

# Shoal Bay Place Plan

Draft for public exhibition



November 2023 – This document is for public exhibition purposes and is expected to change with community feedback received.



# Guudji Yiigu

(Goo-jee ik-koo)

We welcome you to  
Port Stephens – part of  
the Worimi Aboriginal  
Nation who speak the  
Gathang language.



We acknowledge the Worimi as the  
original Custodians and inhabitants  
of Port Stephens.

May we walk the road to tomorrow  
with mutual respect and admiration  
as we care for the beautiful land and  
waterways together.

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# What is a Place Plan

Place plans are a way of planning for the growth of our unique towns and villages across Port Stephens. Place plans provide a local filter on the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan and other important planning documents to create actions which improve the liveability and wellbeing of our communities into the future.

## **Actions**

The actions in our local place plans create alignment in the way we plan for future land use, finance infrastructure, attract investment and bring life to our streets. Place plans recognise the importance of our public spaces in creating great places to live, work and play.

## **Community**

Most importantly, the development of place plans starts with talking to our community. They respond to the community's aspirations, values and priorities; they enable collaborative partnerships between residents, business and Council to deliver great place outcomes.

# Our place planning approach



## Local values

Through the Port Stephens Liveability Index, we know the values and priorities of our individual communities. This information provides the foundations of our place plans and helps guide planning and decision making across our community.



## Start with yes

A culture that supports innovation and ideas is critical to the success of our place plans. By starting with yes, we can encourage new thinking, new ideas and attract more people to share in creating great places.



## Test and trial

Great places don't appear by accident – they take time, effort and a shared understanding that not every project will work every time. By testing and trialling low cost, short term ideas, we learn by doing and create the stepping stones to bigger and better things.



## Civic pride

The Port Stephens community is abundant with energy and expertise and people who want to be involved in planning and creating for their place. Place plans provide opportunities for collaboration, foster pride and create meaningful community connection.



## Measure and benchmark

When we trial a new idea, launch a new program or invest in our public spaces, we need to understand what works and what doesn't. Measuring the success of our projects and comparing them to the best possible examples we can find will help build amazing places where people will want to live, work and play.



# About Shoal Bay

Exciting things are happening in Shoal Bay!

Shoal Bay is a beautiful coastal town, steeped in Worimi traditions and has come a long way from its sleepy fishing village beginnings.

With its crystal clear waters and pristine beaches, Shoal Bay is paradise and only a 2.5 hour drive from Sydney and minutes from Nelson Bay, making it easily accessible for visitors.

The natural beauty of the area is unparalleled, with a coastal inlet that is larger than Sydney Harbour and is a popular location for fishing and recreational boating.

Shoal Bay has a rich history dating back thousands of years and has been home to the Worimi Aboriginal people for generations. The spirit of their traditions and history can be felt when exploring this breathtaking area.

In 1934, a local fishing venture decided to build a clubhouse in Shoal Bay, and the area has been developing ever since. During World War II, a garrison was established on Tomaree Headland to defend the entrance to the port and provide amphibious training for U.S. and Australian soldiers.

Today, Shoal Bay and Tomaree Headland are popular destinations, attracting thousands of visitors with their natural beauty and unique history.

The Tomaree Headland Walk, one of the most popular attractions in Port Stephens, offers panoramic views of the coastline. The new Tomaree Coastal Walk is expected to boost the local economy by attracting year round visitation and creating new business opportunities.

Shoal Bay hosts a number of restaurants, cafes and bars which all contribute to the evening economy – this is particularly evident during the summer months but remains a challenge outside of peak season.

At the heart of Shoal Bay is the close-knit community who values its natural assets and local character. The village feel is maintained by its appealing grassed esplanade and beach-facing shopfronts and restaurants that line Shoal Bay Road.

The open space provides a magnificent view of the beach and Tomaree Headland. The overall character of Shoal Bay is highly valued by residents and visitors. This character is

directly connected to the natural environment and the built form of the town centre creating a laid back, coastal feel.

The population of Shoal Bay increases dramatically during peak holiday periods. To cater for continued growth and the development into the future, our focus is on enhancing the natural assets, improving pedestrian access, traffic circulation, and accommodating appropriate residential infill development.

This place plan contains actions to help manage the negative impacts of development pressure and major State Government initiatives. It also focuses on actions to preserve the natural beauty of the area, while enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

The Transformational Projects map (on page [14](#)) showcases exciting and innovative major projects that are set to take place in the community over the next few years.

As Shoal Bay continues to grow and evolve, so will the needs and expectations of the community. This Place Plan provides the framework for Council, the community and business to work together to ensure that this growth is managed in a way that benefits all.

## Character principles



Shoal Bay has the right mix of transport infrastructure in the right locations to enable a range of options for people to access and move around Shoal Bay.



New development respects the coastal character and village feel that is valued by the community. Building design that contributes to an interesting streetscape and provides visual variety.



The highly valued natural environment in Shoal Bay is protected and enhanced.



Local business is supported, and new commercial activity is encouraged to service the local community and tourism.



The foreshore is the centre of activity and a welcoming and vibrant space for locals and visitors.



View corridors are part of what makes Shoal Bay unique; water and hill views will be celebrated.



Safe and accessible pathways create a network for pedestrians and bike riders to key shopping, recreational and beach areas.



Development aims to achieve a neutral or beneficial effect on water quality and no increase in flooding impacts.



Targeted landscaping with species suitable for a coastal environment is used to soften the built environment, create habitat, and reduce urban heat effect.



The topography informs drainage and development opportunities, including maximum building height.

The residents of Shoal Bay are unique. Knowing who they are helps us understand their values and priorities.



Population  
**1,815**



**457**  
Families

**126**  
Active businesses trading  
in Shoal Bay\*



**59**  
Median age

**24%**  
of workers in tourism,  
accommodation and food services\*



ABS 2021 Census data; \*Remplan data 2021



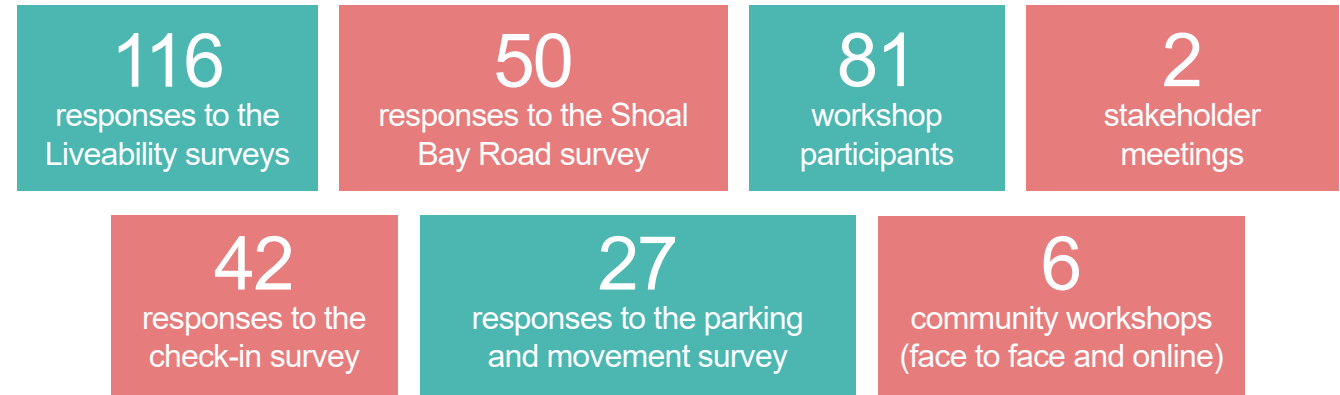
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Liveability is simply what a place is like to live in – creating liveable places improves the wellbeing of our communities.



# We've been listening

The community explored the future of Shoal Bay through an extensive community engagement process. Here's a snapshot of the **Shoal Bay Place Plan Engagement Report**.



## What makes Shoal Bay a great place to live?

In September 2020, 116 people from Shoal Bay completed the Liveability survey, telling us what they value about their community and their priorities for their place. We used this data to shape the Shoal Bay Place Plan – to set the vision, and define the actions that deliver the best outcomes for the Shoal Bay community. Read more at [pscouncil.info/shoal-bay-place-plan](https://pscouncil.info/shoal-bay-place-plan)

## Key themes

The Liveability survey results indicate that the 6 most important themes of liveability for the people of Shoal Bay are:

- Environmental sustainability
- Management and safety
- Economy
- Movement and Place
- Character
- Public Open Space



## Most valued

These are the things that are most important to you in your ideal neighbourhood.



Elements of natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife)



General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks)



Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity



Protection of the natural environment



Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution)

## Top strengths

These are the things you care about most and you believe are performing well. We'll continue to celebrate and protect these.



Locally owned and operated businesses



Elements of natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife)



Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery stores, pharmacy, banks)



Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafes, shops, health and wellness services).



Landscaping and natural elements (street trees, planting, water features)

## Top priorities

These are the things most important to you, but you believe they're under performing. We'll work together to improve these.



General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks)



Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport (signage, paths, lighting)



Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity



Protection of the natural environment



Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution)

## Liveability Index – how does Shoal Bay compare?

Shoal Bay



Port Stephens



National Average



# Community engagement

**Phase 1:** Liveability survey and Town Centre survey

**Phase 2:** Series of workshops with community and businesses and meetings with key stakeholders.

**Phase 3:** Workshops and survey with community and businesses about Land Use and Character, and Parking and Movement.

**Phase 4:** Draft actions and map tested via survey with workshop participants and key stakeholders.

**Phase 5:** Public Exhibition of the draft Shoal Bay Place Plan.

# How you value your town centre

A Town Centre survey for Shoal Bay Road between Government and Tomaree Roads provided place-specific insights into how the community rates the strengths and weaknesses of this area.

After Council invested \$800,000 in foreshore improvements, including state-of-the-art toilets, stunning landscaping, and new street furniture, the results were astounding. A follow-up survey revealed that the community rating skyrocketed from 71 out of 100 to a 82 out of 100!

## Strengths



Amenities and facilities (toilets, bubblers, parents rooms)



Welcoming to all people



Sense of safety (for all ages, genders, day/night, etc.)



Overall look and visual character of the area

## Improvement priorities



Public art, community art, water or light features.



Unusual or unique businesses/shops



Unusual or unique buildings or public space design



Evidence of community activity (community gardening, art, fundraising)



Service businesses (post offices, libraries, banks)





# Emerging themes for Shoal Bay

## Environmental Sustainability: maintaining the balance

Shoal Bay is surrounded by an abundance of natural beauty and this spectacular environment is highly valued by the community. Not surprisingly, residents rate environmental sustainability as the highest overall priority for their place.

The natural environment is not only an important community asset, but also a driver for the visitor economy, attracting thousands of people a year. Finding the right balance between development and protection of the natural environment is crucial, and includes challenges like dune and beach erosion along the Shoal Bay foreshore. The community has identified opportunities to get involved in ensuring the long term protection of their environment, through education campaigns, citizen science, interpretive signage, trails, and environmental programs.

## Management and Safety: safe and comfortable places

When we visit a place we like to feel comfortable, safe and welcome. Creating a sense of security is a shared responsibility. It needs ownership from the community, businesses and Council to create attractive places where people want to spend time and do business.

We've seen lots of community collaboration in Shoal Bay, with a number of community groups working diligently to improve their place. Business and residents can collaborate to improve comfort and safety through improving shopfronts, keeping areas clean, installing additional lighting, holding events and undertake place activation. Council contributes by providing controls for good urban design and maintenance of public spaces and through support for community events.

## Economy: creating a vibrant community

Shoal Bay offers a variety of boutique retail shops, bars, restaurants and cafés, as well as medical providers that service the local community and visitors. These small businesses are the lifeblood of the town and are highly valued by the community.

Tourism is important for Shoal Bay. Visitors increase vibrancy and strengthen the local economy. Visitation also creates opportunity for business which may not otherwise be viable for a small community. Tourism in Shoal Bay thrives especially in the warmer months, however business will benefit from a reduced reliance on the seasonality of the tourism market.

The new Tomaree Coastal Walk caters for a range of year round visitor experiences and offers new opportunities for local business. Careful management is needed to ensure that impacts from increased visitation, such as traffic congestion, do not reduce liveability for Shoal Bay residents.



## **Movement and Place: making it easier to get around**

Every person in our community should be able to move around their neighbourhood and town centre with ease, whether they are walking, bike riding, or driving. This becomes possible when we drive at safer speeds, ensure the connectivity of a shared pathway network, and improve parking and traffic flow through the Smart Parking program.

Shoal Bay is accessed by only one road, which becomes very congested during busy holiday periods. This, combined with ongoing coastal erosion leaves limited space for new and improved pathways. It also creates issues for emergency management and accessibility. Alternative solutions need to be investigated including alternate access roads.

## **Public Open Space: create quality open spaces**

Shoal Bay is spoilt for choice when it comes to open space, with beaches and National Parks that are supported by formal open spaces like parks and playgrounds. Shoal Bay's open spaces are natural, green and clean.

Open spaces are important for community wellbeing; they provide places to exercise, relax, play, socialise, and connect with nature. Walkable, accessible, well-designed open space is key to a town's character and promotes healthier lifestyles, supports diversity and improves wellbeing.

Improvements to open space do not need to be large scale interventions by Council, nor do they need to be expensive. Place making and activation projects like the introduction of public art, seating, events, or improved landscaping can also improve open space and are often community led.

## **Character: enhance the look and feel of Shoal Bay**

Shoal Bay's character is defined by its coastal setting, laid back holiday feel, and magnificent views of the blue water bay and headlands.










Its unique identity is shaped by a combination of the land, people, built environment, history, culture, and tradition, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal elements.

The community values Shoal Bay's natural elements, outdoor living, light-colored buildings, and nostalgic holiday quality.

Existing and new development can impact the character of a place through bulk and scale, look and feel, context and height. Planning controls should be established to protect and enhance Shoal Bay's character while facilitating growth for new housing.

A town's character is also created by fostering opportunities for socialising and creating lively streets with attractive shopping and dining areas that give people a reason to visit.

## Transformational projects

-  Facilitate appropriate infill housing
-  Harbourside Haven Village
-  Better access to Shoal Bay
-  Smart Parking Infrastructure
-  The Tomaree Coastal Walk
-  Creation of memorable walking trails
-  Prioritising pedestrian movement
-  Navigating the boat ramp
-  A new future for Tomaree Lodge

Please note: this is a draft map only and doesn't represent a finalised design.





# Transformational Projects

## Shoal Bay projects

The Transformational Projects Map (page 14) identifies key projects that will take place in Shoal Bay over the next few years. The following information provides an overview of these projects which will be finalised in partnership with the community.

### Facilitate appropriate infill housing

Shoal Bay is surrounded by National Park and there is limited opportunity to provide new housing outside of the current developed area. Yet Shoal Bay continues to attract strong development interest, particularly for multi-dwelling housing and residential flat buildings.

The recently adopted Hunter Regional Plan 2041 sets the State Government's planning direction and seeks to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of diverse housing in the future. This plan applies to the Greater Newcastle Area, which includes Shoal Bay, and requires approximately 80% of new housing development to be located within the existing urban area. This is known as infill development.

Infill housing is the redevelopment of existing urban areas for additional housing and can include apartment buildings, duplexes, terraces, townhouses or granny flats. Infill housing increases density and creates compact neighbourhoods and a more efficient use of existing infrastructure such as pathways, roads and parks. By increasing density, we can also support a greater investment in social infrastructure and community facilities. Some types of infill housing can also deliver more affordable first home options for young families, or provide older people with opportunities to age in place, close to shops, support services, friends and family.

The existing E1 Local Centre and the R3 Medium Density Residential zones already permit medium density developments.

This zoning can also facilitate more diverse housing, allowing for residential flat buildings, serviced apartments and hotels. However, without the right planning tools in place, development pressure can result in poor planning outcomes that do not achieve the desired character of Shoal Bay, or don't make the most efficient use of the available space.





### Did you know?

Changing the height of buildings in Port Stephens requires an amendment to the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan, 2013.

This starts with a planning proposal that outlines the reasons and benefits behind the change. The legislation in place ensures that everyone is consulted, and all impacts are considered before any decisions are made.

The current planning guidelines limit the maximum height of buildings within the E1 and R3 zones (maximum heights are 15 and 9 meters respectively).

The right planning controls need to ensure that new development contributes to creating a vibrant and active town centre, that uses space efficiently, and facilitates greater density closer to services, shops, public space and public transport”

While we still need to have some more detailed discussions with the community to set the vision for future housing growth in Shoal Bay through the review of the Port Stephens Housing Strategy, our initial analysis suggests that there is opportunity to increase building heights in a way that mitigates the visual impact.

Currently, the Breakwater Tower is the highest building in Shoal Bay and we understand that it may seem out of place compared to the rest of the area. That’s why we want to use it as a reference point for the maximum building height, which is about 8 storeys, and gradually taper building heights down to the existing 2 – 3 storey height limit (refer to map on page 14).

By tapering the heights, we can balance the need for additional housing with the desire to limit the visual impact of new buildings, particularly as experienced at the street level.

These tapered buildings will appear less imposing, improve design outcomes and continue to respect the character of Shoal Bay. They will also mean that the Breakwater Tower won’t stand out as much.

Robust engagement with the community will be undertaken before we make any changes to building heights in Shoal Bay.

Before we increase density however, the right infrastructure needs to be in place. Insufficient drainage infrastructure in Shoal Bay has meant that during periods of heavy rain residents in Shoal Bay experience issues related to storm water management and nuisance flooding. Along with affecting existing residents and property, this also affects the potential to build new housing. Without finding solutions for these issues, further development will only exacerbate the impacts of these problems.

Council has commissioned a Shoal Bay Drainage Study to inform investigations into higher density development opportunities. Outcomes from this study may include using existing Council land to support improvements in drainage management. If suitable drainage solutions cannot be identified, infill development may not be feasible.

## Harbourside Haven Village

Harbourside Haven Village provides residential aged care options for seniors in our community. The long-term continuity of this service is important, particularly as our population continues to age.

There may be opportunity to redevelop this site to achieve higher densities, which will enable additional dwellings and a greater variety of housing choice, enabling people to age in place. It is envisaged that building heights will be greater at the rear of the site, and taper down towards the front. Planning controls will also be investigated to ensure that any proposed redevelopment makes a positive statement at this prominent gateway location.

The community will be consulted on any proposed changes through the planning proposal process.

## Better access to Shoal Bay

We all know how congested the road into Shoal Bay can become during peak tourist season. Solutions are being explored to improve the situation, like considering the creation of an alternative road into Shoal Bay. This will alleviate traffic issues, but also improve emergency access, provide more space for bike and footpaths along the foreshore, and address concerns related to coastal erosion and access to the holiday park.

Council will undertake a study to determine the feasibility of this road, and work closely with Transport for NSW, National Parks & Wildlife Service and adjacent landholders to progress planning for this road.

While this isn't proposed as an alternative to the Fingal Bay bypass project, it's still an important consideration for the community.

## The Tomaree Coastal Walk

The new Tomaree Coastal Walk project promotes a 27 kilometre coastal walk from Tomaree Head to Birubi Point. The project caters for a range of visitor experiences from short walks to half or multi-day options.

Tomaree Headland is one of the most significant features of the walk and is the official starting point. Part of the Worimi Aboriginal cultural landscape, the area is steeped in history as it also displays the rich WWII heritage of Tomaree Head. Visitors can experience whales, wildflowers and abundant wildlife that attract thousands of visitors each year.

This new nature based experience is expected to drive increased visitation during low and shoulder peak periods, offering great opportunity for new and existing business.





## Creation of memorable walking trails

Shoal Bay is a hotspot for visitors and locals of all ages, who can be found walking, running, cycling and exploring this beautiful natural playground at all times of the year.

While there are some missing links, Shoal Bay is generally well connected by shared pathways from both Nelson Bay and Fingal Bay.

There may be options for a continuous waterfront pathway from Shoal Bay through to Nelson Bay, creating a meandering trail along the coast. Extending the Coastal Walk with a shared path network from Shoal Bay to Nelson Bay, via Little Beach, is the first stage. The design work has commenced to fill in the missing pathway links and has been funded by an Active Transport Grant.



## Smart Parking infrastructure

We know that finding a car park in Shoal Bay during peak times can be difficult. To address this, Smart Parking is being rolled out throughout the town centre. This will not only improve parking in the area by supporting the turnover of parking spaces, but it will generate revenue that will be reinvested in Shoal Bay. An example is the car park upgrades on the corner of Shoal Bay Road and Government Road. Refer to page [25](#) for more information about the program and potential future infrastructure projects.



## Prioritising pedestrian movement

Pedestrian friendly spaces are walkable, accessible and vibrant. Pedestrians need to be able to safely move at their own pace with an opportunity to stop and spend time enjoying their surrounds.

The mix of accommodation and the appeal of the beach, shops and restaurants make the footpath along Shoal Bay Road a particularly busy and sometimes congested space. While various means of transport need to coexist, in areas like these pedestrians should have a clear priority over cars.

We will investigate and trial ways to reduce the dominance of cars in this area and make it more pleasant for pedestrians.

This could be achieved by reducing speed, implementing shared zones, or by introducing a one way option in the Shoal Bay town centre. Improvements in traffic flow, additional car parking and providing more space for bikes and pedestrians will require longer term planning.



## Navigating the boat ramp

Due to its proximity to Tomaree and Yacaaba Heads, the Shoal Bay boat ramp is a very popular launching location for those wishing to boat, fish, paddle, jet ski or canoe. The boat ramp can become very congested during peak holiday periods and cars illegally park in areas located for trailer parking.

Smart Parking in this area will support the turnover of parking spaces and reduce the incorrect use of parking bays. Revenue generated from parking will be invested into the redesign of the carpark, the formalisation of parking spaces and an upgrade to the existing amenities.

## A new future for Tomaree Lodge

The Tomaree Lodge site was, until recently, a residential centre for people with disability. The site and surrounding areas are highly valued by the community. It has both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage value, high ecological value and forms part of the Shoal Bay open space network. It is also a stunningly beautiful location at the base of Tomaree Mountain, with views inward toward Nelson Bay, across to Tea Gardens and out towards Broughton Island.

The NSW Government has committed to retaining the Tomaree Lodge site in public hands for future community and recreational use only. Council continues to advocate that these uses need to be respectful of the historical and environmental importance of the site, accessible to the entire community, and safe in design. A sustainable operating model needs to ensure a high quality community and visitor experience.

Council has advocated for the NSW Government to provide details on the potential use of the site to understand the site's constraints and opportunities. Council will continue to engage with the Government on the future of this important site.

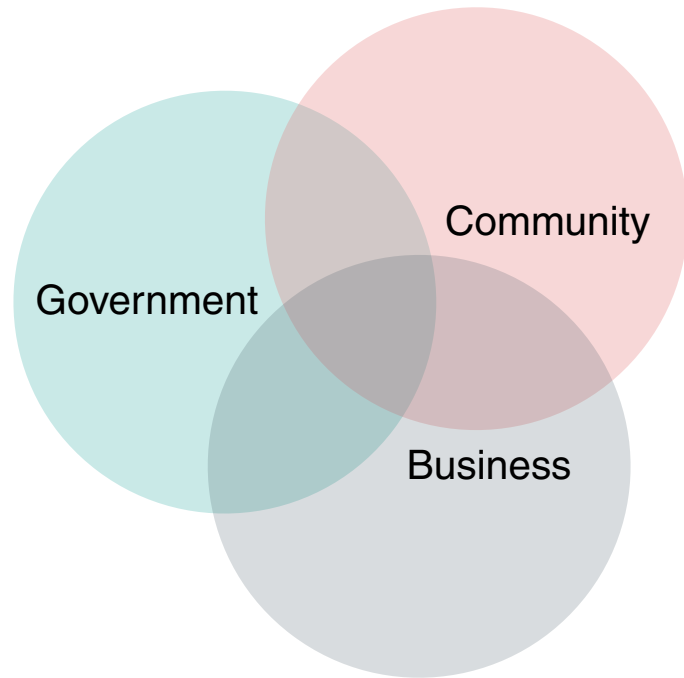
Community input into options for the site was provided during the engagement for this Place Plan. This information will be included as discussions with State Government progress.

### ANZAC Park

It's was great to hear the community speak up about the improvements they'd like to see in Anzac Park. Although it's not identified on the project map or in the actions, we're working in the background to determine the best way forward.



# A shared responsibility for our place



Individual responsibilities with opportunities for partnerships



## Residents

Residents make an important contribution to their place through individual or collective efforts. The impact on the look and feel of a place is through the diversity of people; their rich heritage, lived experience and their sense of ownership of public and private space. Place making activities are developed in partnership with the residents and consider the cultural values with the Traditional Owners of the Land, the Worimi people.

## Local workers

Local workers contribute to a place in many ways, and have a connection to a place even if they don't live there. Their presence activates a place and makes it vibrant and they support local business. Some workers even volunteer their time to activities that improve the place.

## Visitors

Visitors and tourists, including day trippers, overnight visitors, or those just passing through, play an important role in a place. They provide a customer base that may result in new local business like cafés and restaurants, or key attractions that also benefit residents by offering a larger variety of things to see and do.

## Business

Businesses have many opportunities to contribute to placemaking. These could include funding and supporting community projects, collaborating with other businesses, sharing resources or training local workers. Businesses make a vital contribution to the character of the place. Maintaining an attractive shopfront that presents positively to the streetscape contributes to an appealing and welcoming town centre.





### **Port Stephens Council**

Council has 4 different roles in implementing place plans – as a coordinator by providing guidance and assistance for a project; as a supporter by providing permission, inspiration or project funding; as a partner that works with community groups and business to undertake projects; or as the primary organisation that funds and delivers the project.



### **Investors and developers**

A town or city needs people and organisations that believe in its potential, and who are able to invest in its future. Investors, including families, businesses, and developers play an active role in ensuring that development aligns with the strategic direction of a place. They're in a position to deliver and maintain housing, infrastructure, and business opportunities that improve and grow places.



### **Community groups and volunteers**

Community groups and volunteers with a can-do and proactive attitude are vital for placemaking projects. They include sporting clubs, schools, charities, churches, clubs, social groups and environmental custodians. Community groups and volunteers contribute significantly to their community.



### **State Government**

State Government has 3 roles in placemaking – as an authority, a strategic visionary and a funding body. Importantly, they have a significant role in the management of roads and other infrastructure, parks and heritage, which are all essential contributors to the identity of a place.

## Working together

Creating great places requires a collaborative approach and ownership from all those that live, work and play in the place. By working together we can harness people-power to achieve more, and best of all, create lasting connections that improve liveability and increase the wellbeing of the Shoal Bay community.

## Town Teams

Town Teams are a group of positive and proactive people that work collaboratively to improve a place or area. The Town Team model is inclusive and open to everyone – businesses, residents, community groups and anyone keen to have a go.

Talk to Council about how you can join Shoal Bay's Town Team and connect with other ambitious community members to start delivering outcomes for Shoal Bay.



# Creating better places and spaces in Shoal Bay

## What projects are in the pipeline for Shoal Bay?

In the next 5 years, Council expects a range of projects, as shown on the map, to commence. These projects will improve liveability in Shoal Bay and include improvements or replacement of existing roads, additional pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, gutters, drainage improvements and recreational facilities.

Council has already started to budget for these projects and you can find more detail in our Resourcing Strategy, Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan and Projects and Works page on Council's website, [portstephens.nsw.gov.au](http://portstephens.nsw.gov.au)

## Smart Parking infrastructure

The ease of parking has been an ongoing priority for residents and visitors to Shoal Bay, particularly during the busy school holiday periods. Council is implementing a Smart Parking program to reduce congestion, increase parking turnover, and gain revenue to reinvest back into priority projects for Shoal Bay.

The program is supported by an Infrastructure Plan which was prepared in consultation with the community. It details how money generated through Smart Parking will be spent on infrastructure projects in Shoal Bay as shown on the Creating better places and spaces map. Revenue also supports place activation programs, like events. More information about the Smart Parking program for Shoal Bay is available on Council's website, [pscouncil.info/smart-parking-shoal-bay](http://pscouncil.info/smart-parking-shoal-bay)

## Other potential future projects




Potential future projects shown on the map represent opportunities to deliver desired outcomes for Shoal Bay, but these projects are not yet funded in Council's work program.

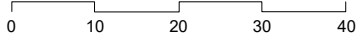
There's many other ways to deliver these outcomes – such as through grant funding secured by either Council or community groups, fundraising by individuals or charity groups, donations or sponsorship by businesses, or through voluntary planning agreements with developers.






**KEY**

-  Schools
-  Shopping District
-  Parking



# Creating better places and spaces map

 Location to be confirmed

## Smart Parking Infrastructure Projects

- 1 Corner Shoal Bay Road and Government Road. Car park upgrades, surface and line markings. 2024
- 1 Corner Shoal Bay Road and Government Road. Smart lights, below ground conduits for future electric vehicle charging and CCTV. 2024
- 2 Mt. Tomaree Base Carpark - carpark extension with turning circle and footpath realignment. 2026
- 3 Messines Street. Kerb and gutter south side from Government Road to Rigney Street. 2028
- 4 Shoal Bay Road (east of town centre near boat ramp). Carpark redesign and formalisation. 2028
- 5 Bernie Thompson Park at Government Road. Carpark formalisation (access realignment and associated works). 2028
- 6 Town Centre. Create pedestrian friendly space, including traffic circulation implementation. 2030
-  Various Locations. Traffic and parking upgrades, installation of wayfinding signage and controls. 2032
- 7 Shoal Bay to Harwood Avenue (Nelson Bay). Missing link pathway/shared pathway. 2034
- 8 Coastal areas. Viewing platforms (2x). 2034
-  Location unknown - Park & Ride Facilities. 2034
- 9 Government Road. Shared path from Messines Street to Peterie Street. 2035
- 10 Government Road. Shared path from Peterie Street to Sylvia Street. 2035
- 11 Sylvia Street. Shared path from Government Road to Horace Street. 2035
- 12 Messines Street. Undergrounding of power lines. 2035





## Civil Projects

- 1 Rigney Street. Pavement reconstruction, kerb & gutter and, if possible, a footpath from Fingal Street to Messines Street. 2027
- 2 Tomaree Road. Pavement rehabilitation, kerb & gutter and footpath construction from Verona Road to Messines Street. 2026
- 3 Tomaree Road. Pavement reconstruction, kerb & gutter and footpath construction from Rigney Street to Marine Drive. 2029
- 4 Beach Road. Shared path from Harwood Avenue to Shoal Bay Road. 2029
- 5 Shoal Bay Road. Shared path from Beach Road to end of existing path. 2029
- 6 Rigney Street. New drainage system and kerb and guttering in front of 55 Rigney Street to Fingal Street. 2027

## Community Projects

- 1 Shoal Bay Road, eastern end. Upgrade multiple beach access points (path to beach). 2023
- 2 Shoal Bay Road. Replacement of public amenities near the boat ramp. 2024

## Projects for investigation

-  Foreshore area. Implementation of projects of the foreshore masterplan being drafted.
-  Exercise Gym/Equipment.
-  Improvements to the street drainage system with kerb and guttering.
-  Major augmentation of trunk drainage system to the Shoal Bay Beach outlet and improvement to existing drainage system.

**Please note:** Timing, funding or locations may be subject to change.

# Look and feel for Shoal Bay

Creating an attractive streetscape brings people into town and compels people to stay and linger. The use of a consistent colour palette and materials can help to create a beautiful town with its own, unique 'look and feel'.

Small projects such as shop front renovations, fence replacements and street furniture may all present opportunities to create a more cohesive town centre and a sense of belonging to the community.

The colour palette represents the many attributes of Shoal Bay and celebrates the outstanding natural beauty of the broader Port Stephens East Ward region.



**Blue** for the dazzling clear skies that reach from the horizon up over the bay.

**C:** 44% **M:** 0% **Y:** 10% **K:** 0%  
**R:** 91 **G:** 208 **B:** 230  
**Hex:** 5BD0E6



**Turquoise** for the pristine waters of the bay and lapping waves along the shoreline.

**C:** 66% **M:** 5% **Y:** 35% **K:** 0%  
**R:** 76 **G:** 183 **B:** 177  
**Hex:** 4CB7B1



**Deep green** for the native bushland around the bay and reaching up Tomaree Head.

**C:** 91% **M:** 44% **Y:** 66% **K:** 35%  
**R:** 0 **G:** 86 **B:** 78  
**Hex:** 00554D



**Sandstone** for the sandy shores of the East Ward and coastal parts of Port Stephens.



**Grey** for the resident dolphins and the pods of migrating whales.

**C:** 78% **M:** 59% **Y:** 48% **K:** 29%  
**R:** 67 **G:** 81 **B:** 92  
**Hex:** 43515C



**Coral pink** for the incredible marine creatures and the vibrant Gynea Lilies.

**C:** 6% **M:** 63% **Y:** 42% **K:** 0%  
**R:** 229 **G:** 125 **B:** 124  
**Hex:** E57D7C



**Sandy white** for the glittering sand, white boats and business frontages of the friendly Shoal Bay village.

**C:** 3% **M:** 4% **Y:** 9% **K:** 0%  
**R:** 244 **G:** 240 **B:** 228  
**Hex:** F4F0E4







# A vibrant Shoal Bay

## Test and Trial

Taking on the 'lighter, quicker, cheaper approach' is a great way to tackle really complex problems in a place. It allows testing before spending big budgets on projects and allows Council and the community to understand what works and what does not work. This approach can also help with the temporary and seasonal use of sites that may be underutilised. These projects are easy to remove, low-budget and engaging, think – temporary infrastructure (seats, planting), planting, temporary parks, pop up shops and play spaces.

## Our incredible Place

Open spaces can be transformed by events – attracting visitors, creating community connections and supporting local business during low and shoulder seasons. Events can range from artisan markets to sporting events, environmental activities or music – in Shoal Bay the stunning water and natural landscape naturally attract water based events. There is opportunity across the foreshore and open spaces to expand the current event program by supporting new events that celebrate the unique cultural and environmental elements of Shoal Bay.

## Active day and night!

Shoal Bay's mix of restaurants, bars and cafes creates opportunities for a vibrant night life! To increase the value of the night time economy, we need to find solutions for improved lighting, access and safety. We need to encourage people to come out for an evening, find ways to encourage them to stay, and create spaces that are safe and accessible for all.

This may include street entertainment and music, evening events, street theatre, new lighting installations, safe zones or even incentives for business looking to expand their opening hours into the evening.



## Activating our streetscape!

Shopfronts and the space in front of our local businesses are an important element of the Shoal Bay streetscape. An integrated and attractive streetscape is achieved when business work together with community and Council to create spaces that attract people and encourage them to linger longer. Activities could include planting and greening projects, seating, artwork, performance, shop displays, façade upgrades and even interesting signage.

## Paint me a Picture

Art is an excellent way to both brighten a place but also celebrate the important stories of that place. The unique stories of Shoal Bay include those from our first people – the Worimi, the stunning natural environment, the wartime history of Tomaree headland and the fishing industries that grew from this unique landscape. Art in Shoal Bay can be expressed in endless ways – murals, asphalt art, sculpture, lighting installations and trails, for example.

## What can we do?

Creating vibrancy in our town centres and public spaces requires a collaborative approach. It needs shared ownership and action from business, the community and Council to create places that are resilient, welcoming and inclusive. Place activation is not about big budgets and big infrastructure, it's about creating unique and innovative experiences and testing new ideas. This approach connects local identity both through the built form of the place and the programming of the space.



### Did you know?

Did you know that Council offers a range of funding streams for our community to create vibrant places and improve the liveability of their town? Visit our website to find out more [portstephens.nsw.gov.au](http://portstephens.nsw.gov.au)

# Actions

## Timeframe

This Place Plan has a planning horizon of 5 years. Timeframes denote when delivery of an action is expected to start.

Short term – 0 to 2 years



Medium term – 2 to 4 years



Long term – 4 to 5+ years



## Cost

Cost indicates whether an action is a relatively cheap or a costly undertaking.

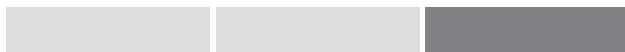
Low



Medium



High



## Lead

Each action will be lead by Council or a specific group associated with the action.

## Council role

Shoal Bay's Liveability Index results have inspired a series of action items. Port Stephens Council has 4 possible roles in delivering these actions:

- **Coordinate** – As a coordinator, we'll provide guidance on how to start your project, help by identifying approvals required, advise you about funding opportunities, get you in touch with other organisations, or advocate for your project.
- **Support** – As a supporter, we may provide support, permission, inspiration or funding.
- **Deliver** – In delivering, we'll fund and deliver the project.
- **Partner** – As a partner, we'll work with the community, business, developers, and state agencies to undertake projects or programs.

## Emerging themes

The Liveability survey results indicate that the 6 most important themes of liveability for the people of Shoal Bay are:

- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Management and safety**
- **Economy**
- **Movement and Place**
- **Character**
- **Public Open Space**

**Please note:** Cost estimates and delivery timeframes are indicative only and subject to further investigation.

The order for commencement of actions is flexible and will be based on timing and availability of funding and resources, and community initiative.

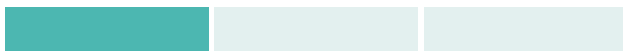


## 1. Caring for the local environment

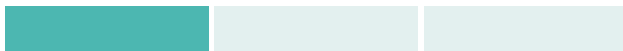
We know that residents in Shoal Bay want to see more native gardens between the boat ramp and Tomaree Lodge. We also know that there is a strong interest from residents in understanding the type of plants they can use in their own backyards to help the local environment.

Environmental volunteering is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, to create new connections and to contribute to your local community. Residents and business are encouraged to think outside the box and work with Council to understand the possibilities. Ideas could include maintaining native vegetation in reserves and along the foreshore, undertaking weed control, creating native gardens along pathways, planting street trees, establishing garden beds or starting a pot plant collection in public spaces like the village square or in front of businesses.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community **Council role:** Support

The Shoal Bay Beach Preservation Committee encourages volunteers to assist with monthly working bees on the dunes and parkland adjacent to Shoal Bay Beach. Council also provides grants to community groups and business to implement projects to support the local environment.

Residents can also enhance the vibrancy of Shoal Bay through improving vegetation at their own properties or by planting in the verge in front of their properties with native, edible or rain gardens.

Council will develop resources to outline how you can improve your verge, the type of plants you can use and any approvals that may be required.







## 2. Protecting our precious coastline

Beachfront stabilisation is required to prevent dune and beach erosion along the Shoal Bay foreshore. The right stabilisation will ensure ongoing and safe access to the beach and public spaces and the protection of public infrastructure like roads, paths, steps, boat launch facilities and seating.

Across NSW, all coastal Councils are required to develop a Coastal Management Program (CMP). This document sets the long-term strategy for managing our coast. It identifies risks to the coastline and sets out actions to manage and mitigate these risks now and into the future.

The Port Stephens CMP will be critically important to the protection of the Shoal Bay foreshore and dune system. In partnership with the community, Council will prioritise actions to protect Shoal Bay's coastline,

beaches and infrastructure. Actions to be investigated include rehabilitation of native vegetation, sand back passing (where we recycle sand that has moved), and dune stabilisation methods.

Degraded areas could be revegetated with plants and trees while existing vegetation could be better protected by the use of appropriate barriers that encourage pedestrians to use designated pathways.

For Council to access funding to support all these actions, they must be included in the CMP. If you care about the coastline, you can find out more on Council's website [pscouncil.info/cmp](http://pscouncil.info/cmp)

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council **Council role:** Deliver / Coordinate

### 3. Maintaining the balance

One of the most effective ways to protect the natural environment is through education. By building an understanding of why Shoal Bay is so unique and how we can all work together to protect the local environment, there will be a greater chance of ensuring long-term sustainability.

Education programs might include interpretative signage along the foreshore highlighting simple ways to protect our waterways, reduce our impact on coastal vegetation or minimise waste. Information could be provided on the Port Stephens - Great Lakes Marine Park, the Tomaree National Park and how our everyday behaviour can affect these important assets.

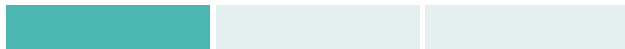
Events can also be a very effective education tool – building on existing events like World Environment Day or World Oceans Day or creating new events like beach clean-up days,

creating fun and engaging way to educate people of all ages on how they can protect this precious place.

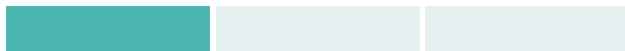
Community Groups are encouraged to contact Council about the Port Stephens Environmental Projects grant. This fund is designed to support initiatives that improve biodiversity and sustainability, protect local ecosystems, encourage student participation and educate our community. Council can also provide advice on accessing sponsorship through local business to support your initiative.

Council will also work closely with National Parks, the Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park, residents and business to develop interpretative signage in locations with high visitation.

#### Timeframe



#### Cost



**Lead:** Community    **Council role:** Support

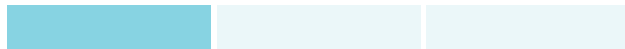


## 4. Establish a Town Team

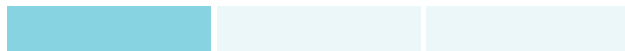
Town Teams are positive and proactive “doers” who work collaboratively with Council to improve a place. Town Teams are inclusive – they include residents, businesses, existing community groups or anyone interested in improving their place. The Town Team model also provides support to existing community groups who align with the Town Team Charter through provision of resources, education and funding support.

Shoal Bay already has a strong group of volunteers committed to improving their place – Town Teams won’t replace these important community groups but provide additional support and more opportunities to work collaboratively on placemaking projects.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community    **Council role:** Coordinate

## 5. Spotlight on Shoal Bay

The creative use of lighting is an effective way to encourage people to visit a place during the evening. Good lighting improves safety and visibility and makes people of all ages feel more comfortable about going out at night.

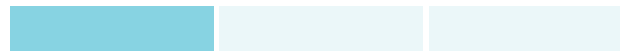
Shoal Bay has an opportunity to create a place that attracts people to its cafés, restaurants and foreshore year round. Creative projects like adding festoon lighting in public spaces, installing temporary lighting installations on footpaths and buildings, and showcasing events which feature lighting, can support the evening economy by increasing the ambience of a place and extending dining and trading hours.

Improving lighting within pedestrian corridors is also important. Good lighting from parking areas to the commercial centre and foreshore improves safety and accessibility.

There is also opportunity to highlight important architectural features and landmarks such as the Shoal Bay Jetty, trees on the foreshore or in the village square.

All lighting needs to consider the impact on residents, business and the natural environment. The use of sustainable options like solar should also be investigated.

### Timeframe



### Cost



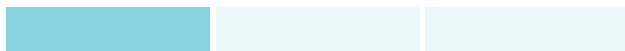
**Lead:** Community and Business

**Council role:** Partnership

## 6. Navigating the boat ramp

Smart Parking will support the turnover of parking and reduce the incorrect use of parking bays around the boat ramp. Revenue generated from Smart Parking will be re-invested into the redesign of the boat ramp carpark, which will include the formalisation of parking spaces and an upgrade to the existing amenities.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council **Council role:** Deliver

## 7. Help keep it clean and tidy

Shoal Bay residents place high value on the visual appeal of their place. Maintaining a clean and tidy town that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors is everyone's responsibility.

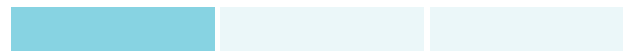
The community and businesses could come together by joining the annual Clean up Australia Day event. You could also connect to other organisations like Good for the Hood and Take 3 for the Sea to implement programs that reduce the impact of rubbish in Shoal Bay.

Another simple way to keep the place clean is to report what you see. Council's Report and Request service allows you to submit an

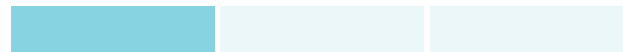
issue anywhere, anytime at [pscouncil.info/ReportAndRequest](https://pscouncil.info/ReportAndRequest) By using this tool, it will generate a detailed report directly into our system and allow us to manage the issue more efficiency and effectively.

If you'd like to find out more about clean up days or connecting with organisations to support this, Council can get you started or put you in touch with other like-minded people. Council's Waste Team also provide a number of educational programs and resources that may also help you start your next beautification project.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community **Council role:** Support





## 8. Village noticeboard

A community noticeboard provides a way for the community to know what is going on in their place. We heard that at times, the Shoal Bay community find it hard to access information and feel that they miss out on opportunities to participate and contribute.

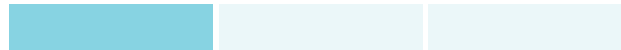
There are many ways to create a community noticeboard – it could be a digital noticeboard hosted via social media or a physical noticeboard on the wall in the village square . This could be developed and managed through a local community group or business.

Council also provides information on events, projects and engagement opportunities through social media, digital newsletter, website and

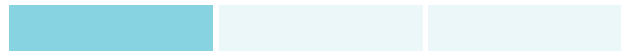
printed newsletters. Council will work on ways to increase the distribution of the Your Port newsletter and other information to ensure it reaches as many in Shoal Bay as possible.

Destination Port Stephens provides regular updates via their newsletters and social media channels to entice and communicate with visitors, providing information on what's on, access to visitor services, as well encouraging visitors to help look after our special places when they visit.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community and Council

**Council role:** Coordinator

## 9. The Tomaree Coastal Walk

The new Tomaree Coastal Walk caters for a range of visitor experiences from short walks to half or multi-day options.

The new walk will help support a year round visitor economy, increase jobs and reduce the impacts of seasonal fluctuations. Council will promote the wide range of resources created by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), while also communicating new opportunities that emerge for local business. We'll also monitor additional visitation to ensure appropriate management of any negative impacts such as rubbish, waste, graffiti and overcrowding.

Opportunities for transport links from accommodation providers will reduce parking demands. The impact on public amenities and other facilities will also be reviewed on a regular basis. We'll seek feedback from local residents on their experience with the new walk to support these reviews.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** National Parks and Wildlife Service

**Council role:** Partner

## 10. It's On – events and activation

Events are an important element of vibrant communities – they can bring a community to life, create social connections and support business growth. You'll find inspiring examples on page 28 of this place plan.

Council is focused on finding the balance – attracting events that recognise the character of the place, bring business during times of low visitation and those that respect our precious environment are key.

Supporting community events is also a focus of Council. Through revenue generated from Smart Parking, Council will also ensure that Shoal Bay is part of the 'It's On!' scheduled

program of activation, which celebrates and promotes music, art, food, nature, health, and other community friendly activities.

If you have ideas for what types of activities you'd like to see or if you would like to run an event yourself, contact Council's Vibrant Places team. We have a range of event resources and we can talk about permits or funding options through the Community Grants program.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council **Council role:** Deliver

## 11. Prioritising pedestrian movement

Over the next few years, revenue generated from Smart Parking in Shoal Bay will be reinvested into the local community to make further improvements. These funds may be used for upgrades to car parks and local roads and projects that improve pedestrian movement. We will be trialling and testing a range of measures that could improve both traffic flow and prioritise pedestrians in some areas.

Prior to these works commencing, Council will engage with the community to gain their feedback on any changes. For more information on these projects and for your chance to get involved, we encourage people to visit council's website [pscouncil.info/smart-parking-shoal-bay](https://pscouncil.info/smart-parking-shoal-bay)

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council **Council role:** Deliver

## 12. Promoting walkability and connection

Shoal Bay can leverage off the opportunities created by the Tomaree Coastal Walk by creating unique waterfront walk that goes from Shoal Bay to Nelson Bay.

Extending the Coastal Walk with a shared path network from Shoal Bay to Nelson Bay, via Little Beach, is the first stage. Funding from the Active Transport Grant scheme supports the design work, which commenced to fill in the missing pathway links.

Mid-point and end of trip facilities such as bike parking areas, seating, viewing platforms and water bottle filling stations should also be included. Signage will encourage hikers to continue their Coastal Walk experience throughout Port Stephens and there is

opportunity to create interesting wayfinding signage to encourage users to stop along the track and learn something new about the area.

A hop on/off bus service could get people from Shoal Bay town centre to key points along the walk and other town centres. Community groups, clubs or tourism businesses can consider the feasibility of providing such a service.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council **Council role:** Deliver

### 13. Better access to Shoal Bay

Shoal Bay Road is the only way to access Shoal Bay and can be very busy and congested during peak holiday periods. The road has a section under threat from coastal erosion and there is limited space for construction of pathways and road improvements that will remedy this issue.

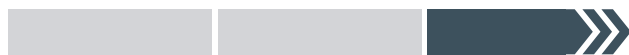
A future study will investigate the feasibility of an alternative access road into Shoal Bay from Harwood Road, along the rear of Harbourside Village and Shoal Bay Holiday Park, and linking with Government Road.

This study will identify if this potential access road can improve traffic flow to and from Shoal Bay, create better access for emergency response vehicles and provide

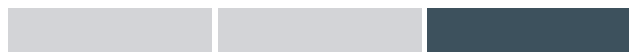
more space for pathways along the foreshore. This is a long-term project and Council will work closely with Transport for NSW, National Parks & Wildlife Service and adjacent landholders to progress planning for this road.

Community members and businesses can get behind this project by advocating to State and Local representatives, which may help Council gain high-level support for the project, enabling it to progress to more detailed planning.

#### Timeframe



#### Cost



**Lead:** Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Transport for NSW

**Council role:** Partner







## 14. Facilitate infill housing

Future infill housing may be one of the transformational projects for Shoal Bay as explained on page 15.

To increase housing supply and diversity in Shoal Bay, we need to find opportunities on existing developed land to increase housing density.

The Shoal Bay Drainage Study will help us understand the capacity of Shoal Bay to cater for additional infill development, and will inform investment decisions for drainage infrastructure. If the Study determines that infill development is feasible, we will commence discussions with the community through the review of the Port Stephens Housing Strategy and development of the Port Stephens Housing Supply Plan, where we will set the vision for future housing growth in Shoal Bay.

### Timeframe

Drainage Strategy		
Housing Study		

### Cost

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**Lead:** Council    **Council role:** Deliver

## 15. Defining Shoal Bay's character

The community highly values the existing character of Shoal Bay. To retain this character, the right planning controls need to be in place to ensure that any new development contributes to, and strengthens the character of Shoal Bay. After we have set the vision for future housing in Shoal Bay through the review of the Local Housing Strategy, a Shoal Bay Specific Development Control Plan (DCP) chapter will be prepared.

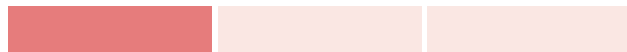
This new DCP is to guide the design of new developments through a wide range of provisions for landscaping, design and articulation, car parking, storm water and drainage infrastructure and floor space ratios.

In partnership with the community, we will also investigate if this DCP can include provisions for undergrounding of power lines, improving pathways or providing public access to key locations like the foreshore.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Council    **Council role:** Deliver

## 16. Increased capacity for Harbourside Haven Village

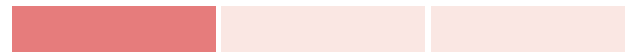
In order to enable additional dwellings and housing choice for all stages of life, there may be opportunity for Harbourside Haven Village to increase their capacity by enabling the site to achieve higher densities.

Council will work with the landholder to investigate options of increasing building heights and to create planning controls that ensure the potential redevelopment makes a positive statement at this prominent gateway location. Council will continue to liaise with the landholder on this matter.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Business    **Council role:** Coordinate

## 17. Building better business

Facilitating better business stimulates the economy and provides additional value for residents and visitors alike. Pop up shops and temporary business provide an opportunity for new ideas to be tested and trialled – they can quickly fill empty retail spaces, with the agreement of the property owner, and increase vibrancy of a retail centre.

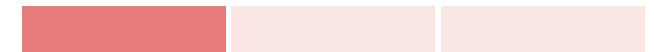
Council's commercial operators policy provides an opportunity to set up temporary or pop up style trial businesses. These could support nature based pursuits, be it food or activity focussed pursuits.

Ideas could include renting bushwalking and beach equipment, providing maps as well as selling food, drink and souvenirs, all of which contributes to the village look and feel of this coastal place.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community    **Council role:** Coordinate

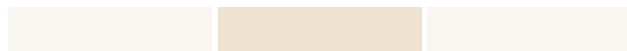
## 18. A new future for Tomaree Lodge

The State Government is looking into the potential of the Tomaree Lodge site for future community and recreational uses. Port Stephens Council and local community groups are ready to collaborate with the Government to achieve the best community outcomes.

Council will continue to advocate that the future uses of the site be respectful of the historical and environmental importance of the site, accessible to the entire community, and safe in design. A sustainable operating model needs to ensure a high quality community and visitor experience.

Council will continue to engage with the Government for an outcome that will retain public access, and acceptable levels of infrastructure.

### Timeframe



### Cost



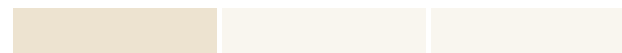
**Lead:** Council    **Council role:** Partner

## 19. Activating your public space

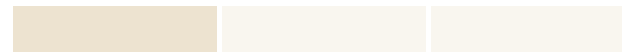
Activating public space creates opportunities for connection, beautification and builds community pride. Murals, sculptures, landscaping and installations create a sense of place and can help reinforce the character of Shoal Bay. Public art helps to create a more attractive environment for visitors – it can reflect cultural experience and solidify local identity.

Business and community can be involved in the creation of temporary exhibitions or host art classes in public spaces. You do not have to be an expert to promote, facilitate, or host public art or events. Community groups or your local Town Team could also run an art competition, sponsor or facilitate activities or even hold a specific arts event or festival.

### Timeframe



### Cost



**Lead:** Community and Business

**Council role:** Support

Business and property owners in Shoal Bay have a unique ability to effect the look and feel of the Shoal Bay village. By improving shopfronts, adding some seating and plants to the front of businesses, we can improve the sense of place and create a more vibrant place for locals and visitors to connect, shop and be entertained.

In the right place, we can also enhance the shopping and dining experience through small-scale projects, which could include creative street furniture or mini market days.

Council provides a number of grant programs to support activations, events and business improvement. Talk to our Vibrant Places Team for more information.









**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL

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