



MINUTES

Infrastructure Committee Meeting

held at

Council Administration Centre
Committee Room
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 17 June 2025

at 5:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 5:07pm.

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Lithgow City Council acknowledges Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside. The Council also extends our respects to our neighbouring nations.

2. Present

Present:

Councillor C Coleman (Mayor), Cr S Ring - Chair (Deputy Mayor), Cr R Smith (Councillor), Councillor T Evangelidis (Councillor) and Cr E Mahony (Councillor) arrived at 5:09pm,

Officers:

Ross Gurney (General Manager) Jonathon Edgecombe (Director Infrastructure and Economy), Vanessa Browning (Director Finance and Governance), Leanne Kearney - Assets and Infrastructure Planning Manager and Penny Way (Minute taker).

3. Apologies

NIL

4. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the Infrastructure Committee Meeting held on 3rd June April will presented to the Council on 23rd June 2025.

ACTION

THAT the Minutes of the meeting of be taken as read and confirmed.

MOVED: Cr Coleman

SECONDED: Cr Mahony

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

NIL

6. Declaration of Interest

NIL

7. Staff Reports

7.1. Road Renewal Backlog - Funding Plan

The Committee discussed a report outlining options to address road infrastructure backlog, particularly the financial strategies involved. In summary between \$2 - \$4.5 million per year over 6 years is needed and proposed that the bulk of the funding be secured with loans. There is also the opportunity for dividends and adjustments to upcoming budgets. Other options for raising funds including leasing equipment to nearby Council's was suggested.

Modelling is currently being completed to remove the special loan income assumption and to demonstrate a baseline scenario how long the backlog reduction process would take without the supplemented income. The modelling will show the risks and increased cost of delaying the use of loan funding.

Concerns about borrowing were raised, including discomfort with taking on large amounts or bundling loans. It was suggested that staggering the loans could be beneficial, as it allows Council to adjust the borrowing amounts in response to available grant funding or other income opportunities.

Additionally, the committee was informed that borrowing can be a positive strategy, as it supports intergenerational equity—spreading the cost of infrastructure over the lifespan of the asset so that both current and future users contribute fairly. Borrowing also helps smooth financial peaks and troughs, supporting a more consistent budget. This aligns with the life cycle cost approach, ensuring that decisions about roads and other infrastructure are made with long-term community benefit in mind.

The Committee were informed of the potential cost savings from addressing road issues early—before they require extensive repairs. Using this model the roads will be prioritised not only based on maintenance needs but also by considering factors such as tourist usage, school bus routes, and heavy vehicle traffic.

The impact on other infrastructure areas was considered, and it was noted that future borrowing may be necessary for other assets such as parks, buildings, water, and sewer infrastructure. In response, it was acknowledged that individual departments are developing tailored plans to ensure their budgets are utilised effectively.

There was discussion about the potential to transfer certain roads to the state government. Council have previously identified suitable roads, such as Glen Davis Road and Hampton Road, and submitted the required documentation; however, no action was taken at that time. That information remains available and the option will be explored further.

The best way to deliver information to the community was discussed, including a website and utilising community groups to act as a buffer while raising awareness of the planning and decision-making process. To help minimise conflict, it was emphasised that the communication should focus on a forward-looking plan that outlines priorities rather than a fixed, date-specific schedule, as priorities may shift over time. While publishing a multi-year plan is an option, planning too far in advance may be impractical. Aligning the schedule with the Council's term was suggested as a more realistic approach.

ACTION

THAT the Infrastructure Committee note the report

MOVED: Cr Smith

SECONDED: Cr Coleman

CARRIED

7.2. Formal Property Access to 35 Honeysuckle Falls Road

Council's involvement with a Crown Road linked to a private property was discussed. It was noted that Council was not fully informed at the outset and acknowledged there was a media report that misrepresented the situation.

The issue involves a property owner who wants to sell land accessible only by a Crown Road. Council had considered providing a one-off maintenance grade, for which Crown Lands indicated they would accept this as a one-time arrangement and provide written confirmation it wouldn't obligate Council to ongoing maintenance.

However, considerations that doing so might set a precedent, leading to more residents demanding similar services. It was noted that around 700 private properties currently access Crown Roads and maintaining them could be a huge financial burden.

Ultimately, it was recommended that no action be taken and that the report be noted.

ACTION

THAT the Infrastructure Committee notes the update provided with respect to the matter of formal access to 35 Honeysuckle Falls Road, Tarana (Lot 35 DP 757076).

MOVED: Cr Smith

SECONDED: Cr Mahony

CARRIED

7.3. Policy 10.15 - Nature Strip and Median Maintenance Review

Amendments to the policy 10.15 - Nature strip and Median maintenance were discussed. Including expanding the definitions and aiming to ensure the public can still undertake appropriate works on nature strips.

Aspects of the discussion touched on

- Median Maintenance on Great Western Highway, where there has been long-standing confusion and inconsistency regarding Council's responsibilities. The policy now clearly states that Council will not maintain state-owned medians.
- Median strips are a walkway and need to be free of trip hazards, be consistent aesthetically pleasing.
- The Council is working on removing unpopular "mop top" trees and replacing them with better-suited deciduous varieties. There's a plan to upgrade streets gradually.
- Concerns about precedent and budget pressure when taking on responsibility for more state-owned or private infrastructure can stretch limited Council resources.
- The need for a Street Tree Policy to be beneficial for the green street scape project.
- Policy 10.15 should be placed on Exhibition for community submissions and feedback during this period, which will be considered before final adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

1. The Committee note the report made to the draft Policy 10.15 - Nature Strip and Median Maintenance.
2. The Council publicly exhibit the draft policy (10.15 Nature Strip and Median Maintenance Review) for 28 days, prior to its return to council.

MOVED: Cr Ring

SECONDED: Cr Smith

CARRIED

7.4. ENM and VENM Management Policy and SWP

The committee discussed the Policy and Standard Work Procedure, developed in response to a contamination incident at two playgrounds. Aimed at preventing future issues, the policy introduces strict traceability for all materials used by Council and includes staff training scheduled for early July. While typically an internal operational matter, the policy was brought forward due to the seriousness of the incident. Councillors raised broader concerns about asbestos in older Council assets and the future cost of remediation. An optional public-facing policy was also proposed to reinforce transparency and community trust. The committee supported the policy and recommended it be endorsed for public exhibition.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT

1. The Committee note the progress update relating to the proposed draft ENM and VENM reuse policy and SWPs.
2. The Council publicly exhibit the draft policy (ENM & VENM Policy) for 28 days, prior to its return to council.

MOVED: Cr Mahony

SECONDED: Cr Coleman

CARRIED

7.5. Improved Zebra Crossing Design - Main Street, Lithgow

In response to the report on improved zebra crossing design for Main Street, councillors noted that the proposed painting options were too expensive and would result in ongoing maintenance costs. As an alternative, it was suggested that rumble strips be installed on either side of the crossing to help slow traffic and improve driver awareness. Concerns were raised about pedestrian safety and the long-term upkeep of current infrastructure. It was recommended that the matter be referred to the LEEP team to consider broader placemaking opportunities, and to forward the issue to the Traffic Advisory Local Committee (TALC) for further advice on appropriate safety treatments.

ACTION

THAT the Committee:

1. Note the report regarding options to improve community safety in the vicinity of the Cook Street Plaza zebra crossing and suggests its preferred approach.
2. Refer to TALC for the application of rumble strips and signage or other items that could be of assistance. pedestrian and vehicular safety.
3. Note that there has been no 2025/26 budget allocated to improve the Main Street zebra crossing design.

MOVED: Cr Coleman

SECONDED: Cr Smith

CARRIED**7.6. I&E - Project Update Report**

In response to the capital infrastructure projects update report, some project delays were acknowledged, including the deferral of the Portland Street project to prioritise urgent maintenance in the Capertee Valley. Updates were provided on various works, with the Queen Elizabeth Park toilets confirmed as operational. Questions were raised about the change table and the cost of installing a lift, which will be investigated. Browns Gap Road is nearing completion, and the Infrastructure team was congratulated for their efforts. However, it was noted that communication around project updates could be improved, to which action is already being taken. The Vale Street project remains incomplete and will be followed up as a priority. The committee also discussed ongoing structural movement at the Kremer Park wall, which may lead to legal action pending further engineering advice.

ACTION

THAT the Committee notes the update provided relating to capital infrastructure projects in the Infrastructure and Economy directorate that are valued at \$500,000 or more or are otherwise grant funded.

MOVED: Cr Ring

SECONDED: Cr Mahony

CARRIED**7.7. Cemetery Requests - Maintenance (enquiry from 6-month review of Operational Plan)**

In response to cemetery requests, it was noted that most issues are addressed promptly, with the majority resolved within five days. The only ongoing matter is the planting of a hedge at Lithgow Cemetery to screen an unsightly grave, which cannot be actioned due to legal and identification limitations.

Overall, maintenance concerns such as mowing and rubbish are being managed effectively, and a new lawnmower has been approved for purchase. The team, particularly Kaitlin, was commended for their dedication to cemetery upkeep.

ACTION

THAT the Committee note the update.

MOVED: Cr Coleman

SECONDED: Cr Smith

CARRIED

7.8. Joint Procurement Initiatives - Works Panels

The discussion highlighted both the benefits and challenges of joint procurement initiatives and contractor management. While cost savings are a key factor, there was strong emphasis on the non-monetary advantages of working with long-standing local contractors, such as speed, reliability, and trust—demonstrated by a recent successful project involving Portland bus stop instalment.

Concerns were raised about current procurement processes, including how local contributions are assessed, contractor performance over time, and gaps in policy that may be open to exploitation. It was noted that while local procurement policies are in place (e.g., requiring contractors to be active locally for 12+ months), they may not always reflect the real reinvestment into the community. Suggestions were made to revisit procurement frameworks and refine contractor evaluation procedures. It was suggested that the discussion be referred back to the Finance committee for further review and potential policy improvements.

ACTION

THAT the committee note the update provided with respect to joint procurement initiatives.

MOVED: Cr Mahony

SECONDED: Cr Smith

CARRIED

8. General Business

The committee discussed ongoing concerns related to flood mitigation and infrastructure planning associated with the new Fire and Rescue Station. Key issues included the absence of shared flood studies and a lack of communication during the land acquisition process. There is a clear need for a comprehensive flood study.

The Director of Infrastructure and Economy is actively communicating with the Fire and Rescue representative and will request further information. Should this information not be forthcoming, the option to pursue a Government Information (Public Access) request (GIPA) remains available.

The committee stressed the importance of better communication with all stakeholders, including

the local member and the Minister, noting that the council was not adequately informed about the Fire and Rescue developments.

In addition, traffic management and pedestrian safety in the surrounding precinct were raised. Future planning will need to focus on footpath improvements, traffic flow - potentially including one-way streets and carefully planned links to all locations to improve movement for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

9. Meeting Close

Next Meeting: 5th August 2025 at 5pm in the Committee Room

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 6:41 pm