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Australia's property industry

Creating for Generations

1 October 2021

Mr David Green
Land Use Planning Manager
Wollongong City Council

Email to: records@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Green,

Submission - Draft Wollongong Tourism Accommodation Review

The Property Council of Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Wollongong Tourism Accommodation Review. We acknowledge our collaborative working relationship with Wollongong City Council and will continue to engage on the finalisation and implementation of the initiatives which have been outlined in this review.

As Australia's peak representative of the property and construction industry, the Property Council's members include investors, owners, managers and developers of property across all asset classes. We also represent a diverse group of members spread across all parts of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Considering the significant \$23.9 billion contribution our local economy contributes to the overall NSW economy, we support in principle the recommendations outlined in the review to ensure longer term, there is an adequate supply of tourism accommodation sites to support the tourism sector and local economy, and to encourage the development of new facilities and establishments.

We do raise some concerns about the relativity of the data outlined in the review and believe that further analysis and research needs to be done to provide 'real-time' data to inform the decision-making process as part of this process. Especially with the impacts of COVID-19 and changes to the way in which people are travelling, it would be beneficial to have a better understanding of the movements to and from Wollongong and how this will drive future tourist activities, to guide where accommodation should be permitted and prioritised.

As part of this process, there also needs to be strategic oversight from Council bringing together Land Use Planning with Economic Development and Destination Wollongong to ensure that key economic data and tourism initiatives are being considered and are informing the review. Rezoning land is just one part of the process and increasing tourism to Wollongong needs to be a 'whole of government' response, with the supply of diverse tourism accommodation sites playing a major role in this process.

Importantly, we do believe that this review also needs to strike the balance between 'tourist accommodation' and 'housing stock' and ensure that accommodation does not take away from the housing stock we also need for our local communities. With housing supply shortages occurring right across the region, we need to ensure we have the right policies in place to ensure that housing remains a priority and does not allow it to be turned into short term rental accommodation 'everywhere.'

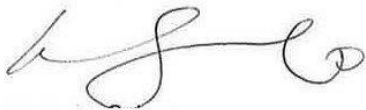
Lastly, we do believe there is a need for eco-tourism in the LGA and disagree with not enabling this type of tourist accommodation in some identified areas. We understand that there are a range of environmental factors to consider, however in light of the coastal walks and potential for further tourist activities associated with these walks and our escarpment, completely disregarding this type of tourist accommodation would not be in the best interest of our local tourism sector and economy.

Overall, we support Wollongong City Council undertaking this review especially with major events coming to the region and the demand for tourism accommodation increasing. We understand that there are a range of initiatives underway that Council is leading and would like to see further investment in venues and existing facilities to drive business attraction and jobs in the tourism sector.

We encourage Wollongong City Council to continue engaging with industry and business in the finalisation and implementation of any strategies or plans arising from this review, and welcome further collaboration.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself on 0437 315 198.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Guido', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Guido
Illawarra Regional Director
Property Council of Australia

