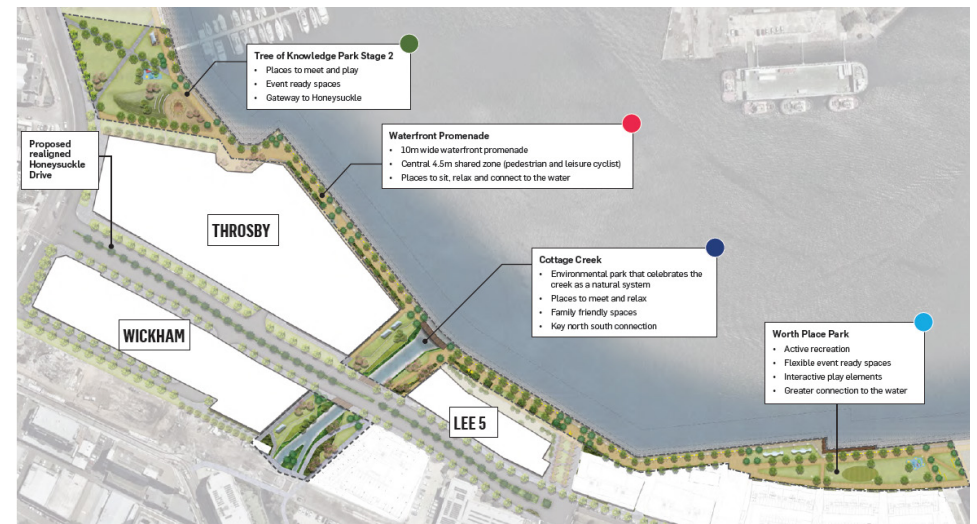


**POSITIVE OUTCOME
IN NEWCASTLE**

POSITIVE OUTCOME IN NEWCASTLE

Newcastle centre, is one of the most successful urban renewal projects in NSW. After BHP wound up its steelmaking operation, the heavy rail line that ran along the harbourfront was removed. This was controversial; a new railway interchange had to be built, and a light rail constructed to connect both ends of the city. However, these changes, enabled the land to be used for offices and apartments with leisure facilities, carefully incorporated. The city opened up to the waterfront and open corridors allowed views to be preserved from the old city.

There are many heritage buildings in good repair and of a good scale, a desirable up to date waterfront residential area, as well as a viable working harbour. A theatre, a vibrant university, and proximity to wine growing areas, beaches and resort facilities makes Newcastle a desirable place to live. The commercial strip of Hunter Street has suffered from the effect of the new regional shopping centres, but there is an active plan to rejuvenate the area.



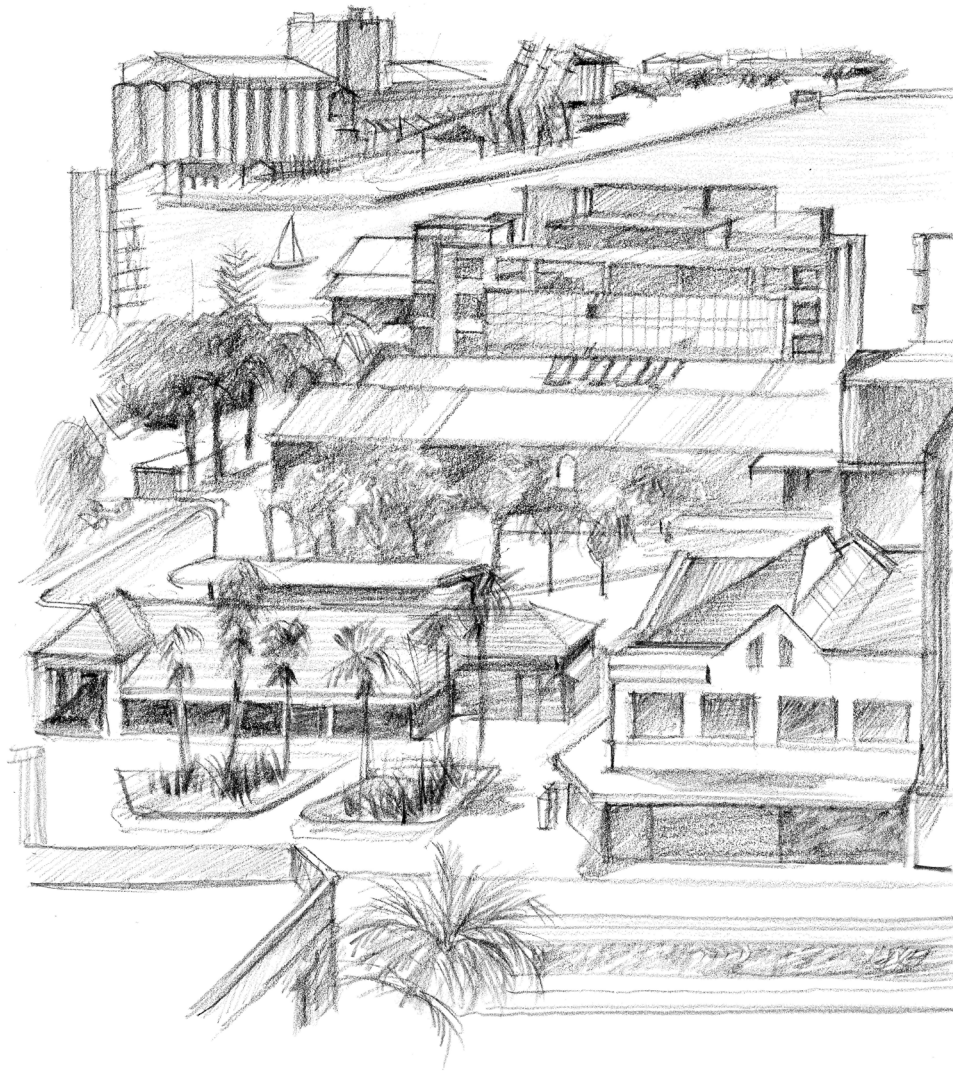
Proposed Honeysuckle Foreshore Public Domain Plan



Newcastle City foreshore area 2007



Newcastle City foreshore area 2022



Structure of Central Newcastle in 2023, consists of active port (top), new Honerysuckle development (centre) and Old Newcastle (bottom)

The repurposing of the is a successful outcome. The building was Council Administrative Offices, were designed in 1970 by Frederick Romberg. Born in Germany and educated in Switzerland, Romberg emigrated to Australia in 1938. A modernist, he joined Grounds and Boyd in various partnerships becoming an influential modernist architect in Melbourne. After a successful career, he was appointed foundation Professor of Architecture to Newcastle University, in 1965, and designed the modest faculty buildings there. The Newcastle Council Offices were completed in 1977, and became a landmark in the Newcastle Civic Centre. Circular in form, with articulated concrete fins, the building fitted the brutalist category but without the board marked off form concrete finishes. It became a symbol of modern Newcastle and aroused much public debate about its design.



Former Newcastle Council Administration Building



*Former Newcastle Council Administration Building
reinvented to become Crystalbrook Kingsley Hotel*

Before Newcastle Council moved its offices to Stuart Street in 2019, they intended to sell the old building and there was the possibility that it would be demolished. There was much debate about this in the community and in the end the NSW Heritage Council (led by Gabrielle Kibble) stepped in and said the building could not be demolished. This meant that any new owner would have to creatively adapt the old building for a new use. It seems that after the heritage listing, there were no pedantic roadblocks, and local architects EJE, were able to reinvent the building into a 130-room hotel, with a restaurant and bar added at the top level. The wedge-shaped rooms are cleverly designed to provide a spacious shower room, separate WC, generous windows, and sympathetically designed fixtures. The interiors by SUEDE in Melbourne, compliment the circular theme. Vibrant colours and sensitive finishes, add a joyful atmosphere. Located in the Civic Centre adjoining the City Hall, the theatre and park, it is still a distinctive landmark, by an iconoclast designer. Congratulations to all involved, the successful adaptive reuse, shows how we need not demolish buildings that have outlived one use. They can be successfully adapted to another.



Hotel lobby



Hotel furnished to accommodate building's circular form



Hotel dining areas with circular patterned carpet



Fixtures follow the circular layout of the hotel



Hotel room interior, heavy use of rounded elements