

MINUTES

WOLLONGONG HERITAGE REFERENCE GROUP

5.15PM ON THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2024



PRESENT

Cr Ann Martin (Chair)	Aara Welz via Microsoft Teams
Meredith Hutton	Fiona Reynolds

IN ATTENDANCE

Joel Thompson – Coordinator Heritage WCC	Chris Stewart – Manager City Strategy WCC
Denise Marinkovic – Heritage Officer WCC	David Green - Land Use Planning Manager - WCC
Sofia Gibson - City and Culture Manager WCC	Dianne Hillier - Project Leader Learning City - WCC
Martha Tyndall - Community Land Management Officer WCC	

1 WELCOME

The Chairperson Cr Martin opened the meeting at 5:15pm and welcomed all present.

It was noted that as a quorum was not obtained for the meeting, it would not constitute a formal meeting of the WHRG and that no motions or resolutions could be passed.

2 APOLOGIES

Sandra Pires, David Bottin, Rod Logan, Nicholas Gill, Hillary Powell.

3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Martin provided an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed all Aboriginal people present.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were made by the Membership.

Joel indicated that we would be discussing the Grants for the next financial year but that this discussion would be general and no decisions would be made.

5 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 DEC 2023

Due to the lack of a quorum the minutes of the previous meeting on 14 December 2023 could not be endorsed.

Members noted that the distributed minutes were missing the resolution of endorsement of the previous minutes and noted the incorrect date.

Corrected minutes for the 14 December 2023 are to be presented to the next meeting for endorsement.

6 FUTURE WEST DAPTO CENTRES - EXHIBITION

Joel provided an overview of the business paper report in relation to this item and noted opportunity for Members to provide input to the process via personal submissions.

Discussion occurred in relation to the following:

- Cultural Significance of the large Fig Tree at Marshall Vale Town Centre and relevance for the master plan and visioning of the area, particularly the town centre.
- Participation of Aboriginal Community in the consultation process.
- Consideration of view lines to Djembla and the Illawarra Escarpment for both proposed Centres, and visual connection to Duck Creek from Marshall Vale as they are acknowledged as culturally significant.
- Impact on connection between the Escarpment and Lake Illawarra by riparian corridors.
- Level of protection of the area along the creek via zoning C3 (Environmental Management).
- Implications of landform modifications (drainage, roads, etc).
- Potential for a Cultural / Community Centre linked to the Fig Tree site area, as raised by the Aboriginal Community through the consultation.

During discussion of this item, Martha Tyndall - Community Land Management Officer joined the meeting.

7 WOLLONGONG CITY FORESHORE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Martha Tyndall - Community Land Management Officer (WCC) provided an overview of the information provided within the Business Paper and explained Council's obligations to prepare Plans of Management for certain Community Land and Crown Land parcels.

Discussion occurred around the following:

- There is a previous existing Wollongong City Foreshore Plan of Management (2008), but it doesn't meet the requirements of the Crown Lands Management Act 2016 legislation.
- Discussion of differences between operational land and community land.
- Majority of Crown Reserves now needs to be treated like Council-owned community land – with the draft PoM including land at: Flagstaff Point/Flagstaff Hill, North beach and City beach, Blue Mile, Stuart Park, JP Galvin Park, Osborne Park, etc.
- Due to the Crown Land inclusions, the exhibition of a draft POM requires permission / endorsement from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure - Crown Lands, and they are able to make changes to the draft prior to exhibition.
- Following this permission from Crown Lands, the draft Wollongong City Foreshore POM will be placed on public exhibition.
- Members will be kept informed and provided with further opportunities for WHRG Member input.

8 HILL 60 RESERVE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Martha Tyndall - Community Land Management Officer (WCC) provided an overview of the business paper report and progress on the draft Hill 60 Plan of Management.

Discussion occurred around the following:

- Past master planning and approvals.
- Long term license to Marine Rescue.
- Area of very high Cultural Significance for Aboriginal and military history.
- Plan will follow similar path to draft Wollongong Foreshore POM.
- Before putting draft to Council, write designated notice to Aboriginal Community.
- Exhibition period.

During discussion of this item David Green left the meeting (6:15pm).

9 WOLLONGONG HERITAGE GRANTS 2024/2025

Joel Thompson gave a brief overview of the business paper report and called for nominations for the sub-committee to review applications for the 2024/2025 program.

Meredith and Fiona expressed an interest in joining the sub-committee. It was noted that Rod had indicated his interest in participating via email.

Joel and Denise will work with the nominated sub-committee members to arrange a meeting following the close of grant applications at the end of April.

The sub-committee will be formalised next meeting given the lack of a quorum.

10 HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2024

Joel provided a brief summary of the business paper report and called for discussion of planned events for the upcoming Heritage Festival.

Discussion occurred around the following:

- WCC don't have a specific budget allocated.
- The National Trust has an online calendar of events which is the main source of information relating to the festival.
- Discussion occurred in relation to previous events including historic themed tours run by the Wollongong Botanic Gardens, Wollongong City Centre Heritage Tours, Library Exhibitions, Gallery Exhibitions etc.
- Joel noted there is an opportunity for Members and their organisations to register events on the NT Website and to link this to the destination Wollongong event calendar.

11 HERITAGE STAFF REPORT

Joel Thompson Heritage Coordinator (WCC) gave the following updates as detailed in the business paper report:

- Old Wollongong Court House – Roof and Gutter Upgrades/Repair
- Pioneer Rest Park – Footpath Repair Project
- NSW Housing Policy Proposals/Changes
- Wollongong Health Precinct Strategy – NSW Government Consultation
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage – Community of Practice
- Planning Proposal Road and Rail Corridor Rezoning and Land Reservation Acquisition Map – Exhibition Details

During discussion of this item Aara noted that Heritage NSW are undergoing another restructure and that parts of the Aboriginal Heritage staffing will be split off from Heritage NSW.

12 MEMBER UPDATES/DISCUSSION

A. Pendlebury Rest Park

- Meredith noted vegetation has been cleared from gardens, but it is unsure about what is going to happen to the area and timing of works being completed. Also raised concern about the trees and brickwork. Noted potential to include signage to give the park and nearby Pendlebury house more context.
- Joel noted that Heritage staff have input to a plan which would involve repair/reconstruction of parts of the brick retaining walls and retention of trees but unsure about the timing of works.

B. Bulli hospital site

- Meredith asked what was happening with this site.
- Joel indicated that a number of DA's had been lodged towards a residential redevelopment process. Approved DA's relate to demolition and preliminary works including de-contamination and are subject to conditions relating to heritage requirements.
- There are some active DA's involving earthworks and subdivision that are under assessment.
- Aara Welz indicated that ILALC have provided input on Aboriginal Due Diligence.
- Cr Ann Martin indicated this site now belongs to Landcom and is for medium density housing with some affordable housing.
- Joel noted the site is not heritage listed but that an Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Assessment, a Heritage Impact Assessment Report and a Historic Archaeological Assessment had informed the process.

C. Breakwater Battery Museum and Crane

- Meredith noted concern about the lack of care by NSW Ports for the Conservation of the Museum Building or Crane.
- Cr Ann Martin indicated she understands the lease for the Museum may be ending soon and NSW Ports may be looking for options.
- Sofia indicated that there has been a breakdown of communications between the Wollongong Heritage Collection Inc. (the organisation who lease the building and operate the Breakwater Battery Museum) and NSW Ports.
- Council commissioned an audit of the collection of the Museum which found only 25 significant objects, with the rest of the collection inconsequential, duplicates, etc.
- Council has held talks with WHC Inc. to suggest a refocus on the relevant items, and consolidation of the Museum but Council is not member of the WHC committee.
- Joel indicated he has been involved in a meeting with Heritage NSW and Ports NSW, entity which manages the Museum building.
- Meredith indicated she has done an assessment of the Crane around six years ago and provided an example of another crane that is well maintained. Meredith expressed concern about the condition of the crane.
- Joel noted that NSW Ports are a private commercial entity that lease the Port from the NSW Government.

D. Denmark Hotel & Bulli Miners cottage

- Meredith noted she has met with the new owners of the Denmark Hotel and asked about progression of options for this site.
- Meredith noted the owner is facing an issue with the access over the Miner's Cottage and has been asked to pay a large amount of money for the easement and that this could make the project unviable.
- Meredith feels the new owners are good people to have in the Denmark Hotel and should be encouraged by Council.
- Joel indicated the owner has written to Council's Property Division and has provided his concerns and some proposals related to this negotiation. Joel noted that Council's Property Division need to comply with strict procedures to ensure probity in relation to dealings related to Council land and that a meeting was being arranged to progress these discussions.
- Meredith noted her view that Council should consider selling the BMC to the owner.
- Chris indicated he will have a meeting with the Property Team in the coming fortnight to discuss this matter.

13 OTHER MATTERS

Wollongong Local History Prize

Joel noted that the Wollongong Local history prize is currently opened with a closing date of 28 June. The project involves a monetary prize for primary research and has an objective of building new content for the Local Studies section of the Wollongong City Library.

Members were encouraged to consider making entries or alerting local researchers to the Prize.

Stream Hill – Progress of Sale

Cr Martin enquired about any updates on the sale of the Stream Hill property.

Joel indicated that to his knowledge the process is still ongoing.

Gleniffer Brae Conservation Management Plan and Plan for Wollongong Botanic Garden

Cr Martin asked about progress of considerations relating to the future of Gleniffer Brae and the Botanic Garden.

Chris noted there is a Councillor briefing scheduled on this matter for March.

Learning City Project

Dianne Hillier noted that she is working for Council as part of the Wollongong Library on a "Learning City" Project but had attended the meeting as an observer. This project may be added to the agenda for a future meeting.

Councillor Martin closed the meeting at 7.09pm