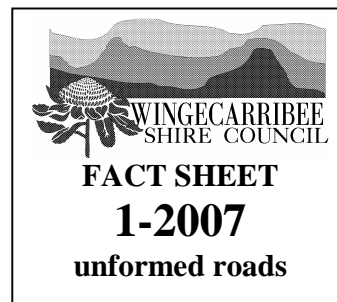


Unformed Roads in Wingecarribee Shire



In addition to the 660km of sealed and 330km of unsealed roads that council maintains, there are hundreds of kilometres of Crown and Public Roads across the Shire that Council does not maintain. These roads, while available for public use, are referred to as Unformed Roads (or "paper roads").

Over time, residents have built houses along these unformed roads, using them to access their properties. As these roads have not been properly formed or correctly drained, they deteriorate quickly during wet weather. When landowners contact Council and request maintenance on these roads, they become angry when told that Council does not maintain these roads.

Council keeps a list of roads which it does maintain in a document called the "Road Segment Ledger", which is available for inspection at the Customer Services Centre of the Civic Centre, Elizabeth Street Moss Vale. If a road or access-way is not listed in this document, the maintenance of the road is the responsibility of the landowners who use the road for access.

The reason for this is that Council simply does not have the capacity to construct and maintain an access along every road reserve in the Shire. Indeed, it would be an inequitable use of rate funds to do so even if this was not the case. Further, the Roads Act does not compel a Roads Authority (Council) to construct or maintain a road along these reserves.

Even though all road reserves are owned by Council or the crown, Council only maintains those roads that have been constructed by Council, or constructed by another party to Council's requirements then formally handed over to Council. People wishing to upgrade their access along an unformed road are required to gain the approval of Council prior to undertaking the work. In addition, if the road is a Crown Road, approval is also required from the Department of Lands.

The formation of a road to Council standards, however, does not automatically imply that Council will maintain the road. Council as a rule will only take over maintenance of the road if it serves a genuine public function, for example by providing access to a number of properties along the road.
