PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Horseshoe Bay Reserve
South West Rocks

Prepared for:
KEMPSEY SHIRE COUNCIL
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT?

A Plan of Management “is a document that provides the framework for managing a land resource”. It is a document which defines and addresses “the value, use and management practices” of an area of public land.

Plans of Management are required by both the NSW Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Crown Lands Act 1989. They are to apply to all Crown Land that is classified as “community land” and therefore will be retained in public ownership. The land use must be governed by an adopted Plan of Management.

1.2 AIMS OF THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Horseshoe Bay Reserve is a Crown Reserve No. 82364 for Public Recreation. Kempsey Shire Council is the appointed Trust Manager of the Reserve, and is responsible for the care, control and management. Council was recently directed by the Minister of the then Department of Land and Water Conservation to “prepare a Plan of Management, under the Crown Lands Act 1989 for Reserve 82364” with the letter of direction stating that “this reserve is an extremely popular reserve on the coast and a Plan of Management will allow for future planning of this important area with community input. It will identify future users and uses of the reserve and appropriately locate and accommodate them on the reserve now and in the future”.

The general principles of Crown Land Management are:-

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land
- The natural resources of Crown land be conserved wherever possible
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity

Council’s principal objective in preparing this Plan of Management is to provide a framework for land use and managerial decision making for the Reserve that is based upon the following:-

- recognised community and user demands
- Council and Departmental policy and resources
- the capabilities of the natural resources present at the site
To achieve these objectives the plan aims to:–

• identify the significant qualities and values of the Reserve
• provide an information base on the Reserves’ physical and cultural characteristics, land use and users which will facilitate informed planning and managerial decision making
• identify the issues associated with the Reserves’ qualities, values, sustainability, pressures and conflicts
• develop management strategies to ensure and direct the future maintenance and enhancement of these values and resolve the conflicts and pressures currently placed upon the Reserve
• develop an action plan to achieve the management strategies outlining direction for future management, timeframes, priorities and responsibilities
• adopt a monitoring method by which Council can assess the performance of the action plan

1.3 THE PROCESS USED FOR THIS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The process required to be followed in preparing this Plan of Management is outlined in the Crown Lands Act and is summarised as follows:–

1. Receive direction from the Minister to prepare a Plan of Management for Reserve 82364 (as per letter dated 8th January, 2001)

2. Prepare a Plan of Management and circulate a draft for comments.

In order to prepare a Plan of Management for Horseshoe Bay Reserve the following basic steps were carried out:–

a) Site assessment and evaluation
   - data collection and analysis of the site
   - consultation with key stakeholders and community groups
   - assessment of the site’s physical and cultural values
   - assessment of the site’s main uses and user groups
   - assessment of relevant legislation and government policies
   - assessment of existing management practices

b) Development of the preferred management approach by satisfying the aims and objectives of the plan and the needs of the community and key stakeholders

c) Preparation of a detailed strategy and action plan and prioritising of these actions

3. Exhibition of the draft Plan of Management for public comment

4. The Minister to consider comments from the public, stakeholders and government departments with subsequent (and warranted) amendments
5. Ministerial adoption of the Plan of Management

6. Reserve Trusts (in this case Kempsey Shire Council) must follow and monitor the plan.

7. Periodic review of the plan must be carried out at agreed future dates.

It must be emphasised that this Plan of Management is a document relating to a dynamic and continually evolving natural and cultural environment. The proposed management approaches, strategies and outcomes resulting from the analysis process will require monitoring and updating as the Reserve evolves therefore requiring periodic review and readopting of the Plan of Management in the future.
2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

2.1 SITE LOCATION

The area known as Horseshoe Bay Reserve is situated at South West Rocks, a coastal town on the mid north coast of NSW. The Reserve is bordered by:-
- South West Rocks Creek (Backwater Creek to the locals) to the west
- Trial Bay and Saltwater Creek to the north
- Arakoon State Recreation Area to the east and
- Fig Tree Lane, Livingstone Street, Memorial Avenue, Paragon Avenue, Mitchell and Landsborough Streets, Phillip Drive to the south

2.2 STUDY AREA, TENURE AND ZONING

The study area known as Horseshoe Bay Reserve incorporates part of the Crown Land Reserve Number 82364 which is listed for Public Recreation. The Reserve is administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources for which Kempsey Council is the Reserve Trustee. Under the Minister’s direction the following areas of the Reserve are to be excluded from the study area:-
- the area to the south of Phillip Drive housing the South West Rocks sporting fields and golf course (DP 1003894, Lot 20987)
- the intertidal zone of Front Beach

Also excluded from the study area due to the land being under separate titles are:-
- South West Rocks Surf Club Building
- The Flagstaff and associated structures on Point Briner
- The Old School House site and Catholic Church site along Gregory Street

The study area is approximately 65 hectares and is zoned 6(a) (Open space “A” Zone)

Part of the Reserve includes a lease for the operation of the Caravan Park which is dated 1.02.1998 (expires 31.01.2009) and sub lease for the operation of the Kiosk which is dated 24.01.1999 (expires 30.01.2009)

Native Title has been extinguished on the Reserve as of 22nd May 1995

(Refer to Locality Map 2.1 for Site Location and Study area)
Plan of Management
Horseshoe Bay Reserve – South West Rocks
2.3 NATURAL LANDSCAPE

2.3.1 Climate

Climate on the Mid North Coast of NSW is acclaimed as ideal, being the mildest in Australia. It is therefore an important factor influencing the community’s use of the Reserve. It also has a significant influence on tourists’ choice of South West Rocks being their chosen holiday destination.

The climate in general in this area is warm temperate to sub-tropical with a maritime influence. This is characterised by mild winters with day time temperatures averaging 19°C and warm summers with an average day time temperature of 26°C.

South West Rocks receives an annual rainfall of approximately 1500mm (Smoky Cape) which is mainly distributed during the months of January to April with the driest months being July to November.

Prevailing winds are predominantly from the northeast during summer and from the west and south west during autumn and winter.

2.3.2 Landform

The Reserve area is essentially surrounded on three sides by water. It occupies a frontline coastal position facing predominantly north with creek systems to the west and east. The landform is quite diverse including beaches, dune system, headlands, undulating rises, low lying wetlands, estuaries and creek systems.

Both the western extremity and eastern area of the Reserve follow creek systems that both open out into Trial Bay. Saltwater Creek to the east is an important natural estuarine system for which a processes study has recently been undertaken and a draft Plan of Management for the system is being developed.

At both creek exit points the topography is dominated by headlands, Point Briner to the west and Monument Point to the east. Both headlands provide significant vantage points over Trial Bay and along the coastline to the east and northwest.

Parts of the Reserve have been modified by human activity over the years including the construction of the breakwall to South West Rocks Creek, the area that is occupied by the Caravan Park and general roads and infrastructure present on the site.
2.3.3 Geology and Soils

The geology and soils vary significantly within the Reserve relating to the general landforms. The higher elevated areas are predominantly located on rock outcrops with the rock type being mostly sediments and volcanics. The soils are generally poorly drained, acidic and low in fertility.

The lower lying areas generally relate to the coastal dune system and creek estuary systems. The foredune and hind dune areas comprise siliceous sands that are rapidly draining, have high permeability, low fertility and are highly erodable. The areas immediately comprising and adjoining the creeks are comprised of mixed estuarine and barrier sands. They are poorly drained, high in organic matter with high acid sulphate potential and are associated with high water tables and flood hazards.

2.3.4 Hydrology and Drainage

The Reserve is part of two catchment areas, South West Rocks Creek to the west and Saltwater Creek to the east. Both watercourses are associated with low lying adjacent areas and provide storage area for floodwaters. This is particularly so with Saltwater Creek which consists of large areas of wetlands or swampy areas and which is intermittently closed to the ocean leading to higher inundation risks.

Saltwater Creek is an intermittently open and closed estuary system with many unique characteristics and issues associated with it. An estuary processes study has recently been prepared for Saltwater Creek with a Management Plan currently underway that addresses the many issues of concern identified by the community. In addition, Saltwater Lagoon and subsequently Saltwater Creek have been recently assessed and classified under the Coastal Lakes Inquiry. This means that a range of actions as specified in the Coastal Lakes Strategy will be required to be implemented under a yet to be adopted State Environmental Planning Policy.

South West Rocks Creek is a permanently flowing creek system that has been modified significantly over many years. It originally provided permanent boat access to the ocean for boat transport and professional and amateur fishermen. Many issues and concerns have been recently raised including the ever increasing build up of the sand bar at the mouth of the creek hindering boat access; the general increase in siltation of the creek system; general stormwater disposal related issues.

The complexities of these matters is outside the scope of this Plan of Management and are not being dealt with in this document. It has been suggested that a Coastal Processes Study would be an appropriate tool in which to deal with these and other matters and should be placed on the high priority list with the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources.
Natural drainage within the Reserve, with the exception of the low lying creek systems, is relatively good due to the undulating landform and free draining nature of the soils. Natural drainage, however, has been considerably altered in parts of the Reserve, where modifications to the landform and infrastructure have led to the installation of piped stormwater systems and diversion of natural water passages. Numerous problems relating to the inadequacy of these systems and the poor location of stormwater outlets has led to scouring and pollution problems throughout the Reserve. A draft Stormwater Management Plan for the township of South West Rocks is currently under review. This plan includes the installation of a Gross Pollutant Trap in Horseshoe Bay Reserve at the end of Memorial Avenue.

2.3.5 Flora

Vegetation within the Reserve area is quite complex and diverse and can be categorised into a number of different vegetation communities (Kendall and Kendall 2003) namely Open Area/ Grassland, Dry Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland, Swamp Sclerophyll Forest, Shrubland Formation, Heathland Formation, Sod Grassland Formation, Sedgeland Formation, Rushland Formation.

Of major significance are the areas within the Reserve that are designated SEPP14 Coastal Wetlands which incorporates virtually all of Saltwater Creek (439) and the mouth of South West Rocks Creek (436). These wetland areas are governed by the State Environmental Planning Policy No. 14 which covers the management of estuarine and freshwater wetlands and rates these areas as having high conservation value.

No Threatened Species Conservation Act Species or Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act species have been located within the study area during past studies or the current field study of Saltwater Creek catchment conducted by Kendall and Kendall (2003). Kendall and Kendall (2003) have identified some possibly occurring threatened flora species within the Saltwater Creek catchment that may require further investigation if future development within the catchment is planned.

Within the Saltwater Creek catchment area a number of vegetation communities have been ranked by Kendall and Kendall (2003) as having a high conservation priority. These vegetation communities are *Eucalyptus planchoniana*; *Spinifex sericeus* tussock grassland; *Baumea juncea* sedgeland; *Juncus krausii* rushland. These communities are predominantly found within the SEPP 14 boundary and are therefore currently protected.

A small pocket of Blackbutt forest (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) lies within the Reserve between the rear of the Pilot Station and the carpark area adjacent to South West Rocks Creek. Although heavily infested with various weed species, tall
stands of Eucalypts dominate the embankment providing a significant natural buffer to the town centre.

A small pocket of disturbed remnant Littoral Rainforest lies adjacent to the Surf Club at Monument Point. This example of coastal rainforest has potential to be an important representation of this vegetation type in this area with high educational value.

Of major dominance are the open grassland areas within the Reserve that have been extensively modified over time with much of the area being cleared and replaced with introduced grasses and exotic trees and shrubs. The most prominent of the introduced trees species are the Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) which form a significant landscape feature within the Reserve adjacent to Livingstone Street.

Of major concern is the dominance of numerous invasive weed species that are evident on the fringes of all the main vegetation communities and penetrate into native bushland areas and along watercourses. Many of the weeds are threatening areas of high conservation value and potentially reducing the biodiversity of the floristic and habitat values of the area.

2.3.6 Fauna

Fauna species and habitats within the Reserve are quite diverse but concentrated within the eastern portion. They can be divided into different habitats based upon the amalgamation of various vegetation communities (Kendall and Kendall 2003). These fauna habitats are Banksia – foredune complex and coastal banksias dry heath shrubland; Dry Sclerophyll Forest; Wet Heath; Wet and Dry Sclerophyll Forest; Melaleuca and Melaleuca/Casuarina Swamp Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland; Sedgeland; Rushland; Open Water; Beach.

Fauna of conservation significance recorded within 10km of Saltwater lagoon is listed in *Appendix C* Table 5: Threatened Species Conservation Act threatened species, extract from Saltwater Creek Flora & Fauna Study. This list includes mainly birds and bats with the Koala potentially found in Forest areas.

Degradation of any of the habitats found within the study area could have an impact on the listed threatened fauna species. For example degradation of the Swamp Sclerophyll Forest and Woodland could impact on the nectar and sheltering resource for several threatened birds and bats; any changes to the tidal influences of Saltwater Creek could create tidal mudflats and detract from the habitat value of rushland and sedgeland for freshwater bird species.
2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

2.4.1 General Heritage Significance of the Area and Reserve

South West Rocks is the traditional homeland of the Dunghutti Nation. Historically, Monument Point was the traditional place of gathering and ceremony for the Dunghutti, Thaingutti, Gumbaynggir and Biripi Nations with the headland representing a ‘song line’ or energy line between Mount Yarrahapinni and the hills behind Arakoon.

Since European settlement in South West Rocks it has been long known as a popular tourist destination and a desirable place to retire for many residents of the Macleay Valley. Parts of the existing Reserve were used as a well visited camping destination well over a century ago and, therefore, a long history of public recreation is associated with the study area.

South West Rocks is also well known as having a rich maritime heritage with remains including buildings and structures, submerged shipwrecks, a range of historical relics, artefacts and sites of interest. The history of the Pilot Station Group of Buildings and the Flagstaff and Signal Station began in 1902 after the flood of 1893 caused the closure of the river entrance at Grassy Head. A few years later the pilot and his crew were relocated to South West Rocks near the new entrance forced by the river flood. It was at this stage that the importance of South West Rocks as a town of maritime significance was realised.

The surf life saving movement had a strong following at South West Rocks with many carnivals attracting big crowds from the 1920s to 1950s. It was in 1924 that the first clubhouse was built (although much altered now) with an attempt in the early 1930s to build a small footbridge across Saltwater Creek to gain easy access to Front Beach. All that remains are two stone supports.

Brighton Park was originally part of the “suburban lands” surveyed as part of the Town of Arakoon in 1866. When the town plan was readjusted in 1901 it was made a Reserve. It was designated for ‘police purposes’ in 1902 where the visiting constable would leave his horse. Over the years the park has been used as a cricket pitch, a camping ground and now as open parkland.

2.4.2 Heritage and Historic Features

The most significant heritage items associated with the Reserve are the Pilot Station Group of Buildings and the Flagstaff and Signal Station on Point Briner. Although these items are located on land that is not included in this Plan of Management, their close proximity and association, and their visual and cultural linkage to the Reserve requires that they be given careful consideration when determining management objectives and strategies.
Heritage items that exist within the Reserve include:-

1864  A stone monument erected on Monument Point in memory of three men who drowned with the sinking of the ketch "Wooloomooloo".

1902  Concrete steps and a concrete slab (located in the bush behind the Pilots House near to the existing wharf) are the remains of the boatshed which housed the Pilot boat. The shed and stepped access was built around 1902 in conjunction with the Pilots House.

1902  A timber footbridge across South West Rocks Creek was also built this time providing access to the Macleay River’s new entrance. This was replaced with the existing high footbridge in the early 1980’s.

1910  A concrete slab that lay in the middle of the road on Monument Point was all that remained of a small “lighthouse” built to assist the pilot in communication with shipping.

1914  Norfolk Island Pines and plaques along Memorial Drive that were planted from 1914 in remembrance of World War One soldiers who lost their lives.

1934  Two stone supports remain near to the entrance of Saltwater Creek from an attempt to build a footbridge from the surf club to Front Beach.

1937  Memorial Gate Posts that originally (and still do) flanked the access to the Reserve and were erected in memory of Thomas Snow, a local man killed in a shipping accident.

1940  South West Rocks Memorial Monument and Flagstaff located to the western end of Livingstone Street was unveiled on Anzac Day 1940 in remembrance of ten World War One active servicemen who did not return. Anzac Day memorial services were held on this corner for many years prior to the erection of the Monument.

Stone monument on Monument Point
War Memorial at west end Livingstone St

Gate Post with memorial to Thomas Snow

Entry Gate Posts with some of the memorial Norfolk Island Pines
Heritage items outside of the Reserve but closely associated to the Reserve precinct due to heritage, cultural and visual significance:-

1887 Pacific Guest House located on Livingstone Street is a two storey stone house that was the second building erected in South West Rocks for visitor accommodation

1902 Pilot Station Group of Buildings located at the corner of Gregory St and Ocean Ave were built to house the Macleay River Pilot John Jamieson and his staff of four when the pilot station was relocated from its original site at Grassy Head

1902 Signal Station and Flagstaff located at Point Briner were built as part of the Pilot Station and were used for communication with ships sheltering in Trial Bay and or bound for the Macleay River Entrance

1925 Heritage Seaside Café was built by the then owners of the Guest House and originally operated as a Billiard Room

Sketch of the Flagstaff and Signal Station on Point Briner (by Tony Nolan)
2.4.3 Heritage Status Listing

The Pacific Guest House is Heritage Listed as being of regional significance (S23) and is listed under the Interim inventory 1988.

Statutory protection is afforded to the Pilot Station Group of Buildings under Kempsey Council’s Local Environmental Plan (Kempsey LEP 1987) which identifies the above items as “items of environmental heritage”.

Arrangements are under way to nominate the Pilot Station Group of Buildings as part of the Register of the National Estate.
2.5 VISUAL QUALITY AND AMENITY

Horseshoe Bay Reserve precinct is well known and visited for its natural scenic quality and spectacular views. Point Briner and Monument Point are natural headlands providing very accessible vantage points from which spectacular views of Trial Bay, Arakoon State Recreation Area, river mouths, the northern coastline and the surrounding mountains and hinterland can be observed. Within the Reserve a large expanse of open grass areas with a dominating tree canopy of Norfolk Island Pines creates a very protected and attractive recreational destination.

*View from Monument Point to Arakoon and Trial Bay*

*View from South West Rocks Creek mouth to Mt Yarrahapinni and coastline*
Unfortunately a number of built forms significantly detract from the overall scenic beauty of this precinct. Of greatest visual impact are possibly the variable elements located on the high ridge of Point Briner namely the very dominating, multistorey and modern “Lees Court” holiday units that are located inappropriately between the main historical precinct of the “Boatmen’s Cottages” and the Flagstaff; similarly the dominating line of “white boxlike” holiday cabins adjacent to the War Memorial and the adhoc layout and array of unattractive buildings within the Caravan Park itself. Scattered, unattractive buildings throughout the Reserve also detract from the visual amenity of the area including the main amenity block, kiosk, Surf Club with its prominent roof line and colour and various dominating, multi storey holiday units located adjacent to the Reserve.
Areas of the Reserve surrounding South West Rocks Creek and Saltwater Creek precincts have a visual amenity that is more enclosed and is of significant contrast to the headland areas. These areas are of equal natural scenic beauty with significant vantage points including the various footbridges over the creeks as well as the more open foreshore areas.

Saltwater Creek

South West Rocks Creek
2.6 USE OF THE SITE

2.6.1 Existing Land Uses

Horseshoe Bay Reserve is one of the focal points of the South West Rocks township and is the main focal point of the adjoining CBD. It is an important draw card for tourists whether they are visitors to the Caravan Park, day users or sightseers and is an important day recreation destination for the local and surrounding community. The Reserve offers a large range of activities including beach use, swimming, picnics, walking, scenic viewing, fishing, boating, market days and historic attractions.

The Reserve can be divided into three distinct precincts with each precinct offering different recreational opportunities

- Saltwater Creek Precinct

This area is dominated by native bushland and wetland areas consisting of various vegetation communities and divided by Saltwater Creek. A pedestrian/cycleway is located to much of the southern boundary of the Reserve with two walkways and footbridges cutting through the Reserve to provide access to Front Beach and Trial Bay. Brighton Park is the only open grass area within this precinct. This precinct is well used by recreational walkers and cyclists as well as beach goers using the pathway system. A travelling carnival visits Brighton Park annually with day recreation users and local residents using the park on occasions for a multitude of low key recreational functions

- Horseshoe Bay Reserve Precinct

This area of the Reserve is the most extensively used by both tourists and the local community. It is dominated by open grassland with access to two headlands and a small sandy beach as well as being an access point to the main Front Beach. It is a vitally important passive recreational area.

Various facilities and infrastructure have been provided for visitors including access road and carparking, two amenity buildings, a kiosk, large multi functional picnic shelter with bbq’s, scattered picnic tables and shelters, children’s playground. Bus and truck access is currently prohibited within the Reserve due to inadequate turning and parking facilities.

Numerous items of heritage interest are located within or adjacent to this precinct These items are an added attraction for the tourist and include the Pilot Station Group of Buildings, Flagstaff and Signal Station and the War Memorial.

The Caravan Park is a well visited part of the Reserve and occupies a large area of this precinct. It currently provides a total of seventy eight sites which include
a mix of holiday units, powered caravan sites, two amenity buildings and an office and managers residence.

- **South West Rocks Creek Precinct**

This area is dominated by the breakwall to the bank and mouth of the creek, access road and parking facilities, small wharf, footbridge accessing the western bank of the creek, beach and boat moorings and a small open grass reserve area. This precinct is well visited by both recreational and professional fishermen as well as beach users accessing Back Beach. Easy road access attracts many sightseers during the day but lack of facilities or infrastructure limits day use by picnickers.

### 2.6.2 Main User and Interest Groups

- Macleay River Historical Society Inc – South West Rocks Committee
- South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club
- Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol
- South West Rocks Visitor Information Centre
- South West Rocks Markets
- Lions Club
- Amateur Fishing Club
- Caravan Park visitors
- Day recreation and picnic visitors
- Tour groups

*Children’s Playground, Fishing Classic, Market day*
2.6.3 Special Events

- Kempsey Toyota Fishing Classic – annual event
- Surf Life Saving State Championships
- Beach Soccer Championships

2.6.4 Existing Structures

- Saltwater Creek Precinct Structures

Sewer Pumping Station - located adjacent to the pedestrian/cycleway along Phillip Drive.

Two footbridges - across Saltwater Creek. The bridges are narrow timber structures that require ongoing repairs.

Cycleway - through most of this precinct linking Phillip Drive opposite the old Caltex site. Some sections are new while other areas require reconstruction.

- Horseshoe Bay Precinct Structures

Two Public Amenity Blocks - single storey, flat roof brick buildings that require significant upgrading. The larger amenity block is visually intrusive and unattractive. The smaller is less prominent, being relatively well screened from the access road by vegetation.

Kiosk - a single storey, pitched roof brick building with a degraded paved outdoor seating area. The building requires internal and external upgrading. It is located dangerously close to the access road and is in a very prominent position.

Multifunctional Picnic Shelter - a brick and timber, partially open structure with a pitched, corrugated iron roof. It terminates the vista from the road entry gates and is very dominant. It contains several bbq’s, permanent picnic tables, a stage to one end, a storage room and has recently been landscaped with low retaining walls, new concrete entry steps and planting.

Playground - a children’s playground is located near to the Surf Club and adjacent to the main entry road.

Caravan Park - incorporating a number of permanent buildings including two amenity buildings, an office/managers residence and numerous prefabricated holiday cabins. The amenity buildings are prominent brick buildings that require internal and external upgrading. The office/managers residence is a two storey brick building with a wire mesh fence surround to part of it with numerous high retaining walls of rock and rounded treated pine logs. It is visually prominent.
from within the Reserve and requires upgrading to improve its external appearance.

Public Facilities - there are numerous picnic shelters of varying design and size scattered throughout the open grass areas with various styles of picnic tables, seats, garbage bins, bicycle racks, water taps also randomly scattered throughout. Most require upgrading or replacement and their adhoc locations require integrated consolidation.

Adjoining the Reserve are a number of very dominant structures that need to be considered

Flagstaff and Signal Station - are located on Point Briner ‘contained’ within their own precinct and are important heritage items. They are more or less in their original state and consist of a white, timber flagstaff with a white weatherboard signal hut. A white post and rail fence and gate is located on their southern side. All structures form a visually and historically significant landmark.

Surf Club - the clubhouse is located at the mouth of Saltwater Creek with Monument Point headland rising directly behind it. Although the building is set low and is below the headland a number of features make it quite dominant. It is a two storey brick building with a visually obtrusive blue colourbond pitched roof. The building and its surrounds have had numerous additions and outbuildings added over the years giving it a somewhat untidy, piece meal appearance. A multitude of advertising signage dominates its appearance from the Reserve.

• South West Rocks Creek Precinct

Break wall - extending from the mouth of the river, along the bank of the creek finishing near the footbridge. It is made up of large quarried rock, randomly placed. It forms a very uneven and ugly edge to the creek bank. A dredge is permanently located at the end of the break wall intended to keep the channel open to the sea and accessible by boat.

Wharf - of timber and concrete, is located at the end of Buchanan Drive from which fishing boats are occasionally and temporarily moored.

Footbridge - a high timber footbridge provides access over South West Rocks Creek to Back Beach and boat moorings. It is in a state of disrepair and requires considerable maintenance to bring it to satisfactory safety standards.

2.6.5 Linkages with Other Open Spaces

The Reserve is linked to open space systems in numerous locations. To the east it adjoins the Arakoon State Recreation Area with a future possibility of linking the pedestrian/cycleway with this area and providing a significant linkage between the Reserves and surrounding townships. In the reserve containing the
South West Rocks Sporting Fields and Golf Course, future plans should include upgrading the pedestrian/cycleway linkage between the two recreation areas with similar landscape themes and effectively enhancing the association between the two areas. To the west the Reserve abuts areas of dominant bushland, wetland areas and mangroves along the creekline. Access is provided to Back Beach by way of the footbridge over South West Rocks Creek linking the Reserve with the dune and beach system of Back Beach and the Macleay River area.

2.7 CURRENT RESERVE MANAGEMENT

2.7.1 Current Administration and Management Practices

- Current Reserve Maintenance Practices
  The Reserve is currently maintained by Kempsey Councils’ Civic Maintenance team which includes a crew attending to weekly and weekend maintenance of amenities and garbage collection.

  A number of capital improvements have been scheduled for the Reserve with monies already allocated. These projects have been put on hold until this Plan of Management has been finalised. These projects include:-
  - extension of the cycleway/footpath between Point Briner and Brighton Park
  - upgrading of the main Picnic Shelter in Horseshoe Bay Reserve including
    - repainting and a new BBQ
    - refurbishments of the main amenity block in Horseshoe Bay Reserve
    - additional lighting
    - new tables and seats
    - additional planting
  Three picnic tables have been replaced with four more scheduled for replacement prior to Christmas 2006.

  A number of proposed capital improvements within the Reserve which have yet to seek approval include:-
  - disabled access to Horseshoe Bay Beach
  - entertainment stage/gazebo in Brighton Park
  - sculpture walk between Brighton Park and Horseshoe Bay Reserve

- Regular Events
  A number of regular community and commercial events are carried out in the Reserve which are managed by the various community organisations and which include:-
  - monthly markets at Horseshoe Bay
  - ‘housie’ in the Picnic Shelter adjacent to the Surf Club
  - carnival annually at Brighton Park
  - fishing Tournament annually at Horseshoe Bay
2.7.2 Current Leasing Arrangements

The Caravan Park is currently under a lease arrangement which includes the sub-lease of the Kiosk. The current lease is for a period of eleven years having commenced on 1 February 1998 and ending on 31st January 2009. Upon completion of the lease Council has a number of options including:

- leasing the Caravan Park for a further maximum of 21 years under the Local Government Act 1993. Any proposal however to lease the land for more that five years requires that Council place any proposal on public notice. In the event that an objection is lodged with Council, the consent of the Minister for Local Government is required for the lease to proceed.
- Council retaining the Caravan Park and placing it under contract management or Council management.
3.0 POLICY BASIS

3.1 RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND STUDIES

This Plan of Management has been prepared taking into consideration the following legislation, policies and technical studies

- NSW Crown Lands Act 1989
- NSW Local Government Act 1993
- NSW Coastal Policy 1997

Relevant recommendations
- Central focus is to manage the NSW coastline in an ecologically sustainable way and to protect and conserve the coast for future generations
- Principle objectives
  - include protecting, enhancing and conserving the natural environment, the natural processes, the aesthetic qualities and the cultural heritage of the coastal zone;
  - provide for appropriate public access and use;
  - provide information to enable the effective management of the coastal zone


Relevant recommendations
- the Council is committed to ensuring that the natural attractions and features that make South West Rocks unique are not compromised by new development and that future development proceeds in an environmentally sound manner.

- South West Rocks Urban Design Study and Town Centre Masterplan Rupert G.H. Milne Home Landscape Consulting (July 1998)

Relevant recommendations
- identifies and formulates design improvements that are realistic, achievable and relevant to improving the safety, convenience, comfort and environmental appeal of users to the Town Centre and surrounding environs
- sets the framework and character for the detailed design and implementation to revitalise the Town Centre and adjoining public recreation areas
- recommends a Plan of Management be prepared for the Town Centre open space areas. This will ensure that the foreshore reserves will continue to provide a “Seaside” identity to the Town Centre and will preserve the recreational opportunities provided to the community.

- Saltwater Creek Estuary Processes Study – DPWS and Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (March 2002)

  Relevant recommendations
  - identifies issues of concern raised by the community. In summary these were the value of the estuary for future generations and as a recreational and natural amenity now.
  - there is a need to enhance the understanding of the Saltwater Creek system with the requirement for more technical and detailed information e.g. surveying of entrance berm, water levels, flora & fauna, water quality etc
  - that a well-defined Plan of Management must be initiated

- Independent Inquiry into Coastal Lakes – Final Report 2002 Healthy Rivers Commission

  Relevant objectives
  - has established the Coastal Lakes Strategy which is an over-arching set of arrangements to improve the management of coastal lakes and their catchments so that progress towards the long term goal of healthier coastal lakes is achieved
  - requires the development and implementation of Sustainability Assessment and Management Plan for each nominated coastal lake (included Saltwater Lagoon and Saltwater Creek) be carried out. The responsible public authority is to be accountable for the conclusion of the planning, actions and assessment

- Draft Catchment Blueprint - Mid North Coast Catchment Management Board (February 2002)

  Relevant recommendations
  - to set management actions and targets to improve the health and sustainability of catchments including the more efficient use of natural resources, enhanced biodiversity, catchment protection, reduced land degradation and reduced waterway pollution