



PART 2 : HISTORY & BACKGROUND

HISTORY OF THE ENTRANCE

It is believed Europeans first discovered The Entrance in 1796 when Colonel David Collins and his party began the search for an escaped convict (Mary Morgan) who, it was believed, was living with Aborigines to the north of the Hawkesbury River. A few months earlier, a number of fishermen became shipwrecked in the approximate location of the The Entrance. They were fed and helped back to Sydney by local Aborigines and upon returning reported a white woman living with the Aborigines. This resulted in an excursion to search for the woman, believed to be the escaped female convict.

This search party became the first Europeans to discover Tuggerah Lake and what we now know as The Entrance.

European Settlement

The area now known as The Entrance was occupied by Henry Holden in 1828. He occupied 640 acres (259 ha) which is now known as The Entrance Peninsula. Holden named the property 'Towoon'.

After changing ownership a number of times, in 1854 the land was purchased by the Taylor Family. It was renamed 'Tuggerah Beach' and was held as a private beach until 1900 when it was divided amongst the 12 Taylor family children. At this time land was also donated to the Catholic Church, the Church of England and also for the establishment of a school. Other family members subsequently donated lands which became Taylor Park.

The division of land amongst the Taylor Family and for a range of community uses gave rise to a growing centre and the new settlement which we now know as 'The Entrance'.

Tourism

In the late 19th Century tourism in the area began and with the completion of the Sydney to Newcastle railway residents from Newcastle and Sydney were able to use The Entrance as an escape. From Wyong station people could travel by launch to The Entrance or directly from Sydney by boat.

Guest houses began to open with the Dunleith Guest House at North Entrance (1885), Bayview Guest House (1900) and Pinehurst (1903) being the first. The Taylor Family ran a ferry business and owned several guest houses and later camping grounds. By 1920 it was clear that a 'township' had begun to form and 200 lots were sold. Soon after that time construction began on holidays homes and guest houses, as well as associated amenities for visitors.



Images from left to right: Main Street still retains some of its original buildings, such as the Lakes Hotel or the 'Top Pub' as it is known; The first Entrance bridge opened on the 15th December 1934, encouraged pedestrian connectivity between north and south; Dunleith Guest House (built in 1890) was the first guest house to operate in the area. At this time jetties and boats formed the primary means of transport in the locality (Images sourced from www.theentrance.org).

The Emerging Town

During the early part of the 20th century a Post Office, School and Churches were established in The Entrance. In the 1920's the ferry service between Wyong River and The Entrance became less important as the area was opened up with road infrastructure. Soon after (in 1934) The Entrance Bridge was constructed (a timber, one lane bridge) connecting the northern and southern side of the channel for both vehicles and pedestrians. The creation of the bridge stopped ferry services and bus services across the bridge began. The bridge remained in its original state until it was demolished in 1969 when the current bridge was officially opened. In 1942 the first hospital for the area was created from the existing Bowenfels Guest House in The North Entrance. The popularity of The Entrance as a tourist destination flourished during the 20th Century, with attractions including the fishing, beaches, the lake and accommodation.

Evolution of Development

In the period following WW2, urban development of The Entrance peninsula continued. The initial separate settlements of The Entrance, Long Jetty and Toowoan Bay have merged to form a single urban area across the entire peninsula from lake to sea. During this period developments were almost exclusively modest, single storey, detached dwellings – often used as holiday homes for Sydney families.

Since the 1980's there have been a range of urban form changes, particularly to The Entrance itself. There has been an increase in medium density development, generally to 3 storeys, with a number of taller apartment buildings. More intense urban development has generally occurred near to the town centre area and extending along the coastal strip. There has been modification of road traffic arrangements over time, resulting in the current 'one-way' system in the town centre and the by-pass which takes through traffic to the west of the town core.

Revitalisation

In the mid 1990's Wyong Shire Council undertook an urban design and rejuvenation project. This resulted in the preparation of a masterplan for the area based on the work of Council staff and a range of consultants. This masterplan culminated in a variety of public works.

In 1995 the 'Pelican Plaza' (the site of the daily pelican feeding) was completed along with works providing access and pedestrian connectivity along the foreshore from the town centre to the surf club. At that time Memorial Park was given its current layout.

In early 1996 work commenced on the existing pedestrian promenade, landscaping and associated works. These works were completed a few months later and the current layout and arrangements of public spaces in The Entrance is primarily a result of that masterplan and public works program.



Images from left to right: The one way main street comprises a mix of angle and parallel parking; The Entrance bridge opened in 1969. Dredging has been undertaken from time to time; Picnic Point is reclaimed land constructed as a result of dredging.

PREVIOUS STUDIES AND REPORTS

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

NSW 2021 – ‘A Plan to Make NSW No. 1’

NSW 2021 – ‘A Plan to Make NSW No. 1’ is the State Government’s 10 year plan to guide policy and budget decision making. A number of key priorities within are located within the NSW 2021 Plan which are relevant to any review of planning/strategic policy, including:

- Goal 20 – ‘Built Liveable Centres’ which includes targets of encouraging job Growth in centres close to where people live, providing access to better transport services and
- Goal 22 – ‘Protect our natural environment’ which includes provision for protection to waterways, wetlands and coastal environments
- Goal 23 – ‘Increasing the opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments’ including increased local presence in decisions making
- Goal 27 – ‘Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities’; and
- Goal 29 – ‘Restore Confidence and Integrity in the Planning System’

Central Coast Regional Strategy (2006-31)

The Central Coast Regional Strategy 2006-2031 (CCRS) is a 25 year planning strategy for the Wyong and Gosford Local Government Areas and sets the planning agenda for the region.

The Central Coast Regional Strategy identifies The Entrance as a ‘Town Centre’. Under the provisions of the Central Coast Regional Strategy ‘Town Centres’ are to set out to:

‘Generally have concentrations of retail, health and professional services mixed with medium density residential within and adjoining the centre. Town Centres will also serve surrounding residential areas and have a public transport interchange.’

The Strategy sets out that an additional 45,000 jobs will be required across the Central Coast over the next 2 decades. Given the role of The Entrance as a ‘town centre’ under the strategy, significant focus should be made on the creation of jobs within close proximity to The Entrance.

Central Coast Regional Priorities Plan (September 2010)

In late 2010, Regional Development Australia (Central Coast) prepared a ‘Central Coast Regional Priorities Plan’ with a focus on identifying the challenges for the success of the Region and highlighting priorities for the economic, social, cultural and environmental sectors.

Regional Economic Development & Employment Strategy

The employment and economic development objectives of the Central Coast Regional Strategy have been expanded and further emphasized through the Regional Economic Development & Employment Strategy (REDES). The Strategy aims to assist in achieving the aims of the Regional Strategy in providing 45,000 new jobs across the Central Coast over the next 2 decades. Primarily, the REDES aims to create a positive environment for investment in the Region.

The objectives identified in the REDES are:

- Attracting new businesses and supporting existing businesses
- Improving the training and skills development opportunities
- Increasing research, knowledge and innovation
- Ensuring appropriate planning processes and land supplies
- Planning for regional economic centres
- Providing new infrastructure
- Marketing the region as an attractive business location.

The Central Coast Destination Management Plan

A Central Coast Destination Management Plan has been prepared in a joint working partnership between the NSW Department of Industry & Investment and Central Coast Tourism.

This Plan was developed in partnership with the local industry, government and stakeholder groups resulting in a unified vision for the tourism industry. The Plan takes a holistic approach to developing appropriate tourism strategies that contribute to the prosperity of the region without compromising its future. It will be the central reference point for the development and delivery of tourism product and services and the implementation of marketing strategies for the Central Coast.

The Entrance Peninsula Planning Strategy

The Entrance Peninsula Planning Strategy covers suburbs on The Entrance Peninsula (including The Entrance North) and aims to provide a vision and direction for the development of the locality.

In part, the vision for the Entrance Peninsula is for development that whereby:

‘the Entrance Peninsula will evolve into a more vibrant and viable locality, renowned for being alive with activity and attractions and a range of retail, commercial, cultural, entertainment and recreational facilities.’

The *Entrance Peninsula Planning Strategy* deals with various precincts within The Entrance individually, providing discussion on the desired future character for each precinct and recommending strategies to achieve those objectives.

Note that there is a significant focus on maintaining and enhancing public open space (including along The Entrance Channel), provision of improved accessibility (including pedestrian and cycle access), ensuring an appropriate mix of uses and maintaining the environment of the locality.

Wyong Residential Development Strategy

The Wyong Residential Strategy was adopted in 2002 to provide a comprehensive strategy to guide residential development which will increase the quality and diversity of development in Wyong Shire. The Strategy aims to plan for residential development which is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable in both a local and regional context.

Wyong Shire Council Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015

The Wyong Shire Council Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015 contains Principle Activity 3 - Economic & Property Development, with the objective to support quality town centre development, to build a sense of community cohesion and pride. To ensure that town centres achieve sustainability and Council's objectives concerning quadruple bottom line by supporting other service units in Council in their operational functions (including co-ordinating The Entrance, Toukley, and Wyong Town Centre Management) and includes the service performance indicator to complete and adopt The Entrance Town Centre Masterplan by February 2012.

EMERGING STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Entrance Economic and Tourism Strategy

NSW Industry & Investment along with Central Coast Tourism jointly funded a recent Economic and Tourism Strategy for The Entrance.

The document aimed to undertake a review of economic and tourism activities, specifically focussed on The Entrance with a view to making recommendations and developing a strategy to improve the tourism offer of the locality.

The draft document is currently with NSW Industry & Investment and Central Coast Tourism for review before being finalised.

Revitalise the Entrance (The Entrance Property Owners Group)

Recently, a number of key land holders in The Entrance have formed 'The Entrance Property Owners Group' which aims to coordinate activities of owners so that future development compliment (rather than compete with) each other. This group is currently preparing the 'Revitalise The Entrance' Strategy. Although this strategy appears to sit outside any formal framework (ie it does not form part of work currently underway by Wyong Shire Council or by State Government agencies) the strategy is likely to give some indication as to the desired form of development proposed by land holders. It is understood that this document will be presented to Council by The Entrance Property Owners Group as representing a consolidated vision for the area

Emerging Key Iconic Development Sites

A Report was presented to Wyong Shire Council in November 2010, identifying Iconic Sites in the Wyong Shire as well as options for a plan of action. The report has identified 28 Iconic Development Sites within the Wyong Shire that have the potential to be a catalyst for economic growth and development confidence. The report also proposes a framework for creating planning controls that provide a balance between incentives for proposals and orderly development of these key areas.

The Entrance town centre contains 7 of the Iconic Sites, including:

- Dunleith Tourist Park
- Vacant 'Key' Site (Corner of The Entrance Rd & Marine Parade)
- Ebttide Mall
- Denning/Short Street Carpark
- Lakeside Plaza
- The Greens Bowling Club
- Residential Tourist Zone 'Klumper' Site

Council's Key Iconic Development Sites Development Control Plan has been prepared and is currently on public exhibition. It is anticipated that the Development Control Plan will be finalised and adopted sometime in 2012.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development

Following the Premier’s Forum on Residential Flat Design in March 2000, the Urban Design Advisory Committee prepared a report titled ‘Achieving Better Design - Residential Flat Developments in NSW’. State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – ‘Design Quality of Residential Flat Development’ (SEPP 65) was the Government’s response to assisting in better design of residential developments.

SEPP 65 aims to improve design quality of residential flat buildings of three or more storeys, and containing four or more self contained dwellings. The SEPP 65 contains ten Design Quality Principles, which form the basis for achieving good design. The Design Quality Principles provide a guide for evaluating the merits of development proposals and draft planning policy. This Policy will apply to residential developments with a height of 3 storeys or more and containing 4 or more residential units.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 71 – ‘Coastal Protection’

The area subject to this masterplan lies within the coastal zone and is affected by State Environmental Planning Policy No. 71 – ‘Coastal Protection’ (Coastal Protection SEPP).

It is noted that a significant aim of the Coastal Protection SEPP relates to maintaining public access to foreshore areas and, where possible providing for improving/enhancing public access opportunities. The aims also relate significantly to maintaining amenity and protecting the coastal environs.

Clause 8 of the Coastal Protection SEPP provides matters which must be considered by Planning Authorities in determining applications for development within the coastal zone. These considerations relate heavily to protecting the amenity of the coastal environment as well as protecting and enhancing public access to foreshore locations.

In summary, key aspects to be considered under the Coastal Protection SEPP include:

- Access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability should be retained and, where possible, public access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability should be improved;
- Incorporate opportunities to provide new public access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability,
- An evaluation the suitability of development given its type, location and design and its relationship with the surrounding area,
- Review and potential for impact that development may have on the amenity of the coastal foreshore, including any significant overshadowing of the coastal foreshore and any significant loss of views from a public place to the coastal foreshore,
- Any measures to protect the cultural places, values, customs, beliefs and traditional knowledge of Aboriginals,
- The conservation and preservation of items of heritage, archaeological or historic significance.

Wyong Local Environmental Plan 1991

The Wyong Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 1991, provides the primary planning framework for development in The Entrance.

The following represents a brief summary of the current zoning provisions for The Entrance:

- Commercial Core - the primary commercial core of The Entrance is zoned 3(a) – ‘Business Centre Zone’
- Tourist Business Zone - the commercial areas at the northern end of the key commercial areas are zoned 3(d) – ‘Tourist Business Zone’
- Open Space & Community Uses - Foreshore and open space areas are generally zoned 6(a) – ‘Open Space & Recreation’
- Community Uses - There are also a range of community uses in selected locations throughout The Entrance (including school and community centre). These are located on lands generally zoned 5(a) – ‘Special Uses Zone’
- Residential Uses - around the commercial and open space core areas, residential zonings provide for a range of dwelling types. The areas nearest to the commercial/CBD area are generally zoned Residential 2(c) – ‘Medium Density Residential’ which provides (generally) for housing and apartments at a medium density to a height of 3 storeys. To the immediate east of the main commercial area, residential developments at ‘high density’ is permitted under the 2(d) – ‘High Density Residential Zone’. This allows for higher density residential development on allotments of a suitable size. Further from the commercial core, residential developments are permitted to 2 storeys on lands zoned 2(b) – ‘Multiple Dwelling Residential’ and 2(a) – ‘Residential’

Draft Composite Wyong Local Environmental Plan

Wyong Council are currently preparing their composite Local Environmental Plan in accordance with the Standard Template. It is anticipated that the Draft Local Environmental Plan will be released for public exhibition sometime in 2012.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION BACKGROUND

Initial Community Workshop

In April 2011 Wyong Shire Council commenced The Entrance Masterplan project with a open forum community workshop.

The first workshop was intended to set the foundations for the masterplanning process and aimed to determine the optimal stakeholder mix and representation arrangements as well as establishing a format for future workshops.

A more concise 'consultation/working group' was nominated at that meeting – this group (of around two dozen people) were drawn from a range of community interests and stakeholder groups with the objectives of meeting on a regular (monthly) basis to progress the project.

Ongoing Workshops

Since the initial open forum community workshop there has been an addition 5 meeting/workshop sessions.

These ongoing stakeholder/workshop sessions have progressed through a range of issues which require consideration in the preparation of the Masterplan, assisted by an independent facilitator as well as specialist Council staff (where necessary). These stakeholder groups have reviewed a range of key issues, reviewed the initial concept plans for each of the key iconic development sites and the sessions were used as an open forum for the expression of ideas, concerns and comments.

In summary, the following works have been undertaken as part of the first six workshop sessions:

Workshop 1: Establish the purpose and scope of the masterplan, identify elements of a vision for the town centre, identify practical ways to consult and engage the stakeholders and formation of an on-going project team comprising stakeholder groups representatives.

Workshop 2: Study area refined, the overall 'vision' was established, consultation and engagement methods refined.

Workshop 3: Key (Iconic) Development Sites in The Entrance Town Centre study area were presented to the project stakeholder team by the proponents of each development.

Workshop 4: The mooted planning provisions for The Entrance Town Centre study area were presented to the project stakeholder team.

Workshop 5: The constraints in the study area were presented to the project stakeholder team. Exercises were carried out to identify potential retail, commercial, activity and attraction development opportunities and locations.

Workshop 6: Exercises were carried out to identify potential community facilities, public infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle network, transport, parking and access opportunities and locations. The Consultant (The Design Partnership) preparing The Entrance Town Centre Masterplan presented the mooted principles, structure, texture and how the masterplan would work.

Workshop 7: The project stakeholder team reviewed, revised and finalised draft masterplan ready for seeking Council approval to place the document on public exhibition.

Workshop 8: Will be held in early December, at which the project stakeholder team will consider submissions received during public exhibition period and review, revise and finalise the masterplan, ready to seek Council's approval to adopt the masterplan in mid December.

The Draft Masterplan has been prepared taking into account the discussions and comments raised at these stakeholder workshops.

Establishing the Vision and Key Urban Design Principles

A significant aspect of the stakeholder forums was to establish the 'vision' and 'key urban design principles' to guide the masterplan process.

These form important key aspects of the design process and set the over-arching direction for the masterplan. The vision and Key Urban Design Principles (as set out in Part 3 of this Masterplan Report) have been prepared as a collaborative process as part of the six stakeholder forum workshops.