



Foreshore Masterplan



FINAL EXHIBITION

Artisit impression of beachfront area

A revised version of the Southern Foreshore Masterplan has been put back on public exhibition until March 18. The plan has been amended as a result of submissions received following the exhibition of the first draft in April of last year.

The Council received 45 submissions to the original plan with many relating to the car parking layout. This was expected as the reconfiguration of the parking forms a major component of the proposal. The revised plan increases the total number of parking spaces from the existing 189 to a proposed 204.

One of the contentious points was the change to the beachfront carpark. Currently there are 13 spaces in the front row directly facing the ocean. These spaces are popular with people who want to view the ocean to check conditions prior to surfing and also with

people with disabilities who have difficulty leaving their cars. The previous plan included a "drop off zone" of 4 parallel parking spaces in this area whereas in the revised plan there are now 7 perpendicular drop off spaces and a further 3 disabled spaces.

Parking in this prime location will thus be available to a wide section of the community at all times for dropping off and picking up people and equipment, for short terms stops to check surf conditions and for disabled people who would otherwise be unlikely to conveniently access a beach view. *(Continued p.3)*



President's Message

IAN ESPLIN

Welcome to the first Newsletter for 2012. It has been some time since the last newsletter and we apologise for the break, however we have not been idle.

Our last newsletter co-incided with the controversial sinking of the HMAS Adelaide which occupied so much attention and produced such a strong reaction both locally and beyond. Perhaps fortunately there have been no similarly controversial issues in Avoca since then and so our attention has been elsewhere. In particular we have been involved with the Gosford Landing proposal and have lodged submissions to both the initial Masterplan as well as the current proposal for rezoning of the waterfront land and the granting of State Significant Site status.

You may wonder why we are interested in this when we are a local community association that should be concerned just with local issues. We came to the conclusion (along with 14 other groups on the Coast) that the significance and scope of these proposals were so far-reaching that our involvement was appropriate. So far there have been nearly 500 submissions received by the Department of Planning nearly all of which are strongly opposed. If you look through the submissions (available at http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=3966) it is clear that the reaction has been very emotional and I would say far more unanimous than was the situation with the HMAS Adelaide sinking.

It is hard to understand how such an unpopular plan could come to be seriously proposed especially given the fact that there have been numerous strategic plans for the revitalization of Gosford by highly respected town planners over the years which have apparently just been over-ridden by this new concept. The current proposal bears little relationship with the so called "community consultation process" that preceded it and has been characterized by excessive "spin doctoring".

It generally appears to have more to do with politics and undisclosed deals with developers rather than good public planning. Hopefully as a result of the overwhelmingly negative response to the proposal some balance will return to the scheme. No-one disputes the need for the revitalization of Gosford however with so many vacant and underutilized sites within the CBD, it is clear that this is where the public wants to see new large buildings rather than along the open public foreshores.

Looking back at our local area, there is progress on a number of fronts including the adoption of the Five Lands Walk Masterplan by Council and also the final exhibition of the Southern Foreshore Masterplan after it was reviewed following public submissions. I'm pleased to say that by contrast with the Gosford Landing masterplan, the public response to both of these local proposals, whilst not unanimously supportive, has been generally so. Also, importantly, the genuine concerns and issues raised through by the submissions have been carefully considered in detail and quite significant amendments made as a result.

I encourage you to take a look with an open mind and try to imagine the possibilities that there are to really make the most of the wonderful asset that we have with our beautiful beach. For the first time ever there would be a blueprint for the future development, upgrading and maintenance of this area that will allow long term planning and open up new opportunities to access funding.

The tremendous growth in popularity of the weekend markets and events such as the Five Lands Walk is an indication of what we can expect in the future and without a comprehensive plan to deal with the pressures created we are in danger of degrading what we have further.

Currently we have a heavily congested carpark area around the beachfront, a lack of facilities and space for pedestrians, danger from conflicts between pedestrian and car movements and a generally constricted environment with few trees for shade or green open space. What green space there is suffers from overuse or neglect. We have paid the price for the lack of planning over the years with inadequate facilities and a confusion of buildings and land uses inappropriately located next to each other. The other result is a lack of certainty for landowners wishing to develop their properties

Avoca Beach is perceived as a high quality beachside suburb as well as holiday destination and it deserves better in order to fully utilise the features that are here. We commend the Council for pushing forward with this and also encourage the public to engage with the project.

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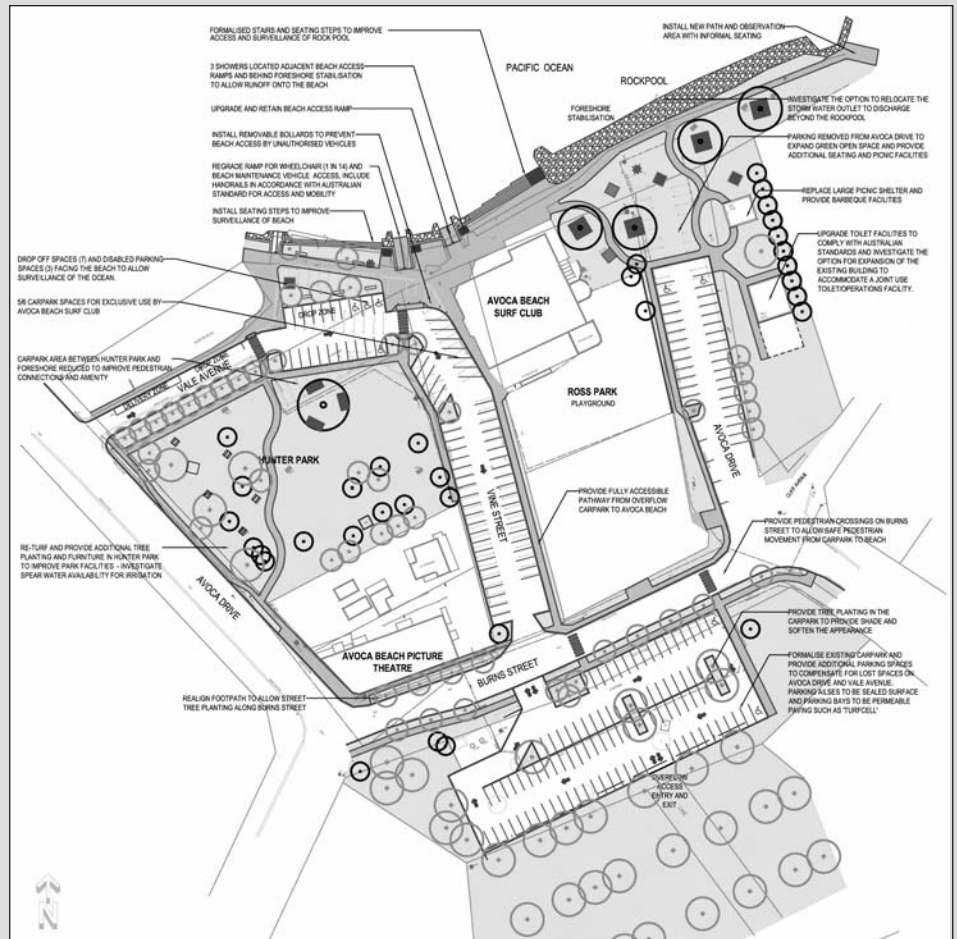
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AVOCA BEACH

Foreshore Masterplan

(continued from page 1)

Another significant change to the parking layout is that the spaces proposed in Hunter Park along Vale Ave in the previous draft have been deleted in the revised plan due to concerns about the loss of green space and also safety issues. In addition 5 spaces adjacent to the club house are now available for the exclusive use of the club (up from 4 previously).



The formalization of the current carparking area in the South End Park (opposite the Theatre) remains in the revised plan however the Council planners have responded to concerns about the loss of green space and the extent of hard impervious surfaces. The new plan now includes tree planting in carpark area to provide shade and soften the appearance.

Other significant amendments include the retention of the beach access ramp in front of the Surf Club. This ramp is to be upgraded to allow its use for disabled access since the disabled access ramp to the beach along the foreshore is now deleted in the new plan. New stairs to the beach are now included at the Eastern end of the surf club and the seawall itself will now act as seating where parents can watch children in the surf and rock pool.

Finally the planners responded to the feedback by providing a wider footpath leading to the rock platform with a substantial viewing platform at the end to allow people to get a close up view of the surfers on the waves in safety and comfort.

The finer details of the plan are still to be completely resolved and there will inevitably be more fine tuning as it comes closer to realization. Provided that there is a general acceptance of the revised plan the Council will adopt the revised plan as its policy. At this stage there is no timetable for the implementation but with a formally adopted plan the Council can approach the state and federal governments for grant funding in addition to utilizing their own capital works budget.

The full Masterplan can be downloaded from the Council website at <http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/draft-avoca-beach-southern-foreshore-masterplan-revision-b/>

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Five Lands Walk Masterplan adopted by Council



Artist impression of entry to walkway in Avoca Drive

The Five Lands Walk Infrastructure Master Plan has now been adopted by Gosford City Council. This follows the exhibition of the draft plan in June of last year which itself was preceded by 12 months of investigations, community consultation and design.

The Masterplan encompasses the whole route from MacMaster's Beach through to Terrigal with new walkways, steps, lookouts, signage and facilities so that the walk can be undertaken at anytime of year in a safe and convenient way as well as catering for the large numbers expected at the annual event.

For Avoca the main component is the creation of a new pathway along the cliff edge joining the end of Endeavour Drive to Avoca Drive with a viewing deck at the end of Arden Ave. The path will incorporate steps as required to negotiate the steeper sections. From here the Masterplan links in with the Foreshore Masterplan in the beachfront area.

The work will be carried out in a staged process with the upgrade of the existing track between 55 Del Monte Drive & Winnie Bay as a first priority. Also included is the upgrade to the car park, new lookout & water filling station at Captain Cook Lookout. The Council has undertaken to complete these works in time for the 2012 5 Lands Walk.

The Council has been successful in securing a grant under the Regional Tourism Product Development Funding Program to erect signage on the existing 5 Lands Pathway. Plans are under way to erect some directional signage on the existing track before the 2012 Lands Walk.



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Five Lands Walk Masterplan adopted by Council continued...

Extract from the 5 Lands Masterplan Report Part B Issue E



HUNTER PARK

Upgrade park and carparking area as per the Avoca Masterplan prepared for Gosford City Council.

NEW VIEWING DECK

Proposed multipurpose viewing area at the end of Arden Avenue suitable for temporal art displays or small musical performances.

NEW STEPS

Proposed new steps between Endeavour Drive and Avoca Drive. Refer to Artist Impression.

WATER TOWER

Well known local landmark. Provide car parking area in clearing adjacent to Endeavour Drive. Opportunity for local artist to paint Skillion artwork from each years 5 Lands Walk event on water tower. Refer to Artist Impression.



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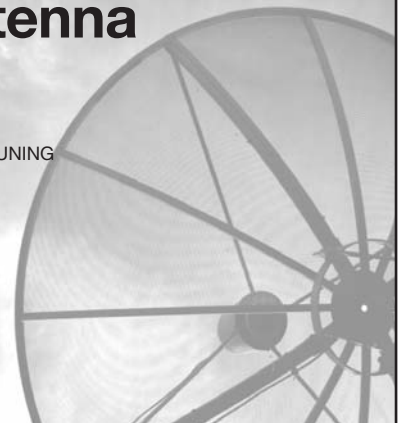
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Gosford Bike Strategy 2011 extends network to Avoca

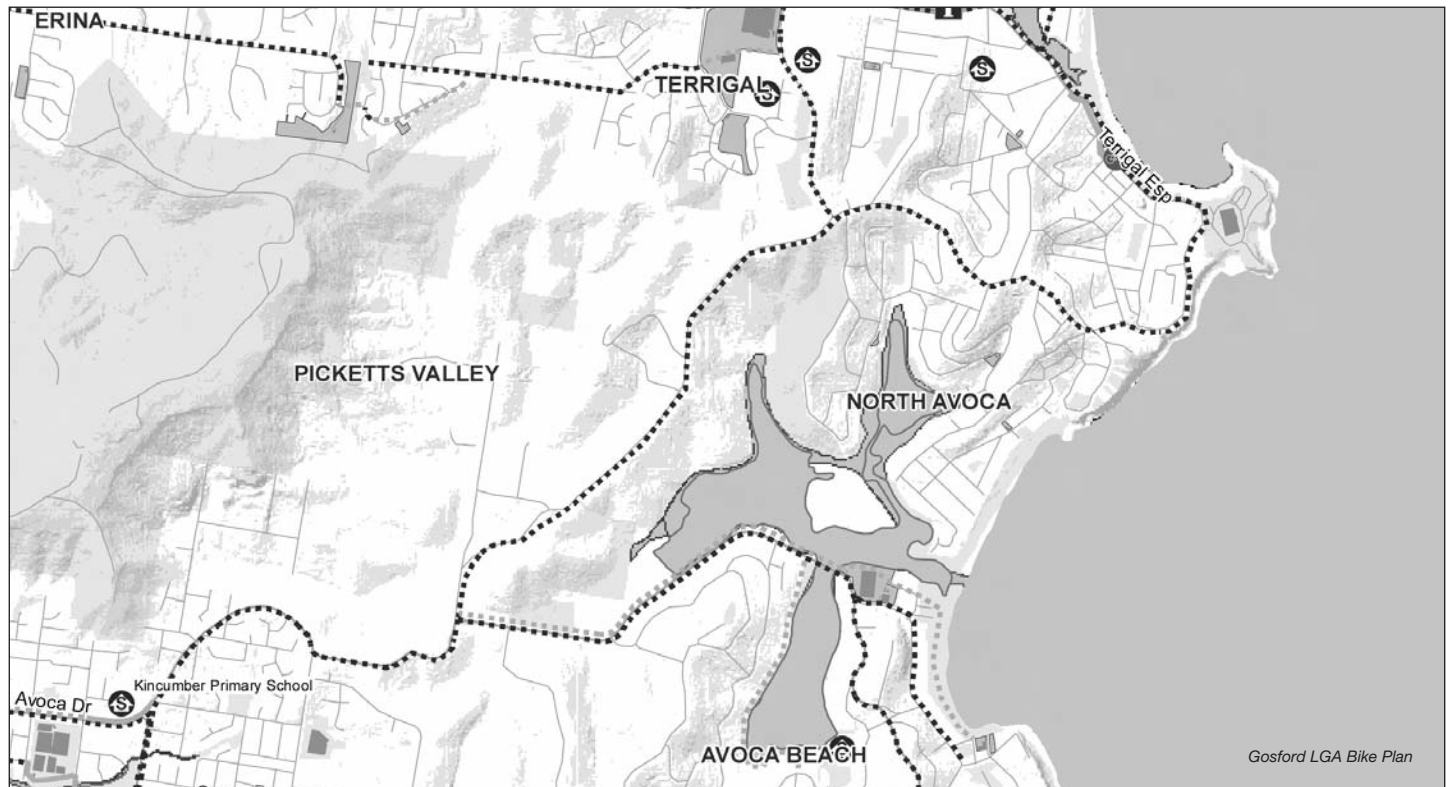
Readers with a good memory will remember our campaign of some years ago to extend the cycleway network to Avoca. At the time, despite words of support by relevant people on Council, nothing substantial appeared to be achieved. We were told that Avoca was not a high priority and was not being considered due to the higher priority given to commuter routes.

It is therefore encouraging to see that an extension to Avoca has now been included in the Draft Gosford Bike Strategy 2011. This plan is being developed in partnership with the State Government to encourage the use of bikes for both commuter and pleasure in the Gosford area. The plan is a draft however priority routes have been nominated (Avoca is not one of them) and so it is clear we will still have to wait some time before anything is seen on the ground. The Council is requesting feedback and this will have some influence on the decisions being made.

There is a website which as well as having an online forum and quick poll, also includes maps and bike routes to download. There is information about integrating bike travel with other forms of public transport, fact sheets and videos as well as the links to download the full documentation of the plan. There are also links to other related websites.

It is very encouraging and definitely a major step forward. Anyone with an interest in bike riding or just the planning and future development of the area would find the site interesting. It is just possible that if enough people from Avoca provide feedback that the priority for our part might be increased.

<http://haveyoursaygosford.com.au/bikeplan2011>



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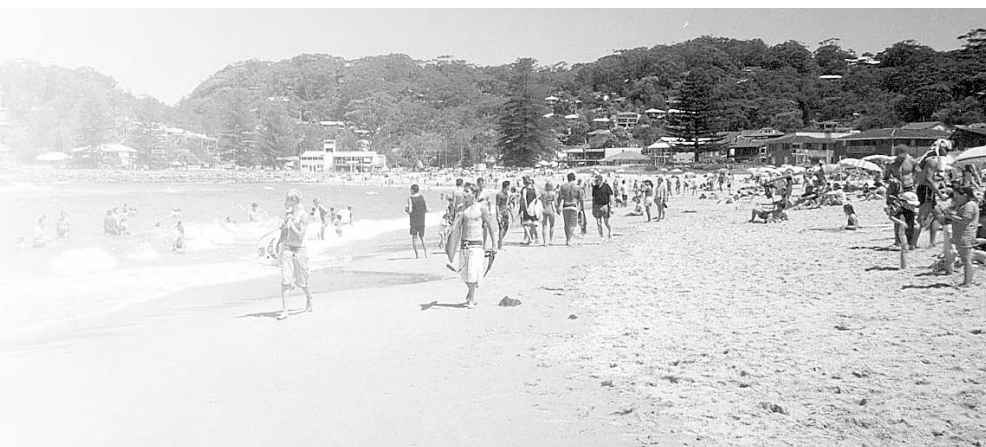
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April 2	December 3	March 12	August 13	March 26	August 27
June 4		April 9	September 10	April 23	September 24
August 6		May 14	October 8	May 28	October 22
(AGM)		June 11	November 12	June 25	November 26

Avoca Beach Community Association Inc.

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ABCA is a community group for residents and non-resident property owners which tries to protect the relatively relaxed lifestyle that Avoca's village character and natural beauty offers. We support and initiate plans which promote this lifestyle and work to oppose proposals that threaten it.

ABCA meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of every second month.

The Association's newsletter The Avoca Beach Review is published three times per year.

It is financed by advertisements from local businesses who can show their support for the community and promote themselves to the community through the advertising. Rates \$40 for 6cm x 6cm.

Contributions and letters are welcome. Please send to:
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