



Minutes

Built and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee

**Tuesday 25 June 2024
4.00-5.30pm**

Location:	Dougherty Community Centre and Microsoft Teams
Chair:	Wayne Farmilo
Attendees:	Members: Adrian Alexander; Rena Czaplinska-Arche; Nicholas Flood (online); Wayne Farmilo; Karen Somers; Srishti Mahhajan; Paul Storm; Audrey Thomas WCC Staff: Dyalan Govender (Head of Planning); Lachlan Marshall (Heritage Planner); Bushra Salam (Governance)
Apologies/absent:	Nil
Guests	Councillor Anna Greco Larissa Penn (Member of Public)
Attachment:	a) Discussion notes of informal meeting dated 14 May 2024 b) Achievements of the Committee for the End of Term Report

Agenda items

Item	Topic / Discussion	Action
1	Welcome: The meeting was declared open at 4:02 pm when quorum was reached.	
	Apologies: Nil	
	Declarations of interest A link to the Disclosure of interest by Committee Members form was circulated with the Agenda. No declarations were received.	
	Acknowledgement of Country Governance Officer acknowledged Country on behalf of Council.	
2	Committee Governance	
	Appointment of Chair Pursuant to clauses 5.3 of the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Committee unanimously appointed Wayne Farmilo for the meeting. Nominations for Chair of the meeting:	

- Nominated by Audrey Thomas
- Seconded by Adrian Alexander
- No other nominations were received
- All in favour

The Committee unanimously appointed Wayne Farmilo as the Chair of the meeting.

3 Previous Minutes

Confirmation of minutes of meeting dated 19 March 2024

Moved by Wayne Farmilo and seconded Audrey Thomas, the Committee adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Tuesday 19 March 2024.

Carried unanimously.

Adoption of notes of informal meeting dated 14 May 2024

Moved by Audrey Thomas and Seconded by Nicholas Flood the Committee carried:

“that the discussion notes of the informal meeting held on 14 May 2024 be tabled and resolved as formal part of this meeting.”

4 Business arising from Previous Minutes

Draft Heritage Review Update

Dyala Govender (Acting Head of Planning) advised that the draft heritage review was considered at the June Council meeting. Council endorsed the review and will be forwarding the proposal to the Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure seeking approval to proceed to public exhibition.

Heritage matters are getting quite amount of scrutiny at the moment. If everything goes smoothly, we will finalize the exhibition dates and get on with the exhibition. We are accessing the feedback and then we go to finalization. Next role of Council will be post exhibition.

Heritage is not static and we will do another proposal in the next term of Council and the scope of the next review will be raised in a future Committee meeting should these Committee meetings continue.

5 Business discussed

5.1 Report from working group on scope of the group

Paul Storm updated the Committee on his effort to contact the Bushland and Natural Heritage Advisory Committee. He was unable to get a response.

Acting Head of Planning noted that specialist advice from an arborist/landscape architect etc. is not necessarily required. The working group could rely on its understanding of the area and the areas heritage to identify potential trees and/or gardens that might be significant for future consideration. This need not include technical assessment, it need only include a statement from the working group about why. In the view of the group, it should be assessed in more detail. A future committee could then make a recommendation as to potential next steps.

Moved by Paul Storm and seconded by Rena Czaplinska-Arche the Committee passed the following resolution:

“that Working Group continues as an informal group for working on identifying future potential horticultural items.”

5.2 End of Term Report

Terms of Reference s.17.3 require “An end of term report outlining the work and achievements of the committee during the term, be submitted to Council, prior to the caretaker period.”

The Advisory Committees’ Terms of Reference require that Advisory Committees will be disbanded at the commencement of the caretaker period preceding the 2024 NSW Local Government elections, which is from Friday, 16 August to Friday, 13 September 2024 (inclusive). This report will therefore be submitted to Council’s August 2024 meeting.

The members discussed the End of Term Report drafted by Audrey Thomas and made the following observations and recommendations:

- One Committee member noted that as it was her first sitting in this Committee she did not know what to expect or how to move forward but she does feel that looking at ToRs of this Committee, they have not touched on cultural issues, or anything to do with landscape environment etc. as there only had six meetings and there was lot more to discuss. But she does think her contribution was valued.

- One Committee member noted that he thinks he can't think anything they missed and through this Committee he got an idea how Local Government operates.
- One Committee member appreciated that such a Committee existed and there was an outlet that is readily accessible. He noted that they did not seem to have access to Public at large. Council needs to get back in to the Public domain.
- One Committee member noted that he joined this Committee because he is an architect and he wanted to get an understanding how Council works and engages Architects. He enjoyed the process and would like to continue in next term too. It will help him grow as professional and every application he does he has a heritage impact statement.
- One Committee member noted that as a long-term resident of Willoughby she was disheartened when her family home was listed as conservation as it was not original and was done in 1970s. She was interested to see what feedback people actually provide to Council to make such a decision and that's why she joined this Committee.
- One Committee member noted that as a heritage and ecological architect it was an interesting opportunity for her. She worked on Griffin houses. She was interested to know how the government works and wanted to contribute her knowledge. As far as heritage policy is concerned it took her few times to know how it works. She supports the idea of streetscapes as they make space for the community.
- One Committee member noted that he represents Artarmon Progress Association. He thinks that this Council has a long cultural & social history and he tried to make some contribution in that.
- One Committee member recommended that they should strengthen collaboration with other Committees as well and also to have more insight in Built & Cultural Heritage. She noted that Council needs to reach more to Public beyond digital announcement about these Committees through placing posters on the Library for the people who are not tech

savvy.

- The Acting Head of Planning thanked the committee for their involvement and for sharing their local knowledge and expertise.

6 Other Business

No other business was discussed.

7 Meeting Conclusion

The Meeting concluded at 5.40 pm.

Notes of Informal Meeting held on 14 May 2024

Location:	Banksia Meeting Room, Level 6, 31 Victor St Chatswood
Facilitator:	Wayne Farmilo
Attendees:	<p>Members: Nicholas Flood (online), Audrey Thomas, Paul Storm; Wayne Farmilo</p> <p>WCC Staff: Dyalan Govender (Acting Head of Planning), Lachlan Marshall (New Heritage Planner), Bushra Salam (Governance)</p>
Apologies/absent:	<p>Members: Adrian Alexander, Rena Czaplinska-Arche (Absent), Denis Fernandes, Srishti Mahhajan, Karen Somers</p>
Guests	<p>Councillor Anna Greco</p> <p>Shirley Ramrakha (WCC Local Studies Librarian)</p>

Agenda items

Item	Topic / Discussion	Action
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Due to a lack of quorum, the meeting was postponed. The members present held the following informal discussions.</p> <p>Apologies</p> <p>Adrian Alexander, Denis Fernandes, Karen Somers, Srishti Mahhajan were apologies for the meeting.</p> <p>Absent</p> <p>Rena Czaplinska-Arche</p> <p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>No declarations were received.</p> <p>Acknowledgement of Country</p> <p>Governance Officer, acknowledged Country on behalf of Council.</p>	
2	<p>Committee Governance</p> <p>Nominations for Facilitator of the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul Storm nominated Wayne Farmilo 	

-
- Wayne Farmilo accepted, Audrey Thomas seconded
 - No other nominations were received
 - All in favour

Pursuant to clauses 5.4 of the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Committee unanimously appointed Wayne Farmilo, as the Facilitator for the informal meeting.

Introductions

The new Heritage Planner Lachlan Marshall introduced himself to the Committee.

3 Previous Minutes

Confirmation of minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, this item was deferred until the next Committee meeting.

4 Business arising from Previous Minutes

Update on Draft Heritage Review

Report from working group on scope of the group

Due to a lack of quorum, consideration of this item was deferred until the next Committee meeting.

5 Business discussed

1) Presentation from Local Studies Officer

Shirley Ramrakha – Council's Local Studies Officer, gave a presentation on the local history section of the library. In her presentation Shirley Ramrakha highlighted salient features of the Willoughby City Library website.

- She noted that at the moment there are two distinct collections; one being hardcopy collections e.g. Council reports etc which are catalogued and the other is digital collection.
 - Sharing our Stories about Willoughby
 - History at Willoughby
 - People of Willoughby
 - Awards
 - Previous Mayors & Councillors
 - Heritage Paths
 - Willoughby roads & streets index
-

-
- Heritage reports
 - State Heritage inventory
 - Walking Apps
 - Family History
 - Willoughby Digital arts collection
 - Pictures Willoughby

The Committee members made following observations: -

- Audrey Thomas enquired as to whether individuals need to be a member of library to do research. It was confirmed that membership is not required to access the information available on the website.
- Dyalan Govender (Acting Head of Planning) confirmed that individual heritage impact assessments undertaken as part of Development Applications are not on Council's website as they are subject to copyright and potentially privacy restrictions. However, they can be accessed on request.
- Cr Greco noted that some progress associations have a lot of historic information in hardcore archives. The Committee wishes to understand whether there is a possibility of digitising that information, incorporating into the Council's library resources or if this Committee could help in any way with a project that consolidates all this type of information? It was confirmed that the most appropriate place for progress associations and the historical society's archives to be held is in their custody. Council could however help in identifying potential grants that might aid in digitisation of archives noting it is an expensive and intensive undertaking. Council can also provide links on its local history pages, to those community groups' archives once they are online.
- Shirley Ramrakha noted that the community groups all have websites so linking can be accommodated. With respect to digitisation, it was noted that indexing is crucial, though it is expensive and labour intensive, if you don't index, people can't find the information.
- Wayne Farmilo agreed that as a member of a progress association the point of progress association is to be different from each other so rather than having one form for the different websites and archives, linking the different pages would be an appropriate way forward.

Acting Head of Planning, confirmed that progress associations and heritage societies are encouraged to provide links to Council via email to include on the Willoughby City Library website. Should progress associations & heritage societies need any assistance seeking grants for digitization of their archives they can contact Council for assistance,

noting that while Council can help, we would not be able to take on the project or project management of digitization directly, nor could we make the grant applications, we can, however, share our experience to help facilitate the efforts of community groups.

2) Discussion on Natural heritage register & the existing listings of Natural listed plants through the suburbs

Acting Head of Planning briefed the Committee on the Natural Heritage Register and the existing listings of natural listed plants throughout the suburbs. Following were the key discussion points:

The Natural Heritage Register is a detailed document listing vegetation, predominantly remnant native vegetation, but also some exotic plantings, located on private property, compiled by a consultant arborist over a period of approximately 15 years.

It was created to identify and assist in the protection of significant trees on sites potentially subject to Development Applications or tree removal or pruning applications. While it has no legislative standing, it has assisted in strengthening Council's strategy to retain this important category of vegetation.

This document is available on the website.

The Street Tree inventory is a project that has been worked on recently, which includes all species, native and exotic street trees present in Willoughby's streetscapes. This will form part of Council's internal asset management strategy and will be used to document Work Orders and to record maintenance on street trees. It will also be used and accessed by staff on Council's internal systems.

Individual heritage studies related to Development Applications and Park Masterplans have included information relating to historic plantings in private gardens or parks, but these landscape components would need further detailed assessment to reflect their current status.

The Committee's intent is to identify and better protect plantings of potential heritage significance and is better served via the LEP Heritage schedule. It is recommended that the Committee consider a working group to identify potential nominations, the Committee could then agree on potential items to nominate for the next heritage review (to be undertaken during the next Council term).

6 Meeting Conclusion

The informal meeting concluded at 5.35 pm.

Built and Cultural Heritage Committee – Achievements:

As stated in the terms of reference, each advisory committee is required to submit a report on the achievements of the committee at the end of the term of Council. The Achievement report for the Built and Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee as included at Attachment 1b.

Key achievements of the committee include:

May 2023

- Reviewed and provided input into new LEP and DCP – of legislation and controls over heritage conservation areas. Issues discussed included demolition and damage to heritage items.
- LGA wide comprehensive Heritage Review proposed to be undertaken in 2023-2024 for new heritage listings.
- Committee asked about access to a map of Contributory Items within Heritage Conservation area. Advised that this exists but is not publicly available and is also not updated.

July 2023

- Scope of Heritage Review discussed for preparation of a consultancy brief and agreed on.

September 2023

- The existing WCC Conservation Areas review report was developed in 1999 and has not been subsequently reviews. Recommendations and seconded:
 - Discussions on digitalizing it as a historical document and making it publically available on website.
 - Council to consider allocating budget through the 2024/25 Projects and Capital Works budget for review of WCC Conservation Areas Review Report.
- Update on the progress of the Heritage Review on selected area.

November 2023

- Paul Storm suggested a register of historically significant exotic gardens. Council already has an existing Natural Heritage register that includes some exotic planting. Committee noted that a review and more expansive document could be a future project to pursue. For consideration: Committee members to document historical exotic species items for cultural and historic value, and collate relevant sources that could be used. The existing Natural History register would be a useful starting point.
- Artarmon Reserve and its natural history was discussed for exploration of local natural history.
- Signage boards with erroneous historical information was discussed with issues to be brought forward.
- Promotion of heritage and education for the community discussed. Committee to review existing repositories of historical information and identify the information and any gaps. Ku-ring-gai has a good example of historical information online.

March 2024

- Draft Heritage Review presentation – by Council officer.
- Documentation of exotic plant species to contribute to the natural heritage register. Further action for the attendance of Council's Bushland Team Leader at next committee meeting to talk about the Natural Heritage register.

- Discussions on:
 - Promotion of heritage educational forum for community.
 - Audit of display boards for historical accuracy.
 - History and Willoughby webpage overview and management – presentation by Council officers on information of heritage content available on website.
 - Local Studies officer to present on information of historical content at Libraries.

- Impact of State government's Housing Reforms on heritage conservation areas discussed.

May 2024

- Presentation by Local Studies officer on the local history section of the library. Noted that a number of progress associations have historic information within their organisation. Discussed possibility of digitalizing such information and incorporating it into the library's resources. Applying for grants was discussed. Also links from the progress associations' website into the library website. *No further outcome reported on these issues reported.*

- Discussion on Natural Heritage register and existing listings of natural-listed plants within the LGA. Reported that the NH register:
 - Is a detailed document listing predominantly remnant native vegetation but also some exotic plantings located on private property – compiled by a consultant arborist over a period of some 15 years.
 - Was created to identify and assist the protection of significant trees on sites – to assist the DA assessments or applications for tree removal/ pruning. The document is available on the website.

- A Street Tree Inventory, worked on recently, includes all species, native and exotic street trees present in the LGA streetscapes. Only available to Council staff.

- Individual heritage studies related to DAs and Masterplans have included information on historical plantings in private gardens or parks. These need to be assessed to reflect their current status.

- Protection of natural heritage/ landscape need to be further discussed.

Conclusion:

These were areas discussed during its meeting, and if the committee were able to continue further research, actions and reports would have been produced for council officers' consideration. The committee's main achievement was creating a bridge between interest parties and relevant professionals with the council officers and presenting considered external input as to what the community would like the council to consider or provide with respect to the Built & Cultural Heritage of Willoughby. Providing this input can only expand and possibly improve council officers' decision-making and vice versa; the committee can understand the decision-making process and potentially offer support for these decisions to the broader community.