

Draft Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy - Summary of Submissions received during Public Exhibition

Overview

In total, 8 submissions were received during the public exhibition period. These included:

- 5 (via Council's Have Your Say webpage)
- 2 (via email) from sport and recreation organisations
- 1 (via email) from a neighbouring council (City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council)

A summary of comments is provided in the following table. The table also includes Council responses to the comments as well as changes to the Strategy and/or actions required.

Table: Summary of Submissions, Responses and Actions Required

Summary of Comments/Suggestions	Summary of Council Response	Changes to Strategy and/or Actions Required
3 submissions specifically expressed support or complimented Council on the Strategy.	Council thanked respondents for their positive feedback and support.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
2 submissions commented on the absence of various sporting facilities and possible improvements to fields, courts and amenities.	Sport and recreation facilities were not included in the scope of this Strategy. They will be considered as part of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: Comments have been forwarded to Recreation and Facilities teams for consideration.
1 submission commented on the need for facilities to be accessible in terms of ease and access to booking spaces.	The bookings process was identified by many stakeholders as a priority area for improvement. In response, Strategy 5.2 – Improve booking and hiring processes, was included in the Strategy. The strategy also identifies the need to review leasing arrangements to improve access to facilities. Strategy 5.3 – Refine the leasing and licensing process, includes exploring licensing arrangements that would allow greater flexibility and shared use of various spaces across the LGA.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.

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<p>1 submission suggested facilities should include casual work spaces (so that people can work remotely and do not have to travel to Sydney CBD or Parramatta).</p>	<p>The Strategy proposes investigation of co-working/business incubator space (refer to Action 2.3.8). The proposed facilities hierarchy on page 45 also mentions the potential incorporation of co-working/business incubator spaces in future community hubs.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: Wording of Action 2.6.1 amended as follows:</p> <p>Investigate opportunities to establish co-working/business incubator spaces.</p> <p>Action: Respondent's feedback forwarded to Council's Business Engagement Coordinator for review.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested the Strategy consider provision of spaces for social enterprises.</p>	<p>Council agrees that social enterprises are important initiatives and has proposed reflecting this by expanding Action 2.6.1 relating to spaces for service provision.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: Wording of Action 2.6.1 amended as follows:</p> <p>Seek opportunities to provide access to spaces for community service providers. This could include office and meeting spaces, as well as opportunities for social enterprise initiatives within Council-owned buildings.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission commented that older facilities need painting and minor repairs.</p>	<p>Maintenance and repairs to facilities (including older facilities) will be undertaken through Council's maintenance and renewal program. Refer Action 1.1.1 – 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. The program works will be informed by the assessment of facilities undertaken as part of the development of the Strategy, as well as the Asset Condition Audits of Council's assets recently undertaken by Council.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

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<p>1 submission suggested Council should monitor community needs for facilities and programs as they change over time.</p>	<p>The Strategy estimates the scale and types of needs of the community for facilities in the future, to ensure a proactive approach to planning and in reflection of the significant timeframes involved in planning and developing facilities. Council understands however that it is difficult to predict the exact needs of populations in the future. The planning of new facilities identified in Priority Area 2 in the Strategy will each involve additional studies and community engagement in the future to better understand the needs of local communities. Facilities in Cumberland will also be designed to be 'Multipurpose and adaptable' to enable them to adapt to changing needs over time (refer to principles p.42).</p> <p>Council is also committed to ensuring the programs, services, resources and other offerings at our facilities successfully meet a broad range of community needs and interests. Strategy 4.1 – Implement processes to more actively facilitate a range of relevant high quality programs and use, reflects Council's commitment to continual monitoring and review of programs and to ensuring programs meet community needs as they change over time.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested paintings, artefacts, old photographs and stories relating to life when building was constructed be displayed at facilities to reflect local culture and heritage.</p>	<p>Suggested inclusions for reflecting local history and heritage have been considered and the wording of Action 3.2.1 has been revised to incorporate this suggestion.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: Wording of Action 3.2.1 amended as follows:</p> <p>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.).</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

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1 submission noted it is essential that Council have an integrated system for all bookings and reporting of maintenance required.	Action 5.1.1 – Develop a centralised online request system for reporting of facility maintenance issues and requests, and Action 5.2.1 – Implement a new online booking system for Council facilities to improve efficiency and customer experience, will ensure provision of the centralised system suggested.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission noted that implementation of the Strategy is crucial.	Council is committed to successfully implementing the Strategy and achieving the outcomes identified in section – ‘Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the strategy’ (p.63). An implementation plan will be developed each year that will detail the actions and tasks to be undertaken. Implementation plans will need to reflect project timeframes, planning and approvals processes, resourcing, budget allocations etc. Progress on the implementation of the Strategy will be regularly monitored and reported annually to Council.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission suggested the main culture to be reflected at facilities should be that of Australian not migrants.	Council is committed to welcoming all members of our community. Council recognises the contribution made by all groups and individuals to making Cumberland a diverse, vibrant and interesting place. In reflecting local culture and heritage at our facilities consideration will be given to the reflection of all cultures, including that of area’s oldest community (the Darug people), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and both older, established and newly arrived communities across Cumberland.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission noted the need for Council to improve communication in relation to facilities and the need for volunteers in the Cumberland area.	Strategy 5.4 – Increase the promotion of Council’s network of facilities and their offerings, is aimed at increasing the promotion of what is available to the community. With regard to volunteers, Council’s facilities can play a role in creating access to affordable spaces for volunteer run organisations and in connecting people interested in volunteering to organisations and programs, in particular at our staffed community centres.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.

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<p>1 submission suggested community facilities be accessible to all, ensure dignity of access, and equality, and that access for all be part of the DNA of Council's facilities. It also noted that disability is very diverse.</p>	<p>The Strategy recognises the importance of providing facilities that are accessible to all. Included in section 'Key directions for community facilities' (pp. 41-43) are principles that will guide the planning, design and management of Council's facilities moving forward. The Principle 'Accessible' directs the provision of facilities that 'comply with principles of universal access', that is, facilities that are accessible to all including, but not limited to, people with disability. The Principle 'Welcoming and inviting' reflects the desire to create facilities that are inclusive of all, including people of all ages, backgrounds, needs and interests. The Strategy also identifies the need to facilitate access to all at our existing facilities (refer Strategy 1.2, p.49).</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested ongoing community consultation is key to achieving inclusion for everyone.</p>	<p>Ongoing community consultation is indeed extremely important and essential. As identified in Priority Area 2 (p.52) the development of each new proposed facility will requires further research, including community and stakeholder engagement to inform the detailed design and programming of the facility. Council also recognises the role of community consultation and the importance of community feedback in the continuous monitoring and review of programs to ensure they successfully meet a broad range of community needs.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested accessible amenities be provided at facilities and events.</p>	<p>The incorporation of high quality accessible amenities at all new facility developments (identified under Priority 2, p.52) will be a key consideration during the design phase for each of these facilities. In addition to professional architectural services input, the design process will also include consultation with Council's Access Committee and broader community consultation to capture community feedback on access and inclusion needs.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested facilities be 'cool zones' during summer months.</p>	<p>Climate and thermal comfort will be considered during the design phase for all new facilities. Rising temperatures is indeed a key consideration. Council is also committed to creating new facilities that are environmentally and financially sustainable (as included in the Principles on p.43). Council will therefore also seek to ensure new buildings are designed to reduce energy use associated with heating and cooling.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

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<p>1 submission suggested Council ensure facilities are multipurpose and flexible and that incorporation of technology is important.</p>	<p>The Strategy references the importance of multipurpose, flexible spaces that can accommodate multiple uses and respond to changing needs and uses over time (refer to Principle – ‘Multipurpose and adaptable’, p. 42). ‘Adaptable’ can also refer to being able to change and respond to technological advancements and incorporating new technologies and offerings. Additional text will be added to this principle in response to this suggestion.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: The following text has been added to principle ‘Multipurpose and adaptable’ (p.42):</p> <p>‘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.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission expressed a desire to see a greater focus on first Australians culture (e.g. culture centre in Merrylands Garden).</p>	<p>Council has a strong focus on recognising the importance of the area’s Aboriginal culture and heritage, the Darug community and reflecting this in our work. Strategy 3.1 – Promote Aboriginal history and contemporary cultures through facility provision, reflects this focus. Council is committed to ensuring this reflection of Aboriginal culture will not be token; that any related initiative will be undertaken in consultation with Council’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee and community.</p> <p>With regard to a cultural centre, the development of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Prospect Hill is proposed in the Draft Community Facilities Strategy (refer Action 3.1.1 – Plan and develop the Aboriginal Culture Centre at Prospect Hill, p.57) and is also proposed in Council’s Cultural Plan and Reconciliation Action Plan.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

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<p>1 submission suggested the provision of cooking and food events, with a lifecycle approach, involving community gardens and food from different cultures.</p>	<p>There are a number of gardening and community cooking programs and groups that run from Council facilities (e.g. at Auburn Centre for Community). Council's Grants Program has also funded cooking related programs run by community organisations that involve bringing people together over cooking and food. The Strategy also identifies the need to upgrade kitchens at key facilities (refer Action 1.3.1, p.49), reflecting the importance of these popular spaces within our facilities. In response to this feedback, text reflecting the importance of community gardens will be added to the principle 'Access to outdoor areas' (p.42).</p>	<p>Plan amendments: The following text has been added to principle 'Access to outdoor areas' (p.42):</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested Council should provide internet and technology assistance services, including an outreach service to older people in homes or aged care facilities.</p>	<p>Council recognises the need for computer and technology assistance and programs within our community. Council provides computer and internet access at our libraries and provides a number of computer and technology classes from our facilities, including classes for seniors, people with disability and people with English as a second language. However, Council does not offer any of these programs as outreach services. There are also a number of digital training and mentoring programs provided in the Cumberland area by community organisations.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission noted that the Strategy does not include specific, time-framed and measurable outcomes and substantive and solid performance indicators.</p>	<p>The Strategy is a high level, long-term document that will be underpinned by annual implementation plans that will detail tasks to be undertaken each year to achieve the identified actions. These Plans will include more specific performance indicators for that year.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

Summary of Comments/Suggestions	Summary of Council Response	Changes to Strategy and/or Actions Required
1 submission noted an issue with actions being reliant on funding and planning processes.	Council acknowledges that new facility developments are reliant on securing funding and number of complex processes and conditions. This is precisely why it is important that Council has a long-term strategy that identifies priorities, sets planning in motion, supports funding applications, prompts the identification of partnerships and other opportunities and informs other Council strategies and plans. The projects identified in the Strategy for example are informing Council's new Development Contributions Plan (in development), a key source of funding for community facilities. Having an endorsed Strategy is also extremely beneficial when applying for grants as it demonstrates a clear, long term commitment and provides a robust evidence base for projects.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission noted that the provision of adequate parking at facilities was identified by the community as an important inclusion and questioned why Council took parking away from patrons of the Merrylands Library to provide staff parking.	Very limited parking is available at Council's Merrylands Service Centre and Library for Council staff. There is limited parking for the Mayor, Councillors, Executives, visitors, pool cars and Council service vehicles that require frequent access to facilities and out into the community. The remainder of the Merrylands carpark includes parking shared between Holroyd Centre and Library users. There are almost 300 Council employees working at the Merrylands site, and very few have access to this car park.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission suggested Council should have liaised with the State Government to provide a commuter carpark as part of the Granville Centre development.	The provision of commuter car parking was investigated as a potential optional inclusion for the Granville Centre. However, due to site constraints, including issues associated with flooding, this option was deemed to not be feasible.	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.
1 submission suggested Council needs to better promote its assets (including Linnwood House) and events.	Council has recognised the need to better promote its facilities, programs and events. This is reflected in Strategy 1.5 – Expand the information offerings at Council facilities (p.50), and Strategy 5.4 – Increase promotion of Council's network of facilities and their offerings (p.61). Council is also developing a Business Plan for Linnwood House that will provide a clear direction for the planning, operations and management of the facility moving forward (including programming and promotion).	Plan amendments: No amendments required. Action: No action required.

Summary of Comments/Suggestions	Summary of Council Response	Changes to Strategy and/or Actions Required
<p>1 submission questioned the proposal to develop a community hub in Merrylands Town Centre as part of a broader civic centre redevelopment. This submission suggested this proposal does not reflect Council's current consideration to possibly relocate Council's main office to Granville.</p>	<p>Council has recognised the need to review its administration space arrangement and is currently investigating options. No decision has been reached to date. The Strategy does not include any mention of a Council administration centre at Granville as the Strategy is concerned with community facilities and administration buildings are not within the scope. The needs of the Granville community and surrounding areas for community facilities will be met at the Granville Centre. There is a gap in community facility space in Merrylands which will increase further in the future, therefore a community hub in Merrylands is included in the Strategy as a key project. It also seemed logical to investigate the provision of a community hub as part of a broader civic redevelopment as an option. The hub is a key recommended project regardless of whether Council administrative functions are to be co-located.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested repurposing underutilised facilities and rationalising poor quality facilities should be immediate priorities (not short term timeframes of 2-5 years).</p>	<p>The short term timeframes assigned to the repurposing and rationalisation of facilities reflects the potential endorsement, approvals, community and stakeholder engagement and implementation timeframes typically associated with such projects, in addition to budget availability and constraints.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested Council be mindful of the noise impacts that may be generated from communal space in apartment developments.</p>	<p>Communal spaces are becoming increasingly important with the increase in people living in higher density developments, including an increasing proportion of families with children. Communal spaces in apartment developments provide places for people to socialise, play, relax and study outside the home, as private indoor and outdoor space is limited. Mitigating noise impacts is indeed important. This can be addressed through good building design, which can be assessed during the development approval process.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission suggested the timeframe for the Business Plan for Linnwood House be immediate rather than short term</p>	<p>The timeframe (short term – 2 to 5 years) identified for the action relating to the Business Plan for Linnwood House (Action 3.3.1) relates not just to the development but implementation of the plan, therefore requiring a longer timeframe.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>

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<p>1 submission suggested expanding the action relating to increasing the promotion of Council's network of facilities and their offerings through a new webpage to include increased promotion through Council's e-news and social media. The submission also suggested increased promotion to schools, youth groups, CALD groups etc.</p>	<p>In response to this feedback Action 5.4.1 will be amended to reflect additional promotion methods.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: Wording of Action 5.4.1 amended as follows:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Action: No action required.</p>
<p>1 submission requested Council create more dog parks.</p>	<p>Dog Parks are not within the scope of the Community Facilities Strategy (which examines Council's community facility buildings). Council is however developing a new Cumberland Open Space and Recreation Strategy, of which dog parks are included in the scope.</p>	<p>Plan amendments: No amendments required.</p> <p>Action: Comments have been forwarded to Council's Public Open Space Planner for consideration.</p>