

Neighbourhood Forum 5

Wollongong's Heartland

*Collaborating with Council
on community aspirations,
visions, needs & concerns.*



Coniston,
Figtree,
Gwynneville,
Keiraville,
Mangerton,
Mount Keira,
Mount St Thomas,
North Wollongong,
West Wollongong,
Wollongong City.

AGENDA meeting MONDAY 2nd December at 6 pm at the Wiseman Park Bowling Club, Gwynneville

- 1 Presentation George Takacs on Health and Active Transport
- 2 Apologies Harold Hanson, John Dorahy,
- 3 Minutes of meeting of 4th November and matters arising: see pp. 17-21
- 4 Comments If you wish to comment on, or object to, any of the recommendations in this agenda please respond before the meeting date.
- 5 Caveats **See p. 2.**
- 6 Responses
 - 6.1 Council Planning Notifications: see p.2
 - 6.2 Character Statements: see **rec p.2**
 - 6.3 Cosgrove Avenue Re-zoning: see p.3
 - 6.4 Speed Limits on Cliff Road: see p.3
 - 6.5 Mount Ousley Interchange Revised Design: see p. 4 & p.13
 - 6.6 Issues awaiting responses: see p.4
- 7 Reports
 - 7.1 Neighbourhood Forum 5 meeting arrangements: see p.5
 - 7.2 Community Strategic Plan: see **rec p.5**
 - 7.3 Future of the Wesley Uniting Church: see **rec p.6** & p. 16,
 - 7.4 Grey Street Footpath Obstructions: see **rec p.6**
 - 7.5 Sydney Water Charges: see p.7
- 8 Planning
 - 8.1 Planning see p.7
 - 8.2-6 Development Applications: see **recs pp. 7-9**
 - 8.7 DA determinations: see p.10
- 9 Late Business. 9.1
- 10 Snippets see p.12

Current active membership of Neighbourhood Forum 5 : 447 households

5 Caveats

Please note that whilst these reports and reviews, together with the recommendations and actions based on them, have been prepared with all due care and objectivity, no legal responsibility is accepted for errors, omissions or inadvertent misrepresentations, nor for any outcomes which might result from them.

6 Responses 6.1 Council Planning Notifications.

“My apologies in the delay in reply to two NF5 matters arising from the 6/3/24 meeting concerning the Community Participation Plan.

1. On-site Notices
2. Notification periods

On 31/7/23 Council adopted the current Community Participation Plan 2023 following a review and exhibition of the draft Plan. I note that NF5 lodged a submission on the draft Plan that was considered by Council.

A further review of the Community Participation Plan is not currently scheduled and may not occur for a number of years. NF5s suggestions will be considered as part of the next review of the Community Participation Plan.”

Land Use Planning Manager

6.2 Character Statements

“My apologies in the delay in reply to NF5’s letter arising from the 6/3/24 meeting concerning Character Statements. On 27 February 2023 Council adopted the Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023. The Strategy includes an implementation program which includes as priority 10 the preparation of updated character statements.

Council officers are working through the priority actions of the Housing Strategy and other adopted Strategies. An implementation progress report was considered by Council on 5/2/24. The preparation of Character Statements cannot be brought forward without impacting Council’s other priority projects.”

Land Use Planning Manager

Recommendation

That representations be made to Ward Councillors to get a much higher priority for the definition of Character Statements in the Development Control Plan since the current ones are absolutely useless for purposes of controlling development which is ruining the streetscape of many of our suburban streets and, moreover they could be virtually the only way Council can reduce the impact of the new arbitrary controls imposed by the State Government.

6.3 Cosgrove Avenue Re-zoning

Update for NF5 on 14 Cosgrove Ave, Keiraville
Wollongong LEP 2009 (Map amendment No.9) was published today, which has rezoned the majority of the property from R2 and some C2, to a majority of C2 with some C3 (APZs) and R2. Land Use Planning Manager



Recommendation

Council be commended on achieving the re-zoning.

6.4 Speed Limits on Cliff Road

“Council is committed to making it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to get around the Wollongong foreshore area. In 2023, Council sought feedback on proposals to improve the Foreshore Area. The proposals used traffic data, community feedback and best practice guidelines to develop our initial concepts. This included working Transport for NSW to look at reducing the speed limit throughout these roads and shared zones. This speed zone review request was submitted to TfNSW for their assessment. Council proposal two speed limit zones – 10km/h on Cliff Road around Stuart Park to create a shared zone environment and 30km/h along Cliff Road from Bourke Street through to Crown Street to create a High Pedestrian Priority Area.

Please refer to the map - [Speed Zone Catchment](#).

The outcome of this speed zone request submitted by Council was a change in the speed limit along on Cliff Road around Stuart Park to 20km/h. The existing speed limit has been reviewed in consultation with Council and NSW Police and is in accordance with the NSW Speed Zoning Standard. This will be the first 20km/h speed zone implement in South Region under the NSW Speed Zoning Standard. This area was prioritised to support the All-Abilities playground at Stuart Park. Council is still awaiting the outcome of the assessment for the section of Cliff Road from Bourke Street through to Crown Street.

While Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has the responsibility for reviewing and setting speed limits in NSW, Council also undertakes studies and request reviews of speed zones through TfNSW such as along the Wollongong Foreshore. For future reference, all requests for an assessment, review, or update of a speed zone review can be submitted through the following link: <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/>.

We'll continue to work with TfNSW as projects are delivered along the Wollongong Foreshore to support a pedestrian focused and low speed environment. This includes communications and appropriate signage to support this change in speed environments.”

Transport and Infrastructure Planning Manager

6.5 Mount Ousley Interchange Revised Design Safety Concerns

On 28 March 2024 TfNSW released a Project Update which included a map of the revised design by TfNSW during 2023. On 3 April NF5 welcomed the MOI project and agreed to form a small Working Group to liaise with TfNSW including re feedback from residents on the revised design. On 30 April the Working Group held discussions with representatives of TfNSW and contactor Fulton Hogan, including concerns about replacement two roundabouts by signalised intersections.

On 20 May a well-attended public meeting resolved, amongst other things, to call on State and Federal Governments to complete MOI work in accordance with the scope of works agreed in 2016 and in the 2017 NSW REF. Also to form a Working Group with representatives of KRAG, iBUG, HC-I, NF4 & NF5 to liaise with local MPs and representatives of TfNSW and Council. On 15 Nov a third meeting was held, and senior representatives of the Active Transport section of TfNSW attended the site.

At NF5 meeting on 7 Oct 2024 a report was tabled on MOI design changes, which included background information and identified nine safety issues. TfNSW reply received 22 Nov is summarised in appendix 1 on page 13. A meeting with TfNSW and NF5 Working Group is proposed in the near future to clarify aspects of their response.

6.6 Issues awaiting responses

Partial responses/acknowledgements have been made to some of these items but substantial responses are still to come.

- 1 Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Flooding;
- 2 Parking for Carers & Service People;
- 3 Danger to Pedestrians;

- 4 Corrimal Street Footpath;
- 5 draft Wollongong Foreshore Plan of Management;
- 6 Community use of Local Parks;
- 7 Allotments and Community Gardens;
- 8 Housing Mix;
- 9 Construction activities on Footpaths;
- 10 Pedestrian crossing at Cliff Road and GHD.

7 Reports 7.1 Neighbourhood Forum 5 meeting arrangements

Discussions are ongoing but we seem to be very close to reaching a mutual agreement. Council have agreed to modify the agreement to use the Library theatre, but the final wording has still to be settled.

7.2 Community Strategic Plan

A significant 4 page submission was lodged in response to Council's questions about the future of the city. The submission concluded:

We would like Wollongong to be:

1. a greener city with green flood free corridors from the escarpment to the ocean, with Council enlisting greater community involvement in tree planting and local park management and with deep planting at the front, not the back, of new developments, together with mandatory green roofs;
2. a safer city with far more traffic calming, more infrastructure for active transport; promotion of street parties to encourage community development and the active use of local streets;
3. a city of harmonious residential areas with reliable, enforceable character statements for new development, and high rise development near the centre relating to adjoining buildings and have welcoming entries;
4. a city with a heart, an exciting centre showcasing our many diverse cultural communities and celebrating our industrial strength;
5. a city where education is valued, available, and relevant to the various needs of all in the community and enhances their quality of life;
6. a city where suitable jobs are available in accordance with the aspirations and needs of individuals and industry;
7. a city Council that cares for and collaborates with residents in planning and delivering affordable essential services and infrastructure efficiently and effectively.

Recommendations

- 1 that the submission be endorsed;
- 2 that, following discussion and amendment as agreed, the conclusions from the submission on the Community Strategic Plan be adopted as the Forum's policy position on the future of the city.

7.3 The future of the Wesley Uniting Church on the Mall

In early November, 2024, the Illawarra Mercury and Illawarra ABC reported that the Wesley Church on the Mall is to be mothballed because it needs a considerable amount of investment to address safety and other structural issues
See Appendix 2.

Recommendation

Council's Heritage Officer be requested to host a meeting with the Uniting Church Synod Property Services NSW & ACT, Neighbourhood Forum 5, the National Trust - Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch and other stakeholders to discuss the site's future, that of the 140 year old organ and the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan.

7.4 Grey Street Footpath Obstructions

Use of the footpath, by pedestrians especially pedestrians using walking assistance devices, on the eastern side of Grey St between # 18 Grey St and Gipps Rd is considerably congested by the presence of power poles located in the foot path proper. In fact the obstruction by these power poles is so adverse that at one power pole the clearance is only 880mm between the power pole face and the face of Keiraville Public School security fence. Furthermore the clearance between the power pole face and the eastern edge of the footpath is only some 650mm. This clearance is grossly deficient for senior citizens using walkers or wheel chairs to safely pass. Consequently senior citizens using walkers access to and from Gipps Rd on the road pavement.

It just so happens this foot path section is subject to high primary school aged accompanied by parent pedestrian traffic. It is observed the power pole congestion demands some of the traffic utilize the road pavement as there is insufficient footpath width to accommodate each pedestrian group walking abreast. Use of the road pavement is further promoted by the absence of gutter ramps between say # 18 to #30 Grey St.

Recommendations

That Council be requested to liaise with the responsible power authority:

- 1 to relocate the existing 4 off power poles on the eastern side of to the western side of Grey St between Gipps Rd and #22 Grey St,
- 2 on removal of the subject power poles concrete infill the footpath depressions, so generated, to match the footpath surface;
- 3 install a pedestrian ramp in the eastern side kerb opposite # 20 Grey St,

4 attended to these pedestrian safety issues as soon as possible.

7.5 Sydney Water Charges

It has been recently announced Sydney Water is pushing for an immediate 18% increase in water rates followed by 7% increases for each of the four years following. This will in fact double current rates in five years time.

Clarification is urgently required in regard is the increase applicable to each clients total invoice amount, or only the fixed connection fee (for both water and sewerage connection) or only the rate per mega litre. The sudden much overdue increase in rates raises management issues within Sydney Water.

The last major infrastructure project installed by Sydney Water is the Port Botany Desalination plant. This suggests Sydney Water infrastructure is considerably aged and need of replacement, repairs and improvements. It also suggests significant water supply shortages will apply to Sydney Water Clients during drought periods in the future.

8 Planning

8.1 As these reviews have only been made with the information available, members are encouraged to make their own submissions with any additional comments to the Secretary before the closing date if possible.

8.2 DA-2024/803 Dual Occ 34 Evans St W'gong

18th Nov

This is a proposal for an attached dual occupancy with an amazing design. Access is via a gated carport then through a garage to the front door. Whilst strictly speaking the garages do not constitute more than 50% of the street frontage, the carport screens, together with the absence of front doors, make the streetscape unconventional, but this end of Evans Street is very mixed. There is also a very minor infringement of the rear setback.



Recommendation

That the submission of support be endorsed.

8.3 DA-2024/812 Dual Occ 26 Crawford Av Gwynneville

19th Nov

This is a proposal for an attached dual occupancy on the corner of Crawford Ave and Mountview Ave from whence both lots get access. It does not quite comply with side setback, width of private open space, or solar access for one of the dwellings which are acceptable in the circumstances. It otherwise complies with our Locality Plan for Fairy Creek



Mountview Avenue

Recommendation

That the submission of support be endorsed.

8.4 DA-2024/776 Dual Occ 14 Finlayson St W’gong

25th Nov

This is a proposal for an attached dual occupancy. It complies with all Council requirements save minimum site width -1.9% variation.



Recommendation

That the submission of support be endorsed.

8.5 DA-2024/818 7 storey, mixed 26 units 34 Keira St W’gong

28th Nov

This is a proposal for a 7 storey building with commercial on the ground and first floor with 26 units above and basement parking. There are multiple minor infringements of setback and building separation requirements, which are acceptable. Whilst there are some solar panels on the roof, far more panels and/or greening should be incorporated.



Recommendation

That the submission of support, subject to a significant increase of solar panels or greening on the roof, be endorsed.

8.6 DA-2024/860 Dual Occ 13 Braeside Ave Keiraville

9th Dec

This is a proposal for a detached dual occupancy on a lot between Braeside Ave and Michael Street with a separate access from each street. It does not quite comply with lot width which is acceptable in the circumstances. It otherwise complies with all Council requirements and our Locality Plan for Keiraville.



Recommendation

That a submission of support be lodged.

8.7 DA Determinations

23/507 complies	W'gong	Belmore Basin	Timbersports event	Support	Approved
23/533 complies	Kerraville	64 Grey Street	Dual Occ	Support	Approved
23/541 complies	Figtree	17 Evelyn Ave.	Dual Occ	Support	Approved
23/511 faulty	W'gong	16-18 Market Pl.	5 stories, 7 units,	Object	Approved Panel
23/587 complies	W'gong	5 Greenacre Rd	Dual Occ	Object	Approved
23/64 faulty	W'gong	4 Smith St & 22 Harbour St	4 stories, 5 units	Object	Approved Panel
23/759 complies	W'gong	45-49 Flinders St	MacDonalds	Support	Approved Panel
23/768 faulty	W'gong	205 Church St	Dual Occ	Object	Refused
23/962 complies	W. W'gong	Edmund Rice College	2 storey building	Support	Approved
23/975 complies	Gwynnvil	19 Paulsgrove	boarding house	Support	Approved
23/1008 faulty	Keiraville	8 Burradool St	Dual Occ	Object	Approved Panel
24/1 complies	W'gong	15-19 Marr St	7 storeys, 24 units	Support	Approved Panel
24/2 faulty	Gwynnvil le	13 Francis St	Dual Occ	Object	Approved
24/11 complies	W'gong	106,120,122 Smith St, 3A Charlotte St	8 lot subd.	Support	Approved
24/23 faulty	Mangertn	51 Byrarong St	Dual Occ	Object	Refused
24/26 faulty	W'gong	23-27 Auburn St	16 stories, 61 units	Support	Deemed refusal
24/96 complies	Keiraville	74 Grey St.	Dual Occ	Support	Withdrawn
24/100 faulty	Figtree	4A Arter Ave.	13 dwellings	Object	Withdrawn
24/181 complies	Mt Keira	Mt Keira Road	Archery clubhouse	Support	Approved
24/207 faulty	N. W'gong	26-30 Ajax Ave	12 houses	Support	Refused
24/290 complies	W'gong	2 Auburn St	Dog day care	Support	Approved
24/476 faulty	W'gong	264-6 Kenny St	19 stories, 113 units	Object	Deemed refusal
24/477 faulty	W. W'gong	33 Parsons St.	3 houses	Object	Refused

Not yet determined

23/156 faulty	W'gong	c/o Crown/Gladstone	22 stories 288 units	Object
23/945 complies	W'gong	98-104 Gipps St	5 storey commercial	Support
24/87 complies	N.W'gong	39-41 Montague St	16 warehouse units	Support
24/210 faulty	W'gong	41-47 Denison St	17 stories, 75 units	Support
24/477 faulty	W. W'gong	33 Parsons St.	3 houses	Object
24/538 complies	W'gong	65 Gladstone Ave	Dual Occ	Support
24/574 complies	Coniston	47 Robertson St	Dual Occ	Support
24/599 faulty	W'gong	109-115 Church St	9 stories, 45 units	Object
24/608 faulty	W'gong	Keira and Kenny Sts	14 stories, 116 units	Object
24/708 faulty	W.W'gong	93 Robsons Rd	6 Co-living rooms	Object
24/776 faulty	W'gong	14 Finlayson St	Dual Occ	Support
24/788 faulty	Keiraville	19 Rose St	Dual Occ	Object
24/796 faulty	Figtree	14 Mallangong Close	Dual Occ	Support
24/803 faulty	W'gong	34 Evans St	Dual Occ	Support
24/812 faulty	Gwynneville	26 Crawford Ave	Dual Occ	Support
24/860 faulty	Keiraville	13 Braeside Ave	Dual Occ	Support

Late Business

Next Meeting; to be confirmed:

6.30 Wednesday 6th February Library Theatre

Current active membership of Neighbourhood Forum 5 : 449 households

Snippets

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in the UK

A Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) is an area in which filtered permeability and traffic calming are deployed to lower speeds and reduce motorised through-traffic in residential areas. LTNs can be implemented through the use of barriers such as bollards, boom barriers and planters; they can also be implemented virtually through the use of automatic number-plate recognition cameras and road signs, which can allow vehicle access for residents and emergency services while penalising unrelated through traffic.

Local councils engage in extensive public consultations and provide educational materials to ensure community awareness and support for the LTN implementation. A systematic review has showed that, in some areas, car traffic within the zones almost halved, while on the boundary roads there was almost no effect on traffic. The introduction of LTNs has also been associated with improved air quality, contributing to public health benefits by reducing pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, and contributing to the war on climate change.

Within the LTN areas, the numbers of injuries, and the risk of injury per trip, reduced by about 70% for walkers, cyclists, and car occupants, even though more people were walking and cycling. In addition people had an improved perceptions of the local cycling environment. It also led to a decrease in street crime as well as violent crimes and sexual assaults. The only category for crime which saw an increase was bicycle theft!



How about dogs, cars or street games & parties?

Appendix 1: MOI Revised Design Safety Concerns – TfNSW reply

The following is a summary of TfNSW response 22 Nov 2024 to design safety concerns raised by NF5 at meeting in October 2024. The revised plan can be found at transport.nsw.gov.au website for MOI, Project information, Overview Map.

Q1. Reinstate the pedestrian/cyclist bridge across Mount Ousley Road, and provide pedestrian phases at both signalised intersections.

A1. Transport is investigating the feasibility of a pedestrian and cyclist bridge over Mount Ousley Road and developing preliminary design concepts. Once a preferred option is confirmed, Transport will assess the potential environmental impacts of the bridge including how much additional vegetation clearing would be required and the potential for light spill and other visual impacts before sharing the proposal with the broader community.

Pedestrian signal phases will be provided for pedestrian and cycle paths where required.

Q2. How will queuing for southbound vehicles (waiting at new traffic signals) to access UoW at the new northern (and new route to existing southern) entrance be safely provided.

A2. Signalised intersections allow for real time certainty to avoid off ramp traffic backing up onto the motorway. There is an ability to “hold” individual streams of traffic flow and give priority to the motorway. This functionality would not have been available with the installation of roundabouts as motorists have to choose their own gap when entering the roundabout under Give Way conditions. Traffic signals are a substantial benefit in comparison to roundabouts in intersections with large volumes of traffic.

Traffic queue detectors will be installed to enable the traffic signals to adapt to traffic changes and provide priority to key movements to ensure that queues do not extend back to the M1 Princes Motorway.

Traffic modelling has been carried out to assess the signalised intersections to ensure that they will perform to a satisfactory level of service.

Other benefits of the revised design include:

- o Allows for traffic flows to be managed and altered to respond to demand
- o Provides cost reduction and simplifies construction staging
- o Achieves design compliance of second heavy vehicle safety ramp
- o Can be altered for individual occurrences or special events such as the start of school term, school holidays, public holidays, UOW orientation week etc
- o Performs at satisfactory level of service in peak times in 2046 allowing for future development in the surrounding region.

Q3. What effective advance warning and route signage will be provided for southbound vehicles unable to access the University Ave roundabout via the M1 queuing lane.

A3. There will be two options available to southbound vehicles wishing to access the University of Wollongong.

The first will be to exit the Motorway at the new interchange and use the new bridge over the Motorway to enter the University at the northern end. The second will be to exit the Motorway at the new interchange and use the new access road to enter the University via University Avenue. The inclusion of traffic signals in the new interchange will allow for traffic flows to be managed and altered to respond to demand, helping to minimise congestion and delays to through traffic and those accessing the University of Wollongong during peak times. Signage will be installed as per Australian Standards and Austroads requirements in advance of the southbound exit.

Q4. How and where will southbound Over Size Over Mass heavy vehicles on the M1 be able to safely exit, wait and then travel south past the height- restricted University Ave Bridge.

A4 From the heavy vehicle bypass lane, heavy vehicles will either travel under a new bridge to continue southbound on the M1 Princes Motorway or exit eastbound onto Mount Ousley Road adhering to traffic lights.

The project separates southbound heavy vehicles from other southbound traffic exiting at Mount Ousley Road. Heavy vehicles that are over 4.6 metres high will need to exit onto Mount Ousley Road and follow the approved over size over mass vehicle route.

Southbound heavy vehicles that currently need to use the University Avenue roundabout to avoid the height restricted University Avenue bridge will be able to continue to do so.

They will need to take the southbound exit to the interchange and travel via the service road through the University Avenue roundabout and back on to the Motorway.

There are two over height detector systems to be installed for the project. One is in advance of the heavy vehicle bypass to reinforce the message to over height vehicles to exit the motorway via the heavy vehicle bypass lane and use the over height detour. The other over height detector is located prior to the merge of the heavy vehicle bypass lane and the southbound motorway to ensure any over height vehicle that has missed the over height detour are instructed to use the heavy vehicle pull over bay, that will be installed as part of the project, prior to reaching the University Avenue bridge.

Q5 How will northbound light vehicles exiting UoW new north access be safely able to cross to the light vehicle lane across slow moving heavy vehicles in the truck lane/s.

A5 The Mount Ousley interchange, including the northbound entry ramp to the M1 will provide a safer, more efficient way for traffic from Wollongong to access the M1 north to Sydney. Traffic modelling, taking into account the forecast increase in traffic, indicates that the new interchange will improve traffic flow.

There will be two ‘through’ lanes on the northbound lanes on the M1 past the new Mount Ousley interchange and three ‘through’ lanes on the northbound lanes on the M1 north of the new Mount Ousley interchange.

The northbound lane where vehicles enter the motorway from Mount Ousley Road (University of Wollongong) continues north along the M1 for about four kilometres, similar to the existing arrangement. Vehicles will be able to merge into and out of this lane as it continues up Mount Ousley.

Heavy vehicles will be able to continue north on the motorway using the centre lane or they can choose to move into the left lane as they travel north along the motorway

Q6 Where will the Incident Response vehicle/s be located.

A6 Currently incident response vehicles are located in strategic locations to respond to unplanned incidents north and south of Mount Ousley Road as required. There are no proposed changes to current response locations.

As part of the project, space will be allocated adjacent to the new commuter car park to allow an incident response facility to be constructed in the future, should the need arise. Upon completion, the project will facilitate easier access for incident response vehicles through use of the interchange.

Q7 When will an independent expert Road Safety Audit and Report with recommendations be conducted, with appropriate community engagement.

A7 All designs are developed in accordance with Austroads guidelines and Australian Standards. Throughout the design process the design is subject to numerous workshops to ensure the design is safe and fit for purpose. Modelling of outputs, like traffic and noise, is also refined during the design process to ensure the standards and requirements are being met as set out in the Transport for NSW requirements and Australian Standards.

Road safety audits are carried out by independent auditors throughout design and construction.

Q8 When will a thorough review of the RMS2017 REF be carried out, with community engagement, considering significant changes to scope and details by TfNSW since 2023
A8 The project has planning approval for construction. A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the project was completed and placed on public display in 2017 with the project's Submission Report published in April 2018. Following this, an Addendum Review of Environmental Factors was prepared to document the potential environmental impacts of early utility works outside of the original REF proposal area. You can view the REF and Submissions Report on the project website.

During 2023, refinements were made to the scope and design to ensure the project achieve a value for money solution which delivered core project objectives. These refinements were assessed as being consistent with the existing planning approval. Fulton Hogan has been awarded the contract to design and build the Mount Ousley interchange project as approved. Major construction work is now underway.

Q9 What improvements are proposed to enable southbound vehicles exiting the University Ave roundabout to merge safely with fast southbound heavy vehicles on the M1.

A9 Transport is looking into concerns raised regarding this merge.

Appendix 2: The future of the Wesley Uniting Church on the Mall

The Wesley Church is on the Local Heritage Register not the State's Heritage Register. Wollongong Council's submission (attached) to the Parliamentary inquiry into the *Heritage Act 1977* in 2021 mentions St Michael's Cathedral as the only Wollongong church on the State's registry.

The NSW State's Heritage Inventory states: *“This Church is of significance for the local area for historical and aesthetic reasons, for social significance that it has for its congregation, and as a representative of stone church buildings in the area. The building is an important element in the streetscape of Wollongong's main street, interpreting the historical development pattern of the area. It is demonstrative of the evolving history of the Wesleyan/Methodist/Uniting Church congregation. Being an active place of public worship, it continues to be a substantial part of public life in Wollongong. The building makes an important contribution to the streetscape and the site presents a local landmark. The 1871 Organ is also a rare and intact example of a 19 century pipe organs”*

A Parliamentary inquiry into the *Heritage Act 1977* was held in 2021. The inquiry reviewed the effectiveness of the Heritage Act and the NSW heritage regulatory system to consider ways to deliver more effective, relevant, and best-practice approaches to recognise, conserve, re-use and celebrate NSW heritage. The Standing Committee on Social Issues – a committee of the NSW Legislative Council delivered its report on the inquiry into the review of the Heritage Act 1977 on 22 October 2021. The committee's report makes a series of recommendations to improve both the Act itself and its implementation and administration.

The NSW Government is currently developing a new heritage strategy (submissions closed March 2024). It looks to modernise heritage systems and processes, understand the meaning of heritage to the NSW community and address key challenges of heritage now and into the future.

The Strategy will:

- implement the review of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) to ensure its powers and responsibilities meet the needs of coming decades
- examine the s170 Heritage and Conservation Registers of NSW Government agencies and the management of the assets listed on the registers
- examine the interaction between state planning laws, planning policies and the Heritage Act
- review the funding support and incentives for heritage conservation and maintenance.

It is important for the NSW Government to finalise the review into funding support and incentives for heritage conservation and maintenance. The mothballing of the church raises the issue of its protection and restoration and the need for a conservation management plan to ensure the significance of the building is preserved. Measures need to be taken to prevent further damage and loss of cultural heritage.