

**Submission  
No 2**

## **INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC TOILETS**

**Name:** Ms Cath Blakey

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The Wiseman Park public toilet block (which also incorporate change rooms and shelter) in Gwynneville is a great design, with individual stalls that ensure privacy and are big enough for a parent to accompany a young child, a fold-down baby change table and also railings for ambulant toilet access. This toilet block and change rooms replaced a 50 year old facility that had no provision for use by women. The demolition and construction of a new facility in 2019 cost about \$800,000. This is a significant investment, and unfortunately Council does not have capacity to bring all public toilets up to this standard. This was made clear in the related inquiry "INTO ABILITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES"

Wollongong Council's submissions stated: "Over the past 47 years, under a rate peg environment, the framework has been structured around the determination of services and service levels that could be afforded within a predetermined rates

income. This methodology, coupled initially with limited financial and asset management understanding and capability in local government, has added to the broad financial stress and lack of sustainability for many NSW councils."

There are numerous toilets which do not meet this crime prevention by design, and one way that the risk of vandalism or other anti-social behaviour is managed is by closing the public toilets at night. This means that the toilets aren't available of an evening or night, often when people still need them, and this can lead to public urination and exposed faecal matter which can be smelly, negatively impact amenity and is a public health risk. Providing state government funding to upgrade public toilets has the potential to reduce the on-going operational costs associated with opening and closing public toilets, and ensure they are available any time they're needed.