

ITEM 2 POST EXHIBITION - WOLLONGONG HERITAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2027

On 26 June 2023, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Wollongong Heritage Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023-2027, which occurred from 29 June to 4 August 2023. This report details the outcomes of the exhibition process and recommends that Council adopt the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 and note the attached Implementation Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 (Attachment 2) be adopted by Council.
- 2 The Wollongong Heritage Implementation Plan 2023-2027 (Attachment 3) be noted to support delivery of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy
Authorised by: Mark Adamson, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods (Acting)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Engagement and Communications Summary Report & Summary of Submissions
- 2 Revised Wollongong Heritage Strategy
- 3 Updated Implementation Plan

BACKGROUND

The previous Wollongong Heritage Strategy (2019-2022) was adopted by Council on 28 October 2019. The Strategy document, and accompanying implementation plan, informs the work of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group and Council staff in the conservation and management of the City's heritage. The Strategy is due for renewal.

During 2022-2023, Council staff have been working closely with the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group to review the existing Strategy and develop a draft Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 (draft Strategy).

The 9 key strategies embedded in the previous strategy remain largely unchanged given they capture the key strategic aspirations of Council. The draft Strategy includes minor revisions for a stronger focus on Aboriginal heritage and the management of cultural landscapes. In addition, some amendments relating to Council's work around climate change and the management of the open coast have been made.

The accompanying Implementation Plan is intended to provide direction to the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group and Council staff, and to guide Council's heritage functions and service delivery. The Implementation Plan also details some aspirational projects (currently unfunded) to assist with making funding applications, and to prioritise available resources into the future.

On 26 June 2023, Council considered a report on the draft Strategy and resolved that -

- 1 *The draft Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 be endorsed for exhibition for a minimum of 28 days.*
- 2 *The draft Implementation Plan be included as supporting exhibition material.*

The draft Strategy and the accompanying Implementation Plan were exhibited from 29 June to 4 August 2023. The details of the exhibition and submissions received are detailed in the 'Consultation and Communication' section of this report.

PROPOSAL

Implementation of Council's heritage program is important to ensure the ongoing conservation and increased community appreciation and awareness of our city's unique and valuable heritage. The draft Strategy and accompanying Implementation Plan, provides strategic framework for the ongoing

management and delivery of heritage actions and projects. The structure, format and timeframe of the draft Strategy is guided by the requirements of Heritage NSW. The adoption of the draft Strategy will support ongoing applications for funding from the NSW State Government Heritage Grant Program, toward Council's Heritage Program.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Following Council's resolution of 26 June 2023, the draft Strategy and the Implementation Plan were exhibited from 29 June to 4 August 2023.

The exhibition was advertised in local newspapers, via a press release and on Council's website and social media channels. Key stakeholders including the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, the Illawarra Historical Society, and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust along with relevant State agencies including Heritage NSW were invited to comment on the draft Strategy.

An Engagement and Communications Report and Summary of Submissions is provided as Attachment 1 to this report.

During the exhibition, the projects 'have your say' web page was viewed by 201 people in 279 visits, and a total of 207 documents were downloaded from the page. These are encouraging numbers that indicate the level of interest from the community in the management of the City's heritage remains high. Five people provided online comments in response to the exhibited documents via the online feedback tool and 2 additional community submissions were received.

Three agency submissions were also received from the NSW Heritage Council, Neighborhood Forum 5 and the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

The key issues raised in the submissions are detailed and addressed in the 'Summary of Submissions' within Attachment 1 to this report. The actions recommended by Council's Heritage staff with input from the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group to address each submission are also included in this document.

Key themes in the feedback received on the draft Strategy included comments on Council's management of heritage assets, Council's role and work in the museum sector and the need for proactive management responses. A number of submissions also highlighted the importance of Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights as a heritage precinct and suggested additional actions in that area. The submissions also encouraged the continued inclusion of the community in all areas of heritage management.

The draft Strategy document has not been amended in response to the feedback received through the public exhibition process. This is because the majority of commentary provided was supportive of the strategies and any suggested changes were more focused on ensuring delivery of the defined actions within the Implementation Plan. The Wollongong Heritage Strategy is provided as Attachment 2 to this report and is now recommended for adoption as a supporting document.

The Wollongong Heritage Implementation Plan 2023-2027 has been amended with some minor changes in response to the feedback provided within submissions and to correct some minor grammatical issues. The updated Implementation Plan is provided as Attachment 3 to this report. A specific update to the Implementation Plan has been made to introduce a new action in relation to Mount Kembla/Kembla Heights as follows:

6.3 Undertake a Community Visioning Project to develop a Vision and Plan for the future of Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights - Note: The project has commenced and is currently underway.

The Wollongong Heritage Reference Group had input into the review and drafting of the revised draft Strategy during 2022-2023. The Group received a report on the submissions at their meeting of 24 August 2023 and resolved to recommend that Council adopt the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan - Goal 1 We value and protect our environment. It specifically delivers on core business activities, including 'promote and protect heritage', as detailed in the Land Use Planning service.

Further, this report directly responds to the previous Wollongong Heritage Strategy and Implementation Plan 2019-2022 which stated that Council 'actively involve the community in the management of Wollongong's heritage', as well as Action 1.4 to 'monitor the implementation of the Heritage Strategy 2019-2022 by undertaking reviews of performance against the strategy and implementation plan'.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The management of the City's heritage and the conservation of those places that hold significance to the city or its people represent an important aspect of sustainable environmental management. Council's heritage program aims to conserve those places of significance for future generations.

The draft Strategy sets out a framework for the sustainable management of Wollongong's natural, cultural, landscape and built heritage.

RISK MANAGEMENT

This report relates to the review and renewal of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy (2019-2022), an existing supporting document that provides Council staff and the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group with direction and focus in delivering on Council's heritage responsibilities and commitments. The adoption of a revised draft Strategy will ensure that Council's actions are contemporary in nature and respond to community interest on this issue.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with the adoption of the recommendations within this report. If adopted the draft Strategy will support Council in seeking continued financial support under the NSW Heritage Grant Fund for implementation of our Heritage Program.

The Implementation Plan that supports the draft Strategy acknowledges Council's ongoing core business in heritage management, as well as detailing Council's planned and resourced heritage projects and programs such as the Wollongong Local Heritage Grant Program. The draft Strategy also details aspirational projects which would be subject to either internal or external resourcing and funding. Planned projects and deliverables identified within the draft Implementation Plan are identified as being either resourced or unfunded to manage community and stakeholder expectations surrounding their progression. This approach, and the identification of these projects will assist with supporting future external grant funding applications as opportunities arise.

CONCLUSION

The adoption of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 as a supporting document within Council's strategic management framework is a key step in ensuring the continued delivery of our heritage management program. The Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027, along with the accompanying Implementation Plan, will guide and give focus to the ongoing work of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group, and Council staff, in the management and conservation of Wollongong's heritage. This will also support the ongoing allocation of funding from the NSW State Government Heritage toward Council's Heritage Program.

ATTACHMENT 1 - SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS, ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT DRAFT WOLLONGONG HERITAGE STRATEGY 2023-2027 AND DRAFT WOLLONGONG HERITAGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2023-2027

INTRODUCTION

This document provides a summary of the submissions received during the exhibition of these draft Council documents. The exhibition was conducted from 29 June to 4 August 2023. Details relating to the exhibition and access to the exhibited documents is provided via the link below:

[Wollongong Heritage Strategy Update 2023-2027 | Our Wollongong \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

The exhibition was advertised in local newspapers, via a press release and on Council's Website and social media channels. Key stakeholders including the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, the Illawarra Historical Society and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust along with relevant Agencies including Heritage NSW were invited to comment on the draft Strategy.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

During the exhibition, the projects 'have your say' web page was viewed by 201 people in 279 visits, and a total of 207 documents were downloaded from the page. These are encouraging numbers that indicate the level of interest from the Community in the management of the City's heritage remains high.

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

During the exhibition period a total of 10 submissions were received. These submissions included 3 Agency/Organisational submissions, 2 individual written submissions, and 5 comments provided via the 'have your say' comments tool on Council's project page. The details of these submissions, along with a brief Council staff response, are outlined within the tables below:

Agency/Organisational Submissions

No	Submitter Details	Summary of submission/Key Points	Response
1	Heritage NSW as delegate for the NSW Heritage Council	Submission in support of the draft Strategy, commending Council on its continued commitment to updating the Strategy. Noted potential to apply for NSW Heritage Grant Program funding toward some of the planned actions	Support noted.
2	National Trust of Australia (NSW)	<p>Submission in support of the draft Strategy, commending Council on the continual update of the draft strategy and the involvement of the Heritage Reference Group in this process. Provided comments on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broad support for the objectives of the Strategy, particularly noted support for objective 2, relating to the involvement of the Community. - Noted support for the nine Strategies identified. - Noted the importance of maintaining and updating accurate data in relation to heritage items as recently noted by the Auditor General. - Noted strong support for Strategy 6 but noted concern with the Management of “the rural landscape in West Dapto”. Stream Hill and its management was noted as a particular concern. - Noted support for the finalisation of the Heritage Asset Management Strategy to ensure improved management of Council’s Heritage Assets. - Noted the importance of funding and the need for “sufficient and targeted funding”. - Noted support for the continued role of the Heritage Advisor in providing advice to Council. - Noted support for the action relating to “explore funding opportunities to develop an Industrial Heritage Study to identify key industrial sites” and offered the support of the National Trusts Industrial Heritage Committee in completing this task. 	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Council’s Heritage Staff liaise regularly with local representatives of the National Trust Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch and two members of this Branch hold positions within the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group.</p> <p>This ongoing role will ensure opportunities for the National Trust to maintain vision and input to Council’s delivery of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>The ongoing support and input of the National Trust is highly valued.</p> <p>On 29 August Council resolved to sell the ‘Streamhill’ property with a caveat for any future owner to undertake conservation works as part of future residential development. The link to the Council Report can be accessed via the following link: Agenda of Ordinary Meeting of Council - Monday, 29 August 2022 (nsw.gov.au)</p>

No	Submitter Details	Summary of submission/Key Points	Response
3	Neighbourhood Forum 5	<p>Submission in support but noting the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noted support for initiatives that give greater focus to Aboriginal Heritage, management of Cultural Landscapes and capturing Council's work in Climate Change and Coastal Management Planning but questioned whether these items are clearly spelled out within the Strategy and action plan. - Supports the strategies and implementation proposals but noted concern that timing and resource allocations are not clear. - Noted concern that Council's ambition to identify and manage historic precincts and streetscapes is not fully addressed in the statutory policies governing development. - Noted criticism of Council's Character Statements for suburbs provided within the Wollongong DCP and noted this as a key heritage issue. - Noted that no new heritage items are identified in the Heritage Strategy. 	<p>Support for the key strategies and implementation proposals is noted. Some minor amendments have been made to the exhibited versions to give greater clarity to the key focus areas.</p> <p>Timing and resource allocations are linked to Council's broader organisational planning and have been aligned with Council's standard approach for supporting documents.</p> <p>NF5's concerns relating to Character statements and issues of local character differentiation are noted and will be considered in an upcoming review of Council's suburb based character statements. This issue is largely separate to the Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>The progression of the review of the Wollongong Heritage Schedule within the Wollongong LEP and the addition of new items is a complex and ongoing project which is identified within the Implementation Plan. This project is ongoing. The addition of new Heritage Items to the Heritage Schedule is not something that can be progressed directly under the Strategy.</p>

Individual Submissions

No	Submitter Details	Summary of Submission/Key Points	Response
4	Resident – Wollongong 24351747	<p>Comments specifically on Strategy 8 – “Implement best practice heritage asset management procedures as a positive example for the community”.</p> <p>Raises concern in relation to Council’s management and sale of the ‘Streamhill’ property in West Dapto, and the lack of care provided during Council ownership leading to the building’s poor condition.</p> <p>Raised concern that Council is not delivering on this Strategy.</p>	<p>Strategy 8 provides an important inclusion to the Wollongong Heritage Strategy as it acknowledges Council’s role in managing a broad range of Council owned Heritage Assets. The strategy and implementation plan provide commitments to achieving continued improvement in Heritage Asset Management.</p> <p>On 29 August Council resolved to sell the ‘Streamhill’ property with a caveat for any future owner to undertake conservation works as part of future residential development. The link to the Council Report can be accessed via the following link: Agenda of Ordinary Meeting of Council - Monday, 29 August 2022 (nsw.gov.au)</p> <p>This process of sale is currently being progressed in accordance with Council’s resolution.</p> <p>The comments are noted however no changes are considered necessary to the draft Strategy or Action Plan.</p>
5	Resident Have your say page comment	Strategies look robust and effective, thank you for your work.	Noted.
6	Resident Have your say page comment	How is "best practice" defined? What standard make a practice the "best" one?	“Best practice” is a term used to highlight Council’s ambition to manage its heritage assets in a planned, considered manner that keeps pace with current theory and practice.
7	Resident of Mount Kembla Have your say page comment	<p>Wollongong council says it is shaping heritage policy and legislation at all levels of government. Where are the documents to enact this?</p> <p>Kembla Heights Village residents are alarmed and distressed how that mine is not maintaining the heritage buildings and recently one of the oldest buildings in Windy Gully, next to the mass grave of Australia’s first Industrial disaster, has collapsed. The heritage is being lost from a lack of proactive measurements.</p> <p>How can council be more proactive to defend our</p>	<p>The Heritage Implementation Plan includes a range of specific actions aimed at delivering on the Heritage Strategy and outlines a realistic agenda for heritage achievements within the Strategy timeline and available resources.</p> <p>The maintenance of Heritage Assets by a private company is not within the remit of the Heritage Strategy but Council is actively working on developing a vision for Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights which will consider the future of these areas and how the Mine’s assets form part of this picture. Council’s Heritage Staff have recently met with and will continue to follow up with South 32 about their management of heritage assets. A range of positive steps are being taken by the Company to acknowledge and</p>

No	Submitter Details	Summary of Submission/Key Points	Response
		<p>fading history? Providing advice is not actually a proactive measure. Proactive means council identify areas of concern and act to preserve our history. Please be truly proactive and act to protect the deterioration of heritage sites.</p>	<p>conserve the heritage significance of Kembla Heights.</p> <p>The Implementation Plan outlines a range of projects and activities to deliver on Council's Strategy including proactive projects aimed at identifying and planning for future management of heritage sites and assets.</p> <p>A new proposed action has been inserted into the Implementation Plan to acknowledge Council's work in developing a Vision for Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights to acknowledge Council's work in this space.</p>
8	<p>Resident of Mount Kembla Have your say page comment</p>	<p>Everything on Mt Kembla should stay heritage</p>	<p>Kembla Heights is identified as a Heritage Conservation Area under the Wollongong LEP as well as the range of local heritage listings within the area. The whole of Mount Kembla is also subject to a site specific Development Control Plan Chapter which sets out specific controls related to the unique character of Mount Kembla. These matters are key considerations in any DA process. Council is also in the process of undertaking community engagement process to inform visioning for the area and this has prompted a high level of interest in submissions to the Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>A new proposed action has been inserted into the draft Implementation Plan to acknowledge Council's work in developing a Vision for Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights to acknowledge Council's work in this space.</p>
9	<p>Resident of Mount Kembla Have your say page comment</p>	<p>I would like to see Mount Kembla added to the list of heritage areas in the Wollongong LGA (as well as Kembla Heights). This is because there are significant historical buildings such as the school and pub, also the cemetery. Mount Kembla is also one of the few remaining 'true' villages in the LGA - this needs to be preserved, as well as the historical significance.</p> <p>Also Environmental Zoning needs to be looked at in the context of supporting (and not thwarting) commercial initiatives that add value to the overall heritage of the area, village, e.g. by encouraging local tourists to explore and appreciate the area.</p> <p>Request a specific action to work with the relevant state dept to review and improve environmental zoning criteria.</p>	<p>Kembla Heights is already identified as a Heritage Conservation Area under the Wollongong LEP as well as the range of local heritage listings within the area. The whole of Mount Kembla is also subject to a site specific Development Control Plan Chapter which sets out specific controls related to the unique character of Mount Kembla. These matters are key considerations in any DA process. Council is also in the process of undertaking community engagement process to inform visioning for the area and this has prompted a high level of interest in submissions to the Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>A new proposed action has been inserted into the draft Implementation Plan to acknowledge Council's work in developing a Vision for Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights to acknowledge Council's work in this space.</p>

No	Submitter Details	Summary of Submission/Key Points	Response
10	Resident – personal submission	<p>Q1: I believe the strategy has covered the necessary areas but is lacking in recognising and resourcing current museums and heritage organisations who carry out the research and uncover the hidden voices and stories of our rich and diverse culture. The focus is clearly on buildings and precincts and quite rightly, elevating indigenous history, but our city is embarrassingly devoid of a regional museum that uplifts the stories we have to tell.</p> <p>Q2: Please revise the resourcing to enable the employment of a fulltime museum development officer and grant funding to support the heritage sector outside of the built environment.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that Council does not currently have a regional museum, nor does it have immediate plans for a regional museum. This suggestion and the resourcing of it have been discussed with Council's Cultural Services section and have been highlighted as a relevant consideration for the upcoming review of Council's Creative Wollongong Strategy, which is due for review in 2024.</p> <p>It is noted that the Heritage Implementation Plan does highlight the following key actions that are relevant to this submission -</p> <p><i>4.3 Develop a management policy for moveable heritage items and develop a list of significant moveable heritage within the City.</i></p> <p><i>4.5 Continue to work with our local museums to support the management of their historic collections (See item 3.4.3 of the Cultural Plan to be reviewed in 2024).</i></p>

Minor changes to the strategy arriving out of the above exhibition input have been made and are discussed and outlined within the Council report.

Heritage Strategy 2023-2027

Conserving and enhancing our city's rich Heritage

September 2023



Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027

Protecting and conserving
our city's rich Heritage

September 2023

*The Wollongong Heritage
Implementation Plan
(Attachment 1) is intended
to inform Council's Delivery
Program and Operational
Plan. It contains some items
that are subject to the
securing of funding and
grants and will be subject
to regular review and
evaluation based on available
resources, funding and other
operational requirements.*



Cintra, Austinmer

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Background

Development of a Wollongong Heritage Strategy

With the support of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group, Wollongong City Council has adopted three previous versions of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy for the periods 2011-2014, 2014-2017 and 2019-2022.

The nine strategies outlined have strategic alignment with the NSW State Government requirements and priorities identified by Heritage NSW.

Updating the Heritage Strategy

The Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027, has been developed following a review of the 2019-2022 Strategy and Implementation Action Plan, with input from the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group, various Council divisions and following a public exhibition process.

This document provides continued direction and guidance to Council in relation to heritage outcomes for the strategy period.

Policy Statement

Wollongong City Council respects and acknowledges those who came before us, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our City is built, and all of those who have contributed to the City of Wollongong.

We will do this by working with the community to:

- identify; acknowledge;
- conserve; protect;
- document; record;
- interpret; promote; and manage, the significant: places; objects; records; stories; and memorials, of our past, for the benefit, enjoyment, and appreciation of future generations.



Former Church, Scarborough

Council's Integrated Planning Process

Council has an integrated approach to cultural heritage management.

Council's Plans and Strategies work together to make Wollongong a liveable city for all people.

The Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 expands on the Heritage aspects of our **Wollongong Community Strategic Plan - Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 (CSP)** and Goal 1 and 4.

Goal 1 - We Value and Protect our Environment

Goal 4 - There is greater awareness and understanding of Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, heritage and histories

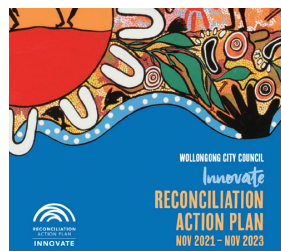
The Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 is closely linked to the following supporting documents endorsed by Council, some of which include specific heritage actions:

- > Creative Wollongong Cultural Plan 2019-2024
- > Urban Greening Strategy 2019-2037
- > Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023
- > City Centre Urban Design Framework 2019
- > Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy
- > Wollongong Coastal Zone Management Program



Community Strategic Plan

A 10 year plan that identifies our community's priorities and vision for the future



Supporting Documents

A level of interconnected documents that provide further detail about how we are going to achieve positive outcomes for the community



Implementation and Action Plan

Sets out the key priorities for heritage management and includes our approach to implementation

Our Heritage

Wollongong's Heritage

Our History

The Traditional Custodians live and care for Country here in the Illawarra as they have done for thousands of years. In 1815 some of the Illawarra's Traditional Custodians led the first white settlers and their cattle down the escarpment. This marked a new chapter in the story of our area.

Today the knowledge, cultural traditions and dreamings of our Traditional Custodians has been layered with a rich history of timber-getting, farming, coal mining, railway and port building and burgeoning seaside village and holiday communities. All this has occurred in the setting of our beautiful beaches and the magnificent escarpment.

Our Shared Heritage

Wollongong's heritage places include historic buildings, industrial infrastructure, cemeteries, ocean pools and memorials. But our heritage is much more than just architectural forms. Rural lands, mining sites, cultural and natural landscapes of importance to the Aboriginal community are all entwined to form our shared heritage.

Our heritage is the product of thousands of years of Aboriginal custodianship, descendants of the first European settlers and generations of migrants and their families from across the world who moved to the Illawarra and made it their home. It is also continuously evolving as we welcome those drawn to the Illawarra's natural beauty and rich history. This living heritage is a vital part of the cultural fabric that makes up the Illawarra.

These places such as Hill 60 Reserve in Port Kembla, which is listed on the State Heritage Register are significant for their Aboriginal Heritage and shared values.

Our Heritage Places

At the time of adoption of this strategy Council has over 500 heritage sites and cultural landscapes listed in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 and through State Environmental Planning Policies.

Of these items, 25 are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register as being items of significance to the state of New South Wales.

Heritage Conservation Areas

There are nine listed Heritage Conservation Areas in the Wollongong Local Government Area:

- Austinmer Conservation Area
- Brownsville Conservation Area
- Bulli Conservation Area
- Old Bulli Conservation Area
- Garrawarra Hospital Conservation Area
- Kembla Heights Mining Village
- Market Street Conservation Area
- North Beach Precinct and Belmore Basin
- Illawarra Escarpment Landscape Area

Declared Aboriginal Places

There are three declared Aboriginal Places under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 in the Wollongong Local Government Area. These places are Sandon Point Aboriginal Place, Bellambi Point Aboriginal Place and Dharawal Resting Place. Djeera (Mt Keera) and the Five Islands have also been proposed as Aboriginal Places. These Aboriginal Places hold great importance to the Aboriginal Community due to their cultural significance.

“Places of cultural significance enrich people’s lives, often providing deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences. They are historical records that are important expressions of Australian identity and experience.

These places reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the Australian Landscape. They are irreplaceable and precious.”

- The Burra Charter

Objectives

There are four key Objectives that this Strategy aims to achieve

- 1 Provide for the long term sustainable management of Wollongong's shared cultural heritage
- 2 Ensure that the Community, including the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group are actively engaged in the development and delivery of Council's heritage policies and priorities
- 3 Provide a formal mechanism for evaluating, and reporting on Council's performance in heritage management
- 4 Provide the supporting policy framework for delivery of the Wollongong's Heritage Implementation Plan 2023-2027



Our Heritage Strategies

Heritage Strategy

- Strategy 1:** Actively involve the community in the management of Wollongong's heritage;
- Strategy 2:** Maintain an up to date list of heritage items;
- Strategy 3:** Provide qualified and trained people to support the ongoing management of Wollongong's heritage and provide professional planning advice;
- Strategy 4:** Develop and implement programs and projects that aim to achieve proactive heritage management;
- Strategy 5:** Provide funding for heritage projects and programs;
- Strategy 6:** Identify and manage key heritage precincts, streetscapes, cultural and natural landscapes;
- Strategy 7:** Implement heritage education and promotion programs;
- Strategy 8:** Implement best practice heritage asset management procedures as a positive example for the community; and
- Strategy 9:** Promote sustainable development and Caring for Country as tools for heritage management.

Council will strive to achieve its Heritage Policy and Objectives by implementing nine key Heritage Strategies.

Each strategy is linked with a recommendation from the Heritage NSW publication 'Recommendations for Local Council Heritage Management'.



The Imperial Hotel, Clifton

Strategy 1

Actively involve the community in the management of Wollongong's heritage

**Heritage NSW
Recommendation
1 - 'Establish
a Heritage
Committee to
deal with heritage
matters in your
local area'**

Involving the community in the management of the city's heritage is an essential component of good heritage management. The Wollongong Heritage Reference Group has been convened in numerous formats for a number of decades. The purpose of the Reference Group is to provide community representation and advice in relation to Council's Heritage Management processes.

Council acknowledges that the Heritage Reference Group provides only one means for community involvement in heritage management and that Council must also engage with a diverse cross section of our community in relation to policy decisions that will impact on heritage outcomes.

Council also recognises the need to continually improve our engagement with the local Aboriginal community in relation to Council works projects as well as Council policy programs to build trust and meaningful relationships. Council

has recently developed an Aboriginal Engagement Framework, as part of Council's commitment to engage in a meaningful and consistent way. The Framework is underpinned by local Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage.

The Framework can be accessed on Council's website:

https://wollongong.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/133785/Aboriginal-Engagement-Framework-accessible.pdf

In recent years, there has been a significant trend within social media toward engagement around issues relating to the history and heritage of Wollongong. Social media provides an opportunity to engage with a broader and younger segment of the community in relation to heritage issues.



Strategy 2

Maintain an up to date list of heritage items

Council has a legislative responsibility to keep a list of its heritage items and places. Council is committed to the ongoing review and update of Schedule 5 of the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan and is focused on ensuring that the Schedule accurately represents those aspects of our City's heritage that are important to the community.

Council is also working to clearly identify and demonstrate the significance of all heritage items through ensuring that the information available on the NSW Heritage Database is accurate and up to date. This database is accessible online by the general public.

Council also acknowledges that there are many sites and places of significance to the local Aboriginal Community that are not listed on Schedule 5 of the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan. These sites fall under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and are most appropriately managed by Heritage NSW through the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management Database.

Heritage NSW Recommendation 2 - Identify the heritage items in your area and list them in your Local Environmental Plan



Sri Venkateswara Hindu Temple, Helensburgh

Strategy 3

Provide qualified and trained people to support the ongoing management of Wollongong's heritage and provide professional planning advice

Heritage NSW Recommendation 3 - Appoint a heritage advisor to assist the Council, the community and owners of listed heritage items

Council will continue to provide a range of heritage services to the community. These services include:

- Heritage planning advice to private heritage owners and general public;
- Advice relating to conservation and adaptive reuse projects;
- Heritage promotion and education programs;
- Providing internal advice on Council projects;
- Continue to grow and maintain the Wollongong Local Studies Library Collection.

Council recognises the importance of providing adequate resources to maintain and deliver these services. Council has two funded full time heritage staff, and continually applies for grant funding from the State Government to contribute to engaging an independent Heritage Advisor.

Council is also committed to the development and implementation of an internal staff training programs as well as the continued implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.



Gleniffer Brae, Keirville (SHR)

Strategy 4

Develop and implement programs and projects that aim to achieve proactive heritage management

Council recognises the importance of proactive heritage management in providing positive heritage outcomes and is committed to the implementation of projects and programs that encourage the active conservation of our City's heritage.

Council aims to achieve this by ensuring that heritage advice and guidance is readily available to the community. Council will continue to promote positive heritage projects through the use of the heritage incentive clauses in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan.

Council also takes a proactive role in shaping heritage policy and legislation at all levels of government. Council is committed to ensuring that the views of the community, including the local Aboriginal community, are meaningfully represented as part of significant legislative reviews.

Council is committed to maintaining open and effective working relationships with other government agencies including the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Heritage NSW as well as community organisations such as the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust, Illawarra Historical Society and the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council and our Traditional Custodians to implement cross organisational projects.

**Heritage NSW
Recommendation
4 - Manage local
heritage in a
positive manner**



Strategy 5

Provide funding for heritage projects and programs

**Heritage NSW
Recommendation
5 - Introduce a
local heritage grant
fund to provide
small grants to
encourage local
heritage projects**

Council recognises the importance of funding to support community based and individual Heritage projects as well as to manage our own Heritage assets. Providing funding for a range of projects allows Council to achieve positive heritage outcomes that benefit the entire community. Council is committed to providing assistance to support the delivery of this Strategy and the associated Implementation Plan.

Council has run a successful local heritage grant program for the past 15 years and will continue to support local heritage owners to achieve positive conservation outcomes. Council will also continue to actively pursue available heritage funding from other levels of government, including Heritage NSW Local Government Heritage Grants program.



Coral Vale Dairy Building Adaptive Reuse, Smiths Lane Wongawilli

Strategy 6

Identify and manage key heritage precincts, streetscapes, cultural and natural landscapes

The identification and management of historic precincts and streetscapes is recognised by Council as an important component of heritage management, as well as being interlinked with principles of urban design and strategic planning.

Council also recognises that some of our valued rural landscapes such as the West Dapto Precinct and historic industrial sites including former Collieries and Coke Works are undergoing significant change. As Council delivers green and brownfield urban release areas it is important that heritage values be managed as part of new development.

Council is committed to managing our highly significant Aboriginal Places, cultural landscapes and environmental heritage. Council recognises the significance of both the tangible and intangible values associated with cultural landscapes such

as Sandon Point, Hill 60 and the Illawarra Escarpment that are entwined with the environmental values of these places. It is recognised that all of these places together form interconnected and layered cultural landscapes, which traverse suburb and Local Government Area boundaries and should be managed holistically.

Council is committed to ensuring heritage is a key consideration of town and village planning, neighbourhood planning, and master planning for public places and significant sites with recognised heritage values.

**Heritage NSW
Recommendation
6 - Run a heritage
main street
program**



View of the Illawarra Escarpment and West Dapto Urban Release Area

Strategy 7

Implement heritage education and promotion programs that celebrate our shared history and

Heritage NSW Recommendation 7 - Present educational and promotional programs

Council recognises that our heritage places and sites, particularly the Illawarra Escarpment, Wollongong Harbour Precinct and North Beach Precinct as well as a wide range of other significant places, are unique assets to the community that provide opportunities for education, cultural tourism and the ongoing economic development of the region.

Council recognises that educating and promoting our heritage to the community and visitors to our Local Government Area is an important part of proactive heritage management. For this reason Council has committed to the ongoing presentation of education and promotion programs for all ages, related to our shared heritage such as the National Trust Heritage Festival and World Environment Day events.

These programs include an ongoing education program for Council staff, a commitment to ongoing support for local heritage events and festivals, as well as history and heritage tours such as the Blue Mile Walking Tour developed in partnership with Destination Wollongong.

It is also recognised that Council should support the local Aboriginal community to develop and benefit from educational and tourism opportunities, where culturally appropriate, to ensure our rich Aboriginal heritage and culture is shared and celebrated.

It is important to acknowledge that increased tourism can have an impact on cultural values and sensitive ecological areas that must be appropriately managed.



Blue Mile Heritage Walking Tour, Wollongong (Image: Destination Wollongong)

Strategy 8

Implement best practice heritage asset management procedures as a positive example for the community

Council is responsible for the management of over 30 heritage listed buildings, more than 20 heritage listed parks and recreation areas, eight cemeteries, as well as many other heritage items including trees and landscapes, monuments/memorials, ocean pools, historic roads and rail alignments.

In addition to these, Council also maintains a number of assets that have cultural significance but may not be listed as heritage items on the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009. These sites include a wide range of Aboriginal sites and places of cultural significance to the local Aboriginal community.

Additional heritage assets, including archaeological sites, trees and parks along with interpretive elements and places of Aboriginal Heritage significance are increasingly being dedicated to Council for management predominantly through greenfield development of the West Dapto Urban Release Area.

It is important that Council puts in place procedures and processes to ensure that it proactively manages our heritage assets. Best practice heritage management benefits our local community by ensuring our shared history, our iconic public buildings as well as our cultural landscapes are cared for into the future and are accessible for the community.

Heritage NSW Recommendation 8 - Set a good example to the community by properly managing heritage places owned or operated by the council



Glengarry, current used as Wollongong Council waste management centre

Strategy 9

Promote sustainable development and Caring for Country as tools for heritage management

Heritage NSW Recommendation 9 - Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage management

Council acknowledges that Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is intrinsic to the Illawarra Landscape and our rich variety of flora and fauna. Involving our Aboriginal community in Caring for Country, through implementation of sustainable environmental management is essential to the ongoing management of our significant Cultural Landscapes.

Due to the unique topography of the Wollongong Local Government Area, we acknowledge that climate change poses a significant risk for many of our significance places, particularly those located along the coastline and in flood affected areas. Council is committed to science based planning for future impacts such as erosion of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites and inundation of built heritage in coastal areas in consultation with the community.

Council also recognises that the conservation of heritage sites supports the underlying principles of environmentally sustainable development (ESD). Council supports the principles of ESD through the Heritage Incentives clause in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan that encourage adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and the waiver of development application fees where conservation outcomes are achieved.

Council also acknowledges that opportunities to allow heritage buildings to meet modern sustainability outcomes are increasing through the development of new technologies. These innovations can be balanced with the heritage significance of these sites through appropriate management and decision making, with support and guidance from Council.



Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council and WCC undertaking erosion protection works at Bellambi Harbour

Delivery of this Strategy

Implementation Plan

To ensure the successful delivery of the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 the following Implementation Plan has been developed. The Implementation Plan and associated actions are provided as Appendix 1 to the Strategy.

Under each Strategy Council undertakes a number of activities as part of its core business. These are identified in the Implementation Plan, however are not actions for completion.

The Implementation Plan are intended to guide Council in the delivery of the nine strategies detailed in this Policy

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Email: Council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Please provide written feedback to:

Online:

www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au

The General Manager
Locked Bag 8821
WOLLONGONG DC NSW 2500
Australia

Attachment 1: Implementation Plan

Strategy 1 - Actively Involved the community in the management of Wollongong’s heritage

Core Business

Hold bi-monthly meetings of the Aboriginal Reference Group and ensure key Aboriginal heritage policy issues are discussed.

Hold quarterly meetings of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group.

Monitor the implementation of the Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 by undertaking annual reviews of performance against the strategy and implementation plan.

Continue to implement the Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework across Council Projects.

Continue to deliver Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan and acknowledge the important connections between reconciliation and the recognition of our Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

Strategy 1 - Implementation Actions			
	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
1.1	Explore potential procurement procedures to encourage engagement of Aboriginal contractors for works on key Aboriginal sites.	Heritage and Procurement Staff	Yes
1.2	Conduct reviews of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group in accordance with the Reference Group Charter as required to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Reference Group is effective.	Heritage Staff	Yes
1.3	Explore funding opportunities to develop a Walking on Country pilot program. See Action 9.2 of the Reconciliation Action Plan	Heritage Staff & Community and Cultural Services	No

Strategy 2 - Maintain an up to date list of heritage items

Core Business

Continue to acknowledge the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System as the key register of Aboriginal Heritage places and sites.

Where sites are identified through planning processes, development applications or heritage studies as being of State Heritage significance, prepare State Heritage nominations for these sites.

Undertake bi-annual reviews to monitor and maintain the schedule of heritage items listed in Wollongong's planning instruments

Strategy 2 - Implementation Actions

	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
2.1	Finalise Stage 2 of the Wollongong Heritage Schedule Review and update the State Heritage Inventory Database accordingly	Heritage and Procurement Staff	Yes
2.2	Explore funding opportunities with the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council to develop a community led Strategic Aboriginal Cultural Heritage studies for the Wollongong Local Government Area to inform Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment priorities and significant Cultural Heritage places and sites	Heritage Staff	No

Strategy 3 - Provide qualified and trained people to support the ongoing management of Wollongong’s heritage and provide professional heritage planning advice

Core Business

Develop and implement regular in-house heritage training for Council staff, Councillors and Heritage Reference Group Members to encourage and facilitate a collaborative and cross division approach to heritage management.

Continue to grow, maintain and make accessible the Wollongong Local Studies Library Collection, including acquiring deposits of all complete heritage studies and report.

Prepare and assess Interim Heritage Order requests under delegation from the NSW Heritage Council in accordance with Council’s delegations.

Provide professional heritage referral advice in relation to development applications and engage with key community groups (including the ILALC, The Illawarra Historical Society, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust) and provide opportunity for their input into development applications with potential heritage impacts.

Identify, investigate and enforce compliance matters relating to illegal development involving heritage places.

Strategy 3 - Implementation Actions			
	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
3.1	Explore funding opportunities for the employment of an Aboriginal Heritage role within Council	Heritage and Procurement Staff	Yes

Strategy 4 - Implement programs and projects that aim to achieve pro-active heritage management

Core Business

Continue to provide Heritage comments and input into the State Government’s Draft Aboriginal Heritage legislative Reforms.

Provide Conservation Incentives for appropriate development to heritage properties through the Conservation Incentives clause in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009

Strategy 4 - Implementation Actions			
	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
4.1	Undertake a review of Chapter E11: Heritage Conservation of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009	Heritage Staff	No
4.2	Review Chapter E10: Aboriginal Heritage of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009	Heritage Staff	No
4.3	Develop a management policy for moveable heritage items and develop a list of significant moveable heritage within the city	Heritage Staff	No
4.4	Run a Local Heritage Grant program for local conservation projects	Heritage Staff	Yes
4.5	Continue to work with our local museums to support the management of their historic collections (See item 3.4.3 of the Cultural Plan to be reviewed in 2024).	Heritage Staff Community & Cultural Services	Yes

Strategy 5 - Provide funding for heritage project and programs

Core Business

Provide a local heritage grant fund for local conservation projects.

Continue to fund a consultant Heritage Advisor to support the role of Council's Heritage staff.

Provide Conservation Incentives for appropriate development to heritage properties through the Conservation Incentives clause in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009.

Strategy 4 - Implementation Actions

	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
5.1	Continue to seek funding to support a Heritage Advisor position and Council's Local Heritage Grant program through the NSW Heritage fund	Heritage Staff	Yes
5.2	Actively pursue grant funding for heritage projects through available programs when they arise	Heritage Staff	Yes

Strategy 6 - Identify and manage key heritage precincts, streetscape, cultural and natural landscapes

Core Business

Continue to acknowledge and identify Heritage Conservation Areas and key cultural, rural, industrial and natural landscapes as part of Council's Heritage Review and through town and village planning studies, planning proposals and other strategic planning processes

Strategy 6 - Implementation Actions

	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
6.1	Explore funding opportunities to develop an Archaeological Zoning Plan for the City (particularly the CBD) and implement procedures through appropriate development controls/mapping	Heritage Staff	Yes
6.2	Explore funding opportunities to develop an Industrial Heritage Study to identify key industrial sites	Heritage Staff	Yes
6.3	Undertake a Community Visioning Project to develop a Vision and Plan for the future of Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights	Community Engagement Staff	Yes

Strategy 7 - Implement heritage education and promotion projects

Core Business

Support local events and festivals which celebrate aspects of Wollongong's Heritage.

Maintain a heritage section on Council's website and provide a user friendly resource of heritage information/guidelines and publications including through the use of social media.

Strategy 7 - Implementation Actions			
	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
7.1	Seek funding to support the development and implementation of a signage strategy for the identification of Heritage Conservation Areas.	Heritage Staff	Yes
7.2	Implement the remaining recommended Heritage Interpretation Works contained within the Blue Mile Heritage Interpretation Strategy	Heritage Staff	Yes
7.3	Develop a Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the Grand Pacific Walk	Heritage Staff ISP	Yes

Strategy 8 - Implement best practice heritage asset management procedures as a positive example for the community

Core Business

Incorporate Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage considerations in the planning process for Council works projects and development of Council's Town and Village Planning studies.

Seek independent external heritage advice where appropriate.

Strategy 8 - Implementation Actions			
	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
8.1	Finalise and Implement the Wollongong Heritage Asset Management Strategy for Council's Heritage Assets	Heritage Staff	Yes
8.2	Consider options for the use of the Bulli Miners Cottage property	Heritage Staff	No
8.3	Implement the outcomes of the Hill 60 Masterplan in accordance with the relevant approvals and in consultation with the local Aboriginal community and other stakeholders	Heritage Staff ISP Engagement	Yes
8.4	Prepare a conservation management plan for the Fortifications in the Wollongong Harbour State Heritage Precinct and explore options for their future activation.	Heritage Staff ISP	Yes
8.5	Implement the outcomes of the Sandon Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management and AHIP in consultation with the local Aboriginal community and other stakeholders.	Heritage Staff ISP Engagement	Yes

Strategy 9 - Promote sustainable development and Caring for Country as tools for heritage management

Core Business

Actively encourage the adaptive reuse of heritage sites and offer incentives to this end, including waiver of Development Application & Construction Certificate Fees and Section 94 Contributions and free pre lodgement advice for adaptive re-use projects.

Support Natural Area Management, including 'Bushcare' and similar programs that enhance, reinstate and support 'natural' heritage environments and Places of Aboriginal Heritage significance, and involve Aboriginal workers in these projects where possible.

Carefully consider the potential for Cultural Heritage impacts from climate change in the development and implementation of our coastal management plans and programs.

Strategy 9 - Implementation Actions

	Action	Responsibility	Resourced
9.1	Develop guidelines and policies related to the provision of solar panels, solar hot water systems, water tanks and other technologies aimed at improving sustainability of heritage buildings	Heritage Staff	Yes

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