



Hunter Valley



New South Wales
Wonnarua Country

Diverse Economy

Affordable Housing

New Master- Planned
Towns

Australia's largest
regional economy - \$143
billion annual output

Hunter Valley

\$91 billion

According to REMPLAN, the region's gross regional product was \$91 billion in FY2024, which substantially outpaces the Northern Territory, Tasmania and the ACT.

860,000

The broader Hunter region is home to more than 860,000 residents already which is forecast to grow to 1 million residents by 2024.

\$20 billion

Its economy is poised to continue growing with almost \$20 billion in renewable energy projects set to deliver thousands of jobs to the region.

54.8%

CoreLogic's November 2024 Regional Market Update showed that median values in the Newcastle-Maitland region increased by 54.8% in the past five years while rents increased by 38.4% during the same period.

6.1%

The CoreLogic 2024 Best of the Best report, found the Muswellbrook LGA had the highest gross rental yield in regional NSW of 6.1%.

\$1.5 billion

Currently under construction, the \$1.5 billion master-planned project is the region's first new town in 50 years and on completion, it is expected to comprise 7,500 dwellings, a 200ha town centre, and four neighbourhoods.

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Hunter Valley

New South Wales
Wonnarua Country

01 Diverse Economy

03 New Master- Planned Towns

05 \$3 Billion In Transport Upgrades

07 \$20 billion in Resources Projects

The Hunter Valley region offers an enviable rural lifestyle, a strong economy, and a location within striking distance of thriving Newcastle.

Its economy is poised to continue growing with almost \$20 billion in renewable energy projects set to deliver thousands of jobs to the region. It is poised to become the home of Australia's first major offshore wind farm.

As well as the emerging renewable energy industry, the local economy's additional strength is its diversity. Coal mining and viticulture continue to be important components of the region. Also driving the local economy forward is an extensive thoroughbred breeding industry along with advanced manufacturing and Defence Force operations.

02 Affordable Housing

04 Australia's largest regional economy - \$143 billion annual output

06 Singleton Bypass

08 Links to Port of Newcastle

The local councils have joined forces under the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) banner to ensure further sustainable growth is coordinated throughout the region.

The broader Hunter region is home to more than 860,000 residents already which is forecast to grow to 1 million residents by 2024. It is Australia's largest regional economy.

Along with lower property prices than those of capital cities, this makes the Hunter region an appealing location for investors, those seeking a tree change and first-home buyers (FHBs).

Vacancy rates remain low and growing demand has resulted in increased rents and solid yields.

Hunter Valley



LOCATION

Distance from Newcastle:

Upper Hunter: 175km

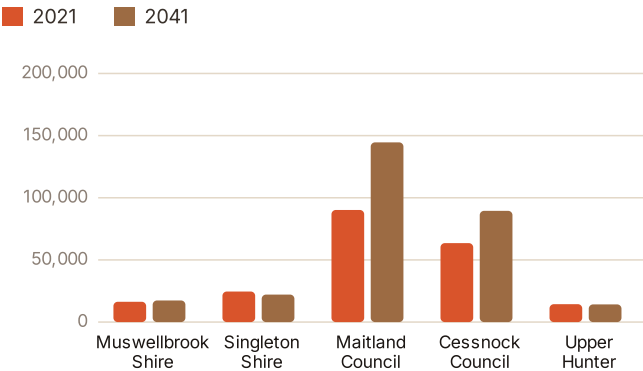
Maitland: 35k

Cessnock: 50km

Muswellbrook: 135km

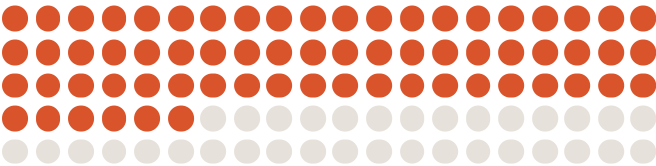
Singleton: 80km

POPULATION

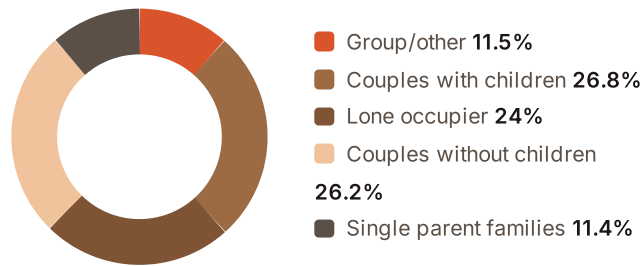


HOME OWNERSHIP

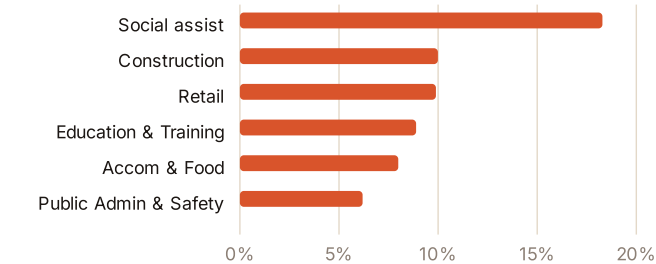
66% Owner Occupiers



HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION



EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY



We acknowledge the Wonnarua peoples as the traditional owners of lands within the Hunter Valley region

Source: ABS 2021 Census, REMPLAN

Economy and Amenities

The Hunter Valley region is Australia's largest regional economy and comprises the LGAs of Maitland City; Cessnock City; and Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter shires.

According to REMPLAN, the region's gross regional product was \$91 billion in FY2024, which substantially outpaces the Northern Territory, Tasmania and the ACT. The strong local economy - which continues to grow in 2025 - was instrumental in boosting the region's population to 798,000 in FY2023.

The Hunter Valley benefits from its proximity to Newcastle and Sydney, with most towns around two to three hours' drive from the Harbour City and even closer to the busy port city of Newcastle.

Transport includes regular rail passenger services connecting towns such as Muswellbrook to Newcastle, Sydney and Brisbane while the Hunter Expressway has made it easier for workers to commute to employment hubs and for visitors to visit the area.

According to REMPLAN, the Hunter Valley's \$37.8 billion mining industry sector makes the greatest contribution to economic output in the region, accounting for 21.7% of total output. However, the healthcare and social assistance industry sector is the region's largest employer.

Other mainstays of the local economy are agriculture - including thoroughbred horse breeding and racing - viticulture, tourism and

Defence. Australia's main fighter pilot training base - RAAF Williamtown - is co-located with Newcastle Airport.

Renewable energy, including offshore wind farms, is also a growing industry.

Equine Industry

The Hunter Valley equine industry contributes \$2.6 billion to the NSW economy and more than \$500 million to the State's regional economy annually. It employs 5,000 employees in the region and supports 220,000 jobs nationally throughout its value chain.

Supported by nearby Muswellbrook and Murrumbidgee, the town of Scone in the Upper Hunter region is Australia's horse-breeding capital and is the nation's largest producer, supplier and exporter of premium thoroughbreds.

One of only three global International Centres of Thoroughbred Breeding Excellence, Scone has the largest concentration of thoroughbred breeding studs in the world, outside of the US state of Kentucky. The Scone Equine Hospital is the largest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and is recognised as a Centre of Excellence in its own right.

Local infrastructure includes the Hunter Valley Equine Research Centre; the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred nursery, training and racing complexes; and equine-related education facilities at TAFE NSW. Arrowfield, Vinery, Emirates Park, Widden and Segenhoe are among the region's world-renowned studs while

racecourses are located at Muswellbrook, Scone, Cessnock and nearby Newcastle.

Cessnock

Cessnock is a substantial regional centre, 30 minutes south-west of Maitland, with retail outlets, recreational facilities, an airport and a TAFE NSW campus.

The 63,000-strong town has a growing economy and a healthy construction industry. It is home to the Shortland Correctional Centre - a maximum security facility for male offenders that accommodates up to 616 inmates. It underwent a \$170 million expansion in 2019.

As of September 2024, Cessnock LGA had an unemployment rate of 5.3%.

A \$9 million upgrade of the airport was completed in 2022 while master plans for a \$112 million renovation of Cessnock District Hospital were revealed in 2023.

The LGA has 28 schools and an entertainment centre. It also is home to the Hunter Valley Wildlife Park.

In April 2024, Cessnock City Council announced a \$75.3 million capital works spend as part of its draft Operational Plan 2024-25 report. This includes:

- \$39.7 million on infrastructure and transport links;
- \$17 million on waste and environmental management; and
- \$11.9 million on open spaces and community facilities

Singleton

Singleton is 45km north-west of Maitland and is a 25,000-strong town surrounded by coal mining operations and power stations. It also has market gardens, a large dairy and beef cattle industry, and an emerging mushroom industry.

The regional centre's extensive facilities include a TAFE NSW campus and recreational complexes. The EC Throsby abattoir at Whittingham, near Singleton, processes 170,000 cattle per annum. As of September 2024, the LGA had an unemployment rate of 2.9%.

It has a Gross Regional Product of \$13.6 billion in FY2024 and the Singleton Council has a \$54.7 million capital works program in 2024/2025.

Projects include

- Alroy Oval Sports Precinct Redevelopment - \$6.5million
- Brunnens Bridge Replacement - \$7.2million (delivered across 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets)
- Singleton Gym + Swim improvements - \$5.6million
- Kilfoyles Bridge Replacement - \$4.5million

Upper Hunter Shire

The Upper Hunter Shire is bounded by Liverpool Plains Shire and the Tamworth Regional Council area in the north, Mid Coast Council and Dungog Shire in the east, the Singleton Council area and Muswellbrook Shire in the south and the Mid-Western Regional Council area and Warrumbungle Shire in the west.

It is predominantly a rural area and encompasses a total land area of about 8,000 sq km, a large proportion of which is National Park and nature reserves. Most of the rural area is used for grazing, dairy farming, horse studs and general farming. Its main township is Scone. As of September 2024, it had an unemployment rate of 2.9%.

The Council capital works program in FY2025 plans to focus on:

- The MR358 rehabilitation
- Scone CBD revitalisation

Muswellbrook

Around 100km north-west of Maitland, Muswellbrook Shire features a shopping centre, TAFE NSW campus, hospital, railway station and several industrial estates. The town of 16,000 people is well known for coal mining, horse breeding and horse racing, and it is also developing a reputation for gourmet food and wine.

Two coal-fired power stations - Liddell and Bayswater - are a remnant of a slowly dying energy industry. Both owned and operated by Macquarie Generation, Liddell ceased operation in May 2023, while Bayswater is expected to close by 2033.

As of September 2024, the LGA had an unemployment rate of 6.7%.

The Shire has a Gross Regional Product of \$8 billion in FY2024. In its 2025 Budget, the council intends to spend:

- \$15.4 million on roads and drainage
- \$9.3 million on waste management
- \$4.1 million on sport and recreation
- \$2.8 million on economic development

Maitland

Based on both size and population, Maitland is the largest LGA in the Hunter Valley. It is also one of the fastest-growing LGAs in NSW with a 16.7% increase in residents between the 2016 and 2021 Census bringing population numbers to 90,000.

Housing affordability and lifestyle attractions are the main reasons for this popularity. The Levee in Central Maitland has been redeveloped to produce the town's major lifestyle precinct. The Stockland Green Hills - a \$414 million speciality shopping centre - is a major retail drawcard.

The city also features several historic buildings including the Old Maitland Gaol. The heritage-listed, maximum security site was open from 1848 to 1998, making it the longest continually operating prison in Australia.

As of September 2024, the LGA had an unemployment rate of 3.4%. The Gross Regional Product for Maitland was \$7.8 billion in FY2024.

The Council has endorsed a \$216 million operating budget for the FY2025 which includes a \$60 million Infrastructure Program. Major projects in FY2025 include:

- Community centres at Tenambit and Chisholm
- Chisholm and Lochinvar sportsgrounds planning
- Staged upgrades at Maitland Resource Recovery Facility

Tourism

Directly supporting around 14,000 people, tourism is a significant contributor to the Hunter Region's economy, with 9,000 of these workers employed in the accommodation and food services sector.

The local wine industry alone accounts for \$557 million worth of total goods and services per year with the industry generating about 2,800 local jobs.

Around 11.1 million tourists visited the Hunter Region in the year to September 2024 spending \$4.2 billion. The Hunter Valley's vineyards as well as hot air ballooning are popular attractions, along with rodeos and food, wine, and music festivals.

The increasing profile of the Hunter Valley breeding industry has created a tourism offshoot of its own, with racing enthusiasts and horse lovers undertaking stud tours throughout the year.

Property Profile

The Hunter Valley region's real estate market has been a strong performer since 2018 with lifestyle buyers appreciating its relative affordability compared to Newcastle and Sydney.

It continued for the most part to enjoy further price growth in the 12 months to January 2025. Key influences that have positively impacted the local property market include:

- Improved accessibility since the opening of the \$1.7 billion Hunter Expressway in 2014
- A relaxed lifestyle among wineries and equine areas
- Property affordability, especially compared to Sydney, Newcastle and the NSW Central Coast
- Local economic recovery, helped by a resources sector revival

The Summer 2024/2025 Price Predictor Index by Hotspotting said many parts of Regional NSW have been in gradual recovery since the March 2023 quarter. Since then transactions have been lifting during most quarters. It described the Hunter Valley LGAs as being steady and consistent markets.

Transaction levels are rising in the Cessnock, North Rothbury, Chisholm, Tenambit, Singleton and Scone House markets and in the East Maitland and Muswellbrook, unit markets. Rising transaction levels are often a precursor to further price growth.

Canstar's Rising Stars report, released in April 2024, identified the Hunter region as having a series of solid

property markets underpinned by a strong and diverse economy and myriad lifestyle attractions.

CoreLogic's November 2024 Regional Market Update showed that median values in the Newcastle-Maitland region increased by 54.8% in the past five years while rents increased by 38.4% during the same period.

The CoreLogic 2024 Best of the Best report, found the Muswellbrook LGA had the highest gross rental yield in regional NSW of 6.1%.

Market Summary

According to PropTrack data, there were 4023 house sales and 518 unit sales across the region in the 12 months to January 2025.

Median house prices start at just \$395,000 in Merriwa in the Upper Hunter Shire and go up to \$1.14 million in Lorn in the Maitland LGA. There are eight suburbs with a median house price of \$600,000 or below.

Of the 38 suburbs analysed by this report, the vast majority recorded median house price growth in the past 12 months. The highest growth was 64% in Lochinvar in Maitland, bringing its median to \$800,000, although that was based on just 55 sales in the past year.

The suburb of Muswellbrook was the most popular location with house buyers with 311 changing hands in the past year, while Cessnock was close behind with 300 sales and Rutherford (Maitland) with 255 sales.

Annual average long-term growth over the past five years ranges most between 7% and 14% with Farley (Maitland) at 30%.

Unit market

The affordability of the housing market in the region means the unit market is not large. East Maitland had 70 unit sales in the past 12 months while Cessnock had 55 and Muswellbrook had 54.

Kurri Kurri (Cessnock) had the highest median growth in the 12 months to January 2025 of 6% to \$445,000, while Cessnock was up 5 to \$494,000.

Annual average long-term growth over the past five years ranged between 6% and 10%.

Vacancy Rates & Rental Yields

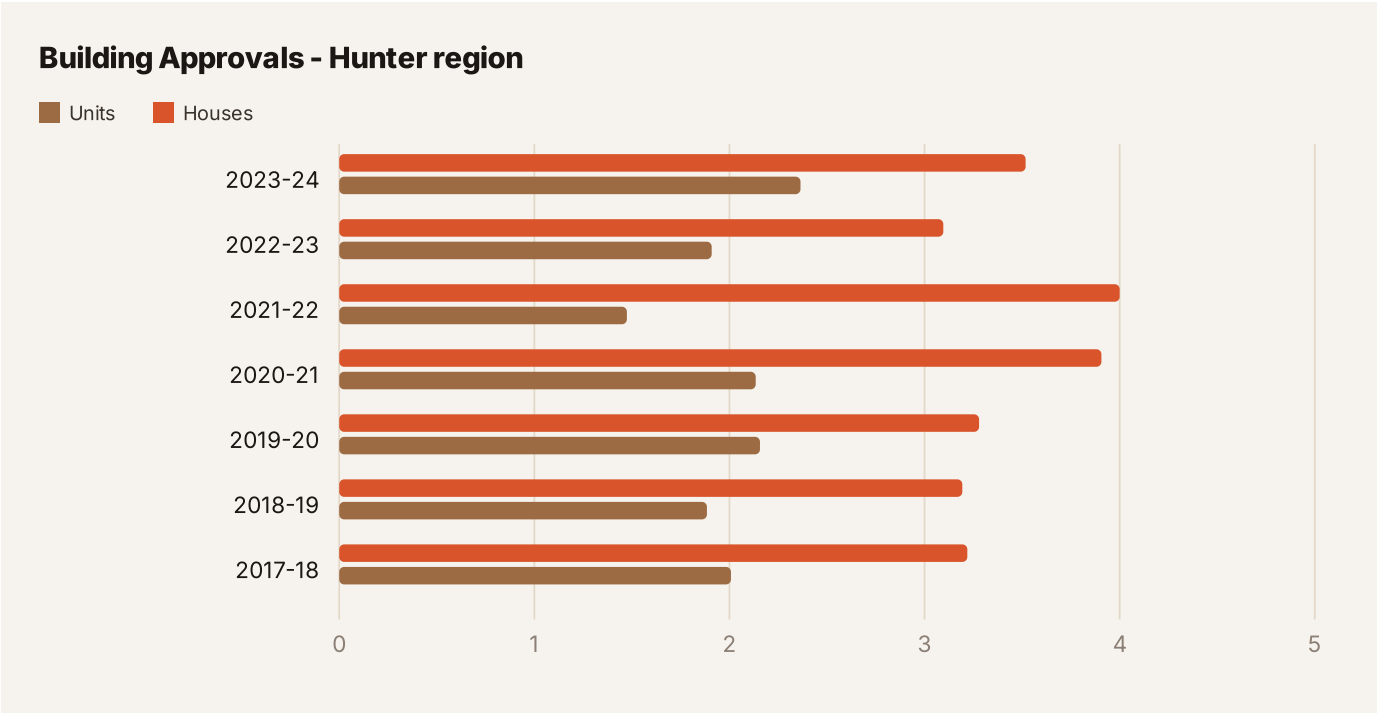
Local economic improvements have created jobs and brought new residents to the Hunter Valley which has impacted the vacancy rate which is mostly between the 3% considered to represent a balanced market.

Vacancy rates range between 0.5% in Singleton Heights and Thornton, and 3.2% in North Rothbury, although the majority of markets are below 1%.

Rent increases were varied in the past 12 months with PropTrack data showing median asking rents for houses now range from \$490 per week in Weston and up to \$750 per week in Chisholm.

The Hunter region's median rental yields for houses range from 3.7% to 6% while in the unit market yields start

at 4.7% in Cessnock and go up to 6.3% in Musswellbrook.



Source: REMPLAN

03

HUNTER VALLEY

Future Prospects

The Hunter region mayors have come together to form the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) to help drive further cooperation throughout the area.

The region is home to more than 860,000 residents which is forecast to grow to 1 million by 2040, which would make it the largest regional economy in Australia.

Its strong economic prospects are thanks in large part to its industry diversity. While the local economy centres around coal mines, energy and infrastructure projects, it is

broadening to host a range of other opportunities. In April 2021, Meridian Australia highlighted that the region produced 80% of NSW's electricity and 40% of its coal resources.

The 2024 Hunter Investment Prospectus - described the region as a "vibrant and diverse centre" with a focus on technology, research, knowledge sharing, industry and innovation.

In December 2022, the NSW Government released the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 which highlighted a future for the region of greater

diversification of employment, mining and energy and a new approach to planning for new land uses and infrastructure.

It said there would be a focus on 15-minute mixed-use neighbourhoods and a preference for infill development rather than greenfield development.

To meet this demand from its growing population new residential estates in the Hunter Valley are on the rise, with one of the largest being Huntlee - a

new town near North Rothbury, 25km northwest of Maitland CBD, which will eventually house 20,000 people.

Currently under construction, the \$1.5 billion master-planned project is the region's first new town in 50 years and on completion, it is expected to comprise 7,500 dwellings, a 200ha town centre, and four neighbourhoods.

Housing targets

According to the Property Council, the region is on track to deliver 68% of its housing targets by 2029 under the National Housing Accord.

Property Council Hunter and Central Coast Regional Director Amy De Lore said Maitland and Cessnock councils were standouts and were on track to meet or even exceed their targets.

The NSW Department of Planning data forecasts that Maitland's population will grow by 49% and Cessnock by 40% by 2041.

The Property Council believes the Anambah-Branxton, a regionally significant growth area that covers Maitland, Cessnock and Singleton, has enormous potential to support this growth.



Transport

Accessibility to the Hunter Valley region from Sydney is improving, thanks to upgrades to the M1 Pacific Motorway.

Construction on the M1 extension to Raymond Terrace began in January 2024, with Federal and State governments funding the \$2.1 billion project. Expected to open to traffic in 2028, the 15km extension will result in five sets of traffic lights being removed. It will also deliver a 2.6km viaduct over the Hunter River and floodplain as well as the Main North Rail Line and the New England Highway, and new bridges at Tarro and Raymond Tce.

In September 2024 the first sod was turned on the long-awaited Singleton Bypass. The \$700 million project will deliver Singleton's biggest infrastructure project to date and will remove around 15,000 vehicles each day from the Singleton CBD. Once complete motorists will avoid five sets of traffic lights and benefit from improved road safety and reduced travel times.

Six bridges will be built as part of the project, including four across the Hunter River floodplain as well as a northbound climbing lane which will allow heavy vehicles to climb the hill without slowing other traffic between Gowrie Gates and the northern connection. The project is expected to support 1,300 jobs during construction and be open to traffic by late 2026.

Early work started on the Muswellbrook Bypass in early 2023 and will result in a 9km new road connecting the town to the New England Highway. Completion is due in late 2027.

Rail projects

The High-Speed Rail Authority has developed a business case for high-speed rail between Sydney and the Hunter. It says if it were to proceed, it could lead to hundreds of jobs and an engineering skills boom in the region.

The business case was presented to the Federal Government in late 2024 and is being reviewed.

The proposed line from Newcastle to Sydney would use trains capable of travelling up to 320 km/h on a dedicated railway line. It would have significant flow on effects for the whole Hunter region.

Gas Connections

The Hunter Power Project in Kurri Kurri - a \$950 million gas-fired power station - was approved in 2021. Comprising two heavy-duty, open-cycle gas turbines (OCGTs), the Snowy Hydro project will be built on the site of a former aluminium smelter and will provide 750MW in power.

The project reached a key milestone in June 2024 with the construction of the project's SFC buildings. The buildings were 24 tonnes each and were transported from Adelaide before being installed.

Other gas plans for the Hunter region include an 830km pipeline from Queensland to Newcastle, via NSW towns including Scone, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Maitland. The Hunter Gas Pipeline project, acquired by Santos in 2022, will cost \$1.2 billion and create 350 construction jobs.

Renewable Energy

With most of the Hunter Valley's coal-fired generators expected to close in the next two decades - and the 500MW Liddell power station in Muswellbrook closing in April 2023, after 52 years in operation - renewable resources in the area are gaining traction.

The State Government wants at least 12GW of new, clean energy generation capacity developed before 2030. Its Electricity Strategy scheme, released in November 2020, includes plans for a line-up of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs).

The Hunter-Central Coast was declared the State's fourth REZ in December 2022 and the first to feature offshore wind energy. The REZ has already attracted \$100 billion worth of potential investment, with developers and investors looking to build 24 solar farms; 13 onshore and seven offshore wind energy projects; 35 large-scale batteries; and eight pumped hydro facilities.

In December 2024 the State Government signed a commitment deed to appoint a preferred network operator to the Hunter-Central Coast REZ. Ausgrid will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the REX network infrastructure.

The project is expected to allow for the delivery of an additional 1GW of network transfer capacity and put more renewable energy into the state's electricity grid. The Hunter-Central Coast REZ is anticipated to be commissioned in 2028.

The possibility of constructing pumped hydro facilities near Scone and Singleton is already being explored, following WaterNSW awarding a development agreement to Upper Hunter Hydro (UHH) in February 2024. The two projects are part of WaterNSW's Renewable Energy and Storage Program and would be

capable of storing more than 1000 MW for eight to 12 hours - as much power as one million household batteries.

UHH estimates the combined projects could potentially generate 1,400 construction jobs and 80 ongoing operations roles.

The Hunter Valley could also soon become Australia's first 'hydrogen valley'. The Hunter Hydrogen Network (H2N) project is a \$2 billion hydrogen production, transportation, and export plan that will work in partnership with users and exporters.

H2N projects include the Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub on Newcastle's Kooragang Island. Planned to be the Hunter's first commercial hydrogen manufacturing hub, the precinct will see Newcastle become one of the first cities in the world to produce commercial quantities of green hydrogen. In September 2023, the NSW State Government pledged \$45 million towards the project, with the hub estimated to deliver 55 MW of electrolyser capacity by 2026.

Major Projects

A major project in the area is the 3,200-ha Hunter Economic Zone (HEZ) in Kurri Kurri - 12km southwest of Maitland - which is set to be Australia's largest industrial estate and business park. The master-planned precinct incorporates residential, commercial, industrial, aged care, retail, community and emergency facilities, plus a hospital and schools.

It is also located at an intersection of road, rail and power, predicted to see the development of \$3.5 billion of industrial and commercial property.

Another freight industry project in the pipeline - the Hunter freight hub and industrial precinct - comprises approximately 300ha of rezoned land near Black Hill, 19km south of Maitland. It is expected to create 1,000 jobs.

Offshore Windfarm

The Hunter Valley's potential to develop off-shore wind farm projects was confirmed in July 2023, when the Federal Government announced a Pacific Ocean area on the Hunter coastline as the newest approved centre for such green energy.

The 1,854m² area between the Central Coast and Port Stephens, to the north of Newcastle, has the potential to generate up to 5GW of energy - enough to power 4.2 million homes. The project could also create up to 3,120 construction jobs and another 1,560 ongoing operational jobs.

Equinor and Oceanex Energy have been awarded a feasibility licence in the zone for Australia's first floating offshore wind project. It hopes to have the \$10 billion project up and running by 2030.

The Novocastrian Offshore Wind Project will deliver 2010MW of energy to the grid, produce 3000 direct jobs during construction and produce enough electricity to power 1.2 million homes.

It is anticipated it will provide 200 ongoing jobs once operational.

Onshore Windfarms

Several onshore wind farms are already in the pipeline or underway with the first stage of the largest approved wind farm in the Hunter Valley ticked off in February 2024.

Ark Energy's \$590 million Bowmans Creek Wind Farm is in the Hunter-Central Coast REZ, 10km east of Muswellbrook. It will have 54 turbines with a 335MW capacity.

In March 2024, Ark Energy announced it still wanted to expand the project to a total of 75 turbines in total and would submit a separate scoping report submission to do so by late 2024. However, the potential for 21 turbines in the project's second stage will require separate approval from the

State Government, and possibly the State's Independent Planning Commission.

Work began in May 2024 on a 500 MW, two-hour duration, grid-scale battery on the site of the former coal-fired Liddell power station. To form part of AGL's Hunter Energy Hub - a low-carbon industrial energy precinct - the \$750 million project has an expected lifespan of 20 years, with completion expected in mid-2026. The first phase of construction will generate up to 100 jobs.

Plans have been revealed for a solar farm east of Singleton on a property at 1023 Gresford Rd about 12km from town. Elgin Energy is behind the Mitchell's Flat Solar Farm proposal. It would include ground-mounted solar panels and a battery energy storage system with around 90 megawatts of capacity, to store energy when demand is low and dispatch energy when demand is high.

To connect the project to the grid Elgin says a 14km transmission line will be built along Mirannie and Gresford Roads. It is expected to generate enough electricity to power 37,500 homes.

Coal Mining

Increases in global coal prices and more profitable conditions in recent years ensure coal continues to be a strong contributor to the Hunter Valley's economy. The region is the main coal-producing region in NSW with 28 mining companies providing direct local spending of \$6.1 billion (up \$800 million on the previous year), according to the NSW Mining Industry Expenditure Survey in 2021. The industry supports 3,400 supplier businesses.

But mines are closing with the AGL-owned Liddell Power station in Muswellbrook closed in April 2023, and the adjacent Bayswater facility set to close by 2033.

At Dartbrook, 15km north of Muswellbrook, a mine that closed in 2006 reopened in 2024 and has begun production again.

Now owned by Australian Pacific Coal (APC) and several joint venture partners, it secured \$90.6 million in funding to restart the mine.

Medical Facilities

The John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct in Newcastle - in particular, the John Hunter Hospital and John Hunter Children's Hospital - is undergoing an \$835 million expansion and redevelopment.

A \$470 million public hospital opened in Maitland in March 2022, with the 339-bed precinct featuring 50,000m² of space.

A builder was appointed in August 2024 for the \$45 million final section of a three-stage expansion at Muswellbrook Public Hospital. Stage 3 will create a new inpatient, birthing, and maternity department and include relocated community health facilities.

The Cessnock Hospital is also earmarked for a \$138 million redevelopment which will include a two-level health services building, Emergency Department, overnight inpatient accommodation, and theatre facilities.

Desalination plant

The Belmont water desalination plant received planning approval in September 2024 in the nearby Lake Macquarie LGA.

Hunter Water will deliver the \$530 million, State Significant Infrastructure Project which will use seawater to provide about 15% (30 million litres) of Hunter's average daily water demand.

Construction is expected to create up to 215 full-time equivalent jobs and the plant is due to start operating in 2028.

The project began as a temporary drought response measure in 2018, but it was announced in 2021 that it would become a permanent piece of infrastructure with twice the capacity of the temporary plant.

Newcastle Airport

The nearby Newcastle Airport had been intending to expand its tarmac to handle more international flights as well as upgrading its terminal.

In April 2022 the Federal Government committed \$55 million to upgrading the airport. Work commenced on upgrades to the airport in July 2023. But as of November 2024, it placed on hold its plans to upgrade the tarmac to accommodate international aircraft because of a critical funding shortfall.

This means it can only continue to handle international flights to areas within Oceania such as Bali and Auckland. The airport said the works were deferred until FY2027.

The terminal and runway upgrade were expected to generate 4,400 full-time jobs throughout the airport precinct after construction and return \$12.7 billion in local economic activity over the next 20 years.

Other developments

Plans were lodged in May 2024 for a five-storey hotel in the Cessnock CBD. The \$12.7 million project is to be built on a site on North Avenue. It will have 66 rooms and a function room. The developer has requested an exception to the council's building height limit of 15 metres to cater for the rooftop function room, which will feature an outdoor courtyard.

The Cessnock Leagues Club will be redeveloped to become double its current size. Plans were lodged in July 2024 for the club's capacity to increase from 700 patrons to almost 1400. The Cessnock Hospitality Group-owned club will gain an additional 1700 sq m of outdoor space

and an outdoor children's playground. Pending approval it is anticipated work will start in early 2025.

A development application was approved in July 2024 for an Aldi Supermarket in the suburb of Branxton. According to Cessnock Council, the population forecast in Branxton, Greta and North Rothbury

for 2024 sits close to 10,000. However, that is predicted to grow to more than 25,000 by 2046.

All Saints' College Maitland is to receive an \$18 million multi-purpose centre. The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has lodged a development application with the state government for the project.

It would be used as a central gathering space for its two campuses St Mary's and St Peter's. The project would involve the refurbishment of the St Paul's Parish Hall and the demolition of an addition to the hall.

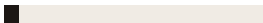


Major Projects

Major projects currently impacting the region are:-

	PROJECT	VALUE	STATUS	IMPACT
1	Offshore Wind Farm (Equinor and Oceanex Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$10 billion 	Licence granted	2010 MW energy to power 1.2 million homes. 3000 construction jobs, 200 ongoing jobs
2	M1 Pacific Motorway - Raymond Terrace extension (State & Federal Govts) INFRASTRUCTURE - TRANSPORT	\$2.1 billion 	Under construction Open to traffic 2028	New 15km dual carriageway will link to M1 via & include 2.6km viaduct over Hunter River
3	Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project, Muswellbrook (MACH Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$2 billion 	Approved September 2022	Plans to extract extra 247Mtpa of coal & extend operations until 2048
4	Regrowth Kurri Kurri, Loxford (McCloy Group & Stevens Group) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS	\$2 billion 	Rezoning underway	2,000ha master-planned, mixed use urban redevelopment with 5,300 homes to be built on rezoned former aluminium smelter site
5	Huntlee Estate, North Rothbury (LWP Property Group) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS	\$1.5 billion 	Under construction	Jobs: 3,000 New master-planned suburb to feature 7,500 homes, town centre & schools across 4 villages
6	Hunter Gas Pipeline (Santos) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$1.2 billion 	Approved	830km pipeline Qld to Newcastle, via NSW towns including Scone, Muswellbrook, Singleton & Maitland
7	Mangoola coal mine - extension, Muswellbrook (Xstrata/Glencore) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$1.1 billion 	Under construction	Increase production by 30% to 13.5Mtpa & extend mine life to 2030
8	Hunter Power Project, Kurri Kurri (Snowy Hydro & Federal Govt) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$950 million 	Testing in December 2024	Gas-fired plant on former aluminium smelter site with 750MW capability
9	Liddell Battery (AGL Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$750 million 	Work began May 2024. Complete in 2026	500 MW, two-hour duration, grid- scale battery on former coal-fired Liddell power station site
10	Singleton Bypass (State & Federal Govts) INFRASTRUCTURE - TRANSPORT	\$700 million 	Work began September 2024	8km bypass with 600m-long bridge will enable travellers to avoid 5 sets of traffic lights
11	Mount View Grange, Bellbird (WST Property Group) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS	\$650 million 	Under construction	240ha master-planned estate for 1500 lot estate with 3.11ha town centre

	PROJECT	VALUE	STATUS	IMPACT
12	Bowmans Creek Wind Farm, Muswellbrook (Ark Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$590 million 	Approved Feb 2024. Extension proposal lodged	54 wind turbines over 200m-high will deliver 335MW of energy with hopes to increase facility to 75 turbines
13	Maxwell Underground Mine, Muswellbrook (Malabar Resources) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$509 million 	Completed. First coal cut January 2025	Largest capacity underground mine in the Hunter Valley with 75% of coal used in steel making
14	Maxwell Solar Farm, Muswellbrook (Malabar Resources with EDF Renewables) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$450 million 	Approved	25MW farm on former Drayton coal mine site will power 10,000 homes
15	Bells Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project, Muswellbrook (Idemitsu with AGL) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$450 million 	Declared State Significant project July 2024	Pumped storage project to feature 250MW hydro reservoir on former Muswellbrook Coal mine site
16	Newcastle Power Station, Tomago (AGL Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$440 million 	Completion expected 2026	Jobs: 300 construction Gas-fired 250MW station to replace Liddell coal-fired station
17	Vintage Estate, Pokolbin (Stevens Group) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS	\$400 million 	Under construction	Jobs: 400 500 dwellings to be added to existing 500 ones
18	Muswellbrook Bypass (State & Federal Govts) INFRASTRUCTURE – TRANSPORT	\$331 million 	Early works began Feb 2023 Completion due late 2027	9km of new highway & several bridges will connect with New England Highway
19	Bridgman Ridge Estate, Singleton North (Bridgman Ridge Holdings) RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS	\$250 million 	Under construction	Sub-division development with 650 lots to be released over 30 stages
20	Cedar Mill Hunter Valley, Polkabin (Cedar Mill Group) COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT – GENERAL	\$235 million 	Under construction	30,000-seat outdoor amphitheatre, 100-room hotel, museum, food outlets & cellar doors on 40ha
21	Hunter Hydrogen Hub, Kooragang Island (Origin Future Fuels) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	\$208 million 	Approved June 2024	55MW of electrolyser capacity increasing to 1GW over ten years
22	Cessnock District Hospital - redevelopment (State Government) INFRASTRUCTURE – HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES	\$138 million 	Design unveiled April 2024 Construction start TBC	New Emergency Department & medical imaging service plus 2 inpatient units
23	Chisholm Plaza, Chisholm (Redevelop) COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT – GENERAL	\$120 million 	Construction to commence March 2025	Town centre on 6ha with supermarket, gym, tavern, medical centres & retail spaces
24	Muswellbrook Hospital redevelopment (State Government) INFRASTRUCTURE – HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES	\$45 million 	Stage 3 builder appointed August 2024	New operating theatre suite, sterilising department and relocation of Community Health consultation spaces into the existing hospital

	PROJECT	VALUE	STATUS	IMPACT
25	Old Maitland Gaol, East Maitland - redevelopment (State Government & Council) SPORT AND ENTERTAINMENT	\$30 million 	Two Development applications lodged September 2024	Repairs needed to historic site, then it will be developed into a tourist destination with 90-100 room hotel, cafe, activity hub & museum
26	Maitland Private Hospital - Mental Health & Oncology expansion INFRASTRUCTURE - HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES	\$15 million 	Opened November 2024	New cancer care centre
27	Cessnock Leagues Club expansion (Cessnock Hospitality Group) COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT - GENERAL	TBA 	DA lodged July 2024	Double the current size of the club with an additional 1700sq m of outdoor space
28	Aldi Supermarket, Branxton COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT - GENERAL	TBA 	Approved July 2024	New Aldi Supermarket
29	Muswellbrook Battery Energy Storage System - BESS (Firm Power) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	TBA 	Offer to connect for grid studies expected late 2024, enabling construction	150MW battery adjacent to Ausgrid's Muswellbrook substation
30	Mitchell's Flat Solar Farm, Gresford Rd (Elgin Energy) ENERGY AND RESOURCES	TBA 	EIS pending	Solar panels producing enough energy to power 37,500 homes

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