

3 Character Statements

This section provides general information on the character of the various towns, villages and zones within the Great Lakes local government area. Character statements exist for the coastal town centres and the village centres. Zone based statements apply to all areas outside of these centres.

The Great Lakes local government area (LGA) is a diverse area with both coastal and hinterland settlements which can be grouped into four general settings:

- (1) Coastal towns centres of Forster, Tuncurry, Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest;
- (2) Coastal and inland villages;
- (3) Areas of residential settlements with a bushland, rural or coastal setting; and
- (4) Rural and environmentally sensitive areas.

In general, new development must:

- Contribute to the existing and desired future character of the locality;
- Help differentiate between different precincts / villages / neighbourhoods;
- Respect existing development scale and setbacks;
- Protect and enhance the natural environment; and
- Encourage passive surveillance and security.

When determining the appropriateness of design for the particular location, consideration must be given to the following matters:

- Siting of new buildings in relation to adjacent structures, site features and vegetation;
- Street address of buildings, both street frontages are to be addressed on corner allotments;
- The building mass and bulk and how this relates to the site and surrounding development;
- The importance of roof form and pitch within the streetscape, natural environment and view sharing;
- The visual affect of materials and colours, particularly wall and roof materials;
- The proportions of openings to the building, including doors and windows; and
- The impacts of windows and verandahs on the privacy of adjoining residents.

3.1 Coastal Town Centres

3.1.1 Forster and Tuncurry Additional Character Statements

Forster Tuncurry has the classic elements of the coastal town idyll. It has excellent surf beaches; picturesque headlands; a large lake; forest and dune systems; and an abundant marine ecosystem. The towns exist in the popular imagination and memory of the people of NSW as a place of sun, saltwater and fun.

The town vision illustrated in the Town Centre Concept Diagrams have been developed in the consultation with the community and stakeholders and built upon a large body of work that has preceded it, including: Forster Tuncurry Conservation and Development Strategy (2003); Forster Tuncurry Housing Strategy (2006); NSW Coastal Design Guidelines; SEPP 65: Design quality of residential flat development.

VISION

“To retain and enhance the unique natural environmental character and relaxed coastal lifestyle offered by Forster Tuncurry, whilst embracing high quality development promoting the area as a popular location for residential living, tourism and business”.

The following objectives have been established for the town centres:

- *Achieving sustainable town centres*
New development will incorporate the principles of sustainability. Environmental, social and economic sustainability tests will be applied to new projects. This means that the built environment and public spaces will minimise the consumption of energy and water, and promote social interaction and activity, and a diversity of uses will be encouraged to generate year-round economic activity.
- *A unique identity*
Strong growth of Forster Tuncurry is part of a pattern of change along the East Coast. Forster and Tuncurry will maintain a distinct character by building upon patterns in the towns, including: compact and recognisable town centres; good connections to the waterfront; easy walking access to many major attractions, a visible 'working waterfront'; and reclaim its status as a significant event location. Changes will occur while remaining welcoming to locals and visitors alike: "(the town) must still feel like a pair of old jeans".
- *Creating compact and attractive town centres*
Planning and development will focus on street activation, a high quality public realm and promotion of pedestrian friendly environments. New development will be of a high quality and contribute to a visually attractive built form. A diverse range of land uses will be present in the town centres. The form of the town centres will have a strong sense of place with buildings relating to streets and public areas.
- *Facilitating access and mobility around and between the towns*
The precincts in the towns will be integrated and linked by clearly defined movement networks for a wide range of modes including: pedestrian, car, cycle, skating, gophers etc. Cycleways will provide easy and safe connections between the town centres and the surrounding residential areas. Public transport access to the towns will be improved and car parking will be specifically managed to meet the needs of different user groups. Visitors should be able to "throw the car keys in the corner" for the duration of their stay. Pedestrian movement will have priority against car traffic.
- *Creating liveable towns*
The range of public domain amenities and services will attract people of all ages and from diverse communities to live in Foster Tuncurry. The streets will be safe, and easy to move around. Street life and activity will increase with a greater mix of uses serving residents, workers and visitors. The town centres will be a more desirable place to live and visit. They will offer greater housing mix and cater for greater residential diversity. The Business Zones in the Town Centres will be enlarged, diversified and consolidated to generate more employment opportunities.
- *Re-connecting the towns to the foreshore*
The towns will "turn around and look at the water". The character of Forster and Tuncurry will be strengthened by the improvement of pedestrian access to the foreshore and landscape design of the lake and beach fronts. The foreshore precincts will become a recreation leisure and entertainment destination for locals and visitors. The towns' working waterfronts will be recognised as enriching elements. The focus will be on the different and special qualities of North Street, Memorial Drive, Little Street, Pilot Hill Peninsula, Cape Hawke Harbour, Oxley Park and the Point Road Peninsula.
- *Improving the quality of the public domain*
The public domain will be well designed and give pedestrians a feeling of importance. A network of public spaces, laneways and parks will be provided. The quality of footpath paving, street trees, signage and lighting will be improved. The landscape design concept for the towns will ensure that each tree planted or paving laid is part of an integrated vision for the public domain.
- *Improving the quality of new buildings*
The town centres will be distinguished by high quality new architecture and design. A SEPP 65 Design Review Panel (made up of respected professionals who do not have a private interest in the area) and Architectural competitions will ensure well-designed buildings for special precincts and multi-dwelling housing.

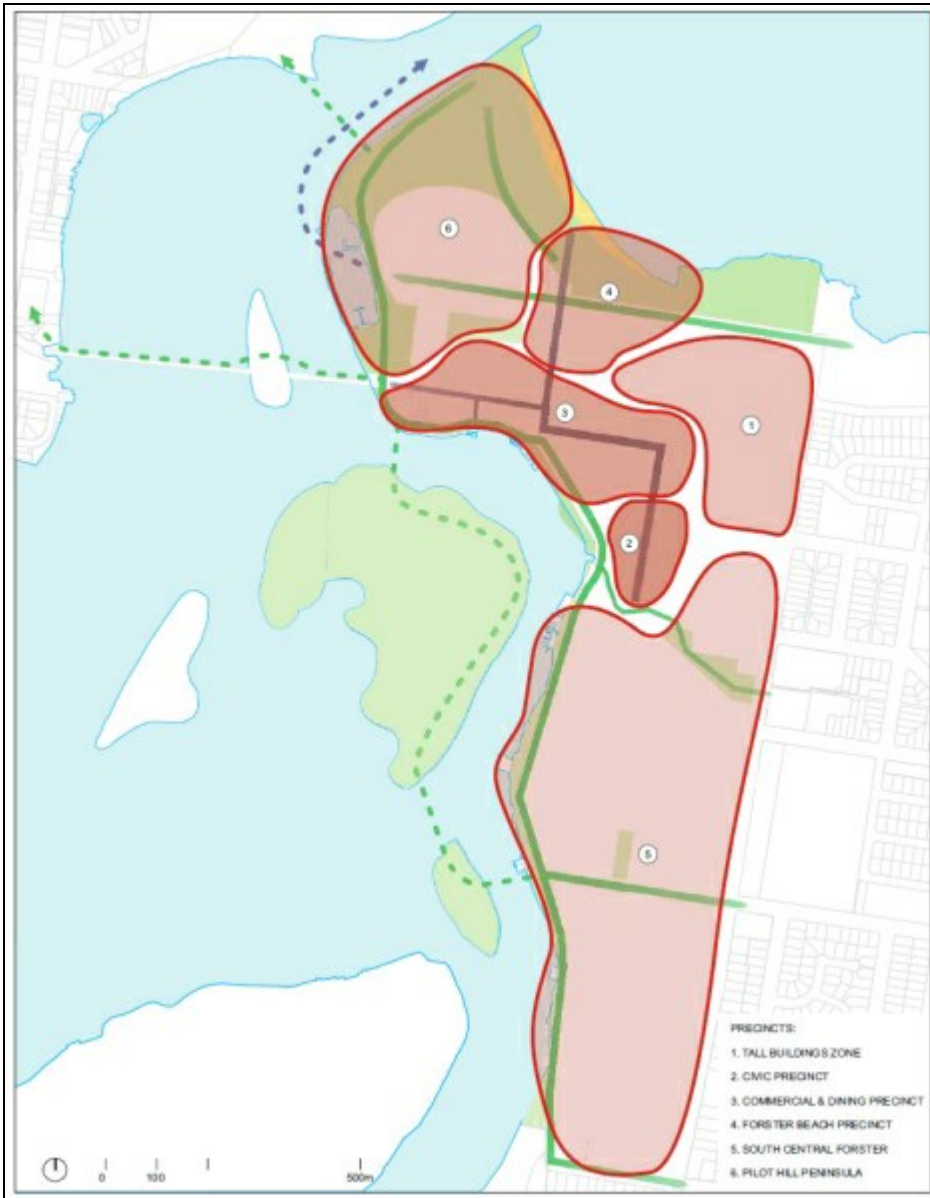
The controls within this Plan are designed to deliver a city-wide residential development strategy which preserves the character and amenity of existing neighbourhoods, whilst allowing opportunities for infill development in appropriate locations. The focus for infill residential development remains in town centres and the high density residential zones within Forster Tuncurry.

- *Improved Neighbourhood Amenity*
This Plan aims to ensure that new development respects, enhances and integrates with neighbourhood character. Development should contribute to the quality of the natural and built environment and the public domain.
- *Diversity and Availability of Housing types*
The Plan encourages the provision of a wide range of housing types that reflect the needs and aspirations of the diverse backgrounds and lifestyles of residents and provides for increased housing choice and availability that contribute to a sustainable living community. To achieve this, the Plan seeks to reinforce the hierarchy of Great Lakes' residential zones, by encouraging increased densities within the town centre areas, which have a higher level of accessibility to the broader range of services and facilities offered by the twin towns.

The Plan also seeks to support increased densities within the surrounding medium density residential zones, particularly in those areas which are located in close proximity to town centres, thereby encouraging urban consolidation principles. Increasing densities in such locations will reduce development pressure on the low density residential areas, thereby encouraging the retention of the detached suburban character, which residents currently enjoy.

- *Environmental Accountability*
This Plan aims to ensure that new high and medium density residential development is ecologically, economically and socially responsible. New development should provide a broad range of housing choices with a high standard of design, ecological sustainability and energy efficiency. Development should enhance neighbourhood amenities and add to both the natural and built environment.

3.1.1.1 Forster Town Centre



Town Centre Precincts (Click here to view [original image](#))

Tall Building Precinct - Area 1

The vision for this area is for active pedestrian oriented streets that will suit permanent residents as well as visitors to the area.

Development adopts similar heights to the existing but reinforces the street-orientation of the buildings. Reduced side setbacks permit buildings to give the streets a more formal urban character. Ground level apartments will generally be accessed through a courtyard with a fence and gate to the street. Larger rear setbacks with substantial deep soil zones and a requirement for planting trees that grow to substantial size will create a complete 'green zone' in the mid-block. These will effectively screen buildings facing one another across the rear lane.

All vehicular access onto the sites is via the rear lane. Gone are the long access ramps that mar many of the recent developments in the zone. These are either unnecessary because the car parking is wholly below grade, ramps are integrated within the building lobby or ramps are located at the side of the building.

Civic Precinct - Area 2

This area occupies an important threshold in Forster. At the southern edge of the existing town centre and at the place where Penenton Creek line meets the Breckenridge Channel. It incorporates the Police Station, court house, public service buildings and bus stop. It is bounded to its south by parkland that provides a clear demarcation between the commercial centre and the medium density zone to the south. The curve of Little Street and the Westward slope of the site create a natural amphitheatre with its focus upon the foreshore.

The future use of the area is the subject of separate masterplan investigation. The site holds development potential for mixed commercial use that reinforces the role of the area as the civic heart of the Forster. It has been considered for functions such as library, café, market ground and office space.

Commercial and Dining Precinct - Area 3

The vision for this area is for an active pedestrian-oriented precinct where hospitality and entertainment activities are focused. The well-landscaped character of Wharf Street is extended to Wallis and Lake Street. Improved pedestrian crossings with roadway narrowing and shared zones permit easy movement. Car parking is provided in the large capacity of the streets together with possible multi-level council car parks in the area.

It is essential that retail serving local day-to-day needs make this a viable town centre that remains vital out of tourist season. Importantly, this area retains a number of banks, other functions are also supported such as green grocer, baker, supermarket, pharmacy.

The potential noise-generating entertainment activities suggest care will be taken in the location and detailed design of residential apartments in the area to minimise conflict, this may include design strategies to minimise noise transmission. Growth of office use in the area would be compatible with the evening noise.

The built form in the area is characterised by the lower-rise buildings in the area west of Beach Street and southward along the foreshore and taller buildings emerging from the area east of Beach street and further from the shoreline.

Memorial Drive, Little Street and the foreshore provide one of the most memorable and unique places on the coast. The planned extension of the boardwalk will boost the use of the area providing a long and interesting foreshore walk and cycle way.

Forster Beach Precinct - Area 4

Forster Beach represents the only formal urban beach interface on this part of the coast. Tall buildings provide a strong contrast to the horizontal open space of the beach. Topography of Pilot Hill to the east and the forested Second Head reserve to the west give a natural setting to the urban character of the area.

The natural attractions of the beach and tidal pool have been augmented with the recent addition of a restaurant at the corner of North and West Streets, (The Dorsal) which has brought activity to the south side of North Street.

The vision for this area will see a re-activation of the Surf Club together with an active frontage on North Street. The esplanade is to be upgraded with many more places to sit, shade structures, landscaping and a well-formed promenade.

South Central Precinct - Area 5

This area will be an important living area with a predominance of permanent residents, including a significant proportion of elderly people. The range of facilities creates the potential for ageing in place. People may remain in a familiar area within a community while their needs may change with regards to size of dwelling, household, or level of care.

The area offers more active space along the foreshore in the "front row". The street away from Little Street and Macintosh Street are quieter and leafy in character. Close proximity to the foreshore with an improved boardwalk and its generally flat topography make this an excellent walking precinct. The increasing residential density in the area will

likely see the re-establishment of neighbourhood shops on Little Street as well as growing facilities on the waterfront.

Pilot Hill Precinct - Area 6

This area is bounded by the town centre, surf beach, harbour breakwater and lake shore. The peninsula includes the caravan park and marina facilities. Significant potential exists to improve access and permeability in the area.

This area is well suited to tourism and recreation activities with a focus toward the water-based attractions. Synergy with the existing town centre will be important in any change of land use; differentiation of the commercial “offer” from the existing town centre is likely to stem from the identity of the marina, its varied shoreline and hilltop parkland. Presently the area provides a significant volume of low cost tourist accommodation in close proximity to the town centre.

North Street Precinct - Area 7

3.1.1.2 Tuncurry Town Centre



Tuncurry Town Centre Precincts (Click here to view [original image](#))

Tuncurry Active Street & Fishing Fleet Precinct - Area 1

This area represents possibly the greatest potential for improvement in the either town. The vision for the area is for a well-landscaped street environment with shade trees, calmed traffic, pedestrian shared zones, active frontages with restaurants and retail spilling onto footpaths. This is an environment suitable for strolling, looking in shops having lunch in a street café. Envisaged land use is generally commercial at ground level with apartment accommodation above.

The potential exists for a positive relationship between the fishing industry and the recreational uses in the area. More visitors will boost the co-op sales, while the boats, nets and the catch of the fleet provide interesting and authentic attraction for visitors. A reconfigured co-op would permit better catch-handling improve foreshore pedestrian access and visibility of the processes of a working fishing fleet.

Tuncurry CBD Precinct - Area 2

Manning Street is to be reconfigured with public domain improvements including footpath widening at intersections, avenue tree planting and consolidation of its built form. It will remain the primary traffic link from the north. Land uses include commercial at lower levels and residential and commercial at upper levels. Street level businesses will tend to be those who benefit from a high level of exposure to passing traffic and are not compromised by traffic noise.

Building heights in the area will permit upper level water views south and west to Wallis Lake and east to Cape Hawke Harbour and the Pacific Ocean. It is hoped the CBD will include one or two “anchor” retailers such as supermarkets.

The requirements for side setbacks for residential units will mean that few buildings will reach the full permitted height & buildings will vary in height according to the site size; however the unifying element of the three-storey podium will establish a height datum along Manning Street that will visually calm the environment. This unifying height will give the street a formal and regular character although individual buildings will differ in width, material and expression.

Careful consideration will be given to the design of the rear lane address of buildings in the centre. The lanes have an important service function, providing for car park access, deliveries and garbage collection. The vision for Tuncurry as a living centre requires that the lanes remain comfortable and interesting places to walk. Building setbacks and greening will help to improve this environment and establishing some commercial activity on the lane will make these interesting spaces in the town.

There is no strong architectural precedent currently in the town for mixed use and town centre buildings of the form that will develop. The appropriate architecture of the centre will be contemporary coastal buildings. The selection of materials and construction detail will be of high quality and robust. Care will be taken to use high quality and well-detailed materials and construction, especially in the parts of the buildings that are the closest to the public domain.

The type of buildings and their architecture will reflect the rising status of Tuncurry as a prosperous and growing coastal town.

Bent and Peel Street Precinct - Area 3

This precinct includes both medium density and mixed use areas. It is anticipated the mixed use area on Peel Street between Kent and South Streets will include commercial office space adjoining the CBD.

Bent Street will retain its residential character, as well as its role as the alternative north-south vehicle connection. With avenue tree planting and a more consolidated and uniform built edge and frequent front gates, the street space will be better contained and passive surveillance improved.

The street edge of buildings on Bent Street will have to consider the possibility of growing vehicle traffic over time. Careful fence and garden wall design that helps reduce noise without disconnecting the residence with the street (passive surveillance) will be a feature of the locale.

Large trees and substantial vegetation in the rear part of sites in this precinct will help to screen properties across lanes and back fences and help to establish an visual environment of ‘shared landscape’. Special consideration will be

given in this regard to locations where commercial and residential buildings are adjacent. Developers of commercial buildings will share responsibility for establishing screening vegetation with their residential neighbours.

John Wright Park Precinct - Area 4

The character of this area will not change significantly. Upgrades to the park will see an improvement in the area. It remains an appropriate setting for the fun fair and a place of passive recreation through the year.

This remains one of the few areas where taller buildings are permitted adjacent to parkland and the waterfront.

Tuncurry North Central Precinct - Area 5

This area is predominantly medium density residential. The area has good proximity to the waterfront and CBD so it provides an excellent area for people to live and work within a walking distance. It also provides a good setting for ageing in place. It is a short level walk to the retail of the CBD, the waterfront recreation areas and the bowling club.

The western part of the precinct meets Manning Street in the zone between the residential area to the north and the commercial area to the south. This represents an important transition for people moving along Manning Street. Buildings will tend to have broken down form (rather than monolithic) and they have gates and front courtyards to ground level apartments.

Tuncurry Boat Ramp Precinct - Area 6

This area represents an important waterfront activity zone. Its function may be significantly expanded with mixed use activities in the block east of Point Road. This block has excellent potential with its close relationship to Memorial Park and the foreshore.

The area along the foreshore may expand its boating and recreational role. This includes boat hire, restaurants and chandlery. It is considered public boardwalks, piers and other structures would add another dimension to this area allowing people to walk beyond the shore line. The old cinema and skate-park give a civic dimension to this precinct.

There is relatively limited land with development potential, it lies mostly within the block bounded by Coral Avenue and Palm Street. It is anticipated there will be relatively concentrated activity in this block including accommodation and tourism or recreational commercial activity. The block is presently occupied by a group of small-footprint art deco and mid-20th Century flat buildings.

Appropriate building form will follow the pattern of discreet (separated) building mass; distinctive and memorable character buildings would be appropriate this location.

Buildings on the water side of Point Road have an important role to make a good street-edge on Point Road and Palm Street while taking advantage of their location and views in the opposite direction; toward the lake. Watson Bay Wharf with its fish shop and Doyle's restaurant is a precedent in this regard. Another precedent is the area around Manly Wharf, for example the Manly Wharf Hotel displays the characteristic of having a clear and welcoming entry on the street and visual connections from the interior space to the street while also having a strong connection to the harbour.

This area has the potential to become an interesting part of the longer Tuncurry Waterfront promenade. Care must be taken to ensure the path for walkers through the precinct is open and clear.

The principle challenge and opportunity in this area is to create an active waterfront precinct with a relatively buildable area.

Point Road Peninsula Master Plan Precinct - Area 7

The future land use for this area is to be the subject of the master plan. It may be principally residential or it may include a special purpose activity such as a conference facility. The site is particularly significant because it is a large

consolidated land holding with close proximity to the town centre and foreshore.

Key objectives for this area are to achieve a well-integrated street pattern with clear connections across and along the peninsula, linking Ohmas Bay to the Point Road foreshore and to optimise land use for this strategic site. Flooding represents a significant constraint for the whole Peninsula. It is anticipated that any further development will integrate design measures to constructively deal with this constraint. This may include floodway that serves as parkland.

The built form in the area will depend up on the land use, however it is considered well-designed contemporary coastal architecture will be appropriate. Good address to public domain including parkland and streets will be a feature of any approval. A good walking environment with many alternate routes to the foreshore will serve the residential population of the peninsula and the growing number of visitors in this desirable part of Tuncurry.

Point Road Peninsula - Area 8

This precinct is characterised by public access along much of the foreshore. It includes the oyster farming operations. The potential exists to improve public interface with this interesting activity with its racks, punts, oyster cleaning. It may also include direct-to-public sales of Wallis Lake's excellent oysters in the same way wineries have a 'cellar door'.

The precinct includes bush land at the western end. The potential exists to make a pedestrian / cycle bridge connection across the mouth of the shallow Ohmas Bay as part of an integrated foreshore recreation network. The structure may incorporate space for recreational fishing.

The street pattern in the future should be better integrated. Close proximity to the foreshore and parkland make this area attractive for both permanent residents and visitors. Flooding represents a specific challenge for this area.

3.1.2 Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest Additional Character Statements

Background

Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest are at a significant turning point in their history. The rapid growth of apartment development has been the result of a combination of expanded medium density zoning and recent improvements in the profitability of such projects. The historic context of Tea Gardens is characterised by single storey Victorian and Federation era houses and cottages, however there is not a strong local architectural language for multi-unit buildings.

The significant challenge in these towns is to establish a building type that has a good 'fit' with the place; a building that relates to its context of human and natural history and to its purpose. This quality of fit is what a competent architect with an appropriate brief will bring.

The involvement of a SEPP 65 panel will play an important role in this: Unsympathetic designs will not be supported by the panel. Developers will learn to only engage architects capable of designing buildings which fit their context. New buildings will not make token copies of the architectural elements of the old buildings. The apartment buildings should not appear as overgrown federation houses; rather they will consider materials, climate, social environment and lifestyle of the towns.

Diversity and Availability of Housing types

The objectives and development controls encourage the provision of a wide range of housing types that reflects the needs and aspirations of the diverse backgrounds and lifestyles of residents. Future residential development should provide for increased housing choice and availability that contributes to a sustainable living community. To achieve this, the planning controls seek to reinforce the hierarchy of Great Lakes' urban development within Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest. By encouraging increased densities within the village centre areas, residents will have a higher level of accessibility to the broad range of services and facilities offered within the centres.

The planning controls also seek to support increasing densities within Medium Density Residential zones, particularly

those areas which are located in close proximity to town centres, thereby encouraging urban consolidation principles. Increasing densities in such locations will minimise further pressure on the Low Density Residential zone, thereby encouraging the retention of the detached suburban character, which residents currently enjoy.

The town vision has been developed in the consultation with the community and stakeholders and built upon a large body of work that has preceded it, including: Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest (TG/HN) Development and Conservation Strategy 2003; TG/HN Housing Strategy 2006; TG/HN Community Plan May 2006; NSW Coastal Design Guidelines and; SEPP 65: Design quality of residential flat development; TG/HN Stakeholders workshop, 25 Oct. 2006; and TG/HN Community Workshop, 14 Nov. 2006.

Environmental Accountability

The planning controls aim to ensure that new residential development is ecologically, economically and socially responsible. New development should provide a broad range of housing choices with a high standard of design, ecological sustainability and energy efficiency. Development should enhance neighbourhood amenities and add to both the natural and built environment.

Improved Neighbourhood Amenity

The aim of the development objectives and controls is to ensure that new development respects, enhances and integrates with existing neighbourhood character. Development should contribute to the quality of the natural and built environment and the public domain.

Community Vision

NATURE

- Preserve the natural environment

ECONOMY

- Development to occur for economic expansion and associated employment
- Diverse local economy

URBAN FORM

- Preserve "small village" identity

POPULATION

- Achieve a demographic mix by attracting families with children and young people.
- Vibrant community

3.1.2.1 Tea Gardens

The following objectives have been established for the Tea Gardens Town Centre.

Nature

- Promote Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) and reduce traffic
- Retain and enrich local vegetation both in the public and private domain
- Retain and enrich historical vegetation along the foreshore

Economy

- Improve zoning for business diversification
- Provide pedestrian network connecting business and residential zones

Urban Form

- Maintain heritage buildings and heritage character
- Limit building mass and improve design
- Achieve pedestrian and cycle friendly public domain
- Improve waterfront access and waterfront promenade

Population

- Maintain residential character
- Attract young people and families



Tea Gardens Town Centre Precincts (Click here to view [original image](#))

Town Core - Area 1

This represents a vital precinct and presents a 'postcard view' of Tea Gardens. The ferry wharf and the pub are central identifying elements for the town. Mixed use buildings including traditional shop-top form provide accommodation at the town core. The Tea Gardens Hotel boosts the visitor population at the centre. The town core also represents a desirable location for office space, close to the water front and good coffee.

The high quality public domain links the foreshore to the north and south. The moderately scaled buildings up to 3 storeys reflect the fine-grain of the street and the building materials reflect a river town with a timber port history.

The key to developing the Tea Gardens "style" has been some high quality and sensitive design by capable and appropriate architects.

Locally focused retails such as groceries, pharmacy, hardware are concentrated on Myall Street and benefit from passing trade.

South Central - Area 2

This area represents a good environment for medium density living close to the activity of the town centre and waterfront. Care must be taken that as each parcel is developed a clear picture of how the whole block will function in its developed state. This may include consolidated vehicle access and servicing (possibly in the form of a rear lane).

The extension of Charles Street along the south eastern boundary is desirable to maintain the integrity of the town street grid and to provide public access (street) at the town edge.

Marine Drive Foreshore Precinct - Area 3

Building form development controls establish small forms: lower height and narrower forms at the front of the site (see Built Form examples for multi-unit buildings and mixed use buildings). The bulk is shifted to the centre of the site. Topmost level is 60% of the area below. Good street address provide for passive surveillance. Buildings in this area will serve holiday accommodation and residents.

The architectural expression in this location should reflect its river-front setting and maritime history. This may include timber cladding, deep balconies with views to the river, solid and void in the river-facing elevation (not only balconies). Buildings may include taller solid elements that read as corner towers. Variation in height on this street front will have the effect of breaking down building mass creating interest. Unusual or surprising architecture may be appropriate in this area if skilfully handled.

North Central Precinct - Area 4

This is a medium density zone that is suitable for aging in place. It is located less than 1km from the town centre and it is level and pleasant walk to the ferry wharf. It is close to the foreshore and country club.

Development controls give consideration to:

- context of heritage buildings;
- lower scale toward street;
- two storey height adjacent to existing houses;
- landscape character reinforced with tree planting; and
- all buildings are within the tree canopy height.

3.1.2.2 Hawks Nest

Objectives

The following objectives have been established for the Hawks Nest Town Centre.

Nature

- Promote Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and reduce traffic
- Retain and enrich local vegetation both in the public and private domain
- Protect and enhance koala habitat and movement corridors

Economy

- Revitalize the village centre

- Connect town centre to the waterfront

Urban Form

- Maintain "bushland" character and limit building heights to "below the canopy"
- Limit building mass and improve design
- Achieve pedestrian and cycle friendly public domain
- Improve waterfront access and waterfront promenade

Population

- Attract permanent residents
- Attract young people and families



Hawks Nest Town Centre Precincts (Click here to view [original image](#))

Hawks Nest Town Centre Precinct - Area 1

Mixed use core and the adjacent medium density area have potential for growth, particularly along Booner Street. Retail will employ strategies to deal with the seasonal nature of demand. This may mean open and closing with demand. Flexible use space for living, working and retail such as an artist's studio/gallery may be appropriate.

The intersection of Booner Street and Tuloa Avenue should be distinguished with built form, landscape or public art to

strengthen the sense of arrival at this point. Future streetscape work will give high status to Yamba and Langi Streets in recognition of their waterfront-linking role.

Hawks Nest Water Front - Area 2

The future for this precinct will build upon its waterfront character. The opportunity exists to expand the facilities on the foreshore possibly including a pier, boardwalk, swimming structures or structures for recreational fishing. The foreshore reserve may also accommodate a seasonal kiosk or café.

Building placement of the 'front row' will consider preservation of water views for buildings to their east.

The northern part of the precinct forms an important threshold in the town. The bush at the landing of the Singing Bridge provides an appropriate and forested setting for this arrival point.

Hawks Nest North Central Precinct - Area 3

This residential area has close proximity to the town centre and waterfront in a leafy koala-friendly context. It represents a good environment for permanent living or holiday accommodation.

3.2 Village Centres

Desired future character

The overall desired future character for the villages is to ensure new development responds to the nature of the settlement type in which it is to be located.

In general, new development must:

- Contribute to the existing and desired future character of the locality;
- Help differentiate between different precincts / villages / neighbourhoods;
- Respect existing development scale and setbacks;
- Protect and enhance the natural environment; and
- Encourage passive surveillance and security.

3.2.1 Coastal Villages Additional Character Statements

Characteristics

Coastal Villages are generally characterised by their relatively isolated nature and single village zoning. Within the Great Lakes there are also distinctions between those villages with reticulated water and sewer, and those without.

Water and Sewer available:

- Charlotte Bay
- Smiths Lake
- Green Point
- Tarbuck Bay
- Karuah
- Pacific Palms – Elizabeth Beach, Bluey's Beach and Boomerang Beach

Water and Sewer NOT available:

- Bundabah
- Nerong
- Bungwahl
- North Arm Cove
- Carrington
- Pindimar
- Coomba Park

- Seal Rocks

Desired Future Character

The desired future character of Coastal Villages is derived from existing development patterns, reflecting the infrastructure, topographic and environmental limitations of each location. Existing development within these areas is usually characterised by:

- Development that is secondary to the landscape and natural environment;
- Development that does not dominate views and vistas;
- Buildings which avoid overshadowing and are in scale with existing development;
- Small scale detached buildings addressing the street; generally single storey;
- Development which follows the contour of the land on sloping and steep sites;
- Commonly gable and hipped roofs up to 22 degree pitch, but sometimes low, mono pitch (skillion) roofs with cantilevered eaves;
- Common use of fibre cement sheet and weatherboard for wall cladding with less common use of painted brick;
- Common use of corrugated roof sheeting;
- Mixture of small vertically proportioned windows in some cases, and larger expanses of glass to the view;
- The retention of natural tree cover throughout residential lots and public space.

Designs which are not in character with these locations include:

- Large bulky buildings
- Gun-barrel site layouts - rectangular buildings which cover the full length of an allotment;
- Large or elongated roof forms
- Buildings constructed of unpainted brick especially textured or mottled bricks
- Roofs with angled fascias
- Concrete roof tiles;
- Highly ornate buildings and buildings in imitation "styles" such as federation or Mediterranean styles;
- Designs incorporating mock detail such as shutters, cast iron lace and columns; and
- Highly formalised planting or landscape design

3.2.1.1 Seal Rocks

Desired Future Character

Seal Rocks is a small coastal hamlet dominated by its surrounding ecological systems; individual buildings and the settlement as a whole are dominated by the natural landscape setting. Large scale residential, tourist, retail and commercial developments are inappropriate in the Hamlet.

Protection of the existing natural assets and biodiversity and the creation of a safe environment for people and assets from bushfire hazard is at the forefront of the desired future character.

The overall built form of the locality is limited to single dwellings of up to two storeys to retain the low key, relaxed natural setting of the hamlet. Buildings sit within a natural amphitheatre which defines the settlement and provides outstanding vistas of the coast.

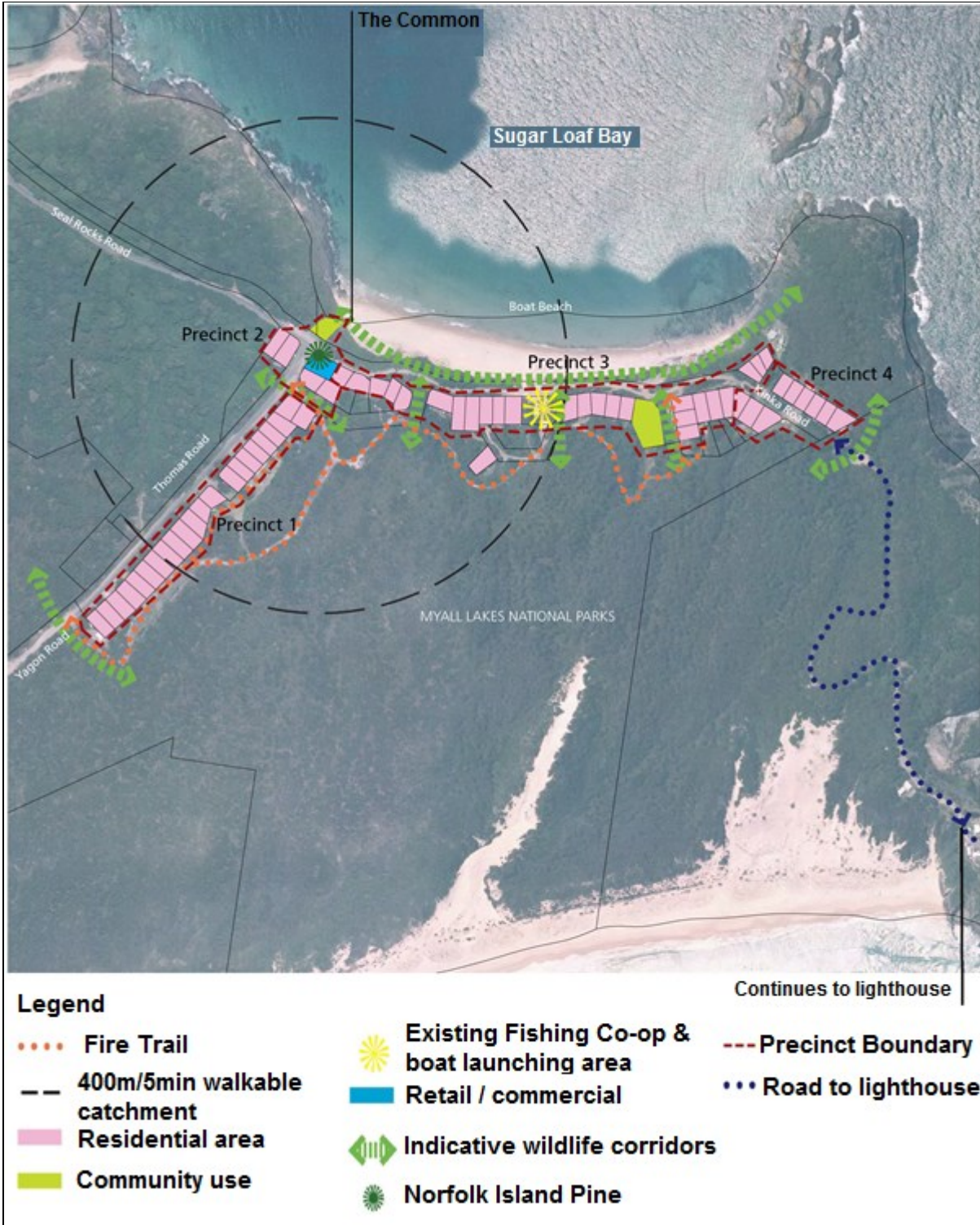
Vision

The vision for future development within Seal Rocks is to enable sustainable development that enhances the traditional fishing village character and protects the natural setting of the Seal Rocks coastal hamlet.

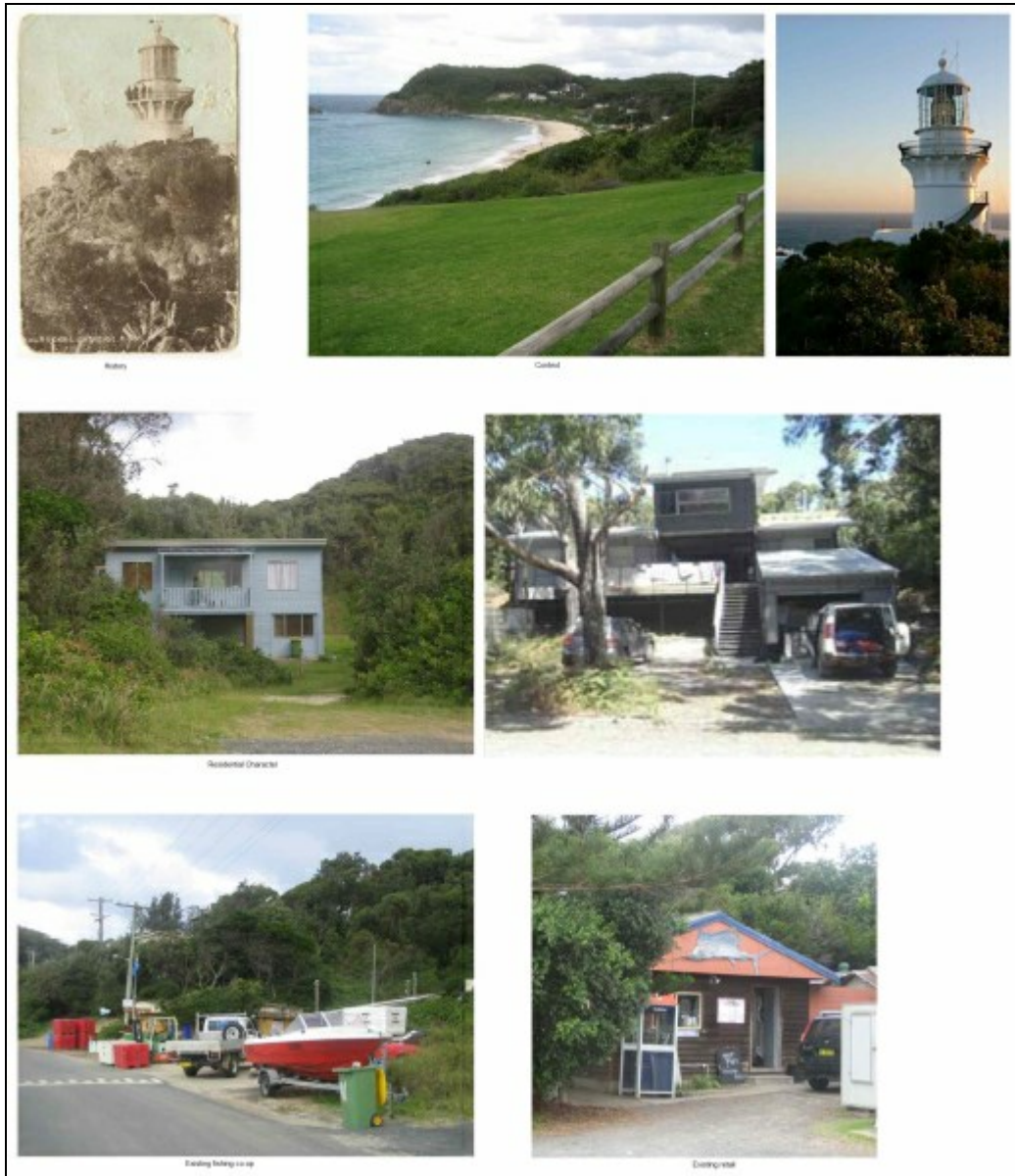
Objectives

To maintain the distinct character of each of the 4 key precincts:

- (1) Thomas Road;
- (2) Shop / Community Gateway;
- (3) Kinka Road Escarpment and
- (4) Kinka Road Valley.



Seal Rocks precinct structure plan (click here to view [original image](#))



Seal Rocks Character (Click here to view [original image](#))

Precinct 1 - Thomas Rd

- The Thomas Road Precinct is characterised by single storey and split level pavilion style dwellings without views of the foreshore and is thus less visually sensitive than other precincts.
- Contemporary design that steps with the slope where applicable
- Upper storey set back 2 metres behind front building line.
- No more than one garage to be visible building facade
- Generally an exterior finish palette of light and muted colours (greys, greens, and browns)



Precinct 1: Thomas Road (Click here to view [original image](#))

Precinct 2 - Shop/Community Gateway

- The Shop/Community Gateway Precinct is defined by the shop, the “common” and the dominant Norfolk Island Pine. The character of this area is of a community hub “nestled” within the existing vegetation.
- Traditional character.
- Retail parking to be accommodated in Thomas Road and beside the existing ‘Common’.
- Retain existing Norfolk Island Pine
- Generally an exterior finish palette of light and bright colours



Precinct 2: Shop / Community Gateway (Click here to view [original image](#))

Precinct 3 - Kinka Rd Escarpment

- The Kinka Road Escarpment Precinct is characterised by steep housing sites with limited access from Kinka Road within a highly visually sensitive amphitheatre.
- It is the location of the original existing fishing co-op and boat launch area.
- Buildings step with the slope with only one storey visible from Kinka Road.
- Shared pedestrian access (wooden steps) to properties from Kinka Road that blend with the topography
- Shared vehicle access to comply with Shared Road Access provisions of this Development Control Plan
- Generally an exterior finish palette of light and bright colours



Precinct 3: Kinka Road Escarpment (Click here to view [original image](#))

Precinct 4 - Kinka Rd Valley

- The Kinka Road Valley Precinct is characterised by the steep slope of Kinka Road up to the Seal Rocks Lighthouse in the National Park. Properties to the north are on steep land and have more pronounced front

setbacks. The precinct is less visually sensitive than the Kinka Road Escarpment Precinct.

- Buildings step with the slope with ideally only one storey visible from Kinka Road.
- Shared pedestrian access (wooden steps) to properties from Kinka Road that blend with the topography
- Generally an exterior finish of light colours with darker colours used to trim roof overhang.



Precinct 4: Kinka Road (Click here to view [original image](#))

3.2.1.2 Pacific Palms

Vision

Future development within Pacific Palms is to enable sustainable development that enhances the village character and protects the natural setting.

Desired Future Character

The desired future character of the Pacific Palms locality is derived from its inherent natural attributes associated with the National Park, Wallis Lake and proximity to the expansive Pacific Ocean and Marine Park. The beachside villages will continue to be defined and contained by the existing green spaces associated with Booti Booti National Park, Wallis Lake and the Pacific Ocean.

Hand in hand with protection of the existing natural assets and vegetation will be the creation of a safe environment for people and assets from bushfire hazard.

The overall built form of the locality is to be of a high quality design with an architecture suited to a sensitive coastal location. A low scale 'bushy' coastal setting is to be maintained by small scale sympathetic infill development in the low density residential areas and sensitive low scale development in the low density greenfield areas.

Areas zoned for open space purposes and environmental protection purposes are to be maintained as natural assets for the locality.

The Blueys Beach Neighbourhood Centre is to function as the main village service centre; it will serve the daily retail and service needs of the locality with a predominance of small specialised business.



Pacific Palms (Click here to view [original image](#))

3.2.2 Inland Villages Additional Character Statements

Characteristics

Inland Villages are typically located on main roads, railways or rivers which historically provided transport links between regional centres. They comprise the following areas within Great Lakes:

- Allworth
- Booral
- Bulahdelah
- Bunyah
- Coolongolook
- Limeburner's Creek
- Markwell
- Nabiac
- Newells Creek
- Stroud
- Stroud Road
- Wards River
- Wootton

Desired Future Character

The desired future character is derived from the existing development. Existing development within these areas is usually characterised by:

- Detached buildings, usually small in size, and with simple traditional (square or rectangular) footprints;
- Usually address the street, often with a simple verandah;
- Generally single storey;
- Commonly gable and hipped roof forms with skillion additions;
- Roof pitches up to 30 degrees, but commonly 15 degrees or 22 degrees;
- Common use of weatherboard, and less common use of brick;
- Common use of corrugated iron and in some cases shingle roofing;
- Usually small window openings of vertical proportion;
- Often painted in earthy colour schemes including light stone, brown and beige colours; and
- Landscaping which commonly includes remnant bush, vegetation within streets, reserves and private land.
- Designs which are not in character with these locations include:
 - Large bulky buildings;
 - Gun-barrel site layouts- rectangular buildings which cover the full length of an allotment;
 - Large or elongated roof forms;
 - Buildings in textured or mottled bricks roofs with angled fascias or flat roofs;
 - Highly ornate buildings and buildings in imitation “styles”;
 - Designs incorporating mock detail such as shutters, cast iron lace and columns; and
 - Highly formalised planting.

3.2.2.1 Stroud

Vision

Future development within Stroud is to encourage development that makes a positive contribution to the historic character of Stroud.

History

Stroud is historically significant from both an Aboriginal and non Aboriginal cultural perspective. The Stroud-Gloucester Valley supported high Aboriginal populations and was home to the Worimi and Wonarooa people in the southern parts of the valley and the Biripi people in the northern parts. The valley was a rich source of food and their land management techniques helped create the areas of grassy open forest that were eagerly sought by the Australian Agricultural Company.

The Australian Agricultural Company was the first large agricultural company formed in Australia and its Port Stephens Estate, which included the Stroud-Gloucester Valley, was intended to produce fine wool for the English wool mills.

Stroud became the headquarters of the Company from about 1834 to 1856 and today contains important early colonial buildings remaining from this first period of occupation. The township was surveyed in 1855, thus providing Stroud with its present street layout and character.

Stroud is historically significant because of this early association with the Australian Agricultural Company and the subsequent development of the township in the period from the 1850s to about 1960.

These qualities have been relatively undisturbed by later development and have given Stroud a rich legacy of early colonial buildings, later commercial and civic buildings and a broad range of weatherboard dwellings and styles. Stroud is set scenically in the Mammy Johnson’s – Karuah River Valley, regarded since its initial exploration as a

place of great beauty and adding richly to Stroud's heritage significance.

Stroud's heritage significance was formally identified by the National Trust in 1976 and given further emphasis in 1978 when it commissioned a conservation study of Stroud and its environs.

The overall built form of the locality reflects an historic early 19th century township. This built form consists of predominantly single storey, detached dwellings with an open curtilage and traditional fences or no fences within the residential areas of Stroud.

Commercial buildings have a domestic scale with simple parapets; hipped or gabled roof forms, traditional shop fronts and footpath awnings to help create a pedestrian friendly environment.

Rural areas retain their landscape setting with buildings well set back from each other and located so that they do not intrude upon prominent ridges and hill lines.

Desired future character

The desired future character of Stroud as expressed by the community is for the existing ambience and settlement pattern of the historic village to be maintained.

To achieve this, new development is to 'fit in' with the historic character and is to follow the historic design cues embodied in the village and environs. These cues relate to the low scale building form, open grid street pattern and open landscape setting of Stroud.

Protection of the existing historic buildings, places and landscape is of fundamental importance in the growth and development of Stroud.

The protection of historic buildings and places is particularly important within the 'bridge to bridge' precinct which incorporates the Stroud Heritage Conservation Area.



Example of residential house character (Click here to view [original image](#))



Example of Stroud main street character (Click here to view [original image](#))



Edge of town character - landscape framing the visual catchment of the village (click here to view [original image](#))



Stroud edge of town character - landscape framing the visual catchment of the village (click here to view [original image](#))



Character - Stroud Post Office (click here to view [original image](#))



Example of character - Stroud showgrounds (click here to view [original image](#))

3.3 Residential Development

3.3.1 Low Density Residential

These character statements apply to areas of low density residential and may include land zoned;

- R2 Low Density Residential

Existing low density residential development is generally influenced by natural landform and vegetation. The following characteristics contribute to their uniqueness and character and provide the foundations for the desired future character of the low density residential setting:

- Interaction between natural coastal vegetation and built form;
- Detached buildings of varying size;
- Few bulky buildings;
- High standard of individual designs sometimes emphasised by topography and usually oriented towards the view;
- Variety of roof forms;
- Wide range of materials often contrasting with the natural landscape; often buildings elevated above the site; and
- Strong attention to detail, with use of articulation, contrasting materials and colour to enhance their appearance.

Designs which are not in character with these locations include:

- Large bulky buildings
- Gun-barrel site layouts - rectangular buildings which cover the full length of an allotment;
- Highly ornate buildings and buildings in imitation "styles" such as federation or Mediterranean styles.

3.3.1.1 Tea Gardens Additional Low Density Residential Character Statement

The desired future character of the low density residential areas of the Tea Gardens locality is derived from its maritime history, estuarine setting and tourism appeal.

Tea Gardens is located within a sensitive estuarine environment; maintaining water quality and the riverscape are key

elements in the future desired character of this area.

Protection of the area from natural hazards including flooding, sea level rise and reflecting its history will influence the future urban form.

The overall built form of the locality is to be of a low key, relaxed design suited to a sensitive estuarine location.

3.3.1.2 Hawks Nest Additional Low Density Residential Character Statement

The desired future character for the low density residential areas of Hawks Nest is derived from its coastal setting and habitat values; particularly for koalas.

Development at Winda Woppa is to be limited to low scale and low density housing developments designed to fit within this scenic area and to be protected from natural hazards.

A low scale 'bushy' coastal setting is to be maintained in Hawks Nest by small scale sympathetic infill developments set within the natural vegetation.

The Hawks Nest business centre is to function as the main town centre; it will service the daily retail and service needs of the locality. Supporting this centre will be the recreation and service facilities associated with the surf club, caravan park, golf club and waterway reserves.

3.3.2 Large Lot Residential, Rural and Environmental Land

These character statements apply to areas of large lot residential, rural or environmental which may include land zoned;

- R5 Large Lot Residential
- RU2 Rural Landscape
- E2 Environmental Conservation
- E3 Environmental Management
- E4 Environmental Living

The desired future character of residential development in these areas is for small scale low impact dwellings and ancillary structures which respond to topographic and environmental site constraints.

Existing development patterns within these areas may be characterised as:

- Development being secondary to the natural environment;
- Development does not dominate views and vistas;
- Detached buildings generally single storey;
- The retention of natural tree cover with consideration of both bush fire hazard and environmental protection.

New development within these areas will be guided by the following principle objectives:

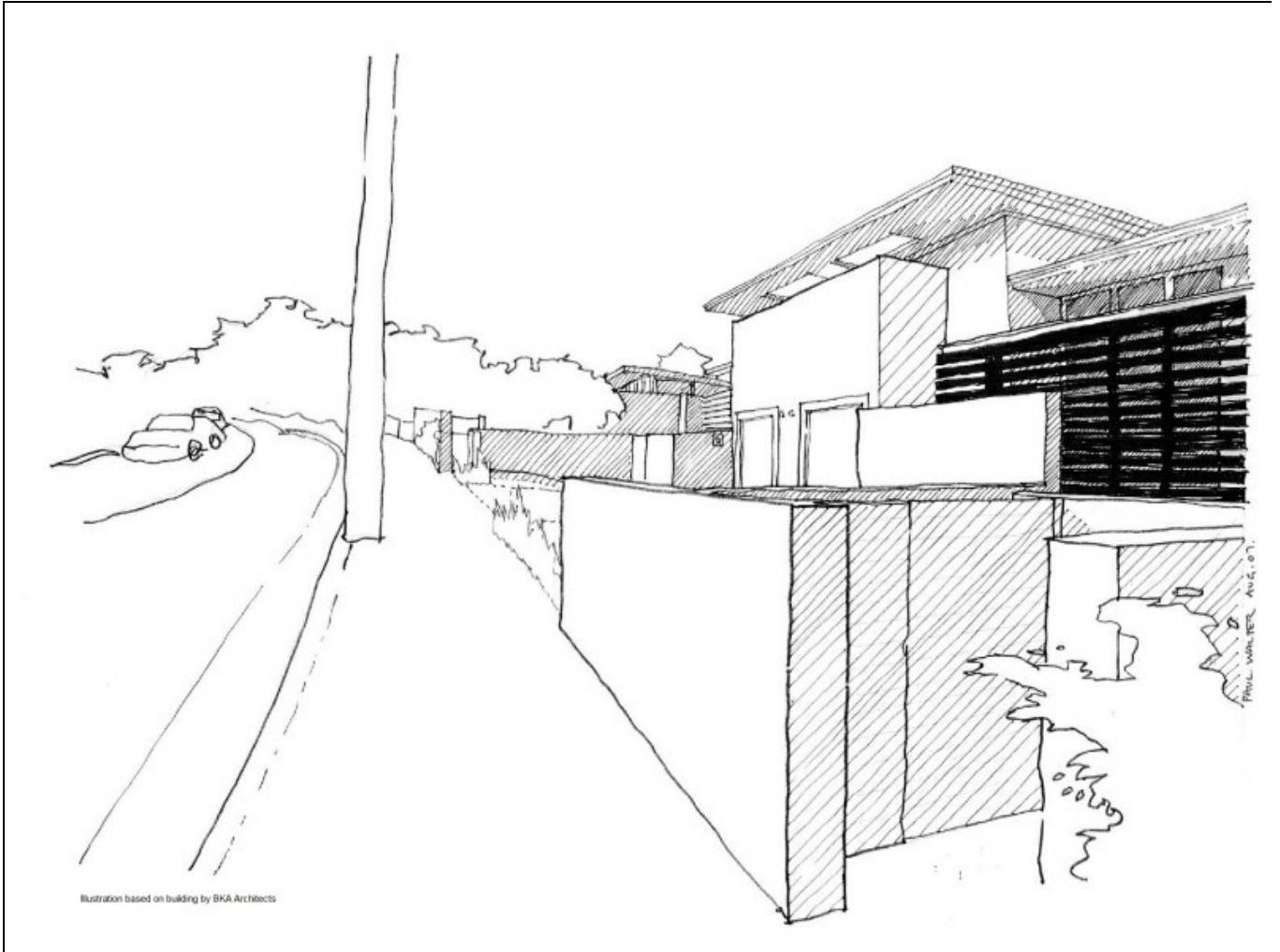
- To promote development that is sympathetic to the existing character of the locality, as well as the specific landform, vegetation, soils and geology of the site;
- To protect and enhance sensitive environs and waterways;
- To ensure the preservation of rural land activities and agriculture and prevent fragmentation of rural lands;
- To minimise potential conflicts between land uses, especially primary production enterprises and rural small holdings;
- To prevent the siting and orientation of any new building upon any prominent ridgeline or hilltop;

3.3.3 Medium Density Residential Development

These character statements apply to areas of medium density residential and may include land zoned;

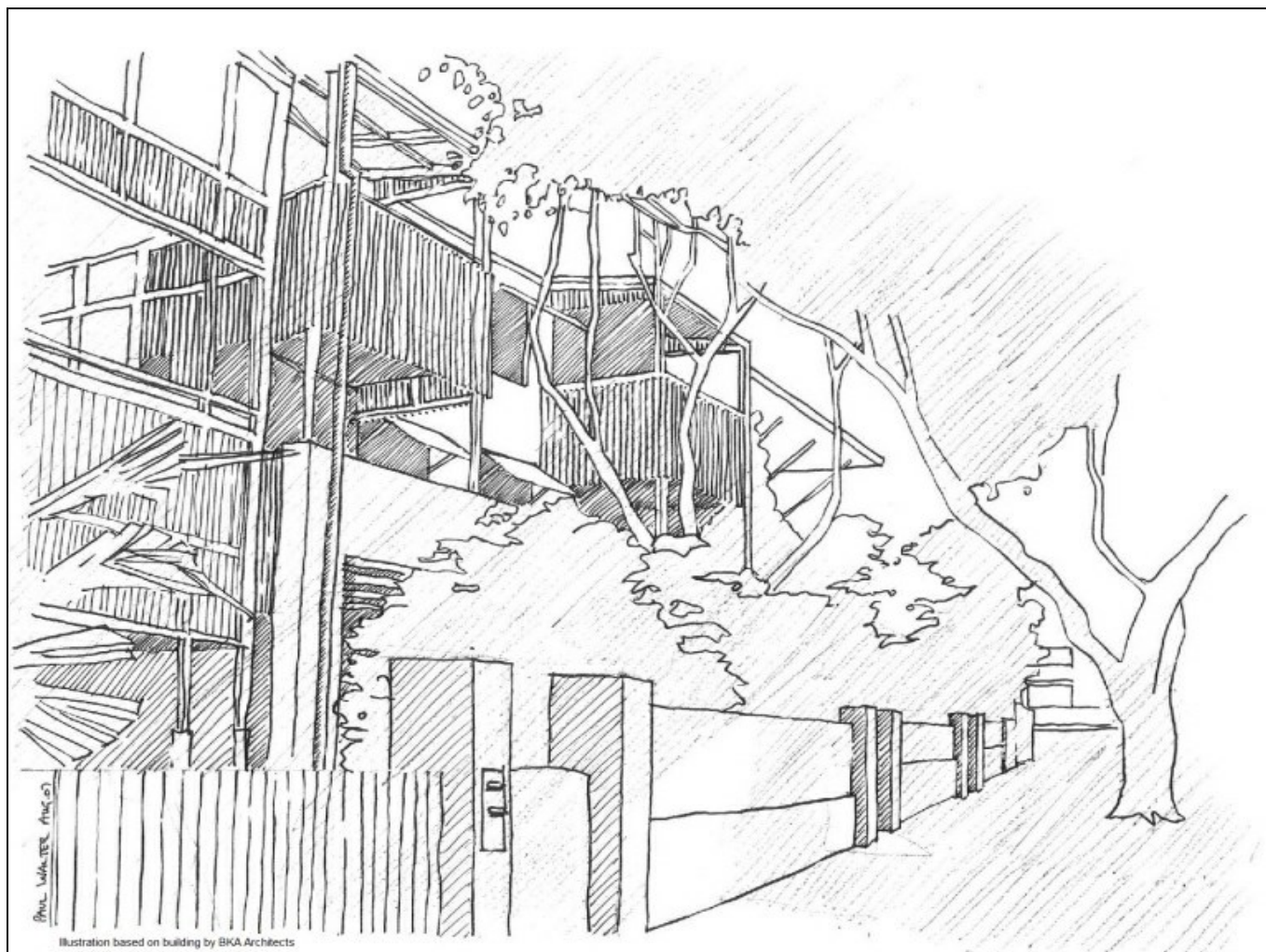
- R3 Medium Density Residential

Examples of the building characteristics for medium density residential areas are described below.



Medium density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Building mass is composed as a group of separate elements. It is neither monolithic nor has it monotonous repetition.
- Broad eaves shade windows and protect wall surfaces
- Batten screens mediate privacy between busy public road and interior.
- Garbage storage area is discreetly integrated into design in a convenient location.
- Project deals with a busy road edge with masonry walls however passive surveillance is permitted and walling does not form a continuous barrier.



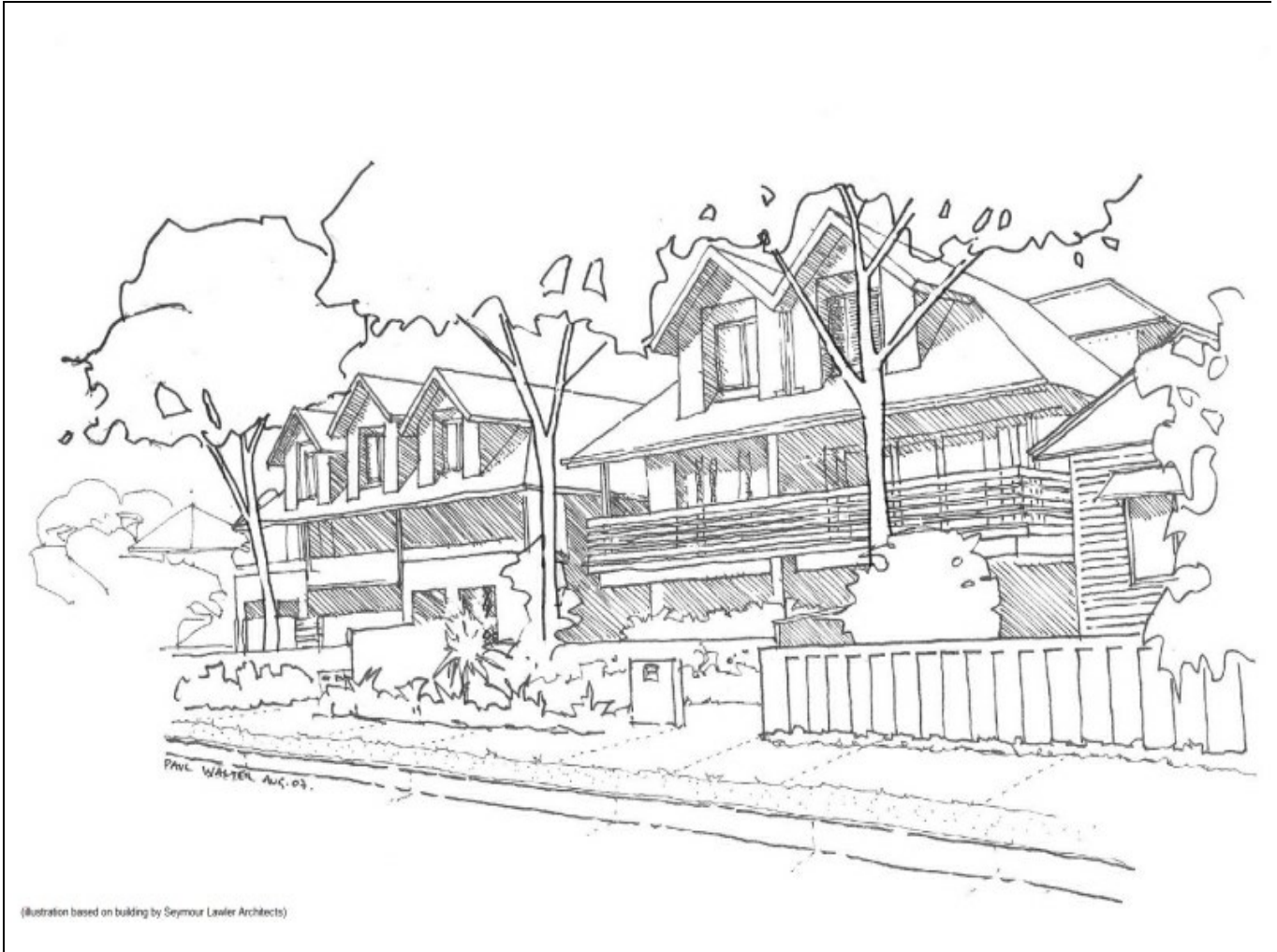
Medium density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Dense vegetation screens ground level living space.
- Passive surveillance of the street is provided from upper level windows and balconies.
- Well-shaded windows protect from heavy rain and summer heat.
- Broad eaves and balcony roofs protect interior.
- Timber structure and battens refer to traditional warm-climate Australian residential architecture.
- Individual 'front gate' entries are clearly identifiable.



Medium density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Vertical walls establish a clear rhythm in the elevation.
- Building steps in and out to modulate the street elevation: reducing the bulk and creating interest
- Projecting eaves and balconies create a variety of light and shadow on the elevation
- Plantation shutters can be operated to shelter balconies depending upon needs or the weather
- Placement of shades and operable shutters animates the elevation
- Vegetation screens ground level living spaces.
- Building overlooks the street providing good passive surveillance.
- Informal building character appropriate to a coastal holiday town.
- Building incorporates elements of traditional Australian warm-climate architecture including timber screens, shutters and shades.



Medium density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

Desired building character in the medium density residential zone, particularly in heritage conservation area or in proximity of heritage items, illustrating:

- Development is broken into discreet buildings that respond to the existing rhythm of single house lots.
- Taller building elements at the rear of the site
- The design uses hipped roof and gable forms to reduce bulk of upper level
- Shady balconies have a good view to the street
- Separate units are legible from the street.
- Street address is not dominated by car parking structures
- Substantial native canopy trees are established in the property.

3.3.4 High Density Development

These character statements apply to areas of high density residential and may include land zoned;

- R4 High Density Residential

Examples of the building characteristics for high density residential areas are described below.



Illustration based on building by BKA Architects

High density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Strong corner-defining build form.
- Relationship of solid and void emphasizes vertical orientation.
- Vegetation incorporated on podium.
- Tall retail space at corner invites entry.
- Residential commercial mix creates passive surveillance of the street.
- Substantial street trees create pleasant shaded environment on footpath.



High density residential building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Retail addresses through-site link creating passive surveillance.
- Corner is activated with outdoor dining.
- Contemporary coastal style.
- Deep balconies connected to living spaces.
- Operable shutter screens shelter balcony space and create interest in the elevation.
- Broad eaves protect windows and doors.

3.4 Mixed Use Development

Mixed use developments is encouraged as it provides for a variety of uses and activities, adding vibrancy and life to the streets.

Mixed use development promotes a mix of uses within urban areas and challenges conventional planning practices which segregated land into individual uses. Mixed use developments integrate uses either horizontally with different uses adjacent to each other or vertically with different uses stacked within the same building.

These character statements apply to areas of mixed use development and may include land zoned;

- B1 Neighbourhood Centre
- B2 Local Centre
- B4 Mixed Use
- R4 High Density Residential



Mixed use building character (click here to view [original image](#))

- Carefully detailed timber construction refers to traditional 'timber town'.
- Face timber weatherboards is allowed to weather and 'silver' over time creating natural colour tones.
- Individual residential entries add to street activation and provide clear address.
- Broken form modulates street elevation and creates rhythm.
- Louvered windows permit cross ventilation maintaining security and weather protection.
- Contemporary architectural expression
- Masonry blade walls provide fire separation between timber residences