

Community Vision

for the future of

Tomaree Headland Port Stephens

Presented by

The Tomaree Headland Heritage
Group Inc.

June 2021





TOMAREE HEADLAND

SHOAL BAY

‘An outstanding Natural and Heritage asset which is potentially a Nationally Significant Visitor Attraction located in Port Stephens’

LOT 453

The Tomaree Lodge Site
is Freehold which is owned by the State Government and
Managed by the Department of Communities and Justice

The Tomaree Lodge site is listed on the **State Heritage Register**.

‘The site is a physical demonstration of Port Stephen’s important contribution to WWII when it was developed as a military base by the joint Australian Army-United States Navy defence venture in March 1942’.

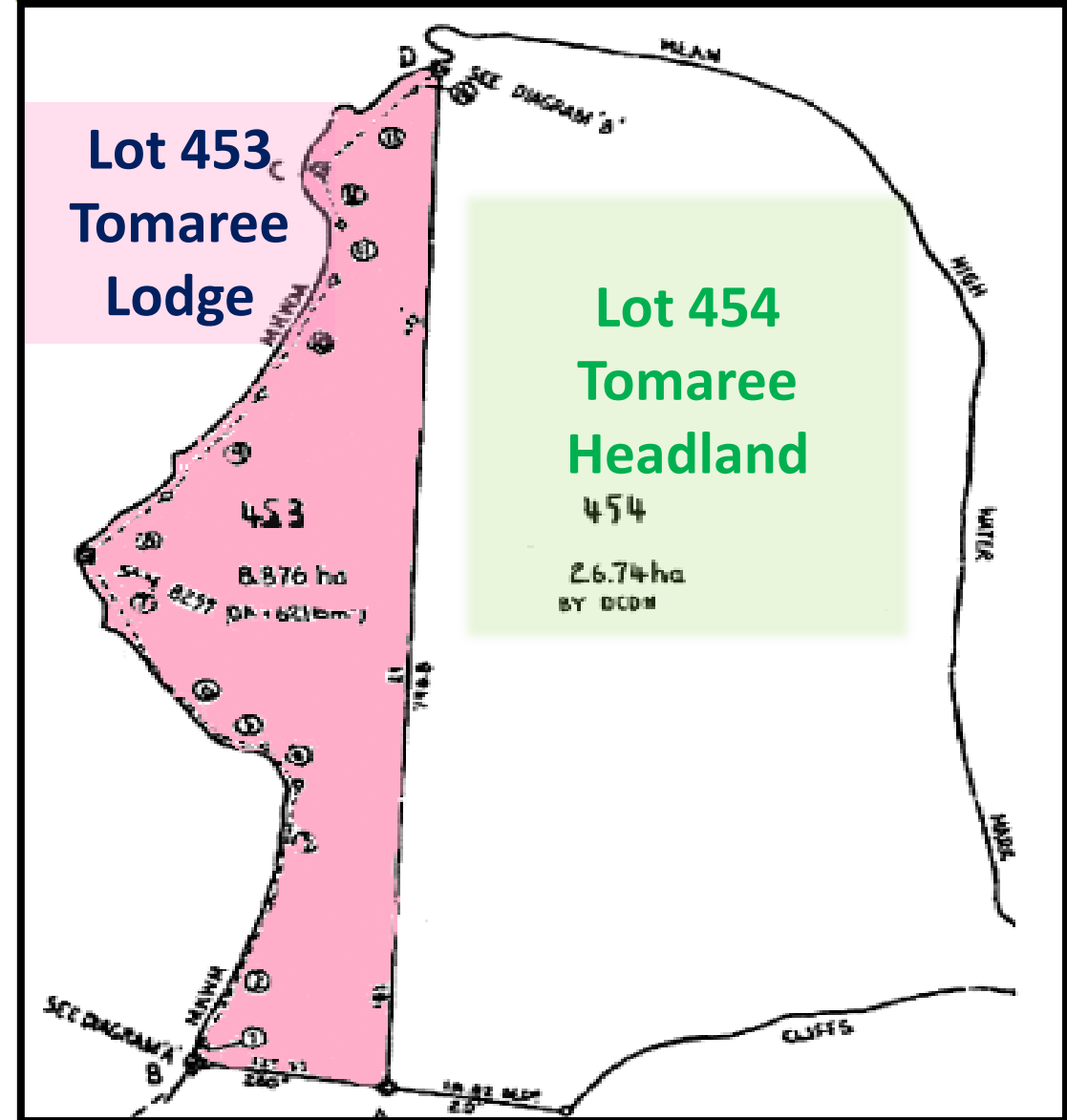
This Statement also states *‘The site is rare as one of the few surviving, relatively intact Army Garrison Camps dating from the Second World War in NSW’.*

LOT 454

The Tomaree Headland
is owned by the National Parks and WLS.

The National Park site has a **similar Heritage Status** with special mention of its Radar Station and fortifications including gun emplacements.

Headland Map



Participating Groups

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc.

- **Business Port Stephens Inc.** *(formerly the Tomaree Business Chamber Inc.)*
- **Nelson Bay RSL Sub-Branch Inc.**
- **Destination Port Stephens Inc.**
- **Port Stephens Historical Society Inc.**
- **Shoal Bay Community Association Inc.**
- **EcoNetwork - Port Stephens Inc.**
- **Marine Parks Association Inc.**
- **Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association Inc.**
- **Tomaree Museum Association Inc.**

KEY OBJECTS

of the **TOMAREE HEADLAND HERITAGE GROUP Inc.**

(formally the 'Friends of Tomaree Headland')

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- 1) **To Protect** and interpret the outstanding natural and heritage, including indigenous heritage, assets of Tomaree Headland
- 2) **To Retain** the site of the Tomaree Lodge in public/community ownership with appropriate public access
- 3) **To Create** a nationally significant tourist attraction based on Tomaree Headland
- 4) **To Complement** the existing and planned improvements to the adjoining Tomaree National Park, in particular the recently announced Tomaree Coastal Walk which commences at the base of Tomaree Headland
- 5) **To Optimise** visitor experiences and enterprise opportunities leading to economic sustainability of the site and to ensure its long-term sustainability
- 6) **To Facilitate** the establishment of a Museum/Interpretive centre to conserve and showcase the natural and cultural history of Port Stephens and Tomaree Headland

KEY OBJECTS

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- 7) **To Realise** the potential use of the site for educational and research facilities relating to marine science, nature conservation, indigenous culture and more recent historical events.
- 8) **To Strengthen** the appeal of the Tomaree Peninsula which is recognised as a strategic tourism hub
- 9) **To Ensure** that the future use and development of Tomaree Headland is guided by an integrated Masterplan
- 10) **To Examine** the need for an appropriate administrative authority to oversight the planning and management of Tomaree Headland
- 11) **To Develop** concepts for the adaptive reuse of the assets of the Tomaree Lodge Heritage site
- 12) **To Enhance** the public's appreciation of the vital role of the Tomaree Headland and Port Stephens in the defence of Australia during WW11

Achievements to Date

Page 1

by our Group



- ***Obtained written Bipartisan Government Support*** for keeping Tomaree Lodge in public/community ownership
- ***Financial support from Port Stephens Council*** allowing us to establish a formal structure, including marketing material, website etc including the establishment of a Council liaison person
- ***Council resolution requested and adopted*** committing to ongoing support
- ***Became an Incorporated Association*** in 2020 (changing our name from Friends of Tomaree Headland)
- ***Established a united Voice from our 9 Community Member Groups*** who represent thousands of local residents
- ***Development of a 'Community Vision'*** with the support of all the 9 Foundation Member Groups and their thousands of members

Achievements to Date

by our Group



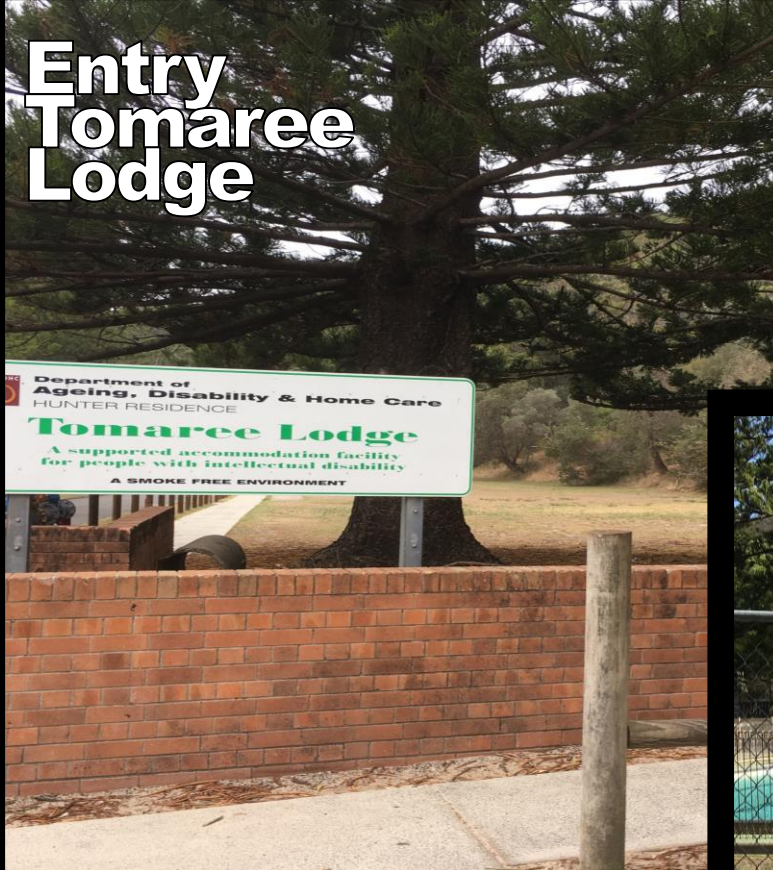
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- ***Recognition by the Minister responsible for the Tomaree Lodge*** that our Group will be playing a role in the Community Consultation process when the Lodge becomes available
- ***Numerous meetings in our quest to develop strong lines of communication and dialogue*** with State and Local Government representatives and have been established and ongoing
- ***Grant application*** -We have received a grant of \$10,000 from the Federal Government to employ a Historian to prepare a comprehensive History of the Tomaree Headland which will provide the basis and the first step towards our goal to develop an integrated Master Plan for the future direction of the Tomaree Headland and the Tomaree Lodge
- ***Our support base and Membership*** has grown substantially. Our nine (9) community member groups represent many thousands of Port Stephens residents
- ***Invited and subsequently contributed to*** the National Parks & WLS -***Tomaree Coastal Walk Reference Group***

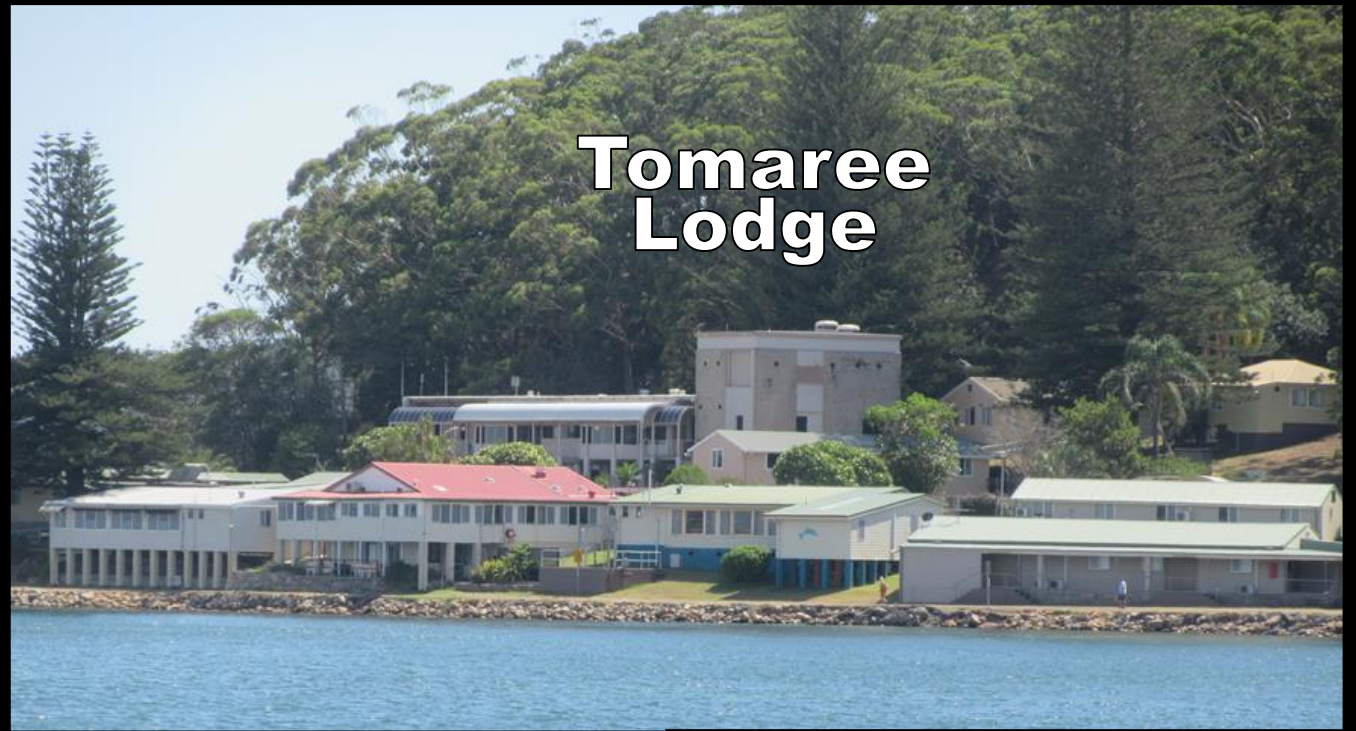
Tomaree Lodge



Entry
Tomaree
Lodge



Tomaree
Lodge



Possible
Future
Amenities
Block



Possible
Carpark
Site



Strong need to Restore, Protect & Preserve WWII Relics



**Gun
Emplacements**



Restored 6" Gun

**What a Relic could
look like after
restoration !!**



**WWII Torpedo
Launching Site**



WWII Relic

Tomaree Coastal Walk Master Plan for the Tomaree Headland Precinct



Existing (E) Track Condition

KEY OPPORTUNITIES:



- Trail head upgrade
- Upgrade Information panels
- Upgrade with exposed aggregate paths
- Upgrade Fisherman's Track picnic area
- Provide new Fisherman's Track Lookout
- Upgrade stairs and seating area
- Repair/retain local stone stairs
- Expand stairway up terraced bank
- Upgrade summit lookout
- Retain historic route
- Upgrade gun emplacement curtilage 1
- Upgrade gun emplacement curtilage 2
- Celebrate slot canyon experience
- Gun Emplacement Road & Tomaree Track junction
- Upgrade Torpedo Tubes connection
- Upgrade Zenith Beach access node

Opportunities

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- Visitor information facilities
- Various museum and Interpretation facilities showcasing the History of the Headland and Tomaree Lodge
- Introduction of activities that will enhance the financial sustainability and appeal of the Tomaree Lodge site which could include Education and Research activities, Cafés, restaurants, Eco activities, History and Nature based walking Tours, Marine related activities such as tours of the existing Oyster Spawning business, Boutique Accommodation, events such as weddings etc, school and university excursions

Opportunities

Page 2

- Re-instatement of the Jetty with a pontoon opening the opportunity for Public Transport access by Ferry and Cruise vessels. Has the potential to provide an important link to the new Tomaree Coastal Walk and headland summit as well as the future Tomaree Lodge site activities. It will also assist address the already constricted parking issues and traffic management
- Depending on Masterplan outcomes consider the adaptive reuse of the old sporting fields for:
 - Additional Parking
 - Amenities Block
- To reinstate the Jetty

Opportunities

These are included in the Tomaree Coastal Walk Masterplan

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- Picnic and Recreational Area activities
- Upgrade Walkways on the Headland and the various historic elements
- Additional access to Headland Peak to allow for less mobile people
- Upgrade the 'Summit' Viewing Area
- Upgrade history Interpretations
- Provision of Public Amenities, water stations and garbage receptacles
- Substantially increase Parking and improve Traffic Management

Jetty Project

It is proposed to seek reinstatement of the Jetty which was removed some years ago and replace with a pontoon.

This would allow the introduction of Public Transport to the Headland which will have the key benefit of accessing the Headland Summit and also connecting to the future 'National Parks Tomaree Coastal Walk' which will extend from the Headland to Birubi

The potential introduction of a Ferry service between Nelson Bay and the Headland will open the door to a more extensive ferry service embracing such areas as Lemon Tree, Soldiers Point and Bannisters



Way Forward

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- Determining the transition process for the Tomaree Lodge into Public/Community Hands
- What format a future structure for Tomaree Lodge Management /ownership could look like: Maybe a *Trust which could include Port Stephens Council, State Government and community representatives*
- To support National Parks & WLS requirements for the Tomaree Lodge site i.e. parking/service access and their walk requirements
- Development of a integrated *Masterplan* for the Tomaree Headland and the Tomaree Lodge which will particularly identify future uses for the Lodge Site requiring further community consultation
- Seek funding for various studies and projects such as restoration, preservation and interpretation of *WWII Relics*
- Seek meaningful meetings with Government to determine the way forward



Way Forward

Page 2

- We would also like to see a significant *Visitor Interpretation Centre and/or Museum and Marine Research and Education Centre*
- *Identification of Sustainable Funding Mechanisms* and a management model to ensure long term financial viability of the Tomaree Lodge site which could embrace coffee shops, restaurants, boutique accommodation, educational opportunities etc- see opportunities
- *Not let the Tomaree Lodge site lay Dormant* while its future is being determined
- **Reinstatement of the Jetty** (as a pontoon) which will allow the introduction of Public Transport by way of a Ferry Service and also access for cruise operators
- Identify opportunities to enhance parking, particularly the existing dormant sporting field, traffic management, amenities, water stations, garbage Management
- Seeking ongoing support from the relevant Government agencies
- Ongoing lobbying to the various responsible Government agencies maintaining our profile and pursuing leverage of opportunities

