

MINUTES

WOLLONGONG HERITAGE REFERENCE GROUP

5.15PM ON THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025



PRESENT

Cr Ann Martin (Chair)	Samatha Keats
Cr Ryan Morris via Microsoft Teams	Auntie Sheryl Davis-Fulcher
David Bottin	Aara Welz
Meredith Hutton	Camellia Webb-Gannon
Fiona Reynolds	

IN ATTENDANCE

Joel Thompson – Coordinator Heritage WCC	Chris Stewart – Manager City Strategy WCC
David Green – Land Use Planning Manager WCC	Denese Thornton – Administrative Officer WCC
Samantha Figueroa – Service Team Leader Local Studies Library WCC (Acting)	

1 WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting at 5:15pm and welcomed all present.

2 APOLOGIES

Rod Logan, Carly Boag, Sophie McCrea and Sofia Gibson

3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed all Aboriginal people present.

4 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Joel provided a brief overview of the expectations and commitment of members of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Advisory Committee. The Code of Conduct and the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group Charter were discussed. Procedures were outlined in relation to the declaration of Conflicts of Interest arising in relation to the business of the Reference Group and Members encouraged to familiarise themselves with their obligations.

Community Members were asked to sign and return a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) document.

5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Joel advised the membership that this is a standing Agenda item to allow members to declare any conflicts of interest relevant to the Agenda and/or generally to the business of the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group.

Fiona Reynolds declared an interest relating to item 9 (Heritage Grants) in particular in relation to project No 16 Railway Cottage, 3 Vera Street Helensburgh. Fiona has provided Heritage advice to the owners of this property.

David Bottin declared a pecuniary interest in relation to 125 Keira Street, Wollongong, a listed heritage item. David advised he is a part owner of this property.

The conflicts were noted.

6 MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS AND UPDATES FROM LOCAL HERITAGE INTEREST GROUPS

Members introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their experience and interests, including their professional involvement with heritage related projects in the Illawarra area and beyond. Councillor Martin thanked everyone for sharing their experiences. Joel referred the membership to the Community Member Biographies circulated to the group.

David Bottin gave the following update:

- As part of the Port Kembla Bluescope land redevelopment masterplan, discussions are underway with Bluescope for the inclusion of a regional Industry Museum.

Councillor Morris gave the following update:

- Noted interest and involvement in the Breakwater Battery Museum and work with RSL Members to try and see the facility re-opened.
- Corrimal RSL is looking to recover an Artillery piece previously associated with the Corrimal War Memorial which has been found in the nearby creek. RSL Members are trying to arrange to have this restored and rededicated ahead of Remembrance Day.

Fiona Reynolds (Illawarra/Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust) gave the following update:

- Breakwater Battery Museum and Crane – the National Trust have raised concerns regarding the ongoing heritage protection of these items due to the recent changes to the Ports SEPP/revitalisation plans for the port. The National Trust are pursuing the State listing of the Breakwater Battery and curtilage (including the anti-tank blocks, observation posts and nearby middens).
- Mount Kembla Mine Disaster Site – The National Trust are writing to Heritage NSW requesting the State Heritage Listing's curtilage be expanded to include the Mount Kembla Village and Windy Gully Cemetery.
- The annual National Trust Heritage Festival is currently underway until 14 May. A list of the events can be found on the Trust's website: ([Welcome to the Australian Heritage Festival in New South Wales – National Trust](#)).
- Congratulations are noted to Wollongong City Library for being shortlisted for the 2025 National Trust Heritage Awards for *Hill 60 Aboriginal Community Stories*. Winners are to be announced on 16 May 2025.

Cr Martin requested these important and valuable stories be shared to the whole of Council and wanted thanks noted to those involved in documenting and in particular those who shared their stories to create this incredible piece of work.

Councillor Martin gave the following update:

- Hill 60 and Ngaraba-aan Art Trail – works are progressing, and advised of her interest in how immersive art works such as sound installations could be incorporated on site using the local stories.
- Hill 60 tunnels – future use and current anti-social and security issues discussed. Joel advised of an ongoing Council project relating to exploring opportunities for use/access to the tunnels.
- Bulli Miners Cottage – requested investigation on how this project could be progressed in this term of the committee.

Aunty Sheryl gave the following update:

- Reconciliation & Truth Telling Conference organised by WCC - was fantastic, enjoyed meeting and hearing about what WCC are doing with regards to reconciliation.
- Involved with a lot of Aboriginal specific projects to do with urban design and development. Working closely with Aara on coastal erosion projects, including the priority project at Sandon Point for the conservation of burial sites.

Aara Welz from Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council gave the following updates:

- Bellambi Point Management Plan – undertaking community consultation.
- Mt Keira Aboriginal Place – Heritage NSW draft review.
- Coastal Management Plan input – Cultural Values study being completed for Council
- Lake Illawarra erosion project – commenced field work survey on Cultural Values study.

Camellia Webb-Cannon gave the following update:

- Noted her work through UOW, undertaking a research project on decolonisation and cultural heritage, working with the Bellambi community to explore the indigenous perspective on cultural heritage, housing design, aiming to develop respectful and sustainable outcomes that help the community to be culturally proud and to thrive on Country.

David Green left the meeting at 6.30pm.

7 INTRODUCTION TO WHRG ROLE, FUNCTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Joel presented a brief overview of the information provided within the Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2024-2027 and the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group Charter. The document links have been circulated to the membership as part of the business paper for this meeting.

Councillor Martin added that the Strategy review is an opportunity on how the members would like to prioritise the committee's time and leave a legacy project. The Bulli Miner's cottage, Stream Hill and the Lake were highlighted as examples.

8 PRESENTATION – HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN WOLLONGONG

Joel provided a slide presentation outlining (in brief) Council's role in Heritage Management and the work of Council's Heritage staff. A copy of the presentation will be circulated to the membership.

9 WOLLONGONG LOCAL HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM 2025-2026

Joel gave a brief overview of the business paper report and noted the normal process of a sub-committee being formed to assess the grants, with nominations for the sub-committee to review application for the 2025-2026 program being taken and Members appointed.

Joel advised that a sub-committee meeting will be scheduled in June for the assessment of the projects.

The membership resolved to form a Heritage Grants Sub-Committee, to include the following members: David Bottin, Meredith Hutton, Samantha Keats, Camellia Webb-Gannon and Rod Logan to assist Council in the assessment of the Wollongong Grant Fund Applications for the 2025/2026 financial year.

Moved by Cr Martin, seconded by Aara Welz

10 HERITAGE STAFF REPORT

Joel gave the following updates as detailed in the business paper report:

- Wollongong Coastal Zone Management Plan
- Options for Lake Illawarra Entrance Update
- Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Illawarra Museum Rising Damp Investigation Works

The membership resolved to note the information provided by Council Staff

Moved by David Bottin, seconded Samantha Keats

11 OTHER MATTERS

David Bottin noted concerns raised by Stuart Barnes, in relation to the Smith Hills Fort. Joel advised of the current Council project developing a conservation management plan for the Wollongong forts and will provide a report to the membership at the next meeting.

David Bottin enquired on the status of the reappointment of a Museum Advisor. Joel advised that he will request an update from Council's Cultural Services Team (Sofia Gibson) in relation to the status of this program ahead of the next meeting.

12 **NEXT MEETING**

The next WHRG Meeting was noted to be held on the 5 June 2025 at 5:15pm.

Councillor Martin closed the meeting at 6.55pm

ACTION SUMMARY

Item	Action	Who	Status
1	Circulate copy of Heritage Management slide presentation (Item 7)	Heritage Staff and Membership	Attached to JT email 29 May 2025
2	Organise Sub-Committee Meeting – assessment of Heritage Grant applications for 2025-26 program	Heritage Staff	
3	Museum Advisor status/update	Seek Update from Cultural Services	