOPMENT

This Base Case scenario envisages that the proposal does not take place and the properties continue to be tenanted or are sold and remain occupied as single dwellings. Thornton will continue to have no New Generation Boarding Houses and housing diversity will maintain the status quo in a narrow vernacular.

ALTERNATIVE 2 – REDEVELOPMENT WITH AN ALTERNATE/ LESSER RESIDENTIAL FORMAT.

- The Site is redeveloped by replacing the existing structures with two new detached dwellings, a dual occupancy development or townhouses.

ALTERNATIVE 3 – REDEVELOPMENT WITH A 3 STOREY RESIDENTIAL FLAT BUILDING

- The Site is redeveloped through the construction of a three storey residential flat building in accordance with the Apartment Design Guide and SEPP 65.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF ALTERNATIVES 1 AND 2 VERSUS BASE CASE

Should a smaller development be put forward, it would:

- Assist Council achieve its residential targets under the LSPS, however this would be less than optimal.
- Add some volume and variety to the local housing mix, with only a few affordable residential options.
- Provide residential development in a town centre location, with existing public transport, schools, sportsgrounds and other infrastructure, thereby slightly reducing the requirement for new greenfields infrastructure and services.
- Some additional funds through development levies and taxes to assist funding existing infrastructure upgrades, required regardless of whether the development proceeds.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF ALTERNATIVE 3 VERSUS BASE CASE

Should a residential flat building be put forward and built, it would:

- Assist Council achieve its residential targets under the LSPS, however this would be less than optimal.
- Add some volume and variety to the local housing mix, with the ability to provide affordable units if the proposal were also put forward under the ARH SEPP.
- Provide residential development in a town centre location, with existing public transport, schools, sportsgrounds and other infrastructure, thereby slightly reducing the requirement for new greenfields infrastructure and services.
- Provide a range of dwelling sizes to cater for the demand for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments – types that are not well represented in the housing stock across the Study Area or wider suburb.

- Provide additional funds through development levies and taxes to assist funding existing infrastructure upgrades, required regardless of whether the development proceeds.

None of the alternative scenarios however provide the type or size of accommodation offered in the subject proposal and therefore, the latent demand will remain unmet.

POTENTIAL COSTS OF ALTERNATIVES VERSUS BASE CASE

In a social context, the alternatives represent a feasible if less than optimal outcome and an “easy way out” scenario, with nothing changing in the context of housing options. There would be no additional accommodation or people added to the Study Area and the ability for people to age in place in more suitable alternatives to a large, detached dwelling, will remain diminished.

The alternative scenarios will however mean that redevelopment occurs. The social impacts could manifest through a range of possible amenity impacts on adjoining properties, however, as mentioned previously, these can be appropriately managed. Generally, these would include:

- Short term increases in heavy vehicle traffic during the construction phase.
- Short term, adverse impacts on environmental amenity during the construction process (i.e. dust, noise, vibration).
- Short term inconvenience to pedestrians and road users with the closure of roads and footpaths for various construction activities.
- A small influx of people in the longer term which cause additional stress on the road and public transport networks if planned upgrades do not occur.

The last point however is not unique to the Site and will be dependent on a variety of factors, most notably operational and capital expenditure budgets of the relevant State Agencies and other funding imperatives. These factors are beyond the control of either the applicant or Council and are at best unpredictable.

7.15 MITIGATION MEASURES

The nature of the proposal, its location and context mean that mitigation measures are minimal and would consist of the following:

- Activities involved in the demolition and remediation of the Site should be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards, approved demolition and construction, as approved by Council and in accordance with the Protection of the Environment Operations Act and the NSW EPA's Industrial Noise Policy;

- A Traffic Management Plan dealing with traffic measures required throughout all demolition and construction stages, taking into account the necessary works across the intended timeline of the project. The Traffic Management Plan should also accommodate the needs of pedestrians moving through the public domain and across the adjoining properties.
- All temporary traffic management activities should be undertaken in accordance with the specific conditions of approval from Council as part of the development assessment process.
- Standard construction environmental management practices, communication with neighbours about the timing and extent of inconvenience and a 'hotline' to answer questions and report concerns are general measures used to mitigate construction impacts.
- A detailed Construction Management Plan should include the programming of construction activities.
- A detailed Communications Plan should be developed to enable regular communication and engagement with surrounding owners and occupiers, as well as people moving through the area. The Communications Plan should detail the measures to be undertaken to communicate up-coming works, service disruption, access changes and the like, as well as a strategy for responding to requests for information and complaints from the general public.

Given that these mitigation measures are either already standard conditions or can be drafted as specific conditions of development consent that could be imposed by Council, a separate Social Impact Management Plan is not proposed. The preparation of such a Plan would merely duplicate the conditions that would ordinarily be imposed on a development consent. The recommended management plans would also need to be prepared by experienced practitioners within their respective fields of expertise and be developed at a later point in time as the detailed design, construction programme and costings have been undertaken.

7.16 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL BENEFITS

Having regard to the above assessment, the proposal provides significant opportunities for positive impacts in a social context. These are summarised as follows:

- The development will facilitate compliance with or achievement of a significant number of strategic planning outcomes identified in the planning framework responsible for managing growth and creating better urban spaces across State and LGA.
- The removal of any hazardous materials or contamination (if encountered) to provide for a safer, cleaner environment and better public health outcomes.

- Greater levels of social cohesion through the delivery of an alternative to the vernacular to provide greater diversity in residential accommodation. This will lead to greater social and demographic diversity across the precinct and LGA, making for richer and stronger communities.
- An improved level of affordability through additional types of residential accommodation that are perhaps more suited to the underlying demographic trends and emerging structure of the surrounding area.
- A safer community with more people in the precinct, activating public spaces and providing greater levels of passive surveillance.
- A stronger and more connected community with residents and visitors able to interact and engage with one another in the private open space areas, private (resident) communal open space areas and public spaces. The general public and boarders will also be able to engage with one another in the public spaces, which include the building entrance zones, open lawn areas and along the existing pedestrian pathway to the eastern boundary.
- Additional accommodation of a type that just does not exist in an area, which is in close proximity to a wide range of retail/ commercial services, social, cultural, educational, recreational and medical facilities and support services with good access to a range of private, public and active transport options.
- Additional spaces for social interaction; and improved social resilience.

8 CONCLUSION

The proposal (as amended) is anticipated to impact on the surrounding area in terms of its social context; however these impacts are both anticipated and will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the social fabric of the surrounding area. Within several contexts these outcomes are positive, actively contributing to the overall wellbeing of the residents within the Study Area and the wider community. The development provides a range of positive social benefits, such as an increased local supply and form of housing, improved social cohesion within the community and contributing to the local economy and employment.

The location of the Site supports the provision of residential accommodation. There is sufficient access to transport, essential services and employment, being located within close proximity to the Thornton town centre and public transport nodes. In regard to the above analysis there is evidence of stress within the Thornton rental market, with residents either renting or with a mortgage. At present, the demand for boarding house accommodation is not being met as there are simply no other alternatives.

The proposal offers an alternative to the detached dwelling narrative which dominates the local area, without adversely impacting on the any groups of people This, in conjunction with good access to supporting facilities and services, will make a positive contribution towards the social fabric and diversity of Thornton, without impacting on the supply of conventional forms of accommodation.

From an economic and employment perspective the development is favourable. There will be short term employment for local trade businesses during the construction phase. The proposal will also increase the population, specifically of older people, resulting in growth for local business and commercial premises, particularly the retail premises located within the immediate area of the development Site.

While there is always some potential for any new development to adversely impact the social fabric of an area and supporting social infrastructure, the proposal does not present in a way that any impacts will be significant or cannot be adequately mitigated. The proposal is not of a scale, nature or design that the available health, education, employment and other social support infrastructure and facilities would be unable to cope or suffer a reduced level of service as a direct consequence of this development. Overall, the proposal will provide opportunities to have a positive impact on the social fabric of Thornton and the immediate surrounding area.

9 REFERENCES

This SIA has been prepared having regard to a number of reference materials and internet resources. These documents and websites are listed below:

Australian Bureau of Statistics Data, 2011 and 2016 Census including custom tables and QuickStats

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) – Thornton (NSW) (SSC12274) 2011 Basic Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) – Maitland (C) (LGA15050) 2011 Basic Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) – Maitland (C) (LGA15050) 2011 Expanded Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) – Maitland (LGA15050) 2012 General Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) – Maitland (C) (LGA) 2011 Expanded Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) – Thornton (NSW) (SSC12274) 2011 Basic Community Profile

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) – Thornton (NSW) (SSC13851) 2016 Basic Community Profile

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APPENDIX A – STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSESSMENT

TABLE 1: THE HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN 2036

GOAL/ DIRECTION/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Goal 1 – The leading regional economy in Australia	
Direction 1 – Grow Greater Newcastle as Australia’s next metropolitan city	
<p><i>Action 1.1 Prepare a Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan, underpinned by the following principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Integrate transport and land use planning to enhance public transport connectivity and improve employment accessibility. ➤ Focus development to create compact communities that allow 95 per cent of people to live within 30 minutes of a strategic centre. ➤ Protect the environment and respond to climate change impacts 	<p>The proposal is located with easy access to bus and rail transport, is close to shops and a range of services and employment nodes. The proposal also has immediate access to the local pedestrian network. It supports the creation of a compact community by providing development within the permitted height and density parameters expressed under the Maitland LEP and DCP.</p>
Goal 3 – Thriving communities	
Direction 17 – Create healthy built environments through good design.	
<p><i>Action 17.1 - Develop best-practice guidelines for planning, designing and developing healthy built environments.</i></p>	<p>The proposal satisfies the applicable design guidelines expressed in the ARHSEPP and the Maitland LEP and DCP.</p>
<p><i>Action 17.3 - Enhance the quality of neighbourhoods by integrating recreational walking and cycling networks into the design of new</i></p>	<p>The proposal also has immediate access to the local pedestrian network. It is located within easy walking distance of public transport networks, community and recreational activities, as well as the</p>

GOAL/ DIRECTION/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<i>communities to encourage physical activity.</i>	Thornton Shopping Centre to encourage residents walking as opposed to relying on private cars.

Direction 20 – Revitalise existing communities

<i>Action 20.1 - Accelerate urban revitalisation by directing social infrastructure where there is growth.</i>	The proposal is located within an area that has ready access to existing social support services, medical facilities, places of worship and other community resources.
<i>Action 20.3 - Enhance the amenity and attractiveness of existing places.</i>	The proposal will provide for a good level of residential amenity, privacy and visual interest.

Goal 4 – Greater Housing Choice and jobs

Direction 21 – Create a compact settlement

<i>Action 21.1 - Promote development that respects the landscape attributes and the character of the metropolitan areas, towns and villages.</i>	The proposal is compatible with the established character and in line with the desired future character for the locality and the R1 General Residential zone. The provision of development with a slightly higher density and built form is to be anticipated immediately adjoining a town centre.
<i>Action 21.1 - Focus development to create compact settlements in locations with established services and infrastructure, including the Maitland Corridor growth area; Newcastle – Lake Macquarie Western Corridor growth area; the emerging growth area around Cooranbong, Morisset and Wyee; and in</i>	As noted above, the proposal is located with easy access to bus and rail transport, is close to shops and a range of services and employment nodes. The proposal also has immediate access to the local pedestrian network. It supports the creation of a compact community by

GOAL/ DIRECTION/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<i>existing towns and villages and sites identified in an endorsed regional or local strategy.</i>	providing development within the permitted height and density parameters expressed under the Maitland LEP and DCP. The proposal consistent with the specific Key Policy Objective of the Activity Centres and Employment Clusters Strategy to <i>"Encourage the development of higher density residential dwellings in and around the centre to offer a range of housing size and types within a highly accessible location."</i>
<i>Action 21.3 - Identify opportunities for urban redevelopment or renewal in urban locations with access to public transport and services in the Greater Newcastle metropolitan area and where there may no longer be a need for employment land.</i>	The proposal is located where it will be in close proximity to bus and rail public transport options.
<i>Action 21.4 - Create a well-planned, functional and compact settlement pattern that responds to settlement planning principles and does not encroach on sensitive land uses, including land subject to hazards, on drinking water catchments or on areas with high environmental values.</i>	The Site is not constrained by any identified hazard, is not on land that is identified as having any particular environmental values and will not encroach on sensitive landuses.
<i>Action 21.5 - Promote small-scale renewal in existing urban areas, in consultation with the community and industry to ensure that this occurs in the right locations.</i>	The proposal is of a relatively modest scale of a size that satisfies the density and height controls contained within the Maitland LEP and DCP. Community engagement will be undertaken via the normal

GOAL/ DIRECTION/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
	statutory processes associated with the development application.
<i>Action 21.6 - Provide greater housing choice by delivering diverse housing, lot types and sizes, including small-lot housing in infill and greenfield locations.</i>	<p>The proposal represents an alternative to the vernacular within both the Study Area and the wider area. The Maitland LGA only has two registered and operational boarding houses with another approved, but not yet operational – all in Central Maitland.</p> <p>The 2016 census data shows that within the Study Area, 95.6% of the housing stock comprised of detached dwellings, 3.7% were townhouses and 0.06% were apartments. The proposal will assist to provide a small, but much-needed diversity in the available housing forms.</p>
<i>Action 21.7 - Promote new housing opportunities in urban areas to maximise the use of existing infrastructure.</i>	The location of the proposal within an existing urban area and immediately adjacent to a designated town centre fulfills this intended outcome.

Goal 3 – The leading regional economy in Australia

Direction 22 – Promote Housing Diversity

<i>Action 22.1 - Respond to the demand for housing and services for weekend visitors, students, seasonal workers, the ageing community and resource industry personnel.</i>	New Generation Boarding Houses provide a viable alternative for key workers, seasonal workers, students and older people. The proposal is not inconsistent with this outcome.
<i>Action 22.2 - Encourage housing diversity, including studios and one and</i>	As demonstrated in the demographic profile section of this assessment, the

GOAL/ DIRECTION/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<i>two-bedroom dwellings, to match forecast changes in household sizes.</i>	Study Area (and in fact the entire LGA) has a distinct lack of diversity in the built forms and dwelling size available. There is a clear lack of accommodation options that cater for one and two people households, to which the proposal can contribute towards redressing.
<i>Action 22.3 - Develop local housing strategies to respond to housing needs, including social and affordable housing, and support initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing.</i>	Council already has in place a range of strategies, initiatives and actions aimed at responding to housing needs. However, recent debate within Council effectively seeking to prohibit boarding houses is concerning and would appear to be in contradiction to the long-term strategies and Government Priorities to increase the supply of alternative and affordable housing options.

TABLE 2: THE GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2036

OUTCOME/ STRATEGY/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Outcome 3: Deliver housing close to jobs and services	
Strategy 16 - Prioritise the delivery of infill housing opportunities within existing urban areas	
<i>Action 16.1 - Greater Newcastle councils will focus new housing in existing urban areas, particularly within strategic centres and along urban renewal corridors.</i>	The proposal is within an existing urban area and a designated town centre.
Strategy 17 - Unlock housing supply through infrastructure coordination and delivery	
<i>Action 17.1 - The Department of Planning and Environment, through the Urban Development Program, will coordinate the delivery of state infrastructure to support development in housing release areas, urban renewal corridors and strategic centres.</i>	The augmentation of utility services can be coordinated through the service providers in accordance with their requirements and Council's standard conditions of consent.
Outcome 4: Improve connections to jobs, services and recreation	
Strategy 20 - Integrate land use and transport planning	
<i>Action 20.2 - The Department of Planning and Environment, working with Transport for NSW, will develop guidance for redevelopment near specific train stations and other transport nodes throughout Greater Newcastle.</i>	The proposal has immediate access to an existing pedestrian network, is within close proximity to a regular bus service and within easy walking distance of Thornton Train Station.

TABLE 3: MAITLAND URBAN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

AIMS FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Infill development should comprise 15% of all new dwellings in Maitland	The proposal contributes to this target.
Consolidation and redevelopment of centres to be consistent with the identified investigation areas and the stated hierarchy of centres	The proposal is immediately adjacent to the Thornton Town Centre and is consistent with the vision and stated Outcomes and Actions for it across a range of policies and controls.
Development must respond to appropriate planning controls and specific design criteria which will be further investigated	The proposal satisfies the applicable State and local planning controls, as demonstrated in the Statement of Environmental Effects.
New development must be of a scale which ensures the character of centres and other infill areas is enhanced.	The proposal is compatible with the existing character and satisfies the relevant scale, bulk, height and density controls specified in the Maitland LEP and DCP, as well as the ARHSEPP.

TABLE 4: MAITLAND LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT 2040+

LOCAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Plan for diverse and affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing and changing community	The proposal responds to the distinct lack of residential accommodation containing 1 or less bedrooms in the locality with persons over 55 representing the largest cumulative growth between the last two census periods.
Support sustainable housing growth by balancing greenfield and infill housing.	Most of the development activity within the LGA is greenfield housing. The proposal supports this priority by replacing existing housing stock with a more optimal built form.
Support a place-based planning approach to guide better planning and urban design outcomes for our centres and neighbourhoods.	The proposal is consistent with the urban design outcomes for the area and the Thornton Town Centre.
Preserve and enhance the distinctive local character of our centres and neighbourhoods.	As discussed in the SEE in relation to the "Character Test", the proposal will not conflict with the existing character of the surrounding area, which is comprised of a school, dwellings, a recreation area, library and a shopping centre.
Plan for healthy, culturally rich and socially connected communities.	The proposal will provide an alternative form of residential providing opportunities for people with diverse backgrounds and a greater level of social cohesion.
Improve access to, from and within the city, and encourage public and active	The Site has good access to bus and train services, as well as existing

LOCAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
transport to connect people and places.	pedestrian networks and local road networks.

TABLE 5: MAITLAND 10+ COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

THEME/ COMMUNITY STATEMENT	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<i>Proud people, great lifestyle:</i>	
<i>Our growing community retains our sense of place and pride in our city whilst welcoming diversity and change</i>	
We will work together to make sure that all of Maitland's citizens feel safe, valued, skilled and connected.	The proposal is not inconsistent with the Community Statement. The proposal provides opportunities for passive surveillance over the Site, onto each street frontage and the pedestrian pathway running along the western boundary. The Site will be sufficiently illuminated and provided with appropriate security measures (CCTV, swipe card access to buildings) to provide a suitable level of personal safety. There is no basis to any assumption that the mere presence of a New Generation Boarding House will adversely affect public safety or be occupied by antisocial residents.
We will understand the growth and the changes we expect to see in our city and be prepared for what this will mean.	The ARHSEPP has been in place since 2009. Likewise, the Maitland LEP and the built form outcomes for the R1 General Residential zone have been in place since its adoption in 2011. Significant development has occurred throughout Thornton and surrounding areas so the presence of infill development should not be unexpected.
<i>Our community, recreation and leisure services and facilities meet the needs of our growing and active city</i>	

THEME/ COMMUNITY STATEMENT	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
We will work together to end homelessness across the city.	While the proposal does not seek to provide social housing or housing for homeless people, it does provide an alternative form of housing for very low, low or moderate income households, as provided in the ARHSEPP.

Our built space:

All residents are able to move around the city in safety and with ease – on foot, bicycle, car bus or train

Our roads and other associated infrastructure will ensure connected and efficient movement throughout the city.	The Site is well connected to road, bus, train and pedestrian networks and modes of travel. The location opposite a shopping centre reduces the need for residents to rely on private vehicles for access to shopping and services.
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Diverse and affordable housing options are available for our residents throughout all life stages

We will realise more new, affordable homes in Central Maitland and other established urban centres.	The Site is located adjacent to the Thornton Town Centre and is consistent with other strategies to provide greater densities in and adjacent to those centres.
Planning and development of new suburbs will provide for a mix of housing types.	While the Site is within an established area, it promotes a mix of housing types as both the Study Area and wider Thornton area lack any form of boarding house-style housing options.
The diverse housing needs of our community will be met through active partnerships and development.	The proposal is not of a scale to warrant an active partnership, however recognition of the prevailing planning

THEME/ COMMUNITY STATEMENT	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
	controls and policies promoting this form of development is critical to the provision of housing diversity beyond the detached dwelling vernacular.

Our natural environment:

The potential impacts of our growing community on the environment and our natural resources are actively managed

Planning and development activities will provide a balance between the built and natural environments	The proposal does not have any significant adverse impacts on the built or natural environments that warrant the refusal of consent, as demonstrated in the Statement of Environmental Effects. Statutory compliance with the applicable controls is achieved by the proposal.
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A prosperous and vibrant City:

A unique sense of identity and place is found within our villages, suburbs, towns and City Centre

We will embrace new technologies, creativity and innovation to grow a network of vibrant mixed use centres and services.	The proposal will utilise smart technologies to provide an improved level of safety to residents.
We will evolve our identity as a growing regional city that provides convenient access to community services, activities and facilities.	The proposal is not so radical as to cause significant, adverse and unplanned change to identity of Thornton. The Site is located optimally in terms of access to transport options, services and potential employment opportunities.

Maitland is seen as a desirable place to live, an easy place to work, a welcoming place to visit and a wise place to invest

THEME/ COMMUNITY STATEMENT	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
We will enhance and diversify accommodation offerings across the city.	As stated previously, diverse housing options are lacking in both the Study Area and the LGA. The proposal represents a permissible and anticipated form of residential accommodation.

TABLE 6: MAITLAND DELIVERY PROGRAM 2018-2022 AND MAITLAND OPERATIONAL PLAN 2021/2022

COMMUNITY STRATEGY/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<i>We will work together to make sure that all of Maitland's citizens feel safe, valued, skilled and connected.</i>	
Undertake an illumination survey to identify current lighting levels and areas for potential lighting improvements at Taylor Avenue Thornton, in the shopping community and school precinct – survey completed.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>We will understand the growth and the changes we expect to see in our city and be prepared for what this will mean.</i>	
Local Strategic Planning Statement under preparation for the Maitland Local Government Area.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>We will work together to end homelessness across the city.</i>	
Continue to identify and implement activities that support Council's commitment to The Newcastle and Hunter Ending Homelessness Pledge in partnership with key service providers.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>Our roads and other associated infrastructure will ensure connected and efficient movement throughout the city.</i>	
Carry out routine and programmed maintenance for roads, footpaths, cycle ways, bridges and drains.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy. The proposal will make use of the existing pedestrian network and proximity to the Thornton Shopping Centre.
<i>We will realise more new, affordable homes in Central Maitland and other established urban centres.</i>	

COMMUNITY STRATEGY/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Review planning framework for affordable housing in the context of a broader review of housing options across the local government area (review completed).	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy. The ABS census data reveals that boarding house accommodation within Thornton is non-existent while across the LGA, it is limited to two existing and one approved, but as yet non-operational General Registered Boarding Houses. There are no boarding houses of any type within the Study Area.
Work with affordable housing providers wherever possible.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>Planning and development of new suburbs will provide for a mix of housing types.</i>	
Encourage a range of housing types through the review of residential zones (review completed).	The proposal promotes housing diversity and does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>The diverse housing needs of our community will be met through active partnerships and development.</i>	
Encourage a range of housing types through the review of residential zones (review completed).	The proposal promotes housing diversity and does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>Planning and development activities will provide a balance between the built and natural environments</i>	
Ensure the principles and land use planning provisions of the Local Environment Plan (LEP) are consistently applied.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.
<i>We will evolve our identity as a growing regional city that provides convenient access to community services, activities and facilities.</i>	

COMMUNITY STRATEGY/ ACTION	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
Make adequate provision for all relevant modes of transport in the planning for, and improvement of, new and existing centres or precincts.	The proposal does not conflict with this Community Strategy.

TABLE 7: ACTIVITY CENTRES AND EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS STRATEGY

AIMS	CONSISTENCY OF THE PROPOSAL
<p>Encourage a well designed public domain with spaces for people to meet and mingle and a high quality built form with active ground floors to enhance the safety and overall pedestrian experience</p>	<p>The proposal has been designed to provide a high-quality external appearance, promote opportunities for social interaction and passive surveillance over the public domain to enhance public safety and residential amenity.</p>
<p>Encourage the development of higher density residential dwellings in and around the centre to offer a range of housing size and types within a highly accessible location.</p>	<p>The Site is immediately opposite the Thornton Town Centre and provides a form of housing that is not available within the local area and wider suburb. The Site is able to access an extensive pedestrian network and has bus and rail travel modes within close proximity.</p>