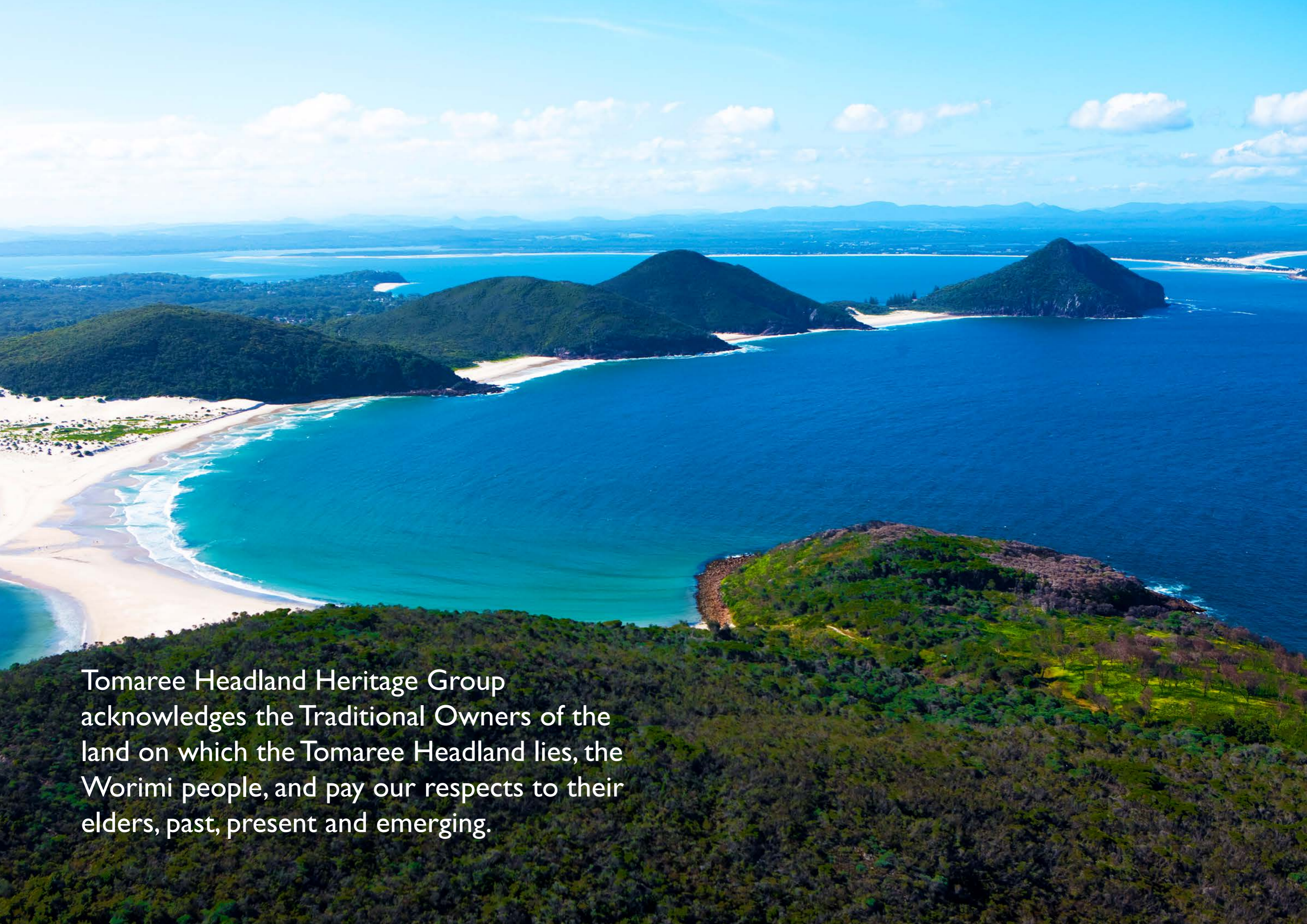




**TOMAREE LODGE SITE
STRATEGIC CONCEPT PLAN
ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE TOMAREE LODGE SITE**

S22-0026 Issue E • 28/10/2022



Tomaree Headland Heritage Group acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Tomaree Headland lies, the Worimi people, and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

TOMAREE LODGE SITE STRATEGIC CONCEPT PLAN



Client
TOMAREE HEADLAND HERITAGE GROUP INC.
 PO Box 6 Nelson Bay NSW Australia
 Phone • 0491 179 941
 Email • admin@tomareeheadlandheritagegroup.com.au

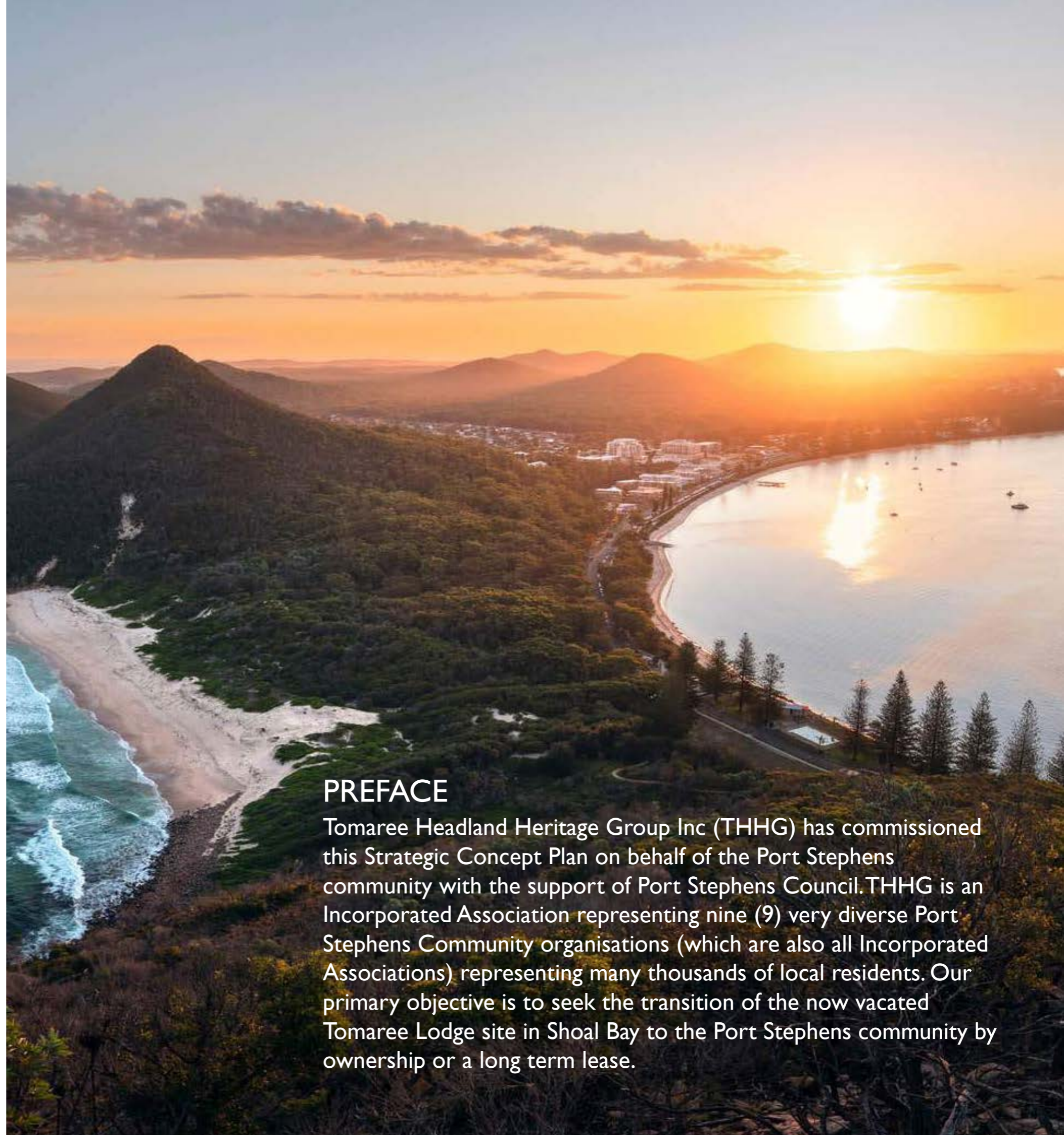


Prepared by
CLOUSTON Associates - a division of Beveridge Williams
 Landscape Architects • Urban Designers • Landscape Planners
 65-69 Kent Street • Sydney NSW 2000
 PO Box R1388 • Royal Exchange NSW 1225 • Australia
 Telephone +61 2 8272 4999 •
 Contact: Crosbie Lorimer
 Email • sydney@clouston.com.au
 Web • www.clouston.com.au

| Issue | Date | Status | Review | Verify | Validate |
|-------|------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| A | 30/06/2022 | DRAFT | BH | FH | CL |
| B | 08/08/2022 | DRAFT | BH | FH | CL |
| C | 06/09/2022 | FINAL | BH | FH | CL |
| D | 21/10/2022 | REV | BH | FH | CL |
| E | 28/10/2022 | REV | BH | FH | CL |

Note: This document is preliminary unless validated.

IMAGE
 Cover: Tomaree Head, Port Stephens, Destination NSW.
 Acknowledgement of Country: Beaches Fingal to Headland, THHG.
 Preface: Tomaree Head Summit, Destination NSW.



PREFACE

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc (THHG) has commissioned this Strategic Concept Plan on behalf of the Port Stephens community with the support of Port Stephens Council. THHG is an Incorporated Association representing nine (9) very diverse Port Stephens Community organisations (which are also all Incorporated Associations) representing many thousands of local residents. Our primary objective is to seek the transition of the now vacated Tomaree Lodge site in Shoal Bay to the Port Stephens community by ownership or a long term lease.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

PREFACE

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION & VISION | 5 |
| 2. BACKGROUND | 6 |
| 3. INITIAL OBJECTIVES | 8 |
| 4. SITE OVERVIEW | 9 |
| 5. SITE HISTORY | 10 |
| 6. PLANNING ANALYSIS | 14 |
| 7. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES | 17 |
| 8. STRATEGIC CONCEPT PLAN PRINCIPLES | 18 |
| 9. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT | 19 |
| 10. STRUCTURE PLAN AND ZONES | 20 |
| 11. POSSIBLE EVOLUTION CONCEPT | 21 |
| 12. PRECINCT HUB CONCEPT FRAMEWORK | 22 |
| 13. PRECINCT HUB CONCEPT OPTION | 23 |
| 14. STAGING AND PRIORITIES | 25 |
| 15. OPERATIONAL MATRIX | 26 |
| 16. NEXT STEPS | 28 |

LIST OF FIGURE

| | |
|------------|---|
| Figure 1: | An aerial photograph showing the regional context of the Tomaree Headland site, overlooking Port Stephens. |
| Figure 2: | The Land Title and an aerial photograph of the Tomaree Headland (Lodge site is identified by the red line). |
| Figure 3: | Aerial photograph of the Tomaree Lodge site. |
| Figure 4: | Road access to the entrance of Tomaree Lodge. |
| Figure 5: | The centre of Tomaree Lodge. |
| Figure 6: | Public foreshore access path. |
| Figure 7: | Zenith Beach. |
| Figure 8: | Entrance path and road. |
| Figure 9: | Existing pergola structure on site. |
| Figure 10: | Existing heritage cottages on site. |
| Figure 11: | Foreshore view. |
| Figure 12: | Headland Lawn. |
| Figure 13: | Map of Worimi land. |
| Figure 14: | Worimi People fishing. |
| Figure 15: | Worimi People's settlement. |
| Figure 16: | Worimi Land Council has undertaken a major cultural development at the southern end of Nelson Bay Road. |
| Figure 17: | A Matilda tank rolls off a landing craft at Shoal Bay. |
| Figure 18: | Australian troops disembark over the sides of a LCP during an exercise at Joint Overseas Operational Training School. |
| Figure 19: | Image of Infantry Camp, Tomaree. |
| Figure 20: | Tomaree Gun Emplacement. |
| Figure 21: | Remains of old rail tracks on Tomaree Headland. |
| Figure 22: | Radar Station. |
| Figure 23: | Torpedo Footing & Surf Battery. |
| Figure 24: | Tomaree Lodge. |
| Figure 25: | Tomaree Headland. |
| Figure 26: | Regional site analysis. |
| Figure 27: | Headland site analysis. |
| Figure 28: | The Lodge site analysis. |
| Figure 29: | Constraints & Opportunities. |
| Figure 30: | Pine Tree Foreshore Walk. |
| Figure 31: | View from Gun Emplacement Road |
| Figure 32: | Glance of view from Headland Summit Walk. |
| Figure 33: | Structure plan and Zones. |
| Figure 34: | Possible Evolution Concept. |
| Figure 35: | Precinct Hub Conceptual Framework Plan. |
| Figure 36: | Precinct Hub Concept Option. |
| Figure 37: | Aerial sketch of Possible Precinct Hub Concept. |
| Figure 38: | Short term. |
| Figure 39: | Medium term. |
| Figure 40: | Long term. |
| Figure 41: | Tomaree Lodge view from the Pine Tree Avenue. |

INTRODUCTION & VISION

INTRODUCTION

Located on the western shoreline of Tomaree Head and close to the harbour entrance of Port Stephens, Tomaree Lodge is a prominent Shoal Bay landmark, providing spectacular views to the north and west of Port Stephens.

Located on the land of the Worimi people, the Tomaree Lodge site formed part of a significant World War II military garrison. The Australian Army took possession of Tomaree Headland under the National Security Regulations on 8 August 1941. The military camp operated from early 1942 and for most of 1943. In 1947 the Commonwealth Defence Department transferred the former military camp to the NSW Division of Mental Hygiene.

In June 2006, the current Lodge site, consisting of 8.876 ha, was acquired by the State of New South Wales for community welfare purposes. The Lodge site was used as an accommodation facility for people with intellectual disabilities until 2021.

The site is listed on the Commonwealth and State Heritage registers. The NSW Register's statement of significance refers to its 'use as an Army Garrison Camp during the Second world War' and its 'physical demonstration of Port Stephens important contribution to the Second World War'

With its scenic landscape, sensitive ecology, historic buildings, multiple land uses and important Aboriginal and European heritage, Tomaree Lodge is a rich and complex public asset that calls for a creative concept to secure its future.

VISION

The Vision for the Tomaree Lodge site as presented in *The Potential Adaptive Re-Use of the Tomaree Lodge, Port Stephens* by Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc. (THHG) reads:

"Tomaree Lodge is an outstanding Natural and Heritage asset celebrating the Aboriginal, European and natural values, which provides opportunities as a new Tourism and Education Precinct For Port Stephens and Australia".

This Strategic plan builds on that vision and will be a dynamic and evolving document. It draws together known information about the site and proposes planning principles identifying potential public uses that will complement its scenic setting and proximity to the Tomaree National Park.

Following various health-oriented land uses, the State of NSW is yet to determine the future responsibility for this site.

In recognition that a community consultation process by the NSW State Government is pending, the Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc (comprising nine community stakeholder associations) has commissioned the preparation of this Strategic Concept Plan with the support of Port Stephens Council, to demonstrate the potential for adaptive re-use and

future management of this heritage site and to inspire interest in the broader community.

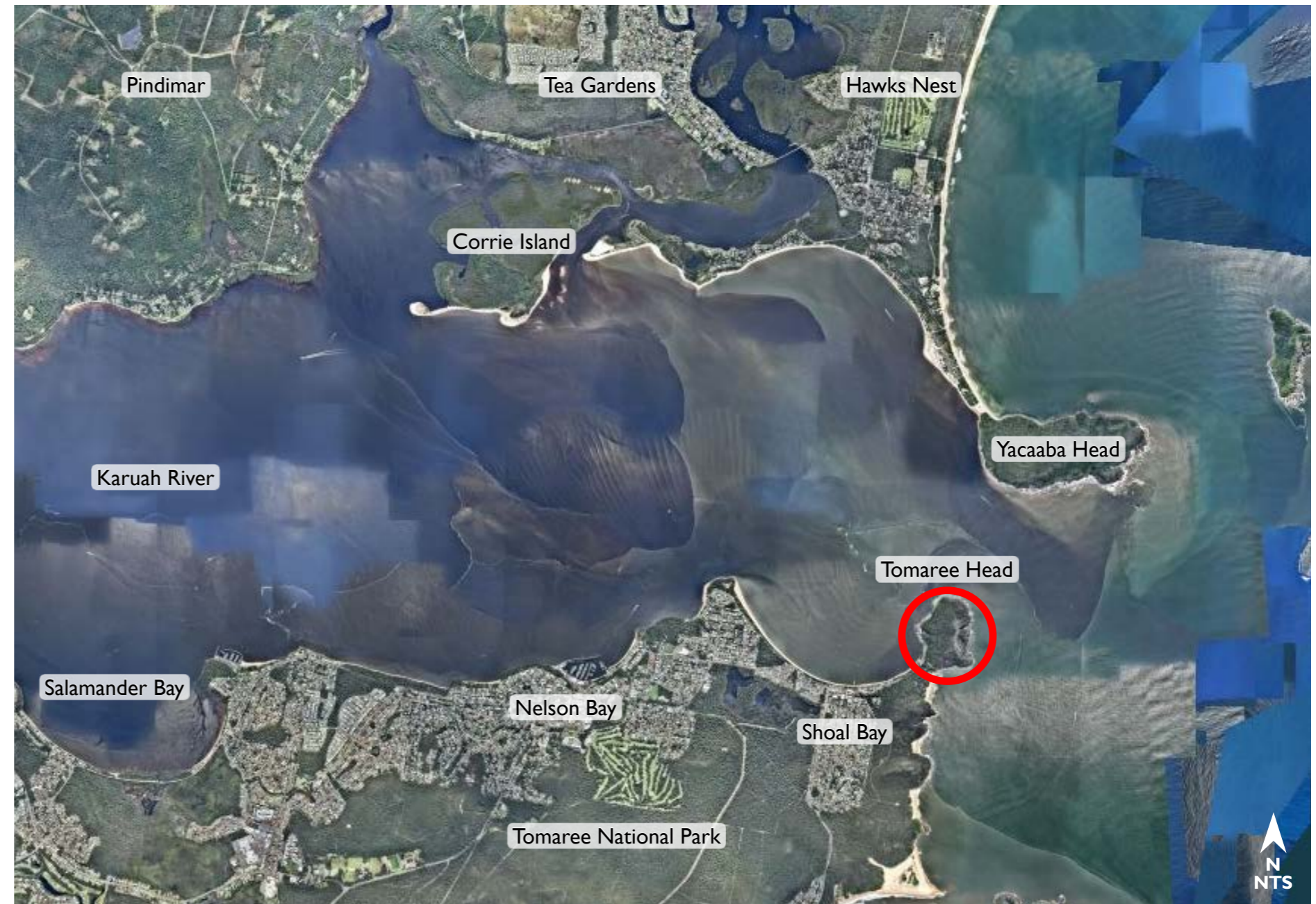


Fig 1. An aerial photograph showing the regional context of the Tomaree Headland site, overlooking Port Stephens
Source: Nearmap

BACKGROUND

LAND TITLE

The registered proprietor of the Lodge site, Lot 453 DP 705463 comprising 8.876 ha, is the State of New South Wales. The site is vested in the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services was compulsorily acquired in 2006 in accordance with the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 for community welfare purposes. Currently the Minister for Communities and Justice has responsibility for the site which is managed by the Department of Communities and Justice.

An Aboriginal Land Title Claim lodged in 2015 was refused and this was subsequently the subject of an appeal to the NSW Land and Environment Court. A judgment handed down in this Court on 19 October 2022 ruled that the site be retained by the Minister.

Following this determination, the Minister for Communities and Justice has indicated that 'the NSW Government has re-affirmed its commitment to retain the Tomaree Lodge site at Port Stephens for community use'. The Minister also commented that 'community consultation, which will commence at the end of October, is vital to deciding the best future use of the site'.

The Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc is committed to active engagement with all parties during this consultation phase and advocates for early engagement of the local indigenous community and its organisations in this consultation process

The land is bordered to the east by the Tomaree National Park which is under the care and control of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and to the west by the Port Stephens foreshore, which is managed by Port Stephens Council.

PLANNING CONTROLS

The site is zoned in C2 - Environmental Conservation under PSLEP 2013, with RE1 - Public Recreation applying to the public access along Shoal Bay Road and W1 - Natural Waterways applies to the boat access and service on Shoal Bay. National Parks neighbouring status does not impose any planning controls on the Lodge site.

Objectives of C2 zone:

- To protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values.

- To prevent development that could destroy, damage or otherwise have an adverse effect on those values.
- Permitted & Prohibited Land Use refer Port Stephens LPE 2013.

SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THIS CONCEPT

The intent of this Strategic Concept Plan for the Tomaree Lodge site is to establish a design and planning framework for the future adaptive reuse of the site for public purposes.

In the absence of gaining access to the buildings on the site and to review documents such as the Conservation Management Plan (CMP), the Plan is necessarily broad brush in its scope.

The principles and overarching strategy that underpin the Plan are however robust and can be refined once additional information and access is made available.



Fig 2. The Land Title and an aerial photograph of the Tomaree Headland (Lodge site Lot 453 is identified by the red line).
Source: Nearmap

BACKGROUND

HISTORICAL USES

The following is a brief chronology of the major historical uses of the site (a historical summary follows later).

- Pre European settlement, the site was occupied by the Worimi people.
- This land and the bay have been a significant source of food for the local indigenous people, and the headlands would have been an important lookout and location for communications.
- Prior to World War II, the site was Crown land.
- In 1942, the site was opened as a nationally significant military base for the defence of the Newcastle and Hunter region and for training of Australian, US and other allied forces for the Pacific war zone. The Tomaree Headland facility was designed to look like a fishing village.
- After the war in 1947, it was transferred to the NSW Division of Mental Health.
- In 1949, it was adapted for use as a psychiatric hospital.
- In 1950, 106 acres of Crown land (the whole Headland) was dedicated for public purposes under the New South Wales Crown Lands Consolidation Act, 1913 for the purpose of a hospital.
- Since 1985, the site has been used for patients with developmental difficulties.
- In 2006, Lot 453 (the current Lodge site) was acquired for community welfare purposes.
- In 2021, Tomaree Lodge ceased operations as a supported accommodation facility for people with intellectual and physical disabilities.
- An Oyster Hatchery is located in the site, and is still in operation.
- Following the recent departure of all residents of Tomaree Lodge which was managed by the Department of Communities and Justice, the facility is now vacant pending a decision by the NSW Government as to the future use of the site.



Fig 3. Aerial photograph of the Tomaree Lodge site.
Source: Nearmap



Fig 4. Road access to the entrance of Tomaree Lodge.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 5. The centre of Tomaree Lodge.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 6. Public foreshore access path.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

The Tomaree Lodge is a complex site on the cusp of change. With the vacating of the site in 2021, it offers a wide range of future use opportunities in a spectacular setting. In addition to this, there are opportunities for the general public to access and appreciate the magnificent views of the site, as well as enjoy the link through to the adjacent regional Tomaree Coastal Walk and Tomaree National Park.

However, the numerous buildings on the site - many of WWII era - pose some challenges for the adaptive redesign for contemporary public uses.

THHG has developed more immediate key objectives for the site following engagement with the community, particularly from their Member Groups. The development of this Strategic Concept Plan draws on these objectives to provide design principles, which will guide development of the site and contribute to the quality of its natural and built environment.

In summary, THHG believes that Tomaree Headland and the Lodge site has the potential to become a significant destination and public attraction. The headland is the most visited Tourism attraction in Port Stephens and has been for many years.

The following five objectives for the site have been established by THHG for the next five years.



Objective 1:

For the NSW Government to commit and complete transition of the Tomaree Lodge site to the Port Stephens Community by ownership or by way of a long term lease.



Objective 2:

That an appropriate ownership/management model be established for the adaptive re-use for the Tomaree Lodge site (e.g. a Trust or similar).



Objective 3:

To have finalised and adopted a Master Plan for the adaptive re-use of the Tomaree Lodge site ready for progressive implementation within the next few years.



Objective 4:

To have reinstated the Jetty/ Pontoon to provide public transport access/egress to the Headland summit, also to the recently commenced Tomaree Coastal Walk, Zenith Beach.



Objective 5:

To have in place a Visitor and Information Kiosk (including amenities) at the entry/egress point to the Lodge site which is also the start of the Headland summit walk and the Tomaree Coastal Walk as well as the popular Zenith Beach.

SITE OVERVIEW

THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

Tomaree Headland forms the northernmost part of Tomaree National Park in the Port Stephens area, approximately 60 kilometres north of Newcastle.

Spectacular views are available from various vantage points especially from the peak. Tomaree Head is the most popular recreational destination in the Port Stephens district.

Port Stephens is recognised as a major NSW tourist destination area attracting 1,700,000 visitors in 2020-2021 with spending estimated at \$705 million.

NPWS recorded formal data (prior to the COVID pandemic) which indicated that there were over 200,000 visitors in 2018 who climbed to the Tomaree Headland Summit.

Visitation has largely recovered since the pandemic declined and the \$7 million now being invested in the NPWS Tomaree Coastal Walk is expected to significantly increase the visitation to the Tomaree Headland precinct.

The NPWS Masterplan for the Headland walk includes a proposal to double the capacity of the walkways, primarily through widening of existing steel staircases.

The Tomaree Lodge is located on the western foreshore of the headland. The headland is shared with NPWS and The Lodge occupies 8.8 hectares area including a range of predominantly single-story weatherboard buildings and landscape features.

This area also accommodates a range of structures including a swimming pool, work sheds, an oyster hatchery, and at least two major relics associated with Fort Tomaree.

Tomaree headland has a rich and varied history of use and occupation since pre-European settlement and was an important coastal defence installation during the Second World War.



Fig 7. Zenith Beach
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 8. Entrance path and road
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 9. Existing pergola structures on site.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 10. Existing Heritage cottages on site.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 11. Foreshore view.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 12. Headland lawn.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate

SITE HISTORY

ABORIGINAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Port Stephens area, including Tomaree Head, is part of land originally occupied by the Worimi Aboriginal language group.

The Worimi's traditional lands stretched from Myall Lakes in the north, Barrington Tops to the west and to the Hunter River in the south. In Worimi language, Yacaaba (The northern headland of Port Stephens, at the entrance of Nelson Bay) is said to mean 'place of lookout' and Tomaree is said to mean 'big brother to lookout'.

The references to the Aboriginal use of the sea and land in the vicinity of the headlands have been recorded in 'Port Stephens Blacks' by William Scott, one of four or five convict men who escaped by boat from Sydney in September 1790, reached Port Stephens and lived with the Worimi people.

This land and the bay would have been a significant source of food for the indigenous people, and the headlands would have been an important lookout and location for communications.

It is recorded that Worimi people fished here with lines or spears, and they also grilled oysters for consumption. During regular seasons, they also dived around the Heads to catch lobsters, and people on the shore threw rocks into the water to disperse sharks.

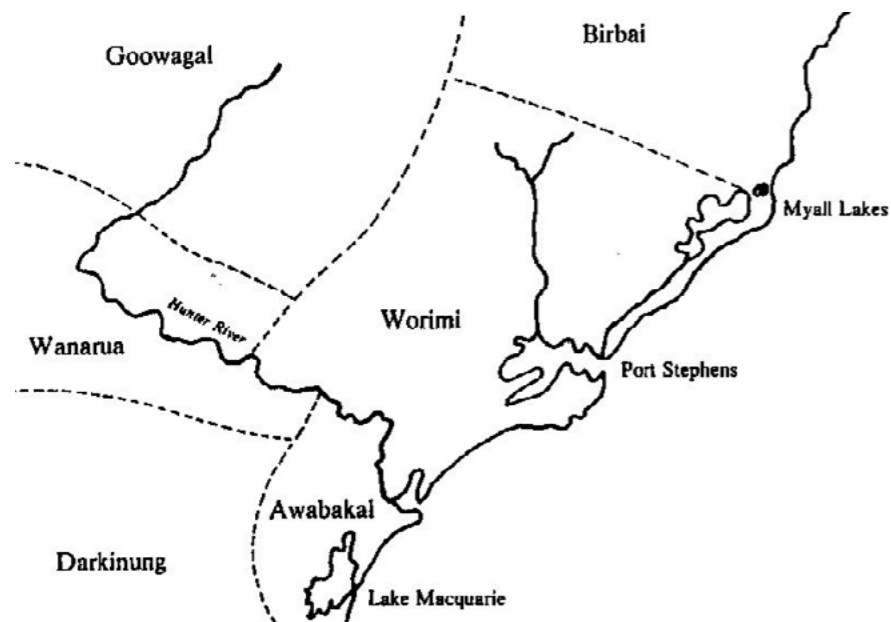


Fig 13. Map of Worimi land.
Source: John Armstrong's book *Yacaaba and Tomaree*

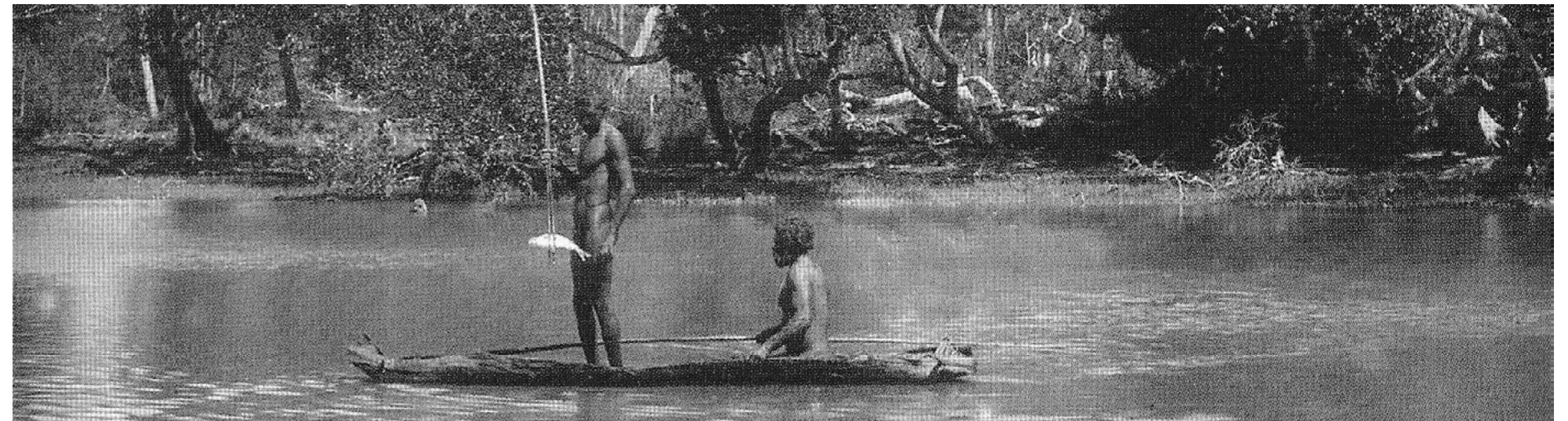


Fig 14. Worimi People fishing.
Source: *The History of the Worimi People*, by Mick Leon.



Fig 15. Worimi People's settlement.
Source: *Plan of Management, Worimi Conservation Lands*



Fig 16. Worimi Land Council has undertaken a major cultural development at the southern end of Nelson Bay Road.
Source: *Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, Newcastle Herald*

SITE HISTORY

EARLY EUROPEAN OBSERVATIONS

Captain Cook noted Tomaree Head in 1770 when he was sailing along the NSW coast. Friday 11 May 1770, Log of Lieutenant James Cook Master of ENDEAVOUR reads;

...“Log of Richard Pickeragill, master’s mate; ... passed by several islands and a fine harbour, which lies round a bluff point, and within the islands; this harbour seems to be very commodious and the country about it looked rich and fertile. As we sailed along the shore we saw many smokes and signs of inhabitants.”

Following European settlement to the east coast of NSW from 1788, Port Stephens’s rich resources were harvested; fishing and cedar getting were the main industries in the early nineteenth century.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

In March 1795, the Lieutenant-Governor Captain William Paterson sent Surveyor General Charles Grimes in the colonial vessel ‘Francis’ to report on the harbour at Port Stephens.

During the Australian Agricultural Company Years, 1825-1860s, the vanguard of the British ‘Australian Agricultural Company’ reached Sydney by the ships ‘York’ and ‘Brothers’. In November 1825, an early task for the company’s agent was to select the million acre grant authorised by the Imperial government, which occurred in 1824.

The first thorough examination of the land in the vicinity of Port Stephens was then carried out by Robert Dawson the company’s agent, and his assistants in 1826. Dawson drew a ‘Bird’s-Eye View of Port Stephens’. Tomaree and Yacaaba Headlands appear to have impressed Dawson greatly.

The next significant mapping of the region was carried out by the Surveyor Henry Dangar in the mid-1820s and published in 1828. This is the first historic map sighted to use the name ‘Tomaree or S. Head’ for the South Headland and ‘Yacabah or N. Head’ for the North Headland.



Fig 17. A Matilda tank rolls off a landing craft at Shoal Bay.
Source: HMAS Assault History, NAVY.



Fig 18. Australian troops disembark over the sides of a LCP during an exercise at Joint Overseas Operational Training School.
Source: P02216.002, Australian War Memorial, Dec 1942.



Fig 19. Image of Infantry Camp, Tomaree.
Source: Tomaree Lodge Heritage Report 2021 by Heritage Archaeology + Planning

SITE HISTORY

MILITARY HISTORY - FORT TOMAREE

Tomaree Head played an important role in the defence of Australia during the Second World War.

With Japan's invasion of South-East Asia and occupation of the Pacific islands to Australia's north in 1942 it became necessary to establish training camps with the object of training personnel from all three armed services (navy, army and air force) in joint operations to retake the captured islands.

In June 1942 a Royal Marine officer, Commander, F. N. Cook, and Lieut-Colonel Hope inspected sites on the east coast to establish a School of Combined Operations. Port Stephens was selected because of its defensible port, safe anchorage, away from Japanese submarines and sparse population.

The military installations commenced in 1942 were Fort Tomaree on Tomaree and Nelson Heads, 'HMAS Assault I' at Fly Point and along the shores of Nelson Bay.

In 1943, along with the closure of the (Nelson) Head Battery and the Amphibious Training Centre at 'HMAS Assault', the lower camp at Tomaree (the infantry camp) was also closed and turned over to the Volunteer Defence Corps for training.

During World War II, training was provided for 20,000 United States Marines on the Tomaree Peninsula and Fort Tomaree formed an essential part of the defence of the industrial city of Newcastle and the Hunter Valley.

The radar atop Tomaree Headland was one of the first of this technology deployed in Australia.

The US and Australians and other allied forces who trained in Port Stephens, were ultimately sent north to thwart the Japanese advances through the Pacific theatre of World War II.

In 1947 the infantry camp at Tomaree was transferred from the Commonwealth Department of Defence to the NSW Department of Public Health.

In 1950s the whole of Tomaree Headland was dedicated for a hospital site.



Fig 20. Tomaree Gun Emplacement
Source: McGuinness, Mary_Climbing Tomaree Head 2012.



Fig 21. Remains of old rail tracks on Tomaree Headland
Source: McGuinness, Mary_Climbing Tomaree Head 2012.

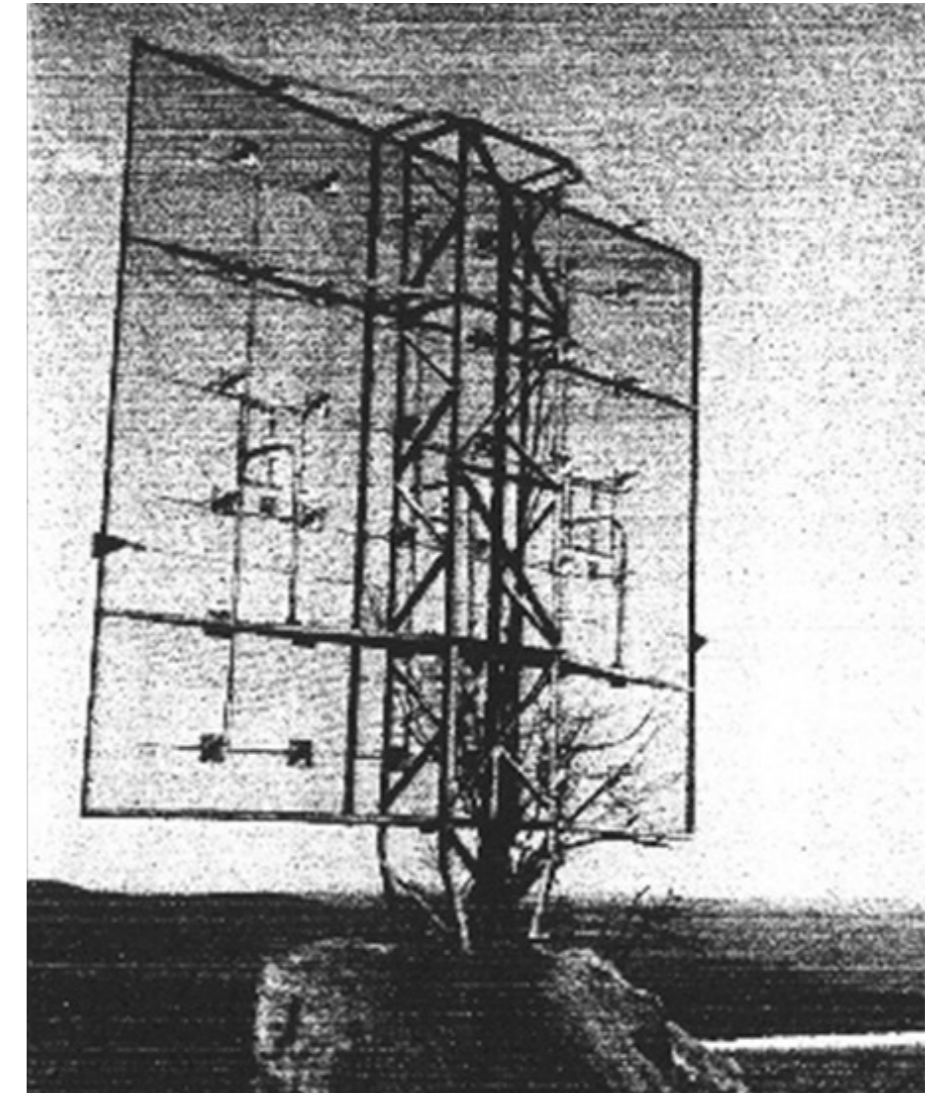


Fig 22. Radar station.
Source: THHG



Fig 23. Torpedo Footing & Surf Battery.
Source: McGuinness, Mary_Climbing Tomaree Head 2012.



Fig 24. Tomaree Lodge
Source: CLOUSTON Associates

TOMAREE HOSTEL ('HOLIDAY LODGE')

On 9 June 1950, the entire Tomaree Headland was dedicated for hospital purposes, under the Crown Lands Act.

Between 1953 and 1955, two tennis courts and a concrete cricket pitch were laid in the lawn area at the entrance to the grounds.

In 1965, a major building program expanded the hospital considerably, providing administration, kitchen and dining facilities. A 'Health in NSW' article also states that the first patients (in about 1947) were 'convalescent patients from State hospitals' and that the holiday scheme began in 1960.

This article acknowledges that 'Tomaree Lodge, in a natural setting of great beauty and tranquillity, is making a unique and valuable contribution in recreational therapy and its development marks further advance in the Department's services in the field of mental health'. The holiday program ended in 1985 and patients from that time were permanent.

The use of the lodge site for rehabilitation and other services for persons with psychiatric disabilities continued until 2021, when the facilities were closed.



Fig 25. Tomaree Headland
Source: THHG

TOMAREE HEADLAND AND CONSERVATION

In the nineteenth century, the islands at the entrance to Port Stephens attracted the attention of ornithologists who identified there the breeding grounds for a number of important sea bird species: little penguin, sombre petrel, white-winged petrel, wedge-tailed shearwater, and nankeen night heron. In the early years of the 20th century, the Port Stephens islands and headlands were closely studied by ornithologists and other experts from the Australian Museum.

On 8 October 1929, the governor of NSW issued a proclamation under the Birds and Animals Protection Act 1918 that appeared in the Government Gazette of 11 October.

On 11 April 1934, the governor of NSW issued a proclamation under the Birds and Animals Protection Act 1918-1930 that appeared in the Government Gazette of 24 April. The proclamation concerned farmer Dickenson's 100 acre lease, Tomaree Head, which was reserved from sale for the purpose of preservation of native flora and fauna.

Tomaree National Park was created in 1984 to preserve the unique scenic coastline. This park included the eastern portion (26.74 ha) of Tomaree Headland which contains a significant number of the remaining relics of Fort Tomaree such as gun emplacements and observation posts. The Headland peak of 161 metres provides breathtaking views in all directions and has now become the major visitor attraction for Port Stephens.

The ocean and bay waters surrounding the Headland have rich and diverse marine life which attract significant recreational and scientific interest.

PLANNING ANALYSIS

The following is a summary of the analysis carried out during the development of this strategic concept plan (See also Figure 16, 17 & 18).

CONTEXT

The site is important within the context of open space, leisure and recreation in Port Stephens and beyond. The site:

- is a key location of cultural significance for the Worimi people.
- lies on the western tip of the peninsula at the end of Shoal Bay Road;
- adjoins part of the Tomaree National Park and is a major conservation and recreational asset of the Port Stephens district;
- enjoys extensive views along and across the Shoal Bay waterway;
- is a popular recreational asset and maintains high aesthetic appeal;
- has historic significance because of its use as an Military Camp during the Second World War.

The Tomaree Headland with well-planned protection of its heritage and natural assets, and appropriate improvements, has potential to become a nationally significant visitor attraction and to make a major contribution to the regional economy of Port Stephens.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- The site is not directly served by public transport, with the nearest bus station being 1.5km to the west at Shoal Bay, and the nearest waterway transport at Nelson Bay; Bus routes link to Sydney and Newcastle as well as Newcastle Airport and Northern rail services.
- The public can access the site from the southwest along Shoal Bay Road, but parking adjoining the site is limited.
- A concrete pedestrian path is provided following the Shoal Bay Road, connecting the Shoal Bay and Tomaree Headland;
- A parking area located at the end of the residential zone following the south side of Shoal Bay Road, is already under high pressure in holiday and weekend periods, particularly given the adjoining public boat ramp.
- A small traffic junction with parking is at the entrance of Tomaree Lodge and is connected by a footpath to Zenith Beach, including a one way Loop Road;
- There is an established network of minor internal roads and limited parking on site; the principal access road divides into two, one is the public foreshore route to the head, and the other one leads through the Tomaree Lodge to the headland.

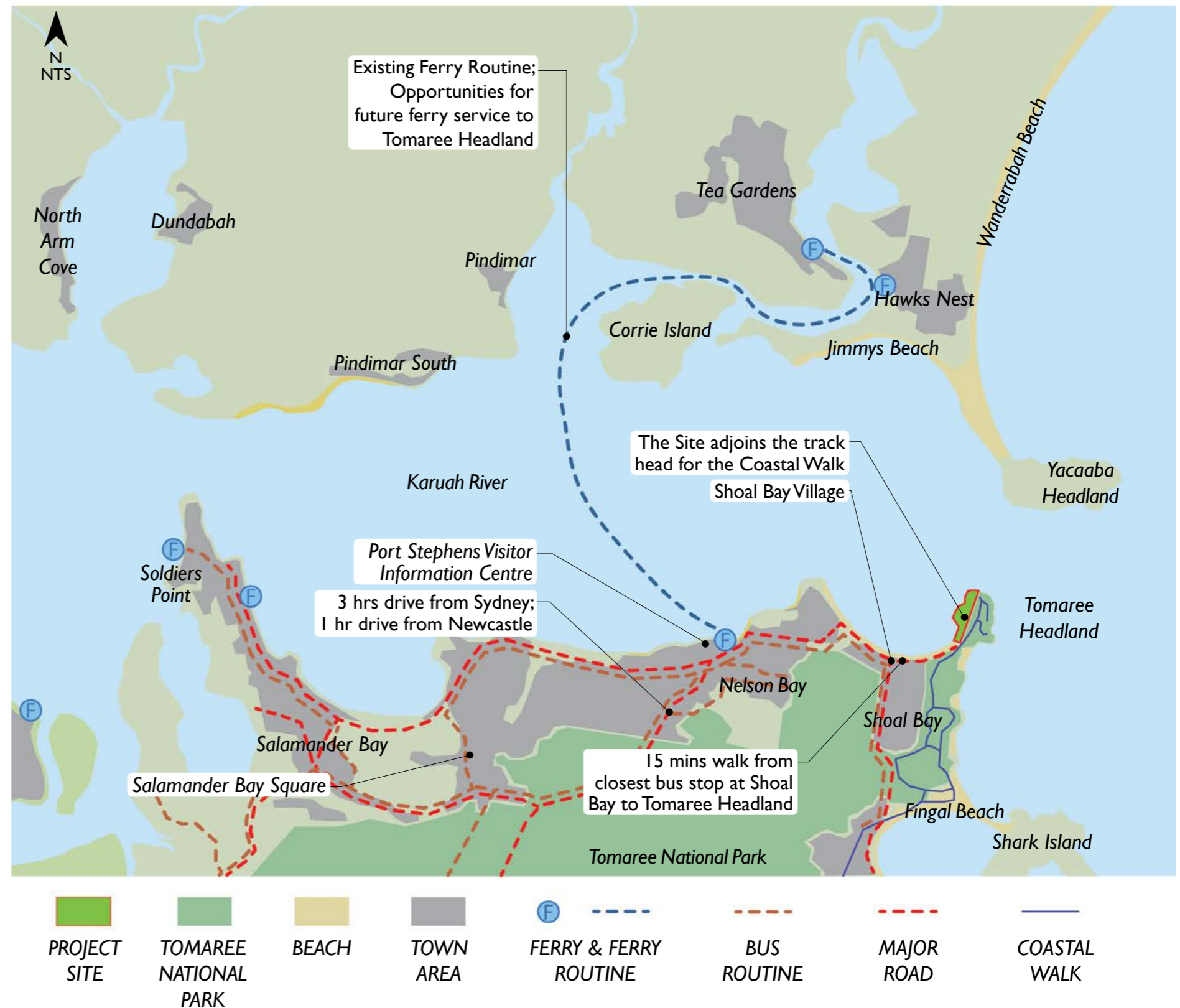


Fig 26. Regional site analysis.

PLANNING ANALYSIS

NATURAL HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT

The natural heritage and the environment are key features of this site, notably:

- The site, prominently located at the entrance of Port Stephens has outstanding scenic assets and environmental values which constitute a national and significant visitor attraction;
- Tomaree Headland has the highest tourist visitation of any Visitor attraction in Port Stephens;
- The site sits in the moister, richer and more sheltered north-west foreshore area with a greater variety of native vegetation from on its ocean aspect;
- The headland setting is representative of the natural topography and indigenous vegetation of Port Stephens;
- There are examples of cultural planting and significant specimen trees on site;
- The site is surrounded by estuaries and ocean waters which are much valued for scientific research and recreation and also currently support an oyster hatchery on the site itself.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The site has a rich heritage with many layers:

- It is significant for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage;
- The Worimi people occupied the land prior to white settlement. Middens associated with stone implements and middens with only shell content are the most evident remaining fabric along the wider coastal areas;
- Tomaree Head has been associated with many aspects of Australia's history from initial discovery by Captain Cook, early explorers, seafarers, settlers and industry including fishing, timber and farming;
- The Second World War saw the biggest change with the construction of extensive fortifications in 1941-42 as part of a network of coastal defences in NSW;
- The Tomaree Lodge site heritage listing is particularly related to its WW II operations as identified in the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR);
- The slope embankment behind Tomaree Lodge is likely to contain archaeological evidence associated with camp operations and Tomaree Battery.

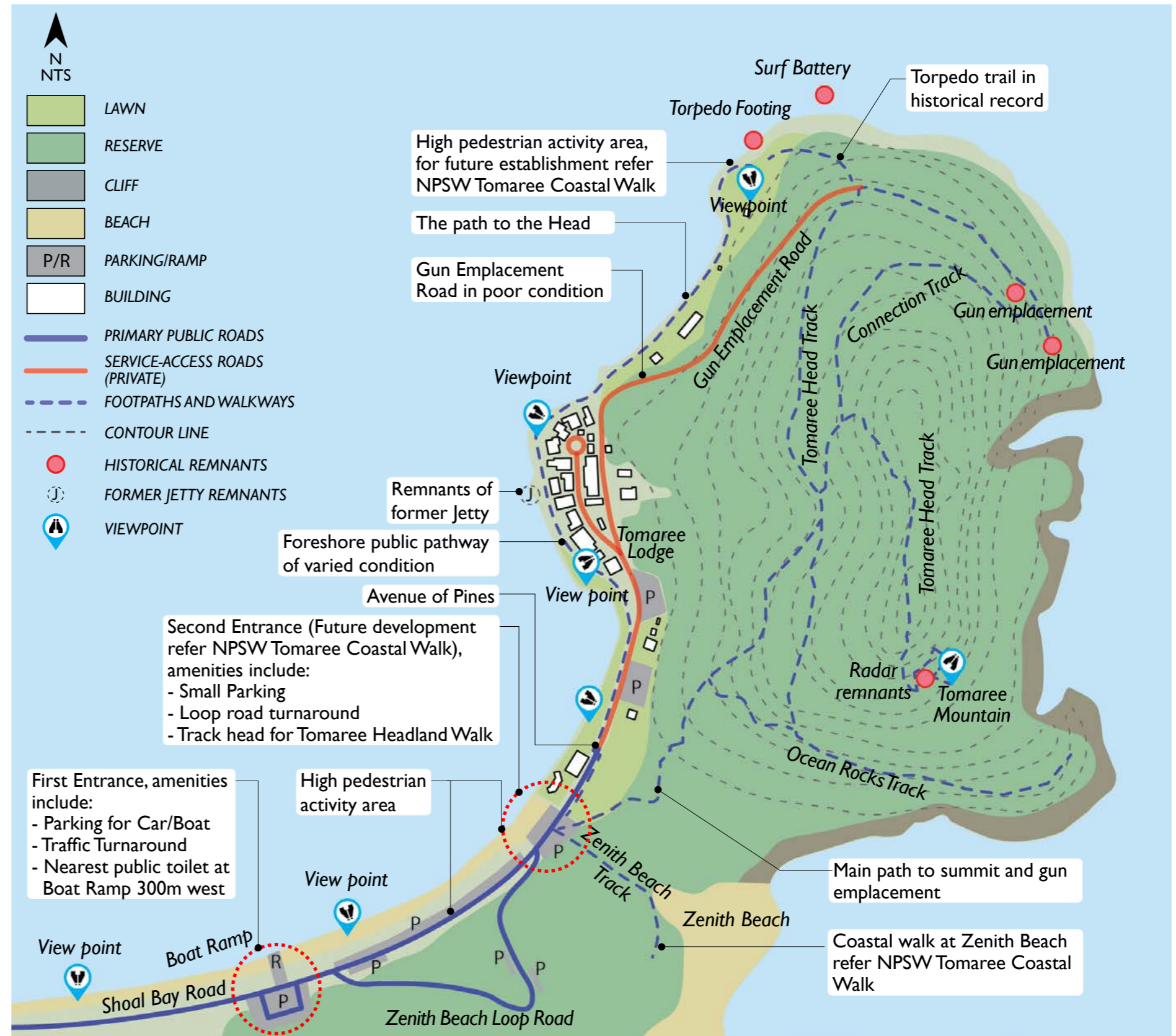


Fig 27. Headland site analysis.

PLANNING ANALYSIS

LAND USES AND BUILDINGS

The diversity of buildings from different development periods and changing uses include:

- 26 buildings on the site of varying use, size, age and condition;
- 10 predominantly single-storey weatherboard ex-WW II Australian Army garrison camp accommodation buildings;
- Oyster Hatchery (Building 36) is privately operated and leased from NSW Government;
- Council has identified that buildings/structures may have lesser heritage value and may potentially have fewer limitations in relation any heritage constraints:
 - Recreation Hall (*The Quarterdeck*, Building No. 10);
 - The Administration Block (c1980s) and staff cottages (Building No.13);
 - A range of structures including a swimming pool, work sheds, a fisheries laboratory, stone walls constructed by former residents along the foreshore of Shoal Bay.
- The remaining buildings on site are vacant and secured;
- Existing toilets and other public amenities are unlikely be able to accommodate the growing number of visitors in the future;
- Two historic relics are associated with Fort Tomaree: the surf battery and the footings for a torpedo tube. These relics are of high heritage value and require conservation and interpretation.

IMAGE AND CHARACTER

The image and character of the site is central to the user experience:

- The site's prime location commands extensive bay views of Port Stephens and is a scenic landmark in the waterway;
- The existing buildings prevent any significant view of the site from the entry road;
- There are selective views of the water from various locations on site, with the lawn area on the northern part of the headland forming a highly scenic outlook;
- Views to the bay from the eastern half of the Lodge site are largely obstructed by the foreshore buildings.

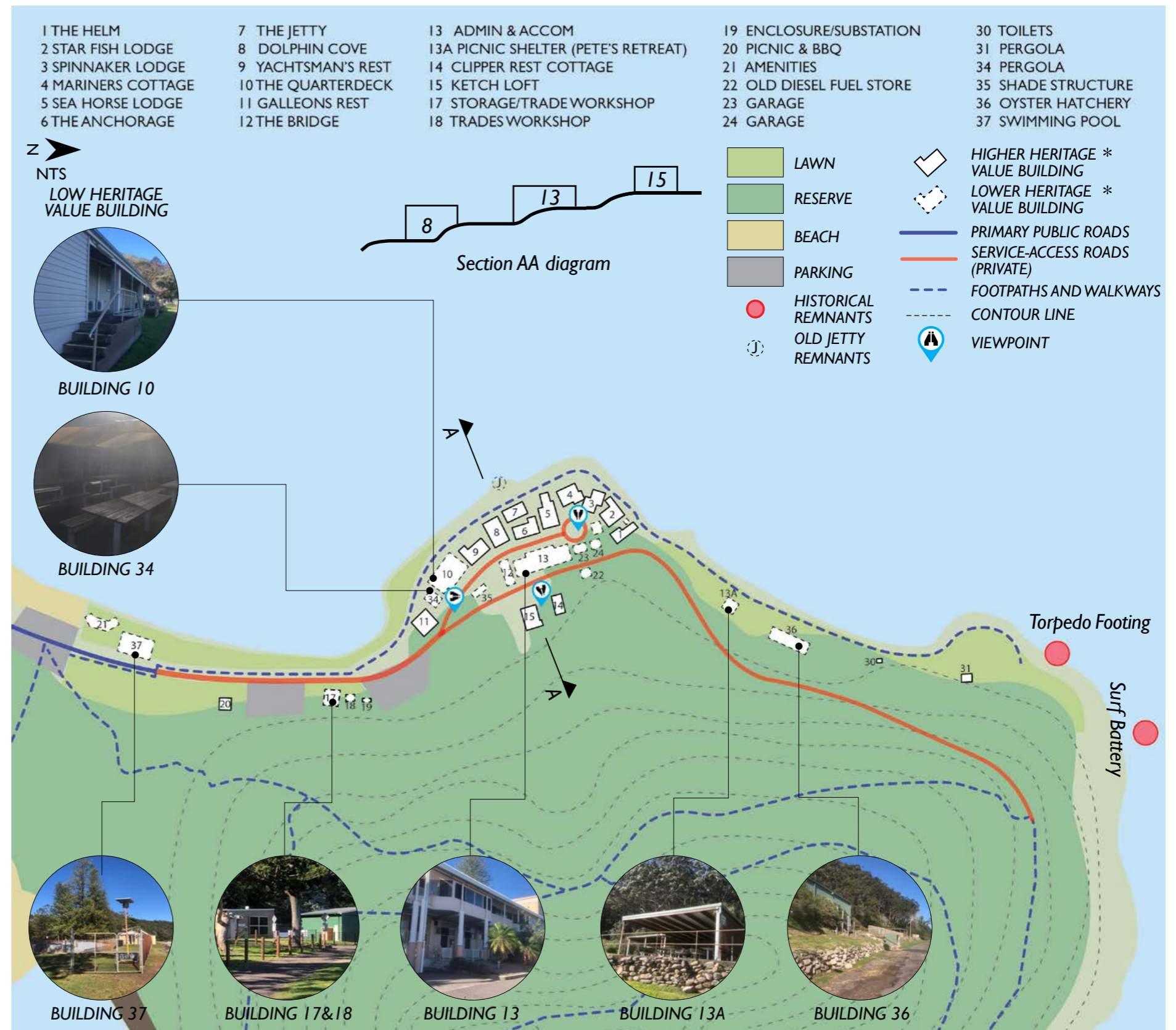


Fig 28. The Lodge site analysis.

Note: *Classification of heritage Value of Buildings refers to PSC Heritage Consultant 7th May 2021

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CONSTRAINTS

- A** Constrained vehicle circulation and limited parking.
- B** Numerous small buildings constrain some future adaptive uses.
- C** Landslide risks from steep slope of Headland on eastern side of site.
- D** Lack of pedestrian connection between the foreshore area and the upper headland.
- E** Dense buildings limit visual access to the bay.
- F** No universal access to buildings No. 14 & 15; No access to the coastal walk.
- G** Road is accessible and usable albeit improvements would be warranted.
- H** Open lawn area with good views but no continuous path connection around the headland.

OPPORTUNITIES

- I** Opportunity for integrating NPSW Tomaree Coastal walk plan.
- J** Potential for future uses that also serve NPWS visitors.
- K** Open lawn in good condition, with fine views and sheltered backdrop.
- L** Potential for event or other recreational uses.
- M** Storage/Workshop may retain operational uses.
- N** Possible short term use for visitor facilities (e.g. food and beverage), open up for wider uses.
- O** Opportunity for public ferry service and marine activities.
- P** Possibility of long term demolition Admin & Accom building and surrounding low heritage value structures, to provide central open space for the hub.
- Q** Potential for high heritage value buildings to have a range of small scale public uses.
- R** Possibility of enhancing Oyster hatchery facilities to future commercial marine activities with public visitor access.
- S** Open lawn in good condition, possibility of event or booked activities.
- T** Possibility of connections between the headland lawn area and Coastal Walk

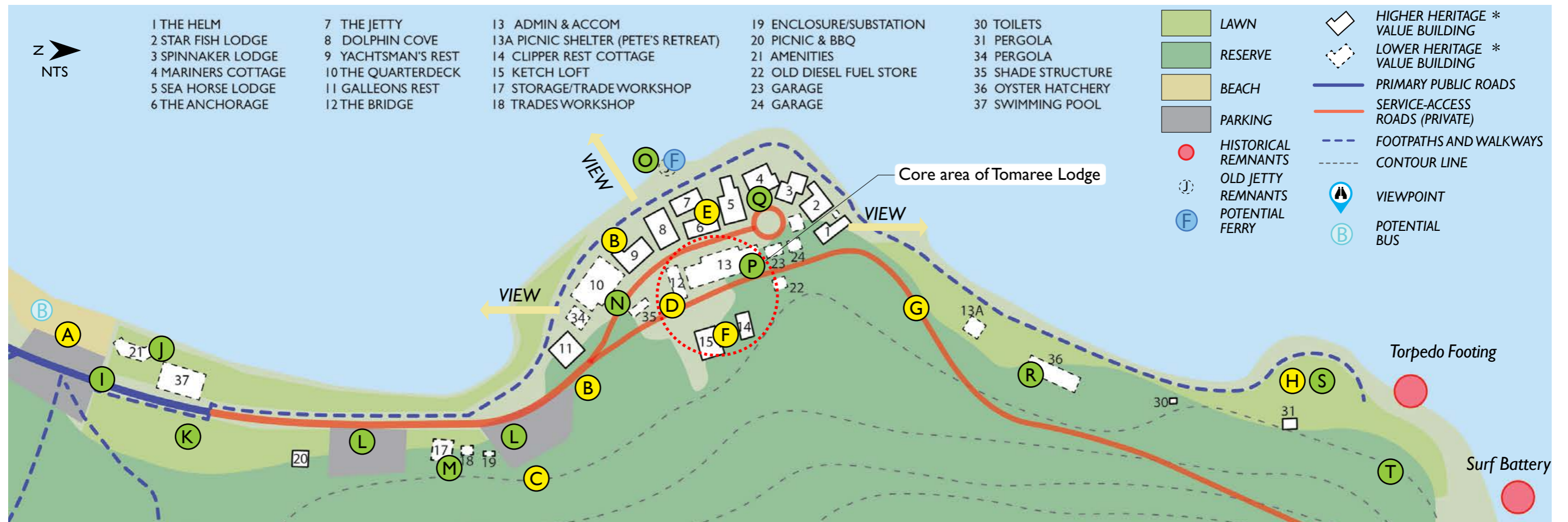


Fig 29. Constraints & Opportunities

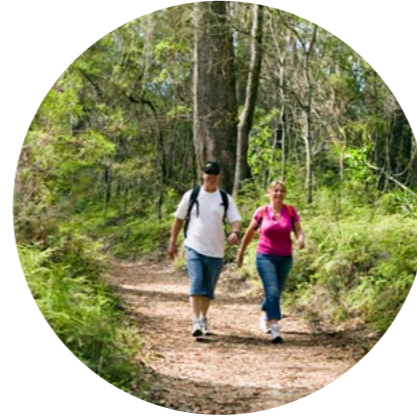
Note: * Classification of heritage Value of Buildings refers to PSC Heritage Consultant 7th May 2021

STRATEGIC CONCEPT PLAN PRINCIPLES



CONTEXT

- Respect and integrate the Worimi connection with Country
- Retain the compact 'village' style character of the Lodge site in its headland park context
- Optimise visibility and accessibility of the precinct from Shoal Bay
- Ensure future uses complement the site and Shoal Bay marine environment.



ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

- Prioritise public and collective access to the site (foot, cycle, bus, minibus) and make the site pedestrian priority.
- Promote and facilitate the site's role in accessing the National Park and Coastal Walkway
- Optimise water access to the site (ferry and boat jetty)
- Maximise universal access to and around the site.



LAND USES AND BUILDINGS

- Ensure that all uses reflect the unique character and culture of the site
- Respect and integrate the heritage of significant buildings and landscape elements
- Establish open space within the site that can be used for public activities and events
- Ensure that commercial returns from complementary uses assist in site management and maintenance.



HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT

- Conserve and interpret the Aboriginal heritage and long working history of the site
- Protect and interpret the heritage listed assets
- Protect significant trees and maximise the landscape connection to the Park and Headland
- Protect and enhance the native flora, fauna and marine ecology associations of the site.



IMAGE AND CHARACTER

- Optimise views to the site from Shoal Bay
- Protect and enhance major views and filtered views to the bay from the site
- Remove or modify intrusive buildings (where heritage values permit) and rationalise car parking to consolidated nodes
- Maximise visual links to the National Park and Coastal Walkway.



MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION

- Control and minimise private vehicle access to and within the site
- Integrate emergency and maintenance vehicle access to the site
- Maintain adaptability in upgrades of retained buildings to minimise future conversion costs
- Maintain a simple readily managed coastal landscape.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

With its scenic landscape, sensitive ecology, historic buildings and former land uses, important Aboriginal and European heritage, Tomaree Lodge is a rich and complex public asset that requires a coherent long term Strategic Concept Plan to conserve and draw on those values. Given that investigations and heritage evaluation of the buildings on site have yet to be completed, the following pages provide strategic design cues that draw on the Strategic Concept Plan Principles to inform and direct the more detailed site planning that will follow.

STRUCTURE PLAN AND ZONES

The Structure Plan overleaf (Fig 33) provides a strategic framework for the future adaptive re-use of Tomaree Lodge. The definition of landscape character precincts across the site assists in ensuring that complementary uses and activities will be grouped in the most fitting landscape settings, adding cohesion to the site story and visitor experience:

- Shoal Bay Approach - the primary public approach to the site;
- Address & Arrival - the entry hub/track head for Tomaree Headland/Zenith Beach
- The Pine Avenue - the distinctive landmark avenue leading to the Precinct Hub
- Orientation Node - wayfinding and decision point for upper and lower path access
- Precinct Hub - the built from core of the site and principal activity focus
- Park Connection - the linking path to the Headland Park area
- Headland Park - large lawn open space and WWII heritage features
- National Park Coastal Walk Connection - connecting path to the summit

POSSIBLE EVOLUTION CONCEPT

This plan illustrates some of the strategic design opportunities that can be explored over time. These strategies will assist in activating the site from the outset and help secure a financially viable long term model for the site and its users. These design strategies focus strongly on the public domain aspects of the site and are therefore largely independent of the various building uses that may evolve over time.

PRECINCT HUB FRAMEWORK

The Precinct Hub is the most activated area of the Tomaree Lodge site. This design framework suggests that an approach that groups complementary building uses, which will offer greater synergies, easier management, greater security and more viable options for interested parties that may need larger footprints than a single building provide.

The three building groups illustrated are not intended to be definitive, but convey the importance of ensuring that consideration be given to the most appropriate locations for differing use types.

This plan also suggests that a large open space to the rear of the site behind the foreshore buildings would offer all the building users and the general public a stronger public space focus, ideal for a variety of events, gatherings and outdoor activities.

PRECINCT HUB CONCEPT OPTION

The plan and perspective sketch for the Precinct Hub Concept illustrates one way in which the strategic design framework might be realised. The plan emphasises the need to maximise the pedestrian permeability of the Precinct Hub, offering slot views to the bay between buildings and contrasting tight built form with a generous open space zone to the rear.



Fig 30. Pine Tree Foreshore Walk.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate



Fig 31. View from Gun Emplacement Road.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate

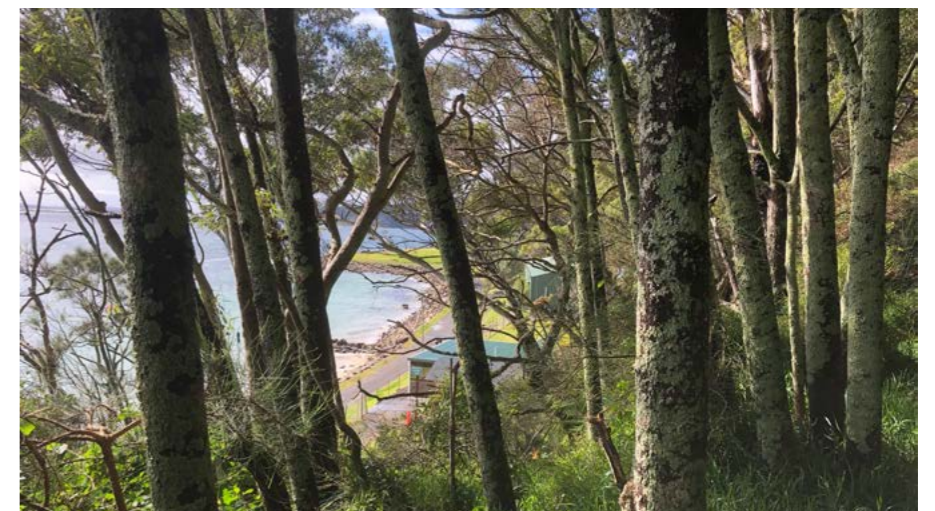


Fig 32. Glance of view from Headland Summit Walk.
Source: CLOUSTON Associate

STRUCTURE PLAN AND ZONES

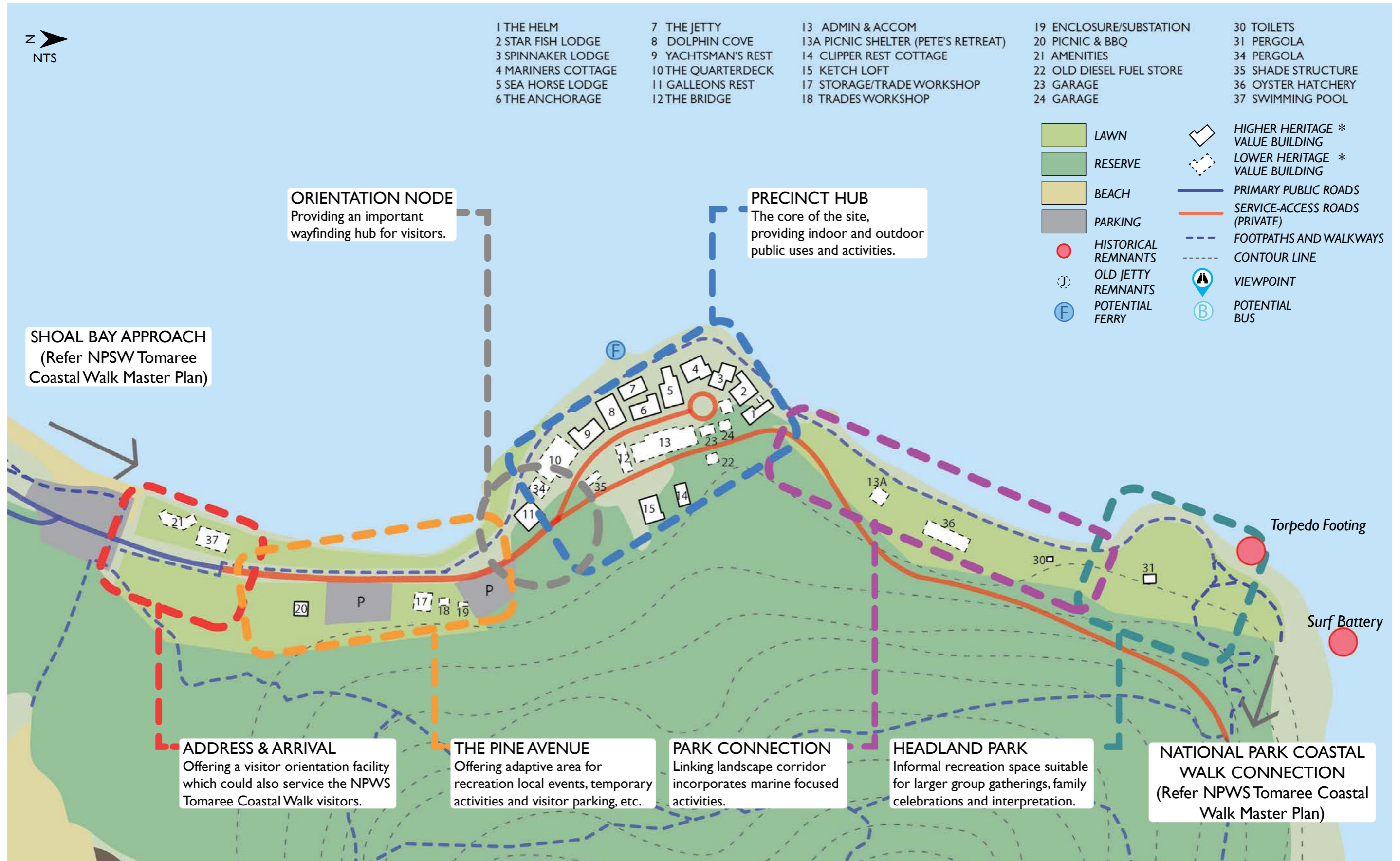


Fig 33. Structure plan and Zones.

Note: * Classification of heritage Value of Buildings refers to PSC Heritage Consultant 7th May 2021

POSSIBLE EVOLUTION CONCEPT

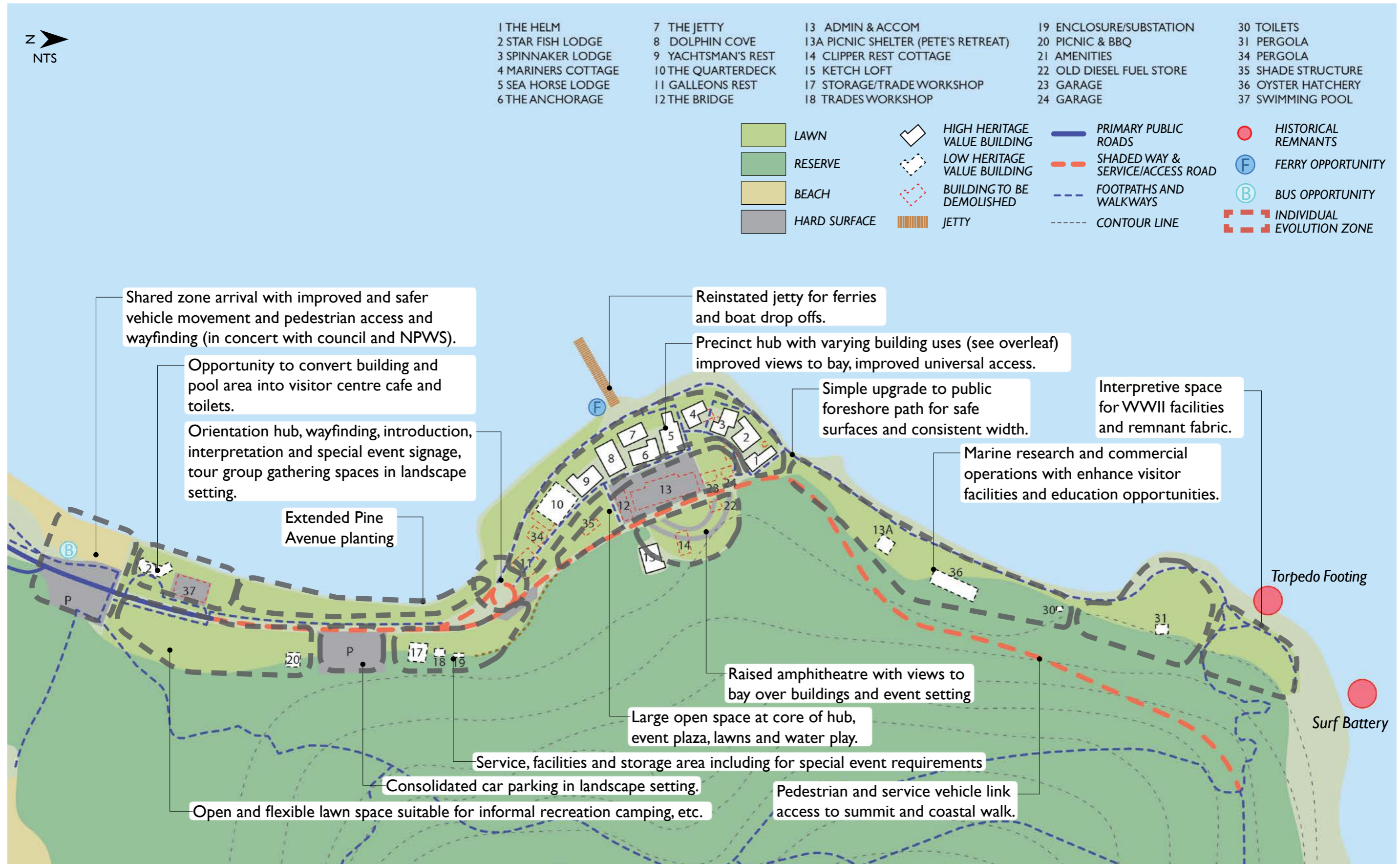


Fig 34. Possible Evolution Concept.

PRECINCT HUB CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

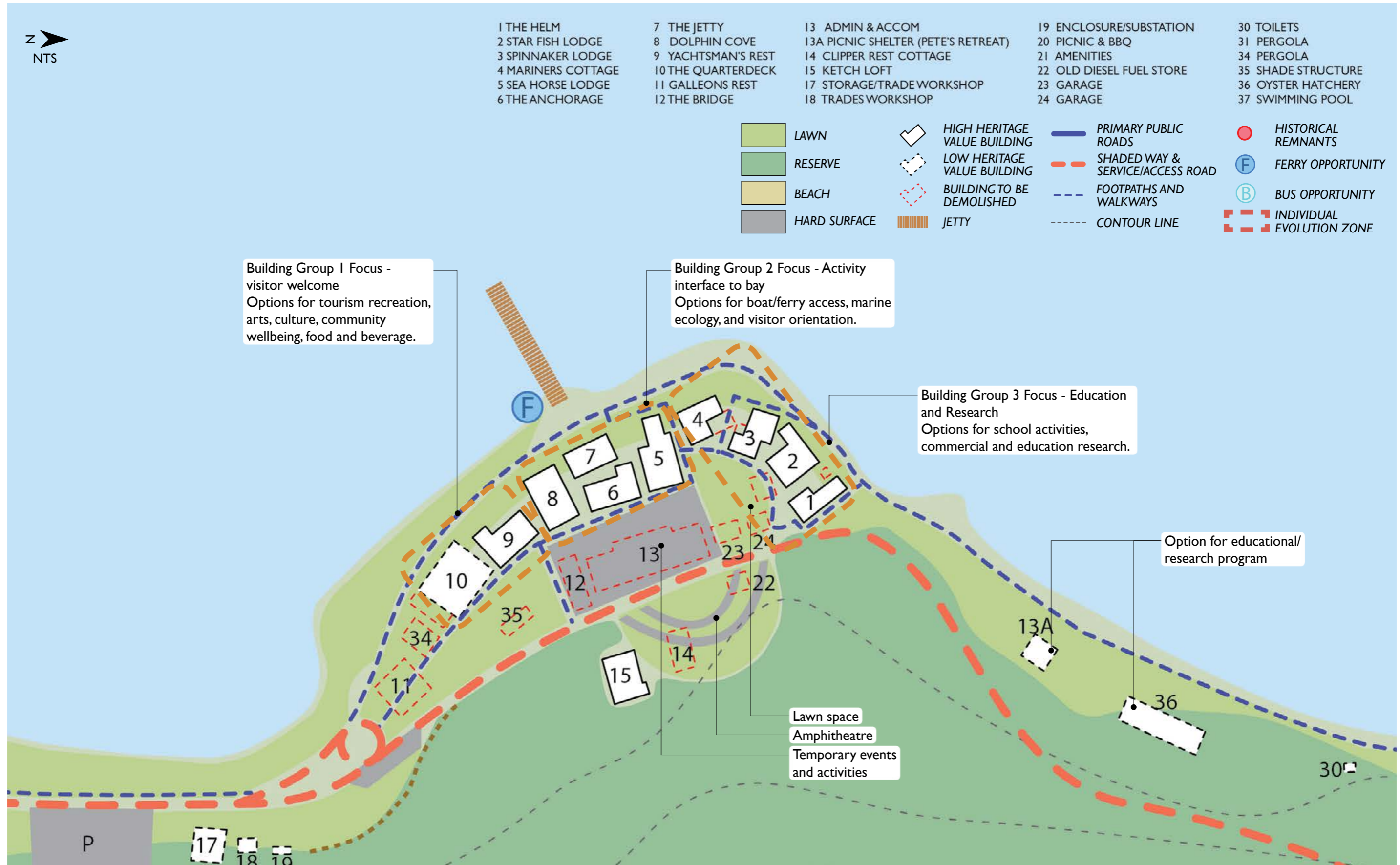


Fig 35. Precinct Hub Conceptual Framework plan

PRECINCT HUB CONCEPT OPTION

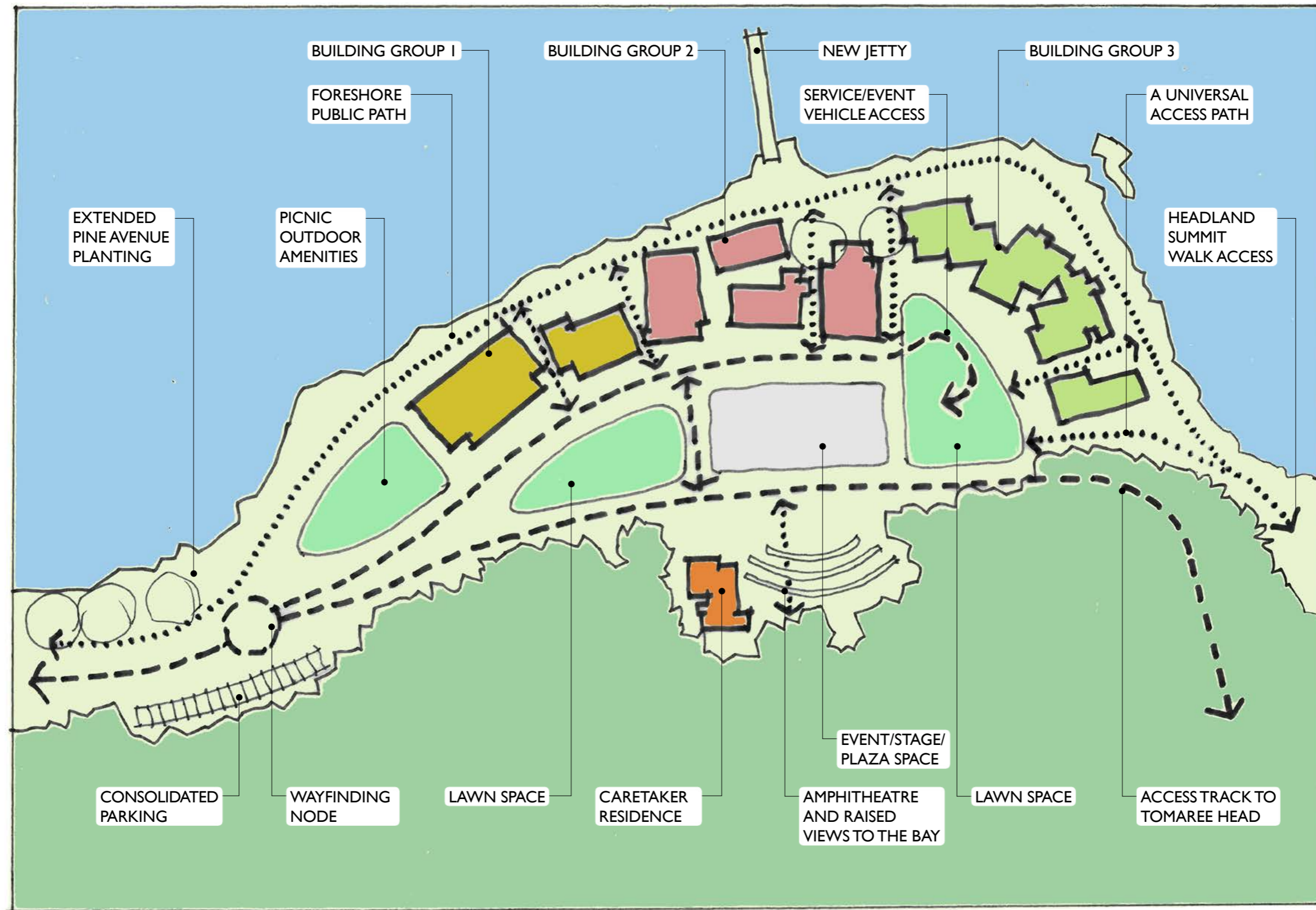


Fig 36. Precinct Hub Concept Option

PRECINCT HUB CONCEPT OPTION



Fig 37. Aerial sketch of Possible Precinct Hub Concept

STAGING AND PRIORITIES

The Tomaree Lodge is a complex site on the cusp of change, it offers a wide range of future use opportunities in a spectacular setting. The staging provides some initial development direction that activates the site from the outset, balances public access with appropriate commercial uses in concert with an enhanced landscape setting and prospect to the bay.

SHORT TERM

The first priority is to reinforce the connection with its surrounding environment and establish safe pedestrian access to the whole site. It is also important to consider which buildings or external space could be able to accommodate interim use that generate some basic income that can be focused on management, operations and maintenance.

MEDIUM TERM

The medium-term plan assumes that the heritage values of all buildings has been established and adaptive use potential of buildings confirmed. The need to open up more public space in the Precinct Hub and the potential financial burden of adapting buildings that are of no heritage significance and which may not be complementary to the original site layout, may suggest some building removals. For instance Building 13, being a later addition may be more current in design and possibly suitable to interim short term uses. However, its character is wholly at odds with the WWII garrison buildings and its removal over the longer term would free up a large public open space.

LONG TERM

The long-term plan for Tomaree lodge is to establish a functional suite of buildings and associated diverse open spaces which complement the bay foreshore and National Park. At this point, it should be expected that the building users will be generating a high level of activity and interest that would be equally appealing to the local community as they would to domestic and international tourists.

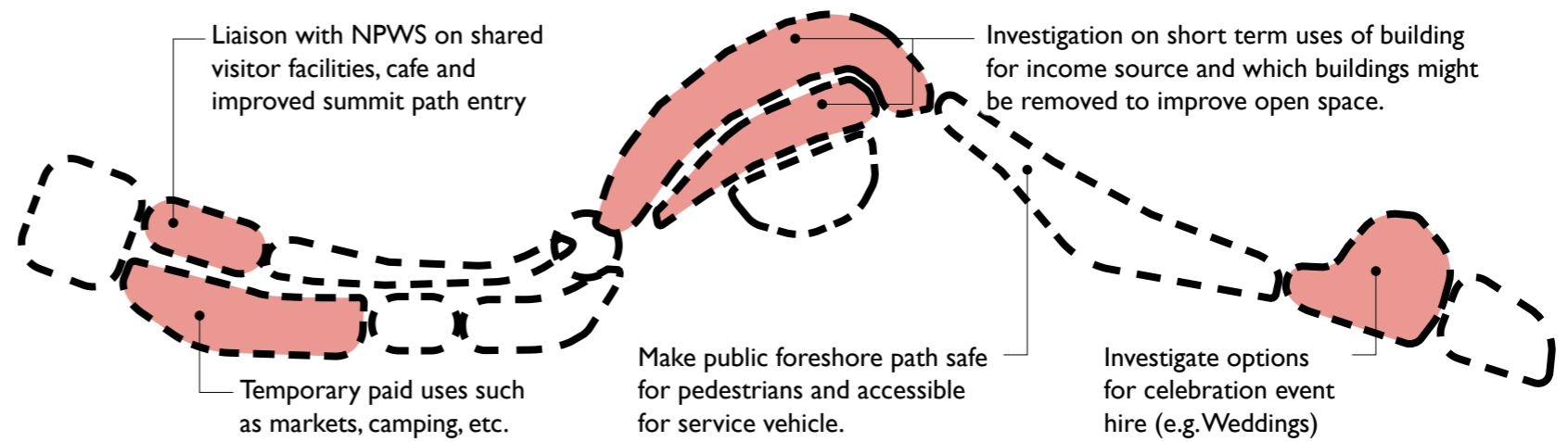


Fig 38. Short term.

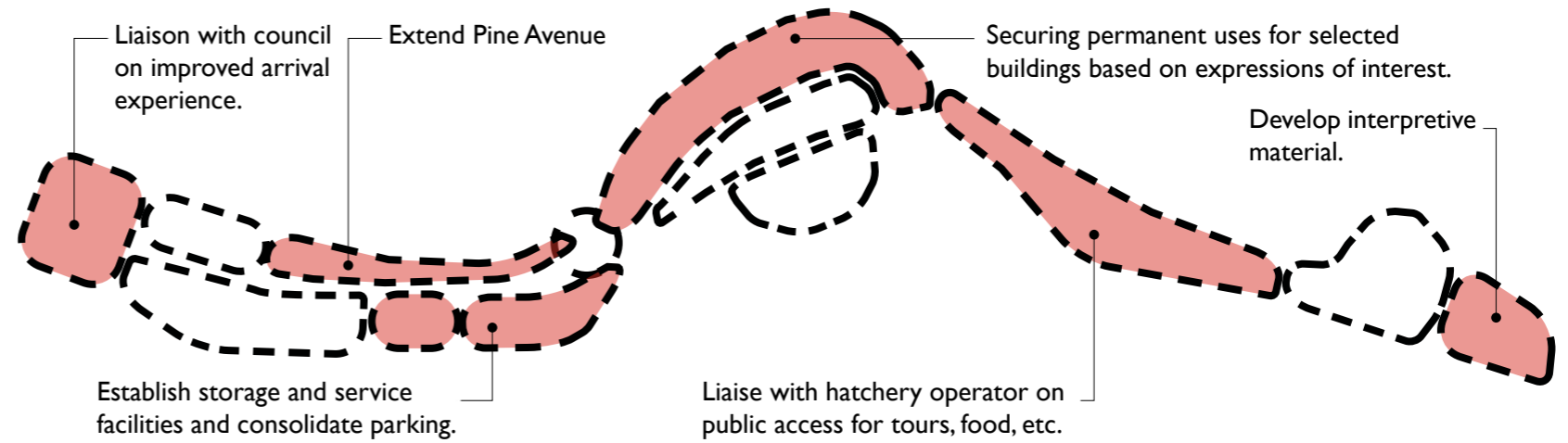


Fig 39. Medium term.

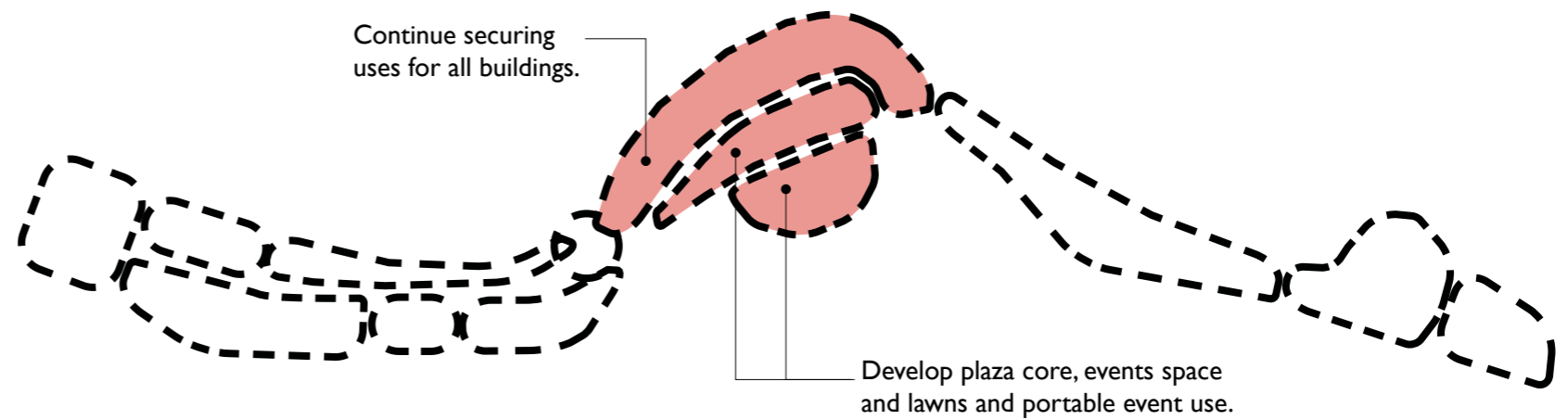


Fig 40. Long term.

OPERATIONAL MATRIX

ADAPTIVE REUSE

Expressions of interest for potential users and uses of this exceptional site will undoubtedly be plentiful, not least given its highly scenic location. But establishing the range of uses that would most complement the site itself, be viable, prove popular in the broader community and be enduring will need to be driven by a coherent analysis of the site's values, opportunities and constraints.

Any future uses should optimally draw directly from the site's environmental and cultural qualities, its historical uses and its direct association with the Headland, the bay and its heritage and marine and terrestrial ecology.

In that regard, future uses associated with such themes as the environment, culture, Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal heritage, World War II, terrestrial and marine ecology, education, research, the arts, health and wellbeing and so forth are likely to be compatible - subject to meeting other criteria implicit in the scale, character and accessibility of the place (see Criteria and Ratings below).

Likewise, supporting and complementary uses for visitors such as food and beverage, toilets, visitor orientation, event spaces, wayfinding, interpretation and the like will also be compatible, where sensitively located and designed.

Rather than seeking to define specific users and uses, which may limit evolving and future options, the selection process of uses that are suitable to the site can be derived by testing that use against a series of criteria that are generated by the six Principles outlined earlier in the document.

The table overleaf sets out the six Principles and describes the criteria that can be tested against each use for the level of alignment with those Principles.

These criteria can be used to test options for individual buildings, groups of buildings and external spaces as well as for temporary events and activities on the site.

CRITERIA AND RATINGS

This criteria selected are not intended to be exhaustive nor a single basis for selecting uses for the site (the criteria would need to be refined as a matter of course when more information is available on the status of all of the buildings).

This matrix will however be able to demonstrate from the outset which uses are clearly not suitable to the site. For instance, any activity that requires large areas of parking for private vehicles on the site or which needs a large building footprint will not be compatible, given the site's location in a natural setting on a peninsular with a single minor road access and a village-like setting of small buildings.

Rather than seeking to provide a numbered and/or weighted scoring system in this evaluation (which would be complex and readily challenged), the ratings in this matrix are based on a simple 5 point band from High to Low.

If a use is tested against these criteria and produces consistently low ratings, then that use is unlikely to be compatible with the site. Similarly, if the ratings are generally high, but certain criteria like private vehicle access or large building footprint requirements score very low, then the use may still not be compatible. Moderate/High to High scores across most of the criteria for a particular use would suggest a strong compatibility with the site's values and opportunities and be worthy of further and more detailed investigation.

DEFINITIONS OF PUBLIC USE

The terms of the transfer of the land call for the site to be for public use. It will be important to gain clarification on what are – or are not - considered public uses, as this is often a grey area of definition.

In general however, public uses imply that the general public have access to the whole precinct and that those uses offer a public service or opportunity, such as for recreation, leisure, tourism, education, arts, culture and the like.

Public uses can also include occupation by government agencies (local, state or federal) that are appropriate to the site and its marine and national park context; these might include fisheries, marine ecology, research, parks or arts agencies etc.

Where it can be clearly demonstrated that commercial uses are ancillary to those public uses, (e.g. cafés, kiosks, paid entry and for special events within defined zones) then these too can typically be deemed public uses.

SHORT AND LONGER TERMS USES

It will necessarily take some time to achieve planning permission for the plans and proposed uses for the site, much less to commence substantial embellishment works on the site. In the interim the site will still need to be managed and maintained to ensure public safety and to minimise deterioration of the built and landscape fabric.

Consequently, it would be worthwhile considering which buildings or external spaces could, with a modest amount of minor adaptation, be able to accommodate an interim use that generates some basic income that can be focused on management, operations and maintenance.

OPERATIONAL MATRIX

| PROPOSED LAND USE: | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|---------|------------|
| TOPIC | PRINCIPLES | LAND USE CRITERIA | RATING* | COMMENTARY |
| CONTEXT | Respect and integrate the Worimi connection with country. | Be complementary to indigenous culture and encourage indigenous employment | | |
| | Retain the compact village character in its headland park context. | Be operationally viable with respect to compact footprint and constrained service access | | |
| | Ensure uses complement the site and Shoal Bay land uses. | Be complementary to and not in significant commercial conflict with established similar land uses in the Shoal Bay area | | |
| ACCESS AND CIRCULATION | Prioritise public and collective access to the site. | Be viably independent of significant private vehicle access and associated parking requirements | | |
| | Promote and facilitate the site's role in accessing the National Park and Coastal Walkway. | Complement and gain value from the adjoining coastal and headland walk | | |
| | Maximise universal access to and around the site. | Be able to offer universal access to all areas, including sharing commonly accessible disabled parking with other users | | |
| LAND USES AND BULDINGS | Ensure that all uses reflect the unique character and culture of the site. | Have a direct relationship to the marine, natural, cultural and heritage environment | | |
| | Respect and integrate the heritage of significant buildings and landscape elements. | Be a viable use, accessible to the public that can work within existing built form footprint(s) and related heritage constraints | | |
| | Ensure that appropriate commercial returns assist in site management and maintenance. | Offer a commercial return that at minimum meets the site servicing costs of the user | | |
| HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT | Conserve and interpret the Aboriginal heritage and WWII history of the site. | Be able to include and integrate interpretive elements on site and be accessible to the general public on at least one Open Day per year | | |
| | Highlight and foster the marine associations of the site. | Be complementary to or directly related to maritime services, recreation or marine environment, science and education | | |
| | Protect and enhance the native flora, fauna and marine ecology of the site. | Be environmentally sustainable with no impact on environmental qualities of the land or bay (eg water quality, noise, lighting etc) | | |
| IMAGE AND CHARACTER | Protect and enhance major views and filtered views to the bay from the site. | Retain views to the bay and surrounding landscapes from inside and outside of buildings (ie active facades) | | |
| | Remove intrusive buildings and rationalise car parking where not significant. | Be adaptable and complementary to changing uses in neighbouring buildings and external spaces that may evolve over time | | |
| | Maximise visual links to the National Park and Coastal Walkway. | Offer views to the foreshore path and to the headland behind the site | | |
| MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION | Control and minimise private vehicle access to and within the site. | Require minimal private vehicle parking that may also not immediately adjoin the building (ie a short walk away). Be adaptable to shared disabled parking | | |
| | Integrate emergency and maintenance vehicle access to the site. | Not require significant and/or regular large vehicle servicing. Be low energy users able to use site generated power (solar) and recycled water for parts of operation | | |
| | Maintain adaptability in retained buildings to minimise future conversion costs. | Be adaptable to flexible and modular floor layouts that would meet a wide range of use types without significant conversion requirements when uses change | | |

Average Overall Rating

XX

*Rating bands: High (H), Moderate/High (MH), Moderate (M), Moderate/Low (ML) and Low (L). Higher ratings imply strong alignment of use type with criteria

NEXT STEPS

In order to advance the concepts illustrated in this strategic plan, there is a series of parallel and sequential activities that this plan will help inform and drive, as set out below:

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

This first step is key to the success of the stages that will follow, as the momentum built for the project will be dependent on garnering partners, advocates and community support for the scheme. Such support will, over time, help generate additional funds to take the next steps in realising the site's full potential. Preliminary engagement would typically include:

- Engaging the Council to agree next steps and planning approval processes
- Commencing negotiations with the State Government to gain access to the buildings and to critical background documents
- Continuing to seek engagement with key stakeholders such as the NSW National Parks, local indigenous representatives and the like
- Promoting the process and informing the community through digital platforms and site tours (see below)
- Meeting interested parties to present this strategic plan and establish suitability of their proposal for the site.

SITE FAMILIARISATION

While the general public already have access to the foreshore fronting the site, there is presently no public access permitted to any of the buildings nor is there any expression of the site's rich history and cultural values.

To gain interest and a better understanding of the site's unique values and opportunities amongst the community, the promotion of free guided tours of the site for small numbers of people (on a free but booked basis) will elicit community interest and support for the site's adaptive reuse.

PLANNING PATHWAYS AND BUSINESS CASE

Gaining clarity on the most likely planning pathway for the site at an early stage will help focus priorities in the development of the required planning and design documents.

Engagement with Council and the State Government on the most likely pathway and approvals processes will be a critical early step.

A Business Case will also need to be prepared to evaluate the validity of any proposed building uses.

SPECIALIST INPUTS

A potentially wide range of professional disciplines will be required over time to help develop the required planning and design documents for the site through to documentation of site works and embellishment.

Not all disciplines will be required at the outset to complete a comprehensive site master plan, but key disciplines for this initial stage might typically include surveyors, town planners, heritage consultants, Connecting with Country consultants, Architects, Landscape Architects, Engineers (civil, structural, hydrological and marine), Access Consultants, Ecologists, Quantity Surveyors, Tourism planners and Facility operators.

INTERPRETIVE OVERLAY

Central to the meaningful experience of the site's long and rich history will be the development of a seamless storyline, that links the many threads of the site's evolution, from pre European settlement, through its role as a garrison in WW II, its aquatic values, and its association with the National Park to today's proposal for its adaptive reuse.

This interpretive overlay - presented under key themes - can and should take a number of forms, from retention showcasing and conservation of physical fabric, expression through landscape design, interpretative signage, public art, digital communications and site tours, amongst others.

MANAGEMENT MODEL

In order to establish operational parameters for the site over the long term, it will be important to consider which of a range of possible management models would be best suited to the site's long-term care and control.

For sites of this nature that management model may necessarily need to evolve over time, as the site is progressively embellished and the required operational expertise and resources evolve in parallel. The following steps might be taken:

- Transferring site ownership and or responsibility to the Port Stephens Council with appropriate conditions consistent with the original NSW Government commitment to the Port Stephens community, or
- Establishment of some form of Management Trust under the oversight of a State authority with representation from significant stakeholder interests including:
 - Port Stephens Council;
 - NPWS;
 - The local Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council;
 - Community Organisations represented by THHG.



Fig 41. Tomaree Lodge view from the Pine Tree Avenue.
Source: CLOUSTON Associates