

AGENDA

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of Wingecarribee Shire Council will be held in the Council Chambers at Wingecarribee Shire Council Civic Centre, 68 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale on:

Wednesday 20 May 2026 at 3:30 pm

The Public Forum will commence at 2.30pm, subject to any registered speaker/s to items listed on this Agenda. Further information and details on the registration process can be found on Council's website, using the following link: [Public Forum Application Form | Wingecarribee Shire Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Lisa Miscamble
General Manager

We're with you

AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of Council



We're with you

Wednesday 20 May 2026

Council Chambers, Wingecarribee Shire Council Civic Centre
68 Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale at 3:30 pm

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Council Chambers

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The Council Chamber has 24 Hour Video Surveillance.

1 OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Mayor will open the meeting.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

"Wingecarribee Shire Council acknowledges the Gundungurra and Dharawal people as the Traditional Custodians of this land. I pay my respect to the Traditional Custodians, their Ancestors who cared for this Country for many thousands of years, and their Elders and descendants who continue to care for Country. I would also like to extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including those here today."

3 APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS

Nil at time of print.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

THAT the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 15 April 2026, MN 2026/85 to MN 2026/118 inclusive, be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.

5 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Local Government Act 1993 regulate the way in which nominated staff of Council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public trust.

The Act prescribes that where a member of Council (or a Committee of Council) has a direct or indirect financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council (or Committee), that interest and the reasons for declaring such interest must be disclosed as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting.

As members are aware, the provisions of the Local Government Act restrict any member who has declared a pecuniary interest in any matter from participating in the discussions or voting on that matter and further require that the member vacate the Chamber.

Council's Code of Conduct provides that if members have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed. The Code also provides for a number of ways in which a member may manage non pecuniary conflicts of interest.

6 MAYORAL MINUTE(S)

7 ADOPTION OF MATTERS BY EXCEPTION

8 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

8.1 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

8.2 DECISION REPORTS

8.2.1 Development Assessment Progress (March and April 2026) and the Minister's Action Plan (May 2026)

Report of: Michael McCabe
Director Communities and Place

Authorised by: Michael McCabe
Director Communities and Place

PURPOSE

The Development Applications Progress Report (DAPs) profiles progress on matters relating to Development Applications (DAs) in response to Council's resolution dated 15 October 2025:

That Council set a new goal to exceed the NSW average percentage of DA's being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe by September 2026.

The current NSW average percentage of DAs being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe has reduced by 1% to 70% for the financial year to date (FYTD).

This report profiles the months of March 2026 (Attachment 1) and April 2026 (Attachment 2) in addition to the FYTD as per the published data on the Minister's Council League Table.

Council's current gap to exceed the NSW average percentage of DA's being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe by September 2026 is now 11% (71% - 60% = 11%).

The one-year anniversary progress report of Council's adopted our Development Assessment Action Plan (DAAP - April 2025 to April 2026) is published as Attachment 3.

Finally, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces – The Hon Paul Scully MP (the Minister) has written to the Mayor requesting that the Minister's proposed Action Plan dated 6 May 2026 be endorsed in its entirety at this Council meeting – Annexure 4.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

- 1. Note the current gap to exceed the NSW average percentage of Development Applications being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe by September 2026 is 11%.**
- 2. Endorse the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces' Action Plan as per Attachment 4.**

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The DAPs included at Annexure 1 and 2 have been developed to provide Council with a routine snapshot on DA progress. Some of the commentary below is based on combined data from Attachment 1 and 2. Contemporary data from the NSW Council League Table as at the end of March 2026 was not published by the NSW Government prior to Council's publishing date for the April 2026 ordinary meeting of Council, therefore, data for both March and April 2026 are presented in this Council report.

Council has determined 81 DAs for the months of March and April combined. 72% of those 81 determined DAs have met the Minister's timeframe expectations. Over the last 2 months our Council has exceeded the NSW average of 68% for the combined March-April period.

60% of the 448 FYTD determined DAs have met the Minister's timeframe expectations. This is the highest FYTD percentage (beyond a single month) for our Council since the Minister launched the Council League Table in July 2024. This result is a 3% increase since February 2026, reducing the gap to achieving Council's adopted goal from 15% to 11%.

The NSW Planning - Council League Table (the League Table) consistently monitors the performance of NSW Councils individually and collectively for lodgement and determination of certain DAs against two timeframe expectations in response to the Minister's Statement of Expectations Order 2024:

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/node/27186>

The League Table does not report on all DAs but does monitor most DAs received and is generally updated by NSW Planning on the sixth business day following the conclusion of each month. The current data represents DAs through to the end of April 2026.

Link to the League Table:

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/faster-assessments-program/council-league-table>

Council's DAPs at Attachments 1 and 2 primarily rely on data from the League Table.

Council last received a six-month progress report on Council's Development Assessment Action Plan at the ordinary Council Meeting dated 15 October 2025 where Council resolved *That Council set a new goal to exceed the NSW average percentage of DA's being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe by September 2026.*

The DAAP April 2025 to April 2026 (Attachment 3) highlights Council's performance at the one-year anniversary since Council adopted it on 16 April 2025.

Following on from the Minister's appointed Expert Planner's Review in June 2025, the Minister has now written to the Mayor with his proposed Action Plan dated 6 May 2026 (Attachment 4).

DISCUSSION

The DAPs (Attachment 1 and 2) layout consists of 3 parts:

1. **The Left Half** which copies current images straight from the League Table profiling our Council's performance for the 2025/26 financial year.
2. **The Upper Right Quarter** which copies current images straight from the League Table profiling our Council's performance for the two-months which have just concluded (March and April 2026).
3. **The Lower Right Section** which relies on data from the League Table to calculate the Determination Rate and Council data for the other information profiled in that section.

The DAPs (Attachment 1 and 2) highlight that Council is not meeting the Minister's expectations but is making progress to address the issue and to meet Council's goal: *to exceed the NSW average percentage of DAs being determined within the Minister's expected timeframe by September 2026.*

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Council's Adopted our Development Assessment Action Plan (DAAP - April 2025 to April 2026)

The DAAP report (Attachment 3) highlights Council's performance at the one-year anniversary since adoption on 16 April 2025. Noted are the 3 graphs based on data from the Minister's Council League Table and the NSW Planning Portal which each show progress of the 3 key indicators being:

- Council's Average Assessment Days compared to the Minister's Expectations;
- Council's Percentage of DAs meeting the Minister Expectations compared to the NSW Average (Council's adopted goal set on 15 October 2025); and
- Council's DAs – Undetermined, Lodged and Determined.

Improvement is also evident with the status of Council's undetermined DAs being reduced to a record low 81 DAs (as of 13 May 2026) comprising:

- 60 DAs being <105 days (the Minister's expectation);
- 8 DAs being >105 days and <180 days; and
- 13 DAs being >180 days (referred to as Legacy DAs by the Minister).

The Minister's Proposed Action Plan

It has been 10 months since the Minister's Expert Planner conducted his review of our Council in June 2025. The Minister has now written to the Mayor requesting that the Minister's proposed Action Plan dated 6 May 2026 (Attachment 4) be endorsed in its entirety at this Council meeting.

The Minister has stated in his letter: *'I note the clearing of legacy DAs will be reflected in the Council League Table Data. However once cleared, these timeframes are expected to drop considerably'*.

The Minister also states that there was a delay to finalise his proposed Action Plan and it is noted that the content of his proposed Action Plan appears outdated and requires qualification with some examples being:

Lodgement, notifications and referrals – Lodgement times reduced from 20 to 7 days: Council's Lodgement timeframe for the month of April is 6 days being below the Minister's expectation of 7 days. Council's FYTD average is 13 Days, in comparison, the NSW State Average is 10 days. The recommended reduction from 20 days is not based on the Minister's League Table data.

Assessment – Officers caution in accepting recommendations of consultant planners, delaying final assessment: Only 3 undetermined DAs are currently being assessed by Consultant Planners.

Assessment – Increase in productivity from 40 to 70 determinations per month: The FYTD data on the Minister's League Table shows that our Council has an average of 34.9 DA Lodgements per month and is exceeding that with 44.8 Assessments per month. The Expected Outcome in the Minister's Action Plan does not appear to be based on the Minister's League Table data.

Managing legacy DA matters – Zero DAs>180 days by the end of June 2026: The Minister's proposed Action Plan expects this outcome by 30 June, but for the same matter states a timeframe of 4 months which equates to September 2026.

Regardless of content still requiring clarity in the Minister's proposed Action Plan, it is recommended to be adopted by Council as the Minister has stated in his letter that the Department will work closely with Council and will be monitoring progress monthly through ongoing interaction between the expert planner and Council while the identified actions are implemented.

Our Council and the NSW government will continue to work together to improve development assessment timeframes and determinations for the Shire.

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COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific budget implications associated with this report.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Leadership

Outcome - 5.1 We deliver our future together

Strategy -5.1.1. Strengthen community confidence in democratic processes and trust in government

Indicator - **Satisfaction with Council (%)**

Addressing improved performance in relation to development applications.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Development Assessment Progress March 26 [**8.2.1.1** - 1 page]
2. Development Assessment Progress April 26 [**8.2.1.2** - 1 page]
3. Development Assessment Action Plan - 1 Year Anniversary [**8.2.1.3** - 5 pages]
4. Minister's Letter and Action Plan - 6 May 2026 [**8.2.1.4** - 12 pages]

8.2.2 Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management Consultant Engagement

Report of: Karen Guymer
Coordinator Natural Resource Projects

Authorised by: Michael McCabe
Director Communities and Place

PURPOSE

Wingecarribee Shire supports a significant koala population, including two of the ten stronghold populations identified in the NSW Koala Strategy. Council has worked with the NSW Government for more than a decade through the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project to support koala population monitoring, habitat restoration, vehicle-strike minimisation and community engagement.

Habitat loss and fragmentation remain the principal long-term threats to koalas. A Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPOM) provides a strategic mechanism to identify, manage and protect koala habitat through land use planning and related conservation actions.

The engagement of the consulting firm Lodge Environmental Pty Ltd is proposed to develop a CKPOM for the Wingecarribee Shire in accordance with Council's adopted Operational Plan and Budget 2025-26 – Deliverable 3.1.1.1 OP1 (Page 45 of the Operational Plan and Budget 2025-26).

This report is provided in response to the Mayoral Minute dated 20 November 2024 (MN 2024/332).

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

- 1. Council note the appointment of Lodge Environmental Pty Ltd to develop a Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for the Shire.**
- 2. The draft Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management be considered by Council prior to placing on public exhibition.**

REPORT

BACKGROUND

Council's current Operational Plan and Budget profiles Deliverable 3.1.1.1 OP1 to *Develop core and highly suitable koala habitat maps for Wingecarribee Shire for inclusion in planning instruments, plans and strategies*. The measure is *Koala habitat map completed; and Draft Koala Plan of Management completed*.

The development of a CKPOM is also identified in relevant regional and local strategic planning documents, including the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan and the Wingecarribee 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Due to the technical nature of the project, Council is engaging Lodge Environmental (the Consultant) to progress and prepare the draft CKPOM.

The Mayoral Minute dated 20 November 2024 (MN 2024/332) requires the General Manager to provide briefs for consultancy services for the preparation of plans, strategies or studies to Council for endorsement where the project:

- 1) Engagement is over \$250K; or
- 2) Impact is long term; or
- 3) Outcomes impacts on more than 10,000 people and/or Shire wide.

The proposed Consultant engagement meets point 2 and may meet point 3 of the above criteria which has triggered this Council report.

DISCUSSION

The CKPOM is to be developed by the consultant under the direction and oversight from Council's Waste and Environmental Sustainability Branch, with input from other relevant teams across Council.

Council will also use the existing Southern Highlands Land Management Working Group, a multi-agency group led by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, to provide external technical input and guidance during preparation of the draft CKPOM.

It is proposed that the draft CKPOM will be brought to Council prior to placing on public exhibition.

NSW Koala Strategy Grant – Koala Habitat Mapping Projects

Council received \$300,000 in funding under the NSW Koala Strategy from 2022 – 2026 to produce a series of spatial layers to support koala conservation. This includes the following products:

- Koala occupancy model and map
- Woody vegetation extant map,
- Fine-scale Plant Community Type (vegetation) map
- Core and highly suitable koala habitat map
- Koala habitat corridor map (in development)

The Koala habitat corridor map will highlight priority linkages across the landscape. These map products are being developed using years of koala research, both locally and regionally, the latest scientific knowledge and modelling technology endorsed by ecologists and mapping experts within the NSW DCCEEW. These products will inform the development of the CKPOM.

The development of these geospatial models and maps have put Council in the position to develop the CKPOM.

Purpose and role of a CKPOM

A CKPOM is a strategic planning and conservation framework prepared under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 (the SEPP) to support the conservation and management of natural vegetation that provides habitat for koalas and to assist in maintaining permanent, free-living koala populations.

The preparation and application of a CKPOM is governed by the particular requirements under Chapters 3 and 4 of the SEPP. Within this legislative framework, the CKPOM will clearly outline the survey methodology used to identify koala habitat across the LGA and provide evidence that Council's koala habitat mapping satisfies the definition of 'core habitat' as described under Chapter 3 and 4 of the of the SEPP.

For Council, the CKPOM will provide both regulatory and non-regulatory benefits. It will support more consistent consideration of koala habitat in land use planning, development assessment and strategic planning, while also identifying practical actions to address threats to koalas across the Shire.

A shire-wide CKPOM is intended to improve certainty for Council, landholders and proponents by providing an agreed framework for assessing koala habitat and managing impacts. It may also reduce reliance on ad

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hoc koala studies for individual development proposals where matters are appropriately addressed through the adopted CKPOM framework.

Need for the CKPOM

Current planning controls and available mapping do not provide a complete strategic framework for managing koala habitat across the Shire. Without a CKPOM, development assessment relies heavily on case-by-case application of the SEPP and individual ecological assessments.

A CKPOM will assist Council to take a more proactive approach by identifying core and highly suitable koala habitat, supporting habitat connectivity, guiding development assessment, and informing future planning controls such as the Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan 2010 and Development Control Plans. The CKPOM will streamline and improve efficiency in development assessment impacting koala habitat.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

This report addresses the Mayoral Minute dated 20 November 2024 (*MN 2024/332*) noting that this project is grant-funded through the Southern Highlands Koala Habitat Mapping Project and the NSW Koala Strategy Wingecarribee Regional Partnership.

The budget is estimated to be \$80,000 and this is earmarked within that grant-funded project budget for this purpose for this financial year.

There is little discretion in the scope given the grant funding along with the technical and legislative aspects required for the CKPOM as per Chapter 3 and 4 of the of the SEPP.

A request for quote was undertaken in accordance with Council's Sustainable Procurement and Contract Policy. Three proposals were sought and three were received.

The Lodge Environmental Pty Ltd proposal is priced at \$77,338 inclusive of GST. Council prepared a contract which has been executed by Lodge Environmental Pty Ltd but is unexecuted by Council.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Environment

Outcome - 3.1 We protect and nurture our natural environment

Strategy - 3.1.2. Protect, nurture and live in harmony with country and our natural environment to preserve our ecological communities and biodiversity

Indicator - Total Protected Land Area (ha)

A CKPOM will assist Council to meet its obligations to assess the impact of development on koalas and to avoid, minimise and as a last resort, offset, these impacts. The CKPOM will also address the non-regulatory actions for Council and the community to minimise the key threatening processes impacting koalas in the wild.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

8.2.3 Wingecarribee Shire Council submission on draft Statewide Community Participation Plan

Report of: Jessica Lintern
Manager Strategic Outcomes

Authorised by: Michael McCabe
Director Communities and Place

PURPOSE

The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) have released a Draft Statewide Community Participation Plan (draft CPP) (Attachment 1) and supporting discussion paper for public exhibition.

The draft CPP proposes to establish a single, consistent framework for community participation across NSW for all councils and planning authorities to clearly outline how and when the community can participate in planning decisions and processes, and when planning authorities exercise their relevant planning functions. The draft CPP replacing the current approach where each council prepares its own CPP.

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the draft submission (Attachment 2) to the NSW DPHI on the draft CPP.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse the draft submission at Attachment 1 to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on the draft Statewide Community Participation Plan.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The draft CPP proposes to establish a single, consistent framework for community participation across NSW. The intent of the reform is to improve consistency, transparency and accessibility across the planning system, while ensuring that engagement is proportionate to the scale and impact of planning decisions. Once the draft CPP is finalised, it will replace Council's existing Community Participation Plan. The existing Plan was adopted by Council at its meeting of 11 December 2024 as part of the previous Community Engagement Strategy.

The draft CPP applies broadly across the planning system, including strategic planning processes, such as Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPs) and masterplans, development assessment functions, and State-led planning framework changes.

The draft CPP is on public exhibition until 3 June 2026.

DISCUSSION

The overall intent of the draft CPP is supported, particularly its emphasis on consistency and proportionality in community participation. The focus on early and inclusive engagement is also supported and aligns with Council's current approach to community engagement.

However, several key matters require further consideration to ensure the framework operates effectively in practice and does not introduce unintended delays into the planning system.

Strategic Planning exhibition timeframes

A key concern relates to the proposed public exhibition timeframes for strategic planning documents, including LSPSs and masterplans for urban renewal and greenfield areas.

While meaningful community engagement is essential, strategic planning processes already involve substantial engagement during their preparation. This typically includes multiple rounds of consultation, targeted engagement with affected stakeholders, and iterative refinement of proposals. In this context, extended exhibition periods at the final stage risk duplicating engagement that has already occurred.

The cumulative effect of extended exhibition periods, combined with statutory reporting requirements, Council meeting cycles and post-exhibition processes, can significantly delay the finalisation and implementation of strategic plans whilst increasing costs. This has direct implications for infrastructure coordination, land supply and the timely delivery of housing.

A more flexible approach is warranted, allowing exhibition timeframes to be adjusted where councils can demonstrate that early and effective engagement has already occurred. This would better align with the principle of proportionality and support more efficient plan-making.

State-led planning framework changes

The draft CPP indicates that exhibition timeframes for certain State-led planning functions, including legislative amendment and State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), may be determined on a case-by-case basis. This contrasts with the more prescriptive approach proposed for councils.

This introduces inconsistency within the planning system and reduces transparency around consultation processes. Councils require sufficient time to review complex proposals, assess local implications and report to Council to enable a formal response. Without defined minimum timeframes, there is a risk that consultation periods will not allow for meaningful input from local government.

The absence of detailed information in early-stage documents, such as explanations of intended effects, further limits the ability of councils to assess the full implications of proposed changes.

Development Assessment

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Councils currently have discretion on how local development applications are notified. Currently, Councils can specify shorter or longer public exhibition periods than the standard 14 days in their Community Participation Plans. Higher impact proposals—such as environmentally sensitive, designated, or nominated integrated development—require extended public exhibition periods of 28 days.

Councils also have discretion to choose if certain types of development do not require public exhibition. In other Local Government Areas this typically includes internal residential alterations, new one or two storey dwellings, subdivisions, ancillary structures such as pools, sheds and garages.

Development exempt from public exhibition means that adjoining neighbours will not be notified that a development application has been received for a site, allowing Councils to complete their assessment of the application.

The draft CPP, proposes certain development types will be exempt from public exhibition and notification, listed in Table 6 (which is reproduced below), where the development:

- is permissible in the relevant zone; and
- meets the relevant planning controls in a local environmental plan, development control plan and/or state environmental planning policy; and
- does not include a 4.6 variation.

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Table 6: Development exempt from public exhibition and notification

Residential and related uses	
- Alterations – Internal alterations - Alterations and additions existing dwellings - Ancillary development (such as pools, sheds, farm buildings) - Boundary adjustment - Demolition (excluding heritage items) - Exhibition Homes and Villages - Group homes - Heritage item – minor works that does not impact item and is located behind the front façade - Residential flat buildings*	- Moveable dwellings - New single and two storey dwellings, dual occupancies and attached dwellings - Temporary structures - Rural workers dwellings - Secondary dwellings - Strata and Stratum subdivision - Tree removal where they are not heritage items - Home business and/or home occupation - Shop top housing*

*a pre-commencement of works notification to adjoining neighbours is required 7 days before works commence.

Primary production and rural development	
- Agritourism - Commercial farm	- Extensive agriculture - Farm buildings
Commercial development	
- Alterations and additions - Change of use - Take away food and drink premises	- Kiosks - Roadside stalls - Signage

Industrial development	
Change of use	Industrial retail outlets
Community, health, education, recreational and other infrastructure	
- Alterations – internal and external - Environmental facility	Environmental protections works
Tourist and Visitor accommodation	
Bed and Breakfast accommodation	Farm stay accommodation
Other	
Modifications involving minimal environmental impact	- Applications made under section 4.55(1) of the EP&A Act. - Applications made under section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act. - Applications made under section 4.56 of the EP&A Act with minimal environmental impact.
Application for the review of a determination or decision of a consent authority (Division 8.2 Reviews)	Reviews where the application has not been amended pursuant to section 8.3(3) of the EP&A Act.

It is suggested that “residential flat buildings” and “shop top housing” be removed from the development exempt from public exhibition and notification list as these are not considered low impact developments. The DPHI could limit the notification period for this form of development to be no more than 14 days. Public exhibition of these types of development will typically run concurrently with an assessment team’s preliminary assessment and advice requests to various external agencies such as Water NSW and internal referral groups. Due to the high workload of assessment teams, external agencies and internal referral groups and the time required to comprehensively review development documentation, it is unlikely that these tasks would be complete within the current typical 14-day public notification period.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the Table 6 exemption list may shorten the assessment period for certain low impact developments, clarity is required around “meeting the development controls in a Development Control Plan”. A Development Control Plan (DCP), is defined in the draft Community Participation Plan as:

“A plan providing detailed planning and design guidelines to support LEP planning controls”

If a DA does not meet a numerical control within the DCP but meets the objectives of the control, it is unclear whether the proposal could be considered to “meet the development control” in the DCP. This needs to be clarified.

Also, to determine whether a DA meets the relevant planning controls in the SEPPs, LEP and DCP requires an assessment of that application.

Traditionally, notification of an application is carried out as soon as a DA is lodged. The Draft CPP may lead to situations where a DA is lodged, assessed and then, once a non-compliance is identified, the DA may need to be notified. This could affect assessment timeframes (e.g. invoice for notification fees would need to be raised and paid by the Applicant) and may lead to additional requests for information (if submissions raise issues that require additional information to be submitted, etc.).

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (Regulation)* requires most applications for development to be made in an “approved form” and include information specified in that form. It is suggested that the DPHI update that form to include a specific statement from an Applicant for a DA as to whether a proposal complies with all relevant planning controls in the SEPPs, LEP and DCP. It is recommended that we suggest to the DPHI that where an Applicant has failed to recognise a non-compliance with a planning control that the application be returned at submission stage of the DA process.

Council could be subject of legal litigation, on procedural grounds, if a DA that required notification is not notified. Responding to litigation is both a time consuming and expensive exercise and takes resources away from undertaking assessments and approving housing. Therefore, it is important that the DPHI clarify the rules around compliance with controls.

The draft CPP proposes to establish a single, consistent framework for community participation across NSW, it is equally important for all local government areas to have access to consistent information regardless of the resourcing of each Council. Therefore, it is recommended that the NSW Government exhibit all DAs that are lodged and under assessment on the NSW Planning Portal Spatial Viewer (Spatial Viewer) or equivalent. DPIE already have the information technology infrastructure and data management practices in place for other DA and planning attributes across the state. These are currently available for viewing by the public via either the Spatial Viewer, the Council League Table or the NSW Planning Portal, therefore the extension to extend this to exhibiting all DAs that are lodged and under assessment on the Spatial Viewer or equivalent could be easily achieved.

The exhibition could simply be limited to map pin with salient information only such as the address and DA description. No additional information would be required as there could be a disclaimer stating that for further information please contact your local Council.

Such a tool would allow the public to self-service at any time at the one online facility to lessen the change impact felt by community members because of the draft CPP. It would enable communities to be aware without the need to notify.

Application of Proportionality and Early Engagement

The emphasis on proportionality and early engagement as core principles of the draft CPP is supported. Early engagement is particularly valuable in strategic planning, where it assists in identifying issues early, reducing conflict and improving outcomes.

However, the draft CPP does not clearly demonstrate how early engagement influences subsequent participation requirements. There is a risk that councils may be required to undertake both extensive upfront engagement and lengthy formal exhibition processes, regardless of the level of community input already obtained.

Greater clarity is required to ensure that effective and early engagement is recognised and reflected in streamlined exhibition requirements. Guidance on what constitutes adequate upfront engagement would also support consistent application across councils.

Local Context and Council Role

While the draft CPP recognises that councils will continue to prepare engagement strategies tailored to their communities, the ability to apply this flexibility is limited where key elements such as exhibition timeframes are prescribed.

Local government is best placed to understand community expectations, local issues and appropriate engagement methods. Effective community participation is influenced not only by the duration of the exhibition period, but by the quality, timing and accessibility of engagement activities.

Allowing limited discretion within a clear framework would enable councils to respond to local context and apply proportionality more effectively, while maintaining a consistent statewide approach.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Leadership

Outcome - 5.2 We have a strong community voice

Strategy - 5.2.2. Increase opportunities for people of all ages and stages to participate in matters that impact them

Indicator - Having a Say and Being Heard Index

The endorsement of this submission supports Council's commitment to a strong community voice by advocating for a planning framework that ensures community participation is meaningful, accessible and proportionate, while also enabling timely delivery of planning outcomes that reflect community priorities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Statewide Community Participation Plan [8.2.3.1 - 31 pages]
2. Draft Statewide Community Participation Plan - WSC Submission [8.2.3.2 - 6 pages]

8.2.4 Youth Council Review

Report of: **Meredith Lea**
Community Development Officer

Authorised by: **Shelley Jones**
Director Corporate Strategy and Resourcing

PURPOSE

To present the outcomes of the Youth Council pilot and seek Council's endorsement to continue the program on an ongoing basis.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

- 1. Note the review and outcomes of the Youth Council pilot, as provided in Attachment 1.**
- 2. Endorse the continuation of the Youth Council program, with minor amendments incorporated into the updated Terms of Reference included at Attachment 2.**

REPORT

BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 11 December 2024 (MN 2024/351), Council resolved to:

- 1. Pilot a Youth Council for a 12-month period launching in Youth Week in April 2025.*
- 2. Adopt the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) as included in Attachment 1 to this Minute.*
- 3. Note the Mayor is a non-voting member of the Youth Council.*
- 4. Appoint Councillor Champion as a non-voting member to the Youth Council for the period April 2025 - April 2026.*
- 5. Request the General Manager undertake review of the Youth Council following conclusion of the pilot in April 2026 and report outcomes back to Council by June 2026.*

The Youth Council was subsequently established, comprising 19 students representing 10 local schools. Participating schools included Bowral High School, Moss Vale High School, The Highlands School, Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School, Chevalier College, Family Run Education Southern Highlands, Frensham, Oxley College, Southern Highlands Christian School, and St Paul's International College.

Students in Years 7 to 11 were selected through a school-led nomination process.

The Mayor, Councillor Champion and relevant Council staff supported the Youth Council as non-voting members.

The Youth Council met on the following occasions:

- 26 March 2025 (Induction)
- 10 April 2025
- 12 June 2025
- 11 September 2025

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Reports outlining the outcomes of these meetings were presented to Council for noting at the 21 May 2025, 16 July 2025, and 15 October 2025 Ordinary Meetings.

The Youth Council also co-designed and attended the annual Youth Forum held on 20 November 2025. An additional Youth Council meeting was held on 19 February 2026 to provide input into Council's Financial Sustainability program.

A final meeting scheduled for April 2026 was cancelled due to school holiday availability constraints. Planned engagement activities were instead delivered online.

An end-of-pilot celebration event was held on 5 May 2026 to acknowledge the contributions of Youth Council members and participating schools.

DISCUSSION

The Youth Council was established to provide young people with a structured and meaningful opportunity to contribute to local decision-making and community planning.

The program enabled participants to engage directly with civic leaders, contribute to key initiatives, and develop their understanding of local government and leadership capability.

As outlined in **Attachment 1**, the Youth Council has provided a valuable mechanism for capturing the perspectives of young people and incorporating their views into Council planning, projects and decision-making.

Throughout the pilot, Youth Council members provided informed and constructive input into a range of Council initiatives and consultations. Participation levels were strong, with members demonstrating a high level of engagement and commitment.

Key contributions included:

- How Council could communicate and engage with young people, with their feedback being incorporated into Council's new Communications and Engagement Strategy.
- What youth-led initiatives and events they wanted to see happen in our Shire, with their priorities and feedback incorporated into the new Young Highlands Action Plan and Youth Week planning.
- What they'd like a youth precinct to look and feel like, what could be done there and how young people could be made to feel welcome in these spaces, with feedback incorporated into the Mittagong Rewilding project.
- How Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan could include young people and their families and increase inclusion in our Shire.
- How Council can support young people through the inclusion of a Young Achievers Awards in our Community Financial Assistance Framework.
- The planning and delivery of the Youth Forum, which saw around 75 young people attend, learn skills suggested by the Youth Council, and pitch their ideas to Council.
- Requesting briefings from Council staff, and asking questions on topics like transport, roads, recreation, sustainability and access to services.
- Providing insights into the importance of different Council services and contributing to the financial sustainability review.
- Contributing to the Regional Drought Resilience Plan program
- Representing the Youth Council on initiatives such as the Future Council film screening and local events.

Members also contributed to broader discussions on issues affecting young people, including mental health, transport, connectivity, road safety, and access to local activities. They shared information with their peers about Council initiatives and showed up to meetings consistently, modelling what good community participation can look like.

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Evaluation of Youth Council Pilot

Feedback was sought from Youth Council members following each meeting, with additional feedback requested from participating schools and members in April and May 2026. The results of this feedback form the basis of the review included in **Attachment 1** of this report.

In assessing overall feedback and satisfaction with the Youth Council pilot, participants were invited to rate each meeting via an online survey using a score out of 10.

- The April 2025 meeting received an average rating of 8.86 out of 10
- The June 2025 meeting received an average rating of 9 out of 10.
- The September 2025 meeting received an average rating of 9.4 out of 10
- The November 2025 Youth Forum received an average rating of 9.3 out of 10.

Feedback from supporting teachers and principals, collected via an online survey, indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Youth Council pilot, with an average rating of 9.67 out of 10.

At the conclusion of the pilot, Youth Council members were asked whether they would recommend participation to other young people. All respondents (100%) indicated that they would recommend involvement in the Youth Council.

In addition to positive participant feedback, the pilot has demonstrated broader impact. Youth Council members have received recognition at both local and national levels, including successful nominations for Wingecarribee Young Citizen of the Year and appointment of a Youth Council member to the National Youth Parliament 2026.

Further key results and recommendations are outlined in **Attachment 1**.

Youth Council Continuation

Given the positive outcomes of the pilot and strong support from participants and schools, it is recommended that Council continue the Youth Council program.

The program provides a structured and ongoing mechanism for engaging young people in Council processes, enabling them to raise local issues and contribute to strategic planning.

Continuation of the Youth Council also supports delivery of the Young Highlands 2025–2029 Plan, which aims to ensure that programs, services and activities reflect the needs and aspirations of young people across the Shire.

It is proposed that the program continue with minor amendments, informed by feedback from participants and schools. These amendments have been incorporated into the updated Terms of Reference (**Attachment 2**) and include:

- Expanding eligibility to include students completing secondary education through TAFE NSW
- Allowing schools and networks to nominate alternate representatives where required
- Clarifying how Youth Council outcomes are reported to Council and communicated to the community

It is proposed that the next group of Youth Council members be nominated for an extended term from June 2026 to December 2027. This transitional arrangement will allow the program to align with the school calendar year from 2028 onwards, with future Youth Council terms to operate on a standard 12-month cycle.

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It is also proposed that future Youth Council members be announced at the annual Youth Forum in November each year to support continuity, allow for member handover, and further raise the profile of the program amongst young people across the Shire.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Ongoing delivery of the program is proposed to continue within the existing Community Development budget allocation for youth programs.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Leadership

Outcome - 5.2 We have a strong community voice

Strategy - 5.2.2. Increase opportunities for people of all ages and stages to participate in matters that impact them

Indicator - Having a Say and Being Heard Index

The Youth Council directly supports the 'Having a Say and Being Heard Index' by enabling youth voices to be heard in Council processes. It strengthens civic participation, improves community connection, and leads to more responsive planning.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Youth Council Review and Outcomes Report - May 2026 [**8.2.4.1** - 15 pages]
2. Updated Terms of Reference - Youth Council [**8.2.4.2** - 4 pages]

8.2.5 Bundanoon Village Place Plan - Draft for Public Exhibition

Report of: Cordelia Hough
Senior Strategic Planner

Authorised by: Michael McCabe
Director Communities and Place

PURPOSE

Council's endorsement is sought to place the draft Bundanoon Village Place Plan (the draft BVPP) (**Attachment 1**) on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

The draft BVPP has been developed through extensive engagement with the community and key stakeholders. It establishes a shared vision for the future of Bundanoon and identifies a range of place initiatives to guide future planning and activation of the village.

The development and implementation of a community-led draft BVPP responds directly to Wingecarribee Shire Council Operational Plan and Budget 2025/26 action 2.2.1.4 OP1: *Complete the Bundanoon Place Plan*.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

- 1. The draft Bundanoon Village Place Plan be endorsed for public exhibition for a period of 28 days.**
- 2. Following the public exhibition period, a report be submitted to Council outlining the outcomes of the public exhibition, for Council's consideration.**

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The draft BVPP (**Attachment 1**) is the second Place Plan (following Robertson Village) to be developed under Council's Village Place Plan Program. It has been informed through a collaborative and iterative process with the community and key stakeholders, bringing together local knowledge, ideas and aspirations to establish a shared vision for Bundanoon's future. To reflect local priorities, engagement has been delivered in three (3) rounds, each building on the previous to listen, test ideas and refine the direction together.

The draft BVPP responds to actions identified in Council's adopted Wingecarribee Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), including:

- 6.1 (i) - Adopt a place-based approach to planning in local towns and villages to ensure that their special character is preserved.
- 6.1 (v) - Develop place-based urban design development controls for our satellite centres of Bundanoon and Roberson to ensure that new development is in keeping with the desired future character of these areas.

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The format of the draft BVPP differs from the Robertson Village Place Plan to align with the now adopted Wingecarribee Community Strategic Plan (CSP) being centred around the five key themes: Our People, Our Places, Our Environment, Our Economy and Our Leadership.

DISCUSSION

The draft BVPP has been developed in partnership with the community and key stakeholders, who have actively helped shape the vision statement and initiatives, reflecting shared responsibility in the development and delivery of the Place Plan. This collaborative approach is important in fostering ownership of the Plan and supporting its subsequent implementation by all stakeholders, based on impact, timeframes and available resources. Council is recognised as the lead of several initiatives, with a number of initiatives also sitting with stakeholders for delivery. This reinforces that the BVPP is a community plan rather than solely a Council plan, and that its successful implementation relies on ongoing leadership and commitment from both the community and stakeholders.

This collaborative approach is important in fostering ownership of the Plan and recognising that its implementation extends beyond Council, relying on ongoing leadership and participation from the community and key stakeholders, based on impact, timeframes and available resources.

The draft BVPP includes a vision statement and 31 Place Initiatives aligned with the five (5) CSP themes which consider environmental, economic, social and cultural needs of the village, while protecting and enhancing its unique character, including matters such as safety and accessibility. Together, these initiatives guide the delivery of the shared vision for Bundanoon.

Effective place-based planning relies on a strong understanding of the community. To support this, extensive community and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken during the preparation of the draft, prior to public exhibition. This is complemented by a detailed analysis of demographic data from sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census and [Profile.id](#). Key findings are outlined in the supporting *Community Profile and Engagement Report (Attachment 2)*.

The engagement approach has been informed by learnings from the previous Robertson Village Place Plan and has been structured in three (3) iterative rounds, each building on the previous stage to listen, test ideas and refine direction:

- i. **Round One: Place Check - Your Village, Your Voice (December 2024 to April 2025)**
Focused on understanding what the community values most about Bundanoon, the challenges experienced, and aspirations for the future. These insights informed an emerging vision and initial set of draft initiatives.
- ii. **Round Two: Your Voice in Action (November 2025)**
Ideas were tested through an Ideas Pack, enabling the community to provide feedback on what resonated, what could be strengthened, and what additional considerations should be included.
- iii. **Round Three: Public Exhibition (commencement subject to resolution of Council)**
Feedback received to date has informed the draft BVPP now proposed for public exhibition. This stage provides an important opportunity for further refinement to ensure the Plan reflects community and stakeholder priorities prior to adoption.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement across the first two rounds included student consultation, interactive workshops, drop-in sessions, surveys, and other activities to support broad community participation. For the purposes of this report, a high-level summary is provided below. A more comprehensive summary of methods and outcomes is included in the accompanying *Community Profile and Engagement Report (Attachment 2)*.

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ONLINE ENGAGEMENT - The community contributed ideas and feedback via Participate Wingecarribee during both rounds of engagement, with a total of 109 online responses being received, including short surveys and a visioning activity.

IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT -

- The Place Check community workshop was held on Friday 6 December 2024 at Bundanoon Soldiers Memorial Hall, with a total of 160 participants in attendance.
- Drop-in sessions were held on Tuesday 18 November 2025, with project staff in attendance with the Mobile Library in the village for the morning session and at Bundanoon Soldiers Memorial Hall for the afternoon. Approximately 50 attendees participated across both sessions.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

During Round One, 18 written submissions were received. These included a report from the Bundanoon Community Association (BCA) outlining the results of a Place Game survey undertaken with residents prior to the commencement of the Bundanoon Place Plan project, as well as 17 submissions from students at Bundanoon Public School sharing what they value about their village and their aspirations for its future.

During Round Two, three (3) written submissions were received, including feedback from a local resident, Year 2/3 students from Bundanoon Public School, and the BCA.

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES TO DATE

The combined outcomes of Round One and Round Two engagement include:

- 109 online contributions
- Approximately 200 attendees at face-to-face engagement activities
- 21 written submissions
- 2,454 visits to Participate Wingecarribee project page

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Extensive engagement has informed the project to date. Public exhibition of the draft BVPP will provide a further opportunity to test, refine and ensure the proposed initiatives align with community and stakeholder priorities.

The draft BVPP (**Attachment 1**) and supporting *Community Profile and Engagement Report* (**Attachment 2**) will be made available at the Civic Centre, libraries and online via the Participate Wingecarribee platform. Additional engagement opportunities will be provided during the exhibition period to facilitate community feedback. All feedback received will be reviewed and considered prior to finalisation of the draft BVPP.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The draft BVPP has been developed using internal resources in collaboration with the community. initiatives within the draft may be delivered through a range of funding sources, including grant funding and the adopted annual operational budget and resourcing, subject to prioritisation and available resources.

Initiatives vary in nature, with some being advocacy based and others community-led, relying on volunteer input and local resourcing.

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Place Plans also provide strategic alignment and demonstrate community support, which can strengthen applications for external funding to deliver identified initiatives.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Leadership

Outcome - 5.1 We deliver our future together

Strategy - 5.1.2. Cultivate partnerships between government, service providers, communities and businesses for maximum community value

Indicator - Satisfaction with Council (%)

The draft BVPP has been developed through a collaborative and iterative process between Council, the community and key stakeholders. This process has helped shape a shared vision and reinforce shared responsibility for its delivery. The draft BVPP identifies key initiatives and place partners, and their associated roles as either leader, partner or advocate, to guide short, medium and long-term actions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Bundanoon Village Place Plan - Draft for Public Exhibition [**8.2.5.1** - 29 pages]
2. Community Profile & Engagement Summary Report - Bundanoon Village Place Plan [**8.2.5.2** - 28 pages]

8.2.6 Busking Policy - Draft for Adoption

Report of: **Corinne Buxton**
Coordinator Community Development

Authorised by: **Shelley Jones**
Director Corporate Strategy and Resourcing

PURPOSE

To present the outcomes of the public exhibition of Councils Busking Policy and recommend its adoption as included in **Attachment 1**, following consideration of community feedback.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

- 1. Adopt the Busking Policy as included at Attachment 1 to this report.**
- 2. Note that in response to community feedback, Council will cover permit and insurance costs for up to 20 young performers under the age of 18 each financial year, with an additional \$2,500 proposed to be included in the draft 2026–2027 budget and future budgets for this purpose.**
- 3. Write to all community members who made submissions during the Public Exhibition period to thank them for their contributions.**

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The draft Busking Policy was reported to Council on 18 February 2026 and placed on public exhibition for 28 days between 23 February and 23 March 2026.

DISCUSSION

During the 28-day public exhibition period, Council received four submissions from community members. All submissions were in support of the policy while also recommending additional considerations. A staff response to each submission is provided as **Attachment 2**.

A key theme raised in the submissions was ensuring equitable access and participation opportunities for young people. Submissions highlighted that cost can be a barrier to involvement and emphasised the value of minimising or removing fees to encourage greater participation, support emerging talent, and create inclusive opportunities for young people to participate in busking activities.

Following the public exhibition period, minor amendments were made to the draft Busking Policy in response to community feedback.

These amendments include the introduction of a supported pathway for young performers, with Council covering permit fees and public liability insurance for up to 20 performers under the age of 18 each financial year.

The amended Busking Policy as per **Attachment 1** of this report is recommended to Council for adoption.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Under the amended Policy, Council would support youth busking for up to 20 performers under the age of 18 each financial year by covering permit and insurance costs.

Given community feedback and Council's commitment to supporting families and young people, it is recommended that an additional \$2,500 be included in the 2026–2027 budget and future budgets for this purpose, supporting young people to participate in busking activities throughout the year. Permit fees collected through the broader busking program are anticipated to contribute toward partial cost recovery of this initiative.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our People

Outcome - 1.3 We come together to connect and celebrate

Strategy - 1.3.1. Provide opportunities for participation in community life through vibrant community events and festivals

Indicator - Getting Involved in the Community Index

The Busking Policy supports creative expression by providing opportunities for performers to share their skills, enriching cultural life and contributing to community wellbeing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Table of Submissions - Draft Busking Policy [**8.2.6.1** - 8 pages]
2. Busking Policy - Draft for Adoption [**8.2.6.2** - 9 pages]

8.2.7 Disability Inclusion Action Plan - Draft for Adoption

Report of: **Corinne Buxton**
Coordinator Community Development

Authorised by: **Shelley Jones**
Director Corporate Strategy and Resourcing

PURPOSE

To present the outcomes of the public exhibition of the draft *Inclusive Highlands: Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2030* (DIAP) (**Attachment 1**) and seek Council's adoption of the Plan following consideration of community feedback.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Adopt the *Inclusive Highlands: Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2030*, as provided in Attachment 1.
2. Write to community members who made submissions during the Public Exhibition period to thank them for their contributions.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The draft *Inclusive Highlands: Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2030* (DIAP) was reported to Council on 18 March 2026 and placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, from 23 March to 20 April 2026.

DISCUSSION

The DIAP provides a framework to guide Council's actions to improve access, participation and inclusion for people with disability across the Wingecarribee Shire.

The Plan reflects Council's commitment to creating an inclusive community where people with disability are respected, supported and able to participate fully in community life. It has been developed to meet legislative requirements and aligns with Council's broader strategic objectives.

The DIAP is intended to embed disability inclusion across Council's planning, service delivery and day-to-day operations over the life of the Plan.

During the 28-day public exhibition period, Council received one submission. A staff response to the submission is provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – Submissions and Council Officer Response

Submission	Council Officer Response
J. Evers, High Range The proposed plan needs to consider the broad range of disabilities & try to cater to the full spectrum wherever possible. This would be	The DIAP recognises the diversity of disability and adopts an inclusive approach across all focus areas. It includes actions that balance improvements to infrastructure with community-based initiatives,

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Submission	Council Officer Response
extremely demanding & expensive if it did not give priority to mobilisation of carer/community support (witness cost blowout with the NDIS). While there are limitations on family/volunteer support for individuals with disability it is informative to recall that this was the common - often only - support mechanism not too long ago. In my opinion it's still there but under-utilised. This indicates to me that apart from some basic engineering/construction/modification to facilitate physical access the role of the WSC should be primarily coordinating/assisting individual carers/volunteers to create groups that develop strategies to assist specific areas of disability. eg. mobility; intellectual; vision impairment; dementia; etc. It would require a full-time Disability Coordinator to foster formation of support groups & offering WSC facilities to convene meetings/discussion groups. At the individual level I would want to see WSC using people with disabilities in the workplace - initially on an unpaid work-experience type scheme similar to school students & then if appropriate as employees. That is the ultimate sign of inclusion in the general community.	partnerships and service collaboration. The Plan acknowledges the important role of carers, service providers and community organisations in supporting inclusive outcomes, and includes actions to strengthen these partnerships. Council supports inclusive employment pathways for people with disability, including work experience, traineeships and employment opportunities, and is committed to leading by example in this area. Council also engages with organisations such as Jigsaw Australia, a social enterprise supporting employment opportunities for people with disability, to further strengthen inclusive employment. The suggestion regarding coordination of support networks is noted. This aligns with existing actions within the DIAP relating to community development, partnerships and engagement. While Council supports opportunities for connection and collaboration within the community, there is currently no dedicated resourcing within Council for a full-time Disability Coordinator role to facilitate the formation of support groups or coordinate ongoing discussion groups. Overall, the matters raised are largely addressed within the existing DIAP and do not require amendments to the Plan.

Given the strategic nature of housing outcomes, the following actions have been removed from the DIAP and will be more appropriately considered through broader housing strategy and strategic planning processes:

- Review and update planning controls to align with current national access standards and Liveable Housing Design requirements under the National Construction Code (NCC)
- Explore potential incentives (such as floor space ratio bonuses or expedited approvals) to support adaptable housing outcomes

These matters will be considered as part of broader strategic planning and policy work.

The amended DIAP as per **Attachment 1** of this report is recommended to Council for adoption.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the DIAP will be supported through existing operational budgets.

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Delivery of specific initiatives may require external grant funding and/or future reprioritisation of resources through the annual budget process.

Existing partnerships and networks will be leveraged to support delivery of priority actions.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our People

Outcome - 1.3 We come together to connect and celebrate

Strategy - 1.3.3. Provide accessible spaces for people to meet and build community relationships

Indicator - Getting Involved in the Community Index

The DIAP supports this outcome by promoting accessible and inclusive services, facilities and programs, and by strengthening opportunities for people with disability to participate fully in community life.

The Plan contributes to a more inclusive, connected and equitable community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Inclusive Highlands Disability Inclusion Action Plan for Adoption [**8.2.7.1** - 35 pages]

8.2.8 Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026-2030 Draft for Adoption

Report of: Kathryn Baget-Juleff
Manager Community Life & Libraries

Authorised by: Shelley Jones
Director Corporate Strategy and Resourcing

PURPOSE

To present the outcomes of the public exhibition of the draft *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026-2030* and recommend its adoption as included in **Attachment 1**, following consideration of community feedback.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Adopt the *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026-2030* as presented at Attachment 1.
2. Write to all community members who made submissions during the Public Exhibition period to thank them for their contributions.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

The *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026–2030* sets the strategic direction for the delivery of library services over the next four years.

The Plan outlines how Council will evolve library services to meet changing community needs, support access to information and technology, and strengthen opportunities for learning, creativity and connection. It provides the framework that will guide our services and collections, inform our programs and partnerships, and the look and feel of our library spaces. It ensures our resources are directed where they will have the greatest impact for the community, today and into the future.

DISCUSSION

The draft *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026–2030* was placed on public exhibition to seek community feedback and ensure the Plan reflects local priorities and expectations.

During the public exhibition period, Council received one formal submission and 258 visits to the Participate Wingecarribee page.

A staff response to the submission is provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Submission to Draft *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026-2030*

Name	Submission	Council Officer Response
K. Frith, unknown location	Overall it looks like a good plan and as a user of the library I highly support its continued investment. 1. STEM - Stem has been superceded by AI and is an outdated field of study. I	STEM education refers collectively to the teaching of the disciplines within its umbrella: science, technology, engineering and mathematics. AI is part of this and will be incorporated into future STEM

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Name	Submission	Council Officer Response
	would highly recommend this program be dropped. Many programmers and STEM developers have lost their roles as it is now undertaken by AI. Perhaps you could replace STEM with AI courses. 2. Collections assembled by genre. Do not support. The Dewey system is standard worldwide the non fiction collection should remain as is. Filing fiction by author is standard in most libraries. Some books are difficult to class by genre so filing by genre probably wouldn't work. The change is confusing for older readers and resources could be better used having events rather than reorganising Collections. 3. Request for more author talks. To bring together the reading community and to support Australian authors. The Kate Horan one you had was excellent! 4. Request that our libraries connect with and commit to supporting the Southern Highlands writers festival. This festival generates interest in literacy and income for this district. It is a great event for our region. Can this plan please include support for the festival and specifically call it out in terms of funding and planning. 5. Upgrade printing services. current ones are complex and confusing. Keep it as user pays but the equipment and its ease of use needs attention.	programming, including an introduction session in our upcoming Tech Savvy Seniors program. Our libraries will continue to use Dewey as the core organisational framework for collections. However, selected collections will also be arranged by genre to improve accessibility and create a more intuitive, user-friendly browsing experience. This approach reflects contemporary library practice and supports community members to more easily discover and engage with materials. Author events will continue to be expanded through our literary programming, including consideration of partnerships such as the Southern Highlands Writers' Festival in future planning. The Writers Festival could consider applying for funding through Council's Community Financial Assistance Grants. The libraries printing equipment is currently being updated toward a more efficient system.

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Name	Submission	Council Officer Response
	Your library staff are great. The facilities really useful the spaces around activities are excellent and its a good collection.	

Following the exhibition period, minor amendments were made to the action plan based on the one submission received and further internal review.

These amendments to the actions include:

- Explore new opportunities with partners such as the Southern Highlands Writers' Festival to strengthen and expand author events.
- Expanding non-traditional resources such as Seed Libraries and Memory Kits to support active discovery, community connection, and lifelong learning.
- Develop a Family Literacy Framework that includes investigating and securing funding for an established early literacy program such as the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

The amended *Wingecarribee Libraries 2026-2030 Plan*, per **Attachment 1** of this report, is recommended to Council for adoption.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026–2030* will be supported through existing operational budgets, partnerships and external grant funding where available.

Delivery of some initiatives may require future reprioritisation of existing resources or additional funding consideration through the annual budget process.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our People

Outcome - 1.2 We are creative and always learning

Strategy - 1.2.2 Provide opportunities to learn and grow our skills and knowledge

Indicator - Health & Wellbeing Index

The *Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026–2030* outlines how we will shape the future of our libraries to support our vision of being the most liveable place in NSW for all generations to thrive. The plan will strengthen literacy and lifelong learning, reduce barriers to information and technology, foster social inclusion and help preserve and share the stories of our region.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Wingecarribee Libraries Plan 2026-2030 [8.2.8.1 - 21 pages]

8.2.9 Sewer Main Upgrades and Renewals (Package B) - Tender Evaluation

Report of: Samir Paudel
Project Manager

Authorised by: Clinton McAlister
Director Service and Project Delivery

PURPOSE

To present to Council the evaluation of the Request for Tender for the Sewer Main Upgrades and Renewals (Package B).

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Accept the Tender for RFT# T-2026-2 Sewer Main Upgrades and Renewals (Package B) from Interflow Pty Limited at a lump sum price of \$2,861,093.26 (inclusive of GST).
2. Delegate authority to the General Manager to execute the contract and any other documentation required to give effect to this resolution.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

Council manages 551km of wastewater gravity mains and 98km of rising mains, seventy-seven (77) sewer pump stations, six (6) sewer treatment plants plus other assets across the six (6) sewer schemes in the Wingecarribee sewer network. If well-constructed and maintained, sewers are a safe and hygienic means of transporting wastewater for treatment. The sewer main upgrade and renewal program targets mains that are in poor condition, ageing or require upgrading or extension to improve service levels. Sewer main renewals and upgrades are prioritised based on condition monitoring, overflow history, operational feedback and age/material type. Pipe upgrades are a result of sewer modelling, masterplan findings or developmental growth within the network.

DISCUSSION

Council sought tenders from suitable and qualified contractors to provide a lump sum tender for the scope of works. The full scope of works was detailed in the design drawings and tender documents

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* part 3, section 55(3)(n), Council is required to invite tenders where estimated expenditure is greater than \$250,000 (GST inclusive).

ADVERTISING

The tender advertising period was from the 20 January 2026 to 24 February 2026 (35 days), which included a two-weeks extension.

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The tender was advertised as follows:

Newspaper / Website	Date Advertised
Council's Website	For the duration of the advertising period
Council's eTendering Website	For the duration of the advertising period

TENDERS RECEIVED

A total of three (3) tender submissions were received as part of the tender process. Interflow Pty Limited submitted three alternative options for consideration. Benex Group Pty Ltd subsequently withdrew its tender submission during the evaluation phase due to their other project commitments.

Company Name		
Benex Group Pty Ltd	Queanbeyan, NSW	2620
Infrastructure Renewal Services Pty Ltd	Rydalmere, NSW	2116
Interflow Pty Limited	Mitchell, ACT	2911
Interflow Pty Limited - Alternate A	Mitchell, ACT	2911
Interflow Pty Limited - Alternate B	Mitchell, ACT	2911

LATE TENDERS

A total of zero (0) late tender submissions were received.

TENDER EVALUATION

A Procurement Evaluation Plan was developed which outlined the pre-determined selection criteria, the criteria weightings, and members of the tender evaluation panel.

Each submission was evaluated against the specified criteria by the tender evaluation panel with a scoring system based from 0 to 10 and weighted according to the pre-determined criteria.

TENDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Tender was conducted by staff in the following positions as approved through the completion of Procurement Initiation Plan.

Role	Responsibility	Position
Evaluation Panel Chair	To manage the evaluation process and report to Council.	Project Manager
Evaluation Panel Member	Perform a detailed evaluation of the Tender Submissions.	Project Coordinator

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Role	Responsibility	Position
Evaluation Panel Member	Perform a detailed evaluation of the Tender Submissions.	Modelling and Systems Engineer
Procurement Process and Advice (Probity)	Manages the tender process ensuring that it complies with all relevant legislation, Procurement Policy, Guidelines and Procedures. Manages all communication with Respondents during the advertisement and evaluation periods. Providing probity advice and support to the evaluation panel.	Procurement Officer

SELECTION CRITERIA

The pre-determined criteria used to evaluate the tender were as follows:

Mandatory Criteria:

Mandatory Criteria
Public Liability - \$20 million
Workers Compensation OR [Self Employed] Personal Accident and Illness Insurance or Personal Income Protection
Motor Insurance – Comprehensive
Works Insurance – 130% of Contract Value
Bank Guarantee – 2 X 2.5% of Contract Value

Tenderers were required to meet the mandatory criteria to be eligible to be shortlisted and progress any further in the evaluation process.

Non-Cost Selection Criteria & Weighting:

Non-Cost Criteria	Weighting
Capability & Experience	15%
Specifications, Service & Support, Fit for Purpose	30%
Quality Assurance & Innovation	5%
Community & Social (including local content)	10%
Total	60%

Summary of Selection Criteria & Weighting:

Criteria	Weighting
Total Non-Cost Criteria	60%
Total Cost Criteria	40%
Total	100%

NON-COMPLIANT TENDERS

Upon evaluation a total of Zero (0) tender submissions were determined to be non-compliant.

COMMENTS ON OVERALL EVALUATION OUTCOME

Tendered submissions were of a high standard. The contractors were all clearly capable and experienced with the type of work required.

COMMENTS ON RECOMMENDED TENDER SUBMISSION

Interflow has recently undertaken similar wastewater main relining works for Wingecarribee Shire Council, having been the successful contractor for the relining contract during the 2024–2025 financial year. Interflow is also currently delivering a comparable wastewater main relining project for Council in the 2025–2026 financial year. The contract work was performed efficiently and without incident and had negligible impact on the environment and the community.

Interflow has demonstrated a strong track record in delivering trenchless wastewater main relining projects. For the current project, Interflow has proposed three (3) alternative options, each supported by detailed methodologies and technical recommendations. Following a review of these options, Council proposes to adopt Alternative A, as it represents the most practical and efficient approach for the successful delivery of the current relining works.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

This project forms part of Council's broader Sewer Main Renewal Program, which is funded at approximately \$2.0 million per annum. The programmed works for the 2025/26 financial year were developed based on previous actual costs from comparable relining and pipe bursting contracts.

Tender submissions received indicate a considerable increase in costs, reflecting broader global pressures including escalation in material prices, contractor resources, and market conditions. As the project is delivered as part of a rolling renewal program, the recommended tender can be funded across both the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial year budgets.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Places

Outcome - 2.3 We have the services and facilities we need to live and work here

Strategy - 2.3.3. Provide reliable and resilient infrastructure

Indicator - Access to local government services index

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The proposed wastewater main renewal program using trenchless, relining and pipe bursting technology is a cost-effective way to extend the operational life of the ageing wastewater network by at least 50 years. The technology is particularly suited to pipeline renewals in areas of the wastewater network that is environmentally sensitive or has sensitive community considerations (such as when the wastewater main extends through private property).

CONCLUSION

The trenchless wastewater main relining and pipe bursting technology offered by Interflow is cost-effective, fast to install, and causes minimal installation construction risk (i.e., low community and environmental impact, and low risk to adjacent buried assets). The technology is completely compatible with the existing sewer network operational practices. It is recommended that Council accept the tender from Interflow Pty Ltd – Alternative A option at a lump sum price of \$ 2,861,093.26 (inclusive of GST) for the Sewer main Upgrades and Renewals (Package B) project.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

8.3 INFORMATION ONLY REPORTS

8.3.1 Investments Report

Report of: **Ahmed Mustafa**
Coordinator Financial Accounting

Authorised by: **Katherine Parks**
Acting Chief Financial Officer

PURPOSE

This report presents Council's Cash Investment Portfolio held at 30 April 2026 .

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive and note this Cash Investment Report as at 30 April 2026.

REPORT

In accordance with section 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, the Responsible Accounting Officer must provide Council with a written report setting out details of all money that Council has invested under section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993.

This report provides details of Council's Investment Portfolio as at 30 April 2026.

Attachment 1 to this report provides Council's Cash Investment Portfolio, detailing investments held and a summary of the portfolio by the institution invested with and their credit rating.

In accordance with section 212(1)(b) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, the investments listed in **Attachment 1** have been made in accordance with the:

- **Local Government Act 1993**
- **Local Government (General) Regulation 2021**
- **Ministerial Investment Order 2011 and**
- **Council's Investment Policy.**

Interest earned from investments totalled \$9,639,448 to 30 April 2026.

The interest is attributable to each fund as listed in the table below.

Fund	Annual	YTD	YTD	YTD
	Budget (\$)	Budget (\$)	Actual (\$)	Variance (\$)
General Fund	3,928,887	3,274,070	3,326,433	52,363
Water Fund	2,329,167	1,940,970	2,993,704	1,052,734
Sewer Fund	2,136,000	1,780,000	3,319,311	1,539,311
Total Council	8,394,054	6,995,040	9,639,448	2,644,408

Non-Fossil Fuel Investments

Council's holdings in non-fossil fuel aligned investments was \$104,038,470 on 30 April 2026 which represents 41% of the total investment portfolio. Council officers will continue to work with its investment advisor to identify and pursue green term deposit opportunities that deliver competitive returns within policy.

COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Council's year to date investment returns exceeded budget by \$2,644,408 with \$2,592,045 of this revenue restricted to the water and sewer funds. The General Fund position will continue to be actively monitored as existing investments mature and favourable interest rate conditions contribute to increased investment revenue.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to the Wingecarribee 2035 Community Strategic Plan Outcome and Strategy:

Our Leadership

Outcome – 5.2 We have a strong community voice

Strategy – 5.2.1 Promote evidence-based decision making

Indicator – Council Image/Trust (%)

Investing Council funds in accordance with legislation and ministerial orders provides the community with confidence that public funds are being invested appropriately.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Investment Report Summary - April 2026 [8.3.1.1 - 6 pages]

8.4 COMMITTEE MINUTES

9 NOTICES OF MOTION / NOTICES OF RESCISSION MOTIONS

9.1 AEC Proposed Service Review

COUNCILLOR MOYLAN SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING MOTION:

MOTION

THAT Council:

Engage AEC to conduct;

- i) A full services review identifying where savings can be made in the 2026-2027 financial year and in the Long-Term Financial Plan 2026-2036;**
- ii) A report putting forward alternatives to the proposed SRV and the proposed increases to water and sewer charges as identified in the Wingecarribee Shire Council Financial Sustainability Business Case;**
- iii) Upon release of the report referred to in ii) a public forum be convened to discuss the report.**

BACKGROUND

As I have been consulting the community there have been residents who have put forward alternatives to the proposed SRV and utility cost increases. It is important we consider all options and alternatives before proceeding to a decision on the recommendations made in the Wingecarribee Shire Council Financial Sustainability Business Case. It is critical the community are involved in this process and all options are considered.

FUNDING SOURCE

Working Capital or Materials and Contracts.

STAFF RESPONSE

Council has and will continue to undertake a program of service reviews, strategic planning activities and organisational efficiency measures as part of its broader Financial Sustainability Program and Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.

Consistent with the NSW Office of Local Government IP&R Guidelines, Council is required to prepare a program to review services, consider service levels and identify opportunities for continuous improvement over the term of the Delivery Program.

In response to this requirement, Council has already completed or commenced a range of major reviews and reform initiatives, including the Financial Sustainability Assessment itself, along with reviews for

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Aquatic Facilities, Out of School Hours Care, Visitor Services review, Bowral Memorial Hall review, Tulip Time Strategic Review. Council has participated in the Development Assessment Expert Planner review.

In addition, Council has recently undertaken substantial strategic reviews through the preparation and exhibition of plans and strategies relating to libraries, arts and culture, youth services, communications and engagement, and community event delivery (Christmas).

Council has also implemented a range of efficiency and savings measures through the development of the draft 2026–2027 Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan, including organisational restructures, operational efficiencies, service realignment, capital program reprioritisation and reductions in non-essential expenditure.

While further service reviews will continue as part of Council's ongoing efficiency program under all future scenarios, a detailed "full service review" of all 26 services within Council's Service Catalogue at a granular functional level would represent a substantial body of work requiring significant time, resourcing and cost to complete. Such a review would not be capable of being completed prior to Council's legislative obligation under section 405 of the Local Government Act 1993 to adopt its Operational Plan, Budget and associated IP&R documents by 30 June.

The AEC Financial Sustainability Assessment and Business Case has already considered a range of alternative approaches to improving Council's long-term financial position. The findings indicate that, while efficiencies and savings measures remain important and must be considered in all scenarios, the scale of Council's infrastructure renewal gap and structural operating deficit cannot reasonably be addressed through savings and efficiency measures alone.

In relation to water and sewer pricing, these are separate restricted user-pay funds which are required to operate on a financially sustainable basis. This means that funds need to be managed to meet current as well as future costs associated with the delivery of new plant, renew and maintain existing water and sewer assets and response to customers who have localised water or sewer issues. The water and sewer infrastructure is large and complex and includes major sewer plants at Bowral, Moss Vale, Mittagong, Robertson and Bundanoon and the major Wingecarribee Water Treatment Plant that provides reliable and safe drinking water to our residents.

Independent modelling undertaken by AEC identified that Council's current water pricing does not meet lower bound pricing principles and that additional investment in water and sewer infrastructure is required to maintain long-term service sustainability, asset renewal and regulatory compliance. As such, there are limited alternatives available that do not ultimately involve adjustments to pricing over time.

Importantly, no decision to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) will be made by Council in June 2026.

The current exhibition period relates to the draft IP&R suite, including the draft Long-Term Financial Plan, which presents two scenarios for consideration:

- Base Case scenario with no SRV; and
- Sustainable Assets and Services scenario which includes a proposed SRV and increased investment in infrastructure renewal and maintenance.

Following adoption of the IP&R documents, Council will undertake a broader community engagement program regarding the two scenarios prior to any future Council consideration of whether to make an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The next steps in the process are as follows:

June 2026: Council adoption of the IP&R documents as required under legislation and consideration of commencement of community engagement on the two scenarios in the Long-Term Financial Plan

July–August 2026: Community engagement regarding the Long-Term Financial Plan scenarios and proposed SRV pathway

October 2026: Report to Council on engagement outcomes and Council decision on whether or not to proceed with an application to IPART

February 2027: Deadline for submission of any SRV application to IPART

March–April 2027: IPART review process, including independent community engagement and assessment

May 2027: IPART determination on SRV applications

July 2027: Any approved SRV would commence

Any future SRV application process is subject to IPART's prescribed assessment framework, including specific community engagement and evidentiary requirements.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.2 Resolution MN 2024/332 - Proposed Amendment

COUNCILLOR RUSSELL SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING MOTION:

MOTION

THAT Council amend the adopted Motion 2024/332 to resolve that:

- 1. The General Manager provide briefs for consultancy services to be brought to Council for endorsement where:**
 - a) Engagement is over \$100K; or**
 - b) Impact is long term; or**
 - c) Outcomes impact on more than 10,000 people and/or Shire-wide.**
- 2. Note that technical and construction projects are not excluded from these provisions.**

BACKGROUND

In establishing measures that increase our transparency and accountability, we can demonstrate to ratepayers and residents that we have checks and balances in place for how public money is spent.

This builds community confidence and trust in Council.

FUNDING SOURCE

None identified.

STAFF RESPONSE

The existing resolution arising from Mayoral Minute 2024/332 already provides an opportunity for Councillors to have input into significant strategic consultancy engagements over and above legislative requirements.

Under the Local Government Act 1993, the governing body is responsible for setting the strategic direction of Council, while the General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective operational management of the organisation under delegated authority. Council has formally delegated operational functions to the General Manager pursuant to section 377 of the Act through its resolution of August 2025:

MN 2025/214

MOTION moved by Cr Fitzpatrick, seconded by Cr Kent

THAT Council:

- 1. Reaffirm the Mayor's delegations as set out in the Instrument of Delegation to the Mayor included at Attachment 1, pursuant to section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993.***
- 2. Reaffirm the General Manager's delegations as set out in the Instrument of Delegation to the General Manager included at Attachment 2, pursuant to section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993.***

CARRIED BY EXCEPTION

Council officers are engaged to provide professional and operational expertise to support the delivery of Council's adopted priorities and statutory responsibilities. Existing procurement, governance and financial control frameworks are designed to ensure these engagements are appropriately assessed, managed and overseen administratively.

The proposed amendments would substantially broaden the scope of matters requiring Council endorsement. This is likely to create additional administrative burden, delays to procurement and project delivery, reduced organisational agility, and duplication of existing governance and procurement controls by adding in another layer of approval.

The proposal also risks blurring the distinction between the strategic governance role of the elected body and the operational responsibilities delegated to the General Manager and staff. The Local Government Act 1993 intentionally separates these functions to ensure the organisation can operate effectively through qualified professional staff, established procurement controls and delegated authority. Expanding councillor involvement into detailed operational procurement decisions risks creating duplication, inefficiency and a culture where staff's professional opinion and governance frameworks are continually re-litigated through the elected body. In practice, this would reduce organisational agility, undermine confidence in the Council organisation and impede Council's stated objectives around operational efficiency and financial sustainability.

Significant consultancy and contract engagements (over \$250k) are already subject to established legislated procurement processes and public reporting obligations commensurate with their value and risk.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

10.1 AEC Business Case - Public Exhibition

COUNCILLOR MOYLAN SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING QUESTION WITH NOTICE:

QUESTION WITH NOTICE

On the Public Exhibition website page, Council has highlighted the proposed spend should Council accept the recommendation from the AEC review. Is there a reason Council did not highlight the costs to residents including the special rate rise of 34%, the water and sewer rises, the proposed \$34million borrowings and the \$10million in asset sales so residents can easily understand?

STAFF RESPONSE

The purpose of the Participate Wingecarribee page is to publicly exhibit Council's annual processes associated with the Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documents, as required under the Local Government Act 1993 and associated regulations, ahead of their adoption by 30 June 2026.

Significant information including the Council report which clearly steps out the problem and imperative for change are available for the community to access on Participate and Council's website [Financial Sustainability at Wingecarribee Shire Council | Wingecarribee Shire Council](#), along with the full recording of the April council meeting ([Wingecarribee Shire Council - YouTube](#)) which includes the detailed presentation from AEC. This information has been communicated widely through Council's established channels.

Following adoption of the annual Integrated Planning and Reporting documents in June, a dedicated community engagement program regarding the future funding scenarios identified in the Long-Term Financial Plan is proposed to occur during July and August 2026, prior to any future Council consideration of whether to apply to IPART for a Special Rate Variation. Council will receive the details of this program in the June business paper.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10.2 Consultancy Services and Associated Costs

COUNCILLOR RUSSEL SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING QUESTION WITH NOTICE:

QUESTION WITH NOTICE

What are the consultancy services, and their associated costs, that would have come to Council in this Financial Year to date, if MN 2024/332 had included technical and engineering reports?

STAFF RESPONSE

This question falls outside the intent and scope of the original Mayoral Minute MN 2024/332 which was specifically established to provide visibility of consultant engagements that were of a strategic nature.

Technical and engineering consultancy engagements are operational and managed in accordance with Council's procurement and governance frameworks. These types of matters are outside of a Councillor's strategic remit under the Local Government Act.

Further, the retrospective extraction and reconciliation of the level of operational detail requested would require a substantial manual review during a critical financial year-end period, resulting in a significant diversion of operational resources. In this context, undertaking the exercise is not considered a proportionate or effective use of organisational resources, particularly where the information sought does not relate to a strategic decision-making requirement of Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

11 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

11.1 Timing of Assessment - AEC

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

To: General Manager
From: Councillor Russell
Received: 15 April 2026

QUESTION

When will the assessment be undertaken to determine the most efficient approach to the costings, including the technical and productive inputs referred to by Mr Jarvis of AEC?

RESPONSE

The General Manager took this question on notice.

Response from Graham Jarvis of AEC Group:

At mark 3:02 in the livestream recording Clr Russell has referred to myself (Graham Jarvis from AEC) as stating that "There had been little assessment of what was the most efficient way in terms of technical and productive inputs in the costings. Given that statement would you agree that now is the time to be doing those business cases before applying for a rate rise"

I do not recall making this statement in the presentation at the General Meeting on the 15th April 2026. I believe what Clr Russell is referring to a one hour meeting that I had with Clr Russell on the 1st April 2026 during which I ran through the presentation I provided at the Strategic Planning Day on the 27th February 2026 and during which I responded to Clr Russell's questions. During this meeting Clr Russell sought clarification on the unit rates that have been used to calculate the annual asset renewal costs for the major renewal programs.

My recollection is my intention was to explain and outline to Clr Russell the efforts that AEC undertook to ensure the unit rates applied to the costings reflected an efficient price, resulting in a reasonable funding allocation for the renewal programs. I recall explaining to Clr Russell that on several occasions we questioned and sought further clarification from Council's asset management team regarding the unit rates that were applied as they did appear high based on our experience with unit rates applied in our councils. During the meeting we referred to the inputs that were used to cost the renewal program. I recall explaining an example that due to the poor condition of the roads, the actual project costs used for setting unit rates were high due to the need to undertake repairs to the pavement before renewing the surface and that we needed to clarify with Council and adjust to ensure the unit rates reflected future optimal costs, not a road in a poor state (given that we were addressing backlog and repairs in other cost items in the modelling. Based on Council's request AEC undertook benchmarking with surrounding councils to test the reasonableness of the unit rates that were being applied. Following AEC's feedback and the benchmarking data, Council undertook a further detailed zero based review of unit rates for the major road renewal programs. The final unit rates applied in the modelling for the Financial Sustainability Assessment were reduced, and further adjusted in the Business Case and the LTFP to reflect a reasonable unit rate and costings.

It is important to note that AEC has carefully questioned the unit rates, given that we are not qualified engineers and not in a position to comment on whether the council's approach to asset treatments reflects best practice or an efficient approach. We simply questioned where in our experience the unit rates applied to costing asset treatments appeared to be significantly higher than what we typically experience in other similar councils.

AEC has advised Council, and recommended inclusion in the Asset Management Strategy, that Council continues to improve the asset management planning for asset renewals with a continual focus on optimising the lifecycle management of assets, which will result in achieving the lowest whole of life cost for assets. This is a challenge for every Australian local government authority and certainly not unique to Wingecarribee.

11.2 Capital Works in Yerrinbool

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

To: General Manager
From: Councillor Russell
Received: 15 April 2026

QUESTION

What is the allotment in the General Fund to capital works in Yerrinbool for the remainder of the Council term?

RESPONSE

Under the proposed four-year Capital Works Program currently on public exhibition, Yerrinbool is allocated \$560,000 in capital investment, including a playspace renewal, road asphaltting and resealing works.

Escalating costs arising from disruption to global fuel and petroleum markets—driven by instability in middle east—present a material financial risk to the 2026/27 budget. Fuel and petroleum-based inputs such as diesel, petrol, bitumen and asphalt are fundamental to Council’s core operations and service delivery, and continued price volatility places pressure on program affordability.

As a result, the playspace renewal project is at risk of being deferred to a later year.

11.3 Risk Analysis - Fuel Cost Exposure and Electrification Pathways for Fleet

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

To: General Manager
From: Councillor Russell
Received: 15 April 2026

QUESTION

Why was a risk analysis undertaken in relation to the price impacts to the 2026/27 budget as a result of Council's current exposure to the current fuel shortage crisis for Item 9.3 Fuel Cost Exposure and Electrification Pathways for Fleet?

RESPONSE

The April Council Business paper provided:

Item 8.1.1 Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2026/27, Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27, Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2036 and Draft Asset Management Plan 2026-2036 for Public Exhibition. This report set out a sensitivity analysis on the impacts of increased fuel costs, noting as a potential risk.

Item 9.3 Notice of Motion: Fuel Cost Exposure and Electrification Pathways for Fleet. Officers provided comment in the business paper in response to the Notice of Motion.

12 CLOSED COUNCIL - CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

13 CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING