

Summary of Amendments to Tathra Wharf and Headland Draft Precinct Plan

August 2022

Introduction

Tathra headland is a popular place offering a range of activities, including fishing, scuba diving, Tathra wharf & museum, memorial gardens, Tathra Hotel, and access to the Wharf to Wharf walking track. Tathra wharf and the adjacent reserve at the headland are listed on the National Trust and Australian Heritage Commission registers.

Poor road layout and vehicle priority dominate the place, and there is poor pedestrian safety and no dedicated path linking the key destinations. The traffic circulation is confusing, particularly at the intersections. A poorly located parking lot at the end of Service Lane is a visual eyesore. There is inadequate wayfinding, and visitors have no awareness of their surroundings, often driving to the wharf and back to the memorial park before realising they could have walked.

In December 2021, Council developed a draft precinct plan for the Tathra headland and released it for public consultation. Support for the plan was divided, with 42% showing no support, 34% showing support in part, and 24% supportive of the plan in its entirety.

Council summarised critical insights from the consultation in a [listening report](#).

In August 2022, Council developed a revised precinct plan based on community feedback. Against each key theme from the listening report is a summary of how the revised precinct plan (August 2022) has responded to the input.

Table 1: How the revised precinct plan has responded to the feedback			
<i>Item #</i>	<i>Key Themes</i>	<i>Feedback (February 2022)</i>	<i>Response to feedback and how it is incorporated into the revised precinct plan</i>
1.	<i>Lower to upper Tathra path</i>	There were many requests to go beyond the Tathra headland and continue the proposed active travel links to lower Tathra, opening the town up more broadly. Whilst there was support for a shared path at the headland, to increase safe opportunities for walking and cycling, there were clear comments that it needed to link to lower Tathra to be effective and usable.	We have undertaken an options study for a walkway from lower to upper Tathra. Council has released the options study for public consultation in conjunction with the revised precinct plan.

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2.	<i>Wharf Road</i>	<p>There was support for improved pedestrian and cycle access to Wharf Road however many felt strongly that vehicle access and parking should be maintained.</p> <p>There were mixed responses in relation to bus access to Wharf Road with some stating that it was a must have and others stating that bus access should be prevented.</p> <p>Some suggested the removal of parts of the cliff face along the bottom half of Wharf Road to allow for a bus turning circle and additional parking.</p> <p>Generally, people supported the restructure of the intersection to the entry to Wharf Road to prevent and deter larger vehicles.</p>	<p>Wharf Road is transitioned into a slow-moving shared space for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles with parking along the southern side.</p> <p>At the entry to the wharf and headland walk are three accessible parking bays.</p> <p>There is no long vehicle access permitted. A raised threshold at the entry to Wharf Road will visually deter large vehicles and guide them to the headland park. Minibus access is achievable.</p> <p>Council considered removing parts of the cliff face along the bottom half of Wharf Road. In 2011, we completed a constraints analysis for a wharf turning circle. The report stated that ‘excavation for a turning circle would be extensive, resulting in a notable impact on the landform immediately adjacent to the wharf.’ Additionally, the report indicated a risk of weakening the foundations of the wharf building during the construction of a turning circle.</p> <p>The proposed turning circle would be located within the curtilage of the Tathra wharf and building, impacting the heritage significance and setting of the heritage item. Council will not remove parts of the cliff face as the excavation for a turning circle would harm the landform, heritage significance, visual area, and setting of the Tathra wharf and building.</p>
3.	<i>Drop off/pick up zone to the wharf</i>	<p>Generally supported, especially by the scuba diving community as a point to unload dive gear near the entry point to the wharf without obstructing other users. The</p>	<p>A loading/drop off/pick up zone to the front of the wharf for up to five vehicles will support commercial and small-</p>

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		scuba diving community felt that the drop off/pick up zone was a good addition but didn't necessarily agree that parking be removed from Wharf Road in lieu of a drop off/pick up zone – they wanted to see both accommodated for.	scale tourism operations (scuba diving, fishing, and minibus access to museum and cafe). Parking along the southern side of Wharf Road is maintained.
4.	<i>Retain character</i>	Many stated that the draft precinct plan doesn't suit the character of the headland and that a 'less is more' approach is required. People want to see a more organic approach, less concrete and paving, more landscaping, and less formal parking. Rural village, quiet coastal town, seaside village, sleepy seaside, were all descriptions provided that the community wanted retained. Locating utilities services underground was supported to enhance character. Key message received was 'do not overdevelop'.	The revised precinct plan focuses on critical changes only, such as improving pedestrian, cycle, and vehicle sharing. Increasing the pedestrian and cycle connectivity creates an opportunity for people to connect to the headland's character more intimately. It reduces the parking demand and creates more opportunities for public green space.
5.	<i>Stormwater</i>	Many felt that a standard kerb and gutter approach was not appropriate for the headland. A flush kerb, natural swales and raingardens were supported for stormwater management. There were several comments acknowledging that an improved approach to stormwater management was required.	The precinct plan proposes flush kerb, natural swales, and rain gardens to improve stormwater management.
6.	<i>Parking</i>	There was mixed response in relation to formalised parking and whether parking at the headland was busy or not busy, and whether more was required or less was required. Some people felt that the parking situation was fine as it is, and that less was better whereas others felt that the precinct plan hadn't allowed for enough and more parking spaces were required.	Formal parking is proposed along Wharf Road, parts of Bega Street and Beach Street to optimise space. Removing the car park at the end of Service Lane will improve road function and remove the current visual eyesore. Some loss of parking cannot be replaced without compromising the character of the headland - however, the improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity will create less parking demand.

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		<p>There was support for the proposed DDA compliant parking at Beach Street shops, supermarket, the headland, and wharf.</p> <p>Additionally, there was support for removing the carpark to the front of the pub.</p> <p>Some suggested timed parking.</p> <p>Generally, the feedback was that the site is quiet for the majority of the year and so formalising the parking was not necessary. People want to see a more relaxed approach to parking arrangements, particularly in respect to catering for boat trailers and caravans.</p>	<p>All other areas remain informal and essentially unchanged.</p> <p>Accessible parking spots are placed at the wharf, memorial park, and Beach Street shops and link directly to the path network.</p>
<i>7.</i>	<i>IGA supermarket parking</i>	<p>There was mixed response in relation to supermarket parking with some people supporting the reorganisation of the parking and others not supporting it.</p> <p>Overall there appeared more comments stating that the arrangement works well as it is and no change was required.</p>	<p>Supermarket frontage remains informal and unchanged.</p>
<i>8.</i>	<i>Slip lane at war memorial</i>	<p>There were concerns that the slip lane 'cut' the memorial space from the central greenspace and that it was too close to the memorial.</p> <p>There were some queries about whether Beach Street could continue through to Bega Street and act as a slip lane.</p>	<p>The slip lane is removed from the precinct plan and the integrity of the central greenspace is retained. Service Lane remains as two way.</p>
<i>9.</i>	<i>Aboriginal yarning circle</i>	<p>There were comments and queries in relation to whether the aboriginal community had been consulted in relation to the yarning circle.</p>	<p>During the consultation with the Djirringanj Elders Federation and Bega Aboriginal Land Council, a yarning circle at the headland was suggested. Both agreed that the headland has opportunities for indigenous art and cultural experiences. The Bega Aboriginal Land Council selected the location in consultation with Bega Valley Shire Council and the Tathra Lions Club.</p>

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10.	<i>One way loop road</i>	<p>There was a mixed response to the one way loop road with some responses welcoming the traffic circulation and others stating it would be inconvenient. Generally, there was an acceptance that the current street and traffic flow arrangement could be improved, and most people supported the intersection at Wharf Road as a measure to deter unwanted long vehicles from entering.</p> <p>Some requested whether council could investigate a tighter loop by using the service lane to Bega Street. Some felt that the one direction flow would increase congestion.</p>	<p>The revised precinct plan retains the current road alignment providing a low intervention approach. However, part of Bega Street is one way to create one access and arrival road into the headland via Service Lane. Simplifying entry into the headland creates safer intersections at Service Lane and Bega Street.</p> <p>Two-way traffic at Service Lane allows emergency vehicles to exit the police station quickly. It also removes the need for a slip lane – retaining the integrity of the central greenspace and minimising visual impact on the war memorial and aboriginal burial site.</p>
11.	<i>Shared zones</i>	<p>There were some concerns on shared zones, and their safety and whether they would make the road less safe. There were comments around whether a shared zone was needed with a separated shared path was provided.</p>	<p>Studies show that shared zones improve pedestrian safety. Roads and Maritime Services state that – “Changing the way streets are used improves the quality of life. Streets become places for people, not just traffic.”</p> <p>Wharf Road will be a slow-moving shared space for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.</p>
12.	<i>Footpath and shared path</i>	<p>There were divided responses to the proposed footpaths and shared path arrangements. For some, the proposed footpaths and shared path were welcomed particularly for those who want to walk or cycle but don’t currently feel comfortable doing so, parents with prams, and those with mobility issues.</p> <p>On the contrary, there were responses that insisted bikes not be encouraged, that the headland was only accessed</p>	<p>The precinct plan focuses on a dedicated shared path extending from the headland walk to Andy Poole Drive via the headland’s key destinations. The shared path may connect to a future walkway to lower Tathra.</p>

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		<p>via car and so vehicles should take priority over pedestrians and bikes.</p> <p>Some stated that people like walking on grass and on the road.</p> <p>The most common comments were around reducing the amount of footpaths to just one shared path linking the site, and that the new shared path needed to link to broader Tathra to be fully effective, i.e. the bike path at Davidson Street and lower Tathra.</p>	
13.	<i>Greenspace</i>	<p>There were several comments appreciating the additional greenspace and several comments disapproving of the additional hardscape and this demonstrated a lack of understanding about the proposed changes. Essentially the precinct plan will increase greenspace as it reclaims the road reserve for active travel, natural stormwater management and public space creating a greener and healthier community.</p> <p>Several comments noted and supported the proposed plant palette being native, low maintenance and fire retardant.</p> <p>General feedback requested that all landscaping be wild in its nature and not manicured.</p>	<p>No greenspace is affected by the proposed plan.</p> <p>The purpose of the precinct plan is to reduce the road surface, improve stormwater management and increase opportunities for active travel. We are ultimately creating a greener and healthier community.</p>
14.	<i>Headland turning circle at the Memorial Gardens</i>	<p>There were requests to angle the turning circle further south to avoid the memorial garden, in particular the memorial path and plaques.</p>	<p>The turning circle and shared path have been realigned to avoid impact on memorial path and plaques.</p>
15.	<i>Beach Link near Cliff Place</i>	<p>General feedback was that as it is not accessible, concrete path is not preferred and simple wayfinding and gravel path is all that is required to improve.</p>	<p>Revised plan shows gravel track and an opportunity to improve some concrete sections.</p>
16.	<i>Street lighting</i>	<p>There were concerns in relation to the amount of street lighting proposed and to reconsider with respect to light pollution.</p>	<p>Lighting along the shared path will allow those exercising in the early morning or late evening to travel safely.</p>

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			Proposed lighting will be subject to all applicable standards and best practice to ensure minimal light pollution.
17.	<i>Heritage</i>	The World War II dugout (watching post) located near the existing lookout has not been incorporated into the plan.	Revised plan shows location of World War II dugout and opportunity to conserve and protect.
18.	<i>Cost and funding</i>	There was confusion over the funding and cost of the project and why funds couldn't be spent elsewhere or on matters that were more important to the community.	The funding received under the NSW Government's COVID-19 stimulus program is related to the Tathra wharf precinct. The grant funding is allocated to the wharf restoration works in the first instance, followed by the building restoration works. Developing a precinct plan to resolve the car parking and amenity at the wharf forms part of the funding agreement. No funding is allocated to the implementation (construction) of the precinct plan ideas – Council will seek external funding for future works. Some smaller projects, such as the yarning circle or the recycled wharf timber deck could be community projects.
19.	<i>More community consultation</i>	There was feedback on the consultation process and requests for more consultation with locals in the development of the precinct plan.	Consultation undertaken so far has been documented in the stakeholder consultation report and listening report . In response to the community feedback for additional consultation, we revised the draft precinct plan, and arranged an additional six-week consultation period – currently being undertaken. Feedback from the second round of public consultation will be used to finalise the precinct plan prior to seeking council endorsement.