

Heritage group celebrates Lodge win

By Marian SAMPSON

THE Tomaree Headland Heritage Group (THHG) is celebrating the release of outcomes from community consultation on the Tomaree Lodge by the NSW Government, and the announcement of planned improvements for the site.

"This is the first clear indication that the Lodge

will be transitioned to a community and recreation use precinct," THHG President Peter Clough told News Of The Area.

The heritage group also welcomed the announcement of continued consultation with the Port Stephens community on the future use of the site, and expected on-site improvements.

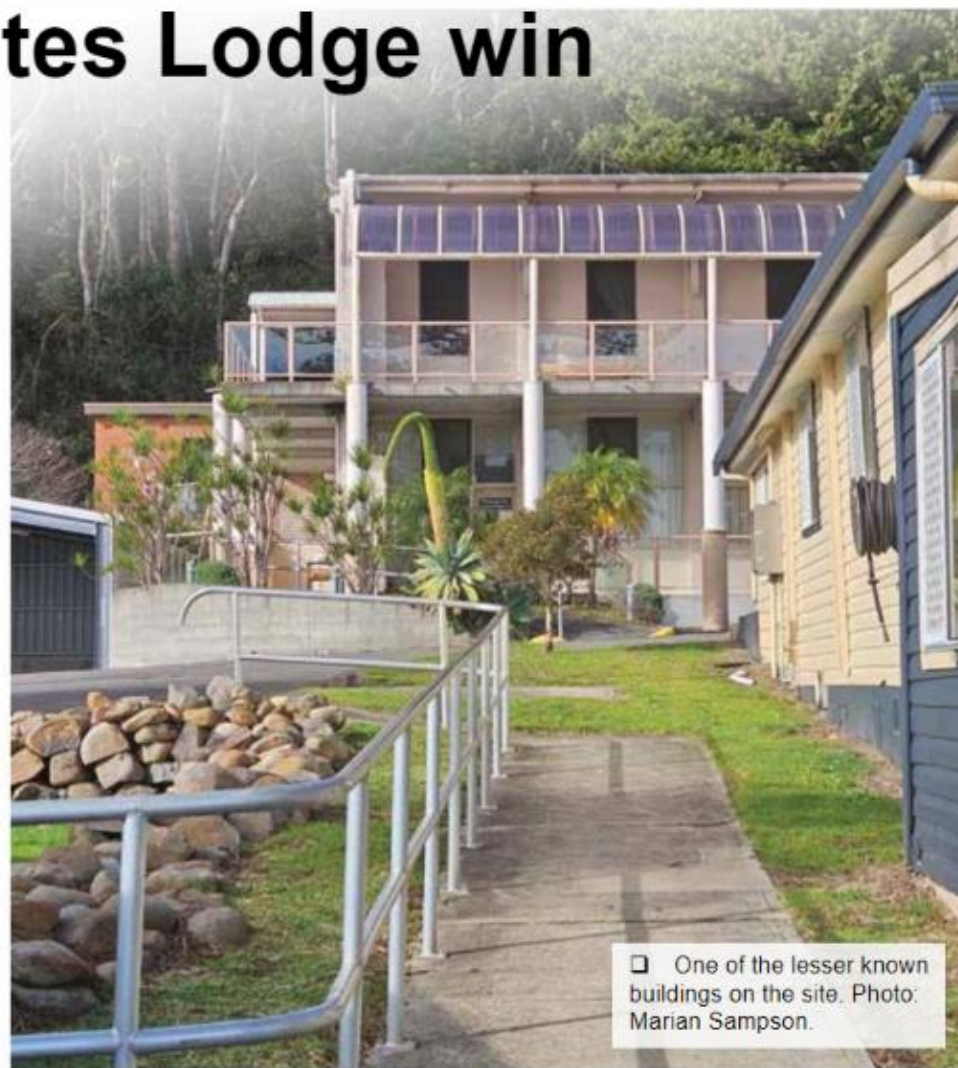
"It is noted that this

[consultation] will commence in the coming weeks and potentially there will be short term projects to enhance the community and visitor experience, including signage," a media release from the group stated.

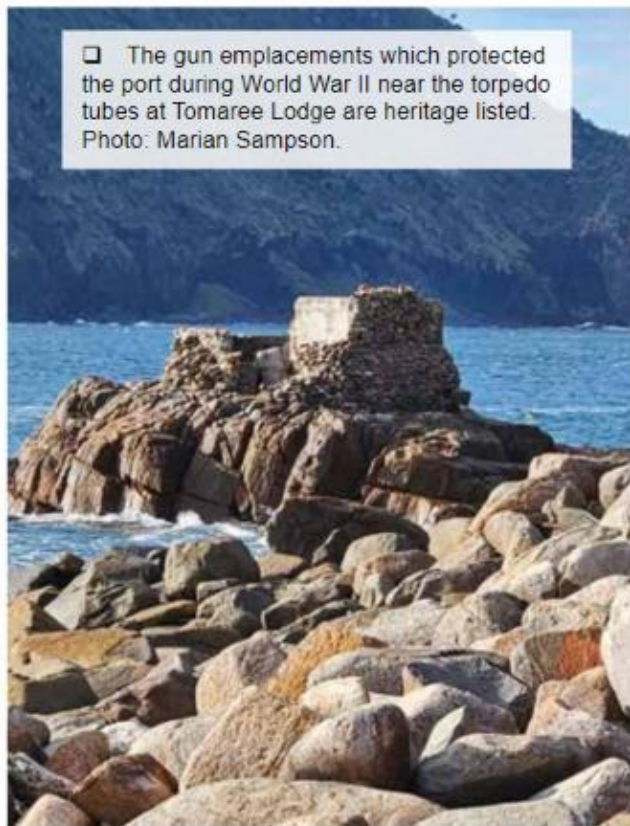
Following the recent release of the 'Tomaree Lodge Site Potential Future Uses - Community Consultation Outcome Report' by the State Government, TGGH highlighted several positive points.

These include 'recognition that this site is highly valued by the Port Stephens community and visitors and therefore requires significant care when repurposing the site' and 'acknowledgement of the significance of the WWII military history which was the basis for the State Heritage listing of the Tomaree Lodge site'.

The report also recognises popular support for enhancing the visitor experience with potential inclusions such as a cafe and information kiosk, a museum and interpretive centre, a performing arts and cultural facilities, education and research facilities, open spaces for community activities, recreational and history trails, budget accommodation for visiting students, the reinstatement



One of the lesser known buildings on the site. Photo: Marian Sampson.



The gun emplacements which protected the port during World War II near the torpedo tubes at Tomaree Lodge are heritage listed. Photo: Marian Sampson.

of the jetty to reduce the need for motor vehicle traffic, and the establishment of a management model that is community based and includes Port Stephens Council.

"These outcomes are

generally consistent and therefore reinforcement of the extensive [THHG] community engagement undertaken over a number of years," said Mr Clough.

Looking to the future, THHG is advocating for the

development of a master plan which addresses the financial sustainability of the site, as well as a management group to facilitate incremental improvements identified in the long-term master planning process.