

Newcastle

# Coastal Revitalisation Strategy

MASTER PLAN REPORT

**September 2010**

Prepared for:  
Land and Property Management Authority  
Hunter Surf Life Saving  
Newcastle City Council



Land and Property  
Management Authority



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# Executive Summary

The Newcastle Coastline Revitalisation Masterplan provides a strategic framework for the future uses of the 11km coastal land within the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA). The project is jointly sponsored by NSW Land and Property Management Authority, Newcastle City Council and Hunter Surf Life Saving, all of whom are significant stakeholders of the coastline.

This Masterplan seeks to enhance coastal and beach precincts through concept design, investigative and community consultation as well as in depth research and policy review. Community values and comments raised through previous consultation have been considered carefully and has contributed the design of the precincts.

The study area has been divided into three sectors, based on the three distinctive landscape characters of the coastline, identified as Stockton (Northern) Sector, City Beaches (Central) Sector and Suburban Beaches (Southern) Sector (Figure 1). This structure plan also shows the broad strategies adopted in the master plan – improved access along the Bathers Way route, around the Hunter River and Stockton Beach, stronger connections to Newcastle CBD and Stockton town centre and a series of new activity nodes along the coast. The structure plan also shows existing major open space and retail centres.

The activity nodes proposed support the core activities that occur along the coastline and are aimed at enhancing access, safety and the vibrancy. A series of planning and design principles provide a framework for the master plan concepts with each precinct containing objectives and principles to support the concepts.

Many of the opportunities identified are aimed at encouraging greater access for residents and visitors to the coastline as well as provide a higher standard of liveability and vitality associated with the built and natural forms along the coastline. Improvements to safety and access are significant priorities, with Figure 2 giving a broad overview of the access and movement opportunities. These are further discussed within the sector plans and Masterplan concepts, principles and objectives.

Enhancing the relationships between built form, open space, access and movement are also significant for revitalisation of the coastline. Public domain improvements and facility upgrades along the coastal movement corridors and open space nodes are anticipated to enhance user experience and act as a catalyst for improvements to adjoining areas. Pedestrian path activation, view line improvements and micro climate improvement strategies shape building realignments and recommendations for new buildings.

The key themes that are acknowledged as integral to the Masterplan include:

- Access and movement;
- Coastline activities;
- Open space and reserves;
- Provision of community facilities; and
- Heritage value.

Strategies to fund the proposed works have also been documented in this report. The analysis undertaken to determine funding opportunities identified that there is no single mechanism to fund the works proposed and that a combination of sources of funding will be required to enable the implementation of the Masterplan.

A number of proposed works projects are already underway in the study area, with planning and design studies being undertaken. These projects have a high priority along with proposed works located close the Newcastle CBD, which can test the commerciality and support the revitalisation of the Newcastle CBD. It is noted that the works proposed along the coastline cannot all be implemented concurrently. The works must be staged to ensure disruption to access to the coastline is managed and ensure that funding can be provided through various streams. An indicative staging schedule is provided in the report however it is noted that environmental, economic conditions, access to funding and changes to priorities may require this schedule to change.

Submissions made during the public exhibition period held during April and May 2010 were reviewed and changes were undertaken where appropriate. The adoption of the Masterplan by Council and State government provides a level ownership and weight, which forms the basis for government, private organisations and the community to become involved in the implementation of the works proposed in the plan.

Implementation of the concepts contained within this plan will require more detailed planning and design, and where appropriate, additional public consultation. It is acknowledged that there may also be additional future opportunities that arise during the life of this plan. These potential additional opportunities may also be considered in addition to those in this plan.

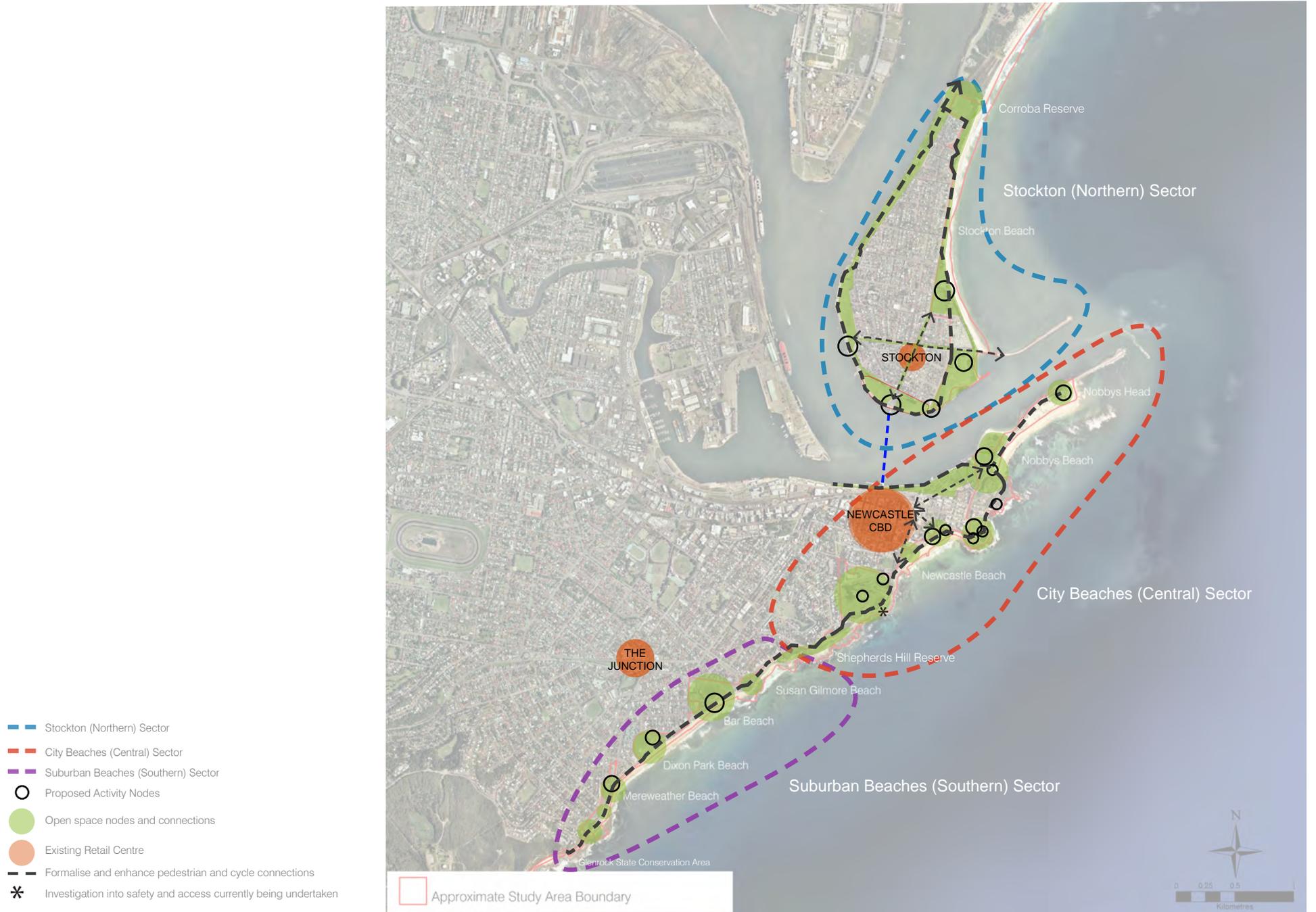


Figure 1: Structure Plan



#### Stockton Beaches (Northern) Sector

1. Prevent 4WD access to Stockton Beach.
2. New Stockton pedestrian and cycle loops.
3. Enhance connections to Stockton town centre.
4. Existing Stockton ferry route.

#### City Beaches (Central) Sector

5. New park loop road with on road parking.
6. Enforced timed parking around city beaches.
7. Shortland Esplanade converted to a one way road operating in a southerly direction between Nobbys Road and Zaara Street.
8. Enhance pedestrian connections to public transport and Newcastle Central Business District.
9. Re-open Shortland Esplanade between Newcastle South Beach and King Edward Park.
10. Investigate opportunities to improve access to the Bogey Hole.
11. Bathers Way - pedestrian and cycle route.

#### Suburban Beaches (Southern) Sector

12. Additional pedestrian crossing points provided on Memorial Drive between Empire Park and Bar Beach. On street parking arrangements modified to assist calming of Memorial Drive.
13. Convert John Parade to a one way road operating in a northerly direction .
14. Slow traffic along Scenic Drive/ Frederick Street.

Figure 2: Access and Movement

# I Introduction

The Newcastle coastline comprises varied natural and modified landforms including beaches, sand dunes, rock platforms and grasslands that provide a unique setting that Novocastrians strongly connect with and use every day. The coastline is augmented with tangible built assets and a cultural identity spanning from Aboriginal to elements of European settlement over the past two hundred years. Importantly our beaches provide for passive and active recreation, with community facilities and amenities supporting various formal and informal activities. It is this combination of landforms, facilities and activities, with the coast's cultural heritage that create places that are highly valued by local residents and visitors.

This Masterplan aims to enhance the vibrancy of the 11km stretch of coastline from Stockton in the north, to Merewether in the south; with the central portion immediately adjacent to the Newcastle Central Business District (CBD).

The plan is based on planning and design principles, supported by context and local character analysis and against a triple bottom line sustainability framework. It incorporates direct community input and results of public exhibition as well as the results of previous studies and plans. Potential funding mechanisms for implementation have also been considered and documented.

The Masterplan seeks to incorporate residents and visitors expectations over the next 20 years. The precinct concept plans contained within this document inform detailed design of individual sites by way of principles that work towards fulfilling these expectations which have been identified in objectives.

## I.1 The Project Sponsors

The land within the study area is mostly public open space comprising crown reserves and community land owned or managed by Newcastle City Council (NCC) and the NSW Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA). Existing facilities are largely owned and maintained by Council; however, some buildings in the study area are leased to private operators or owned by other organisations (such as Newcastle Port Corporation, owner of Nobbys headland).

Hunter Surf Life Saving (HSLs) coordinates six Surf Life Saving Clubs (SLSC) in the study area as well as a storage facilities near Nobbys Beach. The organisation provides a vital role and are key users of the coastline for their activities and programs, including surf education and beach patrols. The SLSC each utilise a highly prominent building located on the coastline, often with historic significance, forming an important part of the coast's historical and current social fabric. These buildings act as a landmark or gathering point for visitors to the beaches and in turn generate activity around them.

In December 2008, the NSW Minister for Lands, Newcastle City Council, Hunter Surf Life Saving and the six Newcastle surf clubs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing their respective organisations to achieve the revitalisation of the city's coastal public spaces. That agreement and needs identified in reports such as the previous Newcastle Coastline Management Plan, instigated this Masterplan. The MOU and the objectives of this Masterplan are to ensure the Newcastle beaches are developed to:

- realise their potential to contribute to the city's future;
- complement the overall planning framework for the city;
- consider the needs of all beach users, existing stakeholders and the broader community;
- improve community access to services and facilities; and
- deliver sustainable economic and management outcomes.

The Masterplan project is being overseen by the Coastal Revitalisation Working Group (CRWG), which has representatives from the Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA), Hunter Surf Lifesaving and Newcastle City Council. A higher level reference group has also been established, comprising executive representatives of the project sponsors, and a range of relevant local organisations and peak businesses. The members of these groups are in listed in Appendix B.

## 1.2 The Brief and our Approach

### The Brief

The brief from the project sponsors required preparation of a strategic Masterplan to guide the future uses, and rejuvenation of the public land along the Newcastle Coastline.

Much of the infrastructure along Newcastle's coastline is now dated and may not fully cater for current and future needs as identified in the Newcastle Coastline Management Study (Umwelt 2003). It is intended to renew the coastline's assets whilst retaining the natural and cultural character of the coast.

The community's views and direct input into the strategies and designs have been an important aspect and will continue to be an important part of the revitalisation process.

Outcomes from this project include:

- analysis of landscape character areas, providing definition to places that can be embraced, utilised and celebrated by residents and visitors;
- defining areas of improvement to the quality of open space and facilities to benefit residents and visitors; providing greater variety, activating sometimes under-utilised spaces, broaden hours of public visitation and use in parts; all increasing the sense of place/destination, and surveillance and security;
- identifying funding mechanisms for undertaking the works required to implement these concepts to be adopted by the project sponsors;
- providing a strategic level plan, integrating the whole of Newcastle's coastline;
- avoiding ad hoc decision making for individual areas and projects;
- allowing a degree of certainty for investment in the coast and its use and management;
- considering existing and proposed land uses and facilities;
- addressing issues raised by the project sponsors and by stakeholders during community engagement; and
- identifying new issues and address outstanding issues through planning and design.

### Approach

The Masterplan has employed a sustainability-based approach, developing Masterplan concepts around environmental, economic and social values. This includes a preliminary economic analysis of commercial proposals.

The process responds to key aspects of existing documents and policies without duplicating their information here. Appendix A contains a list of the reports, strategies and policies referred to in preparing this Masterplan. The development of this plan implements one of the key actions of the Newcastle Coastline Management Plan (2003 Umwelt).

The inclusion of community consultation in the preparation of the Masterplan is vital to understanding stakeholder needs and requirements and ensuring local ownership. The process allowed stakeholder inputs at a number of points and community engagement informed the plans through community design workshops held in late 2009.

Following public exhibition of the draft Masterplan during April and May 2010, a review of comments and submissions was undertaken. Where required, refinement of the Masterplan was undertaken prior to the adoption of this plan.

It is also important to note that implementing many of the initiatives will be longer term and geared to broader development and population growth of the city over time. Hence, the opportunities presented will complement existing business. It is acknowledged that there may also be additional future opportunities that might arise, which can be considered in addition to those in this plan.

It is important to consider that turning the Masterplan into reality will require close consultation with a range of stakeholders and for some actions, more detailed planning and design for the works in each precinct. The preparation of additional specific Plans of Management will be considered by the project partners on a needs basis. There may be benefits in additional detailed planning (e.g. such is the case for Merewether Beach precinct); however these are not a prerequisite for implementation of many actions under this Plan and for Crown reserves, the Crown Lands Act. Many of the issues and constraints and other environmental planning issues will be analysed further in the detailed design and implementation stages in actualising various actions and opportunities.

### I.3 Structure of the Report

The structure of this report is as follows:

- This introduction;
- *The Context* – a summary of the local geographic conditions;
- *Sector Plans and Masterplan Concepts* - The sector plans establish key landscape character themes between the precincts to inform and establish connectivity of the public domain, open space and facilities. The three Sectors are; Stockton (Northern), City Beaches (Central) and Suburban Beaches (Southern);
- *Financing and Funding* - identifying opportunities to enable the implementation of the plan;
- *Indicative Priorities and Staging* – provides an indicative schedule for the key projects and activity nodes; and
- *Conclusion* – providing a summary to the report and next steps for implementation.

## 2 Context

The study area is located very close to the Newcastle CBD, heart of Australia's sixth largest city. The proximity of nationally significant beaches and natural open space to a major city is unique in Australia and invaluable to residents and visitors.

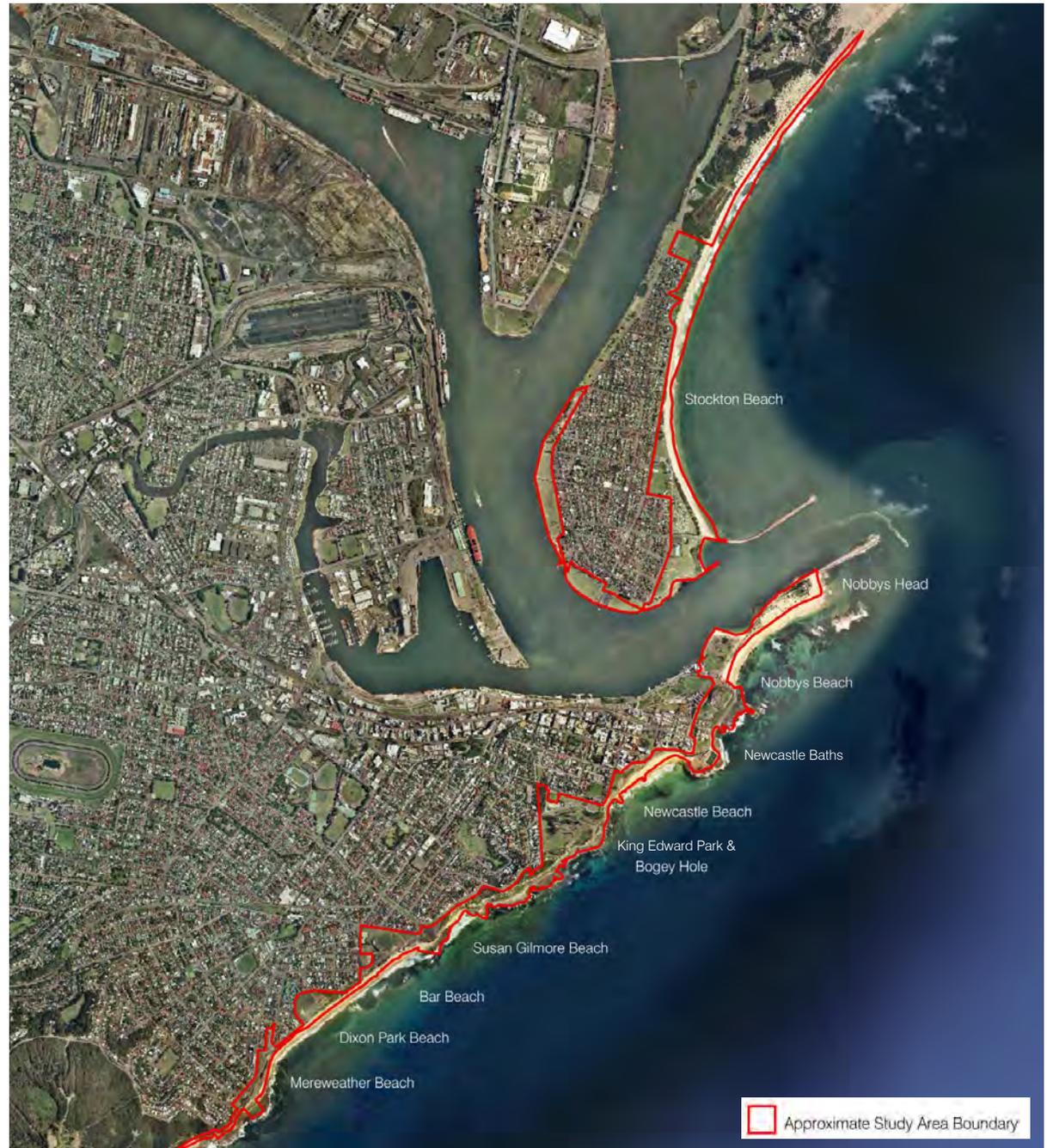


Figure 3: Study Area

## 2.1 The Study Area

The study area for the Masterplan is defined as the public spaces on the 11km coastline from Stockton Beach in the north to Merewether Beach in the south, within Newcastle LGA shown in Figure 3. The study area includes community land owned by Council and crown reserves – administered by LPMA and mostly managed by Council. The project partners will investigate rationalising boundaries by potentially transferring community land to Crown reserve where this is beneficial to either capture the opportunities under this strategy or ensure appropriate management outcomes. Commercial opportunities will be made available generally through leasing and hence no sales of public lands are expected as a result of this Masterplan.

The study area has been divided into three character areas referred to here as sectors. Within these sectors are 11 key precincts, linked by vehicular, cycle and pedestrian connections. These key precincts were agreed with the joint project sponsors as part of developing the Masterplan. The precinct approach ensures that a level of detail and sensitivity is applied to planning and design. The sectors and precincts are as follows:

### Northern (Stockton) Sector

- Corroba Park;
- Stockton Beach;
- Stockton East;
- Griffith Park;

### Central (City Beaches) Sector

- Nobbys;
- Newcastle Baths;
- Newcastle Beach;
- King Edward Park and Bogey Hole;

### Southern (Suburban Beaches) Sector

- Bar Beach and Empire Park;
- Dixon Park; and
- Merewether Beach.

## 2.2 Existing Management Plans and Policies

The range of existing strategy and policy documents informing this report are listed in Appendix A. Those considered crucial to this process include:

- NSW Coastal Policy 1997;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) No. 71;
- DoP's Climate Change Mapping Project which identifies low-lying areas on the Central and Hunter coasts at risk of sea level rise resulting from climate change;
- NSW Government Sea Level Rise Policy;
- NCC Coastline Management Plan;
- NCC Beach Asset Framework; and
- Coal River Precinct – Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan.

A number of adopted public reserve Plans of Management apply to land in the study area. These are also listed in Appendix A. These plans provide specific management directives for geographic areas or specific activities and uses within the Newcastle Local Government Area.

### Newcastle Coastline Management Study 2003

The Newcastle Coastline Management Study focuses on the integrated management of Newcastle's Coastline. It seeks to define the type, nature and significance of potential coastline hazards and acknowledge potential environmental management and planning issues for the area. The outcome of the study provides strategic options for the incorporated sustainable management of the coastline in relation to social, cultural, economic and environmental elements that are consequently addressed in the Masterplan concepts, planning and design principles.

The Newcastle Coastline Management Plan (CMP) provides an integrated management planning framework for a balance between the long term use of the coastline and its environmental conservation. This Masterplan implements one of the key actions of the CMP, in integrating planning specifically for the coastline's public spaces.

### Newcastle Local Environmental Plans

The principal local planning instruments are the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2003 and the Newcastle City Centre Local Environmental Plan 2008. The Newcastle LEP 2003 zones most of the Newcastle coastline 6(a) Open Space and Recreation. A number of the beach assets are also classified as local heritage items. Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008 also applies to some of the study area.

## The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy and NSW State Plan

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy and NSW State Plan also form part of the overall planning context, the main issues identified are:

- extensive economic and population growth over the next 25 years with an extra 66,000 jobs anticipated;
- vital regional infrastructure required for future investment as well as protecting the diverse natural landscape and biodiversity of the region; and
- a green corridor between the Watagan Ranges and Stockton Beach and the environmental significance of adaptation against coastal recession.

## 2.3 The People

Newcastle reaches out to the sea, creating Australia's only city centre bounded by pristine beaches and an active working harbour. From its intriguing 200 year story has arisen a dynamic city of contrasts. It is a port city in transition with a mixture of the raw and refined. Working wharves are becoming places of play; the city has a vibrant arts culture and an emerging food scene is evident. The surf is world class and much enjoyed, the pace remains relaxed and friendly locals are proud of their city. (Adapted from: Newcastle City Council [www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/discover\\_newcastle/visit\\_newcastle](http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/discover_newcastle/visit_newcastle)).

The coast forms an integral part of Newcastle's identity, and social and cultural fabric.

### Current and future population:

The Newcastle LGA had a population of 141,753 in the 2006 Census and almost 16% were aged 65 years or over. It is forecast that seniors will continue to account for a large majority of persons in the LGA (almost 20% by 2021). The general population is expected to rise significantly (16,285 people) between now and 2021. The Newcastle CBD is outlined as a growth centre in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy; and this current and future growth and its impacts on the coastline are important to the master plan.

Implications of population change may include:

- increase in the seniors population is important, particularly regarding access, mobility and facilities;
- greater demand on community/recreational facilities
- potential for new commercial opportunities around leisure, recreation and hospitality services in and around the foreshore, particularly in central areas such as Newcastle Beach.

### Visitors:

The Hunter received almost 1.9 million domestic overnight visitors in 2008/09 (NSW Tourism 2009). Only 16% of its domestic visitors were from interstate (Queensland being the biggest share) with the remainder from NSW.

The number of international visitors to the Lower Hunter is significantly lower. The region received 113,100 international overnight visitors in 2009 (up 2.2% from 2008). Tourists from English speaking countries account for the three largest international markets (the UK, USA and New Zealand make up over 51%). The majority of visitors arrive by car (84.5%), followed by plane (9.4%) and railway (3.8%).

Implications for the study area regarding a culturally diverse visitor profile include:

- The majority of visitors arrive by car;
- The need to maintain and improve passive surveillance at foreshore areas popular with visitors. This important to safety and minimising anti-social behaviour;
- The need to enhance visitor attraction such as Indigenous and European heritage sites and interpretation strategies for public spaces where these are located; and
- The need to balance the of 'sense of place' with the need to accommodate a wide range of foreshore users, including visitors.

## 2.4 Environmental Conditions

The broad range of plans and studies that have provided an overview of environmental conditions and required works previously identified are listed in Appendix A. The Newcastle Coastline Management Study and Management Plan (Umwelt 2003) are the most relevant of these.

Cliff instability has been identified at a number of locations including Cooks Hill, between Nobbys and Fort Scratchley, Newcastle Beach, King Edward Park and Bar Beach. Investigations into stabilisation are currently being undertaken by Council. Opportunities to improve dune vegetation have been identified in some areas including Stockton, Bar Beach, Nobbys Beach and Nobbys Headland.

Protection of Themeda Grassland, an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), in King Edward Park and the ability to provide additional trees generally along the coastline are also identified. The lack of trees in some areas means that limited shade and protection from winds is available.

Stormwater management is also identified as an area for improvement. Design of improved stormwater management should be undertaken as part of detailed public domain plans in accordance with best practice Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) standards.

## Climate Change and Sea Level Rise --Implications for Foreshore/Coastline Development

Low lying coastal and foreshore areas are most at risk from the affects of climate change. Existing Surf Life Saving Clubs are at risk, particularly at Stockton, Newcastle and Bar Beach.

In October 2009, the NSW Government released the Draft NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting to Sea Level Rise, which provided guidance on how sea level rise and its associated impacts (including coastal erosion) are to be considered in land use planning and development assessment. The draft guideline adopted the NSW sea level rise planning benchmark, which is an increase above 1990 mean sea levels of 40cm by 2050 and 90cm by 2100.

The guideline required the preparation of erosion hazard lines, which identify areas potentially at risk to coastal erosion. Immediate, 20 year and 50 year erosion hazard lines have already been developed for Stockton Beach; however these hazard lines will require revision to meet the requirements of the guideline. The draft guideline requires councils to consider options to reduce land use intensity in coastal risk areas where feasible (land use planning), and to minimise the exposure to coastal risks from proposed development in coastal risk areas (development assessment).

The Draft NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting to Sea Level Rise (2009), used during the site analysis and development of the Masterplan, also identified a (interim) potential coastal erosion and recession investigation area 45-90m landward for sandy coastlines in NSW. This has been used to assist identifying risk areas as part of this study with the maximum 90m line shown on the precinct issues analysis. It is noted that this 90m maximum distance as shown in the plans in this document is conceptual only. Since the exhibited draft strategy, the draft NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting to Sea Level Rise was adopted (August 2010) and incorporated the sea level rise planning benchmark. Proposed works within the investigation area will require additional detail on coastal hazards to be verified at the detailed design stage.

## 2.5 Access and Movement

The following documents have provided an overview of understanding and opportunity in relation to access and movement associated with Newcastle's coastline:

- Newcastle City Centre Liveability Survey, 2009, Scott Carver/SCAPE for Newcastle City Council
- Newcastle Bike Plan Discussion Paper, 2009, Newcastle City Council
- The Bathers Way – Newcastle's Coastal Walk, Tourism Potential Assessment, Dain Simpson Associates
- Disability Action Plan 2005 – 2010, Newcastle City Council

Most tourists visiting the Lower Hunter arrive by car (over 84%). Timed parking can assist parking availability close to coastal activities and minimise use of coastal car parks by long stay commuters, in particular at Griffith Park, Nobbys Beach and King Edward Park. As parking is a premium along the coastline especially around the CBD a principle of no net loss of parking could be implemented to ensure that no short term pressures are created by the proposals.

The Masterplan aims to enhance access and provide alternatives to private car use including public transport, walking and cycling. Public transport will be increasingly important in improving access to the coastline and enhanced services are required, however this study does not specifically address the management issues in relation to implementing an improved public transport system.

Better pedestrian access to beaches and foreshores is a key objective locally and state-wide. There is a need to interconnect the Newcastle coastline, particularly for travel by foot and cycle, which has additional environmental and health benefits. Adequate widths of shared pathways are required to avoid conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. Access for people with disabilities to the coastline is also important.

## 2.6 Open Space and Reserves

The coastline comprises numerous parks, reserves and open spaces, all of which are important to the natural setting and the people of Newcastle. The integration of parks and reserves with current and future facilities along the coastline is imperative to the overall functioning and use of the areas. The following plans/documents have been reviewed regarding open space and recreation:

- Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006 – 2016, 2006, Newcastle City Council;
- Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management, 2009, Newcastle City Council and NSW Department of Lands;
- King Edward Headland Reserve Plan of Management, 2007, NSW Department of Lands; and
- Bushland Plan of Management, 2003, Newcastle City Council.

The Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006 – 2016 promotes a number of opportunities and values that have been adapted in the master plan and include:

- Maximising choice and opportunity;
- Enhancing sustainability;
- Maintaining equity; and
- Encouraging participation.



Figure 4: Dixon Park

## 2.7 Provision of Community Facilities

The following documents have provided the background for management and provision of community facilities:

- Community Plan 2006-2010, Newcastle City Council;
- Sportslands Plan of Management, 2003, Newcastle City Council; and
- Economic Development Strategy, 2002, Newcastle City Council.

Additionally, Urbis undertook a tour of the six Surf Life Saving Clubs and the Newcastle City Council Lifeguard facilities in the study area. This provided a greater understanding of the location, condition, quality and relationship of facilities.

Facilities currently provided by Newcastle City Council in the study area include shade structures, barbeques, toilets, showers and lifeguard facilities. The six beaches where the Surf Life Saving Clubs are located also host Council lifeguard patrols on Tuesday to Saturdays and access to facilities is shared. Several locations require facility upgrades to accommodate both community and Council uses.

Activities of other organisations such as the Coastal Volunteer Patrol and Landcare are also facilitated in the study area and these organisations may require temporary sites for their activities. E.g. use of the cottage at King Edward Park.

## 2.8 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The Newcastle coast has significant social, spiritual and cultural values for Aboriginal people, today represented by traditional owners and/or the Worimi and Awabakal people. Aboriginal people named the landscape features from Stockton to Merewether. Mulubinda was first noted by Reverend Threlkeld (1834) as the Aboriginal name for Newcastle, meaning Indigenous sea fern. Threlkeld also recorded Ya-ran-na-li as the cliffs at south Newcastle Beach.

The first census of Aboriginal people in Newcastle in 1827 recorded two tribes; the Coal River tribe and Ash Island tribe. Material evidence exists here of Aboriginal habitation; the majority located near the coast and estuaries or stone quarries. Sources of chert were recorded at Nobbys and Merewether and yellow ochre at Merewether Beach. Open campsites were found at Dixon Park, Merewether, South Newcastle Beach and Nobbys. Stockton Bight contains burials, campsites and middens. King Edward Park, the area south of Shepherds Hill and an area near Corroba Reserve, contain archaeological material. Natural mythological sites have been identified above Newcastle Beach and Nobbys Headland.

The landscape today continues to retain both tangible and intangible cultural heritage value. As traditional owners of the land, the Indigenous community can hold a central place in the heritage themes of the place and in defining their eventual interpretation.

## 2.9 European Heritage

The coastline also offers significant European heritage sites. The Newcastle Heritage Register contains information on the Heritage items identified by Newcastle City Council. There are more than 59 sites or items within the study area listed as having heritage significance.

The Coal River Precinct, adjacent to Nobby's Beach was placed on the NSW State Heritage Register in 2003. It contains comprehensive evidence of pre-European Aboriginal cultural life. The precinct is also the site of initial European settlement in Newcastle; with the Nobbys Signal Station, Macquarie Pier (constructed by convicts) and later breakwater, Nobbys Beach and surf club pavilion and the 19th century Soldiers Baths.

The Coal River Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan (2007, Boyce Pizzey Strategic) provides a valuable insight into the precinct's importance and points to ways that can enhance local, regional and national appreciation of its contribution to the development of Newcastle through its indigenous pre-history and European settlement.

Promotion of the precinct and its meaning by appropriately packaging the stories as part of a broader Newcastle coastal experience could greatly enhance the appreciation of its significance for local community members and visitors.

As the precinct is listed on the State Heritage Register any major construction or development proposal requires approval from the NSW Department of Planning Heritage Branch.

Relevant documents reviewed in preparation of the master plan are listed in Appendix A.



Figure 5: Nobbys Lighthouse

## 2.10 Consultation – Developing a plan for, and by the community

Community consultation is an integral part of the Masterplan process. Community design workshops for each sector were held in November 2009 to gain active community participation in the design process.

A “Back to the Table” Workshop was also held in December 2009 to confirm the planning and design approach with participants. Participants in the workshops were identified through a list of key stakeholder groups and individuals, combined with surveys of residents on Council’s “Newcastle Voice” community database.

The draft Newcastle Coastal Revitalisation Masterplan was placed on public exhibition for community comment during April and May 2010. Comment was requested through written submissions as well as a survey. The Newcastle community provided a significant response with 1072 surveys completed and 147 written submissions received from individuals, stakeholder groups and organisations.

Community engagement provided diverse feedback for each precinct informing the exhibited draft version of this strategy. Common issues identified across all precincts include:

- Access, mobility and connectivity including cycle and walk-ways and links between precincts;
- Appropriate car parking and traffic flow;
- Public transport options to and from key activity areas;
- Provision of amenities (including public toilets, café’s/kiosks, playgrounds and BBQ areas);
- Appropriate shade, including planting suitable trees in locations that do not block views;
- Recognition of heritage values and listed items; and
- Upkeep of open space and parks.

## 2.11 Planning and Design Principles

The principles described in Appendix D also helped to establish the strategies contained in the Sector Plans and Precinct Masterplan Concepts. These principles provide guiding direction for the future land use, facilities and public domain improvement for the coastline, and address issues of:

- Social values;
- Access and movement;
- Parking and transport;
- Place;
- Sustainability and environment; and
- Public domain.

# 3 Sector Plans & Masterplan Concepts

The Sector Plans below utilise the coast's three main landscape character areas to establish key themes, which is important for developing a sense of place, enhanced by linking identified activity nodes. The Sector Plans also establish broad objectives and strategies, that are then translated to strategies at a precinct level. The Sector Plans assist to establish the connectivity of the public domain, open space and facilities. These strategies and concepts are based on identified issues and opportunities and strongly reflect the input from the community workshops.

The Sectors and Precincts are defined here as follows:

## Stockton (Northern) Sector

- The Stockton Peninsula
  - Corroba Reserve
  - Stockton Beach
  - Stockton East
  - Griffith Park

## City Beaches (Central) Sector

- South Eastern Newcastle Harbour Foreshore south along the coast to Shepherds Hill Reserve
  - Nobbys
  - Newcastle Baths
  - Newcastle Beach
  - King Edward Park + Bogey Hole

## Suburban Beaches (Southern) Sector

- Shepherds Hill Reserve south along the coast to Glenrock State Conservation Area
  - Bar Beach + Empire Park
  - Dixon Park
  - Merewether Beach

The following sections provide a Sector Plan for each of the three sectors, outlining existing conditions, key themes, objectives and strategies at a broad level. Under each Sector, more detailed Masterplan Concepts are then provided for each precinct, which have specific objectives and strategies at the local level. These form the framework for future detailed design, costing and staging of works required for the Coast's revitalisation and realisation of this Plan's vision. Commentary is provided for select precincts on preliminary commercial analysis for recommended options.

### 3.1 Stockton (Northern) Sector

#### Existing Conditions

Stockton comprises a peninsula bound on three sides by water bodies; the Hunter River to the south and west and the Newcastle Bight, and South Pacific Ocean to the east. The Stockton Peninsula is relatively flat and low lying.

Existing development is located central to the peninsula, well setback from the coastline and river front, leaving a continuous ribbon of surrounding open space.

Stockton has a lower level of accessibility given its location north of Newcastle Harbour and therefore attracts a lower level of visitation from residents and visitors. As such, the potential to increase the draw of Stockton and therefore improve commercial opportunities will depend on capturing a greater level of visitation. The coastline is however easily accessible from the existing urban areas due to the orientation of the road pattern and pathways. The Stockton ferry also plays an important role in connecting Stockton to the Newcastle CBD.

Stockton has numerous facilities for sporting activities, with boating and fishing also popular. Key places are Stockton Beach, Griffith Park and Corroba Reserve. Corroba Reserve is at the northern end of the peninsula and Council is currently planning its upgrade to a major sporting facility servicing the local community. There is currently informal (unsanctioned) 4WD access from Fullerton Road through Corroba Park to Stockton Beach. Unrestricted access to other open space areas on the Stockton Peninsula also pose a potential vehicle-pedestrian conflict issue for and sometimes result in illegal camping.

Stockton East and Beach precincts are located on the eastern side of the peninsula, north-east of the Stockton town centre. North of the Hunter River mouth, breakwaters protect the beach from southerly winds. The beach offers its users a north-easterly aspect with expansive views to Port Stephens headland. The beach is being eroded due to a sediment deficit. A number of solutions to manage the coastal erosion are currently being investigated by the State Government and Council. Anticipated sea level rise along with ongoing erosion will impact on existing facilities.

The Stockton Sector may have fewer major opportunities in the short term due to lower population density and visitor numbers, however will present longer term opportunities in line with potential density uplift within existing urban areas and potential new developments to the north.

Stockton has significant and well developed sport and recreation assets adjacent to the Stockton Beach Surf Club and the Stockton Tourist Park. These include a bowls club, tennis courts, netball courts and playing field.

A concept plan has been prepared by Council for the northern end of Stockton Tourist Park that seeks to rationalise the number of onsite vans and partly replace these with cabin style accommodation that will have wider tourism potential. The Stockton Tourist Park is a key attractor

for the area and experiences strong occupancy throughout the year, therefore reconfiguration and expansion of the park will benefit the area.

The existing sporting and tourism accommodation and infrastructure within Stockton provides the basis for creating a regional sport and recreation facility that would have appeal to the broader NSW community. Examples of coastal based sport and recreation centres include the Tallebudgera Camp School operated by Queensland Education and the NSW Communities run Point Wollstonecraft Sport and Recreation Centre (on Lake Macquarie) and Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation Centre (on Lake Macquarie).

Griffith Park is located at the southern end of the peninsula. The park is sparsely landscaped consisting mainly of large areas of open space. The park, exposed to southerly winds, affords magnificent views to the Newcastle CBD. The ferry terminal at Griffith Park services travel between Newcastle CBD to Stockton. There is also a large car park associated with the terminal. An opportunity exists to develop a series of landscaped open spaces and to provide a restaurant/café near the existing ferry terminal.

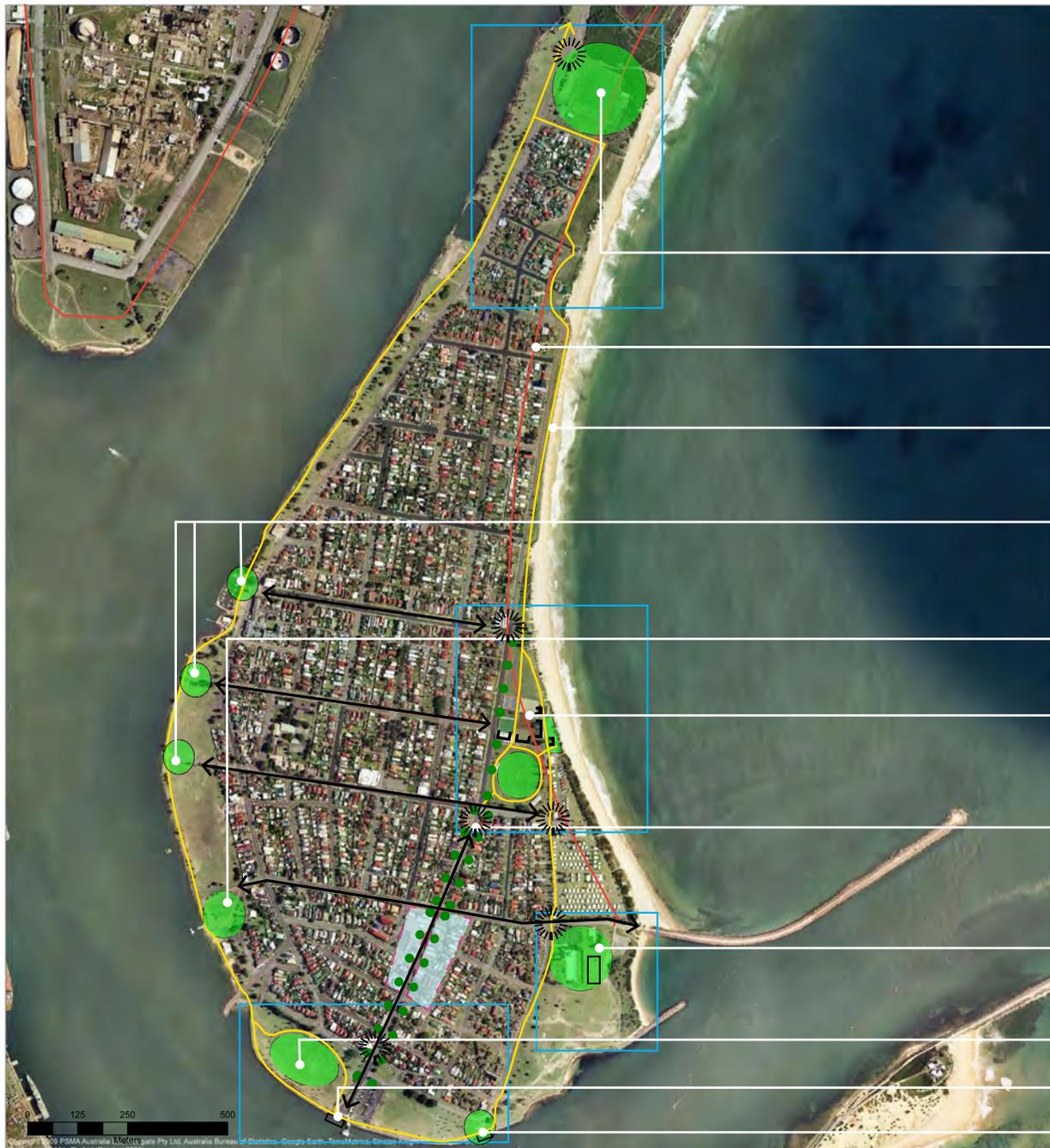
Mitchell Street, the main retail street for Stockton has an important role in linking Griffith Park to Stockton Beach; however this could be reinforced with enhanced landscape treatment.

#### Key Themes

- Sporting, recreation and education.
- History and heritage.
- Tourism.

#### Sector Objectives

- Improve access to existing and upgraded sporting and recreation facilities.
- Ensure new development is protected from coastal recession and erosion.
- Enhance landscape character within the Stockton peninsula.
- Formalise connection between Griffith Park and Stockton Beach.
- Encourage educational facilities and heritage interpretation sites.
- Attract new and previous visitors to Stockton.
- Improve the type, quantity and quality of public domain elements.
- Investigate opportunities to enhance maritime infrastructure.



-  Precinct Gateway
-  90m Coastal Recession investigation area
-  Pedestrian and cycle pathways
-  Connector roads
-  Open space activity nodes
-  Approximate key precinct location

Corroba Reserve upgraded to accommodate additional sports facilities and capacity in accordance with Council plans.

90m Coastal Recession Investigation Area.

Manage access points to beach in commonly used locations to allow restoration of dune vegetation.

Activity nodes at western foreshore ends of streets. NSW Maritime to investigate opportunities for enhanced maritime infrastructure with further extensive public consultation.

Activity node around existing sailing club.

Sporting and beach activity node with open space in front of consolidated Stockton sports clubs building.

Norfolk Island Pines along Mitchell Street to enhance connection between Stockton Beach, Stockton Town Centre and Griffith Park.

Additional short term accommodation adjacent to existing swimming pool and tourist park.

Formalise oval and provide additional vegetation.

Cafe/ Restaurant building adjacent to existing pier/ ferry terminal.

Formalise existing harbour lookout.

Figure 6: Stockton (Northern) Sector Plan

### Sector Strategies

- Create activity nodes on the western foreshore in the alignment of east west running roads.
- Upgrade and expand Corroba Reserve sporting facilities.
- Combine Stockton sporting clubs to create economies of scale.
- Provide street tree planting along Mitchell Street to assist with way finding and providing a landscape character.

#### 3.1.1 Corroba Reserve

##### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Corroba Reserve is approximately 2km north of Stockton town centre and consists of fenced rectangular playing fields, basketball court, some play equipment, toilets and storage facilities. A track is located to the north of the playing fields and is used for unsanctioned 4WD access to Stockton Beach. Located to the south of the reserve is Meredith Avenue with residential dwellings on the southern side that have views of the reserve.

The reserve is quite exposed due to the topography and the limited number of trees. Dune vegetation exists to the north and east with some trees located on the western perimeter. Views to the Newcastle Harbour are afforded to the west of the reserve. Potential exists for upgrading facilities and improving the landscape.

##### Objectives

- Expand the active recreation area to accommodate additional facilities.
- Maintain, enhance and protect significant vegetation bounding the reserve.
- Formalise car parking for the reserve.
- Ensure appropriate landscape treatment of Meredith Avenue edge to support casual surveillance opportunities and transition from open space to residential dwellings.
- Prevent 4WD vehicle access along the northern edge of Corroba Reserve to Stockton Beach.
- Provide pedestrian and cycle connections to other parts of the Stockton peninsula.

### Strategies

- Maintain and enhance tree plantings along Fullerton Street and Meredith Avenue edges of the reserve. Selection of vegetation species to be undertaken at detailed design stage.
- Provide additional sporting facilities including accommodating athletics facilities, additional football playing field and cricket pitch in accordance with plans being undertaken by Newcastle City Council.
- Provide safe, clearly defined entry and egress points for car parking.
- Block existing 4WD Access, provide signage to inform 4WD users of access point at Lavis Lane, Fullerton Cove.
- Implement cycleways and footpaths to connect Corroba Reserve to Stockton to the south and Port Stephens pathways to the north.
- Improve dune vegetation and dune stability by limited number of beach access points.



□ Approximate Study Area Boundary

Track used for 4WD for unauthorised access to beach.

Playing field size and shape limit their uses.

Limited shade provided in and around reserve. There are few trees around edges of reserve.

Existing Play equipment requires upgrade.

Detached dwellings provide casual surveillance over Corroba Reserve and adjoining open space.

Numerous Beach access points, some in close proximity which could be rationalised to improve dune vegetation.

Emergency coastal erosion protection required.\*

90m (Maximum) Coastal Risk Investigation line.\*\*

\* Stockton Beach Coastal Zone Management Study (2009)

\*\* NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting To Sea Level Rise - Typical Maximum distance for strategic planning

Figure 7: Corroba Reserve Issues Analysis



- Approximate Study Area Boundary
- New / Upgraded Buildings
- Existing Buildings

- Formalise safe vehicle access and parking for reserve.
- 4WD access to be effectively prevented (alternate formal access available approximately 10 minutes north).
- Extend playing fields 20m north as per existing stakeholder agreement.
- Upgrade playing fields including floodlighting and formalised parking at Corroba Park in accordance with Newcastle City Council proposed plan for multipurpose sports facility.
- Provide trees around edge of reserve to formalise open space edge and provide shade. Trees should not impair opportunities for casual surveillance of the reserve.
- Manage access points to beach in commonly used locations to allow restoration of dune vegetation. Access points to be further investigated at detailed design stage.
- Replace existing playground.
- Provision of numerous pathways of varying length loops for walking, jogging and cycling and connecting the Stockton Sector activity nodes.

Figure 8: Corroba Reserve Concept Masterplan

### 3.1.2 Stockton Beach

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The primary Stockton Beach access, where the beach is patrolled by lifeguards, is adjacent to a number of sporting facilities, including tennis, netball, cricket/football oval and bowling greens, which service Stockton sporting clubs. Views are afforded to the harbour's northern breakwater from the beach. To the south is a tourist park which is fenced to the vegetated dune, limiting public access along the coastline to between the water's edge and foredune. The area is subject to coastal erosion and the dunes lack vegetation in some areas. Investigations into long term solutions to reduce the erosion are being investigated by Council in partnership with the NSW Government.

The terrain is relatively flat and the arrangement of built form makes way finding around the precinct difficult for visitors. Heritage Norfolk pines are located around Lynn Oval and the landscape character could be enhanced with increased tree planting which would assist with way finding.

Stockton Surf Life Saving Club is located close to the beach and is in an area of high coastal erosion risk. The Bowling Club has three bowling greens and is located south west of the Surf Life Saving Club. The adjacent Tennis Club forms the northern edge to the facilities with open netball courts located further north.

The reconfiguration of the northern part of the Stockton Caravan Park is currently being investigated. The Caravan Park has no opportunity for expansion in this location due to the ocean, Lynn Oval and existing lifeguard facilities.

#### Objectives

- Improve pedestrian access and experience by separating pedestrians and vehicles.
- Provide increased pedestrian permeability between beach entrances, sporting facilities and residential area.
- Provide additional, and formalise, on-street parking.
- Maintain proximity of sporting facilities including Lynn Oval, netball courts, tennis courts and bowling greens to enhance a consolidation of Stockton sporting clubs in consultation with the clubs and stakeholders.
- Provide a visual and way finding connection between Stockton Beach, Stockton town centre and Griffith Park.
- Improve vegetation to provided shade and stability.

#### Strategies

- Remove car parking located between the existing Stockton Surf Life Saving Club and Surf Pavilion, offset with parking elsewhere; and replace with grass and dunal vegetation.
- Provide parking bays around Lynn Park to accommodate additional on-street parking.
- Provide street tree plantings along Mitchell Street to create a visual connection to Griffith Park and Stockton town centre.
- In consultation with the clubs and stakeholders, establish new facilities for a combined Stockton sporting club allowing for removal/relocation of the existing Stockton Surf Life Saving Club which is at risk of damage due to coast erosion. Position the building(s) to take advantage of change in level and to assist in creating an inviting micro-climate in the area where the existing beach car park is located.
- Remove existing play equipment east of the bowling club and install new equipment between tennis and netball courts.
- Establish new shade, seating and vegetation in Dalby Park.
- Provided pathway to connect the beach, oval and sporting facilities to other parks of the peninsula.
- Improve dune vegetation and dune stability by limited number of beach access points.



Figure 9: Stockton Beach - Perspective of Combined Sports Clubs



□ Approximate Study Area Boundary

Limited tree planting along streets.

90m (Maximum) Coastal Risk Investigation line.\*\*

View corridors at the end of streets with connections to open space.

Significant coastal erosion with existing sandbagging protection visible in some areas.

Limited bins, shade and seating in open space.

No formal pedestrian paths on eastern side of Mitchell Street.

Surf Life Saving Club at risk of damage due to coast erosion.

Sports clubs operating separately have limited opportunities for new facilities. The cluster of sports facilities limit direct pedestrian access.

Small carpark experiences conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. No opportunity for seating adjacent to the beach.

Off beach coastline access limited by fenced tourist park boundary.

Predominately detached dwellings constructed in various character styles and eras adjacent to the open space.

Vehicular circulation and parking opportunities limited and conflict with pedestrians exist.

Historic Norfolk Pines.

\* As identified in Umwelt (2003) Newcastle Coastline Management Plan

\*\* NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting To Sea Level Rise - Typical Maximum distance for strategic planning

Figure 10: Stockton Beach Issues Analysis



Approximate Study Area Boundary

New / Upgraded Buildings

Existing Buildings

Relocate/ install new play equipment north of tennis courts. Four netball courts to the north to be retained.

Shared pedestrian and cycle path around the Stockton Peninsula.

Additional vegetation, seating and shade facilities to encourage use of open space.

Retain four tennis courts and 2 bowling greens.

New combined Stockton Sports Club and community facilities to incorporate Surf Life Saving Club facilities located back from coastal erosion area. Potential to provide car parking under new building. Relocate play equipment and shade structure.

Relocate existing parking and shade structure to create new open space fronting new built form and beach dunes.

Provide at grade disabled and small bus parking, Emergency and SLSC vehicle access to dunes.

Retain existing Lifeguard facilities building.

Improve pedestrian permeability throughout the precinct.

New parking bays located around Lynn Oval.

Increase tree planting along Mitchell Street. Preferred cycle access along share path parallel to Mitchell Street,

Shade shelter retained.

Manage access points to beach in commonly used locations to allow restoration of dune vegetation.

Figure 11: Stockton Beach Concept Masterplan

### 3.1.3 Stockton East

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Stockton East contains a public swimming pool, skate facility, access to the northern breakwater and a significantly sized reserve (Pitt Street Reserve) which is heavily utilised, particularly during the holiday period. Vehicle access across Pitt Street Reserve results in potential conflicts between reserve users and vehicles.

With the existing infrastructure available in Stockton there is ability for the Tourist Park to provide an expanded level of accommodation. Potentially cabin style accommodation of up to 2 storeys can be boosted in non-peak times by school camps during school terms and also rented to families and groups during peak holiday periods as traditional tourist accommodation. Potential for interpretation of historical sites and heritage items, including ship wrecks, that exist in the Pitt Street Reserve can also support this.

It is understood that draft concept plans have been prepared for upgrading and expansion of cabin style accommodation in the northern end of the tourist park. Further consideration should be given to designs to allow for the potential use of land south of the current tourist park. However it is noted that the skate park and swimming pool are critical community facilities and are not to be fragmented or removed.

This proposal may lead to higher revenues and operating profits for the tourist park and its contribution to adjoining Crown reserves.

#### Objectives

- Maintain swimming pool, skate facility and access to northern breakwater.
- Explore opportunities for new short term accommodation facilities.
- Limit vehicular access across Pitt Street Reserve.
- Provide cycle and pedestrian connections to the north and south of the peninsula.
- Encourage historical interpretation.
- Formalise oval and parks.

#### Strategies

- Plant vegetation and install bollards to limit vehicular access across Pitt Street Reserve to improve reserve user and pedestrian safety.
- Undertake detailed studies for tourist park expansion in Stockton East without compromising existing facilities (swimming pool and Skate Park).
- Extend cycleway from Griffith Park north to form part of a shared cycle and pedestrian loop around the Stockton peninsula.
- Establish interpretive tracks and sites that explore the history and heritage of the area.



\* As identified in Umwelt (2003) Newcastle Coastline Management Plan

\*\* NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting To Sea Level Rise - Typical Maximum distance for strategic planning

Figure 12: Griffith Park Issues Analysis



Figure 13: Stockton East Concept Masterplan

### 3.1.4 Griffith Park

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Outstanding views are afforded from Griffith Park south to the Harbour, breakwaters and Newcastle CBD. The ferry terminal is well used as a quick access to the CBD. There is significant paved car parking area and a drop off area located adjacent to the ferry terminal and informal parking on adjacent grassed areas are also used. The park is used for formal and informal recreation uses however lacks established vegetation in some areas to provide protection from sun and wind for users.

Given the prominent location of the ferry terminal at Griffith Park and its expansive views, opportunity exists to develop a restaurant or café located on the water (similar to Scratchley's located adjacent to Queens Wharf).

Access to the restaurant could be provided via car and the car parking located in Griffith Park or via the ferry from Newcastle. The location of a restaurant/café in this location would have synergies with the General Washington Hotel located on the corner of Hunter and Mitchell Streets.

As with any commercial development proposal, consideration of viability will be required given the relative isolation of Stockton, travel times, small local population and sequencing of competition in the broader coastal corridor.

The waterfront setting of Griffith Park overlooking Newcastle Harbour and CBD also lends itself to more recreation and tourist uses. In particular, the proposal for enhanced cycle ways throughout Stockton may generate demand for services such as bicycle hire. This type of use typically does not warrant the construction of a dedicated facility and would most likely be best serviced by a mobile facility. Hire schemes are operated similarly in other areas in Australia, such as within the Brisbane Botanical Gardens. Income opportunities from these types of uses are generally derived through a licence agreement that allows for exclusivity for the operator to provide bicycle (or other) hire services within the park.

Weekend markets are another tourist based use that could be considered here. However this type of use should be considered and coordinated with similar markets elsewhere in Newcastle so as not to compete directly. Operation of a market could be set up with direct casual licences on a per day basis with individual stall holders; or through a head lease with an operator that would operate the whole market. The head lease option provides many benefits to Council as all responsibility for management and marketing lies with the head lease holder.

#### Objectives

- Provide opportunity for a small development on land adjacent to the ferry terminal to take advantage of spectacular views.
- Provide a visual and physical connection between Stockton Beach, Stockton town centre and Griffith Park.
- Encourage foreshore activity nodes to encourage use of the foreshore.
- Encourage active recreation and formalise use of the oval.
- Accommodate future ferry commuter car parking needs.
- Improve pedestrian, cycle and disabled access.

#### Strategies

- Investigate the development of café/restaurant adjacent to ferry terminal.
- Formalise oval with shade providing tree plantings to formalise the playing field extents.
- Formalise lookout point located south of the junction of Pitt Street and Wharf Crescent.
- Manage car parking, including through timed maximum stay so that prime car parking is not exclusively used by commuters.
- Strategically locate foreshore activity nodes including disabled fishing platforms, taps, tables, shade and seating, and link with current plans for cycleways, especially to the north-west.



Figure 14: Griffith Park - Perspective of Restaurant adjacent to ferry terminal



Figure 15: Griffith Park Issues Analysis



Figure 16: Griffith Park Concept Masterplan

## 3.2 City Beaches (Central) Sector

### Existing Conditions

The City Beaches are highly popular with both the local community and tourists. Their unique proximity to the CBD, the increase in higher density residential development adjoining the foreshore, and the proximity of regional rail to the beaches, leads to the open space being highly used.

Nobbys Beach, Newcastle Beach, and King Edward Park form a continuous open space system along the harbour foreshore and coastline that provides a magnificent landscape setting to the Newcastle CBD. Heritage Ocean baths are located North of Newcastle Beach off Shortland Esplanade.

The Sector has a number of heritage areas and items including: The Hill Heritage Conservation Area, the Bogey Hole and Newcastle East Heritage Conservation Area including Fort Scratchley, Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club and Nobby's Lighthouse. Opportunities to access and enhance the areas surrounding the heritage assets exist. Establishing gateways to provide definition for both heritage areas and the CBD open space/beaches will assist in displaying the heritage values of these areas. The initiatives within the Coal River Precinct Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan (2007, Boyce Pizzey Strategic) need to be incorporated where possible in this area.

In enabling access to the coastline, linkages to the CBD by roads, pathways and open space is important. Providing facilities in this sector is of heightened importance due to this accessibility and frequency of use.

The primary vehicular access for the coastline is along Wharf Road from Honeysuckle and Shortland Esplanade to King Edward Park. Pedestrian access to Nobbys Beach from the railway station is through Foreshore Park. Access to Newcastle Beach is along Hunter, King and Church Streets. Enhancing the pedestrian experience to Newcastle Beach via Pacific Park and relocation of the Newcastle Beach Surf Life Saving Club would assist to create an improved CBD linkage.

There are numerous points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, particularly at Wharf Road, Nobbys Road and along Shortland Esplanade in the vicinity of Newcastle Beach. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation needs to be improved around the coastline and between the CBD, foreshore and the beaches.

The intensity of use on the coast has placed pressure on the maintenance and management of existing facilities such as parking, adequate seating, shade, bins etc. Management is required to ensure visitors are not discouraged from using the coastline due to inaccessibility or inadequate public domain and facilities provisions.

### Key Themes

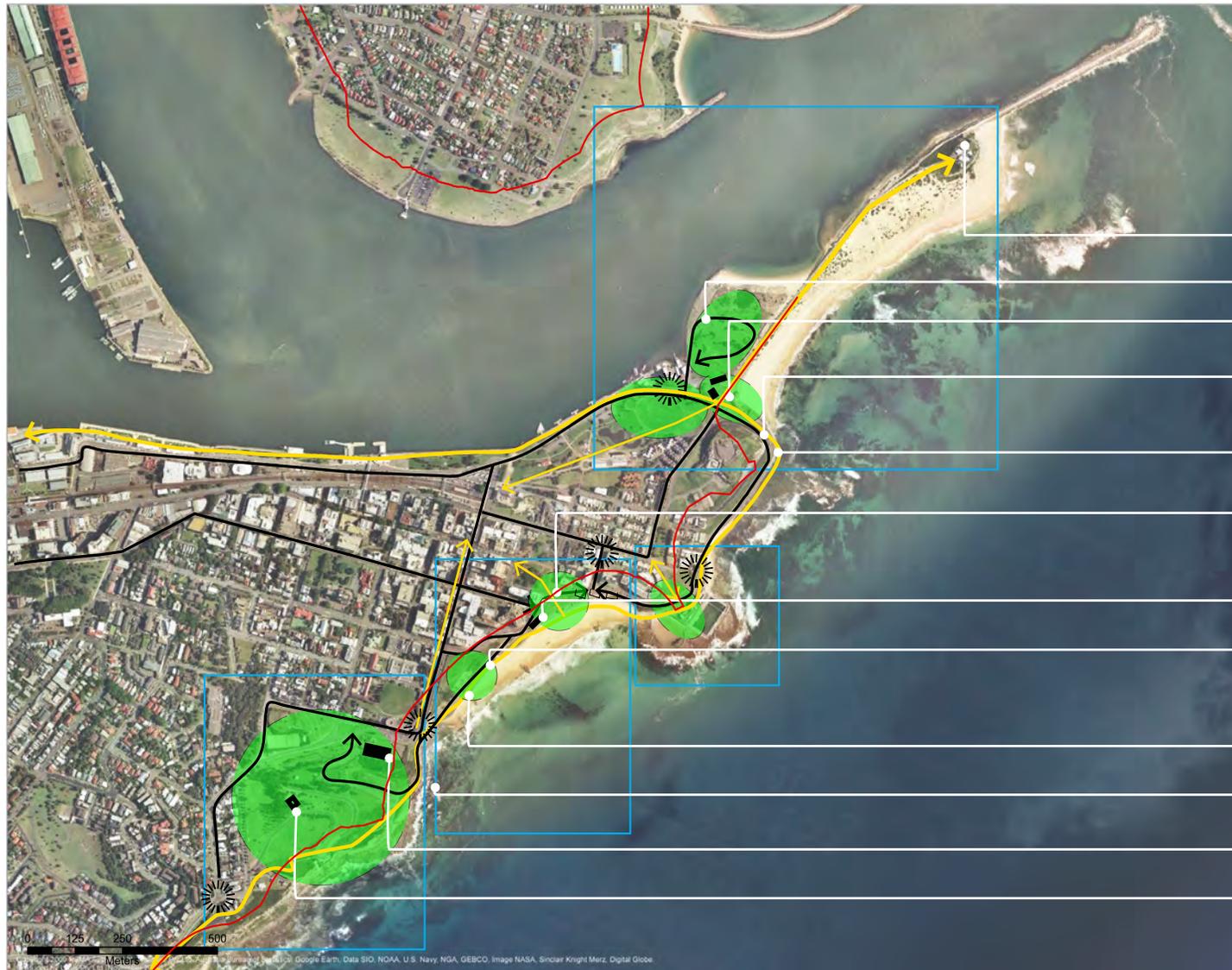
- Urban beach experiences.
- Gateway to city.
- Heritage Significance

### Sector Objectives

- Enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the Newcastle CBD and other parts of the coastline.
- Increase activity and vitality along the coastline that is in close proximity to the CBD.
- Improve the accessibility, quantity and quality of public domain elements.

### Sector Strategies

- Enhance pedestrian connectivity through the development of and improved links to Bathers Way.
- Establish limited new built form along select streets to encourage activity and vibrancy to the area.
- In consultation with Newcastle Port Corporation and the Coal River Working Party, enhance access to and interpretation of historical sites such as Nobbys Lighthouse and the Historic Baths, incorporating initiatives where possible of the Coal River plan.
- Encourage and support temporary and permanent activities such as temporary markets and potentially the establishment in the longer term of a restaurant precinct along the city beaches coastline.
- Encourage a public domain elements study to be undertaken to identify appropriate locations for new or relocated bins, seats, lighting, cycle parking in association with CBD revitalisation.



-  Precinct Gateway
-  90m Coastal Recession investigation area
-  Bathers Way route
-  Pedestrian and cycle pathways
-  Connector roads
-  Open space activity nodes
-  Approximate key precinct location

Access to light house with kiosk associated with proposed uses.

Provide one way park loop road with parking.

Relocate Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club and convert existing Clubhouse to restaurant.

Convert Shortland Esplanade to one way road with angle parking.

Provide wider Bathers Way coast line path to allow for cyclists and pedestrians.

Option to remove existing Surf Life Saving Club adjacent to Newcastle Beach, establish grassed amphitheatre park.

Option to relocate Newcastle Surf Club south of existing location.

Option to relocate skate park (in accordance with Council Skate Park Review) and replace with family oriented activity node.

Re-open Shortland Esplanade at Newcastle Beach South.

Upgrade safety and access at the Bogey Hole.

New restaurant/ function centre at King Edwards Park Headland.

New park cafe/kiosk.

Figure 17: City Beaches (Central) Sector Plan

### 3.2.1 Nobbys

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The proximity of Nobbys Beach to the Newcastle CBD and adjoining foreshore parkland makes the location popular for tourists and local residents. The precinct is also close to the Stockton ferry terminal. Car parking adjacent to the surf club and Horseshoe Beach is inadequate for vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Limited access currently exists to the Nobbys Head Lighthouse, however the walk along the southern breakwater is popular with visitors and local residents. Views are afforded to the breakwaters from the beach and adjoining promenade. The park between the Harbour Pilot Station and the road to Nobbys Head is underutilised due to a lack of facilities, topography and landscape treatment.

The precinct is listed on the State Heritage Register. From the Coal River Precinct Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan (2008), its Statement of Significance is:

“With its indigenous associations, [it] is a true ‘birthplace’ site. Its land, buildings and subterranean remains concentrate elements of the Newcastle story from prehistory through the first hundred years of European settlement. In the beaches and the later Nobbys Beach Pavillion the all-embracing questions of the Newcastle character are exemplified. It is difficult to think of another major city which can point to such a rich mix of important heritage themes in such a special landscape environment.”

Measures to emphasise the area’s rich heritage values have been proposed in the Coal River Plan adopted by Council and will be incorporated where appropriate into the implementation of this plan. This Masterplan also necessarily addresses a broader range of coastal needs.

The existing Nobbys Surf Life Saving Clubhouse is limited in size and hence in its ability to accommodate its full range of functions. Membership cannot be catered for in the current building. Currently, 700 members including 400 female members not adequately covered by female facilities. Membership currently on hold but could easily expand to 1000 in 5 years. Investigations have been undertaken to determine the potential expansion of the Club. The preferred option is to construct a new clubhouse north-west of the existing club as shown in the annotated concept drawing (see Figure 22). Appendix E contains alternative options.

In conjunction with the potential for Nobbys Lighthouse to be opened for public access; and the potential for accommodation, restaurant or similar, there may be potential for a small kiosk to be developed in this precinct. This kiosk would service the significant number of visitors that would utilise the walk to the Lighthouse, should it be opened to access. In addition to providing a modest income opportunity, the kiosk would primarily improve the offer provided by the Lighthouse walk, improving its value as a tourist destination. The kiosk might only operate during peak periods such as weekends and holidays, in line with demand.

Operation of a kiosk at the Lighthouse may need to be tied to the operation of either the proposed accommodation/restaurant in the buildings around the Lighthouse or the kiosk/restaurant at Nobbys Beach. This is due to the small scale of a kiosk at the Lighthouse having limited viability as a stand-alone business.

In assessing the operation of the surf club and its facilities, it is clear that the current building is not suitable for the Club’s long term needs. Heritage values will limit expansion of the building and may require a new club facility to be constructed nearby.

The iconic heritage design of the existing clubhouse and north-easterly aspect of the building, lend it towards a restaurant based use. (A prime example of this is the Bathers Beach Pavilion at Balmoral Beach in Sydney). The conversion of this building to a restaurant would also require inclusion of the existing kiosk located on the south-eastern end of the building; however there may be potential to leave some public toilet facilities within the building.

Relocation of the surf club to a new building would also allow for additional commercial facilities to be located in the lower levels of the surf club such as an informal café or kiosk. This would maintain the current amenity provided by the existing kiosk whilst also increasing the depth of offer through a restaurant developed in the current building.

Income would be derived through both a lease of the existing heritage clubhouse as a restaurant, and from a kiosk/café located in the new club building. As this option requires the construction of a new clubhouse, a full financial feasibility is needed to determine its viability. In addition to income generation, there would also be employment and economic benefits delivered to the community. This particular proposal appears to provide a strong return, however it would be offset by the need to construct a new club.

The proposed upgrade to the pedestrian promenade forming part of the Bathers Way between Nobbys Beach and Newcastle Beach is well positioned to provide markets during special occasions (e.g. night food markets and/or special arts & craft markets). However market are not anticipated to occur in this location on a regular basis. This type of use would provide income opportunities to Council as well as improving the sense of vitality and tourism attractiveness of the area.

Improved parking vehicular circulation in the precinct could assist in reducing antisocial gatherings in dead end carparks and turn over of car parking spaces. Development of a parkland loop road must take into account the space requirements for City of Newcastle events. This can be addressed in the detail design stage. The precinct should not result in a net loss of parking due to any proposal. Enforced timed parking would also assist in providing parking for beach and open space users and discourage all day commuter parking in prime locations.

There is potential to incorporate sky canons and audio park in accordance with Coal River Precinct Conservation and Cultural Tourism Management Plan (2007, Boyce Pizzey Strategic). A potential water feature could provide a safe water play area for younger children who are not yet comfortable in the ocean particularly during periods of rougher seas. Further investigation of both of these proposals at detailed design stage is required.

### Objectives

- Determine the future of Nobbys Lighthouse and headland in consultation with Newcastle Port Corporation and other stakeholders.
- Emphasise heritage, incorporating elements of the Coal River Plan.
- Ensure management of car parks discourage antisocial gathering of vehicles and behaviour.
- Provide additional recreation space overlooking the beach with shelter from weather.
- Improve vehicular circulation by making Shortland Esplanade a one way road.
- Enhance the pedestrian connection to the foreshore and along Shortland Esplanade to Newcastle Beach.
- Provide priority parking for park and beach users.
- Provide space for temporary activities to occur.
- Ensure the range of surf life saving and related functions are accommodated.

### Strategies

- Develop a new Surf Life Saving Clubhouse north of existing clubhouse to accommodate other uses in function room and take advantage of views. Utilise the existing clubhouse for restaurant/café facilities and other uses, whilst considering the heritage values of the building.
- Review priorities of the Coal River Plan and address these wherever possible in consultation with key stakeholders such as the Coal River Working Party.
- Enforce time-limited parking to reduce all day car parking by city workers.
- Increase pathway width to enhance pedestrian connectivity between the harbour foreshore and the coastline to the south.
- Establish a parkland loop road to connect parking and improve vehicular circulation.
- Establish water feature/play area adjacent to the beach to accommodate safe play area for younger children. (This might be combined with the “audio park and sky canons” proposals of the Coal River Plan).
- Utilise lighthouse for kiosk facility associated with proposed short term accommodation or similar uses.
- Ensure safety by design including appropriate opportunities for passive surveillance and lighting.



Figure 18: Nobbys - Perspective of New and Existing Surf Life Saving Club



Figure 19: Nobbys Issues Analysis (see also Figure 21)



Figure 20: Nobbys Concept Masterplan (see also Figure 22)

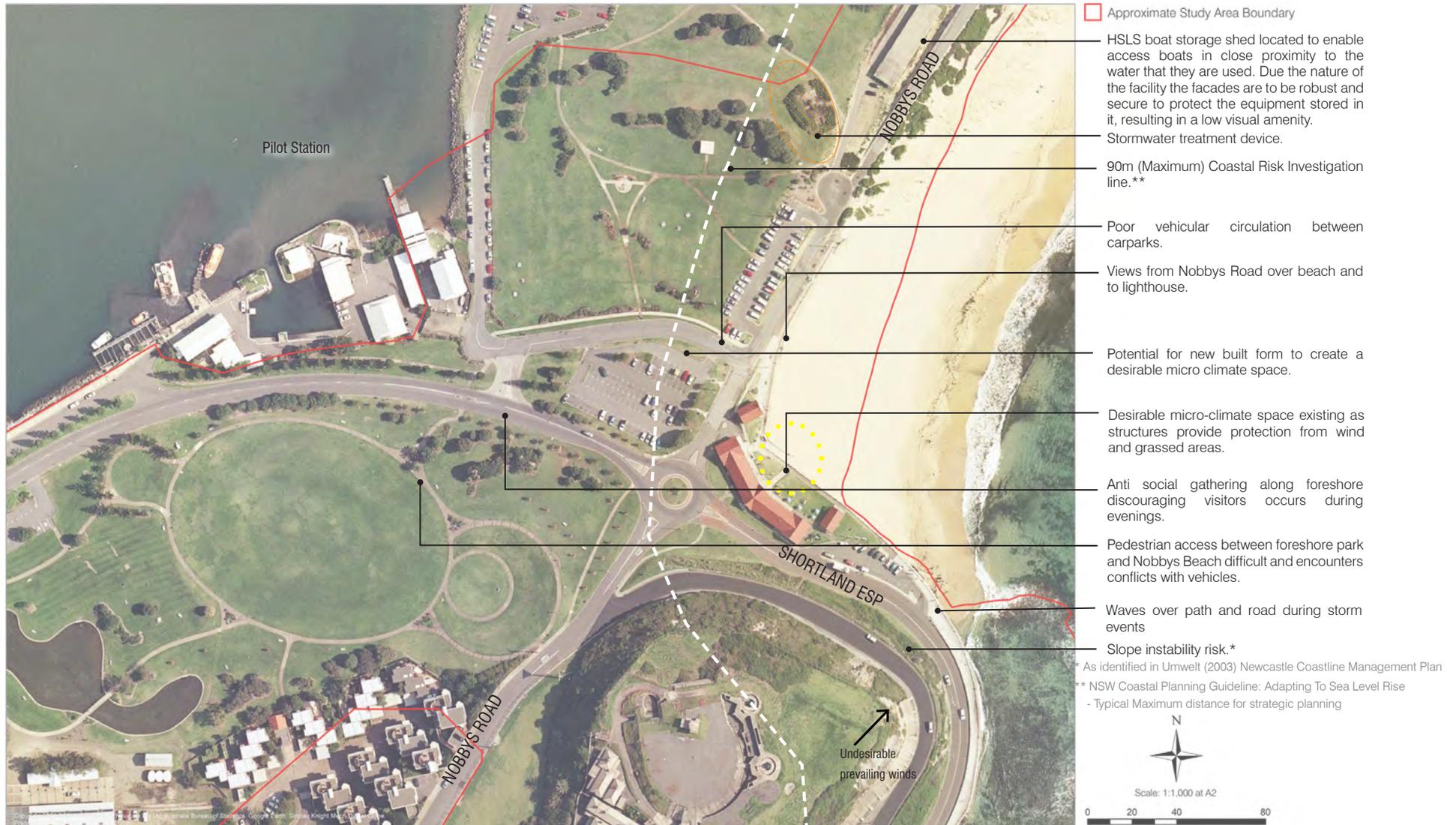


Figure 21: Nobbys Central Issues Analysis

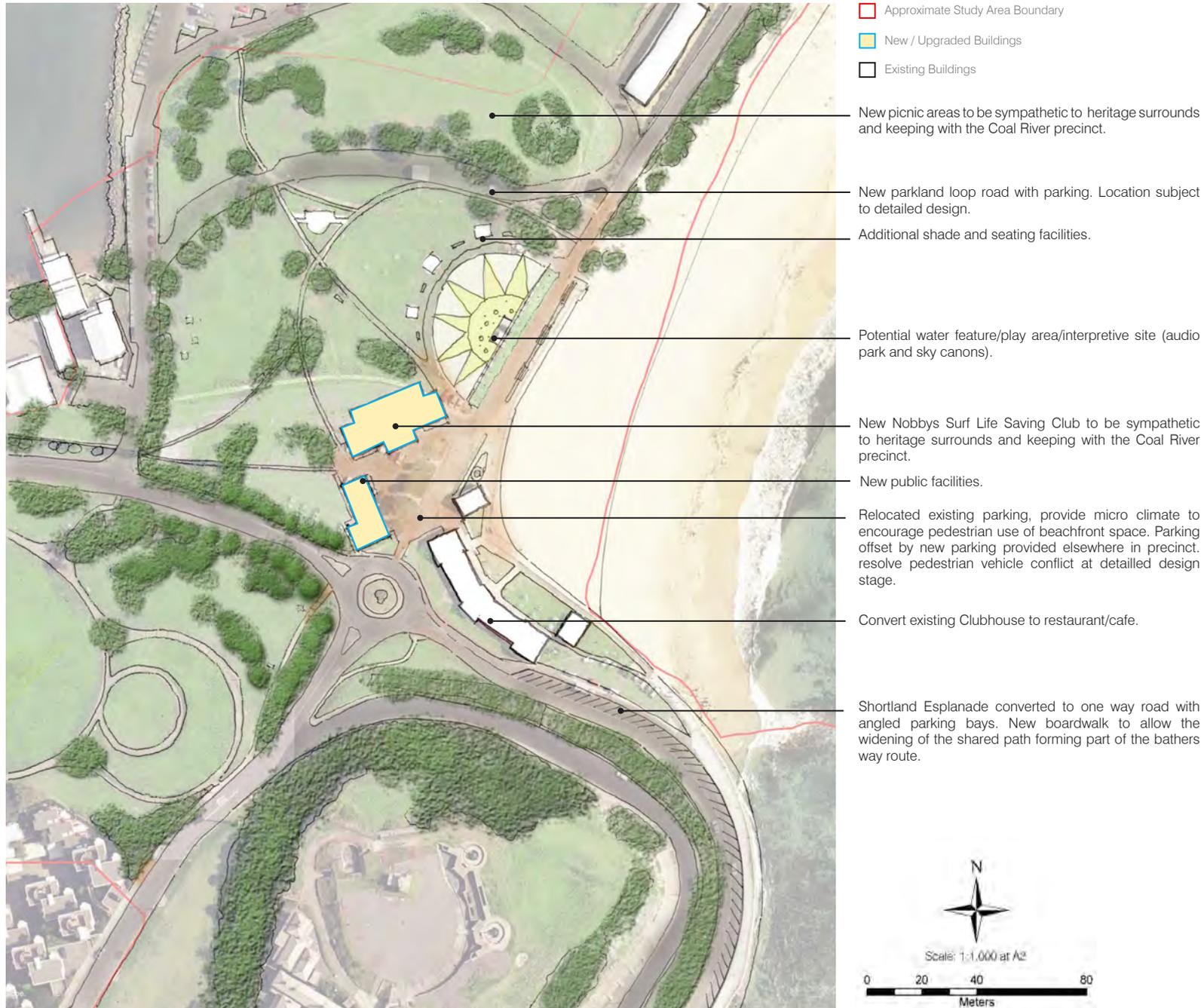


Figure 22: Nobbys Central Concept Masterplan (Preferred Option (C))

## 3.2.2 Newcastle Baths

### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The precinct consists of Tramway Park to the north-west of Shortland Esplanade and the Newcastle Baths to the south-east. Tramway Park is a small park with a steep embankment located at the edge of Shortland Esplanade. Pedestrian access is narrow along Shortland Esplanade and can be enhanced. The precinct assists in embellishing coastal built form and historic coastal use in close proximity to the CBD.

Tramway Park was investigated for potential for development. The exhibited draft version of this strategy contained an indicative assessment of development yield suggests potential for a low rise residential/short term accommodation complex comprising around 15 town houses/villas. However there were a number of objections submitted during public exhibition and further analysis questions viability in the current situation. Hence investment based around Newcastle Baths is the preferred current option.

The heritage listed Newcastle Baths have long provided public swimming facilities for Newcastle residents; however have degraded due to their age and coastal location. Car parking for the baths was upgraded in late 2009 including reconfiguration and resurfacing. The main pavilion is separated into northern and southern ends, separated by a two-level section at the main entrance point. The southern end contains partially open-air change rooms and public toilets, with the northern end having been partially demolished to rectify structural issues on the site. The central two-level component houses the life guard facilities, a small kiosk on the ground level and a vacant dilapidated two bedroom residence on the upper level (formerly used by the caretaker).

Development of the northern end of the baths is problematic, as it is regularly inundated with water, particularly in very high tides or rough ocean conditions. This makes development of the northern end for commercial use difficult. A better use for this area may be for the change rooms and public toilets, as these are wet area uses that could be designed to accommodate occasional sea water entry.

Relocation of the change rooms and public toilets to the northern end would then free-up the southern end of the baths for some form of commercial use. This end of the baths overlooks the Canoe Pool with an outlook towards Newcastle Beach.

Potential uses for the site are limited by the importance of the heritage façade and the potential impact on views of constructing additional levels. As such, any use would most likely have to be a single level no higher than the existing building. Potential for some expansion of the building may exist at the southern and eastern elevations which would assist in providing additional floor space.

Given the attractive outlook of the baths it would be well positioned to accommodate a hospitality based use such as a restaurant. The potential size of a facility on the southern end of the baths could be in the order of 800 sqm with expansion, which would also provide sufficient size for functions to be catered by the restaurant. This type of use would also link

well with potential restaurant and entertainment uses proposed for adjacent new development along Newcastle Beach. However, retaining the connectivity between the Baths and the beach to the south is important.

Key challenges in the development of the Newcastle Baths will be financial viability, given that any proposal will require relocation of the change room and toilet facilities to the northern part of the building. Whilst financial viability may be marginal in terms of commercial return due to high costs of rectification work, it will assist in maintaining this important historic asset for the community.

### Objectives

- Utilise ocean bath structures with heritage significance to take advantage of views and historic coastline uses.
- Maintain and improve views from Tramway Reserve and access through to Bathers way from Scott Street.
- Improve pedestrian access along Bathers Way.
- Provide an active pedestrian edge along Shortland Esplanade.

### Strategies

- Maintain and improve public pedestrian access to Bathers Way from Scott Street via Tramway Reserve.
- Convert Shortland Esplanade to a one way road and provide angled parking and increased pathway width.
- Widen path forming part of Bathers Way through use of a cantilevered structure where landform does not permit at-grade expansion.
- Allow cafe located in the Newcastle Baths Pavilion to take advantage of views.
- Permit the use of the upper levels of the Newcastle Baths Pavilion to be used for accommodation or office purposes.



Figure 23: Newcastle Baths Issues Analysis



Figure 24: Newcastle Baths Concept Masterplan



Figure 25: Perspective of Bathers Way, Shortland Esplanade at Newcastle Baths



Figure 26: Perspective of Bathers Way, Shortland Esplanade at Newcastle Baths

### 3.2.3 Newcastle Beach

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The connection between the Newcastle CBD and Newcastle Beach is weak, with Pacific Park lacking legibility to assist with way finding. The location and built form of the Newcastle Beach Surf Life Saving Club are not ideal for users nor for enabling access to the beach promenade from Shortland Esplanade.

The development surrounding the beach negatively impacts on pedestrians' experience, with limited active street frontages facing the beach and some tall blank masonry walls. This lack of active street frontage and the setbacks on what appears to be unused road reserve make the area uninviting for users and less vibrant than it could be. A longer term opportunity exists to activate the ground floors of the apartment building opposite the beach to enhance vibrancy. This may also facilitate the creation of a restaurant precinct in the longer term, affording good amenity and access however due to strata titling the potential for this to occur in the short to medium term is limited.

Coastal locations throughout Australia, particularly in built-up CBD and tourist areas are a natural location for food and beverage locations. These uses are a perfect complement to leisure uses of the beach and provide an investment opportunity within the Newcastle Coastal Precinct. The current provision of food and beverage facilities adjacent to Newcastle Beach is relatively limited compared to other similar locations throughout Australia. A cross section of examples of strong food and beverage precincts around Australia include:

- Noosa, Queensland
- Mooloolaba, Queensland
- Surfers Paradise, Queensland
- Coolangatta, Queensland
- Coffs Harbour Jetty, NSW
- Terrigal, NSW
- Balmoral Beach, NSW
- Bondi Beach, NSW
- Portsea, Victoria
- Glenelg, SA
- Cottesloe Beach, WA

In addition to food and beverage uses, other retail such as fashion and beachwear have synergies with the coast. However, these types of uses depend more on exposure to passing trade and therefore require a prominent location.

The Masterplan options include a redesign and refurbish the current surf club building. The potential redesign should optimise the building spaces for all users to share. A potential redesign should also, investigate the option of a glass restaurant on top of the building similar to the Brighton Le Sands Surf Club, south of Sydney. The other option shown in Figure 29 relocates into a new building to the south, allowing the reinstatement of the grassed half bowl/amphitheatre between Pacific Park and Newcastle Beach. The second option also assist in providing additional light and surveillance of the pedestrian underpass with building envelopes positioned either side of the and could provide accommodation for restaurant, café and retail uses.

In the longer term, establishment of a successful dining precinct around Newcastle Beach would benefit from additional restaurant and cafe here and on adjoining areas. Any proposed structures in the long term could potentially be set into the slope below Shortland Esplanade to reduce visual impacts.

The timing of any development of retail accommodation will need to correspond with the expansion of other tourism generating opportunities (such as the tourist accommodation apartments on the former Newcastle Hospital site due for completion in late 2010). This will ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from increasing the region's tourism market.

In addition to growth of the tourism market, continued population growth will increase available retail expenditure from residents directed toward food and beverage outlets. This in turn will generate demand for additional restaurant and café accommodation. This growth in retail expenditure will also increase the diversity of demand. Indeed, the work undertaken in the Newcastle CBD Revitalisation Strategy has indicated a growing residential and tourism focus for the eastern end of Newcastle, which in itself will drive demand for additional facilities over time.

### Objectives

- Improve the physical and visual connection from Pacific Park to Newcastle Beach.
- Potentially remove the Skate Park at Newcastle South in accordance with and pending outcomes of Newcastle Skate Park Strategy and replace with family oriented facilities.
- In the longer term, investigate built form to accommodate uses that support a vibrant restaurant precinct.
- Improve access to South Newcastle Beach.

### Strategies

- Pending surf club options, re-instate a grassed half bowl shape (potentially for amphitheatre uses) for public access and recreation adjacent to beach promenade at the location of the existing Surf Life Saving Club.
- Re-open Shortland Esplanade to vehicles at South Newcastle Beach.
- Following investigation of preferred options, redesign and refurbish existing Surf Life Saving Club or develop a new Surf Life Saving Club to the south of the existing location, demolish the existing clubhouse.
- Provide new development set into the escarpment between Newcastle Beach and



Figure 27: Newcastle Beach- Perspective looking west

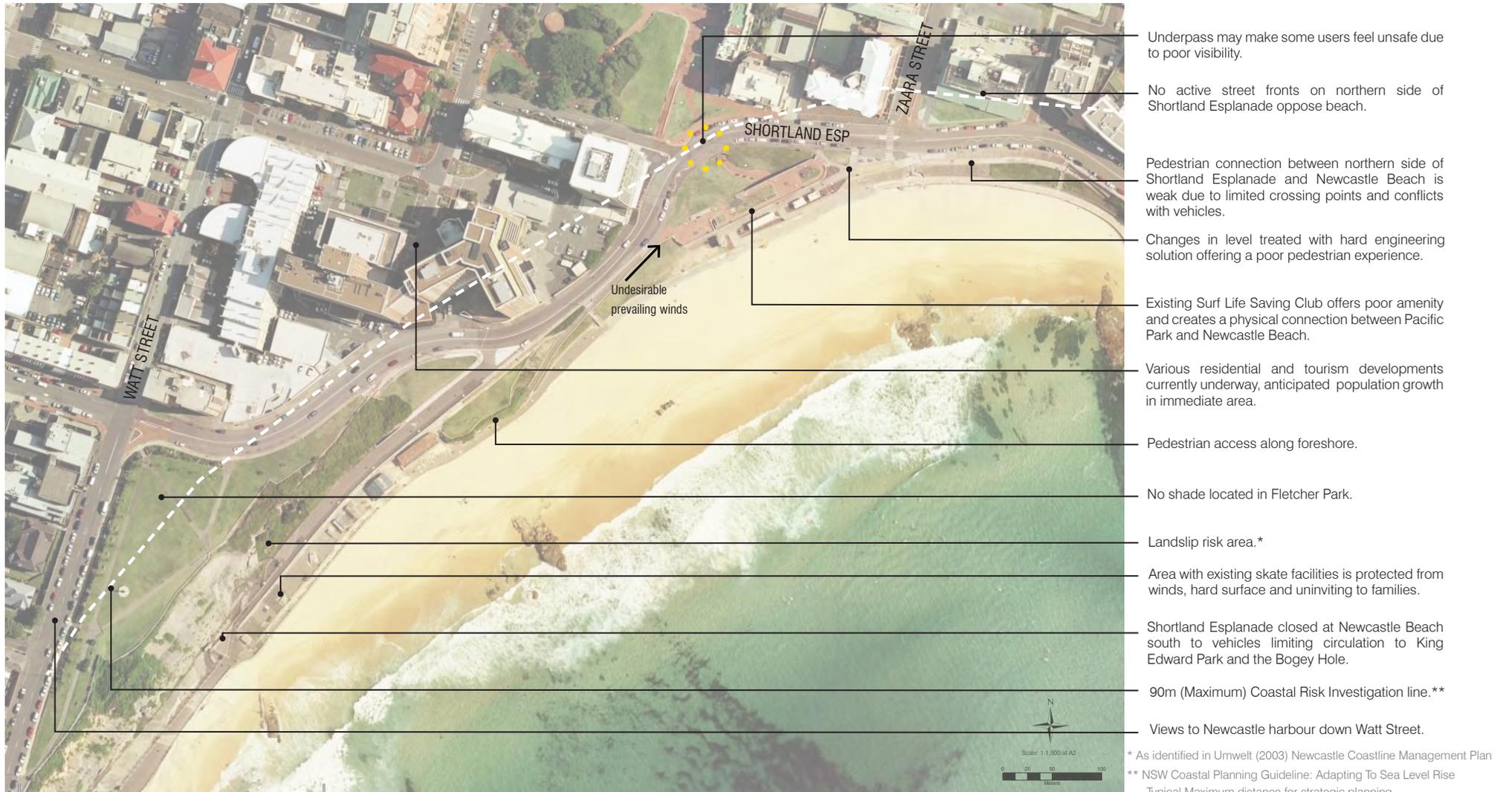


Figure 28: Newcastle Beach Issues Analysis

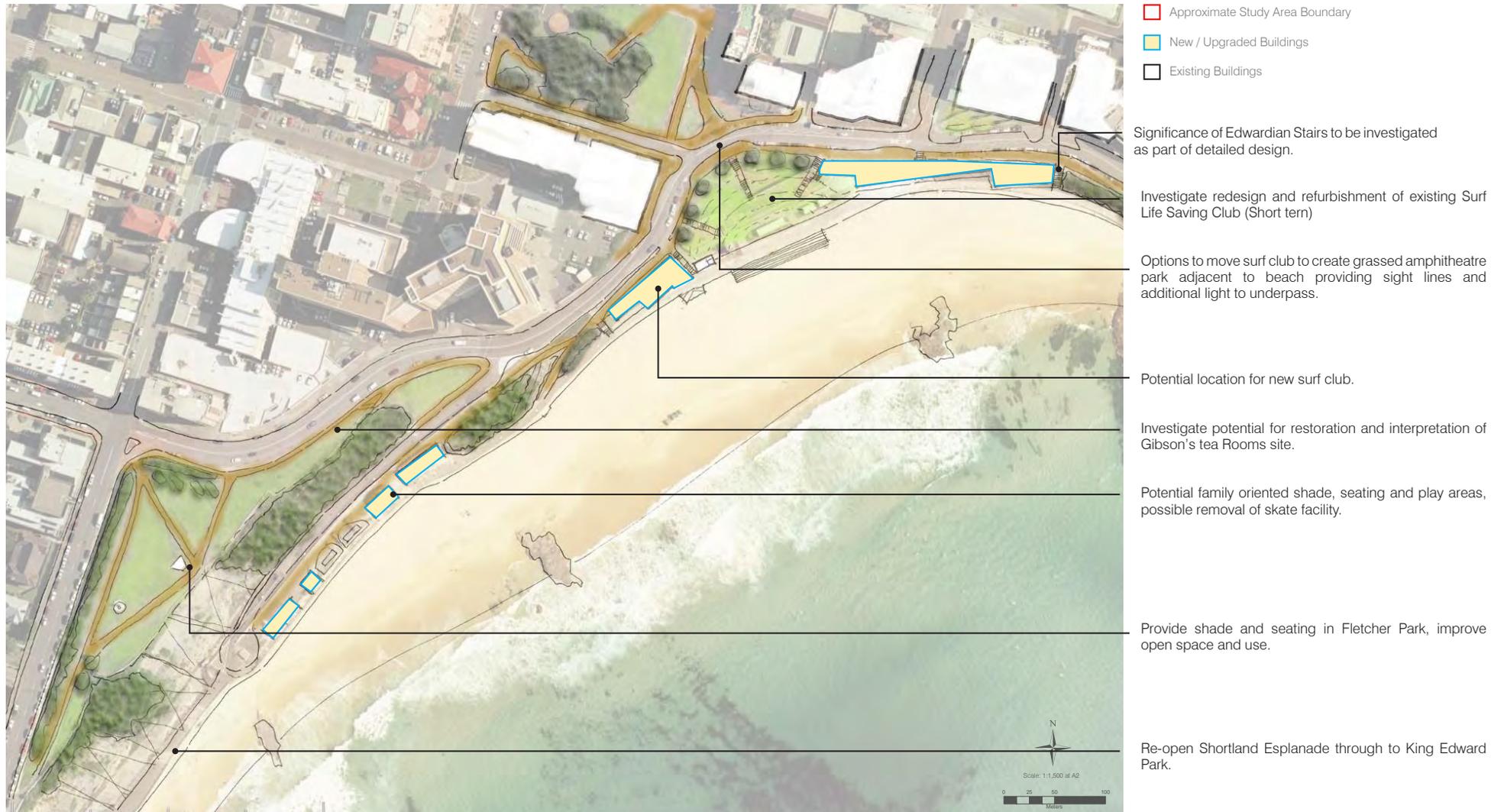


Figure 29: Newcastle Beach Concept Masterplan

Shortland Esplanade.

### 3.2.4 King Edward Park + Bogey Hole

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

King Edward Park has varying terrain and limited development. The park is well used for passive and active recreation and affords significant views to the coast and from the southern end of Watt Street to the Harbour. The visually prominent former bowling club site to the north of the park is subject to a lease arrangement to develop a function centre and restaurant.

The Park is located in The Hill Heritage Conservation Area (Newcastle DCP 2005) which was subject to coal mining during the 19th century. An opportunity exists to provide interpretive opportunities of the uses and heritage items.

The potential re-opening of Shortland Esplanade would improve vehicular circulation through the park, with potential to reinstate parking opportunities.

The Bogey Hole, which is located on a rock platform below a steep section of the park has safety issues; however it is frequented by local residents and visitors. Investigation into the upgrade of safety and access is currently underway. Should an upgrade to provide adequate safety and access be undertaken, potentially additional facilities such as toilets, change rooms and lifeguard facilities may also be required consistent with heritage values of the site.

King Edward Park is popular for local residents and tourists, particularly during holidays and weekends. There are currently no commercial facilities that service this precinct, however the proposed redevelopment of the former bowling club site (the King Edward Headland Reserve) will provide a close point of access. The NSW Land and Property Management Authority has undertaken an expressions of interest process to choose a successful tenderer for the development of this site. A lease agreement for development of the site has been entered between LPMA and proponent and works on site have also commenced.

There is an opportunity for a small cafe/kiosk providing services to visitors in King Edward Park. This type of kiosk would be similar to the kiosk discussed for the Nobbys Lighthouse and would most likely operate during peak periods on weekends and holidays. This use would be best located near the public toilets within the park and could serve a similar role to, for example, the Pavilion Kiosk in the Royal Botanic Gardens which is a satellite of the Pavilion on the Park.

The financial return of this type of use is likely to be relative low given its small scale and the likely limitation on trading hours. The main purpose however would be to deliver an improved service to residents and visitors and therefore any decision to add a kiosk into King Edward Park may depend on the trading success of the proposal for King Edward Headland Reserve and demonstrated demand from park users.

#### Objectives

- Improve access to historical and heritage items.
- Provide opportunities for park users to purchase food and beverages.
- Ensure the preservation of public access and open space for recreational purposes.
- Enhance pedestrian and cycle access through the park.

#### Strategies

- Investigate opportunities to secure funding to reinstate and enhance safety and access to the Bogey Hole.
- Allocate a site in a parkland setting close to public amenities for the sale of food and beverages.
- Upgrade pedestrian and cycle paths linking the park to the north and south of the coastline.
- Provide new seating and shade facilities near pathways that transect the park.
- Provide interpretation sites for items of history and heritage.



Figure 30: King Edward Park- Perspective of park Kiosk/cafe



□ Approximate Study Area Boundary

Street tree planting forms edge to park and amenity for detached residential dwellings opposite, should be retained. Area is located within The Hill Heritage Conservation Area.

High point provides significant coastal views.

Former bowling club site leased to be utilised as restaurant and function centre.

Significant tree planting provides shade and wind protection, should be retained and enhanced.

No food or beverage purchase opportunities in King Edward Park.

Conservation of remnant Themeda Grassland recommended.\*

Use of park as a hand glider landing ground.

Limited shade and seating at lookout point.

Access and safety at the Bogey Hole issues as existing infrastructure is aging and inadequate.

Park users may be discouraged from using the park due to vehicle conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists. Parking used by CBD workers needs to be carefully managed to ensure parking availability for park and coastline users.

Opportunity for a new pathway for pedestrian and cycle access to the South.

90m (Maximum) Coastal Risk Investigation line.\*\*

\* As identified in Umwelt (2003) Newcastle Coastline Management Plan

\*\* NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting To Sea Level Rise

- Typical Maximum distance for strategic planning

Figure 31: King Edward Park and Bogey Hole Issues Analysis



Figure 32: King Edward Park and Bogey Hole Concept Masterplan

### 3.3 Suburban Beaches (Southern) Sector

#### Existing Conditions

The Suburban Beaches comprising Bar Beach, Dixon Beach and Merewether Beach are well used by local residents and visitors for day to day recreation. Each beach has its own distinct character resulting from topography, road network, aspect and surrounding built form.

The Sector extends between Cooks Hill to the north and the Glenrock State Conversation Area to the south. A small headland with residential development separates Bar Beach from Dixon Beach and Merewether, however from Cooks Hill a visual link is present. Establishing gateways is important for defining the character of the area, providing a heightened sense of place for residents and visitors.

The character of each beach could be improved and enhanced through upgraded public domain elements, increased accessibility and expression of local character. The existing facilities situated directly on the coastline are limited and an opportunity exists for new and upgraded structures on under-utilised land to serve visitors and residents and to support existing facilities.

Car parking dominates a number of key coastal positions in the Suburban Beaches Sector; these could be relocated to enable these spectacular locations to be utilised for other purposes such as recreation and landscape restoration.

Road connections are important for facilitating access to and between the three beaches; though they also impact the pedestrian connection between beaches and parks. There is opportunity to improve safety and direct through-traffic along desirable routes and to improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity.

#### Key Themes

- Suburban Beach experiences.
- Transition from tourist/visitor (city) beaches to beaches used by "local" individuals and groups.
- Families and all ages coastal activities and use.

#### Sector Objectives

- Enhance connectivity along the coastline.
- Improve the type, quantity and quality of public domain elements.
- Ensure the passive and active recreation opportunities are located to minimise conflict and to enhance safety.
- Ensure prime coastal positions are best utilised by rationalising car parking (with no net loss at each precinct) to accommodate other uses such as open space.
- Permit new built form on under-utilised land to assist with casual surveillance and to support existing facilities.

#### Sector Strategies

- Enhance and develop the Bathers Way coastline route and other means of accommodating pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improve and enhance green space adjacent to beaches with vegetation, shade, seating and pathways.
- Relocate car parking to retain accessibility, while allowing sites with a significant relationship to the coast to be reinstated as public open space.
- Establish new facilities in strategic locations to serve visitors and support existing facilities and activities.



-  Precinct Gateway
-  90m Coastal Recession investigation area
-  Bathers Way route
-  Connector roads
-  Open space activity nodes
-  Approximate key precinct location

Consolidate car parking and provide open space with relocated war memorial and coastal lookout.

Change nature of Memorial Drive to provide improved parking arrangements and provide safe pedestrian and cycle movement.

Reconfigure playing fields at Empire Park, provide new playground facility, new district level skate facility.

New community/training facility and kiosk.

John Parade converted to a one way road.

Modifications to vehicular movement along Frederick Street and Henderson Parade, upgrade park to the west of existing Merewether Surf Life Saving Club.

Kiosk and other facilities to be located at Bath Pavilion.

Figure 33: Suburban Beaches (Southern) Sector Plan

### 3.3.1 Bar Beach + Empire Park

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Bar Beach is a popular destination where visitors can experience views south to Merewether and Cooks Hill to the North. The Cooks Hill Surf Lifesaving Club located on the beach is at long term risk of sea level rise and other coastal impacts.

Memorial Drive separates Bar Beach from Empire Park and serves as a coastal route from Merewether to the CBD. The road is sign-posted at 60km/h and has on-street parking. Potential exists to reconfigure the carriageway to accommodate reconfigured parking bays and improved pedestrian crossing points.

A significant change in level exists between Memorial Drive and the beach itself. The Surf Life Saving Club, lifeguard tower, public toilets, café and picnic facilities are located on series of concrete platforms at varying levels. Concrete stairs connect these, however way finding could be improved at this location. The promenade has the ability to be reconfigured to assist with access to facilities and to the beach from Memorial Drive.

Empire Park, located immediately adjacent to the beach is used for formal and informal recreation. It is surrounded by residential development to the north and west. The park contains a sporting oval and grandstand, tennis club, bowling club, bat/ball wall and skate ramp. The north-east corner of the park is also a favoured landing area for hang gliding. Council has proposed to replace and upgrade the existing skate facility as part of the Newcastle Skate Park Review (2009). A draft concept design has been developed by Convic Design (May 2010) for the proposed skate facility.

Potential exists to underground services (electricity and telecommunications) and relocate the Heritage War Memorial to enhance the safety for kite flyers and hang gliders. This will also enhance the landscape character and improve views.

A large car park is located on the south-facing slope of Cooks Hill; the car park pavement is visible from the beach and dominates the landscape particularly when viewed from the south.

Stability issues exist with the cliffs at the northern area of the beach, identified in the Newcastle Coastline Management Plan (2003 Umwelt Environmental Consultants) as requiring stabilisation for safety. Council and GHD (December 2009) commenced investigations and design of the works required for this stabilisation. A landscape concept plan for this area was developed by Council in January 2010.

This coastal location offers fitness and physical activity opportunities, with further opportunities for encouraging walking, running, cycling, swimming and surfing. Hence uses such as gymnasiums and health clubs may be attractive near locations such as these.

Cooks Hill Surf Club is located close to the high water mark and may be at long term risk of the impacts of sea level rise. This may require rebuilding the surf club building elsewhere in the long term. As such, the health club/gymnasium use may assist in defraying the cost of constructing a new surf club building should they be co-located.

Bar Beach has a high exposure to passing traffic and already has some local semi-commercial facilities such as the Bar Beach Bowling and Sports Club. In terms of the sectors between Nobbys Beach and Merewether, Bar Beach is also the most central to the surrounding population. Bar Beach and Dixon Park kiosks can be enhanced to service beach goers and visitors and improve the area's vitality.

The adopted Plan of Management for Merewether also envisages a commercial development on the site of the Surf House building. This is expected to provide a ground floor café facility with change rooms and a surf products retail outlet; a second level function centre; and a third level restaurant and bar. This is a substantial facility that has been considered in the overall supply of facilities within the region.

Hence in determining a specific location for any form of commercial operations, it is desirable to locate them close to the existing Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club. This provides the greatest opportunity for an activated precinct with good connections with the main beach entry point and existing activity generated by the surf club.

The beach side of Memorial Drive has limited development opportunities due to coastal environmental impacts.

### Objectives

- Increase pedestrian access to beach and park facilities.
- Encourage Empire Park and Bar Beach to become a health and fitness locality where a range of sports and fitness activity can occur.
- Change the nature of Memorial Drive to encourage greater pedestrian activity and calm traffic.
- Reduce the size of the large car park north of Bar Beach (off-set elsewhere) to increase passive recreation space and potentially move war memorial to this location.
- Encourage vibrancy by providing facilities that support and/or complement existing activities.

### Strategies

- Increase pathway width along the Bathers Way route to ensure safe access for pedestrians and cyclists travelling north and south along the coastline.
- Establish new tree plantings along Memorial Drive and in Empire Park well west of the hand glider landing area.
- Consult community regarding relocation the heritage war memorial to the eastern side of Memorial Drive.
- Install new play equipment in a safe and accessible location.
- Install an upgraded skate park in accordance with funding provided and Council's adopted plan.
- Investigate issues and opportunities for expansion of the Surf Life Saving Club.
- Investigate in the longer term the opportunity for a health and fitness activity node.
- Provide new/enhanced shared pathways within Empire Park.
- Improve shade and shelter at various locations.
- Retain existing and consider new bat/ball court for Empire Park.



Figure 34: Bar Beach - Cliff top restoration Landscape concept

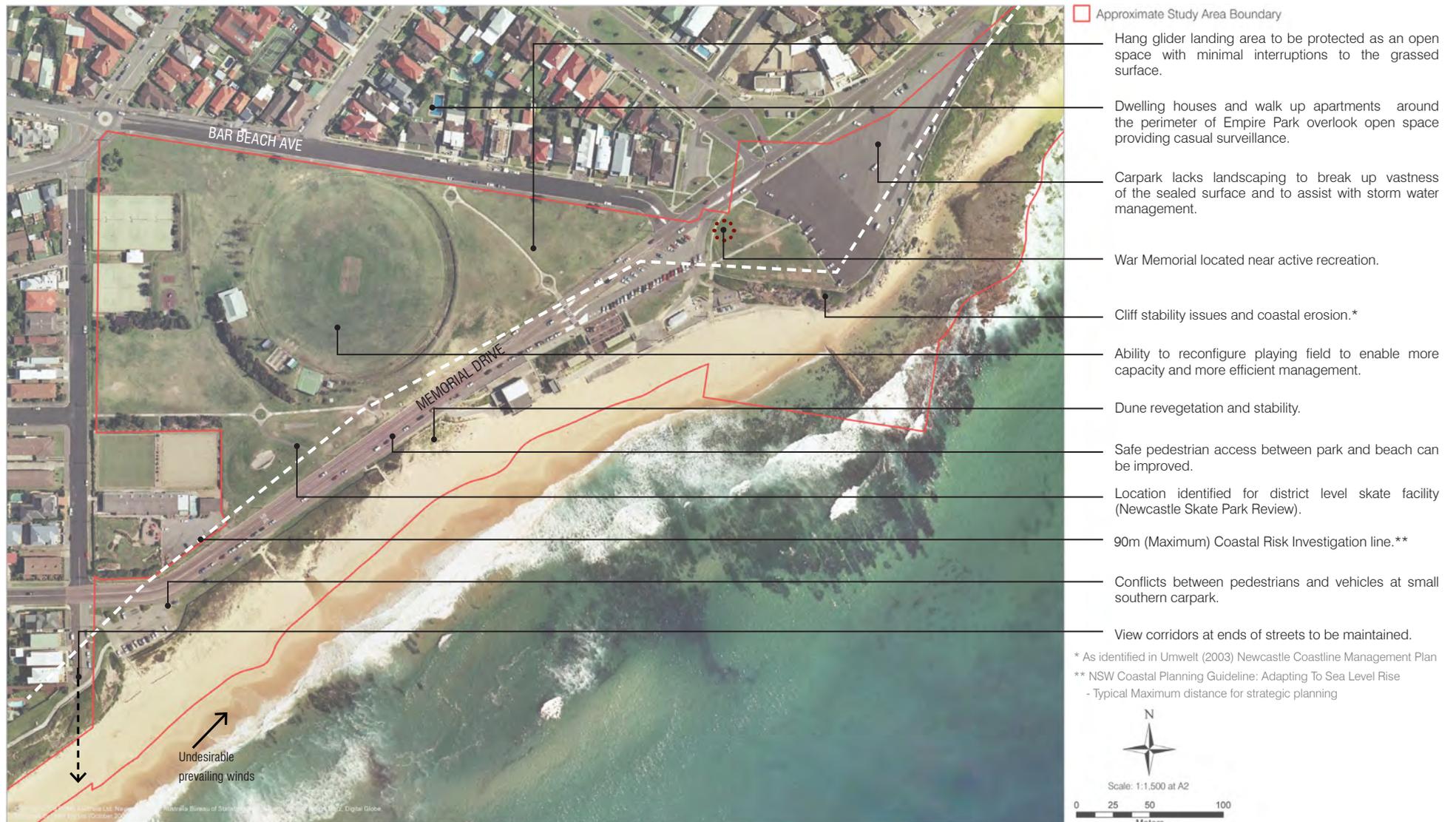


Figure 35: Bar Beach and Empire Park Issues Analysis



Figure 36: Bar Beach and Empire Park Concept Masterplan



Figure 37: Bar Beach & Empire Park - Perspective looking South



Figure 38: Bar Beach - Perspective looking North

### 3.3.2 Dixon Park

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Dixon Park is quite exposed, comprising open grassed areas with some shade structures, barbeque facilities and play equipment. A steep, unused slope exists between the northern end of Ocean Street and the surf club. There is also a considerable change in level between the park and the beach. There are also stormwater management issues in the northern part of this precinct.

Dwellings surrounding the park afford views over the park to the ocean. Views to the water are also afforded from the existing car park south-west of the Surf Life Saving Club, adjacent to the beach.

The beach receives high visitation and is popular with families, given the recent installation of new play equipment. As such, there is opportunity for a small kiosk/cafe associated with the surf club, to provide for beach and park users. The existing freestanding kiosk building on the edge of Dixon Park does not provide outdoor seating and is not attractive to visitors or tourists.

A kiosk operated in association with the SLSC would be developed with limited additional construction, the costs should be relatively low and it would attract an increase in rental income.

The kiosk would benefit from the proposed development of community based training rooms or similar, recommended for the currently unused slope. Income from lease/hire of training rooms would be negligible relative to construction costs, but there may be significant benefit for community groups such as Hunter Surf Life Saving, and for increased use and passive surveillance of the area. Other opportunities may need to be explored for this sloped area over time to ensure these desired outcomes are achieved.

#### Objectives

- Increase safe pedestrian access to Dixon Park Beach.
- Reduce conflict between cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians.
- Provide increased surveillance of car parks.
- Ensure adequate open space is available for activities such as local markets, surf carnivals etc.
- Increase green space to increase the buffer between car parking and beach, also assisting with stormwater management.
- Provide additional landscaping to facilitate protection for park users from sun and wind.

#### Strategies

- Remove the beach-side rows of car parking to accommodate open space adjacent to the beach. Provide new car parking bays around the edge of the park.
- Enhance pedestrian safety connectivity through increased pavement width and car park crossings.
- Enhance car parking while maintaining opportunity for observation of ocean from vehicle.
- Redevelop old kiosk building in short term, further investigate opportunities for kiosk in the longer term.
- Provide new low-rise built form opposite the surf lifesaving club on the unused slope for a community facility or similar activity and to provide casual surveillance of the car park.
- Provide landscape in strategically placed locations to prevent interruption of views and damage by vandals.



Figure 39: Dixon Park- Perspective looking North west from Surf Life Saving Club

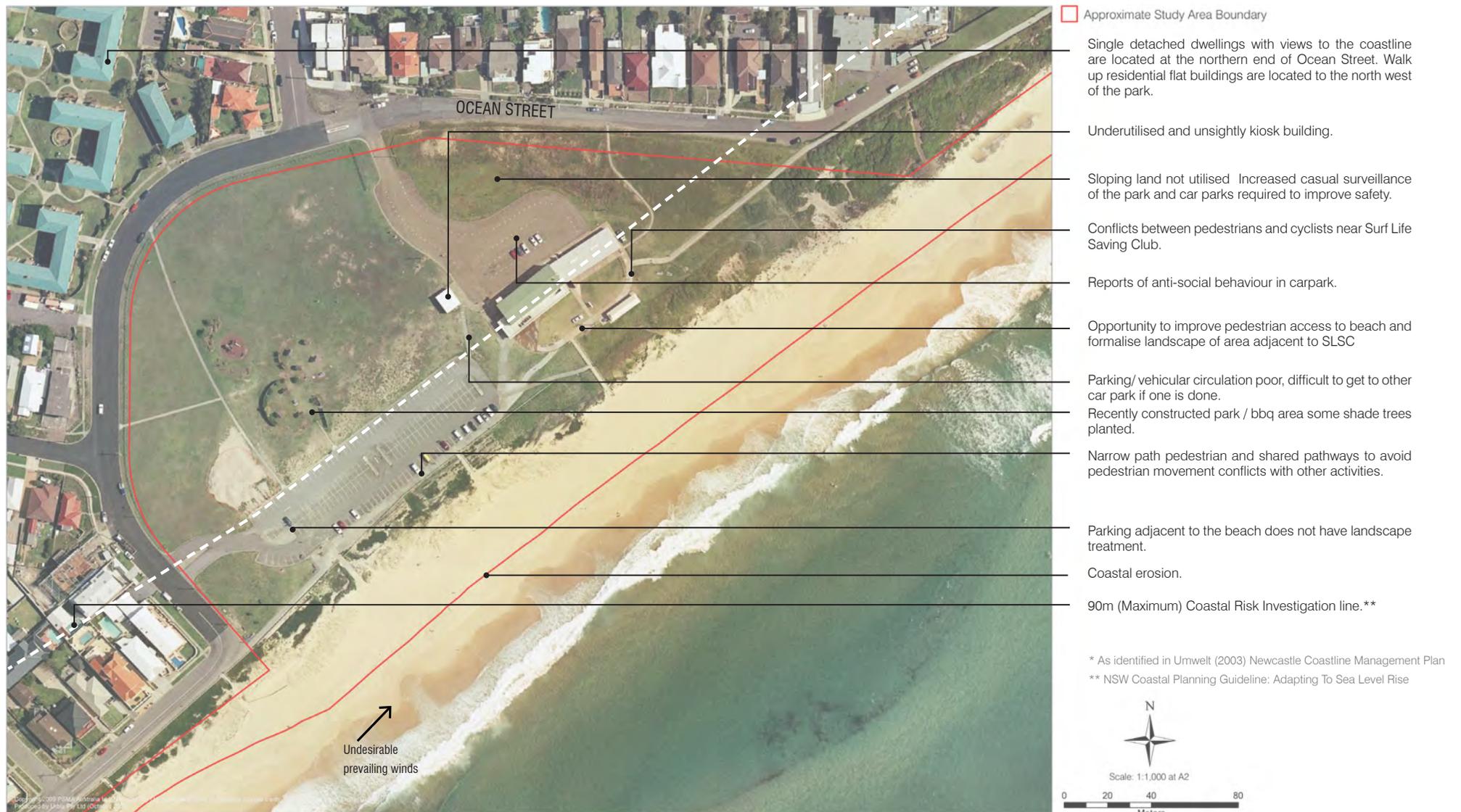


Figure: 40: Dixon Park Issues Analysis



Figure 41: Dixon Park Concept Masterplan

### 3.3.3 Merewether Beach

#### Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Merewether Beach has significant elevation change between the water and existing developments. This, with the limited number of trees, means Merewether is one of Newcastle's most exposed beaches. Despite this, it is a popular destination for swimmers and surfers, runners and walkers, the social and the solitary. Its significance is formalised by the identification of the Merewether Beach and surf as a National Surfing Reserve.

Surf House and Merewether Ocean Baths Pavilion south of the surf club are disconnected from other development and have limited relationships to the surrounding environment. Despite this, the pathways connecting these and the ocean baths to nearby urban development are well used.

Views north along the coastline are significant as a sense of connection to other parts of this sector. It is not apparent to visitors that the beach is a National Surfing Reserve and there are opportunities to celebrate and express the character of the area. The promenade along the coastline creates locations for views to be enjoyed.

#### The Public Domain Improvement Plan

The Public Domain Improvement Plan (Jane Irwin & Associates – in production) currently underway for the Merewether Beach reserves makes a range of complementary places for promenade and pause, serving visitors to the beach in a day to day way while being capable of transformation for community activities, festivals, performances, markets and the like. It complements the existing Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management. The plan identifies a series of inter-related public projects which consolidate and build on the public works here of the 1920s and 30s.

The Public Domain Improvement Plan forms the next level of detail for works to be undertaken to implement revitalisation of the Newcastle Coastline. This plan is typical of the level of detail that the other precincts may require for public domain improvement implementation.

#### Objectives

- Improve safety and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Provide facilities and space to serve a range of overlapping user groups.
- Provide an enduring public domain utilising robust and durable materials.
- Capture and clean stormwater prior to discharge into the ocean.
- Ensure the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management is followed, reviewed annually and amended as required.

#### Strategy

- Widen upper promenade to encourage safe pedestrian movement.
- Provide locations for storm water capture and cleaning.
- Enhance access and the size of Jefferson Park by reconfiguring Henderson Parade.
- Widen the John Parade promenade to improve pedestrian amenity and safety.
- Redevelop the Surf Lifesaving Club to create new surf lifesaving facilities, café, public amenity and a public terrace.
- Review the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management annually.
- Introduce traffic calming measures to increase pedestrian safety.



- Land between Frederick street and Henderson Parade under utilised, lacking vegetation, shade and seating. Area is over looked by apartments, hotel and commercial development.
- Carpark lacks shade and vegetation to enhance the visual amenity.
- Temporary building used by Council lifeguards. Significant change in level between Surf Life Saving Club and Ocean. Coastal erosion.
- National surfing reserve.
- Footpath along John Parade narrow.
- Frederick Street and Henderson Parade running parallel create barriers for pedestrians accessing.
- Maintain sight lines at the end of streets.
- Surf House and baths pavilion are separated from other development and are not ideal orientation for sunlight access or building modification.
- Pedestrian connection between baths and Surf Life Saving Club, while well used is narrow and lacks providing an experience for the pedestrian.
- Traffic along Scenic Drive and Frederick Street moves fast making pedestrian crossing points difficult.
- Ocean baths are well used.
- Pedestrian link to Glenrock State Conservation Area.
- Rockfall risk area.\*
- Single detached dwellings and 2-3 storey apartments are located adjacent to the coastline.
- 90m (Maximum) Coastal Risk Investigation line.\*\*

\* As identified in Umwelt (2003) Newcastle Coastline Management Plan

\*\* NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting To Sea Level Rise



Scale: 1:2,500 at A2

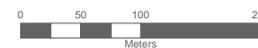
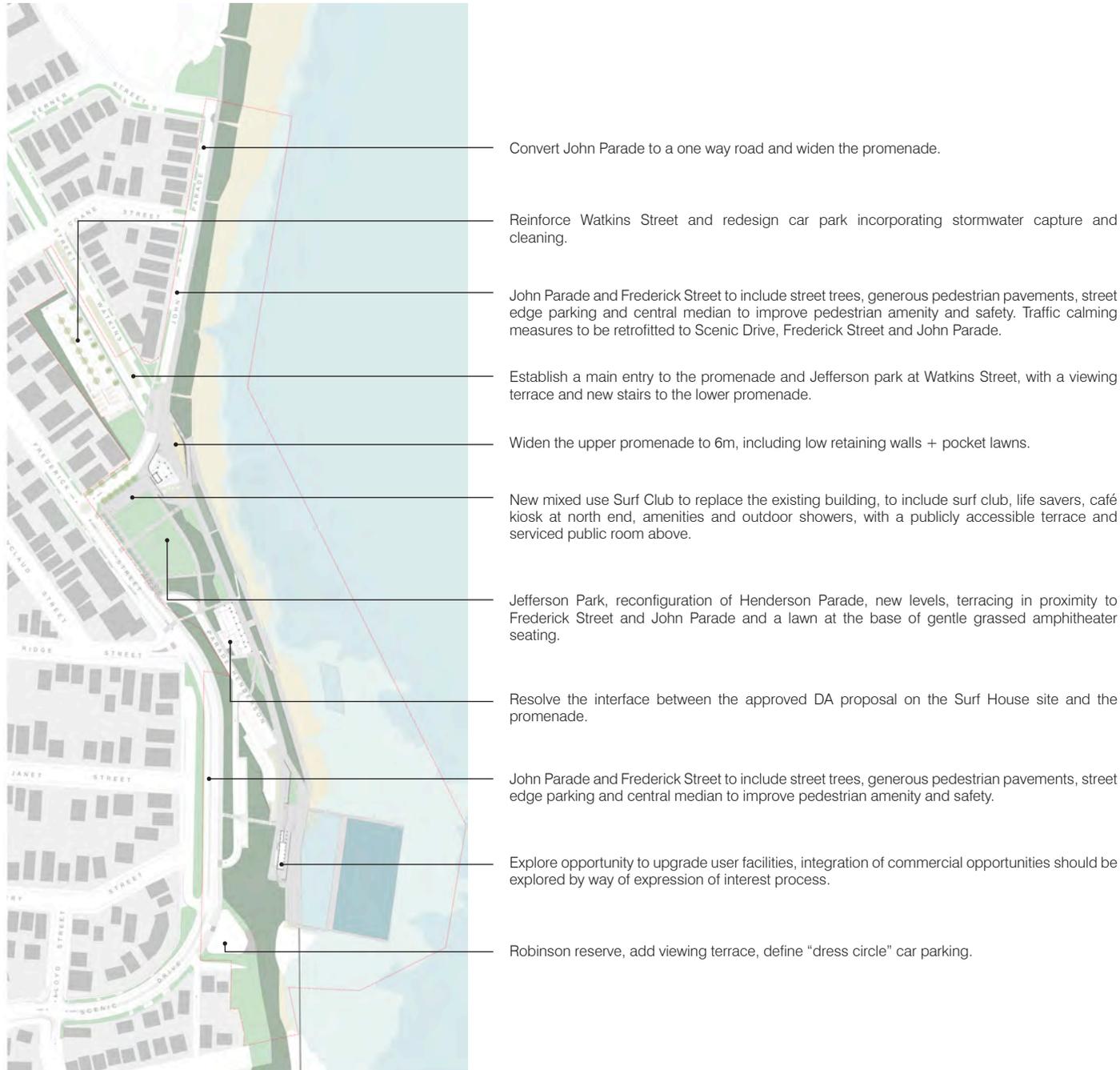


Figure 42: Merewether Beach Issues Analysis



- Convert John Parade to a one way road and widen the promenade.
- Reinforce Watkins Street and redesign car park incorporating stormwater capture and cleaning.
- John Parade and Frederick Street to include street trees, generous pedestrian pavements, street edge parking and central median to improve pedestrian amenity and safety. Traffic calming measures to be retrofitted to Scenic Drive, Frederick Street and John Parade.
- Establish a main entry to the promenade and Jefferson park at Watkins Street, with a viewing terrace and new stairs to the lower promenade.
- Widen the upper promenade to 6m, including low retaining walls + pocket lawns.
- New mixed use Surf Club to replace the existing building, to include surf club, life savers, café kiosk at north end, amenities and outdoor showers, with a publicly accessible terrace and serviced public room above.
- Jefferson Park, reconfiguration of Henderson Parade, new levels, terracing in proximity to Frederick Street and John Parade and a lawn at the base of gentle grassed amphitheater seating.
- Resolve the interface between the approved DA proposal on the Surf House site and the promenade.
- John Parade and Frederick Street to include street trees, generous pedestrian pavements, street edge parking and central median to improve pedestrian amenity and safety.
- Explore opportunity to upgrade user facilities, integration of commercial opportunities should be explored by way of expression of interest process.
- Robinson reserve, add viewing terrace, define "dress circle" car parking.

Figure 43 : Merewether Beach Public Domain Plan (plan prepared by Jane Irwin Landscape Architects)

## 4 Financing and Funding

The primary source of funding used by Councils to provide and maintain facilities and services including parks and open spaces, is through its statutory power to charge Council rates. It is also worth noting the considerable contribution made by community members in the coastal zone through the volunteer surf life saving movement, dune care and other voluntary groups.

Funding is also supplied from both State and Commonwealth Governments – relevant potential sources are listed further below.

This section of the report discusses a range of potential funding sources for implementation of the Masterplan as follows.

1. Council rates
2. Public sector funding
3. Taxation initiatives
4. Developer contributions
5. Commercial finance
6. Income-generating opportunities
8. Voluntary and community sector involvement (may not involve funds but contributes to significant works in the coastal zone).

### 4.1 Traditional Local Authority Funding

In NSW, the total amount of income that a Council can raise from rates is limited by the rate-peg percentage specified by the Minister for Local Government each year. With rate pegging, a Council's overall rates revenue cannot increase by more than the percentage increase approved by the Minister. If overall land values rise, Councils may have to reduce or otherwise adjust the amounts levied so that total income does not grow by more than the percentage increase approved by the Minister. This may limit revenue available for the Newcastle Coastal Precinct and the demands on Council's budgets are many and varied.

Councils can apply to the Minister for Local Government to increase their rates by more than the rate-peg limit. This is called a special variation application. The Council must include details of its intention to apply for a special variation in its draft management plan and consider any submissions received from the public. If approved, the Minister will specify the percentage by which the Council may increase its general income. A particular trigger could be the additional works that will be generated out of the Newcastle Coastal Revitalisation Masterplan which will increase Newcastle Council's funding requirements.

### 4.2 Public Sector Funding

Parks and open spaces provide far reaching benefits for the community. Hence, it may be possible to access funding from a range of government departments and public agencies. Such pooling of resources between different bodies can support mutual goals leading to efficiency and cost savings. This is particularly relevant to parks or open space that have a regional or state-wide attraction and that benefit the community beyond the immediate local government area.

These arrangements are often one-off or short term grants. Attracting these funds will be at competition with other areas and will depend on priorities with the various departments. Potential sources of grants will include:

State Government Departments – through grants and funding partnerships

Federal Government - Financial Assistance Grants to local governments and Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs).

In more recent times, additional funding has been made available by the Federal Government as part of the economic stimulus response to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). This has largely been project specific funding with specific timelines set for the release of funding to ensure maximum expenditure to stimulate the economy.

For the Newcastle coastline, it is likely that a substantial level of support from State and Federal Government will be required to implement parts of the Masterplan. In particular, initiatives that will assist in generating economic growth and employment or alternatively provide benefit to the community beyond the Newcastle LGA would be attractive to this form of funding. Below is a summary of the prime examples of State and Federal Government funding.

Additional public funding for works such as for water management may be sought if integration of Catchment Management Authority - Catchment Action Plan were implemented in precincts.

Table 1 – Sources Federal Government funding grants.

FEDERAL		
Organisation	Grant	Details
Department of Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts	Caring for Our Country	Environmental and natural resource management projects. Envirofund: small community-based projects tackling important local coastal and marine natural resource management problems. Bushcare Program: conserving and restoring habitat for native flora and fauna. Coastcare: regeneration and associated construction works, and educational and awareness programs.
Department of Resources Energy and Tourism	TQUAL	A grants program providing assistance to businesses in the tourism industry.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government	Community Infrastructure Program	The funding is for local government to stimulate growth and economic activity across Australia and support national productivity and community well-being.
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	National Landcare Program	Supports the Landcare movement and the sustainable use and management of natural resources.
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Recreational Fishing Community Grants Program	Improvements to fishing infrastructure (fish cleaning tables, tracks to fishing places), protecting sensitive habitats, education and awareness raising.
Department of Environment and Water Resources; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Community Water Grants	Projects related to water saving and efficiency, water recycling, and water treatment.

Source: Belmont Wetlands State Park, Draft Plan of Management 2009, Andrews Neil Pty Ltd

Table 2 – Sources of State Government funding grants.

STATE		
Organisation	Grant	Details
Department of Planning	NSW Coastline Cycleway grants program	Funding is available for the development and implementation of cycleways along the NSW Coastline Cycleways route.
NSW Heritage Office	Heritage study and promotion	Grants are offered for research, management and conservation of significant heritage items.
NSW Heritage Office	Heritage Incentives Program	Identification, conservation, management and promotion of NSW heritage.
NSW Land and Property Management Authority	Public Reserves Management Fund	Loans and grants are available for the development, maintenance and protection of Crown Reserves throughout NSW. The PRMF is self funding and so funding and grants are generally in the form of loans.
Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water	Environmental Trust	Supports restoration, rehabilitation, research and education programs.
Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water	Coastal Management Program	Preparation of coastal studies and coastline management plans; construction of works for conservation/ improvement of beaches and public reserves; management measures and works to reduce potential damage from coastal processes in existing developed areas.
Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water	Estuary Management Program	Management and restoration of rivers and lakes.
Department of Arts, Sport and Recreation	Capital Assistance Program	Community-oriented sporting and / or recreational facilities.
Department of State and Regional Development	'Your Community – Your Future' Community Economic Development (CED) Program	Program to support increased business and economic activity for regional populations over 2000 people.
NSW Maritime	Waterways Asset Development and Management Program	Provide waterways infrastructure (foreshore improvements, construction of boat ramps and jetties, foreshore access) for the boating community.
NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing	Community Development and Support Expenditure Scheme	Encourages larger registered clubs in NSW to contribute to the provision of front-line services and community projects.

Source: Belmont Wetlands State Park, Draft Plan of Management 2009, Andrews Neil Pty Ltd

### 4.3 Taxation Initiatives (Special Rates and Environmental Levies)

To raise funds for parks and open spaces, councils can also instigate taxation initiatives. Under the Local Government Act 1993, (Section 495) a Council may make a special rate towards the costs of any works, services, facilities or activities provided or undertaken, or proposed, other than domestic waste management services. The advantage of special rates lies in that funding is quarantined from other council initiatives. There is a guaranteed level of income that does not have to be divided amongst other council services, since the special rates must be directed to that purpose (i.e. a coastal management special rate must be directed to coastal management projects only).

Newcastle already has Special Rates Levies for a number of specific locations throughout the LGA. There would be a strong argument for a coastal management special rate to apply to the whole of the LGA, as the coastal precinct is accessible to all residents, however a higher rate may be applied to designated coastal locations and a lower rate to non-coastal locations.

Environmental Levies have been used by other Councils (e.g. Liverpool, Ku-ring-gai and Blue Mountains) to fund bush regeneration projects or environmental asset protection and improvements. Environmental levies are likely to play an important future role in income generation for councils. For many of the councils, projects are identified through extensive community consultation. In the Newcastle context, it may be possible for an environmental levy to be utilised for works such as cliff stabilisation and dune protection. Special rates and environmental levies are generally calculated by taking the land value of each property in the LGA and multiplying it by a set rate in the dollar.

### 4.4 Developer Contributions

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, and Regulation 2000, provide mechanisms for councils to seek contributions from developers for the provision of public services and amenities. The three mechanisms provided for are Contributions under section 94, levies under section 94A and Planning Agreements under section 93F of the Act. Contributions may be sought under one of these mechanisms or as a combination of two (with the exception of Section 94 and Section 94A combined).

#### 4.4.1 Section 94 Contribution towards provision or improvement of amenities or services

A council may levy a contribution of land or money where a proposed development would require increased demand for public amenities and/or services within the area. Contributions may also be sought to re-coup the cost of amenities/services already provided by Council to facilitate the development of an area.

Such a contribution sought by Council must accord with an adopted Section 94 Plan which sets out a clear nexus between the demand that would be generated by the development to be levied and the cost of providing services and amenities to meet that demand. Such a Plan must also allocate specific works projects for which contributions are to be sought and provide an indicative works program (timing) for such services.

In this regard a Section 94 plan for the coastal precinct will need to be reviewed or developed to identify the value of potential initiatives within the coastal corridor and the additional service requirements that may be generated by new development. This is viewed as being a potential revenue source to assist in funding new coastal infrastructure improvements such as transport, community facilities, bike paths/walkways, etc.

#### 4.4.2 Section 94A Fixed Development Consent Levy

Section 94A allows for levying a per-cent value of the cost of works as a contribution to local services. Such a levy is sought on all new development above a nominated value. No link need be demonstrated between the type of development and the services to be provided by the levy (as is required under s94). A Council must, however, identify within a Contributions Plan the public amenities or services to be provided, recouped, extended or augmented to which the money is to be applied.

#### 4.4.3 Section 93F Planning Agreements

A Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) is a voluntary contractual agreement between a council and a developer. It allows planning authorities to obtain contributions for public purposes that may be outside the scope of a Section 94 Plan. A 'public purpose' includes the provision of (or recoupment of the costs of) public amenities and services, affordable housing, transport and other infrastructure, funding of recurrent expenditure, monitoring of the impacts of development and conservation or enhancement of the natural environment. A VPA may be in the form of works in kind, or allocation of funds for a specified or non-specified purpose. For example, a VPA may be paid to fund a future strategic plan preparation, or may fund open space upgrades.

A VPA would result in a reduced monetary contribution through the s94 program. Although monetary VPA contributions do not need to be allocated for a specific purpose, Councils are likely to state in a condition of consent the purpose for which the VPA is being paid for probity reasons.

## 4.5 Commercial Finance

Much like private sector organisations, Councils can borrow funds to finance new capital works. In relation to the Masterplan, this form of funding is likely to be considered for projects that would generate an income stream to service the loan, such as the construction of cafe or restaurant spaces that could be leased commercially.

## 4.6 Income Generating Opportunities

Coastal reserves and parks offer the potential to generate income in their own right. This may be achieved through a number of means including on-site businesses, development on ground leases, the hiring out of facilities or fees and charges. Centennial Park in Sydney utilises a number of these strategies to help fund the park's operations, such as:

- on-site businesses including restaurants, cafes and bike rental;
- hiring out its grounds for sporting matches, weddings, events and functions;
- hosting large scale concerts, festivals (such as hosting World Youth Day related activities);
- charging fees for filming and photography; and
- parking fees, both metered and flat rates.

Other possibilities used elsewhere include:

- weekly/monthly events such as a farmers markets;
- gardening demonstrations;
- nature walks;
- partnerships with local sporting organisations;
- donations or entry fees (where a park or open space carries particular appeal);
- instituting fines or penalties for 'environmental crimes' such as dumping litter, graffiti and bill posting; and
- long term ground leases for development.

Importantly, the ability of a park to generate income stems from its popularity, size and location.

## 4.7 Voluntary Sector Involvement

Newcastle has a well established volunteer sector contributing to care, maintenance and safety in the coastal zone. This currently includes for example cliff stabilisation work at Merewether and volunteer surf life savers. These ongoing contributions from the Newcastle community will contribute to the delivery of the Masterplan.

# 5 Indicative Priorities and Staging

The timing of future development will need to be structured on three key factors; the availability of opportunities in the market, the importance of key nodes to the overall delivery of the Masterplan and the availability of various sources of funding. Provision of public domain upgrades, particularly to those that improve safety and access are priority.

An indicative staging schedule has been prepared based on current conditions and needs of the precincts (see Table 3 over page). The indicative time frames in this table are subject to change due to a range of factor including environmental and economic conditions.

The indicative plan outlines works currently being undertaken or with detailed studies already commenced.

The areas of the Newcastle Coastline study area where detailed works or studies have already commenced include:

- Corroba Reserve playing fields – plans prepared;
- Stockton Cycleway from Griffith Park north (western side of peninsula) – plans prepared;
- Merewether Public Domain Plan – plans underway;
- Bar Beach Cliff Stabilisation – investigations commenced;
- Empire Park District level skate facility (Newcastle Skate Park Review);
- Bogey Hole (investigations in ability to restore and improve access) - investigations underway; and
- Nobbys Lighthouse (details of lease arrangement being undertaken – negotiations commenced.
- Empire Park Skate park and installation of new playground equipment.

The indicative staging schedule to 2030 provides an over arching and flexible framework that initiates with the commencements of work relating directly to the improvement and upgrade of existing facilities within the study area as well as those proposed.

The initial phases of the proposed work involves actions that activate accessibility between Newcastle CBD and the precincts; particularly Newcastle Beach. The improvement of access to facilities from Newcastle CBD is pivotal to the Masterplan and overall connectivity between the precincts, this includes the re-opening of Shortland Esplanade between Newcastle Beach and King Edward Park.

It is noted many of the concepts in the Masterplan require further investigation, detailed design, costing, prioritising and community input. The preparation of additional specific Plans of Management will be considered by the project partners on a needs basis. There may be benefits in additional detailed planning, however these are not a prerequisite for implementation of works under this Plan and for Crown reserves.

The next phase of the Coastal Revitalisation project will further assess opportunities, needs, financial viability and funding sources to develop a more detailed implementation plan. The Council management plan for 2011/12 will include a detailed four year delivery program of projects arising from the adopted Masterplan.

Table 3 – Indicative Staging Schedule

(Indicative Only - Commencement of works subject to environmental and economic conditions which may cause amendment by project sponsors)

INDICATIVE STAGING SCHEDULE - PROPOSED COMMENCEMENT		2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024	2026	2028	2030
Stockton Cycleway - Griffith Park north (western side of peninsula)	Plans Prepared											
King Edward Park Restaurant and Function Centre	Lease Agreement - site works commenced											
Nobbys Lighthouse Accommodation/ Restaurant	Negotiations commenced											
Merewether Public Domain Upgrade	Plans Underway											
Bogey Hole Safety Investigations	Investigations underway											
Corroba Park Upgrades	Plans Prepared											
Bar Beach cliff stabilisation	Investigations commenced											
Empire Park Sports Facilities and Public Domain Upgrades	Master planning and construction of skate park underway											
Dixon Park Kiosk upgrade												
Bogey Hole Safety and Access Upgrades *												
Shortland Esplanade One way, Car parking bathers way widening												
Re-opening of Shortland Esplanade between Newcastle Beach and King Edward Park												
Newcastle Baths Restaurant/Cafe and reconfiguration												
Stockton Pedestrian and Cycle Loop												
Bar Beach car park consolidation/relocation												
Bathers Way incomplete sections												
Newcastle Beach Amphitheatre/ New Surf Life Saving Club												
Nobbys SLSC relocation and convert existing Club to restaurant, car parking reconfiguration												
Dixon Park community facility and parking reconfiguration												
King Edward Park Café/kiosk												
Griffith Park Café/restaurant												
Additional Bathers Way widening												
Stockton sports club consolidation												
Stockton additional short term accommodation												
Bogey Hole/King Edward park additional facilities*												
Stockton interpretive centre												
New Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club												

\* subject to studies recommending works being undertaken.

## 6 Conclusion

The Newcastle Coastline Revitalisation Masterplan aims to enhance access, experiences and the quality of facilities along the coastline. The social, environmental and economic sustainability of the coastline is crucial in supporting the growth of Newcastle as a whole. The strategy is guided by principles, objectives and strategies developed from analysis of the issues and opportunities, case studies and consultation.

The issues mapping and analysis has identified particular areas within the key precincts that require attention to facilities and public domain. The issues analysis also identifies the interface issues, critical views and key connections. These with the community and facilities analysis and key learnings from the case studies provided the basis for developing the Masterplan concepts.

The key learning gained from the case studies (Appendix C) is that the primary activities that occur on the coastline need to be supported by facilities and activities that create vibrancy to improve the experience for locals and visitors.

While some commercial developments have been proposed, the role of development proposed in this report is primarily to support the existing coastal activities and improve the quality of the existing open space. The Masterplan concepts provide the framework for detailed design to be undertaken for the proposed development and public domain works. Detailed design and costing will need to be undertaken by way of more detailed place plans, built form design and landscape plans.

While certain projects have detailed studies underway for improvements, the City Beaches (central) Sector has importance as this will demonstrate the ability for the commercial opportunities to be viable, have a higher level of use due to accessibility and proximity to the Newcastle CBD.

It is noted that the funding for the works proposed in this report cannot be provided by a single mechanism. A combination of funding mechanisms will be required to enable the funding of works over the life of the Masterplan. Commercial opportunities will make a small, but important contribution to the overall funding, however brings vitality and employment benefits. The success of the strategy will be reliant on cooperation of government at all levels to support a range of financing mechanisms to fund the strategies to be undertaken in a way that does not compromise the strategy principles or broader local or regional objectives. It will also require the support of the Newcastle community.

### Next Steps

Implementation of works and further detailed designs are to be undertaken by the project partners. Identification of specific funding sources for each proposal is to be undertaken. The priorities and staging section provides an indicative time frame for the implementation over the next 20 years however as noted previously this is subject to change and the plan should be reviewed by the project partners regularly to ensure that the document is relevant. New opportunities appropriate for and enhancing the value of the Newcastle Coastline for its users will continued to be explored as part of these reviews.

# APPENDIX A

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# APPENDIX B

## Key Stakeholders

### Coastline Revitalisation Working Group

- Newcastle City Council: Fiona Leatham, – assisted by Rachel McConkey, Judy Jaeger, Tim Askew, Jill Gaynor, Luke Erskine.
- Land and Property Management Authority: Brett Phillips, Anthony Signor
- Hunter Surf Life Saving: Rhonda Scrutton, John Waghorn.

### Coastline Revitalisation Reference Group

- Lindy Hyam (Chair), NCC - General Manager
- Brett Phillips, Land and Property Management Authority
- Stuart Barnett, Dixon Park Surf Club
- Roger Brock, Newcastle Newspapers
- Frank Cordingley, NCC - Director Liveable City
- Glenn Crompton, Merewether Surf Life Saving Club
- Martin Coates, NCC - Director City Engagement
- Steve Edmonds, NCC - Director City Assets
- Jann Gardner, Sparke Helmore
- Brian Gilligan, Community Representative
- Judy Jaeger, NCC - Director Future City
- John Johnston, NCC - Acting Mgr Infrastructure Mgt Services
- Jill Gaynor, NCC - Mgr Strategic Planning Services
- Fiona Leatham, NCC - Acting Mgr Strategic Planning Services
- Fiona Marshall, Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority
- Michelle McPherson, NIB
- Craig Norman, Hunter Development Corporation
- Rhonda Scrutton, Hunter Surf Lifesaving
- John Waghorn, Hunter Surf Lifesaving
- Gary Webb, Newcastle Port Corporation

### Coal River Working Party

Surf Life Saving Clubs: Stockton, Nobbys, Newcastle, Cooks Hill, Dixon Park and Merewether

### Executive Sponsors

- Mr Graham Harding, General Manager Crown Lands Division, Land and Property Management Authority
- Ms Lindy Hyam, General Manager Newcastle City Council

# APPENDIX C

## Summary of Case Study Analysis

In order to consider the broad range of opportunities that may be suitable for various parts of the Newcastle Coastline, a range of case studies that offer superior design and/or vibrancy and first class public domain from throughout Australia been analysed. The key attributes and findings for a cross section of the selected case studies are detailed as follows:

### Avoca Beach, NSW

- New surf club facilities recently established – can accommodate functions
- Eateries directly accessible from the beach
- Large public open space areas with children’s play equipment, BBQs and picnic facilities
- Holiday villas and apartments located on the beach, and many within short walking distance
- Pathway connects beach to main retail strip of Avoca (700m)

### Kings Beach, Caloundra, QLD

- Caloundra’s most popular surf beach.
- Connected to neighbouring beaches by a 2km boardwalk & pathway skirting the headland.
- Caloundra Council has spent many millions of dollars upgrading this whole area in recent years. It now includes:
  - An amphitheatre with regular free concerts;
  - An interactive water fountain;
  - Children’s playground;
  - Picnic areas;
  - A public swimming pool on the beach; and
  - Many holiday apartments, hotels, and villas located in short walking distance.



Figure C1: Avoca Beach, NSW



Figure C2: Kings Beach, Caloundra QLD

### Burleigh Heads, QLD

- Beach lined with parkland, with picnic and BBQ areas.
- Many beachfront cafes and restaurants.
- A wide running / cycle path runs adjacent to the beach.
- Weekend markets are held at the parkland area near the beach.
- A range of accommodation, including hotels, apartments and hostels is nearby.

### Cottesloe Beach, WA

- Indiana Restaurant housed in an iconic building right on Cottesloe Beach.
- Other restaurants, cafes and bars scattered along approximately 1 kilometre of the Cottesloe Coastal strip.
- Cottesloe SLSC and North Cottesloe SLSC located at the southern and northern ends of the strip.
- Significant open space areas with public facilities including BBQs, exercise equipment and children's play equipment.
- Residential apartments and back-packer style accommodation located across the road from the beach. Other short stay accommodation scattered throughout the area (e.g. serviced apartments).
- Coastal walkway stretches approximately 8 kilometres south to Fremantle.

### Floreat Beach, WA

- Relatively small, quiet beach that has been activated in recent years due to development of:
  - Public open space areas
  - Children's play equipment
  - BBQ and picnic facilities
  - Kiosk / café
  - Public Beach volley ball courts
  - Shower and change room facilities
  - Floreat SLSC is quite detached - 700m from the above facilities



Figure C3: Burleigh Heads, QLD



Figure C4: Cottesloe Beach, WA

### Scarborough Beach, WA

- New Urban Design Masterplan implemented since 2006.
- Focus of Masterplan was on creating a safe, pedestrian oriented development.
- New development comprises of:
  - Improved walkways and cycle path;
  - Ampitheatre and grassed terraces;
  - Additional picnic and BBQ facilities;
  - Shade structures; and
  - A waterpark adjacent to the beach front was proposed within the Masterplan, but not yet developed.
- Strong community opposition to high rise residential and tourist accommodation development along the beach front.
- Many cafes and restaurants, and a small retail offering (e.g. surf shops, supermarket, specialty stores) within beach precinct.
- Significant tourist accommodation.
- Scarborough SLSC on the southern end of beach. Kiosk adjoins SLSC.

### Key Learnings

The case studies identify that the rationale for development along coastlines is that of facilitating the visitation and use of the coastline including places for coastal activities to occur. Important aspects that contribute to a positive experience include:

- Activity nodes of various sizes and a variety of facilities including retail and restaurant precincts.
- Pathways connecting adjoining areas to retail and food and beverage offer.
- High level of landscape quality and treatments, including in car parks.
- Expression of character, history and heritage (sense of place).
- Provision of facilities that support the primary activities such as those that are provided by Council including shade structures, amphitheatres, promenades, barbeques, lifeguard facilities, public toilets and showers.

Ancillary to the primary activities occurring on the coastline are things such as retail, restaurants, cafes, kiosks, hire facilities and accommodation facilities. These facilities assist with the overall coastal visitation experience through enhanced vibrancy and vitality, help promote tourism and encourage visitors to return.



Figure C5: Floreat Beach, WA



Figure C6: Scarborough Beach, WA

# APPENDIX D

## Planning & Design Principles

The principles described below establish the basis for strategies contained within the structure plans and concept plans. The principles provide guiding direction for the future land use, facilities and public domain improvement of the Newcastle Coastline.

### Social

- Reflect user preferences, values and needs.
- Encourage diversity and enable access to and between facilities.
- Minimise conflicts between users of the coastline.
- Maintain Indigenous and European heritage sites, artifacts and where appropriate, develop interpretation strategies for public spaces where these are located.

### Access and Movement

- Ensure efficient pedestrian and cycle connectivity within precincts and linking the coastline together.
- Provide safe and legible movement routes along the coastline and connections to other parts of the Local Government Area.

### Parking and Transport

- Locate parking as close as possible to key activity nodes within each precinct without compromising the historic or landscape character of the coastline.
- Car parks are not to be located on prominent coastal sites that compromise the visual landscape connection and/or physical accessibility to the coast.
- Landscape car parks to provide shade, shelter and improve visual character.
- Locate public transport towards focal points and places in each precinct.
- No net loss of car parking.

### Place Principles

- Ensure high quality security and passive surveillance, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- Manage interface with adjoining residential areas.
- Cluster buildings to create protected open spaces that capture breezes in summer and protection from winter winds.
- Maintain solar access to beaches and minimize shadow impacts of development.
- Utilise existing physical and built form assets where possible.
- Maximise connectivity between waterfront and the city and other areas in the Local Government Area.
- Highlight 'gateways' to the coastal area, historic areas and beaches.
- Enhance the character of the coastline as a whole as well as within each sector and individual precinct.
- Maintain views from adjoining areas and from the public domain.
- Design parks to ensure adaptability for a variety of potential uses.
- Ensure parks and open space form a sequence of spaces and are linked by a pedestrian and cycle system.

### Sustainability and Environmental Principles

- Maximise principles of environmental sustainability.
- Ensure the Planning Criteria For Proposed Development in Coastal Risk Areas is addressed for all proposed development within the 90m landward maximum coastal recession investigation area for sandy coastlines (NSW Coastal Planning Guideline: Adapting to Sea Level Rise, 2010).
- Encourage local activity opportunities by providing activity nodes for new and existing activities to occur.

- Ensure commercial sustainability for coastal areas by:
  - Establishing opportunities to subsidise public domain costs through development sites and leased premises.
  - Providing retail and commercial space to improve the vitality of the precincts.
  - Improving links to existing centres.
  - Building employment opportunities.
  - Encouraging tourism.

### Public Domain Principles

- Reinforce the landscape character of the coastline by stabilising eroded areas, removing weed species and replacing, where suitable with local native species ensuring view corridors are maintained.
- Enhance the public domain through the provision of increased and upgraded:
  - Toilets and shower facilities
  - Lighting
  - Bicycle parking near beaches and in parks
  - Seating
  - Shade structures
  - Trees, shrubs and grass
  - Waste and recycling bins
- Establish public domain concepts for which detailed public domain plans can be prepared.

# APPENDIX E

## Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club - Options

These additional studies have been undertaken based on proposals for club expansion as noted by members of the Surf Life Saving Club at the community design workshop, November 2009.

### Option A

Extend Nobby Surf Life Saving Club up and over Shortland Esplanade

- Impacts views
- Impacts heritage value of existing club house
- Clearance heights required for Shortland Esplanade cause change in level for upper storey

### Option B

Extend Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club to rear, relocate section of Shortland Esplanade

- Steep escarpment between Shortland Esplanade and Fort Drive makes moving road difficult
- The need to provide pedestrian access south of building limits size of extension limited
- Impacts heritage value of existing club house

### Option C (Preferred)

Build a new Club in a nearby location (Shown on Figure 22)

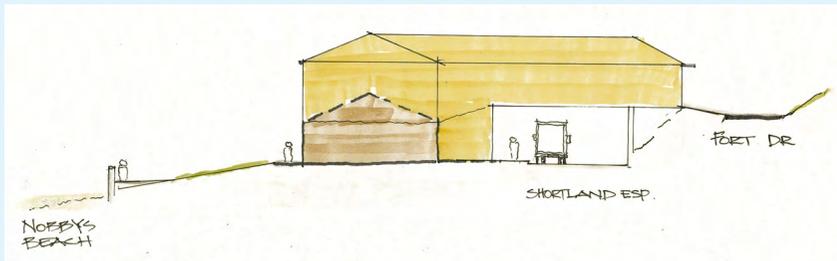


Figure E1: Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club Development Option A Section

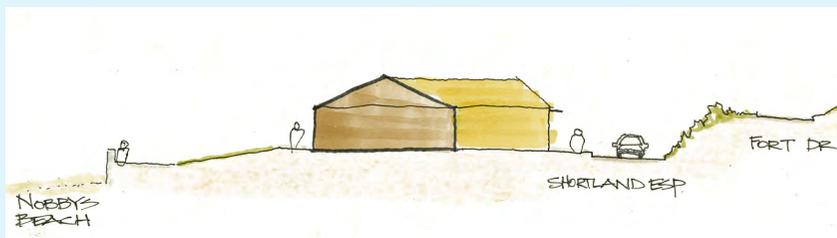


Figure E2: Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club Development Option B Section



Figure E3: Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club Development Option A Plan



Figure E4: Nobbys Surf Life Saving Club Development Option B Plan

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