

11.5 Improved Access to Public Toilets in Mudgee

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY
TO 17 AUGUST 2022 ORDINARY MEETING
GOV400098, P0041211

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **receive the report by the Director Community on the Improved Access to Public Toilets in Mudgee;**
2. **provide in principle support for the proposal to utilise toilets on the St John's Anglican Church grounds for public use;**
3. **delegate to the General Manager the authority to finalise any requirement agreements with the St John's Anglican Church for this proposal;**
4. **allocate a project budget of \$80,000 in the 2022/23 financial year to be funded from the Capital Reserve Fund; and**
5. **allocate a maintenance budget of \$20,000 in the 2022/23 and future financial years to be funded from unrestricted cash.**

Executive summary

This report seeks to update Council on plans for improved community access to public toilets in the Mudgee CBD, including a proposal to utilise existing toilets that are owned by the St John's Anglican Church to allow for them to be used by the public as part of the existing options throughout the town.

Disclosure of Interest

Nil

Detailed report

At the Council meeting in February, it was resolved that Council provide better access to public toilets across the region but especially in the Town Hall Arcade Mudgee. This report seeks to provide Council with an update on a proposal to increase access to public toilet facilities in the Mudgee CBD.

Currently, there are a number of public toilet options within the Mudgee CBD, these include:

- Town Hall Arcade - Council managed
- Mudgee Library – Council managed
- Old Tourist Office at 84 Market Street – Council managed
- Robertson Park – Council managed
- Coles Car Park – Privately managed
- Mudgee Metro Plaza (Woolworths) – Privately managed

It is noted that the Mudgee Library is only opened during library opening hours. Other Council managed facilities are open during daylight hours.

It is also noted that there are other facilities that are operated by Council outside of the CBD, including Lawson Park and Percy Nott Rest area (open 24 hours).

One idea that has emerged is the option to utilise existing public toilets on the grounds of the St John's Anglican Church. These toilets are located off Church Street and have recently been refurbished. The option would include the following:

- The Anglican Church would continue to own the toilets
- Council would open and close the toilets each day
- Council would clean the toilets and attend to any minor maintenance issues
- Council would also maintain the area to the south and east of the Church building to encourage more public use of this area
- A proposal for some works to create a more open and inviting public space would be discussed between Council and the Church

This proposal would require some additional ongoing operational budget for cleaning and security operations (including opening and closing each day) and grounds maintenance. One-off funds would also be required for some landscaping works south of the Church building to provide for a more open public area off Market Street. The cost of the landscaping works will depend on the favoured approach. One option is to utilise crushed granite (similar to the driveway at St John's). A more expensive option would be to lay pavers over a concrete base. This would like add an additional \$50K to the proposed budget.

An alternative option for Council would be to consider the building of an additional toilet block on Council owned land in the CBD.

Another important consideration is ensuring that there is appropriate signage throughout the CBD to ensure that visitors and the community have clear information about the location of public toilets and the easiest way to access them. While this work is ready to proceed, we will include signage for the St John's Anglican Church toilets should Council endorse the recommended approach.

Community Plan implications

Theme	Looking After Our Community
Goal	Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure
Strategy	Provide infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community

Strategic implications

Council Strategies

Community Plan

Council Policies

Not Applicable

Legislation

Not Applicable

Financial implications

Additional funds will be required in any circumstances where additional public toilets are brought into operation as there will also be additional costs in relation to cleaning, opening and closing and minor

maintenance issues. The proposal also includes the possibility of creating more public open space within the CBD, which is beneficial given increasing tourism numbers. However, this will also need to be funded with council's support.

Budget Year	Operating Performance Ratio	Own Source Revenue	Building & Infrastructure Renewal
2022/23	X	-	-
Future Years	X	-	-

Associated Risks

There are risks associated with the issue of access to public toilets on private land. It is appropriate that consideration of public liability and insurance be covered in any agreement or Memorandum of Understanding between the Anglican Church and Council.

It is also noted that it is in Council and the community's interests to ensure that adequate public toilet facilities are available in the Mudgee CBD. Ultimately, this is to present the Mid-Western Region as a welcoming destination for visitors.

SIMON JONES
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

1 August 2022

Attachments: 1. St John's Anglican Church Concept Plan- Draft.pdf.
2. St John's Anglican Church - artist impression of open space.

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER

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