



BUSINESS PAPER

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

To be held at 6:00 PM on

Monday 7 April 2025

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

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

Order of Business

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

Members

Lord Mayor –
Councillor Tania Brown (Chair)
Deputy Lord Mayor –
Councillor Linda Campbell
Councillor Andrew Anthony
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Kit Docker
Councillor Dan Hayes
Councillor Ann Martin
Councillor Richard Martin
Councillor Ryan Morris
Councillor Tiana Myers
Councillor Thomas Quinn
Councillor Deidre Stuart
Councillor Jess Whittaker

QUORUM – 7 MEMBERS TO BE PRESENT

Statement of Ethical Obligations

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

OATH OR AFFIRMATION OF OFFICE

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

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

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

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

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

INDEX

PAGE NO.

	Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Council 17/03/2025	1
ITEM A	Lord Mayoral Minute - Bestowing the Keys to the City to the Illawarra Hawks	
ITEM 1	Public Exhibition - Draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 - Integrated Planning Documents.....	8
ITEM 2	Public Exhibition - Financial Sustainability Council Policy.....	606
ITEM 3	Public Exhibition - Draft Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement	629
ITEM 4	Post Exhibition - West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025	701
ITEM 5	Policy Review - Compliance and Enforcement Policy.....	789
ITEM 6	Policy Review - Wollongong Memorial Gardens & Cemeteries Council Policy.....	807
ITEM 7	Tender T1000173 - Memorial Drive (Albert Street) Debris Control Structure	812
ITEM 8	February 2025 Financials.....	817
ITEM 9	Statement of Investment - February 2025	824
ITEM 10	Notice of Motion - Councillor Dan Hayes - Safer School Routes Program	828
ITEM 11	Notice of Motion - Councillor Jess Whittaker - Advocate for the Underpass to the F6 Freeway at Waterfall to be reopened for cyclists	829
ITEM 12	Notice of Motion - Councillor Kit Docker and Councillor Andrew Anthony - Extending the operating hours of the Continental Pool.....	830

MINUTES

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

at 6:00 PM

Monday 17 March 2025

Present

Lord Mayor – Councillor Tania Brown (in the Chair)
Deputy Lord Mayor – Councillor Linda Campbell
Councillor Andrew Anthony
Councillor David Brown
Councillor Kit Docker
Councillor Dan Hayes
Councillor Ann Martin
Councillor Richard Martin

Councillor Ryan Morris
Councillor Tiana Myers
Councillor Thomas Quinn
Councillor Deidre Stuart
Councillor Jess Whittaker

In Attendance

General Manager
Director Infrastructure + Works, Connectivity Assets + Liveable City
Director Planning + Environment, Future City + Neighbourhoods
Director Corporate Services, Connected + Engaged City
Director Community Services, Creative + Innovative City
Chief Financial Officer
Manager Customer + Business Integrity
Manager Commercial Operations + Property (Acting)
Manager Regulation + Enforcement
Manager Development Assessment and Certification (Acting)
Manager Project Delivery (Acting)
Manager Open Space + Environmental Services
Manager Community Culture + Engagement
Manager Libraries + Community Facilities

Greg Doyle
Joanne Page
Linda Davis
Renee Campbell
Kerry Hunt
Brian Jenkins
Todd Hopwood
Roisin OSullivan
Corey Stoneham
Andrew Heaven
Jeremy Morgan
Paul Tracey
Sue Savage
Sarah Taylor

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

INDEX

	PAGE NO.
ITEM 1	Illawarra Performing Arts Centre Ltd Funding and Services Agreement Renewal 1
ITEM 2	Sale of Lot 87 DP 32081, Baringa Park Dapto..... 2
ITEM 3	Sale of Lot 16 DP 216777, Lot 16 Range Place Bulli..... 2
ITEM 4	Sale of Lot 59 DP 28802, 20 Ranchby Avenue Lake Heights 2
ITEM 5	Sale of Lot 5 DP 217372, 18 Stanbrook Avenue Mount Ousley..... 3
ITEM 6	Grant of Easements over Council Community Land for Community Batteries 3
ITEM 7	Policy Review - Community Facilities 4
ITEM 8	Policy Review - Compliance and Enforcement Policy 4
ITEM 9	Appointment of Council 'Local Expert' Members and Councillor Representatives on the Southern Regional Planning Panel..... 4
ITEM 10	Councillor Attendance at ELEVATE Local Government Communications Summit - 4 April 2025..... 4
ITEM 11	Tender T1000176 - Bulli Beach Cafe Roof Replacement 4
ITEM 12	Tender T1000180 - Camp Gully (Whitty Road, Helensburgh) Headwall and Embankment Rehabilitation..... 5
ITEM 13	January 2025 Financials 5
ITEM 14	Statement of Investment - January 2025 5

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Ann Martin declared a non-significant, non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 - Policy Review - Community Facilities due to her role as Chair of Our Community Project which is based at the Port Kembla Community Centre. Councillor Ann Martin advised she would remain in the meeting during debate and voting on the item.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2025

- 18 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Campbell that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday, 24 February 2025 (a copy having been circulated to Councillors) be taken as read and confirmed.

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM

ITEM NO	TITLE	NAME OF SPEAKER
NON-AGENDA ITEM	GARBAGE COLLECTION AT HILLCREST RETIREMENT VILLAGE	PETER SARLOS

- 19 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Morris that the speaker be thanked for his presentation and invited to table his notes.

CALL OF THE AGENDA

- 20 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor R Martin that the staff recommendations for Items 3, 4, 10, 13 and 14 be adopted as a block.

ITEM 1 - ILLAWARRA PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE LTD FUNDING AND SERVICES AGREEMENT RENEWAL

- 21 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor R Martin seconded Councillor Hayes that Council endorse the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre Ltd Funding and Services Agreement 1 January 2026 – 31 December 2031 under the following provisions:

- 1 In accordance with section 55(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council resolves that, due to the following extenuating circumstances:
 - (i) the achievement of economies of scale through centralised administrative functions and greater operational flexibility between the venues
 - (ii) the ongoing annual funding and in-kind support provided by Council to Illawarra Performing Arts Centre Ltd (IPAC) to provide the Centre and Town Hall programs; and
 - (iii) the impracticality for scheduling purposes and securing/programming performances, a satisfactory result would not be achieved by:
 - (a) inviting tenders for the services provided by IPAC; and
 - (b) IPAC or Council inviting tenders (as may be required by section 55 of the *Local Government Act 1993* as outlined in this report) for contracts for the purpose of programming productions and performances at the Centre or the Town Hall during the term of the New Agreement.

- 2 Council enter into the New Agreement with IPAC for the period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2031 including the licences for the Centre and Town Hall.
- 3 Council delegate the finalisation and execution of the New Agreement with IPAC for the period of 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2031 to the General Manager.

ITEM 2 - SALE OF LOT 87 DP 32081, BARINGA PARK DAPTO

22 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Quinn that -

- 1 Council authorise the sale of Lot 87 DP 32081 to the owner of lots 1 and 2 Sec 56 DP 3436 on the following conditions:
 - a An easement be granted in favour of Council for public thoroughfare burdening Lot 87 DP 32081 allowing the continued use of the laneway connecting Moombara Street and Baringa Place Dapto, and as identified in the attachments to this report.
 - b Each party be responsible for their own legal costs.
- 2 The Lord Mayor and General Manager be granted authority to affix the Common Seal of Council to any documentation required to give effect to this resolution and the General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation necessary to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 3 - SALE OF LOT 16 DP 216777, LOT 16 RANGE PLACE BULLI

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 20)

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

1. Council authorise the sale of Lot 16 DP 216777 being Lot 16 Range Place, Bulli on the open market.
2. The General Manager be authorised to approve the sale strategy and finalise the sale price and the terms of the sale.
3. The Lord Mayor and General Manager be granted authority to affix the Common Seal of Council to any documentation required to give effect to this resolution and the General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation necessary to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 4 - SALE OF LOT 59 DP 28802, 20 RANCHBY AVENUE LAKE HEIGHTS

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 20)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor R Martin that -

- 1 Council authorise the sale of Lot 59 DP 28802 being 20 Ranchby Avenue, Lake Heights on the open market.
- 2 The General Manager be authorised to approve the sale strategy and finalise the sale price and the terms of the sale.
- 3 The Lord Mayor and General Manager be granted authority to affix the Common Seal of Council to any documentation required to give effect to this resolution and the General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation necessary to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 5 - SALE OF LOT 5 DP 217372, 18 STANBROOK AVENUE MOUNT OUSLEY

23 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Hayes seconded Councillor D Brown that -

- 1 Council authorise the sale of Lot 5 DP 217372 being 18 Stanbrook Avenue, Mount Ousley on the open market.
- 2 The General Manager be authorised to approve the sale strategy and finalise the sale price and the terms of the sale.
- 3 The Lord Mayor and General Manager be granted authority to affix the Common Seal of Council to any documentation required to give effect to this resolution and the General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation necessary to give effect to this resolution.

In favour Councillors Hayes, R Martin, Quinn, D Brown, Myers, A Martin, Campbell, Anthony, Stuart, Morris, T Brown

Against Councillors Docker, Whittaker

ITEM 6 - GRANT OF EASEMENTS OVER COUNCIL COMMUNITY LAND FOR COMMUNITY BATTERIES

24 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Stuart seconded Councillor Morris that -

- 1 Pursuant to section 46 (1) (a1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council resolves to grant an easement for the construction and maintenance of a community battery site of eighty-three square metres over Council land known as Lot 263 DP 29165, as shown on the attachment to this report.
- 2 Pursuant to section 46 (1) (a1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council resolves to grant an easement for the construction and maintenance of a community battery site of fifteen square metres over Council land known as Lot 16 DP 36010, as shown on the attachment to this report.
- 3 Pursuant to section 46 (1) (a1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council resolves to grant an easement for the construction and maintenance of a community battery site of forty-nine square metres over Council land known as Lot 42 DP 258363, as shown on the attachment to this report.
- 4 Pursuant to section 46 (1) (a1) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council resolves to grant an easement for the construction and maintenance of a community battery site of sixteen square metres over Council land known as Lot F DP 18578, as shown on the attachment to this report.
- 5 The applicant will be responsible for compensation to Council for the grant of the easements.
- 6 The applicant will also be responsible for the creation of the easements including Council's valuation, survey, plan lodgement and legal costs, and any other costs associated with the grant/registration of the easements.
- 7 The Lord Mayor and General Manager be granted authority to affix the Common Seal of Council to any documentation required to give effect to this resolution and the General Manager be granted authority to sign any documentation necessary to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 7 - POLICY REVIEW - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 25 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Campbell that the following draft policies are adopted:

- a Management of Community Facilities
- b Reduction or Waiver of Hire Fees for Community Facilities

ITEM 8 - POLICY REVIEW - COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

- 26 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Campbell that consideration of the updated Compliance and Enforcement Policy be deferred.

Variation The variation moved by Councillor Hayes (that consideration of the Policy be deferred) was accepted by the mover and seconder.

ITEM 9 - APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL 'LOCAL EXPERT' MEMBERS AND COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL

- 27 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** - RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Campbell that Councillor David Brown (Delegate) and Cr Quinn (Alternate Delegate), be appointed to the Southern Regional Planning Panel for the term of the Council.

The Lord Mayor handed proceedings over to the Returning Officer. Council's Public Officer, Todd Hopwood acted as Returning Officer. As there were more nominations received than required delegates, the Returning Officer conducted elections for the position of Alternate Delegate.

- One Councillor position available for Alternate Delegate
- Two nominations were received from Cr Kit Docker and Cr Thomas Quinn

Following the election the Returning Officer declared Cr Thomas Quinn elected as the Alternate Delegate.

ITEM 10 - COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ELEVATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS SUMMIT - 4 APRIL 2025

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 20)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor R Martin that Council approve attendance at the ELEVATE Local Government Communications Summit in Narre Warren, Victoria on 4 April 2025 for Councillor Thomas Quinn.

ITEM 11 - TENDER T1000176 - BULLI BEACH CAFE ROOF REPLACEMENT

- 28 **COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION** – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor Hayes that -

- 1 In accordance with Section 178(1)(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council accept the tender of Batmac Constructions Pty Ltd for the Bulli Beach Café Roof Replacement and Associated Works, in the sum of \$680,628.24, including GST.
- 2 Council delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise and execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.
- 3 Council grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 12 - TENDER T1000180 - CAMP GULLY (WHITTY ROAD, HELENSBURGH) HEADWALL AND EMBANKMENT REHABILITATION

29 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Hayes seconded Councillor R Martin that -

- 1 In accordance with Section 178(1)(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council accept the tender of The RIX Group for Camp Gully Headwall Rehabilitation, in the sum of \$436,661.50, including GST.
- 2 Council delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise and execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.
- 3 Council grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.

ITEM 13 - JANUARY 2025 FINANCIALS

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 20)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor R Martin that the financials be received and noted.

ITEM 14 - STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT - JANUARY 2025

The following staff recommendation was adopted as part of the Block Adoption of Items (refer Minute Number 20)

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor D Brown seconded Councillor R Martin that Council receive the Statement of Investment for January 2025.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7:23 PM

Confirmed as a correct record of proceedings at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the City of Wollongong held on Monday 7 April 2025.

Chairperson

ITEM A

LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - BESTOWING THE KEYS TO THE CITY TO THE ILLAWARRA HAWKS

The Illawarra Hawks successful 2025 NBL season has had a huge impact on the City and deserves our highest recognition. Their success has rightly made the community very proud, boosted economic activity in the city and promoted Wollongong to a large national audience. Thousands of people attended the community event to celebrate the Hawks in Crown Street Mall on 27 March 2025. It is appropriate that the Keys of the City are bestowed to the successful Illawarra Hawks to recognise their achievements and contribution to Wollongong in 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

The City of Wollongong, in line with our Community Recognition Program, bestow the Keys to the City on the Illawarra Hawks for winning the 2025 National Basketball League Championship.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

ITEM 1

PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT OUR WOLLONGONG OUR FUTURE 2035 - INTEGRATED PLANNING DOCUMENTS

In consultation with the community, the draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 planning documents have been prepared. The draft planning documents set out the vision and strategic direction for the Wollongong community and Council's actions and resource commitments in working towards achievement of the Community Strategic Plan and Council's Delivery Program.

This report seeks Council's endorsement for the Draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan, Draft Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035 and Draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 to be placed on public exhibition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Council endorse the Draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan, Draft Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035, Draft Asset Management Policy, Draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026, including the Draft Budget 2025-2026, Draft Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029 and Draft Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026 to be placed on public exhibition for the period 9 April to 7 May 2025.
- 2 Following public exhibition, the post-exhibition Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035, Asset Management Policy, Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026, including the Budget 2025-2026, Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029 and Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026 be presented to Council for adoption.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Brian Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer

Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Exhibition Draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan
- 2 Exhibition Draft Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035
- 3 Exhibition Draft Asset Management Council Policy
- 4 Exhibition Draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026
- 5 Exhibition Draft Attachment 1 - Budget 2025-2026
- 6 Exhibition Draft Attachment 2 - Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029
- 7 Exhibition Draft Attachment 3 - Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026
- 8 Our Wollongong 2035 Engagement Report - Phase 1

BACKGROUND

Council commenced the development of this Community Strategic Plan with launching the Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 engagement process in October 2024. A two phased approach was developed and implemented to enhance engagement outcomes and ensure the adopted document is a true reflection of the community's aspirations and priorities.

Phase 1 – Listening to our community concluded on 18 November 2024. Information collected from various methods was collated and analysed, with high level findings presented to Councillors in November 2024, followed by a comprehensive Engagement Report in December 2024. The Phase 1 Engagement Report is an attachment to this report.

Phase 2 – Checking In (public exhibition process), will occur during the period of 9 April to 7 May 2025.

The draft Plans have been informed by feedback from the community and with extensive input and engagement from Councillors, Executive, Senior Leadership Team and officers from across Council. A range of internal and external data sources have informed the development of the draft planning suite, including previous Community Strategic Plans; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; stakeholder strategic plans; Council's Supporting Documents; census data; stakeholder engagement;

community engagement feedback; community satisfaction and wellbeing Surveys; State and Regional Plans; staff meetings and workshops and current priorities.

Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan

A Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is an aspirational document that outlines the community's desired future for their Local Government Area (LGA). It outlines where the community wants to be, the strategies for how we will get there, who is responsible and measures to track progress (community indicators).

While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan, Council is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as State Agencies and community groups, may also be engaged in delivering the long term objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The revised Community Strategic Plan identifies Council's role for each strategy including advocate, partner, regulator and service provider.

The updated Plan includes feedback from our community and stakeholders to focus the Plan and results for the most meaningful impact. This has resulted in amended vision, goals, objectives and strategies to reflect community feedback and is more succinct. While retaining key themes and high-level outcomes Our Wollongong 2032, the Community Strategic Plan review proposes four new goals. The revised draft includes a range of changes, including:

Revised Vision

A revised vision has been developed as a result of community sentiment from phase 1 of the Community Strategic Plan community engagement.

The draft revised vision is as follows:

"On Dharawal Country, from the mountains to the sea, we value and respect each other, our places, past, and future. We will be a sustainable, connected, vibrant, and innovative city, with a diverse economy."

Amended from current vision – *"From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and will be leaders in building an educated, creative, sustainable and connected community."*

Revised Community Goals

The current Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Community Strategic Plan is structured by six community goals relating to economic, environmental, social, cultural, health, transportation, development, and sustainability outcomes. The draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan captures these focus areas and themes in a four goal structure, reflecting updated community sentiment.

1 We are a sustainable and climate resilient city

- Retains elements of current goal 1 ('We value and protect our environment'), with a stronger focus on climate resilience and sustainability.

2 We have well planned, connected, and liveable places

- Includes elements from current goal 1 ('We value and protect our environment'), goal 5 ('We have a healthy community in a liveable city') and goal 6 ('We have affordable and accessible transport').

3 We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture, and creativity

- This goal combines current goal 2 ('We have an innovative and sustainable economy') and goal 3 ('Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city').

4 We have a healthy, respectful, and inclusive community

- This goal combines elements of current goal 4 ('We are a connected and engaged community') and goal 5 ('We have a healthy community in a liveable city').

A range of other amendments have been made to the objectives and strategies which sit beneath each goal, including:

- Goal 1 focuses on the natural environment, resilience and addressing climate change. Additional strategies include partnering with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations on the way we care for our environment. There is a new focus on the circular economy and a specific strategy on protecting and enhancing the value of Lake Illawarra.
- Goal 2 promotes development that is balanced, well planned and sustainable. There is an increased focus on housing affordability. There is a continued focus on connected and sustainable transport within and out of the Wollongong Local Government Area. There is an additional strategy on sustainable and resilient infrastructure.
- Goal 3 focuses on a diverse economy, innovation and building a vibrant city. It includes strategies to support arts and culture, to build a vibrant city. This goal has specific strategies relating to tourism and events.
- Goal 4 covers recreation, leisure, wellbeing, belonging and inclusivity, and includes strategies to support the vulnerable and promote equity. Goal 4 includes a new strategy to promote opportunities for inclusion of people with all abilities and has a greater focus on water safety. The role of Council as a provider of services and information for the community is included in this goal.
- All community goals include alignment to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

Draft Resourcing Strategy 2025-2035

Council's role in delivering the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program is supported by the Resourcing Strategy and acts as the bridge between planning and delivery. The Community Strategic Plan outlines the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and the strategies to achieve them. Council's Delivery Program details the principal activities to be undertaken by Council to perform its functions (including implementing the strategies it is responsible for in the Community Strategic Plan) within the limits of the resources available under the Resourcing Strategy. The Resourcing Strategy outlines how Council will manage and allocate its resources (finances, assets, workforce and technological) to implement the Delivery Program, delivered through Council's Services.

The draft Resourcing Strategy includes the following key elements:

- Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035
- Draft Asset Management Strategy 2025-2035
- Draft Workforce Management Plan 2025-2029
- Draft Digital Strategy 2025-2029

Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035

The Long Term Financial Plan is a component of the Resourcing Strategy that provides the financial projections for the next 10 years based on the direction proposed and decisions of Council. It details the planning assumptions that underlie these, the key indicators that are used to measure performance and discussion of risk areas.

It is a living document intended to support decision making and provide a guide for future action. It is continually updated to reflect both internal decisions and external impacts.

The Plan and corresponding financial forecasts are built within the parameters of Council's Financial Sustainability Policy. The Draft Financial Sustainability Policy provides direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Council's limited financial resources. It sets the parameters within which Council provides financial stability, affordability, focus, efficiency, or value for money, over the short, medium and longer terms. The key performance indicators outlined in the Draft Financial Sustainability Policy set clear targets to support continuous measurement of financial sustainability. The Draft Financial Sustainability Policy has been tabled under separate cover and is proposed to be exhibited concurrently with these Plans.

Draft Asset Management Strategy 2025-2035

The draft Asset Management Strategy provides the strategic direction for managing Council's diverse asset portfolio. It outlines how Council will ensure our assets support the delivery of community priorities

and aspirations, as defined in the Community Strategic Plan, and those services and functions Council is responsible for as presented in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The Strategy emphasises organisational sustainability, resilience and value-for-money outcomes in managing assets throughout their lifecycle. It serves as a guide for decision making ensuring Council resources are effectively prioritised and deployed to support implementation of the Delivery Program.

A draft Asset Management Plan (AMP) has been prepared to support the implementation of the draft Asset Management Strategy which provides detailed, long term planning for the maintenance, renewal and upgrade of Council's assets, for each asset class. While the AMP forms a key part of the Resourcing Strategy, it will be presented to Council as a separate document in a future report. Public exhibition is proposed for May-June 2025, with adoption aligned to the Integrated Planning documents presented in this report.

Draft Workforce Management Strategy 2025-2029

The draft Workforce Management Strategy ensures Council has the right people, skills and capacity to deliver the quality services and projects included in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Recognising our people are our most important asset, the Strategy aims to support a workforce that is agile, future-ready and equipped to achieve our objectives.

Draft Digital Strategy 2025-2029

The draft Digital Strategy leverages technology and innovation to support all areas of Council and improve efficiency, service delivery, customer service and community engagement. The Strategy sets out Wollongong's vision for a digital future. This Strategy provides a roadmap for how we can continue to transform our organisation and participate in the continued digital transformation of Wollongong, creating opportunities for our residents, visitors and businesses and addressing the challenges of the digital age.

Draft Asset Management Policy

Council is the custodian of community and corporate assets worth over \$7B. The value and number of assets will change in response to service demand and population growth, and we must be agile and responsive to these changes. The Asset Management Policy outlines the responsibilities and accountabilities for the sustainable and coordinated management of existing and new assets. The intent of the Policy sets out the asset management principles, establishes the strategic asset management framework, defines key roles and responsibilities, by promoting sustainability and supports inter-generational equity.

Draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan outlines the projects and services Council will deliver to work towards achieving the community's long term direction, vision and goals identified in the Community Strategic Plan set by our elected representatives.

The Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 includes:

- Draft Budget 2025-2026
- Draft Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029
- Draft Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026

The development of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan was informed by the Community Strategic Plan phase 1 engagement process, a range of internal and external data sources, Council's Supporting Documents; census data; Councillor workshops; staff meetings, workshops and current priorities.

Draft Budget 2025-2026

The financial forecasts contained in this document provide a financial view that support the Service levels and outcomes documented in the Resourcing Strategy and Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026.

Forecasts have been informed by the revised and yet to be adopted Asset Management Plan, the timing of the capital program, and are supported by a range of underlying indices and assumptions discussed throughout the Budget document.

The development and maintenance of Council's forecasts are centred around a 10 year continuous budget process that is updated regularly. Underlying indices support the long term forecasts and are revised through the strategic planning process to reflect recent economic indicators. The greatest risk in this process is that underlying indices, particularly the correlation between the rates index and cost of service, are mismatched in the future.

The key forecast financial results related to Council's Key Financial Indicators for the years 2025-2026 to 2028-2029 are shown in the tables below.

Table 1

Key Income & Expense Results

	2025/2026 Forecast \$M	2026/2027 Forecast \$M	2027/2028 Forecast \$M	2028/2029 Forecast \$M
Funds Available for Replacement	67.3	73.7	72.1	79.5
Funds Result	0.9	(0.3)	0.5	0.2
Available Funds	16.7	16.4	16.9	17.1

Since 2022, Council has continued to forecast and report negative Operating Results [pre capital], primarily related to asset revaluation and depreciation impacts. It has been noted that while the asset valuation and depreciation impacts would not impact the planned Delivery Program over the reporting period, rising costs and future asset renewals would need to be addressed in the medium to longer term to ensure continued financial sustainability.

Over the past year, Council has invested in a detailed review and update of Council's Asset Management Strategy and Plan, which has resulted in the development of new asset management practices and assumptions to take into the future. Some of the changes forecast to be implemented have been incorporated into the Long Term Financial Plan, resulting in improvements to the underlying financial results.

This improved forecast has been particularly driven by changes in anticipated asset lives due to reassessment of the management of some asset classes over their lifecycle. The change of lives will result in lower overall depreciation rates, although for the buildings class, the reassessment has resulted in an increased rate of depreciation, as follows:

Table 2

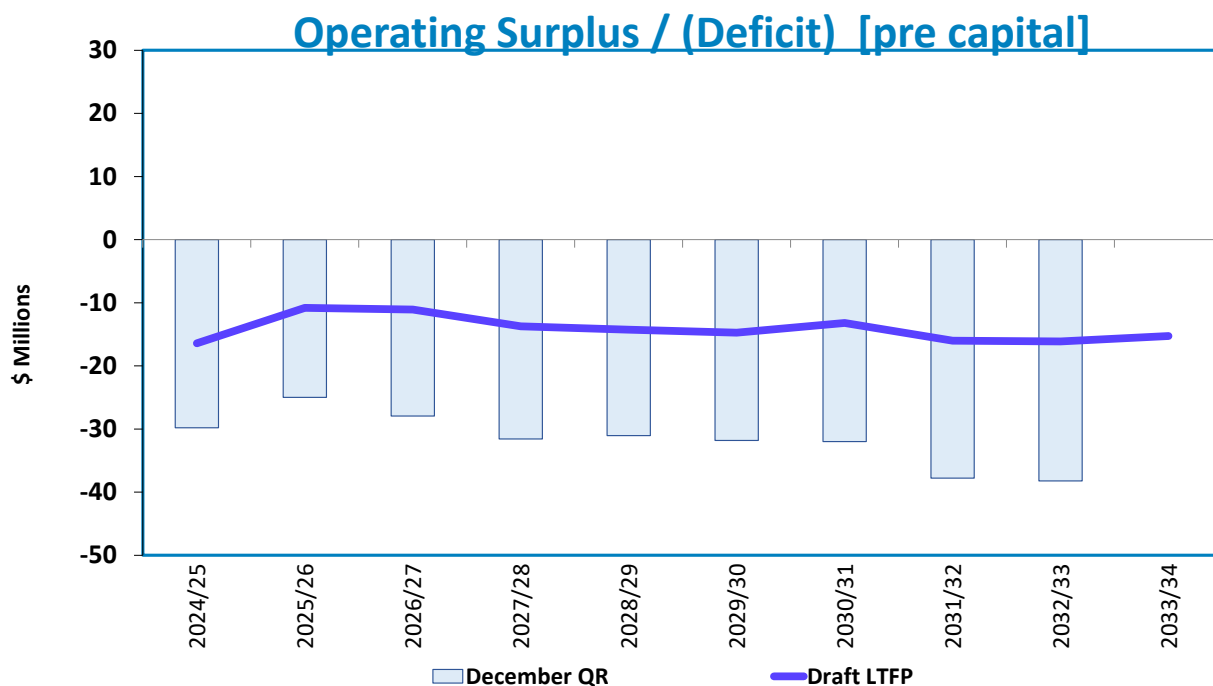
Depreciation - Asset Lives Impact

Asset Class	2025/2026 Depreciation Forecast \$'000s	2025/2026 Proposed Depreciation Forecast \$'000s	Variance \$'000s
Buildings	20,760	22,323	(1,563)
Stormwater	20,794	9,218	11,576
Pathways (Footpaths & Cycleways)	6,052	3,341	2,712
Bridges	2,449	1,793	656
Total	50,056	36,675	13,381

These adjustments have been applied to future forecasts, although require audit review before being finalised and reported in the Financial Statements. It should be noted that the changes to accounting for depreciation will be prospective from 30 June 2025, so will not have a material impact on the 2024-2025 Annual Statements.

In addition to the asset forecast improvements, the Operating Result [pre capital] has been improved by revised forecasting for revenue related to the Waste Facility and Domestic Waste. Net Income improvements in these areas relate to longer term asset replacement requirements and pricing respectively and have been transferred to Restricted Assets for future expenditure. The revised Operating Results [pre capital] compared to the December Quarterly Review results are as follows:

Graph 1



The notable changes to the Long Term Financial Plan to reflect current knowledge include:

- Revised Domestic Waste Management Charge and Waste Facility Tipping Charge.
- Updated West Dapto rates revenue and operational expenditure forecasts.
- Changes to the delivery timing of Supporting Documents projects.
- Introduction of a partial Outdoor Dining Waiver in 2025-2026 (funded from Strategic Projects Restricted Asset).
- Introduction of Open Street Event Support in 2025-2026 to 2027-2028 (funded from Strategic Projects Restricted Asset).
- Introduction of recurrent City Presentation budget (funded from Rates Growth).
- Introduction of year 10, 2034-2035.

Draft Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029

Council has prepared a four year infrastructure investment program, which is detailed in the attached draft Infrastructure Delivery Program 2025-2026 to 2028-2029.

The draft Infrastructure Delivery Program has been developed considering a range of factors including:

- asset condition data
- financial and delivery capacity
- project cost escalations
- statutory approval requirements
- safety and accessibility improvements to the public domain
- feedback from Councillors
- implementation plans from Council's adopted Supporting documents

Council has also been successful in its application for significant NSW and Australian Government grant funding that supports the delivery of a variety of programmed projects within Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program.

The draft Infrastructure Delivery Program is a dynamic Plan that we continually monitor and adjust in response to varying factors. This may result in the rephrasing of some projects, particularly those impacted by external factors. These changes will be incorporated into the final draft of the Program, to be considered by Council in June 2025 following the public exhibition period. In the current economic climate, we need to remain flexible with timing to ensure decisions involving public investment are made in the best interests of the community. The draft Infrastructure Delivery Program budget for 2025-2026 is \$145.3M.

Draft Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026

Council's Revenue Policy, Rates, Fees & Charges 2025-2026 outlines policy and pricing for those areas that Council receives income. The Revenue Policy is developed as part of the Operational Plan each year.

The draft Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026 outlines how Council proposes to collect income while the draft Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Operational Plan 2025-2026 shows how Council intends to use community resources across its services based on current and future need.

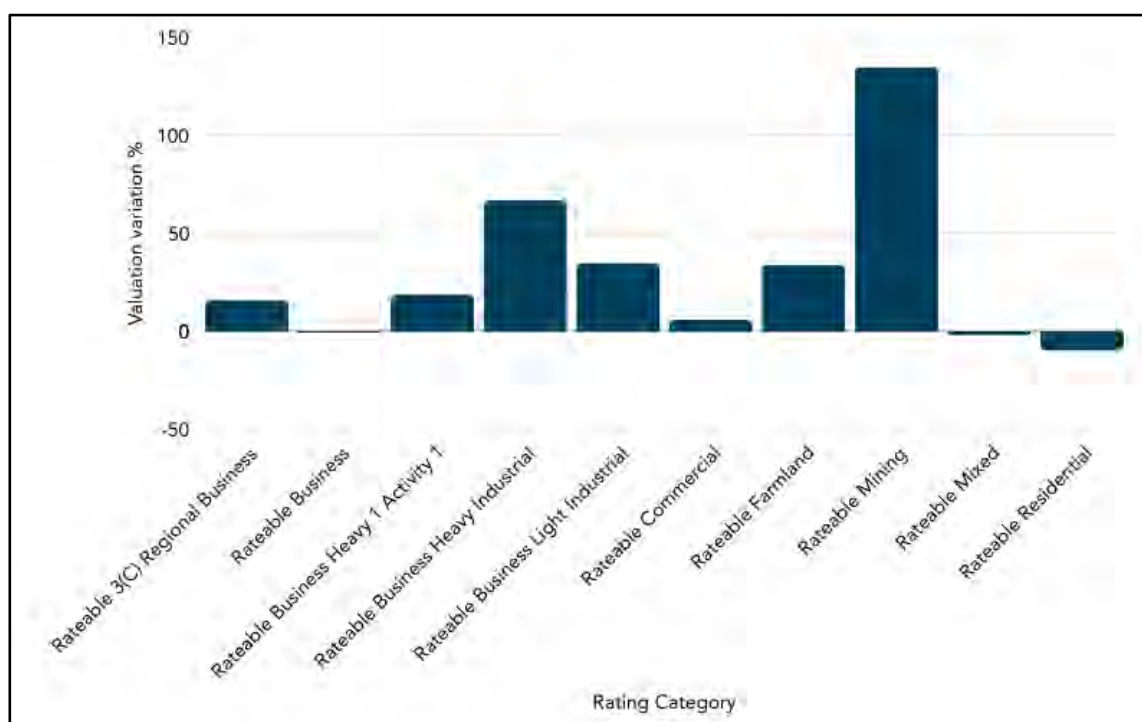
The total amount of rate revenue to be collected from registered property owners at the commencement of a rating year (General Income) is set by Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) on behalf of the Minister for Local Government. This process, known as the 'Rate Peg', sets the percentage (4.7% for 2025-2026) Council can increase its General Income.

Land valuations are determined by the NSW Valuer General and are used in determining the ad valorem amount applied in the allocation of rates to be issued by Council. A general revaluation of land within Council areas usually occurs every three years. Council rates for 2025-2026 will be calculated using new revaluations determined as of 1 July 2024.

Revaluations do not change Council's total General Income. This is determined through the IPART Rate Peg determination process. Variations in land value does, however, affect the proportion to be paid by individual assessments which will vary depending on the change in land value in relation to the average change in land values.

The new valuations have impacted the categories in different ways. While movements in valuations are highly variable and may not be well represented through average variation analysis, the graph below does indicate a general trend in valuations between the Rates categories and sub-categories. On average, the categories (and properties within categories) with higher than average variation will experience increases and those with lower than average will experience reductions or lower increase depending on the amount of variation.

Graph 2



The impact of these valuations will mean that 3(c) Regional Business, Heavy 1 Activity 1, Heavy and Light industrial, Commercial, Farmland, Mining will share a slightly greater percentage of the rate yield, while residential will have a lower percentage of the total yield.

Outdoor Dining Fee Waiver Extension for 2025-2026

Hospitality businesses were significantly impacted by the suite of COVID-19 restrictions throughout 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. A fee waiver was introduced in 2020 to support COVID-Safe operations and business recovery. This waiver was extended in 2021 until June 2025 and expanded to include businesses outside of the CBD. The Draft Revenue Policy, Rates, Annual Charges and Fees 2025-2026 includes a proposal to continue the waiver for an additional six months for the period 1 July 2025 until 31 December 2025 and then reintroduce the fee with a 50% waiver for the period 1 January 2026 until 30 June 2026. It is envisaged this will provide participating businesses time to prepare for a reintroduction of the full fee in 2026-2027. The cost to Council to provide this waiver for 2025-2026 is estimated at \$208K.

Monitoring and Reporting

Council is committed to transparent and accountable reporting to ensure the community is kept informed of progress towards the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Monitoring and reporting are a key part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, providing the mechanisms for Council to track its performance and report outcomes to the community.

Progress against the Community Strategic Plan is reported each Council term through the State of Our City Report, which tracks long term progress towards the community's shared goals. The Community Strategic Plan also includes a set of community indicators that reflect broader outcomes for Wollongong, reflecting Council's contributions and those of the wider community and other organisations.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan are reported quarterly through Quarterly Review Statements, which provide updates on the delivery of key projects, services and budget performance. The Draft Budget and Long Term Financial Plan are also monitored through the Quarterly Budget Review Statements, (with the exception of the June Quarter). A suite of performance measures included in the Delivery Program helps track Council's performance across a range of services and strategic objectives, with some reported quarterly and others annually, depending on the measure. The Annual Report provides a comprehensive summary of progress against the Operational Plan, including audited financial statements and other statutory reporting.

As part of the development of the Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Integrated Planning documents, Council undertook a comprehensive review of community indicators and performance measures, resulting in a refined and more meaningful set of measures that will guide progress tracking over the coming years.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed Council endorse the draft Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Integrated Planning suite of documents for public exhibition during the period 9 April to 7 May 2025. Following the exhibition period an engagement report for Community Strategic Plan feedback and submissions received for Delivery Program and Operational Plan matters will be reported to Council along with a summary of any recommended changes to the draft documents resulting from the exhibition period.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The draft documents have been informed by feedback from the community. A two phased approach was developed to enhance engagement outcomes and ensure our Community Strategic Plan is a true reflection of the community's aspirations and priorities. To date, 10,199 voices have been heard, with 4,341 as part of phase 1 community engagement and 5,858 voices from recent relevant engagements.

Our Wollongong 2035 Engagement Report – phase 1 report provides a comprehensive overview of engagement activities and outcomes undertaken during phase 1 engagement to inform the development of the draft Plans.

Councillors provided extensive input during workshops and have been engaged throughout the development and finalisation of these drafts since the start of the Council term. Engagement activities will be carried out during the exhibition period. Council's online engagement platform will be utilised

throughout the exhibition period. During this time, Council will use a number of engagement and communication opportunities to provide the community with awareness about the documents and opportunity for feedback. Hard copies of the draft documents will also be distributed to Council libraries and customer service centre for public inspection.

Executive, the Senior Leadership Team and officers have been provided opportunity to refine the draft documents.

The documents are proposed to be placed on public exhibition for the period 9 April to 7 May 2025.

Following the exhibition period an engagement report for Community Strategic Plan feedback and submissions received for Delivery Program and Operational Plan matters will be reported to Council along with a summary of any recommended changes to the draft documents resulting from the exhibition period.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 goal 4 “*We are a connected and engaged community*”. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
4.7	Demonstrate responsible decision-making based on our values, collaboration, and transparent and accountable leadership.	Corporate Strategy
4.8	Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services
6.4	Plan and provide sustainable infrastructure for safe and liveable places integrated with the environment and accessible to key transport routes.	Infrastructure Strategy and Support

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the proposed estimates and assumptions, Council's position will remain sustainable in the short to medium term and Council will continue to monitor and react to longer term issues in advance of any change requirements. Council will continue to progress Organisational Sustainability actions throughout the period to drive improvement of outcomes, efficiency and to create capacity for enhancement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the proposed estimates and assumptions, Council's position will remain sustainable in the short to medium term and Council will continue to monitor and react to longer term issues in advance of any change requirements. Council will continue to progress Organisational Sustainability actions throughout the period to drive improvement of outcomes, efficiency and to create capacity for enhancement.

For access to the attachments in this report, please use the below link:

[Item 1 - Public Exhibition -
Draft Our Wollongong Our
Future 2035 - Integrated
Planning Documents](#)

ITEM 2 PUBLIC EXHIBITION - FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL POLICY

This report provides recommended changes to the Financial Strategy Council Policy including a change of name to the *Financial Sustainability Council Policy*. The Policy is developed to provide direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Wollongong City Council's financial resources to ensure financial sustainability. The proposed changes to the Policy reflect Council's advancement in its Asset Management Strategy and Plan that allow a changed focus on Council's decisions and measurement of asset replacement requirements over the short, medium and longer term.

RECOMMENDATION

Council endorse the draft Financial Sustainability Policy to be placed on exhibition with Council's Integrated Planning suite of documents.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Brian Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer

Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Financial Sustainability Council Policy
- 2 Draft Financial Sustainability Council Policy - marked up version

BACKGROUND

The Financial Strategy, in its current form, was first developed in 2008 and has had several revisions, particularly to the targets for key indicators. The changes in these targets have been modified over time to reflect Council's financial position, maturity and evolution. The first major revision was made in 2014 when, following an extensive community consultation process, the 'Securing Our Future' plan was adopted by Council creating the blueprint for the steps in the journey towards financial sustainability. It is important to remember the 'Securing Our Future' targets were aimed at providing sustainability at the current service levels, by allowing sufficient funding to carry out existing services at existing levels and replace assets with equivalents as required over time.

In April 2017, having reached a reasonably sustainable position, Council adopted a revised Financial Strategy that fine-tuned targets to continue to provide direction and context for decision making in a sustainable way. Further refinement was made in 2021.

In the period from December 2021 to late 2024, there was a period of substantial economic volatility, particularly accelerated inflation, that has impacted Council's cost of service and the valuation and replacement cost of Council's assets. Council has taken many measures to combat these difficult external drivers and has been able to maintain its current services at existing levels through that period. At the same time, the valuation of assets and the resultant depreciation (accounting expression for the consumption of assets over time) led to a negative financial performance result.

Council's financial sustainability is heavily impacted by how Council manages the assets that are used in delivering our services. Council has, to date, applied broad asset management indicators through our Financial Strategy over time, including:

- Operating Result [pre capital]
- Funds Available from Operations equal to Depreciation

With the development of the revised Asset Management Strategy (AMS) and Asset Management Plan (AMP) there is opportunity to reinvent our financial asset management measures in a way that provides improved outcomes, greater understanding and a more mature response to a critical sustainability issue.

The review of the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans has identified many improvements in asset management assumptions and has provided a clearer set of financial targets and timeframes that will allow this refined approach to our understanding and response to our financial sustainability. This is particularly evidenced through a clearer understanding of Council's asset

replacement requirements over the medium term (10 years) and a revised lifecycle for some asset classes (Buildings, Stormwater, Bridges, Footpaths and Cycleways) based on new assumptions for maintenance and replacement requirements. While some of these measures still require audit review, it is anticipated that Council's annual depreciation will be decreased by around \$13M through these changes.

Importantly from a financial sustainability perspective, the Asset Management Strategy now outlines how Council will ensure that our assets, that support the delivery of the services and functions Council delivers (Delivery Program and Operational Plan), are to be managed so that they are fit for purpose. This includes the renewal of assets as they are required based on the following assumptions:

- The replacement cost of an asset will need to be funded from Council's General Revenue, and/or grants, donations and proceeds from the sale of existing assets.
- The replacement cost of an asset may exceed the Current Renewal Cost held in our financial data.
- The Asset Management Plan identifies where a level of upgrade is essential for some of our assets – this is included in 'Replacement Cost'.
- Upgrades and Expansion to assets above the essential requirements would require additional funding (above sustainability) and would be managed through the Integrated Planning process.

The concept of Replacement Cost, which includes agreed systematic uplifts to assets at time of replacement (such as building compliance), has not previously been accounted for in Council's Policy, as the depreciation proxy only measured the current estimated cost of renewal on a like for like basis. Additionally, the current Accounting Standards apply a prospective approach to calculating remaining depreciation. This impacts the annual depreciation if an asset life is changed (increased or decreased) resulting in numbers that do not reflect the annual replacement lifecycle cost of an asset (estimated cost/life). It is for these reasons that depreciation should not be the measure of funds required for asset replacement where more accurate information is available.

It is recognised that there are other external financial performance indicators that are required to be reported by Council. Many of these indicators are currently being reviewed and new indicators may be introduced in the future. Through our Financial Sustainability Policy, Council has attempted to focus its measures on a small number of critical indicators that best apply to our needs and has continually improved measures over time. Council has continued to report external measures, often with explanatory information required to disclose the deficiencies or circumstances that produce results that often vary from the measures intent. Council will be required to continue reporting other measures as required.

PROPOSAL

While the underlying structure and most of the existing Policy are not proposed to be changed, it is proposed that Council amend its asset management related policy statements and the underlying measures to align with the revised Asset Management Strategy. This will allow movement away from the broad based accounting measures that have been used as a proxy for many years in the absence of detailed asset plans.

The most significant change is to introduce a clear direction to ensure medium term financial stability and service continuity by stating:

Council will plan to achieve Funds Available for Replacement at least equal to the estimated cost of replacing assets due for renewal (10 year profile).

This statement would replace the existing direction to match Funds Available from Operations with Depreciation.

Funds Available from Operations is a Wollongong City Council result that measures the amount of funds available after all of Council's operating expenditure is met. These funds are generally available for capital expenditure or held as Available Funds. Unlike the Operating Result, it does not include non-cash transactions. The proposed Policy introduces a result titled 'Funds Available for Replacement'. Funds Available for Replacement would be mostly derived from the Funds Available from Operations that are not made available for new, upgraded, or expanded assets, transferred to future asset renewal, or used to increase the Available Funds. The Funds Available from Operations would also include any sales

proceeds of existing assets being replaced and Restricted Assets to be applied to asset replacement. Generally, decisions to direct Funds Available from Operations to new, upgraded, or expanded assets would be made after the asset replacement requirements are fully met.

The intent is that the Funds Available for Replacement will be targeted to meet the full cost of asset replacements that are determined to be due for renewal through the Asset Plans.

While the Funds Available for Replacement measure above provides a clear medium term picture, it does not show the full extent of potential underlying issues in Council's longer term financial sustainability. As Council has a large number of assets that are very long lived, it is probable that asset replacement concerns would exceed the 10 year planning horizon. Council's Asset Management Strategy includes a measurement of Long Term Asset Renewal requirements, which is a measure of the total renewal value of all existing assets divided by their estimated useful lives (ie, an annualised replacement cost) compared against Funds Available from Operations.

The proposed Financial Sustainability position states:

Council will monitor the long term asset renewal requirements and plan for potential issues outside of the current planning cycle.

Council recognises that estimated renewal values and estimated lives for long lived assets have a degree of variation and/or uncertainty. While it is expected that gaps may be reported through this measure at a point in time, with the medium term measures in place there will be long lead times and many variables that will change before such gaps are realised, providing sufficient time to make planned changes in an orderly fashion without unduly creating unsustainable outcomes.

It is proposed that this would replace the Operating Result [pre capital] as the primary indicator of long term asset financial sustainability. The Operating Result [pre capital] would still be retained as a significant reporting line in both the internal and external Financial Reports but would only be reported as a key performance indicator if mandated by external bodies such as the Office of Local Government or the Accounting Standards Board.

While not new to the Financial Sustainability Policy, it is considered that the Total Funds Result should play a more significant role in the management of financial sustainability. It is recommended in the Policy that this becomes a key financial indicator. The proposed Financial Sustainability position states under the header of Total Funds Result:

Council's annual allocations to operational and capital budgets will generally not exceed anticipated cash inflows.

The Total Funds Result measures all funds allocated and estimated to be earned (or expended and earned for actual results) during a period for operating and capital. This recognises that sustainability requires the annual budget be affordable and cash to be managed to ensure that payments can be made as required. By holding a level of Available Funds and planning for near breakeven funds results, this position can be maintained. The Total Funds result is inclusive of financing cash flow and movements in Restricted Assets.

Also included in the current Financial Strategy, but important in closing the sustainability loop for asset management, is the requirement to ensure capital expenditure for new, upgraded, or expanded assets is appropriately considered with a long term focus. The proposed Financial Sustainability position states:

In determining the approval of budget for new, expanded, or upgraded assets, Council will ensure that the whole of life cost is considered and is able to be sustainably accommodated within future forecasts.

This statement, which should be supported in practice through internal controls, requires capital expenditure decisions to be fully informed by understanding the impacts on future results. Consideration of these costs, and any potential revenue, must be part of the initial evaluation and approval process and be recognised in future estimates to aid future planning.

In addition to these more significant changes, the proposed Financial Sustainability Policy includes minor changes as follows:

- Update to new Policy template.

- Change 'ratepayer' to 'community' to better reflect accountability to broader stakeholders.
- Removal of 'Funding for the renewal of assets will be applied to asset replacement' as this is controlled through the new statements and measures applied.
- Inclusion of 'to finance investments' as a valid use of borrowings as the existing definitions are considered limiting if Council wished to make investment in activities that required borrowings. This would not include cash investments.
- Removal of 'fees and charges' being ringfenced for West Dapto as we do not have the information to allocate some income such as parking fines, dog registrations and others by area.
- Inclusion of Service Optimisation, to reflect the role that this program may play in future financial sustainability in addition to Service Reviews.
- Addition of legislative reference, reporting, roles and responsibilities and related strategies, policies, and procedures required in new templates.

Other minor administrative or grammatical changes to improve understanding.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The review has been discussed internally and with Councillors through a workshop on 10 March 2025. It is proposed to place the document on exhibition, and feedback received through the public exhibition period will be reviewed and considered prior to the Policy being reported back to Council for adoption.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Goal 4 "We are a connected and engaged community". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	
Strategy		Service	
4.8	Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services	

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are not any direct financial cost implications to implementing this Policy.

CONCLUSION

Council place the draft Financial Sustainability Policy on exhibition with Council's Integrated Planning suite.

**FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
COUNCIL POLICY**

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

This Policy has been developed to provide direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Wollongong City Council's financial resources.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this Policy are to:

- 1 Assist Council to use community money, together with other funding available, wisely to provide prioritised services and ensure financial sustainability.
- 2 Provide direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Wollongong City Council's financial resources.
- 3 Guide Council in the management of the ten-year financial plan and determine financial boundaries for delivery of operational and capital plans.

OUR WOLLONGONG OUR FUTURE 2035 OBJECTIVES - STRATEGY

4.14 Council demonstrates responsible leadership that is customer focused, demonstrates respect and inclusion, and uses resources that are managed effectively to ensure long term sustainability

POLICY**Introduction**

Wollongong City Council's Financial Sustainability Policy provides a clear direction and context for decision making that guides the allocation, management and use of its financial resources. It aims to ensure that Council remains financially stable while giving focus to financing key Council priorities through strong financial management. It acts as the catalyst for improving efficiency and releasing resources to improve frontline services and continuity. The Financial Sustainability Policy sets parameters within which Council agrees to operate to maintain accepted financial outcomes and should be viewed as an enabling Policy that aims to provide financial stability, affordability, focused delivery and value for money over the short, medium and longer term.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY



Challenges

Council and the community have created a stable and sustainable financial environment in the short to medium term that should allow Council to provide its existing levels of service without significant change to future income requirements. In the future, Wollongong City Council will continue to face challenges that require strong financial leadership and creative solutions applied to matching its community's aspirations to its capacity and desire. The key challenges faced include:

- 1 Better understanding the community's needs, wants, desires and priorities for services and service levels and matching that to the organisation's, and community's, capacity to sustainably fund the provision of agreed services.
- 2 Providing capacity to meet contemporary and increasing expectations from all areas including community, service users and government.
- 3 Ensuring future decisions provide affordable long term solutions that are within the financial capacity of our community.
- 4 Delivering organisational change to improve efficiency and quality of service.
- 5 Financial risk associated with significant growth and development of new infrastructure and services in the West Dapto area.
- 6 Managing any future demands associated with climate change.

The following aims and parameters are designed to assist Council in achieving financial stability, affordability, focus and efficiency.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

1 STABILITY

1.1 Available Funds

- a Council will aim to maintain Available Funds (the unallocated portion of revenues) between 3.5% and 5.5% of the current operational revenue [pre capital].

Available Funds are funds that Council has earned but not allocated to specific expenditure in the past or future. They are held as Council's savings and are used to act as a buffer against unanticipated future costs or can be used to provide capability to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.

- b Where the Available Funds level is above maximum requirements, additional funds will be transferred to the Strategic Projects Restricted Asset with any allocation of funds to be considered through the Strategic Planning process.

Where the Available Fund balance falls below the targeted minimum level in a period, the onus through the planning process, is to ensure adequate adjustment is made to restore the balance in future programs, within an acceptable timeframe.

1.2 Asset Management - Replacement

Council will plan to achieve Funds Available for Replacement at least equal to the estimated cost of replacing assets due for renewal.

Funds Available from Operations is a Wollongong City Council result that measures the amount of funds available after all of Council's operating expenditure is met. These funds are generally available for capital expenditure or held as Available Funds. Unlike the Operating Result, it does not include non-cash transactions.

Funds Available for Replacement would be a subset of the Funds Available from Operations that are not required to be moved to Restricted Assets and are not made available for new assets or increases to the Available Funds balance. Generally, these decisions would be made after the asset replacement requirements are achieved.

Council's intent from a sustainability perspective is to prioritise Funds Available for Replacement to at least provide sufficient funds to replace assets as they fall due over the planning cycle. The replacement of existing assets should be at the agreed current standard, determined through the Asset Management Plans. Through the planning process, Council may also determine a level of Funds Available from Operations that will be allocated to the provision of Expanded or Upgraded assets and/or New assets.

1.3 Long Term Asset Renewal

Council will monitor the long term asset renewal requirements and plan for potential issues outside of the current planning cycle.

Council's Asset Management Strategy includes the measurement of the Long Term Asset Renewal Funding Ratio, which is a measure of the total renewal value of all existing assets divided by their estimated useful lives (i.e. an annualised replacement cost) compared against Funds Available from Operations. Council recognises that estimated renewal values and estimated useful lives for long lived assets have a reasonable degree of variation and/or uncertainty. While gaps may be reported through this measure at a point in time, there are currently long lead times and many variables will change before such gaps are realised.

Council can take a longer-term view to managing such gaps. The short to medium term measures, such as the Asset Management Renewal Ratio above, will provide greater certainty and lower probability of variation over the current plan, while this measure will provide an eye on the future and allow for solutions to be developed that may include funding and potential changes to current asset management practices and assumptions.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

2 AFFORDABILITY

2.1 Total Funds Result

Council's annual allocations to operational and capital budgets will generally not exceed anticipated cash inflows.

Short term affordability requires the annual budget be affordable and cash to be managed to ensure that payments can be made as required. By holding a level of available funds and planning for near breakeven funds results, this position can be maintained. The total funds result is inclusive of financing cash flow and movements in Restricted Assets.

2.2 Capital Expenditure

In determining the approval of budget for new, expanded, or upgraded assets, Council will ensure that the whole of life cost is considered and is able to be sustainably accommodated within future forecasts.

Capital expenditure decisions need to be fully informed by understanding the impacts on future results. For example, a building cannot be considered as a one-off cost, it will have operational costs for electricity, water and consumables and will normally involve services that will require operational budgets, including employee costs. The building will then need to be maintained and eventually renewed and/or be disposed of. Consideration of these costs and any potential revenue must be part of the initial evaluation and approval process and be recognised in future estimates to aid future planning.

2.3 Investment of Surplus Cash

- a Council will invest surplus cash in accordance with its Investment Policy.

Investments are surplus funds at a point in time, either earned from prior operations or available due to timing between income and expenditure (including Restricted Assets). Interest on Investment of surplus funds provides additional resource to Council and assists in maintaining the real value of restricted funds held. Council, in its Investment Policy, carefully considers its stewardship role and prudent investment risk to optimise returns. Events in past years have highlighted the need to remain vigilant in securing public monies and making appropriate risk reward decisions.

- b Returns on externally and agreed internally restricted cash will be transferred to restricted assets and treated as capital revenue where required.
- c A baseline return on investments will be included in the Long Term Financial Plan. Additional returns above the baseline will be treated as short term capacity within the Strategic Planning process and be considered for non-recurrent allocation.

Returns from investments vary significantly from year to year based on interest rates and the level of cash held. From a planning perspective, it is deemed prudent to ensure that Council's investment returns are not funding ongoing operations which would be a risk when returns diminish. For this reason, it is considered reasonable to allocate these funds through the planning process for one-off operating projects or to capital where ongoing funding obligations and costs can be accommodated within the Long Term Financial Plan. It is also important to understand that predicted future returns may not be realised and funding may not be available as expected.

2.4 Borrowing

- a Council will actively consider borrowings through its Resource Strategy and Capital Budget as a source to finance timing mismatches between cash availability and expenditure requirements and to provide for intergenerational equity where determined applicable.
- b Borrowings will be considered for investment in assets acquired to provide additional service or service level, to finance investments, or to provide for timing mismatches in asset replacement funding.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

- c Internal borrowing will be applied first where funds are available and it is determined to be more economical.
- d Interest on internal borrowings will be costed where borrowing is applicable to Income Activities, to reflect the opportunity cost and will be applied in business cases to reflect the actual return on investment.
- e Borrowing terms will preferably be structured to match, but not exceed, asset life where there is appropriate product in the market to do so.

This Policy focuses on ensuring that Council continually sets a financial plan that ensures financial sustainability. Consideration of the Council services and the resources, including assets, required to provide those services must be affordable, that is, they must be within existing capacity, funded by increased capacity through efficiencies or based on a willingness of the community to provide additional revenue to fund increased service. Borrowings do not generate income and don't allow Council to acquire things we couldn't otherwise afford. They do provide for timing mismatches between cash and expenditure with an interest cost and they do allow Council to provide assets for future community use without impacting on past or present communities (intergenerational equity). They also allow for investment in assets that provide future positive returns.

Consideration of borrowings will be based on the needs or community demand for services and the projected capacity to pay for those services, or the willingness to raise additional revenue for them. Actual borrowings will be based on liquidity requirements and not specific assets or investments.

2.5 Rates, Fees & Charges

- a Council will review and maintain its rate base to ensure long term financial viability.
- b Business rating structures and differential pricing between categories will be considered as part of the Annual Revenue Policy development.
- c Council's pricing methodology will be applied consistently for all fees and charges. Fees & Charges will be reviewed on a cyclical basis to ensure compliance.

Council's revenue strategies will be considered as part of the long-term financial planning in accordance with this Policy. General rates increases are determined through IPART's 'rate pegging' process and approved by the Minister for Local Government. The rate peg has generally been in line with increases in costs to local government. Rate variations beyond this level will be linked to community aspirations for services which will be considered in conjunction with other revenue options and cost reduction opportunities.

2.6 West Dapto

- a Increased annual rates created from subdivision in West Dapto will be applied to meet West Dapto operational costs and the net Funds Available from Operations and funding for Depreciation in the area will be restricted.
- b In the transition to full development of the area, the West Dapto restricted asset will be made available to meet infrastructure and planning requirements in the area where required.

West Dapto is the last significant 'green fields' development in Wollongong. It will have significant financial impacts over time. It is anticipated that there will be substantial developer contributions and capital expenditure. The management of the Development Contributions Plan has inherent risks due to estimating, scoping and timing variables. Rates and other revenues will usually precede operational demand and assets built will require little renewal or maintenance for seven to 15 years creating a perception of improved financial performance. Experience in developing councils has shown the negative long-term impacts that the delayed expense pattern has if additional rate revenue is built into other recurrent operations.

It is considered important that this longer term view of additional revenue is given and appropriate long-term provisions are made from the commencement of the development.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

3 FOCUSED DELIVERY

3.1 Operational Services

Council's Delivery and Operational Plans will be used to:

- determine core and value added services,
- identify, deliver and report on business improvement initiatives, and
- set actions to improve service levels, costs and delivery methods.

Alignment of Council services with Our Wollongong 2035 will continue to play an important part in determining the future needs and operations of the organisation. Assuring that the right things are done in the most efficient way and being able to measure that performance should provide a sound platform for communicating and planning to meet agreed community expectations.

3.2 Grant Funding and other Capital Contributions

Council will actively pursue grant funding and other contributions to assist in the delivery of core services.

Priority for grants should be directed to actions and projects that are included in Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan, Operational Plan or supporting documents. Continued effort in obtaining and improving Council's success in targeted grant funding is vital to future enhancement and progression of objectives.

4 EFFICIENCY - VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 Service Optimisation

Council will develop a program of service optimisation reviews.

The fundamental premise behind the Service Optimisation Program is to assess if Council is delivering the right things in the best way, by considering the following principles:

- *How well do we balance service levels and community desire against affordability for Council and our community/customers?*
- *Are we delivering a good customer experience?*
- *Are our services operating efficiently and effectively to deliver better value?*

4.2 Service Reviews

Council will maintain an ongoing review of its services that seeks to better define service requirements, refine delivery methods and balance service aims against affordability for both the Council and our customers.

All services should be reviewed continually to consider efficiency and periodically through Quarterly Reviews to provide up to date estimates of cost and revenues. As part of the review processes the service budget should be zero based in line with the agreed service levels from time to time.

Council will also continue to deliver procurement savings through improved strategic procurement and collaboration with other authorities and agencies.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Local Government Act 1993 s223

- (1) The role of the governing body is as follows:
- (c) to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of the council.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of once every term of Council, or more frequently as required.

REPORTING

The Key Performance Indicators will be reported in Quarterly Reviews as follows:

Total Funds Result

Asset Management Replacement Ratio

Available Funds

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsible Accounting Officer will be responsible for monitoring and reporting of success against the principles and objectives of this Policy.

RELATED STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Delivery Program and Operational Plan

Resourcing Strategy

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Finance
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Corporate Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	28 June 2021, 3 April 2017, 17 February 2014, 23 April 2012, 23 June 2009
Date of next review	2029



[POLICY NAME FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY]

COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

Purpose

This policy has been developed to provide direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Wollongong City Council's financial resources.

POLICY INTENT

OBJECTIVE

The main objectives of this Policy are to:

- 1 Assist Council to use ratepayers' community money, together with other funding available, wisely to provide prioritised services and ensure financial sustainability and asset management.
- 2 Provide direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Wollongong City Council's financial resources.
- 3 Guide Council in the management of the ten-year financial plan and determine financial boundaries for delivery of operational and capital plans.

OUR WOLLONGONG OUR FUTURE 2035 OBJECTIVES - STRATEGY

4.14 Council demonstrates responsible leadership that is customer focused, demonstrates respect and inclusion, and uses resources that are managed effectively to ensure long term sustainability. ~~Link the policy to Council's strategic plan and deliverables and document what outcomes it hopes to achieve. Give particular focus to any innovation or sustainability objectives the policy hopes to achieve.~~ 4.14 Council demonstrates responsible leadership that is customer focused, demonstrates respect and inclusion, and uses resources that are managed effectively to ensure long term sustainability

POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

Wollongong City Council's Financial ~~Sustainability Policy Strategy~~ provides a clear direction and context for decision making that guides the allocation, management and use of its financial resources. It aims to ensure that Council remains financially stable while giving focus to financing key Council priorities through strong financial management. It acts as the catalyst for improving efficiency and releasing resources to improve frontline services and continuity. The Financial Sustainability Strategy sets the parameters within which Council agrees to operate ~~in order to~~ maintain accepted financial outcomes and should be viewed as an enabling ~~Strategy Policy~~ that aims to provide financial stability, affordability, focused delivery and value for money over the short, medium and longer term.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY



Challenges

Council and the community have created a stable and sustainable financial environment [in the short to medium term](#) that should allow Council to provide its existing levels of service without significant change to future income requirements. In the future, Wollongong City Council will continue to face challenges that require strong financial leadership and creative solutions applied to matching its community's aspirations to its capacity and desire. The key challenges faced include:

- 1 [4](#) Better understanding the community's needs, wants, desires and priorities for services and service levels and matching that to the organisation's₁ and community's₁ capacity to sustainably fund the provision of agreed services.
- 2 [2](#) Providing capacity to meet contemporary and increasing expectations from all areas including community, service users and government.
- 3 [3](#) Ensuring future decisions provide affordable long term solutions that are within the financial capacity of our community.
- 4 [4](#) Delivering organisational change to improve efficiency and quality of service.
- 5 [5](#) Financial risk associated with significant growth and development of new infrastructure and services in the West Dapto area.
- 6 6 Managing any future demands associated with climate change. The following aims and parameters are designed to assist Council in achieving financial stability, affordability, focus₁ and efficiency.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

1 STABILITY

1.1 Available Funds

- aa** Council will aim to maintain Available Funds (the unallocated portion of revenues) between 3.5% and 5.5% of the current operational revenue [pre capital].

Available Funds are funds that Council has earned but not allocated to specific expenditure in the past or future. They are held as Council's savings and are used to act as a buffer against unanticipated future costs or can be used to provide capability to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.

- b** Where the Available Funds level is above maximum requirements, additional funds will be transferred to the Strategic Projects Restricted Asset with any allocation of funds to be considered through the Strategic Planning process.

Available funds are funds that Council has earned but not allocated to specific expenditure in the past or future. They are held as Council's savings and are used to act as a buffer against unanticipated future costs or can be used to provide capability to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.

Where the Available Fund balance falls below the targeted minimum level in a period, the onus through the planning process, is to ensure adequate adjustment is made to restore the balance through-in future programs, within an acceptable timeframe.

1.2 ~~Operational Result [pre capital]~~

- 1.2a** ~~Council will plan to maintain a small operational surplus [pre capital] (average over three years).~~

The operating result [pre capital] is considered to be an indicator of the long term financial viability of Council. In broad terms, a deficit from operations indicates that Council is not earning sufficient revenue to fund its ongoing operations (services) and continue to renew the assets, which are an integral part of that service, when required. This indicator includes accounting and engineering estimates relating to the consumption of long-lived assets (depreciation) that are used in determining this result. Council has improved, and will continue to refine, its estimating process to provide greater accuracy of the result. Council will plan based on the best information available.

b Asset Management - Replacement

Council will plan ~~for to achieve a~~ Funds Available from Operations ~~for Replacement~~ -at least equal ~~to the~~ estimated cost of replacing ~~costs~~ Depreciation ~~assets~~ due for renewal.

Funds Available from Operations is a Wollongong City Council result that measures the amount of funds available after all of Council's operating expenditure is met. These funds are generally available for capital expenditure or held as Available Funds. Unlike the Operating Result, it does not include non-cash transactions.

Funds Available for Replacement would be a subset of the Funds Available from Operations that are not required to be moved to Restricted Assets and are not made available for new assets or increases to the Available Funds balance. Generally, these decisions would be made after the asset replacement requirements are achieved.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

Council's intent from a sustainability perspective is to prioritise Funds Available for Replacement to at least provide sufficient funds to replace assets as they fall due over the planning cycle. The replacement of existing assets should be at the agreed current standard, determined through the Asset Management Plans. Through the planning process, Council may also determine a level of Funds Available from Operations that will be allocated to the provision of ExExpanded tended or Upgraded assets and/or New assets.

Funds Available from Operations is a Wollongong City Council indicator that is considered to be a more reliable indicator of Council's capacity to manage its assets over the longer term. Unlike the Operating Result, it does not include non-cash transactions and excludes transfers to and from funds which are externally or internally restricted (Restricted Assets).

Council's intent is to provide at least sufficient funds from operations for the capital budget to replace assets as they fall due. 1.3 Long Term Asset Renewal

Council will monitor the long term asset renewal requirements and plan for potential issues outside of the current planning cycle.

Council's Asset Management Strategy includes the measurement of the Long Term Asset Renewal Funding Ratio, which is a measure of the total renewal value of all existing assets divided by their estimated useful lives (i.e. an annualised replacement cost) compared against Funds Available from Operations. Council recognises that estimated renewal values and estimated useful lives for long lived assets have a reasonable degree of variation and/or uncertainty. While gaps may be reported through this measure at a point in time, there are currently long lead times and many variables will change and before such gaps are realised.

Council can take a longer-term view to managing such gaps. The short to medium term measures, such as the Asset Management Renewal Ratio above, will provide greater certainty and lower probability of variation over the current plan, while this measure will provide an eye on the future and allow for solutions to be developed that may include funding and potential changes to current asset management practices and assumptions.

Council's intent is to provide at least sufficient funds from operations for the capital budget to replace assets as they fall due. The depreciation target is currently used as a proxy for the long-term annual funding requirement to replace Council's assets at their gross replacement value.

This target does not allow for new assets or the enhancement of assets being replaced. Nor does the target assist in managing the actual timing of replacement based on renewal schedules that may vary significantly from year to year. The delivery planning process will include consideration of enhanced services requiring additional assets and planning for any financing and/or restricted funds movements to manage timing issues.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

2 AFFORDABILITY

2.1 Total Funds Result

Council's annual allocations to operational and capital budgets will generally not exceed anticipated cash inflows.

Short term affordability requires the annual budget be affordable and cash to be managed to ensure that payments can be made as required. By holding a level of available funds and planning for near breakeven funds results, this position can be maintained. The total funds result is inclusive of financing cash flow and movements in Restricted Assets.

2.2 Total Funds Result

~~a Council's annual allocations to operational and capital budgets will generally not exceed anticipated cash inflows. Where Available Funds level are above minimum requirements, additional funds will be transferred to the Strategic Projects Restricted Asset and consideration given to the allocation of funds through the Strategic Planning process.~~

~~Short term stability requires the annual budget be affordable and cash is managed to ensure that payments can be made as required. By holding a level of available funds and planning for near breakeven funds results, this position can be maintained. The total funds result is inclusive of financing cash flow and movements in Restricted Assets.~~

Capital Expenditure

~~a Funding for the renewal of assets will be applied to asset replacement.~~
b In determining the approval of budget for new, extended expanded, or enhanced upgraded ~~additional or enhanced~~ assets, Council will ensure that the whole of life cost is considered and are ~~is~~ able to be sustainably accommodated within future forecasts.

Capital expenditure decisions need to be fully informed by understanding the impacts on future results. For example, a building cannot be considered as a one-off cost, it will have operational costs for electricity, water and consumables and will normally involve services that will require operational budgets, including employee costs. The building will then need to be maintained and eventually renewed and/or be disposed of. Consideration of these costs and any potential revenue must be part of the initial evaluation and approval process and be recognised in future estimates to aid future planning.

~~Asset renewal, maintenance and operational costs impacting on future budgets will be included in forecasts as part of the capital budgeting process.~~

~~Capital expenditure decisions need to be fully informed by understanding the impacts on future results. For example, a building cannot be considered as a one-off cost, it will have operational costs for electricity, water and consumables and will normally involve services that will require operational budgets, including employee costs. The building will then need to be maintained and eventually renewed and/or be disposed of. Consideration of these costs and any potential revenue must be part of the initial evaluation and approval process and be recognised in future estimates to aid future planning.~~

2.3 Investment of Surplus Cash

a Council will invest surplus cash in accordance with its Investment Policy.

Investments are surplus funds at a point in time, either earned from prior operations or available due to timing between income and expenditure (including Rrestricted aAssets). Interest on Investment of surplus funds provides additional resource to Council and assists in maintaining the

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

real value of restricted funds held. Council, in its Investment Policy, carefully weighs up considers its stewardship role and prudent investment risk to optimise returns. Events in past years have highlighted the need to remain vigilant in securing public monies and making appropriate risk reward decisions.

- b** Returns on externally and agreed internally restricted cash will be transferred to restricted assets and treated as capital revenue where required.
- c** A baseline return on investments will be included in the Long Term Financial Plan. Additional returns above the baseline will be treated as short term capacity within the Strategic Planning process and be considered for non-recurrent allocationed ~~on a non-recurrent basis~~.

Returns from investments vary significantly from year to year based on interest rates and the level of cash held. From a planning perspective, it is deemed prudent to ensure that Council's investment returns are not funding ongoing operations which would be a risk when returns reducediminish. For this reason, it is considered reasonable to allocate apply these funds through the planning process to or one-off operating projects or to capital where ongoing funding obligations capital (or one-off projects) that do not impact ~~owhere~~ future operational costs can be accommodated within the Long Term Financial Plan. It is also important to understand that predicted future returns may not be realised and funding may not be available as expected.

2.4 Borrowing

- a** Council will actively consider borrowings through its Resource Strategy and Capital Budget as a source to finance timing mismatches between cash availability and expenditure requirements and to provide for intergenerational equity where determined applicable.
- b** Borrowings will be considered for investment in assets acquired to provide additional service ~~or and~~ service level, to finance investments, or to provide for timing mismatches in asset renewal replacement funding.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

- c Internal borrowing will be applied first where funds are available, and it is determined to be more economical.
- d Interest on internal borrowings will be costed to Income Activity Services to reflect the opportunity cost and will be applied in business cases to reflect the actual return on investment.
- e Borrowing terms will preferably be structured to match, but not exceed, asset life where there is appropriate product in the market to do so.

This Strategy focuses on ensuring that Council continually sets a financial plan that ensures financial sustainability. Consideration of the Council services and the resources, including assets, required to provide those services must be affordable, that is, they must be within existing capacity, funded by increased capacity through efficiencies or based on a willingness of the community to provide additional revenue to fund increased service. Borrowings do not generate income and don't allow Council to acquire things we couldn't otherwise afford. They do provide for timing mismatches between cash and expenditure with an interest cost and they do allow Council to provide assets for future community use without impacting on past or present communities (intergenerational equity). They also allow for investment in assets that provide future positive returns.

Consideration of borrowings will be based on the needs or community demand for services and the projected capacity to pay for those services, or the willingness to raise additional revenue for them. Actual borrowings will be based on liquidity requirements and not specific assets or investments.

2.5 Rates, Fees & Charges

- a Council will review and maintain its rate base to ensure long term financial viability.
- b Business rating structures and differential pricing between categories will be considered as part of the Annual Revenue Policy development.
- c Council's pricing methodology will be applied consistently for all fees and charges. Fees & Charges will be reviewed on a cyclical basis to ensure compliance.

Council's revenue strategies will be considered as part of the long-term financial planning in accordance with this Strategy. General rates increases are determined through IPART's 'rate pegging' process and approved by the Minister for Local Government. The rate peg has generally been in line with increases in costs to local government. Rate variations beyond this level will be linked to community aspirations for services which will be considered in conjunction with other revenue options and cost reduction opportunities.

2.6 West Dapto

- a Increased annual rates, ~~fees & charges~~ created from subdivision in West Dapto will be applied to meet West Dapto operational costs and the net Funds Available from Operations ~~and funding for Depreciation in from~~ the area will be restricted.
- b In the transition to full development of the area, the West Dapto restricted asset will be made available to meet infrastructure and planning requirements in the area ~~where required~~.

West Dapto is the last significant 'green fields' development in Wollongong. It will have significant financial impacts over time. It is anticipated that there will be substantial developer contributions and capital expenditure. The management of the Development Contributions Plan has inherent risks due to estimating, scoping, and timing variables. Rates and other revenues will usually precede operational demand and assets built will require little renewal or maintenance for seven to 15 years creating a perception of improved financial performance. Experience in developing councils has shown the negative long-term impacts that the delayed expense pattern has if additional rate revenue is built into other recurrent operations.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

It is considered important that this longer term view of additional revenue is given and appropriate long-term provisions are made from the commencement of the development.

3 FOCUSED DELIVERY

3.1 Operational Services

a Council's Delivery and Operational Plans will be used to:

- determine core and value added services,
- identify, deliver and report on business improvement initiatives, and
- set actions to improve service levels, costs and delivery methods.

Alignment of Council services with Wollongong 2022 will continue to play an important part in determining the future needs and operations of the organisation. Assuring that the right things are done in the most efficient way and being able to measure that performance should provide a sound platform for communicating and planning to meet agreed community expectations.

3.2 Capital Delivery

~~a Council will achieve targets for capital renewal by programming these works with sufficient flexibility to allow re-phasing, deferral and/or the introduction of other deferred renewal works as required.~~

~~Council plans for substantial capital works each year. The planned works are in varying stages of maturity when they are adopted by Council and some projects may change in delivery time due to the issues that arise through the planning, community engagement, procurement and delivery phases. Council's financial goal is to endeavour to provide the full value of the annual capital program. This may be achieved, where necessary, by repositioning projects within the agreed four year program.~~

3.32 Grant Funding and other Capital Contributions

a Council will actively pursue grant funding and other contributions to assist in the delivery of core services.

Priority for grants should be directed to actions and projects that are included in Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan, Operational Plan or supporting documents. Continued effort in obtaining and improving Council's success in targeted grant funding is vital to future enhancement and progression of objectives.

4 EFFICIENCY - VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 Service Optimisation

Council will develop a program of service optimisation reviews.

The fundamental premise behind the Service Optimisation Program is to assess if Council is delivering the right things in the best way, by considering the following principles:

- How well do we balance service levels and community desire against affordability for Council and our community/customers?

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

- Are we delivering a good customer experience?
- Are our services operating efficiently and effectively to deliver better value?

4.12 Service Reviews

- a Council will maintain an ongoing review of its services that seeks to better define service requirements, refine delivery methods and balance service aims against affordability for both the Council and our customers.

It is intended that all services be reviewed continually and/or on a cyclical basis over a period of time. During each review of service, the service budget should will be zero based in line with the agreed service levels.

Council will deliver procurement savings through improved strategic procurement and collaboration with other authorities and agencies.

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Local Government Act 1993 s223

- (1) The role of the governing body is as follows:—
- (c) to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of the council.,

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of once every term of Council, or more frequently as required.

REPORTING

The Key Performance Indicators will be reported in Quarterly Reviews as follows:

Total Funds Result

Asset Management Replacement Ratio

Available Funds

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsible Accounting Officer will be responsible for monitoring and reporting of success against the principles and objectives of this Ppolicy.

RELATED STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Delivery Program and Operational Plan
Resourcing Strategy

[NAME OF POLICY] FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	[Name of Division] Finance
Date adopted by Council	28 June 2021
Date/s of previous adoptions	28 June 2021, 3 April 2017, 17 February 2014, 23 April 2012, 23 June 2009
Date of next review	[Not more than three years from last adoption] 2029

ITEM 3

PUBLIC EXHIBITION - DRAFT WOLLONGONG LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

On 29 June 2020, Council adopted the Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2040 to provide a 20-year land use planning vision for the City. Council is required under legislation to review its Local Strategic Planning Statement at intervals of not more than seven years.

A draft revised Statement has been prepared which details Council's planning priorities with reference to a range of adopted supporting documents. It is recommended that Council endorse the draft Local Strategic Planning Statement for a minimum 28-day exhibition period, with the exhibition to coincide with that of the draft Community Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

The draft Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement be exhibited for a minimum of 28 days.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

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

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Draft Wollongong Strategic Planning Statement

BACKGROUND

In March 2018, amendments to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* introduced a new requirement for Council to prepare and make Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS). Council is required to review their LSPS at least every seven years. An adopted LSPS will set out -

- A 20-year vision for land use in the local area.
- The special characteristics which contribute to local identity.
- Shared community values to be maintained and enhanced.
- How growth and change will be managed into the future

On 29 June 2020, Council adopted the current *Wollongong LSPS 2020-2040*. The LSPS has been used as an important guiding document in the assessment of Planning Proposals to amend the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009. LSPS 2020-2040 included actions under 6 planning themes.

- 1 Jobs and Economic Growth.
- 2 Housing for all.
- 3 Inclusive and Connected Communities.
- 4 Climate action and resilience.
- 5 Protect the natural environment.
- 6 Enabling Infrastructure and Transport.

The completed actions of the LSPS 2020-2040 include the following adopted strategies and plans:

- *Creative Wollongong.*
- *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework.*
- *Tourism Accommodation Strategy.*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy.*
- *Wollongong Industrial Lands Review.*
- *Affordable Housing Policy and Procedures.*

- *Wollongong Housing Strategy.*
- *Plan of Management for 32 Council Reserves,*
- *Helensburgh Park Plan of Management.*
- *Sustainable Wollongong 2030.*
- *Net Zero 2050: Climate Change Mitigation Plan.*
- *Climate Change Adaptation Plan.*
- *Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program.*
- *Towradgi Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.*
- *Mullet Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.*
- *Fairy and Cabbage Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.*
- *Allans Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.*
- *Wollongong Cycling Strategy.*
- *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.*
- *West Dapto Social Needs Assessment.*

Since the adoption of this LSPS, a revised Regional Plan has been published, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041. In addition, several other significant State strategies have been released including:

- *State Infrastructure Strategy 2022 – 2042* (Infrastructure NSW)
- *Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan – 2021* (Transport for NSW)
- *NSW Net Zero Plan: 2020-2030*
- *Connecting with Country Framework – July 2023* (Government Architect NSW)

In addition to strategic documents, amendments to policy since the adoption of the current LSPS are also relevant. The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) has been delivering on an ambitious agenda to increase housing supply via a range of mechanisms including:

- *Housing Targets:* 9,200 new dwellings in Wollongong by 2029
- *Transport Oriented Development:* uplifted controls around Corrimal, Dapto and North Wollongong Stations
- *Low and Mid rise Housing:* increasing the permissibility of medium density housing types across residential zones, and increasing the allowable density of medium density housing types around certain Centres including Dapto, Fairy Meadow, Warrawong and Corrimal
- *Infill Affordable Housing bonus:* 2 applications determined and 9 under assessment which when combined include a potential 525 affordable units
- *State Assessed Planning Proposal:* Planning Proposal to enable 1,300 dwellings on Warrawong Plaza site
- *Housing Delivery Authority:* alternative planning pathway for proponent led planning proposals and development applications for larger housing developments

The strategic and policy context presents a good opportunity for Council to update the existing LSPS and reinforce the approaches of our adopted strategies.

The review and update of the LSPS has been timed to be within the 7-year renewal timeframe and coincide with development of a new Community Strategic Plan.

The draft LSPS 2026-2046 has been informed by community and industry feedback gathered over the last five years during the development of major land use and other strategies, and via the recent engagement to inform the Community Strategic Plan.

PROPOSAL

The draft LSPS draws on existing strategic priorities and programs to provide a single source document that sets out our approach to land use planning over the next 20 years, including the actions and outcomes we have committed to under our adopted strategies.

The document provides the community with a realistic picture of where growth and change will be focussed, and what expectations Council will place on proposals to amend the planning framework over that period.

Context: The draft LSPS outlines the current and future context for planning in Wollongong. Relevant demographic and environmental characteristics are related to the forecast areas of change including significant housing growth, employment capacity and climate change impacts.

The document recognises Wollongong's progress in delivering on an ambitious agenda to provide diverse and high-quality housing in the right locations for a population which will grow significantly over the next 20 years.

The document highlights that the natural places and processes which make Wollongong unique and beautiful, are also what make it vulnerable to environmental risks and hazards. Amendments to the planning framework, especially to enable development intensification, must recognise these constraints and values.

The draft LSPS defines a vision and 12 planning priorities under three themes. The planning priorities outline the shared community values to be maintained and enhanced, and how growth and change will be managed into the future.

Vision: As Wollongong's community grows and the climate changes, we will plan and develop for a sustainable future. Our plans will have their foundation in Wollongong's unique places and landscapes and seek to deliver healthy Country and community well-being. Wollongong's housing, employment precincts, recreational spaces and natural areas will be resilient, diverse and well connected, and support a thriving and innovative economy.

Planning Priorities:

Sustainable & Resilient

- 1 We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems
- 2 We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards
- 3 We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets

Liveable & Connected

- 4 The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings
- 5 We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future
- 6 The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community
- 7 Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible
- 8 The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression

Productive & Vibrant

- 9 Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas
- 10 The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile
- 11 The Port Kembla industrial precinct is a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation
- 12 The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets

The planning priorities are summarised below.

1 We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems

The community values the preservation and improvement of natural environments, and Council plays a significant role in managing and restoring these areas, including the protection of ecological communities. Strategic planning for coastal, floodplain, and stormwater management is essential for safeguarding waterways, beaches, and other natural resources. The planning framework, which includes significant areas like the Illawarra Escarpment and the Greater Sydney drinking water catchment, helps protect these ecologically important areas from inappropriate development. Council will prioritise proposals that protect natural landscapes, restore biodiversity, and support Aboriginal communities' cultural practices and environmental responsibilities.

2 We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards

Wollongong faces various environmental risks due to its natural geography and climate, including flooding, bushfires, coastal storms, and heat events. Council's planning framework will guide urban development that is resilient to climate change and supports emissions reductions and net-zero targets. As the region experiences more frequent and intense hazards, land use controls in vulnerable areas may be modified to reduce risks further, including through floodplain and coastal management, and bushfire protection measures.

3 We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets

The City has abundant open spaces, including beaches and National Parks, which are vital for recreation, but growing population pressures may require greater access to open spaces in urban areas which can be a challenge. Council plays a key role in managing and enhancing vegetation, with a goal of achieving 35% tree canopy cover by 2037. Public streets and urban areas benefit from tree planting and green infrastructure, which improves air quality, and encourages biodiversity. Green infrastructure, such as tree canopies and open spaces, will be essential for cooling and improving the community's well-being, as Wollongong faces increasing urban heat. As the city densifies, planning efforts focus on ensuring equitable access to high-quality green spaces that support a variety of community needs, including recreation, sports, and nature appreciation.

4 The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings.

Wollongong's natural, built, and cultural context shapes its uniqueness, creating a dynamic place that continues to evolve over time. As the population grows, there is a need for careful planning to ensure new development is balanced with the protection of the environment and cultural heritage, whilst meeting the needs of the community. Some areas of the city are unsuitable for certain developments due to land use constraints, natural hazards, or environmental sensitivities. Future planning will continue to consider the importance of contextual design, ensuring that new development enhances and leverages the city's heritage, landscape, and desired future character.

5 We have access to diverse and high-quality housing

Wollongong's population is projected to grow significantly, with an additional 66,000 – 70,000 people expected by 2046, driving the need for diverse, affordable and high-quality housing. The city's existing housing stock includes a mix of detached houses, medium-density dwellings, and high-density apartments. There is an increasing need for affordable housing, as entry-level homes and units are largely unavailable for low and moderate-income households. The NSW Government has introduced planning reforms to address these challenges, such as Transport Orientated Development (TOD) Program and incentives for affordable housing. Wollongong City Centre and West Dapto Urban Release Area are key areas for housing delivery and will contribute to the State Government's short term housing target of 9,200 additional homes by 2029 and provide increased housing capacity in the long term. The Wollongong Housing Strategy (2023) aims to ensure housing diversity and affordability, while maintaining the city's environmental and heritage values. Success will require the provision of necessary infrastructure, managing land use conflicts, and addressing environmental constraints.

6 The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community

Wollongong's vision for its Centres is to create vibrant, accessible spaces that support community needs, economic growth, and social well-being. The Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy (2023) highlighted that the city's centres have sufficient retail supply to meet current and future demand, with room for complementary uses. The Wollongong City Centre, as the highest-order centre, will play a

key role in accommodating future job growth, while smaller centres, will provide for the day to day needs of residents. Centres are also being considered for increased residential density to support population growth. Improving multi-modal transport accessibility, supporting night-time economies, and updating planning controls will help ensure Centres continue to meet the needs of the community while promoting economic vitality.

7 Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible

Wollongong aims to reduce car dependence and increase public and active transport usage which will support a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, improved travel times, and positive health outcomes. Over the next decade, increased car travel will have significant environmental and congestion costs if changes aren't made. Currently 8 out of 10 trips are made by car, and our cities transport network will need to adapt to encourage mode shift. Council is committed to creating a resilient and adaptable transport system that prioritises public and active transport modes. This includes improved walking and biking paths, better public transport integration, and smart parking solutions. Council will rely on public transport planning and investment from the NSW State Government to achieve these outcomes.

8 The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression

Wollongong's landscape and built environment are shaped by creativity and culture, with ongoing contributions adding to the city's evolving story. Public art plays a key role in expressing community values, and with over 170 permanent pieces across the city, it enhances public spaces and is integral to the city's growth and cultural identity. The conservation and reinterpretation of heritage places, including through compatible development opportunities, helps revitalise areas while preserving historical significance.

9 Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas

Wollongong is a growing coastal city with a diverse economy, generating \$15.7 billion in gross regional product and employing over 100,000 people. The city prioritises employment-generating uses in industrial areas and centres, including both established and emerging industrial zones in West Dapto and Tallawarra. The Port Kembla industrial precinct is important for heavy industry and green energy innovation, while local industrial lands support a range of general industrial uses. The City Centre is a thriving commercial hub, with nearly 30% of jobs in the region located there, and the development of West Dapto's centres is a key growth priority. The health sector, particularly the nationally significant Wollongong Hospital, plays a vital role in employment and is set for expansion.

10 The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile

Wollongong's freight network is essential for supporting economic growth, linking ports, airports, and industrial areas to regional, national and global trade. The Port of Port Kembla has the potential to have an increasingly important role in international trade, and requires upgraded road and rail connections to meet future demands. Challenges such as congestion, limited road access for specialised freight vehicles, and the coupling of freight and passenger rail transport services should be addressed to improve efficiency. The growth of online retail has intensified the need for effective last-mile logistics, requiring careful management of traffic, parking, and pedestrian safety in urban centres. Council advocates for improved infrastructure, including rail connections, road upgrades, and optimised port functions to support growing freight needs.

11 The Port Kembla industrial precinct and Port is a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation

The Port of Port Kembla and the surrounding industrial land is a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and employment, particularly in heavy industry and port operations. The Port serves as an international trade hub, handling bulk agricultural products, construction materials, and mining exports, and is the State's largest grain export terminal and second-largest coal export port. The Port of Port Kembla has been earmarked for a range of potential future developments highlighting its strategic importance. At the adjacent Steelworks, Bluescope proposes to progressively transform approximately 200ha of underutilised industrial land into a thriving employment with potential for 30,000 jobs. Council aims to maintain the Port Precinct's role in fostering clean energy and heavy industrial uses while ensuring it remains compatible with surrounding residential areas.

12 The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets

Wollongong is a popular destination with a thriving visitor economy, fuelled by its natural beauty and cultural assets. The city's coastal and escarpment areas, along with recreational and sporting events, attract both locals and tourists, contributing significantly to the local economy. Visitor numbers are expected to increase, particularly to the foreshore, cycling routes, and walking trails, with future developments enhancing tourism infrastructure. Wollongong's creative and cultural venues, along with a regular calendar of events, support the city's vibrant tourism industry. The Tourism Accommodation Strategy aims to increase overnight stays by expanding accommodation options and improving tourism facilities to attract more major events and conferences.

Actions and Implementation:

With a large set of recently adopted Strategies, Council is in an excellent position to galvanise our priorities and commitments under existing strategic planning documents without the need for a new set of actions.

The draft LSPS incorporates a summary implementation plan which outlines the range of supporting documents adopted by Council, documents to be delivered, and Council Services which are relevant to the delivery of the 12 Planning Priorities.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The development of the draft LSPS has relied on the extensive community engagement undertaken as part of the development of Council's supporting documents. This feedback has been supplemented by contemporary input from the community gathered through the informing engagement run for the development of the new Community Strategic Plan.

If endorsed, the draft LSPS will be publicly exhibited for a minimum period of 28 days, and the issues raised in submissions reported to Council for consideration in the final statement.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal One. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
1.5	Maintain the unique character of the Wollongong Local Government Area, whilst balancing development, population growth and housing needs	Land Use Planning

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The planning priorities of the draft LSPS guide a sustainable approach to land use planning which considers how growth can be managed to deliver sustainable communities, with access to quality housing, goods and services, transport, employment and open space.

The draft LSPS reinforces Council's commitment to environmental sustainability including climate adaptation and mitigation, by outlining how amendments to the planning framework need to demonstrate adherence with Council's relevant adopted strategies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The draft LSPS reiterates the actions of adopted strategies and core business of Council. Any actions requiring funding will be subject to a business proposal and consideration through the Integrated Planning and Reporting process.

CONCLUSION

The draft Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) provides the opportunity for Council and the community to set a contemporary 20-year land use planning vision for the City. It is recommended that the draft LSPS be publicly exhibited for a minimum period of 28-days to enable community input.



Wollongong City Council

Local Strategic Planning Statement - Draft



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land in which our city is built, the Aboriginal people of Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and our greater community.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our acknowledgement and respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call our city home.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to our city.

Project and report	Date	Issue
Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement	April 2025	Draft for exhibition

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country.....	2
About the Plan	5
Purpose of the Local Strategic Planning Statement.....	5
Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 - 2040.....	5
Context	9
Role	9
Place	9
Profile.....	11
Your Voices	12
Wollongong 2045.....	13
Vision.....	19
Planning Priorities.....	19
Sustainable & Resilient	21
1. We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems	22
2. We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards	24
3. We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets	28
Liveable & Connected.....	31
4. The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings	32
5. We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future	35
6. The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community	41
7. Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible.....	43
8. The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression.....	45
Productive & Vibrant	46
9. Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas	47
10. The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile	50
11. Port Kembla's industrial precinct and Port are a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation	52
12. The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets	54
Consistency with the strategic planning framework.....	57
Implementation	61
Implementation Plan Summary	62

About the Plan

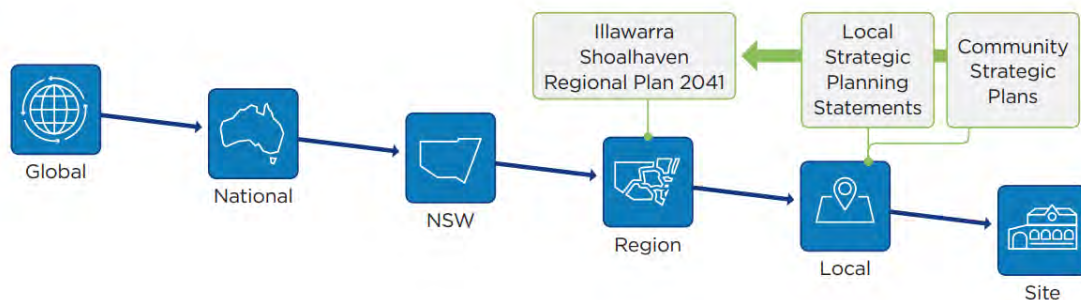
Purpose of the Local Strategic Planning Statement

This Local Strategic Plan Strategic Plan (LSPS), Wollongong 2045, is a plan to guide land use planning in Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) over the next 20 years. It aligns with the 10 year Community vision - *Our Wollongong Our Future 2035 Community Strategic Plan (2025)*:

On Dharawal Country, from the mountains to the sea, we value and respect each other, our places, past, and future. We will be a sustainable, connected, vibrant, and innovative city, with a diverse economy.

The LSPS brings together land use priorities and actions from existing strategies and plans that have been developed, exhibited, and adopted in recent years. It identifies key planning priorities that focus on protecting and retaining the many elements that make Wollongong unique, as well as embracing the future with the aim to support healthy communities in liveable places.

The LSPS gives effect to the NSW Government strategic directions for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Region outlined in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2021).



The purpose of the LSPS is established by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act). The LSPS will inform changes to the planning controls in Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) to achieve the priorities. The LSPS will also inform other planning tools, such as Development Contribution Plans, to ensure that local facilities are provided as the community's needs change. State agencies will also use the LSPS to inform their infrastructure planning and service delivery such as schools, hospitals and transport to support local communities.

The LSPS is required to set out:

- the 20-year vision for land use
- the shared community values to be maintained and enhanced
- how future growth and change will be managed
- the special characteristics which contribute to local identity

Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 - 2040

Wollongong's first LSPS was adopted in June 2020. LSPS 2020 - 2040 was structured around six key themes:

1. **Jobs and Economic Growth:** Support the goal to reach 10,500 new jobs by 2029 by strengthening industrial activities, expanding educational institutions like the University of

Wollongong, incentivising City Centre commercial office development and promoting sectors such as renewables and green technology.

2. **Housing for All:** Accommodate a growing population in diverse housing options, including the development of the West Dapto Urban Release Area and higher-density housing in the Wollongong City Centre, as well as working towards an affordable housing scheme.
3. **Inclusive and Connected Communities:** Acknowledge the importance of cultural heritage, community facilities, and public spaces to foster social cohesion and inclusivity.
4. **Climate Action and Resilience:** Commit to environmental sustainability reiterating Council's emission reduction target of net zero by 2050 for community operations and by 2030 for council operations.
5. **Protect the Natural Environment:** Conserve natural landscapes, such as the Illawarra Escarpment, Lake Illawarra and coastal areas, through the implementation of adopted strategies.
6. **Enabling Infrastructure and Transport:** Council will continue to advocate for State and Commonwealth investment into regional infrastructure that will catalyse growth opportunities and provide local infrastructure that supports economic growth and healthy lifestyle opportunities.

The actions of LSPS 2020-2040 included the preparation of a range of LGA wide strategies which have been completed since the document was adopted. These include:

- Wollongong Housing Strategy (2023)
- Affordable Housing Policies and Procedures (2024)
- Wollongong Industrial Lands Review (2023)
- Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy (2023)
- Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020
- Wollongong Tourism Accommodation Strategy (2025)
- Wollongong Heritage Strategy (2023 - 2027)
- Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City Strategy
- Wollongong Climate Change Mitigation Plan (2023 - 2030)
- Wollongong Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CCACP) (2022)
- Wollongong Urban Heat Strategy (2023) (action of CCAP)
- Wollongong Cycling Strategy (2020)
- Wollongong Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (2024)
- Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program (2020)
- Towradgi Creek floodplain risk management study and plan
- Mullet Creek floodplain risk management study and plan
- Fairy and Cabbage Creek floodplain risk management study and plan
- Plans of Management for Council Community Land
- Plans of Management for 32 Crown Reserves
- Plans of Management for Helensburgh Park, Bald Hill and Stanwell Park Reserve

Key planning amendments implemented include:

- City Centre Heritage Listings
- Bush Fire Prone Lands mapping updated
- Rezoning in the Illawarra Escarpment foothills to protect environmental values
- Rezoning in the West Dapto Urban Release Area and at the former Corrimall Coke Works site to increase housing supply
- Revision and adoption of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 Chapters:

- A1 Introduction (2025)
- B4 Development in Centres and Peripheral Sales Centres (2024)
- B6 Development in the Illawarra Escarpment (2023)
- C1 Advertising Signage and Structures (2022)
- C3 Boarding Houses (2022)
- C17 Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Facilities (2023)
- D16 West Dapto (2024)
- D19 Former Corrimal Coke Works Site (2022)
- D20 Former Port Kembla School Site (2023)
- D21 Tallawarra Lands (2024)
- E1 Access for People with disability (2022)
- E3 Car Parking, Access, Servicing/Loading Facilities and Traffic Management (2022)
- E12 Geotechnical Assessment of Slope Instability (2021)
- E13 Floodplain Management (2020)
- E14 Stormwater Management (2020)
- E16 Bush Fire Management (2024)
- E18 Native Biodiversity Impact Assessment (2023)
- E19 Earthworks (Land Reshaping Works) (2023)
- E23: Riparian Land Management (2022)

With a full suite of contemporary LGA wide strategies Council is well placed to guide land use planning in Wollongong for the future.

Figure 1 - Wollongong Local Government Area



Context

Role

Wollongong is within the lands of the Dharawal speaking nations which stretch from Botany Bay in the north to the Shoalhaven River in the south, and west to the Georges River. For tens of thousands of years, the land, sky and sea Country of Wollongong have been in the custodianship of Aboriginal people.

Wollongong is the focus of activity in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region. We provide over 75% of the Region's total employment and are home to its major educational, cultural, healthcare, sports and entertainment facilities. Wollongong sits at the cusp between Greater Metropolitan Sydney and Regional NSW, a position which provides unique opportunities and challenges. The city plays a key role in existing international trade via the Port of Port Kembla and is set to be a key contributor to the national energy transition as one of the State's four Renewable Energy Zones (REZ).

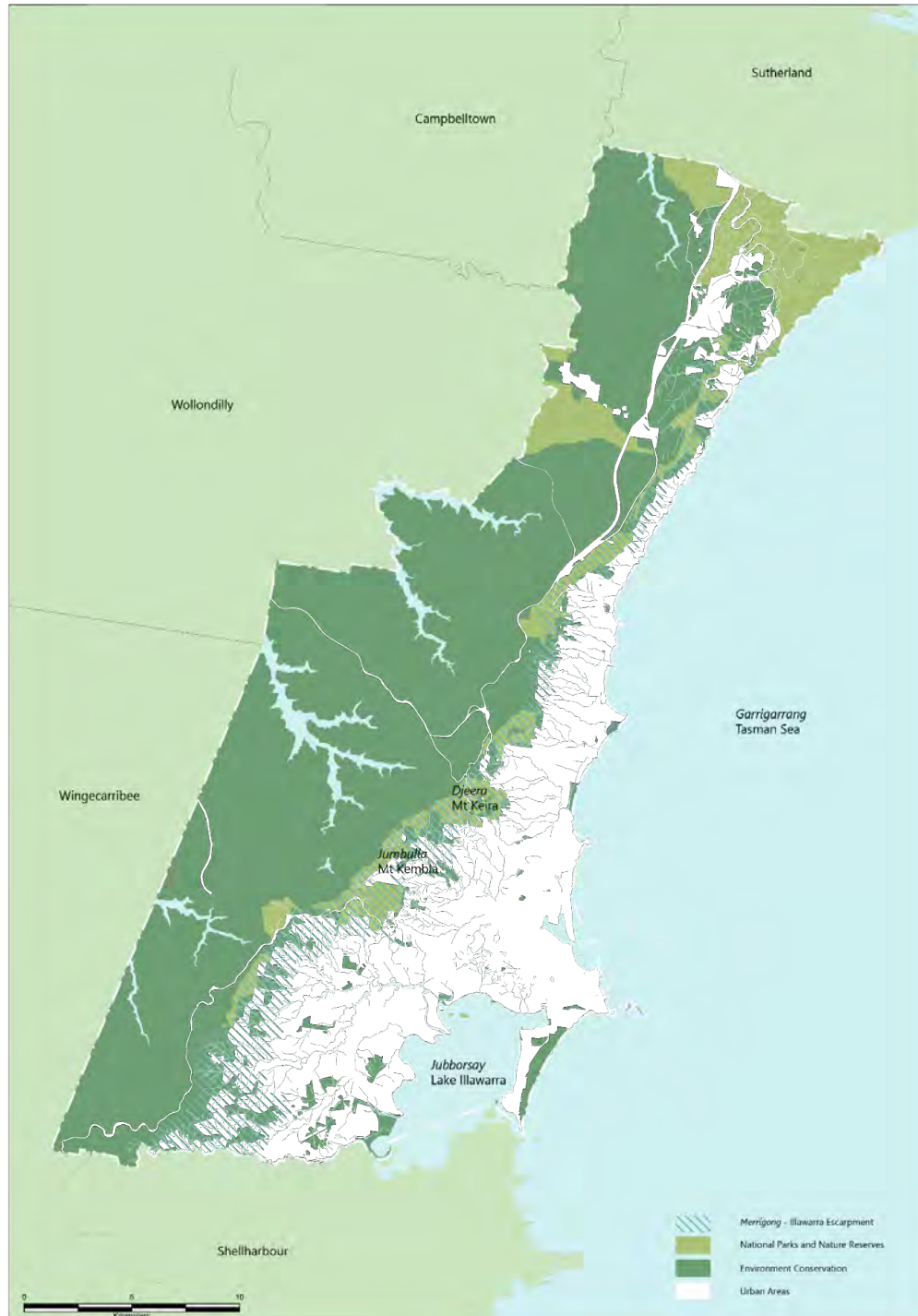
The Illawarra Shoalhaven Region Plan 2041 is the overarching regional policy document guiding strategic land use planning in the region.

Place













Wollongong is defined by its blue and green borders. The landscape setting of the City is integral to its identity and cultural heritage. The name Wollongong is said to originate from the Aboriginal word *woolyungah*, meaning five islands. Many of the key landscape features, travel routes, meeting places and trading places of today reflect the pre-1788 environment.

As they were prior to settlement, the beautiful coastline of Marrang (beaches) and Garrigarrang (the Sea), *Merrigong* (the Illawarra Escarpment), and *Jubborsay* (Lake Illawarra) are highly valued places. Wollongong's urban places – the Wollongong CBD, towns, villages and neighbourhoods are all set within that natural context and draw many of their values from that setting.

Figure 2 - Landscape and Urban Areas



Profile

Population (2026 id) 225,607 	Economic Activity (GDP) (2023 NEIR) \$15.74 billion	Canopy Cover (2025 WCC) 27% 
Dwellings (2026 id) 94,514 9.2 dw/Ha of zoned land permitting residential		Top 5 Industries (2025 id) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Care & Social Ass. (20.1%) • Construction (10.5%) • Education & Training (10.4%) • Retail trade (8.0%) • Manufacturing (7.3%)
Household size (2026 id) 2.48pp 	Jobs (2023 NEIR) 102,802	Community Greenhouse gas emissions 20% reduction since 2016
Social Housing (2021 ABS) 6.8% of households 	Workers (2023 NEIR) 114,706 	Council Greenhouse gas emissions 13% Reduction since 2021
Dwelling structure (2021 ABS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate house 66.3% Medium density 20.5% High density 12.3% Other 1.0% 	Local Businesses (2024 ABS) 15,929 	Endangered Ecological Communities Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 19
Car ownership (2021 ABS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per household 87.4% = at least one 17.9% = 3 or more 	Daily visitors (2022 Place Intelligence) 121,000	Threatened flora species Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 >30 
Area of the LGA 714 sq km <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban 24% Non-urban 76% 	Visitor nights (2023/24 id/Tourism Research Australia) 4,806,740 overnight stays by international and domestic visitors	Threatened terrestrial fauna species Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 >60 

Your Voices

Community Engagement is important, it informs decision making, builds relationships and trust and keeps the community informed. When we engage with our community about planning it is an opportunity to improve knowledge and understanding about development and deliver more transparent planning decisions.

Since the adoption of LSPS 2020-2040 Council has engaged with the Community in relation to a range of significant strategic planning documents including the development of a new Community Strategic Plan. The key themes of these engagements, as relevant to land use planning, are represented here. This collective feedback has been considered in the development of this LSPS, noting that Council is not responsible for delivering on all the issues.

Environment

- Protect & add green space & trees
- Invest in renewables energy
- Respond to climate change and increase resilience
- Maintain creeks for health and to mitigate flood risk

Housing

- Ensure diverse and sustainable housing
- Increase affordable housing options
- Address homelessness
- Support with population physical and service infrastructure

Active Transport

- Improve safety
- Increase and promote the network
- Increase accessibility

Education

- More schools needed

Arts and Culture

- Provide events and spaces
- Support creatives
- Showcase diverse cultures

Transport

- Improve public transport and expand the Gong Shuttle service
- Provide parking solutions
- Build a safe and sustainable network

Local Economy

- Focus on creating local jobs
- Foster sustainable and cultural tourism
- Enhance dining, shopping and nightlife options
- Invest in revitalisation and vibrancy

Development

- Avoid over development
- Preserve and protect the environment, *character* and heritage
- Plan sustainable growth
- Equitable investment into suburbs
- Manage impacts of increased density

Heritage

- Value our heritage
- Protect buildings and landscapes
- Recognise and respect Aboriginal culture

Community Services, facilities, and Spaces

- maintain places and programs for social connection
- Provide inclusive and accessible community spaces

Recreation

- Maintain and increase open and recreational space
- Invest in maintenance of parks and beaches
- Provide accessible recreational options

Wellbeing

- Enhance public space safety
- Increase access to health services
- Increase and promote sustainable food systems
- Involve the community in decision making

Inclusive and Accessible

- Provide accessible information
- Improve digital inclusion

Wollongong 2045

The community have told us that they value Wollongong's unique landscape, culture and lifestyle – and want to see those things maintained and enhanced as we grow. They've expressed concern about some of the impacts of growth and whether there will be the necessary infrastructure to support a larger population. They have a clear understanding of the impacts and threats of climate change and support a transition to renewable energy and the commitment to Net Zero emissions by 2050.

Over the past 5 years Government has set a clear agenda for sustainable urban growth, committing to policies to "enable all people to participate in and benefit from opportunities in our cities, living comfortably in close proximity to education and work places, shops, leisure and service facilities¹". This includes planning cities to meet the needs of both current and future generations, focussing on affordable housing, balanced economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Collaboration with diverse communities and respect for First Nations knowledge are key to achieving this agenda.

The *National Urban Policy 2024*² defines three goals which set a strategic vision for urban places :

- Our urban places should support access for everyone to the basics of a decent life, including suitable and affordable housing, health care, education and work
- Our urban places should support economic growth and encourage innovation
- Our urban places value and protect Australia's unique environment and biodiversity for future generations

The National Housing Accord commits to deliver 377,000 new well-located homes across the state of NSW by 2029. The NSW State Government is implementing a range of planning reforms to deliver on these targets³.

The State is complementing these reforms with a range of other plans to support Building Regulation, Employment Lands, Night-Time Economy, and acceleration of assessment pathways.

¹ Infrastructure Australia, 2024, *National Urban Policy* National Urban Policy | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts;
<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/media/publications/national-urban-policy>

² *ibid*

³ NSW Planning, Housing, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing>

Areas of Change	2026	2046	Change
Population			
Forecast Population <i>range sourced from id. Forecast and NSW Common Planning Assumptions</i>	225,607 233,545	291,797 303,796	+66,190 to +70,251
Natural annual increase in population	699 or 31.76%	963 or 25.38%	+ 264
Annual Net migration	1,502 or 68.24%	2,832 or 74.62%	+1,330
Daily population <i>source Place Intelligence</i>	280,000*	362,000*	+82,000*
Daily visitors <i>source Place Intelligence</i>	121,000*	156,000*	+35,000*
Housing			
Households	89,085	119,171	+30,086
Average Household size	2.48	2.4	-0.08
Dwellings	94,514	126,739	+32,225
Dwelling Occupancy Rate	94.26%	94.03%	-0.23%
Employment			
Under working age (under 15)	17.36%	17.70%	+0.3%
Working age (15-65)	63.48%	62.36%	-1.1%
Retirement age (over 65)	19.16%	19.94%	+0.78%
Employed resident Workforce <i>source TZP24</i>	111,938	141,578	+29,640
Jobs in Wollongong <i>source TZP24</i>	110,941	138,495	+27,554
Jobs per km ² of urban land <i>source TZP24</i>	647	808	+161
Climate Change			
Rise in average temperatures 2021-2040 <i>IPCC</i>			+1.9-3.0°C
Sea Level Rise 2045 <i>Source NASA Sea Level Projection Tool - SSP 5-8.5</i>			+0.11-0.31m
Community Emissions reduction target	50% reduction on 2016 levels by 2030	Net zero 2050	
Council Emission reduction target	Net zero by 2030		
Tree canopy Target	27%	38% by 2038	

Notes:

- Data in the above table is sourced from id (informed decisions) unless otherwise stated
- A 2026-2046 time period has been used to align with the readily available forecast data across most sources
- The *Common Planning Assumptions* include the Travel Zone Projections 24 (TZP24) by TfNSW and the 2024 Population Projections prepared by DPHI.
- * Place Intelligence visitation data is for the period from 2022 to 2041

Residents and dwellings

Wollongong is forecast to be home to over 288,000 people in 2046. This represents around an additional 66,000 people and 32,000 homes (id. Forecast – 2026-2046). Population increase is made up of natural increase (births minus deaths) and net immigration (from other parts of NSW, the nation and overseas). As Wollongong’s population grows towards 2046, it will also become more diverse. Net migration will grow from making up 68% of annual total increase in 2026, to 75% in 2046.

While most urban areas will experience some levels of additional development, most of the planned dwelling growth to house our increasing population is forecast to occur in:

- the West Dapto and Tallawarra Urban Release Areas where we expect to see around 16,500 low and medium density dwellings in addition to those that have already been developed (Avondale-Cleveland +6,668; Stream Hill-Wongawilli-Huntley +3,403; Marshall Mount-Haywards Bay-Yallah +2,516; Horsley +2,395; Kembla Grange +1,520).
- Higher density housing is forecast to be concentrated in Wollongong CBD (~ +5,300)⁴.
- Remaining dwelling growth will be distributed across existing urban areas, with low rise, multi dwelling infill (secondary dwellings, dual occupancies, townhouses) continuing to be developed through our low-density zones, and denser dwelling types (apartment buildings and shop-top housing) becoming more common in our medium density zones in and around train stations and centres.

We will continue to advocate for the proportion of social housing in Wollongong LGA to be maintained in relation to need, which would result in an increase in overall social housing numbers. Social Housing supports persons and families that are unable to participate in the private rental or homeownership markets and is critical to enable affordability in the broader housing market. In 2021, 6.8% of Wollongong households lived in social housing. If supply of this housing is not increased, the ability to provide housing for all households and mitigate against homelessness will be compromised.

An increased population with a larger proportion living in smaller housing types means our communal spaces and infrastructure will see more use. This increased demand will add to the activity and vibrancy of our public places, retail centres and community facilities and require commensurate Local and State Government support to expand and maintain public transport and service infrastructure and facilities.

Economy

Wollongong will continue to be the economic capital of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Region with strong links to Greater Sydney and Sydney CBD. Wollongong’s diverse economy will provide an employment centre of growing importance to the South-Western Sydney growth area. A dynamic city for growth, investment and lifestyle, its resilient economy will be supported by diverse sectors including advanced manufacturing, clean energy, professional services, tech business and creative industries. Wollongong’s economy will continue to foster innovation and support a thriving community of entrepreneurs and leverage its role as an international trade gateway through the Port of Port Kembla.

The Wollongong CBD will remain the pre-eminent employment hub for the region providing a diverse range of work opportunities including in health care, government services, professional and financial services and tech businesses. The CBD will be an office market of choice in NSW for businesses looking to establish outside of Sydney. The CBD will also continue to grow its inner-city

⁴ Population and household forecasts, 2021 to 2046, National Forecasting Program, .id (informed decisions), April 2024.

population and provide an exciting range of retail and entertainment options for residents and visitors across a thriving 24-hour economy.

To achieve this economic future, by 2045 Wollongong is projected to need to provide an additional 27,500 jobs to support the expanding workforce⁵. Maintaining a sustainable pipeline of employment floorspace is one critical aspect of a productive economic future for the community.

The national Future Made in Australia agenda seeks to revitalise manufacturing in Australia through economic and industrial energy transition opportunities, including a core focus on renewable energy and clean energy transition. Wollongong's State designated Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone including the Port of Port Kembla is a key opportunity to deliver on this agenda. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan is aligned with this, seeking to protect the Port of Port Kembla as an international gateway for trade and logistics and to support it as a destination for green energy industries.

There is significant competition for well serviced land and development capacity within existing areas. The Industrial Lands Review highlighted the critical role our E4 General Industrial and E5 Heavy Industrial zones play in providing employment and driving an innovative and active economy. The State's Industrial Lands Action Plan outlines an approach to secure, manage and monitor the supply of industrial lands across NSW and provide greater consistency for industrial land planning and certainty for investment.

The *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework* and the *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy* highlighted the potential for residential development to compromise commercial development in our centres. Council is pursuing amendments to the planning framework to incentivise employment generating floorspace, consolidate commercial activity and protect existing supply.

By 2041, the City's daily population of visitors, workers and residents is expected to grow to 362,000 people. This is 74,000 more people every day using the streets, open spaces, transport and businesses than there were in 2022. Between 2022 and 2041 the percentage of the daily population who are visitors to Wollongong will increase from 42% to 47%, reflective of our attractive employment opportunities but also our valuable natural and recreational assets, which are a significant drawcard for visitors. This growth and opportunity acknowledges the City's assets, and also presents demand for future employment floorspace, and the expansion and increased maintenance of our publicly accessible places and public transport services.

Wollongong is well located to leverage off the growth and investment occurring in the neighbouring Western Parkland City. The Western Sydney Aerotropolis will be the economic centre of the Western Parkland City "Bradfield". It has and will continue to see significant investment from State and local governments and the private sector. Local businesses and industries will require efficient, reliable and safe connectivity between locations to facilitate economic growth. Council continues to advocate with other Government agencies and the private sector for new freight and passenger links between Western Sydney and Wollongong, particularly linking to the Port and manufacturing activities at Port Kembla.

Environment

From our beautiful beaches and wetlands through to the striking escarpment, Wollongong is a city with unique and diverse environments. However, the projected population growth and associated requirements for housing and employment land will place increasing pressure on our natural resources. Healthy ecosystems are vital for the health of our community and for the future sustainability of our city. The State's *Connecting with Country* framework explains that Western and

⁵ Transport for NSW Travel Zone projections 2024

Aboriginal concepts of sustainability are largely shared, including the critical need to reduce the impact of building development on the environment. The framework uses the term 'Healthy Country' to describe healthy, interconnected natural ecosystems, supported by regenerative and sustainable environmental practices.

Protecting and enhancing our ecosystems is important to ensure that local plants and animals, including endangered species, are protected and can adapt to a changing climate. Our parks and natural areas act as biodiversity hot spots and green corridors which provide habitat and allow native animals to move through our suburbs. Council will continue to maintain and enhance these assets through our natural areas program and increase tree canopy by delivering on the Urban Greening Strategy.

Over the next 20 years NSW waste volumes are forecast to nearly double, growing by 16 million tonnes. Using our resources wisely to reduce waste and promote a circular economy will be a key priority for regional development over the coming decades to ensure we have capacity to safely manage waste in the future. A circular economy involves valuing our resources by getting as much use out of products and materials as possible, it also provides long-term economic, social and environmental benefits. Wollongong's significant industrial activity supports opportunities to develop circular economy pathways and maximise efficiencies. We know a significant portion of what enters our Whytes Gully landfill can be recovered. Our strategic planning framework will support further diversion and re-use of these resources reducing the environmental impacts of waste.

Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change will continue to have impact on the way we live in Wollongong.

We are likely to experience more 'very hot' days and longer heat waves. The risk of major bushfire events is likely to increase with hotter summers and drier winters. This will also increase the urban heat island effect emphasising the role our public spaces and resilience centres play in providing 'cool' spaces.

Due to its geographical features, Wollongong is prone to significant flooding. Climate change will result in more intense and more frequent storms. Rainfall is expected to reduce in winter, but there is likely to be bigger downpours in summer and more flooding events

The average height of the ocean has been increasing 3.7mm each year since 1991⁶, an acceleration on the previous trends recorded since 1890⁷. More intense storms and any increase to sea level can intensify flood impacts and lead to more damage to the coastline such as beach erosion and damage to private property and coastal infrastructure such as cycleways, carparks, roads, stormwater networks and surf clubs.

Less winter rainfall and more drought conditions in the future will likely require us to limit our water use and increased stress on our playing fields and public spaces such as parks and natural areas from dry conditions.

⁶ Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, 2024, *NARClIM Illawarra Shoalhaven Climate Change Snapshot*, <https://www.climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-08/NARClIM2-Snapshot-Illawara.pdf>

⁷ Centre for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, *Relative Sea Level Trend 680-140 Sydney, Fort Denison 1 & 2, Australia*, https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/sltrends_station.shtml?id=680-140

Meeting our growth expectations

This Statement recognises that we are in the midst of a housing crisis and outlines our growth agenda in response. Linked to housing growth is the need to generate more high paying local jobs and supporting infrastructure. We're committed to enabling a resilient, liveable and productive Wollongong set in an extraordinary landscape context for our future community.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 does not set housing or jobs targets for Wollongong. In May 2024 the State Government set short term housing targets in response to the National Housing Accord, which require Wollongong to provide 9,200 constructed dwellings between 2024-2029, or 1,840 per year.

Wollongong Council's Economic Development Strategy 2019 set a jobs target for 2029 of 10,500 new jobs. This target was 96% achieved at the Strategy's half way point in 2022/23.

To understand housing and employment needs for a 20 year horizon, Council uses dwelling forecasts prepared by ID consulting and job projections issued by Transport for NSW. Council will also continue to adhere to shorter term targets set by the State or Council's own policies.

Whilst the theoretical development capacity of Wollongong's planning controls is already generous, and denser residential products are already permissible across all our residential land use zones (ie dual occupancies, multi dwelling housing, residential flat buildings), we have not seen a significant take up of this capacity in the form of denser housing development sufficient to create a sustainable pipeline of diverse housing that would meet the State's targets.

The incentives available through the State's infill affordable housing bonuses, Transport Oriented Development (TOD) and low and mid-rise reforms will all go some way to increasing theoretical development capacity of Wollongong's existing planning controls for medium density product. A broad and coordinated effort is needed across government and private industry to see that these increases in capacity result in an increased take up of available supply to deliver constructed housing, rather than driving speculation and higher land costs.

Council is committed to ongoing review of zonings and planning controls to support increasing capacity for housing to accommodate growth. We are progressing with the actions of the Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023 including reviewing capacity in and around town centres, in Medium Density Zones, and around the Wollongong City Centre. In addition to our proactive review work, Council will continue to accept and assess planning proposals from proponents seeking changes to the planning controls, in accordance with our legislative responsibilities, Council's Planning Proposal Policy and consistent with this Statement.

Our community will experience changes to their neighbourhoods as newer, denser development replaces older single dwellings. In some locations, local character will change noticeably over time. Council will continue to work with Government and industry to meet the housing needs of the community while protecting our natural environment and heritage, maintaining employment lands, advocating for public transport services and managing climate and environmental risks and hazards.

Vision

As Wollongong's community grows and the climate changes, we will plan and develop for a sustainable future. Our plans will have their foundation in Wollongong's unique places and landscapes and seek to deliver healthy Country and community well-being. Wollongong's housing, employment precincts, recreational spaces and natural areas will be resilient, diverse and well connected, and support a thriving and innovative economy.

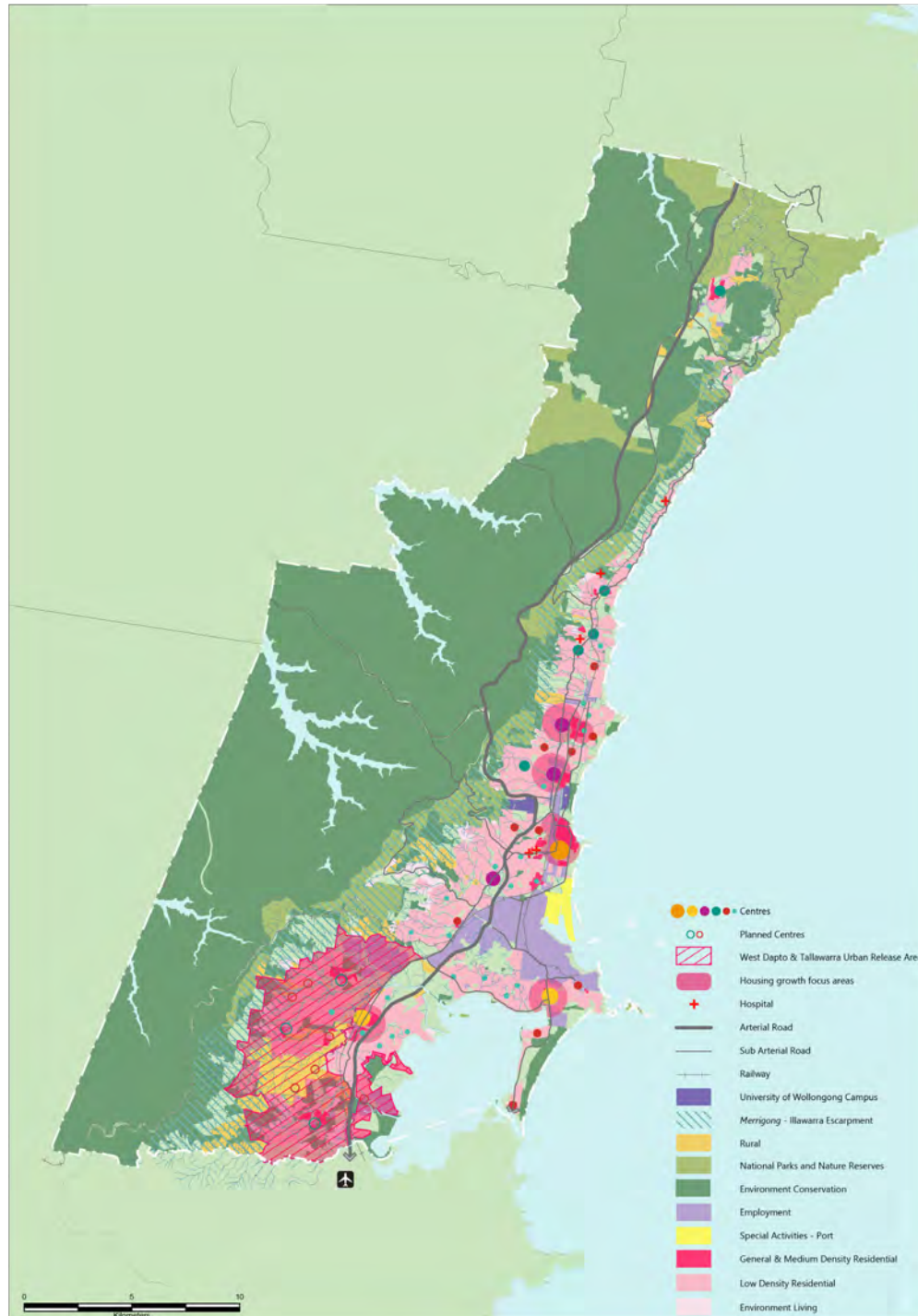
Planning Priorities

Wollongong's *Planning Proposal Policy* sets out when and how applications to rezone land or change development standards or permitted uses will be considered by Council. This includes reasons why proposals may not be supported, and what sorts of proposals will be given priority.

Consistency with the *Local Strategic Planning Statement* is a key requirement for Planning Proposals. The Planning Priorities set out in the LSPS align with and expand upon the matters for consideration in the Policy.

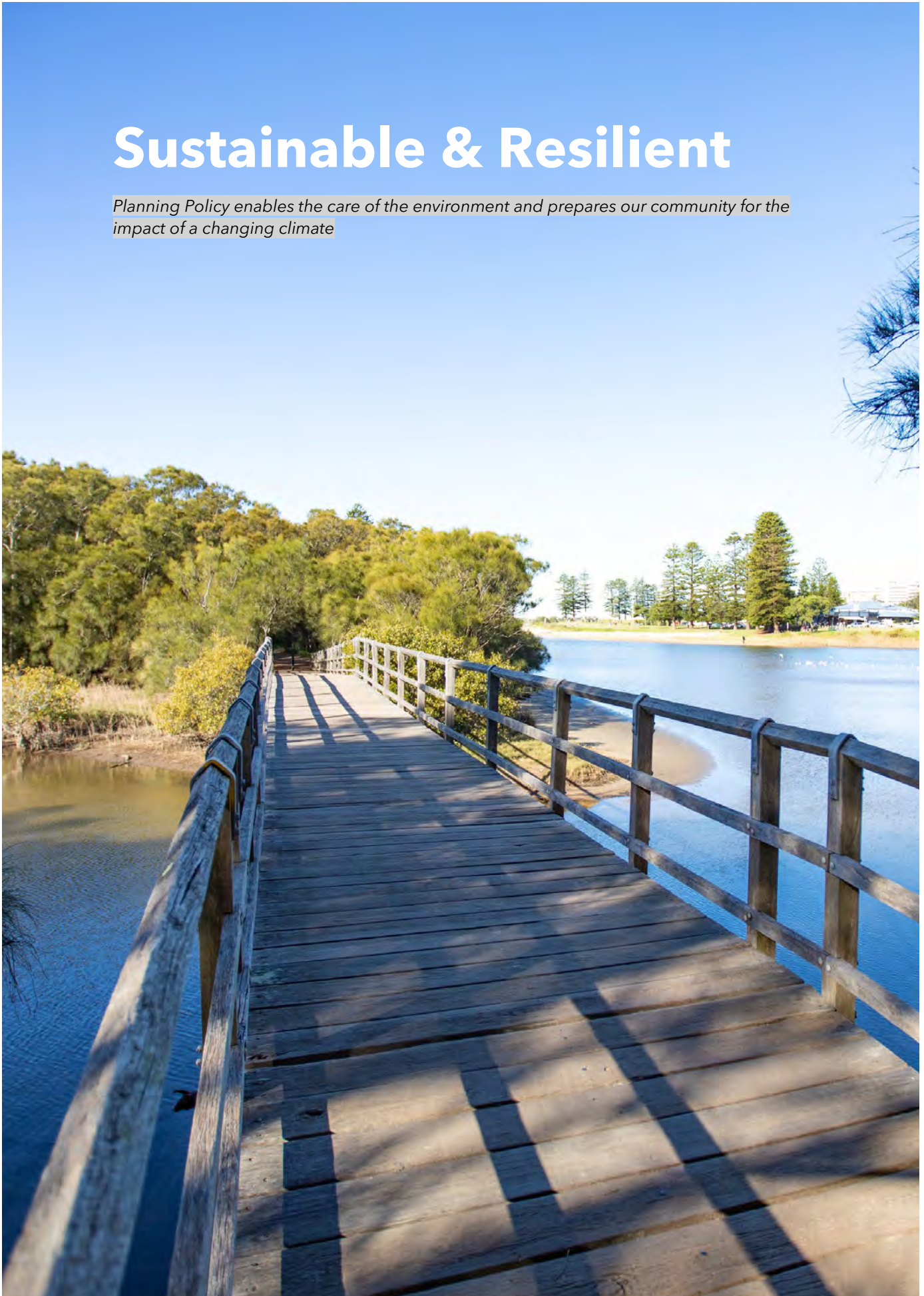
Sustainable and resilient	Liveable and Connected	Productive and Vibrant
1. We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems	4. The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings.	9. Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas
2. We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards	5. We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future	10. The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile
3. We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets	6. The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community	11. Port Kembla's industrial precinct and Port are a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation
	7. Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible	12. The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets
	8. The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression	

Figure 3 - Structure Plan



Sustainable & Resilient

Planning Policy enables the care of the environment and prepares our community for the impact of a changing climate



1. We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems

The community value the preservation and improvement of the natural environment. Council is involved in this through the management and restoration of natural areas under Council care and control, and the conservation of endangered ecological communities and threatened species. We also strategically plan for a coordinated approach to Coastal management, floodplain risk management and stormwater management including protection of waterways, beaches, lakes, lagoons and creeks.

Healthy Country describes healthy, interconnected natural ecosystems, supported by regenerative and sustainable environmental practices. Western and Aboriginal concepts of sustainability are largely shared, including the critical need to reduce the impact of building development on the environment.
Connecting with Country 2023

The Wollongong LEP 2009 includes in its aims - (e) to conserve and enhance remnant terrestrial, aquatic and riparian habitats, native vegetation and fauna species, and (h) to ensure that significant landscapes are conserved, including the Illawarra Escarpment, Lake Illawarra, the drinking water catchment and the coastline.

Development and inappropriate land use are identified as key threats to local biodiversity and ecosystems, with the potential to impact on public health and amenity. For this reason it is critical that we act to protect and enhance our natural environment for current and future generations, in part, through effective and informed strategic land use planning; balancing social, economic and environmental needs and aspirations. ***Council ensures sensitive areas are appropriately zoned to guide development outcomes and manage environmental compliance through regulation and enforcement.***

Over half of Wollongong's LGA is zoned C2 Environmental Conservation (54.2%). This zone enables the protection, management and restoration of areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values and prohibits development that could destroy, damage or have adverse effects on those values. In Wollongong, key areas of environmental value covered under this zone are the Illawarra Escarpment and the Greater Sydney drinking water catchment. A further 17.1% is identified under other environmental zonings including C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves (9.5%), C3 Environmental Management (5.3%), C4 Environmental Living (1%) and W1 Natural Waterways (1.3%). These zones provide for a limited range of development, avoiding uses that could destroy, damage or otherwise have an adverse effect on the special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values of the land.

Land use planning on the Illawarra Escarpment is focused on achieving its ongoing conservation and enhancement. The Escarpment lands include a number of existing communities as well as extractive industries and dormant industrial sites. ***The Illawarra Escarpment and foothills are not seen as an area appropriate for urban growth. Any Planning Proposal on the Escarpment needs to focus on the conservation outcome proposed for the Escarpment and demonstrate how changes will provide an overall improvement to the environmental and cultural values of the Illawarra Escarpment.*** This will be a key consideration as existing mining operations in the escarpment transition over the next decades.

Wollongong's coastal environment is highly valued as a natural landscape, recreational destination and cultural place. The planning framework has a key role to play in ensuring these values are maintained.

"This coastal land holds deep family kinship connections embodied through memories and lives of people and community, extending through time to the ancestors that created this part of the Country. Continuing cultural practices, interwoven with the land and sea environment, have been

maintained for a millennium. Cultural practices across the coastal region, such as food and medicine gathering, teaching and learning, ceremonies and crafts, instil a great sense of wellbeing and responsibility for the conservation of resources in the extended Aboriginal community and demonstrate a continual and deeply rooted held respect for Country" - Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council (2022)⁸.

Wollongong City and Shellharbour City Councils prepared the *Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030 (CMP)*, to provide the strategic direction and specific actions to address the threats to the Lake and maintain its ecological, social and economic values. ***The overall intent of the CMP is to work towards achieving ecological sustainability for Lake Illawarra over the long term. In relation to planning outcomes, the CMP recommends that areas mapped as impacted by tidal inundation should not be eligible for land use intensification.***

As we continue to develop urban land, there are opportunities to protect and enhance our natural environment and retain its interconnected functions. ***Council will prioritise planning and development which seeks to maintain natural physical topography, minimise interference with natural water systems and enable natural healthy water flows, restore and protect original landscapes, restore biodiversity and connect isolated pockets of environmental value.*** These opportunities can be supported enabling Aboriginal communities to practice their cultural obligations to care for Country through practices such as vegetation management, and by providing ongoing opportunities for the Aboriginal Community to be on-Country.

Key Plans to be delivered

- Wollongong Coastal Management Program (in preparation)
- Riparian Corridor Management Strategy for the West Dapto Urban Release Area (in preparation)
- Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy update (joint council project)

Guiding Documents

- Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030
- Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan (2015)
- Flood Risk Management Plans for various catchments
- Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy 2011-2016
- Sustainable Wollongong 2030
- Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022
- Net Zero Wollongong: Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030
- West Dapto Vision 2018
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023
- South Wollongong Futures Study

⁸ Salients for Wollongong City Council, Wollongong Coastal Scoping Study 21 March 2023

2. We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards

Wollongong's natural geography and climate mean it is subject to a range of environmental risks and hazards. Our urban areas are mainly distributed along the coastal plain, which narrows south to north as the distance between the Illawarra Escarpment and the coastline decreases. Our community experiences environmental hazards differently dependant on where they are located within this rich and complex environment. Our planning framework seeks to ensure our urban areas are resilient, that they thrive in ideal conditions, adapt to change, and survive and recover from extreme events. It is likely that over time land use controls for land in vulnerable areas will need to be modified to reduce risks to our community from environmental risks like flooding, bushfire, coastal storm and heat events.

The urban area of Wollongong is located on a coastal plain, bounded by the ocean and Illawarra Escarpment. Due to the steep escarpment slopes, narrow coastal plain and orographic rainfall patterns, the Wollongong LGA is prone to flash flooding. The historic development patterns mean that many developed areas can be affected. Council's Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans (FRMS&P) consider future development scenarios, climate change, mitigation measures and guide management actions, which may include land use planning recommendations. The FRMS&Ps also consider whether access and evacuation routes are available during major floods, information which forms part of the assessment of a Planning Proposal request and Development Applications.

Planning Proposals on land within the flood planning area must address Local Planning Direction 4.1 Flooding. The Direction seeks to ***prevent amendments to the planning framework which would increase risk to people and properties, and place increased requirements on government spending for emergency services and mitigation works.***

The Illawarra Escarpment forms a natural boundary and scenic backdrop to the Wollongong coastal plain. It is one of the most important landscape and cultural features of the region and has high aesthetic value to the local community. The Illawarra Escarpment has elevations in the order of 450 to 700 m AHD. The topography and lush vegetation of the Illawarra Escarpment and its foothills create an attractive environment to live. However, the steep slopes, vegetation cover, bush fire risk, geotechnical risk and flood risk constrains urban development. Much of the Illawarra Escarpment and its foothills has been mapped as being subject to known or likely geotechnical risk.

The steep slopes, large water catchment area and the forested nature of the LGA means that many properties have a bush fire risk. The Rural Fire Service (RFS) has certified Council's Bush Fire Prone Land maps. Planning proposals seeking to amend the LEP are considered against the requirements of Local Planning Direction 4.3 Planning for Bushfire Protection. The Direction aims to ***protect life, property and the environment from bush fire hazards, by discouraging the establishment of incompatible land uses in bush fire prone areas; and encouraging sound management of bush fire prone areas.***

The coast of the Wollongong LGA stretches around 50km from just south of Garie Beach to the Lake Illawarra Entrance at Windang. The northern most 10km between Garie and Stanwell Tops is within the Royal National Park. The coastline comprises a total of 26 beaches, mostly separated by headlands, rock platforms and cliffs, as well as creeks. The distance between the escarpment and the coastline increases as you head south, resulting in smaller estuary catchments in the north and larger catchments to the south.

Council is currently preparing the *Wollongong Coastal Management Program* (excluding the Port of Port Kembla and Lake Illawarra), which will identify coastal management issues and the actions

required to address these issues in a strategic and integrated way. The hazard studies informing the CMP use a 20, 50 and 100 year forecast time frame and consider a range of hazards listed in the Coastal Management Act 2016, including: beach erosion, shoreline recession, coastal lake or watercourse entrance instability, coastal inundation, coastal cliff or slope instability, tidal inundation, erosion and inundation of foreshores caused by tidal waters and waves. The previous *Coastal Zone Management Plan* identified that there are many private properties along the Wollongong Coastline that are potentially affected by existing and future coastal risks. ***Storm erosion and its impacts including loss of land or foundation capacity has been highlighted as a key risk for consideration, as well as coastal and tidal inundation in future planning amendments.***

Much of the urban land along our coastline is zoned for Public Recreation (RE1), or Environmental Conservation (C2), Environmental Management (C3) or Environmental Living (C4) to prevent the intensification of these sites. The larger coastal zone includes the majority of land between the railway line and the coastline between Stanwell Park and Port Kembla. Around Lake Illawarra the coastal zone extends between around 500m to 1km from the lake edge into urban areas. Under Local Planning Direction 4.2 (Coastal Management), planning proposals that seek to amend a local environmental plan in the coastal zone must be consistent with the NSW Coastal Design Guidelines. To achieve this, the planning proposal authority and local plan-making authority will assess a proposal against the requirements set out in section 3.2 of these guidelines. The Direction ***does not permit the intensification of land in the coastal vulnerability area or within a coastal wetlands and littoral rainforest areas and requires the consideration of coastal scenic values within the coastal environment and coastal use area.***

Lake Illawarra is at the southern end of the LGA, straddling both Wollongong City and Shellharbour City Council areas. The Councils' jointly prepared the Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030 (CMP), to provide the strategic direction and specific actions to address the threats to the Lake and to maintain the ecological, social and economic values of the Lake. The overall intent of the CMP is to work towards achieving ecological sustainability for Lake Illawarra over the long term.

Climate change is altering the way people live in Wollongong. We are experiencing more frequent and intense events including heat, flooding, bushfire, storms, droughts and sea-level rise. These hazards have impacts on the health and wellbeing of the community as well as our built and natural environments. To reduce these impacts our community is supportive of achieving net zero emissions and protecting and investing in our natural environment. Opportunities to support emissions reductions within our community via Council's land use planning framework include support for a renewable energy transition, energy efficiency, reducing waste, sustainable transport, protecting and enhancing our natural environments and green industry. It is important that we work together towards reducing emissions and increasing resilience, and our planning system enables us to mitigate, adapt, and respond to our changing environment guided by strategically planning for a coordinated approach to risk.

As part of their goal to reduce emissions and transition to renewable energy generation, the State government has designated land within Wollongong LGA as a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). The REZs bring together investment in renewable energy, storage and transmission infrastructure to deliver reliable, affordable and clean electricity for the people of NSW as coal-fired power stations retire over the next 10 to 15 years. ***Projects within the zone have the potential to contribute significantly to Wollongong's net zero targets by reducing emissions from traditional energy generation.***

The REZ includes all of the urban land in Wollongong LGA south of North Wollongong, as well as an area within Shellharbour LGA. The REZ will take advantage of Wollongong's major energy and transport infrastructure, our potential for onshore generation, storage and transmission of renewable energy.

The Illawarra Offshore Wind Zone is governed by the Federal Government's Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021 and has been designated in commonwealth waters off the coast of Wollongong. ***Projects within the REZ and offshore will require a considered approach to environmental impacts, both at the site of the activities and along the path of transmission lines.***

Council's services and strategic plans seek to meet the development needs of our growing community in a sustainable way which does not put future generations at risk, commit government and private land-owners to significant ongoing costs, or put in place mitigation which will compromise other environmental values. In line with the NSW State Government, we are committed to reducing community emissions to reach net zero emissions in Wollongong by 2050. Council's services and strategic plans seek to meet the development needs of our growing community in a sustainable and resilient way which does not put future generations at risk, commit government and private land-owners to significant ongoing costs, or put in place mitigation which will compromise other environmental values. Our planning framework will support the community to be more adaptive to the impacts of climate change and reduce the future impacts of climate change through reducing emissions.

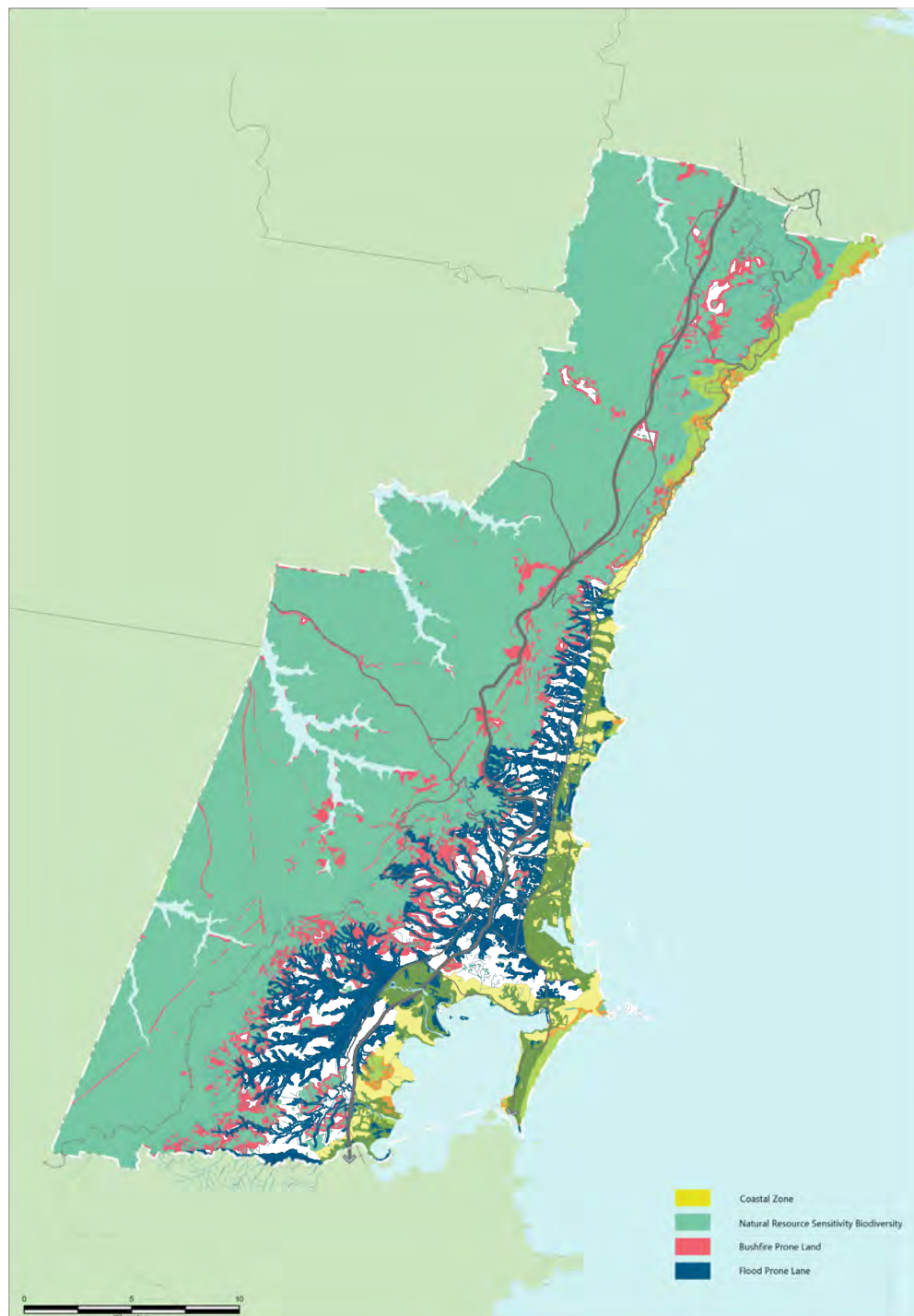
Key plans to be delivered

- Wollongong Coastal Management Program (in preparation)
- Floodplain Risk Management Plans for the following catchments:
 - o Hewitts Creek
 - o Collins Creek
 - o Wollongong City
 - o Brooks Creek
 - o Lake Illawarra
 - o Duck Creek
 - o Minnegang, Hospital Creek and Kully Bay

Guiding Documents

- Sustainable Wollongong 2030
- Net Zero Wollongong Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030
- Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022
- Climate Change Friendly Planning Framework
- Urban Heat Strategy 2023
- Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030
- Coastal Zone Management Program 2017
- Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan 2015
- Flood Risk Management Plans for various catchments
- Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023
- South Wollongong Futures Study

Figure 4 - Key environmental risks and hazards



3. We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets

The climate of the Wollongong area is warming. We can expect an increased frequency and duration of periods of extreme heat. Urban areas are hotter than rural or natural areas, due to the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect. Green infrastructure - tree canopy and open green spaces - is key to cooling our urban environments. Open green spaces and green streets are also places of high social value to the community.

Wollongong is fortunate to have large areas of open space, beaches and National Parks. We use our open spaces for a variety of passive and active recreational activities. As our population grows, access to high amenity natural and urban green space will be key to the wellbeing of the community and parks and reserves will come under greater utilisation pressure. Due to high prices and competing needs for land expanding the amount of public open space in existing urban areas will be challenging. This highlights the need to utilise our existing open spaces and streets creatively to maximise urban greening and community recreation.

The Wollongong LEP 2009 includes in its aims (d) *to improve the quality of life and the social wellbeing and amenity of residents, business operators, workers and visitors*. Trees and vegetation are critical to the amenity, recreation opportunities and liveability of the City - and the wellbeing of residents.

Council plays a significant role in restoring natural areas, managing vegetation on public land, and protecting and enhancing vegetation on private land. We have a leadership role in delivering quality streetscapes, improved public amenity and increased shade. Urban greening is a strategic approach to increase the quality and quantity of all vegetation and open green space on all land types in an urban setting. Green infrastructure delivers a range of benefits including mitigating flooding (ie through bank stabilisation), improving air and water quality, cooling the urban environment, encouraging active transport modes, and enhancing biodiversity and ecological resilience.

Council's commitment to urban greening is articulated through the *Urban Greening Strategy* which set a goal for 35% tree canopy cover by 2037. Since the previous LSPS was adopted, tree canopy has increased from 17% to 27%⁹.

Wollongong streets contribute to the natural components of the urban environment through street tree and verge planting. These green elements contribute to more attractive and active streets because they provide more comfortable and pleasing environments for people. The retention and protection of existing trees is key to increasing tree canopy and protecting and maintaining networks of undisturbed deep soil. Existing trees also play an important role in maintaining healthy Country, and mitigating the visual impacts of changes in the built environment. ***New tree planting in the urban environment, especially on our streets and within large hardstand areas like car parks is essential to mitigate against urban heat and provide a network of tree canopy for biodiversity.***

There is currently 46 km² of land (6.2% of the LGA) zoned for Public Recreation (RE1) which includes both Council and Crown Land in the form of parks, sporting fields and reserves. Of the Council owned land, 8.4 km² (1128 lots) is categorised as park and 4.2 km² (150 lots) as sportsground.

As we plan for a denser, more populous City there is need to ensure our urban environment provides the quantity and quality of green spaces our community needs. Council's strategic

⁹ MetroMap Insights - Vector Trees Layer 2023 © Aerometrex Ltd 2024'

framework for open space, recreational facilities and community facilities *Planning People Places* 2006-2026 highlights the need for strategic planning to either only increase housing density in areas where open space provision can sustain additional populations or, commit to improving open space provision to meet additional needs. The strategy outlines an approach to providing, developing and managing open space that maintains an equitable spread of spaces, applies a hierarchy of scale and quality, maintains a consistent level of design and management quality and uses sustainable management practices.

Council's *Play Wollongong Strategy 2014 - 2024*, *Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2023/2027* and *Future of our Pools Strategy 2014 - 2024* all analyse and address the community's requirements for open space and recreation. Council will renew the *Play Wollongong Strategy* over the next 12 months. This Strategy covers all public open space in the LGA where the primary purpose of the land is for passive recreation (ie not sport, conservation, easements etc). The development of this strategy update will consider the community's open space requirements in light of the planned population growth.

Table 1: Residential Zoned lots in Public Open Space catchments

Zoned lots	Distance to public open space (radius circles)	
	400m	800m
General Residential	66%	99%
Low Density Residential	86%	97%
Medium Density Residential	87%	99%

Source: Land iQ site search - distance to public open space

Although most of our residential areas are nearby to public open spaces, there are some areas where distribution could be improved.

Across the Centre and Train Station surrounds planned for uplift via the *Transport Oriented Development* (TOD) and *Low-and Mid-Rise Housing* (LMR) programs, opens space provision varies.

Table 2: Lots outside public open space catchments in intensifying areas

Number of lots more than 400m from public open space (radius circle)	
TOD	
Dapto	42
Corrimal	0
North Wollongong	1
LMR	
Dapto	239
Fairy Meadow	51
Warrawong	217
Corrimal	10

Source: Land iQ site search - distance to public open space

The above radial catchment data available through the State's Land iQ software does not take into account features of accessibility including walking paths, cycling routes or topography, nor does it give a picture of the size or quality of the available open space. The update to the *Play Wollongong Strategy* will deliver more detailed analysis to develop a robust LGA-wide framework to evaluate growth planning against public open space provision and access.

Planning Proposals to increase residential density must demonstrate inclusive and equitable provision of public open space. Public open spaces must be designed to ensure adequate sunlight in mid-winter to ensure the health of vegetation and the active use of the space; and shade during mid-summer to protect users from UV radiation. They are to be safe, accessible, connected and green.

Key Plans to be delivered

- *Play Wollongong Update*
- *MacCabe Park Masterplan*
- *Lang Park Masterplan*
- *Urban Greening Strategy Update*

Guiding Documents

- *Planning People Places 2006-2026*
- *Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024*
- *Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2037 - 2027*
- *The Future of our Pools Strategy 2014-2024*
- *Net Zero Wollongong Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030*
- *Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022*
- *Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037*
- *Urban Heat Strategy 2023*
- *Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028*
- *Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy*
- *Plans of Management for Council Community Land*
- *Plans of Management for Crown Reserves*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*

Liveable & Connected

Planning policy enables great places for a growing population to live, work and play



4. The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings.

Wollongong is set within a dramatic landscape with beaches, changing coastal topography, the Illawarra Escarpment, and Lake Illawarra. These landscapes have cultural, environmental, and recreational values. Over time, human settlement has left physical patterns in the form of open spaces, streets and buildings that combine to create unique places with local character across different broad areas.

Strategic planning and development within Wollongong will respect these contextual values, enhancing areas of environmental and cultural value, and enabling the design of buildings and places in recognition that we are always on Country, and always in the context of a varied landscape, heritage and social settings and systems.

Our population, businesses and industries are growing, and this presents both opportunities and challenges. We will proactively plan for additional housing and jobs in appropriate locations, supported by a range of infrastructure that encourages sustainable transport options. In doing so, we need to balance growth with high quality place-based design of development, strategic infrastructure delivery, land use constraints, natural hazards and the needs of the current and future community.

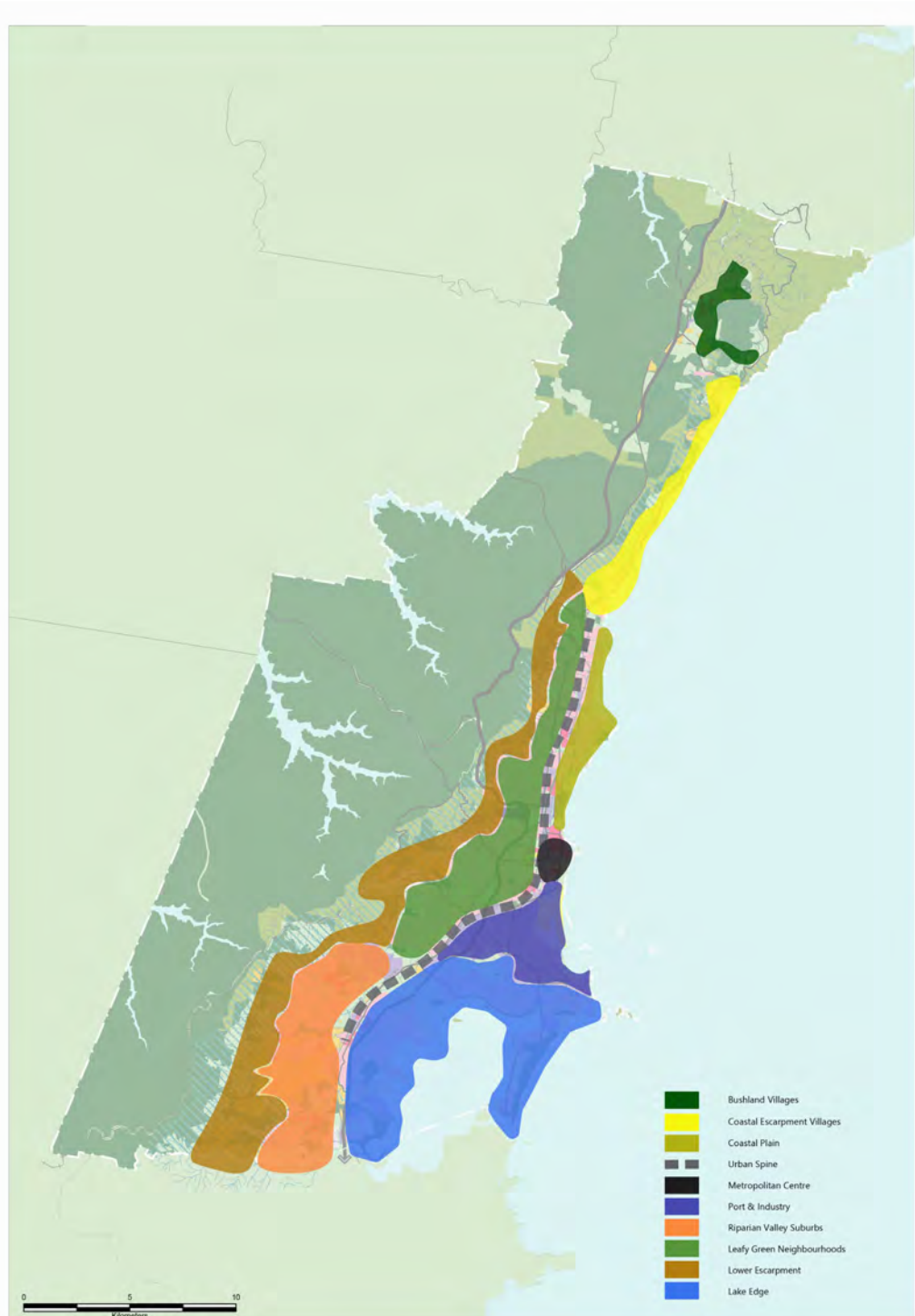
Some areas of Wollongong are not appropriate for certain types of development. This is due to land use constraints, natural hazards, environmental and cultural sensitivities, or infrastructure limits. Current legislation and planning policy generally reflects these restrictions and defines processes to mitigate impact and risk. From time to time the planning framework is amended to further enable this approach.

Managing constraints is one part of a place-based approach to the design of places and buildings. Recognising contextual values and responding to these in the planning and design of places is another significant component.

The NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (Act) includes the object '(g) to promote good design and amenity of the built environment'. *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW (GANSW)* established what the NSW Government expects regarding good design and effective process. Objective 1 of *Better Placed* is 'Better fit: contextual, local and of its place. *Good design in the built environment is informed by and derived from its location, context and social setting. It is place-based and relevant to and resonant with local character, and communal aspirations. It also contributes to evolving character and setting.*'

Wollongong includes many distinctive places with recognisable character. Character is a combination of: environmental setting and systems; people and activities; buildings, streets and open spaces; history, culture and tradition. Broadly speaking, Wollongong's character areas are intrinsically linked to natural features and how development has responded to these over time. These broad areas are indicated in Figure 5 and the renewing of character statements in the Wollongong Development Control Plan will take this broader landscape approach moving forward.

Figure 5 – Character Areas



Character is not static, it evolves over time as people and processes impact places. For the character of a place to evolve in a positive way, new interventions should draw on valued existing characteristics whilst delivering on the needs of the community. Improving the identity of a place and supporting its character has a positive effect on liveability and economic prosperity.

Embedded in the character of Wollongong is the cultural significance and practices held by Aboriginal traditional knowledge holders. The sharing of knowledge by Aboriginal knowledge holders is a generous act and provides significant value in the process of strategic planning. Council has and will continue to work with the Aboriginal community to develop place based assessments and frameworks to guide projects and plans. We will continue to seek direction from Aboriginal community, including exploring opportunities to draw together existing cultural value mapping and assessments and build on these to guide and frame future engagement and planning.

There is scope within the planning framework currently in place in Wollongong for a significant level of development. This means that some change is likely across most of our urban area. Our community is familiar with this kind of change, which might occur as a secondary dwelling in a neighbour's backyard, a single dwelling being replaced by a set of town houses, or several commercial buildings being replaced by a shop-top housing development. Over the past 10 years the Wollongong CBD has seen a dramatic change to the skyline with multiple new commercial and mixed-use projects utilising the capacity available in the current planning controls. Similarly, in West Dapto large areas of rural land have transitioned to low and medium density housing.

Development occurring within the existing planning framework must meet its requirements for contextual considerations. Across multiple planning pathways, including complying development and state assessed development applications, the requirements for a development to adhere to specific place-based controls like a development control plan are varied. Planning Proposals to amend the land use and development controls in an area must address a range of contextual issues via the Local Planning Directions, State Environmental Policies, Regional Plan and this Local Strategic Planning Statement.

As Wollongong grows and changes, the qualities and characteristics that are valued and distinctive are to be reinforced. Urban Design Analysis and testing is key to informing changes to the planning framework, which often need to be supported through a masterplan. This work ensures contextual issues are considered and drawn upon, including:

- Identifying important aspects of our natural and cultural heritage, including significant Aboriginal and European sites, assets or values and creating proposals that conserve and acknowledge the historic and cultural context.
- Consideration of existing and desired future character aspects including broad landscape areas, scale, height, density, and allotment pattern, and ensuring important views are maintained from streets and key public spaces.
- How the LEP land use, height, and floorspace controls will result in building typologies and streets that are able to retain significant vegetation, work with topography, maintain important view lines and relate to existing development.

Guiding Documents

- *Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023 - 2027*
- *Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023*
- *Sustainable Wollongong 2030*
- *West Dapto Vision 2018*
- *Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 - 2023*

5. We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future

The Illawarra Shoalhaven will be the fastest growing region in the state, with Wollongong forecast to add between 66,000¹⁰ to 70,000¹¹ people to its population by 2046. Wollongong's planning framework will evolve to allow for a sufficient pipeline of housing to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population. Diverse and high-quality housing means housing that is great for people and place - varied to provide choice of type and cost, and high-performing to ensure community well-being and a sustainable environment.

Wollongong's existing housing stock is made up of 89,337 dwellings including 59,206 separate houses, 18,273 medium density dwellings, and 10,957 high density dwellings.¹²

The community that these dwellings house is diverse. Analysis of the household/family types in Wollongong City in 2021 compared to Regional NSW shows that there was a higher proportion of couple families with children as well as a similar proportion of one-parent families. There was a lower proportion of lone person households and a lower proportion of couples without children. In 2021 64% of households were purchasing or fully owned their home, 23.1% were renting privately, and 6.8% were in social housing.

What's driving the demand for housing in our City has changed over time. Despite the competition for land and dwellings that comes with a growing population and a finite land supply, our homes are being built larger and housing less people than ever before. Household size is forecast to continue to decrease from 2.48 people per dwelling in 2026 to 2.40 by 2046¹³, meaning the same population would require 890 more homes in 2046 than it did in 2026.

The supply of housing is also changing. Although we're seeing an increase in the diversity of housing types being built, and improved policy and regulation relating to sustainability and construction quality, these dwellings are not available to a wide range of incomes. In the 12 months preceding June 2024, there were no 'entry level' houses (\$810K) or units (\$576K) on the market for purchase, meaning no households on very low, low or moderate incomes could afford to buy a home in Wollongong¹⁴. Rental in 'Entry level' (\$450/w) and 'Median' (\$550/w) units was slightly more available, though only for those on moderate incomes¹⁵.

Housing Policy context

The *National Planning Reform Blueprint* has defined 10 measures to improve housing supply through planning reform. These measures are intended to drive improvements to planning systems to assist jurisdictions in meeting national housing supply targets of new well-located homes. The NSW Government has been delivering against these measures via a range of planning reforms which Council has been actively engaged in implementing at a local level. These reforms, coupled with Council's density uplift program, are intended to deliver a significant amount of capacity for housing, sufficient to meet the short term 2029 target and also generate ongoing supply in the medium and long term.

- **Targets:** NSW released 5-year LGA housing completion targets for each of the 43 Local Government Areas across Greater Sydney, Illawarra-Shoalhaven, Central Coast and Greater

¹⁰ Population and household forecasts, 2021-2046, .id (informed decisions)

¹¹ Common Planning Assumptions, 2024, DPHI

¹² Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021, ABS

¹³ Forecast population, households and dwellings, 2026 - 2046, .id (informed decisions)

¹⁴ Housing purchase affordability, 12 months to June 2024, .id(informed decisions)

¹⁵ Housing rental affordability, 12 months to June 2024, .id(informed decisions)

Newcastle regions, and one target for regional NSW. Wollongong's housing target is for the delivery of an additional 9,200 constructed homes by 2029.

- **Transport-oriented development:** State led rezoning proposals for transport-oriented development (TOD) accelerated precincts in Greater Sydney were finalised in late 2024. A further set of TOD planning amendments have been applied around 37 train stations. In Wollongong, this has resulted in increased height and floorspace controls applying to the development of residential flat buildings and shop top housing on land surrounding Dapto and Corrimal Train Stations, with North Wollongong Station expected to follow in April 2025. Council has also nominated Wollongong as a potential Tier 1, and Coniston and Unanderra as potential Tier 2 TOD sites.
- **Low- and Mid-Rise housing:** Two phases of the Low- and Mid-Rise housing policy reforms have been implemented, including increasing the permissibility of medium density housing types across residential zones, and increasing the allowable density of medium density housing types around Centres and Train Stations. In Wollongong these reforms have effect around 4 town centres – Warrawong, Dapto, Fairy Meadow and Corrimal. Supporting delivery of these housing types is the development of the Government Architect NSW housing pattern book.
- **Infill affordable housing bonus:** Amendments to the Housing SEPP have introduced a bonus of up to 30% additional height and floorspace to incentivise the inclusion of 10-15% affordable housing (for 15 years) in new apartment development. Since its implementation in December 2023, there have been 11 applications under this planning pathway, including State Significant Development requests and modifications to existing development consents to take advantage of the bonus. These applications include a total of 525 affordable dwellings in the Wollongong City Centre which has higher height and floor space ratios. If all are approved and constructed, this would significantly increase the LGA's supply of affordable rental dwellings (managed by Community Housing Providers).
- **State Assessed Planning Proposal Pilot:** The State Assessed Planning Proposal Pilot (SAPP) invited applications for site based rezonings linked to increased housing supply. A planning proposal to permit some 1,300 dwellings in a development up to 78m/22 storeys on the Warrawong Plaza site was finalised in February 2025.
- **Urban Development Program:** The Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI) is working with State agencies, local councils, and industry through the Urban Development Program (UDP) to establish an evidence base on housing supply at a granular level and to develop the first Infrastructure Opportunities Plans, that outline the long list of infrastructure to effectively support housing and productivity growth. The UDP monitors housing development, land supply and infrastructure delivery in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Region. Importantly, this monitor reports on both building approvals and net completions, helping government to realistically compare approval numbers with housing completion targets. No Infrastructure Opportunities Plans have been released for Wollongong to date.
- **Housing Acceleration Fund:** The Housing Acceleration Fund (HAF) provides grants for critical infrastructure projects which help accelerate the delivery of housing. Projects funded under the HAF include transport, water, wastewater, drainage and community infrastructure. Wollongong has been appreciative of receiving several HAF grants funding road and wastewater projects in West Dapto Urban Release Area.
- **Housing Delivery Authority (HDA):** The Housing Delivery Authority (HDA) has been established to consider proponent-led rezoning and development proposals for larger residential development.

Our housing future

In February 2023 Council adopted the *Wollongong Housing Strategy* which was endorsed by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on 17 July 2023. The Strategy presented an

ambitious housing agenda, proposing to increase housing supply substantially in appropriate locations and increase the amount of available Affordable Rental Housing. Council has implemented a range of actions from this Strategy, including the development of an affordable housing policy and procedure, planning proposals to release land at West Dapto for housing, and a planning proposal to limit development on large lots in the Illawarra Escarpment foothills. Ongoing work includes the review of Council owned reserves, increasing development capacity in medium density zones and an affordable housing scheme.

Housing Strategy Vision

Housing will respond to Wollongong's unique environmental setting and heritage.

New housing will continue to diversify supply and provide choice for residents. Diversity will be provided through a variety of housing types, sizes, configurations, and features, to cater for a wide range of residential needs and price-points. Focus for diversity will be on affordable, smaller, and/or adaptable housing located throughout the Wollongong LGA to cater for a range of incomes and abilities.

Wollongong City Centre will deliver a range of higher density housing options in appropriate locations having regard to retail and commercial outcomes. It will be a thriving and unique regional city, delivering a diverse economy and offering a high quality lifestyle. It will be liveable and a place where people will want to live, learn, work and play.

Urban Release Areas such as West Dapto, will deliver the largest proportion of new housing supply and will be adequately serviced with essential infrastructure.

Town and village centres, and land zoned for medium density residential development will promote their distinctive character, whilst planning for and facilitating growth and high quality design in desired locations.

Wollongong will strive to increase affordability in the housing market, and to ensure housing provides for a wide range of incomes, people with a disability and for our ageing population.

The State's short term housing targets for Wollongong require the LGA to provide 9,200 constructed dwellings over the five years from July 2024 to July 2029, or 1,840 per year. Just over half that number is expected to eventuate from existing approvals or rezonings that have already occurred. The remaining number are expected to be delivered through the NSW Government's housing reforms¹⁶.

Over the past 30 years, Wollongong has added an average of 819 dwellings to the LGA every year¹⁷. Like our neighbours in Greater Sydney¹⁸, we experienced a peak in housing delivery in 2016/17 when dwelling completions topped out at 1,453. Smaller peaks occurred in 2018/19 and 2020/21 before falling back to pre 2017 levels (~600-800) in 2021/22. The construction or completion of dwellings is influenced by a range of factors, such as interest rates, changing legislation, price of material and labour which are beyond the control of Council.

Council has a role in providing zoned land, enabling planning controls, infrastructure planning and in the assessment of development applications for residential development. Dwelling approval data shows that on average 1,068 dwellings are approved annually. As a consequence, there is an average difference of approximately 200 dwellings per year between approvals and completions. The State's targets for Wollongong are ambitious and require a concerted effort from multiple levels of government and private industry.

¹⁶ NSW Planning, Wollongong Council's housing snapshot, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/housing-targets/wollongong-councils-housing-snapshot>

¹⁷ Illawarra Shoalhaven Urban Development Program Dashboard

¹⁸ Sydney Housing Supply Forecast

The range of policy amendments introduced by the State to assist in meeting their targets and incentivising the provision of affordable housing discussed above are extensive. It is likely that both State and Local governments will continue to modify the planning framework and planning pathways to enable the delivery of housing. These initiatives will see the character of some areas change and development outcomes may not always align with community preferences.

In order to accommodate a community which is forecast to grow across all age groups, housing across Wollongong in 2046 will be diverse in type and size, and located to ensure we maximise the value of existing infrastructure.

Challenges

We face a range of challenges in delivering diverse and high-quality housing for Wollongong.

The planning framework does not control how many applications for residential development are submitted, or how many approved development applications go on to be constructed. Council's role is to enable housing development by ensuring there is capacity in the planning framework to house future populations and to assess applications efficiently and in alignment with regulations.

Some locations are constrained by limited infrastructure as well as environmental sensitivities and are not appropriate for intensification of housing, such as the northern coastal escarpment villages.

Providing infrastructure, amenities, facilities and public spaces for current and future West Dapto residents will require partnerships, funding and advocacy in a coordinated and timely way. Delivery of the West Dapto Urban Release Area (WDURA) in stages, and a sensible sequence, is crucial to this approach, to ensure the delivery of infrastructure can be concentrated alongside the growth of housing. ***Council is not intending to progress zoning for urban development within the Stage 4 area of the WDURA until there is clear commitment from Transport for NSW and Sydney Water to supporting infrastructure for that Stage, and no detrimental effect on the progression of the stages 1,2,3 and 5.***

Wollongong's available land is contested by a range of competing land use agendas. The objectives of Land Use zones can be compromised by the addition of new uses. In our effort to increase supply of housing, it is important that other outcomes for employment, industrial development, recreation, heritage and environmental conservation are not ignored. ***Planning proposals to add or increase residential uses that do not align with the objectives of the zone, or which seek to rezone Employment (E), Recreation (RE1), or Environmental (C) land to a residential zone are not encouraged.***

As we increase our stock of dwellings in Wollongong, it is important that they contribute to safe climate, comfortable living, and affordable running costs for the community. ***Council is reviewing the sustainability measures in our DCP to align with community expectations, create healthier living conditions and potentially increase cost of living expenses.***

Our residential zones currently include broad permissibility of different residential typologies. The R1 General Residential, R2 Low Density Residential Zone and the R3 Medium Density Zone permit the full range of residential typologies (dwelling house, dual occupancies, semi-detached dwellings, attached dwellings, multi dwelling housing, residential flat buildings, shop top housing). R4 High density Residential is the only zone which does not permit the lower scale uses (dwelling house, dual occupancies, semi-detached dwellings). Different height and floorspace controls across these zones tend to restrict or incentivise certain typologies, in line with the objectives of the zone and characteristics of the place. However, the permissibility of these lower scale typologies together with moderately increased height and floorspace controls in the R3 zone means that they are dominated by larger single or attached dwellings, which do not deliver the potential housing supply of these zones. ***Amendments to the planning framework to preserve the intent of the***

medium density residential zones, and investigate increase to height and floorspace controls in some locations are being considered by Council.

Housing Growth

We have capacity in our existing zoned land, under the State planning pathways and in the planned urban release areas to deliver housing for our community in the short, medium and long term.

Wollongong CBD will continue to support its key employment and economic role with an increasing population of apartment dwellers energising the streets day and night. The population of the CBD area is forecast to double between 2025 and 2046, increasing from 9,090 to 18,125¹⁹. Over 2,400 dwellings have been completed in the City Centre in the last 11 years. An additional ~1,000 dwellings are under construction, a further ~2,000 dwellings have been approved but construction has not commenced, and a further 2,100 dwellings are under assessment.

West Lake Illawarra Urban Release areas will continue to deliver detached and medium density housing supported by transport, recreation and social infrastructure. Stages 1,2,3 and 5 of the **West Dapto Urban Release Area** (WDURA) have been zoned to permit urban development. Some 14,800 dwellings are enabled through the zoning, of which 6,215 lots have been approved through neighbourhood Plans, 2,900 lots have been approved for subdivision, 509 medium density development dwellings approved and some 2,700 lots have been released. Council has sold a property in Stream Hill to assist housing supply. **Tallawarra** has been rezoned to permit urban development and enable 1,100 dwellings. **Calderwood** spans across Wollongong and Shellharbour LGAs. The Wollongong portion has been rezoned to enable around 700 dwellings.

We will see more medium density housing of varying sizes in and around our **Centres and train stations**, and in **medium density zones**.

Council will continue to work with **private developers** and **public agencies** on **opportunity sites**. In 2022, the former Corrimall Coke Works site was rezoned to permit some 550 dwellings and development is now occurring on-site. Potential for additional housing capacity has been made available on the site via the State's planning reforms. Council has a memorandum of understanding with Homes NSW to collaborate with them to renew their portfolio. Homes NSW will continue to undertake its neighbourhood infill renewal programs, replacing small groups of detached houses with medium density housing types. Major estate renewals at Gwynneville and Bellambi are also progressing with community involvement.

Importantly, not all areas will see growth. The Housing Strategy outlines areas or conditions where it is not appropriate to increase housing density, or where it may be necessary to reduce that density. Key areas where additional residential development is proposed to be limited include the Illawarra Escarpment Foothills, the northern villages (north of Thirroul), Helensburgh surrounds, and high and medium flood risk areas in Windang and Fairy Meadow.

Key plans to be delivered

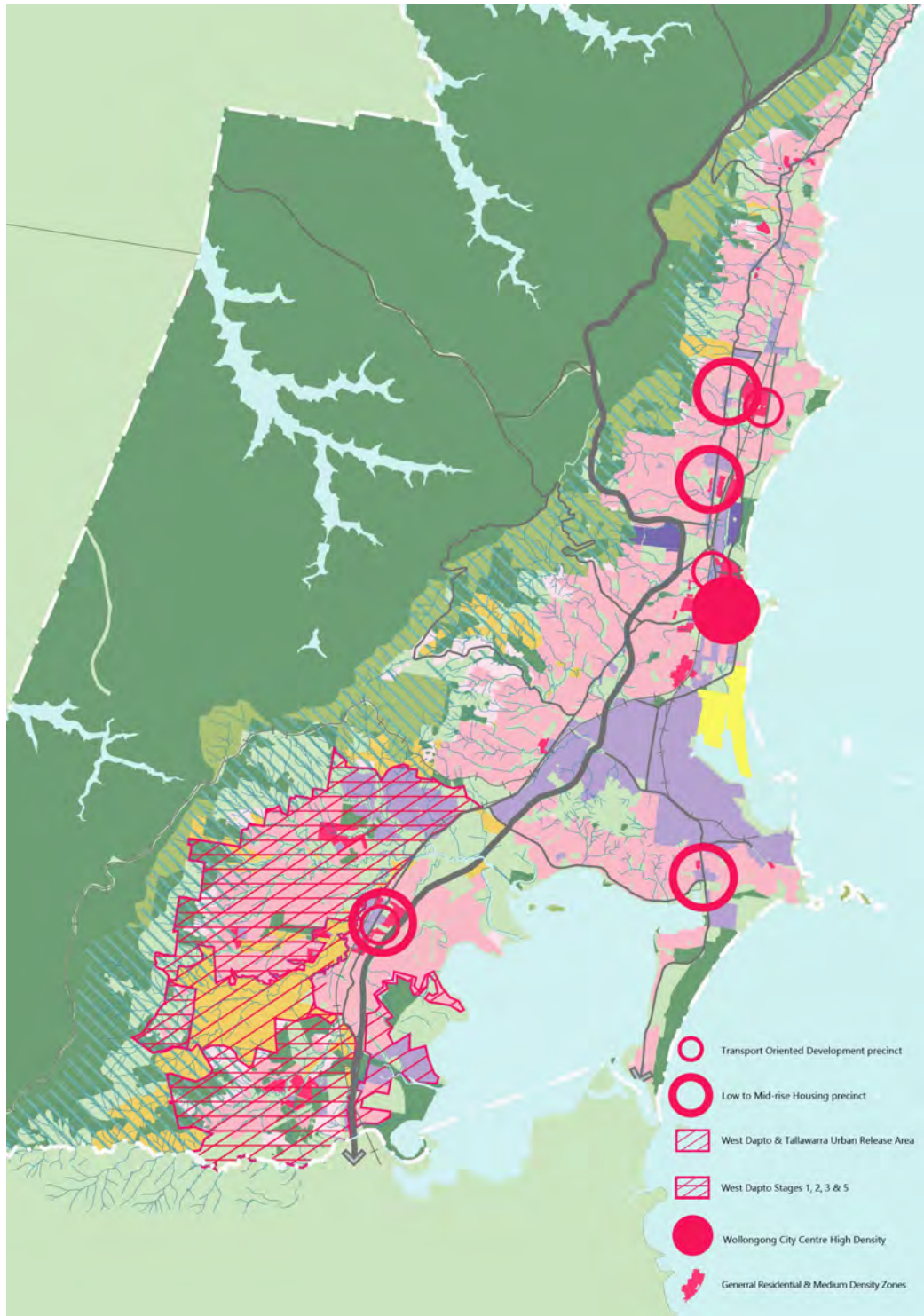
- *Wollongong Affordable Housing Scheme (in preparation)*

Guiding documents

- *Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023*
- *West Dapto Vision 2018*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*
- *Wollongong Affordable Housing Policy and Procedures 2024*

¹⁹ Id (informed decisions) *Wollongong Central small area forecast*

Figure 6 - Inset: housing growth focus areas



Note: this map includes North Wollongong TOD which is expected to be formalised in April 2025

6. The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community

Our vision for our City, town and villages Centres is to create vibrant, accessible, and well-defined spaces that meet community needs while supporting economic growth, sustainability, and social well-being. As the retail goods landscape continues to evolve, complimentary services and experiences are key to the ongoing economic life of our Centres. Our community told us that a diverse mix of uses was the most important attribute of their local centre.

Key to the planning controls governing development in Centres is the Centres Hierarchy which describes the characteristics of our City Centre, Major Regional Centres, Major Towns, Towns, Villages and Small Villages.

The *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy* was adopted in 2023 and endorsed by the Department of Planning, Housing and Environment on 27 July 2023. The Strategy demonstrated that Wollongong's Centres have sufficient retail supply to meet current demand. Our Centres also have a generous amount of feasible supply within the existing planning framework to allow retail businesses to grow in response to increased demand to 2041 and beyond. This room to grow will also need to accommodate complimentary uses appropriate to the type of Centre.

The delivery of planned Centres in West Dapto is critical to ensure the proper functionality of the urban release area. Expectations for development outcomes for zoned West Dapto Centre sites, including land use mix and built form, is being explored and formalised through master-planning processes.

Wollongong CBD is our highest order Centre, and much of the high-quality office space needed to deliver on future jobs generation is expected to be accommodated within it. To attract these jobs a work precinct is required with a distinctly commercial sense of address and strong networking opportunities amongst allied businesses. The Wollongong CBD has strong retail demand²⁰ but suffers from dispersed and diluted retail activity due to the large size of the commercial and mixed-use zones which current require non-residential uses on the ground floor. The Crown Street Mall is evolving into a vibrant environment at the heart of the CBD supported by a range of commercial and community activity which is active day and night.

Centres can play a role in the delivery of medium density housing. The Strategy has identified which Centres have excess supply that could be absorbed through an increase in residential population within the Centre catchment. This information, together with planning and urban design analysis will inform potential increases to residential density in or around some centres like Berkeley, Corrimal, Fairy Meadow, Unanderra, Warrawong. The areas surrounding the Centres of Corrimal, Fairy Meadow and Warrawong also feature uplifted controls as part of the State's Low- and Mid-Rise Housing reforms.

Night-time economies are becoming an increasingly important component of our city and town centres. Centres with successful night-time economies are supported by high quality public spaces, including public space activation and events programs and appropriate infrastructure. Council is committed to supporting the participation of artists and performers, and engaging with a range of planning and regulatory reforms to enable businesses to grow the evening economy and contribute to the vibrancy of our Centres.

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

²⁰ SGS retail gravity modelling showed forecast demand for 91,175sqm of retail floorspace from 2021 out to 2041

community has reasonable access by walking to daily convenience needs from most areas. The western outskirts of suburbs south of Wollongong CBD are an exception. The planned town and village Centres of West Dapto will all need supermarkets and/or grocery stores in order to achieve optimal walkable accessibility (800m).

The Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy made a range of recommendations to benefit our network of centres. Council is progressing with the implementation of these recommendations. The DCP chapter B4 has been updated with a revised retail and business Centre hierarchy and definitions to reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong's Centres and guide their growth. Work is progressing on a planning proposal to adjust the boundaries of some centres to protect existing supply or tighten boundaries to concentrate retail activity. This work will also compliment the broader agenda to increase housing supply in appropriate areas, by providing more flexibility for mixed uses on the fringe of some centres.

Guiding Documents

- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*
- *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020*
- *'Places for the Future' Social Infrastructure Future Directions Plan: 2023 - 2036*
- *Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D15 West Dapto Urban Release Area Neighbourhood plans and Centre Masterplans*
- *Creative Wollongong 2030*

7. Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible

As we plan for our growing population, our transport network needs to enable a shift in transport modes from private vehicle dependence to public and active transport. This shift will result in a reduction in: greenhouse gas emissions; urban heat; travel times; and poor health outcomes. And increase reliability, social and economic participation, the safety of our streets and the health of our community.

Wollongong's contemporary transport network traces some of the travel routes of our Traditional Custodians, the Dharawal speaking nations. What we now know as the Princes Highway, Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Bulli Pass and Picton Road, are part of a transport network that has been connecting communities for thousands of years²¹.

The early years of urban development in Wollongong, with its fine grain street grids and regional rail line, reflect a period where active and public transport were the mainstays of the transport system. After the 1930's transport planning in Wollongong became increasingly car-centric, based on the assumption that ours would be a car based future. Today, 8 out of 10 trips are by car, and over half of those are less than 1km.

Without change in the way the transport network operates, and how our community travel, over the next 10 years increased vehicle kms will add an environmental cost of \$48m to the community, vehicle delay hours in the AM peak will increase by 21%, and there will be 3,300 more car trips from West Dapto Release Area in the AM peak²².

Council is working to create a resilient and adaptable transport network that allows people to meet their transport needs in a variety of ways. We are committed to managing our street network for all users with a priority on measures to improve public transit, active travel infrastructure, public spaces, traffic calming, landscaping, and mixed uses to foster safe, accessible and attractive areas. Transport for NSW's *Movement and Place Framework* and the *Design of Roads and Streets Guide* are key in aligning these measures with the role and function of the streets in our network.

Our walking network will be accessible and comfortable. Bike riding paths will be inclusive, safe and comfortable, and will continue to be a key driver for mode shift and bike tourism. Active travel will become more attractive for short local trips. Public transport will become more competitive and attractive as a primary option – and will integrate with other travel modes like walking and bike riding. The allocation of on and off-street car parking will create access for those who need it and support high demand locations alongside other transport modes. There will be an emphasis on efficient management of on-street parking in high-demand areas to promote turnover and support fairer access. The public's engagement with the transport network will be user friendly and technology like smart parking systems and real time public transport information at bus stops will be supported.

Council will continue to collaborate with and advocate to the NSW State Government for proactive service planning and prioritised investment in improved and sustainable public transport and freight rail. Key outcomes being sought include more frequent, reliable, time efficient and accessible rail and bus public transport, proactive planning for state roads and highways, micro-mobility regulation and regional active transport routes. We will work towards the evolution of our vehicles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by supporting the growth of EV charging infrastructure in public spaces and certain types of new development.

²¹ Early Contact Map, NSW Department of Environment and Heritage;
<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/cultureheritage/illawarraaboriginalhistoryposter.pdf>

²² Urbis, 2024, Draft Integrated Transport Strategy (based on modelling undertaken by VLC, 2024)

Land use and transport planning will be integrated, to ensure we are maximising existing infrastructure and supporting growth, in well serviced locations, and with the strategic investment. Planning proposals to amend the planning framework will demonstrate alignment with Local Planning Direction 5.1 Integrating Land Use and Transport. The direction aims to ensure that urban structures, building forms, land use locations, development designs, subdivision and street layouts improve access to housing, jobs and services by public and active transport: reduce dependence on cars; reduce travel demand - especially by car; and support public transport services and the efficient movement of freight.

Key Plans to be delivered

- *Wollongong Transport Strategy 2025 - 2035 (draft exhibited)*
- *Wollongong City Centre Movement and Place Plan 2025-2035 (draft exhibited)*
- *Wollongong Cycling Network Plan 2025-2035*

Guiding Documents

- *City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017 - 2021*
- *Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*
- *Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023*
- *Net Zero Wollongong Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-2030*

8. The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression

The infusion of creativity and culture into built and natural environments allows the story of our City to be told whilst also encouraging new ideas and perspectives.

The City is an evolving canvas. Its landscape, urban settings and buildings are expressions of the processes and people who formed them. When we 'add to' these places we do so as the next piece in an ongoing story.

The conservation of and reinterpretation of significant heritage places and landscapes by design professionals celebrates their value and enables them to drive the revitalisation of places, whilst acknowledging their historic significance, for community and economic benefit. The Blue Mile, a group of foreshore reserves linked by a shared pathway between Stuart Park and Wollongong Golf Club combined high quality place design with heritage interpretation and public art to create a valuable community asset with broad benefits for health and well-being, and visitor attraction. Smiths Lane Dairy at Wongawilli, a café and general store within the old dairy shed and holding yards on the site of the historic Coral Vale homestead activates this small privately owned precinct for the community, and provides continuity in the context of rapid change in the growing urban release area.

The City's public spaces and streets are locations for cultural expression and celebration. Ensuring that these places are safe and comfortable for people ensures their activation. As we plan for a growing population, and create new suburbs and town centres, the network of these places forms a vital overlay.

Public Art can express community values, enhance our environment, transform a landscape, or question our assumptions. Placed in public sites, this art is unrestricted and there for everyone to experience. Our community has told us that they want arts and culture to flourish in the CBD, suburbs and open spaces and for public art to be included in new building projects. Currently Wollongong has over 170 permanent pieces of public art on display across the Local Government Area. Created by local, national, and international artists, artworks are scattered in and about our suburbs and towns, open spaces, streets, and buildings.

Key plans to be delivered

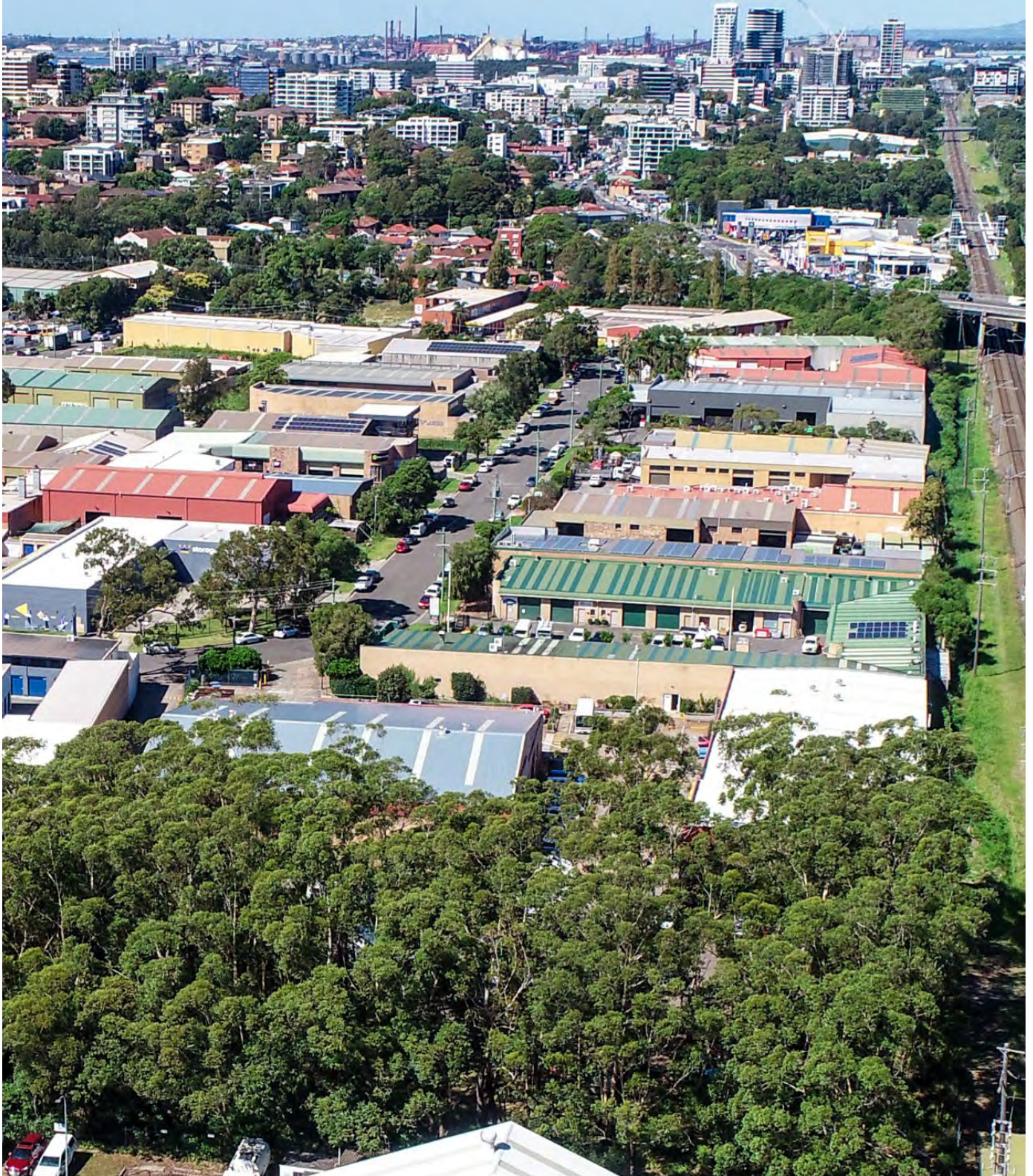
- *West Dapto Cultural Plan with associated Public Art Plan*

Guiding Documents

- *Creative Wollongong 2023-2033*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*
- *Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023 - 2027*
- *Animating Wollongong Public Art Strategy 2022 - 2032*
- *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020*
- *Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021*

Productive & Vibrant

Planning Policy enables the efficient and effective use of our assets to deliver a vibrant economy



9. Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas

Wollongong is a vibrant coastal city that is home to a supportive business ecosystem, a pipeline of world-class talent, and a growing number of businesses with increasingly global footprints. As the regional capital of the Illawarra, Wollongong plays an important role in providing employment opportunities for both residents of Wollongong and the surrounding region. The City generated \$15.7B in gross regional product in 2023 and employed just over 100,000 people. Wollongong includes a range of land use zones which contribute to employment outcomes for our community and economy. These include industrial land, Centres, productivity support, and some special activity zones (such as around Wollongong Hospital).

Industrial Land

Industrial zoned land plays a key role in the economic success of the region. The management and promotion of industrial lands is important to support jobs growth, provision of services and economic prosperity of Wollongong. The Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure has recently released the Industrial Lands Action Plan and committed to securing, managing and monitoring the supply of employment lands in NSW. DPHI will work with Council to categorise employment land as state significant, regionally significant, locally significant and other.

Wollongong has a range of established and emerging industrial land. In our West Dapto and Tallawarra Urban Release areas, emerging industrial zoned lands will provide employment opportunities for the community and are of strategic importance to the region. The Port of Port Kembla and surrounding Bluescope steelmaking site includes our most significant heavy industrial zoned land which will continue to drive employment and economic growth and contribute to innovation in the green energy and manufacturing sector. Local industrial lands support the community and local businesses, providing access to important products and services in appropriate locations. Lastly, our mining lands (often zone RU1 Primary Production) will experience some transition if mining activities cease. These lands are often in areas of environmental value, where future land use zoning should protect these values. In some cases, highly disturbed or developed sites may present limited opportunities to transition to other employment related uses. ***Council is committed to maintaining the employment and economic objectives of all these lands.***

The *Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023* identifies planning principles and various actions to retain and also further enhance planning controls to facilitate future growth, diversity of uses and advocacy for critically important infrastructure.

Industrial Lands Planning Principles

- 1 Recognise the importance of industrial land to supporting jobs, economic development, and urban services by retaining lands in locations that support these outcomes.
- 2 Recognise, retain, and promote the Port of Port Kembla and surrounds as an area of critical economic importance focused on employment generation in heavy industry, port operations as well as supporting clean energy investment. Alternative employment uses that provide opportunity for growth and evolution of employment generating sectors will be supported through rigorous precinct scale master planning and strategic evaluation processes.
- 3 Retain a mix of lot sizes, including larger lots that accommodate diverse business requirements and support expansion for existing and future industries.
- 4 Where appropriate, allow for increased density on industrial land to accommodate changing building requirements for evolving industrial uses.
- 5 Promote agglomeration of industrial activity within well-defined precincts with efficient transport connectivity and appropriate buffers from surrounding residential.
- 6 Continue to advocate for provision of servicing to industrial lands and critical enabling infrastructure.
- 7 Collaborate with landowners to plan for the eventual transition of mining lands

Retail and Business Centres

Wollongong's Centres deliver sustainable local employment opportunities, economic productivity and convenient access to services for an increasing and evolving population. The 24-hour economy is a growing consideration in our Wollongong CBD and town centres, fuelling vibrancy, creative industries and flexible access to goods and services. State Government led planning reforms have pursued an adaptable and flexible planning approach to Centre land use zones, allowing for innovative, contemporary retail solutions that match consumer need. This has included transitioning to fewer business/employment zones with broader objectives and permissible land uses, creating complying pathways for a wider range of business and business activities, and increasing allowances for hours of operation and the scale of development.

Council has clearly articulated its intent for our retail and business centres through our Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023. This intent builds on the State Government objectives for a diverse and accessible Centre network and emphasises our community's value of our unique setting and the character and function of individual places. Council documents acknowledge the need to balance increased housing growth and diversity, with the priority for employment generating and population serving businesses in our centres.

The Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023 includes principles to guide planning and development in our centres, including making their role as employment lands clear.

Retail and Business Centres Planning Principles (selected)

- 1 The role of our centres is clear: the retail and business Centre hierarchy and definitions reflect the contemporary role and function of Wollongong's Centres and guide their growth
- 2 Our new Centres in West Dapto are well planned: encourage the development of planned Centres in West Dapto
- 3 Our City Centre is a thriving commercial precinct: prioritise employment floorspace development in the Commercial Core

The *Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020* confirmed its vision as 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". 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. As a Regional City, we are aspiring for growth in jobs across a range of business, government, retail, cultural, entertainment and recreational industries. 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.

Special Activities

The Special Activities (SP1) Wollongong Hospital Precinct zone is located in the west of the Wollongong CBD. In addition to their critical role to support the health outcomes of the community, Council recognises the role the health industry plays in the economy and as key employers. Health Care and Social Assistance is our highest employer with 1 in 5 Wollongong jobs being in this industry.

The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) is working with NSW Health Infrastructure and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District to plan for the future of Wollongong Health Precinct, including ensuring that planning controls enable the expansion of the hospital site to meet forecast demand and health service objectives. The future Wollongong Hospital will increase its capacity to provide non-admitted care, strengthen digital and virtual health, undertake clinically led research and build in innovative models of care and technological advancements. A redevelopment of Wollongong Hospital is a significant opportunity to transition to a low carbon, electrified campus that contributes to the region's sustainability goals. Enabling development floorspace for the expansion of this facility will provide significant public benefit in relation to the health and wellbeing of our Region, as well as supporting employment growth in this sector. Council is committed to working alongside DPHI to realise the planning framework necessary to enable the future Health Precinct.

Key documents to be delivered

- *Wollongong Economic Development Strategy Update*

Guiding Documents

- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*
- *Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023*
- *Wollongong Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029*
- *Creative Wollongong 2023-2033*

10. The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile

The importance of linking freight, ports, and airports for economic growth and optimising diverse supply chains to ensure resilient productivity is well established. The movement of freight of all scales through Wollongong's freight network is critical to the operation of our businesses and industries. Ensuring these corridors are protected from encroachment of incompatible land uses, are resilient to environmental hazards and have appropriate capacity via collaborative land use and transport planning is key. Investment in city shaping freight infrastructure has the potential to transform our economy.

Connections to freight corridors to and from industrial areas and trade gateways, and a lack of government investment in freight infrastructure are key barriers to private investment in Industrial zoned land. This can occur at the smaller scale, in the case of unserviced zoned land, or at the larger scale, when an existing precinct is looking to dramatically upscale operations.

The Port of Port Kembla provides for international trade connections importing and exporting commodities including coal, grain, flour, steel, motor vehicles, mineral ore and manufactured goods. The precinct's major road connections are Springhill Road (to the Wollongong CBD) and Five Islands and Masters Roads (to the M1 Princes Motorway). The precinct includes public passenger and freight railway (with the South Coast Line running through the precinct to Port Kembla station) as well as private lines servicing port operations. Freight connections out of the precinct include both the South Coast Line and the Moss Vale - Unanderra Line. With the potential to become NSW's second international container port once Port Botany reaches capacity, this will have implications for existing road and rail connections. ***Amendments to the SEPP Infrastructure and Transport should seek to reduce land use conflicts and, where appropriate, include buffer measures to minimise the impact of development on the efficient functioning of the Port and freight industry.***

In 2045 the regional freight task will continue to grow, particularly with the Port of Port Kembla identified as a possible future container terminal and potential hub for hydrogen production and export. To support this expansion, surrounding road and rail networks will need to embrace technology-driven solutions, and address first mile/last mile limitations. Freight transport between Port Kembla and Sydney will need to be via direct routes to Western Sydney Logistics Centres and Airport. Shifting freight off existing road corridors will reduce 18,500 commuters' trip times by 15-20 minutes.

A key tension for Wollongong is the coupling of freight and passenger transport services. As the city grows, traffic congestion around Wollongong is a risk to efficient freight movement. The joint passenger and freight south coast rail line and the freight and private vehicle road corridors between Wollongong and South Western Sydney all present issues for the efficiency of both passenger and freight movement.

Council will continue to advocate for a resilient freight network via initiatives such as the Illawarra Rail Resilience Plan, and projects including SWIRL (South Western Illawarra Rail Link), Maldon-Dombarton rail link, Outer Sydney Orbital and improvements to the existing South Coast Rail Line and heavy vehicle road network.

The High Productivity Vehicles (HPV) network of roads is restricted, particularly in the southern part of the region, meaning that larger road freight accessing the region must approach from the north via either the M1 Princes Motorway or the M31 Hume Motorway and Picton Road. The construction of the Mount Ousley interchange is intended to improve connectivity, safety and efficiency for some of this HPV traffic.

The growth of online retailing has had implications on many industries, including freight and logistics. Over a quarter of online customers are willing to pay for same-day delivery. This has placed pressure on 'last mile' logistics, which is the most important and most expensive leg the of the delivery process. Traffic congestion, geographical distance, and customer expectations, require distribution Centres to be in areas close to residential populations. Centres are ideal logistical locations, however, prices in and around Centres are high and the impact of 24/7 operations and vehicle dominance on urban amenity needs to be considered in detail to ensure Centres retain pedestrian priority. Cars and vans dominate last-mile deliveries in Wollongong. Delivery and pick up access particularly in relation to logistics, kerbside deliveries in shopping areas, deliveries to apartment buildings and click and collect functions is an area to be carefully managed to ensure pedestrian and bike rider safety and amenity, traffic management is maintained, and access to appropriate levels of parking for loading are achieved.

Council will continue to advocate for:

- A direct rail connection to South-West Sydney
- Improved rail resilience from weather-related impacts
- Bridge clearance heights across the road freight network, particularly on the M1, to accommodate movements of oversized and over mass products.
- The optimisation of Port functions via connections to inland bulk goods receival facilities.
- Road infrastructure, including Picton Road upgrade central and eastern sections should be high delivery priority.

Key Plans to be delivered

- *Wollongong Transport Strategy 2025* (draft exhibited)

Guiding Documents

- *Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023*
- *Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023*

11. Port Kembla's industrial precinct and Port are a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation

The Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023 committed to recognise, retain, and promote the Port of Port Kembla and surrounds as an area of significant economic importance focused on employment generation in heavy industry, port operations and clean energy investment.

Port Kembla's industrial precinct is a unique asset. It supports international trade and is home to the largest manufacturing site in Australia. The Port is closely supported by the Industrial lands around it in the Unanderra Industrial Estate which employs almost 8,650 people.

The progressive construction of Port Kembla Harbour between 1901 and 2007 changed the natural landscape and processes of the coastal land considerably. Further extensions to the harbour have been proposed, to cater for a range of potential uses. A small area of remnant estuarine wetlands comprising natural saltmarsh, mangroves and swampy oak floodplain forest exists within the area that was formerly Tom Thumb Lagoon. The Port lands are within the Allans Creek flood catchment and include a large amount of land that is within the Coastal Use Area. Much of the Port lands are within the flood planning area with a medium risk category.

The deep-water Port is an international trade gateway for bulk agricultural, construction and mining industries. It is home to the state's largest grain export terminal and second largest coal export port. The NSW Ports lease area includes 8 berths, a short, deep water shipping channel, and is capable of handling large cargo vessels. The port has been identified as a potential location for a defence submarine base and hydrogen hub.

The majority of the remaining lands east of Port Kembla Harbour are occupied by Bluescope's Port Kembla Steelworks facility. The Steelworks were located here in 1928 to take advantage of the deep water port and the nearby metallurgical coal mines. The 760 ha property has a production capacity of over 3 million tonnes of steel and accounts for more than \$2billion in sales of locally produced steel each year.

Bluescope proposes to progressively transform approximately 200ha of underutilised industrial land at Port Kembla into a thriving employment precinct for industry, advanced manufacturing, sustainably focused technologies, education, entertainment and recreational uses. A large proportion of the area is intended to be green and blue space and open parklands. The NSW Government committed \$500,000 in 2024 to investigate the transport infrastructure needed to support the proposed redevelopment.

Serviced and undeveloped industrial land in Wollongong is scarce. The reimagining of a 200ha site in single ownership is a unique opportunity to galvanise the economic role of Port and maximise the productivity of the site for employment and innovative industries. The restoration of the green space and riparian areas, is an opportunity to provide an adequate buffer area between the Heavy Industrial and Port operations and the surrounding residential suburbs of Port Kembla, Warrawong, Lake Heights and Cringila. The Industrial Lands Review supported alternative employment uses on the site provided they provide opportunity for the growth and evolution of employment generating sectors, and are supported through rigorous precinct scale master planning and strategic evaluation processes. Creative Wollongong further articulated Council's intention to advocate for cultural facilities and arts and creative industries to be included in the revitalisation. The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan cautions the inclusion of high traffic generating development types, such as large scale retail or high density residential, on roads that service the Port to reduce conflicts with dangerous goods vehicles.

Planning at the Port of Port Kembla and surrounding industrial precinct is regulated via State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure and Transport. Exhibition of an explanation of the

intended effect of an amendment to the SEPP, and the seeking and consideration of submissions from the public, is at the discretion of the Minister. ***Council will continue to advocate for the Port to play a key economic and employment role, with a focus on heavy industry, port operations and clean energy investment.***

Guiding Documents

- Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023
- Wollongong Economic Development Strategy 2019-2029
- Creative Wollongong 2023 - 2033

12. The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets

Wollongong is an extraordinary place to visit. Growing the visitor economy is recognised in Council's Economic Development Strategy (2019-2029) which identified the attraction of more major events and tourism infrastructure as a game changer for Wollongong's economy. Increased visitation, especially overnight visitors, has a positive benefit to the local economy through increased expenditure which supports local businesses and jobs. Visitation also needs to be planned for, with adequate space, services and infrastructure to support movement and activity and protect our natural and cultural assets.

Wollongong has numerous attractors to drive the visitor economy. A spectacular coastline and escarpment; places to swim, ride, walk and play; historic character filled villages, and a thriving creative industry of festivals, live music, sporting events and public art.

On an average day, around 74% of Wollongong's resident population remains in Wollongong, equal to around 166,000 people. The rest of the people present are visitors from other LGAs. On average this equals around 121,000 people, giving Wollongong a daily population of around 287,000 people.

Our daily visitors come to Wollongong for a range of reasons - to access work, education, a range of goods and services, and to visit people and places. Most of our daily visitors are from Shellharbour (12.4%), Shoalhaven (2.38%), Sutherland (2.30%) and Canterbury Bankstown (1.49%). On peak activity days like Christmas Day, the local population is slightly higher (~1,400pp), and the visitor population is significantly higher (~46,000pp).

As a regional city, business people visit Wollongong during the week for work trips, training, and conferences. There are opportunities for greater mid-week worker visitation underpinned by the recent increase in A-grade office space. The public and private hospitals, Wollongong University and TAFE continue to attract a large working population from outside the LGA. This working population stimulates the local economy, supporting daytime and night time activity.

On the weekend, Wollongong's proximity to Sydney and regions to the south means that for many people, Wollongong is an easy day trip to visit family and friends, attend an event or enjoy our local attractions.

Our foreshore places are key attractors for visitation to our Wollongong. On an average day, approximately 37,000²³ people visit our foreshore places - around 31,000 per day on a weekday, and 52,000 per day on a weekend²⁴. In an average week, trips to and from the foreshore places make up 5.05% of the activity on the road network²⁵. Overall, visitation to our foreshore places is split 53% locals to 47% visitors. Shellharbour LGA has the highest percentage of visitor population, at 6.22%. This is followed by Camden (3.94%) Sutherland (3.78%) Campbelltown (3.44%) and Liverpool (2.22%). Bald Hill, Stanwell Park Beach and Bulli Beach all have average visitor populations of 75% or higher. 2041 projections show that we are expected to have a significant increase in visitation to our Foreshore places. On an average weekday, there is expected to be an additional 4,467 visitors and 3,779 locals visiting foreshore places. On weekends the increase is for 8,937 visitors and 5,373 locals.

²³ rounded to the nearest thousand

²⁴ Wollongong Per Place Estimates; Place Intelligence 2023

²⁵ Wollongong Places of Interest Road Index; Place Intelligence 2022

Sports and recreational tourism in Wollongong includes a mix of stadium and court events, and cycling and walking trails. Bike tourism has grown significantly in the area since the establishment of the coastal bike paths and the UCI World Cycling Championships (2022). Strategic planning for cycle and pedestrian routes which safely accommodate both local active transport needs as well as managing high visitation from bike tourism is a key consideration, particularly along the coastline, lake and on Escarpment paths. ***There will be opportunities to fill in missing links along key corridors and create new district routes through urban release areas during redevelopment and neighbourhood planning.*** The environmental and cultural impacts of mountain biking within the Illawarra Escarpment has been a key consideration of planning by NPWS and Council for the planned 70km sustainable mountain bike experience. Part of this work involves the removal of informal tracks in sensitive cultural areas in consultation with the Aboriginal community.

Walking trails within the Royal National Park, the Wodi Wodi track between Stanwell Park – Bulli Tops, and the Mount Keira ring track attract a high number of visitors. Over 50% of those walking the Wodi Wodi track are visitors from outside the LGA. The Grand Pacific Walk masterplan envisions a continuous pathway for walking or riding between Stanwell Tops and the entrance to Lake Illawarra at Windang. Council is progressively designing and constructing the remaining sections of this route.

Wollongong includes other locations for potential destination walking and cycling paths. Lake Illawarra currently attracts between 20 and 40% visitors to the open space parklands which line the northern shore. A continuous connecting shared path around the Lake presents opportunities for increased visitation by both locals and visitors, and the development of a key tourist destination with public art, cultural interpretation and environmental restoration and education.

Wollongong's creative and cultural places and events are another key asset supporting our visitor economy. Our cultural infrastructure includes small and large venues for visual and performing arts and live music, a regular calendar of local and regional scale events, and a network of public art in scenic locations. This infrastructure is driven by both government and private investment, and supported by an active business community who provides food and beverage, transport and accommodation services.

Wollongong's Tourism Accommodation Strategy was adopted in February 2025. The Strategy seeks to maximise the economic and employment benefit of increased visitation and convert weekend day trips into overnight stays to increase visitor spend and expand their experience of Wollongong.

Tourism accommodation venues occur throughout the LGA, providing accommodation for over 5,400 guests. Different forms of Tourism accommodation are permissible in many zones under the Wollongong LEP 2009. The SP3 Tourist zone is partially used for tourism accommodation.

The attraction of and investment in tourist infrastructure is a shared opportunity across all tiers of government, industry associations and the development / investor sector.

The tourism industry has told us that more tourism accommodation is required to attract and support major events and conferences, however the feasibility of hotel development is challenging due to a range of factors, including high land and construction costs, holding costs before operational cashflow kicks in, and competition with higher yielding uses.

The Tourism Accommodation Strategy recommended retaining, upgrading and expanding existing hotel and motel accommodation; establishing 2 new 5 star (or equivalent) hotels in Wollongong CBD and establishing new tourism accommodation in the existing SP3 Tourism zone. These recommendations will be realised through various changes to the planning framework, via planning proposals to amend uses in the SP3 zone and incentivise tourism accommodation via additional permissibility and height and floorspace increases in certain zones and areas.

Key plans to be prepared

- *Wollongong Cycling Network Plan*
- *Lake Illawarra Shared Path Masterplan*

Guiding Documents

- *Economic Development Strategy (2019-2029)*
- *Creative Wollongong 2024 - 2033*
- *Tourism Accommodation Strategy 2025*
- *Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027*
- *Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan*
- *Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030*

Consistency with the strategic planning framework

Planning Priorities	Regional Plan Objectives	Community Strategic Plan
<i>Sustainable & Resilient: Planning Policy enables the care of the environment and prepares our community for the impact of a changing climate</i>		
1 We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems	A sustainable and resilient region Objective 11: Protect important environmental assets Objective 17: Secure water resources	Goal 1: We are a sustainable and climate resilient City 1.2 Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations in the way we care for the environment. 1.3 Manage and improve the cleanliness, health, biodiversity of land and water including creeks, lakes, waterways and oceans. 1.7 Apply ecologically sustainable development principles to manage our coastal environments, including Lake Illawarra, to protect and enhance their ecological, social, cultural and economic values.
2 We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards	A sustainable and resilient region Objective 12: Build resilient places and communities Objective 15: Plan for a Net Zero region by 2050	Goal 1: We are a sustainable and climate resilient City 1.4 Increase our resilience to natural disasters and ability to adapt to a changing climate, to protect life, property, and the environment. 1.5 Work together to achieve net zero carbon emissions, and reduce waste going to landfill. Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.2 Facilitate ecologically sustainable development that considers the current and future needs of our community and environment.
3 We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets	A productive and innovative Region Objective 1: Strengthen Metro Wollongong as a connected, innovative and progressive city: utilise green infrastructure to create a green network of open spaces; activate public domain to support investment and renewal Objective 5: Create a diverse visitor economy: Strategic planning and local plans should consider opportunities to: create green and open spaces that are accessible and well connected and enhance existing green infrastructure in tourist and recreation facilities A sustainable and resilient region Objective 13: Increase urban tree canopy cover Objective 14: Enhance and connect parks, open spaces and bushland with walking and cycling paths (supporting document – Greener Places Action 5: Develop the Illawarra Shoalhaven Green Grid and identify priority projects for enhancement	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected, and liveable places 2.1 Urban areas are planned and well maintained to provide a healthy and safe environment for our community to live, work and play. Goal 4: We have a healthy, respectful and inclusive community 4.2 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public spaces and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.

Planning Priorities	Regional Plan Objectives	Community Strategic Plan
<i>Liveable & Connected: Planning policy enables great places for a growing population to live, work and play</i>		
4 The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings.	A region that values its people and places Objective 22: Embrace and respect the region's local character Objective 23: Celebrate, conserve and reuse cultural heritage	Goal 1: We are a sustainable and climate resilient City 1.2 Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations in the way we care for the environment. Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.2 Facilitate ecologically sustainable development that considers the current and future needs of our community and environment. 2.7 Develop and implement programs and projects that achieve proactive heritage management, education and promotion. Goal 3: We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture and creativity 3.11 Using community art and cultural development practices, our places and spaces reflect the creativity, history and identity of our people. Goal 4: We have a healthy, respectful and inclusive community 4.11 Partner with our diverse communities, including Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities on programs and projects.
5 We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future	A region that values its people and places Objective 18: Provide housing supply in the right locations Objective 19: Deliver housing that is more diverse and affordable	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.4 Housing provides choice, affordability, and liveability for our diverse community. 2.5 Integrated services are provided to residents in need of urgent shelter.
6 The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community	A productive and innovative region Objective 7: Respond to the changing nature of retail A sustainable and resilient region Objective 12: Build resilient places and communities A region that values its people and places Objective 21: Respond to the changing needs of local neighbourhoods	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.1 Urban areas are planned and well maintained to provide a healthy and safe environment for our community to live, work and play. 2.6 The growth of West Dapto urban release area is well planned with facilities, spaces and educational institutions to support the growing community. Goal 4: We have a healthy, respectful and inclusive community 4.1 Accessible and appropriate health care services are available to the community. 4.2 Provide a variety of quality and accessible public spaces and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community. 4.7 Work towards enabling all people in our community to have access to safe, nutritious, affordable, and sustainably produced food.

Planning Priorities	Regional Plan Objectives	Community Strategic Plan
7 Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible	A sustainable and resilient region Objective 14: Enhance and connect parks, open spaces and bushland with walking and cycling paths A smart and connected region Objective 28: Create connected and accessible walking and cycling networks	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.3 Deliver high quality, fit for purpose and sustainable infrastructure to support a growing and resilient city. 2.8 Plan, advocate for, and provide accessible and sustainable multi-modal transport networks. This includes continuation and expansion of the Gong Shuttle, and active transport infrastructure to meet the community's needs. 2.10 Plan and provide sustainable infrastructure for safe and liveable places integrated with the environment and accessible to key transport routes. 2.12 Improve active transport links and connectivity to our unique places and spaces, including marine access along the Local Government Area and accessibility from the Central Business District to the foreshore.
8 The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression	A region that values its people and places Objective 23: Celebrate, conserve and reuse cultural heritage	Goal 3: We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture and creativity 3.9 Enable signature events and festivals where communities and visitors can gather and celebrate. 3.11 Using community art and cultural development practices, our places and spaces reflect the creativity, history and identity of our people.
<i>Productive & Vibrant: Planning Policy enables the efficient and effective use of our assets to deliver a vibrant economy</i>		
9 Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas	A productive and innovative region Objective 1: Strengthen Metro Wollongong as a connected, innovative and progressive City Objective 2: Grow the region's Regional Cities Objective 4: Activate regionally significant employment precincts to support new and innovative economic enterprises Objective 7: Respond to the changing nature of retail	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.1 Urban areas are planned and well maintained to provide a healthy and safe environment for our community to live, work and play. 2.6 The growth of West Dapto urban release area is well planned with facilities, spaces and educational institutions to support the growing community. Goal 3: We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture and creativity 3.3 Increase and attract new business investment and enterprise to Wollongong while supporting and growing existing local businesses. 3.4 Continue to build Wollongong CBD as a vibrant employment precinct with an active evening economy. 3.7 Support growth sectors to assist in the ongoing transition of Wollongong's economy including the Port Kembla industrial lands.

Planning Priorities	Regional Plan Objectives	Community Strategic Plan
10 The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile	A productive and innovative region Objective 6: Activate the region's harbours to promote the blue highway A smart and connected region Objective 27: Protect major freight networks	Goal 2: We have well planned, connected and liveable places 2.9 Effective and integrated regional transport with a focus on road, bus, rail and freight movement (including the port of Port Kembla). 2.11 Advocate for strong transport links within the Local Government Area, and connections to Sydney, particularly Western Sydney (including the Aerotropolis), the Illawarra Region, to provide physical and economic opportunities.
11 Port Kembla's industrial precinct and Port are a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation	A productive and innovative region Objective 3: Grow the Port of Port Kembla as an international trade hub Objective 4: Activate regionally significant employment precincts to support new and innovative economic enterprises A smart and connected region Objective 25: Collaborate to leverage opportunities from Western Sydney's growth	Goal 3: We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture and creativity 3.2 Continue to diversify and grow the Wollongong economy to enhance its economic and employment role in the Region recognising opportunities and challenges in South West Sydney. 3.6 We are leaders in sustainable industries and support a transition to a low-carbon and clean energy future.
12 The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets	A productive and innovative region Objective 5: Create a diverse visitor Economy A region that values its people and places Objective 24: Support major events, public art and cultural activities A smart and connected region Objective 25: Collaborate to leverage opportunities from Western Sydney's growth	Goal 3: We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture and creativity 3.2 Continue to diversify and grow the Wollongong economy to enhance its economic and employment role in the Region recognising opportunities and challenges in South West Sydney. 3.8 Promote the Wollongong Local Government Area as an event, conference and visitor destination. 3.9 Enable signature events and festivals where communities and visitors can gather and celebrate. 3.10 Promote and support tourism opportunities through planning controls and infrastructure. 3.11 Using community art and cultural development practices, our places and spaces reflect the creativity, history, and identity of our people.

Implementation

With a large set of recently adopted Strategies, Council is in an excellent position to galvanise our existing strategic planning approach without needed to generate a new set of actions.

The LSPS includes a summary implementation plan which outlines the range of adopted Council documents, documents to be delivered, and Council Services which are relevant to the delivery of 12 Planning Priorities.

As we implement the LSPS, Council is committed to progressively engaging with our community and supporting our decisions with data and evidence.

Community engagement with planning policy is productive and inclusive

We recognise that the community has an interest, and a right, to be informed about planning matters and given opportunities to participate in strategic planning for our LGA. Openness and accountability creates trust that enables effective planning

Council is committed to demonstrate best practice engagement with our community through the following principles:

1. We aim to be flexible
2. We will be inclusive
3. We believe community engagement is important for good governance
4. We aim to effectively plan each engagement
5. We will give you feedback

Council does this through the ongoing implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy, Community Participation Plan and Aboriginal Engagement Framework.

The Community Participation Plan outlines how Council will engage with the community about planning and development matters, and how the community can provide their feedback.

Many planning matters are handled through local or State panels, or through the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). From time to time, Council partners with the DPHI to make the community aware of changes to the planning framework which are not initiatives of Council.

Data and evidence drives planning decisions

Data-driven strategic plans use information and analysis to define a strategic priority and identify challenges and barriers. Evidence-based decision making allows local government to be more responsive to community needs and ultimately more effective in achieving desired outcomes.

Urban Planning can be a complex and technical activity involving multiple qualitative and quantitative inputs. Having accurate and current base level information is key to ensuring land use decisions can be evaluated appropriately. evaluated

Council's Information Management and Technology Service is committed to empower a data driven culture to enable Council to meet its strategic objectives and take advantage of emerging technologies which are aligned with business needs.

Council's Land Use Planning service prepares and issues Planning Certificates and maintains data in the Land Information System to provide accurate for residents and investors.

Implementation Plan Summary

Planning Priorities	Supporting Documents	Council Core Business Services
<i>Sustainable & Resilient: Planning Policy enables the care of the environment and prepares our community for the impact of a changing climate</i>		
1 We rehabilitate and protect natural environments and ecosystems	Sustainable Wollongong 2030 Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy 2011 - 2016 Net Zero Wollongong: Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30 West Dapto Vision Reconciliation Action Plan Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023 South Wollongong Futures Study Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022 Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030 Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan 2015 Flood Risk Management Plans for various Precincts To be delivered: <i>Wollongong Coastal Management Program</i> <i>Riparian Corridor Management Strategy for the West Dapto Urban Release Area</i> <i>Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy Update</i>	Botanic Garden and Annexes Natural Areas Management Environment Services Land Use Planning Property Services Regulatory Compliance
2 We are resilient to climate risks and environmental hazards	Sustainable Wollongong 2030 Net Zero Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30 Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022 Climate Friendly Planning Framework Urban Heat Strategy 2023 Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030 Coastal Zone Management Program 2017 Illawarra Escarpment Strategic Management Plan 2015 Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023 South Wollongong Futures Study To be delivered: <i>Wollongong Coastal Management Program</i> <i>Floodplain Risk Management Plans for various catchments</i>	Botanic Garden and Annexes Natural Areas Management Environmental Services Emergency Management Service Land Use Planning Floodplain Management and Stormwater Services Waste Management Aquatic Services Infrastructure Strategy and Support

Planning Priorities	Supporting Documents	Council Core Business Services
3 We have access to green and healthy urban open spaces and streets	Planning People Places 2006-2026 Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024 Sportsgrounds and sports fields strategy 2023-2027 The Future of our Pools Strategy 2014-2024 Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037 Urban Heat Strategy 2023 Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028 Illawarra Biodiversity Strategy 2011 - 2016 Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30 Climate Change Adaptation Plan Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy Plans of Management for Council Community Land Plans of Management for Council reserves To be delivered: <i>Play Wollongong update</i> <i>MacCabe Park Masterplan</i> <i>Lang Park Masterplan</i> <i>Urban Greening Strategy update</i>	Botanic Garden and Annexes Natural Areas Management Environment Services Waste Management Land Use Planning Property Services Aquatic Services Community Facilities Community Programs Leisure Centres Parks and Sport Fields Infrastructure Strategy and Support Emergency Management Service
<i>Liveable and Connected: Planning Policy enables great places for a growing population to live, work and play</i>		
4 The natural, built and cultural context informs the design of places and buildings.	Reconciliation Action Plan Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027 Sustainable Wollongong 2030 Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030 Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023 West Dapto Vision 2018	Environment Services Land Use Planning Development Assessment Service Floodplain Management and Stormwater Services
5 We are growing our capacity for housing, so our community have access to diverse and high-quality homes in the future	Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023 West Dapto Vision 2018 Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020 Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023 Wollongong Affordable Housing Policy and Procedures 2024 To be delivered: <i>Wollongong Affordable Housing Scheme</i>	Land Use Planning Floodplain Management and Stormwater Services Development Assessment Public Health and Safety

Planning Priorities	Supporting Documents	Council Core Business Services
6 The network of Centres provides for the needs of our community	<p>Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023</p> <p>Places for the Future: Social infrastructure Future Directions Plan 2023-2036</p> <p>Creative Wollongong 2023-2033</p> <p>Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020</p> <p>Wollongong DCP 2009 Chapter D15 West Dapto Urban Release Area Neighbourhood Plans and Centre Masterplans</p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Transport Services</p> <p>City Centre Management</p> <p>Arts and Culture</p> <p>Economic Development</p> <p>Community Facilities</p> <p>Community Programs</p> <p>Libraries</p> <p>Parks and Sports Fields</p> <p>Public Health Safety</p>
7 Transport options are safe, reliable and accessible	<p>Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030</p> <p>City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021</p> <p>Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023</p> <p>Wollongong Housing Strategy 2023</p> <p>Net Zero Wollongong: Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30</p> <p>To be delivered:</p> <p><i>Wollongong Transport Strategy 2025-2035</i></p> <p><i>Wollongong City Centre Movement and Place Plan 2025-2035</i></p> <p><i>Wollongong Cycling Network Plan 2025-2035</i></p>	<p>Transport Services</p> <p>Infrastructure Strategy and Support</p> <p>Environment Services</p> <p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Aged and Disability Services</p>
8 The city is enriched by creative and cultural expression	<p>Creative Wollongong 2023-2033</p> <p>Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027</p> <p>Animating Wollongong Public Art Strategy 2022 - 2032</p> <p>Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023</p> <p>Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework 2020</p> <p>Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021</p> <p>To be delivered:</p> <p><i>West Dapto Cultural Plan with associated Public Art Plan</i></p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>City Centre Management</p> <p>Arts and Culture</p> <p>Engagement, Communications and Events</p> <p>Community Programs</p>

Planning Priorities	Supporting Documents	Council Core Business Services
Productive & Vibrant: Planning Policy enables the efficient and effective use of our assets to deliver a vibrant economy		
9 Employment generating uses are prioritised in Centres and Industrial areas	<p>Wollongong Economic Development Strategy 2019 - 2029</p> <p>Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023</p> <p>Wollongong Retail and Business Centres Strategy 2023</p> <p>Creative Wollongong 2023-2033</p> <p>To be delivered:</p> <p><i>Wollongong Economic Development Strategy Update</i></p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Economic Development</p>
10 The freight network is efficient, from international trade to the last mile	<p>Wollongong Retail and business Centres Strategy 2023</p> <p>Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023</p> <p>To be delivered:</p> <p><i>Wollongong Transport Strategy 2025-2035</i></p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Transport Services</p> <p>Infrastructure Strategy and Support</p>
11 Port Kembla's industrial precinct and Port are a hub for economic growth, employment and innovation	<p>Wollongong Economic Development Strategy 2019 - 2029</p> <p>Wollongong Industrial Lands Review 2023</p> <p>Creative Wollongong 2022 - 2033</p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Economic Development</p>
12 The growing visitor economy celebrates natural and cultural assets	<p>Economic Development Strategy (2019-2029)</p> <p>Creative Wollongong 2024 - 2033</p> <p>Tourism Accommodation Strategy 2025</p> <p>Wollongong Heritage Strategy 2023-2027</p> <p>Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan</p> <p>Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030</p> <p>To be delivered:</p> <p><i>Wollongong Cycling Network Plan</i></p> <p><i>Lake Illawarra Shared Path Masterplan</i></p>	<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>Economic Development</p> <p>Tourist Parks</p> <p>Aquatic Services</p> <p>City Centre Management</p> <p>Arts and Culture</p> <p>Engagement, Communications and Events</p>



On Dharawal Country, from the mountains to the sea,
we value and respect each other, our places, past,
and future. We will be a sustainable, connected,
vibrant, and innovative city, with a diverse economy.

We are a sustainable and climate resilient city

We have well planned, connected, and liveable places

We foster a diverse economy, and we value innovation, culture, and creativity

We have a healthy, respectful, and inclusive community



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



ITEM 4 POST EXHIBITION - WEST DAPTO DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN 2025

The West Dapto Development Contributions Plan (Plan) was first introduced in 2010 and is subject to regular review. Council updated the Plan in 2011, 2015, 2017 and 2020.

On 30 October 2023, Council considered a review of the 2020 Plan and resolved that the draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2024 Plan be endorsed for public exhibition. The draft 2024 Plan was exhibited between 6 November and 4 December 2023. On 18 March 2024 Council considered the post-exhibition report and resolved to forward the draft Plan to NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for review.

The West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025 has been assessed by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). Council has also received direction from a nominee of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, advising that Council can adopt the latest update to the Plan.

This report seeks adoption of the 2025 Plan in accordance with the Minister's nominee direction.

RECOMMENDATION

The West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025 (Attachment 1) be adopted and a notice placed on Council's Public Notices webpage.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

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

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025
- 2 Copy of Minister's Nominee Letter - 27 February 2025

BACKGROUND

Section 7.11 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (Act) establishes that a consent authority can require contributions where development will or is likely to require the provision of or increase the demand for public amenities and public services.

A section 7.11 development contributions plan for the West Dapto Urban Release Area (WDURA) commenced on 23 December 2010 and has been updated in 2011, 2015, 2017 and 2020.

West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2020

On 7 December 2020, Council adopted the 2020 Plan, which came into force 14 December 2020. The 2020 Plan is available on Council's website at [West-Dapto-Development-Contributions-Plan-2020.PDF](#)

Given the proposed contribution rates of the 2020 Plan surpassed the State imposed \$30,000 per lot threshold, the draft 2020 Plan was subject to IPART review. On 15 May 2020, IPART released the Assessment of the draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2020 Final Report (IPART Final Report) and made 24 recommendations for the draft 2020 Plan.

The IPART Final Report was submitted to the then Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (Minister) for consideration and to provide direction to Council. The IPART Final Report and all information regarding their assessment is available on their website at [Final Report - Assessment of Wollongong City Council's West Dapto Contributions Plan 2020 - May 2020 | IPART](#)

On 23 September 2020, the Minister's nominee provided direction to Council. The Minister's nominee agreed with 23 of the 24 recommendations made in the IPART Final Report. The Minister's nominee agreed with Council that the IPART recommendation relating to a split catchment with different contribution rates was not appropriate. The draft 2020 Plan was subsequently updated by Council in accordance with the Minister's nominee direction. At the time of adoption, the 2020 Plan included over \$950 Million (or approximately \$1.15 Billion in current dollars) of infrastructure works and land acquisition for social infrastructure (community facilities land and open space and recreation), transport and traffic,

stormwater management and administration. The costs were apportioned to both residential and non-residential development.

Residential Development

The standard residential contributions rate in the 2020 Plan, when adopted, was \$51,428.10 per dwelling. The contribution rates are indexed every quarter of the year. The current indexed rate under the 2020 Plan is \$62,682.23 per dwelling.

Since the 2020 Plan came into effect, Council has collected approximately \$100.5M in residential contributions from approval of Development Applications to create more than 2,900 subdivided lots for residential development. The total amount of contributions Council is set to receive from Development Applications already approved and Development Applications under assessment would amount to approximately \$160M.

Council has entered into six Planning Agreements and has accepted several infrastructure items as Works-in-Kind where infrastructure identified in the Contributions Plan has been provided by a developer and offset against the monetary contributions payable.

Commercial and Industrial Development

When the 2020 Plan was adopted, the standard industrial contributions rate was \$126,513 per hectare. For commercial development the rate was \$371,189 per hectare. The contribution rates are indexed every quarter of the year. The current indexed rate under the 2020 Plan is \$154,198 per hectare for industrial and \$452,417 per hectare for commercial. Council has collected approximately \$6.5M in contributions from commercial and industrial developments at West Dapto.

Draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan, 2024 (now referred to as the 2025 Plan)

On 30 October 2023, Council resolved that the draft 2024 Plan be endorsed for public exhibition. The draft 2024 Plan was exhibited between 6 November and 4 December 2023. Late submissions were accepted up until the end of December 2023.

A total of 28 submissions were received. Submissions were received from -

- State agencies: Transport for NSW and School Infrastructure NSW.
- Peak Organisations: Property Council of Australia (PCA) – Illawarra Branch, Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) – Illawarra Branch and Regional Development Australia (RDA) – Illawarra Branch.
- Community groups: Illawarra Bicycle User Group.
- Property developers and their consultants (15 submissions)
- Community members (seven submissions).

The main themes raised in submissions included –

- Request for removal of the Western Ring Road (including the Northcliffe Drive Extension) valued at \$450M from the 2024 Plan. Submitters requested the Road be included by the State Government in a regional infrastructure program.
- Concern with infrastructure cost increase and impact on development feasibility. Specific concern also raised regarding transport and open space cost increases. There were also requests to limit the scope of infrastructure to minimum requirements. Use of bridges was a specific area of concern.
- Specific requests for exemption from contributions were proposed such as schools.
- Rates of land value for specific land parcels and Council staff proposed indexation approach has been questioned.
- Split catchment approach to contributions requested.
- Rail crossings safety and need for road overpass (Northcliffe Drive Extension).
- The number of parks, land area and cost of Open Space provision has been questioned.

- Stormwater related to drainage infrastructure and flooding in relation to infrastructure design and yield impact assumptions were raised.
- Community Facility CF05 as a sub-district facility has been questioned in the context of neighbouring community facilities such as those planned for Calderwood.
- Essential Works List, specifically lack of Childcare facilities funding.
- Increased in Commercial development contributions questioned.
- Housing density and residential land reduction.
- The relationship of West Dapto Contributions Plan infrastructure items to Calderwood development.
- Support for shared use paths and bridges.
- Other individual matters and edits.

On 18 March 2024 Council considered a report relating to the exhibition feedback and resolved that -

- 1 *The summary of issues raised during public exhibition be noted.*
- 2 *The draft West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2024, as exhibited, be endorsed for submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for review and that IPART be asked to consider staff proposed changes to the draft contributions plan as summarised in the Proposal section of this report and Attachment 2 (of the 18 March 2024 report).*
- 3 *Council note that the outcome of the IPART review will be in the form of recommendations to the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.*
- 4 *That a report be presented back to Council with IPART recommendations and NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces direction.*

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Assessment

On 15 April 2024, Council requested that IPART review of the draft 2024 Plan. IPART commenced their assessment on 24 May 2024. A draft Report was released by IPART on 16 September 2024 for public exhibition and submissions. A revised draft Report was released on 11 November 2024.

On 16 December 2024, the IPART Final Report was released which made four recommendations to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. The recommendations are summarised as:

- Council ensures changes are made to scope and costs of infrastructure based on Stormwater Management prior to its next IPART submission.
- Council review costs and adjust for any grant funding received following the adoption of the plan.
- Prior to the next IPART review Council include land acquisition allowance for the purposes of land acquisition under the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.
- Council provide documentation and quantify the amount of open space being provided by developers in the next submission to IPART.

Council staff wrote to the Minister on 19 December 2024 seeking support for removal of the Western Ring Road, including Northcliffe Drive Extension, from the draft 2024 Plan subject to a funding commitment from the State Government to deliver the regionally significant growth enabling infrastructure.

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces Direction

On 4 March 2025, Council received advice from the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI), as the Minister's nominee, confirming that no amendments are required to Council's post exhibition version of the draft 2024 Plan before it is made. The DPHI advice acknowledged that the four IPART recommendations relate to future actions and were provided to Council for advice only. The letter is provided at Attachment 2.

The DPHI letter further confirmed that once Council has finalised the Plan, it will meet the requirements of an IPART reviewed contributions plan within the meaning of clause 5(3) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Local Infrastructure Contributions) Direction 2012.

DPHI also responded to Council's representations to the Minister seeking removal of the Western Ring Road, including Northcliffe Dr Extension, from the draft 2024 Plan subject to a funding commitment from the State Government to deliver the regionally significant growth enabling infrastructure. DPHI confirmed that there is no committed funding for this infrastructure by the State Government and noted IPART's comment that premature removal of the infrastructure item from the draft 2024 Plan risks funding shortfalls and delivery delays. IPART has recommended that the Plan be updated when any grant funding is received, and DPHI supports that recommendation. Any future amendment to the Plan, to account for any grant funding received or transfer of responsibility of certain infrastructure from Council to the State (such as the Western Ring Road), will not require further IPART assessment provided it results in a reduction to the contribution rate payable by residential development.

PROPOSAL

This report proposes adoption of the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan, 2025 (Attachment 1) consistent with IPART review findings and the direction received from the Minister's nominee dated 27 February 2025 (Attachment 2).

The 2025 Plan has been updated with indexation to reflect Producer Price Indexes applicable to the appropriate infrastructure type and Valuer General 5-year average based indexation for land. In summary the indexation calculation has resulted in the following proposed contribution rates:

Land Use Type	Post Exhibition Proposed Contribution Rate (rates as of 30 June 2022)	Final Contribution Plan 2025 proposed rate
Residential		
Subdivision per lot	\$79,318.34	\$91,652.83
Per Dwelling House, Dual Occupancy and other dwellings.	\$79,318.34	\$91,652.83
Per Secondary Dwelling (also known as Granny Flat)	\$34,701.77	\$40,098.11
Multi-Unit Housing Rates		
4+ bedrooms per dwelling	\$71,882.24	\$83,060.38
3+ bedrooms per dwelling	\$61,967.45	\$71,603.78
2+ bedrooms per dwelling	\$54,531.36	\$63,011.32
0-1+ bedrooms per dwelling	\$42,137.87	\$48,690.57
Non-Residential		
Commercial per hectare e.g. uses in E1, E3, MU1 zones	\$630,911.68	\$723,108.88
Industrial per hectare and other e.g. uses in E4, E5, SP2 zones	\$198,217.24	\$229,402.80

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Internal

The Urban Release and Land Use Planning Teams have jointly prepared this post exhibition report seeking adoption of the 2025 Plan. In addition, as part of this process, internal consultation was carried out with Infrastructure Strategy and Planning, Library & Community Services, Project Delivery, Finance and Recreation Services and the West Dapto Steering Committee. The Finance team provided detailed financial model outputs to inform the proposed contribution rates.

Councillors have been briefed during the preparation of the 2025 Plan. This includes a post exhibition briefing on 4 November 2024 and an update briefing during a tour of the West Dapto urban release area on 3 March 2025.

External

On 30 October 2023, Council resolved that the draft 2024 Plan be endorsed for public exhibition. Council staff conducted a public exhibition between 6 November and 4 December 2023 and accepted late submissions up to the end of December 2023. Council received 28 submissions during the exhibition as explained in detail in the Post Exhibition Council report of 18 March 2024 and summarised in the background section of this report.

The Council staff project team maintained regular liaison with IPART staff during preparation of the draft 2024 Plan. This included regular update meetings prior to and during IPART's review. IPART published a draft report for public comment in September 2024 and a revised draft report for public comment in November 2024.

Following publication of the IPART Final Report on 16 December 2024, Council staff wrote to the Minister seeking removal of the Western Ring Road, including Northcliffe Drive Extension, from the draft 2024 Plan subject to a State Government funding commitment to deliver the regional growth infrastructure. In addition, Council staff have had several meetings with DPHI and Transport for NSW staff, regarding key issues raised in submissions, including the Western Ring Road and Northcliffe Drive Extension considerations.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 1. It specifically delivers on the following –

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	
Strategy		Service	
1.6	West Dapto urban growth is effectively managed with facilities and spaces to support the future community	Land Use Planning	

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The 2025 Plan schedule of infrastructure includes items that will specifically contribute to sustainability outcomes in the WDURA. Contributions are proposed to be collected for active transport via shared paths and shared path bridges. Contributions are proposed to be collected for bus shelters to support public transport. These transport specific measures will help to improve community health outcomes while also providing alternative travel options to private vehicles. Council's open space design process contributes to sustainability objectives. For example, the Urban Greening program would benefit from open space provided through development contributions.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Council is committed to regular review of the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan. The preparation of the 2025 Plan is consistent with IPART's 2020 recommendation number 23, which recommended that the Plan be reviewed in 3 years (staff commenced the current detailed review in 2023). It is important to note that the Minister's nominee, approved an extension for the adoption date clarifying that Council's review does not have a specific due date.

Without regular review, there is risk that the Contributions Plan does not reflect updated information regarding development of the release area and essential infrastructure requirements and cost. Therefore, it is in Council's interest to ensure regular review of all contribution plans.

The risk to development feasibility is also connected to other contributions and charges including the NSW Housing and Productivity Contribution (HPC), which commenced on 1 October 2023 and replaced the Illawarra Shoalhaven Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC), 2021.

The 2025 Plan does not propose collection of contributions for the major bridge section of the Northcliffe Drive Extension, a key regional / state significant infrastructure item identified in the former Illawarra

Shoalhaven SIC. The Northcliffe Drive Extension major bridge is required to ensure Northcliffe Drive extends into West Dapto via a grade separated crossing of the Southern Rail Line and Princes Highway.

The 2025 Plan does maintain continued collection of contributions for the Western Ring Road, including much of the Northcliffe Drive Extension as it extends west of the proposed major bridge section. The Western Ring Road is an infrastructure item listed in the current adopted 2020 Plan. In 2021, the State Government determined the Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC, which included the West Lake Illawarra Major Road Spine. Under the SIC, development was to contribute 10% of the infrastructure cost (\$45 Million) for the Western Ring Road. It is Council staff's understanding that the other 90% of cost would come from other Government funding sources. However, that was never committed by the State Government.

On 1 October 2023, the Housing and Productivity Contribution commenced replacing the SIC. The HPC does not include a Schedule of infrastructure. However, Council staff understand that the State Government through TfNSW and DPHI consider the Major Road Spine to be a key regional transport item. During preparation of the 2025 Plan there has been concern raised in submissions of duplicated contributions by Council and the State Government, for the Western Ring Road and the regionally significant Spine Road (considered to be the same piece of infrastructure in the main). Council staff will continue to work with the State agencies to ensure that there is no duplication of development contributions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The continued development of the WDURA will result in significant demands for both state and local infrastructure. The 2025 Plan is an important mechanism to levy development toward the cost of providing local infrastructure.

It should be noted that Council will need to separately fund infrastructure considered to be non-essential for the purpose of Section 7.11 development contributions but still essential for our community (i.e. community centres and libraries) as well as the ongoing maintenance, operational and renewal costs.

It is also important to understand that the 2025 Plan, and future versions of the Plan, will not recoup previous accumulated cost shortfalls. Therefore, those shortfalls remain an ongoing financial implication for Council. Council staff will continue to advocate for State and Federal support through grants and other funding opportunities to address that shortfall. The previous accumulated cost shortfalls relate to the following -

- Between 2010 and 2017 contributions levied were capped at \$30,000 per lot/dwelling, and since 2017, contributions levied under the 2017 and 2020 Plans were less than the current proposed contribution rate. This means that the contributions paid to date do not reflect the current cost of infrastructure and the development already levied have or will pay less than the current contribution rate. This shortfall will continue to increase with future Plan reviews. This shortfall cannot be re-levied and applied to existing or future development at WDURA.
- Where exemptions are granted, for example to affordable housing developments, a contribution is not collected and cannot be collected from other development.
- The infrastructure cost apportioned to the demand created by the Calderwood development in the 2025 Plan is more than the contributions that can be collected through the various Planning Agreements with Calderwood developers. This shortfall cannot be levied to other development in the WDURA.

The indicative timing of infrastructure delivery has financial implications and has relied on assumptions of development rates at WDURA in previous versions of the Plan. Due to the long-time frame of development delivery, and the many variables that influence development timing, there will always be some uncertainty regarding development forecasting.

Various submissions received during public exhibition of the draft 2024 Plan raised development yield related issues, and some referred to the timing of infrastructure. Following public exhibition of the draft Plan, Council staff considered the options and methods to best inform indicative timing of infrastructure. As a result, Council sought IPART support for use of a population thresholds trigger as the indication of when the Plan infrastructure items (open space and community facilities land) are needed. The IPART Final Report supported Council's proposed approach.

Continued monitoring and effort to improve accuracy of forecasting development, is an ongoing task of Council staff, and relies on understanding of utilities services timing and development industry programs, as well as land use planning and Development Applications status.

CONCLUSION

The West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025 is an important strategic planning document for the urban release area as it provides the mechanism to collect contributions to fund essential local infrastructure required to support new development. This report provides a summary of exhibition and consultation processes, the outcome of IPART's assessment, advice from the Minister's nominee to enable adoption of the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2025. Adoption of the Plan will enable Council to levy development contributions and plan for the delivery of infrastructure required to service the current and future West Dapto community.

For access to the attachments in this report, please use the below link:

[Item 4 - Post Exhibition -
West Dapto Development
Contributions Plan 2025](#)

ITEM 5 POLICY REVIEW - COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Council's Compliance and Enforcement Policy has been reviewed and updated as part of the policy review cycle. The Policy outlines the framework within which Council exercises its powers as an enforcement agency under a range of legislation. This report seeks Council's resolution to endorse the updated Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the updated Compliance and Enforcement Policy

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Corey Stoneham, Manager Regulation + Enforcement

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

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Updated Compliance and Enforcement Policy

BACKGROUND

The existing Compliance and Enforcement Policy was last adopted by Council in August 2022. The Policy outlines the overarching principles of how Council will exercise its legislative powers under a range of Acts in response to identified offences.

The Policy takes a risk based, escalating approach to compliance, and is modelled on the NSW Ombudsman's Enforcement Guidelines and Policy for Local Councils (Dec 2015). It is consistent with policies found across most NSW Councils.

A version of the revised Policy was considered by Council at its meeting of 17 March 2025. The report was deferred to provide an opportunity for staff to review formatting, wording and clarify some aspects of the policy. The revised Policy has been updated in response to the feedback from Council and is presented for adoption.

PROPOSAL

The Compliance and Enforcement Policy is required to be reviewed this term of Council. The Policy has been reviewed by leaders within Council's Regulation and Enforcement, Governance, and Development Assessment and Certification divisions and some edits have been suggested. The proposed changes are generally administrative and do not change the current approach to compliance and enforcement activities.

Some amendments seek to improve interpretation of the Policy and include better explanation of the role of Private Certifiers when they are appointed as the Principal Certifier and minor edits to better align the risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement matters with Council's recently adopted Corporate Risk Score Matrix.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Consultation within Council's Regulation and Enforcement, Governance, and Development Assessment and Certification divisions has occurred, and feedback has been incorporated into the updated Policy.

In cases where no or only minor changes are proposed to a policy, community consultation is not required. Therefore, as the review proposes minor changes, the Policy has not been placed on exhibition for broad community consultation.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 1: "We value and protect our environment" – 1.5 Maintain the unique character of the Wollongong Local Government Area, whilst balancing development, population growth and housing needs and Goal 5: "We have a healthy

community in a liveable city” – 5.2 Urban areas are created and maintained to provide a healthy and safe living environment for our community.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Compliance and Enforcement Policy assists Council staff in prioritising its response to customer requests and in using its resources effectively and efficiently.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The revised Policy has been considered and assessed against Council’s Corporate Risk Score Matrix. Key risk areas that have been identified include reputational risk, legal risk, environmental risks and risks associated with our community and staff.

Matters of extreme risk will be managed via emergency management protocols

The risks that have been identified and assessed can be managed through the consistent application of the policy, regulatory decisions that are taken and through the policy review cycle to ensure that relevant legislative changes that have been made are considered and incorporated into the policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

Council's Compliance and Enforcement Policy has been reviewed. Changes are not wholesale but rather emphasise the role of Private Certifiers and general administrative and terminology changes.

It is recommended that the revised Compliance and Enforcement Policy attached be endorsed by Council.



COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

This Policy provides information for all internal and external stakeholders and interested parties about Council's position on compliance and enforcement matters in Wollongong City.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide structure for consistency and transparency in decision making, and to facilitate a proportional approach to compliance and enforcement. It is also intended to assist Council staff to act promptly, effectively and consistently in response to allegations of unlawful activity.

This Policy outlines matters to be considered at the various stages of the enforcement process from the receipt and investigation of reports alleging unlawful activity, through to what enforcement option Council will consider and whether to commence criminal or civil proceedings.

In certain circumstances Council will have shared enforcement responsibilities with other regulatory authorities. Advice and guidance is also provided on the role of Council in building and construction compliance matters where there is a Private Certifier, and the role of Councillors in enforcement.

Responsible Council staff are not limited by this Policy in their use of discretion and exercise of official functions. The full circumstances and facts of each case need to be considered, and a decision made on the merits.

POLICY INTENT

This Policy applies to the investigation of complaints about unlawful activity or failure to comply with the terms or conditions of approvals, consents, notices or orders. It outlines how to assess whether complaints of unlawful activity require investigation, options for dealing with unlawful activities and regulatory breaches, matters for consideration and facilitates a proportional approach to compliance management.

It is based on the NSW Ombudsman "Enforcement Guidelines for Councils" and "Model Policy" (2015).

The objectives of this Policy are:

1. To establish clear guidelines and protocols for Council staff in the management of Council's regulatory activities.
2. To provide a framework to facilitate a responsive and risk-based approach to proactive and reactive compliance and enforcement matters.
3. To improve compliance management and reduce the impact of unlawful activity on the community and our environment.

The Policy also provides advice and guidance on the role of ~~the~~ Private Certifiers and the role of Councillors in enforcement.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

This Policy is a direct contributor to the delivery of Wollongong 2032, Goal 1: "We value and protect our environment – 1.5 Maintain the unique character of the Wollongong Local Government Area, whilst balancing development, population growth and housing needs and Goal 5: "We have a healthy community in a liveable City" – 5.2 Urban areas are created and maintained to provide a healthy and safe living environment for our community.

~~This Policy is a direct contributor to the delivery of Wollongong 2032, Goal 1: "We value and protect our environment – 1.1.2 Impacts from development on the environment are assessed, monitored and mitigated" and Goal 5: "We are a healthy community in the liveable City" – 5.3.1 Promote and enforce~~

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

~~compliance, develop and implement public health amenity and safety regulatory Programs and assist in improving compliance and legislative requirements.~~

POLICY

The Policy applies a risk-based approach to compliance management to ensure resources are focussed on those matters posing the biggest risk to the community and environment. This approach is applied to both proactive compliance activities and also in response to reports alleging unlawful activity (reactive compliance). Council will undertake enforcement action where appropriate in accordance with this Policy document.

1. Introduction

Council's regulatory responsibilities are applicable to threatened or *actual unlawful activity*, as well as a *failure to take action* (in order to be compliant with certain legal requirements). For simplicity, this Policy refers to both an act and/or an omission by an alleged offender as 'unlawful activity'.

2. Definitions

The following are the definitions of key terms in this Policy:

Enforcement

Actions taken in response to serious or deliberate contraventions of laws.

Regulation

Using a variety of tools and strategies to influence and change behaviour to achieve the objectives of an Act, Regulation or other statutory instrument administered by Council.

Report alleging unlawful activity

An expression of concern or a request for service in relation to alleged unlawful activity, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Unlawful activity

Any activity or work that has been or is being carried out contrary to the below and/or failure to take required action in order to be compliant with:

- terms or conditions of a development consent, approval, permit or licence
- an environmental planning instrument that regulates the activities or work that can be carried out on particular land
- a legislative provision regulating a particular activity or work
- a required development consent, approval, permission or licence.

3. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT PRINCIPLES

The following are the principles that underpin Council actions relating to compliance and enforcement.

Principle	Action
Accountable and transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting in the best interests of public health and safety and in the best interests of the environment • Ensuring accountability for decisions to take or not take action

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting fairly and impartially and without bias or unlawful discrimination • Providing information about compliance and enforcement priorities and reasons for decisions to improve understanding and certainty and promote trust by the regulated community • Ensuring meaningful reasons for decisions are given to all relevant parties, particularly when there is a departure from this Policy
Consistent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring compliance and enforcement action is implemented consistently • Encouraging customer reports about possible unlawful activity by acting reasonably in response to the circumstances and facts of each matter
Proportional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the level of enforcement action is proportionate to the level of risk and seriousness of the breach • Making cost effective decisions about enforcement action • Taking action to address harm and deter future unlawful activity
Timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring responses to reports alleging unlawful activity and decision making in relation to those is timely.

4. RISK BASED REGULATION

Our community has become more expectant of living in a healthy and liveable city where we value and protect our environment. It is understandable that a direct correlation of this expectation is that the number of laws and regulations have increased expanding the scope of necessary enforcement. From time to time reports alleging unlawful activity will exceed available resources.

Risk based regulation works on the basis that the type of compliance action chosen will be dependent on an evaluation of the degree of risk, and the impact of the non-compliance on Council's ability to achieve its objectives. It is a way to target resources where they are most needed and where they will produce the most effective impact.

Council is committed to developing and implementing both proactive and reactive strategies to achieve effective and efficient risk-based compliance enforcement programs. To this end, Council uses intelligence gained from its customer management systems to determine the most appropriate strategy.

Proactive compliance monitoring assists Council in meeting its statutory requirements, respond to common complaints and maintain a positive monitoring presence. The aim of proactive strategies is to reduce the amount of reactive incidents requiring a Council response. Examples of Council proactive compliance monitoring include our food premises inspection program, onsite wastewater management program, school zone parking compliance program, building sites compliance program and our swimming pool safety barrier inspection program.

Education and awareness raising activities are both proactive approaches to preventing breaches of the law and can be very cost effective in achieving compliance. Providing information to the public through media releases, Council's website, workshops with target groups and brochures together with incentives e.g. financial/awards, are all strategies Council will explore to determine the best fit for the areas of focus.

Reactive compliance enforcement has been informed by Council's endorsed Corporate Risk Score Matrix and incorporates a risk-based approach which categorises the request into low, moderate ~~edium~~ and high risk. Appendix 1 provides examples of commonly occurring customer request types and their risk category. In that regard reference should be made to the Appendix 1 Risk Category Matrix.

It should be noted that matters routinely investigated by Council's Regulation and Enforcement Team are considered of low, moderate and high risk. Extreme risk matters if and when they occur are generally dealt with via emergency management protocols led by state government agencies.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**COUNCIL POLICY**

Periodic reviews of the Policy's risk-based approach will be undertaken using intelligence collated from its case management systems as well as other sources to ascertain whether systemic or more serious patterns are emerging which warrant re-categorising the risk levels of unlawful activities.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

Council receives information about alleged unlawful activity from members of the public, contact from other Government Agencies and information gathered by its Officers during proactive inspections.

Only Council staff with appropriate delegations from the General Manager can undertake investigations or compliance and enforcement action in relation to this Policy.

Council staff are required to:

- treat all relevant parties with courtesy and respect
- communicate with all relevant parties and provide feedback on the progress of an investigation and any reasons for delay without compromising the integrity of the investigation
- make full and proper records in relation to the assessment and investigation of reports alleging unlawful activity, including reasons for any decisions
- inform all relevant parties of reasons for decisions
- provide as much information as possible to all relevant parties about the outcomes of investigations to show that adequate and appropriate action was taken and/or is proposed to be taken in response to a report of alleged unlawful activity
- provide information to all relevant parties about any avenues to seek an internal or external review of a decision

All reports alleging unlawful activity are to be entered into Council's customer request system and actioned within the appropriate risk-based time frame by the appropriate business unit.

6. SUBMITTING REPORTS OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

Reports alleging unlawful activity will be recorded in Council's customer request systems and will be allocated a unique reference number. The report will be referred to the relevant Council Officer to commence any necessary action.

The name, address and contact details of the person submitting the report will also be recorded. This information is critical as Council may need to rely on evidence from the complainant to prove any alleged offence and commence enforcement action. Council will advise any complainants of the action, if any, taken or the reasons why no action was taken in the circumstances.

As outlined in Council's Customer Service Policy, Council generally seeks to keep confidential, personal information identifying a complainant. However, Council may be required to disclose this information in a variety of circumstances including the following:

- When access to the information is permitted under another Council Policy (consistent with legislation)
- Legal proceedings are commenced and the information is disclosed in evidence served
- When access to the information is permitted under Legislation, including the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 or the Local Government Act 1993.
- the disclosure is required to comply with the principles of procedural fairness
- the disclosure is necessary to investigate the matter.

Also, in some circumstances it may be possible to ascertain the identity of the person submitting the report by the nature of the allegation.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

6.1 What Council expects from people who report allegations of unlawful activity

Council expects that people who report allegations of unlawful activity will cooperate and act in good faith in respect of any investigations conducted by Council. This includes:

- providing a clear description of the problem (and the resolution sought, if relevant)
- providing a clear description/account of the impact that the alleged activity is having
- giving all available and relevant information to Council, including any new information about the alleged activity that may become known to the person following the making of their report
- not giving any information that is intentionally misleading or wrong
- cooperating with Council's inquiries and giving timely responses to questions and requests for information
- treating Council's staff with courtesy and respect

6.2 Anonymous Reports

Anonymous reports will be recorded and assessed. However, because it is not possible to seek clarification or additional information about a matter, it is more difficult to evaluate the allegations and therefore only high-risk matters that are reported anonymously are likely to be tasked for investigation.

7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

Council will record every report alleging unlawful activity.

Not all reports will, can or need to be investigated. A preliminary assessment of all matters will be made to determine the priority for a response, and whether investigation or other action is required. The principles contained in this policy and Council's Corporate Risk Score Matrix are used to help assess risk and prioritise action through the triaging of customer requests.

Availability of resources plays a role in the allocation and priority investigation of reported matters. Resources are allocated to high and moderate risk matters in the first instance with low-risk matters being investigated as resources allow or being actioned via letter, phone call or other administrative means in the first instance.

An investigation of alleged unlawful activity may take a significant amount of time to complete, particularly where the issues are complex. If Council decides to investigate, staff will give the person who reported the alleged unlawful activity regular feedback on the progress of the investigation, and any reasons for delay. This does not mean that the individual can expect to be given details about every aspect of the investigation or information that would compromise the integrity of the investigation.

Decisions about what action should be taken by Council are made at the Council's discretion. This means the objective is that reports alleging unlawful activity will be resolved to the satisfaction of Council, not necessarily the person raising the matter. Council will generally try to resolve matters as quickly and informally as possible so as to avoid the need to take formal action.

Council staff will endeavour to manage the expectations of people who report alleged unlawful activity, and in particular explain that in the absence of sufficient evidence of unlawful activity, Council may be unable to take further action. Council does not have unlimited resources and powers to deal with reports alleging unlawful activity.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

8. INVESTIGATING ALLEGED UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

A preliminary assessment of all requests will be made to determine whether investigation or other action is required. Council will prioritise matters based on risk and the principles outlined in this policy-the Compliance and Enforcement Principles (Section 4).

If there is insufficient information in the report to undertake a preliminary assessment, the customer will be advised and the matter not tasked for investigation.

8.1 Circumstances where no regulatory action will be taken

Council will take no further action if, following a preliminary assessment, it is identified that:

- the report is not supported with evidence or appears to have no substance.
- Council does not have jurisdiction to investigate or is not the appropriate authority to take action on the issues raised. Where there is another appropriate authority or course of action, Council may bring the matter to the attention of the authority or provide information and contact details to the individual. For example Safe Work NSW for workplace safety matters, the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for possible environmental offences relating to premises with an Environmental Protection Licence and the NSW Food Authority for food manufacture and primary production. Community Justice Centres NSW for personal disputes.
- the report relates substantially to a matter previously determined by Council and no new or compelling information is presented which would cause Council to change its earlier decision. In this case, staff will acknowledge the report and advise that no further action will be taken as no new information had been provided (other than where the person has previously been advised they would receive no further response).
- the allegations relate to a lawful activity (eg where there is an existing approval or the activity is permissible without Council approval or consent being required).
- The relevant Coordinator, Manager, Director, or General Manager may use discretion in determining that an investigation or further regulatory action isn't required in any of the following circumstances:
 - a) The investigation revealed that approval is likely to be achieved.
 - b) It is not a safety concern.
 - c) There is no amenity impact to the community.
 - d) The complaint is made anonymously, relates to low-risk activity as defined by Councils 'Risk Category Matrix' and is without supporting evidence.
 - e) The complaint relates to a known neighbourhood dispute.
 - f) It is not in the public interest as the outcome will not justify the expenditure of resources.

8.2 Relevant factors guiding decisions as to whether to take regulatory action

When deciding whether to investigate, Council will consider a range of factors including whether:

- the activity is having a significant detrimental effect on the environment, or it constitutes a risk to public safety
- the report is premature as it relates to some unfinished aspect of work that is still in progress
- the activity or work is permissible with or without permission
- all conditions of consent are being complied with
- much time has elapsed since the events, the subject of the report, took place
- another body is a more appropriate agency to investigate and deal with the matter
- it appears there is a pattern of conduct or evidence of a possible widespread problem
- the person or organisation reported has been the subject of previous reports

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

- the report raises matters of special significance in terms of the Council's existing priorities
- there are significant resource implications in relation to an investigation and any subsequent enforcement action
- it is in the public interest to investigate the report
- the activity is having an amenity impact to the community

The above are factors for Council to consider and weigh in making a determination. Council staff are not limited in their use of discretion by these considerations and may decide to investigate based on these and other factors.

The objective of the processes Council staff use when investigating incidents of alleged unlawful activity, is to:

- determine the cause of the incident
- determine if there has been a contravention of law, policy or standards
- gather evidence to the required standard to support any required enforcement action
- determine any necessary action to mitigate the possibility of reoccurrence of similar incident.

Any decision not to investigate an allegation of unlawful activity will be recorded and the reasons for that decision clearly stated.

9. DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE ENFORCEMENT ACTION?

When deciding whether to take enforcement action in relation to a confirmed case of unlawful activity, Council will consider the full circumstances and facts of the matter and the public interest. The following general considerations will assist Council staff in determining the most appropriate response in the public interest:

9.1 Considerations about the alleged offence and impact

- the nature, extent and severity of the unlawful activity, including whether the activity is continuing
- the harm or potential harm to the environment or public health, safety or amenity caused by the unlawful activity
- the seriousness of the breach, including whether the breach is merely technical, inconsequential or minor in nature
- the time period that has lapsed since the date of the unlawful activity.

9.2 Considerations about the alleged offender

- any prior warnings, cautions, instructions, advice that was issued to the person or organisation reported or previous enforcement action taken against them
- whether the offence was committed with intent
- whether the person or organisation reported has been proactive in the resolution of the matter and assisted with any Council requirements and instructions
- any mitigating or aggravating circumstances demonstrated by the alleged offender
- any particular circumstances of hardship affecting the person or organisation reported.

9.3 Considerations about the impact of any enforcement action:

- the need to deter any future unlawful activity
- whether an educative approach would be more appropriate than a coercive approach in resolving the matter
- the prospect of success if the proposed enforcement action was challenged in Court
- the costs and benefits of taking formal enforcement action as opposed to taking informal or no action

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

- what action would be proportionate and reasonable in response to the unlawful activity
- whether Council is prevented from taking action based on earlier advice given, ie whether an estoppel situation has been created.

9.4 *Considerations about the potential for remedy:*

- whether the breach can be easily remedied
- whether it is likely consent would have been given for the activity if it had been sought
- whether there is a draft planning instrument on exhibition that would make the unauthorised use legal.

10. OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH CONFIRMED CASES OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

Council will use the most effective, informal option to deal with unlawful activity wherever possible unless there is little likelihood of compliance with such options. Council staff will use discretion to determine the most appropriate response to confirmed cases of unlawful activity and may take more than one approach.

Any enforcement action taken by Council will depend on the full circumstances and facts of each case, with any decision being made on the merits.

There are a range of enforcement actions available as shown ~~below~~ in Figure 1.

Enforcement options are not necessarily mutually exclusive: for example, in some circumstances it may be appropriate to simultaneously issue an Order and a Penalty Notice. It is also important to note that the following is a guide only and each case must be assessed on the particular facts.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

Figure 1: Enforcement actions available to Council



COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

Note that it may be appropriate to use more than one enforcement option in some cases. If initial enforcement action does not achieve a satisfactory outcome, it may be necessary to proceed to a higher level of enforcement response. For example, if a warning letter or notice of intention does not achieve the desired response, it may be appropriate to ~~issue give~~ an Order; or if an Order is not complied with, it may be appropriate to ~~bring enforcement- issue a penalty notice or or prosecution proceedings.~~

11. OFFENCES WHERE PENALTY NOTICE CAN BE ISSUED.

For certain offences a penalty notice can be issued as the appropriate regulatory action, even for these certain offences, council officers have the authority to use discretion and issue a caution in place of a monetary fine. The circumstances for which a council officer may use discretion are clearly outlined ~~in as~~ guidelines ~~under in~~ section 19A (3) of the Fines Act 1996.

https://www.justice.nsw.gov.au/justicepolicy/Documents/caution_guidelines_under_the_fines_act_pdf.pdf

12. FOLLOWING UP ENFORCEMENT ACTION

All enforcement action will be reviewed and monitored to ensure compliance with any ~~undertakings given by the subject of enforcement action or advice,~~ directions or orders issued by Council. Reports alleging continuing unlawful activity will be assessed and further action taken if necessary. If the unlawful activity has ceased or the work has been rectified, the matter will be resubmitted for follow up action to ensure compliance outcomes are met. Should initial enforcement action be found to have been ineffective, Council staff will consider other enforcement options.

~~12.13.~~ TAKING LEGAL ACTION

Council and delegated staff will be guided by legal advice in deciding whether to commence criminal or civil proceedings and will consider the following:

- whether there is sufficient evidence to establish a case to the required standard of proof,
- whether there is a reasonable prospect of success before a Court,
- whether the public interest warrants legal action being pursued.

Whether there is sufficient evidence to establish a case to the required standard of proof

Council considers the decision to take legal action a serious matter, and as such will only initiate and continue proceedings once it has been established that there is admissible, substantial and reliable evidence to the required standard of proof.

The basic requirement of any **criminal** prosecution is that the available evidence establishes a prima facie case. The prosecutor is required to prove the elements of the offence beyond reasonable doubt.

In **civil** enforcement proceedings, Council will require sufficient evidence to satisfy the Court that an actual or threatened breach has occurred on the balance of probabilities.

Whether there is a reasonable prospect of success before a Court

Given the expense of legal action Council will not take legal action unless there is a reasonable prospect of success before a Court. In making this assessment, Council staff will consider the availability, competence and credibility of witnesses, the admissibility of the evidence, all possible defences, and any other factors which could affect the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Whether the public interest requires legal action to be pursued

The principal consideration in deciding whether to commence legal proceedings is whether to do so is in the public interest. In making this determination, the same factors to be considered when taking enforcement action apply.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

The following considerations relate more specifically to the decision to commence legal proceedings and will assist Council and its delegated staff in making this determination:

- the availability of any alternatives to legal action
- whether an urgent resolution is required (Court proceedings may take some time)
- the possible length and expense of Court proceedings
- any possible counter-productive outcomes of prosecution
- what the effective sentencing options are available to the Court in the event of conviction
- whether the proceedings or the consequences of any resulting conviction would be unduly harsh or oppressive.

Time within which to commence proceedings

Council staff must be aware of legislative time limits in which enforcement proceedings must be commenced. Sometimes legal action will be statute barred despite good evidence that unlawful activity has occurred.

13.14. SHARED ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Some reports will raise matters involving shared regulatory responsibilities between Council and other authorities including the Environment Protection Authority, NSW Police, NSW Liquor and Gaming, NSW Fair Trading, NSW Food Authority, ~~office of~~ Building Commission NSW and Crown Lands.

Council recognises that collaboration and cooperation between authorities to address issues of shared regulatory responsibility is the best approach. To this end, where there are shared legislative responsibilities, Council staff will work with relevant authorities to establish:

- which authority will take the leading role on any joint investigation
- which activities each authority will carry out
- responsibilities for updating an individual where relevant
- protocols for exchanging confidential information between the relevant authorities.

Council will reasonably endeavour to respond to requests for information or assistance on joint regulatory matters in a timely manner.

14.15. ROLE OF COUNCIL WHERE A PRIVATE PRINCIPAL CERTIFIER HAS BEEN APPOINTED NOMINATED AS THE PRINCIPAL CERTIFIER

Where ~~at the Private Principal~~ Certifier has been appointed as the Principal Certifier (PC) the Council recognises that the ~~Private Principal~~ Certifier is the authority responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions of development consent.

~~Private Principal~~ Certifiers have limited enforcement powers. Private Certifiers appointed as the PC They can issue a Written Directions Notice to ~~issue an order to~~ the owner or builder to comply with the conditions of consent or rectify any ~~non-compliance breaches~~. When a non-compliant Written Directions Notice issued by a private certifier is not complied with, the matter is referred to Council by the certifier. Council will then conduct an assessment to determine if as to whether if Council will initiate enforcement action against the owner or builder consistent with the risk based approach of the Compliance and Enforcement Policy. ~~enforce the notice by issuing an Order.~~

In instances where a Private Certifier is appointed as the PC, customers raising an issue will ~~Persons making complaints regarding a site where the PC is private will,~~ in most cases, be advised to contact the ~~Private Principal~~ Certifier in the first instance. This will give the ~~Principal Private Certifier~~ Certifier an

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

opportunity to address the issues and take appropriate action. Council may intervene if an immediate public safety or environmental risk is identified.

~~Should the Principal Certifier fail to use their enforcement powers to address the issue raised within a reasonable timeframe, Council will act to investigate the matter.~~

It must be noted that Council is not the regulator of ~~Private~~ Principal Certifiers and any complaints about the conduct of Principal Certifiers must be directed to the NSW Fair Trading <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>.

Council will endeavour to work with ~~Private~~ Principal Certifiers to resolve any issues when they arise to achieve compliance with the development consent or complying development certificate. Council staff will take steps to ensure individuals are clear about which agency performs which role.

~~Refer to Council's Fact Sheet on Private Principal Certifiers for more information www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/.~~

15.16. REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCESSES

Any order issued by Council (as a proposed order) (unless issued in an emergency) will have a notice period allowing representations to be made (generally up to 28 days). Representations should be made in writing to the attention of the General Manager.

Fines issued by Council under a range of legislation have a review process that is managed by Revenue NSW. Information on how to request a review of a fine can be found at www.revenue.nsw.gov.au.

16.17. ROLE OF COUNCILLORS IN ENFORCEMENT

Compliance and enforcement matters are sensitive and easily susceptible to allegations of impropriety, bias or inconsistency. ~~In order to~~ To manage those risks, and consistent with Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillors do not attend on-site meetings with Council staff, the complainants, or persons the subject of investigation or enforcement action. ~~Councillors do not~~ or direct staff in relation to particular outcomes relating to investigations or enforcement options or actions.

Councillors can help individuals who raise concerns with them by referring them to the Regulation and Enforcement Division for the appropriate action to take place as outlined in this Policy.

18. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Whilst this policy is not required under legislation it is considered best practice for Council's to adopt a Compliance and Enforcement Policy to guide its activities and actions under the legislation it is responsible for enforcing.

Council is an enforcement agency, and its officers authorised under a range of legislation including:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
- Public Health Act 2010
- Food Act 2003
- Swimming Pools Act 1992
- Companion Animals Act 1998

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

19. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of once every term of Council, or more frequently as required.

20. REPORTING

Council is required to report annually on its compliance activities under several pieces of legislation including the Food Act 2003, Public Health Act 2010, and the Companion Animals Act 1998. Council reports on its compliance activities quarterly through the Quarterly Review Statement under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework as well as reporting some activities in its Annual Report.

21. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager Regulation and Enforcement is the Responsible Officer for reviewing and updating the Policy. The Environment and Development Compliance Manager and the Compliance and Regulation Manager are responsible for ensuring the Policy is implemented consistently by staff.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

Appendix 1

RISK CATEGORIES

High Risk

May include ~~ing~~ but not limited to:

- Fire safety compliance
- Major / significant pollution incidents
- Dog attacks, straying stock
- Large scale vegetation clearing
- Abandoned vehicles deemed dangerous or a public safety risk in unsafe locations
- Abandoned items posing a public safety risk
- Collapsed or unsafe building works adjacent to public areas
- Poor sediment control on building sites,
- Legionella outbreak
- Food born illness outbreak
- Swimming pool barrier (fencing)

Medium-Moderate Risk

May include ~~ing~~ but not limited to:

- Roaming dogs, dogs on beaches/animal registration/general companion animal enquiries ~~Abandoned motor vehicles~~
- Minor pollution incidents
- Breaches of tree preservation orders
- ~~Swimming pool barrier fencing~~
- Domestic sewage surcharge
- Commercial & industrial air/noise complaints (criteria)
- Food premises complaints
- Public and environmental health premises complaints
- Significant unauthorised/noncomplying building works
- Building works where a Principal Certifier is appointed
- Land filling
- Waste / rubbish dumping
- Parking ~~Footpath obstructions~~
- Onsite sewage management systems
- Reserve encroachments
- Boarding houses
- ~~Caravan park compliance~~

Low Risk

May include ~~ing~~ but not limited to:

- Barking dogs
- Domestic noise complaints (power tools, air conditioners, pool pumps, amplified music)
- All other animal related enquiries
- Overgrown land (criteria)
- Home business/home occupation
- Minor unauthorised/noncomplying building works (criteria)
- Overland Stormwater flow (criteria)
is appropriate authority
- Smoke nuisance from domestic wood heaters, outdoor BBQ's, burning prohibited items
- ~~Weed biosecurity~~
- Keeping of roosters, rooster noise, including poultry and fowl houses
- Abandoned vehicles (not safety issue)
- Abandoned items (not safety issue)
- Footpath obstructions (not safety issue)
- Illegal camping (not safety issue)
- Unsightly premises
- Strata issues where Consumer's Tenancy & Trader's Tribunal

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

COUNCIL POLICY

- is appropriate authority
- Dividing fences/boundary fence issues where [the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal is the appropriate authority.](#)
 - Caravan Park [compliance](#)

~~The action undertaken by Council in response to a request will be proportionate the quantum of resources available at the time. For example, where the number of requests exceeds the amount of resources available, requests may be actioned using compliance through voluntary action (letters of cooperation). Conversely, when resources are available, more detailed investigations may be conducted.~~



COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT COUNCIL POLICY

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Regulation and Enforcement
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Corporate Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	29 August 2022, 3 April 2018, 25 November 2013, 28 November 2011, 23 June 2009.
Date of next review	[Not more than three years from last adoption]

ITEM 6

POLICY REVIEW - WOLLONGONG MEMORIAL GARDENS & CEMETERIES COUNCIL POLICY

The Wollongong Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Policy (the Policy) has been reviewed with minor amendments to better reflect the management and operations of Council's cemeteries and gardens and ensure alignment with the recently implemented Cemetery Interment Scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

Council endorse the revised Wollongong Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Policy.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Roisin OSullivan, Manager Commercial Operations + Property (Acting)
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Wollongong Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Policy

BACKGROUND

The Policy has been developed to provide our community with clear guidelines around how Council manages our cemeteries and gardens and to ensure our community feels confident that Council will undertake its responsibilities to provide space to honour and remember those that have passed.

Minor changes have been made to the Policy to provide clarity around several provisions and to give staff and the community clear direction on the application of interment rights within the cemeteries. A summary of these changes is included below:

Defining at-need interments

At-need interments are those provided at the time of, or immediately after the death of an individual. A definition for at-need interments has been added to the Policy for clarity.

"Providing the number of interments allowed within a burial site – A limit of 4 interments (ashes and body) with a maximum of two bodily interments".

All new burial plots are dug to a depth that allows for two bodily interments, with the additional number up to the maximum allowable held for ash interments. A maximum allowable number has been set to provide clarity for customers and ensure the wishes of the original deceased are maintained.

Religious and Memorial Ceremonies outside cemeteries

Reinforcing this Policy does not consider ceremonies conducted external to the cemeteries and that these ceremonies may be subject to other approvals and processes.

Laying down of monuments

At times monuments may need to be laid down as they become unsafe. The process for laying down a monument is identified in the new industry Interment Scheme. This change is reflective of this process.

Defining limitations on the storage of cremated remains – Up to 12 months after which ashes will be scattered.

Whilst the gardens no longer cremate, we do inter a significant number of ashes each year. At times the ashes are delivered to our site however a memorial site is not paid for. This addition allows for the ashes to be disposed of after the time has lapsed and staff have made three (3) attempts at contacting the interment right holder.

Outlining the allocation of a pre-need right in a restricted area – one pre-need site can be allocated up to 30 days after the at need interment has taken place.

When sales in a particular area are restricted to at-need only, to ensure family members are able to be buried together, the family may purchase another site at the time of the at-need supply for future use. This pre-need site will need to be purchased within 30 days of the date of the first burial. All new sites

can support double depth interments meaning with this clause, four (4) family members can be buried together with an additional two sets of ashes also able to be interred into each site.

Destitute Burials – provided at Wollongong Lawn Cemetery

Council provides services to those community members, through NSW Health, who do not have the means to pay for a burial. Burials designated as destitute are provided at Wollongong Lawn Cemetery only and provided at triple depth.

Legislative addition – Cemetery Interment Scheme 2024

The Cemetery Interment Scheme commenced in 2024 and was introduced by Crematoria and Cemeteries NSW. The scheme provides several guidelines that must be implemented to enable a licence to operate to be issued.

PROPOSAL

The attached draft Wollongong Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Policy be endorsed.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Commercial Operations & Property

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 5 – ‘We have a healthy community in a liveable city.’. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	
Strategy		Service	
5.4	Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, recreation, learning and cultural activities in the community.	Memorial Gardens & Cemeteries	

RISK MANAGEMENT

The continued limitation of sales when stock availability is low is considered restrictive however ensures Council’s ongoing ability to deliver at-need burials to the community when needed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no financial impact on the implementation of this Policy.

CONCLUSION

The Wollongong Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Council Policy provides consistent interpretation of our operations and ensures all decisions are applied in line with the relevant acts that oversee the industry. It provides the community a clear understanding of Council’s role in the management and operations of our cemeteries.



WOLLONGONG MEMORIAL GARDENS AND CEMETERIES COUNCIL POLICY

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

PURPOSE

Council recognises the importance of its Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries to our community. This policy has been developed to ensure that Council's Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries are managed effectively and provide our community with access to interment services that are respectful of culture and faith and provided in a consistent, transparent, and accountable manner.

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to –

1. Recognise the importance of our Cemeteries and Memorial Gardens to our community.
2. Ensure that our Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries are well managed, safe, and accessible.
3. Enable Council to continue to meet the needs of our community through effective management and future planning.

WOLLONGONG 2032 OBJECTIVES

This policy links to objective 5.4 *Provide a variety of quality and accessible public places and opportunities for sport, play, leisure, learning and cultural activities in the community.*

This will be achieved through the management of Council's commercial businesses to optimise service delivery at the Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries.

POLICY

Citation

This Policy may be cited as 'the Policy' or 'the Council's Cemeteries Policy'.

Application

This Policy applies to all cemeteries and memorial gardens controlled, managed, administered, operated, and maintained by Council.

Definitions

Cemetery or Cemeteries means an area containing one or more burial places and that is administered or controlled by Council.

Council means Wollongong City Council.

Interment means the act of burying, interring, or immuring the remains of a deceased person, whether cremated or not.

Interment Right Holder means the person/s granted by application the exclusive right to authorise the interment of human remains (whether cremated or not) and/or to establish or alter a Monument or other memorial at the interment site in respect to which the right was granted

Interment Site means a grave site, vault site, crypt site, memorial site or other place for the disposition or commemoration of the remains of the dead, whether cremated or not.

Memorial Gardens means an area containing sites for cremated remains only, and that which is administered or controlled by Council.

WOLLONGONG MEMORIAL GARDENS + CEMETERIES

COUNCIL POLICY

Monument means any structure, memorial, plaque, headstone, masonry, metal work, casting or item placed over, in or around an Interment Site.

Pre-need means a service or Interment Right purchased or being purchased in advance of actual need, that is, the entitlement of the Interment Right has not been exercised.

At-need means a service or Interment Right is purchased and executed at the time of, or immediately after the death of an individual.

PROVISIONS

Planning, Conduct and Maintenance of Council's Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries

Council will make such provisions as it considers necessary to ensure the effective management of its' memorial gardens and cemeteries to ensure they are well managed, safe, and accessible to the community through the following:

- a. the setting aside of sections for different types and classes of Interment. Council will ensure, where available and based on need, that a variety of interment options, including natural burials, are available for the community's use across its cemeteries and gardens.
- b. areas dedicated to specific cultures where the interment needs differ from those of the general sections. Council will provide options for cultural interments at Wollongong Lawn Cemetery, where there is significant need within the local community.
- c. a limit of up to 4 interments (combination of ashes and body) will be allowed in a burial plot, with a maximum of 2 bodily interments in each site (this does not include destitute burials).
- d. the carrying out of work by contractors and external stakeholders, including conducting burials, and the installation and maintenance of monuments in the Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries will require approval by Council
- e. the removal, replacement, and maintenance of memorial structures erected within the cemeteries remain the responsibility of the interment right holder. To ensure the safety of our community, if deemed unsafe, Council will cordon off or lay down a monument, in line with the processes identified in the industry interment scheme.
- f. the conducting of religious or other ceremonies of burial, disposition, or commemoration will be allowed with prior approval by Council within our memorial gardens and cemeteries. Religious or other memorial ceremonies wishing to be undertaken in public parks or other areas may be subject to separate approvals and booking processes.
- g. cremated remains will be stored securely for a period of up to 12 months from the date of delivery. During this time, 3 attempts will be made to contact the Interment Right Holder to determine placement arrangements. If after 12 months and with no confirmed arrangement, council reserves the right to inter the ashes into one of our allocated scatters gardens. This approach and timeframe will also be applied to memorial plaques, in which case they will be placed on the individual reserved plot.
- h. where the supply of interments is restricted, Council will allow only at-need burials to ensure the community can access sites when needed. The option of reserving one pre-need Interment Right at the time of purchasing an at-need Interment Right, is allowed however will expire **30 days after the date of burial**.
- i. destitute burials will be provided at Wollongong Lawn Cemetery.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This Policy is aligned with the following legislation to ensure that the Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries administered by Council comply with statutory requirements:

WOLLONGONG MEMORIAL GARDENS + CEMETERIES

COUNCIL POLICY

1. *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013*
2. *Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulation 2022*
3. *NSW Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health Regulation 2022*
4. *Crown Lands (General Reserves) By-Law 2006*
5. *Australian Standards for Headstones and Cemetery Monuments AS 4204:2019*
6. *Crematoria and Cemeteries NSW Industry Interment Scheme 2024*

It considers statute and common law, regulation and National Standards that affect the management and operation of memorial gardens and cemeteries. It also sets reasonable and practical standards of conduct for those entering Council's cemeteries and memorial gardens.

APPLICATION OF ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD) PRINCIPLES

The Policy assists in achieving practical allocation of diminishing resources, primarily interment rights and interment sites, within the cemeteries and memorial gardens.

It also encourages all new structures (monuments, etc) to be built in accordance with the best practices and standards, thereby making them as sustainable as possible.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of once every term of Council, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Operations Manager Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries will oversee the implementation of this policy across all sites under Council's control.

RELATED STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Management policy - Memorial Gardens and Cemeteries Operations Management.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Responsible Division	Commercial Operations and Property
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Corporate Governance]
Date/s of previous adoptions	26 May 2014, 29 May 2017, 20 March 2022
Date of next review	[Not more than three years from last adoption]

ITEM 7 TENDER T1000173 - MEMORIAL DRIVE (ALBERT STREET) DEBRIS CONTROL STRUCTURE

This report recommends the acceptance of a tender for the construction of a debris control structure in the upper Bellambi Gully main arm, upstream of the Memorial Drive, within the Collins Creek catchment in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

The Collins Creek Catchment area covers 14 square kilometres between Bulli, Woonona and Bellambi and is subject to flash flooding, with flood levels peaking within an hour of the commencement of heavy rainfall. The Collins Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan recommended the design and construction of a debris control structure in Albert Street, Bellambi. Debris control structures are intended to reduce large scale debris loading and the risk of blockage to downstream culverts, thus reducing the potential for flood damage and reducing the flood impact on downstream properties, infrastructure and roadways.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 In accordance with Section 178(1)(a) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Council accept the tender of Select Civil Pty Ltd for Memorial Drive (Albert Street) Debris Control Structure, in the sum of \$537,388.00 including GST.
- 2 Council delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise and execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.
- 3 Council grant authority for the use of the Common Seal of Council on the contract and any other documentation, should it be required, to give effect to this resolution.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Jeremy Morgan, Manager Project Delivery (Acting)
Authorised by: Joanne Page, Director Infrastructure + Works

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Locality Plans

BACKGROUND

The Collins Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (2014) recommended the design and construction of a debris control structure in the upper Bellambi Gully main arm, upstream of Memorial Drive in Albert Street, Bellambi. The following Collins Creek catchment related projects have been included in Council's previous and current Infrastructure Delivery Programs:

- Bellambi Gully Scheme – channel improvement works – under construction.
- Ursula Road flood mitigation scheme:
 - construction completed for Stage 2
 - design is well-progressed for Stage 1 and 3.
- Debris control structures – Gordon Hutton Park, Russell Vale Golf Course, and Brompton Road Bellambi – construction completed.
- Debris control structure – Memorial Drive (Albert Street), Bellambi (subject of this tender).

Debris control structures are constructed to reduce the likelihood of large debris from entering existing culverts and small bridges. These structures reduce the risk of structural damage and therefore reduce the potential for flooding to occur on surrounding properties, roadways and infrastructure during high rainfall events.

Open tenders were invited for this project with submissions closing at 10.00 am on 5 February 2025.

Eight (8) tenders were received, and all tenders have been scrutinised and evaluated by a Tender Evaluation Panel in accordance with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures and comprising representatives from the Project Delivery, Infrastructure Strategy and Planning and Governance and Customer Service Divisions.

Tenders were reviewed against the following Evaluation criteria and weightings as set out in the request for tender documents as follows:

Mandatory Criteria

- 1 Satisfactory references from referees for previous projects of similar size and scope
- 2 Financial evaluation acceptable to Council which demonstrates the tenderer's financial capacity to undertake the works
- 3 Accredited Workplace Health and Safety Management System

Evaluation Criteria

- 1 Cost to Council – 40%
- 2 Appreciation of scope of works and construction methodology – 20%
- 3 Experience and satisfactory performance in undertaking projects of similar size, scope and risk profile, including staff qualifications and experience – 15%
- 4 Demonstrated strengthening of local economic capacity – 10%
- 5 Proposed sub-contractors – 5%
- 6 Proposed sub-contractors – 5%
- 7 Workplace health and safety management system and environmental management policies and procedures – 5%

The mandatory criteria have been met by the recommended tenderer.

The Tender Evaluation Panel utilised a weighted scoring method for the evaluation of tenders which allocates a numerical score out of 5 in relation to the level of compliance offered by the tenders to each of the evaluation criteria as specified in the tender documentation. The method then applies weightings established prior to opening tenders for each of the evaluation criteria which provides for a total score out of 5 to be calculated for each tender. The tender with the highest total score is considered the offer that best meets the requirements of the contract in providing value to Council. Table 1 below summarises the results of the tender evaluation and the ranking of tenders.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF TENDER ASSESSMENT

Name of Tenderer	Rank
Select Civil Pty Ltd	1
Cadifern Pty Ltd	2
Convil Group Pty Ltd	3
GC Civil Contracting Pty Ltd	4
City Coast Services Pty Ltd	5
Earthbuilt Environmental	6
Infrastructure Renewal Services Pty Ltd	7
Silver Raven Pty Ltd	8

PROPOSAL

The Tender Evaluation Panel recommend acceptance of the tender from Select Civil Pty Ltd to carry out the Memorial Drive (Albert Street) Debris Control Structure in accordance with the scope of works and technical specifications developed for the project.

The recommended tenderer has satisfied the Tender Evaluation Panel that it can undertake the works in accordance with Council's standards and technical specification.

An acceptable financial capability evaluation has been received in relation to the recommended tenderer.

Referees nominated by the recommended tenderer have been contacted by the Tender Evaluation Panel and the panel was satisfied with the responses.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 1 Members of the Tender Evaluation Panel
- 2 Nominated Referees

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2032 Goal 1. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
1.3	Increases our resilience to natural disasters and a changing climate to protect life, property and the environment	Stormwater Services

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk in accepting the recommendation of this report is considered low on the basis that the tender process has complied with Council's Procurement Policies and Procedures and the Local Government Act 1993.

The risk of the project works is considered medium based upon Council's risk assessment matrix and appropriate risk management strategies will be implemented.

The works have been identified as part of the Collins Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan and were recommended on a cost benefit basis. There are several impacts including safety, financial and reputational risks that should be considered if Council does not undertake the debris control structure works.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic sustainability implications are considered relevant to the installation of debris control structure to reduce ongoing maintenance costs and potentially reduce likelihood of flood damages.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

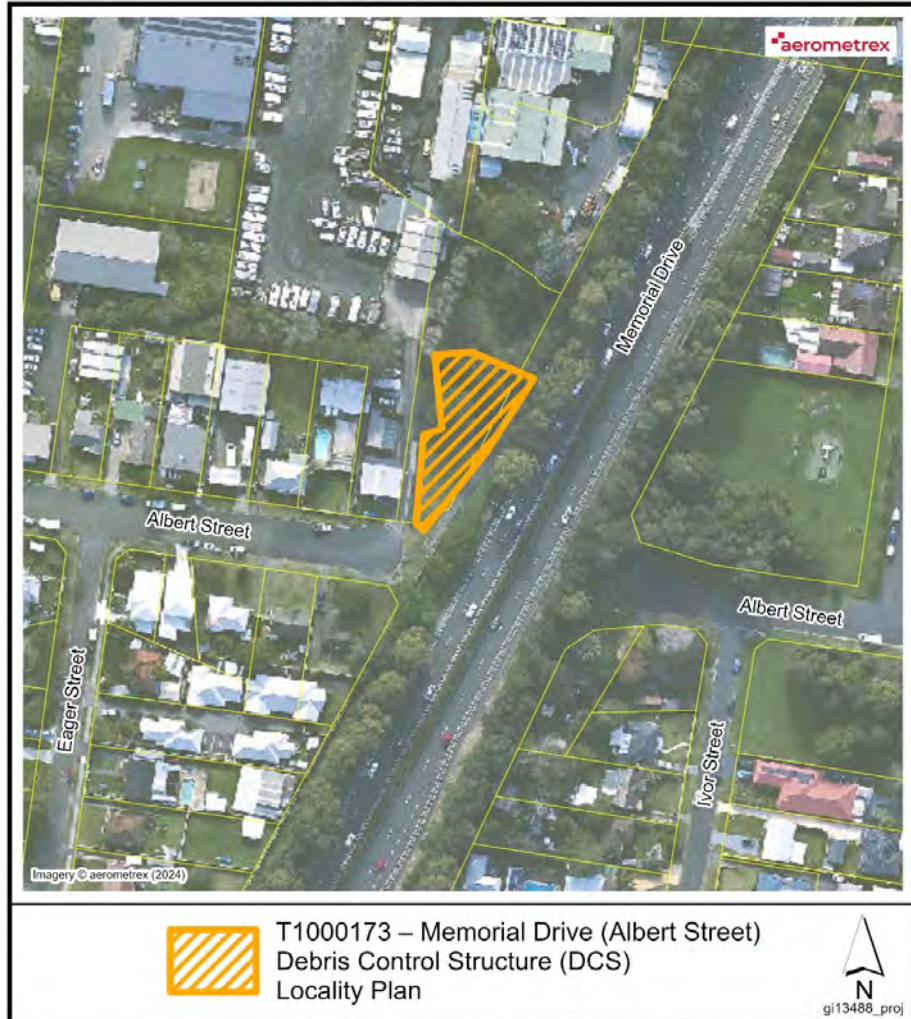
It is proposed that the total project be funded from the following source/s as identified in the Operational Plan –

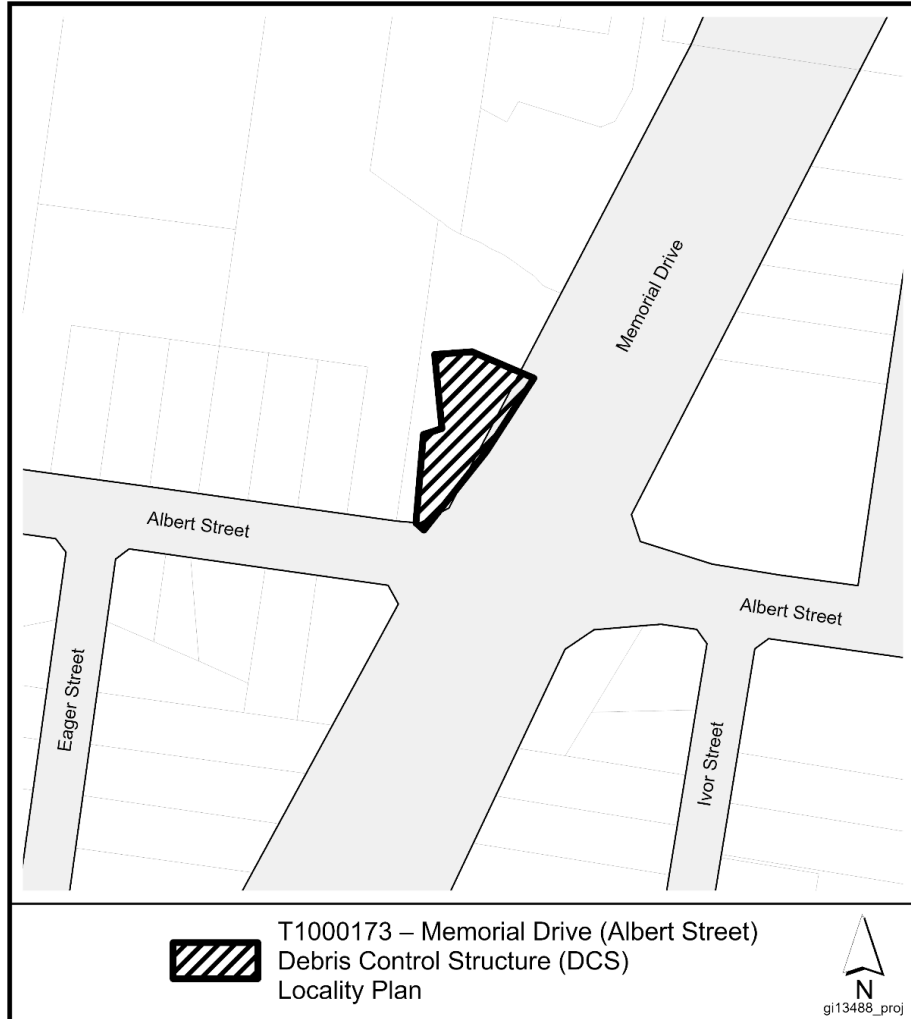
2024/25 Capital Budget

2025/26 Capital Budget

CONCLUSION

The proposed debris control structure at upper Bellambi Gully main arm, upstream of the Memorial Drive is recommended as part of the flood modification options in the Collins Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan. Select Civil Pty Ltd have provided a satisfactory submission, and it is recommended that Council endorse the recommendations of this report.





While every effort has been made to ensure the highest possible quality of data, no liability will be accepted for any inaccuracy of the information shown.
Copyright © Wollongong City Council, Mapping Services Section. This map may not be reproduced in any form whatever without the express written permission of Wollongong City Council.

ITEM 8 FEBRUARY 2025 FINANCIALS

The financial result for February 2025 compared to budget is favourable for the Operating Result [pre-capital] \$2.4M. Funds Available from Operations was unfavourable compared to budget \$4.3M and the Total Funds Result favourable \$1.6M compared to budget.

The Statement of Financial Position at the end of the period indicates sufficient cash to support external restrictions.

Council has expended \$57.1M on its capital works program representing 55.5% of the annual budget. The budget for the same period was \$60.8M. The third Quarter Capital Budget adjustments will be approved through the March Quarterly Review process.

RECOMMENDATION

The financials be received and noted.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Brian Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer

Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

ATTACHMENTS

- Financial Statements - February 2025

BACKGROUND

This report presents the Financial Performance of the organisation as at 28 February 2025. The below table provides a summary of the organisation's overall financial results for the year to date.

Wollongong City Council	Original	Revised	YTD	YTD	
28 February 2025	Budget	Budget	Forecast	Actual	Variation
Forecast Position	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
	1-Jul	28-Feb	28-Feb	28-Feb	
Operating Revenue	368.1	356.5	217.2	219.5	2.3
Operating Costs	(354.2)	(376.9)	(252.1)	(252.0)	0.1
Operating Result [Pre Capital]	13.9	(20.5)	(34.9)	(32.5)	2.4
Capital Grants & Contributions	27.5	31.0	15.5	17.1	1.6
Operating Result	41.3	10.5	(19.4)	(15.4)	4.0
Funds Available from Operations	66.3	49.2	35.2	30.9	(4.3)
Capital Works	106.0	102.8	60.8	57.1	3.7
Contributed Assets	7.0	7.0	(0.0)	-	(0.0)
Transfer to Restricted Cash	2.6	31.1	1.4	1.4	-
Borrowings Repaid	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	-
Funded from:					
- Operational Funds	66.3	49.2	35.2	30.9	(4.3)
- Other Funding	49.2	75.6	15.5	17.7	2.2
Total Funds Surplus/(Deficit)	(0.8)	(16.8)	(12.1)	(10.5)	1.6

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The February 2025 Operating Result [pre-capital] deficit of \$32.5M is a favourable variance of \$2.4M compared to the budget deficit of \$34.9M.

The Operating Result deficit of \$15.4M is a favourable variance of \$4M compared to budget.

The Funds Available from Operations result is unfavourable by \$4.3M compared to phased budget. This result excludes the non-cash variations and transfers to and from Restricted Assets but includes the variation in cash payments for Employee Entitlements. This result best represents the operational budget variations that impact our funding position and current financial capacity.

The Total Funds result as at 28 February 2025 is a favourable variance of \$1.6M compared to phased budget.

The Funds Available from Operations variation includes the impacts of the April natural disaster and additional EPA levy associated with construction materials brought on site at the Waste Facility. A claim for the EPA levy associated with the construction material has been lodged however it has not been approved at this stage. The continuing impact of the Natural Disaster is not fully known, and work continues on substantiating external funding opportunities that may be available to offset associated expenses.

At the end of February, the Capital Works Program had an expenditure of \$57.1M compared to a budget of \$60.8M.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash, Investments & Available Funds

Council's cash and investments increased during February 2025 to holdings of \$199.9M compared to \$180.7M at the end of January 2025. A significant portion of these funds are subject to restriction meaning they can only be utilised for specific purposes. As a result, Council's true available cash position is more accurately depicted by considering available funds that are uncommitted and not subject to restriction.

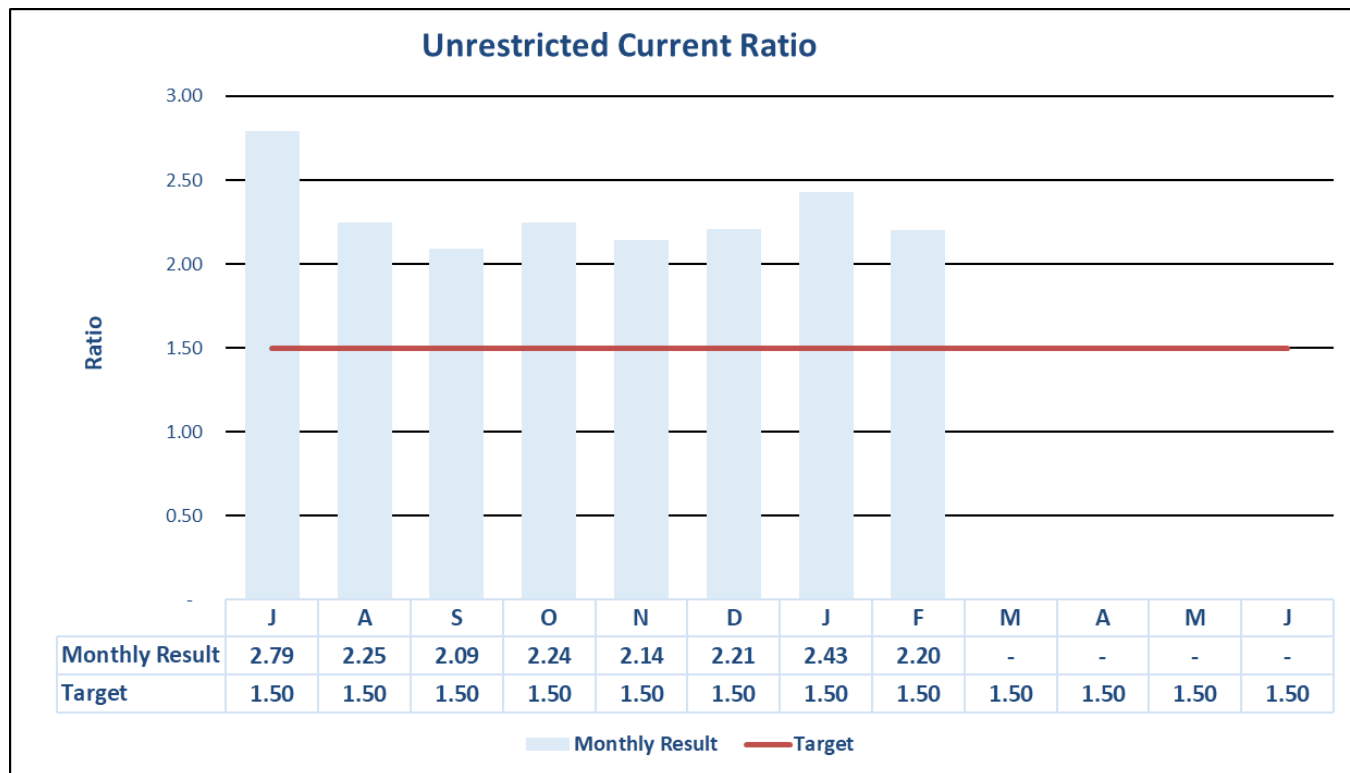
Wollongong City Council 28 February 2025 Cash, Investments and Available Funds				
	Actual 2023/24	Original Budget 2024/25	Revised Budget 2024/25	Actuals YTD February 2025
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
Total Cash and Investments	179.5	186.1	202.6	199.9
Less Restrictions:				
External	86.9	80.0	94.2	100.5
Internal	68.7	86.6	90.9	68.2
CivicRisk Investment	3.1			3.1
Total Restrictions	158.7	166.6	185.2	171.8
Available Cash	20.8	19.5	17.4	28.0
Adjusted for :				
Payables	(22.3)	(29.3)	(31.4)	(33.6)
Receivables	32.4	28.6	28.0	27.3
Other	10.5	(2.4)	1.9	9.2
Net Payables & Receivables	20.6	(3.1)	(1.5)	3.0
Available Funds	41.4	16.4	15.9	31.0

External restrictions are funds that must be spent for a specific purpose and cannot be used by Council for general operations. Internal restrictions are funds that Council has determined will be used for a specific future purpose, although Council may vary that use by resolution of Council. Further details on the internal and external restrictions can be found in the Cash Flow Statement (Attachment 1).

The level of cash and investments in Council's available funds position is still above the Financial Strategy target range of 3.5% to 5.5% of operational revenue (pre-capital) due to the impact of the early

payment of the Financial Assistance Grant. The decrease in cash and investments is in line with anticipated cash flows.

The Unrestricted Current Ratio measures the Council's liquidity position or ability to meet short term obligations as they fall due. The below graph reflects Council's performance against the Local Government benchmark of greater than 1.5 times.



Borrowings

Council has no outstanding loans as at 28 February 2025. Council's Financial Strategy includes provision for additional borrowing in the future and Council will consider borrowing opportunities from time to time to bring forward the completion of capital projects where immediate funding is not available.

Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment

The Statement of Financial Position shows \$4.04B of Property, Plant and Equipment at net carrying value, and gross replacement cost \$7B (excluding \$117M in Work In Progress) that are controlled and managed by Council on behalf of the community at 28 February 2025.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Goal 4 "We are a connected and engaged community". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026	
Strategy		Service	
4.8	Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services	

CONCLUSION

The financial result impacted key financial indicators at the end of February through a favourable result for *Total Funds Result Budget versus Actual*.

Wollongong City Council
1 July 2024 to 28 February 2025
Income Statement

	2024/25 Original Budget \$'000	2024/25 Revised Budget \$'000	2024/25 YTD Budget \$'000	2024/25 Actual YTD \$'000	Variance \$'000
Income From Continuing Operations					
Revenue:					
Rates and Annual Charges	247,048	247,535	164,767	165,007	240
User Charges and Fees	39,990	37,523	25,066	26,849	1,783
Interest and Investment Revenues	6,197	9,707	6,470	7,299	829
Other Revenues	6,074	6,956	4,622	4,974	352
Rental Income	7,028	7,025	4,495	4,499	4
Grants & Contributions provided for Operating Purposes	33,212	19,210	13,979	13,120	(859)
Grants & Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	27,454	30,955	15,459	17,070	1,611
Other Income:	0	0	0	0	0
Profit/Loss on Disposal of Assets	28,516	28,516	(2,253)	(2,253)	(0)
Total Income from Continuing Operations	395,519	387,427	232,605	236,565	3,960
Expenses From Continuing Operations					
Employee Costs	164,095	165,700	109,394	111,098	(1,704)
Borrowing Costs	557	1,055	703	701	2
Materials & Services	102,189	111,583	75,290	67,164	8,126
Other Expenses	24,257	24,504	16,652	18,364	(1,713)
Depreciation, Amortisation + Impairment	87,113	98,249	65,410	65,470	(60)
Labour Internal Charges	(21,690)	(21,853)	(13,858)	(9,821)	(4,037)
Non-Labour Internal Charges	(2,323)	(2,301)	(1,532)	(986)	(546)
Total Expenses From Continuing Operations	354,198	376,937	252,057	251,989	68
Operating Result	41,322	10,489	(19,452)	(15,424)	4,028
Operating Result [pre capital]	13,868	(20,466)	(34,911)	(32,494)	2,417
Funding Statement					
Net Operating Result for the Year	41,322	10,489	(19,452)	(15,424)	4,028
Add back :					
- Non-cash Operating Transactions	106,241	96,972	88,209	85,828	(2,381)
- Restricted cash used for operations	14,601	18,771	12,818	10,628	(2,190)
- Income transferred to Restricted Cash	(79,972)	(60,780)	(35,774)	(35,989)	(215)
Leases Repaid	(132)	(496)	(330)	(338)	(8)
Payment of Employee Entitlements	(15,763)	(15,763)	(10,254)	(13,834)	(3,579)
Funds Available from Operations	66,297	49,193	35,216	30,871	(4,345)
Loans Repaid	(656)	(656)	(656)	(657)	(0)
Advances (made by) / repaid to Council	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Funds Available for Capital Budget	65,642	48,537	34,559	30,214	(4,346)
Capital Budget Statement					
Assets Acquired	(105,995)	(102,791)	(60,779)	(57,102)	3,677
Contributed Assets	(7,014)	(7,014)	0	0	(0)
Transfers to Restricted Cash	(2,607)	(31,123)	(1,413)	(1,413)	0
Funded From :-					
- Operational Funds	65,642	48,537	34,559	30,214	(4,346)
- Sale of Assets	3,550	32,066	2,433	1,294	(1,139)
- Internally Restricted Cash	13,920	14,006	2,096	5,646	3,549
- Borrowings	0	0	0	0	0
- Capital Grants	15,875	15,276	6,794	6,742	(52)
- Developer Contributions (Section 94)	5,135	3,521	2,114	2,235	121
- Other Externally Restricted Cash	1,547	2,631	1,410	1,164	(246)
- Other Capital Contributions	9,161	8,086	679	682	4
TOTAL FUNDS SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(788)	(16,805)	(12,107)	(10,540)	1,567

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

**Statement of Financial Position
as at 28 February 2025**

		YTD Actual 2024/25 \$'000	Actual 2023/24 \$'000
Current Assets			
Cash Assets		54,871	44,900
Investment Securities		115,863	116,457
Receivables		27,332	32,372
Inventories		6,533	6,524
Current Contract Assets		7,705	10,771
Other		7,048	3,561
Assets classified as held for sale		0	0
Total Current Assets		219,351	214,585
Non-Current Assets			
Non Current Cash Assets		26,000	15,000
Non Current Investment Securities		3,117	3,117
Non-Current Inventories		0	0
Property, Plant and Equipment		4,039,071	4,056,151
Investment Properties		5,100	5,100
Intangible Assets		0	0
Right-Of-Use Assets		1,020	1,332
Total Non-Current Assets		4,074,307	4,080,700
TOTAL ASSETS		4,293,659	4,295,285
Current Liabilities			
Current Payables		33,562	22,273
Current Contract Liabilities		17,169	12,543
Current Lease Liabilities		150	460
Current Provisions payable < 12 months		16,888	18,706
Current Provisions payable > 12 months		42,119	42,119
Current Interest Bearing Liabilities		0	657
Total Current Liabilities		109,888	96,758
Non-Current Liabilities			
Non Current Interest Bearing Liabilities		0	0
N/C Lease Liabilities		963	963
Non Current Provisions		50,354	49,685
Total Non-Current Liabilities		51,317	50,648
TOTAL LIABILITIES		161,206	147,406
NET ASSETS		4,132,453	4,147,879
Equity			
Accumulated Surplus		1,509,596	1,534,631
Asset Revaluation Reserve		2,465,663	2,466,361
Restricted Assets		157,193	146,887
TOTAL EQUITY		4,132,453	4,147,879

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL			
Cash Flows and Investments			
as at 28 February 2025			
	YTD Actual 2024/25 \$ '000	Actual 2023/24 \$ '000	
Cash Flows From Operating Activities			
Receipts			
Rates & Annual Charges	183,243	232,873	
User Charges & Fees	23,615	42,526	
Interest & Interest Received	5,885	8,575	
Grants & Contributions	39,728	68,654	
Bonds, deposits and retention amounts received	207	886	
Other	22,129	29,432	
Payments			
Employee Benefits & On-costs	(103,439)	(142,434)	
Materials & Contracts	(77,225)	(138,853)	
Borrowing Costs	(32)	(127)	
Bonds, deposits and retention amounts refunded	-	(1,352)	
Other	(19,946)	1,578	
Net Cash provided (or used in) Operating Activities	74,165	101,758	
Cash Flows From Investing Activities			
Receipts			
Sale of Investments	28,796	37,813	
Sale of Investment Property			
Sale of Real Estate Assets			
Sale of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	1,294	848	
Payments:			
Purchase of Investments	(38,000)	(38,090)	
Purchase of Investment Property	-		
Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	(55,316)	(98,797)	
Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(63,227)	(98,226)	
Cash Flows From Financing Activities			
Payments:			
Repayment of Borrowings & Advances	(657)	(2,572)	
Repayment of Finance Lease Liabilities	(310)	(431)	
Net Cash Flow provided (used in) Financing Activities	(967)	(3,003)	
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash & Cash Equivalents	9,971	529	
plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents - beginning of year	44,900	44,371	
plus: Investments on hand - end of year	144,980	134,574	
Cash & Cash Equivalents and Investments - year to date	199,851	179,474	

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL			
Cash Flows and Investments			
as at 28 February 2025			
	YTD Actual 2024/25 \$ '000	Actual 2023/24 \$ '000	
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents and Investments - year to date	199,851	179,474	
Attributable to:			
External Restrictions (refer below)	100,484	86,881	
Internal Restrictions (refer below)	68,192	68,674	
Unrestricted	31,175	23,919	
	199,851	179,474	
External Restrictions			
Developer Contributions	65,955	55,949	
RMS Contributions	657	422	
Specific Purpose Unexpended Grants	14,141	11,730	
Special Rates Levy Wollongong Mall	1,027	962	
Special Rates Levy Wollongong City Centre	94	94	
Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme	-	-	
Unexpended Loans	906	924	
Domestic Waste Management	6,262	5,321	
Private Subsidies	7,513	6,943	
Housing Affordability	3,101	3,029	
Stormwater Management Service Charge	828	1,507	
Total External Restrictions	100,484	86,881	
Internal Restrictions			
Property Investment Fund	5,560	5,396	
Strategic Projects	32,013	32,991	
Sports Priority Program	804	524	
Car Parking Strategy	1,400	1,223	
MacCabe Park Development	2,140	2,040	
Darcy Wentworth Park	18	18	
Garbage Disposal Facility	9,568	10,854	
West Dapto Development	15,979	14,927	
Natural Areas	173	173	
Lake Illawarra Estuary Management Fund	537	528	
Total Internal Restrictions	68,192	68,674	

Notes to the Financial Statements:

While reviewing the information presented through this report, it should be noted that Council has elected to process additional transactions that vary from the accounting standards applied to year end reports to ensure the information at monthly intervals provides support to the decision-making and monitoring process. These transactions are summarised below:

- Timing of the recognition of Rates income – under AASB 1058, the Rates income is required to be recognised when it is raised. Through the monthly financial reports, the income has been spread across the financial year.
- Timing of the recognition of Financial Assistance Grant – under AASB 1058, the Financial Assistance Grant is required to be recognised on receipt. Through these financial reports, the income is spread across the financial year.

ITEM 9 STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT - FEBRUARY 2025

This report provides an overview of Council's investment portfolio performance for the reporting period February 2025.

Council had an average weighted return for February 2025 of 0.39% which was above the benchmark return of 0.34%. The result was primarily due to the positive valuations on the consolidated NSW TCorp investments and positive valuations of the consolidated Floating Rate Notes. The remainder of Council's portfolio continues to provide a high degree of credit quality and liquidity.

RECOMMENDATION

Council receive the Statement of Investment for February 2025.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Brian Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer

Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Statement of Investment – February 2025
- 2 Investment Income Compared to Budget 2024-2025

BACKGROUND

Council staff monitor Council's cash flow on a daily basis and mandated to invest surplus funds in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order and Office of Local Government guidelines. The Order reflects a conservative investment approach and restricts investment types available to Council. In compliance with the Order and Office of Local Government guidelines Council adopted an Investment Policy on 12 December 2022. The Investment Policy provides a framework for Council to manage investment credit quality, institutional diversification and maturity constraints. Council's investment portfolio was controlled by Council's Finance Division during the period and has remained in compliance with the Investment Policy. Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) provide oversight of Council's Investment Policy and Management Investment Strategy.

Council's Responsible Accounting Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, is required to sign the complying Statement of Investment contained within the report, certifying that all investments were made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Regulation 2005.

Council's investment holdings at 28 February 2025 were \$199,392,007 (Statement of Investment attached) [23 February 2024 \$173,718,073] and includes Council's interest in CivicRisk Mutual Ltd recognised at fair value as at 30 June 2024.

Council had an average weighted return for February 2025 of 0.39% which was above the benchmark return of 0.34%. The result was primarily due to the positive valuations on the consolidated NSW TCorp investments and positive valuations of the consolidated Floating Rate Notes. The remainder of Council's portfolio continues to provide a high degree of credit quality and liquidity. The global markets are still experiencing levels of volatility in interest rates, driven by the persistent inflation issues. Australia's inflation has fallen substantially since the peak in 2022 and longer-term inflation expectations remain on target, however the medium-term predictions have been revised upward slightly as the Board remains cautious about the outlook, with underlying factors easing. Rates available to Council on purchased investments are assessed regularly and across credit and maturity spread to maximise returns on committed capital.

At 28 February 2025, year to date interest and investment revenue of \$6,456,494 was recognised compared to the year to date proposed budget of \$5,804,385.

Council's 20 floating rate notes had a net increase in value of \$143,712 for February 2025.

Council holds two Mortgaged Backed Securities (MBS) that recorded a net decrease in value of \$20,633 for February 2025. The market value of this security considers the extended term of the security with limited liquidity, and the coupon margin reflects pre-Global Financial Crisis (GFC) pricing. While the

maturity dates are outside Council's control, the investment advisors had previously indicated capital is not at risk at this stage and recommended a hold strategy due to the illiquid nature of the investment.

Council holds two investments within the NSW TCorpIM Funds; Long-Term Growth Fund and Medium-Term Growth Fund. The Long-Term Growth Fund recorded a net decrease in value of \$15,096 and the Medium-Term Growth Fund recorded a net increase in value of \$21,132 in February 2025. The fluctuations in both the Long-Term Growth and Medium-Term Growth Funds are a reflection of the current share market volatility both domestically and internationally and is diversified across a number of different asset classes with differing risk and return characteristics.

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Board will meet eight times each year effective from February 2024, in order to spread monetary policy decisions across fewer meetings and allow the board to gather more information. At their February 2025 meeting, the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) decided to reduce the official cash rate by 0.25% to 4.10%. The RBA will continue to monitor uncertainties regarding the global economy, trends in demand, developments and adjust policy as needed as based on the data and evolving assessment of risks to return inflation to target of 2%–3%.

The current Investment Policy sets a 40% maximum exposure limit to individual institutions within the AAA category. This limit is currently considered to include funds held within the Commonwealth Bank (CBA), savings account which holds Council's operating cash balances. At the end of February 2025, the exposure to CBA was 24.04%, which is below the investment strategy target of 25%.

The current investment portfolio complies with Council's Investment Policy which was endorsed by Council on 12 December 2022. Council's Responsible Accounting Officer has signed the Statement of Investment contained within the report, certifying all investments were made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Regulation 2005.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

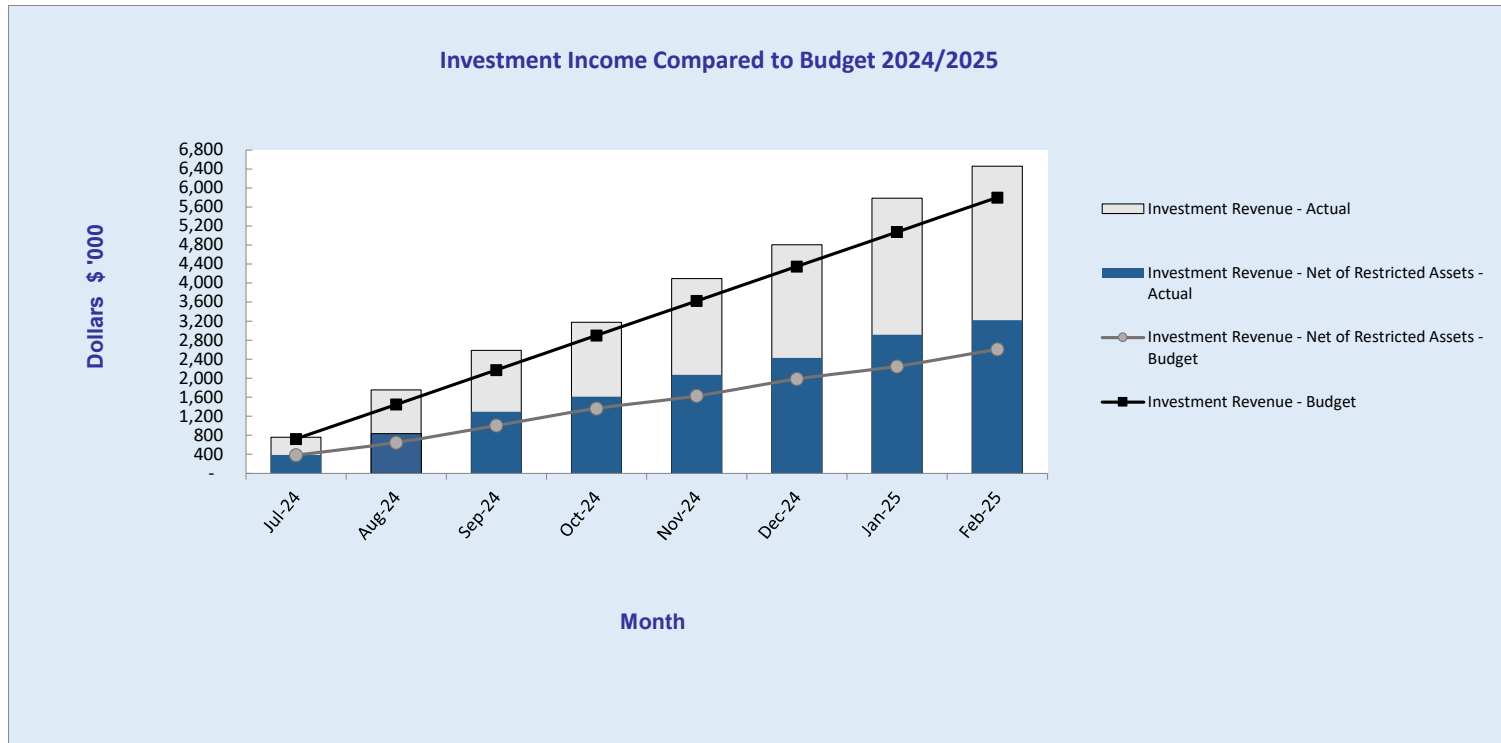
This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong Our Future 2032 Goal 4 "We are a connected and engaged community". It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan 2032		Delivery Program 2022-2026
Strategy		Service
4.8	Council's resources are managed effectively to ensure long term financial sustainability.	Financial Services

CONCLUSION

The investments for February 2025 recorded an average weighted return that was above the AusBondBank Bill Index Benchmark and performed favourably when compared to the year-to-date budget.

Brian Jenkins
RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OFFICER



ITEM 10 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR DAN HAYES - SAFER SCHOOL ROUTES PROGRAM

Councillor Dan Hayes has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that Council receives a report in 2025 outlining –

- a The challenges and opportunities in delivering the Safer School Routes Program.
- b Current budget allocations to the project and timeframes.
- c The future roll out of the program to other schools and implementation of future projects.
- d Opportunities to expedite the projects identified.”

Background provided by Councillor Dan Hayes:

Wollongong City Council is committed to improving pedestrian safety. This is shown by the involvement in the Safer School Routes Program which is designed to make safer routes for children, parents and carers travelling to school. There are over 80 schools in the local government area ultimately leading to a large number of projects with different scope and scale.

With a significant interest by the community and councillors in improving school routes, having more information about the project and our approach to delivering the projects as well as the challenges to do so, will be beneficial. This will also allow the opportunity to explore options to increase the roll out of this important program.

The current Safer School Routes Program projects can be found here: [Safer Routes to School | City of Wollongong](#).

ITEM 11

NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR JESS WHITTAKER - ADVOCATE FOR THE UNDERPASS TO THE F6 FREEWAY AT WATERFALL TO BE REOPENED FOR CYCLISTS

Councillor Jess Whittaker has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that Wollongong City Council write to the NSW Minister for Roads, Jenny Aitchison MP, requesting that the NSW State Government investigate the feasibility of reopening the toll booth tunnel under the F6 Freeway at Waterfall. This action will provide cyclists with a safe crossing location at the freeway when travelling south to the Old Princes Highway.”

Background provided by Councillor Jess Whittaker:

Cyclists traveling from Sydney to the Illawarra face significant risks due to a blackspot on the F6 at Waterfall, where they must cross the freeway to access the quieter Old Princes Highway.

The Old Princes Highway is a popular training route and offers different topography compared to the route through the Royal National Park to the Illawarra.

Following a tragic accident at this site in January 2025, a petition has been launched by members of a local cycling group to advocate for a safer solution. Adding our support to this campaign may contribute to enhancing the safety of cyclists traveling from Sydney to the Illawarra.

The exit to the Old Princes Highway for south bound cyclists is located on the right-hand side, which all riders must navigate if they wish to access the quieter Old Princes Highway.

There is a disused tunnel under the freeway that could provide a safer crossing. This tunnel and its associated access roads were originally constructed to service the toll booths and administration building when the F6 opened in 1975. According to the local cycling group, cyclists used to pass through this tunnel until the 1990s.

The tunnel and road infrastructure for this safe crossing is already in place, however concrete and earth barricades have been placed across the roadway, and sections are now overgrown. The adjacent roadways are in a state of disrepair near the tunnel entries.

The community are requesting that removal of barriers and necessary repairs to the roadway should be carried out by the NSW State Government to restore this safe crossing for cyclists.

ITEM 12

NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR KIT DOCKER AND COUNCILLOR ANDREW ANTHONY - EXTENDING THE OPERATING HOURS OF THE CONTINENTAL POOL

Councillor Kit Docker and Councillor Andrew Anthony have submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“We formally move that a report come to Council outlining the potential benefits and additional costs associated with extending the operating hours of the Continental Pool to 6:00 pm during the months of May and June.”

Background provided by Councillor Kit Docker and Councillor Andrew Anthony:

The Continental Pool is a valued community asset that provides health, recreation, and social benefits to residents and visitors.

There has been a request from users of the pool that the opening hours be extended to 6:00 pm during the months of May and June. This could encourage greater community use of the pool during the winter months.

It is essential to assess the financial and operational implications of such an extension, including staffing, lighting, maintenance, and energy costs.

This report could provide Councillors with the necessary information to make an informed decision regarding the feasibility and benefits of this proposed change including relevant pool usage data.