

ITEM 1 WOLLONGONG CITY CENTRE PLANNING REVIEW

On 30 May 2016, Council endorsed the Vision for Wollongong City Centre, *A City for People - a people-orientated, sustainable and liveable city*. In 2018 work commenced on the City Centre Planning Review, a comprehensive review of land use and built form controls to bring them into alignment with *A City for People*. The Planning Review included planning, urban design and economic analysis. Two key outputs of the analysis are the *Draft Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework* (UDF) and the *Wollongong City Centre Planning Review: Economic Analysis* (Economic Analysis). The draft UDF includes recommendations for changes to controls, process and projects across land use, built form and public domain and connections.

On 24 February 2020, Council resolved to endorse the draft UDF and Economic Analysis for exhibition. The UDF and Economic Analysis were exhibited between 25 February and 27 April 2020. Significant promotional activities were undertaken to encourage and support the community to provide feedback through an online survey or written submissions, as well as meetings and stakeholder forums. Due to the social distancing requirements imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, several engagement activities were transitioned from face-to-face workshops into online forums.

The engagement webpage received over 1000 hits and 98 surveys were completed including an average of 300 words each in commentary. Council also received 25 written submissions, 10 of these were from individuals and 15 from groups. The group submissions received were from diverse sectors including peak bodies, industry representatives and community-based organisations.

The majority of individuals and groups supported each of the recommendations of the UDF. This response re-affirmed the community's ongoing support for the vision outlined in *A City for People* and the desire to see it implemented. Minor modifications have been made to the UDF in response to the community input received.

It is recommended that Council adopt the revised *Urban Design Framework* as a foundational document on which to base a planning strategy for Wollongong City Centre and guide development of a Draft Planning Proposal and Draft City Centre DCP chapter.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The community and stakeholder feedback on the *Draft Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework* (February 2020) and *Wollongong City Centre Planning Review: Economic Analysis* (June 2019) as documented in the *City Centre Planning Review Engagement Report* (Attachment 2), be noted.
- 2 The revised final *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework* (Attachment 3) be adopted as a planning policy to guide development outcomes in the City Centre and the preparation of a Draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy.
- 3 A Draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Strategy, including the Draft Planning Proposal and Draft Wollongong Development Control Plan Chapter, be finalised and reported to Council.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

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ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Study Area
- 2 UDF Engagement Report - City Centre Planning Review
- 3 Urban Design Framework

BACKGROUND

In March 2014, Council resolved to review the existing City Centre Revitalisation Strategy; a suite of four documents setting the strategic framework for the City Centre: (1) City Centre Vision, (2) Wollongong City Centre Local Environmental Plan (LEP), (3) Wollongong City Centre Development Control Plan (DCP) and (4) Wollongong City Centre Civic Improvement Plan.

Council engaged Gehl Architects to partner in developing *Wollongong Public Spaces Public Life*. The Gehl philosophy is based on encouraging life in a City by improving the public spaces and built environment. If more people are using the City, the economics and life of the City will increase.

Setting a renewed Vision for Wollongong City Centre - A City for People 2016

The analysis performed through *Wollongong Public Spaces Public Life* informed a new vision for the City Centre. On 30 May 2016 Council endorsed the vision outlined in *A City for People* together with key strategies and outcomes aspired to be achieved in the short, medium and long term.

Council also resolved to retire the *Revitalising Wollongong City Centre Vision* (2007), *Civic Improvement Plan* (2007) and *Wollongong CBD Action Plan* (2010) as policy documents.

The City Centre Vision

The vision presented in *A City for People* is about what Wollongong City Centre aspires to become. It is intended to set a clear direction to guide decision making and priorities in the City Centre over time.

In the 21st century Wollongong City Centre will be a people orientated, sustainable and liveable city.

Wollongong City Centre is a thriving and unique Regional City, delivering a diverse economy and offering a high-quality lifestyle. The City Centre is nationally recognised as a liveable city and is the place where people want to live, learn, work and visit.

The vision is underpinned by 12 aspirational goals for delivering the Wollongong City Centre of the future. These goals are grouped under the following themes:

- Celebrate the uniqueness
- Develop a human scale City
- Grow a living City
- Create an accessible, pedestrian friendly City

Implementing the Vision: City Centre Planning Review

A City for People identified a disconnect between our current City Centre planning controls and the vision the community helped to define. In order to address the disconnect and deliver a planning strategy for the future, a comprehensive City Centre Planning Review was undertaken.

The Review included planning, urban design, open space and economic analysis to inform appropriate distribution of height and scale of buildings across the City Centre, including refinement of the City Centre boundary and associated planning policy amendments.

Draft Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework

In 2018, Architectus and Andrew Burns Architects were commissioned to prepare an UDF to incorporate the planning, urban design, open space and economic analysis and present a new way forward, in alignment with *A City for People*. The draft UDF and Economic Analysis is focused on the Commercial areas of the City Centre, zoned B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use (Attachment 1). The purpose of the urban design framework is to:

- Provide Council with strong recommendations in order to develop a suite of clear and consistent planning controls and guidelines that facilitate better design outcomes as well as economically feasible development in the City Centre
- Strengthen the way that design excellence is taken into account when Council examines places and reviews proposals

- Set the foundations that enable Council to develop a stronger design culture within Council and the community.

The draft UDF undertakes detailed testing of existing planning policy and urban design analysis of the City at a precinct scale. This work is supported by economic analysis and forecasting prepared by SGS Economics and Planning. A set of recommendations define clear objectives for policy change across the themes of Land Use, Built Form and Public Domain and Connections. These objectives are supported by Strategies and Directions which start to detail how policy can change to deliver *A City for People*.

Key findings of the draft UDF and Economic Analysis include:

Land Use

- 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 shop fronts and creates inactive streets
- The City's cultural identity is diversifying to support City life

Built Form

- General development controls don't respond to the character and historic qualities of places in the City
- The planning controls do not provide clear guidance for development to deliver the intended built outcomes for the City.
- The City's development controls do not promote development that defines a city skyline or enhances the unique natural setting
- Developments favour maximising building development controls over design quality, producing a less attractive City

Public Domain and Connections

- The City lacks clear physical and visual connections to key places which makes wayfinding difficult and discourages walking
- Arrival into the City Centre is confusing and provides an underwhelming first impression of Wollongong
- Public open spaces are valued but do not yet realise their full potential
- Key public spaces are at risk of overshadowing by surrounding buildings
- Tree canopy cover in the City Centre is inadequate

Recommendations of the Urban Design Framework

The draft UDF, accompanied by detailed Economic Analysis, defines clear objectives for policy change across the themes of Land Use, Built Form and Public Domain and Connections. These objectives are supported by Strategies and Directions which start to detail how policy can change to deliver *A City for People*.

Land Use Strategy - To deliver a vibrant and growing Regional City

Planning controls promote diversity to encourage a vibrant mix of land use throughout the City Centre, day and night. Jobs and population growth support Wollongong's role as a Regional City. Wollongong is an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. Directions are:

- 1 Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core
- 2 Develop active commercial streets that respond to character
- 3 Plan for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive city

Built Form Strategy - An attractive and diverse city in a unique natural and historic setting

Clear planning controls preserve the unique character of Wollongong's precincts. Renewal at all scales is encouraged and this creates an interesting built fabric. Built form variety creates a recognisable city skyline that celebrates the natural setting and responds to human scale. Directions are:

- 1 Grow a legible city that supports a distinctive and evolving character
- 2 Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place
- 3 Elevate the importance of design quality in the City Centre

The Public Domain and connections Strategy - A green and walkable city

A significant increase to the City's tree canopy contributes to a green, walkable and sustainable city. Attractive and revitalised public spaces support an active and healthy community and are a catalyst for growth in the City. The City grid is clear and permeable and facilitates walkability. Directions are:

- 1 Strengthen the structure of the City through a permeable grid that prioritises pedestrians
- 2 Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city
- 3 Improve the functionality and amenity of the street for pedestrians.

On 24 February 2020, Council considered a report on the draft UDF and *Economic Analysis*. Council resolved that:

- 1 *Community and stakeholder feedback be sought on the Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework and Economic Analysis.*
- 2 *Following the consultation period and review of submissions, the draft Planning Proposal and draft Development Control Plan amendments be finalised and reported to Council for consideration.*
- 3 *The suggested LGA-wide retail centres study be included for possible funding within the preparation of the next budget.*

This report presents the engagement received on the draft UDF and Economic Analysis and seeks Council's adoption of the revised UDF. If endorsed, the UDF will form the basis for the preparation of a draft Planning Strategy (including draft Planning Proposal and draft DCP chapter) which will be reported to Council later in 2020.

In terms of the third part of the resolution, Council's Delivery Plan includes funding for the Retail Centres Study, which will commence in the 3rd quarter of 2020-21.

PROPOSAL

Finalisation of the Urban Design Framework

The draft UDF and Economic Analysis were exhibited between 25 February and 27 April 2020. The exhibition arrangements are detailed later in this report. Feedback came from 121 submissions, which included: 98 online survey responses from individuals; eight (8) emailed or posted submissions from individuals and 15 group submissions. A copy of the engagement report which outlines the purpose of the engagement, how we engaged and what we heard, is included in Attachment 2.

Recommendation 1: *Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development* prompted considerable stakeholder feedback, particularly for groups. The community commentary supported the need to increase local jobs, have more availability of appropriate commercial floorspace and to balance the provision of space for jobs with the provision of housing in the City Centre. Commentary from the groups were mostly supportive of the intent of recommendation 1, however some were opposed to defining commercial only zones where residential development was limited or no longer permitted. Some groups who supported commercial only areas proposed alternate locations or scales.

In response to the feedback received throughout the exhibition period Council officers have undertaken to review the Strategies aligned with Recommendation 1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development, including reviewing:

1. The Principles for the location of the commercial only areas
2. Capacity testing of commercial only areas
3. Effectiveness of controls to protect commercial outcomes in the Commercial Core, especially as it relates to sensitive areas eg Crown St Mall and Market Street
4. Test commercial capacity and building envelopes in key areas eg Crown St Mall
5. Check in on market analysis
6. Precinct Vision boundaries and naming

Whilst the review demonstrated that the recommendations of the draft UDF remained sound, amendments have been made to the document in relation to the commercial-only area, precinct boundaries and naming as well as the retail narrative.

The amendments made to the draft UDF aim to increase clarity, correct errors and respond to the results of further testing instigated through the engagement feedback. A summary of the more significant amendments is as follows:

| UDF Section Reference | What looks different |
|--|---|
| What has informed the UDF | Amended to include reference to community engagement undertaken to inform the final document. |
| Economic Analysis pg16 | Minor amendments to reinforce alignment with Council endorsed Economic Development Strategy 2019-29. |
| Urban Design Analysis 'City life' | Deleted reference to 'Culture' in header to change to: <i>The City's identity is diversifying to support city life.</i> Reference to culture found to be out of place, and more appropriately aligned with the culture of the local community and people of Wollongong. |
| Urban Design Analysis 'character and historic qualities of place' | Changed text to reference Aboriginal Heritage and importance of <i>Connecting to Country</i> . Added to 'The Opportunity': <i>Work in partnership with the Traditional Custodians of the Land to determine how their heritage is identified and managed, to ensure we uphold some of the world's longest standing spiritual, historical, social, and educational values.</i> |
| Direction 1 – Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core | Direction has been expanded to further document and clearly communicate identified policy mechanisms to deliver commercial outcomes in the Commercial Core. The narrative for A-Grade Office clusters has been included, including clearly communicating informing Principles and new Strategy 1.2 Safeguard land for an A-Grade Office Towers. Extent of commercial only areas reduced to remove Market St West, include Lowden Block and reduce the depth on Burelli St fronting sites. |
| Direction 2 – Define Thriving retail amended pg72 73 | This Direction has been amended to shift the narrative from 'thriving retail network' to 'active commercial streets'. Adjustments to the description of the Lower Mall – diversity in scale of commercial outcomes. Strategies adjusted to reflect the change in Direction wording. |

| UDF Section Reference | What looks different |
|-----------------------|--|
| Precinct Visions | <p>Based on feedback, there has been some review of Precincts.</p> <p>All Precinct Visions have minor wording adjustments to reflect feedback and strengthen alignment with <i>A City for People</i>.</p> <p>Precinct boundary adjustment have been made to introduce a Health Precinct. Commitment to preparing a Precinct Vision for the Health Precinct is noted for a future partnership with Health NSW and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The Mall Precinct Vision has been amended to better define evolution of the Mall for commercial outcomes as intended.</p> <p>The boundary of the Foreshore and Market Street East to Harbour Precincts have been amended to overlap.</p> <p>Precincts naming convention has been changed to respond to community feedback to reflect location of Precincts</p> <p>Cycling has been integrated into some of the sketch perspectives.</p> |

The UDF has been revised and provided as Attachment 3 to this report. If the revised UDF is endorsed, Council officers will progress with preparation of the City Centre Planning Strategy including the draft Planning Proposal and draft DCP Chapter D13 – Wollongong City Centre. A future Council report will seek approval to submit the draft Planning Proposal to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) for a Gateway Determination to enable exhibition. The report will also seek approval to exhibit the draft Planning Strategy and draft DCP chapter alongside the Planning Proposal as part of the statutory exhibition process. It is anticipated that this exhibition will occur during the first half of 2021, subject to the DPIE Gateway process.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Purpose

The draft UDF and Economic Analysis were exhibited between 25 February and 27 April 2020. The purpose of the engagement was to establish the community's level of support for the key Directions and Strategies of the draft UDF. These were summarised into the following seven Recommendations:

1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development
2. Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support city life
3. Defining a thriving retail network
4. Clearly guiding development to respond to context
5. Elevating the importance of a well-designed City Centre
6. Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around
7. Delivering a high amenity public spaces.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders identified prior to the commencement of the engagement period included:

- Residents in the City Centre
- Residents in the LGA who own land, visit or work in the City Centre
- Community groups and non-government organisations
- Industry stakeholders such as property developers, Peak bodies, University of Wollongong, local businesses, landowners, those in the health, entertainment and hospitality sectors, local architectural and planning firms.

Exhibition Period

A 7-week exhibition period from 25 February to 8 April 2020 was planned. In order to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to requests from stakeholders, the exhibition period was extended to 27 April 2020.

Consultation Activities

The consultation initiatives undertaken during the exhibition period are outlined below:

- Our.Wollongong Project webpage with exhibition materials, FAQs, online survey, etc
- Public notices in the Advertiser and Illawarra Mercury
- Electronic Direct Mail to 4500 'Join The Conversation' subscribers
- Social media via Facebook
- Street signage at 23 locations
- Direct mailout to residents and landowners within the existing City Centre boundary (approx. 7000)
- Postcard letterbox drop to residents in study area (approximately 4500)
- Emails to Government Agency stakeholders
- Copies of draft UDF and Economic Analyses distributed to seven Council libraries and the Customer Service Desk
- Distribution of UDFs and Economic Analyses at Annual Property Council Australia (PCA) Lunch
- Information Stand at Friday Markets, Crown Street Mall, 8 March 2020
- Invitation with short videos to Industry Forums (approximately 150 stakeholders invited)
- Six Industry Stakeholder Forums (held online)
- Follow up meetings with various Industry Stakeholders (PCA, Metro Wollongong, etc)
- Neighbourhood Forum 5 Presentation.

Participation and Responses received

Community members were asked to either complete a detailed online survey or send (via email or post) in a submission. Feedback came from 121 submissions, which included: 98 online survey responses from individuals; eight (8) emailed or posted submissions from individuals and 15 group submissions.

A broad spectrum of the community participated in the survey. Most of the online participants reported that they visited the City and significant proportions either lived or worked in the City Centre. Some owned or operated a business in the City Centre and some owned land.

The most popular reason respondents stated for visiting the City Centre were shopping, eating and drinking. Many also accessed services, attended events or visited for entertainment purposes.

Groups submissions were received from a range of sectors including landowners, property developers, local consultancies, Community Based Organisations (CBO), Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and peak industry bodies.

| Engagement activity | Participation/Responses |
|---|-------------------------|
| Our.Wollongong Project Page visits | 1480 |
| Our.Wollongong Project Page – users who downloaded document/s | 454 |
| Online survey via the Our.Wollongong Project Page | 98 |
| Information Stand at Friday Markets, Crown Street Mall | ~ 120 |
| 6 Industry Stakeholder Forums (online) | 31 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Formal submissions (Individual) | 8 |
| Formal submissions (group) | 15 |

Analysis of the engagement response

Overall, the majority of individuals and groups supported each of the recommendations of the draft UDF. This reaffirmed the community's ongoing support for the vision of *A City for People* being a people-orientated, sustainable and liveable city.

Several notable themes from the engagement feedback include:

- Support for better quality and more environmentally sustainable, design of buildings and the public domain (dissatisfaction with the quality and impact of many recent developments)
- Support for a liveable, active, vibrant city
- Contention around commercial only areas (wanting less or more)
- Uncertainty about future of retail, particularly in light of COVID-19
- Dissatisfaction with current availability of parking and the perceived impacts of this
- Concern raised around Council's Development Approval processes and whether there are the in-house design skills to deliver against a design-focused policy
- Scepticism about the political will for the recommendations being implemented
- Desire to see cohesive and effective implementation in partnership across Council and with industry.

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Engagement

Open dialogue has been maintained with the DPIE – Southern Regional Team with a series of working sessions/meetings held.

Engagement Report

The *City Centre Planning Review Stage 1 Engagement Report: Urban Design Framework* can be found in Attachment 2. It is the intention of this report that Councillors note the community feedback contained in this report.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 Goal 2 'We have an innovative and sustainable community' and Goal 3 'Wollongong is a creative and vibrant city'. It specifically delivers on the following:

| Community Strategic Plan | Delivery Program 2018-2022 | Operational Plan 2020-21 |
|--|---|---|
| Strategy | 4 Year Action | Operational Plan Actions |
| 2.1.2 Grow the national competitiveness of Metro Wollongong to drive economic growth, employment and diversification of the region's economy | 2.1.2.2 Progress implementation of a City for People and its accompanying Implementation Plan | Undertake the City Centre Planning Review and Design Review arising from the Wollongong City Centre – Public Spaces Public Life Implementation Plan |

This work is a direct delivery of *A City for People*, aligning directly with Council's Operational Plan.

Economic Development Strategy (2019-2029)

On 23 September 2019, Council adopted an Economic Development Strategy following its exhibition. The recommendations of the UDF are consistent with the aspirations of the Economic Development Strategy. Importantly, the recommended changes to planning controls to prioritise commercial development in the City Centre directly support the jobs target and the transition to a higher order, knowledge-based economy.

Draft Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement for People Strategy

The draft Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement for People Strategy is currently under preparation. This project will test and incorporate recommendations from the UDF, Economic analysis and a number of transport strategies and plans in order to develop a future transport network for Wollongong City Centre that supports the vision described in *A City for People*. Initial community input was sought in parallel with the exhibition of the draft UDF and Economic Analysis. Transport and parking relate modelling is underway. The draft Access and Movement for People Strategy will be reported and exhibited separately.

Other related projects

The UDF has been informed by a number of other projects, including the Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037, Creative Wollongong 2019-2024, Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020–2025, draft Wollongong Cycling Strategy (exhibited), draft Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy (exhibited) and draft Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan (exhibited).

The UDF will provide the framework to support the preparation of the draft City Centre Planning Strategy, Planning Proposal, draft City Centre Development Control Plan chapter and master planning processes for identified key sites.

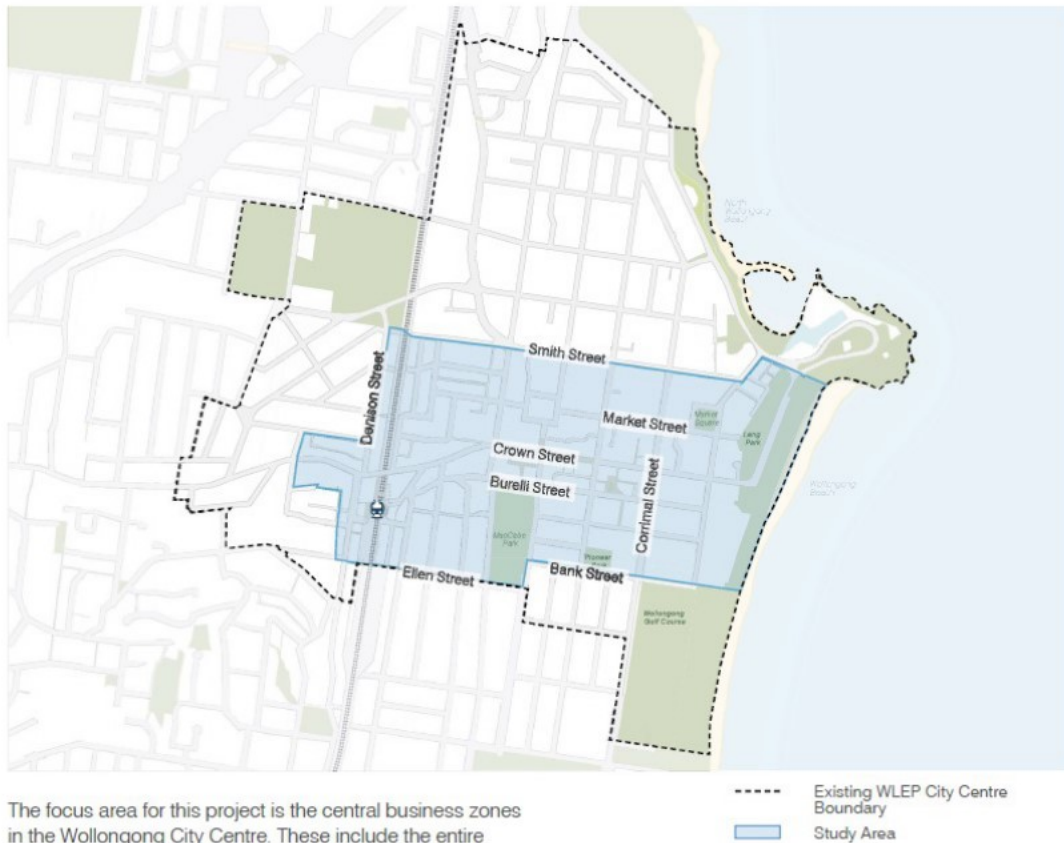
The information and data contained in the UDF and supporting studies will also inform the draft Housing Strategy, draft Tourism Accommodation Review (in preparation) and draft Retail Centres Study (to be prepared in 2021).

CONCLUSION

The vision for Wollongong City Centre, defined by *A City for People*, was endorsed by Council in May 2016. An Urban Design Framework and Economic Analysis has been developed to understand how the current suite of planning policy aligns with the endorsed vision for the City.

The Urban Design Framework provides recommended Objectives and Directions to inform policy recommendations across land use, built form and public domain and connections. Council sought community and stakeholder feedback on the Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework, and Economic Analysis. This feedback has been used to revise and finalise the UDF. Council's endorsement of the revised Urban Design Framework is sought as a foundation document on which to finalise a Planning Strategy for Wollongong City Centre, together with an associated Draft Planning Proposal and Draft City Centre DCP chapter.

Study Area



The focus area for this project is the central business zones in the Wollongong City Centre. These include the entire Commercial Core (B3) and Mixed Use (B4) zones.

Generally speaking the area is defined by the Coast to the East, Ellen street to the South, Denison Street to the West and Smith Street to the North.

OUR WOLLONGONG

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



City Centre Planning Review

Stage 1 Engagement Report:

Urban Design Framework

August 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Draft Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework (UDF) presents recommendations that form the basis for changes to the existing Wollongong City Centre Planning Controls (including Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 and Chapter D13 of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009). Council asked the community to comment on the draft UDF to determine their level of support for its recommendations.

This Engagement Report seeks to reflect the qualitative feedback received and specifically the community's ideas on ensuring that Wollongong continues to grow as an extraordinary City into the future. The report is structured to present the community's response to each recommendation, outlining the overall level of support, additional reasons given for individuals' and groups' responses, and a selection of quotes that illustrate these reasons.

All feedback has been reviewed by the Project Team and some groups have been followed up for clarification or further information. The feedback will inform the refinement of the Urban Design Framework.

All feedback received relating to traffic matters, including strengthening connections in the City Centre, active transport, walking, driving and parking, will be considered as part of the *Access and Movement For People* project that was open for consultation at the same time.

Community engagement on the draft UDF and supporting economic analysis ran from 24 February to 27 April 2020. Numerous promotional activities were undertaken to encourage and support the community to provide feedback through an online survey, written submissions, meetings and stakeholder forums.

A total of 106 surveys and written submissions were received from individuals, as well as 15 submissions from groups. Groups who made submissions included landowners, property developers, local architecture and planning firms, community-based organisations (CBO), non-government organisations (NGO), and peak bodies.

Overall, the majority of individuals and groups supported each of the recommendations of the UDF. This reaffirmed the community's ongoing support for the vision of *A City for People* for Wollongong City Centre to be a people-orientated, sustainable and liveable city.

The directions of the draft UDF were tested using 7 key recommendations:

1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development
2. Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support city life
3. Defining a thriving retail network
4. Clearly guiding development to respond to context
5. Elevating the importance of a well-designed City Centre
6. Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around
7. Delivering a high amenity public spaces.

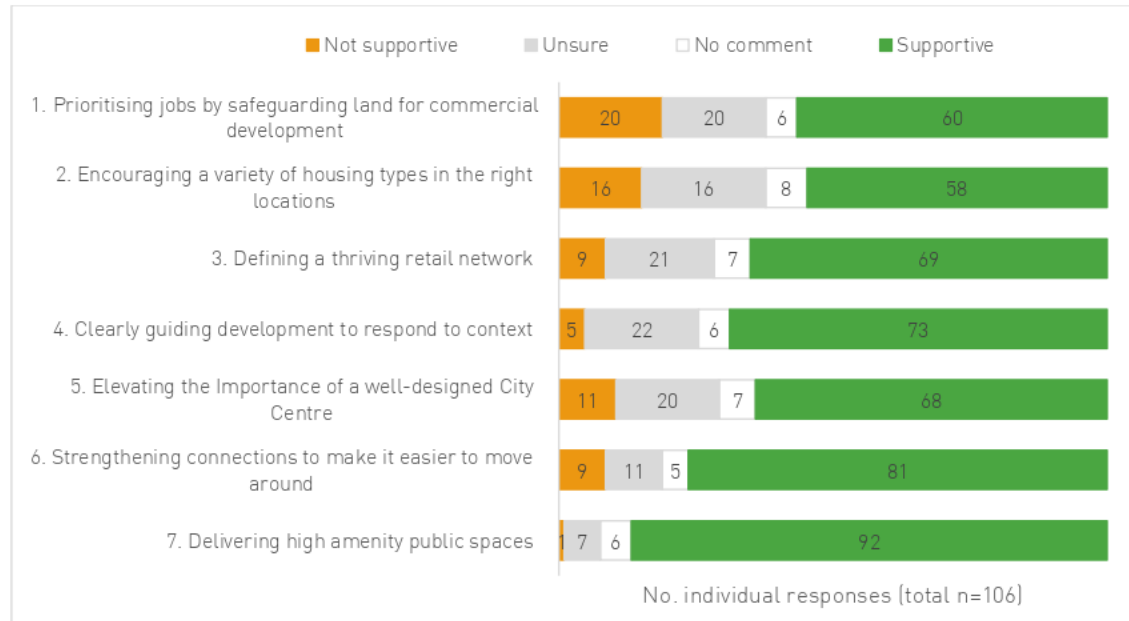
Several recurring themes were discerned from the engagement feedback:

- Support for better quality, and more environmentally sustainable, design of buildings and the public domain (dissatisfaction with the quality and impact of many recent developments)
- Support for a liveable, active, vibrant city
- Contention around commercial only areas (wanting less or more)
- Uncertainty about the future of retail, particularly in light of COVID-19
- Dissatisfaction with current availability of parking and the perceived impacts of this

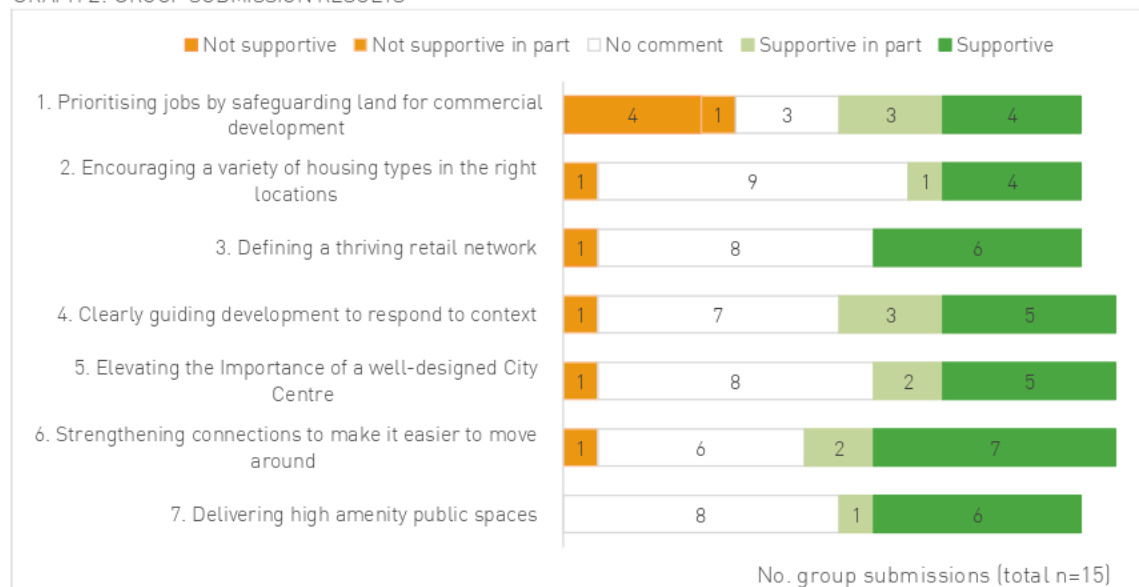
- Concern raised around WCC's development approval processes, and whether there are the in-house design skills to deliver against a design-focused policy
- Scepticism about the political will for the recommendations being implemented
- Desire to see cohesive and effective implementation in partnership across Council and with industry

A summary of the feedback against each recommendation is illustrated in the following graphs:

GRAPH 1. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION RESULTS



GRAPH 2. GROUP SUBMISSION RESULTS



Recommendation 1: *Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development* was the most contentious recommendation, particularly for groups. The community commentary supported the need to increase local jobs, have more availability of appropriate commercial floorspace, and to balance the provision of space for jobs with the provision of housing in the City Centre. Commentary from the groups was mostly supportive of the intent of Recommendation 1, however some did not support defining commercial-only zones where residential development was limited or no longer permitted. Some groups who supported commercial-only areas proposed alternate locations or scales.

BACKGROUND

In 2016 'A City for People', our vision for Wollongong City Centre was endorsed. A key recommendation was to test planning policy to ensure it aligned with delivering the City Centre vision – a City Centre that is *people-orientated, sustainable and liveable*.

Wollongong City Council then undertook detailed urban design, economic and planning analysis to review the planning controls. This work has come together in the draft Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework (UDF). The UDF includes detailed testing of existing planning policy and urban design analysis of the City Centre to precinct scale. This work was supported by economic analysis and forecasting prepared by SGS Economics and Planning. At its meeting of 24 February 2020, Council resolved to exhibit the draft UDF and Economics Analysis for public comment.

The recommendations presented in the UDF form the basis for drafting changes to City Centre planning controls. Feedback received during this engagement will inform the refinement of the UDF in order to progress with the next stage of the Planning Review, the preparation of draft planning controls (a renewed Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan Chapter).

This Engagement Report will be submitted to Council with the final Urban Design Framework. Once endorsed, the final Urban Design Framework will inform the development of draft Wollongong City Centre Planning Controls.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders identified prior to the start of engagement included:

- Residents in the City Centre
- Residents in the Local Government Area who own land, visit or work in the City Centre
- Community groups and non-government organisations
- Industry stakeholders such as property developers, peak bodies, University of Wollongong, local businesses, landowners, those in the health, entertainment and hospitality sectors, local architectural and consulting businesses.

METHODS

A 7-week exhibition period from 24 February to 8 April 2020 was planned initially. In response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and requests from stakeholders, the exhibition period was extended to 27 April.

Communication and engagement activities undertaken included:

- Our.Wollongong 'Join the Conversation' project webpage with exhibition materials, FAQs, online survey
- Public notices in the Advertiser and Illawarra Mercury
- E-newsletter to 'Join The Conversation' subscribers (4500 people)
- Social media posts (Facebook)
- Street signage at 23 locations
- Direct mailout to residents and landowners within the City Centre (approx. 7000)
- Postcard letterbox dropped to residents in study area (approx. 4500)
- Email to government agency stakeholders
- Copies of UDF and Economic Analyses documents distributed to seven Council libraries and Council's Customer Service Centre
- Distribution of UDF and Economic Analyses documents at annual Property Council Australia (PCA) lunch
- Information stand at Friday Markets, Crown Street Mall, 8 March 2020
- Email invitation to Industry Forums, with short explanatory videos (approx. 150 stakeholders invited)
- Six online Industry Forums
- Follow-up meetings with various industry stakeholders (PCA, Metro Wollongong)
- Presentation to Neighbourhood Forum 5

A key component was engagement with industry stakeholders. Due to social distancing requirements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, this engagement was conducted via online forums. Invitations to these forums were supplemented with a series of short explanatory videos to communicate the key messages of the UDF.

Representatives of 31 business, government and non-government organisations participated across the six one-hour forums. The forums were well received by participants who appreciated the open exchange of ideas and opportunity to clarify aspects of the UDF and Economic Analysis.

Several follow-up conversations were had with stakeholders after the forums to discuss aspects of the information on exhibition.

The forums and follow-up conversations informed the detailed submissions received from industry stakeholders during the exhibition.



RESULTS

Engagement Participation

Community members were asked to either complete the online survey or send in a submission via email or post. Feedback came from 121 submissions, which included 98 online survey responses from individuals, 8 emailed or posted submissions from individuals and 15 group submissions.

| Engagement Activity | Participation/Responses |
|---|-------------------------|
| Our Wollongong project webpage visits | 1480 |
| Our Wollongong project webpage – users who downloaded document/s | 454 |
| Online survey responses via the Our Wollongong project webpage | 98 |
| Information stand at Friday Markets, Crown Street Mall – no. of attendees | 120 |
| Online industry stakeholder forums – no. of attendees | 31 |
| Formal submissions from individuals | 8 |
| Formal submissions from groups | 15 |

Participant Demographics

A broad spectrum of the community participated in the online survey. There were respondents in all categories from 18-24 years to 70-84 years, however most were in the 35-49 years age group.

Most of the online participants reported that they visited the City and many either lived or worked in the city centre. Some owned or ran a business in the City Centre, and some owned land.

The most popular reasons respondents stated for visiting the City Centre were shopping, eating and drinking. Many also accessed services, attended events or visited for entertainment purposes.

Group submissions were received from a range of sectors including landowners, property developers, local architecture and planning consultancies, community-based organisations (CBO), non-government organisations (NGO) and peak industry bodies.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Summary

Overall, the majority of individuals and groups supported each of the recommendations of the UDF and provided detailed commentary on this. This response re-affirmed the community's ongoing support for the vision of *A City for People* and desire to see it implemented.

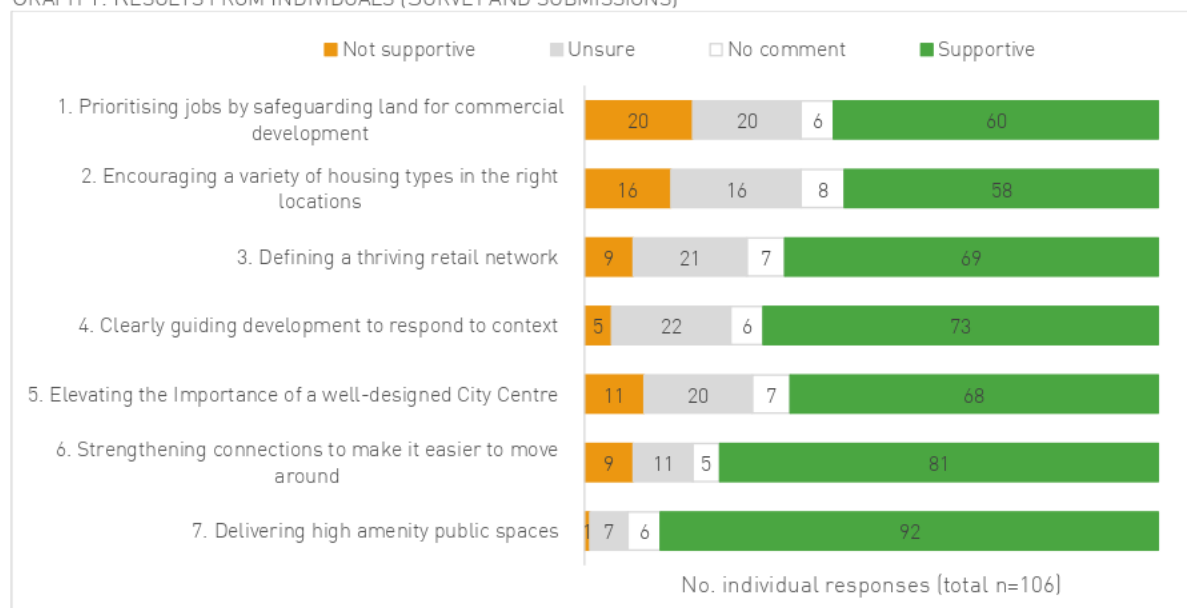
"I think this is a great plan for our City and a step in the right direction that rectifies many poor policies, such as the continuous culling of trees in the CBD, and the requirement for new developments to have ground floor retail, even if they are far from the commercial area. The focus on making the City more pedestrian and bike-friendly and environmentally conscious is impressive and sets a great precedent for the future direction of our City. It is important that the City continues to grow and become a more pleasant and affordable place to live for everyone. I don't see the point of decreasing height limits, as sunlight and views can be preserved with smart architectural design, such as curved roofs. I hope that in ten years, the CBD will be a safer, car-free city with bike lanes, more buses, a better railway station, more parks and better public spaces, and more apartments and offices for people to live and work."

The survey asked respondents if they supported the following recommendations:

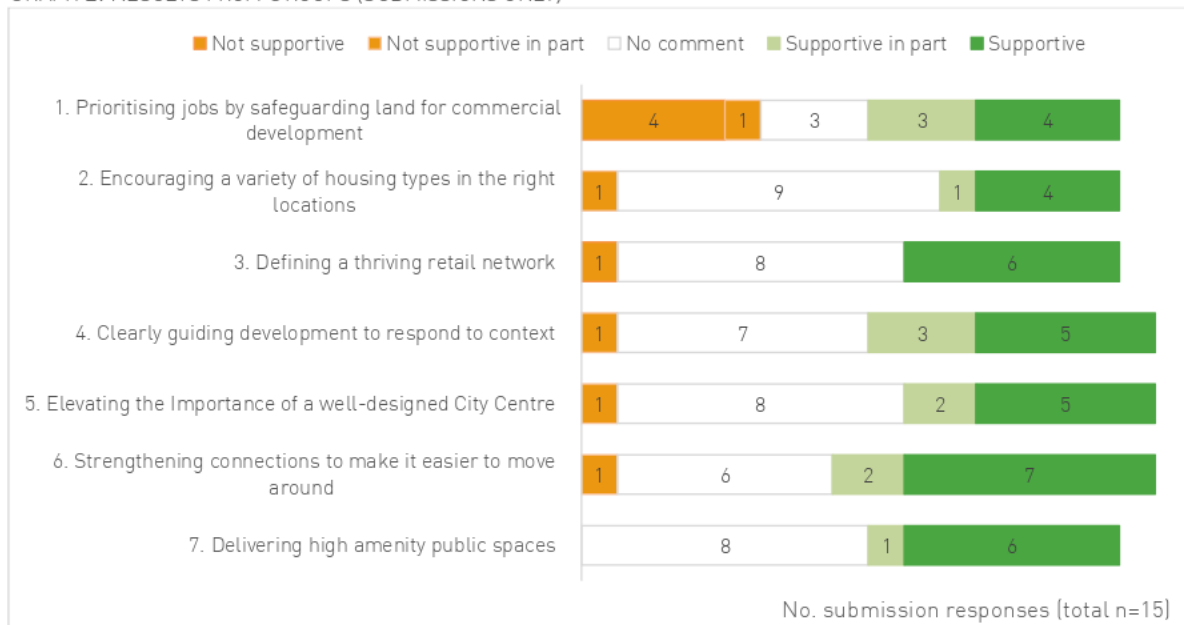
1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development
2. Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support city life
3. Defining a thriving retail network
4. Clearly guiding development to respond to context
5. Elevating the importance of a well-designed City Centre
6. Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around
7. Delivering a high amenity public spaces.

A summary of the quantitative feedback against each recommendation is illustrated in the following graphs. The group submissions did not necessarily structure their responses to articulate a level of support for every recommendation, but rather made responses to the recommendation with which they were most concerned. This explains the substantial amount of 'no comment' responses from the group submissions.

GRAPH 1. RESULTS FROM INDIVIDUALS (SURVEY AND SUBMISSIONS)



GRAPH 2. RESULTS FROM GROUPS (SUBMISSIONS ONLY)



Recommendation 1: *Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development* was the most contentious recommendation, particularly for groups. The community commentary supported the need to increase local jobs, have more availability of appropriate commercial floorspace, and to balance the provision of space for jobs with the provision of housing in the City Centre. Commentary from the groups was mostly supportive of the intent of this recommendation, however some did not support defining commercial-only zones where residential development was limited or no longer permitted. Some groups who supported commercial-only areas proposed alternate locations or scales. This is further detailed in the following pages.

[Key themes](#)

Several themes were discerned from the engagement feedback.

- Support for better quality, and more environmentally sustainable, design of buildings and the public domain (dissatisfaction with the quality and impact of many recent developments)
- Support for a liveable, active, vibrant City
- Contention around commercial-only areas (wanting less or more)
- Uncertainty about future of retail, particularly in-light of COVID-19
- Dissatisfaction with current availability of parking and the perceived impacts of this
- Concern raised around Council's DA approval processes, and whether there are the in-house design skills to deliver against a design-focused policy
- Scepticism about the political will for the recommendations being implemented
- Desire to see cohesive and effective implementation in partnership across Council and with industry.

Analysis of each Recommendation

Respondents were asked about their level of support for each recommendation in the UDF. This section presents each recommendation and provides detailed commentary from respondents to each.

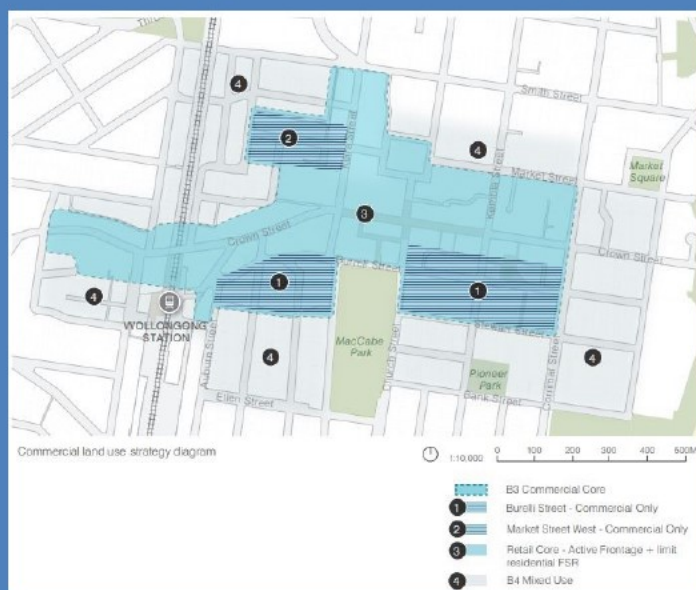
Recommendation 1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF revealed that future jobs growth is compromised by the current planning controls, which allow residential development throughout our City Centre. Also, great cities have vibrant and growing economies. Planning policy needs to establish a resilient commercial core that safeguards land for commercial development.

The Review recommended that planning policy prioritise job generating development in the commercial core by:

1. Preserving the existing supply of commercial floorspace
2. Allowing mixed-use development in parts of the commercial core with a limitation on the proportion of residential floorspace
3. Defining commercial only areas for large and small office buildings



What this might look like?

- The commercial core is smaller and more concentrated
- Residential development is limited, and in some areas, no longer permitted

Excerpt from survey (Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

Response from Individuals



The majority of individuals supported this recommendation. Reasons provided include:

- To have jobs close to where people live and encourage jobs growth
- To have more commercial floorspace available in the City Centre
- The City Centre has enough residences with the recent development and parking issues worsening
- To create a vibrant atmosphere for shoppers
- Encourage a range of uses and revitalise the City Centre
- Avoid conflict between residents and retail, entertainment and commercial services
- To concentrate the current excessive spread of commercial development
- Need the balance of jobs, city living and the environment

Other comments in support of this recommendation included:

"As a business owner with premises on Crown Street it has been difficult to find sufficient commercial premises as we expand the team. Adding to this frustrating experience is dealing with absent landlords with no connection to the Illawarra who are happy to let their buildings deteriorate instead of investing in maintaining them."

"The function of Wollongong is changing. We are no longer the retail hub of the Illawarra, but rather a commercial centre incorporating head office centres, law, government departments, finance and the like. I have no doubt that these centres should locate around the mall and strive for the centre of town."

Approximately a fifth did not support and another fifth were unsure. Some reasons for either not supporting or being unsure about this recommendation included:

- Didn't support all three aspects on how to prioritise job-generating development in the commercial core
- Different boundaries for the commercial core, such as commercial-only cores in other precincts
- The recommendation was not noticeably different to what currently exists
- Concern over current vacant retail space and future of retail
- Concern over demand for commercial space
- Concern over inadequate parking
- Already significant residential in the commercial core
- Concern over sterile environment and safety at night with lack of people on streets
- Inadequate access to Central Business District
- Concern about current level of developments in the City Centre and declining green space

Some typical responses that didn't support this recommendation included:

"I do not support the idea of a purely commercial zone in the centre of the City. Having a mixture of uses provides greater community-level surveillance and prevents the emergence of dead zones around commercial precincts as we see in so many Australian cities."

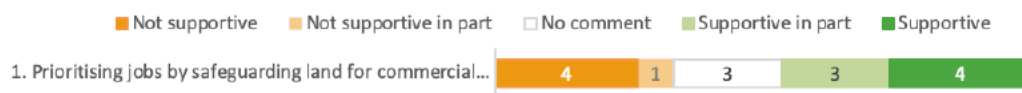
"I agree with a more concentrated commercial centre, with less derelict areas on the fringes. But I am not sure I agree with less residential - people bring heart to the City from shopping, eateries and entertainment."

Some typical responses from those who were unsure whether to support the recommendation included:

"Retail shops are suffering from online competition. There are lots of 'For Lease' signs up in the CBD and yet few landlords willing to participate in the Renew Wollongong program to bring artists and social enterprises to the City Centre to reinvigorate it. On the one hand, I support having a commercial centre, but on the other hand it seems to be dying off. How can it further be supported so that we have a City Centre that people want to visit and spend in?"

"Preservation of employment lands does seem useful. I'd like to know why these areas in particular? If the major employment generators are the uni and hospital, could it be better to have the commercial areas in their direction? Perhaps north of the current small Keira St commercial area, closer to station? Along Flinders St?"

Response from Groups



Most groups provided feedback on Recommendation 1. It was the most contentious of all the recommendations. All but one of the groups were supportive of the intent, to prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core, however groups differed on how this should occur.

Based on the findings of the UDF and economic analysis, most groups were supportive of defining commercial-only areas where residential development would no longer be permitted. Examples of supportive comments included:

"The demand for commercial floorspace significantly exceeds feasible capacity under current market and planning conditions. We support the conclusion that this will likely result in higher commercial rents in Wollongong City Centre. We also believe this will potentially displace jobs growth to other areas in the region, or to Sydney. We believe a forecast lack of commercial space makes it difficult - if not impossible - to attract larger professional and administrative services organisations to Wollongong."

"We support the need to improve the feasibility of commercial development. The establishment of a commercial core (or zones within the CBD) where residential development is subject to tight control, or proscribed, is one option to achieve that outcome - but other incentives or mechanisms may also exist."

Some groups suggested that the commercial-only core be larger, smaller or in different locations across the City Centre. Examples included:

- A cluster of key sites surrounding the Station that provide a "front door" to the City of Wollongong, as well as a leading point to both the commercial core and the medical / education precinct
- Not supporting the proposed Market St West commercial-only area (#2)
- Extending commercial-only areas West past the railway station or further north across to Crown Street

"The lower part of Burelli Street from the Council building up to MacCabe Park would be a good area to keep commercial only. This is already happening organically, however the other parts of Burelli Street up towards the train station being more problematic for the industry. We are unsure there will be the demand for commercial only for the whole length of Burelli Street and IF the demand will be there for A-Grade office as suggested, especially in light of the recent COVID-19 crisis."

Some groups' commentary made it clear that while they supported the prioritising of jobs growth in the City Centre, they were reluctant to support recommendations which removed residential completely:

"We do not consider that residential development need necessarily occur in the heart of the CBD to support City life, given the close proximity of B4 Mixed-Use zoning. We submit that only limited residential development should occur in the commercial core. Council should conserve the integrity of the CBD in the medium-long term through this planning review by confining a significant majority of residential development to B4 Mixed-Use zones."

Some peak bodies, property developers and consulting firms did not support defining commercial-only zones where residential development was limited or no longer permitted. Reasons provided included:

- The residential uplift that has occurred around the Wollongong CBD creates vibrancy and economic opportunities and so clear signals need to be sent to the property industry to encourage the increased development of both. As such, residential development should not be prohibited in the commercial core, but rather minimised.
- Stifle future capital investment and renewal of the City Centre by reducing land use flexibility and negatively impacting development feasibility
- The supposed commercial floorspace gap is likely to be overstated
- The location of the proposed commercial core does not reflect the location of the key economic anchors
- Establishing a mixed-use core would be a more effective and efficient response to the challenges being faced by Wollongong's commercial office sector
- There is a higher chance of sterilizing that area as long as demand is low
- A mix of land uses should be sustained. Buildings should be designed to suit the site and context and for flexible uses of floor space to be adaptable to change.

Groups, both in support and against a commercial-only core had other suggestions on how to strengthen a commercial core:

- Increase demand for commercial space and in this vein, "more resources need to be put into attracting businesses to the Wollongong CBD"
- Use incentives to increase commercial development feasibility
- Prohibit / disincentivise future commercial development outside of the City Centre

The view that this recommendation is significant yet sensitive nature is illustrated by a quote from one group:

"The UDF outlines one approach to the next 20 years of infrastructure and economic development for Wollongong, though some of its recommendations – particularly the development of a commercial-only core – are not without risk and will require political courage."

Recommendation 2. Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support city life

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF revealed that current planning policy does not make clear where residential development should be located. Wollongong City Council's policy allows residential development above the ground floor throughout the whole City Centre in the form of 'shop-top housing'. However, some areas need to preserve more commercial floorspace for jobs, others may benefit from having residential development at ground.

Also, great cities are liveable because they balance living, working and recreational activities effectively. Well-designed and located residential development supports the vitality and resilience of a City Centre and offers choice to residents.

The Review recommended that planning policy guide the location and proportion of residential development by:

1. limiting residential development throughout the commercial core to prioritise job generating development
2. removing the requirement for non-residential ground floors in the mixed-use zone
3. exploring the development of an affordable housing scheme



What this might look like?

- Residential development is limited throughout the commercial core zone
- The supporting mixed-use zone allows residential at ground level
- An affordable housing scheme is developed to deliver better housing choice in the City Centre

Excerpt from survey (Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

Response from Individuals



Approximately three-fifths of individuals supported this recommendation. Further to the findings of the UDF, some reasons individuals provided in support of this recommendation were:

- Too many ground-floor shops are vacant and the 'shop-top' housing building type does not appeal to businesses
- The requirement for non-residential on the ground floor has dispersed retail businesses and commercial services too widely
- Mixed-use residential and commercial leads to conflicts
- A shortage of affordable housing in Wollongong
- Affordable housing provides a mix of people with proximity to the City Centre

Some comments from those that supported this recommendation included:

"The non-residential ground floors don't appear to be appealing to business as so many remain vacant for long periods. The model doesn't work. Affordable housing mixed in with other styles is a very sensible approach."

"I completely support the need for affordable housing in close proximity to the commercial core. Affordable housing is simply a necessity in supporting people to live, particularly young people and those on lower income. Having affordable housing close to the commercial core can help reduce commuting and thus environmental impacts of driving."

"I don't consider shop-tops as mixed use. Perhaps the ratio of commercial and residential can be more even. Thus allowing more space for business and residential to coincide. But strategic placement of housing and business can be a good thing. For instances, late night clubs and bars. Nightlife in general."

"It's a pity that non-residential grounds cannot be filled with viable businesses. But better they be occupied with residents than left empty."

"Mixed-use residential and commercial, particularly residential and restaurants/bars/late-night cafes lead to conflict and a reduced quality of life."

Less than a fifth did not support this recommendation and slightly more than a fifth were unsure.

Reasons for not supporting or being unsure about this recommendation included:

- Respondents didn't support all three components of the recommendation
- Misinterpretation of the recommendations, i.e. some people thought that 'removing the requirement for non-residential ground floors in the mixed-use zone' implied no residential to ground floor
- Requiring further information to decide whether to support the recommendation of residential to ground floor because it becomes 'private space'
- Concern about current level of development
- Perception that it is too late to restrict residential now
- Concern over availability of parking
- Not supporting an affordable housing scheme in the City Centre
- Confusion over affordable housing being solely social housing

Some typical responses from those that did not support this recommendation included:

"Non-residential on the ground level opens up areas for general use. When it's residential at ground level it feels like they are "private" areas, and there is little welcoming or street appeal."

"As before, residential in the core is historically shown to make centres more vibrant. Currently, we have an oversupply of commercial spaces to lease and this plan is back-to-front. It should have an emphasis on residential in the core. I agree with point 2 and 3 to not limit mixed-use and also promote social housing."

Some typical "unsure" responses included additional suggestions, such as:

"I support a limited amount of 'shop-top housing' in the commercial zone in the form of high-rise developments, whereby the shop bottom can utilise pedestrian-heavy traffic for the promotion of business development while offering close, convenient residential living to the City Centre."

"Come up with a combination of these ideas: an affordable, high-rise living arrangement. There are plenty of architecturally beautiful and natural living possibilities (shared cooking areas, and communal rooftop gardens) which highlight communal benefits and could be used in conjunction with visions such as this without detriment to the commercial core centre."

Response from Groups

■ Not supportive ■ Not supportive in part ■ No comment ■ Supportive in part ■ Supportive



Less than half of the groups provided comment on this recommendation. Of those that provided comment, the majority supported this recommendation.

A comment in support of this recommendation was:

"We support Council's recommendation to remove the existing requirement that all new residential developments include ground-floor commercial space in mixed-use zones. When this occurs outside the commercial core, it dilutes the CBD and draws retail, food offerings and other consumer services outside of town, requiring customers to drive or walk long distances."

"We believe the City is doing a relatively good job of providing a good mix and variety of housing in the city centre. Developments like the Signature and Avante address the upper end of the mix and there are others like Skye that address the middle to lower end. There are developments underway that would fit the lower end of the scale."

"However, agree with strategy 3.3 (UDF) that there could be more encouragement for affordable housing and there is a lack of student housing. The challenge here is improving the connectivity of the University and the City Centre to make student housing more practical."

In contrast, some groups did not support part of the recommendation. One group who didn't support the UDF strategy to leverage public benefit through development stated:

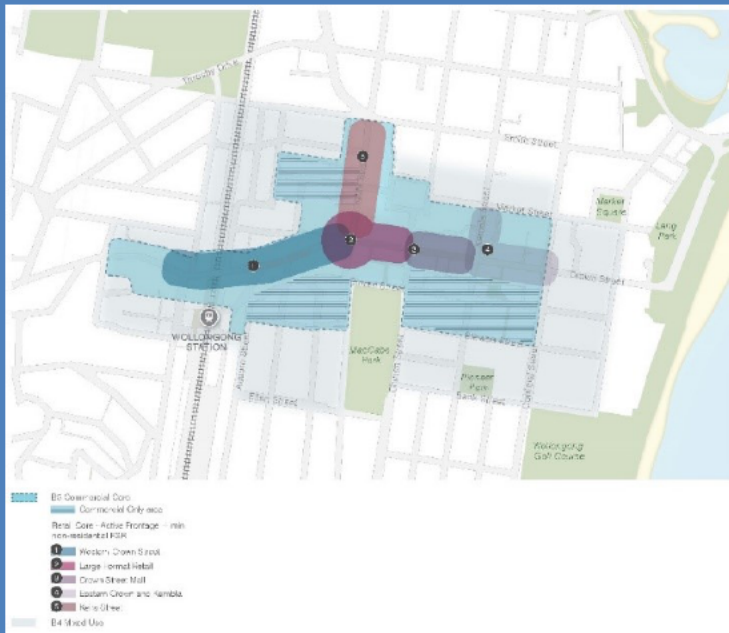
*"Existing s7.12 arrangements are adequate if well managed and planned by Council.
...existing incentives for affordable housing are adequate. We oppose additional levies
without zoning uplift."*

Recommendation 3. Defining a thriving retail network

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF revealed that the current planning policy requiring non-residential uses at ground floor has led to retail uses being dispersed across the City Centre. This oversupply of retail space leads to inactive pockets in the City. Also, great cities have a range of retail offers, day and night. Successful retail precincts make the most of their distinctive characters and contribute to high quality public spaces by having active street frontages.

1. Only requiring non-residential uses on ground floor on key retail streets where there is good pedestrian traffic and access to public transport
2. Protecting the character and role of key retail streets and precincts
3. Delivering a balance between night-time economy and residential living

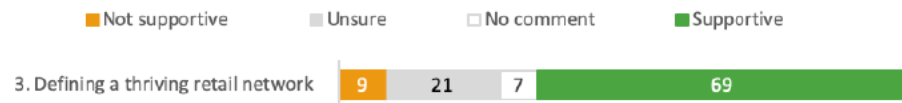


What this might look like?

- the fine grain character, streetscape and solar amenity of key retail streets are protected
- development in the supporting Mixed-Use zone is not required to have a non-residential ground floor
- clear policy addresses real and perceived conflicts between residents and city noise

Excerpt from survey (Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

Response from Individuals



A majority of individuals supported this recommendation, with a small proportion unsupportive. Further to the findings of the UDF, some reasons why individuals supported this recommendation were:

- Bring all age groups into the City Centre
- Addresses the real and perceived conflicts between residents and noise

Some comments in support of this recommendation included:

"I can see the complete sense in this strategy. Wollongong is very fragmented and therefore lacks impact for commerce and retail, so I wholeheartedly support this policy. I also believe that if developers are able to replace retail/commercial space on the ground level with garden courtyard apartments, they will see this as favourable because there has always been a high demand for ground floor apartments especially if they have their own separate gate entrance - this is highly favourable."

"100% agree with this idea. Wollongong MUST attract commerce. Look at Shellharbour City. We are dying here and they are the winners. Myer gone. David Jones?? Hope it does not go. Wollongong must survive and be a modern hub. We must revitalise our district."

"The current requirement for non-residential ground floor is visibly not working, with large numbers of empty shop fronts around town. I also think the non-residential ground floor in new blocks in residential streets reduces the sense of a safe residential community in what should be a residential street. I also support protecting the character and role of key retail streets and precincts."

"The large number of vacant ground floor locations suggests that business isn't interested."

Some typical responses unsupportive of this recommendation included:

"Retail in terms of shopping in person is slowly becoming redundant. Large areas such as the Crown Street Mall should not be reserved for the banal reminiscent culture of shopping. Look at Fortitude Valley and the layout of Brisbane for example."

Many individuals were unsure about this recommendation, for reasons including:

- Respondents didn't support all three components of the recommendation
- Concern over current state of mall
- Additional suggestions stating night-time economy functions are required to make the Mall successful
- Parking considered to be key driver to thriving retail
- Uncertainty over future of retail sector
- Required further information to form their opinion.

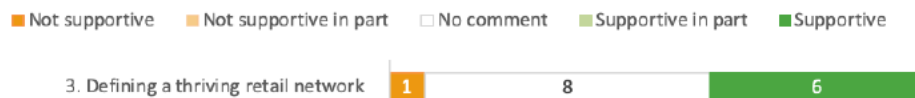
Some "unsure" responses included:

"With the shift to more experienced based retail (food, music, etc) and less shopping (clothes, shoes, etc) with the advent of the internet shopping experience and next day delivery, I'm unsure what a retail precinct even looks like in 5-10 years."

"The analysis (as summarised above) points towards non-residential uses at ground floor as the culprit to a dispersed and over-supplied retail land use. What about rents? It's obvious that rents are a key driver to where the night-economy in particular sets up.... it's not setting up in the core where higher patronage and hence rents occur. It's why the night economy is on the periphery - it generally doesn't open during the day (or, if it does, it has very low patronage) and can't afford the rent and pay staff. Food retail is barely evident in the mall proper - particularly after 5pm (unless you get food vans in en mass on special nights). The night economy operates west and east of the mall.... sadly, the mall is the shadowy gauntlet you need to cross unscathed to get to the other precinct."

"If we continue to have a mall, it should not be located where retail shops are closed at night - no wonder it is dead and perceived as dangerous. The mall should be lined with businesses which are open at night - restaurants, cafes and bars. Perhaps Crown street should be re-opened and Keira street could become the mall between Crown and Smith?"

Response from Groups



Almost half of the groups supported the recommendation to define a thriving retail network that responds to character and supports a range of offers. The majority did not provide comment. One group was not supportive.

Comments in support of this recommendation included:

"The current retail precinct is problematic and too long in length to be able to sustain and activate. Retailers are gradually moving up to the upper end of the precinct and vacancies are increasing by the day in the lower part of the Mall. This is a real issue and the acknowledgement of this by Council is vital to reshaping the lower end of the Mall and encouraging more commercial office and mixed-use developments in this area. Also considering the current COVID-19 crisis, this is even more critical with the retail sector taking a hit and businesses impacted."

"...The night time economy is also lacking in this area, and as mentioned above we have a real opportunity to make the lower end of the Mall into a more vibrant, inviting space which allows eateries, cafes and bars open up to the street and create a great a place that people want to visit and spend time in. Especially in light of tourism, there is a real opportunity to reshape this part of Crown Street to make it more inviting."

"Consolidating our retail precinct to the already established areas on Crown St and Keira St achieves the aim of re-establishing a thriving retail network from the disconnected one as it is now. Furthermore, it might be worth looking into how the existing vacant non-residential shops throughout the city outside of the core may be able to be repurposed to further consolidate the retail precinct."

"While there will be renewal over time, we support an approach to maintain the 'fine grain' low rise character of these precincts."

Other groups suggested the following:

"The retail core should focus on the areas between Keira and Church Streets."

"Provide incentives for commercial services to occupy ground floor offices in the vacant shops."

"Adopt Melbourne model of new residents accepting pre-existing noisy uses"

The group unsupportive of strategies detailed in this recommendation stated:

"We recommend that Council seek to consolidate retail trade along Crown Street Mall, which would be incentivised if Council abolished the City Centre Levy applied to these premises in order to put downward pressure on rents and encourage greater retail activity in the City Centre."

"We suggest that Crown Street Mall should instead comprise of ground-level retail frontage and low-rise office development above, instead of the residential space that is being recommended."

"We recommend that micro-precincts be devised for the Mall itself, to establish an alfresco dining zone, along with the existing entertainment zone, and a family friendly zone where children can play."

Recommendation 4. Clearly guiding development to respond to context

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF revealed that current planning policy is confusing and doesn't clearly guide development to respond to the unique character or natural setting of the City Centre. Also great cities celebrate their unique qualities. These qualities can occur at a street, precinct or city scale. A place-based design approach is required to get the bulk and scale of buildings right across the different parts of our City Centre.

The Review recommended that planning policy be updated to clearly guide development to be right for place by ensuring building envelope controls:

1. Respond to the City Centre's natural setting
2. Support the desired future character of City Centre Precincts



What this might look like?

- place based policy replaces generic envelope controls
- height and floor-space ratio controls are better aligned to guide the overall form of the City Centre

Excerpt from survey (Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

It should be noted that UDF *Direction 4 – Grow a legible city that supports and distinctive and evolving character* - and *Direction 5 – Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place* - were bundled together in the survey under *Recommendation 4 – Clearly guiding development to respond to context*.

Response from Individuals



Almost three-quarters of individuals supported this recommendation, with only a small number not supportive.

Further to the findings presented in the UDF and survey, reasons for supporting this recommendation included:

- Capitalise on the sea, views and natural setting
- Concern about over-development
- Concern about high buildings in inappropriate locations
- Support for high buildings in appropriate locations

Some comments demonstrating support for this recommendation included:

"We must do more to restrict the proliferation of high-rise development throughout the city of Wollongong, particularly in the central region. Already the out-of-control high-rise development has led to a significant loss of sunlight and views to the escarpment and changed the character of the City for the worse."

"Better alignment and more purposeful policy sounds like a good idea. I am concerned that Wollongong will be turned into an overdeveloped shopping mall that is surrounded by huge residential apartments that block out views and the sun."

"Professional advice on setting a character charter for the future, which is not based on building the cheapest buildings is needed. We need quality buildings that will last the tests of time visually and structurally."

"Notice the high rise in all the wrong places; top of hills, around the stadium. No sense of grouping for residential, or clear pathway to the coast."

"I am hoping this is taking into consideration the building heights. The 20-plus-storey buildings that are going up are ridiculous. There needs to be consideration placed on the aesthetic of an area, what is surrounding those buildings and the density now caused in those areas. More smaller-level building as shown in the picture above looks nicer and spreads the density across the City. I would also like consideration to be placed on retaining the original building fronts. There are some beautiful historic store/building fronts that should be maintained and take pride in the place within the City core. Protected and worked around, not knocked down!"

A significant number of individuals were unsure about this recommendation for the following reasons:

- Considered the recommendation too vague, i.e. many wanted to know the specific height and floor-space ratio controls
- City Centre is already disparate so the opportunity for place-based controls is lost
- Unclear on the impact on development processes and investment

Some typical "unsure" responses included:

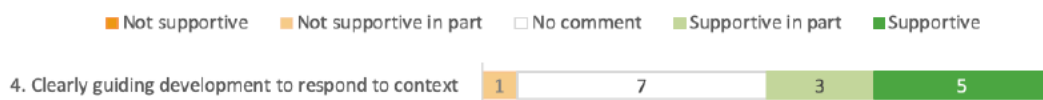
"I think preserving the character is important, but, Wollongong already has such a bad reputation for how hard it is to get development approval and people just move on and"

build amazing things elsewhere because it is too hard here. Way too much red tape. Fremantle does it well. They have preserved the historic facades but then allowed development to move the City forward. So I think this could be good in theory as long as the City moves forward and doesn't stagnate."

"Concerned about the excessive height of buildings currently being constructed which are not in keeping with the natural setting. The sentence "Height and Floor-space ratio controls are better aligned to guide the overall form of the City Centre" is rather vague and could be interpreted in a number of ways."

"Hard to get investment from major developers... we need a win-win situation for both City and parties... some developers should have extra height limits if the development will generate and support the economy... depends on the land/location."

Response from Groups



Half of the groups provided opinion or commentary on this recommendation. Of those that provided comment, the majority were in support of the directions and strategies, some only supported parts and one was unsupportive in part.

Commentary in support of this recommendation included:

"We support, in principle, the revision of the Floor Space Ratio (FSR) controls across the entire City Centre. FSR controls that will respond to 'place' as a result of detailed precinct planning, building envelope testing and an appreciation of local character is an encouraging step forward."

"Strategies 4.1 and 4.2 of reviewing FSR and height controls across the City Centre is long overdue. It is also encouraging that the UDF is looking to 'unlock' narrow sites. The idea of creating precincts to help determine applicable controls to those specific areas makes sense. However, caution needs to be taken in defining the controls to not hinder and limit development completely. Making FSR and height controls more flexible in the context of the location and size of the site will provide for more achievable and acceptable built form outcomes that are also feasible."

Additional suggestions from groups included:

"The strategies discussed in this direction (5) seem to provide for more specific controls in relation to setbacks which need to be addressed cautiously in order not to stifle development in areas such as the retail core of the City. The setbacks and street wall lengths discussed in 5.5 and 5.6 will be difficult to achieve due to current conditions. For example, it will be difficult to achieve the desired outcomes for setbacks along Burelli St. It would be encouraging to see more flexibility in some of these controls where merit is shown."

"The framework must further consider land-use compatibility in the rail arrival & southern district, western Crown & Keira Street and commercial services precincts to deliver a robust Wollongong City Centre. On this basis, it will be important for Council to consider the intensification of residential development along the rail corridor and ensure the design mitigation measures consider the future noise environment."

"This is a great start. We need to see more detail with additional public exhibition / workshops of proposed design guidelines/controls."

"A review and significant reduction of floorspace ratios and height limits are clearly needed. Reductions in site width requirements can be supported provided very clear and mandatory requirements are in place for the amenity of adjoining and nearby properties and their potential development."

"Alongside the commercial core, Wollongong comprises a number of existing precincts that require greater activation, and these include the entertainment, MacCabe Park, waterfront, recreation, and health precincts. We believe there should be a plan for each of these precincts that better directs public and private investment and includes better linkages between them and to public transport. We support a precinct approach to city planning in the Wollongong CBD."

The group that didn't support some of the proposed strategies stated:

"Built form should be guided by height rather than FSR."

"Concerned about the discretionary approach to additional FSR/height. This creates investment uncertainty."

"City skyline should be legible but not focused on office-only height eminence."

"Height controls should be maintained to ensure a legible skyline and potential yield should not be downgraded simply because of existing lot sizes (with no amalgamation) or perceptions about development potential."

"Why are continuous views of the escarpment from Flagstaff Hill so vital? Having some towers pierce the escarpment line signals the strength of the City."

Some groups were interested in the planning control details of the 'built form' objectives:

"Overall, we support this principle and the need for more streamlined planning controls, and more work needs to be done in this space to elevate the importance of design and the built form should reflect the vision for the precinct and not just a 'one size fits all' approach. However, at the same time we don't want to overcomplicate the process with complex planning controls - the missing piece in this framework is How we do this and what the Council is planning to do to work with the wider industry in an effective and efficient way to achieve this objective together."

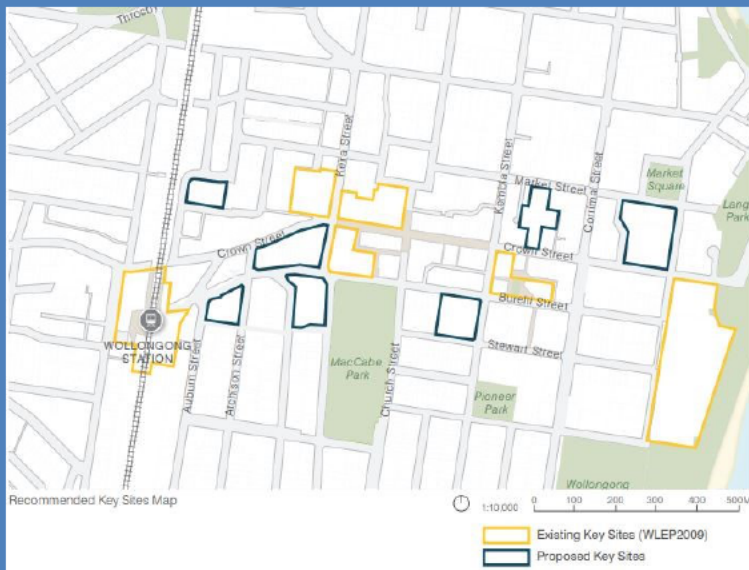
Recommendation 5. Elevating the Importance of a Well-Designed City Centre

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF indicated that a higher standard of design quality in the City Centre is required to deliver improved outcomes in both built form and public spaces. Also, great cities embrace good design. Good design achieves functional, attractive and sustainable solutions to a range of issues. Design quality requirements and review should be relative to the potential impact of the development proposal – the higher the impact, the more rigorous the requirements.

The Review recommends the planning policy strengthens the commitment to design excellence by:

1. introducing new design review requirements for high impact and challenging development sites
2. encouraging innovation and design quality in local design and development industry
3. preparing design guidelines that communicate better design outcomes

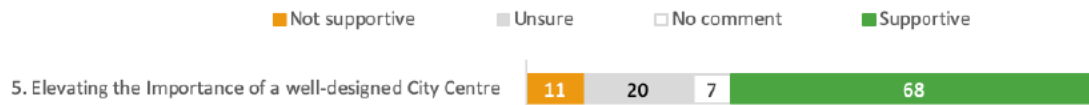


What this might look like:

- additional key sites are defined
- large or Key sites are subject to a master-planning process to establish site planning and basic massing prior to detailed design
- high impact developments are subject to a design competition
- narrow sites are unlocked for development, subject to a Design Review Panel process

Excerpt from survey [Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au].

Response from Individuals



Almost three-quarters of individuals supported this recommendation with a small proportion not supporting it. Further to the findings in the UDF, additional reasons why individuals supported this recommendation were:

- To prevent the “cookie-cutter approach to building design and cheap, nasty construction of new developments in the City Centre”
- Dissatisfaction at the “overall standard of design in recent developments in central Wollongong”
- Incorporate sustainable products and an environmental ethos
- Good design and master-planning is critical and brings many benefits to the community

Some comments that supported this recommendation included:

“All development should enhance and beautify the City. I support large or key sites being subject to a master-planning process and high-impact developments being subject to a design competition. In recent years there have been some large-scale developments in the City area which are very generic in appearance, and have not contributed any greenery or street plantings in their design. They have a huge visual impact due to their size but have not enhanced the City environment in any way, instead they have detracted from it.”

“Supported, but suggest that most of the design focus be at the streetscape/street level/human scale rather than obsession with building form. A well-designed streetscape will contribute more to overall positive improvements in the City than ‘landmark’ buildings.”

“If there are going to be new buildings, let’s make them cool, and let’s make them so that they work well and stand the test of time. Wollongong is known for its creative streak - let’s capitalise on that. No more vanilla blah cheap and nasty.”

“The design of the buildings within a City totally reflects its character. Clever and attractive design that incorporates sustainable products and a positive environmental ethos would be great to see like rooftop gardens, water tanks, solar etc. Many cities are becoming quite green and in this beautiful environment that we live in, we should be doing everything we can to minimise the effects of our growing population.”

Responses that did not support this recommendation included:

“Sounds like this is a review of development standards to allow a bending of the rules to enable sites that should never be allowed to be developed to receive some form of development consent.”

“This will simply create more levels of red tape, additional cost to delivery products and another level of Design Review Panelling. How many times have I already experienced Design Review Panel experts who can’t agree on development design amongst themselves and then Council who does not agree with Design Review Panels recommendation, and the proposal is for another level of opinion and scrutiny.”

Less than a fifth of individuals were unsure about the recommendation. The most common explanations why individuals provided an "unsure" response were:

- Too many unknowns to understand the impact
- Reservations about who decides what is 'good design'
- Concern over more red tape being introduced

Response from Groups



Of the groups that provided comment, most were supportive either wholly or in part. More than half of the groups did not provide any comment on this recommendation.

Commentary in support of the strategies proposed included:

"We acknowledge Council's recognition of strengthening design excellence and ensuring a stronger design culture across council and the community. We encourage Council to explore this further as part of this framework and collaborate with industry to achieve this vision and shape precincts in line with design guidelines. This is something which should be explored in the near future to test the viability of decisions."

"We support the intent of this recommendation, provided that design requirements do not disincentivise prospective development. We would seek any new design requirements in draft and would obtain the feedback of the property industry to ascertain the impact upon potential developer investment in the City."

Other suggestions from groups included:

"We also encourage Council to implement the Major Projects Panel as described in their Economic Strategy to assist in achieving the vision for the City. A dedicated team with an urban designer which is leading the transition to achieve the true vision of the City and this strategy would be recommended."

"Design Review Panel to do a report on what they consider to be the common / repeated mistakes made with DAs they have considered to date and give case examples on how this was fixed / addressed to encourage a more constructive and practical way of approaching design."

"Avoid tendering public works in one design and construction lump. This approach leads to outcomes led by developers and construction companies rather than architectural and urban design professionals. Tender in stages to allow architectural practices to develop quality outcomes from the start....For better outcomes, condition the approval to ensure the design architect is in some way linked to the construction documentation and construction phase... Key fine grain design elements to be detailed during DA."

"We consider that there is merit in requiring new commercial buildings to meet the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star certification standards. We support this recommendation."

Those groups that only supported parts of this recommendation stated:

"We support the recommendation of the UDF whereby owners or proponents of key sites greater than 5,000m² should be encouraged to engage with Council to enable a more strategic, place-based approach to guiding scale and develop site specific design parameters where projects can deliver community benefit, design excellence, and alignment with the strategic direction as set by Council. This measure enables a better alignment of floor space and building height and controls developed having regard to the characteristics of each site and its context."

One group did not support several the proposed strategies. They suggested alternative ways of improving design outcomes:

"Controls we support in Directions 5 and 6 negate the need for onerous design review or competition."

"Existing sub-optimal outcomes are not a reflection on design talent available in Wollongong – it is a result of a death by a thousand cuts. Council needs to develop innovation and design quality attributes in its staff and processes."

Recommendation 6: Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis from the UDF showed that the City lacks clear physical and visual connections to key places which makes it difficult to find your way around and discourages walking. Also, great cities are walkable. To deliver *A City for People*, a strong active transport network of walking, cycling and public transport is required.

The Review recommended that planning policy facilitate a strong active transport network by:

1. defining the role and function of streets in the City
2. creating a walkable city grid for pedestrians with additional pedestrian and shared connections
3. delivering active transport infrastructure including bike lanes and footpaths
4. helping people to make the shift from cars to public and active transport by making them a more attractive option than driving and parking



What might this look like:

- opportunities for pedestrians to move more freely and spend time in the City Centre are prioritised
- high volume vehicle movement corridors are minimised through the City Centre
- new through block links create a more walkable street grid for pedestrians
- a new bike network facilitates cycling in and around the City Centre

Excerpt from survey [Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au].

Feedback on this recommendation, including the detailed pedestrian, traffic, parking and cycling suggestions, will inform the development of Wollongong City Centre's *Access and Movement for People* Project.

Response from Individuals



Over three-quarters of individuals supported this recommendation with less than a tenth not supporting it. Further to the findings of the UDF, additional reasons provided in support of this recommendation included:

- Bike track connectivity between university, beach, City Centre and railway station, which will also support stronger integration with beach and harbour
- More alternatives to driving so less reliance on cars
- Walking and cycling are good for health
- Support for increased public transport and free shuttle service
- Increase footpaths, street crossings and street lighting to promote walking

Some comments that supported this recommendation included:

"More integration needed with the beach and harbour - whether that be for lunchtime workers, inner city residents or visitors/tourists. Moving from CBD to the coastline is a pretty average experience but shouldn't be - there's a ton of history and potential amenity. A safe and coherent network from CBD to UoW campuses is urgently warranted - especially as e-bikes become more popular, funkier and cheaper."

"Wholeheartedly support. Increased shared spaces, reduced CBD carparking especially for commercial development. ... If you want people to ride from home to work, and work is in your proposed commercial areas in the city, then you will need to deliver them there via safe and separated infrastructure. Grow some toughness and be prepared to undertake road space reallocation away from the private vehicle if you actually want to change behaviour."

"Reliance on cars around the City Centre and UoW has been a bane for Wollongong residents for years. The compact nature of the retail hub mean that is an obvious by-product. The introduction of the 'free bus' (Gong Shuttle) was and is a great example of an initiative that can ease the traffic around the City Centre. More consideration for supporting alternative transport options is always welcomed."

"This is the policy that would make the biggest difference to me as a resident. I don't drive and I rely on public transport and pedestrian access to get around, and I find Wollongong CBD is not well-catered for this. There are very few bike lanes, few bus lanes, footpaths are often narrow and old, and the poorly planned road layout makes some walking trips unnecessarily long and complicated. Many other CBDs make walking more attractive by putting in pedestrian crossings on almost all road intersections, but there are many busy intersections in the CBD with no pedestrian crossings. As an environmentally conscious resident, I've long considered getting a bike to get around, but the lack of bike lanes and aggressive nature of local drivers has turned me off the idea. The free shuttle bus is fantastic, but public transport still needs to be improved in and around the CBD. Wollongong Station needs a massive overhaul, there needs to be more frequent buses serving the area, and there needs to be bus-only lanes to make public transport faster."

Reasons for not supporting or being unsure included:

- Concern over the unrealistic expectation that population of Wollongong will give up car use
- The current Mall isn't working, yet it is reserved for pedestrians
- Need clarification as diagram hard to read
- Lack of parking remains an issue

Some typical responses unsupportive of this recommendation included:

"To think that people are going to give up their cars is ludicrous, people are starting to purchase electric vehicles, so the sooner you recognise this and start planning for it the better."

"It is already challenging to drive in the city this should not be further impeded, especially as mobility-impaired persons and the elderly/parents with babies need car access. Bikes pose a hazard to pedestrians and reduce the relaxed slow pace of pedestrian areas."

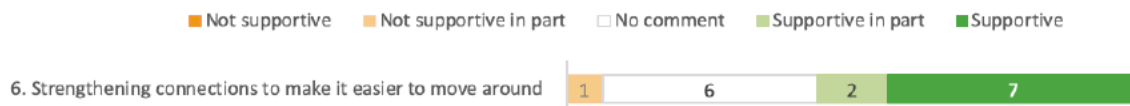
"Over 50% of the Wollongong is over 50 years old and walking too far or riding a bike is not an option."

Less than a tenth of individuals were unsure. Some typical "unsure" responses included:

"I support parts of this, but the bike lanes bother me if they are shared with pedestrians or cars. The lycra-wearing brigade of riders, particularly the older ones, ride too fast and dangerously on existing bike and shared paths, disregarding road rules as well as the safety of others."

"Nothing mentioned on disabled use of footpaths or moving around the City, also all restaurants, shops and other commercial areas MUST have disabled access for wheelchairs."

Response from Groups



Almost all groups were supportive of the strategies proposed. Over half of the groups provided commentary on this recommendation and strategies to "strengthen connections to make it easier to get around".

General commentary in support of this recommendation included:

"In general, we agree with this direction. Pedestrian connectivity from public transport and car parking availability is currently in poor shape. Pedestrian access from the train station into the city centre and retail precinct is poor and needs to be addressed. Strategies discussed in this direction do address that. However, more needs to be done to promote public transport into the city and car parking in the city needs to be addressed."

"We strongly support this intention (enabling pedestrian and cycling movements) including the activation of laneways, improvements to the public domain and enhancing the cycle network. There needs to be some consideration of the incentives for redevelopment opportunities which create through block links."

One group had limited support for UDF Strategy 7.4 – ‘Enable the mode shift from cars to public transport’ because it should “*distinguish between residents and visitors when disincentivising parking. Ensure parking reductions are supported by concurrent public/active transport infrastructure improvements*”.

Recommendation 7. Delivering high amenity public spaces

In the survey, the community were asked if they supported this recommendation:

Analysis in the UDF revealed that the current planning policy needs to do more to preserve and promote the amenity of public spaces. Views to key natural features and buildings are compromised by current building controls and we are at risk of losing direct sunshine on key public spaces, including the Arts Precinct and Crown St Mall. We could do more to make our high value open spaces more usable and attractive for our community.

Also, great cities are healthy and enjoyable to spend time in. High quality public domain supports a healthy community and attracts investment.

The Review recommended that planning policy facilitate high-amenity public spaces by:

1. Planning for building envelopes that protect sunlight to key public spaces, preserve views to natural and built assets and facilitate street tree planting
2. Reinforcing the character of key streets and precincts with appropriate tree planting
3. Identifying and prioritising public domain projects to promote renewal and encourage investment in the City



What might this look like?

- detailed context analysis addresses public domain amenity
- solar access to the Arts Precinct and Crown Street Mall is protected
- views to the natural context and built heritage are revealed and protected
- buildings are setback on key walking streets to facilitate street tree planting
- the green quality of key streets is reinforced through policy statements
- key parks and open spaces are renewed

Excerpt from survey [Join the Conversation - our.wollongong.nsw.gov.au].

Response from Individuals



Most individuals supported this recommendation with only a small number unsure or not supportive. Further to the findings of the UDF, additional reasons individuals supported this recommendation were:

- Support for preservation of solar access and renewal of parks and green spaces, particularly MacCabe Park
- Building setbacks to support walking, footpaths and tree planting
- Need to plant more trees for aesthetic streetscape and shade

Some comments that supported this recommendation included:

"Current development is creating an ugly street scape lacking green spaces that encourages people to spend time in the city. Wind tunnels and walking pathways devoid of sun are already common and needs to be improved."

"The views and sun that give Wollongong City Centre its sense of space and openness are great. Same story for the UoW campus; it's what separates our nice city from the space-starved Sydney CBD and unis. These elements should definitely be taken into consideration when thinking about the development of the space."

Some additional suggestions noted included:

"MacCabe Park should have quality residential around the perimeter and then utilise the space. Fields, tennis courts, gardens established stage for concerts etc."

"This is a good proposal, but should be developed further to ensure that all residential buildings should be set back to facilitate tree planting. The current move to building apartment blocks right up to the building line is ugly and will probably suppress their value in the future."

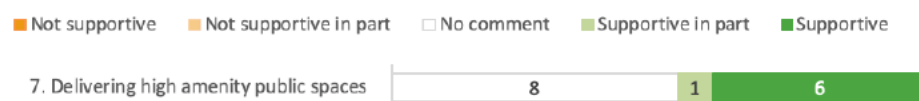
Typical comments from individuals unsure about this recommendation included:

"Building setback is not nearly as important as quality urban form and reduced vehicle use, and/or reduced vehicle speeds, in delivering quality outcomes."

"With the constant increase in high-rise buildings, will these "green zones" be covered in shadows or bathed in sunlight?"

"As long as tree planting is not causing footpath destruction and obstacles for those with disabilities"

Response from Groups



Half of the groups provided comments on the recommendation for "delivering high-amenity public spaces". All groups that provided comment on this recommendation were wholly supportive or supportive in part.

Comments in support included a focus on improving MacCabe Park:

"The protection of direct solar access year-round is strongly supported for important civic spaces. This needs to be more creative than just limiting building heights. Innovative design stimulus and other ways to optimise the use of sites should be investigated and encouraged. There is also a need to add more locations where direct solar access needs to be maintained and protected including the foreshore, the Harbour and foreshore parks, the eastern end of Crown Street and the foreshore entertainment precinct to protect amenity for outdoor dining and entertainment and maintain a pleasant pedestrian-friendly outdoor environment."

"The most significant progress towards this goal will be the improvement of MacCabe Park as the City's central green space. MacCabe Park is currently underutilised. Part of this reason is that there are still commercial buildings on the Park, which distract and confuse the Park and discourage users particularly along Keira St and Burelli St. The demolition of current buildings and realisation of the MacCabe Park masterplan will be a turning point in its utilisation as the central park to the City..."

"Overshadowing in a city is unavoidable. However, agree that key public spaces such as MacCabe Park, Crown St Mall and the Arts Precinct should maintain solar access."

"We support the need for open spaces and a 'green' city that is welcoming to citizens and people working in the CBD to enjoy and spend time in. There is a real opportunity with MacCabe Park which we would like to see Council explore further."

One group only had limited support for UDF Strategy 8.5: 'Leverage new development to offset the cost of greening'. They considered that *"more detail is needed on the process for attributing impact"*.

OTHER ISSUES RAISED

Parking

Parking was frequently raised by individuals, and to a lesser extent groups. Feedback on this issue spanned across the UDF's recommendations and directions.

Response from Individuals

Three aspects of parking commonly raised by individuals were:

- Concern a lack of parking inhibits shoppers from shopping in Wollongong's City Centre, and inhibits workers and residents from easily accessing their offices or homes
- Concern about the lack of free parking and cost of pay parking. Many individuals said they prefer free parking and are willing to drive to Warrawong, Miranda, Figtree or Shellharbour to shop, where free parking is available.
- Concern that the limited amount of parking inhibits the elderly and those with mobility issues

Comments included:

"I don't think anything will work unless you change the (cost of) parking situation as well. People are too reliant on their cars and by limiting parking the way it is people, particularly those with mobility issues or young children will go to the easier option with free parking such as Shellharbour's shopping centre or Figtree Grove. Most of the people I know feel the same way and although we used the City Centre a lot during our youth, this is the primary reason we have stopped going."

"Build a parking lot. A substantial parking station. The City is dying because to utilise public transport from the suburbs takes so long. We're a city of drivers. That's how it is. Embrace it. Make it reasonably priced so people are inclined to pay to be in the City."

"We need to sort out the parking issues as the highest priority before anything else, I live in lower Kembla Street and to get in and out of our driveway puts us at risk every day."

"I'd support it (Recommendation 1) but the major issue here is there is little to no parking anywhere near the proposed retail only sites and any parking costs money. Who would put a retail business in an area with limited parking? It's easier to go to Warrawong or Shellharbour to go shopping. Without parking, retail won't take up these sites. How about Council buying up some of these sites and addressing the lack of free parking in the City?"

Response from Groups

Six groups mentioned parking as an issue that should be addressed, mainly regarding increasing the availability of parking or increasing development feasibility. Below are some examples of their comments:

"We support the intent of active transport options but does not consider it to present a solution to limited carparking across a geographically-dispersed commercial core... We recognises that carparking is an issue for businesses and residents alike and submits that it should be addressed in this review."

"We consider that Wollongong is not of a scale that it can look to or expect active and public transport patronage to address this."

"Council should consider supplementing active transport infrastructure by:

- *Investigating means to better utilise existing parking spaces, whether by upgrading them (from single to multi-level) or by utilising better wayfinding (e.g. electronic signs),*
- *Constructing 'park and ride' facilities within 5 minutes ride to the City Centre, and*
- *Investigate the construction of additional multi-level paid car parks on the edge of the commercial core, as part of a mixed-use development led by the private or public sector."*

"We support the removal of the requirement for car parking in commercial developments, however Council should take measures to improve parking availability in the Wollongong CBD, including upgrading its at-grade carparks across the City."

Council processes and implementation

Feedback from the surveys revealed significant cynicism and scepticism towards Wollongong City Council and its likelihood of implementing the recommendations of the UDF based on recent track record of tall buildings, developments not offering setbacks, shadowing, cutting down of trees, shop-top housing and red tape associated with development approvals.

Response from Individuals

Examples of comments included:

"Council are good, exceptionally good, at approving and publishing plans that say all of the right things, but the moment someone says 'Boo!' in the Mercury or other media about reducing car parking, blocking a through road or any other progressive measure then Council runs for cover. Nothing will change until both the elected Councillors and the paid staff realise that Wollongong will remain a second-rate unimaginative me-too hick town until someone has the courage to make some progressive decisions in the areas of active transport, elimination of parking minimums to be replaced by parking maximums on all developments and a range of other measures."

"We need a vision and unambiguous controls, that will not be white-anted by developers, for the betterment of Wollongong and its residents."

"It sounds like you're trying to impose more red-tape which will add more work for yourselves (and lets be real: you're not going to get faster at approving it), will slow down application times, and will encourage competitive investment to look elsewhere. You don't need to be "introducing new design review requirements"; Australia has some of the highest building standards on the planet. Encourage effectiveness of a system, before efficiently doing an additional non-critical thing."

"In reality, the Council, both elected and employed officers, have been passive and spineless when it comes to actually making the City more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. It would be nice if Council grew a backbone and copied cities like Paris, Copenhagen, Amsterdam and others. Or at least took some baby steps in that direction. Such as reduce on street parking to make room for parklets, outdoor eating, bike lanes and wider footpaths. Reduce speed limits on all Council controlled local roads to 30kph."

Response from Groups

One group commented:

"We note, however, that this is at least the third consultant-based, strategic review of the City Centre in the past 15 years and implementation of recommendations and

strategies has been inconsistent. One of our key recommendations is to select a strategy and resource it for full implementation."

COVID-19

Most individual responses were submitted at the beginning of the exhibition period, before the COVID-19 'pandemic' had been declared. No individual submissions or surveys commented on COVID-19 and its likely impacts on the City Centre Planning Review.

During the industry stakeholder forums, several groups expressed concern and uncertainty about the COVID-19 pandemic and possible impacts on retail, employment, demand for and nature of commercial floorspace, and lifestyle. Comments included:

"The Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework on which we are commenting is reliant on a return to a global and local condition which has fundamentally changed.

We are unsure there will be the demand for commercial only for the whole length of Burelli Street and IF the demand will be there for A-Grade office as suggested, especially in light of the recent COVID-19 crisis."

APPENDIX 1. ONLINE SURVEY

Wollongong City Centre Planning Review Survey

In 2016 Council endorsed your vision for Wollongong City Centre 'A City for People'. We've been working hard to bring the community's vision to life.

We're committed to creating a City Centre that is people orientated, sustainable and liveable. Key to making this happen is bringing our planning policy into alignment with the aims of the vision.

The Wollongong City Centre Planning Review has developed the following recommendations:

1. Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development
2. Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support City life
3. Defining a thriving retail network
4. Clearly guiding development to respond to context
5. Elevating the importance of a well-designed City Centre
6. Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around
7. Delivering a high amenity public spaces

There are 8 pages in this survey, one for each of the recommendations and a final comments page. On each recommendation page you can let us know your level of support and make comments. The last page is for general feedback and information about you. Please [sign in](#) or [register](#) and read Council's [Privacy Notification](#) before submitting your response.

Prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development

Analysis revealed that future jobs growth is compromised by the current planning controls, which allow residential development throughout our City Centre.

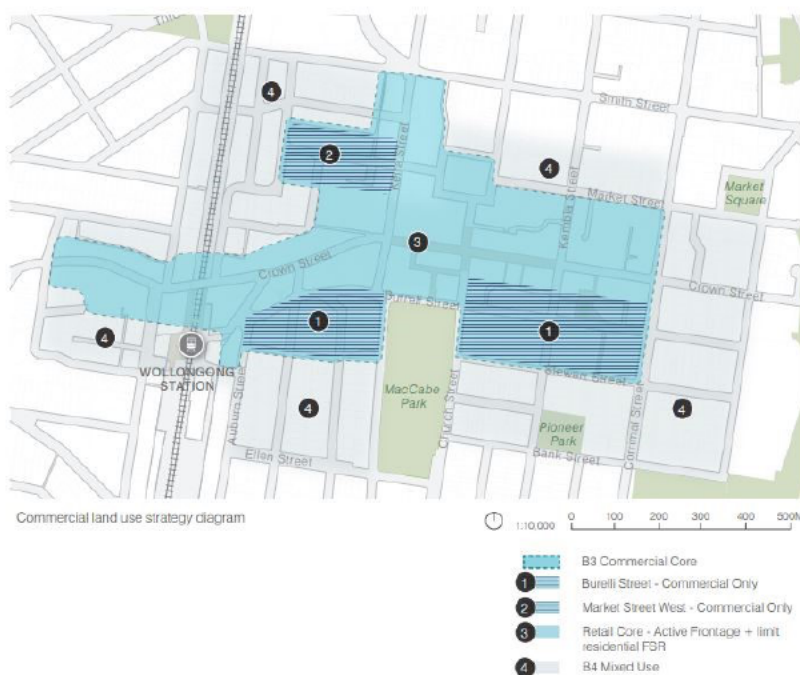
Great cities have vibrant and growing economies. Planning policy needs to establish a resilient commercial core that safeguards land for commercial development.

The Review recommends that planning policy prioritise job generating development in the commercial core by:

1. Preserving the existing supply of commercial floorspace
2. Allowing mixed-use development in parts of the Commercial Core with a limitation on the proportion of residential floorspace
3. Defining commercial only areas for large and small office buildings

What might this look like?

- The Commercial Core is smaller and more concentrated
- Residential development is limited, and in some areas, no longer permitted



Do you support this recommendation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Encouraging a variety of housing types in the right locations to support City life

Analysis revealed that current planning policy does not make clear where residential development should be located. Our policy allows residential development above the ground floor throughout the whole City Centre in the form of 'shop-top housing'. However, some areas need to preserve more commercial floorspace for jobs, others may benefit from having residential development at ground.

Great cities are liveable because they balance living, working and recreational activities effectively. Well-designed and located residential development supports the vitality and resilience of a City Centre and offers choice to residents.

The Review recommends that planning policy guides the location and proportion of residential development by:

1. Limiting residential development throughout the Commercial Core to prioritise job generating development and minimise conflicts between residential and other development
2. Removing the requirement for non-residential ground floors in the Mixed Use zone
3. Exploring the development of an affordable housing scheme

What might this look like?

- Residential development is limited throughout the Commercial Core zone
- The supporting Mixed-use zone allows residential at ground level
- An affordable housing scheme is developed to deliver better housing choice in the City Centre



Do you support this recommendation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Defining a thriving retail network

The analysis revealed that the current planning policy requiring non-residential uses at ground floor has led to retail uses being dispersed across the City Centre. This oversupply of retail space leads to inactive pockets in the City.

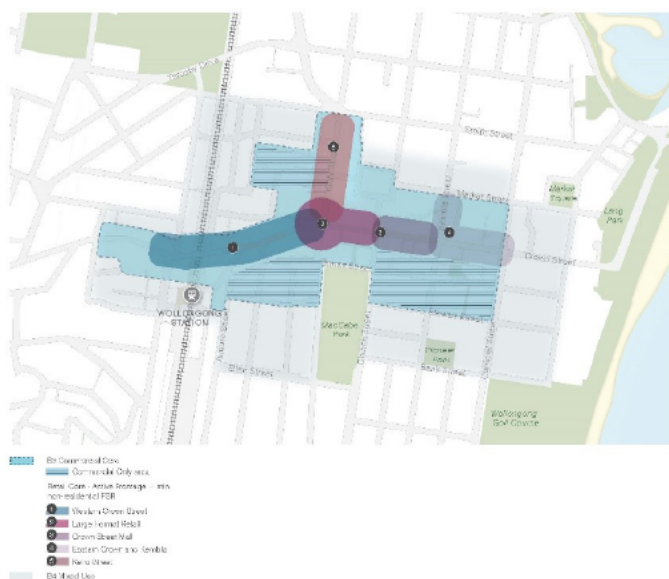
Great cities have a range of retail offers, day and night. Successful retail precincts make the most of their distinctive characters and contribute to high quality public spaces by having active street frontages.

The Review recommends that planning policy facilitates a vibrant retail network by:

1. Only require non-residential uses on ground floor on key retail streets where there is good pedestrian traffic and access to public transport
2. Protect the character and role of key retail streets and precincts
3. Delivering a balance between night-time economy and residential living

What might this look like?

- The fine grain character, streetscape and solar amenity of key retail streets are protected
- Development in the supporting Mixed-use zone is not required to have a non-residential ground floor
- Clear policy addresses real and perceived conflicts between residents and city noise



Do you support this recommendation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Clearly guiding development to respond to context

Analysis revealed that current planning policy is confusing and doesn't clearly guide development to respond to the unique character or natural setting of the City Centre.

Great cities celebrate their unique qualities. These qualities can occur at a street, precinct or city scale. A place-based design approach is required to get the bulk and scale of buildings right across the different parts of our City Centre.

The Review recommends that planning policy be updated to clearly guide development to be right for place by ensuring building envelope controls:

1. Respond to the City Centre's natural setting
2. Support the desired future character of City Centre Precincts

What might this look like?

- Place based policy replaces generic envelope controls
- Height and Floor-space ratio controls are better aligned to guide the overall form of the City Centre



Do you support this recommendation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Elevating the importance of a well-designed City Centre

The analysis indicates that a higher standard of design quality in the City Centre is required to deliver improved outcomes in both built form and public spaces.

Great cities embrace good design. Good design achieves functional, attractive and sustainable solutions to a range of issues. Design quality requirements and review should be relative to the potential impact of the development proposal – the higher the impact, the more rigorous the requirements.

The Review recommends that planning policy strengthens the commitment to design excellence by:

1. Introducing new design review requirements for high impact and challenging development sites
2. Encouraging innovation and design quality in the local design and development industry
3. Preparing design guidelines that communicate better design outcomes

What might this look like?

- Additional key sites are defined
- Large or Key sites are subject to a master-planning process to establish site planning and basic massing prior to detailed design
- High impact developments are subject to a design competition
- Narrow sites are unlocked for development, subject to a Design Review Panel process



Do you support this recommendation? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Strengthening connections to make it easier to move around

The analysis has shown that the City lacks clear physical and visual connections to key places which makes it difficult to find your way around and discourages walking.

Great cities are walkable. To deliver A City for People, a strong active transport network of walking, cycling and public transport is required.

The Review recommends that planning policy facilitate a strong active transport network by:

1. Defining the role and function of streets in the City
2. Creating a walkable city grid for pedestrians with additional pedestrian and shared connections
3. Delivering active transport infrastructure including bike lanes and footpaths
4. Helping people make the shift from cars to public and active transport by making these a more attractive option than driving and parking

Note: these recommendations will be tested further through the concurrently running *City Centre Access and Movement for People Study*

What might this look like?

- Opportunities for pedestrians to move more freely and spend time in the City Centre are prioritised
- High volume vehicle movement corridors are minimised through the City Centre
- New through block links create a more walkable street grid for pedestrians
- A new bike network facilitates cycling in and around the City Centre



Do you support this recommendation? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Delivering high amenity public spaces

The analysis revealed that the current planning policy needs to do more to preserve and promote the amenity of public spaces. Views to key natural features and buildings are compromised by current building controls and we are at risk of losing direct sunshine on key public spaces, including the Arts Precinct and Crown St Mall. We could do more to make our high value open spaces more usable and attractive for our community.

Great cities are healthy and enjoyable to spend time in. High quality public domain supports a healthy community and attracts investment.

The Review recommends that planning policy facilitates high amenity public spaces by:

1. Planning for building envelopes that protect sunlight to key public spaces, preserve views to natural and built assets and facilitate street tree planting
2. Reinforcing the character of key streets and precincts with appropriate tree planting
3. Identifying and prioritising public domain projects to promote renewal and encourage investment in the City

What might this look like?

- Detailed context analysis addresses public domain amenity
- Solar access to the Arts Precinct and Crown Street Mall is protected
- Views to the natural context and built heritage are revealed and protected
- Buildings are setback on key walking streets to facilitate street tree planting
- The green quality of key streets is reinforced through policy statements
- Key parks and open spaces are renewed



Do you support this recommendation? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Tell us why...

Do you have any general feedback on the Urban Design Framework or the Economic Analysis?

Respondent details

Age

- ☐ 17 years and under
- ☐ 18-24 years
- ☐ 25-34 years
- ☐ 35-49 years
- ☐ 50-59 years
- ☐ 60-69 years
- ☐ 70-84 years
- ☐ 85 years and over

How do you use the City Centre?

- ☐ I work in the city centre
- ☐ I live in the city centre
- ☐ I run / own a business in the city
- ☐ I own land in the city centre
- ☐ I visit the city centre
- ☐ Other

If you visit the City Centre, what are your reasons for visiting?

- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Eating and drinking
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Attending events
- ☐ Accessing services
- ☐ Other



Date: September 9, 2020

Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Project and report | Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework |
| Version and date issued | February 2020 - Draft reported to Council |
| Version and date issued | September 2020 - Final post exhibition report |

Wollongong City Council would like to show its respect and acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land to which this Strategy applies, of Elders past and present, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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Wollongong - A Nationally Significant City

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Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct

Foreshore Precinct

Executive Summary

In the 21st century Wollongong City Centre will be a people orientated, sustainable and liveable city.

Wollongong City Centre is a thriving and unique regional city, delivering a diverse economy and offering a high quality lifestyle. The City Centre is nationally recognised as a liveable city and is the place where people want to live, learn, work and play.

A City for People

In 2014, Council commenced a review of the *Revitalising Wollongong City Centre Strategy (2007)* and its associated suite of planning controls. The resulting study, *A City for People (2016)* by Gehl Architects and McGregor Coxall, sets a vision for the future - a people-oriented, sustainable and liveable city.

A City for People identified four themes to support growth towards this vision:

1. Celebrate the uniqueness
2. Develop a human scale city
3. Grow a living city
4. Create an accessible, pedestrian friendly city

A key action of *A City for People* was to undertake a City Centre Planning & Design Review. Two key elements of the Review were Economics and Urban Design analysis and recommendations. The Urban Design Framework brings these two pieces of work together to take the next step in implementing *A City for People*.

The Urban Design Framework is a tool for decision making. It provides a detailed analysis of the current City Centre planning policy and seeks to provide a set of Objectives, Directions and Strategies to inform Planning Policy Change to realign with *A City for People*.

The purpose of the framework is to:

- Provide Council with strong recommendations in order 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.
- Strengthen the way that design excellence is taken into account when Council examines places and reviews proposals.
- Set the foundations that enable Council to develop a stronger design culture within Council and the community

The Urban Design Framework document is broadly divided into two parts:

1. Analysis
2. Urban Design Recommendations

The analysis includes urban design studies and testing by Architectus and Andrew Burns Architects. This is supported by economic analysis and forecasting by SGS Economics and Planning. The outcomes of this analysis work are summarised into 12 key findings.

The Objectives, Directions and Strategies which make up the Urban Design Recommendations respond to the challenges raised in the 12 findings. These, along with the key findings, are illustrated in the diagram on the facing page.

Detailed recommendations under each strategy have been refined following public consultation, in order to inform an implementation plan detailing changes to planning and design controls and processes.

A design framework for people and places



Proposed Structure Plan



Proposed desire future character of precincts



| | | Land Use | Built Form | | | Public Domain and Connections | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|--|---|--|------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| ANALYSIS | Key Findings | <div><div></div><div>Current land use controls could result in a City filled with residential development, compromising long term employment growth</div></div> <div><div></div><div>The retail core is spread out too far, which results in empty shopfronts and creates inactive streets</div></div> <div><div></div><div>The City's cultural identity is diversifying to support City life</div></div> | <div><div></div><div>General development controls don't respond to the character and historic qualities of places in the City</div></div> <div><div></div><div>The planning controls do not provide clear guidance for development to deliver the intended built outcomes for the City</div></div> <div><div></div><div>The City's development controls do not promote development that defines a city skyline or enhances the unique natural setting</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Developments favour maximising building development controls over design quality, producing a less attractive City</div></div> | <div><div></div><div>The City lacks clear physical and visual connections to key places which makes wayfinding difficult and discourages walking.</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Arrival into the City Centre is confusing and provides an underwhelming first impression of Wollongong</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Public open spaces are valued but do not yet realise their full potential.</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Key public spaces are at risk of overshadowing by surrounding buildings</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Tree canopy cover in the City Centre is inadequate</div></div> | | | | |
| | Precincts | <div><div></div><div>Rail Arrival & Southern District</div></div> <div><div></div><div>MacCabe Park</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Western Crown & Keira Street</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Commercial Services</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Crown Street Mall</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Historic Spine</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Foreshore</div></div> | | | | | | |
| URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS | Objectives | <div><div>A vibrant and growing Regional City</div><div>Planning controls promote a diversity of uses to encourage a vibrant City Centre, day and night. Jobs and housing growth supports Wollongong's role as a Regional City. Wollongong is an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.</div></div> | <div><div>An attractive and diverse city in a unique natural and historic setting</div><div>Clear planning controls preserve the unique historic character of Wollongong's precincts. Renewal at all scales is encouraged and this creates an interesting built fabric. Built form variety creates a recognisable city skyline , celebrates the natural setting and is human scale.</div></div> | <div><div>A green and walkable city</div><div>The city street grid is clear and facilitates walking. Revitalised public spaces are a catalyst for growth and support an active. healthy community. A significant increase to the City's tree canopy contributes to a green and sustainable city.</div></div> | | | | |
| | Directions | <div><div><div>1</div><div>Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core</div></div><div><div>2</div><div>Develop active commercial streets that respond to character</div></div><div><div>3</div><div>Plan for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive city</div></div></div> | <div><div><div>4</div><div>Grow a legible city that supports a distinctive and evolving character</div></div><div><div>5</div><div>Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place</div></div><div><div>6</div><div>Elevate the importance of design quality in the City Centre</div></div></div> | <div><div><div>7</div><div>Strengthen the structure of the City through a permeable grid that prioritises pedestrians</div></div><div><div>8</div><div>Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city</div></div><div><div>9</div><div>Protect sunlight to key public spaces</div></div></div> | | | | |
| | Strategies | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> | | | | |
| | | Structure Plan | | | Precinct Visions | | | |

Wollongong City has initiated a visionary process that marks a paradigm shift in the planning culture of the city...putting people at the centre of planning in order to strengthen city life, vibrancy, sustainability and active mobility


A City for People





01 Introduction

This section introduces the Wollongong City Centre Planning and Design Review, the purpose of the Urban Design Framework, and why changes are needed to achieve the Vision as set out in *A City for People*

An illustration of a city skyline with various buildings, including a church and a lighthouse. The foreground shows a park with people walking, sitting, and playing. The background features a large sun with rays and a dark blue sky with a few parachutists. The city is situated on a hillside overlooking the ocean.

“In the 21st century
Wollongong City Centre
will be a people-orientated,
sustainable and liveable city.”

A City for People

In 2014 Wollongong City Council partnered with Gehl Architects to deliver a renewed and re-framed vision for the Wollongong City Centre - *A City for People*.

The planning approach of *A City for People* focusses on the importance of people and place. It gives priority to the delivery of high-quality streets, buildings and public spaces to support the 'public life' of our community to deliver an extraordinary City Centre.

A City for People was the result of detailed, observation-based analysis of the way our City Centre works. It involved intensive community engagement and resulted in a clear vision for the future of our City.

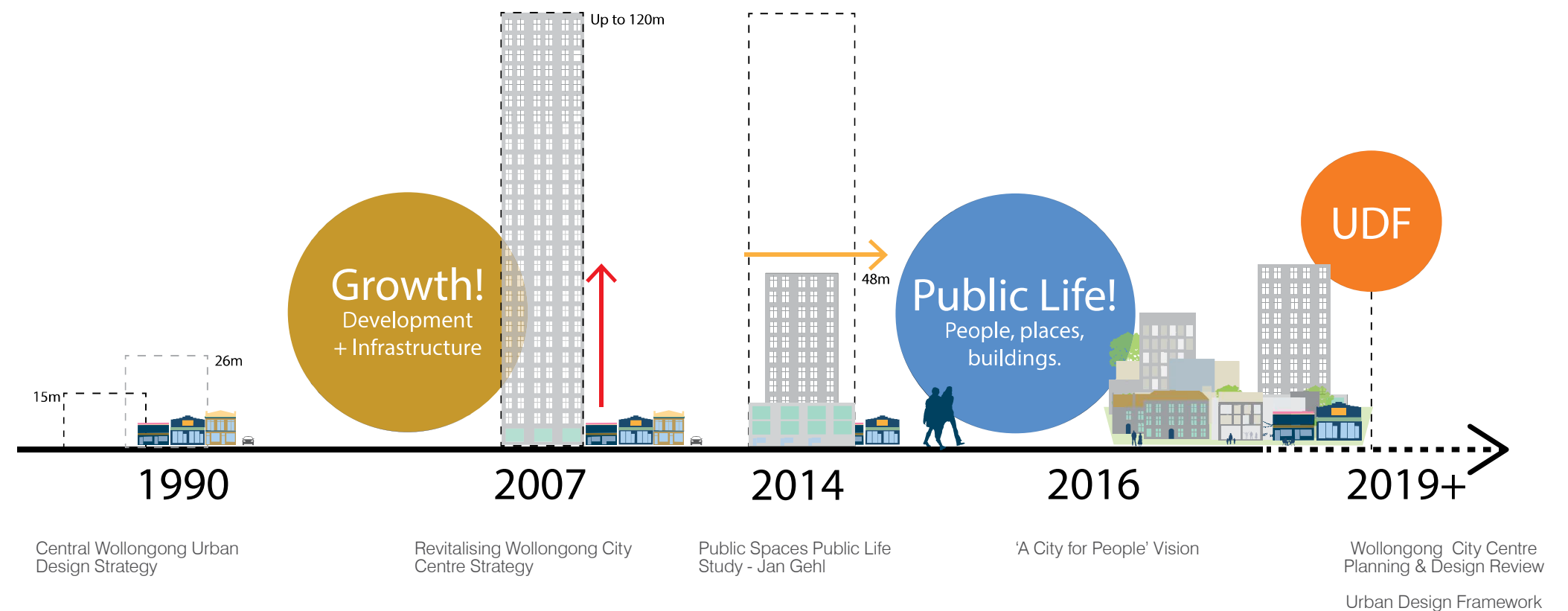
"In the 21st century Wollongong City Centre will be a people-orientated, sustainable and liveable city."

Wollongong City Centre is a thriving and unique regional city, delivering a diverse economy and offering a high quality lifestyle. The City Centre is nationally recognised as a liveable city and is the place where people want to live, learn, work and play."

This study establishes 12 vision statements under 4 themes to support growth towards this vision:

1. Celebrate the uniqueness
2. Develop a human scale city
3. Grow a living city
4. Create an accessible, pedestrian-friendly city

Key to the delivery of this Vision is our planning framework. *A City for People* identified a disconnect between the current City Centre planning controls and the vision, identifying a key action to undertake the City Centre Planning Review (Action 1.1) and the City Centre Design Review (Action 1.6). The objective of these reviews is to establish the basis on which to recommend changes to the existing Wollongong City Centre planning controls, including the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 (LEP) and the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 - Wollongong City Centre Precinct (DCP D13).



Introducing the Urban Design Framework

The City Centre Planning Review and Design Review (Review) aims to recalibrate the planning controls and processes governing city centre development to align with the vision set out in *A City for People*. Critical to this aim is the desire to enable and require better design in our City.

Although the Review's focus is on planning and design policy, it acknowledges that multiple factors are contributing to poor design outcomes across Wollongong's City Centre. Multiple levers must be engaged to enable better outcomes, spanning across policy, process and culture.

The Review's critical supporting document is the Urban Design Framework (UDF). The aim of the UDF is to be the basis for a new suite of planning controls and physical interventions that set clear objectives and enable feasible, high quality development. Its development has involved extensive analysis and testing of the built environment and public spaces of our City.

A focus of this analysis has been to understand and communicate the character precincts that make up the City Centre, and develop policy recommendations that encourage a design response to place. In some cases this draws heavily on the existing fabric, and in others, provides guidance towards a new character for the place.

The UDF will inform changes to the planning controls (LEP + DCP) that shape the form and function of the Wollongong City Centre, in order to bring them into alignment with the vision set out in *A City for People*.

The objectives of the urban design framework are to:

- Provide Council with strong recommendations in order to develop a suite of clear and consistent planning controls and guidelines that facilitate better design outcomes as well as economically feasible development in the City Centre
- Strengthen the way that design excellence is taken into account when Council examines places and reviews proposals
- Set the foundations that enable Council to develop a stronger design culture within Council and the community

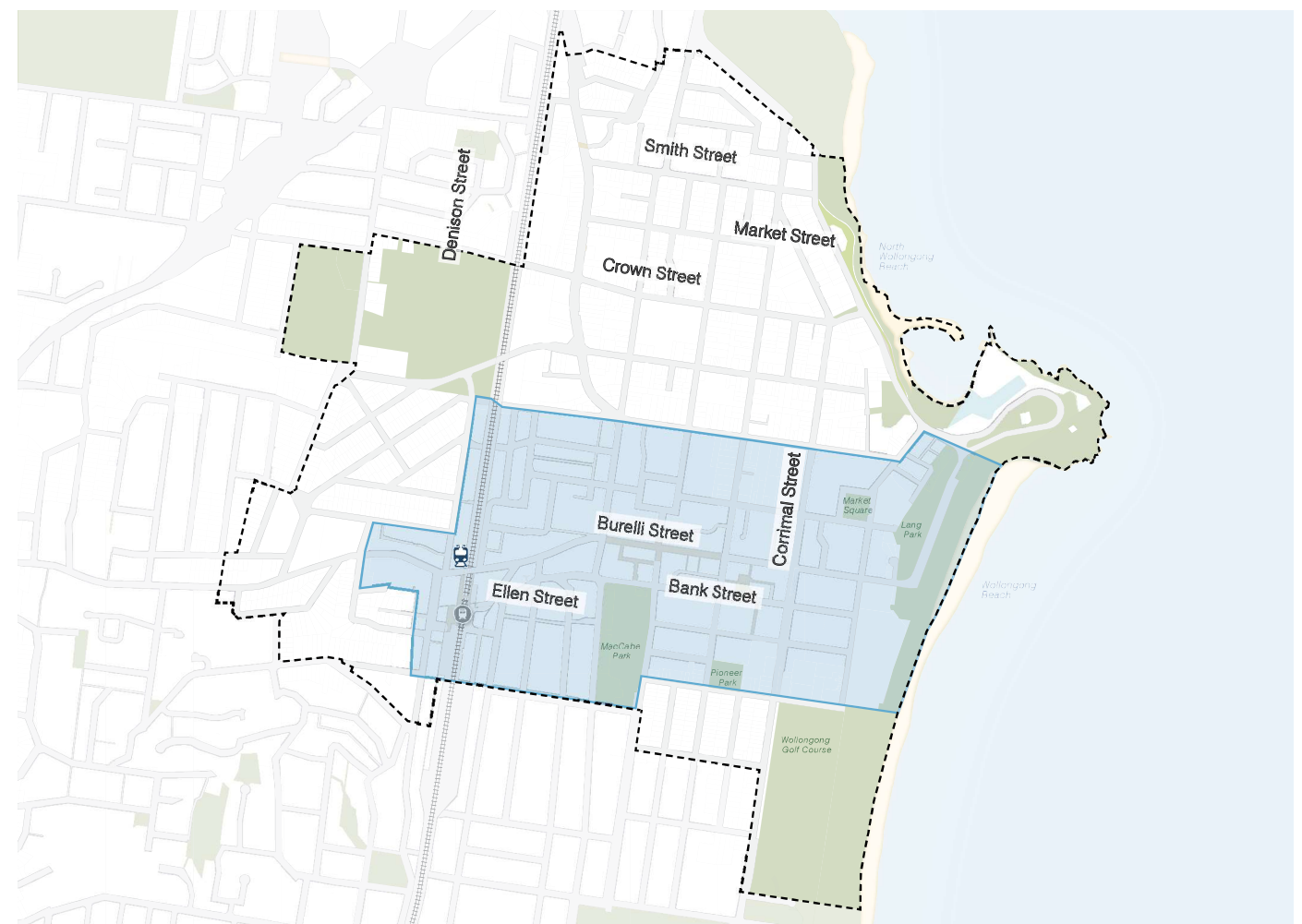
The UDF provides a detailed analysis of the current state of the City and a design framework that will facilitate:

- a thriving commercial core that attracts investment and maintains Wollongong's role as a regional city;
- vibrant retail streets supported by housing in the right places;
- an improved human experience of the built environment and public open spaces.

Study Area

The focus area for this project is the central business zones in the Wollongong City Centre. These include the entire Commercial Core (B3) and Mixed Use (B4) zones.

Generally speaking the area is defined by the Coast to the East, Ellen street to the South, Denison Street to the West and Smith Street to the North.



The Study Area

- Existing WLEP City Centre Boundary
- Study Area

What has informed the Urban Design Framework?

The Urban Design Framework document is broadly divided into two parts, Analysis and Recommendations. The final UDF has been informed and refined by the feedback received through the public exhibition of the draft document.

Analysis

The Analysis has been informed by a range of inputs. Community and Industry engagement sourced primarily through *A City for People (2016)*, the Community Strategic Plan (*Our Wollongong 2028*), the Urban Greening Strategy (2017), and the *Economic Development Strategy (2019)*.

A City for People Review to identify the challenges faced in delivering the 12 statements defined under the vision.

Internal specialist stakeholders to determine the current issues impacting design quality and the development process. These included Council specialists in traffic, flooding, landscape design, architecture, economic development and development assessment, as well as independent groups such as the Design Review Panel.

Economic analysis by SGS Economics & Planning covering employment patterns, sector growth and decline, floor-space capacity under current controls, impacts on development feasibility and ability to meet forecast growth projection. This economics analysis has been a fundamental piece in informing proposed changes to land use and development envelopes. The method and findings of this analysis are detailed in 02 Analysis.

Urban Design Analysis was undertaken by Architectus and Andrew Burns Architects. An understanding of the physical attributes of the City was established through a series of site visits, photographic recording, desktop review and research and the development of a 3D City Centre model. This analysis included: existing movement

activity; environmental conditions; detailed character precinct studies; and built form site studies to determine key design quality issues.

Testing of the existing controls was undertaken to better understand the impact of the existing planning controls (LEP and DCP) on delivering the vision and facilitating the expected growth of the city. The 3D model was critical to this process. The model excluded sites which were identified as constrained and less likely to redevelop, including recently constructed (within 5 years), heritage and character items, existing residential subject to strata over 5 storeys, existing commercial over 10 storeys, special uses and recreational land, and isolated lots. Remaining lots were modelled under an amalgamated scenario (common ownership) to achieve minimum lot frontage and lot size dimensions.

The detailed character precinct studies defined 8 precincts, which expand on the 6 identified in *A City for People*. Detailed analysis, observation and research was used to establish the unique character of each precinct. Strengths and weaknesses in the current land use, built form and public domain were identified, and the capacity of the existing controls to support the character of each precinct were determined. An additional 9th Precinct around Wollongong Hospital, the Health Precinct, was also identified and will be subject to further analysis with NSW Health.

Key findings summarise the outcomes of the testing and analysis, and identify a series of land use, built form and public domain and connections challenges.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the UDF are a response to the challenges defined through the analysis. Recommendations are defined through:

Objectives: The Framework is built on three key objectives relating to land use, built form and public domain and connections. These objectives were identified following the analysis and act as a benchmark against which to evaluate actions moving forward.

Directions and strategies: The Framework presents directions to achieve the objectives. The directions are designed to be overarching statements that describe the broad moves made by the Framework. To achieve the directions, the framework outlines a series of strategies which explain in detail the proposed approach to delivering the directions.

Structure plan: A structure plan has been developed for the City which incorporates the strategies for land use, built form and public domain and connections.

Precinct Visions: These proposed future desired character statement and principles for different precincts across the city centre. They seek to celebrate the unique qualities of our city centre and guide future development in line with community values and our role as a Regional City Centre.

Refined by the Community


The draft Urban Design Framework was considered by Council on 24 February, and supported to be shared with the community until 27 April 2020. The intent was to test the strategic direction of the draft Urban Design Framework. Feedback was received via an online survey, written submissions, face to face conversations and online forums. Further information relating to the community engagement is detailed in the accompanying Engagement Report.

Over 100 submissions from individuals and groups were received from landowners, property developers, local architecture and planning firms, Community Based Organisations, Government and Non-Government Organisations, and peak bodies.

Areas of support and concern were raised and these have been considered. Overall the majority of individuals and groups supported each of the Directions and Strategies of the draft UDF. This reaffirmed the community's ongoing support for the vision of *A City for People* for Wollongong City Centre.

From a Precinct perspective, the need to recognise a Health Precinct was raised and this is documented as a recommendation moving forward. Minor adjustments to Precincts were also made in the Recommendations section.

The Direction relating to *prioritising jobs by safeguarding land for commercial development* prompted considerable feedback. Further testing was carried out in response to concerns raised. This document, the final Urban Design Framework, has been amended to integrate and reflect feedback received through the engagement process.



By guiding city design to reflect a comfortable human scale, priority is given to the delivery of high quality city streets and spaces, inviting people to explore their city and to appreciate the unique and beautiful qualities offered in the City Centre.

A City for People

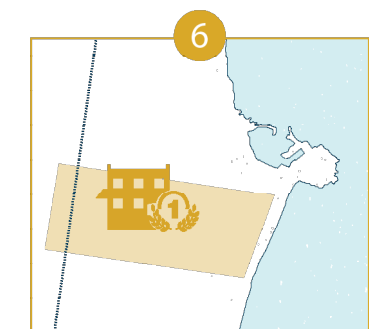
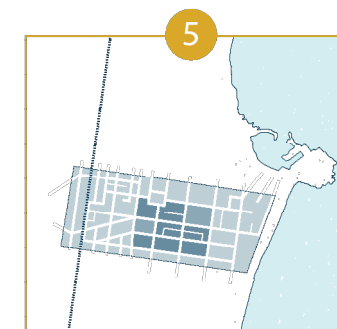
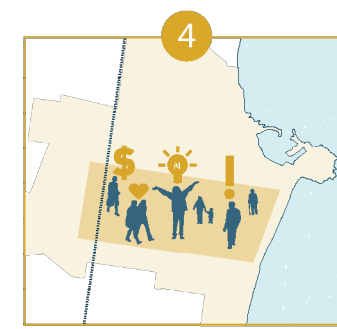
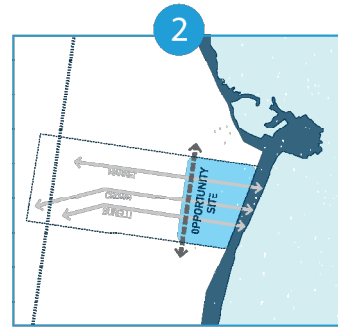
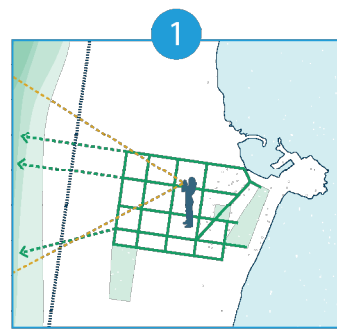


02 Analysis

This section outlines key findings and opportunities which have been defined as a result of comprehensive analysis of the City Centre

A City for People Learnings

Theme 1 Celebrate the uniqueness



Vision Statements

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The natural beauty of the escarpment is seen from City streets and in-between City buildings. – Nature is an important part of the City street character, providing comfort and connection to the escarpment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offering a seamless journey between the City and the sand, the coastal setting underpins city experience and attracts a diverse range of people. – The foreshore is exciting and there are a range of things to do, see and enjoy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The nostalgia of our past shapes the City identity and tells a story of our rich Indigenous, European and industrial history. – Heritage is revealed in buildings, street grid and the spaces that exist in-between. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The City Centre is tightly defined, guiding priorities for investment and a growing economy. – A compact City Centre delivers a more connected CBD, bringing efficiencies and enhancing its regional role. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Buildings are designed to relate to City streets, delivering a comfortable scale, connecting people with street life. – The character and form of buildings responds to and respects the City's natural setting and spread public life. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Architectural design excellence is celebrated, and a culture of high quality design is evident in the look and feel of the City. – Street presentation is exceptional, with high quality building edges interacting with the street. |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|

Key challenges:

- The need to achieve a seamless transition between the core City and the foreshore, where there are a range of things to see and do.
- Ensure that Wollongong's heritage is reflected in buildings and spaces in between, telling the City's Indigenous, European and industrial story.

Key challenges:

- The foreshore feels disconnected from the City Centre.
- Building on the existing entertainment uses and knitting the foreshore back into the centre will be critical.
- Opening up this part of the City at all times of the day, not just for events, will help to activate the foreshore.
- Corrimal Street is a clear delineation between the City core and foreshore - and a new approach to street activation and land uses is required.

Key challenges:

- Integrating the old with the new is always a challenge.
- Heritage is an important component of the City's character but there must be appropriate controls that balance redevelopment and heritage protection.
- Heritage is just as much about the City's structure, with the history and character of streets, such as Crown Street, having a significant historical influence on the city.
- The structure of the City should reinforce and build on the historic grid that developed in the early 1800's.
- Achieving conservation of heritage items, appropriate settings and reinforcing aspects of local character in a high-density environment.

Key challenges:

- The extent of the commercial core is too large to enable a compact, urban City Centre.
- The B3 area needs to be redefined as a key employment area that prioritises jobs, and is supported by high quality public spaces.
- Allowing shop top housing across the City Centre compromises the commercial core - recent mixed use developments have resulted in high residential yields but limited employment outcomes.

Key challenges:

- The current height controls are excessive and do not give sufficient consideration to the streetscape/public domain.
- There is little variation in the built form outcomes being delivered across the City
- The built form should respond to the historic and existing street character and function - this means some streets may have lower heights than currently permitted.
- Establishing a strong and consistent street wall height for the City Centre will be key.
- There must be a diversity of built form and also a diversity of uses to create a fine grain, human scale City.

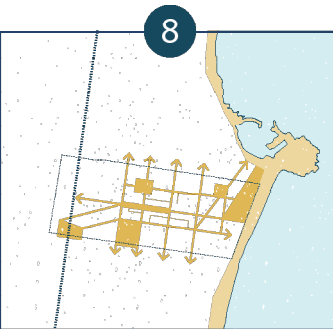
Key challenges:

- High quality design that provides excellent public amenity and addresses the public domain should be the norm - not best practice.
- Design excellence must extend beyond the built form to deliver buildings that provide an excellent street interface, respond to local character and build on local identity.
- The public domain must also exhibit design excellence - a refocus on the public domain and the street edge condition is required.
- The challenge is how to deliver the best design outcomes when physical constraints such as flooding, noise and traffic must be addressed.

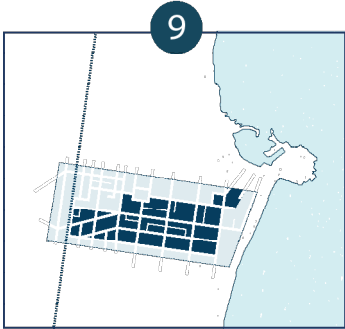
Theme 3 Grow a living city



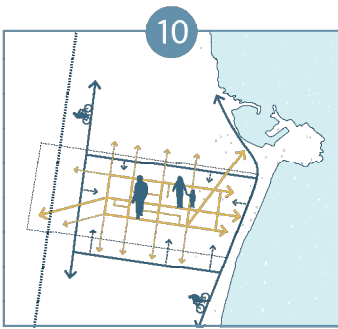
- The City Centre has a strong, growing residential population who enjoy the lifestyle offered by a cosmopolitan City.
- A diverse community that is socially connected and has a shared sense of pride.



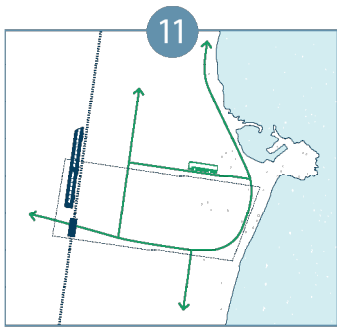
- The City Centre delivers a network of intuitively connected paths and open spaces.
- Unique in character and role, the spaces are well designed offering flexibility in the way they support city life.



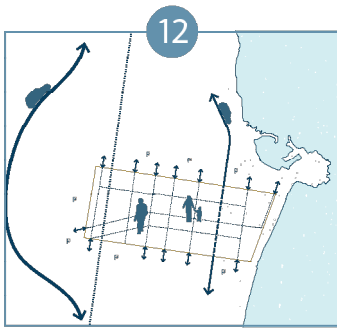
- City blocks, streets and sites provide opportunities to live, work, learn and play.
- A range of uses engage with the street deliver vibrancy day and night.



- Streets prioritise walking and cycling, enticing people to weave through the City and discover its offerings.
- Streets are comfortable, enjoyable, safe. Inviting people of all ages and abilities to meet and socialise, day and night.



- Public Transport is the preferred way of accessing the City, seamlessly linking with the pedestrian and cycle network.
- Regular and reliable, bus and train trips conveniently connect to key destinations (e.g., hospital and university).



- Vehicle movements and car parking support City Centre functions while prioritising pedestrian comfort.
- There is a sense of pedestrian priority on City streets with through traffic redirected and cars encouraged to slow down.

Key challenges:

- There has been a significant increase in the number of people living in the centre over the past 5 years, and this trend is set to continue.
- The challenge now is how to balance increasing residential and mixed use development with more diverse jobs and improved public spaces.
- More people in the centre brings more activity, but residential growth must not compromise the ability of the centre to grow as a major employment centre.

Key challenges:

- Further from the City Centre, there are less connections, with a lack of north-south connections particularly along western Crown Street.
- There is a need for new connections, especially between the station and the foreshore, to improve pedestrian access.
- The City has some great open spaces on the edges (MacCabe, Lang), but these parks are underutilised, with inactive edge conditions and don't provide the amenity/facilities required to support a young, urban population.

Key challenges:

- The challenge is how to achieve a genuine mix, with a diversity of uses and fine grain streets.
- The dilution of the City Centre with ground floor retail uses on all streets is a real challenge for the City Centre.
- There is currently an oversupply of retail floorspace, with high vacancy rates and empty shop-fronts, compromising the ability to create an active, safe and vibrant streets.

Key challenges:

- Wollongong suburb has a walk score of 76/100. This means the City is very walkable but is not a "walkers' paradise".
- The walk score increases the closer you get to the centre - the challenge is how to expand the fine grain structure in the core to all of the City Centre.
- Streets that are great for walking have a fine grain structure and have high pedestrian amenity with visual interest, seating and shade.
- The City needs to build on the existing network of lanes, and create additional secondary street connections that are less about cars and more about people.

Key challenges:

- Despite high active transport and public transport use in the centre, private car remains the dominant form of transport.
- Improving direct, safe and attractive connections to the station is required.
- The City did not initially develop around the station - although Crown Street remains the key spine connecting the City and the station, the station feels disconnected from the City Centre.
- The challenge is how to activate the area around the station - improved public space around the station, a direct high quality pedestrian connection, along with improved way-finding is required.

Key challenges:

- Crown Street and Keira Street carry high traffic volumes, creating a barrier through the centre.
- The challenge is how to create a more pedestrian friendly environment along an arterial road.
- The challenge with Gehl's vision is that it relies on a City Centre bypass - this is a long term vision.
- Until such time as there is a bypass, or the declassification of Crown and Keira Streets, the pedestrianisation of these streets will remain a challenge.

Economic Analysis

Wollongong - A nationally significant City

The UDF recognises the Wollongong City Centre's role as a National City, the vibrant capital of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven, with diverse employment, services and recreational uses. Metro Wollongong is the economic and cultural heart of that region.

To inform the UDF, Wollongong City Council engaged SGS to undertake an economic analysis of the City Centre including theoretical capacity testing, development feasibility testing, forecasting and testing of potential feasibility levers.

It is recognised that there are several regionally significant economic clusters within, or in close proximity to the Wollongong City Centre. These clusters, including Wollongong Hospital and health precinct, University of Wollongong and Wollongong Innovation Campus, exert a substantial influence on the LGA's economy, and represent key growth areas which could be leveraged to create continued growth across the Wollongong local government area (LGA).

The City Centre has intrinsic assets that offer significant potential to stimulate economic growth, however, with excellent proximity to Sydney, a key issue for jobs growth in the City Centre is significant job leakage with residents commuting to Sydney for highly skilled jobs. As Wollongong transitions to a higher order knowledge-based centre, there is a need to prioritise office and commercial jobs in the City Centre. Council's Economic Development Strategy sets an aspirational net new jobs target of 10,500 jobs in the LGA by 2029. The City Centre is the key location for this jobs growth. The UDF builds in significant capacity for the City Centre to grow beyond this target, and ensures that the planning controls will not present a barrier to investment in high value jobs.

Wollongong City Centre has all the foundations for a successful city: Economic analysis by SGS Economics and Planning supports the UDF. The economic assessment undertaken by SGS highlights that the Wollongong City Centre has all the foundations for a successful regional city, however these need to be better leveraged to attract commercial development and employment.

Wollongong has much to offer: The amenity and lifestyle of Wollongong City Centre are part of its unique offer, and its nearby hospitals and university campuses are seen as key economic assets. Nearly a third (27%) of jobs in the Local Government Area are found in the City Centre. Health Care, Social Assistance, Public Administration and Safety continue to be our largest established industries.

Our jobs growth is not occurring across the full spectrum of sectors expected for a Regional City: Analysis demonstrated employment growth has been mainly linked to population serving industries including accommodation and food services and education and training. These industries tend to grow when a population grows. As a Regional City, we are aspiring for growth in jobs across a full range of business, government, retail, cultural, entertainment and recreational industries. Wollongong will need to continue to proactively advocate for key knowledge-intensive, high value, high skilled sectors, which are not linked to population growth.

Wollongong continues to lose skilled labour to Sydney: The number of the LGA's 2016 working population employed outside the LGA continues to increase (30% in 2016 up from 26% 2011). Of those who have moved to the LGA from Sydney, more than 50% are still employed in Sydney. The lack of employment in professional services in comparison with Sydney will continue to draw employment away from the City Centre. Our employment offer is not increasing in line with population growth.


Feasibility of commercial development is challenging: Key moves to improve the attractiveness of Wollongong to encourage employment growth is important to attract key industries now and into the future. Upgrades to infrastructure, public domain and planning processes will assist in meeting aspirational growth projections.

The UDF looks at how the City can guide commercial investment and explores planning policy levers to unlock commercial feasibility in the City.



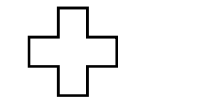
21,290
Jobs in the
City Centre

In 2016 the Study area and immediate surrounds (including the Hospitals) contained 21,290 jobs.




27%
of LGA's
jobs

The City supports 27% of the total jobs across the LGA, and 16 % of all the jobs in the Region. The area's jobs have increased by 2,200 from the previous decade, an annual growth rate of 1.1%.




40%
of jobs in top
3 industries

Jobs in health care and social assistance (16%), education and training (13%), and accommodation and food services (12%) comprise 40% of jobs in the Study area and immediate surrounds.



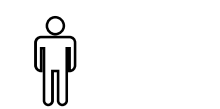
29%
travel out of
LGA for work

Job numbers in the City Centre are increasing, but the proportion of residents working outside the LGA remains significant. The largest proportion of workers who leave the LGA for work travel to Greater Sydney (21%)




15%
walk or cycle
to work

Within the City Centre 14% of residents walk and 1.2% cycle to work. Combined with 11% of residents who catch public transport to work, there is a much lower reliance on private vehicles in the City Centre than in the outer suburbs of the LGA.




32%
lone person
household

One third of households are lone person households in the City Centre. This is a much higher proportion than the Wollongong LGA at 24%.



2.1
average
household
size

The average household size is relatively small at 2.1 people per household. This reflects the high number of lone person households and low proportion of family households in the City Centre. Only 12.5% of households comprise couples with children.




37%
aged 20-34
years

There is a very young population with over a third of residents aged 20-34 years. The median age of 34 years is much younger than that of the Wollongong LGA at 39 years.



20%
currently
studying

There is a high proportion of university students living in the centre (18%). Combined with TAFE students this number increases to almost 20% of the population.



29%
have a
university
degree

The population is young, and highly educated with almost a third of residents having a Bachelor's degree. This correlates with a high number of professionals (30%), and managers (10%) who live in the City Centre. (source: ABS)

Key findings

Under the existing planning controls there is significant theoretical floor space capacity (1.3 million sqm) for commercial development within the City Centre. However, limited feasibility of commercial development is a significant barrier for commercial growth. Based on SGS findings, forecast demand for commercial floor space significantly exceeds feasible capacity.

Based on State Government employment forecasts, SGS has projected that over the next 20 years, there is a projected demand for an additional:

- 120,000 sqm of commercial floor space
- 195,000 sqm of residential floor space
- 3,000 – 18,000 sqm of retail floor space

Currently only 34,000 sqm of commercial floor space in the City Centre is feasible. This is likely to result in an estimated shortfall of 86,000 sqm of commercial floor space by 2036 (based on forecast demand for 120,000 sqm floor space). Conversely, the capacity for residential development significantly exceeds projected demand.

Using the Residual Land Value (RLV) model to test feasibility, SGS found that residential shop top housing is the most feasible development type in the City Centre business zones. This results in residential and mixed use development being the predominant development type in the City Centre, which has potential to constrain future commercial development.

RLV modelling showed that commercial development requires a significant (70%) cross subsidisation with residential to become feasible. SGS found that barriers to feasibility include a lack of market depth, increased construction cost associated with taller buildings, estimated land acquisition costs, high construction costs associated with basement car-parking and the risk in the development approval process.

SGS has determined that if the dominant mixed use development scenario was to continue unheeded, there would be a net loss of 45,000 sqm of commercial floor space in the City Centre by 2036. This is under the assumption that existing commercial would be redeveloped to shop-top housing, in line with the dominant trend and permissibility of shop top housing in the B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use zones. This is a significant issue as commercial floor space is required to support the economic role and employment offer of Wollongong.

SGS identified that retail demand is relatively low in the City Centre. The requirement for active ground floor uses across the City Centre has the potential to result in an oversupply of retail floorspace.

The feasibility of commercial development is a significant barrier for Wollongong City Centre to realise its full economic potential as the regional city for the Illawarra Region. There are a number of potential actions that could be introduced to address this issue. The objective of implementing any actions is to:

- promote commercial development in the City Centre in line with the vision
- support economic potential of the City Centre
- address feasibility issues

Wollongong Economic Development Strategy 2019-29

Council's Economic Development Strategy guides the strategic direction for employment and economic growth. The Strategy has a key focus on the City Centre, recognising its role for higher order professional jobs.

The UDF seeks to work alongside the Economic Development Strategy, to guide the right planning policy framework to promote and support investment for jobs in the City Centre.

Recommended Actions

Commercial and Retail Development

- Introduce a commercial core where residential development is prohibited in close proximity to Wollongong railway station, Crown Street Mall and public open space.
- Reduce risk for developers and increase certainty for development by providing clearer guidance to commercial landowners and developers across key sites within the commercial core of the City Centre. This includes a consistent process, speed of response and clearer planning controls.
- Market test a reduced on-site car parking rate with developers and prospective commercial tenants to understand market for this and potential impact on rents.
- Undertake an updated LGA-wide retail centres study to provide a more accurate estimation of retail demand and better inform recommendations of potential growth in retail floorspace

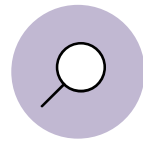
Public Domain

- Undertake an assessment of the value that existing industry and industry targets place on public domain improvements and use these to prioritise investment.
- Investigate alternative development contribution rates or mechanisms to fund future public domain investment in the Wollongong City Centre.
- Continue to implement existing public domain investment projects which increase the amenity of the Wollongong City Centre.
- Advocate for improvements to Wollongong railway station to improve physical connectivity between the railway station and commercial core.

Access and Movement

- Continue to implement the bike lane program and investigate opportunities to expand the Wollongong Shuttle network.
- Test feasibility of developing multi-storey car park against the contribution rate for off-site provision of parking for development.

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *Current land use controls could result in a City filled with residential development, compromising long term employment growth*

The existing Commercial Core is not well defined and does not have sufficient protection or incentives to support the development of commercial land.

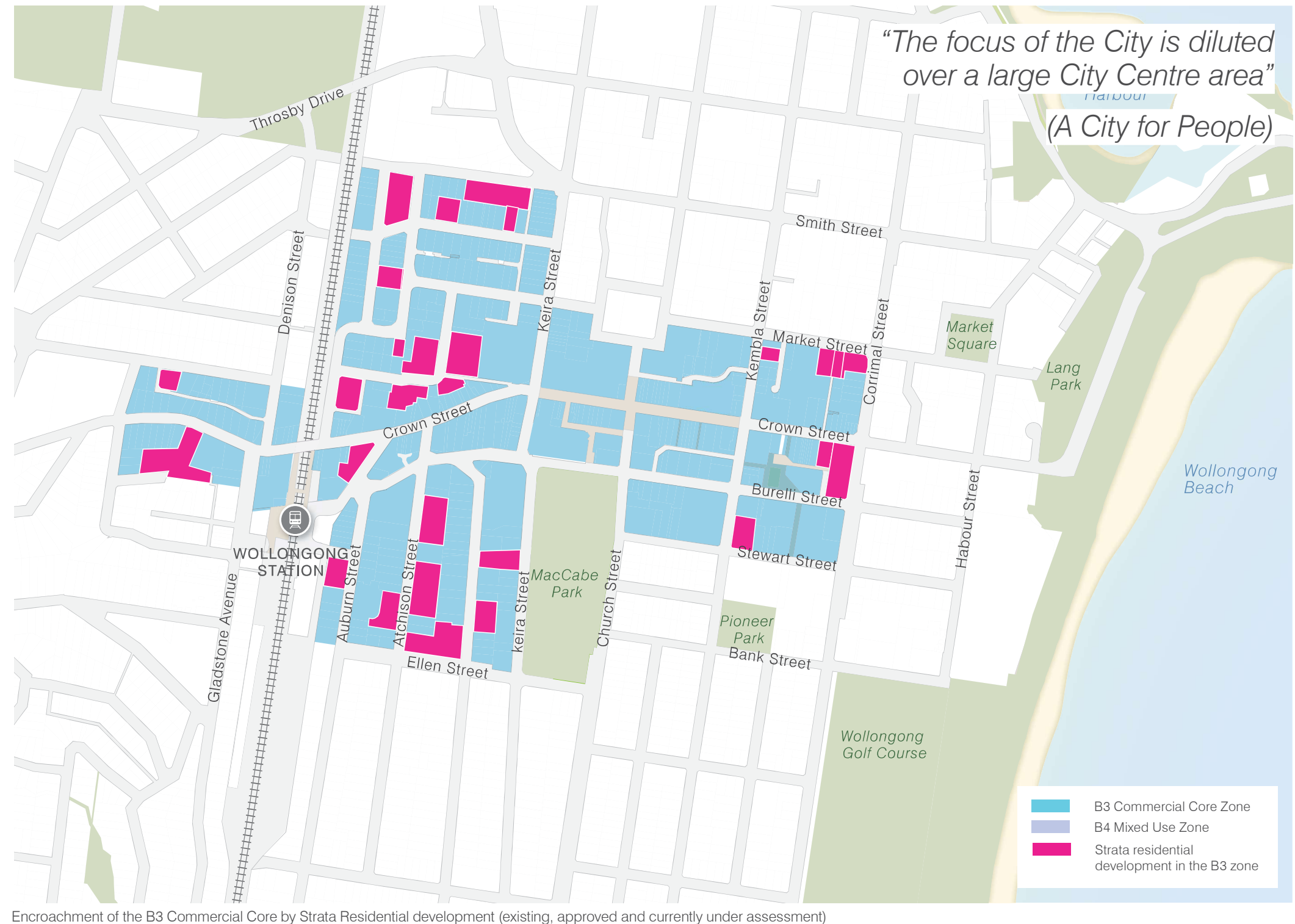
The current permissibility and feasibility of residential shop-top development across the centre threatens its role as a Regional City.

There is no clear Commercial Core

- There is no clear guidance on the preferred or appropriate land use, and the B3 Commercial Core and B4 Mixed Use zones permit very similar uses and built form outcomes.
- The City lacks diversity. Controls do not stipulate a land use mix. This is resulting in minimal commercial development and maximum residential development.
- The current B3 Commercial Core zone is too large, lacks definition, and does not provide sufficient protection for commercial land, by allowing residential development throughout the City Centre.

The existing land use zoning discourages commercial development because:

- The B3 zone permits shop top housing which raises the land value and impacts feasibility for commercial uses.
- There is no concentrated core with a commercial street address.
- A-grade office tenants prefer to locate in commercial-only zones where large floor plates are available.



Land Use

Residential encroachment is a threat to long term employment growth in the City

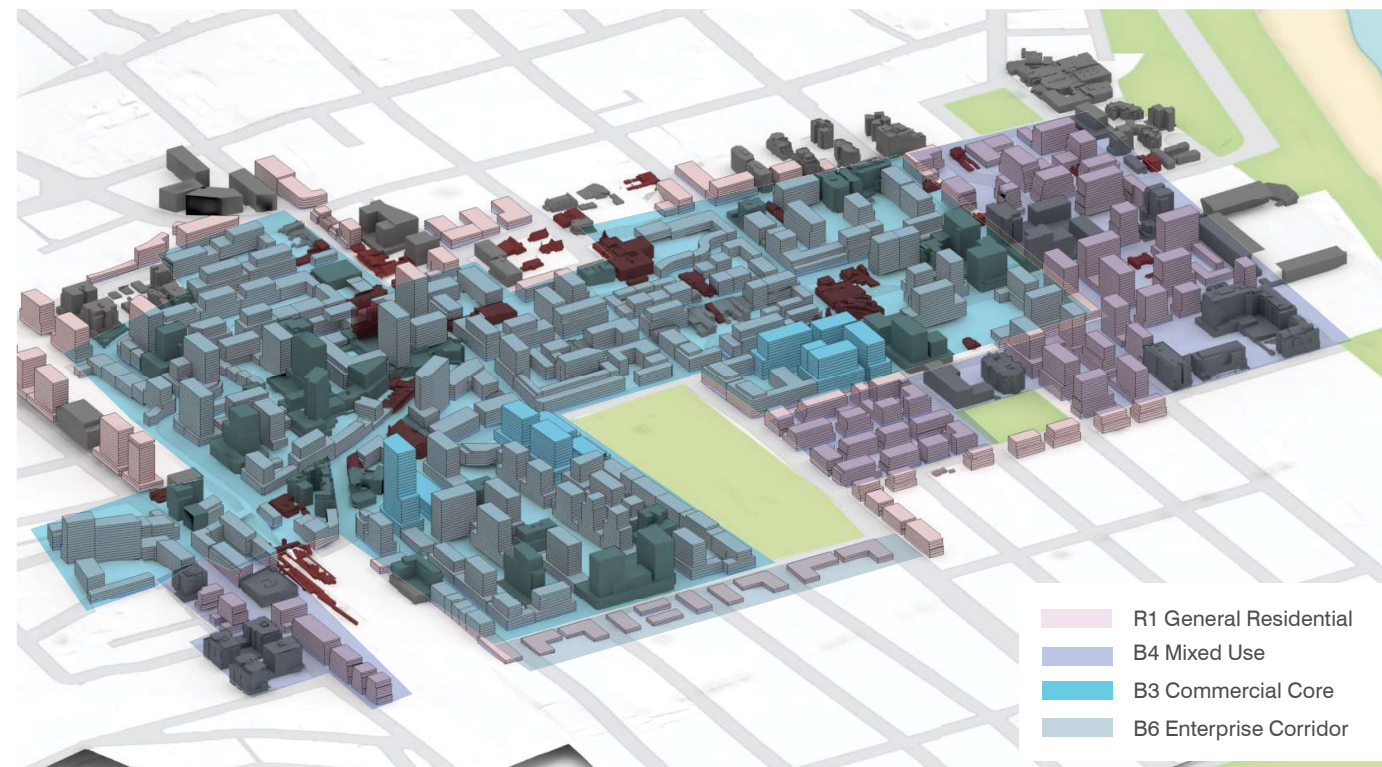
- Residential development adds significant vibrancy to the City Centre, however it must be balanced with commercial growth. Under the current 'business as usual' development scenario, there could be a loss of commercial floor space in the City Centre.
- Permissibility of residential uses in all land use zones in the centre (including the B3 Commercial Core which is non-standard) is resulting in a homogeneous outcome for the centre. As developments with residential uses are currently the most feasible and therefore the most likely development outcome.
- Encroachment of shop top housing throughout the centre is a risk for availability of commercial space in the future.

Economics

- SGS' Economic Study (2019) has found that commercial development in the City Centre is only marginally feasible, requiring significant cross subsidisation with residential development (70%) to achieve a viable development outcome. Residential is currently permissible within the B3 Commercial Core, and as a result there is a high proportion of residential development in the City.
- Over the last 10 years the number of jobs in the City Centre has increased, however, job leakage to Sydney has remained significant.
- Without intervention, there is a risk that Wollongong will not be able to improve prospects for commercial development or achieve its status as a major regional city. A new direction for the City Centre is required.
- If the current land use controls are maintained, there is not likely to be capacity for the forecast demand of 120,000sqm of additional commercial floor space that will be required by 2036.



The same land use outcome in both the B3 and B4 zones either side of Corrimal Street with similar shop-top housing developments



Complying scenario model view of the centre (land use overlay)

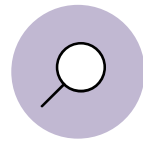
★ The Opportunity

Creating distinct land use areas in the City will enable specific character areas to develop, get the balance right and enable the City to grow at a human scale.

Safeguarding space in the centre for commercial only development will ensure residential development does not compete with commercial development and will assist in making commercial development more feasible.

Key drivers of economic growth are located outside the City Centre – including the University of Wollongong, TAFE, Innovation Campus and the hospitals. Connecting and integrating these precincts will be important, but the key focus will be to build on these assets and encourage the location of supporting health, education and business uses within the City Centre.

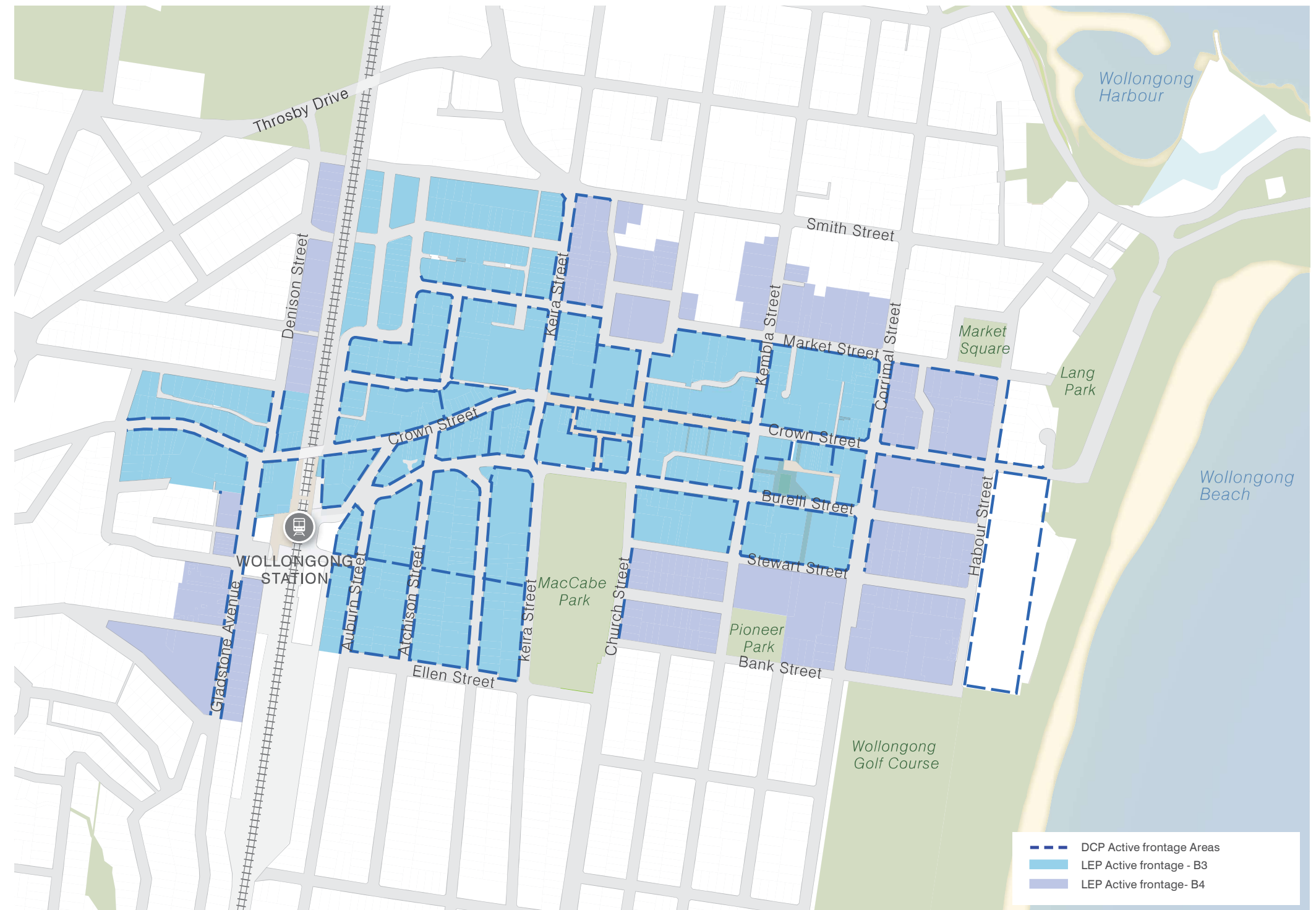
Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *The retail core is spread out too far, which results in empty shopfronts and creates inactive streets*

Current policy requires non-residential ground floors throughout the B3 and B4 zones. This results in an oversupply of shopfronts and erodes the significant high-street character and traditional retail of Crown and Keira Streets.

- Crown and Keira Streets are unique in their scale and character. The majority of frontages along Western Crown, Lower Crown Street Mall and Keira Street have a width less than 7 metres and a 2-storey street wall. This results in fine grain streets flanked by relatively narrow, low scale buildings. This should be preserved where possible.
- There is not enough depth in the retail market to support retail offers across the extent of this area, especially with the growth of ‘big box’ retail centres on Crown and Keira Streets. Numerous ground floor vacancies across the City Centre are evidence of this.
- Over time the spread of retail has eroded Crown Street’s significance as Wollongong’s retail high street. While Crown Street continues as the main retail spine, a noticeable increase in ground floor vacancies on the western end of Crown suggests that the retail core is too dispersed across the city.
- Although developments with commercial at ground and residential above protect commercial land use at ground, they do not deliver the built form outcome required by many commercial tenants.
- There is a discrepancy between the LEP and DCP definition of active frontage. The LEP requires non-residential uses at ground (WLEP clause 7.13) while the DCP D13 Clause 3.3 suggests that residential can also activate the street.



Active frontages required by Wollongong DCP (2009) and Wollongong LEP (2009) results in a diluted retail precinct

Land Use



01

Artist: Smug One



02

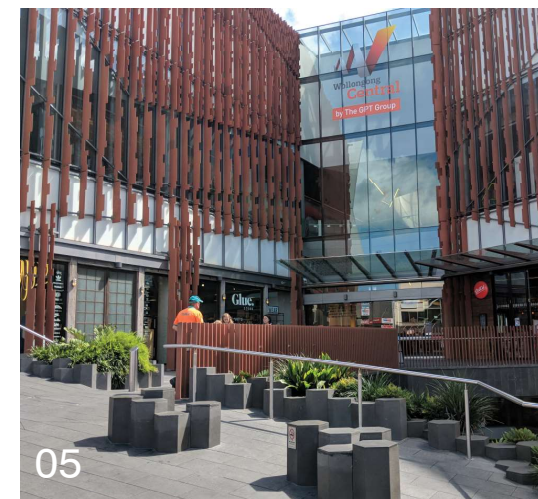


03

Artist: Fintan Magee



04



05

★ The Opportunity

There is a need to encourage a vibrant, compact retail core, which reinforces the important role of Crown Street.

The oversupply of retail space in the City Centre suggests a need to re-consider ground floor uses across the City Centre.

Alternative uses such as well-designed ground floor residential apartments and terrace style accommodation at ground floor should be explored as a means of activating streets with uses other than retail.

- 01 Globe Lane Precinct is an attractive intimate scale retail area
- 02 An example of a building in the B4 Mixed Use zone with a poor interface between ground floor tenancy and streetscape
- 03 Cafe culture is successful on Lower Crown Street
- 04 Crown Street Mall is the primary retail strip
- 05 The West Keira shopping centre extension has absorbed retail from Crown Street Mall

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *The City's identity is diversifying to support City life*

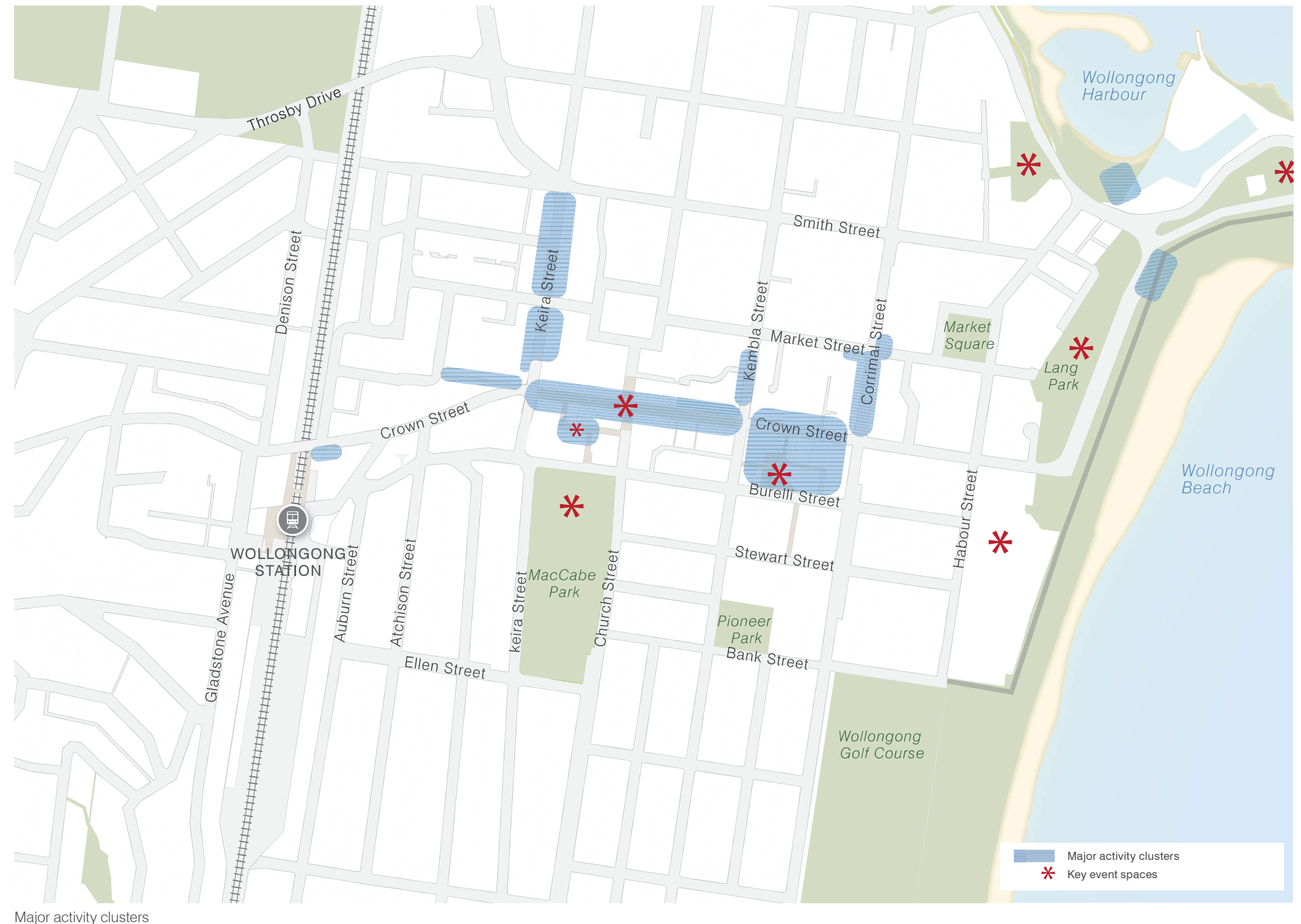
Wollongong's historic and cultural diversity coupled with an increasing young and entrepreneurial population provides a rich foundation for a vibrant city. The City Centre is an attractive place to visit with an array of small bars and cafés, art and culture and pristine recreation areas to enjoy.

In recent years, Wollongong has grown its café, small bar and live music scene. With an influx of new small bars and cafés opening in the past 5 years, the City Centre is well populated with places to eat and drink at most hours of the day.

Wollongong's reputation as a regional live music destination has been strengthened through festivals such as Yours & Owls, Corona Sunsets, and the Wollongong Fringe as well as high profile concerts like Elton John. These attract significant interest from around the Illawarra and beyond.

Wollongong is also known for its outdoor and recreational activities for individuals and families. Surrounded by bushland and sea, it is a destination for fans of water sports, sky diving, cycling and hiking.

Wollongong's historic cultural diversity coupled with an ever increasing student and entrepreneurial population is a rich foundation for a vibrant city.



Land Use



★ The Opportunity

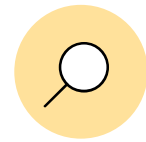
Although a popular spot for day trippers, Wollongong is often overlooked by overnight visitors in favour of smaller towns along the coast. With its growing cultural identity as a creative and diverse city, Wollongong is in a unique position to re-define itself.

The City is emerging as both a vibrant regional destination known for its arts, music and food scene and a hotspot for outdoor recreation. There is the opportunity to continue to build on the provision of a wide range of tourist accommodation and entertainment types to support the culture of the city.

Policy provisions to assist in mitigating conflicts between residents, businesses and event spaces will support a strong evening economy in the City.

- 01 Hey Day on Western Crown
- 02 Wollongong Art Gallery in the Arts Precinct
- 03 Live music at the former Rad Bar
- 04 Street art and murals are prominent on walls throughout the City Centre
- 05 Performers in Crown Street Mall
- 06 Water activities in Wollongong Harbour

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: General development controls don't respond to the character and historic qualities of place in the City

The City is fortunate to have a unique and valuable sense of place, shaped by its history, peoples, culture and landscape. How buildings and streets are designed should respect and enhance these unique City qualities.

Built form controls need to respect the values associated with the natural setting as well as Aboriginal and European heritage. Stronger guidance is needed to improve development outcomes in the context of heritage items and character precincts.

The design of the built environment is an opportunity to connect with Country, to develop ways to share knowledge about Aboriginal Places, as well as places of shared cultural and heritage significance. There is an opportunity to connect with Country in partnership with the local Aboriginal Community to inform and shape the future of the City Centre.

The City Centre has many notable character buildings and places - some are already protected through a Heritage Listing - others that are not. These form part of our community's memory and experience of the City Centre and it's important that we find a balance between development of new buildings and the preservation of those showcase our cities evolution and history.

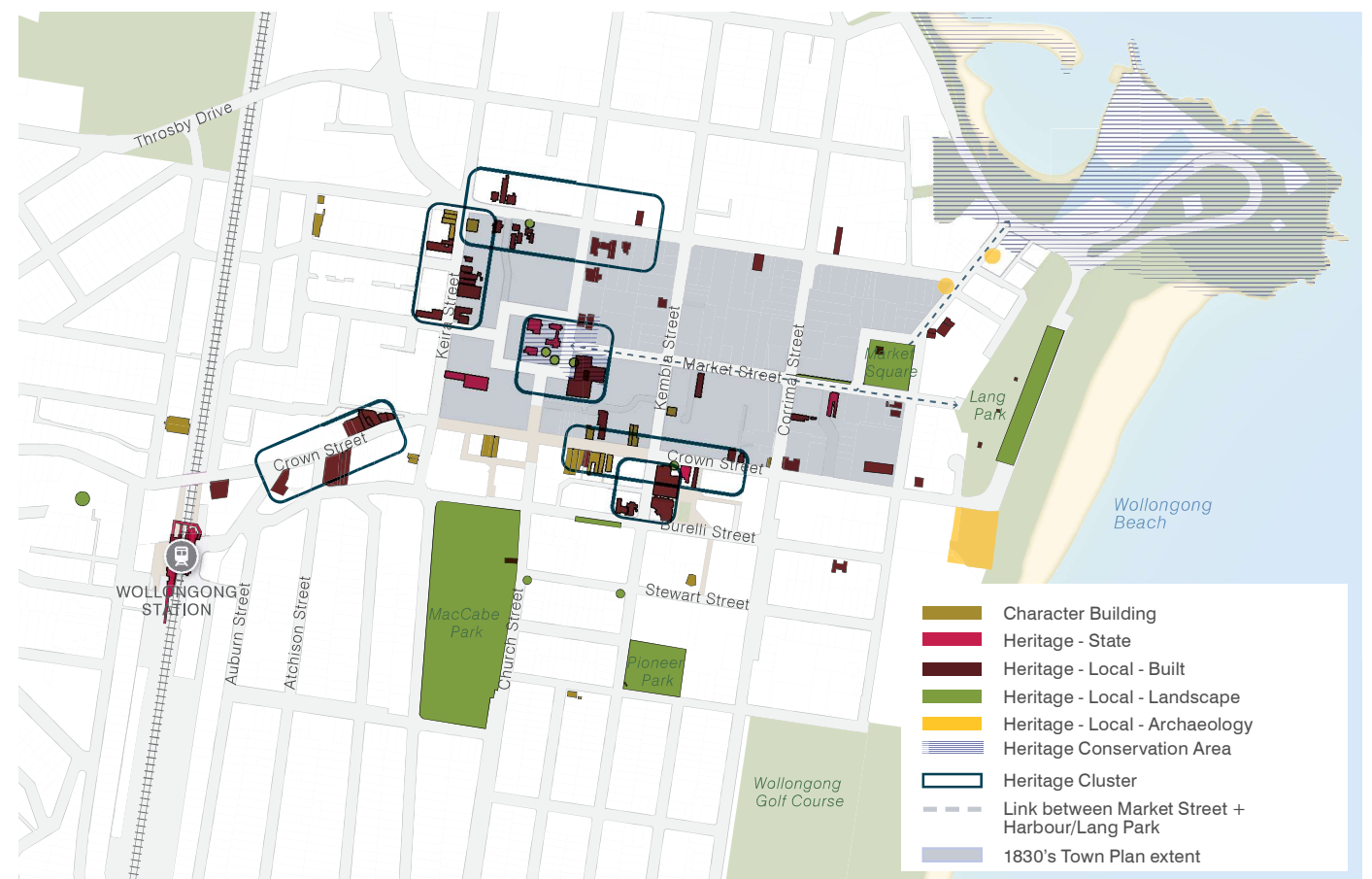
Analysis has identified additional character buildings that play an important role in demonstrating Wollongong's history that should be investigated for potential heritage listings.

The adaptive re-use and re-development of heritage buildings do not always involve full scale re-development. Most works undertaken in the City Centre have involved low scale modifications and additions that facilitate the gradual adaptation of the building to accommodate changes in existing uses or more extensive modifications to accommodate new ones.

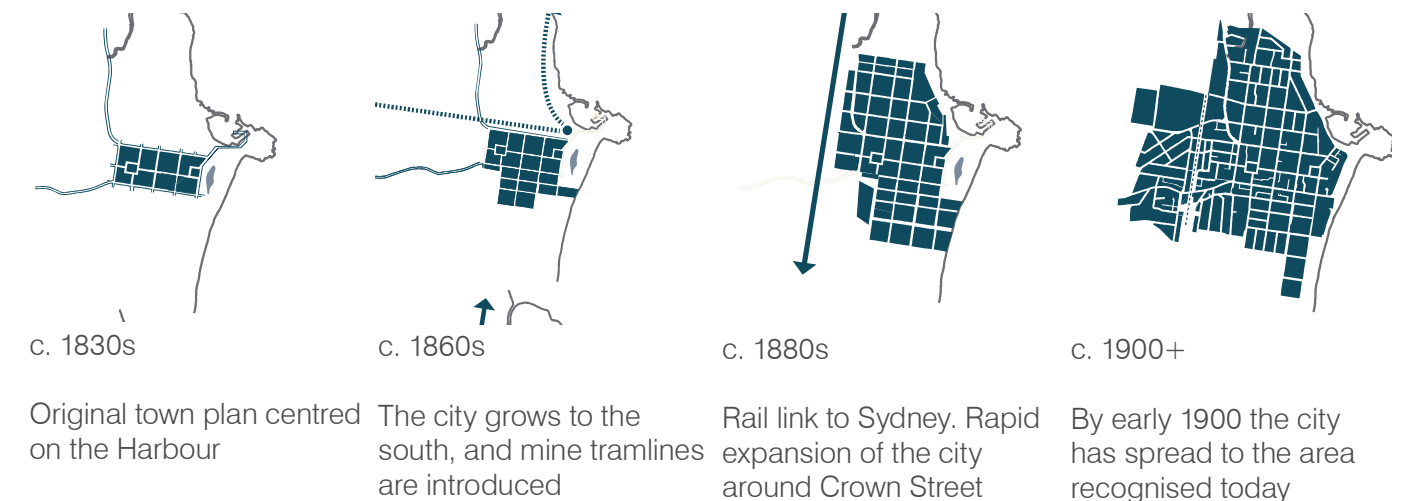
Planning controls should be place based to better respect and celebrate the City's unique qualities. There is an opportunity to connect with Country and tell the story of our City Centre over time so it can be enjoyed by generations to come.



Artists: Lorraine Brown, Narelle Thomas and Michael Keighery



Map of Heritage and Character buildings and places (2019)



Built Form



★ The Opportunity

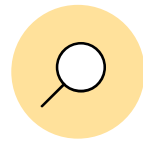
Work in partnership with the Traditional Custodians of the land to determine how Aboriginal Heritage is identified and managed, to ensure we uphold some of the world's longest standing spiritual, historical, social, and educational values.

The provision of a specific design guideline could greatly strengthen Council's approach to development in heritage precincts and provide land owners with a clear understanding of Council's objectives for re-development.

The guidelines may address broad issues such as preferred use and appropriate built form, to more specific issues such as materials selection and façade treatment. The document may also be an opportunity for Council to showcase exemplar projects from other regional cities which clearly demonstrate good examples of adaptive re-use of heritage buildings. The adaptation of the Design Guide for Heritage prepared by Government Architect NSW may be a starting point for the development of such a guideline

- 01 Heritage listed former Marcus Clark building that has been stripped of detailing and painted over and is in need of revitalisation.
- 02 St Michael's Anglican Cathedral marks the historic centre of Wollongong, its steeple is a significant landmark in the City.
- 03 Wollongong Court House upgraded with a sympathetic, contemporary extension
- 04 87 Crown Street, Heritage buildings on Crown Street create a unique character.
- 05 Masonic Hall adapted into apartments with residential tower set behind.

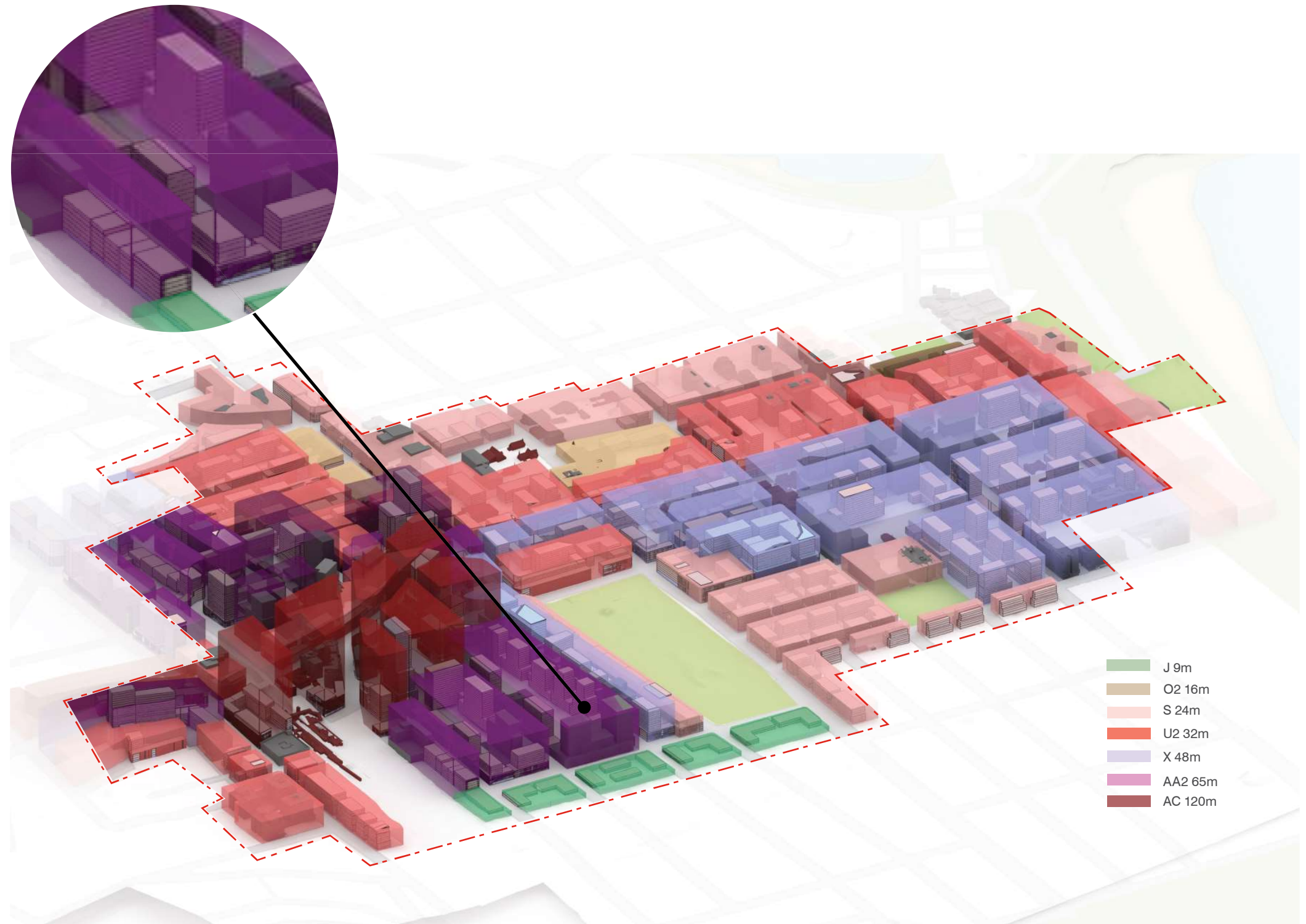
Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *The planning controls do not provide clear guidance for development to deliver the intended built outcomes for the city.*

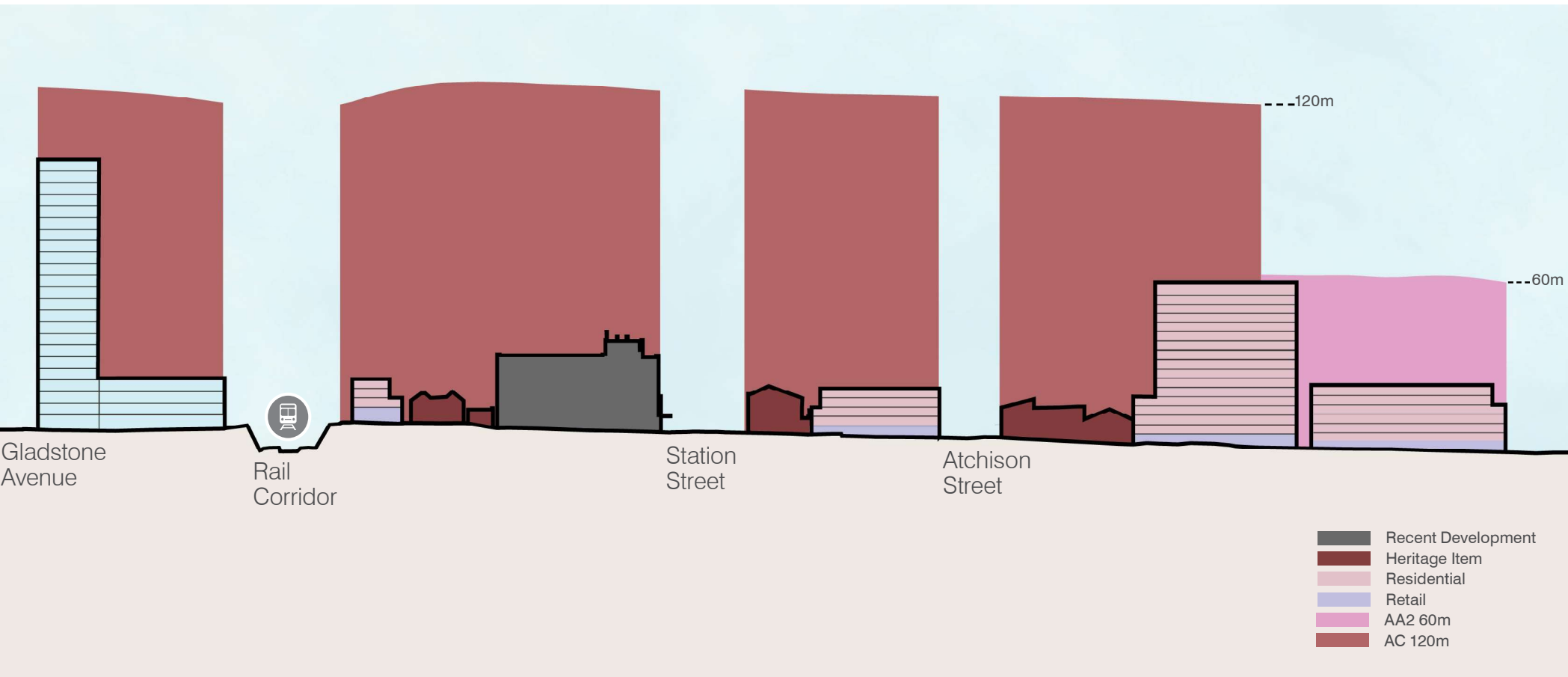
LEP height and floor space controls are at odds with the intended outcomes of the DCP - for a permeable, legible city of distinct precincts. In many cases, permissible height controls are unachievable due to a misalignment with the amount of floor-space permitted. This is confusing for land owners and means that the intended form of the City will not be realised.

- Controls don't respond to the specific place, context or character within the City
- The outcomes permissible under the controls can result in very different buildings, depending on land-use, which results in uncertainty. There are also cases where building envelope controls are not able to be realised, leading to false expectations and inflated land values.
- FSR is confusing to calculate.
- FSR is calculated solely on site area and land uses, rather than being spatially distributed with regard to height controls and character.
- The sliding scale does not incentivise development on small sites, which could provide valuable infill opportunities and create fine grain streets.
- The incentives for commercial development including an increased FSR of up to 6:1 for large sites, have had limited take-up. Shop-top housing continues to be the preferred development outcome.
- There are inconsistencies between built form controls in the LEP and DCP, such as continuous street walls versus side setback controls in the B4 Mixed Use zone.



Maximum FSR overlaid with existing height controls demonstrates that not all sites can achieve their height within the FSR control, particularly above the 48m limit.

Built Form



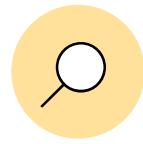
East-west section through the City showing maximum developable FSR within permissible height controls. On a range of sites the maximum FSR is reached before height limits are achieved.

★ The Opportunity

There is an opportunity to simplify FSR calculations to better align the character, land use, typology and heights with the achievable FSR.

Revised controls should consider design quality and the character of specific precincts within the City.

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *Developments favour maximising building development controls over design quality, producing a less attractive City*

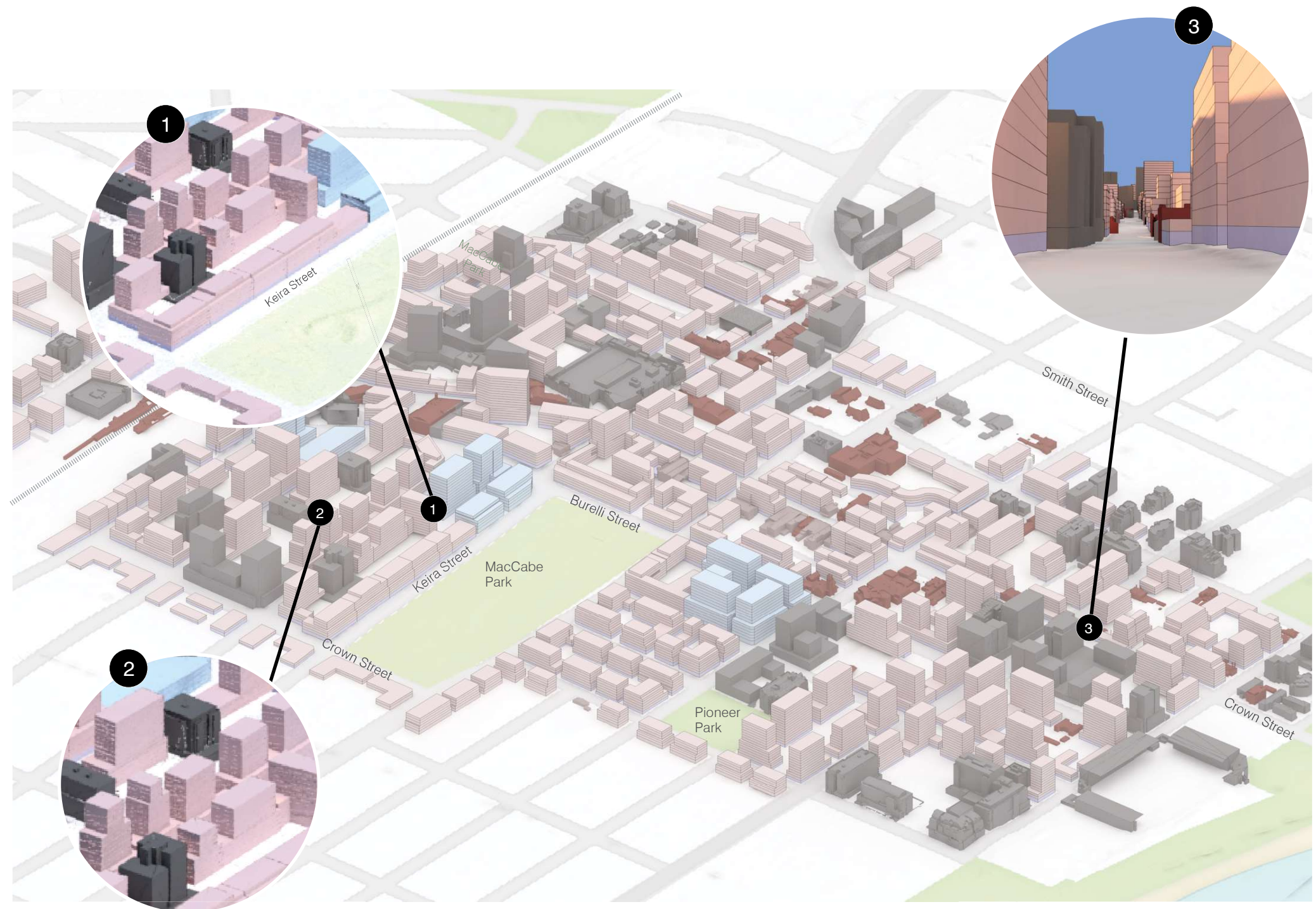
Some planning controls contribute to poorly designed buildings and streetscapes which do not respond to a precinct's character or human scale principles. Design quality is compromised by buildings that seek to maximise yield with little consideration to the broader impact or quality of the development

In looking at the City Centre as a whole, the amenity and quality of a number of streets were at risk from the development of large, bulky street wall buildings of varying heights.

- 1 This is particularly true of areas within the B3 Commercial Core zone where testing of the existing controls resulted in street walls that exceeded 100 metres in length with no provision for through site links.

The 12-24 metre range in heights for the B3 Commercial Core zone creates ambiguity in the controls and an inconsistency of built form across the zone.

- 2 In addition, the combination of DCP side setback controls and the Apartment Design Guideline building separation requirements resulted in an undesirable 'wedding cake' effect.
- 3 There was found to be no designated street wall height in the B4 Mixed Use zone and R1 General Residential zone resulting in a lack of consistency in streets where buildings varied greatly in height without due consideration for a transition in scale.



Built Form

The Wollongong LEP currently includes design excellence provisions which apply to the whole City Centre and to key sites. There is no distinction between the provisions applied to the Centre as a whole and to the specific sites. While these provide good principles, they give little guidance to outcomes for specific character precincts and result in an over-reliance on Council's design review panel.

In looking at recently completed projects within the City Centre, it is clear that the existing built form controls create a street interface which is difficult to navigate and detracts from the public domain.

An example of this may be seen in photograph 01 which applies both the 6x6m corner splay control at ground floor and raises the ground floor level of the development approximately 600mm above street level to mitigate the risk of flood.

Without specific design based controls within the Council's DCP to address the issues of flooding and access, prominent corner sites become compromised resulting in a poor urban design and aesthetic outcome.

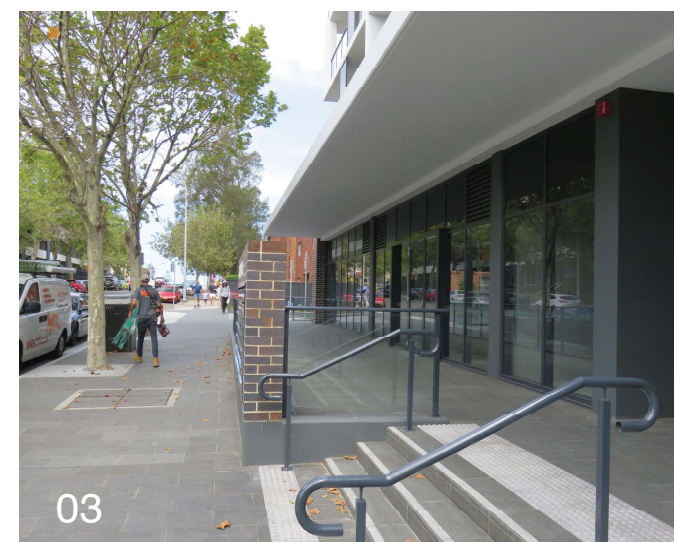
It is important to recognise the value of good design outcomes, by prioritising the human experience, both in flood and non-flood conditions. Through a more considered integration of engineered flooding solutions with built form it will be possible to create interfaces that are both functional and liveable.



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★ The Opportunity

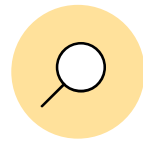
A new design-lead approach to built form and streetscape needs to be developed to enable more positive urban outcomes to be realised.

The approach should seek to balance development to locate density appropriately across different precincts and consider particular urban conditions such as heritage areas, environmental areas or other prevailing factors.

In addition, the new approach to building controls should achieve the best possible design quality for the City. Controls should enable built form which responds to human scale while addressing the impacts of climate change, including improved built form responses to flooding in low lying areas, while also celebrating the City's unique coastal climate.

- 01 Long ramps and stairs provide universal accessibility but lack access legibility and compromise safety. Railing associated with level changes at thresholds and on footpaths detract from the street experience,
- 02 Some overland flow grates have an open appearance and detract from streets.
- 03 Unnecessarily raised entries and street walls exceeding 55 metres contribute to a poor pedestrian environment

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *The City's development controls do not promote development that defines a city skyline or enhances the unique natural setting*

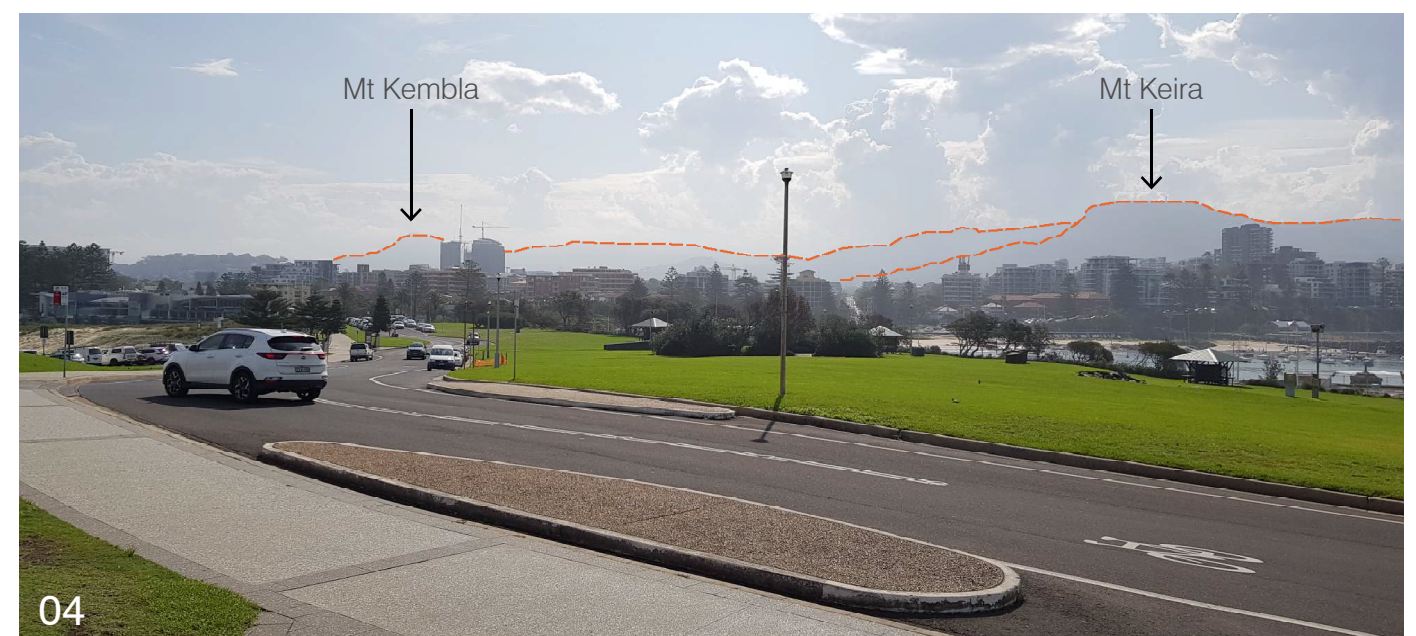
Wollongong's natural setting is an identifiable part of its character. Views connecting the City to the escarpment and foreshore are not well protected and are under threat of being lost. Tall residential buildings and areas of blanket height limits do not give reference to important precincts within the City. Development controls that influence building height and bulk need to change to improve the design quality and legibility of the City.

Topography plays an important role in Wollongong. The City Centre is located on an undulating plane between the ocean and the Illawarra escarpment. These natural features offer a striking and distinctive backdrop to the city and are key to Wollongong's identity as a truly coastal city as well as being critical to wayfinding.

The challenge for Wollongong is to balance the effects of growth with the need to retain the existing character of its place. This includes the need to establish a scale of development which is appropriate to its existing environmental context, in particular to its views to the coast and escarpment.

A number of developments both approved and constructed impact on the surrounding natural and urban context, leading to the partial or complete loss of views to the escarpment, coast or key vistas in the City Centre.

This loss of amenity, coupled with poorly designed and constructed buildings actively detracts from the qualities that give Wollongong its original appeal making it a less desirable place to live and visit.



- 01 Distant view to the steelworks from Church Street
- 02 Market Street provides a great vista to the ocean flanked by large trees. (protected view under current controls)
- 03 View up Church Street to St Michael's is obstructed by the shade structures in Crown Street Mall
- 04 The view of the escarpment from Flagstaff Hill is compromised by the height limits allowed by the Local Environmental Plan

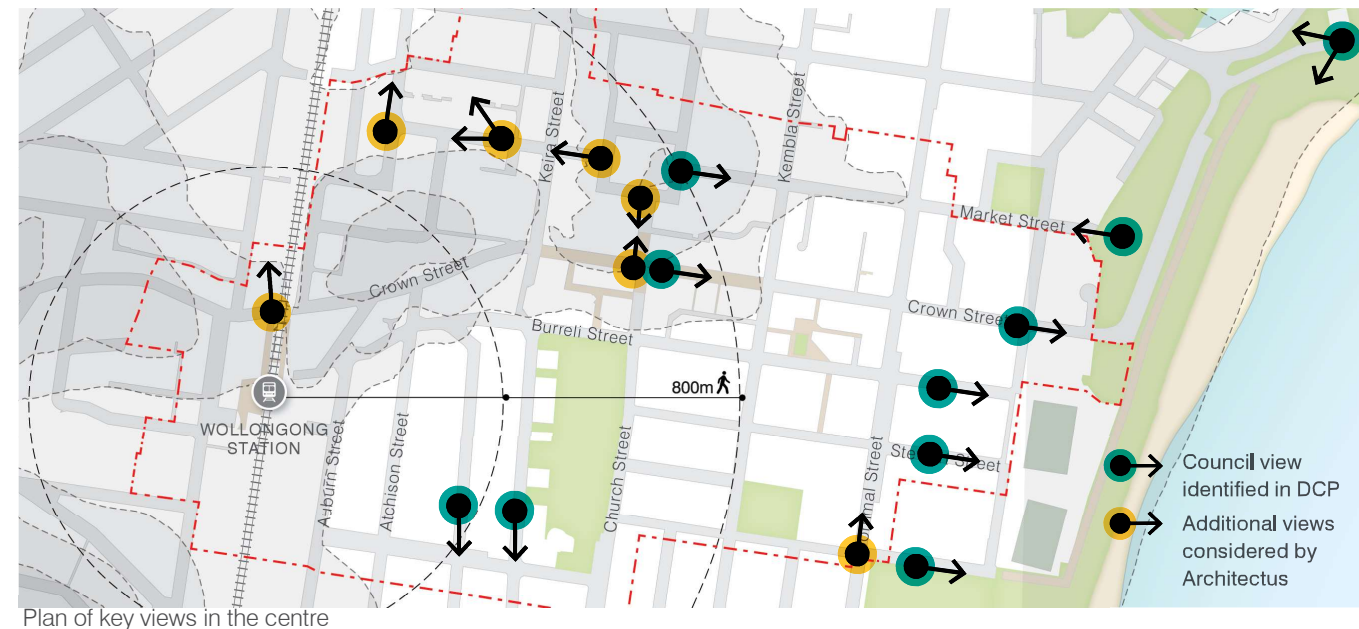
Built Form

Permitted building heights and bulk have the potential to impact views to the escarpment and ocean.

- Controls promote low wide bulky forms which don't respond to the character of particular precincts, or to the topography.
- The monotonous 'table-top' outcome, seen in the image of a complying City development scenario, does not provide legibility about uses, character or precincts within the City, and does not assist with way-finding in the way that a varied city skyline with towers in key locations, slender towers, and appropriate building separation can.
- Sleeved podium parking is creating bulky podiums, limiting through site permeability and resulting in poor built form relationships with adjacent sites.
- Height controls do not consider and protect the fine grain low scale character of Keira and Crown Streets.
- Height is concentrated west of Keira Street around the station and height is limited in the existing office core. The City's highest buildings are located on highest topographic point, impacting views to the escarpment and giving the impression that these buildings are the centre of the City, rather than the existing office or retail core.

Testing built form controls using the 3D model of the City revealed the following potential impacts on views within the city and to the natural setting:

- Current protected views are being compromised by poor compliance with and enforcement of view controls.
- Several significant views are not protected under the current planning controls
- The panoramic view from the lighthouse provides views to the escarpment and should be protected.
- Views along streets are easier to protect than oblique views, however, even these are obstructed
- Western views to and from St Michael's Church/ Square are not considered a protected view in the DCP and while special area controls protect the immediate surrounds, they do not protect views outside this area.
- Recently approved DAs negatively impact the view of the sky against the St Michael's spire.



Complying development scenario: West-East Section of City under existing controls

★ The Opportunity

Revisions to land-use and built form controls provide the opportunity to plan for a variety of precincts within the City. Each can develop with its unique character and a built form that will provide variety and legibility to the City skyline.

New vistas to the foreshore can be considered in conjunction with redevelopment opportunities in the entertainment precinct. Vistas to the escarpment can be protected with the right built form controls.

Views along key streets can be preserved to enhance character and protect significant natural and built heritage.

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *The City lacks clear physical and visual connections to key places which makes wayfinding difficult and discourages walking.*

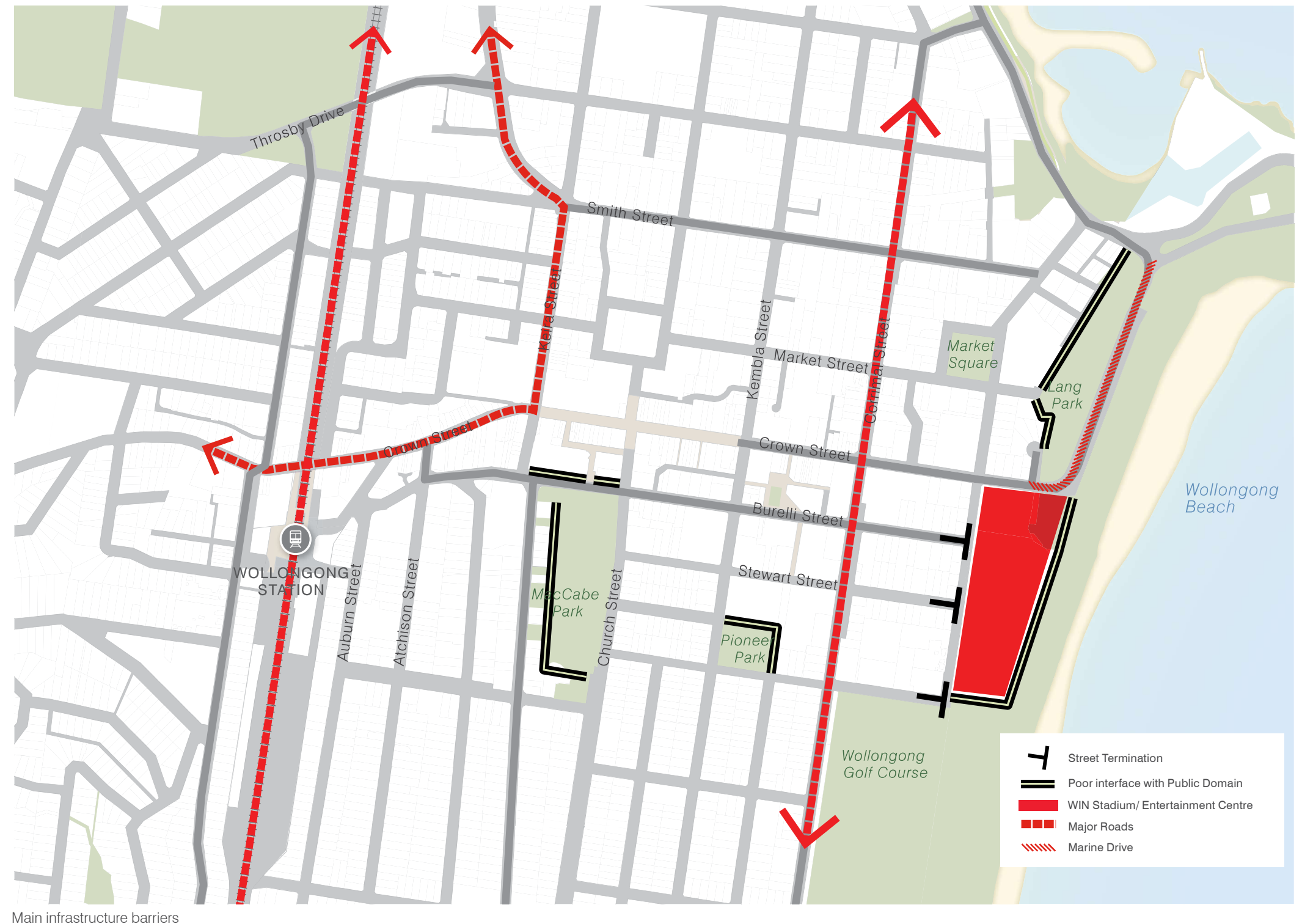
Long street blocks and major infrastructure barriers limit permeability by prioritising vehicles over pedestrians. The City Centre is divided by the Railway line and State Roads. Direct access to the foreshore is limited, the interfacing built form is inactive and key views are blocked by bulky buildings.

Major infrastructure barriers slice the city and offer limited paths of travel for pedestrians.

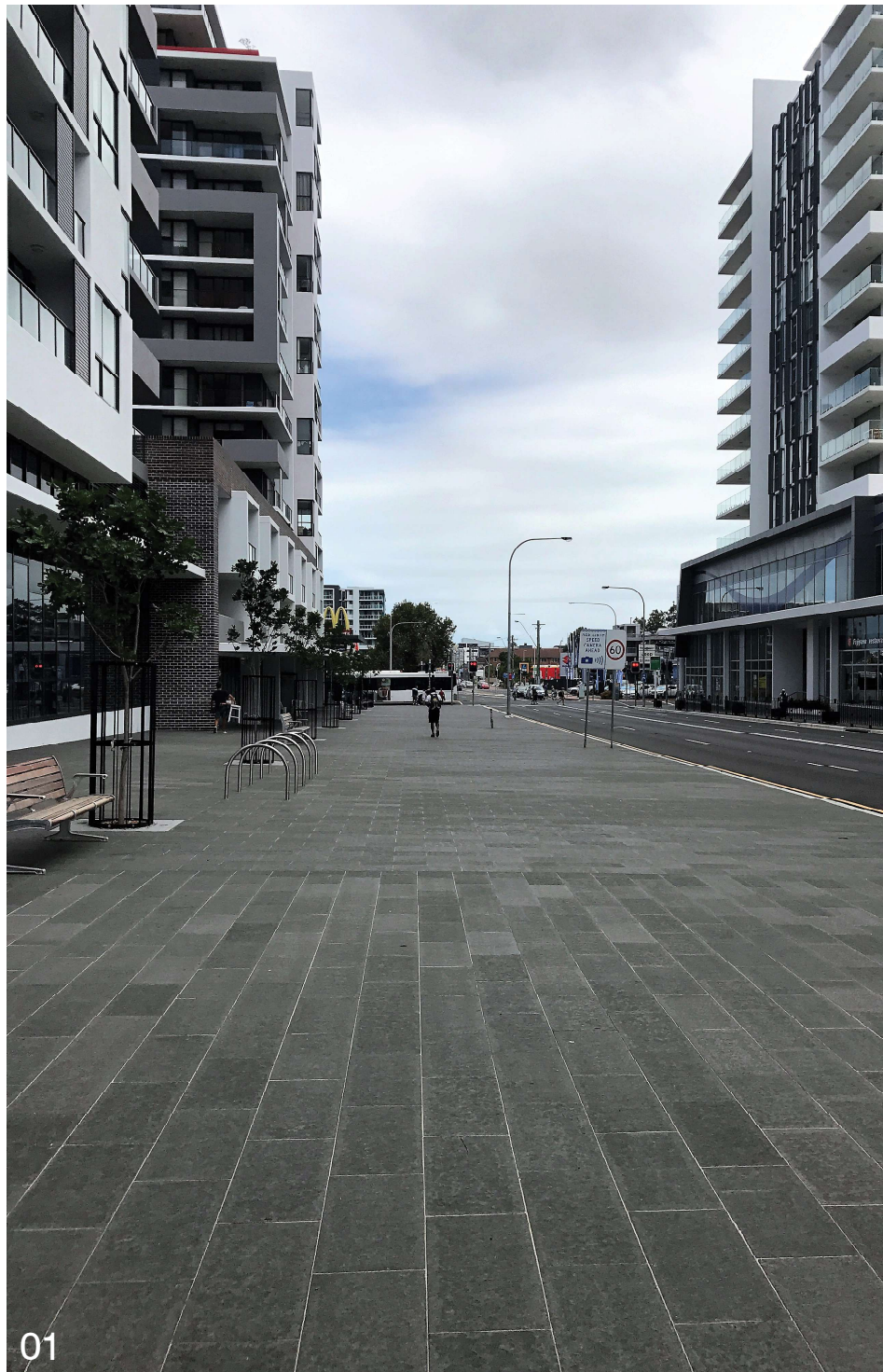
- The rail line creates a significant disconnect between the western side of the railway and the eastern City side.
- Keira and Western Crown Street are currently State governed roads, linking to the Princes Highway. This limits public space opportunities such as outdoor dining and planting and results in cars using City Core streets as a bypass, rather than a destination.

As identified in A City for People, the foreshore feels disconnected from the City Centre. Factors which have weakened the connection between the City and the coast, include local public domain factors as well as structural city-wide challenges:

- The WIN Stadium and Entertainment Centre and the Wollongong golf course acts as barriers
- Marine Drive severs Langs Park's connection with the foreshore
- Corrimal Street is a clear point of delineation between the City core and foreshore
- Smith, Market, Burelli, Stewart, Bank, Glebe, and Beach Streets do not connect with the foreshore
- The Crown Street link to the foreshore is underwhelming



Public Domain and Connections



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★ The Opportunity

There is an opportunity to plan for multiple connections from the City to the Beach- not only via Crown Street- providing a permeable network of vistas and links.

Consider the interface of built form with the foreshore and public domain to ensure active frontages and passive surveillance to improve the safety and attractiveness of the precinct.

Treat the coastal protection zone sensitively to protect and enhance Wollongong's natural coastal heritage as the City grows.

There is an opportunity to renew the station precinct to better connect with Crown Street up to the hospital and city core.

The introduction of the Denison-Throsby by-pass would minimise the use of Western Crown and Keira Streets as major thoroughfares for through traffic.

- 01 Future road widening on Corrimal Street results in excessively wide footpaths. Spaces need to be designed for comfort and activation.
- 02 The Southern end of the Blue Mile walking track is currently isolated by the WIN stadium and entertainment centre and lacks surveillance
- 03 Andrew Lysaght Park (former Anglican cemetery) is fenced off and has a limited public interface
- 04 There is a poor sense of arrival at the foreshore

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: Arrival into the City Centre is confusing and provides an underwhelming first impression of Wollongong

Arrival by car, bus and train provides a poor first impression of Wollongong. A lack of transition between surrounding residential and the CBD gives little sense that you have entered a Regional City.

For those arriving by rail, views of the spectacular coastline are suddenly replaced by an inland urban interface. This leaves visitors disoriented and struggling to identify whether they have arrived in Wollongong, and whether the City is to the east or west.

There are a number of issues which are common across all points of entries into the City. These include:

1. No clear point of transition marking the edge of the City Centre from the periphery making it unclear to visitors whether they have arrived.
2. A poor public domain interface which fails to promote walkability into the City Centre.
3. A lack of way-finding and visual connections making it difficult for visitors to orientate themselves in relation to the City Centre, coast and escarpment. It is noted new wayfinding signage is being delivered in the City Centre in 2020.
4. Lack of a legible skyline or buildings which act as markers to define different City precincts or hubs within the City.
5. Sunken topography and poor connectivity of train station.



Approach and arrival to the Wollongong City Centre.

Public Domain and Connections



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★ The Opportunity

An opportunity exists to develop strategies which draw on potential circulation and public domain improvements. These include street re-alignment to maximise access and visibility and take advantage of flatter topography and public domain improvements such as way finding, footpath upgrades and street planting. The intent should be to mark a clear point of arrival into the City and enhance the visual appeal of these key gateways.

- 01 Corrimal Street is a heavily trafficked gateway to the City.
- 02 The Flinders Street arrival experience, approaching Keira Street provides a sudden transition from a Highway character to a City Centre character
- 03 Way finding to the centre from Station Street is not legible
- 04 Station Street prioritises vehicles and buses over pedestrian connections with winding and narrow footpaths.

Urban Design Analysis



Finding: *Public open spaces are valued but do not yet realise their full potential*

Public spaces are generally well located, however they are underutilised and lack a clear identity. As the City's population increases, high quality green spaces are needed to deliver a healthy and liveable city and support community well-being.

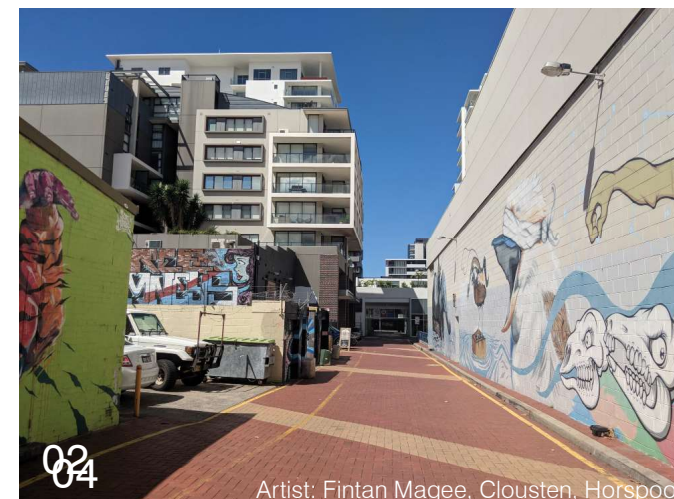
There has been significant investment in the Crown St Mall upgrade and the Blue Mile. As the City densifies the need for further investment in key spaces will be a catalyst for change.



City Centre open space assets

Public Domain and Connections

- **Lang Park** hosts large festivals, gatherings and passive recreation. A number of physical limitations include, Marine Drive which separates Lang Park and the beach-front. The bus terminus and roundabout are an impediment to pedestrians. Boundaries adjoining the park often present back fences. Topography and vegetation limit the opportunity for views of the ocean from the Park.
- **MacCabe Park** is centrally located however under-utilised, largely due to the poor interface with surrounding streets and built form. Existing buildings in the park limit views and access to and from the park, as well as impacting on passive surveillance and the sense of safety.
- Council has been purchasing properties along Keira Street since the 1980s to expand the Park.
- **Crown Street Mall** and surrounding laneways provide paved pedestrian-only space in the City Centre. The mall provides a venue for weekly markets and laneways provide important pedestrian cross-block connections. These places cultivate a creative City culture with vibrant public art murals and emerging retail and food and beverage operators.
- **The Arts Precinct** enables a creative City culture with vibrant public art murals, cultural venues and intimate spaces for retail and food and beverage operators.



★ The Opportunity

Investment in public domain will signal renewal for the City. Not only will it offer benefits to residents and visitors to the City, but will also encourage commercial tenants who desire a high quality public domain.

Recent investment in the public domain in Crown Street Mall and the Blue Mile foreshore walk signals positive renewal for the Centre. Improvements to other existing open space assets including MacCabe Park, Lang Park and the Arts Precinct will increase the amenity the Centre has to offer to workers, residents and visitors. Infrastructure investment in the public domain also sends a clear signal to the investor market that a place is highly valued.

As the population of City Centre densifies and diversifies, quality public green space within walking distance to peoples' homes and workplaces will be needed.

- 01 Existing buildings along western edge of MacCabe Park provide cluttered and unsafe interface.
- 02 Crown Street Mall has recently been upgraded with integrated Artworks
- 03 Residential properties with fences fronting Lang Park do not provide an appropriate public/private threshold
- 04 'Street Talk' art in the laneways off the Arts Precinct.



Finding: Key public spaces are at risk of overshadowing by surrounding buildings

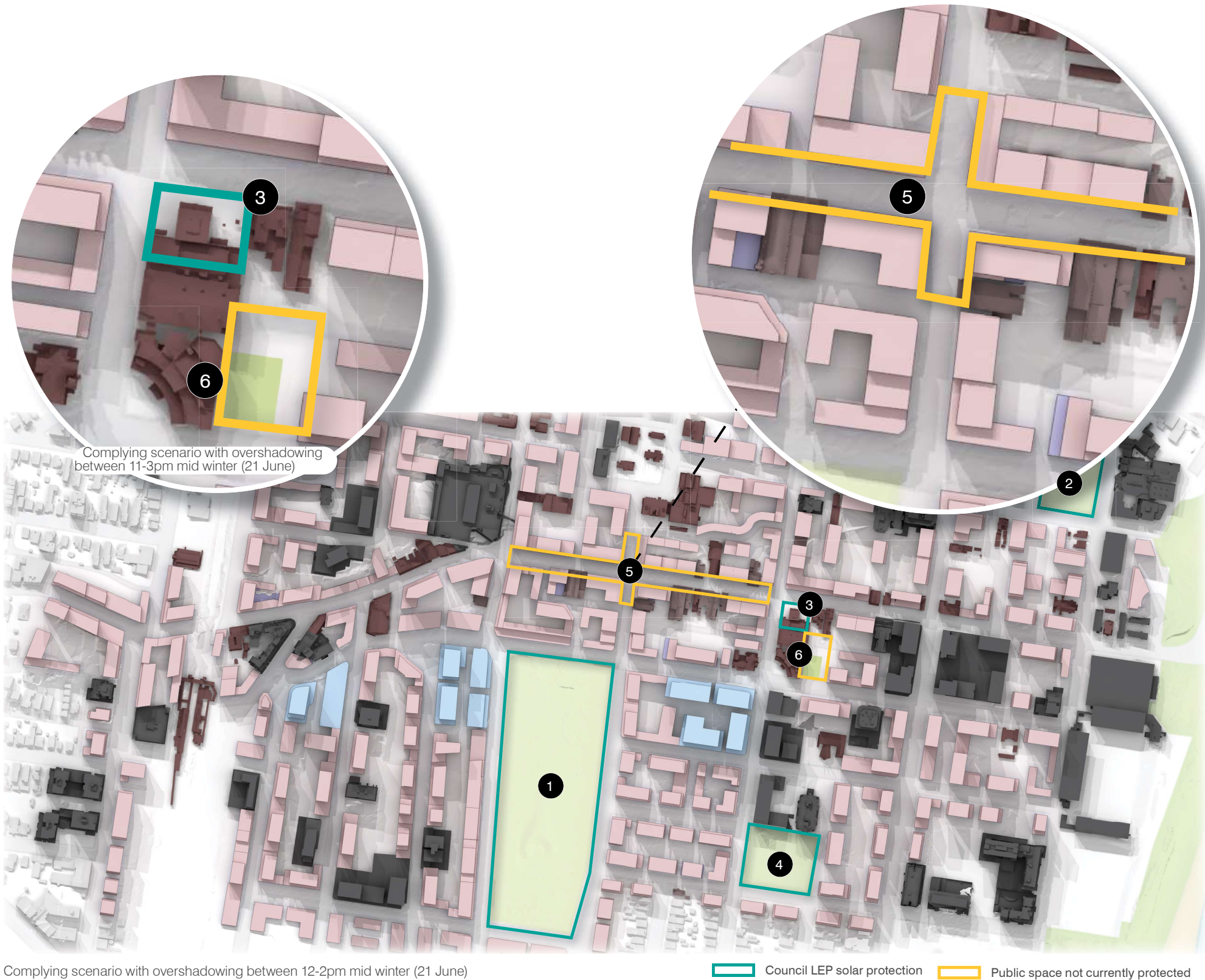
Although solar protection controls exist for selected open spaces in the City, there is no protection for Crown Street Mall or the Arts Precinct Lawn. Without strong and clear controls, these key public spaces are at risk of losing their natural sunlight and being overshadowed by new developments.

Sun access controls currently protect these spaces between 11-3pm:

- 1 MacCabe Park
- 2 Market Square
- 3 Civic Square
- 4 Pioneer Park has solar-access controls over lots to the North, however existing and recent developments are not compliant with these controls, resulting in overshadowing of the open space between 12-2pm.

There are no sun access controls for key east west streets (Burelli Street, Crown Street, Market Street) or for the following key public spaces:

- 5 Crown Street Mall
- 6 Arts Precinct lawn



Public Domain and Connections



★ The Opportunity

Delivery and protection of high quality public domain should be supported by appropriate sun access controls. This will become increasingly important as the City redevelops and density intensifies.

Built form controls should encourage slender towers and physical breaks in form to minimise overshadowing and maximise views to the sky.

- 01 Civic Square is currently protected by LEP solar protection controls on site to the north only
- 02 Existing overshadowing of Crown Street Mall by Wollongong Central Shopping Centre
- 03 The Arts Precinct Lawn is an important public space to be considered for future solar protection
- 04 Existing solar access protection of MacCabe Park offers amenity to users



Finding: *Tree canopy cover in the City Centre is inadequate*

The overall canopy coverage in the City Centre is minimal. This results in increased urban heat, poor streetscapes and a loss in amenity. Mature trees are part of the City’s character and should be preserved and increased with new plantings along key walking routes. Canopy cover and vegetation supports ecosystem services, trees provide other health, social, economic, and aesthetic benefits.

A City for People sets out a clear vision for the City Centre which places a specific emphasis on the importance of public spaces and a desire to connect the natural setting and foreshore to the City.

Urban tree canopy is important in the City Centre to mitigate the urban heat island effect, support cleaner air and water and provide local habitat. Trees remove fine particles from the air and help insulate against urban noise pollution, particularly along busy roads. Trees are valued by residents and contribute to the streetscapes, character and amenity of the City, so preserving and expanding the urban tree canopy in public places will become even more important for supporting a sustainable and liveable City into the future.

Council’s Urban Greening Strategy (2019) builds on this ambition, targeting an overall increase in canopy cover to 35% by 2046 across the entire LGA. The City Centre is currently one of eight suburbs with less than 10% existing canopy cover, with 63% of total canopy on private land.

Less than 10%
Canopy Cover

The absence of tree canopy cover within the City Centre is most evident at street level, where the frequency and density of street planting can best be described as sparse. While most major streets such as Corrimal, Stewart and Burelli all have areas of street planting, the density and frequency of planting varies greatly from one street block to the next. This is due to the limited opportunity for street tree planting in the current road reserves due to relatively narrow road reserves, and extensive services located under footpaths meaning that the only opportunities for increased tree planting are currently on setbacks to private land or between kerbs, which is problematic for traffic and parking movements.



Existing tree canopy (Source: LIDAR image supplied by Wollongong City Council, 2013)

- Existing Tree Canopy
- Existing Open Space
- Heritage and Landmark Trees

Public Domain and Connections



★ The Opportunity

As the most densely populated urban area in the Wollongong LGA, the City Centre has a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution to achieving the targets outlined in the Urban Greening Strategy, while connecting the City with its beach and escarpment setting.

New public domain projects will address some of the need for additional tree canopy, to provide increased amenity and liveability to residents now and into the future. There are opportunities to alter setbacks and footpath alignments in coordination with existing services locations to identify locations for new street trees. Where there is limited space to plant new trees there may be opportunities to plant other forms of vegetation such as garden beds and hedges, that can help improve amenity and air quality.

Green cover can also include rain gardens, green roofs and green walls, all of which can help slow and store storm water and improve water quality, filtering pollution before it reaches waterways.

- 01 There is a lack of tree coverage on streets around the station south of Burelli Street.
- 02 Market Street is flanked by large trees which frame the view to the ocean.
- 03 Crown Street has narrow footpaths and awnings with no space for trees resulting in a harsh pedestrian environment.
- 04 Eastern Crown Street has great tree coverage and is a very successful outdoor dining area.
- 05 Large trees exist in MacCabe Park and provide good shade for this public space
- 06 Corrimal Street and Crown Street, towards the foreshore, have limited tree coverage and little shade, reducing the amenity of the walk to the beach.



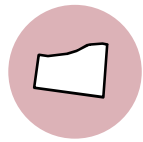
Precinct Analysis

In order for the City to develop richness and diversity, key public domain moves and built form controls need to enable the existing character of the City to emerge and strengthen. The City was divided into 8 precincts, which expand on the 6 identified in A City for People.

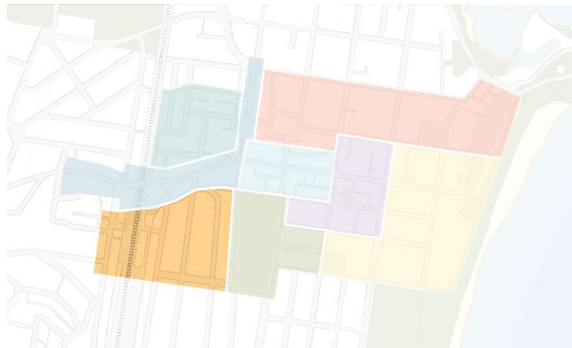
Each precinct was examined through detailed analysis, observation and research into place, environment, land use, movement, heritage, open space, and public domain to establish its unique character. Strengths and weaknesses were identified, and the capacity of the existing controls to support the character of each precinct as it renews were determined.



Precinct Analysis



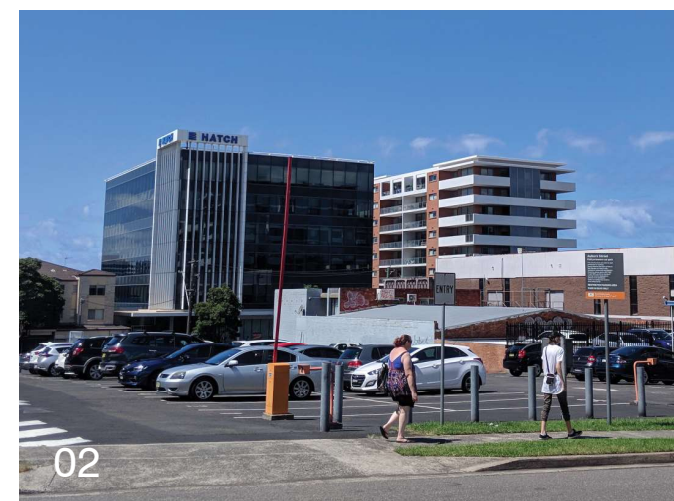
Precinct Rail Arrival and Southern District



Start your day at the gym, have breakfast at a trendy café, drop your car at the mechanics, drop your kids at childcare, donate unwanted clothes to charity, do your grocery shopping, learn martial arts, window shop expensive bicycles, and furnish your house...all within a stone's throw of each other.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Arrival:** This precinct is part of the entry to the City. The built form and the placement of the station are important in the history of the City and the shifting focus of the City Centre.
- **Topography:** Crown Street follows the ridge line and crosses the rail line in this precinct.
- **Proximity:** The light industrial area is located close to the City Centre and commercial core in the low-lying flood prone area south of the station.
- **Mixed commercial on large lots:** The area is characterised by large lots which run east-west on long, north-south streets. These lots generally feature a diverse mix of low density industrial warehouses and commercial shop-front buildings 1-2 storeys in height.
- **Distinct character:** The combination of low and high densities in the area along with a patchwork of inconsistent building types make it a place which is distinct from other precincts within the City Centre.



- 01 The approach into the City Centre from Station Street is an underwhelming experience.
- 02 Long blocks running north-south make east-west circulation between rail and city difficult
- 03 The grain of the rail arrival precinct is characterised by low rise, single storey semi-industrial buildings on large lots.

What's great about it now?

- **A key Transport Hub:** The station and bus services are an important point of arrival and a hub for travel mode shift.
- **An important midway point:** There is significant pedestrian traffic along Western Crown Street traveling between the hospital, station and retail core.
- **Services for the people:** Owing to its location between the City Centre and the hospital, a range of services including medical, food and retail uses and services are well patronised.
- **Opportunities for renewal:** To the south of Station Street and west of the rail line there are sites which provide opportunities for significant renewal.
- **Ease of access:** The land area to the east of the station precinct is relatively flat, offering accessible opportunities for active transport along Burelli Street and through MacCabe Park.

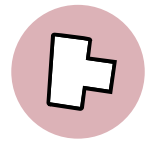
What's missing?

- **Finding your way is difficult:** For passengers arriving at Wollongong Train station, orientation to the City Centre is unclear. There is no direct line of sight to Crown Street from Station Street, so it is not immediately apparent where the City Centre is, nor how to get there.
- **An underwhelming public domain:** Station Street is the main connection to the civic and retail core, but has poor public domain. Station Street is wide and barren with the street radius and kerbs designed for traffic rather than pedestrians. The footpaths are narrow, there is no consistent street wall edge, there are very few trees or shade, and the gradient is steep.
- **A station disconnected from its city:** The City did not initially develop around the station. Although Crown Street remains the key spine connecting the city and station, the location of the station, away from the City Centre and with no entries from Crown Street makes it feel disconnected from the city.
- **Street level activation:** Due to the mix of uses including car based warehousing and depots, pedestrian amenity is limited in the southern part of the precinct

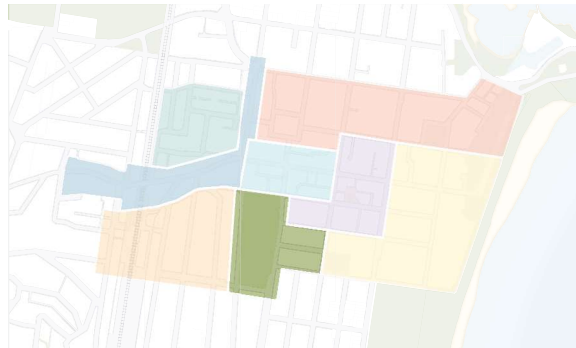


- 01 The approach to the rail precinct is marked by an intersection of four streets and can be a disorientating place to locate the City Centre from.
- 02 There are multiple development opportunity sites on the western side of the rail corridor along Crown and Gladstone Streets.
- 03 A recent increase in development in the City has seen the emergence of larger medium density residential and commercial developments in the precinct.

Precinct Analysis



Precinct *MacCabe Park*



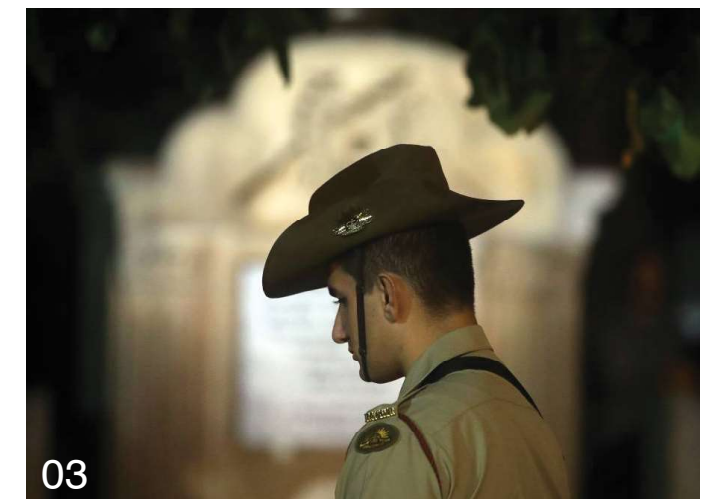
MacCabe Park is the City Centre's largest park and is located centrally between the train station and the commercial core. The Park's renewal has the potential to transform the entire City around it providing a revitalised open space which can be enjoyed by everyone.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Civic Life:** The park is significant within the civic life of the Wollongong community playing host to numerous cultural events, including fairs, indigenous celebrations, concerts and commemorative occasions such as Viva la Gong and ANZAC Day services.
- **Flat topography:** Located at a low point in the City, the Park and its surrounding areas are particularly susceptible to flooding as it was historically swamp-land which has been filled in. There is a very low grade of 1-2% from Tom Thumb Lagoon.
- **Built elements:** The Keira St edge is lined with a series of low-rise semi-industrial buildings within the park, leaving the park's western edge largely concealed from the street. The Centennial Hall and Carpark off Church Street and the Council office building on the corner of Burelli and Church Streets encroach on the green space.
- **Youth Centre:** A well used youth centre on the northern edge of the park at the corner of Burelli and Keira Streets is a community draw-card, however it turns its back on the park and like the industrial buildings along the Keira Street edge, conceals the park from Burelli Street.
- **Variety of spaces:** within the park there are a variety of spaces for different uses- memorials and places of reflection, heritage listed date palms through the middle, and a sculpture visible from the Burelli Street entrance.



Nike
Artist: Ken Unsworth



- 01 MacCabe Park is a well vegetated open space, centrally located in the City.
- 02 The playground is well used by the community and has undergone several upgrades.
- 03 The park plays host to a number of important Civic events including ANZAC Day dawn services

What's great about it now?

- **Civic life:** The Park was and continues to be a place for everyone. The Park, including a youth centre, is frequently utilised.
- **Council investment:** Since the 1980s Council has been actively investing in the Park through the progressive acquisition of sites along Keira Street with the intention of converting these sites to parkland. The Park is also home to the Council run youth centre located at the northern end fronting Burelli Street.
- **Proximity to railway station:** The Park is the closest green space to the railway station, and the gradient is flat, making access to it relatively easy
- **Flexible open space:** Large public open space is able to accommodate a variety of uses, including concerts and festivals.
- **Connection to Burelli Street:** Located directly off Burelli Street, the northern end of the Park is central to the City and well connected to the Burelli Street civic core, as well as to the retail core.

What's missing?

- **Activation at the edges:** Existing development within the Park conceals the park from the street, does not activate the area is an issue for surveillance and safety.
- **Good access to the Park:** A number of existing buildings with light industrial uses currently occupy the Park, particularly along the Keira St edge, and limit views and access to and from the park. Council has been acquiring these properties progressively.
- **A safer welcoming environment after hours:** Despite its extensive use during the day, the Park lacks adequate lighting, visibility and security measures to ensure that it is a safe place to be after hours.
- **Greater diversity of use:** Despite the numerous uses and events, further opportunities exist to provide active uses including ball courts and cycling paths to provide a transition of uses for workers in the day and residents after work.



02

- 01 A number of public events and festivals take place in the park transforming it into a large gathering space.
- 02 Space for sitting and reflection
- 03 The existing line of retail buildings that flank the eastern edge of Keira Street turn their back to the park posing a security issue.
- 04 An mural painted on Centennial Hall facing the park improves the building's poor rear interface



01



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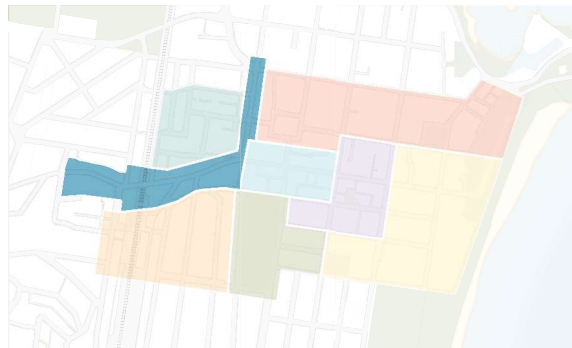
04

Artist: Kane Trait Horspool

Precinct Analysis



Precinct Western Crown & Keira Street



The gateway to Wollongong's commercial and civic heart, Western Crown Precinct is a place where the City's top restaurants sit side by side with long established watering holes, historic landmarks and contemporary retail outlets.

What characterises this precinct?

- **A historical record of the city's urban life:** Historically, Keira and Crown Streets (the Princes Highway) have been the cultural, commercial and retail lifeblood of the city, bustling with street life and busy shop-fronts.
- **Variety:** The built form along Crown and Keira Streets is reflective of the traditional high street, and transitions from fine dining and office on Keira Street to the retail and office character of Western Crown Street. The fine grain tenancies and local offers play an important role in supporting the small employment uses and foot traffic generated by the station and health precinct further west along Crown Street.
- **Major point of arrival:** Like the Rail Arrival Precinct, the Western Crown Precinct includes the two key points of vehicular entry into the Wollongong City Centre (Western Crown Street from the west and Keira Street from the north)

The precinct is defined largely by its role as a busy multi-lane classified road flanked by tightly knit, small scale retail and commercial buildings 2-3 storeys in height with awnings and narrow frontages which have changed little throughout its history.

- The intersection of Crown and Keira Streets supports large format retail shopping.



- 01 Despite its intimate scale, the northern approach into the City Centre from Keira Street is an underwhelming experience.
- 02 The approach into the City Centre from Western Crown Street is flanked by a series of small scale shops and retail buildings that do not present a clear sense of arrival into a regional city.

What's great about it now?

- **Gateway to the City Centre:** Despite its underwhelming sense of arrival, this precinct plays a pivotal role in delivering many visitors into to the City Centre. An opportunity exists to enhance the arrival experience for many visitors and residents alike.
- **The Eat Street Dining Legacy:** Both Keira and Crown Streets have long had a tradition of being a destination for socialising and dining. This is currently reflected by the multitude of restaurants, catering to a broad range of tastes and offering a different experience to the internalised dining offered in the large shopping centre buildings.
- **A proud past with buildings to match:** Despite the changes to the City over a long period of time, the streets and a significant number of original buildings remain largely intact. Council's 'Facades Upgrade Program' in partnership with building owners has helped to restore and maintain the integrity of some of these character and heritage listed buildings. The mixture of contemporary buildings and older style heritage buildings from different eras are opportunities to develop new and innovative uses for the future.
- **A catalyst site with a potential for real change:** The site between Crown, Keira, Burelli and Atchison Street is a significant land holding within the precinct which represents a rare and unique opportunity to re-imagine Western Crown as a destination that could incorporate a unique mix of uses which could include entertainment, hotel accommodation, professional offices, residential, and food and retail uses at a range of scales.

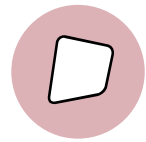
What's missing?

- **A clear point of arrival into the city:** The arrival to the City Centre by car from the north along the Princes Highway and west along Crown Street are both sudden with little or no indication to signal your arrival and transition into the City Centre.
- **An alternative to the 'rat run' through the city:** The sequence of the highway abruptly turning into Keira Street in the City Centre means that large volumes of through traffic are being forced through the City Centre in what should be a pedestrian focused retail and civic area.
- **A safe people oriented walking environment:** The City needs to build on the existing network of lanes within the Centre to create additional secondary street connections that focus more on the local movement of people within the City Centre. This includes the removal of overhead bridges and passage ways between buildings to keep people circulating at grade and activating the City's streets and laneways.
- **What's proposed:** In order to reduce through traffic it is proposed that Keira and Crown Streets be designated as local roads and through traffic diverted via Throsby Drive and Denison Street.

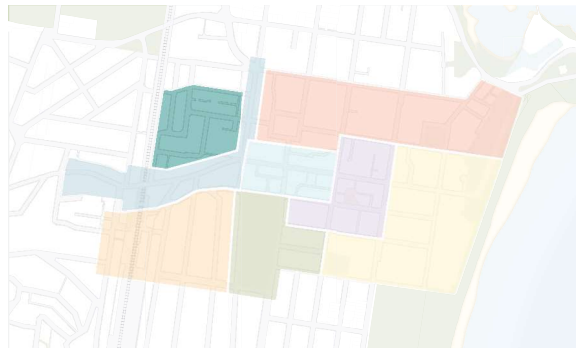


- 01 Wollongong Central, West Keira is the newest retail addition to the precinct.
- 02 The Regent Theatre is a cultural institution on Keira Street.
- 03 The western side of Keira Street features an impressive variety of restaurants ranging from fine dining to everyday eats.
- 04 The southern end of Keira Street is a much quieter place with little or no activation.
- 05 The lack of street activation is not helped by sky bridges which remove foot traffic from the street.

Precinct Analysis



Precinct Commercial Services



Home to Wollongong's smaller scale professional service sector, close to the Mall, Courthouse and Keira Street dining precinct. You can eat and shop, while waiting for your tax return

What characterises this precinct?

- **Topography:** The precinct sits on a high point of the City. It is characterised by long inclined streets which make pedestrian movement a challenge.
- **Location:** Tucked away on the north-west edge of the City Centre, the area is characterised by smaller buildings, a mix of small tenancy serviced based local businesses, homes and non-government organisations mixed into a varied streetscape.
- **Building typology:** The precinct is characterised by smaller buildings including single houses (turned offices), residential flat buildings and office buildings up to 8 storeys in height. These house a range of uses including service based local businesses, homes, retail and non-government organisations.
- **Roads:** The precinct is characterised by several long, continuous street frontages which are in excess of 250 metres making pedestrian permeability challenging.



- 01 Market Street, is the primary entry into the Commercial Services precinct.
- 02 A number of small cafés and restaurants operate along Keira Street.
- 03 The Illawarra Hotel is a live music and night club venue which is a popular night spot.

What's great about it now?

- **Between two great precincts:** Located north-west of the Western Crown Precinct and just north of the Rail Arrival precinct, it is close to the railway station, shops, restaurants and bars.
- **Views to the escarpment:** The precinct is located on the high side of the City and currently has uninterrupted views west to the escarpment.
- **Centre for local commerce:** The precinct is a balance of small, trade and service based businesses, shared office spaces and non-government institutions. There is a clear demand for small commercial tenancies in the City, currently being met by this precinct.
- **Market Street:** Is the major point of entry into the precinct and is flanked by a number of restaurants and small businesses, including the heritage listed Illawarra Hotel on the corner of Keira and Market Streets.

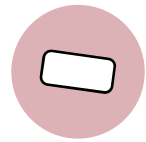
What's missing?

- **Local connections within the precinct:** This precinct is physically and visually disconnected from the City Centre. Despite its proximity to Crown Street and the Station, the lack of connections to Crown Street combined with the steep topography make the precinct difficult to locate and access.
- **Connections to other precincts:** While the area is ideally geared for significant increases in densities, the precinct's lack of active and vehicular transport connections to the railway station and Crown Street inhibits this area's potential for further growth.
- **Protection of commercial uses:** The precinct contains a mix of uses, which is primarily commercial at its centre and residential at the fringes to the west and north. Protecting and promoting these smaller scale commercial uses will be important to maintain a range of commercial offers across the City Centre.
- **Lack of open space:** Despite the great views of the escarpment, a lack of open space and tree cover reduces the amenity for residents and workers within the precinct.

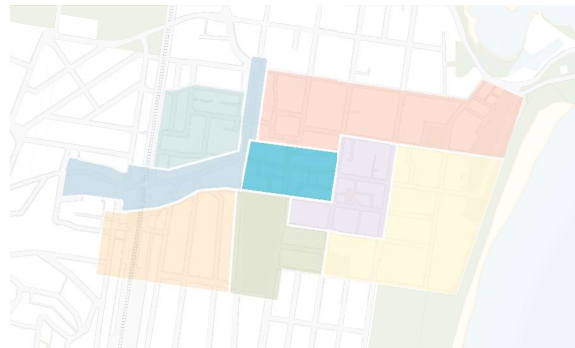


- 01 The Rawson Street Car-park provides great vistas west to the escarpment
- 02 Residential development on the top of the hill has shifted the city skyline and increased population density significantly in short period of time.
- 03 An example of the mix of densities which characterise the area - a converted two storey house alongside a 3 storey commercial strata building is reflective of the varied scale of built form and mix of densities in the precinct.

Precinct Analysis



Precinct Crown Street Mall



Wollongong City's premier and historic retail high-street. A shopper's paradise that has a rich history and continues to be a place that attracts people from all walks of life.

Week night food markets bring life and music, Friday markets provide access to the region's best produce.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Location:** Situated in the geographic centre of Wollongong, the retail core is the heart of merchant activity in the City .
- **Pedestrian Mall:** Flanked by low scale retail, the buildings on both sides of the street are generally characterised by narrow frontages and street awnings to give the precinct a human scale. The open pedestrian mall provides flexible space for activity with high-quality landscaping, street furniture and public art.
- **Building typology:** The retail centre comprises two distinct and contrasting halves. The first is a shopping centre at the western end of Crown Street Mall. This cluster of large, multi-storey, mono-functional buildings is linked by sky-bridges and offers little in the way of pedestrian amenity or street-scape benefits. East of the shopping centre, is a series of low scale, single shop buildings providing an attractive fine grained streetscape. Professional offices at and above ground brings an active population to the area during the day.



- 01 An aerial view of the retail core reveals a recently updated landscape treatment with new art installations in the mall flanked by low rise shop fronts.
- 02 The inclusion of a new performance space at the heart of the mall is a focal point for community performances, but impacts views to St. Michael's Spire from some vantage points.

What's great about it now?

- **A meeting place:** The mall is host to produce, craft and 'Eat Street' markets making it an important focal point for formal and informal community gathering.
- **Pedestrian mobility:** The retail core and the surrounding lane-ways provide a highly permeable pedestrian friendly network of open space and lanes in the heart of the city.
- **The fine grain:** The lots oriented north-south create a fine grain of development characterised by deep buildings with narrow frontages and side setbacks which facilitate pedestrian only lane-ways, creating a tightly knit, but highly permeable series of retail shops and buildings. Successful fine grain precincts are emerging, particularly in the lane-ways between Crown and Burelli Streets, where small tenancies create important nodes and an element of surprise within the pedestrian network.
- **Heritage rich:** The mall is dotted with a number of heritage buildings including the Wesley Uniting Church and a group of heritage listed and character shop-fronts on the south-eastern side of the mall.
- **Public art:** The lane-ways provide important pedestrian cross-block connections and currently cultivate a creative city culture with vibrant public art murals.
- **Breaking down the box:** Large format shopping centres tend to present to the street as 'big boxes' with a single entry, however some effort has been made to sleeve smaller retail tenancies along the street frontage of the Crown Street Mall.
- **Proximity to Historic Spine:** In contrast, the area north of the retail centre including St Michael's Cathedral, Market Street and Wollongong Local Court serve as a strong reminder of the City's past, with local heritage items along Market Street serving as strong reminders of the effort to protect Wollongong's built heritage.

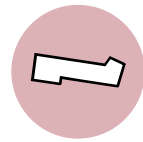
What's missing?

- **A concentrated retail core:** The dilution of the City Centre with ground floor uses on all streets is a real challenge for the City Centre
- **Activation of Crown St Mall:** From the train station to the beach-front Crown Street covers a length of nearly 1.5km, with 400m length of mall. Along this length, the predominant ground floor use is retail, however vacant tenancies, particularly at the fringes, contribute to a lack of vibrancy.
- **Shopping centres are competing with the street:** Much of the retail activity is being directed into internalised shopping centres, which negatively impact on the vibrancy of the street and the viability of tenancies on the street.
- **The right mix:** A mixed-use City Centre with a range of uses including community, retail, commercial and residential is required to create a vibrant centre. The challenge is how to achieve a genuine mix, with a diversity and fine grain streets.
- **Active and unobstructed streetscapes:** Pedestrian Overpasses negatively impact protected views along Crown Street and reduce pedestrian activation at street level.

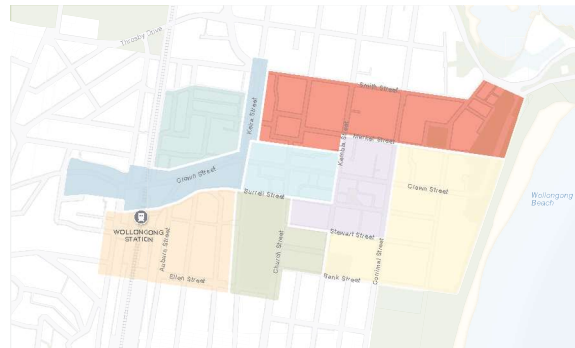


- 01 The western end of Crown Street Mall is occupied by the multi-storey Wollongong Central shopping centre which includes a number of large retail stores
- 02 Artwork in the lanes are a feature of the City Centre. Globe Lane features several works in a setting with bars and restaurants
- 03 A view from the block behind the Crown Street mall reveals the extent of parking on rooftops.
- 04 Globe Lane and Globe Way link Crown Street Mall to MacCabe Park
- 05 Crown Street Mall is host to a variety of markets and events and plays an important role in enabling Wollongong's residents to meet formally and informally

Precinct Analysis



Precinct *Historic Spine*



The Historic Spine is a fantastic place to take a quiet moment from the hustle and bustle of the retail core below.

Sweeping views of the city combined with grand Victorian buildings connect visitors with the historic beginning of the City.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Heritage:** With the highest concentration of historically significant buildings in the Wollongong City Centre, the precinct was outlined in the 1834 town plan for Wollongong and is important to the earliest history of the township.
- **Composition:** A precinct of two parts: The precinct can be described best as two separate but connected portions.

The first is the hill on which St Michael's Cathedral sits. This area includes a cluster of heritage listed civic buildings including the law courts, which forms the centre of the old town.

The second is Market Street, which is arranged symmetrically on an east-west axis with the Cathedral. This street comprises a mixture of commercial, residential and mixed use buildings and forms a strong view corridor in both directions, with views to the ocean from the top of the hill towards St Michael's Spire and the escarpment beyond. Market Street is terminated by Market Square where the street alignment pulls the focus to the North-East, towards the historic harbour.

- **Vistas:** This high point is one of the few places in the City Centre from which the ocean, escarpment and the traditional steelwork heritage of Port Kembla can be seen.



c. 1830s - Original town plan centred on the Harbour



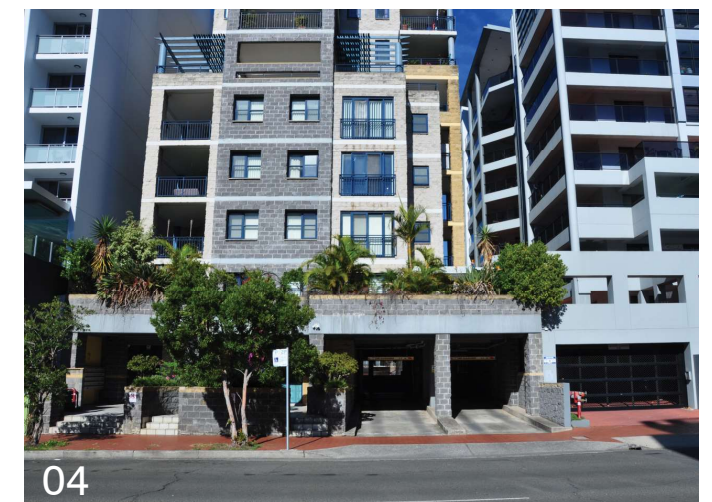
- 01 Street view of St Michael's Cathedral (1859)- a Victorian Gothic sandstone building in a green setting and significant trees.
- 02 The view east down Market Street from St Michael's Cathedral affords the precinct views of the ocean.
- 03 The view west up Market Street to St Michael's Cathedral

What's great about it now?

- **Location:** The hill is the topographical high point of the area and at one time in the City's history, was the City's Centre.
- **Market Street Axis:** Market Street runs east-west from Lang Park extending all the way to the rail corridor. The street is split by St Michael's at the top of the Hill. It was the road which connected the original Market place (now Market Square) with the harbour.
- **St Michael's Cathedral:** The old sandstone Cathedral is the focal point of the precinct. Located at the top of the hill, St Michael's Cathedral overlooks the entire city and can be seen from the eastern end of Market Street.
- **The old civic core:** The St Michael's Spire and Courthouse Clock tower are important and identifiable markers of the old City. The 1834 town plan grid still remains today linking through the Market Square and the Harbour. The memory of the old town through heritage buildings civic institutions clustered around the precinct.
- **Student life:** The University of Wollongong have a limited number of student housing beds in a development immediately behind the Cathedral, which are extremely popular.

What's missing?

- **Green streets:** Heritage hill is relatively green with the church grounds and large trees. Market Street however lacks tree canopy coverage to provide pedestrians with amenity and shelter.
- **Activation on Market Street (east):** The eastern portion of Market Street is dominated by medium density residential dwellings with poor commercial interfaces at ground floor which do little to activate the street.
- **Wollongong Central Interface:** The northern edge of the Wollongong Central Shopping Centre backs onto the precinct, resulting in an undesirable interface made up of on-grade car parks. The gradient change and lack of connection through the large footprints impact pedestrian accessibility of heritage hill.

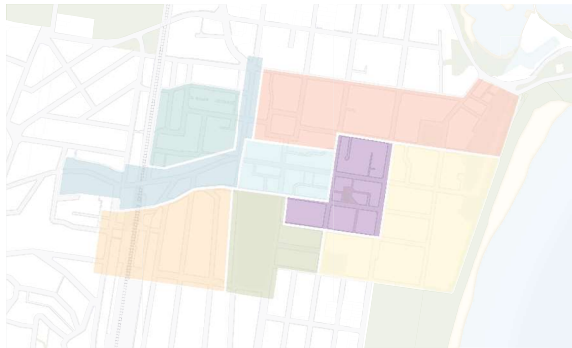


- 01 The Wollongong Law Courts have recently undergone a facelift and extension (2013).
- 02 Market Square and Market Street are key to the historical significance of the Wollongong City Centre (photo 1950s).
- 03 The view south reveals significant views to Port Kembla and escarpment which should be protected.
- 04 The lower portion of Market Street east is dominated by medium density residential dwellings with poor commercial interfaces at ground floor.
- 05 Entry to the on-grade car park which backs onto Wollongong Central results in a poor interface opposite the Cathedral.

Precinct Analysis



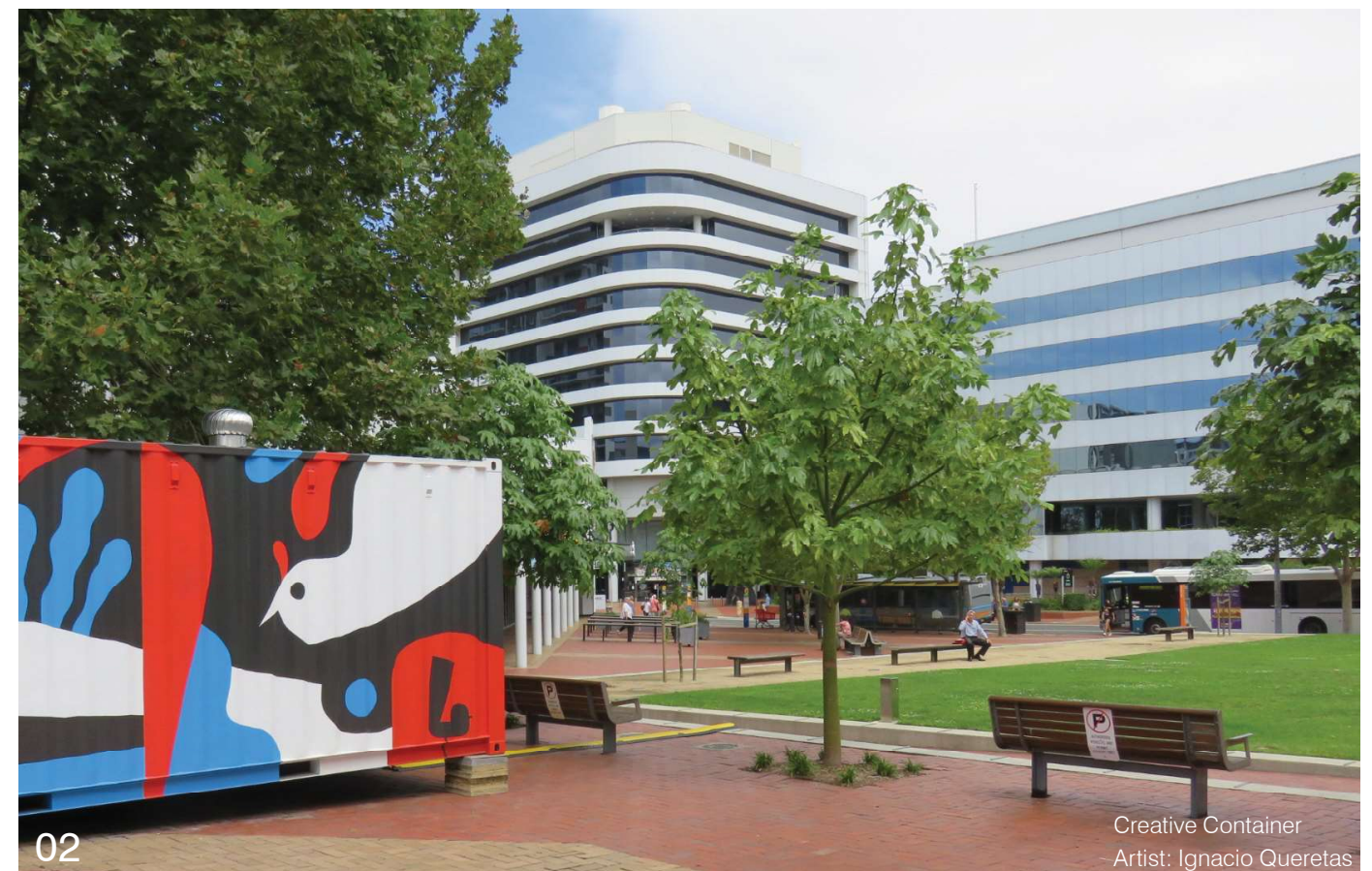
Precinct *Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct*



Wollongong's arts and civic heart converge around the generous public domain of Eastern Crown and Burelli Streets. Here theatre, music and art co-exist with Council Chambers, Government offices, Wollongong Central Library and mid-rise commercial buildings. A rich network of lane-ways and open spaces connect, this part of Wollongong is key to the city's café and small bar scene.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Varied built form character:** Bookended by the retail and entertainment districts, the Eastern Crown Street and Arts Precinct is slow and green, a true mixed use precinct with a balance of residents, workers and civic facilities. It is a compact area which features a mixture of development types ranging from small 1-2 storey shop fronts facing Crown Street to larger multi-storey commercial strata office buildings lining Burelli Street..
- **Civic Uses:** The precinct is home to the key civic functions of the City including the town hall, performing arts centre, regional gallery, central library and Council chambers.
- **Pedestrian friendly:** These public landmarks are well served by a strong network of generous footpaths, pedestrian lane-ways and squares with extensive street planting, on a relatively flat gradient.
- **Commercial Cluster:** The result is a precinct that is highly permeable and easily accessible and invites a broad range of commercial enterprises to co-exist, from small lane-way bars and restaurant start-ups to large private companies, in large floor-plate tenancies. The proximity to civic uses and clustering of existing commercial business give the precinct a prestigious commercial address.



- 01 Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) is a respected venue for the performing arts.
- 02 Council Chambers and the Library overlook the Arts Precinct lawn.

Creative Container
Artist: Ignacio Queretas

What’s great about it now?

- **It is the civic heart of Wollongong:** The Eastern Crown Arts Precinct has all of the ingredients of a great regional city in two compact, walk-able street blocks. This includes the town hall, performing arts centre, regional gallery, central library and Council chambers, which are located either side of Burelli Street between Kembla and Corrimal Streets.
- **Great cafés and Bars:** Eastern Crown and Kembla Streets have a variety of fine grain food and beverage offers conveniently located for commercial office workers and nearby residents alike.
- **A network of pedestrian connections:** There is a network of north- south pedestrian lane-ways connecting Crown, Burelli Street buses, Kembla Street, the Library, Crown Street Mall and the foreshore, making it a permeable and walk-able precinct. The pedestrian link through Ethel Hayton Lane and the Arts Precinct Lawn includes consistent planting providing a green vista and canopy cover.
- **Safe, slow and convenient streets:** On Eastern Crown Street blisters contribute to generous footpaths which give pedestrians a sense of priority, and make crossing the road easy. Half hour parking makes it a convenient destination for shoppers and cafe-goers.
- **Open Space:** The Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Wollongong Art Gallery are located around a generous landscaped square which provides relief along the street, a green outlook from the office towers and open space amenity in the City. The precinct has a higher percentage of tree canopy than most of the City.
- **Public art is a dominant feature** in the form of discrete light boxes, large format murals and sculpture.

- **Varied built form:** Eastern Crown Street is characterised by portions of fine grain and collections of period buildings. The two storey street wall and awnings create a successful street-scape. On the northern side of Burelli Street the Arts Precinct comprises buildings ‘in the round’ with generous setbacks. On the southern side the mid-rise commercial buildings are clustered together in an emerging commercial core.

What’s missing?

- **Civic presence:** In spite of having all of the ingredients of a great regional city in this compact area, the precinct lacks a strong civic character. The precinct does not announce itself as the civic heart of the City.
- **Commercial and civic built form:** Although commercial office buildings are clustered in what has the potential to become a prestigious commercial precinct, the buildings themselves are dated. The arts and civic buildings have a poor interface with the public domain. The Art Gallery and Town Hall both present their rear facade to the landscaped square.
- **Mixed public domain experience:** Burelli Street has generous footpath setbacks, but limited and inconsistent street tree planting result in a poor public domain experience.
- **Distance to rail:** It is important for the arts and commercial uses to be easily accessible by public transport. The distance from the station and the topography at the western end of Burelli Street and Station Streets negatively impact the connectivity to rail. New active and public transport connections with rail will be important.



01



02 Gallery Wall
Artist: Cultural Conversations by Warwick Keen



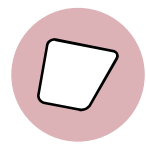
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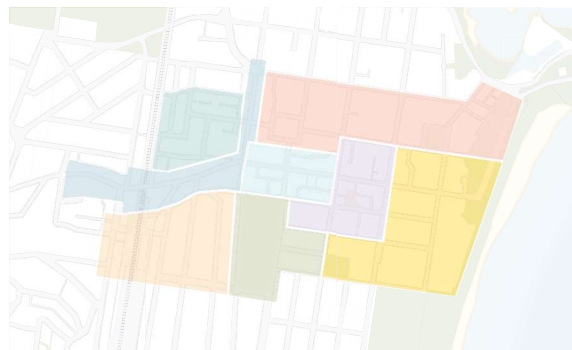
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- 01 There is a good network of open spaces and connections.
- 02 The Art Gallery presents a predominantly inactive wall to the square.
- 03 The public domain has a rich food and beverage offer where public art is a dominant feature.
- 04 There is a consistent street tree canopy on Eastern Crown Street for the block between Kembla and Corrimal Streets.

Precinct Analysis



Precinct Foreshore



The foreshore is one of the City's greatest assets, a destination to celebrate, be entertained and enjoy the natural beauty of our coastal setting. People from every walk come together at the WIN Sports and Entertainment Centres in support of their local team or to enjoy local and international live shows. The recently upgraded 'Blue Mile' links the precinct to the Harbour and the popular North Beach.

What characterises this precinct?

- **Sports and recreation:** Located next to the beach this precinct offers many opportunities for both active and passive recreation.
- The precinct is home to a number of the City's key sporting and public open spaces including City Beach, Lang Park, WIN Stadium, Wollongong Entertainment and Sports Centre and Steelers' Leagues Club.
- **Higher density residential:** The recently completed residential developments along Corrimal, Crown and Harbour Streets mark a dramatic shift in the precinct's character from low density 3 storey walk-up apartments with front lawns, small school buildings on church lands, to large scale multi-unit developments in excess of 11 storeys with 3-4 storey street walls.
- **The City Centres backyard:** While this precinct is popular during major sporting and entertainment events, it presents a larger opportunity to provide residents and workers of the City Centre better access to their coastline and major public spaces on a day by day basis. This will be increasingly important as higher density residential development increases in the City Centre.



01



02



03

- 01 City Beach is one of Wollongong's greatest natural assets, yet is underutilised.
- 02 The Wollongong Entertainment and Sports Centre and Stadium occupy prime beach-front position
- 03 Recently completed residential development characterises the changing face of the foreshore.

What’s great about it now?

- **Home to the City’s beach:** The City is in the privileged position of having a beach on the door-step of the entertainment, arts and business precincts, just short a walk for a lunch-time surf or an after-work swim.
- **Lang Park is a key event space:** Major sporting events and festivals take advantage of the beach-front location and unencumbered open space that Lang Park offers. This is a place of choice for boot-camps and fitness.
- **Scenic walking and cycling:** The attractive Blue Mile walking track follows the coastline, connecting City Beach to Wollongong Harbour and North Wollongong Beach.
- **A sports and entertainment hub:** The Stadium and Entertainment and Sports Centre are regional attractors for the City.
- **An attractive place to live:** New residential developments in the area have access to good views and amenity, and are fast becoming prestigious addresses.
- **Ease of access:** The precinct is on the free Wollongong Shuttle bus loop and being relatively flat, has good active transport connections to the retail core, arts and cultural precinct and North Wollongong.

- 01 The beach is difficult to see from Crown Street, and the large roundabout and bus terminus prioritise vehicles over pedestrians.
- 02 The stadium loading dock and service road are located along the beach-front, creating a poor pedestrian experience
- 03 Private properties back on to the Western edge of Lang Park with inactive frontages and limited opportunity for passive surveillance.

What’s missing?

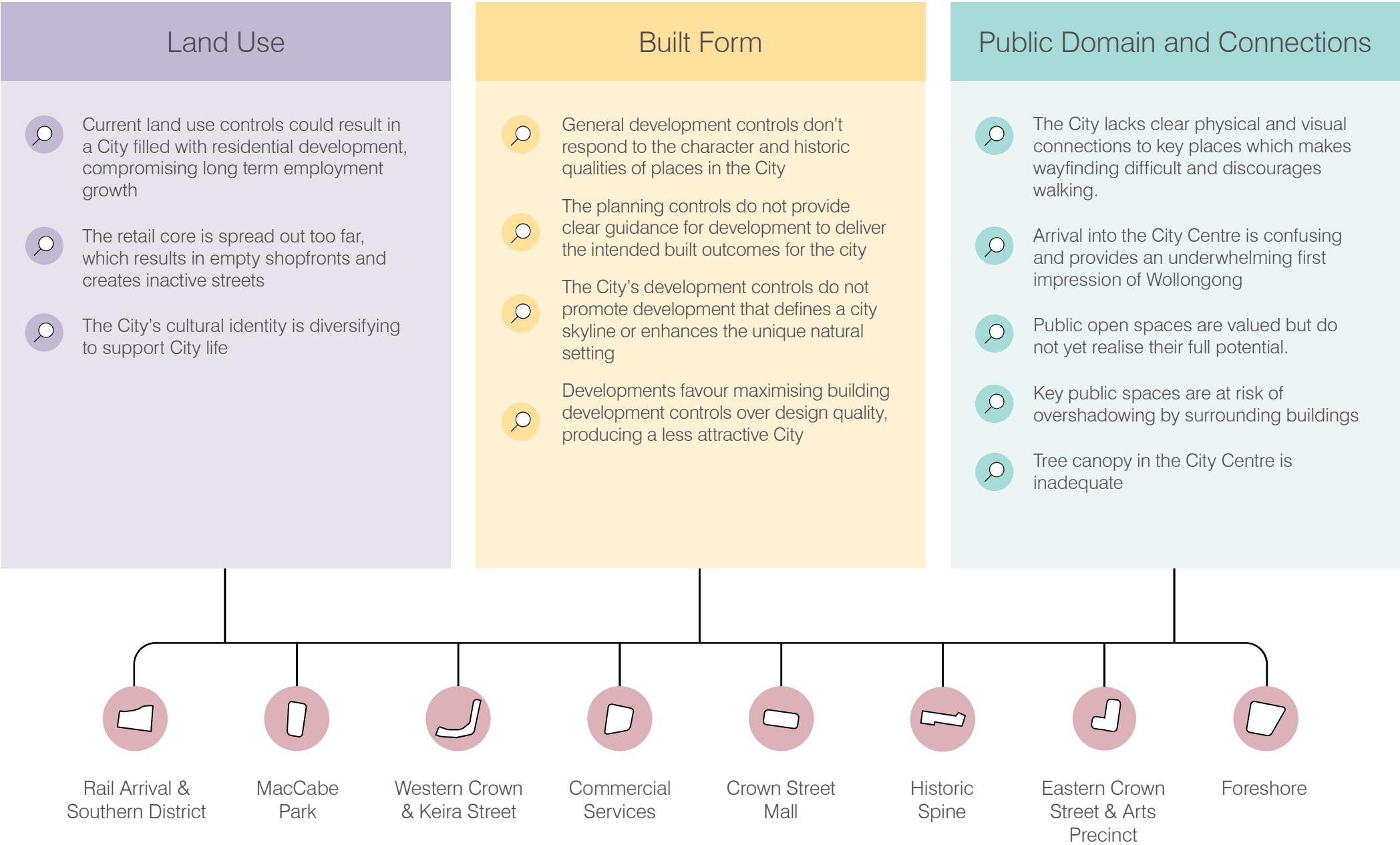
- **The Foreshore is disconnected from the City:** The large lots of the stadium, entertainment centre and golf course are barriers between the City Centre and the foreshore. These occupy a long stretch of the foreshore, block views of the beach and ocean from the city and limit opportunities for connections. The Stadium loading dock and service road on the eastern side of the complex are in a location which is incompatible with the beach-front address and create a poor public domain experience.
- **Crown Street is the only street connecting city and beach:** Market, Burelli, Stewart, Bank, Glebe, and Beach Streets do not connect with the beach-front.
- **There is a poor pedestrian approach to the beach:** On the Crown Street approach to the beach, the sand and water are difficult to see due to dune and road conditions. The roundabout and bus terminus prioritise vehicular movement make pedestrian access to the beach unclear and unpleasant.
- **There are limited attractors at the beach:** For those wanting to enjoy the beach over a meal or drink, there are few options. The spectacular setting has the opportunity to offer a variety of destinations for an early morning coffee, a scenic lunch or an after-work cocktail. The existing bar is compromised by a poor interface with Andrew Lysaght Park and the loading dock
- **Lang Park interface is compromised:** Whilst Lang Park has the opportunity to provide an excellent interface between the city and the beach, Marine Drive is separates the two. Lang Park is under-utilised. On the western edge of Lang Park, the inactive property frontages provide a privatised, poor interface with the park.



Summary of key findings

Findings identified through urban design analysis and testing of the existing planning controls, and supported by economic analysis and forecasting, can be broadly summarised under the themes of land use; built form; and public domain and connections

These findings underpin the thinking behind the directions and strategies outlined in the Urban Design Framework.





Artist: Kate 'Trait' Horspool

| Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework |

| Trait



PROPERTY SETTLEMENTS
WARRARA

156



03 Recommendations

Based on our analysis and key findings, recommendations to inform planning policy change are defined in the form of Objectives, Directions and Strategies. These have been broadly categorised into 3 key areas - built form, land use and public domain and connections.

Urban Design Framework

A design framework to deliver *A City for People*

The Urban Design Framework consists of objectives, directions and strategies for development, which form a framework to deliver the Vision of *A City for People*.

Objectives

The objectives express a high-level aim for each key area - land use, built form, and public domain & connections. These objectives were identified following the city-wide and precinct-wide analysis and respond to the key findings in each area.

The objectives should guide future decision making, specifically the refinement of planning and design controls.

Directions

The directions describe the key moves required to achieve the objectives.

Strategies

The strategies begin to explain in detail the mechanisms required to deliver the directions. The strategies range in their scope, with some relating to the Wollongong City Centre as a whole and others being precinct-specific.

Land use

Built form

Public domain and connections

OBJECTIVE

A vibrant and growing Regional City

Planning controls promote a diversity of uses to encourage a vibrant City Centre, day and night. Jobs and housing growth supports Wollongong's role as a National City. Wollongong is an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

An attractive and diverse city in a unique natural and historic setting

Clear planning controls preserve the unique historic character of Wollongong's precincts. Renewal at all scales is encouraged and this creates an interesting built fabric. Built form variety creates a recognisable city skyline, celebrates the natural setting and is human scale.

A green and walkable city

The city street grid is clear and facilitates walking. Revitalised public spaces are a catalyst for growth and support an active, healthy community. A significant increase to the City's tree canopy contributes to a green and sustainable city.

DIRECTIONS & STRATEGIES

- 1
- Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core
- Define and strengthen the role of the B3 Commercial Core for employment

– Safeguard land for A-Grade Office Towers

– Pursue incentives for commercial development
- 2
- Develop active commercial streets that respond to character
- Promote commercial diversity in buildings while protecting the character of historic retail streets and precincts

– Only require non-residential ground floors on key active City Centre streets

– Develop planning controls that support a balance between night-time economy and residential city living
- 3
- Plan for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive city
- Guide residential development in the City Centre in the right locations

– Leverage opportunities for public benefit improvements through development

– Encourage a diversity of housing in the City including Affordable Rental Housing and Student Housing

- 4
- Grow a legible city that supports a distinctive and evolving character
- Plan for diversity in form and renewal at all scales

– Plan for building envelopes that preserve amenity and support the desired future character

– Preserve buildings and places of significant character values for the enjoyment of future generations

– Preserve views to the escarpment, ocean, natural and built heritage
- 5
- Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place.
- Develop controls that ensure slender tower forms, appropriate separation and consistent setbacks

– Develop controls for floor to ceiling heights that ensure good amenity and adaptability

– Develop controls and provide guidance on site amalgamation and isolation

– Develop controls for fine grain frontages to ensure human-scale development

– Develop ground setback controls that provide attractive interfaces and functional streetscapes

– Develop street wall controls that respond to character and human scale
- 6
- Elevate the importance of design quality in the City Centre
- Strengthen the commitment to design excellence

– Encourage innovation and design quality in the local design and development industry

– Provide clarity and improve outcomes through a strong assessment process

– Prepare design guidelines that communicate better design outcomes

– Develop specific design guidelines that demonstrate better built form outcomes on flood prone lands

- 7
- Strengthen the structure of the City through a permeable grid that prioritises pedestrians
- Define the role and function of streets in the City

– Create a permeable city grid for pedestrians

– Deliver active transport infrastructure

– Enable the mode shift from cars to public transport

– Identify roads for vehicular traffic and servicing
- 8
- Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city
- Reinforce the character of key streets and precincts with appropriate tree planting

– Define and implement a 35% minimum canopy target on key walking streets by 2037

– Prepare a City Centre Street Tree Masterplan

– Establish a tree-centric approach to deliver greening in response to existing constraints

– Leverage new development to offset the cost of greening

– Identify and prioritise public domain projects to catalyse renewal and encourage investment in the City
- 9
- Protect sunlight to key public spaces
- Protect solar access to key public spaces to maximise amenity

Land Use - A vibrant and growing Regional City

The Economic and Cultural Heart of the City

As defined by the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan, Wollongong City Centre is the economic and cultural heart of the Illawarra, and is a nationally significant City. In accordance with the Regional Plan, much of the future prosperity of the Region will be built on the potential to generate jobs from the integration of education, health care, business and tourism precincts in Metro Wollongong. The City Centre is key to achieving this.

The land use strategies for the City Centre focus around getting the balance of land uses right: encouraging commercial investment; containing a vibrant retail core; and supporting City life with residents.

Shaping land use across the City Centre

Cities are more than commercial business districts. There is a fine balance in understanding how commercial, retail and residential markets interact to deliver liveable cities. Economic analysis, growth forecasts and capacity testing was undertaken to understand how we can plan for our changing economy and growing City.

What the testing revealed:

Commercial lands need to be protected

It is critical for a Regional City like Wollongong, that housing in the City Centre does not inhibit commercial growth. The city is losing commercial land to residential development and therefore needs to define adequate zoned land and support commercial uses into the future.

The commercial offer needs to be diverse

A successful City needs to cater for growth and diversity in the commercial market. Planning for large A-Grade office towers and small to medium sized office buildings is important. Our City has the capacity to deliver place-based design outcomes to promote diversity in the commercial market.

Streets need to be active, with retail activity concentrated

There is a need to establish current and future retail demand in the City and encourage a vibrant, compact retail core, while reinforcing the important character of the traditional high-streets of Crown and Keira Streets as they evolve and take on new roles in the City Centre.

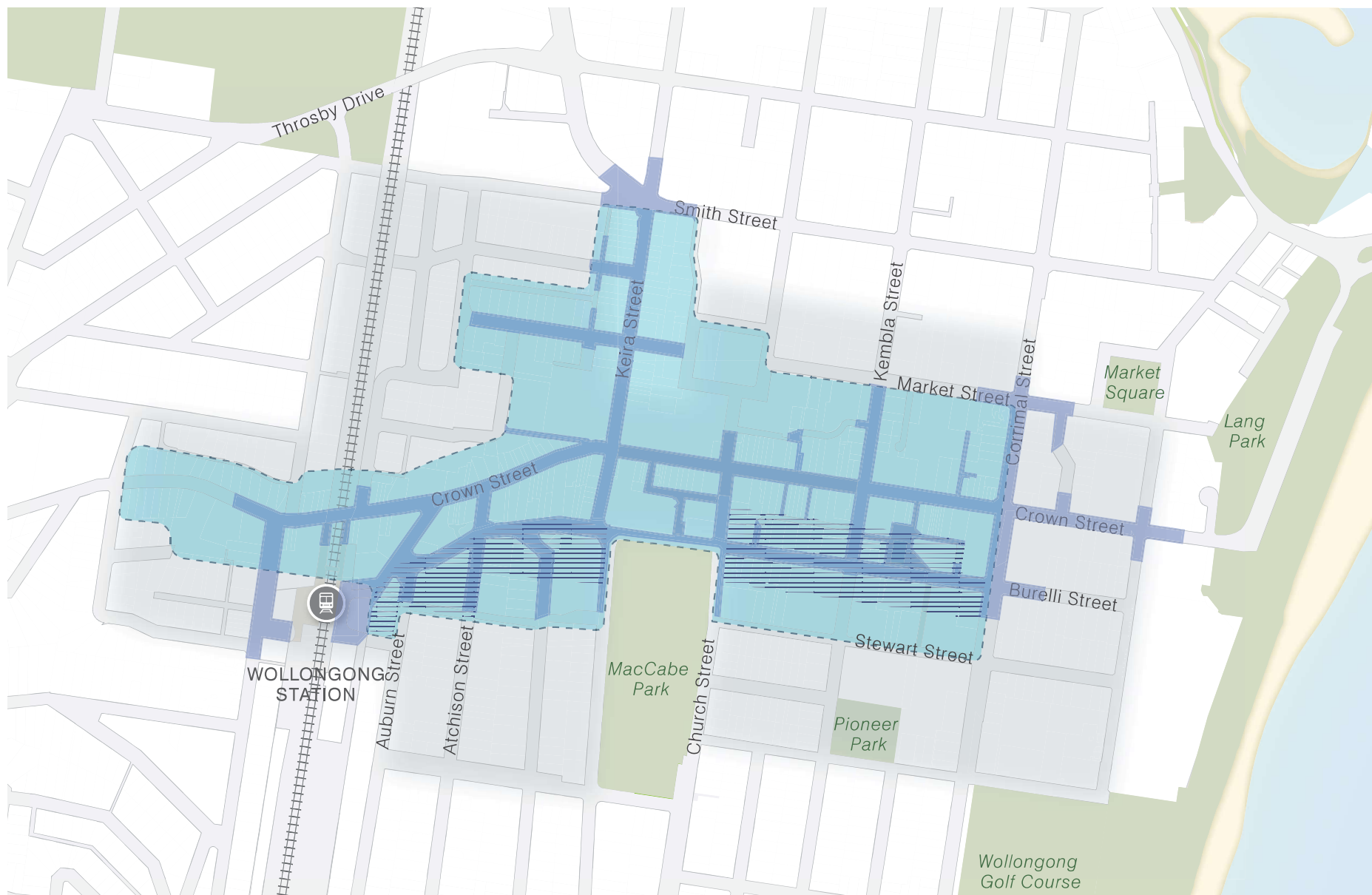
Residential needs to support City growth

Well designed residential uses in mixed use areas support the vitality and resilience of a city. Increasing the City's residential population will bring significant benefits; a more diverse night-time economy; increased pedestrian activity; passive surveillance; and more people living within walking distance of all the services and amenities they need.

Housing must be in the right locations to support City life. It must be designed to ensure the amenity of residents without compromising the public domain or limiting the day and night activity that is valuable to our identity and offer as a National City. Housing must also provide the right mix to meet the needs of a growing population. Variety in dwelling type and size will contribute to, and support a diverse community.

What is a Land Use Zone?

Land Use Zones define the legally permitted and prohibited uses of a piece of land, determining if a lot can be used for commercial, industrial, residential or other purposes. In other words, it defines what development land can, and cannot, be used for.



- B3 Commercial Core
- Commercial Only area
- Active Commercial Streets
- B4 Mixed Use

Objective

A vibrant and growing Regional City

Planning controls promote a diversity of uses to encourage a vibrant City Centre, day and night. Jobs and housing growth supports Wollongong's role as a Regional City. Wollongong is an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

Directions

- 1 Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core
- 2 Develop active commercial streets that respond to character
- 3 Plan for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive city

1 Direction: *Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core*

The analysis has found that the current land use strategy is compromising diversity and long term commercial growth opportunities due to a lack of distinction between land use zones. Supporting the growth and function of higher-grade commercial uses, with a range of complementary mixed uses, is an important part of Wollongong's role as a National City.

This Direction aims to ensure that the City Centre has adequate zoned land for commercial uses into the future. The direction also aims to ensure that sites are attractive to commercial tenancies, which aligns with the Economic Development Strategy.

No land use changes are proposed for areas outside the B3 and B4 zones of the Wollongong City Centre.

The key policy moves supporting this Direction include:

- Concentrate the commercial core to be the focus for jobs
- Establish a commercial hierarchy that responds to City character
- Preserve the existing supply of commercial floorspace
- Use residential to leverage commercial outcomes with the benefit of activating the City Centre
- Encourage large sites (5,000+) to take a tailored approach
- Define where large format A-Grade office towers can best be co-located

★ STRATEGY 1.1

Define and strengthen the role of the B3 Commercial Core for employment

A concentrated commercial core with a focus on delivering jobs

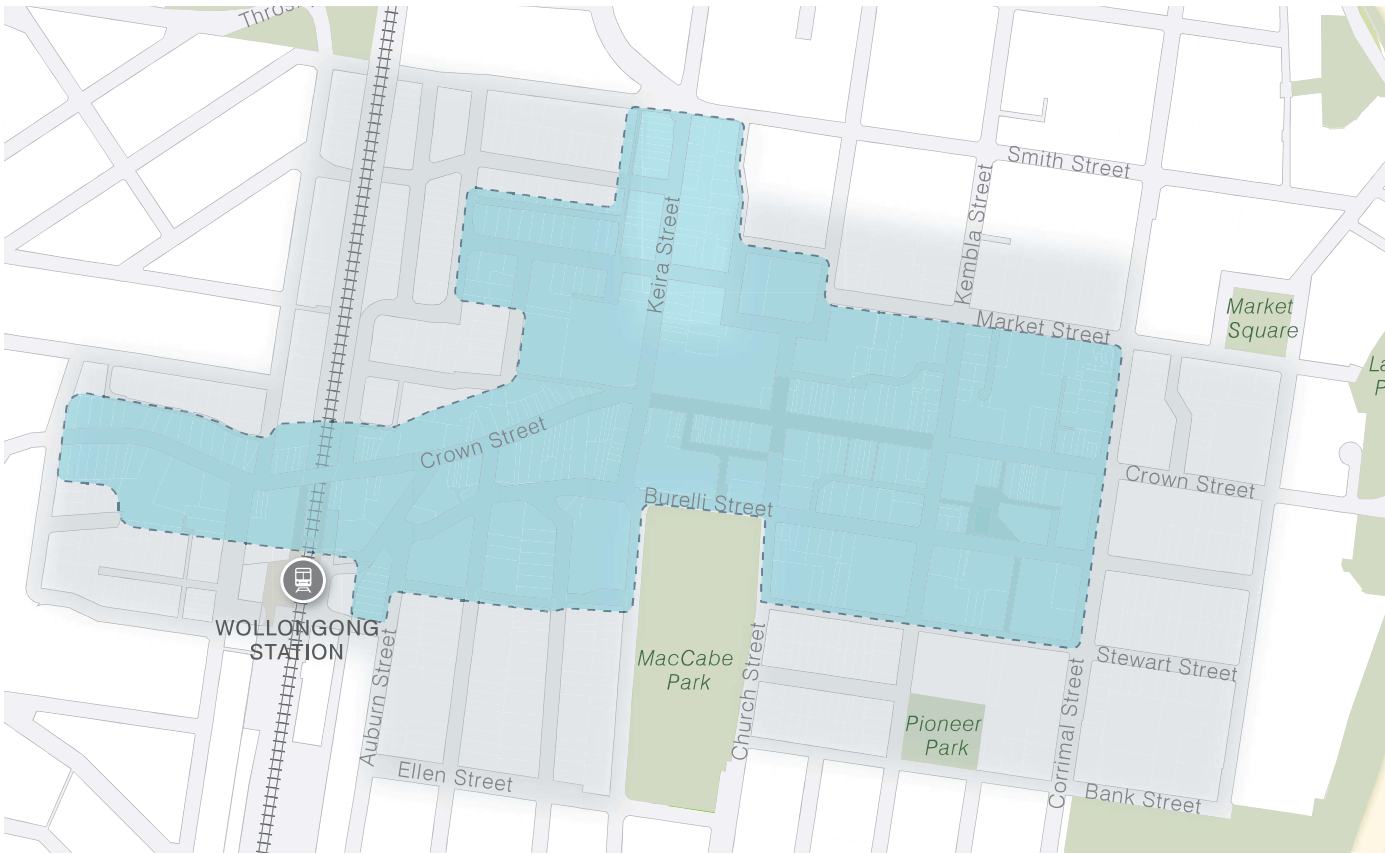
The Commercial Core zone (B3) is condensed and redefined with a renewed focus on delivering jobs. Aligned with the boundary adjustments, the key zone objective for high density residential is removed to bring clarity that the commercial core is the place to establish business.

The commercial core promotes a diversity of office needs, including small, medium and large office sites across the different City character precincts, and supports a range of non-residential outcomes including tourism, education, cultural facilities, retail, and entertainment uses.

City life is promoted around the Commercial Core, with a 'City Support' or a mixed use area established which allows more flexibility in delivering a resident development including residential flat buildings and mixed use buildings.

Preserve the existing supply of Commercial floorspace

Sites across the Commercial Core are required to retain the existing supply of commercial floor space established on site. This will ensure that the City is able to grow its commercial offering from the base supply of commercial floor space as sites renew.



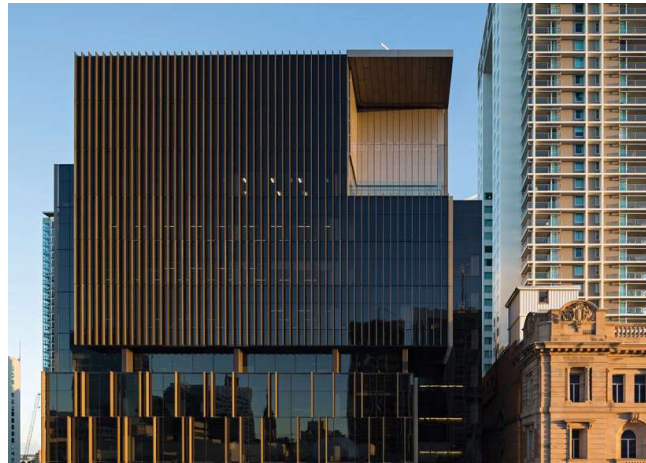
Commercial Core land use diagram

1:10,000 0 100 200 300 400 500M

B3 Commercial Core
B4 Mixed Use

Land Use

1



Define a commercial hierarchy that responds to City character

The proposed B3 Commercial Core is broken into smaller areas, each playing their own role in achieving an attractive central business district. How buildings look and what happens within them needs to respond to the different character places that make up the City Centre.

Burelli Street supports larger commercial buildings, presenting as the prestigious A-Grade commercial precinct.

2



To the north, the Market Street West precinct is intended to support a boutique office character with smaller tenancies and shared working spaces well connected to Keira Street and the station.

Crown Street and Keira Street mix small and mid scale commercial outcomes amongst adapted character and heritage buildings, re-purposed from retail to shared services.

The intersection of Crown and Keira Streets is the retail core with large format shopping centres clustered at three (3) corners.

3



Surrounding the Commercial Core, the B4 Mixed Use zone delivers a suitable mix of business, office, residential and retail land uses to support the vibrancy and success of the Commercial Core. Residential and commercial development will be permitted throughout this zone, delivering a true mixed use outcome. Horizontal mix of uses will see residential and commercial buildings side by side, and vertical mix of uses will see a range of land uses in the one building.

Lever Commercial outcomes from residential

Full commercial development is permitted and promoted in the Commercial Core, however complimentary residential is encouraged to promote a vibrant City day and night. A clear shift is made in the way we deliver commercial floor space.

Current policy quarantines the ground level only. This is changed to require that any mixed use development which introduces residential in the Commercial Core zone is to retain a minimum of 30% commercial floor space (or retain the net commercial floor space existing on the site, whichever is greater).

A tailored approach to large sites

As sites get larger there is a disconnect between FSR and building envelopes. Site planning may require new streets and public spaces, and there is increased flexibility to arrange floor space in different configurations (one building, multiple buildings). Detailed Urban Design Analysis together with a staged assessment process will allow a tailored approach for large sites to refine built form outcomes.

What is Commercial Development?

In this document, commercial development is used to describe a wide range of uses that are not residential. These include uses such as office buildings, retail, entertainment and education facilities, community and medical facilities, hotels, places of public worship and recreation facilities.

Urban Design Framework

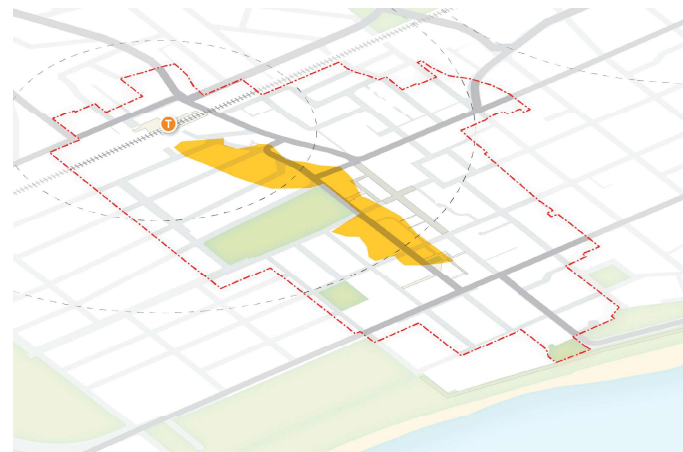
1 Direction: *Prioritise jobs growth and establish a resilient commercial core*

Define where large format A-Grade office towers can be clustered as a destination

Aligned with the Economic Vision for the City Centre, it is important to identify where large A-Grade office towers can be accommodated in a cluster within the City Centre. A-Grade offices are prestigious and highly sought after as a high end business addresses. The creation of an A-Grade office cluster is expected to invite increased rental returns, and therefore improve commercial feasibility.

While it is acknowledged that A-Grade office buildings are encouraged across the City Centre and can come in many forms, this section is focussed on A-Grade office towers with large floor plates of at least 1,000m². These towers need to be established on large sites, and present the opportunity to create a new City character.

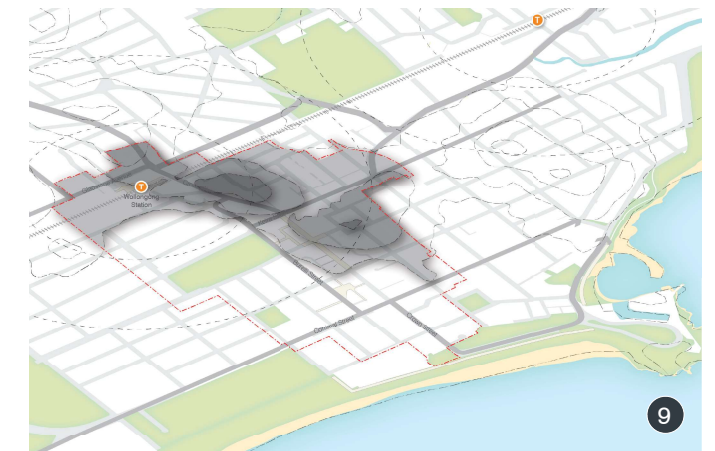
There are a series of principles to inform the best location to for A-Grade office tower. When overlayed, Burelli Street is revealed as the opportunity to establish a concentration of these important City defining buildings, creating a destination for business within the Commercial Core.



Overlaying Principles reveals Burelli as the best location to support a cluster of A-Grade Office Towers

Principles informing A-Grade Office Tower locations

1. Part of a condensed commercial core, and has the ability to co-locate significant commercial buildings, a destination for businesses
2. In close proximity to clusters of existing established 'A grade', large commercial buildings
3. Sites large enough to support 'A Grade' large format tower typology (> 2000sqm)
4. Located on exclusively commercial sites (A-Grade offices are typically commercial only buildings)
5. Respect the history and character of the City, protecting the narrow lot sizes and low rise character of Crown and Keira Streets, and the important connections between the Harbour, Market Street and St Michael's Cathedral
6. Located in proximity to public transport: Wollongong railway station, bus stops
7. Located in proximity to Crown Street Mall (to ensure accessibility to retail, hospitality and other services for workers)
8. Proximity to City assets of public open space e.g. MacCabe Park, Foreshore and/or waterfront
9. Access to views both within the City Centre, to the foreshore and escarpment, and to the industrial skyline south at Port Kembla
10. Away from areas of environmental sensitivity (e.g. flood areas south of Burelli Street)



Land Use

★ STRATEGY 1.2

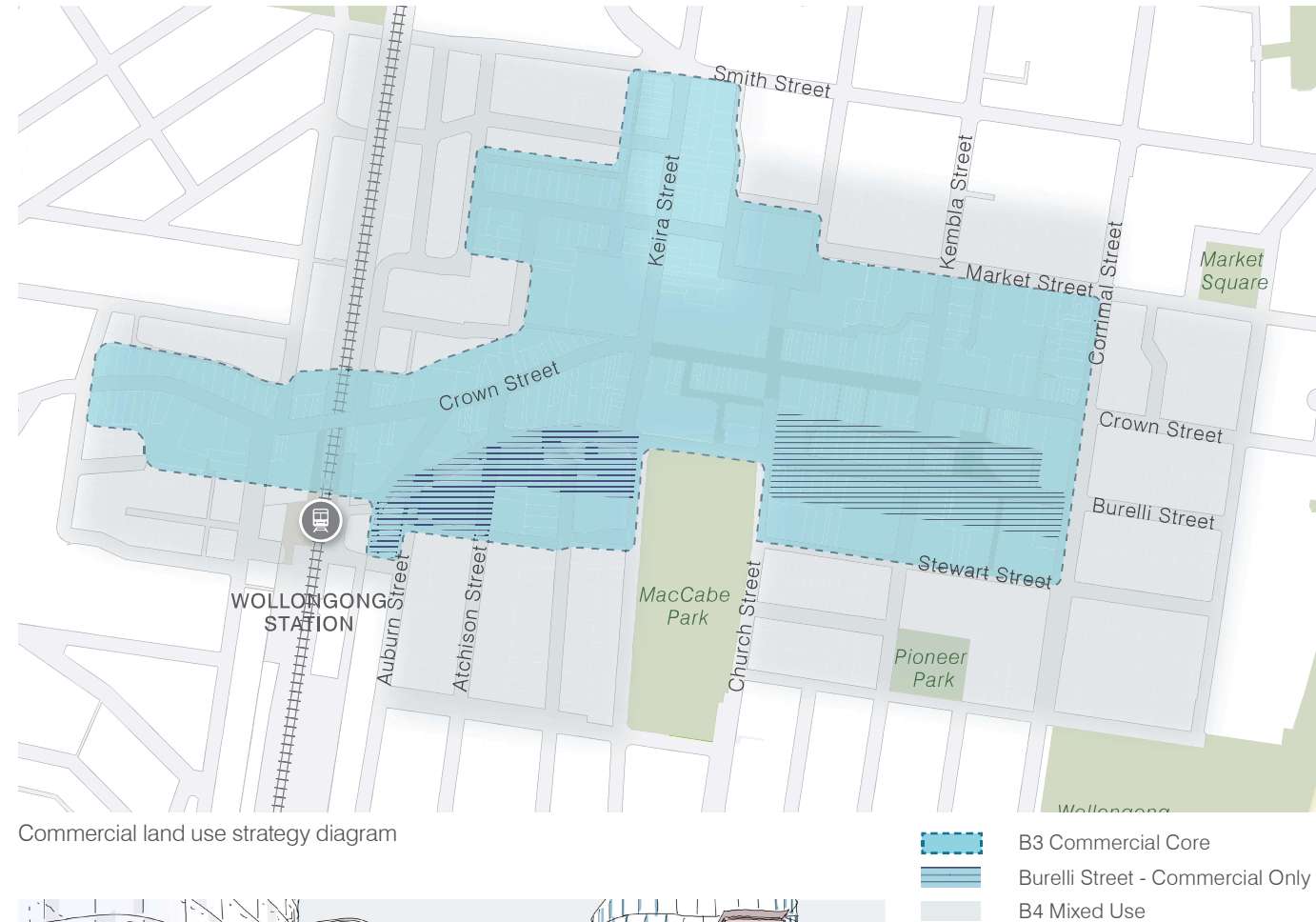
Safeguard land for an A-Grade Office Towers

Within the Commercial Core, an area of commercial only lands are defined to safeguard land for large format office towers into the future. When overlaying the principles for A-Grade Office Towers, Burelli Street stands out as the opportunity to support a cluster of this important City offer. Large sites that are under-developed present an opportunity to establish a new City character. Burelli Street is well positioned to rail, retail and leisure (MacCabe Park) and the street already supports a cluster of A-Grade office buildings adjacent the Arts Precinct.

Large sites in the City Centre are attractive to residential outcomes in the current market. To safeguard this land for future commercial development, residential development should be prohibited. This is to prevent the erosion of the commercial function of the City Centre. Defining these opportunity sites sends a signal to the market that the City remains a business district.

Planning controls need to holistically reflect the role of these sites, restricting residential, while supporting generous height and floor space controls to allow for tall towers which create a spine of height running through the City. The creation of a City Skyline.

Defined commercial only sites comfortably accommodate the forecast demand for commercial floor space beyond 2036. While the commercial only precinct should prohibit residential uses, there is the opportunity to consider allowing a range of temporary non-strata development options including student housing and other accommodation services.



Commercial land use strategy diagram



Artist impression of future Burelli Street A-Grade Office Towers

★ STRATEGY 1.3

Pursue incentives for commercial development

The commercial only lands should be supported by investment incentives where possible. These need to be further investigated, and respond to market needs.

Council should consider undertaking market testing of reduced on-site car parking for development in the Commercial Core to determine whether a reduction in the parking requirement would incentivise development.

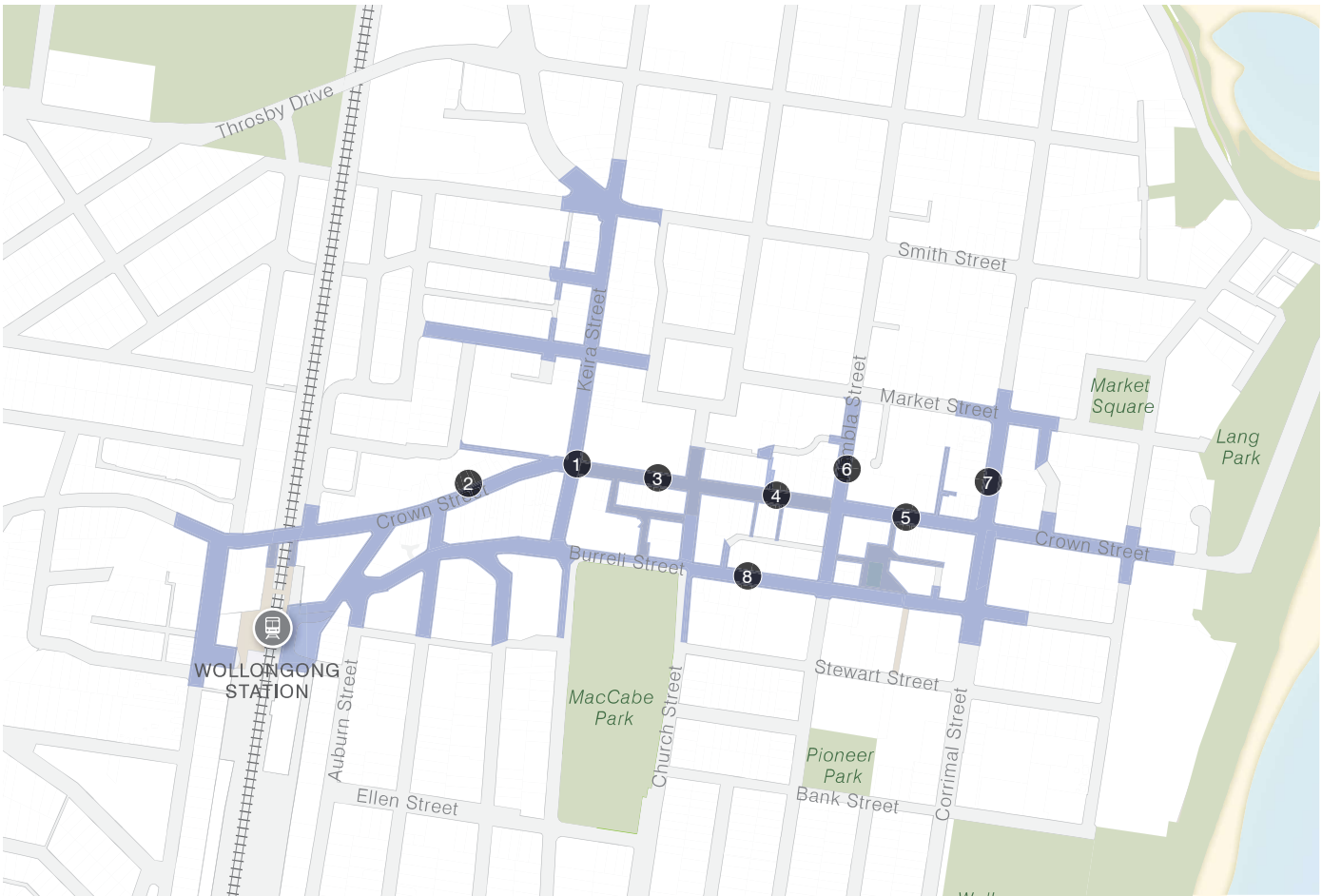
2 Direction: *Develop active commercial streets that respond to character*

The analysis has found that active uses are dispersed too thinly across the City Centre and that the retail offering is not concentrated. Important historic mainstreets are no longer required for retail functions and present an opportunity to be adapted and re-purposed for commercial purposes.

There is a need to establish a concentrated retail core to respond to current and future retail demand in the City - a vibrant, compact retail core.

Recognising the evolving role of the City's traditional high-streets of Crown and Keira, the direction aims to conserve the character of these historic fine-grain retail streetscapes while unlocking their potential to evolve and deliver alternate City Centre functions. While the uses inside buildings evolve over time, it is important to ensure that they are designed to activate and bring energy to this important network of streets in the City Centre.

A series of activity clusters existing across our commercial streets and these become key focal points of the City Centre. Each have individual characteristics which add to the vibrancy of the city, and host some of Wollongong's favourite offers both during the day and night.



Active Streets Strategy Diagram



Artist impression show active laneways and streets throughout the City Centre

Supporting thriving City Centre Streets

- 1 The junction of Keira and Crown Streets supports large format shopping centres. Keira Street supports evening activities with its existing collection of quality restaurants which are destination attractors for the City Centre.
- 2 Western Crown Street offers affordable, alternative retail and emerging businesses.

Crown Street Mall is a key public space delivering events and community activities including markets and festivals.
- 3 The Upper Mall (west) offers a mix of large format and street level retail.
- 4 The Lower Mall (east) evolves as a business and professional services hub. Professional suites, banking and office studios fill adapted historic and character buildings with the traditional highstreet streetscape a celebrated point of difference. This emerging professional services hub closely aligns with the Burelli Street and Lower Crown commercial building clusters.
- 5 Lower Crown supports a range of Government Agencies, bars, cafés and restaurants. This area supports a vibrant evening economy.
- 6 Kembla Street offers a food, beverage and entertainment cluster closely linked to Burelli Street commercial and civic uses.
- 7 Corrimal Street is vibrant day and night with exciting range of food and entertainment.
- 8 Burelli Street is emerging to support large format office towers. The street supports impressive foyers.

Land Use

★ STRATEGY 2.1

Promote commercial diversity in buildings while protecting the character of historic retail streets and precincts

Implement built form strategies to protect the fine grain character, function, streetscape and solar access to what is the existing retail heart of the City. Built form controls should promote the adaptive reuse of existing character buildings, allowing renewal set back from the street.

Implementation of this strategy should consider defining the retail areas through the active frontage control in the LEP and the character precincts in the DCP. Controls should encourage focus on large format retail at the intersection of Keira and Crown, and a high street character with a focus on fine grain on Crown, Keira and Kembla Streets.

It should be clear that even large format retail must address and activate any street frontages.



Traditional fine grain shop-top tenancies on Keira Street

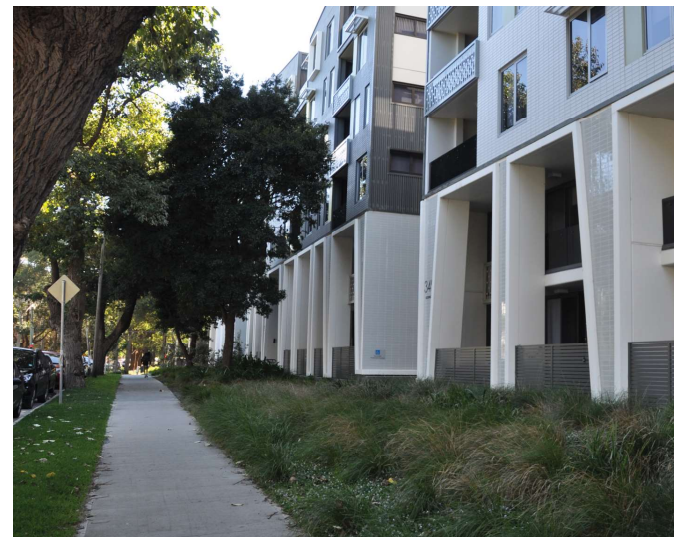
★ STRATEGY 2.2

Only require non-residential ground floors on key active City Centre streets

Allow a diverse mix of uses which supports and balances the need for commercial, retail and residential growth in the centre today and in the future.

Currently the WLEP requires development within the B4 Mixed Use zone and B3 Commercial Core zone to provide a non-residential ground floor use. It is recommended that this approach is replaced with an identification of key retail streets on an 'active frontage map' for the City Centre, requiring a non-residential ground floor use that activates the street in these locations. This should be supported by examples of well-designed active frontages in the DCP or design guidelines.

The strategy will ensure that non-residential uses are appropriately located and support a retail street, rather than being dispersed across the City.



Residential interfaces with the public street, managed with planting, a setback, and a raised private open space

★ STRATEGY 2.3

Develop planning controls that support a balance between night-time economy and residential city living

In alignment with the *Economic Development Strategy* and *Creative Wollongong: Cultural Plan*, provide clear policy guidance to City Centre living to assist in mitigation of real and perceived conflicts between residents and city noise.



Promote a diverse night-time economy with interesting offers of food, culture and entertainment, to activate City Centre streets

Direction: *Plan for a variety of housing to support a lively and inclusive City*

Well designed residential uses in mixed use areas support the vitality and resilience of a city. When balanced with other uses, housing in the City can bring vibrancy, support local businesses and create an urban lifestyle desired by a diverse population.

Increasing the City's residential population will bring significant benefits; a more diverse night-time economy; increased pedestrian activity; passive surveillance; and more people living within walking distance of all the services and amenities they need.

It is critical that housing in the City Centre does not inhibit commercial growth. Housing must be in the right location, and provide the right mix to meet the needs of a growing population. Variety in dwelling type, size and location will support a diverse community

Key objectives of designing residential for the City Centre should be the activation of key city streets and management of land use conflicts.

★ STRATEGY 3.1

Guide residential development in the right locations

Define a Mixed Use area which operates as a City Support. This area promote a diverse mix of uses which support and balance the need for commercial, retail and residential growth in the Centre today and in the future. Residential and commercial development will be permitted throughout this zone, delivering a true mixed use outcome. Horizontal mix of uses will see residential and commercial buildings side by side, and vertical mix of uses will see a range of land uses in the one building.

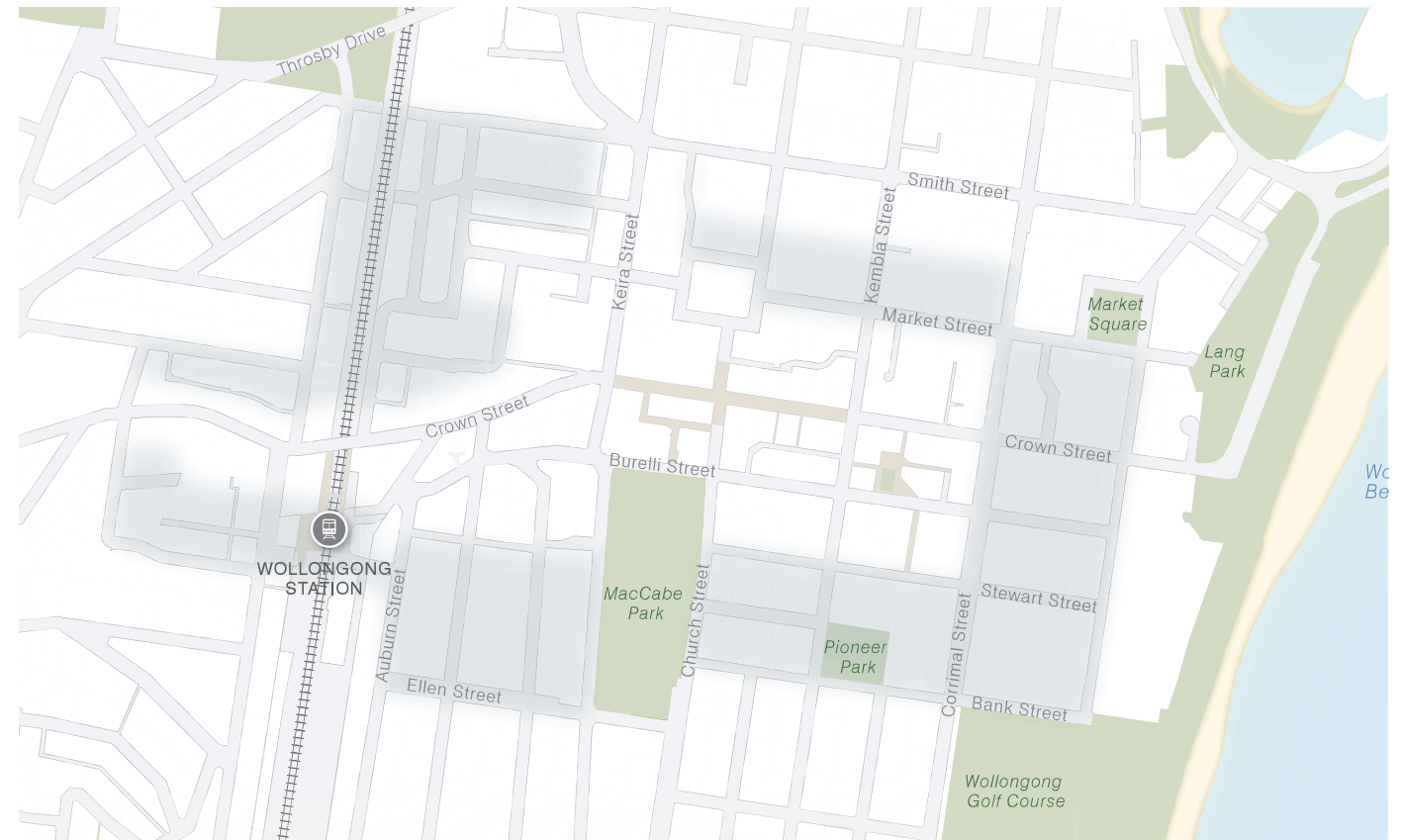
In nominated areas, residential uses are permitted at ground floor level, to stop the unnecessary sprawl of vacant retail tenancies. Ground floor residential needs to be appropriately designed to provide privacy for residents as well as ensure streetscape amenity.

★ STRATEGY 3.2

Leverage opportunities for public benefit improvements through development

The strength of the residential market is a key opportunity to leverage significant public benefits for the City Centre, including local infrastructure such as affordable housing, new parks, walking and cycling connections, and new community facilities.

Private residential development should contribute to an improved public domain experience. This presents an exciting opportunity to make the most of residential in the City, and to leverage development contributions to deliver public domain improvements, new connections and open space.



Commercial land use strategy diagram

City Support - Mixed Use



Artist impression of George Street delivering medium and high density housing to support the City Centre

Land Use



Double height apartments at ground with fences maintain privacy while offering visual interest.



Individual entries contributes to life on street and continues fine-grain rhythm.



Medium and high density housing is appropriate in the City Centre



Improvement to public spaces such as parks and community facilities creates public benefit around developments.

★ STRATEGY 3.3

Encourage a diversity of housing including Affordable Rental Housing and Student Housing

The City Centre is well serviced and well placed to assist in the delivery of housing offers.

Affordable rental housing for low and very low income residents has been identified as a key need. Offering a range of affordable housing in the City Centre, close to key services will improve housing outcomes in our Local Government Area.

It is recommended that Council prepare an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme. This work will identify Affordable housing needs and define how a scheme could be applied in the City Centre.

The City has a young population, and high proportion of small households, but there is a lack of student housing in the City Centre. Only 5% of student housing is located in the City Centre. Providing more student housing in the City Centre would bring more students into the City, helping to create a more diverse resident population.

Built Form - An attractive and diverse city in a unique natural & historic setting

Grow a City Centre with exceptional built form

The design of individual buildings and the spaces they create shapes our City Centre and influences its character and function. Every building and public space must be designed to reflect its context and to enrich the quality of the City for people.

Built form controls play an important role in setting expectations for the way a building ‘fits’ into the City. Setbacks, building height and separation and floor space ratio controls work together to guide building envelopes. However, they don’t work alone. To deliver a high quality City, building envelope controls need to be met with high quality design, tailoring each building design to its unique circumstance.

Shaping new built form controls for the City Centre

Built form testing was carried out based on identified Character Precincts. Building envelopes were developed across a range of site sizes, and different lot patterns, including small and infill sites. The process revealed how controls guiding building envelopes need to better respond to, and respect, the distinctive and evolving character of places across the City Centre.

What the testing revealed:

Building envelopes need to respond to context, including character and heritage

Testing developed appropriate variations in building height, floor space ratios, street wall heights and setbacks by precinct to better reflect the existing character. These changes establish the baseline for recommended changes to planning controls across the City Centre.

Not all sites will achieve maximum height and floor space

There is significant variation in lot configuration with some 45% of sites across the City Centre having narrow frontages. Testing shows how sites of varying scales will sit in the City context. In many circumstances, sites which are smaller or have a narrow frontage are unable to achieve maximum height and floor space ratio outcomes. This is particularly evident where lot configurations are typically narrow and long.

There is an opportunity for a more flexible approach to ‘unlock’ narrow sites

Narrow sites present an opportunity across the City Centre. They should be ‘unlocked’ to allow for creative and innovative responses to renewal. While planning controls (maximum building heights and floor space ratio) should not be ‘as of right’, flexibility should be provided where high quality design processes are in place, to facilitate appropriate development outcomes.

There is sufficient capacity for growth

Testing demonstrated that the ability for the City Centre to grow and deliver projected commercial and residential development to support our growing community can be accommodated within proposed planning control changes.

Processes for considering outcomes on larger sites across the City Centre are not differentiated. Bespoke site planning and building envelope requirements will allow appropriate flexibility and deliver design excellence and city benefit

As sites become larger, there is a disconnect between how a floor space ratio can predict building envelopes.

Site planning may require new streets and public spaces and there is increased capacity to configure floor space in different ways – tall and slender towers or lower, wider buildings.

A tailored design approach is required.

Owners or proponents of sites greater than 5,000 square metres will be encouraged to engage with Council to discuss a tailored planning pathway to access appropriate height and density through a site specific planning proposal.

Proponents using this process will need to demonstrate that a proposal can deliver community benefit, design excellence, and alignment with the strategic direction as set by Council. This will need to be documented clearly in a City Centre Planning Strategy.

4

Direction: *Grow a legible city that supports a distinctive and evolving character*

★ STRATEGY 4.1

Plan for diversity in form and renewal at all scales

Floor Space Ratio (FSR) is recognised as an important regulator for development.

FSR guides building envelopes in partnership with many factors including building height, street wall, setbacks, and landscape controls. Only through a high quality design process that considers all these factors can the appropriate yield of a site be established with any certainty.

Floor Space Ratio is not ‘as of right’. It is expressed as a maximum, however, it is not an upper limit achievable on all sites. Complexities around the context of the site, its orientation, lot width, size and unique site characteristics, such as heritage significance, mean that a development will not always achieve the maximum FSR.

To grow a legible city that supports the character of Wollongong, the floor space ratio controls should be revised to:

Map maximum FSR controls across the City Centre that respond to ‘place’

Through detailed precinct planning, building envelope testing and an appreciation of local character, a series of floor space ratio controls are being developed to respond to place. This marks a significant shift in the FSR strategy for the City Centre. It is recommended that the requirement to derive FSR from land use and site size is removed to enable a more strategic, place-based approach to guiding scale in the City.

Protect and incentivise commercial capacity

Generous FSR controls should be maintained in selected commercial areas, and be aligned with appropriate height controls. This is to incentivise development, particularly in the proposed new A-grade commercial precinct to emerge along Burelli Street, where the urban structure supports taller buildings with larger floorplates.

Unlock development potential on narrow sites to allow renewal when high quality design outcomes can be demonstrated

Narrow Sites – site frontage less than 20 metres

Nearly half of sites across the City Centre have narrow frontages (frontages of less than 20m). Under the current controls these sites must be amalgamated in order to access height and floor space controls for redevelopment. This has key implications on delivering change and promoting smaller scale renewal.

Building envelope testing demonstrated that appropriate built form outcomes can be achieved on smaller sites when designed well.

While site amalgamations are still appropriate in some areas, it is recommended that narrow sites be ‘unlocked’ to allow for redevelopment where it can be demonstrated that a high quality design can be achieved and key amenity criteria can be met for the site and its neighbours.

Residential flat buildings on narrow sites – site frontage less than 24 metres

Testing demonstrated that residential flat buildings in the urban city context can be delivered on sites less than 24m site width. A series of built form envelopes identified potential small site renewal for residential on sites as narrow as 14 metres. Delivering residential on sites less than 24 metre site widths is challenging. In some instances, site orientation and site context will make it unachievable.

For sites with a width less than 20 metres, and for sites with a width less than 24 metres proposing a residential flat building - it is proposed that a base FSR be applied and potential height be capped at the recommended Street Wall height. Consideration may be given to allowing additional FSR and height above this base in accordance with the proposed maximum FSR and Building Height in exceptional circumstances.

What is Floor Space Ratio (FSR)?

FSR is used to calculate the maximum developable floor area (m²) relative to the total size of a site.

The purpose of FSR is to provide an appropriate relationship between the size of a site and the amount of development on that site.

It sets a maximum development density and intensity of land use, and seeks to encourage a consistent building scale within an area.

For example: You have a site that is 1000m² and a maximum FSR of 3:1.

Your developable floor area is calculated by multiplying the site area by the FSR provided.

1000m² x 3=3000m².

You could deliver this 3000m² in many ways, dependant on context and the requirements set by other planning controls that guide maximum building envelopes e.g. height, street-wall, setbacks and floorplates.

It is not always possible to develop the full FSR permissible on a site. A site specific, contextual response is necessary to inform the appropriate building envelope

Built Form

★ STRATEGY 4.2

Plan for building envelopes that preserve amenity and support the desired future character

Protect the amenity of key public places

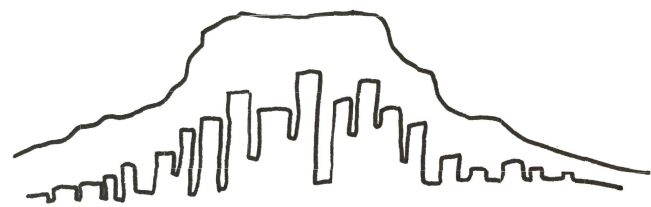
Introduce new solar access planes to inform reduced street wall heights and increased setbacks above street wall on Crown Street Mall, and reduced heights in the Arts Precinct.

Limit residential capacity in flood prone areas

Proposed changes to land use permissibility (allowing residential at ground) will result in an increase to residential floor space permitted in flood affected areas. This is not encouraged under Section 9.1 Ministerial Direction for flood prone land. Building Heights may need to be reduced in these areas to limit any increase in residential capacity, in alignment with the Ministerial Direction.

Create a legible city skyline that concentrates height around the office core

Introduce an east-west spine of height along Burelli Street, between the station, MacCabe Park and the Arts Precinct, denoting the commercial and civic core of the city. Ensure heights on the City Centre fringes step down to maintain views to key natural features and transition to low scale areas.



Height clearly defines CBD with a transition to lower forms as you move out of the City Centre.

Ensure heights reflect character of precincts

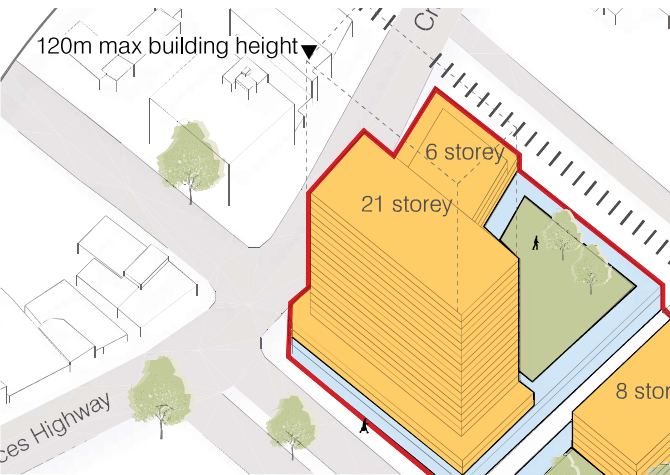
Define appropriate street wall heights and tower depths on Crown Street and Keira Street to protect the fine grain, human scale character.

Ensure consistency across the Market Street commercial services precinct where some existing sites have controls permitting significantly taller heights than those in-keeping with the character of the smaller office buildings in this area.

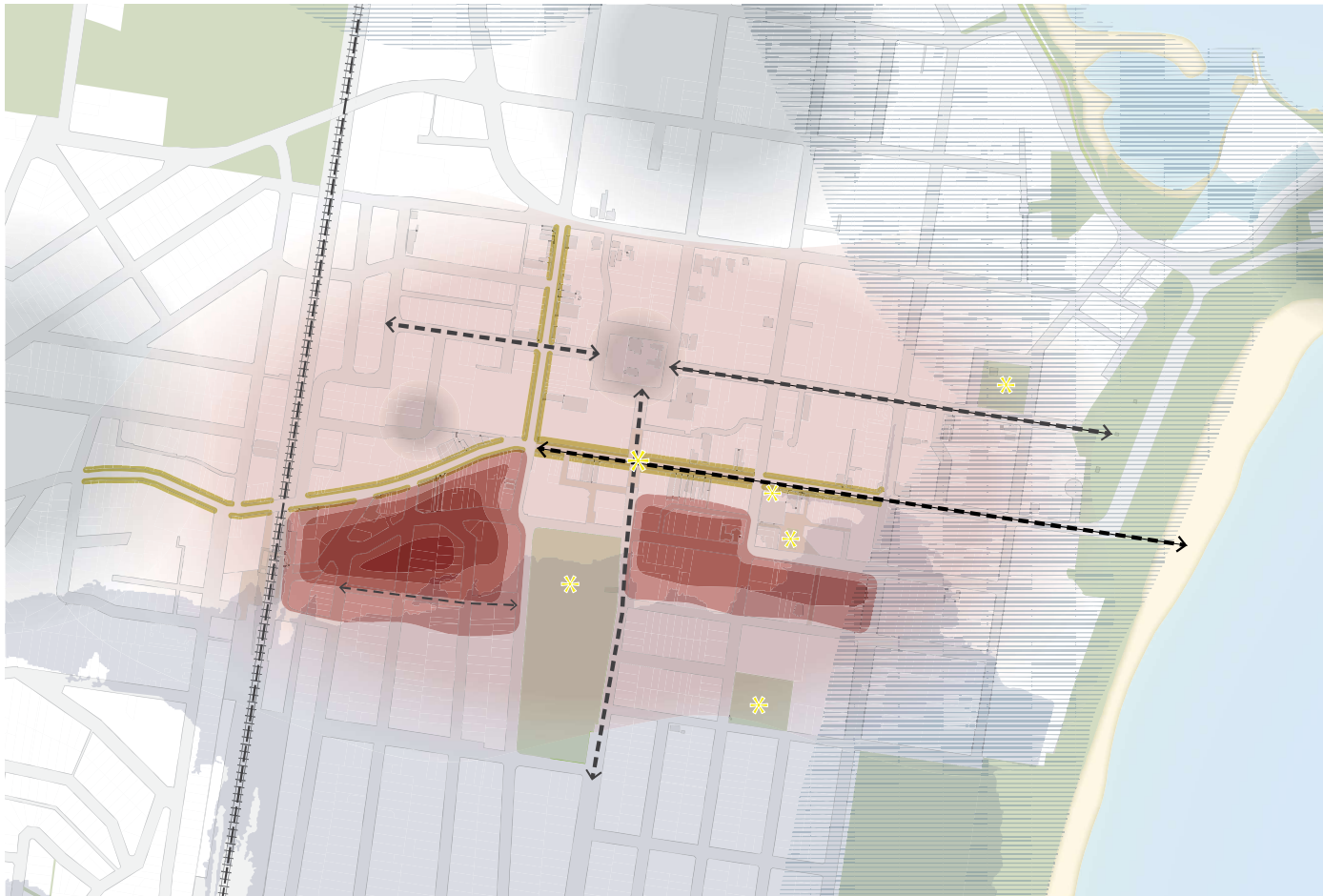
Align heights with the desired future character of Burelli St A-Grade commercial precinct, which is suitable for larger footprint, taller office towers.

Align heights to development potential

Ensure height controls on sites around the station are aligned with the achievable development envelope. This will ensure the controls better reflect likely development outcomes and prevents the inflation of land values based on unachievable heights.



Built form testing found that in several areas with taller height limits maximum FSR was achieved well before the height control was reached



Height strategy diagram

- ✱ Solar access protected
- Low-scale street wall
- Heritage + Character buildings
- Flooding extent (2015)
- Spine of tall buildings through commercial office precinct

What is a Height Limit?

Height limits are one of the controls used to define the maximum size of a building. Heights limits are given in metres and determine how tall a building can be. Heights are measured vertically from the natural ground level.

Height limits are important because they help shape the character of an area and define the city skyline, with the tallest buildings normally denoting the centre of the City.

Urban Design Framework

★ STRATEGY 4.3

Preserve buildings and places of significant character values for the enjoyment of future generations

Improve planning controls to respond to place and celebrate the character of Wollongong

Wollongong has many character buildings and places that provide an interesting streetscape, rich fabric and host many of our community's local businesses and civic functions. It's important to strengthen planning controls to protect these places and facilitate good design outcomes in and around them for the future.

Protect significant buildings and places

The identification and management of historic places is an essential part of ensuring we continue to 'celebrate the uniqueness' of the built environment and character of Wollongong City Centre.

Ensure significant buildings are listed and managed in alignment with community values and legislative direction. The Heritage Schedule and Heritage Map in the Wollongong LEP 2009 should be updated to include relevant additional buildings.

Encourage the adaptive reuse of character and heritage buildings through the promotion of the Heritage incentive clause in the LEP, supported by Heritage Guidelines.



★ STRATEGY 4.4

Preserve views to the escarpment, ocean, natural and built heritage.

Views towards the escarpment and ocean are what give Wollongong its unique character and appreciation of its natural setting. Views also help people using the City orient themselves, and connect with the wider context.

Many views towards the escarpment and ocean have already been obscured by development, or are difficult to achieve in low-lying areas of the City Centre. Views along streets can be more easily preserved. Care should be taken when developing at the terminus of streets, to preserve views to significant landscape beyond.

Ensure the form of development in the city centre preserves views to the escarpment from the foreshore

Maximise continuous views of the ridge-line of the escarpment from Flagstaff Hill.

Preserve views along street corridors

Give access to potential new views that may be made available with redevelopment. This is particularly relevant to the WIN stadium and WIN Entertainment Centre, with the potential opportunity to extend Burelli and Stewart Street view corridors to reveal a visual connection to the foreshore.

Ensure built form controls create a permeable skyline

Amend built form controls including side setbacks and setbacks above street wall preserve views between buildings to significant natural landscape and built form.

Improve views to St Michael's spire and Courthouse

Preserve views to St Michaels Cathedral and Courthouse and its silhouette against the sky. Ensure structures within Crown Street Mall and Church street assist with opening up views towards St Michael's spire.



Recommended key views

- Key Views
- ★ Key points of interest
- Heritage & Character Buildings
- State Heritage items

Built Form

5 Direction: *Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place*

★ STRATEGY 5.1

Develop controls that ensure slender tower forms, appropriate separation and consistent setbacks

Achieve an attractive city skyline sympathetic to the topography, natural setting and character

Minimise building profiles to maximise the opportunity for shared amenity and views to the sky and as specified in key views map.

Preserve and open up public views of significant built form, open spaces and natural features available from and around the site.

Promote tower slenderness

Provide a consistent control for maximum floor plate sizes above street wall height:

- ① Retain existing maximum floor plate sizes for commercial (1,200m² GFA) but increase maximum building depth to 30m to allow for greater variety of tower forms.
- ② Decrease maximum floor plate size for residential development to 750m² GFA to ensure tower slenderness. Increase maximum building depth to 21m to allow for a typical residential apartment layout.

The maximum floorplate may not be achievable where design needs to respond to specific character areas.

Where the unique circumstances of a site demonstrates that a more skilful design can achieve

improved outcomes for public domain views and amenity, variation from strict application of this control, where appropriately justified may be possible.

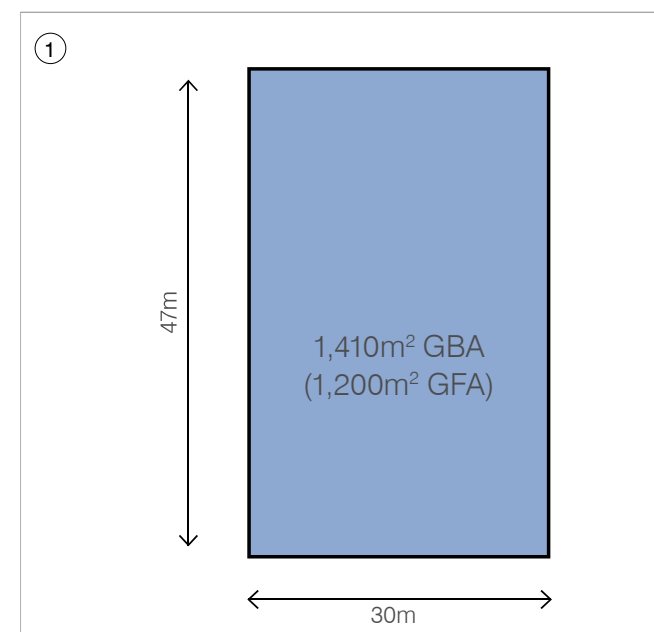
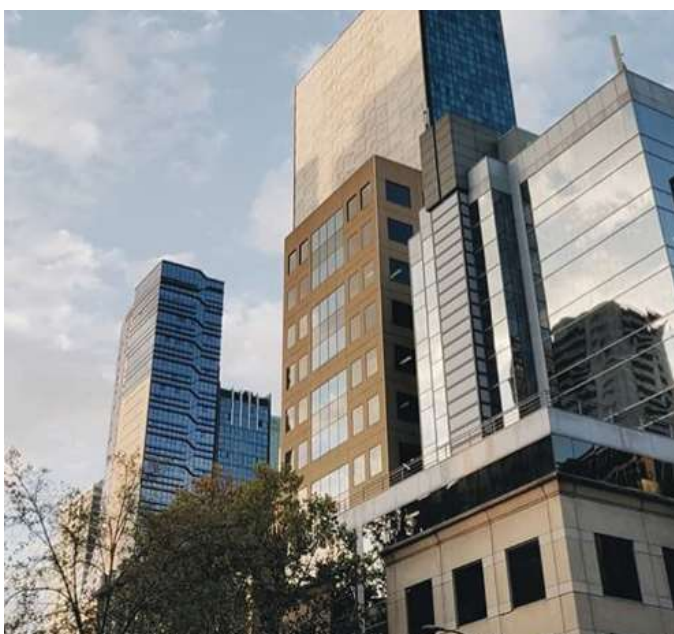
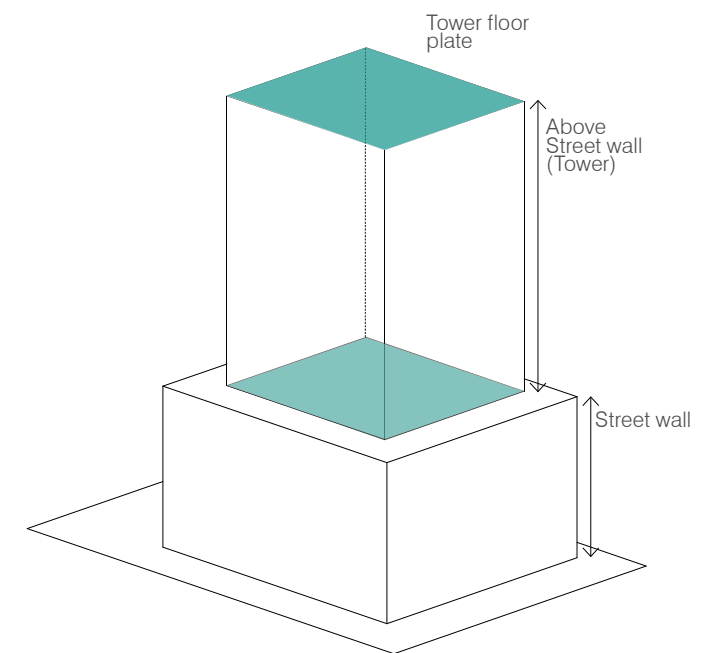
Attractive and diverse tower forms

To avoid stepped building forms, a single setback should be provided above street wall. For taller buildings this means the greatest side and rear setbacks should be applied from street wall height.

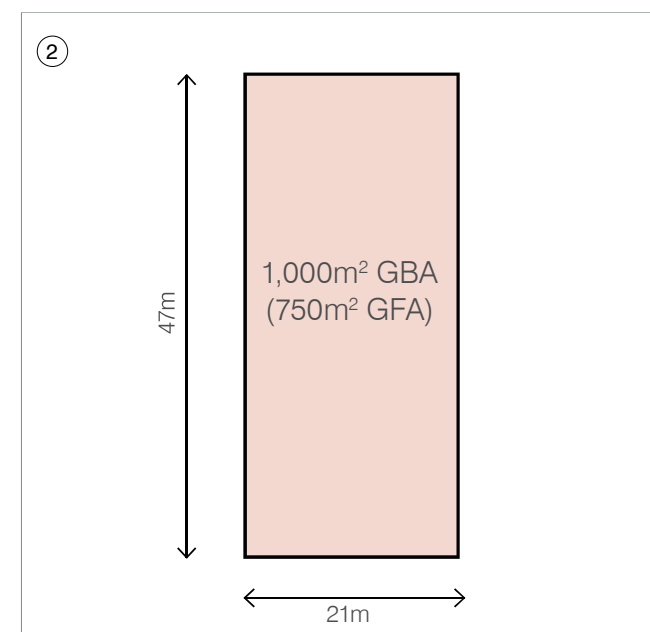
Ensure well separated towers

Building separation as per *Apartment Design Guide* for residential and a minimum 6m from side and rear boundaries for commercial uses above street wall height in the commercial core.

Apartments blocks with habitable spaces directly opposite each other should be avoided and increased separation be provided where possible.



Example of max floor plate and depth for commercial development (assuming GFA efficiency is 85% of GBA)



Example of max floor plate and depth for residential development (assuming GFA efficiency is 75% of GBA)

What is GBA - Gross Building Area?

Gross building area is the sum of the floor area calculated within the external walls of each floor of a building.

What is GFA - Gross Floor Area?

Gross floor area is defined in the Local Environmental Plan. It is what you use to calculate a floor space ratio. It is the sum of the floor area of each floor of a building measured from the internal face of external walls, but has a range of exclusions such as vertical circulation, required parking and plant rooms.

★ STRATEGY 5.2

Develop controls for floor to ceiling heights that ensure good amenity and adaptability

The following floor-to-ceiling heights are recommended as a minimum to achieve a high level of internal and external amenity:

- Ground: minimum 4m for all ground floor uses in active frontage areas. 3.3m for all other areas. As per ADG for residential.
- Level 1 and above: 3.3m for commercial. As per ADG for residential.

Note: Residential at ground should generally be raised to provide visual privacy. In flood prone areas ground requires raising up to 1.5m. See Design Quality section for good design of ground floor built form interfaces.

★ STRATEGY 5.3

Develop controls that provide guidance on site amalgamation and isolation.

Isolation should be discouraged. Where a site will unavoidably be isolated, joined basements and 0-setback podiums should be provided to allow the neighbour to develop to an appropriate potential under the controls.

★ STRATEGY 5.4

Develop controls for fine grain frontages to ensure human-scale development.

Wollongong has been successful in establishing a fine grain along its pedestrian spine of Crown Street Mall and Crown Street and Keira Street. The traditional shop-front pattern of 6-12m should be maintained and enhance. New developments should relate to the existing fine grain of shop-fronts, even where the typology may include taller buildings.

What is Human-scale development?

We use the term human scale to refer to people as pedestrians and their experience of a City.

In its simplest definition, creating a human scale environment means making sure that the buildings that we interact with are of a scale that is comfortable for an average person to be around.

Built Form

Strengthen and simplify planning controls to promote built form diversity in response to people and place

★ STRATEGY 5.5

Develop ground setback controls that provide attractive interfaces and functional streetscapes.

Promote walk-able urban retail streets

Retain zero setbacks for active frontages on key streets, where awnings can be provided. For key large sites which are able to achieve greater setbacks and currently have narrow footpaths, an additional setback is recommended.

Protect views

Ensure that views along streets to the city's natural setting can be maintained. (Refer to views section for more detail).

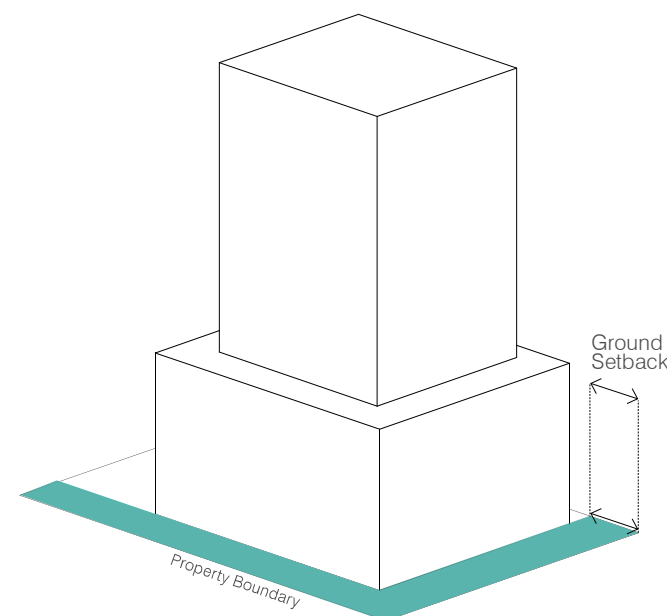
Set the tone for prestigious commercial precincts

Provide a generous dedicated setback on the southern side of Burelli Street between the station and Corrimal Street to allow for a significant public domain and planting zone, and wider setbacks on the northern side to allow for tree planting.

Provide wider setbacks along Market Street West to allow for greater public domain space and street tree planting on this key street of the urban services precinct.

Get the mixed use interface right

Require 3m ground and basement setback in mixed use zones outside the retail core this will allow for flexibility in ground floor uses whether it be commercial or retail uses with space for outdoor seating, or residential requiring a transition zone with landscaping and amenity for residents.



★ STRATEGY 5.6

Develop street wall controls that respond to character and human scale.

Protect and enhance the character and heritage quality of Crown Street Mall, Crown Street and Keira Street

- Establish a 2 storey street wall height, which aligns with prevailing heritage parapet heights.
- At Crown Street Mall establish a 2 storey street wall height with a generous 10m setback above the street wall to protect the unique low scale character of this key public space. In doing so this will improve solar access to the mall from the north, allow the heritage to breathe, the fine grain character to be read. The setbacks are equal on both northern and southern sides to ensure generous views to the sky from the mall.
- On Crown Street (between Darling and Keira and Kembla and Corrimal Streets) and Keira Street (north of Crown Street) establish 6m setbacks above street wall to protect the heritage and fine grain character of the streets.

Promote the civic character of the Burelli Street commercial spine

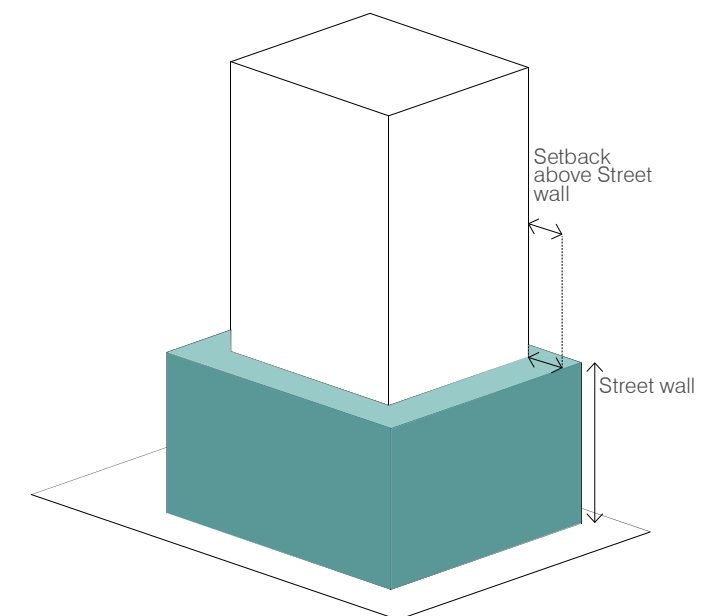
Establish street wall heights of 6 storeys along Burelli Street. Permit a variety of setback typologies including tower to ground.

Ensure a human-scale interface with MacCabe Park and a transition to low scale areas.

Provide a consistent treatment of park edges where land uses change through consistent 4 storey street wall height and 4m podium setbacks. Transition street wall heights from the core to the city fringe where they interface with low density residential.

Deliver strong and well articulated street walls

- Permit continuous street walls along Crown Street Mall, Crown Street and Keira Street to retain existing shop-front character.
- In all other areas require a maximum street wall length of no more than 55m (approximately mid-block) before which an articulation break is required to ensure human scale development and physical relief in the streetscape.



Direction: *Elevate the importance of design quality in the City Centre*

The analysis indicates that a higher standard of design quality in the City Centre is required to deliver improved outcomes in both built form and public domain.

Design quality does not necessarily mean a more expensive design. Good design achieves functional, attractive and sustainable solutions to a range of issues. In Wollongong City Centre some of the key issues which required an improved design response are:

- building modulation to manage bulk and scale and respond to context
- the resolution of flooding and accessibility requirements without compromising the streetscape
- establishing a positive relationship to heritage and character places, the natural environment, and the public domain.

★ STRATEGY 6.1

Strengthen the commitment to design excellence

Ensure that the size of the development and its potential to deliver great urban outcomes, including the potential to deliver more public domain, is linked to a more rigorous design process.

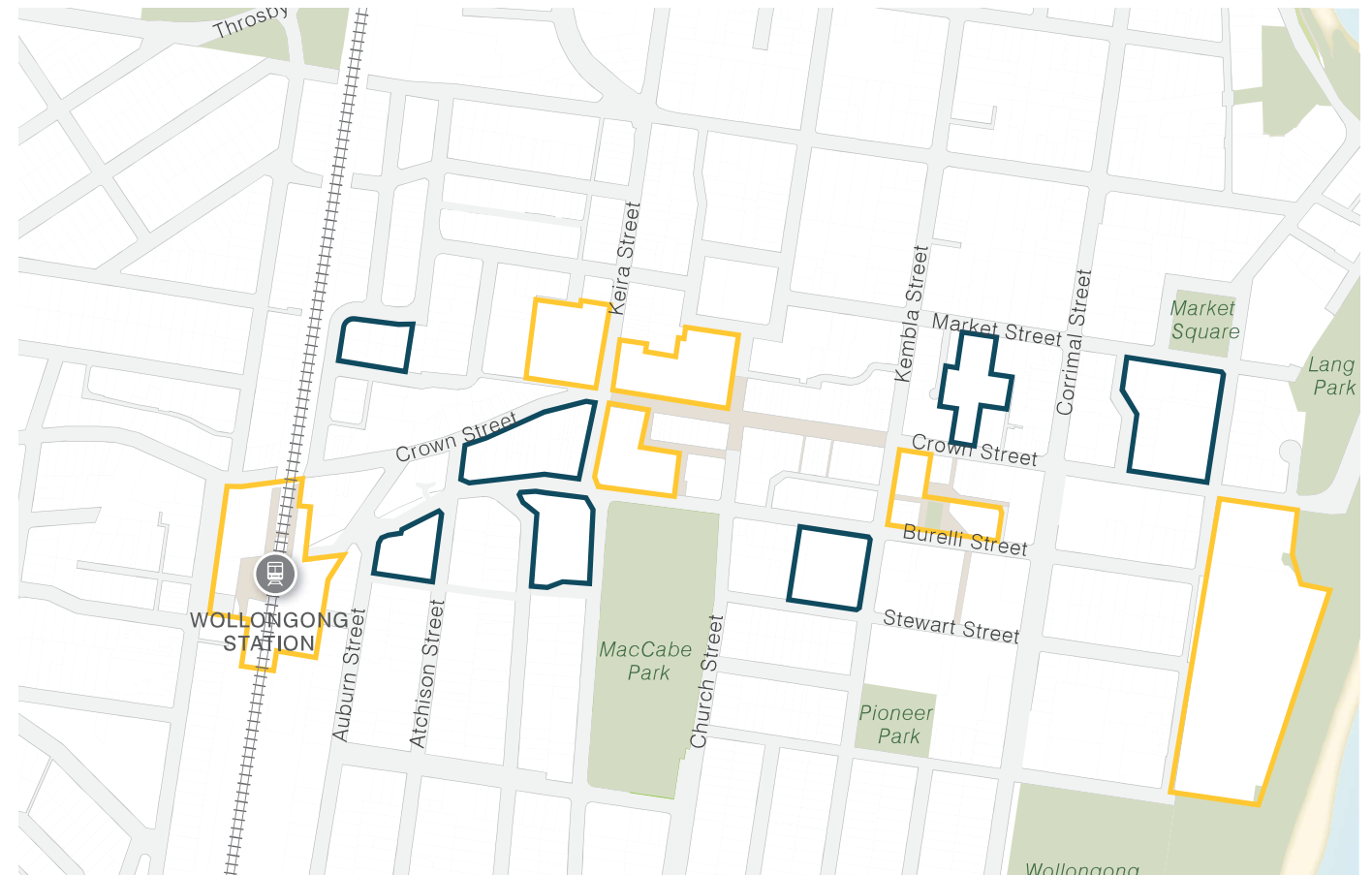
- Very narrow sites should be required to undertake a Design Review Panel pre-lodgement process prior to development application submission. This will ensure that developments on these challenging sites are appropriately reviewed and evaluated at an early stage.
- Large or key sites should be subject to a master planning process and design excellence processes.
- Council should consider in the development of competitive design processes and the cost that this may add for developers.

★ STRATEGY 6.2

Encourage innovation and design quality in the local design and development industry

Identify design talent based in the Wollongong LGA and more widely and endeavour to provide opportunities for small public projects; public space projects, community building refurbishment etc.

Consider an ideas competition for a key component of Wollongong, to stimulate Sydney and nation-wide interest in Wollongong from the architectural, urban design and planning community.



Recommended Key Sites Map

- Existing Key Sites (WLEP2009)
- Proposed Key Sites



An example of a design competition outcome: Sutherland Entertainment Centre - winning entry (CHROFI)



Hyde Park cafe - Andrew Burns Architecture

Built Form

★ STRATEGY 6.3

Provide clarity and improve outcomes through a strong assessment process

Continue to develop the design capability of Council's assessment teams.

Require development applications to provide clear site analysis and explicit explanation of how the proposed design outcomes respond to the site analysis.

Incorporate a requirement in the development application assessment process to provide wall sections and detailed elevations to clearly indicate materiality and key details. Incorporate adherence to these details as a condition of consent, to avoid the dilution of architectural concepts and materiality as projects progress through documentation.

★ STRATEGY 6.4

Prepare design guidelines that communicate better design outcomes

Develop design guidelines to improve the design quality of typologies that are developed most frequently. For example guidelines for shop top housing, designing in the vicinity of heritage structures, incorporation of fine grain retail, design for flooding, and ground floor residential.

Guidelines should make a more tangible link between existing character, desired future character and how architectural design can achieve it. Guidelines could leverage the design quality policies prepared by Government Architects NSW, either by adapting the guidelines to make them specific to Wollongong City Centre or incorporating them in the guidance offered to developers.

★ STRATEGY 6.5

Develop specific design guidelines that demonstrate better built form outcomes on flood prone lands

Develop a series of built form controls in the Development Control Plan that promote good design outcomes for the City in flood prone areas. This includes integrated resistance and impermanence for both residential and commercial/retail situations.

For residential developments, design principles should include:

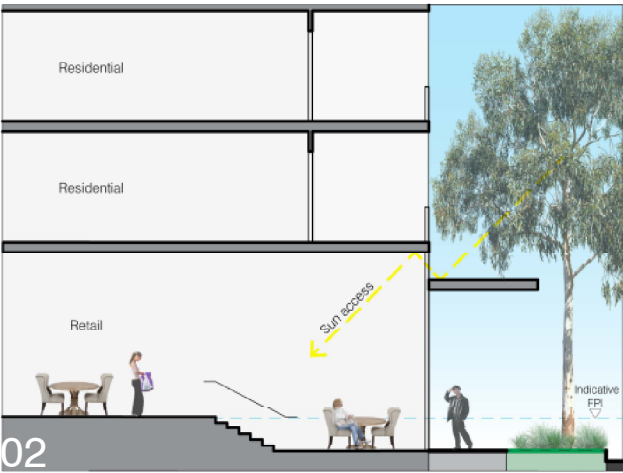
- Retaining walls and landscaping
- Promote surveillance of the street from ground floor apartments
- Raised ground floor levels for privacy
- Provide individual residential entries to ground floor apartments
- Locate access stairs perpendicular to the footpath
- Locate ramps behind low scale walls and/or planting to limit their visual impact and extent of blank walls and balustrades.

For retail and commercial developments it is critical to ensure that finished floor levels are as close to street level as possible. This will ensure that streets are active and that commercial tenancies are visible. This may result in flooding of some part of commercial tenancies where appropriate and subject to Council requirements. Design principles should include:

- Include an upper level transition and circulation zone for activation along the street and easy access
- Enable the capacity to link circulation zones

between property to potentially contribute to a wider circulation network above flood level

- Split the overall change in level between indoor and outdoor to maintain human scale
- Include active temporary uses such as outdoor dining at lower levels to reinforce street life.
- Finished floor levels should not be determined by basement parking levels.



01 Functional solutions can achieve high quality urban design outcomes. This Waterloo building has highly detailed stair and ramp access to its ground floor retail frontage. Source: <http://www.sjb.com.au/projects/casba-dank-street>

02 Designing for flooding for sacrificial retail uses fronting onto the ground floor.

Public Domain and Connections - A green & walkable City

Wollongong is an accessible, pedestrian-friendly city

City streets, lanes and spaces create the structure of the city. These elements make up the public domain are central to our experience of place. Successful pedestrian streets and spaces are important to the amenity and economic vitality of a city.

The structure of the City was tested alongside an understanding of land use and built form outcomes.

What the testing revealed:

The City needs to promote active transport

A proactive approach is required to create connections between buildings and enhance pedestrian movement along city streets. Long blocks with continuous street walls and no through site links have resulted in limited permeability making the City unfriendly for pedestrians.

Streets need to be designed as places with high amenity

Delivering quality tree canopy, awnings, freedom of movement and minimal conflict with cars.

The traditional grid from the 1830s is being eroded

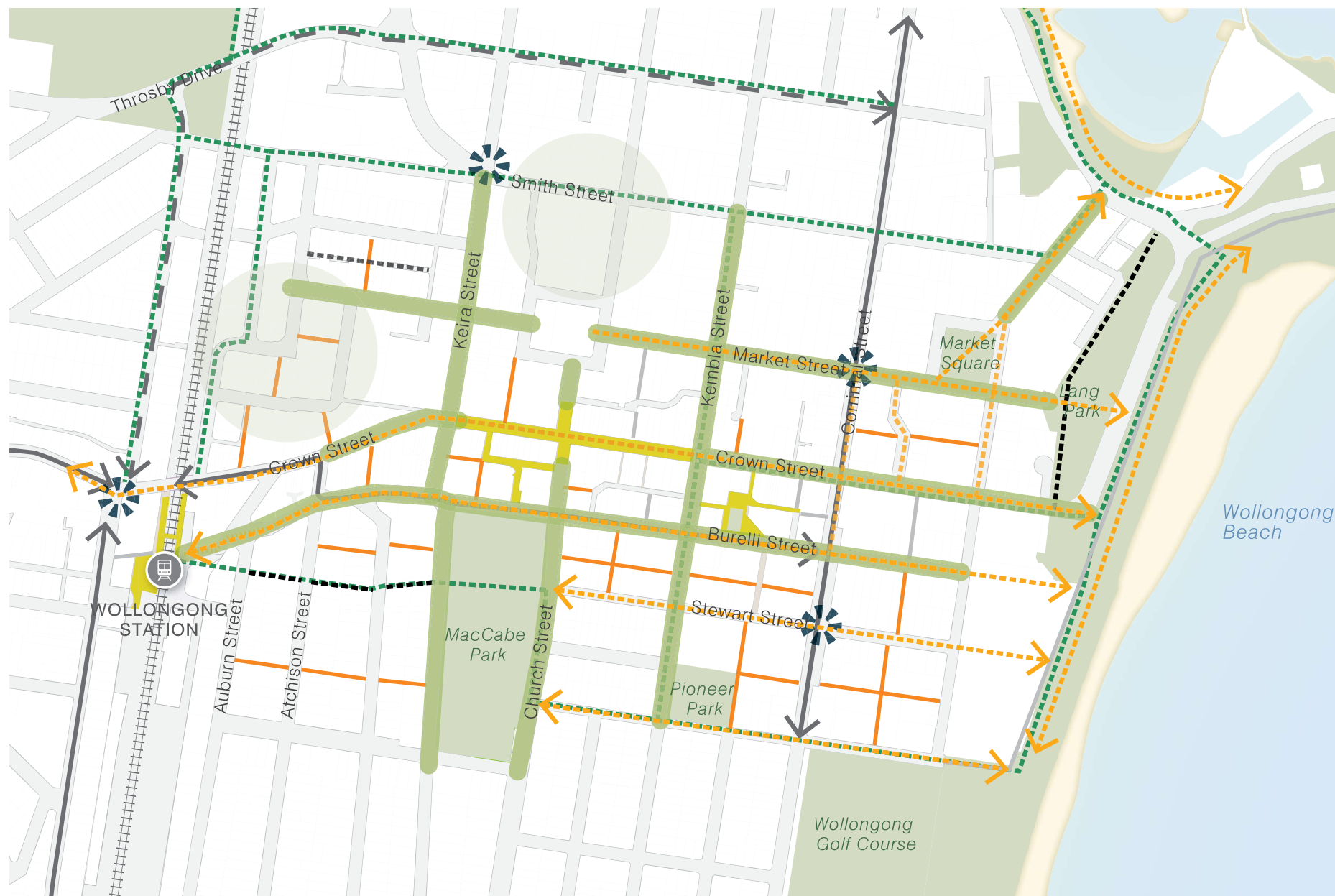
The grid and structure of the City needs to be reinforced with increased permeability, active transport and to contribute to precinct character.

Sunlight to important public spaces needs to be protected

Important public spaces, like the Mall, need to have clear sun protection controls.

Important public domain projects need to be identified to act as catalysts for change.

A structure plan needs to be developed for the City incorporating the strategies for land use, built form and public domain and connections as outlined in the Urban Design Framework.



- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | Existing public open space | | Key pedestrian desire lines |
| | Pedestrian priority public space | | Proposed shared connections |
| | Additional public open space required | | Existing mid-block connections |
| | Key Green Streets | | Proposed mid-block connections |
| | Entry points | | Proposed bike network |

Objective

A green and walkable City

A significant increase to the City's tree canopy contributes to a green, walk able and sustainable city. Attractive and revitalised public spaces support an active and healthy community and are a catalyst for economic growth in the city. The city grid is clear and permeable and facilitates walkability

Directions

- 7 Strengthen the structure of the City through a permeable grid that prioritises pedestrians
- 8 Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city
- 9 Protect sunlight to key public spaces

7

Direction Strengthen the structure of the City through a permeable grid that prioritises pedestrians

This section sets out the strategies required to reinforce the grid and structure of the City, increase permeability, and contribute to precinct character.

These strategies are being reinforced and tested through the development of the *Access and Movement for People Strategy* for the City Centre, utilising the Movement and Place framework in keeping with the guidelines under the *Future Transport 2056*.

★ STRATEGY 7.1

Define the role and function of streets in the City

A defined street hierarchy that reinforces precinct character and the role of each street should be implemented. The strategy for key streets is:

- Burelli Street: Civic and premier A-Grade office street defined by tall towers, key cultural destinations, large trees and generous public domain.
- Market Street West: Secondary office street with street tree planting and wide footpaths.
- Crown Street Mall: pedestrian street with commercial and retail, high quality public domain connected via a series of laneways.
- Crown and Keira Streets: Secondary retail & commercial high streets. These streets have increased pedestrian amenity through landscaping and footpaths.
- Keira and Kembla Streets: Established after-hours dining streets with outdoor seating.

★ STRATEGY 7.2

Create a permeable city grid for pedestrians

- Deliver a new east-west street connection the station and MacCabe Park to break down blocks, provide new connections and improve legibility and accessibility between key destinations in the centre.
- Improve legibility of the arrival experience into Wollongong, with pedestrian connections to the centre through upgrades to Lowden Square; Crown Street and the hospital through a new station forecourt over the railway to Crown Street.
- Reinforce the laneway network with additional mid-block connections.
- Consider formalising the public/private threshold between Lang Park and the adjacent private properties by linking the disconnected streets along the park's western edge.
- Consider how Marine Drive could be modified to improve the connection between Lang Park and the foreshore for people. Include the removal of the roundabout and relocation of the bus layover in this work.

- Investigate slowing down vehicular speeds within the City to 40km/h on low traffic streets.
- Continue the Blue Mile link along the foreshore south to Bank Street. Work with Venues NSW to ensure public domain is activated increasing public access, safety and enjoyment of the beach. Discuss the opportunity of additional east-west pedestrian links through the venues to connect the foreshore to the City via Burelli and Stewart Streets.

★ STRATEGY 7.3

Deliver active transport infrastructure

Provide the infrastructure for safe active transport by delivering the proposed cycle network and complete the city loop from the station by considering new routes:

- Along the new east-west connection in the rail arrival and southern precinct, through MacCabe Park and continuing along Stewart Street to connect to the extended Blue Mile link.
- Provide a safe active link north from the station along Railway Parade through the Commercial Services precinct to connect to Smith Street.



Increased pedestrian permeability between buildings.



Generous public domain and tree plantings. Passeig de Sant Joan Boulevard, Barcelona, Spain



A road transformed into a shared way with high quality public domain and day and night activation. New Road, Brighton, UK



Cycleways integrated into existing streetscape. Bourke Street Upgrade Sydney

Public Domain and Connections

★ STRATEGY 7.4

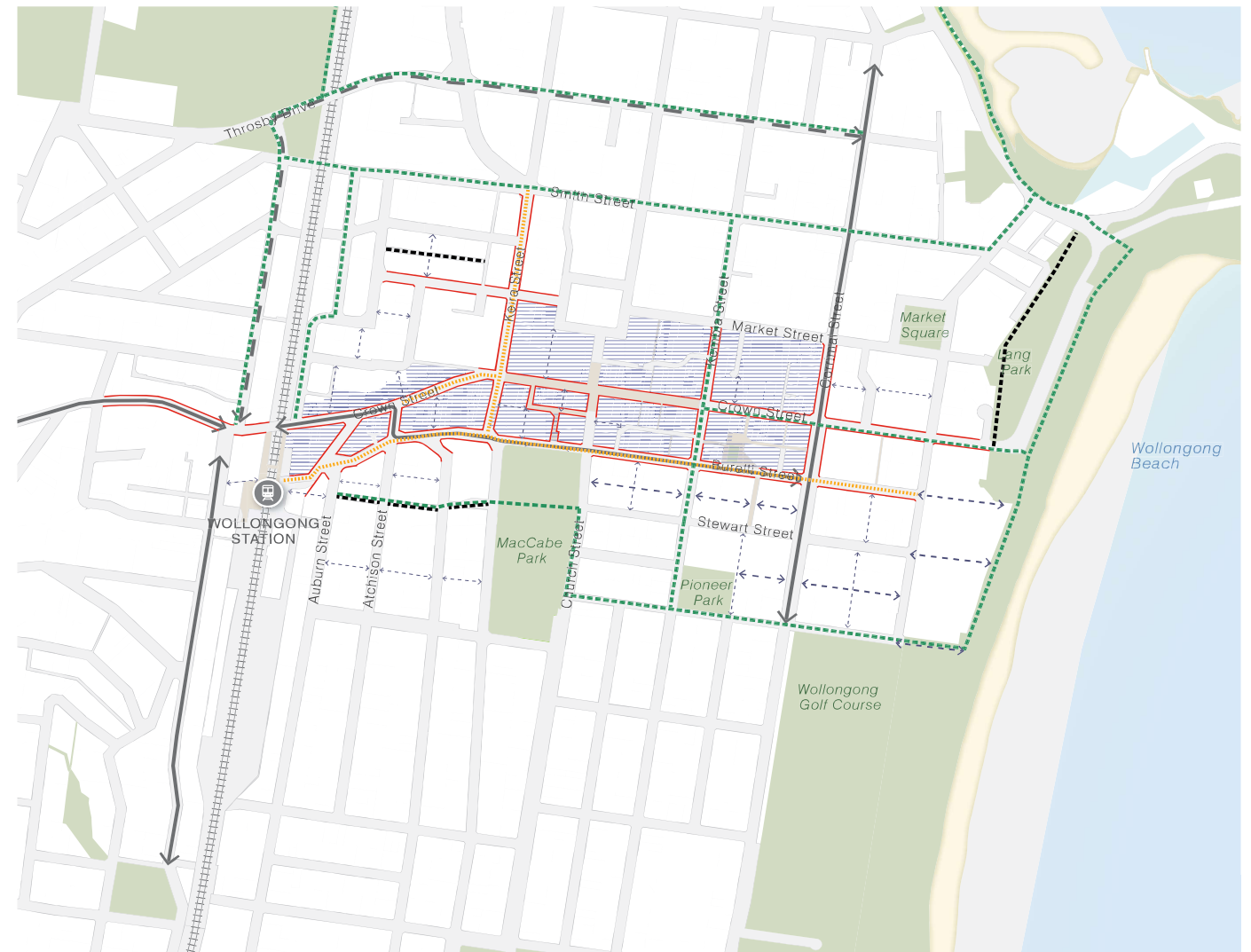
Enable the mode shift from cars to public transport

- Prioritise bus movements at the station to provide a more efficient service for passengers and promote public transport over cars.
- Collaborate with State Government and Federal Agencies to deliver significant public transport improvements to Wollongong City Centre.
- Improve existing public transport to deliver more frequent servicing from outside the City Centre
- Link public and active transport to improve their attractiveness to users
- Consider dis-incentivising car parking in the City Centre

★ STRATEGY 7.5

Identify roads for vehicular traffic and servicing

- Throsby Drive / Denison Street by-pass provides the opportunity to direct through-traffic around the centre, calming traffic and discouraging cars in the core.
- Corrimal Street is a key north-south connector through the centre and subject to existing road widening conditions.
- Burelli Street is an important vehicular and bus street providing the primary east - west connection through the Centre, and will need to manage pedestrian priority with traffic needs.
- Manage vehicular movements to prioritise pedestrians by limiting driveways, vehicular and service access to key pedestrian streets including Crown Street, Burelli Street and Keira Street.



Recommended streets and movement strategy

Recommended interventions

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| | Vehicular Corridors | | Bike network |
| | Throsby Denison Bypass | | Road/Laneway upgrades |
| | no additional vehicular entrances | | Pedestrian Connections |
| | Pedestrian priority core | | Shared Connections |

8

Direction: Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city

Street Tree Planting

Urban tree canopy is important to control urban heat, support cleaner air and water and provide local habitat. Analysis has found that tree canopy in the City is below target levels. Narrow road reserves and extensive underground services in streets present design and technical challenges to maximising planting opportunities.

This section sets out the actions required to increase greening in the City and thereby improve sustainability, comfort and character.

★ STRATEGY 8.1

Reinforce the character of key streets and precincts with appropriate tree planting

- Improve the visual and physical amenity of streets with a consistent street tree canopy providing shade and visual continuity
- Encourage trees, shrubs and grasses for their inherent value to support coastal identity and for the environmental and ecological benefits that tree canopy offers.
- Key streets are identified for street tree planting within lot boundary set-backs- a green boulevard along Burelli Street and Market Street and Crown Street south.

★ STRATEGY 8.2

Define and implement a 35% minimum canopy target on key walking streets by 2037

- Support the creation of a City Centre Street Tree Master Plan aligned with the *Urban Greening Strategy (UGS)*.
- Work towards a canopy target of 35% as supported by the UGS

★ STRATEGY 8.3

Prepare a City Centre Street Tree Masterplan

- Inform planting program and renewal
- Specify technical standards and species
- Identify appropriate locations for urban greening including street trees and green walls / roofs.
- Identify key locations and opportunities for statements planting to assist with the legibility and walkability of the City Centre.
- Include strategies for education in greening within private lands and in dense urban environments such as green walls, terraces, planter boxes and roofs consistent with *Urban Greening Technical Guidelines*. Align with Water Sensitive Urban Design objectives to ensure 'green', 'blue' and 'grey' infrastructure are complementary and co-designed.



Recommended focus streets for urban greening

- Existing Street Trees
- Priority Green Streets
- Setback for Street Trees
- Existing open space

Public Domain and Connections

★ STRATEGY 8.4

Establish a tree-centric approach to deliver greening in response to existing constraints

Review street services conditions in relation to tree planting. Provide the opportunity for greater tree planting along key pedestrian streets in the Centre, through either ground setbacks or blister parking and plantings:

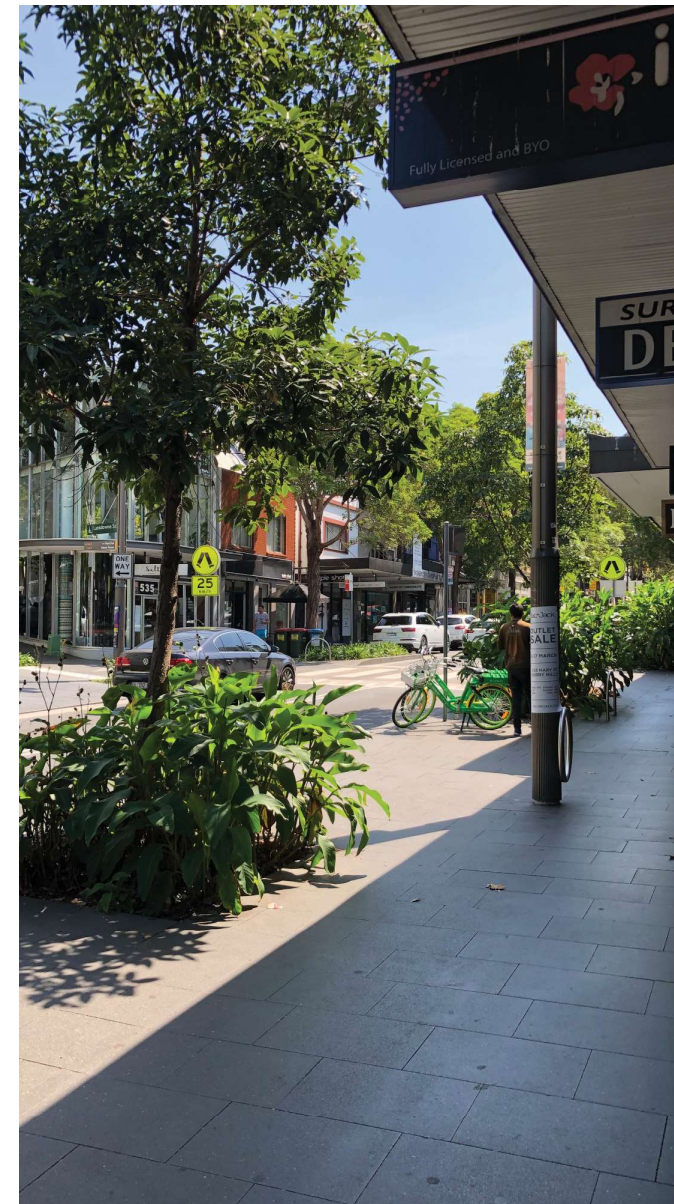
- Identify services locations in the street which prevent tree planting.
- Where services in streets prevent street tree planting, the front building set-back has been increased to allow for tree planting.
- Where there are services in streets as well as a distinct existing street wall typology and heritage character, and where road width permits, trees are proposed in blisters between parking bays in the outside lanes of streets.
- Provide space, soil and water for canopy trees.

★ STRATEGY 8.5

Leverage new development to offset the cost of greening

Redevelopment can be leveraged to deliver new greening, but can also impact on existing greening. The strategy is to:

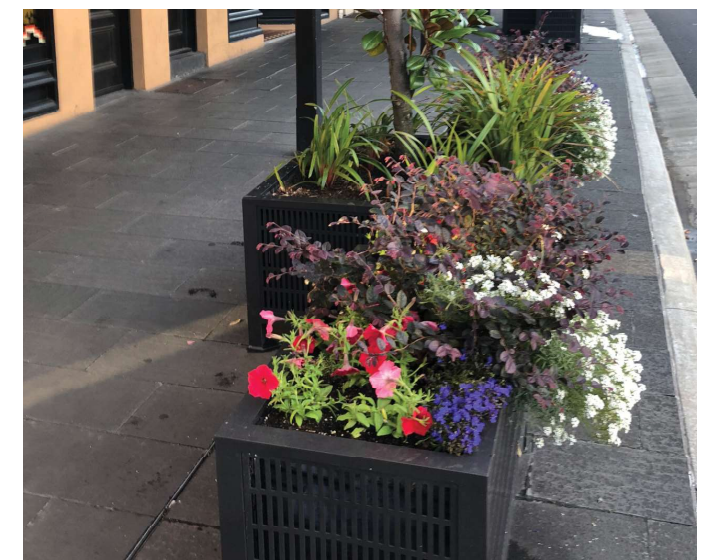
- Use the opportunity that redevelopment presents to deliver new planting on public and private land
- Introduce Tree Amenity Valuation (see City of Melbourne) via guidelines and the DCP.
- Require developers to fund the cost associated with tree removal and replacement of trees impacted by development.



Canopy and vegetation planting in blisters



Mature trees provide canopy over and frame the street



Planter boxes with potted colour in areas that are constrained

Create a green network of open spaces for a sustainable, healthy and attractive city

Open space

As the residential and worker population density in the City Centre, the need for additional open space increases. Analysis has found that parts of the City are blessed with generous public open spaces, but that many are in need of renewal, and that other part of the City will need new green space as the City densifies.

This section sets out the actions required to achieve the open space required to support the vision for A City for People.

★ STRATEGY 8.6

Identify and prioritise public domain projects to catalyse renewal and encourage investment in the city

Public open spaces provide for a wide variety of opportunities for recreational, social and cultural activities, as well as promoting healthy lifestyle and opportunities for casual and formal interaction.

The strategy is to:

- Renew the City with accessible parks and open spaces to make it attractive, safe and liveable to its residents, workers and visitors.
- Link landmark sites to public domain delivery.
- Plan for future additional open space needs by engaging with key asset owners to identify opportunities, nominate land in appropriate locations and source funding.
- Prioritise the following 3 catalyst projects:
 - ① Station Upgrade including Lowden Square
 - ② MacCabe Park
 - ③ Foreshore Plaza



Public open space strategy

- Public green open space
- Additional public open space needed
- Urban public open spaces



Stage space in the Mall



Sitting space in the Arts Precinct

Direction: *Protect sunlight to key public spaces*

Solar access

Solar access is the ability to receive sun light to a space. Provisions are put in place to assure exposure of public spaces to the sun during a desired period of the year.

Good solar access is a key contributor to the amenity of public spaces and streets, particularly during winter. Solar access controls should ensure sufficient sunlight to new and existing public spaces at all times of the year.

Analysis has shown that existing solar controls successfully protect most of the key public open spaces within the City Centre. However, there are currently no solar access controls for Crown Street Mall or the Arts Precinct.

★ STRATEGY 9.1

Protect solar access to key public spaces to maximise amenity

Clear sun access controls should be in place for key open spaces. These must be rigorously tested to maximise protection of spaces while minimising impact on development potential.

Solar access controls should relate to key times of the day when spaces are most used by the public. This will differ for different spaces.

The cumulative overshadowing impact of multiple developments should be prevented through built form controls and considered design response to where a building is placed in the City Centre.

Controls should take into account the impact of solar protection on the strategic development potential of the Centre.

Consideration should also be given to the extent to which sunlight is protected along the City Centre foreshore and beach area.



Recommended solar access

















- Key public spaces with existing Solar Access Protection
- Key Public Spaces which require Solar Access Protection
- Potential areas for new open space/public domain for which solar access controls should be considered



Arts Precinct
May 2019
9:30am

Structure Plan

A structure plan has been developed for the City which incorporates the strategies for land use, built form and public domain and connections outlined in the Urban Design Framework. The structure plan is high level and summarises the strategies into a single plan.

-  Public open space
-  Additional public open space required
-  Important interface
-  Key Green Streets
-  Streetscape upgrade
-  Vehicular network
-  Bike path network
-  Entry points
-  Pedestrian connections
-  Pedestrian priority areas
-  Active frontages
-  Key Sites - Masterplan
-  Commercial Core
-  Public urban open spaces
-  Heritage + Character buildings
-  Shared connections



Structure plan

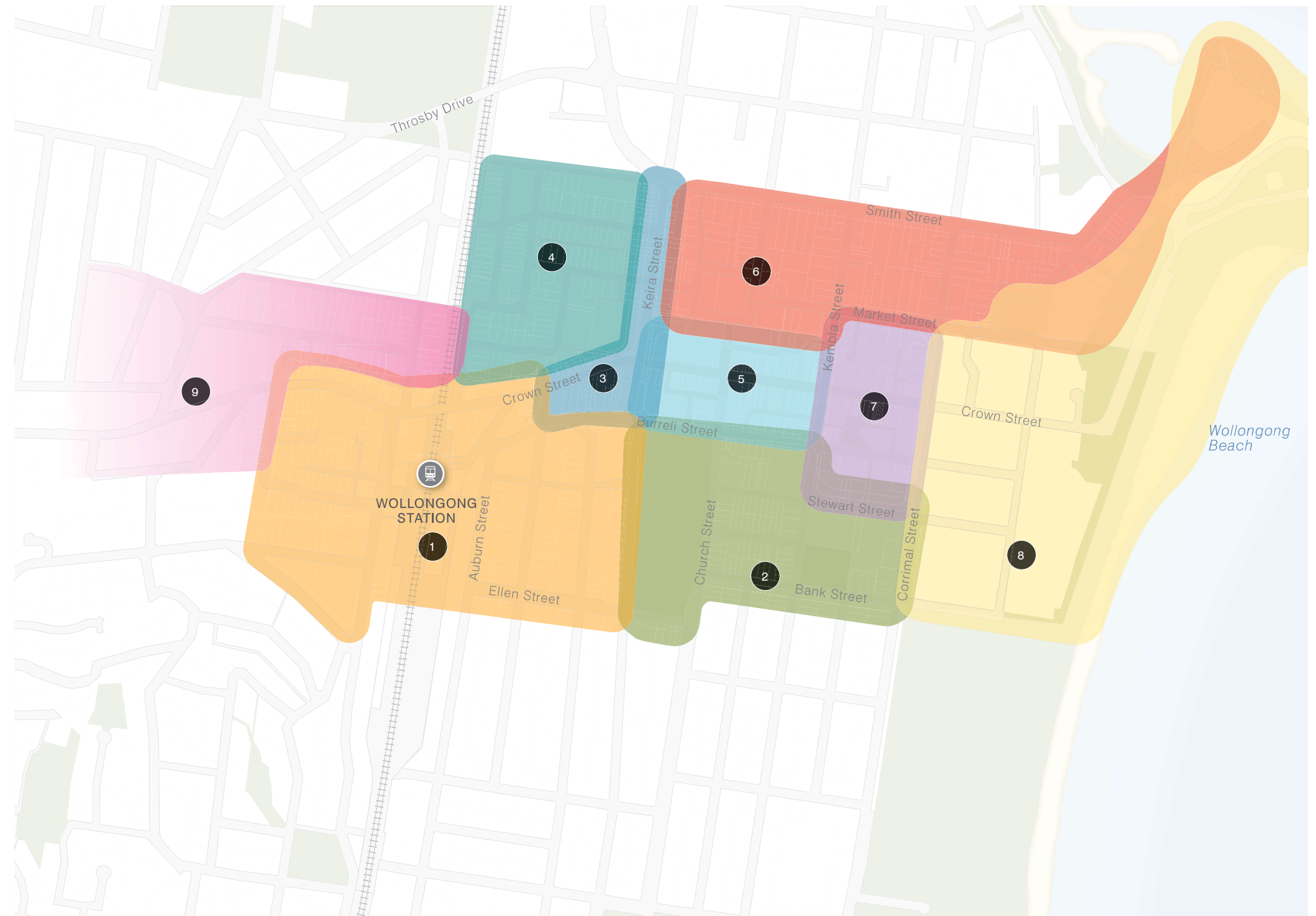
Precinct Visions

The structure plan for the City Centre is further developed at precinct scale, with a series of Precinct Visions established to reflect the desired future character of buildings and public spaces as it relates to place.

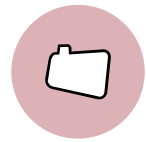
It is acknowledged that these precincts work together and feed into each other to create the City Centre experience.

The Precinct Vision for the Hospital Precinct sits outside of the Study Area Boundary. It is recognised that this is a critical part of the City Centre, and that a collaborative process is required to develop a Health Precinct Vision in collaboration with NSW Health, the Private Hospital and other local stakeholders.

- 1 Rail Arrival and Southern Precinct
- 2 MacCabe Park Precinct
- 3 Western Crown and Keira Precinct
- 4 Market Street West Precinct
- 5 Crown Street Mall Precinct
- 6 Market Street to Harbour Precinct
- 7 Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct
- 8 Foreshore Precinct
- 9 Health Precinct



Precinct Visions



Precinct Rail Arrival and Southern District

Future Character

The City will offer an inviting, high quality and well connected rail arrival, with strong pedestrian and public transport links to the City Centre, foreshore and hospital. Burelli Street will provide a prestigious front door to the office core of the City. An important new east-west laneway will connect the station to MacCabe Park and provide a buffer between the new office core and the southern district.

The gritty character of the southern district, which is manifested through its diverse built form, is retained and enhanced.

- New, green and civic spaces at the station will provide a new front door to the City and be a safe place with improved access and legibility for commuters on both sides of the rail line.
- The station will form a gateway into the City framed by a newly defined Burelli Street as a civic street with a commercial street-scape, offering A-grade offices close to the station.
- A thriving and edgy neighbourhood filled with a great mix of places to live, off-beat places to eat and shop, with easy access to transport and open space, all on the doorstep of the commercial district.



Lowden Square and the new street connection provide a strong connection, and a sense of arrival into the City Centre



Public Domain improvements create an enjoyable space to wait at the station



Small, light manufacturing remains in warehouse space throughout South Wollongong



Residential development mixed with existing buildings create a unique city experience

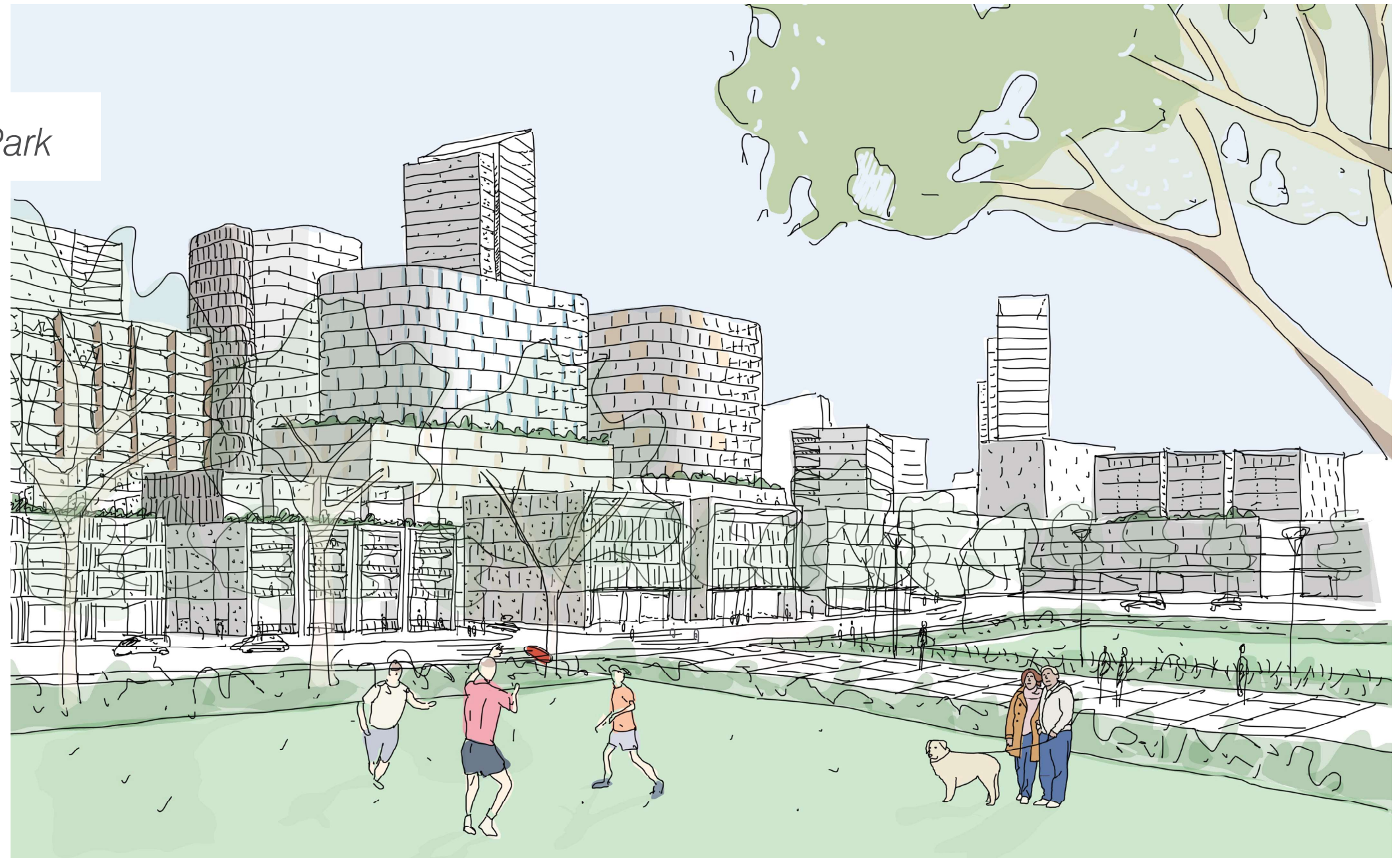


Precinct *MacCabe Park*

Future Character

A premier City park offering a range of activities for all ages, it is a place of pride for city residents and workers. The park anchors A-Grade commercial towers and a new residential neighbourhood.

- Following the planned acquisition of private properties, the entire Park is publicly owned and operated for the benefit of the community. It is celebrated as an identifiable City asset - a well utilised, high quality green space.
- Burelli Street extends the CBD, accommodating impressive A-Grade office towers which bring to life the City Skyline.
- The northern end of MacCabe Park offers lunch time activities for office workers.
- Surrounding the Park (southern end), low scale street wall buildings with development above set back to maximise solar access.
- Street and building design facing the Park is active day and night, with cafés, ground floor apartments and commercial offers along its length
- To the east the medium density residential neighbourhood is green and walkable with generous setbacks and deep soil planting.
- The impact of flooding is addressed through landscape and water sensitive urban design
- A range of active and passive recreation is on offer, and the Park is a place for events and festivals.



MacCabe Park will be a focal point for the City on the Burelli Commercial Spine linking rail to foreshore



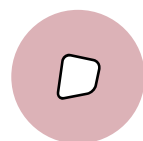
A variety of usable spaces in the park optimise water sensitive urban design.



Opportunities for community facilities to be integrated into the park



The City will develop around this key open space



Precinct *Market Street West*

Future Character

The precinct will continue to serve an important role as a place of local commerce with enhanced amenity and fine grain connections to enable better pedestrian movement.

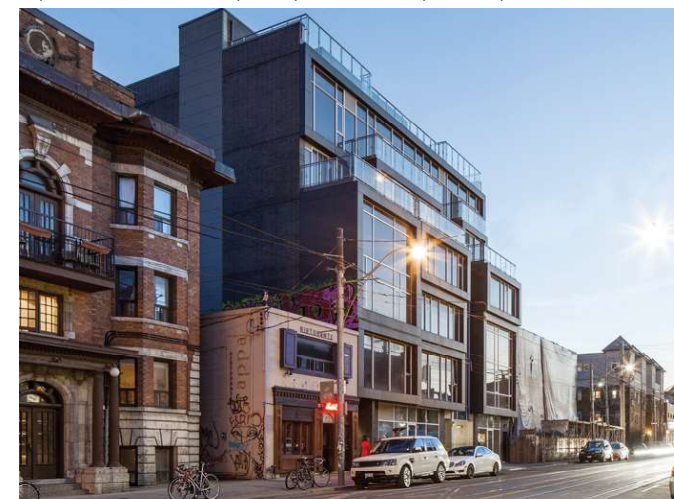
- A walk-able mixed use precinct with great views to the escarpment and connections to the Station and Keira Street dining strip.
- New parks, pedestrian connections and lane-ways will ensure it is a more desirable place to live and work.
- Market Street continues to support a commercial role, well located to services, the Station, Keira and Crown Streets.
- The precinct introduces medium and high density residential as it steps north. A great place to live, with diverse residential apartments and hotels encouraged in proximity to the Station.



Market Street will continue to develop as a vibrant commercial services precinct with new open space and improved public domain



A new open space will be a welcome relief for the busy office worker population



New mid-scale small suite commercial buildings will sit side by side with existing built form



A focus on creative working spaces will continue

Precinct Visions



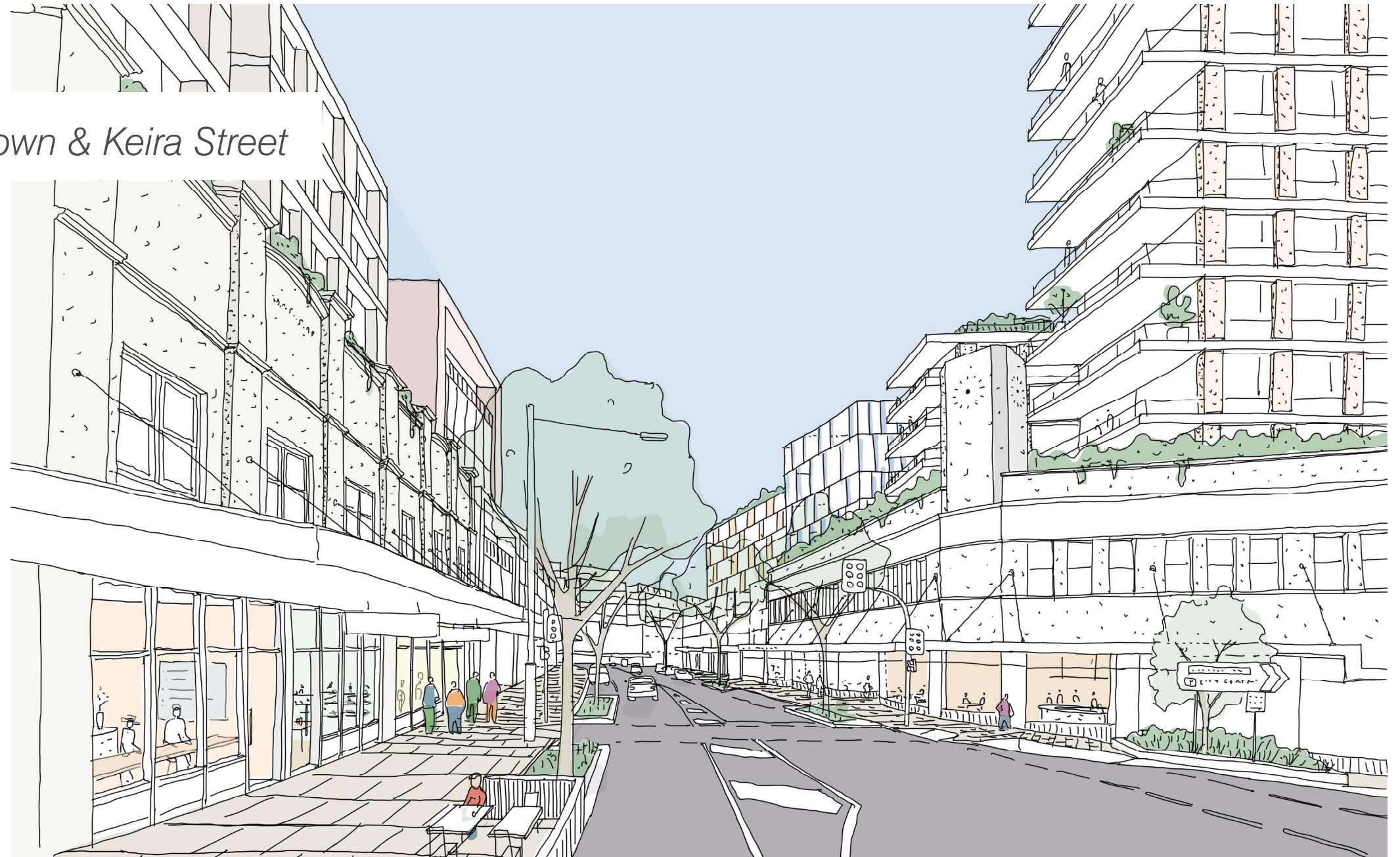
Precinct Western Crown & Keira Street

Future Character

Crown and Keira Streets are high quality pedestrian streets offering increased pedestrian amenity with street trees, widened footpaths, outdoor dining and reduced traffic.

The precinct is full of vibrant shopfronts and restaurants which preserve the fine scale and historic role of Crown and Keira Streets as a great place to socialise, eat, shop and do business.

- Historic mainstreets continue to adapt as a thriving hub for local business.
- Western Crown is an important pedestrian link connecting the Station with the City Centre.
- Crown and Keira Streets will offer increased pedestrian amenity with street trees, widened footpaths and reduced traffic.
- Restoration and adaptation of heritage buildings within this precinct will contribute to the mixed land use and has the potential to create a new destination to reinvigorate Western Crown
- Crown Street will be a highly walk-able, safer green street which extends the arrival experience from the station to the City Centre.
- The Façades Program which initiated the restoration of the Western Crown cluster of heritage buildings should be encouraged to continue.



Western Crown Street will become a pedestrian friendly active high street with mixed use development set back behind fine grain retail street walls.



Heritage buildings will continue to contribute to the character of the precinct

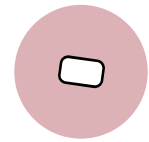


Increased building setbacks and footpath widening will allow for outdoor dining



Increased building setbacks and footpath widening will allow for outdoor dining

Precinct Visions



Precinct Crown Street Mall

Future Character

Crown Street Mall is at the heart of the City and continues to be a key public space delivering events and community activities which contribute to the social and economic life of the city - day and night.

Buildings take pride in respecting the City's historic streetscape, a celebrated point of difference.

- Crown Street Mall (west) offers a mix of large format and street level retail, and Crown Street Mall (east) continues to grow as a business and professional services hub.
- The historic streetscape character is protected, with priority given to adapting historic and character buildings.
- New offices emerge, set back to respect the streetscape character.
- At the street, fine grain retail and commercial is integrated with dining, entertainment and leisure.
- A true after hours Centre which operates beyond the hours of nine-to-five, reflecting the needs of a cosmopolitan city.
- A high amenity pedestrian precinct well connected via character filled laneways to adjacent commercial and civic clusters on Burelli and Market Streets.
- Buildings are designed to ensure solar amenity of the Mall is protected all year round.



New development on Crown Street will be set back to protect the fine grain character of Crown Street Mall, and preserve solar access to the open space



Streets are active at night time creating a safe city



Laneway uses contribute to the thriving character of the precinct



Small tenancies support the fine grain character



Precinct *Market Street east to Harbour*

Future Character

The Historic Spine will continue to be the link to the City's history and connection with the Harbour.

The importance of historical buildings is elevated, and attention given to their setting. The view of St Michael's is celebrated and protected.

- Enhancing Market Street through minor public domain improvements and connecting it to active transport links will ensure that the precinct continues to be valued and loved by the community.
- The Law Courts and St Michael's Cathedral will continue to serve their key civic functions.
- The Historic Spine is the only place that allows visitors to the City Centre vistas to the escarpment, ocean and Port Kembla. It is important these are preserved.
- Pedestrian connections with the Harbour are strengthened to encourage more people to walk between destinations.



Sensitive adaptive reuse and additions to the heritage fabric of the precinct will ensure that the character is preserved and supported.

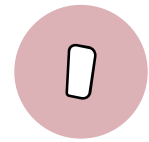


New built form can complement existing heritage fabric



Streetscape improvements will support the heritage character

Precinct Visions



Precinct *Eastern Crown Street & Arts Precinct*

Future Character

This precinct is the City's cosmopolitan civic and office core. The Arts Precinct is a welcoming and active city plaza with high amenity and a range of offers for city workers, residents and visitors.

- Interconnected laneways, streets and buildings celebrate art music and culture through the installation of public art.
- Venues including bars, live performance venues and restaurants activate the area at night.
- The Arts Precinct lawn provides a key passive recreation and event space, activated by surrounding cultural institutions such as the Town Hall, Gallery and IPAC.
- Lower Crown Street is defined by clusters of heritage listed civic and commercial buildings. The high quality form and materiality of the building façades is complemented by the amenity of the public domain.
- Civic and Government Agency buildings anchor this Precinct along Lower Crown and Burelli Streets, connected by active laneways and public spaces.
- Mature trees line Burelli and Crown Streets and the Arts Precinct, and are integral to its public character.
- Burelli Street forms the commercial Spine of the City Centre and is home to large A-Grade office Towers. This destination of commercial offices is a desired place to do business.



A series of active lanes and public spaces connect business, cultural and civic uses



Slender towers will announce the A grade precinct on the skyline



Contemporary and Heritage buildings sit side by side complementing active public domain



Important public spaces connect to cultural and civic buildings



Precinct *Foreshore*

Future Character

The foreshore's natural beauty informs the character and identity of the City Centre.

The precinct will provide a thriving outdoor culture offering high quality public spaces connecting the City with its relaxed beach lifestyle. An exciting urban destination for an ocean-front business lunch, or a sundowner with a view.

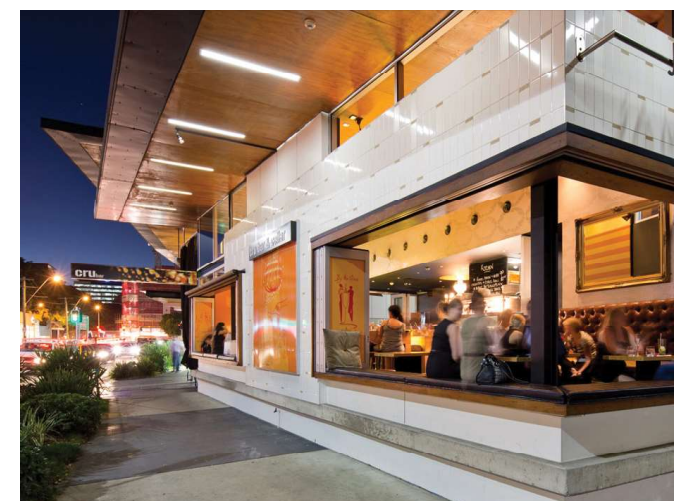
- The interface between Crown Street and beach is improved with a new City Beach forecourt providing an exciting sense of arrival and which connects people to Country.
- The precinct's evolving recreation and entertainment uses will continue to be major regional attractors activating the precinct all weekend.
- The area continues to build on entertainment and recreation uses, with tourism and residential living ensuring day and night activation.
- A sparkling ocean front destination which puts Wollongong on the map. Attend a beach-side event only a 2 minute walk from Wollongong's CBD.
- Re-enforcing the City street grid through new links will ensure that the beach becomes visually and physically connected to the City.
- Aboriginal Heritage is visibly celebrated at the foreshore.



The foreshore will become an important gathering place with a variety of active and passive uses



The beach arrival will be a focal point of the precinct



There is potential to increase active edges to major public domain in the precinct



Lang Park could improve its activation and connection to the beach

The City needs to be flexible, open to new approaches and understand that over time, incremental changes will shape the City Centre's continuous journey of revitalisation.

