

MEDIA RELEASE

14th August 2023

SECURITY and SAFETY at the TOMAREE LODGE SITE SHOAL BAY

As reflected in the attached recently taken photograph [taken Friday 11th August] , Graffiti has significantly impaired the newly opened amenities block at the Tomaree Lodge site. All of this seems to have occurred during last week. This graffiti was subsequently removed on Saturday by the local volunteer Graffiti Removal Team.

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc [THHG] has therefore some concerns that the Tomaree Lodge site does not have adequate security to protect such a large very accessible historic and iconic site which has particularly large visitor numbers .In fact over 200.000 visitors access this area every year .It has now been well over two years since the site became vacant and since the State Government agreed to transition the site to Port Stephens for community use and therefore we look forward to this happening as soon as possible. THHG acknowledges that there are extensive costs to the NSW Government associated with securing the site. However, THHG believes there is now an elevated risk of vandalism, fire, and squatters. In saying this THHG cites the fire in the early 1990's which engulfed and subsequently destroyed the Light house residence on nearby Fingal Island.

Whilst THHG understands the costs are extensive to effectively secure this iconic site [potentially over \$600,000 pa] it is very important that **this state heritage listed site** has effective security and at the same time continues to be accessible to the public.

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