



# 2025 Maitland Visitor Economy Forum

Total Homestead | Wednesday 25 June

**maitland**  
CITY COUNCIL

# Welcome

Brett Gardiner,  
*Manager Strategic Planning*



# Proceedings

## **9.30am MORNING SESSION**

Hear from Council, Destination Sydney Surrounds North,  
Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner and Newcastle Airport

## **10.50am MORNING TEA AND NETWORKING**

## **11.15am MIDDAY SESSION**

Breakout sessions: Agritourism, Night Time Economy and,  
Accommodation + Marketing

## **12.35pm NETWORKING LUNCH**



# Economy and Destination Update

Lisa Cameron,  
*Coordinator City  
and Visitor Economy*



# Maitland's economy

Median age:  
36 years

Indigenous status:  
7.5%

Median income:  
\$41,738pa

Labour force participation rate:  
63.98%

Population growth:  
3.1%

Land area:  
39,150.89ha

98,163 people  
Population (2024)  
↑ 2,226 people from 2023



3.6%

Unemployment Rate  
(Dec 2024)  
↑ 0.9ppts from Dec 2023



\$737,500

Median House Price  
(2023-24)

\$7.80 billion  
GRP (2024)  
↑ \$413.11 million from  
2023



\$3.50 billion

Wages and Salaries  
(2024)  
↑ \$185.72 million from  
2023



6,011

Business Counts  
(Jun 2024)

\$15.09 billion  
Output (2024)  
↑ \$799.56 million from  
2023



\$5.23 billion

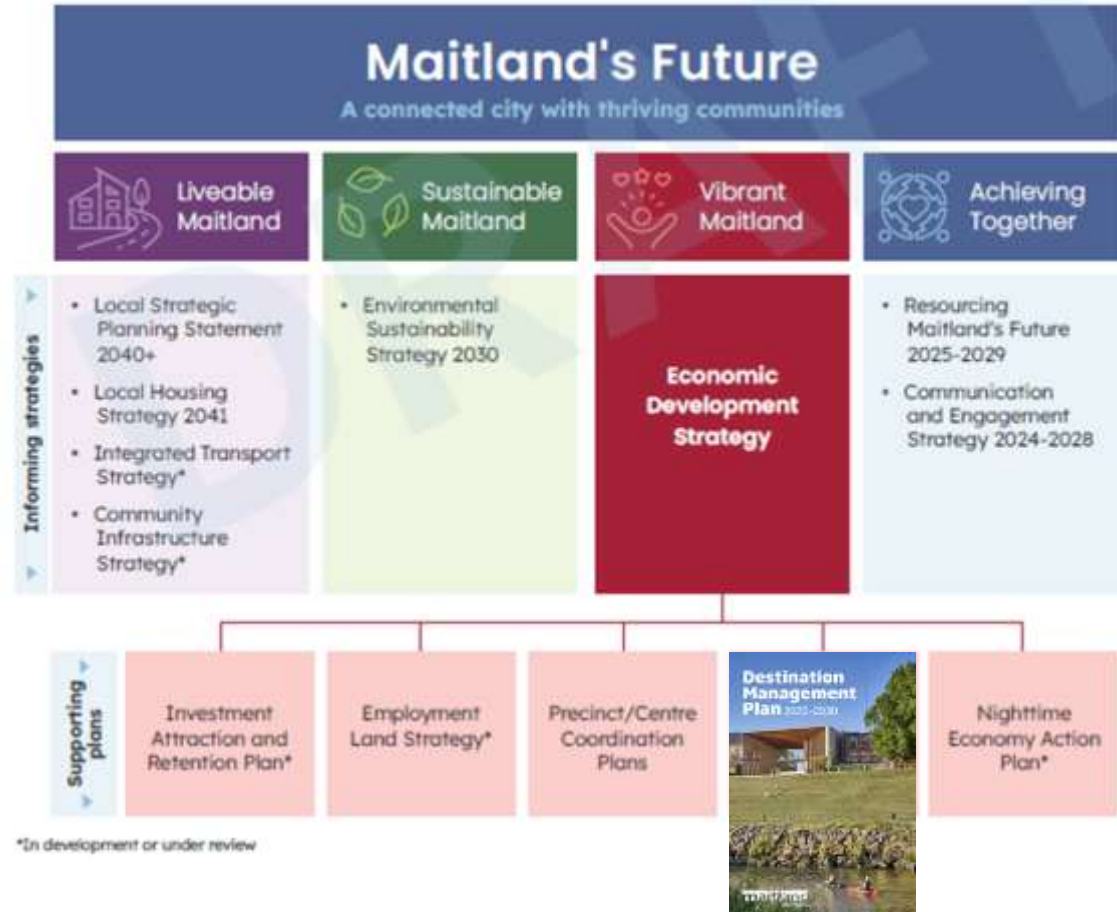
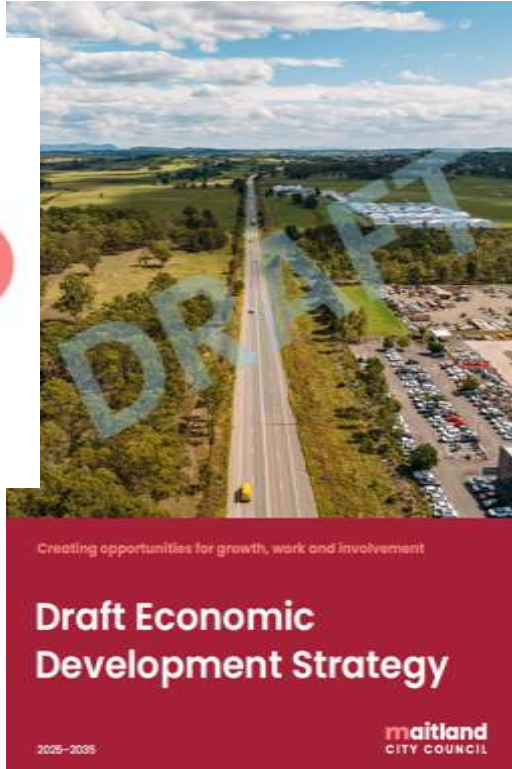
Regional Exports (2024)  
↑ \$277.17 million from  
2023



\$425.36 million

Residential Approvals  
(2023-24)

# Draft Economic Development Strategy



# Four focus areas



## People and future skills

**Purpose:** To provide access to a diverse range of education, lifelong learning and training options to equip Maitland's people with future-ready skills that connect them with local employment opportunities. Actions here support a balanced lifestyle and address local economic and community needs.

- **Knowledge:** Prepare our people for jobs of the future through education, work-integrated learning and training.
- **Skills:** Develop a skilled workforce that contributes and adapts to the needs of the local economy.
- **Movement:** Connect people with more opportunities to work, learn, study, and play close to home.



## Thriving and connected places

**Purpose:** To enhance Maitland's liveability and appeal by improving connectivity, supporting sustainable industries, and creating vibrant, diverse spaces and destination experiences. Actions here aim to foster a thriving and connected community with an enviable lifestyle.

- **Connected:** Enhance liveability through improved connectivity of people and place, day and night.
- **Sustainable:** Drive sustainable and resilient economic growth to support a healthy business ecosystem.
- **Vibrant:** Develop places and experiences that create vibrancy and celebrate diversity.



## Innovative and diverse economy

**Purpose:** To foster creativity, entrepreneurship, and collaboration through strategic marketing, investment attraction, and innovation precincts. Actions here will position Maitland as a thriving hub for economic growth, business opportunities, and technological advancement.

- **Identity:** Raise awareness of our city and build a positive reputation through strategic communications and marketing.
- **Investment:** Leverage Maitland's identity and competitive advantages to attract investment, grow visitation and create employment.
- **Innovation:** Foster creativity and entrepreneurship to establish and accelerate innovative precincts and places.



## Productive and equitable partnerships

**Purpose:** To create a resilient and inclusive economy in Maitland by partnering with local businesses and other key stakeholders to support city-shaping priorities. Actions here will adopt a local-first approach that aims to build community wealth, strengthen identity, and drive sustainable growth.

- **Productivity:** Promote and partner with local businesses to enhance supply chains, stimulate demand and boost the economy.
- **Advocacy:** Secure support for city-shaping priorities that strengthen Maitland's identity and economy.
- **Equity:** Build community wealth to establish a resilient and sustainable economy where all can prosper.

# Objectives that support a strong visitor economy

- Foster collaboration among tourism, arts, and hospitality sectors (Connectivity)
- Advocate for a liveable, walkable city that enhances quality of life (Movement)
- Develop cultural experiences celebrating diverse heritage and identity (Vibrancy)
- Promote Maitland to boost visitation and local spending (Vibrancy)
- Increase private sector investment in unique experiences and events for tourism growth (Vibrancy)
- Enhance Maitland's profile as a top destination for investment (Identity)
- Partner with stakeholders to raise Maitland's profile in target markets (Identity)
- Engage stakeholders to strengthen city identity and community pride (Identity)

# Objectives that support a strong visitor economy cont'd

- Attract strategic investment to create jobs and business opportunities (Investment)
- Support business growth to increase output and stimulate visitation (Investment)
- Drive business development through innovation, collaboration, and capacity building (Innovation)
- Strengthen local business collaboration to improve productivity and supply chains (Productivity)
- Provide targeted support to enhance small business skills and growth (Productivity)
- Secure funding for infrastructure that supports economic and social growth (Advocacy)
- Support and advocate for Aboriginal-led projects with social and economic benefits (Equity)

***Have your say by Monday 30 June.***



# Visitor Economy Snapshot

	YE DEC 20 and 21 (2yr)	YE DEC 21 and 22 (2yr)	YE DEC 22 and 23 (2yr)
<b>Total visitors</b>	716,000	708,000	827,000
>Domestic day	565,000	536,000	599,000
>Domestic overnight	151,000	172,000	228,000
<b>Total nights</b>	395,000	438,000	563,000
<b>Avg LOS</b>	3	3	3
<b>Expenditure \$M</b>	130	174	219
>Domestic day \$M	50	100	102
>Domestic overnight \$M	80	74	117
<b>Avg spend per trip</b>	-	-	-
>Domestic day \$	142	187	171
>Domestic overnight \$	332	432	514
<b>Avg spend per night \$ (domestic)</b>	127	169	208

TRA MAITLAND LGA PROFILE - AVG YE DEC 2022 & DEC 2023



## Five priority destination hubs

Total

Morpeth

Walka Water Works

Maitland Gaol

Central Maitland

+ Morpeth to Walka Shared Pathway

## Four focus areas

**Product development**

**Industry development**

**Marketing and promotion**

**Visitor servicing**

## Sector Development – Breakout Sessions

### **Agritourism Development**

Action Plan - Simon and Glenn

### **Night Time Economy**

Action Plan - Nicole and Steve

### **Accommodation development (+ marketing)**

Investment attraction – Lisa and Michael

## Sector Development cont'd

### Cruise tourism

Regional Ports Cruise Promotion MoU

### Inbound tourism

Hunter Global and Newcastle Airport

### Events tourism

### Sports tourism

## **Industry resources and supports**

**Websites and newsletters**

**Business advisory services**

**Industry events and awards**

**Your City and Visitor Economy team!**



BUY  
TICKETS  
NOW



# HUNTER TOURISM INDUSTRY EVENT

THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025 6 - 9PM





DESTINATION SYDNEY SURROUNDS NORTH

# Glenn Caldwell

25<sup>th</sup> June 2025





# VISITOR SPEND ACROSS ALL DESTINATION NETWORKS HAS INCREASED COMPARED TO 2019



# VES Review Update



## Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 Review Report summary



**The NSW Government has set an ambitious stretch goal: to boost annual visitor expenditure to \$91 billion by 2035**

To make this ambition a reality, NSW should:

- Enhance its unique experiences to capture greater market share.
- Improve access within and to NSW.
- Expand and upgrade accommodation across the state adding 40,000 rooms.
- Increase airline capacity by 8.5 million seats.
- Develop and drive demand for compelling visitor experiences.

# Hunter Global Project

## Introduction and Objectives:

- Focuses on leveraging Newcastle Airport's upgrades to welcome international arrivals.
- Aims to enhance collaboration among stakeholders, strengthen the region's international appeal, and increase visitors' length of stay and spending.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

- Challenges include a fragmented regional identity, limited export-ready products, and complex market requirements.
- Opportunities revolve around airport expansion, targeted trade marketing, and a focus on international markets like Singapore, New Zealand, and the USA.

## Strategic Priorities:

- Establishing governance structures, such as a central working group.
- Developing a unifying regional identity and cross-sector collaboration for packages and itineraries.
- Implementing a three-stream approach: foundational setup, strengthening industry supply, and international marketing.

## Action Plan:

- Includes creating mentoring programs for operators, building digital resources, and contracting a specialist agency for trade representation.
- Identifies resource needs and a phased timeline for implementation.

## Governance and Partnerships:

- Calls for collaboration between local governments, Destination Marketing Organisations, and Newcastle Airport.



# HUNTER VALLEY



## PORT STEPHENS *Surfable by Nature*



**PORT STEPHENS**  
Surfable by Nature  
Experience the thrill of surfing at Port Stephens, where the ocean meets the shore in a perfect harmony.



**PORT STEPHENS**  
Surfable by Nature  
Experience the thrill of surfing at Port Stephens, where the ocean meets the shore in a perfect harmony.



# Newcastle Cruise

## 2024-25 Newcastle Cruise Season

Over the 2024-25 cruise season Newcastle received:

- Cruise visit bookings: 13
- Cruise visits: 9 (four cancellations due to protest and weather)
- Actual Passengers: 9,345
- Actual Crew: 4,952

There were 9,345 passengers onboard the nine cruise ships that visited the Port of Newcastle in 2024-25 of which:

- 78% of the passengers went ashore however there was significant differences based on the passengers on board:
  - International – 98% ashore
  - Domestic – 56% ashore



# Newcastle Cruise

## Passengers Onboard & Ashore



## 2024-25 Newcastle Cruise Season

There were 9,345 passengers onboard the nine cruise ships that visited the Port of Newcastle in 2024-25 of which:

- 78% of the passengers went ashore however there was significant differences based on the passengers on board:
  - international – 98% ashore
  - domestic – 56% ashore
- Almost 5,000 passengers took an organised shore excursion tour – 68% of passengers who went ashore
- Over 3,100 passengers (43% of passengers ashore) used the shuttle bus from the Port to Newcastle CBD
- There were almost 5000 crew on the nine ships that visited Newcastle Port, with 34% going ashore

# Newcastle Cruise



## Economic Impact

In 2023-24 the cruise market generated an estimated economic impact of \$20\* million to the local Newcastle/Greater Hunter visitor economy. *Note: 2024-25 economic data is released last quarter of 2025.*

Cruise passengers are high yield with the average spend by cruise passengers and crew being higher than domestic daytrip visitors to the Hunter Region (\$153 per visitor as at YE June 2024) – *Source National Visitor Survey, TRA*).

Cruise passengers spend per day in transit ports:

- Domestic Cruise Passengers: \$197 per day
- International Cruise Passengers: \$283 per day
- Crew: \$137 per day

# DNSW Workshop

**Join an online workshop and get tips & insights on:**

- The foundations of great visitor experiences
- Understanding different kinds of visitors
- Creating bookable experiences, and refining existing experiences, to meet your visitor's needs
- Where to find tools, resources and support

**10am – 3pm**

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**FREE**



# Share Your News...

## Have you got a new:

- Experience
- Website
- Menu

Please share your latest news with DNSW & DSSN



# Industry Newsletter

## Sign up to the DSSN Stakeholder Newsletter

Keep up to date with the latest

- News
- Grants
- Events
- Training
- And more



# DESTINATION SYDNEY SURROUNDS NORTH

-stakeholder newsletter-



# Thank you

## DSSN Team

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*Executive Assistant*  
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[michelle.jenkins@dssn.com.au](mailto:michelle.jenkins@dssn.com.au)

# INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICE

- NSW Office of the 24-Hour  
Economy Commissioner  
– June 2025



# The role of the Office

- Collaborate with NSW and Local Governments and industry to build vibrant, diverse and safe going-out precincts.
- Enhance flexible day and night trading conditions.
- Improve NSW's appeal as a global destination for living, working, playing and investing.
- Implemented through key programs and initiatives delivered by our Policy, Strategy, Programs and Engagement teams.
- Established to bolster Greater Sydney's 24-Hour Economy, then expanded to the Six Cities, and now state-wide.

• Image: Ross Coffey - Villa + Villa



# Our team

- Supporting the 24-hour economy



- Policy

Supports major legislative reform benefiting live music, dining, creative sectors and workers, reducing red tape and bringing vibrancy back to NSW's 24-hour economy.



- Strategy

Extends the productivity of the NSW day-time economy into the night. Supports businesses, consumers, councils and community groups in the development of an accessible, diverse and vibrant 24-hour economy.



- Programs

Provides upskilling and funding opportunities and resources to districts, businesses, industry and councils to help develop and implement 24-hour economy initiatives.



- Engagement

Works with key stakeholders across all relevant sectors to gain insights, feedback and input to help inform the Office's actions and decision-making.

# Programs and initiatives

# 3

# Uptown District Acceleration Program



First-of-its-kind program with two stages (Uptown Accelerator and Uptown Grant.)



Designed to fast-track the formation of local business communities and facilitate the growth of their Districts into vibrant going-out hubs in line with the 24-Hour Economy Strategy.



Additional 10 LGAs across Newcastle, Central Coast and Wollongong were made eligible for Round 3



Holistic two-step model, developed in direct response to the identified economic and social challenges, improves efficiency for collaborators, who can work on a one-to-many basis and achieve scale, instead of partnering with one single business.

- [Image: Haymarket/24-Hour Economy NSW](#)



# Neon Marketplace



A virtual B2B platform that enables businesses, creatives and artists to connect and collaborate to create vibrant, inclusive and sustainable places and communities across NSW.



Districts, creatives and suppliers can view and apply for Opportunities including corporate funding, service providers, artists, producers and major events.



Launched in October 2024, there are currently 27 Districts showcasing on the platform with more coming soon.

- [Image: Destination NSW](#)



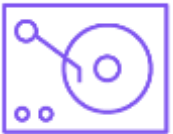
# Live Performance Venue Program (LPVP)



Aims to increase the number of fit-for-purpose live performance venues across NSW.



Phase 1 (The Accelerator) builds capabilities of how to regularly stage live performance. Phase 2 (The Grant) provides funding to purchase and install equipment, pay artists as part of a regular program, and market live performances.



Live performance can include: theatre, live music, cabaret, opera, dance, classical music and choral performances, comedy, live art murals, DJs, poetry slams and live immersive and interactive experiences.



# Purple Flag



International accreditation program for excellence in managing the night-time economy. Rolled out in 90+ locations in the UK, Ireland, Sweden, New Zealand and Australia.



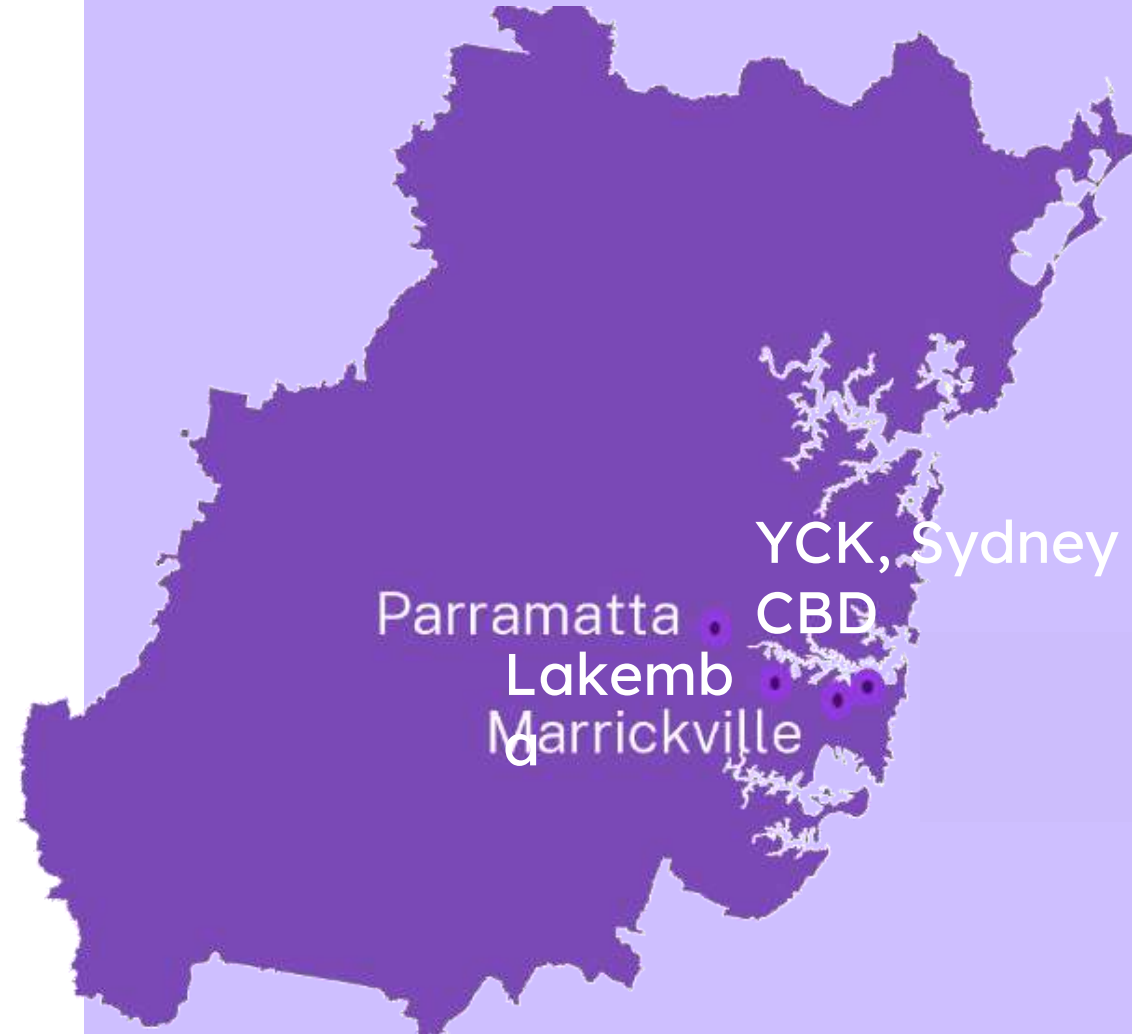
Safe and exciting nightlife destinations are key to unlocking the potential of nightlife precincts. Criteria includes ready public transport access, adequate street lighting, safety and entertainment.



After four successful pilots across Sydney (YCK, Parramatta, Lakemba and Marrickville), the program will be rolled out statewide in phases, starting with Greater Sydney followed by regional areas.



When you see the Purple Flag sticker, you'll know the area meets standards of excellence in vibrancy, diversity and safety at night.



# Vibrancy Reforms



A cross-government initiative developed to enable NSW venues to reach their full entertainment, economic and creative potential.



Have reduced regulatory barriers, streamlined approval processes and added incentives for venue operators to provide more live music, and for councils to support more activated communities by making outdoor dining and street activation easier.



**597 more core businesses** operating in the night-time economy sector since Vibrancy Reforms were first introduced in December 2023.

- Image: Vivid/Destination NSW



# Special Entertainment Precincts (SEP)



An **area, streetscape or single venue** mapped by council in a Local Environmental Plan (LEP).



Inside this area, council sets **trading hours and sound criteria in a precinct management plan** to support live entertainment and give greater certainty for businesses and residents.



SEPs benefit venues and support nearby residents, communities and businesses by **creating more diverse, safe, accessible and vibrant districts.**



Resources for councils include **mandatory guidelines, opt-in acoustic toolkit, best practice handbook, model templates, online SEP Support Hub and SEP Kickstart Grant Program.**



# Local Government NTE Toolkit



Support councils to build their capacity to develop and manage their night-time economies.

- Online diagnostic tool allows councils to map the maturity of their local NTE and grow it.
- Implementation guides provide tailored actions to progress.
- Strategic direction modules and webinars upskill and offer latest NTE insights.
- Local Night-Time Economy Strategy template (coming soon).
- **51 Councils have completed the diagnostic tool, with 1100+ toolkit downloads.**



• Thank you



24-Hour  
Economy

*Our purpose:*

**To be the airport the  
region deserves**

Newcastle Airport



**Newcastle  
Airport**

# Newcastle Airport



## Airport Precinct



Catchment population  
1.4m



Powered by **100% renewable energy**



**12 direct routes**  
Recently announced  
Bali and Perth



**\$250m**  
terminal expansion  
almost complete



Large diverse  
economy with over  
**54,000** businesses



Economic output of  
over **\$95.7B GRP**  
2 x Adelaide



2024 **1.2M**  
**passengers** the  
highest in 5 years



Diversity across trade  
industries – Defence,  
energy, education,  
medical technologies

## Astra Aerolab Precinct



**Unique** proposition  
located adjacent to RAAF  
base Williamtown and NTL



**\$200M+** of building  
projects in the pipeline



**3 Defence industry  
businesses** currently investing  
~\$1M in DA preparations

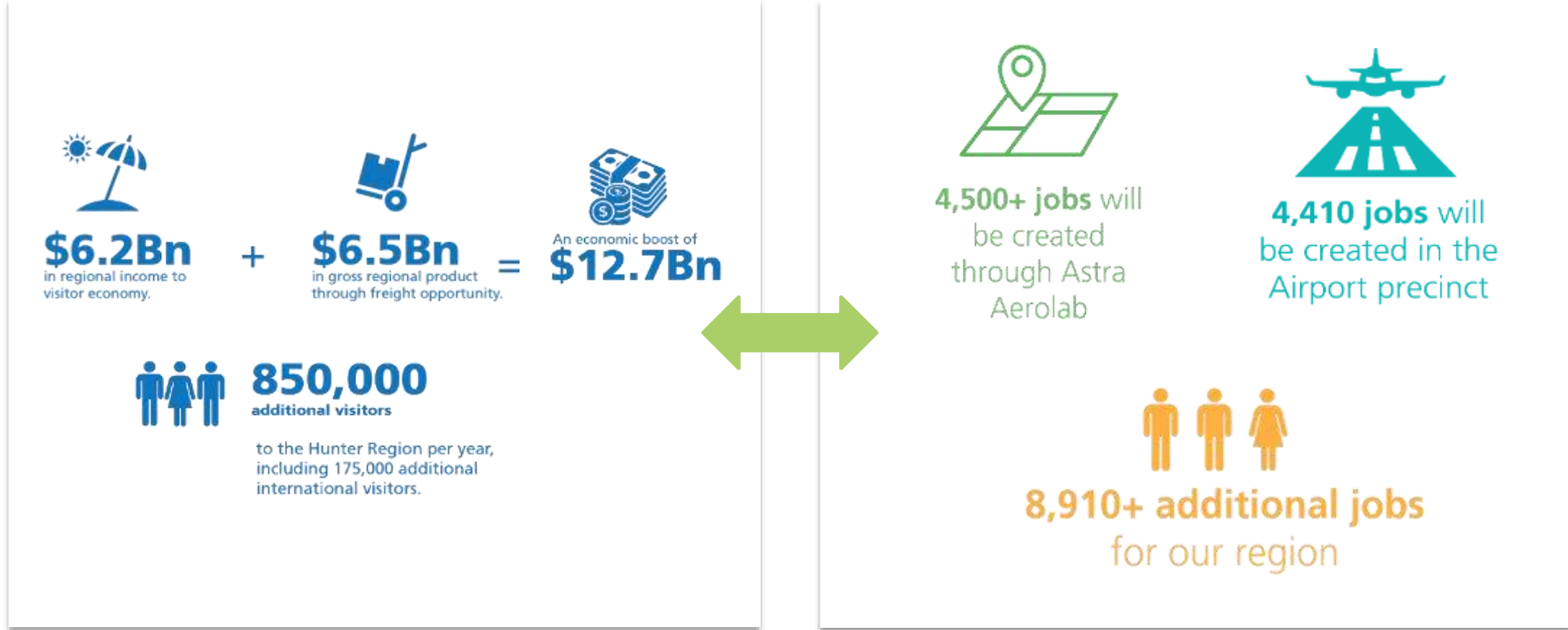


**DSR priority alignment**,  
including IAMD, GWEO,  
increased readiness and  
training F35 fleet



# Economic Impact

Benefit to the region



\*SOURCE – Synergies Consulting – NAPL Economic Impact Assessment – AUG 2018



# Newcastle Airport International Terminal Upgrade Update

2024

## Completed works

- ✓ Terminal enabling works
- ✓ Runway upgrade to accommodate B777-300ER & A350-1000

2025

## Completed works

- ✓ Topping out ceremony - placement of the final roof beam
- ✓ Roof and glass façade
- ✓ Aerobridge installation

## In Progress – lock up stage

- ✓ Internal fit out with passenger services, baggage carousels and food and beverage outlets
- ✓ Border agency fit out

## Next stage – June/July

- ✓ ORAT (Operational Readiness and Airport Transfer) scheduled and completed
- ✓ Internal fit out completed
- ✓ First use of 'Arrivals'

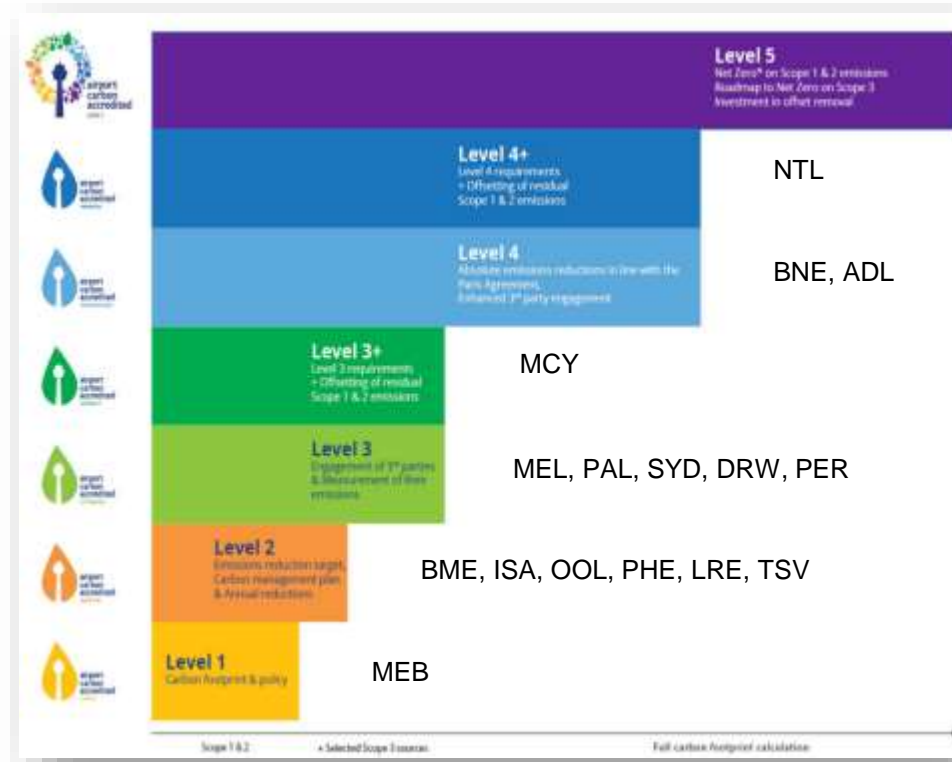
AUG

**Code E International Terminal officially opens**

# Sustainability

## Newcastle Airport is the **Greenest** airport in Australia

- Level 4+ Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) from Airports Council International.
- Newcastle is the highest accredited airport in Australia
- within top 12% worldwide.



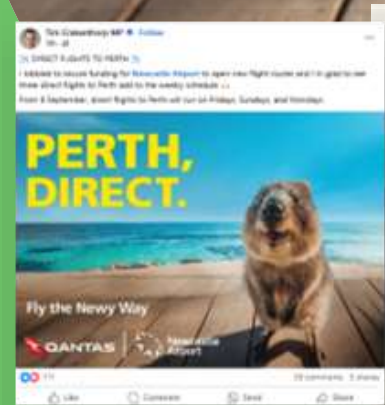
# LONG HAUL RUNWAY – DESTINATION POTENTIAL

New Infrastructure and New Aircraft Technology



# Perth Connection Announced

- Year-round direct service commencing September 8
- 3 flights per week
- *NSW Aviation Attraction Fund*
- Significant demand (70% support when surveyed – 12% of all Newcastle Airport social comments last 12-monts)
- 1-stop connection between Newcastle and Rome, Paris, London and Johannesburg.



- um Covered
- Stay
- stay
- Stay
- Stay Saver

# Bali, our first international route



- Year-round direct service commencing October 2025
- 1st international route using new terminal
- 3 flights per week (A321LR – 232 seats)
- 1st Route to utilise *NSW Governments Aviation Attraction Fund*



# Australia's largest unserved passenger market

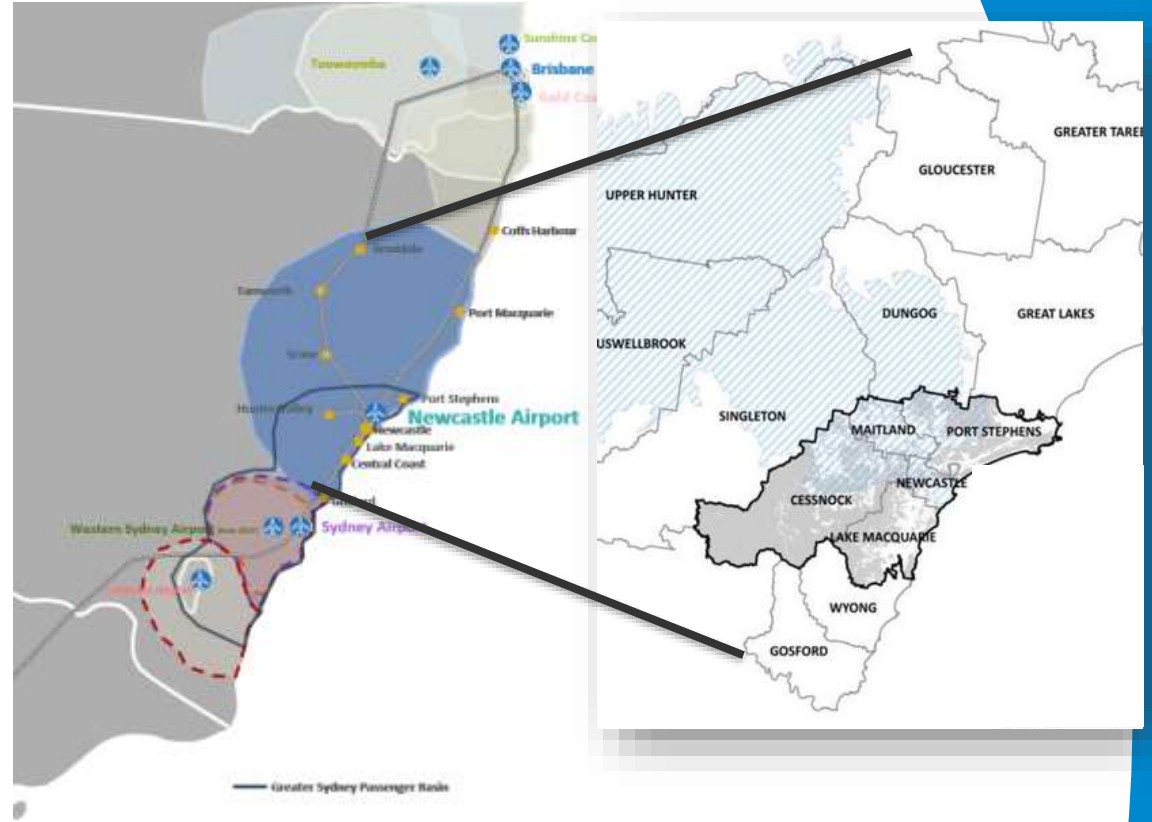
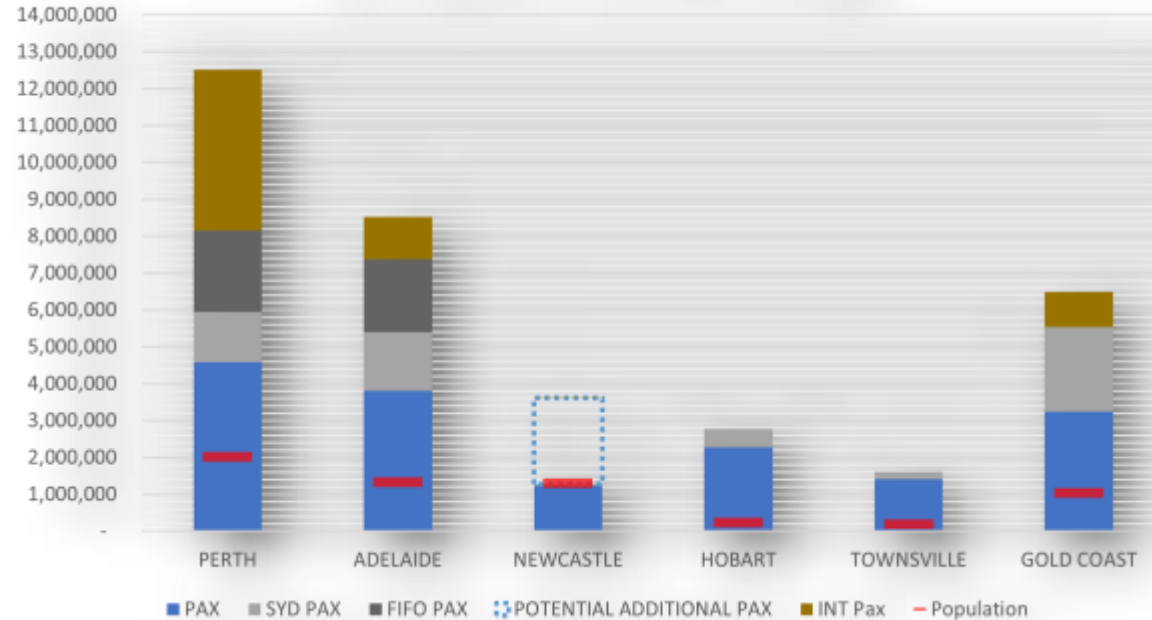


## Newcastle Airport Catchment

### Potential Growth

- ~ 1m additional international passengers
- ~3m domestic passengers

2019 Population v 2019 DOM Passengers



6th Largest population & economy with just the 13th biggest airport

# Terminal Expansion Vision



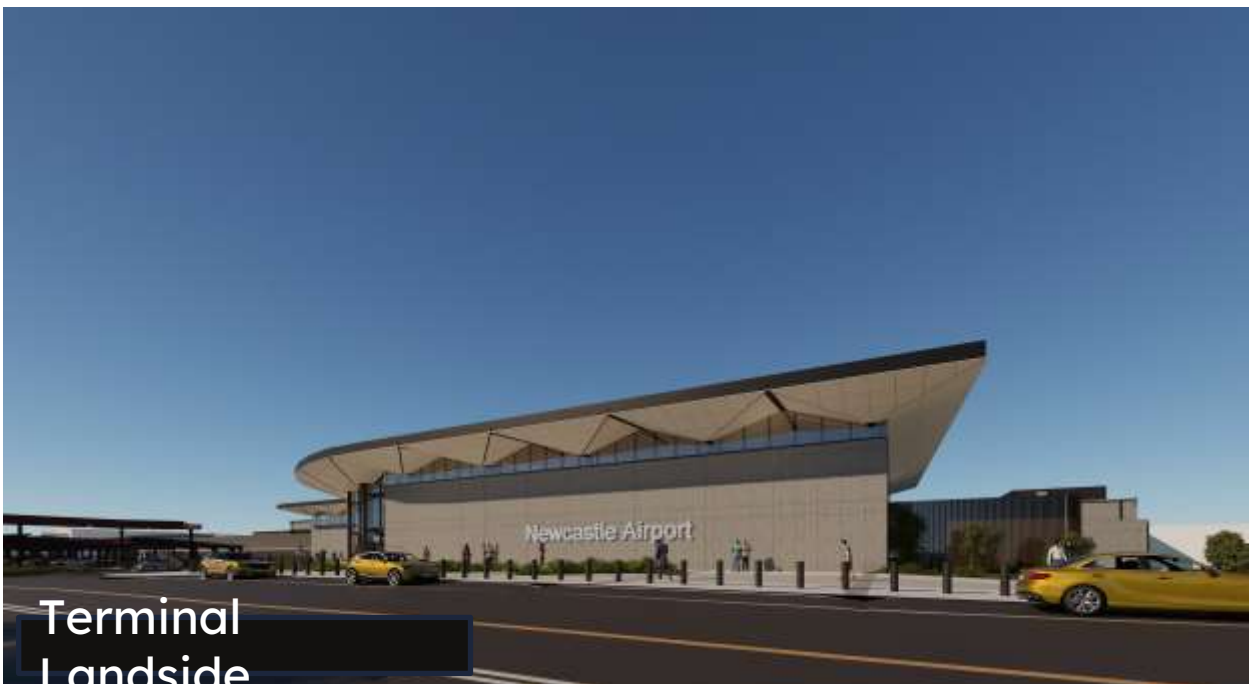
Arrival



Terminal Landside

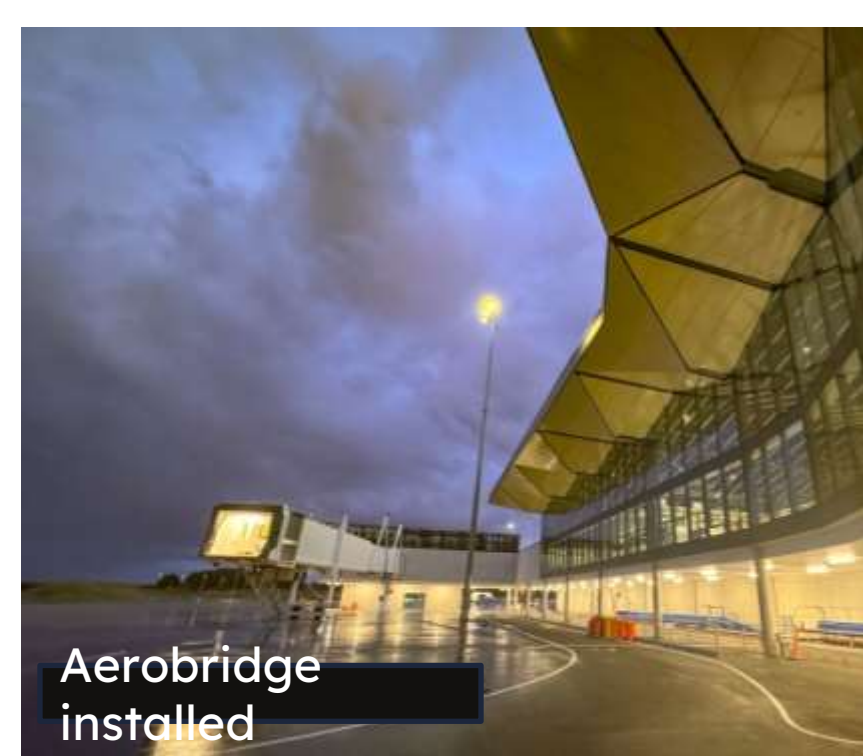


Arrivals Forecourt

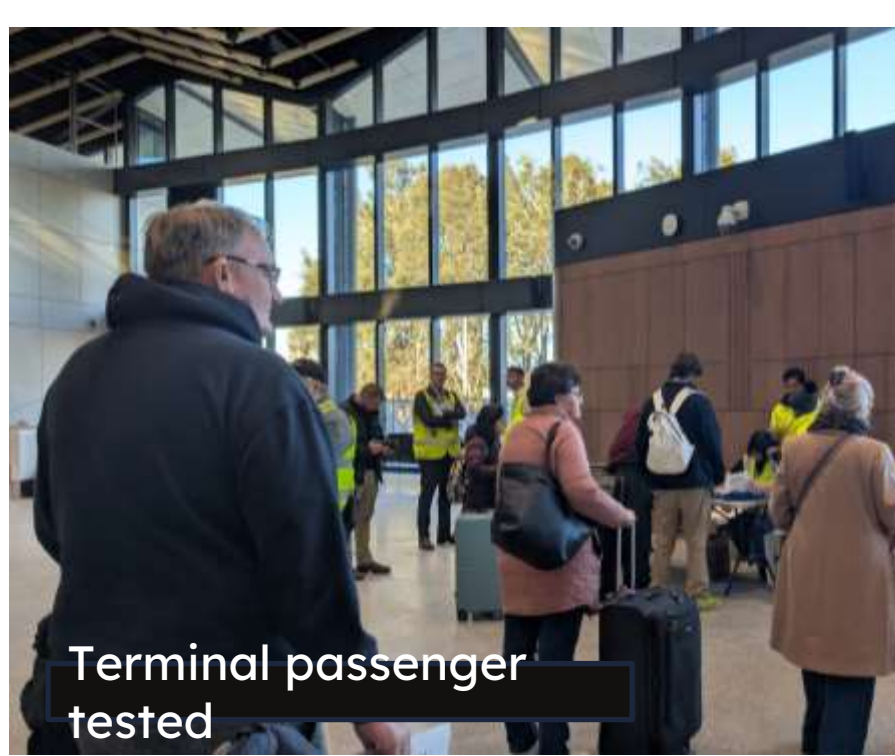


Terminal Landside

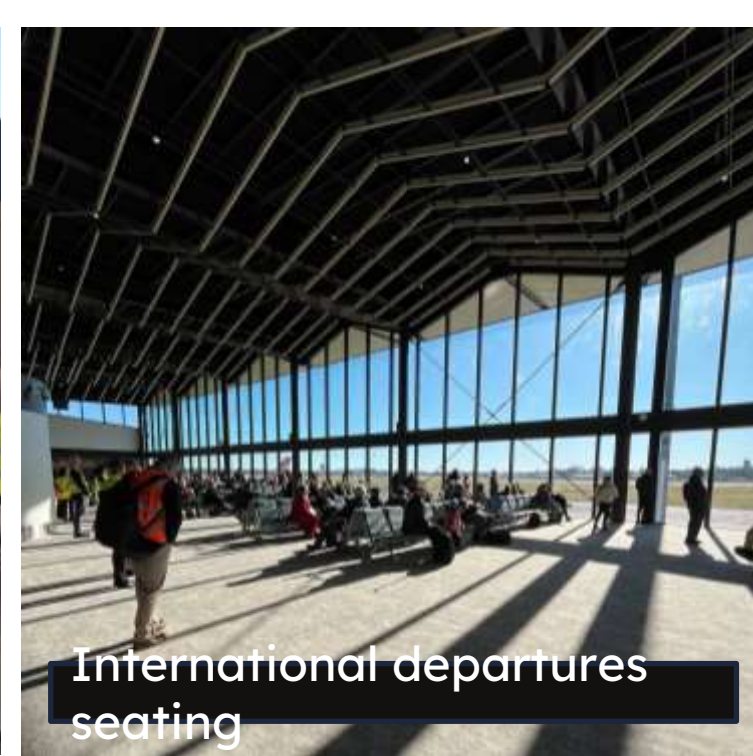




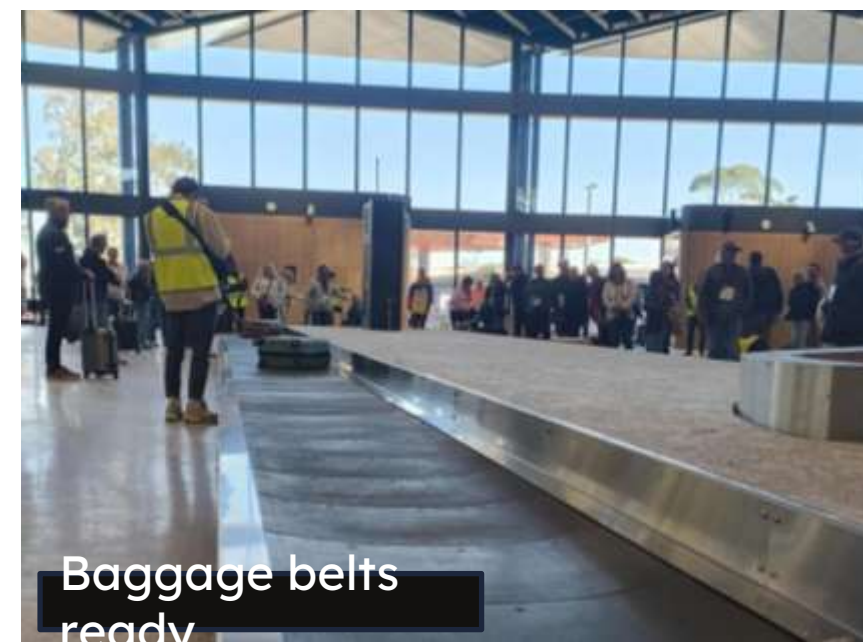
Aerobridge installed



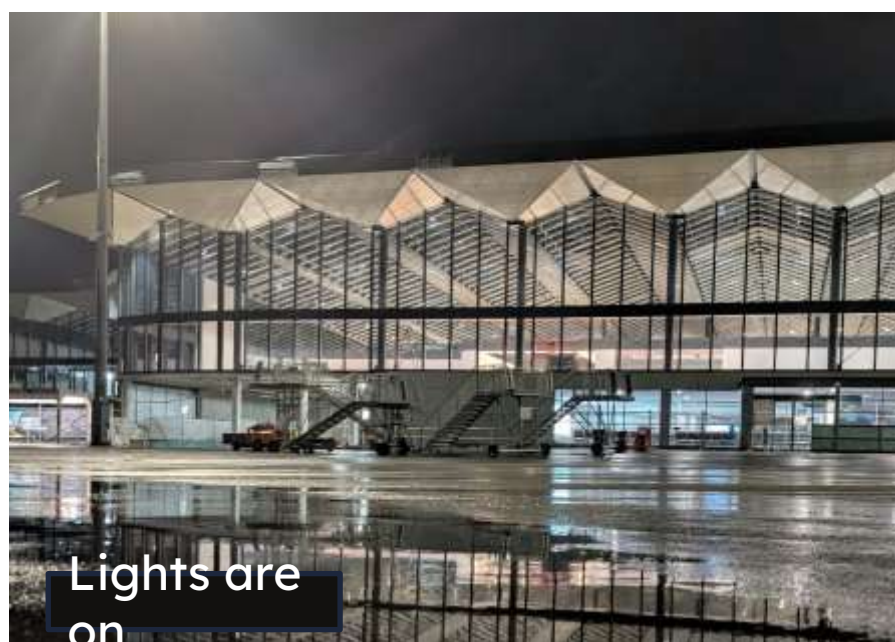
Terminal passenger tested



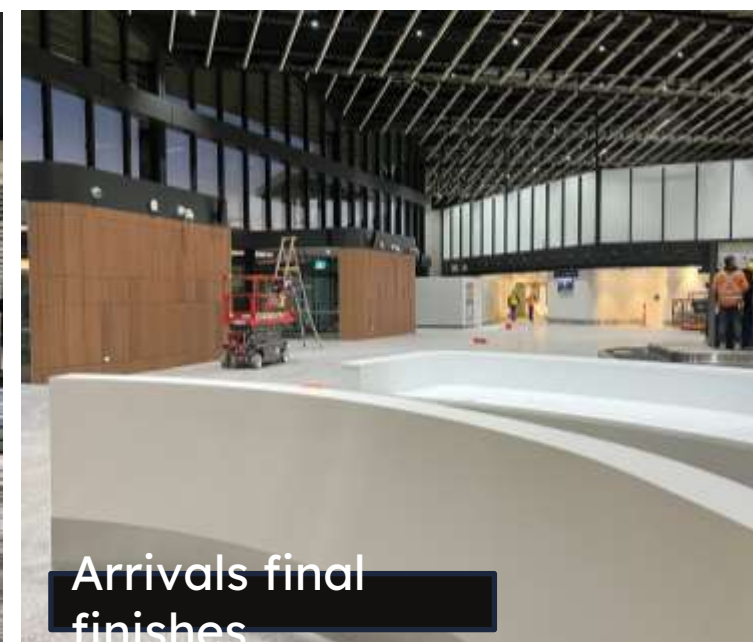
International departures seating



Baggage belts ready



Lights are on



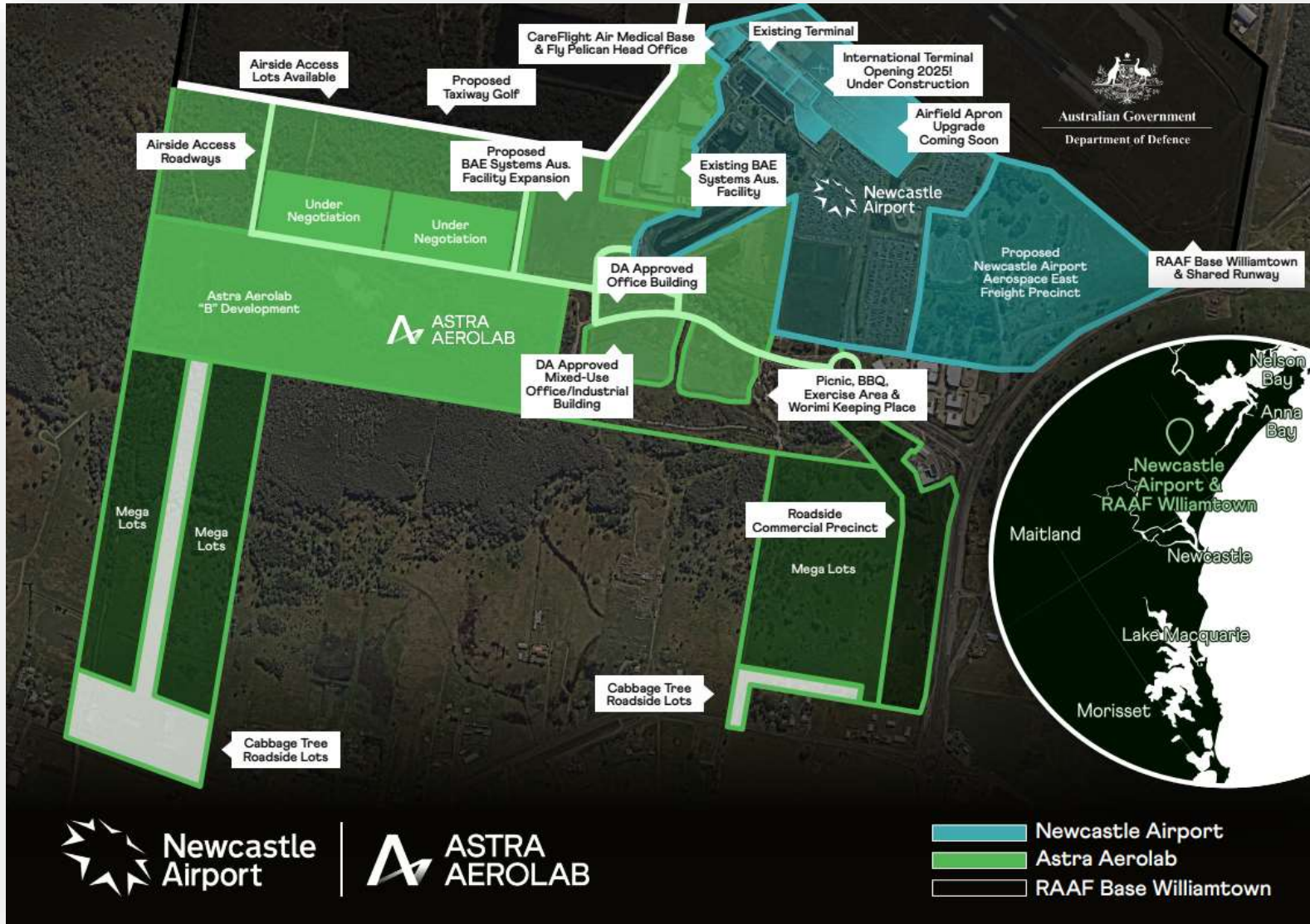
Arrivals final finishes



# ASTRA AEROLAB

THE WORLD'S MOST UPLIFTING  
PROPERTY, AEROSPACE AND  
INNOVATION PRECINCT

# Astra Aerolab Precinct



Two DA approved buildings ready for commencement



# Astra Aerolab Vision



# Freight opportunity



## Aerospace East Precinct

Stage 1 alone will deliver **\$134M** of benefits and generates a benefit-cost-ratio of **1.7**





**Thank You**



A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, featuring a repeating pattern of wavy, overlapping lines in two shades of red: a darker, more saturated red and a lighter, coral-like red. The pattern creates a sense of movement and texture.

# Morning Tea Break



**Industry Workshops**

**maitland**  
CITY COUNCIL



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**263 High Street, Maitland NSW 2320**

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**[maitland.nsw.gov.au](http://maitland.nsw.gov.au)**

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**CITY COUNCIL**