

7/12/2017

To whom it may concern,

The Draft metropolitan plan is an exciting step forward for the greater Newcastle region, although it appears to make very little mention of Lake Macquarie, which is surprising given that LGA contributes 204,000 people to the metropolitan cities overall population (ABS, 2015). The area offers a valuable contribution to Newcastle's lifestyle, leisure and job opportunities with the beautiful lake at its heart.

It's particularly disappointing to see that the suburb of Charlestown was missed as a 'catalyst area' given that it is often referred to as Newcastle's second CBD. Charlestown features a significant number of high density mixed use residential/commercial buildings with a significant presence of business and specialist services and is crucially the only area outside central Newcastle where planning height restrictions exceed 50m. Charlestown is also home to one of the region's largest shopping centre's another key employment hub and a fantastic leisure precinct with its outdoor plaza featuring restaurants, bars, cafe's and other entertainment venues. Other leisure precincts include the Pearson Street Mall which has been earmarked for revitalisation as an 'innovation precinct' after a long history of decline and has the potential to become a thriving hub of street activity.

I think this is a missed opportunity to bring focus to an area that has already undergone such a significant revitalisation in recent years, with much more on the horizon given the areas potential for development and recent development approvals. The areas current characteristics and potential growth enabled through current planning provisions should see Charlestown considered as key growth area for Newcastle's emerging service based economy and is an area set to contribute to the strategies goal of delivering housing close to jobs and services.

Overall, the report seems to be heavily Newcastle LGA focused which is reasonable given this is the core centre of the Newcastle metropolitan city, although the relative devoid of information regarding Lake Macquarie presents a large gap in knowledge and doesn't seem to capture all the key elements of the metropolitan area as a whole. I think further specialist engagement and participation with Lake Macquarie City Council would add enormous contribution to the strategies purpose and goals.

Sincerely,

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