Executive Summary

Warrawong Town Centre will be a key cultural destination, bringing people together.

Building on Warrawong’s unique features and strong community, small, transitional changes will improve the experience, amenity, function and economic performance of the centre.

Creating places for people

The public domain will be designed with people in mind. Streets, plazas and parks will form a network of interconnected places reflecting the identity of Warrawong’s community.

People will be given space to bring additional life and vibrancy to the street. Creating a sense of welcome to all is key to its success.

Acknowledgements

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Wollongong City Council

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WARRAWONG
TOWN CENTRE
DRAFT MASTER PLAN
1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Report

In January 2013, AECOM Design + Planning was engaged by Wollongong City Council to develop a Master Plan for Warrawong Town Centre. This Master Plan builds on previous engagement with the Warrawong community between 26 April and 14 June 2012. Council staff held approximately 500 conversations in 5 languages with school students, businesses, residents, social and multicultural groups and service providers. 562 surveys were completed with 73% respondents living in the southern suburbs of Wollongong. The Master Plan builds on the structure of the existing centre and identifies key moves and catalyst projects, including public domain upgrades to improve the function of the centre. Key elements include providing public places for social interaction to enhance community capacity building.

The recommendations of the Master Plan will inform public domain improvements, facilitate community initiatives, and guide development and investment in the centre over the next 30 years. This Master Plan seeks to achieve a coherent and attractive public domain, built form and activity mix that is consistent with its role as the second largest retail centre in the Wollongong Local Government Area.

Vision and Objectives

The Vision was developed based on previous community engagement and stakeholder consultation. Warrawong Town Centre will be an attractive meeting place and cultural destination. Located at the crossroads between important destinations on King Street and Cowper Street, Warrawong provides the opportunity to bring people together.

There is demand for places for people in the centre related to public domain, activities and entertainment, meeting rooms and eatery options. Building on Warrawong’s unique features and strong community, there is the potential to make key improvements within the centre to improve the experience, amenity, function and economic performance of the centre.

The key aim of this project is to deliver a Master Plan and Implementation Strategy which seeks to deliver a vibrant and well-designed town centre. The project objectives are to:

- Create an attractive and functional town centre for the Warrawong community
- Strengthen the current distinctive assets of the Warrawong Town Centre
- Provide for public domain, community, open space and transportation needs
- Respond to the current and future needs of residents and visitors to the town centre
- Develop strategies for increasing the appeal of Cowper Street as the Main Street within the Town Centre
- Guide built form and investment over the next 30 years

Desired Future Place Character

The desired future character was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and from the results of community consultation:

“A place for everyone - Warrawong Town Centre will welcome all. It will be a place to experience the rich culture of the southern suburbs of Wollongong, meet friends and experience the rich diversity of its people. Its unique, eclectic character and casual atmosphere makes everyone feel welcome to be themselves.”

The outcomes of this work demonstrated a need for a Master Plan to respond to the issues raised and to develop a Vision for the future development of Warrawong. The Master Plan provides the opportunity to create a sense of unity and consistent identity within the centre as it develops over time, through a series of connected destinations that are appropriate for the needs of the community.

The majority of people who visit the town centre come by car (74%). The top place to visit in the town centre is Westfield (48% of responses). Other places or streets in the town centre are not seen as key destinations.

The community want:

- To create a hub of activity where people can shop, eat, access a range of services and socialise with friends.
- To have a community meeting place in the town centre to ‘hang out’, ‘a place for buskers …musicians’, outdoor cafes”, “a children’s play area”, “create a sense of belonging”, “outdoor places to sit”, “a piazza”.
- The community places a high priority on being able to walk and cycle in green spaces and recreational areas and enjoy a range of recreational activities in the town centre.
- The Library to be closer to the town centre with the ability to cater to the broader community.
- To feel safe in the town centre. A large number of youth generally feel unsafe in the town centre (52%).

The results of this consultation has influenced the development of strategies and recommendations for the town centre including the creation of a central town plaza, increased open space, increasing activity and surveillance and recommending the development of a new library and community centre.

The overarching strategy is to create the Cowper Street as the hub. Rejuvenating Cowper Street as the Main Street with a series comfortable and social spaces will improve the amenity, safety and experience of the centre.

Workshops

Two stakeholder workshops and one workshop with Councillors were conducted as part of the Master Plan to refine the Vision, define the Desired Future Place Character and provide feedback on the options and strategies developed. Stakeholder input was invaluable to the refinement of the Master Plan and provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share ideas and collaborate.

The Master Plan Process

The Warrawong Town Centre Master Plan process has involved community engagement conducted by Wollongong City Council, stakeholder and councillor workshops, place audits and a site analysis. A series of master plan options for the town centre have been investigated, and an implementation strategy will be prepared to guide the delivery of the Master Plan in the immediate, short, medium and long term.

The Vision

Warrawong Town Centre will be a key cultural destination. Its location, retail offer and unique character provide the opportunity to bring people together by creating comfortable public places, attractive destinations catering to the daily needs of its culturally rich community.

The community values:

- To feel safe in the town centre.
- To have a community meeting place in the town centre.
- To have a variety of retail options including a community centre.
- To create a sense of unity and consistent identity within the centre as it develops.
- To have an attractive public domain.
- To have a range of services and socialise with friends.
- To have a community meeting place in the town centre to ‘hang out’, ‘a place for buskers …musicians’, outdoor cafes”, “a children’s play area”, “create a sense of belonging”, “outdoor places to sit”, “a piazza”.
- To create a sense of unity and consistent identity within the centre as it develops.
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Key Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Currently, the centre is divided by traffic into four segments. Warrawong lacks public meetings spaces, a central heart and a comfortable public domain. The centre lacks an interconnected network of pedestrian pathways and footpaths that are protected from traffic. There is no clearly defined ‘Main Street’. A large amount of activity occurs within the internal shopping centre. The town centre feels unsafe to many residents as most of the activity is located inside with few activities occurring within public spaces or on the street. This increases the perceptions that the area is unsafe.

Pedestrian barriers and a lack of quality outdoor spaces limit the potential of Cowper Street to develop as the Main Street. The existing community centre on Greene Street is disconnected from Cowper Street, and the library is located outside the town centre within the Bulky Goods area. This has resulted in the dispersing of key services and anchors hindering the creation of a vibrant town centre.

There is a lack of open space within the town centre and few pedestrian and cycling connections to the nearby Kully Bay Reserve and playing fields.

Currently, public seating is limited to beneath the Westfield under-croft where people take advantage of weather protection seating near key destinations. While there are many activities located within the town centre they are not connected through a continuous built form resulting in a series of disconnected destinations with no central hub.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to refocus Cowper Street as the main retail street, encourage private investment, introduce opportunities for more public activity supported by traffic calming and public domain improvements.

Another opportunity is to create a central hub and town plaza.

The town centre has a great network of laneways. Laneways are used by pedestrians to access the centre from surrounding residential areas. There is an opportunity to further improve the laneways to enhance the pedestrian experience. This will create opportunities to provide spaces for retail and outdoor dining in new locations.

Opportunity exists to provide better connections from the town centre to Kully Bay Reserve. There is an opportunity to provide recreational facilities for all ages linking to existing cycle networks and providing a link to Lake Illawarra.

There is an opportunity to introduce a range of temporary activities and events within the streets, surface car parks and in laneways of Warrawong to bring a vibrancy to the town centre, activate the town centre and celebrate the local community before physical infrastructure is provided.

COWPER STREET RENEWAL

There is an opportunity to restore Cowper Street to a Main Street that is attractive to people, by widening the footpath, installing traffic calming measures and increasing fine grain retail frontages on Cowper Street as the priority.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

There is an opportunity to create a community focus in the town centre, by creating a new town plaza.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

The community centre is an important resource for the local community and ensuring it is well connected to the town centre is a priority. The existing library has been removed from the town centre, however there is an opportunity to relocate it within the centre with the redevelopment of the existing community centre.

LARGE SITES UNDER SINGLE OWNERSHIP

The Bunnings site and adjacent car park, a large site in single ownership. This land, west of King Street, is a potential catalyst site for redevelopment in the town centre. This site also provides an opportunity to link the town centre to the Lake Illawarra foreshore.

BIG BOX RETAIL

The relationship between Big Box retail and the town centre is a major challenge - key issues include: providing active retail frontages, addressing public amenity, access, parking, servicing and loading whilst providing an attractive pedestrian environment.

LANEWAYS

Laneways have the ability to be key links in the town centre as well as community meeting spaces and destinations in their own right. Laneways behind commercial development on King Street provide potential pedestrian connections. The network of laneways provide potential pedestrian priority areas or shared zones and could contribute towards increased walkability in the town centre.

TRAFFIC

There is the potential to divert traffic away from key pedestrian links in the town centre to make it comfortable to walk around and enjoy the town centre. Redirecting traffic movements away from Cowper Street reducing the number of vehicle lanes, and designing streets to better suit people, will improve safety and amenity for the pedestrian.

LAKE ILLAWARRA

Currently there is a lack of connections to Kully Bay Reserve, with few amenities provided there. There is an opportunity to locate district and regional destinations within the Reserve attracting more people to the area. Conveniences and direct links to the town centre need to be installed to avoid people driving to the reserve and not visiting the town centre.
Place Audit

A place audit was conducted at Warrawong Town Centre on 9 January 2013. The key findings of the audit are:

• The town centre is divided by heavy traffic into quadrants with people using the surrounding laneways and internal spaces to escape the uncomfortable public places and street environments.
• There is a lack of connectivity between destinations and a lack of continuous built form along Cowper Street and King Street creating a disconnected pedestrian experience.
• Uncomfortable public domain, currently there is a lack of shade and landscaped areas within the centre creating a harsh and unpleasant experience.
• Narrow, uncomfortable footpaths.
• No coffee shop or outdoor dining anywhere in the town centre.
• Lack of meeting places.
• People gather at bus stop on only free things to do.
• There is no playground, no youth facilities and few things to do for elders (except for giant chess).
• Community centre is ageing and at capacity and the library has been moved out of the town centre.
• There are few free things to do.

The following photographs illustrate some of the issues that were observed during the audit.

2. STRATEGIES

The following strategies have been developed to respond to the existing challenges and opportunities.

Activities and Destinations

Cowper Street is the Main Street

The community in Warrawong meet under the Westfield awning (fronting Cowper Street) and congregate to play at the giant chess board in the Westfield car park. However, there is no community meeting place or comfortable public spaces provided for people to socialise and spend time in.

• Build on the existing cultural destinations of the Gala Cinema, Oscars Deli and local Italian restaurants and provide more opportunities for interesting events and activities along Cowper Street working together with local businesses. Small shops can trade out onto the street and there is an opportunity for restaurants and eateries along Cowper Street to provide outdoor seating and entertainment at night time to complement visitors coming to the centre to watch a film. There is an opportunity for Bunnings to address Cowper Street with plants for sale and DIY demonstrations.

Benefits to Warrawong

A series of connected and comfortable public, free places to stay that are welcoming to all. Revitalising Cowper Street as the Main Street and hub will encourage economic growth and support local businesses. Focusing the activity on Cowper Street will increase activity on the street and improve the sense of security and amenity.

Culture and Identity

Warrawong has a unique village character

Currently, the character of Warrawong is restricted to indoor activities due to a lack of attractive public places and quality public domain in front of the existing fine grain small businesses. There are few physical places to hold community events and activities.

• Increase pedestrian comfort and permeability within the centre. Connect destinations to encourage more people to walk around the centre and to increase surveillance. Divert traffic away from Cowper Street and introduce traffic calming. Widen Cowper Street and improve laneways to provide pedestrian priority areas and additional places for outdoor dining increasing laneway surveillance.

Benefits to Warrawong

A comfortable pedestrian environment will increase activity within the centre improving surveillance and the perceptions of safety. This will assist in attracting more people to the centre by improving its function as a convenient centre for daily needs including retail, services, community and entertainment.

Convenient Access

Warrawong is pedestrian focused

Currently main roads are dominated by high traffic volumes that result in an uncomfortable pedestrian experience. As a result pedestrians use laneways to access the centre. People feel unsafe within the centre which is discouraging people walking to and around the centre.

• Create a series of connected natural and urban places within the centre to provide for a variety of activities for a range of ages. Connect the town centre to Kully Bay Reserve by providing a comfortable pedestrian and cycling pathway and a pedestrian/cyclist overpass. Provide regional recreational amenities at Kully Bay Reserve including a playground, picnic area and cycle paths fronting Lake Illawarra.

Benefits to Warrawong

The provision of quality open space within the centre would provide needed recreational and play opportunities for the community. Regional amenities at Kully Bay Reserve would attract more people to the town centre stimulating local business and potentially increasing trade at eateries.

Public Amenity

Warrawong’s public places matter

There are few open spaces within the centre and the existing open spaces in and around the centre are disconnected.

• There is potential for revitalisation of Cowper Street as the Main Street.
• There is a lack of a variety of things to do in the public domain.
• Bunnings is an asset and brings people to the centre.
• There is no playground, no youth facilities and few things to do for elders (except for giant chess).
• Community centre is ageing and at capacity and the library has been moved out of the town centre.
• There are few free things to do.

Strategies

Create the Main Street as the hub to provide a series of connected public places along Cowper Street by widening the footpath and providing areas for public and private seating shaded by awnings and street trees. Connect the existing and additional public places including the future town plaza to Cowper Street to increase activity within the centre.

Benefits to Warrawong

Strategies

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Benefits to Warrawong

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Build on the existing cultural destinations of the Gala Cinema, Oscars Deli and local Italian restaurants and provide more opportunities for interesting events and activities along Cowper Street working together with local businesses. Small shops can trade out onto the street and there is an opportunity for restaurants and eateries along Cowper Street to provide outdoor seating and entertainment at night time to complement visitors coming to the centre to watch a film. There is an opportunity for Bunnings to address Cowper Street with plants for sale and DIY demonstrations.

Benefits to Warrawong

Working with local cultural groups to realise their desires for the centre in relation to activities and events will assist in making Warrawong an attractive and fun place for locals whilst attracting visitors as it becomes a known cultural destination. This will improve the social capital and community capacity of Warrawong whilst rejuvenating local businesses and by attracting additional visitors to the centre.

Benefits to Warrawong

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Key Strategies

Activities and Destinations
*Cowper Street is the Main Street*

- Create multiple and connected activities and destinations
- Collocate a diversity of activities on the Main Street to create a vibrant street life
- Link nearby destinations including the hospital, Lake Illawarra, Port Kembla to the centre through wayfinding, signage and comfortable walking paths
- Resolve the disconnection of existing destinations, connect people to places
- Locate community services on the Main Street to increase activity and vitality

Convenient Access

*Warrawong is pedestrian focused*

- Slow traffic on Main Street – create convenient traffic connections
- Distinguish pedestrian movement networks from high traffic roads, create laneway connections to divert cars and give some sections of laneways pedestrian priority to access the Main Street
- Use the laneways and widened pedestrian footpaths to create a comfortable pedestrian experience
- Improve safety by increasing street life and surveillance

Culture and Identity

*Warrawong has a unique village character*

- Cultural destinations and investment to focus on Cowper Street to create synergy and a village atmosphere
- Capitalise on unique features of The Gala Independent Cinema, create an evening economy and places to get coffee, dinner and a drink
- Create temporary shops, stalls and outdoor trading on Cowper Street and car park to provide affordable places for up and coming businesses to operate
- Trial temporary uses on the car park on Cowper Street to provide missing activities and amenity in the immediate term e.g. playground
- Support up and upcoming businesses on Cowper Street in fine grain premises
- Concentrate the new community centre, library and child care on Cowper Street
- Locate the town plaza on Cowper Street with places for people to gather creating a sense of activity reflecting the diverse cultures of the area, potentially include the giant chess here in consultation with its current users

Public Amenity

*Warrawong’s public places matter*

- Create a comfortable and attractive public domain for people
- Create connected and convenient public places close to a mix of uses
- Bring quality landscaping back into the centre providing shade and cooler microclimates and improving the aesthetics
- Create a town plaza and urban park on the main street with places for play
- Provide quality pedestrian connections from the Town Centre to recreation facilities at Kully Bay Reserve
Key Directions

Activities and Destinations
Cowper Street is the Main Street
- Locate a diversity of activities on Cowper Street to create a vibrant street life
- Link destinations including the hospital and Kully Bay with comfortable walking paths
- Consider the best location for the new Community Centre and Library

Public Amenity
Warrawong’s public places matter
- Create comfortable, safe and attractive streets and spaces for people
- Create connected and convenient public places
- Promote a mix of uses to bring life to streets and spaces during the day and evening
- Create a town plaza and urban park on the Main Street

Culture and Identity
Warrawong has a unique village character
- Focus cultural destinations and investment on Cowper Street to create a village atmosphere
- Promote evening activities
- Allow shops and restaurants to ‘spill out’ and trade on Cowper Street footpaths
- Trial temporary uses on the car park on Cowper Street to provide additional activities and amenity in the immediate term eg, playground, stalls, pop-up cafes and art projects
- Locate the Town Plaza on Cowper Street for people to gather. This space would provide for a range of diverse uses for the community

Convenient Access
Warrawong is pedestrian focused
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment
- Prioritise pedestrian movements
- Provide traffic calming in the town centre
- Provide laneways and footpaths that are more inviting for pedestrians and it is easy to move around
- Provide bus stops that are safe and easy to access

Key Projects

1. COWPER STREET RENEWAL
   This includes widening of the footpath on the northern side with multiple spaces for different community activities:
   - Outdoor dining and trading and space for improved public amenity
   - Street trees
   - Reducing the width of the roadway
   - Formalising pedestrian crossings and on street parking
   - Improving bus shelters
   - Location and seating and removing pedestrian barriers
   The southern side of Cowper Street will remain in its current alignment. Future redevelopment of the southern side would provide widened footpath through building setback / colonnade.
   A key requirement of achieving a pedestrian friendly environment on Cowper Street is reducing the number of traffic lanes.
   A signalised intersection at Greene Street / King Street will allow for redirection of through-traffic away from the town centre.
   Buildings on Cowper Street will be mixed use with active street frontages.

2. COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIBRARY
   In considering the location for a district level community centre and library in the future, prioritise opportunities to design and locate the facility to be accessible to all. If integrated with the town centre, this important community facility could activate the town centre, support local business, and cater for a diverse community. As a catalyst project, a district level community centre and library should connect with and activate Cowper Street and key community meeting spaces and contribute to the vitality of the town centre.

3. COMMUNITY OUTDOOR SPACE
   Opportunity to provide a new Town Plaza on Cowper Street. The new Town Plaza is likely to coincide with a future redevelopment of the Bunnings carpark site. Opportunity to work with Westfield and the community to start-up temporary uses to activate Cowper Street on part of the existing Westfield surface carpark.

4. LANEWAYS
   Laneways provide pedestrian priority links to the town centre and become destinations. Provide guidance on the laneways and interdependence of future adjoining redevelopment parcels. These are essential for the future redevelopment parcels fronting Cowper Street and King Street. Recommend providing new vehicular exit / entry locations on Cowper Street to reduce vehicle conflict and enable active frontages and pedestrian only spaces to the lane immediately off Cowper Street.
Community Hub

Cowper Street is the Main Street
- Town plaza and Cowper Street renewal provide a new hub connecting activities and destinations
- On street dining and opportunities for Council and community events on the widened footpath of Cowper Street create a new focus for activity and an attraction for Warrawong to the surrounding districts
- Cowper Street widening to the north provides public space in the short term before the later development of the town plaza

Warrawong has a unique village character
- Cowper Street rejuvenation and the creation of a town plaza will create a village atmosphere and provide the space for cultural events and activities
- Supporting fine grain development and local businesses along Cowper Street will support the development of Warrawong into a cultural hub attracting visitors for food and entertainment

Warrawong is pedestrian focused
- Bus stops on Cowper Street upgraded amenity create a convenient and pedestrian friendly experience
- The provision of comfortable seating arranged in social positions will attract people to sit on Cowper Street and at the town plaza
- Street trees and landscaping within the town plaza will create a comfortable microclimate, a grassed area will be attractive for all ages for sitting and gathering

Warrawong’s public places matter
- The town plaza will be connected to Cowper Street to increase the vitality of the centre and allow for good surveillance
- Cowper Street will be connected to Kully Bay Reserve with a pedestrian pathway linking through the town plaza
- Opportunities for visual connections to Lake Illawarra exist from the 3rd or 4th floor

View of Town Plaza, Cowper Street and Library / Community Centre Redevelopment (looking north)

1. Active frontage retail
2. Seating with shade tree planting on eastern side of plaza to shade from the hot western sun
3. Green space / focal point / small play area
4. Social seating
5. Bus Stop
6. Possible pedestrian crossing location
7. Alfresco Dining
8. Pedestrian Laneway with Active Frontages
9. Ground level Retail
10. Apartments above
11. Ground Floor active frontage (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
12. 2nd and 3rd floor - mixed use (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
13. View of Kully Bay is possible from the 4th level and above
14. King Street
15. Corner Redevelopment / mixed use with possible residential above
16. Existing Cinema
17. Entrance to Westfield owned site Redevelopment
Cowper Street Renewal

**Cowper Street is the Main Street**
- The renewal of Cowper Street will see it restored as the Main Street of the town centre supporting the rejuvenation of existing small businesses and the development of additional street frontage to create a continuous built form along its length
- Public domain works within Warrawong will widen footpaths along Cowper Street and support a range of uses and activities

**Warrawong’s public places matter**
- Cowper Street will be the largest public space within the centre, it will act as the spine of the centre with each of the other public places connecting directly to it
- The Cowper Street rejuvenation will act as a catalyst for focusing new growth and development on Cowper Street as a strategy for increasing connectivity, activation and a sense of community

**Warrawong has a unique village character**
- The provision of wider footpaths, public seating, café seating, awnings and street trees will create an attractive village atmosphere
- Planter boxes, banners, a community notice board, flowers and custom made street furniture are good ways to display the culture of the local community within the Main Street
- Revitalising Cowper Street will support exiting businesses and attract future investment. Up and coming businesses can develop along the west end of Cowper Street with the east side supporting a hub of entertainment and evening activities
- There are opportunities for interim activities to occur to activate Cowper Street including markets on the Bunnings car park facing Cowper Street and Bunnings trading out onto the street / carpark with stalls with DIY demonstrations and coffee carts

**Warrawong is pedestrian focused**
- Introducing street trees and comfortable public seats along Cowper Street will improve amenity for people
- The selection of street furniture, landscape plantings and awnings will consider the comfort of people as the highest priority

**Key Recommendations**
1. Council to undertake detail design of Cowper Street
2. Cowper Street Renewal requires future signalisation (traffic lights) at the Greene / Montgomery and King Street intersections. Council to continue to work with RMS to resolve design requirements
3. Council to work with local landowners to support and promote the activation of both public and private spaces
4. Council to investigate ways to support and promote a range of temporary interventions, including ‘pop-up’ stalls and cafes, entertainment, outdoor dining, art projects and temporary installations.
Cowper Street Renewal

1. Ground Floor setback with colonnade/spaces for seating, community notices and programme advertisements. (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
2. Ground Floor Retail
3. Apartments above
4. Laneway
5. Town Plaza
6. Bus Stop
7. Possible pedestrian crossing location
8. Improved amenity and various new programs along Cowper Street footpath - shade tree planting, outdoor seating and trading, alfresco dining, markets, bicycle parking, artwork, general community space

View of Cowper Street (looking west)
New Town Plaza

Cowper Street is the Main Street
- The new town plaza will front Cowper Street supporting it as the centre of activity.
- The new town plaza will be an extension of the activity created on Cowper Street.

Warrawong has a unique village character
- The new town plaza will be designed at a pedestrian scale creating a village atmosphere.
- The activities and facilities provided within the centre will be refined with future consultation with the community to determine needs and preferences for identified user groups including a variety of ages and cultures.
- The new town plaza will provide the space for cultural and community events and activities to bring people together to display and celebrate the diverse community of Warrawong.

Warrawong is pedestrian focused
- The new town plaza will provide public seating that uses comfortable materials that do not get too hot or cold.
- Trees and awning will provide shade and weather protection.
- Separate places will be provided within the plaza for various groups to meet and gather.

Warrawong’s public places matter
- The new town plaza will be connected to the public space on Cowper Street.
- There will be multiple connections from the town plaza resulting in a permeable pedestrian network of paths.

View of Town Plaza, Cowper Street (looking north)

1. Active frontage retail
2. Seating with shade tree planting on eastern side of plaza to shade from the hot western sun
3. Green space / focal point / small play area
4. Social seating
5. Bus Stop
6. Possible pedestrian crossing location
7. Alfresco Dining
8. Pedestrian Laneway with Active Frontages
9. Ground level Retail
10. Apartments above
11. Ground Floor active frontage (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
12. 2nd and 3rd floor - mixed use (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
13. View of Kully Bay is possible from the 4th level and above
Laneway Activation

Cowper Street is the Main Street
- The laneways will feed activity to and from Cowper Street
- The laneways provide permeable and safe pedestrian connections to Cowper Street increasing its convenience and attraction as the Main Street

Warrawong has a unique village character
- The laneways provide opportunities for wall art, murals and public art within the pavements and roads to provide cultural attractions and interest within the centre
- The laneways provide additional places for activities and events, becoming destinations in the town centre

Warrawong is pedestrian focused
- The laneways provide a pedestrian scale that is attractive and intimate for retail and dining frontages to wrap around creating diverse experiences within the town centre
- Small trees and planting in the laneways can provide attractive places for outdoor dining providing shade and improving the amenity

Warrawong's public places matter
- The laneways will connect Cowper Street to the open space on Greene Street to the north of the centre
- The rejuvenation of the laneways will create additional public places that are already connected used by people to access the centre

View of Laneway and Cowper Street Frontage (looking north)

1. Bus Stop.
2. Possible pedestrian crossing location.
3. Alfresco Dining.
4. Pedestrian Laneway with Active Frontages.
5. Ground level Retail.
6. Apartments above.
7. Ground Floor active frontage (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
8. 2nd and 3rd floor - mixed use (Possible Library and Community Centre redevelopment site)
Restoring Cowper Street as the Main Street is a key strategy underpinning this Master Plan, to create a vibrant and attractive place. The renewal of Cowper Street provides the ideal opportunity to link the existing successful places within the centre by a central spine.

Improvements to Cowper Street includes:

- Footpath widening on the northern side with multiple spaces for different community activities
- Outdoor dining and trading and space for improved public amenity
- Street trees - species selection to be fast growing and maintenance friendly
- Reducing the width of the roadway
- Formalising pedestrian crossings and on street parking
- Improving bus shelters, location and seating

Benefits to Warrawong

Linking destinations along Cowper Street will provide reasons for people to walk along its length increasing surveillance and the sense of security within the centre. Reducing the impact of traffic and providing comfortable seating along the street will also attract people to the street.

Importantly, the renewal of Cowper Street will support local businesses and specialty retailers by providing community space on the main street, encourage outdoor dining and trading, providing a safer and more comfortable experience that will attract more people from outside the area.

Through these public domain improvements, some momentum for redeveloping old building sites fronting Cowper Street will be created.
Cowper Street connects the Precincts

Cowper Street has the important role of connecting places and spaces that provide a diverse offer for the Centre. The Precincts have been established from understanding the existing site assets and integrating these assets into the Master Plan to provide a strong basis for Warrawong to develop into the future. The Precincts are:

1. Community Centre Precinct. This includes the existing community centre site and organisations such as Barnados
2. Retail Growth Precinct. The existing Bunnings car park site presents an opportunity for future retail growth should this be economically feasible
3. Entertainment Precinct. This includes the existing Gala Cinema and pub, the Westfield Food Court
4. Cowper Street/Main Retail Street - this is the main focus of independent retailing in the Centre and connects all the precincts together
5. Town Plaza Precinct - a key focal point
6. King St Services Corridor Precinct
7. Existing Westfield Retail
8. Open Space Precinct

Community Hub and Cowper Street Renewal Precinct

This precinct forms the focus for the provision for a community hub by revitalising Cowper Street as the Main Street and providing a new town plaza.

The first stage of development in the short term will be the widening of Cowper Street on the northern side along with improvements to the public domain as illustrated.

In considering the location for a district level community centre and library in the future, prioritise opportunities to design and locate the facility to be accessible to all members of the community, both in the immediate locality and the broader district. If connected to the town centre, this important community facility could activate the town centre, support local business, while catering to a diverse community.

As a catalyst project, a district level community centre and library should allow for connectivity with and activation of Cowper Street and key community meeting spaces and contribute to the vitality of the town centre.

Future Redevelopment Precinct

The Future Redevelopment Precinct will be developed in the medium to long term. It provides the opportunity for new retail and/or residential development.

The type and size of the development will be defined by the market. Planning controls, maintaining an active, fine grain frontage on Cowper Street, will ensure the rejuvenation of Cowper Street as the Main Street.

An alternative scenario, should retail growth be unfeasible, is for Bunnings car park site to remain as a car park servicing the town centre. In this scenario there is also potential for this site to develop into medium density residential.

In both scenarios, realigning of Cowper Street with mixed use development is an important objective to provide a diverse range of activities fronting the Main Street.

Land Use

Warrawong Town Centre is zoned Commercial Core, supporting a range of retail uses and surface car parking fronting the main roads. Low density residential dwellings remain on the Greene Street, First Avenue and Montgomery Avenue. A range of home occupations are established.

The current zoning permits a range of uses. To guide future development in accordance with the Master Plan, and character of land across the town centre, the following land use precincts have been identified:

Mixed use (ground level retail with apartments above)

The ‘mixed use’ land use zone will include a frontage to Cowper Street to provide activation and support the renewal of the Main Street. The ground floor will be retail with apartments above providing for residential living within the centre.

No change to zoning required.

Large floorplate retail (‘Big Box’)

The large floorplate retail land use shown in light orange on the map includes the existing Westfield shopping centre and the retail shops including Bunnings and other ‘stand alone’ shops on that block surrounded by surface car parking.

The Bunnings block provides the opportunity for a future ‘large floorplate retail’ and/or residential development in the medium to long term future if the market allows. This land use will need to ensure that it is sliced by Mixed use development on Cowper Street to ensure that any future large floorplate development does not detract from the Main Street village character.

No change to zoning required.

Commercial use

The commercial area in the north of the town centre shown in dark blue on the map will be maintained as any area to locate service stations, commercial development. Fine grain retail uses that compete with Cowper Street will be discouraged from the activity on Cowper Street.

Due to the lack of laneway on the western side of King Street that area is unsuitable for residential development. The area to the eastern side of King Street has the potential to be developed for medium density residential development.

No change to zoning required.

Medium density residential

Opportunities for future medium residential development have been identified in the pink areas on the map. These areas would discourage retail uses that compete with Cowper Street.

Change to zoning would need to be considered to permit residential at ground level.

Entertainment and Services Precinct

The Entertainment Precinct builds on existing key entertainment features including the Gala Cinema and the Hoyts Cinema within the Westfield shopping centre. There is a key opportunity to build on the point of difference of these two cinemas by supporting the development of restaurants, eateries and cafes along Cowper Street.

Collocating these activities will provide reasons for people to spend more time at Warrawong on the Main Street. Promoting Warrawong as a destination for ‘dinner and a movie’ will draw visitors and locals for longer stays, activating a safe night time economy by providing many ‘eyes on the street’.

Town Plaza

The town plaza will be a centrally located community meeting place on Cowper Street. Active ground uses will front the town plaza creating vibrancy and ensuring good surveillance. Footpath trading and markets on the plaza will be encouraged.

There is an opportunity to provide urban parks on Cowper Street to provide for play space, potential events and activities.

No change to zoning required.

Open space

Existing green spaces and opportunities for potential open space have been indicated in green on the map.

A key feature of this master plan is to strengthen links with the key regional open space at Kully Bay Reserve.

It is recommended to locate a regional playground, learn to ride paths, connections to the existing cycle network, picnic tables and BBQs to increase its amenity for the surrounding suburbs and to attract people to also visit the Warrawong Town Centre.

No change to zoning required.
Setbacks

Setbacks to street frontages and laneways are consistent with active frontage locations.

- **The King Street north setback** provides for future footpath widening and landscape areas.
- **Setback for residential uses** provides area for landscape.
- **Setback on shared vehicular and pedestrian connections on Mowbray Lane and the lane fronting the existing community centre site** provide for footpath widening and landscape areas.
- **Setbacks for large-format retail fronting King Street** provides for future sleeving with active frontage built form.
- **Setback to south-facing frontages on Cowper Street** for upper levels above 2-stories are to be 3m to provide better solar access to the public domain.

Laneway connections

An interconnected series of pedestrian pathways have been provided by improving existing footpaths and utilising the laneways for a comfortable walking environment out of conflict from the heavy traffic on King Street.

- **Laneway connections for vehicles** are important for servicing future development fronting Cowper Street and to minimise vehicular driveways entering Cowper.
- **Laneway connections to Cowper Street that are close to the Cowper-King intersection** are to be pedestrian only to avoid traffic congestion near the intersection.
- **Limiting vehicular access to lots fronting King Street** require a new laneway connection to the properties fronting King on the North-Western side.

Active frontages

Active frontages to streets and laneways to be consistent with ground level retail uses.

- **King Street frontages** are active close to Cowper Street. Further away from Cowper Street they are visually active.

Laneway connections

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**Built footprints**

To strengthen the Main Street it is important that a continuous built form that addresses the street on both sides be created on Cowper Street with awnings and/or colonnade to provide a protected pedestrian environment.

The building footprint shown on the Bunnings car park site assumes expansion of the large-format retail and is subject to future economic feasibility. Should this not proceed, the building footprints in this area should be appropriate to the new land use.

**Active frontages**

Active frontages to streets and laneways to be consistent with ground level retail uses.

- **King Street frontages** are active close to Cowper Street. Further away from Cowper Street they are visually active.

**Laneway connections**

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**Awning**

Awning

Awnings are required on streets with active frontages and frontages to the plaza and open space areas in the town centre. Laneways do not require awnings.

**Access and Movement**

Access and Movement

A key strategy of this master plan is to resolve the conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic within the town centre.

A pedestrian connection to Kully Bay Reserve will be provided through the town centre past the open space creating a ‘green spine’ for pedestrians and cyclists. This access will enable Kully Bay Reserve users to conveniently access the town centre and vice versa.

**Colonnade**

Colonnade

Colonnades provide wider footpaths / outdoor trading areas on the southern side of Cowper Street.

**Public Open Space**

Public Open Space

A key strategy of the master plan has been to improve the public amenity within the centre by increasing open space, improving the quality and size of the public domain and delivering a new district community centre including meeting rooms, child care and relocating the library back into the centre.


2. Park on King Street – provides a buffer from the high traffic on King Street and is a key part of the ‘green spine’ connecting Cowper Street to Kully Bay Reserve. In the longer term part of the park can be used for future new development fronting King Street.

3. Kully Bay Reserve - it is recommended to locate a regional playground, learn to ride paths, connections to the existing cycle network, picnic tables and BBQs to increase its amenity for the surrounding suburbs and to attract people to also visit the Warrawong Town Centre.
1. Work with local land owners, business and community to investigate laneway activation projects.


3. Cowper Street public domain and pedestrian improvements Stage 1: detailed design - footpath widening, street trees, outdoor dining and trading, bus stop infrastructure improvements, pedestrian crossings and traffic lanes adjustment. Continue to work with RMS to resolve detailed design requirements.

4. Possible short term activation of Cowper Street south - car park modifications for market stalls/community events/Bunnings garden centre education/temporary community garden.

5. Frontage to existing Community Centre public domain improvements.

6. Footpath improvements to Montgomery frontage of the Open Hearth Hotel.

7. Work with Westfield to promote the activation of the short term car park when not in use. Temporary interventions include ‘pop-up’ playgrounds, markets and music events.

8. Review potential of rezoning nominated sites on Greene Street, Montgomery Avenue and First Avenue to medium density residential as part of the Housing Choice Study programmed for 2013-14 financial year.
IMPLEMENTATION
Council is seeking input from the Community on the Warrawong Town Centre Draft Master Plan. Feedback received will be used to inform the Implementation Strategy that will list and prioritise actions for Council to deliver the Master Plan over the next 30 years.

5. NEXT STEPS
After the exhibition period Council will finalise the Warrawong Town Centre Draft Master Plan. Council will also prepare an Implementation Strategy for coordinating Council's activities, and engaging with local businesses, land owners and other government agencies to implement the strategies contained in this document.

Not everything in this Draft Master Plan will be implemented. The economic feasibility of private development, especially any expansion of retail development, will be market driven. This is why some of the most important aspects of the Master Plan are focused on the renewal of the Cowper Street and other public amenity improvements to streets, laneways and public spaces. Through these public domain improvements, some momentum for redeveloping existing building sites will be created.

This Master Plan also provides an important framework for future development in Warrawong. Having a common understanding of an ultimate vision for Warrawong Town Centre will enable a coherent and focused response to small incremental development and will assist existing and future land owners to understand how their assets contribute to the whole.

We invite you to provide your feedback to Council and continue the dialogue on creating an exciting and vibrant Warrawong Town Centre.

Key Recommendations
The Implementation Strategy will provide guidance on future Council activates and assist in coordinating resources and funding for future works. These will be prioritised based on community feedback of the Draft Master Plan and ongoing communication with the community. Some of the actions that the implementation strategy will address are listed below.

PLANNING POLICY
- Undertake an Economic Feasibility to review the retail and commercial needs of the town centre
- Land Use – consider rezoning sites on Greene Street, Montgomery Avenue and First Avenue as part of the Housing Choice Study
- Development Controls – update the Wollongong DCP 2009 to reflect the built form outcomes of the Master Plan.
- Monitor and measure outcomes
- Review the Master Plan and implementation strategy every 5 years or following key investment/ project delivery

INFRASTRUCTURE
- Temporary ‘trial’ public domain works – look at opportunities to activate spaces in a temporary nature to trial how the community will interact with spaces
- Traffic and Transport – progress to detailed design of Cowper Street in collaboration with RMS, Bus companies and key stakeholders, considering:
  - Traffic calming
  - Parking
  - Pedestrian Crossings
  - Footpath widening
  - Pavement upgrades
  - Street tree planting
  - Street furniture
  - Temporary ‘trial’ public domain works
- Laneways – In partnership with the Community, land owners and businesses, progress to detailed design of public laneways. Include:
  - Public art
  - Work with local land owners, business and community to investigate laneway activation projects

COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING
- Work with residents, retailers, land owners, community groups and artists to develop events and activities to activate spaces in the town centre.
- Communicate existing programs to the community
- Further community engagement on specific projects
- Council to investigate ways to support and promote a range of temporary interventions, including ‘pop up’ stalls/ cafes, entertainment, outdoor dining furniture and spaces; art projects and temporary installations.
- Work with Westfield to promote the activation of the short term car park when not in use. Temporary interventions including ‘pop up play’; markets and music events – Bunning’s car park and Westfield short term car park.