

<p>Neighbourhood Forum 5</p> <p>Wollongong's Heartland</p> <p><i>Collaborating with Council on community aspirations, visions, needs & concerns</i></p>		<p>Coniston, Figtree, Gwynneville, Keiraville, Mangerton, Mount Keira, Mount St Thomas, North Wollongong, West Wollongong, Wollongong City.</p>
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Minutes of meeting on 7th February 2024

- 1 Presentation None possible
- 2 Apologies Harold Hanson, Jenny Bayley
- 3 Minutes of meeting of 6th December were adopted and matters arising incorporated into the minutes.
- 4 Comments A number of comments have been received with general support for all items. There have been a good few with specific support for the reports on planning controls and two against. The executive considered all these in detail.
5. Caveats **Noted that the caveats in Agenda item 5 equally apply to these minutes and the correspondence based on them.**
- 6 Responses **6.1 Library Strategy:** noted
6.2 Insurance Issues: noted
6.3 Construction Noise in City Centre
Deputy Lord Mayor Tania Brown advises that Council has changed consent conditions for future construction development applications in the Wollongong CBD, particularly due to excavation of basement car parks, which impacting residents and their quality of life “A detailed Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan will now be required to be submitted prior to development assessment, getting ahead of the issue and providing some assurance to neighbouring residents that their concerns will be heard”

Current active membership of Neighbourhood Forum 5 : 408 households

This is most welcome and follows NF5 discussions in 2023 with regulatory staff and it was obvious that improvements to DA consent conditions are urgently needed based on expert geotechnical and engineering advice. NF5 requested a small working party, including representatives of affected residents to help progress this matter with planning assessment staff, but unfortunately this has not occurred.

It was agreed that:

- i Deputy Lord Mayor Tania Brown be thanked for progressing this issue;
- ii a meeting be sought with the General Manager to clarify details of the improvements and discuss community involvement issues, since there seems to be a significant mismatch between policy and practice.

7 Reports

7.1 Planning Controls:

It was agreed that

- i the General Manager be requested to convene a meeting with Forum executive, Ward Councillors and relevant Council staff to discuss the situation;
- ii the Forum review the desired future characters set out in the Locality Plans and adjust if necessary.

7.2 Proposed State takeover of Planning Control

It was agreed that:

- i a submission be lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment opposing the proposed radical changes which indiscriminately raise heights and densities of residential development regardless of social or environmental impacts;
- iii Councillor Dorahy be thanked for his support for this position.

7.3 Wollongong Health Precinct Planning; noted

Residents are invited to register on planning.nsw.gov.au website for workshops in the Gwynneville Senior Citizens centre:

- 1 Saturday 10 February between 2.30pm and 4.30pm;
- 2 Tuesday 13 February between 4pm and 6pm.

7.4 Mount Ousley Interchange:

It was agreed the Forum write to Ryan Park MP for Keira noting that work is now to proceed on the Mt Ousley Interchange and for him to make representations to the Minister for Roads that TfNSW establish a Community Consultative Committee, with representation and this to include a representative from Nhd Forum 5.

		7.5 Community Satisfaction Survey: noted
		7.6 Bus Layover Relocation: It was agreed that the TfNSW response be forwarded to Council requesting clarification re outstanding concerns, including the status of an Integrated Transport Interchange at Wollongong railway station, its consideration in Council's impending Integrated Transport Strategy and City Centre Movement & Place Plan and an Action Plan to offset the loss of 106 CBD parking spaces in Wollongong CBD.
8	Planning	8.1 Planning: noted 8.2 DA-2023/975 boarding house 19 Paulsgrove St. Gw'ville It was agreed that the submission of support be endorsed. 8.3 DA-2023/945 5 storey commercial 98-104 Gipps St W'gong It was agreed that the submission of support be endorsed. 8.4 DA-2023/91008 dual occ 8 Burradool St Keiraville It was agreed that the submission of objection be endorsed. 8.5 DA-2024/2 dual Occ 13 Frances St Gwynneville It was agreed that the submission of objection be endorsed. 8.6 DA-2024/1 7 storeys, 24 units 15-19 Marr Street W'gong It was agreed that the submission of support be endorsed. 8.7 DA-2024/26 16 stories, 61 units 23-27 Auburn St W'gong It was agreed that the submission of support be endorsed. 8.8 DA-2024/24 2 Dual Occs, 7-9 Woodlawn Ave Mangerton It was agreed that the submission of support be lodged. 8.9 DA-2024/11 7 lots, 120-2 Smith & 3A Charlotte Sts W'gong It was agreed that the submission of support be lodged. 8.10 DA-2023/962 new bldg, Edmund Rice College W. W'gong It was agreed that the submission of support be lodged subject to resolving any traffic or parking issues. 8.11 DA-2024/23 Hse & Dual Occ, 51 Byrarong Ave Mangerton It was agreed that a submission be lodged of support for the second dwelling but objection to the dual occupancy as unsustainable and overdevelopment of the site.

9.1 Resignation of Convener

Harold Hanson has been Convener for the past ten years and has brought a breadth of experience in local government and community activities second to none. He now finds that he is unable to continue in this role. The Forum, our neighbourhood, Council and indeed the city owe him a great debt of gratitude for his leadership and vision.

It was agreed that:

- 1 The Forum express regret to Harold that he feels he must step down as Convener, thank him for his enormous contribution and look forward to his continued involvement in Forum affairs;
- 2 the election of a new Convener be deferred until the Annual General Meeting in April;
- 3 Meanwhile the Co-convenor, John Riggall , will be acting as Convenor, in accordance with Council's NF Charter.

9.2 Council's Housing Strategy

A comprehensive report was considered by Council on 5th February. Rather than revise the strategy it merely sets out progress on a number of actions that have completed or started.

Subject to details, it includes a number of initiatives which could be supported in principle:

- 1 Review the R1 General Residential zone which surrounds the Wollongong City Centre – rezone to a mix of R2, R3 and R4;
- 2 South Wollongong – a review of the planning controls for the South Wollongong precinct is scheduled to occur following the completion of the Wollongong City Floodplain Management Study and Plan. Noting that this precinct is also important for light industrial and employment uses.
- 3 Review the SP1 Hospital zone at Wollongong – consider rezoning to R3 Medium Density Residential and R4 High Density Residential zones (following the completion of the Department of Planning and Environment / NSW Health master plan)
- 4 Flinders Street, North Wollongong precinct – rezone parts of B6 Enterprise Corridor zone along Bourke Street, Edward Street and Gipps Street to a residential or mixed -use zone. The boundaries are to be defined.

- 5 Town Centres – review the floor space ratio and building height limits to increase the opportunity for shop top housing. The floor space ratio and building height will need to be defined for each centre. Centres with adequate public transport will be a higher priority for review.
- 6 As part of the finalisation of the Tourism Accommodation Review, review the permissibility of Short -term Rental Accommodation and options to reduce the impact on the rental market .

However, it does not include some actions the Forum has considered as crucial:

- 1 Review floor space ratios near local centres (this could become a dead letter if the outrageous State policies ever eventuate);
- 2 Review minimum size of lots near the Escarpment;
- 3 Review building heights in centres;
- 4 Review Neighbourhood Character Statements (to commence with Gwynneville and Keiraville) to start in 2023/4 but take 3-5 years to complete!

Nowhere is mentioned a review of lot width restrictions (which do much to inhibit medium density near centres) nor review the density of development in remote areas. The report also included a useful summary of the new State proposals (see item 7.2 in the agenda). It appears the uncertainty of these proposals is causing developers to hold off to see what emerges.

It was agreed that these factors be used as basis to inform the actions to be taken under items 7.1 and 7.2 above.

9.3 Pop-up Cycleways

Following extensive community feedback, Wollongong City Council is making changes to pop up cycleways across the city with some to remain in place, while others to be tweaked or removed. Road cushions will be removed from Stewart Street, except for those either side of the pedestrian kerb blisters beside Aldi supermarket.

Shared path use will remain on Corrimal Street, Crown Street (from Corrimal St to the foreshore), Gladstone Avenue, MacCabe Park and Burelli Street west of MacCabe Park.

The trial cycleways on Smith, Harbour and Kembla streets will remain in place and be considered as part of the new transport plan for Wollongong – the Wollongong City Centre Movement and Place Plan.

This Plan is under development now and will identify the integration of all forms of transport and their supporting infrastructure. This will include which existing cycleways and shared paths should remain and recommend new cycleways and other enhancements that will provide a safe, well- connected and convenient bicycle network.

Public Exhibition of the Wollongong Movement and Place Plan (to replace the 2013 Plan) is anticipated to occur in early 2024.

9.4 Northern Breakwater

Public access to this area was closed due to COVID fears when the Ruby Princess was sent to Port Kembla in Autumn 2020. When that ship left, public access continued to be denied. The latest excuse was the construction of the LP Gas facility now long completed, yet access is still denied.

Recommendation

That Paul Scully MP be requested to make representations for the Northern Breakwater to be re-opened for community access to this important public coastal amenity.

9.5 Strata Commissioner re Law Changes

The new NSW Strata & Property Services Commissioner is reported to state that plans to build millions of apartments will “falter without major changes to the laws underpinning ownership and management of properties.” He says the Government’s policy to build high density around transport hubs needs to be supported “by reforms pushing better community education, tougher professional standards, and streamlined disputes resolution, as well as protections for owners blindsided by major repairs costs. The whole issue around housing supply, affordability and ultimately social and economic well-being requires strata to be successful and for people to have confidence in strata.”

In 2022 there were more than 1 million dwellings in NSW across nearly 90,000 strata and community schemes and strata disputes are increasing. Within about 15 years it is expected more than 3 million people in Greater Sydney will live in strata. The 2021 Census data shows that 86% of dwellings in the Wollongong CBD are High or Medium Density.

The Minister for Fair Trading says changes are occurring and there is a need to educate agents and buyers. The Strata Commissioner’s role sits alongside the Building Commissioner and the Rental Commissioner, but his budget is minimal for 3 staff, with access to Fair Trading resources, and the Owners’ Corporation Network (OCN) supports the need for adequate resources and powers.

It is understood that at Council meeting on 5 Feb there was a call for the Building Commissioner to set up a permanent presence in Wollongong, following ongoing problems and concerns with multi-storey residential construction in the CBD.

It was agreed to support Council's call for the Building Commissioner to set up a permanent presence in Wollongong, and OCN's call for the Strata and Property Services Commissioner's role have adequate powers and resources.

9.6 Micro-mobility Devices in Apartments

Recent media articles have highlighted concerns of some apartment owners of safety risks by fires emanating from faulty charging of lithium-iron batteries for micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters (in particular) and sometimes e-bikes. Apparently charging of electric vehicles is significantly safer. OCN has drafted a model By-Law for how best to manage the devices.

The NSW government is pushing to double the number of walking and cycling trips in NSW across the next 20 years, and hopefully they will urgently implement legislation, monitor and progressively take necessary actions to ensure changes are safe and effective.

10 Snippets Noted

**Next Meeting 6pm Wednesday 6th March
Hopefully in the Library Theatre.**