



BUSINESS PAPER

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

To be held at 6:00 pm on

Monday 12 September 2022

Council Chambers, Level 10,
Council Administration Building, 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong

(Note: In accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors will be able to attend and participate in this meeting via electronic means)

Order of Business

- 1 Opening Meeting
- 2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians
- 3 Civic Prayer
- 4 Apologies and Applications for Leave of Absence by Councillors
- 5 Confirmation of Minutes of Ordinary Council Meeting
- 6 Confirmation of Minutes of Extraordinary Ordinary Council Meeting
- 7 Conflicts of Interest
- 8 Petitions and Presentations
- 9 Confirmation of Minutes of Council Committee Meeting
- 10 Public Access Forum
- 11 Call of the Agenda
- 12 Lord Mayoral Minute
- 13 Urgent Items
- 14 Reports to Council
- 15 Reports of Committees
- 16 Items Laid on the Table
- 17 Notices of Motions(s)/Questions with Notice
- 18 Notice of Rescission Motion
- 19 Confidential Business
- 20 Conclusion of Meeting

Members

Lord Mayor –
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM (Chair)
Deputy Lord Mayor –
Councillor Tania Brown
Councillor Ann Martin
Councillor Cameron Walters
Councillor Cath Blakey
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Dom Figliomeni
Councillor Elisha Aitken
Councillor Janice Kershaw
Councillor John Dorahy
Councillor Linda Campbell
Councillor Mithra Cox
Councillor Richard Martin

QUORUM – 7 MEMBERS TO BE PRESENT

Statement of Ethical Obligations

In accordance with clause 3.23 of the Model Code of Meeting Practice, released by the NSW Office of Local Government, Councillors are reminded of their Oath or Affirmation of Office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest

OATH OR AFFIRMATION OF OFFICE

The Oath or Affirmation is taken by each Councillor whereby they swear or declare to undertake the duties of the office of councillor in the best interests of the people of Wollongong and Wollongong City Council and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All Councillors must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at Council meetings in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting will be suspended or terminated for the time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by Council, or at any time during which Council is voting on the matter.

Councillors should ensure that they are familiar with Parts 4 and 5 of the Wollongong City Council **Code of Conduct for Councillors** in relation to their obligations to declare and manage conflicts of interests.

Staff should also be mindful of their obligations under the Wollongong City Council **Code of Conduct for Staff** when preparing reports and answering questions during meetings of Council.

INDEX

	PAGE NO.
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Council 29/08/2022	1
ITEM A Lord Mayoral Minute - Freedom of Entry for Number 314 (City of Wollongong) Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets.....	9
ITEM B Lord Mayoral Minute - Professor Justin Yerbury AM - Keys to the City	10
ITEM 1 Public Exhibition - Draft Wollongong DCP 2009 Site-Specific Chapter - Former Port Kembla Public School Site, Military Road, Port Kembla	11
ITEM 2 Public Exhibition - Draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy	34
ITEM 3 Post Exhibition: Review of Alcohol Free Zones	200
ITEM 4 Public Exhibition - Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027	224
ITEM 5 Public Exhibition - Draft Stuart and Galvin Park Landscape Masterplan	275
ITEM 6 Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 - Opt-In Legislation.....	359
ITEM 7 West Dapto Review Committee Charter	397
ITEM 8 Policy Review: Community Facilities.....	403
ITEM 9 Policy Review: Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Council Policy.....	412
ITEM 10 Policy Review: Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy.....	428
ITEM 11 Policy Review: Smoke-Free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy	443
ITEM 12 Policy Review: Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Council Policy	448
ITEM 13 Tender T1000060 - Refurbishment of Otford Community Centre	469
ITEM 14 Tender T1000066 - Grand Pacific Walk - Clifton School Parade to 347 Lawrence Hargrave Drive - Parking, Footpath, Boardwalk and Observation Deck Construction	474
ITEM 15 July 2022 Financials.....	479
ITEM 16 Statement of Investment - July 2022.....	490
ITEM 17 Notice of Motion - Councillor Linda Campbell - Council's Community Flag Policy.....	494

CLOSED SESSION

ITEM C1 CONFIDENTIAL: General Manager's Annual Performance Review – Report by Performance Review Committee

Reason for Confidentiality

This report recommends that this item be considered in Closed Session to the exclusion of the press and public in accordance with Section 10A(2)(a) of the Local Government Act, 1993, as the report contains personnel matters concerning particular individuals.

MINUTES

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

at 6:00 pm

Monday 29 August 2022

Present

Lord Mayor – Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM (in the Chair)

Deputy Lord Mayor – Councillor Tania Brown

Councillor Ann Martin

Councillor Cameron Walters

Councillor Cath Blakey

Councillor David Brown

Councillor Dom Figliomeni

Councillor Elisha Aitken

Councillor Janice Kershaw

Councillor John Dorahy

Councillor Linda Campbell

Councillor Mithra Cox

Councillor Richard Martin

In Attendance

General Manager

Director Infrastructure + Works, Connectivity Assets + Liveable City

Director Planning + Environment, Future City + Neighbourhoods

Director Corporate Services, Connected + Engaged City (Acting)

Director Community Services, Creative + Innovative City

Chief Financial Officer (Acting)

Chief Information Officer

Manager Governance + Customer Service

Manager Property + Recreation (attended remotely)

Manager City Strategy

Manager Regulation + Enforcement (attended remotely)

Manager Project Delivery

Manager Open Space + Environmental Services

Manager Community Cultural + Economic Development

Manager Library + Community Services (attended remotely)

Land Use Planning Manager

Greg Doyle

Joanne Page

Linda Davis

Jeff Reilly

Kerry Hunt

Steph Hummerston

Ingrid McAlpin

Todd Hopwood

Lucielle Power

Chris Stewart

Corey Stoneham

Glenn Whittaker

Paul Tracey

Sue Savage

Jenny Thompson

David Green

Note: In accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice, participants in the meeting can participate via electronic means. Those who participated via electronic means are indicated in the attendance section of the Minutes.

PAGE NO.

ITEM 1	Public Exhibition - Draft Wollongong Housing Strategy	1
ITEM 2	Post Exhibition - City-Wide Development Contributions Plan 2022	2
ITEM 3	Draft Quarterly Review Statement June 2022.....	2
ITEM 4	West Dapto Lands - 231 Sheaffes Road, Dombarton.....	2
ITEM 5	Policy Review - Wollongong City Tourist Parks Discounting and Promotions Policy.....	3
ITEM 6	Public Exhibition - Policy Review: draft CCTV Code of Practice and Register	3
ITEM 7	Post Exhibition - Review of Compliance and Enforcement Policy	3
ITEM 8	Council Meeting Dates 2023	3
ITEM 9	Repair of Failed Road Embankment and Associated Works at Harry Graham Drive, Mount Kembla	3
ITEM 10	Tender T1000056 - Security and After-Hours Support Services at Council's Tourist Parks	4
ITEM 11	Preliminary and Pre-Audit Financials - 30 June 2022	4
ITEM 12	Statement of Investment - June 2022	4
ITEM 13	Notice of Motion - Councillor Tania Brown - Electric Vehicle Fleet	4
ITEM 14	Notice of Motion - Councillor Cath Blakey - Wollongong Bushcare	5

PETITION – SAVE CORRIMAL FIRST FENCED OFF DOG LEASH PARK

Councillor Bradbery tabled a petition containing 403 signatures requesting Council progress the off leash dog park at the Corrimal Coke Works site.

PETITION – HELENSBURGH LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Bradbery tabled a petition containing 267 signatures requesting Council approve the building of the new Helensburgh Library and Community Centre before 2024.

PETITION – BUSHCARE MAINTENANCE SURVEY

Councillor Blakey proposed to table a survey from Bushcare Maintenance containing 44 respondents. The Lord Mayor, Councillor Bradbery ruled that the tabling of the survey was out of order as the Code of Meeting Practice only allows the tabling of petitions.

A MOTION OF DISSENT from the ruling of the Lord Mayor that tabling of the survey was out of order was MOVED by Councillor Cox seconded Councillor Blakey. The MOTION OF DISSENT on being PUT to the VOTE was LOST.

In favour Councillors Cox, Blakey, Aitken

Against Councillors Kershaw, R Martin, D Brown, T Brown, A Martin, Campbell, Walters, Dorahy, Figliomeni and Bradbery

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 8 AUGUST 2022

711 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Walters that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday, 8 August 2022 (a copy having been circulated to Councillors) be taken as read and confirmed.

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM

ITEM	TITLE	NAME OF SPEAKER
14	Notice of Motion – Councillor Cath Blakey - Wollongong Bushcare	Saoirse Aherne Illawarra Intrepid Landcare For Recommendation
14	Notice of Motion – Councillor Cath Blakey - Wollongong Bushcare	Neil McLaren Landcare Illawarra For Recommendation
Non-Agenda Item	Shared Path Renewal at Pioneer Drive to Woonona Beach (Blue Lagoon)	John Croker
Non-Agenda Item	Tree Preservation – The Need to Improve Outcomes in the Wollongong City Council Area	Dr Caroline Colton

- 712 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Walters that all speakers be thanked for their presentation and invited to table their notes.

CALL OF THE AGENDA

- 713 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that the staff recommendations for Items 2, 5 and 7-12 inclusive be adopted as a block.

DEPARTURE OF COUNCILLOR

During debate and prior to voting on Item 1, Councillor Cox departed and returned to the meeting, the time being from 7:01 pm to 7:02 pm.

ITEM 1 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT WOLLONGONG HOUSING STRATEGY

- 714 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that the draft Wollongong Housing Strategy be exhibited for community and stakeholder input for a minimum of eight (8) weeks, with an additional point added to Section 5 c ii 'Social Housing' of the draft Housing Strategy – "Collaboration include agreement in principle to resolve the tenure of 6-8 Grandview Parade, Lake Heights and that the zoning of this property be considered for inclusion in one of the proposed draft planning proposals to implement the Housing Strategy."

Variation The variation moved by Councillor A Martin (an additional point be added to Section 5 c ii 'Social Housing' of the draft Housing Strategy – "Collaboration include agreement in principle to resolve the tenure of 6-8 Grandview Parade, Lake Heights and that the zoning of this property be considered for inclusion in one of the proposed draft planning proposals to implement the Housing Strategy") was accepted by the mover and seconder.

ITEM 2 - POST EXHIBITION - CITY-WIDE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN 2022

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that the Wollongong City-Wide Development Contributions Plan (2022) be adopted.

ITEM 3 - DRAFT QUARTERLY REVIEW STATEMENT JUNE 2022

- 715 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Cox seconded Councillor R Martin the draft Quarterly Review Statement June 2022 be adopted.

DEPARTURE OF COUNCILLOR

During debate and prior to voting on Item 4, Councillor R Martin departed and returned to the meeting, the time being from 7:41 pm to 7:42 pm.

DEPARTURE OF COUNCILLOR

During debate and prior to voting on Item 4, Councillor Blakey departed and returned to the meeting, the time being from 7:48 pm to 7:51 pm.

ITEM 4 - WEST DAPTO LANDS - 231 SHEAFFES ROAD, DOMBARTON

716 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that -

- 1 Council resolves to dispose of the property known as 231 Sheaffes Road, Dombarton, being Lot 23 DP 790915 as proposed by this report.
- 2 Council register a positive public covenant on the property known as 231 Sheaffes Road, Dombarton, being Lot 23 DP 790915 prior to sale in relation to heritage obligations on the site.
- 3 The net proceeds of the sale be allocated to social, recreational and cultural amenities in the West Dapto release area.
- 4 Council resolves to rescind previous resolutions in relation to the property known as 231 Sheaffes Road, Dombarton to the extent that they have not been enacted.
- 5 The General Manager be authorised to appoint an independent (external) probity advisor to provide advice and oversight in relation to the sales process to ensure probity requirements are met.
- 6 The General Manager be authorised to approve the sales strategy, negotiations and final sale price relating to the disposal of the property known as 231 Sheaffes Road, Dombarton, being Lot 23 DP 790915.
- 7 A confidential briefing be provided to Councillors prior to exchanging contracts with a potential purchaser to provide an update on the sales campaign and proposed sale terms.
- 8 The General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation to give effect to this resolution.
- 9 Council grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on all documents relevant to this matter, should it be required to give effect to this resolution.

In favour
Against

Councillors Kershaw, R Martin, D Brown, T Brown, A Martin, Campbell, Aitken, Walters, Dorahy, Figliomeni and Bradbery
Councillors Cox, Blakey

ITEM 5 - POLICY REVIEW - WOLLONGONG CITY TOURIST PARKS DISCOUNTING AND PROMOTIONS POLICY

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that Council adopt the revised Wollongong City Council Tourist Parks Discounting and Promotions Policy.

DEPARTURE OF COUNCILLOR

During debate and prior to voting on Item 6 Councillor T Brown departed and returned to the meeting, the time being from 7:55 pm to 7:55 pm.

DEPARTURE OF COUNCILLOR

During debate and prior to voting on Item 6, Councillor Aitken departed and returned to the meeting, the time being from 7:56 pm to 7:58 pm.

ITEM 6 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION - POLICY REVIEW: DRAFT CCTV CODE OF PRACTICE AND REGISTER

717 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Cox seconded Councillor D Brown that -

- 1 Council endorse the draft CCTV Code of Practice and CCTV Register for public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.
- 2 The draft CCTV Code of Practice and CCTV Register be reported back to Council following public exhibition.

ITEM 7 - POST EXHIBITION - REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that the Compliance and Enforcement Policy be adopted.

ITEM 8 - COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2023

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that Council adopt the Ordinary Council Meeting dates for 2023 as detailed in this report.

ITEM 9 - REPAIR OF FAILED ROAD EMBANKMENT AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT HARRY GRAHAM DRIVE, MOUNT KEMBLA

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that Council receive the report on the procurement process followed and note the engagement of Abergeldie Complex Infrastructure in the sum of \$2,241,475.20 (Inc GST) for the repair of failed road embankment and associated works at Harry Graham Drive Mt Kembla.

ITEM 10 - TENDER T1000056 - SECURITY AND AFTER-HOURS SUPPORT SERVICES AT COUNCIL'S TOURIST PARKS

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that Council -

- 1 In accordance with Section 178(1)(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council accept the tender of Insight Security Australia Pty Ltd for the provision of security and after-hours support services at Councils tourist parks.
- 2 Award the contract for an initial term of three years with one three-year optional extension, exercisable solely at the discretion of Council for a maximum term of six (6) years.
- 3 Delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise and execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.
- 4 Grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 11 - PRELIMINARY AND PRE-AUDIT FINANCIALS - 30 JUNE 2022

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that the pre-audit financials be received and noted.

ITEM 12 - STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT - JUNE 2022

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 713)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor T Brown that Council receive the Statement of Investment for June 2022.

ITEM 13 - NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR TANIA BROWN - ELECTRIC VEHICLE FLEET

718 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor T Brown seconded Councillor A Martin that –

Recognising that within the adopted Climate Change Mitigation Plan, Council committed to upgrading the fleet of vehicles to hybrid and electric cars, and to pursue the installation of public electric vehicle charging stations across the city, Council –

- 1 An update by way of an Information Note be provided by 1 November, on progress in implementing upgrades to Council's vehicular fleet on installation and plans for additional public electric vehicle charging stations.
- 2 The Information Note to include -
 - a advice on progress to include Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) in the design brief for all new significant Council buildings, and
 - b following close of feedback (1 July) on the Climate Friendly Planning Framework Discussion Paper, whether consideration was given to updating planning controls to include EVCI in significant retail, commercial, industrial, and high-density housing projects.

ITEM 14 - NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR CATH BLAKEY - WOLLONGONG BUSHCARE

719 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Blakey seconded Councillor Cox that Council –

- 1 Note that Bushcare, Dunecare, Landcare and Fire Ready volunteers make an important contribution within the community and to our environment.
- 2 Recognise that the Wollongong Local Government Area includes over 60 Bushcare and Dunecare group, 8 Fire Ready groups and 8 Landcare groups. The number of volunteer Bushcare and Dunecare groups supported by Council has recently been capped, with any new enquiries being directed to existing groups.
- 3 Congratulate Growing Illawarra Natives on their new WEA course "Wollongong's Wonderful Plants!".
- 4 Write to the Federal and State Environment Ministers, local members, Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra, and Parliamentary Friends of Landcare chair, noting the decline in funding to Landcare Illawarra and advocating for a restoration of funding for Landcare."

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 8:29PM

Confirmed as a correct record of proceedings at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the City of Wollongong held on Monday 12 September 2022.

Chairperson

ITEM A

LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - FREEDOM OF ENTRY FOR NUMBER 314 (CITY OF WOLLONGONG) SQUADRON AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS

From time-to-time Council may grant Freedom of Entry to the City to a military unit. Freedom of Entry to the City of Wollongong should be restricted to Australian Military and civilian units which have an attachment to the City of Wollongong. Approval to grant Freedom of Entry is by resolution of Council.

In 2021 the Royal Australian Air Force marked 100 years of service to Australia. It was the 80th year of what is now known as Australian Air Force Cadets and 60 years of Australian Air Force Cadets presence in Wollongong. Plans to mark the anniversary in 2021 were disrupted by Covid. Granting Freedom of Entry to Number 314 (City of Wollongong) Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets is an appropriate means to recognise the contribution the Royal Australian Airforce and the Cadet movement has made to Australia

RECOMMENDATION

Wollongong City Council grant Freedom of Entry to Number 314 (City of Wollongong) Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets on Saturday 26 November 2022.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

ITEM B LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - PROFESSOR JUSTIN YERBURY AM - KEYS TO THE CITY

Professor Justin Yerbury AM is a molecular biologist who leads a research team that has challenged prevailing thought about the pathology of Motor Neuron Disease (MND), a degenerative disease with no known cure. His discoveries about the underlying molecular principles of the disease, made since he was diagnosed with MND in 2016, are driving new research into the causes of cell dysfunction. He holds the position of Professor in Neurodegenerative Disease at the University of Wollongong.

Professor Yerbury was awarded Wollongong's Citizen of the Year in the Australia Day Awards in 2019 and was made a member of the Order of Australia in the 2020 Australia Day Honours for "significant service to education and research in the field of biological sciences" He was awarded University of New South Wales Eureka Prize for Scientific Research in 2022.

Council may bestow this honour and recognition by awarding the Keys to the City to individuals who have given a significant high level of long-term service, inspiration and esteem to the community of Wollongong over and above the criteria outlined for the Australia Day Awards.

The research undertaken by Professor Yerbury and his team has implications for the wellbeing and future health outcomes for humanity. Professor Yerbury's scientific achievements, his inspiration and advocacy for those with disabilities and his tenacity of spirit, in spite of his own physical disabilities, make him a worthy recipient of the Keys to the City.

RECOMMENDATION

I therefore recommend that Wollongong City Council bestow the honour of the Keys to the City on Professor Justin Yerbury AM in recognition of his significant achievements in scientific research of Motor Neuron Disease and cellular dysfunction at the University of Wollongong.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

ITEM 1

PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT WOLLONGONG DCP 2009 SITE-SPECIFIC CHAPTER - FORMER PORT KEMBLA PUBLIC SCHOOL SITE, MILITARY ROAD, PORT KEMBLA

On 10 May 2021, Council resolved to support the preparation of a draft Planning Proposal for the former Port Kembla Public School Site and seek a Gateway Determination to enable exhibition. A Gateway Determination was granted on 19 December 2021 for exhibition of the draft Planning Proposal subject to preparation of a site-specific Development Control Plan (DCP) 2009 Chapter.

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council resolution to place a draft site-specific DCP Chapter for the site on exhibition, in conjunction with the draft Planning Proposal, to allow community and stakeholder feedback.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The draft site-specific Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter Former Port Kembla Public School Site be exhibited for a minimum period of 28 days, in conjunction with the draft Planning Proposal for Lot 1 DP 811699 Military Road, Port Kembla.
- 2 A post exhibition report be prepared outlining the feedback received, for Council to consider.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

Authorised by: Linda Davis, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Location Map
- 2 Draft DCP Chapter: Former Port Kembla Public School Site

BACKGROUND

Subject Site

Lot 1 DP 811699 Military Road, Port Kembla was previously occupied by the Port Kembla Public School from 1890 until 1999. The site is bounded by Military Road, Marne Street, Reservoir Street and Electrolytic Street, has an area of 2.195 hectares. The site is somewhat trapezoidal in shape with a width of 97m and a length of 301m along Military Road and 143m along Reservoir Street (Attachment 1).

The site slopes to both the north and the south, from a crest that runs from near Third Avenue to Marne Street / Reservoir Street. The elevation at the crest is 33m above sea level, sloping down to 28m at Marne Street / Military Road and to 26m at Electrolytic Street. At 33m above sea level, the site has views in all directions. To the west, the site looks over Port Kembla and Warrawong to the escarpment. It captures views of the ocean to the east, and Hill 60 to the south.

The site is located to the south of the former Port Kembla Copper (PKC) site zoned IN3 Heavy Industrial, and to the east of the Port Kembla Town Centre zoned B2 Local Centre. To the south and east of the site is low density residential development zoned R2 Low Density Residential with a 9m height limit. Land on the western side of Military Road north of Church Street is zoned IN2 Light Industry. There is a strip of RE2 Private Recreation zoned land separating the Residential R2 land along Marne Street from the Heavy Industry zoned land.

The site adjoins land covered by the State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Transport and Infrastructure 2021 – Chapter 5 Three Ports, however is not subject to any of the SEPP provisions.

The former Port Kembla Public School site has social and cultural value as the school site and buildings served an important function in the community for more than 100 years. All structures have been demolished however evidence of the former use remain (i.e. footings, concrete paths etc).

Council Resolutions to Date

On 28 May 2018, Council considered a request to prepare a draft Planning Proposal to rezone the site to permit residential development. Council resolved to prepare a draft Planning Proposal to progress the rezoning request.

In November 2018, the (then) NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment advised that it would not issue a Gateway Determination to allow the proposal to progress to exhibition. The Department considered that the future expansion of the Port of Port Kembla (proposed to be 24 hours/day, seven days/week) would result in increased noise, dust, odour, traffic, visual, hazard/risk issues and other amenity impacts that would be unlikely to be tolerated by incoming residents and was concerned this could threaten future industrial development within the Port.

On 20 July 2020, in response to the Department's decision, the applicant submitted a revised Concept Plan and draft Planning Proposal request, supported by the following additional studies -

- Urban Design Analysis Report (Studio GL July 2020).
- Acoustic Feasibility Study (Wilkinson Murray July 2020).

On 10 May 2021, Council considered a report outlining a revised draft Planning Proposal request prepared to address the concerns raised by the Department. The Council report also discussed recommendations made by the Wollongong Local Planning Panel (WLPP) that the proposed building heights and floor space ratios be reduced. Council resolved to support the preparation of a revised draft Planning Proposal for the site and seek a Gateway Determination to enable exhibition, as outlined below -

- 1 A revised draft Planning Proposal be prepared to amend the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 for Lot 1 DP811699 Military Road, Port Kembla (the former Port Kembla Public School site) to enable medium density residential development, including -
 - a Rezone the southern part of the site (majority) from B4 Mixed Use to R3 Medium Density Residential;
 - b Rezone the northern point of the site from B4 Mixed Use to RE2 Private Recreation;
 - c The Floor Space Ratio of 0.5:1 be retained on the site;
 - d The Height of Buildings be increased to 11m on the proposed R3 Medium Density Residential land, excluding the frontage to Marne Street and Reservoir Street, which is to remain at 9m;
 - e Amend the Key Site Map to identify the site as a Key Site under Clause 7.18 Design Excellence;
 - f Delete clause 7.17 Former Port Kembla School – which enabled the now demolished school building to be used for tourist and visitor accommodation;
 - g At least 5% of the proposed dwellings be made available for Affordable Rental Housing through a Planning Agreement with details of the proposed management arrangements of the dwellings and proposed housing needs sector to be targeted.
- 2 The draft Planning Proposal be referred to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for a Gateway determination to enable a minimum exhibition period of 28 days.
- 3 Should a Gateway determination be issued, consultation be undertaken with the following agencies and stakeholders during public exhibition -
 - a EPA;
 - b NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment – Environment, Energy and Science;
 - c Department of Premier & Cabinet – Heritage;
 - d NSW Heritage Council;

- e Endeavour Energy;
 - f Transport for NSW – Roads and Maritime Services;
 - g Sydney Water;
 - h Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council; and
 - i NSW Ports.
- 4 The applicant prepare a Heritage Interpretation Management Strategy which is to comprise of the following and will inform the design guidelines of the site, and which is to be exhibited with the draft Planning Proposal -
- i Key views and site lines into and out of the site;
 - ii Historic built form locations and building siting, access points etc;
 - iii Social History of the site and the significance of past debates over conflicts with adjacent industrial development and the school and school activism in this space which eventually led to the relocation of the school;
 - iv The role of the school in providing education to the local Aboriginal community;
 - v Appropriate means for providing on site interpretation and recognition of historic significance of the site; and
 - vi Consideration of any special Aboriginal Cultural Significance, and/or archaeological significance attached to the site.
- 5 A further Acoustic Feasibility Assessment be prepared by the applicant and submitted reflecting the proposed lower built form.
- 6 The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment be requested to issue authority to the General Manager to exercise Plan making delegations, in accordance with Council's resolution of 26 November 2012.

A Heritage Interpretation Management Strategy has since been submitted (John Oultram Heritage & Design 2020), with an updated version submitted in December 2021. An updated Urban Design Analysis Report (Studio GL) was prepared for the site and submitted in December 2021, to reflect the recommendations in the latest Heritage Interpretation Management Strategy. An updated Acoustic Feasibility Study (RWDI Group June 2021) was also submitted.

The Gateway Determination

The draft Planning Proposal was referred to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and a Gateway Determination was received on 19 December 2021. One condition of the Gateway Determination was that a site-specific DCP Chapter be prepared for exhibition with the draft Planning Proposal. This condition has been required in recognition of the potential amenity impacts associated with proximity to the Port operations and seeks to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are integrated into the redevelopment of the site.

The Gateway Determination stipulated the following in relation to the DCP -

The DCP must be consistent with the recommendations of the acoustic study (and any urban design analysis/concept design) and incorporate built form/development controls (e.g. improved glazing, ventilation, masonry style construction etc) seeking to manage potential land use conflicts and ensure any future development provides a suitable level of amenity for incoming residents considering potential noise, air, dust, odour, traffic, visual, and other amenity impacts from the Port operating at capacity 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Prior to public exhibition, the following must be prepared to Council's satisfaction and exhibited with the planning proposal -

A site-specific Development Control Plan (DCP) chapter to ensure that all appropriate mitigation measures are integrated into the redevelopment of the site, and any built form outcomes are compatible with surrounding land uses. The DCP shall be consistent with the recommendations of the acoustic study (and any urban design analysis/concept design) and incorporate built form, design, layout and development controls seeking to manage potential land use conflicts and ensure any future development provides a reasonable level of amenity for incoming residents considering potential noise, air, dust, odour, traffic, visual, and other amenity impacts from the Port operating at its estimated future capacity 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This DCP chapter should incorporate measures/requirements such as -

- i Orientation of living areas and balconies to the north, with bedroom areas facing south to mitigate from noise sources to the north;
- ii Apartment layouts which extend from one side of the building to the other or use internal light wells, to provide shielding from Port noise;
- iii Improved glazing requirements for apartment layouts with good window seals, such that when windows are closed, low internal noise levels can be achieved;
- iv Provision of fresh air ventilation and thermal comfort, which would ensure that windows can be closed when improved amenity is desired by occupants;
- v Inclusion of Section 10.7 certificates on the title so it is clear for future owners and occupiers that their property is affected by impacts of a 24-hour operating port (noise, light, air/dust etc);
- vi Adoption of masonry style façade construction which performs better at low noise frequencies with façade design to be reviewed by an acoustical consultant;
- vii Outdoor areas which are designed to take advantage of any acoustic shielding by the building structure or surrounding buildings; and
- vii Other landscaping, buffer, setback, engineering, and design solutions.

The Department believes the ultimate success of the development will largely come down to how well Council and the proponent can work together to develop the site-specific DCP (and concept design) and ensure, through the development assessment and construction processes, that the new dwellings/site design incorporate appropriate attenuation measures to manage potential land use conflicts and mitigate future residents from future port/industrial impacts on amenity.

PROPOSAL

In response to the Gateway Determination, a draft DCP Chapter has been developed for the site (Attachment 2). The purpose of the site-specific DCP Chapter is to guide the implementation of the Master Plan, respond to site opportunities and constraints, and to provide guidance and a tool in the assessment of future Development Applications.

The draft DCP Chapter has been informed by the recommendations contained in the following studies submitted in support of the Planning Proposal –

1 **Acoustic Feasibility Study (RWDI Group June 2021)**

This study concludes that a proportion of the development at the northern end will be affected by Port and industrial noise at a level higher than desirable for many people. The report recommends that noise impacts be minimised by -

- Ensuring new dwellings incorporate appropriate noise attenuation measures to mitigate impacts from the Port to acceptable levels.
- Buildings and apartments being designed to orientate noise sensitive rooms away from the Port and nearby industry, and incorporate glazing and ventilation requirements in the design.

- The inclusion of a notation on Section 10.7 Planning Certificates so it is clear for future owners / occupiers that they may be subject to Port / industrial noise and other amenity impacts.

2 Heritage Interpretation Management Strategy (John Oultram Heritage & Design 2021)

The former Port Kembla Public School site has social and cultural value as the school site and buildings served an important function in the community between 1890 and 1999. It is listed as a local heritage item in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2009.

There is a series of demolished structures on site, relating to a former use as a Primary School. These include footings of the Primary School building erected in 1916, and an Infants building erected in 1953, along with associated buildings on site. There is also evidence remaining of playground facilities such as game courts and concrete pathways. The site has been identified as a prominent location with potential to reflect its past social significance as a school.

A Heritage Interpretation Management Strategy has been submitted, recommending interpretation in the form of the following -

- 1 Retention of Landscape: retention of mature trees.
- 2 Demolished Structures: introduced devices (the term introduced devices refers to features, sculptures plaques and the like that may demonstrate, describe or reflect an important aspect of the site); footing markings of main school building in public areas
- 3 Introduced Devices - the suggested interpretation will take the form of -
 - Layout to reflect both Aboriginal occupation and educational themes.
 - Artwork/structures to allow interpretation of Aboriginal themes.
 - Interpretation panels, with the following interpretive elements suggested -
 - Aboriginal Themes - Yarning circle; Totem poles with Aboriginal images and place names in the direction of views and connections to the physical context that are of importance for the site's connection to Country; Indigenous plantings; Plaques; Dreamtime stories of Mount Kembla, Mount Keira and the Five Islands. Any interpretation would require the input and involvement of the local indigenous community, as it would be a telling of their stories and a representation of their on-going connection to this Country.
 - Development of Port Kembla – Plaques; View references to the industrial development.
 - Port Kembla Public School – Artwork and Plaques on the new building close to the former school and play equipment relating to the history of the school on this site; use of salvaged brickwork from the school site; Footing lines in public areas to show the location of the main school building; Retention of mature trees.

3 Urban Design Analysis Report (Studio GL December 2021)

The revised draft Planning Proposal is supported by an updated Urban Design Analysis Report which addresses the matters identified in prior Council reports. The Urban Design Analysis Report also incorporates the findings of the Acoustic Feasibility Study.

The report outlines urban design principles that will influence the built form so that it contributes positively to the character of the local area. It contains 3D modelling and graphics to highlight building envelopes, solar access and potential views, sound mitigation strategies and site access. This includes the provision of a green buffer/vegetated berm between the industrial lands to the north and north-west and potential land uses across the rest of the site to reduce noise impacts.

The report indicates that potentially 110 dwellings could be built on the site, which would need to include 5% Affordable Rental dwellings.

Overall, the proposed layout uses the built form of some buildings to 'shield' residential areas located further from the noise source. The proposed built form creates front setbacks compatible with the surroundings, with special consideration where areas for heritage interpretation have been proposed. The taller built form located towards the north and west of the site, along Military Road, provides a generous front setback to allow for a high level of amenity for residential units located on the ground level, for vegetation planting in private open spaces, and for the preservation of existing street trees and planting of new ones. The setback provides visual privacy and noise mitigation for future residents, as well as for existing residents to the west of Military Road. The built form located to the south and east is of smaller scale and height in the form of terrace houses and townhouses, and proposes a 4.5m setback along Reservoir Street and 3m along Marne Street, in line with the existing built form in the area.

The orientation and location of the site provides a high level of solar access for future residents. Taller buildings are located to the west of the site, with the main façades facing north and east, creating sunny courtyards for the use of residents. The buildings are separated to maximise solar access to the residential units. This built form proposes setbacks of the top levels, as well as generous setbacks fronting Military Road, to minimise potential solar access impacts to residents on the western side of the road. The terrace houses along Reservoir Street have been positioned to the east of the site, and oriented to the north-east to maximise solar access. The compact scale and reduced height of the terrace houses allow for the townhouses located to the south to also receive generous amounts of natural light.

Draft Development Control Plan: Proposed Controls

A site-specific DCP Chapter has been developed to guide the implementation of the Master Plan, respond to site opportunities and constraints, and to provide guidance and a tool in the assessment of future Development Applications. Feedback from NSW DPE, Wollongong Local Planning Panel (WLPP) and Council Officers was taken into consideration in the drafting of the DCP Chapter for public exhibition, along with the findings and recommendations contained in the technical studies submitted. The public exhibition will provide the opportunity for further input from the wider community, state agencies and other key stakeholders.

The site-specific draft DCP Chapter is intended to supplement the land use planning controls contained in Wollongong DCP 2009, to achieve the vision for the site while ensuring site-specific aspects are acknowledged, protected and managed. The general chapters of Wollongong DCP still apply, such as subdivision, heritage, parking etc. The site-specific Chapter contains provisions that override some of the generic development controls.

State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (Housing) 2021 and the NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) are the key design controls for residential apartment buildings, and the SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 – Low Rise Housing Diversity Code may be applicable for any dual occupancy or multi dwelling houses (terraces, townhouses and villas) proposed for the site.

Wollongong LEP 2009 (Clause 7.18) allows for the designation of certain sites as “Key Sites”. These are sites which are of their nature reasonably large and have the potential to revitalise town centres and provide both significant economic or social return and significant public domain benefit. The LEP clause provides that Key Sites can only be developed if they deliver a high standard of architectural and urban design. Additionally, any development application must be referred to Council’s Design Review Panel. Council resolved that the site be listed as a “Key Site” under Clause 7.18 of the WLEP due to its prominence and heritage values. The DPE and WLPP additionally recommended that the rezoning proposal be subject to a site-specific DCP Chapter to ensure that all appropriate mitigation measures are integrated into the redevelopment of the site in terms of the likely noise and light spill from the Port, and any built form outcomes are compatible with the surrounding low density residential character.

The draft site-specific DCP Chapter includes the following provisions -

- Key objectives for development of the site to achieve the Master Plan vision.
- Controls to preserve or create key views and vistas – there are extensive views from the site to the south, north and west.
- Building setback controls.
- Architectural diversity and building design controls.
- Movement network, street design and road width controls.
- Key heritage objectives and controls specific to the site, to ensure that future development creates opportunities for acknowledgment, storytelling and interpretation.
- Controls to protect the amenity of future residents, ensuring all appropriate mitigation measures in terms of noise, light spill etc are integrated into the redevelopment of the site, and to guide built form outcomes that are compatible with the surrounding low density residential character.

Draft Planning Agreement – Affordable Housing

Council officers and the applicant are in discussions on a draft Planning Agreement to implement Council's resolution for the provision of 5% Affordable Rental Housing. Five percent of the estimated 110 dwellings equates to 5.5 dwellings, although will be rounded up to 6 dwellings. The draft Planning Agreement will be reported to Council separately for endorsement prior to exhibition.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

A Gateway Determination has been issued by the NSW DPE for the exhibition of the draft Planning Proposal for the site. As part of that Gateway Determination, DPE stipulated that a draft site-specific DCP Chapter is to be developed and exhibited with the Planning Proposal.

If the draft DCP Chapter is supported by Council, it will be exhibited with the draft Planning Proposal for a minimum 28 days commencing in October 2022. The Gateway Determination stipulates that consultation should occur with the following State agencies and other organisations -

- NSW Ports.
- Environment Protection Authority.
- DPE – Environment Energy and Science.
- Endeavour Energy.
- Sydney Water.
- Transport for NSW.
- Roads and Maritime Services.
- Department of Premier and Cabinet (Heritage NSW).
- National Trust of Australia, Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Branch.
- Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council

The draft Plans will also be referred to Neighbourhood Forum 7, Property Council of Australia, Urban Development Institute of Australia.

The draft Plans will be exhibited on Council's website and in local libraries and Council's Administration Building.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan Goal 5 *"We have a healthy community in a liveable city"*. It specifically delivers on the following –

- 5.2 Urban areas are created and maintained to provide a healthy and safe living environment for our community.
- 5.8 Housing choice in the Wollongong Local Government Area is improved, considering population growth, community needs and affordability.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The preparation and exhibition of the draft Planning Proposal and draft Development Control Plan Chapter are managed within the Land Use Planning Service.

If the Planning Proposal, Development Control Plan and the development of the site is approved and constructed, the Master Plan provides for a connection to Military Road, in line with Third Road, which connects through to Electrolytic Street and Reservoir Street, and a laneway connector from the new through road to Reservoir Street. It is proposed that these roadways will be constructed by the developer at their cost and dedicated to Council upon completion.

CONCLUSION

A site-specific DCP Chapter has been prepared to guide future development and provide a tool for the assessment of future Development Applications for the former Port Kembla Public School site.

It is recommended that Council support the exhibition of this draft DCP Chapter in conjunction with the draft Planning Proposal already endorsed for exhibition, to allow community and stakeholder feedback.

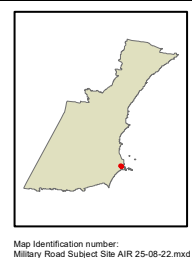
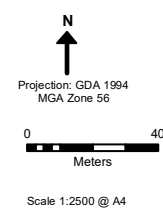


Key Site



Planning Proposal
Lot 1 DP 811699 Military Road
Port Kembla
Subject Site

Subject Site



Part D – Locality Based/ Precinct Plans

Set ID 22470333



Contents

Part D – Locality Based/ Precinct Plans	i
Chapter DXX: Former Port Kembla School Site	i
Contents	i
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
3 DEFINITIONS	2
4 MASTER PLAN	2
4.1 Desired Future Character	3
5 DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS	4
5.1 Views and Vistas	4
5.2 Built Form Setbacks	5
5.3 Architectural Diversity and Building Design	7
5.4 Movement Network	9
5.5 Accessible Private Open Space and Natural Environment Public Domain	11

Document Control		
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Adoption Date	In Force Date	Revision Details

1 INTRODUCTION

This Locality Chapter applies to land identified as the former Port Kembla School Site, located off Military Rd, Port Kembla (Lot 1 DP 811699), as shown in **Figure 1** below.

This Locality Chapter is intended to supplement the land use planning controls applied by Part B of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 (WDCP) to guide development of the former Port Kembla school Site. This Chapter recognises the unique opportunity the former school site offers to provide a variety of housing types in a high amenity, open space setting, in close proximity to the Port Kembla Town Centre.

This Chapter should also be read in conjunction with Part A, B, C, D and E of WDCP, the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (WLEP) and relevant State Environmental Planning Policies. In the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of this and any other chapters of WDCP, the provisions of this Chapter shall prevail to the extent of that inconsistency. In the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of this chapter of the WDCP 2009 and State Environmental Planning Policy 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development (SEPP 65) and the Apartment Design Guide (ADG), SEPP 65 and the ADG will prevail to the extent of that inconsistency



Figure 1- Land to which this plan applies

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of this Locality Chapter is to provide supplementary planning controls to facilitate urban renewal of the former Port Kembla School Site.

The key objectives of this Chapter are to -

- a. Enable the development of the Site in a manner consistent with Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 and the former Port Kembla School Site Master Plan outlined in Section 4 of this Chapter.
- b. Supplement the planning controls of Wollongong DCP 2009 to create a liveable and sustainable residential precinct that provides high quality housing and high levels of amenity for future residents and the wider community.
- c. Ensure that development of the Site results in an open and welcoming urban environment to facilitate integration and connection between future residents and the wider community.
- d. Ensure that future development acknowledges, respects and celebrates the shared cultural heritage significance of the Site, and provides opportunities for interpretation of the significant values and sympathetic built form design.
- e. Ensure that the site is developed to its potential whilst respecting neighbouring properties by sensitively integrating the new development with the existing adjacent residential buildings
- f. Retain the existing mature trees on the Site boundary as a green buffer to the development, and at the proposed public space bounded by Military Road and Electrolyte Street. Provide suitable space to incorporate new tree plantings to support a future urban tree canopy.
- g. Create a high quality, safe and accessible public domain.
- h. Develop a clear and safe hierarchy of roads, lanes, pedestrian paths, and cycle ways to integrate the Site with the wider Port Kembla area and to encourage walking and cycling.
- i. Ensure the resultant built form and public domain optimises solar access and frames key views to the coast, Hill 60 and Illawarra Escarpment.
- j. Ensure future residential development and open space is located and designed to mitigate against noise and other impacts associated with current and future uses within the Three Ports SEPP area.
- k. Provide a suitable buffer distance between development within the Site and uses within the Three Ports SEPP land through building design, materiality and landscaping for noise mitigation to protect residential development and public domain space.

3 DEFINITIONS

For all definitions refer to **Appendix 4: Definitions of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 (Wollongong DCP 2009)**.

4 MASTER PLAN

The former Port Kembla School Site Master Plan has been prepared to demonstrate the vision and urban design and planning principles that will guide the future character and development of the Site (**Figure 2**). All future development applications must demonstrate that the objectives and development controls in this DCP Chapter have been considered and will be achieved.



Figure 2 Former Port Kembla School Site Masterplan

4.1 Desired Future Character

The former Port Kembla School Site will be developed to provide a diversity of housing choice, including affordable housing, close to existing services offered by the Port Kembla Town Centre, providing connectivity and direct linkage to public transport, public facilities, and the coast. The residential development will be set within a high-quality public domain, integrated with heritage interpretation opportunities and pedestrian connections.

Development of the Site will acknowledge and respond to the arrangement of the former Port Kembla School buildings and celebrate the shared heritage significance of the Site through innovative and interactive interpretation outcomes.

In recognition of being listed as a Key Site in WLEP 2009 due to its prominence and heritage values, the Site will be developed to deliver the highest standard of Architectural and Urban Design. Built form will be designed and distributed to provide appropriately scaled interfaces to

areas of heritage significance and the existing adjacent residential development; optimise key views from the site; maximise solar access; and mitigate against potential noise and other amenity impacts to future residents and the community in general from the Port at Port Kembla and associated industry. A landscaped buffer and berm along the northern boundary will assist with attenuating the noise from the existing and potential expansion of the Port activity.

The development will encourage walking through green streets and the Site will be open and permeable to invite the broader community to use its public space and appreciate its historical significance.

5 DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

A diverse range of building types, sizes and built form is encouraged for the purpose of creating a vibrant urban setting, which respects the heritage value of the former Port Kembla School Site and surrounding suburb. Chapter B1 of Wollongong DCP 2009 provides general development controls which apply to residential development, and Chapter B2 (Section 6) provides development controls which apply to Subdivision Design. The following controls supplement WDCP 2009 providing controls specific to the former Port Kembla School Site.

5.1 Views and Vistas

5.1.1 Objectives

- Ensure that development of the Site maintains and establishes key public view corridors, for example to the coast and Illawarra Escarpment.
- Ensure key cultural views and connections to significant landscape elements such as Mt Keira and Hill 60 are celebrated and enhanced through built form and design.

5.1.2 Development Controls

- New development will establish or maintain key view corridors as indicated in **Figure 3**.
- Buildings are to be positioned, scaled and set back to ensure key views (as indicated in Figure 3) are maintained or created.

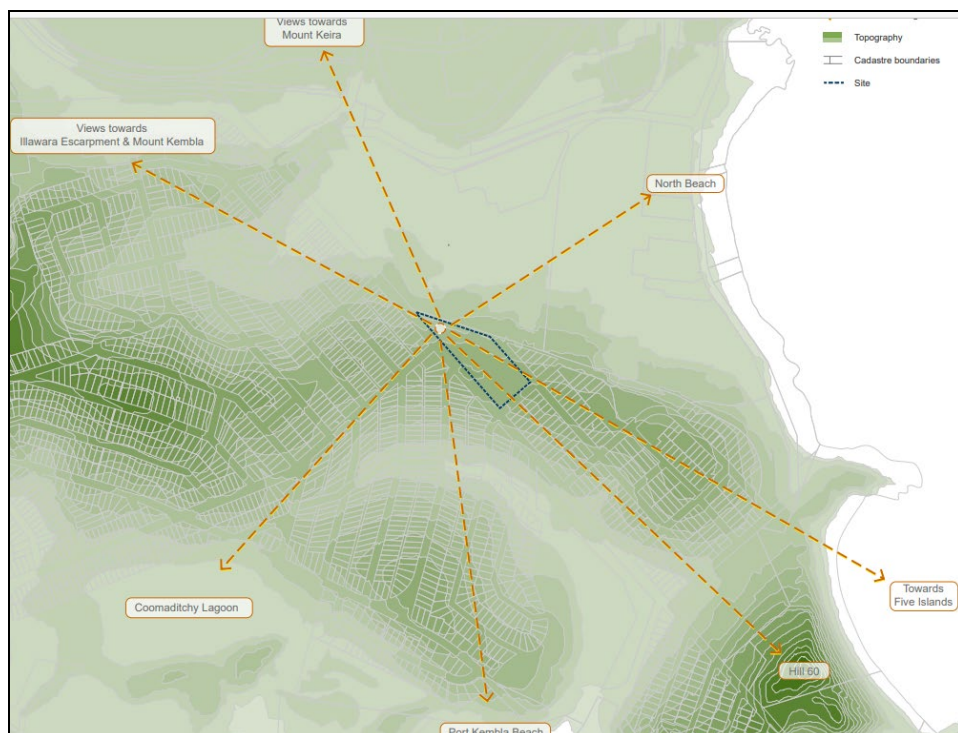


Figure 3 - Views and Vistas

5.2 Built Form Setbacks

5.2.1 Objectives

- a. Create an appropriate street interface and maximise contiguous areas of deep soil adjacent to the public domain through setbacks and articulation.
- b. Ensure development at highly visible sites, such as view terminations and street intersections, are of the highest architectural quality.
- c. Encourage façade both vertical and horizontal articulation and modulation, particularly on street facing elevations generally.
- d. Ensure setbacks provide space for landscaping and canopy trees.
- e. Ensure future development respects neighbouring properties by sensitively integrating the new development with the existing adjacent residential buildings.
- f. Ensure that the built form acknowledges and responds to the arrangement of the former Port Kembla School Buildings.

5.2.2 Development Controls

1. Building setbacks are to comply with Figures 4 – 8.
2. A minimum 6m setback to Military Road – to be vegetated to enhance the interface between the street and the new development. Build to alignment, along Military Road, is to be a minimum of 60% of the building façade.
3. A minimum setback of 4.5m along Reservoir Street – sites facing this street are also to have a 1.5m noise mitigation façade articulation zone.
4. A minimum setback of 3m along Marne Street – sites facing this street are also to have a 1.5m façade articulation zone to encourage facade modulation variety.
5. Terrace houses are to be built to the boundary on both sides, or one side where the terrace is the end of the row.
6. The minimum street frontage width for terrace house development is to be no less than 8 metres.
7. Up to 70% of the articulation zone can be occupied by architectural elements. Articulation zone means a zone forward of the main facade line that may include architectural features such as pergolas, roof elements, bay windows, sun shading and verandahs. The articulation zone may not include habitable floor area or basement levels above ground.
8. Maximum of 30% of façade length can protrude into the façade articulation zone.
9. Maximum of 60% of façade length of any individual building can protrude into the noise mitigation articulation zone. This zone is to be used for the provision of protected balconies.
10. Ground floor setbacks, including articulation zones, are not to incorporate basement levels.
11. Setbacks must provide a street wall that provides sympathetic integration and transition in form to surrounding buildings.



Figure 4 - Set Back and Articulation Controls

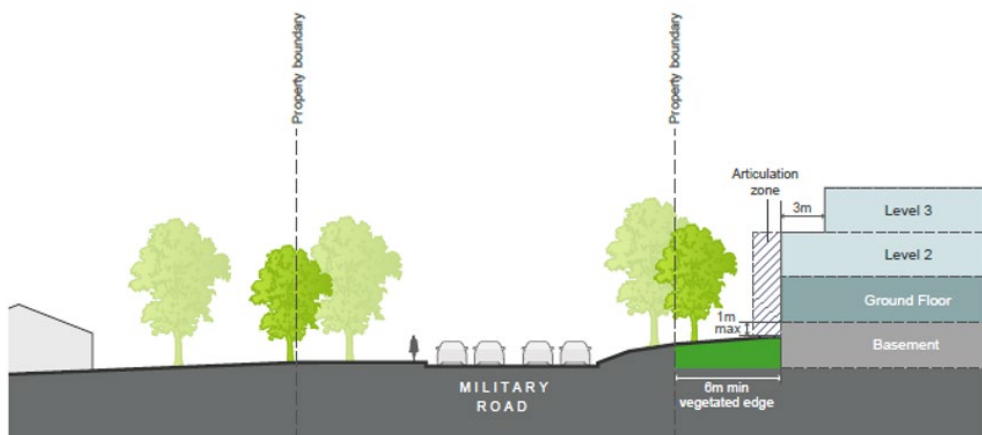


Figure 5 - Section A - Military Road interface

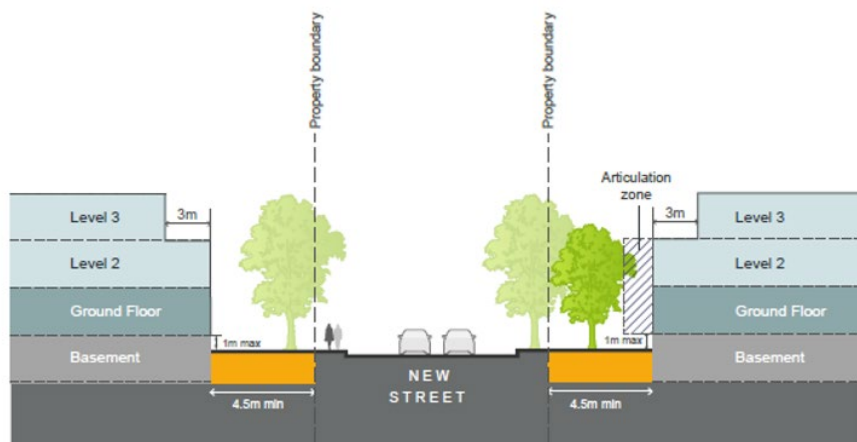


Figure 6 - Section B - New street interface

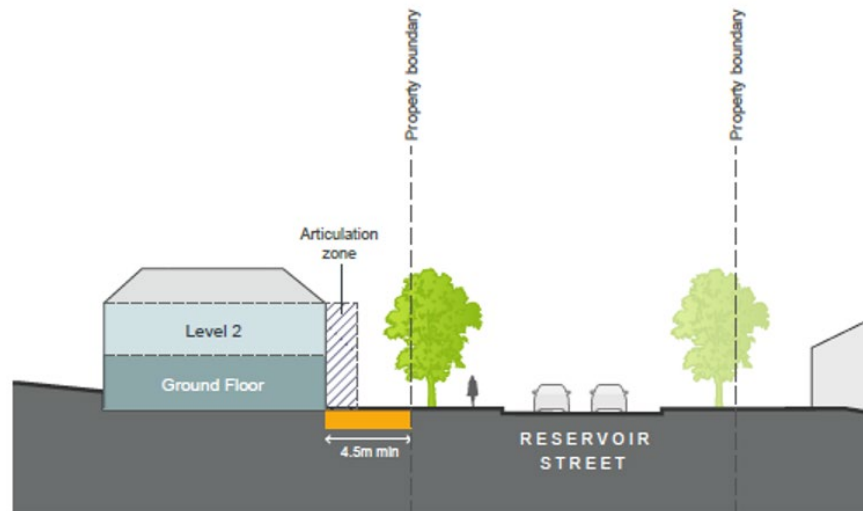


Figure 7 - Section C – Reservoir Street interface

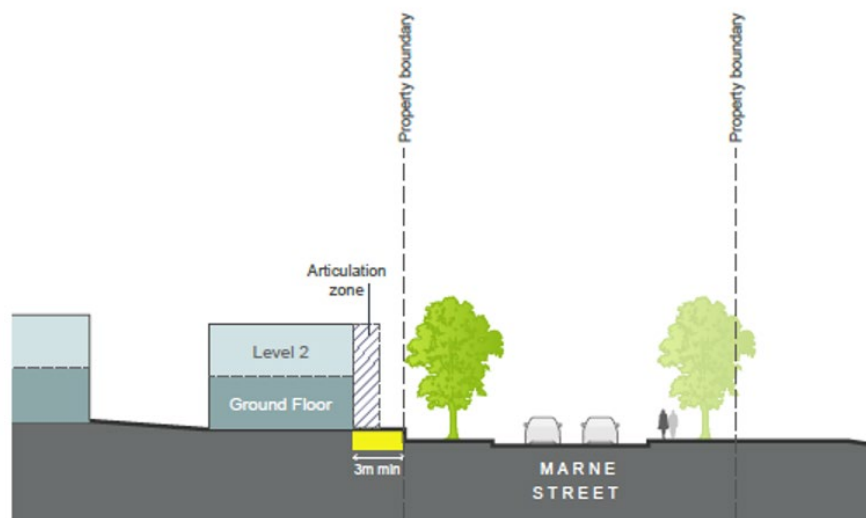


Figure 8 -Section D – Marne Street interface

5.3 Architectural Diversity and Building Design

5.3.1 Objectives

- Ensure quality and innovative architectural designs that reflect the desired future character of the Site, interpret heritage cultural values, and avoid a bland and monotonous architectural style.
- Design and locate buildings to mitigate against noise impacts including low frequency noise from adjacent heavy industries associated with the current and future uses within the Three Ports SEPP area surrounding the Port of Port Kembla.
- Ensure that the site is developed to its potential whilst respecting neighbouring properties by sensitively integrating the new development with the existing adjacent residential buildings.

- d. Ensure the resultant-built form and public domain optimises key views to the coast, Illawarra Escarpment and significant cultural landscape elements.
- e. Locate dwellings to encourage optimal amenity (visual privacy, solar access and functional amenity) and passive surveillance of communal and public spaces, including streets-

5.3.2 Development Controls

1. The Subdivision layout is to respond to and utilise the site's topography, and promote appropriate lot orientation to maximise the northern aspect.
2. The Site layout is to respond appropriately to potential noise and other amenity impacts resulting from the Port of Port Kembla and any future heavy industrial or Port related development within the Three Ports SEPP area, and where possible use the built form of buildings to shield residential areas located further from the noise source.
3. Future development and architecture is to be of the highest quality, respond to the heritage significance of the Site and the former school buildings, and be sympathetic to the existing surrounding local character.
4. Buildings are to be designed to reduce the level of potential disturbance from the Port activities, including orientation of buildings, materials selection and noise attenuation. A suitably qualified and accredited acoustic consultant should be consulted to advise on façade construction, noting that masonry style faced construction performs well at low noise frequencies. Noise mitigation façade treatments are to be employed as per Figure 9 below.
5. A landscaped berm (minimum 10m wide) is to be created along the north-eastern boundary, designed in conjunction with an Acoustic Engineer, to reduce the impact of noise generated by port activities on properties within the development.
6. The design of buildings is to achieve architectural diversity reflecting the typologies outlined in Figure 2. A diverse range of housing types, sizes and built form is to be delivered, including affordable rental dwellings subject to a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA). Housing types are to cater for a diversity of household types and demographic profiles, and include townhouses/terraces, villas and apartments.
7. Multi dwelling and attached housing are to have direct frontage to a public road (i.e., are not to be built on battle-axe lots)
8. The design of new built form located on the footprint of former school buildings should allow for interpretation of former use of the site and reflect the setback, scale, form, and proportions of the former school buildings.
9. Materiality should respond to the desired future character statement of the site and setting of the development. A suitable mix of materials that are sympathetic to the former school buildings should be utilised in any new development, specifically timber cladding, corrugated iron and reclaimed brick.
10. Design of new buildings should minimise the overall sense of bulk and scale and maximise building separation. The modulation of the components of the buildings and the composition and detailing of their facades will also contribute to their perceived scale. Designs must demonstrate consideration of all of these elements. Landscaping, articulation, upper floor setbacks, balconies, sun shading devices and awnings should be used to help reduce the apparent bulk of buildings. Limit blank walls to 30% of any façade facing a boundary.
11. Living areas and balconies are to be oriented to the north, with bedroom areas facing south, to mitigate from noise sources in the north. Apartment layouts which extend from one side of the building to the other, or use internal light wells, are to provide shielding from port noise. Glazing is to be provided for apartment layouts such that when windows are closed, low internal noise levels can be achieved. Fresh air ventilation and thermal comfort measures are to be provided to ensure windows can be closed to improve amenity.
12. Locate dwellings to encourage optimal amenity (visual privacy, solar access and functional amenity) and passive surveillance of communal and public spaces, including streets. Buildings directly adjoining open space must be designed with an appropriate interface and

frontage to the open space. An appropriate interface will include buildings which front the open space, clear entries to residential lobbies and/or individual dwelling entries at the ground floor, sufficient landscaped setbacks to create a transition and delineation between public and private space, landscaped verge and shared paths and/or roads clearly defining the extent of public domain. Dwellings on the ground floor facing the street are to have individual entries from the street. Outdoor areas are to be designed to take advantage of any acoustic shielding by the building structure or surrounding buildings.

13. Ensure opportunities for outlook and maintenance of views through blocks. Buildings are to be located to provide an outlook to and passive surveillance of the public domain where possible. Apartment setbacks to the side and rear boundaries should be a minimum 6m up to 4 storeys.
14. Residential development should comply with the Development Near Rail Corridors and Busy Roads Interim Guideline, NSW Government and any other relevant State Environmental Planning Policy (i.e., SEPP (State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021)) and NSW EPA Noise Guidelines for Local Government.
15. Section 10.7 Planning Certificates are to include a notation that the property is affected by impacts of a 24-hour operating port (noise, light, air/dust etc).

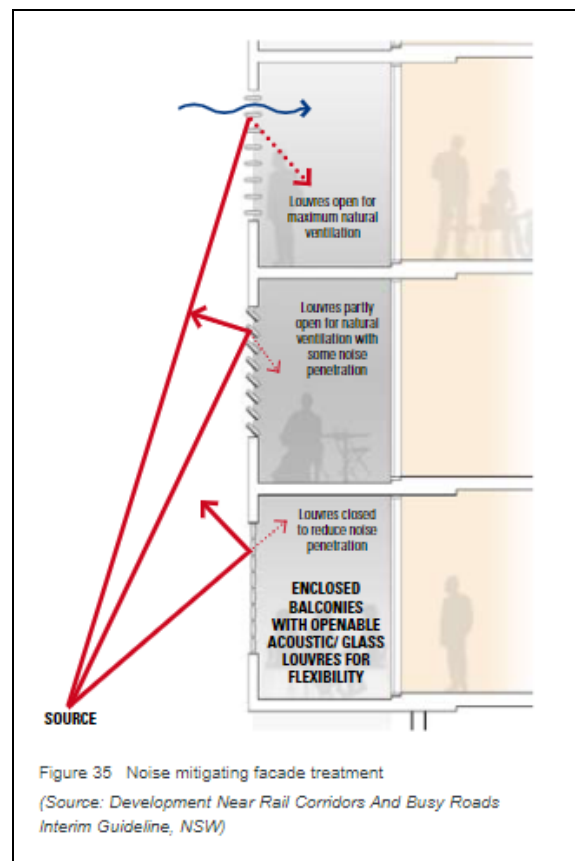


Figure 9: Noise Mitigating Façade Treatment

5.4 Movement Network

5.4.1 Objectives

- a. Deliver a clear and safe hierarchy of roads, lanes, pedestrian paths and cycle ways to integrate the site with the wider Port Kembla community and established Port Kembla Town Centre.

- b. Ensure people can move through and within the site including pedestrians, cyclists and traffic by creating new streets that link into the existing grid.
- c. Ensure a safe and functional internal road network, including the provision of on street parking.
- d. Provide consolidated vehicular access to all lots within the site.
- e. Provide continuous footpaths within the site.
- f. Ensure no vehicular access to individual lots directly off Military Road and Reservoir Street.
- g. Create a number of blocks that increase street frontage

5.4.2 Development Controls

1. All roads and laneways will be consistent with Transport for NSW Roads and Wollongong City Council engineering requirements and provided as per the Master Plan in Section 4. The Master Plan provides for a connection to Military Road, in line with Third Road, which connects through to Electrolytic Street and Reservoir Street; and a laneway connector from the new through road, to Reservoir Street, providing rear lane access to the terraces and driveway access to the apartment buildings, independent of Military Road.
2. A roundabout is to be provided at the connection to Military Road in line with Third Road.
3. Street Type 5 (modified): 20 metre wide road reserve (1.5m footpath – 3.6m verge – 9.8m carriageway – 3.6m verge – 1.5m footpath) to distribute traffic throughout the site, with footpaths and verge to both sides to support pedestrian and cyclist safety and amenity.
4. Laneway Type 8: 8.4 metre wide road reserve (1.45m footpath – 5.5m carriageway – 1.45m footpath) to distribute traffic to carparking located on individual lots, with footpath to both sides to support pedestrian and cyclist safety and amenity.
5. For lot frontages six (6) metres or less car parking access must be from rear lanes only.



Figure 10 - New proposed street section

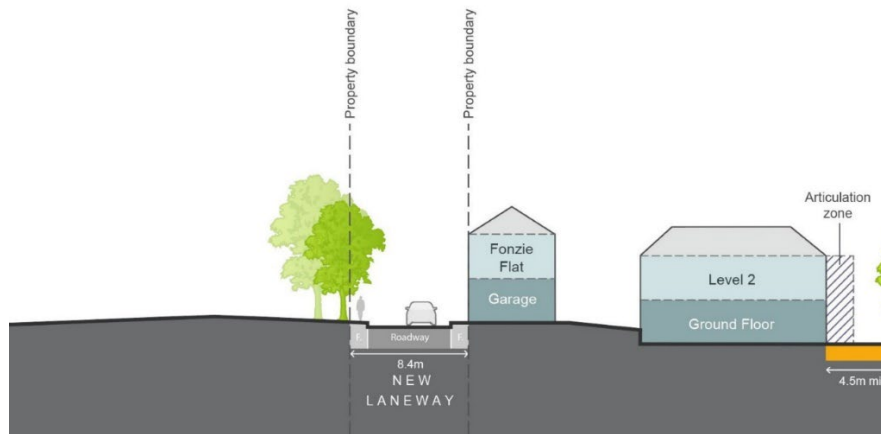


Figure 11 - New proposed laneway section

5.5 Accessible Private Open Space and Natural Environment Public Domain

The former Port Kembla School Site Master Plan in Section 4 of this Chapter provides a range of open spaces for the community and residents, integrated with heritage interpretation opportunities, pedestrian connections and residential development.

5.5.1 Objectives

- Provide multiple high quality, safe and accessible open spaces of various scales as identified in **Figure 2** to cater for a wide range of user needs, including both future residents and the wider community.
- Create a safe and accessible open space network that provides connectivity to Port Kembla Town Centre and other recreation spaces such as Gallipoli Park and King George V Oval. Ensure private open spaces are activated with passive surveillance to provide a sense of security and safety.
- Celebrate and acknowledge the shared heritage significance of the Site through innovative and interactive interpretation outcomes guided by the recommendations of an endorsed Heritage Interpretation Plan.
- Ensure the integration of interpretation of shared cultural heritage values associated with the Site, including Aboriginal Cultural Heritage values and the history of the former Port Kembla School Site, as well as key views through open space and natural environment outcomes in line with the Designing with Country Guidelines (2019).
- Promote passive surveillance between private open space and publicly accessible areas within the development.
- Ensure that future built development acknowledges, respects and celebrates the shared heritage significance of the Site, and provides opportunities to integrate interpretation of cultural values with open space, built form and retention of views.
- Retain the existing mature trees on the Site boundary as a green buffer to the development, and at the proposed public open space bounded by Military Road and Electrolyte Street.

5.5.2 Development Controls

- New open spaces are to be provided in accordance with Table 1 -

Table 1: Open space typologies

Open Space	Total Area (ha)	Ownership
Aboriginal Interpretation Area	0.3ha	Private
Vegetated Berm	0.3ha	Private
European Interpretation Area	0.7ha	Private

2. A landscaping plan is to be submitted to Council for approval with the relevant development application for any of the open space and public realm areas.
3. The identified public and private open spaces are to be landscaped in a manner in keeping with the former ecological nature of the Site, including native and endemic plant species.
4. The existing mature trees on the Site boundary, and at the proposed public open space bounded by Military Road and Electrolyte Street, are to be retained as a green buffer to the development.
5. An updated Heritage Interpretation Plan is to be submitted to Council for approval for the whole site with the first development application or subdivision application for the site.
6. The updated Heritage Interpretation Plan should consider the archaeology on the site including school building footings and how these can be included in on-site interpretation.
7. A historic archaeological assessment report is required to be submitted with any future Development Application and a section 140 excavation permit obtained under the NSW Heritage Act 1977 where required.
8. The landscaping plan is to detail any proposed public art in accordance with Council's Public Art Strategy and Guidelines 2016-2021 and other interactive elements developed with the local Aboriginal community to celebrate the history of the Site, as endorsed by the Heritage Interpretation Plan. Public art should be considered at selected locations within the public domain. Any public art should be robust and low maintenance and designed with consideration of public safety.
9. Locational and appropriate lighting shall be provided as part of the open space system in line with CPTED principles.
10. Design of the public open space and the elements within it is to be undertaken in consultation with the local Indigenous Aboriginal community, in accordance with the principles set out in the NSW Government Architect Draft Connecting with Country guidelines. This should form part of the landscaping plan and be guided by an updated Heritage Interpretation Plan to be endorsed by Council. Any servicing facilities are to be located to minimise impacts on the public domain. Any substation located within the public domain is to be positioned to minimise its functional and visual impact, and appropriately screened.
11. The prominent public open space is located in close proximity to the existing Port Kembla Town Centre must be accessible and welcoming to the Community. This space shall provide an attractive and comfortable community space that can be activated by adjoining neighbourhood scale retail and business uses.
12. Open space to be activated by interfacing residential development, and where possible, abutted by the local road network. Direct and accessible access to the open spaces is to be maximised.
13. Interpretative elements, including introduced devices, signage and built form outcomes, should be included throughout the landscape setting of the Site, responding to the siting, location and materiality of the former School Buildings.
14. A landscaped setting is to be created within an area of open space to the north of the residential development, to provide passive recreation opportunities and a location for interpretation of the shared cultural heritage and history of the Site.
15. A landscaped/vegetated berm is to be created along the north-eastern boundary (minimum 10m in width), designed in conjunction with an Acoustic Engineer, to reduce the impact of noise generated by port activities on properties within the development (Figure 12).

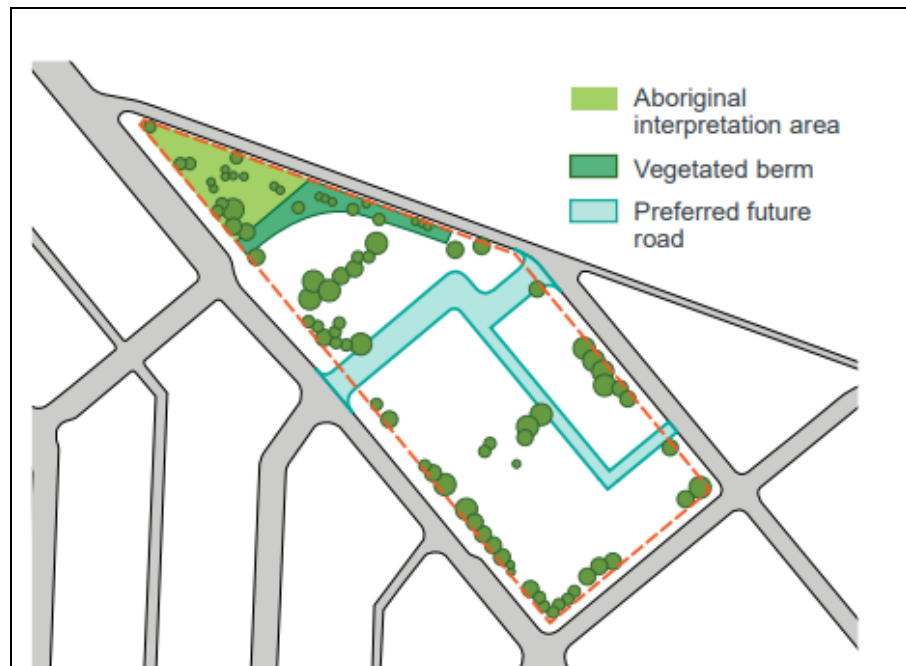


Figure 12: Location of Future Vegetated Berm

ITEM 2 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT RETAIL AND BUSINESS CENTRES STRATEGY

The draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy (Strategy) has been prepared and makes recommendations to support the success of Wollongong's Centres. The findings of the draft Strategy will be used to guide the scope and objectives of Council projects and inform updates to Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2009, Development Control Plan (DCP) and guidance material.

It is recommended that the draft Strategy be exhibited for a minimum period of four (4) weeks to enable sufficient community and stakeholder input.

RECOMMENDATION

The draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy be exhibited for community and stakeholder input for a minimum of four (4) weeks.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

Authorised by: Linda Davis, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy - August 2022
- 2 SGS Study (Papers 1 - 4) July 2022

BACKGROUND

Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres include the central business districts of villages, towns, major towns and the City Centre. Generally speaking, these Centres have a business zoning (e.g. B1 Neighbourhood Centre, B2 Local Centre, B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use) and include a mix of uses including commercial, residential, public recreation and social infrastructure.

Planning and development in Wollongong's Centres is currently regulated through a range of statutory and non-statutory planning policies. Of significance, are the Wollongong LEP 2009, the Wollongong DCP 2009 and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008. Council also provides several guidance documents to support development and operations in Centres including the Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy Policy, the Outdoor Dining on Council Land Policy and the Design and Fit Out Guide for food and drink premises.

Key to the planning controls governing development in Centres is the Centres Hierarchy, outlined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement, and further elaborated on in the DCP Chapter B4 Development in Business Zones. The Centres hierarchy has been in place since the introduction of the Wollongong DCP 2009.

Wollongong's Centres were last reviewed by Council in September 2004 (Hill PDA). This study was used as a reference document for the *Review of Illawarra Retail Centres* prepared by the then Department of Planning & Environment in June 2014. Individual town centre studies have been prepared for Thirroul (2006), Warrawong (2013), Figtree (2013), Unanderra (2013), Corrimal (2015), Dapto (2017), Port Kembla (2018), Helensburgh (2020), and the Wollongong City Centre (2020).

On 7 December 2020, Council resolved to defer the exhibition of the draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy until the draft Strategy, and other items, were further developed.

Other Council resolutions relevant to the draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy are detailed below.

On 31 May 2021, Council considered a Notice of Motion on *Protecting the character and heritage of Thirroul Village* and resolved that -

- 1 *Council develop a Thirroul Town Centre Plan in collaboration with the community to identify a community vision for the village and to develop planning controls to achieve that vision.*
- 2 *Council conduct a Thirroul Heritage Review, with the aim of achieving heritage listings for buildings and streetscapes with heritage values, acknowledging that Council is mid-way through reviewing the heritage items for the whole of the city.*
- 3 *A Draft Planning Proposal be prepared to change the current LEP, to ensure there is a 'Village' plan for the local communities north of Bulli Pass.*
- 4 *The Draft Planning Proposal should look at but not be limited to, having a maximum height of 9 metres and other tools such as lot sizes and floor space ratios to enable the current 'Village' communities to be maintained.*
- 5 *The Draft Planning Proposal be presented to Council for resolution to formally prepare the Planning Proposal to forward to the Department of Planning Industry and Environment for a Gateway determination.*

The Delivery Program 2022-26 includes a budget allocation for this project in the 2024-26 financial years. The recommendations of the draft Strategy will inform the Thirroul Village - Character and Heritage Study.

On 28 June 2021, Council adopted the Operational Plan 2021-2022, and resolved (in part) that -

- 8 *A Councillor Briefing be held to explore how DCP character statements can be used to reflect and support suburbs' future desired character, that the briefing outline the mechanisms and timelines to amend, develop and implement such DCP chapters.*

The Councillor briefing occurred on 14 February 2022. The draft Strategy, specifically recommendations in relation to the Centres hierarchy, will inform the draft character statements for our Centres.

Since 2013 Council have adopted 7 Town and Village plans for Wollongong Centres. Key implementation actions of these Plans relate to an update to planning controls (DCP and LEP) to be supported by capacity analysis and built form testing. Both the draft Strategy and the draft Housing Strategy inform the progression of these actions, especially with respect to understanding supply and demand of floorspace. The Built Form project is included in the Delivery Program 2022-26 and is funded for completion between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

PROPOSAL

This report presents the draft Strategy for Council's consideration and endorsement to exhibit.

The objective of the draft Strategy is for Council to gain an understanding of the current and future retail, commercial and urban service needs of the LGA to appropriately deliver more sustainable local employment opportunities, economic productivity and convenient access to services for an increasing and evolving population.

The draft Strategy is informed by a suite of State Government and Council documents. Key Council documents include -

- *Wollongong Community Strategic Plan – Our Future 2032.*
- *Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020.*
- *Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029.*

The draft Strategy was prepared with technical support and input from SGS Economics and Planning. Their informing work is provided as Attachment 2 to this report. The draft Strategy explores the following

-
- Feedback from our community on what they value about our Centres.
- Observations from Industry regarding Retail Centre opportunities and challenges.
- Current trends impacting Centres and the retail industry.
- The current supply of retail and business uses in our Centres, and where there is capacity to grow.
- The performance of selected Centres against place specific criteria and accessibility.
- How well-suited selected Centres are to offer different types of retail.
- Current spending profiles across different Centres and retail categories.
- The forecast demand for retail goods and services, and commercial office space in our Centres.
- The current and future role and function of Centres, in light of forecast demand, trends and aspirations.
- Opportunities to improve planning outcomes through a range of recommendations.

The key findings of the draft Strategy include -

- Centres are largely performing in line with the current Retail and Business Hierarchy. There is an opportunity to update definitions in line with contemporary contexts and Council's strategic priorities, and ensure the hierarchy is supported by consistent and cohesive controls in the LEP and DCP.
- Wollongong's Centres have sufficient retail supply to meet current demand (there is a very small unmet demand of ~1% of total demand, or ~6,000sqm). Our existing supply will need to grow by ~136,000sqm (25%) to cater for forecast retail demand in 2041. Planned floorspace accounts for 80% of this required growth, and includes planned Centres in West Dapto and development applications for retail, mostly focused in the City Centre. Our Centres have a generous amount of feasible supply to allow retail businesses to grow in response to increased demand, far exceeding what is needed to meet the 2041 forecast.
- The delivery of planned Centres in West Dapto is critical to meet demand. The provision of supermarkets and grocery stores across all planned town and village centres is needed to provide appropriate access to daily needs. Delay to the delivery of West Dapto Centres will be temporarily mitigated by existing Centres to the east. Prolonged delays are likely to result in reactive expansion of supply in the existing Centres and continued poor access outcomes for West Dapto residents. Expectations for development outcomes for planned Centre at West Dapto, including land use mix and built form, could be strengthened through the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- Centre zoning boundaries do not always reflect the function boundaries of our Centres. There is a need to protect existing supply in some locations where it is located on land zoned residential on the fringe of Centres. There is also a need to reduce business zoning in some Centres where the requirement for ground floor commercial and retail uses is spread too far to be sustained by current or future demand.
- Centres play a role in the delivery of medium density housing. The draft Strategy has identified which Centres have excess supply that could be absorbed through an increase in residential population within the Centre catchment. Further urban design analysis is required to determine if residential density should be increased within or surrounding Centres.
- Online trading continues to grow. Centres play an important role in offering consumers a physical context for the experience of goods and services. To ensure that Centres continue to compliment online trading, it is critical that they perform well across a range of physical criteria including amenity and built form quality, activity, access and mix of uses.

- The results of the Shape your Town survey showed that ‘a mix of uses’ was the Community’s most valued attribute of a Centre. Ensuring our Centres have a mix of land uses as well as public spaces and facilities will provide a solid foundation on which retail businesses can provide a diverse offer of goods and services. All of these attributes contribute to a Centre’s attraction.
- Night-time economies are becoming an increasingly important component of Centre offers. Longer centre operating hours support the growth of food and hospitality and entertainment uses, as well as other businesses which benefit from the increased activity. Centres with successful night-time economies are supported by high quality public spaces, including public space activation and events programs and appropriate infrastructure (adequate street lighting, and well-designed, safe public spaces).
- Multi-modal accessibility is key to Centre success. Whilst most of Wollongong’s Centres are easily accessible by car, changing requirements for contactless pick up, delivery logistics and Electric Vehicles will drive the modification of Centre infrastructure and business operations. Public transport access to our Centres continues to be a challenge for Wollongong. The network of town and village Centres in our established suburbs means that our community has good access by walking to daily convenience needs from most areas. The western outskirts of suburbs south of Wollongong City Centre are an exception. The planned Town and Village Centres of West Dapto will all need to offer supermarket and/or grocery store offers in order to achieve optimal walkable accessibility (800m).
- The City Centre is our highest order Centre, and its success as an employment generating precinct is important to the economies of our LGA, and the Illawarra Shoalhaven / Greater Cities Region. Council has committed to an aspirational jobs target of 10,500 net new jobs by 2028. Through the Invest Wollongong business attraction program, a number of industry sectors are being targeted, including those that will require sufficient supply of high-quality office space, much of which is expected to be accommodated within the Wollongong City Centre. To attract these jobs to Wollongong City Centre requires a work precinct with a distinctly commercial sense of address and strong networking opportunities amongst allied businesses, with the appropriate conference/hospitality facilities nearby. The City Centre has strong retail demand but suffers from dispersed retail activity due to the large size of the commercial and mixed use zones.

The draft Strategy proposes the following vision for the Centres in the LGA -

- *The role of our Centres is clear*
 - Update the retail and business Centre hierarchy and definitions to reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong’s Centres and guide their growth.
 - Review and update planning documents to ensure consistency with the updated hierarchy.
- *Our Centres are a good fit for our Community*
 - Tighten Centre boundaries to create resilient and active Centres.
 - Prevent the oversupply of retail floorspace.
 - Protect existing required supply.
 - Explore opportunities to increase residential density.
- *Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned*
 - Encourage the development of planned Centres.
 - Limit oversupply in Centres surrounding West Dapto.
 - Communicate clear expectations for Centre development outcomes.
- *Our Centres are active and vibrant*
 - Complement online trading with exceptional physical retail offerings.

- Facilitate an appropriate range of land use options to increase activity within, and patronage of, Centres.
- Update Active frontage planning controls to improve street presentation.
- Facilitate an evening economy in our Towns, Major Regional Centres and City Centre that is right for our community.
- Facilitate the activation of the road reserve for outdoor dining.
- Incorporate public art to create places which are distinctive, and which reflect local identity.
- *Our Centres are accessible and support mode shift*
 - Provide clear direction on the role and function of streets in our Centres.
 - Provide clear parking controls and public parking facilities that are in line with sustainable community needs.
 - Plan for walkable Centres.
 - Support cycling to Centres.
- *Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct*
 - Deprioritise residential development in the Commercial Core.
 - Tighten and focus the retail core.
 - Facilitate diverse land use outcomes and leverage the City's assets.

The draft Strategy proposes to implement the recommendations through a range of funded or core business projects. The findings of the draft Strategy will be used to inform the scope and objectives of these projects as they progress -

- Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) Review.
- Updates to the Wollongong LEP 2009 through Planning Proposals.
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter B4 Development in Business Zones Review (including built form testing).
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D1 Character Statements Review.
- Draft Wollongong Housing Strategy (endorsed by Council on 29 August 2022 for exhibition).
- Draft Wollongong Industrial Land Planning Review (in preparation).
- Draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy (deferred by Council on 7 December 2020. To be reviewed).
- Wollongong Integrated Transport Strategy including the Movement & Place Study for the City Centre (in preparation).
- West Dapto Town and Village Centre Development (on-going).
- Ongoing Planning Proposal review and Neighbourhood planning processes.
- Outdoor Dining Guidelines.

Employment Zone Reforms

Separate to Council's Retail and Business Centres project, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) have been progressing Employment Zone Reforms. The Reform seeks to provide a more flexible planning framework for existing Business and Industrial zoned land by transitioning to fewer zones with broader objectives and permissible land uses. The proposed zone translation is shown in the following table -

Existing Zones	New Zone
Business and Industrial Zones	Employment Zones
B1 Neighbourhood Centre	E1 Local Centre
B2 Local Centre	
B3 Commercial Core	E2 Commercial Centre
B5 Business Development; B6 Enterprise Corridor; B7 Business Park	E3 Productivity Support
IN1 General Industrial	E4 General Industrial
IN2 Light Industrial	
IN3 Heavy Industrial	E5 Heavy Industrial
IN4 Working Waterfront	W4 Working Waterfront
B4 Mixed Use	MU1 Mixed Use
B8 Metropolitan Centre	SP4 Enterprise

On 21 February 2022 and 27 June 2022, Council considered reports on the draft Reforms. Of particular concern is the merger of the B1 Neighbourhood Centre and B2 Local Centre zones, which impacts on the current hierarchy of village centres. Council endorsed a submission which included measures to mitigate any negative impacts of these reforms through the introduction of several local provisions, intended to maintain the nuanced approach to centres in different tiers of the retail hierarchy.

It is understood that the NSW DPE is progressing with the implementation of the reforms and the legislative changes to the Wollongong LEP 2009 may be made in late 2022 / early 2023.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The draft Strategy has been informed by a range of stakeholder input.

An internal Project Reference Group comprising representatives from Development Assessment, Social Infrastructure, Economic Development, Traffic and Transport, Environment and Urban Release was formed at the inception of the project and has provided input throughout the project.

Council staff sought community input through the *Shape Your Town* survey, which ran for a period of three (3) weeks from 27 October to 17 November 2021. The purpose of this survey was to -

- Understand which attributes our community values most in a Centre.
- Understand what our community likes about the Centre they use.
- Understand how the community access Centres.
- Gain suggestions for how our Centres could be improved from either a utility or experiential perspective.

A total of 230 surveys were received with respondents providing Council with feedback on 23 Centres within the LGA, with the most responses received for our larger Centres such as Wollongong City Centre (41), Dapto (30), Thirroul (30), Figtree (20), Warrawong (16) and Fairy Meadow (14).

Input was also sought from key stakeholders involved in the retail industry in Wollongong. The purpose of the engagement was to -

- Understand the local economic conditions that are driving investment and business location in the LGA.

- Gain market insight into development patterns across the LGA's Centres, including development patterns that may be unique or nuanced to specific submarkets.
- Have an appreciation of related activities that are already taking place or may take place in the future across Council and other allied organisations such as local chambers of commerce.

It is proposed that the draft Strategy be exhibited for a minimum four (4) week period, commencing early October 2022. The draft Strategy will be made available online through Council's engagement page. Physical copies of the documents will be available at selected libraries and Council's Customer Service. Key stakeholders will be briefed on the draft Strategy through face to face and online presentations. The public will be invited to make submissions on the draft Strategy in accordance with the Community Participation Plan.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 1 "We value and protect our environment" and goal 2 "We have an innovative and sustainable economy".

It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the Land Use Planning Service Plan 2022-23 - "Local Government Area Wide Retail Centres Study".

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The exhibition of the draft Strategy will be managed within the Land Use Planning Service.

The draft Strategy proposes to implement the recommendations through a range of planned projects. The findings of the draft Strategy will be used to inform the scope and objectives of these projects as they progress.

CONCLUSION

The draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy upholds the role of the Retail and Business Centres Hierarchy in our planning assessment framework. The draft Strategy confirms that Wollongong's Centres have sufficient feasible capacity under the current planning settings to meet forecast demand, provided Centres in West Dapto are delivered in line with population growth in the urban release area.

Although the quantity of retail supply is likely to be adequate, there is room for improvement relating to the distribution of this supply. There is opportunity to secure important supply and tighten Centre boundaries in areas where excess supply has diluted activity. The draft Strategy provides quantitative data to support the progression of actions of adopted Town and Village Plans and the draft City Centre Planning Strategy.

The draft Strategy highlights the need for Centres to be high quality places, with good amenity, built form quality, a diverse mix of uses and retail offers and multi-modal accessibility.

Recommendations of the draft Strategy will inform the scope of future Council projects, and support the progression of actions in adopted Centre plans.

It is recommended that the draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy be exhibited for community and stakeholder input, prior to being reported back to Council for finalisation and implementation.



Wollongong City Council

Wollongong Retail and Business Cent Strategy,

DRAFT August 2022

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We acknowledge the legacy of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra, who have always made efficient use of the abundance of natural resources, and who established many of the paths and places on which we travel and meet. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to our city, towns and villages.

Contents

	Executive Summary.....	3
1	Introduction	5
1.1	Purpose of the Strategy.....	6
1.2	Study Area.....	6
1.3	Method.....	9
2	Context	11
2.1	Place	11
2.2	People.....	14
2.3	Policy.....	16
3	Planning for Centres.....	18
3.1	Planning Framework	18
3.2	Retail and Business Centres Hierarchy.....	20
4	Feedback, Analysis and Findings	23
4.1	Community and Industry Views	23
4.2	Trends and Influences	27
4.3	Forecast growth and demand.....	43
5	Strategy Recommendations.....	49
5.1	The role of our Centres is clear.....	50
5.2	Our Centres are a good fit for our community	51
5.3	Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned.....	54
5.4	Our Centres are active and vibrant	55
5.5	Our Centres are accessible and support transport mode shift.....	57
5.6	Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct.....	59
6	Appendices	61
6.1	Review of Strategic Policies	61
6.2	Retail Floorspace Supply and Demand 2021- 2041 by Centres	67

Executive Summary

'Retail and Business Centres' refers to the central business districts of villages, towns, major towns and the Wollongong City Centre. Generally speaking, these Centres have a business zoning e.g. B1, B2, B3 and B4, and include a mix of uses including commercial, residential, public recreation and social infrastructure.

Planning and development in Wollongong's Centres is currently regulated through a range of Statutory and Non-Statutory planning policies.

Key to the planning controls governing development in Centres is the Centres Hierarchy, outlined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement, and further elaborated on in the DCP Chapter B4 Development in Business Zones. The Centres hierarchy has been in place since the introduction of the Wollongong DCP 2009.

Council completed a comprehensive LGA review of Wollongong's Centres in 2004 (Hill PDA). Individual Centre studies have been prepared for Thirroul (2006), Warrawong (2013), Figtree (2013), Unanderra (2013), Corrimal (2015), Dapto (2017), Port Kembla (2018), Helensburgh (2020), and the Wollongong City Centre (2020).

The objective of the draft Retail and Business Centres Strategy is for Council to gain an understanding of the current and future retail, commercial and urban service needs of the LGA, in order to appropriately deliver more sustainable local employment opportunities, economic productivity and convenient access to services for an increasing and evolving population.

Key Findings

Centres are largely performing in line with the current Retail and Business Hierarchy.

Wollongong's Centres have sufficient retail supply to meet current demand. Our Centres have a generous amount of feasible supply to allow retail businesses to grow in response to

increased demand, far exceeding what is needed to meet the 2041 forecast.

The delivery of planned Centres in West Dapto is critical to ensure the proper functionality of the urban release area.

Expectations for development outcomes for West Dapto Centre sites, including land use mix and built form, could be more clearly communicated through the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Centre zoning boundaries do not always reflect the functional boundaries of our Centres. There is a need to protect existing supply in some locations where it is located on land zoned residential on the fringe of Centres. There is also a need to reduce business zoning in some Centres where the requirement for ground floor commercial and retail uses is spread too far to be sustained by current or future demand.

Centres can play a role in the delivery of medium density housing. The draft Strategy has identified which Centres have excess supply that could be absorbed through an increase in residential population within the Centre catchment.

Online trading continues to grow. Centres play an important role in offering consumers a physical context for the experience of goods and services.

The results of the *Shape Your Town* survey showed that 'a mix of uses' was the community's most valued attribute of a Centre.

Night-time economies are becoming an increasingly important component of Centre offers. Centres with successful night-time economies are supported by high quality public spaces, including public space activation and events programs and appropriate infrastructure.

Multi-modal accessibility is key to Centre success. Whilst most of Wollongong's Centres are easily accessible by car, public transport access to our Centres continues to be a challenge. The network of town and village Centres in our established suburbs means that our community has reasonable access by

walking to daily convenience needs from most areas. The western outskirts of suburbs south of Wollongong City Centre are an exception. The planned town and village Centres of West Dapto will all need to offer supermarket and/or grocery store offers in order to achieve optimal walkable accessibility (800m).

Wollongong City Centre is our highest order Centre, and much of the high quality office space needed to deliver on our jobs target is expected to be accommodated within it. To attract these jobs to Wollongong City Centre requires a work precinct with a distinctly commercial sense of address and strong networking opportunities amongst allied businesses. The City Centre has strong retail demand but suffers from dispersed retail activity due to the large size of the commercial and mixed use zones.

Recommendations

The role of our Centres is clear

1. Update the retail and business Centre hierarchy and definitions to reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong's Centres and guide their growth
2. Review and update planning documents to ensure consistency with the updated hierarchy

Our Centres are a good fit for our community

3. Tighten Centre boundaries to create resilient and active Centres
4. Prevent the oversupply of retail floorspace
5. Protect existing required supply
6. Explore opportunities to increase residential density

Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned

7. Encourage the development of planned Centres in West Dapto
8. Limit oversupply of retail floorspace in Centres surrounding West Dapto

9. Communicate clear expectations for Centre development outcomes

Our Centres are active and vibrant

10. Complement online trading with exceptional physical retail offerings
11. Facilitate an appropriate range of land use options to increase activity within, and patronage of, Centres
12. Update active frontage planning controls to improve street presentation
13. Facilitate an evening economy in our Towns, Major Regional Centres and City Centre that is right for our community
14. Facilitate the activation of the road reserve for outdoor dining
15. Incorporate public art to create places which are distinctive, and which reflect local identity

Our Centres are accessible and support transport mode shift

16. Provide clear direction on the role and function of streets in our Centres
17. Provide clear parking controls and public parking facilities that are in line with sustainable community needs
18. Plan for walkable Centres
19. Support cycling to Centres

Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct

20. Deprioritise residential development in the Commercial Core
21. Tighten and focus the retail core
22. Facilitate diverse land use outcomes and leverage the City's assets

The draft Strategy proposes to implement these recommendations through a range planned projects. The findings of the draft Strategy will be used to inform the scope and objectives of these projects as they progress.

1 Introduction

Our City, Town and Village Centres are the physical places we meet to do business, shop, and build community. In addition to businesses and shops, Centres also contain other uses such as housing, licensed clubs, tourism accommodation, parks and community facilities.

In a contemporary context, business, shopping and social interaction is now much bigger than these places alone, extending into the virtual and digital world of online shopping, remote working and social media. Despite this, in the context of growing populations, COVID-19 and the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change, our Centres have never been so important to our liveability and wellbeing, productivity and adaptability.

Wollongong has just under 60 Centres, ranging in size from our Wollongong City Centre, down to small villages. These Centres are distributed between Helensburgh in the north to Windang in the south. We also have new Centres that are planned for but not yet built, to service growing populations in urban release areas within West Dapto and Tallawarra in the south.

In addition, there are also around 12 bulky goods sales areas on the fringes of our Centres, such as the King Street Warrawong Precinct. Lastly there are 3 business parks, in Coniston, Port Kembla and Yallah (planned).

Centres generally occur on land zoned for business uses. The Wollongong LEP 2009 currently includes the Business Zones set out in Table 1.

Retail and business functions also occur on land not zoned business. In some Centres, shops operate on land zoned residential that sit outside the existing business zones. Conversely, in some cases land zoned business is being used for purely residential purposes, because of historic development activity; previous planning permissibility and/or lack of a market drive to deliver business outcomes in these locations.

Each of our Centres has its own unique character, role, feel and value for the local community. And each Centre has a role to play in the wider network.

Table 1- Wollongong LEP Business Zones

Zone	Name	Intent and Role
B1	Neighbourhood Centre	Provide for small-scale retail, business and community uses serving people who live or work in the surrounding neighbourhood.
B2	Local Centre	Provide for retail, business, entertainment and community uses serving people who live in, work in and visit the local area, encouraging employment opportunities in accessible locations.
B3	Commercial Core	Provide a wide range of retail, business, office, entertainment, community and other suitable land uses that serve the needs of the local and wider community, encouraging appropriate employment opportunities in accessible locations.
B4	Mixed Use	Provide a mixture of uses, integrating business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations.
B6	Enterprise Corridor	Promote businesses along main roads and encourage a mix of compatible uses, provide a range of employment uses (including business, office, retail and light industrial) and maintain the economic strength of centres by limiting retailing activity
B7	Business Park	Provide a range of office and light industrial uses, encourage employment opportunities, while enabling other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of workers in the area.

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

We all want our Centres to be successful thriving places for people to meet, connect, shop, work and live. We know how critically important these places are to both the liveability and economic health of our Local Government Area (LGA.)

There are many factors that contribute to the success of our Centres, and many inputs have a role to play to support that goal – infrastructure, place-making and activation, economic development, urban greening and more.

This Retail and Business Centres Strategy focuses on how our planning controls can support successful centres and facilitate an appropriate mix and quality of development. It is an opportunity to check in to:

- Gather feedback from our community and industry on the performance and value of our Centres;
- Explore current trends impacting centres and the retail industry;
- Gain accurate information about the current supply of retail and business uses in our centres, and where there is room to grow;
- Evaluate the performance of our centres against place specific criteria
- Consider the current and future role and function of centres in light of forecast demand, trends and aspirations; and
- Explore opportunities to improve planning outcomes including development capacity and permitted uses.

The Strategy is informed by a range of State and Council Policies. It supports our community's goals to:

- maintain the unique character of Wollongong,
- support future communities with facilities and spaces,
- attract business investment and support local business,
- provide communities with access to quality local spaces that are safe, clean and inviting
- enable our community to have access to safe, nutritious, affordable and sustainably produced food,
- provide sustainable infrastructure to access key places

The findings of this Strategy will be used to inform the scope and objectives of the following:

- Town Centre Built Form Review
- Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) Review
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter B4 Development in Business Zones Review
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D1 Character Statements Review
- Amendments to the Wollongong LEP 2009
- Wollongong Housing Strategy
- Wollongong Industrial Land Planning Review
- Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy
- Wollongong Integrated Transport Strategy
- West Dapto Town Centre Development
- Outdoor Dining Guidelines
- Ongoing Planning Proposal review and Neighbourhood planning processes

1.2 Study Area

The Strategy will consider all Retail and Business Centres in the Wollongong LGA (Figure 1). These Centres are listed in Table 2. Retail and Business Centres are generally defined by a Business (B) Land Use Zoning. In some cases, clusters of shops

on other types of zoned land (such as residential) have been included, to ensure all areas that are functioning as Centres are included. These are marked in the table with an asterisk *.



Figure 1 - Study Area – Wollongong LGA

Table 2- Current Retail and Business Centres across the Wollongong LGA

Centre Type	Centre Name		
Regional City	Wollongong		
Major Regional Centres	Warrawong	Dapto	
Major Town Centres	Corrimal Figtree	Fairy Meadow Unanderra	
Town Centres	Helensburgh Thirroul Bulli Woonona	Balgownie Port Kembla Windang Berkeley	Cringila Darkes Road (planned) Tallawarra (planned) Bong Bong (planned) Marshall Mount (planned)
Village Centres	Stanwell Park Coledale Austinmer East Woonona Rothery Street, Bellambi East Corrimal Towradgi Tarrawanna	Gwynneville Keiraville Cordeaux Heights* Farmborough Heights Koonawarra Kanaooka Brownsville (Dandaloo) Horsley	Coniston Primbee Wongawilli (planned) Jersey Farm (planned) Huntley (planned) Avondale (planned)
Small Village Centres	Bellambi Lane, Bellambi Berkeley Road, Berkeley Kelly and Nolan Streets, Berkeley Farrell Road, Bulli Kent Road, Dapto Lakelands Drive, Dapto Railway Street, East Corrimal	Cabbage Tree Lane, Fairy Meadow Weringa Avenue, Lake Heights Buena Vista Avenue, Lake Heights St Johns Avenue, Mangerton Farmborough Road, Unanderra	Fowlers (planned) Princes Highway, West Wollongong Thames Street, West Wollongong Crown Street (449-457), Wollongong
Business Parks	Bridge Road, Coniston	Wentworth Street, Port Kembla	Yallah (Planned)
Peripheral Sales Precincts (Bulky Goods)	Woodrow Place, Figtree Flinders Street, Wollongong Keira Street, Wollongong Kembla Street, Wollongong Northcliffe Drive, Kembla Grange	King Street, Kemblawarra /Warrawong Mt Ousley Road, Fairy Meadow Princes Highway, Corrimal Princes Highway, Helensburgh	Princes Highway, Russell Vale Military Road, Port Kembla Yallah (planned) Princes Highway, Dapto Princes Highway, Unanderra
Other	Industrial Zones	SP Zones: Innovation Campus and University of Wollongong Main Campus	

1.3 Method

Wollongong City Council requires an understanding of the current and future retail, commercial and urban service needs of the LGA to appropriately deliver more sustainable local employment opportunities, economic productivity and convenient access to goods and services for an increasing and evolving population. A 20-year horizon from 2021 – 2041 has been selected for the purpose of this Strategy.

To develop this understanding, Council took a combined quantitative and qualitative approach, using a mix of methods to establish a sound evidence base, and make recommendations moving forward. The approach to research and analysis was informed by the questions posed at each stage of the project. These are outlined overleaf.

The Strategy was prepared with technical support and input from SGS Economics and Planning (SGS). SGS's work is referenced as 'the SGS Study' throughout this document, and the tasks completed by them marked with an * in the table above. Detailed descriptions of methods used by SGS are contained within the SGS Study.

We acknowledge use of the following data sources:

- ABS Census Data
- id. (community profile, forecast population, social atlas & economy)
- Department of Planning and Environment Population Forecasts
- Transport for NSW (TZP19) forecasts for Wollongong (travel zone level)
- Spendmapp by Geografia
- PSMA Geoscape building data
- Google places data
- Cordell Connect
- ANZIC codes
- Marketinfo data set (modelled off ABS Household expenditure surveys)

- Movement and Place Built Environment Indicators

COVID-19 Pandemic

The Strategy was prepared during the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. Some data was sourced, and community engagement undertaken, when health orders were in place. As such, community and stakeholder engagement were conducted via phone calls and online surveys. Data has been obtained and extended to cover pre-pandemic periods (e.g., prior to April 2020), to illustrate 'normal' conditions. The impacts of COVID-19 on various outcomes (immigration, employment, spending etc) have been illustrated throughout the report.

Although most restrictions and public health orders have been lifted at the time of this Strategy being drafted, the long-term impact of COVID-19, particularly on where people work, how people shop and their appetite to spend time in busy locations remains unknown.

Relationship with the Councils Housing Strategy and the Industrial Lands Review

Council is currently completing several significant LGA-wide land use strategies – this Retail and Business Centres Strategy, the Housing Strategy, and the Industrial Lands Planning Review. These strategies will all make recommendations regarding land availability and capacity for development. They will also all seek to balance the interests of economic growth and employment; greater housing diversity; the provision of adequate public open spaces; and access to public transport modes.

As part of the Strategy, SGS considered retail supply in industrial areas, and capacity for residential intensification in Centres. Conversely, recommendations coming from the Housing and Industrial Lands work will consider the findings and recommendations of this Strategy.

Table 3- Approach and methods

Background and Base Data	
What is our community and how are we projected to grow?	<i>Literature review</i> : of all relevant policies and studies to inform the aims and objectives of the Strategy
What are our priorities as defined by our key planning strategies?	<i>Demographic and population forecast analysis</i> : to understand the current and future population, and inform the retail demand modelling
What are the key planning documents to be reviewed?	<i>Engagement with technical staff</i> : to establish key stakeholders for consultations, and collate current issues across assessment and economic development
What has our community told us about their concerns and aspirations for our Centres?	
Existing Centres Appraisal	
What's the break-down of land uses?	<i>Planning data collation</i> : an audit of current centres including all lots and associated planning controls to inform the existing supply and capacity modelling. Focus on Business zoned land, with some exceptions where relevant.
What is their capacity to grow within the current planning controls?	<i>Floorspace supply audit</i> *: combination of desktop data audit and on ground review
Is growth currently feasible?	<i>Commercial floorspace supply</i> *: allocation of Gross Floor Area (GFA) by employment numbers at a centre-based level using ANZIC codes
What is the community's view?	<i>Retail and commercial capacity</i> *: Net yield calculated by subtracting existing floorspace supply from possible yield across available sites.
How are the Centres performing?	<i>Feasible capacity</i> *: High, medium and low yield scenarios based on standard development contexts.
	<i>Engagement with the community</i> : to establish a set of prioritised place-based criteria in relation to centres
	<i>Multi criteria analysis</i> *: evaluation against place-based criteria, weighted according to community prioritisation.
	<i>Accessibility modelling</i> *: walkable catchments modelled in GIS
Forecast Demand	
What's happening with retail more broadly and how will this inform the future of our Centres?	<i>Contemporary research review</i> *: to determine relevant trends impacting Wollongong
How are people living and working?	<i>Planned floorspace</i> *: Cordell Connect search
How will that change? What are our priorities for jobs growth, and housing density?	<i>Potential floorspace (future Centres)</i> *: Strategic planning review and apportionment across retail types
Can growth be accommodated?	<i>Commercial floorspace demand</i> *: demand units generated through employment forecasts then converted to floorspace.
Is it suitable and appropriate?	<i>Retail goods floorspace demand</i> *: demand units generated by resident and worker expenditure; population forecasts applied.
	<i>Retail services floorspace demand</i> *: demand units generated through employment forecasts for retail services then converted to retail floorspace across service categories.
	<i>Gravity model</i> *: used to reconcile demand and supply,
Growth Scenarios	
How will the role and function of Centres change under future scenarios?	<i>Gravity model</i> *: used to test various scenarios including aspirational job targets, delays to planned new centres and potential areas for residential intensification.
Draft Recommendations	
What needs to change in the way we define and structure our Centres?	<i>Collation and evaluation</i> : of all previous recommendations from adopted Town and Village Plans, findings from SGS Study, strategic direction of allied LGA wide land use plans and strategies (Housing).
What changes are needed to planning controls?	
Recommendations for changes to the DCP Chapter B4 – Development in Business Zones,	
Recommendations for changes to the LEP	

2 Context

2.1 Place

The Wollongong LGA is approximately 714km² and is located 85km south of Sydney CBD. The LGA is bound by significant natural landscapes including: the Pacific Ocean; the Royal National Park; the Illawarra Escarpment; and Lake Illawarra. These features are the physical setting for most of our Centres, forming spectacular backdrops which are a key part of their place character.

Wollongong is located on Dharawal Country. Aboriginal people have been caring for Country here for tens of thousands of years, engaging in ceremony, trading and making efficient use of the area's resources. Camps, settlements and meeting places were located on the coast and near waterbodies, places which were rich in fish, crustacea and water birds, where fishing and trading activities occurred. In some locations, like Hill 60 and Red Point these activities developed into industries such as commercial fishing post European settlement.

Europeans began to make their mark on Wollongong in the early 1800s. During this time the landscape began to change dramatically, as timber cutters, grazers, agriculturalists and later dairy farmers began to use the area for its resources. With these industries and agriculture established, Europeans began to settle in the area in the 1820s and 1830s. Wollongong Township was planned in 1834, connecting business, government and community activities to the growing activity in Wollongong Harbour. As the coal industry moved in during the 1840s, villages were established in relationship with the mines, 'pit townships' sprung up, generally in alignment with established traditional Aboriginal travel routes¹. In many cases, the alignment of

our now established roads is based on these traditional routes.

From the 1860's a network of early tramway routes ran from the Escarpment Collieries east to jetties in harbours and ports, to allow for the transportation of raw materials to Sydney. These original railways also influenced future transportation routes. Bellambi village was originally established the junction of the Illawarra Railway and the South Bulli Colliery tramway lines.

As urban settlement was expanded, and inter-city connections strengthened, in the late 1880s when the Illawarra railway was completed, running between Macdonaldtown in Sydney, to Kiama. The route for the trainline was largely dictated by topography and in most cases sat parallel and at a distance to established travel routes and towns. The Railway also caused tourism to increase and seaside towns and villages such as Austinmer and Thirroul expanded as business boomed. Some townships originally situated along road travel routes such as in Bulli also began to shift towards railway stations, creating competing commercial centres.

As steelmaking was added to Wollongong's industry in the 1920s, new towns were established. Cringila, or 'Steel town' as it was originally known, was released as a subdivision in the same year the steelworks opened, and in 1937 Charles Hippisley opened a mixed business and unofficial post office in Newcastle Street, Cringila, kick starting the town centre.

In 1913 Port Kembla was connected to Wollongong by rail, providing an important freight function, then a passenger service some years later. As on the existing Illawarra line, the

¹ Department of Environment and Heritage, Early Contact Map

rail stations on the new extension were misaligned from the locations of the town centres, being located instead to service the Port, mining and steelmaking operations. Some of the Town Centres along these routes have experienced times of boom and decline, as residential and worker populations have fluctuated.

Across Wollongong, the combination of the topography, the rail line's alignment, and its combined passenger and freight roles continue to present challenges to the way we plan for our centres.

The most significant period of urban expansion occurred after World War II when successive waves of overseas immigration occurred to meet labour force needs associated with industrial expansion. This saw towns like Port Kembla grow significantly, along with surrounding villages at Lake Heights and Cringila.

In 1949 the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme included the zoning of Helensburgh and noted the area from Sandon Point, Bulli up to Stanwell Tops as land reserved from future planning. Although draft instruments were in place through the 1950s and early 1960s, the whole LGA was not formerly zoned until 1968, through the introduction of the Illawarra Planning Scheme.

Throughout the 1960s and 70s urban growth, including new towns and villages, occurred on the edges of existing urban areas, through greenfield development. As new subdivisions were created portions of this land was reserved for business uses, for the development of neighbourhood shops and local centres.

Since the 2000s, significant growth has been planned for West Dapto and Tallawarra. Planning for this land release includes detailed structure plans which specify the type and distribution of centres to serve the growing population. Even with forward planning to ensure these new communities have good access to services, the delivery of centres in urban release areas is slow, tending to follow population density, rather than being a catalyst for it.

Today, Wollongong's Centres provide a connected network that provides our community with access to goods and services, entertainment, community interaction and employment. Planning for the ongoing success of our Centre network will include addressing the opportunities and challenges that come with the unique place we inhabit, and the legacy of the movement corridors and public transport network we have inherited.



Figure 2 - The layout of Wollongong's centres is strongly influenced by its natural landscape, patterns of industry and the movement networks which connect it to the surrounding areas. These aspects have informed the way people have settled and gathered for thousands of years

2.2 People

Who are we?

The first release of the 2021 Australian Census results provides an updated snapshot of the Wollongong community.

- The average Wollongong resident is aged 39, married and living in a family household.
- The largest service age group in Wollongong was Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49 years old), however the three age groups that increased the most since 2016 were:
 - Seniors (70 to 84 years): +2,902 persons (+14.3%)
 - Young workforce (25 to 34): +2,390 persons (+9.2%)
 - Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69 years): +2,115 persons (+9.8%)
- 74.9% of residents were born in Australia, and 3.2% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. 19.3% of households use a language other than English.
- Around one third of Wollongong residents own the dwelling they live in, one third is paying off a mortgage on that home, and the remaining third is renting. More than two thirds of us live in a detached house, and around one fifth live in an apartment.
- 28.6% of Wollongong residents are obtaining a tertiary qualification.
- Wollongong's median household weekly income is \$1,682. 18.6% of households earn less than \$650 per week, and 23.8% earn more than \$3,000.
- 54.6% of households have 2 or more registered vehicles.
- 71.2% of people who live in Wollongong indicated they travel to work in a motor vehicle, 5.5% travelled by train, 2.0% travelled by bus, 3.6% used active transport (such as cycling or walking) and 3.5% worked at home (ABS 2016 Census).

How are we growing?

In 2021, we had an Estimated Resident Population of 214,656 (ABS 2021 Census).

Since 2016, Wollongong LGA has added an estimated 4,263 residents. The majority of Wollongong's population growth has occurred in the suburb of Wollongong and throughout the West Dapto Urban Release Area. Figtree, Bulli and Corrimal also experienced high growth in comparison with other suburbs.

Since 2016, we have added 5,424 dwellings to our LGA. 32.7% of those were medium or high density (town houses or apartments), compared to 17% in Regional NSW.

Our population is expected to increase to 278,744 residents by 2041 (Forecast.id), adding an estimated 23,186 new private dwellings.²

The suburbs with the greatest projected population change are shown in Table 4, along with their relevant Town Centres. No suburbs show a significant projected negative change.

New housing developed in Wollongong will include a range of housing typologies, across low, medium and high densities. Centres play an important role in increasing our medium and high-density housing stock. The Wollongong City Centre has seen significant growth in apartment development. Fairy Meadow and Corrimal are also seeing increased apartment development within their Town Centres.

² Note this forecast has not yet been updated based on the 2021 Census.

Housing development within our urban release area is still largely detached housing and dual occupancies. As identified in the Draft Housing Strategy there is an opportunity to increase housing density and include more medium

density typologies in and around our planned West Dapto Centres. This would support the demand for retail and other population servicing businesses as these Centres grow.

Table 4- forecast population- key areas

Areas with the highest forecast growth >1000pp 2016 – 2041		
Suburb		Centre
Wollongong Suburb		Wollongong City Centre
West Dapto Urban Release Area	Kembla Grange	Planned Darkes Rd Town Centre
	Dombarton – Wongawilli – Huntley	Planned Wongawilli and Jersey Farm Village Centres
	Avondale – Cleveland	Planned Huntley and Avondale Village Centres
	Marshall Mount - Haywards Bay - Yallah	Planned Marshall Mount Centre
	Horsley	Planned Bong Bong Major Town Centre
Corrimal		Corrimal Major Town Centre
Keiraville – Mount Keira		Keiraville Village Centre
Dapto - Brownsville		Dapto Major Regional Centre
Figtree		Figtree Major Town Centre
Kanaooka		Kanaooka Village Centre
Bulli		Bulli Town Centre

What jobs exist in Wollongong?

There were an estimated 94,524 jobs located in Wollongong LGA in the year ending June 2021 (NIEIR 2021 and economy.id). This is equivalent to 73,479 full time equivalent (FTE) positions. Retail jobs account for 8.1% of these, offering FTE employment to around 5,960 people. This proportion has remained static since 2016.

There were 14,141 registered businesses in Wollongong in 2021 (economy id). Retail Trade accounted for 6.7% of these businesses (943). There were 46 more retail business in 2021 than recorded in 2016.

Table 5- Wollongong's top Industries by employment

5 largest employers by Industry			
Industry	People Employed (FTE)	Percentage Employed	Change 2016 – 2021 (FTE)
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,468	15.6	+555
Education and Training	9,132	12.4	+985
Construction	7,574	10.3	+525
Manufacturing	6,780	9.2	-534
Retail Trade	5,957	8.1	-15

What do we spend our money on?

In the last year (June 2021- May 2022) Wollongong residents spent \$2.565 billion on card and cash transactions inside the LGA (Spendmapp by Geografia 2022). Residents also spent \$1.021 billion outside the LGA, and \$2.038 billion through online purchases.

The top 5 resident spending categories make up over 70% of the total local resident spend. The greatest volume of spending occurs in Grocery Stores and Supermarkets, and a large portion is spent on other food related spending like dining out and buying specialised foods.

Table 6- Wollongong Local Resident Expenditure

Resident Local Spend across top expenditure categories (2021-2022)		
Expenditure Category	Resident Local Spend \$	% Total
Grocery Stores & Supermarkets	\$711.59 M	27.74%
Dining & Entertainment	\$379.47 M	14.80%
Transport	\$260.37 M	10.15%
Specialised Food Retailing	\$253.52 M	9.88%
Specialised & Luxury Goods	\$230.39 M	8.98%
Department Stores & Clothing	\$201.98 M	7.87%
Professional Services	\$193.22 M	7.53%
Bulky Goods	\$151.03 M	5.89%

2.3 Policy

The NSW State Government sets high-level strategic priorities through Ministerial directions, plans and policies. Local Governments – such as Wollongong City Council - are responsible for the application of State Plans locally through Local Strategic Planning Statements; LGA wide Land Use strategies (such as this); Town and

Village Plans and updates to local planning instruments (Wollongong LEP and DCP). Together this suite of documents helps us to plan for the future.



Figure 3 - Relationship between strategic plans

Guiding State Government and Greater Cities Commission strategic plans support a distributed approach to centre planning, to enable our community better access to employment, services and goods using a range of transport options. Walkable access to local centres which offer diverse activities, and are complimented with open space and community facilities, is a key goal. Local Character, heritage values and high-quality public domain design continue to be objectives for centre planning.

State Government led planning reforms have pursued an adaptable and flexible planning approach, allowing for innovative, contemporary retail solutions that match consumer need. This has included transitioning to fewer business/employment zones with broader objectives and permissible land uses, creating complying pathways for a wider range of business and business activities, and increasing allowances for hours of operation and the scale of development.

Wollongong City Council has clearly articulated its intent for our retail and business centres through our key documents and plans. This intent builds on the State Government objectives for a diverse and accessible Centre network and emphasises our community's value of our unique setting and the character and function of individual places.

Key Council documents acknowledge the need to balance increased housing growth and diversity, with the priority for employment

generating and population serving businesses in our centres. Local character and congestion concerns are acknowledged as key tensions where dwelling growth is occurring within centres.

Social infrastructure and public domain provision, improvement and activation are clear priorities across a range of strategic documents and operational activities. The role of our libraries, community centres and local parks in our towns and villages is critical to ensuring diverse and active Centres.

Active and public transport are key areas to develop and improve. Car dominance, particularly in relation to logistics, drive-thru food and drink premises, and click and collect functions is an area to be carefully managed to ensure pedestrian priority is maintained.

Lastly, the delivery of new Centres in our Urban Release Areas is key to ensuring adequate provision of retail services and goods to our communities of the future. There is opportunity to improve the process involved in the delivery of these centres, to ensure the best outcomes for our community.

The table in Appendix 1 explores a range of Strategic Policies in detail and highlights the relevant implications for this Strategy. Core Planning Documents including the Codes SEPP, the Wollongong LEP 2009 and the Wollongong DCP 2009 are discussed in more detail in section *3.1 Planning Framework*.

3 Planning for Centres

Centres are complex places. A strong and clear planning framework helps articulate and facilitate the community's visions for place. Planning decisions are informed by research, engagement, technical analysis, design, and testing. Where required, Council partners with leading practitioners in urban design, community consultation and economics to inform our policies and plans.

Planning policies are reviewed and updated in response to a range of complex issues including demographic change, development challenges and opportunities, environmental management, and in order to improve the amenity of our built and natural places and spaces.

A range of activities can inform changes to planning policy for Centres, from LGA-wide strategic studies like this one, down to detailed, site specific masterplans.

3.1 Planning Framework

The core planning framework includes State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP), the Local Environmental Plan (LEP), and the Development Control Plan (DCP). Key aspects of these plans relevant to development in centres are outlined below:

State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008

Development standards for exempt and complying development including:

- Outdoor dining and Mobile Food Vending
- Signage
- Change of Use
- Shop fronts and awnings
- Alternations and additions within Business Zones

The Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (LEP)

- *Objectives:* these include encouraging economic and business development to increase employment opportunities and improving the quality of life and the social well-being and amenity of residents, business operators, workers and visitors.
- *Land Use Table:* Business Zones B1 – B7 describe the majority of the objectives relevant to, and land uses permitted in Centres.

- *Part 5 Miscellaneous provisions: 5.4 Controls relating to miscellaneous permissible uses* includes a range of controls which limit the scale of certain uses including neighbourhood shops, neighbourhood supermarkets and Artisan food and drink premises.
- *Part 6 Urban Release Areas: 6.2 Development Control Plan* outlines measures to accommodate and control appropriate neighbourhood commercial and retail uses in urban release areas.
- *Part 7 Local Provisions: 5.4 Certain land within business zones* encourages activation in centres by prohibiting residential uses on the ground floor of buildings in B1, B2, B3 and B4 zones and requires an entrance and window to face the street. *7.19 Active Street Frontages* applies similar requirements to land mapped on the *Active Street Frontages Map*.
- *Part 8 Local Provisions – Wollongong City Centre: 8.7 Shops in Zone B4 Mixed Use* limits the size of shops in the B4 zone to 400sqm, to maintain the B3 zone as the principal retail area.

The Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 (DCP)

The Wollongong DCP provides a framework for the development of land across the Wollongong LGA. The DCP is a set of Council policies that

explain how developments are to be designed to meet the conditions of the LEP and State-wide rules. The purpose of the DCP is to outline built form controls to guide development that are specific to a land use; locality or planning context.

Amendments are made to the DCP on a chapter-by-chapter basis. The Chapters most relevant to development in centres include:

- *B4 Development in Business Zones:* provides objectives, strategies and detailed planning controls for retail, office premises, business premises developments, bulky goods premises and other developments and contains Council's adopted retail hierarchy strategy for both existing and planned retail and business centres within the Wollongong City LGA
- *C1 Advertising Signage and Structures:* supplements the provisions of SEPP Industry & Employment and outlines Council's requirements for advertising signage and structures
- *C12 Outdoor Restaurant and Footpath Trading (Street Vending) Activities:* provides objectives and performance criteria for outdoor restaurants and outdoor trading activities on or over public road reserve areas including footpaths, malls and other public domain areas
- *C15 Retail Markets:* outlines Council's general requirements for the proposed establishment and operation of a retail market upon any land within Wollongong Local Government Area
- *D1 Character Statements:* identifies the existing character and desired future

character for each particular suburb, often with reference to the town centre.

- *D12 Thirroul Village Centre:* a locality-based plan which seeks to strengthen the role of the centre as an economic and cultural hub through enhancing the existing character of Thirroul
- *D13 Wollongong City Centre:* a locality-based plan which provides the site specific planning requirements for development within the Wollongong City Centre precinct
- *D16 West Dapto Urban Release Area:* provides structure and guidance for the future development of the West Dapto Urban Release Area based on the West Dapto Vision 2018 and West Dapto Structure Plan

Supporting Policies

Supporting the key planning documents are the following policies:

- *Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy (NTE) Policy:* seeks to provides clarity regarding appropriate locations and hours of operation for businesses seeking to trade at night in the Wollongong CBD.
- *Outdoor Dining Council Policy:* encourages the establishment of Outdoor Dining wherever feasible and appropriate throughout the Local Government Area
- *Design and fit-out guide for food businesses:* provides guidance to operators, architects, designers, builders, equipment manufacturers and other professionals associated with the design and construction of food premises

3.2 Retail and Business Centres Hierarchy

Key to the planning controls governing development in Centres is the Wollongong Centres Hierarchy, outlined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement, and further elaborated on in the DCP Chapter B4.

In a planning context, we understand our Centres as existing within a hierarchy. Each Centre has a different role and function in respect to providing key services to a particular catchment or market. This tiered hierarchal system exists because *"higher order functions benefit from critical mass and colocation of activities and patronage whilst many so called 'lower order' functions are not necessarily less important but need to be accessed more readily and so therefore must disperse across the urban/regional landscape. They too benefit to some degree from colocation (hence still being in centres), but not to the extent of those activities found in the higher order centres"*³.

Wollongong City Centre is our **Regional City** and sits at the top of the hierarchy. Regional cities have the largest commercial component of any location in the Region and provide a full range of higher-order services, including hospitals and tertiary education services.

Major Regional Centres like Warrawong and Dapto, vary in size, location and mix of activities. They enable access to key services and facilities that offer a range of goods, services and jobs. Our **Major Town Centres** provide for the major weekly shopping and convenience retail needs for several surrounding suburbs. As we scale

down through the **Town, Village and Small Village Centres** these places tend to cater for more localized populations.

All that being said, how people use these Centres does not just follow a simple catchment logic. People will use one or many different Centres and for many different reasons.

Understanding and classifying the centres in the hierarchy allows us to manage development in those centres in an orderly way. The defined function of the centre links to appropriate objectives, land use zoning and permissibility and built form controls.

The Retail Centres of Wollongong are listed in the following diagram. Note that this reflects the current retail hierarchy, to be reviewed as part of this Strategy.

Wollongong DCP Chapter B4: Development in Business Zones includes criteria and descriptions for centres at each level of the hierarchy. These are summarised in Table 7.

The current hierarchy and definitions have not been updated for some time. An update to the Centres hierarchy should ensure that any gaps or inconsistencies are resolved, and that the functions and commodities described are reflective of the current aspirations for and activities present in our Centres. Consideration should also be given to the classification of each Centre, and whether this is reflective of the Centre's actual size and function.

³ SGS Study Paper 1 Appendix A: Centre Hierarchy Definitions, 2022

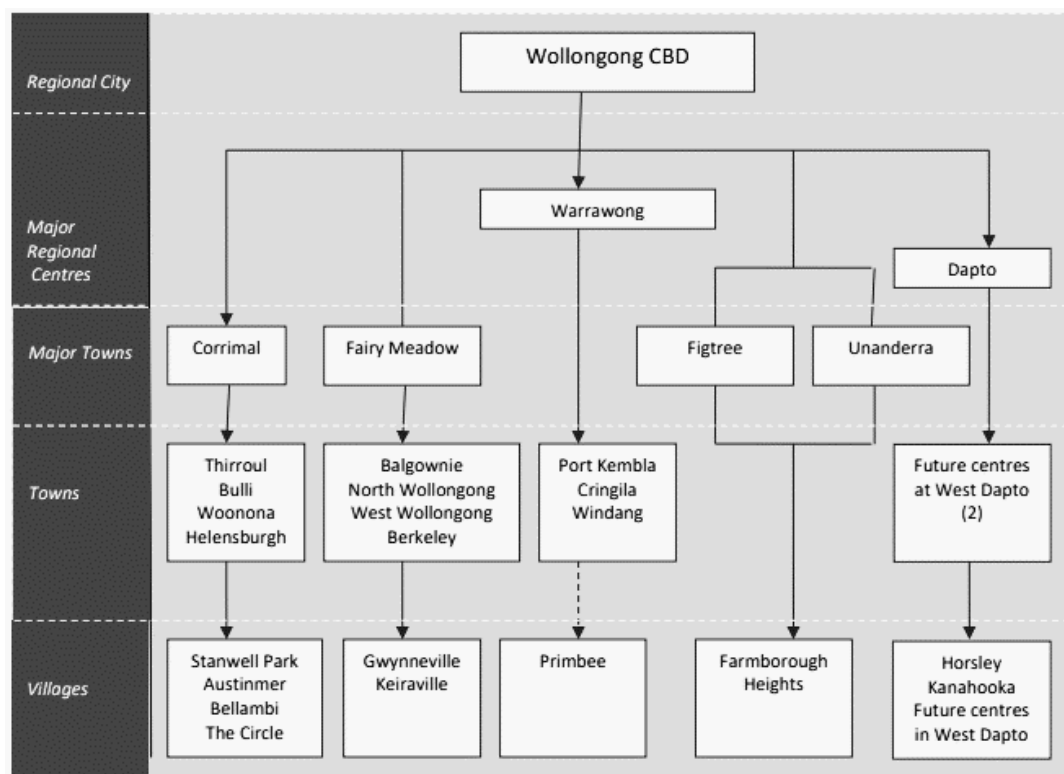


Figure 4 - Wollongong Centres Hierarchy (Source: Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020)

Table 7- Current Centres Hierarchy criteria and descriptions

Centres Hierarchy			
Centre type and scale	Functions	Location	Commodity types
Regional City (Regional Centre) Retail floorspace: 110,000m ² ~500,000m ² total retail, commercial office, civic and entertainment Population catchment: over 200,000	High order government / civic, business, health, education, entertainment, arts and cultural, community functions	Adjacent to major public transport (rail and bus) networks	Generally anchored by department stores, one (1) or two (2) discount department stores, two (2) or more full line supermarkets.
Major Regional Centres (Sub-Regional Centres) Retail floorspace: 40,000-80,000m ² Population catchment: up to 100,000	Higher order retail and other business and community functions	On major public transport network	Generally anchored by at least one (1) discount department store (DDS) and at least one (1) or two (2) full line supermarket(s) with higher order retailing and a range of non-retail services including cinemas, community services, commercial office space and professional / specialist services serving the sub-regional population.
Major Town Centres (District Centres) Retail floorspace: 20-40,000m ² Population catchment: Up to 50,000	Providing for the major weekly shopping and convenience retail needs of the surrounding population of more than one (1) residential suburb as well as a large range of specialty retail shops and non-retail services	Close to public transport (rail and/or bus) services	Generally anchored by one (1) discount department store, at least one (1) or two (2) medium to full line supermarkets and other specialty retail shops and services including banks, community services, professional offices and medical services.
Town Centres (Local Centres) Retail floorspace: 5,000 – 20,000m ² Population catchment: 10,000-20,000 (800 metre - 1 km catchment radius)	Limit provisions to the weekly and daily convenience needs of the surrounding residential catchment.	Close to public transport (bus) services	Generally anchored by a medium to full sized supermarket; May include a fruit and vegetable store, bakery, butcher and a limited range of non-retail services including a pharmacy, hairdresser(s), medical services, video / entertainment hire outlet, dry cleaning, Australia Post etc. Reduce reliance on less healthy prepared or fast-food outlets.
Villages (Neighbourhood Centres) Retail floorspace: 2,000 - 5,000m ² (~5- 30 shops) Population catchment: up to 10,000 (~ catchment radius of 600 – 800m)	Limit provisions to provide for the daily convenience needs of the surrounding residential community, especially healthy food and grocery retailing. Provide for walk-in daily shopping requirements.	5 – 10 minute walk between shops and surrounding residential population	Generally served by a small to medium sized supermarket and or mixed business type shop, fruit and vegetable retailers, newsagents, take away restaurant, bakery, butcher and some limited non-retail services including a hairdresser, dry cleaning, video / entertainment hire outlet etc.
Small Villages (Local Convenience Centres) 100 – 2,000m ² 700 – 1,000 dwellings (catchment radius of ~ 400 – 500m)	Primarily provide for the daily convenience needs of the surrounding residential population for each suburb.		Generally, includes small supermarket and / or mixed business and possibly a fruit and vegetable store, butcher, bakery etc;

4 Feedback, Analysis and Findings

4.1 Community and Industry Views

To inform the preparation of this Strategy, feedback was sought from key industry representatives and the community. An overview of the purpose of this engagement, questions asked, and feedback received is provided below.

Community

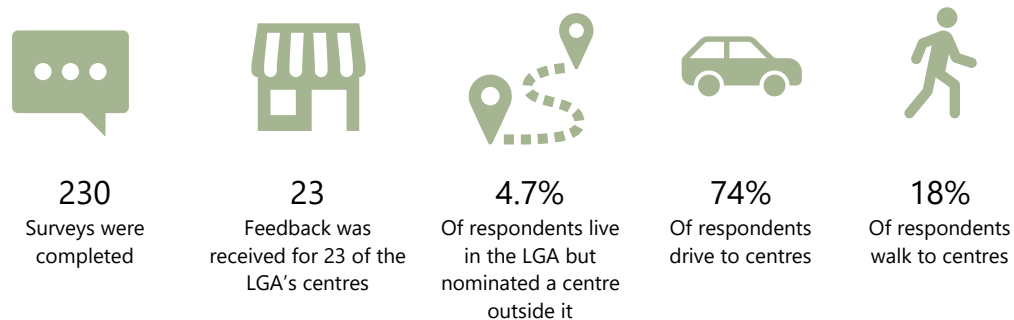


Figure 5 – Shape Your Town Survey information

The *Shape Your Town* survey was open for a period of three (3) weeks from 27 October – 17 November 2021 inclusive. The purpose of this survey was to:

- understand which attributes our community values most in a Centre.
- understand what our community likes about the Centre(s) they use.
- understand how the community access Centres
- gain suggestions for how our Centres could be improved from either a utility or experiential perspective.

An overview of the feedback received is provided below. A total of 230 surveys were received with respondents providing Council with feedback on 23 Centres within the LGA, with the most responses received for our larger centres such as Wollongong City Centre (41), Dapto (30), Thirroul (30), Figtree (20), Warrawong (16) and Fairy Meadow (14).

The survey asked respondents to consider 8 criteria and prioritise them in response to the following two questions:

- a. What's most important to you when you visit your local shops?

Question a) asked respondents to arrange the criteria in order of importance with 1 being the most important to 8 being the least important. The results shown in the following table are the collated responses, with the top being the most important and the bottom the least important overall.

- b. What do you like about your local shops?

Question b) asked respondents to select all criteria that were important to them. The results shown in the following table are the most frequently selected responses, with 1 being the most selected and 8 being the least selected.

Table 8- Ranked responses to the Shape Your Town survey

Rank	Value What's most important to you when you visit your local shops?	Responses	Experience What do you like about your local shops?
1	Mix of Uses	167	Major supermarket
2	Comfort and Amenity	145	Easy to access via car
3	Major supermarket	143	Mix of Uses
4	Easy to Park	119	Easy to Park
5	Places to gather	90	Comfort and Amenity
6	Character and quality	88	Walk and Cycle
7	Easy to access via car	78	Places to gather
8	Walk and Cycle	57	Character and quality
9	Public Transport	50	Public Transport

Two observations can be made based on the differences between the responses to question a and b.

1. Certain attributes that are identified as being the most important to respondents, aren't necessarily available to them when they visit their local centre. So, whilst someone may value something very highly, it may not be present in the location where they regularly shop, and it may not be important enough to cause them to shop elsewhere. Comfort and amenity for example, drops from 2nd most important to 5th most selected as something respondents liked about their local centre.
2. When asked to select all attributes that they liked about their local shops, the top 4 responses related to offer (supermarket and mix of uses) and accessibility (easy to drive to and park). These attributes are fundamental success factors for most existing Centres and are reflective of practical needs relating to accessing daily goods and services.

Respondents were also asked an open response question of "What do you think will improve your local shops?". Responses received have

been collated and grouped under five (5) reoccurring themes outlined in Table 8- Ranked responses to the Shape Your Town Survey. The information gathered through the survey provides general insights into what attributes of centres are important to the survey respondents.

A theme that comes through strongly is a desire to shop locally and the importance of attractions such as food and entertainment in creating a vibrant, desirable, and accessible centre. Responses highlight aspects of our city planning that may need diversification, protection and/or improvement such as public transport, building controls and walking connections.

The information from this survey was used by *SGS Economics and Planning* to inform their Multi Criteria Assessment of Centres (section 4.3). The relative importance of different attributes of Centres was used to determine weightings of each criterion to better reflect the importance of certain attributes to the community.⁴ The results of the Multi Criteria Analysis were then used as an input into the Gravity Model, which balances supply and demand of retail

⁴ *SGS Study Paper 1 Appendix A: Multi Criteria Assessment, 2022*

Figure 6 - Open feedback from the Community

Improvements to Centres – Respondent suggestions	
Theme	Summary of feedback
<i>Diversity of offers</i>	A greater variety of offers including specialty stores and boutiques, local traders, supermarkets, restaurants, bars and cafes as well as outdoor dining offers. Having a mix of local and chain offers but ensuring that chain and large format offers are appropriate for a centre. Activate centres by filling empty spaces, improving evening offers and extending outdoor dining.
<i>Traffic conditions</i>	Improvements to parking in the form of more spaces (including accessible and electric charging spaces) that are free and untimed. Existing off-street carparks are perceived as unsafe and in need of renewal. Increased traffic calming measures and move traffic away from town and village centres
<i>Active and public transport choice</i>	Improved public transport offers and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists by way of improved and connected footpaths, safe locations to cross street and designated cycleway networks.
<i>Improvements to amenity</i>	Purposeful landscaping in the form on canopy trees, flowers and community gardens to improve the look and feel of centres. Increased access to multi-purpose public spaces integrated within town centres allowing places to meet, play and socialise and ensuring spaces are safe, clean, smoke free with access public amenities.
<i>Retention of unique character</i>	Retaining a 'village feel' and celebrating the unique character of centres. Upgrades to building facades, working with landlords to fill vacant shops and integrating public art into centres. Development should be suited to a Centre's character, with stronger planning control in place to control outcomes.
<i>Scale and quality of development</i>	Concerns were raised about the over-development of centres and suburbs. Some respondents wanted high-rise apartments to be contained to the Wollongong City Centre. More flexibility in zones to permit a variety of businesses in centres including small scale manufacturing. Development that provides amenity and enhances villages was encouraged.

OUR WOLLONGONG JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Shape Your Town Centre

We've more than 70 local shopping areas and town and village centres across our city. Right now, we're working on long term plans for these essential places. We're keen to hear from you about the shops that you visit, why you visit them and what you like about them.



Fill in a survey to go in the draw to win one of six \$50 VISA gift cards.
Find the survey by scanning the QR code or visiting www.our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Figure 7 – Shape your Town Survey signage in place

Industry

In July 2021, *SGS Economics and Planning* led targeted conversations with key local industry stakeholders including major developers, local agents, land and business owners, and industry representatives. The focus on this feedback was to assist in defining the implications of trends and drivers (section 4.2) on Wollongong LGA.

The key objectives of the engagement were to:

- Understand the local economic conditions that are driving investment and business location in the LGA,

- Gain market insight into development patterns across the LGA's centres, including development patterns that may be unique or nuanced to specific submarkets, and
- Have an appreciation of related activities that are already taking place or may take place in the future across Council and other allied organisations such as local chambers of commerce.

Table 9 provides a summary of the industry engagement feedback categorised as themes.

Table 9- Industry feedback

Theme	Summary of feedback
<i>Supermarkets and food-retailing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major supermarket chains are exploring options for smaller format supermarkets within the LGAs suburbs. • Major Supermarkets are monitoring growth in West Dapto and watching COVID impacts. • Exploration for sites and then negotiations with landowners are important to the process of finding the right locations for potential supermarkets/stores.
<i>Wollongong CBD</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opinion remains that the Crown Street Mall lacks activation to attract people to visit. The cost of having and holding land in the CBD is a barrier (rates, levies etc). • Wollongong CBD is diversifying from a retail-based CBD to include residents, experience-based retail (cafes and small bars) and tech and shared services sectors. • Retail will need to meet the needs of CBD residents (these residents will have higher incomes than other residents LGA wide) and of workers in the CBD. • Commercial agents raised intrinsic conflicts between residential and commercial uses, with premium companies wanting pure commercial buildings and residential outcompeting all other land uses. As such, there was support for quarantined precincts for commercial only development through a review of CBD planning controls. • The mixed-use developments have not been successful, with many commercial vacancies at ground. • There has been an approx. 70% uplift in A-grade office stock in Wollongong but the Wollongong office market is still largely unknown to Sydney based commercial real estate agents. • Due to COVID-19 Office markets are changing and CBDs are getting quieter with many people working from home. This results in a lack of foot traffic in the CBD, which is problematic for retail businesses. Migration from cities to regional locations poses an opportunity for Wollongong to activate the Centre. • Support for increased night-time economy to support and foster activity in place making such as updates on planning certificates and extension of licences allowing 2am trading.
<i>Resurgence in manufacturing and Industry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many businesses are moving from the CBD to the growth centres of Wollongong where rent is cheaper, building footprints are larger and parking is available. • There has been a rise in enquiries for industrial lands particularly around Port Kembla. Many of these are in energy resources such as gas and hydrogen, which could bring significant jobs creation extending beyond those uses to their supply chains. • Some stakeholders believed that some industrial land may be better suited as residential such as in Kembla Grange.
<i>Jobs in West Dapto</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to consider the role of future West Dapto centres and what local employment opportunities are there beyond retail to provide self-sufficiency and job choice.
<i>Diversifying economy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wollongong economy has been undergoing a process of diversification, moving from a manufacturing to a service led economy. While there are still some manufacturing jobs located within Wollongong LGA, this industry no longer dominates the employment market. This trend has been driven by businesses and residents relocating from Sydney to Wollongong.

4.2 Trends and Influences

The distribution, role and function of centres across Australia is shaped by a range of factors. This section explores the most influential and applicable key trends that are affecting the business and retail economy broadly and the implications of these trends on the Wollongong LGA specifically, both now and into the future.

The evolution of our Centres

The role and evolution of Wollongong's retail and business centres has changed since the formation of our post-colonial townships in the 19th century. We moved from walkable, local commercial high streets providing all your daily needs and founded to support core industries such as mining and the steelworks, to the rise of shopping malls formed around large corporations and supported by mass production and improvements to freight. These large shopping centres were a new land use, built form and centre offer in themselves, catering to private car ownership and a desire for the convenience of a one-stop-shop. These shopping centres competed with the traditional high-streets and drew activity from the streets and public spaces inside.

For much of Australia's history, retail trading was heavily restricted, with night-time and weekend trading limited. In recent decades, as part of a broader push towards economic deregulation, retail trading hours have been increased, with

retailers and service providers now able to generate activity outside of 'standard' business hours.

The emergence of personal smart phones and online retailing has disrupted the role and function of both the high street and shopping mall forms. Online shopping offers both diversity and convenience, key success indicators for retail success.

As our population grows and diversifies, consumer values have shifted with a desire to return to small businesses, seek experiences and shop sustainably and locally. This has seen some small businesses and creatives shift into older high-street building stock and a resurgence of the traditional high-streets and centres. Online shopping remains a strong economy, and rather than trying to compete, most Centre businesses now recognise the need to have a complementary online and physical presence

Today, decentralised working, online shopping and social media has changed our traditional behaviours. Where we spend our time and our priorities and spending habits are not what they were when our Centres were developed. As we continue to evolve our existing Centres, and deliver new Centres in our Urban Release Areas, it is important that we recognize these contemporary behaviours and priorities and plan accordingly.



Figure 8 -The evolution of Centre typologies and retail trends

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 global pandemic commenced in early 2020 and resulted in Governments, including the NSW Government, sending communities and economies into lockdowns with an aim to reduce the spread of the virus. As we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is challenging to predict, what its long-term impact will be on specific communities, economies, and Centres. However, the SGS Study referenced a paper by Florida et.al.⁵ which identifies three main forces that have the potential to lead to the long-lasting transformation of cities:

- **Social Scarring:** Fears which result in people avoiding crowded spaces or changing how they interact with others. This behaviour influences where people live, work and spend time.
- **Forced experiment for employment, shopping, resident choice and commuting:** The restrictions enforced by health orders have provided conditions for a forced and radically different experiment including

remote online working, learning and shopping. Social interactions have been largely limited to social media and digital platforms. It remains to be seen whether these online alternatives will permanently alter and/or replace traditional interactions as face-to-face communication becomes more practical

- **Need to secure the urban built environment against this and future health and climate risks:** Social distancing creates the immediate need for different configurations of indoor and outdoor spaces. Some of these changes will likely be maintained whether for public health benefits, or because people simply prefer them. In the long term this pandemic will prompt architects, designers, and planners to more seriously consider permanent interventions that respond to future pandemics and climate risks.

The impact of COVID-19 is further outlined throughout this section.

Population Change

Overall, population growth remains the greatest driver for retail growth in centres, particularly supermarkets. As population growth (driven largely by immigration) is the demand driver for retail facilities the decrease in population growth during COVID-19 has caused delays in growth and financial pressure.

Although we saw a decrease in international migration during COVID-19, we saw a shift in internal migration patterns to some regional areas. This is driven by a change in value proposition in favour of higher-amenity, lower-cost regional centres supported by the option for people to choose to work from home and avoid a commute to inner Sydney.

Online Retailing

Online retailing is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet, rather than in-person, using a web browser or a mobile app. People shop online to

save time, locate the best price and shop at a time convenient to them.

The rise of online retail is not a new trend and has been impacting on Australia's retail sector for over a decade. The market share of online

⁵ R.Florida, A.Rodriguez-Pose, M.Storper (2020) Cities in a Post COVID world

retail has grown by approximately 0.75% per annum.

COVID-19 saw a faster shift to online retail than projected and this trend to shop online is assumed to remain strong, especially for people who cannot easily access a Centre with diverse offers. During COVID lockdown periods in 2020, this share spiked to 11.1%. Although this share has dropped back, it has not adjusted to pre-COVID levels, suggesting an increased share could become permanent.

Online retailing has the potential to cover all retailing categories but impacts some categories more than others. Merchandise, specialty stores, apparel and department stores have all experienced a shift away from in-store purchasing.

As part of their scenario testing, SGS explored how an acceleration in online retailing would impact Centres in Wollongong. The results

showed that specialty retailing and therefore the City Centre and large major-regional Centres like Warrawong and Dapto (which tend to have department stores) were the most impacted. Town Centres were least affected, given they principally tend to service customer's daily food needs.

Retail services (gyms, health care, childcare etc) are not expected to be significantly impacted by an increase to online spending.

Initially the retail industry perceived online shopping as a direct threat to bricks and mortar stores. Today, businesses are expanding to service models with both online and in-person retailing. This has opened up new ways for people to shop, including 'Click & Collect'.

For Centres to be attractive to consumers and maintain physical activation, they will need to perform well across a range of factors. These are outlined in Table 10.

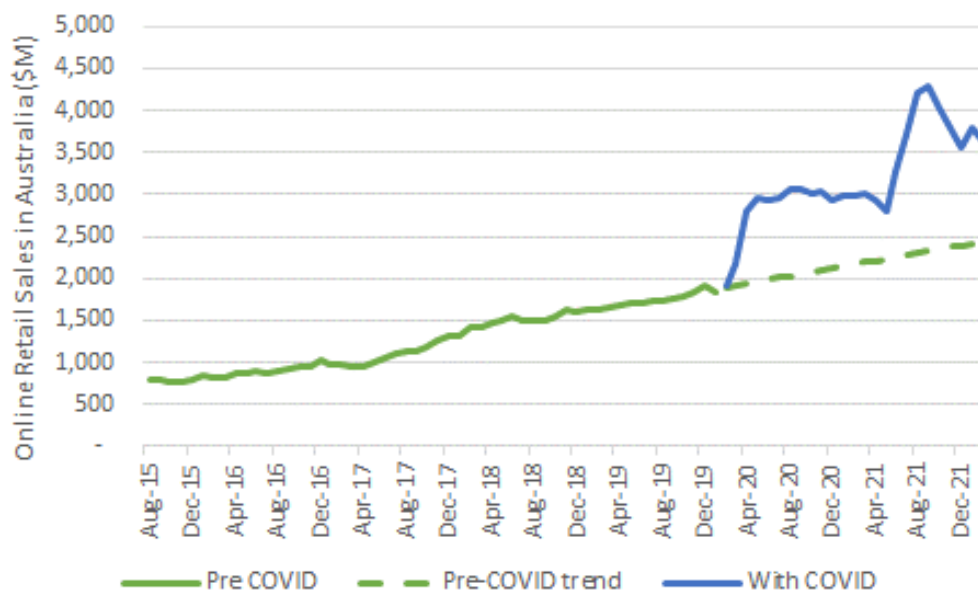


Figure 9 - Growth of Online Retail, Australia. Source: Source: ABS 8501.0 Retail Trade (Source - SGS Study)

Table 10- Maintaining physical activation in Centres (source – SGS Study)

Key elements for physical stores	How planning can optimise centres on those indicators
Visual presentation	Encourage investment that refreshes shopfronts, prevent floorspace oversupply which can lead to vacancies. Where existing assets complement place character, planning should seek to enhance these features (e.g. heritage, natural amenity).
Physical access	Ensure adequate traffic and pedestrian movement strategies are in place across the centre
Encouraging footfall	Have strong anchors in strategic locations. Make use of major infrastructure such as new railway stations and natural assets such as parks, riverfront and foreshores.
Enticing vibe	Manage the aesthetic element of centres across infrastructure, tenancies and design. Work with businesses on street presentation.

The growth of online retailing has had implications on many industries, including freight and logistics. Over a quarter of online customers are willing to pay for same-day delivery. This has placed pressure on 'last mile' logistics, which is the most important and most expensive leg the of the delivery process. Traffic congestion, geographical distance, and

customer expectations, require distribution Centres to be in areas close to residential populations. Centres are ideal logistical locations, however, prices in and around Centres are high and the impact of 24/7 operations and vehicle dominance on urban amenity needs to be considered in detail to ensure Centres retain pedestrian priority.

Retail Types

Over the past 20 years, the retail sectors growth has slowed across Australia, with annual growth trending downwards. There are a range of factors that have contributed to this decline:

- Increase in the proportion of income saved
- Long-term low real wage growth
- Record housing prices
- Change in spending priorities e.g., on travel and increasing life costs

- Change in consumer preferences for shopping experiences.

Although COVID-19 has provided significant distortion in this downward trend, it is assumed likely that this trend will resume its long-term trajectory.

Trends across different retail types are explored in this section.



Figure 10 - Quarterly retail expenditure growth in Australia, 1996 to January 2021. Source: SGS Study

Food Retailing

Food-based retailing includes bakeries, bars, cafes, convenience stores, restaurants, liquor stores, grocery stores and supermarkets. Wollongong has over 330 stores in this category.

Traditionally most Centres and high-streets were anchored by a supermarket, clustered with smaller stores that benefited from the supermarket's ability to attract a high volume of sales.

This condition is still in place in contemporary Centres, although Supermarket offers are diversifying to include new chains, changing formats to smaller metro-style stores, offering online shopping and delivery options (click and collect) and tailoring offers to market to individual communities. Non-supermarket food retailers such as bakeries, butchers and delis also play a significant role although are competing more and more with larger supermarkets, which often include these specialised offerings.

Wollongong City Centre may be a candidate for some of these evolving trends, especially metro style supermarkets with specialty food retailing, which are attractive in walkable higher density locations. Public domain improvements such as

active and public transport connections across large and small Centres will support the success of these smaller offerings.

Service-based cafes, bars and restaurants have experienced strong growth over the past five years, supported by the rise in alfresco dining and 'eat street' culture. The facilitation of outdoor dining and restaurant-defined retail strips requires a collection of physical and policy settings to be in place. These include generous footpaths, attractive building character, a strong focus on urban amenity (including street trees, provision of furniture and pedestrian/diner safety) as well as supportive policies (late night trade and evening economy).

The distribution of population growth will drive locational decisions around future food retailers, particularly new supermarkets and their supporting retailers. West Dapto is a strong candidate for new clusters of food retailing and it is important to provide land for a variety of sizes and types of these offers. It is important that these offers occur within defined Centre locations, to capitalise on the activation potential and ensure they don't move to out of centre locations which are more affordable but will not provide flow on benefits.

Department and Specialty Stores (non-food)

Wollongong's non-food retail economy includes shopping malls, department stores and other specialty stores such as jewellery, bike and book stores. Wollongong has over 80 stores in this category.

The role and influence of Department and specialty stores has been decreasing for some time due to the competition of online platforms. The trend is expected to continue, along with general merchandise/ apparel sub-sectors that are just not competitive enough versus online platforms.

The exception to this is in high footfall centre locations with a higher level of natural amenity and distinctive character. These places attract consumers using a 'lifestyle' or 'experience' retailing model. Thirroul Town Centre currently performs well in this regard, and Port Kembla has the potential to do so.

Operators of large Shopping Centres that possess a prominent Discount Department Store may need to revisit their economic composition over the next decade towards more of an open and connected street mall that can attract and retain a broader group of businesses.

Bulky Goods

Bulky goods retailing primarily includes of hardware stores, household goods stores, furniture stores and car dealerships. Wollongong has over 160 stores in this category.

The decline experienced by other retail sectors has not impacted bulky goods in the same way. This is due to strong residential population growth and associated construction activity. Areas where population growth and household formation is strong are well suited to support bulky goods retail. In Wollongong this includes areas of West Dapto. These precincts are in addition to the existing network of dispersed peripheral sales areas which support established communities.

Bulky Goods retailers are well suited to locations with convenient car access. Highway locations on the periphery of centres, and car-based centres and shopping malls are common bulky goods precincts. Wollongong, Figtree, Dapto, Warrawong and Kembla Grange have a comparative advantage in this regard.

The most successful precincts are anchored by a large tenant (such as Harvey Norman, Bunnings or MITRE 10) who provide strong visitation that flows on to surrounding businesses.

Bulky goods retail should remain strong as long as these retailers still have access to affordable land in appropriate locations.

The category of 'Household Goods' can be delineated into high and low density offers e.g., lounge and dining furniture is often solely found in low-density precincts such as King Street, Warrawong. However, items such as blankets and household linen are split between high- and low-density areas such as within shopping centres in Town Centres.

Traditional town centres can't compete with the lower floorspace costs and availability of large sites available to bulky goods retailers in peripheral areas, and therefore must leverage human amenity, urban character and hospitality to attract consumers to purchase these products.

Population Serving Industries (non-food)

Population serving retail in Wollongong includes business types such as banks, salons, pharmacies, night clubs and dentists. Wollongong has over 490 businesses in this category.

These services are more experiential, and offer important opportunities for interaction, community, and connection. They require some of the highest levels of face-to-face interaction across the retail economy so are likely to remain as a strong physical presence in our Centres. That being said, they have been highly vulnerable to COVID-19 restriction, which have been a major inhibitor to the growth of the population-serving retail economy in the short term. Retail service industries are forecast to experience high growth in Wollongong, whilst retail goods are expected to decline.

SGS's scenario testing revealed that by 2041, Wollongong is likely to experience an overall 10.9% vacancy across retail goods businesses, and an 6.2% undersupply of retail services floorspace. Given the floorspace requirements for these two types of activities are similar, it is reasonable to expect that we will see a transition across existing stock, and an overall balancing of over and undersupply.

For Centres with established malls and large department stores, this transition will be more complicated, and we may see more vacancies in these location as retail goods store decline.

There is an opportunity to work towards improving the amenity and customer experience of these centres to encourage the transition to service businesses.

Commercial Trends

The Wollongong LGA has a strong commercial office sector that is well positioned to thrive. Most commercial office floorspace is located in the Wollongong City Centre CBD with more localised offers within the other suburban Centres.

The decentralisation of many government and corporate organisations creates a great opportunity for the Wollongong City Centre CBD, because it offers a setting outside of Sydney that still has an agglomeration environment that commercial firms require.

High amenity office precincts with a mix of large organisations and a strong critical mass of small to medium enterprises have an important long-term role to play. These precincts provide opportunities for different firms and services to collaborate. For these precincts to be successful they need critical mass, which is why

concentrating to a defined geographic area has great benefits.

This physical critical mass has been disrupted by COVID-19 health orders and subsequent operational adjustments. There is now a tension between the positive benefits of professional service employees working from home and facilitating internal and external collaboration in face-to-face settings. This has implications for the amount of commercial floorspace required, with some newer offices consolidating teams across smaller floorspace areas than originally intended, and sub-leasing excess floorspace to other organisations. The development sector requires an agile approach to adjust to these evolving conditions and should be cautious about making any assumptions about future floorspace requirements that could limit practical operational requirements.

Residential Development in Business Zones

Over the past ten years Wollongong LGA has seen a large amount of residential development and population moving into apartments in business zoned land, especially in the Wollongong City Centre, B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use Zones. This housing has diversified housing stock, typically taking the form of a mixed-use building. The Wollongong LEP 2009 defines shop top housing as one or more dwellings located above a ground floor retail premises or business premises. Such development is currently permitted in all business zones including the B1 Neighbourhood Centres, B2 Local Centre, B3 Commercial Core, B4 Mixed Use and B6 Enterprise Corridor zones.

The influx of shop top housing in some Centres has weakened the intent of the zones as employment land, with land locked up under strata title. This restricts future opportunities for

employment generating development.

Tokenistic ground floor retail/ business has also resulted in many locations remaining vacant, and the relative energy of the retail core weakened.

Conflicts and competition between residential and commercial land uses are evident, particularly within the Wollongong City Centre CBD. Much of the new development in the CBD has been mixed-use, which is not of preference to premium companies looking for high quality office space. There is a need to ensure the right floorspace is being delivered to create high value jobs for the community. This is more likely to occur through the development of separate mixed use and commercial precincts, more so than mixed use buildings.

Summary – Trends

Trends and drivers impacting Wollongong's centres can best be summarised as:

- **Influence of population growth:** Population growth is the greatest driver of business and centres growth.
- **Retention of centre-appropriate anchors:** For Centres to succeed and thrive, they rely on a cluster of different uses, most often with an anchor (such as supermarkets, food retailing) drawing significant footfall. Recognising and supporting retention of these anchors (e.g., the right floorspace, access, amenity) are key determinants to their success.
- **Importance of accessible centres:** Accessibility is key to Centre success. Wollongong residents' reliance on cars to access centres (over public transport or walking) has resulted in significant parking and vehicle movement within centres. This is detrimental to character and public domain, and inhibits safe and comfortable pedestrian movement. Ensuring the community have access to centres that are activated, walkable and attractive is critical in providing the greatest opportunity for local businesses and centres to thrive and survive in the face of competition from online and out of centre developments.
- **Mix of uses and activities:** Beyond Commercial and Residential, larger centres should contain a mix of activities including office, retail, dining, art and culture, community facilities, entertainment, sport and recreation. This diverse mix will generate an environment that attracts, retains and grows businesses into the future. These uses should extend to cover night-time economies supported by high quality public spaces, including public space activation and events programs and appropriate infrastructure.
- **Quality and experience of the Urban Environment:** Service based retailing that is more experiential, especially in a suburban context, tends to offer important opportunities for interaction, community and connection. Services span from libraries and childcare to hair salons, gyms and coffee shops. We can support these offers through building and public domain improvement, night-time economy initiatives, access, space for outdoor dining and extension of trading hours.
- **Ensuring resilience to pandemics:** The built environment and planning policy settings need to remain flexible to support any distancing restrictions (spaces for dining), to allow for businesses to pivot.
- **Building a critical mass of office businesses:** High amenity office precincts with a strong critical mass of Small to Medium Enterprises (anchored by some larger corporates) have an important long-term role to play to ensure a diverse provision of employment and professional services to the community. Higher order centres, and especially the City Centre, need to have appropriate planning control settings to enable this to occur.
- **Residential development in Centres:** Some Centres are well placed to facilitate medium and high density dwelling development. Conflicts and competition between residential and commercial land uses are evident, particularly within the Wollongong CBD. There is a need to ensure the right floorspace is being delivered to create high value jobs for the community.

4.3 Existing Centres analysis

Retail Floorspace Supply

In Wollongong LGA, retail floorspace is spread across a number of different land use zones. Whilst most retail activity occurs in Centres, our peripheral sales precincts and industrial areas also account for a portion of our overall retail floorspace supply.

In 2021, there was around 348,000m² of floorspace in Wollongong LGA devoted to the sale of retail goods. Retail services occupied a smaller area of around 190,000m².

Retail floorspace can be broadly understood as falling into 5 different categories: food, specialty, population serving, bulky goods, and export oriented⁶. Table 11 illustrates the percentage breakdown of Wollongong's total number of retail 'stores' and their respective floorspace, under these 5 categories.

Table 11- Retail Floorspace categories and distribution (Source: SGS floorspace audit 2021)

5 Economies	Stores	Floorspace
Bulky Goods	18%	28%
Export	9%	14%
Food/Supermarket	37%	29%
Non-food retail	9%	7%
Population Serving	27%	21%

Feasible Capacity

Current planning controls provide significant capacity to respond to a growing demand for retail floorspace. Excluding sites that are relatively unlikely to redevelop and applying a feasibility filter that considers triggers for redevelopment, Wollongong LGA has over 1

million m² of additional available floorspace to meet ongoing demand for retail goods and services⁷.

Planned Floorspace and Development activity

In 2021 there was over 110,000m² of additional retail floorspace planned for development in centres across Wollongong LGA. This included floorspace allocated to our planned centres throughout West Dapto and Tallawarra (17%), and that proposed through development applications in existing centres (83%). Over half of the total planned floorspace is located within the City Centre⁸. This distribution of planned floorspace has a direct relationship with the areas where our population and dwelling numbers are growing and highlights a recognised need for adequate supply in these locations.

Centre Performance

In addition to supply and capacity to grow, there are other factors that contribute to a Centre's role and function in the overall network. These factors are place-specific, and relate to the quality of the built environment, the ease of access and the diversity of activities on offer.

The NSW Public Spaces Charter notes that *"Town centres and retail precincts that are supported with quality public spaces where people can sit, rest and connect with each other are more likely to thrive"*

Table 12 outlines this range of place specific criteria that contribute to thriving centres.

⁶ See SGS Study for explanation of retail types

⁷ SGS Floorspace Audit 2021

⁸ ibid

Table 12- Place based attributes of Centres (Source - SGS Study)

Category	Criteria
Place	1.1 Environmental quality and physical amenity
	1.2 Built form quality
Activity	2.1 Presence of private sector business anchors
	2.2 Presence of public sector and institutional anchors
	2.3 Overall land use mix
	2.4 Presence of entertainment / recreation / community uses
Access	3.1 Major arterial road access
	3.2 Public transport accessibility
	3.3 Active transport and walkability
	3.4 Car parking
Retail composition	4.1 Presence of anchor supermarket
	4.2 Presence of anchor department/discount department store
	4.3 Overall retail mix

Some of the attributes above are more important than others, both to different sectors of the community, and for the success of different types of retail activity. Access by car is an important attribute for areas specialising in the sale of bulky goods, whereas having a mix of retail and other offers is more important to those areas that specialise in food and specialty goods. These place attributes are important considerations in light of the growth of online trade, and the need for physical retail to provide the right combination of attributes and experience to attract trade and visitation.

SGS conducted an evaluation of selected centres against the criteria in the table above. The

scores against particular criteria were then weighted using the community's ranking derived through the *Shape Your Town Centre* survey. These weightings were then modified for hospitality and bulky goods to reflect the particular success factors for those industries. The table below shows how well the selected centres perform in relation to 3 key retail categories – where 0 is poor and 1 is optimal. These results resonate with the analysis completed through various town and village plans, and reinforce the need to consider our centres holistically, and in light of their desired role and function.

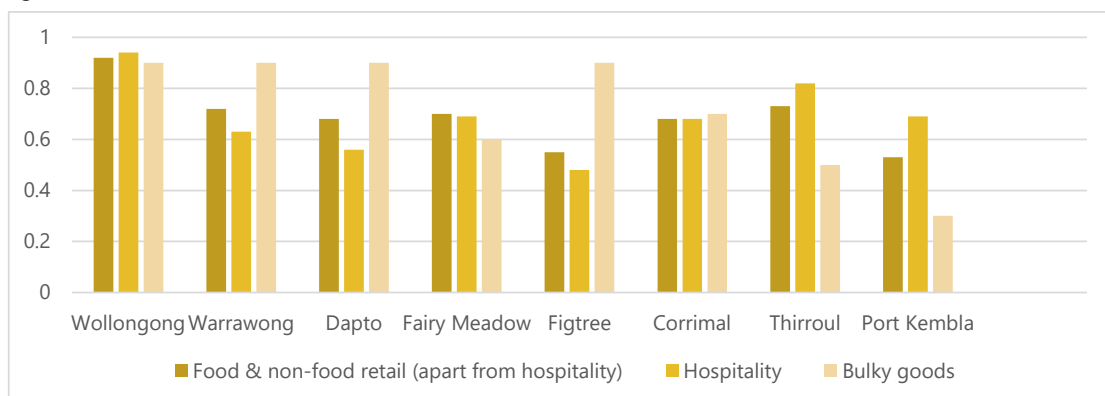


Figure 11 - Centre performance in relation to key retail categories (Source - SGS Multi Criteria Assessment)

Accessibility

Successful and equitable centres must be accessible to function well. People use multiple modes of transport to access centres.

Access by car

The nature of our LGA's geography and the number and network of available Centres means that the majority of our population can easily access a Centre with a supermarket or grocer by car.

Access by Public Transport

The majority of the Wollongong LGA has a Public Transport Accessibility Level of 1-Low to 3-Medium. For those Centres located along a major road served by bus services, accessibility within the centre and immediate surrounds is generally rated 4 – Medium-High to 5 – High. Within the Wollongong City Centre only, public transport accessibility is rated 6 - Very High.

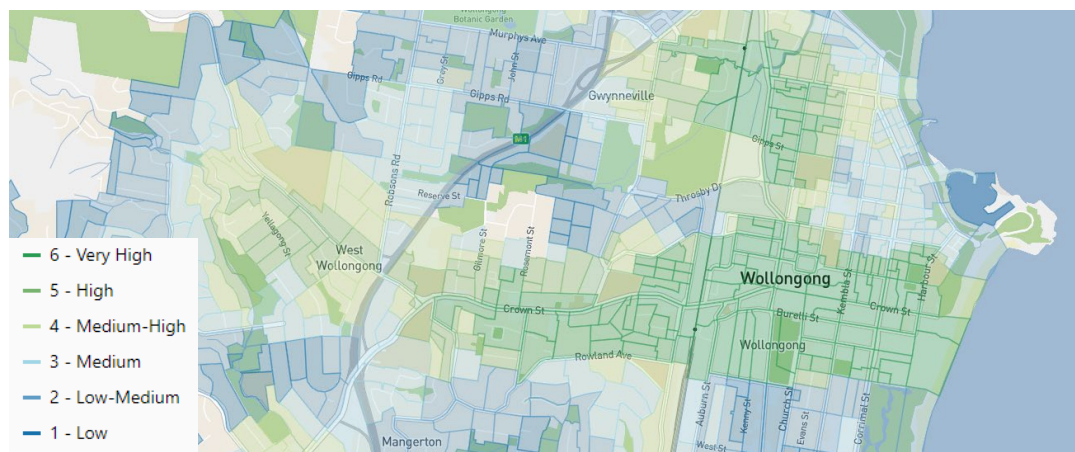


Figure 12 - Public Transport Accessibility Level Map excerpt (Source: Built Environment Indicators – Public Transport Access and Connection)

Access by walking

An 800m easy walking catchment is considered the aspirational distance that an able resident should be expected to walk to their nearest grocery location. A distance of 1.6km aligns with the '20-minute walkable threshold'.

Despite its relatively large geographic size, Wollongong's network of Centres provides coverage for most residents within a 20-minute walking catchment. There is also good coverage of residential areas within an easy 800m walking catchment of centres. The exceptions are all south of the Wollongong City Centre, generally in the western outskirts and lower escarpment regions. Areas with poorer accessibility include:

- The western outskirts of Figtree
- The western outskirts of West Wollongong
- Farmborough Heights
- Cordeaux Heights, Mount Keira and Mount Pleasant (exacerbated by topography)
- Primbee (could be enhanced with grocery provision in existing B1 zone)
- Kanahooka
- Avondale
- West Dapto – note that accessibility will remain poor for large areas even with the development of the planned centres, unless supermarket/grocery provision is supplied in the smaller village centres.

Spending profiles

Spending profiles give us an insight into how our community is using our centres – both in terms of the volume of spending and the break-down of the spending across different categories. Profiles also allow us to check in on whether spending activity is reflective of the Centre's position in the centre hierarchy (section 3). The following data has been pulled from Spendmapp for the period of February to April 2022.

Total Spending

Spendmapp data largely confirms the existing role of centres within the existing retail hierarchy.

As the 'Regional City', the suburb of Wollongong received 28% of total local spending, which was approximately three times more than Warrawong, four times more than Dapto and five times more than Figtree and Corrimal.

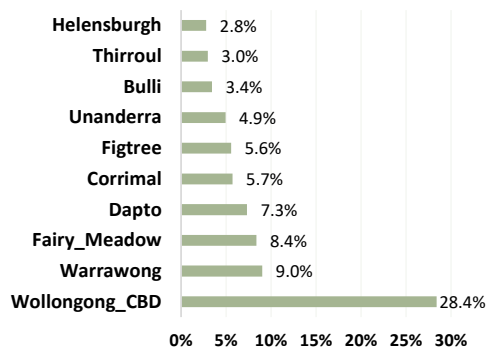


Figure 13- Proportion of total spending - Top 10 Suburbs (Source - Spendmap by Geografia)

In terms of external visitor spending, Wollongong City Centre's regional role is further highlighted with the suburb receiving 35% of total visitor spending to the LGA over the period.

In terms of average proportion of total local spend, there is little difference between the contribution of suburbs containing a 'Major Regional Centre' (8.2%) such as Dapto and Warrawong and those containing a 'Major Town Centre' (6.1%) such as Corrimal, Fairy Meadow Figtree and Unanderra. However, the average contribution of suburbs containing a Town or Village Centre was much lower at 1.7% and 0.5%, respectively.

When comparing Total Local Spending and Resident Local Spending, all suburbs within the top ten remain with only minor changes to proportions and ranking (*Proportion of Resident Local Spending*).

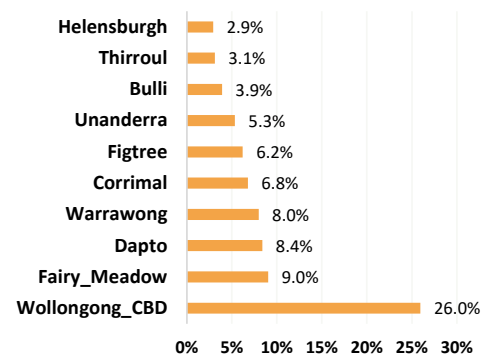


Figure 14 - Proportion of Resident Local Spending - Top 10 Suburbs (Source - SpendMapp by Geografia April 2022)

Spending Category Analysis

The following analysis relates to the period of February to April 2022 and explores the contribution of individual suburbs to total local spending per category.

Bulky and Household Goods

This category includes spending on bulky goods such as home supplies, household appliances, hardware stores, nurseries and furniture supplies.

Across the LGA, total spending in this category was concentrated in the four suburbs of Warrawong (23.1%), Kembla Grange (22.5%), Bellambi (22.3%) and Wollongong (21.5%), collectively making up 89% of total spending.

This largely reflects the current spatial distribution across the LGA of large format retail sites on the periphery of centres with access to major transport corridors.

Department Stores and Retail

This category includes spending on a wide range of retail goods at department and clothing stores as well as at more specialised and luxury retailers such as bookstores, florists, electronic stores, and jewellers.

Across the LGA, the highest spending in this category occurs within suburbs containing higher order Centres that broadly reflect the existing retail hierarchy.

The suburbs of Wollongong (36.8%) and Warrawong (22.3%) collectively made up 59% of total expenditure, which is due to them containing the two largest shopping Centres.

This is followed by Figtree (10.1%), Dapto (7.2%), Fairy Meadow (5.9%) and Corrimal (3.4%), which highlights their role in supporting suburban retail demand.

Dining, Entertainment and Travel

This broad category includes spending on hospitality (cafes, bars, restaurants), entertainment and tourist attractions as well as

accommodation and travel related expenditure (airlines, car rentals etc.).

Wollongong is the strongest suburb in this category contributing 35.8% of total local spending which is likely elevated through its role as a key employment precinct as well as visitor destination.

Grocery Stores, Food & Alcohol Retailing

This category includes spending at supermarkets as well as at specialised food retailers such as bakeries, butchers and alcohol stores.

Spending here is driven mostly by local resident demand and provides insight into the role a suburb is playing in servicing its surrounding residential catchment.

Across the LGA, spending in this category broadly reflects the Centres hierarchy.

Bulli has an elevated role (ranking 5th), higher than suburbs such as Warrawong and Figtree with larger shopping precincts.

Light Industry, Trades and Transport

This broad category includes spending on a variety of industrial products, trades and contractors as well as transport related expenditure (e.g., service stations, car and other vehicle dealerships, automotive parts).

Across the LGA, Wollongong contributed 21.1% of total local spending in this category with Unanderra (11.1%) and Fairy Meadow (9.9%) also notable.

Although not as concentrated as Bulky and Household Goods, the spatial distribution of spending mostly reflects areas of industrial zoning across the LGA.

Services and Other

This category includes spending on professional services, personal services as well as miscellaneous items that do not fit within other categories.

Wollongong is clearly the strong suburb in this category contributing 42.3% of total local spending which reinforces its role as the Regional Capital.

Proportions of spending among Fairy Meadow (6.3%), Figtree (6.1%), Corrimal (6.1%) and Dapto (5.6%) were roughly equal reflecting their roles in providing local suburban services.

Warrawong (3.2%) was approximately equal to Woonona (3.2%) and shortly followed by Thirroul (3%) and Helensburgh (2.9%).

Warrawong has a lower proportion of services spending than expected for a suburb containing a Major Regional Centre.

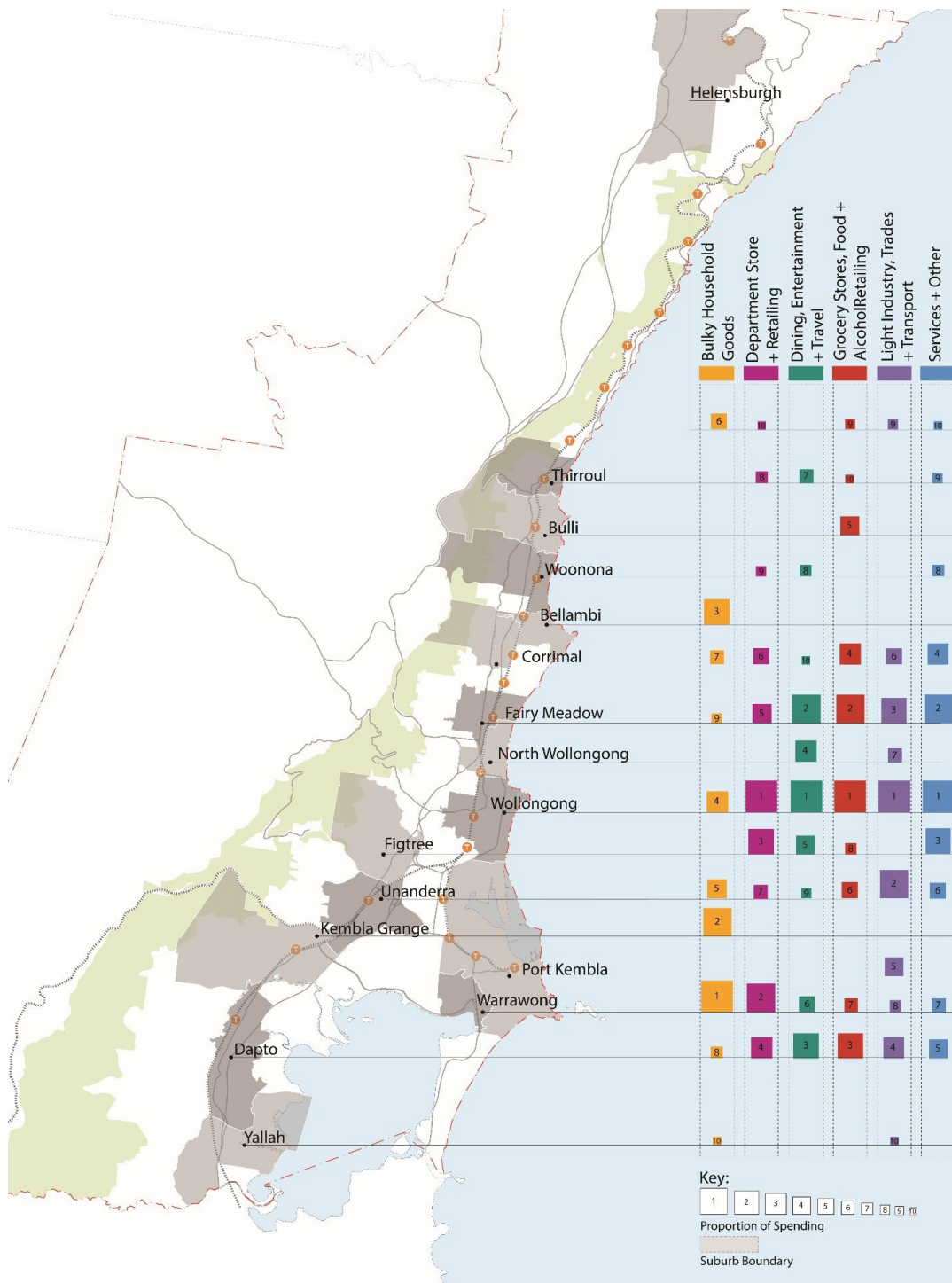


Figure 15 – Top 10 Suburbs across the Six Spending Profile Categories

4.3 Forecast growth and demand

Forecast growth and demand across Wollongong's retail and business Centres has been modelled for a 20-year horizon from 2021 – 2041. The modelling includes consideration of the following floorspace types and associated methods:

- Commercial: job forecasts for commercial offices converted to commercial floorspace at a ratio of 25m² per each forecast job (standard for most suburban and regional centres)
- Retail goods: expenditure of forecast resident and worker populations converted to retail floorspace across 6 categories: supermarket; other food; hospitality; specialty retail; department stores and bulky goods.
- Retail services: job forecasts for retail services, then converted into retail floorspace across 8 categories: fitness; services stations; beauty and personal services; health; automotive; entertainment; childcare and social services.

SGS Economics and Planning used a Gravity Model to reconcile demand and supply. The Gravity Model simulates the movement of trade flows via the LGA's current and future road network. Relevant economic interactions outside the LGA are also accounted for using Spendmapp data, to establish retail expenditure inflows and outflows. The demand generated by these flows is converted into floorspace and then reconciled against existing and planned floorspace across the LGA.

Results

Retail Goods and Services

The demand for retail goods and services floorspace across Wollongong in 2041 is largely consistent with forecast population growth and forecast job densities.

When compared with expected floorspace supply, we can identify gaps in provision,

indicating whether centres will be under or over supplied in relation to demand.

Figure 16 shows the relationship between retail floorspace supply and demand at present, and in the future (2041). The table in Appendix 2 shows this in more detail, including floorspace numbers for each Centre. Where known, the available additional feasible floorspace (2021) is also shown.

In both 2021 and 2041, the results show that our floorspace supply, and the spare capacity within our centres, is tracking well with forecast demand. Overall, our current planning settings will allow the market to continue to deliver our community's required access to goods and services into the future.

2021 results show that we have a very small undersupply of ~6,000m² of retail floorspace across the LGA. This represents just over 1% of current demand. Resident expenditure could support more supply in Thirroul and Wollongong. Dapto, Figtree, and Port Kembla all have more supply than is demanded by catchment population expenditure.

In 2041 the results show that we will need an additional ~136,000m² to meet forecast demand across the LGA. Planned floorspace, in the form of known retail development and the Centres in West Dapto, would supply ~110,000m² of this demand, leaving ~26,000 m² or just over 3.5% of projected demand. The planning settings are well placed to allow the market to meet this demand over the ensuing 20 years. This relationship is shown in Figure 16.

Floorspace undersupply is evident in the short term across the new planned centres of West Dapto. It is important to note that these planned Centres have the capacity within their planning controls to meet demand, and the temporary shortfall is expected to be met by surrounding established Centres.

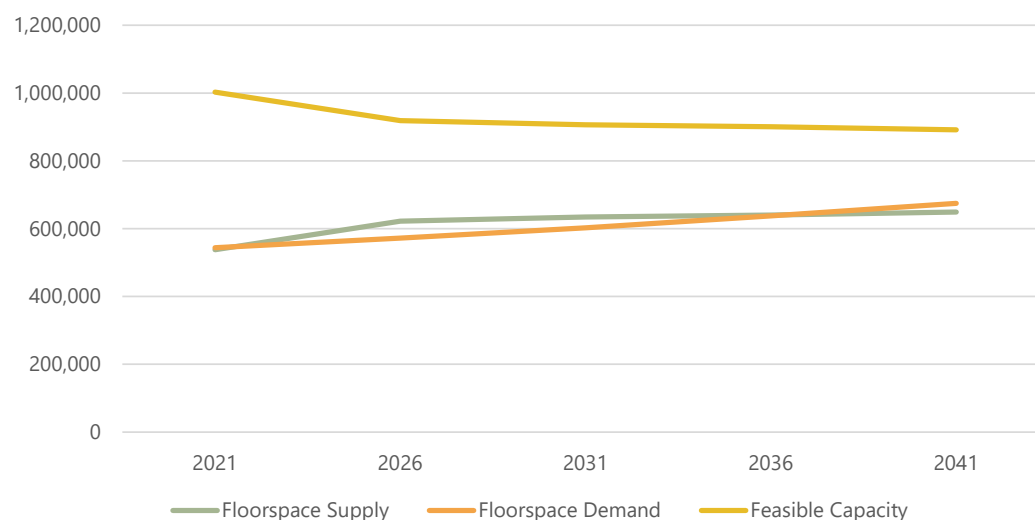


Figure 16 - Relationship between Retail Floorspace Supply, Demand and Feasible Capacity

Centre roles and relationships

The Centres Hierarchy uses floorspace thresholds as one criteria to guide the size of Centres in relationship to each other. These thresholds are shown in Table 13.

Table 13 - Centre size thresholds

Hierarchy Tier	Size (sqm)
Regional City	100,000sqm+
Major Regional Centre	40-80,000sqm
Major Town	20-40,000sqm
Town	5-20,000sqm
Village	2-5,000sqm
Small Village	100-2,000sqm

In some cases, even if a Centre falls outside a specific size threshold, it may be appropriate to classify it within a different hierarchy tier due to its strategic location, or its current or future required function and land uses to serve the community.

The proposed changes to the Centre hierarchy are detailed in Table 14. The proposed Centres Hierarchy is illustrated in Figure 17.

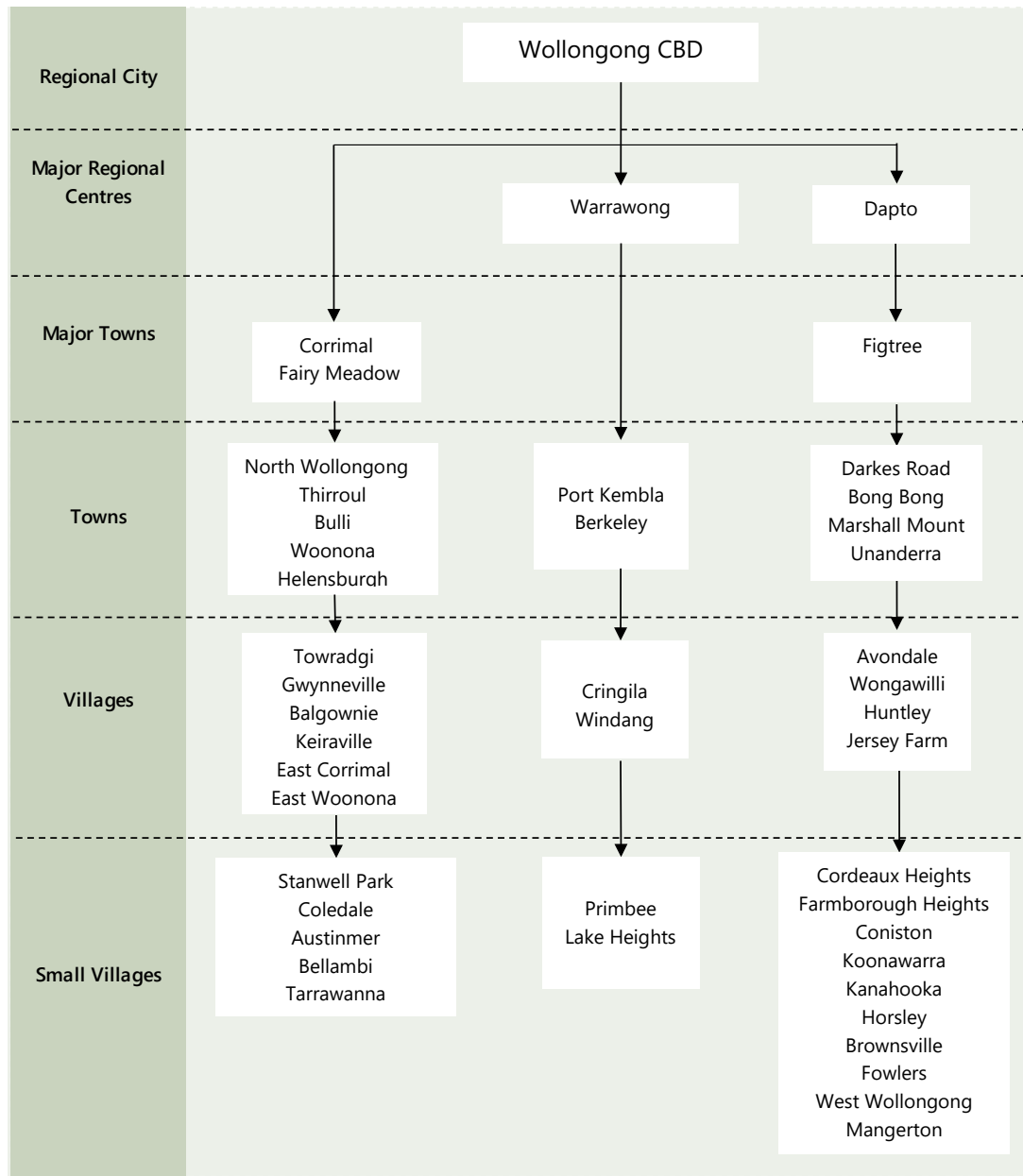
The floorspace audit and forecast growth modelling has allowed us to check in on the position of our Centres within the Centres Hierarchy.

Table 14 –Proposed Centres Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Centre	Existing Retail Floorspace 2021	Demand by 2041	Proposed Change
Regional City (110,000sqm+)	Wollongong	122,450	213,625	-
Major Regional Centre (40-80,000sqm)	Dapto	40,076	50,484	-
	Warrawong	57,651	72,785	-
Major Town (20-40,000sqm)	Corrimal	27,646	25,296	-
	Fairy Meadow	21,927	16,104	-
	Figtree	24,069	19,440	-
Town (5-20,000sqm)	Bulli	9,438	11,757	-
	North Wollongong	15,674	12,624	-
	Helensburgh	9,557	11,277	-
	Woonona	14,040	17,490	-
	Port Kembla	10,599	9,276	-
	Thirroul	13,039	16,834	-
	Bong Bong	0	10,401	-
	Unanderra	17,392	15,155	Move from Major Town Centre to Town Centre
	Darkes Road	0	5,622	-
	Berkeley	5,342	3,137	Retain as Town Centre
	Marshall Mount	0	3,999	Retain as Town Centre
Village (2-5,000sqm)	Windang	2,782	2,724	Move from Town Centre to Village Centre
	Gwynneville	2,049	2,752	-
	Balgownie	3,384	4,281	Move from Town Centre to Village Centre
	Towradgi	3,024	2,664	Moved from Town Centre to Village Centre
	Avondale	0	2,038	-
	Cringila	1,913	1,853	Move from Town Centre to Village Centre. Do not shift to Small Village Centre
	Keiraville	1,797	1,786	Retain as Village Centre
	East Woonona	1,082	758	Retain as Village Centre
	East Corrimal	1,126	909	Retain as Village Centre

Hierarchy	Centre	Existing Retail Floorspace 2021	Demand by 2041	Proposed Change
Small Villages (<2,000sqm)	<i>Fowlers</i>	0	2,168	Move from Village to Small Village
	<i>Coniston</i>	1,583	1,419	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Brownsville</i>	1,415	1,174	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Austinmer</i>	1,371	1,340	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Tarrawanna</i>	1,303	1,262	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Stanwell Park</i>	1,108	847	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Koonawarra</i>	725	218	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	West Wollongong (Thames St)	688	605	-
	<i>Cordeaux Heights</i>	652	561	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Coledale</i>	556	443	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	Lake Heights	556	440	-
	<i>Horsley</i>	446	268	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Kanahooka</i>	433	375	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	Mangerton	351	321	-
	<i>Bellambi</i>	286	247	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Farmborough Heights</i>	251	180	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre
	<i>Primbee</i>	200	146	Move from Village Centre to Small Village Centre

Figure 17 – Proposed Centres Hierarchy diagram



Commercial Floorspace

Although Commercial Floorspace demand is not the focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge and plan for this floorspace type in our centres. Unlike retail demand, demand for commercial office space is not determined based on spatial catchments. Instead, it relates to the floorspace required by forecast employment types and numbers, multiplied by a sqm amount per job. Its spatial distribution should be generated through a strategic direction, established by the council through the planning controls.

Wollongong City Council has expressed a clear priority to focus employment generating office floorspace in the CBD of the Wollongong City Centre through the Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029. Our other business zones also have a role to play in delivering office floorspace, albeit significantly less and of a smaller scale. This intentional spatial distribution is critical to ensure that commercial office businesses have the benefit of agglomeration, through proximity to a critical mass of other firms. Consolidating commercial office precincts also has the benefit of focussing Council's efforts on public domain improvements and operational services relevant to this industry.

The Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework (2020) illustrated that whilst the

current planning controls are able to facilitate a range of commercial office outcomes across the CBD, the development of consolidated commercial precincts where agglomeration benefits could occur, is under threat from residential encroachment.

SGS modelled three scenarios for commercial office demand, all using the base assumption that demand would remain concentrated in Wollongong City Centre CBD. Moderate growth was forecast in Centres with good connections to Industrial Precincts, and which offer floorspace that the City Centre cannot – namely office buildings that can be combined with industrial building types. The three scenarios included:

1. Base Case employment forecasts based on Transport for NSW projections (TZP19 – released Sept 2020)
2. COVID impact forecast – building in a temporary recession over the next 5 years, and more permeant flexible working arrangements moving forward.
3. Aspirational – based on the 10,500 jobs target (2028) projected out to 2041 and factoring in additional jobs growth across the nominated industries (finance/insurance, IT/telecommunications, professional/scientific/technical services, public administration and clean energy)

Table 15- Commercial Office Forecast Floorspace Scenarios

Location	Total Floorspace Demand 2041 (sqm*)		
	Base Case	COVID impact	Aspirational
Wollongong City Centre	175,000	164,000	499,000
Coniston (B7)	58,000	58,000	102,000
Kembla Grange industrial	35,000	34,000	48,000
Port Kembla (B7 and industrial)	26,000	25,000	31,000
Dapto	24,000	23,000	38,000
Fairy Meadow	23,000	22,000	38,000
Montague Street Industrial	22,000	21,000	28,000
Coniston (B7 and industrial)	18,000	17,000	35,000

*Based on 25sqm per job (SGS) Note that this ratio relates to gross floor area (GFA) and is therefore more generous than a standard 8-15sqm per person allowance often quoted for office leasing purposes.

5 Strategy Recommendations

Strategic direction	Recommendation
<i>The role of our Centres is clear</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the retail and business Centres Hierarchy and definitions to reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong's Centres and guide their growth 2. Review and update planning documents to ensure consistency with the updated hierarchy
<i>Our Centres are a good fit for our Community</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Tighten Centre boundaries to create resilient and active Centres 4. Prevent the oversupply of retail floorspace 5. Protect existing required supply 6. Explore opportunities to increase residential density
<i>Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Encourage the development of planned Centres in West Dapto 8. Limit oversupply of retail floorspace in Centres surrounding West Dapto 9. Communicate clear expectations for Centre development outcomes
<i>Our Centres are active and vibrant</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Complement online trading with exceptional physical retail offerings 11. Facilitate an appropriate range of land use options to increase activity within, and patronage of, Centres 12. Update Active frontage planning controls to improve street presentation 13. Facilitate an evening economy in our Towns, Major Regional Centres and City Centre that is right for our community 14. Facilitate the activation of the road reserve for outdoor dining 15. Incorporate public art to create places which are distinctive, and which reflect local identity
<i>Our Centres are accessible and support transport mode shift</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Provide clear direction on the role and function of streets in our Centres 17. Provide clear parking controls and public parking facilities that are in line with sustainable community needs 18. Plan for walkable Centres 19. Support cycling to Centres
<i>Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Deprioritise residential development in the Commercial Core 21. Tighten and focus the retail core 22. Facilitate diverse land use outcomes and leverage the City's assets

These recommendations are expanded on the following pages, and will be used to inform the scope, objectives and implementation of the following projects:

- Town Centre Built Form Review
- Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) Review
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter B4 Development in Business Zones Review
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D1 Character Statements Review
- Amendments to the Wollongong LEP 2009
- Wollongong Housing Study
- Wollongong Industrial Land Planning Review
- Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy
- Wollongong Integrated Transport Strategy
- West Dapto Town and Village Centre Development
- Outdoor Dining Guidelines
- Ongoing Planning Proposal review and Neighbourhood planning processes.

5.1 The role of our Centres is clear

The Centres Hierarchy is outlined in our Local Strategic Planning Statement and our Development Control Plan Chapter B4 – Development in Business Zones. The SGS Study, the Employment Zone Reforms and our community engagement all pointed to a need to retain and strengthen our centres hierarchy.

Recommendation 1: Update the retail and business centre hierarchy and definitions to reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong's centres and guide their growth

The proposed Centres Hierarchy is illustrated in Figure 17 in section 4.3 of this Strategy. Further to the proposed changes to selected Centre positions, updates are needed to our planning policies to ensure the hierarchy is clear and consistent. Proposed revisions will include:

- Revised hierarchy definitions
- Consistent guidance on retail and office floorspace targets, population catchments, urban structure (movement, open space networks), built form, hours of activity and land use composition
- An objective to focus large commercial office developments in the Wollongong CBD, made clear through the definitions of each tier in the hierarchy
- Small Villages as a tier in the hierarchy, and these villages be clearly listed
- Map of all centres showing their level in the hierarchy
- Review Planning controls to ensure development is alignment with the Centre's place within the hierarchy
- Glossary of key terms to ensure consistency

The revised hierarchy should be used to guide development and assessment processes to ensure developments are consistent with and contribute to the defined role and function of our centres.

Recommendation 2: Review and update the following planning documents to ensure consistency with the updated hierarchy:

- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter B4 *Development in Business Zones*
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D1 *Character Statements*
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D16 *West Dapto Urban Release Area*
- Wollongong DCP 2009 Appendix 4 *Definitions*
- Wollongong LEP 2009 Land Use Table and Local Provisions
- Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement

5.2 Our Centres are a good fit for our community

Recommendation 3: Tighten centre boundaries to create resilient and active centres

The SGS Study illustrated that the physical extent and feasible capacity of some centres was in excess of what was required to meet demand. SGS confirmed the findings of the City Centre Planning Strategy – that the City Centre’s retail core is spread out too far, which results in empty shops and reduced street activation. Town and Village Plans have also identified portions of business zoned land which is considered excess to the functional extent of the centre. These excess areas are often plagued by vacancies, or have been developed as strata residential and are unlikely to be redeveloped for business uses. Excessively large business zones also dilute retail activity, often leaving central areas less active than is optimal.

Where appropriate, the transition of some business land to a medium density residential outcome needs to be considered in order to provide housing diversity and increase pedestrian foot traffic to support our retail spaces. This is in line with the recommendations of the draft Housing Strategy to:

- *Review the opportunity to provide of additional housing in key Town Centres, to be undertaken following the completion of the Retail and Business Centres Strategy*
- *Review the zoning of town centres which could result in changes to both the Business and Residential zonings.*

For centres where ground floor capacity exceeds current and future demand, or where previous development has removed feasible development outcomes for commercial uses, consider reducing the extent of business zoning.

The following actions are recommendations from Council adopted Town and Village Plans:

- Undertake a planning proposal process to rezone 2 portions of land in Helensburgh Town Centre from B2 – Local Centre to R3 Medium Density Residential, in line with the adopted Helensburgh Town Centre Plan 2020-2045
 - 65-71 Walker Street, and
 - the block bound by Stuart St, Bush Pea Lane, Gibbons Lane and Lilyvale St
- Undertake a planning proposal process to rezone 3 portions of land in Warrawong Town Centre from B3 Commercial Core to R3 Medium Density Residential, in line with the adopted Warrawong Town Centre Masterplan and Implementation Strategy
 - 21-35 Greene Street
 - 282 Cowper Street
 - 7-17 Montgomery Ave
- Review the B4 Mixed Use land west of Warrawong Town Centre along Cowper St. As per the findings of the SGS Study, this land currently contributes no floorspace supply and is not required to meet future retail demand. Consider transition to a residential land use zoning.
- Review the B2 Local Centre land on Wentworth Street Port Kembla, between Church and Fitzwilliam Streets in line with the adopted Port Kembla 2505 Revitalisation Plan 2018 - 2045. Consider transitioning this zoning to B4 Mixed Use, and amending Wollongong LEP clause 7.13 to omit reference to B4 Mixed Use (see Recommendation 5)
- As part of the Industrial Lands Review:
 - review the B2 zoned land on Military Road Port Kembla between Darcy Rd and Allan St. Consider transition to IN2 Light Industrial, in line with the adopted Port Kembla 2505 Revitalisation Plan 2018 - 2045.
 - review the recommendation of the adopted Unanderra Masterplan 2013 to transition the B6 Enterprise Corridor

zoned land south-east of Unanderra Town Centre to a B2 – Local Centre zoning to improve street activation along the Princes Hwy corridor.

The following actions are recommendation of this Draft Strategy and will require further investigation:

- Review the B4 Mixed Use land on Railway St in Thirroul Town Centre. As per the findings of the SGS Study, the two northern lots contribute to the Town Centre with complimentary uses, however the remaining lots to the south provide no floorspace supply and are not required to meet future demand. Consider transition to a residential land use zoning.
- Review the B1 Neighbourhood Centre land on Moore Street Austinmer. Consider extent of retail goods and services businesses, and community uses. Consider established retail used on residential zoned land on southern side of Moore St.
- Review the lot at 9 Devon St Berkeley and consider transition from B2 Local Centre zoning to a residential zoning.
- Review the Flinders Street B6 – Enterprise Corridor zoned land (between Smith St and Ajax Ave Wollongong). Consider which areas need to be preserved as Enterprise Corridor/Productivity Support, and which areas should transition to other zoning, including Mixed Use and/or Residential. In line with the recommendations of the draft Housing Strategy
 - Rezone parts of B6 Enterprise Corridor Zone along Bourke Street, Edward Street and Gipps Street back to a residential zone (as existed prior to 2007)

Recommendation 4: Prevent the oversupply of retail floorspace

The SGS Study noted that the feasible capacity for employment generating floorspace in B4 zoned land made up a relatively small proportion of total feasible capacity in centres. Town and Villages Plans, and the Wollongong

City Centre Urban Design Framework have demonstrated the poor outcomes that occur when ground floor commercial/retail uses are mandated across a larger area than the market demand can sustain. Removing the requirement for non-residential ground floors in B4 zones will provide an impetus for older retail floorspace within B1, B2 and B3 zones to be refurbished for more competitive stores entering the market, helping to revitalise centre cores where foot traffic and activation is concentrated.

Consider removing requirements for commercial at ground in B4 Mixed Used zones surrounding centres.

- Review clause 7.13 of the Wollongong LEP 2009 and consider removing the reference to land in B4 Mixed Use zones.

Recommendation 5: Protect existing required supply

Many of our centres have components of active and productive business uses that are not on land zoned for business uses. This means the supply provided by the business, and the role it has in the structure and operation of the centre, is not assured, and could be lost to redevelopment for other uses.

For centres where the business zoning boundary does not reflect the functional extent of the commercial activity of the centre consider expanding business zoning to encompass adjacent properties with established business uses where appropriate.

The following actions are recommendations from Council endorsed Town and Village Plans:

- Undertake a planning proposal process to rezone 1 portion of land in Helensburgh Town Centre from R3 Medium Density Residential to B2 – Local Centre, in line with the adopted Helensburgh Town Centre Plan 2020-2045
 - 112 Parkes Street (Helensburgh Hotel)

- Review the following land portions which form part of functional town centres and consider the merits of rezoning them from residential to business zonings:
 - 749-759 Lawrence Hargrave Drive Coledale (established collection of shops and Fire Station)
 - 34-40 Moore St Austinmer (established collection of shops)
 - 236-278 Princes Hwy Bulli (established collection of shops and Bulli Heritage Hotel)
 - 231-233 Princes Hwy Bulli (established businesses in heritage listed Former Stockbank House and Former Post Office)
 - 424 – 440 & 493 – 507 Crown Street West Wollongong (Services Stations/convenience stores etc)

Some businesses have established or maintained functional neighbourhood centres on land that is currently zoned residential. Often maintaining or altering these premises can be difficult, requiring the need to establish existing use rights to continue operations. Given the active role some of these places have in our retail network, there is a need to consider whether a formal business zoning is required, or if there are other planning pathways available.

Review the following land portions which function as well-located commercial businesses and consider the merits of rezoning them from residential to business zonings, and/or establishing additional permitted uses for these sites. These actions are recommendations of this Draft Strategy and will require further investigation:

- Cordeaux Village Centre (26 Derribong Rd Cordeaux Heights)

- 4 lots at the corner of Bourke St and Cliff Rd North Wollongong (7-11 Bourke St and 16-18 Cliff Rd)
- 2 lots with 5 tenancies in traditional shop-top housing typology (41-43 Yellagong St West Wollongong)
- 5 lots with shop-top housing and parking (40 Point Street)
- 1 lot at 64 Mount Kiera Road, Mt Keira
- 1 lot at 196 Mt Kiera Rd. Mt Keira
- 2 lots at 99-101 Bellevue Rd Figtree
- 2 lots at 20-22 Walang Avenue Figtree

Recommendation 6: Explore opportunities to increase residential density

The SGS Study determined that there were some centres where there would be more retail supply than needed for future demand.

For centres with excess supply moving forward consider the opportunity to increase residential density when the centre has the urban structure and transport connectivity to support an increased population.

The draft Housing Strategy makes the following recommendation in relation to our centres:

- *Review the opportunity to provide of additional housing in key Town Centres, to be undertaken following the completion of the Retail and Business Centres Strategy*
- *Review the FSR in town centres*
- *Review the building height in town centres*

In alignment with the draft Housing Strategy and from a retail and business centres perspective, review residential density controls in the direct catchments of the following centres

- Warrawong
- Corrimal
- Unanderra
- Fairy Meadow
- Berkeley

5.3 Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned

The West Dapto Vision and Structure Plan identifies 3 future Town Centres and 5 Village Centres to service the growing community. At this stage none of the planned Centres have been delivered.

Recommendation 7: Encourage the development of planned Centres in West Dapto

The timely development of planned West Dapto Centres is important to ensure appropriate access to goods and services for our growing communities. Delaying the delivery of these centres in the long-term, including the full suite of their intended commodities and facilities, will establish and prolong the negative impacts of residents needing to travel further by car to access their closest centre. It may also force oversupply in existing centres, discouraging new centre development in West Dapto.

- Council to continue to work with land-owners to develop place-specific planning frameworks for planned centres and ensure Centres are developed in parallel with residential development.

Recommendation 8: Limit oversupply of retail floorspace in centres surrounding West Dapto

The SGS Study illustrated the impact that the delayed development of the planned West Dapto centres will have on the short-term performance of surrounding centres, which would need to supply the residual demand from population growth in urban release areas. Given this demand is likely to be spread fairly evenly, it can be managed in the short term without triggering overtrading or a need for additional supply through new development.

- In order to maintain local demand within appropriate catchments in West Dapto, the expansion of retail floorspace supply

surrounding adjacent centres should be discouraged.

Recommendation 9: Communicate clear expectations for centre development outcomes

New communities in West Dapto will need appropriate access to centre based goods and services. The *Wollongong DCP D16 West Dapto Urban Release Area* outlines the locations and proposed functions of the planned towns and villages. To avoid poor outcomes for the community, there is a need to strengthen the development controls, and the planning process prescribed for the realisation of these centres.

- Council to continue to improve and evaluate the neighbourhood planning process to provide strong planning guidance to applicants. Applicants to be required to provide detailed structure plans for planned village centres. Structure planning for town and village centres is to be informed by thorough site analysis and link with the surrounding context.
 - Structure plans for town centres are to include street structure, pedestrian links, open spaces, built form massing, active frontages, street walls and setbacks and be adopted as site specific DCP controls and amendments to the LEP where appropriate.
 - Structure plans for village centres are to include street structure, pedestrian links, open spaces, active frontages, street walls and setbacks and be adopted as site specific DCP controls.
- Ensure the LEP and DCP controls for new centres in West Dapto facilitate the outcomes described for towns and villages in the updated Centres Hierarchy.
- Ensure alignment between *Wollongong DCP Chapter D16 West Dapto Urban Release Area* and *B4 Development in Business Zones*.

5.4 Our Centres are active and vibrant

Recommendation 10: Complement online trading with exceptional physical retail offerings

The SGS Study highlighted the important role that centres play in offering consumers a physical context for the experience of goods and services. This compliments the role that online retailing plays in the wider retail framework.

In order to ensure that centres continue to compliment online trading, it is critical that they perform well across a range of physical criteria.

Visual presentation

- Ensure that planning controls facilitate an appropriate response to active shopfronts positive place characteristics including heritage and interfaces with natural amenity.

Physical access

- Ensure adequate traffic and pedestrian movement strategies are in place across the centres
- Develop local provisions to mitigate the impact of increased vehicle use for click-and-collect Local Distribution Premises etc in centres

Increased foot traffic

- Have strong anchors in strategic locations.
- Make use of major infrastructure such as new community facilities, transport facilities and natural assets such as parks and foreshores to improve the amenity and enjoyment of retail precincts.

Recommendation 11: Facilitate an appropriate range of land use options to increase activity within, and patronage of, centres

- Continue to discourage out-of-centre retail development by limiting the scale and/or permissibility of retail uses in other zones.

- Implement the proposed changes of the Employment Zone Reform to remove indoor recreation and Take-away food and drink premises from the Land Use Table in Heavy Industrial Zones.
- As part of the Industrial Lands Review, consider whether further limitations on retail premises are required in Industrial zoned land.
- Locate new, and revitalise existing community uses like libraries and community centres within Centres.
- Provide a mix of housing types and densities in and around centres
- Provide spaces for events and social gathering in centres. Revitalise and improve the amenity of existing open spaces. Require high quality public domain outcomes from large scale centre development.

Recommendation 12: Update Active frontage planning controls to improve street presentation

A high level of pedestrian interest and interaction at street level and a direct connection between the ground floor of buildings and the street is critical in Centres. This is known as an active 'frontage'.

- Update the Wollongong LEP 2009 Clause 7.13 to include additional requirements that ground floor premises in centres
 - will be used for the purposes of business premises or retail premises,
 - will enable direct visual and physical contact and interaction between the street and the interior of the building.
- Update Wollongong LEP 2009 Clause 7.13 to remove 'vehicular access' from part c.
- Undertake an analysis of key centres to map all active frontages, in conjunction with the Movement and Place planning for centres. Prioritise Centres based on their level in the Centres Hierarchy. Update the Wollongong

LEP Active Street Frontages Map to include these.

- Once mapping is complete and included in LEP clause 7.19, remove clause 7.13 from the LEP.

Recommendation 13: Facilitate an evening economy in our Towns, Major Regional Centres and City Centre that is right for our community

- Consider the expansion of the city centre evening economy policy throughout the LGA.
- Map areas that lend themselves to increased night-time activation.
- Develop comprehensive late night trading management DCP controls that deliver clear direction on expectations for land use and operations within the night-time economy for both assessment officers and the community.

Recommendation 14: Facilitate the activation of the road reserve for outdoor dining

- Produce clear guidelines for the safe and effective use of road reserves for outdoor dining
- Monitor and review licensing of road reserves within centres
- Conduct investigation into where road reserves can be further used for outdoor dining and encourage business owners to explore outdoor dining options.

Recommendation 15: Incorporate public art to create places which are distinctive, and which reflect local identity

- Investigate opportunities to integrate public art opportunities when undertaking projects within Centres in line with the Public Art Toolkit (Draft Public Art Strategy 2022).

5.5 Our Centres are accessible and support transport mode shift

- Encourage walkable and cycling friendly centres
- Support local living by providing mixed-use developments, compact neighbourhoods and local access to shops, public facilities and services.
- Design centres to be inclusive and diverse, fostering a sense of ownership, encouraging physical activity, and supporting social interaction.
- Use the Movement and Place framework to inform future streetscape master plans for various centres, if and when required.
- Work with Transport for NSW under the Movement and Place Framework to deliver the vision for streets in centres located along Classified Roads.
- Enhance pedestrian comfort in Centres through the delivery of street tree canopy in line with the Urban Greening Strategy

Recommendation 16: Provide clear direction on the role and function of streets in our centres

In order to effectively inform streetscape design, built form controls and operational guidelines for street-based activities, we need to understand the desired role of the streets in our centres. Whilst this is unclear, streets remain contested places. The Movement and Place Framework recognises the network of public spaces formed by roads and streets and the spaces they adjoin and impact. It offers a process by which we can classify the function of our streets to guide a range of movement-related projects at various phases, and scales.

- As part of the Integrated Transport Strategy, classify the movement and place function of centre streets
- Review LEP active frontage controls and align with street roles and functions
- Review DCP general and centre specific built form controls considering street roles and functions. Consider specifically street wall height, ground floor setback, active frontages, and vehicle access controls.
- Review and develop operational guidelines for street-based activities which illustrate how to deliver activities safely and effectively on streets with different Movement and Place functions.

Recommendation 17: Provide clear parking controls and public parking facilities that are in line with sustainable community needs

- Develop shared parking supply and management strategies for Town and Village Centres to reduce traffic impact on important these community places.
- Develop an integrated approach to parking for developments in centres to reduce the need for parking overall. Consider:
 - access to public transport
 - managed parking schemes for on-street parking to promote turnover of visitors and short-stay parking.
 - consolidated parking structures
 - micro-mobility or mobility-as-a-service (such as car share spaces) as a substitute for parking demand.
- Ensure car parking does not dominate the urban environment and its built form is permeable to the surrounding network.
- Where 'at-grade' parking is provided in centres:
 - provide adequate trees, landscaping and permeable surfaces
 - locate parking to the rear of the site to allow buildings to define the street edge and contribute to the streetscape.
- Consider the inclusion of end of trip facilities, e-charging stations and micro-mobility/car share and cycle parking when

assessing parking needs and designing parking provision in centres

- Continue to deliver accessible parking in priority locations.

Recommendation 18: Plan for walkable centres

- Support wayfinding by providing clear sightlines to place features such as key facilities, public open spaces, landmarks and civic built form.
- Ensure developments in centres provide through-site links, including opportunities to integrate new local traffic or walking and cycling connections through large-format blocks and uses.
- Where possible, adopt speed limits and intersection treatments that minimise the risk of fatality for vulnerable road users (e.g. 30 or 40 km/hour or less).
- Integrate alternative materials in low-speed streets to aid pedestrian legibility and reinforce pedestrian priority.
- Continue to increase the number of continuous accessible paths of travel that include parking, footpaths and kerb ramps in our town centres.

Recommendation 19: Support cycling to centres

- Connect key locations such as transport stops or interchanges, centres, local open spaces and schools to the cycle network.
- Provide supporting infrastructure in those key locations such as secure cycle parking and end-of-trip facilities.

5.6 Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct

SGS's work included an in-depth analysis of the City Centre's role in network of centres. The City Centre is our highest order centre, and its success as an employment generating precinct is important to the economies of our LGA, the Illawarra Shoalhaven City and the Greater Cities Region.

Recommendation 20: Deprioritise residential development in the Commercial Core

Council has committed to an aspirational jobs target of 10,500 net new jobs by 2028. Through the Invest Wollongong business attraction program, a number of industry sectors are being targeted, including those that will require sufficient supply of high-quality office space, much of which is expected to be accommodated within the Wollongong City Centre. To attract these jobs to Wollongong requires several preconditions:

1. A city centre that is competitive with other city centre options in the Greater Sydney-Hunter-Illawarra Region
 2. A work precinct which has a distinctly commercial flavour with a commercial sense of address, where businesses feel their needs will be prioritised
 3. Developers that possess the ability to attract major tenant businesses (even before completion of the construction project)
 4. Fully activated streets that employees will enjoy spending their workdays in
 5. Networking opportunities amongst allied businesses, with the appropriate conference/hospitality facilities to facilitate that outcome
 6. Commercial address with marketable frontages
 7. Competitive leasing prices for floorspace
- Points 2, 3, 6 and 7 would all be seriously compromised in a mixed-use precinct, whilst point 5 requires a strong critical mass of commercial activity to be maximised.

For these reasons, it is reasonable and appropriate for Council to be deprioritising residential development within the B3 Commercial Core.

- Prevent the loss of commercial floorspace in the commercial core
- Avoid vertical mixed use (apartments on top of office space) in the commercial core.
- Deprioritise residential development in the commercial core. Provide defined areas where medium and large-scale commercial outcomes are incentivised to provide a critical mass of commercial activity. Consider how conference and hospitality uses in proximity can complement this outcome.

Recommendation 21: Tighten and focus the retail core

The success of retail facilities is predicated on the concept of co-location and density that leads to activated streets with high volumes of pedestrian traffic. Such concentrated activity also leaves Council with a more focused task of improving the public realm of those targeted locations. The economic reality of the contemporary retail industry is that demand for retail goods and services is limited. An oversupply of floorspace can lead to a dispersal and dilution of retail activity.

The City Centre planning controls currently require non-residential uses on the ground floor of the B3 Commercial Core and the B4 Mixed Use Zone. Combined with the high feasibility of shop top housing development, this results in ground floor retail floorspace being spread across a larger area than is needed to supply current demand. This has led to the degradation of older tenancies in the centre of the city, and vacancies in many newer developments.

Removing the requirement for non-residential ground floors in the B4 Mixed Use zone may be an impetus for older retail floorspace to be refurbished for new stores that enter the local

market and allow retail businesses to be established in the city fringe where there is demand.

- Reduce the area where ground floor employment activity is mandated, to ensure ground floor activation is concentrated in strategic locations in the City Centre, and those core locations are frequently refreshed.

Recommendation 22: Facilitate diverse land use outcomes and leverage the City's assets

- Commit to the broadening of jobs growth to include non-office activities in and around the commercial core. Diversification of land use should be wider than just residential, retail and office space.
- Consider how large format showroom type floorspace developments which focus more on marketing brands and user experience will be accommodated in the retail core
- Consider how City Centre cultural facilities can integrate better with public open space, pedestrian networks and complementary retail food offerings.

6 Appendices

6.1 Review of Strategic Policies

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres																						
NSW State Government																							
<i>Planning for the future of retail – discussion paper 2018 (DPE 2018)</i>	Highlights the need for an adaptable and flexible planning approach, allowing for innovative, contemporary retail solutions that match consumer need.																						
<i>Employment Zone Reforms (DPE 2021)</i>	<p>The Department of Planning and Environment is currently progressing the Employment Zone Reform. The Reform seeks to provide a more flexible planning framework for existing Business and Industrial zoned land by transitioning to fewer zones with broader objectives and permissible land uses.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Existing zones</th><th>New zone</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Business and Industrial Zones</td><td>Employment zones</td></tr> <tr> <td>B1 Neighbourhood Centre</td><td rowspan="2">E1 Local Centre</td></tr> <tr> <td>B2 Local Centre</td></tr> <tr> <td>B3 Commercial Core</td><td>E2 Commercial Centre</td></tr> <tr> <td>B5 Business Development; B6 Enterprise Corridor; B7 Business Park</td><td>E3 Productivity Support</td></tr> <tr> <td>IN1 General Industrial</td><td rowspan="2">E4 General Industrial</td></tr> <tr> <td>IN2 Light Industrial</td></tr> <tr> <td>IN3 Heavy Industrial</td><td>E5 Heavy Industrial</td></tr> <tr> <td>IN4 Working Waterfront</td><td>W4 Working Waterfront</td></tr> <tr> <td>B4 Mixed Use</td><td>MU1 Mixed Use</td></tr> <tr> <td>B8 Metropolitan Centre)</td><td>SP4 Enterprise</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Key implications for Wollongong are the collapsing of the B1 Neighbourhood Centre and B2 Local Centre zones a new E1 Local Centre zone. This specifically impacts our existing B1 Neighbourhood Centres (generally our villages and small villages) which will now share the same land use objectives and permissible uses as our larger town centres.</p> <p>Wollongong Council is seeking to mitigate any negative impacts of these reforms through the introduction of several local provisions, intended to maintain the nuanced approach to centres in different tiers of the retail hierarchy.</p>	Existing zones	New zone	Business and Industrial Zones	Employment zones	B1 Neighbourhood Centre	E1 Local Centre	B2 Local Centre	B3 Commercial Core	E2 Commercial Centre	B5 Business Development; B6 Enterprise Corridor; B7 Business Park	E3 Productivity Support	IN1 General Industrial	E4 General Industrial	IN2 Light Industrial	IN3 Heavy Industrial	E5 Heavy Industrial	IN4 Working Waterfront	W4 Working Waterfront	B4 Mixed Use	MU1 Mixed Use	B8 Metropolitan Centre)	SP4 Enterprise
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B8 Metropolitan Centre)	SP4 Enterprise																						
<i>The Fun SEPP (2021)</i>	<p>The Fun SEPP Explanation of Intended Effects (EIE) informed of changes to the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008</i> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make permanent the trial that allows pubs and small bars to have outdoor dining on the footpath as exempt development • Increase the number of days that event can be held at major event sites • Make COVID-19 emergency measures for food trucks and dark kitchens permanent • Make a complying development pathway to allow a change of use of premises to artisan food and drink industry in certain circumstances, including development standards • Make a complying development pathway to allow a change of use of retail premises to small live music or arts venues, including developments standards and amendments to the Building Code of Australia • Clarify the exempt development standards for events • Extending the number of days for filming as exempt development. 																						
<i>Building Business Back Better (DPE 2021)</i>	The Building Business Back Better amendment to the <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008</i> created a complying development pathway to allow:																						

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres
<i>COVID-19 recovery measures (2020-2022)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wider range of land uses so businesses can quickly adapt their offerings to new market demands for things like entertainment facilities, indoor recreation facilities and creative industries. • New and larger building allowances to attract more investment. • Flexibility to carry out site and parking upgrades to accommodate new modes of delivery. • Longer opening hours in certain areas to support night-time economies <p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NSW Government introduced the COVID-19 Legislation Amendment (Emergency Measures) Bill 2020, which made temporary changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the EP&A Act) to support the state's economy and jobs. These measures lapsed in March 2022, however, some of these measures were made permanent in April 2022.⁹</p> <p>Relevant measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended opening hours for businesses (in business areas) including supermarkets (6am – 10pm) • 24 operations for delivery and non-trading activities within business areas • Dark kitchens (24-hour non-trading) can operate in existing commercial kitchens (some limits in resi areas) • Food trucks can operate 24 hours (some limits in resi areas)
<i>Greater Cities Commission (GCC)</i>	<p>In December 2021, the NSW Premier announced the formation of the Greater Cities Commission, which extends the jurisdiction of the Commission from the Greater Sydney area to include the Central Coast, Newcastle, and the Illawarra-Shoalhaven. As part of the Illawarra Shoalhaven City, it is understood that Wollongong will subscribe to the Greater Cities Commission's directions including achieving the following indicators relevant to centre development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased 30-minute access to a metropolitan centre/cluster (Wollongong CBD) • Increased use of public resources such as open space and community facilities • Increased walkable access to local centres • Increased access to open space • Percentage of dwellings located within 30 minutes by public transport of a metropolitan centre/ cluster • Percentage of dwellings located within 30 minutes by public transport of a strategic centre • Increased jobs in metropolitan and strategic centres • Increased urban tree canopy <p><i>*Note – The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 continues to have effect, as if it were a district strategic plan, until a district strategic plan is made for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven City.</i></p>
<i>Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (DPE 2021)</i>	<p>The Regional Plan highlights the importance of the retail economy in the region, and the need for retail businesses and destinations to evolve to meet changing consumer behaviours.</p> <p>The Plan takes a strong centres-based approach to jobs, housing and services and defines the importance of strategic centres as key places. The Strategic centres of the Wollongong LGA are Metro Wollongong, Dapto, Warrawong and Corrimal.</p> <p>The Plan encourages Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider measures that diversify retail focused centres to provide a diverse mix of uses, • Consider the impact of technological change on warehousing and distribution. • Align city wide retail studies with town centre studies that promote public domain design measures to enhance centre activation and vibrant street life. • Enhance the amenity, vibrancy and safety of centres and township precincts • Support appropriate growth of the night-time economy • Develop new centres in urban release areas to support new communities, including shopping services, community services and jobs. Integrate active and public transport connections to enhance accessibility to diverse employment opportunities, retail, health and education facilities. • Protect distinctive local character and embrace heritage values even as places grow and change. • Provide access to vibrant public open space and cultural facilities.

⁹ Department of Planning and Environment, Covid 19 Response and Recovery

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres
<i>Illawarra Regional Transport Plan (TfNSW 2021)</i>	<p>The IRTP proposes a 'hub and spoke' approach to ensure improved multi-modal connectivity to, from and between the five regionally significant centres*, as well as with Greater Sydney. The plan nominates four objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased population within a 30-minute public transport trip of a regionally significant centre* Connectivity between Metro Wollongong and Greater Sydney by public transport is efficient, reliable, comfortable and safe Future residents of regionally significant growth areas (ie West Lake Illawarra/West Dapto) are within a 30-minute public transport trip of a regionally significant centre Maintain reliable north-south, east-west transport spines <p>Further relevant initiatives raised in the plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of the Movement and Place Framework to deliver improved amenity and liveability and to ensure the right balance is achieved between the need to facilitate the movement while supporting successful places. Investigate areas that could be suitable for a 30km/h speed zone trial to provide a safer environment in areas of high pedestrian and cycling activity Work collaboratively to increase the number of all trips – be they work, education, health, retail or recreation-related – made by walking, cycling or public transport across the Illawarra-Shoalhaven to one in every five (20%) trips <p><i>*Metro Wollongong, Shellharbour City Centre, Kiama, Nowra City Centre and Milton-Ulladulla</i></p>
Local Character and Place Guidelines (DPE 2019)	<p>The Local Character and Place Guideline is a response to community feedback and Government's direction to elevate the consideration of local character in NSW planning decision making. The guideline outlines how to prepare a character assessment in order to evaluate whether the character of areas should change, be enhanced or be maintained. The assessment can be utilised to illustrate a local character statement or to inform council plans or strategies.</p>
Wollongong City Council	
<i>Wollongong Community Strategic Plan – Our Wollongong 2032</i>	<p>The Community Strategic Plan identifies a number of strategies across all six goals that are relevant to the Retail and Business Centres Study.</p> <p><i>Goal 1 We value and protect our environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 Maintain the unique character of the Wollongong Local Government Area, whilst balancing development, population growth and housing needs. 1.6 West Dapto urban growth is effectively managed with facilities and spaces to support the future community. 1.7 Develop and implement programs and projects that achieve proactive heritage management, education and promotion. <p><i>Goal 2 We have an innovative and sustainable economy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.3 Increase and attract new business investment and enterprise to Wollongong while supporting and growing existing local businesses 2.8 Continue to build Wollongong as a vibrant, modern city with a revitalised city centre and an active evening economy. <p><i>Goal 3 Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.5 Provide communities with access to quality local spaces and places to meet, share and celebrate. <p><i>Goal 4 We are a connected and engaged community</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.12 Technology is used to enhance urban planning and service provision for our community <p><i>Goal 5 We have a healthy community in a liveable city</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.2 Urban areas are created and maintained to provide a healthy and safe living environment for our community. 5.3 Work towards enabling all people in our community to have access to safe, nutritious, affordable and sustainably produced food. 5.12 Plan and deliver an accessible, safe, clean and inviting public domain <p><i>Goal 6 We have affordable and accessible transport</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.4 Plan and provide sustainable infrastructure for safe and liveable places integrated with the environment and accessible to key transport routes.

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres
<i>Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)</i>	<p>The Statement re-affirms the importance of our local centres as a focus for local jobs, community facilities, social interactions as well as increased housing opportunities.</p> <p>The Retail and Business Centres Strategy is a key action of the Statement.</p>
<i>Wollongong Economic Development Strategy (2019-2029)</i>	<p>The Strategy sets an aspirational jobs target of 10,500 new jobs by 2028, with a focus on increasing office capacity in the Wollongong City Centre to attract and accommodate these new jobs.</p> <p>The Strategy recognises that jobs growth in population serving industries, including retail, will continue to grow with an increasing population.</p> <p>The Strategy recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing local transport policies that ensure all residents can access employment opportunities in job centres such as Metro Wollongong Investigating options for reducing car parking rates to assist commercial building feasibility in the city Providing infrastructure to support activities and improve amenity and activation within the Wollongong city centre
<i>Integrated Transport Strategy (underway)</i>	<p>The Strategy will be Council's guiding supporting document for transport in Wollongong. It will bring together other strategies across all transport modes and use the Movement and Place Framework to develop a clear understanding of the role and function of our movement networks. This is of significance in our Centres, where the road reserve is often a contested space with multiple competing priorities placed upon it.</p>
<i>Draft Housing Strategy)</i>	<p>The draft Wollongong Housing Strategy was endorsed for Public Exhibition on 29 August 2022. The Strategy has been prepared to address a range of housing issues, including housing supply and demand, emergency housing, social housing, housing for disabled persons and affordable housing. The draft Housing Strategy is a result of a comprehensive review of housing issues in the LGA. It proposes a combination of continuing several existing strategies, modification of others and the introduction of new strategies to better address the housing needs of the LGA.</p> <p>The following recommendations of the Draft Strategy are particularly relevant to the consideration of our Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the opportunity to provide of additional housing in key Town Centres, to be undertaken following the completion of the Retail and Business Centres Strategy Review the zoning of town centres which could result in changes to both the Business and Residential zonings. Review the FSR in town centres Review the building height in town centres
<i>Climate Friendly Planning Framework Discussion Paper</i>	<p>The Discussion Paper promotes enhancements to our planning framework to improve the environmental outcomes of development.</p> <p>The paper has 5 focus areas: Landscaping and Urban Greening; Solar and Energy Efficiency; Materials, Building Form and Waste; Transport and Car Parking; Policies and Incentives.</p> <p>Relevant to centres is the encouragement to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quantity and quality of canopy cover in the public domain Encourage walkable and cycling friendly centres, particularly in CBD's
<i>Urban Greening Strategy</i>	<p>The strategy seeks to increase the quality and quantity of all vegetation and open green space on all land types in an urban setting. Wollongong's average urban tree canopy cover is well below the national average of 39% (ISF Benchmarking report). Optimal urban canopy cover for amenity and wellbeing is estimated at 35- 40%. Some suburbs in Wollongong have canopy cover as low as 3%. New urban release areas will need to be planned to establish a tree canopy from scratch.</p> <p>Canopy cover is not evenly distributed across the LGA, and priority must be given in public tree programs to protecting the most vulnerable by increasing canopy cover where it is needed most. Council's investment will focus on providing high quality shade where people are most active by targeting town centres, streets and active transport routes, and parks.</p>
<i>Social Infrastructure Planning Framework (2018-2028)</i>	<p>Within the Social Infrastructure Planning (SIP) Framework, Wollongong City's Planning Areas and 'hard' social infrastructure assets are categorised according to scale, based on a hierarchy of provision that aligns with Wollongong Council's 'Centres' hierarchy. Facilities are categorised as local/neighbourhood, district, or regional facilities, based on size and the size of the community they serve, or will serve in the future. Strategically, this results in a larger number of small, local/neighbourhood facilities, distributed across the LGA and relatively few large, regional facilities, in key locations.</p>

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres
<i>Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework (2021)</i>	<p>The location of social infrastructure facilities like libraries and community centres within our town and village centres acts as a key attractor and increase activity in these places.</p> <p>The Framework provides Council with strong recommendations to develop a suite of clear and consistent planning controls and guidelines that facilitate better design outcomes and economically feasible development in the City Centre.</p> <p>It identified the following selected findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current land use controls could result in a City filled with residential development, compromising long term employment growth • The retail core is spread out too far, which results in empty shopfronts and creates inactive streets • General development controls don't respond to the character and historic qualities of places in the City <p>And proposed the following selected directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core • Develop active commercial streets that respond to character • Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place
<i>Town and Village Plans</i>	<p>The following centre-focused strategic plans and studies have been prepared, some of which were supported by additional economic analysis (noted by ^{EA}). The plans include actions relating to proposed changes to zoning and built form controls. Where relevant, these recommendations have been included as recommendations in this Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warrawong (2013) • Unanderra (2013) ^{EA} • Figtree (2013) ^{EA} • West Dapto (2009 updated 2018) ^{EA} • Corrimal (2015) • Dapto (2017) ^{EA} • South Wollongong (2017) ^{EA} • Port Kembla (2018) ^{EA} • Helensburgh (2020) • Wollongong City Centre (2016 + 2021) ^{EA} <p>A review of the current adopted Town and Village Plans revealed some common themes evident in the Implementation Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake LGA-wide studies to inform planning controls changes • Undertake economic analysis to test proposed changes to planning controls aimed at improving feasibility. Consider all relevant factors, especially flood mitigation costs. • Redefine Town Centre boundaries (and associated zoning) where centres have excess floorspace for future needs. • Provide transition areas surrounding business zones to mitigate land use conflicts with surrounding residential or industrial precincts. • Consider where it may be appropriate to allow residential development at ground on the fringe of oversupplied centres. • Acknowledge through DCP controls the functional extent of the centre, including areas which may not be on land zoned for business. • Support the revitalisation of centres through public domain and streetscape improvements, and access to transport. • Undertake built form analysis and testing to encourage development that is appropriate to context and character and update relevant LEP and DCP controls. • Take an LGA wide perspective on housing provision. The centres have a role to play but must balance commercial outcomes and adverse impacts on traffic generation and character.
<i>West Dapto Vision (2018)</i>	<p>The Vision outlines that the town centres of West Dapto will fill diverse roles, functions and mixed uses. Configurations will reflect the town centre hierarchy with a focus on pedestrian priority. Supported with a decision process (zoning, neighbourhood planning, etc.), appropriate locations will promote the social and economic functions and outcomes sympathetic to character and 'place'.</p> <p>West Dapto Town Centres are to be planned to meet three objectives:</p>

Strategic Plan or Policy	Implications for Wollongong's Retail and Business Centres
<i>Urban Release area neighbourhood plans</i>	<p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Hierarchy</i>: Hierarchy reinforces role and function, supports the Wollongong City Centre and higher order centres and provides certainty for investment decisions. Hierarchy reinforces character and identity as well as provides direction around appropriate residential density sympathetic to community facilities and service locations. 2. <i>Movement Sensitive</i>: The town centres of West Dapto are expected to facilitate social contact, employment and living needs in a sustainable manner. The town centres will be located to promote active transport and healthy lifestyle. Centres will provide activities, attractions and services within walking distance. Centres must also be supported and surrounded by a network of connected streets, paths and cycle ways, providing opportunities for active transport and convenient access to public transport. The network will link centres with open space and recreation areas. 3. <i>Diversity and Identity</i>: Centres will facilitate a diverse range of activities by prioritising spaces for people of all ages that become vital to the social fabric of a neighbourhood where people gather, meet friends and family and engage in social activities. Centres will be developed to capitalise on existing features of heritage, environment (vegetation, topography etc.) and contribute to a new theme expressing the centre's role in the urban residential landscape. </p> <p>The Neighbourhood Planning Process is outlined in the <i>Wollongong DCP 2009 D16 West Dapto Urban Release Area</i>.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Planning is a progressive step between the West Dapto Structure Plan, the urban zoning process, and a development application for subdivision. It allows issues to be considered on a neighbourhood or catchment scale.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Planning is intended to set urban density targets at an appropriate scale that supports town and village centre development. DCP Chapter D16 includes a map of the defined neighbourhoods of West Dapto including the location of future centres.</p> <p>Adopted Neighbourhood plans including planned centre development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bong Bong East and North (Bong Bong Town Centre) • Wongawilli North (Wongawilli Village Centre) • West Dapto Road/Sheaffes Road (south) (Darkes Road Town Centre) • Yallah/Marshall Mount (Marshall Mount Town Centre) <p>To date, the neighbourhood planning process has provided limited guidance to the development of town and village centres.</p>

6.2 Retail Floorspace Supply and Demand 2021- 2041 by Centres

(Source – SGS Study)

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Austinmer	1,265	1,265	0	386	1,265	1,340	-75
Goods	580						
Services	684						
Avondale	0			-	1,875	2,038	-163
Goods	0						
Balgownie	3,384	3,384	0	1,409	3,684	4,281	-597
Goods	1,773						
Services	1,611						
Bellambi (Bellambi Ln)	169	169	0		169	228	-58
Services	169						
Bellambi (Rothery St)	304	304	0	1,570	304	247	58
Goods	242						
Services	62						
Bellevue Road	406	406			406	396	10
Goods	156						
Services	250						
Berkeley	987	5,342	0	12,548	5,342	3,137	2,205
Goods	987						
Services	0						
Berkeley (Kelly St)	672	672	0		672	75	596
Goods	672						
Services	0						
Bong Bong	50	50	0	43,560	10,550	10,401	149
Goods	0						
Services	50						
Brownsville	1,189	1,189	0	1,197	1,189	1,174	15
Goods	696						
Services	493						
Bulli	9,438	9,438	0	8,003	9,438	11,757	-2,319
Goods	5,338						
Services	4100						
Bulli (Farrell Rd)	0	0	0	742	0	0	0
Services	0						

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Coledale	575	575	0	726	575	443	132
Goods	384						
Services	190						
Coniston	1,449	1,449	0	6,196	1,449	1,419	31
Goods	816						
Services	633						
Coniston (B7)	906	906	0		906	844	62
Goods	906						
Services	0						
Cordeaux Heights	653	653	0		653	561	93
Goods	432						
Services	222						
Corrimal	27,646	27,374	272	13,113	27,646	25,296	2,351
Goods	17,353						
Services	10,293						
Corrimal (B6)	3,977	3,977	0		3,977	4,331	-354
Goods	2,050						
Services	1,926						
Corrimal (Railway Street)	509	509	0	441	509	401	108
Goods	383						
Services	126						
Cringila	1,914	1,914	0	2,277	1,914	1,853	60
Goods	998						
Services	915						
Dapto	40,550	39,721	829	89,528	42,950	50,484	-7,534
Goods	28,043						
Services	12,506						
Dapto (Kent Rd)	1,577	1,577	0		1,577	2,396	-819
Services	1,577						
Dapto (Lakelands Dr)	406	406	0		406	130	275
Goods	406						
Services	0						
Darkes Road	0			11,074	5,625	5,622	3
Goods	0						
East Corrimal	1,107	1,107	0	504	1,107	909	198
Goods	687						
Services	420						
East Woonona	1,171	1,171	0	717	1,171	758	414
Goods	978						

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Services	194						
Fairy Meadow	21,927	22,167	-240	21,149	21,927	16,104	5,823
Goods	17,079						
Services	4,848						
Fairy Meadow (B6)	13,836	13,836	0		13,836	12,507	1,329
Goods	8,871						
Services	4,964						
Fairy Meadow (C Tree Ln)	180	180	0		180	106	74
Goods	168						
Services	12						
Fairy Meadow Industrial	0	0	0		0	0	0
Services	0						
Farmborough Heights	182	182	0	248	182	243	-61
Services	182						
Figtree	24,478	22,442	2,036	3,383	24,478	19,440	5,037
Goods	18,704						
Services	5,774						
Figtree Hotel (B6)	415	415	0	7,038	415	324	91
Goods	179						
Services	235						
Fowlers	0				1,875	2,168	-293
Goods	0						
Gwynneville	2,049	2,049	0	918	2,449	2,752	-303
Goods	1,044						
Services	1,005						
Haywards Bay	18,169	5,547	0	7,416	18,169	22,650	-4,481
Goods	5,547						
Services	12,623						
Helensburgh	9,556	9,556	0	32,985	9,856	11,277	-1,421
Goods	6,347						
Services	3,210						
Helensburgh (B6)	34	34	0		34	21	13
Goods	34						
Services	0						
Horsley	446	446	0		446	268	179
Goods	446						
Huntley	0				1,500	1,654	-154
Goods	0						
Jersey Farm	0			5,747	1,875	1,696	179

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Goods	0						
Kanahooka	427	427	0		427	375	53
Goods	412						
Services	16						
Keiraville	1,797	1,797	0	688	1,797	1,786	10
Goods	786						
Services	1,011						
Kembla Grange	1,733	1,733	0	31,317	1,733	2,084	-351
Goods	493						
Services	1,240						
Koonawarra	893	893	0		893	218	675
Goods	893						
Services	0						
Lake Heights (Weringa Av)	625	625	0	1,634	625	440	185
Goods	478						
Services	147						
Mangerton	274	274	0	337	274	321	-47
Goods	126						
Services	148						
Marshall Mount	0	0	0		3,675	3,999	-324
Goods	0						
Montague Street Industria	0				0	0	0
	0						
North Wollongong (B6)	15,674	15,674	0	208,063	15,674	12,624	3,050
Goods	8,416						
Services	7,258						
Port Kembla	10,600	9,909	690	2,971	10,600	9,276	1,324
Goods	6,822						
Services	3,777						
Primbee	201	201	0	210	201	146	55
Goods	201						
Services	0						
Russell Vale	808	808	0	1,585	808	601	206
Goods	609						
Services	199						
Stanwell Park	1,273	1,273	0	1,030	1,273	847	426
Goods	1,111						
Services	162						
Tallawarra	0			25,450	1,500	1,828	-328

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Goods	0						
Tarrawanna	1,221	1,221	0	674	1,221	1,262	-41
Goods	734						
Services	487						
Thirroul	13,039	13,627	-588	10,445	16,439	16,834	-395
Goods	9,051						
Services	3,988						
Towradgi	3,024	3,024	0	11,428	3,024	2,664	360
Goods	2,892						
Services	132						
Unanderra	17,110	17,110	0	32,928	17,110	15,155	1,955
Goods	11,785						
Services	5,326						
Unanderra (Farmborough Rd)	963	963	0		963	584	379
Goods	859						
Services	104						
Unanderra Industrial	0	0	0		0	0	0
Services	0						
University of Wollongong	9,920	9,920	0		9,920	14,218	-4,298
Services	9,920						
UoW Innovation Campus	2,482	2,482	0		2,482	3,452	-970
Goods	335						
Services	2,147						
Warrawong	57,652	58,120	-468	71,041	69,752	72,785	-3,034
Goods	45,861						
Services	11,790						
Warrawong (B6)	31,040	31,040	0		31,040	30,032	1,008
Goods	28,749						
Services	2,291						
Warrawong Industrial	0	0	0		0	0	0
Services	0						
West Wollongong (Thames)	540	540	0	292	540	621	-81
Goods	181						
Services	359						
Windang	2,782	2,782	0	3,366	2,782	2,724	58
Goods	1,803						
Services	979						
Wollongong	124,243	132,735	-8,492	232,938	186,243	213,625	-27,381
Goods	80,196						

Unmet demand >500m ²	2021 Retail Floorspace m ²				2041 Retail Floorspace m ²		
Oversupplied >500m ²							
Centre or Area	Existing Supply	Existing Demand	Gap	Additional feasible capacity	Forecast Supply	Forecast Demand	Gap
Services	44,048						
Wollongong (B6)	22,695	22,695	0		22,695	22,816	-120
Goods	10,526						
Services	12,170						
Wollongong West (Crown West)	771	771	0		771	602	169
Goods	771						
Services	0						
Wollongong West (Princes Hwy)	1,680	1,680	0	350	1,680	1,460	220
Goods	532						
Services	1,148						
Wongawilli	0	0	0	4,240	1,875	2,068	-193
Goods	0						
Woonona	14,040	14,040	0	11,906	14,040	17,490	-3,540
Goods	7940						
Services	6100						
Grand Total	537,847	543,808	-5,961		649,047	674,667	-25,620



Our Wollongong Our Future

From the mountains to the sea...

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport



Wollongong City Council
wollongong.nsw.gov.au
Phone (02) 4227 7111





Paper 1 – Existing Centres Appraisal

City of Wollongong
July 2022

1. Existing Floorspace

This paper focuses on the existing situation for centres across the Wollongong LGA. It commences with an assessment of floorspace supply and capacity, before turning its attention to the quality of that floorspace and how it all functions within the centres hierarchy.

Table of Contents

1. Existing Floorspace	1
1.1 Floorspace supply	3
Floorspace Audit Method	3
Supply Results	4
1.2 Capacity assessment	5
Capacity results	8
1.3 Roles and Functions	10
2. Centre Performance & Multi Criteria Assessment	13
2.1 Specifying centre strengths	13
2.2 Developing the criteria	13
2.3 Scoring	16
2.4 Weighting	16
Appendix A: Centre Hierarchy Definitions	20
Regional Cities	20
Major Regional Centres	21
Major Town Centres	22
Town Centres & Village Centres	22
Small Villages	23

1.1 Floorspace supply

This subsection describes the method and outcomes of a floorspace supply audit. The audit focuses on employment floorspace, which includes both retail and commercial office.

Floorspace Audit Method

BUILDING FOOTPRINTS

PSMA's Geoscape building data was used as a base to add centre names, travel zones and position within the broader centre hierarchy. Google Places data is also used here to locate concentrations of activity and attribute businesses to their respective buildings in Geoscape.

AUDITING SHOPPING MALLS

For the Geoscape audit, we used the building footprints to derive Gross Floor Area (GFA) and then to estimate the proportion of that GFA consumed by each category of use. However, this method only accounted for floorspace on the ground floor of buildings, and can't offer any detail on a building's internal layout. This is an issue for shopping malls which quite often have multiple floors and internal corridors, and will account for a significant portion of the retail floorspace in most Australian cities. To address this, we manually audited these shopping centres to replace their respective Geoscape buildings at the modelling stage.

For other multi-storey buildings that were not shopping malls, a calculation was applied based on building heights (eaves, not rooves), applying an average floor height assumption of 3.5m per floor and multiplying the residual numbers of floors by building footprint.

ON GROUND REVIEW

Subsequent to the above two steps, Council staff also undertook an 'on ground' review of centre floorspace to ensure that data from Google places was accurate. This was considered necessary as much of the Google data was collected during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic where some businesses may have temporarily closed.

POTENTIAL FLOORSPACE (EXISTING CENTRES)

A Cordell Connect search was conducted under the following parameters:

- Wollongong LGA and Shellharbour LGA
- Retail, tourism, medical, commercial, public buildings, hospitality, education and social categories selected
- For all stages in the development pipeline
- Deferred and abandoned projects excluded

The resulting excel report was then refined by removing already completed projects, minor projects such as alterations and additions, etc (by cost of works), projects in Shellharbour LGA that are not in close proximity to the Wollongong LGA.

POTENTIAL FLOORSPACE (FUTURE CENTRES)

Council had already identified what the new centres are – all located within urban release areas -, where they will roughly be located, and the total GFA that will be provided in them (if known). This GFA is typically a centre total and includes residential GFA.

Once identified, a review of strategic documentation was conducted including Local Strategic Planning Statement, previous retail and centres studies, town and village plans, other strategic documents to determine what the recommended non-residential gross floor area. Often, this was further broken down into recommended retail types. All data is added to an excel spreadsheet in a similar format to the potential floorspace in existing centres component. Where the breakdown of retail types is not provided, an educated guess was applied (typically assuming supermarket/food retail will take up most of the total share).

COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE

Current commercial floorspace is determined through allocation of GFA by employment numbers at a centre level based on the relevant ANZIC code.

Supply Results

All centres with over 1,000sqm of existing and planned floorspace is shown in the table below.

TABLE 1 EXISTING AND PLANNED FLOORSPEACE SUPPLY ACROSS WOLLONGONG (>1000 SQM) LGA & SELECTED EXTERNAL CENTRES

Centre	Existing GFA		Planned GFA	Total GFA
	Retail Goods	Retail Services	Retail	
Wollongong	80,196	42,254	62,000	184,450
Shellharbour Central*	83,501	15,954	0	99,455
Warrawong	45,861	11,790	12,100	69,751
Dapto	28,043	12,033	2,400	42,476
Warrawong (B6)	28,749	2,291	0	31,040
Corrimal	17,353	10,293	0	27,646
Kiama*	16,424	8,295	0	24,719
Figtree	18,704	5,365	0	24,069
Bulli	13,279	10,199	0	23,478
Wollongong (B6)	10,526	11,932	0	22,458
Fairy Meadow	17,079	4,848	0	21,927
Warilla*	13,943	5,311	0	19,254
Haywards Bay	5,547	12,623	0	18,170
Unanderra	11,785	5,326	0	17,111
Thirroul	9,051	3,988	3,400	16,439
North Wollongong	8,416	7,258	0	15,674
Calderwood Town Centre* ^	0	0	14,500	14,500
Fairy Meadow (B6)	8,871	4,732	0	13,603
Albion Park*	6,550	4,215	0	10,765
Port Kembla	6,822	3,777	0	10,599
Bong Bong ^	0	50	10,500	10,550
Helensburgh	6,347	3,210	300	9,857
Shellharbour	5,046	3,447	0	8,493
Oak Flats*	4,634	2,958	0	7,592
Calderwood Valley Village* ^	0	0	7,500	7,500
Warilla South*	2,338	3,299	0	5,637
Corrimal (B6)	2,050	0	0	8,785
Darkes Road ^	0	0	5,625	5,625
Berkeley	4,355	987	0	5,342
Balgownie	1,773	1,611	300	3,684
Marshall Mount ^	0	0	3,675	3,675
Towradgi	2,892	132	0	3,024
Windang	1,803	979	0	2,782
Barrack Heights*	2,304	473	0	2,777
Gwynneville	1,044	1,005	400	2,449
Cringila	998	915	0	1,913
Oaks Motel*	1,388	523	0	1,911
Avondale ^	0	0	1,875	1,875
Jersey Farm ^	0	0	1,875	1,875
Wongawilli ^	0	0	1,875	1,875
Fowlers ^	0	0	1,875	1,875
Albion Park Rail*	1,820	0	0	1,820
Keiraville	786	1,011	0	1,797
Kembla Grange	493	1,240	0	1,733
Wollongong West (Princes Hwy)	532	1,148	0	1,680
Tallawarra ^	0	0	1,500	1,500
Huntley ^	0	0	1,500	1,500
Coniston	816	633	0	1,449
Lake South*	352	1,088	0	1,440
Stanwell Park	1,111	162	0	1,273

Austinmer	580	684	0	1,264
Brownsville	696	493	0	1,189
East Woonona	978	194	0	1,172
East Corrimal	687	420	0	1,107
Total (Wollongong LGA)	343,268	167,030	111,200	628,234

* selected external centre (outside Wollongong LGA) ^ Planned Centre

Source: SGS Floorspace Audit 2021

1.2 Capacity assessment

This subsection focuses on the assessment of capacity (as opposed to existing supply from section 1.1). We commence by describing the capacity methods before displaying the results.

Capacity Method

A high-level assessment was undertaken on the employment capacity (including both retail and commercial office) which could be accommodated on each site under existing planning controls.

The base data for this analysis was comprised of:

- Properties within identified centres intersected with land use zones, with property data from Geoscape Australia
- Geoscape building footprints and heights intersected onto this layer to calculate approximate GFA per property
- The % coverage of each property/zone intersection by constraint layers under the LEP (e.g. heritage etc)
- Places of interest data from the NSW Government intersected onto properties

The following process was followed to identify the capacity:

- Available land:** Calculate which property/zone intersections would be excluded under a range of exclusion criteria which identify sites which either cannot be developed or would be relatively unlikely to be developed.
Any sites within relevant zones and not excluded are identified as available for development
- Yield calculation:** For each available site, calculate employment-generating floorspace likely to be yielded by development. Different assumptions regarding built form outcomes are used in different scenarios.
- Net yield calculation:** Subtract approximate existing employment generating GFA from calculated yield to provide the net change in floorspace which could be achieved through development on each available site.

Three scenarios were created:

- High scenario (theoretical maximum):** Only sites already at their maximum GFA, or large existing mixed-use developments are excluded, as these sites would be highly unlikely to undergo substantial further development. It is assumed that sites are developed to their maximum allowable GFA and 100% of floorspace delivered in commercial zones is for non-residential uses and therefore employment generating.

This scenario provides a theoretical maximum capacity under current controls, although it could never be reached in reality.

- **Medium scenario (feasible capacity):** Sites relatively unlikely to be redeveloped are excluded, including. Those that are strata subdivided, have more than two dwellings on them, are more than 40% covered by a heritage control or contain existing social or physical infrastructure or community facilities.

A feasibility filter is also applied. For a range of development types (e.g. single storey to double storey retail, bulky goods, mixed use retail/residential) high-level feasibility modelling was performed to determine a % of the maximum achievable GFA already developed above which redevelopment is likely to be unfeasible. Four different categories of property market in Wollongong LGA were profiled in each case (CBD, good markets, medium markets, poor markets).

This scenario assumes that in mixed use developments (B2 and B4 zones), 70% of the ground floor will be employment generating (with the rest services, entrances etc), and the ground floor will cover 80% of a site. The rest of all floorspace up to the maximum GFA will be residential. This scenario provides a high-level estimate of how much of the theoretical maximum capacity could realistically and feasibly be developed given existing land uses. Even then, some sites would be unlikely to be redeveloped due to site specific constraints or landowner intentions.

- **Low scenario (vacant sites):** this scenario assumes that only currently vacant sites can undergo development. It uses the same built form outcome assumptions as the medium scenario. This scenario provides a minimum value for the capacity if no redevelopment occurs.

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

Council had provided a spreadsheet of all the centres their existing total area, and relevant planning controls.

Three maximums are completed:

1. An 'absolute maximums': Each of the centres areas is multiplied by their respective FSR's- as permitted under the WLEP. The results are then aggregated by Centre name.
2. A 'maximum spare capacity': The results from the existing floorspace by centre are deducted from the absolute maximum capacity to determine what is left over or not yet realised.
3. An 'augmented maximum capacity': In the spreadsheet where the maximum capacity by site was determined, FSRs are adjusted to assume that only the ground floor will be developed for retail purposes. For example, if the max height is 9m (2 storeys) and the FSR is 0.5:1, assume that 0.25:1 will be used for retail purposes. The exception is B5/6 zones where 100% is used for retail and the B3 zone in the Wollongong CBD where the assumption was made that 2 storeys will be used for retail purposes.

FEASIBLE CAPACITY

The existing floor space dataset is utilised to determine what percentage of the total FSR is already built on this site.

A high-level feasibility exercise is completed that seeks to implement a threshold at which redevelopment is likely.

The feasibility is overlayed and all sites with an existing footprint/buildout lower than the threshold are aggregated by centre.

Capacity results

Capacity results are shown in the table below. Substantial differences between the medium and high scenarios are due to two different factors: the differing built form assumptions (100% commercial vs mixed use buildings), the feasibility thresholds and other exclusions applied under the medium (but not high) scenarios.

TABLE 2 ADDITIONAL AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE SUPPLY ACROSS WOLLONGONG LGA

Centre	Low	Medium	High
Wollongong	83,687	232,938	546,578
Dapto	10,462	89,528	316,675
North Wollongong	7,609	208,063	286,499
Warrawong	1,555	71,041	259,839
Bong Bong	0	0	155,679
Bulli	6,872	19,910	130,744
Marshall Mount	0	38,591	118,631
Unanderra	16,768	32,928	103,673
Fairy Meadow	1,974	21,149	101,032
Corrimal	6,703	13,113	91,826
Yallah	82,654	82,654	82,654
Figtree	1,051	3,383	81,069
Thirroul	1,142	10,445	69,474
Helensburgh	4,655	32,985	65,805
Port Kembla	2,479	2,971	64,251
Berkeley	5,819	12,548	46,742
Darkes Road	0	11,074	39,553
Tallawarra	25,450	25,450	34,085
Kembla Grange	6,347	31,317	32,177
Towradgi	0	11,428	31,741
Balgownie	210	1,409	12,586
Jersey Farm	5,747	5,747	7,697
Haywards Bay	4,919	7,416	7,416
Figtree Hotel	0	7,038	7,148
Windang	2,391	3,366	6,736
Wongawilli	4,240	4,240	5,678
Cringila	295	2,277	5,371
Russell Vale	0	1,585	3,856
Coniston	572	6,196	7,883
Austinmer	0	386	3,364
Stanwell Park	0	1,030	3,268
Lake Heights	0	1,634	3,087
Tarrawanna	0	674	3,041

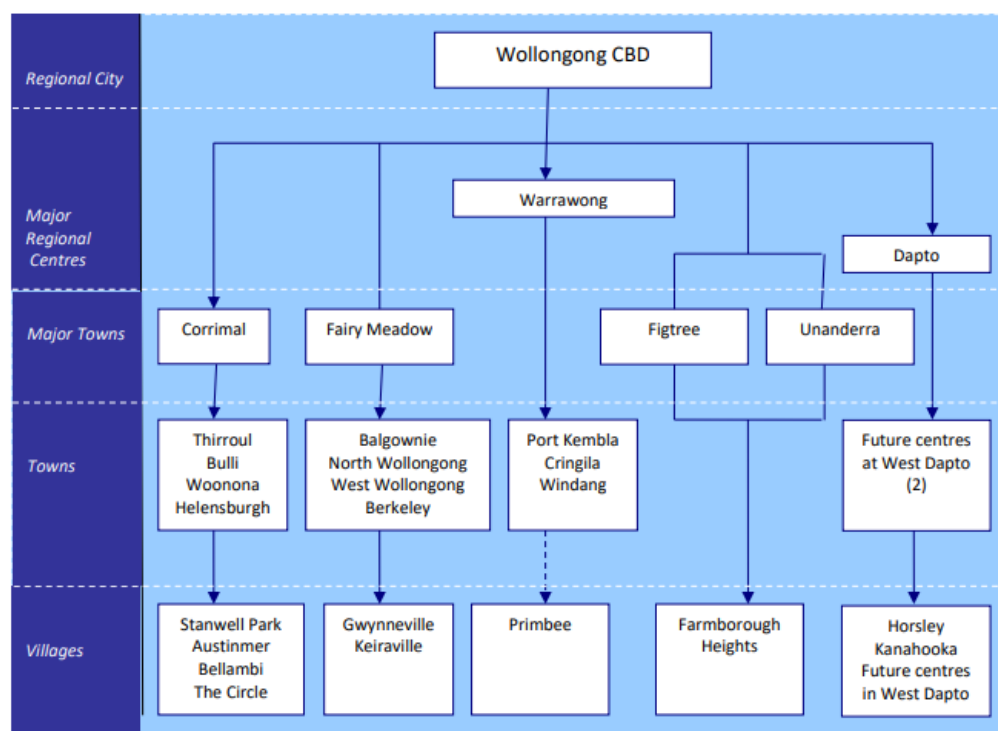
Bellambi	0	1,570	2,943
Horsley	0	0	2,727
Gwynneville	407	918	2,487
Brownsville	0	1,197	2,210
Keiraville	0	688	1,905
East Woonona	129	717	1,827
Railway Street, Corrimal	0	441	1,361
East Corrimal	0	504	1,311
Coledale	0	726	1,307
West Wollongong	0	292	1,028
Farmborough Heights	0	248	896
Wollongong West	0	350	838
Mangerton	0	337	568
Primbee	0	210	546
Total	284,137	1,002,712	2,599,406

Source: SGS Floorspace Audit 2021

1.3 Roles and Functions

A review of centre roles and functions was undertaken, particularly in relation to Centre hierarchies in the LGA. The chart below summarises the LGA's centres hierarchy, as defined in the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and further expanded on within the Wollongong DCP Chapter B4 – Development in Business Zones.

FIGURE 1 WOLLONGONG LGA CENTRE HIERARCHY (LSPS 2020)



The table below shows the hierarchy alongside the actual volumes of retail floorspace in those centres. These numbers includes both population services and retail floorspace – which were modelled separately. The base case forecast floorspace demand to 2041 is also shown. Further detail on these calculations can be found in Paper 3.

TABLE 3 RETAIL FLOORSPACE NUMBERS (SQM) DEFINED BY CENTRE HIERARCHY

Hierarchy	Centre	Existing Retail Floorspace 2021	Demand by 2041
Regional City (110,000sqm+)	Wollongong	124,243	213,625
Major Regional Centre (40-80,000sqm)	Dapto	40,076	50,484
	Warrawong	57,651	72,785
Major Town (20-40,000sqm)	Corrimal	27,646	25,296
	Fairy Meadow	21,927	16,104
	Figtree	24,069	19,440
Town (5-20,000sqm)	Bulli	9,438	11,757
	North Wollongong	15,674	12,624
	Helensburgh	9,557	11,277
	Woonona	14,040	17,490
	Port Kembla	10,599	9,276
	Thirroul	13,039	16,834
	Bong Bong	0	10,401
	Unanderra	17,392	15,155
	Darkes Road	0	5,622
Village (2-5,000sqm)	Windang	2,782	2,724
	Cringila	1,913	1,853
	Gwynneville	2,049	2,752
	Balgownie	3,384	4,281
	Berkeley	5,342	3,137
	Fowlers	0	2,168
	Marshall Mount	0	3,999
	Towradgi	3,024	2,664
	Avondale	0	2,038

Small Villages (100 – 2,000sqm) can be found in Appendix B.

In terms of floorspace calculations only, most Centres were found to be performing their role in the centre hierarchy. The clear exceptions have been identified and listed below:

1. Bulli and Woonona with a combined 31,000sqm, with further potential to grow – should be a combined Major Town Centre given proximity to each other.
2. Balgownie, Berkeley, Cringila, Windang could all be shifted down to Village status.
3. West Wollongong, Austinmer, Bellambi, East Woonona, Horsley, Kanahooka, Keiraville, Primbee and Stanwell Park could all be shifted down to Small Village status.

Quantitatively, the hierarchy criterion make sense. Some more specific thoughts for Council could include:

1. Regional City should have a stronger emphasis on activation, entertainment, dining and employment functions given the uncertain future of Department Stores and the trouble of the retail sector more generally.
2. Reconsider the requirement for a Major Regional Centre or Major Town Centre to possess at least one Discount Department Store (DDS). This is likely to become less relevant in the long run as this store type becomes increasingly outdated. In its place, the emphasis should be on these tiers of centre to play a stronger service role for their local community, and become focal points for community and social gathering.

Appendix A provides a more qualitative set of criterion for assessing a centres network/hierarchy.

2. Centre Performance & Multi Criteria Assessment

2.1 Specifying centre strengths

While the size of a centre (in terms of floorspace quantum, as defined in the previous section) for different commodities will exert an influence over people's propensity to visit, this is far from the only consideration in centre attractiveness. A spread of place-specific attributes will also affect the catchment of each centre. Built form and character, functionality, cultural traditions, affluence and historical legacies are all relevant considerations in this regard. How these factors interact with the background of contemporary economic trends and drivers are central to people's reasons for travelling to certain destinations over others.

Differentiating Wollongong's centres in this way provides a more valid representation of their role in the centre hierarchy and value to the community. In the absence of this type of consideration, the real dynamics of centre competition and specialisation are not given adequate attention. It may also emphasise the need for improvements other than changes to floorspace ratio controls to make places which are vital and enjoyable.

SGS has completed 'multi-criteria analysis' (MCA) to distil these quantitative variables into measurable criteria and then score each centre relative to others in the study area. This has produced a score and ranking for each centre, offering a measurable comparison of their place-based strengths. This score also provides an input to determining the 'gravity' of each centre at the modelling stage.

2.2 Developing the criteria

Prior to developing MCA criteria, the place-specific variables of relevance to centre performance must first be identified. Here, SGS has drawn on its past project work and experience to illustrate thematic success factors for centres and precincts. This is shown in Figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2: SUCCESS FACTORS FOR CENTRES AND PRECINCTS



Source: SGS Economics and Planning

These precinct 'success factors' have provided an input to the formation of 'criteria' by which the locational attributes of each centre are tested. Trends and drivers identified in an earlier section of this report have also informed the criteria development process, with the aim of determining which centres are most likely to succeed amid these structural changes to the economy of centres.

Some themes have been omitted to avoid double counting similar criteria and to reduce the focus on centre size, which is already accounted for at a separate stage in the modelling. Where possible, criteria have been linked to data sources gathered throughout the project. In other circumstances, qualitative assessment of relevant centre attributes has been used to determine scores. The logic of this criteria development and scoring process is shown in the table below.

TABLE 4: CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

Category	Criteria	Data
Place	1.1 Environmental quality and physical amenity	Assessment of sense of place, pedestrian permeability, presence of open space, presence of greenery.
	1.2 Built form quality	Assessment of character, quality, grain and distinctiveness of the centre's built form.
Activity	2.1 Presence of private sector business anchors	Identification of major business anchors through floorspace and supply audit.
	2.2 Presence of public sector and institutional anchors	Identification of institutional anchors through floorspace and supply audit. This includes universities, hospitals, government offices etc.
	2.3 Overall land use mix	Assessment of land use mix in floorspace supply audit.
	2.4 Presence of entertainment / recreation / community uses	Examination of land uses such as open space, community facilities, cinemas, pubs, entertainment venues etc.
Access	3.1 Major arterial road access	Examination of proximity to regionally significant road routes.
	3.2 Public transport accessibility	Desktop audit of rail infrastructure and regional bus routes.
	3.3 Active transport and walkability	Assessment of centre amenity towards active transport users. Factors including permeability, dedicated infrastructure for walking and cycling and proximity to major traffic routes have been considered.
	3.4 Car parking	Examination of spatial data on car parking locations provided by Council.
Retail composition	4.1 Presence of anchor supermarket	Desktop assessment of if a major, only minor or no supermarket is present
	4.2 Presence of anchor department/discount department store	Desktop assessment of whether two or more, one only or no department stores are present
	4.3 Overall retail mix	Evaluation based on % floorspace breakdown from floorspace audit results for each centre

Source: SGS Economics and Planning

2.3 Scoring

A score of 1-3 has been given to strategically significant centres throughout the LGA for each criteria. Selected centres external to the LGA have also been included for comparison. Scores have been awarded on a relative basis, with the aim of drawing out the differences between the characteristics of different centres.

Table 5 details the scores awarded to each centre and provides a composite score for each according to its overall performance across all criteria. Initially, an equal weighting has been placed on each criteria, providing a summative impression of the results. Weightings have then been adjusted in section 2.4 to place emphasis on certain locational attributes (see below).

TABLE 5: MCA SCORING AND RESULTS UNWEIGHTED

Category	Place		Activity				Access				Retail		
Criteria	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	4.3
Wollongong City Centre	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1
Shellharbour Central	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	3	3	3	1
Corrimal	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	2
Dapto	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	2	2
Fairy Meadow	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	3
Figtree	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	1	3	2	2	2
Warilla	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	1	3
Warrawong	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
Thirroul	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	2
Port Kembla	3	3	1	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	1

Source: SGS Economics and Planning

2.4 Weighting

Following the initial scoring process, weightings (%) have been refined to place emphasis on certain locational attributes valued by the community.

A community survey was undertaken by Wollongong Council's engagement team. The purpose of this survey was to:

1. Gain a better understanding of the local community's perceptions of Centres,
2. Understand how the community utilise Centres
3. The relative strengths and weaknesses of the Centres
4. And suggestions for how these Centres could be improved from either a utility or experiential perspective.

Weightings reflecting the importance of each MCA criteria to the community have been determined based on the results of this community survey. The survey did not contain enough data points for each

centre to provide scores. Instead, respondents' ranking of the relative importance of different attributes of centres was used to determine weights.

For food and non-food retail, the centre characteristic the community felt to be most important (a mix of shops, cafes and services) was assigned 35% of the total MCA weighting. This 35% was distributed as weights between the relevant MCA criteria that matched that attribute so that they add up to 35% in total.

Following this, 20% of the overall MCA weighting score was assigned for the second most important centre characteristic according to the community and this 20% was assigned as weights to the relevant MCA criteria so they add to 20% in total. 15% was then assigned for the third most important characteristic and so on for each of the other characteristics so that their relative importance in the MCA weighting reflects their rank according to the community.

The weights assigned to each MCA criteria are shown in the table overleaf, along with how they relate to the survey options.

Weightings were modified for hospitality and bulky goods to reflect that centre success in hospitality is heavily influenced by the quality of the local environment and built form, while the success of bulky goods centres is generally dominated by their road accessibility and tenant mix.

The option in the survey for *'Has places for people to gather and socialise (e.g. a community centre, park, cinema and/or a pub)'* was not included as it was not measured as directly by the MCA criteria or any available data, and it overlaps slightly with the other options measuring land use mix.

TABLE 6: CATEGORY WEIGHTINGS

Survey option	Average rank by community (lower is better)	Corresponding MCA criteria	% of overall MCA score		
			Food & non-food retail	Hospitality	Bulky goods retail
1. Has a mix of shops, cafes, schools, doctors, libraries and/or government services	3.78	2.1	5%	3%	
		2.2	10%	7%	
		1.3	5%	3%	
		4.2	5%*	3%	15%
		4.3	10%	7%	
		<i>Subtotal</i>	35%	23%	15%
2. The comfort and amenity of the place (e.g. it's easy to get around; has shade and seating; and feels welcoming)	4.06	1.1	15%	30%	
		1.2 (shared with option 5)	10%	20%	
		<i>Subtotal</i>	20%**	40%**	
3. Has a major supermarket, like Coles, Woolworths, IGA or ALDI	4.17	4.1	15%*	10%	15%
4. Easy to park my car	4.97	3.4	10%	7%	30%
5. The quality and character of the buildings and public spaces	5.1	1.2 (shared with option 2)	10%	20%	
		<i>Subtotal</i>	5%**	10%**	
6. Easy to get to by car	5.34	3.1	5%	3%	40%
7. Easy to walk or cycle around	5.66	3.3	5%	3%	
8. Easy to get to by public transport	6.91	3.2	5%	3%	

* Note presence of anchor department store score not used for ranking centres by likely department store performance in centres, while presence of anchor supermarket score not used for ranking centres by likely supermarket performance.

** Note – as MCA criteria 1.2 is shared between option 5 and option 2, only 50% of the MCA criteria weighting is added to the subtotal for each survey option.

Following the application of these weightings, new composite scores have been produced to rank the relative strength of each centre, and these scores have been scaled to lie between 0 and 1 where 0 is poor and 1 is optimal.

These results are summarised in **Error! Reference source not found.** below. As shown, the place attributes of certain centres may be highly suited to specialisation in certain sectors, and less so in others. For example, centres which are suited to bulky goods retailing will typically be different from those most suited to specialty retail.

TABLE 7: MCA SUMMARY RESULTS

Centre	Food & non-food retail (apart from hospitality)	Hospitality	Bulky goods
Wollongong	0.92	0.94	0.9
Shellharbour Central	0.67	0.60	1.0
Corrimal	0.68	0.68	0.7
Dapto	0.68	0.56	0.9
Fairy Meadow	0.70	0.69	0.6
Figtree	0.55	0.48	0.9
Warilla	0.75	0.72	0.7
Warrawong	0.72	0.63	0.9
Thirroul	0.73	0.82	0.5
Port Kembla	0.53	0.69	0.3

Source: SGS Economics and Planning

These scores provide a useful frame through which to view place-based centre development policy. They also provide a link between the emerging characteristics of floorspace demand, as identified in the trends and drivers section, and the modelling of centre gravity.

Appendix A: Centre Hierarchy Definitions

Below is a set of centre hierarchy definitions. The definitions originate from an economic geography perspective in that they define how different tiers of the centre hierarchy should serve particular functions for the community in a given region.

These tiers exist because higher order functions benefit from critical mass and colocation of activities and patronage whilst many so called 'lower order' functions are not necessarily less important, but need to be accessed more readily and so therefore must disperse across the urban/regional landscape. They too benefit to some degree from colocation (hence still being in centres), but not to the extent of those activities found in the higher order centres.

The definitions have been adapted to the Wollongong Centres Hierarchy as defined under the Wollongong DCP 2009.

Regional Cities

Regional Cities possess large and diverse retail and entertainment facilities, often featuring some niche retail sub-precincts. Regional Cities are typically positioned in some of the most accessible locations in regional areas, with strong public transport and major road linkages. All Regional Cities serve a wide catchment that extends across whole regions.

Function and Form

The function of a City Centre is to provide the highest end retail, commercial office and mixed-use services to the regional economy. This multi-functional role is also complementary, as each function serves to enhance the potency of the other, synergistic uses.

Due to these functions, Regional Cities also become de-facto focal points for the regional community, as significant proportions of the regional population can be expected to visit, work, shop, and play in these nodes.

Regional Cities are often so large that they contain multiple built forms within the same centre. Most Regional Cities will typically include a mall (open, close or semi-enclosed) along with street-based retailing, plus a pedestrianised square or street. Laneways are also a design feature. This variety in built form encourages a greater diversity of opportunities for different types of retailers to find their most suitable floorplate, along with a broader and deeper offer of attractions for customers.

Land Uses

Regional Cities are usually anchored by one or more department stores, discount department store(s), supermarket(s), mini major(s) and speciality stores. These centres are often associated with a significant provision of bulky goods retailing adjacent to the core retail centre, and in pure planning principles are the best places to accommodate regionally significant bulky goods retail clusters. Regional Cities provide for a full range of retail needs including leisure and social facilities such as large cinemas and restaurants.

Whilst retail generally comes first, Regional Cities eventually also become great locations for commercial office development. If combined with strong road and rail access, these centres should attract significant demand for corporates looking to combine good amenity for their workforce, ability to interact and do business with collaborators in the economy as well as the branding benefits that are generally associated with a reputable centre.

Finally, civic functions such as government offices or social services may (although not always) locate in Regional Cities given the high volume of population captured in their trade areas.

Size

Regional Cities should possess approximately 100,000 sqm in retail floorspace, up to 500,000sqm or more of commercial office floorspace; serving a population of 200,000 people.

Major Regional Centres

Major Regional Centres are major retail nodes that serve wide catchments (but smaller than catchments for Regional Cities, and with less variety of non-retail uses). Up until the past decade, Major Regional Centres have traded well. However, the gradual decline of Department Stores has seen these centres become increasingly vulnerable to competition from lower tier centres.

Function and Form

Major Regional Centres aim to offer a nearly full range of goods and services to the local resident community. They will also provide some office space and community facilities for that local to sub-regional community.

Most Major Regional Centres will contain an enclosed or semi-enclosed mall or plaza, as the Department Store anchor generally prefers to operate out of those boxes. As on-street activity, alfresco dining and cultural features have becoming increasingly important to centre performance in the online era, centres anchored by malls are under increasing pressure to create a more open environment – both physically and socially. And whilst malls in Regional Cities can justify significant investment in those domains from shopping centre operators, many Major Regional Centres have been left to look somewhat more tired.

Land Uses

Major Regional Centres can be anchored by one or more department stores, supermarket(s), mini major(s) and specialty stores.

Given the challenges discussed above, Major Regional Centres of the future are less likely to rely on Department Stores as their major anchor. Whilst they are not entirely extinct (in the form of Discount Department Stores in areas with a lower socio-economic profile), the focus is expected to shift to food, health and wellness at a level that extends beyond what is seen in supermarkets.

Offices and community facilities are also expected to remain vital to the role that Major Regional Centres play in a community. Employment floorspace in Major Regional Centres tend to cater more to a suburban office market, so price is a consideration, with shop-top offices a good compromise as opposed to more expensive standalone office developments. Note that whilst some Major Regional

Centres may still play a predominantly retail function, there should be opportunities for office and community facilities if the landowners/developers are to pursue those options.

Size

Major Regional Centres generally range from 40,000 sqm to 80,000 sqm, with the typical centre at a size of approximately 35,000 sqm. The average Major Regional Centre's catchment area can be expected to encompass approximately 100,000 people.

Major Town Centres

Major Town Centres are relatively large centres with supermarkets and on occasion (mostly in the past) Discount Department Stores acting as anchors.

Function and Form

Major Town Centres are often strong in either:

- Non-supermarket food stores (including delis, cafes and restaurants), or
- Discount Department Stores, independent clothing, specialty boutiques, population services,

The latter is becoming less common.

In growing areas (particularly in growth areas) many Major Town Centres are also centres which are transitioning from Town Centres to Major Town Centres as a result of population growth, and a lack of competition in that sub-regional catchment.

A key difference between Major Town and Town Centres is that the former can often withstand competition from out of centre developments as they possess multiple supermarkets and/or a variety of goods and services which are difficult to replicate on stand-alone sites.

Most Major Town Centres take either a street-based or mall form.

Land Use and Size

A typical Sub Regional Centre should be around 20-40,000 sqm in retail floorspace, serving 50,000 people; although fewer centres are in the higher end of the range, with the exception of some niche examples in popular tourism or entertainment precincts or in areas of high affluence where there are thousands of sqm of independent/specialty boutiques.

Town Centres & Village Centres

Town Centres generally serve a contained catchment and are anchored by one or more supermarkets. Some of these centres may also contain mini major(s), but not Discount Department Stores.

Town Centres can vary significantly in terms of function, size and floorspace composition. Any centre ranging from 5,000 sqm to 20,000 sqm should be considered a Town Centre.

Centres with 2,000 to 5,000 sqm of floorspace can be described as Village Centres, whilst 5,000 sqm+ centres are considered Town Centres. Both serve similar purposes, but to different degrees – scaling

often with the size of their local/supportable population catchment that may grow (or in some remote locations decline) over time.

Many Town and Village Centres will generally do little more than serve the weekly shopping & grocery needs of its population catchment.

The typical population catchment for Town Centres is 10,000 - 25,000 people, noting that major supermarket operators traditionally seek a catchment of at least 8,000 people.

Town Centres - and their supermarket anchors in particular - tend to perform well in growth areas. This is because major supermarket chains located close to home offer a low cost (both in terms of time and money) means of shopping for weekly grocery needs.

Small Villages

Small Villages are smaller retail nodes which serve the day to day needs of residents who are within walking distance. These centres usually consist of small grocers, milk-bars, a takeaway restaurant and perhaps a café. They are generally no larger than 2,000 sqm of retail floorspace, serving 700 to 1,000 dwellings within a 4-500m radius.

These centres can help to create 800m walkable catchments across a metropolitan/suburban area.

Appendix B: Small Villages

Villages – below 2000sqm supply

Centre	Existing Retail Floorspace	Demand by 2041
Keiraville	1,797	1,786
Coniston	1,583	1,419
Brownsville	1,415	1,174
Austinmer	1,371	1,340
Tarrawanna	1,303	1,262
East Corrimal	1,126	909
Stanwell Park	1,108	847
East Woonona	1,082	758
Koonawarra	725	218
Russell Vale	721	601
West Wollongong (Thames St)	688	605
Cordeaux Heights	652	561
Coledale	556	443
Lake Heights	556	440
Horsley	446	268
Kanahooka	433	375
Figtree Hotel	421	324
Bellevue Road, Figtree	403	396
Mangerton	351	321
Bellambi	286	247
Farmborough Heights	251	180
Primbee	200	146



Paper 2 – Retail & Centres Trends Analysis

City of Wollongong

July 2022



Contents

1. Trends and drivers for retail and commercial services	3
1.1 Impact of COVID-19	3
Growth in online retail	4
Population growth	5
Post pandemic	7
1.2 Food/ Supermarket	8
Changing profile and role of supermarkets	9
1.3 Department Store/ Discount Department Store/ non food (retail)	11
Fluctuating retail expenditure growth	12
Rise of online retailing	13
1.4 Bulky goods (retail)	17
Out-of-centre retailing (supermarkets, bulky goods and fuel retailing)	17
1.5 Population serving	21
Emergence of café culture eat streets and food centres	21
Shopping hour deregulation and night-time economies (NTE)	22
1.6 Export oriented businesses	23
Changes in freight logistics	23
Corporates and Commercial Office	24
1.7 Key implications for Wollongong	26

1. Trends and drivers for retail and commercial services

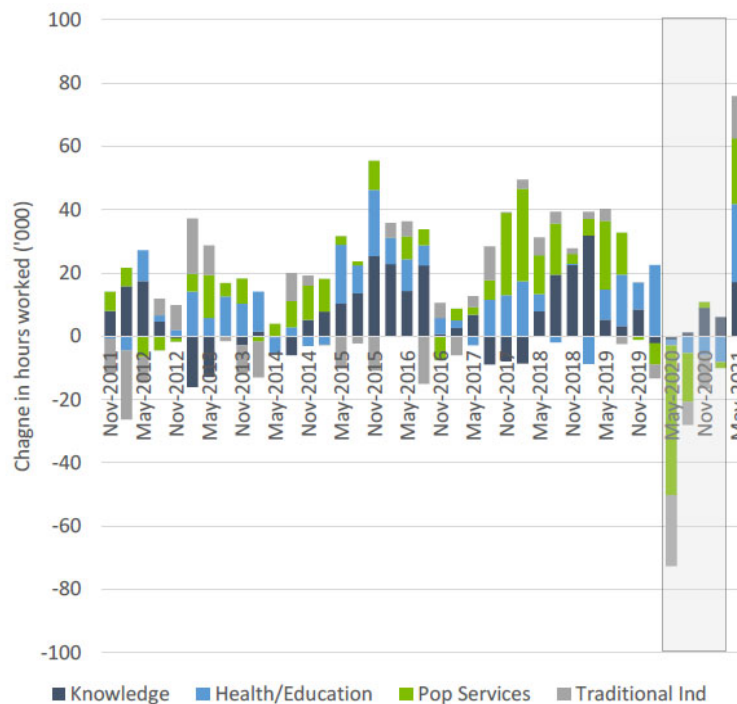
This paper explores the key trends that are affecting the business and retail economy both now and into the future. An assessment is also made on how these trends are affecting the Wollongong LGA's centres specifically.

1.1 Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic took hold globally in early 2020, with governments forced to send communities and economies into lockdowns in order to reduce the spread of the virus. During the course of this study (2021-22), NSW and other parts of Australia experienced further waves of COVID-19. Now in period of post-pandemic recovery, it is too early to say what the long-term impact of the pandemic on specific communities, economies and centres will be. However, we can discuss perhaps the most significant impacts from a centres planning perspective - such as population change and changes in work and retail preferences.

The chart below highlights just how seriously the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted working hours, particularly for the population serving industries. Growth was also stagnant (at best) for other industry sectors during much of 2020.

FIGURE 1: CHANGES IN HOURS WORKED 2011-2021



Source: NSW Labour Force Survey, ABS

Growth in online retail

One scenario that may occur as a result of the pandemic is a faster shift to online retail. Australia's online market penetration of 11.1% is around six years behind the global average, around half that of global markets (25%) and a quarter to the Asia-Pacific (40%)¹. Reasons for this include Australia's 'tyranny of distance', low population density and high labour rates, which add considerably to delivery costs and reduce online margins². Despite this, the gap between Australia and the world suggests there is capacity for accelerated online market penetration. Ultimately, the answer may well be found in the next 12-24 months, as the recovery gathers speed and online and offline are once again in competition. SGS experience around the country has found that online retail penetration has been strongest in locations that are either (a) devoid of activated, walkable centres or (b) distant from access to major centres³. Those centres are most commonly found in outer suburban locations. In those cases, So Council should work hard to ensure that its community has strong access to activated, walkable centres

¹ Mitchell, Sue 2020. 'Online spending surges but retailers warned against over reliance'. Australian Financial Review. <https://www.afr.com/companies/retail/online-spending-surges-but-retailers-warned-against-over-reliance-20200903-p55s1h>

² Ibid

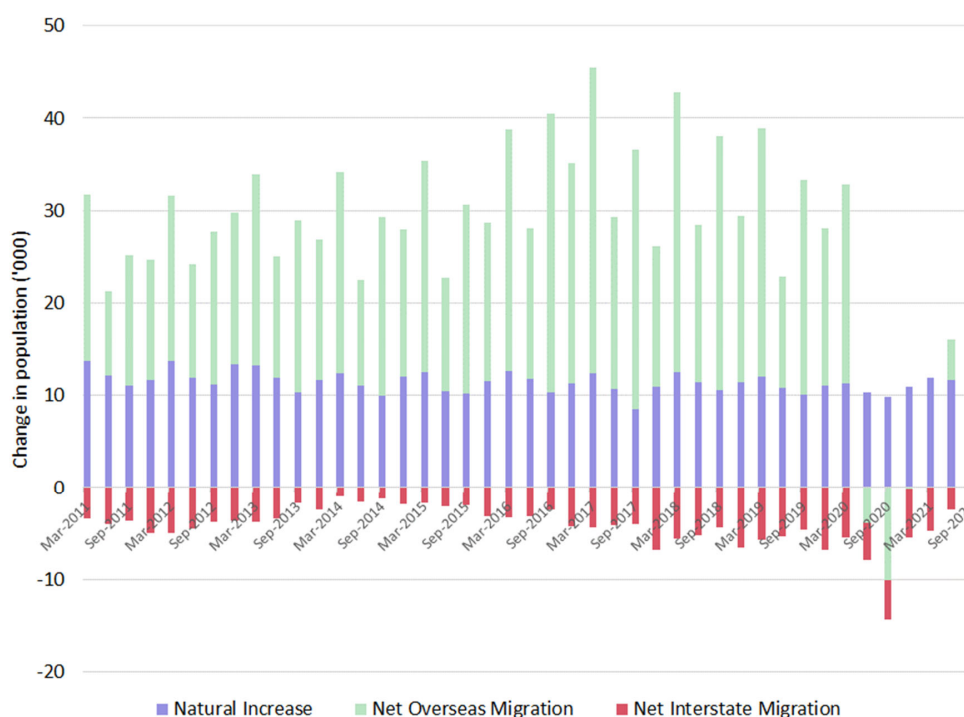
³ Our research on this is confirmed by recently released Australia Post data, which shows a similar pattern for online retail penetration: https://auspost.com.au/content/auspost_corp/business/marketing-and-communications/access-data-and-insights/ecommerce-trends/annual-report/#suburb

– which would in turn provide greater opportunity for local businesses to thrive and survive in the face of online competition.

Population growth

COVID-19, which resulted in restricted travel movements within, outside and into Countries has resulted in the slowest national population growth since 1942, with Net Overseas Migration (NOM) turning negative for the first time since WW2.⁴ With population growth strongly tied to retail expenditure (new residents need housing, furniture, groceries), any forecast declines will lead to declines in retail expenditure.

FIGURE 2: NSW POPULATION GROWTH 2011-2021



Source: NSW Estimated Resident Population, ABS

The impact of reduced population growth on Wollongong is likely to be mixed. Previous research has indicated that around 70% of all Australian migrants arrived on temporary visas, with a large majority classified as students or visitors.⁵ Given the overall reduction in overseas travel and university sector

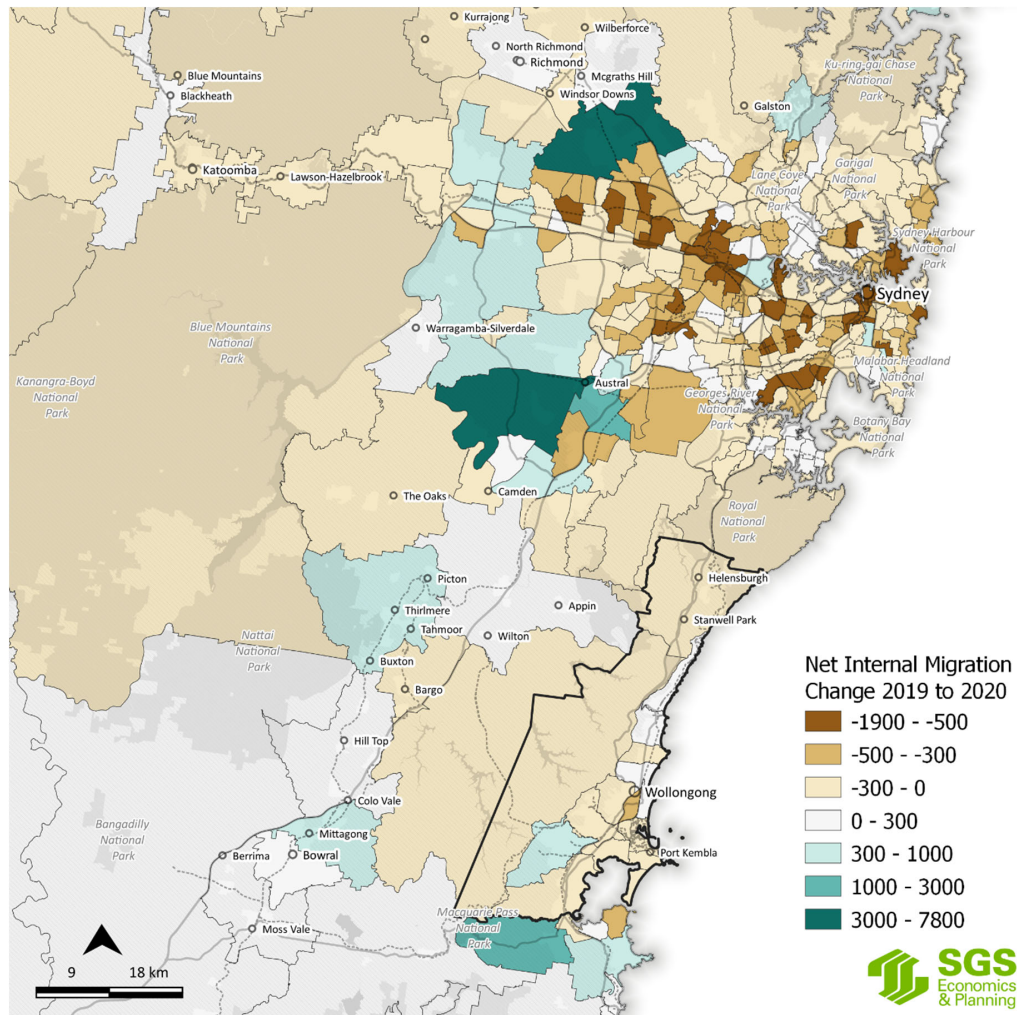
⁴ Van Onselen, Leith. 2020. 'Budget forecasts lowest population growth since WW2'. Macrobusiness. <https://www.macrobusiness.com.au/2020/10/budget-forecasts-lowest-population-growth-since-ww2/>
⁵ Lawless, Tim. 2020. 'How Will Stalled Net Overseas Migration Impact Housing Demand'. CoreLogic. <https://www.corelogic.com.au/news/how-will-stalled-net-overseas-migration-impact-housing-demand>

shutdowns, the largest impact on NOM is on temporary visas. Given that almost 90% of temporary migrants are renters, this has resulted in reduced rental demand. Markets that cater for most of this rental demand are found mostly in the inner city, such as the Sydney CBD. Therefore, the impact of reduced rental demand on an area such as Wollongong is likely to be much less. As Tim Lawless from Corelogic explains:

“Greenfield housing estates are also less impacted from reduced NOM, with early reports that the HomeBuilder grant, together with low interest rates and first home buyer incentives, are providing a solid boost to demand. Developers and builders may need to pivot towards these more active sectors, at least while NOM remains low.”

Shifts in internal migration following the outbreak of COVID-19 has had a relatively marginal impact for NSW as a whole. However, there has been a significant impact on regional centres. Despite a decrease in Net Overseas Migration, areas such as Wollongong have seen an increase in net *internal* migration following the COVID-19 outbreak (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: NET INTERNAL MIGRATION CHANGE 2019 TO 2020



Source: ABS

This pattern is driven by the fundamental change in value proposition for metropolitan versus ex-metropolitan living for the working population. With people required, and now more often *choosing* to work from home, the high prices and relatively poor amenity of inner-city or suburban commuter suburbs has become less appealing. In contrast, the value proposition of cheaper and high amenity areas outside of larger metropolitan areas, such as Wollongong, has increased.

Post pandemic

The long term impact of COVID-19 on cities is still uncertain. In the past, pandemics have caused havoc during the period of outbreak but haven't resulted in any long standing changes to the function of cities, economies and societies. Following the outbreak of COVID-19, there have been claims that 'this

time is different' (in terms of both during and post pandemic impacts) as this is the first time in history for a pandemic to occur when there is a widely available alternative/s to face-to-face interaction. Despite this, whether or not cities will shrink, die or evolve as a result of this pandemic, there will be changes at least in the short term. A paper by Florida (2020)⁶ identifies four main forces that have the potential to lead to the long-lasting transformation of cities and regions as we currently know them:

- **Social scarring:** This refers to the fear instilled by the pandemic which may pull citizens apart and cause people to avoid crowded spaces for a certain period. This will influence residence choice, travel and commute patterns, and the economic viability of certain kinds of businesses and social gathering spaces.
- **Forced experiment for employment, shopping, workplace and resident choice, commuting of the lockdown:** The restrictions enforced by health orders have provided conditions for a forced experiment. Workplaces and classrooms have transitioned to remote learning, shopping to online and delivery, and social interactions have been largely restricted to social media and other digital platforms. The lockdowns showed that there are radically different ways of living made possible by digital tools. However, the extent to which these alternatives will be complements or substitutes for traditional ways of interaction, as the immediate threat has passed, remains to be seen. While there are strong signs that, for many types of activity, distanced and digital interaction is not a full substitute and that there is hunger to return to face-to-face, it seems almost certain that post pandemic workplaces, particularly professional services, will have a much higher incidence of work from home.
- **Need to secure the urban built environment against this and future health and climate risks:** Public infrastructure, public facing businesses, and all spaces where lots of people gather have needed to make immediate changes to facilitate social distancing and hygiene standards. In the long term this pandemic will prompt architects, designers, and planners to more seriously consider permanent interventions that respond to future pandemics and climate risks.
- **Changes to urban built form, real estate, design, and streetscapes:** Social distancing creates the immediate need for different configurations of indoor and outdoor spaces, as well walkable access. Some of these changes will likely be maintained after the immediate threat passes, whether for public health benefits, or because people simply prefer them. The outcome of the forced experiment could also lead to more permanent changes in how and where people live and work, including how they use the space allocations for work and life.

1.2 Food/ Supermarket

This economy is comprised of food based retailing, including bakeries, bars, cafes, convenience stores, restaurants, liquor stores and grocery stores/ supermarkets. Table 1 demonstrates the total Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the food based economy across the Wollongong LGA.

TABLE 1: FOOD/SUPERMARKET FLOORSPEACE, WOLLONGONG

Store type	Count	Floorspace
------------	-------	------------

⁶ R. Florida, A. Rodriguez-Pose, M. Storper (2020) Cities in a Post COVID world

cafe	67	21,133
restaurant	84	19,626
bar	27	18,276
supermarket	14	16,277
meal_takeaway	45	11,918
liquor_store	25	9,672
grocery_or_supermarket	13	8,386
meal_delivery	18	3,379
bakery	21	2,996
food	15	2,114
convenience_store	3	361
Grand Total	332	114,138

Changing profile and role of supermarkets

High street retail strips and enclosed shopping centres are typically anchored by a supermarket, with smaller stores clustering around this anchor. Supermarkets play a significant role in the overall health of a shopping centre or district. Traditionally, Australia's groceries market has been dominated by Woolworths and Coles. Although in recent years there have been some new entrants into the groceries market, the duopoly still accounts for more than three-fifths of the total grocery market.⁷

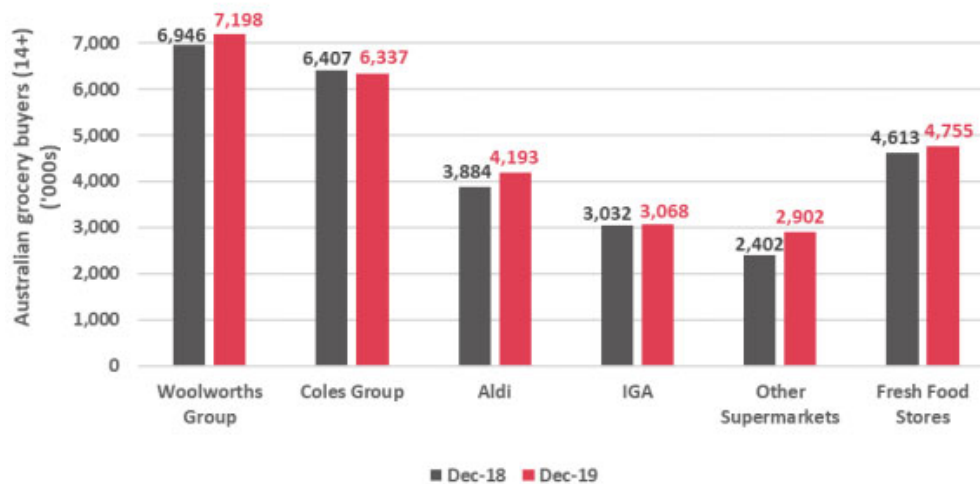
Two main competitors have risen over the past decade: IGA and Aldi. Combined, these two chains accounted for 19.7% of Australian grocery market share in December 2019. IGA has a focus on stocking goods that tailor to individual communities, identifying itself as an active commercial citizen in these places. Now that these two operators have demonstrated market potential for smaller, 'metro style' stores in often out of centre suburban locations, Woolworths and Coles are also exploring the possibility of contesting that market.

In December 2019, Aldi had increased its market share to 12.4%, according to Roy Morgan. Their focus on low-price 'home brand' items has attracted a number of shoppers who may not have traditionally shopped at discount supermarkets.

While supermarkets traditionally tend to service their surrounding population catchment, there is anecdotal evidence that Aldi bucks this trend, with many choosing to shop at Aldi even though it may not be their closest supermarket.

⁷ Roy Morgan 2020, 'Looking beyond the panic-buying, Australia's big supermarket story is Aldi's growing market share' – 24 March, [http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7537-woolworths-increases-lead-in-\\$100b-plus-grocery-war-201803230113](http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7537-woolworths-increases-lead-in-$100b-plus-grocery-war-201803230113)

FIGURE 4: SHARE OF TOTAL GROCERY MARKET, 2018 & 2019



Source: Roy Morgan 2020

It is worth noting that while supermarkets capture a significant proportion of food retailing, non-supermarket food stores play a significant role in meeting food retailing needs. These include bakeries, grocers, delicatessens etc. However, a recent trend has seen many supermarkets 'in-house' these speciality offerings within their stores. In recent years, major supermarket operators have become more specialised in their bakery and deli offerings in particular, placing further pressure on competing high street retailers. That said, these high street retailers are also reliant on these major supermarkets as anchor tenants, with visitation to smaller retail outlets driven in large part by people attracted first and foremost to centre supermarkets.

Supermarkets continue to evolve their business models and are looking to grow their share of the online market. According to KPMG's Australian Retail Outlook 2021, online grocery sales doubled their market share of overall grocery sales during 2020, with major investment from Woolworths and Coles into home delivery and 'click and collect' models.⁸

With 'click and collect' becoming increasingly normalised within the local context (including home delivery business models), Woolworths have announced plans to design 'drive-through' facilities into new stores, with customers having the option of purchasing online, and picking up from a purpose-built drive-through facility. In some older demographics, this click and collect business model has been reasonably popular.

Implications for Wollongong:

- The distribution of population growth will drive locational decisions of future food stores – particularly supermarket anchored clusters. Traditionally centre-based retailers are also

⁸ KPMG 2021, 'Australian Retail Outlook 2021', <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/au/pdf/2021/australian-retail-outlook-2021-report.pdf>

becoming more likely to locate in these out-of-centre locations, due to lower price and space constraints, and proximity to road infrastructure.

- **West Dapto is a strong candidate for new clusters**, given the expected rollout of new greenfield estates nearby resulting in a significant new residential population.
- Woolworths and Coles both have strategies in place for the rollout of **more 'metro' style stores** in both CBD as well as **suburban locations moving forward**.
- Due to the **shift in the Wollongong CBD's role from a traditional retail-based centre to one based on commercial and recreational or 'experience-based' uses**, it may be attractive to new 'metro' style supermarkets which focus more on convenience and specialty food retailing, particularly in locations with strong footfall, public transport access and dense residential populations (where there isn't already a supermarket). Consultation with local market players has suggested that Wollongong CBD **could benefit from amenity and public realm improvements** to remain a relevant and attractive destination for new forms of retailing.
- Because of the competition and potential efficiencies of new food business models, including online delivery and click and collect, **convenience and differentiation are now paramount** to the competition strategy of food retailers. Generally speaking, new entrants would need to compete on one of those two fronts.

1.3 Department Store/ Discount Department Store/ non food (retail)

The non food retail economy in the Wollongong LGA includes shopping malls, department stores and various types of retail stores. Table 2 shows the total GFA for the non food retail economy across the Wollongong LGA.

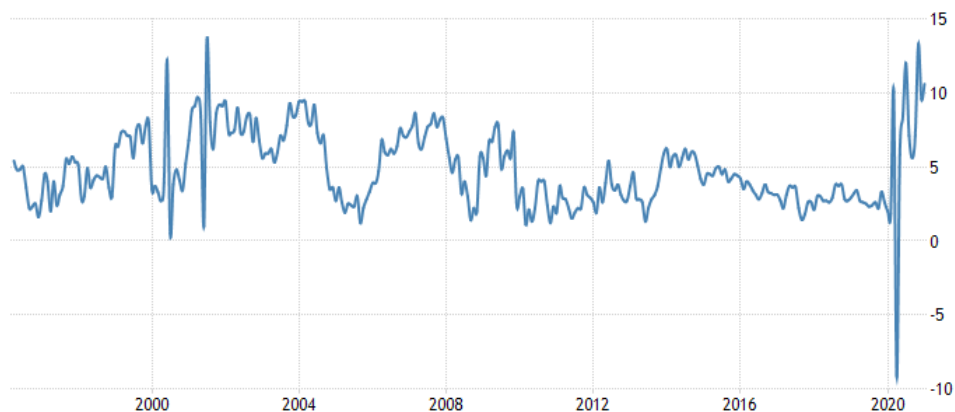
TABLE 2: NON-FOOD RETAIL FLOORSPEACE, WOLLONGONG

Store type	Count	Floorspace
Electronics store	28	11,931
Clothing store	12	4,118
pet_store	6	2,758
book_store	9	2,169
department_store	2	2,007
shopping_mall	6	1,783
jewelry_store	5	1,745
bicycle_store	4	1,263
shoe_store	7	912
store	4	506
Grand Total	83	29,192

Fluctuating retail expenditure growth

Over the past twenty years, the retail sector's growth has slowed across Australia, with annual growth trending downwards since the late 1990s.

FIGURE 5. QUARTERLY RETAIL EXPENDITURE GROWTH IN AUSTRALIA, 1996 TO JANUARY 2021



Source: Trading Economics 2021

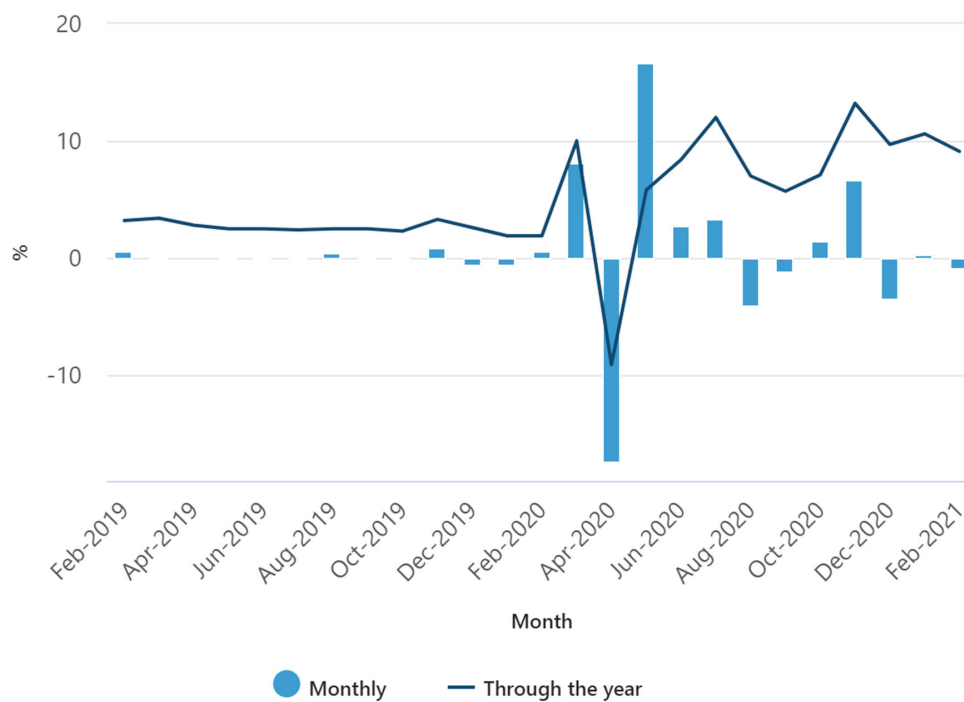
The post-GFC years (2010 to 2014) in particular represent something of a break from the trend for retail spending. During the decade prior to COVID-19, quarterly growth in retail expenditure has averaged 0.45 %, while growth prior to that averaged 1.04 %. There are a range of factors that have contributed to this decline, with these acting in combination to suppress growth in retail expenditure, particularly since the GFC. These include:

- Australians are saving a greater proportion of their incomes, reflected in relatively high savings rates since 2010, and resulting from lower levels of confidence in the global and national economies.
- A long-term trend of low real wage growth.
- Record high housing costs requiring households to devote a larger share of disposable income to mortgage payments or rent.
- Increased competition from other sectors (e.g. travel) which have become cheaper and attract an ever-increasing proportion of household expenditures.
- Changes in consumer preferences in regard to shopping experiences, which are rarely reflected in the layout of contemporary Australian retail centres from a supply-side response perspective

Figure 6 illustrates the change in retail expenditure growth during the recent pandemic and lockdown periods. Although COVID-19 has provided a significant distortion, this trend is seen as likely to resume its long-term trajectory. Although some sectors have recovered strongly, several industries continue to be in recession and are likely to remain subdued in the short-medium term, placing downward pressure on spending.

The post-COVID bounceback has been impressive, however at this stage, is still making up 'lost-ground' from the suppressed (or negative) growth during the COVID years. A longer term growth trajectory would need to be observed before declaring this bounceback to be part of a more significant revival.

FIGURE 6: MONTH-ON-MONTH NATIONAL RETAIL TURNOVER GROWTH, AUSTRALIA



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Throughout the decline in per-capita spending, population growth (driven largely by immigration) has been the major demand-side driver behind the expansion of retail facilities nationally. Given that COVID-19 has been responsible for a cessation of immigration in the short term, projected population increases have been delayed considerably, and so overall – the retail economy has struggled to grow, placing less competitive businesses under financial pressure.

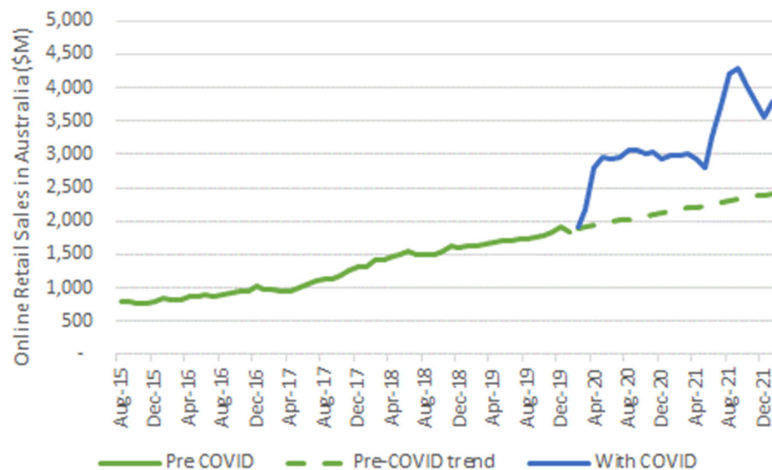
Rise of online retailing

The rise of online retailing is increasingly impacting on Australia's retail sector, with market share growing by around 0.75% per year. As of February 2020 (prior to COVID-19) the market share of all retail spending stood at 7.2%⁹. One month later and until November 2020, online retail had risen to be as high as 11.1%. As of December 2020, it has since fallen to 9.1%. A summary of this time-series is provided below. It illustrates that prior to COVID-19, online retail was growing steadily each year up

⁹ ABS, 2020. 8501.0 Retail Trade - Table 23 | Percentage Change of total Australian Retail.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/retail-and-wholesale-trade/retail-trade-australia/latest-release>

until around March 2020, where it experienced a significant spike. Since then, it has not fallen back to pre-pandemic levels, suggesting the trend could well become permanent.

FIGURE 7: GROWTH OF ONLINE RETAIL, AUSTRALIA



Source: ABS 8501.0 Retail Trade - Table 23 | Percentage change of total Australian retail, December 2020

Key reasons for individuals choosing to shop online are:

- to reduce the amount of time taken to undertake purchases,
- to make it easier to find the cheapest price for a good, and
- to provide flexibility to shop at convenient times.

The risk of loss of expenditure to online retailers varies across retail categories. Some are highly vulnerable to loss of trade online, while others are a bit more insulated from these impacts. Retailers that are most vulnerable are those that trade in non-perishable goods (i.e. those that can be stored and transported without loss of quality) that have standard specifications. On the other hand, retailers that trade in the following categories of goods are relatively less vulnerable:

- those where the brand distributes the product,
- those that are perishable (i.e. food, although home delivery business models could potentially encroach on this as well),
- those that are liable to have variations in quality, and where customer review prior to purchase would typically be considered important (i.e. cars, fresh food, cosmetics), and
- those that need to be customisation (i.e. glasses, suits, cars).

As

Table 3 below indicates, both forms of retailing possess distinct advantages.

TABLE 3: HOW PLANNING CAN OPTIMISE THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL RETAIL FLOORSPEACE IN CENTRES

Key elements for physical stores	How planning can optimise centres on those indicators
Visual presentation	Encourage investment that refreshes shopfronts, prevent floorspace oversupply which can lead to vacancies. Where existing assets complement place character, planning should seek to enhance these features (e.g. heritage, natural amenity).
Physical access	Ensure adequate traffic and pedestrian movement strategies are in place across the centre
Encouraging footfall	Have strong anchors in strategic locations. Make use of major infrastructure such as new railway stations and natural assets such as parks, riverfront and foreshores.
Enticing vibe	Manage the aesthetic element of centres with a dedicated place manager who works across infrastructure, tenancies and design. Work with businesses on street presentation.

When online retailing first emerged, it was seen as a direct competitor to store based retailing. However, as online technologies have evolved, many 'bricks and mortar' retailers have adopted a new approach to business that involves having both physical and online presences that work in a single system (known as the omni-channel¹⁰).

An example this omni-channel form of retailing is where a customer finds the retailer online and decides to download the store app. The customer then visits the store, and reviews and purchases a product using a 10% discount coupon from the app. As part of the process, the retailer receives data about how the customer found the store, their preferences, etc. This data allows the retailer to develop and deliver a more targeted product and service offer.

Implications for Wollongong:

- There is a perception that **businesses are locating to the outer centres** of the Wollongong LGA due to **better rent affordability and accessibility** for residents by car. However SGS research in this project has found that this is not really the case, with the Wollongong CBD still having the lion's share of retail floorspace supply and demand in the LGA.
- Centres with a **higher level of natural amenity, distinctive built character and a presence of entertainment or recreational uses** are typically the best suited to those retailing models relying on 'lifestyle' or 'experience' as a component of their attraction. Outside the CBD, both Thirroul and Port Kembla ranked highly in this regard.
- The general shift away from malls in the broader retail economy may already be affecting mall operators in Wollongong, with a shift in the land uses in the CBD **moving from a traditional retail offering to one with a greater emphasis on recreation and lifestyle offerings**, catering to new residential growth in the CBD.
- As such, there has been **more growth in cafes and small bars** rather than just retail stores.
- There is also significantly more **growth in the tech and shared services sectors**, further shifting the focus of the Wollongong CBD **away from just retailing**.

¹⁰ As distinct from multi-channel retailing

- Dapto is another centre possessing a **prominent DDS operator** that may need to revisit its economic composition over the next decade towards more of an open and connected street mall that can attract and retain a broader group of businesses.

1.4 Bulky goods (retail)

The bulky goods retailing sector in Wollongong comprises primarily of hardware stores, home goods stores, furniture stores and car dealerships. The following table illustrates the total GFA of each of these retailers within this economy.

TABLE 4: BULKY GOODS FLOORSPEACE, WOLLONGONG

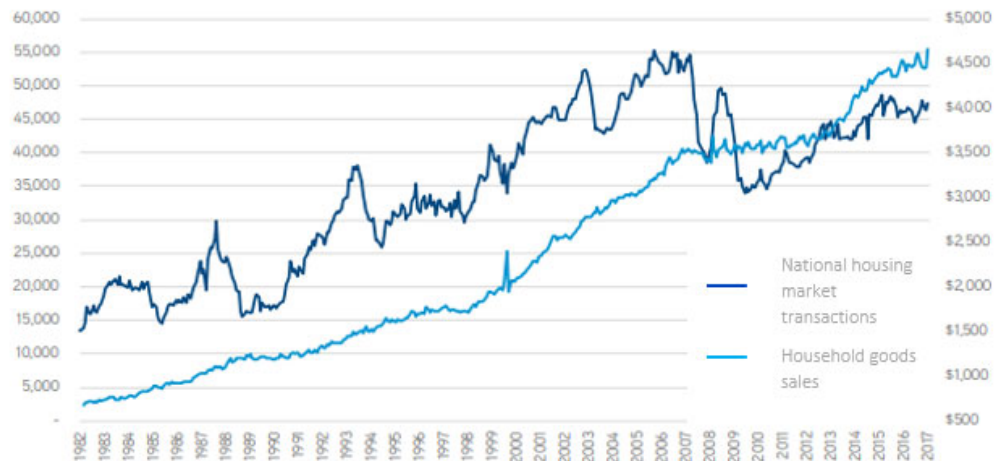
Store type	Count	Floorspace
home_goods_store	82	39,162
furniture_store	37	33,978
hardware_store	7	16,707
car_dealer	31	15,989
car_rental	4	4,517
Grand Total	161	110,353

Out-of-centre retailing (supermarkets, bulky goods and fuel retailing)

In recent years, the performance of household goods (which includes furniture, houseware, textile, electrical, electronics and hardware¹¹) has been strongly linked to housing construction, urban expansion and low interest rates. As a result, consistent increases in residential property prices and growth in new dwellings has tended to underpin strong performance in the bulky goods retail sector. Figure 8 shows this relationship to 2017, showing a clear association between a buoyant property market and an expanding household goods sector.

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019. '8501.09 – Retail Trade, Australia, Jul 2019.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8501.0Explanatory%20Notes1Jul%202019?OpenDocument>

FIGURE 8: NATIONAL HOUSING MARKET TRANSACTIONS (NO.) AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS SALES (\$M), 1982 TO 2017



Source: Colliers (2018)

In the year to June 2019, large format retailing was responsible for 23.5% of total retail sales in Australia – equivalent to \$81.8 billion in expenditure and accounted around 35% of total retail floorspace in Australia.

The successful entry of Aldi to the Australian market has occurred, in part, as a result of their smaller format, successfully differentiating them from Coles and Woolworths. This allows them in some cases to operate 'out-of-centre', in employment precincts. The transfer of expenditures away from centres has meant that foot-traffic and flow-on expenditure that would otherwise have found its way to smaller retailers in the centre network has been lost.

Fuel retailers have also played a role in the rise of out-of-centre retailing, diversifying their product offering to include convenience items and food retailing (e.g. snacks, bread, milk etc.). The alliance between fuel retailers and supermarkets in NSW has also contributed to this trend.

Bulky goods retailers – a derivation of household goods, though in a different shop format, are particularly well-suited to outer-metropolitan growth areas, where car-oriented lifestyle dominate, as well as finding opportunities in former industrial precincts in inner and middle ring areas of Australia cities. Traditional activity centres are unable to compete with these retailers across a range of retail categories and must therefore leverage their human scale, better urban amenity, and an increasing presence of food and hospitality providers, entertainment options and population services to attract visitors.

In recent years, out of centre retail clusters have made a comeback. Traditionally, they have been anchored by bulky goods clusters in employment precincts and fuel retailing on major highways. But because then because those two activities are forms of 'retail' they have in some cases, begun to create opportunities or reasons for supermarkets to gain a foothold in those same out of centre locations as part of the same cluster.

High and low density restricted retail

The expenditure category of 'Household Goods' can be delineated by high and low density offerings. Higher density household goods stores are often found in closer proximity to town centres and may even act as indirect competitors to discount department stores and specialty stores. Low density household goods stores on the other hand, are more likely to be found near major arterials. Assumptions regarding the apportionment of product types are shown below in Figure 8. Based on these assumptions, it has been calculated that 65% of total household goods expenditure can be captured in low density retail precincts and stores, whilst the other 35% of household goods expenditure should be allocated to high density precincts and stores.

FIGURE 8: APPORTIONMENT OF HIGH AND LOW DENSITY RETAIL BY PRODUCT TYPE

Product Category	Low Density	High Density
Furniture and floor coverings		
Bedroom furniture	100%	0%
Lounge/dining room furniture	100%	0%
Outdoor/garden furniture	100%	0%
Other furniture	100%	0%
Carpets	100%	0%
Floor rugs, mats and matting	100%	0%
Vinyl and other sheet floor coverings	100%	0%
Floor tiles	100%	0%
Other floor coverings	100%	0%
Blankets, household linen and household furnishings		
Bed linen	40%	60%
Blankets and travelling rugs	40%	60%
Bedspreads and continental quilts	40%	60%
Pillows and cushions	40%	60%
Towels and face washers	40%	60%
Table and kitchen linen	40%	60%
Curtains	60%	40%
Blinds	60%	40%
Other household textiles	40%	60%
Household linen and furnishings (excluding ornamental) nec	40%	60%
Paintings, carvings and sculptures	40%	60%
Ornamental furnishings nec	40%	60%
Household appliances		
Cooking stoves, ovens, microwaves, hot plates and ranges	50%	50%
Refrigerators and freezers	50%	50%
Washing machines	50%	50%
Air-conditioners	50%	50%
Dishwashers	50%	50%

Clothes dryers	50%	50%
Whitegoods and other electrical appliances nec	50%	50%
Non-electrical household appliances	50%	50%
Glassware, tableware, cutlery and household utensils		
Tableware	20%	80%
Glassware	20%	80%
Cutlery	20%	80%
Cooking utensils	20%	80%
Cleaning utensils	20%	80%
Glassware, tableware, cutlery and household utensils nec	20%	80%
Tools and other household durables		
Lawnmowers (including electric)	80%	20%
Gardening tools	80%	20%
Other hand and power tools	80%	20%
Mobile phones	5%	95%
Telephone handset (purchase)	5%	95%
Answering machines	5%	95%
Tools and other household durables nec	50%	50%

Source: ABS Household Expenditure Survey 09-10

Size of bulky goods tenancies

In our experience, a bulky goods precinct anchored by a large tenant (such as Bunnings or Mitre 10) usually trades better than a group of smaller bulky goods tenancies. This is because the anchor store is likely to draw retail traffic that result in spill-over visits to the smaller stores.

Without a larger tenant, it may also take longer for the proponent to lease out the floorspace to smaller tenants, which would affect the short-term viability of the bulky goods component. On the other hand, the poorer trading performance would reduce the impact on other bulky goods precincts.

Implications for Wollongong:

- Residents in the Wollongong LGA are heavily reliant on cars as their primary mode of transport.
- This has historically contributed to **the relocation of bulky goods retailers to the outer fringes and growth centres of Wollongong**, where the availability of **parking is more prevalent and large building floorplates can be afforded** to accommodate bulky goods retailers.
- Car-based suburban centres are generally the best suited to bulky goods retailing. Within the LGA, **centres like Figtree, Dapto, Warrawong and Kembla Grange have a comparative advantage** in this regard.
- Beyond those car based centres, bulky goods clusters can also develop in major highway locations with good exposure. All of this will likely result in a **dispersed growth the bulky goods economy** across the Wollongong LGA.

1.5 Population serving

The population services economy in the Wollongong LGA includes an extensive list of business types such as banks, doctors, beauty salons, pharmacies and dentists. Table 5 shows the GFA of all population servicing businesses across the Wollongong LGA.

TABLE 5: POPULATION SERVING FLOORSPEACE, WOLLONGONG

Store type	Count	Floorspace
gym	64	27,794
lodging	25	16,891
doctor	70	12,144
school	25	11,803
beauty_salon	50	11,280
church	21	10,529
accounting	38	9,355
gas_station	38	8,353
library	4	7,983
art_gallery	8	7,641
dentist	33	7,419
real_estate_agency	38	7,352
hair_care	42	7,036
moving_company	11	6,108
night_club	10	5,648
laundry	14	5,476
secondary_school	1	5,392

Emergence of café culture eat streets and food centres

Service-based cafes and restaurants have experienced strong growth over the past five years. For instance, the café and coffee shop sub-sector grew by an average annual rate of 2.5% between 2014 and 2019, contrasting to the stagnation of the broader retail sector.¹²

Cafés and restaurants currently account for approximately 14% of retail sales volume across Australia.¹³ This has coincided with the rise in alfresco dining and the 'eat street' culture.

The move towards outdoor dining and restaurant-defined retail strips requires a reconfiguration and generocityfootpaths and road alignment, a strong focus on urban amenity (including street trees,

¹² IBISWorld, 2019, Cafes and coffee shops in Australia – Market Research Report <https://www.ibisworld.com.au/industry-trends/market-research-reports/accommodation-food-services/cafes-coffee-shops.html>

¹³ Colliers, 2016, Research and Forecast Report: First Half 2016

provision of furniture and pedestrian/diner safety) as well as supportive policies that enable these to take place. Many high streets are increasingly focusing on the pedestrian and diner experience along local retail strips.

Privately owned malls have also evolved on their food offering, moving away from food courts to collections of cafés, restaurants and fresh food outlets, including green grocers, delis etc. Providing a healthier and more diverse food offering provide an opportunity to increase the attraction of standalone shopping centres and increase footfall.¹⁴ Shopping centre operators are increasingly recognising the importance of providing an amenable experience to shoppers in order to differentiate their centre and food retailing plays a significant role in creating a point of difference and positive experience.

Shopping hour deregulation and night-time economies (NTE)

For much of Australia's history, retail trading was heavily restricted, with night-time and weekend trading limited. In recent decades, as part of a broader push towards economic deregulation, retail trading hours have been increased, with retailers and service providers now able to generate activity outside of 'standard' business hours.

Night-time economies are becoming an increasingly important component of centre offers. A high functioning NTE is also a significant economic generator, with a 2020 estimate putting its value at \$128bn, or 6.5% of the Australian economy¹⁵ Longer centre operating hours support the growth of food & hospitality and entertainment uses that have an 'after hours' focus, including cinemas and restaurants.¹⁶ Growth of these types of businesses can in turn benefit centre retailers by attracting expenditure to retailers and traditional centre service providers. Centres that do better with their night-time economies are those with high quality public spaces, including public space activation and events programs, minimum activity densities and appropriate infrastructure (such as attractive street lighting, and well-designed, safe public spaces).

One example of this is the City of Parramatta's award-winning Night City Framework 2020-2024, which provides a vision for how the City can become more vibrant after 5pm.¹⁷ Policies include creating safe and vibrant centres, live entertainment and creative spaces and events and activations. This has flow on benefits to the local economy. Parramatta Council's own research estimates that the number of NTE establishments in Parramatta has increased by 27% since 2009, with employment increasing by 13%. The food and hospitality sector is the largest beneficiary of the night-time economy, having grown by 43% over the same period.

¹⁴ Colliers, 2016, Research and Forecast Report: First Half 2016

¹⁵ Measuring the Australian Night Time Economy 2019-20

¹⁶ Jones Lang Lasalle, 2013, 'The evolution of Brisbane Retailing', July 2013, <http://www.jll.com.au/australia/en-au/Research/JLL-AU-Advance-The-Evolution-Of-Brisbane-Retailing-July2013.pdf>

¹⁷ City of Parramatta, 2020. 'City of Parramatta backs NSW Government's 24-hour economy plan'. <https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/about-parramatta/news/media-release/city-of-parramatta-backs-nsw-governments-24-hour-economy-plan>

Implications for Wollongong:

- There has been approximately a **70% increase in A-grade offices within the Wollongong CBD** in recent years. Retailing in the CBD has shifted to meet the needs of new workers in the CBD. This has contributed to a change in the character of its population-serving retail uses.
- This **trend of diversification in the CBD economy** is perpetuated by population flows from Sydney.
- The implications of this trend align with work done by Wollongong Council to **support and foster the night time economy**. Council's Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy Policy¹⁸ seeks to provide greater clarity for operators in terms of hours of operation and the impact of those operations. This includes changes to s10.7 certificates (formerly 149 certificate) to inform residents of expectations for night time trading in the CBD. Council has also allowed 2am trading in the CBD to encourage growth of this sector.
- COVID-19 restrictions have been a major inhibitor on the growth of the population-serving retail economy.

1.6 Export oriented businesses

The export based economy in Wollongong consists of insurance, lawyers, engineering, storage facilities, and the university. The split of this GFA across the Wollongong LGA is shown in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6: EXPORT INDUSTRY FLOORSPEACE, WOLLONGONG

Store type	Count	Floorspace
university	9	22,693
storage	13	13,295
electrician	15	8,965
lawyer	29	7,137
finance	9	2,181
insurance_agency	10	1,820
Grand Total	85	56,091

Changes in freight logistics

The growth of online retailing has had implications for a number of industries. For freight and logistics, this has increased the expectations that customers have of the speed with which goods can be delivered. Previous research has identified that around a quarter of consumers are willing to pay a premium for same-day delivery.¹⁹ With the overall increase in popularity of online retailing and e-

¹⁸ <https://our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/wollongong-cbd-night-time-economy-policy>

¹⁹ McKinsey & Company, 2016, 'How customer demands are reshaping last-mile delivery', <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-transport-and-logistics/our-insights/how-customer-demands-are-reshaping-last-mile-delivery>

commerce, 'last mile' logistics has become a priority. In terms of land, this places an even higher value on logistics, industrial services and dispatch lands in areas close to populations.

'Last mile' delivery is the final part of a product journey from warehouse to the customer doorstep. It is also often the most expensive and time-consuming part of the shipping process. This is due to factors such as traffic congestion, which is an issue particularly for urban areas. 'Last mile' delivery costs are estimated to account for around 53 per cent of the total cost of shipping. Customers have also become less willing to pay delivery fees with the presence of some 'free shipping' options.

Retailers and logistics companies are seeking new, technological solutions to improve the last leg of this process and overcome geographical challenges. Some of these solutions have included drones or crowdsourcing local delivery sources.²⁰ However, the value of industrial, logistics land and dispatch centres close to urban areas is still clear and remains highly valuable to the speed of delivery – particularly when land uses are highly contested and land prices are high.

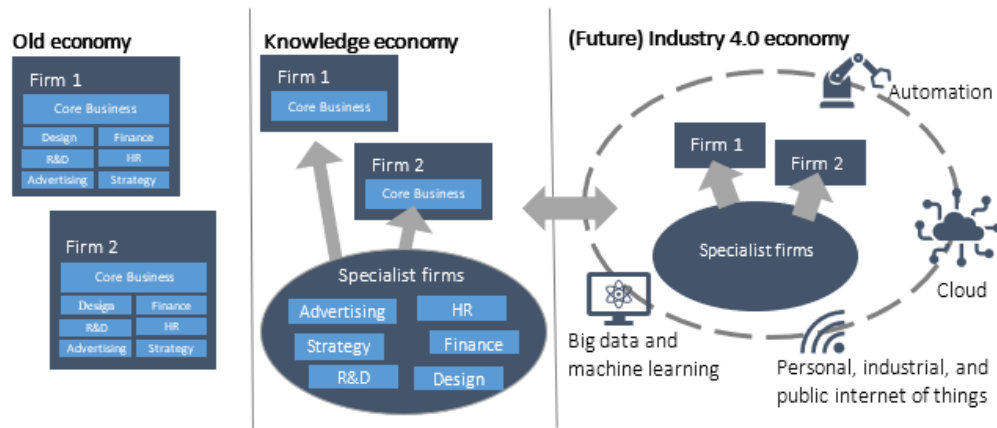
Corporates and Commercial Office

The Commercial Office sector has remained an important part of the economy. Whilst many professional service workers transitioned towards greater levels of work from home during the pandemic-lockdown years, businesses still require or at least encourage the majority of their workforce to spend some parts of their working week in the office. Office floorspace also represents an opportunity for workers to collaborate.

Collaboration also remains important beyond the confines of an office or a single organisation. The concept of supply chains has traditionally been associated with industrial sectors, but in recent times have become increasingly significant to the professional and technical services as well. The knowledge and information economy continues to diversify rapidly, with technical specialisations generally being more productive in independent, smaller firms that focus on deepening their expertise and brand in a specific domain.

²⁰ Business Insider, 2018, 'The Challenges of Last Mile Logistics & Delivery Technology Solutions', <https://www.businessinsider.com/last-mile-delivery-shipping-explained/?r=AU&IR=T>; Strategy + Business, 2018, 'Convenience is key in last-mile delivery around the world', <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/Convenience-Is-Key-in-Last-Mile-Delivery-around-the-World?gko=bef84>

FIGURE 9 OLD VS NEW ECONOMY STRUCTURE



Source: SGS

Whilst there are large, conglomerate exceptions, the consistently high failure rate of corporate mergers and acquisitions²¹ to integrate and extract value from combining these specialisations speak to the fact that each service specialisation tends to require its own unique brand, culture and drive for innovation.

To that end, large employment precincts that 'house' a dense ecosystem of hundreds or even thousands of SMEs (Small and Medium sized Enterprises) all collaborating and building a precinct-based culture remains as relevant as ever in the knowledge economy. It also explains why these corporate precincts need a critical mass to be viable – smaller suburban nodes don't tend to thrive anywhere near as much and that is why centres tend to have either major hubs of employment or just have a scattering of small shop top offices.

Implications for Wollongong:

- The Wollongong LGA possesses a healthy and growing commercial office sector. As with many Regional LGAs, the majority of professional services are focused in and around the CBD
- The suburban centres tend to play a more localised role, with most of the office floorspace more geared towards serving consumers and/or local Wollongong clientele.
- The spatial and operational decentralisation of the corporate economy creates great opportunity for the Wollongong CBD because it offers a setting outside of Sydney that still has an agglomeration environment that smaller firms require.
- From a corporate business's perspective, conflict between residential and commercial land uses has become evident, particularly within the Wollongong CBD. Residential uses are a lower risk

²¹

<https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Pages/item.aspx?num=39920#:~:text=Companies%20spend%20more%20than%20%242,and%20how%20to%20integrate%20them.>

asset stock compared to commercial office (build and sell versus build and hold), so mixed use developments tend to favour the former over the latter in most B4 zone precincts.

- Much of the new development in the Wollongong CBD has been mixed-use, which is not of preference to premium companies in the insurance and finance industries. Council needs a sustainable strategy to ensure the right floorspace is being delivered for those firms to then create high value jobs for the community.

These implications are fleshed out further in Paper Three, where modelling of employment forecast scenarios have been undertaken for post-COVID scenarios as well as for aspirational targets led by Council's Economic Development team.

- Instead of mixed use being residential with some commercial, Council should be thinking of 'mixed use' more in terms of a mix of activities (office, retail/dining/hospitality, art and culture, meeting/event spaces, entertainment, sport and recreation, etc.) that will generate an environment that attracts, retains and grows businesses of the future.

1.7 Key implications for Wollongong

The most important trends and drivers for the Wollongong LGA's centres can best be summarised as:

1. Population growth cannot be ignored as the greatest driver of organic business and centres growth. Increased migration towards the Wollongong LGA both before and (potentially) post-COVID will drive demand for new centres as well as grow existing centres.
2. The continued dominance of supermarkets and food retailing as the cornerstone of business sales and customer attraction in most suburban centres. Hence the appeal of those centres for those businesses' needs and success (e.g. the right floorspace, access, parking, amenity) are key determinants to their success and/or failure.
3. Department/Discount Department Stores have been waning in influence for some time now. The trend is expected to continue, along with general merchandise/ apparel sub-sectors that are just not competitive enough versus online platforms. The exception is in high footfall CBD locations, but even there the traditional mall is being disrupted by environments that favour showrooms and experiences.
4. Services are more experiential as well, and in a suburban context tend to offer important opportunities for interaction, community and connection. Services span from libraries and child care to hair salons and gyms. The urban environment should therefore also reflect those reasons for patronage.
5. Bulky goods retail remains an exception so long as these retailers still have access to low cost floorspace. On the periphery of centres or in dedicated highway/industrial locations. Not a major issue for a centres strategy, but where population growth/household formation is strong in Calderwood/West Dapto for example, they will be an important part of the retail economy.
6. High amenity office precincts with a strong critical mass of SMEs (anchored by some larger corporates) still have an important long term role to play because of the way the professional service economy is inherently structured.



Forecast Demand & Options Testing

City of Wollongong

July 2022

Contents

Contents.....	2
1. Introduction & Structure	4
1.1 This Paper	4
1.2 Key data sources.....	4
2. Base Case.....	5
2.1 Overview & parameters.....	5
2.2 Results	6
3. Employment Scenarios for Office Floorspace	9
3.1 Overview & parameters.....	9
3.2 Results	9
4. Potential Areas for Residential Intensification	11
4.1 Overview & parameters.....	11
4.2 Results	11
5. Accessibility Gaps	12
5.1 Overview & parameters.....	12
5.2 Results	12
6. Impact of Online Retailing for Retail Businesses in Centres.....	14
6.1 Overview & parameters.....	14
6.2 Results	14
7. The Rise of Retail Services	17
7.1 Overview & parameters.....	17
7.2 Results	17
8. Potential Gaps in Supermarket Provision	18
8.1 Overview & parameters.....	18
8.2 Results	18
9. Removal of B4 Ground Floor Capacity	20
9.1 Overview & parameters.....	20
9.2 Results	20
10. West Dapto – Delayed Development	22
10.1 Overview & parameters	22

10.2	Results.....	22
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1. Introduction & Structure

1.1 This Paper

The purpose of this paper is to (a) summarise the forecast demand and growth scenarios work completed for the Wollongong LGA and (b) centres strategy options testing.

A large number of scenarios and options have been tested and are presented here including:

1. The base case
2. COVID scenario for office floorspace
3. Aspirational growth targets for office floorspace
4. Potential areas for residential intensification
5. Accessibility gaps for a 20-minute neighbourhood (in terms of access to centres)
6. An increased presence of online retailing
7. An increased presence of retail services as opposed the sale of retail goods in the centres' economy
8. Potential gaps in the provision of supermarkets
9. Removal of ground floor B4 floorspace capacity (for employment/retail)
10. Delay in development of centres in West Dapto

1.2 Key data sources

The modelling work in this paper draws on all previous work in the study including:

1. Existing centres appraisal
2. Trends analysis
3. Stakeholder engagement (community survey)

2. Base Case

2.1 Overview & parameters

From the supply side, the base case includes all existing centres/floorspace in the Wollongong LGA. The base case also includes approved proposals for future developments in and around the LGA, such as Calderwood as well as those in West Dapto.

The demand side is accounted for differently for different activity types:

1. Commercial floorspace

- Demand units are generated through employment forecasts. Each job is then converted into floorspace demand at a ratio of 25sqm per job, which is the standard for most suburban/regional centres. For the base case, employment figures have been generated using the Transport for New South Wales (TZP19) forecasts for Wollongong at a small area (Travel Zone) level.

2. Retail goods floorspace

- Demand units are generated through the expenditure of resident and worker populations across the LGA. Population figures are generated via Profile Id's population forecasts for the Wollongong LGA. Expenditure forecasts use the industry standard Marketinfo dataset that is modelled off the latest ABS Household Expenditure Surveys. The expenditure categories include supermarket, other food, hospitality, specialty retail, department stores and bulky goods.

3. Retail services floorspace

- Demand units are generated through employment forecasts for retail services as there are no direct estimates for *services* (as distinct from retail *goods*). These jobs are then converted to retail floorspace. This retail service categories include fitness, service stations, beauty and personal services, health, automotive, entertainment, child care and social services.

Demand and supply are reconciled through the use of a Gravity Model. This is primarily a transport model that simulates the movement of trade flows via the LGA's road network. Future/proposed roads are also accounted for in future years (post-2026) in the West Dapto area.

Economic interactions beyond the boundary of the Wollongong LGA are also accounted for where appropriate. That includes retail expenditure inflows and outflows, the patterns of which have been sourced through Council's Spendmap data which is based on credit card transactions occurring in and out of the LGA. Due to COVID interruptions and lockdowns, the data sourced is from the pre-COVID period of May 2019 to January 2020.

The modelling work is for a 20-year horizon from 2021 to 2041.

The focus of the modelling work is on Council's business and retail centres (including Wollongong CBD), defined by business zonings, and so excludes jobs in industrial and residential parts of the LGA.

2.2 Results

Retail

In an open market (without supply constraints), retail floorspace demand largely tracks and follows population growth across the LGA. This is emphasised by the strong demand in the Wollongong CBD and West Dapto growth areas where population growth is expected to be highest.

FIGURE 1 CENTRE GROWTH FORECAST ACROSS WOLLONGONG LGA 2021-41

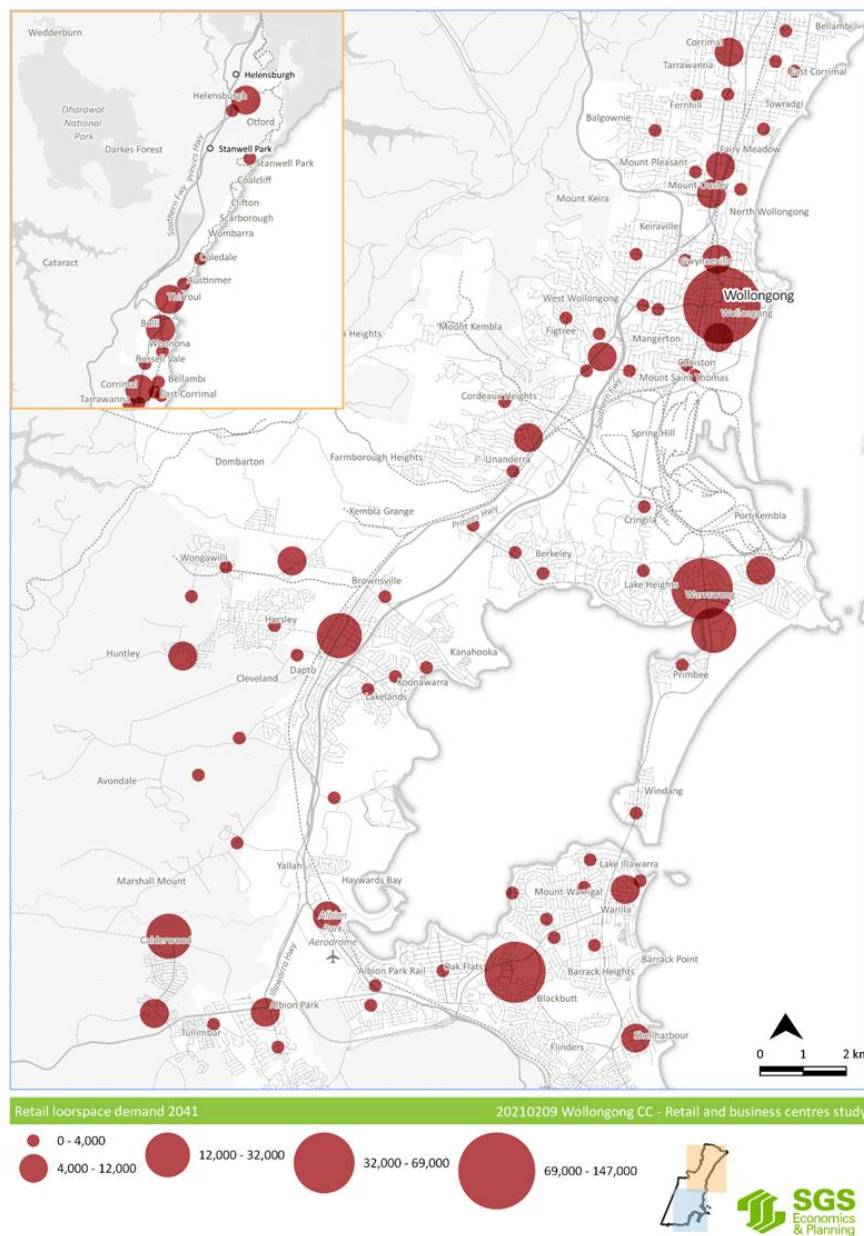


TABLE 1 RETAIL DEMAND – TOP 20 CENTRES(2041)

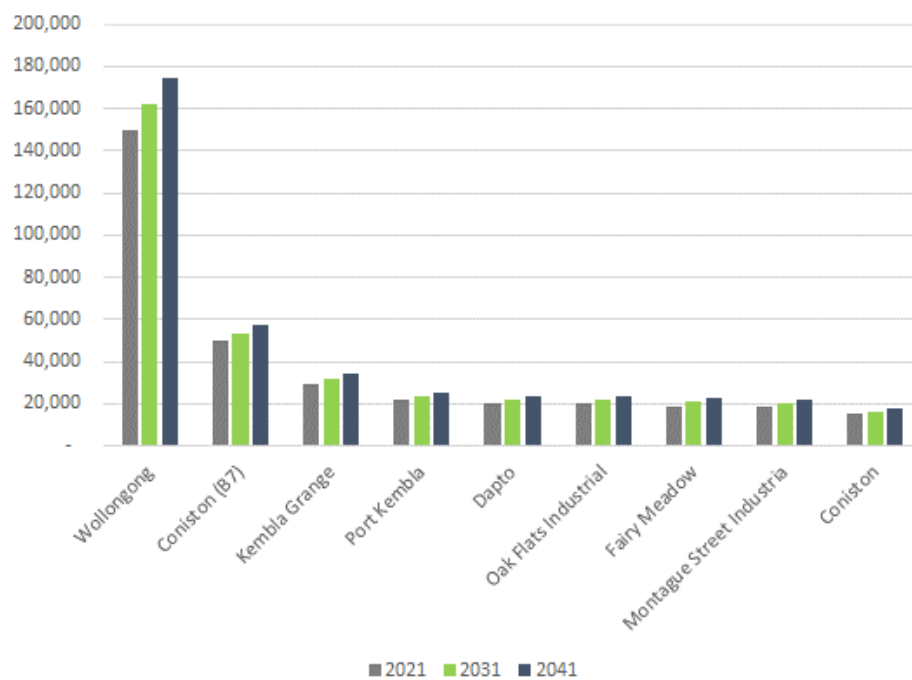
Centre Name	Demand(sqm)
Wollongong	147,463
Shellharbour Central	68,778
Warrawong	56,296
Dapto	32,015
Warrawong (B6)	26,057
Calderwood Town Centre	15,423
Kiama	14,950
Thirroul	11,823
Warilla	11,211
Corrimal	11,201
Figtree	11,184
Bong Bong	10,305
Fairy Meadow	9,540
Bulli	8,228
Unanderra	8,003
Fairy Meadow (B6)	6,990
Wollongong (B6)	6,688
Helensburgh	6,646
Calderwood Valley Village	6,628
Haywards Bay	5,747

Commercial Office

For commercial office floorspace, the Wollongong City Centre is expected to continue growing as the dominant market for commercial office floorspace in the LGA, whilst Coniston, Kembla Grange and Port Kembla are also expected to accommodate significant levels of office floorspace (but of a more industrial flavour). Dapto is an important location for commercial office floorspace in suburban centres.

It is important to note there is a difference between the CBD office and the suburban office market. The City Centre office market has the greatest scope for growth as it caters to a broader regional and state-wide market, whereas the suburban office market typically draws more of its demand from local residents that have a desire to work close to home whilst still having office floorspace to operate their small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) from.

FIGURE 2 COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE GROWTH 2021-2041



Note that the numbers above reflect the statistical geographies (ABS SA1 categorisation) that the centres are located within. This provides a general understanding of the level of office demand that is prevalent in each area. That demand may well be satisfied by home offices (particularly post-COVID) and other office/work premises that are located outside centre boundaries but are still within those statistical areas.

3. Employment Scenarios for Office Floorspace

3.1 Overview & parameters

In this scenario, we focus on the demand for and provision of office floorspace in the Wollongong LGA. Given the current climate, three scenarios relating to office space provision have been tested:

1. Business as Usual – using Transport for NSW projections. This reflects steady growth trajectories from a pre-COVID pattern of development.
2. COVID impact – Bundling of qualitative research in this area to drive some assumptions – noting that some of it is speculative at this stage. A temporary recession is assumed over the next five years, whilst a more permanent flexible working arrangement is also built in.
3. Aspirational – 10,500 additional jobs in the Wollongong LGA from 2019 to 2029, with much of it concentrated in the Wollongong City Centre. This aspiration is articulated in Council's Economic Development Strategy, and focusses on five sectors in particular: finance/insurance, IT/telecommunications, professional/scientific/technical services, public administration and clean energy. The first four will have a strong bearing on jobs in centres, which the clean energy sector is likely to be more heavily focused around the LGA's industrial precincts.

3.2 Results

Error! Reference source not found. below shows the level of office floorspace demand that is expected across the major employment centres¹ in the Wollongong LGA.

Under the COVID impact scenario, growth is tempered in the short term (2021 to 2031), but then reverts back to base case growth from 2031 to 2041. However, a more permanent flexible working arrangement sees a more dispersed worker pattern, with some workers working more from home whilst others establish in suburban offices/hubs. The net result is that the Wollongong CBD loses some of the growth otherwise expected under the base case. Meanwhile most other centres see lost growth (under recession) being offset by the dispersal effect.

Under the aspirational scenario, Council's economic development team is successful in attracting significant employment from a range of key industries outlined in Section 3.1. Many of these industries will bring a combination of decentralised headquarters from Major Capital Cities like Sydney and some smaller businesses that find it attractive to work from a Regional City location, particularly given the increased prevalence of remote working and related technologies. The Wollongong CBD will be the focal point for this activity, whilst other centres around the LGA can also be expected to accommodate floorspace. Given the focus will be on the CBD, the other locations that will receive the greatest boost

¹ Includes all centres that already possess over 10,000sqm of commercial office floorspace as of 2021.

would be the ones that offer floorspace the CBD cannot – namely office buildings that can be combined with industrial warehouses/factories, which would be suitable for businesses in the clean energy sector in particular. The B7 Coniston precinct is an example of such a precinct. Land around Port Kembla also provides unique opportunities for those firms that have links to port activities.

TABLE 2 OFFICE FLOORSPACE ACROSS THREE SCENARIOS, WOLLONGONG LGA (2041)

Centre	Total Floorspace Demand (sqm)			
	Current Demand	Base Case	COVID	Aspirational
Wollongong City Centre	150,000	175,000	164,000	499,000
Coniston (B7)	50,000	58,000	58,000	102,000
Kembla Grange	29,000	35,000	34,000	48,000
Port Kembla	22,000	26,000	25,000	31,000
Kiama	21,000	24,000	24,000	41,000
Dapto	20,000	24,000	23,000	38,000
Oak Flats Industrial	20,000	23,000	23,000	40,000
Fairy Meadow	19,000	23,000	22,000	38,000
Montague Street Industrial	19,000	22,000	21,000	28,000
Coniston	15,000	18,000	17,000	35,000

4. Potential Areas for Residential Intensification

4.1 Overview & parameters

Strategic city planning requires understanding of potential areas that are appropriate for residential intensification. Whilst housing market analysis and development potential is beyond the scope of this study, the location of centres, retailing and services forms a crucial part of decision making around where best to focus efforts of targeted residential development. Areas which have capacity to service that growth are generally well placed to accommodate population growth.

Given the modelling work, a number of centres have been identified as having a significant 'gap' between their forecast level of demand relative to the volume of floorspace supply in the long run (by 2041). For those centres, larger population growth in their direct catchments would help facilitate greater levels of spending and land use in the respective centre.

4.2 Results

Six centres in the LGA were forecast to have a potential oversupply (gap) of over 1,000sqm of by 2041. In these locations, residential intensification would generate demand for economic activity in the respective centres.

Centre Name	Total floorspace gap/oversupply in 2021 (sqm)	Total floorspace gap/oversupply by 2041 (sqm)
Warrawong	-468 ²	6,083
Figtree	2,036	2,675
Fairy Meadow	-240	2,335
Thirroul	-588	1,468
Berkeley	0	1,451
North Wollongong	0	1,386

² A negative number means undersupply

5. Accessibility Gaps

5.1 Overview & parameters

Access to services and facilities is a core tenet of centres policy. From the earliest centres strategies to the more recent 20-minute neighbourhood concepts, a network of centres aims to provide coverage and access to services for all residential areas across an LGA.

This scenario explores the adequacy of centres coverage across the LGA from a walkability perspective. In a suburban context, 800metres is considered the aspirational distance that a resident/pedestrian shopper should be expected to walk to their nearest grocery location. In regional/rural areas, this may be stretched to up to 1.6km (which is the general 20-minute walkable threshold), with cars being the dominant mode of transport. The analysis on this page assumes Wollongong LGA to be aspiring to the 800metre principle, with 1.6km being the absolute maximum distance that any resident should have to traverse to their local supermarket or grocer.

5.2 Results

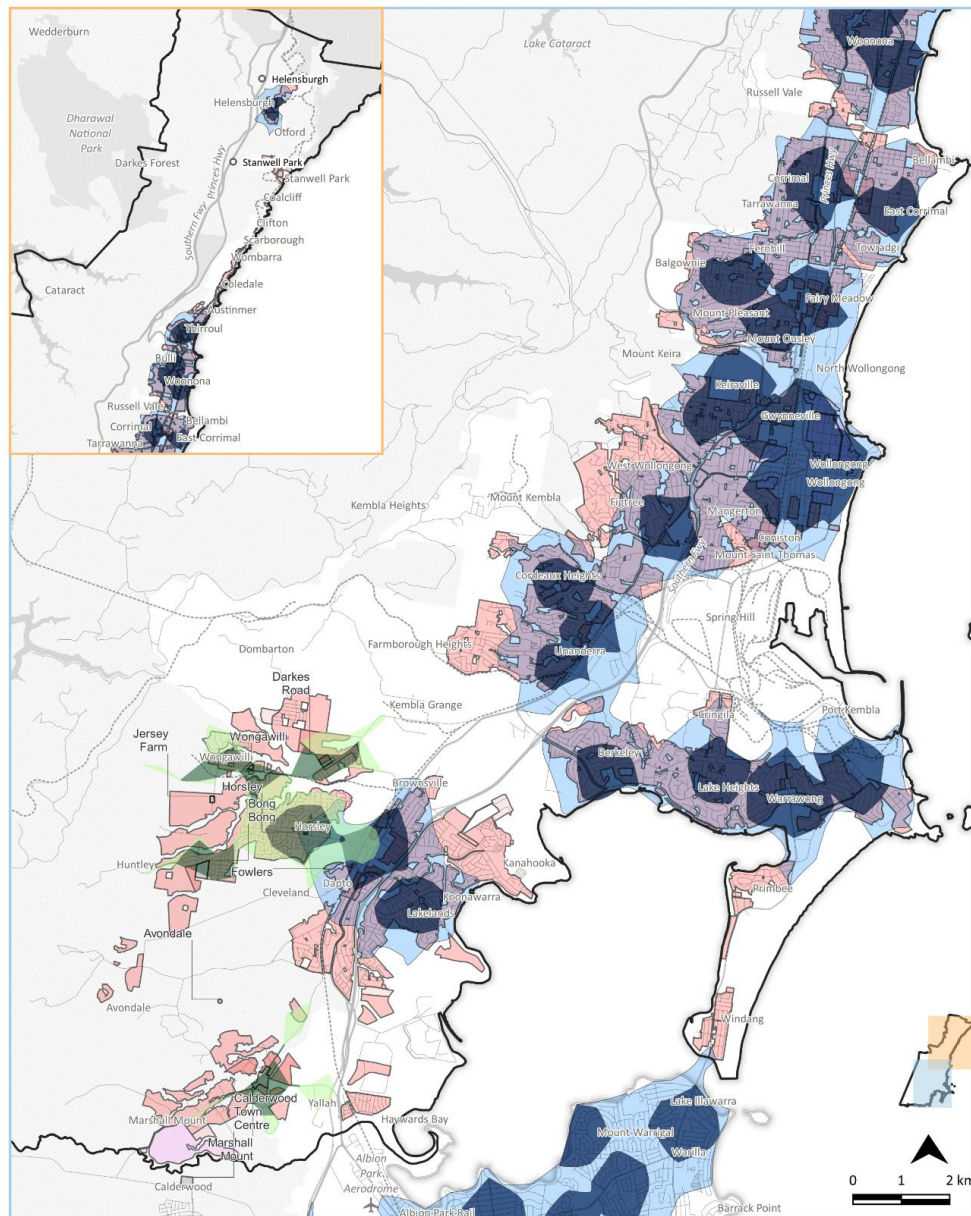
Overall, the Wollongong LGA has a strong network of centres that provides coverage for most residential areas of the LGA despite its relatively large geographic size. Most of the LGA is within 20minutes walk of their local centre's supermarket or grocer, with many also within 800metres.

The exceptions are:

1. The western outskirts of Figtree
2. The western outskirts of West Wollongong
3. Farmborough Heights
4. Primbee – there is an underutilised B1 zoned precinct here. The trouble with this location is that it is surrounded by water and so its local catchment is quite limited.
5. Kanahooka
6. Avondale
7. West Dapto – although the area will likely see new stores/centres in the future.

In most cases, these locations sit on the edge of urban catchment areas, up against natural barriers such as water bodies or large hills. That means their economic potential for growth is constrained. This sometimes explains why there is no centre/supermarket/grocer servicing the area. Nonetheless from a 20 minute neighbourhood perspective, it is important to identify the existence of these gaps.

FIGURE 3 ACCESS TO SUPERMARKETS FOR THE LGA'S RESIDENTIAL AREAS



Walkable Neighbourhoods

20210209 Wollongong CC - Retail and business centres study

Supermarket walking catchments
10 minute
20 minute

West Dapto supermarket (current/proposed)
centres walking catchment
10 min
20 min

Residential land
General Residential
Low Density Residential
Medium Density Residential
High Density Residential



6. Impact of Online Retailing for Retail Businesses in Centres

6.1 Overview & parameters

Online retailing is now recognised as a major player in retail sales, marketing and distribution. Over time, it has gradually shifted from being the mere domain of enthusiasts and early adopters to the point where it has disrupted all categories of retailing. As discussed in the trends analysis paper, different store categories have been impacted differently. In particular, merchandise, specialty stores, apparel and department stores have seen a significant shift away from in store purchases.

This trend is expected to continue, and in this scenario, we explore how a potential acceleration of that trend would impact on centres in the Wollongong LGA.

Note that a greater degree of online sales is also likely to be accompanied by an increased level of demand for warehouse, distribution and logistics facilities in industrial precincts in the region as businesses move to fulfill online orders.

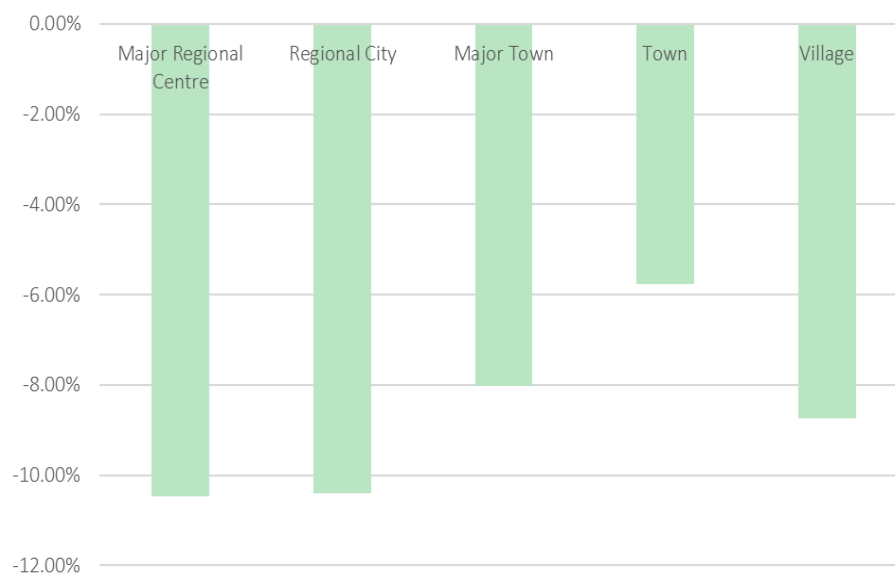
6.2 Results

An increase in online retailing impacts on speciality retailing considerably and large sub-regional centres face the largest total impact to demand.

In the first figure below, the impact is categorised across the centre hierarchies, focusing on retail product stores only, as product sales are generally under the greatest threat from online platforms.

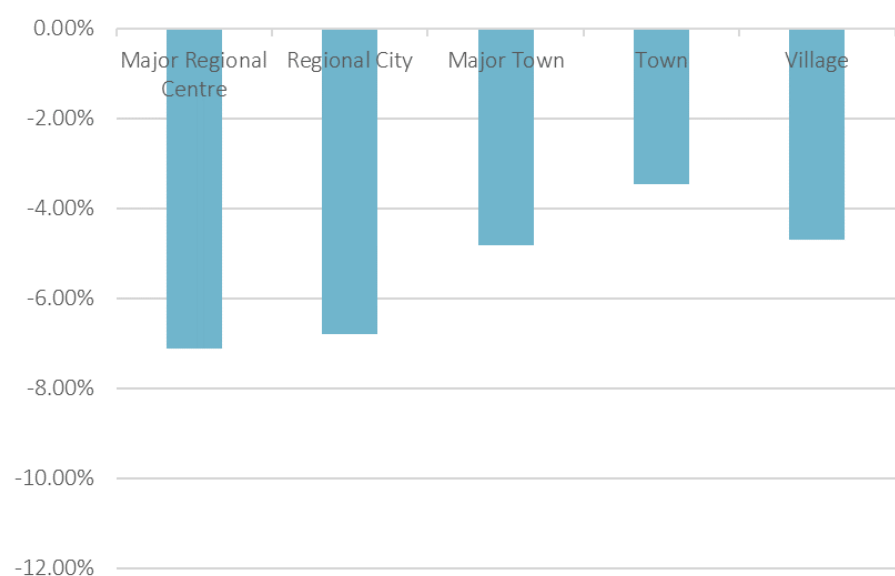
It shows that Major Regional Centres (Wollongong CBD) and Regional Cities (Dapto, Warrawong, Figtree) are under the greatest threat. This is to be expected, given they contain the majority of department/discount department stores in the LGA. Conversely, Town Centres are least affected, as they possess many local food stores that typically service customers that enjoy a walk to the local shop/deli/butcher.

FIGURE 4 IMPACT TO RETAIL FLOORSPACE DEMAND BY CENTRE HIERARCHY (RETAIL PRODUCT STORES ONLY)



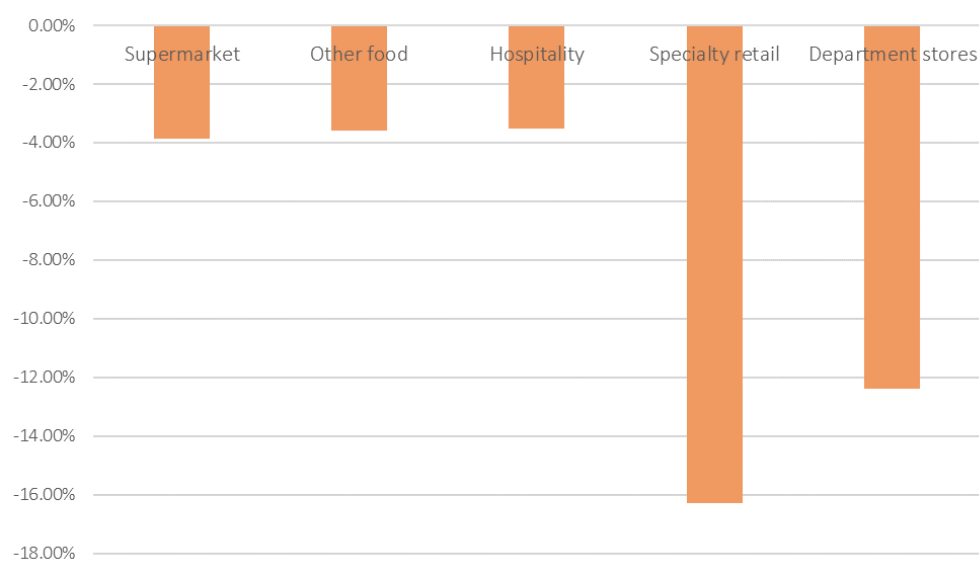
The next chart then expands the analysis to cover all retail floorspace in centres. It does so by adding retail services (such as gyms, health care, child care etc.) are not expected to be significantly disrupted by online platforms. That shows in these charts, with a resultant reduced impact to all centres (in terms of floorspace demand) of up to 7%.

FIGURE 5 IMPACT TO TOTAL FLOORSPACE DEMAND BY CENTRE HIERARCHY (ALL RETAIL FLOORSPACE)



The final chart recuts the impact in terms of store type. Whilst all retail product sales are impacted by online platforms, our research suggests that most of the impact is heavily focused around specialty stores and department stores. Note it is theoretically possible for many of those brands to recover sales through their own online platforms, but in reality, the online marketplace is more competitive than in local bricks and mortar sales, and so loss of floorspace is generally associated with some loss of market share/revenue.

FIGURE 6 IMPACT TO FLOORSPACE DEMAND BY RETAIL TYPE



7. The Rise of Retail Services

7.1 Overview & parameters

One aspect of retailing which is not as likely to be impacted by online retailing is retail services. Services such as fitness, beauty, health, child care and social services require some of the highest levels of personal, face to face interaction in the economy, and so will always require a shop/retail frontage.

Many of those industries are also forecast to be some of the highest growth industries across NSW and Wollongong. In concert with a gradual reduction of retail goods floorspace as a result of online retailing, it is expected that many of the LGA's centres will experience a gradual shift towards a higher ratio retail services.

7.2 Results

In the base case, it is expected that by 2041, the LGA will experience an overall vacancy of 10.9% across all its retail goods centres. On the other hand, the LGA will also experience a 6.2% undersupply of retail service floorspace. This is based on an existing ratio of 64% goods, 36% services in the LGA's centres where a mix of these activities can be found.

It is entirely possible given the numbers that by 2041, 60% of centre floorspace across the LGA will sell goods whilst 40% of centre floorspace will sell services.

Of course the floorspace for these two types of activities are highly substitutable, and so it is entirely reasonable to expect that the market will find a balance between the two in the long run (i.e. stores that previously sold goods may be repurposed to sell services instead). Nonetheless, it is something that Council should be aware of and plan for when it comes to issues such as public realm, urban design and centres hierarchies.

For the Wollongong LGA, Major Regional Centres and Major Towns are most likely to see this shift given the uncertain future of the Discount Department Store and Department Store sectors. For these centres, the amenity and experience dimensions of the centres' "offer" to their local community will be important levers for success when it comes to encouraging a stronger presence of service businesses.

8. Potential Gaps in Supermarket Provision

8.1 Overview & parameters

Gaps in supermarket provision can emerge not just due to accessibility, but also due to inadequate levels of floorspace provision in a given trade area. This can result in crowding and overtrading in centres and stores or just a lack of product availability when stock becomes limited (such as during a pandemic), raising concerns around food security.

Such gaps can then also become the subject of much debate around whether alternative supermarket options should be made available – often by landowners or proponents in out of centre locations if Council has not prepared appropriate in centre options ahead of time.

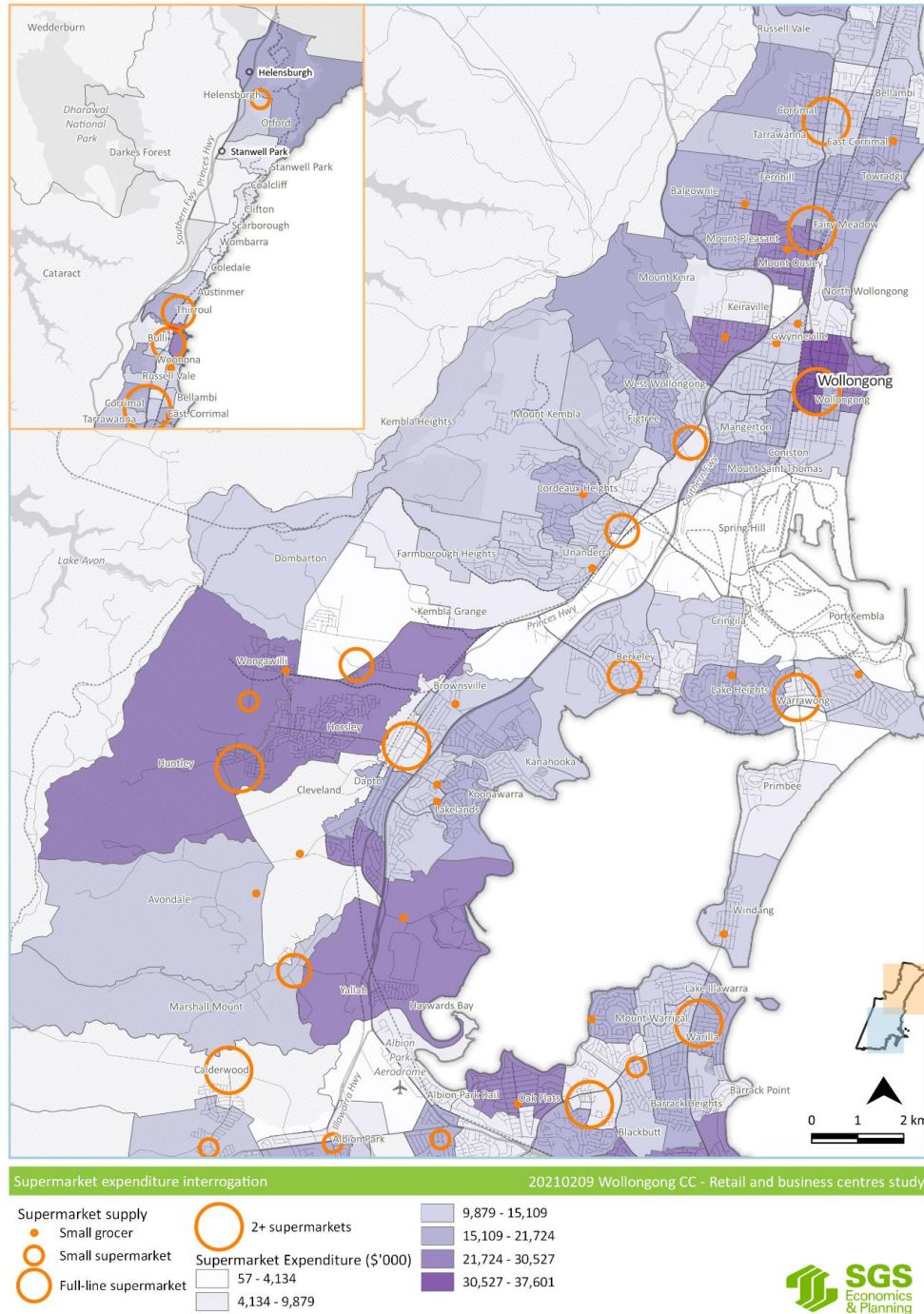
This scenario aims to identify locations/submarkets/centres where Council should be planning for extra capacity/sites for groceries before the market makes an approach.

8.2 Results

The map below provides a spatial representation of expenditure source (demand) against supermarket floorspace (supply). The darker the shading, the greater the pressure for more supermarket provision

It shows that with the exception of West Dapto (which is still developing and subject to various potential development options), most of the LGA has a strong provision of supermarket floorspace. The major area of concern would be in the Keiraville area, where close proximity to the Wollongong City Centre and the presence of a small local grocer on the University Campus appears to (currently) be sufficient. It is likely that as the population in the area grows in the future, that some interest in a new/larger grocer will emerge. This may also be the case for the University of Wollongong campus, where residential population growth could generate demand for local grocery retailing.

FIGURE 7 SUPERMARKET SUPPLY VS EXPENDITURE



9. Removal of B4 Ground Floor Capacity

9.1 Overview & parameters

Net floorspace capacity results (i.e. the amount of *additional* floorspace that can be accommodated on each site) can be broken down by existing land use zones. This provides a picture of what proportion of each centre's total capacity lies within the B4 zone.

B4 zoned land is the focus here because Council are interested in understanding how the removal of mandatory ground floor employment uses would impact supply³.

The scenarios make the following assumptions around built form outcome in the B4 zone:

- The medium capacity scenario (feasible capacity) assumes that the ground floor of developments in the B4 zone will be employment generating, with the rest of the development residential (residential generally yields higher profits and so developers will maximise the amount of residential space).
It also excludes sites which are unlikely to be feasible for redevelopment or available for redevelopment.
- The high scenario (maximum theoretical capacity) assumes that 100% of floorspace will be employment generating. Note that current planning controls do not in any way enforce or ensure this outcome (but the controls do ensure the medium scenario above).

9.2 Results

The results for centres containing B4 zones (apart from the greenfield centre at Marshall Mount) are shown below. These results show that the B4 zone makes up a relatively small proportion of feasible capacity in any centre. Note that Warrawong and Thirroul have already been noted as having more supply than what is needed to meet demand.

TABLE 3 CAPACITY IN B4 AND OTHER ZONES

Zone	Medium (feasible capacity)			High (maximum theoretical capacity)			
	B3	B4	Total (inc. other zones)	B3	B4 – ground floor	B4 – upper floors	Total (inc. other zones)
Wollongong	188,726	34,311	232,938	279,493	56,922	165,601	546,578
Dapto	33,118	12,430	89,528	105,594	19,552	73,136	316,675
Warrawong	65,764	4,639	71,041	245,989	6,300	2,249	259,839
Thirroul	0	3,078	10,445	0	3,356	1,492	69,474

³ The floorspace provided is often lower in quality, diluting the presence of retailing across the CBD overall.

The following table shows capacity results for the Wollongong City Centre currently, and under Council's proposed changes to zone boundaries, which increase the amount of B4 zones land and decrease the amount of B3 zoned land.

These changes decrease the overall capacity for employment floorspace in the centre by around 79,200 sqm in medium (feasible) scenario, mainly because this scenario assumes that only a part of the floorspace delivered in the B4 zone will be employment generating. This reduces the capacity by around 34%.

TABLE 4 IMPACT OF PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE IN WOLLONGONG CITY CENTRE ON CAPACITY

Zone	Medium (feasible capacity)			High (maximum theoretical capacity)			
	B3	B4	Total (inc. other zones)	B3	B4 – ground floor	B4 – upper floors	Total (inc. other zones)
Current	188,726	34,311	232,938	279,493	56,922	106,597	546,578
Proposed zones	78,998	65,468	153,716	154,110	165,601	262,240	546,578
Change	-109,728	31,157	-79,222	-125,383	108,679	155,643	0

If minimal employment generating floorspace was delivered in the B4 zone, for example if it was not required on the ground floor of development (noting that the ground floor makes up essentially the entire assumed floorspace provided in the medium scenario), feasible capacity in the City Centre would drop to around 79,000sqm. Maximum theoretical capacity in the B3 zone would be somewhat higher, at around 154,100 sqm.

10. West Dapto – Delayed Development

10.1 Overview & parameters

The West Dapto area constitutes the largest growth area in the Wollongong LGA. Significant residential development and population growth is expected over the next 20 years (55,000 new residents by 2041).

Council has planned for a number of centres in the area to service future populations from community, retail and employment perspectives.

However, there is always some uncertainty surrounding the development of these estates and centres from a timing perspective. This scenario therefore explores the impact of delayed development in the West Dapto centres.

The table below includes the centres which are expected to be delayed, with the right hand column showing a possible alternative date for development. Some centres planned floorspace were allocated over the 5-year scenario time points.

Affected Centre	Base Year Start	Base Year Finish	Scenario Start	Scenario Finish
Avondale	-	2036	-	2041
Bong Bong	2036	2041	-	2041
Darkes Road	2026	2036	2031	2041
Fowlers	-	2031	-	2041
Jersey Farm	-	2036	-	2041
Marshall Mount	2026	2031	2031	2036
Tallawarra	-	2031	-	2041
Wongawilli	-	2026	-	2036

Note that this has been done to simulate a possible outcome, and is not based on any consultation with land owners/developers in these locations.

10.2 Results

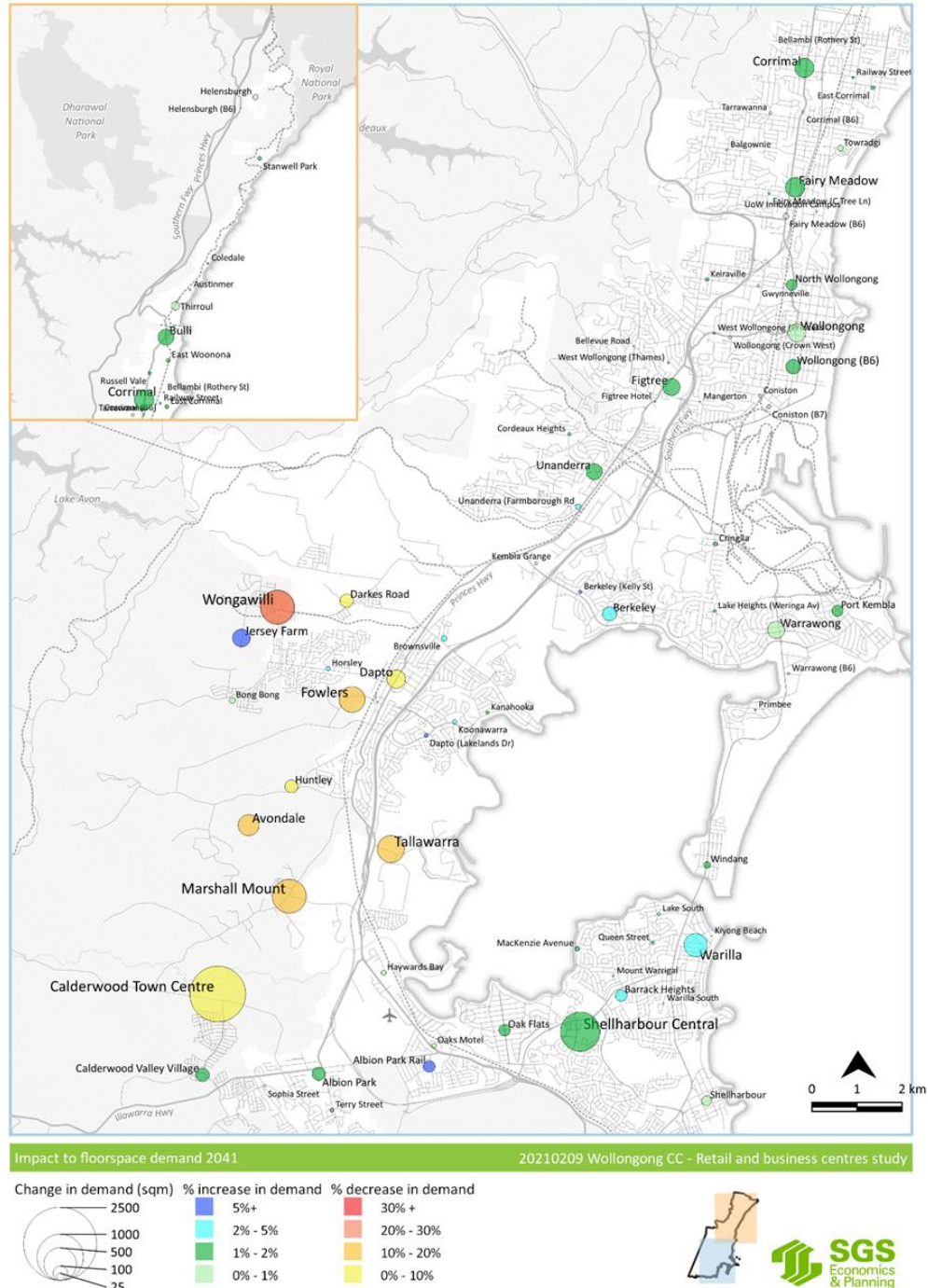
Pushing back the timeline of the development of these West Dapto centres, can have a significant impact on the long term performance of surrounding centres as they would need to pick up the residual demand that is emerging from the population growth in West Dapto. The map below shows that spatial impact with orange circles denoting the centres that are delayed and the green circles showing the extent to which each (surrounding centre) gains floorspace demand as a result. Overall the impact is spread across the centres network from Dapto through to the Wollongong CBD. This spread is actually a good outcome because it provides a boost to all the centres, without overloading any centre

with so much demand that results in overtrading/impetus for new development. Such development interest (if it comes to pass) should be discouraged in centres like Dapto if the West Dapto centres are still showing signs of eventually absorbing local demand – otherwise there would be oversupply problem in the long run.

Jersey farm can be identified as an outlier amongst the west Dapto centres – it's difficult to clearly identify why Jersey farm has an increase in demand from the base scenario. Potentially due to a number of factors including the location of the centre and it may be directly competing with Wongawilli due to their similar size and close location.

Table 3 lists those centres which have been most impacted under the delayed scenario, specifically using a threshold of +/-2% change from base scenario demand with a minimum of 50sqm change. All of the centres in the delayed scenario experience some minor shift from the base scenario, but only a handful where there is clear impact.

FIGURE 8 SPATIAL IMPACT OF DELAYED DEVELOPMENT IN WEST DAPTO BY 2041



**TABLE 5 CENTRES EFFECTED GREATER THAN 2% BY DELAYED DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRES IN WEST DAPTO
(FLOORSPACE DEMAND SQM)**

Centre	2041		Difference (sqm)	Percent change
Wongawilli	2,068	1,528	-540	-26%
Tallawarra	1,828	1,484	-344	-19%
Fowlers	2,168	1,856	-313	-14%
Marshall Mount	3,999	3,459	-539	-13%
Avondale	2,038	1,831	-207	-10%
Jersey Farm	1,696	1,844	148	9%
Huntley	1,654	1,575	79	-5%
Berkeley	1,994	2,087	93	5%

MELBOURNE

Level 14, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
+61 3 8616 0331
sgsvic@sgsep.com.au

CANBERRA

Level 2, 28-36 Ainslie Avenue
Canberra ACT 2601
+61 2 6257 4525
sgsact@sgsep.com.au

HOBART

PO Box 123
Franklin TAS 7113
+61 421 372 940
sgstas@sgsep.com.au

SYDNEY

Suite 2.01/50 Holt Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
+61 2 8307 0121
sgsnsw@sgsep.com.au



Paper 4 – Planning Strategy Review

City of Wollongong

July 2022

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Review of Draft City Centre Planning Strategy Directions	4
2.2 Prioritising jobs and establishing a resilient commercial core	5
2.3 Develop active commercial streets that respond to character	5
2.4 Rail Arrival and Southern District Precinct	6
2.5 Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct	6
3. Wollongong City Centre - Draft Planning Proposal (Review)	7
3.1 Amendments to the boundary of the B3 Commercial Core	7
3.2 Reduction of need for ground floor retailing in the B4 Mixed Use areas.....	8

1. Introduction

This paper forms a written review of planning directions that have been set out by Council's proposed Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy and Draft City Centre Planning Proposal.

Some of the logic and rationale that supports those documents were initially generated through SGS's CBD Planning Review work in 2018-19. Whilst that work remains relevant today, since the completion of that work, there has been some shifts in the operating environment including COVID, the nature of work, population growth momentum towards regional NSW and the Greater Cities Commission's greater focus on Newcastle and the Illawarra Region as part of their expanded remit.

The 2021-22 Wollongong LGA-wide Centres Strategy has been a broader piece of work, focused on modelling the economic data, and specifically retail floorspace demand, across the LGA. Within that context, we now review the City Centre Planning Strategy and Draft City Centre Planning Proposal, utilising the understanding that has been gained from the analysis of key economic issues and trends in the Wollongong LGA.

2. Review of Draft City Centre Planning Strategy Directions

The City Centre Planning Strategy is set out as a series of key directions with specific visions for different City precincts. The most relevant to the Centres Study are discussed sequentially below.

Directions

Key directions of relevance to the Wollongong Centre Strategy are identified and analysed below. More detailed analysis follows the table.

1. Prioritising jobs and establishing a resilient commercial core

Preserving the existing supply of commercial floor space, as a minimum, while encouraging additional floorspace.

This principle has been applied in a number of commercial precincts in Sydney and Melbourne under threat from residential encroachment. The idea is logical in the sense that if each precinct can onto its commercial floorspace, then net growth will emerge wherever a major office expansion or redevelopment occurs. If any site/precinct is allowed to 'lose' floorspace, there is no guarantee that sufficient 'gains' will be made elsewhere for a net growth outcome.

Allowing mixed-use development in parts of the Commercial Core with a limitation on the proportion of residential floorspace

This should be applied on the key condition that vertical mixed use (where apartments are 'stacked' on top of office floorspace) is avoided as much as possible in the B3 commercial core, with the housing/mixed use to be predominantly provided in separate B4 zoned areas. SGS engagement with industry has suggested that the potential to generate long term office yields using 'vertical' mixed use may be overstated and that in reality, those buildings are potentially ineffective at sustaining long term commercial tenancies.

Defining commercial only areas for larger office buildings and aligning height and floor space controls to promote tall buildings with generous floorplates

This initiative helps to maximise commercial yields from what is a finite number of B3 commercial core sites in the City Centre. In reality can be difficult to legislate for, however, sometimes it is possible to engineer development scenarios whereby it is unfeasible to develop "less" floorspace than "more". Care would then need to be taken to ensure that such a development floorspace threshold is not too high so as to block moderately sized developments that would still provide great employment outcomes.

2. Develop active commercial streets that respond to character

Only requiring non-residential uses on the ground floor on key commercial streets where there is good pedestrian traffic access to public transport.

Reducing the number of locations where ground floor employment activity will ensure that ground floor activation is concentrated in more strategic locations in the City Centre. The opposite would be a dispersal of economic activity along all City Centre streets, resulting in the seemingly positive outcome of new businesses being established at many

mandated locations; but with that occurring at the expense of refreshing more strategically important retail shopfronts in the CBD core.

3. Planning for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive city

Allowing limited residential throughout the Commercial Core to activate the City and lever commercial outcomes.

Some degree of residential development around City Centres has proven in the past to be one means of encouraging revitalisation of core business districts. This diversification of activity should be occurring alongside other efforts including improvements to offer of dining, entertainment, the arts, sport and recreation.

2.2 Prioritising jobs and establishing a resilient commercial core

More clarity and focus on the Commercial role for the B3 core in the CBD is a positive, and should ensure that established commercial floorspace is never displaced by residential development.

A common 'claim' is that mixed use or residential development in/around city centre cores provides diversity, refreshing the range of uses beyond the ground floor retail and commercial offices that form part of the traditional 'core' offering of a city centre. This becomes more pronounced if there is a lull in the commercial floorspace market – which can happen in the real estate cycle.

If and when the commercial floorspace market is weaker than that of residential, to avoid a long term loss in commercial activity, Council can still look to prioritise other forms of job generating activity in the core, including community facilities, cultural facilities, sport and entertainment etc. That in turn creates a greater diversity of uses to generate a more vibrant city centre – without turning over strategically important commercial land to residential. Recommendation: commit to the broadening of jobs growth to include non-office activities in and around the commercial core as well.

2.3 Develop active commercial streets that respond to character

Active streets with unique character will help attract commercial tenants as well as workers back into offices.

Preventing floorspace oversupply should be a core part of that strategy. Council will need to ensure the volume of retail floorspace being made available in the long run matches the demand forecasts for the CBD that have been undertaken in this study.

Alongside preventing oversupply, Council will also need to ensure that the floorspace is regularly refreshed. Achieving both can be a challenge when new floorspace usually occurs through new developments that then leave another sub-precinct behind. Without compromising legitimate commercial office growth targets (25,000sqm under a base case; up to 350,000sqm aspirationally), managing a tighter commercial core will mean that in many cases new floorspace will be replacing older floorspace, rather than extending or adding to the size of the commercial core itself.

City Precincts

2.4 Rail Arrival and Southern District Precinct

It is good for the Planning Strategy Review to highlight the importance of the precinct as an entrance point for both commercial and retail uses.

Many office tenants (particularly those that might be relocating from Sydney) prefer strong, high amenity access to public transport, and this has been a feature of other recent centres' success in attracting new commercial development (e.g. Parramatta CBD).

Noting here that the precinct would essentially need to double as a commercial precinct AND major transport hub – which will generate challenges for Council in terms of how pedestrian traffic, parking, car movement, office buildings, amenity, retail/food and drink premises are all managed in the one Crown Street Mall Precinct

The precinct as the retail core of the CBD has a focus on capitalising on existing character of the Mall (the western end is larger format stores, the eastern end is more fine grain). That is an important direction to ensure the Council's vision for the mall is realised. The only caveat to that is for Council to also look out for any potential interest in larger format showroom type floorspace developments which some major brands (such as Nike, Telstra, Microsoft, Apple etc.) have been developing in the Melbourne and Sydney CBDs as well as more recognised global shopping strips such as in Shanghai or New York City. Those spaces are less focused on selling products, but utilised to help market brands/sub-brands as well as provide for user experience (UX) interaction opportunities as a means of testing and marketing new products and services.

Such uses may not be suited to Crown StreetMall, but Council should be prepared for a potential location in another sub-precinct or on the edge of the mall where that concept can be adopted because it does generate high volumes of foot traffic and creates good exposure and publicity.

2.5 Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct

SGS's recent engagements with Arts facilities in NSW and other states have highlighted a growing trend where cultural organisations and facilities have a desire to 'open up' their facility more to the public realm of their surrounding precinct/urban environment.

So over time, it would be good for Council to plan/design for a precinct where many of these facilities will be increasingly integrated into the streetscape/laneways that they operate off. The facilities will also benefit from an urban environment that encourages pedestrians to slow their walk and interact with the facilities.

Commercially, many of these facilities also benefit from any successful café/shop operations that are being run off the street, so foot traffic that is funnelled towards these uses would also benefit the cultural institutions in the long run.

3. Wollongong City Centre - Draft Planning Proposal (Review)

This section of the planning proposal (A2 Amendment provisions relating to the B3 commercial core zone) has three components:

- 2(a) - Amend the B3 Commercial Core zone objectives
- 2(b) - Amend the boundary of the B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use zones
- 2(c) - Prioritise commercial development in the B3 Commercial Core zone by prohibiting and limiting shop-top housing and other residential uses as permissible uses certain areas.

The amendments to the B3 zone are discussed collectively in Section 3.1 (as they are part of the same strategic initiative. Section 3.2 then goes on to discuss the implications of the A4 amendment 'Activation of Ground Floor Uses on Active Commercial Streets' to the B4 zoned areas.

3.1 Amendments to the boundary of the B3 Commercial Core

The intent here is to reduce the size of the B3 Commercial Core area in the City Centre, whilst increasing the emphasis of and protecting the commercial core function of that area.

Overall the strategic justification is logical in that genuine mixed-use developments are rare. Most developers (and subsequent development projects) lean in one direction or the other based on their expertise, industry contacts and marketing abilities. The act of attracting major commercial tenants that are suitable for a City Centre precinct requires a number of preconditions for success including:

1. A city centre that is competitive with other city centre options in the Greater Sydney-Hunter-Illawarra Region
2. A work precinct which has a distinctly commercial flavour with a commercial sense of address, where businesses feel their needs will be prioritised
3. Developers that possess the ability to attract major tenant businesses (even before completion of the construction project)
4. Fully activated streets that employees will enjoy spending workdays in
5. Networking opportunities amongst allied businesses, with the appropriate conference/hospitality facilities to facilitate that outcome
6. Commercial address with marketable frontages
7. Competitive leasing prices for floorspace

Points 2, 3, 6 and 7 would all be seriously compromised in a mixed-use precinct that allows for any form of mixed-use development or interest from developers whose expertise swings more in favour of residential rather than commercial development, whilst point 5 requires a strong critical mass of commercial activity to be maximised.

The issue here is not merely one of volume of commercial vs residential floorspace, but rather a strategic approach where all stakeholders (Council, landowners, developers and tenants) work towards a strong competitive commercial city centre offering, meeting all seven of the criteria above.

For these reasons, it is reasonable and appropriate for Council to be deprioritising residential development within the B3 Commercial Core.

3.2 Reduction of need for ground floor retailing in the B4 Mixed Use areas

This section discusses part A4 of the Planning Proposal titled 'Activation of Ground Floor Uses on Active Commercial Streets'.

Here the idea is to only mandate for ground floor retail activity in the core parts of the City Centre.

The objective of this amendment is to focus active uses only on key commercial streets within the City Centre to protect the retail and commercial character of these streets. This change will ensure that non-residential uses are appropriately located and support commercial streets in the City Centre, rather than being dispersed across the City.

Whilst having high volumes of high-quality retail would be the optimal outcome, the economic reality of the contemporary retail industry is that demand for retail goods and services is limited, and in some commodities even shrinking in relative terms to other sources of transaction such as online platforms. Furthermore, an oversupply of floorspace can actually lead to a dispersal of retail activity when the success of retail facilities is predicated on the concept of co-location and density that leads to activated streets with high volumes of pedestrian traffic. Such concentrated activity also leaves Council with a more focused task of improving the public realm of those targeted locations further.

So long as Council leaves sufficient floorspace capacity for the 20 year level of forecast retail floorspace demand in the City Centre, there is no reason for concern.

As shown in the table below, the current B4 portion of the Wollongong CBD only constitutes 34,000sqm out of 233,000sqm of potential retail floorspace (15%) when it comes to feasible capacity. Removing that 34,000sqm would still leave nearly 200,000sqm of potentially feasible development capacity in the CBD, whilst only 9,000sqm of net new floorspace (gap) is required by 2041 (see section 9 of Paper 3 for a complete discussion of B4 Ground Floor capacity).

Zone	Medium (feasible capacity)		Demand vs supply (by 2041)		
	B4	Total (inc. other zones)	Demand	Supply	Gap
Wollongong CBD	34,311	232,938	192,995	184,450	-9,000 (undersupply)

The direct flow on effect of the decision to remove the requirement for non-residential ground floors in the B4 zone would be an impetus for older retail floorspace to be refurbished for new stores that enter the local market – which should help to revitalise some older/outdated retail shopfronts in the centre of the City (B3 zone).

ITEM 3 POST EXHIBITION: REVIEW OF ALCOHOL FREE ZONES

Alcohol Free Zones (AFZs) are established under the *Local Government Act 1993* to improve public safety and prevent disorderly behaviour caused by the consumption of alcohol in public areas. AFZs have up to a four year term and apply to road related public areas including footpaths, roads and car parks. All of Council's seven AFZs are due to expire on 30 September 2022.

This report seeks Council endorsement to re-establish AFZs across seven locations and establish AFZ exemptions in key event locations.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council endorse the proposed AFZs in Helensburgh, Thirroul, Corrimal, Wollongong, Berkeley, Warrawong and Dapto as shown in Attachment 1 of the report for a period of four years.
- 2 Council adopt a maximum of 10 events per annum in each of the following City Centre areas to be exempt from alcohol prohibition: Upper Crown Street Mall (including Crown Lane), Lower Crown Street Mall, Globe Lane, the Arts Precinct and Wollongong Foreshore area as shown in Attachment 2.
- 3 Authority is delegated to the General Manager to suspend the AFZ in other areas to a maximum of two events per year.
- 4 The exemptions in both Parts 2 and 3 be subject to the relevant event organiser undertaking a formal event approval process, including obtaining development consent, liaising with NSW Police and obtaining approval for a liquor licence from Liquor and Gaming NSW and that all conditions for the safe delivery of an event be the responsibility of the event organiser.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Cultural + Economic Development
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Existing and Proposed Alcohol Free Zone Maps 2022 - 2026
- 2 Major Event Location Areas seeking Alcohol Free Zone Suspension
- 3 Review of Alcohol Free Zones Review 2022 - Engagement Report

BACKGROUND

Current AFZs and Re-establishment

AFZs prohibit alcohol consumption in road related public areas (eg road, footpath or carpark). AFZs are currently located in Helensburgh, Thirroul, Corrimal, Wollongong, Dapto, Warrawong and Berkeley (Attachment 1). The AFZs expire on 30 September 2022 which has triggered a review to be undertaken.

The main objective of an AFZ is to act as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible drinking on streets and footpaths, to incidents involving serious crime. *The Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) sections 642-648 is the legislation underpinning an AFZ. The Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones 2009 outlines the procedures for establishment and reestablishment of an AFZ.

The Guidelines detail an AFZ:

- may be considered if 'the fact that irresponsible behaviour arising from the consumption of alcohol is occurring on those roads and footpaths.'
- should be as small as is possible and must only extend to areas that irresponsible behaviour from the consumption of alcohol is occurring.

- should 'primarily be located adjacent to outlets supplying alcohol where drinkers congregate. In the absence of such an outlet a zoning should be considered only in exceptional circumstances. For example, a known hot spot for inappropriate street drinking may be in a public carpark adjacent to a beach or public reserve'.
- may be established for a maximum period of four years. Once established, it applies 24 hours per day.
- enables NSW Police Officers to tip out, or otherwise dispose of, alcohol being consumed within the AFZ. The activity is prohibited, not illegal, it is not recorded as an offence and as such does not carry a fine.
- is a short term control measure and in many instances a zone will achieve the desired objectives within its operational period.

The criteria when considering the re-establishment of an AFZ should include:

- The factors which originally supported a zoning in that area?
- How successful was the previous AFZ in achieving a reduction in unacceptable street drinking?
- What do Police statistics indicate about the value of re-establishing an AFZ in that area?
- What other measures may need to be considered (eg a community education program) if unacceptable street drinking is still of concern in that area?
- Has the community's perceptions of safety improved?

AFZ Exemptions for Events

AFZs provide a tool that can help maintain safety in public places. Positive activation is also a tool to enhance community safety. In 2014 and 2018 Council passed a resolution to support exemptions of some AFZ areas to allow for events, inclusive of alcohol, to occur in our City Centre. Permission for these exemptions will expire on 30 September 2022.

To streamline the event application process, along with providing activation and economic benefits, Council adopted blanket development consents for major events in the City Centre areas of Lower Crown Street Mall, Upper Crown Street Mall (including Crown Lane), the Arts Precinct, Globe Lane and Wollongong Foreshore. These blanket development consents outline stringent conditions for events where alcohol is involved. The conditions were initially determined in consultation with the Wollongong Police District.

To further support the event application process, Council endorsed a maximum of ten major events per annum in each of these areas (except the foreshore area) to be exempt from alcohol prohibition. Council also authorised the General Manager to suspend AFZ in other areas to a maximum of two events per year.

The Council resolution removed the need to seek individual resolutions in order to suspend part of an AFZ for one-off events. This was effective in reducing the three month 'lead' time required to seek a Council resolution, therefore enabling more events and activation.

Pre-COVID the exemption was enacted annually on average eight times in Stuart Park and twice in Lang Park. The exemption has been enacted in Crown Street Mall for Nights on Crown and in Globe Lane for Yours and Owls New Year's Eve events.

This report seeks the same support for AFZ exemption for the major event locations of Upper Crown Street Mall (including Crown Lane), Lower Crown Street Mall, Globe Lane and the Arts Precinct and Wollongong Foreshore area.

Overview of AFZ Review

Options considered:

1. Re-establish AFZs as they currently exist for four years
2. Do not re-establish any AFZs
3. Establish AFZs only in two identified locations - Wollongong CBD and Dapto Square
4. Establish AFZs in current suburbs with a reduced/minimal footprint in consultation with Police.

A range of information was considered against each option including:

- Level of evidence of irresponsible behaviour arising from the consumption of alcohol
- Proximity to outlets supplying alcohol, where drinkers congregate
- AFZ should be as small as is possible
- Police advice on how AFZs are used to perform their duties
- Alcohol related crime data
- The influence AFZs have on perception of safety
- Feedback from Police and community.

Alcohol Related Crime Data

Alcohol related crime has been declining across NSW, including the Wollongong Local Government Area, for over 10 years. Incidents of Alcohol Related Assault (non-domestic assault) in Wollongong LGA has a declining ten year trend of 8% per year (compared to the NSW average decline of 8.4% per year). Incidents of Alcohol Related Assault on Road/Street/Footpath Premises also has a ten year declining trend of 9.1% per year (compared with the NSW average decline of 9.6%).

Feedback from Police

Lake Illawarra Police requested Berkeley and Warrawong AFZ be re-established as businesses in are directly affected by intoxicated behaviour. Police recommended a reduction to the Dapto AFZ boundary as alcohol consumption and unruly behaviour does not appear to be prevalent in the outer areas.

Lake Illawarra Police District submission presented crime data specific to each AFZ area presenting a case to re-establish all three AFZs. Data is not collected by NSW Police on how often they use 'tip out' powers

Lake Illawarra Police stated AFZs are part of their 'Crime and Harm Minimisation Management Plan' and have played an important role in crime reduction. AFZs enable a proactive approach to engage members of the community before behaviour escalates.

Lake Illawarra Police acknowledged lighting and design of family friendly environments, plus clear and visible signage are also measures that collectively help to improve safety.

Wollongong Police submission expressed strong support for AFZs in 'an endeavour to continue to make Wollongong LGA a safer community. AFZ's provide reassurance for families, young children, and the elderly that they can enjoy public spaces without the fear of engaging with intoxicated people'.

AFZs were stated as being a strong crime prevention strategy and invaluable tool to prevent antisocial behaviour and "preloading" prior to entering a licenced premise. The importance of the Wollongong AFZ was emphasised due to the licenced premise density (94 in total).

Graphs presented in the submission demonstrated the alcohol related crime trend over a 26-year period, showing a decline across all AFZs.

Wollongong Police oppose reduction and support re-establishment of all current AFZs. In addition, they presented a revised Thirroul AFZ boundary.

Wollongong Police acknowledged the final decision lies with Council.

Feedback from community

There is support both for and against AFZs. Feedback in support of AFZs suggests drinking continues to occur in the spaces, they need to be enforced and drinking in public should not be permitted. Feedback against AFZs suggests they should be a short term solution, they are inconsistent in size and location, there is no clear rationale/justification and Police have powers without AFZs.

Feedback highlighted AFZs provide a level of perceived safety however many community members are unaware of AFZ locations.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed:

- Corrimal, Berkeley and Warrawong AFZs are re-established without change for four years.
- Dapto, Thirroul, Helensburgh and Wollongong AFZs are re-established for four years with a reduced footprint (Attachment 1). The reduced footprint responds to Ministerial Guidelines which requires AFZs to:
 - Be as small as is possible
 - Only extend to areas that irresponsible behaviour from the consumption of alcohol is occurring
 - Be within close proximity to outlets supplying alcohol
- Continue AFZ exemptions to enable and welcome major events in Upper Crown Street Mall (including Crown Lane), Lower Crown Street Mall, Arts Precinct, Globe Lane and Wollongong Foreshore.
- Council delegates authority to the General Manager to suspend AFZs in other areas to a maximum of two events per year, if required.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

In accordance with the NSW *Local Government Act 1993* and Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones 2009, Council undertook an engagement strategy to inform the community and invite public comment on the proposal to re-establish AFZs. Stakeholders included Wollongong Police Local Area Command, Lake Illawarra Police Local Area Command, Anti-Discrimination Board, Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service, licensed premises located within each AFZ, Neighbourhood Forums, Register of Interest – Community Safety and community.

Written correspondence was sent to Police, organisations and businesses. Follow up conversations were also had with Wollongong and Lake Illawarra Police Local Area Commands. A public notice was placed in the newspaper and community members were invited to provide feedback via our online engagement platform. Information and paper based surveys were also made available in Council libraries, facilities and Customer Service Centre.

Council's internal City Centre team and Events team have been consulted regarding their needs moving forward in relation to event diversity and activation.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5. It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the Community Programs Service Plan.

The Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025 identifies Action Item 3.2 Alcohol Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Places are reviewed every four years.

The Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Council Policy has been reviewed and will be considered under a separate cover as part of this agenda.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with updating AFZ signage will be as per current processes.

CONCLUSION

AFZs assist to improve and maintain community safety. They are one strategy, among many and act as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible street drinking to incidents involving serious crime.

Re-establishment of AFZs demonstrates Council's commitment to community safety. It acts to further support NSW Police in reducing alcohol related crime and harm that can occur from the misuse and abuse of alcohol.

Enabling the suspension of parts of AFZs for events will ensure Council builds on the positive activation occurring within our City Centre and provides a streamlined process that supports event diversity.

ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

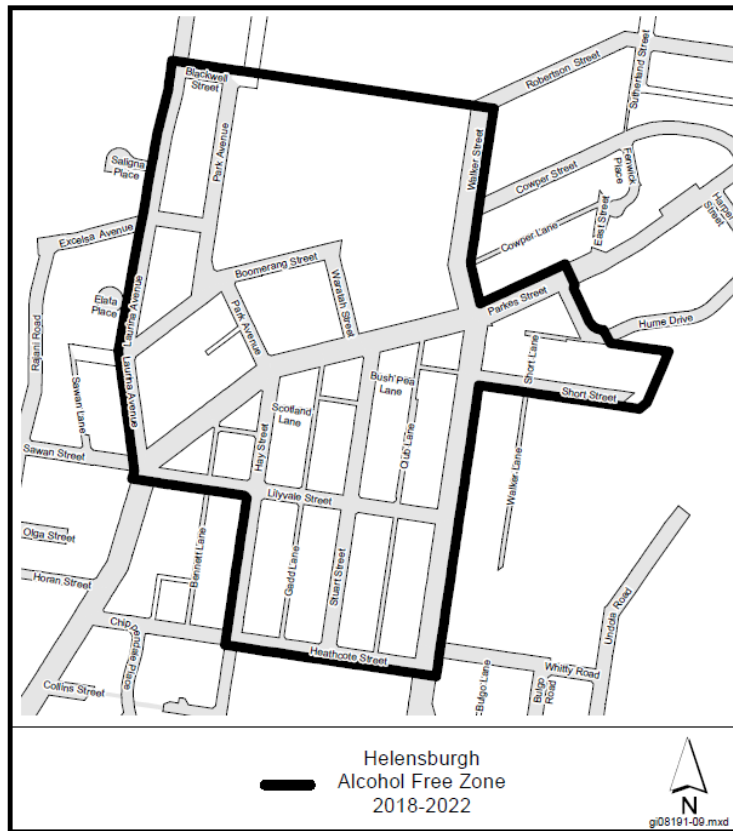
ATTACHMENT 1

AFZ REVIEW 2022

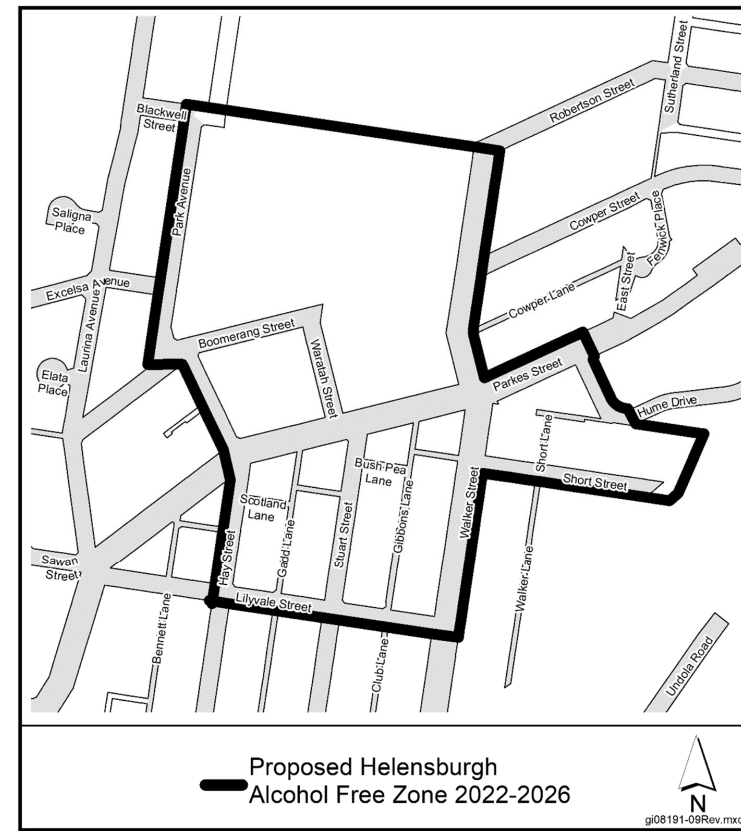
PROPOSED ALCOHOL FREE ZONES 2022-2026

ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

HELENSBURGH AFZ



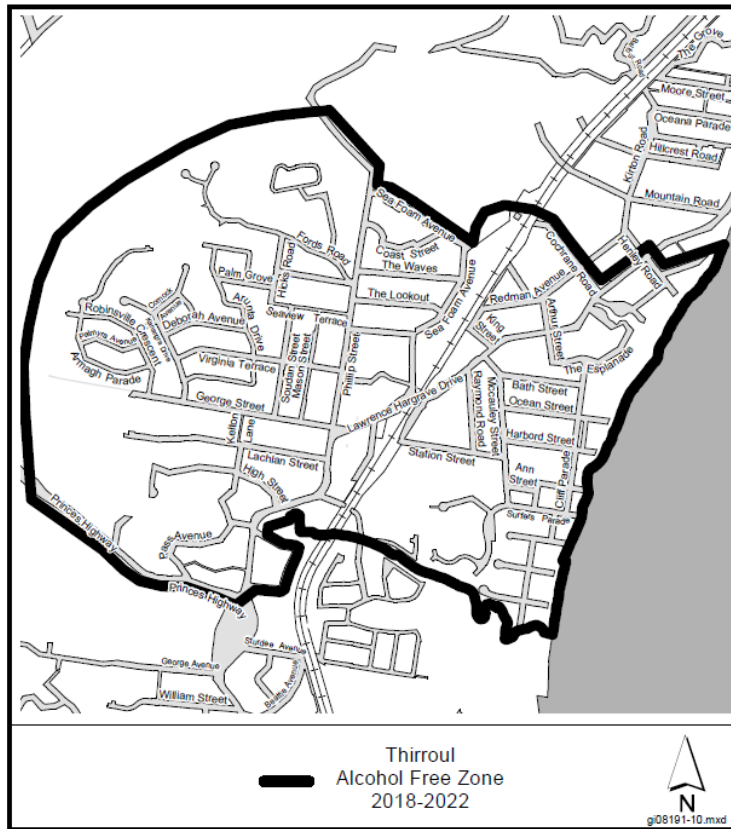
Existing AFZ 2018 – 2022



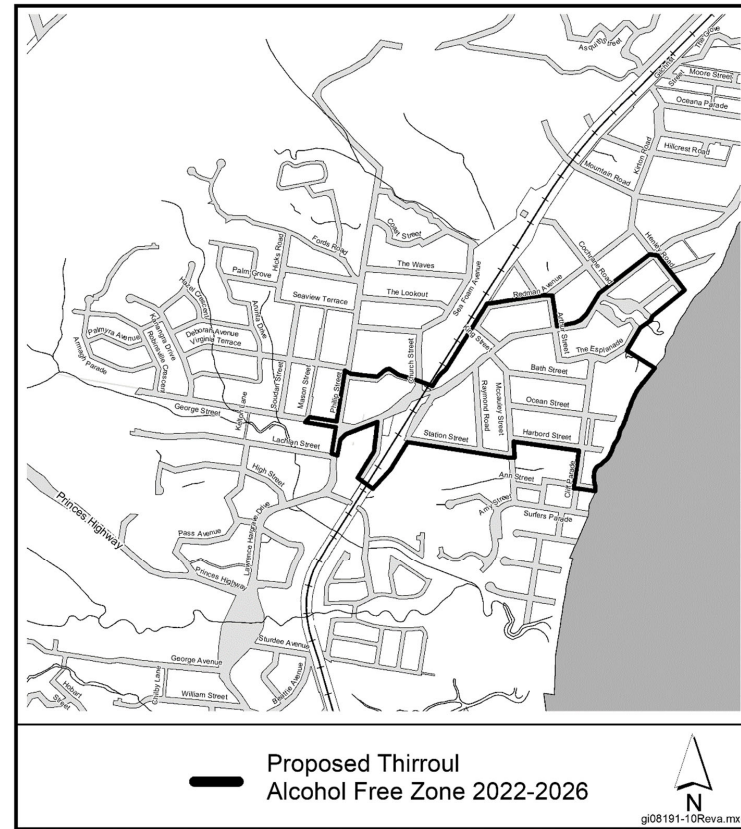
Revised and reduced AFZ proposed for 2022 – 2026

ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

THIRROUL AFZ



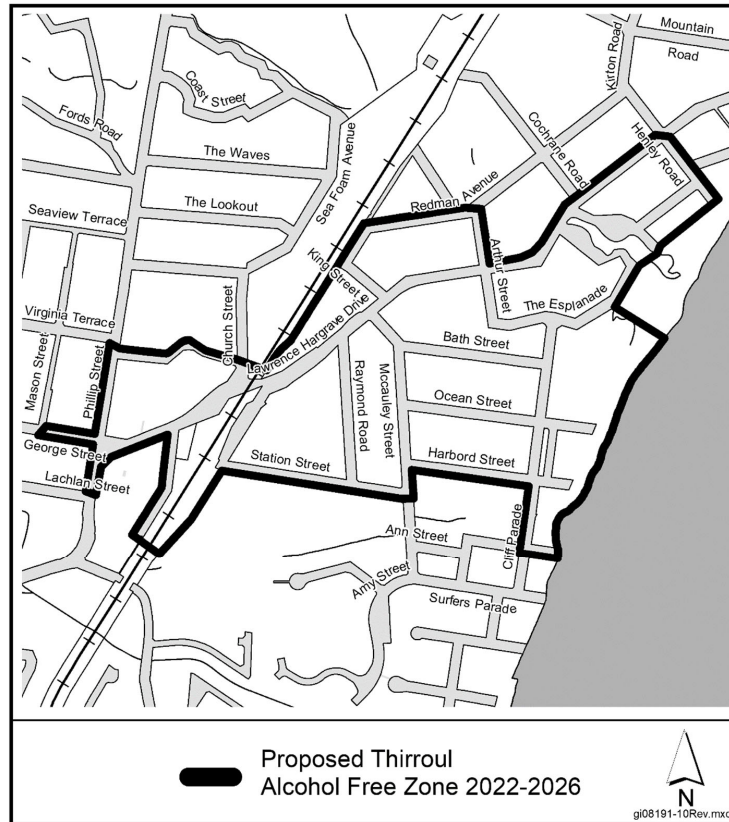
Existing AFZ 2018 – 2022



Revised and reduced AFZ proposed for 2022 – 2026 (comparison view)

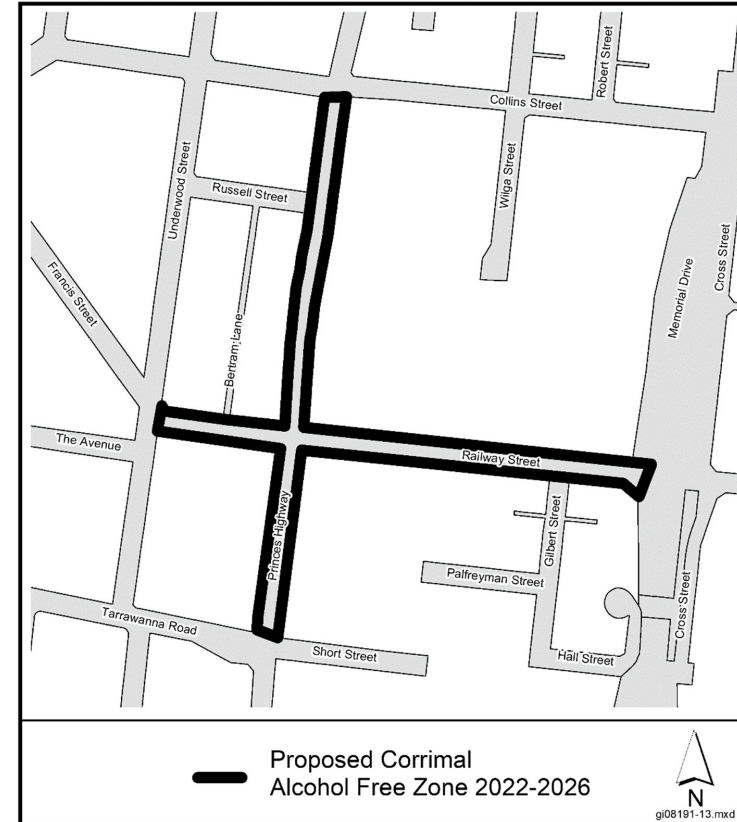
ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

THIRROUL AFZ



Close up - Revised and reduced AFZ proposed for 2022 – 2026

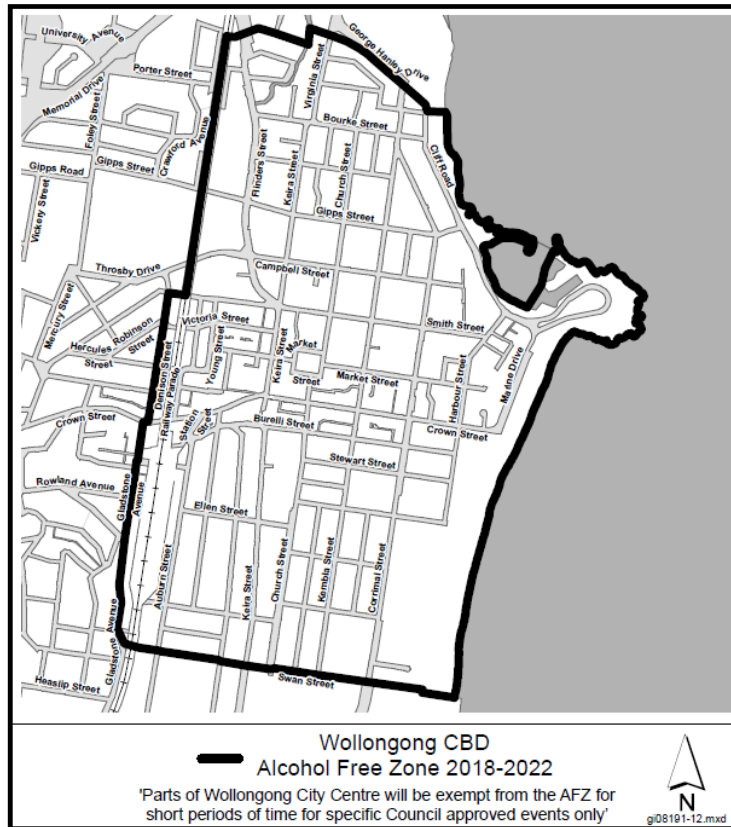
CORRIMAL AFZ



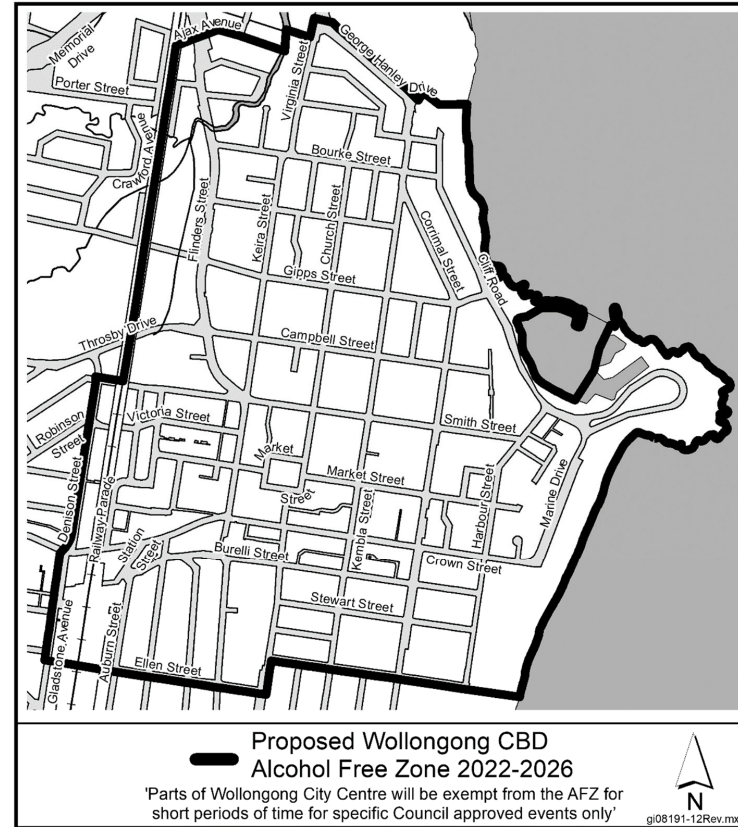
No changes to existing AFZ

ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

WOLLONGONG AFZ



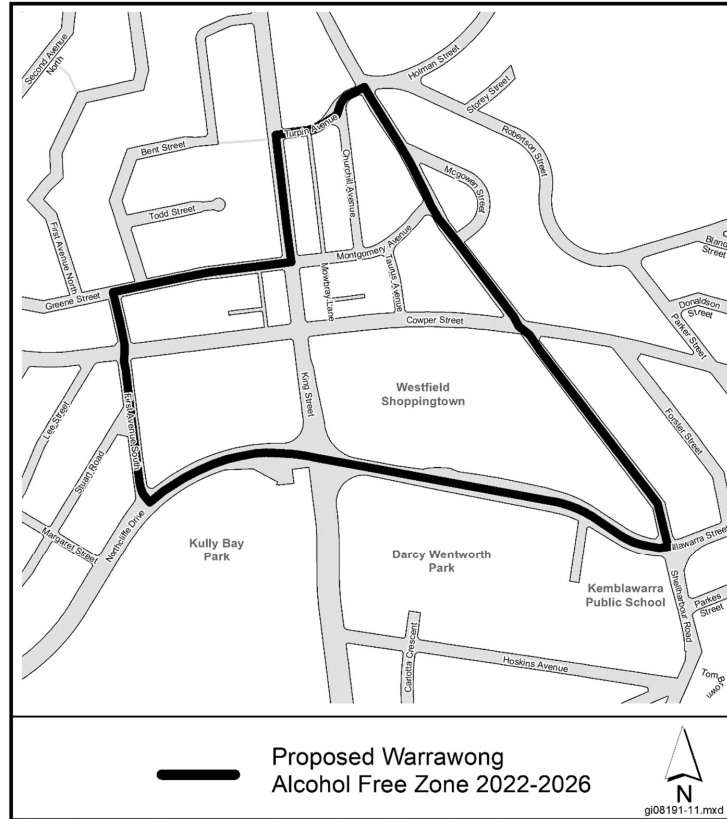
Existing AFZ 2018 – 2022



Revised and reduced AFZ proposed for 2022 – 2026

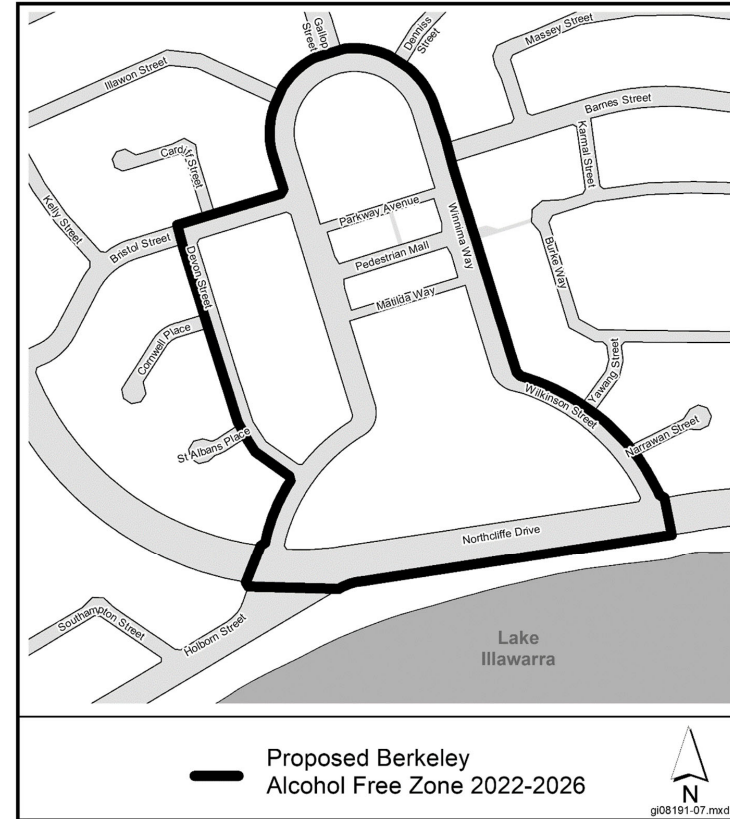
ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

WARRAWONG AFZ



No changes to existing AFZ

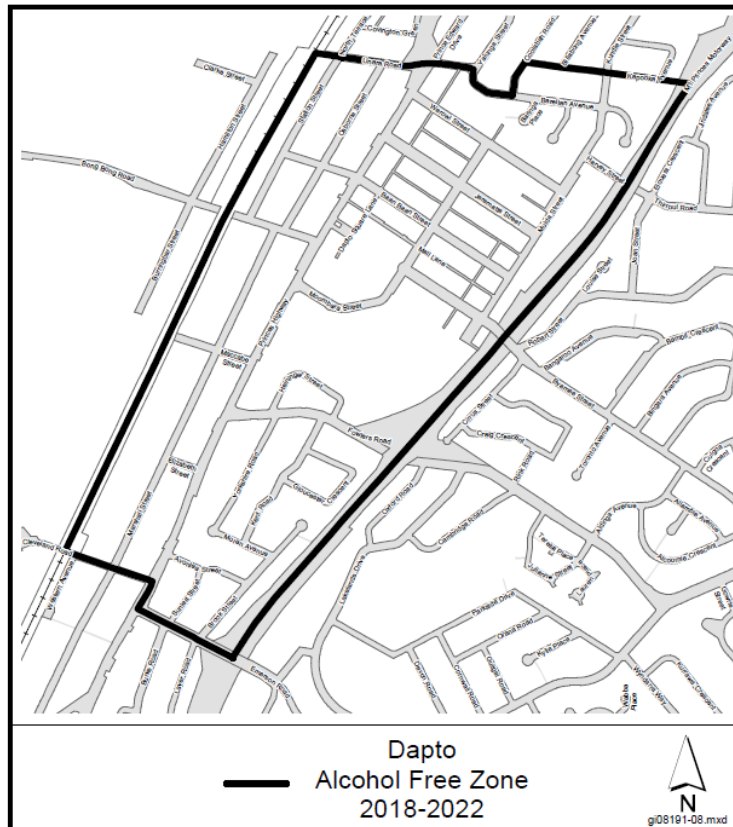
BERKELEY AFZ



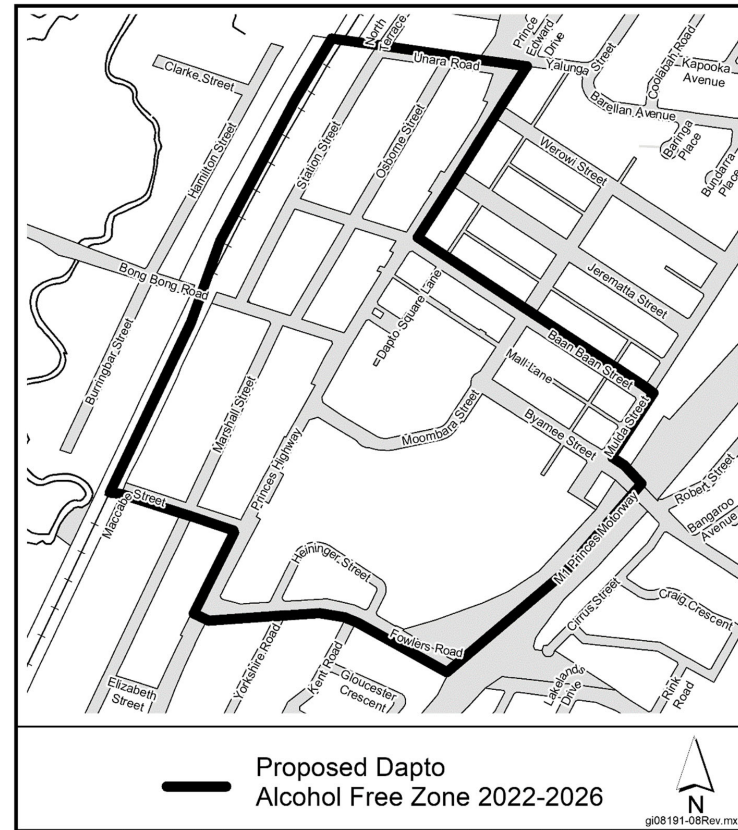
No changes to existing AFZ

ATTACHMENT 1 - AFZ Review 2022 - Proposed AFZ Maps – September 2022

DAPTO AFZ



Existing AFZ 2018 – 2022



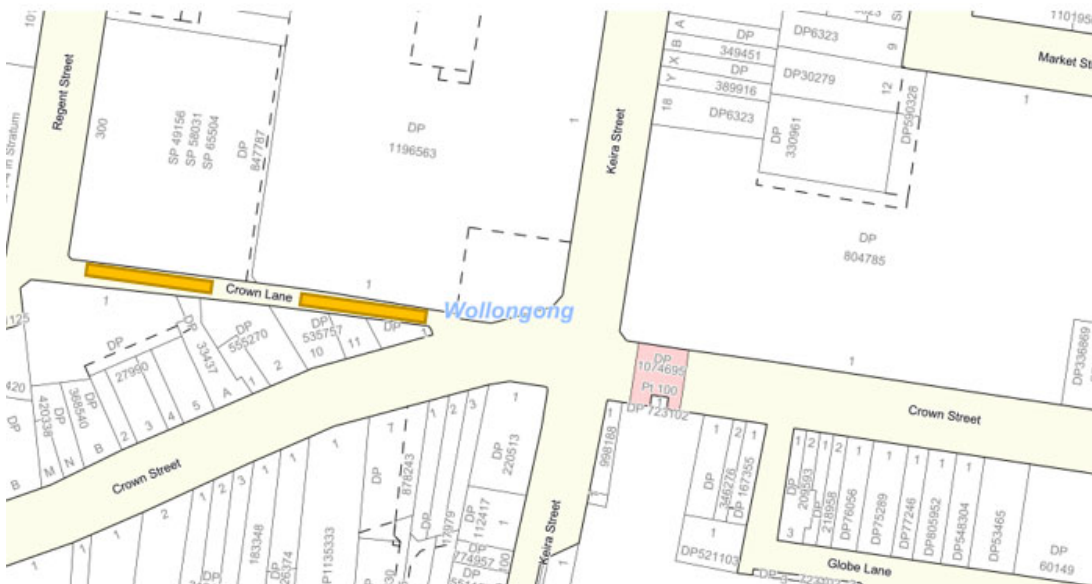
Revised and reduced AFZ proposed for 2022 – 2026

MAJOR EVENT LOCATION AREAS SEEKING ALCOHOL FREE ZONE SUSPENSION 2022-2026

Upper Crown Street Mall Activation Area



Crown Lane, see below, has been added to the Event DA for Upper Crown Street.



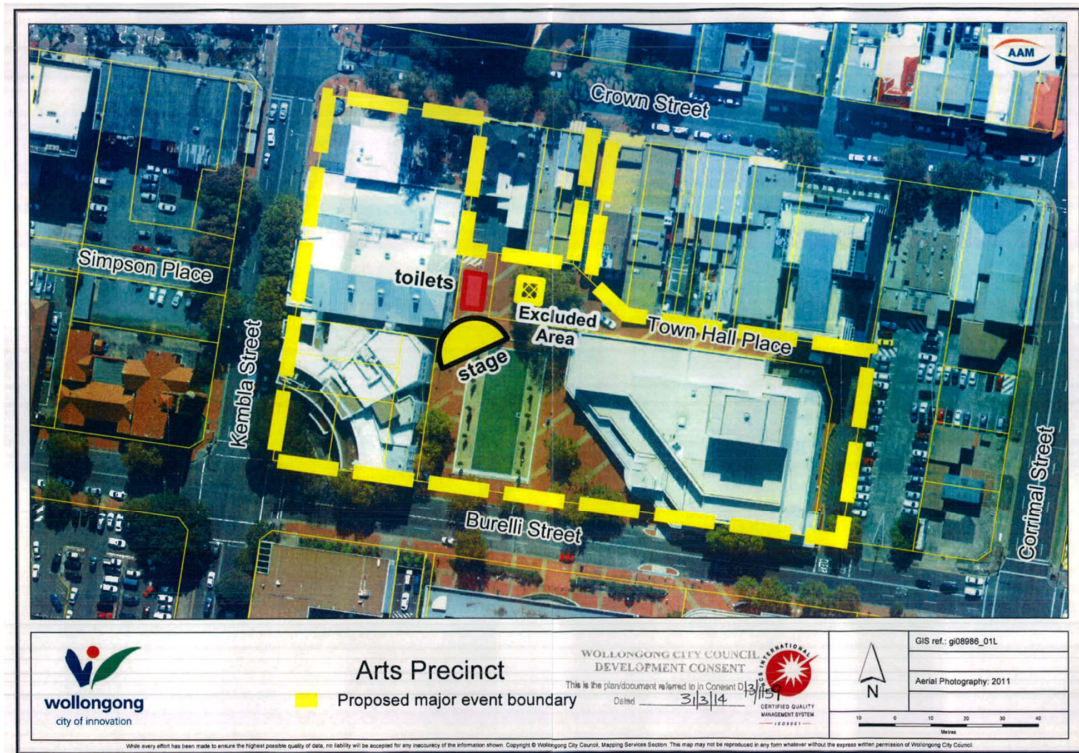
Lower Crown Street Mall Activation Area



Globe Lane Street Activation Area



Arts Precinct Major Events Area



Detail Plan Flagstaff Hill – Major event boundary



Wollongong Foreshore Area – Major event area (yellow solid areas)



Alcohol Free Zone Review

September 2022

OUR WOLLONGONG JOIN THE CONVERSATION



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Background	4
Stakeholders.....	5
Methods.....	5
Results.....	6

AFZ Review 2022 - Engagement Report ECM 22888790

The information in this report is based on data collected from community members who chose to be involved in engagement activities and therefore should not be considered representative.

This report is intended to provide a high-level analysis of the most prominent themes and issues. While it's not possible to include all the details of feedback we received, feedback that was relevant to the project has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration.

Executive Summary

Council asked the community to comment on Alcohol Free Zones (AFZs) in Helensburgh, Thirroul, Corrimal, Wollongong, Warrawong, Dapto and Berkeley. The AFZ's will expire on 30 September 2022. AFZs have a four year term after which they are reviewed.

Methods and Stakeholders

An engagement strategy was undertaken in accordance with the NSW Local Government Act and Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones 2009. Stakeholders included Wollongong Police District, Lake Illawarra Police District, Anti-Discrimination Board, Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service, licensed premises located within each AFZ, Neighbourhood Forums and community.

The AFZs were exhibited from 10 July to 12 August 2022. A public notice was placed in the newspaper and community members were invited to provide feedback via our online engagement platform. Information and paper based surveys were also made available in Council libraries, facilities and customer service centre.

Feedback

35 responses were received. This included 31 online surveys, two submissions via email and two formal submissions from Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts.

The majority of feedback related to Wollongong AFZ followed by Dapto AFZ and Thirroul AFZ. Many comments supported the re-establishment of the AFZs. While others questioned their rationale, extensiveness and the enforcement.

Background

Alcohol Free Zones

Alcohol Free Zones (AFZs) are established under the Local Government Act. The Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones 2009 outline the process and criteria for establishing an AFZ. They have a four-year term and apply to road-related public areas including footpaths, roads and car parks.

The main objective is to act as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible street drinking to incidents involving serious crime. The criteria stipulates they should be a short term measure, as small as possible, and that it makes sense to locate them adjacent to Liquor supply outlets where drinkers congregate.

Police Powers

Anyone drinking in an AFZ will not receive a fine. As part of AFZ power, NSW Police are enabled to either confiscate or tip out the alcohol. Police also have the power to give a move-on direction to a person in a public place if the police officer believes the person's behaviour:

- a) is obstructing another person or persons or traffic, or
- b) constitutes harassment or intimidation of another person or persons, or
- c) is causing or likely to cause fear to another person or persons, so long as the relevant conduct would be such as to cause fear to a person of reasonable firmness, or
- d) is for the purpose of unlawfully supplying, or intending to unlawfully supply, or soliciting another person or persons to unlawfully supply, any prohibited drug, or
- e) is for the purpose of obtaining, procuring or purchasing any prohibited drug that it would be unlawful for the person to possess.

Police acknowledge these powers do not give police the power to prevent consuming alcohol in public places, which may lead to intoxication.

AFZ History

Most AFZs have been in place since the mid 1990's (Wollongong 1994, Berkeley 1995, Dapto and Helensburgh 1996, Thirroul pre 2007, Corrimal 2010). Historically AFZs existed in Unanderra and Port Kembla, however, safety concerns relating specifically to street drinking dissipated and benefits provided by the AFZ were not considered relevant.

Alcohol Related Crime Data

Alcohol related crime has been declining across NSW, including the Wollongong Local Government Area, for over 10 years. Incidents of Alcohol Related Assault (non-domestic assault) in Wollongong LGA has a declining ten-year trend of 8% per year (compared to the NSW average decline of 8.4% per year). Incidents of Alcohol Related Assault on Road/Street/Footpath Premises also has a ten-year declining trend of 9.1% per year (compared with the NSW average decline of 9.6%). (retrieved from BOCSAR Aug 2022. Data ranges from April 2012 to March 2022).

AFZ Review

Council's seven AFZs are due to expire on 30 September 2022 which has triggered a review. The criteria when considering the re-establishment of an AFZ should include:

- The factors which originally supported a zoning in that area?
- How successful was the previous AFZ in achieving a reduction in unacceptable street drinking?
- What do Police statistics indicate about the value of re-establishing an AFZ in that area?
- What other measures may need to be considered (e.g. a community education program) if unacceptable street drinking is still of concern in that area?
- Has the community's perceptions of safety improved?

A sign audit was also undertaken as part of the review process.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders identified prior to the start of the engagement period included:



Methods

Table 1: Details of Communication and Engagement Methods

Methods	Details of Methods
Communication Methods	
Email to key stakeholders	An email and summary of the Ministerial Guideline criteria was sent to our NSW Police partners. Follow-up emails and phone calls regarding the process occurred. Neighbourhood forums were notified via email.
Register of Interest	An email was sent to 995 participants registered on the Our Wollongong website with an interest in Safety.
Letter and phone calls	A letter about the public exhibition and how to submit feedback (via phone, email or online) was delivered to approximately 170 licenced venues that reside within each of the seven AFZs. Letter was sent to the Police Commander of Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts, the Anti-Discrimination board, local organisations representing our Aboriginal community with follow up email and phone call.
Our Wollongong website	The project webpage hosted background information and supporting documents.

The Illawarra Mercury	A notice appeared on the Council page in the 13 July edition of The Illawarra Mercury to promote the engagement.
Council Libraries	The AFZ review was promoted at Council libraries with a QR code directed to the online survey.
Engagement Methods	
Our Wollongong website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online survey was used to capture participants' comments.
Email and phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback was received via email and phone
Councillor briefing	The opportunity to present at a Councillor briefing was offered to Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts

Results

Engagement Participation

This section provides details on the participation in engagement activities and feedback received during the exhibition period. Details of the number of participants for each engagement activity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participation in Engagement Activities

Engagement Activities	Participation
Online Participation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware – Total number of people who viewed the project webpage. 	227
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged – Total number of people who actively contributed to the project, e.g., by submitting comments via the survey or posting a question to the Q&A. 	31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey responses across the seven AFZs. (Of the 31 respondents some commented on more than one AFZ). 	65
Phone calls – Liaised with Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts	Ongoing
Formal submissions received from NSW Police (Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Districts)	2
Emails correspondence in response to the review	2

What we heard through the feedback

Survey

Some respondents commented on more than one AFZ with support provided both for and against re-establishment of AFZs. The majority of respondents were aware the AFZs exist, however, a significant portion were unaware. Wollongong, Warrawong and Dapto AFZs were the most familiar.

Over a half of the respondents commented on Wollongong AFZ. About one third responded on Thirroul and Dapto AFZs, while less than a quarter responded on Warrawong, Berkeley and Helensburgh AFZs.

In Helensburgh and Thirroul the majority of respondents had not witnessed drinking behaviour in the AFZ. For Wollongong, Dapto and Corrimal just over half of respondents acknowledged some experience with antisocial behaviour.

The following summarises the sentiment shared in the survey comments.

In support:

- AFZs make people feel safe
- AFZs are working and there is concern for escalation of problems without them
- Public drinking is occurring in some places
- The AFZ reduces the frequency of experiences with intoxicated people
- More enforcement required.

Against re-establishment:

- Support removing the AFZ if there are no ongoing issues
- Limit to a short period of time
- Limit to shop areas and around playgrounds
- Inconsistency in the size and extensiveness of some AFZs
- Elitist to prevent people from choosing to drink in a public place
- Police can enforce nuisance behaviour (regardless of alcohol consumption) without an AFZ
- No clear rationale.

Email submission

Two comments were received via email both in support of Dapto AFZ and one reflective of the business community.

Lake Illawarra Police District Response

Lake Illawarra Police District enforce Warrawong, Berkeley and Dapto AFZs.

Lake Illawarra Police District's submission (ECM_22783249) addressed the five key criteria set out in the 2009 AFZ Ministerial Guidelines. Crime data was provided specific to each AFZ area presenting a case to re-establish all three AFZs.

Lake Illawarra Police informed AFZs are part of their 'Crime and Harm Minimisation Management Plan' and have played an important role in crime reduction. The community are aware the AFZs exist and are quick to contact police. AFZs enable a proactive approach to engage members of the community before behaviour escalates.

Lake Illawarra Police acknowledged lighting and design of family friendly environments, plus clear and visible signage are also measures that collectively help to improve safety.

Lake Illawarra Police requested Berkeley and Warrawong AFZ be re-established with the same boundaries suggesting businesses in Warrawong are directly affected by intoxicated behaviour. Police recommended a reduction to the Dapto AFZ boundary as alcohol consumption and unruly behaviour does not appear to be prevalent in the outer areas.

Wollongong Police District Response

Wollongong Police District enforce Helensburgh, Thirroul, Corrimal and Wollongong AFZs.

The Wollongong Police submission (ECM:22887943) expressed unequivocal support for AFZs in 'an endeavour to continue to make Wollongong LGA a safer community. AFZ's provide reassurance for families, young children, and the elderly that they can enjoy public spaces without the fear of engaging with intoxicated people'.

AFZs were stated as being a strong crime prevention strategy and invaluable tool to prevent antisocial behaviour and "preloading" prior to entering a licenced premise. The importance of the Wollongong AFZ was emphasised due to the licenced premise density (94 in total).

Graphs presented in the submission demonstrated the alcohol related crime trend over a 26-year period showing a decline across all AFZs. The crime peak occurred between 2007-2009 for each zone (2012 for Corrimal). The submission pointed out AFZs were introduced in 2007, and therefore had a 'distinct link' to the decline and positive effect on crime statistics. (Authors note: Most AFZs, including Wollongong AFZ, were introduced in the mid 1990's). The submission also highlighted that there has been no crime displacement to areas outside the AFZ boundaries.

Wollongong Police oppose a reduction and support re-establishment of all current AFZs within the Wollongong LGA. Wollongong Police did provide feedback on a reduced Thirroul AFZ boundary and presented a revised version for Councils consideration.

Wollongong Police acknowledged the final decision lies with Council.

ITEM 4

PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT SPORTSGROUNDS AND SPORTING FACILITIES STRATEGY 2023-2027

The Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027 (the Strategy) has been developed to provide strategic guidance for the management and planning of community sports and recreation in Wollongong over the next five years. The availability and effective management of Council's sport and recreation assets will be critical to ensure we can successfully cater for the existing and future sporting demands of our community.

The previous Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2017-2021 was adopted in June 2017, with the aim of assisting Council to sustainably meet the existing and future sporting needs of community and grass roots sports. The implementation of the 2017-2021 Strategy has resulted in the successful delivery of several key outcomes. This includes the renewal and enhancement of sporting infrastructure, including provision of sports field lighting, synthetic surfaces, irrigation and drainage, gender equitable amenities, storage, fencing/perimeter control, hardcourts and outdoor fitness equipment.

Recognising that individual sport requirements and Council's own services have evolved since 2017, it was timely for Council to revisit the Strategy. The updated Strategy seeks to strike a balance between the diverse needs and the different expectations of our sporting community, with a strong emphasis on supporting grass roots sports and emerging recreation pursuits.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council endorse the Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027 for public exhibition from 14 September to 26 October 2022.
- 2 Following public exhibition, Council receives a further report with the updated Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027, incorporating community engagement findings.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027

BACKGROUND

Sport and recreation activities play a critical role in maintaining the physical, mental and social wellbeing of communities. The provision of quality, accessible and functional sport and recreation infrastructure is therefore extremely important, requiring careful planning and significant financial commitment.

The Strategy sets out how we will continue to support our diverse community sports and active recreation pursuits across Wollongong. This important document builds on the work we have delivered from our previous Strategy and takes a critical look at the sporting opportunities we are committed to delivering for our community in the future.

Wollongong City Council previously adopted the Planning-People-Places Strategy to guide the provision, development and management of open space, recreation and community facilities in the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) until 2027. The framework that Planning-People-Places adopted was 'One City, Three Districts, Ten Planning Areas'. As per this supporting document, the implementation of Council's Strategy will be guided by Council's integrated planning approach, which looks at sporting needs and demands in accordance with the three districts.

A number of key strategic documents have also helped shape this Strategy, including publications from local, regional, state and federal government agencies.

The overall vision of this Strategy is to 'provide a diverse range of sustainable, functional infrastructure that supports active, safe and inclusive participation in sport and recreation across the City'.

This Strategy aligns with Council's Community Goal 5 of the Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan 'we have a healthy community in a liveable city' and will help to achieve the below objectives:

There is an increase in the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our community.

Our community participation in recreation and lifestyle activities increases.

The following set of guiding principles have also been developed as part of this Strategy and will help provide an overarching direction in accordance with our identified vision. They will also ensure Council's sport and recreation priorities align closely to those throughout State, Federal and Local Strategic documents, as well as key participation trends across Wollongong.

- Inclusive and accessible
- Participation
- Sustainable
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Safe

A suite of high-level actions has been developed for each of the key focus areas in this Strategy. The implementation of these actions will contribute to achieving the Strategy vision and will help address the current and future sporting demands of our community.

- Renew and enhance sports facility infrastructure
- Manage sportsground capacity issues
- Effectively plan and manage sportsground precincts
- Support safe and inclusive participation in sport
- Strategically plan for the development of new sports facilities
- Support female participation in sport
- Cater for emerging and unstructured recreation pursuits
- Strengthen partnerships with clubs and associations and leverage from effective collaboration
- Transition sportsgrounds and sporting facilities toward greater climate resilience
- Attract and support sporting events and tourism.

PROPOSAL

This report seeks Council endorsement of the Draft Strategy to be placed on public exhibition from 14 September to 26 October 2022.

Post exhibition, the Strategy will be reviewed considering any feedback received and updated as required. Council will be provided the updated Strategy with an associated implementation plan, outlining current supported actions as identified in Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

During 2021-22, Council worked directly with local sporting representatives and groups to develop the draft vision, guiding principles and key focus areas that would guide and inform this Strategy. These were shared with the community to demonstrate what Council is committed to achieving and ensure Council's strategic direction for sport reflected community needs. Engagement ran from 18 October to 15

November 2021 and as part of this engagement, information was also provided to the community regarding the scope and purpose of the Strategy.

There was generally positive support for the vision, guiding principles and key focus areas, with the community acknowledging they were a well-founded and comprehensive approach to support delivery.

The area's most strongly supported by the community included:

- supporting female participation in sport
- catering for emerging and unstructured sports and recreation pursuits particularly for young people
- strengthen partnerships and collaborations (especially with sporting clubs)
- attracting and supporting sports events and tourism.

The community provided further suggestions and ideas on how these could be considered in implementation such as:

- improved accessibility to quality sporting opportunities through accessible and inclusive infrastructure and amenities
- prioritising inclusive and equitable access to sport through licence allocation
- establishment of multi-use grounds, and sports centres for local and competition use
- broadening partnerships with local communities, schools, business and elite sporting groups
- allocation of resources to support female participation in sport.

In developing the Strategy, consideration was also given to existing data from previous community consultation opportunities including Our Wollongong 2032 Community Strategic Plan, which both reflected and reinforced similar themes.

Moving forward, should Council resolve to support the public exhibition of the draft Strategy, additional community engagement is planned to run from 14 September to 26 October 2022.

The following means of promoting the draft Strategy will involve:

- Presentation and emails to the Sports Facilities Reference Group
- Direct emails to local sporting clubs and associations
- Our Wollongong: Join the Conversation - online survey, FAQ, key documents
- Media release
- Onsite signage (with QR code) at key locations with unstructured and emerging recreation pursuits
- Social media posts
- Newsletter

The findings of this second phase of community consultation will be used to refine the draft Strategy and reported for Council's future consideration.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of 'Our Wollongong 2032' Goal 5. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032	Delivery Program 2022-2026	Operational Plan 2022-23
Strategy	Service	Operational Plan Actions
5.7 Provide an appropriate range of active and passive open spaces and facilities to cater for traditional and emerging recreational pursuits.	Parks and Sportsgrounds	Develop and implement the Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2022-2026.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A number of key supported actions will be in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan for resourcing and implementation. These will be outlined in the 2022-2026 implementation plan, which will be received by Council following public exhibition and formulation of updated Strategy.

Funding for the implementation of actions within this Strategy will be subject to approval through our annual budgetary and planning processes. Additional feasibility assessments, external funding applications or partnerships may be necessary for large scale projects.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Strategy seeks to ensure that current and future sport and recreation facilities support long-term sustainability, with particular consideration to the following:

- Whole of life costings and financial feasibility;
- Availability and demand of Council resources;
- Existing and future needs/demands of the community;
- Changing trends in sport and active recreation;
- Optimisation of existing community infrastructure
- Environmental Sustainability and climate adaptation initiatives, including key actions of Council's Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037, Sustainable Wollongong 2030 and Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020.

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive review of key strategic documents, sports participation data, emerging trends and community consultation has been conducted over the past 18 months to help inform and develop the Strategy. The Strategy will provide Council with an ongoing strategic approach and will be a key supporting document to guide the planning, management and maintenance of sportsgrounds and facilities across the city.

The final adoption of the Strategy will provide Council with a clear direction for the planning, management and maintenance of community sports infrastructure. This will ensure Wollongong has a diverse range of sustainable, functional facilities, which support active, safe and inclusive participation across the city and cater for emerging youth focused independent sports, inform Council's Annual Plan and budget allocations, and support the effective delivery of sports across our city.



**WOLLONGONG.
GLOBALLY RECOGNISED
FOR IT'S CITY
CYCLING STRATEGY**

Wollongong City Council

Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to the city.



Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Lord Mayor's Message	5
Executive Summary	6
Background	8
Previous Strategy Outcomes	9
Roles and Responsibilities	10
Key Challenges	11
Study Approach	11
Strategic Setting	11
Community Profile and Participation Trends	13
Community profile	13
Sport and active recreation trends	14
Current supply of sports facilities	26
Strategy Framework	27
Strategic approach	27
Vision Statement	28
Guiding Principles	28
Sportsground Hierarchy	30
Determining strategic priorities	32
Sports Facility Reference Group	36
Engagement & Communication	37
Consultation outcomes and key themes	37
Strategic Direction & Actions	38
1. Renew and enhance sports facility infrastructure	39
2. Manage sportsground capacity issues	39
3. Effectively plan and manage sportsground precincts	40
4. Support safe and inclusive participation in sport	40
5. Strategically plan for the development of new sports facilities	41
6. Support female participation in sport	41
7. Cater for emerging and unstructured sport and recreation pursuits	42
8. Strengthen partnerships with clubs and associations and leverage from effective collaboration	42
9. Transition sportsgrounds and sporting facilities towards greater climate resilience	43
10. Attract and support sporting events and tourism	43
Appendix 1	44
Appendix 2 Charter: Sports and Facilities Reference Group	45

Lord Mayor's Message

I think it's fair to say that thanks to our experiences in recent years we've a greater appreciation for our city's sportsgrounds and sporting facilities.

The global pandemic saw a refreshed gratitude for our city's open spaces, and then the wet and wild weather of 2021-2022 drew attention to the maintenance of our sporting fields, the passion of sportspeople within our community in their desire to remain active, and highlighted the diversity of sporting codes who use Council's facilities.

It's timely then to present the Draft Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027, which sets out how we will continue to support community sport in all its diversity and active recreation opportunities across Wollongong. This important document builds on the work we've delivered from our previous 2017-2021 Strategy, and takes a critical look at the sporting opportunities we're committed to delivering for our community into the future.

From the 2017-2021 Strategy, we delivered renewed sportsground amenities – a step that looked to address an imbalance in the provision of change facilities for our city's sporting women and girls and improve access to accessible facilities. We've also installed much-needed LED sportsground lighting in key locations like Guest Park, Thomas Dalton Park Oval and Figtree Oval, as examples.

This work will continue in our updated Strategy as we remain committed to collaborate with key stakeholders to provide contemporary amenities for sport, including incorporating accessible and gender equitable features.

The document also includes a focus on catering for the future and existing demands of our sporting community. This includes, for example, the provision of new skate facilities for Wollongong and the northern suburbs and the re-purposing of several under-utilised hard-court surfaces to better cater for popular outdoor activities such as basketball.

The Strategy seeks to strike a balance between the diverse needs and the different expectations of our sporting community with a strong emphasis on supporting grass roots sports. We are proud of the diversity of sporting interests and codes in the city – but it's a challenge to balance equitable access with the community needs, expectations and available land. These are challenges that are not to be underestimated and as a community's we need to be realistic in our expectations of access.

In this Strategy's preparation we've drawn on community feedback, research and case studies to inform its development. We've also been guided by five principles – inclusive and accessible, participation, safe, partnerships and collaboration and sustainable. With 10 key focus areas and a clear set of actions we will use this Strategy to our vision for sport in Wollongong over the next 5 years.

**Wollongong City Lord Mayor
Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM**



Executive Summary

The Wollongong City Council Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027 has been developed to provide strategic guidance for the management and planning of community sports and recreation in Wollongong over the next five years. The availability and effective management of Council's sport and recreation assets will be critical to ensure we can successfully cater for the existing and future sporting demands of our community.

The overall vision of this Strategy is to:

“Provide a diverse range of sustainable, functional infrastructure that supports active, safe and inclusive participation in sport and recreation across the City...”

This Strategy aligns with Council's Community Goal 5 of the Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan, ***“We have a healthy community in a liveable city”*** and will help to achieve the below objectives:

There is an increase in the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our community.

Our community participation in recreation and lifestyle activities increases.

Based on key strategic documents and the Strategy vision, a set of guiding principles have been developed to help provide the overarching direction for the future of sport in Wollongong:

- Inclusive and accessible
- Participation
- Sustainable
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Safe

To help inform the Strategy's Key Focus Areas, Council officers undertook consultation with key stakeholders, including local sporting associations via Council's Sports Facilities Reference

Group (SFRG), local sporting clubs, Council staff and Councillors.

Following a strategic review of Council's key documents and community feedback, a set of 10 key focus areas have been developed. These focus areas will guide the implementation of the Strategy and help to achieve the overarching vision of the document:

- Renew and enhance sports facility infrastructure
- Manage sportsground capacity issues
- Effectively plan and manage sportsground precincts
- Support safe and inclusive participation in sport
- Strategically plan for the development of new sports facilities
- Support female participation in sport
- Cater for emerging and unstructured recreation pursuits
- Strengthen partnerships with clubs and associations and leverage from effective collaboration
- Transition sportsgrounds and sporting facilities toward greater climate resilience
- Attract and support sporting events and tourism

Following public exhibition and endorsement by Council, the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023-2027 as a key supporting document, will be integrated into Council's Integrated Planning & Reporting framework of plans and documents.

*It is noted that public swimming pools and associated water sports have been excluded from this Strategy, as they have been addressed in Council's adopted “The Future of our Pools Strategy 2014-2024”.

Hockey NSW Representative from Illawarra South Coast Hockey.



Background

Wollongong is the third largest city in New South Wales and the tenth largest city in Australia, with a predicted population increase of 14.47% from 2021 to 2036, representing an additional 32,203 people in the area (ID community). Given this anticipated increase, the supply and effective management of quality sports and active recreation facilities will be essential to support the delivery of community sport and active recreation opportunities across the city.

Sport and recreation activities play a critical role in maintaining the physical, mental and social health of communities. In 2019, 43.6% of those over the age of 16 living in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Health District did not participate in sufficient levels of physical activity when assessed against the 2014 National Guidelines for Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour (SAPHaRI 2019).

Previous Strategy Outcomes

The implementation of the 2017-2021 Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy has resulted in the successful delivery of several key outcomes over the past five years. This includes the renewal and enhancement of supporting infrastructure, including provision of

sportsfield lighting, synthetic surfaces, irrigation and drainage, gender equitable amenities, storage, fencing/perimeter control, hardcourts and outdoor fitness equipment.

- Over \$20 million invested in sportsground and sporting facilities between 2017 and 2021, including:
 - 3 amenities renewals and refurbishments, totalling \$4 million.
 - 1 FIFA Accredited synthetic football pitch
 - Cringila Hills mountain bike park, pump track, bike skills park, totalling \$3.1 million.
 - 12 sportsfield lighting projects
 - 8 irrigation and drainage projects
 - 14 fencing projects
 - 7 outdoor fitness stations
 - 7 storage facilities
 - 3 sports hardcourt surface renewals
 - \$1.3 million in sports grants projects
- An average of \$4.5 million spent each year on sportsground maintenance



Ian McLennan Park, Synthetic Football Pitch.



Illawarra Hockey Centre



Wollongong Bulldogs Women's AFL

Roles and Responsibilities

Council

Whilst the specific role of Council will vary greatly across each project and circumstance, Council's primary role will be to support community and grass-roots sport. It is anticipated Council will work with clubs and associations, to assist in the planning and delivery of community sports infrastructure. Council's key roles include:

- Strategic planning
- Engage relevant clubs and associations to coordinate access to services
- Establish and deliver identified service and maintenance levels for sportsgrounds and facilities
- Provide affordable and equitable access to sportsfields and facilities

- Support clubs and associations with the submission of grant applications for priority projects
- Facilitate Council's annual Sports Grants program
- Coordinate activities of Council's Sports and Facilities Reference Group

Local Clubs and Associations

Local sporting clubs and associations manage the day-to-day delivery of services for their respective sports. This may include the coordination of training and competitions, undertake maintenance of grounds and infrastructure, as well as working with Council to plan facility renewal and upgrades. Local sports associations are responsible for representing the interest of local sporting clubs and have the opportunity to collaborate strategically with Council via the Sports Facilities Reference Group.



Key Challenges

- Ongoing sports facility and sportsground maintenance costs
- Availability of land for new sportsgrounds is limited to the West Dapto area
- Climate adaptation and responding to the impacts of significant weather events
- Expectations associated with Council's involvement in pathways to support elite sports development.
- Escalating costs of sports infrastructure
- Limited availability of external grant funding opportunities to support community sport

Study Approach

- Stage 1: Background research & analysis of participation and trends
- Stage 2: Community & stakeholder consultation
- Stage 3: Analyse feedback and review findings
- Stage 4: Strategic actions

Strategic Setting

Local, state and regional context

A number of key strategic documents have helped shape the development of this Strategy, including publications from local, regional, state and federal government agencies. A list of these key documents has been summarised in the table below.

Level	Strategic Documents
Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport 2030 National Sport Plan • Australian Sports Commission Corporate Plan 2020-24 • Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines • Play by the Rules
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Sport Strategic Plan 2020-2024 • Sport NSW Future Directions 2019-2022 • Her Sport Her Way
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illawarra Shoalhaven Sport and Active Recreation Plan 2018-2023
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan • Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2022-2026 • Resourcing Strategy 2032 • Infrastructure Delivery Program 2022-2023 to 2025-2026 • Council supporting documents and master plans

Global context

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global strategy agreed by the United Nations General Assembly and form a blueprint to create a sustainable future for everyone. There are 17 interconnected goals for 2015-2030, including four directly relevant to the key focus areas of this Strategy, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1



Kanahooka Park.

Community Profile and Participation Trends

To help achieve our vision for sport and active recreation in Wollongong, it is important for Council to understand the demographics of our community and key trends in sport participation.

Community profile

ABS 2016/2021 & Community Profile ID

- Total population: 214,657 (ERP 2021)
- Population growth: 24.62% population increase from 2022-41 (55,060 people)
- LGA area: 683.8 square km
- Median age: 38 (2016)
- Median weekly household income: \$1,335 per week (compared to \$1,481 for NSW)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 3.2% (2021)
- Ethnic diversity, overseas born: 21.5% (2016)
- Unemployment rate: 7.1% (compared to 6.3% in NSW and 6.9% Australia) (2016)
- Open space: 2,409 ha
- SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD): 989
- Car ownership: 8.2% do not own a car (2021)



WIN Stadium and Entertainment Centre.

Sport and active recreation trends

The following data and trends regarding sport and active recreation have been extracted from the ActiveXchange SportsEye platform and SPORTAUS AusPlay survey results.

Organised Sports

Sport and physical activity are an integral part of Australia's identity and play an important role in maintaining our physical and mental wellbeing. In 2020-21 88.8% of adult Australian's participated in sport or physical activity at least once per week, with 21% of these doing so through a sports club or association (AusPlay 2021). Overall, participation in sport and physical activity has increased in the last two decades, with more adults participating more frequently compared to 2001 (AusPlay 2021).

According to AusPlay survey results (2021), the top motivators for sports participation across Australia, revolve around physical health/fitness and fun/enjoyment, whilst the most significant barriers for sports participation include:

- Lack of time/too many other commitments
- Poor health or injury
- Wrong age – too old/too young
- Too lazy
- Don't like sport or physical activity
- Unaffordable/access to transport

Dapto Cricket Club Juniors



Illawarra Academy of Sport Rugby League



Top activities for sports club participation in NSW

1. Football (soccer)
2. Golf
3. Tennis
4. Netball
5. Cricket

The following data relating to sports participation in Wollongong has been extracted from the ActiveExchange SportsEye Platform. It should be noted that sports referenced in this section are limited to those available within the platform.

25,995 people in Wollongong participate in sport through a sports club or association.

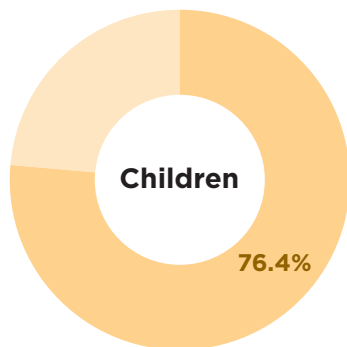


Figure 2. Wollongong sport and physical activity participation rate (at least once per year). Extracted from 2021 AUSPLAY Survey results.

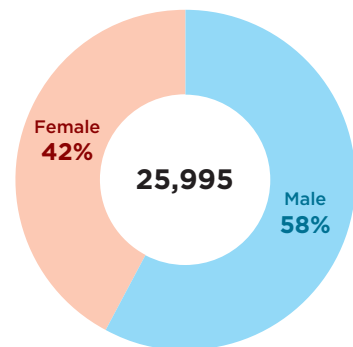
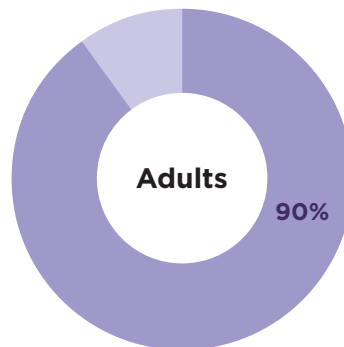


Figure 3. SportsEYE data for total number of sports members in 2020/21.



The Vale Golf Club.

Wollongong Sports Membership

With 9,381 participants, football (soccer) is the most popular sport in Wollongong, consistent with state and national participation trends. Football (soccer) accounts for 36% of all sports club membership, followed by rugby league (14.3%) and netball (7.3%).

It should be noted that the SportsEYE platform does not capture participation numbers for other popular or unstructured sports in Wollongong, including: golf, swimming, skating and cycling.

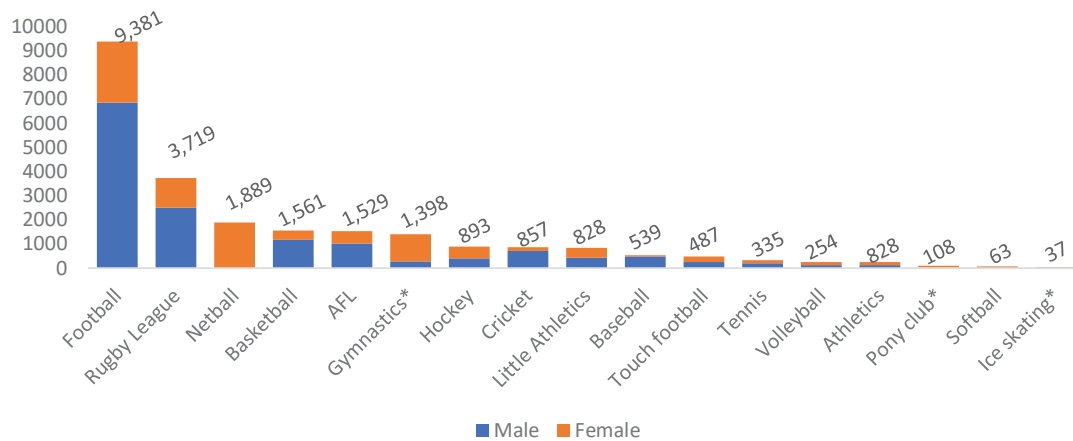


Figure 4. 2020/21 Wollongong membership numbers by individual sport. Extracted from the SportsEYE platform.

*Facilities for these sporting codes will not be addressed as part of this Strategy.



Illawarra United Stingrays.



Illawarra Academy of Sport Basketball.

Organised Sports Participation by Gender

Female

Key trends in female participation

- 10,915 females in Wollongong are members of a sports club, accounting for 42% of all sports members in Wollongong.
- Football (soccer) has the highest number of female participants; however women only equate for 26.69% of all football (soccer) participation.
- Netball has the highest percentage of female participants (>99%).
- Baseball has the lowest proportion of female participants (8.35%).
- Hockey (55.21%), touch football (soccer) (48.84%), athletics (49.58%) and volleyball (48.13%) have a relatively even amount of female and male participants.
- Netball, hockey and softball are the only three sports with a higher proportion of female participants.

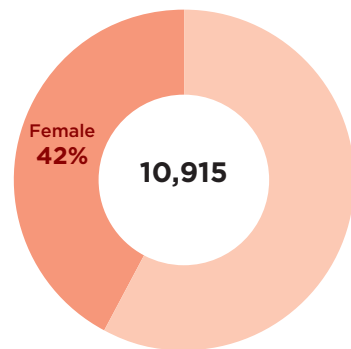


Figure 5. Membership numbers for female sports participants in Wollongong, extracted using SportsEYE.

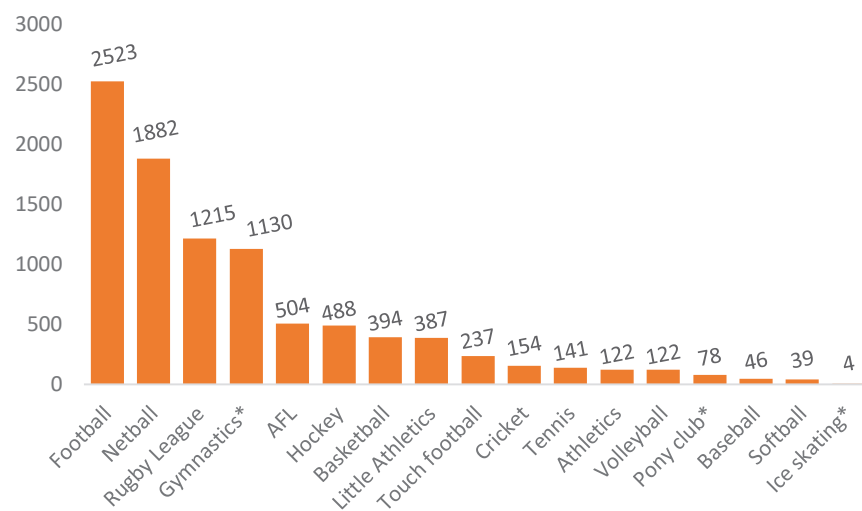


Figure 6. Individual sports membership numbers for female sporting participants

*Facilities for these sporting codes will not be addressed as part of this Strategy.



Illawarra Academy of Sport Hockey.



Illawarra District Netball Association Juniors at Fairy Meadow.



University of Wollongong Women's Football Club.

Male participation

Key trends in male participation

- 15,043 males in Wollongong are members of a sports club, accounting for 57.9% of all members.
- Football (soccer) has the highest number of male participants, followed by rugby league and basketball.
- Baseball has the highest proportion of male participants (91.65%), followed by cricket (80.6%).
- There are a higher proportion of males in all sports except for hockey, softball and netball.

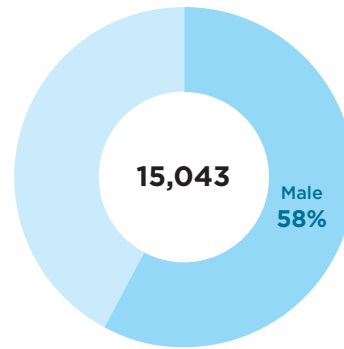


Figure 7. Membership numbers for male sports participants in Wollongong, extracted using SportsEYE.

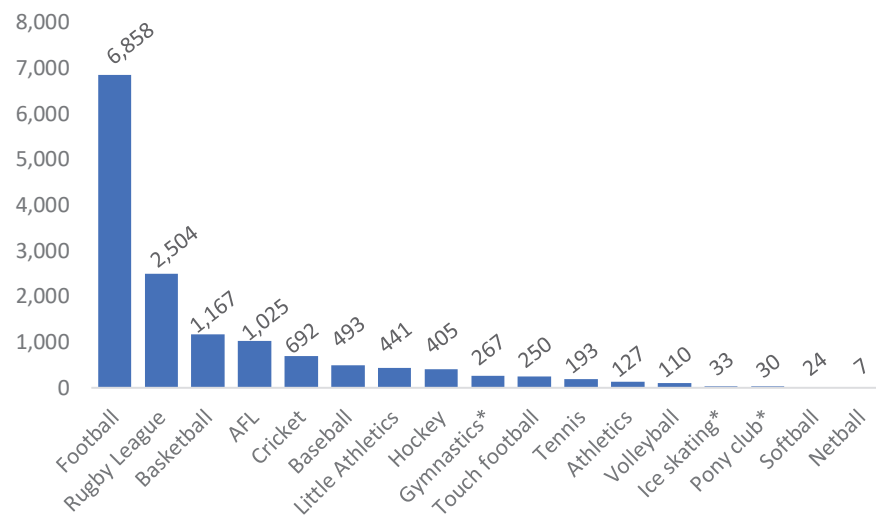


Figure 8. Individual sports membership numbers for female sporting participants.

*Facilities for these sporting codes will not be addressed as part of this Strategy.



Wollongong Lions Junior AFL at North Dalton Park.



Wollongong Vikings Rugby Union Club

Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to ensure the successful continuation of organised sports, with important non-playing roles such as coaches, officials or team managers often taken on by volunteers (SportAus 2021). In Australia, 15.1% of people (over the age of 15) participated in a non-playing role in sport, with the most common role being coach and official (AusPlay 2021). Unfortunately, since COVID-19 and associated restrictions, just 53% of people who volunteered in organised sports before the pandemic, returned to a volunteering role in 2021. Whilst this has significantly increased from just 30% in 2020, volunteers will be essential to help strengthen and rebuild community sport into future years.

Unstructured and emerging sports

In recent years, recreational habits across Australia have evolved, with unstructured and emerging sports and leisure pursuits gaining increased

popularity. Australians have taken to more flexible activities which better suit personal needs (SportAUS 2021). This includes activities such as running, walking or gym exercise and is largely influenced by the prioritisation of health over competition.

Whilst unstructured and emerging sports were gaining increased popularity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions on organised sports and rules on physical-distancing, accelerated unstructured sports participation (SportAUS 2022). Australians took to more COVID-safe, or home-based activities, including walking, bushwalking, tennis, pilates, mountain biking and canoeing/kayaking (SportAUS 2022). These participation trends have continued into 2022, as Australians embrace a greater mix of physical activities (SportAUS 2022). The use of online interactive platforms and gaming consoles for physical activity, known as “exergaming”, has also increased in popularity. Since 2019, exergaming has increased 100-fold to 2021, becoming a top 20 activity for Australians over the age of 15.



Illawarra Academy of Sport.



Holborn Park Skate Plaza.



Beaton Park Tennis Facility.

Cycling and Skate

Since the late 1960's alternative and unstructured sports have been gaining increased popularity across Australia. The introduction of BMX cycling in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, followed by surfing, skateboarding and sport climbing in the 2020 Summer Olympics have further driven increased popularity across these sports.

In February 2021, Wollongong became the first City in the Southern Hemisphere to be labelled a UCI Bike City. The label recognises our long-term commitment to supporting cycling at all levels and was awarded by the Union Cycliste Internationale. Wollongong will host the UCI Road World Championships in September 2022, which will see the world's best cyclists in attendance and bring worldwide media coverage to our city.

Cycling sports and associated infrastructure now form part of Council's Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030. Some notable projects related to this Strategy include the construction of parkland bike trails across the city, including the Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park, pump track, bike skills park and the Illawarra Criterium Track at Unanderra. Following the city hosting the UCI Road World Championships, Council anticipates further growth in this sport.

It is also recognised that there is currently unmet demand for skate opportunities throughout the city. During the life of this Strategy, Council will pursue construction of the Wollongong CBD and northern suburbs facilities, in addition to modular skate elements at Port Kembla and other locations.

Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park.



Sportsfield surfaces

Given the unique landscape and topography of the city, it is acknowledged that there is limited opportunity for the development of new sportsfields. With this in mind, the importance of providing quality playing surfaces is integral to meet future demands of community sport.

It is recognised that the use of synthetic turf on sportsfields remains a consideration in highly populated, metropolitan areas, where sportsfield demand often exceeds supply. Over the past decade, technology has provided more durable synthetic playing surfaces, which has permitted greater hours of use to address sportsfield capacity challenges.

Whilst synthetic surfaces are appealing to local sports clubs, due to their ability to meet growing demand and reliability during weather events, high initial capital and renewal costs and community concerns over the impact of synthetic surfaces should be carefully considered. As outlined in the Synthetic Turf Study in Public Open Space Report 2021 published by NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, these concerns include impacts on the local environment, loss of open space and impacts on the amenity of the local community.

The Report also notes a number of alternative approaches to synthetic turf, including:

- Improvements to natural turf design
- Improved data collection and analysis for facility owners
- Managing use
- Hybrid turf options
- Advancements in synthetic design (alternative construction materials and methods)
- Utilisation of spaces and siting considerations

Noting these alternative approaches, Council will give careful consideration to the following when planning and upgrading sportsfield surfaces:

- Site suitability
- Community values
- Open space access and amenity
- User demand and surface capacity
- Investigations of options and implications
- Lifecycle costs
- Health impacts
- Local climate/environmental conditions
- Environmental impacts
- Sports-specific priorities
- Planning pathway and funding options

Active Kids Voucher Data (2021)

In 2019, the median annual cost of all organised sport or physical activity for children in Australia was \$649, significantly higher than that of all previous years (Reece et al. 2019). The Active Kids Voucher program therefore plays an important role in lowering these costs for parents and families across Wollongong.

- Vouchers since start of program (as at June 2022): 146,339
- Population uptake: 71% of eligible population (2021)
- 48% female & 52% male (2021)
- Top activities:
 - Female → swimming, dance, soccer
 - Male → soccer, swimming, rugby league



Current supply of sports facilities

Wollongong City Council currently has 67 sports venues, equating to 332.8 hectares of land or 13.2% of Council's open space. These sports venues are made up of the below:

4 x Athletics tracks (one synthetic)

11 x AFL fields (8 senior and 3 junior)

6 x Baseball diamonds

7 x Basketball courts (full-size outdoor)

48 x Cricket wickets (7 turf and 41 synthetic)

85 x Football (soccer) fields (49 senior)

3 x Hockey fields

77 x Netball courts (25 grass and 52 sealed)

9 x Outdoor fitness stations

28 x Rugby League fields (16 senior and 12 junior)

6 x Rugby Union fields

5 x Skateparks

5 x Softball diamonds

1 x Synthetic football (soccer) field

90 x Tennis courts

8 x Touch football Oztag fields

The distribution and hierarchy of sportsgrounds across the city is represented via the map in appendix 1.

Kerryn McCann Athletic Centre.



Strategy Framework

Strategic approach

To work toward achieving our Vision, we will need to align our priorities to projects that are strategically important to the success of sport and active recreation in Wollongong. This will ensure our priorities align with Wollongong's current and future sport and active recreation trends, as well as sportsground hierarchy facility standards and maintenance requirements.

Wollongong City Council previously adopted the Planning-People-Places Strategy to guide the provision, development and management of open space, recreation and community facilities in the Wollongong LGA until 2027.

The Framework that Planning-People-Places adopted was:

**One City,
Three Districts,
Ten Planning Areas**

As per this supporting document, the implementation of Council's Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy will be guided by Council's integrated planning approach, which looks at sporting needs and demands in accordance with the three planning districts.

The structure of this approach is outlined in the table below:

Planning Districts	Planning Areas	Suburbs
Northern	1	Coalcliff, Darkes Forest, Helensburgh, Lilyvale, Maddens Plains, Otford, Stanwell Park and Stanwell Tops
	2	Austinmer, Clifton, Coledale, Scarborough, Thirroul and Wombarra
	3	Bulli, Reidtown, Russell Vale, Woonona
	4	Balgownie, Bellambi, Corrimal, East Corrimal, Fairy Meadow, Fernhill, Mount Ousley, Mount Pleasant, Tarrawanna and Towradgi
Central	5	Wollongong CBD
	6	Coniston, Gwynneville, Keiraville, Mount Keira, Mangerton, Mount St Thomas, North Wollongong and West Wollongong
Southern	7	Cordeaux Heights, Farmborough Heights, Figtree, Kembla Grange, Kembla Heights, Mount Kembla, Nareena Hills and Unanderra
	8	Berkeley, Cringila, Kemblawarra, Lake Heights, Port Kembla, Primbee, Springhill, Warrawong and Windang
	9	Brownsville, Dapto, Kanahooka and Koonawarra
	10	Avondale, Cleveland, Dombarton, Haywards Bay, Horsley, Huntley, Marshall Mount, West Dapto, Wongawilli and Yallah

Vision Statement

“Provide a diverse range of sustainable, functional infrastructure that supports active, safe and inclusive participation in sport and recreation across the city...”

Guiding Principles

The following set of Guiding Principles have been developed to help provide the overarching direction for the future of sport and recreation across the city. This will ensure Council's sport and recreation priorities align closely to those throughout State, Federal and Local Strategic documents, as well as key participation trends across Wollongong.

Principle	Description / Objective
Inclusive and accessible	Ensure our future facilities cater for participants of all abilities and genders, so all feel supported and encouraged to participate and engage in sport and active recreation.
Participation	Encourage active involvement in sport and recreation opportunities by reducing associated barriers to participation in structured and emerging recreation pursuits, to support players, officials and volunteers.
Safe	Existing and proposed recreation facilities and services support safe participation, with consideration to sport facility guidelines, child safety policies, maintenance schedules and crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles.
Partnerships and Collaboration	<p>Collaborate effectively with a variety of key stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government agencies • Illawarra Academy of Sport • Local sporting associations and clubs • Businesses • Schools <p>To support community participation, athlete development and other shared outcomes and events.</p>
Sustainable	<p>Current and future sport and recreation facilities support long-term sustainability, with particular consideration to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole of life costings and financial feasibility; • Availability and demand of Council resources; • Existing and future needs/demands of the community; • Changing trends in sport and active recreation; • Optimisation of existing community infrastructure • Environmental Sustainability and climate adaptation initiatives



North Dalton Park Regional Sports Centre.



North Dalton Park Sheffield Shield.

Sportsground Hierarchy

Organised sport is conducted at a number of different levels from juniors, seniors, masters, to national and international levels. Each level has a facility standard that is influenced by state, national and international sporting organisations. To assist with the strategic prioritisation of projects, each project

must align with the sportsground hierarchy identified in this Strategy.

The following table provides a guide to the standard of facilities required for each level of competition and forms the basis for future facility developments and renewals.

Hierarchy	Facility Standard
International / National	<p>International, national and state facilities are the highest-level facilities capable of hosting international events and competitions, national leagues, and state or national team training centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conforms to national technical standards • Fully enclosed to control access and generate revenue • Provides gender equitable facilities and DDA compliant amenities for competitors and officials for multiple teams or local events competitions • Provides lighting for high level competition, training and broadcasting • Provides covered spectator seating and amenities • Irrigation capacity to maintain turf • Grounds are fully maintained and functional with no deterioration
State / Regional	<p>International, national and state facilities are the highest-level facilities capable of hosting international events and competitions, national leagues, and state or national team training centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conforms to state technical standards • Enclosed to control access and generate revenue • Provides gender equitable facilities and DDA compliant amenities for competitors and officials for multiple teams or local events competitions • Provides lighting for competition and training • Provides limited spectator seating and amenities • Irrigation and drainage capacity to maintain turf surfaces • Grounds are fully maintained and functional with no deterioration • Off street parking for participants and spectators



Illawarra Hockey Stadium.

Hierarchy	Facility Standard
District	<p>District facilities cater for association competition, hosting local finals or acting as a central venue for regular competition for multiple clubs and/or teams. They comprise a mix of recreational, competitive and program formats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conforms to codes general technical specifications for senior and junior competition • Is a multi-sport venue with shared gender equitable amenities • Provides lighting for some competition and training purposes • Maximises land use and design • Irrigation and drainage capacity to maintain turf surfaces • Off street parking available
Local / community	<p>Local facilities service the needs of the local community and sporting clubs for home and away fixtures, social sport, training activities and participation programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides senior and modified grounds to encourage maximum participation • Is a multi-sport facility • Maintained to provide safe playing conditions • Provides basic amenities • Council determines land use and allocates to provide maximum efficiency

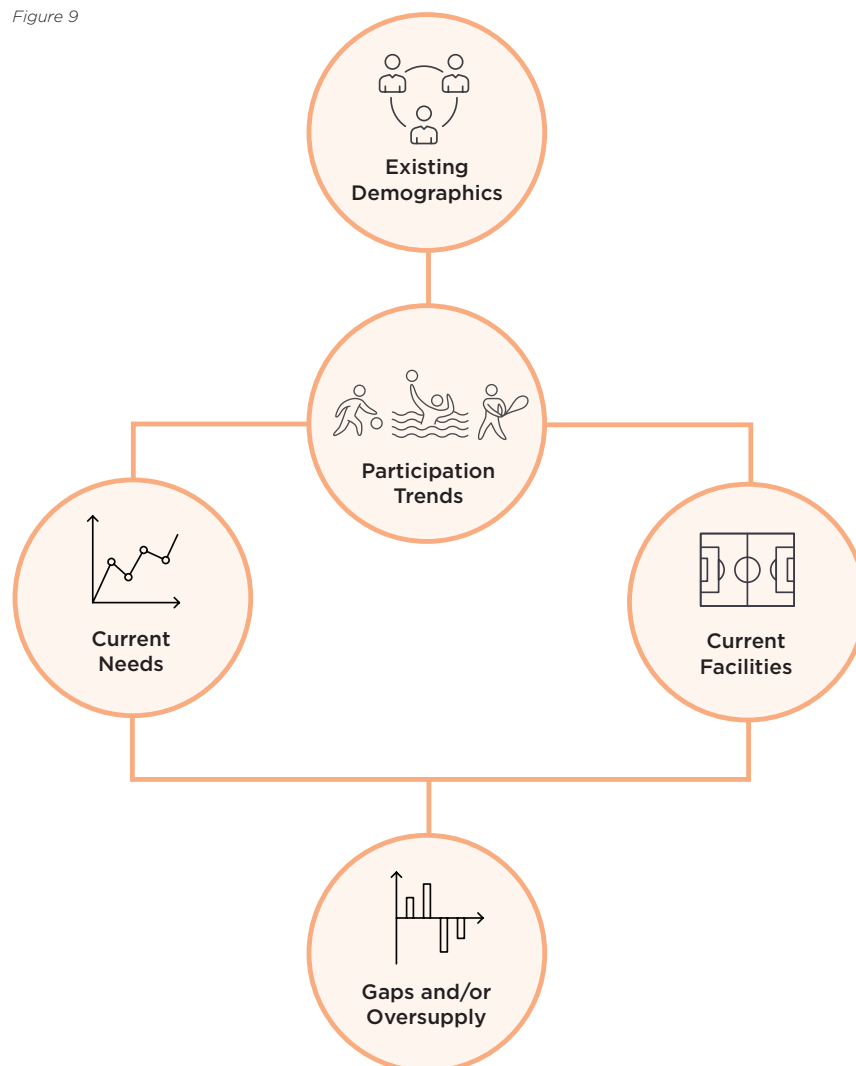


Determining strategic priorities

The methodology Council will use to guide our priorities includes:

1. Identify the impact of shifting demographics and trends in sport participation for the long-term provision of sporting facilities;
2. Assess the existing distribution and supply of sportsground facilities to help determine the future facility needs of sporting organisations;
3. Identify opportunities to more effectively provide, develop and manage sports facilities in partnership with sporting associations and other parties;
4. Increase the effectiveness of facility provision by identifying potential multi-use facilities and develop partnerships; and
5. Utilise a set of criteria and decision model to prioritise sports infrastructure renewal and development.

Figure 9



Prioritising sportsground infrastructure

The renewal and provision of new amenities, lighting, irrigation/drainage, storage, fencing and court resurfacing projects will be prioritised with careful consideration to elements of the following assessment framework.

Criteria	Rationale
Cost & feasibility	Consideration of site constraints, preliminary cost estimates and funding sources.
Site hierarchy / Strategic alignment	Strategic alignment with sport and Council key supporting documents (i.e. Strategies and Master Plans).
Age & condition	The remaining life of the asset and risk of failure, or condition of playing surface.
Demand	Participation numbers of clubs/teams using site and/or evidence of increased participation following project works.
Inclusive	Support female participation and improved accessibility.
Multi-use	Projects which will benefit multiple sports and groups. With consideration to levels of competition played at site (e.g. Senior men's/women's, juniors) and other sporting codes.
Need	The impact of the proposed infrastructure, with consideration to existing facilities, benefit to existing users, increased training opportunities.
Site suitability	Existing supporting infrastructure, including amenities, parking, accessibility, lighting, fencing, drainage/irrigation.



Unstructured and emerging sports infrastructure

Renewal and provision of new unstructured and emerging sports infrastructure, including skate parks, mountain bike/pump tracks, outdoor exercise stations and basketball courts may also consider the application of the above framework.

The site selection for new skate facility infrastructure will also consider the application of industry-based standards and will consider the three planning districts and 10 planning areas. The aim of this approach is to ensure a balanced distribution of facilities across the city.

In relation to the provision of skate facilities, Council also utilises an industry-based skate facility selection criteria – Courtesy of Convic Skateparks Pty Ltd:

- Physical site conditions and technical considerations
- Access/transport
- Natural surveillance, security and safety
- Proximity to amenities (water, toilets, shade, food & drink)
- Impact on existing facilities, adjoining uses and users
- Distance from housing (minimum 50m) & incompatible land use
- Management and maintenance issues
- Context and amenity
- Consistency with strategic objectives



Cringila Hills, Pump Track.



Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park.



King George V Oval, Basketball Court, Port Kembla.

Sports Facility Reference Group

Council has a community reference framework that it uses to allocate funds from the Sports Facilities Reserve through its sports planning process. That framework is centred on the notion of “One Sport, One Voice”.

The Sports and Facilities Reference Group (SFRG) operates under a charter (Appendix 2) with one representative from women in sport, emerging sports, people with disability and each peak sporting body. Three Councillors also form part of the group, with one Councillor nominated as chair of the group.

The importance of the retention of the “One Sport, One Voice” framework through the peak associations and their representation on SFRG is seen as critical to maintain the strategic focus on citywide sports development. The SFRG meets quarterly to discuss the issues and trends associated with each respective sporting body.

A key objective of the SFRG is the annual Wollongong City Council Sports Grants Program. The Program sees applications for funding from individual clubs in consultation with the peak body of the sport, to be assessed by representative of the SFRG, under a predetermined set of criteria. Projects are objectively evaluated and provided a ranking, which in turn may inform future operational and capital funding through Council's Sports Reserve Fund.



Illawarra Hockey Centre Outdoor Synthetic Pitches.

Engagement & Communication

Consultation outcomes and key themes

During 2021-22 we worked directly with local sporting representatives and groups to develop the draft Vision, Guiding Principles and Key Focus Areas that would guide and inform this Strategy. These were shared with the general community, to demonstrate what Council is committed to achieving and ensure Council's strategic direction for sport reflected community needs. Engagement ran from 18 October to 15 November 2021 and as part of this engagement, information was also provided to the community regarding the scope and purpose of the Strategy.

There was generally positive support for the Vision and Guiding Principles and the Key Focus Areas, with the community acknowledging they were a well-founded and comprehensive approach to support delivery. The areas most strongly supported by the community included:

- supporting female participation in sport
- catering for emerging and unstructured sports and recreation pursuits particularly for young people
- strengthening partnerships and collaborations (especially with sporting clubs)
- attracting and supporting sports events and tourism.

The community provided further suggestions and ideas on how these could be considered in implementation such as:

- improved accessibility to quality sporting opportunities through accessible and inclusive infrastructure and amenities
- prioritising inclusive and equitable access to sport through licence allocation

- establishment of multi-use grounds, and sports centres for local and competition use
- broadening partnerships with local communities, schools, business and elite sporting groups
- allocation of resources to support female participation in sport

In developing the Strategy, consideration was also given to existing data from previous community consultation opportunities including the 2032 Community Strategic Plan, which both reflected and reinforced similar themes.

Community feedback also helped to refine our key focus areas and guiding principles and directly informed the strategic direction and actions of the Strategy.



Wollongong Lions Junior AFL.

Strategic Direction & Actions

A suite of high-level actions have been developed for each of the key focus areas in this Strategy. The implementation of these actions will contribute to achieving the Strategy vision and will help address the current and future sporting demands of our community.

A number of key supported actions will be in our Delivery Program and Operational Plan for resourcing and implementation.

Funding for the implementation of actions within this Strategy will be subject to approval through our annual budgetary and planning processes. Additional feasibility assessments, external funding applications or partnerships may be necessary for large scale projects.

Effective and collaborative implementation of the actions identified in this strategy will ensure that we can cater for the existing and future demands of sport and active recreation in Wollongong.



King George V Oval.

1

Renew and enhance sports facility infrastructure

Many of Council's existing sports facilities are ageing and no longer meet the contemporary needs of sport, including gender equitable and inclusive facilities. The sustainable renewal and enhancement of this infrastructure is imperative to ensure all participants feel safe, included and adequately catered for when playing sport.

- 1.1** Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders to provide contemporary amenities for sport, incorporating accessible and gender equitable features and storage facilities that are consistent with the sportsground hierarchy.
- 1.2** Continue to invest in the programmed renewal of sportsfield lighting, incorporating LED lighting and innovative technologies.
- 1.3** Work with stakeholders to plan for the renewal and provision of new hard court playing surfaces, including netball, tennis and basketball facilities.
- 1.4** Progress the staged realignment of the outdoor netball courts at Fred Finch Park, Berkeley.
- 1.5** Maintain the provision of existing and future turf and synthetic cricket wickets to align with the sportsground hierarchy and needs of current and future participants.
- 1.6** Ensure Council's sports grants program continues to support and enable sports planning priority projects.
- 1.7** Incorporate operational, maintenance and whole of life costings in the renewal and provision of new sporting infrastructure.
- 1.8** Work with Illawarra Sport Stadium to advocate for the funding of the stadium extension to cater for unmet need.

2

Manage sportsground capacity issues

With an increase in sports participation across the community, the effective use and management of sportsgrounds is important to Council, local sporting organisations and the broader community; however the ability to provide access to new green field sites is limited. To help manage sportsground capacity issues, Council's approach will consider lighting, drainage, irrigation, shared sportsfield use and provision of more resilient playing surfaces.

- 2.1** Ensure equitable allocation of sportsgrounds while encouraging the development of multipurpose facilities.
- 2.2** Strategically identify and activate under-utilised sportsfields with lighting.
- 2.3** Consider the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Synthetic Turf Study in Public Open Space Report 2021 and the findings of the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer review of the Report during sportsfield planning and development.
- 2.4** Encourage shared use of sportsfields by reviewing policies, considering new licence arrangements and when formulating Plans of Management (POM's).
- 2.5** Prioritise the ongoing allocation of funding for the implementation of irrigation and drainage infrastructure at highly utilised sportsgrounds.
- 2.6** Collaborate with Department of Education and private entities to identify underutilised facilities which could be used for community sport activities.



3

Effectively plan and manage sportsground precincts

With consideration to the significant demand of sportsgrounds in the local area, it is important Council adopts a holistic and sustainable approach when planning for new, or managing existing sportsground precincts. This involves clearly identifying the role of clubs, associations and Council during the upgrade, renewal, maintenance or operation of facilities. In addition, Council's hierarchal classification system, Australian Standards and relevant sports specification guidelines will work to inform facility standards and service level requirements. Supporting infrastructure should be considered as part of sportsground precinct planning, to ensure that facilities cater for the needs of all participants.

3.1 Ensure all lease and license agreements have a clearly defined and consistent approach to roles and responsibilities, with consideration to facility upgrades, renewal, maintenance and operation.

3.2 Ensure all new and renewed facilities are constructed in accordance with Council's Hierarchy system, Australian Standards and sport specific facility guidelines.

3.3 Adopt a holistic approach (master planning) during the renewal and construction of sports facilities, with consideration to convenient connections to external walking and cycling networks, public transport, car parking, signage, pathways, storage, fencing, lighting, drainage and irrigation requirements.

4

Support safe and inclusive participation in sport

Incorporate the principles of safety and inclusiveness in the upgrade of ageing, non-compliant infrastructure, and actively promote accessible and inclusive participation in sport.

4.1 Provide natural and built shade at all sporting facilities.

4.2 Ensure that perimeter control interventions are renewed or installed at key locations.

4.3 Incorporate Council's Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Standards into all lease and licence agreements.

4.4 Ensure all new sporting facilities and upgrades to existing, incorporate the principles of universal design and comply with access legislation including continuous accessible paths of travel to amenities, accessible parking and seating.

4.5 Work with sporting groups to facilitate 'Come and try' inclusion days.

4.6 Continue to support the Illawarra Academy of Sport to deliver program opportunities for targeted groups.

4.7 Ensure all new infrastructure supports the needs of referees, umpires and volunteers.

5

Strategically plan for the development of new sports facilities

Strategically plan for the provision of new sporting facilities and precincts, including those in the West Dapto catchment area.

5.1 Continue planning for the provision of new sportsgrounds and sporting facilities in the West Dapto catchment area, with a focus on district level sportsgrounds.

5.2 Ensure West Dapto Development Contributions Plan, Chapter D16 of Wollongong DCP, and the West Dapto Open Space Technical Manual are key informing documents in the provision of new and renewed local and district level Open Space and Recreation infrastructure for West Dapto Urban Release Area.

5.3 Continue to collaborate with AFL ACT/NSW and Cricket NSW to plan and deliver the Darkes District Sports Park and Community Hub.

5.4 Continue to plan for the West Dapto (Cleveland) Community Leisure and Recreation Precinct,

5.5 Work collaboratively with Local and State Sport Organisations and nearby LGA'S in the hierarchical planning of sports facilities in the Wollongong LGA.

5.6 Explore opportunities with the NSW Government to establish Regional Sporting Hubs and sub-hubs at key locations.

5.7 Continue to plan and deliver the implementation of the Beaton Park Master Plan.

5.8 Consider multipurpose or co-located facilities prior to the construction of new facilities.

5.9 Engage the local Aboriginal community during the planning and development of new sportsfield sites to inform the design of culturally safe spaces and to appropriately incorporate local Aboriginal culture, history and connection to place.

6

Support female participation in sport

Support the participation of females in sport, by engaging female participants and administrators, to achieve more equitable access to amenities, sportsgrounds and venues.

6.1 Encourage sporting clubs and associations to review the current allocation and scheduling of training and competition to support female participation.

6.2 Prioritise the renewal and provision of new facilities to better accommodate female participation in sport.

6.3 Finalise improvements to Guest Park, as a training facility for the Illawarra United Stingrays and provide in principle support in their planning for a home ground location.

6.4 Collaborate with local clubs and associations to pursue new and innovative approaches to generate funding for facilities to support female participation.

6.5 Promote and provide opportunities for greater representation of women on Council's Sports and Facilities Reference Group.

6.6 Identify and pursue grant funding opportunities which encourage female participation in sport.

6.7 Pursue legacy opportunities associated with the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023.



7

Cater for emerging and unstructured sport and recreation pursuits

Provide infrastructure aimed at supporting unstructured or emerging sport and recreation pursuits, including the provision of skate/scooter/BMX facilities, outdoor basketball courts and outdoor exercise equipment.

- 7.1** Provide opportunities for affordable exercise pursuits through the construction and renewal of outdoor exercise equipment, outdoor basketball and multipurpose courts.
- 7.2** Repurpose under-utilised hard courts to better cater for a wider variety of sporting and active recreation pursuits.
- 7.3** Provide opportunities at Cringila Hills Mountain Bike Park for external providers to deliver formal sporting, educational and recreational cycling services.
- 7.4** Continue to collaborate with the community on the development and maintenance of parkland bike trails.
- 7.5** Provide access to sportsgrounds and facilities to unstructured and/or emerging sports, including but not limited to disc golf, ultimate frisbee and parkour.
- 7.6** Progress the planning and development of the Wollongong City Centre, Northern Suburbs and Port Kembla skate facilities.
- 7.7** Ensure that the planning of skating facilities incorporates best practice principles in determining priorities and sites.
- 7.8** Explore suitable locations for the installation of skate features, modular pump tracks and mobile skate facilities.
- 7.9** Plan for the provision of off-beach outdoor volleyball opportunities at key locations across the city.

8

Strengthen partnerships with clubs and associations and leverage from effective collaboration

Promote active collaboration between Council, local clubs, local associations and state sporting organisations to pursue grant funding opportunities for priority projects.

- 8.1** Review and consider private and public partnership ventures to assist in the development of sporting infrastructure in accordance with relevant legislation requirements.
- 8.2** Ensure regional facilities meet the required standards to host major regional, state or national level competitions, events and/or training.
- 8.3** Explore partnerships with public and private education providers and school Infrastructure NSW to explore shared-use opportunities.
- 8.4** Support sporting groups and associations to identify grant opportunities that align with this Strategy and relevant Plans of Management and provide guidance through the application process.
- 8.5** Review the Sports and Facilities Reference Group Charter and membership to ensure broader representation.
- 8.6** Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders to pursue opportunities to enable mountain biking access to escarpment areas consistent with environmental and planning legislation.

9

Transition sportsgrounds and sporting facilities towards greater climate resilience

Manage, maintain and construct sportsgrounds and sporting facilities in accordance with Council's Sustainable Wollongong 2030, Climate Change Adaptation Plan and Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020 to encourage greater climate resilience across Council sportsgrounds and sporting facilities. Council will need to carefully consider the use of natural turf, synthetic or alternative surfaces to address climate related impacts.

9.1 Implement Council's Urban Greening Strategy during the planning and construction of new facilities and precincts.

9.2 Plan for the provision of resilient playing surfaces, through innovative processes including enhanced drainage, recycled water irrigation and where appropriate, synthetic or hybrid surfaces at key locations.

9.3 Improve sustainability and reduce carbon emissions from the operation of sportsgrounds and sporting facilities consistent with key actions within Council's Sustainable Wollongong 2030 and Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020.

9.4 Utilise sustainable sportsground maintenance and management practices to minimise impacts of climate change on the quality of sportsfields.

9.5 Ensure sports events that occur within the city are conducted in accordance with Council's Sustainable Events Guidelines.

10

Attract and support sporting events and tourism

Collaborate with a range of key stakeholders, to actively attract sporting events and tourism opportunities within the region.

10.1 Ensure Council's regional sports facilities are provided with appropriate infrastructure to support the hosting of regional, state and national sports events.

10.2 Provide in principle support to establish a home ground location for a national baseball league team in the city.

10.3 Support and develop sports legacy events, such as the UCI Road World Championships 2022.

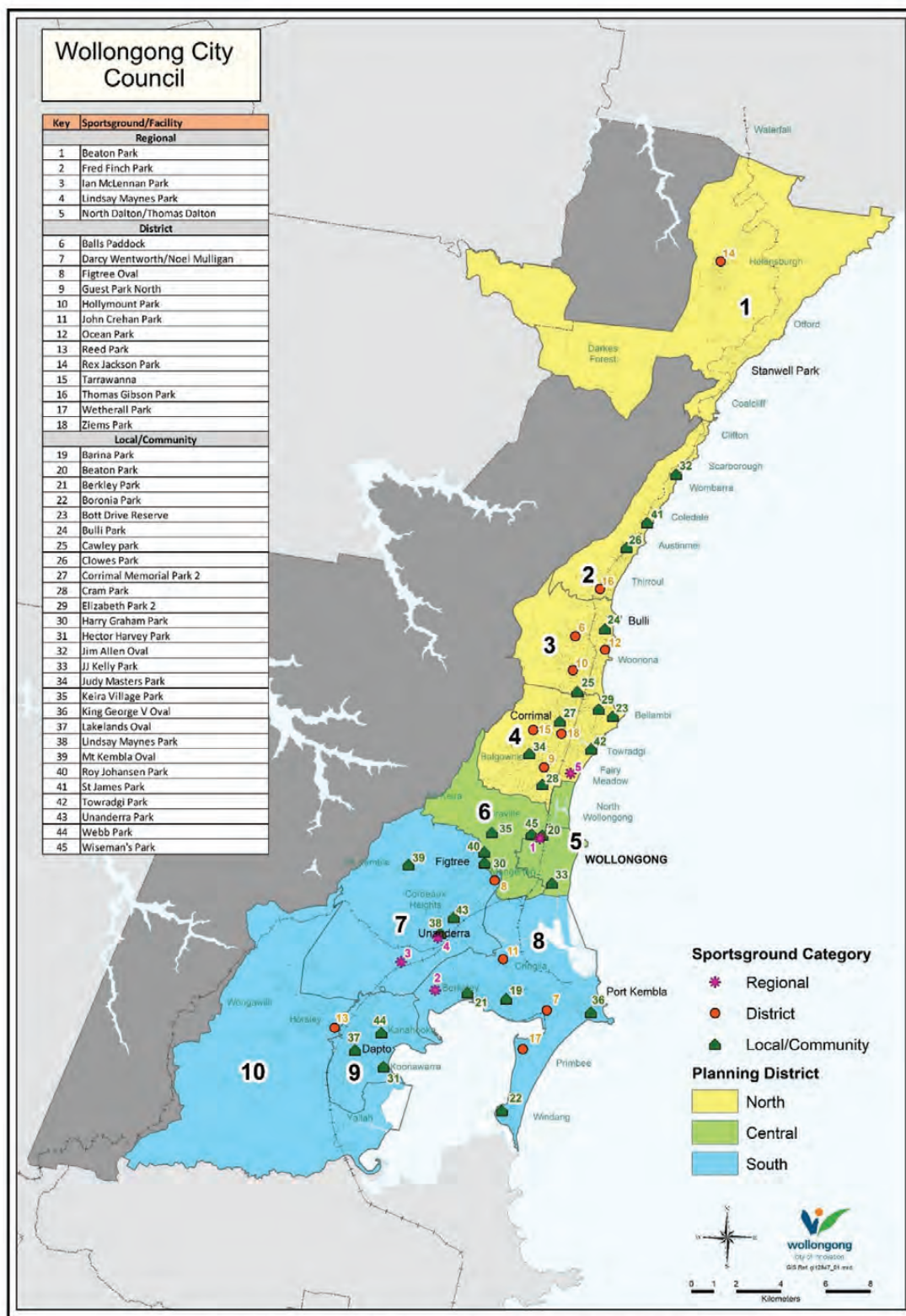
10.4 Continue to partner with key stakeholders to host and facilitate events to create awareness and encourage participation in sports.

10.5 Pursue grant funding for sports infrastructure to attract and support events in the city.

10.6 Continue to advocate to the NSW State Government for detailed planning and redevelopment of the Illawarra Sports Entertainment Precinct, to provide an international standard sports facility for the city and region.



Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Charter: Sports and Facilities Reference Group

1 Introduction

The Sports and Facilities Reference Group has been established to provide advice to Council on policies and strategies which relate to the implementation of the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy. The focus of the Sports and Facilities Reference Group is to assist Council in working towards the identification of priorities for sport and sporting infrastructure. The Sports and Facilities Reference Group comprises people interested in furthering these aims.

2 Authority

The Sports and Facilities Reference Group will provide advice, feedback and support to Council in developing, implementing and monitoring policies and strategies which relate to the implementation of the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy.

The Sports and Facilities Reference Group does not have decision making authority, the power to bind the Council, nor the power to incur expenditure.

3 Responsibilities and Functions

The responsibilities and functions of the Sports and Facilities Reference Group are to -

- Review and monitor Council's Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy;
- Develop, review and monitor the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy which assists Council in the identification of priorities for sport and sporting infrastructure;
- Consider the cumulative effects of Council's decisions on identification of priorities for sport and sporting infrastructure; and
- Provide advice to Council on strategic projects and Council policies related to, or that may impact on the implementation of the Sportsground and Sporting Facilities Strategy.

4 Priorities

The immediate priority of the Sports and Facilities Reference Group is to:

- Provide strategic advice and input relating to the development of Council's Sportsground and Sporting Facilities
- Strategy and policies;
- Contribute to the master planning process of regional and district level facilities;
- Provide advice and assist in facilitating Council's Sports Grant process;
- Assist in the implementation of the Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy;
- Identify opportunities for the city to attract and secure major sporting events; and
- Participate in discussions regarding emerging sport and recreation related trends/topics and their impact on sport.

Other priorities will be determined by the Reference Group from time to time.

5 Composition of the Reference Group

The Sports and Facilities Reference Group is to be made up of:

- Three (3) Councillors
- One (1) representative from the NSW Office of Sport;
- One (1) representative of Illawarra Academy of Sport;
- Minimum of 10 members with Council Officers requesting nominations from the peak bodies and major sporting associations that utilise Council sporting facilities and grounds from each of the following sporting associations:
 - AFL;
 - Athletics;
 - Baseball;
 - Basketball;
 - Cricket;
 - Football;
 - Hockey;
 - Netball;
 - Rugby League;
 - Rugby;
 - Tennis; and
 - Touch Football.

Charter: Sports and Facilities Reference Group

- The Sports and Facilities Reference Group is to also include representatives from each of the following groups:
 - Women in Sport (1)
 - Emerging Sports (2)
 - Access for people with Disability (1)
 - Other peak sporting bodies specifically using Council's grounds and sporting facilities
- Non-Voting Members to include:
 - Manager Property and Recreation;
 - Recreation Services Manager;
 - Recreation and Open Space Project Officer; and
 - Sportsground Coordinator.

The Chairperson will be appointed by Council from the Councillor representatives.

Vacancies that occur on the Sports and Facilities Reference Group will be filled by public advertisement and selection by Council.

Council's Manager Property and Recreation will attend Reference Group meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Reference Group. Other Council staff, Government officers, advisors or individuals may be invited to attend meetings from time to time to provide expert advice, information or presentations in relation to the Reference Group's business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

Representation to the Reference Group will be sought through direct correspondence being forwarded to sporting Associations.

6 Term Of Appointment

Term of appointment is to be for the term of the 2021-2024 elected Council, subject to attending 70% of the scheduled meetings.

7 Obligations Of Members

Members of the Sports and Facilities Reference Group, in performing their duties, shall:

- Act honestly and in good faith;
- Participate in the work of the Reference Group;
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Reference Group;

- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person;
- Comply with the Reference Group's Charter; and
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

8 Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly with an online option available, except where no business has been identified.

A quorum will consist of half the nominated sports representatives of the Sports & Facilities Reference Group plus one (1).

Meetings will be chaired by the Council appointed chairperson. If the chairperson is absent from a meeting, the first business of every such meeting is to elect a chairperson from the members present to preside over such meeting.

The Reference Group has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, advice from the Reference Group may be presented with supporting and dissenting views of Reference Group members.

Meeting agendas will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.

9 Reporting

The minutes of meetings will be provided to Councillors and Council's Executive Management for information. Minutes will also be distributed to all members.

Advice and decisions of the Reference Group relating to specific Council projects will be reported to Council as part of the project reporting process.

Any matters arising that require a separate decision of Council may be reported to Council at the discretion of the Manager Property and Recreation.

10 Evaluation and Review

A review of the Reference Group will be undertaken every 12 months to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Reference Group is effective and to make appropriate changes.



From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community.

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport

ITEM 5 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT STUART AND GALVIN PARK LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

In accordance with the Delivery Program 2022-2026, Operational Plan 2022-23, a draft landscape Master Plan has been developed to provide Council with a vision to inform the future enhancement of Stuart and JP Galvin Parks, North Wollongong.

The draft Stuart and Galvin Park Landscape Master Plan (draft Master Plan) focuses on enhancing and improving community access to the park and proposes a range of improvements. Key features of the draft Master Plan include incorporation of the planned all abilities/all ages playground, new boardwalk and footpaths, new yarning circle and upgraded public amenities. Public exhibition of the draft Master Plan will allow the community to provide further input into the refinement of the plan. This report seeks Council's endorsement of the draft Master Plan for exhibition and for a subsequent report with findings from engagement be presented to Council on completion.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council endorse the draft Stuart & Galvin Park Landscape Master Plan for public exhibition from 28 September to 2 November 2022.
- 2 Following exhibition, Council receives a further report with an updated Master Plan incorporating the community engagement findings.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Stuart Park Precinct Master Plan - Study Area - Map
- 2 Phase 1 - Preliminary Community Engagement Report
- 3 Draft Stuart Park Landscape Master Plan

BACKGROUND

Stuart Park (including JP Galvin Park) is Wollongong's premier park and is a much-loved community asset. Located on Dharawal Country on a site with significant Aboriginal cultural value, it is a Crown Reserve and was gazetted as Stuart Park in 1885 for public recreation purposes.

Stuart Park is a vital recreational asset for the City. In terms of scale, Stuart Park is the most significant open space area in the city foreshore area. Located adjacent to the highly popular attraction of North Beach, and the natural areas of Puckeys Estate and Fairy Creek, Stuart Park provides a significant open area for leisure and recreation, and space for community events.

The park is well used by local residents and during peak period and weekends is a popular destination for visitors. Stuart Park is also increasingly used for special events such as festivals and community celebrations.

The JP Galvin area, lagoon and playground area are well utilised for passive recreation and leisure including social gatherings, picnics, sun baking and fitness. In contrast, the southern and western sections of Stuart Park support activities including walking and cycling by persons using the existing asphalt shared path. Having little embellishment and supporting infrastructure, the area has a much lower level of utilisation and general activity. The central area of the park is almost devoid of activity having no infrastructure but is used frequently for major events.

The park is currently home to several facilities including:

- The Lagoon restaurant and café servicing park patrons
- The Caretakers Cottage (currently utilised by Skydive the Beach for skydive operations)

- Access road with right angle car parking and three designated carparks
- An old cricket amenities building: a 1970's brick building currently used by Council open space staff but having no public access
- Contemporary public amenities close to the lagoon, and older style amenities south of the old cricket amenities building
- Dedicated cycle path along the southern and western boundary, shared path and footpaths
- Bike racks, benches, picnic shelters, bollards, seating, parking and BBQs
- Dedicated beach access point and timber fencing along crest of foreshore dune area
- A children's playground with tall slide tower, flying fox and liberty swing incorporating shaded picnic settings and children's art. An all abilities/all ages playground is in the process of being built.

The park is also home to significant natural vegetation, including extensive swamp oak plantings undertaken by Council along George Hanley Drive and Squires Way, coastal estuarine vegetation on Fairy Creek Lagoon, large Norfolk Pine trees along JP Galvin Park and on the northern side of The Lagoon restaurant.

In 2007 Council adopted the Blue Mile Master Plan (incorporating Stuart Park precinct) which proposed a range of city foreshore improvements to realise the potential of the iconic urban beach and foreshore as a major people-oriented place and the focus for public activities. Council has progressively implemented significant public infrastructure and recreation and tourism experiences in the foreshore area stretching from the Wollongong Golf Course in the south to Fairy Creek in the north.

Since the adoption of the Blue Mile Master Plan, several improvements within Stuart Park have occurred including the upgrading of the playground, installation of contemporary toilets, and new and upgraded shelter and picnic facilities.

Since the adoption of the Blue Mile Master Plan, several significant changes have occurred that requires a review of the Stuart Park precinct. This includes:

- Strong population growth
- Construction of the tramway and increased walking and cycling movement throughout the precinct
- Increased visitation from western and south western Sydney
- Recognition of Stuart Park as Wollongong's premiere event site
- Adoption of new policies including Urban Greening Strategy
- Extreme weather events and climate change
- Deterioration of ground conditions in some areas receiving higher usage
- Improved understanding of Aboriginal Cultural values attached to the site
- Development of the Innovation Campus and planned future works.

PROPOSAL

A draft Master Plan has been developed to guide future activities and enhancements that support current and future usage. The draft Master Plan:

- Provides a long-term design vision to guide changes to Stuart and JP Galvin parks
- Responds to the changing and diverse recreational requirements of local residents
- Ensures the park is placed to support an increasing visitor population
- Guide future iterations of Council's plan of management, capital programs and works plans

- Understands the park's natural and cultural values and how they can be best preserved and enhanced
- Responds to the changing and diverse recreational requirements of visitors to the park
- Make recommendations about the future pedestrian and cycle access and traffic management within the park.

Key aspects of the draft Master Plan include:

- **Retaining current park structure**

The Master Plan seeks to enhance the intrinsic qualities of the park by retaining the current park structure. The Master Plan features enhanced vegetation management on the front dune and estuarine area, whilst maintaining the current level of natural area plantings that bound Squires Way and George Hanley Drive ensuring that the natural feel and biodiversity of the area is maintained. Opportunities for native grass and tree plantings will be pursued where integration with infrastructure and key activity nodes is desirable eg: playground, sensory trail, picnic areas. Planting of trees in the defined events area should be cognisant of the operation of events and other commercial activities.

The Master Plan does not envisage an increase in the footprint of The Lagoon restaurant although landscape interventions to immediately surrounding areas are required to improve condition, functionality and connection to parking, footpaths, foreshore and playground.

The lagoon area incorporating the sanded/grassed area and stand of Norfolk Pines will remain relatively untouched but requires improved maintenance and sensitive treatment to minimise erosion resulting from high usage and inclement weather events.

- **Enhanced pedestrian experience**

Defining key pedestrian circulation routes will enable Stuart Park to accommodate increasing numbers of visitors without compromising the condition of its green spaces and landscaped areas and will also ensure the aging population and less mobile residents can continue to access to the park activity nodes.

The Master Plan provides guidance for new pedestrian entry points to the park from surrounding residential areas.

The Master Plan envisages a new perimeter path that responds to existing desire lines and walking tracks connecting the Blue Mile with Fairy Lagoon through to Puckeys Nature Reserve and around the western fringe of the park to the shared path. The new path alignment shall take advantage of key views and logical connections with activity nodes, the form, dimensions, materiality, colours and detailing requiring careful consideration and response to the park's heritage significance and sense of place.

Consideration of future pedestrian level lighting (including solar) along the primary paths is required to support general park activity during the hours of 6am-9pm.

- **New yarning circle**

In recognition of the significance of Stuart Park to the Aboriginal community, the new yarning circle will provide a space where stories and knowledge can be shared. The yarning circle will be located within proximity and visual connection to the man-made lagoon and take advantage of natural shade from mature trees. Function and scale should support gatherings and design will be connected to by footpaths to the perimeter walking circuit. Additional tree planting will provide natural shade over time.

- **Upgraded play experience**

An expanded and improved play precinct targeting a broader age range and abilities will be provided. The draft Master Plan incorporates Council's planned all abilities/all ages playground and strengthens access with new pedestrian access to existing amenities.

- **Nature/Sensory trail**

The Master Plan envisages a new secondary path that will circumnavigate the man-made lagoon encouraging exploration and provide a series of experiences along a route that is designed to engage the different senses and to collectively immerse people in a multi-sensory journey.

The trail will be planned for people with disabilities, especially people with sensory impairments, but will connect and support all users of the new all abilities/all ages playground and the proposed yarning circle encouraging people to move between these spaces.

- **New and upgraded amenities**

Amenity and usability of the park will be improved through the integration of additional toilet facilities. The Master Plan envisages that the main amenities southeast of The Lagoon restaurant will more than double in size to meet current demand.

The older southern amenities will be demolished and replaced with contemporaneous and automated style facilities, located closer to the realigned southern path and activities.

- **Enhanced interpretation**

Stuart Park plays an important role in both the environmental, indigenous, historical and social history of Wollongong. A significant opportunity exists to create a new and enhanced interpretation experience to convey the multi-layered history of Stuart Park to every visitor. The Master Plan proposes a new interpretation overlay to be permanently embedded within the park landscape including new methods of wayfinding and interpretation so that all visitors can engage with its many stories. It is proposed that the perimeter walking circuit becomes the uniting element for this enhanced interpretive experience, whilst the man-made lagoon provides for a new trail with a focus for ecological exploration and fun.

- **Defined Events Area**

The Master Plan will continue to support events by creating defined event spaces suitable for large and smaller events and temporary activations. These spaces will be supported by providing new power to the spaces, widening/strengthening of footpaths to allow for heavy vehicle movements, and improvements to flooding/stormwater infrastructure. Regrading of the area west of the access road may also be required to improve stormwater.

Removal of the old cricket amenities building will create a larger contiguous open area free of obstructions suitable for hosting larger music style events. The realigned southern shared path provides improved delineation that will allow the operation of events whilst providing continued access to activity nodes within the park.

- **Unstructured Recreation**

Supporting healthy lifestyles through the creation of attractive and well-maintained spaces is a core priority for local government. Meeting community need is fundamental to good planning.

The Master Plan notes the desirability of Stuart Park for the high number of local residents who enjoy using the park to walk, run, and exercise in group fitness. The proposed upgrading of paths and improvements to stormwater and flooding will meet the needs of these groups.

This Master Plan notes that Stuart Park historically hosted tennis courts and a senior cricket field. The Master Plan does not support formalising any area for organised sport but acknowledges that the large expanse of grassed areas is conducive to light training by local sports groups and can be accommodated with minimal intervention subject to ground condition.

Other emerging recreation activities such as slacklining (walking and/or balancing on a suspended flat line) is to be supported with minimal interventions and harnessing the natural setting. Low-cost interventions such as kilometre markers along key jogging routes could be installed to encourage challenge.

- **Caretakers Cottage**

The Master Plan envisages the restoration and refurbishment of the Caretakers Cottage to make accessible for public commercial use. Future works must also consider the adequacy of current storage facilities, amenities and outdoor gathering areas and plan for accordingly. Any new work should reveal and reinforce the role of the Caretakers Cottage whilst meeting the needs of current and future users.

- **Traffic and Parking**

The Master Plan seeks to maintain current access arrangements and the current level of carparking within the park. However, several interventions are envisaged that will improve safety and support park users including:

- Renewal of the north western carpark (immediately west of The Lagoon restaurant) incorporating new accessible carparking bays with extended lengths allowing for disability support vehicles adjacent to the playground area.
- Reduce vehicular speed limit within the entire park area from 40 kilometres per hour to a maximum of 10 kilometres per hour.
- Construct a new raised crossing at the intersection of Cliff Road and George Hanley Drive.
- Provide new formalised parking on western side of Squires Way.
- Provide space for minibus parking in the central carpark adjacent to the Caretakers Cottage.
- Provide new layover minibus parking adjacent to the main toilet facilities.
- Provide permanent emergency vehicle access to North Beach and Fairy Lagoon.
- Review parking configuration along George Hanley Drive with aim of increasing carparking.
- Consider bus parking bay along George Hanley Drive.
- Review the amount of accessible parking bays within the park to ensure adequate parking exists for future needs of the community.
- Explore opportunities to reduce or manage carparking demand to encourage a modal shift to transit, pedestrian and bicycling trips and opportunities for smart parking (real-time information).
- Provide new electric vehicle charging points.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

To help assist in clarifying aspirations for the site, significant engagement has already occurred and has directly informed the development of the draft Master Plan. The preliminary engagement phase ran from 25 October to 22 November 2021 where we asked the community and key stakeholders for ideas on how we can improve this area for everyone over the next 10 years.

Methods and stakeholders

During the engagement period of 25 October to 22 November 2021, more than 4,100 letters, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and surveys were sent to residents, businesses and property owners near Stuart Park. Emails with this information were sent to:

- Destination Wollongong
- Emergency services
- Lifeguards
- Local businesses, licensees and event holders
- Local early education and care services, primary schools and high schools
- Mr Paul Scully MP

- Neighbourhood forums
- NSW Crown Lands
- Participants in previous engagements linked to Stuart Park
- Register of Interest – Access, Cultural/Arts
- Sport, fitness, recreation, health, multicultural and disability groups and organisations
- University of Wollongong

A project webpage was published on our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au, which included an ideas tool, online survey, mapping tool, stories tool and Q&A forum. People were encouraged to submit ideas to the webpage via SMS.

A short video was produced to promote the engagement which was used on the website and social media. Promotional signs were installed around Stuart Park, written in English, Arabic and simplified Chinese. The signs had a QR code linked to the project webpage.

Social media was utilised including Facebook posts, with some in multiple languages targeting local audiences and those in Southern and Western Sydney. A media release was developed and a notice in the Community Update of the Illawarra Mercury newspaper was published. People could access the information from Council's Customer Service and Wollongong Library. Four online information sessions were conducted, and a video recording of the presentation was published on the project webpage for those who were unable to attend. Several online meetings were held with key stakeholders and online workshops with school students were also conducted. A poster was also sent to local early education and care services so children could draw pictures of what they want to see and do in Stuart Park.

Several meetings with local Aboriginal Elders, community members and representatives from the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council were held onsite. These meetings were an opportunity to work together to ensure the draft Master Plan appropriately acknowledges and responds to the Aboriginal cultural values of Stuart Park. Our conversations with people from the local Aboriginal community are ongoing as we plan for Stuart Park's future.

Feedback

Responses were received from 860 people ranging in age from early education and care services through to older residents and several organisations. Most respondents enjoy the park's amenity but offered multiple ideas and suggestions for enhancing the park experience including:

Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community most values the park amenity - large, open space and green natural areas. • Family friendly. • Plenty of room for everyone - enough space for different groups of people to do different activities. • Opportunities for play.
Greening and shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant more local natives. • Need more shaded areas.

Parking, traffic, public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People recognise there are issues which will be challenging to resolve, but opinion is divided on how to do this. • Some want timed or paid parking, with free parking/permits for ratepayers. • Others think there is enough parking and want to discourage having more vehicles in the area. • Encourage active transport - improve and create new pathways, add bike facilities. • Encourage use of public transport - consider having a bus stop or Gong Shuttle bus stop at the park. • Improve pedestrian safety. • Consider installing smart parking.
Exercise facilities	Install outdoor gym/calisthenics equipment.
Picnic facilities, seating, water	Respondents like what is there, but said there could be more huts, seating, barbeques, access to water and coal bins.
Events	Support for temporary activations including markets, food trucks and music. People also like the idea of having an outdoor cinema.
Spaces to play and recreate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The playground is good, but suggestions were made for it to be expanded to include more play equipment for people of all ages; babies, toddlers, children, teenagers and adults. • Some children would like to see modest additions to the existing playground such as monkey bars, a trampoline, sandpit or more swings. • Basketball/multipurpose court areas for informal sport and games. • Many people want some sort of accessible water play feature. • A skate park or pump track.
Recognising culture, history and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush tucker garden. • Interpretive signs - Aboriginal cultural values, migrant history, accessible information (height of signs, braille), use of mobile technology. • Preserve and promote the site's Aboriginal cultural values with artwork, a circle gathering place or 'yarning circle' and a garden containing places of significance to the Aboriginal community. • Exploring the possibility of dual naming of Stuart Park.
Waste management / maintenance / cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy with the overall appearance of the park. • Mostly happy with the cleanliness and maintenance of facilities and parklands. • The Lagoon restaurant waste area needs improvement and better management.
Dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A divisive issue amongst respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporters want an enclosed off-leash area. ○ Those unsupportive did not want dogs, their droppings or disruptions in a space they feel is just for people.
Pathways and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pathways need fixing up. • People want bike paths to be separate from pedestrian paths. • Put pathways on both sides of the parking area. • Create a perimeter/loop pathway around the park. • Build a path connecting the playground to the existing toilet block.

Cycling facilities	Need bike racks and lockers.
Lighting	Need more lighting, especially along pathways, for people using the space early in the morning or in the evening.
Commercial use and development	Some do not want any development to occur, preferring to keep its current character, while others want all sorts of facilities and infrastructure built or renovations made to the Skydiving building. There is mixed opinion on commercial operators at the site; some are supportive of it, but others want the space returned for public use.
Stormwater drainage flooding	/ After rain, there is an area in the park that stays waterlogged for a long time. Improve drainage to help resolve this.
Cultural facility, art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More public art. • Amphitheatre.
Food / cafes / restaurants	<p>People are generally pleased with current food and drink offerings but would like more options such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food vans / trucks / carts. • Takeaway food from a canteen or kiosk.
Toilets showers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more toilets. • A shower would be good.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure pathways, parking, water, signs and facilities are accessible. • Provide accessible play spaces.
Skydiving	Of those who support this happening in Stuart Park, they like watching skydivers land, and think it has local economic and tourism benefits. Those who are unsupportive do not like a commercial business taking up so much of the space or restricting public access to it. They think it should be moved elsewhere.
Leave as is	Some people think it is just right as it is and do not want any new infrastructure to change or impact its natural beauty.
Amusement Park	Some like the idea of an amusement park that would appeal to all ages and be a tourism drawcard.

The full Engagement Report is attached to this report – refer Attachment 2.

Moving forward, should Council resolve to support the public exhibition of the draft Master Plan, additional community engagement is planned to run from 28 September to 2 November 2022 seeking feedback on draft plans.

The following means of promoting the draft Master Plan will involve:

- Community update in the Illawarra Mercury
- Mail out to all households/businesses within 400 metres of site (approximately 4,000 residents)
- Our Wollongong: Join the Conversation - online survey, FAQ, key documents
- Media release
- Flyers/posters/feedback forms dropped off at local libraries
- Onsite signage
- Social media posts
- Onsite information stalls

- Presentation to Neighbourhood Forum 5 (NF5)
- Stakeholder workshop
- Workshops with children and young people who participated in the first round of consultation

The findings of this second phase of community consultation will be used to refine the draft Master Plan and reported for Council's future consideration.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5 "We have a healthy community in a liveable city". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	Operational Plan 2022-23
Strategy		Service	Operational Plan Actions
5	We have a healthy community in a liveable city	Parks and Sports fields	Develop and implement the Landscape Masterplan for Stuart and Galvin Parks, North Wollongong

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The draft Master Plan has carefully considered the natural values of the site. All proposed initiatives utilise site topography, avoiding extensive cut and fill exercises and wherever possible maintaining current landscape form. Existing native vegetation will be maintained with some further urban greening options and increased natural shade across the site will be pursued over time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The draft Master Plan envisages significant works that will provide new and upgraded recreational opportunities along with additional supporting amenities. These works are designed to be delivered in a staged manner over time. Additional information including preliminary high-level cost estimates will be provided to Council following community feedback and development of a revised draft Master Plan and an accompanying Implementation Plan. It is anticipated that once adopted, the Stuart and JP Galvin Park Master Plan will help inform the forward capital delivery program requirements and external grant opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The draft Master Plan has been developed to stimulate community input to guide the future direction of Stuart Park precinct. The draft Master Plan focuses on retaining the current structure of the park whilst enhancing community access, engagement and enhancing usage of the park for locals and visitors.

Key features of the draft Master Plan include an expanded play precinct, enhanced pedestrian access and new recreational opportunities for local residents. Proposed interventions retain the open space feel of the park, improve functionality for events, acknowledge and celebrate the multi-layered history of the park.

Endorsement of the draft Master Plan for exhibition will allow community feedback and input, to assist in refining the Master Plan and ensuring its success.





OUR WOLLONGONG JOIN THE CONVERSATION



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park

Phase 1 – Preliminary Engagement Report

August 2022

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park – Phase 1 Preliminary Engagement Report August 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Background	7
Stakeholders	9
Methods.....	9
Results	14
Next Steps.....	72

The information in this report is based on data collected from community members who chose to be involved in engagement activities and therefore should not be considered representative.

This report is intended to provide a high-level analysis of the most prominent themes and issues. While it's not possible to include all the details of feedback we received, feedback that was relevant to the project has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Executive Summary

Council is working on a master plan for Stuart Park, including JP Galvin Park (the grassy beachfront area). As Wollongong's premier park, it is a well-used and valued place for our community and visitors. Many people enjoy going there to play, picnic, attend special events, get fit or enjoy the natural areas and coastal views. This area is on Dharawal country and has important Aboriginal cultural value. The Stuart Park Master Plan, once written, will be a 10-year plan that will guide:

- Improvements that make it a better place for the community and visitors.
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, heritage and Aboriginal cultural values.
- Additional recreational opportunities for local residents.
- Improved traffic and parking arrangements, and access to Stuart Park.
- Development of key event areas.
- Future work programs.

We asked the community and key stakeholders for ideas on how we can improve this area for everyone over the next 10 years.

Methods and stakeholders

During the engagement period, 25 October to 22 November 2021, we sent more than 4,100 letters, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and surveys to residents, businesses and property owners near Stuart Park. They were invited to learn more and join the conversation. We sent emails with this information to:

- Destination Wollongong
- Emergency services
- Lifeguards
- Local businesses, licensees and event holders
- Local early education and care services, primary schools and high schools
- A Local MP
- Neighbourhood Forums
- NSW Crown Lands
- Participants in previous engagements linked to Stuart Park
- Register of Interest – Access, Cultural/Arts
- Sport, fitness, recreation, health, multicultural and disability groups and organisations
- University of Wollongong

We published a project webpage on our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au, which included an ideas tool, online survey, mapping tool, stories tool and Q&A forum. People could also submit ideas to the webpage via SMS. We produced a video to promote the engagement which was used on the website and social media. We installed promotional signs around Stuart Park, written in English, Arabic and Simplified Chinese. The signs had a QR code linked to the project webpage. We published Facebook posts, including some in multiple languages targeting local audiences and those in Southern and Western Sydney. We issued a media release and published a notice in the Community Update that appears in the Illawarra Mercury newspaper. People could access the information from Council's Customer Service and Wollongong Library. We held four online information sessions and published a video recording of the presentation on the project webpage for those who were unable to attend. We held online meetings with some key stakeholders. We facilitated online workshops with school students and set up an online survey for school groups and young people. We sent a poster to local early education and care services so children could draw pictures of what they want to see and do in Stuart Park. We contacted people from the local

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Aboriginal community via phone and email. We also met with the chairperson of a local Aboriginal organisation at Stuart Park. Our conversations with people from the local Aboriginal community are ongoing as we plan for Stuart Park's future.

Between February and August 2022, Council arranged several meetings with local Aboriginal Elders, community members and a local Aboriginal organisation. These meetings were an opportunity to work together to ensure the draft Master Plan appropriately acknowledges and responds to the Aboriginal cultural values of Stuart Park.

Feedback

We heard from 873 people ranging in age from early education and care services through to those in their 90s, and several organisations. Their ideas and comments are summarised as follows:

Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community most values the park amenity – large, open space and green natural areas. Family friendly. Plenty of room for everyone – enough space for different groups of people to do different activities. Opportunities for play.
Greening and shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant more local natives. Need more shaded areas.
Parking, traffic, public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People recognise there's issues and they'll be challenging to resolve, but opinion is divided on how to do this. Some want timed or paid parking, with free parking/permits for ratepayers. Others think there is enough parking and want to discourage having more vehicles in the area. Encourage active transport – improve and create new pathways, add bike facilities. Encourage use of public transport – consider having a bus stop or Gong Shuttle bus stop at the park. Improve pedestrian safety. Consider installing smart parking.
Exercise facilities	Install outdoor gym/calisthenics equipment.
Picnic facilities, seating, water	Respondents like what's there, but said there could be more huts, seating, barbeques, access to water and coal bins.
Events	Support for temporary activations including markets, food trucks and music. People also like the idea of having an outdoor cinema.
Spaces to play and recreate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The playground is good, but suggestions were made for it to be expanded to include more play equipment for people of all ages; babies, toddlers, children, teenagers and adults. Some children would like to see modest additions to the existing playground such as monkey bars, a trampoline, sandpit or more swings. Many people want some sort of accessible water play feature. A skate park or pump track Basketball/multipurpose court areas for informal sport and games

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Recognising culture, history and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush tucker garden. • Interpretive signs – Aboriginal cultural values, migrant history, accessible information (height of signs, Braille), use of mobile technology. • Preserve and promote the site's Aboriginal cultural values with artwork, a circle gathering place or 'Yarning Circle' and a garden containing plants of significance to the Aboriginal community. • Exploring the possibility of dual naming of Stuart Park.
Waste management / maintenance / cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy with the overall appearance of the park. • Mostly happy with the cleanliness and maintenance of facilities and parklands. • The Lagoon Restaurant waste area needs improvement and better management.
Dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A divisive issue amongst respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Supporters want an enclosed off-leash area. ◦ Those unsupportive don't want dogs, their poo or disruptions in a space they feel is just for people.
Pathways and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pathways need fixing up. • People want bike paths to be separate from pedestrian paths. • Put pathways on both sides of the parking area. • Create a perimeter/loop pathway around the park. • Build a path connecting the playground to the existing toilet block.
Cycling facilities	Need bike racks and lockers.
Lighting	Need more lighting, especially along pathways, for people using the space early in the morning or in the evening.
Commercial use and development	Some don't want any development to occur, preferring to keep its current character, while others want all sorts of facilities and infrastructure built or renovations to the Skydiving building. There is mixed opinion on commercial operators at the site; some are supportive of it, but others want the space returned for public use.
Stormwater / drainage / flooding	After rain, there is an area in the park that stays waterlogged for a long time. Improve drainage to help resolve this.
Cultural facility, art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphitheatre. • More public art.
Food / cafes / restaurants	<p>People are generally ok with current food and drink offerings but would like more options, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food vans / trucks / carts. • Takeaway food from a canteen or kiosk.
Toilets / showers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more toilets. • A shower would be good.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure pathways, parking, water, signs and facilities are accessible. • Provide accessible play spaces.
Skydiving	Of those who support it happening in Stuart Park – they like watching skydivers land, think it has local economic and tourism benefits. Those who are unsupportive don't like a commercial business taking up so much of the space or restricting public access to it. They think it should be moved elsewhere.
Leave as is	Some people think it's just right as it is and don't want any new infrastructure to change or impact its natural beauty.
Amusement Park	Some like the idea of an amusement park that would appeal to all ages and be a tourism drawcard.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Next steps

The feedback received from the first phase of the engagement will be used to help develop the draft Master Plan for Stuart Park.

The draft Master Plan will be shared with the community in 2022. This will be an opportunity for people to let us know if they support the draft Plan. Feedback received during this second stage of engagement will be used to finalise the Master Plan, before it goes to Council seeking adoption.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Background

Through its Community Strategic Plan (CSP), Council has committed to provide a variety of quality public spaces and opportunities for sport, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.

Stuart Park Precinct (including JP Galvin Park) is Wollongong's premier park and is a much-loved community asset. It is located on Dharawal country and is a site with significant Aboriginal cultural value. This park is an important recreational asset for the City, well used by the public daily and for special events such as festivals, celebrations and race endings. It is a Crown reserve and was gazetted as Stuart Park in 1885 for public recreation purposes.

The area is currently home to:

- A restaurant and café servicing park patrons.
- A sky diving business and, when the area is not in use as a drop zone, a wide-open space of green lawn for general recreation and multiple commercial fitness trainers.
- Caretakers cottage (used by Skydive the Beach).
- A 1970's brick building used by Council Parks staff to store equipment near the oval.
- Facilities; bike racks, public toilets, benches, picnic shelters, bollards, seating, parking and BBQs.
- A children's playground with tall slide tower, flying fox and liberty swing incorporating shaded picnic settings and children's art. An all ages and abilities playground is in the process of being built.
- Significant natural vegetation, including along JP Galvin Park (dune area), swamp oak plantings along George Hanley Drive, coastal estuarine vegetation on Fairy Creek Lagoon, large Norfolk Pine trees along JP Galvin Park and on the northern side of the Lagoon Restaurant.



1 Stuart Park Plan from 1885 showing artificial lake, island, cricket and running ground, feature tree planting, foot and baseball ground, perimeter pathway and pathway network and enclosure for horses and carriages.

For the purposes of Crown land management, the Stuart Park Reserve also includes the North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club building (currently being refurbished) which is a local heritage item. The northern lawn area immediately outside this building will be included in the Master Plan.

The Norfolk Pines and Canary Island Palms are of local significance.

Stuart Park is located on Dharawal Country and is understood to be an important place with strong Aboriginal cultural values. The site's location next to a coastal lagoon, on the coastline and nearby to

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

rock platforms and other valuable food resources, as well as known Aboriginal sites within the area confirm that the site has a special place in the community.

Stuart Park and Galvin Park feature as a key precinct in the northern extent of the City's Blue Mile Precinct. The original Blue Mile Master Plan was formerly adopted in 2007. Since this time, there have been significant improvements to the playground, shelters, pathways, public amenities and carparks. More recently, the evolution of the park as an events precinct has created additional activities and opportunities.

There are several drivers which require exploration in an updated master plan to guide future activities and enhancements. These include:

- Growing use of the park by local residents for green space and local recreational activities.
- Increasing visitor numbers on weekends and school holiday periods.
- Stormwater/flooding issues.
- Some infrastructure is ageing and requires renewal and accessibility upgrades.
- Strong demand for parking and improved accessibility.
- Need to improve connectivity with the Blue Mile foreshore area and recent investment in North Gong Beach area.
- Commitment to preserving and enhancing Aboriginal culture and values of the site.
- Multiple commercial business operations.
- A need to consider the optimal footprint for major events; enabling the activity while:
 - Lessening disruption to parks users and visitors.
 - Minimising impacts to park infrastructure and turf.

The overarching goal of the project is:

“To provide a strategic approach to the sustainable long-term development and enhancement of the Stuart Park as Wollongong’s premier park to accommodate the future recreational and cultural needs of our community”.

We are involving the community in a staged approach for developing the Stuart Park Master Plan.



We will implement the Stuart Park Master Plan from late 2022 onwards, subject to:

- Council endorsement.
- Further community engagement on specific projects in the Plan.
- Available budgets.
- Annual capital programming.
- Environmental approvals.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park – Phase 1 Preliminary Engagement Report August 2022

Stakeholders

Stakeholders identified prior to the start of the engagement period included:





Methods

Our Methods


Table 1: Details of Communication and Engagement Methods

Methods	Details of Methods
Communication Methods	
Email to key stakeholders	An email and FAQ was sent to key stakeholders identified through an analysis process.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Letter	A letter about the engagement and how to submit feedback (via phone, email or online) was delivered to more than 4,100 local residents, businesses and property owners.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	Responses to questions about planning for the future of Stuart Park and the engagement were distributed with the letter and emails, and published on the project webpage.
Maps	<p>Two maps were produced; The study area:</p>  <p>Location plan with images:</p> 


Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Our Wollongong website	<p>The project webpage hosted background information, videos and supporting documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently Asked Questions • Ideas tool • Stories tool • Mapping tool • Q&A forum • Online survey <p>There was also a webpage for online engagement with schools and young people. It hosted the overview video, an online survey and community information session presentation video.</p>
Community Update	<p>A notice appeared in Council's Community Update page, printed in the Illawarra Mercury, on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 October • 3 November • 10 November • 17 November
On-site signs	<p>Corflute signs in English, Arabic and Simplified Chinese that included a QR code linking to the Our Wollongong project webpage were installed in multiple locations around Stuart Park.</p> 
Media release	A media release about the engagement was distributed on 2 November 2021.
Presentation	Wollongong Youth Services gave a presentation at an Education Support Network Meeting to promote the engagement and opportunity for young people to be involved.
School newsletters	Information was distributed to schools for publication in school newsletters.



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Social media	<p>City of Wollongong Facebook page published a post promoting the engagement on 28 October and 16 November 2021.</p> <div> </div> <div> </div>
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Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

	<p>Wollongong Youth Services Facebook page published a post promoting the engagement and competition (5 x \$25 gift card draw for completed surveys) on 18 November 2021.</p> 
Engagement Methods	
Our Wollongong website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ideas tool was used for people to share their ideas for improving Stuart Park via the website and SMS. • A survey was used to capture participants' comments. • A mapping tool was used so people could provide feedback and share ideas about specific locations in Stuart Park. • A Stories tool was used so people could share their memories and experiences of Stuart Park.
Stakeholder meetings	A summary of open feedback and actions was noted in meeting minutes.
Online workshops	<p>Online workshops were held with students at the following primary schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coniston Public School • Towradgi Public School • Wollongong Public School
Email	People emailed in open written submissions.
Poster	A poster was distributed to early education and care services so that children could draw three things they would like to see or do in Stuart Park.

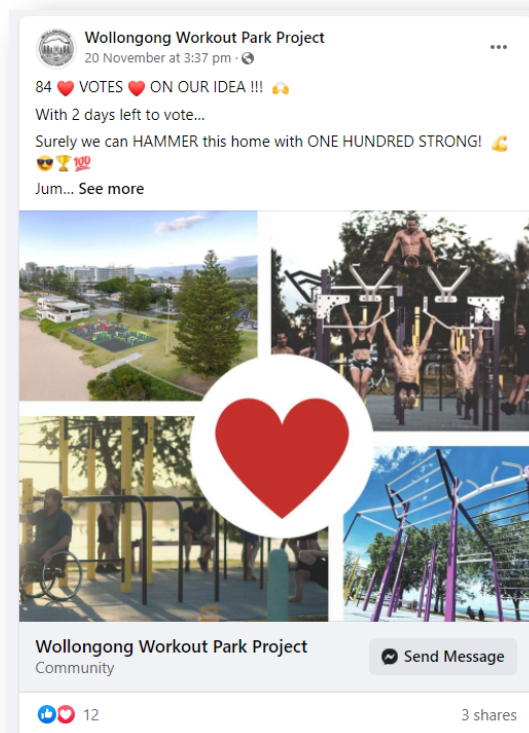
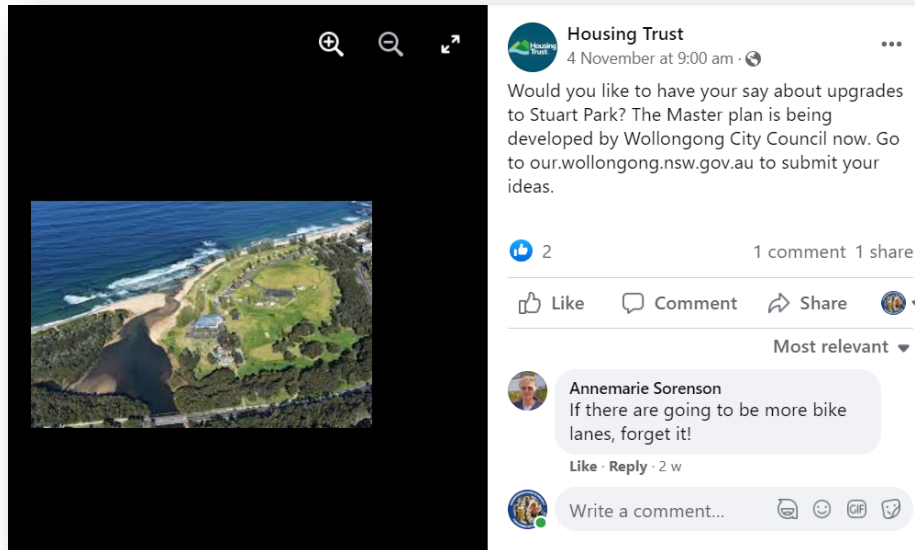
Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

	<div><p>We want to make Stuart Park in North Wollongong a great place for everyone to visit.</p></div> <p>→ What 3 things do you think would make it better? You can write your answers or draw us some pictures</p>  <p>.....</p>
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Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Results

All stakeholders and the wider community were invited to share their ideas for improving Stuart Park. Social media pages posted about the engagement opportunity.



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

The Illawarra Mercury published a story on 3 November 2021. ABC Illawarra interviewed Council's Recreation Services Manager on 18 November 2021.

Engagement Participation

This section provides details on the participation in engagement activities and feedback received during the engagement period. Details of the number of participants for each engagement activity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participation in Engagement Activities

Engagement Activities	Participation
Stakeholder meetings	15
Online information sessions	8
School workshops	144
Poster - drawings from children under the age of	44
Online Participation – general public	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware – Total number of people who viewed the project webpage. 	1,150
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed – Total number of people who clicked a hyperlink, e.g. to download a map. 	772
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged – Total number of people who actively contributed to the project, e.g. by submitting comments via the survey, posting ideas, commenting on ideas or voting <input type="checkbox"/> for their favourite idea. 	504
Online Participation – schools and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged – Total number of people who actively contributed to the project, e.g. by submitting comments via the survey 	49

Submission results

We received ideas and feedback from 873 people of all ages (from early education and care services through to people in their 90s), including from the general community, several groups and organisations.

Table 3: Submission types

Submission type	Number of participants
Open – Email	27
Open – Letter	1
Open - Online information sessions	8
Open - Meetings	15
Drawings from children under 5 years old	44

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Survey	130
Schools' workshops with years 3, 4, 5 and 6	144
Online – Survey for schools and young people	49
Online – Ideas tool	436
Online – Mapping tool	15
Online – Stories tool	4
TOTAL	873

People contributed many ideas and comments in different ways. This is a summary of all the feedback we received:

Open feedback received via email

Individual submissions

We received 13 submissions from individuals. A community member who had attended an online information session also emailed through letters of support from nine organisations for their “Wollongong Workout Park” proposal. The letters were for a funding application they put together in mid-2021. Letters of support were provided as part of this submission by nine sport, health and community organisations.

Parking, traffic and public transport

Most commonly in open submissions from individuals, people spoke about parking, traffic or public transport. Some suggested more parking is needed, while others said they do not support having more parking. One respondent thought parking should be removed entirely and vehicular access limited, e.g. only to emergency and service vehicles or booked patrons of commercial facilities. One called to consolidate the parking area on the corner of Cliff Road and George Hanley Drive and at the Surf Club, then build a multistorey carpark on it. Another was unsupportive of having a multistorey car park. Some suggested moving Skydive the Beach, e.g. to Fairy Meadow, to use that area for parking. Some suggested using other areas for parking, such as:

- On the western side of Squires Way, both north and south of the bridge over Fairy Creek.
- Angle parking both sides of George Hanley Drive, between Corrimal Street and Squires Way
- In the area adjacent to the Innovation Campus and Live Steamers.

It was suggested to continue the road past the Lagoon Restaurant out onto Squires Way, possibly one way, to stop cars turning around at the restaurant and going back. Another suggested extending George Hanley Drive through the existing carpark (to follow the original railway location) from the roundabout and close off the existing road into Stuart Park to compensate for loss of parking spaces.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Other ideas included:

- Have digital smart parking sign at the intersection of Cliff Road and George Hanley Drive.
- Provide a free mini shuttle to park locations and the car park during peak season.
- Limit traffic along Cliff Road in front of the Novotel to emergency and service vehicles only.
- Charge parking fees to out-of-town visitors.
- Collaborate with the community to develop then implement the Stuart Park access and parking strategy.
- Create 10km/h shared zone/s to improve safety for pedestrians.
- Provide and enforce 3-hour or 4-hour time limits for foreshore parking to avoid all-day use e.g by people using the free bus to access the CBD.

There was a call to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and public transport at intersections.

Skydiving

This was the next most discussed topic in open submissions from individuals. Some think the oval should be for public use only. There were calls to return the heritage Caretakers Cottage to the public and use it as a museum, information centre or kiosk. Some would like Skydive to be relocated, e.g. to Fairy Meadow “where they have used it before”, North Dalton Park or the perimeter of the park “as previously provided in Plan of Management”. It was suggested that if Skydive moved, there could be community or charity events, occasional concerts or more parking in that space.

The space monopolised by Skydive is one of the best for ball games for families and groups, however they are frequently excluded from this by a private enterprise.

Greening, shade and open space

Some want Stuart Park to maintain its natural, green character with no additional infrastructure. Some said they want to see more trees planted, especially along the roads. There was a call to return the former cricket oval area to the concept of the village green, “as promised in the 1990s as the reason for relocating cricket and baseball out of Stuart Park”.

The level of development in the local area has meant Stuart Park and surrounds is the only available large green space left for people to use. Green space is essential as Council acknowledges in many of its policies. This was never more evident than during COVID, when the park was a refuge and haven for so many people.

Development

We received mixed comments about the possibility of future development in Stuart Park. Some would not like more structures or commercial facilities built in the park, with a respondent saying they may ruin the existing view. Others said they would like to see a new toilet block built near the Caretakers Cottage. A suggestion was made for a new beach canteen including seats, tables and a bridge area for fishing. We heard that the interior and exterior design of the beach canteen should reflect Wollongong’s beaches with classic sea motifs or themes and a long deck on a steep slope to connect it to the water.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Pathways and connectivity

A request was made to improve and widen the original cycleway through the park. One respondent wants cyclists confined to the roadside perimeter of the park and to in-fill a pedestrians-only path around the park. One respondent believes the path from the beach into Stuart Park near North Wollongong SLSC is dangerous for pedestrians (refer to extract from submission). They suggested:

- Having marked pedestrian crossings to provide safe movement.
- Replacing the pathway around the western part of the park.
- Completing the pathway around Stuart Park to make a circuit.

Planning decisions and impacts

It was requested Council recognise the areas surrounding Stuart Park, particularly the Smiths Hill area, is a high-density residential area with no access to a local park within the immediate area.

There was a call for the 2000 Plan of Management for North Beach and Stuart Park to be the overarching planning document for the area and not the Blue Mile Master Plan. With all future use of the park being consistent with the 2000 Plan of Management.

Events

We heard that well managed events and festivals bring many benefits to the park. It was mentioned that the management of major events has improved over the years. We also heard that people were happy that major events are taking place at other parks across Wollongong, like, North Dalton park, Lang Park and MacCabe Park. This has helped balance the needs of residents and visitors with the economic benefit. Another contributor suggested Lang Park and the Steelers Stadium could be used more for major events. A comment was made that events should not have commercial sponsorship from the liquor industry.

Community engagement

A request was made for more consultation with local residents. It was suggested that a community-based committee/working party could be established to inform the project. Membership of the committee/working party could include:

- Ward 2 Councillors
- Representative from North Wollongong Surf Club
- Representative of the food places at North Wollongong Beach
- Representative of Lagoon Restaurant
- Convenor of Neighbourhood Forum 5 or his/her delegate



There is a clear opportunity to complete the pathway (yellow line below) as a circuit around Stuart Park which would allow the many pedestrians and runners who already follow the logical and well-worn route to safely complete this without the many trip-hazards that exist near the Lagoon and without walking through mud after rain in much of the rest of the circuit.

10. Stuart Park

Such a wonderful asset: to have a large, open and grassy park adjacent to a beach. Once again, across the whole of the access road into this area, there is not a single designated and marked pedestrian crossing.

The pathway around the western part of the park is in need or replacement. It is cracked and rutted and beyond its best-before date.

The pathway on the beach-side of the car park ends abruptly before the Lagoon Restaurant. Although the path kind of continues through the Lagoon car park, it involves pedestrians competing with cars and is not well designated.



Image ©2021 TerraMetrics. Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

Extract from submission:

"Pedestrian Movements along the Blue Mile Pathway, Wollongong"

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Four residents of North Beach/Smiths Hill area

Picnic facilities, seating and water

There was a call for more seating to be provided near the playground. An idea was shared to install more shelters and BBQs to the north west of the playground, while being mindful of allowing enough open space for people to play and run around.

Waste management / maintenance

We received feedback about the restaurant's waste disposal – that it is an 'eyesore' and unhygienic. It was suggested the waste from the rubbish could be removed more often and the area could be cleaned with a high-pressure hose. The wooden structure housing the bins could also be better used.

Other areas

People shared comments about how busy the park can be and that we should encourage people to go to some of our other local parks and beaches. Others told us they are happy with Stuart Park and think that resources would be better directed towards some of our other parks. It was suggested MacCabe Park could be improved.

People using the park

Respondents shared that the number of visitors to the park can stop residents and their families from using the park. It was requested that Council recognise that many users of Stuart Park, especially on weekends, are not residents of Wollongong.

Other comments

Other comments and feedback received via email include:

- Shared proposal for Wollongong Workout Project.
- Rejecting any proposals for a BMX track.
- Strict enforcement on noise controls.
- Encourage family-oriented activities of a fair commercial nature.

Group submissions

We received detailed submissions from 12 groups. The full submissions have been provided to the project team for consideration. Following is a high-level summary of each:

One community cycling group made the following requests:

- Relocate the existing shared path crossing 20 metres north to improve sightline.
- Continue the shared path on George Hanley Drive east to Cliff Road.
- Build the shared path around the northeast side of Stuart Park as shown in the Blue Mile Master Plan.
- Provide a separated cycleway to improve safety for all.
- Have a fully separated bicycle route to accommodate the number of cyclists using the Coastline Cycleway.
- Provide a link from North Wollongong Railway Station along Ajax Avenue.

A government health promotion unit provided the following recommendations to inform the development of the Stuart Park Master Plan to maximise health and wellbeing:

- Acknowledge the cultural significance of the area through interpretive signs explaining the cultural significance of the area, identifying bush tucker and local native plants.
- Improve active living infrastructure, e.g.
 - Slow traffic measures.
 - Clear crossing points.
 - Shared pathways on both sides of the parking area.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Level pathway access to more places such as forest maze, dry creek bed.
- Complement concrete pathways with paths/tracks that include mulch and dirt surfaces.
- Accessible pathways.
- Separate off-road style path for BMX, mountain and gravel bikes.
- Bike racks.
- Outdoor exercise equipment stations.
- Regular activation events and seasonal programs of free or low-cost communal sport/fitness activities, e.g: communal soccer, cricket, free outdoor exercise classes, Park Run type activities.
- Increase lighting along shared pathways and at equipment/facilities.
- Increase appropriate supportive seating, including bench seating with supportive high back and arm rest to assist with rising out of seat.
- Water-saving showers.
- More affordable, healthy food/drink options closer to the main playground and picnic areas e.g. food vans during weekends and holidays.
- No smoking signs in locations where smoking is prohibited.
- Improve accessibility:
 - Add wheelchair accessible water refill and drinking fountains.
 - Uninterrupted level pathways.
 - Add wheelchair accessible picnic tables and hard surface around current picnic tables with sufficient manoeuvring area.
 - Additional disabled toilets.
 - Ensure signage is readable from a seated height and include clear legible text, explanatory symbols and images.
 - Include Braille in signage/tactile maps of site.
- Add shade trees to open spaces, shade structures over the main play space and quiet/calming areas.

A local heritage community group would like images of the history of the park and its strong value to the migrant community in any signage, interpretative works or art installations. They feel any migrant history that is showcased needs to follow the Indigenous history of the area. The group believes there are opportunities to:

- Link the park to other key places to contextualise the area, such as the Harbour and migrant hostel accommodation on Squires Way.
- Model safety and responsible care for our beaches and natural environment as well as the management of refuse.

They shared an extract from their research to provide context and emphasise the significance of Stuart



Stuart Park tents and caravans can be seen around the oval and among the trees. Aerial photo January 1955 Wollongong City Council.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Park in the history of migration to Wollongong. This includes information about tents and caravans in Stuart Park that were used as temporary first accommodation for migrants coming to Wollongong in the late 1940s and '50s. In 1949, it was estimated the population at Stuart Park was about 3,000. NSW Heritage Listed buildings from the former Migrant Workers Hostels are a five-minute walk further north along Squires Way. They shared photos used in the research, two of which are included in this report.



Jeanny, Elle, Jeannet and Herbert van Gils outside the tent at Stuart Park 1951.
Photo: Petrus van Gils.

A road safety lobby group provided a detailed submission to support their view that share paths are dangerous. They want separated pathways for pedestrians and bike riders.

Local emergency services representative would like to provide input into the draft Master Plan. Their focus is on operational considerations for major events and music festivals, e.g. crowd management, infrastructure and hostile vehicle mitigation.

A local resident community action group provided a detailed submission and suggested improvements for:

- Facilities for community and visitors, e.g. shelters, barbeques and seating.
- Natural environment improvements, e.g. additional plantings.
- Highlighting heritage, e.g. park entry structure and interpretive signage.
- Providing for passive recreation, e.g. open space, exercise equipment and Bocce area.
- Restricting commercial use, e.g. relocating Skydive the Beach, minimal-impact events and leasing the cottage out for a kiosk or information centre.
- Improving access and safety, e.g. co-develop access and parking strategy with community, 10km/h shared zone, timed parking and perimeter share path.
- Installing services, adding lighting and improving drainage.
- Ongoing management, e.g. employ a Stuart Park Place Manager, establish a Master Plan working party with community and use feedback from internal and external stakeholders to inform improvements.

A local recreation business told us they value the open green space and views between the park and ocean. They made suggestions for improvements, including:

- Upgrading the Caretakers Cottage in line with the park's heritage and environmental strategy.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Adding a shaded area and associated facilities next to the cottage.
- Allocating a bus parking bay on George Hanley Drive, with Skydive providing bus shuttles.
- Joint precinct initiatives through partnerships with surrounding local businesses.
- Linking with Indigenous communities through programs, art and joint initiatives. Inclusive/accessible facilities e.g. increasing accessibility to the cottage.

A local organisation that help preserve Illawarra history advocates to maintain the park as an open recreation area for individuals and small groups. They do not support use of the park for commercial activities or large events like concerts but are ok with Illawarra Live Steamers continuing where they are. They think exercise/fitness activities should be restricted to non-peak times and/or to areas in the western portion of the park east of George Hanley Drive. They'd like to see historical and environment interpretation boards in the park, supplemented by technology access to more information. They want the dune area protected by a wider range of endemic flora, access barriers and accessible pathways. They want to see the Swamp Oak plantings maintained along both sides of George Hanley Drive. They suggested adding a 'formal gateway' near the junction of Cliff Rd and George Hanley Drive. They do not want parking areas to increase. They would like additional toilet facilities near the playground and in the western sector of the Park east of George Hanley Drive.

A community service club proposed two projects:

- A basketball court that could also be converted to a performance space.
- '100 Tree Project' – planting 100 Illawarra Flame (or best option) trees to celebrate Rotary Club of Wollongong's 100 years of service to the City.

They acknowledged the Aboriginal heritage significance of local landmarks and would like to gain the support of Indigenous communities and organisations to assist with the proposed projects.

A national conservation body would like the following items considered whilst developing the Master Plan:

- The public park amenity be maintained.
- Reconsider use of the skydiving drop zone so it can be used by the public.
- Consider alternate locations for skydiving activities or meet participants at the airport to take pressure off the park.
- Avoid corporate use of the former caretaker's cottage by current or future businesses
- Carefully manage festivals to minimise the alienation of public space.
- Coastal dunes, riparian corridor and cultural landscape plantings maintained/enhanced.
- Appropriately maintain heritage listed Norfolk Island Pines and Canary Island Palms and prepare succession plantings for pines and other feature trees, including figs.
- Add interpretative signage – historical and ecological.
- No additional parking facilities or multistorey parking.
- Heritage listing of the stone shelters.

They congratulated Council on the information session video presentation on the engagement website.

A government heritage organisation advised there are recorded Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and values at Stuart Park. They recommend a comprehensive heritage assessment be conducted to inform the Master Plan, incorporating:

- A detailed Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment.
- An Environment Heritage Assessment.

A local tourism organisation emphasised the importance of major events at the park and North Wollongong Beach precinct to the region's economy. They are not against limiting the number of events

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

held each year, but would like capacity for events at the park to increase to attract world-class musical acts. They said having one premier event annually at North Wollongong Beach would help take the load off Stuart Park. They expressed support for skydiving adding colour and atmosphere to the park, saying “They have shown over many years that they can work with and among event operators, with little disturbance to the general public”. Their suggestions for maintenance and improvements for major events included:

- Allocation of a dedicated annual maintenance budget for pre-approved major event sites.
- A membrane installed in high traffic areas of the park, so heavy vehicles can access the non-hardstand areas without causing damage.
- Improving drainage, especially in the heavily used south-east section of the park.

Open feedback received during online information sessions

Eight people attended a one-hour online information session. Their feedback is summarised under the following themes:

Parking

A representative of a local resident action group spoke about needing a foreshore parking strategy. Another community member made suggestions for:

- Smart parking.
- Creating more spaces on Cliff Road and Squires Road.

Exercise facilities

One community member shared their detailed [proposal](#) for a large outdoor gym/calisthenics equipment, “Wollongong Workout Park”.

Use of the site

Some community members said Skydive the Beach should be relocated so that the space they’re using can be used by the general public. There is concern about the site’s use for commercial business activities and perception that Skydive do not pay Council adequately for use of their facilities. Other suggestions for how the site should be used include:

- Only using the oval for occasional community events or festivals.
- Banning bikes within Puckeys as they are perceived to be dangerous.
- Limiting group sizes, particularly around barbeque areas.

Blue Mile Master Plan

A representative of a local resident action group said a significant number of existing 2007 Blue Mile Master Plan projects have not been completed.

History and heritage

One community member said they would like to see Puckeys House rebuilt. They shared personal stories of the park as a zoo, which had peacocks and wallabies.

Community engagement

Some community members attended to learn about the process for developing the master plan and appreciated the opportunity to receive information at the online information session.

Open feedback received in meetings

A local Aboriginal organisation provided their feedback.

- Stuart Park is a significant site. This needs to be acknowledged and carefully considered in all future planning and works.
- Want to ensure the significance of the park is recognised and acknowledged in the future and keen to discuss how this might be explored through the Master Planning process, both in terms of ensuring appropriate outcomes but also through education and site interpretation.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- More detailed and broader discussions in relation to the master plan process need to be held to consider the future use and management of the space.
- Keen to use the site to educate the community about Aboriginal Cultural Values, stories and attachments and to encourage the whole community to engage with this important part of our heritage. Local Aboriginal people must lead this process and the development of interpretation material and how these stories are communicated and told. The development of the interpretation material for Sandon Point by the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council was noted as an example of where this type of approach is happening.
- The ongoing use of the area for picnic grounds and passive recreation may be a good fit for the site. They are concerned about any ideas to commercialise and develop the space further, or to build large-scale infrastructure.

A cultural knowledge holder and traditional owner provided the following feedback.

- They would like to be involved as a cultural advisor.
- Stuart Park is a very special and sacred site for local Aboriginal people.
- It was traditionally used for a gathering place, a place to make tools.
- There are known archaeological sites that should be kept protected from development and dogs.
- Was also a place for teaching, hunting and dance.
- Had plenty of bush tucker which and fresh water that meets the sea.
- Would like to see an Aboriginal-designed circle gathering place built in the ground with sandstone. It would be the perfect place to meet outdoors on country if a big meeting needed to happen.
 - Big enough to sit 30 to 40 people.
 - Locate near the existing new park.
 - A spot that all can use, easy to access.
 - Toilet close by so elders using the space don't have to walk too far.
 - Tables and chairs around the outside with shelters.

Another local Aboriginal organisation provided their feedback.

- Would like to see:
 - A storyline of Aboriginal history depicted on signs along the boardwalk of Stuart Park.
 - Artwork that represents the historical use for such a special place for the local Aboriginal people.
 - More toilet amenities in park area.
 - Aboriginal artwork on footpaths, like what was done at Hill 60.
- Interested in creating a bush tucker walk at Stuart Park for all community to be a part of.
- Interested in creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, especially young people.
- Would like specific sacred sites to be untouched if possible and preserved.

A charity health organisation shared their feedback.

The organisation has a focus on creating a health-affirming environment, through urban design, footpath connections and spaces to recreate. They shared Heart Foundation's Healthy Active By Design case studies.

They said it is important to:

- Get people walking more.
- Provide connectivity to active transport.
- Make sure those who are disadvantaged, at risk of heart disease and least active see it as beneficial – making it accessible and appealing for those people.

A local resident action group provided their feedback.

They spoke of Stuart Park's local and state importance, as the most important park on the coast between the Royal National Park and Victoria, used primarily for passive recreation and nature-based activities. They feel a new Master Plan needs to be holistic, recognising the needs of the natural environment, users and key stakeholders, engaging with them and balancing key priorities and

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

outcomes. The group want Council to consider existing constraints in developing a new Master Plan, such as:

- Environmental conservation areas.
- Flooding.
- Conditions of DA approvals, leases & licences including:
 - Skydive the Beach (they feel it alienates the large, central grassed area).
 - Lagoon Restaurant.
 - Commercial fitness trainers.
 - Illawarra Live Steamers.
 - Major events.

They said ideally, the plan of management should be developed first, which will outline principles for further enhancement of site.

They believe optimising green space is the highest priority and improving functionality is paramount. General observations included the need to:

- Improve facilities for the growing community and increasing visitors, including picnic shelters and seating, drinking fountains and toilets.
- Maintain perimeter plantings, whilst additional tree planting will help Council meet its Urban Greening Strategy targets. Extend Norfolk Pine plantings along the foreshore.
- Highlight heritage (Aboriginal, European) including installation of interpretative signage, art.
- Explore potential opportunities for local skate facilities and hardcourt basketball court, exercise equipment, maintain area for bocce.
- Improve path network and reduce conflict with cyclists.
- Improve entry point, including raised pedestrian area – noted success of recent garden/flower plantings at key entry node.
- Retain JP Galvin Park area for passive recreation and picnics. Noted wind protection in existing picnic shelters on the ridge lacking. Provide additional bubbler/water points.
- Western area of park provides more nature-based opportunities e.g. nature trails and links to Puckeys Estate.
- Maintain Live Steamers area west of Squires Way – no further development but access could be enhanced by additional pedestrian crossing.
- Enhance the lagoon area enhanced for passive recreation, children swimming etc. Minimise concrete paths / hard surfaces.
- Opportunity for place management approach.

The group also requested opportunities to exchange and discuss views with representatives of the key stakeholders, including the recreation planning section and open space staff in developing the plan.

Drawings from early education and care services

Poster templates were sent to early education and care services across the Wollongong Local Government Area. The posters allowed space for children to draw three things they would most like to see or do in Stuart Park. We received drawings from 44 children.

An amazing swing that goes as high as the sky

Most of the drawings included requests for more play equipment, with a slide, monkey bars, flying fox and swings being the most popular. Other suggestions included:

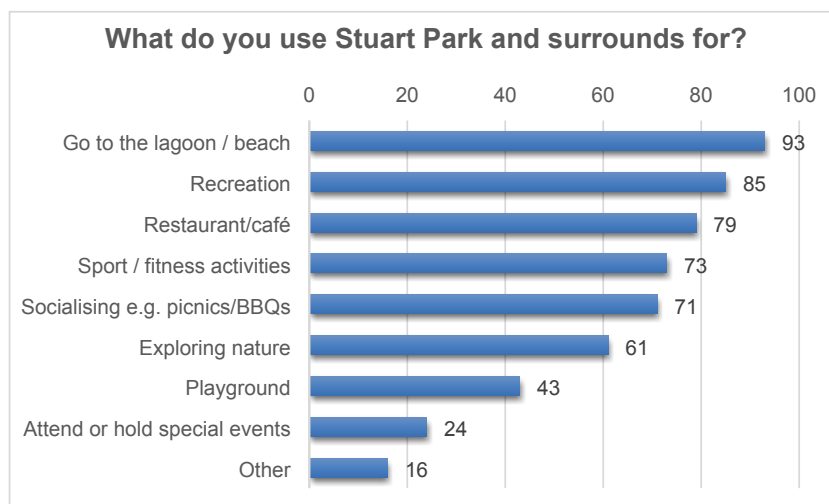
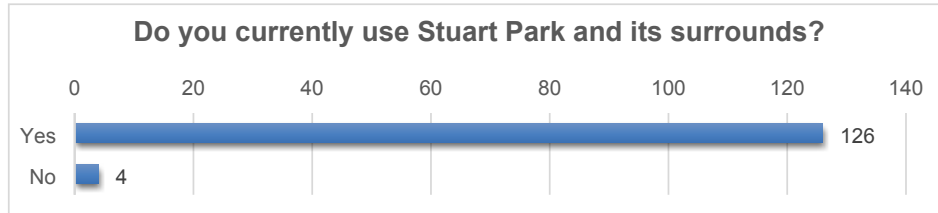
- Swimming pool or water park.
- Ninja park.
- Bike track or skatepark.
- Climbing area or frame.
- Sand pit.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Trampoline/jumping pillow.
- Adventure/imagination play; an obstacle course, pirate ship, rocket ship, cubby house, dry creek bed, doctors set, hairdressers set and train set.
- A play area for babies.
- Bowling alley or flip out.
- Bush walking and camping area.
- Shelters, bins and picnic tables and seats.
- Toilets and showers.
- Potato garden.
- A waterfall with a fairy garden.
- Art centre.
- Yoga area.
- Fenced area for dogs.
- Butterfly or dragonfly enclosure.
- Pony rides.
- Small farmyard.
- Pond for frogs.
- A jetty with flowers, water and a boat.
- Lolly or ice cream shop.

Survey

People could complete either an online or paper survey. We received a total of 130 completed surveys; 70 online surveys and 60 paper surveys. Some responses to the survey questions are graphed and others are presented under themed headings.

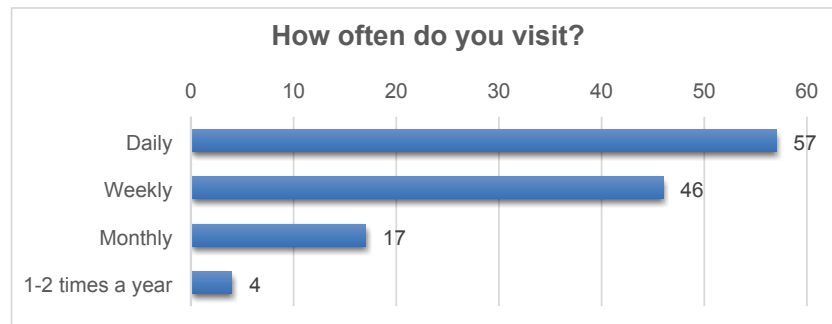


Other reasons people gave for visiting the park included:

- Walking.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Dog walking/activities and picnics.
- Bike riding/cycling.
- Access parking to go to the beach.
- Kick a football.
- Meditate and read.
- Passive recreation.



People who said they didn't currently use Stuart Park said their reasons for this are:

- Too busy, especially in summer.
- Parking is too difficult.
- No shade.
- Don't like the rock music concerts, festivals and daytrippers from Sydney camping out and taking over the facilities.
- A 93-year-old who uses a walking frame prefers to walk along the Blue Mile, closer to where they live.

We asked what people value the most about Stuart Park and what are the good things people like about it. Their responses are summarised as follows:

Nature / green space / open space / size

Most respondents said they value the park's natural areas, green space and open space. They expressed appreciation for the beautiful scenery, coastal and escarpment views and grassed areas. Some said they value the trees, shade and wildlife, including the birdlife and duck pond. Several commented about the park having great spaces to picnic, including under the Norfolk Island pines. Some spoke of the lagoon and the natural water play opportunity it creates. Respondents like that there is lots of space for a variety of activities. Feedback showed an appreciation for the large area of relatively undeveloped land right in the city and next to the ocean, with the backdrop of Mount Keira and Puckey's bushland. It was commented that large, green spaces like these are highly valued by those living in surrounding apartments. Its value during the pandemic was also noted.

You are immersed in nature, but in the city with facilities, showers, toilets, bins, playground and coastal path connection right there.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Exercise

Some respondents spoke of the park being a great space to play sport and exercise, including with their outdoor fitness groups, friends and family. They enjoy walking, running and riding there. Some mentioned participating in Parkrun. The pathway connection to Puckeyes and North Wollongong is valued.

I love that I can come down and enjoy my outdoor fitness in such a great environment. As we know from this past year, fitness plays an important part to mental health and training outdoors is so much better for you. We can even enjoy a dip in the ocean afterwards.

Location/connections

Some respondents appreciate the park's location close to the CBD, Blue Mile, Puckeyes and the beach. Several spoke of it being close to home, so it's convenient and easy to access or walk to and from. Some said it's handy to cafes and other Blue Mile amenities. One respondent said they value its isolation away from traffic and roads, while another spoke of their appreciation for having "a beautiful pocket of nature so close to the CBD".

Facilities and amenities

Some respondents said they value facilities and amenities such as:

- Barbecues and huts.
- Picnic shelters.
- Public toilets and showers – "clean, modern".
- Seating.
- The stone shelters.

We often use the shelter areas for lunch or when the weather changes.

Pathways / bike paths

Some respondents said they like the walking paths and bike track. They like the connectivity to the Harbour, WIN Stadium, Puckeyes and the North Gong Pavilion – "great for exercising". Some like the flat pathways ("easy, accessible") and being able to take their children for a ride on their bikes or scooters.

Ocean / beach

Some respondents value the access or proximity to the beach and lagoon. Some said they enjoy surfing, kayaking or the views.

Atmosphere

Respondents said it was a peaceful, calm and relaxing place when not crowded. Some like seeing people enjoy the area, saying it feels lively and friendly. Another said they like the lack of commercialism.

Restaurants/cafés

Several respondents like the cafés and restaurants at the park and along the Blue Mile. People enjoy having a coffee in beautiful natural surroundings as well as supporting local businesses and going there for special occasions.

Play

Several respondents said they like the playground or playing at the park because it has:

- Accessible facilities.
- Natural water play opportunity created by the lagoon.
- Open space for children to play.
- Paddleboarding on the lagoon and beach for young children.
- Playground has good variety.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Childrens cycle area.
- Is great for all ages and families.

Maintenance

Several people said they appreciate that the facilities, e.g. toilets, and the park's grounds are well maintained.

Skydiving

A few respondents said they enjoy seeing "spectacular, colourful parachutes" and skydivers landing. Some think it is a drawcard for the city, with nearby cafés benefiting from visitors.

Variety of activities/experiences, a place for everyone

Respondents spoke of their appreciation of the large space, its coastal/beachside location so close to the city and how it's used in a variety of ways by different groups, e.g:

- Picnickers/barbequers.
- Families.
- Music goers.
- Different cultural groups.
- Walkers and dog walkers.
- Bike riders.
- Beach goers.
- Skydivers.
- People enjoying natural areas.

Multipurpose
but spread out

A place to spend time with friends and family

Respondents said they appreciate being able to socialise at the park with friends and/or family. People appreciate that it is a family-friendly place. These respondents go there to eat (picnics or café), meet people, or play.

We live in an apartment
so it is our backyard, a
place to meet people.

Events

A few respondents said they enjoy live music events, such as concerts and festivals. One said they like how the park is cleaned up quickly and well after big events. Another said music events "may be a bit inconvenient, but provide a vibrant music scene for our area".

Parking

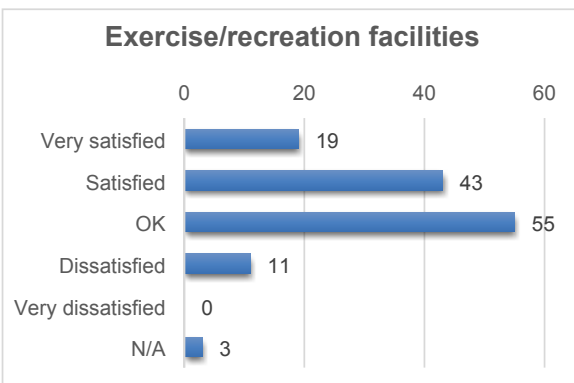
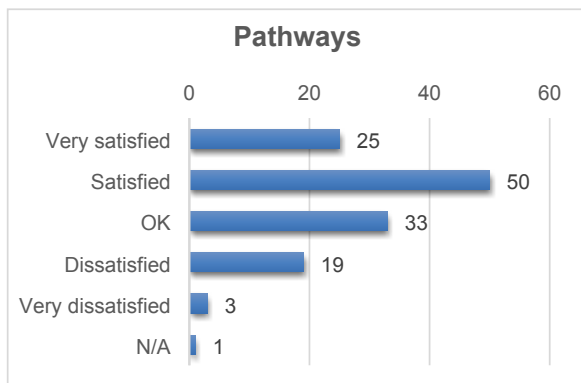
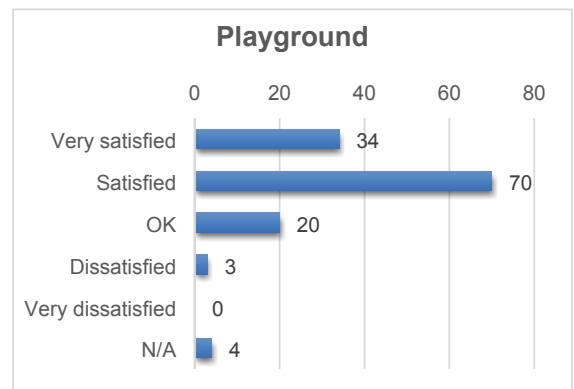
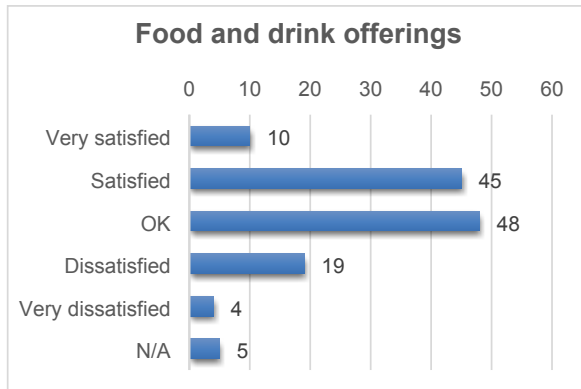
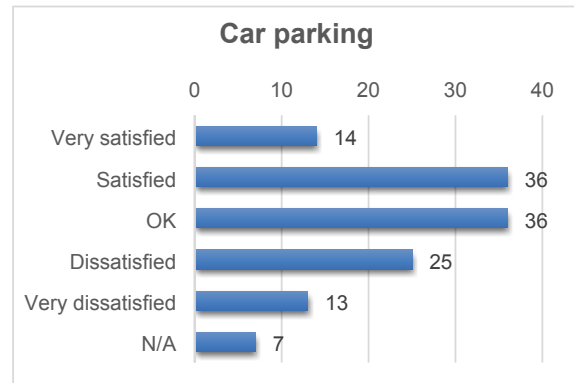
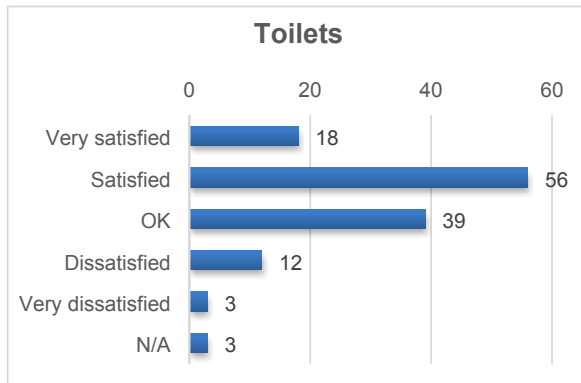
Some respondents said they appreciate the amount of parking, location and limited traffic at the park.

Less commonly, respondents said they value:

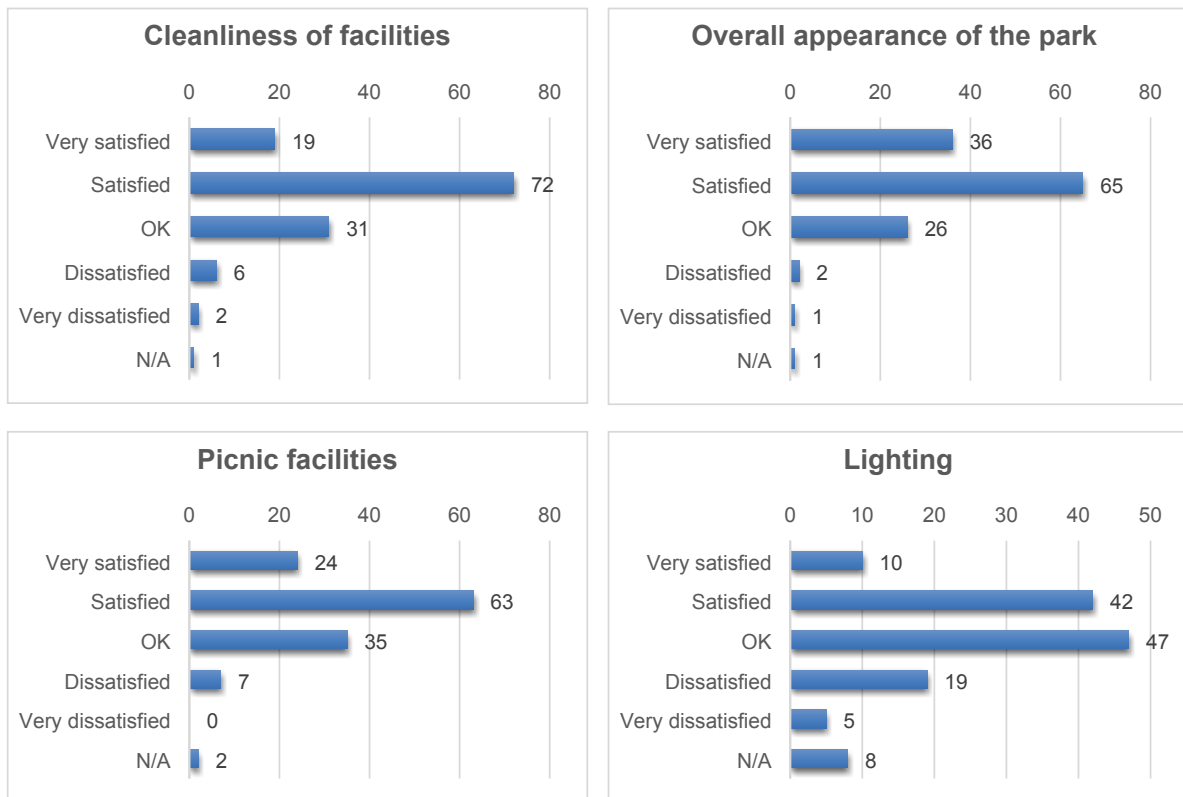
- The park's historical buildings, e.g. surf club, Diggies and brick huts.
- Feeling safe at the park.
- No squatting or camping allowed.
- Its potential!

We asked people to rate their satisfaction of the facilities and services at the park. These are their responses:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



We asked people to tell us their ideas for how Stuart Park can be improved for the whole community over the next 10 years. We wanted to find out what would encourage people to spend time there and what's most important to them. Responses are presented under the following themes with the number of submissions referencing that theme in brackets:

Parking, traffic and public transport

More than a third of respondents shared ideas or comments relating to parking, traffic and public transport. There are mixed opinions about what will resolve issues relating to this. While some are supportive of increasing the amount of parking, others do not like this idea at all and are concerned more parking will make congestion worse by encouraging more vehicles into the area. Some want timed or paid parking, with preferential weekend / public holiday access or parking permits issued to ratepayers. Some think visitors from out-of-area should be contributing to the maintenance cost of the park through parking fees. Others say it is important to keep free, untimed parking. Some called for more accessible parking spaces.

I often avoid going, even though I would like to, because I know it will be hard to park.

To manage parking and congestion issues, people suggested:

- Evening lockout of parking.
- Having an electronic sign showing the number of car spaces available, or a "parking full" sign at the roundabout entry to the car park.
- Parking attendants, e.g. a roster of interested community groups to supervise weekend parking and collect parking entry fees.
- Extending the road to join up to the main road beyond the Lagoon Restaurant (perhaps with traffic lights).
- Free 'park and ride' bus service.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- A multistorey car park.
- Marked parking spaces in nearby streets and better line marking of spaces at the park, with fines for those taking up two parking spots.
- One way traffic.
- Angle or rear-to-kerb parking along the western side of Squires Way.
- Encourage people to use the Gong Shuttle by adding a stop closer to the park, or a better connection / crossing to the existing stop outside the Novotel.

One respondent said priority for parking and feedback on the area needs to be given to the skydiving business, with a view they are pulling in huge revenue from tourists for the city and Stuart Park area.

Gridlock has a massive impact on the skydive business, as they cannot transport their passengers in and out of the area.

Suggestions for improving the safety of pedestrians and bike riders included:

- A raised crossing that gives bikes and pedestrians right of way on Cliff Road at the beginning of the car park.
- New crossing from Virginia Street to Stuart Park - "It is very dangerous crossing Squires Way and George Hanley Drive".
- Install a stop sign on George Hanley Drive at the intersection with Cliff Road to give priority to pedestrians on the crossing - "Vehicles often do not fully stop before turning either right or left. This has been a dangerous intersection for a long time".

One respondent said "swamp pines are scary" and they don't want to walk through areas with these to get to Virginia Street or George Hanley Drive. They suggested ripping some out to create spaces for more parking islands.

Pathways, connectivity, cycling facilities and accessibility

Many respondents spoke about needing to improve, repair or widen existing pathways. There is a strong desire to have a continuous path around the park and to separate pedestrians from cyclists. Some want cyclists to use the pathways outside the park and keep the inner pathways just for pedestrians. There were requests for easy, safe access to the lagoon, restaurant area and beach for people with disability.

Suggested locations or ideas for new pathways and connections to other areas included:

- Continuous connection from the coastal path to the lagoon and playground.
- Connection to North Wollongong Station.
- A path to walk through the park - not just around it.
- A pathway on the northern side of the Lagoon Restaurant.
- Cinder, not concrete, walkway around eastern fence line.
- Connecting routes to other local riding/walking trails.
- Footpath from the playground to the toilet block - "grass uneven, stumbling block".
- Dedicated running track.
- Accessible links from the park to Puckeys Estate and the Innovation Campus.
- Footpaths on the opposite side to the beach, across the carpark.
- A bridge across the lagoon closer to the beach or over the roots of the casuarina grove.
- A good dirt walkway at the north western end.

Stop using asphalt for walkways.. generates too much heat.. dirt walkway is sufficient.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Suggestions relating to bike paths and cycling included:

- An inner, circular bike loop for young children.
- Build a cycle track from near the lagoon to Squires Way.
- Realign the bike track away from the T-intersection.
- Replace the bitumen bike track that is becoming dangerous with longitudinal cracking.
- Connect the current bike track between North Gong Beach and Puckeys Estate, possibly in front of the Lagoon Restaurant – “Need to make the bike track not go directly through the playground. It is very dangerous to try navigate through the carpark with kids around”.
- Provide illustrated maps and directions via apps etc.
- More cycling facilities and secure bike racks.
- Onsite e-bicycle hire.

The intersection of the bike track and pathway on Squires Way causes a lot of problems, especially with bikes going too fast.

Greening and shade

More than a quarter of respondents spoke about having more shade, more local native plantings or keeping the park as green and natural as possible. Some said native vegetation is important to support native wildlife. Another said open green spaces were important to local residents living in apartments. One respondent said they love the flower boxes. Another said they'd like more shade, but to be mindful of the impact on large concerts. There is a view the green space should be left open to all. Some suggested locations where more trees could be planted, including:

- On the western side.
- Around the playground.
- Around the edge of the large green area.
- In the middle of the park.
- Along pathways.

Other suggestions included:

- Extend what is growing in Puckeys Reserve into Stuart Park.
- Turn the grassed areas into gardens.
- Keep the grassy beachfront natural.
- High-quality landscaping and native gardens with things of interest for people to look at, use and impress visitors – “An extension and expansion of the Wollongong Botanic Gardens”.
- Urban agriculture.
- Put tree guards around new trees.
- Demolish the Lagoon Restaurant and car park and return it to parkland with picnic shelters.

Suggestions for vegetation maintenance included:

- Clear the undergrowth on the south and west sides of park to beautify it.
- Weed and get rid of non-native plants and trees in the green area on the western side of the car park and along George Hanley Drive.
- Weed Puckeys.
- Replace non-native weeds growing along the banks of the lagoon area with native vegetation.

Toilets / showers

Some respondents would like additional toilets or showers, or upgrades to the existing toilets. Some think the toilet block in the middle of the park should be demolished or replaced. There were requests for showers near the lagoon end of the beach, including water-saving showers. There was a request for additional shower facilities at the northern end of beach on “peak use days”.

Locations where additional toilets are desired include:

- Near the playground.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Nearer to the main road.
- South-west near the duck pond.

Requested features for toilet amenities included:

- Sloped floors so water drains away properly.
- Sanitary bins for transgender men.
- Toddler-sized toilets in the family amenities, like some of the shopping centres.
- Toilets with lids.
- "Sinks you can actually wash your hands in".
- Clean changing facilities.
- Having to run a toilet training 2-3 year old all the way from the playground to the toilets is not easy, especially if you have other kids that you can't leave unattended.
- Install dispenser soap as "current hand soaps are unhygienic".

Picnic facilities, seating and water

Nearly a quarter of respondents said there is a need for additional picnic facilities, seating or access to water. This includes more huts/shelters, barbeques and shaded picnic areas. An idea was shared to have some weatherproof picnic shelters that could be booked for use via the Council website. There was a suggestion to add some benches and raised observation platforms overlooking the beach along the eastern side of the park. There were requests for seating up near the main road, more sheltered seating at the playground and picnic shelters in the north western area. Some think the oval should be turned into a picnic area, with shade and/or shelters. There were requests for the provision of water; taps, bubblers and water bottle refill stations. Some would like seating not just for picnickers, e.g. grouped bench seating within a garden.

I like the area to the south of the large playground around the pond for more intimate/quieter picnics.

Events

Respondents most commonly said the type of event they would like to see is markets, including night markets. There was discussion about when these could be held, with suggestions including on the last Friday each month, weekly, in summer during daylight savings or on weekends.

Some would like to see more running and cycling events or a seasonal program of sport/fitness events the community can take part in, e.g:

- Communal soccer.
- Cricket.
- Free outdoor exercise classes.
- Parkrun type activities.

A Parkrunner would like to see signs promoting when the event happens (weekly) and kilometre markers along the track.

While several respondents would like to see more large music and concert events happen, others did not support this idea.

Relocation of music concerts to JJ Kelly Park? Impact of noise and antisocial behaviour on nearby residents is huge and constant - often on public holidays stopping us from doing any entertaining ourselves. Parking is also ridiculous at these times, resulting in strangers parking in our driveways.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Other events-related ideas included:

- Community or special events, such as on New Year's Eve or other occasions.
- Food festivals.
- Once a year kart race.
- Regular activation events.

No circuses

One commented "The park should not be monetised in a 'user pays' concept but be freely amenable, and its availability for informal gatherings maintained".

Food / cafes / restaurants

There is a desire for more food and drink options, including casual dining or takeaway/kiosk. Some suggested a mobile food van area with some permanent outdoor seating and tables, e.g. near North Beach Pavilion on the southern side. Suggestions for food and drink options included:

- Casual, healthy food/drink option/s, including food vans.
- An ice cream cart.
- Another café.

The Lagoon Restaurant is too formal and the distance from the main playground to any alternate food outlets is too far.

Locations where people would like to see these include:

- Closer to the main playground and picnic areas.
- Near the Skydive office.
- At the lagoon end of the park.

I wouldn't mind a kiosk, but I don't want to see significantly more buildings on the site than there are now.

Business and development

Some respondents want the park to remain as is. They don't want to see any development occur and want the natural characteristic retained. Some feel private/commercial businesses should not be allowed to operate in the park. Others made suggestions for developments they'd like to see, including:

- A deck over the lagoon to fish or feed ducks.
- A variety of shops, similar to Burleigh Heads with the beach and shopping close by.
- Improved facilities for SkyDive the Beach – "We believe this could be done sensitively with minimal impact on the green space".
- A cable car station that takes people to the top of the escarpment and back – "This would REALLY put Wollongong on the world map. Tourists could park at the top off the F6, land in Stuart Park, day trip around all the key locations in Wollongong (getting around by e-bike or free shuttle) before heading home or staying overnight – an amazing tourist experience and a winner for Wollongong businesses!"
- A supermarket – "North Wollongong needs a Metro Woolies, Coles Express or IGA. There are currently no supermarkets within walking distance to cater to all the apartments in the area. A supermarket would also be an awesome convenience for people wanting to picnic, picking up fresh food etc".

If you start developing it you risk spoiling its atmosphere. Also you don't want too many people there of that will create more parking/toilet/facility problems.

It was meant to be a park for the people, not for business.

Need to create other areas in the Illawarra where residents and visitors can enjoy similar facilities and recreation as Stuart Park.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

It should be modelled on Centennial Park in Sydney - large, open space to relax with low-impact recreational amenities. The park should maintain the relaxed atmosphere of the holiday camping ground it once was.

Lighting

Several people called for improved or more lighting, especially along pathways. There was a request not to have major floodlighting and another to turn lights down at night to allow a more natural environment.

I really enjoy training there with my fitness group but in winter, it gets very dark and you can't see where you are running.

Waste management / maintenance

There were requests for more bins, including recycling bins. Several complained about the rubbish area at the Lagoon Restaurant, saying it is a "smelly eyesore" that needs to be cleaned up. It was said the garbage bins in the Skydive car park are a dumping ground. Some respondents spoke about needing to fix pollution and water quality issues at the pond and lagoon. Some called to continue or improve the level of cleanliness and maintenance of the toilets and facilities, including the playground tables.

The duck pond has had a tractor tyre in it for some time. Not pretty.

The Lagoon restaurant rubbish compound is a disgrace. The encroachment on the road is untidy and at times dangerous - kegs, broken furniture and bins that stink.

Skydiving

While there was not much commentary on skydiving activities, most of those who did mention it said they think it should be relocated to another area, e.g. North Dalton Park or Fairy Meadow Beach. This is to free up more space for picnickers and allow the area to be used by the general public for other activities. Others called to maintain the parachuting facilities, saying it is iconic to Wollongong.

Its presence does little for Wollongong from an economic point of view. As soon as they land they are taken away in a bus with no time to go to the local cafes. The money they pay Council is not commensurate with monies paid for the privilege of using Council-owned properties elsewhere in Australia.

Exercise facilities

Some said they would like gym equipment stations or ninja warrior course, to encourage a healthy lifestyle and participation by people of all ages, e.g. elderly people who don't like indoor gyms. Others said they want recreation space retained for sport and fitness activities. Some asked that outdoor fitness groups be allowed to continue using the area. Another suggested having yoga on the beach on Sunday mornings.

Spaces to play

Some people would like a skate park for mid/older children. Others would like a water park/play area, near the children's' playground. Reasons given for this are that the beach is unpatrolled at that end, lagoon and beach are unsafe for swimming, and the lagoon is sometimes stagnant or polluted. Examples of water play areas people like are Darling Quarter/Darling Harbour, Pyrmont and Brisbane Southbank. A request was made for a children's ninja warrior park or play area like one in Oatley (Sydney). There were requests for a basketball court or multi-sport courts and proper Bocce court. Some

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

would like more play equipment and a jump track for children. There was a suggestion to remove the children's' bike paths, with a view they are not used much, and to have more shade sails in the children's' play area.

Stormwater/drainage/flooding

Several respondents called for the drainage to be improved. Some areas have been observed to be waterlogged for weeks.

Dogs

A few respondents would like the park to be a dog-friendly area, while others do not want dogs in this space because they don't want it "spoilt with dog poo". There were requests for an enclosed off-leash area, or parks similar to Reed Park in Dapto or Brisbane waterfront. More bins and waste bags were requested.

The area over near the duck pond would be good [for a dog park]. The ducks would not be affected and other activities such as Skydive the Beach, concerts or cross-country races would be unaffected.

Safety

A few respondents gave suggestions for improving safety at the park. These included:

- Pedestrian crossings:
 - Where the bike path crosses the road, north of the surf club.
 - Just east of the Kembla Street roundabout, to cross George Hanley Drive.
 - Between Virginia Street and Fairy Creek, to cross Squires Way.
- Banning bikes in the park or having speed limits for motorised skateboards, bicycles and similar – "they speed and are a danger to walkers, children ,dogs, water rats, ducks etc."
- Measures to prevent to prevent loitering, vandalism, hooning and antisocial behaviours:
 - Clear signage and surveillance.
 - More ranger presence.
- First aid station - defibrillator.
- Having a perimeter fence or fencing the playground to keep children safe.

Aboriginal culture

There were requests to have places to learn about and explore Aboriginal culture. These included:

- An Indigenous garden.
- Aboriginal cultural space.
- Yarn circle.
- Signs and information with names of Aboriginal places and things, and history of the area, e.g. the battle on the banks of the creek in the 1830s.
- Artworks.

In New Zealand they have English + Maori on signs everywhere. Why not here?

I am not Aboriginal, but love learning about the Aboriginal history and culture of sites in Wollongong. My family and I actively plan to visit spaces with these features, e.g. signs along the Blue Mile and Aboriginal artworks at Port Kembla.

Cultural facility and art

Suggestions for a cultural facility or art included:

- Relocate the Bert Flugelman winged figure sculpture to a location in Stuart Park looking towards Stanwell Tops. Permanent sculpture pieces on display.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Exhibit artworks in a well-designed building that is inviting and easily accessible to passing foot traffic.
- An amphitheatre to enjoy concerts, plays, etc. by the sea – “Would look awesome and connect so many people”.

Other ideas and comments

- Open the lagoon to the ocean for fresh water.
- Install gates at the entrance to control excess visitors.
- Be mindful of and consult with residents living along George Hanley Drive and other directly neighbouring streets of any changes.
- Alternative use – “Could part of it be set aside for burials? I do not wish to be cremated and turned into a toxic greenhouse emission”.
- “It is beyond recovery. There are too few alternative spaces for local and Western Sydney users”.

The final survey question asked people if they had any additional comments. Of those who responded, most took it as an opportunity to reinforce the ideas and feedback in their other responses. New ideas and feedback that were shared included:

Parking, transport and connectivity

- “We need to flip the transport paradigm to make it easier and more convenient and well connected to ride, walk or get public transport to Stuart Park than it is to park a car”:
 - Have crossing points on the natural-lowest point e.g to Virginia St, to connect to North Gong train station.
 - Improve east-west connectivity: build a shared path and bridge from Montague St, in the utility easement on the northern side of the PYCY, over Fairy Creek and through the Little Steamers car park to connect to Virginia St – aligns with the Wollongong Cycling Strategy action 2.3 to “Develop and deliver high impact cycling routes that link dense residential areas to nearby employment, education, public transport and activity centres” and action 2.4 to “Develop and deliver east-west cycling routes across Wollongong” and potentially 3.1 to “3.1 Develop ready-to-construct, high-value cycling projects.”
 - Fairy Creek bridge and shared path would be a great facility to improve connectivity to Stuart Park, and from the coastal path to the main uni campus, TAFE campus and Gwynneville.
- Request for designated “restaurant only” parking spots.
- Car park near the playground is perceived to be dangerous – “the timber bollards don’t stop kids running out into the car park.”

Criticisms of the survey

- Not community friendly as you had to provide your own stamp to post it. “A friend could do it online - but could not find the right term. Not everyone is computer literate anyway”.
- Doesn’t allow for being neutral on a topic.

Facilities, amenities, new additions and aesthetic

- Current barbeques are slow with long cooking times – “It would be great to have more efficient/faster barbeques so cooking is quicker, allowing more people to use them”.
- Keep the public toilets open after sunset for people using it in the evening, e.g. for exercise/recreation.
- Put a bike café in, a meeting spot for bike riders – “We can’t all fit in Diggies now!”
- Have a floating pontoon walkway at Puckeys, like Brisbane, to link Puckeys.
- Maintain the contrast between the built area and the more natural area of Puckeys Estate separated by the lagoon.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Play features

- Mollymook Beach park and playground a great example - fully fenced and suitable for all ages and abilities.
- Request to assess whether the wheelchair swing in the playground is used, as respondent had not seen it used.
- "The current playground has great equipment but is too close together - little ones running around can quite easily be struck by a swing".

Thanks and appreciation for...

- Being able to call a beautiful place like Wollongong home.
- Clean up after weekend activities and around the lagoon after a storm.
- Putting in additional bins and skips when there are major events or public holidays.
- Those who have made Stuart Park "so wonderful to date" – "I hope your new plan preserves what is good and enhances the parts that have not received a lot of attention over the past 40 years".

Complaints

- Report that people ignore the off-leash dog restrictions – "One day a child could be bitten".
- Perception that the pop-up cycleways in the City Centre have been a waste of money and nobody uses them.

Other areas

It was suggested to use the money to develop other places like north of Fairy Meadow Surf Club, Towradgi (needs more seating and trees), Bulli or around the Lake. This is to encourage people to visit other areas.

Photos

Possible location of water playground, site of tree removal (with request to plant Norfolk Pines), waste and maintenance issues:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Possible Water Playground Location



This area of Stuart Park currently under-utilised as it is not close to lagoon or beaches but does have good access to parking area and toilet facilities



Possible alternative location for water experience playground – south of the Amenities Block – should the first suggestion not be suitable – still close to parking and amenities but also not a well utilised area.



This area of Stuart Park is in close proximity to the existing much-loved playground – a new experiential water playground would add to its attractiveness for families, providing safe access to water recreation – current lagoon water quality can be poor, beach can be unsafe.



A number of trees have been removed (presumably dead) and should be replaced with Norfolk Pines or an alternative species with wide shady crown to cool parking area.

General Maintenance and Visual Aesthetic Issues



Garbage area behind the Lagoon is an eyesore and needs better screening and management.



Interface between the Lagoon and the driveway to the parking area behind the Lagoon is an eyesore that needs better urban design treatment.

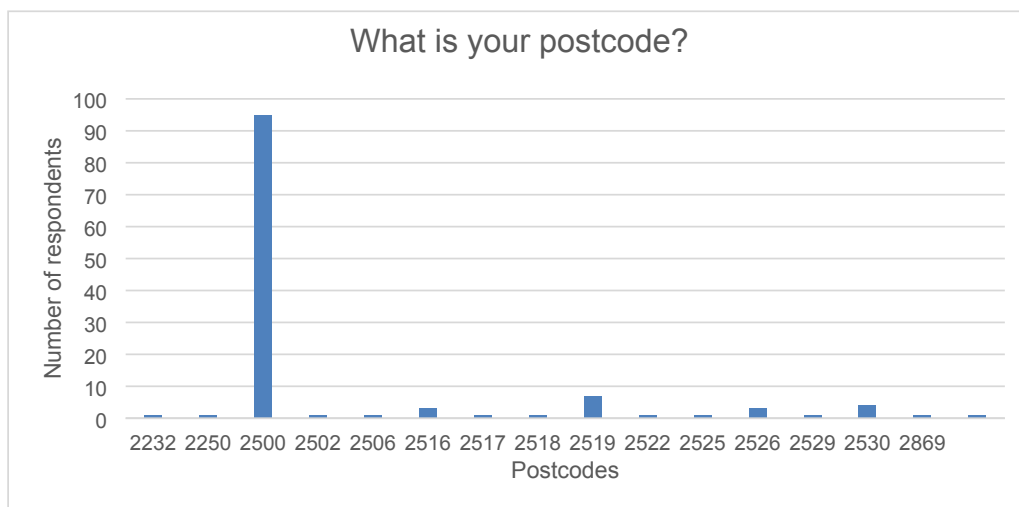
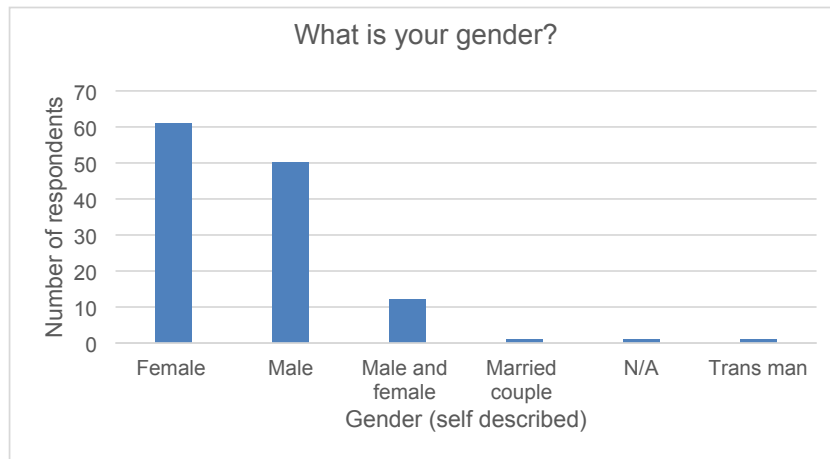
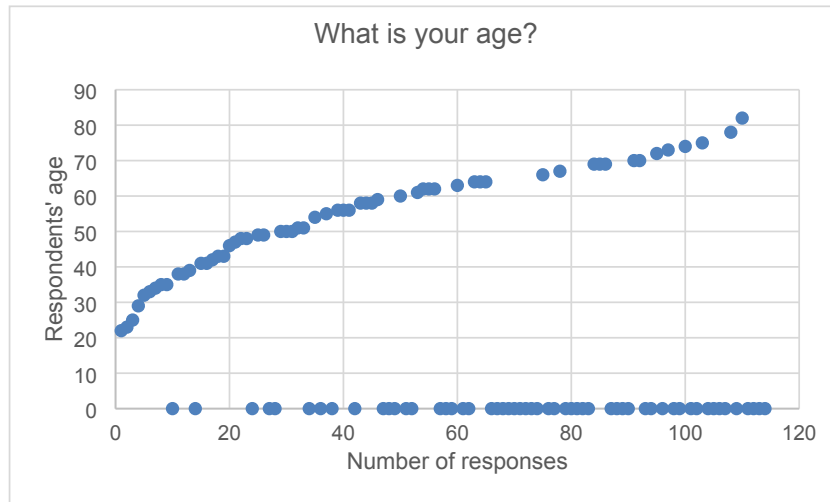


Storage approaches behind Skydive cottage needs tidy up and better urban design approach.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Demographic data for survey respondents

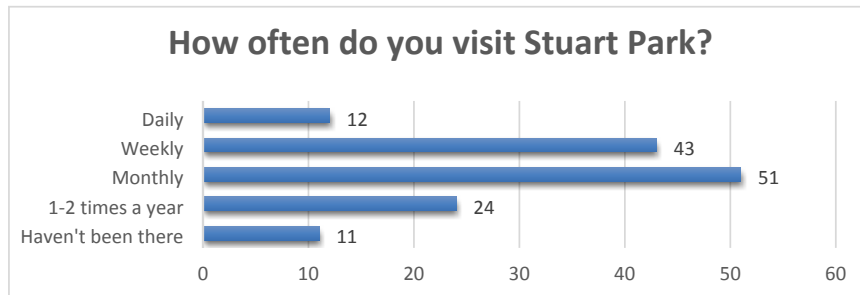
Responses to the demographic questions were optional, so not all respondents provided this information.



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Schools' workshops

We facilitated online workshops with students from Wollongong Public School, Towradgi Public School and Coniston Public School. A total of 144 students from years 3-6 participated across three workshops. Some of the feedback received has been graphed, with the rest presented under themed headings.



People who don't visit Stuart Park said their reasons for this are:

- Not been there in a long time.
- Not much to do there.
- Because of the parking – it's hard to get a park.
- There are other playgrounds for this age group closer to where they live and other beaches they can walk to.

Students were invited to break up into small groups and were provided a map of the area and large sheets of butchers paper where they could write and draw. We asked the students to tell us about what they like to do at Stuart Park. The feedback received has been themed under the following headings:

Play

The majority of participants told us that they like to play when they go to Stuart Park. Many like to visit the playground, making mention of the flying fox/zipline, slide, net swing and chair swing. We also heard that several of the students like the artwork at the playground. Other ways children like to play include:

- Playing tip, chasing birds or running or dancing on the grass.
- Playing sports, like soccer, football or volleyball.
- Climbing trees, exploring amongst the trees or making forts out of sticks.
- Playing walkie talkies or hide-and-seek.
- Making obstacle courses and then completing them.

Do the spaghetti dance all around the grass lawn.

Explore every inch of the trees.

Beach and lagoon

Visiting the beach and lagoon was another popular activity for participants, with many telling us they like to go there to swim or play in the sand. Other activities the students like to do at the beach and/or lagoon include:

- Having lunch or a picnic with friends.
- Collecting rocks.
- Skipping rocks across the water.
- Going fishing.
- Making sandcastles.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Sprint or walk along the beach.
- Creating structures by the lagoon.
- Surfing.
- Beach volleyball.
- Making sandcastles.

Walking and cycling

Many people told us that they like to go walking in the park and some mentioned they go there for a run or to jog. Participants shared that they go for walks with their parents or take their dog/s for a walk. Some people told us that they like to walk along the footpaths in the park and others told us they like to walk along the beach or at Puckeys. Others said they like to go on bike rides or ride their scooter along the bike track.

Picnic / BBQ

Some students told us they like to have a picnic or a BBQ when they visit Stuart Park. A participant told us they go there for picnics with their church, while another said it's a great place for a birthday party. We also heard it's nice to have a picnic under the gazebo.

Other things

Listed below are the other things students like to do when they visit Stuart Park:

- Stare at people.
- See the ducks.
- Watch the skydivers fall out of the sky or go skydiving.
- Learn about history and look around.
- Sightsee, look at the view or look at nature.
- Visit the park on school reward days.
- Go to events or music festivals.
- Attend the rock and mineral show.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Exercise or practice sport.

We asked students to tell us what they think the good things are about Stuart Park. Following is a summary of what they told us:

Play

Most participants said the many places to play is a good thing about Stuart Park. Most enjoy the playground, with respondents making special mention of the following equipment:

- Flying fox.
- Spider swing.
- Carousel ('spiny thing').
- Trampoline.
- Hammock.
- Lookout.
- Chain swing.
- Big slide.

The park that everyone
can enjoy

We heard it's a great place to visit and play with friends. Others told us they like to play with the bell step at Puckeys and they like the bike track next to the playground.

Beach, lagoon and pond

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Many participants said they like the beach, lagoon, duck pond and/or the creek. People like that they can get to the water to go swimming, fishing surfing, build sandcastles, or visit the ducks or seals. We heard people like that the water is clean.

Nature and open space

Many students made comments about the natural park. We heard they like being surrounded by nature and wildlife, especially the ducks, and that it's a great place to look at the views of the mountains and the ocean.

Many people said they like the big, open, grassy space, saying it's a great place to play or run around on. Others made comments on the colour of the grass and that the space makes them feel 'free'. People told us they like the amount of trees, bushes, plants and the shade. Others said they really like how close it is to Puckeys Estate. It was commented that being surrounded by nature is calming, peaceful and relaxing. Some people told us they like the weather and the sunshine, while others like playing in the puddles when it rains.

That it's a nice, calm place.

environment of the
All the adorable ducks.

The feeling of being free.

I love the colour of the grass.

Food offerings

Many participants told us they think the food from the café/kiosk and restaurant is the best part of the park. We heard there are many yummy food choices, with participants making special mention of the hot chocolate and smoothies.

Facilities and amenities

Students said the many places to have a picnic or barbeque is one of the good things about Stuart Park. Some people told us that they like the gazebos and covered areas because they have good seats and tables where people can eat their food. Students also told us they like the clean bathrooms, bins and large carpark.

Walking, cycling and exercise

Many students told us the bike track is a good part of Stuart Park, with some telling us the park is a fun place to ride their bike. We also heard people like going for walks on the footpaths through the park, or along the nature trails in Puckeys Estate. Some participants told us they like to walk their dog through the park. Some people told us that they like the Park Run. We also heard that a participant likes to participate in Savvy Survivor with her mum.

The bike track is really fun to go on!

Skydiving

Several participants told us they like to watch the skydivers and parachutes land in the park.

Other comments

Other good things about Stuart Park include:

- Spending time with family and friends.
- It's accessible.
- Everyone is welcome and lots of people go there so it is very nice.
- Heritage significance.
- It's clean.
- It's appropriate entertainment for young kids.
- Lots of people having fun.
- Lots of things to do.
- Safety.
- The way it is connected to different areas and the location.
- Attracts different age groups and diversity.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Pet friendly.
- It's a good place to have a party or event e.g. wedding or birthday.
- Concerts and festivals.

Students were invited to share the things they would like to see and do at Stuart Park in the future. Their comments are summarised as follows:

Play and recreation

Most students said they would like more opportunities for play and recreation. Many comments were made about the playground being expanded and including more play equipment for people of all ages – babies, toddlers, children, teenagers and adults. We heard people would like to see the following equipment/elements added to the playground:

- Flying fox / zipline
- Bouncy castle / in-ground trampoline.
- Twisting slide.
- Monkey bars.
- A maze / garden maze.
- Ball dunk.
- Climbing net.
- Musical equipment.
- Sandpit.
- Seesaw.
- Swings / chair swing.

Ninja warrior course
with a warped wall.

Flying fox that shoots you into
the water.

A suggestion was made that the equipment could be changed often to keep kids curious about what will be at the park. A call was made for more equipment for people with disability, such as swings. We also heard it would be important to have a toilet for people with disability close to the park.

Adventure play was a popular request with some people saying they would like to see a castle, mini caves, a treehouse or a drawbridge over the lagoon. A ninja warrior or parkour playground was another very popular idea. Other suggestions included a trampoline park, a human-sized chess board, an obstacle course or a rollercoaster that goes over the lagoon.

Water play was another popular theme. Suggestions included:

- Outdoor or indoor pool.
- Wave pool.
- Hot tub.
- Water fountain / water maze.
- Splash park with a tipping bucket or waterfalls.
- Water slide / slip'n'slide.
- Water park like at Jamberoo.

I'd love to see a
water park

Many students would like to see sporting facilities included in the park in the future. They told us they would like to see:

- Soccer field or goals.
- Basketball court.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Tennis court.
- Cricket pitch.
- Football fields.
- Handball courts.
- Rockclimbing area.
- Gokart track.
- Stadium for ball sports.

I would really want a mountain bike track like Harry Graham park

Several students told us they'd like to see more bike facilities, like a bike track, mountain bike trails or a pump track. Others said they would like a skate park or some skating ramps.

Other ideas relating to play and recreation included:

- Laser tag.
- Paintball.
- Bat cave.
- An arcade.
- Jet rush.
- Nerf battles.
- Platform for scuba diving and snorkelling.
- Rollerskating.
- "A really cool machine that shoots out surfboards".
- A theme park.

The swamp can have a sitting area and more happy areas for sad people.

Greening, shade and nature

Many students said they think the park should have more trees and shady areas. Some people suggested we should plant native trees, oak trees, lemon tree or a passionfruit vine. Other children told us they would like a big tree they can climb or a treehouse. Suggestions were made for more gardens, lots of flowers and a community garden. Ideas were shared for a native garden with information about all the different plants, a pumpkin patch and a corn maze. Several people told us it's important to have more gardens and plants, as they will attract and provide a home for wildlife such as, bees, insects, birds and other animals. A request was also made for another pond for ducks, fish and turtles. Other ideas about nature included:

- A greenhouse.
- To clean up the lagoon.
- A glass wall with fish in it.
- Spaces to sit and be in nature.

An Australian native garden that the community can access and learn about different species and important insects.

More plants that attract local birdlife and other animals.

Amenities and facilities

Many people said they would like more toilets in the park, with some saying they should be located close to the playground. Students also said there should be more changing facilities and hot showers and that the toilets should be cleaned more regularly. Others told us they would like to see more water taps or bubblers throughout the park.

Some more picnic places or grass areas and more bins and more toilets.

Suggestions were made for more areas where people could sit and eat their food. They'd like to see more tables, chairs and picnic shelters and barbeques throughout the park. Students said it's important

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

to have more bins, including recycling bins. A suggestion was made for a campfire area with log seating and another suggestion was made for a library to be built in the park.

A comment was made about needles and syringes being found in the park and that they needed to be cleaned up.

Food offerings

Many participants said they would like to see more cafes or restaurants in the park. Suggestions were made for the following:

- KFC.
- McDonalds.
- Fish and chips.
- Exotic food.
- Doughnuts, candy and ice cream / gelato.
- Places for people with eating requirements like coeliac disease.

Parking, traffic and connections

Many students told us they would like more parking at Stuart Park. A call was made for the free bus to stop at the park. Several ideas were shared about footpaths and connections. Participants told us they would like to have separate paths for cyclists and people walking or running. We also heard that the paths should be smoother and wider. We received a few ideas about improving connections through the park. These include:

- A bridge connecting Stuart Park to Puckeys.
- A path from the playground to the toilets.
- A bike track around the whole park.

A GIGANTIC
carpark.

It was suggested there could be more walking tracks through the bush.

Events and activities

Ideas were shared about the types of events and activities people would like to see in Stuart Park. Students said they would like to see a carnival with rides, a ferris wheel and face painting; or different types of markets, including fresh food markets. Other ideas were shared about the different types of facilities that could be built for events such as a stage, theatre or entertainment centre. Participants also shared their ideas for different activities to bring people together, like, free yoga in the park or community games of capture the flag.

Large, organised
games, like
community games of
'capture the flag' and
things so kids can get
to know other people.

Pets and animals

A few students said they would like to see more spaces for pets and animals in the park. We received requests for a dog park, a pet walking area, a bird house, a petting zoo, an aquarium and a farm.

Other ideas

Other ideas included:

- An outdoor study area or classroom.
- Reading area that blocks out sound.
- Art including Aboriginal artwork or statues.
- Stargazing area.
- Bird baths.
- A dock for boats or canoes.
- Camping area or caravan park.

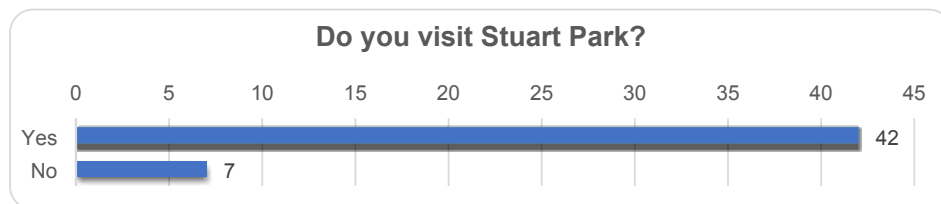
I would like to see a dog park.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Casino.
- Disneyland.
- Free wifi.
- A place to make art.
- Gym or exercise area.
- Library.
- Historical remembrance sites.
- More lifesavers at the beach.
- Things for people with disability – a playground or exercise equipment.
- Outdoor area to acknowledge our Aboriginal elders.
- Scuba diving and snorkelling, tourism.
- Information about the park and maps.
- Videogame centre.
- Wishing well.

Online – Survey for schools and young people

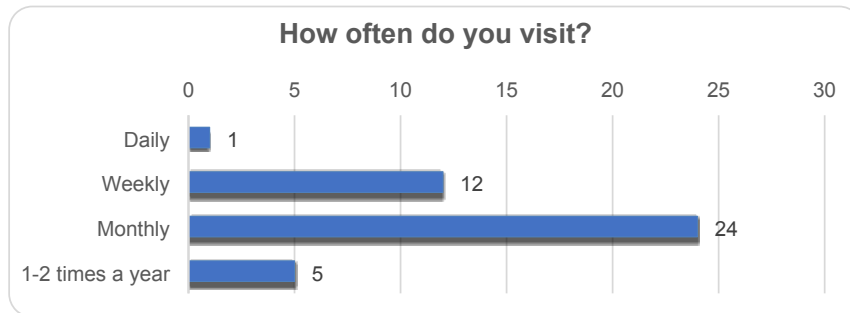
A short survey was created for schools and young people. This version of the survey was adapted from the community survey. It was shared with all schools in the Wollongong Local Government area and promoted via the Wollongong Youth Services Facebook page. Forty-nine surveys were completed. Some responses to the survey questions are graphed and others are presented under themed headings.



Other things respondents do at Stuart Park include:

- Run.
- Drive.
- Skate.
- Stand-up paddleboard.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



People who don't currently visit Stuart Park said their reasons for this are:

- Isn't really close to my house.
- Parents haven't taken me yet.
- I don't know / not sure.

We asked students and young people to tell us what the good things are about Stuart Park. Their responses are summarised as follows:

Open space and natural areas

We heard that people love that the park has lots of open, flat, grassy space. People told us that this a great place to run around, have a picnic and play. Other people told us they like the natural surrounds of the park and how close it is to the lagoon and the beach.

Playground

Many people told us they like the playground. We heard it's:

- Fun for people of all ages.
- Well put together with lots of places for people to sit and play
- Well maintained.

They told us the playground has nice equipment, with many people making mention of the flying fox, big slide, swings, tower, "spinney things you stand on" and bike/scooter track. Another respondent told us they thought the playground is starting to get outdated.

Facilities and amenities

Respondents told us they like that the park has a variety of facilities and amenities. We heard the parking and shaded picnic and BBQ areas are good.

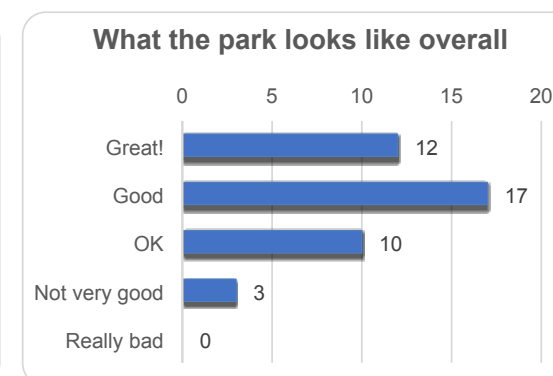
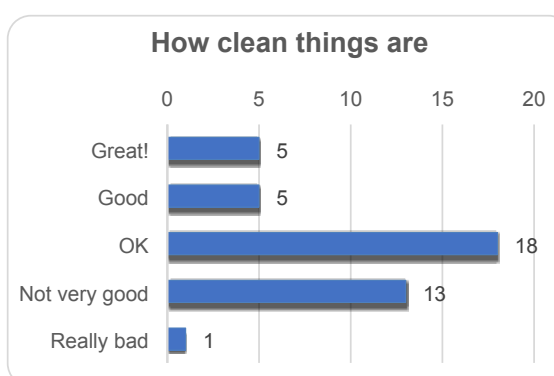
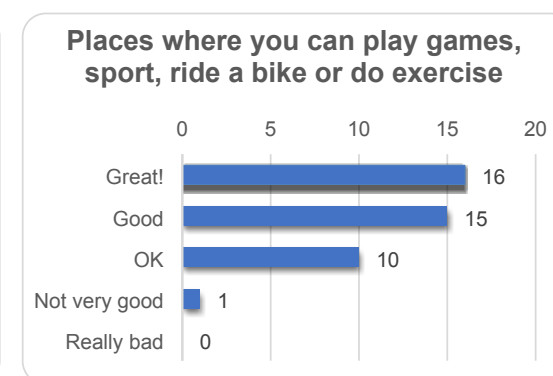
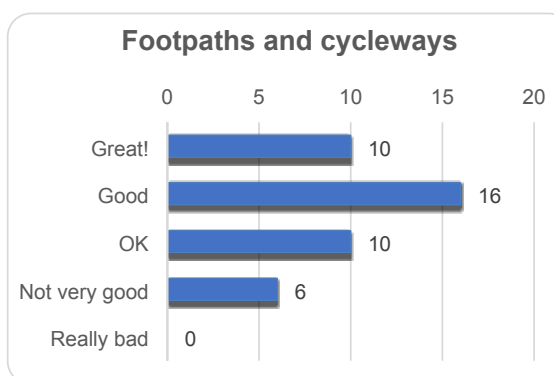
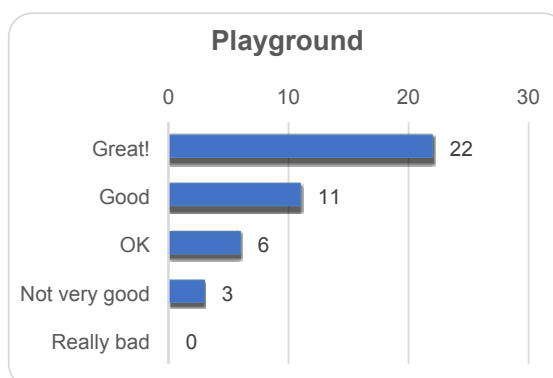
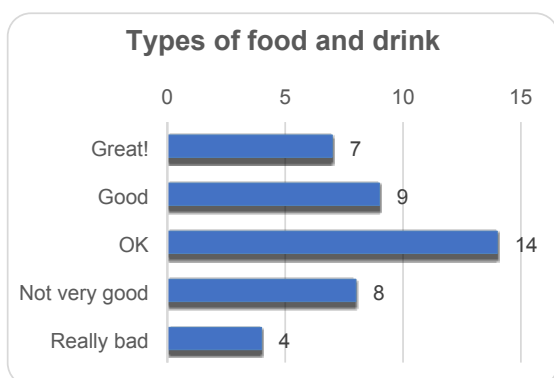
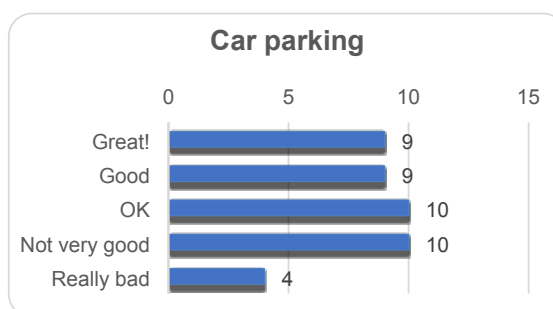
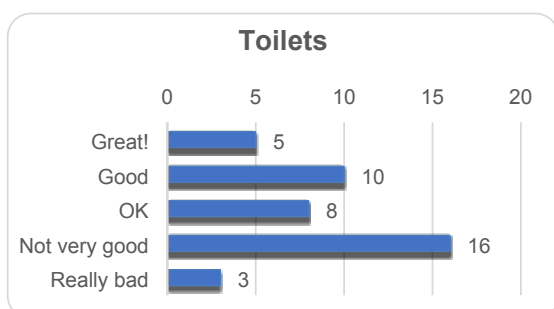
Other comments

Other good things about the park include:

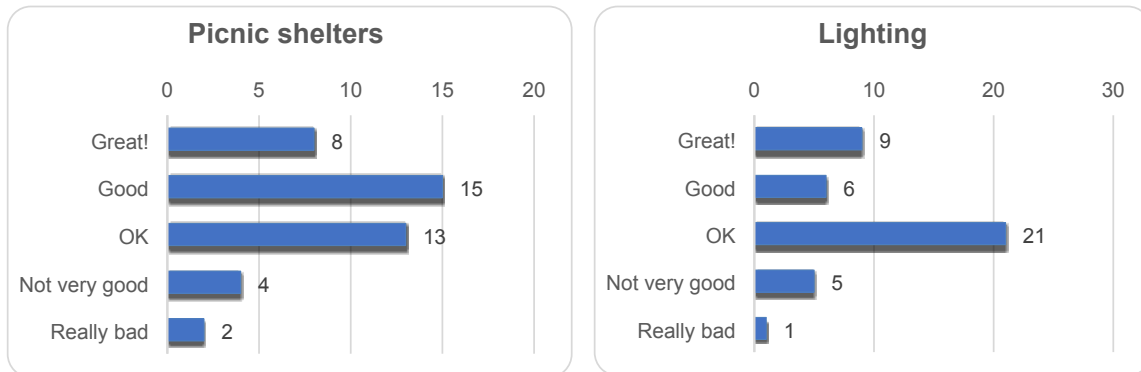
- Café and restaurant.
- Bike and walking tracks.
- Park is well maintained.
- Feels safe.
- Music festivals.

We asked people to tell us what they thought of the facilities and services at the park. These are their responses:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



We asked people to tell us what they would like to see or do at Stuart Park. Responses are presented under the following themes, with the number of submissions referencing that theme in brackets:

Play and recreation

We received many ideas about places to play. Some people told us they think this would be a great place for a skate park/ plaza. A suggestion was made for a big bowl, similar to the one at Bar Beach Newcastle. Another respondent told us they would like one designed for skaters, as well as bike and scooter riders. We also heard this could be a good place for a bitumen pump track or bike jumps. A suggestion was made for a bike track with working traffic lights and signals.

Water play was another popular idea. People told us they would like to see a large-scale water park, similar to Jamberoo Action Park, while others said they would like to see elements of water play, similar to Darling Harbour, other areas of Sydney and Picton New Zealand. Other people told us they would like to see a pool in the park.

A water play area for summer.

Safe ninja course.

A proper skate park in for the skaters, bikers and scooterers.

Some people told us they would like to see another playground, a nature playground, a ninja warrior course, archery, skirmish or a maze with different difficulties. Other people told us they would like to see other elements included in the existing playground. These ideas included:

- Ground trampolines/trampoline pillow.
- Sandpit.
- Telescopes in the tower.
- Longer slides.
- More wheelchair-friendly activities.
- Monkey bars.
- A rocket powered round-a-bout.
- Another flying fox.
- More swings.
- Taller tower.

Have a clear tube that leads from that and connects to another tower that you can only access this way, then there's a slide that wraps around the second tower.

We also heard ideas for a basketball court, soccer field/goals or netball court at the park.

Add a soccer field at the park.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Infrastructure and amenities

Suggestions were made to build more toilets closer to the playground – we heard it's a fair walk to the toilet block with little ones and there's no path to get there. Others said they would like for the existing toilets to be cleaner or have better lighting. Comments were also received about increasing the number of water bubblers / bottle refill stations. We also received an idea for having stations that provide food and water for pets. There was a call for more seating areas and more picnic shelters. A request was made for more lighting at night. It was suggested the lights could be solar powered. We heard the park can get muddy after it rains – it was suggested that something could be done to help the grassy areas drain better.

Toilets closer to the playground

Access, connections and traffic

Some respondents told us they would like to see a footpath linking the existing playground to the toilets so they don't have to walk on the road. It was suggested the existing cycleways and footpaths could be extended and/or widened, as this would make it easier for riders to steer clear of people walking.

A footpath from the playground to the bathrooms that doesn't require kids to walk on the road on the sharp bend corner past the restaurant. Cars don't look on that corner and it's really dangerous. The path that stops at the lagoon needs to be extended around to the playground.

Another comment was made about people feeling unsafe leaving the park from Virginia Street. We also heard people would like more parking spaces.

Natural areas, greening and shade

We heard people would like to see more care given to the inlet. Some also said they would like more shady spots, trees and pergolas throughout the park.

Events

We heard it would be good to have more events in Stuart Park specifically for children and young people. Suggestions were made for all-age music festivals with local and international acts. Others would like to see events centred around culture and food. A comment was made about the need to find another event area and having better crowd management at future events. We received several ideas about having markets in the park, including:

- Permanent market stalls set up in shipping containers.
- Weekend farmers markets.
- Markets with stalls run by kids.
- Night markets with food.

More events such as food stalls/night markets, music festivals.

Food offerings

There were suggestions for a variety of small food shop selling ice cream, corn, chestnuts or popcorn. An idea was shared for a beachside boardwalk with bars and cafes. Another idea was for a hawker-esque food hall with permanent stalls for small businesses to make a wide range of foods and drinks, from snacks to full meals

Maybe ice cream shop, corn shop, small shops will be soooo good.

Public art

It was suggested there could be more public art in the park, an idea included a local Aboriginal artwork/water fountain.

Online – Ideas tool

On the Our Wollongong website, we asked people for ideas on how we could improve Stuart Park for the whole community over the next ten years. People could also submit their ideas via SMS. 436 people participated using this tool. There were:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



152 ideas



1,483 'up votes' for ideas people liked



99 comments

The ideas and comments are summarised under the following themes:

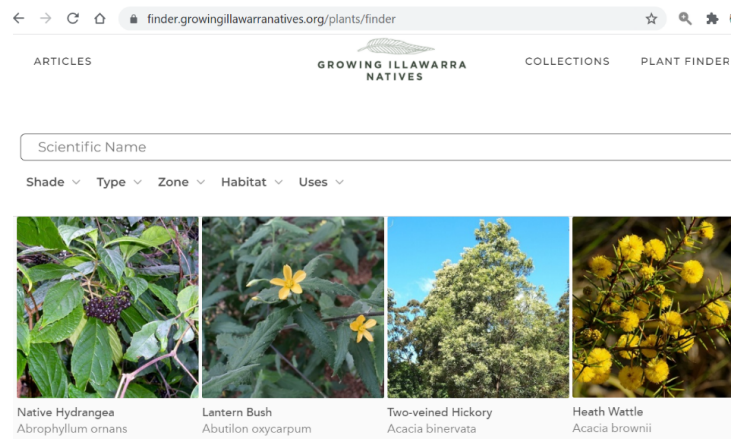
Greening and shade

The majority of ideas, up votes and comments were from participants saying to increase shade and plant more local native trees and shrubs. There was a strong desire to retain green spaces, in consideration of increasing development in the area, climate change and population growth. Some supported ideas for "lush, wild gardens" and planting thousands of natives to help absorb carbon monoxide emissions from vehicles on Cliff Road.



With higher heat levels set to become a larger problem in the next few decades, more cooling and shade opportunities should be considered paramount. i.e. water fountains, tree-planting, shade shelters, and other public outdoor cooling infrastructure like water/mist cooling systems. They are already a feature in some places like the Pilbara (extreme example), but come with potential health risks. Might be a good feature near tree lines/pathways.

Green spaces are really precious. Slowly, decision by decision they are lost. They are so important to ocean health, mental health, biodiversity, climate. I look at Stuart Park and think how lucky we are to have that space. It would be a great loss to see the addition of more concreted/asphalted areas.



Some suggested or supported the idea of having an environmentally-friendly hedge maze. People liked the idea of using native bush/hedging. Some thought it would be a great attraction for the community, with the addition of having social and health benefits, although there was a concern about the level of maintenance it would require. A few did not support the idea of a hedge maze, with a concern drunk people from nearby bars may get lost in it. A picture showing an example of a hedge maze was submitted:

Great idea, but would need too much maintenance.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

It's amazing!



People suggested planting edible fruit trees, swamp lilies (*Crinum pedunculatum*), Illawarra flame trees and jacarandas. There was a suggestion to have community permaculture gardens and less play equipment. It was explained that the excess food could potentially be distributed to those in need and the gardens could host a range of community programs on permaculture, urban agriculture and sustainable communities.

Exercise facilities

Many people either suggested or expressed support for the idea of having outdoor gym equipment. Respondents said the equipment could be fully inclusive, accessible for people of all skill levels and abilities and cater to a range of strength levels. Some proposed or supported the idea of a ninja warrior course or park, calisthenics equipment or seniors' exercise park.

Some submitted examples to help explain their ideas:



Comments on outdoor gym equipment related to:

- Having security cameras and emergency points.
- Encouraging a variety of health, social and economic outcomes.
- Ensuring it suits a range of ages, abilities, fitness levels, heights.
- Complementing exercise activities already taking place in Stuart Park.
- Being an attraction for Wollongong – “Muscle Beach” of the South Coast.
- Needing more outdoor exercise spaces during and post COVID-lockdown, for mental and physical health benefits.
- Providing examples: Corrimal SLSC, Canberra CBD - Henry Rolland Park, East Point Street Workout in Darwin NT (built to international standards), Observatory Hill in Sydney.



A great idea! For all ages, abilities and genders (current outdoor gyms do not fit women's heights need very well). Look at Henry Rolland Park outdoor gym in Canberra or the Observatory Hill one in Sydney: lots of different heights and equipment, little nooks to help climb up for people who are not the height of the average man, sitting AND bike racks.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

There was a call to retain the spaces where people set up slacklines and ensure commercial fitness activities can continue. Other suggestions included having a running track around Puckeys and a cricket oval.

Parking, traffic and public transport

Most who commented about parking did not want to see it increased, as "it is the park's natural beauty that makes it attractive". People said active transport should be encouraged and the space should be retained for people, not cars. Some thought better public transport options and improved infrastructure would help ease parking issues. Suggestions were made to include this area on the free shuttle bus route, have light rail from Wollongong Station and a bus stop closer to the playground. A comment was made that having public transport to get skydivers and tourists into the CBD would be great. While some suggested having paid or timed parking to increase turnover, others want free parking retained. It was suggested that revenue from paid parking could fund park or beach upgrades and longer lifeguard hours in the summer. One commenter said free parking would be important for schools using the park for fun runs and those hosting charity events. In response to the idea of having less parking and more park, it was suggested to:

Anyone catching the bus to Stuart Park has quite a long walk to the playground, the kiosk and the popular picnic areas at Stuart Park, making it harder for older people and those with little kids to access these facilities by bus. We don't want to waste this beautiful site by putting in more parking, so let's have a bus stop close to the playground.

- Use current parking spaces at night for markets or events that require asphalt surfacing.
- Provide good, secure bike storage so people can ride to the beach instead of driving.

Others thought the amount of parking needs to be increased. Some suggested improving or increasing parking in the surrounding areas, e.g. on George Hanley Drive with overflow parking bays on weekends. Some thought building a multistorey car park is needed. Ideas relating to this included:

- Having it in the old 'Splashes' carpark.
- Building a multilevel underground car park, similar to the underground Botanic Gardens car park in Sydney.

To address traffic issues, people suggested:

- Changing to one-way along the beach or through Stuart Park, exiting onto Squires Way or with an exit and roundabout onto Pioneer Drive.
- Installing a roundabout at Virginia Street with a new parking entrance opposite.
- Installing speed bumps at the Skydive car park to prevent racing, noise and people doing donuts.
- Installing smart parking, so drivers know to park along George Hanley Drive if the park is already full.



Smart parking example (participant submission)

One person said the space needs to be accessible to everyone and that parking is vital for people with disabilities and mothers and babies. They said families arriving with small children, chairs, food, blankets etc. will appreciate good access.

A suggestion was made to permit rear-to-kerb parking, as:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- It is safer to exit forwards than in reverse.
- Existing front-to-kerb damages vehicles with low bodywork.

Picnic facilities

Some participants requested or supported the idea of having more:

- Picnic shelters.
- Barbeque areas.
- Covered areas.
- Tables and seats or benches, including in the West and South sections of the park and near the lagoon.
- Bubblers.
- Facilities for disposing of barbeque coals.

In response to a suggestion for electronic barbeques, it was asked if they could be powered by solar panels on the roof of the barbeque hut.

Events

Many respondents suggested or supported the idea of having seaside markets, food trucks, local bands/buskers and breweries/BYO. The idea of sunset/night markets was popular, with others suggesting they could run on weekends or on the last of Friday of each month. It was thought this would be a good use of underused space at night, "create a Santa Monica Pier vibe" and be good for families, visitors and locals. Some liked the idea of having food carts along the cycleway a few nights a week to enliven the public space and bring people out to enjoy it more. People said more lighting would be needed for night events. There was a concern markets could add congestion to the busy walkway, with a suggestion to use other areas of the park instead, e.g:

- Skydive car park.
- South of the Surf Club.
- In the park near the Skydive office and amenities.
- Close to George Hanley Drive.

Close the road off during the markets and extend the road to Squires Way one way so the restaurant can still have road access while the markets are on.



Some people like the idea of a summer cinema, where films from around the world or cultural festivals are screened.

Some suggested or supported the idea of having a permanent stage for bands/concerts or an amphitheatre. One said the western side of the oval would be a good location. Another commented it could be used as an open air cinema too, great for sound and "no mozzies by the ocean". One participant said there could be future opportunities for surf, skate and music festivals to combine if there was a skatepark. An enclosed beach entertainment area, similar to the one in Brisbane was also suggested.

Have free movie screenings of local and foreign art films, and engage different communities to present their cultures through food, art, market, films - (Greek, Sudanese, Filipino, Thai, Macedonian, Latin American, etc) - Wollongong has a rich plethora of cultures - surface this for better understanding.



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Several people expressed support for Parkrun and asked that it continues in the future. A suggestion was made to improve the event with signage/bollards. One participant said their wife had been hit by runners in a fun run while crossing the bridge over the lagoon. They feel the Puckeys Estate area should be limited to passive recreation, saying "it is a nature reserve, not a running track".

Enclosed beach entertainment area in Brisbane
(participant submission)

Spaces to play / parks e.g. skate, amusement, water, pump track

The idea of having a wild water play garden or splash play area was popular. People gave examples such as the Ian Potter Children's Wild Play Garden in Centennial Park, and water play areas at Darling Harbour and Calderwood. One said they loved this idea because they have a disabled child whose access to the current playground is limited. An accessible splash park would be ideal for them. Another thought it would be good for toddlers/infants, saying "80% of the playground is more suited to older kids from 3 years old". One said they currently do water play in the lagoon, as it their toddler's favourite spot and another was concerned it could be dangerous.



They are a great idea and when landscaped around them, they look really lovely.

The idea of having a pump track and skatepark was also popular. Some liked the idea of having it surrounded by permaculture systems, with shade from fruit trees and a community skill share area. People gave examples of facilities they like, including:

- Bondi bowl.
- Cairns foreshore.
- Dubbo.
- Riverside Skate Park in Melbourne.
- Camden area.

Capitalise on Olympics for skaters and scooters and older (over 5 years) bike riders. Provide something for teens.



Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

In my teens, the skatepark was a home. I can imagine with the surfy skater nature of many of the youth in the Illawarra, it would create a hub for them to share and create memories.



Riverside is council run, has a café and offers skate lessons on the weekend. It will create jobs, allow kids to get some training and keep it controlled, unlike Fairy Meadow Skate Park.

Some thought a skate park would benefit nearby businesses as well as young people.

Some also liked the idea of having a pump track similar to Shoalhaven Heads but larger, or Cringila. It was suggested to locate it through the casuarina grove on the George Hanley Drive side of the park and that it should be sealed/asphalt.

Several people suggested having an area that could be used for a number of different activities, e.g:

- A basketball court that can be used for netball/other sports.
- Water play park, hard courts, parkour and skate park.
- Volleyball.
- Children's cycle track.
- Outdoor games area - boules, volleyball, badminton, minigolf, skittles, Aboriginal games, designated soccer and cricket areas, equipment hire.



Several suggested or liked the idea of an amusement park, as a destination point. Ideas for this included:

- Environment friendly.
- Mini golf.
- Rides, e.g. rollercoaster and ferris wheel.
- Heritage family theme park, with ferry harbour activities, a new jetty, new fun boardwalks and visitors arriving from the harbour by miniature train.



Others were less keen on the amusement park idea.

I think this is the wrong site for an amusement park. The area is enjoyed by all age groups and is a free space. The attraction is the beach and parklands. An amusement park requires its own space away from a naturally beautiful environment. The area wouldn't handle the extra traffic either.

No motor scooters or mini golf or rollercoaster please.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

While some would like more playgrounds, play equipment for children or a sensory playground, another thought there should be more gardens and less play equipment.

Some would like to see an official disc golf course of 18 holes in the park. Examples included Lake Jindabyne and [one in Brisbane](#). A respondent suggested the proceeds could go to a charity and companies could sponsor individual holes.

Recognition of Aboriginal culture and connection to country

Many liked the idea of having a bush tucker walk, local species planting and recognition/information shown about how Aboriginal people care for country. A suggestion was made to design and construct the bush tucker walk in collaboration with local Aboriginal people. It was thought it could work well along the current perimeter of bushland running from the lagoon, around the playground area and joining the walkway at the bridge, then again along the walkway on the southern side of the park amongst the existing bushland.

I think we are all really eager to learn as much as we can about our local Indigenous cultures and how they lived on the land so harmoniously. We have a lot to learn from them at a time when we are desperate for ideas to save our planet.

Waste management

Many suggested or supported the idea of having recycling and FOGO bins. Some said rubbish bins are overflowing and rubbish ends up in the lagoon and ocean after weekends and public holidays. There was a suggestion to increase fines and patrols to stop people leaving rubbish behind. Others spoke of needing more bins to dispose of hot coals, as they are often dumped behind trees, next to bins or taps etc.

We've often seen hot coals dumped at the base of trees, often the pines and this has on some cases caused fires or killed vegetation. We need to have a policy and infrastructure to cope with this problem.

Dogs

While many people liked the idea of having an enclosed off-leash area for dogs, others were less supportive. One of the ideas that received some support gave Sydney Park as an example, as it has walking tracks, proper landscaping and drainage, and space for people and dogs to walk and socialise.

Others suggested:

Not every dog is good with being unrestrained on the beach, so giving them an option for a fenced area is great.

- Having taps and chairs around the perimeter.
- Locating it between the duck pond and Skydive car park, as this area is not used much.
- Including seating and locating it near trees to provide shade.

People who are unsupportive of this idea were largely concerned about dogs disrupting or causing stress to picnickers and families, and people who don't collect their dog's waste. There is a view Stuart Park is for people, not their pets, and that we have enough off-leash areas.

Please no dogs. Stepping in dog poo is something that really takes away from your experience.

Pathways and connectivity

Several people suggested or supported ideas for new pathways, including:

- Another footpath on the beach side in front of the car spaces to make it easier to walk from the Blue Mile to the playground at the lagoon and toilets.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- New path linking the park to North Wollongong station.



Path linking to North Wollongong Station
(participant submission)

I think a path is already there, just need to build a footbridge over the creek and a couple of street signs.

- New paved path linking the playground to the cycle track. The footpath on the ocean side of the car park is viewed as “too narrow for bike riders and pedestrians to mix comfortably at busy times, but then the road through the car park is also too dangerous for young kids on bikes”.

The pedestrian desire line (worn dirt track) that links the children's playground to the shared pathway / cycle track should be hard paved. Many people walk around the perimeter of the park. This section of park gets very boggy after rain.



Waikiki Park example
(participant submission)

- Footpath along Fairy Meadow Beach that connects to the Blue Mile – extend the boardwalk to Fairy Meadow Beach. “See photo of Waikiki Park, that's what we need more of”.

Several people gave ideas relating to pathways for bike riders. Supported ideas included:

- Glow-in-the-dark bike lanes.
- Redoing the bike track.
- Widening the bridge over Fairy Creek on Squires Way for pedestrians and bike riders.
- Perimeter walking/riding track.
- Improving the bike paths in surrounding suburbs so it's more feasible to ride to the park.
- Safer cycleway/"shared path".

Poland's solar-powered glow-in-the-dark bike lanes have caused their cities to become even safer for cyclists at night. These cycling strips are made from blue luminophores, a material that emits light for 10 hours after being charged by the sun.

There was a call to separate bike paths from walking paths for safety reasons. Some spoke of almost being hit by bikes while walking, and cyclists speeding along the edge of Stuart Park and not ringing their bell on approach from behind.

Several people liked the suggestion to pave the walkway in front of the restaurant for wheelchair access and to stop grass wear and tear.

Suggestions were made to pedestrianise Cliff Road between the Novotel and George's Place and provide more pathways in the area for people with disabilities.

Cycling facilities

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Several people liked the idea of having good, secure bike storage and lockers to encourage more people to ride to the beach. A request was made to improve end-of-trip facilities for cyclists and provide electric scooter hire.

Water activities

Some liked the idea of an inflatable water park that floats on top of the water and a kayak entry point.

Lighting improvements

Some respondents said there should be more/better lighting in the park so it can be used after dark, particularly on the northern perimeter and along the inner path. There was a suggestion to have solar-powered lighting.

Development

Ideas relating to development in the park were met with mixed responses. Some people are against any kind of development in the area. People said they prefer to keep the natural areas, as that's what makes it attractive. Respondents suggested developing other parks around Wollongong to make them more attractive and spread people out. Some thought skate parks, basketball courts and outdoor gyms should be built in other areas. Some are concerned the park is already too congested or that development would impact the site's history.



Inflatable water park idea
(participant submission)

Others suggested upgrading the building leased by Skydive the Beach and building different types of facilities/structures, including those that could provide Council with an income or make it a tourist destination.

Those suggestions included:

- A multistorey car park with gym and restaurant.
- An indoor saltwater swimming pool.
- A boardwalk down to the lagoon from the surf club, with 4 to 5 small restaurants along it.
- High-rise residential and entertainment restaurant strip / theme park / recreational areas in Puckeys.
- Indoor skydiving and a sporting complex on the unused parkland / current skydive building.
- An airport for international flights.
- A scenic skyway.

Copy Cairns Boardwalk - they have everything from skate bowls, climbing walls, basketball courts, all linked through cafes and playgrounds.

It has been a successful active recreation area for at least 60 years.

Some expressed concern at the suggestion to develop Puckeys, saying wetland, bushland and recreational areas should not be destroyed. Others said any development should be limited to passive recreation and add to the natural appeal of the park.

There were suggestions to:

- Improve Stuart Park as a destination by developing Wollongong Harbour and commercial shop activities.
- Have more public-owned assets to make money and provide community-used assets.

Art and culture

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Some suggested building cultural facilities, such as an amphitheatre for the public to enjoy plays, choirs and concerts in the open air by the sea. There is a desire to encourage connection, culture and the arts.

Another suggested having a water sculpture such as at Redfern Park, Redfern, that celebrates the natural and cultural history of the area. There was a request for more public art and a performance space for local productions. One respondent wants a surfing monument to be built next to the surf club.



Amphitheatre idea (participant submission)

Stormwater/drainage

Several participants said improvements to drainage are needed, as the old cricket pitch area where skydivers land floods with heavy rain, gets waterlogged and it can take a long time to subside. The flooding also makes it difficult to access the facilities.

Public access

Some said the park's public use by all members of the community should be retained and they would like more public access to the park. Some don't like it when cars sit idly in one spot, taking up space, and feel the area should be kept for people. A few were critical of commercial business operators using public space.

Food and drink offerings

A few people liked the idea of having a takeaway shop and a beach canteen was suggested.

Toilets

A few participants thought existing amenities need an upgrade or suggested areas for more toilets, including:

- Near Savvy on the corner/George Hanley Drive side.
- At the playground, as it's too far for children who are toilet training and solo adults who have to find and take all children every time one needs the toilet.

There was a request for toilets to be open 24/7 with light.



Beach canteen idea (participant submission)

Accessibility

A few people suggested improving the accessibility of facilities, particularly for wheelchair users.

Other ideas and comments

Some criticised spending any money on Stuart Park, with a view the priority should be neglected creeks, beaches and headlands in the east and providing more facilities in the west. Some said they love seeing the skydivers land and like that it brings tourists from Sydney to spend more money in Wollongong.

There were requests to:

- Heritage list the site.
- Improve the grounds, grandstands and amenities at Thomas Dalton Park facilities.
- Publish all previous Master Plans so people can see what has been previously proposed, adopted and implemented. "Learnings from the past".
- Diversify areas of engagement in Stuart Park.
- Have Council visit Waverley Park at the top of Bondi Rd in Bondi to get ideas.

We asked what facilities or activities people would NOT like to see in Stuart Park in the future. The responses are summarised under the following themes:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Development

Most commonly, people said they do not want to see any type of development occur in the park. This includes:

- Commercial or residential development.
- Multistorey development, including a car park or high rise.
- Parks, e.g. fun park, skate park, amusement park, water park/slides or basketball courts. There is a view these activities should be located in other parks, e.g. MacCabe Park.
- Buildings.
- Development that will attract more visitors to the area.
- Concert arena.
- More picnic shelters, huts or barbeque areas – “there are plenty already!”
- Permanent, artificial shade sails.
- Extension of the playground.
- Pathways and bike tracks.
- Swimming pools.

A blank space holds a lot more potential than one that is already built upon.

The park can't accommodate more facilities and activities that attract more visitors. It is already overburdened and spoiled by too many visitors on weekends and public holidays.

Parking

Many respondents said they did not want to see additional parking, especially if it encroaches onto green space or is a multistorey car park. There are concerns additional parking will lead to more overcrowding, congestion and traffic. Some said they do not want to see paid parking or parking meters. Others said they do not want to see a reduction in parking.

Environmental and sustainability concerns

Many respondents said they did not want to see further loss of green space or anything that will detract from the park's natural beauty. Some said they do not want any trees removed or natural habitat destroyed. For park vegetation, some said they do not want more swamp pines, non-native plants, bindies or palm trees growing through rocks. Other comments about what people don't want to see included:

- Active powering of infrastructure (only solar or wind).
- Charcoal barbeques burning the grass.
- Lack of increase in trees.
- Park users not respecting the open green space.
- Too much of the open space taken up – “Stuart Park's free and open space makes it very appealing”.

We need all those trees to help cool our city, soak up carbon and restore our spirit.

Commercial activities

Many respondents said they do not want to see commercial use of park, or expansion of this type of activity. There are concerns it is an “invasion of public space”, with a view the park is for residents and visitors. Examples of activities people are concerned about seeing in the park included sporting fields, fitness/bootcamp operators and Skydive the Beach.

I don't want to see one company (e.g. Skydive the Beach or an event organiser) become a monopoly or controlling.

Events

Some people are against holding music or Yours and Owls events in the park. Reasons for this include the following impacts, particularly on nearby residents:

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Noise.
- Waste/pollution/litter.
- Traffic.
- Stress to wildlife.
- Having a large part of the park unavailable for several days either side of the event for set-up and clean-up.

I don't mind occasional special events, e.g. markets and music festivals, but I wouldn't want to see large sections of the park consumed by commercial or private activity.

There was a call to relocate these events, e.g. to WIN Stadium. Others do not want to see carnival-style activities, e.g. merry-go-rounds, circuses or rides. Others said they do not want to see markets, events that are not waste-free and those that do not acknowledge Dharawal people as traditional custodians of the land.

Food / cafes / restaurants

Some respondents said they don't want fast food vans, more cafes or franchised restaurants and chains. Others do not want further the Lagoon Restaurant to use more of the public space.

Skydiving

Opinion was mixed on whether skydiving should continue in the park. Some do not want to see the skydiving business being provided with additional space to run their business or an increase in skydiving. It was suggested to relocate it to Dalton Park. Others are happy with the current level of skydiving activity/operations or do not want to see a loss of skydiving.

No further expansion, building and land asset with promotional benefits - but large enough.

It should never have been here. t, parking, a great

Camping

Some said they do not want to see camping in the park, including Christmas/New Year's illegal camping. There is a concern campers do not respect the facilities, leaving rubbish and mess, including in the Pavilion bathrooms.

Numbers of people/activities

Some respondents do not want to see overcrowding or an "inundation of non-illawarra visitors". There is a view we don't need additional activities as it is busy enough. There is a dislike of "large groups around the Lagoon deck obscuring the view or picnicking from dawn to late evening around large grass areas, with smoky BBQs and pop-up tents". One said they would not like to see it left empty and not being put to good use.

Some beaches like Austinmer are overwhelmed by Sydneysiders on weekends. Let's try to avoid this.

Waste management / maintenance

Respondents said they don't want to see littering, overflowing rubbish bins or a reduction in the standard of maintenance. One said they don't want to see the Lagoon Restaurant's level of upkeep. Another suggested excluding charcoal barbecues because people dump the hot coals on the grass.

Restrictions

A few respondents do not want to see any restrictions on park use or to any areas.

Other things people do not want to see

A small number of respondents said they do not want to see:

- Fitness classes.
- Formal sporting fields.
- No spaces for group exercise with Savvy.
- Loss of open ground, green space or "space to exercise and kick a ball around with the kids".

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- Bike riders, including on the Blue Mile – “send them north to Fairy Meadow”, “I was run into last week!”
- Lack of showers close to the beach.
- “Terrible toilet paper that is rough on the butt”.
- Lack of lighting.
- Flooding.
- Drone use.

Online – Mapping tool

Respondents could provide feedback via the Our Wollongong website using the interactive mapping tool. Using this tool, people could select a pin, drop it at a specific place on the map and then write a comment or share an idea. Fifteen people used the interactive mapping tool and 58 pins were placed on the map. The ideas and comments are summarised under the following themes:

Access and connections

It was mentioned the intersection of Cliff Road and Bourke Street is a very popular yet dangerous crossing spot. It was suggested this area could be improved, slowing traffic and improving pedestrian mobility.

An idea was shared for moving the Gong Shuttle Bus stop to the corner of Blackett Street and Cliff Road. It was suggested this would make accessing Stuart Park easier and more convenient.



We received several comments about the need to improve the safety of this popular crossing point for pedestrians. Ideas shared include:

- Installation of a pedestrian crossing.
- Installation of traffic slowing devices and signage.
- Installation of a stop sign at the corner of George Hanley Drive and Cliff Road.
- Moving the crossing further along Cliff Road, away from George Hanley Drive.
- Making the entire area a shared zone.

An idea was shared to widen the footpath along eastern side of JP Galvin Park, in front of the car park. we heard this is an area people like to walk along and it can become easily congested.

We received comments about the existing bitumen path along the western side of the park. It was suggested this stretch of path could be widened. Another suggestion was made to separate bikes and pedestrians along this path. We also received an idea about installing lights along this footpath to improve safety in this area.

Several ideas were shared for improving access and connections around the northern end of the park. A suggestion was made that pathways could be built around the playground and Lagoon Restaurant. These pathways could connect to the existing pathway on the eastern and western side of the park. It was mentioned this circuit of pathways would be popular for walkers, runners and cyclists who want to exercise away from traffic.

We also heard that many people would like paths connecting the playground to the toilets and Lagoon Restaurant. People expressed the importance of having these connections, as at the moment they need to travel along the road or through the car park with prams and small children.

One responded requested we explore the opportunity to provide more parking along the western side of Squires Way and include a designated crossing area for pedestrians.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

It was requested we consider installing a small roundabout before the restaurant, as this would allow cars the opportunity to turn around before making it to the car park at the end of Cliff Road.

Several ideas were shared for improving access and connection to the park from Fairy Creek and Virginia Street. We heard that people leave the path and travel along the grassy area on the northern side of the PCYC, between Montague Street and Virginia Street. It was suggested a share path could be built here, making it easier for people to access North Wollongong Train Station.



Improving safety

A suggestion was made to rezone Cliff Road as a 30 km shared zone during summer daylight hours to alert drivers of the pedestrians and cycles in Cliff Road. This would make the road safer for cyclists and help overcome overcrowding on the Blue Mile.

Amenities

We heard there is a need for more bins along the grassy beachfront, with a respondent suggesting each picnic zone could have their own bin. There was a suggestion that recycling and FOGO bins could also be installed in the Park.

Several comments were made about the need for more or upgraded toilets in the Park. It was suggested the existing toilet block in the centre of the park, near the Village Green could be removed and replaced by a new toilet block towards the edge of the park. We also heard people would like to see another toilet block built closer to the playground.

Greening and shade

Respondents told us they would like to see more trees in the centre of the park where there is currently no shade.

Food and drink offerings

It was suggested there could be more food and drink facilities in the park, including places to get ice cream, drinks, burgers and chips.

Local stories, culture and history

A suggestion was made to install story boards about the local Aboriginal history of the area. It was mentioned these could be located along the foreshore area, with sightlines to Mt Geera and the Five Islands. We also received an idea for an Aboriginal cultural space in the north-western area of Stuart park, close to the duck pond.

We heard about the importance of preserving the existing cottage and palms in the centre of the park. A respondent had an idea that this could be converted into a cultural centre containing displays, local history and art and craft. It could also be used as an information centre and indoor/outdoor café.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

Sport and recreation

It was suggested exercise equipment could be installed along the grassy beachfront (near the Surf Club). This would include features like pull-up bars and a spongy ground area, similar to the features included in the image.

We received several ideas about how sport and recreation could be incorporated into the Park. Ideas for the south western side of the Park included:

- Bocce-style courts.
- Basketball court.
- Roller-skating rink/basketball court that incorporates public art.



Participant submission

Ideas for the north western side of the park included:

- Rockclimbing boulders.
- Skate park.
- Outdoor table tennis table.

Participant submission



Participant submission



the stories too have been summarised under the following themes:

Amenity

We heard that parking is getting worse, and access to the area is a “logistical pain”. It was suggested that public transport to the park could greatly reduce the traffic. A comment was made about the state of the surf club and skydive building. It was suggested they could be refurbished. A call was made for “sustainable and modern solutions” to the currently dilapidated facilities, i.e. the toilets. It was also mentioned there could be more footpaths within the park.

The once retro/historical buildings from my childhood are viewed as shabby, and in woeful need of repair and refurbishment. I would love to see the Surf Club and Skydive building revived in the same way the pavilion was, keeping the heritage aspect but bringing some much-needed love and attention into the area.

Natural areas

Stuart Park is viewed as a sanctuary of green grass next to a pristine beach. We heard the lagoon is a great space to play and picnic with family and friends. Images were shared of Fairy Creek after a pollution incident and a call was made to protect and improve the water quality for the animals that live there and people that play in the creek.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022



Fairy Creek – water pollution
(participant submission)



Fairy Creek – normally
(participant submission)

Meeting up with family and friends

Stuart Park was said to be a great place for making memories over the years. It's a central place to meet for a coffee, with the park being a prime picnic location.

My friend and I cycle from Coniston down to the lagoon via Swan St and the coastal path for an outing with our toddlers. The kids chase the seagulls, we have a picnic and visit the playground and then head home. It blows the baby blues away.



Playing in the park with friends/family
(participant submission)

Skydiving

We heard from a respondent about their experience of viewing Wollongong and Stuart Park while skydiving. We also heard the skydiving provides free entertainment for people having

The best way to see Stuart Park and the rest of beautiful Wollongong is definitely after jumping out of a plane from way up above...coming into land at Stuart Park after freefalling over the city of Wollongong and taking in all the amazing views was one of the best experiences of my life!

When I was younger my parents were lifeguards, and I spent many sunny days running around the surf club, exploring the rock pools and watching the skydivers zoom in from the blue skies.

a picnic.

Exercise

We heard Stuart Park is a great place for outdoor exercise classes.

Meetings with Aboriginal Stakeholders

Between February and August 2022, we undertook additional engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders. This engagement process was guided by the principles outlined in Council's [Aboriginal Engagement Framework](#). Stakeholders included Aboriginal Elders, community members, Registered Aboriginal Parties identified through a stakeholder analysis process and a local Aboriginal organisation. Through a

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

series of meetings, the group discussed how the draft Master Plan can appropriately acknowledge and respond to the Aboriginal cultural values of Stuart Park. A summary of these meetings is provided below.

February 2022

Aboriginal stakeholders and representatives from a local Aboriginal organisation, an environmental consultancy firm, a government heritage organisation, a landscape architecture firm, and Council met to discuss current projects relevant to Stuart Park. One of the projects discussed at this meeting was the development of a Master Plan for Stuart Park.

Participants expressed that it was very important for the master planning process to consider the cultural values and culturally significant places within Stuart Park. The group shared the importance of allowing an appropriate amount of time for further discussions to be had with Local Aboriginal Elders and Knowledge Holders throughout the master planning process.

Some participants shared their ideas about how local aboriginal culture could be represented in the master plan; these ideas included:

- Recognition of a local soldier - a plaque or statue.
- Integration of a dreaming story.
- Dual naming of Stuart Park.
- A yarning circle and bush tucker garden.

Participants shared that they would like for Council work with a local Aboriginal organisation to collate and present the following information in the form of a map:

- Known areas of significance within Stuart Park based on historical documentation.
- Findings of previous archaeological investigations.
- Location of known artefacts uncovered due to weather events etc.
- Relevant geotechnical information.

It was decided the map would be presented at the next meeting, where further discussions would take place around what Aboriginal stakeholders would see as 'opportunities' and 'constraints' for the master plan. One participant suggested Council investigate the possibility of further non-invasive investigation methods, such as ground-penetrating radar or aerial radar to identify some of the culturally sensitive areas within the park.

March 2022

Council staff worked with a local Aboriginal organisation to collate and visually present the information requested at the February meeting. A map indicating the areas known and predicted to have high archaeological value was created.

April 2022

Council met with Aboriginal stakeholders and a local Aboriginal organisation to walk on Country and present the map containing the findings of recent archaeological investigations, documented recounts of local history and other relevant information. This is a summary of the feedback provided by the meeting participants:

- There is a need for a footpath connecting the existing playground, the proposed AAAA playground and the existing toilet block. It was mentioned this connecting pathway should be constructed in an area likely to cause minimal ground disturbance and impact to any artefacts in the area.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- It was acknowledged there is a need for additional toilets to service the playground, both existing and proposed. As the proposed location for the new toilet facilities is in an area that contains many artefacts, it was suggested the new toilet block could be built opposite the accessible parking spaces, close to the playground. The construction of the toilets could make use of a concrete slab that already exists in this area, reducing the amount of ground disturbance.
- Nothing should be planned for the area identified as endangered ecological communities (EECs).
- Comments were made about the importance of maintaining the sightlines to Mt Keira. This is something Council should be mindful of if there are additional tree plantings proposed for the northern end of the park.
- The carpark at the northern end of Stuart Park is in an area where many artefacts have been found. The participants would not like to see the car park extended beyond its existing footprint. The group agreed the existing carpark would need to be upgraded into the future.
- It was suggested a raised boardwalk could be constructed to the east of the Lagoon Restaurant – between the restaurant and the Norfolk pines. This location appears to contain various shell deposits, which are being damaged by the many people who walk in this area. It was suggested a raised boardwalk would provide a formal walking path for pedestrians, while protecting the area from further erosion and damage.
- The participants would not like to see much proposed for the dune area, JP Galvin Park, as this area is predicted to have high archaeological value.
- It was suggested Council should undertake non-invasive testing throughout the site, particularly in the dune area to better understand what artefacts may exist.
- Some concerns were shared about the impacts of climate change to the park, particularly to the dune area.

May 2022

A meeting was held with some Aboriginal Elders who were unable to attend the Walk on Country in April. The Elders were in agreement with the ideas and feedback shared as part of the Walk on Country, including:

- Maintaining sightlines to Mt Keira.
- A raised boardwalk located between the Lagoon Restaurant and the Norfolk pines.
- The need for and suggested locations for additional footpaths and toilet facilities.
- Minimal works should be proposed for the dune area, JP Galvin Park.

They mentioned they would like to see a yarning circle included in the Master Plan, saying this would be a great location for community gatherings, important meetings and to teach and share local knowledge and stories. They said it would be important for the Yarning Circle to be connected to other areas of the park by footpaths and located close to the toilet and AAAA playground. They would not like to see the yarning circle be positioned in the far north-western end of the park.

June 2022

A meeting was held with Aboriginal stakeholders and a local Aboriginal organisation to discuss ideas for how Aboriginal culture, values and history could be represented in the master plan. The following ideas were discussed:

- **Yarning circle:**
The idea that Stuart Park could be a good location for a yarning circle was shared. The group discussed how this could provide an appropriate space for the sharing of knowledge and stories.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

We heard that the yarning circle should be a standalone feature of the park and not integrated with, or an extension of with other elements of the park, like the playground or potential event sites. The ideal location would be in a quieter area of the park that provides lots of shade and is a short distance from the toilets and parking. The design of the space would need to be accessible for Elders and small children, with pathways connecting the space to all other uses in the Park. It was suggested that a garden containing local natives and local Aboriginal medicinal plants could be created next to the yarning circle, as this would enable future opportunities for the sharing of knowledge. While many felt that Stuart Park was a good location for a yarning circle, a participant asked Council to consider if this was the most suitable location in the City. Participants shared that the detailed design of the space would need to happen in collaboration with members of the Aboriginal community.

- **Dual naming:**
The group discussed the potential for the dual naming of Stuart Park to include a traditional Aboriginal name for the area. It was mentioned that exploring the possibility of dual naming the park would be a great demonstration of reconciliation and decolonisation. The participants agreed that this would require further discussion and research, however they would like to see Council make a commitment to exploring the possibility for dual naming of Stuart Park.
- **Interoperative signage:**
The participants discussed the possibility of including interoperative signage in the park. While some were supportive of this idea, others thought there are other places where it would be more appropriate to include this type of signage. It was mentioned that the idea of interoperative signage would need to be discussed in further detail with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

August 2022

A walk on Country was arranged as an opportunity for Council to share a preliminary plan and seek feedback from the Aboriginal stakeholders. The feedback provided by the meeting participants is summarised as follows:

- The AAAA playground should have a toilet located close by. Other possible locations for the toilets could be investigated, however the final location should not impact on any areas where artefacts have been found.
- While there were artefacts found in the location of the proposed footpath connecting the toilet block to the accessible parking, the footpath could be built in this location if it is constructed in a way that does not disturb the archaeology.
- Council will need to consider that any work to the carpark could interfere with the archaeology near the playground, this is something that will need to be investigated further if any works are proposed.
- The participants were supportive of the idea of creating a space for a yarning circle in the park, saying it would be a great location for community gatherings, meetings and events. It was also mentioned it could become a great space for schools to bring their students.
- A community member would like for Council to work with community to tell the community and local schools about the space as a way of ensuring it will be adequately and appropriately used by the community into the future.
- The participants suggested the yarning circle could be located to the south-west of the pond as this is a quiet area of the park. They mentioned that space is ideal as it provides lots of natural shade and is somewhat removed from the other uses of the park, while being positioned near toilets and car parking. It is also located close to the bike path, which was a positive.
- Many liked that the possible location for the yarning circle was close to an endangered ecological community as this could provide an opportunity for Aboriginal Elders to teach children about different aspects of nature.

Planning for the Future of Stuart Park - Engagement Report August 2022

- The participants would like a garden containing culturally significant plants to be created in an area close to the yarning circle.
- It was suggested the Gong Shuttle bus could have an additional stop located along George Hanley Drive that would service visitors to and from Stuart Park.
- A suggestion was made for additional seating to be included in the site around the pond as this could provide a quiet space for people to sit and watch the ducks.
- The participants were supportive of the idea of including additional passive recreation opportunities in the western side of the park. They liked the idea of including a multicourt for casual recreation. It was stated that this space should not be used by any formal sporting groups, with its primary purpose being to cater to informal recreation and play.
- It was mentioned that Council could investigate the possibility of building a toilet block on the western side of the park to service the proposed yarning circle and passive recreational space. They asked if Council could investigate the location of the existing sewer lines to see if this is a feasible option.
- Some of the participants shared their frustration over the sense that the park “shuts down” for major events and for any repair work to the ground after major events. They feel the space should remain clean, tidy and available for the community.
- The group were supportive of the idea of the continuation of the Blue Mile – from the North Wollongong Surf Club, along the dune area, to the north of the playground, connecting to George Hanley Drive. They agreed that the footpath should be constructed in a way that will result in minimal ground disturbance and digging. The group were supportive of the proposed location of the raised boardwalk between the Lagoon Restaurant and the Norfolk pines. It was mentioned that in some locations along the dune, the preference is for the pathway to sit on the western side of the trees as this would channel the pedestrian activity away from some of the sensitive sites in this area of the park.
- A participant would like for Council to include more signage along the proposed extension of the Blue Mile to remind people about the importance of bike and pedestrian safety.
- A request was made for Council to undertake more non-invasive archaeological investigations.

Next Steps

The feedback received from this first phase of engagement will be used to help develop the draft Master Plan for Stuart Park.

We will share the draft Master Plan with the community in 2022. This will be an opportunity for people to let us know if they support the draft Plan. Feedback received during the second stage of engagement will be used to finalise the Master Plan, before it goes to Council seeking adoption in 2023.



ITEM 6 ROCK FISHING SAFETY ACT 2016 - OPT-IN LEGISLATION

Rock fishing continues to be one of the city's highest-risk recreational activities. Since January 2021, six rock fishers have lost their lives at the rock platform known as Honeycomb Rocks at Port Kembla.

Council officers have continued to liaise with key agencies to explore a holistic multi-agency approach to enhancing rock fishing safety including education, engagement and communication, equipment and enforcement. Our Research continues to highlight that the *Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016* (Act) remains the only available legislative means in New South Wales (NSW) to have rock fishers mandated to wear an appropriate life jacket when fishing at high-risk locations.

Acknowledging the ongoing rock fishing fatalities occurring on our coastline, on 23 May 2022 Council resolved to pursue stakeholder and community engagement on a proposal to opt-in on the Act. The community engagement phase was pursued from 24 June to 24 July 2022 with the findings of the consultation phase now a key consideration in a proposal to opt-in to the legislation.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council notes the findings of the Rock Fishing Safety Community Engagement Report outlined in Attachment 1
- 2 Council requests the Minister for Local Government to make a declaration under the *Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016* that the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) is an area where high-risk rock fishing takes place
- 3 For the purposes of the above declaration, the high-risk rock fishing locations within the Wollongong LGA are those described and identified on the map attached to this report.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Rock Fishing Safety Community Engagement Report
- 2 High Risk Rock Fishing Areas Wollongong LGA combined - Map

BACKGROUND

Since early 2021, a total of six rock fishers have tragically lost their lives at a popular rock fishing location on a rock platform below Hill 60, Port Kembla, located on Sydney Water land known as Honeycomb Rocks.

In response, Council gained Sydney Water's support to install multilingual shock signs in the Hill 60 rock precinct warning of the hazards of rock fishing and recommending the wearing of life jackets. Throughout the past 15 months Council has maintained engagement with NSW Police, Marine Area Command, Department of Primary Industry (Fisheries) (DPIF) and Surf Life Saving to deliver two onsite information and educational workshops in the Honeycomb Rock precinct carpark. Information from these workshops can be found at <https://wollongong.nsw.gov.au/explore/beaches/rock-fishing>.

Council officers have also actively participated with other councils, through its membership of the NSW Local Government Coastal Safety Group on initiatives to reduce the frequency of rock fishing deaths. This research notes that a number of councils that had previously experienced repeated rock fishing tragedies, such as City of Randwick, Sutherland Shire Council, Northern Beaches Council and Lake Macquarie City Council noted decreases in incidents and/or deaths since they pursued opting into the legislation. It is evident from these ongoing discussions with councils that have opted into the

Act that rock fishers' compliance to the wearing of life jackets varies between 50 to 90% and remains heavily reliant on the enforcement capabilities of NSW Police.

In response to the number of incidents and requests from NSW Government representatives and agencies, a report to Council was considered at its meeting on 23 May 2022, Item 2 Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 Opt-In Legislation, where it was resolved unanimously that:

1. Council resolves to pursue stakeholder and community engagement for 28 days on Council's proposal to opt-in to the *Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016*, which would see areas within Wollongong LGA declared as high-risk rock fishing locations.
2. A subsequent report come to Council with the outcome of this engagement to have Council resolve to request the Minister for Local Government to make a declaration under the *Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016* that the Wollongong LGA is an area where high-risk rock fishing takes place.
3. The report also investigates a range of options that may include, but not be limited to, short term hire or loan of life jackets so that no one is disadvantaged by the introduction of this regulation. Further that funding options to provide this, including funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust and the Port Kembla Community Investment Funding (PKCIF) be examined.
4. For the purposes of the above declaration, the high-risk rock fishing locations within the Wollongong LGA are those described and identified on the map attached to this report.

In response to the Council resolution points 1 and 2, Council officers have pursued formal engagement with the broader community from 24 June to 24 July 2022 and targeted key stakeholder sessions with NSW Police, Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving NSW, Surf Life Saving Illawarra, DPIF, the NSW Local Government Coastal Safety Group and land-based anglers representations.

It is noted from these discussions with emergency responders such as NSW Police and Surf life Saving that there is strong support to see Council Opt-in to the legislation. Some of the expressed views of representatives of rock fishers indicated a desire to see access again to save ocean fishing locations such as the Port Kembla harbour northern break wall or the recently fenced Wollongong Harbour break wall. In addition, Rock Fishing representatives noted that the wearing of life jackets should remain a personal choice.

As outlined in the Rock Fishing Safety Community Engagement Report (Attachment 1), Council pursued a range of engagement initiatives to seek opinion on the proposal, gain further insight into local issues and to better understand attitudes around the wearing of life jackets.

Council officers engaged with over 1,000 participants registered on the 'Our Wollongong' website, published a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on its website, established a web-based Question and Answer (Q&A) forum and online survey. The opportunity to participate was also pursued through social media and with multilingual signage at popular rock fishing locations and multilingual flyers at libraries and community centres, swimming pools and local bait and tackle shops.

Outcomes and key findings of the engagement are available within Attachment 1 with the engagement phase providing 106 formal contributions via the online survey or the Q&A.

A summary of these engagement findings include:

- 91.5% of participants said English was their first language
- 75% of respondents said they fish every few months or more frequently
- The most common reason for rock fishing was leisure, followed by sport and food
- The most common zone participants fish within is Zone 3 (ie the southern coastal area from City Beach to Windang)
- Of the participants who rock fish, 60% said they either 'never' or 'rarely' wear a life jacket

- 91.8% of respondents indicated they knew where to get rock fishing safety equipment (such as a life jacket).

Survey participants were asked the following primary question:

‘Wollongong City Council is proposing to opt-in to legislation that would make it a legal requirement for rock fishers to wear a life jacket while fishing from rock platforms in Wollongong. What would you like Council to consider before making this decision?’

Council received 95 responses to this particular question with the responses analysed for their sentiment and scored as either supportive of Council’s proposal, neutral (or didn’t have any clear or obvious sentiment), or unsupportive.

The results were:

- 33.7% supportive
- 34.7% neutral
- 31.6% unsupportive.

In addition to the primary question, participants were asked at the end of the survey if they wished to make any further comments. A wide variety of minor themes were identified in the responses and within these themes, participants expressed a broad spectrum of opinions.

A summary of the feedback received and issues raised in all submissions is presented under the following feedback themes listed below in frequency expressed (highest to lowest):

- Education
- Signage
- Enforcement
- Economic impact
- Freedom to make personal decisions
- Less high-risk areas
- Need for safer alternative sites
- Hill 60
- Consider the lives risked in rescuing
- Life jackets
- Head injuries and helmets
- Wet suits and safety equipment
- Swimming ability
- Life jackets impact on ability to dive under waves
- Life jackets create a false sense of security.

In relation to point 3 of the resolution which relates *‘to investigating a range of options, but not be limited to, short term hire or loan of life jackets so that no one is disadvantaged by the introduction of this regulation’*, Council officers noted the following feedback from rock fishing retailers and experienced rock fishing anglers on loaning or hiring life jackets:

- The average cost of readily available compliant rock fishing life jackets (Australian Standard 4758 at least level 50s for adults or at least 100 for children under age 12) is between \$50 and \$100. Feedback from anglers and retailers is that the pricing of life jackets is considered reasonable in comparison to other rock fishing tackle and essentials such as particular ocean species lures costing up to \$25 and noting entry level fishing gear, footwear and tackle ranges from \$500 to \$700 to commence rock fishing.
- Council officers note that a life jacket loan/hire system has been established and operating in Western Australia (WA) through Recfishwest, which is the peak body representing the interests of 750,000 recreational fishers in WA and have a long-standing service level agreement with the WA Government. Participating bait and tackle shops can be located at <https://recfishwest.org.au/our-services/safefishing/>.

- Feedback from local stakeholders indicated that hiring would not likely be considered viable given the relative low cost of purchase of new life jackets and the need for more frequent maintenance in accordance with manufacturers guidelines on all life jacket options.
- Local retail stores' operating hours suit daytime rock fishers for purchases but do not cater for or align to popular late afternoon/evening fishing patterns.
- It was also highlighted that hiring or sharing of life jackets runs the risk of individuals not pursuing a correct and close-fitting life jacket. Should a fisherman be immersed in the water and be unfamiliar with the operation of a life jacket there is a risk of the life jacket being worn in a manner that may not optimise their buoyance performance and reliability when immersed.
- It was noted that contemporary inflatable life jackets have a life averaging six years. The lifespan is heavily dependent on correct and compliant maintenance (annual testing on inflatable options). The hiring of such items in a marine environment would significantly reduce the lifespan of the life jacket and require a comprehensive hygiene regime.
- Local fish and tackle stores within five kilometres of Hill 60 carry a broad range of compliant rock fishing safety life jackets and other safety equipment including footwear.
- Other initiatives such as the provision of Emergency Rescue Beacons (ERB), which are currently managed by Surf Life Saving NSW (SLSNSW) on four local unpatrolled beaches, are considered an effective post incident response. These solar powered devices provide digital images of emerging incidents and when activated escalate immediately to emergency response agencies. Council officers have worked collaboratively with SLSNSW and a unit has recently been installed during August 2022 on Sydney Water land adjacent to Honeycomb Rocks, Port Kembla.

In relation to point 3 of the resolution, *'that funding options to provide this, including funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust and the Port Kembla Community Investment Funding (PKCIF) be examined'* Council officers have explored current available funding opportunities.

The Recreation Fishing Trust Grants do provide opportunities to support rock fishing safety and Council currently has a grant application for rock fishing safety signage at popular locations across the city currently under evaluation by the DPI.

It is noted that funding options for the provision of education workshops and life jackets have recently been supported through a successful grant funding initiative by SLSNSW with funding through the Department of Primary Industries NSW Recreational Fishing Trust. The 'Gone Fishing' rock fishing safety workshops are targeting aspiring rock fishing anglers across NSW.

The first of these initiatives in the State is scheduled to be conducted at Port Kembla on Saturday, 10 September 2022 and has been proactively encouraged and supported by Council. The event will see registered participants pursue the following:

1. Rock fishing skills workshop
2. Life jacket education session
3. Safety gear session – clothes, shoes etc.
4. Understanding conditions – Wind, swell, tide, and signage
5. Hill 60 platform hazard tour
6. Emergency scenario session featuring Wollongong City Council lifeguards and local volunteer lifesavers.

If registered, participants who attend and complete all the activities across the day, will be personally fitted with a free life jacket.

Council officers have also reviewed the current eligibility criteria for the PKCIF grant opportunities. A review of the requirements notes that eligible projects must come the following streams:

- Stream 1: Community Infrastructure – Construction of new or upgrades to existing community infrastructure that is used primarily for public benefit.
- Stream 2: Business Infrastructure – Major capital expenditure on new equipment, facilities, utilities, road and rail access infrastructure.
- Stream 3: Environmental Infrastructure – Activities that help decarbonise local industry with a focus on heavy transport mobility.

As such grant funding opportunities may be a consideration for future water safety infrastructure initiatives at Port Kembla, with funding restricted to the Port Kembla 2502 precinct only, with resources being unable to be utilised elsewhere within the LGA.

Clarification on what is the *Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 (Act)* and where it applies

The Act only applies to councils who have opted into this legislation. The legislation gives councils and other enforcement agencies including the NSW Police, DPIF and National Parks and Wildlife Service, power to enforce the mandatory wearing of approved life jackets by rock fishers within declared areas. The enforcement of the Act has in other Local Government areas been led by NSW Police.

Specifically, the Act requires a person must not rock fish without a life jacket at a high-risk rock fishing location. Secondly, a person must not permit a child in their care or supervision to rock fish in a high-risk rock fishing location. A child is defined as a person who is under 12 years of age.

A high-risk rock fishing location is specifically defined in the legislation as 'naturally occurring rock platforms or other rock formations exposed to ocean swell within a declared area'. The high -risk rock fishing locations are identified in attachment 2 is applied to all naturally occurring rock platforms or other rock formations in the Wollongong LGA.

The attachment 2 maps reference all the locations where such naturally occurring formations lay. All rock platforms provide increased risk by varying tidal and ocean conditions and a rock fisherman's potential inexperience to hazards present at these locations. The application of high-risk locations across the entire and all rock platforms in the LGA is consistent with the intention of the legislation and what has been recommended by the DPIF and applied and implemented by the council's that have opted-in to the legislation.

While a small number of fatalities have occurred at manmade structures such as break walls, these are not considered a high-risk rock fishing location. The Act has limited the wearing of life jacket requirements to all naturally occurring rock platforms and rock formations within declared areas.

Following a resolution of Council to opt-in to the legislation, the legislation requires an initial 12-month moratorium on infringements. Following this, enforcement will be pursued by NSW Police noting the issuing of Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) with PINs to be paid into the Recreational Fisheries (Saltwater) Trust. Following the decision of the Council to formerly opt-in, the Minister needs to declare the areas, by order, published in the gazette.

Why Should Council opt-in?

An average of eight lives are lost each year in NSW due to rock fishing, and previous coronial inquiries recommend that life jackets be made mandatory in NSW. To date, eight councils have formerly resolved to opt-in to the Act to reduce the frequency of fatalities at high-risk rock fishing locations. Engagement with a number of these Councils indicate a reduction in rock fishing related fatalities in these LGAs. The NSW Police have again reassured Council of their willingness to participate in targeted enforcement initiatives noting the likelihood that the compulsory wearing of life jackets may lead to a decrease in fatalities.

PROPOSAL

Council has pursued community consultation for 28 days on a proposal to opt-in to the Act. The outcomes of the community consultation are noted, and this proposal now sees areas within Wollongong LGA declared as high-risk rock fishing locations. The Act defines a high-risk rock fishing location as 'a naturally occurring rock platform or other rock formation exposed to ocean swell within a declared area'.

The declaration would include a description and map that identifies the high-risk rock fishing locations (Attachment 2) and would be published on the NSW Government website and any other appropriate website, including the Wollongong City Council website.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Council has continued to engage with key stakeholders including NSW Police, Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving NSW, various NSW Government departments, other coastal councils and land-based anglers. In addition, the Lord Mayor and staff met with NSW Police and Marine Rescue to discuss the options available and the role of Police in enforcement.

As part of the proposal to have Council formally opt-in to the Act, Council has undertaken a 28-day community engagement process to seek further feedback from stakeholder groups and the broader community.

As outlined in Attachment 1, community engagement was undertaken from 24 June to 24 July 2022.

The primary purpose of the engagement was to:

- Determine the level of support for the proposal
- Discover local knowledge that may influence Council's decision
- Understand the social and economic impacts.

The secondary purpose of the engagement was to:

- Raise awareness of the hazards and dangers of rock fishing
- Understand the reasons for reluctance to life jackets
- Gauge the reasons why people rock fish
- Gather ideas on the most effective ways to change risk-taking behaviour.

Findings of the engagement are outlined in the Attachment to this report.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5 'We have a healthy community in a liveable city'. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032	Delivery Program 2022-2026	Operational Plan 2022-23
Strategy	Service	Operational Plan Actions
5.4 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public spaces and opportunities for sport, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.	Lifeguard Services	Explore and deploy Smart Technology options to better obtain and utilise attendance and event data to inform Lifeguard Services Provision

RISK MANAGEMENT

Rock fishing is one of Australia's most high-risk pastimes. The Surf Life Saving NSW Coastal Safety Report 2021 notes that since 2004/05 that 19% of all drowning deaths in NSW are associated with rock fishing with an annual average of eight rock fishing related fatalities. Since January 2021 there have been six rock fishing related deaths in the Wollongong LGA. With each incident there are additional risks to first responders and rescue and recovery teams.

Reducing the number of people who die while rock fishing is the key aim of the Act and supported by the Office of Local Government, NSW Police and State Government agencies, Surf Life Saving NSW and

Surf Life Saving Illawarra. By opting in together with active NSW Police support on enforcement and multi-agency participation in deployment on communications and education, there is an anticipated likelihood of reducing rock fishing deaths in the city.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Should Council decide to opt into the legislation it will be required to meet all costs associated with the installation of signage and production of targeted educational resources. The cost associated with public education and signage across all declared high-risk locations is estimated at \$60,000. Council officers have recently applied for grant funding of \$30,000 from the Recreation Fishing Trust to pursue educational signage to support Council in opting into the legislation.

The deployment of the signage and further enhanced educational resources would be reliant upon Council securing external grant funding associated with recreational fishing or identifying resources from Council's future operational and capital works budget, including signage maintenance.

Council's current water safety education programs delivered through schools was updated and the use of Council staff during any joint exercises will be undertaken within current budget allocations.

CONCLUSION

Council officers have deployed a range of community engagement initiatives throughout the 28 day consultation phase. In addition, staff have continued to actively engage with key stakeholders including NSW Police, Marine Area Command, Surf Life Saving NSW, various NSW Government departments, other coastal councils and land-based anglers, in pursuing research into initiatives to reduce the likelihood of rock fishing tragedies occurring within the LGA.

Research indicates a range of measures are required to reduce the risk of fatalities for rock fishers along Wollongong's coastline. Many of these measures have been deployed and will continue to be delivered. The additional measure of Council opting- in to the Act that sees the compulsory wearing of life jackets at high-risk fishing locations across the city presents as a key initiative that will assist in reducing the frequency of fatalities across the LGA.



OUR WOLLONGONG JOIN THE CONVERSATION



Rock Fishing Safety Engagement Report

August 2022

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary	3
Background	6
Stakeholders	7
Methods.....	7
Results	11
Next steps	27

The information in this report is based on data collected from community members who chose to be involved in engagement activities and therefore should not be considered representative.

This report is intended to provide a high-level analysis of the most prominent themes and issues. While it's not possible to include all the details of feedback we received, feedback that was relevant to the project has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Executive Summary

Council has proposed to opt-in to the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016. This proposal would see all rock platforms in the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) declared as high-risk rock fishing areas where fishers must wear a lifejacket or they could be issued a fine.

We asked the community to comment on the proposal to help inform Council's final decision on opting in.

Stakeholders, methods and results

Community engagement was undertaken from 24 June to 24 July 2022. The engagement aimed to determine the level of support for the proposal, discover local knowledge that may influence Council's decision and understand the social and economic impacts.

Emails were sent to more than 1,050 stakeholders during the engagement period including:

- Fishing organisations and clubs.
- Fishing businesses and industry.
- Emergency and rescue services and organisations.
- Local state and federal politicians, and relevant political parties.
- Government bodies and agencies and neighbouring local government area.
- Register of Interest groups (Sport and Safety).
- Neighbourhood forums.
- Internal reference groups.

A webpage was published on Council's engagement site, Our Wollongong. It hosted an online survey, provided background information, Frequently Asked Questions, a Q&A function and maps showing the areas proposed to be declared high-risk rock fishing areas. The project webpage was visited 427 times.

The engagement was promoted through a variety of methods. An advertisement was published in the Illawarra Mercury. Corflute signs were installed at key rock fishing sites. Flyers were distributed to 12 Council facilities and bait and tackle stores near Hill 60. The signage and flyers had QR codes linking to the project webpage and key information translated into Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean and Arabic.

The engagement was also publicised via two media releases and three social media posts. This resulted in 12 media articles/stories by four media outlets.

The engagement received seven submissions from key agencies and organisations, 106 online survey responses, 10 emails, three phone enquiries, an in-person enquiry, and an in-person submission.

The survey participants varied in age from 18 to 85+ years. More than half of participants were aged from 35 to 59 years.

91.5% of participants said English is their first language and 8.5% said it wasn't.

Survey findings

69% of survey participants said they fish from rock platforms in the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA). Of these people, 75% said they rock fish every few months or more. The most common reason they rock fish was for leisure, followed by sport and food.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

The most common map zone participants fish within was zone 3 (City Beach to Windang), followed by Zone 2 (Thirroul to City Beach) and finally, Zone 1 (Otford to Thirroul).

Participants identified as living across 32 different post codes, the most common being 2519 (Balgownie, Fairy Meadow, Fernhill, Mount Ousley, Mount Pleasant). 10 of the 11 most common postcodes were in Wollongong LGA, with the exception being the second most common post code, 2528 (Barrack Heights, Barrack Point, Lake Illawarra, Mount Warrigal, Warilla, Windang) mostly located in the Shellharbour LGA.

Of the participants who rock fish, 91.8% of them said they knew where to get safety equipment but 60% said they either “never” or “rarely” wear a lifejacket.

Feedback themes

We asked participants what they wanted Council to consider before deciding to opt in. The responses to this question were analysed for their sentiment and scored as either supportive of Council’s proposal, neutral (or didn’t have any clear or obvious sentiment), or unsupportive. While we didn’t explicitly ask participants to express whether they supported Council’s proposal or not, most participants made it clear in their answers. The results were 33.7% supportive, 34.7% neutral (or didn’t have any sentiment), and 31.6% unsupportive.

The survey responses were also analysed for themes. A wide variety of minor themes were identified. Within these themes, participants expressed a broad spectrum of opinions. These themes and the key points that were expressed are summarised as follows:

Education

This was the most common theme found in participant’s comments.

- Some rock fishers need further education to better understand the conditions and “read the ocean”.
- Increased education rather than legislation.
- Lifejackets are only part of the solution, with education being a key component to the solution.

Visitor education:

- Many rock fishers who fish in dangerous conditions or get themselves into danger are visitors to the area or unfamiliar with the rock platforms.
- Visitors need to be educated in the places where they live, rather than relying on being educated once they get to the water’s edge.

Education in other languages:

- Education needs to consider rock fishers who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).
- Educate visitors using non-English media channels and community groups.

Enforcement

This was the second most common theme in comments.

- Some expressed support for heavier penalties and increased surveillance.
- Some acknowledge the difficulty in policing the legislation.
- Some questioned the timing of when the enforcement would take place, and suggested it was a revenue raising exercise.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Economic impact	Some respondents want Council to consider the economic impact of mandating lifejackets, but from a variety of different standpoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the affordability of lifejackets in general. High cost of specialised lifejackets, or for a person who rock fishes infrequently, on top of a licence fee. Council's role in affordability. Cost of legislation being enforced and areas patrolled. Cost of rescue services, and opportunity cost if others miss out on rescue services.
Personal decision	Some respondents said that rock fishers should have the freedom to make their own decisions regarding safety equipment.
Less high risk areas	Some participants want Council to reconsider the locations proposed to be declared high risk rock fishing areas as they believe not all rock platforms are high risk.
Need safer alternative sites	Some participants expressed the need for more rock fishing sites that are safe and for old sites to be reopened. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A greater variety of sites available used to be available (e.g the Pork Kembra northern breakwall and jetties 3, 4 and 6). New jetties or walls could be built to provide safer sites.
Signage	Signage was commonly suggested as either a complementary safety measure (needed in addition to lifejackets) or as a preferred safety measure.

Several less-common themes were also identified, including:

- Hill 60
- Lives risked rescuing
- Lifejackets for other activities
- Lifejacket types
- Head injuries and helmets
- Wetsuits and safety equipment
- Swimming ability
- Impact on ability to dive under waves
- False sense of security

Many one-off ideas for improving rock fishing safety were also shared by respondents, and are summarised in the report.

Other submission types

One verbal submission was received and was supportive of the proposal.

Seven emails were received: four expressed support for the proposal and three did not.

Seven submissions were received from organisations and agencies. Submissions of support were received from Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts, Crown Lands, Paul Scully MP, and Surf Life Saving Illawarra. Submissions with varying concerns were received from Wollongong Sportfishing Club, Australian National Sport Fishing Association, and Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW.

Next Steps

The feedback received from this engagement will be reported to Council to help inform their decision on opting into the Rock Fishing Safety Act.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Background

Rock fishing continues to be one of Australia's highest-risk sports and recreational pastimes.

Since January 2021, six rock fishers have lost their lives at the rock platform known as Honeycomb Rocks at Port Kembla.

Following the tragic events of 2021, Council has actively engaged with key stakeholders to implement strategies to reduce the likelihood of rock fishing tragedies occurring within the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA). Council also researched the best available mitigation strategies to reduce harm. This research confirmed that rock fishing safety needs to be pursued through a holistic multi-agency approach with a focus on education, engagement, communication, equipment, and enforcement.

Following the most recent rock fishing tragedy on 25 April 2022 at Honeycomb Rocks, NSW Police (Lake Illawarra District) and Marine Rescue requested that Council give further consideration of opting-in to the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016. Opting into this legislation would make wearing a lifejacket a legal requirement while rock fishing in Wollongong LGA.

A report to Council was considered at its meeting on 23 May 2022 - [Item 2 - Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 - Opt-In Legislation](#) where it was resolved unanimously that:

1. Council pursue stakeholder and community engagement for 28 days on Council's proposal to opt-in to the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016, which would see areas within Wollongong LGA declared as high-risk rock fishing locations.
2. A subsequent report come forward to Council with the outcome of this engagement, with a view to have Council resolve to request the Minister for Local Government to make a declaration under the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 that the Wollongong LGA is an area where high-risk rock fishing takes place.
3. The report also investigate a range of options that may include, but not be limited to, short-term hire or loan of lifejackets so no one is disadvantaged by the introduction of this regulation. Further, that funding options to provide this, including funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust and the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund, be examined.
4. For the purposes of the above declaration, the high-risk rock fishing locations within the Wollongong LGA are those described and identified on the map attached to the Council report.

This engagement report is in response to points 1 and 2 of the resolution.

Community engagement was undertaken from 24 June to 24 July 2022.

The primarily purpose of the engagement was to:

- Determine the level of support for the proposal.
- Discover local knowledge that may influence Council's decision.
- Understand the social and economic impacts.

The secondary purpose of the engagement was to:

- Raise awareness of the hazards and dangers of rock fishing.
- Understand the reasons for reluctance to lifejackets.
- Gauge the reasons why people rock fish.
- Gather ideas on the most effective ways to change risk-taking behaviour.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Stakeholders

Stakeholders identified prior to the start of the engagement period included:



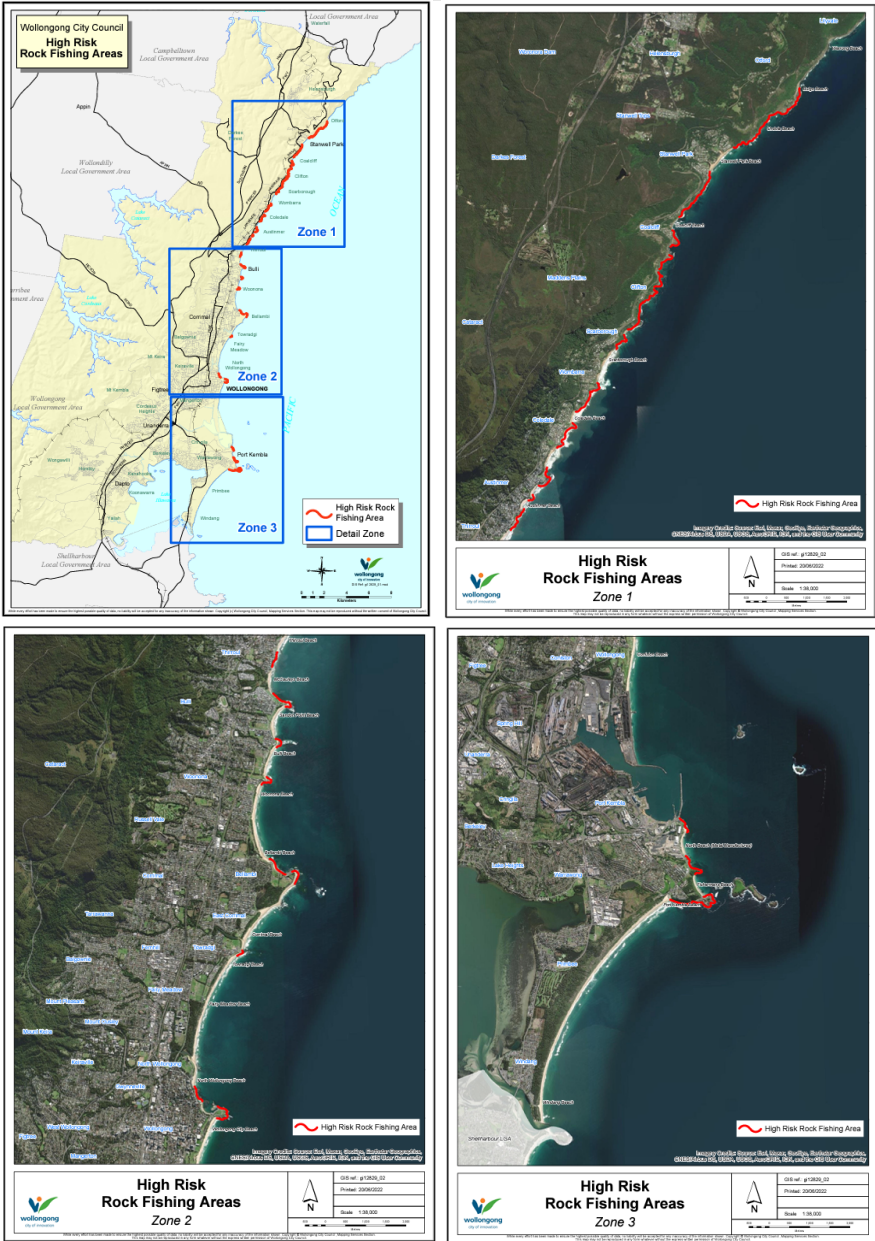
Methods

Our Methods

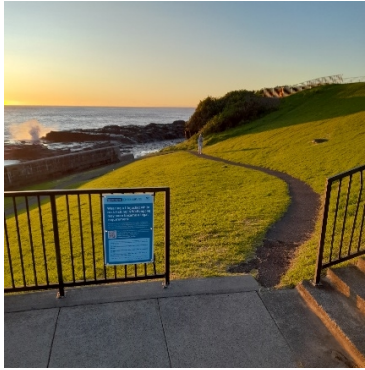

Table 1: Details of Communication and Engagement Methods

Methods	Details of Methods
Communication Methods	
Email to key stakeholders	An email was sent to more than 40 key stakeholders identified through an analysis process.
Register of Interest	An email was sent to participants registered on the Our Wollongong website with an interest in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety - sent to 977 participants Sport - sent to 31 participants
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	Responses to likely questions about the proposal were published on the project webpage.
Maps	Maps showing the locations proposed to be declared high-risk rock fishing areas across the LGA were produced and published on the project webpage.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

	
<p>Our Wollongong website</p>	<p>The project webpage hosted background information, supporting documents and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently Asked Questions • Maps • Q&A forum • Online survey

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

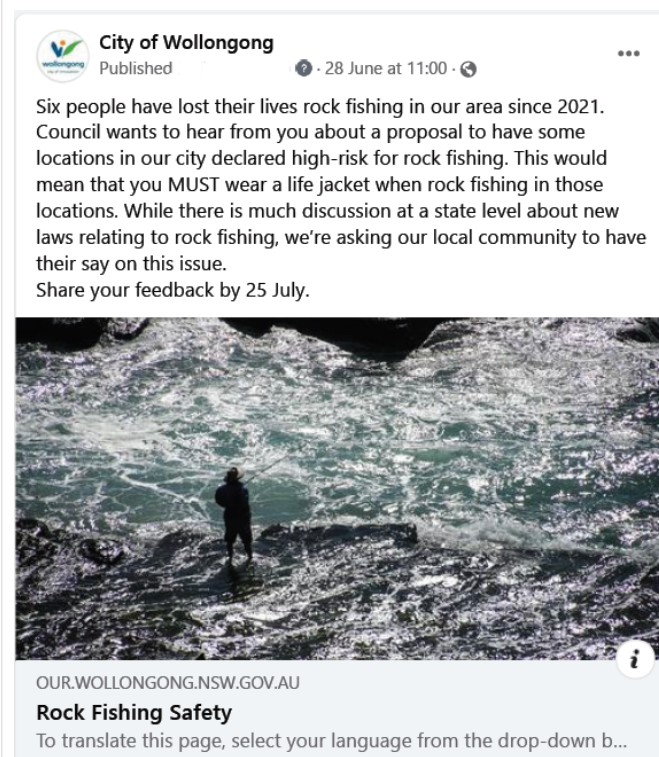
Illawarra Mercury Community Update	A notice was published on the Council page in the 6 July 2022 edition of the Illawarra Mercury Community Update to promote the engagement.
Corflute signs	<p>Corflute signs with a QR code linking to the Our Wollongong project webpage were produced. They included key information in Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean and Arabic. They were installed in key locations at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hill 60 • Flagstaff Hill • Leeder Park, Coalcliff • Coalcliff Rock Pool • Sea Cliff Bridge 
Flyers	<p>DL-sized flyers with key information in Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean and Arabic were produced and distributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Wollongong City Library branches (Helensburgh, Thirroul, Corrimal, Wollongong, Warrawong, Unanderra, and Dapto) • Corrimal Community Centre • Dapto Ribbonwood Centre • Corrimal Pool • Continental Pool • Dapto Pool • Fergo's Tackle World, Warrawong • Windang Bait & Tackle • Compleat Angler Illawarra, Windang • BCF (Boating Camping Fishing), Warrawong
Media release	Two media releases about the proposal and engagement were distributed on 23 May 2022 and 27 June 2022 .
Social media	<p>A Twitter post about the Council resolution was published on 23 May 2022:</p> 

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

A Twitter post about the engagement was published on [27 June 2022](#):



A Facebook post promoting the engagement was published on [28 June 2022](#):



Engagement Methods

<p>Our Wollongong website</p>	<p>An online survey was used to capture participants' comments.</p> <p>An online Q&A forum was provided for participants to ask questions about the proposal.</p> <p>FAQs were provided in anticipation of question people may have.</p>
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22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Phone calls	A summary of open feedback was noted during phone conversations.
Email	People emailed in open written submissions.
Stakeholder meeting	A summary of open feedback was noted in meeting minutes.

Results

All stakeholders and the wider community were invited to provide feedback on Rock Fishing Safety.

Media

The proposal and exhibition were well publicised by a variety of news outlets. The following table summarised the news stories published or broadcast following the Council resolution and during the public exhibition period.

Table 2: Media Coverage

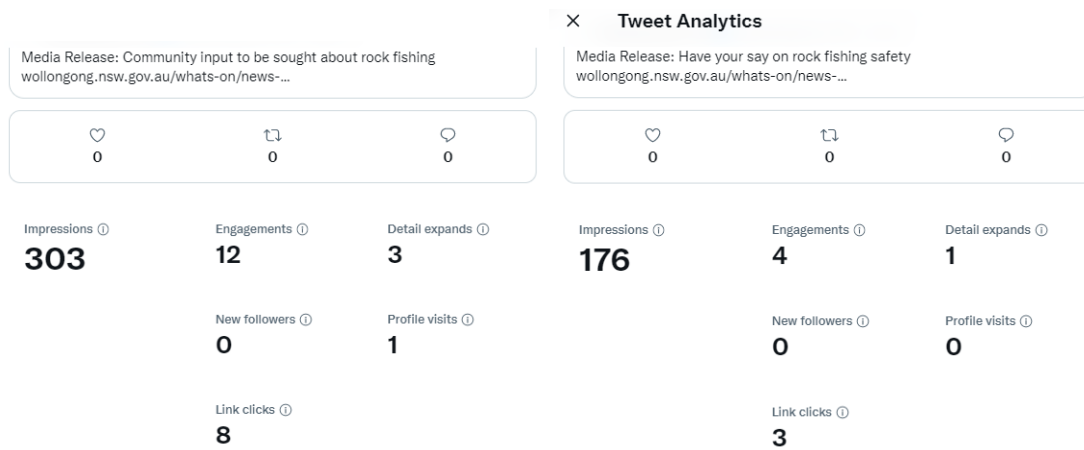
Date	Media Outlet	Headline/description
24 May	Daily Telegraph	'Time for us to act': Wollongong Council step toward rock fishing lifejacket rule
25 May	i98FM Illawarra	Host chat - Lifejackets - Council resolution News headline - Lifejackets
26 May	Illawarra Mercury	Council acts on fishers' lifejackets
3 June	ABC Illawarra	NSW rock fishers risk their lives at Honeycomb Rocks, one of Australia's deadliest angling spots
10 June	Illawarra Mercury	Anglers 'wanted wetsuits'
30 June	Illawarra Mercury	Feedback sought on mandatory lifejackets
7 July	Illawarra Mercury	Have your say on rock fishing safety in the Illawarra
13 July	Illawarra Mercury	Lifejacket rule would apply to every rock shelf for 60km
14 July	ABC Illawarra	Host chat - discussion of news headlines - Lifejackets for rock fishing
15 July	Illawarra Mercury	Rock fishing funding 'the one that got away' says Wollongong MP
16 July	Illawarra Mercury	A push for lifejackets at Kiama
19 July	ABC Illawarra	Story discussed during Breakfast with Melinda James News headline – Making lifejackets mandatory

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

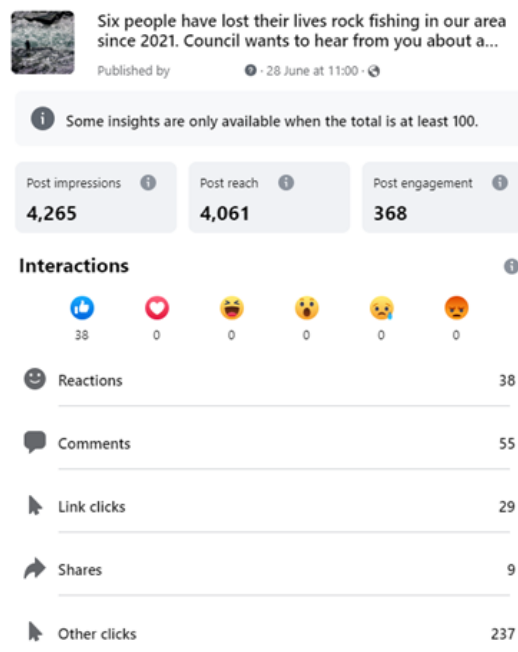
Social media

The Twitter post about the Council resolution published on 23 May 2022 received 303 impressions, 12 engagement and 8 link clicks.

The Twitter post about the engagement published on 27 June 2022 received 176 impressions, 4 engagement and 3 link clicks:



The Facebook post promoting the engagement published on 28 June 2022 received 4,265 impressions, 368 engagements, 55 comments and 29 link clicks.



Some stakeholders promoted the public exhibition via their social media pages or to their email networks.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Webpage traffic

The webpage was visited 427 times.

The maps showing the locations proposed to be declared high-risk rock fishing areas were downloaded 70 times.

The FAQs were viewed 32 times.

The QR code on the corflute signs was scanned 9 times, by 8 users, viewed in 15 sessions.

The QR code on the flyers was scanned 6 times, by 5 users, viewed in 7 sessions.

Engagement Participation

This section provides details on the participation in engagement activities and feedback received during the exhibition period. Details of the number of participants for each engagement activity are presented in Table 2.

Table 3: Participation in Engagement Activities

Engagement Activities	Participation
Phone Calls	3
Emails	10
In-person enquiry	1
In-person submission	1
Online Participation	
Aware – Total number of people who viewed the project webpage.	382
Informed – Total number of people who clicked a hyperlink, e.g., to download the draft plans.	200
Engaged – Total number of people who actively contributed to the project, e.g., by submitting comments via the survey or posting a question to the Q&A.	106

We heard from many highly experienced and knowledgeable rock fishers, as well as plenty of community members who care about the lives of rock fishers. We heard from several people who had experienced the loss of a fisher, or had been involved in responding to a rock fishing incident.

Many participants took considerable time to convey the complexities of rock fishing safety and the factors involved in making it a safer activity.

Submission results

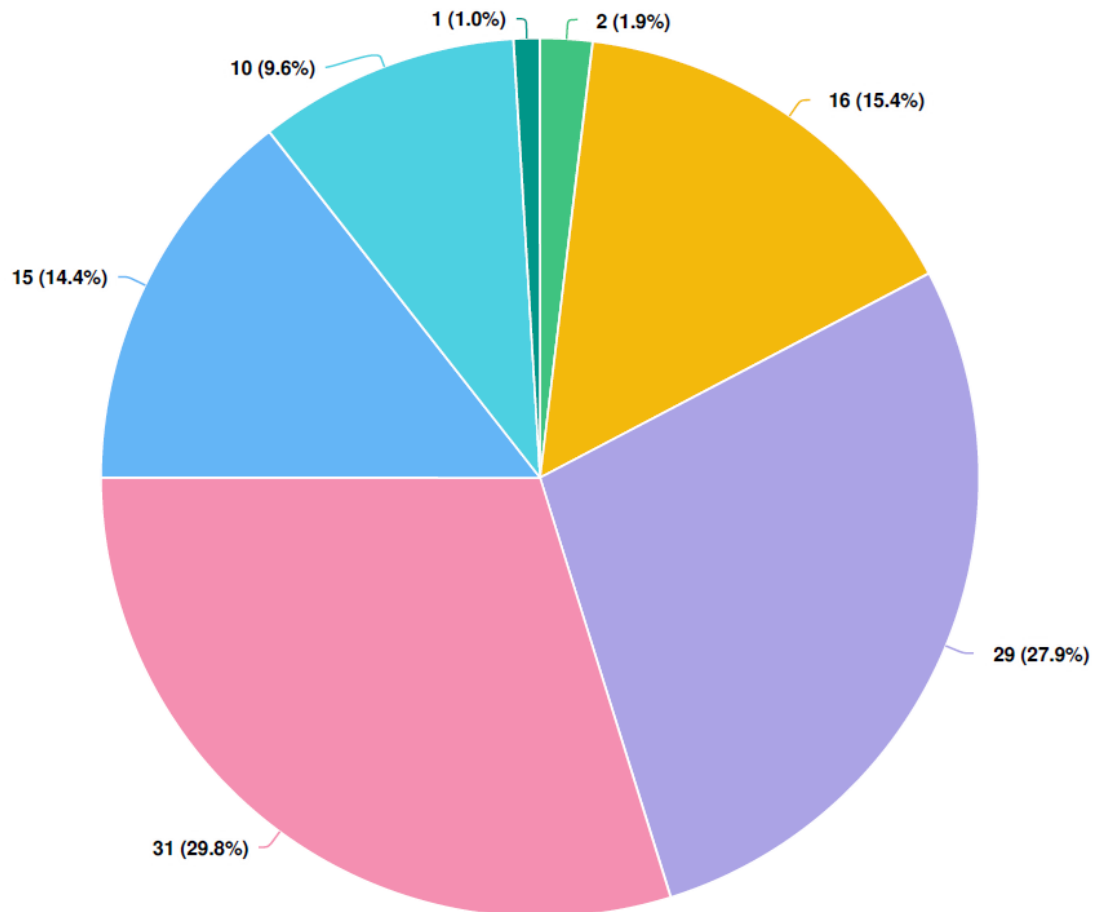
Survey

106 people participated in the online survey.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Age profile

Survey participants varied in age from 18 to 85+ years. The most common age category was 50-59 years, closely followed by 35-49 years. 58% of participants were in these age categories.



Question options

18 to 24 years 25 to 34 years 35 to 49 years 50 to 59 years 60 to 69 years 70 to 84 years
 85 years or more

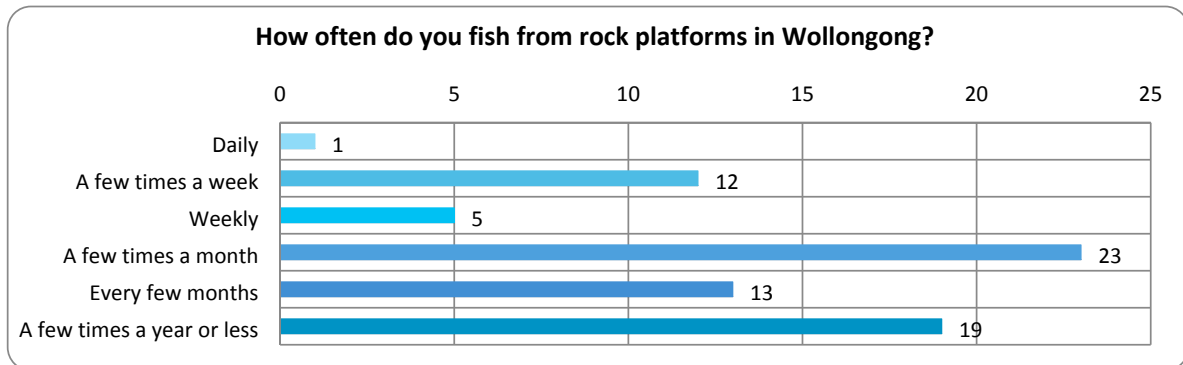
Language

91.5% of participants said English was their first language and 8.5% said it was not. All participants chose to answer this question.

Rock fishing behaviour

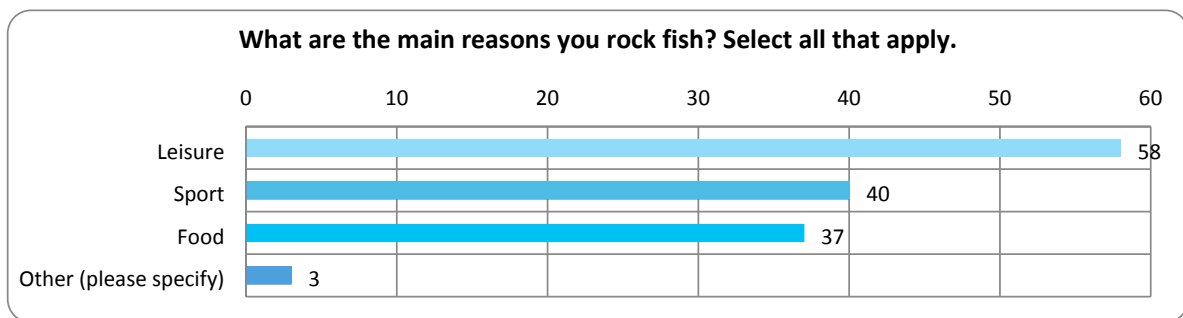
Of the 106 survey participants, 73 of them (69%) said they fish from rock platforms in the Wollongong Local Government Area. Almost three-quarters of these people said they rock fish every few months or more frequently.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022



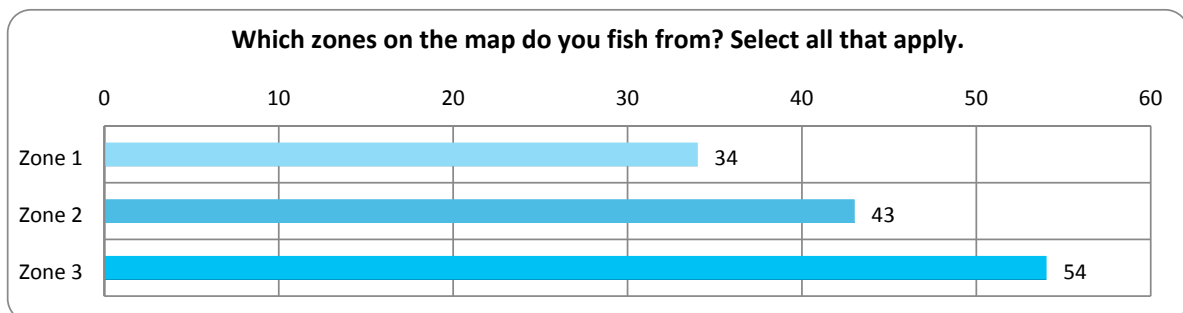
Reasons for rock fishing

The most common reason for rock fishing was leisure, followed by sport and food. Three other reasons were given - these were competition, relaxation and meditation.



Zones where participants fish

The most common [map zone](#) participants fish within was zone 3 (the southern coastal area from City Beach to Windang). This was followed by Zone 2 (the central coastal area from Thirroul to City Beach) and finally, Zone 1 (the northern coastal area from Otford to Thirroul).



Post code

Participants identified as living across 32 different post codes.

The most common post codes were:

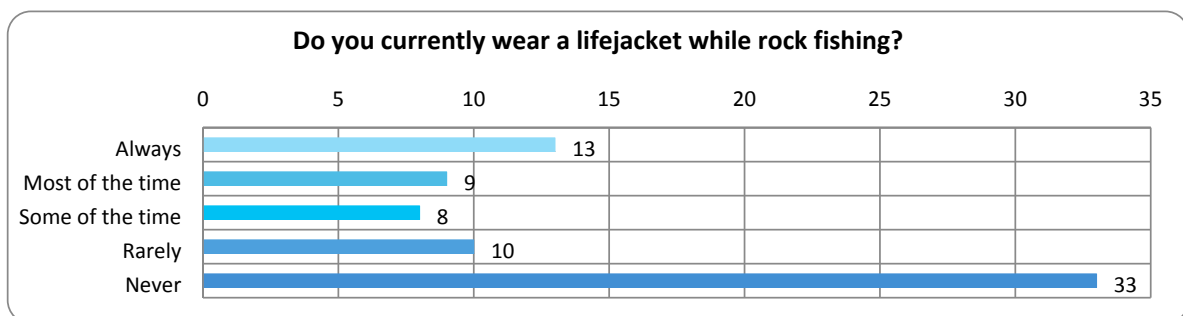
22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Participants	Postcode	Suburbs
10%	2519	Balgownie, Fairy Meadow, Fernhill, Mount Ousley, Mount Pleasant
9.5%	2528	Barrack Heights, Barrack Point, Lake Illawarra, Mount Warrigal, Warilla, Windang
9.5%	2517	Russell Vale, Woonona, Woonona East
9.5%	2518	Bellambi, Corrimal, Corrimal East, East Corrimal, Tarrawanna, Towradgi
8.5%	2500	Coniston, Gwynneville, Keiraville, Mangerton, Mount Keira, Mount Saint Thomas, North Wollongong, Spring Hill, West Wollongong, Wollongong, Wollongong DC, Wollongong West
7.5%	2530	Avondale, Brownsville, Cleveland, Dapto, Dombarton, Haywards Bay, Horsley, Huntley, Kanahooka, Koonawarra, Marshall Mount, Wongawilli, Yallah
5%	2508	Coalcliff, Darkes Forest, Helensburgh, Lilyvale, Maddens Plains, Otford, Stanwell Park, Stanwell Tops, Woronora Dam
5%	2525	Figtree
4%	2515	Austinmer, Clifton, Coledale, Scarborough, Thirroul, Wombarra
4%	2502	Cringila, Lake Heights, Primbee, Warrawong
4%	2505	Port Kembla

23% of the participants were from 20 other postcodes.

Lifejacket use

Of the 73 survey participants who rock fish, 43 of them said they either “never” or “rarely” wear a lifejacket, and 19 of them said they wear one either “always” or “most of the time”.

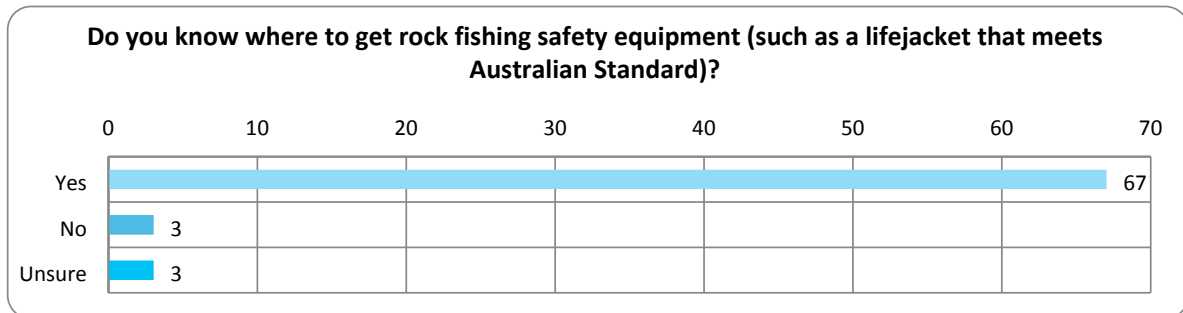


Sourcing safety equipment

Participants who rock fish were asked: “Do you know where to get rock fishing safety equipment (such as a lifejacket that meets Australian Standard)?”. Of the 73 survey participants who rock fish, 67 said “yes”, 3 said “no”, and 3 were “unsure”.

All 9 of the participants who said English is not their first language said they know where to source safety equipment.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022



Sentiment

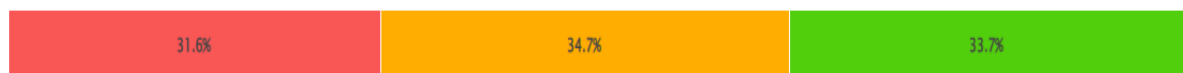
Survey participants were asked the following primary question: “Wollongong City Council is proposing to opt into legislation that would make it a legal requirement for rock fishers to wear a lifejacket while fishing from rock platforms in Wollongong. What would you like Council to consider before making this decision?”.

We received 95 responses to this question.

The responses to this question were analysed for their sentiment and scored as either supportive of Council’s proposal, neutral (or didn’t have any clear or obvious sentiment), or unsupportive. While we didn’t explicitly ask participants to express whether they supported Council’s proposal or not, most participants made it clear in their answers.

The results were:

- 33.7% supportive
- 34.7% neutral
- 31.6% unsupportive



Themes

In addition to the primary question, participants were asked at the end of the survey if they wished to make and further comments. All comments were analysed together.

A wide variety of minor themes were identified in the responses, and within these themes, participants expressed a broad spectrum of opinions.

Some participants had opposing opinions on topics or opposing ideas or solution to the same issue. For example, one participant suggested we ask the police and ambulance services for their input instead of rock fishers, while another participant suggested we should talk to fishing organisations instead of rescue authorities. One participant said mandating lifejackets for rock fishers may contribute to a worse outcome (including death), while many others said mandating lifejackets will save lives.

Many acknowledged that *something* should be done but expressed diverse ideas on *what* should be done to improve the situation.

A summary of the feedback received, and issues raised in all submissions is presented under the following feedback themes:

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Education

Rock fisher education was the most common theme found in participant's comments.

Participants commonly expressed that many rock fishers need further education to better understand the conditions and "read the ocean". Suggestions included education about weather, understanding the ocean, tides and swell, water safety, swimming, and safety equipment.

Some participants would prefer to see increased education rather than legislation. Others suggested lifejackets are only part of the solution, with education being a key component to the solution.

It was suggested that:

- In lower-risk rock fishing sites, education would be a more suitable tool for keeping people safe than lifejackets.
- People think they don't need to be educated if they wear a lifejacket.
- Some of the money from fines could fund education.

I am not necessarily against lifejackets being mandatory for rock fishing (I do usually wear one myself these days) I just hope that any such decision is made in consultation with those in the sport, as you are doing here. So I commend you for that.

Visitor education

Some participants expressed that the rock fishers who fish in dangerous conditions or get themselves into danger are either all or mostly visitors to the area or are otherwise unfamiliar with the rock platforms.

Several comments suggested that visitors need to be educated in the places where they live, rather than relying on being educated once they get to the water's edge. It was suggested that for education to be effective, their home communities must take some of the responsibility. Others suggested a generous budget to alert and educate visitors using non-English media channels and community groups.

Education in other languages

Some participants specifically stated that education needed to consider rock fishers who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD). It was suggested that these rock fishers will need multi-lingual community engagement strategies, and our local signage should continue to present information in multiple languages.

Enforcement

Enforcement was the second most common theme in comments. Some participants expressed support for heavier penalties and increased surveillance. Others acknowledge the difficulty in policing the legislation. One respondent suggested a "neighbourhood watch" system to assist with compliance, another suggested CCTV be installed to monitor compliance and assist with enforcement.

In contrast, some questioned the timing of when the enforcement would take place, and if not in dangerous conditions, it was suggested the enforcement may be heavy handed, be used to raise revenue, and a short-sighted approach to the issue.

Another wanted Council to consider whether those responsible for enforcing the legislation would have the right equipment and expertise to be on rock platforms.

Economic impact

Some respondents want Council to consider the economic impact of mandating lifejackets, but from a variety of different standpoints.

The following points were raised for consideration:

- Affordability of lifejackets:
 - High cost of lifejackets, especially with the cost-of-living pressures and impact of Covid.
 - The high cost of specialised automatic Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).
 - High cost for a person who only rock fishes a few times a year, on top of a licence fee.
 - Lifejackets are not expensive considering many people spend a lot more money on their fishing equipment.
- Council's role in affordability:
 - Council should pay for lifejackets.
 - If Council could make lifejackets more affordable perhaps more people would wear them.
- Cost of enforcement:
 - The cost for Police to enforce the legislation.
 - The cost of having the areas patrolled.
- Cost of rescue services:
 - The cost of rescue services.
 - The cost of others missing out on rescue services because they're engaged in rescuing rock fishers.
 - The cost of body retrieval.

I would like the council to consider the economic costs not only to have these areas patrolled but also to the fishermen that would be required to purchase [lifejackets].

Personal decision

Some respondents expressed the view that rock fishers should have the freedom to make their own decisions regarding what type of safety equipment they use and when.

Some respondents said safety is a personal responsibility and it's up to the fisher to check the conditions and know when it isn't safe to fish. Several of these people said they would prefer to see other measures taken instead (signage, education, etc).

The decision to wear a lifejacket (or the type of lifejacket) should be left to the individual's own personal risk assessment based on the conditions, their experience and swimming ability.

Less high-risk areas

Some participants want Council to reconsider the areas proposed to be declared high risk rock fishing areas (where lifejackets would be a legal requirement). These respondents claimed that not all rock platforms are high risk, and want Council to only include the most dangerous ones in the declaration.

Some participants suggested that Council should consider the risk profile or merits of each location before making the determination. One participant said that data should dictate the action taken, rather than there being a blanket rule.

The declaration of every single rock shelf in the area as high risk is unnecessarily heavy-handed.

Signage

Signage was commonly suggested as either a complementary safety measure (needed in addition to lifejackets) or as a preferred safety measure.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Comments about signage included suggestions for signs to:

- Be more prevalent.
- Be easy to read.
- Be printed and visual.
- Be in multiple languages.
- Warn of high swells.
- Warn of the risks.
- Include a message to report non-compliant rock fishers to Police.
- Display statistics on rock fishers' deaths and injuries in specific locations.
- Educate rock fishers on safety equipment.

I would prefer to see signs, awareness and education over legislation.

Need for safer, alternative sites

Some participants expressed the need for more rock fishing sites that are safer than those currently available and for old sites to be reopened. It was expressed that there used to be a greater variety of rock fishing sites available, but for various reasons, these are no longer available. The Port Kembla northern breakwall and jetties 3, 4 and 6 were provided as examples. These participants said in adverse weather conditions, these sites were a lot safer, but with them currently unavailable, people fish from the remaining sites in adverse conditions.

Some participants suggested that new jetties or walls could be built to provide safer sites.

Can the Northern Breakwater at Port Kembla be reopened? I have fished it for 45 years. It can accommodate a large number of fishermen and is far safer than Hill 60. To my knowledge, no deaths have occurred there. I now fish Hill 60, as the Northern Breakwater is closed.

Hill 60

Some participants spoke of Hill 60 or Honeycomb Rock specifically. The following provides a summary of the points made about the site:

- It is unpredictable and dangerous on any sea.
- Hill 60 is notorious within our community for erratic conditions.
- A special marine habitat area needs to be established and rock fishing banned within that area.
- Fishing should be banned from the rock platform.
- Need more awareness of conditions at this site.
- It is a significant risk and accounts for nearly all the deaths and other issues.
- If the northern breakwall was open, people wouldn't have to fish Hill 60 in a southerly swell.
- It is not necessarily more dangerous than any other sites. The problem is the ease of access which makes it popular, and that water comes over the rocks less regularly in deep water fishing spots, so the danger is not as obvious. There is a lack of understanding that an unbroken "green" wave is still full of energy and can be just as dangerous as a broken wave.
- A significant amount of rock fishers at this site don't wear lifejackets.
- This site would benefit from mandating lifejackets.

Consider lives risked rescuing

Some participants want Council to consider the lives that are risked rescuing rock fishers. The sentiment of these participants' comments is supportive of Council's proposal.

Some participants said lifejackets should be mandatory as they can assist rescuers in any potential rescue efforts. Several said too many people are being put at risk in rescue efforts.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Lifejackets for other activities

Some participants raised that it is unfair that other users of the locations proposed to be declared high-risk rocking fishing areas wouldn't have to wear lifejackets, for example rock hoppers, walkers, kids playing near rock pools and snorkellers.

I am happy to wear a lifejacket in high risk areas, but I would like to be able to have a choice when (safely) spending an afternoon on a rocky headland on a low swell day where we may throw in a line for everyone to have a go after having been for a snorkel around those same rocks (without a lifejacket).

Lifejacket types

Some participants made comments about lifejacket types from a variety of different standpoints.

The following provides a summary of the points made:

- The type of lifejacket should be determined by individuals based on their own needs, abilities, and experience.
- Different types and levels of lifejackets have advantages and disadvantages once you are in the water.
- Manual inflatable lifejackets:
 - Must be activated by the wearer once they are in the water, if they sustain a head injury and are unconscious or have sustained any other serious injury which effects their ability to activate the jacket, the jacket is useless.
 - Few people have the composure and ability to inflate them after the initial impact.
- Automatic PDFs that inflate when enough water hits it would be very expensive for rock fishers.
- A collared lifejacket:
 - May keep your face out of the water if you are a poor swimmer or rendered unconscious. A collar-less jacket will not.

Head injuries and helmets

Several participants raised head injuries and helmets as matters for consideration. The following provides a summary of points raised:

- Lifejackets don't stop fishers from getting head injuries or being knocked unconscious and drowning.
- If a fisher is wearing a manual inflatable lifejacket and hits their head, the lifejacket won't save them.
- Rock fishers should consider wearing a safety helmet to protect against head injuries on impact or if pushed against the rocks once in the water.
- Consider making helmets compulsory.

Wetsuits and safety equipment

Several participants raised wetsuit and safety equipment as matters for consideration. The following provides a summary of points raised:

- There have been cases and there will be more where a lifejacket hinders a fisher's self-extraction from the ocean and different safety gear is far more important.
- Consider the wearing of a wetsuit (instead of a lifejacket) as being compliant.
- Council should wait until the legislation is amended to include wetsuits as an alternative to a lifejacket.
- Consider other alternatives or forms of floatation not just lifejackets.
- Consider investigating the effectiveness of cleated footwear, and if found to be effective, put signage near popular rocks informing people that cleats exist and that they can stop you getting hurt. Cleats are more effective at preventing harm than lifejackets.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

Swimming ability

Several participants raised swimming ability as a matter for consideration. The following provides a summary of points raised:

- Swimming ability should be a key factor in the decision to wear a lifejacket and the type of lifejacket.
- Lifejackets should be compulsory for anyone who can't swim.
- One of the main problems is that people who can't swim go rock fishing.
- People who can't swim shouldn't go rock fishing.
- Poor swimmers need to wear lifejackets with a collar so their face will be kept upright out of the water.

Impact on ability to dive under waves

Several participants expressed concern that once in the water, some lifejackets can negatively impact a person's ability to dive under waves and/or to swim out of the danger zone. This feedback is summarised as follows:

- If a person ends up in the water, they usually need to clear any breaking waves to be able to swim out to safety. Inflated lifejackets make this a lot harder, due to the additional buoyancy of the lifejacket.
- The ability to float can make the situation more dangerous as the breaking waves can push a person against the rocks, which may cause further harm.
- Even strong swimmers can be impeded by inflated lifejackets when diving under waves.

False sense of security

Several participants expressed that they believe lifejackets can provide wearers with a false sense of security and that this can:

- Cause fishers to take further risks.
- Make fishers think they don't need to be educated on safety.
- Give inexperienced anglers a false impression that because they are wearing a lifejacket it is safe to fish, regardless of the conditions.

Ideas to improve safety

Some respondents shared their ideas for improving rock fishing safety. Ideas included:

- Linking the law to the weather conditions. For example, if there is a weather warning of hazardous surf conditions that makes rock fishing dangerous, then you are required to wear a lifejacket.
- Making lifejackets a legal requirement in adverse weather conditions only.
- A "white card" type system or a one-day course to educate people of the dangers.
- Fines issued could be partly donated to rescue services, fund education or used to develop an app that indicates whether it's safe to fish.
- Install cameras at the carparks to monitor lifejacket use. If people are detected not wearing lifejackets a buzzer goes off and deploys a message to enforcement agencies, who can then issue fines.
- An anchor system could be created for fishers to attach a safety strap to. This would prevent them being washed into surf.
- Anyone requiring rescuing should pay for the rescue service.
- Police phone numbers be added to signs with a message to call if you see someone fishing without a lifejacket.
- Displaying statistics on rock fishers' deaths and injuries.
- Make lifejackets compulsory only if you live further than 30km from the coast.
- A buy-back scheme for old lifejackets.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

- Work with other councils and community organisations to promote awareness and education in culturally diverse communities who travel to the Illawarra to fish. Also, work with fisheries and the police etc, to go out and speak with the rock fishers to warn, educate and if necessary, penalise. Education through non-English radio stations and newspapers, through religious groups and via social media channels used by the CALD community.

Other submission types

In-person submission

A verbal submission was received from the owner of a fishing shop who made the following points:

- Very supportive of the proposal due to having known fishers who have lost their lives. The participant spoke of their firsthand experience of the impact the tragedy has had on the local community and fishing fraternity.
- They don't rock fish because of the dangers and because their family isn't supportive of it.
- They get lots of customers come into the shop and ask about good locations, but they rarely suggest Honeycomb Rocks because of how dangerous it is, especially to visitors or newcomers to the sport who don't know how to read the local conditions.
- Suggested that lifejackets should be a solid foam type to protect against being ruptured, and to provide a bit of protection for the head.
- Proposed that behaviour change could be incentivised – e.g, fishers get a discount on purchasing a lifejacket through the renewal of their fishing licence. This would also help reduce the economic barrier.
- Offered to be involved further in any way that may assist.

Email submissions

Four emails were received in support of the proposal. All the points raised in these emails have already been covered in the above themes.

Three emails were received that did not express support. Following is a high-level summary of the key points made by each participant:

Participant 1:

- Enforcing lifejackets has too many variables legally; it would compound the workload of enforcement services and put pressure on the courts, and most would still not comply.
- Lifejackets are too simple a solution for what is a complex problem.
- Proposed a balustrading system to prevent fishers being taken out to sea.

Participant 2:

- The engagement should be delayed or extended until the proposed amendments to the Rock Fishing Safety Act are finalised through the NSW parliament.
- Council should meet with the Recreational Fishing Alliance to get perspective from experienced, safety-conscious rock fishers, as rescue groups will only come up with the one solution - "wear a lifejacket". This makes sense to the majority of the public, but not to many experienced rock fishers.
- Described their extensive rock fishing experience and the way they approach safety. Wearing any form of approved lifejacket would impede their ability to swim freely and duck-dive oncoming waves, and therefore be unsafe.
- Provided historic photo from 1969 of fishing champions wearing the same safety equipment (footwear and light clothing) that is recommended for the sport today, but without lifejackets. Safety gear is far more important than an L50 lifejacket.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

- Education and safety awareness should be the main tool to solve the fatality rate of rock fishers. Opting into the Safety Act is an easy out. Councils need to work more closely with rock fishers to understand the issue to solve it.
- Rock fishers should have greater access to free technology to assist them in making safe decisions, like the bar cams provided free by the State Government through Marine Rescue. Currently, they must pay a private company to access real-time wave conditions. Many of the cameras used by these companies are located on Surf Lifesaving properties, built in part by public money.
- A series of inshore buoys would be an extremely beneficial safety tool for rock fishers to be able to check conditions.

Participant 3:

- Advocated for wetsuits to be included as an alternative for lifejackets in the Rock Fishing Safety Act.
- Provided a copy of their submission to Randwick City Council on the same matter. Their submission made the following points:
 - The legislation is blunt and doesn't mention correct footwear nor acknowledges that you can't dive under waves wearing a lifejacket.
 - Participated in the Recreational Fishing Alliance program ["Don't put your life on the line"](#) where they worked with Government agencies as a volunteer to produce videos and multi-language information packs advising on safe rock fishing.
 - Wants the legislation modified to match the safety advice given in the video (which was produced with Government funding) so it reads: "Rock fishers must wear either a lifejacket, a life vest or a wetsuit and appropriate footwear being rock cleats or rock spikes on sandstone and slippery rocks or lightweight, stout-soled boots on granite."
 - Until the Act is amended, they intend to not comply, and if fined, will take it to Court. This is because they believe a wetsuit is as effective in floatation as a lifejacket but has the following advantages over a lifejacket:
 - You can dive under waves and swim in a wetsuit.
 - It will protect you from cuts to a very large degree.
 - It will stop you getting hypothermia.
 - It will prevent you from being sunburnt in the steamer version.
 - People sharing the rocks are not subject to being fined even if they are in the exact same location.
 - Questioned whether the Act is constitutional.

Submissions from organisations and agencies

We received seven submissions from organisations and agencies. The full submissions have been provided to the project team for consideration. Following is a high-level summary of each:

Crown Lands:

- Supportive of Council's proposal.
- Many of the rock platforms identified as high risk are Crown land, managed either by Council or Crown Lands directly.
- Work with the Australian National Sportfishing Association on placement by ANSA of 'Angel Rings' on high risk rock platforms.
- The requirement for rock fishers to wear lifejackets will increase their chances of survival, and reduce risks to first responders.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

- A great many styles of lifejackets are authorised for use under Australian Standards so that they may be used and worn without impeding the wearer.
- These lifejackets are routinely available through government-funded programs should fishers wish to upgrade their old or out-of-date lifejackets.
- Rock fishing is an activity that anyone has authorisation to undertake on public land, and is also a high-risk activity, especially if the fisher does not know the platform in great detail, such as with visiting fishers. Even experienced rock fishers can and are injured or killed. This not only places great stress on the fishers and families, but also bystanders and first responders.

Paul Scully MP:

- Supportive of Council's proposal.
- Expressed there are multiple options for solutions, but all are insufficient and diminished if Council doesn't opt into the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016.
- The six deaths at Hill 60 demonstrates an immediate need for improvements to public safety.
- Unnecessary to wait for coronial inquiry finding to take further measures, as like previous enquires, it's likely the outcome of future inquiries will also include a recommendation for lifejackets.
- Signage warning of dangers is insufficient – more can be done by Council to prevent unnecessary deaths.
- Noted that Council has not applied for financial assistance for educational campaigns through NSW Recreational Fishing Trust over the last decade. This should be done to complement opting in.
- Council should opt in so additional resources are able to be allocated to enforce the wearing of lifejackets.
- Council should take further steps to implement options that would provide lifejackets at minimal or no cost, for loan or rent, to lower income or infrequent fishers.

Surf Life Saving Illawarra:

- Supportive of Council's proposal.
- Are first responders to rock fishing related critical incidents.
- Expressed that their ability to achieve more favourable outcomes is largely dependent on whether a fisher is wearing a lifejacket.

Wollongong Sportfishing Club:

- Want the decision to wear a lifejacket (or the type of lifejacket) to be left to the individual's own personal risk assessment based on the conditions, their experience and swimming ability.
- View different types and levels of lifejackets as having advantages and disadvantages once you are in the water:
 - Lifejackets are beneficial in deep water locations away from breaking ways.
 - In shallow water locations close to rocks and with breaking waves, once in the water it is best to get away from the rocks and breaking waves. This is much harder to achieve while wearing an inflated lifejacket as it impedes your ability to dive under broken waves, even for strong swimmers and this may contribute to a worse outcome.
 - Manual Inflatable lifejackets must be activated by the wearer once they are in the water. If they sustain a head injury and are unconscious or have sustained any other serious injury which effects their ability to activate the jacket, the jacket is useless.
- Questioned whether the legal requirement to wear a lifejacket should not extend to any activity undertaken in the areas declared high risk.

Australian National Sport Fishing Association (ANSA) including Wollongong Sport Fishing Club and Australian Land Based Anglers Association:

The spokesperson is also a community representative of culturally and linguistically diverse fishers.

Expressed the following key points:

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

- Understanding of Council's position, but concerned of the proposal's ramifications.
- Believe a lack of safer alternative sites is a major contributing factor to the number of deaths in recent years:
 - Fishers can no longer access the northern wall of Port Kembla Harbour. This site is a safer alternative to Hill 60 and is in close proximity. It could safely accommodate a large number of fishers.
 - It's no coincidence that there's been increased deaths at Hill 60 since this site was closed (without the Covid lockdowns it's likely the number of deaths would have been even higher).
 - Older jetties in the Port Kembla inner harbour that were used in the past are no longer available. Other sites are fenced off.
 - No access to alternative safe site at Wollongong Harbour - eastern breakwall fenced off.
 - Access to some alternative sites is difficult, especially for fishers with mobility issues (for example, the northern side of Hill 60). This limits the sites many people can use, or use as an alternative in adverse conditions. An example was given of a fisher who used access Wollongong Harbour via scooter to fish for food, but no longer can due to the site being fenced for safety reasons.
- Opportunity for Council to advocate to resolve access issues, or create more sites where fishers can fish safely, for example, a new configuration of Wollongong harbour with additional jetties or walls.
- Perception that without acting, the safety issues will worsen due to population growth of Sydney and Wollongong, the growing popularity of rock fishing and overcrowding of accessible sites, which will push people to use unsafe sites.
- Perceived issues with lifejackets and mandating their use:
 - Not necessary in fine conditions and can even be a hinderance (for example, they can make you hot in summer).
 - Non fishers are not required to use them, yet they're exposed to the same hazards.
 - Concerned that once mandated, the focus will be on encouraging lifejacket use and not investing in education to change behaviour, or facilitating the availability of additional safer sites for fishers.
- Believe education is key - many rock fishers don't know to check the weather, have an exit plan etc, and don't realise the risks and dangers.

Lake Illawarra and Wollongong Police Districts:

Both Commanders supportive of Council's proposal to opt into the Rock Fishing Safety Act and proactively enforce the legislation.

Have offered to support and assist with Council education initiatives. Offered to meet to discuss initiatives further.

Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW:

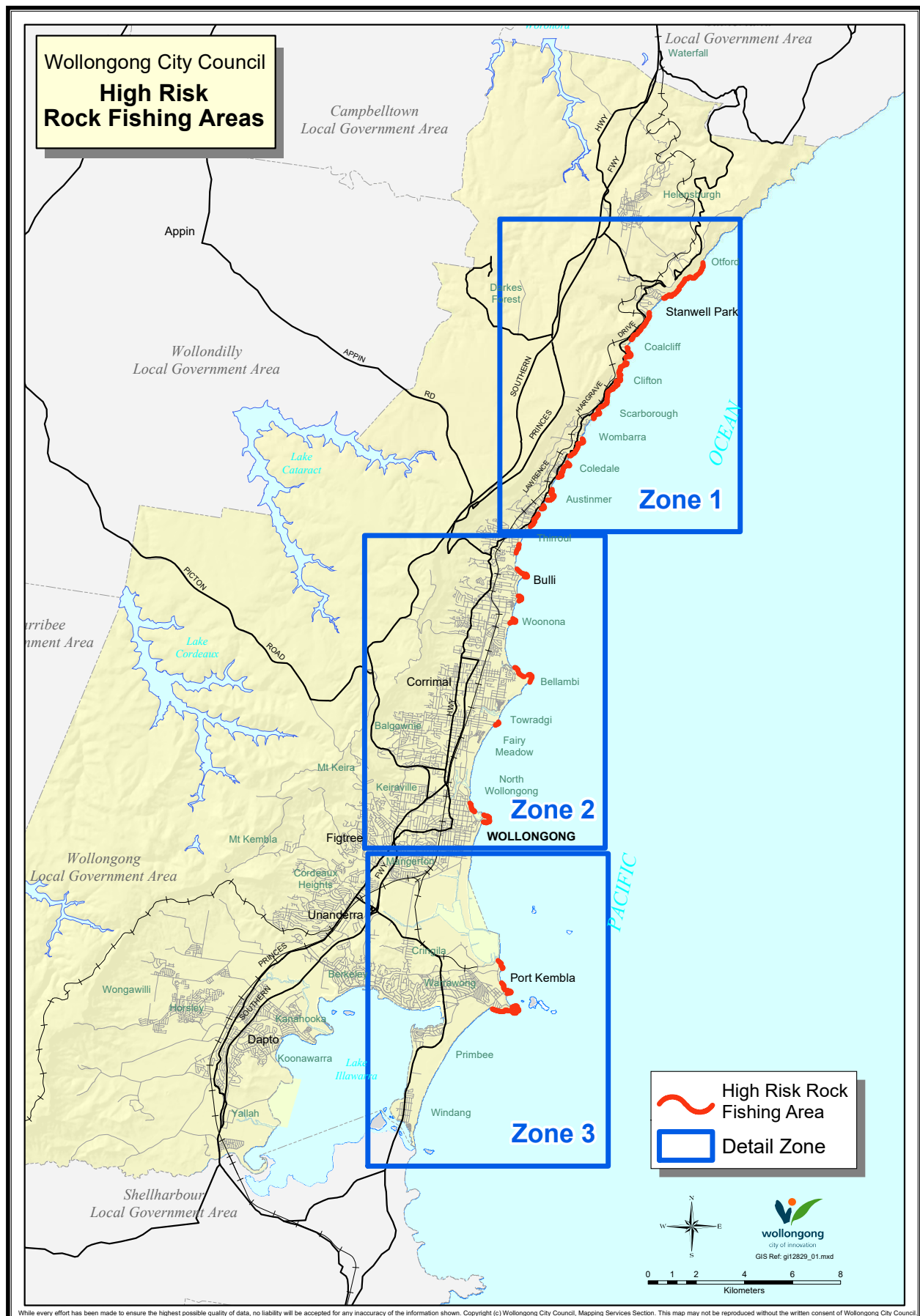
- Unsupportive of Council's proposal as it stands.
- Offered to be further engaged in lifejacket and water-safety discussions and initiatives.
- Believe there are many challenges to rock fisher education with regard to lifejackets. Before they even get near the water there are challenges to overcome:
 - It is a daunting task even for the most knowledgeable person to determine the best lifejacket to purchase. There is a huge variety of lifejackets available for purchase (in stores and online) which makes it a confusing exercise.
 - Fishers need to consider their swimming ability, water-safety skillset, seasonality changes and more.
 - They also need to know which lifejackets are the safest, most suitable and appropriate for rock fishing. It can be very difficult to navigate through the lifejackets that are Australian Standard approved but should not be used for rock fishing.

22907281 Rock Fishing Safety - Engagement Report August 2022

- Expressed concern regarding fishing buoyance vests purchased online from overseas manufacturers, used by many in the CALD community. Questioned the manufacturing standards and suitability. Government was to assess this matter but as yet, the report has not been made public.
- Explained that like many other similar sports and recreational past times, there are risks involved, but rock fishers do not go fishing with intention of ending up in the water, being rescued or worse still in the media.
- Perceive that lifejackets add buoyancy, but don't necessarily save lives. Believe that to save lives, Council needs to focus on education to improve rock fishers' personal safety responsibilities.
- Suggested that Council:
 - Put education before regulation – suggested Council provide advice locally to all rock fishers, experienced or not, as well as any potential rock fishers, within the LGA and other surrounding LGA's covering those travelling rock fishers about the requirement to wear a lifejacket. This must occur before a rock fisher is compliant to go rock fishing. Also educate them on the basic 10 rock fishing safety rules.
 - Provide consistent ongoing funding to cover all facets of rock fishing safety and educate the rock fishing community across NSW.
 - Investigate other options and signage systems to alert fishers and the general public to coastal weather conditions at beaches, headlands and coastal rock platforms as it is not just rock fishers who lose their lives. Examples were given of the recent 'Pink Caves' drownings at Catherine Hill Bay and Figure 8 Pools injuries.
 - Don't opt in. Stick with what they can do locally to reduce rock fishing incidents and fatalities.
 - Advocate to the Government that there needs to a consistent approach to rock fishing safety across NSW that make it is safe as possible - similar to what has been established for many other water and beach safety activities where there are no laws at present. For example, people must swim between the flags at the beach, when erected. When people don't, there are laws that can be applied by the NSW Police, but they are rarely if ever used.
- Acknowledged that it is State legislation, not Council's policy and expressed that it is a disjointed approach by Government to delegate Rock Fishing Safety to councils, and add to their ever-increasing number of water safety strategies, plans and responsibilities.

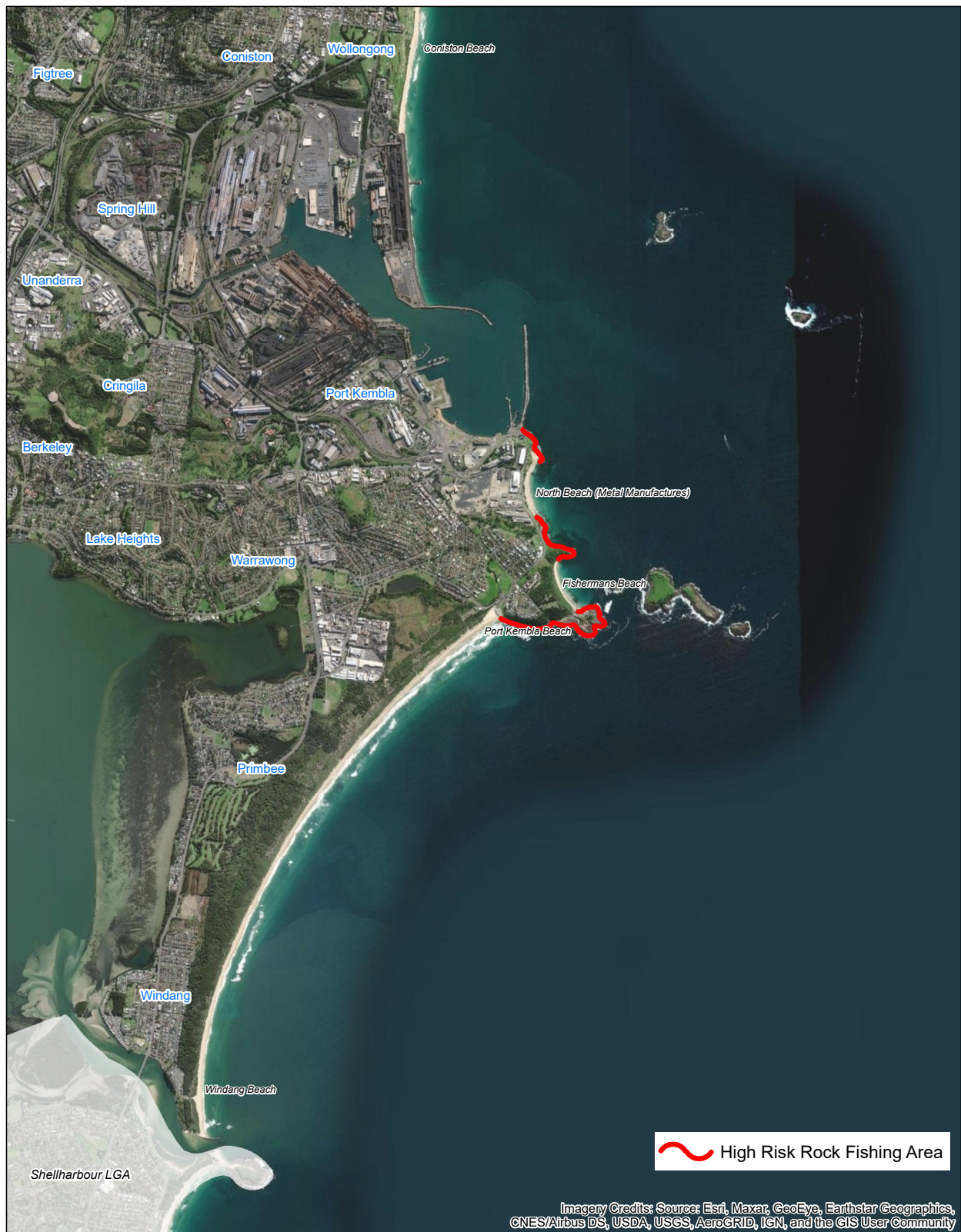
Next steps

The feedback received from this engagement will be reported to Council to help inform their decision on opting into the Rock Fishing Safety Act.









ITEM 7 WEST DAPTO REVIEW COMMITTEE CHARTER

The West Dapto Review Committee was first endorsed as a Committee of Council on 13 May 2013. The Committee's role is focused on providing advice on policies and strategies to assist with the delivery of the West Dapto Land Release.

The Review Committee has operated for several years in accordance with an established Committee Charter. The need for the Committee remains strong as West Dapto is one of Council's five (5) Strategic Priorities included in the adopted Delivery Program 2022-2026.

This report recommends Council adopt a revised West Dapto Review Committee Charter in line with the evolving nature of the West Dapto Release Area from an area being planned, to a release area that has an existing and growing community.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council adopt the revised West Dapto Review Committee Charter included as Attachment 1 of this report.
- 2 The Lord Mayor continue to be appointed as the Chairperson of the West Dapto Review Committee.
- 3 The Ward 3 Councillors continue to be appointed as members of the West Dapto Review Committee.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

Authorised by: Linda Davis, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 West Dapto Review Committee Charter August 2022

BACKGROUND

The West Dapto Review Committee was established in May 2013 recognising West Dapto as a Strategic Priority for Wollongong City Council. The Committee's focus has been providing advice to Council on policies and strategies to assist with delivery of the West Dapto Land Release.

The Committee membership includes the Lord Mayor (Chair) and Ward 3 Councillors with invitations to State agencies from time to time including a standing invitation to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). Council's Director Planning & Environment – Future City & Neighbourhoods attends the meetings as an ex-officio member and along with various other staff provide technical advice, information, and presentations.

The West Dapto Release Area has been developing steadily during the past 10 years with over 2,000 residential lots registered for housing development.

The Review Committee has operated for a number of years in accordance with an established Committee Charter. At its meeting of 17 August 2022, the Committee agreed that a revised Charter be reported to Council for adoption.

PROPOSAL

At the West Dapto Review Committee meeting held 17 August 2022, the Committee discussed matters arising, considered emerging strategic priorities, and reviewed the communication / engagement requirements related to the Urban Release Area. Committee members also discussed governance and administrative requirements such as Committee membership, business reports and meeting frequency. Committee members agreed that a revised Charter be reported to Council for consideration.

The revised Charter (Attachment 1) outlines the responsibilities and function of the Committee which includes the ongoing development of policies and strategies which relate to the West Dapto Release Area with an additional focus on the implementation and monitoring of those policies including the West Dapto Vision.

Key changes to the Charter include -

- Responsibilities and Functions updated to be more strategic and to reflect that in addition to ongoing planning, we are also now focussed on implementation.
- Priorities to be set each year to ensure they are current and appropriate.
- Department of Planning and Environment representative will have a standing invitation to attend the meeting.
- Meetings to be held quarterly rather than bimonthly.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The West Dapto Review Committee was consulted at their meeting held 17 August 2022, which informed preparation of the revised Charter.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 1 We value and protect our environment. It specifically delivers on the following -

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
1.6	West Dapto Urban Release growth is effectively managed with facilities and spaces to support the future community	Land Use Planning

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The proposed West Dapto Review Committee Charter (Attachment 1) outlines the responsibilities and functions of the Committee which includes the need to review, monitor and implement the West Dapto Vision. Council's Vision for West Dapto reflects the need for a sustainable and liveable community. The Vision includes specific planning principles intended to guide land use planning decisions associated with the urban release area. Sustainable outcomes are intrinsic in all the West Dapto Urban Release Area Planning Principles.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The revised West Dapto Review Committee Charter will strengthen the governance arrangements around the role of the group and continue the focus on implementation of policies and strategies including monitoring their effectiveness.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs related to the continued operations of the West Dapto Review Committee are minimal and can be managed within the existing operational budget.

CONCLUSION

West Dapto remains a strategic priority for Wollongong City Council. Council has undertaken significant strategic work over the past decade enabling the West Dapto Urban Release Area to evolve from a planned release area to a growing active community. The role of the West Dapto Review Committee has also evolved in line with the Release Area. As a result, the revised Charter (Attachment 1) is proposed to

ensure the Committee continues to be effective and is focussed on the needs of West Dapto and it's growing community.

CHARTER

WEST DAPTO REVIEW COMMITTEE



1 INTRODUCTION

The West Dapto Review Committee has been established to provide advice to Council on policies and strategies which relate to the West Dapto Lands Release. The focus of the Committee is to assist Council work towards the West Dapto Land Release. The Committee comprises people interested in furthering these aims.

2 AUTHORITY

The West Dapto Review Committee will provide advice, feedback and support to Council in developing, implementing and monitoring policies and strategies which relate to the West Dapto Land Release.

The Committee does not have decision making authority, the power to bind the Council, nor the power to incur expenditure.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The responsibilities and functions of the West Dapto Review Committee are to –

- Review, monitor and provide advice regarding implementation of the West Dapto Vision, Structure Plans and local and State infrastructure plans.
- Receive progress updates relating to the status of development in the planning pipeline.
- Provide a forum to provide advice to and discuss with Council on strategic projects and policies related to, or that may impact on the West Dapto Land Release.
- Monitor community feedback related to the roll-out of urban development.
- Advocate to State and Commonwealth governments in support of West Dapto outcomes.

4 PRIORITIES

Immediate priorities for the West Dapto Review Committee will be set at the first meeting of each calendar year.

5 COMPOSITION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The West Dapto Review Committee is to be made up of –

- Ward 3 Councillors (All).
- Lord Mayor (Chairperson).

Council's Director Planning & Environment – Future City & Neighbourhoods will attend Committee meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Committee. Other Council staff attend meetings as required to provide advice, information or presentations in relation to the Committee's business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

CHARTER

WEST DAPTO REVIEW COMMITTEE



Government officers, advisors or individuals may be invited to attend meetings from time to time to provide expert advice, information or presentations in relation to the Committee's business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members. A representative from Department of Planning and Environment will have a standing invitation to attend meetings.

6 TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The term of appointment be for the term of Council.

7 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

Members of the Committee, in performing their duties, shall –

- Act honestly and in good faith.
- Participate in the work of the Committee.
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Committee.
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person.
- Comply with the Committee's Charter.
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

8 MEETINGS

Meetings will be held quarterly, except where no business has been identified.

A quorum will consist of three (3) Committee Members.

Meetings will be chaired by the Lord Mayor. If the Lord Mayor is absent from a meeting, the first business of every such meeting is to elect a chairperson from the members present to preside over such meeting.

The Committee has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, advice from the Committee may be presented with supporting and dissenting views of Committee members.

Meeting agendas will be distributed at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

9 REPORTING

The minutes of meetings will be provided to Councillors and Council's Executive Management for information. Minutes will also be distributed to all Members.

Advice and recommendations of the Committee relating to specific Council projects will be reported to Council as part of the project reporting process.

Any matters arising that require a separate decision of Council may be reported to Council through of the Director Planning & Environment – Future City & Neighbourhoods.

CHARTER WEST DAPTO REVIEW COMMITTEE



10 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A review of the effectiveness of the Committee will be undertaken every 12 months by the Committee to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Committee is effective and to make appropriate changes to the Charter.

ITEM 8 POLICY REVIEW: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This report seeks approval for the adoption of two key policies relating to management of social infrastructure assets. These policies have been revised under Council's rolling review of corporate policies.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The following draft policies are adopted:
 - a Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres
 - b Reduction of Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Halls Under the Direct Control of Council
- 2 The 'Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups' policy, whose provisions have now been incorporated into the Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres policy, is revoked and removed from the Wollongong City Council Policy Register

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Jenny Thompson, Manager Library and Community Services

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens Centres and Neighbourhood Centres Policy
- 2 Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Halls Under the Direct Control of Council Policy

BACKGROUND

Council provides affordable and accessible social infrastructure assets, where community members and community groups meet, organise, deliver services, recreate and celebrate. The allocation and management of community facilities in a manner that is consistent with Council's Vision, Mission and Values has historically been governed via three key policies, which were most recently revised and endorsed by Council at its meeting of 17 July 2017.

- 1 *Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres* policy
- 2 *Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Rooms and Halls under the Direct Control of Council* policy
- 3 *Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups*

These policies aim to provide fair and equitable access for community groups to the hire and/or management under licence, of community facilities.

These policies have been revised under Council's rolling review of corporate policies, to ensure currency and relevance. Consultation during the policy review process indicated the value of bringing together the allocation and management of social infrastructure assets into a single policy (see Table 1 below). The two policies for endorsement now comprise:

- 1 *Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres*
- 2 *Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Rooms and Halls under the Direct Control of Council*

The principal purpose of these policies is as follows:

Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres

This policy has been revised to incorporate the *Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups* policy.

Council manages and maintains numerous facilities across the Wollongong Local Government Area on behalf of the community. The value of these assets to Council and to the community is maximised when the community is engaged in their operation and activation.

The intent of this policy is to promote a sense of community and connection by providing fair and equitable access for community groups to Council's core social infrastructure assets. It aims to achieve optimum benefit from these facilities for both the community at large and Council.

Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Halls Under the Direct Control of Council

The intent of this policy is to maximise community engagement and benefit through removing financial barriers for community use of Council's assets by providing for the reduction or waiver of fees in particular circumstances.

Proposed changes to these policies are outlined in the following table.

Table 1: Summary of Proposed Changes to Policies

POLICY	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy content incorporated into Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres Policy to be revoked and removed from Policy Register
Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy changed to new template and adapted to suit new headings Allocation policy included Purpose now includes a more community focused approach Statement of Procedures removed – now included in Council Procedure 2028 Objectives updated to reflect current Community Strategic Plan Policy now includes the words 'Council will review, consider alternate use options and dispose' instead of – 'Council will dispose'
Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Rooms and Halls under the Direct Control of Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy changed to new template and adapted to suit new headings Purpose now includes a more community focused approach 2028 Objectives updated to reflect current Community Strategic Plan Statement of Procedures removed – now included in Council Procedure Clarification of delegations, responsibilities and accountabilities

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the revised Council policies as outlined in the table above and detailed at Attachments 1 & 2 are adopted by Council, and that *Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups* is revoked and removed from the Policy Register.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

These policies have been reviewed by Council's Community Facilities Team and the Manager Library and Community Services, in consultation with Council's Property team.

The revisions to their design were consulted with relevant staff from the Governance team.

The draft policies were endorsed by the Executive Management Committee on 21 July 2022, for submission to Council for consideration and adoption.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 4 – We are a connected and engaged community and Goal 5 – We have a healthy community in a liveable city. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032	Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy	Service
4.11 Quality services, libraries and facilities are available to communities to access and gather.	Libraries / Community Facilities
5.4 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.	Libraries / Community Facilities

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

1. Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres
 - All Licenses/Leases issued by Community Facilities include clauses to ensure licensees manage these assets in an environmentally sustainable way
 - Council manages and maintains numerous facilities across the Wollongong Local Government Area on behalf of the community. The value of these assets to Council and to the community is maximised when the community is engaged in their operation and activation
2. Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Halls Under the Direct Control of Council
 - This policy contributes to the financial sustainability of community groups, by providing affordable spaces for their activities

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres
 - The net cost to Council of management of these assets is reduced by their allocation to and management by community groups.
2. Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Halls Under the Direct Control of Council
 - There is an overarching expectation that the hire of community facilities will generate an income stream, which is shown within the relevant revenue budget and which offsets the cost to Council of operating and maintaining these assets. The outcomes of this policy are factored into revenue planning and will be delivered within the existing expenditure budget.

CONCLUSION

Policies within the remit of Library and Community Services Division due for revision under Council's three-year policy review program, have been reviewed and updated. These policies are recommended to Council for endorsement.



MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY HALLS, COMMUNITY CENTRES, SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: : [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

Council manages and maintains numerous Community Facilities across the Wollongong Local Government Area, acting as the custodian of these assets on behalf of the community. The value of these assets to Council and to the community is maximised when the community is engaged in their operation and activation.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Maximise the community benefit and use of Community Facilities.
2. Reduce the net cost to Council associated with the maintenance and operation of the Community Facilities.

WOLLONGONG 2028 OBJECTIVES

Our Wollongong 2028 outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This Policy contributes toward Wollongong 2028 Objectives:

- Goal 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city.
 - 3.3 Strong diverse local cultures are supported
- Goal 4: We are connected and engaged community.
 - 4.2 Our residents have an increased sense of community.

POLICY

1. Where appropriate, Council will transfer, by way of allocation, the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens centres and neighbourhood centres to community organisations for the purposes of conducting their activities. The occupant community organisation is to make the premises available for use/hire by other groups, organisations and the general public when not being used for its' core business.
2. Allocation of Community Facilities (under control of the Library and Community Services Division) to community groups will be based on a process of consultation with community groups interested in the occupation of the facilities and a transparent decision-making process in relation to the awarding of leases and licences.
3. This policy applies to the leasing or licensing of Community Facilities where:
 - a. the existing occupancy arrangement or agreement is due to expire; OR
 - b. a building becomes available for community use through:
 - i. vacation by the existing occupant;
 - ii. acquisition by Council; or
 - iii. new construction;
 - c. and it is determined to allocate occupancy to a community group.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY HALLS, COMMUNITY CENTRES, SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

COUNCIL POLICY

4. Council will work with the community organisations that manage community facilities on our behalf to support their capacity to effectively meet their responsibilities and accountabilities under licence or occupancy agreements, and in compliance with all relevant Legislative requirements.
5. Council will review, consider alternative use options, and dispose of community facilities that are no longer required for general community use.
6. Council will undertake the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens centres and neighbourhood centres that are not allocated to community organisations.
7. This policy is not applicable to facilities:
 - a. controlled by a Committee of Council;
 - b. by Council directly; or
 - c. earmarked for either 7 (a) or 7 (b) above;
 - d. childcare centres; or,
 - e. community facilities where the licence has expired and the existing licensee:
 - i. has advised Council that the group wants to continue to be the licensee; and,
 - ii. is able to demonstrate that the organisation has the capacity to continue to meet the criteria for effective governance and management, that is required of all licensees at community facilities; and,
 - is in receipt of grant funding when the licence expires, and the grant funding is being used for the employment of staff to provide community services and those staff have their primary office at the facility, and,
 - iii. has consistently demonstrated adherence to previous licensing requirements.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms are used:

Community Facilities are Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens Centres and Neighbourhood Centres.

A *community group* is any organisation, that is legally constituted, engaged in charitable or other community-based activity operating under Australian law and not established for the purpose of making a profit.

An *occupant organisation* is the body that enters into a lease or licence agreement at a community facility and in doing so takes on the responsibility for the day-to-day management of that facility.

A *tenant organisation* is a body that has an agreement with the occupant organisation to be housed and to operate from the facility on a long-term basis.

RELATED LEGISLATION

This policy complies with the following, but is not limited to:

- Crown Land Management Act (2018)
- Local Government Act
- Child Protection (working With Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Bill 2018
- Child Protect (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Children and Young Person (Care and Protection) Act 1998

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY HALLS, COMMUNITY CENTRES, SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

COUNCIL POLICY

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

REPORTING

Library and Community Services Manager will monitor the scope and currency of this policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Divisional Manager is responsible and accountable to ensure that this procedure is implemented in their areas of responsibility.

Middle Management/Coordinators/Supervisors will ensure that this procedure is implemented and communicated to staff responsible for conducting the allocation process as per Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups Procedures.

RELATED PROCEDURES & POLICIES

- Allocation of Community Facilities to Community Groups Procedure.
- Child Safety – Working with Children Management Policy

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Division	Library and Community Services	
Date/s adopted	<i>EMC</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [To be inserted by Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	17 July 2017, 14 October 2013, 22 July 1986	
Date of next review		



REDUCTION OR WAIVER OF HIRE FEES FOR COMMUNITY ROOMS AND HALLS UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF COUNCIL COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: : [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

This policy seeks to maximise community engagement and benefit by removing financial barriers to community use of Council's Community Facilities. It recognises that there may be occasions where financial circumstances limit the access of individuals, groups or organisations to Council's social infrastructure assets. **POLICY INTENT**

The main objective of this policy is to:

1. Maximise access to Community Rooms and Halls under the direct control of Council.
2. Recognise disadvantage and promote equitable access to Council's facilities by removing financial barriers.
3. Provide for a consistent approach which will allow the use of Community Rooms and Halls under the direct control of Council that would be prevented from proceeding if Council's standard fees and charges were applied.

This policy is to be applied via the *Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Rooms and Halls Under the Direct Control of Council Procedure*.

WOLLONGONG 2028 OBJECTIVES

The *Our Wollongong 2028* Community Strategic Plan outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This Policy contributes towards the following *Our Wollongong 2028* objectives:

- Goal 3: Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city.
 - 3.3 Strong diverse local cultures are supported.
- Goal 4: We are connected and engaged community.
 - 4.2 Our residents have an increased sense of community.
- Goal 5: We have a healthy community in a liveable city.
 - 5.1 There is an increase in the health and wellbeing of our community.

POLICY

The General Manager or delegate be authorised to determine all requests for the reduction or waiver of fees for the hiring of community rooms and halls under the direct control of Council.

In order to be considered for a reduction or waiver the group or organisation must be able to demonstrate that they meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. The community facility is the most suitable or only available venue for the planned activity **and**;
2. The function, meeting, exhibition or other activity is determined to be of value to the broader community **and**;
3. The payment of the standard hire fee applicable will prevent the function, meeting, exhibition or other activity from proceeding **and**;

REDUCTION OR WAIVER OF HIRE FEES FOR COMMUNITY ROOMS AND HALLS UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY

- a. It is a non-profit organisation and/or is registered under the Charitable Fundraising Act No 69 of 1991 and demonstrates benefit to the community and that the majority of its revenue is received from membership fees, donations or public subscriptions.
or
- b. It is an organisation which supports and stimulates the local cultural economy and reflects the community goals of Wollongong City Council Strategic Plan.
or
- c. Public appeal.
or
- d. Wollongong City Council function, meeting or other activity which is determined to be of value to the broader community for which alternate funds/budget is insufficient or unavailable.

The General Manager or Manager Library & Community Services may at their absolute discretion make a determination to approve a fee waiver or reduction where the above criteria are not met.

The amount of reduction granted (or complete waiver) be determined on an individual request basis subject to the following conditions:

- a. where cleaning will need to take place outside of the standard hours allocated, a charge equivalent to the labour costs for cleaning will be applied, and
- b. bond (refundable subject to standard conditions) be applied in the usual manner.

Note:

1. Evidence of an organisation's non-profit/charitable status may be requested and/or current audited financial statements along with a full budget for the function, meeting or other activity for which a reduction or waiver of hire fees is being requested.
2. Organisations or groups that are already recipients of grant funding, sponsorship or any other type of financial/in kind support from Wollongong Council will not be eligible for a fee waiver under this policy.
3. Application of these waivers will be documented on a register and subject to independent checks.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

REPORTING

Library and Community Services Manager will monitor the scope and currency of this policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General Manager (or authorised delegate) is responsible for:

- Assessing requests for reductions or waivers to determine whether the request meets the criteria of this Policy.

RELATED PROCEDURES

REDUCTION OR WAIVER OF HIRE FEES FOR COMMUNITY ROOMS AND HALLS UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY

Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Rooms and Halls Under the Direct Control of Council procedure.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Division	Library and Community Services	
Date/s adopted	<i>EMC</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [To be inserted by Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	17 July 2017, 28 October 2013, 2 July 2005, 2 July 1990	
Date of next review		

ITEM 9

POLICY REVIEW: COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE COUNCIL POLICY

The Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Council Policy has been revised as part of the Council policy review process. This Policy has been reviewed and administrative changes made to align with Council's new Policy Framework.

The revised Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Policy is presented to Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

Council adopt the revised Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Policy

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space - Council Policy
- 2 Draft Procedural Guideline - Commercial Fitness Training Activities Public Open Space

BACKGROUND

Council's Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Policy was due for review in June 2022. The Policy outlines the requirements for commercial fitness training activities on public open space to ensure that they are delivered in a manner which protects public infrastructure, minimises disturbance to surrounding residents and addresses public risk concerns.

Commercial Trainers and outdoor fitness groups need to get a licence from Council to use public spaces for their activities. Council currently 56 licenced outdoor fitness locations across the Wollongong LGA that cater to both small and large groups.

The intent of the existing Policy is to ensure the sustainable use of public open space while providing equitable access for general community use and commercial fitness training activities, whilst encouraging and supporting the utilisation of public open space for health and recreational pursuits. This Policy has evolved over time based and incorporated feedback from community members and commercial fitness operators and has been well received.

The Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Council Policy has now been reviewed and remains current. In line with Council's new Policy Framework, administrative changes to the Policy are proposed including the removal of procedural components for inclusion in a new standalone Procedural Guideline. As part of this review, the Policy and new Procedural Guideline were referred to Council's Property Management Section, Governance team and Regulation Enforcement Division, with no further changes other than minor edits and formatting identified during the consultation phase.

The key changes as part of this Policy review are:

- 1 Removal of procedural components of the Policy, and development of a stand-alone Procedural Guideline.
- 2 Update to new Council Policy template.

PROPOSAL

The reviewed Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Council Policy be adopted.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation was undertaken with staff from the following divisions:

- Property and Recreation
- Regulation and Enforcement
- Governance and Customer Service.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 “We have a healthy community in a liveable city”. It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objective 5.4 “Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community”.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk in relation to this Policy is considered low based on Council’s risk matrix. Ensuring commercial fitness training activities are conducted in a safe manner is a key focus of this Policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Fees and charges are set via Council’s annual planning process.

CONCLUSION

The Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Policy remains effective at managing commercial fitness training activities on public open space. The changes proposed as part of this review are administrative in nature and the revised Policy should be adopted.



COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

Wollongong City Council plays a significant role in providing recreational opportunities and the supporting infrastructure on public land that encourages physical activity among the community. In addition to Council's provision, there is a demand for commercial fitness trainers to provide assistance in enhancing public health and well-being. In supporting the use of public open space for such fitness endeavours, Council recognises the need to plan and coordinate for the provision and maintenance of open space to limit the potential impact of activities and ensure equitable use of open space.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the effective management of commercial fitness training activities occurring on public open space to ensure that they are delivered in a manner which protects public infrastructure, minimises disturbance to surrounding residents and addresses public risk concerns.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- 1 To ensure the sustainable use of public open space while providing equitable access for general community use and commercial fitness training activities.
- 2 To encourage and support the utilisation of public open space for health and recreational pursuits.
- 3 Reduce and manage the potential impact of commercial fitness training activities on public assets.
- 4 Minimise public liability concerns.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

Our Wollongong 2032 outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This policy supports the delivery of the community Goal, "we have a healthy community in a liveable city", contributing to the delivery of Objective 5.4 "Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community".

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council-managed public open space within the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA), including all parks, sportsgrounds, beaches, pools, cycle ways, footpaths and shared paths within parks and open spaces/reserves but does not include Council owned Leisure /Recreation Centres, libraries or community facilities situated on public open space. The scope of this policy refers to all individual and group sessions on these lands.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	COUNCIL POLICY
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DEFINITIONS

Combat Training	The term 'combat training' where stated in this policy refers to physical activities which involve opposing individuals and/or competitive or fighting and is of an aggressive or intimidating nature.
Commercial Fitness Training	The term 'commercial fitness training' where stated in this policy refers to the teaching of exercise for the purposes of conducting a business and to assist participants in the improvement of physical fitness and mental wellbeing. Engaging in such business involves the exchange of fee, reward or payment.
Commercial Fitness Training Activity Operator	The term 'commercial fitness training activity operator' where stated in this policy refers to those people owning, managing, teaching or instructing mental wellbeing and physical fitness training for the purposes of conducting a business for exchange, reward, fee or payment.
Commercial Fitness Training Activities	The term 'commercial fitness training activities' where stated in this policy refers to the various physical fitness activities conducted for the purposes of conducting a business through training participants on how to improve their physical fitness and mental wellbeing.
Licence Agreement and Licence	The term 'licence' and/or 'Licence Agreement' where stated in this policy refers to a printed document that gives official permission from Wollongong City Council to a specific person, operator or company to conduct commercial fitness training activities within a designated area of public open space. A licence may be issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Crown Lands Act 1989.
Mobile Licence	The term 'mobile licence' where stated in this policy refers to a licence which permits an operator to undertake commercial fitness training activities involving no greater than three (3) participants only, on public open space where development consent/Council approval has been granted.
Notices	The term 'notices' where stated in this policy refers to signs erected by Council which relate to the doing of anything in a public place, the use of the place or any part of the place or the payment of a fee for entry or use of the public place.
Primary Site Licence	The term 'primary site licence' where stated in this policy refers to a licence which permits an operator to undertake commercial fitness training activities involving greater than three participants per session, on public open space where development consent/Council approval has been granted.
Public Open Space	The term 'public open space' where stated in this policy refers to land that is provided for the use of the community and administered through its representatives in government. Specifically, 'public open space' includes land designated as public parks and reserves, sportsgrounds, beaches, cycleways, shared pathways and footpaths within public parks/open spaces that are within the ownership of Wollongong City Council or Crown Land vested in the care and control of Wollongong City Council.

POLICY

Management of the use of public open space within the Wollongong Local Government Area is regulated by the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Crown Lands Act 1989* and is subject to Council's Plans of Management.

**COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON
PUBLIC OPEN SPACE****COUNCIL POLICY**

As a growing segment in the Fitness Industry, the use of public open space for commercial fitness training highlights a number of issues including:

- Access – e.g. equity of access to public open space for the greater community and the potential risks of monopolisation of areas by commercial fitness training operators.
- Asset – e.g. increasing impact on public open space, potentially causing wear and tear to public recreational facilities.
- Public Liability – e.g. concerns for public liability and sufficient insurance for commercial fitness training.

This policy complements Our Wollongong 2032 in ensuring good planning of public infrastructure for community cohesion, health and well-being. The policy also aligns with Wollongong City Council's Strategic Framework for Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Community Facilities, *Planning People Places*, in providing a proactive approach to the broadening of lifestyle and activity opportunities, while ensuring quality spaces and management that is sensitive to the cultural and environmental facets.

1. Approval Process

All commercial fitness training activities covered by this policy require development consent (unless exempt by legislation). Approved sites are licensed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, the *Crown Lands Act 1989*, and any other relevant statutory requirements, and Council's 'Lease and Licences of Council Owned and Managed Land, Buildings and Public Roads' Policy. Council approved commercial fitness training operators are permitted to operate commercial exercise activities in areas in accordance with their Licence Agreement. Council at its discretion will also determine appropriate zones to assist in managing demand and impact on public property.

Council acknowledges that a number of commercial fitness training activities occur in public open space that may involve personal (one-on-one) or small group (one-three participants) training activities. These activities are typically of a roving nature and operators will be required to obtain a 'mobile licence' which permits them to undertake such commercial activities where development consent/Council approval has been granted.

Where commercial fitness training activities involve greater than three (3) participants (per session), operators will be required to obtain a 'primary site licence' which permits them to undertake such commercial activities from a base location where development consent/Council approval has been granted.

2. Exclusion Zones

Commercial fitness training activities are not permitted within or on the following areas:

- Cemeteries – not permitted at any time.
- Natural areas, sand dunes and dune stabilisation areas – not permitted at any time.
- Beaches – within 100 metres either side of patrolled areas (i.e. flagged areas) with the exception of those sites given Development Approval and a Licence Agreement and subject to the daily advice of Council Surf Lifeguards and volunteer Surf Patrols.
- Within 10 metres of heritage monuments, memorials, playgrounds, or public change rooms.
- Council picnic shelters, park furniture, and trees.
- Stairways within the Blue Mile Precinct, with the exception of the stairway located at City Beach where use is only permitted through specific licence conditions.

**COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON
PUBLIC OPEN SPACE****COUNCIL POLICY**

- Use of designated sportsgrounds and courts within public open space is permitted, however a separate booking for group activities at each location is required. Fees, charges, terms and conditions relevant to the sportsgrounds and courts will apply. This includes operating in accordance with sportsground closure processes.
- Use of areas such as swimming centres and tennis courts within public open space is permitted in accordance with the relevant facilities fees, charges, terms and conditions.

Council may nominate other exclusion areas during the life of this policy from time to time.

3. Activities for which the Policy applies

Commercial fitness training activities are limited to the normal activities of a registered personal trainer/instructor, which would include but not be limited to:

- Gym sessions (with or without weights, fit balls, skipping ropes etc).
- Boxing and pad training.
- Organised aerobic activity.
- Yoga, Tai Chi and Pilates classes and like activities.
- Circuit training.
- [Walking and running.](#)
- [Bike skills.](#)

4. Prohibited Activities

The following activities within public open space are prohibited under this policy:

- Aggressive or intimidating activities including combat training.
- Outdoor recreational activities conducted with amplified music or voice including megaphones or whistles which cause offensive noise as defined by the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.
- Organised ball sports and competitions (unless conducted on designated ovals, sportsgrounds or courts which are subject to the payment of applicable published fees and charges).
- The soliciting of funds directly from park visitors or the public.
- The erection of advertising signs, flags, and banners without Council's prior written consent.
- Erection of signs, stakes, rope, or tape.
- Suspending boxing (or kicking) bags, training slings, ropes, or any other equipment from trees and/or structures.
- Dragging of logs, tyres, heavy ropes, and other equipment that may damage the natural environment.
- Using trees, seating, picnic tables, rotundas, and other park infrastructure for exercise training, except as permitted by the particular individual licence conditions.

5. Exempt Activities/Groups

This policy does not apply to the following activities:

- Not-for-profit individual or small group exercise (e.g. Tai-Chi or Meditative Yoga).

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

- Not-for-profit walking, jogging, or cycling groups.
- Community training groups (where no participation fees are charged).
- Recreation activities performed by local schools under the supervision of a Teacher.
- Irregular recreation activities performed by local sporting clubs, Surf Life Saving Clubs and Associations under the conditions of a site-specific booking or approval.
- Emergency services for training drills and exercise regimes.
- Defence Force activities including but not exclusive to training drills, Army Reserves, and exercise regimes.

Any significant, organised activities which these groups may wish to conduct on a public park, sportsground or beach must be independently hired and would be subject to Wollongong City Council's Terms and Conditions for Use of Council Playing Fields, Parks and Beaches and Wollongong City Council's current Major Events Policy.

2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 INDUSTRY COMPLIANCE

~~All commercial fitness activities must be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of Fitness Australia or other relevant peak body.~~

2.2 SITE CAPACITY AND TRAINER/PARTICIPANT RATIO

~~The size of a licensed site will be determined by Council however the maximum number of participants will not exceed 54 participants at one licensed location.~~

~~Commercial fitness training activities are to be undertaken in a manner that should ensure that all group participation is appropriately supervised, providing instruction to each individual.~~

~~Fitness training groups are limited to 18 participants per instructor where participants are undertaking the same activity and six (6) participants per instructor where participants are undertaking different activities.~~

2.3 HOURS OF OPERATION

~~Subject to development consent, licence holders are permitted to operate on their licensed area from Monday to Saturday between 6 am and 8 pm, and on Sunday between 7 am until 10 am.~~

~~When conducting activities beyond daylight hours, Commercial Fitness trainers must monitor and control risks to participants and ensure public safety is not impacted by their activities (e.g. use of personal lighting and high visibility garments).~~

~~Failure to operate within these specified times will be dealt with in accordance with the Termination clause outlined in a Licence Agreement.~~

2.4 QUALIFICATIONS

~~To be eligible for consideration of a Licence Agreement, a commercial fitness activity trainer must:~~

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

~~a Provide evidence in having completed accredited courses specific to the type of activity being instructed and endorsed by Fitness Australia and/or VETAB providers such as TAFE, Universities and Nationally Recognised Training institutions/colleges~~

~~b Have a current Senior First Aid Certificate.~~

~~c) Proof of being a current registered professional with Fitness Australia or the relevant peak body.~~

~~All fitness trainers employed by the licence holder are also required to hold the above qualifications.~~

2.5 STORAGE

~~All equipment used for training sessions is to be stored off site. The erection of fixed structures for the storage of fitness equipment is not permitted.~~

2.6 SALE OF MERCHANDISE

~~Licence holders are permitted to provide/offer the sale of health and fitness clothing and equipment associated with the activity to their clients/participants.~~

2.7 CAR PARKING

~~Licence holders and participants are required to park in designated parking areas. Parking on grassed open space is not permitted and will incur penalties in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.~~

2.8 WASTE

~~Licence holders are required to ensure the area used for personal training sessions is clean and tidy after use and that such is communicated to session participants.~~

2.9 ENVIRONMENT

~~Licence holders must manage the activities to minimise wear and tear on grassed areas (this includes rotating within the designated area and/or alternating activities).~~

2.10 RISK MANAGEMENT

~~Licence holders must comply with industry guidelines including ensuring:~~

~~☐ Availability of a well-equipped first aid kit in close proximity for the duration of the activity.~~

~~☐ Pre-exercise screening of all participants to ensure effective and safe programming.~~

~~Licence holders must, prior to commencing commercial fitness training activities, assess weather conditions and inspect the immediate area for hazards and take appropriate action to remove those hazards or alternatively move the training site and, without undue delay, report to Council the hazard or any other hazardous matters observed during the training that may require Council's attention.~~

2.11 INSURANCE

~~Licence holders must take out and maintain in their name, for the duration of the term of the Licence Agreement, public liability insurance for a minimum of \$10 million (or such greater amount as Council may reasonably require) and produce documentary evidence of this at the time of application and at time of renewal. Failure to hold or produce evidence of public liability insurance to Council's satisfaction will result in cancellation of the licence.~~

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

2.12 BUSINESS INTERRUPTION

~~Council will accept no responsibility or liability for any interruption to business caused by the need for Council or any other Authority to carry out any special event or type of maintenance works on the approved public open space site, inclement weather or any other interruption to business howsoever caused.~~

2.13 NOISE/DISTURBANCE

~~Under this policy and the allocation of a Licence Agreement, commercial fitness training activity operators must:~~

- ~~☐ Always conduct themselves in accordance with the Fitness Australia Code of Ethics, in a proper and orderly manner and be considerate to other reserve users and adjacent residents.~~
- ~~☐ Not create any noise from training activities that unreasonably disturbs other users and adjacent residents.~~
- ~~☐ Ensure that all noise associated with their activities does not cause offensive noise as defined by the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.~~
- ~~☐ Ensure that any exercise equipment used does not create any hazards or obstruction.~~
- ~~☐ Ensure that any training group for which they are responsible, runs in single file when running in narrow areas (ie along footpaths, stairways, shared paths and cycleways), and always give way to pedestrians/cyclists using those areas.~~
- ~~☐ Ensure that any activities conducted outside of their licensed area does not interfere with any Council approved or booked activity, or the passive recreational use of an area or impact on the enjoyment of such passive use.~~
- ~~☐ Leave the training area in the same condition it was at the commencement of training.~~

2.14 PENALTIES FOR ACTING CONTRARY TO NOTICES

~~A person who fails to comply with terms of any notice erected by Council is guilty of an offence pursuant to section 632 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Council officers and rangers may enforce penalties on any person who fails to comply with any notice.~~

2.15 OTHER CONDITIONS

~~Under this policy and the allocation of a Licence Agreement, commercial fitness training activity operators are to:~~

- ~~☐ Use their licensed area as the primary location for all activities.~~
- ~~☐ Ensure that their activities do not impact on other licensed activities outside of their licensed area.~~
- ~~☐ It is acknowledged that operators would, from time to time, as part of normal training activities, move from the 'primary site' to other locations, including neighbouring parks, reserves, beaches, footpaths/cycleways. These activities though, should not impact on the general community or other licensed areas/activities as outlined in this policy.~~
- ~~☐ Primary site licence holders must ensure that they commence and cease their commercial fitness training activities from within their licensed location.~~

**COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON
PUBLIC OPEN SPACE****COUNCIL POLICY**

- ~~Commercial Fitness Training Operators are to act in accordance with Council's Code of Business Ethics policy in their dealings with Council.~~

6. Signage

Prominent Public Open Space Areas covered under this Policy are currently signposted with notices relating to areas in which Commercial Fitness Training Activities are prohibited in accordance with Section 670 of the Local Government Act.

7. Enforcement

Under Sections 632, 670 and 679 of the *NSW Local Government Act 1993* Council has the power to:

- erect notices which relate to the doing of anything in a public place, the use of the place or any part of the place or the payment of a fee for entry or use of the public place.
- serve, by means of an authorised person, a fine upon any person who fails to comply with the terms of any such notice; and

Should a commercial fitness training operator be using public open space on a regular basis for activities without Council approval and licence, Council Compliance officers will be able to undertake compliance action in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

8. Term of Licence

A commercial fitness training operator's Licence Agreement will be valid for a period of not less than six (6) months and not greater than five (5) years and will authorise each trainer to use designated public open space for commercial fitness training activities in accordance with this policy on a non-exclusive basis.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

[This policy complies with and supports implementation and compliance with the following policies and instruments:](#)

- [Local Government Act 1993](#)
- [Crown Lands Management Act 2016](#)
- [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)
- [Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009](#)

[If any legislation changes occur that are contrary or inconsistent with this management policy, the updated legislation will prevail.](#)

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Property & Recreation is the Division - Recreation Services are responsible for the administration and review of this Policy and Property Services are responsible for the review, management and issuing of licences under this Policy.

Regulation & Enforcement is the division responsible for any compliance action if required.

RELATED PROCEDURES

- [Commercial Fitness Training on Public Open Space Procedure](#)
- [Wollongong City Council's Terms and Conditions for Use of Council Playing Fields, Parks and Beaches](#)

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property and Recreation
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	25/06/2018, 22/06/2015, 27/10/2009
Date of next review	[Not more than two years from last adoption]



COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

ADOPTED BY MANAGER [DIVISIONAL MANAGER] | DATE: [DATE]

CONTEXT

The purpose of this document is to provide for the effective management of commercial fitness training activities occurring on public open space to ensure that they are delivered in a manner which protects public infrastructure, minimises disturbance to surrounding residents and addresses public risk concerns.

This Procedural Guideline is to be read in conjunction with the Commercial Fitness Training on Public Open Space Council Policy (the Parent Policy).

DEFINITIONS

Commercial Fitness Training	The term 'commercial fitness training' where stated in this document refers to the teaching of exercise for the purposes of conducting a business and to assist participants in the improvement of physical fitness and mental wellbeing. Engaging in such business involves the exchange of fee, reward or payment.
Commercial Fitness Training Activity Operator	The term 'commercial fitness training activity operator' where stated in this document refers to those people owning, managing, teaching or instructing mental wellbeing and physical fitness training for the purposes of conducting a business for exchange, reward, fee or payment.
Commercial Fitness Training Activities	The term 'commercial fitness training activities' where stated in this document refers to the various physical fitness activities conducted for the purposes of conducting a business through training participants on how to improve their physical fitness and mental wellbeing.
Fixed Structure	The term 'fixed structure' where stated in this document refers to any item that is deemed immovable or securely positioned including signs and storage containers.
Licence	The term 'licence' where stated in this document refers to a printed document that gives official permission from Wollongong City Council to a specific person, operator or company to conduct commercial fitness training activities within a designated area of public open space. A licence may be issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Crown Lands Act 1989.
Notices	The term 'notices' where stated in this document refers to signs erected by Council which relate to the doing of anything in a public place, the use of the place or any part of the place or the payment of a fee for entry or use of the public place.
Primary Site Licence	The term 'primary site licence' where stated in this document refers to a licence which permits an operator to undertake commercial fitness training activities involving greater than three participants per session, on public open space where development consent/Council approval has been granted.
Public Open Space	The term 'public open space' where stated in this document refers to land that is provided for the use of the community and administered through its representatives in government. Specifically, 'public open space' includes land designated as public parks and reserves, sportsgrounds, beaches, cycleways, shared pathways and footpaths within public parks/open spaces that are within the ownership of Wollongong City Council or Crown Land vested in the care and control of Wollongong City Council.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES

Commercial Fitness Activities and Licences on Public Open Space will be managed in accordance with the below terms and conditions:

1. Security Deposit

- a. The grantee of a 'primary site licence' must deposit with Council the sum equivalent to twenty-five per cent (25%) of the annual licence fee.
- b. This deposit will be refunded upon termination of the licence provided there is no damage to the designated area of public open space as a result of the commercial fitness training activities undertaken on the site.

2. Fees

- a. Licence holders are required to pay fees and charges in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges, and as per terms of the licence agreement.

3. Industry Requirements

- a. All commercial fitness activities must be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of Fitness Australia or other relevant peak body.

4. Site Capacity and Trainer/Participant Ratio

- a. The size of a licensed site will be determined by Council however the maximum number of participants will not exceed 54 participants at one licensed location.
- b. Commercial fitness training activities are to be undertaken in a manner that should ensure that all group participation is appropriately supervised, providing instruction to each individual.
- c. Fitness training groups are limited to 18 participants per instructor where participants are undertaking the same activity and six (6) participants per instructor where participants are undertaking different activities.

5. Hours of Operation

- a. Subject to development consent, licence holders are permitted to operate on their licensed area from Monday to Saturday between 6 am and 8 pm, and on Sunday between 7 am until 10 am.
- b. When conducting activities beyond daylight hours, Commercial Fitness trainers must monitor and control risks to participants and ensure public safety is not impacted by their activities (e.g. use of personal lighting and high visibility garments).
- c. Failure to operate within these specified times will be dealt with in accordance with the Termination clause outlined in a Licence Agreement.

6. Qualifications

- a. To be eligible for consideration of a Licence Agreement, a commercial fitness activity trainer must:
 - i. Provide evidence in having completed accredited courses specific to the type of activity being instructed and endorsed by Fitness Australia and/or VETAB providers such as TAFE, Universities and Nationally Recognised Training institutions/colleges
 - ii. Have a current Senior First Aid Certificate.
 - iii. Proof of being a current registered professional with Fitness Australia or the relevant peak body.
 - iv. All fitness trainers employed by the licence holder are also required to hold the above qualifications.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

7. Storage

- a. All equipment used for training sessions is to be stored off site. The erection of fixed structures for the storage of fitness equipment is not permitted.

8. Sale of Merchandise

- a. Licence holders are permitted to provide/offer the sale of health and fitness clothing and equipment associated with the activity to their clients/participants.

9. Car Parking

- a. Licence holders and participants are required to park in designated parking areas. Parking on grassed open space is not permitted and will incur penalties in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

10. Waste

- a. Licence holders are required to ensure the area used for personal training sessions is clean and tidy after use and that such is communicated to session participants.

11. Environment

- a. Licence holders must manage the activities to minimise wear and tear on grassed areas (this includes rotating within the designated area and/or alternating activities).

12. Risk Management

- a. Licence holders must comply with industry guidelines including ensuring:
 - i. Availability of a well-equipped first aid kit in close proximity for the duration of the activity.
 - ii. Pre-exercise screening of all participants to ensure effective and safe programming.
- b. Licence holders must, prior to commencing commercial fitness training activities, assess weather conditions and inspect the immediate area for hazards and take appropriate action to remove those hazards or alternatively move the training site and, without undue delay, report to Council the hazard or any other hazardous matters observed during the training that may require Council's attention.

13. Insurance

- a. Licence holders must take out and maintain in their name, for the duration of the term of the Licence Agreement, public liability insurance for a minimum of \$10 million (or such greater amount as Council may reasonably require) and produce documentary evidence of this at the time of application and at time of renewal. Failure to hold or produce evidence of public liability insurance to Council's satisfaction will result in cancellation of the licence.

14. Business Interruption

- a. Council will accept no responsibility or liability for any interruption to business caused by the need for Council or any other Authority to carry out any special event or type of maintenance works on the approved public open space site, inclement weather or any other interruption to business howsoever caused.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

15. Noise/Disturbance

- a. Under this Procedural Guideline and the allocation of a Licence Agreement, commercial fitness training activity operators must:
 - i. Always conduct themselves in accordance with the Fitness Australia Code of Ethics, in a proper and orderly manner and be considerate to other reserve users and adjacent residents.
 - ii. Not create any noise from training activities that unreasonably disturbs other users and adjacent residents.
 - iii. Ensure that all noise associated with their activities does not cause offensive noise as defined by the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.
 - iv. Ensure that any exercise equipment used does not create any hazards or obstruction.
 - v. Ensure that any training group for which they are responsible, runs in single file when running in narrow areas (ie along footpaths, stairways, shared paths and cycleways), and always give way to pedestrians/cyclists using those areas.
 - vi. Ensure that any activities conducted outside of their licensed area does not interfere with any Council approved or booked activity, or the passive recreational use of an area or impact on the enjoyment of such passive use.
 - vii. Leave the training area in the same condition it was at the commencement of training.

16. Penalties for Acting Contrary to Notices

- a. A person who fails to comply with terms of any notice erected by Council is guilty of an offence pursuant to section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993. Council officers and rangers may enforce penalties on any person who fails to comply with any notice.

17. OTHER CONDITIONS

- a. Under this Procedural Guideline and the allocation of a Licence Agreement, commercial fitness training activity operators are to:
 - i. Use their licensed area as the primary location for all activities.
 - ii. Ensure that their activities do not impact on other licensed activities outside of their licensed area.
 - iii. It is acknowledged that operators would, from time to time, as part of normal training activities,
 - iv. move from the 'primary site' to other locations, including neighbouring parks, reserves, beaches,
 - v. footpaths/cycleways. These activities though, should not impact on the general community or other
 - vi. licensed areas/activities as outlined in the Commercial Fitness Training Activities on Public Open Space Policy and Procedure.
 - vii. Primary site licence holders must ensure that they commence and cease their commercial fitness
 - viii. training activities from within their licensed location.
 - ix. Commercial Fitness Training Operators are to act in accordance with Council's Code of Business Ethics policy in their dealings with Council.

REVIEW

This Procedural Guideline will be reviewed every two years or in-line with the review of the parent policy (where applicable) and at other times as required. Changes to the Procedural Guideline that are consistent with the parent policy can be approved by the Manager Governance and Customer Service.

COMMERCIAL FITNESS TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property and Recreation
Date adopted	[Date Adopted]
Date of previous adoptions	Not Applicable
Date of next review	[Review Date]
Responsible Manager	Manager Property and Recreation
Parent Policy	Commercial Fitness Training on Public Open Space Council Policy

ITEM 10

POLICY REVIEW: COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE COUNCIL POLICY

The Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy has been revised as part of the Council policy review process. This Policy has been reviewed and amended to align with Council's new Policy Framework.

The revised Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Policy is presented to Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council adopt the revised Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Policy

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Commercial Surf School Activities Foreshore Public Open Space - Council Policy
- 2 Draft Commercial Surf School Activities Foreshore Public Open Space - Procedural Guidelines

BACKGROUND

The Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy manages the use of foreshore public open space for commercial surf school activities. This policy has been actively applied to commercial surf school operators throughout the city since February 2013 and, since that time, Council has not received any negative feedback on the policy or its requirements. The policy has been utilised effectively in responding to increased demand and access to our foreshore reserves and beaches.

The Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy has now been reviewed and remains current. In line with Council's new Policy Framework, administrative changes to the Policy are proposed including the removal of procedural components for inclusion in a new standalone Procedural Guideline. As part of this review, the Policy and new Procedural Guideline were referred to Council's Property Management Section, Governance team and Regulation Enforcement Division, with no further changes other than minor edits and formatting identified during the consultation phase.

The key changes as part of this Policy review are:

- 1 Removal of procedural components of the Policy, and development of a stand-alone Procedural Guideline.
- 2 Update to new Council Policy template

PROPOSAL

The reviewed Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Policy be adopted.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation was undertaken with staff from the following divisions:

- Property and Recreation
- Regulation and Enforcement
- Governance and Customer Service

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 “We have a healthy community in a liveable city”. It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objective 5.4 “Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community”.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk in relation to this Policy is considered low based on Council’s risk matrix. Ensuring commercial surf school activities are conducted in a safe manner is a key focus of this Policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Fees and charges are set via Council’s annual planning process.

CONCLUSION

The Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy remains effective at managing increased demand and access to our foreshore reserves and beaches for Commercial Surf School Activities. The changes proposed as part of this review are administrative in nature and the revised Policy should be adopted.



COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

Wollongong City Council plays a significant role in providing recreational opportunities and the supporting infrastructure on public land that encourages physical activity among the community. Council acknowledges there is a demand for commercial surf school operators to enhance public knowledge and skills in the aquatic environment.

In supporting the use of foreshore public open space for commercial surf school activities, Council recognises the need to plan and coordinate for the provision and maintenance of public open space to limit the impact of commercial surf school activities and ensure equitable use of foreshore public open space.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- 1 Maximise public safety at beaches, pools, Council sportsgrounds, playgrounds and parks.
- 2 Provide community leadership in taking measures to protect the health and wellbeing of the community.
- 3 Improve the public amenity and maintenance of Council property.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

Our Wollongong 2032 outlines the community's main priorities for the future and includes strategies for achieving them. This policy supports the delivery of the community Goal, 'we have a healthy community in a liveable city', contributing to the delivery of Objective 5.4 'Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community'.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council-managed foreshore public open space within the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA). This policy will permit all Council foreshore public open space to be reviewed as potential locations for commercial surf school activities and allow Council to determine appropriate locations and the number of licensed operators. The scope of this policy refers to all individual and group sessions.

DEFINITIONS

Commercial Surf School	The term 'commercial surf school' where stated in this policy refers to the instruction of surfing/water safety for the purposes of conducting a business and to assist participants in learning to surf, improve surfing skills and ocean knowledge. Engaging in such business involves the exchange of fee or payment.
Commercial Surf School Operator	The term 'commercial surf school operator' where stated in this policy refers to those people owning, managing or instructing surfing/water safety lessons for the purposes of conducting a business for exchange of fee or payment.
Commercial Surf School Activities	The term 'commercial surf school activities' where stated in this policy refers to the various surf school activities conducted for the purposes of conducting a business through instructing participants on how to improve their surfing/water

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

	safety skills and ocean knowledge. This may include surf boards, foam boards, surf rescue boards, body boards and stand-up paddle boards.
Licence	The term 'Licence' where stated in this policy refers to a printed document that gives official permission from Wollongong City Council to a specific person, operator or company to conduct Commercial Surf School Activities within a designated area of a foreshore public open space. A Licence may be issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Crown Lands Act 1989.
Notices	The term 'Notices' where stated in this policy refers to signs erected by Council which relate to the doing of anything in a public place, the use of the place or any part of the place, or the payment of a fee for entry or use of the public place.
Foreshore Public Open Space	The term 'public open space' where stated in this policy refers to land that is provided for the use of the community and administered through its representatives in government. Specifically, 'Foreshore Public Open Space' includes land designated as public parks and reserves, beaches, cycleways, shared pathways and footpaths within public parks/open spaces that are within the ownership of Wollongong City Council or Crown Land vested in the care and control of Wollongong City Council.

POLICY

Management of the use of foreshore public open space within the Wollongong Local Government Area is regulated by the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Crown Lands Act 1989* and is subject to Council's Plans of Management.

In determining the suitability of operations at sites, Council will review natural and built constraints, access, parking, historical usage patterns, demand and potential impact of commercial surf school activities on passive recreational pursuits.

This policy complements Wollongong 2032 Community Strategic Plan in ensuring good planning of public infrastructure for community cohesion, health and wellbeing. The policy is also consistent with Council's Planning People Places, which provides a Strategic Framework for Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Community Facilities.

1. Approval Process

All commercial surf school activities covered by this policy require development consent and a Licence from Council for use of a designated area of foreshore public open space.

Approved sites for commercial surf school activities on a designated area of foreshore public open space may be licensed through Council's Property and Recreation division in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

Licensed commercial surf school operators are only permitted to operate in approved areas in accordance with their Licence Agreement, Development Application (DA) consent and in accordance with this and other Council policy requirements. Where a commercial surf school operator wishes to operate from more than one licensed area, additional Licence Agreements will need to be obtained.

2. Exclusion Zones

Commercial surf school activities are not permitted within or on the following areas:

- Sand dunes and dune stabilisation areas.
- Beaches – within 50 metres either side of patrolled areas (ie surf craft flagged areas).
- Rock platforms.

Council may nominate other exclusion areas during the life of this policy from time to time.

**COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE****COUNCIL POLICY****3. Prohibited Activities**

The following activities within public open space are prohibited under this policy:

- Surf school activities conducted with amplified music or voice including megaphones.
- the soliciting of funds directly from beach or park visitors or the public.
- the erection of advertising signs and banners without Council's prior written consent.
- the inappropriate use of park/beach infrastructure.
- exemptions may be considered for special events and are subject to Council approval.

4. Exempt Activities/Groups

The following groups/activities are exempt from the approval:

- Activities directly delivered by not-for-profit groups (eg disabled surfing, school sport).
- Irregular recreation activities directly delivered by local sporting clubs, surf life saving and board riders clubs and associations (where there are no tuition fees).
- Instruction in surfing/water safety delivered directly by teaching staff employed by either the Department of Education and Communities, Catholic Education Office or Independent Schools Association.

Any significant organised activities which these groups may wish to conduct on a foreshore public open space must be independently hired and would be subject to Council's Terms and Conditions for Use of Beaches and Council's current Major Events Policy.

4.7 Security Deposit

~~It is a requirement of the Licence issued by the Council that Commercial Surf School Operator's must deposit with Council the sum equivalent to twenty five per cent (25%) of the annual Licence fee as a security deposit.~~

~~This deposit will be refunded upon termination of the Licence provided there is no damage to the designated area of foreshore public open space as a result of the Commercial Surf School Activities undertaken on the site or the Council terminates the Licence as a result of some other breach of the Licence by the Commercial Surf School Operator.~~

4.8 Fees

~~A Licence Preparation Fee and Annual Licence Fee are applicable under this policy and shall be determined by Council.~~

~~Annual fees are to be paid to Council in advance upon approval of Licences.~~

5. Signage

Prominent Foreshore Public Open Space Areas covered under this Policy are currently signposted with notices relating to areas in which Surf School Activities are prohibited in accordance with Section 670 of the Local Government Act 1993

5.6. Enforcement

Under Sections 632, 670 and 679 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993 Council has the power to:

- erect notices which relate to the doing of anything in a public place, the use of the place or any part of the place or the payment of a fee for entry or use of the public place.
- serve, by means of an authorised person, a fine upon any person who fails to comply with the terms of any such notice.

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

Should a commercial surf school operators be using foreshore public open space on a regular basis for activities without Council approval and licence, Council Compliance officers will be able to undertake compliance action in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

6.7. Term of Licence

A Licence issued by Council to Commercial Surf School Operator's will be valid for a period of not less than twelve (12) months and not greater than five (5) years and will authorise each Commercial Surf School Operator to use designated foreshore public open space for Commercial Surf School Activities in accordance with this policy on a non-exclusive basis.

2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 Industry Compliance

~~All Commercial Surf School Activities must be undertaken in accordance with the applicable guidelines and recommendations of the peak bodies including Surfing Australia/The Academy of Surfing Instructors/Surf Life Saving Australia and/or Department of Education and Communities (ie student: instructor ratio).~~

2.2 Area of Operation

~~Commercial Surf School Operators are permitted to conduct their Activities within the Licensed area subject to the terms of the Licence, on the beach subject to this and other Council policies.~~

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must comply with all reasonable directions from Lifeguards, Lifesavers and Council Officers.~~

~~The Commercial Surf School Activities within licensed areas, on beaches and in the surf must be cancelled if conditions are unsafe, or if a surf carnival, or major event is being held.~~

2.3 Hours of Operation

~~Subject to development consent, Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are permitted to operate on their licensed area:~~

- ~~• During the scheduled patrolling season from Monday to Saturday between sunrise and sunset and 11.00 am to sunset on Sundays.~~
- ~~• Outside the scheduled patrolling season from Monday to Sunday between sunrise and sunset.~~

~~Failure to operate within these specified times may result in the Licence being terminated.~~

~~Commercial Surf School Operators must during normal patrol hours or upon the arrival of the patrolling Lifeguards or Lifesavers, consult with patrolling Lifeguards or Lifesavers prior to entering the water.~~

2.4 Qualifications

~~To be eligible to apply for a Licence from Council, a Commercial Surf School Operator must:~~

- ~~• provide evidence of having completed accredited courses specific to the type of activity being instructed and endorsed by Surfing Australia or the Academy of Surfing Instructors and/or VETAB providers;~~
- ~~• possess a current Senior First Aid Certificate;~~
- ~~• possess a current Surf Bronze Medallion or equivalent; and~~

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

- ~~• provide evidence of Working with Children Check in accordance with relevant Child Protection Legislation.~~

2.5 Storage

~~All equipment used for Commercial Surf School Activities is not to be stored on foreshore public open space, or in the Licensed area when not in use by the Commercial Surf School Operators. The erection of fixed structures for the storage of Surf School equipment is not permitted.~~

2.6 Structure

~~Temporary shade structures are permitted to be erected throughout the duration of the daily business activities of Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators. Structures should be secured in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines and be removed from the Licensed area at the end of each day. Structures should not exceed 3 x 6 square metres in size.~~

2.7 Sale of Merchandise

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are only authorised to offer Surfing Lessons. The sale of clothing, equipment or any other goods, service or products is not permitted from a licensed area.~~

2.8 Rescue Equipment

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators shall at all times during operating hours, provide, maintain and have available a mobile phone to facilitate communication with emergency services and for rescue purposes, suitable rescue equipment, first aid and oxygen equipment (as outlined in NSW Office of Local Government 'Practice Note 15' on Water Safety).~~

2.9 Car Parking

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators and participants are required to park in designated parking areas.~~

~~Parking on grassed open space or beach areas is not permitted and will incur penalties in accordance with section 632, section 650 and section 651 of the Local Government Act 1993.~~

2.10 Waste

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are required to ensure the area used for Commercial Surf School Activities is clean and tidy after use and that this is communicated to lesson participants.~~

2.11 Environment

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must manage the Activities to minimise their impact on foreshore public open space. Designated beach and park access tracks are to be used where available.~~

2.12 Risk Management

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must, prior to commencing and during their Commercial Surf School Activities:~~

- ~~• inspect the immediate area and ocean conditions to ensure no hazards are evident and take appropriate action to remove those hazards or alternatively move the surf school site and, without undue delay, report to Council the hazard or any other hazardous matters observed during the training that may require Council's attention;~~

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

- ~~complete and document a Site Safety Management Plan for the licensed area (including relevant Standard Operating Procedures for the Activities being undertaken);~~
- ~~ensure a mobile phone is available for emergency use with each class;~~
- ~~ensure First Aid Kits are available onsite throughout the duration of each class and that all stock is current; and~~
- ~~ensure Instructor's rescue boards are onsite for all classes.~~

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must have distinctive high-visibility colour garments for each student and teacher.~~

2.13 Insurance

~~Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must take out and maintain in their name, for the duration of the term of the Licence, a public liability insurance policy for a minimum of \$10 million (or such greater amount as Council may reasonably require); and produce documentary evidence of this at the time of application and at time of renewal of such insurance policy.~~

2.14 Business Interruption

~~Council will not accept any responsibility or liability for any interruption to business caused by the need for Council or any other Authority to conduct any special event or carry out any maintenance works, natural events or any other interruption to business howsoever caused.~~

2.15 Noise/Disturbance

~~Under this policy and the allocation of a Licence, Commercial Surf School Operators:~~

- ~~must always conduct themselves in accordance with Surfing Australia, Academy of Surfing Instructors, Surf Life Saving Australia or the Department of Education and Communities' Code of Conduct in a proper and orderly manner and be considerate to other beach and park users and adjacent residents;~~
- ~~must not create any noise from Commercial Surf School Activities that unreasonably disturbs other beach or park users and adjacent residents or businesses;~~
- ~~must ensure that any surf school equipment used does not create any hazards or obstruction, and~~
- ~~must leave the licensed surf school area in the same condition as it was at the commencement of the Commercial Surf School Activities.~~

2.16 Penalties for Acting Contrary to Notices and Development Consent Conditions

~~A person who fails to comply with terms of any notice erected by Council is guilty of an offence pursuant to section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993. Council Officers and Rangers will enforce penalties on any person who fails to comply with any notice.~~

~~A person who fails to comply with any conditions of development consent permitting Commercial Surf School activities is in breach of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, and may be subject to penalties.~~

2.17 Other conditions

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

~~Under this policy and any Licence issued by Council, Commercial Surf School Operators are to:~~

- ~~• use their licensed area and approved beach areas as the only location for their Commercial Surf School Activities;~~
- ~~• ensure that their Commercial Surf School Activities do not impact on other licensed activities outside of their licensed area or elsewhere on the beach or in the water.~~

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This policy complies with and supports implementation and compliance with the following policies and instruments, but is not limited to:

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- NSW Office of Local Government 'Practice Note 15' on Water Safety
- Working with Children Check in accordance with relevant Child Protection Legislation.
- *Crown Lands Act 1989*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013*

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Property and Recreation is the division responsible. Recreation Services are responsible for the administration and review of this Policy and Property Services are responsible for the review, management and issuing of licences under this Policy.

Regulation and Enforcement is the division responsible for any compliance action if required.

RELATED PROCEDURES

- *Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Procedural Guideline*
- *Wollongong City Council's Terms and Conditions for Use of Council Playing Fields, Parks and Beaches*

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

COUNCIL POLICY

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property and Recreation
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	14/03/2016;
Date of next review	[Not more than two years from last adoption]



COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

ADOPTED BY MANAGER [DIVISIONAL MANAGER] | DATE: [DATE]

CONTEXT

DEFINITIONS

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES

Commercial Surf School Activities and Licences on Foreshore Public Open Space will be managed in accordance with the below terms and conditions:

1. Security Deposit

- a. It is a requirement of the Licence issued by the Council that Commercial Surf School Operator's must deposit with Council the sum equivalent to twenty-five per cent (25%) of the annual Licence fee as a security deposit.
- b. This deposit will be refunded upon termination of the Licence provided there is no damage to the designated area of foreshore public open space as a result of the Commercial Surf School Activities undertaken on the site or the Council terminates the Licence as a result of some other breach of the Licence by the Commercial Surf School Operator.

2. Fees

- a. A Licence Preparation Fee and Annual Licence Fee are applicable under this Procedural Guideline and shall be determined by Council.
- b. Annual fees are to be paid to Council in advance upon approval of Licences.

3. Industry Compliance

- a. All Commercial Surf School Activities must be undertaken in accordance with the applicable guidelines and recommendations of the peak bodies including Surfing Australia/The Academy of Surfing Instructors/Surf Life Saving Australia and/or Department of Education and Communities (i.e. student: instructor ratio).

4. Area of Operation

- a. Commercial Surf School Operators are permitted to conduct their Activities within the Licensed area subject to the terms of the Licence, on the beach subject to this Procedural Guideline and other Council policies.
- b. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must comply with all reasonable directions from Lifeguards, Lifesavers and Council Officers.
- c. The Commercial Surf School Activities within licensed areas, on beaches and in the surf must be cancelled if conditions are unsafe, or if a surf carnival, or major event is being held.

5. Hours of Operation

- a. Subject to development consent, Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are permitted to operate on their licensed area:
 - i. During the scheduled patrolling season from Monday to Saturday between sunrise and sunset and 11.00 am to sunset on Sundays.

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

- ii. Outside the scheduled patrolling season from Monday to Sunday between sunrise and sunset.
- iii. Failure to operate within these specified times may result in the Licence being terminated.
- iv. Commercial Surf School Operators must during normal patrol hours or upon the arrival of the patrolling Lifeguards or Lifesavers, consult with patrolling Lifeguards or Lifesavers prior to entering the water.

6. Qualifications

- a. To be eligible to apply for a Licence from Council, a Commercial Surf School Operator must:
 - i. provide evidence of having completed accredited courses specific to the type of activity being instructed and endorsed by Surfing Australia or the Academy of Surfing Instructors and/or VETAB providers;
 - ii. possess a current Senior First Aid Certificate;
 - iii. possess a current Surf Bronze Medallion or equivalent; and
 - iv. provide evidence of Working with Children Check in accordance with relevant Child Protection Legislation.

7. Storage

- a. All equipment used for Commercial Surf School Activities is not to be stored on foreshore public open space, or in the Licensed area when not in use by the Commercial Surf School Operators.
- b. The erection of fixed structures for the storage of Surf School equipment is not permitted.

8. Structure

- a. Temporary shade structures are permitted to be erected throughout the duration of the daily business activities of Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators. Structures should be secured in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines and be removed from the Licensed area at the end of each day. Structures should not exceed 3 x 6 square metres in size.

9. Sale of Merchandise

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are only authorised to offer Surfing Lessons. The sale of clothing, equipment or any other goods, service or products is not permitted from a licensed area.

10. Rescue Equipment

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators shall at all times during operating hours, provide, maintain and have available a mobile phone to facilitate communication with emergency services and for rescue purposes, suitable rescue equipment, first aid and oxygen equipment (as outlined in NSW Office of Local Government 'Practice Note 15' on Water Safety).

11. Car Parking

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators and participants are required to park in designated parking areas.
- b. Parking on grassed open space or beach areas is not permitted and will incur penalties in accordance with section 632, section 650 and section 651 of the Local Government Act 1993.

12. Waste

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators are required to ensure the area used for Commercial Surf School Activities is clean and tidy after use and that this is communicated to lesson participants.

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

13. Environment

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must manage the Activities to minimise their impact on foreshore public open space. Designated beach and park access tracks are to be used where available.

14. Risk Management

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must, prior to commencing and during their Commercial Surf School Activities:
 - i. inspect the immediate area and ocean conditions to ensure no hazards are evident and take appropriate action to remove those hazards or alternatively move the surf school site and, without undue delay, report to Council the hazard or any other hazardous matters observed during the training that may require Council's attention;
 - ii. complete and document a Site Safety Management Plan for the licensed area (including relevant Standard Operating Procedures for the Activities being undertaken);
 - iii. ensure a mobile phone is available for emergency use with each class;
 - iv. ensure First Aid Kits are available onsite throughout the duration of each class and that all stock is current; and
 - v. ensure Instructor's rescue boards are onsite for all classes.
- b. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must have distinctive high visibility colour garments for each student and teacher.

15. Insurance

- a. Licensed Commercial Surf School Operators must take out and maintain in their name, for the duration of the term of the Licence, a public liability insurance policy for a minimum of \$10 million (or such greater amount as Council may reasonably require); and produce documentary evidence of this at the time of application and at time of renewal of such insurance policy.

16. Business Interruption

- a. Council will not accept any responsibility or liability for any interruption to business caused by the need for Council or any other Authority to conduct any special event or carry out any maintenance works, natural events or any other interruption to business howsoever caused.

17. Noise/Disturbance

- a. Under this Procedural Guideline and the allocation of a Licence, Commercial Surf School Operators:
 - i. must always conduct themselves in accordance with Surfing Australia, Academy of Surfing Instructors, Surf Life Saving Australia or the Department of Education and Communities' Code of Conduct in a proper and orderly manner and be considerate to other beach and park users and adjacent residents;
 - ii. must not create any noise from Commercial Surf School Activities that unreasonably disturbs other beach or park users and adjacent residents or businesses;
 - iii. must ensure that any surf school equipment used does not create any hazards or obstruction, and
 - iv. must leave the licensed surf school area in the same condition as it was at the commencement of the Commercial Surf School Activities.

18. Penalties for Acting Contrary to Notices and Development Consent Conditions

- a. A person who fails to comply with terms of any notice erected by Council is guilty of an offence pursuant to section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993. Council Officers and Rangers will enforce penalties on any person who fails to comply with any notice.

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

- b. A person who fails to comply with any conditions of development consent permitting Commercial Surf School activities is in breach of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and may be subject to penalties.

19. ~~2.17~~ Other conditions

- a. Under this Procedural Guideline and any Licence issued by Council, Commercial Surf School Operators are to:
 - i. use their licensed area and approved beach areas as the only location for their Commercial Surf School Activities.
 - ii. ensure that their Commercial Surf School Activities do not impact on other licensed activities outside of their licensed area or elsewhere on the beach or in the water.

REVIEW

This Procedural Guideline will be reviewed every two years or in-line with the review of the parent policy (where applicable) and at other times as required. Changes to the Procedure that are consistent with the parent policy can be approved by the Manager Governance and Customer Service.

COMMERCIAL SURF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON FORESHORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property and Recreation
Date adopted	[Date Adopted]
Date of previous adoptions	Not applicable
Date of next review	[Review Date]
Responsible Manager	Manager Property and Recreation
Parent Policy	Commercial Surf School Activities on Foreshore Public Open Space Council Policy

ITEM 11 POLICY REVIEW: SMOKE-FREE (RECREATION AREAS) COUNCIL POLICY

The Smoke-Free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy has been revised as part of the Council policy review process. The Policy remains current with changes being only minor edits and formatting to align with Council's new Policy Framework.

The revised Smoke-Free (Recreation Areas) Policy is presented to Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council adopt the revised Smoke-Free (Recreation Areas) Policy

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Lucielle Power, Manager Property + Recreation

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Working Copy - Smoke-free (Recreation Areas) - Council

BACKGROUND

The Smoke-free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy relates to the public open space and recreational areas across the Wollongong Local Government Area where smoking is prohibited. This Policy was first introduced in 2010 with the aim to improve public health outcomes of the community by reducing exposure to smoking in public areas.

This Policy has evolved over time in line with changes to smoking legislation and following consultation and benchmarking activities. The Policy was last reviewed in 2018, with the inclusion of e-cigarettes and expansion of the Policy to include patrolled sections of beaches, these changes were implemented without issue.

Council's approach to compliance with the policy is based on self-regulation by the community supported by signage. This approach has been effective and well received by the community.

The Smoke-free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy has now been reviewed and remains current with legislation, effective in its intent and is consistent with other Council's approaches. No changes to the Policy are proposed as part of this review other than the inclusion of Council's approach towards Policy implementation, minor edits and formatting.

PROPOSAL

The revised Smoke-Free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy be adopted.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation was undertaken with staff from the following divisions:

- Property and Recreation
- Regulation and Enforcement
- Open Space and Environment.
- Governance and Customer Service.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 “We have a healthy community in a liveable city”. It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objective 5.5 “Provide safe, well maintained and accessible beaches and aquatic recreation facilities”.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Policy remains current with changes being only minor edits and formatting. The risk in relation to this revised Policy is considered low based on Council’s risk matrix.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs for any signage and promotional materials relating to this Policy are covered through existing operational budgets.

CONCLUSION

The Smoke-free (Recreation Areas) Council Policy confirms Council’s commitment to advocating public health outcomes and improving the natural environment and amenity of the city through reducing the community’s exposure to smoking in public areas.



SMOKE-FREE (RECREATION AREAS) COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: : [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

This Policy recognises that Council plays an important role in advocating public health outcomes and has a commitment to improving the natural environment and amenity of the local area by reducing the negative effects of smoking and use of e-cigarettes in public areas.

There is substantial evidence linking exposure to second-hand smoke with a range of serious and life-threatening health impacts including heart disease, cancer, asthma and other respiratory problems. Children exposed to second-hand smoke are at an increased risk of asthma, acute respiratory infections and other health issues.

In addition to the health impacts, cigarettes also contribute to street, beach and storm water litter and are considered as an environmental issue. The provision of smoke-free recreation areas can assist in reducing cigarette-butt litter and enhance our local environment.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to –

- 1 Improve the health of community members
- 2 Improve public amenity and maintenance of Council property
- 3 Raise community awareness of the issues associated with smoking and e-cigarette use
- 4 Provide community leadership in taking measures to protect the health and social wellbeing of the community
- 5 Minimise cigarette-butt pollution on Council-owned beaches, waterways, parks and other public open space areas.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

This Policy contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 “We have a healthy community in a liveable city”.

It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objectives 5.4 “Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community” and 5.5 “Provide safe, well maintained and accessible beaches and aquatic recreation facilities”.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the entire Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA).

SMOKE-FREE (RECREATION AREAS)

COUNCIL POLICY

DEFINITIONS

Recreation area	The term 'recreation area' where stated in this policy, refers to Council owned or managed outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds, skate parks, outdoor fitness equipment, public swimming pools, patrolled beaches and leisure centres.
Outdoor sporting facilities	The term 'outdoor sporting facilities' where stated in this policy, refers to Council owned or managed (including leased and licensed) sportsfields and the infrastructure associated with a sportsfield, including amenities buildings, canteens, grandstands and clubhouses.
Smoke	Means use, consume, hold or otherwise have control over a tobacco product, non-tobacco smoking product or e-cigarette that is generating (whether or not by burning) smoke or an aerosol or vapour.
Patrolled beach	An area of a beach that has an active lifeguarding or volunteer lifesaving service supervising a public bathing area where red and yellow flags have been erected.

POLICY

This policy recognises that Council has:

- an obligation to promote public health outcomes where Council provides assets and services intended to be of benefit to children and other members of the community
- an understanding that the damaging effects of smoking and vapour while well documented in regard to indoor areas, is recognised as a priority in outdoor recreation areas
- outlined a strategy for Council's management of smoking on and around public playgrounds, swimming pools, patrolled beaches, leisure centres and sports fields
- a commitment to improve the natural environment and the amenity of the local area by reducing the amount of cigarette-butt litter found in outdoor spaces.

1. Smoke-free areas

The following areas of public open space and sport and recreation facilities managed by Council are designated smoke-free areas:

- Within 10 metres of all children's playground equipment
- Within 10 metres of all outdoor fitness equipment
- Around and within the identified perimeter of all Council outdoor sporting facilities and skate parks
- Around and within the identified perimeter of Council leisure centres and public swimming pools (including rock pools)
- Within 4 metres of an entrance used by pedestrians to get into or out of a public building
- Between the red and yellow flags to the land edge and within a 50 metre radius of the red and yellow flagged area at Council's patrolled beaches. The smoke-free area will apply during patrolled times, when the red-and-yellow lifesaving flags are erected.

2. Signage

Signs will be installed in strategically placed areas covered under this Policy and will include the no smoking symbol in accordance with Section 670 NSW Local Government Act 1993.

SMOKE-FREE (RECREATION AREAS)

COUNCIL POLICY

3. Enforcement

Under Sections 632, 670 and 679 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993 Council has the power to:

- erect suitably worded and strategically placed notices in 'public places' within the local government area prohibiting smoking
- serve, by means of an authorised person, a fine upon any person who fails to comply with the terms of any such notice
- otherwise prohibit smoking in any place within the local government area of Wollongong, in respect of which Council is the owner or occupier, as a condition of entry to that place.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This policy complies with and supports implementation and compliance with the following policies and instruments:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Smoke-free Environment Act 2000
- Smoke-free Environment Regulation 2016

If any legislation changes occur that are contrary or inconsistent with this policy, the updated legislation will prevail.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Property & Recreation is the Division responsible for the administration and review of this Policy.
- Regulation & Enforcement is the Division responsible for any compliance action if required.

RELATED PROCEDURES

Wollongong City Council's Compliance and Enforcement Policy will guide the enforcement of this Policy, with the view that this Policy will be supported by persuasion and self-policing in the first instance, and then punitive enforcement as required subject to resourcing.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Property and Recreation
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	09/12/2019, 20/11/2017, 13/07/2015, 15/07/2013, 26/10/2010
Date of next review	[Not more than two years from last adoption]

ITEM 12

POLICY REVIEW: ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ALCOHOL FREE ZONES ON PUBLIC ROADS AND FOOTPATHS COUNCIL POLICY

The Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Council Policy (the Policy) has been reviewed with only minor changes to the policy.

This report seeks Council endorsement of the draft Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones Policy for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

Council endorse the draft Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Council Policy for adoption

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Cultural + Economic Development
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Council Policy
- 2 NSW Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones

BACKGROUND

The *NSW Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) provides for the establishment of Alcohol Free Zones (AFZs) on roads and footpaths within local government areas as part of a strategy to improve public safety and prevent disorderly behaviour caused by the irresponsible consumption of alcohol in public places. The Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2020-2025 identifies the review and establishment of AFZs as one method among many to help reduce alcohol related crime.

The main objectives of this policy are to act as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible, street drinking to incidents involving serious crime and to provide a means for assisting the Police to control the public consumption of alcohol in Wollongong Local Government Area.

The policy outlines a statement of procedures for establishing an AFZ which follows the Local Government Ministerial Guidelines for AFZs. These guidelines took effect on 5 February 2009 replacing the previous guidelines issued in 1995.

AFZs are established and maintained by councils, while their enforcement is undertaken by NSW Police. The consumption of alcohol in an AFZ is prohibited and NSW Police are empowered by the Act to seize and dispose of alcohol being consumed in an AFZ.

PROPOSAL

The policy has been reviewed. There are minor changes to the policy which includes transferring the Policy to a new template, including reference to contacting Aboriginal organisations as part of the consultation requirements and changing the title of Community Safety Reference Group to Community Safety Interagency.

The objective of the policy continues to be valid. The policy supports NSW Police and Council in managing public safety and provides information to the public about the process for establishing an AFZ in accordance with the Act.

The policy is based on the Local Government Ministerial Guidelines for Alcohol Free Zones which have had no amendments since their inception.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Establishment and Maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones on Public Roads and Footpaths Policy has been reviewed by Council's Community Partnerships and Safety team.

The process outlined in this policy is guided by the Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones. The Ministerial Guidelines have been prepared under Section 646(1) of the Act.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5. It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the Community Programs Service Plan.

The Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025 identifies Action Item 3.2 Alcohol Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Places are reviewed every four years.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with reviewing and updating the policy.

The duration of an AFZ is four years and if proposed for re-establishment there will be costs associated with signage in the fourth year. If a new AFZ is proposed and endorsed there will be costs associated with signs and installation. These costs will be attributed to existing budgets.

CONCLUSION

Establishment of AFZs on roads and footpaths within the LGA assist the NSW Police and Councils in managing public safety. The Policy supports actions identified in Wollongong City Council's Community Safety Plan by providing the framework for how to establish an AFZ. The policy enables Council to inform the public about this process.



ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES ON PUBLIC ROADS AND FOOTPATHS COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for the establishment and maintenance of Alcohol Free Zones (AFZ) in Wollongong Local Government Area.

POLICY INTENT

The establishment of AFZs on public roads and footpaths at particular locations within the City of Wollongong is undertaken as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible drinking, to incidents involving serious crime.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Detail Council's role in establishing and maintaining AFZs
2. To demonstrate Council's commitment to creating a safe community.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

The Policy contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 5 "We have a healthy community in a liveable city". It specifically contributes to the delivery of objective 5.11 "Local crime continues to be prevented and levels of crime reduced."

The Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025 identifies Action Item 3.2 Alcohol Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Places are reviewed every four years.

POLICY

The *NSW Local Government Act 1993* ('the Act') provides for the establishment of AFZs on roads and footpaths within Local Government Areas as part of a strategy to improve public safety and prevent disorderly behaviour caused by the irresponsible consumption of alcohol in public places.

AFZs are established and maintained by Councils while their enforcement is undertaken by NSW Police.

Statement of Procedures

1. Upon receipt of an application for an AFZ check that the application is valid in accordance with Section 644 of the Act.
2. Acknowledge receipt of the application together with advice summarising the process to be followed and the anticipated time frame.
3. Refer the application to the NSW Police and Council's Community Safety Interagency for consideration and comment.
4. If the establishment of the AFZ is supported by NSW Police prepare a report to Council, including the recommendations of the Police and Council's Community Safety Interagency, for consideration and approval of the public exhibition of the proposed zone.
5. Advertise the proposal to establish the AFZ and invite written comments from the community, the Officer in Charge of the Police station within or nearest to the zone concerned, each holder of a licence in force under the *Liquor Act 2007* for premises that border on, adjoin or are adjacent to, the proposed zone, the Anti-Discrimination Board and Aboriginal organisations within 30 days.

ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES ON PUBLIC ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

COUNCIL POLICY

6. Prepare a report including the recommendations of the parties consulted in paragraph 5 and submit to Council for final approval of the establishment of the AFZ.
7. If Council resolves to establish an AFZ, the following notification is required to be given:
 - Notify the applicant, local police and all persons who have made submissions in respect of the proposal.
 - Publish an advertisement in the newspaper advising of the establishment of the AFZ.
8. Install appropriate signposting at the boundaries of, and at regular intervals, within the AFZ.
9. Review the AFZ within 10 months of the expiration with a view to its re-establishment for a further term.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

NSW Local Government Act 1993 Section 644

NSW Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The establishment and maintenance of AFZ will be coordinated and delivered by the Community Cultural and Economic Development Division.

Enforcement of AFZs is undertaken by NSW Police.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Community Cultural and Economic Development
Date adopted by Council	12 September 2022
Date/s of previous adoptions	3 September 2022, 8 September 2014, 13 December 1993
Date of next review	12 September 2024

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol - Free Zones

February 2009

ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Department of Local Government is located at:

Levels 1 & 2

5 O'Keefe Avenue
NOWRA NSW 2541

Locked Bag 3015
NOWRA NSW 2541

Phone 02 4428 4100
Fax 02 4428 4199
TTY 02 4428 4209

Level 9, 323 Castlereagh Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Locked Bag A5045
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

Phone 02 9289 4000
Fax 02 9289 4099

Email dlg@dlg.nsw.gov.au
Website www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

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FOREWORD

The NSW Government has made clear its determination to tackle the growing problem of anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related violence in our community. The Government has introduced a comprehensive package of initiatives to help address this issue, including amendments to the alcohol-free zone provisions in the *Local Government Act 1993* to give Police and local council enforcement officers more power to enforce alcohol-free zones.

These Ministerial Guidelines have been prepared under section 646(1) of the *Local Government Act*. The Guidelines take effect on 5 February 2009 replacing the previous Guidelines issued in 1995.

The principal object of an alcohol-free zone is to prevent disorderly behaviour caused by the consumption of alcohol in public areas in order to improve public safety.

Alcohol-free zones are most effective if they form part of a larger program in which the local community is actively involved directed at irresponsible alcohol consumption. Used in isolation they may only move the problem from one place to another.

The Guidelines provide councils with detailed procedures to be followed when considering the establishment of alcohol-free zones. The guidelines include details on the application process, consultation and operational requirements, as well as guidance on enforcing alcohol-free zones. Councils are encouraged to establish a good working relationship with their Police local area command to enhance the effectiveness of alcohol-free zones.

There is evidence that when alcohol-free zones are established in appropriate areas and operated with the required level of resources to promote and enforce the zones, they are an effective tool in assisting Police and councils manage public safety.

I encourage all councils to consider the appropriate use of alcohol-free zones to manage alcohol related anti-social behaviour in their community.



The Hon. Barbara Perry, MP
Minister for Local Government
5 February 2009

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	5
Guidelines for Councils	6
Valid Establishment of an Alcohol-Free Zone	6
Application for an Alcohol-Free Zone	6
Proposal for the establishment of an Alcohol-Free Zone	6
Reasons to support an Alcohol-Free Zone	7
Location of an Alcohol-Free Zone	7
Alcohol-Free Zones and Alfresco Dining	8
Duration of an Alcohol-Free Zone	8
Consultation with the Police	8
Council consultation with interested parties	8
Council resolution to establish an Alcohol-Free Zone	9
Operation of an Alcohol-Free Zone	10
Signage of the Alcohol-Free Zone	10
Suspension or cancellation of an Alcohol-Free Zone	11
Re-establishment of an Alcohol-Free Zone	12
Recording of Alcohol-Free Zones	13
Enforcement of Alcohol-Free Zones	13
Alcohol-Free Zones and Community Education	14
Contacts	15
Appendix 1 Application for Alcohol-Free Zone	16
Appendix 2 Councils which must consult with Anti-Discrimination Board	17

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

INTRODUCTION

The object of alcohol-free zones is an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible street drinking to incidents involving serious crime.

The drinking of alcohol is prohibited in an alcohol-free zone that has been established by a council. Public places that are public roads, footpaths or public carparks may be included in a zone. Alcohol-free zones promote the use of these roads, footpaths and carparks in safety and without interference from irresponsible street drinkers.

Any person living or working within an area, the local police or a local community group may ask a council to establish an alcohol-free zone or a council itself may decide to do so. A proposal to establish an alcohol-free zone must in all cases be supported by evidence that the public's use of those roads, footpaths or public carparks has been compromised by street drinkers. For example, there could be instances of malicious damage to property, littering, offensive behaviour or other crimes.

The council must undertake a consultation process to decide if an alcohol-free zone is appropriate. Once established by council resolution, the roads, footpaths and public carparks within the zone must be signposted and notice of the zone must appear in the local press. The maximum duration of an alcohol-free zone is four years, although it may be re-established at the conclusion of the original period, following a review by council of its continuing applicability. Alcohol-free zones may also be established for special events only.

Alcohol-free zones are enforced by the police or by council enforcement officers where the Commissioner of Police gives written authorisation. Any person observed to be drinking in an alcohol-free zone may have the alcohol in their possession immediately seized and tipped out or otherwise disposed of.

Alcohol-free zones are most effective if they are part of a larger program directed at irresponsible alcohol consumption in which the local community is actively involved. Used in isolation they may only move the problem from one place to another.

These Ministerial Guidelines provide local councils with detailed procedures which must be followed in the establishment of an alcohol-free zone. They supplement the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Each of the paragraphs of these Guidelines are accompanied by the relevant section reference in the Act. As set out in section 646 of the Local Government Act, the Ministerial Guidelines must be used by councils when establishing an alcohol-free zone.

The Commissioner of Police may separately issue directions relating to the enforcement of alcohol-free zones.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

GUIDELINES FOR COUNCILS

VALID ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

sections 644, 644A, 644B, 644C and 646

To validly establish an alcohol-free zone a council must comply with the procedures in sections 644 to 644C of the Local Government Act as well as those set out in these Guidelines.

The Act identifies that alcohol-free zones can be established in those areas which have identified problems with regard to street drinking.

APPLICATION FOR AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 644 (1) and (2)

One or more of the following people may make application to a local council to establish an alcohol-free zone:

- a person who is a representative of a community group active in the area,
- a police officer, or
- a person who lives or works in the area.

An application to the relevant council is to be made in the form set out at Appendix 1 to these Guidelines. A council may adapt the form, provided the same information is required as a minimum. Councils may consider making the application form available on their website.

An application fee is not appropriate.

If council receives more than one application referring to the same roads, footpaths or public carparks, they may be joined in a single alcohol-free zone proposal.

PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 644

A council may prepare a proposal for the establishment of an alcohol-free zone. In this case, receipt of an application is not necessary as the council itself is initiating action for a zone.

A proposal must be prepared in respect of every proposed alcohol-free zone.

An alcohol-free zone is a means by which a council may limit the locations within its area where the consumption of alcohol is permitted. Because it will impose restrictions on the personal freedom of citizens, a proposal to establish a zone must adequately address the following matters:

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

1 Reasons to Support an Alcohol-Free Zone

The irresponsible consumption of alcohol on roads and footpaths and in public carparks can compromise their safe use by members of the public without interference. Each individual zoning is to be considered according to its particular circumstances.

Reasons for supporting alcohol-free zones must be included and must reflect the fact that irresponsible behaviour arising from the consumption of alcohol is occurring on those roads and footpaths and in those public carparks included in the proposal. This could involve instances of obstruction, littering, the actual commission of, or police intervention to avoid the commission of, more serious offences under the *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002*, *Summary Offences Act 1988* or the *Crimes Act 1900*, such as malicious damage, etc.

It is not appropriate to consider an alcohol-free zone for reasons that are unrelated to the irresponsible behaviour of drinkers, for example, the congregation of drinkers where irresponsible behaviour does not occur, general conduciveness to business or tourist activities or the personal beliefs of particular citizens.

2 Location of an Alcohol-Free Zone

An alcohol-free zone may only be established to include a public road, footpath or a public place that is a carpark (ie carparks on public land or Crown land). Private carparks (being on private land and not under the control of the council) may not be included.

Generally, an alcohol-free zone should be as small as is possible and must only extend to areas which can be supported by reasons as set out in point 1 above. However, larger alcohol-free zones, sometimes known as 'whole-town' alcohol-free zones may be effective in some rural and remote towns where they are supported generally by all stakeholder groups in that community. There are legal issues that need to be considered by councils when such 'whole-town' zones are proposed, as some relevant areas of a town will not be public roads, footpaths or public carparks.

Large alcohol-free zones need to be established in a way which is complementary with public places signposted under section 632 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. It is not usually appropriate to establish an entire local government area, or a substantial part of that area, as an alcohol-free zone. Similarly, it would usually be inappropriate to zone the greater part of a town, suburb or urban area as alcohol-free.

Alcohol-free zones should primarily be located adjacent to outlets supplying alcohol where drinkers congregate. In the absence of such an outlet a zoning should be considered only in exceptional circumstances. For example, a known hot spot for inappropriate street drinking may be in a public carpark adjacent to a beach or public reserve, but which is many kilometres from an outlet supplying alcohol.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Alcohol-free zones and alfresco dining

In some circumstances an alcohol-free zone may be proposed for an area that includes footpath alfresco dining areas for cafés and restaurants which fall within the zone. When a council issues a licence for the use of public footpaths for such dining use in an alcohol-free zone, it must impose conditions on the licensee (eg restaurant operator) about the requirements of the zone, including clear delineation and control of the licensed area from the alcohol-free zone.

3 Duration of an Alcohol-Free Zone

An alcohol-free zone may be established for a maximum period of four years. Once established, it applies twenty-four hours per day.

Where a problem with irresponsible street drinking exists only in relation to a special event within the local area, an alcohol-free zone may be established only for that special event. A “special event” is not defined in the Local Government Act. It could be applied to any event that is of significance to the local area, for example, a local show day, a cultural event such as Tamworth’s Country Music Festival, or a particular time of year such as New Year’s Eve celebrations. It is for the relevant council to decide what is a “special event” for the purposes of establishing an alcohol-free zone.

An alcohol-free zone declared for a special event also has a maximum duration of four consecutive years. The proposal and related signage needs to define the special event that the alcohol-free zone relates to.

The duration of an alcohol-free zone established prior to 3 December 2008 is not extended.

4 Consultation with the Police

In preparing a proposal to establish an alcohol-free zone a council must consult with the relevant Police Local Area Commander about the appropriate number and location of alcohol-free zones.

COUNCIL CONSULTATION WITH INTERESTED PARTIES

section 644A

After preparing a proposal to establish an alcohol-free zone a council is required to undertake a public consultation process. The process under the Act involves all of the following:

1. Publish a notice of the proposal in a newspaper circulating in the area of the proposed alcohol-free zone, allow inspection of the proposal and invite representations or objections within 30 days from the date of publication. The notice should state the exact location of the proposed alcohol-free zone, and the place and time at which the proposal may be inspected.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

2. Send a copy of the proposal to:

- a) the Police Local Area Commander and the officer in charge of the police station within or nearest to the proposed zone,
- b) liquor licensees and secretaries of registered clubs whose premises border on, or adjoin or are adjacent to, the proposed zone,

and invite representations or objections within 30 days from the date of sending the copy of the proposal, AND

3. Send a copy of the proposal to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, if the local area is listed in Appendix 2 to these Guidelines, and invite representations or objections within 30 days from the date of sending the copy of the proposal. Other councils have the option of advising the Board if they wish to seek the Board's views on the proposed alcohol-free zone.

In addition to these statutory requirements there are other consultative avenues that may enhance the effectiveness of any alcohol-free zone that is subsequently established. Accordingly, a council is also required to:

4. Send a copy of the proposal to any known organisation representing or able to speak on behalf of an identifiable Aboriginal or culturally and linguistically diverse group within the local area and invite representations or objections within 30 days from the date of sending the copy of the proposal.

A council is to give proper consideration to any representations, submissions or objections received and as a result may amend or withdraw a proposal to establish an alcohol-free zone. However, any amendment that extends the location of the proposed alcohol-free zone must be supported by reasons (as outlined above).

COUNCIL RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 644B (1) and (2)

After complying with the procedures a council may, by resolution, adopt a proposal to establish an alcohol-free zone. The resolution itself will establish the zone.

After resolution, a council's usual administrative processes would apply in informing interested parties including any applicant, the Anti-Discrimination Board (if applicable), the relevant police Local Area Commander and officer in charge of the local police station (if different), affected liquor licensees and club secretaries and other organisations advised of the original proposal.

OPERATION OF AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 644B (3) and (4)

A council must publicly advise the establishment of an alcohol-free zone by notice published in a newspaper circulating in the area that includes the zone.

An alcohol-free zone will not operate until 7 days after publication of the notice AND until the roads, footpaths and public car parks affected are adequately signposted.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Signage for Alcohol-Free Zones

A council is required to consult with the police regarding the placement of signs.

As a minimum, signs are to be placed at the outer limits of the zone, at the site of specific trouble spots (as indicated by the police) and at other suitable intervals within the zone.

Signs designating an alcohol-free zone must indicate that the drinking of alcohol is prohibited in the zone. Signs should note that alcohol may be seized and disposed of if alcohol is being consumed in the zone. Starting and finishing dates for the operation of the zone should also be included.

It is recommended that signs use consistent, easily recognisable symbols and include a map of the area defining the location of the zone. Some councils may choose to complement erected notices with spray-painted no-alcohol symbols on the footpaths.

Graphic representation on signs is an option. However, Standards Australia does not have an internationally recognised symbol for alcohol and considers that depiction of a bottle, glass AND can would be ideal to avoid confusion. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) provides advice on methods that can be used to create different types of prohibition signs (ISO 7010-2003 *Safety Signs used in Workplaces and Public Areas*). This can be read with ISO 3864.3-2006 (*Design Principles for Graphical Symbols for use in Safety Signs*) which is used to ensure symbols and signs have the intended meaning and can be comprehended by persons as they enter the area the sign applies to. The Standard provides sizing requirements and font sizes for letters used in symbols.

Councils are encouraged to utilise symbols on their signage which don't rely on high levels of literacy.

The local Aboriginal community may be engaged to design signs which are also appropriate for their community.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

The content of the sign below is considered a minimum standard.



** Insert appropriate directional arrow or map*

On such signs the dates may be inserted in a manner that allows re-use of the sign, provided the dates cannot be removed during the period of operation.

Signs are to be removed as soon as practicable, but no longer than 30 days, after the end date of an alcohol-free zone.

SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 645

The power to suspend or cancel an alcohol-free zone during its period of operation is provided so that a council may respond to more immediate situations that arise within the area of the zone.

A council must pass a valid resolution to suspend or cancel a particular alcohol-free zone. Such action may be taken as a result of a request received from any person or body, or at a council's own initiative.

Liaison with the local police, before and after the council resolution, is essential to ensure that both groups are informed and action is coordinated. Additionally, a council may undertake any other consultation that it considers necessary.

A council must publish notice of a suspension or cancellation as required under section 645 (1) and (3). In the case of cancellation of an alcohol-free zone the signs should be removed immediately.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

A council is not limited in the reasons for which it may suspend or cancel an alcohol-free zone. A suspension would not usually be appropriate for any period longer than one month, and generally would be of a much shorter duration eg. to accommodate a specific community event. Alcohol-free zone signage should be removed for the duration of any suspension of the zone.

The four year operation of an alcohol-free zone is not extended by any suspension occurring within that period.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

section 644B(4)

An alcohol-free zone is essentially a short-term control measure and in many instances a zone will achieve the desired objectives within its operational period.

There is no general provision for an alcohol-free zone to be extended. However, the roads, footpaths or public carparks comprising a zone may be included in another alcohol-free zone of the same or different configuration, immediately following the cessation of the existing zone or at any future time.

All the requirements for the valid establishment of a zone apply whether or not any of the roads, footpaths or carparks concerned have previously been zoned as alcohol-free.

Where a proposal for an alcohol-free zone includes roads, footpaths or public carparks that have previously been zoned as alcohol-free, a council is to have regard to that previous zoning.

The evaluation criteria that councils use when considering the re-establishment of an alcohol free zone should include the following:

- what were the factors which originally supported a zoning in that area?
- how successful was the previous alcohol-free zone in achieving a reduction in unacceptable street drinking?
- what do police statistics indicate about the value of re-establishing an alcohol-free zone in that area?
- what other measures may need to be considered (eg a community education program) if unacceptable street drinking is still of concern in that area?
- has the community's perceptions of safety improved?

The re-establishment procedure provides a council with the opportunity to focus again on any community problems associated with irresponsible alcohol consumption and the range of strategies that may be implemented to address these problems.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

RECORDING OF ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES

The maintenance of appropriate records is essential for established alcohol-free zones. As a minimum, records need to be kept in sufficient detail:

- to document that all the steps for valid establishment have been undertaken
- to provide for removal of signs at the conclusion of the zone's operation
- to identify suspensions or cancellations of alcohol-free zones
- to avoid overlap in the establishment of alcohol-free zones
- to provide a reference base where re-establishment of an alcohol-free zone is sought.

ENFORCEMENT OF ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES

sections 642 and 648

Alcohol-free zones may be enforced by any officer of the NSW Police Force or an enforcement officer. An enforcement officer means an employee of a council authorised in writing by the Commissioner of Police to be an enforcement officer for the purpose of section 642 of the Local Government Act.

The legislation applies to all persons, including minors.

The power to seize and tip out or otherwise dispose of alcohol without the need to issue a warning applies within an alcohol-free zone.

Where a council has authorised enforcement officers, the council will be required to adopt a procedure regarding the disposal of any alcohol that is seized.

A Police officer or authorised council enforcement officer may use their discretion to issue a warning to a person who is drinking in an alcohol free zone, for example, where the person may be unaware of the zone.

It should also be noted that in circumstances where a person does not co-operate with a Police officer or authorised council enforcement officer, they can be charged with obstruction under section 660 of the Local Government Act which carries a maximum penalty of \$2,200.

The Commissioner of Police has the power to authorise council officers to enforce alcohol-free zones. The Commissioner may delegate his or her authority to Police Local Area Commanders. Where councils identify benefits to their communities for their officers to enforce alcohol free zones, the general manager will need to liaise with the Local Area Commander to ensure that council officers are suitable for this enforcement role.

Only authorised employees of a council and not contractors, who may be otherwise engaged by a council to provide regulatory services, may be authorised for this purpose.

Councils are responsible for ensuring that their authorised enforcement officers have appropriate identification to support this enforcement role.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Councils with authorised council enforcement officers need to establish a system to record the number of occasions that these officers enforce the Alcohol-Free Zone legislation in their area. This should include monitoring the number of authorised council enforcement officers and how often alcohol is tipped out or otherwise disposed of. Councils may from time to time be required to report this data to the Department of Local Government to inform the evaluation of the usage of the Alcohol-Free Zone powers by councils.

It is important that the Police Local Area Commander and the officer-in-charge of the local police station (if different) are involved in the establishment procedure so that the zone operates and is enforced most effectively.

ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

As well as the requirement to publish information in the local media about the establishment of an alcohol-free zone, the community will be better educated about the intent of the alcohol-free zone if a community education campaign is run in line with the establishment of the zone.

Councils may wish to engage their local Community Drug Action Team or Drug and Alcohol Service within their Area Health Service so that responsible drinking messages can be promoted within the community to coincide with the establishment of the alcohol-free zone.

Posters and other information about the consequences of irresponsible street drinking may be displayed in local licensed premises and bottle shops. Collaboration between council, the police and stakeholders including liquor licensees may be assisted through a local Liquor Accord. Further information on Liquor Accords is available on the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing website at www.olgr.nsw.gov.au.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

CONTACTS

Department of Local Government

Level 1, 5 O'Keefe Avenue
(Locked Bag 3015)
Nowra, 2541

Telephone: (02) 4428 4100

Website: www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

Anti-Discrimination Board

Level 4, 175 Castlereagh Street,
Sydney
(PO Box A2122, Sydney South, 1235)

Telephone:

General Enquiry Service & Employers Advisory Service (02) 9268 5544
For rural and regional New South Wales only 1800 670 812

Website: www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb

NSW Police Service

1 Charles Street
(Locked Bag 5102)
Parramatta, 2150

Telephone: 1800 622 571

Website: www.police.nsw.gov.au

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Appendix 1

APPLICATION FOR ALCOHOL-FREE ZONE

(Local Government Act 1993, section 644)

To(Name of Council)

1 I
(Full Name)

2 of
(Address) (Telephone No.)

3 **Being** (tick appropriate box):

- (a) ☐ a representative of
(Name of Community Group in area)
- (b) ☐ a police officer stationed at
- (c) ☐ a person living in the area
- (d) ☐ a person working in the area at
(work address)

apply to the Council to establish an alcohol-free zone.

4 **Roads or parts of roads ('roads' includes 'footpaths') and/ or public car parks to be included in the alcohol-free zone:**

.....
.....
.....
(Specify exactly by referring to street numbers or other landmarks)

5 **Reasons for requesting the alcohol-free zone:**

.....
.....
.....

(Give details of obstruction, littering, personal injury, property damage, police intervention, etc. that have occurred on those roads or in those car parks)

Signed.....

Date.....

Documents supporting the information on this form may be attached.

Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones

Appendix 2

COUNCILS WHICH MUST CONSULT WITH THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BOARD

Sixteen councils are required to consult with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board in their establishment of an alcohol-free zone to provide a measure of protection against the possibility of a discriminatory impact upon certain groups in the community. These councils are:

Blacktown
Bourke
Campbelltown
Dubbo
Kempsey
Lake Macquarie
Liverpool
Moree Plains
Newcastle
Penrith
Randwick
Shoalhaven
South Sydney
Tamworth
Walgett
Wollongong

ITEM 13 TENDER T1000060 - REFURBISHMENT OF OTFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE

Council has called tenders for the refurbishment of the Otford Community Centre which is located on Otford Road Otford. This report recommends that Council decline to accept any of the tenders submitted for the Refurbishment of Otford Community Centre in accordance with Section 178(1)(b) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Our Community Centres and halls provide the community with a range of different spaces for hire including office spaces, meetings rooms, spaces for kids' activities and halls for large functions across the City.

The Tender Assessment Panel has concluded that none of the tenders is acceptable for the reason that the tenders were either non-conforming or exceeded the allocated budget for this project. It is anticipated that with a revised scope of works, negotiations with the tenderers or any other party will result in a satisfactory outcome being achieved.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 a In accordance with Section 178(1)(b) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council decline to accept any of the tenders received for the Refurbishment of the Otford Community Centre and resolve to enter into negotiations with one or all of the tenderers or any other party with a view to entering into a contract in relation to the subject matter of the tender.
- b In accordance with Section 178(4) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, the reason for Council hereby resolving to enter into negotiations with one or all of the tenderers or any other party and not inviting fresh tenders is that it is anticipated that a satisfactory outcome can be achieved with one of those parties who demonstrate a capacity and ability to undertake the works.
- 2 Council delegate to the General Manager the authority to undertake and finalise the negotiations, firstly with the tenderers, and, in the event of failure of negotiations with those tenderers, any other party, with a view to entering into a contract in relation to the subject matter of the tender.
- 3 Council grant authority for the use of the Common seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.
- 4 A report describing the outcome of the procurement process be submitted to the next available Council meeting following the successful engagement of contractor or contractors.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Glenn Whittaker, Manager Project Delivery

Authorised by: Joanne Page, Director Infrastructure + Works - Connectivity Assets + Liveable City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Locality Plan

BACKGROUND

Otford Community Centre is located on Otford Road Otford adjacent to the tennis courts in Otford. The building consists of what was originally the tennis club room featuring an external toilet lacking compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and no compliant parking.

Tenders were required to be invited for the refurbishment of the existing Otford Community Centre building. The scope of works includes:

- The removal, disposal and appropriate replacement of asbestos containing materials in both the eaves and wall cladding.
- Installation of new windows and doors.

- Painting including the external façade.
- Removal and replacement roof sheeting including gutters, fascia, capping and flashing.
- Installation of a new kitchen and storage facilities.
- Installation of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant access to the building including a new accessible parking bay.
- Complete electrical & lighting upgrade.
- Installation of an automated amenities unit.

Tenders were invited by the open tender method with a close of tenders of 10:00 am on 31 May 2022.

Seven (7) tenders were received by the close of tenders and all tenders have been scrutinised and assessed by a Tender Assessment Panel constituted in accordance with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures and comprising representatives of the Project Delivery, Library Community Services, Governance and Infrastructure Strategy and Planning

The Tender Assessment Panel assessed all tenders in accordance with the following assessment criteria and weightings as set out in the formal tender documents:

Mandatory Criteria

- 1 Provision of satisfactory references from referees for previous projects of similar size and scope
- 2 Financial assessment acceptable to Council which demonstrates the tenderer's financial capacity to undertake the works

Assessable Criteria

- 1 Cost to Council – 45%
- 2 Demonstrated strengthening of local economic capacity – 10%
- 3 Appreciation of scope of works and construction methodology – 15%
- 4 Experience and satisfactory in undertaking projects of similar size, scope and risk profile including staff qualifications and experience – 15%
- 5 Proposed Sub-Contractors – 5%
- 6 Demonstration of WH&S management system and Environmental management policies and procedures – 5%
- 7 Project Schedule – 5%

PROPOSAL

The Tender Assessment Panel has concluded that none of the tenders received are acceptable as all the tenders were either deemed nonconforming or exceeded the budget allocated for this project. The Tender Assessment Panel has recommended that all tenders be declined, and negotiations be undertaken with one or all of the tenderers, or any other party, with a view to entering into a contract for the subject matter of the tender.

The Panel anticipates that a satisfactory outcome will be achieved through a negotiation process conducted in accordance with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 1 Members of the Tender Assessment Panel
- 2 Nominated Referees
- 3 External Consultants

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 goal 4 “we are a connected and engaged community” It specifically delivers on core business activities as detailed in the Infrastructure Planning and Support Service Plan 2022-23.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk in accepting the recommendation of this report is considered low on the basis that the tender process has fully complied with Council’s Procurement Policies and Procedures and the Local Government Act 1993.

The risk of the project works is considered low based upon Council’s risk assessment matrix and appropriate risk management strategies will be implemented.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The following sustainability implications have been considered:

- Sustainable procurement by providing open tender to give local companies the opportunity to tender for the work.
- Weighting in tender assessment provided for using local services, labour and materials.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

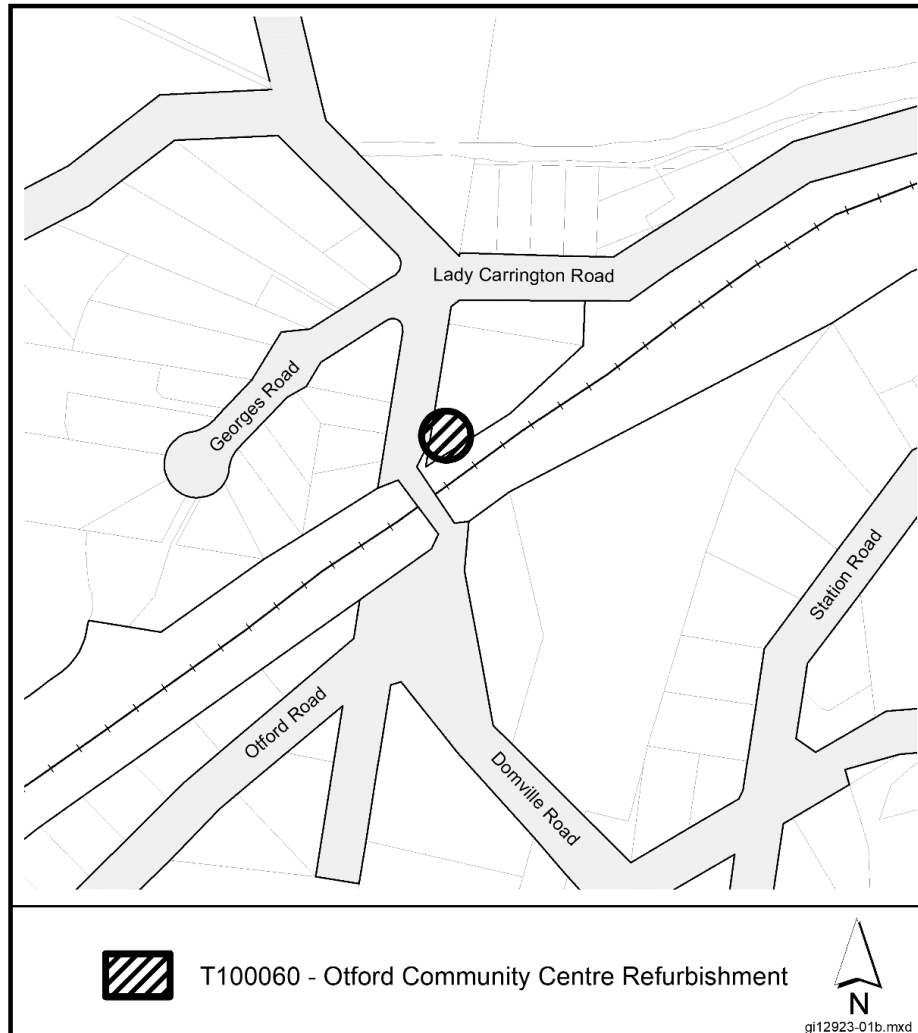
It is proposed that the total project be funded from the following source/s as identified in the Operational Plan –

2022/2023 Capital Program

CONCLUSION

Adoption of the recommendations will allow Council to negotiate the best outcome for the community within the budget allocated for this project. The report to Council following the engagement of the Contractor ensures the decision is transparent to the community. Council should endorse the recommendations of this report.





ITEM 14

TENDER T1000066 - GRAND PACIFIC WALK - CLIFTON SCHOOL PARADE TO 347 LAWRENCE HARGRAVE DRIVE - PARKING, FOOTPATH, BOARDWALK AND OBSERVATION DECK CONSTRUCTION

This report recommends acceptance of a tender for the construction of a component of the Grand Pacific Walk in Clifton including road works, drainage structures, formalised parking, footpath, elevated boardwalk and an observation deck in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

This project forms part of the construction of the Grand Pacific Walk Master Plan to develop a safe route for both pedestrians and cyclists from the Royal National Park through to Lake Illawarra, taking advantage of the numerous spectacular outlooks and areas of high scenic quality.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 In accordance with Section 178(1)(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council accept the tender of Cadifern Pty Ltd for the construction of the Grand Pacific Walk and observation deck at Clifton, in the sum of \$1,647,737.80, including GST.
- 2 Council delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise and execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.
- 3 Council grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Glenn Whittaker, Manager Project Delivery

Authorised by: Joanne Page, Director Infrastructure + Works - Connectivity Assets + Liveable City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Location Plan

BACKGROUND

This project provides another link for the Grand Pacific Walk in continuing to achieve the master plan objectives. In this stage of works, the pathway from the Sea Cliff Bridge will be extended past the recently reopened Clifton Hotel and a new viewing platform will be constructed as the path extends further south of the Hotel.

Tenders were invited for this project by the Open tender method with a close of tenders of 10.00 am on 2 August 2022.

Five (5) tenders were received by the close of tenders and all tenders have been scrutinised and assessed by a Tender Assessment Panel constituted in accordance with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures and comprising representatives of the Project Delivery, Infrastructure Planning and Strategy, and Governance and Customer Service Divisions.

The Tender Assessment Panel assessed all tenders in accordance with the following assessment criteria and weightings as set out in the formal tender documents:

Mandatory Criteria

- 1 Satisfactory references from referees for previous projects of similar size and scope
- 2 Financial assessment acceptable to Council which demonstrates the tenderer's financial capacity to undertake the works
- 3 A Health & Safety Policy and WHS Management System Manual or Plan

4 TfNSW prequalification R2 and A1

Assessable Criteria

- 1 Cost to Council 35%
- 2 Appreciation of scope of works and construction methodology – 20%
- 3 Experience and satisfactory performance in undertaking projects of similar size, scope and risk profile – 15%
- 4 Staff qualifications and experience – 5%
- 5 Proposed sub-contractors – 5%
- 6 Project Schedule – 5%
- 7 Workplace health and safety management system and Environmental management policies and procedures – 5%
- 8 Demonstrated strengthening of local economic capacity – 10%

The mandatory assessment criteria have been met by the recommended tenderer.

The Tender Assessment Panel utilised a weighted scoring method for the assessment of tenders which allocates a numerical score out of 5 in relation to the level of compliance offered by the tenders to each of the assessment criteria as specified in the tender documentation. The method then takes into account pre-determined weightings for each of the assessment criteria which provides for a total score out of 5 to be calculated for each tender. The tender with the highest total score is considered to be the tender that best meets the requirements of the tender documentation in providing best value to Council. Table 1 below summarises the results of the tender assessment and the ranking of tenders.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF TENDER ASSESSMENT

Name of Tenderer	Ranking
Cadifern Pty Ltd	1
Dynamic Civil Pty Ltd	2
Nace Civil Engineering Pty Ltd	3
Coastwide Civil Pty Ltd	4
Ford Civil Contracting Pty Ltd	NON CONFORMING

PROPOSAL

Council should authorise the engagement of Cadifern Pty to carry out the construction of Grand Pacific Walk at Clifton in accordance with the scope of works and technical specifications developed for the project.

The recommended tenderer has satisfied the Tender Assessment Panel that it is capable of undertaking the works to Council's standards and in accordance with the technical specification.

An acceptable financial capability assessment has been received in relation to the recommended tenderer.

Referees nominated by the recommended tenderer have been contacted by the Tender Assessment Panel and expressed satisfaction with the standard of work and methods of operation undertaken on their behalf.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 1 Members of the Tender Assessment Panel
- 2 Nominated Referees

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032	Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy	Service
6.7 Improve active transport links and connectivity to our unique places and spaces, including marine access along the Local Government Area and accessibility from the Central Business District to the foreshore.	Transport Services

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk in accepting the recommendation of this report is considered low on the basis that the tender process has fully complied with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures and the Local Government Act 1993.

The risk of the project works is considered medium based upon Council's risk assessment matrix and appropriate risk management strategies will be implemented.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

This project supports a health community by providing safe and accessible infrastructure for walking and cycling.

The design solution is in accordance with engineering standards relating to asset life and products nominated are fit for purpose in a coastal environment.

Local development considerations have been included in the tender assessment.

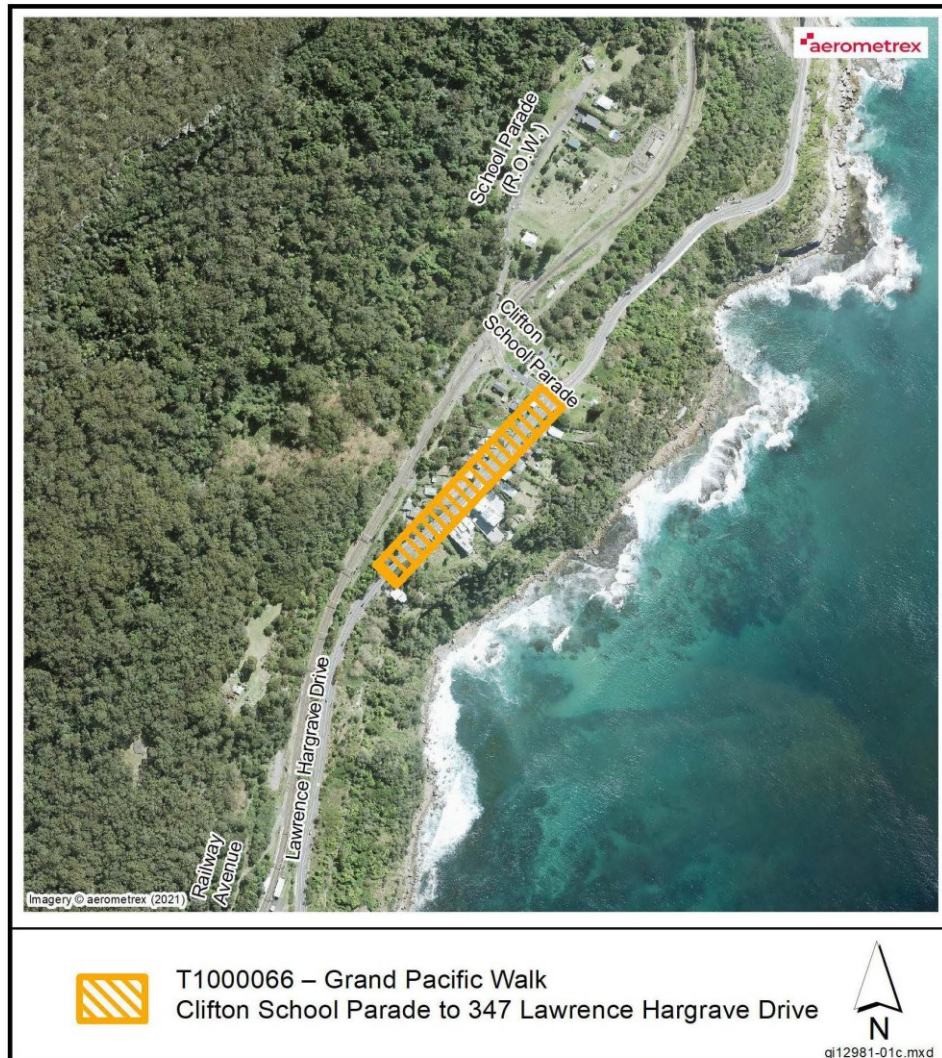
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the total project be funded from the following source/s as identified in the Operational Plan –

Capital Budget 2022-23

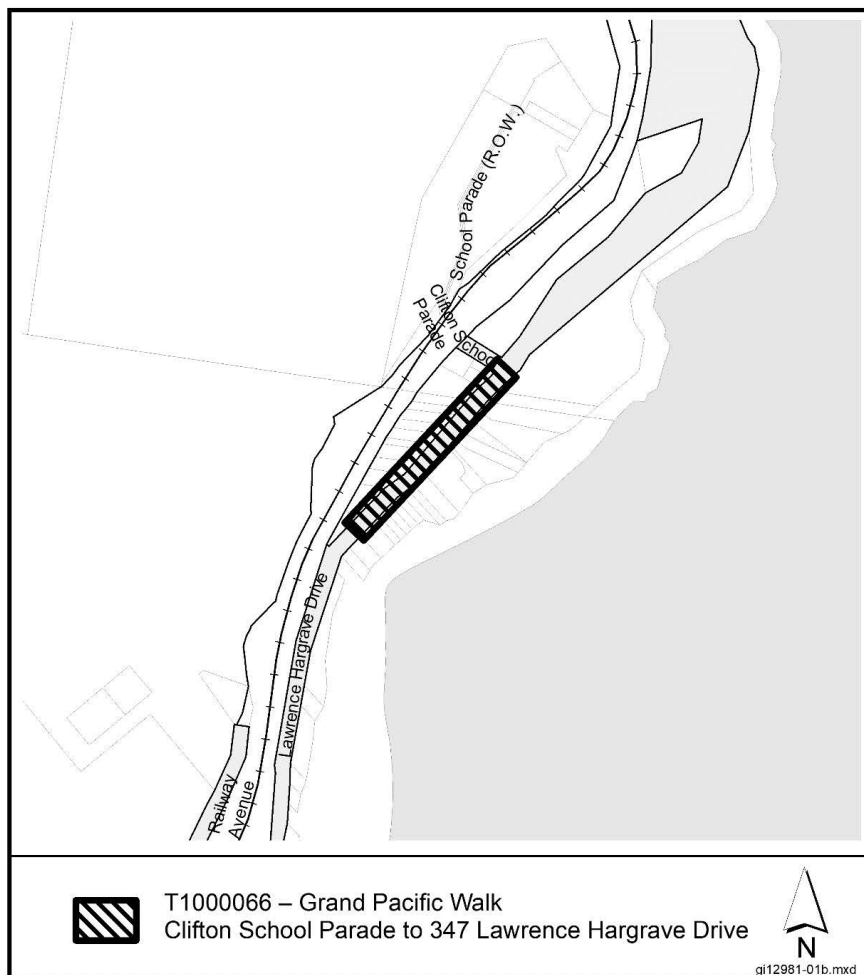
CONCLUSION

Cadifern Pty Ltd have provided an acceptable tender for these works and Council should endorse the recommendations of this report.



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ITEM 15 JULY 2022 FINANCIALS

The financial result for July 2022 compared to phased budget is favourable for the Operating Result [pre-capital] \$1.9M, balanced for the Funds Available from Operations, and slightly unfavourable for the Funds Result \$0.1M.

The Statement of Financial Position at the end of the period indicates that there is enough cash to support external restrictions.

Council has expended \$5.5M on its capital works program representing 5% of the annual budget. The year to date budget for the same period was \$6.4M.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The pre-audit financials be received and noted.
- 2 Council endorse the proposed changes to the Capital Budget for July 2022.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Steph Hummerston, Cheif Financial Officer (Acting)
 Authorised by: Jeff Reilly, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City (Acting)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Financial Statements - July 2022
- 2 Capital Project Report - July 2022

BACKGROUND

This report presents the Financial Performance of the organisation for July 2022. The below table provides a summary of the organisation's overall financial results for the year.

FORECAST POSITION	Original Budget	Revised Budget	YTD Forecast	YTD Actual	Variation
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
KEY MOVEMENTS	1-Jul	29-Jul	29-Jul	29-Jul	
Operating Revenue	283.2	283.2	22.6	23.6	1.0
Operating Costs	(308.0)	(308.0)	(24.8)	(23.9)	0.9
Operating Result [Pre Capital]	(24.8)	(24.8)	(2.2)	(0.3)	1.9
Capital Grants & Contributions	40.4	40.4	2.3	1.6	(0.7)
Operating Result	15.6	15.6	0.1	1.3	1.2
Funds Available from Operations	52.2	52.2	3.5	3.5	0.0
Capital Works	101.9	101.9	6.4	5.5	0.9
Contributed Assets	10.1	10.1	-	-	-
Transfer to Restricted Cash	2.4	2.4	0.2	0.2	-
Borrowings Repaid	3.7	3.7	-	-	-
Funded from:					
- Operational Funds	52.2	52.2	3.5	3.5	0.0
- Other Funding	48.9	48.9	2.8	1.8	(1.0)
Total Funds Surplus/(Deficit)	(16.9)	(16.9)	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.1)

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The July 2022 Operating Result [pre-capital] deficit of \$0.3M is a favourable variance compared to the phased budget deficit of \$2.2M.

The Operating Result of \$1.3M is a favourable variance of \$1.2M compared to phased budget. This includes the net variation above as well as a lower level of capital grants and contributions of \$0.7M.

The Funds Available from Operations indicates no variation. This result excludes non-cash variations and transfers to and from Restricted Assets but includes the variation in cash payments for Employee Entitlements. This result best represents the operational budget variations that impact our funding position and current financial capacity.

The Total Funds result as at 29 July 2022 is an unfavourable variance of \$0.1M compared to phased budget.

At the end of July, the Capital Works Program had an expenditure of \$5.5M compared to a phased budget of \$6.4M.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash, Investments & Available Funds

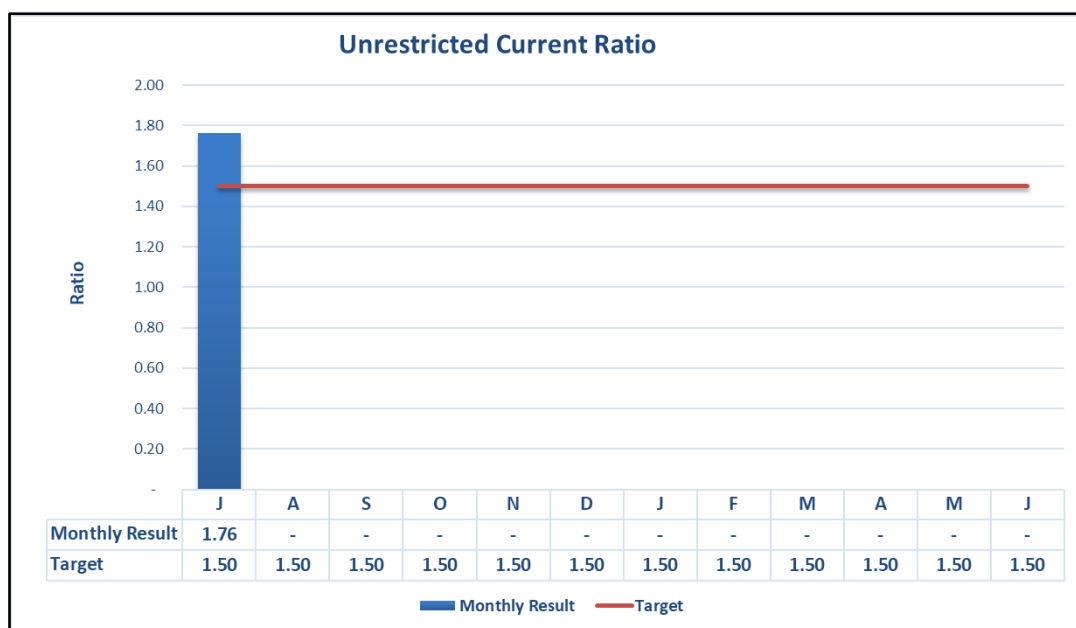
Council's cash and investments decreased during July 2022 to holdings of \$140.7M compared to \$161.9M at the end of June 2022. A significant portion of these funds are subject to restriction meaning they can only be utilised for specific purposes. As a result, Council's true available cash position is more accurately depicted by considering available funds that are uncommitted and not subject to restriction.

CASH, INVESTMENTS & AVAILABLE FUNDS			
	Actual 2021/22 \$M	Original Budget 2022/23 \$M	Actuals YTD July 2022 \$M
Total Cash and Investments	161.9	130.9	140.7
Less Restrictions:			
External	75.3	75.1	77.3
Internal	62.8	48.4	62.7
CivicRisk Investment	2.5		2.5
Total Restrictions	140.6	123.5	142.5
Available Cash	21.3	7.4	(1.8)
Adjusted for :			
Payables	(27.4)	(27.9)	(22.3)
Receivables	24.6	34.0	38.7
Other	13.5	-	16.8
Net Payables & Receivables	10.7	6.1	33.2
Available Funds	32.0	13.5	31.4

External restrictions are funds that must be spent for a specific purpose and cannot be used by Council for general operations. Internal restrictions are funds that Council has determined will be used for a specific future purpose, although Council may vary that use by resolution of Council. Further details on the internal and external restrictions can be found in the Cash Flow Statement (Attachment 1).

The level of cash and investments in Council's available funds position is above the Financial Strategy target range of 3.5% to 5.5% of operational revenue (pre-capital). The decrease in cash and investments is in line with anticipated cash flows.

The Unrestricted Current Ratio measures the Council's liquidity position or ability to meet short term obligations as they fall due. The below graph reflects Council's performance against the Local Government benchmark of greater than 1.5 times.



Borrowings

Council continues to have financial strength in its low level of borrowing. Council's Financial Strategy includes provision for additional borrowing in the future and Council will consider borrowing opportunities from time to time to bring forward the completion of capital projects where immediate funding is not available.

The Debt Service Cover Ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. Council's Debt Service Cover Ratio as at 29 July exceeds the Local Government benchmark of greater than two times.

Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment

The Statement of Financial Position shows that \$3.24B of assets (written down value) are controlled and managed by Council for the community as at 29 July 2022.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report relates to the commitments of Council as contained within the Strategic Management Plans.

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Goal 4 "We are a connected and engaged community". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	Operational Plan 2022-2023
Strategy		Service	Operational Plan Actions
4.8	Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services	Review Financial Strategy to include goals and actions aimed to improve financial capacity to respond to increased service demands.

CONCLUSION

The financial result at the end of July is positive across one of the three key performance indicators.

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL					
1 July 2022 to 29 July 2022					
	Original Budget \$'000	Current Budget \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	Actual YTD \$'000	Variance \$'000
Income Statement					
Income From Continuing Operations					
Revenue:					
Rates and Annual Charges	221,315	221,315	17,585	17,618	32
User Charges and Fees	33,841	33,841	2,596	2,728	132
Interest and Investment Revenues	2,333	2,333	192	486	294
Other Revenues	5,977	5,977	449	313	(136)
Rental Income	5,874	5,874	502	467	(35)
Grants & Contributions provided for Operating Purposes	13,818	13,818	1,276	1,994	718
Grants & Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	40,442	40,442	2,341	1,596	(745)
Profit/Loss on Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	(0)
Total Income from Continuing Operations	323,601	323,601	24,941	25,201	260
Expenses From Continuing Operations					
Employee Costs	145,502	145,502	11,463	11,627	(164)
Borrowing Costs	242	242	19	56	(37)
Materials & Services	88,796	88,796	7,499	5,384	2,116
Other Expenses	19,155	19,155	1,551	1,705	(154)
Depreciation, Amortisation + Impairment	75,642	75,642	6,010	6,063	(53)
Labour Internal Charges	(19,578)	(19,578)	(1,556)	(873)	(683)
Non-Labour Internal Charges	(1,795)	(1,795)	(143)	(75)	(67)
Total Expenses From Continuing Operations	307,964	307,964	24,844	23,886	958
Operating Result	15,637	15,637	97	1,315	1,218
Operating Result [pre capital]	(24,806)	(24,806)	(2,244)	(281)	1,963
Funding Statement					
Net Operating Result for the Year	15,637	15,637	97	1,315	1,218
Add back :					
- Non-cash Operating Transactions	92,764	92,764	7,379	7,022	(357)
- Restricted cash used for operations	15,710	15,710	1,366	850	(516)
- Income transferred to Restricted Cash	(57,120)	(57,120)	(3,971)	(4,013)	(41)
- Payment of Right of Use Leases	(413)	(413)	(33)	(11)	22
- Payment of Accrued Leave Entitlements	(14,354)	(14,354)	(1,384)	(1,662)	(278)
Funds Available from Operations	52,224	52,224	3,454	3,501	47
Loans Repaid	(3,702)	(3,702)	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Funds Available for Capital Budget	48,522	48,522	3,454	3,501	47
CAPITAL BUDGET					
Assets Acquired	(101,916)	(101,916)	(6,439)	(5,519)	920
Contributed Assets	(10,056)	(10,056)	0	0	0
Transfers to Restricted Cash	(2,367)	(2,367)	(188)	(188)	0
Funded From :-					
- Operational Funds	48,522	48,522	3,454	3,501	47
- Sale of Assets	1,885	1,885	116	0	(116)
- Internally Restricted Cash	6,310	6,310	252	397	145
- Borrowings	0	0	0	0	0
- Capital Grants	22,825	22,825	1,866	1,248	(618)
- Developer Contributions (Section 94)	6,834	6,834	655	123	(532)
- Other Externally Restricted Cash	0	0	0	2	2
- Other Capital Contributions	11,031	11,031	0	0	0
TOTAL FUNDS SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(16,931)	(16,931)	(285)	(437)	(152)

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL		
as at 29 July 2022		
	YTD Actual 2022/23 \$'000	Actual 2021/22 \$'000
Statement of Financial Position		
Current Assets		
Cash Assets	12,451	34,118
Investment Securities	88,554	88,184
Receivables	38,745	24,673
Inventories	488	461
Current Contract Assets	10,538	9,711
Other	10,201	6,881
Assets classified as held for sale	65	65
Total Current Assets	161,043	164,094
Non-Current Assets		
Non Current Cash Assets	37,200	37,200
Non Current Investment Securities	2,524	2,524
Non-Current Inventories	5,972	5,972
	0	0
Property, Plant and Equipment	3,240,573	3,240,444
Investment Properties	5,600	5,600
Intangible Assets	70	76
Right-Of-Use Assets	1,064	1,094
Total Non-Current Assets	3,293,003	3,292,910
TOTAL ASSETS	3,454,046	3,457,003
Current Liabilities		
Current Payables	22,321	27,377
Current Contract Liabilities	6,612	5,491
Current Lease Liabilities	395	403
Current Provisions payable < 12 months	15,643	16,005
Current Provisions payable > 12 months	39,591	39,591
Current Interest Bearing Liabilities	3,569	3,569
Total Current Liabilities	88,132	92,437
Non-Current Liabilities		
Non Current Payables	0	0
Non Current Interest Bearing Liabilities	3,374	3,374
N/C Lease Liabilities	788	788
Non Current Provisions	28,703	28,671
Total Non-Current Liabilities	32,864	32,832
TOTAL LIABILITIES	120,996	125,269
NET ASSETS	3,333,049	3,331,734
Equity		
Accumulated Surplus	1,439,299	1,440,230
Asset Revaluation Reserve	1,755,948	1,755,284
Restricted Assets	137,802	136,221
TOTAL EQUITY	3,333,049	3,331,734

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL		
CASH FLOW STATEMENT		
as at 29 July 2022		
	YTD Actual 2022/23 \$ '000	Actual 2021/22 \$ '000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Rates & Annual Charges	1,953	215,632
User Charges & Fees	8,510	31,914
Interest & Interest Received	815	1,549
Grants & Contributions	2,932	64,618
Bonds, deposits and retention amounts received	16	1,201
Other	(3,226)	21,387
<u>Payments:</u>		
Employee Benefits & On-costs	(11,153)	(131,464)
Materials & Contracts	(6,665)	(86,914)
Borrowing Costs	(24)	(442)
Bonds, deposits and retention amounts refunded	-	(755)
Other	7,286	(29,477)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Operating Activities	444	87,249
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Sale of Investments	-	54,491
Sale of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	-	2,161
<u>Payments:</u>		
Purchase of Investments	(739)	(59,990)
Purchase of Investment Property	-	-
Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	(21,358)	(96,237)
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(22,097)	(99,575)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
<u>Payments:</u>		
Repayment of Borrowings & Advances	(1)	(5,496)
Repayment of Finance Lease Liabilities	(7)	(380)
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	(8)	(5,876)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	(21,661)	(18,202)
plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents - beginning of year	34,118	52,320
plus: Investments on hand - end of year	128,278	128,584
Cash & Cash Equivalents and Investments - year to date	140,730	162,702

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL		
CASH FLOW STATEMENT		
as at 29 July 2022		
	YTD Actual 2022/23 \$ '000	Actual 2021/22 \$ '000
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents and Investments - year to date	140,730	162,702
<u>Attributable to:</u>		
External Restrictions (refer below)	77,265	75,344
Internal Restrictions (refer below)	62,745	62,886
Unrestricted	720	24,472
	140,730	162,702
External Restrictions		
Developer Contributions	40,351	40,065
RMS Contributions	205	205
Specific Purpose Unexpended Grants	9,697	8,378
Special Rates Levy Wollongong Mall	435	407
Special Rates Levy Wollongong City Centre	125	88
Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme	-	-
Unexpended Loans	905	907
Domestic Waste Management	7,457	7,604
Private Subsidies	5,994	5,708
Housing Affordability	9,597	9,604
Stormwater Management Service Charge	2,499	2,378
Total External Restrictions	77,265	75,344
Internal Restrictions		
Property Investment Fund	9,387	9,388
Strategic Projects	34,265	34,962
Sports Priority Program	696	671
Car Parking Strategy	1,268	1,189
MacCabe Park Development	1,752	1,740
Darcy Wentworth Park	171	171
Garbage Disposal Facility	6,138	5,831
West Dapto Development Additional Rates	8,424	8,281
Southern Phone Natural Areas	173	173
Lake Illawarra Estuary Management Fund	471	480
Total Internal Restrictions	62,745	62,886

Notes to the Financial Statements:

While reviewing the information presented through this report, it should be noted that Council has elected to process additional transactions that vary from the accounting standards applied to year end reports to ensure the information at monthly intervals provides support to the decision-making and monitoring process. These transactions are summarised below:

- Timing of the recognition of Rates income – under AASB 1058, the Rates income is required to be recognised when it is raised. Through the monthly financial reports, the income has been spread across the financial year.
- Timing of the recognition of Financial Assistance Grant – under AASB 1058, the Financial Assistance Grant is required to be recognised on receipt. Through these financial reports, the income is spread across the financial year.

Manager Project Delivery Division Commentary on July 2022 Capital Budget Report

On 27 June 2022, Council approved a Capital budget for 2022-2023 of \$101.92M which has been increased at the end of July 2022 to \$103.75M because of the addition of multiple funding budget adjustments. The primary reason for the funding adjustments was the addition of funding to projects which were not completed by 30 June as scheduled due to rain or other COVID-19 related delays in the prior financial year. The outstanding portion of the funding which was to have been expended in FY2021-2022 has now been reintroduced in FY2022-2023 thus increasing the size of the FY2022-2023 capital budget.

Council achieved expenditure at the end of July 2022 of \$5.60M which is 87% of the phased budget for July 2022 of \$6.44M.

Listed below is a summary of reason for changes for the month of July to the 2022-2023 Capital Budget.

Program	Final Expenditure vs Budget - Commentary on Significant Variations
Traffic Facilities	Reintroduction of TfNSW funding for two projects which did not get completed until end of July 2022 rather than the scheduled 30 June completion target.
Roadworks	Reallocate budget from Capital Project Contingency to the Roadworks program. Out of a large program, several major road pavement reconstruction and road resurfacing projects (such as Huntley Road reconstruction and the final surfacing of Squires Way) were not fully completed by 30 June due to a combination of wet weather and COVID-19 restrictions. This required the rephasing of the budget (\$1.2M) into the current financial year. Introduce Section 7:12 funding to complete road widening project at Factory Road, Unanderra to support the new Lindsay Mayne Criterium Track project.
Bridges, Boardwalks and Jetties	Reallocate budget from Capital Project Contingency to Bridges, Boardwalks and Jetties program.
West Dapto Infrastructure Expansion	Reintroduce Section 7:11 West Dapto Developer contributions funding for Shone Avenue 'missing link' shared path project – delayed due to design changes.
Footpaths	Reintroduce Strategic Projects Funding for the construction of three footpaths projects in 2022-2023 which did not get completed by 30 June due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays. Reallocate budget from Capital Project Contingency to the Footpaths Program to fund the completion of multiple footpaths projects which were not completed by 30 June due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays.
Cycle/Shared Paths	Introduce Strategic Projects Funding for the implementation of a further stage of NSW Coastline Cycleway Line marking project. Reallocate budget from the Capital Project Contingency to Cycle/Shared Paths Program to fund the completion of designs for multiple cycle/shared path projects which were not completed by 30 June.
Car Parks New	Reallocate budget from the Capital Project Contingency to Car Parks New Program to fund the completion of multiple car park projects which were not completed by 30 June due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays.

Program	Final Expenditure vs Budget - Commentary on Significant Variations
Stormwater Management	Reallocate budget from the Capital Project Contingency to the Stormwater Management Program to fund the completion of multiple stormwater projects which were not completed by 30 June due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays.
Stormwater Treatment Devices	Reallocate budget from the Capital Project Contingency to the Stormwater Treatment Devices Program to fund the completion of design for the Port Kembla Stormwater Quality Improvement Device project which was not completed by 30 June.
Community Buildings	Reallocate budget from the Capital Project Contingency to the Community Buildings Program to fund the completion of designs for multiple projects which were not completed by 30 June.
Play Facilities	Reintroduce Strategic Projects funding and Community Building Partnerships funding for two Outdoor Exercise Equipment projects at Stanwell Park and Bulli Beach Reserve which were not completed in 2021-2022 due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays.
Sporting Facilities	Reintroduce Strategic Projects Funding for completion of three Sportsfield Lighting projects in 2022-2023 which did not get completed by 30 June due to wet weather and other COVID-19 related delays.
Beach Facilities	Reintroduce Section 7:12 Developer Contributions Funding for the construction of the Port Kembla beach access ramp which did not get completed by 30 June.
Land Acquisitions	Introduce Strategic Projects funding for the compulsory acquisition of properties for the new Warrawong Community Centre and Library.
Contingency	Reallocate Council Revenue funding budget from Capital Budget Contingency to the various Capital programs detailed above.

CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT							
as at the period ended 29 July 2022							
ASSET CLASS PROGRAMME	\$'000		\$'000		YTD EXPENDITURE	\$'000	
	CURRENT BUDGET		WORKING BUDGET			VARIATION	
	EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING	EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING		EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING
Roads And Related Assets							
Traffic Facilities	4,183	(3,221)	4,163	(3,201)	577	(20)	20
Public Transport Facilities	365	0	365	0	(22)	(0)	0
Roadworks	14,533	(5,393)	15,793	(5,453)	2,052	1,260	(60)
Bridges, Boardwalks and Jetties	2,005	(167)	2,055	(167)	221	50	0
TOTAL Roads And Related Assets	21,085	(8,780)	22,375	(8,820)	2,829	1,290	(40)
West Dapto							
West Dapto Infrastructure Expansion	5,310	(5,310)	5,473	(5,473)	198	163	(163)
TOTAL West Dapto	5,310	(5,310)	5,473	(5,473)	198	163	(163)
Footpaths And Cycleways							
Footpaths	10,230	(3,020)	11,310	(3,500)	723	1,080	(480)
Cycle/Shared Paths	3,575	(2,170)	3,895	(2,290)	234	320	(120)
Commercial Centre Upgrades - Footpaths and Cycleways	3,275	(200)	3,275	(200)	(74)	(0)	0
TOTAL Footpaths And Cycleways	17,080	(5,390)	18,480	(5,990)	884	1,400	(600)
Carparks							
Carpark Construction/Formalising	140	0	340	0	52	200	0
Carpark Reconstruction or Upgrading	1,060	0	1,060	0	17	0	0
TOTAL Carparks	1,200	0	1,400	0	69	200	0
Stormwater And Floodplain Management							
Floodplain Management	2,375	(650)	2,375	(650)	7	(0)	0
Stormwater Management	4,100	(75)	4,500	(75)	104	400	(0)
Stormwater Treatment Devices	20	0	120	0	0	100	0
TOTAL Stormwater And Floodplain Management	6,495	(725)	6,995	(725)	111	500	(0)
Buildings							
Cultural Centres (IPAC, Gallery, Townhall)	9,900	0	9,900	0	177	(0)	0
Administration Buildings	360	0	360	0	14	(0)	0
Community Buildings	5,950	(1,600)	6,050	(1,600)	450	100	0
Public Facilities (Shelters, Toilets etc.)	150	0	150	0	5	0	0
TOTAL Buildings	16,360	(1,600)	16,460	(1,600)	645	100	0
Commercial Operations							
Tourist Park - Upgrades and Renewal	175	0	175	0	65	0	0
Crematorium/Cemetery - Upgrades and Renewal	195	0	195	0	4	0	0
Leisure Centres & RV/GC	100	0	100	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Commercial Operations	470	0	470	0	69	0	0
Parks Gardens And Sportfields							
Play Facilities	2,290	(1,100)	2,510	(1,320)	11	220	(220)
Recreation Facilities	3,330	(2,200)	3,339	(2,209)	178	9	(9)
Sporting Facilities	11,625	(7,390)	12,075	(7,840)	189	450	(450)
TOTAL Parks Gardens And Sportfields	17,245	(10,690)	17,924	(11,369)	378	679	(679)

CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT							
as at the period ended 29 July 2022							
ASSET CLASS PROGRAMME	\$'000		\$'000		YTD EXPENDITURE	\$'000	
	CURRENT BUDGET		WORKING BUDGET			VARIATION	
	EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING	EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING		EXPENDITURE	OTHER FUNDING
Beaches And Pools							
Beach Facilities	450	(450)	600	(600)	5	150	(150)
Treated Water Pools	3,400	0	3,400	0	128	0	0
TOTAL Beaches And Pools	3,850	(450)	4,000	(600)	133	150	(150)
Waste Facilities							
Whytes Gully New Cells	1,525	(1,525)	1,525	(1,525)	28	(0)	0
TOTAL Waste Facilities	1,525	(1,525)	1,525	(1,525)	28	(0)	0
Fleet							
Motor Vehicles	1,800	(949)	1,800	(949)	115	(0)	0
TOTAL Fleet	1,800	(949)	1,800	(949)	115	(0)	0
Plant And Equipment							
Mobile Plant (trucks, backhoes etc.)	3,800	(937)	3,800	(937)	4	(0)	0
TOTAL Plant And Equipment	3,800	(937)	3,800	(937)	4	(0)	0
Information Technology							
Information Technology	1,350	0	1,350	0	3	0	0
TOTAL Information Technology	1,350	0	1,350	0	3	0	0
Library Books							
Library Books	1,315	0	1,315	0	124	(0)	0
TOTAL Library Books	1,315	0	1,315	0	124	(0)	0
Public Art							
Art Gallery Acquisitions	100	0	100	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Public Art	100	0	100	0	0	0	0
Land Acquisitions							
Land Acquisitions	0	0	200	(200)	9	200	(200)
TOTAL Land Acquisitions	0	0	200	(200)	9	200	(200)
Non-Project Allocations							
Capital Project Contingency	2,931	0	81	0	0	(2,850)	0
TOTAL Non-Project Allocations	2,931	0	81	0	0	(2,850)	0
GRAND TOTAL	101,916	(36,356)	103,747	(38,187)	5,597	1,832	(1,832)

ITEM 16 STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT - JULY 2022

This report provides an overview of Council's investment portfolio performance for the month of July 2022.

Council had an average weighted return for July 2022 of 0.33% which was above the benchmark return of 0.12%. This result was primarily due to positive valuations of the consolidated Floating Rate Notes and the NSW TCorp Growth funds reflecting the continuing volatility in the market. The remainder of Council's portfolio continues to provide a high degree of credit quality and liquidity.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council receive the Statement of Investment for July 2022.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Steph Hummerston, Chief Financial Officer (Acting)
Authorised by: Jeff Reilly, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City (Acting)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Statement of Investment - July 2022
- 2 Investment Income Compared to Budget 2022-2023

BACKGROUND

Council is required to invest its surplus funds in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order and Office of Local Government guidelines. The Order reflects a conservative approach and restricts the investment types available to Council. In compliance with the Order and Office of Local Government guidelines, Council adopted an Investment Policy on 10 December 2018. The Investment Policy provides a framework for the credit quality, institutional diversification and maturity constraints Council's portfolio can be exposed to. Council's investment portfolio was controlled by Council's Finance Division during the period to ensure compliance with the Investment Policy. Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee's (ARIC) role of overseer provides for the review of Council's Investment Policy and the Management Investment Strategy.

Council's Responsible Accounting Officer is required to sign the complying Statement of Investment contained within the report, certifying that all investments were made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Regulation 2005.

Council's investment holdings as at 29 July 2022 were \$141,035,130 (Statement of Investment attached) [30 July 2021 \$155,966,486] and include Council's interest in CivicRisk Mutual Ltd recognised at fair value as at 30 June 2022.

Council had an average weighted return for July 2022 of 0.33% which was above the benchmark return of 0.12%. This result was primarily due to positive valuations of the consolidated Floating Rate Notes and the NSW TCorp Growth funds reflecting the continuing volatility in the market. The remainder of Council's portfolio continues to provide a high degree of credit quality and liquidity. The global markets are still experiencing unprecedented turmoil and volatility in the wake of COVID-19 and may still provide uncertainty for the foreseeable future.

At 29 July 2022, year to date interest and investment revenue of \$485,870 was recognised compared to the year to date budget of \$137,469.

Council's 17 floating rate notes had a net increase in value of \$102,008 for July 2022.

Council holds two Mortgaged Backed Securities (MBS) that recorded a net increase in value of \$3,425 for July 2022. The market value of this security takes into account the extended term of the security along with the limited liquidity and the coupon margin reflects pre-Global Financial Crisis (GFC) pricing. While the maturity dates are outside Council's control, the investment advisors had previously indicated

capital is not at risk at that stage and recommended a hold strategy due to the illiquid nature of the investment.

Council has two investment holdings under the NSW TCorp Hour Glass Facility: the Long-Term Growth Fund and the Medium-Term Growth Fund. The Long-Term Growth recorded a net increase in value of \$125,390 and the Medium-Term Growth Fund recorded a net increase in value of \$139,119 in July 2022. The fluctuations in both the Long-Term Growth and Medium-Term Growth Funds are a reflection of the current share market volatility both domestically and internationally and is diversified across a number of different asset classes that have differing risk and return characteristics.

At their August 2022 meeting, the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) decided to increase the cash rate target by 50 basis points from 1.35% to 1.85%. The increase in interest rates is a further step in the normalisation of monetary conditions. The increase in interest rates has been required to bring inflation back to target and to create a more sustainable balance of demand and supply in the Australian economy. The RBA will continue to assess the outlook and adjust policy as needed to ensure inflation returns to target over time and continue to monitor information and evolving balance of risks and determine the timing and extent of future interest rate increases.

The current Investment Policy sets a 40% maximum exposure limit to individual institutions within the AAA category. This limit is currently considered to include funds held within the NAB (Council's banker) savings account that is used daily to hold cash. Through the banking services contract with the NAB, that includes a fixed margin over the current cash rate, this account is providing a better return than alternate short to medium term investments available to Council. At the end of July 2022, the exposure to NAB was 12.61%, which is below the 25% target set in the Investment Strategy. The NAB savings account is currently the best option available for surplus cash, however this will be continually monitored to ensure best value.

The current investment portfolio complies with Council's Investment Policy which was endorsed by Council on 10 December 2018. Council's Responsible Accounting Officer has signed the Statement of Investment contained within the report, certifying all investments were made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Regulation 2005.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report relates to the commitments of Council as contained within the Strategic Management Plans.

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Goal 4 "We are a connected and engaged community". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032	Delivery Program 2022-2026	Operational Plan 2022-23
Strategy	Service	Operational Plan Actions
4.8 Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services	Review Financial Strategy to include goals and actions aimed to improve financial capacity to respond to increased service demands.

CONCLUSION

The investments for July 2022 recorded an average weighted return above the annualised Bloomberg Bank Bill Index Benchmark and performed favourably when compared to the year-to-date budget.

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT 29 July 2022							
DIRECT INVESTMENTS							
Investment Body	Rating	Purchase Price \$	Fair Value of Holding \$	Security	Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Interest / Coupon Rate
NAB General Fund	A1+	-	339,726	General A/c	29/07/2022	29/07/2022	
NAB Professional Maximiser	A1+	-	12,417,115	Prof Fund A/c	29/07/2022	29/07/2022	1.35%
Bank of Queensland Ltd	Moody's ST P-2	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	16/08/2022	1.25%
Illawarra Credit Union Ltd	Unrated ST UR	250,000	250,000	T/Deposit	25/05/2022	23/08/2022	1.65%
Coastline Credit Union Ltd	Unrated ST UR	250,000	250,000	T/Deposit	8/03/2022	5/09/2022	0.90%
Southern Cross CU	Unrated ST UR	250,000	250,000	T/Deposit	7/06/2022	5/09/2022	1.85%
BNK Banking Corporation Ltd t/as Goldfields Money	Unrated ST UR	250,000	250,000	T/Deposit	16/03/2022	14/09/2022	0.80%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	16/09/2022	1.66%
Members Equity Bank Ltd	Moody's ST P-2	4,000,000	4,000,000	T/Deposit	30/06/2022	28/10/2022	2.56%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	16/11/2022	2.14%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	3,000,000	3,000,000	T/Deposit	26/11/2020	25/11/2022	0.56%
Members Equity Bank Ltd	Moody's ST P-2	4,000,000	4,000,000	T/Deposit	2/12/2021	2/12/2022	0.70%
Australian Unity Bank	S&P ST A2	750,000	750,000	T/Deposit	7/06/2022	5/12/2022	2.65%
Members Equity Bank Ltd	Moody's ST P-2	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	12/12/2022	2.35%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia Ltd	S&P AA-	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	23/12/2020	23/12/2022	0.52%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	25/02/2022	25/01/2023	0.82%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia Ltd	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	18/02/2022	13/02/2023	0.80%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	13/04/2023	2.65%
Bank of Queensland Ltd	Moody's ST P-2	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	16/05/2022	16/05/2023	3.00%
Judo Bank	S&P BBB-	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	17/09/2021	18/09/2023	0.95%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	20/10/2021	20/10/2023	0.87%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia Ltd	S&P AA-	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	20/10/2021	20/10/2023	0.84%
Bank of Queensland Ltd	Moody's A3	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	25/11/2021	27/11/2023	1.15%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	2/12/2021	4/12/2023	1.21%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	23/12/2020	22/12/2023	0.60%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	6/03/2019	6/03/2024	2.24%
Judo Bank	S&P BBB-	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	17/09/2021	17/09/2024	1.20%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	2,000,000	2,000,000	T/Deposit	2/12/2021	2/12/2024	1.63%
Judo Bank	S&P BBB-	2,200,000	2,200,000	T/Deposit	7/03/2022	11/03/2025	2.30%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	5,000,000	5,000,000	T/Deposit	7/03/2022	13/03/2025	2.03%
Total			83,706,841				

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT 29 July 2022 continued							
Bond and Floating Rate Note Securities							
DIRECT INVESTMENTS							
Investment Body	Rating	Purchase Price \$	Fair Value of Holding \$	Security	Purchase Date	Maturity Date	Interest / Coupon Rate
Suncorp-Metway Ltd	S&P A+	1,500,000	1,506,030	FRN	30/08/2017	16/08/2022	1.97%
Bendigo & Adelaide Bank Ltd	Moody's A3	3,000,000	3,010,020	FRN	12/12/2019	12/09/2022	2.47%
Bank Australia Limited	S&P BBB	4,000,000	4,017,400	FRN	2/12/2019	2/12/2022	2.12%
ANZ Banking Group Ltd	S&P AA-	1,000,000	1,007,310	FRN	9/05/2018	9/05/2023	1.84%
National Australia Bank Ltd	S&P AA-	3,000,000	3,020,190	FRN	26/09/2018	26/09/2023	2.70%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	S&P AA-	1,500,000	1,513,320	FRN	16/11/2018	16/11/2023	1.95%
ANZ Banking Group Ltd	S&P AA-	2,000,000	2,018,240	FRN	6/12/2018	6/12/2023	2.27%
National Australia Bank Ltd	S&P AA-	2,000,000	2,014,660	FRN	19/06/2019	19/06/2024	2.76%
Macquarie Bank	S&P A+	2,000,000	1,999,700	FRN	12/02/2020	12/02/2025	1.82%
Bendigo & Adelaide Bank Ltd	Moody's A3	1,700,000	1,667,394	FRN	2/12/2020	2/12/2025	1.74%
Macquarie Bank	Moody's A2	6,500,000	6,383,325	FRN	11/03/2022	9/12/2025	1.96%
Suncorp-Metway Ltd	S&P A+	2,100,000	2,061,927	FRN	24/02/2021	24/02/2026	1.52%
Newcastle Permanent Building Society Ltd	S&P BBB	5,000,000	4,881,850	FRN	4/03/2021	4/03/2026	1.87%
Teachers Mutual Bank Ltd	Moody's Baa1	1,100,000	1,066,901	FRN	16/06/2021	16/06/2026	2.42%
Suncorp-Metway Ltd	S&P A+	3,750,000	3,666,075	FRN	15/09/2021	15/09/2026	2.19%
Suncorp-Metway Ltd	S&P A+	1,500,000	1,475,295	FRN	11/03/2022	25/01/2027	2.99%
ANZ Banking Group Ltd	Moody's Aa3	3,500,000	3,512,390	FRN	12/05/2022	12/05/2027	1.95%
Emerald Reverse Mortgage Trust	Unrated UR	475,141	381,424	MBS	17/07/2006	21/08/2051	1.50%
Emerald Reverse Mortgage Trust	Unrated UR	2,000,000	1,306,620	MBS	17/07/2006	21/08/2056	1.80%
Total			46,510,071				

Managed Funds & Other

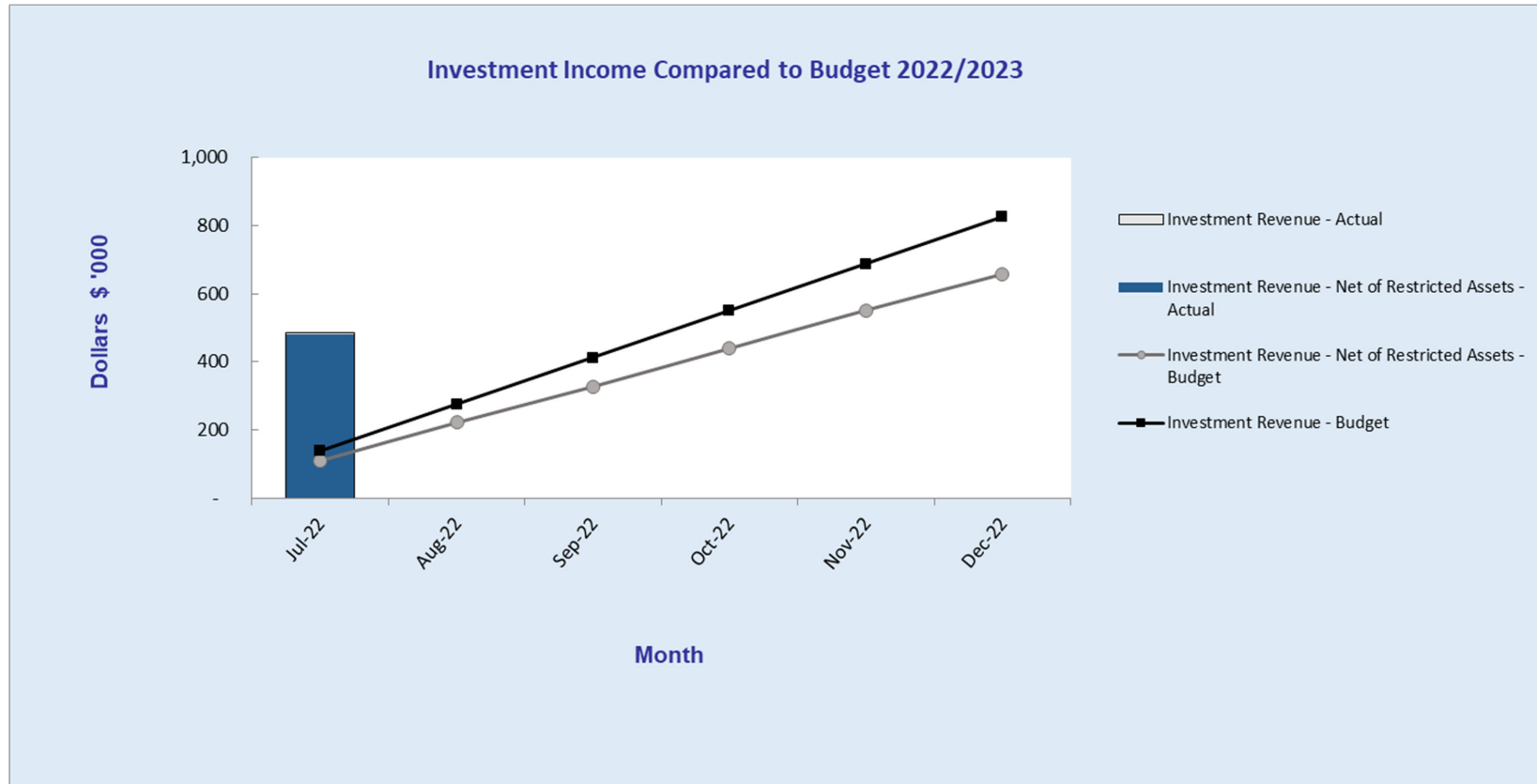
MANAGED FUNDS						
Investment Body	Rating	Purchase Price \$	Fair Value of Holding \$	Purchase Date	Monthly	FYTD (Actual)
Tcorp Long Term Growth Facility Fund	N/A		3,541,701	13/06/2007	3.67%	3.67%
Tcorp Medium Term Growth Facility Fund	N/A		4,752,517	14/06/2007	3.02%	3.02%
Total			8,294,218			

Membership interest in Investment Body	Fair Value of Holding \$		
CivicRisk Mutual Limited	N/A		2,524,000
TOTAL INVESTMENTS		\$	141,035,190

* The maturity date provided is the weighted-average life of the security. This is the average amount of time that will elapse from the date of security's issuance until each dollar is repaid based on an actuarial assessment. Assessments are carried out on a regular basis which can potentially extend the life of the investment. Current assessments anticipate an extension of life of the investment.

This is to certify that all of the above investments have been placed in accordance with the Act, the regulations and Council's Investment Policies.

Brian Jenkins
RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OFFICER



ITEM 17

NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR LINDA CAMPBELL - COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY FLAG POLICY

Councillor Linda Campbell has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that –

- 1 A standard time to be identified for the raising of the flag when a community flag is to be raised, to enable Councillors and community members to attend the flag raising.
- 2 If specific circumstances arise that require a different time be allocated (e.g., a visiting Ambassador or delegation), appropriate community notification is made for the ceremony including the reason for timing.
- 3 This information is provided to Councillors via the Corporate Calendar.
- 4 This be trialled for a period of 1 year to identify any issues that may arise relating to crowds forming or other unforeseen issues arising from the activities.”

Background provided by Councillor Linda Campbell:

In June 2022, Councillors were advised by way of Information Note that:

“Further to a request for Councillors to have greater visibility of significant filming happening in the area and of usage of the community flagpole, the following processes have been put in place.

Flag raising on the community flagpole represents for the community a symbolic gesture of events and celebrations that are important to them. The raising of the provided flags has a high frequency of change over and are not resourced or delivered as an ‘event’.

A flag schedule that lists all community flag requests for 2021 has been created. This is a fluid document as it is updated each time a request is received. All approved flag requests are visible to Councillors via the Corporate Calendar with details of the flag, the reason for flying the flag and the dates the flag will be raised. In some instances, the schedule may need to be adjusted at short notice to accommodate new requests and/or instructions from the Commonwealth Flag Network (e.g. protocols regarding National and State funerals).”

When a group or causes flag is raised it is likely that representatives of the group may wish to be present. Therefore, a regular timeslot would provide information and certainty for those who wish to attend.