

Laneways Policy



1 Purpose

Laneways are vital elements of the structure and function of urban areas. They mark the origin of a city and hold their own heritage. Laneways are key public spaces that can facilitate infill and affordable housing; enable walking and cycling; deliver neighbourhoods with a range of housing choices; and deliver business centres that offer amenity to support economic growth.

This policy establishes a framework to improve the use and management of laneways within the Coffs Harbour LGA (Local Government Areas), with an overall aim to:

- a) bring vibrancy to the City's commercial areas;
- b) facilitate infill and affordable housing;
- c) enable safer spaces for people to walk and cycle while providing a shared function with motor vehicles;
- d) support the use of the City's laneways for events and activation;
- e) provide service access in commercial areas and facilitate the provision of continuous active frontages on parallel streets; and
- f) improve the overall connectivity of key infill areas.

2 Policy

The City will facilitate the development, use and management of its laneways in accordance with the following principles:

2.1 Facilitate safer laneways for active transport

- a) Allow for safe active transport by providing a suitable slow speed environment.
- b) Allow sharing of the road to be by both active transport users and motor vehicles where space does not allow for adequate footpaths.
- c) Enable vehicles to travel through laneways to provide services without impacting on safe active transport movement within laneways.
- d) Support and encourage lighting of laneways to improve safety where evening activation is desired, or the laneways forms a key pedestrian route.

2.2 Support events and activation in laneways

- a) Support temporary closure of laneways to motor vehicles for community events.
- b) Support commercial activation within laneways.

2.3 Support infill development in laneways

- a) Ensure that the City's local planning controls relating to laneways support and facilitate infill development.
- b) Enable laneways to be utilised as the only frontage for commercial and residential land uses (including postal and waste services).

2.4 Design of laneways

- a) Recognise laneways for their unique qualities and design laneways in accordance with best practice road design guidelines including the NSW Government's Movement and Place *'Design of Road and Streets Guide'* to facilitate activation and infill development opportunities.

2.5 Waste collection in laneways

- a) Ensure that the City's future waste services include appropriate provisions to service laneways (including narrow and/or constrained laneways).
- b) Support opportunities for common waste storage bins in constrained laneways to facilitate development within laneways and activation opportunities.

2.6 Parking in laneways

- a) Minimise the impact of public parking and loading zones within laneways on active transport movement and laneway function.
- b) Ensure adequate provision of loading zones within laneways where feasible and where required to service commercial properties.

2.7 Considerations for transfer of laneways to private ownership

- a) The City's preference is that laneways are retained in public ownership because they provide benefits for connectivity, permeability and part of our public open space network.
- b) In circumstances where its considered beneficial to transfer laneways to private ownership, transfer must only occur if there are no significant impacts in regard to the following considerations:
 - i. Coffs Harbour Public Realm Strategy (i.e. essential public open space);
 - ii. Coffs Harbour Movement and Place Strategy (i.e. essential active transport link);
 - iii. Pedestrian connectivity, access, and amenity;
 - iv. Heritage significance of the streetscape and/or adjacent buildings;
 - v. Potential to facilitate infill/affordable housing;
 - vi. Midblock connectivity and permeability; and
 - vii. Vehicle movement and/or servicing and deliveries.

3 Definitions

Active transport: is a physical activity undertaken as a means of transport and includes travel by foot, bicycle, and other non-motorised vehicles.

Laneways: a narrow public street that generally adjoins the rear of properties, to provide access for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to properties or through to a cross street.

Activation: the level of human activity in public spaces, and can be measured by:

- a) Number of people present (also known as 'footfall' or 'visitation')
- b) Time spent by the people present (also known as 'dwell time')
- c) Diversity of people present

Connectivity: how well path/street/road networks provide a direct link. A well-connected network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal to no dead-ends to ensure people can move throughout an area via multiple/alternate routes.

Permeability refers to the ease of movement, in different directions, of both people and vehicles within a street network.

Infill development: the development of land within an existing developed area.

Shared/sharing of the road: pedestrians and cyclists can safely utilise the carriageway of the laneways, together with motor vehicles, without the laneway necessarily being a regulatory 'shared zone.'

4 Key Responsibilities

Position	Group/Directorate	Responsibility
Mayor	Council	To lead councillors in their understanding of, compliance with this policy.
General Manager	Executive	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with this policy.
Directors	All Directorates	To communicate and comply with this policy.
City Leaders	All Directorates	To implement this policy and any related procedures.
All Staff	The City	To comply with this policy and any related procedures.

5 References (laws, standards and other Council documents)

- NSW Movement and Place Design of roads and Streets Guide August 2023
- Relevant AustRoads Guidelines
- City of Coffs Harbour MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan 2032
- Coffs Harbour Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020
- Coffs Harbour Local Growth Management Strategy 2020
- Coffs Harbour Public Realm Strategy 2023
- Coffs Harbour Movement and Place Strategy 2023
- Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2023
- Coffs Harbour Laneway Guidelines 2023
- City of Coffs Harbour's Development Specifications

6 Details of Approval and revision

- **Approval date:** 13/06/2024
- **Responsible Group:** Sustainable Places
- **Responsible Section:** Local Planning
- **Superseded policies/procedures:** Laneways – Closure and Sale Policy
- **Next review date:** 13/06/2028

Table of amendments

Amendment	Authoriser	Approval ref	Date
This is a new policy that supersedes the Laneways – Closure and Sale Policy and provides a framework to improve the use and management of laneways.	Council	2024/104	13/06/24