

A SUMMARY OF BUSINESS FROM THE MAY COUNCIL MEETING

Exciting projects for Portland

Council was pleased to receive reports on two exciting projects for Portland that will improve the well-being of the community providing improved open space and recreational facilities, future housing, and preservation of heritage infrastructure. See more detail below:

Exhibition of The Foundations Portland – Draft Development Control Plan

Council has endorsed the exhibition of the Draft Development Control Plan for The Foundations, Portland for a period of 28 days.

The Foundations site is an industrial legacy site (being the former Portland Cement Works). Since taking control of the site in 2014, the owners of the site have been working to activate and plan for the repurposing and re-development of the site.

It was rezoned in April 2022 to a mix of employment, residential and recreational zoning and was designated as an Urban Release Area.

The owners engaged specialist consultants to prepare the Foundations Draft Development Control Plan (DCP) to guide the form of the development. The Draft DCP includes a Public Domain Masterplan and Conservation Management Plan.

The documents will be placed on public exhibition for a period of no less than 28 days with hardcopies of the plan available for viewing at the Council Administration Centre and Lithgow, Wallerawang, and Portland Libraries.

All submissions received will be considered and the outcomes reported back to Council following the end of the exhibition period. After considering any submissions, Council may:

- Approve the plan as exhibited.
- Approve the plan with amendments, or
- Decide not to proceed with the plan.

Should Council decide not to proceed with the plan, Council must include their reasons in the required notice to be published on its website.

Community BBQ for Saville Park

Council approved a development application from the Portland Touch Football Association for a Community BBQ with picnic table seating and shelter to be constructed at Saville Park adjoining the Clubhouse.

Saville Park is a popular spot for large community events including the Nick Way Memorial Cup and Portland Spring Fair. This facility will be of great benefit to both the Touch Football Association and the wider community.

Lithgow Community Private Hospital Update

The Council received a report about the Lithgow Community Private (LCP) Hospital detailing recent progress in its negotiations with the Local Health District on a long-term sustainable arrangement. LCP is offering the full range of specialist medical services and day surgery to the

community, however day surgery levels at LCP have not yet returned to pre-Covid levels. LCP commissioned its new lung function machine in May and the respiratory physician is very pleased with its operation and results. All patients using the service are bulk billed and can have consultation and diagnostic testing done in the same appointment.

Whilst this is a pleasing result, there are two matters which are still outstanding:

- Development of a service agreement, and,
- Funding to support recovery from the impacts of the responses to Covid.

The council is committed to ensuring the long-term future of LCP in the Lithgow community. The Mayor wrote to the newly appointed Minister for Health in April 2023 requesting his support for early attention being given to these two matters by the new Government. An invitation was also made for the Minister to visit the city to view the innovative model of specialist medical service delivery that LCP provides in a regional setting, and to hear about the health needs of the Lithgow community.

LCP have also confirmed that they are continuing to work with the new State Government to request financial support to assist with recovery from the impact of the Covid response.

Mayor calls for restoration of the Emergency Services Levy

Mayor Statham called upon the Council to make representations to the Treasurer, Minister for Emergency Services, Minister for Local Government, Member for Bathurst, Paul Toole, IPART and the President of LGNSW regarding the NSW Government's last-minute decision to impose an enormous Emergency Services Levy (ESL) cost increase on Councils for 2023/24 by scrapping the ESL subsidy.

"Cost shifting such as this places a significant burden on our community. The Government's decision will lead to a reduction in important local services and/or the cancellation of necessary infrastructure projects". Advised Mayor Statham

"The ESL is a cost imposed on Councils and insurance policy holders to fund the emergency services budget in NSW. The majority is paid as part of insurance premiums, with a further 11.7% funded by Councils and 14.6% by the NSW Government," said Mayor Statham.

"As a consequence of the late announcement of a 73% increase in the State Emergency Service budget and an 18% increase in the Fire and Rescue NSW budget, Council's 3.7% rate peg increase to provide essential community services and infrastructure has been significantly eroded". Continued the Mayor.

For Lithgow Council, the minimum increase in the ESL for 2023/24 is around \$200K. This

amounts to 35% of the expected rate peg increase for 2023/24. Since 2018/19 there has been a massive 65% increase in the ESL.

Local Government NSW has raised the serious concerns of the local government sector with the NSW Government and is seeking the support of Councils across NSW in amplifying this advocacy.

The Council will be taking immediate action to support LGNSW and lobby for:

- Restoration of the ESL subsidy,
- The ESL to be decoupled from the rate peg to enable Councils to recover the full cost, and
- Development of a fairer, more transparent, and financially sustainable method of funding critically important emergency services.

Furthermore, the council will also be writing to IPART advising of the financial sustainability impacts on the Emergency Services Levy.

MAJOR WORKS UPDATE

Sealing Program

The following roads are awaiting sealing, due to the time of year, sealing contractors are very busy and scheduling of sealing can be a bit longer than other times of year:

- Bathurst Street Lane
- Ridge Street, Portland
- Kimbri and Sandalls Drives, Rydal
- Hassans Walls Lookout
- Braceys Lookout

Grading works

- Crown Station Road- Due to start next week,
- Old Bindo Road, Hampton- clearing of vegetation from the road verge will begin this week along with the grading of the road.
- Hassans Walls Road-maintenance grading
- Sloggets Lane, Portland- maintenance grading

Sealed road works

- Baaners Lane, Hartley - works have commenced on road failures with the removal of some trees to allow drainage works to occur.
- Cranbrook Park Road- Remediation and grading is currently happening with the road to be sealed once grading has occurred.
- Kimbri and Sandalls Drive- grading works are complete. Awaiting sealing dates

Pothole patching

Pothole works will continue with as many teams as available, utilising the NSW Governments Pothole Grant.

Note: All work is dependent upon weather conditions and contractor availability.