Design objectives for NSW

Seven objectives define the key considerations in the design of the built environment:

- Better fit: contextual, local and of its place
- Better performance: sustainable, adaptable and durable
- Better for community: inclusive, connected and diverse
- Better for people: safe, comfortable and liveable
- Better working: functional, efficient and fit for purpose
- Better value: creating and adding value
- Better look and feel: engaging, inviting and attractive
1. Introduction

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2. City South:

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Government Architect NSW acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We honour Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to our society. To that end, all our work seeks to uphold the idea that if we care for Country, it will care for us.
Government Architect NSW (GANSW), supporting the Central Coast Coordinator General and in close collaboration with a consultancy team led by CHROFI, has initiated work to support the ongoing revitalisation of the regional city of Gosford.

The Urban Design and Implementation Framework (UDIF) will help to shape the continued development and renewal of the Gosford City Centre and support implementation of the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036 vision for Gosford. Capitalising on government and private sector investment in Gosford will strengthen its role as the regional capital and benefit current and future residents of the entire Central Coast.

This Place based report explores and describes in greater detail the issues, constraints, uses and opportunities associated with City South. It considers Baker Street, Leagues Club Field and the city’s connect to the water’s edge.
1.1 Preamble

Great places and cities don’t happen by chance. They are designed and continue to be designed to manage their transformation over time. The need for the UDIF has arisen from the growing consensus that a vision needs a framework for implementation. The implementation of strategies and recommendations will enable the urban design outcomes to be delivered.

When undertaking urban design analysis and developing strategies and recommendations for collaborative implementation, engaging with people fosters confidence, development and investment. Done carefully, with focus on natural attributes, amenity, public domain and quality, it has the potential to transform quality of life for people, stimulate the economy, and enhance the environment.

The current context

There have been several ad hoc responses to support revitalisation in the city centre including sporadic development of new buildings, largely in the residential market concentrated around the fringe of the city centre itself.

There remains a run-down appearance in the buildings and vacant shops, with poor quality public domain and way finding, poor pedestrian amenity and poor connectivity with surrounding areas.

Previous plans have:
— not resolved issues relating to investment in public domain and the city’s key public places
— led to individual developments but not significantly improved the public domain or overall attractiveness of the city
— not inspired confidence and investment in the Gosford City Centre leaving a run-down appearance, and building stock as well as empty shops
— delivered limited development contributions for public domain infrastructure.

However, there has been progress with the establishment of new government projects and jobs (Hospital, Australian Tax Office) within the city centre and commitments for a regional library and arts centre. This has built both momentum for change and boosted private sector investment confidence.

The UDIF report

The UDIF has identified a different approach to the revitalisation of Gosford City Centre, one that takes a place-based approach. It prioritises and focuses interventions spatially and in terms of implementation and deliverability, with potential catalytic impact. This approach focuses on key public places where there is existing momentum in terms of public and private sector investment, prioritising public focused initiatives in the overall city centre renewal.

The UDIF will provide a series of recommendations regarding the design of places and spaces to support delivery of the vision for Gosford City Centre. It will also provide recommendations relating to governance, infrastructure and other matters that will be critical to the ongoing urban renewal and quality outcomes for Gosford.

An integrated design approach can collaboratively create the framework for the delivery of great places, spaces and buildings that attract and retain residents, jobs, tourists, and further investment.

The UDIF is a design-led methodology, balancing multiple and sometimes competing agendas. It is for all agencies, levels of government, industry and the community to plug in to for action. It builds on the vision of the regional plan, which has consensus.

The UDIF proposes an urban logic to assist with decision making and outlining recommendations. It provides an implementation plan to guide rejuvenation, growth and foster good design and a high quality public realm.

The three places which the UDIF provides in the most detail are:
— City Middle: Kibble park and the civic heart
— City North: The health and education precinct
— City South: Leagues Club Field and water edge

This report provides the detailed urban design framework for the City South.

Purpose of this Report

This Place Based Report provides guidance to help shape and inform the development of the next stages of planning and investment decisions in Gosford.

This report will inform:
— Early urban design advice to assist with shaping and the assessment of time sensitive projects ensuring that they contribute positively to the vision for Gosford e.g. Regional Library and RPAC.
— Development of new and emerging planning controls for the city centre and the three places
— Contribute to the schedule of projects to be included in the preparation of state and local infrastructure contribution plans
— Public and private sector investment decisions in the three key places
— Pre-application advice to developers
— Consideration of planning proposals and applications including proposed design review processes
— Negotiation of voluntary planning agreements (VPA) and the potential inclusion of regional and community facilities in proposals
— Potential partnerships opportunities for mixed use projects
— Inform and support bids for funding e.g. upgrades in public realm, active transport, etc.
When examining the scale of Gosford, the city is large and spread out relative to regional cities of similar population catchment. By creating key places within walking distance to each other, they become stepping stones to connect across the city.

Three places for Gosford have been identified:
— Kibble Park
— City North
— City South

City South Location

Parklands in the City South have the potential to bring the locals, the landscape and the water together. This report looks at the Leagues Club Field (also known as Gosford City Park), Gosford Stadium, the Australian Tax Office (ATO) building, the Finance building, and Baker Street.

This is focused on providing a sense of place and a strong identity for Gosford. It will guide the opportunities to maximise the contribution of the next stage of development while ensuring public access and amenity. A place to arrive but also to spend time.

1.2 Creating three places

A placed based approach for change in Gosford falls broadly into three key areas:

1. Green infrastructure
2. Public domain
2. Built form

These three broad areas can be found throughout the report in both urban design analysis and the recommendations.

The development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, like Parramatta Ways or Greater Sydney Green Grid, can support the establishment of a network of well-connected places that create an attractive capital city with vibrant street life.

Improvements in the public domain create an attractive city which is a platform for investment with short term returns and long term growth.

With the public domain and green infrastructure creating a desirable place to live and work, private and public investment in the built environment can provide the final ingredient for change. The built form strategies in this report champion good design, support development opportunities and protect the public domain for all by placing a value on solar access, views, and consistent built form controls.

Many of the ideas for this place based report start with the green and public assets of the community, and uncover strategies to unlock their potential.
The potential of Gosford
The city of Gosford has enormous potential; the structure of the city has all the ingredients to be a successful regional capital. The reality on the ground is not as favourable. Public investment is needed to change the reality of Gosford.

Role of Gosford
Gosford’s role extends beyond the immediate towards a local, regional and state context.

Its role as a regional capital brings with it aspirations, including:
- Civic and Cultural role as the heart of city centre with the provision of services for a regional city providing employment and residential
- Prominent commercial core functions – professional services, civic services (such as banks, police, court house, government agencies, Council, or regional library facilities)
- Consolidation of government and professional services
- Accessible city that is the focus of efficient movement networks.
02. CITY SOUTH

A region is defined by its capital. For Gosford, the south of the city is a major draw for people from the wider region. This is due to its composition of major destinations including the Stadium, the Olympic Swimming Pool, Leagues Club and boat ramp.

There is also a growing local population of workers and residents in this part of the city. At a local level, the city south should better connect Gosford’s city centre to the water’s edge.

The city south is also a key arrival point for visitors to the Central Coast and for the communities who live around Brisbane Water. In this way, it is important that this part of the city showcases some of the defining character of the region.

In the south, Gosford’s relationship with its landscape is strong, a modern city framed by green ridgelines which meet the Brisbane Water. Together the City South project has the potential to be a unique and defining image of the city, and of the Central Coast.

This report specifically does not address or examine Gosford’s waterfront.

Focus in the short term should be on where investment and change is occurring in the city and where building momentum for improvements can be supported and implemented efficiently and effectively. Once the Civic Centre is revitalised; the hospital is completed and better connected to the city; Mann St is improved; and the investment in jobs and growth in the south is leveraged; collectively government and key stakeholders will be in a better position to examine what the Waterfront needs to be to best support the City and the region.

While there has been focus on the waterfront in previous documents and clearly evident as a concern in ongoing community consultation, there are complex and inter-related issues and opportunities that need to be explored in greater detail than possible in the scope of work defined for this UDIF. The Waterfront is important to the City, the region, the people and the place. It has the capacity to be a regional attractor. Previous plans and visions have failed to deliver a publicly desirable, economically viable and implementable outcome for the waterfront.

GA NSW recommends undertaking a specifically designed process that involves genuine and broad stakeholder and community engagement to develop a shared understanding and approach to its future. There should be extensive analysis of potential uses, physical challenges, strategic objectives, movement requirements and public domain, cultural and development opportunities. Planning controls, governance, ownership and management should all be examined as part of the process.

As with any waterfront for any city, public access and public benefit needs to be paramount, as the natural and cultural qualities of the environment need to be respected and enhanced. Equally, opportunities for investment and the creation or improvement of regional attractors should be explored. Ultimately, the vision, viability and feasibility of ideas and proposals should be evaluated against a clear vision supported by shared values and principles.

As such the work in this report focusses on the important area of the city to the north of the Central Coast Highway and how this part of the city connects to the civic centre and over time, will function as a physical, social and economic connection to the waterfront. It outlines specific and tangible urban moves that can be made to improve how the area works along with key principles to be followed to, builds on existing assets and ensure the natural assets of the place so important to the identity of the city are respected.
2.1 A city framed by its landscape and connected with its wider region

City South should reinforce the role of Gosford as the regional capital, which brings together the qualities and character of the Central Coast.

City South accommodates many existing regional attractors, drawing a large population into the area.

The regional attractors include the Stadium, Gosford Olympic Swimming Pool, Central Coast Leagues Club, Conservatorium of Music, Sailing Club and boat jetty. The proposed Regional Performing Arts Centre will add to this collection of regional destinations. The park offers a huge opportunity to accommodate a range of uses from active sport, to childrens play, to walking and passive recreation.

Recent commercial developments of the ATO offices and further government offices on Mann St have brought a large daytime population to the area. This diverse population needs to be supported by new public domain, allowing the city to function well in event mode as well as day to day.

City South has a rich history

The Darkinjung are the original indigenous inhabitants of this land. They have a deep connection to this place which must be respected, engaged with as a living culture and brought to the surface in any future development of the southern city.

Brisbane Water has always been a place of boat building activity and this rich history should be communicated as part of a low key wayfinding and place approach.

City South is a key arrival point, and must be defined as such, both for the regional population as well as for visitors to the Central Coast. The City South must connect these people into the civic heart.

Key modes of arrival include the highway, the train line and perhaps in future, a ferry service. Active transport links are key between Gosford, and the region’s communities surrounding Brisbane Water. A more direct cycle and walking trail to Point Clare should be considered as a priority.

Quality public domain should draw people to the destinations in City South as well as through to the civic heart.

City South brings together many of the defining qualities of the region. The strong relationship between the city and the surrounding landscape creates a defining identity and image for the city.

There is the opportunity to strengthen the iconic image of the city at the arrival to the Central Coast, by rail or on the highway, which defines the character and identity of Gosford and the Central Coast region.
2.2 Baker St becomes a pedestrian prioritised boulevard and catalyst for the reinvention of City South

The extension and activation of Baker St will help start the reinvention of the south of Gosford city. An active park and pedestrian prioritised boulevard connecting the city with the water will become a focus of City South and create a civic space as the arrival place in the city.

City South is currently poorly connected to the city centre with a low quality public domain. Issues with connectivity and walkability between the city centre and the south include:

1. Mann St cannot meet the water due to the high topography. The cliff and parks at the end are important and highly valued by the community, but the routes through the park and down Vaughan Ave do not connect the city well with the southern area of the city and the stadium.

2. Baker St has few active street fronts and does not continue to the water.

3. Walkability is poor, with poor pedestrian environments.

4. The park is not well defined or activated. It is not a destination for a diverse population.

5. Dane Drive has no pedestrian crossing at the junction with the highway due to the roundabout intersection.

6. The highway impacts the pedestrian environment and crossing opportunities.

1. Existing: No clear route between the city centre and the south, with no active frontages to define the park and attract people.

2. Proposed: Baker St is the catalyst to define, connect and activate a place in the City South, and to connect the city centre to an evolving waterfront. There is also the potential to close the southern end of Vaughan Avenue.
2.3 About City South

What do locals say
The UDIF process involved consultation with a range of key stakeholders and representatives from the local Gosford community. It has also benefited from the findings of the CCC Community Strategic Plan online and face to face surveys.

City South is highly valued by the community. It has been the focus of many design proposals and strong community opinions. It is home to many of the Central Coast and Gosford’s key institutions.

“There is no better setting to watch a game”
“Potential is the best thing about the waterfront”
“The stadium is great, but most of the time the area is dead with nothing to do. Gosford City Park is well used for sports a lunch, but is empty the rest of the time.”
“Tommy’s Cafe is great. We need more like that.”
“It would be great to be able to swim.”
“The public has been pushed to the edges. The edges of the park, the road and the stadium. Slowly over time the public water edge has been lost.”
“With strong southerlies, poor water quality and little to do, the city south doesn’t offer much.”
“It is important to get the city centre right and humming and not be distracted by proposals and planning for the waterfront.”
“Previous plans have enclosed the waterfront and blocked connections to the city. It will be important to get it right this time.”

History
The history of this area highlights:
— the importance of the local indigenous history of the Darkinjung people on this land
— the seawall is often identified as a landmark, or something to walk towards, there was no place to stay once you were there.
— the development of the ATO building on the former primary school site raised community concern for public land in this area.
— there was general resistance to further privatisation of the water’s edge of Leagues Club Field, including The Landings scheme and locating the RPAC on the field.
— the park was seen as the last publicly owned vestiges of the water’s edge.

Values
— a public water’s edge for all of the community
— to protect the views of the water
— quality public open space for play
### 2.4 What we heard

This table captures a summary of feedback from workshop 5 that relates to City South and the surrounding area – current issues, opportunities for the future and the role it can play in making Gosford a regional capital and great place. Whilst not the subject of this report, feedback on the waterfront has been captured here because it helps inform thinking on the wider area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GREEN LINKS</th>
<th>PARKING</th>
<th>TRANSPORT OPTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY</th>
<th>SAFETY</th>
<th>DESIGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link reserves to the city</td>
<td>Parking at night (noting council car park at Baker St shuts at 8pm)</td>
<td>Better public transport options, other than the car, more direct bus routes</td>
<td>Improved safety – particular at night, and for women</td>
<td>A distinct design style, not cookie cutter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>More short term parking (currently used by commuters)</td>
<td>Ferry Service to Woy Woy and Sydney</td>
<td>Passive surveillance</td>
<td>Improved public domain and streetscape, public art, better footpaths, bins,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More parks and gardens, better quality existing parks, botanical gardens</td>
<td>Parking (for events on the waterfront)</td>
<td>Better pedestrian access and accessible footpaths for all (will help things feel closer)</td>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Gosford’s natural assets and ecology</td>
<td>More commuter parking, parking for workers</td>
<td>Water access is too distant improve the connection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenscape and open space on the Showground in the future</td>
<td></td>
<td>Better signage and way finding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bay to Bay type run that links recreation and fitness to the environment, treks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marina for boats, may require dredging</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterplay/Lagoon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Better cycle access and paths</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better connections to Rumbalara Reserve and Presidents Hill</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian access around station, and CC Leagues Club Site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Infrastructure to feed in and be coordinated</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROGRAMME AND ATTRACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>ECONOMY</th>
<th>HOUSING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity of users (youth, aging population)</td>
<td>Options for food + beverage after events, e.g.: a Saturday Game at the stadium</td>
<td>More variety and more residents living near and in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous history of President’s Hill and other locations respectfully displayed</td>
<td>Improve the stadium - address event mode pedestrian access, improved members and sponsor area</td>
<td>More affordable housing, social housing and diversity in housing options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each grey square represents the relative number of mentions each issue had during the workshop.
2.5 Summary of key regional assets

The City South is rich in cultural, natural and economic assets. These assets are brought together at the entrance to the city in the south. The unique natural and civic assets are listed on the left, whilst the cultural, economic and private investments in the city south are listed on the right.

Mann Street – a High Street
The important structural element of the city can be strengthened as a place for the people.

Water’s Edge
The south of the city is formed by Brisbane Water, an estuary ecosystem with mangroves and calm waters.

Bushland Reserves
The bushland reserves sit on either side of the city on President’s Hill and Rumbalara Reserve.

Poppy Park and War Memorial
Formally known as Memorial Park and Rotary Park these much loved spaces at the end of Mann Street reflect on the historic contributions of residents.

Railway Causeway
The railway causeway over Brisbane Water is a unique feature in the city linking Gosford to Point Clare.

Heritage Buildings
Throughout the City South heritage buildings offer some diversity to the built form, and form a vital connection to the city’s past.
Gosford Stadium
This unique stadium is home to the Central Coast Mariners association football club and captures a spectacular view of Brisbane Water beyond.

Olympic pool
The pool currently attracts 200,000 visitors per year, but needs significant upgrades and currently makes no connection to its views and location.

Waterside - 50-70 Mann Street
This 25 story development includes hotel, 130 apartments and commercial space. Demolition of the site has commenced but project status is unknown.

ATO offices
These new offices will be home to 300 ATO staff members. The building represents the strategy of government services moving to regional capitals.

Finance building
Developed by the State Government, the Finance Building will be located on southern Mann St near the ATO and is under construction.

Central Coast Leagues
The Leagues Club is a community place for all ages offering a popular gym, food and drink, community hall, lawn bowls and parking for its patrons.

Conservatorium of Music
This cultural asset is also look to improve its facilities and link to the possible new RPAC position on Mann Street creating a cultural hub in the city that celebrates the historic buildings.

Regional Performing Arts Centre
This local government project (RPAC) has time limited financial backing to create a regional performing arts centre, and looks to be located on Mann Street.
2.6 Observations

The following pages explore the existing condition of the public domain and the network of streets. These observations explore the current identity and physical reality of the City South, including challenges with access and mobility.

Whilst the area is rich in assets, attractors of people like the Leagues Club focus inwards and don’t contribute to activating the parks or streets. The people who visit drive to the facility rather than walk, and the blank facades offer no activation of the surrounding streets.

The public domain experience is often dominated by the Central Coast Highway, on street parking, empty lots or construction sites.

Many of the developments around the Leagues Club Field have failed to address the park or offer active facades.

Access and mobility through the City south is a significant challenge. Most active transport options are limited with significant missing connections.

Overall the built form character and quality is poor. Buildings like the Council Offices require investment. Surface car parking without landscaping together with large stalled development sites create ‘holes’ in the city. Streets like Baker Street appear run down, dominated by on grade parking and are often covered in graffiti.
Some key elements of the landscape remain visible today, whilst others like the creek are no longer present. Image courtesy of the Central Coast Library.
2.7 Four Challenges

1. The topography and orientation of the city makes it difficult to link the city to the water’s edge and the areas regional assets.

2. Between Kibble Park and the water’s edge the city lacks diversity, attractors or places that engage and enliven the regional capital.

3. Significant investment is coming to this part of the city bringing jobs and people. The challenge is to strengthen the public walkability and public uses in the City South. No single development can resolve the public domain and accessibility improvements needed.

4. To create places that protect and reflect the character of Gosford’s unique natural setting while supporting activity and investment.
2.8 Four Opportunities

1. For Gosford to be more than an ‘event city’. There is the opportunity to enliven the City South for more times of the day, and for more locals, regional visitors and tourists.

2. To strengthen the image or identity of the city’s landscape setting, particularly as the city is approached from the south by car and train.

3. To capitalise on the investment in new jobs and homes in the City South, helping to bring together the social and economic opportunities in this area.

4. To create public connections to a unique and evolving water’s edge that supports the identity of the regional capital.
2.9 Design principles for City South: context scale

The following design principles outline the key moves for City South.

On the following pages principles at a place scale are outlined, followed by more detailed investigated of a range of opportunities and potential scenarios.

1. Preserve and strengthen the connection with the distinct landscape setting which frames the city.

Observation:
The city centre forms a north south spine, framed by the ridgelines. There is a strong visual connection to President’s Hill, Rumbalara Reserve, Memorial and Rotary Park and existing tree canopies along the ridges.

This creates a unique identity, with the defining image of Gosford as a city framed by the surrounding landscape.

Principles:
Protect and strengthen the connections to the landscape ridges, by protecting and enhancing the parks and reserves, including President’s Hill, Rumbalara, Memorial Park, Rotary Park and Leagues Club Field and Gosford City Park as well as existing trees.

Maintain key view lines (refer to Principles 6 and 7).

Focus development and height in the North - South spine and around the city centre to create an attractive skyline in the landscape.
2. Connect the city with the region through an active transport network

Observation:
City South is key to connecting Gosford City centre to the wider regional population, recreation and natural assets, but current connectivity is poor.

Principles:
Connect the Civic Heart, through City South, to the wider region and landscape with strong active transport connections.

Consider connections to Point Clare, East Gosford, West Gosford, Adcock Park, Carawah Reserve and Narara Creek, the Olympic Swimming Pool and Gosford City Park.

3. Connect the civic heart to the south by improving walkability.

Observation:
The civic heart of the city is poorly connected with City South, its regional attractors and the wider landscape.

Principles:
Continue the established city grid from the Civic Heart and Mann Street through City South by extending Baker St as a vibrant pedestrian boulevard.

Improve the walkability of streets from the city centre to the south, including Mann St, Baker St, Donnison St and Georgiana Terrace. Developments should present active frontages to key streets and create a safe and attractive pedestrian environment.
4. Promote a diversity of uses and attractors in City South.

Observation:
City South has important regional attractions including the Stadium, Olympic Swimming Pool, Boat ramp, Leagues Club and the Conservatorium of Music.

Principles:
Build on these to offer a diverse range of uses in City South, for a range of demographics and market segments. Include passive and active uses; large and smaller spaces, accommodating a range of businesses, events and offerings at different times of the day, week and seasons.

There is an important opportunity for League’s Club Field to accommodate a range of uses, including a regional playground, and active and passive recreation.

5. Maintain views from the stadium and Leagues Club Field to the water

Principles:
Maintain views out from key public places in City South, including the stadium and the park.
Ensure significant developments are assessed regarding the impact on views.
6. Maintain views of the City and Hills

Principles:
Maintain the visual connection to the ridgelines of the landscape around the city to protect the defining image of Gosford.
Ensure significant developments are assessed regarding the impact to views.
2.10 Design principles for City South:

**Place scale**

1. Investigate temporary activation of the park in the short term

   **Observation:**
   The park is currently not well activated, and does not cater for a large range of users.

   **Principle:**
   Consider temporary activation strategies for the park in the short term, such as food trucks and events.

2. Define and frame the open space with active streets and landscaped edges

   **Observation:**
   The park is not well defined, and is not operating effectively as part of the city for a broad range of people.

   **Principle:**
   Make the park an attractive place within the city. Define and frame the edges at the park and attract people to use the park with active street frontages. Establish planting to reduce the impact of the highway. Rename the park to define its importance as a public space for the city of Gosford.

3. Active pedestrian boulevard

   **Observation:**
   There is no clear connection from the city centre and Mann St to the waterfront.

   **Principle:**
   Establish Baker St as an active pedestrian promenade along the edge of the park connecting the city to the south and the evolving waterfront. Limit internalised retail, food and drink areas in the surrounding developments. Limit vehicular access to existing driveways, with no further driveways located on Baker St. Service entries to be located on Vaughan Avenue, with access from Mann St and no through traffic to the highway.
4. Uncover the creek

Observation:
The park is separated from the water, and the creek which used to run through the park is now piped underground.

Principle:
Draw the experience of water into the city by reimagining the piped creek which runs through the park.
Establish water play and cooling recreation activities in the park, related to a new regional playground.
Engage with the Indigenous community around the uncovering of the creek.

5. Accommodate a range of users and activities

Observation:
The park only caters for a single use, and has no attractor to define it, or to draw people from the city centre. It is not a destination.

Principle:
Foster a diversity of uses in the park including regional playground, water play, and sports, all to be considered during detailed design.
Our City Our Destiny proposed a Regional Playground of 2500sqm in the park.
Locate the playground near Georgiana Terrace to activate the park by drawing people from the city centre.
Locate amenities along the Baker St promenade.

6. Improve pedestrian amenity and connections over time

Observation:
Currently Dane Drive between the stadium and the Leagues Club Field is temporarily closed for major events to create spill-over space and ensure safety for the crowds exiting the stadium. Connections are poor at other times. Closing Dane Drive in event mode is an additional operating cost and has limited impact on improving amenity.

Principle:
Formalise road infrastructure to allow shared use of Dane Drive (to east of the stadium) and the pedestrianisation of the street during events at the stadium or the park.
Improve pedestrian crossings on Dane Drive, Georgiana Terrace and Baker Street.
Over time as sites are developed and upgrades to the Central Coast Highway are delivered, investigate option to improve pedestrian connections across the highway.

7. Maintain solar access to public space

Observation:
New developments around the park have the potential to impact on the amenity of the park during the day by overshadowing the space.

Principle:
Maintain solar access to public spaces, including the park and the boulevard.
More specifically, ensure solar access for 4 hours between 9am – 3pm at the winter solstice to 70% of the Leagues Club Field.
2.11 City South possible scenario

The projects identified below are one potential combination of design principles and projects in the City South, emphasising better connections and an improved public domain.

1. Activate park edges
Make the park a place within the city, and attract people to use the park. Strengthen the definition of the edges of the park with active built edges (including commercial, retail and food and beverage tenancies and main entries to developments). Establish planting to reduce the impact of the highway.

2. Baker St boulevard
Establish Baker St as an active pedestrian and cycle promenade along the edge of the park connecting the city to the south and the water’s edge. Ensure new development overlooks and interacts with the park.

3. Uncover the creek
Draw the experience of water into the city and across the Central Coast Highway by reimagining the piped creek which runs through the park. Establish water play and cooling recreation activities in the park, related to a new regional playground. Engage with the Indigenous community and their history when uncovering of the creek and designing the park.

4. A regional playground
Create a regional playground to activate the city south by drawing people from across the region to the city centre. The playground should be unique, for all ages, fully accessible and attract both local and regional visitors.

5. Improve pedestrian amenity and connections
Redesign Dane Drive (east of the stadium) to enable it to transition to shared use as a pedestrianised space in event mode. Include formal infrastructure such as raising bollards to reduce the operational costs. Improve conditions for pedestrians crossing roads to access the reimagined park.

6. Improve active transport
Consider active transport connections to Point Clare, East Gosford, West Gosford, Adcock Park, Carawah Reserve and Narara Creek, the Olympic Swimming Pool and Gosford City Park.

7. Connect civic heart to the South
Continue the city grid from the Civic Heart and Mann Street through the City South by extending Baker St as a vibrant pedestrian boulevard. Improve the walkability of streets from the city centre to the city south, including Mann St, Baker St, Donnison St and Georgiana Terrace. Developments should face the street and create a good pedestrian environment.
Indicative process and development envelopes only. All development subject to planning approval.
2.12 Built form principles

The City South is rich in cultural, economic and private assets that provide great regional and local attractors. The following observations identify potential developments and principles to be considered in order to protect and improve Gosford’s connection to its natural assets and public domain.

1. Stadium Precinct

**Opportunity:**
The stadium has direct connection to the waterfront and also forms part of the key arrival sequence into Gosford. It’s location and relationship to Brisbane Water makes it iconic.

Stadium upgrades may include development of corporate boxes, improved amenities, and redesign of the underside of the stadium seating to include active uses and improve design of the curtilage facing Dane Drive. Improve the relationship of the stadium to Leagues Club Field and the city centre.

**Principles:**
Ensure any significant development around the stadium improves the connection and relationship to the park, water and city centre and retains glimpses of the ridgeline views from the park and from Brian McGowan Bridge.

2. Central Coast Leagues Club

**Opportunity:**
As a popular city wide destination the Leagues Club and its redevelopment has the potential to link visitors to the city centre by providing a active edge to the park and connections through the site.

It’s prime waterfront location and proximity to the stadium offers a unique opportunity to integrate further community uses.

**Principles:**
Ensure future Leagues club development provides an active frontage to the park. Any future development to ensure solar access is maintained to the park by means of adequate setbacks. Carparking entry should ideally be off Dane Drive (not Georgiana Terrace or the improved Baker Street).

Built form setbacks and footprints should be evaluated to protect views to surrounding ridgelines from key public places. Consider staggering built form of towers in order to widen view corridors from key arrival points and public spaces.

Provide public connections through the site to improve access between the park and city centre.

3. Waterside Development

**Opportunity:**
The ‘Waterside’ development forms part of a key connection between Mann St and Baker St.

**Principles:**
Ensure active edges are strengthened on both Georgiana Terrace and Baker St frontages. Ideally provide a public through site link from Mann Street to Baker Street. Reconsider design of car park entry to reduce impact on pedestrian amenity on all surrounding street which will become key pedestrian links.

4. Cultural Precinct

**Opportunity:**
The proposed location of the RPAC and Central Coast Conservatorium can form a new cultural precinct in the city.

**Principles:**
The future development of these sites should prioritise an improved public domain and an activated plaza linking Mann St, the existing Council offices and heritage buildings.

5. 32 Mann St Development

**Opportunity:**
The 32 Mann St site forms part of the future Baker Street extension and is a key link in reconnecting the city with the waterfront and park. It’s prime position on the key arrival axis and view (from the Central Coast Highway) forms a key part of the city image. It also forms an important edge to the park and the pedestrian focused Baker Street.

**Principles:**
Prioritise active edges to the proposed Baker St extension, with no internalised retail, food and drink areas whilst also presenting an attractive ‘front door’ to Mann Street.

Service entries to be located on Vaughan Avenue, with access from Mann St and no through traffic to the highway. Consider lengthening the built form along the Baker St edge to further strengthen an active edge to the park and better connection to the waterfront.

Incorporate accessible through site links connecting higher levels of Mann Street to Baker Street.
Gosford Place Report 3: City South

Stadium Precinct

Central Coast Leagues Club

Waterside Development

Cultural Precinct

32 Mann St Development

Vehicular Access

Built form principles

Key views

Existing Approvals

Indicative building envelopes

Active frontages

Key facades for view corridors

Proposed vehicular Access

View corridors

Solar access

Indicative process and development envelopes only. All development subject to planning approval.
This artist’s impression of Gosford Leagues Club Field shows a new activated centre for the City South.

The regional playground will bring children and families to the city centre.

A lively Baker Street Boulevard will be planted with trees and activated by commercial frontages, cafes and retail, providing services and facilities for visitors.

The uncovered creek will provide opportunities for water play and connect with the indigenous history of the land.

The playing field will allow for active play.

Dane Drive (east of the stadium) will have a shared way character that allows the street to be a pedestrian boulevard on game day and when there are events in the park.

Development surrounding the park will bring people to live and visit the city centre and the park. It will be designed to overlook the park providing informal surveillance throughout the day.
Indicative process and development envelopes only.
All development subject to planning approval.
2.13 Connections, movement and access investigations

As the number of people living, working and visiting the south of the city increases it will be important to consider opportunities to deliver a balance between achieving the necessary movement to support the growth of Gosford whilst also facilitating and creating places that the community and visitors to Gosford will value.

Better connections and places will allow the City South to successfully play its important role as a regional event centre and important public space. The following opportunities for improved movement and accessibility should be considered and tested further as part of the joint Access and Movement Strategy, parking and traffic studies.

The critical movement function of the Central Coast Highway is acknowledged but over time needs to be considered alongside the need for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists to support Gosford City, especially in event mode. Over time, this part of the city centre, the important connections and movement corridors will evolve into a safe and inviting place. One that is home to many important regional attractors, places for people, new economic development and growth.

1. Improved north/south connections to the City South.

Investigate options for improved north south connections for pedestrians and active transport. **Baker Street** is the logical and level access to the Leagues Club Field and waterfront beyond from the station and civic heart. It is the only gently graded street that provides active transport linkages and ties the city core to the waterfront. Together with Georgina Terrace it has been emphasised as the active transport focus and a continuation of the Mann Street ‘civic spine’.

Whilst **Mann Street** is the civic main street, its topography rises in the south making access to the waterfront challenging. Potential bridge crossings from Mann Street to the potential future waterfront development should be explored to exploit the topography to benefit pedestrian accessibility. The connection could be integrated into and protect the natural features of the cliff face and the significant trees.

Whilst options for this potential elevated crossing needs to be planned for now, delivery is likely to be a medium-long term opportunity and short-term opportunities to improve north south connections should be investigated.

**Dane Drive** (alongside the Stadium) is another important connection between Grahame Park and Donnison Street. The conversion of this road to a shared way should be investigated, helping to slow traffic, improve safety, connectivity and amenity at all times. This could include introducing bollards and supporting infrastructure to efficiently and attractively pedestrianise the street during events without the expensive and inconvenience of temporary street closures.

As part of the proposed Access and Movement Strategy and the current traffic study, consider options for improvements to the Dane Dr intersection with the Central Coast Highway including pedestrian and cycle crossing. Objectives of the review would include:
— improving pedestrian safety and accessibility
— enable pedestrian crossing or vehicle movements to be prioritised at different times of the day and/or for events
— provide an opportunity to improve the gateway to the regional capital.

The **Point Clare cycleway** and footpath alongside the rail corridor have been identified as having potential to be a regional attractor for visitors, and be a more direct commuter link for communities in Point Clare. This would include utilising the historic rail piers. (Investigations completed by Central Coast Council.)

**Grahame Park** under the highway overpass offers another unique level crossing under the Central Coast Highway. Public accessibility under the highway should be explored for active transport connections. This crossing has the least impact on the highway and could support more active uses of Grahame Park. In the future it could link to improved access to Adcock Park and the Point Clare cycleway.

2. Improve east/west connections to the City South.

Investigate options for improved east and west connections that help to connect the natural features including Rumbalara Reserve and President’s Hill to Leagues Club Field.

Donnison St is an important gateway and access road to the city and is identified as a green planted boulevard linking President’s Hill and Rumbalara Reserve.

Georgiana Terrace plays an important role linking Mann Street to Baker Street and onto regional attractors in the south, the park and waterfront. Future development should include active street frontages and new public connections and laneways through large sites to improve access to and from Leagues Club Field.

3. Consider short stay parking options for visitors to the city south.

Parking options for the city south are limited. Short stay or time restricted parking is needed to allow visitors to more easily access the City, Leagues Club Field and waterfront. Parking options are particularly useful for families and visitors with restricted mobility.

Baker Street is the closest publicly owned parking station. Its close location to Kibble Park and Leagues Club Field make it ideal for short stay parking that supports access to the civic centre, the public parks and the city’s commercial core.

Options for the provision of public short stay parking should be considered within each of the major new developments in the City South or amendments to existing approvals.

The parking strategies for the stadium and city south in event mode should build on the current public transport and shuttle buses from distant commuter parking. Parking at Adcock Park on game days could be supported by improved walking and cycle connections to the stadium (1.2km), or shuttle buses. These arrangements may also demonstrate the opportunity and be extended to other times to benefit a range of visitors to the centre.

Similarly people access the stadium on game day from the east could consider a similar parking arrangement at Hylton Moore Oval.

All these options and others should be explored in the Access and Movement study and current parking study.
Indicative process and development envelopes only. All development subject to planning approval.
2.14 Past reports
Access and movement

When evaluating options to improve access and movement in the south of the city, these following reports and previous studies should be taken into consideration:

Streetscape Design Guidelines
Oculus for Gosford City Council

This set of streetscape design guidelines provided a more detailed analysis of the missing connections and links in the active transport network, as well as suggesting improvements to the streetscapes. The following two key diagrams (right) outlined the suggestions for an improved network.

Projects include prioritising Mann Street and Baker Street for active transport.

- Baker street shown as a straight line to the highway.
- Point Clare cycle link
- Upgrades of pedestrian access across Donnison Street bridge
- Through site links on the St Hilliers Site and Waterside Development
- Stronger pedestrian access to the Baker Street carpark.
Waterfront

Gosford Waterfront Strategy, 2007
TAYLOR, CULLITY LETHLEAN

Whilst the waterfront is not a focus of this report, this strategy is included to focus on the relationship to the city South.

This early report, prior to the Our Vision Our Destiny masterplan of 2010 suggests the Waterfront is considered as a staged development of nodes along a cycle and pedestrian route. Development sites like a medium sized marina are proposed, however the focus is on community driven recreation spaces and a journey that links them along the water.

The strategy recommends that the optimum width of the recreational land between the water and road should be 50-60 meters to allow for walking, cycling, landscape and playgrounds. For this space to be possible the strategy has considered land reclamation or realignment of Dane Drive further north.

Key concepts that remain relevant:
create an series of activity nodes or precincts along the waterfront linked by walking or cycle tracks with key nodes easily accessed across Dane Drive. Experiences, activities and facilities should be authentic, relevant to the amenity of the waterfront location in terms of scale and design, and they must be relevant to the needs primarily of the local community.

“...linkage to the CBD is vital for this important asset to be integrated once more into the city fabric.”

“It is the usual arrival point for people travelling to other Central Coast destinations and, with the turn off from the Pacific Highway passing the waterfront, this highly visible precinct must present as a gateway and arrival point that complements the capital city status of Gosford.”

Suggests including boating activities, childrens playground, picnic facilities, sporting activities, events, cultural activities, restaurants, cafes and bar.

Insufficient crossing points of Dane Drive noted, making the waterfront feel isolated.

Detailed recommendations highlight functional issues like tourist coach access to the waterfront, limited off street parking in this area and access issues with southern end of Mann Street with the escarpment.

It notes that dependence on a single large scale commercial or marina development places the waterfront revitalisation at risk. Rather a number of appropriate sites and uses should be identified with complementary uses that together aid the creation of a visitor destination, but individually can be realised by themselves.

Observations:
This report places a stronger focus on the Leagues Club Field and its surrounds as an important linking space between the city and the future waterfront.

Activation and diversity of uses on the city side of the Dane Drive is critical to draw the city and its peoples towards the waterfront (as shown on the diagram below, this area is the overlap between the two precincts).

These recommendations have influenced the decision to delay detailed investigation of the waterfront.

Since this 2010 plan opportunities for creating these nodes with a widened waterfront have proven to be difficult and limited. The highway remains a key challenge. The proposed cultural art and performance core has also moved closer to the Civic Heart.

Future options for marinas and boating activities with wharf access need to be balanced with the need for a public waterfront character with continuous public access to the waters edge.
Urban design

Our City Our Destiny 2010
COX FOR GOSFORD CITY COUNCIL

The 2010 master plan identified two precincts in the City South with the following projects and principles:

The Waterfront Precinct:
New waterfront development with marina, wharves, retail, entertainment, offices, apartments and hotel.
Continuous public access to the waterfront.
Public square on the waterfront to host events
Minimise view loss from the city
Developments should maintain or enhance the natural environment.
Dane Drive reconceived as a urban street with possible parking on both sides and traffic signals with grade crossings at the bottom of Brian McGowan Bridge and the end of a new Baker Street.
Point Clare cycle link
Regional playground on the waterfront adjacent to the existing pool.

The Arts and Entertainment Precinct:
Upgrade Baker Street as a tree lined boulevard with a strong pedestrian focus
Upgrade Leagues Club Field
Reimagined water element following the original creek
RPAC located in the St Hilliers site area with possible connection to the conservatory.
Create a strong through site link through ‘Waterside’ on Mann St to Baker St and through the Leagues club to Dane Drive to create a strong pedestrian link from Mann St to the stadium.
Through site links through the St Hilliers site for pedestrian access.
Rejuvenation of the Leagues Club contributes to the entertainment precinct.

Observations:
The 2010 masterplan, as visualised in this render, should be reviewed in light of current thinking.

Most of the suggested improvements for accessibility, particularly the importance of Baker Street and crossing Dane Drive, remain relevant today.

In this 2010 masterplan the focus of the City South is the waterfront, which to date has proved difficult to implement.

The identity of the buildings in the City South around Leagues Club Field was focused purely on entertainment uses, some of which are now proposed for Mann Street, a better civic location. This offers the opportunity for more diversity of uses in the City South. The anchor space remains an upgraded Leagues Club Field.

Relocating the regional playground from the waterfront to Leagues Club Field has many benefits, including its ability to activate the park and surrounding buildings. It also has more parking options nearby.

In ‘The Landings’ scheme by Lend Lease the regional playground was suggested in Leagues Club Field with community gardens, water play and kick about space. The pool facility was also relocated here to enable a marina expansion with parking on the waterfront. The pool’s current location on the water is an interesting attractor on the waterfront. Its unique position allows for future water views, and possible connection to swimming in Brisbane Water.

The extension of Baker Street and Leagues Club Field across Dane Drive could create a strong connection and public open space, away from Dane Drive.

The 2010 masterplan proposed public open space on the water side of the highway in line with Leagues Club Field. This proposal helps to move the public experience away from the highway. It also helps to reduce the scale of the highway with public open space. This quality was lost in the 2011 ‘The Landings’ scheme.

‘The Landings’ scheme by Lend Lease from late 2011 received strong community feedback that the development proposals privatised the waterfront with a series of residential wharf fingers.

The scale of development was also challenged. The 2010 masterplan demonstrated reduced building heights moving south from Kibble Park. The 2011 ‘The Landings’ scheme had more built form and height.

Recent proposals have focused on a smaller food and beverage modular development on Grahame Park, in front of the Dane Drive Highway. Any development here would need to ensure public accessibility as outlined under the bridge, to the water’s edge and to future active cycle paths. Access to this attractor will be crucial, and its design should feel seamless to the public domain of the waterfront.
KEY INITIATIVES ARE:

- THE WATERFRONT
- DANE DRIVE UPGRADE (INCLUDING PARKING)
- POINT CLARE CYCLE LINK
- CITY PLAYGROUND

In November 2011, CCRDC submitted a rezoning proposal to the Department of Planning under the State Significant Site (SSS) process. The 'Landings' masterplan (Figure 3) and supporting work developed in collaboration with Lend Lease were utilised in the SSS study.


The Landings masterplan identified hotel and commercial development on the Gosford Public School site. The Regional Performing Arts Centre was identified on the adjacent Crown Land.

Following community feedback from the exhibition of the rezoning proposal, CCRDC decided to significantly amend the rezoning proposal to focus on a much smaller site area (10ha) which included Gosford City Park, Gosford Breakwater and Gosford Public School (shaded orange on Figure 2).
2.15 Precedents – Water’s Edge and Public Domain

The following precedents create a visual story board of public domain improvements that could be considered for City South.

Whilst any one project will be important, the network of new places and improved assets needs to work together in order to create a quality environment that attracts locals and visitors to the regional capital.

Narrabeen Lagoon Trail offers a unique 8.4km active transport loop around Narrabeen lakes that draws locals and tourists.

Image: NSW State Parks – Narrabeen Lagoon. Photo by Lynden Mawson

The Narrabeen Lagoon Trail offers moments to view the water, stop, and engage with the natural ecology.

Designed by Aspect Studio. Photo by Simon Wood

Water sensitive design including a resurfaced city creak is a key concept for the Waitangi Park in Wellington.

Wraight Athfield Landscape + Architecture for the Wellington Waterfront Ltd

Light weight structures on Brisbane Riverwalk create a continuous and unique water’s edge for pedestrians and cyclists.

Image: Kyliie

Brisbane foreshore is an active movement boulevard softened with significant trees and natural water’s edge ecology.

Image: Tourism and Events Queensland. Photo by Ashley Raum Bildkunst Photographees

Opportunities to engage with the natural ecology create unique places in Martin Luther King Park in Paris, designed by Atelier Jacqueline Osty & Associés.

Photo by Marko Legjaneg
By night, Baker Street Boulevard could be an active street, for events and the community like the Adelaide Night Markets.

Image: facebook @AdelaideNightMarket

Baker Street Boulevard by day is upgraded public domain and key link to the city.

Image: North Terrace Adelaide accessed @southaustralia.com

Water play elements create movement and activation, ideal for a regional scale playground.

Image: Sugar Beach, Toronto designed by Claude Cormier and Associés. Design by Jesse Cole Jackson

Rather than equipment, the land itself becomes the focus for play in a regional playground.

Image: Shapes and Field London designed by Studioo Landscape Architects, photo by Sachin Taylor

Unique features like climbing walls are challenging for all ages, and offer great scenes for other to people watch.

Image: Brownhills, The Hague designed by OpenFabric, photo by Adrian Taylor

Open playing field offer flexible open space for active play like at Prince Alfred Park Sydney.

Park Design by Sue Barnsley Design for City of Sydney. Image by Damian McDonald

By night, Baker Street Boulevard could be an active street, for events and the community like the Adelaide Night Markets.

Image: facebook @AdelaideNightMarket

Water play brings the landscape and community together in unique ways. This should be considered for the uncovered creek.

Image: Cultuurpark Westergasfabriek, Amsterdam designed by Gustafson Porter and Bowman. Image by Thomas Schlijper

Baker Street can be the focus for night markets and food trucks like the Hyde Park Noodle Markets which draws large numbers of locals and visitors.

Image: facebook @nightnoodlemarkets

2.16 Precedents – Leagues Club Field and Baker Street