



LEGACYPROPERTY

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Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

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### **Submission to Draft Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041**

Legacy Property commends the Department on release of the Draft Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (Draft Plan) and welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on this significant regional plan.

Legacy Property is responsible for the planning and development of the former Corrimal Coke Works, in partnership with the Illawarra Coke Company. This submission focuses on the opportunities associated with this regionally significant site in the context of the Draft Plan.

The Draft Plan sets out a holistic vision for promoting the economic prosperity and lifestyle opportunities of the region, while balancing its important natural and environmental values. Legacy Property supports this vision but believes strong leadership from the Department will be required to resolve competing tensions across government agencies and where local councils are unable to achieve strategic planning outcomes aligned with the Draft Plan.

Legacy Property recommends that implementation of the Draft Plan could be better supported with a planning framework for collaboration on regionally significant proposals, led by greater involvement from the Department.

The former Corrimal Coke Works is one of only a few specific opportunities identified in the Draft Plan, reflecting the unique and significant opportunity for the site. *Objective 18: Provide housing supply in the right locations* includes the following reference to Corrimal and the former Corrimal Coke Works:

*Corrimal has capacity for housing growth, with its connections to public transport, public open space and cultural facilities. The 18-hectare former Coke Works site could be developed to better connect the town centre to the train station and to increase housing supply and diversity. Any proposed development would need to consider the site's ecological, historical, archaeological and cultural significance.*

Legacy Property strongly support the identification of Corrimal as a strategic centre and specific reference to the former Corrimal Coke Works as an appropriate site to increase housing supply and diversity.



Our vision for the former Corrimal Coke Works is *A community born of diverse people, places and stories that respects the site's past while showcasing Wollongong's future as the city of innovation.* In itself, we believe that this vision is strongly aligned with the themes and objectives in the Draft Plan.

The following identifies where development of the former Corrimal Coke Works supports and is aligned with the objectives of the Draft Plan.

*Objective 1: Strengthen Metro Wollongong as a connected, innovative and progressive City*

The former Corrimal Coke Works is well located to Metro Wollongong and arguably forms part of a logical 'inner fringe' to the north of the city centre, particularly when considering the context of Wollongong University's Innovation Campus. The delivery of new, high quality and diverse housing choices at the former Corrimal Coke Works can support the broad range of outcomes for Metro Wollongong by offering housing that is attractive to the diversity of workers that will support Wollongong's growing and diversifying economic base.

*Objective 7: Respond to the changing nature of retail*

The former Corrimal Coke Works includes opportunity to deliver a small scale retail precinct at Corrimal train station in combination with rejuvenation of existing heritage assets on the site and provision of a new public space. This approach supports activation of the train station and provides a viable basis for retention and reuse of heritage items, and strongly aligns with direction of providing more unique and innovative retail experience.

*Objective 11: Protect important environmental assets*

Despite its extensive and long-term industrial use, the former Corrimal Coke Works contains small areas with important environmental value. Planning for redevelopment of the site has sought to maximise opportunities to retain and enhance key environmental assets where appropriate, and will offset any environmental values that are lost in line with current legislative requirements.

*Objective 12: Build resilient places and communities*

The Draft Plan states:

*At the heart of the Illawarra Shoalhaven's resilience is its diversity: a diverse economic ecosystem; a diversity of quality open, green and public spaces; and a diversity of housing for different stages of life.*

This statement could apply singularly to the former Corrimal Coke Works, which provides an opportunity to deliver housing diversity within a framework of high quality public spaces, underpinned by immediate access to public transport and supporting the local economy.

In addition, extensive technical assessment has demonstrated how development of the site is compatible with potential hazards, such as flooding.



Objective 13: Increase urban tree canopy cover

The proposal for the former Corrimal Coke Works would see over 50% of the site provided as open space, providing considerable opportunity for deep soil planting and the establishment of a significant urban tree canopy.

Objective 14: Enhance and connect parks, open spaces and bushland with walking and cycling paths

One of the earliest opportunities identified by local community stakeholders was ‘unlocking’ the former Corrimal Coke Works as the missing link in the ‘bush to beach’ connection through Corrimal.

The proposal includes provision of a regional walking and cycling link through the site, in combination with a significant riparian corridor that supports the concept of a local green grid. This link will provide a continuous connection through the site, opening up this missing link in Corrimal for the first time in over a century.

Objective 15: Plan for a Net Zero region by 2050

Legacy Property has committed to developing the former Corrimal Coke Works to achieve a 5-star Green Star Communities rating, which represents Australian leadership. This tool supports holistic sustainability outcomes at a precinct/neighbourhood level.

This approach is strongly aligned with this objective, which recognises the value in extending an individual building approach to a precinct-based approach.

Objective 19: Deliver housing that is more diverse and affordable

Housing diversity is at the core of the proposal for the former Corrimal Coke Works and will respond to both the current and future housing needs of the community.

Legacy Property has also committed to partnering with a Community Housing Provider to deliver a minimum 5% affordable housing on the site. This is strongly aligned with the Draft Plan, that states:

*Collaborating with community housing providers builds capacity, facilitates partnership brokering, and helps to remove planning barriers to increase the supply of affordable housing.*

To some extent our efforts to deliver housing diversity and affordable housing have been frustrated by rigid local planning processes that struggle with change and innovation. Again, this is a key area where leadership is required from the Department so that these objectives can be realised.

Objective 21: Respond to the changing needs of local neighbourhoods

The proposal for the former Corrimal Coke Works provides an opportunity for progressive and innovative development.



Even before the onset of Covid-19, we had proposed to deliver a flexible commercial and community space at Corrimal station with the intention of supporting tele-working, local starts ups and community groups. This recognises that Corrimal is strategically located at the heart of the northern Wollongong suburbs, an area with a significant commuter population, so the site is well placed in seeking to alleviate some of this burden.

The proposal will also provide local, neighbourhood scale retail on the site that will allow residents on the site and surrounding areas to walk to these services.

*Objective 22: Embrace and respect the region's local character*

The former Corrimal Coke Works benefits from a unique local heritage that presents a strong opportunity to incorporate its industrial past into the future character of the site.

The design of future public spaces and buildings on the site will draw heavily on the local Corrimal character, inspired by its location between the escarpment and ocean, while also referencing the industrial history of the site. The future character statement and provision of architectural character precincts on the site, incorporated into a site specific DCP, support this outcome.

*Objective 23: Celebrate, conserve and reuse cultural heritage*

The former Corrimal Coke Works has been recognised as a local heritage item and a detailed Conservation Management Strategy and Heritage Interpretation Strategy have been prepared as part of the Planning Proposal to ensure that future development appropriately preserves and celebrates its industrial past.

The site also has some Aboriginal heritage values with the opportunity for these to be interpreted as part of future site development.

*Objective 26: Create faster rail connections between Greater Sydney, Wollongong and Nowra*

The former Corrimal Coke Works is located immediately adjacent to Corrimal station and therefore presents an opportunity to showcase transport-oriented development.

A key concern for the community is the current poor level of service at Corrimal station and whether this will truly support increased public transport usage.

There is an opportunity for collaboration between the Department, Transport for NSW and Legacy Property/Illawarra Coke Company to ensure that there is appropriate planning and provision for future functionality and service at Corrimal station. This would support not only the revitalisation of the former Corrimal Coke Works but also the growth of Corrimal in its capacity at a strategic centre.



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Objective 28: Create connected and accessible walking and cycling networks

As noted under Objective 14, the site presents a rare opportunity to unlock a significant regional connection that supports walking and cycling networks in the area.

This will be a high quality, safe connection with appropriate lighting in order to promote usage.

Objective 29: Utilise smart infrastructure to drive resilience, prosperity and vibrant places

Redevelopment of the former Corrimal Coke Works provides an opportunity to incorporate smart technology from the outset, thereby overcoming the challenges of retrofitting technology into existing urban environments.

This is an element supported under the Green Star Communities rating tool.

Objective 30: Prepare for mobility changes that improve connectivity and sustainability

The delivery of new infrastructure and buildings on the former Corrimal Coke Works essentially presents a 'clean slate' opportunity to plan for and incorporate measures and technology supporting future mobility changes. This could include provision for electric vehicle charging, dedicated car share parking spaces and the like.

This submission demonstrates that the former Corrimal Coke Works is uniquely positioned to contribute to the objectives of the Draft Plan, perhaps more so than any other single project in the region. Legacy Property believes that greater leadership and direction from the Department will be necessary to enable the site to truly meet its potential to benefit the region.

We look forward to the Department finalising the Plan and playing our role in supporting the future growth, prosperity and sustainability of the region.

Yours sincerely,