

# **PLAN OF MANAGEMENT**

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## **Horseshoe Bay Reserve South West Rocks**

**KEMPSEY SHIRE COUNCIL**

**MAY 2014**

**ORIGINAL OCTOBER 2005  
REVISED AUGUST 2006  
REVISED OCTOBER 2006**



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## Executive Summary

Council originally undertook the preparation of a Plan of Management for the Horseshoe Bay Reserve in 2005 following extensive consultation with the Community and State Government. This document maintains the core principles of the original Plan of Management whilst adapting a framework for the current Master Plan for the Horseshoe Bay Reserve, including the holiday park.

The Master Plan primarily focuses on the Horseshoe Bay Reserve (including the Holiday Park), which is one of the three Precincts covered by this Plan of Managements study area. The other two Precincts include the South West Rocks Creek Foreshore Precinct (otherwise known to locals as Back Creek) and the Saltwater Creek Precinct.

In total, the three precincts account for approximately 65 hectares of land area and incorporate part of the Crown Land Reserve Number 82364. This Crown Land is administered by the NSW Trade and Investment Crown Lands and Kempsey Shire Council is the Reserve Trustee.

All of the three precincts are important to the town of South West Rocks. They play a pivotal role in maintaining the cultural, social, and natural scenic qualities of the area as well as contributing significantly to its tourism potential.

The original Plan of Management established the framework for future improvements within the Reserve. It is however, noted that a limited number of the improvements identified within the original Plan of Management have been completed since adoption.

During 2012, Council engaged an urban designer to review the Plan of Management and the current condition of Horseshoe Bay Reserve in order to prepare a Master Plan for the area. The primary purpose of this work was to provide a clear understanding of improvement works in the reserve based on the aims, objectives and principles stated in the Plan of Management. Drawings were prepared to a standard suitable for communication to and engagement with the South West Rocks community.

The development of the draft concept plans involved a collaborative approach between Council staff and the urban designer. The initial proposals were reviewed by Council's senior executive (MANEX) prior to the working draft being finalised. Consultation meetings were then convened with key stakeholders and special interest groups in October 2012. Following the feedback received from these meetings, Council embarked on a wider community consultation program. The feedback from this consultation was reviewed and considered prior to finalisation of the draft Master Plan.

This initial phase of community consultation included placing the Master Plan on public display within Council's offices, website and the Holiday Park. Council's website also included a video presentation overview of the Master Plan which was filmed from a workshop presentation to the Council. Residents were actively encouraged to view the presentation prior to reaching an opinion in relation to the Master Plan.

As a result of submissions received from this initial phase Council staff and the urban designer further revised and advanced the Horseshoe Bay Master Plan. As a result of the community consultation process, over 200 submissions were received by Council. Of the major concerns outlined by the respondents the majority have been considered and have resulted in amendments to the Master Plan. These included:

- Amendments to the configuration of the Holiday Park;
- Renovating the site of the existing shelter shed into an outdoor entertaining area i.e., re-instating the Shelter Shed;
- Retaining the playground in its current location and with a new shade structure over it;
- Re-aligning the road connection from the kiosk to the headland car park; and
- More shelter/ picnic structures generally.

The amended Master Plans and Draft Plan of Management and shelter structure sketches were then placed on public exhibition between 20 May and 17 June 2013 as a part of a second phase of community consultation. These documents were exhibited via plan distribution, display in Council offices, South West Rocks Library and Council's website and Facebook. A large number of submissions were received and reviewed as a result of this second phase.

The submissions associated with this second phase raised a number of similar issues and as a result some very minor changes to the Master Plan were made. These were:

- Notation reinforcing that the new shelter shed is to be constructed on the original site of the shelter shed; and
- Notation that the new unisex toilet proposed to be constructed near the children's playground will also be a disabled toilet, with path access off the main pathway.

Additional community consultation occurred during the end of 2013 and the first half of 2014 and resulted in some further refinements and alterations to the Master Plan. The changes were:

- Cabins have been removed from adjacent to Livingstone Street and placed on the point with the area adjacent to Livingstone Street now consisting of camp sites;
- The number of cabins has been reduced from 13 to 12 which is the same number of cabins as currently exists and the number of camp sites increases from 55 to 56;
- A new amenities block is proposed and the existing amenities block converted into a camp kitchen;
- Three camp sites within the sealed area adjacent to Back Creek have been formalised into a carpark and turnaround area; and
- A 470m<sup>2</sup> section of carpark adjacent to the children's playground has been designated as an active recreation/overflow carpark area. It will be used for additional carparking in peak periods and during low peak times it will be separated from vehicles and used as an active play area.

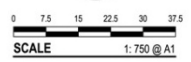
The Master Plans included within this Plan of Management are reflective of all phases of community consultation.

**Key Components of the Horseshoe Bay Master Plan include;**

- Town Entrance Statement
  - Removal of the direct road access from Livingstone Street to the Holiday Park;
  - The widening of Ocean Drive to provide a new entry to the Holiday Park;
- Link Between Town Centre and Beach
  - Shortening the eastern extent of the Holiday Park and removal of the existing amenities building to provide a visual and physical link between the Town Centre and beach;
  - Consideration of a future shared zone within the intersection of Livingstone Street and Prince of Wales Avenue;
  - Provision of a new main pedestrian access pathway 4m wide along the ridgeline connecting the Town Centre and beach facilities;
- Young Families Precinct
  - Provision of additional BBQ/Picnic facilities including the provision of a larger group shelter structure;
  - Provision of a small unisex toilet to reduce the need for pedestrian road crossings;
  - Provision of a shade structure over the existing playground area;
- Facilities/Entertainment Hub
  - Removal of the existing car parking on ridge line to maintain 'green' views from the shoreline and make better public use of this space;
  - Provide additional BBQ and picnic facilities along western edge of ridgeline;
  - Provision of a shared pedestrian/vehicle space to reduce traffic speeds and increase safety generally;
  - Construction of new shelter on the existing shelter structure site;
  - Implement a commercial purposes precinct;
  - Potential for shelter structure and/or seating on top of existing toilet block;
- Headland Viewing
  - Maximise open space and number of car parking spaces by reconfiguring car park;
  - Remove existing road connection and replace with footpath network;
  - Provide new road connection to car park;
  - Provide speed control devices to limit speed;
  - Extending existing pedestrian path circulation;
  - Provide seating along pathway;
- Beach Activity Zone
  - Provision of a beach wall;
  - Widening of pathway to provide emergency and mobility access to the beach;
  - Diversion of stormwater onto northern end of the beach;
  - Extension of pedestrian path circulation;

The above upgrade options are considered to address the actions identified in this Plan of Management whilst not substantially altering the fundamental character of the open space area. The proposed upgrades are also considered to provide significant improvements to the function, access, maintenance and visual quality of the Horseshoe Bay Reserve and surrounding areas.



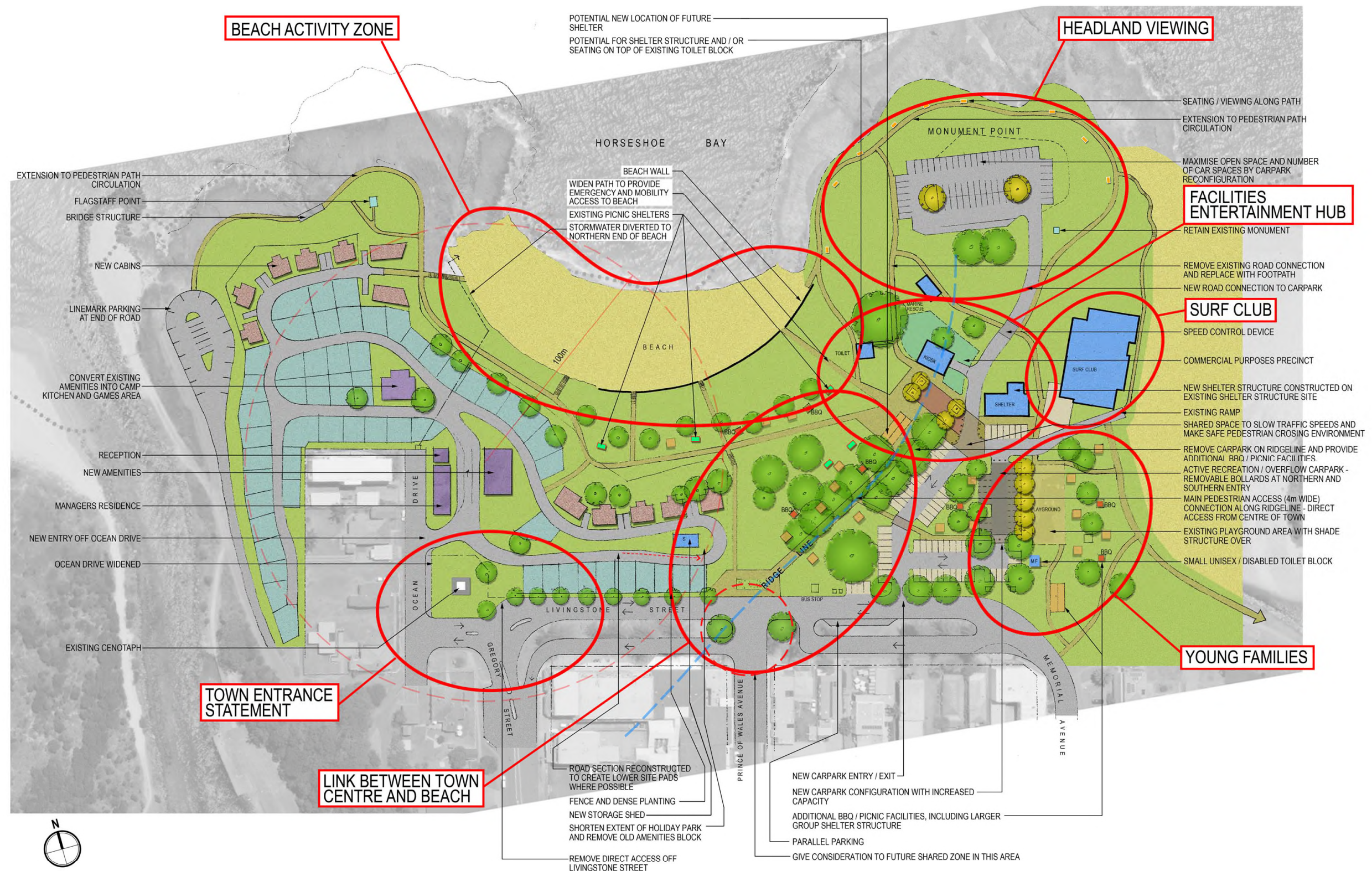


## HORSESHOE BAY MASTER PLAN

### MAY 2014







# HORSESHOE BAY MASTER PLAN

## PRECINCT PLAN

MAY 2014

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 WHAT IS A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT?

A Plan of Management “is a document that provides the framework for managing a land resource”. It is a document which defines and addresses “the value, use and management practices” of an area of public land.

Plans of Management are required by both the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Crown Lands Act 1989. They are to apply to all Crown Land that is classified as “community land” and therefore will be retained in public ownership. The land use must be governed by an adopted Plan of Management.

### 1.2 AIMS OF THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Horseshoe Bay Reserve is a Crown Reserve No. 82364 for Public Recreation. Kempsey Shire Council is the appointed Trust Manager of the Reserve, and is responsible for the care, control and management. Council was directed by the Minister of the then Department of Land and Water Conservation (Prior to the preparation of the existing Plan of Management) to “prepare a Plan of Management, under the Crown Lands Act 1989 for Reserve 82364” with the letter of direction stating that “this reserve is an extremely popular reserve on the coast and a Plan of Management will allow for future planning of this important area with community input. It will identify future users and uses of the reserve and appropriately locate and accommodate them on the reserve now and in the future”.

The general principles of Crown Land Management are:

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land;
- The natural resources of Crown land be conserved wherever possible;
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged;
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged; and
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity.

Council’s principal objective in preparing this Plan of Management is to provide a framework for land use and managerial decision making for the Reserve that is based upon the following:

- Recognised community and user demands;
- Council and Departmental policy and resources; and
- The capabilities of the natural resources present at the site.

To achieve these objectives the plan aims to:

- Identify the significant qualities and values of the Reserve;
- Provide an information base on the Reserves’ physical and cultural characteristics, land use and users which will facilitate informed planning and managerial decision making;
- Identify the issues associated with the Reserves’ qualities, values, sustainability, pressures and conflicts;
- Develop management strategies to ensure and direct the future maintenance and enhancement of these values and resolve the conflicts and pressures currently placed upon the Reserve;
- Develop an action plan to achieve the management strategies outlining direction for future management, timeframes, priorities and responsibilities; and
- Adopt a monitoring method by which Council can assess the performance of the action plan.

The primary intention for the current amendments to the Plan of Management are to build upon the aims and principles identified for the Reserve in the previous version of the Plan of Management and provide Master Plan documents which can be readily communicated to the community.

### **1.3 THE PROCESS USED FOR THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT**

The original Plan of Management was compiled in accordance with the process outlined within the Crown Lands Act and included a detailed assessment, exhibition and consultation process with the general public and key stakeholders.

The current amendments to the Plan of Management included a review of the Plan of Management as well as a detailed and involved community consultation process. This process included presentation and feedback sessions and a walk around the site with community and key stakeholder groups.

A Plan of Management is a document which must respond to a dynamic and continually evolving natural and cultural environment. The Plan of Management approaches, strategies and outcomes require monitoring and updating as the Reserve evolves. This version of the Plan of Management provides a current framework for future improvements to the Horseshoe Bay Reserve.

### **1.4 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

The process required by the Crown Lands Division under Sections 112 and 115 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and its accompanying Regulation for preparing a Plan of Management applying to Crown Land is to:

- Prepare a draft Plan of Management. The Minister may cause or direct a draft Plan of Management to be prepared; or a reserve trust may, with the Minister's consent, prepare a draft Plan of Management for the reserve.
- Refer the draft Plan of Management to the Crown Lands Division for comment prior to the public exhibition.
- Place a public notice in the NSW Government Gazette and in local newspapers advising the public of the public exhibition.
- Exhibit the draft Plan of Management to the public for not less than 28 days to allow for submissions to be made on the Plan of Management.
- Refer public submissions regarding the draft Plan of Management to both the Minister and Kempsey Shire Council as Trust Manager for consideration by the Minister prior to adoption
- Adopt the Plan of Management by Council, and by the Minister under Section 114 of the Crown Lands Act 1989.
- Follow the adopted Plan of Management, with all operations (activities, uses and developments) being in accordance with the adopted Plan.



## 2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

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### 2.1 SITE LOCATION

The area known as Horseshoe Bay Reserve is situated at South West Rocks, a coastal town on the mid north coast of NSW. The Reserve is bordered by:

- South West Rocks Creek (Backwater Creek to the locals) to the west;
- Trial Bay and Saltwater Creek to the north;
- Arakoon State Recreation Area to the east; and
- The South West Rocks town centre including Fig Tree Lane, Livingstone Street, Memorial Avenue, Paragon Avenue, Mitchell and Landsborough Streets as well as Phillip Drive to the south.

The study area is detailed in *Locality Map 2.1* overleaf.

### 2.2 STUDY AREA, TENURE AND ZONING

The study area known as Horseshoe Bay Reserve incorporates part of the Crown Land Reserve Number 82364 which is listed for Public Recreation. The Reserve is administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources for which Kempsey Council is the Reserve Trustee. Under the Minister's direction the following areas of the Reserve are to be excluded from the study area:

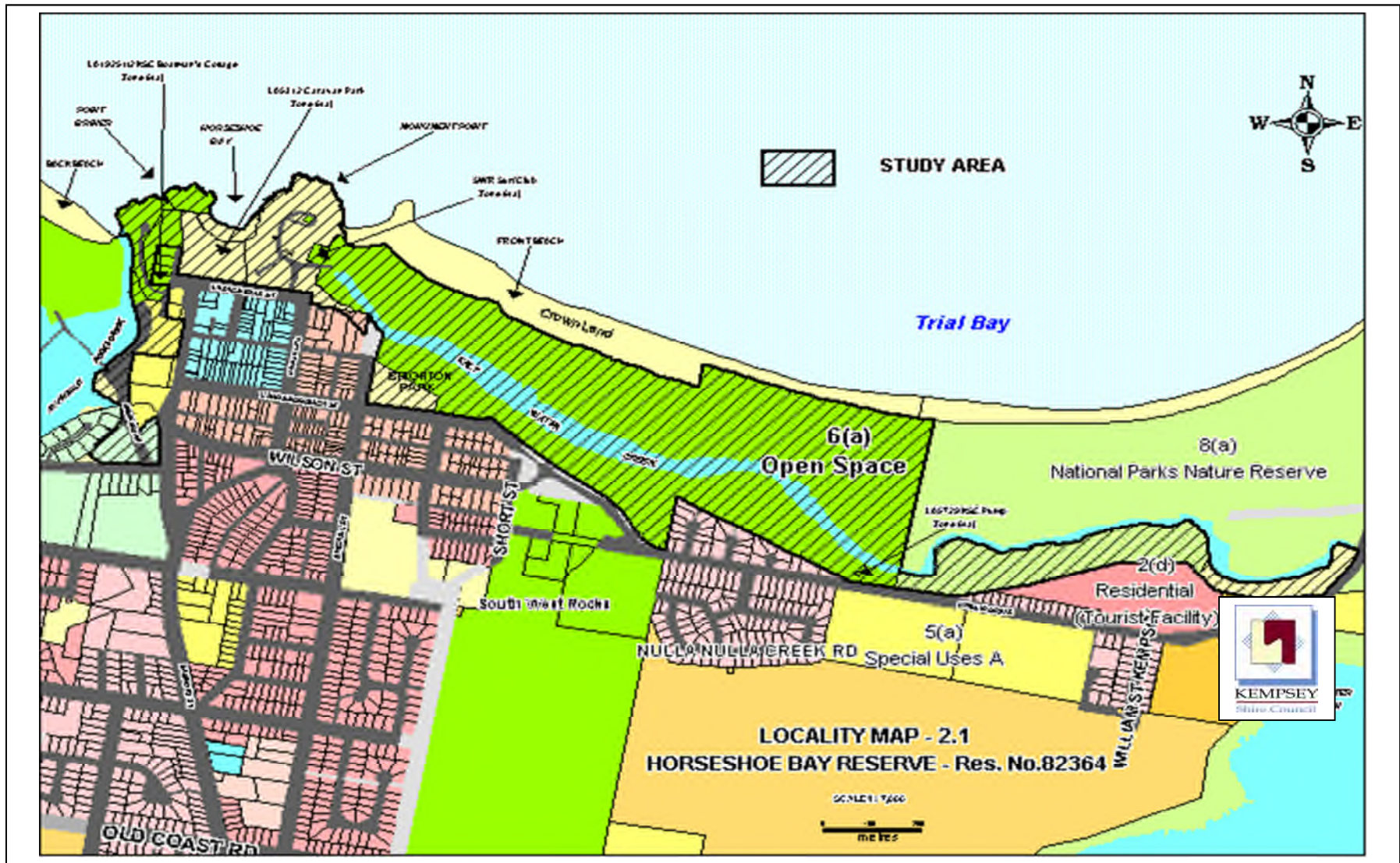
- The area to the south of Phillip Drive housing the South West Rocks sporting fields and golf course (DP 1003894, Lot 20987); and
- The intertidal zone of Front Beach.

Also excluded from the study area due to the land being under separate titles are:

- South West Rocks Surf Club Building;
- The Flagstaff and associated structures on Point Briner; and
- The Old School House site and Catholic Church site along Gregory Street.

The study area is approximately 65 hectares and is zoned 6(a) (Open space "A" Zone) under the provisions of the Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 1987. The study area is zoned RE1 Public Recreation under the provisions of the Draft Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Native Title has been extinguished on the Reserve as of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1995.



Plan of Management  
 Horseshoe Bay Reserve – South West Rocks

## **2.3 NATURAL LANDSCAPE**

### **2.3.1 Climate**

Climate on the Mid North Coast of NSW is acclaimed as ideal, being the mildest in Australia. It is therefore an important factor influencing the community's use of the Reserve. It also has a significant influence on tourists' choice of South West Rocks being their chosen holiday destination.

The climate in general in this area is warm temperate to sub-tropical with a maritime influence. This is characterised by mild winters with day time temperatures averaging 19 C and warm summers with an average day time temperature of 26 C.

South West Rocks receives an annual rainfall of approximately 1500mm (Smoky Cape) which is mainly distributed during the months of January to April with the driest months being July to November.

Prevailing winds are predominantly from the northeast during summer and from the west and south-west during autumn and winter.

### **2.3.2 Landform**

The Reserve area is essentially surrounded on three sides by water. It occupies a frontline coastal position facing predominantly north with creek systems to the west and east. The landform is quite diverse including beaches, dune system, headlands, undulating rises, low lying wetlands, estuaries and creek systems.

Both the western extremity and eastern area of the Reserve follow creek systems that both open out into Trial Bay. Saltwater Creek to the east is an important natural estuarine system for which a processes study has been completed. The *Estuary Management Plan – Saltwater Creek and Lagoon* was also adopted in June 2006.

At both creek exit points the topography is dominated by headlands, Point Briner to the west and Monument Point to the east. Both headlands provide significant vantage points over Trial Bay and along the coastline to the east and north-west.

Parts of the Reserve have been modified by human activity over the years including the construction of the breakwall to South West Rocks Creek, the area that is occupied by the Holiday Park and general roads and infrastructure present on the site.

### **2.3.3 Geology and Soils**

The geology and soils vary significantly within the Reserve relating to the general landforms. The higher elevated areas are predominantly located on rock outcrops with the rock type being mostly sediments and volcanics. The soils are generally poorly drained, acidic and low in fertility.

The lower lying areas generally relate to the coastal dune system and creek estuary systems. The foredune and hind dune areas comprise siliceous sands that are rapidly draining, have high permeability, low fertility and are highly erodable. The areas immediately comprising and adjoining the creeks are comprised of mixed estuarine and barrier sands. They are poorly drained, high in organic matter with high acid sulphate potential and are associated with high water tables and flood hazards.



### 2.3.4 Hydrology and Drainage

The Reserve is part of two catchment areas, South West Rocks Creek to the west and Saltwater Creek to the east. Both watercourses are associated with low lying adjacent areas and provide storage area for floodwaters. This is particularly so with Saltwater Creek which consists of large areas of wetlands or swampy areas and which is intermittently closed to the ocean leading to higher inundation risks.

Saltwater Creek is an intermittently open and closed estuary system with many unique characteristics and issues associated with it. An estuary processes study has recently been completed for Saltwater Creek with a Management Plan adopted in June 2006 addressing the many issues of concern identified by the community. In addition, Saltwater Lagoon and subsequently Saltwater Creek have been recently assessed and classified under the Coastal Lakes Inquiry. This means that a range of actions as specified in the Coastal Lakes Strategy will be required to be implemented under a yet to be adopted State Environmental Planning Policy.

South West Rocks Creek is a permanently flowing creek system that has been modified significantly over many years. It originally provided permanent boat access to the ocean for boat transport and professional and amateur fishermen. Many issues and concerns have been recently raised including the ever increasing build up of the sand bar at the mouth of the creek hindering boat access, the general increase in siltation of the creek system as well as general stormwater disposal related issues.

The complexities of these matters is outside the scope of this Plan of Management and are not being dealt with in this document. It has been suggested that a Coastal Processes Study would be an appropriate tool in which to deal with these and other matters and should be placed on the high priority list with the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources.

Natural drainage within the Reserve, with the exception of the low lying creek systems, is relatively good due to the undulating landform and free draining nature of the soils. Natural drainage, however, has been considerably altered in parts of the Reserve, where modifications to the landform and infrastructure have led to the installation of piped stormwater systems and diversion of natural water passages. Numerous problems relating to the inadequacy of these systems and the poor location of stormwater outlets has led to scouring and pollution problems throughout the Reserve.

### 2.3.5 Flora

Vegetation within the Reserve area is quite complex and diverse and can be categorised into a number of different vegetation communities (Kendall and Kendall 2003) namely Open Area/ Grassland, Dry Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland, Swamp Sclerophyll Forest, Shrubland Formation, Heathland Formation, Sod Grassland Formation, Sedgeland Formation, Rushland Formation.

Of major significance are the areas within the Reserve that are designated SEPP14 Coastal Wetlands which incorporates virtually all of Saltwater Creek (439) and the mouth of South West Rocks Creek (436). These wetland areas are governed by the State Environmental Planning Policy No. 14 which covers the management of estuarine and freshwater wetlands and rates these areas as having high conservation value.

No *Threatened Species Conservation Act* Species or *Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act* species have been located within the study area during past studies or the current field study of Saltwater Creek catchment conducted by Kendall and Kendall (2003). Kendall and Kendall (2003) have identified some possibly occurring threatened flora species within the Saltwater Creek catchment that may require further investigation if future development within the catchment is planned.

Within the Saltwater Creek catchment area a number of vegetation communities have been ranked by Kendall and Kendall (2003) as having a high conservation priority. These vegetation communities are *Eucalyptus planchoniana*; *Spinifex sericeus* tussock grassland; *Baumea juncea* sedgeland; *Juncus kraussii* rushland. These communities are predominantly found within the SEPP 14 boundary and are therefore currently protected.

A small pocket of Blackbutt forest (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) lies within the Reserve between the rear of the Pilot Station and the carpark area adjacent to South West Rocks Creek. Although heavily infested with various weed species, tall stands of Eucalypts dominate the embankment providing a significant natural buffer to the town centre.

A small pocket of disturbed remnant Littoral Rainforest lies adjacent to the Surf Club at Monument Point. This example of coastal rainforest has potential to be an important representation of this vegetation type in this area with high educational value.

Of major dominance are the open grassland areas within the Reserve that have been extensively modified over time with much of the area being cleared and replaced with introduced grasses and exotic trees and shrubs. The most prominent of the introduced trees species are the Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) which form a significant landscape feature within the Reserve adjacent to Livingstone Street.

Of major concern is the dominance of numerous invasive weed species that are evident on the fringes of all the main vegetation communities and penetrate into native bushland areas and along watercourses. Many of the weeds are threatening areas of high conservation value and potentially reducing the biodiversity of the floristic and habitat values of the area.

### **2.3.6 Fauna**

Fauna species and habitats within the Reserve are quite diverse but concentrated within the eastern portion. They can be divided into different habitats based upon the amalgamation of various vegetation communities (Kendall and Kendall 2003). These fauna habitats are Banksia – foredune complex and coastal banksias dry heath shrubland; Dry Sclerophyll Forest; Wet Heath; Wet and Dry Sclerophyll Forest; Melaleuca and Melaleuca/Casuarina Swamp Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland; Sedgeland; Rushland; Open Water; Beach.

Fauna of conservation significance recorded within 10km of Saltwater lagoon is listed in *Appendix C Table 5: Threatened Species Conservation Act threatened species*, extract from Saltwater Creek Flora & Fauna Study. This list includes mainly birds and bats with the Koala potentially found in Forest areas.

Degradation of any of the habitats found within the study area could have an impact on the listed threatened fauna species. For example degradation of the Swamp Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland could impact on the nectar and sheltering resource for several threatened birds and bats; any changes to the tidal influences of Saltwater Creek could create tidal mudflats and detract from the habitat value of rushland and sedgeland for freshwater bird species.

## **2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE**

### **2.4.1 General Heritage Significance of the Area and Reserve**

South West Rocks is the traditional homeland of the Dunghutti Nation. Historically, Monument Point was the traditional place of gathering and ceremony for the Dunghutti, Thaingutti, Gumbaynggir and Biripi Nations with the headland representing a 'song line' or energy line between Mount Yarrahapinni and the hills behind Arakoon.

Since European settlement in South West Rocks it has been long known as a popular tourist destination and a desirable place to retire for many residents of the Macleay Valley. Parts of the existing Reserve were used as a well visited camping destination well over a century ago and, therefore, a long history of public recreation is associated with the study area.

South West Rocks is also well known as having a rich maritime heritage with remains including buildings and structures, submerged shipwrecks, a range of historical relics, artefacts and sites of interest. The history of the Pilot Station Group of Buildings and the Flagstaff and Signal Station began in 1902 after the flood of 1893 caused the closure of the river entrance at Grassy Head. A few years later the pilot and his crew were relocated to South West Rocks near the new entrance forced by the river flood. It was at this stage that the importance of South West Rocks as a town of maritime significance was realised.

The surf life saving movement had a strong following at South West Rocks with many carnivals attracting big crowds from the 1920s to 1950s. It was in 1924 that the first clubhouse was built (although much altered now) with an attempt in the early 1930s to build a small footbridge across Saltwater Creek to gain easy access to Front Beach. All that remains are two stone supports.

Brighton Park was originally part of the “suburban lands” surveyed as part of the Town of Arakoon in 1866. When the town plan was readjusted in 1901 it was made a Reserve. It was designated for ‘police purposes’ in 1902 where the visiting constable would leave his horse. Over the years the park has been used as a cricket pitch, a camping ground and now as open parkland.

#### 2.4.2 Heritage and Historic Features

The most significant heritage items associated with the Reserve are the Pilot Station Group of Buildings and the Flagstaff and Signal Station on Point Briner. Although these items are located on land that is not included in this Plan of Management, their close proximity and association, and their visual and cultural linkage to the Reserve requires that they be given careful consideration when determining management objectives and strategies.

Heritage items that exist within the Reserve include:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1864 | A stone monument erected on Monument Point in memory of three men who drowned with the sinking of the ketch “ Woolloomooloo”.  |
| 1902 | Concrete steps and a concrete slab (located in the bush behind the Pilots House near to the existing wharf) are the remains of the boatshed which housed the Pilot boat. The shed and stepped access was built around 1902 in conjunction with the Pilots House.   |
| 1902 | A timber footbridge across South West Rocks Creek was also built this time providing access to the Macleay River’s new entrance. This was replaced with the existing high footbridge in the early 1980’s.  |
| 1910 | A concrete slab that lay in the middle of the road on Monument Point was all that remained of a small “lighthouse” built to assist the pilot in communication with shipping.   |
| 1914 | Norfolk Island Pines and plaques along Memorial Drive that were planted from 1914 in remembrance of World War One soldiers who lost their lives.   |
| 1934 | Two stone supports remain near to the entrance of Saltwater Creek from an attempt to build a footbridge from the surf club to Front Beach.   |
| 1937 | Memorial Gate Posts that originally (and still do) flanked the access to the Reserve and were erected in memory of Thomas Snow, a local man killed in a shipping accident.   |
| 1940 | South West Rocks Memorial Monument and Flagstaff located to the western end of Livingstone Street was unveiled on Anzac Day 1940 in remembrance of ten World War One active servicemen who did not return. Anzac Day memorial services were held on this corner for many years prior to the erection of the Monument |

*Stone monument on Monument Point*





*War Memorial at west end Livingstone St*



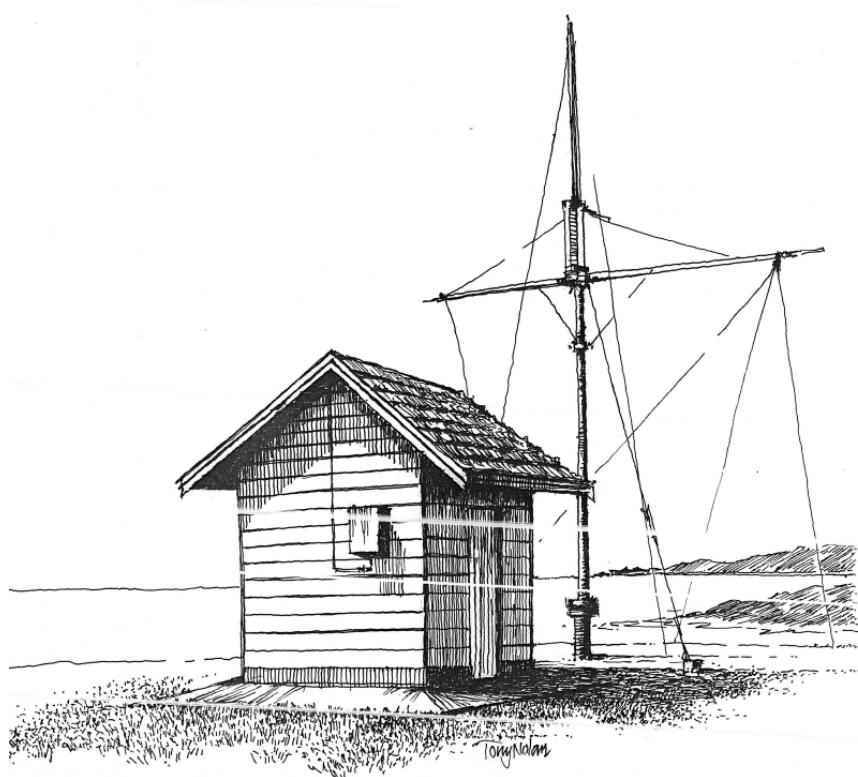
*Gate Post with memorial to Thomas Snow*



*Entry Gate Posts with some of the memorial Norfolk Island Pines*

Heritage items outside of the Reserve but closely associated to the Reserve precinct due to heritage, cultural and visual significance:-

- 1887 Pacific Guest House located on Livingstone Street is a two storey stone house that was the second building erected in South West Rocks for visitor accommodation
- 1902 Pilot Station Group of Buildings located at the corner of Gregory St and Ocean Ave were built to house the Macleay River Pilot John Jamieson and his staff of four when the pilot station was relocated from its original site at Grassy Head
- 1902 Signal Station and Flagstaff located at Point Briner were built as part of the Pilot Station and were used for communication with ships sheltering in Trial Bay and or bound for the Macleay River Entrance
- 1925 Heritage Seaside Café was built by the then owners of the Guest House and originally operated as a Billiard Room



*Sketch of the Flagstaff and Signal Station on Point Briner (by Tony Nolan)*

### 2.4.3 Heritage Status Listing

The Pacific Guest House is Heritage Listed as being of regional significance (S23) and is listed under the Interim inventory 1988.

Statutory protection is afforded to the Pilot Station Group of Buildings under Kempsey Council's Local Environmental Plan (Kempsey LEP 1987) which identifies the above items as "items of environmental heritage".

The Pilot Station Group of Buildings are in the State Heritage register.

## 2.5 VISUAL QUALITY AND AMENITY

Horseshoe Bay Reserve precinct is well known and visited for its natural scenic quality and spectacular views. Point Briner and Monument Point are natural headlands providing very accessible vantage points from which spectacular views of Trial Bay, Arakoon State Recreation Area, river mouths, the northern coastline and the surrounding mountains and hinterland can be observed. Within the Reserve a large expanse of open grass areas with a dominating tree canopy of Norfolk Island Pines creates a very protected and attractive recreational destination.



*View from Monument Point to Arakoon and Trial Bay*



*View from South West Rocks Creek mouth to Mt Yarrhapinni and coastline*



Unfortunately a number of built forms significantly detract from the overall scenic beauty of this precinct. Of greatest visual impact are possibly the variable elements located on the high ridge of Point Briner, namely the very dominating, multistorey and modern “Lees Court” holiday units that are located inappropriately between the main historical precinct of the “Boatmen’s Cottages” and the Flagstaff; similarly the dominating line of “white boxlike” holiday cabins adjacent to the War Memorial and the adhoc layout and array of unattractive buildings within the Holiday Park itself. Scattered, unattractive buildings throughout the Reserve also detract from the visual amenity of the area including the main amenity block, kiosk, Surf Club with its prominent roof line and colour and various dominating, multi storey holiday units located adjacent to the Reserve.

*Holiday units “Lees Court” near Saltwater Creek entrance*



*Holiday cabins at entry to Holiday Park*



*Surf Club at mouth of Saltwater Creek*



*Main amenity block along access road*



Areas of the Reserve surrounding South West Rocks Creek and Saltwater Creek precincts have a visual amenity that is more enclosed and is of significant contrast to the headland areas. These areas are of equal natural scenic beauty with significant vantage points including the various footbridges over the creeks as well as the more open foreshore areas.

*Saltwater Creek*



*South West Rocks Creek*



## 2.6 USE OF THE SITE

### 2.6.1 Introduction

Horseshoe Bay Reserve is one of the focal points of the South West Rocks township and is the main focal point of the adjoining town centre. It is an important draw card for tourists whether they are visitors to the Holiday Park, day users or sightseers and is an important day recreation destination for the local and surrounding community. The Reserve offers a large range of activities including beach use, swimming, picnics, walking, scenic viewing, fishing, boating, market days and historic attractions.

The Horseshoe Bay Reserve is utilised by a wide spectrum of people for a wide variety of informal and organised social activities ranging including:

- Picnics and barbeques, using picnic shelters and tables provided as well as the grassed areas;
- Children's play and informal games in the playground as well as the grassed areas;
- Sitting and relaxing;
- Swimming, surfing and other water based activities;
- General exercise;
- Fishing; and
- Walking.

### 2.6.2 Existing Land Uses

The Reserve can be divided into three distinct areas with each area offering different recreational opportunities.

#### Area 1 - Saltwater Creek

This area is dominated by native bushland and wetland areas consisting of various vegetation communities and divided by Saltwater Creek. A pedestrian/cycleway is located to much of the southern boundary of the Reserve with two walkways and footbridges cutting through the Reserve to provide access to Front Beach and Trial Bay. Brighton Park is the only open grass area within this precinct. This precinct is well used by recreational walkers and cyclists as well as beach goers using the pathway system. A travelling carnival visits Brighton Park annually with day recreation users and local residents using the park on occasions for a multitude of low key recreational functions.

#### Area 2 - Horseshoe Bay Reserve

This area of the Reserve is the most extensively used by both tourists and the local community. It is dominated by open grassland with access to two headlands and a small sandy beach as well as being an access point to the main Front Beach. It is a vitally important passive recreational area.

Various facilities and infrastructure have been provided for visitors including access road and carparking, two amenity buildings, a kiosk, large multi functional picnic shelter with bbq's (which has recently been destroyed by fire), scattered picnic tables and shelters, children's playground. Bus and truck access is currently prohibited within the Reserve due to inadequate turning and parking facilities.

Numerous items of heritage interest are located within or adjacent to this precinct. These items are an added attraction for the tourist and include the Pilot Station Group of Buildings, Flagstaff and Signal Station and the War Memorial.

The Holiday Park is a well visited part of the Reserve and occupies a large area of this precinct. It currently provides a total of eighty-three (83) sites which include a mix of holiday units, powered caravan sites, two amenity buildings and an office and managers residence.

#### Area 3 - South West Rocks Creek

This area is dominated by the breakwall to the bank and mouth of the creek, access road and parking facilities, small wharf, footbridge accessing the western bank of the creek, beach and boat moorings and a small open grass reserve area. This precinct is well visited by both recreational and professional fishermen as well as beach users accessing Back Beach. Easy road access attracts many sightseers during the day but lack of facilities or infrastructure limits day use by picnickers.



### 2.6.3 Main User and Interest Groups

- Macleay River Historical Society Inc – South West Rocks Committee
- South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club
- Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol
- South West Rocks CWA
- South West Rocks Visitor Information Centre
- South West Rocks Day View Club
- South West Rocks Seniors
- South West Rocks Chamber of Commerce
- South West Rocks Markets
- South West Rocks Sub branch RSL
- Lions Club
- Rotary Club
- St Pauls College
- Melville High School
- South West Rocks Public School & P & C Association
- Amateur Fishing Club
- Holiday Park visitors
- Day recreation and picnic visitors
- Tour groups



*Children's Playground, Fishing Classic, Market day*



### 2.6.4 Special Events

The following special events occur, or have occurred, within the Reserve:

- Kempsey Toyota Fishing Classic – annual event;
- Surf Life Saving State Championships;
- Beach Soccer Championships.

### 2.6.5 Existing Structures

#### Saltwater Creek

*Sewer Pumping Station* - located adjacent to the pedestrian/cycleway along Phillip Drive.

*Two footbridges* - across Saltwater Creek. A new bridge has recently been constructed at Mitchell Street however the other is a narrow timber structure that require ongoing repairs.

*Cycleway* - through most of this precinct linking Phillip Drive opposite the old Caltex site. Some sections are new while other areas require reconstruction.

## **Horseshoe Bay**

*Two Public Amenity Blocks* - single storey, flat roof brick buildings that require significant upgrading. The larger amenity block is visually intrusive and unattractive. The smaller is less prominent, being relatively well screened from the access road by vegetation.

*Kiosk* - a single storey, pitched roof brick building with a degraded paved outdoor seating area. The building requires internal and external upgrading. It is located dangerously close to the access road and is in a very prominent position.

Recent works associated with the Open Space Upgrade Master Plan (2012-13) includes a review of road and parking configuration and operation to address issues relating to the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles and the most efficient use of valuable public open space adjacent the kiosk building.

*Multifunctional Picnic Shelter* - a brick and timber partially open structure with a pitched, corrugated iron roof. It terminates the vista from the road entry gates and is very dominant. It contains several bbq's, permanent picnic tables, a stage to one end and was in recent times landscaped with low retaining walls, new concrete entry steps and planting. NOTE: This structure burnt down in 2012. The Master Plan has considered suitable locations for the erection of a new picnic shelter, including in the location of the existing multifunction picnic shelter location. As a result of the community consultation process a new shelter structure is proposed to be built on the existing shelter structure site.

*Playground* - a children's playground is located near to the Surf Club and adjacent to the main entry road.

*Holiday Park* - incorporating a number of permanent buildings including two amenity buildings, an office/managers residence and numerous prefabricated holiday cabins. The amenity buildings are prominent brick buildings that required significant internal and external upgrading. One of the amenities blocks was renovated in 2012. Restorations works to the second amenities building have been estimated to cost around \$500,000. The office/managers residence is a two storey brick building with a wire mesh fence surround to part of it with numerous high retaining walls of rock and rounded treated pine logs. Its future use is limited by accessibility issues and will require upgrading to improve its external appearance.

Many of the facilities within this Precinct are dilapidated and require repair, or in some cases, such as with the existing amenities building within the Holiday Park, require complete restoration and/or replacement.

*Public Facilities* - there are numerous picnic shelters of varying design and size scattered throughout the open grass areas with various styles of picnic tables, seats, garbage bins, bicycle racks, water taps also randomly scattered throughout. Most require upgrading or replacement and their adhoc locations require integrated consolidation.

Adjoining the Reserve are a number of very dominant structures that need to be considered, including:

- Flagstaff and Signal Station – both of which are located on Point Briner 'contained' within their own precinct. Both are considered important heritage items. This was successfully renovated in 2012. All structures form a visually and historically significant landmark.
- Surf Club - the clubhouse is located at the mouth of Saltwater Creek with Monument Point headland rising directly behind it. Although the building is set low and is below the headland a number of features make it quite dominant. It is a two storey brick building with a visually obtrusive blue colourbond pitched roof. The building and its surrounds have had numerous additions and outbuildings added over the years giving it a somewhat untidy, piece meal appearance. A multitude of advertising signage dominates its appearance from the Reserve.

## **South West Rocks Creek**

*Break wall* - extending from the mouth of the river, along the bank of the creek finishing near the footbridge. It is made up of large quarried rock, randomly placed. It forms a very uneven and ugly edge to the creek bank. A dredge is permanently located at the end of the break wall intended to keep the channel open to the sea and accessible by boat.

*Wharf* - of timber and concrete, is located at the end of Buchanan Drive from which fishing boats are occasionally and temporarily moored.

*Footbridge* - a high timber footbridge provides access over South West Rocks Creek to Back Beach and boat moorings. It is in a state of disrepair and requires considerable maintenance to bring it to satisfactory safety standards.

## 2.6.6 Linkages with Other Open Spaces

The Reserve is linked to open space systems in numerous locations. To the east it adjoins the Arakoon State Recreation Area with a future possibility of linking the pedestrian/cycleway with this area and providing a significant linkage between the Reserves and surrounding townships. In the reserve containing the South West Rocks Sporting Fields and Golf Course, future plans should include upgrading the pedestrian/cycleway linkage between the two recreation areas with similar landscape themes and effectively enhancing the association between the two areas. To the west the Reserve abuts areas of dominant bushland, wetland areas and mangroves along the creekline. Access is provided to Back Beach by way of the footbridge over South West Rocks Creek linking the Reserve with the dune and beach system of Back Beach and the Macleay River area.

## 2.7 CURRENT RESERVE MANAGEMENT

### 2.7.1 Current Administration and Management Practices

#### Current Reserve Maintenance Practices

The Reserve is currently maintained by Kempsey Councils' Civic Maintenance team which includes a crew attending to weekly and weekend maintenance of amenities and garbage collection.

A number of capital improvements have been scheduled for the Reserve with monies already allocated. These projects have been put on hold until this Plan of Management has been finalised. These projects include:

- Extension of the cycleway/footpath between Point Briner and Brighton Park;
- Replacement of the main Picnic Shelter in Horseshoe Bay Reserve that burnt down in 2012;
- Replacement of children's playground and shelter above;
- Refurbishments of the main amenity block in Horseshoe Bay Reserve;
- Additional lighting;
- New tables and seats; and
- Additional planting.

A number of proposed capital improvements within the Reserve which have yet to seek approval include:

- Disabled access to Horseshoe Bay Beach;
- Entertainment stage/gazebo in Brighton Park; and
- Sculpture walk between Brighton Park and Horseshoe Bay Reserve.

#### Regular Events

A number of regular community and commercial events are carried out in the Reserve which are managed by the various community organisations and which include:

- Monthly markets at Horseshoe Bay;
- 'Housie' in the Picnic Shelter adjacent to the Surf Club;
- Carnival annually at Brighton Park; and
- Fishing tournament annually at Horseshoe Bay.

### 2.7.2 Current Leasing Arrangements

Council retained the Holiday Park after the lease arrangement ceased in 2009 and it is currently under contract management. The kiosk is currently leased.



## 3.0 POLICY BASIS

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### 3.1 RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND STUDIES

This Plan of Management has been prepared taking into consideration the following legislation, policies and technical studies:

#### Legislation & Policies

- NSW Crown Lands Act 1989

The Crown Lands Act 1989 governs the planning, management and use of Crown land, including reservation or dedication for a range of public purposes, and leasing and licensing. The Crown Lands Division, together with Reserve Trusts appointed by the Minister, are responsible for management of the Crown reserve system throughout New South Wales to ensure that Crown land is managed for the benefit of the people of New South Wales, and having regard for the principles of Crown land management.

- NSW Local Government Act 1993
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EPA Act) establishes the statutory planning framework for environmental and landuse planning in NSW through State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), Deemed SEPPs (formerly Regional Environmental Plans), and Local Environmental Plans (LEPs). The EPA Act also sets out processes for approving development applications for structures and works on public and private land as set out in the Kempsey LEP (as well as the Draft Kempsey LEP 2012).

- State Environmental Planning Policies

The following State Environmental Planning Policies are considered;

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007;
- The SEPP has significant implications for the management and development of Crown reserves. It provides for a range of exemptions from development consent, including:
  - Development purposes and standards for exempt development on public reserves (Schedule 1).
  - Additional uses to be undertaken on certain land where it would otherwise be prohibited under an LEP if those uses are compatible with surrounding land uses.
  - Prescribed low-impact development by the Crown Lands Division or any other authority.
  - Certain development on Crown reserves where Council is the trust manager.
  - Certain development for waterway or foreshore management activities by or on behalf of a public authority.
  - For any purpose relating to implementing a Plan of Management adopted under the Crown Lands Act 1989.

These provisions do not apply to State land reserved for conservation or other environmental protection purposes, or in Council areas where a new principal local environmental plan is in place.

Clause 65(3) of the SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007 sets out several purposes for which development may be carried out by or on behalf of a Council without consent on a public reserve under the control of or vested in the Council.

- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 Advertising and Signage; and
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Temporary Structures and Places of Public Entertainment) 2007.
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997

- Companion Animals Act 1998
- NSW Coastal Policy 1997

*Relevant recommendations:*

- Central focus is to manage the NSW coastline in an ecologically sustainable way and to protect and conserve the coast for future generations
- Principle objectives
  - Include protecting, enhancing and conserving the natural environment, the natural processes, the aesthetic qualities and the cultural heritage of the coastal zone;
  - Provide for appropriate public access and use;
  - Provide information to enable the effective management of the coastal zone
- Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 1987
- Draft Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 2012

Other Technical Documents

- Technical Report for South West Rocks Village, Mitchell McCotter (April 1994)

*Relevant recommendations:*

The Council is committed to ensuring that the natural attractions and features that make South West Rocks unique are not compromised by new development and that future development proceeds in an environmentally sound manner.

- South West Rocks Urban Design Study and Town Centre Masterplan, Rupert G.H. Milne Home Landscape Consulting (July 1998)

*Relevant recommendations:*

- Identifies and formulates design improvements that are realistic, achievable and relevant to improving the safety, convenience, comfort and environmental appeal of users to the Town Centre and surrounding environs;
- Sets the framework and character for the detailed design and implementation to revitalise the Town Centre and adjoining public recreation areas; and
- Recommends a Plan of Management be prepared for the Town Centre open space areas. This will ensure that the foreshore reserves will continue to provide a “Seaside” identity to the Town Centre and will preserve the recreational opportunities provided to the community.
- Saltwater Creek Estuary Processes Study, DPWS and Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (March 2002)

*Relevant recommendations:*

- Identifies issues of concern raised by the community. In summary these were the value of the estuary for future generations and as a recreational and natural amenity now;
- There is a need to enhance the understanding of the Saltwater Creek system with the requirement for more technical and detailed information e.g. surveying of entrance berm, water levels, flora & fauna, water quality etc.; and
- That a well-defined Plan of Management must be initiated.
- Independent Inquiry into Coastal Lakes – Final Report 2002, Healthy Rivers Commission

*Relevant objectives:*

- Establishment of the Coastal Lakes Strategy which is an over-arching set of arrangements to improve the management of coastal lakes and their catchments so that progress towards the long term goal of healthier coastal lakes is achieved; and

- Requires the development and implementation of Sustainability Assessment and Management Plan for each nominated coastal lake (included Saltwater Lagoon and Saltwater Creek) be carried out. The responsible public authority is to be accountable for the conclusion of the planning, actions and assessment.
- Draft Catchment Blueprint - Mid North Coast Catchment Management Board (February 2002)

*Relevant recommendations:*

- To set management actions and targets to improve the health and sustainability of catchments including the more efficient use of natural resources, enhanced biodiversity, catchment protection, reduced land degradation and reduced waterway pollution.



## **4.0 VALUES, MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICY GUIDELINES**

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### **4.1 VALUES OF THE RESERVE AREA**

Following the analysis and evaluation of Horseshoe Bay Reserve, as well as the exhibition and community consultation process associated with the Upgrade Master Plan, the following values have been determined as the most important elements of the Reserve Area. These values must be protected and taken into consideration when determining future management objectives, strategies and actions.

#### PHYSICAL QUALITIES

- The frontline coastal position of the Reserve with two dominating headlands, two creek mouths and accessible sandy beaches form a unique coastal setting of local, regional and potentially of state importance;
- The eastern portion of the site bordering Front Beach and Saltwater Creek has a diverse range of native flora and fauna communities and habitats with high to moderate conservation values; and
- Both creek systems bordering the Reserve provide two very different natural environments offering a diverse range of natural and recreational values and opportunities.

#### VISUAL QUALITIES

- The whole of the Reserve has great visual appeal from both a natural and heritage perspective. The Reserve has a strong physical and visual link both to and from the ocean, creeks, coastline, mountains and hinterland; and
- The vegetative backdrop within the Reserve visually separates and softens the Town Centre from the recreation areas.

#### CULTURAL QUALITIES

- The Reserve retains a high level of maritime historical significance relating to the important past use of the area. This is reinforced by some of the adjacent heritage buildings and structures; and
- The Reserve has been used for a multitude of recreational uses for more than a century by locals and tourists and remains a focal point for passive recreation today.

#### SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL QUALITIES

- The Reserve is an important and accessible tourist destination for day tourists and holiday makers;
- The Reserve provides an important recreational and relaxation resource for the town. It has highly valued recreational uses including surfing, swimming, walking, scenic viewing, picnicking, fishing, caravanning, community and special events; and
- The Reserve is important to the economy of the Town Centre by attracting visitors and tourists.

### **4.2 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

Based upon the values of the Reserve, and the communities and stakeholders preferred outcomes, broad management objectives can be determined. These objectives must also take into account legislation requirements and policy guidelines that have been previously outlined.

The management objectives of the Horseshoe Bay Reserve Plan of Management are:

- To preserve and enhance the physical, visual, cultural, social and recreational values of the Reserve;
- To conserve, enhance, interpret and promote the heritage items and matters relating to the Reserve which will assist with the preservation and development of the maritime heritage precinct while creating additional attractions for tourist recreation;
- To preserve and enhance the visual qualities of the Reserve by removing, screening or modifying the detractors and retaining a significant tree canopy;

- To retain and maintain the Reserve as a high quality, multi-purpose, public recreation space;
- To provide opportunities for further development of the Reserve which will benefit the communities recreational and tourist use while not imposing on the physical, visual and cultural values of the Reserve;
- Maximise, improve and encourage public use and access to and throughout the Reserve particularly to foreshore areas;
- Improve facilities and access within the Reserve to ensure safety of visitors, to reduce ongoing maintenance and further attract visitors to the Reserve;
- Ensure that the ongoing use and management of the Reserve is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable;
- Investigate additional funding sources and opportunities that will allow ongoing and further improvements and facilities to the Reserve; and
- Investigate additional or alternative income generating options within the Reserve that will generate a sustainable income to enable current and future projects within the Reserve to be financed.

#### **4.3 SPECIFIC POLICY GUIDELINES**

1. Any infrastructure or development works to be carried out within the vicinity of Saltwater Creek and its surrounding environs is to be done in accordance with the requirements and recommendations that will form part of the proposed "Saltwater Creek Plan of Management". Until such a plan is put in place, consultation must be carried out with the Saltwater Creek Working Group and the Coastal and Estuary Management Committee;
2. Any development within the Reserve must be done in accordance with Council's planning requirements and the proposal to formulate a specific Development Control Plan for Horseshoe Bay Reserve. This will take into consideration the minimising of adverse visual impact upon the Reserve and its surrounds, recognising the heritage and seaside character of the precinct, ensuring its use is of recreational relevance and importance to the community, and considering the recommendations made in the Town Centre Master Plan;
3. Consider and make provisions for disabled access where appropriate in accordance with the Australian Standard AS1428;
4. All heritage conservation work should be undertaken in accordance with the Australia 'Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)';

## 5.0 MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The Upgrade Master Plan for the Reserve is attached on Page 3. The Master Plan illustrates the works and actions that are proposed to be implemented to achieve the objectives and desired outcomes for the Horseshoe Bay Reserve.

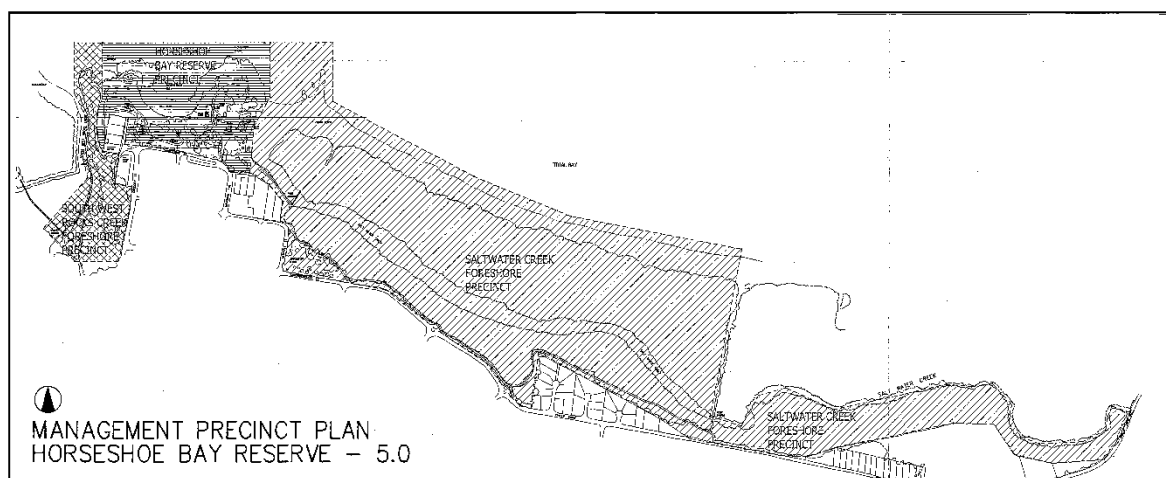


Figure 5.0: The Horseshoe Bay Reserve including the three Reserve Precincts.

The Master Plan has been prepared to demonstrate the concept of precincts within the three broad areas of the Reserve whilst identifying the key features/objectives within each Precinct.

The three broad areas of the Reserve are described as

- The South West Rocks Creek Foreshore;
- The Horseshoe Bay Reserve (including Holiday Park ); and
- The Saltwater Creek Precinct.

Each of these areas, particularly the Horseshoe Bay Reserve, contains distinct Precincts. These Precincts are defined primarily by their use as well as the physical qualities they exhibit. Despite each precinct and area containing different physical, social and cultural features, as identified on the Upgrade Master Plan, the management outcomes, strategies and actions for achieving all are considered universal.

The management outcomes, strategies and actions for the entire Reserve are therefore summarised below:

### Management Outcomes

The management objectives for the Reserve are outlined in Section 4.2 of this Plan:

Satisfaction of the listed objectives is considered the desired management outcome.

### Actions

The actions required will primarily relate to the implementation of the relevant components of the Master Plan.

### Priority

This Plan of Management intends to allow for the users of the Reserve to guide the prioritisation of individual components of the works. The availability of funding as well as the community demand will generally dictate the priority of individual components.

## Cost

Costs for individual components of the Master Plan have not been calculated at this time. It is intended that the costing and implementation of specific components of the Master Plan will be instigated as funds become available and once the community dictates priorities.

## Responsibility

The primary responsibility for the maintenance and upgrade of the Reserve in a manner consistent with the Master Plan will rest with Council. Other parties considered responsible include:

- NSW Trade and Investment Crown Lands;
- The Department of Natural Resources;
- Aboriginal Elders of South West Rocks;
- The Holiday Park lessee;
- Community and stake holder groups and
- The South West Rocks community.

### **5.1 SOUTH WEST ROCKS CREEK FORESHORE**

This precinct is distinctly separate from the rest of the Reserve in both a physical and recreational sense. It is physically very confined, bounded by a creek, steep vegetated embankment and dominating headland making it virtually unseen from the nearby town centre, residential areas and the main Horseshoe Bay Reserve Precinct.

For this reason it does not receive such high visitation by tourists and day users and therefore has not developed the same recreational usages as other parts of the Reserve. Traditionally however, it is an important fishing base for amateur fishermen. It also provides the main pedestrian link to Back Beach by way of the timber footbridge as well as retaining a number of Aboriginal heritage items and historical items relating to the Reserve's maritime past.

This precinct is an important commuter and recreational link to other areas of the town and adjoining open space systems and should be encouraged to develop as such. Greater pedestrian accessibility, improved and additional infrastructure, enhancement and improvement of the visual amenity of the area are all important management objectives that will together greatly improve the usage and recreational opportunities within this precinct.



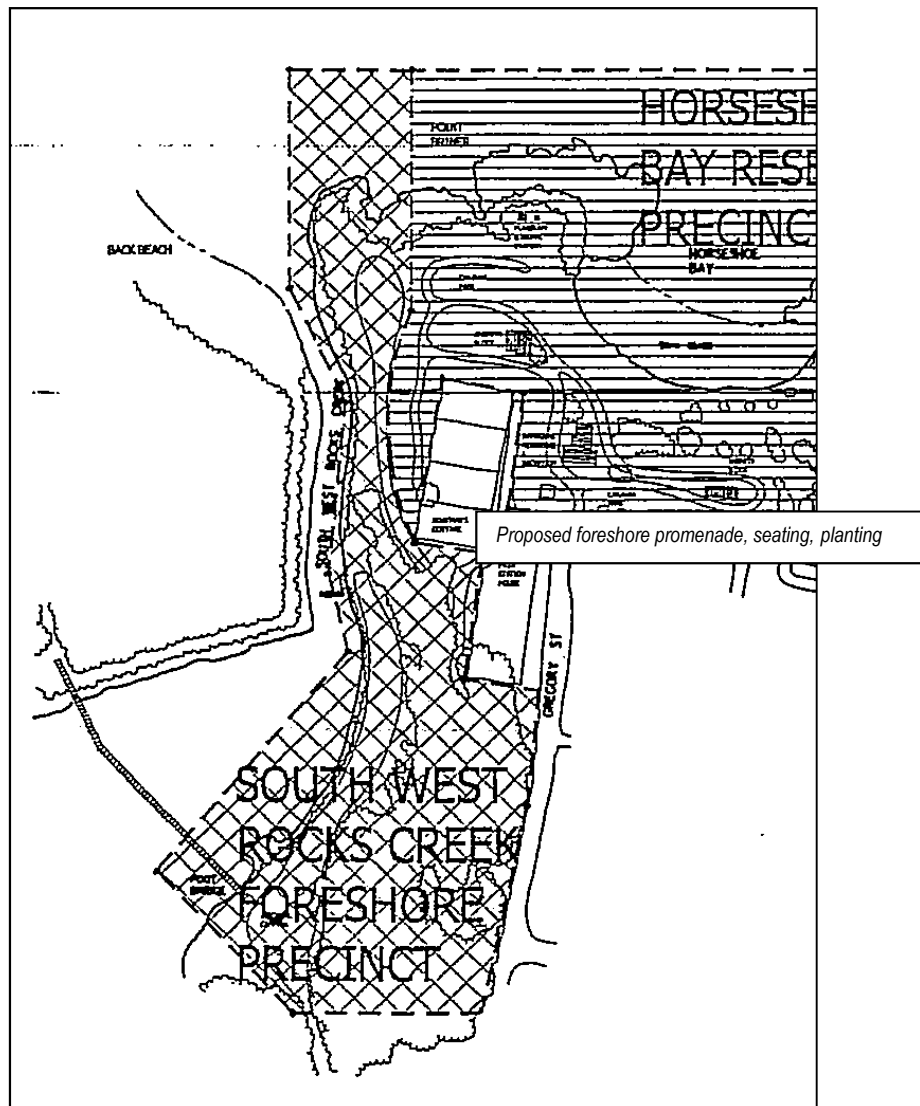


Figure 5.1: The South West Rocks Creek Foreshore Precinct.

## 5.2 HORSESHOE BAY RESERVE

This precinct is arguably the focal point of the Reserve. It is the most readily visible of the precincts, receives the most visitors, is the most accessible by foot and vehicle, has the greatest diversity of recreational activities and supports the majority of infrastructure.

As a result of this popularity and high usage the precinct is under the greatest amount of pressure from a management perspective. It is understandable therefore that the proposed management strategies and actions are very much focused on this area of the Reserve.

There is an increasing economic pressure from the business community and social pressure from the general community to continually upgrade, improve and maintain the natural environs and infrastructure within this precinct of the Reserve. By carrying out improvements it will ensure that the tourist dollar will continue to frequent the Reserve and surrounding township and the high recreational value of the Reserve will be maintained for the general use of the growing local community.

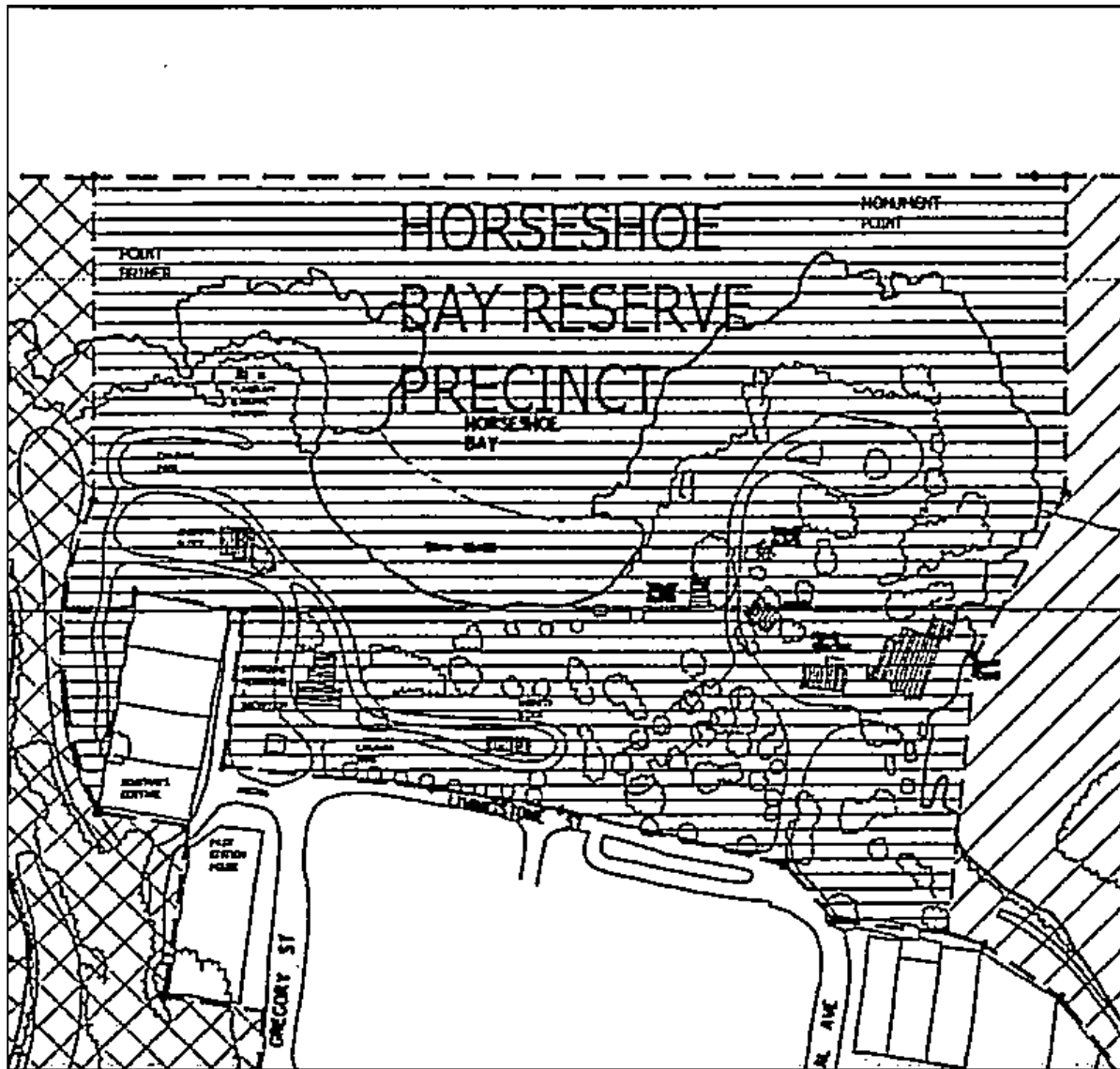


Figure 5.2: Horseshoe Bay Precinct

The Horseshoe Bay Master Plan proposes a number of initiatives to improve the function, useability and visual amenity of the Horseshoe Bay Reserve. These initiatives are discussed below.

### 5.2.1 Town Entrance Precinct

The intersection of Gregory and Livingstone Streets is one of the first points of arrival for visitors to South West Rocks. This area of the reserve is a precinct in which it is important to provide a pleasing and interesting first impression to people who are entering the town centre.

This is seen as being able to be achieved through removing the direct access to the Holiday Park from the existing busy Livingstone Street intersection by shifting it to Ocean Drive. This would require Ocean Drive to be widened to accommodate Holiday Park vehicle movements. The location of the park office and manager's residence would be adjusted to improve the view and consideration of revised planting and landscaping. Additional green space would be provided around the Cenotaph where the existing entrance is.

### **5.2.2 Ridgeline Precinct**

The key concept within this precinct is to create a strong link between the headland and the town centre. This is to ensure that there is a feeling of connection between these two important parts of the town centre.

The ridgeline is also an important area for maximising the views of Horseshoe Bay, so the concept seeks to create an avenue feel, but still allow for activities along that avenue.

Currently the direct link between the Town Centre and beach is obstructed by the eastern end of the Holiday Park. The amount of holiday park land that creates this visual barrier has been handed over to public area, opening up the direct access and views.

Vehicle parking on the ridge line has been removed and a paved pathway used to provide a promenade from the town centre to the Reserve. Additional seating units and barbecue facilities have been located along the ridge line, resulting in a good viewing location over the beach and providing another series of areas for people to congregate and enjoy the reserve.

To realise this avenue, car parking has been relocated to the under-utilised area of the reserve, an area that does not have significant views. A new vehicle entrance into the reserve has been incorporated, to move the entrance away from the Memorial Avenue intersection, improving the safety of that corner and providing for all vehicle movements when leaving the reserve, rather than the existing left turn only on exit.

### **5.2.3 Young Families Precinct**

Feedback from the walk around meeting showed strong support for retaining the position of the existing playground area. The primary benefit of retaining this area as an area for young families was the link to Saltwater Creek, which was seen as popular with families.

Previously consideration was being given to moving the playground to improve the connection between the playground, beach and large shelter structures. It was considered that in order to cater for young family groups additional facilities would need to be clustered in that precinct. For this reason, a large group shelter, additional seating units and barbecues have been added to this precinct. This will allow families to be able to stay in this precinct to avoid crossing the roads and to assist with supervision of children in the playground.

A new small toilet facility is also proposed for this area to allow children access to sanitary facilities without the need to cross a roadway or travel long distances from the playground.

### **5.2.4 Surf Club Precinct**

The surf club building and its current external infrastructure remain as is and the existing boat ramp remains in its current location. This precinct recognises the importance of the Surf Life Saving Club and its objective is to continue the focus on that usage.

### **5.2.5 Headland Viewing Precinct**

Within this precinct the concept is to allow the community the ability to access and utilise the views available from the headland. It was advised that this is important, particularly to mobility impaired residents, who otherwise would not be able to access this area. The concept is to maximise the available parking spaces but minimise the overall size and impact of the car park on the headland. This maximises green areas.

Provision has been made for parking areas facing both east and west to allow viewing of both Trial Bay and Horseshoe Bay.

It is proposed to move the access road to the east of the existing road, to link more directly with the carpark road. In the previous draft plan the access road was relocated to adjacent to the Surf Club, however a suggestion to have the road located between the shelter shed site and the kiosk has been taken on board. The objective of relocating the road is to join back together a larger amount of the reserve's green space. This will give a greater feeling of open space and should promote greater utilisation of areas currently separated from the beach.

Further development of linked walking paths and additional seating around the headland will also complement the area, allowing for many people to access the views.

### **5.2.6 Facilities Entertainment Hub**

The main concept in this area is to create a hub of facilities and activity. This will involve a range of different facilities to bring together groups and users.

It is considered that this would include providing another large shelter near the ridge line path, providing for an area to have group events with good visibility of the high value views into the bay. This would allow, for example groups to have events in the shelter shed and still have children able to be on the beach.

Consolidation of "commercial purposes" into this precinct in and around the existing kiosk is included. This will group the commercial aspects of the headland. This will condense the activity and minimise the visual impact of the buildings. It will also simplify operational activities such as catering for deliveries such as stock.

One of the major calls from members of the community has been to rebuild the existing shelter shed. The reasons provided for this have been:

- Provides a facility that is protected on windy days; and
- Provides a facility that allows for supervision of children at the playground.

The provision of two other large shelter shed areas, one near the playground in the south eastern corner is seen as meeting these needs. The issue of windy weather was also investigated. The indicator of windy days was taken to be over level 4 on the "Beaufort Scale", This level is when small trees in leaf begin to sway and crested wavelets form on inland waters and not when the wind raises dust and loose paper or small branches are moved. Based on the last twelve months, windy days occurred on 16% of all days for that year.

The existing shelter shed was identified as being "very dominant" in the 2006 Plan of Management. The location is a very central site and whatever is at that location will have a significant visual impact. Considering that two conventional large shelter areas are proposed for within the reserve it was considered that there was scope to take a more creative approach to redesigning the old shelter shed area as a creative and artistic focal point. It would still be intended for it to be a purpose designed outdoor entertaining area, but using a creative approach to have an item of unique quality and appeal within the reserve. The community consultation process identified the shelter shed as an important community feature and is intended to be redeveloped for a similar purpose to its current useage.

The area between the commercial space and the large shelter shed is proposed to be an open area that could be used for community events. There is a need to have an open corridor to allow for vehicular access to the beach for surf lifesaving and emergency needs through this area and this has been accommodated.

### **5.2.7 Beach Activity Zone**

As would be expected the primary concept for this area is to maximise the ability for people to be able to enjoy the beach.

The proposal is for vehicular and mobility impaired access to the beach to be provided at the east end of Horseshoe Bay. A beach wall will be used to assist with the transition between grassed slope and beach. Currently the area is unusable and not overly attractive. Better access points to beach from path network will be incorporated with the beach wall. The existing stormwater outlet is proposed to be relocated to the west end of the Bay, to avoid it discharging onto the beach area.

On the adjoining grassed area, additional seating units and barbecue facilities along the foreshore will allow for increased ability to enjoy the beach and have a BBQ. This is expected to increase the usage of an area that is currently not as highly used as it should be.

Within the Master Plan there is a proposal for the potential of a shelter or viewing platform to be developed on top of existing toilet facility. This area and structure are currently underutilised and could provide a significant added benefit to the community.

## 5.2.8 Holiday Park

Note that the Holiday Park will be subject to a separate Plan of Management which is yet to be prepared.

A recent history of issues relating to the Holiday Park, as documented in the previous Plan of Management is;

*A major factor influencing this precinct is the frequented question regarding the future of the Holiday Park. The current lease expires at the end of January 2009, with the options under the Local Government Act 1993 to either;*

- *Extend the lease;*
- *Put out to tender a new lease which may include changes to the lease area and lease conditions;*
- *Put the Holiday Park under contract or Council management; or*
- *Allow the current lease to expire and remove the Holiday Park, re-allocating the land back to open public reserve.*

*Public opinion on the matter is strong and diverse and an attempt to address the issue will not favour all community members.*

*Removal of the Holiday Park will provide a number of benefits including allowing greater public access to the foreshore, allows greater area for day users, reduces the visual impact upon the Reserve and improves the heritage setting of the precinct. In addition, it follows the Department of Lands policy which clearly outlines that "general public access and use of coastal Crown Land should be optimised".*

*Relocation of the Holiday Park on the other hand caters for the needs of tourism marketing and accommodation, brings additional tourist dollars into the CBD and provides the main funding source for the upgrading and maintenance of the whole reserve.*

*Since the public submission of the first Draft Plan of Management in 2004, a number of events and directives have taken place and have needed to be considered.*

*A directive received from the Department of Lands on 20th May 2004 clearly indicated that as the owner of the land the "Department considers it would be opportune at this time to expand the draft plan to include specific recommendations concerning the staged removal of the Holiday Park and the opening of the reserve for general public use".*

*As a result of this directive, subsequent amendments to the Draft Plan of Management were made with an attempt to compromise with this directive. This compromise came in the form of a proposal to remove the eastern half of the Holiday Park and re-establish the land to Open Public Reserve, with the western half converted from a Holiday Park to self-contained cabins. This proposal was put on exhibition for public comment and was firmly rejected by the community. The community expressed their objections at a public meeting held on 18th January 2006 at which 346 people signed the attendance sheet with over 1000 written submissions being received, 99% of which opposed any removal of the Holiday Park and its tent and caravan sites.*

*Following this public outcry an Ordinary Meeting of Kempsey Shire Council held on 14th February 2006, resolved the following:*

- *When reporting on submissions received as a result of the exhibition of the draft Horseshoe Bay Plan of Management the Director Shire Services provide recommendations for improvements to the Holiday Park that DO NOT substantially alter the spirit of the current design;*
- *That the Department of Lands be advised that it would not be economically viable to remove caravan sites from Horseshoe Bay Reserve and that Council does not wish to add additional cabins or to return camping/caravan areas to public use;*
- *That the Department of Lands be requested to review the proposal of a 'possible timetable for the removal of the Holiday Park at Horseshoe Bay Reserve' as indicated by letter dated 20th May 2004';*



- *That it be recommended to the Department of Lands that the function of Horseshoe Bay Reserve subject of a lease as a Holiday Park, be continued for a further ten years from 31 January 2009 with an option of an additional ten years at the discretion of Council, and be the subject of a new lease arrangement; and*
- *Council also resolved that the proceeds received by Council from the lease agreement be allocated to the implementation of the program of works identified within the Plan of Management for overall foreshore precincts.'*

*Discussions were subsequently held in March 2006 with the Department of Lands and a number of Councillors and Council staff members to consider Council's position. Council's resolutions were then forwarded to the Department of Lands in a letter dated 8th June 2006.*

*A public announcement by the Minister of Lands and a letter received from the Department of Lands dated 19th June 2006 states that it 'is more or less reconciled with the points raised and the reasons behind Council's decisions' but it stipulates that 'recommendations concerning the possible extension of the lease require further discussion prior to any possible negotiation with prospective tenderers/lessees, to ensure that returns to Council and the department are appropriate'.*

*It is for economic factors and strong community pressure therefore that this Plan of Management recommends that the Holiday Park be retained for another lease period of ten years with an option of an additional ten years at Council's discretion. It is recommended however that some changes be made to the boundaries, layout and composition of the existing Holiday Park in order that the visual amenity and public access to the foreshore be significantly enhanced.*

Considerable feedback from the users of the Holiday Park during the 2012 consultation process focused on the value of the site as a camping locality. It is seen by many as one of the few areas of a similar nature that still exists. The overall concept for this precinct is to retain the camping nature, yet still maximise values from some significant views.

One of the key proposals for this Holiday Park is to locate cabins in the eastern end of the Park in lieu of replacing the dilapidated amenities block in this location. In this regard, cabins have their own amenities and therefore only one amenities block for the Park is required (which has recently been upgraded). The Master Plan also proposes a new camp kitchen located on a steep unused section of park to make use of that space and provide a much needed facility within the Holiday Park.

To offset some of the loss of sites from the reduction at the eastern end, the area of the Holiday Park has been extended into the north end of the road adjacent to Back Creek providing an additional two sites (three new sites shown but one existing site is used to construct road through existing sites). A parking and a viewing area of the Macleay Bar is still retained for fishermen and tourists, but the large sealed area currently existing is better utilised.

The total number of existing sites is 83 and consists of 71 campsites and 12 cabins. The proposed Holiday Park will contain a total of 68 sites and consists of 55 campsites and 13 cabins. This constitutes a reduction of 15 sites overall (Reduction of 16 campsites and an increase of 1 cabin).

### **5.2.9 Other Aspects**

The concept calls for a shared path around perimeter of reserve linking Back Creek with Saltwater Creek. This will require a bridge over the gorge below the Flagstaff.

The revised layout also allows for some additional parking to be provided in Livingstone Street in the vicinity of the new vehicular entrance into the reserve.

### 5.3 SALTWATER CREEK

Saltwater Creek precinct covers the largest area of the Reserve and is dominated by heathland, bushland, Saltwater Creek and associated wetlands. It is probably the area having the highest conservation value in terms of its natural environment and should therefore be managed with the intention of protecting and conserving this valuable asset.

Formalised recreation use of the precinct is limited to the partially complete pedestrian/cycleway link, beach access tracks and the open grassland at Brighton Park. These uses should be continued, promoted and upgraded with every caution taken to reduce their impact upon the surrounding natural environment. In addition education programs should be encouraged to heighten the general community and adjoining residents' awareness of this natural asset.

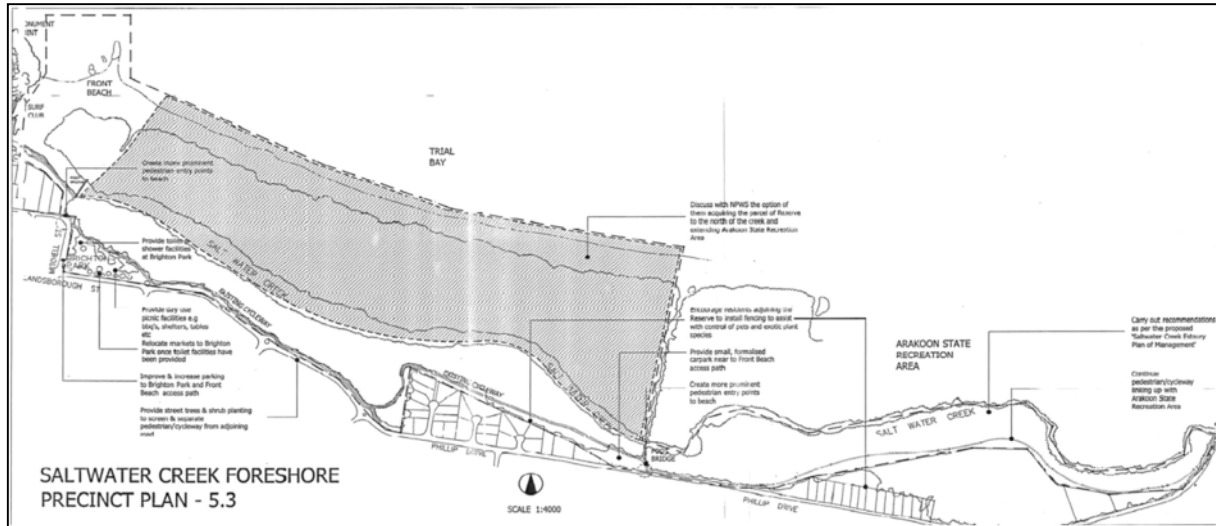


Figure 5.3: Saltwater Creek Foreshore Precinct

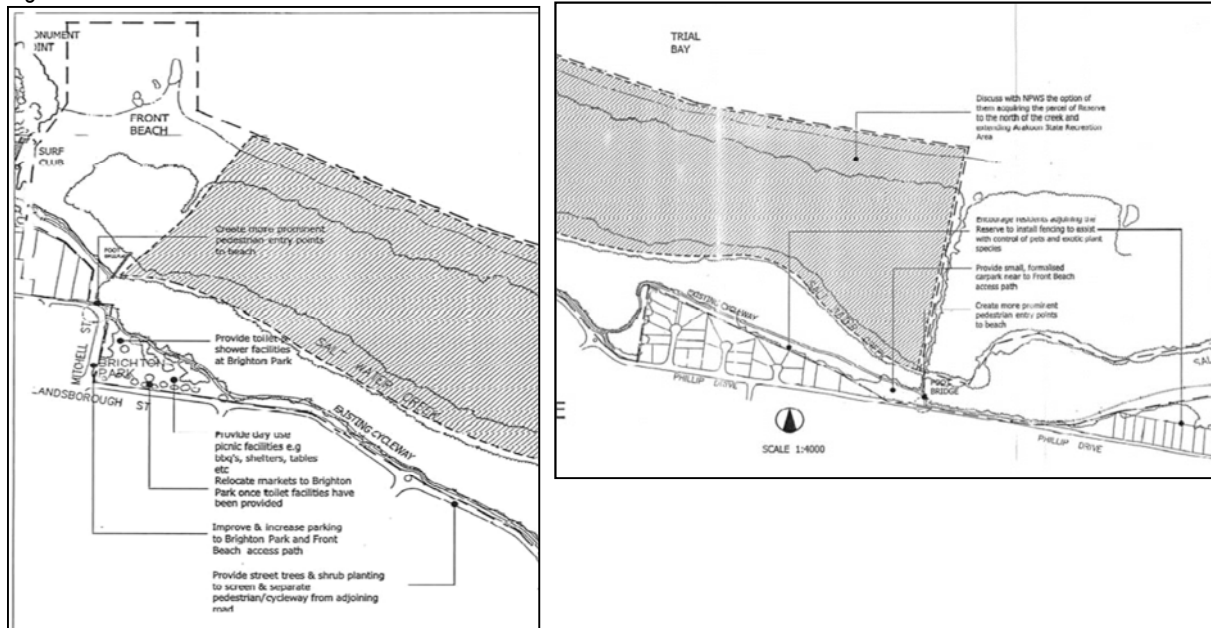


Figure 5.3a: Extract from Figure 5.3

## 6.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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### 6.1 FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND OPTIONS

Funding arrangements to carry out existing management practices within the Reserve are currently obtained from various sources which include:

- Council's general funds;
- Income generated from the leasing of the Holiday Park and Kiosk which Council as the Reserve Trustee is required to reallocate for use to maintain and upgrade the Reserve;
- Section 94 contributions collected by Council for open space management. These monies are for capital works only.

Additional funding options that may be available upon application which will assist with the finance for ongoing and proposed management strategies and actions within the Reserve may include:

1. Public Reserve Management Fund (DNR)
2. Coastal Management Fund (DNR)
3. Grants Programs from both State and Federal Governments
  - Regional Tourism grants program – helps regional tourism growth by providing funding for the development of tourist attractions, facilities, special interest markets, cultural and heritage attractions - Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources;
  - Regional Solutions Program – provides help to regional, rural and remote communities by providing assistance to implement community initiatives - Department of Transport and Regional Services;
  - Coastcare – encourages community involvement in the protection, management and rehabilitation of our coastal and marine environments – Department of Environment and Heritage;
  - Coasts and Clean Seas Program – supports sustainable wastewater management in coastal areas - Department of Environment and Heritage;
  - Grants to Voluntary Environment and Heritage Organisations – help eligible community based environment and heritage organisations to value, conserve and protect the natural environment and cultural heritage;
  - Green Reserve – a conservation program that utilises skills and experience of volunteers for work in local conservation projects – Department of Employment and Workplace Relations;
  - Green Corps – a youth initiative that provides labour assistance to land managers and community groups with priority environmental projects – Department of Family and Community Services;
  - Conservation Volunteers – provides a managed team of volunteers to assist in practical conservation projects that are designed to preserve, protect and restore Australia's natural, indigenous or historical cultural heritage – Department of Environment and Heritage.

Additional funds may be obtained in the future from possible commercial operations that are approved to be carried out on the site. Such operations may include a Restaurant/Café facility; Boat Hire etc.

Possible 'one off' funding may be obtained from the prospective sale of Council lands or assets.

### 6.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF WORKS

This Plan of Management establishes the direction for strategies and actions for the Reserve. These actions have been prioritised and shall be undertaken by the designated and responsible parties as funding and staffing become available and to any special requirements of the Director-General or Minister.

Under the NSW *Crown Lands Act 1989*, this Plan of Management shall be carried out and given effect to. No operations within the Reserve shall be undertaken unless they are in accordance with the plan.

This Plan of Management does not have a specific term and will stay in force until amended or replaced. Where management strategies or works are proposed that are not consistent with the plan, an amendment to the plan or a new plan will be required.

It is recommended that an annual review of progress in implementing the Plan of Management be undertaken by the Reserve Trustee. After five years an overall assessment should be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of managing the Reserve in accordance with this Plan of Management and the degree of success in achieving the plan's objectives and outcomes.

The implementation of this Plan of Management is therefore achieved through its linkage with Council's Management Plan, Operational Budget and Capital Works Program.

Funding arrangements for the Reserve therefore need to address recurrent costs of management and maintenance, together with the capital costs for new facilities and upgrading works. Council currently funds management and maintenance costs through its annual budget allocation, and uses capital funds and Section 94 funding for capital and non-recurrent works. Funding for the construction of new facilities is generally through the annual budgeting process, but special projects may be partly funded through State Government allocations which may involve matching funding from Council.

Staging of works will need to occur because Council cannot meet the cost of every single item of work proposed at one time, due to other financial commitments through the Shire. Works will therefore be prioritised on an as needs basis and as funding becomes available.

At present, Council has approximately \$300,000 of funding within the budget available to be allocated towards improvements in Horseshoe Bay Reserve. It is important that any improvements or upgrading are undertaken in accordance with a well-developed Master Plan that constitutes a vision for the long term development of the site.

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