



THE ENTRANCE PENINSULA COMMUNITY PRECINCT

ENCOMPASSING: THE ENTRANCE; THE ENTRANCE NORTH; LONG JETTY TOOWOON BAY; BLUE BAY; SHELLY BEACH & MAGENTA

Creating A Better Quality Of Life

A paper by TEPCP detailing some of the things Wyong Shire Council need to address to better meet the residents of The Entrance Peninsula's expectations.

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1. Introduction

This paper has been prepared by The Entrance Peninsula Community Precinct (TEPCP) to draw Wyong Shire Council's attention to the many things, large and small that they currently do that could be improved to create a better quality of life for the residents of The Entrance Peninsula. The Vision for Wyong Shire addresses the question of: "Do we, as a community, want to continue to do the same things in the future for similar results?" It has become clear over the past two years that our community are unhappy with the way Council is doing things. These opinions have been expressed over and over again at our monthly meetings.

TEPCP has raised various issues that effect the quality of life of our residents with the Council over the past few years. Council's responses have only resulted in a piecemeal approach to solving the overall problems and not addressed the cause of many of them. As a community, we believe the best way to achieve a better quality of life is to seek ways to improve the infrastructure of our suburbs in an incremental way so that we can all look forward to a better future and not more of the same.

The Entrance Peninsula has a different social dynamic to the rest of Wyong Shire. We know from Council's State of the Shire Report that Wyong Shire is below the New South Wales average when it comes to it's ranking with other areas. Wealth, unemployment, education, crime, transport, health, telecommunications, and infrastructure are all well below the NSW average. What is different about The Entrance Peninsula is that there are fifty percent of the properties in The Entrance are vacant most of the time and thirty percent of those in Long Jetty are vacant most of the time. This presents it's own special set of problems. In many other areas o the Shire people can be described as poor but happy because of the social cohesion of the area. On The Entrance Peninsula there seems not to be the same community spirit that you find in other areas.

TEPCP believe that much of this disconnect can be routed back to the built environment. In 1941 The Entrance Peninsula was the biggest settled area in the Shire by a considerable margin. It is obvious The Entrance Peninsula's rate payers have contributed a lot of rate money over the last seventy years, far in excess of the amounts of the newer suburbs and this contribution has not been repaid in kind, as exemplified by the lack of road infrastructure in Entrance Peninsula.

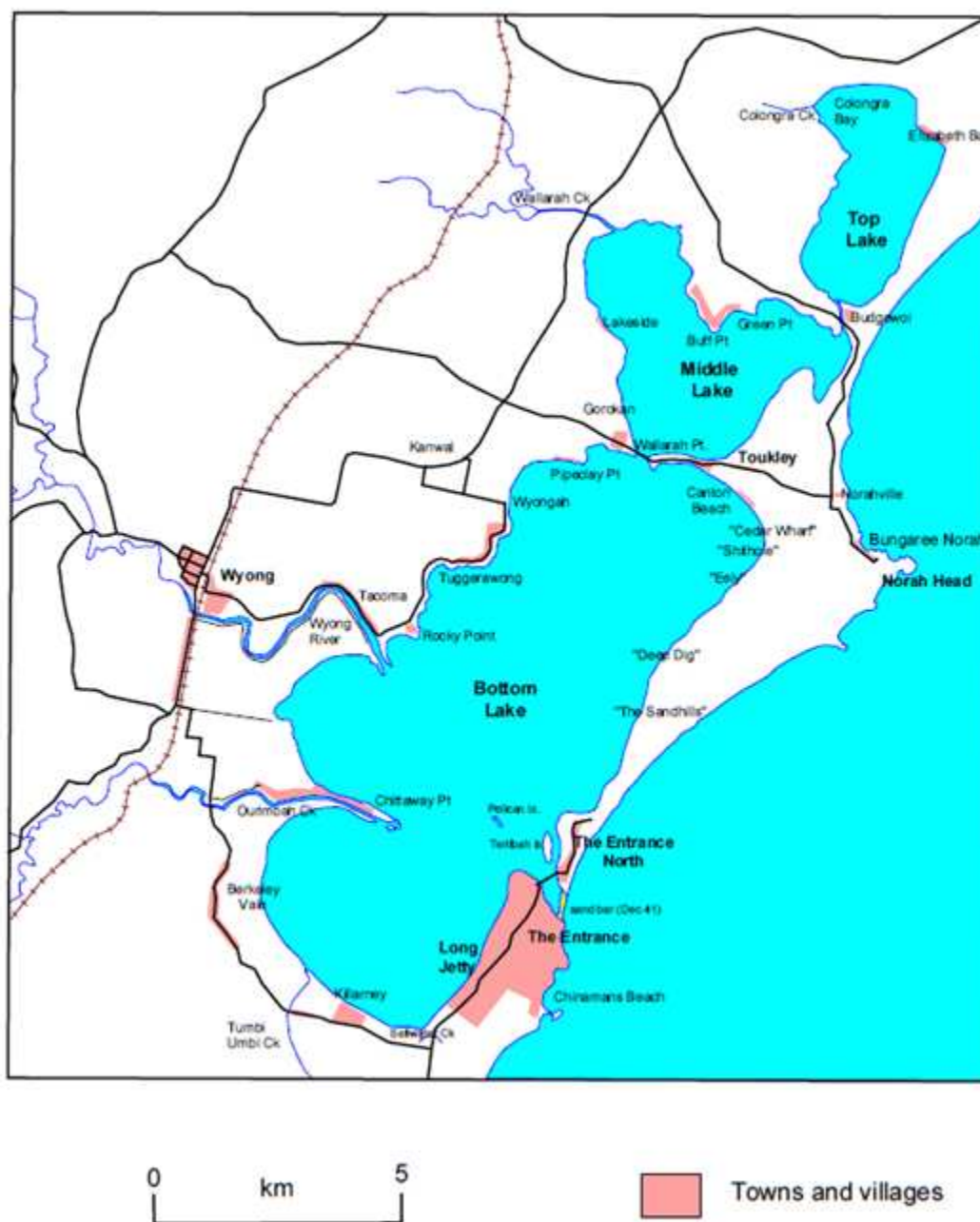
The result of this disconnect is best illustrated in the amount of alcohol related violence on the Peninsula, much higher than the rest of the Shire and one of the highest areas in the State for Alcohol relates assaults and domestic violence. There is a direct link between the built environment and crime. The poorer the suburb in both income and infrastructure, the higher the crime rate.

This paper provides examples where the community believe Council's policies and procedures are not meeting the expectations of The Entrance Peninsula residents and suggests ways in which changes to policies and procedures could really improve our quality of life.

2. Kerb and Gutter

In 1941 The Entrance Peninsula was the biggest settled area in the Shire by a considerable margin. It is obvious The Entrance Peninsula's rate payers have contributed a lot of rate money over the last seventy years, far in excess of the amounts of the newer suburbs and this contribution has not been repaid in kind, as exemplified by the lack of road infrastructure in Entrance Peninsula.

Figure 2b. Tuggerah Lakes in 1941



In TEPCP's letter dated 18th October, 2011, TEPCP put forward the view that not spending money on the outward appearance the peninsula suburbs is counter productive. We argued that:

- It impacts on the value of properties and that means Council receives less rates.
- It also impacts on the impression tourists have of the peninsula.
- Failure to construct kerb and gutter means poor drainage outcomes:
 - Council's maintenance bills increase as pavements fail due to poor drainage.
 - Patched up pavements lead to the "down at heel" appearance of the suburbs.

The lack of kerb and guttering in many of the streets is probably the biggest single contributor to the "down at heel" appearance of the peninsula suburbs. It is the one recurring criticism of Council we hear from the residents. "Why can't the fix our streets? We pay rates don't we?" TEPCP understands the limits of funds available to Council for this type of work but rejects the reply residents are always given the it is too expensive and Council can not afford it.

As a result TEPCP recommended to Council that:

"Council undertakes an investigation into the cost of providing kerb and gutter to the streets of the peninsula suburbs and then allocate sufficient funds each year in the rolling works program so that over the next twenty years all the work is complete."

TEPCP was aware of Council's existing policy and did not need to be told:

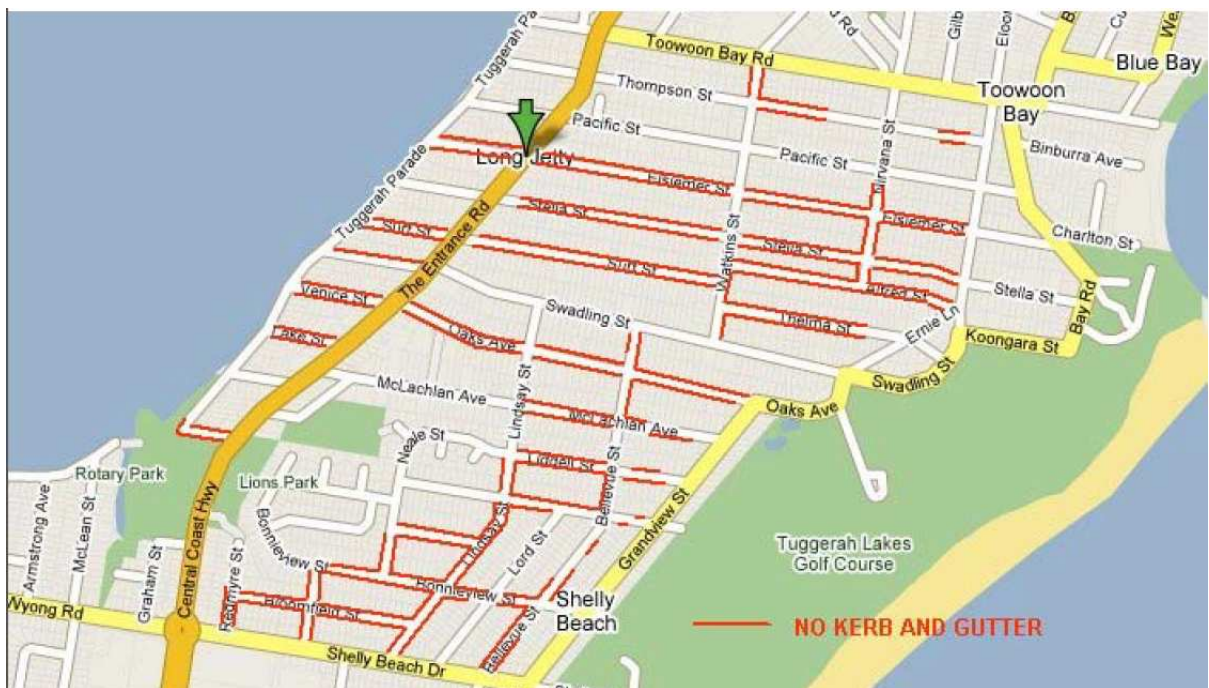
Council annually allocates funding for the maintenance, renewal and upgrade of its road and drainage assets, including kerb and guttering. Council's policy is to construct kerb and guttering only in conjunction with major road rehabilitation works, or to resolve significant flooding issues.

TEPCP calls on Council to change this policy!

It is not good enough to simply say Council does not have enough money when Council do not know how much money it would cost and has not even bothered to investigate the size and cost of the work. Council should be able to develop a twenty year plan that would see the Entrance Peninsula completely kerbed and guttered.

TEPCP calls on Council to reprioritise its spending and find enough funding that would meet the communities real priorities.

The following plans shows in red the streets with no kerb and gutter.



3. Current Road Maintenance Program

Wyong Shire Council is currently expending an increased proportion of its budget on road maintenance and TEPCP congratulates Council on the new road budget to start to address years of neglect. Council has neglected road maintenance over the past ten years, and now, while financially challenged, is playing catch up. TEPCP is concerned about this as a large percentage of the increase in road funding is that most of it is being spent on band aid solutions that in a few years will fail again and require new maintenance because of the poor work being done under this current contract.



Flush seal over broken pavement Elsiemer Street

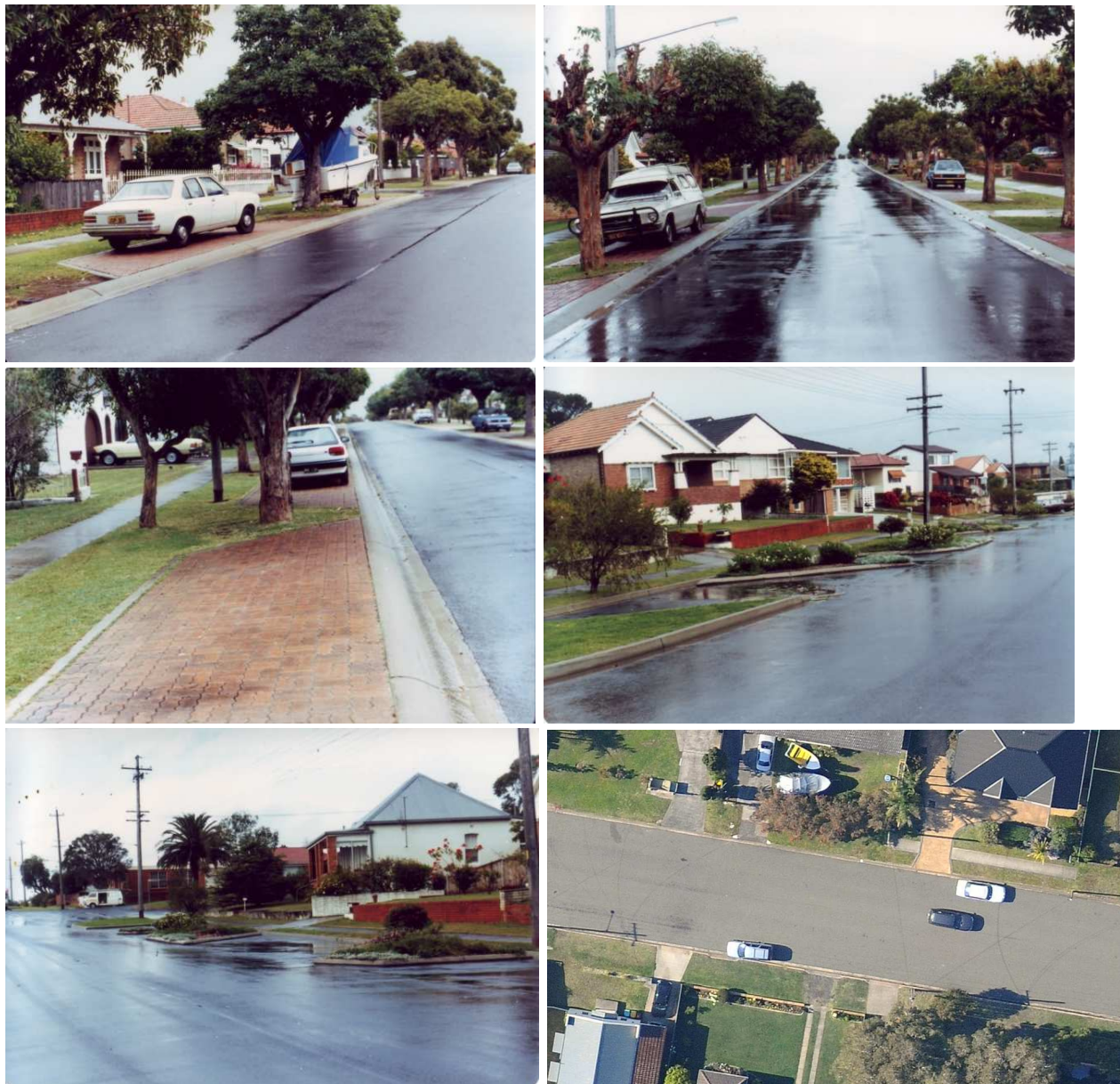
TEPCP's encourages Council to maintain it's road reconstruction funding and try and increase this funding as soon as possible to fund total reconstruction of more streets in The Entrance Peninsula so that they will be maintenance free for at least twenty years.

A flexible pavement design aims to stop water entering the sub-base. It requires the provision of sub soil drainage. The best way for sub-soil drainage to work in an urban area is to provide a good stormwater network with a system of regularly spaced gully pits. Of course kerb and gutter goes with this system. This is what is needed in the Entrance Peninsula to ensure we have long lasting stable pavements.

Council must continue with its current course of action, funding and effort in it's roads portfolio to improve the average pavement condition index and stop the average roughness of road network from slowly worsening. The residents of The Entrance Peninsula believe that they miss out on infrastructure funding because of the amount of funding spent by Council to attract tourists at the expense of the needs of residents.

4. Kerb Treatments

The kerb treatments shown below illustrated what can be achieved by only paving the carriageway and not a parking lane.



The photo on the bottom right shows Pacific Street Long Jetty. It has an old one chain (66ft) wide road reserve. The carriageway is 42 feet or 13.2metres wide where a eight metre wide carriageway would suffice..

If Council adopted a policy where they did not pave parking lanes they could save one third of the cost of construction and one third in the cost of maintenance. This solution also allows for better and more attractive landscaped streets.

5. Use of Coloured Pavement

The use of the light coloured aggregate in the flush seals and asphaltic concrete pavements is a cause for concern. The need for road openings and patching repairs seem always to be done with black top resulting in what The Entrance Peninsula community refer to a the "**run down** " appearance of our suburbs. See photos below:



PACIFIC STREET LONG JETTY

Wyong Shire Council adopting a policy of using black pavement so that Black Top repairs are not so noticeable would improve the appearance of the streets in The Entrance Peninsula.

6. Lack of Footpaths

The lack of footpaths in The Entrance Peninsula results in less people walking and those that do risk injury by walking on the road.



The Quality of Life survey, looked at the body mass index (BMI), calculated as the ratio of self-reported height and weight to provide an indicator of whether residents were obese or overweight. Sixty percent of Wyong residents were either obese or overweight, with men more likely to be overweight than women (CCRF, 2008). The lack of footpaths contributes to this

Walking is an important form of sustainable transport which costs nothing and offers a wide range of benefits to the individual as well as the community. It is important that people are encouraged to walk more often and the provision of footpaths on the streets of The Entrance Peninsula would help achieve this. Among the benefits of walking are:

- improves health and fitness for individuals in the community
- reduces air pollution and traffic congestion
- provides children with an informal learning environment for their physical, practical, emotional and social development
- improves local neighbourhoods when goods and services are purchased locally
- provides people with the opportunity to interact with others in their community
- increases a sense of safety with more people out and about.

Like the need for kerb and gutter, the provision of footpaths in The Entrance Peninsula should be part of Wyong Shire Council's four year plan. The following set of shocking health statistics should prompt Wyong Shire Council to seek State funding to construct footpaths as a way of improving the health of our residents.

- The median age of death for Central Coast residents (77 for males and 82 for females) is similar to NSW but three years below that for Northern Sydney residents.
- Exercise levels are below State averages for males and females and rates of overweight and obesity have been steadily increasing and are above the State average.
- The relationship between social disadvantage and higher demand for health services is widely recognised.
- Wyong ranks as disadvantaged on the Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index.
- Compared to the other areas within the Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health (NSCCH) Central Coast residents have poorer health, higher mortality rates and high rates of behavioural health-risk factors such as smoking and obesity, and poorer access to GPs, primary care and diagnostic and specialist health care (NSCCH, 2008).
- This is reflected in high incidence of diseases frequently related to lifestyle such as diabetes and hospitalisation for alcohol related reasons. Wyong Shire has one of the highest levels in NSW of lung cancer and other cancers.
- Wyong residents are reliant on access to the public health system with only 38 per cent having private health insurance compared to 63 per cent for NSCCH.
- For residents of Wyong nearly as many patients were treated at Gosford Hospital as at Wyong Hospital (NSCCH, 2008)

7 Use of Weedkiller (Roundup[®])

Council has advised TEPCP that most of the scientific studies find no harmful effects of Roundup[®] on humans. What TEPCP is very concerned about is the amount of bare soil in The Entrance Peninsula. In TEPCP's letter of 18th October, 2011, TEPCP recommended that:

"Council cease using weed killer instead of mowing on footpaths."

Council's reply dated 20th February (Reference F2006/00287) stated:

However, I am advised that it is not normal Council procedure to broadly apply weedkiller on road verges or footpaths. Weedkiller (Roundup) is, however, applied from time to time around structures such as guardrails, street signs and against fences to reduce ongoing maintenance requirements.

This statement is patently untrue, and Stephen Ashton has been poorly advised as the photos below show.





Council needs of investigate the area of bare soil in The Entrance Peninsula and apply the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE), a mathematical model used to describe soil erosion processes, to reveal how serious a problem this is in contributing to the amount of sediment in Tuggerah Lakes.

TEPCP calls on Wyong Shire Council to change its practice of using weedkiller as a way of keeping vegetation under control and take measures to revegetate the bare soil areas to stop the erosion and sediment entering Tuggerah Lakes.

8 Sediment from Erosion in Urban Areas

There are two main areas of concern about stormwater runoff in the Entrance Peninsula. The first is the deep table drains that existing in some streets and the second is the way untreated stormwater discharges rubbish and sediment into Tuggerah Lake.

The maintenance practices if Council when maintaining table drains is a serious cause for concern. Recently the drain opposite No 67 Stella Street was cleaned out at great expense to ratepayers. Two trucks, a digger and about a half dozen workers. The result was another environmental debacle with large amounts of bare earth being exposed to erosion. See photo below



Drain opposite No 67 Stella Street

With the aid of the Ratepayer levies. State and Federal Governments grants from taxpayers, Council is spending \$Millions to stop sediment flowing into the Tuggerah lakes under The Estuary Management Plan. Yet Council continues to break environmental laws that if done by a developer, Council would prosecute.

Council needs to change these practices. The most effective method of reducing the sediment run-off is maintenance and formation of a good ground cover. One worker with a wiper snipper in this instance was all that was really needed to clean the drain.

The photo below shows the end of the Watkins Street system where water discharges into an open drain in Stella Street causing erosion



Further down Stella Street Council came up with this solution to keeping drains clean and maintenance free



There are fortyOne stormwater pipes discharging into Tuggerah Lake along the Long Jetty foreshore.



The way they are maintained by Council defeats the intentions of the original idea to provide macrophyte planting to absorb nutrients entering the lake.

Too often the maintenance is done with a back hoe and the exposed material left on the bank as shown below

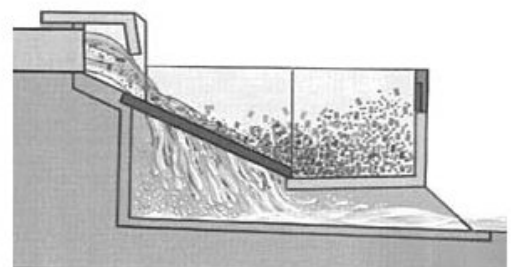


Instead of the reeds being there to absorb nutrients like the photo on the left we have ended up with open channels shown in the photo on the right which leading straight into the lake and stops nothing. Most of the drains are now like this with a clear channel into the lake.



TEPCP calls on council to get expert advice on the maintenance of these drains and educate the maintenance workers on environmentally sensitive maintenance practices.

In the longer term TEPCP suggests that Council consider reducing the number of stormwater culverts discharging into Tuggerah Lake along the Long Jetty foreshore and installing gross pollutant traps such as the Baramy illustrated.



9 Bulk Kerbside Rubbish Collection



The above photo shows rubbish that lay on the kerbside in Oakland Avenue for over a month before it was removed. You can travel any street and find scenes like this all the time. Scavengers pore over it spreading the rubbish and making it more of a problem.

Council describes the service as being for materials that are too bulky, too heavy or too big for the normal bins. Each household is entitled to six kerbside collections per year, on request. These can be either bulk household items or bulk garden vegetation. If you place bulk household waste and bulk garden vegetation out at the same time it counts as two collections.

The Entrance Peninsula is that there are fifty percent of the properties in The Entrance are vacant most of the time and thirty percent of those in Long Jetty are vacant most of the time. This means that for people who are only here on the weekends put their rubbish out on the Sunday night before leaving for Sydney again. Some ring up for the service, some do not. It usually means that the rubbish stays on the street for a minimum of five days and sometimes weeks.

At TEPCP's March 2012 meeting it was pointed out that Hornsby Shire Council have two fixed dates for a clean up a year. Houses, townhouses and villas receive two scheduled kerbside cleanups a year. This seems a much better approach than the one adopted by Wyong Shire Council. This simple measure could see cleaner streets at no cost to Council.

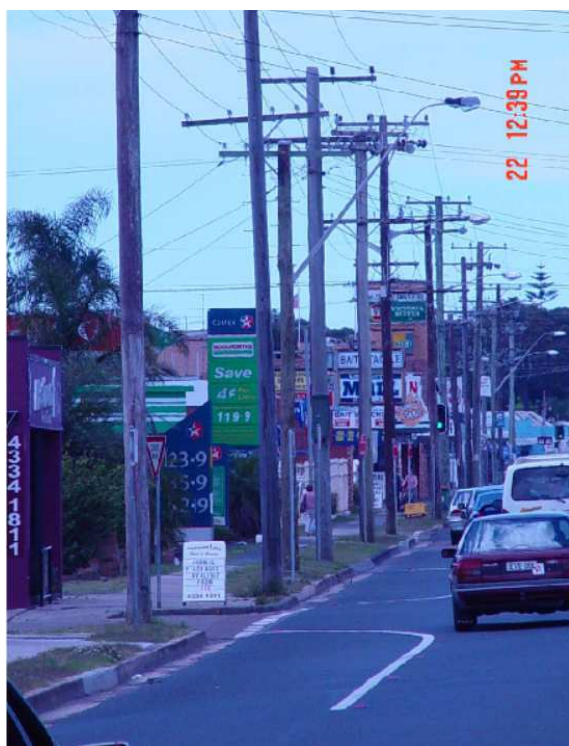
10 Signage

Chapter 2.6 Signage of Wyong Shire's Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012 states that under State Environmental Planning Policy No 64 – Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64) and the Signage Code under State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 (Codes SEPP), provides for uniform regulation of signage across NSW.



The Entrance Peninsula Planning Strategy as adopted by Council recommends a review the existing signage requirements in relation to The Entrance Peninsula, to revise the existing requirements, as necessary, to provide for appropriate coherent themed signage that reflects the coastal character of The Entrance Peninsula and to assist in providing a unique themed environment to enhance The Entrance Peninsula’s tourist aspect and coastal character.

TEPCP believes that Wyong Shire's Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012 (Interim) did not address this requirement and that over the years there has been no enforcement of the existing regulations on signage to provide a uniform coherent themed approach to signage as the photographs indicate.



11 Tree planting

WSC letter 20 March 2012. (F2006/00827) stated:

You raised the concern that tree planting in streets seems to have been abandoned and that even in streets like Archbold where "inappropriate" species have been removed they have not been replaced.

Street tree planting is undertaken almost always in low growth months, between May and September.

The Greening Wyong strategy that is being prepared will determine where trees will be planted.

Wyong Shire Council's DCP 2005 Chapter 14: Tree Management Consent Requirements for Tree Removal states:

- **It is recommended that a replacement tree is planted elsewhere on site.**

It is now three years since the trees were removed and not replaced. See email below for confirmation of dates.

From: Lynn, Stephen [<mailto:lynns@wyong.nsw.gov.au>]

Sent: Wednesday, 19 August 2009 8:17 AM

To: Douglas Darlington

Cc: Rose, Bill

Subject: Removal of street trees in Long Jetty
Douglas,

In regards to your precinct committees concerns in relation to removal of trees in the district recently I give you the following explanations:

On the footpath outside 3+5 Archibald St Long Jetty two coral trees were removed after we received complaints regarding limb failures and trip hazards in relation to the footpath lifting. On inspection of the trees it was noted that after many years of clearance pruning by energy Australia they had deteriorated in such a way that severe decay rendered them unsafe and a danger to passers by, occupants and road users.

1. The trees in Kitchener Rd Long Jetty were also coral trees and were removed for the same reasons after complaints from adjoining residents, these were in a far more severe state of decline.
2. In Stella St on the footpath outside no 83 a gum tree was removed after consultation with the resident and energy Australia. The tree was poorly shaped after years of pruning and the regrowth was becoming quite fragile. It was also suffering from severe borer attack.
3. Outside no 81 Stella St a fig tree was removed as the root system of this tree was causing problems in relation to trip hazards and property damage to resident. This species is not recommended as a street tree as it has the potential to cause major problems to services and roads and was thought best removed before this eventuated.

All trees were removed in consultation with adjoining land owners and council does not remove trees without good reason. I hope this information is of benefit when addressed at your next meeting.

Stephen Lynn

Tree Assessment Officer-Public Land

Parks and Reserves South

Wyong Shire Council

Council is not replacing trees when they are removed in this case.

TEPCP hopes that the "Greening Wyong Strategy" is more than words and that tree planting is undertaken in earnest on The Entrance Peninsula streets to create a better quality of life.

12 Energy Australia Butchers Trees



“They’re not just trimming the tree, they’ve mutilated one whole side and cut it right back to nothing. It’s so ugly now,” she said.

While it is important that trees are kept a safe distance away from power lines, the pruning of trees need to achieve a balance between safety and environmental protection.

Unfortunately, Council has no legislative power to prevent tree lopping under power lines, however TEPCP would like Wyong Shire Council to obtain a commitment from Energy Australia:

“That trees are to be pruned to acceptable arboriculture standards set forth by Australian Standard AS 4373 “Pruning of Amenity Trees”, and that their employees are trained by TAFE – “Tree Care for Electricity Workers” Course . or equivalent.

Where these methods prove inappropriate, e.g. species that require pruning more frequently than is practical or acceptable, alternatives to pruning should be considered.”

To improve the appearance of The Entrance Peninsula, TEPCP calls upon Council to be and advocate for residents in this assault on our trees.

13 Maintaining Assets

On Wednesday, 26 November, 2008, Denis Banicevic, External Auditor, representing Price Waterhouse Coopers reported on his 2007 -2008 Audited Financial Report. His reference to the \$150million deficit in Infrastructure spending led TEPCP Executive to understand the huge problem Council faced with income v expenditure.

He recommended to Council that they should look at the condition of it's assets before creating before creating more infrastructure that it will have to maintained.

Thus TEPCP is aware of the difficulties in funding the maintenance of assets, however there are items that are in public view all the time tat should be maintained better rid The Entrance Peninsula of its run down appearance.



The photos show the fencing on the southern approach to The Entrance bridge, which the RTA informs us is up to Council to repair. (TEPCP wrote to Council two years ago and was advised it is an RTA problem); The trash rack on drain No LJ35 Willow Creek and the sign for Long Jetty Foreshore reserve. Item like these should not be neglected as they contribute to the run down appearance.

14 Pavers in The Entrance Mall

The pavers in The Entrance are reaching the end of their life and replacement is overdue. The pavers have become slippery and a safety hazard in wet weather because of the wear. TEPCP is concerned that a Council that is so short of funds will adopt something that is cheap and nasty to replace them



It is the nature of seaside tourist towns to go through a cycle of boom and bust. As the infrastructure declines the tourists stop coming and a new injection of funds is needed to renew the area. It seems that in the case of The Entrance Town Centre that this has been done at the expense of providing funding to the residential areas of The Entrance Peninsula.

There has always seemed to be an envy about the amount of money Council spends on improving The Entrance Town Centre by A Riding Councillors. Because this will be such a major item in Councils budget there is a danger that it will skew the funds allocated to The Entrance Peninsula residential area yet again.

With the aim of creating a better quality of life for The Entrance Peninsula residents TECP calls upon Council to quarantine the Tourist spending on The Entrance Town Centre and give the residents of The Entrance Peninsula their fair share of the rates they have been contributing to the Shire over the past 100 years, which in total would be far greater than the newer suburbs in the Shire have contributed.

15 Graffiti

In the last two years Wyong Shire council has made impressive progress in combating graffiti in the Shire. TEPCP commends Council on the adoption of its Graffiti Management plan and the funding of anti graffiti programs such as the provision of graffiti removal buckets to residents.

There are two areas in this topic that TEPCP believes Council could improve the quality of life for our residents.

The first is Council's policy of only removing graffiti from Council owned buildings. TEPCP understands there is limited funding available, however this policy should not be as rigorously applied as it is. The sad tale of the Long Jetty Sailing Club is a case in point.

- 18th May 2010 Minister For Lands Advises That The LPMA will assist WSC to in having the graffiti removed and if necessary contribute to the relevant costs
- 21st May 2010 TEPCP requests WSC contact LPMA and take up the Minister's offer.
- 30th July 2010 TEPCP contacted WSC advising there had been a fire in the building and that it was no longer safe
- 3rd September, 2010 TEPCP again contacted WSC advising of further vandalism to the building. TEPCP has been advised that the damage to the building is now so severe that it is only suitable for demolition.
- 28th November, 2011 TEPCP advises Council that there has been a second fire completely destroying the building.

TEPCP believes that if Council had addressed the graffiti on the building in the beginning of 2010 as asked by TEPCP the further vandalism may not have occurred. the photos below shows the building in 2010 and the 2012.



This building is on the Long Jetty shared path which has a very large number of users. This eyesore has been foisted on the community for three years now because of a rigid application of a council policy where common sense tells you Council should have immediately responded to the problem and invoiced the Lands Department for the cost.

TEPCP calls on Council to end the rigid application of this policy and place a test on sites to see if it is in the communities interest to have the graffiti removed immediately.

The second concern is that Council Officers are not trained to report graffiti wherever they see it. The Police have new Apps for its Crime Stoppers that allows the downloading of photos to Police so that hot spots can be better identified. There have been numerous requests by TEPCP to ask Council to change the culture of its employees with regards to graffiti but it seems that the message is not getting through to them. An example of this was the construction site of the new Shelly Beach Surf Club House where building inspections over the months by Council Officers failed to do any thing about the graffiti on the construction site. see photos below.



These simple changes to Councils policies and procedures would help in creating a better quality of life for the residents of the Peninsula.

16 Vacant Lots



Council could ensure that vacant lots are better looked after. A good example of this is the vacant lots on The Entrance Road opposite the intersection with Norberta Street.

It again appears that there is a culture amongst Council employees not to report things like this, because the land has been in this state for a couple of years.

A change in Council's practices here would improve the quality of life on The Entrance Peninsula



18 Ensuring Building Standards are Maintained

It is attention to detail that makes the appearance of a place and small things can make them appear a dump. There are numerous examples where it appears that the building code has not been enforced to the detriment of the quality of life of the residents of The Entrance Peninsula. Again it appears that there is a culture amongst Council employees not to report things like the example provided in the photo below of make shift work right in the centre of the Entrance Mall. This rusted iron, poor plumbing and mesh have been in place for many years.



It is not only small property owners who escape the scrutiny of Council. Telstra, Long Jetty is a poor corporate citizen when it comes to the development and maintenance of its property.



The use of barbed wire fencing in the main street of Long Jetty is surely not allowed under the building code. Telstra's poorly maintained asset with crumbling brickwork and none existing landscape maintenance is a disgrace.

A change in Council's practices to force owners to ensure building standards are meet would improve the quality of life on The Entrance Peninsula

18 Quality of developments approved



It is not surprising that most structures seem to be built with cost in mind – ease (and therefore cheapness) of assembly, of maintenance, of cleaning. As a result we see a streetscape that is defaced by the cruel storefronts; of commercial premises scornful of beauty. Here I squat! they declare. I don't speak to my neighbors. I have no interest in pleasing those who walk by. I occupy square footage at the lowest possible cost. My fixtures can be moved out overnight.

TEPPCP would like Wyong Shire Council to incorporate building controls that avoids cheap and nasty looking developments that do nothing to improve the appearance of the built environment or improve the quality of life of the residents and visitors alike.