MM MOTT MACDONALD

Adding value for people and planet

Opportunities to enhance project social value that will give you more for your money

Tried and tested routes to better outcomes

Our social development and inclusion experts have identified 22 'opportunities' to enhance the social, environmental and commercial performance of projects in six key sectors. You can build these tried and tested solutions and services into your projects in ways that will:

- Help make them future-proof
- Provide sustainable local benefits
- Improve engagement with and buy-in from local stakeholders
- Strengthen environment, social and governance (ESG) performance
- Enhance your reputation with stakeholders, investors and end users
- Generate additional revenue

While local details will always be different, we know these opportunities can be implemented relatively easily, bringing benefits that will outweigh cost and time inputs. And the earlier in a project they are sought, the greater the benefits will be.

Delivering social outcomes is central to our purpose. All of these opportunities can help address the wide-reaching targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enabling potential benefits to be turned into value-adding outcomes.

Find your opportunity –
click on the six sector links below for more information on how to identify ways you can enhance social, environmental and commercial performance

Energy
- Thermal power generation
- Renewable power generation
- Electricity transmission and distribution
- Combined heat and power/district heating

Transport
- Active travel
- Airports/aviation
- Ports
- Rail
- Road

Water and wastewater
- Storage – dams and reservoirs
- Treatment
- Desalination
- Transmission

Social infrastructure
- Education
- Health
- Social care
- Housing

Environment
- Carbon capture
- Flood management
- Waste

Data infrastructure
- Transmission
- Storage

Transforming challenges into better outcomes

Any project can face social, environmental and commercial challenges that can hinder progress towards a successful outcome. These can impact the organisations involved, the communities affected or both, and can lead to tensions between all parties no matter how well intentioned or beneficial the planned outcome may be.

Implementing the opportunities we've identified in the six sectors we've highlighted can help overcome these challenges and tensions by improving communication, engagement and collaboration between all stakeholders, and delivering outcomes that provide inclusive, long-term, sustainable benefits and social value for all.

Social benefits

Challenge		Outcome
Community opposition	→	Inclusive, sensitive, community-led design and buy-in
Adverse impacts on minority groups	→	Targeted positive action for inclusivity
Safety concerns	→	Designed to be safe and feel safe
Social isolation	→	Spaces that encourage social and community cohesion
Limited accessibility	→	Fully accessible and inclusive
Lack of shared benefits	→	Employment, skills and tourism opportunities
Lack of connection to opportunity	→	Accessible, sustainable travel options
Poor community connectivity	→	Effective, efficient community links
Creating congestion	→	Journey-time reliability
Emergency services response time	→	Quickened by design and management
Poor customer experience	→	World-class whole-life experience

Environmental benefits

Challenge		Outcome
Impact on ecosystems	→	Considered site selection and embedded mitigations
Localised environmental impacts	→	Reduce, reuse, recycle culture introduced
Lack of user benefits	→	Community, biodiversity and environmental net gains
Poor end-user focus	→	Considered public realm and community spaces
Inequality of access	→	Equitable access to community facilities and green spaces
Poor active-travel experience	→	Well-planned routes with green interventions
Safety and security	→	Community ownership of safe public-realm spaces

Commercial benefits

Challenge		Outcome
Health and safety risks	→	Health awareness and safety culture
Poor awareness of infrastructure	→	Improved public education
Community opposition	→	Community buy-in
Poor customer experience	→	Trust and confidence established
Costly, underused assets and estate	→	Community and economic uses of assets
Reputational risk	→	Business integrity
Low uptake and use	→	Commercially sustainable assets
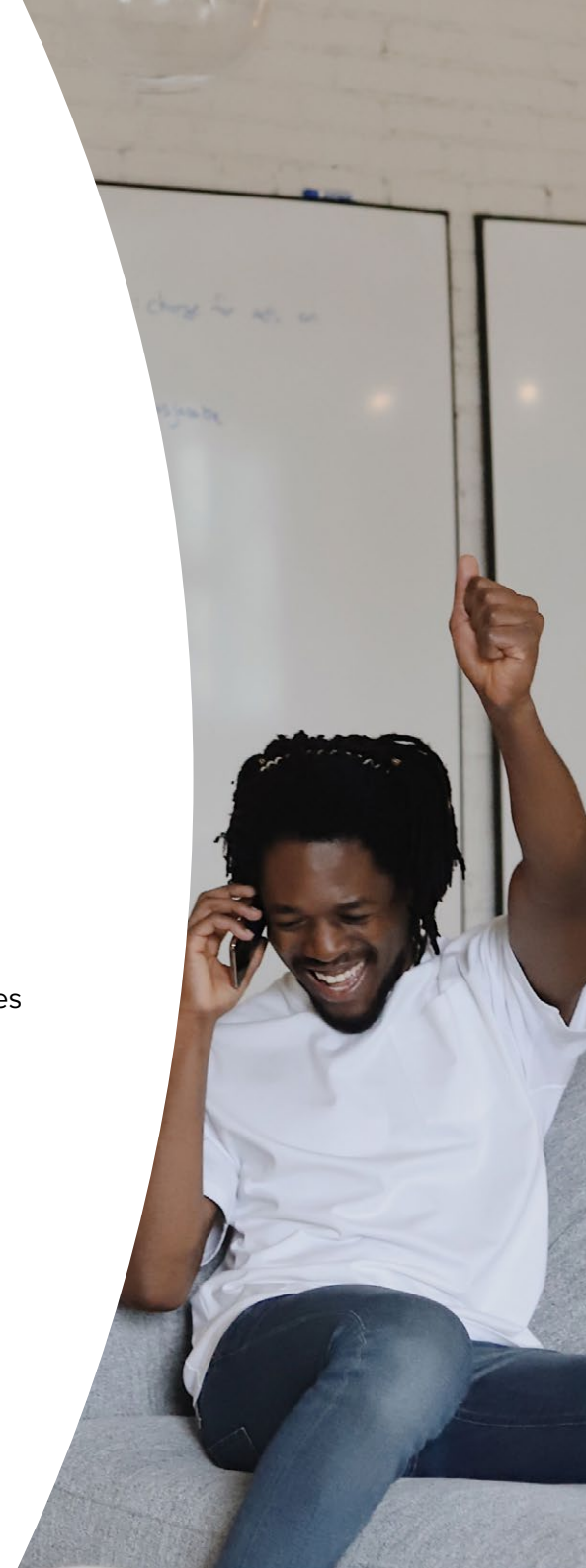
Set objectives, measure performance

We have a people-centred way of setting objectives for our projects and assessing their performance: our social outcomes framework.
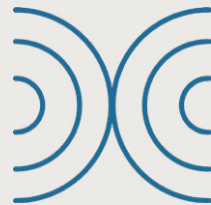
[Read more]

Accessibility: Access to housing, transport, amenities and services

Inclusion: No one left behind, participation, rights, freedoms, choice, and equality between people

Empowerment: Inclusive and regenerative growth, access to education, job training and secure employment, all digitally enabled

Resilience: Inclusive public realm and natural environment, climate resilient and sustainable communities, sustainable energy, water and sanitation

Wellbeing: Good mental and physical health, safety and security, high quality health and social care

Adding value for people and planet

Sectors >

Energy

Including:

Thermal power generation
Renewable power generation
Electricity transmission and distribution
Combined heat and power/district heating

Decarbonisation of national power grids is vital to slowing the pace of global climate change. Key to making this achievable is the reconfiguration of power generation, transmission and distribution, and the adoption of emerging new energy sources such as hydrogen and biofuels.

These can be complemented by the development of carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) technologies and reskilling across the global energy sector, which will see new job opportunities created in new places.

Opportunites

Sustainable fleet

Partnership working

Accessibility

Time banking

Local employment and supply chain support

Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Transport

Including:
Active travel
Airports/aviation
Ports
Rail
Road

Easy access to healthy, inclusive, reliable, affordable transport provides great opportunities to realise social value. Demand for multimodal transport options reflects changing travel behaviours and changing expectations.

Decarbonisation of transport infrastructure – in its construction and operation – and providing end users with a world-class whole-journey experience will demonstrate the social and environmental as well as the economic business case.

Opportunites

Solar panels

Green bridges

Biodiversity net gain

Acoustic and thermal performance

Community safety and security

Micro wind turbines

Energy storage systems

Sustainable fleet

Partnership working

Transport integration

Accessibility

Time banking

Local employment and supply chain support

Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Water and wastewater

Including:
Storage – dams and reservoirs
Treatment
Desalination
Transmission

Need for water and wastewater services is universal, regardless of location or socio-economic background. Water authorities and companies can contribute to inclusive growth and improve social outcomes by putting communities at the centre of the design and delivery of infrastructure and services.

Forging partnerships in this way can bring valuable insight on regional challenges and opportunities, ensure smarter, more efficient infrastructure and better targeted services, and provide equal access to sustainable, affordable water and sanitation services.

Opportunites

Sustainable fleet

Partnership working

Accessibility

Time banking

Local employment and supply chain support

Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Social infrastructure

Including:
Education
Health
Social care
Housing

Education, public health and social care are vital to local and national wellbeing. Social infrastructure must be able to adapt to changing social needs and be affordable and accessible to ensure universal social inclusion.

The COVID pandemic has also shown how crucial it is to build in resilience to disruption from shocks. New build facilities must be aligned with net-zero principles, while existing estates can look into renewable energy retrofit opportunities.

Opportunites

Solar panels

Biodiversity net gain

Acoustic and thermal performance

Community safety and security

Micro wind turbines

Energy storage systems

Sustainable fleet

Partnership working

Holistic healthcare improvements

Participatory design

Community uses of outside spaces

Open community rooms and space

Transport integration

Accessibility

Time banking

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Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Environment

Including:
Carbon capture
Flood management
Waste

Infrastructure must respect a site's natural, aesthetic and heritage stature, and its community value. This requires strong engagement with local communities to help target the issues of greatest local importance and help constraints to be explained, mitigating disappointment and opposition.

And by looking for opportunities to enhance potential positive impacts early enough in project development, you can go beyond mitigation to deliver benefits at little or no additional cost. This can accelerate progress through planning, and enhance reputation and brand.

Opportunites

Green bridges

Partnership working

Accessibility

Time banking

Local employment and supply chain support

Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Data infrastructure

Including:
Data transmission
Data storage

Digitalisation is key to inclusive social and economic growth. Connecting remote and/or socially disadvantaged communities to digital data resources via the internet can open up a wide range of new opportunities in areas such as employment, education and healthcare.

It's also crucial to ensure that any data infrastructure installed comes with built-in long-term resilience to keep pace with the constant evolution of digital technology.

Opportunites

Sustainable fleet

Partnership working

Accessibility

Time banking

Local employment and supply chain support

Training and skills

Workforce diversity

Business ethics

Tourism and the visitor economy

Sector clustering

Adding value for people and planet

Opportunities ›

Opportunity
Solar panels

Installing solar panels will generate local renewable energy and cut the carbon footprint of assets. The cost of solar panel installation will reduce as the technology advances and becomes more accessible, making it a strong contender as an alternative to traditional energy generation methods.

Benefits
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Long-term sustainability
- Low maintenance cost
- Improved reputation
- Minimal spacing requirements

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Access to sustainable energy, water and sanitation systems

SDGs influenced

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

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13 CLIMATE ACTION

Opportunity

Green bridges

Green bridges can be installed at appropriate locations across linear infrastructure, such as roads and rail lines. These vegetated structures fulfil wildlife functions by providing habitats that can enhance biodiversity by complementing and connecting surrounding habitats. Green bridges can also incorporate public trails to be used and enjoyed by the community.

Benefits
- Enhanced biodiversity value of assets
- Improved ecosystems services through
- Enhanced connectivity for biodiversity
- Provides a community asset and connectivity between areas
- Conserving and enhancing the landscape

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Inclusive public realm and high quality natural environment

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

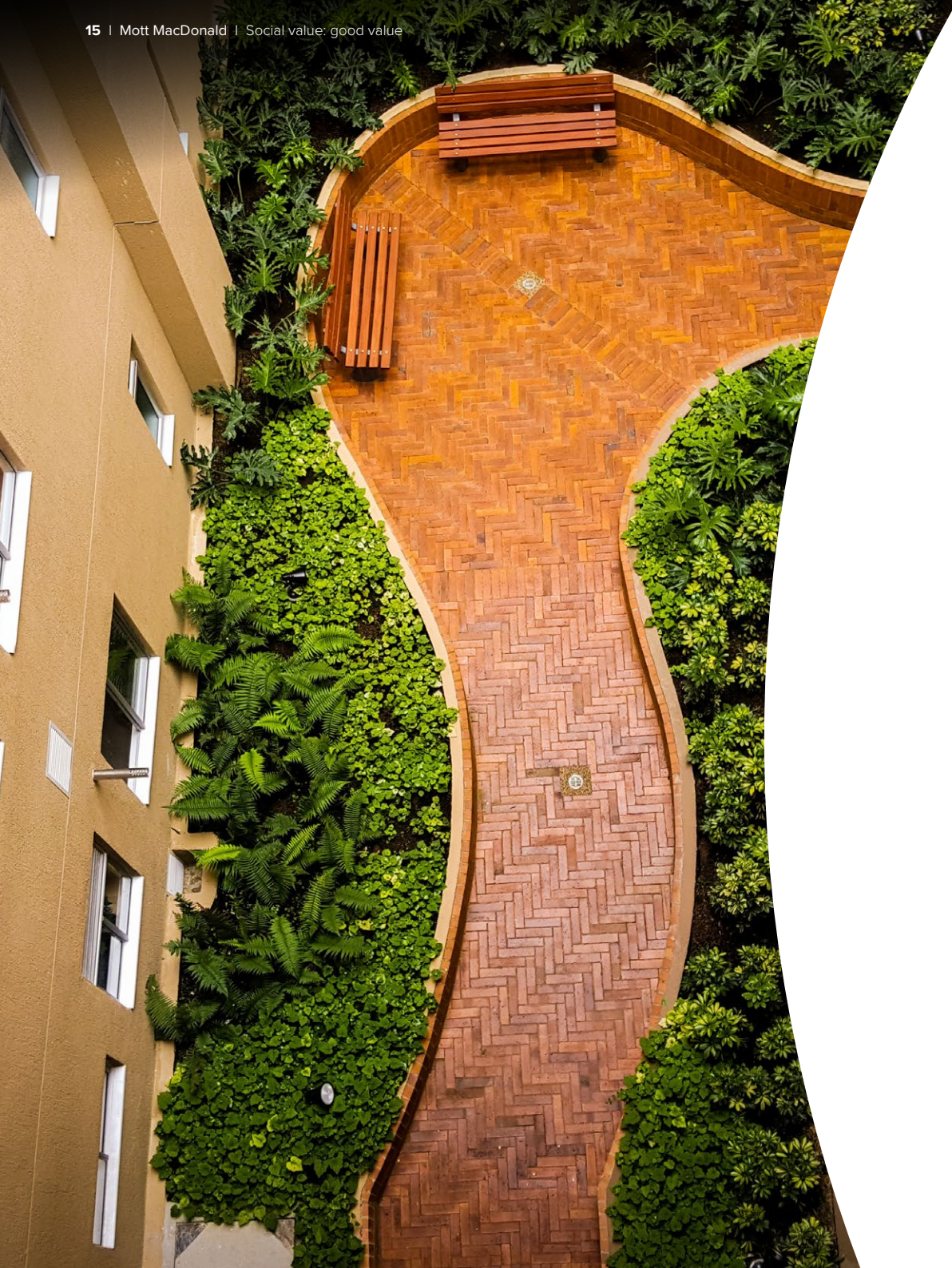**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

15 LIFE ON LAND

Opportunity
Biodiversity net gain

Enhancing the land in and around assets – through the addition, management and monitoring of new and better habitats – can bring biodiversity improvements to the local area.

Benefits
- Enhancement of ecological networks
- Provision of new and improved habitats for biodiversity
- Improved ecosystem services
- Reduction in carbon footprint
- Provides cultural services

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Inclusive public realm and high quality natural environment

SDGs influenced

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

15 LIFE ON LAND

Opportunity
Acoustic and thermal performance

Refurbishing housing and other infrastructure assets to improve acoustic performance and thermal insulation. will protect the health and wellbeing of residents and users, and safeguard against rising energy costs. Acoustic and thermal comfort can often be an issue for older and disabled people.

Benefits
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Long-term sustainability
- Low maintenance cost
- Improved reputation
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Improved equality and inclusive design
- Reduced energy costs

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Climate resilient and sustainable communities

SDGs influenced

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Opportunity
Community safety and security

Designing security into assets can reduce the vulnerability of people and property to crime, and perceptions of crime, by improving aspects of the built environment such as lighting, streetscape and boundary treatments. The best solutions often result from a co-ordinated approach, bringing together the ideas and experience of the developer, designer, local authority, police and community.

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- A safe and secure community

Benefits
- Reduced crime
- Safer environment for asset users, residents, passers by and businesses
- More attractive public realm to prospective residents
- Less damage to properties
- Increased income
- Contributes towards good urban design
- Improved physical safety for road users and workers
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Self-sustaining buildings
- Improved reputation
- Partnership with providers to develop systems for alternative assets

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Opportunity
Micro wind turbines

These turbines can be installed within assets to produce renewable electricity, such as in highway dividers, where passing vehicles will stir the air to rotate the turbines. There are more than 2.5bn cars globally generating wind turbulence that could be harnessed in this way. Numerous turbine designs are available, which can be analysed for suitability to use with current assets.

Benefits
- Electricity generation
- Self-sustaining highways (i.e. street lights can be powered through these turbines)
- Self-sustaining buildings
- Reputational credit for innovative implementation
- Partnership with providers to develop systems for alternative assets

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Access to sustainable energy, water and sanitation systems

SDGs influenced

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Opportunity
Energy storage systems

Energy storage systems (ESS) store energy generated from renewable sources to use at peak times. ESS installation would complement the installation of renewable energy generation systems. As ESS technology develops the price of installation will reduce, making them increasingly attractive in the long term.

Benefits
- Storage of renewable energy for use in peak times
- Minimises wasted energy generation
- Long-term sustainability

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Climate resilient and sustainable communities

SDGs influenced

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Opportunity
Sustainable fleet

All stages of a carbon-neutral process must be either carbon free or offset by a carbon-absorbing process such as tree planting. Using electric vehicles (EV) to transport materials to, from and around assets will help reduce carbon footprints as we aim for carbon neutrality.

Benefits
- Carbon neutrality
- Potential for partnerships for EV
- Long-term sustainability
- Improved reputation

Outcomes
- Improved environmental impact
- Climate resilient and sustainable communities

SDGs influenced

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Opportunity
Partnership working

Developing partnerships with local authorities, businesses, investors, communities and voluntary sector organisations will deliver benefits to end users and the environment. It will also support identification of priorities for corporate social responsibility (CSR) spend by key stakeholders.

Benefits
- Create greater gains more in line with local priorities
- Reduces risk and shares costs
- Gives access to additional funds
- Offers more human resources
- Allows new opportunities for partnership – not only between existing partners

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Diverse participation with personal rights, freedoms and choice

SDGs influenced

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

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Opportunity
Holistic healthcare improvements

Healthcare outcomes can be improved by upgrading service provision and enhancing the wellbeing and experience of all stakeholders. This could include increasing bed numbers, enriching medical training, using complementary healing therapies such as music, art, gardening or physical activities, or developing digitalisation through electronic patient records, online appointment scheduling and virtual appointments.

Benefits
- Improved healthcare services
- Improved wellbeing of people
- Integrated systems across all hospitals
- Efficient appointments/scheduling
- Greater patient and staff empowerment
- Quality care in hard-to-reach areas
- Remote monitoring of patients
- Improved security of data and information

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Access to quality, comprehensive health and social care services

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Opportunity
Participatory design

Liaison and engagement to involve local communities in the design and aesthetics of an asset that will serve them will ensure a positive local legacy that is reflective of the area and its population. For example, engaging with disabled people to ensure that designs are accessible and inclusive for all.

Benefits
- Creating environments that are stimulating, welcoming and reassuring, and can be used as a way of reflecting the values and needs of the community
- An opportunity for collaborative working across multiple community groups
- Ensures end design meets the needs of its inteded user

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Diverse participation with personal rights, freedoms and choice

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Opportunity

Community uses of outside spaces

Outside spaces associated with assets could be used by people of all ages and abilities to engage in healthy lifestyles through physical activity at an outdoor gym, or socialise through community gardens. Spaces could also be used to support the local economy through direct retail opportunities like markets or by creating space for enterprise and skills support.

Benefits
- Wellbeing of patients/residents/pupils
- Biodiversity improvements
- Tackling obesity in the local area
- Space to learn new skills
- Increase children's fruit and vegetable intake
- Provide free or low-cost opportunities for local people to participate in sports and leisure
- Bring local people onto asset site grounds, encouraging integration and local relationships
- Benefits to environment and ecosystems through pollination and enhanced biodiversity from, for example, sensory gardens
- Potential revenue source under some models, e.g. honey sales from managed beehives
- Support to local businesses, social enterprises and community enterprise groups

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Good mental and physical health among the population

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Opportunity

Open community rooms and space

Free or low-cost community space or rooms onsite at an asset can be used by local groups or charities for events such as community meetings and play groups. Providing additional facilities such as seating, desks, and internet access will also enable them to act as learning spaces.

Benefits
- New and improved community spaces supporting local groups and civil society
- Access to facilities supporting disadvantaged communities
- Promotion of the project and supporting 'good neighbour' ethos
- Opportunity to demonstrate integration and collaboration with other public bodies
- Encourage a cohesive community

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Good and equal access to community resources and facilities

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Opportunity
Transport integration

Making sustainable travel part of an
asset's design could include:
• A staff park and ride scheme/shuttle
  service to reduce costs for staff,
  congestion and CO_2 emissions
• Secure cycle storage complemented
  by shower and changing facilities
• Non-motorised user routes – footpaths,
  bridleways, towpaths – to connect the
  asset site with the local community

Benefits
• Improved transport facilities to the site
  and in the local area
• Improved health and wellbeing of
  local population
• Reduced congestion, better journey time
  reliability, better air quality
• Alignment to local transport priorities and
  emerging and 'future' trends for urban mobility

Outcomes
• Improved social impact
• Accessible, inclusive and
  sustainable transportation

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Opportunity
Accessibility

Provide any staff, suppliers, users and customers who might have special needs with equipment and easy accessibility: for example, handbooks/papers in multiple formats and languages, assistive devices, large clear signage and wheelchair ramps.

Benefits
- Children with special needs can participate and foster diversity during the learning process
- Strengthen social inclusion
- Beneficial to children with learning difficulties because of its peaceful and non-academic character

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Equality between people of different socio-demographic characteristics

SDGs influenced

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Opportunity
Time banking

Time banking enables people to help communities using time, not money, as the currency. For example, for every 100 hours spent on a project, a certain number can be donated to the time bank. This saved time can then be spent on community initiatives, schools outreach or volunteering.

Benefits
- Utilising existing skills of project team
- Relatively low cost base for project
- Community directed – the community decide what the time is best spent on
- Can promote the project, project image and connection to host community

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Good and equal access to community resources and facilities

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Opportunity

Local employment and supply chain support

Offer local businesses equal opportunities to bid and compete for contracts. Use contractual clauses or requirements to ensure contractors, labour and suppliers used during construction are sourced locally wherever possible.

Benefits
- Provides business opportunities for local companies
- Helps to enhance the portfolio of smaller organisations in the local area
- Minimises impact of construction workers in local area
- Reduced risks of social issues (e.g. labour exploitation) in supply chain
- Keeps money circulating in local economy

Outcomes
- Improved social value
- Access to secure and stable employment

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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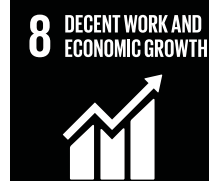
Opportunity
Training and skills

Establish partnerships with local schools and universities to help support cohesive communities, and offer the local workforce or young people skills development opportunities through work experience placements and apprenticeships.

Benefits
- Provides employment and skills opportunities for local people
- Minimises impact of construction workers in local area
- Supporting initiatives to increase employment, particularly amongst disadvantaged groups
- Skills and knowledge transfer from Project team, creating the 'next generation' of employees

Outcomes
- Improved social value
- Access to education and job training

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Opportunity
Workforce diversity

Improve diversity and inclusion within the operational workforce, at board level and throughout the broader supply chain to encourage the growth of a team that represents the local community. Create and integrate an EDI strategy, action planning and monitoring system within asset operations to understand existing or potential workplace inequalities, and incorporate measures to promote equal, fair and transparent employment opportunities.

Benefits
- Promote equal, fair and transparent employment opportunities.
- Positive outcomes for individuals – impact on wellbeing
- Business benefits – recruiting and retaining good talent, market competitiveness and corporate reputation

Outcomes
- Improved social value
- Diverse participation with personal rights, freedoms and choice

SDGs influenced

5 GENDER EQUALITY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Opportunity
Business ethics

Provide staff with tools and processes to help them raise concerns about conduct or practices that do not meet expected ethical standards or codes of business conduct. Set-up a safe, confidential, third-party managed, 24/7 channel that can be used by employees, suppliers or partners to seek advice and report concerns about possible improper, unethical or illegal behaviour.

Benefits
- Promote an open, transparent and safe working environment
- Staff feel protected and supported to speak up and raise concerns about suspected misconduct or malpractice
- Safeguard business reputation, success and continued operation

Outcomes
- Improved governance impact
- Access to secure and stable employment

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Opportunity

Tourism and the visitor economy

Help to develop, fund or sponsor local leisure facilities or infrastructure, or promote local activities that could attract visitors and develop tourism to help support the local economy. This could be particularly valuable for coastal or rural areas.

Benefits
• Supporting wider local economy
• Alignment with government priorities
• Promoting long term economic benefits

Outcomes
• Improved social impact
• Access to secure and stable employment

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Opportunity
Sector clustering

Explore sector-based clusters – such as a health, science, education or technology campus – that could help the local community/region direct economic development and recruiting, or encourage refocusing efforts on existing industries.

Benefits
- Support local economy development
- Attraction of investment into the area
- Provides business opportunities for local companies
- Provides employment and skills opportunities for local people

Outcomes
- Improved social impact
- Access to secure and stable employment

SDGs influenced

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Opening opportunities
with connected thinking.

Talk to us.

James Beard
james.beard@mottmac.com

mottmac.com