

Public Exhibition Summary

Development Control Plan (DCP) 2023



Overview

City of Newcastle (CN) has conducted a comprehensive review of the Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012, considering the relevance of our development controls and whether they reflect best practice guidelines, adopted land use strategies and CN priorities.

The DCP 2023 has been prepared to guide future development of the Newcastle local government area, and to support our community's vision for a smart, liveable and sustainable global city.

Key features

The DCP 2023 features a new structure and easier to use guidance, with new sections on:

- Liveable housing
- Movement networks and infrastructure to encourage active and public transport usage
- Retention of trees and increased landscaping
- Cool facades and design solutions to minimise urban heat
- Local character sections for Tighes Hill and Kotara.



Public Exhibition



The Draft Development Control Plan (DCP) 2023 was placed on public exhibition from **28 September to 27 October 2023**.

Industry stakeholders and the community were invited to review the draft DCP 2023 and provide their feedback through written submission to CN.

Submissions were able to be provided by completing the online form or via email.

73 submissions were received.

Communication & promotion



1,816 visits
to the Have
Your Say
webpage



2,858 reach
on social
media



156
direct emails
sent to
stakeholders



3,461
e-newsletter
subscribers



3
targeted
information
sessions with UDIA,
Property Council
and HIA



Media release

What we heard

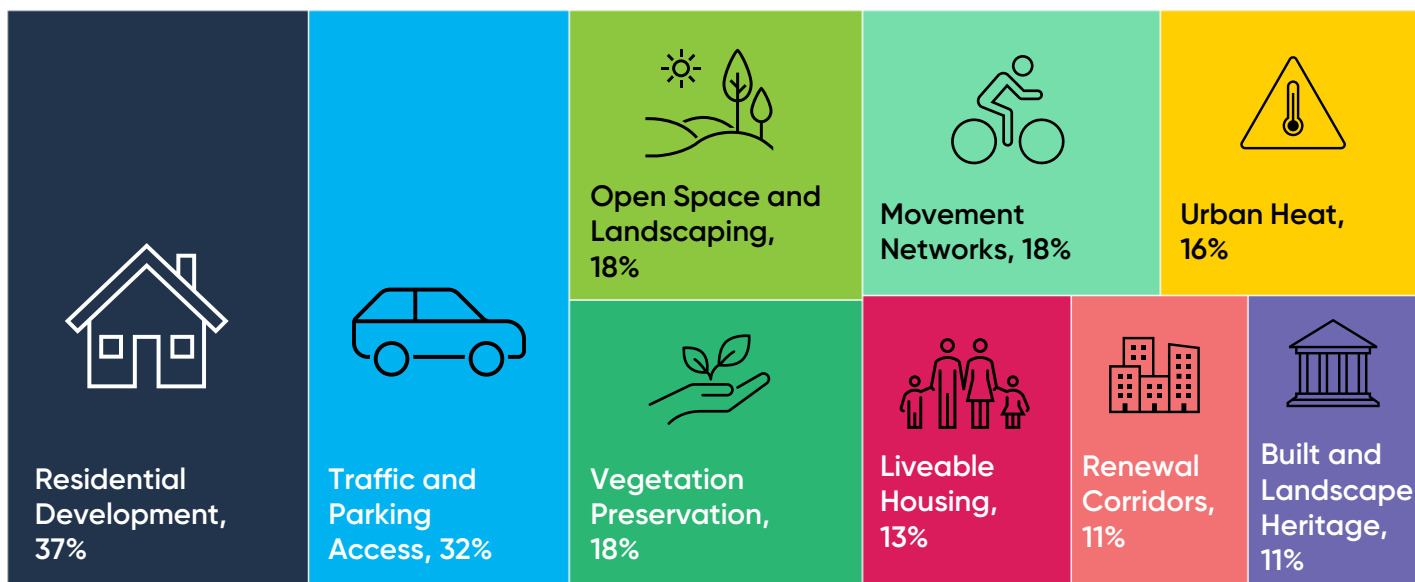
In total, 73 submissions were received (58 online and 15 via email). Feedback was categorised to identify recurring themes.

General support was provided for the Draft DCP 2023 and improved planning controls. Positive comments were made about new sections such as liveable housing, active transport movement networks, urban heat and local character.

The most frequently mentioned sections of the DCP were:

- Residential Development
- Traffic and Parking Access
- Movement Networks
- Vegetation Preservation
- Open Space and Landscaping
- Urban Heat.

The key themes are explored on the following pages.





Residential Development

Within the Residential Development section, respondents showed strong support for encouraging all new multi-unit residential developments be all electric, restricting the installation of indoor gas appliances such as heaters, stoves and cooktops.

It was suggested that CN should go further and require all new developments (residential and commercial) to be fully electric, including hot water units.

Strengthened objectives and controls restrict indoor gas usage within residential development for better health and environmental outcomes, and to avoid unnecessary financial burdens.

The Summerhill Waste Management Centre (SWMC) waste disposal buffer zone relating to both subdivision and lot consolidation, and residential development was also mentioned. Concerns about the extent and appropriateness of the buffer zone in the DCP were raised, along with the potential impact on new dwelling supply.

The revised control allows site specific impacts (odour, noise and visual) to be considered.



Traffic & Parking Access

Several respondents commented on the requirements for Electric Vehicle charging. Whilst there was general support for encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles and moving towards a sustainable city, there were some concerns that the controls would add to the cost of development and exceeded the requirements of the National Construction Code (NCC).

However, it should be noted that the NCC only sets the minimum requirements, and local provisions can vary to support local needs. Planning for future capacity is needed because of the costs and other challenges of retrofitting such as physical barriers.

Other comments mentioned concerns about the availability of parking as high-density housing and new developments continue to be approved.

Some submissions commented that the requirements for bicycle and motorbike parking, in addition to vehicle parking, were not considered appropriate for low density developments (such as attached dwellings, dual occupancies, multi-dwelling and semi-detached housing).

Parking rates were reviewed and benchmarked with other Councils. CN supports active transport modes to reduce car dependency, and this is addressed through the DCP.

Bicycle and motorbike parking provisions support more environmentally friendly modes of travel, diverse transport choices, and are more space efficient.





Movement Networks

Several submissions supported improved infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport to achieve our vision for a more sustainable city and enhance liveability. It was acknowledged that the demand for infrastructure will only increase as population grows and development continues.

Respondents mentioned the need for additional footpaths to connect people to services and facilities as well as improved safety and accessibility.

The prioritisation of active transport needs in building design supports the vision for an inclusive and liveable city.



Open Space and Landscaping

Comments about this section referenced guidelines for vegetation and tree canopy requirements, deep soil zones, mature tree planting and tree removal. Landscaped area controls were said to reduce urban renewal/redevelopments outcomes as well as adding costs to the process.

It was suggested that deep soil zones should be deep enough to support canopy trees, whilst the requirement to plant medium-large size trees on small-medium size lots can be restrictive and may lead to longer term issues.

A new minimum dimension has been introduced for deep soil areas in residential development to help deliver objectives for trees and canopy. Deep soil areas are provided for residential, mixed use and industrial developments.

It was also suggested that an arborist report should not be required for all tree removal applications, and requirements for trees within 3 metres of a building be dropped.



Vegetation Preservation

Several submissions highlighted how this section relates to urban forest management, and provided suggestions for retaining trees and increasing tree canopy cover which is a key objective of the Newcastle Environment Strategy.

Compensatory tree planting, canopy tree planting on private land where there is none, and facilitating a reasonable and affordable process to remove trees that have reached the end of their life were mentioned.

Other submissions commented on the protection of endangered trees and clearing of declared vegetation on high environmental value land. Revised wording provides more clarity on the definition of declared vegetation and approval pathways. This control reflects CN's position for development to avoid high environmental value land.



Urban Heat

It was acknowledged that landscaping is one of the most effective solutions to urban heat. It was suggested that the Urban Heat objectives should include an increase in urban tree canopy cover given that trees, gardens, lawns and parks can help to reduce heat retention and emissions from concrete and brick footpaths, asphalt roads and buildings.

Respondents commented that encouraging tree canopy retention should be prioritised over requirements for developers to provide a reflectivity modelling report.

Whilst the NSW Government Building Sustainability Index (BASIX) governs energy efficiency and thermal performance for residential development, design measures to reduce the impacts of urban heat can also be included as local provisions (Local Environment Plan and development controls).



Liveable Housing

There was general support for the new Liveable Housing section to provide flexible and adaptable housing options for Newcastle residents. It was suggested that the provisions could be further expanded to include seniors housing.

The requirement for all dwellings (except single dwellings) to have Silver Level universal design features was said to be inconsistent with the NSW Government's approach and would cause additional costs to development.

CN supports the Liveable Housing Design Standards (Silver Level) in the NCC and has called upon the NSW State Government to adopt these standards, joining all other states and territories (except WA). Retrofitting homes to meet standards and support needs can be costly.



Built and Landscape Heritage

Key themes regarding this section were facadism, the need to protect more of the historical structures, and appropriate setbacks of modern structures located behind the facades.

The DCP includes controls for heritage items to retain and conserve the existing interior, floor plan and fabric.

Other comments included the importance of preserving interior detailing, contributory buildings and a stronger emphasis on the 'protection' of heritage items, places and settings by including this in the objectives of this section.

Protection of a HCA applies to land and external parts of buildings visible from the public domain (not laneways). Objectives and controls have been updated to include 'conservation', 'protection' and 'understanding'.



Renewal Corridors

Several submissions commented on the Islington Renewal Corridor, with concerns about the density of housing and flow-on impacts for traffic, parking and loss of village character.

It was commented that the proposed density of apartments in the Chinchin Street and Transitional-Residential zone on Maitland Road would put additional pressure on parking, limited public transport and the use of amenities such as shops and parks.

The transitional areas intend to reduce land use conflict. The controls support the Local Environment Plan objectives and uses, and guide the built form outcomes in areas with planned growth. A car parking assessment is required to guide car parking rates in renewal corridors in line with CN's Parking Plan 2021.

Other mentions

Other sections mentioned by five or more submissions include:

- Heritage Conservation Areas
- Subdivision and Lot Consolidation
- Newcastle City Centre
- Minmi Extension, Village Centre and Link Road North Precinct
- Safety and Security
- Social Impact.

Thanks for your feedback!

Thank you to everyone who provided a submission. All submissions were reviewed and considered, with feedback being used to inform the final DCP 2023.