



23 February 2018

Executive Director, Infrastructure and  
Delivery  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Contact: Martin Johnson  
Our Ref: DOC2018/007850  
Your Ref:

Dear Sir/Madam

**Cessnock City Council Submission on the Hunter Region Special Infrastructure Contribution - Proposed Approach**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on 'proposed approach to the Hunter Region Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC)'. Council is generally supportive of improved governance and transparent implementation of a Hunter SIC; and the following comments are provided for consideration.

**Application of SIC**

The proposed approach outlines the zones that the residential SIC payment will apply to. These zones include residential zones, RU5 and E4. Cessnock City Council has a significant number of housing developments being built in the SP3 Tourist zone. Consideration should be given to including this zone in the SIC as these developments also contribute to the need for infrastructure.

The proposed approach outlines that there will be an 'expanded SIC' in the future to apply to infill development but no further detail is provided. The application of an additional levy to infill development should be carefully considered to ensure it is not a disincentive to infill development. This analysis should also include any implications of an expanded SIC on housing affordability.

**Transport infrastructure**

Council seeks clarification on the following infrastructure items listed in the SIC to ensure that they are aligned with the draft Traffic and Transport Strategy prepared by Council:

- Upgrade of Cessnock Road (between Cessnock and Kurri Kurri) \$16.7 million
- Upgrade of Main Road Cessnock \$33.5 million
- New Weston Road link

Council can provide further information once clarification on these items is provided. In addition to the proposed road upgrades listed above a number of additional corridors and connections will be needed to cater for expected population growth from Urban Release Areas. The following upgrades are suggested for inclusions in the SIC:

- Connection between Kurri Kurri and Maitland – growth corridor main road upgrades
- Weston Bypass
- Wollombi Road between Cessnock and Millfield
- Old Maitland Road Upgrade between Cessnock and New England Highway

#### Commuter Carparks along Hunter Expressway (HEX)

The Draft Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan outlines the benefits of providing carpooling facilities across the LGA to take advantage of the HEX as a major regional transport corridor. It is important that commuter parking along interchanges encourages park and ride and carpooling opportunities. Given this infrastructure will be used by residents from across the region it is considered that this could be included in the SIC. Potential locations for commuter car parks adjacent to the HEX include:

- Main Road, Heddon Greta
- John Renshaw Drive, Buchanan; and
- New England Highway, Branxton

#### Rail

Given the significant population growth that is likely to occur from the Urban Release Areas in the Cessnock LGA and the need to improve public transport; consideration should be given to utilisation of the South Maitland Railway connection between Cessnock to Maitland and Maitland to Branxton for passenger services. At a minimum the corridor should be preserved until passenger services are viable. Council supports any action to ensure the ongoing use and viability of rail corridors in this regard.

#### Cessnock Airport

The Cessnock Airport has the potential to operate as the 'second airport' for the Hunter Region, supporting tourism, freight markets and employment. For this to occur infrastructure upgrades at the airport are needed, including a runway extension. Infrastructure projects related to the upgrade of the Cessnock Airport should be considered for inclusion in the SIC as the Airport will service the Hunter Region.

#### General

The proposal to allow development consent to be granted including a condition that the SIC be addressed prior to the issue of a construction certificate or a subdivision certificate is supported. Council is pleased to see our previous concerns about unnecessary delays in the current process have been considered.

If you wish to discuss any of these items please do not hesitate to contact Council's Strategic Planning Manager, Martin Johnson on telephone 02 4993 4229 or via email [martin.johnson@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:martin.johnson@cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

Yours faithfully



Gareth Curtis  
Director Planning and Environment