

ITEM 5 WOLLONGONG HARBOUR MASTERPLAN SUBMISSION

The NSW Department of Industry has released the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan Report, Master Plan background report and Draft community stakeholder consultation report (July 2018) for community consultation. Submissions close on 31 August 2018; however Council has received approval from the Department to provide a response after this date to allow Council consideration.

This report seeks Council's endorsement of a submission to the NSW Department of Industry, commenting on the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan, due to the Department by Friday 7 September 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Note and thank the Department of Industry for the development of the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan and supporting documents in consultation with Council and the Wollongong community.
- 2 Endorse Council's submission on the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan as contained in the body of this report.
- 3 Grant the General Manager authority to finalise the submission and forward it to the NSW Department of Industry by 7 September 2018.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Mike Dowd, Manager Infrastructure Strategy + Planning

Authorised by: Greg Doyle, Director Infrastructure and Works - Connectivity Assets and Liveable City

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

BACKGROUND

Through its Regional Ports Strategy, the NSW Department of Industry has identified Wollongong Harbour as a location where asset renewal in concert with targeted development can invigorate use of the harbour to benefit the population, visitors and the regional economy.

On 16 October 2007 Council resolved to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the NSW Department of Lands (nor Department of Industry) for the cooperative and integrated planning and development of the Wollongong Harbour precinct. The master planning process began in late 2017 and is nearing completion, following input of many local community groups and individuals.

The purpose of the Wollongong Harbour Master Plan is to identify land use opportunities consistent with heritage significance, reservation for port facilities and services and the objectives of the harbour's zoning (IN4 – Working Waterfront).

Moreover, the master plan is intended to provide a vision of possible opportunities within Wollongong Harbour consistent with its heritage, the current use of port facilities and services and the increased recreational activity occurring on the foreshore.

The Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan (the Master Plan) is underpinned by three key documents:

- 1 Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan Report.
- 2 Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan background report.
- 3 Draft Wollongong Harbour Draft community and stakeholder consultation report.

Draft Masterplan Report

The draft master plan explores a future for the harbour that reflects on the past history of the space with a vision to create a contemporary asset that will be a vital part of the life of Wollongong.

Wollongong Harbour's role is changing, as it increasingly becomes a destination to rest and play, as well as a traditional working harbour. The Harbour is a dynamic location that is becoming more popular for recreation than ever before and has over 150 years of maritime industrial history that underpins its character and heritage significance.

The Draft Master Plan reports sets out a vision - based on community feedback – that will guide the future of the harbour and surrounds. The Draft plan envisages that the harbour will continue to provide for a broad range of marine and water-based recreation and tourist activities that respect the history of the site and its intrinsic nature as an open and accessible public space. The Vision set out in the draft Plan is –

“Wollongong Harbour is the active working heart of the city – it is the city’s playground and event space. Marine, tourism and recreation uses will continue to coexist within the harbour, providing activation and economic opportunities consistent with its historical use and purpose.”

Key elements of the Master Plan include –

- A summary of the background and context reviews detailed in the supporting documents, with particular focus on the heritage significance study
- Consolidated constraints and opportunities mapping
- Summarised details of the consultation process and feedback
- The Master Plan – principles and elements
- Implementation Plan

The Master Plan principles used to develop the responses and elements are –

- 1 Scenic Character
- 2 A place to play
- 3 A working harbour
- 4 A place to experience
- 5 Access all areas

Key elements of the Draft Master Plan are highlighted in Figure 1 on the next page and include –

Boardwalks, pontoons and jetties (1, 9a) – new boardwalks that facilitate connection and access throughout the space. Key focal points for improvement include the foreshore adjacent to the existing Co-op building, pontoons walkways improving access to charter vessels and a new boardwalk extending from the central pier to the historical crane pedestal and then to the breakwater lighthouse to form a continuous loop. This boardwalk would then enclose the small beach to create a safe swimming area while still allowing launching of non-motorised watercraft.

Shade (2) – addition of shade trees and shades structures along main pedestrian routes and at select locations on the central pier.

Swimming areas (3) – identified a number of safe swimming zones where all motorised vessels will be excluded, identified with marked floating buoys.

Endeavour Drive loop (4) – explores the option of changing the Endeavour Drive loop to a one-way traffic flow to enable space for additional parallel and angle parking as well as slowing vehicles down in this pedestrian-intensive area.

New kiosk and amenities (5) – New single-story building located on the central pier to house a kiosk/café, showers and toilets and possibly yacht club facilities in lieu of the existing shed at the end of the pier. The central pier is identified as a potential events space as well as providing parking, service and manoeuvring area. Co-locating café and public amenities here supports these uses.

Tourism and interpretive centre (6) – A new building proposed in the corner site below the access road – proposed to house tourist and interpretive centre as well as potentially offices for commercial charter boat operators.

Boat repair and maintenance (7) – the Plan notes that the continuation of boat building and maintenance activities is not dependent on retention of the slipway. In the short term, the Plan proposes maintaining a hard stand area adjacent to the proposed kiosk to cater for these activities and flags the potential for a

mobile boat hoist to provide an alternative to the slipway. In the long term, alternative facilities at Port Kembla and/or Shell Cove are considered as being a more suitable alternative than Wollongong.

Boat ramps and watercraft (8) – upgrade the launch facilities along the northern edge of the central pier to cater for non-motorised water craft. There are no plans for facilities to launch motorised boats.

Fishermen's Co-op Building (9) – in the long term (when the existing building approaches its end of useful life) there is opportunity to redevelop the site and provide a landmark building to capitalise on the site and provide uninterrupted pedestrian access to the waterfront.

Flagstaff Hill Café (10) – proposal to construct a café 'into' the hill to take advantage of the coastline views which is sympathetic to the topography and history of the site.

Governance – noting mixed ownership and responsibilities between Council and various State Government agencies, develop a governance model to provide clear points of contact for coordination and decision-making for events, activities, maintenance, enforcement and leasing.

Water Quality –investigate methods of improving water quality for recreational use within the harbour by addressing Council managed storm water outlets into the harbour.



Figure 1 – Masterplan Elements (Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan, pg 27)

Draft Masterplan Background Report

The Background report provides details of the purpose of the project together with the research and background material used in developing the Masterplan. Key components of this report include –

- Historical review
- Regional and local context, including understanding current uses and activities
- Regulatory documents and constraints
- Related strategic documents – this included a review of key Council strategies including -
 - Blue Mile Masterplan Vision
 - A City for People – Wollongong Public Spaces Public Life
- Urban design analysis, looking at paths, nodes and edges
- Technical assessments including a review of commercial uses and heritage considerations.
- Consolidated constraints mapping

The report also presents the consolidated opportunities and options developed as a result of this analysis that were then presented for community feedback through the engagement processes.

Draft community and stakeholder consultation report

This report sets out the consultation and community engagement processes followed in developing the draft plan as well as collating feedback provided by stakeholders.

In summary consultation involved stakeholder forums, online surveys, formal and pop-up consultation events held in late 2017, as well as targeted Councillor workshops and Government stakeholder interviews.

- 1 Key themes identified through the consultation process were –
- 2 There is a lot right about the harbour
- 3 Support for continuation of the working harbour uses
- 4 More public amenities
- 5 More opportunities for water-based recreation
- 6 Heritage and signage
- 7 Improved access
- 8 Existing harbour infrastructure
- 9 Maintenance and management issues
- 10 Major attractions and events

The consultation report concludes that there is a prevailing consensus for maintaining the character of the harbour, including the heritage working harbour elements within it, as well as promoting the idea of ‘more of the same’ by introducing elements that complement, enhance or preserve the existing elements of the harbour.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Council make a submission to the NSW Department of Industry in response to the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan, with the following key messages.

- 1 Council is grateful for the collaborative approach that the Department and its consultants have taken with Council and the community in the development of the Draft Master Plan.
- 2 The Draft Wollongong Harbour Masterplan generally aligns with Council's associated strategies and plans for the area, specifically the blue Mile Masterplan and A City for People. Feedback has been sought on the Draft Master Plan from Councillors and internal staff with the response generally being positive.
- 3 Council echoes and supports the over-riding community sentiment that future plans for the harbour must maintain the character of the harbour, including the heritage working harbour elements within it, as well as promoting the idea of ‘more of the same’ by introducing elements that complement, enhance or preserve the existing elements of the harbour.
- 4 Council supports the proposed Vision for the masterplan and considers that the principles used to guide the development of options and master plan elements are appropriate for the site.

- 5 Council supports the vast majority of proposed Master Plan elements and is particularly supportive of the proposed pedestrian access improvements and improvements to the Central Pier, including long term plans to utilise alternative sites for boat building and maintenance.
- 6 Council has concerns about the viability of a number of proposed elements and asks that these items be reconsidered or amended as appropriate in consultation with Council. These elements are –
 - a Construction of a Café/Kiosk under Flagstaff Hill – Item (10) in Draft Master Plan.

Provision of new kiosk/café facilities on the central pier, together with the existing offerings in Belmore Basin, the Co-op building and potentially adjacent to the Continental Pool are considered to be more than sufficient to service this precinct. In addition, construction of any facility or structure on or under Flagstaff Hill is likely to have significant environmental and heritage impacts that would be unlikely to receive community support.
 - b Construction of a new boardwalk from the western end of the central pier to the lighthouse breakwater – Item (1).

Council supports the addition of improved pedestrian amenities and foreshore access around the harbour precinct, however questions the rationale for this boardwalk that would otherwise block off water-craft access. Alternative alignments could be considered to provide improved access and use of the historic crane pedestal without impeding vessel access to the central pier access launching sites.
- 7 Council supports the long term plan to redevelop the Co-op building, noting that extensive consultation with the existing commercial lease holders, the community and Council will be required to ensure that the proposed redevelopment is appropriate for this iconic location.
- 8 Council acknowledges the principles behind the proposed actions identified as being Council responsibility in the Draft Implementation Plan, and is prepared to undertake further investigations on these matters in line with Council priorities; these actions being –
 - a Endeavour Drive loop – consideration of traffic flow and parking improvements.
 - b Continental Baths Extension – consideration of entrance and public amenities improvements.
 - c Brighton beach Toilets – consideration of improved public amenities and showers.
- 9 As noted above, Council is not supportive of the proposal for a café under Flagstaff Hill and asks that this action be removed from the Implementation Plan.
- 10 Council supports the need for a defined Governance Structure for ongoing management of the Harbour and implementation of the Master Plan. Council is committed to work with the NSW Department of Industry as well as Harbour users to establish a suitable framework to this end.
- 11 Recognising that the Draft Master Plan does not identify funding sources or allocations, Council seeks advice from the State Government on the proposed funding model for implementation of the Draft Master Plan. Council would welcome the opportunity to have a delegation meet with the relevant Ministers to further discuss and identify potential funding sources for implementation of the Master Plan.
- 12 Council understands that staff feedback on the preliminary draft Master Plan provided to the Department in May 2018 prior to public exhibition, although not being taken into account in the exhibited documents, will be considered as part of the review of submissions made following exhibition. To this end, a copy of this previous Council staff feedback is provided below –

Staff feedback provided in May 2018 -

Overall Council is very supportive of the proposed Masterplan and implementation plan, particularly the positive focus on balancing the historic and working harbour context with potential improved recreational and controlled-commercial opportunities.

Following are some specific comments from various sections of Council.

- Council is developing a Foreshore Parking Strategy to assess existing capacity and options to address future needs along Wollongong's foreshore including a review of car parking in this precinct. With the exception of the Central Pier Deck and the facing share-way, preliminary surveys indicate

that all areas in the precinct are at or above 85% capacity. It is not clear from the proposed masterplan what the net loss or gain in parking numbers is. Given the proposed addition of up to 3 new built facilities plus multiple new activities, management of changes in demand for parking will need to carefully manage through the implementation process.

- Some or all of the proposed works may be able to be carried out under ISEPP as development without consent; it will be up to the proponent to determine. Notwithstanding, the works would be captured by Clause 57(1) of the Heritage Act 1977, and therefore separate approval would be required under that Act. The proponent will need to undertake their own investigations in this regard as this process is separate from Council where development consent is not required.
- In terms of the decontamination & amelioration of old work shed area mentioned on sheet 1, under Clause 9 of SEPP 55, it appears that the works would fall under Category 1 because the site is located within the coastal zone (clause g(eXi)) and because it's within a heritage area (clause g(eXii)). Ordinarily development consent would be required for category 1 works. However, ISEPP prevails over any other environmental planning instrument (under clause 1 of the ISEPP), and therefore the above ISEPP advice applies.
- The matters for consideration below are applicable whether the development is proposed to be carried out without consent or under a DA. The key issues in planning terms for the proposed decontamination & amelioration include:
 - Dilapidation surveys should be carried out prior to work commencing and afterwards to determine potential damage to the surrounding infrastructure during the works.
 - Upon completion of the remediation works, Council would require a copy of the Validation Report within 60 days of the work being undertaken.
 - If on-site soil treatment is proposed, it is advisable to undertake extensive consultation/notification with the surrounding properties and affected members of the public.
 - The proponent should liaise with the EPA in the early stages of the project to ensure the correct process is being followed and EPA's expectations are met
 - The key issues in planning terms particularly for the proposed construction of the three buildings include:
 - Appropriateness of location and siting of buildings
 - Assessment of the proposed building envelopes and any impacts on the heritage significance of the site and associated open space will be paramount.
 - Form & scale of proposal
 - Any new development should not unreasonably reduce public views of the heritage setting, should not visually dominate the site and should relate to the character and form of the heritage item.
 - All proposed uses within the buildings would need to be characterised separately to ensure permissibility. It is unlikely that Council would accept the use of the heritage incentive clause to justify any prohibited use on the land if those uses would have significant adverse effects on the amenity of the surrounding area.
 - Heritage implications arising from the location/design.
 - Clarify, define and render more picturesque the spaces with sensitive architectural treatment, scale and proportions making a positive contribution to the area and providing much-needed amenities to the community. Any new development should sit comfortably in a view that embraces both the old and the new. Any new development should not unreasonably reduce public views of the heritage setting, should not visually dominate the site and should relate to the character and form of the heritage item
 - Parking; the proposal does not appear to provide any car parking for buildings. In the absence of any other justification, it is unlikely that Council would accept the use of the heritage incentive clause to justify a shortfall. Reduced parking provision should only be considered if supported by a Car Parking and Traffic Impact Assessment Study. The study would need to provide detailed information and include the cumulative uses on site including any other intended intensification or expansion above the existing operations on-site. Alternatively, any unjustified parking shortfall could be remedied via monetary contributions under a VPA.
 - A Concept Stormwater Drainage Plan should be prepared by a suitably qualified civil engineer in accordance with Chapter E14 – Stormwater Management of WDCP 2009 and incorporate water sensitive urban design principles.
 - The proposal will need to cater for waste storage and collection.

- The Wollongong CZMP (2017) does not have any particular management actions for this area, but does identify “coastal geotechnical risk” and “permanent inundation and wave overtopping” as issues to consider, especially with projected climate change and sea level rise. The main reason why this plan has not dealt with this area in detail is because Council had already prepared a CZMP in 2007 focussing just on Wollongong Harbour and Belmore Basin (see attached, if interested). The 2007 plan suggests that the breakwaters are potentially exposed to large breaking wave conditions and their construction and orientation has affected the profile of Brighton Beach over time. I would consider therefore that the masterplan for the site should consider the impact of coastal processes and hazards in its proposed design features. Some of the matters for consideration are:
- The design life of the proposed structures and the impact of sea level rise and climate change on these developments over this time (consider potential permanent inundation, wave overtopping and geotechnical risk; may require an updated coastal processes and hazards study by DoI)
- The extension of the breakwaters and any potential impact on Brighton Beach and the beach in the north near the lighthouse
- The presence of a major stormwater outlet in the middle of Brighton Beach and the implications of this for the general amenity of the area.
- Matters for consideration from a heritage perspective include –
- Communication relating to the Draft Wollongong Harbour Masterplan will need to include reference to the Department’s overarching objectives for this and other harbour lands. Also need to articulate how the background analysis report has informed the masterplan
- The masterplan involves a large amount of Council owned land (Brighton Lawn, Flagstaff Hill etc). Governance and funding arrangement to deliver the plan in partnership with Wollongong City Council will need to be articulated?
- Wollongong Council developed a Position Statement in 2008 articulating its objectives for the Harbour precinct (Appendix A). The position statement outlines development principles adopted by Council. Any masterplan for this area should align with these principles. Specific departures from these principles include:
- The inclusion of significant development on Flagstaff Hill (tourist facility), which is to remain free from significant development and be preserved for passive recreation.
- The inclusion of shade structures in the line of sight from the Old Courthouse to the lighthouse and the Harbour.
- The new decking proposed over the remaining convict sea-wall, which will conceal, rather than ‘conserve and showcase’ its heritage value.
- The Draft Consultation Report included strong support for maintaining the existing character of the Harbour. The feedback also outlined the community’s desire to retain the working functions of the harbour and at the same time acknowledges that most of the respondents visit the Harbour for recreational purposes. This highlights what appears to be a tension throughout the various phases of the masterplan, between the Harbour’s working functions and its recreational uses. This tension is most visible in the proposed works to the eastern cove where recreational swimming, small craft, charter boating, fishing boats and markets, yacht facilities and club, and restaurants and cafes are all proposed. The multiple options given for the use of the new facilities highlights the need to define a clear strategic intent for the harbour and this specific area.
- The lower rock shelf including the nun’s pool and early convict built baths appears to be restricted from public access in the masterplan. These sites are of great historic value and their conservation and interpretation should be included in this masterplan
- The overall intensification of uses and additional built structures is not supported from a heritage perspective. A strategic, consolidated approach that preserves passive recreation spaces and significant views is recommended.
- Detailed observations and opinions regarding each implementation action were provided in a separate table at the time of the May 2018 advice and are not repeated here.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation by the Department of Industry in developing the Draft Masterplan involved stakeholder forums, online surveys, formal and pop-up consultation events held in late 2017, as well as targeted Councillor workshops and Government stakeholder interviews.

Opportunity for elected Councillors to contribute to this report and draft submission was provided at a drop-in workshop on 23 August 2018. Comments from internal staff have also been sought through preparation of this report.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 goal “Recognise and value heritage”. It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the “Land Use Planning” and “Infrastructure Planning & Support” Service Plans 2018-19.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications on Council from the adoption of the Masterplan. Any works identified in the Plan that would be Council responsibilities would be subject to Council determining priorities and allocating available budgets accordingly.

CONCLUSION

The NSW Department of Industry has released the Draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan Report, Master Plan background report and Draft community stakeholder consultation report (July 2018) for community consultation. Submissions close on 31 August 2018; however Council has received approval from the Department to provide a response after this date to allow Council consideration.

This report and submission on the draft Wollongong Harbour Master Plan provides Council the final opportunity to put forth its views on the State Government’s vision for the future of Wollongong Harbour. The submission is due to the Department by Friday 7 September 2018.