CUMBERLAND
COUNCIL

Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy
2019-2029

Welcome to Country

"Jumna ya wogal wal ya pemel jumna mingan jumna tamu. Ngalaringi wyanga pemal.

Ngalaringi babuna wal gnia ya pemal da lo-loley dice wara mooting jumna banga nolla ya.

Pemal jumna wal gnia koi mund wal tati pemal jumna annagar dice.

Eorah wal mullana wal mingan jumna gai gnia bou gu-nu-gal nglaringi go-roong dyaralang.

Nglaringi go-roong dyaralang.

Ngalaringi bou ngalaringi jam ya tiati nglaringi bubuna jumna. Mittigar gurrung burruk gneene da daruga pemal.

Didjeree Goor."

"*We were the first carers of the land, we took only what we needed from our Mother Earth.*

Our ancestors knew how to take care of the land, so as to continue their survival.

We do not own the land, but we are charged with the care of it. As custodians of this land we ask that all people join us and preserve what we have left for future generations.

We must protect the few sites we have to ensure our culture continues.

In the language of our ancestors we welcome you to Darug Lands.

Thank you."

Welcome to Country by Darug Elder Aunty Edna

Contents

Introduction

Community facilities play an important role in supporting happy, healthy, thriving, connected and engaged communities. They are important places where people can gather, relax, learn, create and celebrate.

The *Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029* provides a direction for Council's programming, management, planning and provision of community facilities into the future. This direction is provided through key priority areas, strategies and actions.

A key focus in the development of this Strategy has been ensuring that community facilities in the Cumberland area meet the growing and changing interests, aspirations and needs of the Cumberland community. Development of the Strategy involved a detailed needs assessment and community engagement to ensure the needs of the community for facilities will be realised.

This Strategy will be implemented over a ten year period, with progress tracked annually.

PRIORITY AREAS:

1. Enhancing our existing community facilities

2. Aligning community facility provision with existing and future community needs

3. Creating facilities and spaces that reflect local culture and heritage

4. Providing programs that reflect the community's diverse interests and needs

5. Optimising systems and processes

What are community facilities?

Community facilities are buildings provided for the community from which programs, activities, events, functions, services and resources can be provided.

Council community facilities considered in this Strategy include the following:

FACILITY TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Community hubs	Large facilities consisting of co-located functions and services. Examples of facilities that may be co-located within a hub include a library, community centre, art gallery, performance and rehearsal venue, community support service spaces, sport and recreation facilities and education and care services.
Staffed multipurpose community centres	Facilities with a range of spaces that are flexible and adaptable and amenities required to cater to a range of uses and user groups. These facilities also have on-site staff that manage the facility and work with the community to provide programs and services.
Community centres, halls and spaces	Non-staffed venues available for community hire and use. These consist of community centres that may contain multiple spaces, town halls, stand-alone single room facilities and small meeting rooms.
Libraries*	Facilities providing information, resources, programs and spaces (to read, study, learn and socialise). Libraries are staffed with specialist library officers and librarians.
Arts and cultural facilities*	Facilities that cater to creative and performing arts and cultural activities. These include art galleries, exhibition spaces, artist studios, theatres, performance and rehearsal venues, heritage centres. They also include facilities and spaces that support making and creating (such as men's sheds and maker spaces).
Education and care facilities*	Facilities that accommodate education and care services. Service types are explained in section 'Our community facilities' (on page 8).
Leased or licensed facilities	Council-owned facilities leased or licensed by Council to agencies, organisations and groups who utilise the facility for activities, programs or services (e.g. scout and guide halls, youth centres, community service facilities).

*For libraries, arts and cultural facilities and education and care facilities, this Strategy addresses the facility buildings only, not the functions provided within. Council also has a Library Strategy, Cultural Plan and a Children and Families Strategy which address the services, programs and resources provided at these facilities.

Why are community facilities important?

Community facilities can play an important role in supporting a community to grow and flourish. A successful community facility is far more than a building. It is a well-programmed and activated place that provides activities and resources needed by, and of interest to, the local community.

CELEBRATION OF THE LOCAL AREA AND COMMUNITY

Community facilities can celebrate the local culture and history of an area, including Aboriginal perspectives of a local area. Providing opportunities to increase cultural awareness enhances understanding and appreciation amongst diverse communities. This can be achieved through building design or artwork that reflects the local area or through the provision of events and activities that enable cultural expression and show-case local talent.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Community facilities can contribute to the health and wellbeing of a community with many of Council's facilities providing fitness and recreation, healthy eating and healthy lifestyle programs. Community facilities also foster social cohesion and can combat social isolation. They are places that bring people together and facilitate social connections. They can assist people that have newly arrived to Australia or the Cumberland area to build social and support networks.

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Community facilities can be places where people seek and access information, assistance and support. This can range from accessing information about what is happening in the local area, to accessing support services (for example aged, disability, youth and children's services and services for new arrivals, refugees and people seeking asylum).

TRAINING AND LEARNING

Community facilities can also be places where people can access training and education opportunities. Employment readiness, language and English conversation classes, computer classes and a range of lifelong learning programs are examples of programs currently delivered in Council's facilities.

CULTURAL EXPRESSION AND CREATIVITY

Community facilities are also places for cultural expression and creativity. They can provide spaces for creative arts, craft and making activities. They can also be venues for events, performances, rehearsals and functions and for community and family celebrations. These spaces can be in the form of specialist facilities such as galleries, artist studios, performance and rehearsal venues and men's sheds or they can be provided as multipurpose spaces that can also be used for a range of other activities.

RECREATION AND RELAXATION

Some community facilities (such as libraries) include flexible, non-programmed space where people can visit and just 'be'; free indoor public spaces where visitors can lounge, relax, read, study, socialise, play and connect with others.

Recognition of the importance of non-programmed spaces has grown in recent years, resulting in an increase in the prominence of these spaces in community facilities provided by local governments across Australia.

> "The centre makes me feel happy because I enjoy doing activities with other people."
> (Community member)

What is Council's role in community facility provision?

Similar to open space, community facilities are public places, and local governments play a key role in their provision.

Cumberland Council is well positioned to provide facilities for the community due to its ownership and management of land and assets. Council also has the ability to capture funds for facilities through, for example, the collection of contributions from property developers and though State and Federal Government grants. Council also has the capacity and resources to research, identify and plan for growing and changing community needs in the future.

Cumberland Council is a direct provider of a number of community services and programs, therefore Council also plays an active role in programming community facilities. Council however recognises that there is a wealth of organisations and groups that provide high quality programs and services across Cumberland. It is Council's role to facilitate access to our facilities to ensure our facilities best meet the interests and needs of the Cumberland community.

NON-COUNCIL PROVIDED COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Due to the high costs of building and maintaining community facilities, Council alone is unable to meet the community's need for facilities. Council therefore recognises the important role that non-Council organisations play in community facility provision. Examples of non-Council owned community facilities and spaces that are often available for community use include clubs and function centres, school halls, church halls and scout and guide halls. In the case of education and care services and facilities, Council is one of many providers in the Cumberland area, with community organisations and commercial operators providing the majority of services across the Cumberland area.

Council's various community facilities, together with non-Council facilities, form a comprehensive network that collectively address the changing needs of the Cumberland community.

Our community facilities

Community facilities owned by Cumberland Council (in 2019) include the following:

The Granville Centre, Granville (to open 2020)

COMMUNITY HUBS

There is currently one community hub planned for the Cumberland area (The Granville Centre, in the Granville Town Centre). This facility will consist of a library, multipurpose community centre, art gallery, studios and workshop spaces.

STAFFED MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY CENTRES

Council operates three staffed multipurpose community centres (Auburn Centre for Community, Berala Community Centre and Guildford Community Centre). Each facility is overseen by a Centre Coordinator, assisted by support officers.

Auburn Centre for Community, Auburn

COMMUNITY CENTRES, HALLS AND SPACES

Council also owns and manages 21 non-staffed facilities, which consist of a mix of community centres, town halls, community halls, park halls and meeting rooms. These facilities are available for use and hire by commercial hirers, community organisations, groups and individual community members.

In addition to these facilities and spaces, Council owns a number of additional spaces that could be made available for broader community use (such as meeting rooms within Council's swimming centres and in sportsground facilities). In most cases this would be dependent on building improvements, booking system changes and/or agreements with existing facility users or operators.

Norrie Malley Kiosk, Central Gardens, Merrylands West

LIBRARIES

Council currently has eight libraries across the Cumberland area. These include two central libraries (Auburn and Merrylands) and six branch libraries (Granville, Greystanes, Guildford, Lidcombe, Regents Park and Wentworthville). In 2020, library services in the existing Granville Library will be relocated to The Granville Centre.

ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Council currently owns and operates one arts-focused facility, the Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio in Auburn. Arts-focused facilities are also planned for The Granville Centre and a new Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Prospect Hill is proposed. There is also a multipurpose art and craft room within the Merrylands Community Centre.

In addition, Council also leases out spaces to community groups for arts and creative uses, including the Auburn City Men's Shed, Cumberland West Men's Shed, Parramatta Holroyd Lapidary Club and the Potter Room at the Merrylands Community Centre (leased to Holroyd Art and Craft Society).

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Council directly provides a number of education and care services for children aged 0 to 12 years. These services include:

- Long Day Care (8 services provided by Council)
- Occasional Care (1 service provided by Council)
- Family Day Care (1 scheme provided by Council - under review)
- Out Of School Hours care (7 services provided by Council).

Additional information on the above services is included in Appendix 1.

Council owns eleven of the facility buildings these education and care services for children operate from.

It is important to note that unlike the other types of community facilities within the scope of this Strategy, Council does not provide the majority of education and care facilities and services operating in the Cumberland area. Council's services are part of a larger network of services provided by the community sector and commercial operators.

Merrylands Library, Merrylands

Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio

Auburn Long Day Care Centre

LEASED AND LICENSED FACILITIES

Council owns 26 facilities that are leased to community organisations and groups, that provide a range of community programs, activities and services. Examples of facilities leased for community use include scout and guide halls, youth centres, men's sheds, early childhood health centres, child care centres, community service centres and community group facilities. Facilities operated or managed by community organisations and groups are an important part of the broader network of community facilities that collectively meet the needs of the Cumberland community.

While all facilities are currently under lease arrangements, there is an option for Council to utilise licence agreements for Council-owned facilities in the future. The key difference between these two arrangements is that a lease grants exclusive use of a facility to the lessee, while a licence does not. A licence therefore has the potential to facilitate greater utilisation and shared use of a facility by various organisations or groups.

Leased facility - 291 Merrylands Road, Merrylands

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL COMMUNITY FACILITIES
(AS AT 2019)

N

Toongabbie

Pendle Hill

Wentworthville

Westmead

Wentworthville Ward

Great Western Hwy

M4 Motorway

Toongabbie Rd

Merrylands Rd

Gipps Rd

Greystanes Ward

Cumberland Hwy

Fowler Rd

Granville Ward

Guildford

Yennora
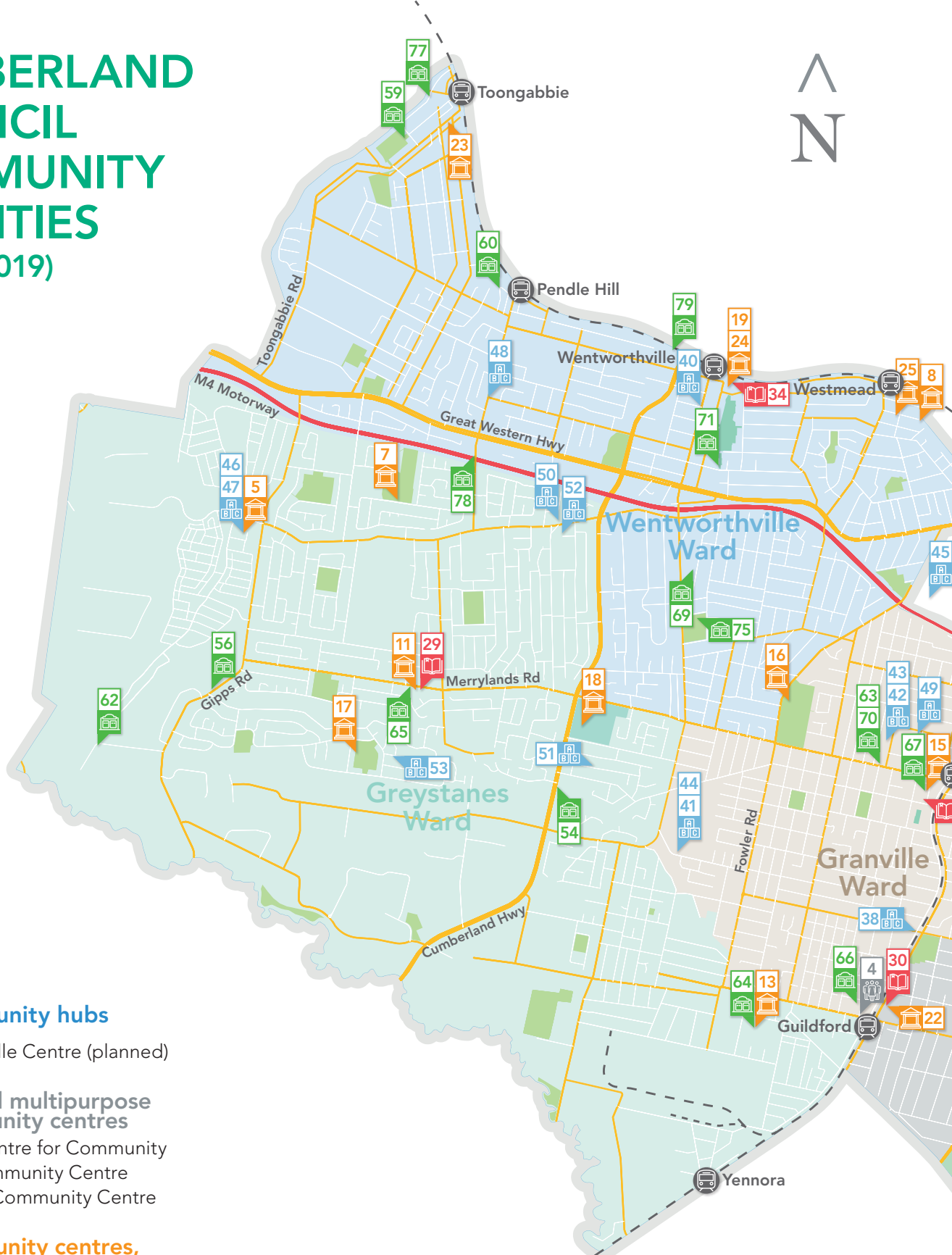
Community hubs
1. The Granville Centre (planned)

Staffed multipurpose community centres
2. Auburn Centre for Community
3. Berala Community Centre
4. Guildford Community Centre

Community centres, halls and spaces
5. Allan G Ezzy Community Centre
6. Auburn Town Hall and Somerville Room
7. Bathurst Street Park Hall
8. Domain Community Rooms
9. Granville Library Meeting Room
10. Granville Town Hall
11. Greystanes Community Centre

12. Holroyd Sportsground Hall
13. Linnwood House
14. Lidcombe Community Centre
15. Merrylands Community Centre
16. Merrylands Park Function Hall
17. Nemesia Street Hall
18. Norrie Maley Kiosk
19. Redgum Centre

20. Regents Park Community Centre
21. Regents Park Community Hub
22. Tom Collins Meeting Room
23. Toongabbie Community Centre
24. Wentworthville Community Centre
25. Westmead Progress Hall

Libraries

26. Auburn Library
27. Granville Library at The Granville Centre (planned)
28. Granville Library
29. Greystanes Library
30. Guildford Library
31. Lidcombe Library
32. Merrylands Library
33. Regents Park Library
34. Wentworthville Library

Arts and cultural facilities

35. Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio
36. The Granville Centre Gallery at the Granville Centre (planned)

Education and care

37. Auburn Long Day Child Care Centre
38. Cumberland Council Family Day Care
39. Frances Fisk Child Care Centre
40. Friend Park Children's Centre
41. Guildford West Children's Centre
42. Holroyd Children's Centre Banksia Babes
43. Holroyd Children's Centre Gumnut Grove
44. Guildford West OOSH
45. Parramatta West OOSH*
46. Pemulwuy Children's Centre
47. Pemulwuy OOSH
48. Pendle Hill OOSH*
49. The Sometime Centre
50. Ringrose OOSH*
51. Sherwood Grange OOSH
52. Wenty Children's Centre
53. Widemere OOSH*

Leased and licensed facilities

54. 102 Betts Road
55. 1st Blaxcell Scout Hall
56. 3rd Greystanes Scout Hall
57. Auburn City Men's Shed
58. Auburn Youth Centre
59. Boronia Multicultural Services
60. Cassia Community Centre
61. Creative Garden Early Learning Centre
62. West Cumberland Men's Shed
63. EarlyEd Centre Merrylands
64. Faulds House and Dormitory (Sunnyfield Disability Services)
65. Greystanes Early Childhood Centre
66. Guildford Early Childhood Clinic
67. Holroyd Community Aid
68. Lidcombe Early Childhood Centre
69. Mays Hill Scout Hall
70. Merrylands Youth Centre
71. Parramatta Holroyd Lapidary Club
72. PCYC Auburn
73. Regents Park Early Childhood Centre
74. Sunny Corner Toy Library
75. Ted Burge Hall
76. The Lions Club
77. Toongabbie Guide Hall
78. Wentworthville/Pendle Hill Guide Hall
79. Youth Off The Streets

Merrylands

Woodville Rd

Granville

Clyde

Clyde Street

Auburn

St Hilliers Rd

Parramatta Rd

South Granville Ward

Lidcombe

Berala

Regents Park Ward

Auburn Road

Olympic Drive

Regents Park

*Note: Council run service in a non-Council owned facility

Development of the Strategy

The *Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029* has been developed on a strong evidence base to ensure that the priority areas, strategies and actions accurately reflect the needs and aspirations of the Cumberland community. Development of this Strategy involved the following components:

CONSIDERING THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Consideration has been given to the local, district and metropolitan policy and planning context to understand key directions, challenges and opportunities in planning for community facilities in Cumberland. A summary is included in the section 'Strategic context'.

HEARING FROM THE COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS

A comprehensive engagement process was undertaken to gain community and stakeholder feedback on Council's community facilities and ideas for the future. The information received through these engagement activities helped Council to better understand the needs and interests of the community in relation to facilities (and the services, programs and activities provided from them). Refer to 'Community engagement' and 'What the community told us'.

ASSESSING EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

An assessment of Council-owned community facilities was undertaken to assess their adequacy and suitability. Facilities were assessed against leading practice planning and design principles (in relation to distribution, location, siting, building quality, design, amenities and functionality). Facility programming and levels of utilisation were also assessed. The review identified key strengths and areas for improvement across the facility network. Key findings from the assessment of existing community facilities are included in section 'Community facility assessment findings'. Council is also undertaking a technical building condition assessment of Council assets, including the facilities within the scope of this Strategy. This condition assessment will further inform decisions and planning for individual facilities.

In addition to Council's community facilities, non-Council owned facilities (including facilities in neighbouring local government areas) were considered as part of the broader regional facility network.

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY FACILITY NEEDS

Determining the needs of the community for facilities involved:

- Considering what the community and stakeholders told us in relation to their interests and needs
- Reviewing the demographic make-up of the Cumberland community and identifying any specific facility, service and program needs based on population size and characteristics
- Considering how the Cumberland community will grow and change in the future and what that will mean in terms of needs and levels of demand for community facilities
- Applying industry benchmarks to assess the existing level of provision, identify gaps and determine future facility requirements (in terms of the number and size of facilities).

DEVELOPING A DIRECTION FOR FUTURE FACILITY PLANNING

Development of the Strategy also involved an examination of case studies and trends in community facility provision. This included identifying successful examples of community facilities (across NSW and Australia), in terms of planning, design, delivery and management. These case studies and trends provided valuable directions, lessons and ideas for Council in planning for facilities in Cumberland. They also informed the development of guiding principles for our community facilities (refer section 'Key directions for community facilities').

IDENTIFYING PRIORITY AREAS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Based on the findings of the above research tasks, Council identified priority areas for community facilities. Strategies and actions were developed for each priority area to direct Council's planning and provision of community facilities over the next ten years.

Strategic context

METROPOLITAN AND DISTRICT CONTEXT

A Metropolis of Three Cities, the NSW Government's 40 year vision for Greater Sydney, highlights the importance of social infrastructure (which includes community facilities). A number of strategies in the plan identify social infrastructure as integral to creating liveable cities and neighbourhoods.

The *Central City District Plan* implements the strategies from the *Metropolis of Three Cities* at the district level (that is, across Cumberland, Blacktown, The Hills and Parramatta local government areas). The plan contains high level actions, including actions directing the delivery of social infrastructure "that reflects the needs of the community now and into the future" and optimising the use of public land for social infrastructure. The plan identifies councils, other planning authorities and State agencies as the parties responsible for implementing these actions.

In developing this Strategy, Council also conducted discussions with neighbouring councils to understand more about the facilities they provide, their plans for the future and to discuss opportunities to work together, address gaps and avoid duplications.

LOCAL CONTEXT

The *Cumberland Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027* sets out the community's vision for the future. The plan, built on an extensive community engagement process, identifies goals as well as activities for Council to deliver on that vision. There are a number of activities identified for Council in the plan relating to community facility planning and programing. These include:

- Catering to young people and families
- Maximising the utilisation of facilities
- Providing facilities in line with community expectations, population growth and intended uses
- Fostering and facilitating access to the creative arts and culture
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Creating equitable access to facilities
- Maintaining facilities well to enhance community pride
- Enhancing facilities to improve safety
- Championing sustainable practices
- Acting to address gaps in local education and care services.

A number of other Council strategies and plans also reference community facilities. These include:

- *Cumberland Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2021*
- *Cumberland Youth Strategy 2017-2021*
- *Cumberland Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021*
- *Cumberland Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2018-2022*
- *Cumberland Library Strategy 2018-2021*
- *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029*
- *Draft Environmental Management Framework 2019.*

Key focus areas identified in these plans that relate to planning and designing community facilities include:

- Consulting with key stakeholders and reflecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the development of new facilities
- Increasing the number of quiet, youth-specific study spaces in libraries
- Establishing youth project reference groups for the design of any new or upgraded facilities

- Developing and implementing accessible design principles for facilities
- Developing and installing accessible signage and technology in facilities
- Improving safety and increasing security at existing facilities
- Planning and designing safety into new facilities
- Developing a strong network of cultural facilities across the Cumberland area by enhancing existing, and increasing the number and diversity of, cultural spaces
- Developing an Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Prospect Hill
- Creating flexible library spaces
- Delivering library expansions and refurbishments.

Council's strategies and plans also contain directions to guide Council in the successful programming of facilities, that is, delivering the programs, activities and services relevant to the interests, needs and aspirations of the community.

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Community facilities are extremely valuable assets that provide significant benefits to the community however, it is important to acknowledge that developing, managing and maintaining community facilities requires significant resources. It is therefore essential Council explores various funding and delivery opportunities and mechanisms beyond Council's general revenue, which alone is not sufficient. Key opportunities (available to local councils) that will be explored include the following.

Local infrastructure contributions

Local councils have the authority to apply infrastructure contribution rates and levies to development applications they receive. These monetary contributions assist the delivery of new or expanded infrastructure, such as community facilities. These facilities service the residential end economic population growth generated by the development. The contributions system is regulated by State Government. Councils manage contributions through their contributions plans, which direct how contributions will be collected and distributed (based on infrastructure needs). Cumberland Council is in the process of developing a new contributions plan for Cumberland.

Due to a number of factors, contributions often do not cover the costs of all infrastructure needs generated by new populations. As contributions must be allocated to infrastructure that supports the needs of new development populations, local infrastructure contributions as a funding opportunity are marginal in areas with limited projected development and growth.

Voluntary Planning Agreements

Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs) are legally binding agreements between government agencies (including councils), land owners and developers. Agreements are often associated with a planning proposals received by a council or State authority and include the provision of land and infrastructure delivery in lieu or in addition to monetary contributions. For example, a property developer may identify a need for a community facility within their development and propose to provide this facility in lieu of contributions payable against the development. This asset is later handed over to a council as a council-owned asset. In such cases the VPA would typically include agreed facility specifications, inclusions, standards and timeframes. VPAs should only be accepted by a council if there is public benefit and they align with a council's strategies and plans.

Government grants

State and Federal Government grant programs are another opportunity for Council to apply for funding for community facility improvement or development projects. An example of this is the NSW Community Building Partnership which provides grants for local community infrastructure projects.

As these are competitive processes, grants cannot be relied on as a certain, definite source of funding.

Consolidation of assets

Due to the high cost of managing and maintaining building assets and a focus on efficiency and quality facility provision, there is a trend in facility planning towards the provision of larger, higher quality, multipurpose facilities (that cater to a range of uses), and towards highly utilised facilities. To fund these new or expanded facilities, many local councils are looking at opportunities for consolidation, including relocating services in lower quality spaces. In some cases, poor quality facilities that are not fit-for-purpose are rationalised to help fund new facility developments.

Partnerships and agreements

There are many examples of councils across the state working in partnership with other government agencies, organisations and the private sector to develop and manage community facilities. Some examples of partnerships include:

- A partnership between a council and a State Government department. For example, School Infrastructure NSW in the development of infrastructure (e.g. school hall, classroom or sports facility etc.) that will be used by both the school and the broader community or the Department of Planning in the co-delivery of infrastructure in a planned Priority Precinct
- A partnership between a council and a property developer in the planning and construction of a mixed-use development (that includes community facilities) on a council-owned site
- A partnership between a council and a community organisation in the co-development of a community facility on council-owned land
- A partnership between a council and a community organisation, in which the organisation staffs and manages a council-owned community facility on the council's behalf.

Income generated from facilities

Facilities can generate income through fees for hire of facilities and spaces. While in Cumberland community organisations and groups can apply to hire space at a lower rate (subsidised by Council), commercial program operators and private hirers pay full fee (as directed in Council's Fees and Charges Policy).

Income generated from facilities can offset a local council's expenditure on facility operations and maintenance (but in most cases, does not go close to covering costs).

Leased and licensed facilities can also generate income for local councils. This is dependent on the agreed fee associated with the lease/licence (the majority of which, for many councils in the past, have been low or no cost). Council must consider and balance the need for income to offset expenditure with providing access to low cost space to encourage and support the provision of much needed services and programs in the area.

For community centres that do generate a profit, some councils have utilised sinking funds to capture revenue. The revenue is then used when it has depreciated in the future to upgrade the facility.
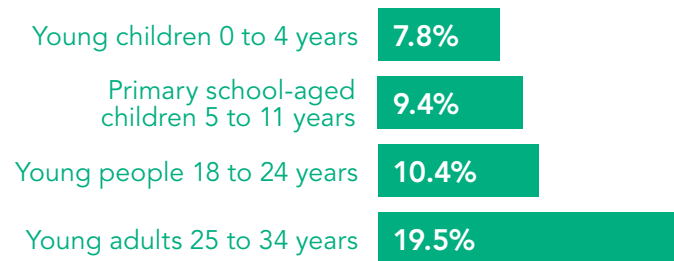
The Cumberland community

The Cumberland area has an estimated population of 242,524[1]. This population is forecast to increase to 304,811 by 2036 (an increase of 26%).

COMMUNITY PROFILE: This profile of the Cumberland community is based on the most recent (2016) Census of Population and Housing data. The profile provides insight into the unique characteristics of the Cumberland community[2].

AGE

The Cumberland area has a relatively young community, with a **median age of 32 years**. The area has high proportions of:

Young children 0 to 4 years	**7.8%**
Primary school-aged children 5 to 11 years	**9.4%**
Young people 18 to 24 years	**10.4%**
Young adults 25 to 34 years	**19.5%**

By 2036, the median age will increase to 34 years. The fastest growing age groups are:

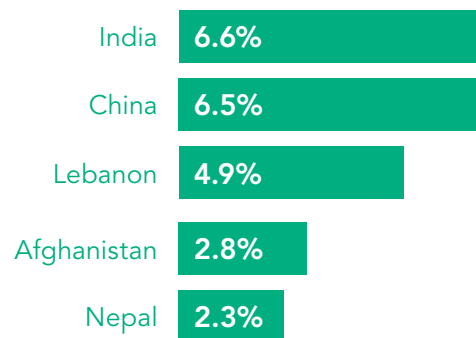|	
High school-aged children 12 to 17 years	**55% increase**
Older people 70 and over	**68% increase**

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Cumberland is a culturally rich, vibrant and diverse area. The area has high proportions of people:

Born overseas	**52.2%**
Who arrived in Australia within the last 5 years	**25.5%**
Who speak a language other than English at home	**65.6%**

The top 5 overseas countries of birth for the Cumberland community are:

India	**6.6%**
China	**6.5%**
Lebanon	**4.9%**
Afghanistan	**2.8%**
Nepal	**2.3%**

The top 5 languages spoken in the Cumberland area (other than English) are:

Arabic	**15.2%**
Mandarin	**6.3%**
Cantonese	**4.5%**
Persian/Dari	**4.5%**
Tamil	**3.1%**
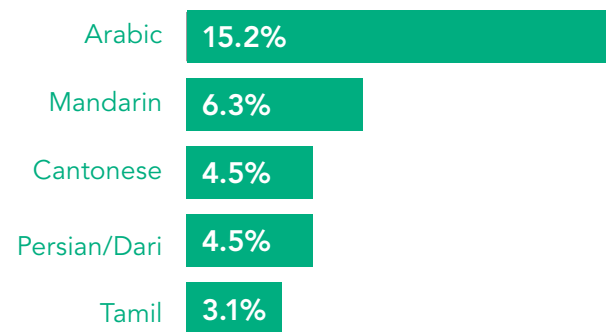
0.6% OF PEOPLE IN THE CUMBERLAND AREA IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER.

[1] Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2036 (.id, April 2019). Population estimate for 2018

[2] Unique characteristics identified by comparing Cumberland statistics with statistics for Greater Sydney. Data sources include 2016 Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics) and Cumberland Council Community Profile (.id)

Cumberland has the **highest proportion of refugees per capita** and the **highest number of people seeking asylum** of any local government area in NSW[3].
Over the past 25 years, **20,000 refugees** have settled in the Cumberland area[4].
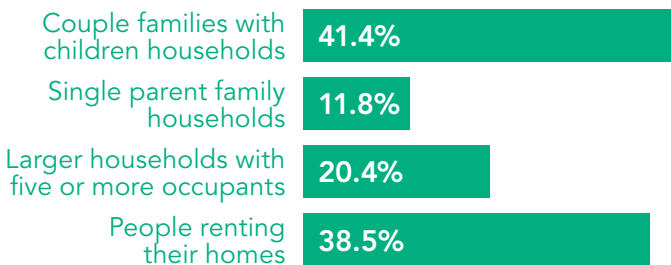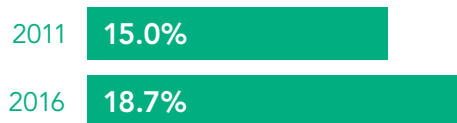
HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSING

The Cumberland area has a high proportion of:

Couple families with children households	41.4%
Single parent family households	11.8%
Larger households with five or more occupants	20.4%
People renting their homes	38.5%

There is a notable increase in high density dwellings (apartments/units) in recent years.

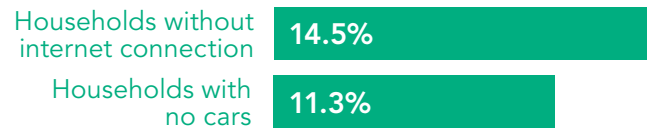|	
2011	15.0%
2016	18.7%

Couple families with children will still be the most common household type in 2036, but there will be a **significant increase of people living alone**

2016	15.6%
2036	17.4%
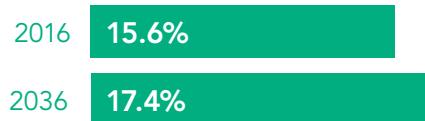
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

The Cumberland area has a high proportion of:

Households without internet connection	14.5%
Households with no cars	11.3%

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

The Cumberland area has a high proportion of:

People looking for work	9.5%
People attending school, TAFE, or university	25.9%
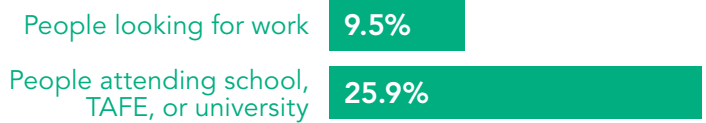
MEDIAN WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2016 WAS $1,377 (COMPARED TO $1,745 FOR GREATER SYDNEY).

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AND CARERS

5.8% OF PEOPLE IN THE CUMBERLAND AREA NEED HELP IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY LIVES DUE TO DISABILITY

11.2% OF PEOPLE IN THE CUMBERLAND AREA PROVIDE UNPAID CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY OR SENIORS IN THE CUMBERLAND AREA

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Community organisations in the Cumberland area (funded and unfunded) **>450**

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[3] Department of Immigration and Border Protection (June 2016), Illegal Maritime Arrivals on Bridging Visa E

[4] Department of Social Services (July 2016), Settlement Database www.data.gov.au/dataset/settlement-reports

CUMBERLAND'S UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

Toongabbie

Girraween

Pendle Hill

Prospect

Wentworthville

Westmead

South Wentworthville

Mays Hill

Pemulwuy

Greystanes

Holroyd

Smithfield

Woodpark

Merrylands West

Merrylands

Guildford West

Guildford

Yennora

Fairfield
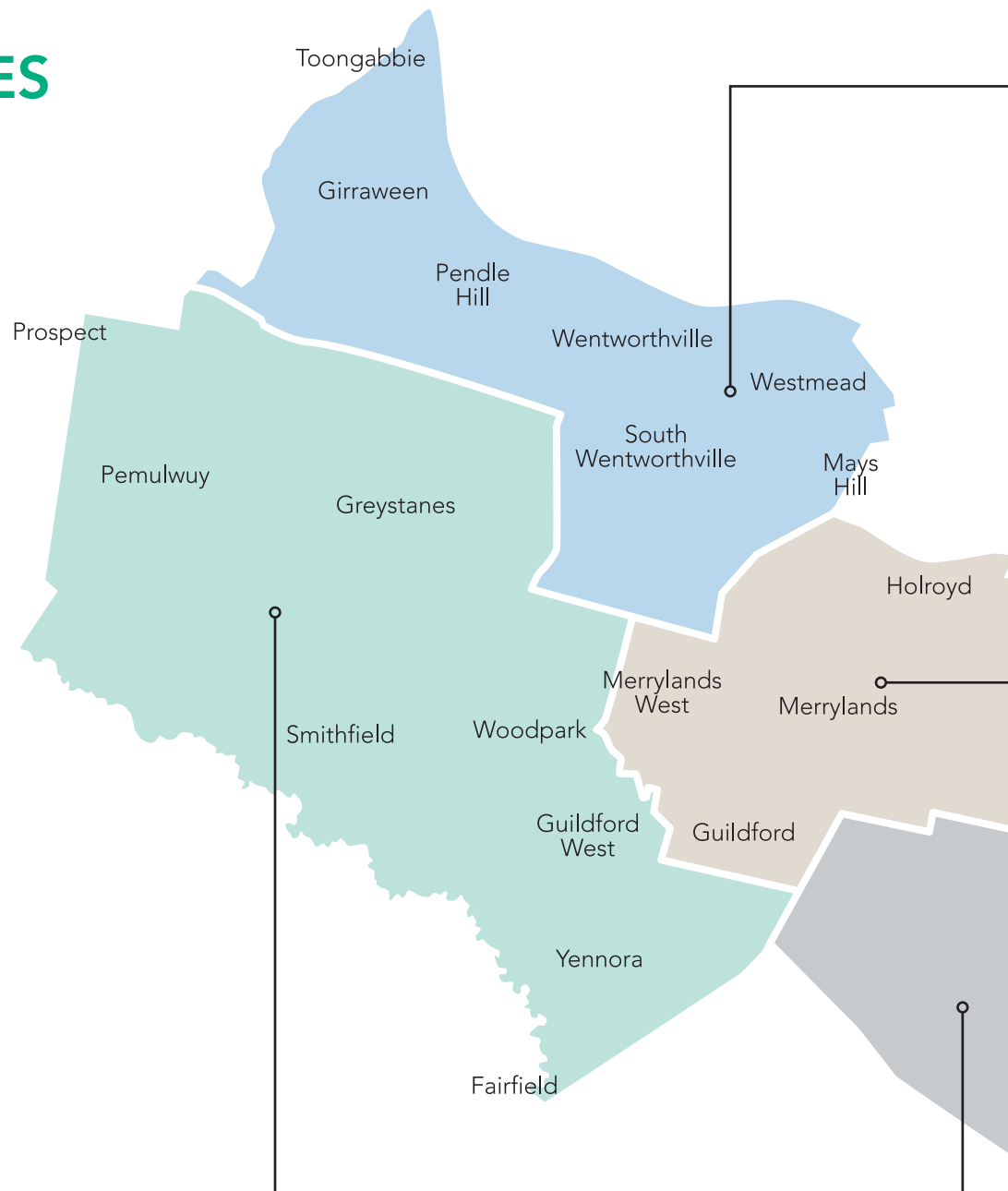
Greystanes Ward

2018 population: **40,245**

Low population growth predicted in Greystanes Ward

High proportions of:
- Couple families with children **6,818 (56.8% of households)**
- Retirees and older people 60 years and over **7,293 (19.5%)**
- Unpaid carers for people with a disability or seniors **3,648 (12.4%)**

South Granville Ward

2018 population: **48,706**

Significant growth predicted in **Auburn**

High proportions of:
- Young people 12 to 24 years **8,584 (19.6%)**
- People looking for work **1,905 (11.5%)**
- People attending school, TAFE or university **12,061 (27.3%)**
- People needing help in their day-to-day lives due to a disability **3,089 (7.0%)**

Wentworthville Ward

2018 population: 45,430

Significant population growth predicted in **Wentworthville** and **Westmead** (in both Cumberland and Parramatta Local Government Areas)

High proportions of:
- People who volunteer **4,303 (13.3%)**
- People employed full-time **11,929 (62.5% of the workforce)**
- Medium density housing **5,300 (36.7% of dwellings)**

Granville Ward

2018 population: 49,208

Significant population growth predicted in **Merrylands** and **Granville** (in both Cumberland and Parramatta LGAs)

High proportions of:
- Higher density dwellings **4,955 (31.6% of dwellings)**
- People living alone **2,989 (20.3% of households)**
- Single parent families **1,880 (12.8% of households)**
- Households with no cars **1,977 (13.4% of households)**
- Households with no internet connection **2,470 (16.6% of households)**

Granville

Auburn

South Granville

Chester Hill

Berala

Rookwood

Lidcombe

Homebush West
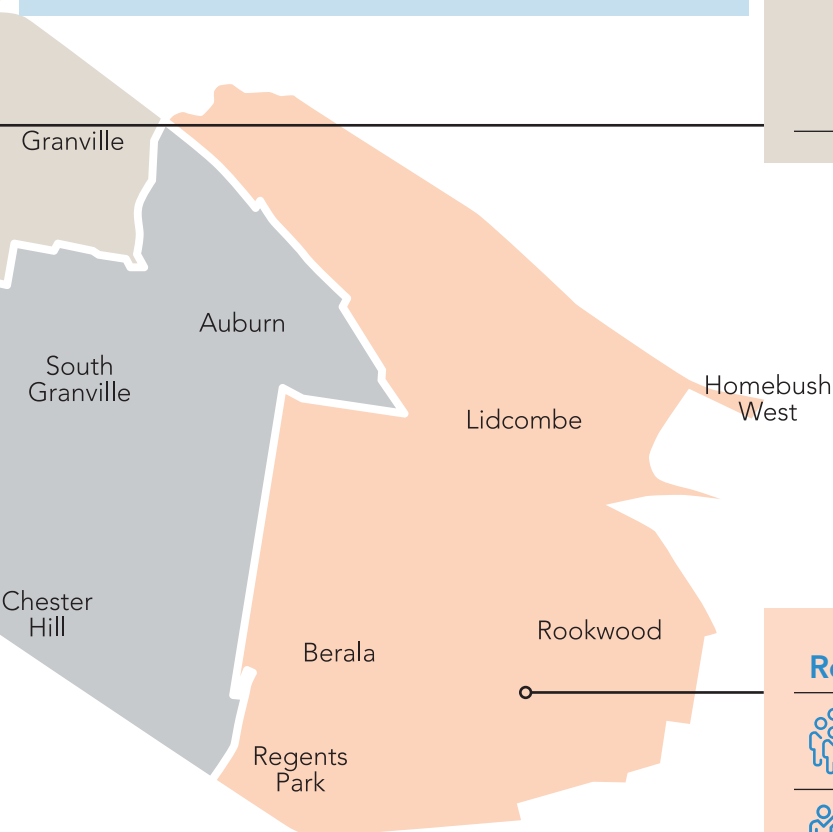
Regents Park

Regents Park Ward

2018 population: 53,730

Significant growth predicted in **Auburn** and **Lidcombe**

High proportions of:
- People born overseas **31,184 (64.5%)**
- People who speak a language other than English at home **37,583 (77.8%)**
- People who have recently arrived in Australia **9,397 (19.4%)**
- People who have recently moved house **20,300 (46.4%)**
- Share houses **1,217 (8.3% of households)**

POPULATION GROWTH 2018-2036

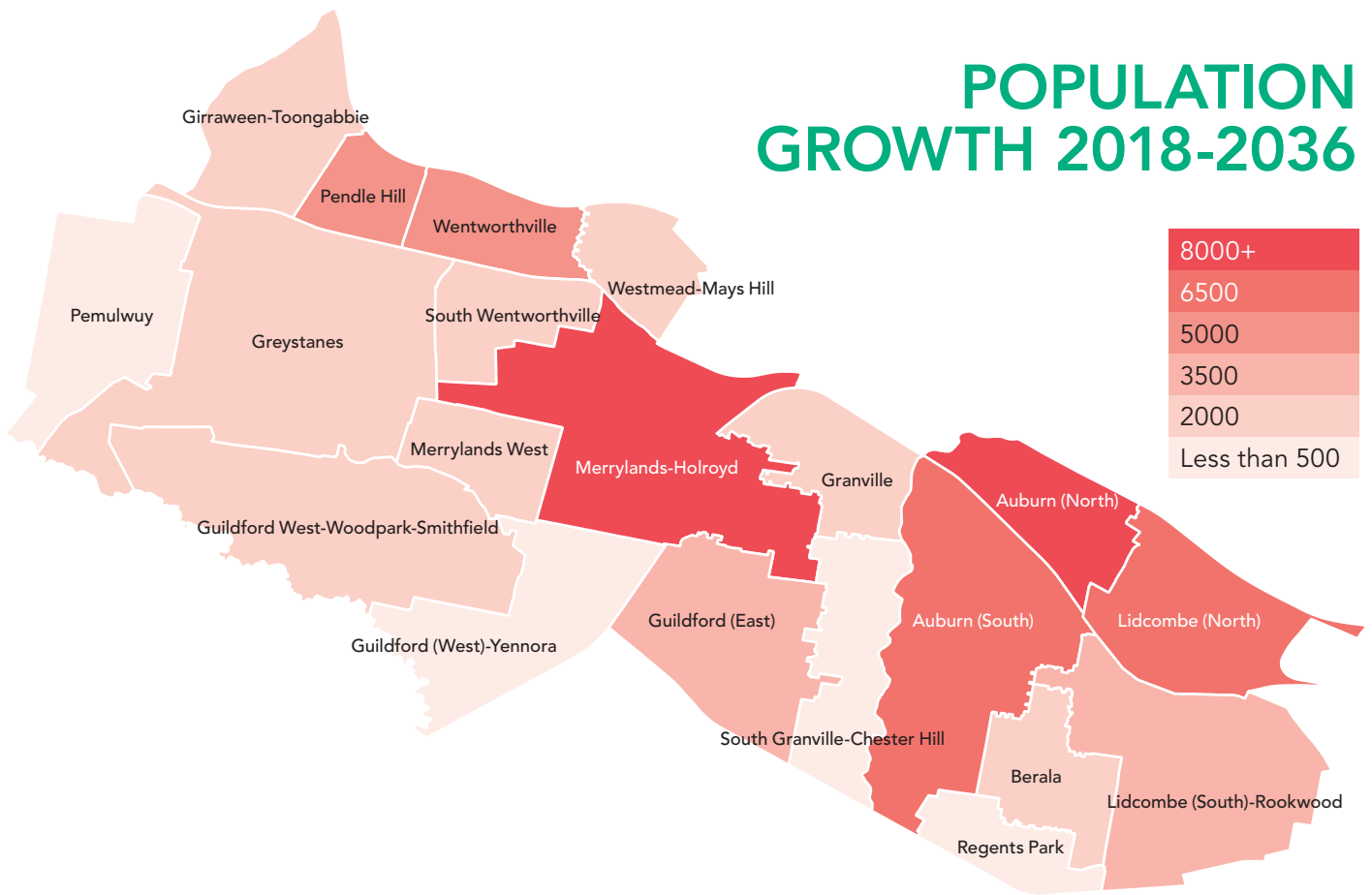| AREA	POPULATION CHANGE	% CHANGE	2036 POPULATION
Auburn (North)	+9,428	+72.7	22,395
Auburn (South)	+5,673	+19.1	35,303
Berala	+1,722	+18.0	11,309
Girraween – Toongabbie	+1,433	+14.5	11,306
Granville	+927	+7.8	12,796
Greystanes	+1,342	+5.6	25,137
Guildford (East)	+3,047	+19.4	18,759
Guildford (West) – Yennora	+1,006	+11.8	9,507
Guildford West – Woodpark – Smithfield	+371	+5.4	7,226
Lidcombe (North)	+6,149	+52.3	17,895
Lidcombe (South) – Rookwood	+2,860	+26.7	13,565
Merrylands – Holroyd	+14,460	+42.0	48,895
Merrylands West	+943	+13.7	7,805
Pemulwuy	-233	-4.3	5,208
Pendle Hill	+4,811	+75.0	11,222
Regents Park	+483	+10.5	5,074
South Granville – Chester Hill	+486	+7.3	7,185
South Wentworthville	+1,043	+14.5	8,211
Wentworthville	+4,657	+46.1	14,760
Westmead – Mays Hill	+1,681	+17.6	11,253
Cumberland LGA-wide	**+62,289**	**+25.7**	**304,811**

WHAT DO THE COMMUNITY PROFILE AND POPULATION GROWTH TELL US?

Population characteristics can provide clues as to how the community might use community facilities and what programs and services they might need or be interested in. They therefore assist Council in planning and programming facilities.

Population growth and change

Population growth in an area will significantly increase demand for community facilities in the future. It will also increase demand for programs and services for all age groups. Population growth and changing demographic characteristics also indicate a need for flexible, multipurpose facilities that cater to a broad range of interests and can adapt as community needs change. They also indicate the need for the continuous review and amendment to facility programing to respond effectively to change.

Families with young children

High numbers of families with young children suggest the need for activities, programs and services for parents with children (e.g. playgroups, mothers' groups, parenting classes) as well as informal meeting spaces for socialising and play. Spaces also need to be designed for parents and their children, with ramps, parents' rooms and child-friendly spaces. Access to quality education and care services is also important.

Young people and students

High proportions of young people and/or students indicate a specific need for access to leisure and lifestyle opportunities (including sport, recreation, entertainment and social activities) as well as access to study/reading areas, informal meeting spaces, Wi-Fi and computer access, youth groups, events and youth support services. Young people also require access to learning and training opportunities and job seeking services. Extended facility opening hours would also be advantageous to this group.

Older people

Ageing populations require facilities and programs that are accessible to seniors. This includes programs and services for older people such as life-long learning programs, social and interest groups and classes, computer training and exercise activities. Design features such as ramps and accessible toilets are also essential.

Culturally diverse communities

Facilities in areas with culturally and linguistically diverse communities must be tailored to cultural needs. Providing multilingual information, English language classes, culturally specific support groups and services, and amenities and programs that support specific cultural practices (such as prayer rooms and female only spaces and programs) are examples of ways that community facilities can be responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

The physical, spiritual, cultural and social connection to Country is integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and should also influence the way community facilities and activities are designed. This can form the basis for cross-cultural sharing opportunities amongst Cumberland's diverse cultural groups.

The high number of refugees and people seeking asylum in Cumberland indicate the need for the provision of specialist services that cater to the specific needs of these groups. Such services are provided by specialist community organisations at Auburn Centre for Community. This example demonstrates how community facilities can be programmed to meet the specific needs of a local community.

New community members

High numbers of people newly arrived to Australia and the Cumberland area suggests the need for places and activities within community facilities that enable people to meet and connect with others, so social connections are formed quickly and easily. These can include formal activities as well as spaces that facilitate informal interactions.

High density living and larger households

Smaller dwellings in high density areas, and the associated lack of separate rooms, living spaces and private open space, indicate a greater need for easy access to spaces for noise-generating activities, including music practice and private functions. Community facilities can also provide respite for those living in larger households by providing quiet spaces to relax, read or study outside the home.

People living alone

A high proportion of people living alone suggests a need for public places that promote social interaction and community participation to reduce social isolation.

People living with a disability and their carers

Facilities should be designed to be universally accessible, including ramps, accessible toilets and parking and adult change tables. In areas where there are high numbers of people with disabilities, disability support services and programs and respite care should be available.

Households with no cars or internet

Facilities should be available in the local area and be located close to train lines or frequent bus services and in town centres or other key destinations. This is particularly important in areas of low car ownership. Low levels of private internet access suggests the need for substantial free public access to computers and the internet in various public spaces, including at Council-owned community facilities.

Job seekers

Community facilities can assist job seekers through access to employment services and training spaces that can accommodate programs with an education, training and job-ready focus.

Low income households

Programs, services and hireable spaces and equipment should be affordable to ensure access for all households regardless of how much they earn.

Volunteers

Volunteers are valuable assets of any community. Providing opportunities to volunteer at facilities, as well as supporting the many volunteer-run organisations and groups operating in Cumberland, provides benefits to Council and the community.

Community organisations

Community organisations play an important role in providing services and programs for the community. The significant number of community organisations operating in the Cumberland area require facilities and spaces to run their programs and services. Council's community facilities play an important role in providing low cost spaces for hire or license by community organisations. The inevitable increase in community needs for programs and services associated with population growth, will increase demand from community organisations for facilities and spaces in the area.

Community and stakeholder engagement

Engaging and listening to the community and key stakeholders were fundamental in the process of developing a relevant and successful strategy for community facilities. Those who participated in the process provided valuable information that directly informed the priority areas, strategies and actions outlined in this Strategy.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES SURVEY

An online survey was hosted on Council's Have Your Say website from September to December 2018. The survey sought feedback on facilities and ideas for the future from the broader community as well as existing facility hirers (including individuals, organisations and groups). The Have Your Say webpage also acted as an online portal for information relating the project including objectives, key dates, and contacts. The website could be translated into a variety of languages using its automatic language translation function.

433 SURVEY RESPONSES

CENTRE FEEDBACK BOARDS

Feedback boards were placed at each community facility on which patrons were invited to provide comments in an informal manner. Information was provided in English, as well as the most commonly spoken languages other than English within the each facility's local area.

195 COMMENTS RECEIVED

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council consulted a number of Advisory Committees in the process of developing this Strategy. These committees included:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee
- Access Committee
- Arts Advisory Committee
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Youth Week 2019 Planning Team

6 COMMITTEES CONSULTED

CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY SECTOR FORUM

Council hosted a Community Sector Forum on 30 October 2018 which was attend by community organisations including organisations that use Council's facilities. An interactive activity was conducted in which participants imagined and recorded their vision for community facilities in the future. This included capturing the attributes participants believed would make community facilities more useful and welcoming to local organisations and community members.

49 COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED

LESSEE SURVEY AND FACILITY VISITS

All lessees were visited at their facilities and they were invited to participate in a survey about their use of the facility.

26 LEASED FACILITIES VISITED

FEEDBACK FROM OTHER PROJECTS

Feedback on community facilities, received during engagement processes conducted for other Council projects, was also considered. These included engagement processes associated with the Cumberland Community Strategic Plan, Council's Community Satisfaction Survey and various Council strategies.

COUNCIL STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Council staff offered insight into operating and managing community facilities as well as using them to provide services. Interviews were held with individual teams and a group workshop was conducted.

> "Everyone is family!
> If you're new, everyone
> makes you feel welcome."
> (Community member)

What the community told us

Many community members told us how much they value their local facilities and the services and programs provided. Community members and stakeholders also identified a number of ways Council's community facilities could be improved to better meet their own needs, or the needs of their families, friends, clients or group members.

FACILITY LOCATIONS

The location of facilities was identified as the most important factor for many community members. The importance of having locally available facilities that are accessible by public transport and/or have adequate parking was consistently raised. Close proximity to shops, services and other amenities was also identified to be of high importance, as was clear signage and wayfinding.

PLACES FOR ALL

Community facilities were recognised by the community as important spaces for connection and community interactions. Community members noted the need for spaces that are accessible to people of all abilities and welcoming to people of all ages and backgrounds. This included accessible and child-friendly design, a feeling of safety and recognition of the cultural diversity of the local area, in particular the local Aboriginal culture. The community also would like programs that provide opportunities to connect with and learn from people from different walks of life, such as through intergenerational or cross-cultural activities. Although cost of hire and programs was often cited as a significant determinant for users, having activities, services and events that are of interest were identified to outweigh barriers associated with affordability for most people.

CONNECTIONS WITH FACILITY STAFF

The community told us that rapport developed between facility staff and users significantly improves their experience. Council's staffed centres in Auburn, Berala and Guildford consistently perform better than non-staffed facilities, both in terms of utilisation and user satisfaction. Staffed centres and libraries are also used as points of contact with Council where the community can access a range of information and resources.

MANAGEMENT AND BOOKINGS PROCESSES

At the time of writing, separate bookings processes are in place for Council's libraries, staffed multipurpose community facilities, non-staffed community centres, halls and spaces and Council's park halls. This creates complexity and reduces opportunities to effectively coordinate bookings and referrals across the different types of facilities. Council staff involved in the management and use of facilities expressed a desire for an improved bookings system and keyless venue access for hirers. The need for an online customer request management system for logging maintenance and cleaning requests was also identified by Council staff and the community. These improved systems were seen as a key way to reduce uncertainty and wait times for hirers, users and provide a more streamlined process for Council staff.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Residents reported that they enjoy the range and quality of programs offered by Council and community organisations and there is a high level of interest for more activities. Specific activities that were identified to be of high value included programs for seniors and youth, and language, computer and exercise classes. Although engagement findings suggest that programs are generally welcoming to a diverse range of people, some users still want a greater variety of programs that are not target-group specific. Some members of the community also suggested increasing programming at libraries, however they understood there is an existing shortage of available spaces.

KEY FACILITY INCLUSIONS

The community and stakeholders identified key features they would like to see included at community facilities. These included larger activity spaces (that can accommodate more than 300 people), commercial kitchens, better connection to quality outdoor spaces, flexible spaces that cater to different uses, youth spaces, performing arts spaces, and informal spaces for socialising and relaxing.

Stakeholders noted the short-supply of meeting rooms across the Cumberland area and the increasing need for storage, especially for long-term hirers. Community service providers expressed interest in more office spaces at community centres to assist localised service delivery. In terms of technology, audio-visual systems, powerpoints and reliable Wi-Fi are considered minimum inclusions in venues for hire.

People also expressed an interest in environmentally sustainable facility design. Extending opening hours was also identified as something that would better accommodate those who work, as well as a way to activate facilities and local areas during the evening.

LOOK AND FEEL

The look and feel of a community facility contributes to how safe and welcoming a facility appears. A high standard of maintenance and cleanliness was seen by community members and stakeholders as crucial to ensuring positive facility user experience. In particular, many parents stated that this was a determining factor in choosing education and care services for their children. Landscaping improvements, regular painting, introducing murals or art works (by local artists) on blank walls and general maintenance upkeep were suggested as ways to improve the look and feel of Council's facilities. The importance of good natural lighting and ventilation was also identified.

CO-DESIGNING TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS

Whether designing new facilities, upgrading existing spaces, or programming facilities, the involvement of the community is seen as vital to create a sense of ownership and pride. Co-designing with end users was identified as a way to ensuring the needs of the local community will be successfully realised. Engaging local artists and community groups, and reflecting local heritage and culture in facility designs were also identified as important.

PROMOTION OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Some members of the community informed Council that they were not aware of what community facilities were, what they are used for, what the programs they had on offer and what would be available to them. Community noticeboards and information, both at facilities and on Council's website, promoting all activities scheduled at facilities (Council and non-Council provided) were identified as ways to generate greater awareness and increase utilisation.

Community facility assessment findings

An assessment of Council's community facilities identified the following key findings in relation to the distribution, facility quantity, quality, use and utilisation of our facilities.

The assessment of facility quality was undertaken for community hubs, centres, halls, spaces, libraries, arts and cultural facilities, and leased facilities. It involved rating these facilities against leading practice facility planning and design principles (in relation to location, siting, visual prominence, access and accessibility, building design, look and feel, amenities and functionality). 11% of facilities were determined to be 'excellent' in terms of their quality. 53% were determined to be 'good', 30% 'fair' and 6% 'poor'.

Building quality assessment ratings for Council's community facilities

COMMUNITY HUBS, CENTRES, HALLS AND SPACES

Distribution and quantity

Council's planned community hub (The Granville Centre) and three staffed multipurpose community centres (Auburn Centre for Community, Berala Community Centre and Guildford Community Centre) are concentrated in the eastern and central sections of the Cumberland area. There is currently a gap in staffed facilities in the western section of the area and in Cumberland's strategic centre, Merrylands.

Council's non-staffed facilities (community centres, town halls, community halls, park halls and meeting rooms) are reasonably well distributed across the Cumberland area.

While there is a high number of community centres, halls and spaces, industry benchmarks[5] suggest a shortfall in terms of total floor area. There is currently approximately 13,234 square metres of floor area across these facilities in Cumberland. Benchmarks indicate an existing shortage of approximately 6,200 square metres.

With the population of the Cumberland area projected to increase significantly in the future, if no change is made to the total floor area (e.g. through facility expansions or developments) then this floor area shortfall will be further exacerbated[6], with particular shortages in Lidcombe, Auburn, Merrylands and Wentworthville.

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[5] The benchmark of 80 square metres floor area per 1000 people (80sqm/1000) is a widely recognised benchmark for local government provided community centres and spaces. There is approximately 55 square metres per 1000 people of Council provided community space provided within the Cumberland area in 2019.

[6] If no change in the total floor area is made, the rate of Council provided community centre and space in 2036 will be approximately 43 square metres per 1000 people (well below industry benchmarks), with a shortfall of approximately 11,200 square metres.

Facility quality

An assessment of Council's centres, halls and spaces against leading practice community facility planning and design principles indicated the following:

- Staffed multipurpose community centres have many high performing aspects. Generally, they are well-located and easy accessed as they are located close to public transport, shops and other services. They also are visually prominent, that is, they are easily seen and recognised as community places to welcome and encourage visitors and users. They are also appealing in look and feel, flexible and multifunctional in their designs (to cater to a wide range of activities) and include a wide range of good quality amenities.

- Community centres, halls and spaces vary greatly in terms of their quality. Allan G Ezzy Community Centre was identified as the highest performing facility in this category. Similarly to the staffed multipurpose community centres, this facility is well-located, visually prominent, appealing in look and feel, has a flexible and multifunctional design and includes good quality amenities. Granville and Auburn Town Halls were also higher performing facilities. While the majority of facilities of this type were considered to be 'good' there were also a notable number considered to be 'fair' in terms of their quality. Particular issues identified related to poor siting, inaccessibility, inability of the building to cater to a variety of activities and uses, lack of or poor-quality amenities, furniture and fixtures and unappealing look and feel.

- Across the facility network, there is a shortage of large halls and spaces that can accommodate activities and gatherings for large groups. Council's data indicates these spaces are extremely popular and in high demand. There is also a lack of suitable amenities to support larger functions and events (such as commercial kitchens, storage for equipment, lightweight and moveable furniture and technology).

Use and utilisation[7]

Council's staffed multipurpose community centres are utilised at a significantly higher rate than non-staffed centres, halls and spaces (in terms of the percentage of total hours available that each facility is booked/used). This could reasonably be assumed to be due to the higher building quality, the range of spaces available, flexibility of spaces (so they are suitable for a variety of activities) and the proactive role that on-site staff play in promoting and programming these facilities.

Of the non-staffed facilities, Allan G Ezzy had the highest rate of weekly hours of use, followed by Wentworthville Community Centre. The most utilised spaces are generally large halls that can accommodate large groups of people including Redgum Centre hall, Merrylands Park Hall, Prospect Room at Merrylands Community Centre and the Main Hall at Allan G Ezzy Community Centre. Facilities with the lowest levels of utilisation include Ted Burge Sports Hall, Bathurst Street Hall and Norrie Maley Kiosk. Bathurst Street Hall also performed poorly in the facility quality assessment.

Most programs provided at Council's community centres, halls and spaces are community run (provided by community organisations or groups). At staffed multipurpose community centres 71% of programs or activities are community run and 29% are provided by Council. The majority of programs or activities provided at these facilities fall in the categories of 'specific cultural or new arrival groups' (e.g. language classes, women's groups), 'children and families', 'faith-based' and 'youth'.

In non-staffed centres, halls and spaces, 82% of programs or activities are community run, 7% are provided by Council and 11% are provided by commercial organisations/businesses. The majority of programs or activities provided at these facilities fall in the categories of 'faith-based', 'specific cultural or new arrival groups' and 'arts and culture'. In terms of the types and numbers of programs, activities and services that are provided or occur at these facilities, Auburn Town Hall had the highest number of unique programs provided, followed by Merrylands Community Centre and Granville Town Hall, Allan G Ezzy Community Centre and Wentworthville Community Centre. The high number of uses at Auburn and Granville Town Halls correspond with engagement findings that suggest high demand for larger, flexible spaces. These facilities were also assessed to be of good quality.

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[7] Use (programs and bookings) and utilisation findings are based on the assessment of the most recent data (as at January 2019).

LIBRARIES

Distribution and quantity

Library services are well distributed across the Cumberland area, with libraries located in most town centres. Town centres in which a library is not located are serviced by libraries in nearby centres.

The State Library of NSW provides benchmarks for library buildings. These benchmarks recommend an approximate size (floor area) a library should be based on the size of the population it is intending to service. The benchmarks indicate that Council's central libraries are reasonably well-sized however, all branch libraries are undersized. With the Cumberland population projected to increase in the future, if there are no increases to library floor areas, benchmarks suggest all of Council's libraries will be significantly undersized. The exception to this is the planned library at The Granville Centre which will have adequate floor area to service its population catchment in the Cumberland area.

Benchmarking findings (indicating a shortage in floor area) are supported by librarians and library staff, who reported a shortage of space in libraries in general as well as particular shortages of meeting rooms for classes, group study areas, space for children's programs, space for young people, reading and lounge areas.

Facility quality

Council's central libraries (Auburn and Merrylands) along with Regent's Park Library performed the highest in the assessment of facility quality. These libraries in general were identified as being well located, functional, safe and secure, and to have good access to transport and higher quality amenities.

For libraries in general, aspects identified to be working well include location, access to transport and amenities. Those aspects in general that require improvement include universal access and the siting of the building (in particular a lack of street presence or connection).

Use and utilisation

The use and utilisation of libraries is not within the scope of this Strategy. Library services and visitation are addressed in the *Cumberland Library Strategy 2018-2021*.

Cumberland Council libraries – existing and State Library of NSW recommended floor areas

LIBRARY	EXISTING OR PLANNED FLOOR AREA (SQM)	RECOMMENDED FLOOR AREA 2018 (SQM)	FLOOR AREA SHORTFALL 2018 (SQM)	FUTURE RECOMMENDED FLOOR AREA 2036 (SQM)
Auburn Library	1,900	2,468	568	2,973
Merrylands Library	2,000	2,425	425	2,942
Granville Library (at The Granville Centre)	800	819	19	883
Greystanes Library	179	1,557	1,378	1,595
Guildford Library	444	1,846	1,402	2,008
Lidcombe Library	360	1,321	961	1,633
Regents Park Library	380	978	598	1,105
Wentworthville Library	671	2,023	1,352	2,458

ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Distribution and quantity

There is a need for a broader network of arts-focused spaces across the Cumberland area. Industry benchmarks[9] indicate the need for a multipurpose performing arts or cultural centre in Cumberland and the need for additional arts and creative spaces across the Cumberland area to meet the needs of the area's growing population. The *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029* also identified this need. Key areas of particular need include Merrylands, Guildford, Lidcombe and Greystanes/ Pemulwuy.

Facility quality

The Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio is currently very constrained by the small building size, however there are plans underway to expand this facility to improve its functionality.

Use and utilisation

The programing and use of arts and cultural facilities is not within the scope of this Strategy. The *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029* provides direction in relation to arts and cultural programs and events across the Cumberland area, including those that could occur from Council's facilities.

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[9] *Growth Centres Development Code*, Former Growth Centre Commission, October 2006. This benchmark for arts facilities is still widely recognised and referred to despite the Commission's disbandment and subsequent archiving of this document.

EDUCATION AND CARE FACILITIES

Distribution and quantity of services

Council's education and care services are predominantly focused in the western and central sections of the Cumberland area. There is one Council-run service in Auburn and no services in the suburbs of Lidcombe, Berala or Regents Park, which represents a lack of equitable access to Council's services for the Cumberland community.

A review of the number of places available in early education and care services within the Cumberland area was undertaken in 2019 and involved consideration of Council and non-Council provided places. This review included a benchmarking exercise, which indicated the following (at the time of writing):

- There is a gap of 659 places (in centre based care) for children 0 to 5 years. There are particular shortages of places the eastern section of the Cumberland area and in Guildford and Merrylands

- By 2036, if no additional places are provided, there will be a gap of 2,509 places (in centre based care) for children 0 to 5 years

- There is currently an adequate supply of places in out of school hours care services for children 5 to 12 years and no projected gap in the future. Places however are unequally distributed across the Cumberland area and by 2036 there will be demand for additional OOSH places in some high growth areas including Auburn and Merrylands.

It is important to note that benchmarks are only one indicator of demand and consideration should also be given to the current reportedly high vacancy rates in many services across the LGA. Of 79 education and care services interviewed during the review, 23 services (or 35%) reported having vacancies, some with low occupancy levels.

There are also recent pressures on OOSH services

emerging in high growth areas across Sydney. Population growth has seen student numbers rapidly increase in some schools, increasing need for additional school space. In some instances spaces used by OOSH services are being reclaimed as classroom space, requiring OOSH services to relocate, downsize or close. Simultaneously, demand for OOSH services is increasing at these schools. This issue is important to track as it may impact on OOSH supply and gaps in some areas in the future.

Facility quality

An assessment of the quality of Council's education and care facilities is not part of the scope of this Strategy. Facility building requirements and quality is regulated through Education and Care Services National Regulations and NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Education Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017. The legislation directs such aspects as the amount of indoor and outdoor space required, building siting, car parking and access etc. Council considers the regulations to be minimum standards and aim for best practice in the development and provision its education and care facilities.

Services

An assessment of the quality of services at education and care facilities is not within the scope of this Strategy. These aspects are addressed in the *Cumberland Children and Families Strategy 2019-2023*.

LEASED OR LICENSED FACILITIES

Distribution and quantity of services

Facilities leased for community use are relatively evenly distributed across the western section of the Cumberland area. There are also concentrations of facilities in Merrylands and Lidcombe.

There are no industry benchmarks for leased or licensed facilities that can direct Council's planning however, Council recognises the important role these facilities play in supporting the broader facility network to meet the needs of the Cumberland community.

Facility quality

Facilities leased for community use vary significantly in terms of their quality. A select few were assessed to be of very good quality. PCYC Auburn and Auburn City Men's Shed are examples of high-quality facilities. These facilities are performing well in terms of their functionality, amenities, look and feel and safety. A large proportion were identified to be of 'good' quality and a similar proportion to be 'fair'. There were a number of facilities deemed to be of 'poor' quality. A notable number of leased or licensed facilities are small, older, poorly located facilities with limited functionality. There are also several facilities that have recently been vacated (including scout and guide halls and early childhood health centres) and, as a result, they are poorly maintained.

Use and utilisation

The highest types of usage for Council's leased/licensed facilities are scout and guide halls, youth-focused facilities and early childhood health centres. Early childhood health centres and many scout and guide halls however, are only used on limited days of the week and at limited times. Council does not require lessees to report on use and utilisation of their facilities, therefore further analysis on types and levels of use has not been undertaken. There is however the opportunity to address this in the future through agreements for lessees/licensees to report on use.

CONSIDERING NEIGHBOURING POPULATIONS

In the planning of Council's community facilities, consideration also needs to be given to neighbouring areas and how their populations may use Cumberland Council's facilities and the impact this may have. This is because local government area boundaries typically do not factor into a person's choice of which facilities they use. Rather, choice regarding the use of facilities is commonly influenced by factors such as distance to the facility from home or work, accessibility, offerings and quality.

The importance of considering neighbouring populations is particularly relevant in Cumberland town centres and neighbourhoods that border areas where significant population growth is projected. Key areas where this is relevant include Granville, Wentworthville and Westmead. This is not to say that Cumberland Council needs to independently address the needs of neighbouring communities, rather it highlights the importance of coordination and collaboration with neighbouring councils in the planning of facilities. Conversations with neighbouring councils were conducted during the development of this Strategy for coordination purposes.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The Granville Centre represents a new style of community facility for Cumberland. The centre reflects a key trend in facility planning, that is, a trend towards larger consolidated facilities that co-locate many services and offerings and serve as key focal points and destinations for their surrounding communities. Local infrastructure contributions in high growth areas, together with Council's ownership of well-located sites in town centres, represent opportunities to develop additional hubs in key centres that could address a major component of the projected gap in facility floor area in the future.

- Council's staffed multipurpose community centres are of high quality and highly utilised. There is however inequitable distribution of this type of facility across the Cumberland area. Consideration should be given to addressing this issue through the provision of a staffed multipurpose community centre in the western section of the area, potentially through the staffing of an existing, high quality facility.

- There is a considerable number of good quality community centres, halls and spaces that could be improved through minor amendments (such as upgrading amenities or improving aesthetics). There is also a significant number of facilities of average quality. Many of these could also be improved through similar amendments however, for those of very low quality, a cost-benefit analysis approach should be undertaken to determine the appropriate level of investment. This particularly relates to facilities with aspects that are more difficult to amend (such as location and siting).

- For those good quality community centres, halls and spaces with lower levels of utilisation, there is the opportunity to undertake more focused, active promotion. An improved and better coordinated online bookings process could also assist to increase utilisation levels (with hirers seeking space more actively referred to other facilities with capacity).

- It is unlikely Council alone will have the resources to address the significant gap in community space projected in the future. The range of facility funding options identified in the 'Strategic context' section of this Strategy will need to be explored. Council could also play a role in liaising with non-Council organisations with spaces suitable for community use (such as schools, religious institutions, sports and other clubs etc.) and negotiating and facilitating access for broader community use.

- With the exception of Granville Library, all of Council's libraries will be undersized in the future. Local infrastructure contributions can contribute to the expansion or redevelopment of libraries in high growth areas (such as Auburn, Lidcombe, Merrylands and Wentworthville). Other funding opportunities will need to be explored for Council's other libraries. Opportunities to co-locate other functions with Council's libraries, in the form of community hubs, should also be explored.

- Consideration should be given to the provision of a performing arts or cultural centre in the Cumberland area, suitable for large performances and events. While this could serve as the major, Cumberland-wide venue, other multipurpose spaces suitable for local performances and rehearsals could be provided in any future community hub developments. Similarly, spaces for creative arts and making should also be incorporated into future hubs.

- The inequitable access to Council's early education and care facilities should be addressed by investigating the potential to provide an additional centre-based care service in the eastern section of the Cumberland area. The quantity of out of school hours care places should continue to be monitored to ensure adequate places are provided in the future. Coordination with the Department of Education is also required. There is the potential for Council to play a role in addressing future gaps in high growth areas.

- There are many vacant leased facilities that provide opportunities for repurposing. These include several early childhood health facilities that are co-located with libraries or community centres, that could be utilised as meeting and activity spaces.

- For leased facilities of poor quality, a cost benefit analysis approach should be undertaken to determine the appropriate level of investment. As Council's resources are not infinite, it may be determined that Council investment in facilities of very poor quality is not appropriate. Options for these facilities include offering the facility for lease or license to a community organisation with capacity to invest in its condition, or rationalisation of the facility.

- Requiring lessees and licensees to report on use and utilisation would enable Council to better understand the type and extent of community needs being met through Council's facilities.

Key directions for community facilities

Principles, a hierarchy and standards have been developed for Council's community facilities. These have been informed by contemporary trends in community facility provision, with principles reflecting key characteristics of successful community facilities.

The principles, hierarchy and standards should guide the planning, design and management of Council's community facilities, including facilities provided in partnership with non-Council organisations. They will be particularly useful in decision making processes, including whether proposals or requests for community facilities should be accepted or pursued by Council (including those submitted by the community, or by developers in the form or Voluntary Planning Agreements). In such cases, a proposal can be assessed against the hierarchy, standards and principles to determine if it is appropriate and suitable.

PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Function as part of a network and equitably distributed	Community facilities across the Cumberland area should be considered as a network of facilities that work together to meet a diverse range of community interests and needs. Planning facilities collectively enables Council to take a more strategic, economically sustainable approach to facility provision. It can help avoid unnecessary or unintentional duplication of amenities and services and can also help Council to plan for unique specialist offerings at individual facilities. Consideration should also be given to how the network of facilities is distributed across the Cumberland area, with focus on creating equitable access to facilities for all communities across Cumberland.
Centrally located and integrated with other services and facilities	For ease of access for users, community facilities are best located near shops, services, schools and other facilities, as well as near public transport. As such, community facilities (in particular community hubs, centres and libraries) are best located in town and neighbourhood centres. This approach ensures community facilities are conveniently accessed and can be easily visited during a single trip to multiple destinations. Locating community facilities in town centres can also increase the level of personal safety for users and facility staff, as these are typically active, busy places with high levels of passive surveillance.

Co-locating various facilities and services on a single site in the form of a community hub is emerging as a key trend in community facility planning. This approach enables visitors to access a range of services in one location and encourages coordination and referrals between services. The hub model also provides efficiencies for councils, through the concentration of resources. |

Visually prominent	Community facilities should be highly visible and easy identified as public places available for community use. Strong presentation to the street is recommended for community hubs and centres, libraries and art and cultural facilities. While it is acceptable these facilities be provided in multistorey arrangements, it is important they maintain a ground floor presence, that is, at least part of the facility should be located on the ground floor. Education and care facilities should be recognisable with good wayfinding; however, they do not need the same level of street presence as other facilities. Their siting also needs to factor in noise mitigation, safety and vehicle access.
Accessible	Community facilities should be within easy and safe walking distance to regular public transport. They should also be connected to prominent pedestrian and cycling routes. While a focus should be on access by active and public transport, there will also be the need for some car parking, including for community and service buses. Community facilities should also comply with the principles of universal access, which direct the design of places that are accessible and usable for people with a disability, and also benefit people with other access requirements such as parents with prams and seniors (in addition to all members of the community).
Multipurpose and adaptable	Community facilities should be designed to accommodate a range of different uses and user groups, ideally at the same time. This can be achieved through the provision of a range of spaces of different sizes, spaces with flexible layouts, and spaces that can be easily reconfigured. Moveable room dividers, light and moveable furniture, removable stages and pull-out tiered seating are examples of adaptable inclusions for multipurpose facilities. Adequate storage is also an essential feature, as it enables many user groups to store their equipment on-site. As multipurpose facilities can cater to a wide range of uses, they are typically highly utilised and have greater potential to adapt to changing community needs over time. 'Adaptable' also refers to responding to new innovations and technological advancements. A facility should be able to incorporate new technologies as they emerge in the future.
Access to outdoor areas	Access to quality outdoor spaces for exploration, learning and play is particularly important for education and care facilities. Provision of access to outdoor areas can also be beneficial at community hubs, centres and spaces. Direct access to enclosed outdoor areas can enhance the suitability and appeal of activity spaces for uses such as playgroup, events and private functions. In addition, locating a community facility adjacent to a park or civic square can enable the facility to host large-scale community events. Consideration should also be given to the co-location of community facilities and outdoor recreation facilities (such as sports courts). Incorporating community gardens within outdoor spaces can also provide many benefits. Community gardens are places that bring people together over a common interest, facilitate new connections and friendships and can provide fresh produce for use in cooking and healthy eating programs at facilities.
Safe and secure	All community facilities should comply with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, to ensure they are safe places for users and facility staff. Town centre and main street locations can also enhance facility safety, as these tend to be more active, busy locations with good passive surveillance.

Welcoming and inviting	Community facilities should be inviting in terms of their look and feel. They should be well-maintained places that people want to visit and spend time at. Friendly, approachable, knowledgeable and helpful staff also assist to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere at community facilities. Community facilities should be welcoming to people of all ages and backgrounds. Examples of how this can be achieved include the provision of programs and services relevant to a diverse range of groups, promotion of facilities and provision of information in different languages and the provision of culturally appropriate amenities and spaces.
Meet local community needs and reflect local identity	Facilities should be planned, designed and programmed to meet the needs of their local communities. There is also the opportunity to reflect and promote the local community identity, history and heritage through building design, landscape, public art and inclusion and display of local talent at the facility. Community facilities that reflect the local identity can become key community focal points and help to facilitate community pride and belonging.
Actively managed and monitored	To ensure community facilities continuously meet community needs and are highly utilised, they must be 'actively managed'. This involves researching and continually monitoring community interests and needs (including through community consultation), identifying new program opportunities, developing programs and facilitating partnerships with providers. It also involves building relationships with users and promoting the facility and its offerings to the broader community. Monitoring facility utilisation and facility use against community need is also important to ensure maximum community benefit is achieved. This applies to Council managed facilities, as well as facilities leased or licensed to other organisations.
Affordable	Ensuring programs provided at facilities and venue hire fees are affordable is particularly important in an area such as Cumberland, which has larger families and lower average household incomes than the Sydney average. Venue hire fees should be based on ability to pay, and higher rates should be charged for commercial hirers to offset and support affordable rates for not-for-profit providers and community groups.
Environmentally sustainable	Environmentally sustainable development aims to meet the environmental needs of the Cumberland community today, while ensuring future generations enjoy the same benefits. The environmental footprint of Council's facilities can be reduced by including features that reduce water and energy usage and waste production. There are also opportunities for local councils to lead by example by incorporating and promoting new sustainable technologies. Environmentally sustainable facility buildings typically have lower operating costs and can therefore provide ongoing economic benefits.
Economically responsible	Community facilities should be financially sustainable. In addition to significant capital costs, operating costs need to be considered. This highlights the importance of a strategic approach to facility planning and investigating opportunities for consolidation of facilities and resources across the facility network.

Community hub model:
The Granville Centre

The new Granville Centre will be a place where the local community can meet, study, create, and perform, as well as access Council services. It will be in the heart of Granville co-located with Granville Memorial Park and Granville Swimming Centre, within the town centre. The facility will include venues for hire, a dedicated youth space, a library, and a gallery and arts space. Opening in 2020, the state-of-the-art centre will give the Granville community a central point to access a range of facilities and services, whilst simultaneously enabling opportunities for collaboration and cross-promotion across the various service and program providers. This model can be adapted to different areas by tailoring the services offered to the wants and needs of the local community.
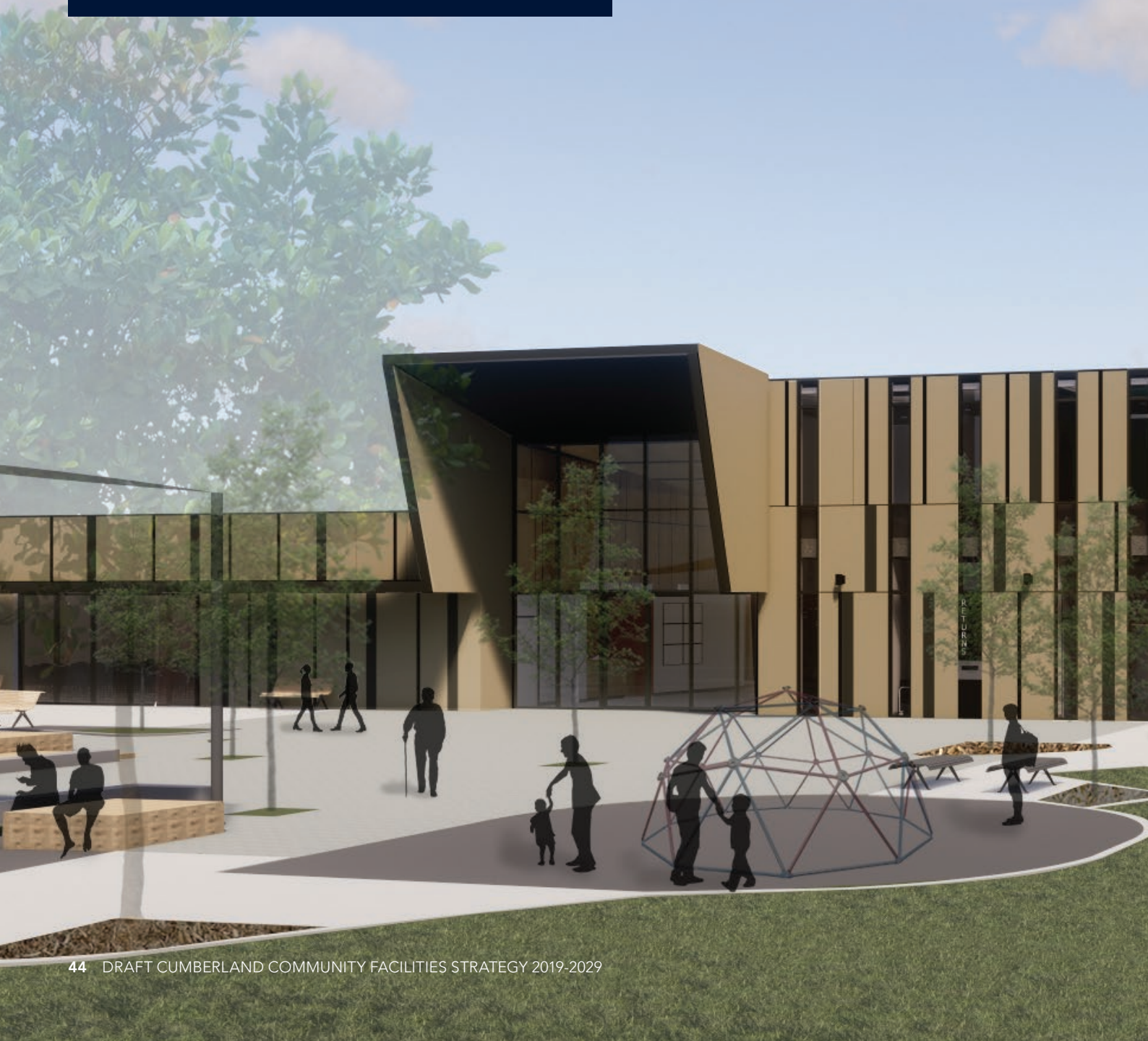
HIERARCHY AND STANDARDS

The following hierarchy and standards provide a guide for Council in the planning of new facilities. They do not represent a 'one size fits all' approach and all facilities will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

FACILITY TYPES	DESCRIPTION AND KEY INCLUSIONS	STANDARDS
SUBREGIONAL FACILITIES (Cumberland-wide facilities) Population served: 100,000+		
Central libraries	Larger libraries serving all, or a large section of, a local government area (as well as their immediate surrounding, local community). Central libraries include a range of spaces for collections, resources, informal reading/lounge areas, computer access areas, study spaces, program/training spaces, children's areas and youth spaces. Also include staff space and library administrative space. May include space for special collections (e.g. local history). Central libraries can be incorporated into district level community hubs.	Library to be sized in accordance with State Library of NSW population benchmarks for central libraries.
Specialist arts and cultural facilities	Specialist arts and cultural spaces (such as art galleries, exhibition space, arts studios, performance and rehearsal spaces). These subregional facilities can be provided as a centralised cultural centre or spaces co-located with/incorporated within district level community hubs.	Size dependent on facility type and function.
Civic centres	Council administrative centre, customer service centre, Mayor's office, councillor meeting rooms and council chambers. While these facilities are not within the scope of this study, consideration should be given to opportunities to co-locate civic centres with other major facilities (such as specialist arts and cultural facilities and/or community hubs).	Sized according to number of Council staff to be accommodated.
DISTRICT FACILITIES Population served: 30,000-50,000 (typically two or more suburbs)		
Community hubs	Large staffed facilities co-locating a variety of facilities, spaces and functions. Potential hub inclusions: library, multipurpose community centre (meeting and activity space, including space suitable for youth programs) multipurpose arts and cultural spaces, foyer (with lounge area and exhibition space), reception/Council customer service point, offices or outreach space for community support services, and outdoor space/s. May also incorporate co-working/business incubator spaces.	Size dependent on functions included. Library to be sized in accordance with State Library of NSW population benchmarks for libraries. Community centre to be sized to achieve total of approximately 80sqm floor area/1000 people within catchment (combined with local and neighbourhood facilities).

Branch libraries	Libraries serving a district catchment. These facilities should include a range of spaces for collections, resources, informal reading/lounge areas, computer access areas, study spaces, program/training spaces, children's areas and youth spaces. May be incorporated into a community hub.	To be sized in accordance with State Library of NSW population benchmarks for libraries.
LOCAL FACILITIES Population served: 20,000-30,000 (typically one to two suburbs)		
Staffed multipurpose community centres (standalone)	Staffed facilities providing a range of multipurpose, flexible spaces of various sizes to accommodate a variety of activities and programs. These facilities should also include a reception desk and staff office space, space for informal community meeting and gathering (e.g. foyer with lounge area, information board and tea/coffee point), and outdoor space. May also include spaces for community support service provision.	All new facilities to be minimum 1000sqm.
Education and care facilities	Long day care, out of school hours care, preschools and occasional care facilities. Many out of school hours care services are provided on primary school grounds. This is the preferred model of provision as the service is provided 'on-site', avoiding the need to transport children to another venue before and after school. However, this may not be achievable in schools with space constraints. These services and facilities may be co-located with other facilities and incorporated into community hubs.	Sized and designed in accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations and NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Education Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017.
NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES Populations served: Less than 20,000		
Community centres, halls and spaces	Smaller standalone facilities with one or more spaces available to hire for community programs and activities.	Small facilities less than 1000sqm. No additional neighbourhood level facilities proposed for the Cumberland area*.

*Neighbourhood level facilities are included in the hierarchy to reflect existing provision. Due to the significant number of neighbourhood level facilities in Cumberland and in line with trends towards larger, co-located facilities, it is not recommended any new Council-owned neighborhood level facilities are developed.

Priority areas, strategies and actions

Five priority areas have been identified to guide Council's planning, design, management and programing of community facilities over the next ten years.

COMMUNITY FACILITY STRATEGY PRIORITY AREAS

1.
Enhancing our existing community facilities

2.
Aligning community facility provision with existing and future community needs

3.
Creating facilities and spaces that reflect local culture and heritage

4.
Providing programs that reflect the community's diverse interests and needs
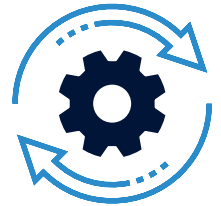
5.
Optimising systems and processes

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Strategies and actions have been developed for each priority area. Collectively the priority areas, strategies and actions aim to maximise the benefit that community facilities provide to the Cumberland community now and into the future.

TIMEFRAMES

Timeframes are identified for each action. These timeframes reflect delivery of the action. For new facilities, facility expansions and redevelopments these timeframes reflect delivery of facility works (rather than investigation and planning processes identified in these actions).

Timeframes:

- Immediate = <2 years
- Short term = 2-5 years
- Medium term = 6-10 years
- Long term = 11+ years

ENHANCING OUR EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Council's community facilities play a key role in providing places for people to meet, interact and access activities and services. They also provide much needed space for hire by community organisations and groups (to run programs and meetings), and by individual community members (to host private functions).

The network of facilities across Cumberland contains many high quality, highly utilised facilities. There are however a number of facilities with potential to do and be so much more. Aesthetic enhancements, as well as improvements to the amenities, offerings, safety features, accessibility and availability, will increase the quality of facilities across the network and the benefits they provide.

Determining key facilities for upgrades and improvements identified in the actions will involve a prioritisation process, informed by facility assessment findings and asset condition audits.

NO.	STRATEGY	ACTION	DELIVERY TIMEFRAME
1.1	Create more appealing and inviting facilities through external and internal upgrades	Improve the street presentation, appearance and prominence of key facilities. This could include façade upgrades, new signage, public art and/or forecourt landscaping treatments.	Medium
		Improve the internal look and feel of facilities by refreshing interiors (including painting and updating fixtures, fitting and furniture) as part of Council's maintenance and renewal program.	Short
1.2	Improve accessibility to and within our facilities to facilitate access for all	Improve wayfinding to and within facilities through improved signage around the local area and within facilities.	Short
		Improve accessibility within and around Council's facilities through provision of accessible features (e.g. hearing loops, braille signage, accessible toilets and parking, MLAK key access) and upgrades to improve physical access.[10]	Medium
1.3	Improve the functionality and flexibility of facilities and spaces to broaden and increase use	Upgrade and provide new amenities at key facilities as part of Council's maintenance and renewal program e.g. additional storage, technology (WiFi, audio visual equipment), lightweight, durable and moveable fixtures and furniture, heating/cooling, improved lighting and ventilation and upgraded kitchens.	Short
		Undertake improvements to Auburn and Granville Town Halls to better support the hosting of performance and live music (as identified in the Cumberland Cultural Plan).	Medium
		Undertake improvements to Toongabbie Community Centre to improve its functionality and accessibility.	Short
		Investigate opportunities at facilities to provide connection to, and make better use of, outdoor spaces.	Long
1.4	Provide amenities and spaces that better cater to diverse needs and encourage interaction between users and groups	Undertake an assessment of the need for culturally appropriate amenities and spaces at facilities and implement priority upgrades (e.g. spaces for separate genders, prayer rooms, wash spaces).	Medium
		Investigate opportunities to create informal/non-programmed spaces within facilities for people to relax, read, meet and socialise (e.g. spaces with lounges, benches, tea and coffee making amenities, reading material etc.).	Short

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[10] Access improvements to be informed by the Asset Condition Audits of Council's assets undertaken by Council.

1.5	Expand the information offerings at Council facilities	Install notice boards and stands at community facilities that include information about facilities, events, programs and services available in the local area and across Cumberland (including translated materials in key languages).	Immediate
1.6	Improve safety for facility users and staff through facility design	Undertake lighting audits in and around facilities and develop a schedule of priority lighting upgrade works.	Short
		Undertake Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) reviews of key facilities and incorporate works into Council's facilities maintenance program.	Short

Quality outdoor space:
AUBURN CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY

One of the most treasured aspects of the already loved Auburn Centre for Community is the available outdoor space. There are shaded BBQ and picnic areas, a children's play area, a lawn, and a community garden, better known as the Friendship Garden. Simply having outdoor areas is not enough, they must also be well integrated with the indoor spaces. In doing so, there is additional flexibility for the diverse range of activities that run out of the centre, as well as a brighter and more welcoming environment, both indoors and outdoors.

Non-programmed spaces:
BERALA COMMUNITY CENTRE

One of the unique features of Berala Community Centre amongst Cumberland's facilities is the non-programmed space that members of the community can access without a booking. There are powerpoints and bench space for working and free tea and coffee for relaxing. This space is free of charge and available to everyone, whether or not they are participating in a program, resulting in an environment conducive to natural community gathering and interactions. There is significant potential for these spaces within other centres and in future facilities. These spaces provide opportunities for building rapport between staff and the users, and connections between community members and to other Council services.

ALIGNING COMMUNITY FACILITY PROVISION WITH EXISTING AND FUTURE COMMUNITY NEEDS

Enhancing our existing community facilities will enable our facilities to better address existing community needs. There are however existing gaps in facility provision that need be addressed through new or expanded facilities and spaces. The projected growth of the Cumberland population into the future will also result in the need for additional facilities.

When expanding and renovating existing facilities or planning and designing new facilities, consideration should be given to leading practice trends and approaches (the community hub model being one key trends). Relevant trends have informed the guiding principles included in this Strategy, which will drive the delivery of high quality facilities for the community.

New facility and facility redevelopment proposals will be aligned with other planning and infrastructure strategies, including Council's Property Strategy and Local Infrastructure Contributions Plans. Planning facilities in town centres will be undertaken in conjunction with

town centre master planning and strategy development processes. The process to develop a new facility will involve siting options analysis, a feasibility study, investigating funding options, a business case, planning approvals and a design process that incorporates community and stakeholder engagement.

The development of a new facility represents a major project that will need to be aligned with Council's Property Strategy. The process to develop a new facility will involve siting options analysis, a feasibility study, investigating funding options, a business case, planning approvals and a design process that incorporates community and stakeholder engagement.

In providing a successful facility network, it is important for Council to focus on quality rather than quantity. Community facilities require significant resourcing (to construct and operate), therefore opportunities to consolidate facilities will also be investigated.

Council is not the only provider of community facilities. There are many opportunities for Council to partner with other organisations and the private sector to meet the community's needs for facilities and spaces in the future.

NO.	STRATEGY	ACTION	TIMEFRAME
2.1	Address the existing inequitable distribution of key facilities across the Cumberland area	Investigate the opportunity to staff Allan G Ezzy Community Centre to address the gap in staffed multipurpose community centres in the western section of the Cumberland area.	Short
		Investigate the opportunity to provide additional Council operated education and care services in the eastern section of the Cumberland area.	Medium
		Proceed with the planning process for the Auburn South Community and Recreation Centre to address the gap in community centre space and education and care facilities in the southern part of Auburn.	Short
2.2	Investigate opportunities for the provision of new community hubs in town centres in high growth areas to address existing gaps and future needs	Proceed with planning for the development of a community hub (incorporating library, multipurpose community centre and other functions) in Wentworthville Town Centre on the existing Wentworthville Library, Community Centre and Redgum Centre site.	Medium
		Investigate the opportunity to develop a community hub (incorporating library, multipurpose community centre and other functions) in Lidcombe Town Centre. Consider as an option redevelopment of the existing Lidcombe Library and Community Centre site.	Long
		Investigate the opportunity to develop a community hub (incorporating library, multipurpose community centre and other functions) in Merrylands Town Centre, as part of a broader investigation of a civic centre redevelopment.	Long
		Investigate the opportunity to develop a community hub in Auburn Town Centre (incorporating library, multipurpose community centre and other functions). Consider as an option the expansion and reconfiguration of the existing Library and Auburn Town Hall.	Long
		Investigate opportunities to incorporate/co-locate education and care facilities and services in proposed community hubs.	Medium
		Plan for new community hubs to achieve a minimum 4 Star Green Star rating (Green Building Council of Australia) or equivalent.	Long

2.3	Address existing and future gaps in community facility provision through facility repurposing and expansion	Plan for the expansion of Guildford Library through redevelopment or reconfiguration of the existing library and Tom Collins Meeting Room as part of the Guildford Town Centre Strategy development, with the option to relocate the Guildford Community Centre to this site to provide a community hub in Guildford.	Long
		Plan for the expansion of the Regents Park Library through incorporation and renovation of the adjoining Regents Park Community Hub and Community Centre.	Long
		Investigate opportunities to expand the Greystanes Library. Consider the option to reconfigure the existing Library and Community Centre (including repurposing the Early Childhood Health Centre as community centre space).	Medium
		Proceed with the expansion of The Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio.	Immediate
		Investigate opportunities to repurpose underutilised spaces for shared outreach spaces for community support service provision.	Short
		Investigate opportunities to repurpose underutilised Council facilities and spaces for arts and cultural programs and activities (as identified in the *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029*).	Short
		Investigate access to other Council assets for community activities, programs and services (e.g. sports facilities, swimming centre meeting rooms).	Short
		Investigate opportunities to establish co-working/ business incubator spaces.	Short
2.4	Address existing and future gaps in community facility provision through provision of new community spaces	Consider incorporation of new multipurpose meeting and activity space during the planning of sports pavilion and amenity building upgrades in areas with gaps or growth.	Medium
		Develop Development Control Plans that include requirements for communal activity space in apartment developments as a means to provide additional space for community use (non-Council owned).	Short
		Consider and identify opportunities through Voluntary Planning Agreements that propose facilities that are of high quality, align with guiding principles, address specific gaps and fit within the network of facilities across Cumberland.	Short to Long

2.5	Coordinate facility planning with neighbouring councils and State Government departments	Continue to liaise with neighbouring councils to coordinate community facility planning, particularly in high growth areas.	Short
		Continue to monitor Out of School Hours Care service provision and needs and work with the State Government to identify solutions to address any issues or gaps that arise.	Short
		Work with School Infrastructure NSW to investigate opportunities for new community facilities through Joint-Use agreements.	Immediate
2.6	Provide additional spaces to support service provision across Cumberland	Seek opportunities to provide access to spaces for community service providers. This could include office and meeting spaces and opportunities for social enterprise initiatives within Council-owned buildings.	Medium
2.7	Investigate opportunities to consolidate facilities across the network to focus Council resources	Identify very poor quality facilities in which investment is not justified and investigate opportunities for rationalisation (e.g. facility demolition or sale to fund new facility development). This particularly relates to locations and sites that do not align with the guiding principles.	Short

Spaces for community service providers:
WENTWORTHVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Community organisations provide a range of vital services and programs for the community and one way Council supports their work is through affordable office spaces. A number of different community service providers operate out of Wentworthville Community Centre, enabling opportunities for collaboration and cross-promotion between the various groups. For the community, the hub is conveniently located near the train station, town centre, and library. The Community Centre also brings together a wider range of services once a month, including Centrelink, NSW Police, and housing and health services. Ultimately, giving service providers space within the local community removes some of the barriers to accessing the required support and at Wentworthville Community Centre, residents can receive a variety of assistance in one convenient location.

PRIORITY 3:

CREATING FACILITIES AND SPACES THAT REFLECT LOCAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE

In planning our community facilities, it is important to respond to and reflect Cumberland's rich history and a vibrant culture.

Our culture starts with the Darug People. Community facilities have the potential to raise awareness of, and reflect, local Aboriginal history and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Cultural diversity has also been recognised as one of our greatest strengths. This should be reflected in the design and programing of facilities. There is also great diversity across our neighbourhoods and town centres, which are distinctive and unique. Our facilities should too be unique; aligning and reflecting local history and culture and responding to local interests and needs.

In addition, our network of facilities also contains buildings with heritage significance and value. Through enhancement, these facilities could play a key role in promoting the history of Cumberland and of local neighbourhoods.

NO.	STRATEGY	ACTION	TIMEFRAME
3.1	Promote Aboriginal history and contemporary cultures through facility provision	Plan and develop the Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Prospect Hill (as identified in the *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029*).	Long
		Consult with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee on new community facilities to incorporate Aboriginal history, living heritage and contemporary themes into facility design.	Short
3.2	Incorporate elements that reflect the local community, culture and heritage into existing and new facilities	Incorporate elements that reflect the local community, culture and heritage, and are designed with community involvement, in existing and new facilities (e.g. artwork and public art, photographs, artefacts, interpretive signage, building materials etc.).	Medium
3.3	Enhance and promote the heritage value of significant facilities and their surrounding areas	Explore the feasibility of repurposing the Granville Library site as a heritage centre to support the proposed establishment of a Granville cultural precinct (as identified in the *Cumberland Cultural Plan 2019-2029*).	Short
		Explore opportunities to enhance and promote Linnwood House through development and implementation of the Linnwood House Business Plan.	Short

PRIORITY 4:

PROVIDING PROGRAMS THAT REFLECT THE COMMUNITY'S DIVERSE INTERESTS AND NEEDS

While providing high quality buildings with the spaces and amenities required is essential; it is the quality, diversity and relevance of the programs, activities and services provided within a facility that determine whether a facility is truly successful.

Council currently plays an active role in programming our staffed multipurpose centres. On-site staff directly engage with facility users and collect feedback and ideas to inform the selection of programs and services offered. Council is also a provider of life-long learning programs, provided primarily at our staffed facilities.

The majority of programs at our staffed and non-staffed facilities are however facilitated by non-Council providers. Council recognises the central role these providers play in meeting community needs.

In terms of the diversity of programs provided and levels of utilisation, there is great disparity across the facility network. Council is interested in addressing this through improved tracking, monitoring and evaluation processes. Our facilities are also widely booked by individual community members, including for the hosting of family functions and celebrations. The right balance between community, commercial and private uses should be determined and achieved.

NO.	STRATEGY	ACTION	TIMEFRAME
4.1	Implement processes to more actively facilitate the provision of a range of relevant, high quality programs and use	Review and implement an annual Expression of Interest (EOI) process for regular hirers/bookings that involves assessment of applications against local community interests, needs and community benefit.	Short
		Introduce a standardised process for tracking and monitoring facility use. The process should involve standardised data collection, analysis and potentially tracking utilisation against targets and types of programs/ use against community need. The process should also involve identifying areas for improvement and program gaps.	Short
		Investigate the opportunities for suitable non-staffed facilities to be managed as 'satellite facilities' from staffed multipurpose community centres, to broaden use and increase utilisation.	Medium
		Require lessees and licensees to regularly report on use and utilisation of facilities to improve ability to track and monitor facilities and identify opportunities for improvement.	Short
4.2	Develop and expand partnerships with key non-Council program providers to activate facilities and address program gaps	Target specialist program providers to deliver programs at facilities that address specific program gaps (identified through tracking and monitoring facility use).	Short
		Identify specific program gaps as priority areas within Council's Grants Program as appropriate.	Immediate
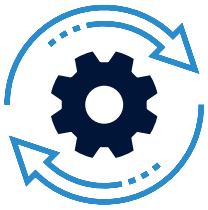
PRIORITY 5:

OPTIMISING SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

To drive the provision of high quality community facilities into the future, Council recognises the need to improve its internal processes. Uniform, streamlined processes and procedures can provide operational efficiencies, ensure consistency across our facility network and improve community/customer experience.

Council has identified a number of areas for improvement including systems and processes relating to planning facilities, maintenance and renewal, facility/venue bookings, facility promotion and leasing and licensing.

NO.	STRATEGY	ACTION	TIMEFRAME
5.1	Refine facility maintenance and renewal processes	Align the facility maintenance and renewal program with facility performance and utilisation.	Short
		Develop a centralised online request system for reporting of facility maintenance issues and requests (for use by Council facility staff and facility hirers).	Immediate
5.2	Improve booking and hiring processes	Implement a new online booking system for Council facilities to improve efficiency and customer experience.	Immediate
		Introduce keyless/cardless venue access for hirers to simplify access for users and enable data capture on use and utilisation.	Medium
		Increase awareness and monitoring of adherence to facility hirer rules and responsibilities.	Short
		Build relationships with providers of non-Council facilities and develop an inventory to enable Council to make referrals to community organisations, groups and members on occasions when Council spaces are not available.	Short
5.3	Refine the leasing and licensing process	Develop an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process for leased/licensed facilities that incorporates criteria aligned to community service and program needs.	Short
		Implement licence (rather than lease) arrangements where suitable to enable greater shared use and increased utilisation of Council facilities.	Short
5.4	Increase the promotion of Council's network of facilities and their offerings	Develop a new Council community facilities webpage and utilise Council's communications channels (including e-news, newsletters, social media and networks) to better promote Council facilities and offerings.	Immediate

Summary of major projects

The following table outlines the major facility projects identified in the strategies and actions. The table also includes timeframes for project delivery.

For some facilities, planning timeframes lie within the duration of this Strategy (ten years), however for the majority, facility delivery will occur into the future. This reflects the substantial timeframes required for identification of funding opportunities, securing of funds, planning processes, community engagement and project construction.

TIMEFRAMES:

- Immediate = <2 years
- Short term = 2-5 years
- Medium term = 6-10 years
- Long term = 11+ years

PROJECT	DELIVERY TIMEFRAME
Development of The Granville Centre	Immediate
Expansion of Peacock Gallery and Auburn Arts Studio	Immediate
Development of Auburn South Community and Recreation Centre	Short
Development of Cumberland Heritage Centre (subject to Council resolution)	Short
Improvements to Toongabbie Community Centre	Short
Development of a new community hub in Wentworthville	Medium
Development of Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Prospect Hill	Medium
Expansion of Greystanes Library/reconfiguration of Greystanes Library and Community Centre	Medium
Development of a new community hub in Lidcombe	Long
Development of a new community hub in Merrylands	Long
Development of a new community hub in Auburn	Long
Expansion/redevelopment of Guildford Library and Tom Collins Meeting Room (potential creation of a new community hub in Guildford)	Long
Expansion/redevelopment of Regents Park Library and Community Centre	Long

Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Strategy

The Community Facilities Strategy actions will be incorporated into Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Progress on the implementation of the actions will be regularly monitored, and reported annually to Council.

At the end of the Strategy term (2019-2029) the Strategy will be evaluated against the projected outcomes identified in the flowing table. These outcomes will act as performance indicators.

PRIORITY	OUTCOMES (INDICTOR)	DATA SOURCES
Priority 1: **Enhancing our existing community facilities**	• Improved quality of community facilities	• Community Satisfaction Survey • Facility user and staff feedback
Priority 2: **Aligning community facility provision with existing and future community needs**	• Council's community facilities are more equitably distributed across Cumberland • Increased floor area of libraries and community space delivered, with planning underway for further increase	• Project plans and facility inventory data
Priority 3: **Creating facilities and spaces that reflect local culture and heritage**	• Increased representation and awareness of local culture and heritage at community facilities	• Facility user and community feedback
Priority 4: **Providing programs that reflect the community's diverse interests and needs**	• Increased number and range of programs and activities provided at community facilities • Programs, activities and services provided at community facilities better meet the needs and interests of facility users and program providers	• Community Satisfaction Survey • Facility user, staff and program provider feedback • Facility bookings and utilisation data
Priority 5: Optimising systems and processes	• Community facilities are maintained, leased/licensed and booked/hired through improved and standardised processes • Increased awareness of Council's community facilities and facility offerings • Increased shared use of leased facilities	• Community Satisfaction Survey • Facility user and hirer feedback • Lessee/licensee reports

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS: EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES

Education and care is a more contemporary and broader term than child care for children aged 12 years and under. It reflects the understanding that all child care services also provide early education and that care is implicit in education. The following are defined as education and care services.

Family Day Care (FDC) is home based childcare where educators work within their own homes and care for up to 4 children aged 0-5 years and up to 3 additional children of primary school age. Educators can care for their own children in this setting however they are counted within the ratios. Family day care educators are registered with an approved provider which acts as a coordination unit.

Long Day Care (LDC) centres provide care for children under primary school age. These services can offer extended hours for working parents. LDC services are required to deliver a transition to school or preschool program if they care for 3-5 year olds.

Occasional Care (OCC) offers short, flexible periods of care for children. This service may suit parents who are studying, working part-time or are required to attend appointments. Fees are charged by the hour. Occasional care can be booked on a regular or irregular basis.

Out of School Hours (OOSH) services offer care for primary school aged children before and after school, during the school term, and vacation care, during the school holidays. OOSH services can be located on school grounds or within close proximity.

Preschools (PS) services offer planned programs for children prior to their commencement of primary school. Preschools typically target children aged 3 – 5 years providing education and care to support the transition to school. These services generally operate school hours during the school term. Preschools can also be referred to as kindergarten or prep, particularly in other states.

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