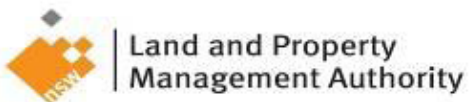


# DRAFT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

for the

## HAWKS NEST BEACH CARAVAN PARK

for Great Lakes Council



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for the

## **HAWKS NEST BEACH CARAVAN PARK**

**For Great Lakes Council**

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**23 March 2010**

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# 1 PREAMBLE

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Plan of Management has been prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Crown Lands Act 1989 to provide a framework for the future management, use and development of the reserved Crown Land known as the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park. Great Lakes Council is the appointed corporate manager of the Reserve.

The purpose of the Draft Plan of Management is to establish objectives, strategies and actions and identify the means the Council will employ in the management of the Caravan Park. Consequently the Plan of Management outlines a management direction for the next 10 years for the Caravan Park. The Plan also establishes management strategies and actions to address the needs and expectations of the local and wider community as well as travellers who visit and use the Caravan Park.

Implementation of the final Plan will lead to the following outcomes:

- Improved and sustainable resource management;
- Enhanced environmental and social outcomes;
- Improved facilities for guests and visitors;
- Better capacity to address changing community and market demands;
- Enhanced turnover and profits for the Caravan Park;
- Increased local economic activity as a consequence of increased visitation; and
- Maintenance of the essential character and long term viability of the wider reserve which includes the Caravan Park.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

On 2 April 1965 Council was appointed the corporate trust manager of the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park. The Caravan Park forms part of a wider Reserve which includes the parkland and a dunal system running parallel with and extending to the beach.

In order to insure that the Caravan Park is managed in a manner that will result in the optimum benefit to the community, Council resolved to undertake a review of the Caravan Park business. The purpose was to establish appropriate strategies to guide future improvement and development of the Caravan Park in the context of the on-going management of the foreshore Crown lands at Hawks Nest.

As a consequence the following material has been prepared as a pre-cursor to the formulation of this Draft Plan of Management;

- A Business Development Strategy that outlines an integrated and consolidated approach to achieving enhanced environmental, social, economic and physical outcomes for the Caravan Park, and
- A Master Plan for the Caravan Park to guide on-going improvement and development in way that will achieve Council's overall planning goals.

### 1.3 OBJECTIVES FOR THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The objectives for this Plan of Management are to;

- Identify the resources and values of the Reserve lands used for the Caravan Park;
- Recognise the role of the Caravan Park in providing for the recreational and tourist accommodation requirements of the community and visitors;
- Establish a vision and strategic direction for the future management and improvement of the Caravan Park;
- Propose initiatives that address the legal and policy parameters relevant to the management of the Caravan Park;
- Develop an approach to the ongoing management of the Caravan Park that is consistent with the long term management of the wider coastal reserve;
- Provide for management actions that will protect, conserve and enhance the natural, cultural, scenic, social, recreational and economic values of the Caravan Park;
- Propose a concept for the Caravan Park that provides effective pedestrian linkages to and from the Beach;
- Preserve the financial contribution the Caravan Park makes to the management of the wider reserve lands and to the local community;
- Allow for a staged development process that will be achievable in terms of planning and financial constraints.

## **2 RESERVE 85147**

### **2.1 LOCATION AND STATUS**

The Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park is situated on the Mid North Coast of N.S.W., approximately 54km north of Raymond Terrace and 110km south of Forster. It is located on the eastern edge of the Hawks Nest village area with commercial areas, restaurants, clubs, general service stores etc all within easy reach.

The Park has direct frontage to the wider Reserve lands and the Pacific Ocean and comprises Crown Reserve 85147 which has been reserved for Public Recreation.

Drawings C-00 and C-01 indicate the area occupied by the Caravan Park and shows the general context.

### **2.2 DESCRIPTION**

The Park sits at the rear of the Hawks Nest Beach dunal system and stretches in a N-S direction from Booner Street in the south for about 400m. The park has an average depth (east to west) of about 130m. The Hawks Nest Golf Club and golf links are located to the north and the Myall Park playing fields and facilities are located to the west. The reserve lands immediately in front of the caravan park (to the east) include a public car park, a children's playground and the Hawks Nest Beach Surf Club.

The Park has an area of approximately 6.1 hectares and is predominantly located on Lot 7025 and Part Lot 7024 DP 1056917. Lot 7024 extends to the east in front of the caravan park for much of its length but does not include the car park, playground and Surf Club which are on a separate allotment.

Given its location the Park displays the typical attributes of its coastal setting with relatively level areas, sandy soils, some scattered natural vegetation as well as a number of more mature specific plantings (Gums at the rear and Norfolk Pines along part of the frontage).

The Park is maintained to a good standard although some of the infrastructure and facilities are relatively dated in relation to the significance of the location.

Drawing C-02 shows the layout of the Park and the current mix of accommodation site types.

## 3 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Plan of Management has been prepared in accordance with the Crown Lands Act 1989, to provide a framework for the future management, use and development of the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park. Other legislation including environmental planning policies as well as guidelines and strategies also require consideration especially where any new development proposals are contemplated.

### 3.2 CROWN LANDS ACT 1989

The objectives and principles of Crown land management are listed in Sections 10 and 11 of the Crown Lands Act, 1989 and form the starting point for the preparation of Draft Plans of Management. The principles of Crown land management are that:

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land;
- The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible;
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged;
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged;
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity; and
- Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licenced or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

Part V of the Act provides that a council may be appointed as a corporation to manage a Crown reserve. Some of the main provisions of Part V of the Act as they relate to a council's on-going management are:

- With the Minister's consent, Council as trustee may sell, lease, licence or grant an easement or licence etc. over part or the whole of a reserve;
- The Act does not prescribe the length of leases or licenses of reserved land;
- The Minister may direct how the proceeds of sale, lease or licence is applied;
- If a reserve trust is acting in good faith in its management of the affairs of the reserve trust the liability of its members is safeguarded; and
- The Minister responsible for the Crown Lands Act or the reserve trust (with the agreement of the Minister) may prepare a Plan of Management for the reserve.

The Crown Lands Act 1989 and existing policy for the management of Crown land encourages the appropriate commercial use of Reserved Crown land. Appropriate

commercial activity can not only meet the needs of public users of a reserve but also generate the financial means required to manage and improve the Crown Reserve system generally. It should be noted that it is a specific requirement of the Act that the proceeds of commercial undertakings on reserved Crown land be spent on the management of reserved Crown land.

### **3.3 THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979**

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) provides the statutory basis for the development consent process in New South Wales. Section 79C of Part 4 of the EP&A Act outlines the factors that a Council must consider when assessing a Development Application. These include:

- any environmental planning instrument;
- any draft environmental planning instrument that has been placed on public exhibition and details of which have been notified to the consent authority.
- any development control plan;
- the Regulations;
- the likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environment, and social and economic impacts on the locality;
- The suitability of the site for the development;
- any submissions made in accordance with the Act or the Regulations; and
- the public interest.

This Act also has a range of other provisions that may take effect depending upon the nature of a development proposal and the issues that may be encountered. In recent times the Act has also been amended by the introduction of a new Part known as Part 3A (this is discussed further below) as well as new provisions dealing with methods of assessment and consent authorities.

### **3.4 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993**

Section 68 of the LG Act requires the owner or manager of a caravan park to seek an approval from Council to operate a caravan park and, in certain circumstances, the prior approval for the installation of moveable dwellings. Council can impose conditions on the operation and structure of a caravan park. The standards for caravan parks are defined in the Local Government (Manufactured Homes, Caravan Park and Moveable Dwellings) Regulation 2005. The standards address such planning standards as site types, setbacks, size, and site coverage; road dimensions, amenities and the like.

Clause 74 of this Regulation provides that the prior approval of a council is not required



for the installation of a relocatable home or an associated structure on a dwelling site within a caravan park so long as it is designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of the regulations. This exemption is modified by sub clauses 6 and 7 which deal with installation on flood-labile land and moveable dwellings of more than one storey.

The Land and Property Management Authority (previously Lands Department) have granted concurrence to Council for the Caravan Park to have the following mix of site types in place on the operational approval:

Sites	Number
Long term	3
Short term	225
Camp	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>

### 3.5 RURAL FIRES ACT 1997

Amendments to the Rural Fires Act have led to the mapping of bush fire prone lands and a requirement for development proposals to respond to the requirements of the *"Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006"* Guidelines. In addition the Act now defines a number of different land uses including tourist accommodation within the category of "special fire protection purpose". Development proposals coming within this category need to respond to a more restrictive set of requirements in the guidelines.

Bushfire Prone Land mapping held by Great Lakes Council indicates that the north western corner of the Caravan Park is designated as fire prone land (including the buffer zone). Where this designation occurs and a proposal is for a special fire protection purpose, a bushfire safety authority must be obtained from the Rural Fire Service. This is usually achieved by way of a report prepared by a bushfire specialist and usually accompanies a development application. Obtaining the RFS safety authority can be difficult and sometimes an authority will not be granted because required outcomes cannot be achieved.

### 3.6 THE RESIDENTIAL PARKS ACT 1998

This legislation was developed by the Government in an effort to ensure that the rights of permanent park residents and owners were clearly defined and that appropriate processes and procedures were established in this regard. The Act has greatest significance in caravan parks which are given over wholly to permanent residents or in parks with large numbers of residents. In 2006 the Act was reviewed, revised and amended. There are three approved long term sites in the Hawks Nest Caravan Park.

### 3.7 HOLIDAY PARKS (LONG-TERM CASUAL OCCUPATION) ACT 2002

The Holiday Parks (Long-term Casual Occupation) Act 2002 and the associated Regulations set out the rights and obligations for owners of moveable dwellings in holiday parks in New South Wales. In essence, the Act provides for an occupation agreement, which runs for at least 12 months, between the manager of a caravan park and the owner of a moveable dwelling for the use of a site.

Some of the principal issues addressed by the Act include:

- Information that a park owner must provide prospective occupants;
- The form and content of agreements;
- What happens at the end of an agreement;
- Occupation fees and charges;
- The formation and amendment of Park Rules;
- Dispute resolution mechanisms and the role of the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal constituted by the Consumer, Trade and Tenancy Tribunal Act 2001.
- The fate of abandoned goods (ie moveable dwelling) and sites.

Given the considerable number of holiday van owners in Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park this Act and its requirements has implications for the Caravan Park's ongoing operation.

### 3.8 RELEVANT ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICIES

#### 3.8.1 Coastal Policy 1997 and State Environmental Planning Policy No 71.

The NSW Coastal Policy 1997 was released by the New South Wales Government to replace the 1990 Coastal Policy. The stated purpose of the Policy is:

*The main challenge for the Government and the community in the coastal zone is to provide for population growth and economic development without putting the natural, cultural and heritage values of the coastal environment at risk. In recognition of this challenge, the Coastal Policy incorporates the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) into coastal planning. ESD aims to ensure that development occurs in such a way that the ecological processes on which life depends are maintained.*  
(Coastal Policy, A sustainable future of the NSW Coast - Fact Sheet, 1997)

The Coastal Policy 1997 introduced three main changes to the previous Policy:

A revised definition of the coastal zone. The 1997 definition of the coastal zone takes in areas within one kilometre of the ocean, as well as an area of one kilometre around coastal lakes, lagoons, islands, estuaries and rivers. The previous policy only applied to areas within one kilometre of the ocean.

Introduction of an Environmental Philosophy. The Policy is described as an integrative policy based on the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and

- Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity
- Intergenerational Equity
- Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms
- The precautionary principle.

A policy hierarchy of goals, objectives and strategic actions. The current policy framework has the same mix of initiatives but with some change of emphasis. There is a greater emphasis on improving water quality and maintaining public access to the coastline.

The Coastal Policy proposes that a range of management planning approaches including catchment management plans be implemented in consultation with relevant agencies to ensure that sustainable development and use of natural resources occurs in harmony with the protection of the environment. A Plan of Management under the Crown Lands Act 1989 is one of the most valuable management tools available to implement the Policy.

The principles of ecologically sustainable development are now also included within the Local Government Act. These principles may on first assessment appear to place limits on the commercial use of land, however, the principles contain provisions that encourage the proper pricing of the use of land and services as well as provisions for ongoing investment in and improvement of land to ensure sustainability.

State Environmental Planning Policy No 71 - Coastal Protection (SEPP 71) was introduced in October 2002 as part of the NSW Government's Coastal Protection Package. SEPP 71 applies to the coastal zone of the State as defined in the Coastal Protection Act 1979. The Policy gives statutory force to some of the elements of the NSW Coastal Policy 1997 and makes the Minister for Planning the consent authority for certain developments. The Policy also defines a category of *sensitive coastal locations*. Finally, the Policy identifies master plan requirements for certain developments in the coastal zone. While the policy primarily comes under consideration when a development application is submitted for determination, the objectives and general principles established in the SEPP should be recognized as relevant to any coastal planning exercise.

The objectives of SEPP 71 are:

- (a) *to protect and manage the natural, cultural, recreational and economic attributes of the New South Wales Coast, and*

- (b) *to protect and improve existing public access to and along coastal foreshores to the extent that this is compatible with the natural attributes of the coastal foreshore, and*
- (c) *to ensure that new opportunities for public access to and along coastal foreshores are identified and realised to the extent that this is compatible with the natural attributes of the coastal foreshore, and*
- (d) *to protect and preserve Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal places, values, customs, beliefs and traditional knowledge, and*
- (e) *to ensure that the visual amenity of the coast is protected, and*
- (f) *to protect and preserve beach environments and beach amenity, and*
- (g) *to protect and preserve native coastal vegetation, and*
- (h) *to protect and preserve the marine environments of New South Wales, and*
- (i) *to protect and preserve rock platforms, and*
- (j) *to manage the coastal zone in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (within the meaning of section 6(2) of the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991), and*
- (k) *to ensure that the type, bulk, scale and size of development is appropriate for the location and protects and improves the natural scenic qualities of the surrounding area, and*
- (l) *to encourage a strategic approach to coastal management.*

Clause 8 of the Policy establishes a list of the matters that a consent authority must take into consideration in assessing developments in the coastal zone.

### 3.8.2 State Environmental Planning Policy - Major Development

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 commenced on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2005. It underwent a substantial revision which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009 and this included a change in its name from 'Major Projects' to 'Major Development'. The purpose of the current Policy is to identify projects to which the development assessment requirements under Part 3A of the Act should apply and to set out the functions of the new Regional Planning Panels in determining specified development applications.

Caravan park development in the coastal zone with a capital investment value of more than \$5m located in an *environmentally sensitive area of State significance* or a *sensitive coastal location* is a Part 3A project and will be determined by the Minister for Planning. The definition in the Policy of *environmentally sensitive areas of State significance* includes land reserved or dedicated under the Crown Lands Act 1989 for the preservation of flora, fauna, geological formations or for other environmental protection purposes. A *sensitive coastal location* includes, for example, land within 100m of mean high water mark.

Section 13C of the SEPP identifies coastal development that will be assessed by the Council and determined by the Regional Planning Panel.

### 3.8.3 State Environmental Planning Policy - Infrastructure

State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 provides that certain types of works do not require development consent under Part 4 of the EP&A Act. However, it does not prevail over SEPP 14 - Coastal Wetlands, SEPP 26 - Littoral Rainforests or SEPP Major Development where there are inconsistencies. Further, the Infrastructure SEPP does not remove the requirement to obtain 'approval' from the Minister in relation to Part 3A projects.

Clause 65 (2)(d) of the Policy provides that in respect of land reserved within the meaning of the Crown Lands Act 1989, development can be carried out without consent by or on behalf of the Director-General of the Land and Property Management Authority, a trustee of the reserve or the Ministerial Land Corporation, or an administrator of the reserve if the development is for purposes of implementing a plan of management adopted for the land.

Clause 65 (3) of the Policy provides that development for any of the following purposes may be carried out by or on behalf of a council without consent on a public reserve under the care control or vested in Council:

- (a) *roads, cycleways, single storey car parks, ticketing facilities and viewing platforms,*
- (b) *outdoor recreational facilities, including playing fields, but not including grandstands,*
- (c) *information facilities such as visitors' centres and information boards,*
- (d) *lighting, if light spill and artificial sky glow is minimised in accordance with AS/NZS 1158: 2007, Lighting for Roads and Public Spaces,*
- (e) *landscaping, including irrigation schemes (whether they use recycled or other water),*
- (f) *amenity facilities,*
- (g) *maintenance depots,*
- (h) *environmental management works.*

Clearly the provisions of this SEPP are relevant to the future implementation of this Plan of Management as well as Council's ongoing management of the Reserve lands.

### 3.8.4 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 21 - Caravan Parks

In 1986 the Government made changes to the prevailing legislation to allow both short-term and long-term accommodation to occur in caravan parks by way of movable

dwellings. This brought about a wider definition for caravan parks.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 21 - Caravan Parks (SEPP 21) was prepared in order to ensure that this wider meaning applied to all relevant planning instruments whether existing or proposed. In essence the SEPP stated that where caravan parks are a permissible land use they will take on this wider meaning.

In addition, the Policy makes development consent mandatory for all new caravan park proposals regardless of local instruments. Council's are also required to have regard to the impact of new long and/or short-term dwelling sites on residential and tourism land uses and operations in their local area.

A key element of the Policy is found in Clause 8, sub clause (4A). The clause removes the effect of any other environmental planning instrument and the need for a development application with respect to the installation of movable dwellings on land approved for use as a caravan park. This has ongoing implications in the operation of all caravan parks.

### 3.9 GREAT LAKES COUNCIL LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 1996

The Great lakes Council Local Environmental Plan 1996 (LEP) provides the primary planning framework for this Draft Plan of Management. The general aims of the LEP in relation to statutory land-use planning for Great Lakes are:

- (1) *The aims of this plan are:*
  - (a) *to provide an updated and simplified plan for the area of Great Lakes, and*
  - (b) *to protect and enhance the environmental qualities of the area, and*
  - (c) *to facilitate the orderly and economic development of land within the area, and*
  - (d) *to promote the well-being of the area's population.*
  
- (2) *The objectives of this plan are:*
  - (a) *to provide a land use framework to guide the future use of the land within the area of Great Lakes, and*
  - (b) *to provide a basis for the preparation of detailed development control plans, and*
  - (c) *to protect environmentally sensitive areas and the heritage of the area, and*
  - (d) *to improve opportunities for ecologically sustainable development, and*
  - (e) *to provide for the cultural needs of and the equitable provision of services and facilities for the community*

The Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park is zoned Open Space 6A Public Recreation Zone. The provisions in the LEP with respect to this Zone is as follows;

## **Zone 6A Open Space and Recreation Zone**

### **1 What are the objectives of the zone?**

*The objective of the zone is to restrict development for the purposes of leisure and recreation to that which:*

- (a) promotes worthwhile community benefits, and*
- (b) does not reduce the amount and distribution of public open space areas below acceptable levels and standards which meet the needs of the community, and*
- (c) does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjoining areas, and*
- (d) has been identified in a plan of management for the land adopted by the Council under Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the [Local Government Act 1993](#).*

### **2 What is permitted without development consent?**

*Development for the purpose of:*

*landscaping, gardening or bush fire hazard reduction.*

### **3 What is permitted only with development consent?**

*Development for the purpose of:*

*advertisements; camping grounds or caravan parks; clubs; community facilities; drainage; entertainment facilities; environmental facilities; helicopter landing sites; recreation areas; recreation facilities; restaurants; roads; utility installations.*

### **4 What is prohibited?**

*Any development not included in Item 2 or 3.*

The range of land-uses permitted in the 6A zone is limited by the objectives of the zone and the content of Plans of Management (under the Local Government Act) is an important part of the development control process. A caravan park is a permitted form of development in the zone, with consent.

## **3.10 OTHER PLANNING REGULATIONS, CONTROLS AND STRATEGIES.**

Great Lakes Council has a range of other planning controls, policies and guidelines in place. These take the form of a development control plans (DCPs), development guides and the like. Depending upon proposed activities, works or development proposals that may emerge in the Reserve over time, it may be that these planning controls require consideration.

Government Departments and agencies also maintain policy and guideline material that may be relevant. In this respect the Crown Lands Caravan Park Policy has some relevance:

### 3.10.1 Crown Lands Caravan Park Policy

In April 1990 the former Department of Lands (now Land and Property Management Authority) issued the Crown Lands Caravan Parks Policy. The primary impetus for the creation of the Policy was to address issues of long-term residency, the number of holiday (storage) vans and to improve the appearance and management of caravan parks. The Policy establishes policies, objectives and strategies that are relevant to the future management and development of all caravan parks on crown land in New South Wales.

The objectives of the Crown Lands Caravan Parks Policy are:

- a. to develop a caravan park and camping ground system on Crown land which meets the needs of the community and provides a range of facilities for short-term use, long term use and camping*
- b. to manage caravan parks on Crown land in an environmentally acceptable manner, to provide for the protection of important scenic, natural and cultural resources consistent with the objects and principles of the Crown Lands Act, 1989.*
- c. to ensure that caravan parks and camping grounds on Crown land are managed in a way that provides appropriately for the recreational and social needs of the community.*
- d. to encourage the entrepreneurial management of caravan parks on Crown lands in order to provide the community with an appropriate standard of facility and the government with an optimum financial return for the land it provides.*

It is clear, particularly from objective (d) above, that the intent of the Crown Land Caravan Parks Policy is that there will be a commercial orientation in the management of Crown caravan parks. However, this objective is one of a set of objectives of equal weight and therefore matters of environmental and community need must be addressed alongside financial considerations.

In the Policy a distinction is drawn between **tourist parks** and **general parks**.

Tourist parks cater primarily for tourists and as a general guide an upper limit in the Policy is that no more than 50% of short term and long-term sites may be used to accommodate a mix of long-term residents and holiday vans.

General Parks depend for their viability on meeting a demand for both short term and long term sites. Given the special character of general parks, most of which are located in in-land areas, the proportion of long term to short term sites is determined by



local conditions of demand.

The Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park has been classified as a tourist park under this Policy. It is assumed that tourism will continue to be a dominant management issue. It is therefore important that the proportion of holiday vans and long term sites in the Park are monitored and managed to ensure consistency with the Policy.

### **3.11 SUMMARY**

The management, operation and development of the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park is subject to a diverse array of statutory controls. It is a fundamental requirement of this Draft Plan of Management that the Reserve Trust Manager will comply with the requirements and provisions of applicable legislation and regulations whether enabling or restrictive.

## 4 RESOURCES AND VALUES

### 4.1 RESOURCES

The principal resource with respect to this Plan of Management is the Caravan Park located on Lot 7025 and part Lot 7024. The Park is clearly a long standing and valuable resource to the local area and the State as it provides 276 accommodation sites in an attractive setting in close proximity to a beach location. In addition the Park currently provides a range of services and infrastructure that support the operation. Guests and Park users enjoy a high quality of amenity.

### 4.2 VALUES

The Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park has a range of significant values inherent in the natural and historic characteristics of the land and the immediately adjoining areas and the recreational opportunities provided by this context. The Hawks Nest area represents a sought after location on the mid north coast in close proximity to facilities and services as well as the many natural features of the Great Lakes district. The designation of the Port Stephens waterway, the Myall Lakes system and the associated coastline as a Marine Park highlight the value ascribed to the area. These factors combine to create a resource of strong scenic, conservation and recreational value as outlined below.

#### **Natural and Conservation Values**

The Caravan Park forms part of a larger natural area located behind the beach. This wider area provides for natural drainage from the hinterland to the west as well as linkages of both open space areas and natural coastal vegetation to the north, south, and east.

#### **Recreation and Tourism Values**

The Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park functions as a key provider of tourist accommodation and recreational facilities within the context of the Hawks Nest area. The Park provides a major focus for the recreation activities of local residents and tourists.

#### **Social and Economic Values**

The Park forms an important part of the community life of Hawks Nest and the Hawks Nest/Tea Gardens area. The use of this natural setting for exercise, relaxation, holidays and social gatherings contributes to the identity and well being of the community.

The Park is a major local resource for tourism that makes a significant contribution to the local economy. The Park also has the capacity to make a significant financial

contribution to the delivery of public infrastructure and services within the greater Regional Crown Reserve system. The Park's capacity to maintain or increase revenue return on investment is crucial to the ongoing maintenance and development of the Park and the Crown estate on this part of the coast.

## 5 MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION.

This Draft Plan of Management is based on a 'Vision Statement' that is intended to guide the Reserve Trust in its decision making processes. It is then supported by management principles which in turn generate specific management objectives, actions and implementation plans. A number of the detailed concept and implementation plans are part of this Draft Plan. In some areas final outcomes will be subject to further detailed consideration. This will allow Council to be responsive to economic factors, new information, and social and technological change.

### 5.2 VISION STATEMENT

The Vision of the Reserve Trust in managing the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park is:

**To conserve and maintain the natural environment of the Park within the wider Reserve while providing a range of recreation and accommodation opportunities for local residents and visitors and optimising a return to the community.**

### 5.3 MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The following principles establish the broad direction the Trust will follow in implementing strategies to achieve the Vision. These principles have been applied specifically to the actions stated for each management unit.

1. Natural Environment: To recognise, protect, and enhance the attractive and ecological values of the Reserve.
2. Cultural Values: To recognise, interpret, and promote valuable cultural heritage relating to the Reserve and local area including the continuation of traditional holidaying activities.
3. Recreation: To provide for a range of recreational and holiday activities based on the natural and cultural features of the Reserve.
4. Caravan Park: To optimise income to the reserve by providing a variety of tourist accommodation options with an emphasis on family holiday opportunities. In addition the accommodation and social needs of any existing Caravan Park long-term residents must be considered to ensure that their rights are respected.
5. Utility Services: To provide necessary services such as reticulated water, power, sewerage disposal and drainage in an efficient and environmentally acceptable manner.

6. Safety and Public Health: To provide and maintain facilities, in a manner that minimises risk to Reserve users and promotes a healthy lifestyle.
7. Reserve Information: To inform people in a creative way of the Reserve's attributes, activities and facilities as well as appropriate ways to use and care for them.
8. Integrated Coastal Management: To promote and assist integrated coastal land management associated with Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park and the adjacent Crown Reserve.

#### 5.4 MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Caravan Park and adjoining Reserve lands have been inspected and assessed to develop an understanding of the matters that need to be addressed in the management strategies and actions that are detailed in the Plan of Management and implemented by the Trust. The following section provides a summary of this analysis and highlights key issues.

Analysis of the Caravan Park has identified a number of strengths. A summary of the key issues is as follows;

- Location - an ideal coastal location close to a surf beach, close to protected waterways and close to services and facilities offered by the Hawks Nest and Tea Gardens villages. Proximity to the large urban population centres of Sydney, Newcastle and the Hunter Region;
- Maintenance standards within the Park are good;
- An emerging stock of self-contained accommodation;
- The park is of a good size and has a broad open feel with generally flat and easy grades;
- A reasonably large park with good site numbers capable of providing a solid income base;
- Sound amenities buildings;

In contrast to those strengths there are a number of issues identified in the assessment of the Park that need to be addressed:

- The provision of an appropriate suite of recreational facilities that can work hand in hand with accommodation to provide attractive holiday experiences for a wide range of guests;
- The introduction of purpose designed and sited cabin accommodation that creates a defined central precinct and takes full advantage of the attractive location and setting;

- Varying the grid road pattern, removing redundant portions of road and changing gun barrel type vistas;
- Improving the form and appearance of key buildings such as the amenities buildings, kiosk, office/manager's residence;
- The presentation and arrangement of the entry including the outlook and vistas to the east;
- The Introduction of en-suite and drive through sites to respond to marketplace demands for these products;
- The extension of appropriate landscaping and planting treatments throughout the Park and especially along boundaries. The provision of good pedestrian linkages;
- The provision of appropriate levels of security especially around the perimeter of the Park;
- The need to manage and control the location and proportion of holiday vans and address any non-compliance issues;
- The need to ensure that all aspects of the caravan park operation embrace ESD principles to the extent that this is possible;

## 5.5 ASSESSING PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

It will be noted that this Draft Plan of Management proposes that a number of development projects should be brought forward by the Reserve Trust over the next 5 years. While there has been wide ranging analysis and consideration of these proposals during the preparation of the Draft Plan the following are some of the key issues that should still be considered by the Reserve Trust when deciding whether a particular land use or development is to proceed within the Reserve;

- The provisions of relevant planning instruments including the Great Lakes Local Environmental Plan 1996;
- The compatibility of the proposal with the notified purpose of the Reserve;
- The impact on the existing use of the Reserve;
- The compatibility with the Vision Statement and Management Principles for the Reserve;
- The need for the proposal. Whether it will promote and be ancillary to the use and enjoyment of the reserve as distinct from satisfying a requirement generated by an adjoining property or by an unassociated community need;
- The benefit the development would bring to the normal Reserve user, and
- The Management responsibility and public availability of the development to Reserve users.

## 6. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The following tables detail the Management Objectives and Management Actions to be implemented by the Reserve Trust. In the first instance the Objectives and Actions are designed to achieve the Vision for the Reserve and address the Management Principles outlined in Sections 5.2 and 5.3. The implementation of the identified Actions will address the Management Issues identified in Section 5.4. Where Actions involve physical improvements to the Reserve and reserve facilities those actions will be in accordance with the plans and drawings that form part of this Plan of Management. Where further documentation is required the planning and design process will be guided by and comply with the Vision, Principles and Objectives established by this Plan.

### 6.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 6.1.1 Vegetation and Habitat Management

Objectives	Actions
To minimise disturbance to native vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement practices and procedures consistent with Council's environmental management planning;</li> <li>• Use appropriate siting of recreation facilities, pathways and roads and cabins to avoid valuable existing vegetation;</li> <li>• Manage pedestrian and vehicle access to and through the entire Park;</li> <li>• Implement fire management strategies;</li> <li>• Address any unauthorised damage to vegetation and garden refuse dumping;</li> <li>• Implement public education programs where applicable;</li> <li>• Define Park edge treatments and protect vegetation through the use of mulching, edge planting and/or fencing as appropriate;</li> <li>• Implement appropriate management strategies to preserve and protect any areas identified as valued habitat.</li> </ul>
To restore natural vegetation and enhance the recreational and visual amenity of the Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement and continue weed control, planting and natural regeneration programs;</li> <li>• Actively manage vegetation adjoining boundaries or dwelling sites including any viewing locations and other high use locations. Extend the use of the iconic Norfolk Island Pines along the Park frontage to enhance visual amenity and assist in the establishment and protection of other vegetation in the Park;</li> <li>• Restore appropriate natural vegetation as resources allow.</li> </ul>

#### 6.1.2 Coastal Processes

Objectives	Actions
To manage coastal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate location and species selection for plantings</li> </ul>

processes and climate change while allowing for natural occurrences	<p>throughout the Park and around margins of the Park;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair damage as necessary after storm events;</li> <li>• Adopt the relevant policies of the NSW government and Council in relation to responsible management with respect to climate change and sea level rise;</li> <li>• Develop specific climate change adaptation plans in conjunction with the rest of the local government area.</li> </ul>
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### 6.1.3 Catchment Management

Objectives	Actions
To implement effective catchment management within the Park and minimize impacts on coastal water quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the existing stormwater management regime with a view to identifying problem areas, current difficulties or unsatisfactory practices. Promote catchment management principles where appropriate;</li> <li>• Implement appropriate measures including erosion control, litter and silt traps and wetland filters where required to control stormwater;</li> <li>• Use chemicals only in accordance with Council guidelines.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.4 Visual Amenity

Objectives	Actions
Protect and enhance the visual amenity of the Park and adjoining reserve lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select materials and designs for buildings, furnishings, signs and pathways which are compatible with the natural environment, create a unified theme for the Park and reinforce local character and design themes;</li> <li>• Where necessary relocate structures which detract from attractive views such as the large storage shed adjacent to the entry to the Park;</li> <li>• Locate facilities, accessways and signs to minimise impact on visual amenity while being clearly visible.</li> </ul>

### 6.1.5 Fire Management

Objectives	Actions
To minimise fire hazard to property and appropriately manage natural coastal vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and maintain adequate fire control access.</li> <li>• Provide and maintain fuel free and fuel reduced zones where necessary eg. adjoining Park boundaries. Minimise disturbance to natural vegetation. Undertake programs to reduce leaf litter and fuel load;</li> <li>• Exclude fuel reduction burning except in special circumstances (eg flora management);</li> <li>• Maintain a record of fire history;</li> <li>• Refer to Council and Rural Fire Service Guidelines and controls.</li> </ul>



### 6.1.6 Ecological Sustainable Management

Objectives	Actions
To create a Caravan Park that achieves a high standard in terms of environmental responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design for minimisation of waste, optimum levels of recycling, a high degree of energy efficiency and responsible use of resources;</li> <li>• Use low ecological impact materials;</li> <li>• Use renewable materials;</li> <li>• Use low embodied energy materials;</li> <li>• Minimise operational energy requirements;</li> <li>• Minimise required maintenance.</li> </ul>

## 6.2 CULTURAL VALUES

### 6.2.1 Aboriginal and European Cultural Values

Objectives	Actions
To protect and enhance Aboriginal cultural values in the Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and protect any significant sites;</li> <li>• Ensure access to significant sites for Aboriginal use;</li> <li>• Provide interpretation of significant sites where desirable and appropriate;</li> <li>• As necessary implement strategies through on-going consultation with Aboriginal groups and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</li> </ul>
To protect and enhance European cultural values and heritage sites in the Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and protect any significant sites;</li> <li>• Provide appropriate interpretation of significant sites where desirable.</li> </ul>

## 6.3 RECREATION

### 6.3.1 Recreation Facilities

Objectives	Actions
To provide, maintain and upgrade designated recreation areas to cater for a range of recreation activities for Park guests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the Caravan Park and develop recreational facilities in accordance with Drawings C-03, C-04 and C-05;</li> <li>• Improve the range of facilities offered to guests so that the Park can function as a holiday destination facility. These recreation areas may provide over time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- picnic tables, shelters and electric BBQs (which may be brought together in a Camp Kitchen building);</li> <li>- swimming pools;</li> <li>- community rooms and general purpose meeting spaces that can accommodate gatherings;</li> <li>- public toilets and beach showers;</li> <li>- playgrounds, garbage bins and lighting;</li> <li>- shade tree planting (use mainly local native species);</li> <li>- off street parking, including boat parking;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fencing to protect natural vegetation;</li> <li>- directional and interpretive signs;</li> <li>• Construct and maintain facilities in accordance with relevant controls and construction standards.</li> </ul>
To ensure easy access to recreation facilities within the Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on Drawings C-03, C-04 and C-05 ensure an appropriate road and pathway layout to allow efficient movement within and through the park;</li> <li>• Provide places where people can relax and enjoy the ambience of the Park;</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate access and parking for emergency vehicles.</li> </ul>

### 6.3.2 Litter and Cleaning

Objectives	Actions
To reduce the incidence of litter and improve recreational amenity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of ESD management (Item 6.1.6) review existing arrangements for litter bins. Install and maintain litter bins in convenient locations. Monitor bin use and modify servicing and bin provision as required. Encourage the community to provide information on litter collection requirements to assist Council;</li> <li>• Include litter reduction in public education programs.</li> </ul>

### 6.3.3 Pedestrian access

Objectives	Actions
To develop, maintain and rationalise pedestrian access to best suit current use and conditions and to ensure access, safety, useability and protection of the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In conjunction with the improvements indicated on Drawings C-03, C-04 and C-05, review existing linkages and circulation throughout the Park taking into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- level of use</li> <li>- vegetation</li> <li>- erosion</li> <li>- visibility and convenience</li> <li>- desire lines;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure access routes have appropriate proportions are appropriately aligned, well defined, safe and properly drained while using appropriate finishes and materials;</li> <li>• Ensure disabled access is provided to community facilities and bathrooms consistent with the Australian Standards requirements.</li> </ul>

## 6.4 ACCOMMODATION

Objectives	Actions
To preserve and enhance the financial contribution the Caravan Park makes to the management of the wider reserve and the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the Caravan Park and develop accommodation in accordance with Drawings C-03, C-04 and C-05;</li> <li>• Install quality on-site accommodation designed to complement the character of the coastal setting and capable of generating a consistent income stream to finance the ongoing management of the</li> </ul>

local community;	Caravan Park and make a substantial contribution to the management of the reserved lands.
To recognise the rights of holiday van owners and long term residents where they occur but also aim to reduce the proportion of these within the park consistent with LPMA policy to ensure the ample provision of tourist accommodation on public reserve lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure resident's rights under existing tenancy agreements are protected;</li> <li>• Ensure that all holiday van owners are aware of their rights and responsibilities as well as the rights and responsibilities of park management (as defined in the Holiday Parks Long term Casual Occupation Act 2002);</li> <li>• Address any existing non-compliance issues especially related to setbacks between holiday vans consistent with the requirements of the caravan park Regulations;</li> <li>• Review the natural attributes of the park and current park layout in conjunction with demands for tourist accommodation and efficient business operations. In the light of this, undertake an improvement program that re-arranges the park layout where possible to enable the installation of additional tourist accommodation as well as the retention of a proportion of holiday vans.</li> </ul>
To create a holiday destination that takes advantage of the Park's location but preserves its existing character, sense of place and that provides affordable, value for money holiday opportunities for a wide cross section of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace, relocate and improve existing cabins to provide affordable family holiday accommodation;</li> <li>• Where necessary demolish poorly sited and unserviceable existing buildings so as prime locations are available for tourist accommodation and to enhance guest's appreciation of natural setting of the Park;</li> <li>• Install quality cabin accommodation on sites that take better advantage of the park's setting;</li> <li>• Provide well organized drive on sites;</li> <li>• Rationalise and rearrange the provision of useable camp sites.</li> </ul>
To have a staged development process that is achievable in terms of planning and financial constraints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to undertake an improvement program over 5 years based on the internal capacity of the Caravan Park to support the funding of the works.</li> </ul>

## 6.5 UTILITY SERVICES

Objectives	Actions
To enable the maintenance and installation of utilities and services within the Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care in maintenance activities to avoid disturbance to natural areas;</li> <li>• Avoid location of new services in or through natural areas;</li> <li>• Install new or revised services for planned accommodation upgrading and recreational facilities in accordance with an approved installation and rehabilitation strategy;</li> <li>• In long term provide solar collectors on the amenities buildings;</li> <li>• Where the provision of any public utilities are required ensure appropriate ongoing management and access regimes.</li> </ul>

## 6.6 PUBLIC SAFETY

### 6.6.1 Safety and Risk Management

Objectives	Actions
To provide health, safety and risk management for the general public, guests and those involved in maintenance and management activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all appropriate OH&amp;S procedures and practices including relevant staff training are in place;</li> <li>• Carry out regular risk management inspections for all infrastructure including accessways, fencing especially boundary fencing, swimming pools, community amenities buildings, other structures and furnishings and implement maintenance and repairs as required;</li> <li>• Maintain recreational areas and playgrounds in accordance with relevant guidelines (Council, Australian Standards etc).</li> <li>• Carry out tree and vegetation maintenance to remove hazards or obstructions;</li> <li>• Review usage patterns and trends regarding 'novelty' and/or unregistered vehicles (motor bikes, push bikes, motorized scooters) and adopt appropriate management responses.</li> </ul>

### 6.6.2 Regulation of Activities

Objectives	Actions
To improve security within the Park and discourage inappropriate behaviour and activities and reduce the incidence of vandalism of facilities or vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement public education programs;</li> <li>• Exercise powers under Crown Lands Act, Crown (General Reserves) By-law and Local Government Act;</li> <li>• Issue on the spot fines or prosecute where appropriate;</li> <li>• Select and install vandal resistance materials and designs when developing facilities;</li> <li>• Determine and implement suitable measures to address problems specific to particular areas eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- alcohol restrictions;</li> <li>- lighting;</li> <li>- hours of use (picnic areas, facilities);</li> <li>- location &amp; design of facilities &amp; landscaping (improve visibility);</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Modify activities which are prohibited or permissible;</li> <li>• Ensure prohibited activities are adequately signposted (see 6.7);</li> <li>• Respond promptly to incidences of damage. Determine appropriate action for each case eg. on the spot fine, prosecution, restoration agreement, restoration and protection of the area, publicity and education. Maintain a record of incidences and action taken;</li> <li>• Restore and protect damaged vegetation areas to meet reserve management requirements;</li> <li>• Implement CCTV surveillance and appropriate lighting at strategic Park locations and especially in the vicinity of boundary gates.</li> </ul>

## 6.7 PARK INFORMATION

Objectives	Actions
To provide signs which identify prohibited activities, safety warnings and Park/reserve information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design signs in accordance with State Wide Best Practice Guidelines to convey appropriate information for each site (eg. Prohibited activities, advisory information, contact numbers for reporting problems);</li> <li>• Minimise number of signs used by combining information.</li> </ul>

## 6.8 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

### 6.8.1 Co-ordination

Objectives	Actions
Implement the Plan of Management and address relevant statutory requirements in an ongoing, co operative and timely manner within the available resources.	<p>Refer inquiries and liaise as required with relevant government agencies, for example:</p> <p><u>Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA):</u> Plan of Management adoption and revisions, Crown Lands leases, Coastline hazard management, Funding grants</p> <p><u>Department of Environment and Climate Change:</u> Soil erosion and acid sulfate soils, water quality, climate change.</p> <p><u>Department of Planning:</u> Approvals for proposals covered by Part 3A of the EP&amp;A Act.</p> <p><u>RFS and Council Fire Control Officer:</u> Fire Control Management Plans and requirements.</p>
To improve environmental management and address coastal planning and management principles and policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the operational boundaries of the Caravan Park in consultation with LPMA. Provide appropriate fencing and clearly define the physical limits of responsibility for the Caravan Park manager.</li> </ul>

### 6.8.2 Commercial Activities

Objectives	Actions
To allow for commercial activities that enhance recreational opportunity without impacting adversely on other recreational users, the natural environment or visual amenity of the Reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the expansion of the kiosk facility within the Park to provide for additional café facilities for guests and visitors (Kiosk to initially be used for Games Room while awaiting Rec. Hall);</li> <li>• Approve commercial activities that are compatible with the use of the Park. Conditions of approval are to apply for insurance, lease or permit fees, minimising noise and other impacts on users, environment or visual amenity as appropriate;</li> <li>• Fee structures will reflect the level of community benefit from the activity.</li> </ul>

### 6.8.3 Adjoining Development

Objectives	Actions
To minimise impacts on the Park from adjoining development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent requirements for developments adjoining and likely to impact on the Park are to include appropriate conditions to minimize the impact on the amenity of the Park, protect its resources and values and to ensure the integration of land uses where appropriate.</li> </ul>

### 6.8.4 Funding

Objectives	Actions
To maximise funding opportunities to enable implementation of the Plan of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the improvements proposed for the Park through funding from trading profits;</li> <li>• Ensure up to date information is available on relevant funding programs;</li> <li>• Apply for funding for suitable projects;</li> <li>• Co-ordinate and maximise funding opportunities eg. matching Council funding with government funding and by obtaining funding for community group projects.</li> </ul>

### 6.8.5 Project Planning and Implementation of Other Plans

Objectives	Actions
To complete site assessment, planning and design to assist in works programs and sourcing of funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare any required plans for upgrading recreation facilities and accommodation areas;</li> <li>• Prepare vegetation regeneration Plans for priority areas where required;</li> <li>• Carry out environmental and user needs assessments at site planning and design stage as required for all improvement works;</li> <li>• Liaise with stakeholders to ensure all issues are addressed through the site assessment project planning process.</li> </ul>

### 6.8.6 Leases and Licences

Objectives	Actions
To enable leases and licences for appropriate uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council may enter into a lease or licence for whole or part of the lands to which this Plan applies provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of the land is in accordance with this Plan of Management, relevant Crown and Council policies and guidelines;</li> <li>- The use of the land is in the public interest;</li> <li>- The granting of the lease, licence or estate is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Crown Lands Act 1989.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## **7 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

This Plan provides a long term strategy for the management of the Hawks Nest Beach Caravan Park located on Reserve 85147. It is anticipated that the majority of the works described will be implemented over a ten year period with a number of matters addressed in the first five years. Priorities for works and funding are to be addressed on an annual basis to meet community needs.

Progress in relation to the implementation of the Plan will be monitored by the Trust and the Trust will report on an annual basis to the Land and Property Management Authority.

This Plan is to be reviewed approximately every five years or as required to ensure that it continues to be remains relevant with respect to government legislation and policy and community expectation.