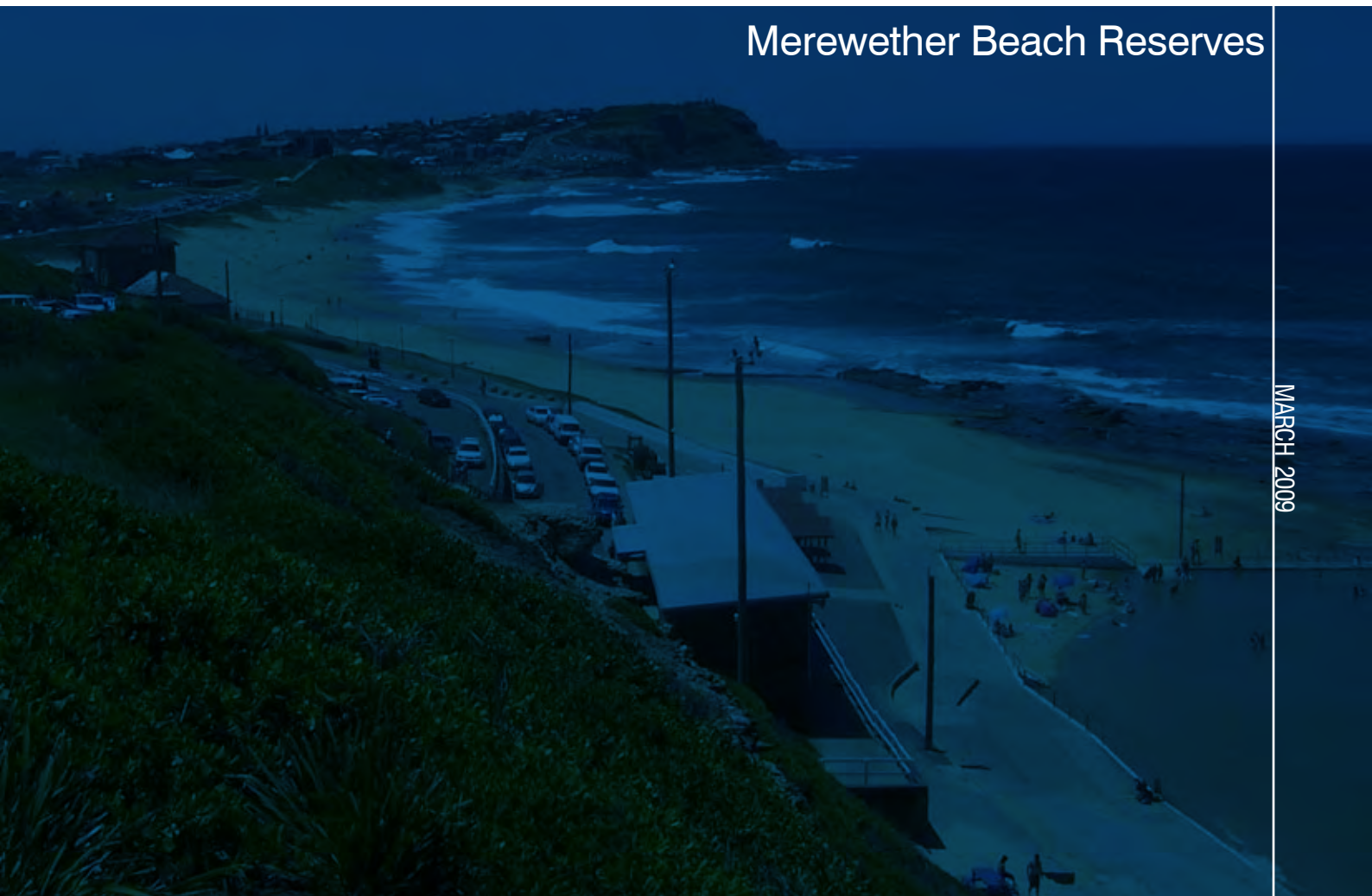


## PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

### Merewether Beach Reserves



MARCH 2009



A237 2118841A

# Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management

March, 2009

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Newcastle City Council and NSW Department  
of Lands

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## Executive summary

Merewether Beach is a landmark of the Hunter's coastline. It is both a suburban beach and an internationally recognised surfing location, which is used by the community for a diverse range of recreational pursuits. The location has remained relatively unchanged for several decades and there is now a need to have a consolidated and directed approach to its future management.

Parsons Brinckerhoff and Moir Landscape Architecture were engaged by Newcastle City Council and NSW Department of Lands to prepare a Plan of Management for the Merewether Beach Reserves. The purpose of developing the Plan of Management is to provide a framework for the future use and management of lands within the Merewether Beach Reserves. There are legal requirements to have a plan of management in place for Crown lands under the management of the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and Community land under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The Plan of Management is intended to respond to the specific issues at the Merewether Beach Reserves by identifying the opportunities and establish an integrated planning concept. The Plan of Management has been developed through analysis of existing policies and plans related to the Merewether Beach Reserves, a site analysis, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses opportunities, and threats) analysis and a comprehensive consultation program.

Community consultation identified key issues related to:

- traffic and access
- environment and landscaping
- infrastructure and services
- social
- management.

Values recognised by the community which should be preserved through the Plan of Management include recreational opportunities, community and heritage assets and environmental aesthetics.

The Plan of Management is accompanied by a concept master plan. This concept master plan separates the Merewether Beach Reserves into five interconnected management precincts, and for each precinct the concept master plan identifies key design and management principles. The Implementation Plan outlined in the Plan of Management, documents a series of management performance targets (objectives) and associated actions for each precinct. In some instances further studies are needed to assess the feasibility of achieving a management performance target (objective).

The implementation of the actions will depend on available funding and resources. While Council and Lands may contribute funds for achieving some of the actions over the years, funds will also need to be sourced through external grants, club contributions, partnerships and more importantly lease and licenses holders.

This Plan of Management is to be evaluated and reviewed annually, and a complete rewrite every 10 years.

# 1. Introduction

Merewether Beach is a landmark of the Hunter Region's coastline. It is both a suburban beach and an icon in the international surfing fraternity, with the latter recognised in the international professional surfing contest of 'Surfest'. The broader Merewether Beach Reserves Precinct (referred to hereafter as the 'study area') is visited and utilised for a diverse range of recreational pursuits, all year round, and is a highly valued community asset.

The study area is located in the suburb of Merewether, Newcastle, New South Wales. It includes the Merewether Ocean Baths and associated Merewether Baths Pavilion, Merewether Surf Life Saving Club building, Jefferson Park and Merewether Beach (refer to Figure 1-1). Whilst the historic Merewether Beach Pavilion (known locally as Surf House) is located within the study area, it does not form part of this Plan of Management (PoM) process.

This part of the Newcastle coastline has remained largely unchanged in several decades, and many assets have reached, or passed, their life expectancy. There are major conflict points within the study area, particularly involving motor vehicles and pedestrians. This combined with a somewhat ad hoc approach to the study area's past management, determined that the development of the study area requires a more consolidated and directed approach to its management now and into the future.

Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) and Moir Landscape Architecture (MLA) have been engaged by Newcastle City Council (Council) and NSW Department of Lands (Lands) to prepare a PoM for the study area. During preparation of the PoM an understanding of site specific issues and values has been established, to assist with design solutions and opportunities that should add value to the area and improve it as an attractive beach destination. The PoM is intended to respond to the identified opportunities and establish an integrated planning concept for the study area. The planning concept has been developed to guide future development within the study area as funding is identified and redevelopment works unfold.

## 1.1 What is a plan of management?

A PoM is a document that provides the framework for the future management of public land (Crown and Community land). A PoM has a statutory basis under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 1993*, where provisions are made for referral and consultation, public exhibition (minimum 28 days) and formal adoption.

The purpose of developing the PoM is to provide framework for the future use and management of lands within the study area. A PoM forms a key strategic document intended to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the local area by realising the recreational and commercial potential of the foreshore.

Accordingly, a PoM defines the values, use, management practices and intent relating to the purpose for which the land has been reserved or dedicated. It not only guides the future management and development of the land concerned but provides the 'how and why' an area should be developed, used and managed.





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**Figure 1.1: Site Identification**



## 1.2 Why a plan of management?

The study area is recognised as one of the most popular beaches of the Hunter Region's coastline, frequented by people locally, regionally and further abroad. It has a significant history and culture and is an important asset to the Newcastle community. However, aging infrastructure and a lack of adequate facilities for the large number of people regularly using the study area has reached a level considered unsatisfactory by many people in the community.

Section 36 of the *Local Government Act 1993* states 'a council must prepare a draft plan of management for community land' (S.36 (1)) and S.112 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989* states:

the Minister may cause a draft plan of management to be prepared for a reserve, including a draft plan that would, if adopted, authorise the reserve to be used for an additional purpose (S.112 (1))

a reserve trust may with the Minister's consent, and if the Minister so directs, shall prepare a draft plan of management for the reserve (S.112 (2)).

Previously there has been no site specific PoM for the study area. Management plans such as the *Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003* and the *Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plan of Management 2000*, provide management guidelines for some assets and operate on a broader scale. The existing PoMs do not provide the level of detail required to manage all assets at a particular site. Therefore it is for legal reasons and other contributing factors which necessitate the need for a PoM to be prepared for the site.

A PoM is necessary to provide Newcastle Council and the Department of Lands with consolidated information to guide the future development, land use and management of the study area.

## 1.3 Vision

The vision for the study area is aligned with Council's vision for the future of Newcastle (NCC Management Plan 2007/2008-2009/2010) and the *Crown Lands Act 1989* management principles (see Section 3.1.1). The vision for the study area is:

The Merewether Beach Reserves will continue to provide an open space area for passive and active recreation with a local community focus. It will be recognised as a gateway to the Newcastle coastline, and promoted as a regional facility, particularly for its recognition as a nationally significant surfing beach. Merewether Beach Reserves Precinct will be developed in a manner that provides for long-term sustainability of its natural resources and as an attractive and functional coastal asset, with due recognition of its values.

## 1.4 Land to which this plan applies

The PoM applies to the 7 ha (approx.) of Crown land, Community land and Merewether Estate land lying within the Precinct (which is approximately 14 ha when including the coastal area), as shown on Figure 1-2.

The PoM site is bounded by Frederick Street to the west, John Parade to the north, Robinson Street and Lloyd Street to the South and the Pacific Ocean to the East (part of

which is included). Table 1-1 provides a schedule of lands to which the PoM applies (illustrated in Figure 1-2).

**Table 1-1 Land status of Merewether Beach Reserves**

<b>Crown Reserve No.</b>	<b>Land Status</b>	<b>Lot/DP</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Category</b>
CR 18 Reserve 56681	Jefferson Park Crown Land Council as Trustee	10/DP1129519	1.07 Ha	
		12/DP1129519	0.03 Ha	
		100/DP1130581	0.12 Ha	
		101/DP1130581	0.08 Ha	
CR 54 Reserve 1011268	Merewether Baths Crown Land – part bed of South Pacific Ocean	N/A		
Reserve 570089	Dedicated Reserve for Public Recreation Crown Land Devolved on Council	7021/DP1128695		
<b>Council Community Lands</b>	<b>Land Status</b>	<b>Lot/DP</b>	<b>Area</b>	
C 157	Jefferson Park – fee simple used as car park	268/1102663	0.23 Ha	General Community Use
C 157	Surf Club	2/DP1118903	1.147 Ha	
	Car-park Jefferson Park	3/DP1118903	0.475 Ha	
C 149	Robinson Reserve – Dedicated Public Reserve and fee simple used as park	2/514500	0.06 Ha	General Community Use
		3/153433	0.07 Ha	

It is important to note that the preparation of PoM is not limited to the study area and takes into consideration other proximate land holdings/assets (context area) that need to be considered in the PoM preparation. These include, but are not limited to, Dixon Park, Burwood Beach/Glenrock State Conservation Area, surrounding suburbs e.g. Merewether/Merewether Heights/The Junction/Bar Beach, and transport routes. It has been paramount to consider this context area in the PoM preparation.

This PoM will revoke the *Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management* and *Newcastle Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management* where relevant to Merewether Beach.

It should be noted that this PoM excludes the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) as it is subject to a separate expression of interest (EOI) and development process. Reference is made to Surf House only in relation to Council and Lands 'Deed of agreement'.





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## 2. Site description

Section 2 outlines the history and past use of the study area, the regional and local context and social context of the study area, as well as outlining the current condition and usage of the assets at Merewether Beach Reserve, in accordance with Section 36 (3a) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and Section 112.7 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

### 2.1 Historic context

#### Indigenous Heritage

The study area was predominantly home to the Awabakal tribe. In the 1960s and 70s numerous Aboriginal sites were recorded by Professor Len Dyal along the coast of Newcastle. The majority of these sites were not formally registered with the NSW National Parks. Consequently because Dyal's studies were conducted over 30 years ago it is considered highly likely that any Aboriginal sites within the study area have been either significantly disturbed or destroyed by development and natural coastal processes (Umwelt 2003).

Investigation of the National Parks and Wildlife Service register revealed that there is no recorded Aboriginal campsite within the study area (Umwelt 2003).

#### Non-Indigenous Heritage

The non-indigenous settlement of the area is typified by the traditional recreational activities within and around the dedicated park reserves, Merewether Baths and Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House). The timeline below outlines the history of the study area.

- 1820-30s Dr James Mitchell acquired the Burwood Estate (later to become the Merewether Estate).
- 1846 Smelter work was built and operated on the Estate.
- 1851 – 1860s The Burwood Colliery (located at Burwood Beach), smelter and railway line operated until its dissolution and the reacquisition of the land and works. Part of the railway line is still evident upslope from the Merewether Baths Pavilion.
- 1869 Edward Christopher Merewether became the owner of Burwood Estate. Today a section of the study area is still owned by the Merewether Estate and the colliery railway track behind the Merewether Baths Pavilion marks the location of the mouth of the rail line tunnel.
- 1909 First Surf House constructed.
- 1923 Small-scale developments continued at the site until a more substantial clubhouse was constructed in 1923.
- 1926 First public swimming ocean bath is constructed (known as the Ladies Bath).
- 1932 Promenade and steps were constructed.
- 1935 Merewether Baths (adult and children's baths) were constructed and are still in use today (Photograph 2-1). Over the years the area has continued to develop with the construction of the Merewether Baths Pavilion, seating, outdoor showers and shade structures (Photograph 2-2). The baths are still the largest wave-cut rock platform baths in Australia.
- 1936 Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) was constructed by local architecture firm 'Pitt & Merewether', on the site of the original surf house to



formalise public amenities and facilities for the Merewether Surf Life Saving Club (Photograph 2-4).

- 1956 The railway line directly ran along the shore at Merewether and provided direct convenient transportation to the baths until it was removed in 1956 (Photograph 2-3).
- 1995 Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) closed due to structural problems.

Several remnants of the study area's history still remain today and these items are listed as heritage items under the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2003. The items include:

- Remains of Glenrock Railway (Local Significance, property ID R46525).
- Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) (Local Significance).
- Newcastle Coke Ovens (Local Significance).
- Merewether Baths (Local Significance, property ID R5681).

There are a number of items currently not listed as heritage items, e.g. the Ladies Baths and the northern portal of the Glenrock railway tunnel.



**Photograph 2-1: Merewether Ocean Baths  
12 December 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)



**Photograph 2-2: Merewether Baths  
Pavilion 12 December 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)



**Photograph 2-3: Burwood Colliery railway  
line at Merewether Beach, 1929**

(Hunter Photo Bank)



**Photograph 2-4: Merewether Beach  
Pavilion (Surf House) in 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)

## **2.2 Social context and site use**

### **2.2.1 Regional and local context**

The study area is situated along the coastline of Newcastle, which is located in the Lower Hunter region between the Central Coast and Port Stephens regions of NSW. Newcastle is the sixth largest city and largest regional city of Australia. It is the regional centre for the Hunter region and is the focus of its economic, administrative and cultural activities (Newcastle City Centre Plan, NSW Department of Planning, 2006).

Merewether is a well-known suburb within the Newcastle LGA (Figure 1-1). The suburb of Merewether is located along Merewether Beach, between Glenrock National Park and Bar Beach, and provides a 'hard' edge to the beach foreshore. Merewether is well connected to the adjoining suburbs of Bar Beach, The Junction, Adamstown and Merewether Heights. The suburb enjoys good access to schools, shopping, and Newcastle's city centre. The suburb has good local social facilities, shops and a diversity of housing types.

The study area is adjacent to commercial and residential buildings. The residential buildings that front John Parade, Robinson and Frederick Streets consist of large single dwellings with high site coverage and medium density housing. All dwellings along both roads have uninterrupted beach and ocean views. The commercial buildings which front Frederick Street, opposite Jefferson Park, includes the Beach Hotel which activates the street, and other more non-descript commercial premises.

The study area can be accessed by vehicle, pedestrian and cycle. Access is via Bathurst Way and public roads. Public transport that connects with the surrounding suburbs is considered poor.

### **2.2.2 Site use**

The study area is not overly developed and is a major community cultural asset for Merewether, Newcastle and the Hunter region. The study area offers a range of uses including active and passive recreation, tourism; commercial, conservation activities and educational opportunities (Figure 2-3) (Refer to Section 4.5 for further description of site use). Table 2-1 outlines the current usage of the study area.

**Table 2-1 Current site use**

Item	Usage
Merewether Ocean Baths	<p>The iconic Merewether Ocean Baths, Merewether Baths Pavilion and facilities is a major activity node and gathering point within the study area, and are still the largest wave-cut rock platform baths in Australia. The larger pool, located on the ocean side, is mainly used as a general recreational pool and for lap-swimming. The pool allows for casual swimming, scuba diving activities, life saving instruction and in addition provides a racing area with diving blocks at the southern end, which is often used for school swimming carnivals in the summer season.</p> <p>The smaller pool is shallower and is used as a children's pool. The sandy beach provided in one corner of the pool is extremely well utilised.</p>
Merewether Baths Pavilion	The Merewether Baths Pavilion provides public change rooms, showers and toilets. The Pavilion is viewed as being unattractive, outdated and lacks appropriate access for disabled citizens.
Merewether Ocean Baths – shade shelter	Shade structures with tables and seating are provided along the promenade west of the baths. These provide shade relief for families and other users of the baths and provide a place for social gathering.
Merewether Beach – shade shelter	Little shade is offered along the walkway with the exception of the shade shelter below the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) which provides tables and seats. This Pavilion is often used by families and groups for picnics on the weekends.
Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House)	The historic Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) is in an obvious state of disrepair and therefore is not longer used. Some seating is provided on the beach side of the building but due to the poor amenity of the area it is not used as much as other areas within the study area.
Merewether Surf Life Saving Club	The Merewether Surf Life Saving Club is a popular public congregation node offering facilities for functions, conducting competitions and Swells Café. During the day-time, tables and seating is provided along the upper beach promenade adjacent the café, attracting walkers and recreational users. Informal seating facilities such as the picnic tables and spherical bollards are located to the north, adjacent to the building, and provide good viewing to the surf and beach. The fence that traverses the edge of the upper beach promenade also provides for informal seating and viewing.
Beach promenades	Both promenades are highly utilised by users for walking, leisure and jogging, as well as a place to observe the ocean and activities on the beach.
Pedestrian underpass	The pedestrian underpass is predominantly the safest access to the study area across Fredrick Street, however it is under utilised due to public safety concerns.
Car parks	Besides being used for vehicle parking and a viewing area, part of the Watkins Street car park is utilised for temporary structures for the annual Surfest event.
Merewether Ocean Bath stairs	The stairs that traverse the slope adjacent to the Merewether Baths Pavilion, provide access to Frederick Street and the numerous car parks, and are also popular for use as fitness training by walkers, joggers and sports teams.
Merewether Beach	<p>The focal point of the study area, Merewether Beach, provides for a range of uses such as swimming, surfing, active and passive recreation and offers high visual and scenic quality with uninterrupted views towards Dixon Park and Bar Beach.</p> <p>The mid-part of the beach is regularly the preferred location for the bathing flags, which are patrolled by qualified life savers in the summer season.</p>
Rock platform	The rock platform encroaches on the southern half of the beach and becomes more prominent moving towards the Merewether baths. This platform is used for educational purposes as well as informal recreational activities such as fishing and surfing in parts.
Open space	Jefferson Park - is located behind the Surf life saving club and between Frederick Street and Henderson Parade, is the largest area of open space within the study

Item	Usage
	area. It provides a number of timber shade structures with seating and tables however, it lacks lighting and landscaping and is largely underutilised by the public due to the overall poor amenity, connectivity and facility provisions.
	Robinson Reserve - A small area of open space known as Robinson Reserve lies between Lloyd and Robinson Streets. This space, bounded by side fences of adjacent residential properties to the west and the cliff face to the east, is mainly used as a thoroughfare by residents in the above residential areas to access the beach area. The space is grassed and naturally landscaped but lacks formal stairs for walkers to travel on between Lloyd and Robinson Street.

## 2.3 Condition of land

### 2.3.1 Environment

The study area is geologically located on the Newcastle Coal Measures and is comprised of conglomerate, sandstone, siltstone, coal and tuff. The Newcastle Soil Landscape map (Series Sheet 9232) indicates that the site is located within the Killingworth and Stockton Beach Colluvial Landscapes. Reference to the Wallsend Acid Sulfate Soil Risk Map (Edition 2, 1997) indicates that there are no known occurrences of acid sulfate soil materials within the study area.

The entire study area rises in elevation from the beach (0m above sea level (AHD)) to the highest point of the study area being the southern point cliff line (Robinson Reserve) with an elevation of 42 m AHD (Figure 2-1). The steep topography in some parts limits the available areas for open space. The only open space areas are Jefferson Park (Photograph 2-5 and Photograph 2-6) and Robinson Reserve (Photograph 2-7) which are both sloped and bounded by traffic movements. There is a grass area and seating between the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) and the Merewether Ocean Baths (Photograph 2-8).

Problems evident on the site include:

- wind erosion hazard
- non-cohesive soils
- foundation hazard
- water erosion hazard
- mass movement hazard
- rock outcrop
- steep slopes
- salt scalding.





**Photograph 2-5: Jefferson Park and one of the picnic tables/shelters**



**Photograph 2-6: Jefferson Park (view towards Frederick and John Parade)**



**Photograph 2-7: Robinson Reserve**



**Photograph 2-8: Open space between Surf House and the Baths**

The vegetation of the study area is highly disturbed, with the only flora being shrub land communities on the headlands and coastal dunes, dominated by the introduced weed Bitou Bush (Figure 2-2). Recent initiatives by Council, Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and volunteer organisations such as Trees of Newcastle Landcare Group, has seen much of the Bitou Bush on foreshore areas removed and replaced with appropriate coastal species.

The vegetation of the study area contains habitat for a very low number of locally occurring fauna species. The sand-dune areas contain habitat for species of shorebirds, while the low shrubland provides habitat for a number of locally occurring bird and reptile species (Conacher Travers 2004).

The coastal zone is subject to continual change under the influence of the prevailing wind, wave and current patterns and associated sediment transport patterns. Variations in these processes, either naturally or induced by man (i.e. climate change), causes fluctuations in the shoreline, and constantly change the amount of sand present at Merewether Beach, over short and long term horizons. Coastal process hazards typically include areas of dune erosion and inundation.

The Newcastle Coastline Hazard Study (WBM 1998) considered that for the beaches south of the Hunter River entrance, the short-term storm bite demand is typical of NSW open coast beaches i.e. 200 cubic metres/metre or the available sand reserve to underlying rock or seawalls which ever is the greater. In general, this will result in the loss of most sand on the beaches following a significant storm event.

Furthermore, the long-term net longshore transport rate of sand can accordingly be expected to be sensitive to minor shifts in the dominant or average wave direction from year




to year. It was also considered in WBM (1998) that Newcastle's southern beaches are generally not experiencing any significant long term recession (i.e. sand loss). However, there could be a medium-term cycle of shoreline retreat and advance associated with a shifting of sand from one end to the other of the individual beaches under the prevailing conditions. The extent of such changes is not expected to be more than about 5 to 10 metres.





The rock seawall was constructed following severe erosion in 1974. The seawall extends along the seaward edge of John Parade from the Ocean Baths to Dixon Park. According to WBM, the seawalls are maintaining their structural integrity, however, a number of maintenance issues exist, which require on-going maintenance by Council.





### 2.3.2 Built environment

The public domain of the study area consists of a number of areas which are visually described in Figure 2-2 and outlined below in Table 2-2.

**Table 2-2 Condition of existing infrastructure**

Item	Description	Condition
<p>Merewether Ocean Baths</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-9: Merewether Ocean Baths</b></p>	<p>Consists of two concrete pools constructed on the rock platform. The larger pool, located on the ocean side, measures approximately 100 x 50 metres. The smaller pool is shallower and is used as a children's pool.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.</p>
<p>Merewether Baths Pavilion</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-10: Merewether Baths Pavilion</b></p>	<p>Provides public change rooms, showers and toilets. The Pavilion is viewed as being unattractive, outdated and lacks appropriate access for disabled citizens (NCC 2000). There is evidence of landslides on the cliff face behind the Pavilion.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly. The landslip issues need to be addressed.</p>
<p>Merewether Surf Life Saving Club building</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-11: Merewether SLSC</b></p>	<p>SLSC is a two storey brick building offering facilities for functions, conducting competitions, club room, surf life savers look out, storage of equipment, Swells Café and public amenities.</p>	<p>Overall in fair condition, deterioration in condition which would be obvious and there would be some serviceability loss.</p>

Item	Description	Condition
<p>Merewether Ocean Baths – Shade Shelter</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-12: Merewether Ocean Bath shelters</b></p>	<p>Wooden shade structure with picnic table.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.</p>
<p>Merewether Beach – Shade Shelter</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-13: Shade shelter</b></p>	<p>A large wooden shade shelter with a concrete floor and offers a number of picnic tables.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.</p>
<p>Stormwater Discharge Pipe</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-14: Stormwater outlet</b></p>	<p>Located along the beach and discharges large volumes of water in heavy storm conditions creating localised erosion and potentially lowering the water quality for swimmers and surfers.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition.</p>
<p>Beach Promenades</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-15: Upper and lower beach promenades</b></p>	<p>The promenades are prominent features of the study area and also act as a seawall, protecting the landward assets and property. The upper promenade, beginning at the Merewether Baths and extending north along John Parade to Dixon Park and beyond, forms a strong link between the Baths, Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) and the SLSC. The lower beach promenade sits just above beach level and also begins at the Baths and extends north to the SLSC and beach.</p> <p>Numerous social gathering places are situated along each promenade at various points however limited shade is provided. Adjacent dune regeneration areas act to visually soften the walkways which are dominated by concrete surfaces.</p>	<p>Upper promenade – in need of repair, uneven and narrow in sections.</p> <p>Lower promenade – in need of minor repairs</p>

Item	Description	Condition
<p>Merewether Ocean Baths stairs</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-16: Baths stairs</b></p>	<p>Large stair case that traverse the slope adjacent to the Merewether Baths Pavilion, providing access to Frederick Street and the numerous car parks.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition with some uneven steps requiring repairs.</p>
<p>Car parks</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-17: Watkins St car park</b></p>	<p>A large car park is provided in Watkins Street opposite the SLSC. This car park offers limited visual amenity due to a lack of landscaping and dominance of bitumen.</p> <p>The Robinson Reserve car park is accessed off Scenic Drive, lacks landscaping and is dominated by bitumen.</p> <p>Entry to the car park at the Baths is by Henderson Parade where the road terminates. Ninety degree parking is provided. Area is often congested and confusing due to the narrow nature of the road and limited turning facilities available at the termination of the road. There are landslide issues on the cliff face surrounding the carpark.</p>	<p>Overall the car parks are in good condition; however the landslip and stabilisation issues need to be addressed.</p>
<p>Pedestrian underpass</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-18: Pedestrian underpass</b></p>	<p>Concrete underpass across Fredrick Street.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition, lighting needs improving.</p>
<p>Roads</p>  <p><b>Photograph 2-19: Henderson Parade</b></p>	<p>The two roads which dissect the study area are Henderson Parade and John Parade. The main road Fredrick Street and Scenic Drive bound the western side of the study area.</p>	<p>Overall in good condition, except for the southwest end of Henderson Parade, which has one lane closed due to stabilisation issues.</p>





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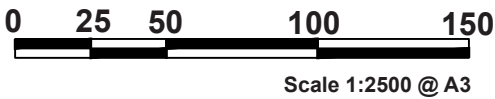


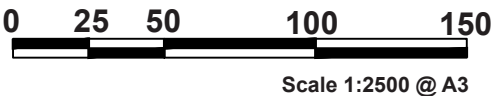
Figure 2.1: Topography





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**Figure 2.2: Existing Public Domain Structure**





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0 25 50 100 150  
Scale 1:2500 @ A3

Figure 2.3: Activity Nodes



### 3. Planning context

Section 3 outlines the planning framework for this PoM by addressing the legal framework for preparing a PoM and existing local plans and policies relevant to the study area and preparation of the PoM. This section also looks at the current ownership and zoning of the land at the study area, and any existing lease and licences at the study area.

Further information on the planning context of this PoM is attached in Appendices A and B.

#### 3.1 Legislative framework

Planning and management of Crown lands and Community land is subject to a number of statutory planning controls and policies. Those of direct relevance to this PoM include:

- Crown Lands Act 1989 and Crown Lands Regulation 2006.
- Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- Heritage Act 1977.
- NSW Coastal Policy 1997.
- SEPP71 – Coastal Protection.
- Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989.
- Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-31.
- Crown Lands Policy for Marinas and Waterfront Commercial Tenures 2005.
- Crown Lands Policy for Tourist and Associated Facilities on Crown Land 2006.

The *Crown Lands Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 1993* are the two laws which govern the management of Crown land and Community land respectively. These acts are discussed in the following sections with a summary of the other relevant legislation, planning and policy documents provided at Appendix A and B.

##### 3.1.1 ***Crown Lands Act 1989 and Crown Lands Regulation 2006***

Crown land must be used and managed in accordance with the provisions of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*. The Principles for managing Crown land are as follows:

- that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land
- that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible
- that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged
- that where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land is encouraged
- that where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity



- that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

The *Crown Lands Act 1989* sets out specific requirements in relation to the preparation, referral, display and adoption of plans of management. The Act requires that plans of management be placed on public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days and notified in the Government Gazette and a newspaper with Local or State circulation. The public are able to make comment on plans of management for a period of time before the plan is adopted. However, the Minister may adopt a plan of management without alteration or with such alteration as the Minister thinks fit.

### 3.1.2 ***Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005***

Community land is defined in the *Local Government Act 1993* to be that land which is set aside for community benefit, such as parks, sportsgrounds, reserves, community centres, swimming pools and walking tracks, and must be retained in public ownership and an adopted plan of management governs their use. Development and use of this land is subject to strict controls set out in the Act.

Sections 35-47 of the *Local Government Act 1993* set out a number of statutory requirements, which Council must consider in the preparation of plans of management. Under S.36(3) and S.36(3A) a plan of management must identify the following (S.36(3)):

- (a) the category of the land (Section 5.4.1 of PoM)
- (b) the objectives and performance targets of the plan with respect to the land (Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of PoM)
- (c) the means by which the council proposes to achieve the plan's objectives and performance targets (Section 6, Table 6-1 of PoM)
- (d) the manner in which the council proposes to assess its performance with respect to the plan's objectives and performance targets (Section 6, Table 6-1 of PoM)
- (e) and may require the prior approval of the council to the carrying out of any specified activity on the land (Section 5.4.2 of PoM).

A plan of management that applies to just one area of community land (S.36(3A)):

- (a) must include a description of:
  - (i) the condition of the land, and of any buildings or other improvements on the land, as at the date of adoption of the plan of management (Sections 2, and 4 of PoM)
  - (ii) the use of the land and any such buildings or improvements as at that date (Sections 2 of PoM).
- (b) must:
  - (i) specify the purposes for which the land, and any such buildings or improvements, will be permitted to be used (Section 5 of PoM)
  - (ii) specify the purposes for which any further development of the land will be permitted, whether under lease or licence or otherwise (Section 5 of PoM)

- (iii) describe the scale and intensity of any such permitted use or development (Section 5 of PoM).

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires Community land to be categorised for a specific use. Section 36(4) and (5) outline the categories which Community land can be categorised as and S.102 -112 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 outlines the management guidelines for each category.

The other main purpose of a plan of management is to outline future lease, licensing and grants to be allowed on the Community land in the future. Section 46 and 46(A) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and S.116 and S.117 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 outlines the requirements/guidelines for issuing leases, licenses and grants on Community land.

The *Local Government Act 1993* also identifies that a plan of management must be publicly exhibited for a minimum of 28 days and for submissions to be received for a minimum period of 42 days following the commencement of public exhibition (S.38 and S.43).

## 3.2 Local plans and policies

Newcastle City Council has its own plans and policies which are relevant to the use and management of Community land and Crown land that forms part of the study area. The plans and policies relevant to the study area and which were reviewed during the preparation of this PoM (Appendix B) include:

- Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2003.
- The Newcastle Urban Strategy (2005).
- Development Control Plans.
- Newcastle Bike Plan 2008 (Draft).
- Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003.
- Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006-2016.
- Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management (2000).
- Newcastle City Council Community Plan 2006-2010.
- The Bathers Way: A Tourism Development Strategy for the Newcastle City Coastal Walk (2000).
- Beach Assets Framework August 2007.
- Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006.
- Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan 2004.

## 3.3 Land use zoning

The majority of the study area is zoned 6(a) Open Space and Recreation Zone, except Lot/DP 1/564017 which is zoned 5(b) Special Uses Reservation Zone and Lot/DP 8/111243 zoned 2(b) Urban Core Zone (see Figure 3-1).

The objectives for zone 6(a) Open Space and Recreation Zone, as outlined in the NCC Local Environment Plan 2003 are:

- (a) To accommodate leisure, recreation and sports facilities in parks, gardens, plazas and other open spaces, for the general use of the community, where consistent with an adopted plan of management under the Local Government Act 1993 or the Crown Lands Act 1989.
- (b) To provide for the conservation of urban bushland where associated with parks and other open spaces.
- (c) To accommodate other facilities for the benefit of the community that are compatible and consistent with the heritage and character of the open space and with the character and amenity of the neighbourhood.

The objectives for zone 5(b) Special Uses Reservation Zone, as outlined in the NCC Local Environment Plan 2003 are:

- (a) To reserve land for future essential services including roads, railways, open space and community purposes.
- (b) To reserve for open space purposes land possessing special recreational, aesthetic, ecological or conservation value.
- (c) To protect land that is to be acquired for a public purpose from inappropriate development.
- (d) To allow the development of land within this zone for an interim purpose where it is not immediately required, provided that such development does not affect the usefulness of the land for the nominated purpose for which it is required.

The objectives for zone 2(b) Urban Core Zone, as outlined in the NCC Local Environment Plan 2003 are:

- (a) To provide for a diversity of housing types that respect the amenity, heritage and character of surrounding development and the quality of the environment.
- (b) To accommodate a mix of home-based employment-generating activities that are compatible in scale and character with a predominantly residential environment.
- (c) To accommodate a limited range of non-residential development of a scale and intensity compatible with a predominantly residential environment which does not unreasonably detract from the amenity or character of the neighbourhood or the quality of the environment.
- (d) To require the retention of existing housing stock where appropriate, having regard to ESD principles.

The areas surrounding the study area are zoned:

- 2(a) Residential Zone – the residential area opposite John Parade, between Watkins Street and Ocean Street. The residential areas to the south of the Precinct, along Robinson Street, Lloyd Street and Scenic Drive.
- 2(b) Urban Core Zone – along the western boundary of the car park and along Frederick Street.
- 3(a) Local Centre Zone – the Beach Hotel and the few businesses to the north of The Beach Hotel, on the corner of Frederick Street and Ridge Street.

### **3.4 Existing leases and licences**

Currently there are no existing leases or licences held at the study area. There is no formal agreement between Council and the surf club for the occupation of the Merewether Surf Life Saving Club building. The kiosk within the Surf Life Saving Club building is not leased separately and is part of the Surf Life Saving Club operations. The Surf Life Saving Club has an agreement with the operator of Swells Café, for which no commercial rent is being paid to Council.

There is the potential for the Community land to be consolidated and transferred to Crown land; this may impact on future lease and licenses.





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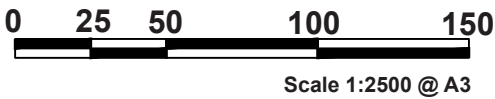


Figure 3.1: Land Zoning



## 4. Basis for management

Section 4 outlines the basis for management by looking at the PoM process (past management of the study area), and assessing the current role of the study area in the community. To gain an understanding and to identify the key values of the study area and the existing key theme of issues, a consultation program with the community and stakeholders was completed. Finally a SWOT analysis was conducted to determine the study area's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats which assists in determining the best way forward with future management of the study area (Section 5 and 6).

### 4.1 PoM process

As stated in Section 1.2, there has been no holistic PoM prepared previously for the study area as required by both the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Crown Lands Act 1989* for community land (owned by Council) and lands owned by the Crown.

A PoM is needed to provide a holistic management of the study area and to formalise future usage of the land. To be able to formalise the usage of the land through leases and licences, Council needs to have identified the core objectives of the land (categorisation of Community land). As there is presently no PoM for the entire study area, not all land within the study area has been categorised and therefore NCC is unable to identify if proposed uses are consistent with the core objectives of the land. Therefore a PoM is required to categorise Community land and formalise lease and licences.

To prepare the PoM a review of previous studies conducted on the study area was undertaken by PB and MLA; the information from the previous studies formed the basis for some of the background research to the PoM. The studies reviewed include, but were not limited to:

- Newcastle Coastline Management Study 2003.
- Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003.
- The Bathers Way: A Tourism Development Strategy for the Newcastle City Coastal Walk 2000.
- Heritage Places: Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2000.
- Merewether Traffic Study 1992.
- Newcastle Urban Strategy 2005.
- Beach Asset Framework 2007.
- Beach Asset Framework volume two: stage one consultation findings 2006.

Background information to the study area has included the above studies and previous consultation (Appendix B), along with analysis of statutory considerations and site visits by consultants PB and MLA. Community and stakeholder consultation was undertaken (outlined in Section 4.3) to determine the values of the site (addressed in Section 4.4). From the background review and the consultations a SWOT analysis (Section 4.6) was conducted to identify the key issues and to then develop the future management goals and performance targets (objectives) (Section 5) for the study area. The management aims and

objectives guided the proposed future management framework for the study area (Section 5). This informed the preparation of the concept master plan and implementation plan (Section 6).

## 4.2 Current role of Merewether Beach Reserves

In a regional sense the city of Newcastle offers more than 1200 ha of open space including sportsgrounds, playgrounds, heritage parks, bushland, 5 swimming centres, 6 patrolled beaches and 2 ocean baths. Within this context the study area is one of Newcastle's most prominent recreational areas, particularly for surfing.

Merewether Beach for the past 2 years has been host to Surfest the largest surfing competition in Australia. Merewether Beach is one of the five locals in Australia to host the event each year. Surfest is Newcastle's only annual international sporting event and Surfest alone attracts more than 200 surfers from Australia, the United States, Hawaii, Brazil, Japan, South Africa, New Zealand and France.

So significant is Merewether Beach that there is the opportunity for Lands to legally reserve Merewether Beach as a Crown reserve for the public purpose of 'surfing recreation' (National Surfing Reserve) under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*. This offers legal protection to a national surfing reserve and highlights the significance of the Crown estate in the surfing culture and Australian lifestyle.

Apart from surfing, the study area provides for many other activities. The study area can currently be defined by 4 broad existing activity nodes which are described in Figure 2-3. These existing activity nodes are described below.

- *Merewether Baths activity node* - includes Merewether Baths, Merewether Baths Pavilion, rock platform, Merewether Baths car parking areas, slope constrained areas surrounding the baths and the cliff car park area (Robinson Reserve). The Baths and facilities represent a major activity node at a local and regional level for users and tourists alike. The activities within this activity node include:
  - active recreation
  - passive recreation
  - education (rock platform)
  - tourism
  - conservation (rock platform).
- *Merewether Beach Shade Pavilion activity node* - includes the Merewether Beach shade pavilion, and surrounding congregation amenities such as seating, open cold showers, access stairs and ramps and the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House). These amenities attract some minor activity and passive recreation. Current activity in this activity node is lacking in comparison to others due to the condition of the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House). The current activities within this activity node include:
  - passive recreation.
- *Open space activity node* - includes Jefferson Park, the northern car park, dunes rehabilitation area and the Surf Life Saving Club (including Swells Café). The open space within this area has low amenity due to a lack of vegetation, shade, disconnected

and unused space caused by the positioning of John and Henderson Parade. The Surf Life Saving Club is a major feature of this activity node within the study area. The current activities within this activity node include:

- active recreation
  - passive recreation
  - tourism
  - commercial
  - conservation (dune rehabilitation).
- *Promenade and beach activity node* - includes John Parade, beach promenade, the beach and ocean. This area is also host to Surfest which is the largest surfing carnival in Australia. These elements combined create a major focal point for local and regional users of the site. The current activities within this activity node include:
    - active recreation
    - passive recreation
    - tourism.

While the site provides for a range of activities and uses, the spatial qualities and linkages through which users experience the site are somewhat disconnected due to road positioning between key uses/activities and constrained in parts particularly around the Merewether Ocean Baths which is characterised by steep topography.

## 4.3 Consultation

The study area is a well known and popular beach area in the Hunter region. The future use and management of this popular social area will have an impact on users of the study area, and therefore community and stakeholder participation is important to the success and acceptance of the PoM.

Under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 1993* community and stakeholder participation in the preparation of plans of management is obliged. The consultation program for the preparation of this PoM included a workshop, community surveys and submissions. For further details on the consultation program and summary report of the stakeholder and community consultation see Appendix C.

The workshop, submissions and community surveys, have assisted with determining the values (Section 4.4), conducting the SWOT analysis (Section 4.6) and identifying the key issues (Section 4.5) of the study area.

## 4.4 Values

The values, outlined in Table 4-1, have been identified through the community consultation program (workshop, submissions and surveys).

**Table 4-1 Values**

<b>Values</b>	
<b>Recreation Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passive and active recreation.</li> <li>Merewether Ocean Baths – safe, free admission, sole swimmer, swimming groups, school carnivals.</li> <li>Promenades – can be used by all people (including wheelchairs and prams) all year round, provides a connection with Dixon Park and Burwood Beach.</li> <li>Beach – Surfest, clean, free, patrolled, SLSC participation, surfing, body boarding, swimming, fishing, windsurfing, kite surfing, diving, group fitness classes, relaxation, bird watching, sunbathing, picnicking, and other social gatherings.</li> <li>Jefferson Park - open space, passive recreation opportunities, social gatherings and group fitness classes.</li> </ul>
<b>Community and heritage asset</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History – study area has a long history with many of the historic features still present. The study area still very much under developed and little has changed in the past 30 years, therefore it has retained some of its history and culture.</li> <li>Community - the study area is identified as a local and family orientated area and is recognised as a social gathering for the surrounding neighbourhoods. This community focus culture distinguishes the study area from other coastal areas in the LGA.</li> <li>The close physical connection of residents with the study area gives people a sense of the beach being an extension of their backyards and they feel a sense of ownership of the study area.</li> <li>Existing facilities provide the opportunities for people to gather with family and friends.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Aesthetics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeling of freedom and openness which provides an escape from the built up urban realm of the Newcastle City.</li> <li>Magnificent views of the Newcastle coastline.</li> <li>The rock platform and tidal pools offer a diversity of marine ecology, providing an educational experience for researchers and the casual observe, and providing hours of exploring and enjoyment for children.</li> <li>The revegetation of the sand dunes has been applauded by the community as not only providing stability of the sand dunes, but bringing back and providing that connection between the beach and the urban realm.</li> </ul>

## 4.5 Key issues

The current issues at the study area have been identified by PB and MLA's own site analysis, a review of previous studies, previous community consultation, discussions with Council, Lands, Steering Committee and input received from the stakeholder and community consultation program (workshop, submissions and surveys). Many of the issues in the previous community consultation and studies are still relevant today. As a result the existing issues have been included the current issues.

The key issues identified at the study area relate to:

- traffic and access

- environment and landscaping
- infrastructure and services
- social
- management.

The main issues are outlined and addressed further in Section 5.2, and a summary of all the issues identified in the stakeholder and community consultation program is outlined in Appendix C.

## **4.6 SWOT analysis**

A SWOT analysis identifies the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis for the study area has provided a better understanding of the constraints and opportunities for future use and management of the study area and is outlined in Table 4-2.



**Table 4-2 SWOT analysis**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><b>Location</b> – the study area is situated along one of the most beautiful coastlines in New South Wales, nestled on the Newcastle coastline. It is located less than 4 km from Newcastle CBD and is within the regional centre of the Hunter. Located in the seaside suburb of Merewether the study area is the gateway to the southern end of the popular coastal drive from the Scenic Drive (off the Pacific Highway) to Newcastle CBD.</p> <p><b>Access</b> – the Merewether study area is located along Frederick Street, a busy arterial road connecting people from the Pacific Highway (via Scenic Drive) and to nearby streets heading into the CBD. Frederick Street is a four lane wide main road with no private driveways accessing the street adjacent the study area.</p> <p><b>Diversity of existing use and facilities</b> – the study area already caters for a large number of different activities, from the Merewether Ocean Baths, patrolled beach and walking/cycle way, to open space for group fitness, picnics and gatherings. Swells café provides beach side beverage and food, and the surf club acts as a venue for community groups and parties. Surfest is now being held at the study area each year and there is the potential for other events to be held at the study area.</p> <p><b>Functional</b> - the study area is still functional, in particular the Surf Life Saving Club which provides amenities, a venue for community use, and Swells Café, and the Merewether Ocean Baths provides amenities and change rooms for Ocean Bath users. There are a few shade structures, picnic tables and seating along the walkway and at Jefferson Park. Many people like the study area just the way it is, however many people agree that the facilities are old and run down and in need of repair and better maintenance.</p> <p><b>Parking</b> – there is already a large number of parking spaces available, however there is room to enlarge and make better use of existing parking areas within and around the study area (e.g. Dixon Park).</p> <p><b>Community opportunity</b> – throughout the development of the PoM, the community and stakeholders get several opportunities to express their opinions about the current operation of the study area, and during public exhibition of the PoM the public have the chance to comment on the document. This process helps identify why people use the study area and what they would like see it managed in the future. The consultation process helps the consultants, NCC and Lands to prepare a PoM that will satisfy majority of the community.</p>	<p><b>Relief</b> – the steep slopes behind Merewether Baths Pavilion, baths car park and along Henderson parade are suffering substantial erosion problems and weed infestation.</p> <p><b>Internal access</b> – Although Henderson Parade provides access off John Parade and Frederick Street; to Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) and the Baths, the road dissects the study area creating a beachside area (Merewether SLSC, Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House), walkway etc) and the back area (Jefferson Park). This separation does not provide the connectivity of the entire study area and results in a reduction of possible open space and use of the study area.</p> <p><b>Location of Swells</b> – the beachside area of the SLSC is a major activity node in that it is near the main car park and it is the location of Swells Café. However, there is a pedestrian conflict, as the pathway is narrow and Swells Café sets out tables and chairs along the pathway for customers. The amenities are located next to Swells and there are tables and chairs to the north of the SLSC which often is a gathering point for people meeting friends and family. There is normal a congestion of people moving in this small area which results in impractical pedestrian movement.</p> <p><b>Lack of public transport</b> – there is currently only one bus servicing the study area and taxis.</p> <p><b>Pedestrian access</b> – pedestrian access from Frederick Street is inadequate, as the undercrossing is not well lit, comes out at Henderson Parade with moving traffic and no safe crossing to the beach. It is not well noticed or marked at Ridge Street and has no disabled access. Disabled access within the study area has been largely neglected, with there only being stairs or the road for wheel chair access from Frederick Street to the baths, and limited safe parking spaces near the baths. The pathway is also narrow and impractical for disabled people needing help walking or moving.</p> <p><b>Parking</b> - Car parking is congested, confusing and pedestrian unfriendly along Henderson Parade, and along the western end of John Street. Parking along the western end of John Parade makes crossing from the car park to the SLSC unsafe as there is limited line of site for pedestrians. The parking area at the Baths is unsafe and impractical. Henderson Parade is a cul-de-sac with parking provided to the very end of the Parade meaning motorists have to reverse out of the parking area to be able to turn around and exit. The parking area is too close to the walkway and Baths were families with</p>

Strengths	Weaknesses
	<p>young children gather.</p> <p><b>Shade and landscaping</b> - Lack of adequate shade structures, the absence of trees and poor landscaping detracts from visual amenity, particularly at Jefferson Park.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>Relief</b> – the eroding steep slopes behind the Baths Pavilion does provide a good opportunity to construct a multi storey building into the slope, which would not impede people’s views and would result in the stabilisation of the slope.</p> <p><b>Open space consolidation</b> – there is the opportunity to consolidate the open spaces and create one large open space area that would create connectivity with the beach, walkway, SLSC, Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) and Merewether Ocean Baths. The open space area would be safe for pedestrians and be more functional with more shade, landscaping and picnic facilities.</p> <p><b>Building reuse/redevelopment</b> – there is the Merewether SLSC and the Merewether Baths Pavilion existing at the study area. Although these two buildings are aging and run down there is the potential to either, repair and better maintain the existing buildings, or demolish and rebuild on the existing buildings sites.</p> <p><b>Merewether Ocean Baths</b> - are a focus of community life and fundamental to the character of the study area. The Baths are a major drawcard for local families and a centre for social interaction.</p> <p><b>Tourism Potential</b> - The study area has significant tourism potential and resulting income generation through improved facilities such as cafes, restaurants etc, and improved visual amenity. The study area is a major entrance to the Bathers Way and offers a prime entrance link from the Great North Walk. Events such as Surfest draw in large crowds to the study area and bring in business for local businesses. The location and available open space, parking and amenities there is potential for more events (e.g. markets, festivals) to be held at the study area.</p> <p><b>Education</b> - The study area has important history for not only Merewether but the Hunter. This history needs to be retained at the study area and visitors be informed of the study areas past. The rock platforms hold a diversity of marine ecology, which offer interesting prospects for biological diversity investigation, school and academic study and discovery.</p>	<p><b>Coastal processes</b> – the coastline is an ever changing area, and humans have very limited control on the coastal processes. Although we humans can try and protect the coastline and coastline development through revegetation of sand dunes, build buildings that will withstand to some degree sea salt, sand erosion, strong winds and storms, there is always the chance of strong storms and seas causing damage and altering the coastlines shape.</p> <p><b>Community perception</b> – the PoM is required to be put on public exhibition and during this exhibition period people are able to make submissions voicing their opinions and raise any issue they have with the PoM. NCC and Lands need to take into consideration all submissions received during the exhibition period. It is impossible to meet the needs of everyone in the community and therefore there is always the chance that there could be some negative feedback about the PoM during its exhibition. The substantial community and stakeholder involvement throughout the development of the PoM assists the consultants, NCC and Lands to prepare a PoM that should meet the needs of the majority of the community and hopeful reduce negative feedback.</p> <p><b>Funding</b> – funding is an existing issue with many of the facilities at the study area old, run down and in need of replacement. Any proposed changes/works for the study area will require funding and long term financial support for future maintenance.</p>

## 5. Management framework

Section 5 has been prepared with the knowledge obtained from the background analysis conducted in Sections 1-4. Section 5 outlines the future management framework for the study area by separating the study area into new management precincts, with each management precinct having a goal and performance targets addressing the key issues to achieving the precinct goal. A concept master plan has been prepared to visually illustrate what the study area could look like in the future if the performance targets and goals of each management precinct are achieved.

The future management framework for the study area also includes meeting statutory requirements, such as categorisation of Community land and the formalisation of lease and licences.

### 5.1 Management precincts and goals

To assist with the future development and management of the study area, the study area has been separated into 5 distinctive, yet interconnected, management precincts (as apposed to the current 4 unconnected activity nodes). These 5 new management precincts have been developed through analysis of the current 4 activity nodes and from the findings of the SWOT Analysis. The new management precincts are (refer to Figure 5-1):

- Precinct 1 – Merewether Beach Gateway.
- Precinct 2 – Merewether Ocean Baths and Multi-Purpose Facility.
- Precinct 3 - Merewether Beach Open Space Area.
- Precinct 4 – Merewether Beach Promenade.
- Precinct 5 – Merewether Beach.

To be able to protect and maintain the values of the study area (recreation opportunities, community and heritage assets, and environmental aesthetics) and keeping in line with the PoM vision; management goals for the 5 new management precincts have been identified, as outlined in Table 5-1. The goal for each management precinct will help define the appropriate management actions to be implemented (see Section 6 Implementation and Action Plan) in the future.

**Table 5-1 New management precinct goals**

Management Area	Goal
Precinct 1 – Merewether Beach Gateway	Scenic Drive will be a gateway to Merewether Beach and will become a significant viewing area of the Newcastle coastline.
Precinct 2 – Merewether Ocean Baths and Multi-Purpose Facility	To be a major activity and social area for Merewether Beach and the Newcastle coastline. It will provide opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as for commercial development, while maintaining the heritage of the Merewether Ocean Baths and railway.
Precinct 3 – Merewether Beach Open Space Area	To be a safe and functional open space area for passive and active recreation, with supporting community amenities and facilities.

Management Area	Goal
Precinct 4 – Merewether Beach Promenade	The Beach Promenade (including John Parade Promenade) will be a major public recreational feature for Newcastle and accessible to anyone.
Precinct 5 – Merewether Beach	The coastline will be a clean and safe environment for the use of all people and the heritage of Merewether Beach will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.





**Disclaimer:** While all reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information contained on this map is up to date and accurate, no warranty is given that the information contained on this map is free from error or omission. Any reliance placed on such information shall be at the sole risk of the user. Please verify the accuracy of the information prior to using it.

**Note:** The information shown on this map is a copyright of the Newcastle City Council and the NSW Department of Lands

**Figure 5.1: New Management Precincts**



## 5.2 Issues and performance targets

Performance targets (objectives) have been developed to help guide the development of actions to deal with each issue in the Implementation Plan (Section 6). The Performance targets are related to the overall goal for each management precinct and outlines what the PoM aims to achieve. The main issues associated with the study area and related performance targets are summarised in Table 5-2.

A summary of all the issues raised in the stakeholder and community consultation program is outlined in Appendix C.

**Table 5-2 Issues and performance targets**

General		
Theme	Issue	Performance Targets (Objective)
Traffic & Access	Traffic congestion. Parking is limited. Pedestrian safety and access.	Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.
	Community concerns about losing access to Burwood Beach.	Maintain access and connection to Burwood Beach and Glenrock State Conservation Area.
Environment & Landscaping	Relationship of community with natural environment.	Increased community awareness of coastal processes.
	Community awareness and education.	Encourage/continue educational activities.
Infrastructure & Services	Tourism & events (e.g. Surf-fest).	Promote & facilitate well managed special events.
	Maintenance re; safety, lighting and improvements.	Improve public domain and integrate with Bathers Way.
	Poor maintenance of the facilities.	Facilities are being regularly maintained.
Social	Funding.	Allow commercial activities through formalised lease and licenses, provided the activity is sensitive to the area, recognises the culture and history of the area and is in line with the land categories core objectives.
	The loss of the heritage of Merewether Beach.	Heritage of Merewether Beach is incorporated into future developments and management of the area.
Management	Lack of recognition for the beach as a key surfing beach.	Merewether Beach is a designated National surfing reserve.
	Lot/DP 1/564017 and 8/111243 are inappropriately zoned for the current and future use of the land.  Land ownership consists of Community land being separated by small areas of Crown land and Crown land being separated by small areas of Community land, this then result in underutilised areas of land and management issues.	Rationalisation of land tenure and LEP zonings.

### Management Precinct 1 – Merewether Beach Gateway

*Goal – Scenic Drive will be a gateway to Merewether Beach and will become a significant viewing area of the Newcastle coastline.*

Theme	Issue	Performance Target (Objective)
Traffic & Access	High speed by motorist on Scenic Drive and Frederick Street. <sup>##</sup>	Create a gateway to Merewether Beach that will symbolise the significance of the area.
	Access to Robinson Reserve car park is unsafe during peak traffic time.	Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.
	Robinson Reserve car park is not formalised and can at times be chaotic.	
	Lack of safe pedestrian crossing along Frederick Street. <sup>##</sup>	
	Lack of public transport. * <sup>##</sup>	Investigate the opportunities for better public transport.
	Robinson Reserve is used as a walk through for residents, but it is steep and has no formal access path/steps.	To stabilise the slope of Robinson Reserve and where possible replant with native vegetation.
		Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.
Infrastructure & services	There is no designated viewing area in the Robinson Reserve car park.	Identify opportunities to provide a safe viewing area from Robinson Reserve.

### Management Precinct 2 – Merewether Ocean Baths and Multi-Purpose Facility

*Goal - To be a major activity and social area for Merewether Beach and the Newcastle coastline. It will provide opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as for commercial development, while maintaining the heritage of the Merewether Ocean Baths and railway.*

Theme	Issue	Performance Target (Objective)
Traffic & Access	Lack of parking at Merewether Ocean Baths, particularly for the elderly and young families.	Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.
	Parking is chaotic and unsafe at the Merewether Ocean Baths. <sup>##</sup>	
	Pedestrian movement to the Merewether Ocean Baths can at times be unsafe due to vehicular movement.	
	Repair and maintenance of steps from upper Merewether Ocean Baths car park to Merewether Ocean Baths. <sup>#</sup>	Merewether Ocean Baths steps are maintained in a safer, usable condition.
Infrastructure &	Merewether Ocean Baths building has no aesthetic value and is in a poor	Investigate opportunities for redevelopment of the Merewether

Services	<p>condition.<sup>##</sup></p> <p>Amenities (showers, toilets, change rooms) are in a poor condition and are poorly maintained.<sup>**##</sup></p> <p>Lack of other café, restaurant, bar facilities.<sup>* ** ##</sup></p> <p>Potential over development.<sup>**</sup></p>	<p>Ocean Baths building for all users incorporating revenue generation and improved public amenities for Ocean Bath users.</p>
	<p>Merewether Ocean Baths need repairs<sup>#</sup>, particularly the surface of the kids pool.</p> <p>Lack of seating and shade provision surround Merewether Ocean Baths.<sup>##</sup></p>	<p>Maintain the Merewether Ocean Baths for long-term future use.</p> <p>Provide shade and seating structures surrounding the Merewether Ocean Baths for users.</p>
	<p>Cliff area behind the Merewether Ocean Baths building is unstable and has suffered from recent land slides.<sup>##</sup></p>	<p>Stabilise the cliff area and where possible replant with native vegetation.</p>

### Management Precinct 3 – Merewether Beach Open Space Area

*Goal - To be a safe and functional open space area for passive and active recreation, with supporting community amenities and facilities.*

Theme	Issue	Performance Targets (Objectives)
Traffic & Access	<p>Jefferson Park is not utilised as it is surrounded by vehicle movement.</p> <p>Unsafe and lack of pedestrian crossings.<sup>##</sup></p> <p>Parking can at times be chaotic and unsafe.</p> <p>Appearance of car parks spaces and associated vehicular access is intrusive and reduces the aesthetic quality.<sup>*</sup></p> <p>John Parade/Frederick Street vehicle access is dangerous.</p>	<p>Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</p>
Infrastructure & Services	<p>Limited facilities for parents with children.</p>	<p>Investigate the options for a multi use public domain area.</p>
Environment & Landscaping	<p>Jefferson Park is not utilised as it is not level.</p> <p>Jefferson Park lacks landscaping.<sup>* ##</sup></p> <p>Lack of picnic and BBQ facilities.</p> <p>Lack of seating.</p> <p>Lack of shade provision.<sup>*# ##</sup></p>	<p>Increase the 'useability' of Jefferson Park through incorporating level open space areas, landscaping, picnic facilities, shade and seating structures.</p>

#### Management Precinct 4 – Merewether Beach Promenade

*Goal - The Beach Promenade (including John Parade Promenade) will be a major public recreational feature for Newcastle and accessible to anyone.*

Theme	Issue	Performance Targets (Objectives)
Infrastructure & Services	<p>Promenade is narrow, over crowded and dangerous along John Parade.</p> <p>Promenade is in a poor condition and suffers from poor maintenance.*</p> <p>There is too much concrete and no colour.</p> <p>Poor lighting along promenade.</p> <p>Lack of shade provision.*# ##</p> <p>Lack of seating along promenade.</p> <p>Fence is unattractive and impairs on peoples views of the beach as they drive by.</p>	<p>Increase the promenades capacity so as to allow it to cope with increase use in the future.</p> <p>Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</p> <p>Upgrade of promenades facilities and utilities so that it is usable at all times.</p>
	<p>Surf Life Saving Club Building has no aesthetic value, is old and not in the best condition.</p> <p>Amenities at the Surf Life Saving Club are in a poor condition and are poorly maintained.**#</p> <p>Swell's Café area is too congested, takes up pedestrian thoroughfare and the limited shelter of the Surf Life Saving Club.</p> <p>No traditional kiosk.</p>	<p>Investigate opportunities for the construct of a new Surf Life Saving Club building, providing facilities for the Surf Club and the public.</p>
Social	<p>Some dog owners not being responsible, dogs not on leash, not under control, leaving faeces on promenade.</p>	<p>Implementation of dog control measures which encourage appropriate use of the promenade.</p>
Environment & Landscaping	<p>Areas between the beach and promenade and the areas surround Surf Life Saving Club building are steep.##</p>	<p>Stabilisation and where possible replant with native vegetation.</p>

#### Management Precinct 5 – Merewether Beach

*Goal - The coastline will be a clean and safe environment for the use of all people and the heritage of Merewether Beach will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.*

Theme	Issue	Performance Targets (Objectives)
Social	Community concern over water quality from the stormwater outlet.	Water quality monitoring of the Stormwater Outlet.
	Alcohol- safety issues with glass being left on the beach and intoxicated swimmers.	Merewether Beach is a safe and socially acceptable area for families and other users.
Infrastructure &	Old Ladies Pool is dangerous for users in its current condition as the	Maintain the heritage of the Old Ladies Pool and provide safe use



Services	rusted metal reinforcement is protruding from the Pools eroding walls	for user.
	Community concern over the proposed construction of the surf life saving facility.	Maintain safe use of the beach.
Environment & Landscaping	Boardriders Associations concern over the impact of current dune stabilisation and Council beach cleaning tractor on the quality of the surf.	Ensure beach maintenance practices are appropriate. Continue sand dune stabilisation and long-term maintenance. Maintain safe use of the beach.
	Lack of education in the community about the ecological importance of the rock platform.	Educational awareness of the rock platform.

#### Legend

- \* Issue also raised in the Newcastle Coastline Management Study 2003
- \*\* Issue also raised in the Beach Asset Framework volume two: stage one consultation findings
- # Issue also raised in the Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2006
- ## Issue also raised in the Bathers Way A Tourism Development Strategy for the Newcastle City Coastal Walk

### 5.3 Concept master plan

The Concept Master Plan (CMP) for the study area (see Figure 5-2) was prepared based on the goals and performance targets for each management precinct and overall design principles (see Table 5-3). The CMP illustrates what the study area could potentially accomplish if the performance targets and goals of each management precinct are achieved. It demonstrates the potential for the study area to provide a variety of activities/uses, which together, will make the study area a functional open space, coastal area that will cater for a variety of users and visitor needs.

The CMP illustrates the utilisation of some existing assets and makes the study area into a more functional and highly significant place for the future use and enjoyment of the Merewether community and visitors. The CMP recognises the strengths and opportunities of the study area and demonstrates the need to try and mitigate some of the study areas weaknesses and threats. The CMP emphasises the study areas location, as well as the opportunity to create more open space (a limited asset along the coast in Newcastle).

It should be noted that many of the proposals in the CMP are still dependent on the completion of further studies to investigate the feasibility and options for certain proposals (e.g. returning land to open space for a public plaza, road closures or one-way street etc). It is also anticipated that some of the built form outcomes may be dependent on business ventures. The scale of these ventures is likely to be subject to commercial decisions.

**Table 5-3 Proposed design of management precinct**

Management Precinct	Goal and performance targets	Design Principles	Future outlook of management precinct
<b>Management precinct 1</b>	<p><i>Scenic Drive will be a gateway to Merewether Beach and will become a significant viewing area of the Newcastle coastline.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a gateway to Merewether Beach that will symbolise the significance of the area.</li> <li>▪ Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</li> <li>▪ Investigate the opportunities for better public transport.</li> <li>▪ To stabilise the slope of Robinson Reserve and where possible replant with native vegetation.</li> <li>▪ Identify opportunities to provide a safe viewing area from Robinson Reserve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create safe vantage points that provide views of the coastline to the north and the south.</li> <li>▪ Promote user safety through passive surveillance and encouraged usage.</li> <li>▪ Promote safe and equitable access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that any built form allows efficient and effective management and maintenance.</li> <li>▪ Encourage the option for use of public transport.</li> </ul>	<p>Develop the precinct into a gateway to the Newcastle coastline using suitable traffic control measures, which maximises visual connections to the ocean along Scenic Drive and Frederick Street.</p> <p>Robinson Reserve cliff top car park will become a significant lookout point to view the Newcastle coastline.</p> <p>The cliff top grassed area will enhance the setting of the coastline and provide safer pedestrian linkage for residents in the residential areas above, plus provide additional viewing area.</p>
<b>Management Precinct 2</b>	<p><i>To be a major activity and social area for Merewether Beach and the Newcastle coastline. It will provide opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as for commercial development, while maintaining the heritage of the Merewether Ocean Baths and railway.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</li> <li>▪ Merewether Ocean Baths steps are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure a safe environment for users of a multi-purpose function facility (if such a facility is constructed).</li> <li>▪ Multi-purpose function facility should be sympathetic in design to surrounding environment.</li> <li>▪ Allow for increased and functional parking demands.</li> <li>▪ Ensure sufficient shade and seating.</li> </ul>	<p>The Merewether Ocean Baths, redevelopment of the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) and proposed redevelopment of the Merewether Baths Pavilion will be a major area of activity for the study area and the Newcastle coastline.</p> <p>The Merewether Ocean Baths will continue to be a popular destination for locals and holiday makers. The heritage of the area will be a significant focal point of the precinct.</p> <p>There is the potential for redevelopment of the existing Merewether Baths Pavilion and also the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) which is currently separate development process.</p>

Management Precinct	Goal and performance targets	Design Principles	Future outlook of management precinct
	<p>maintained in a safer, usable condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate opportunities for redevelopment of the Merewether Ocean Baths building for all users incorporating revenue generation and improved public amenities for Ocean Bath users.</li> <li>Maintain the Merewether Ocean Baths for long-term future use.</li> <li>Provide shade and seating structures surrounding the Merewether Ocean Baths for users.</li> <li>Stabilise the cliff area and where possible replant with native vegetation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote safe and equitable access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.</li> <li>Ensure that any built form allows efficient and effective management and maintenance.</li> <li>Promote user safety through passive surveillance and encouraged usage.</li> <li>Promote use of the facilities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Management Precinct 3</b>	<p><i>To be a safe and functional open space area for passive and active recreation, with supporting community amenities and facilities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</li> <li>Investigate the options for a multi use public domain area.</li> <li>Increase the “useability” of Jefferson Park through incorporating level open space areas, landscaping, picnic facilities, shade and seating structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce conflict between pedestrian and vehicular zones.</li> <li>Increase areas of functional public open space.</li> <li>Allow for large community events.</li> <li>Promote cultural significance and identity of the site.</li> <li>Allow for increased parking demands.</li> <li>Ensure sufficient shade and seating.</li> <li>Promote safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.</li> <li>Ensure that any built form allows efficient and effective management and maintenance.</li> </ul>	<p>This precinct is to develop into an open space area becoming an area that will provide for a range of passive uses including picnicking, recreation, fitness, leisure and cultural activities. The precinct has 2 main open space character areas; the green open space provided by Jefferson Park; and the urban beach plaza (subject to the outcome of the Traffic and Pedestrian Improvement Study). Potential the beach plaza could be themed on Merewether Beach’s status as a site of national significance for the surfing community and could include public art, information boards and focal elements, other options could be a children’s water park similar to The Entrance.</p> <p>The Watkins Street car park is to be more functional with safer pedestrian movement from the car park areas to Jefferson Park and the promenade.</p>

Management Precinct	Goal and performance targets	Design Principles	Future outlook of management precinct
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow for passive surveillance.</li> <li>Promote increased use of the facilities.</li> </ul>	
<b>Management Precinct 4</b>	<p><i>The Beach Promenade (including John Parade Promenade) will be a major public recreational feature for Newcastle and accessible to anyone.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the promenades capacity so as to allow it to cope with increase use in the future.</li> <li>Investigate options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.</li> <li>Upgrade of promenades facilities and utilities so that it is usable at all times.</li> <li>Investigate opportunities for the construct of a new Surf Life Saving Club building, providing facilities for the Surf Club and the public.</li> <li>Implementation of dog control measures which encourage appropriate use of the promenade.</li> <li>Stabilisation and where possible replant with native vegetation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote vibrancy through landscaping, lighting, and signage.</li> <li>Promote safety through passive surveillance.</li> <li>Ensure that the built forms are sympathetic to the environment and allows efficient and effective management and maintenance.</li> <li>Ensure energy efficiency to minimise the environmental footprint of the Precinct.</li> <li>Provide defined crossing points and traffic calming devises to control pedestrian movements and slow vehicles.</li> <li>Promote share way between vehicles and pedestrians through the use of different textiles for road and pavement.</li> <li>New shade structures are to be in theme with existing structures and designed to be sympathetic to the Precincts history.</li> <li>Landscaping on promenade to provide some shade provision but is not to impose on residents views.</li> <li>Amenities meet the needs of the future use of the Precinct.</li> </ul>	<p>The Beach Promenade and John Parade promenade will continue to be part of Bathers way and be a major public recreational feature for Newcastle. Clear view lines and access to the beach and ocean are to be encouraged. The precinct includes the redevelopment of the Surf Life Saving Club which will provide essential life saving facilities to users of the beach and be well integrated to enhance the character of the promenade and activities that occur along the beach.</p>



Management Precinct	Goal and performance targets	Design Principles	Future outlook of management precinct
<b>Management Precinct 5</b>	<p><i>The coastline will be a clean and safe environment for the use of all people and the heritage of Merewether Beach will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water quality monitoring of the Stormwater Outlet.</li> <li>Educational awareness of the rock platform.</li> <li>Merewether Beach is a safe and socially acceptable area for families and other users.</li> <li>Maintain the heritage of the Old Ladies Pool and provide safe use for user.</li> <li>Maintain safe use of the beach.</li> <li>Ensure beach maintenance practices are appropriate.</li> <li>Continue sand dune stabilisation and long-term maintenance.</li> <li>Maintain safe use of the beach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the natural environment of the coastline, ensuring future developments are suitable for coastline and comply with Ecologically Sustainable Development principles.</li> <li>Maintain the sand dunes as they provide the protection barrier and separation of the urban realm to the beach.</li> <li>Provide safe use.</li> </ul>	<p>Merewether Beach is proposed to become a National Surfing Reserve under the <i>Crown Lands Act 1989</i>. As a National Surfing Reserve the beach will have legal protection and highlights its status along the NSW coastline.</p> <p>The coastline precinct will be a clean and safe environment for the use of all people. The Ladies Pool will remain a historic feature of the beach, however regular maintenance will ensure that it safe to continue using in the future. The sand dunes will be stabilised and revegetated with native coastal species and will provide a safe buffer for the John Parade retaining wall. Council will continue the Surf Lifesaving patrols of the beach and the proposed Surf Life Saving facility will provide a better viewing area and facility for the Life Guards.</p>



# MEREWETHER BEACH RESERVES CONCEPT MASTER PLAN



## MEREWETHER BEACH RESERVES PLAN OF MANAGEMENT AND CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

0459-MP01 NOVEMBER 2008

FIGURE 5.2



## 5.4 Future statutory requirements

### 5.4.1 Category of land

It is a requirement that Community land be categorised in accordance with S.36(3A) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, as the chosen category of the land determines the future use and management of that land. Currently the Community land at the study area has been categorised by several different PoMs, with the land categories being General Community Use, Park and Area of Cultural Significance. Table 5-4 outlines the current Community land categories.

Note due to recent land consolidation by Council, the property descriptions (Lot and DP numbers) have been changed.

**Table 5-4 Current and proposed future community land categories**

Existing descriptions in existing PoMs	Current category	Proposed future category
C149 (Robinson Reserve) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot2 DP 514500</li> <li>Lot3 DP 153433.</li> </ul> <i>Source: General Community Use PoM</i>	General Community Use	General community Use
C157 (Jefferson Park, Surf Club and car park) and CR 18 (Crown Land, R56681) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part lot 4 DP 564016</li> <li>Lot 3 DP 564016, Part Lot 12 Sec 8</li> <li>DP 111243 part lot 14, 15, 15A, 16A, sec 8</li> <li>Part Lot 6 DP 564018</li> <li>Lot 1 DP 152424</li> <li>Part Lot 1 DP 152423</li> <li>Part MS 2544MD, Part Lot 2.</li> </ul> <i>Source: Neighbourhoods Parks PoM and Heritage Places PoM</i>	Park and Area of Cultural Significance	Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 3 DP1118903 (Jefferson Park).</li> </ul> General Community Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 2 DP1118903 (Surf Club and car park).</li> </ul> Excludes CR18 as it is Crown Land.
C 157 (Robinson Reserve car park) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 268 DP 1102663.</li> </ul> <i>Source: Neighbourhood Parks POM and Heritage Places POM</i>	Park and Area of Cultural Significant	General Community Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lot 268 DP 1102663.</li> </ul>
CR 54 (Merewether Baths) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part MS 1630.</li> </ul> <i>Source: Under Heritage POM</i>	Area of Cultural Significance	N/A as CR54 is Crown land.

Following a review of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, 102-112 (guidelines for categorising Community land), the Community land within the study area is to be categorised as the following (refer to Figure 5-3 and Table 5-4):

- Park:
  - Jefferson Park.
- General Community Use:
  - Watkins Street car park.
  - Robinson Reserve car park.
  - Robinson Reserve.
  - Surf Life Saving Club.
  - Open space between Surf Club and Surf House (Merewether Beach Pavilion).

Although these areas do have historic significance, only the railway tunnel in the cliff and the old railway cart remain as physical historic evidence (not including Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House)). There may be historic remnants under the soil, but the proposed future use of the areas should not require large earth works; except on lands that has already been subject to earthworks (e.g. Surf Life Saving Club). Given the above explanation, 'Park' and 'General Community Use' are deemed the most appropriate categories.

As stated in Table 5-2, there is the existing issue of Community land being separated by small areas of Crown land and Crown land being separated by small areas of Community land which results in underutilised areas of land and associated management issues. As part of achieving the Performance Target of rationalising land tenure, the issue of Community land being transferred to Crown land will need to be investigated.

## **Park**

Land should be categorised as a park under S.36(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993* if it is, or is proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment of the land by others.

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as a park are (*Local Government Act 1993*):

- to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities
- to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games
- to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

### **General community use**

Land should be categorised as general community use under S.36(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993* if the land:

- a) may be made available for use for any purpose for which community land may be used, whether by the public at large or by specific sections of the public
- b) is not required to be categorised as a natural area under section 36A, 36B or 36C of the Act and does not satisfy the guidelines under clauses 102-105 for categorisation as a natural area, a sportsground, a park or an area of cultural significance.

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as general community use are to promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and the wider public (*Local Government Act 1993*):

- a) in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public
- b) in relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public utilities).

This categorisation of the land connects well with adjoining Crown Lands which are reserved for Public Recreation and can be leased or licensed under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

### **Public Hearing**

Under S.40A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a council must hold a public hearing in respect of a proposed plan of management, if the proposed plan would have the effect of categorising, or altering the categorisation of, community land under section 36(4) of the Act.

As this PoM is proposing to change several land categorisations, a public hearing is required.





**Disclaimer:** While all reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information contained on this map is up to date and accurate, no warranty is given that the information contained on this map is free from error or omission. Any reliance placed on such information shall be at the sole risk of the user. Please verify the accuracy of the information prior to using it.  
**Note:** The information shown on this map is a copyright of the Newcastle City Council and the NSW Department of Lands

**Figure 5.3: Categorisation of Community Land**



## 5.4.2 Future lease and licenses

### Crown land

A lease and licence provide different legal use of Crown land. A lease of Crown land enables exclusive use over a particular piece of land for a specified term and purpose, whilst a licence is a contractual agreement that grants the licensee a personal right to occupy the use of Crown land for a particular purpose. A licence does not provide exclusive use of the area of land as other persons may be permitted to use the same area of land.

Under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*, a person, organisation or business may enter into a lease or license for appropriate use on Crown Land provided that:

- management of the land is in accordance with this PoM, relevant Crown Land policies and guidelines
- the use of the land is in the public interest
- lease does not exceed 100 years, note however that it would only be in exceptional circumstances for a Crown Lands lease term to exceed 30-40 years
- the granting of the lease, license or estate is in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

The current Crown lands in the study area are located in:

- Management Precinct 2 (Merewether Ocean Baths and commercial precinct).
- Management Precinct 4 (beach promenade and John Parade precinct).
- Management Precinct 5 Merewether Beach.

### Future leases for Management Precinct 2 include

- Merewether Baths Pavilion - purposes that may be considered include but would not necessarily be limited to:
  - kiosk, beach shop facility, change rooms etc
  - licensed café
  - function room
  - restaurant
  - health and fitness facilities
  - offices ancillary to the above uses.

Any development should be family and community orientated, respect the character and needs of Merewether beach, and the heritage of Merewether Ocean Baths. It will also be in accordance with the Department of Lands requirements for commercial facilities on Crown land. This will include a contribution to public domain improvements within these reserves.

- Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) - Whilst not formally part of this PoM as it is part of a separate development process, the following provides information in relation to proposed redevelopment.

Council, with Department of Lands consent, has entered into a 'Deed of Agreement for Lease' that provides for redevelopment and then lease of the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) site for a period of 25 years with a further 25 year option.

The Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) is to be demolished and redeveloped for some or all of the following purposes:

- kiosk, beach shop facility
- licensed café
- function room
- general bar
- restaurant and bar
- health and fitness facilities
- offices ancillary to the above uses.

#### **Future lease and licenses for Management Precinct 4 and 5**

- Licenses may be granted for special occasions and other uses (e.g. Surfest, Food and Wine Festival etc), provided that the proposed use/activities is in accordance with all legislative requirements, respects the study areas values and heritage and designated use of the management precinct.
- Future development of Lifeguard Facility.

#### **Community land**

Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, Community land may be leased or licensed provided that the proposed activity is in accordance with Clause 46:

- (1) (b) a lease, licence or other estate in respect of community land may be granted, in accordance with an express authorisation in the plan of management and such provisions of the plan of management as apply to the granting of the lease, licence or other estate.
  - (i) for a purpose prescribed by subsection (4), or for a purpose prescribed by any of sections 36E to 36N as a core objective of the categorisation of the land concerned, or
  - (ii) for a purpose prescribed by the regulations, if the plan of management applies to several areas of community land, or
  - (iii) for a short-term, casual purpose prescribed by the regulations, or
  - (iv) for a residential purpose in relation to housing owned by the council, or
- (c) may be granted in order to allow a filming project to be carried out, whether or not the project is in accordance with the plan of management or is consistent with the core objectives of the categorisation of the land concerned, but may not otherwise be granted.
- (2) Despite subsection (1), a lease, licence or other estate in respect of community land may be granted for a purpose mentioned in subsection (1) (b) only if the purpose for which it is granted is consistent with the core objectives, as prescribed in this Part, of its categorisation.

- (3) A council must not grant a lease or licence for a period (including any period for which the lease or licence could be renewed by the exercise of an option) exceeding 21 years.
- (4) The following purposes are prescribed for the purposes of subsection (1) (b) (i):
  - (a) the provision of goods, services and facilities, and the carrying out of activities, appropriate to the current and future needs within the local community and of the wider public in relation to any of the following:
    - (i) public recreation
    - (ii) the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of persons
  - (b) the provision of public roads.
- (5) Purposes prescribed by subsection (4) in relation to the matters mentioned in subsection (4) (a) (ii) include, but are not limited to, maternity welfare centres, infant welfare centres, kindergartens, nurseries, child care centres, family day-care centres, surf life saving clubs, restaurants or refreshment kiosks.

The Community lands are in:

- Management Precinct 1 (Merewether Beach Gateway).
- Management Precinct 3 (Merewether Beach Open Space Area).
- Management Precinct 4 (Merewether Beach Promenade).

#### **Future lease and licenses for Management Precinct 3 and 4 include**

- Potential redevelopment of the Surf Life Saving Club and associated Swells café  
This should be of a scale and intensity that is similar to that which exists and respects the character of Merewether Beach. Possible uses to include public amenities, function rooms for public hire, kiosk/café and sustainable operations.

#### **Future lease and licences for Management Precincts 1, 3 and 4 include**

- This includes organisations such as commercial fitness groups, special events and festivals such as Surfest and Food and Wine Festival. Any person or organisation that will make a profit for organising and running an event or activity on Community land at the study area will need to have a lease or licence with Newcastle City Council.

All lease and licenses must comply with the legislative requirements under S.36- S.47B of the *Local Government Act 1993* and S.116 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, Division 3-4 of the *Crown Lands Act 1989*, the objectives of the land category, respects the study areas vision and values and Council lease and licensing conditions. The money Council raises in fees from leases and licences will be used to maintain those facilities people/organisations are paying to use.

### **5.4.3 Other statutory requirements**

Due to the past use of the study area there is the potential for heritage items to still exist below the surface. Section 139(1) of the *Heritage Act 1977* states:

that a person must not disturb or excavate any land knowing or having reasonable cause to suspect that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being

discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed unless the disturbance or excavation is carried out in accordance with an excavation permit.

Therefore, under the Heritage Act 1977 an archaeological excavation permit may be required for any future excavations at the study area, unless exceptions are made by the Minister (Section 139 (4) of Act).

## 6. Implementation plan

### 6.1 Responsibility

NSW Department of Lands as owner of Crown land and Council as owners of Community land and trustees of Crown land; are primarily responsible for management of the study area.

### 6.2 Funding

The actions in this PoM do not imply that either Council or Lands have sole responsibility for funding and implementation; and neither does it imply that Council and Lands currently have the funds to achieve all the actions. The feasibility of achieving the Goals and Performance Targets of the Management Precincts relies on the availability of funding.

While Council and Lands may contribute funds for achieving some of the actions over the years, funds will also need to be sourced through external grants, club contributions, partnerships, and more importantly lease and licenses holders.

The potential to have commercial development on the study area will not only bring in money to the local economy; it will also provide Council and Lands with funds from the leases and/or licenses. The funds obtained through the leases and licenses (conditional to *Crown Lands Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 1993*) can be used to build new facilities and for maintenance. Potential proponents may also be required to contribute to the provision of facilities either through financial payments or the completion of works in kind, as may be requested by conditions of planning approval, or agreements with Council and/or Lands (will need to follow appropriate Council and Lands policy and procedures).

Other funding may become available from Federal and State Government sources in order to implement or assist in the implementation of the PoM. For example; the Department of Lands has several sources of funding to assist Trustees (Council) with the management of Crown land. The funding is available to improve facilities, protect the heritage value of Crown Land, or its component facilities. The Public Reserves Management Fund has been established to specifically provide funding for improvement works to Crown reserves and provide for capital development and maintenance projects (Dept of Lands, 2008).

### 6.3 Further studies

When viewing the Implementation Plan and accompanying CMP it should be remembered that it is only a concept design and further studies will need to be conducted to assess the feasibility of an action and the appropriate design/works to achieve the performance targets for the management precincts. The actions that require further investigation include:

#### 6.3.1 Public Domain Master Plan

It is recommended that a detailed Public Domain Master Plan be prepared to investigate traffic and pedestrian movement, options for better utilising public open space, investigate theme/s that will incorporate the heritage of the area, including the type of furniture, landscaping materials, lighting etc. The Plan should also investigate methods for installing



interpretive signs with the story of the area, as well as creating a Public Domain area to illustrate the heritage beach. The Master Plan needs to consider and develop options for Water Sensitive Urban Design.

As part of the Public Domain Master Plan, a Traffic and Pedestrian Improvement Plan will be completed to assess the following:

- Improved traffic movement and access:
  - investigate possible road closures and/or one way traffic movement as originally outlined in the Merewether Traffic Study 1992
  - investigate traffic control measures to create a 'gateway' to the Newcastle coastline and study area.
- Improved pedestrian access, movement and safety.
- Reducing vehicle and pedestrian conflicts.
- Improved existing parking and possible additional parking.
- Investigate the options of returning road areas back to open space to create a public plaza. The size, use and possibility of a public plaza will depend on the assessment of improving traffic and pedestrian access and movement. The use of public plaza could be for:
  - cultural area, focusing on the national surfing status of the beach
  - children playground or water park (e.g. similar to at The Entrance, Central Coast)
  - public art domain
  - open space with seating for social gathering and to host events such as Surfest.

### **6.3.2 Geotechnical study**

Many of the Actions in the Implementation Plan will rely on the results of a geotechnical study to determine the technical feasibility and funding required to conduct works such as retain slopes and build retaining walls, levelling Jefferson Park and possibly building a new building into the cliff face to stabilise it.

### **6.3.3 Multi-purpose facility – feasibility study**

The recommendation for the redevelopment of the Merewether Ocean Baths Pavilion into a multi-purpose facility requires a range of studies to be conducted to determine the potential for such a building to be constructed on the site, the feasibility of constructing the building into the cliff face, the design options and cost of construction. The facility will need to apply ecological sustainable development principles in the design and operations of the facility, as well as follow the principles of the Coastal Policy 1997.

The multi-purpose facility feasibility study should look at the options for such a facility to be suitable for commercial operations as this would provide income from lease and licenses to Council and Lands who can put the money back into maintaining the study area. However the facility would still need to provide facilities for the general public and those using the Merewether Ocean Baths.

## 6.4 Implementation plan

An Implementation Plan (Table 6-1) for the management precincts has been prepared to outline actions for achieving the Performance Targets outline in Section 5. The Implementation Plan also outlines who is responsible for completing the action and manner of assessing if the action has been completed. The concept master plan is a visual representation of the study area if all Performance Targets are achieved.

The timeframe for the PoM covers a 10 year period. However some actions may take longer to achieve, nevertheless the commencement of such actions should occur within the 10 year period, after which the PoM will be reviewed and new Performance Targets and actions included into the PoM.

To provide more flexibility and to facilitate future reviews of Council's and the Land's finances, the actions of this PoM are framed around three priority time frames. These time frames have been formatted based on the need to make the study area safer and more functional for users and visitors. The priority time frames are:

Priority	Meaning of Priority	Time frame
LOW	Action is a long term goal and will increase the overall function, safety and usage of the Precinct.	>10 years
MEDIUM	Action will improve the current function, safety and usage of the Precinct.	5-10 years
HIGH	Action is urgent as it will immediately improve the safety of the Precinct for users.	0-5 years
SHORT TERM	Action is either currently planned or is feasible given current resources	Current and on-going (generally 0-5 years)

**Table 6-1 Implementation plan**

<b>General</b>				
<b>Performance Target (Objective)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Manner of Assessment</b>
Improve public domain and integrate with Bathers Way.	Prepare a Public Domain Master Plan – investigating theme/s based on the areas heritage, lighting strategy, appropriate landscape materials to be used, interpretive signage strategy, water sensitive urban design options, and improved traffic and pedestrian movement.	High	Lands and Council with assistance from relevant stakeholders.	Public Domain Master Plan prepared and the actions outlined in the Master Plan have been implemented.
Investigate the options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement.	<p>As part of the Public Domain Master Plan investigate options for* ** #:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ improved traffic movement and access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ investigate possible road closures and/or one way traffic movement as originally outlined in the Merewether Traffic Study 1992</li> <li>▸ investigate traffic control measures to create a 'gateway' to the Newcastle coastline and study area.†</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ improved pedestrian access, movement and safety</li> <li>▪ reducing vehicle and pedestrian conflicts</li> <li>▪ improved existing parking and possible additional parking</li> <li>▪ investigate the options of returning road areas back to open space to create a public plaza.</li> </ul>	High	Lands and Council with assistance from RTA.	Public Domain Master Plan has been prepared with recommended actions to be undertaken.
Heritage of Merewether Beach is incorporated into future developments and management of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The heritage of Merewether beach is to be assessed and incorporated into the Public Domain Master Plan. Heritage is to be maintained through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ the theme of the furniture, lighting, buildings etc</li> <li>▸ appropriate signage detailing the beach's history</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	High	Lands and Council with assistance from NSW Heritage Branch and relevant stakeholders.	Appropriate signage erected and a theme for furniture, lighting etc has been decided and facilities installed. Proposed new buildings are designed to be sympathetic to the history of the Beach and history of surrounding facilities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▸ selecting appropriate landscaping materials</li> <li>▸ potential to make the proposed public plaza into a cultural area with relevance to the Beach's history.</li> <li>▪ where possible retain physical historic evidence (potentially incorporate into the beaches activities or relocate to another area of the study area).</li> </ul>			
Maintain access and connection to Burwood Beach and Glenrock State Conservation Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain the connection and access between the study area and nearby Burwood Beach and Glenrock State Conservation Area.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Access to surrounding areas is being maintained.
Increased community awareness of coastal processes.  Encourage/continue educational activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investigation of appropriate marketing opportunities to inform community of coastal process and the unique coastal environment. Opportunities may include but not limited to; informative signage at study area, community awareness of Newcastle Coastline Management Plan etc.<sup>++</sup></li> </ul>	Short term	Lands/Council	Appropriate education and coastal awareness marketing program created and being implemented.
Promote & facilitate well managed special events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote the study area as a venue to hold community events and festivals.</li> <li>▪ Appropriate process/policy implemented to facilitate the organisation and hosting of an event/festival at the study area. This should include leasing and licensing requires, costs, conditions for use etc.</li> <li>▪ Continued association with Surfest.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council	Appropriate process/policy prepared and implemented. Appropriate marketing of the study area implemented.  Surfest continuing to be held at Merewether Beach.
Facilities are being regularly maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prepare a maintenance plan.</li> <li>▪ Regular maintenance of the facilities is undertaken.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Maintenance plan has been prepared and implemented. Facilities are now safe and usable.
Allow commercial activities through formalised lease and licenses, provided the activity is sensitive to the area, recognises the culture and history of the area and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposed future commercial development of the Merewether Baths Pavilion, café/kiosk at potential new Surf Club building and future events such as Surfest and/or festivals to be sensitive to the culture and history of the area.<sup>**</sup></li> </ul>	Short term	Lands/Council/ Proponent	Lease and licences are granted to activities meeting the legislative requirements, recognise the community focus and heritage of the area, are in line with the study areas vision

is in line with the land categories core objectives.				and values and do not restrict public access to use of the study areas public facilities.
Merewether Beach is a designated National Surfing Reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the potential opportunities to have Merewether Beach designated as a Surfing Reserve.</li> </ul>	High	Lands/Council	Investigation undertaken and recommended actions taken.
Rationalisation of land tenure and LEP zonings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend LEP so all of Jefferson Park is zoned 6(a) Public Recreation.</li> <li>Investigate rationalising land tenure.</li> </ul>	Medium	Lands/Council	Land rezoning and amendment to LEP has been undertaken.  Appropriate land tenure has been formalised.
<p>The core objectives for management of Community land categorised as General Community Use are to promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public:</p> <p>(a) in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public, and</p> <p>(b) in relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that any activities on Community land meet the core objectives of its category as General Community Use.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council	Facilities provided on the Community land meets current and future needs of the local community and wider public.



utilities).				
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### Management Precinct 1 – Merewether Beach Gateway

*Goal – Scenic Drive will be a gateway to Merewether Beach and will become a significant viewing area of the Newcastle coastline.*

Performance Target (Objective)	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Manner of Assessment
Identify opportunities to provide a safe viewing area from Robinson Reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geotechnical study undertaken to investigate slope stabilisation options. Following outcome of study construct or allocate a safe viewing area from Robinson Reserve. Options include but not limited to; construction of a viewing platform over the cliff, designating area of Robinson Reserve car park with safety barrier as a pedestrian viewing area etc.</li> </ul>	Low	Council	Geotechnical study has been completed and recommended viewing area has been constructed.
Investigate the opportunities for better public transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate and address weekend and public holiday public transport access to Precinct.*<sup>##</sup> +</li> </ul>	Low	Council/NSW State Transit Authority	Council and NSW State Transit Authority have liaised and appropriate action taken.
To stabilise the slope of Robinson Reserve and where possible replant with native vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide slope stabilisation, as outlined in the proposed geotechnical study, where necessary and where appropriate revegetation with native species to assist with slope stabilisation.</li> </ul>	Medium	Lands/Council	Appropriate slope stability measures implemented. Landscaping works have been completed and regular maintenance is being carried out.

### Management Precinct 2 – Merewether Ocean Baths and Multi-Purpose Facility

*Goal - To be a major activity and social area for Merewether Beach and the Newcastle coastline. It will provide opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as for commercial development, while maintaining the heritage of the Merewether Ocean Baths and railway.*

Performance Target (Objective)	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Manner of Assessment
Merewether Ocean Baths steps are maintained in a safer, usable condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigation into required repairs.</li> <li>Required repairs are completed. +</li> <li>Ongoing maintenance of steps.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Required repairs have been completed and ongoing maintenance is occurring.
Investigate opportunities for redevelopment of the Merewether Baths Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call expressions of interest for development, subject to geotechnical report on stability of the substrata. Purposes that may be considered</li> </ul>	Medium	Lands/Council	Expressions of Interest for development of the Merewether Baths Pavilion have been

for all users incorporating revenue generation and improved public amenities for Ocean Bath users.	<p>include but would not necessarily be limited to.<sup>+</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kiosk, beach shop facility, change rooms etc.</li> <li>▪ Licensed café.</li> <li>▪ Function room.</li> <li>▪ Restaurant.</li> <li>▪ Health and fitness facilities.</li> <li>▪ Offices ancillary to the above uses.</li> </ul>			<p>accepted. An EOI that proposes a family and community orientated development, respects the character and needs of Merewether beach and the heritage of Merewether Ocean Baths, and is also in accordance with the Department of Lands requirements for commercial facilities on Crown land, has been chosen.</p> <p>Legal process for development of the site and appropriate lease/licensing agreement has been undertaken.</p>
Maintain the Merewether Ocean Baths for long-term future use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide regular cleaning and maintenance to the Merewether Ocean Baths.</li> <li>▪ Investigate if any structural repairs are required.<sup>***</sup></li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Regular cleaning and maintenance of Merewether Ocean Baths is continuing. Investigation into reported repair works needed has been completed and appropriate works conducted.
Provide shade and seating structures surrounding the Merewether Ocean Baths for users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide additional outdoor shade provision, tables and seating along promenade in the area surrounding the Merewether Ocean Baths.<sup># +</sup></li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Funding sourced and appropriately designed shade structures (providing protection from the natural elements) constructed and installed. Additional tables and seating constructed and installed. New facilities are being regularly maintained.
Stabilise the cliff area and where possible replant with native vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide slope stabilisation, as outlined in the geotechnical study, where necessary and where appropriate revegetation with native species to assist with slope stabilisation.</li> </ul>	Medium	Lands/Council	Geotechnical study completed and appropriate measures implemented to stabilise the slope. Appropriate native coastal species planted. Ongoing maintenance of slope and vegetation occurring.

<b>Management Precinct 3 – Merewether Beach Open Space Area</b>				
<i>Goal - To be a safe and functional open space area for passive and active recreation, with supporting community amenities and facilities.</i>				
<b>Performance Target (Objective)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Manner of Assessment</b>
Investigate the options for a multi purpose public domain area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate opportunities for a flexible, open, public beachfront plaza through the Public Domain Master Plan.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for use of the plaza.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council	Options for the use of the plaza have been explored through consultation with the community and stakeholders.  Chosen plaza use constructed.
Increase the “useability” of Jefferson Park through incorporating level open space areas, landscaping, picnic facilities, shade and seating structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve Jefferson Park:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>geotechnical study to investigate the options for Jefferson Park to be a flat level large open space to cater for large events and family/group picnicking</li> <li>landscape park<sup>+</sup></li> <li>construct picnic facilities (tables, seating, BBQs)<sup>++</sup></li> <li>develop shade through the provision of trees and shade structures.<sup>++</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Medium	Council	Geotechnical investigation completed to determine the appropriate option for making Jefferson park more usable. Recommendation actions and works conducted.  Appropriate landscaping with native species conducted and maintained.  Appropriate picnic facilities (shade, shelter, tables, seating, BBQs) installed in suitable locations and in theme with the community focus and heritage of the beach. Regular repair works and maintenance are being conducted.
The core objectives for management of Community land categorised as a Park are:  (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that any activities on Jefferson Park meet the core objectives of its category as Park.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Council	Facilities provided on the Community land meet the core objectives of its category as Park.

activities, and				
(b) to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and				
(c) to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.				

**Management Precinct 4 – Merewether Beach Promenade**

*Goal - The Beach Promenade (including John Parade Promenade) will be a major public recreational feature for Newcastle and accessible to anyone.*

<b>Performance Target (Objective)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Manner of Assessment</b>
Increase the promenades capacity so as to allow it to cope with increase use in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate options for widening the upper promenade, without causing significant damage to revegetated areas.</li> </ul>	High	Council	Investigation into opinions for widening promenade is completed and the recommended action is taken.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinstate arris fencing to promenade edge.</li> </ul>	Low	Council	Fencing reinstated.
Upgrade of promenades facilities and utilities so that it is usable at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow for outdoor dining areas that do not conflict with the pedestrian promenade.</li> </ul>	High	Council	Investigation into opinions for reducing congestion around Swells Café. Recommended works undertaken.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved lighting along promenade in accordance with the proposed Public Domain Improvements Plan.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council	Appropriate lights installed making the promenade safer for users in the evening.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct additional pavilion shelters along the lower promenade adjacent to Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) site and existing shade pavilion.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council	New shade pavilions identical to the existing shade pavilion constructed next to existing shade pavilion.
Investigate opportunities for the construct of a new Surf Life Saving Club building, providing facilities for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate opportunities for the demolition of the existing Surf Life Saving Club and develop a new Surf Club building. A new Surf Life Saving Club should include facility to cater for all the Surf Life</li> </ul>	Low	Council With assistance from Merewether Surf Life Saving Club	Council liaise with Merewether Surf Life Saving Club and other community organisations to investigate opportunities for

Surf Club and the public.	<p>Saving Club needs and possibly provide additional storage space for other users, and facilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public amenities (change rooms, toilets)</li> <li>function rooms remain available for public hire</li> <li>kiosk/ Swells café</li> <li>Sustainable operations.</li> </ul>			new building. If the opportunity exists design appropriate facility and source funding. DA submitted and approved. Facility constructed and leases signed if appropriate (operator of Café/kiosk).
Implementation of dog control measures which encourage appropriate use of the promenade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate and implement appropriate control measures to encourage dog owners to be responsible when using the Precinct. Control measures may include; dog bag dispenser, more rubbish bins, more signage outlining the fines for inappropriate dog control etc.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Investigation completed and appropriate control measures implemented.
Stabilisation and where possible replant with native vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide slope stabilisation, as outlined in the geotechnical study, where necessary and continue revegetation with native species.<sup>*, +</sup></li> </ul>	Medium	Council With assistance from community groups such as Landcare and Trees in Newcastle.	Funding sort, slopes retained and revegetation works continuing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular weeding and maintenance of revegetated areas.<sup>*, ++</sup></li> </ul>	Short term	Council With assistance from community groups such as Landcare and Trees in Newcastle.	Funding sort and a regular weed removal and maintenance of revegetation areas program implemented.

#### Management Precinct 5 – Merewether Beach

*Goal - The coastline will be a clean and safe environment for the use of all people and the heritage of Merewether Beach will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.*

Performance Target (Objective)	Action	Priority	Responsibility	Manner of Assessment
Water quality monitoring of the Stormwater Outlet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain regular water monitoring program at stormwater outlet.<sup>^</sup></li> <li>Implement community education programs within the catchment to increase awareness of stormwater pollution.<sup>^</sup></li> </ul>	High	Council, HWC	<p>Water monitoring program continues.</p> <p>Community education program regularly implemented.</p>

Educational awareness of the rock platform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install international standard educational signage at entrance points to rock platforms to target collection of intertidal species and ecological information in conjunction with public awareness campaign.</li> </ul>	Medium	Council, NSW Fisheries	Educational signs erected at entrances to rock platform.
Merewether Beach is a safe and socially acceptable area for families and other users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement an Alcohol Free Zone for Merewether Beach.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Appropriate process completed, signs erected at beach and appropriate Council documents/ policies/ brochures amended.
Maintain the heritage of the Old Ladies Pool and provide safe use for user.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Ladies Pool with a view to ensuring the asset is management in a way that does not diminish heritage values.</li> <li>Regular maintenance is undertaken (i.e. removing sand to ensure that tops of walls are exposed).</li> <li>Regular checks of the pools structure is conducted and all protruding metal and any other dangers are addressed.</li> </ul>	High	Council	<p>Heritage of the pool is maintained through regular removal of sand to ensure that it is visible.</p> <p>Removal of all dangers to users and regular maintenance is continuing.</p>
Maintain safe use of the beach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access stairways to beach.</li> </ul>	High	Council	Investigation into required repairs, appropriate action taken. Access to beach is maintained.
Ensure beach maintenance practices are appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review hours of operation of lifeguard patrols.*</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Investigation into the issue completed and appropriate actions taken.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct lifeguard facility and steps at Watkins Street, as per DA plans.</li> </ul>	High	Council	Facility completed and operational.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue regular cleaning of beach.</li> </ul>	Short term	Council	Regular cleaning of beach continues.
Continue sand dune stabilisation and long-term maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue stabilisation of sand dunes through revegetation works, including the removal of weeds.**</li> </ul>	Short term	Council, CMA with assistance from community groups such as Landcare and Trees in Newcastle.	Funding sourced and revegetation works continuing.



Table Legend

- \* Compatible with *Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003*
- \*\* Compatible with *Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2006*
- # Compatible with *Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006-2016*
- ## Compatible with *Newcastle Urban Strategy*
- + Compatible with *The Bathers Way – A Tourism Development Strategy for the Newcastle City Coastal Walk*
- ++ Compatible with *Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006*
- ^ Compatible with *Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan 2004*

## **7. Evaluation and review**

### **7.1 Process**

This PoM is to be evaluated and reviewed annually, and a complete rewrite every 10 years. An annual evaluation and review process will determine whether:

- the planning process is effective
- the PoMs strategies and outcomes are being achieved
- the PoMs strategies and outcomes remain appropriate
- the expectations of stakeholders remain appropriate
- the relevant legislation requirements remain appropriate
- the overall PoM remains appropriate.

The annual review process should involve making recommendations for future works and planning the works program for the next year.

## 8. References

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NSW Department of Planning & Newcastle City Council, 2006, *Newcastle City Centre Plan*.

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## Appendix A

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Legislative and policy overview



Legislation or Policy	Relevance
<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>	<p>The <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> (EP&amp;A Act) provides the statutory basis for the development consent process in New South Wales. Section 79C of Part 4 of the EP&amp;A Act outlines the factors that a Council must consider when assessing a development application for local development. These matters include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any environmental planning instrument</li> <li>any draft environmental planning instrument that has been placed on public exhibition and details of which have been notified to the consent authority</li> <li>any development control plan</li> <li>the Regulations</li> <li>the likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environment, and social and economic impacts on the locality</li> <li>the suitability of the site for the development</li> <li>any submissions made in accordance with the Act or the Regulations</li> <li>the public interest.</li> </ul>
<i>Heritage Act 1977</i>	<p>The <i>Heritage Act 1997</i> is an Act to conserve the environmental heritage of the State of NSW. Environmental Heritage is defined to include places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects, and precincts, of State or Local heritage significance.</p>
<i>Coastal Protection Act 1979</i>	<p>The objectives of the <i>Coastal Protection Act</i> is to provide for the coastal environment of the State for the benefit of both present and future generations. The Act states that a public authority shall not, without the concurrence of the minister carryout any development in the coastal zone or grant any right or consent to a person. The Act also outlines that if a council, or part of whose area, is included within the coastal zone, it may, and must, if directed to do so by the Minister, make a coastal zone management plan in accordance with this Part.</p>
NSW Coastal Policy 1997	<p><i>The NSW Coastal Policy 1997</i> does not impose statutory obligations on the Newcastle Local Government Area, however it does provide important conceptual framework and guidelines within which regional and local policies can be formulated and applied. The Policy does apply to the offshore component of the coastal zone for Newcastle, which extends 3 nautical miles seaward from the open coast high water mark (Umwelt 2002).</p> <p>Policy Goal 6 is to provide for ecologically sustainable human settlement. Objective 6.1 is to ensure that future expansion or redevelopment of urban and residential areas, including the provision of infrastructure, avoids or minimises impacts on environmentally sensitive areas and cultural heritage (Umwelt 2002).</p>
SEPP 71 – Coastal Protection	<p>State Environmental Planning Policy No. 71 – Coastal Protection (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.</p> <p>While the Policy primarily comes under the 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.</p> <p>The objectives of SEPP 71 are:</p>

Legislation or Policy	Relevance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to protect and manage the natural, cultural, recreational and economic attributes of the New South Wales Coast</li> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ to protect and preserve Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal places, values, customs, beliefs and traditional knowledge</li> <li>▪ to ensure that the visual amenity of the coast is protected</li> <li>▪ to protect and preserve beach environments and beach amenity</li> <li>▪ to protect and preserve native coastal vegetation</li> <li>▪ to protect and preserve the marine environments of New South Wales</li> <li>▪ to protect and preserve rock platforms</li> <li>▪ 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)</li> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ to encourage a strategic approach to coastal management.</li> </ul>
Hunter Regional Environment Plan 1989	<p>The Hunter Regional Environment Plan 1989 is a statutory plan which must be taken into account in processing proposals for development and activities along the coastline and seeks to provide for a balanced approach to conservation and development so as to meet the needs and aspirations of the community.</p> <p>The Plan outlines a number of provisions relevant to the Newcastle Coastline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The plan seeks to encourage the coordinated development of the region as an important tourist destinations area to help improve the region's economic diversity and its employment prospects and, as a means for doing this, seeks to encourage the recognition of natural and heritage.</li> <li>▪ Draft local environmental plans should provide for careful consideration for any development proposals within land zoned for public recreation.</li> <li>▪ When considering proposals for development on land within 100 m of the ocean or any substantial waterway, the Council should consider whether there is adequate foreshore open space accessible to the public in the vicinity of the proposed development, likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the waterway, the principles of any foreshore management plans that apply and any alternative use for which a waterfront site is essential.</li> <li>▪ The Plan is concerned to encourage plans for the development of recreation facilities that will result in a net inflow of money or jobs to the region and that</li> </ul>

Legislation or Policy	Relevance
	<p>are environmentally acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Plan is concerned to encourage plans for the development of recreation and boating ancillary facilities which enhance public access to and use of waterways and to encourage the preparation of plans which promote green corridors and walking and cycling trail development and cultural development proposals that reinforce recreation and tourism goals.</li> <li>▪ Tall buildings (over 14 m in height) require the concurrence of the Director-General of DUAP. The Council can assume concurrence where a proposal is in accordance with an adopted Development Control Plan.</li> </ul>
<p>Lower Hunter Regional strategy 2006-31</p>	<p>The <i>Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006-2031</i> identifies how the expected growth in the Lower Hunter region will be managed to provide for both economic development and the protection of environmental assets, cultural values and natural resources. The Strategy will guide the Lower Hunter's growth over the next 25 years by identifying future development areas, principal land use types, settlement patterns and conservation outcomes, as well as aiming to harness the Region's competitive advantages to maximise economic opportunities.</p> <p>The Strategy does not specifically identify Strategies for Merewether of coastal areas however for Newcastle the Strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote Newcastle as the regional city of the Lower Hunter, supported by a hierarchy of major regional centres at Charlestown, Cessnock, Maitland and Raymond Terrace, emerging major regional centres at Morisset and Glendale – Cardiff as well as specialised centres and lower order centres.</li> </ul>
<p>Crown Lands Policy for Marinas and Waterfront Commercial Tenures (2005)</p>	<p>This Policy was developed to guide the creation of new and renewed tenures for marinas and waterfront commercial facilities in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Crown Lands Act 1989</i>, commercial policies, business rules and operations applied to these waterfront and maritime activities/structures following the formation of the Department of Lands.</p> <p>The intent of the Policy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensure that the commercial leasing and licensing of Crown lands is consistent, transparent, fair and impartial</li> <li>▪ encouraging the sound environmental management of New South Wales' waterways and foreshores</li> <li>▪ encouraging the ongoing development and improvement of existing and new waterfront sites to ensure the availability of high quality infrastructure for the storage, maintenance, repair and use of watercraft by the boating public</li> <li>▪ encourage the use of waterfront land for public use and enjoyment</li> <li>▪ securing a market return from the commercial use of Crown Land and the best outcome for the State</li> <li>▪ providing certainty for the holders of Crown tenures in commercially secure environment</li> <li>▪ promoting and encouraging the operation of market forces in the development and operation of Crown tenures.</li> </ul>
<p>Crown Lands Policy for Tourist &amp; Associated Facilities on Crown Land</p>	<p>This Policy addresses issues associated with the development or redevelopment of Crown Lands for tourist facilities, including caravan parks, and to reinforce ongoing maintenance obligations, to promote redevelopment of such facilities, and to guide the creation of new and renewed tenures for tourist facilities in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Crown Lands Act 1989</i>, the principles of Crown Land Management, and the wider policy considerations reflected in ICAC guidelines and government business directives such as the National Competition Policy.</p>

Legislation or Policy	Relevance
(2006)	<p>The intent of the Policy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensuring that the commercial tenure (leasing and licensing) of Crown Lands is consistent, transparent, fair and impartial</li> <li>▪ encouraging the sound environmental management of Crown Land in New South Wales</li> <li>▪ encouraging the ongoing development and improvement of existing and new tourist facilities to ensure the availability of high quality infrastructure and accommodation for tourists</li> <li>▪ encouraging the use of suitable Crown Land for public use and enjoyment</li> <li>▪ securing a market return from the commercial use of Crown Land and the best outcome for the State</li> <li>▪ recognising that major redevelopment works for tourist facilities requires some provision of certainty for the holders of Crown tenures in a commercially secure environment</li> <li>▪ promoting and encouraging the operation of market forces in the development and operation of Crown tenures by removing unnecessary restrictions on commercial transactions.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

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### Plans and policies



### **Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2003**

The *Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2003* (LEP) sets the planning framework to help achieve the objectives of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) in the City of Newcastle. It provides a basis for the preparation of development control plans to guide and assist the preparation, assessment and determination of development applications. The Plan applies to all land within Newcastle Local Government Area (except land being shown as “deferred” on the zoning map, which has been excluded from the Plan under Section 70 (4) of the EP&A Act by the Minister).

The Plan has the following aims:

- 1) To respect, protect and complement the natural and cultural heritage, the identity and image, and the sense of place of the City of Newcastle.
- 2) To conserve and manage the natural and built resources of the City of Newcastle for present and future generations, and to apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) in the City of Newcastle.
- 3) To contribute to the economic well being of the community in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.
- 4) To improve the quality of life and well being of the people of the City of Newcastle.
- 5) To facilitate a diverse and compatible mix of land uses in and adjacent to the urban centres of the City of Newcastle, to support increased patronage of public transport and help reduce travel demand and private motor-vehicle dependency.
- 6) To encourage a diversity of housing types in locations that improve access to employment opportunities, public transport, community facilities and services, retail and commercial services, and the like.

The LEP outlines the objectives of each zoning and the development allowed in that zone.

### **The Newcastle Urban Strategy (2005)**

The *Newcastle Urban Strategy* is a policy document which aims to:

- guide complementary and/or more detailed policy
- guide Newcastle City Council expenditure and action
- influence other individuals and organisations.

The Strategy establishes visions and objectives for a number of identifiable neighbourhoods as statements of ‘desired future character’ for each centre designed to assist development assessment and plan making.

The Vision for Merewether states:

Merewether's beach-side character and function as a convenient location offering high amenity, a diversity of housing types with improved local employment opportunities will be consolidated.

The objective (in relation to the study area) is:

- Encourage development between the beach and the commercial areas with mixed use development to improve amenity by providing more diverse pedestrian based activities.
- Improve public transport services to the area.

The Strategy does not outline specific actions in relation to the coastline corridor.

### **Development Control Plans**

Development Control Plans (DCPs) regulate the built form at the urban/coastline interface. There are no specific DCPs for development within the public lands of the coastline corridor and the DCPs refer only to residential and commercial zoned lands.

### **Newcastle Bike Plan 2008 (Draft)**

The *Newcastle Bike Plan 2008* shows the existing bike routes in and around Merewether Beach and the proposed on and off road bike routes to be constructed by Council in the future. These proposed routes have been considered in preparing this PoM.

### **Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003**

The *Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003* was prepared in accordance with the NSW Coastline Management Manual and addresses the requirements of the *Coastal Protection Act 1979*. The Plan provides Council with an integrated management planning framework that provides for a balance between the long term use of the coastline and its conservation. The Plan outlines nine (9) objectives for the future management of the Newcastle coastline:

- 1) Ensure Council's coastal policy and management is integrated and involves community participation and information exchange.
- 2) Ensure the risks to human safety from the use of coastline resources is minimised.
- 3) Provide for equity in access to the coastline and its facilities, where it does not conflict with environmental objectives.
- 4) Enhance the environmental quality and amenity of the coastline.
- 5) Restore and enhance degraded aspects of the coastline.
- 6) Minimise the long-term cost to the community, in terms of loss of dwellings and social and economic disruption, through long term planning for coastline hazard management.
- 7) Effectively manage and conserve cultural heritage places, items and landscapes.
- 8) Identify and protect areas of natural or built aesthetic quality.
- 9) Identify and facilitate opportunities for the sustainable development and use of resources.

The Plan has identified issues related to commercial opportunities, public transport, vehicular access and shade provision for Merewether Beach and actions to be taken that will resolve or mitigate the issues and allow for better and safer management and development at Merewether Beach.

These actions are addressed in Section 6 of this PoM.

The nine (9) overriding principles outlined in the Newcastle Coastline Management Study 2002, which are borne from the NSW Coastal Policy 1997, must be considered in the implementation of the actions, before any works are undertaken and in the assessment of proposed activities. These principles are:

- 1) protect, rehabilitate and improve the natural environment
- 2) recognise and accommodate the natural processes

- 3) protect and enhance its aesthetic qualities
- 4) protect and conserve its cultural heritage
- 5) provide for ecologically sustainable development and use of its resources
- 6) provide for ecologically sustainable human settlement
- 7) provide for appropriate public access and use
- 8) provide information for its effective management
- 9) provide for integrated planning and management.

Any future development along the Newcastle coastline must consider the above objectives and principles.

### **Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006-2016**

The *Newcastle Recreation Plan 2006-2016* provides direction for the future development of sport and recreation services and facilities for the next ten (10) years. From the Plan the priorities for Council include;

- promoting existing opportunities and their value
- encourage walking and cycling
- getting better value out of existing open space and aquatic facilities
- removing barriers to participation.

The Plan includes an Implementation Plan 2006-2016 that outlines actions Council are to take to meet the goals identified in the Plan. There are four (4) actions in the Implementation Plan that are related to Merewether Beach. These actions are addressed in Section 6 of this PoM.

### **Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2000**

The *Heritage Places Strategic Plan* establishes Council's objectives for the management of places which are in Council's care and whose predominant significance is their heritage. Thirteen areas of community land with heritage places were identified in the Plan, including Merewether. The Plan also outlines Council vision for the management of heritage places in the LGA, which is;

These heritage places, conserved and safeguarded, will be celebrated as part of the rich cultural tapestry of the City of Newcastle.

The Plan dedicates a whole chapter to the Merewether Baths Precinct, outlining the history of the Precinct, its status, significance, current use, and site characteristics. The Plan outlines issues that were raised in community workshops and lists actions recommended for the future management of the Precinct. These actions are addressed in Section 6 of this POM.

The Plan categorises the Community land (Merewether Baths area and Jefferson Park) under the *Local Government Act 1993*, as Cultural Significance. The core objective for management of Culturally Significant land is 'to retain and enhance the cultural significance of the area for past, present or future generations by the active use of conservation methods'. However the Plan only outlines conservation methods for Surf House.

**Newcastle City Council Community Plan 2006-2010**

The Community Plan is a city wide strategy relevant to the social, cultural and recreation sectors of the city. The Plan is aligned and works beside other Council strategies (e.g. Newcastle Urban Strategy 2005) and was created to influence the development of issue and area specific action plans, service plans and Council's annual Management Plan. Strategies for key issues identified in the Plan relevant to the study area include:

- public domain - explore the feasibility of developing public/private partnerships to meet the challenges of public expectations of what public assets should deliver
- public transport - encourage provision of frequent, direct services between centres of activity
- cultural issues - develop open spaces as lively community places that have landscaping, public art and cultural activities to encourage increased use and ownership of open spaces
- community facilities - engage in partnerships which can maximise the delivery and use of existing and future assets.

**The Bathers Way – A Tourism Development Strategy for the Newcastle City Coastal Walk**

The Bathers Way is an overall strategy for the management of the Newcastle Coastline. The Bathers Way is a proposed coastal walk which will link the two culturally and historically significant sites of Merewether Ocean Baths and Newcastle Ocean Baths, taking visitors on a natural and cultural heritage journey along the city coastline and providing for a diverse range of educational experiences and recreational opportunities.

The Strategy reviewed means and options of enhancing the city's natural assets and cultural wealth and increasing the awareness of local and regional visitors of the city's heritage attributes. The Strategy looks at Merewether Beach as a precinct, analysis constraints and opportunities for the precinct. The Strategy formulates a series of recommendations and strategies for the Merewether Beach precinct which is proposed to aid the sustainable development, and planning of the Bathers Way City Coastal Walk.

**Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006**

The Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006 provides the first steps towards making biodiversity issues an important and integrated part of decision-making, especially in relation to strategic land use planning, management of the City's open spaces, design and maintenance of urban infrastructure, development control and education.

The Strategy links to the systems framework of the Newcastle Environment Management Plan (2003) to identify priorities promote integration across disciplines and programs, support allocation of funds, monitor issues and progress and report performance.

The purpose of the Strategy is to:

- Set clear policy direction.
- Generate and promote a shared understanding of biodiversity and its values in Newcastle.

- Establish strategic framework to inform and guide advocacy, research, planning, education and action for the conservation of Newcastle's biodiversity.
- Identify short to medium term priority actions.

### **Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan 2004**

The Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan provides a catchment-based framework for productive community and organisational partner-shop, to deliver outcomes for improved stormwater quality and quantity.

Newcastle City Council, the Hunter Water Corporation and the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority, each have significant roles in stormwater and catchment management in Newcastle.

The Plan provides a process and management framework to ensure that stormwater in Newcastle is managed in a sustainable manner through the ongoing cooperation and commitment of stormwater managers and the wider community to catchment based, whole of water cycle approach to works and policy applications.



## Appendix C

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### Consultation

## Previous consultation

There has been an abundance of community and stakeholder consultation conducted for previous studies on the study area. A review of the previous consultation has assisted with the preparation of the PoM by providing a background on the use of the study area, the existing issues and the community and stakeholder future wants and needs. Consultation that has been undertaken in the past includes:

- Newcastle Coastline Management Study and Plan – community input into the development of the management study and plan occurred via two (2) community workshops held to discuss issues and potential management options for the Newcastle coastline, this included Merewether Beach.

A Community Work Group was formed that consisted of key stakeholders and community groups, Councillors, Council Staff and State agency officers. In February 2001 the Community Workshop Group participated in a community workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to identify and prioritise issues, clarifying linkages, assessing impacts and suggested management options. A second workshop was later held during the compilation of the Newcastle Coastline Management Study to finalise the issues and management options.

Both the study and plan were publicly exhibited between 2 September 2002 and 21 October 2002. A total of 160 submissions were received during the exhibition period. The study and plan were amended accordingly and adopted in 2003.

The results of the consultation for Merewether Beach are outlined in the Newcastle Coastline Management Study: Reference Document 2002.

- Beach Asset Framework 2007 – a wide variety of consultation was conducted both internally and externally in developing the Beach Asset Framework for Council. External consultation was undertaken through small group discussions involving stakeholders and community members, individual meetings, and a random telephone survey of 300 residents across the LGA. The internal consultation program included presentations and discussions with; the Beach Asset Framework Steering Committee, internal Council Committees, and Council Staff/Internal Stakeholder meetings.

Stage 1 of the consultation program enabled Council to identify a number of major issues to be considered when assessing the future use of the beach assets. The issue that were consistently identified by consultation participants as being important to the future of the beach assets and include:

- The coastal environment and existing buildings are major assets of Newcastle and should be preserved. Any long term strategies for this space should not adversely impact on cultural significance or unspoilt natural beauty.
- Public toilets, change facilities and Surf Club buildings are considered to be poor in condition and presentation and are in need of significant improvement.
- Future planning for the coastal assets needs to ensure that use of the space as public domain is not adversely impacted. Further, usage of this space should not lead to marginalisation of any user group.
- Part commercialisation of the existing beach assets was considered acceptable on the provision it was not over done and did not take over core usage of Surf Clubs.

Consistent views were given that the Newcastle coast should not turn into the Gold Coast, or Sydney.

- Any move to part commercialisation of the beach assets needed to consider a range of issues including existing environment and social impacts.
- Any part commercialisation needed to ensure a mix of service levels and cater to a wide range of different uses and expectations.
- Food orientated use was the most favoured idea for part commercialisation.
- Part commercialisation was considered acceptable on the condition that any profits made by Council were refocused on improving the existing assets and environment.
- In setting the future direction of the Beach Assets, Council should not lose sight of the reason these facilities exist in the first place, and, understand the use of the community assets should remain free.

Results of all the consultation is outlined in the Beach Asset Framework volume two: stage one consultation findings August 2006.

### **Workshop and submissions**

A workshop was held at Dixon Park Surf Life Saving Club on Wednesday, 2 April 2008 between 6.00pm and 7.30pm.

### **Advertisement of workshop and submissions**

The community workshop was advertised in the Saturday Newcastle Herald on 15 March 2008 and 29 March 2008.

A total of 75 letters were sent to people/groups informing them of the project, proposed community workshop and how to submit a submission. Out of the 75 letters sent, 35 were sent to residents of John Parade, with the other 40 being sent to regular users/organisations who could be affected or be able to provide some input into the future of the Merewether Precinct. The users/organisations that received letters include:

- Users – Merewether Surf Club, Surfest, Merewether Board Club, Merewether Mackerals, Hunter Branch – Surfriders, and Hunter Branch – SLISA.
- Community Organisations – Merewether Community Forum, Newcastle and Hunter District Historical Society Inc, Merewether Historical Society, Merewether Landcare Group, Trees in Newcastle and Parks and Playground Movement.
- Schools - Holy Family Primary School, The Junction Public School, Merewether High School, Carrington Public School, Newcastle High School, St Pius X High School, St Paul's Catholic College, Hunter School of Performing Arts, West Wallsend High School, Whitebridge High School, Cardiff High School, Kotara High School, Francis Greenway High School, Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College, Hunter Christian School and Irrawang High School.
- Departments – Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority, Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries), Department of Planning, Road and Traffic Authority, EnergyAustralia, NSW Heritage Office, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council, Hunter Business Chamber and National Trust – Hunter Regional Centre.
- Businesses – Beach Hotel

An additional 5000 (approx.) letters inviting people to the workshop and how to submit a submission were sent by Jodi McKay Newcastle MP, to Merewether and Merewether Height residents.

## **Workshop**

The workshop was very successful with approximately 90 people attending. Of the people who attended:

- Residents – 73.
- Newcastle City Council – 5 (including the Mayor and 2 Councillors).
- National Trust – 2.
- Merewether Plan of Management Steering Committee – 2.
- Surfrider Foundation – 1.
- Merewether Surf Life saving Club – 2.
- Merewether Board Club – 1.
- Business – 1.
- Merewether Community Forum – 1.
- DOL – 2.

At the workshop PB gave a powerpoint presentation giving an overview of the project, project time frame and the consultation program. The attendees moved into groups and together they filled out worksheets which asked the following questions:

- Likes:
  - What do you like about the Merewether Beach Precinct?
  - What areas do you visit and why?
- Dislikes:
  - What do you dislike (issues) about the Merewether Beach Precinct and why?
  - What do you think needs improving and why?
- Opportunities:
  - What would make the area more functional and why?
  - How would you like the Merewether Beach Precinct to look in 5-10 years time?

From the workshop a better understanding was given of what the community and stakeholders see as the current issues, what they value about the area and how they would like to see and be using the Precinct in the future.

PB also attended the Merewether Community Forum meeting on Wednesday 9 April 2008 at the request of the Forum. At this meeting 30 community members (approx.) had their chance to provide feedback to the consultants on their likes, dislikes and what they see as the opportunities for the Precinct. The Forums comments were collated with the workshop responses.

## **Submissions**

A total of 15 submissions (emailed and posted) were received from residents (12), National Parks and Wildlife Service (1) and Merewether Board Club (2). The submissions address current issues and future management and development opportunities.

## **Community surveys**

Community surveys were conducted by BP at Merewether Beach and involved asking community members questions about why they use the Precinct, transportation to and from the Precinct, what they like about the Precinct, what they dislike and what they would like to see at the Precinct. Due to wet weather the surveys were unable to be conducted over a one week period and resulted in them being conducted over a whole month. The surveys were conducted on the following days:

- Saturday, 5 April 2008 – 9.30am to 11.30am (Surfest).
- Monday, 7 April 2008 – A group of year 10 students from Broadmeadow High School (students were at the beach for a school assignment).
- Sunday, 20 April 2008 – 2.00pm to 3.30pm.
- Monday, 28 April 2008 – 12pm to 1pm.
- Tuesday, 29 April 2008 – 7.30am to 8.40am.
- Tuesday, 29 April 2008 – 3.30pm-4.30pm.

A total of 141 surveys were completed.

## **Meetings**

A several meetings with stakeholders took place in March and April, they are as follows:

- Merewether Steering Committee meeting (7 March 2008) – Discussion of the project, consultation program and time frame.
- Department of Lands (10 March 2008) – meeting with the Acting General Manager and Regional Manager for the Department of Lands to provide information and their plans for the Precinct.

Newcastle City Council Staff (17 March 2008) – meeting was held with 10 employees of Council. The purpose of the meeting was for the employees to provide PB with any information they had which was related to the Precinct, for example, traffic information, proposed future works etc

## **Summary of all Issues raised by community**

Note: The number inside the bracket is how many people raised the issue

- **General (5):**
  - Dogs in Precinct – people walking their dogs over take footpath, not on leash, not watching their dogs, dog poo on path. (3)
  - Rubbish, litter (2)
- **Precinct Character (16):**



- Infrastructure appearance – old fashioned and outdated, uncoordinated, run down and deteriorating poorly delineated area for equipment, bandaids approach to maintenance, lack of decent boulevard and too much concrete.
  - Surrounds - Large amounts of housing commission type unit blocks next to multi-million dollar views, The drabness of flats, Salvation Army building.
  - People – too many people and too many tourists (3).
- **Ocean Baths (17):**
  - Repair – baths need repairing (3), surface of kids pool (make smooth) (2), inside the baths some of the stony projections need to be removed, baths are in a disgraceful condition
  - Maintenance - baths unable to be used 2 days a week for cleaning, sand in kids pool is unhygienic (2), ladies pool is not maintained, dangerous and in need of repair (5), raw sewage that gets into the little pool at Merewether baths when there are heavy showers and rain about.
  - General –need rules for use of lap swimming.
- **Environment (43):**
  - Shade – lack of shade provision (14).
  - Shelter - Lack of wet weather shelters (2).
  - Landscaping – lack of landscaping (5), lack of greenery and trees (8), more parks (2).
  - Sand dunes - No sand dunes, need more sand dunes.
  - Beach – Surf quality has change dramatically over the last few years mainly due to change in wind patterns on the dry sand area near the dunes that have been worked on by the Landcare group and the use of the Council tractor in flattening out the beach. (4), lack of recognition in the past for what happens 'east of the high water mark.
  - General - Semi-harsh environment – too much concrete, Lack of colour (2), the change and damage to the natural environment and sea life over the last 50 years, loose surface behind the parking area must be made secure against land slips, too windy.
- **Parking (17):**
  - Watkins Street car park – is a bare/ unused space
  - Baths car park – turnaround area at the baths dangerous (2), Lack of car parking available in close proximity to the Baths, Parking situation around the Baths needs addressing
  - General - Car parking unsafe (2), Lack of parking for elderly/young families, lack of parking (4), car parking areas are ugly and unappealing, parking chaos, poor parking, enlarging of parking facilities will create access problems not solve them, Cars park on Jefferson Park on weekends.
- **Access, traffic and transport (20):**

- Traffic - High speed limit in local area (John Parade, Watkins St etc) (2), motorist ignore the 10km speed limit along Henderson Parade, traffic management around the Precinct (2), traffic build-up, conflicts between pedestrians and traffic, turning from John Parade onto Frederick Street is dangerous and cause traffic delays.
- Pedestrian access - Access/facilities for pedestrians is poor, need safe pedestrian crossing (3), under crossing is badly maintained, lack of pedestrian crossing where the median strip is – this would make it safe for those crossing if implemented, need a crossing from car park to beach, pedestrian movement and safety, tunnel area where it access the Henderson Parade is dangerous, poor stair access.
- Public transport - Need better bus service to bring people to beach instead of cars, no public transport.
- **Activities, amenities and facilities (92):**
  - Amenities – (23):
    - *Condition* - Poor amenities at Baths and Surf Life saving Club, showers and toilets need to be upgraded (11), inadequate change room facilities (3), lack of toilets and public amenities (3), not enough showers.
    - *Maintenance* - Lack of maintenance to shower/toilet block at the Baths Pavilion
    - *General* - Showers to be relocated off concrete to grass areas, No signage for dressing sheds, showers are not hot enough in women's change rooms, 15 second showers in the dressing sheds, change areas/showers too far apart.
  - Picnic facilities - Not enough family BBQ/picnic areas (3), Lack of sun shelter over picnic/Council tables (2).
  - Jefferson Park - Lack of facilities, landscaping etc in Jefferson Park, Jefferson Park is a disgrace, Jefferson Park needs a makeover, lack of park land.
  - Seating - Not enough seating, more seating required (5), more seating needed on bottom promenade from showers to old dinner shed, seating in the shade pavilion faces the wrong way.
  - Swell Café, food outlets – 18:
    - *Swells Café* – needs to be fixed up as there is no room and lack of seating (4), Swells café area congested, seating takes over the walkway and area under the Surf Life Saving Club and causes confusion for pedestrians (5), Swells café is uninviting and unhygienic located next to the men's amenities (2).
    - *Food outlets* - Lack of entertaining areas/inadequate food facilities i.e. Restaurant, café, bar (5), No traditional kiosk (2).
  - Buildings - Lack of beauty in added structures, i.e. nothing added to enhance natural beauty, complete absence of design principles and aesthetic value in public structures, general quality of infrastructure had been let go, Surf Life Saving Club house – area needs to be modified to cater for the disparate users e.g. café patrons, pedestrians, cyclists, surf club members, lifeguards and surfers.
  - Commercialisation - The possibility of commercial development, crowded outdoor restaurant is only going to block the pathway for thorough fare.
  - General – 27:

- Not enough bubblers/water access (2), Lack of lighting (3), Lack of garbage bins, Dark in pavilion.
  - More facilities needed for mothers with babies and toddlers, Lack of children facilities (no play area available), Lack of facilities (food, bike hire), Not enough facilities/shops, Not too much to do there.
  - Unsympathetic fencing, wire fence at top of Henderson Drive, the white railing fence that was constructed between old dinner shed and Surf Club building detracts from the 'openness' feel that existed for many years (2), post and rail fence along the road blocks the view of the beach for people driving past.
  - Alcohol near pool – security.
  - Fitness clubs/teams using area (need better accommodation).
  - Infrastructure not maintained, Stairs in need of repair, Council funds to maintain the assets, Lack of funds allocated to provide facilities and maintain the area (2).
  - Young children hang about the main entrance to the beach which hampers, lifeguards, mal riders and boatcrews carry surfboats to the beach, Surfest – setup in the car park is dreadful.
  - Limited access for dogs – difficult to find seating for coffee/picnics with dogs.
  - Surf Board riding deserves its own venue (e.g. surf life saving club).
- Walkways (26):
    - Narrow - Walkway is too narrow particularly along John Parade where it is dangerous as people constantly have to step onto the road to pass each other (13).
    - General - Bicycles on walkway, over crowded walkway on John Parade, road close to walkway – safety issue, sporting teams training along walkways – dangerous knock people out of the way, dog poo on footpath.
    - Maintenance - Poor condition of path from Surf Club to baths, need upgrading Pathways (4), poor maintenance of pathways etc, Surface of path around the Baths and to the kiosk and amenities is rough, cracked and dangerous, Path surrounding the Baths needs to be made smooth and maintained including the tinies pool.
  - Beach (10):
    - Stormwater - Stormwater outlet empty straight onto the beach (6).
    - Alcohol - People drinking on the beach and leaving broken bottles, safety issues with intoxicated people swimming.
    - General - Beach is not a safe swimming beach for young children, no dogs allowed on beach.

## Community and stakeholder workshop

A total of 86 people participated in the community and stakeholder workshop held at Dixon Park Surf Club, 2 April 2008. The following tables are the participants response to questions asked at the workshop.

Note: Merewether Community Forum's responses are represented as group 12.

### LIKES

Group	What do you like about the Merewether Beach Precinct?
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Wide accessibility to beach, open spaces, parklands</li><li>▪ Pedestrian/bicycle access</li><li>▪ The Baths</li><li>▪ Unobstructed views</li><li>▪ The under development (i.e. not <u>over</u>-developed)</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ It's an extension of peoples backyards</li><li>▪ A surfers beach</li><li>▪ A family beach</li><li>▪ A village beach</li><li>▪ Family beach (small tidal pools, bathing area, safe surf area, proximity to transport)</li><li>▪ Pedestrian pathways well utilised and well graded for all users</li><li>▪ Café friendly to families (parents coffee, children playing), well used by parent groups</li><li>▪ Access to beach excellent</li><li>▪ Beautiful vista</li><li>▪ The actual baths facility for non-surf swimmers and exercisers</li><li>▪ Tidal pools</li><li>▪ The old "ladies pool" (in front of Surf House) – very popular with very small children</li><li>▪ I like that it's not houses to the edge of the beach (as in Newport or Avalon etc)</li><li>▪ The renovations of coast by Coastcare/Landcare by removal of bitou bush</li></ul>

3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Uninterrupted views</li> <li>▪ No high use</li> <li>▪ Great exercise area for all different people</li> <li>▪ Even though pool is run down it needs to stay and be repaired and remain free</li> <li>▪ Outdoor showers – need more</li> <li>▪ Naturalness of foreshore</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The beach</li> <li>▪ Free use of baths/beach</li> <li>▪ Free parking</li> <li>▪ Walking track (baths → Bar Beach → City)</li> <li>▪ The Surf/waves – buildings can't affect these</li> <li>▪ The steps for exercise</li> <li>▪ Uninterrupted views of beach (low building height)</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The way it already is –uncluttered along beach from Surf Club to Dixon Park</li> <li>▪ It caters (just) to all members of community from mother with babies, to nippers, to the older members who want to relax. However, facilities need improving, e.g. shelter for children and mothers to play on sand</li> <li>▪ It's a good community 'gathering' place to build on community aspect</li> <li>▪ Rustic appeal should be preserved at all cost</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Look at Bar Beach to Merewether Baths as a continuum</li> <li>▪ Baths</li> <li>▪ Low level dwellings – no high rises, no over shadowing</li> <li>▪ All natural aspects of beach</li> <li>▪ Lots of benches – graded to that everyone can see</li> <li>▪ Free parking</li> <li>▪ Surf &amp; sand</li> </ul>



7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pool</li> <li>▪ Open spaces</li> <li>▪ Coffee shop</li> <li>▪ Walk through whole site – walkway</li> <li>▪ Change rooms</li> <li>▪ Viewing areas</li> <li>▪ Seats</li> <li>▪ Showers</li> <li>▪ Views</li> <li>▪ BBQ facilities</li> <li>▪ Parking nearby</li> <li>▪ Kids pool</li> <li>▪ Access to Burwood</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plenty of space</li> <li>▪ Low rise</li> <li>▪ Swimming baths</li> <li>▪ Easy access to beach</li> <li>▪ Free parking</li> <li>▪ Café (needs improving)</li> <li>▪ Need to do a survey at Surfest – extra tourism input</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Barbeques – at night</li> <li>▪ Walking trail</li> <li>▪ Love the Café atmosphere (small tables are fine) Casual or friendly</li> <li>▪ Love the baths</li> <li>▪ Access to beach – lots of ramps already</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pavilion is great</li> <li>▪ Like to know its safe with active surf life savers</li> <li>▪ Love feeling safe walking along beach</li> <li>▪ Love seeing other people walking</li> <li>▪ Love dogs on leads</li> <li>▪ Love the boot camp activities</li> <li>▪ Like the car park at Merewether Beach</li> <li>▪ Newly planted regeneration work on the ground cover at the edge of sand</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Swim in Ocean Baths</li> <li>▪ Boardriding at Beach</li> <li>▪ Walking for exercise</li> <li>▪ Fitness – steps at Merewether Baths</li> <li>▪ Walking dogs</li> <li>▪ Picnic and BBQ area</li> <li>▪ Social area for coffee/breakfast</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open space</li> <li>▪ Keep path around beach</li> <li>▪ Keep park</li> <li>▪ Good public transport – buses etc</li> <li>▪ Having a suitable swimming pool</li> <li>▪ The community that exist now – culture, life style</li> <li>▪ Protected beaches without Surf Lifesaving Clubs involvement</li> <li>▪ Council clean the beach sand and walkways</li> <li>▪ Keep rubbish from stormwater from flowing onto beach</li> </ul>

12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No comment (did not have time to complete this section)</li> </ul>
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Groups	What areas do you visit and why?
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ocean baths</li> <li>Pavilion below Surf House</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baths - swimming, catching up with friends</li> <li>Promenade – dog walking, pram pushing, exercising, relating</li> <li>Beach in front of Surf House</li> <li>Tidal pools – kids love to explore</li> <li>Seating near tunnel - for resting and fish &amp; chips</li> <li>Change areas at baths – toilets and showers</li> <li>Shed in front of old Surf House – great venue for reading paper, having parties, resting</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean areas</li> <li>Pristine naturalness</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All areas for:</li> <li>Swimming</li> <li>Surfing</li> <li>Coffee</li> <li>Meals</li> <li>Walking</li> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Exercise</li> <li>Surf Club</li> </ul>

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No comment</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pool – swim</li> <li>▪ Beach</li> <li>▪ Walk along foreshore</li> <li>▪ Baths</li> <li>▪ Thoroughfare Cooks Hill and Merewether Baths</li> <li>▪ Shelter is great for family gatherings</li> <li>▪ Sport, health and vitality</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See LIKES comments</li> <li>▪ Baths every day</li> <li>▪ Coffee shop</li> <li>▪ Walkway</li> <li>▪ Car parks</li> <li>▪ Surf</li> <li>▪ Beach</li> <li>▪ Change rooms</li> <li>▪ Showers – including at Surf Club (outdoor shower)</li> <li>▪ Pavilion and baths (covered seats)</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surf Club</li> <li>▪ Baths – summer and winter</li> <li>▪ Ocean swimming</li> <li>▪ The Beaches Hotel – food</li> <li>▪ Nippers</li> <li>▪ Surfest</li> <li>▪ Walking</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surfing</li> <li>▪ Views</li> <li>▪ Whale watching</li> <li>▪ fishing</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baths – for a swim</li> <li>▪ Walkways – for walking</li> <li>▪ Subway walkway – for safe access</li> <li>▪ Café – peace and quiet, a chat, fresh air, coffee, to read the papers, find out what’s happening in the community</li> <li>▪ Burwood Beach – for calm, beautiful walking</li> <li>▪ Surf – for a swim</li> <li>▪ Surf Clubs – exercise, social contacts, life saving, education (i.e. nippers)</li> <li>▪ Ladies baths – rock pools for kids</li> <li>▪ Beach (ladies bath in particular) – for playing games, younger children</li> <li>▪ BBQs</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baths</li> <li>▪ Beach</li> <li>▪ Walkway</li> <li>▪ Kiosk</li> <li>▪ Change shed/toilet facilities of Baths plus Surf Club</li> <li>▪ Steps at baths</li> <li>▪ Car parks</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beach – grandkids, play, walk</li> <li>▪ Surf – health/lifestyle</li> <li>▪ Pool – swim</li> <li>▪ Walking paths – lifestyle</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surf Clubs – safety for public</li> <li>▪ Like to visit the coffee shop, but there is very few seats, or room to sit and enjoy the beach</li> <li>▪ The beach - enjoy</li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No comment (did not have time to complete this section)</li> </ul>

## DISLIKES

Group	What do you dislike (issues) about the Merewether Beach Precinct and why?
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Old fashioned, out-dated, uncoordinated</li> <li>▪ Access/facilities for pedestrians is poor</li> <li>▪ Insufficient facilities for people walking their dogs</li> <li>▪ Lack of greenery/trees/plants/shade provision</li> <li>▪ Watkins Street car park – is a bare, unused space</li> <li>▪ So many unused areas which have the potential for better community use</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not enough greenery/trees</li> <li>▪ Too much concrete</li> <li>▪ Walkway too narrow</li> <li>▪ Not enough bubblers/water access</li> <li>▪ Not enough seating, shade</li> <li>▪ Car parking/turnaround area at baths dangerous – people often back out – danger to small children</li> <li>▪ Change areas/showers too far apart and not enough showers</li> <li>▪ The falling down retaining wall near baths – needs maintenance</li> <li>▪ Car parking</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of toilets and public amenities</li> <li>▪ No signage for dressing sheds</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of lighting (subtle)</li> <li>▪ Stormwater emptying straight onto the beach</li> <li>▪ Lack of parking for elderly, young families</li> <li>▪ Need crossings for safe crossing</li> <li>▪ More free bubblers for water</li> <li>▪ Keep children pool but repair with smooth surface</li> <li>▪ Speed limit on Scenic Drive to be 50km from the hill</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surf House</li> <li>▪ Poor Condition of path from Surf Club to Baths</li> <li>▪ Poorly delineated area for equipment</li> <li>▪ Lack of trees and shade</li> <li>▪ Overcrowded walkway on John Parade</li> <li>▪ High speed limit in local area (John Parade, Watkins St etc)</li> <li>▪ Tunnel badly looked after</li> <li>▪ Poor amenities at Baths and Surf Club</li> <li>▪ Lack of seating/picnic areas</li> <li>▪ Bandid approach to maintenance</li> <li>▪ The Baths being out for 2days/week for cleaning</li> <li>▪ No concreted plan for Precinct linking to Surf House and Dixon Park</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That this PoM needs to know the outcome/future of Surf House. The future of that will impact on use-parking-traffic management etc</li> <li>▪ Lack of knowledge of lifeguard facility and placement</li> <li>▪ Minority groups who think they 'own' the beach and the facilities</li> <li>▪ Poor facilities (toilets, showers etc) at Surf Club</li> <li>▪ More facilities needed for mothers with babies and toddlers</li> <li>▪ No paid parking at any cost</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The traffic management around the Precinct. There is an opportunity in the PoM to make the movement safe for all.</li> <li>▪ The lack of adequate crossing in John Parade and Scenic Drive at Frederick Street to the Baths.</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baths need repairing</li> <li>▪ Car parking is a 'dog's breakfast'</li> <li>▪ Sand in small pool – unhygienic</li> <li>▪ Commercialisation – Issues</li> <li>▪ Hot soup and coffee</li> <li>▪ Mothers and prams</li> <li>▪ Crowded outdoor restaurant is only thoroughfare and blocks public footpath</li> <li>▪ Pathway from Merewether Baths to Surf Club – needs widening</li> <li>▪ Shower to be relocated off pathways on to grassed areas</li> <li>▪ Public consultation used as 'lip service' rather than genuine community involvement</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Narrow walkway</li> <li>▪ Bicycles on walkway</li> <li>▪ Through traffic</li> <li>▪ Disrepair of changerooms/baths</li> <li>▪ SURF HOUSE AS IT IS (you should have let it burn!)</li> <li>▪ Alcohol fall-out near pool – security</li> <li>▪ Inadequate coffee facilities, refreshment access/facilities</li> <li>▪ State of disrepair of "Ladies Baths"</li> <li>▪ Sea lice</li> <li>▪ No health checks of pool – too long between cleans, should be tested</li> <li>▪ Stormwater outlet at Merewether</li> <li>▪ Unsafe access across main road (1 tunnel)</li> <li>▪ Fitness clubs/teams using areas, need better accommodation</li> </ul>

8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of landscaping</li> <li>▪ Not enough shade areas, BBQ and picnic areas</li> <li>▪ Unsympathetic fencing</li> <li>▪ Stormwater drain in middle of beach (unsafe for children)</li> <li>▪ Not enough parking in summertime</li> <li>▪ Jefferson Park is a disgrace</li> <li>▪ Not enough entertaining areas – restaurants, cafes etc</li> <li>▪ We dislike what has happened to Surf House for past 20 years</li> <li>▪ Café area needs fixing up bigger deck area</li> <li>▪ Lack of children facilities (no play area available)</li> <li>▪ Children's pool has always got too much sand</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Don't like the lack of maintenance of - ladies baths, Merewether Baths, toilets/change rooms/showers, bins, paths (if they are narrow, need to be wider)</li> <li>▪ That EYESORE SURF HOUSE</li> <li>▪ Traffic flow around the baths</li> <li>▪ Parking near the baths</li> <li>▪ Lack of beauty in added structures, i.e. nothing added to enhance natural beauty – complete absence of design principles and aesthetic value in public structures</li> <li>▪ Poor use of Ocean Bath facilities/building</li> <li>▪ It gets dark in the pavilion</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infrastructure not maintained</li> <li>▪ Footpath too narrow – John Parade, between Merewether Surf Club and Surf House</li> <li>▪ Not enough family BBQ/picnic areas</li> <li>▪ Coffee shop area needs relocating – confusion of walkers, surfers, dogs and shop patrons</li> <li>▪ Need better bus service to bring people to the beach instead of cars</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small walkway for people to walk on, existing walkway is too narrow</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traffic being out of control – John Parade should be one-way and speed hump to be installed on John Parade</li> <li>▪ Lack of street lighting for walking at night</li> <li>▪ The very bad way in which Surf House has been handled</li> <li>▪ Lack of facilities (food, bike hire) for people who come to use the beach</li> <li>▪ Council funds to maintain the Council assets</li> <li>▪ Rates payed by beach people – are used by all of Newcastle and the Hunter Valley</li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to take a holistic approach, so fair it has all been a bandaid approach and facilities have been viewed in isolation</li> <li>▪ Room at Swells café is inadequate</li> <li>▪ Area around Swells is busy, particularly on weekends when Nippers is on</li> <li>▪ Public amenities are disgraceful. The toilets are only make shift facilities</li> <li>▪ Don't want the possibility of parking meters in the future</li> <li>▪ Shouldn't just be looking at Merewether, should be considering the whole beach, Merewether Beach → Bar Beach</li> <li>▪ Poor visual quality at stormwater outlet</li> <li>▪ Need professional advice on traffic – professionals not in attendance at the Forum meeting</li> </ul>

## OPPORTUNITIES

Group	What would make the area more functional and why?
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exercise stations/circuits, e.g. at Jefferson Park (e.g. Burleigh Heads Esplanade, from Burleigh Heads to North Burleigh)</li> <li>▪ Better and more children's playgrounds and picnic facilities, particularly at Dixon Park (e.g. see what they have done at Southport Park on the Spit at the Gold Coast)</li> <li>▪ More cafes/casual dining – at Merewether baths and Dixon Park. Utilise space at Baths Pavilion for a café.</li> <li>▪ Beautify the path</li> <li>▪ More rubbish bins</li> <li>▪ More benches (seats)</li> <li>▪ A path from top car park to Merewether Baths Pavilion steps</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better access from west of Frederick Street</li> <li>▪ Plantings at Jefferson Park</li> <li>▪ More greenery and trees (but ensure trees do not block views)</li> <li>▪ Widen footpath</li> <li>▪ More shade pavilions</li> <li>▪ Improved Merewether Baths maintenance</li> <li>▪ Baths Way to get interpretive centre</li> <li>▪ Buildings to have a 2 storey height limit</li> <li>▪ Seating at top car park</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Concerns</li> <li>▪ Concerns regarding public/private partnerships and the private sector benefiting from publicly owned facilities/structures/land</li> <li>▪ Local rates/ratepayer concerns that all benefit from upgrade yet only small percentage pay (increase rates), car parking</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian access improved (more crossings, tunnel improved)</li> <li>▪ Secure locker area in change rooms/more change rooms</li> <li>▪ More beach showering/drinking water/bins</li> <li>▪ One-way traffic flow along access road from SLSC to baths</li> <li>▪ Path from top car park (Robinson St) to Henderson Street (or top of long stairs from baths up) so pedestrians don't have to walk on roadway to access stairs down to baths</li> <li>▪ Greater seating/tables/shade structure</li> <li>▪ Perhaps turn top access road (for Scenic Drive) into car park, one-way road past SLSC (Henderson Parade) – new car access back onto Scenic Drive</li> <li>▪ Facilities should reflect the users needs and the village nature of each beach personally in Newcastle</li> <li>▪ Families</li> <li>▪ Surfers</li> <li>▪ Swimmers/exercisers</li> <li>▪ Walkers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better lifeguard facilities</li> <li>▪ Incorporate Dixon Park into plan and better utilisation of Dixon Park</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take 3 metres of eastern side of Jefferson Park to provide angle parking. Taking out the curve in the road.</li> <li>▪ Widen the footpath along John Parade between Surf House and Surf Club /Merewether</li> <li>▪ Make surf House a public green space and not a commercial space, e.g. more shade sheds, barbeques, toilets etc</li> <li>▪ More efficient parking (not paying) or multi-stored at car park</li> <li>▪ Better facilities for families – shade</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To build a shed for the Boardriders Club</li> <li>▪ To incorporate a cycleway/cycleway access to baths/beach</li> <li>▪ An overall master plan</li> <li>▪ Quicker turnover for cleaning of baths</li> <li>▪ Smoother vehicle access</li> <li>▪ BBQ facilities/shade/tables</li> <li>▪ Roundabouts</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian crossings</li> <li>▪ Showers at each beach access</li> <li>▪ Beautify Jefferson Park</li> <li>▪ Use Jefferson Park</li> <li>▪ Kiosk at Baths</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of knowledge of the approved lifeguard facility. Please advertise this to the community</li> <li>▪ Footpath on John Parade to be made wider, e.g. John Parade to be made one-way</li> <li>▪ Provision of safe pedestrian crossings</li> <li>▪ Widen footway on John Parade – make traffic one-way</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognise that the foreshore is a continuum from Bar Beach to Merewether Baths – development must be linked</li> <li>▪ Improve landscaping</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve use of car parks, i.e. better set up</li> <li>▪ Make John Parade a one-way street</li> <li>▪ Better use of Jefferson Park – make use of it</li> <li>▪ Enhance natural beauty (unlike neglect erosion of Dixon Park and surrounds)</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wider walkway – better flow through area – safer</li> <li>▪ Maybe recreational area where Jefferson Park is (e.g. some parts have rail yards at foreshore)</li> <li>▪ Boardwalk, restaurants, cafes, milkbars? Garden sculpture – trees, shrubs, gardens, BBQ areas</li> <li>▪ Widen Henderson Parade to make it safer</li> <li>▪ Kids playground?, trees, more shrubs e.g. Jefferson Park</li> <li>▪ Whole area around baths – car parks, change rooms, roadway needs redeveloping (NOT high rise), to make it easier to flow from one area to another and to use properly. E.g. car park on Scenic Drive not connected safely to pool access.</li> <li>▪ Improve car parks – lots potential – Watkins St car park</li> <li>▪ Make major access to beach along Watkins St to car park – make John Parade boardwalk/walkway? – local traffic only</li> <li>▪ More shade</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restoration of Surf House</li> <li>▪ Surf Club needs change rooms improved</li> <li>▪ Better Gym at the Surf Club</li> <li>▪ Cycle paths</li> <li>▪ Dog walking tracks</li> <li>▪ Fix up concrete paths – so they are even to walk on</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investment in Surf Club buildings to become a larger community centre</li> <li>▪ Café deck</li> <li>▪ Wider walkway along John Parade</li> <li>▪ Some sort of square to hold a market</li> <li>▪ Development of Jefferson Park – i.e. community activities – arts show, wine show, 'Merewether Markets', Jazz/Guitar Festival 'Blues at the Beach', BBQs and parties, live site activity, plays, annual ball (proceeds to beach fund)</li> </ul>

10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make area more family friendly</li> <li>▪ Develop public/private partnerships to help maintain infrastructure and support surf clubs</li> <li>▪ No high rise development – make 2 storeys up</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Concrete path at John Parade etc to be cycleway and extend path seaward for people to walk above beach</li> <li>▪ One-way traffic in John Parade – speed humps, widen walkways</li> <li>▪ Angle parking</li> <li>▪ Improved lighting along walkway adjacent to beach</li> <li>▪ More facilities, picnic tables, BBQ's etc</li> <li>▪ Upgrade the existing pool</li> <li>▪ Better access for surfers to the water at the South end of beach</li> <li>▪ Sign posting, information boards, e.g. history, facilities etc</li> <li>▪ Part of a total integrated plan from ____?? ____ (unable to understand the persons writing) to Newcastle</li> <li>▪ Increased funding from Federal and State Government</li> <li>▪ Sand control e.g. slowing sand onto reads and property</li> <li>▪ Consider maintenance when designing the facilities – to extend the life of equipment with less maintenance</li> <li>▪ Hotel, accommodation and other commercial operations, e.g. coffee shop and surf shop</li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep beach line as it is – no encroachment onto beach</li> <li>▪ Better traffic management at Merewether Baths</li> <li>▪ Maximum 2 stories for any development</li> <li>▪ Retain free parking</li> <li>▪ Maintain conditions of existing public infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Better maintenance of public infrastructure along the beach</li> <li>▪ Old ladies pool to be refurbished or removed</li> <li>▪ Open aired dressing sheds</li> <li>▪ More seating along walkway</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better lighting along the entire walkway</li> <li>▪ Outdoor showers in front of Surf House</li> <li>▪ Better public transport to the beach</li> </ul>
<b>Group</b>	<b>How would you like the Merewether Beach Precinct to look in 5-10 years time?</b>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The “Plan” should not be restricted to Merewether Beach Precinct – the outlook/landscape is Merewether Beach to Bar Beach and should be conclusive of ALL areas in THIS Precinct.</li> <li>▪ A family-friendly, widely accessible area</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More greenery</li> <li>▪ Better transport access (buses or light rail etc) to reduce vehicular private use and allow more equitable beach patronage</li> <li>▪ With improved infrastructure, the continuation of Surfest or other community events/festivals would be beneficial</li> <li>▪ Undeveloped – not too much high rise or private development – no shadowing or beachfront</li> <li>▪ Baths still going strong – pristine and no private development – a true ocean baths- not a poseurs hotspot</li> <li>▪ Surf club as a surf club – not alcohol selling venue (as in Queensland)</li> <li>▪ Still maintaining it’s village personality - quiet, pristine, family friendly etc</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No comment</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cleaner/greener/user friendly/unspoilt/undeveloped</li> <li>▪ Low rise (restrict maximum heights)</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian and cycle friendly</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No comment</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Profile as is with well maintained facilities – we should be able to be proud of our foreshore</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian, cycling friendly – less cars</li> <li>▪ More family oriented</li> <li>▪ Enhance natural beauty</li> <li>▪ No big corporations – i.e. no McDonalds</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trees – lots of trees/parks/shade</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NO HIGH RISE, OVER-COMMERCIAL developments</li> <li>▪ Keep village atmosphere and natural</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better landscaping</li> <li>▪ Surf House fixed up</li> <li>▪ Deck out the front of Swells Café</li> <li>▪ Lifeguard area with viewing deck</li> <li>▪ Better conference facilities</li> <li>▪ We don't want it to look like Bondi or Manly</li> <li>▪ Not over commercialised</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A safer well maintained version of itself today</li> <li>▪ Don't skimp on the design expenditure, it will be there for a long time</li> <li>▪ From Berner Street to Bar Beach to be treated the same</li> <li>▪ Beautiful (a reflection of the beach)</li> <li>▪ Bright</li> <li>▪ In use</li> <li>▪ Clean</li> <li>▪ Safe</li> <li>▪ To show Art and Culture if Australian beaches</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eco</li> <li>▪ Marine friendly environment</li> <li>▪ Minimise sand erosion</li> <li>▪ Family friendly area</li> <li>▪ Area to encourage activity for seniors to accommodate changing demographics in the city</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The safest, most beautiful, eco-friendly and family orientated beach in Australia</li> </ul>

12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low key area, more functional, better maintained, a café, widen footpath, free parking. Still the culture of being a local beach for the Merewether community</li> </ul>
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## Summary of issues and opportunities from submissions (April 2008)

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### Issues

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#### Traffic and Pedestrians (walkway)

- Conflict between pedestrians and traffic
- Motorists ignore the 10Km speed limit along Henderson Parade
- Pedestrian movement and safety
- The 'tunnel area' where it accesses the road is dangerous
- Post and rail fence along beach blocks the view of the beach when driving past
- Bathers' Walk from the surf club to Berner Street is too narrow and 'an accident waiting to happen' when a vehicle jumps the footpath and hits a pedestrian.
- Turning right off John Parade into Frederick Street causes traffic delays. John Parade made one way would help in allowing the foot path to be widened as a lot of boot camps and people exercising take up a lot of space for those out having a casual stroll.

#### Car parks

- Parking situation around the Baths needs addressing
- Loose surface behind the parking area must be made secure against land slips
- Enlarging of parking facilities will create access problems not solve them

#### Jefferson Park

- Jefferson Park needs a makeover
- Cars park on Jefferson Park on the weekends

#### Facilities (Baths, amenities etc)

- No shade
  - Shower need to be upgraded
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- Toilet facilities are all due for an overhaul and upgrade
  - Surf Board riding deserves its own venue (e.g. surf life saving club)
  - Amenities for surfers need to be augmented to provide reasonable dressing and showering facilities. Existing facilities are inadequate forcing many beach users to walk to the baths or Dixon Park for washing and change facilities.
  - Merewether Baths are in a disgraceful condition
  - Surface of path around the Baths and to the kiosk and amenities is rough, cracked and dangerous
  - Path surrounding the Baths needs to be made smooth and maintained including the tinies pool
  - Replace the dirty surface of the tinies pool (under the sand)
  - Inside the baths some of the stony projections need to be removed
  - Old Ladies pool is in a state of disrepair
  - The white railing fence that was constructed 18 months ago between old dinner shed and Surf Club building detracts from the 'openness' feel that existed for many years.
  - Shade areas, with melanoma a major concern, there are not enough shade areas at Merewether beach. Apart from the shade structure on the promenade, the kiosk/restaurant takes up most of the area under the surf club.
  - Maintenance - old ladies pool is in poor shape.
  - Privacy. Since the opening of the kiosk/restaurant, the customers have taken up most of the open space around the surf club which some days can include the car park. There are inadequate change room facilities and most surfers have to get changed in front of a crowd, mind you some enjoy it. Also a lot of young children about the main entrance to the beach which hamper, lifeguards, mal riders and boatcrews carry surfboats to the beach.
  - More seating needed on bottom promenade from showers to old dinner shed
  - Remove wire fence at top of Henderson Drive
  - Consider relocation of Swell café, what other restaurant in the city would allow patrons to sit directly outside a men's toilet whilst consuming food? Surely a health issue?
  - Thru pedestrian traffic is often hindered by location of Swell seats etc
  - The 'Old Ladies Pool' directly in front of Surf House is in a dangerous state, and should be repaired for its value and popularity to the community but also its heritage connections

### **Social**

- Against the construction of viewing platforms along John Parade. The whole of the car parks at both Dixon Park and Merewether provide ample opportunity to see the beach, and if the pathway is widened then there is also an opportunity to stop and view the beach. Viewing platforms would encourage young people



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to hangout at night time.

- People are coming to the beach for the day bringing an Esky with beer etc, and apart from the issues with broken glass, the other issue of safety of people swimming while intoxicated is a big one.

### **Events**

- Surfest – setup in the car park is dreadful
- Surf Life Saving Club house – area needs to be modified to cater for the disparate users e.g. café patrons, pedestrians, cyclists, surf club members, lifeguards and surfers

### **Environment**

- Lack of recognition in the past for what happens 'east of the high water mark
- Dune stabilization that are being done on the beach WITHOUT regard to impact on the surf and waves.
- Water quality, raw sewage that gets into the little pool at Merewether bathes when there are heavy showers and rain about.
- Surf quality. This has change dramatically over the last few years mainly due to change in wind patterns on the dry sand area near the dunes that have been worked on by the landcare group. Also the use of the council tractor in flattening out the beach has affected wave quality. Taken into consideration that the council wants to put Merewether beach on the world surf heritage list, they are having a big impact on quality of surf. Sea wall also affects the surf by causing long gutters.
- The impact of the re-vegetation and continual beach cleaning on the beach contours and detrimental effect on the formation of good sandbanks to create waves.

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### **Opportunities**

#### **Traffic and Pedestrians (walkway)**

- Traffic calming and control along Henderson Parade
  - Possibly restrict traffic accessing Frederick Street from Henderson Parade
  - A raised pedestrian crossing where the pedestrian tunnel accesses Henderson Parade
  - Wider walkway along John Parade and Henderson Parade
  - Close John Parade
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- One-way along John Parade (only if the path is widened). One-way traffic should flow north from Merewether to Dixon Park, which then allows on street parking for residents and for the traffic to flow into the Dixon Park carpark, where 2-way traffic could resume.
  - Widening of the walkways
  - 'Traffic calming' structure put between the car park and footpath at Merewether Beach car park, and the road narrowed to one-way, this would have the desired effects in terms of safety and access for the public without adversely affecting traffic and residents. It would also mean traffic turning into Watkins St from John Parade to access the car park would be turning left, and not right around a 'blind' corner (as currently happens, which is a safety issue for pedestrians crossing from the aged care home).
  - Timber boardwalk over the dunes beside the footpath, if the current footpath along John Parade is not widened
  - Close Henderson Parade adjacent Jefferson Park, and John Parade between Watkins Street and Frederick Street would improve beach access and pedestrian safety and provide space to expand the existing beach facilities
  - Bathers Way is a very popular facility which could be improved by widening between Dixon Park and Merewether Beaches. The southbound lane of John Parade could be utilised by making John Parade one-way north and providing suitable traffic/pedestrian separation.
  - Widen Henderson Parade, left lane to be one-way (from Frederick Street to John Parade) turn only left at Frederick Street
  - A round about would be necessary at the corner of John Parade and Frederick Street
  - John Parade be made one-way (North to South) and widen the footpath with an appropriate barrier to separate cars from pedestrians, or construct a wooden walkway on the east side of the existing concrete barrier (similar to Snapper Rocks, Byron Bay or Sandbar [Celito Beach] near Forster).
  - Re-consider traffic direction / parking on Henderson Parade
  - Improve traffic flow from left hand turn from John Parade into Frederick Street. Council owns the parkland (ex-Hinchcliff Estate) and should put in a 'splay' corner.
  - Widened the footpath from the Surf Club south towards Surf House and the Baths.
  - If John Pde were to be made one-way from South to North, then that would allow access to Henderson Pde, which could also be one way towards the baths, with the exit being 'up the hill' towards Frederick St. This would eliminate the danger of cars coming 'down the hill' past the tunnel at speed and the associated dangers.

#### **Car Parks**

- Car park could be made added if the east side of Jefferson Park is cut into a little and a retaining wall built or park could be terraced and more seating and tables could be added.
- Access to the Baths car parking areas could be provided by a new lane between Frederick Street and Henderson Parade at the southern boundary of the park. This lane should be one-way traffic from north to south using existing exit route.

#### **Jefferson Park**

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- Jefferson park – flattened out, landscaping (low trees and shrubs), picnic tables
  - Jefferson Park needs more trees and shrubs
  - Picnic tables at Jefferson Park
  - Shade picnic tables at Jefferson Park similar to those provided at Merewether and Bar Beach
  - A fence around Jefferson Park along Frederick St and John Parade boundaries.
  - Make Jefferson Park into a car park for the new Surf House development and the Beach Hotel
  - Keep as open space and no development beyond picnic facilities/BBQs etc

#### **Facilities (Baths, amenities etc)**

- Merewether Bath steps are an icon and need to remain
- Signage about the building of the steps and their history
- Commercial development (e.g. cafes, restaurants), provided it is sensitive to the area and makes use of existing buildings (e.g. Merewether Baths)
- Include solar heating and water tanks (and any other power saving devices) to any old or new buildings
- More endemic trees planted and maintained
- Buildings and walkways should be as attractive as the beach, the man made structures need to blend in with the landscape
- New buildings or renovations to the existing should encourage participation and attendance at the beach/baths from both locals and tourists. This should also include commercial interests such as cafes and restaurants. (The existing buildings do not meet these objectives)
- Get rid of the post and rail fence along the beach
- Cleaning of the Baths scheduled after hours where necessary to provide public access to the pool for at least six hours of daylight each day during the summer swimming season. May need to upgrade the light for after hours cleaning.
- A coffee shop and restaurant
- Another outside shower like at Bar Beach
- Repair old ladies pool
- Remove the white railing fence that was constructed about 18 months ago between old dinner shed and surf club building.
- Install shade areas (anywhere appropriate)

#### **Social**

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- Declare the beach an alcohol free zone

#### **Environment**

- Resumption of, an increase in frequency of, Landcare/Coastcare work groups with appropriate funding for necessary capital equipment to remove remaining Bitou Bush and replant native vegetation to ensure dune stabilisation.
  - Extra attention be paid to Bitou removal and native revegetation of the sedimentary based and dominated escarpment between Dixon Park and “The Cliff” carpark (located on the corner of Kilgour Ave and Memorial Dve, Bar Beach). Obvious difficulties emerge with the gradient of said escarpment face, however this could be overcome with engineering an environmental science expertise. Perhaps consultation with the appropriate faculties at the University of Newcastle? The tertiary body may possibly access grants/funding to enable research.
  - Improvement in stormwater management. Too much rubbish reaches or coast via this conduit, new technology for pollution interception must be considered
  - Seek expert evidence / reports from people who know about these things (i.e. the effect of dune work on the general layout of the beach which in turn affects wave quality via lack of wave forming sand banks developing)
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#### **Other**

- Surf House – combined Boardriders and Supports Club House
  - Lights along the path at Dixon Park are inadequate
  - Path along Dixon Park dips down and is dangerous
  - Replacement of Merewether Surf House with a new well designed building that can also provide additional public facilities
  - Need to ensure that the Plan of management supports an inviting, active and safe environment for all visitors and users, particularly pedestrians in the area.
  - Ensure signage and access to Glenrock State Conservation Area and Burwood Beach remain.
  - It would be good if this PoM set a new benchmark for Oceanside redevelopment
  - Give Coastcare a mention for their hard work for their native plant regeneration and weed eradication works and perhaps some funding
  - Please hurry up and landscape Dixon Park, repair the kiddies’ playground, and the whole beach front up to Bar Beach for that matter with Australian native plants indigenous to this site (i.e. not Norfolk pines!).
  - Surf House demolished and the area returned to open space for public recreation. Development of the site for commercial activities is likely to a negative impact on the environment, car parking and customer access facilities.
  - Private investment must be incorporated with a continuing public utilisation of the redeveloped site to ensure economic viability for present and future use.
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- While not having any architectural/engineering expertise, I suggest a “bunker”, tier –styled development built into the hillface.
    - Level 1- Private kiosk (important: the emphasis is on kiosk not café. While latte’s, foccacia and sushi taste great, I question their appropriateness for Newcastle beach culture. A café approach is more appropriate to Sydney coastal culture) and changeroom amenities for the public.
    - Level 2- Office/administrative space for lease, including lecture rooms and convention theatrettes. It would be fantastic to use this space for water sports administration headquarters or for tertiary research centres, such as Coastal Geomorphology, Meteorology or Oceanography.
    - Level 3- Gallery an exhibition space and/or a surfing museum. Possibly even an observation area on the roof of said building.
- Any private use of the building must be on leasehold; twenty year minimum or ninety-nine year maximum.**
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## Appendix D

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Site analysis



# Merewether Beach Reserves Site Analysis

October, 2008

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NSW Department of Lands and Newcastle City  
Council

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# 1. Site analysis

## 1.1 Historic context

### 1.1.1 Indigenous heritage

The study area was predominantly home to the Awabakal tribe, who are represented by the Awabakal Aboriginal Land Council. However, members from different tribes now live in Merewether and the surrounding suburbs (Umwelt 2003). Today, the Indigenous community in the Newcastle area have a strong interest and concern for the management and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

As highlighted in the Newcastle Coastline Management Study, Professor Len Dyll recorded numerous Aboriginal sites along the coast of Newcastle during the 1960-70s. The majority of Aboriginal sites were located adjacent to the ocean, estuaries and on the shoreline of Lake Macquarie (Dyll, in Umwelt 2003). It is therefore believed that it is likely the study area is subject to historic Aboriginal midden sites.

However, despite the numerous recorded Aboriginal sites by Dyll, the majority of these were not formally registered with NSW National Parks. Consequently because Dyll's studies were undertaken over 30 years ago it is considered highly likely that any Aboriginal sites within the study area have been either significantly disturbed or destroyed by development and natural coastal processes (Umwelt 2003).

Investigation of the National Parks and Wildlife Service register revealed that there is no recorded Aboriginal campsite within the study area (Umwelt 2003).

### 1.1.2 Non-Indigenous heritage

The non-indigenous settlement of the area is typified by the traditional recreational activities within and around the dedicated park reserves, Merewether Baths and pavilion and Merewether Beach Pavilion.

The southern end of Merewether Beach has been a popular swimming area since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (NCC 2000). In 1926, in response to pollution arising from a sewage outfall project that affected the southern end of the beach, the Government constructed the first public swimming concrete/ocean bath on the shelf below Henderson Parade. This original ocean bath became known as the Ladies Bath and is still used today as a children's pool. A promenade and steps were constructed in 1932, with the existing Merewether adult and children's baths constructed in 1935 (Photograph 1-1). Over the years the area has continued to develop with the construction of the bath pavilions, seating outdoor showers and shade structures to support the original Merewether baths complex. The existing

baths still the largest wave-cut rock platform baths in Australia, and remain one of the most popular regional swimming facilities and an iconic feature of the Merewether area. Consequently, the Merewether baths and building complex are a prominent part of the Newcastle area and considered to have played a significant role in the history of the city.



**Photograph 1-1: Merewether Baths  
12 December 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)



**Photograph 1-2: Merewether Baths  
Pavilion 12 December 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)

In 1820-30s Dr James Mitchell was acquired the Burwood Estate (later to become the Merewether Estate). In 1846 he built a smelter works on the Estate, importing copper ore for processing from South Australia and New Zealand. This venture was promoted by the discovery of rich coal resources on the Estate. In 1851 the Legislative Council passed a special Tram Road Act to enable Mitchell to build a railway from the Estate through the Australian Agricultural Companies land to the wharf he had built at Newcastle waterfront for shipping. The Burwood Colliery, smelter and railway line, continued into the 1860s until the labour disputes and financial crisis led to its dissolution and the reacquisition of the land and works. The in 1861 Edward Christopher Merewether became superintendent of the Australian Agricultural Co. and he became increasingly involved with management of the Burwood Estate. In 1869 Merewether became the owner of Burwood Estate. Today a section of the study area is still owned by the Merewether Estate. A colliery railway truck behind the Merewether Baths Pavilion marks the location of the mouth of the tunnel through which the rail line continued beneath the headland to the pit at Burwood. Dr Mitchell's railway ran directly along the shore at Merewether and provided direct convenient transportation to the baths until it was removed in 1956.

The study area possesses a strong history of surf life saving activities with the first surf house opened in 1909 (NCC 2000). Small-scale developments continued at the site until a more substantial clubhouse building was constructed in 1923. Photographic evidence suggests that this clubhouse was constructed near the existing building located adjacent to the intersection of Ridge and Frederick streets (NCC 2000).

The Merewether Beach Pavilion was constructed by local architecture firm 'Pitt & Merewether' on the site of the original surf house site in 1936 to formalise public amenities and facilities for The Merewether Surf Life Saving Club (NCC 2000). Historically the Merewether Beach Pavilion was utilised by the Army during WWII but was predominately used as the headquarters for the Newcastle Surf Life

Saving Association until the building was closed in 1995 due to structural problems. Today the Merewether Beach Pavilion is a fine example of Art Deco/Functionalist style, but it is still closed due to structural damage and is no longer used for surf life saving activities or by the public.



**Photograph 1-3: Burwood Colliery railway line at Merewether Beach, 1929**

(Hunter Photo Bank)



**Photograph 1-4: Merewether Beach Pavilion in 1972**

(Hunter Photo Bank)

Several remnants of the study area's history still remains today and these items are listed as heritage items under the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2003 the items include:

- remains of Glenrock Railway (Local Significance, property ID R46525)
- Merewether Beach Pavilion (Local Significance)
- Newcastle Coke Ovens (Local Significance)
- Merewether Baths (Local Significance, property ID R5681).

However, there are a number of items currently not listed as heritage items, e.g. the Ladies Baths and the northern portal of the Glenrock railway tunnel.

## 1.2 Site, cultural and social context

### 1.2.1 Regional context

The study area is situated along the coastline of Newcastle, which is located in the Lower Hunter region between the Central Coast and Port Stephens regions of NSW. Newcastle is the sixth largest city and largest regional city of Australia. It is the regional centre for the Hunter region and is the focus of its economic, administrative and cultural activities (Newcastle City Centre Plan, NSW Department of Planning, 2006). The city has been established around the harbour and coastline, and extends west towards the Mount Sugarloaf ranges, south towards Lake Macquarie and north east along the southern arm of the Hunter River.

### 1.2.2 Local context

Merewether is a well-known suburb within the Newcastle LGA. Merewether is located along Merewether Beach, between Glenrock National Park and Bar Beach, and provides a 'hard' edge to the beach foreshore. Merewether is well connected to the adjoining suburbs of Bar Beach, The Junction, Adamstown and Merewether Heights. The suburb enjoys good access to schools, shopping, and Newcastle's city centre and has local social facilities, shops and a diversity of housing types.

### 1.2.3 Site use and cultural context

A significant feature of Merewether is the study area, which encompasses the promenade along John Parade, public car park at the southern end of Watkins Street, Surf Life Saving Club, Merewether Beach Pavilion, shade pavilion, Merewether Ocean Baths, Baths Pavilion and facilities, Jefferson Park, the hilltop public car park/lookout (Robinson Reserve) and slope constrained area above the baths. The study area is not overly developed and is a major community cultural asset for Merewether, Newcastle and the Hunter region. The study area offers a range of uses including active and passive recreation, educational, tourism, commercial and conservation activities.





**Photograph 1-5: John Parade Promenade**



**Photograph 1-6: Merewether Surf Life Saving Club and Swells Café**



**Photograph 1-7: Surf House**



**Photograph 1-8: Shade shelter**



**Photograph 1-9: Merewether Baths**



**Photograph 1-10: Merewether Baths Pavilion and shade structures**



**Photograph 1-11: Jefferson Park  
(view towards Frederick and John  
Parade)**



**Photograph 1-12: Robinson Reserve  
and hill top car park**

#### 1.2.4 Photography population

The Hunter regional population is currently estimated to be 560,000. Within this Newcastle is estimated to be home to approximately 137,000 people (NCC Management Plan 2007/2008). According to the 2006 Census for Merewether there were 10,368 people in 4,816 dwellings. In 2001 there were 10,011 people in 4,800 dwellings. This represents a very small increase in both population and dwelling numbers in the suburb.

### 1.3 Environmental context

#### 1.3.1 Landform and geology

The entire study area rises in elevation from the beach, which is a feature of the study area that adds to its aesthetic appeal, but also poses management problems, particularly due to slope instability. Along the beach, baths, John Parade, and Merewether Surf Life Saving Club, the land is relatively flat with an elevation of 0 metres (m) above sea level (AHD) to 10 m AHD. The south and south-western part of the study area is a cliff line suffering severe erosion problems, with the highest point of the study area being the southern point (Robinson Reserve) with an elevation of 42 m AHD.

Jefferson Park, the largest area of usable, non-beach, open space within the study area, continues to increase in elevation towards the west, it is 12 m AHD at the north boundary of the park and 18 m AHD at the southern boundary. Henderson parade decreases in elevation past the Merewether Beach Pavillion towards the pool (8 m AHD) but then increases in elevation significantly as the road connects to Frederick Street (26 m AHD).

The study area is geologically located on the Lambton and Adamstown subgroups of the Newcastle Coal Measures (The Newcastle 1:100,000 Geological Series Sheet 9231 and part 9232, Edition 1 1995). The Lambton lithology is comprised of sandstone, siltstone, coal and tuff whilst the Adamstown unit is also made up of conglomerate, sandstone, siltstone, coal and tuff. The Newcastle Soil Landscape map (Series Sheet 9232) indicates that the site is located within the Killingworth and Stockton Beach Colluvial Landscapes. Reference to the Wallsend Acid Sulfate

Soil Risk Map (Edition 2, 1997) indicates that there are no known occurrences of acid sulfate soil materials within the study area.

### 1.3.2 Ecology

The vegetation at the study area is highly disturbed, with the only flora being shrubland communities on the headlands and coastal dunes, dominated by the introduced weed Bitou Bush. Recent initiatives by Council and volunteer organisations such as Landcare and Trees in Newcastle, has seen much of the Bitou Bush on foreshore areas removed and replaced with appropriate coastal species.

The vegetation of the study area contains habitat for a relatively low number of locally occurring fauna species due mostly to the fragmentation of the study area to surrounding remnant vegetation in Newcastle and the high degree of disturbance associated with recreational activities and the urban land use. The sand-dune areas contain habitat for shorebirds species, while the low shrubland provide habitat for a number of locally occurring bird and reptile species (Conacher Travers).

### 1.3.3 Coastal processes and hazards

The coastal zone is subject to continual change under the influence of the prevailing wind, wave and current patterns and associated sediment (sand) transport patterns. Variations in these processes, either naturally or induced by man (e.g. climate change), causes fluctuations in the shoreline, and constantly change the amount of sand present at Merewether Beach, over short and long term horizons. Coastal process hazards typically include areas of dune erosion and inundation.

Merewether Beach, Dixon Park Beach and Bar Beach form one beach unit extending between the rocky headlands at Merewether in the south and Shepherds Hill in the north. The Newcastle beaches south of the Hunter River, including Merewether, facing southeast, is the prominent storm and wave swell direction for this region. As stated in the Newcastle Coastline Hazard Study (WBM 1998), it is considered that for the beaches south of the Hunter River entrance, the short-term storm bite demand is a typical NSW open coast beaches i.e. 200 cubic metres/metre or the available sand reserve to underlying rock or seawalls which ever is the greater. In general, this will result in the loss of most sand on the beaches.

Furthermore, the long-term net longshore transport rate of sand can accordingly be expected to be sensitive to minor shifts in the dominant or average wave direction from year to year. That is, during years when storm waves from the southern sector have a greater influence than those from the east and northeast sector, a net longshore transport rate [of sand] towards the north can be expected. The reverse applies when there is a dominant influence from the east and northeast sectors.

As further stated in WBM (1998), it is considered that Newcastle's southern beaches are generally not experiencing any significant long term recession (i.e.

sand loss). While the long-term retreat rate is assessed as being nil, there could be a medium-term cycle of shoreline retreat and advance associated with a shifting of sand from one end to the other of the individual beach units under the prevailing conditions. The extent of such changes is not expected to be more than about 5-10 m.

As previously stated, the southern beaches of the Newcastle coastline face southeast which is the prominent storm and swell wave direction for this region. Following severe erosion in 1974 a rock seawall was constructed along the seaward edge of John Parade and extended along to Dixon Park. Seawall structures at Merewether Beach extend from the baths through to the northern end of the surf club on John Parade. The structures comprise:

- Sandstone block walls with blocks set in a mortar bed;
- Sections of old mass concrete with sandstone rock aggregate; and
- New stepped mass concrete wall in front of Merewether Surf Club.

According to WBM, the seawalls are maintaining their structural integrity, however, a number of maintenance issues exist, which require on-going maintenance by Council.

The ocean bath structure has been constructed on the sandstone rock platforms within the wave zone. This concrete structure is frequently over topped by waves during storm events and at high tide. No significant deterioration or structural inadequacy was noted in a walk over survey of the bath structures during the preparation of the Newcastle Coastline Management Plan. The outer concrete walls show only limited corrosion and are founded directly on the sandstone rock surface in tight contact with little or no erosion evident at the concrete / rock interface. Ongoing settlement and wash out of loose sandy backfill material from beneath pool deck areas is resulting in some cracking of concrete pavements and the need for maintenance (WBM 1998). According to WBM (1998), the ocean pool is all structurally sound, however, a number of maintenance issues exist that will be addressed as part of Council's ongoing maintenance.

The risk of rock and debris falls occurring along the base of the cliff at Merewether is assessed to be high to very high in WBM (1998), and include:

- the area below Hickson Street
- the area to the south of the baths
- to the south of this area as the cliff swings to the southwest towards Hickson Street.

## 1.4 Urban environment context

### 1.4.1 Public realm structure

The public realm structure of the study area consists of a number of areas which are outlined below.

### Green open space

The study area is characterised by steep topography in some parts which limits available areas of open space. Jefferson Park, located behind the Surf Life Saving Club and between Frederick Street and Henderson Parade, is the largest area of open space within the study area. It provides a number of timber shade structures with seating and tables however, it lacks lighting and landscaping and is largely underutilised by the public due to the overall poor amenity, connectivity and facility provisions.

The grass area between the Merewether Beach Pavilion and the Ocean Baths provides additional open space and tables. The space has some landscaping, uninterrupted views to the ocean and provides some protection from the southern elements making it more attractive to users.



**Photograph 1-13: Jefferson Park and one of the picnic tables/shelters**



**Photograph 1-14: Open space area between Surf House and the Baths**

Some open space exists around the car parking area opposite the Surf Life Saving Club, between John Parade and Watkins Street. This space appears as 'left-over' space from the car park and is mainly used as parking space for residents living in the surrounding residential area.

A small area of open space known as Robinson Reserve lies between Lloyd and Robinson Streets. This space, bounded by side fences of adjacent residential properties to the west and the cliff face to the east, is mainly used as a thoroughfare by residents in the above residential areas to access the beach area. The space is grassed and naturally landscaped but lacks formal stairs for walkers to travel on between Lloyd and Robinson Street.



**Photograph 1-15: Robinson Reserve and surrounding residential properties**



**Photograph 1-16: Stormwater outlet**



### The beach, ocean and rock platform

The focal point of the study area, Merewether Beach, provides for a range of uses such as swimming, surfing, active and passive recreation and offers high visual and scenic quality with uninterrupted views towards Dixon Park and Bar Beach. The northern portion of the beach is sandy and has been stabilised with a revegetated dune area.

A stormwater discharge pipe is located along the beach and discharges large volumes of water in heavy storm conditions creating localised erosion and potentially lowering the water quality for swimmers and surfers.

The mid-part of the beach is regularly the preferred location for the bathing flags, which are patrolled by qualified lifesaving staff in the summer season and is connected to the Surf Life Saving Club and Swells Café via a ramp. This preferred location for the patrolled swimming area is largely due to the location of rips about the rock platform. Council is currently in the process of designing and constructing a new surf life saving tower on the sand dunes to the north of the existing surf club building to provide a covered and clearer viewing area for life savers.

The rock platform encroaches on the southern half of the beach and becomes more prominent moving towards the Merewether baths. This platform has ecological values and is used for educational purposes as well as informal recreational activities such as fishing and surfing in parts.

### Beach promenades

The upper and lower promenades along the beach front are prominent features of the site that offer views to the beach, ocean and in some places Dixon, Bar Beach and Dudley Bluff. They also act as a seawall, protecting the landward assets and property. The upper promenade, beginning at the Merewether Baths and extending north along John Parade to Dixon Park and beyond, forms a strong pedestrian link between the Merewether Baths, Merewether Beach Pavilion and Surf Life Saving Club. It is well utilised but is in need of repair, uneven and narrow in sections forcing users off the path and onto the regeneration areas above and the road in the section along John Parade. The lower beach promenade also begins at the Merewether Baths and extends north to the Surf Life Saving Club and ramp leading down to the beach. Access from the upper to the lower promenade and down to the beach is provided at both ends via ramps and at numerous points between. The lower promenade sits just above beach level and offers a space for users to gather and watch the surf and other activities taking place on the beach. Drinking fountains and open cold showers are scattered along the pathway. Little shade is offered along the walkway with the exception of the shade shelter (pavilion) below the Merewether Beach Pavilion which provides tables and seats. This pavilion is often used by families and groups for picnics on the weekends. Both promenades are highly utilised by users for walking, leisure and jogging. Numerous social gathering places are situated along each promenade at various points however limited shade is provided. Adjacent dune regeneration areas act to visually soften the walkways which are dominated by concrete surfaces.



**Photograph 1-17: Upper and Lower Promenade from the Merewether Baths**



**Photograph 1-18: Upper and Lower Promenade towards the Merewether Baths**

#### [Surf Life Saving Club](#)

The Merewether Surf Life Saving Club is a popular public congregation node offering facilities for functions, conducting competitions and Swells Café, which operates more as a café than traditional surf club kiosk. During the day-time, tables and seating is provided along the upper beach promenade adjacent the café, attracting walkers and recreational users. Informal seating facilities such as the picnic tables and spherical bollards are located to the north, adjacent to the building, and provide good viewing to the surf and beach for users. The fence that traverses the edge of the upper beach promenade also provides for informal seating and viewing.

#### [Merewether Beach Pavilion \(surf house\)](#)

The historic Merewether Beach Pavilion, although not accessible to the public, it is a prominent visual feature in the study area. Built in Art Deco style, it is a significant historic element but is in an obvious state of disrepair. Some seating is provided on the beach side of the building but due to the poor amenity of the area it is not used as much as other areas within the study area. The Merewether Beach Pavilion is currently subject to commercial in-confidence expressions of interest for the redevelopment of the site in the near future, which will considerably enhance the public realm and use of the study area. During preparation of this PoM (15 April 2008), Council made the following resolution:

- *The Acting General Manager be authorized to negotiate a ground lease for Merewether Surf House at a rental value not less than recommended by independent valuation advice.*
- *Authority be granted for the seal to be affixed to all documentation relating to the lease.*
- *If a negotiated agreed is not achieved within three months, Council will terminate negotiations and commence preparation of a development application for demolition of the site.*
- *This resolution is subject to the concurrence of the Department of Lands.*
- *Confidentiality to remain on the commercial details until the lease or Deed of Agreement to enter into the lease has been executed.*



### Merewether Ocean Baths, bathing pavilion house and facilities

The iconic Merewether Ocean Baths, bathing pavilion and facilities is a major activity node and gathering point within the study area. The ocean baths consist of two pools separated by a wide promenade that offers seating and open cold showers. The larger pool, located on the ocean side, measures approximately 100 x 50 m, and is mainly used as a general recreational pool and for lap-swimming. The pool allows for casual swimming, scuba diving activities, life saving instruction and in addition provides a racing area with diving blocks at the southern end, which is often used for school swimming carnivals in the summer season.

The smaller pool is shallower and is used as a children's pool. The sandy beach provided in one corner of the pool is extremely well utilised. Open cold showers and shade structures with tables and seating are provided along the promenade west of the baths. These provide shade relief for families and other users of the baths. The area is largely dominated by concrete and lacks landscaping and softening. Recent landslips have resulted from significant rainfall event, particularly in June 2007, which have damaged some of the facilities such as the seating to the south of the bath house.

Associated with the baths is the bathing pavilion, which provides public change rooms, showers and toilets. The pavilion is viewed as being unattractive, outdated and lacks appropriate access for disabled citizens (NCC 2000). Tables with seating for spectators are situated north and adjacent to the pavilion providing social gathering places.

The stairs that traverse the slope adjacent to the bathing pavilion, provide access to Frederick Street and the numerous car parks, and are also popular for use as fitness training by walkers, joggers and sports teams.



**Photograph 1-19: Merewether Bath steps**

### Regeneration areas

In recent years Merewether Landcare, Trees in Newcastle and local volunteers have restored two small remnants of dune by removing weeds and replacing them with local native plants. The restored dunes occupy the areas between the Merewether Beach Pavilion and Surf Life Saving Club, and John Parade and the beach. Both areas are not accessible to the public but act to visually improve the public realm of the Precinct, as well as stabilise the slopes.

### Slope constrained areas

The southern part of the site surrounding Merewether Baths and facilities is constrained by the severe slopes that exist, as is the area between the upper and lower beach promenade. The two areas are vegetated which softens the public realm of the area by acting as relief from the bitumen and concrete surfaces that dominate the bath and beach front area.

#### 1.4.2 Built form structure

The existing built form of the site consists of three key public buildings, Merewether Beach Pavilion, Surf Life Saving Club and Bathing Pavilion. Merewether Beach Pavilion is a significant building within the study area and is currently unused and in a state of disrepair. The Surf Life Saving Club is well maintained although the design lacks attention in creating sensitive and attractive edges to the surrounding context. The Bathing pavilion appears to have been neglected in recent years and has become unattractive and in need of repair and upgrading.

The study area is surrounded by commercial and residential buildings. The residential buildings that front John Parade, Robinson and Frederick Streets consist of large single dwellings with high site coverage and medium density housing. All dwellings along both roads have uninterrupted beach and ocean views. The commercial buildings which front Frederick Street, opposite Jefferson Park, includes the Beach Hotel which activates the street, and other more non-descript commercial premises.



**Photograph 1-20: Residential properties surrounding the Precinct**



**Photograph 1-21: Beach Hotel**

#### 1.4.3 Movement network, linkages and connectivity

Merewether Beach connects to Dixon Park Beach to the north and Glenrock Lagoon to the south, although access to Glenrock Lagoon is somewhat constrained by rock outcrops. The upper and lower beach promenades feature as key recreational and pedestrian links within the site. These features form part of the Great Northern Walk, a marked walking track that runs between Sydney and Newcastle. These linkages are frequented by the local community and regional visitors for walking, fitness activities, leisure and jogging.

Frederick Street is the main link between the study area and the suburbs of Merewether Heights, Charlestown and Lake Macquarie to the south, as well as The Junction, Cooks Hills and Newcastle to the north. Ridge Street is a frequently

used route within the area and is used to access Merewether/Merewether Heights, and beyond. John Parade, forms part of the Merewether to Nobby's driving 'route', and is highly used by drivers, walkers and joggers.

Current local traffic conditions in and around the study area prioritise vehicle movement and offer limited legibility and connectivity of spaces for pedestrians using the area. Pedestrian access from Frederick Street is inadequate with the only relatively safe crossing being a pedestrian underpass. This makes pedestrian movement between the suburban area of Merewether and the study area difficult. Disabled access within the study area also appears undersupplied.

Two significant pedestrian connections exist within the study area:

- between the public car park at the southern end of Watkins Street and the Surf life saving club
- across Henderson Parade at the exit point of the Frederick Street underpass.

Both connections pose risks for pedestrians crossing the respective roads, due to poor sightlines, the lack of formal pedestrian crossings at key points, and roadside parking.

Public transport that connects with the surrounding suburbs is considered poor. A bus stop is located at the Beach Hotel on Frederick Street and bus route 201 operates at least once an hour between the hours of 7am and 7pm on weekdays and 8am and 7pm on weekends. The route transports passengers to and from Newcastle city centre, Newcastle West, Marketown and Hamilton via Ridge Street, Frederick Street, John Parade and Watkins Street. In addition to the buses, an unmarked on-road cycle route is provided along Henderson and John Parade. The route connects with Bar Beach, Cooks Hill and Newcastle, forming part of the Newcastle regional cycle network. This lack of connection to public transport is a large differentiator in the groups of people that frequent the study area. For example, many younger people that only access the Newcastle coastline by rail, mainly frequent Nobbys and Newcastle beaches because of their proximity to the Newcastle train station.

#### 1.4.4 Roads, car parking and infrastructure

The study area is bounded by Frederick Street to the west which joins Scenic Drive, a major arterial road linking Lake Macquarie suburbs such as Charlestown with the Newcastle coastal suburbs and city centre. Use of the link is high during the week and on weekends due to commuter traffic and the popularity of the beaches, respectively. The road is an important 'gateway' and offers exceptional views towards Dixon Park and Bar Beach on entering the study area. Robinson Reserve car park, which overlooks the Baths and ocean, can be accessed by vehicles travelling south along this route. In its present state the car parking lacks landscaping and line marking and is mainly used as a look-out to view conditions, particularly surf conditions, over Merewether, Dixon Park and Bar Beach.

Vehicular access to Merewether baths is via Henderson Parade, a local road within the study area. Henderson Parade is 'unfriendly' for pedestrians entering and exiting the study area via the Frederick Street underpass due to existing topography, lack of safe refuge from the road and limited sight lines of vehicle

movement. Street parking is provided on both sides along the two-way and one-ways section of Henderson Parade, for the majority. Where the road terminates at the Baths, ninety degree parking is provided. This area is often congested and confusing due to the narrow nature of the road and lack of turning facilities available at the termination of the road. Ramp access to the baths, pools and beach is provided at the southern termination of Henderson Parade.

John Parade is a local street that runs along the northern half of Merewether Beach and connects with Frederick Street and Ocean Street at the Dixon Park end. The street forms part of the Merewether to Nobby's driving and walking route. Pedestrian activity is high along John Parade and due to the narrow footpath on the beach side walkers and joggers are often forced to use the street. Street parking is available along the length of John Parade and users often park along this section to view the surf and beach activities taking place.

A large car park is provided in Watkins Street opposite the Surf Life Saving Club. The space offers limited visual amenity due to a lack of landscaping and the dominance of bitumen. There is strong pedestrian activity across John Parade, between the car park and Surf Life Saving Club.

## 1.5 Economic context

Newcastle is the economic, administrative and cultural centre for the Hunter region. Traditionally, both the city and greater Hunter regional economy has been based on heavy industry, coal and wine production. The harbour, on which Newcastle has been situated around, serves as one of the world's busiest coal export ports and forms the main economic and trade generator for the Hunter Valley and most of the north and northwest of NSW. In the past decade it has experienced a transformation of economic drivers with the decline in reliance on big employers such as BHP and growth in the small to medium enterprise sector and knowledge intensive, service and tertiary industries (Newcastle City Council, NSW Department of Planning, *Newcastle City Centre Plan* 2006). This has resulted in increased investment, jobs growth and revitalisation of the city and its spaces. In turn the city has established itself as a regional centre with emerging tourism and cultural industries and a strengthened sense of heritage and cultural identity drawing visitors from surrounding areas such as Maitland, Port Stephens and Cessnock (NCC 1998).

Within this regional economic context a number of key economic trends were identified as part of the Community Plan study undertaken by Newcastle City Council and described in the *Community Plan, 2006-2010*. The key trends that are expected to have a major impact on Newcastle over the next five years include the following:

- there will be a rise in the proportion of casual jobs within the workforce
- the Newcastle LGA will continue to be the main source of jobs for the Lower Hunter, however, other employment centres will continue to emerge and grow in the region
- people will expect more, including higher service standards and demand when they go out – 'a total experience'.

These trends are expected to have some outcomes for the study area. The first two trends identified are likely to have negligible impact on the site however an increase in service standards expected by the community will influence the community's expectations for the provisions, use and development to occur within the study area.

In its current form the site presently offers limited complementary commercial facilities to these uses with commercial activity limited to one small scale café operating as part of the Merewether Surf Life Saving Club. At a local level the suburb of Merewether offers small scale commercial facilities and services. A village scale retail centre is located along Ridge Street which offers a general store, a bakery and takeaway shop. The Beach Hotel, located adjacent to the site on the corner of Frederick and Ridge Streets, operates as an entertainment venue and provides live music, entertainment, hotel-style accommodation, meals and drinks.

The study area has the potential to play a key role in the local economy by providing a variety of commercial opportunities that are complementary to the existing recreational and tourist related uses. The selection of the study area to hold Surfest highlights its strength as a recreational and tourist destination for the surfing community and general public. The site currently plays a significant role as the southern 'gateway' to the Newcastle coastline or 'Bathers Way' that runs from Merewether to Nobby's. Enhanced commercial opportunities would assist to create a strengthened recreational and tourist node for the area and provide job opportunities for the local community.

Some economic drivers crucial to the future management of the study area to achieve economic viability include:

- beach, recreational and tourist based facilities, services and commercial uses
- yearly and ongoing related events and the associated increase in commercial activities
- attractive linked walking track that offers shade and rest areas.

The recreational, tourism and commercial uses established within and immediately surrounding the study area need to be complimented to ensure feasible and sustainable commercial opportunities are established within the study area. The recreational functions of the beach, baths and open space need to be maintained and improved. This requires detailed planning and capital investment to implement these works. Optimisation of the existing assets of the site is likely to attract investment and ongoing financial return from private industry to off-set the public funds traditionally used to maintain and operate upgrades, infrastructure and services.

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## Appendix E

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Merewether Beach Reserves Plan  
of Management Public Exhibition  
Report



# Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management

## Public Exhibition Report

March, 2009

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For Newcastle City Council and NSW  
Department of Lands

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## Executive summary

The Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management went on Public Exhibition for 63 days (9 weeks), from Monday 8 December 2008 to Monday 9 February 2009, as required under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 1993*. Submissions were accepted until Monday 9 February 2009.

A total of eight submissions were received from residents, Government departments, community forum, commercial stakeholder and Council staff. The key issues identified in the submissions included:

- Surf House
- Proposed commercial development of Merewether Bathing Pavilion
- Alcohol Licences
- Heritage
- Stormwater
- John Parade Promenade
- Dune stabilisation
- Climate change

The eight submissions were summarised by Parsons Brinckerhoff and amendments were made to the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management based on discussions with Newcastle City Council and Department of Lands.

# 1. Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management

The Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management (PoM) was prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff (PB) and Moir Landscape Architecture (Moir) on behalf of Newcastle City Council and NSW Department of Lands.

The PoM was developed to provide a framework for the future use and management of lands within the Merewether Beach Reserves (referred to hereafter as 'study area'). The PoM forms a key strategic document intended to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the local area by realising the recreational and commercial potential of the study area.

The PoM defines the values, use, management practices and intent relating to the purpose for which the land has been reserved or dedicated. The PoM responds to the identified opportunities and establishes an integrated planning concept for the study area. It not only guides the future management and development of the land concerned but provides the 'how and why' an area should be developed, used and managed.

## 2. Public exhibition

The study area consists of both Crown land and Community land. The *Crown Lands Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 1993* are the two pieces of legislation which govern the management of Crown land and Community land respectively.

Under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 1993* community and stakeholder participation in the preparation of plans of management is obliged.

The initial consultation program for the preparation of the Merewether Beach Reserves PoM was held between March and April 2008. The consultation program included a public workshop, community surveys and submissions. Several meetings with stakeholders also took place, including meetings with the Merewether Plan of Management Steering Committee, Newcastle City Council and NSW Department of Lands. A complete report on the consultation program can be viewed in Appendix C of the PoM.

### 2.1 Community land

Under the *Local Government Act 1993* a plan of management must be placed on public exhibition under the following conditions (section 38 of Act);

- (1) A council must give public notice of a draft plan of management.
- (2) The period of public exhibition of the draft plan must be not less than 28 days.
- (3) The public notice must also specify a period of not less than 42 days after the date on which the draft plan is placed on public exhibition during which submissions may be made to the council.
- (4) The council must, in accordance with its notice, publicly exhibit the draft plan together with any other matter which it considers appropriate or necessary to better enable the draft plan and its implications to be understood.

Under Section 40A, a council must also hold a public hearing in respect of a proposed plan of management (including a plan of management that amends another plan of management) if the proposed plan would have the effect of categorising, or altering the categorisation of, community land under section 36(4).

After considering all submissions received during the public exhibition period, council may decide to amend the draft plan of management or adopt it without amendment as the plan of management for the community land concerned (section 40(1)).

If the council decides to amend the draft plan of management it must either (Section 40(2)):

- (a) publicly exhibit the amended draft plan in accordance with the provisions of this Division relating to the public exhibition of draft plans, or
- (b) if it is of the opinion that the amendments are not substantial, adopt the amended draft plan without public exhibition as the plan of management for the community land concerned.

If a council adopts an amended plan of management without public exhibition of the amended draft plan of management, it must give public notice of that adoption, and of the

terms of the amended draft plan of management, as soon as practicable after the adoption (section 40(2A)).

Council may not, however, proceed to adopt the plan until any public hearing required under section 40A has been held in accordance with section 40A.

## 2.2 Crown land

Under the *Crown Land Act 1989* if a draft plan of management for a reserve (Crown land) is prepared the Minister may do the following (Section 113 of Act);

- (1) If a draft plan of management for a reserve is prepared, the Minister:
  - (a) shall refer a copy of it to the reserve trust for consideration (unless it was prepared by the reserve trust),
  - (b) may refer a copy of it to any other person for consideration, and
  - (c) shall place a copy of it on public display for not less than 28 days or shall direct the reserve trust to place a copy of it on public display for not less than 28 days.
- (2) Any person may make representations concerning the draft plan to the Minister within the time allowed by the Minister.
- (3) The Minister shall consider any such representations before adopting the draft plan.
- (4) In the case of a draft plan of management that would, if adopted, authorise a reserve to be used for an additional purpose, the Minister may, in addition to any of the other requirements of this section, require the reserve trust, by notice in writing:
  - (a) to consult on the draft plan with such persons or bodies as may be specified in the notice, and
  - (b) to exhibit the draft plan in accordance with the notice.

Under section 114 'Adoption of plan of management';

- (1) The Minister may adopt a plan of management for a reserve without alteration or with such alterations as the Minister thinks fit.
- (1A) In the case of a plan of management that authorises a reserve to be used for an additional purpose, the Minister may, without limiting subsection (1), adopt the plan subject to the reserve trust complying with such conditions as the Minister thinks fit to impose.
- (1B) Without limiting the conditions that the Minister may impose under subsection (1A), the Minister may impose a condition requiring the reserve trust to indemnify the Crown against any liability or claim for compensation that may arise as a result of the reserve being used for the additional purpose specified in the plan.
- (1C) In determining whether to adopt a plan of management that authorises a reserve to be used for an additional purpose, the Minister is to have regard to the following:
  - (a) the declared purpose of the reserve,
  - (b) the compatibility of the proposed additional purpose with the declared purpose,
  - (c) the principles of Crown land management,



- (d) the public interest.
- (2) If a plan of management is adopted:
  - (a) the reserve trust shall carry out and give effect to it, and
  - (b) no operations may be undertaken on or in relation to the reserve unless they are in accordance with the plan.
- (3) If a plan of management is adopted authorising a reserve to be used for an additional purpose specified in the plan, the reserve may be used for the additional purpose specified in the plan.

## 2.3 Exhibition of the Merewether Beach Reserves PoM

The public exhibition of the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management went as follows:

- Strategic Policy Committee meeting, 2 December 2008 – resolved:
  - “ the Draft Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management be placed on exhibition in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Crown Lands Act 1989*”.
- Public exhibition period included:
  - Notice of exhibition - the exhibition of the PoM was advertised in the Newcastle Herald on Saturday, 6 December 2008 and Saturday 17 January 2009; as well as on Council’s website and NSW Department of Lands website.
  - Exhibition period - 63 days (9 weeks), from Monday 8 December 2008 to Monday 9 February 2009.
  - Public information session - two half day (9.30am to 12.30pm) public information sessions were held during the public exhibition period. The first session was held on Saturday 24 January 2009 at Merewether Beach, and the second was held at the Junction Fair on Saturday 31 January 2009. The public information days were represented by key members of Parsons Brinckerhoff, Council and the Merewether Plan of Management Steering Committee.
  - Letters to nearby owners and key stakeholders
  - Memo to key internal council stakeholders
- Access to PoM
  - Council’s City Administration Centre, available on CD and hard copy
  - Newcastle Regional Library
  - Online at NSW Department of Lands website and Newcastle City Council’s website.
- Submissions
  - Submissions were accepted until Monday 9 February 2009. Submissions were addressed to the General Manager of Newcastle City Council.
- Briefing of Councillors of the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management at the Economy and Civic Assets and Governance Strategic Themes Committee by David Moir of Moir Landscape Architecture, Tuesday 3 February 2009.

- Public Hearing – a public hearing was held as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*. The Public Hearing was conducted by Council on Wednesday 4 February 2009 to address the issue of the Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management proposing to re-categorise community land at the study area.

## 3. Submissions

During the public exhibition of the Draft Merewether Beach Reserves Plan of Management a total of eight submissions were received. They are as follows:

- 2 internal Council reviews
- Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority
- Heritage Branch NSW Department of Planning
- Sailor's Rock Pty Ltd
- 2 from Merewether residents
- Merewether/ Junction/ Bar Beach Community Forum

### 3.1 Key issues from submissions

The eight submissions were collated and each issue have been addressed by PB, Council and NSW Department of Lands. The collated submissions with comments are outlined in Table 3-1. The draft Merewether Reserves POM (exhibited version) will be amended in the light of the submissions received.

The key issues arising from the submissions are as follows;

- Surf House – excluded from PoM.
- Proposed commercial development of Merewether Bathing Pavilion – justification for Surf House development and Pavilion development.
- Alcohol Licences – concern over the potential consumption of alcohol near the beach.
- Heritage – incorporate the heritage of the area into the future use and developments at the Merewether Beach Reserves.
- Stormwater – more information on management of the quality of stormwater entering the beach.
- John Parade Promenade – extend width of promenade.
- Dune stabilisation – more information on the 15 year contract between CMA and NCC for dune stabilisation and maintenance work.
- Climate change – more information on the impacts of climate change to the study area.

**Table 3-1 Collated submissions**

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
1	27/01/09	NCC Council staff meeting, submission is based on Council Officer notes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority to be given to Traffic and Pedestrian Improvement Plan:</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coastal reserves MOU- how does this fit in?</li> </ul>	No	The proposed coastal Reserves POM will be an overarching document guiding all coastal reserves. The Merewether Reserves PoM will be reviewed and incorporated into this PoM where relevant.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues with stabilisation of car park and landslip to south of Baths – needs to be reflected in Condition Report</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Table 2.2 Conditions of existing infrastructure to include stabilisation of car park and landslip issues.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rationale for commercial development at Baths – what is it?</li> </ul>	Yes	Both Council and Lands expressed the desire to have commercial operations at the study site to help provide funding to maintain the area, as well as providing more commercial uses of the coastline.  The PoM will be amended in Sections 5 and 6 to outline that the proposal for the Baths Pavilion will be for family orientated commercial/community development.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steps at Watkins street – due for renewal – should be integrated with Lifeguard Facility</li> </ul>	Yes	Table 6-1 Implementation Plan will be amended to include the construction of steps at Watkins Street, as part of the construction of the Lifeguard facility.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surfest – is Merewether to be promoted as Surfest home or are there other options? Surfest likely to be held at Merewether for next few years</li> </ul>	No	Noted.  The PoM does not make reference to Merewether Beach being the permanent home to Surfest. The PoM

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
					only recognises that the event has been held at the Beach in the past 2 years. It is not known how long Surfest will be held at Merewether Beach.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jefferson Park – look at goal and its function? How does this align with say Dixon Park etc? Should this be more passive or other use?</li> </ul>	No	The function and detailed design of Jefferson Park will be addressed in the 'Detailed Public Domain Master Plan', which is to be prepared as a separate process once the PoM has been adopted.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedestrian access to Burwood Beach – retain? Only can be used in low tide</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roads not recognised as infrastructure – to be included in POM</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Table 2.2 Conditions of existing infrastructure to include roads.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lands register – include sand as a lot.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Figure 1.2 to show Lot.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street Tree Master plan</li> </ul>	No	Noted  The preparation of a Detailed Public Domain Master Plan will incorporate landscaping of the study area.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car park improvements – subject to study</li> </ul>	No	The Detailed Public Domain Master Plan will address car parking and the need for improvements.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need to say in POM that this new POM will revoke existing POMs namely heritage Pom and Neighbourhoods Parks POM.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Section 1.4 of PoM, after first paragraph, pg 4, include;  This PoM will revoke the <i>Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management</i> and <i>Newcastle Neighbourhood Parks Plan of Management</i> where relevant to Merewether Beach.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core Objectives of Land Categories need to be included in Action Plan</li> </ul>	Yes	Include Core Objectives of Park into Management Precinct 3 of Table 6-1.

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			somehow with an action associated with each of them.		Include Core Objectives of Community Land – General Community Use into General of Table 6-1.
2	17/02/09	NCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exec Summary, pg iii, numerous typos in last paragraph</li> </ul>	Yes	Remove the word 'includes' in first line, change 'as' in third line to 'a'.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exec Summary, pg iii, should include a brief description of the purpose of the plan</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Executive summary to include a description of the purpose of the PoM.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 1, pg 1, Second para – PoM should be spelt out in full here, instead of the fourth para</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend POM to be 'Plan of Management (PoM)'. Amend 'Plan of Management (PoM)' in Section 1, fourth para. to be 'PoM'.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 1.2, pg 3, This statement is incorrect. The Newcastle Coastline Management Plan does provide a holistic and integrated management guide for the coastline, but it operates at a broader scale. Therefore, the PoM will provide more detail about the specific requirements of the management setting.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Section 1.2, pg 3, fourth para to state '.....provide management guidelines for some assets and operate on a broader scale. The existing PoMs do not provide the level of detail required to manage all assets at a particular site.'
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 1.3, pg 3, Who prepared the vision and why was it prepared?</li> </ul>	No	<p>The vision was prepared by PB in consultation with NCC and the DoL.</p> <p>The vision was prepared as the <i>Service Specification Consultancy Services: Plan of Management for public reserve lands at Merewether Beach NSW</i>, issued by NCC and DoL, stated;</p> <p><i>Establish a clear vision for the Precinct which recognises that the reserves allows for sustainable management of the NSW environment, its natural</i></p>

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
					<i>resources and heritage, as well as urban services to promote active public use, tourism opportunities and local and regional industries.</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 1.4, pg 3, It should be noted that whilst the beach and rock platform have been included in the study area, there are limited actions relating to this area. Further detail is provided in the NCMP 2003, which provides for the integrated management of the coastal zone, which extends 1km landward and 3NM seaward.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Include the management actions for the rock platform outlined in the NCC Coastline Management Plan. Amend the PoM as follows.</p> <p>Table 5-2 Management Precinct 5</p> <p>Issue - <i>Lack of education in the community about the ecological importance of the rock platform.</i></p> <p>Performance Target (Objective - <i>Educational awareness of the rock platform.</i></p> <p>Table 5-3 Management Precinct 5</p> <p>Goal and Performance targets – add <i>Educational awareness of the rock platform.</i></p> <p>Table 6-1 Management Precinct 5</p> <p>Performance Target - <i>Educational awareness of the rock platform.</i></p> <p>Action - <i>Install international standard educational signage at entrance points to rock platforms to target collection of intertidal species and ecological information in conjunction with public awareness campaign.</i></p> <p>Priority – <i>Medium</i></p> <p>Responsibility – <i>Council/ NSW Fisheries</i></p> <p>Manner of Assessment – <i>Educational</i></p>



Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
					<i>signs erected at entrances to rock platform.</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 2.1, pg 6, first dot point – close bracket after estate</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend first dot point by closing the bracket.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sect 2.1, pg 6, inconsistent use of capital P for Pavilion</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend pavilion to have a capital P, and check entire document for consistency.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 2.1, pg 9, Is a community landcare group operating in this area? If so, should this be identified as a current use of the site?</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The Trees of Newcastle Landcare Group operate at the site to do stabilisation and revegetation works. They are not a 'user' of the site.</p> <p>Amend 'Landcare and Trees of Newcastle' in Section 2.3.1, page 11, second para. to be 'Trees of Newcastle Landcare Group'.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.3.1, pg 10, Is stormwater management a problem that is evident at the site?</li> </ul>	No	The information received from the community consultation process was that people were concerned about the quality of the water entering the beach from the stormwater outlet. People want to see that the water quality is being managed and is safe to be released into the ocean.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.3.1, pg 11, Was this work conducted with HCRCMA assistance? If so, reference should be made to works and the maintenance contract between Council and the CMA.</li> </ul>	Yes	Reword sentence to say " recent initiatives by Council, Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority and volunteer,,,,,,,"
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.3.1, pg 11, Provide date for reference to Conacher Travers study.</li> </ul>	Yes	Date is 2004
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.3.1, pg 11, Has consideration been given to the effects of climate change and associated impacts, such as sea level rise? It should be recognised</li> </ul>	Yes	The information on coastal hazards and coastal processes was referenced from the NCMP and is outlined in detail in Appendix D Site Analysis.

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			that the study area comprises land that is included in the NCMP, which fulfils the requirements of the Coastal Protection Act, NSW Coastline Management Manual (Coastal Hazard Policy).		Section 2.3.1 of the PoM will be amended to reflect the information in the Site Analysis.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 2.2, pg 13, What assessment was used to determine the condition of the stormwater discharge pipe? Reference should be made to the Merewether catchment initiative, which was undertaken in 2003-04. Council, in collaboration with HWC, delivered a community intervention in the urban catchment above the Merewether Beach stormwater outfall. In combination with water quality monitoring at the outfall, the action plan could reference a renewed effort to educate the community about stormwater pollution in the Merewether Catchment. Further, source control options could be further investigated in the surrounding catchment.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The assessment on the condition of the stormwater was made from the site inspection and through consultation with NCC.</p> <p>Add to Table 6-1, Management Precinct 5, Performance Target (Objective) <i>Water quality monitoring of the Stormwater Outlet:</i></p> <p>Action - <i>Implement community education programs within the catchment to increase awareness of stormwater pollution.</i></p> <p>Priority – change to <i>High</i></p> <p>Responsibility - <i>Council, HWC</i></p> <p>Manner of assessment - <i>Community education program regularly implemented.</i></p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 2.2, pg 14, The description of the car parking highlights the need for line marking, but this is not reinforced in the Condition. The condition of the car parks should be noted as good, but they require line marking and better signage?</li> </ul>	Yes	Remove any reference to line marking in the description of the car parks.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.1, pg 18, Provide date for the Crown Lands Regulation (2006) and Local Government (General) Regulation (2005). All references to the Regulations should include the date.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend to include the name and date of the Regulations.

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.2, pg 20, Many of these plans and policies apply to both Community and Crown Land. Amend statement.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend statement as follows, '....management of Community land and Crown land that forms part of the study area.'
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.2, pg 20, Reference has not been made to the Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006 – one of the priority actions identified in the Strategy was to 'incorporate the biodiversity Policy objectives and strategies into the review of PoMs'.</li> </ul>	Yes	Review the <i>Newcastle Biodiversity Strategy 2006</i> and list as a referenced document in Section 3.2 of PoM.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.2, pg 20, Reference has not been made to the Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan 2004.</li> </ul>	Yes	Review the Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan 2004 and list as a referenced document in Section 3.2 of PoM.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.2, pg 20 Should reference be made to the Beach Assets Framework?</li> </ul>	Yes	The <i>Beach Assets Framework</i> was reviewed, will list it as a referenced document in Section 3.2 of PoM.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.3, pg 21, What about the objectives for the 5b and 2b land included within the study area?</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend document to include the objectives of land zones 2(b) and 5(b).
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 5.4.1, pg 45, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph – fix typo (changed).</li> </ul>	Yes	Change the word 'change' to 'changed'.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 5.4.1, pg 45, What are the implications for these existing PoMs if the land and the categories are changed? Will these plans need to be amended to remove these land parcels?</li> </ul>	No	This PoM will have the intention of revoking previous PoMs e.g. Heritage Places and Neighbourhood POM. This will need to be part of the recommendation in the report to Council.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 6.1, pg 55, Should the responsibility column identify the appropriate internal service provider to</li> </ul>	No	Once the PoM is adopted then a more detailed Action plan will be prepared that identifies costings and appropriate

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			deliver the project? In addition, should the action plan contain an indicative cost?		internal service providers. .
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 6.1, pg 55, Third performance objective – typo in manner of assessment (created).</li> </ul>	Yes	Change 'create' to 'created'.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 6.1, pg 61, It would be appropriate to combine water quality monitoring with an education campaign and possibly some source control works, to ensure that the monitoring is linked to actions within the catchment to deliver measurable water quality improvements. It may be beneficial to align the water quality actions with the Newcastle Stormwater Management Plan.</li> </ul>	No	The management of stormwater and the management of pollution at the source is not a key function for a PoM to address. Council documents such as the Coastline Plan and Stormwater Management Plan already addresses the management of stormwater.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appendix A and B, Reference should be made to the NSW Coastal Protection Act 1979. Appendix B - It would be prudent to mention that the NCMP addresses the requirements of the Coastal Protection Act and was prepared in accordance with the NSW Coastline Management Manual.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Appendix A to include the <i>NSW Coastal Protection Act 1979</i> .  Amend Appendix B to include that the NCMP was prepared in accordance with the NSW Coastline Management Manual and addresses the requirements of the Coastal Protection Act 1979.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The relationship between the NCMP and PoM/master plan requires explanation.</li> </ul>	No	Appendix B of the POM explains the relevant plans and policies that apply to this site, including the Newcastle Coastline Management plan.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference should be made to the actions from the NCMP that relate to Merewether Beach. As per Recreation Plan.</li> </ul>	No	Many of the actions from the NCMP that do relate to the site have been implemented into Table 6-1 with the appropriate reference to the NCMP.
3	27/01/09	Hunter-Central Rivers CMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally the proposal is compatible with the guiding principles outlined in the</li> </ul>	No	Noted

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			CMA's Catchment Management Action Plan		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report does not adequately address issues such as weed control (particularly Bitou Bush) and storm water management within the precinct. The CMA has funded several rehabilitation projects involving weed removal in this area in the past and emphasises the importance of ongoing weed management and replanting with appropriate provenance tubestock as a key component that should be included in the Implementation Plan.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend the action; <i>Continue stabilisation of sand dunes through revegetation works</i> , in Table 6-1 Implementation Plan, to include weed control works. The CMA will be listed under the 'Responsibility'.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Plan should also cover the framework for the maintenance of the precincts. The CMA and NCC currently have a contract for dune stabilisation which covers a 15 year maintenance period by inclusion in Council's maintenance program</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend Action Table in Management Precinct 5 in relation to the performance target "continue dune stabilisation and long term maintenance" to include CMA as responsibility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report states that water quality testing will be conducted at the main stormwater outlet on the beach but does not offer any solutions to reduce stormwater pollution at source. The plan should include options such as the implementation of a stormwater education and awareness program as well as outlining how water sensitive urban design principles could be implemented to help reduce nutrient inputs on Merewether Beach</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Add to Table 6-1, Management Precinct 5, Performance Target (Objective) <i>Water quality monitoring of the Stormwater Outlet.</i></p> <p>Action - <i>Implement community education programs within the catchment to increase awareness of stormwater pollution.</i></p> <p>Priority – change to <i>High</i></p> <p>Responsibility - <i>Council, HWC</i></p> <p>Manner of assessment - <i>Community education program regularly implemented.</i></p>

Submission Number	Date	Author	Issue	Changes to PoM	Comment
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report needs to also consider the impacts of climate change</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The information on coastal hazards and coastal processes was referenced from the NCMP and is outlined in detail in Appendix D Site Analysis.</p> <p>Section 2.3.1 of the PoM will be amended to reflect the information in the Site Analysis.</p>
4	30/01/09	Sailors' Rock Pty Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sailors Rock are to redevelop the Surf House site and have entered an agreement to lease with NCC on 11/09/09</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We note the Surf House appears to be excluded from the Plan of Mgmt. As an adjoining stakeholder (by way of lease over the Surf House site) Sailors Rock would like to be kept informed of any developments in relation to proposed Plan of Management, in particular any aspects that are likely to impact on the development and operation of the proposed development</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In reviewing the Plan of Management the table on page 58 (outlining opportunities for Management Precinct 2) references that Merewether Bathing Pavilion may be developed and nominates a range of activities and a process that appears to be the same as the Surf House. Is it intended that the Merewether Ocean Baths Pavilion also be developed along similar lines, or is the reference in error and actually refers to the Surf House which is meant to be excluded from the PoM?</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The draft Merewether PoM did propose similar uses for the Baths Pavilion.</p> <p>Agree though that the PoM will be amended to include that any commercial development of the Baths Pavilion will be family orientated. Remove reference to 'bar' for the Baths Pavilion.</p>
5	02/02/09	Merewether Resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security – concerns over Surf House</li> </ul>	No	The Surf House Development is

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			development and function centre. Security of this facility if it goes ahead will be high and very costly and not in the general interest of the clubs and residents		excluded from PoM. However, the Surf House Development would have included its proposed security measures for the operation. Security will be conducted and funded by the Surf House proponents.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcohol licence issues – if this function centre is approved there may be some incidents with regard to youth and alcohol that may extend onto the beach and beyond the current extent of the Beaches Hotel.</li> </ul>	No	The Surf House Development is excluded from PoM. However, an alcohol licence obtained for operations of the Surf House development would outline certain conditions for the supply and selling of alcohol.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Parade extension of footway eastward was suggested and to keep this street two way</li> </ul>	No	Noted  The possibility of extending the John Parade footpath will be addressed in the proposed detailed Public Domain Masterplan.
6	09/02/09	Merewether Resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PoM states on page 3, <i>'that the document is necessary to provide Newcastle Council and the Department of Lands with consolidated information to guide the future development, land use and management of the study area'</i>. We agree with the objective; however the Draft document fails to achieve this by not considering the parcel of land in the centre of the study area, currently occupied by the Surf House. By not including this site the PoM is fundamentally flawed, is ineffective in achieving the desired outcome and lacks credibility.</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have this document on Public</li> </ul>	No	Noted



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			Exhibition simultaneously with the proposal for the redevelopment of the Surf House site that provides for a 3 level multistorey commercial building in the middle of an area primarily intended as open space for public recreation makes a mockery of the planning process		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Draft PoM should be reviewed including recommendations for the Surf House Site and readvertised</li> </ul>	No	The Surf House Development is excluded from the PoM and is going through a separate planning process.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personally I support the demolition of the old Surf House building. This is a building that has long since served its purpose and is now beyond its useful life. Once demolished, the land on which the building is located should be recontoured and landscaped to match the surrounding embankment and be returned to parkland.</li> </ul>	No	The Surf House Development is excluded from PoM.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Precinct 2 – it is recommended that a Design Principle be included to <i>'maximise the hours that the Baths are available for community use'</i>. Under current arrangements, in summer, the Baths are generally empty 2 days a week due to cleaning. This is because the Baths have been constructed at a low level and can only be emptied at low tide.  If/when Baths are reconstructed, by rebuilding them at a higher level it will allow cleaning at low usage times eg. Night, then they could be available for use in daylight hours for 7 days a week.  Until the Baths are rebuilt, this Design</li> </ul>	No	<p>Noted</p> <p>The construction and cleaning of the baths is an operational issue and is not an issue to be addressed in the PoM.</p>

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			Principle will be of assistance in establishing the Cleaning Program to facilitate maximum use of the Baths by public. It will provide guidance on replacement of equipment such as pumps that will minimise refilling times.		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Precinct 4 – the goal and performance target for traffic should include investigation of a one way traffic system in John Parade to facilitate a wider promenade and create more kerbside parking.</li> </ul>	No	The Performance Target (Objectives) for Precinct 4, as outlined in Table 5-3; <i>Increase the promenades capacity so as to allow it to cope with increase use in the future, and Investigate options for slowing down traffic, consolidating traffic accesses, better utilisation and functionality of existing vehicle parking areas and safer pedestrian access and movement</i> , illustrate that Council intends to investigate the opportunities to increase the promenade, whether it be by constructing a boardwalk over the dunes or making John Parade one way or if there are other opportunities. The preparation of a detailed Public Domain Masterplan will address all the potential options.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Precinct 5 – the old Ladies Baths have long since reached the end of their useful life and have been replaced by the Ocean Baths. They should be kept only in a safe condition, such that they present a danger to the public, ie. When reinforcing steel becomes exposed, minimal work should be undertaken to make the Baths safe.</li> </ul>	No	Council has a responsibility to the public to provide safe use of its beaches and at Merewether beach this includes the old Ladies Baths. The PoM already indicates that the old Ladies Baths will only be maintained so it is safe for users and the tops of the existing walls are still exposed.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Baths should not be 'Upgraded' as indicated on the Master Plan. Council is trying to reduce the number of assets it has to maintain, not increase them, in</li> </ul>	Yes	Amended concept master plan from; <i>Upgrade to ensure safe use and improve ongoing maintenance, to</i>

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			order to reduce the cost burden on rate payers.		<i>Ensure ongoing maintenance to provide safe use.</i>
7	23/02/09	Heritage Branch NSW Dept of Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Heritage Branch notes there are no items listed on the State Heritage Register within the PoM area. Thus Heritage Council not a consent authority except for area of known or potential historical archaeological resources. In such areas there may be a requirement under sections 139-146 of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> for archaeological excavation permits or exceptions for development involving excavation. This should be stated in the plan.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Add in a new Section, Section 5.4.3 Other.</p> <p>This new section should outline that under Sections 139-146 of the <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> an archaeological excavation permits may be required for any future excavations and exceptions for development involving excavations.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The area contains a number of local heritage items and the Branch notes that others were identified in the <i>Newcastle Heritage Study</i>. All heritage items are relevant in providing the reserve and district's evolving landscape character, given the plan's emphasis on examining the reserve's setting, ie. Dixon Park, Burwood Beach/Glenrock State Conservation Area and the surrounding suburbs. Page 7 of the plan notes '<i>There are a number of items currently not listed as heritage items eg. the Ladies Baths and the northern portal of the Glenrock railway tunnel</i>'.</li> </ul> <p>Other items may merit consideration for possible listing as local heritage items on Council's LEP, such as the 1932 beach promenades and steps, the Burwood Colliery railway tunnel portal and other items of archaeological potential eg. the 1909 original surf pavilion on site, remaining with the reserves. Council is</p>	No	<p>The action to be undertaken to have heritage items listed, is not part of the purpose of a PoM. The potential for listing heritage items would be undertaken as a separate process by Council. A copy of this letter however will be forwarded to Council's Heritage Advisor.</p>

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			encouraged to ensure all heritage items are included and carefully considered in the PoM.		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Branch notes that the Merewether Beach Pavilion is within the study area but excluded from the plan and marked as subject to a different development process. This pavilion was subject of a former Interim Heritage Order made under the <i>NSW Heritage Act</i>, which lapsed on 25 February 2004. It is considered to be a finely crafted synthesis of Art Deco and Mediterranean styles, an example of the work of architects Pitt &amp; Merewether, associated with the Merewether Borough council and a fine representative example of the group of substantial beach pavilions erected in the 1930s along the NSW coast, reflecting the beach culture in the 1930s. The Branch has for a number of years worked cooperatively with Council seeking its retention and future adaptive reuse and</li> </ul>	No	The Surf House Development is excluded from PoM.

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			encourages Council to continue to seek these. Thus it is of concern to read on page 50 that <i>'the Merewether Beach Pavilion (Surf House) is to be demolished and redeveloped'</i> ...		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Branch notes that the LEP listing for Merewether Baths Pavilion considers these to be of state significance as the largest seawater baths in the state and possibly Australia, signifying the importance of swimming and the beach in the social and cultural history of the locality, state and nation. The baths were nominated for possible listing on the State Heritage Register under the 'Icons' program in July 2004, indicating community esteem for their heritage values. Unfortunately the level of information provided in that nomination is insufficient. Thus the objectives for conservation and sensitive management of these baths in the plan are commended. Council may wish to consider preparing additional information to support a future nomination for their possible State Heritage Register listing.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The significance of the Merewether Ocean Baths is already outlined in Appendix D Site Analysis.</p> <p>Table 2-1 Current Site Use will be amended to provide more information on the significance of the Merewether Ocean Baths.</p>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is further recommended that Council considers maximising the heritage assets of the reserve in the draft plan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeking to retain and adaptively reuse the beach pavilion as a key element of the reserve at its heart. Page 56 has a performance target of <i>... 'incorporating heritage into future development'</i>... would be better served by retention and adaption rather than demolition. Council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	No	The Surf House redevelopment is not part of this PoM. It is being assessed through a different planning process.

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			should consider amending objectives and implementation strategies and other means outside this plan to affect this.		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider whether the natural and cultural heritage values of the beach reserve should be given greater weight in '<i>Environment and Landscaping</i>' theme and subsequent management actions for each Management Precinct, such as increasing community awareness of these heritage values and their engagement with the understanding of them.</li> </ul>	No	The preparation of a detailed Public Domain Masterplan will ensure that the heritage of the area is maintained through identifying appropriate methods of installing interpretive signs with story of area, themeing of furniture, lighting etc.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider amending page 57 performance target of incorporating heritage into future development/manner of assessment to note need for care in selecting landscape materials eg. paving, levels, materials, planning that consider the setting and cartilage of heritage items.</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend the PoM by including a Action under bullet point 'The heritage of Merewether Beach is to be maintained through', in Table 6.1, pg 56, to read;  <i>Selecting appropriate landscaping materials.</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including in section 6.3 'Further Studies' preparation of an interpretation strategy for the reserves as a high priority for short-term implementation. An interpretation strategy should include</li> </ul>	Yes	Amend the PoM to include the following;  Combine the proposed <i>Traffic and Pedestrian Improvement Plan</i> and the <i>Public Domain Improvements Plan</i> , to be a detailed Public Domain

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			details of the location, types of interpretation, stories and information to be provided. It might focus on the reserve's evolution as part of Merewether's foreshore and diverse heritage values. This should include details of the c.1850s+ colliery railway line and appropriate materials as part of its interpretation, eg. bollards where required made of recycled sections of railway track or of railway sleepers.		Masterplan.  The Public Domain Masterplan will outline appropriate traffic and pedestrian movement options for the study area, utilising open space more efficiently, as well as ensuring the history of the area is maintained through identifying appropriate methods of installing interpretive signs with the story of area, themeing of furniture, lighting etc.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider opportunities to include onsite interpretation of the location, extent (eg. footprint) and functions of former structures and elements.</li> </ul>	No	Bathers Way strategy already does this. It will also be considered as part of the detailed Public Domain Masterplan.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the cumulative impact of proposed works on heritage items or on the setting of nearby heritage items.</li> </ul>	No	Noted
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take into account the recommendation of Council's heritage advisor in relation to the draft plan.</li> </ul>	Yes	The Council Heritage Officer submitted a submission in May 2008. Based on the recommendations in the submissions amend Table 6-1 of PoM as follows;  <i>Action - Prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Ladies Pool with a view to ensuring the asset is management in a way that does not diminish heritage values.</i>
8	02/03/09	Merewether/ Junction/ Bar Beach Community Forum	<p>The forum is in agreement with some development along the foreshore occurring, particularly if this will help better maintain assets.</p> <p>However, residents believe that alcohol and surf do not mix. The Forum do not want any</p>	Yes	<p>Any alcohol licence obtained for the operation of a restaurant, café or function centre will outline certain conditions for the supply and selling of alcohol.</p> <p>The PoM will be amended to outline</p>

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			more licensed premises along the foreshore. The draft plan conflicts with these wishes as it suggests developments such as a licensed cafe, general bar or restaurant and bar for the Merewether Bathing Pavilion at the Ocean Baths. The forum strongly objects to uses such as these.		that the proposal for the BathsPavilion will be for family orientated commercial/community development. This may include a restaurant, café and/or function centre. The PoM will be amended to remove 'bar' from the potential commercial operations at the Baths Pavilion.