



## Illawarra Coke Company

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South Regions team  
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

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

The Illawarra Coke Company (ICC) is pleased to provide this submission in response to the Draft Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 (Draft Plan). We appreciate that the Draft Plan will play a significant role in shaping the future of this important region and commend the Department on achieving exhibition of the Draft Plan.

ICC owns two substantial sites in the Illawarra region, each of which have the potential to provide significant support for the objectives of the Draft Plan. These are the 18.2 ha former Corrimal Coke Works property and the 118 ha former Coalcliff Coke Works.

This submission addresses potential of these two sites in response to the Draft Plan.

#### **Former Corrimal Coke Works**

ICC notes that the former Corrimal Coke Works is specifically identified in the Draft Plan as part of *Objective 18: Provide housing supply in the right locations*, which states:

*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.*

ICC supports the identification of the former Corrimal Coke Works and its suitability to contribute to providing new housing supply.

ICC lodged a Planning Proposal in October 2017 to rezone the site to allow housing development that will provide new housing choices to support the current and future needs of the community.

This Planning Proposal was endorsed by Wollongong City Council in April 2018 and received a Gateway Determination in August 2018, reflecting the strategic and site specific merit of the proposal. ICC and its development partner, Legacy Property, have since worked collaboratively with Wollongong City Council to complete additional technical and economic studies and to define agreed outcomes for the site.

Unfortunately, on 26 October 2020 Wollongong City Council resolved to defer the proposal and require substantial changes that significantly constrain the proposed development outcome on the site. Most disappointing, the resolution of Council was contrary to the

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recommendation of Council staff that had been arrived at after 2 years of detailed and constructive interaction between Council and ICC and Legacy. The intent of the resolution seriously undermines professional evidence based planning in the Illawarra and puts at risk the broad range of public benefits that could be realised through appropriate redevelopment of the site.

The Planning Proposal has now been in the system for more than 3 years without achieving public exhibition. Attainment of the Regional Plan's objectives depends on reliable, efficient and well-founded planning processes that support the broader strategic plans for the region. We hope that the Department shares our concerns about important planning outcomes being compromised by unrepresentative minority interests.

This difficulties and delays we have experienced highlight the challenges of implementing appropriate, long-term strategic planning that results in positive change in local communities, and the need for the Department to exercise clear and strong leadership to support its strategic planning.

We also believe that the difficulties and delays demonstrates the need for a more reliable planning framework to deliver regionally significant proposals. Such a framework would include assessment that is independent of local politics and merit based appeal.

The proposal for the former Corrimal Coke Works would deliver new housing supported by a broad and extensive range of public benefits. The following table highlights many aspects of the proposal and how they support and align with the objectives of the Draft Plan:

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Relevant Objectives</b>
Approximately 750 dwellings with a mix of housing types, including seniors living / aged care	1, 18, 19
Provision for 5% affordable housing delivered in partnership with a community housing provider	19
Improved access and amenity at Corrimal train station, including a new public plaza	26
Over 50% of the site provided as open space delivering more than 9 hectares of new parkland	12, 13, 14, 22, 28
A new regional walking and cycling path through the site, linking Railway Street to the Towradgi Road Corridor, and integrated with a riparian corridor	14, 28
Showcasing the site's rich heritage with extensive preservation and interpretation of significant heritage elements	22, 23
A neighbourhood scale retail precinct to activate Corrimal station and key heritage elements	7, 23
Flexible commercial and community space for tele-working and local start ups	21
Retention, protection and rehabilitation of important environmental assets on the site	11, 12



A 5 star Green Star Community, with progressive environmental and technological outcomes delivering holistic sustainability
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ICC believes that the proposal for the Corrimal Coke Works would benefit from greater certainty about future rail services at Corrimal station and on the Illawarra line generally.

### **Former Coalcliff Coke Works**

The former Coalcliff Coke Works is a unique and highly attractive site. Offering expansive ocean views, the 118ha site is nestled between the coast near the iconic Seacliff Bridge and the lush greenery and spectacular views of the Illawarra Escarpment Conservation area. It is 47km south of the Sydney CBD and 24km north of the Wollongong CBD all connected by rail.

The site offers significant parcels of land that, subject to some limited appropriate rezoning, could create community facilities, eco-living and eco-tourism opportunities that are enlivened by the site's natural beauty and heritage features.

ICC has not commenced any formal planning proposal for the future of the site, but expects to do so in due course.

Like the former Corrimal Coke Works, the site presents an remarkable opportunity to deliver outcomes that support the vision and objectives of the Draft Plan by promoting the economic prosperity and lifestyle opportunities of the region, while balancing its important natural and environmental values.

The former Coalcliff Coke Works has the potential to contribute a range of future uses, including residential, tourism and recreation. We appreciate that that any future development will need to carefully balance its development potential with a range of social and technical considerations.

The range of opportunities and constraints associated with the site mean that it would also benefit from a suitable planning framework to manage regionally significant proposals. Such a framework would require and facilitate collaboration between the Department, Wollongong City Council and relevant State agencies.

We note that the Draft Plan includes a specific objective relating to the Bombo Quarry site, which is a significant 114 hectare site. The former Coalcliff Coke Works, at 118 hectares, is of comparable scale, even though the practically developable area of the site is likely to be a relatively small component of the overall site area.

ICC requests that the Department include specific reference to the former Coalcliff Coal Works in the final Plan, with a similar objective to develop a shared vision for the site involving the Department, Wollongong City Council, State agency stakeholders and the Coalcliff community.

Yours sincerely,

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