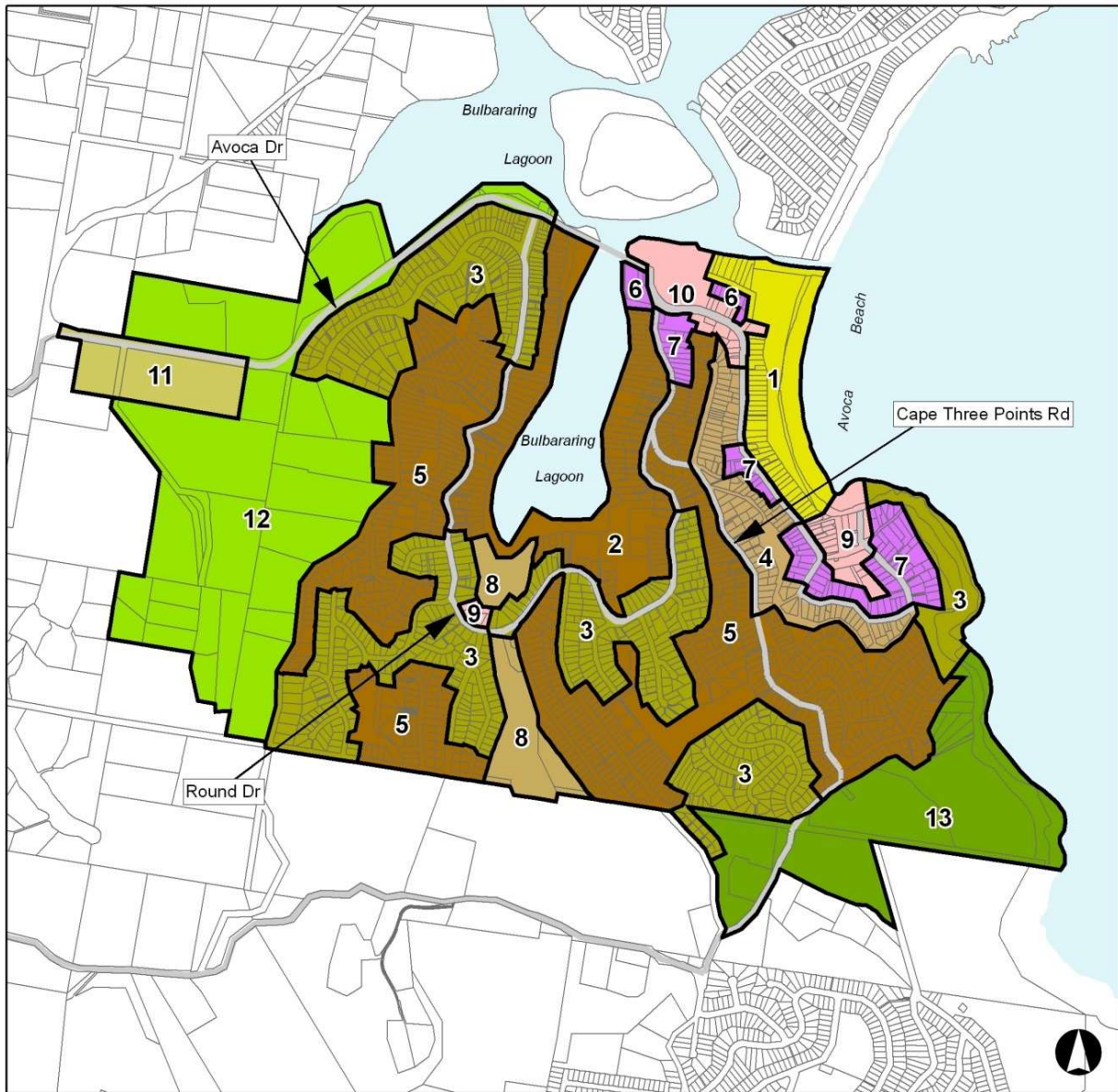









Avoca



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Avoca 1: Ocean Beachfront - Existing

Existing Character

A foreshore residential subdivision exposed to the coastal weather, and the adjoining open ocean beach.

Located upon a traditional subdivision of relatively uniform allotments facing a local thoroughfare with a formed edge and footpath along one side, opposite a wide sloping grassed verge, accentuating a generally casual seaside atmosphere.

A medium-density mix of apartments plus scattered houses and seaside cottages can be viewed from two frontages. Over the past three or four decades, most original timber-framed seaside cottages have been redeveloped for large individually-designed apartment buildings and houses of two-storeys, accommodating both residents and holidaying visitors. Built to capture panoramic ocean views, the new buildings turn their backs to the street and create an almost continuous wall of buildings along the beachfront.

Facing the beach, gardens are small and open, while traditional open street front gardens are often converted to parking courtyards enclosed by tall walls for security. Significant landscape elements include partial lines of Norfolk Island pines, and occasionally, surviving traditional cottage gardens that are densely-planted.

Avoca 1: Ocean Beachfront - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential foreshores where future development does not dominate the informal scenic quality of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's ocean beaches, and new dwellings are surrounded by leafy gardens that provide protection from storm surges and shoreline erosion.

Ensure that new structures do not disrupt development patterns that are evident upon surrounding properties. Avoid disturbing natural slopes plus any existing trees that are visually-prominent foreshore features, and ensure a leafy character for these prominent backdrops to ocean beaches. Plant gardens and street verges with low hedges and salt-tolerant trees that are predominantly indigenous, clustered to maintain existing panoramic views. Facing beachfronts in particular, avoid tall retaining walls or fences, extensive terraces or driveways that would visibly compromise the desired leafy character. Plant low-growing "hedges" of indigenous shrubs and ground covers along boundaries and to stabilise dunes. Also, maintain the informal character of any existing wide street verges that are dotted with shady street trees.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of foreshore development by setting all building works back from exposed fore-dunes, and by surrounding buildings with leafy gardens. Incorporate waterfront and street setbacks that are similar to the surrounding properties, and provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings or additions to existing dwellings. Use irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms, such as linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. All roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, flanked by wide eaves and verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. Facing the beach, disguise the impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies and verandahs.

Reflect elements of traditional coastal architecture and minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and lightly-framed verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views between the dwelling and the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 2: Woodland Foreshores - Existing

Existing Character

An established, low density residential subdivision in an open woodland setting surrounding a coastal lagoon.

Situated on low to moderate slopes, this locality is enclosed by backdrops with ecological and scenic significance: melaleuca woodland along the lagoon foreshores and remnant woodland lining spurs descending from the wooded

ridgetops.

A local thoroughfare with unformed edges meanders along footslopes between copses of tall eucalypts, facing simple front gardens that contain a scattering of canopy trees, both woodland remnants and planted, and providing a casual open woodland atmosphere.

Houses are a mixture of traditional single storey timber-framed coastal cottages, and newer brick buildings of one to two storeys. Surrounded by substantial shady gardens, the scale of these houses appears modest to moderate.

Along the lagoon foreshores, managed gardens intermingle with indigenous wetland and woodland species located in public reserves.

Avoca 2: Woodland Foreshores - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain very leafy, low-density residential foreshores, conserving natural and scenic qualities of the bushland backdrops that are fundamental features of Gosford City's identity, where prominent landscape settings are not dominated by new development.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Screen or shield all verandahs, windows, roofs and suspended floors to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.

Conserve natural and scenic characters of wooded foreshore properties plus unformed road verges by retaining existing natural slopes and the continuity of tree-canopy that is provided by existing bushland remnants. Complement the established tree canopy by new plantings that are predominantly indigenous, and do not plant any identified noxious or environmental weeds.

Promote a natural character for all waterfront backdrops by avoiding structures that would visibly compromise the existing bushy foreshore character. Avoid disturbing natural slopes and trees by appropriate siting of structures plus low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill. On the steeper sites, locate parking next to the street in structures that are designed to blend with their natural setting. Also avoid tall retaining walls, elevated structures such as terraces or pools, steep driveways or opaque fences. Identify all boundaries by hedges or fences that are low or see-through. On properties with direct waterfrontage, ensure that new boatsheds are modestly-scaled and reflect the architectural features of traditional timber-framed sheds. New jetties should be compatible with the style and visual impact of traditional timber piers.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any foreshore or street by setting all building works back from exposed shores or ridges, and maintaining front setbacks that are similar to the surrounding properties. Also provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by strongly-articulated forms that sit beneath the canopy, with floor-levels that step to follow natural slopes and irregular floorplans such as linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls. Facing foreshores or ridges, disguise the impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies and verandahs.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. Where dwellings would be visible from the road frontage, display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from that roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 3: Parkland Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

Established low density residential subdivisions across open slopes that surround a coastal lagoon.

Modern subdivisions across hillsides are linked to an older subdivision along footslopes and tracing the line of the lagoon foreshore. With slopes ranging from low to steep, an irregular topography comprises spurs and gullies that generate a multitude of short vistas towards landscape backdrops of scenic and ecological value: eucalypt woodland along the ridges and top slopes, and melaleuca wetland around lagoon foreshores. Only a scattering of woodland remnants are preserved by modern hillside subdivisions with modestly-sized allotments and wide streets.

In the flatter areas, streets are flanked by wide grassed verges and managed front gardens that are generally simple and open, and provide a tidy parkland atmosphere.

The older footslope subdivision faces a narrow local thoroughfare with unformed edges, meandering along the hillside contours between copses of tall eucalypts.

Detached houses are generally simple modern designs, constructed of brick elevated above basement garages, or set upon mounded building platforms surrounded by retaining walls.

A recent gully subdivision has created a secluded neighbourhood with houses varying from simple forms to individual designs, surrounded by well managed gardens and a woodland backdrop.

A scattering of dual occupancy and secondary subdivisions occur on the larger original allotments, and there are small apartment blocks with shops in a minor business centre fronting the local thoroughfare.

Avoca 3: Parkland Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain leafy low-density residential hillsides, retaining the streetscape and scenic qualities of existing lush hillside gardens that surround each dwelling.

Minimise disturbance to natural slopes and existing trees that are visually-prominent features of any hillside or street frontage by appropriate siting of new structures, plus low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill. Complement the established tree canopy by planting additional trees and shrubs throughout each garden as well as along street verges. Facing the street, emphasise a leafy garden character by avoiding wide driveways and terraces, tall fences or multiple retaining walls.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside. Locate new buildings behind front setbacks that are similar to their surrounding properties. Provide at least one wide side setback or step the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by courtyards. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs, stepped forms or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views from a dwelling to the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 4: Open Woodland Hillsides - Existing

Existing Character

An elevated open ridgeline and headland, flanked by moderate to steep hillsides, together forming a scenically-prominent coastal feature, as well as backdrops to Avoca Beach and the town centre.

Along local access streets and major thoroughfares, relatively regular allotments support low-density development of detached houses that can be viewed from all directions. Road pavements are often narrow, flanked by wide turfed verges and simple open gardens, providing a casual seaside atmosphere.

Houses include traditional seaside cottages, timber-framed as well as brick, located predominantly along the footslopes, with large individually-designed modern houses of two, three and sometimes four levels built along the ridgeline to capture panoramic ocean views.

Large gardens are predominantly to the rear of houses, generally turfed and open but also supporting scattered remnant coastal banksias. Across extreme slopes surrounding the headland, a carpet of coastal woodland spills up and into wide side yards that separate neighbouring ridgetop houses, preserving a semi-natural backdrop of tree canopies along the ridge, and accentuating the low-density appearance of development.

Avoca 4: Open Woodland Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential areas where the existing scenic quality and amenity of prominent hillsides are enhanced substantially by further “greening” of gardens and street verges in order to screen new development and to complement the open bushland canopy that surrounds most dwellings.

Maintain the semi-natural character of hillsides by retaining existing natural slopes throughout gardens and along street verges, and by conserving bushland trees that are visually-prominent features. Complement the established canopy by planting trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous throughout all garden areas and along street verges. Do not plant identified noxious or environmental weeds in any garden that is close to a bushland reserve. Facing all boundaries, emphasise a leafy garden character by avoiding tall retaining walls, elevated structures such as terraces or pools, and steep driveways that would visibly compromise the leafy hillside character.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Screen or shield all verandahs, windows, roofs and suspended floors to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.

Avoid disturbing natural slopes and trees by appropriate siting of structures plus low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks, rather than extensive cut-and-fill. On the steeper sites, locate parking next to the street in structures that are designed to blend with their desired bushy setting. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside by locating buildings behind front and rear setbacks similar to their surrounding properties, and providing at least one wide side setback or stepping the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by stepping floor-levels to follow natural slopes and by using irregular floorplans to create well-articulated forms. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs, stepped forms or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. All dwellings should display a traditional “street address” with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade or block views from a dwelling to the street. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 5: Woodland Hillsides - Existing

Existing Character

Low density residential subdivisions within open woodland lining ridges and topslopes that surround a coastal lagoon, and situated next to a scenically and ecologically significant corridor of coastal forest extending to a neighbouring locality.

Moderate to steep slopes descend from flatter ridgelines, with older subdivisions covering the principal ridges, and more-recent development located on secondary ridges or across hillsides. Irregular topography comprising spurs and gullies generates a multitude of short localised vistas.

Newer hillside subdivisions are relatively regular, with smaller allotments confining remnant woodland to blocks and corridors along rear boundaries, providing significant backdrops as well as contrasting the parkland atmosphere of well-managed front gardens facing wide local access streets with formed edges.

By contrast, the older ridgetop subdivisions face local thoroughfares with unformed edges or wider major thoroughfares, either meandering along topographic contours between tall remnant eucalypts or running straight between copses of tall trees framing scenic lagoon vistas.

Older, larger allotments on steeper slopes preserve a denser woodland canopy, with copses and corridors of tall trees along street frontages and wide side yards, also providing panoramic vistas towards the lagoon and coastline.

Detached housing is generally modest in scale, ranging from single storey timber framed cottages to two storey brick. As well, there is a light scattering of dual occupancy developments and secondary subdivisions upon the larger original lots.

Avoca 5: Woodland Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain very leafy low-density residential hillsides, conserving natural and scenic qualities of the bushland backdrops that are fundamental features of Gosford City's identity, where landscape settings that adjoin bushland reserves are not dominated by new development.

Conserve natural and scenic characters of wooded hillside properties plus unformed road verges by retaining natural slopes and the continuity of tree-canopy that is provided by existing bushland remnants. Complement the established tree canopy by new plantings that are predominantly indigenous, and do not plant any identified noxious or environmental weeds. Facing all boundaries, emphasise a leafy garden character by avoiding tall retaining walls, fences that are not see-through, elevated structures such as terraces or pools, and steep driveways that would visibly compromise the existing bushy hillside character.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Screen or shield all verandahs, windows, roofs and suspended floors to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.

Avoid disturbing natural slopes and trees by appropriate siting of structures plus low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill. On the steeper sites, locate parking next to the street in structures that are designed to blend with their natural setting. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any street or hillside by locating buildings within setbacks that are similar to their surrounding properties, and by providing at least one wide side setback or stepping the shape of front and rear facades.

Minimise the scale and bulk of buildings by strongly-articulated forms that sit beneath the canopy, with floor-levels that step to follow natural slopes and irregular floorplans, such as linked pavilions that are separated by courtyards and capped by individual roofs. Front or rear facades that are taller than neighbouring dwellings should be screened by balconies, verandahs, stepped forms or extra setbacks. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Minimise the scale of prominent facades by using extensive windows and verandahs plus a variety of materials and finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry. Where dwellings would be visible from their road frontage, display a traditional "street address" with verandahs or decks, and living rooms or front doors that are visible from that roadway. Avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any front façade. Locate and screen all balconies or decks to maintain the existing levels of privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 6: Medium Density Foreshores - Existing

Existing Character

A small ribbon of allotments plus a large single allotment are situated in prominent locations near the mainstreet centre, and accommodate either a variety of traditional coastal cottages and multi-unit developments, or have been fully-developed for townhouses.

Buildings in these locations are clearly visible from the ocean beachfront or Avoca Lagoon, and they vary in both height and scale from single storey seaside cottages that are surrounded by leafy coastal gardens, to brick-and-tile apartment blocks of two to three storeys flanked by extensive paving and narrow garden beds.

Both locations have wide streets with broad grassed verges.

Avoca 6: Medium Density Foreshores - Desired

Desired Character

These areas should remain medium-density residential foreshores where the scenic quality of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's coastal waterways is enhanced by new developments that are surrounded by leafy gardens, and where improved standards of amenity and urban design quality are achieved.

Ensure that new structures do not dominate their foreshore setting or disrupt development patterns that are established upon surrounding properties. Conserve existing trees that are visually-prominent, particularly facing water-frontages and streets. Avoid disturbing natural landforms, and on properties that are floodprone, use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive landfilling to elevate habitable floors. Along the waterfront, avoid terraces and retaining walls, plus fences or any other outdoor structure that would disrupt the desired informal scenic quality, or compromise the privacy and amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development along any waterfront or street by surrounding new buildings with leafy gardens that incorporate at least one wide side setback, and by stepping the shape and height of front and rear facades. Maintain waterfront setbacks that are similar to the surrounding properties. Plant clusters of shady trees and shrubs that are mostly indigenous throughout all gardens as backdrops to waterways and the street. Along foreshore and street boundaries, plant hedges next to fences that are low or transparent in order to provide an open water outlook from dwellings as well as offering water glimpses from the street. Maintain existing wide street verges and shady street trees.

Minimise the scale of new buildings by using strongly-articulated forms, with facades that vary in shape and height. For example, divide floorspace into individual dwelling pavilions with a varied form or orientation, separated by landscaped courtyards, verandahs and parking structures. Disguise the visual impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies or verandahs. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves that disguise the scale and bulk of exterior walls. Parking is preferable in open carports, rather than wide garages that would accentuate building bulk or dominate visible facades.

Minimise the scale of all visible facades with extensive windows that are shaded by framed balconies, verandahs or exterior sunscreens, plus some painted finishes and sheet or board cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry. Where dwellings face a street or common access-way, provide a traditional "street address" with visible verandahs, living rooms and front doors.

Screen any driveways, terraces, courtyards and balconies to protect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 7: Medium Density Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

Medium-density redevelopment of former cottage allotments, either singly or as larger sites, for apartments and townhouses.

Predominantly located on moderate footslopes backed by scenically-prominent ridgelines, medium density development accommodates both long term residents and visitors, and occurs in three separate locations: the Avoca "bowl", Avoca Drive and Cape Three Points Road.

Fronting open coastal access streets and thoroughfares, located adjacent to parks that support significant community and recreation activities, these developments are highly visible from all directions.

Multi-unit developments are generally multi-level buildings of substantial size, generally two to three storeys high with simple bulky forms, surrounded by extensive driveways, and contrasting both the form and landscape of surrounding localities where detached houses are set against wooded ridgelines and open hillsides.

Individually-designed buildings, configured either as terraces of repetitive units, as stepping apartment blocks or as simple slab blocks, apartments are sited on sloping allotments cleared of original vegetation and retaining only small areas for landscaping, predominantly along the street frontage. On the steeper slopes, the density and scale of development are accentuated by closely-packed stepping blocks of two and three levels, which from a distance, appear to merge producing a several storey appearance.

Avoca 7: Medium Density Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These areas should remain medium-density residential hillsides where improved standards of amenity and urban design quality are achieved by new multi-unit developments that are surrounded by leafy hillside gardens, providing distinctive backdrops to Gosford City's town centres, main roads or the railway.

Maintain the existing informal scenic qualities of hillside properties and road verges by site planning that conserves visually-prominent trees, particularly near hill crests, close to ridgelines or along street frontages and verges. Surround new developments with leafy gardens that retain natural slopes along all boundaries, providing space for new shady trees and shrubs, and avoiding the appearance of long or continuous buildings. On the steeper properties, use low-impact construction such as framed structures with suspended floors and decks that are elevated above basement parking, rather than extensive cut-and-fill that requires tall retaining walls or steep driveways. Plant a combination of trees and shrubs that are mostly-indigenous along all property boundaries and through courtyards, and use hedges or front fences that are low or see-through rather than tall and opaque.

Minimise the scale of new buildings and retain a proportion of the panoramic views that are available from any neighbouring property by using strongly-articulated forms, including floor-levels that are stepped to follow natural slopes plus facades that vary in shape and height. For example, divide floorspace into individual dwelling pavilions with a varied form or orientation, separated by verandahs and landscaped courtyards. Any facades that are taller or longer than buildings on neighbouring properties should be screened by a combination of extra setbacks and balconies or verandahs. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves that disguise the scale and bulk of exterior walls. Parking is preferable in basements or open carports, rather than in wide garages that would accentuate building bulk, dominate visible facades or require steep driveways.

A "light-weight appearance" is preferable for all visible facades to minimise their scale and bulk, incorporating walls of windows that are shaded by framed balconies or verandahs plus exterior sunscreens, some painted finishes and sheet or board cladding rather than extensive plain masonry. Where dwellings face a street or common access-way, provide a traditional "street address" with visible verandahs, living rooms and front doors.

Screen any driveways, terraces, courtyards and balconies to protect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Avoca 8: Mobile Home Estate - Existing

Existing Character

Overlooking a coastal lagoon, two self-contained medium-density estates of small manufactured homes provide affordable accommodation for permanent residents.

Surrounded by a perimeter of shady trees, manufactured homes are small single storey buildings, with a rectangular floorplan capped by simple gabled roofs. Designed and maintained as individual dwellings, each home is set close to neighbouring buildings and to access driveways that are flanked by narrow garden beds.

The landscaped perimeter of each property incorporates broadly-spaced rows of trees and shrubs that screen the

density of semi-permanent buildings as well as providing attractive backdrops to public places and surrounding properties.

Avoca 8: Mobile Home Estate - Desired

Desired Character

These properties should remain medium-density residential estates where manufactured homes accommodate a combination of permanent and transient residents, and streetscape quality plus amenity are enhanced by “greening” to provide leafy settings for each dwelling as well as improving the scenic quality of prominent backdrops to Gosford City’s major tourist routes.

Conserve existing visually-prominent trees, particularly along street frontages, and plant a combination of shady trees and shrubs along estate boundaries and internal roadways. In order to complement the informal character of existing garden frontages, use hedges or fences that are low or see-through rather than tall and opaque. Maintain the informal qualities of existing wide grassy street verges and conserve existing shady street trees.

Avoid the appearance of long or continuous rows of buildings facing any boundary by varying the siting or orientation of successive dwellings, by providing landscaped setbacks that vary in width, and lining internal roadways with avenues of trees and shrubs. Maintain street setbacks similar to surrounding properties and minimise the extent of hard-paved surfaces.

Avoca 9: Village Centres - Existing

Existing Character

A beachside destination, surrounded by a scenically-distinctive ridgeline, located at the end of a busy thoroughfare, and also connected to surrounding residential localities by a network of local streets and pedestrian walkways, this locality is a focus of community and recreation activities for both residents and holidaying visitors.

Accommodating a range of beachfront activities, this locality incorporates several areas and activities separated by roads and parking areas that carry substantial weekend and holiday traffic: South End Park plus two smaller beachfront reserves, the surf club, and two business premises that are compatible with the recreational focus (the Theatre and the nearby café-restaurant).

Low scale buildings of one and two storeys, providing a focus for pedestrian, recreation and community activities, and visible from all directions.

Streets have formed edges, with footpaths connected to beachfront parking areas and to reserves. Reserves have a simple, open seaside atmosphere with large areas of turf studded by woodland remnants, planted trees, and playground equipment. South End Park is intersected by an open watercourse, also accommodating peak season overflow carparking.

Avoca 9: Village Centres - Desired

Desired Character

Scenic potential and amenity of this prominent village of community and recreation facilities, combining recreation-retail businesses, community buildings, open spaces and parking areas, should be enhanced for the benefit of residents and holidaying visitors.

Within a pedestrian-friendly setting, a network of paths should link both established and future facilities to the adjoining beachfront and rockpool.

The configuration of parkland, streets and parking areas should ensure that benefits to residents and visitors are maximised, and that a wide range of recreation needs are accommodated within a safe and attractive village setting supported by new landscaping, recreation and amenity buildings, and park furniture designed according to a consistent seaside theme.

Building works should maximise public access and recreation activities along all visible street and park frontages, reflecting a modestly-scaled seaside theme with extensive sunscreened verandahs or upper-storey balconies.

Structures with local historical value should be preserved and enhanced. Colour schemes and commercial signs should promote the qualities of a coastal community village, rather than corporate sponsorship.

Avoca 10: Mainstreet Centre - Existing

Existing Character

Located below a scenically-prominent headland, fronting the ocean entrance to a coastal lagoon, and astride the intersection of two thoroughfares, the town centre is both highly visible and accessible to residents and holidaying visitors.

Providing a broad range of recreational and retail services, plus permanent and visitor accommodation, this centre includes multi-storey mixed-use developments, retail shops and a service station, plus Heazlett Park and the Middle Avoca carpark.

Buildings vary in height and scale from four and five storey terraces of shop-top apartments that mimic the headland's form, to smaller one and two storey street-frontage and courtyard developments, interspersed by undeveloped allotments that incorporate steep to extreme hillsides.

Wide streets with formed edges are flanked by broad footpaths along shop fronts, supporting high concentrations of pedestrian activity, connecting to recreation and community facilities located in Heazlett Park and along the beachfrontage.

Avoca 10: Mainstreet Centre - Desired

Desired Character

This should remain a mixed-use centre that provides a range of services and accommodation for local residents as well as visitors, where scenic potential of a prominent backdrop to Gosford City's ocean beaches is enhanced by new development that encourages high levels of street activity and also achieves improved standards of amenity, urban-and-civic design quality.

Promote high levels of on-street activity by maximising the number of retailers and the continuity of shop-windows along all street frontages. Avoid indoor arcades that would draw people away from the street. Incorporate awnings, colonnades or balconies in all buildings to provide sheltered pedestrian settings that encourage pavement dining. Contribute to high levels of visible activity along all streets by surrounding upper storeys with balconies that encourage restaurant dining or residents' outdoor recreation.

Ensure that new developments (including alterations to existing buildings) do not dominate the informal scenic qualities of foreshore settings or disrupt the established main-street development patterns of this coastal shopping centre. Along all public streets, shop-front facades should have a zero setback and a maximum height of two storeys, with taller storeys set back behind terraces to maintain a pedestrian-friendly scale along footpaths. The overall height and form of new buildings should provide a transition between the surrounding residential area and existing multi-storey apartments, as well as preserving the levels of privacy, sunlight and visual amenity that are enjoyed by existing dwellings and their private open spaces.

Reflect the form of development that is typical of traditional seaside centres where a wide variety of retailers are accommodated by separate buildings upon narrow-fronted allotments. Along any street or waterfront, avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development or uniform building heights. Vary the shape and height of all visible facades. Top-most storeys should be setback behind wide roof terraces, and roofs plus parapet heights should step from one building to the next. Neighbouring buildings should be separated by landscaped courtyards or alleyways that provide view corridors, access to apartment lobbies, and daylight plus an outlook for above-ground dwellings.

Disguise the scale and bulk of new buildings. All visible facades should employ extensive windows that are shaded by lightly-framed balconies, verandahs or exterior sunshades, plus painted finishes and some board or sheet cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, flanked by wide eaves that shade terraces and also disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Conceal off-street parking behind shops or apartments, and provide unobtrusive vehicle entrances that minimise disruption to shopfronts and their associated pedestrian activity. Contribute to co-ordinated street improvements that

include dedicated pedestrian crossings, footpath paving, landscaping and lighting to provide safe and secure settings for informal social interaction. Building colour schemes and commercial signs should be co-ordinated and limited in size and number to promote the identity of a coastal centre, rather than emphasising corporate sponsorship.

Avoca 11: Recreation Centre - Existing

Existing Character

Close to the intersection of the primary suburban access road and a regional thoroughfare, a bowling club, motel development and hotel sit on land that has been entirely or partly cleared. Buildings vary in scale and style from a substantial single-storey industrial-style shed, to clusters of architecturally-designed two storey brick and timber pavilions.

Landscape treatments vary from an open forecourt surrounding bowling greens, to a parkland frontage of planted trees scattered across turfed slopes that partly conceal buildings and provide a semi-rural atmosphere.

Commercial signs are relatively low key, principally providing identification plus a few small scale advertisements.

Avoca 11: Recreation Centre - Desired

Desired Character

These properties should continue to provide recreation services to the surrounding residential population. The scenic and civic qualities of these semi-rural landscapes that contribute prominent vegetated backdrops to Gosford City's major roads should be protected as well as enhanced by future development, infrastructure or landscape improvements, and by effective open space management.

Protect the habitat and scenic values of remnant bushland on ridges and low-lying stream banks by retaining natural slopes and avoiding further fragmentation of the tree canopy, particularly mature bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops to the main roads.

Enhance the recreation and scenic potentials of bowling greens and garden areas by masterplanned improvements that include clustered shelter plantings and outdoor seating. Surrounding carparks and along street frontages in general, protect the safety of children and older people by footpaths that are flanked by landscaped barriers to channel pedestrian traffic towards defined road crossings.

Ensure that new developments (including alterations to existing buildings and infrastructure works) do not dominate their natural or landscaped settings. Surround buildings with landscaped settings that maintain the scenic quality of prominent bushland backdrops or existing corridors of planted trees. Ensure that the height and siting of new structures also preserve levels of privacy, sunlight and visual amenity that are enjoyed by existing motel units. Complement the bushland canopy by planting all setbacks, courtyards and parking areas with shrubs and trees that are predominantly indigenous. Along front boundaries, provide for surveillance and safety by planting hedges or using fences that are low or see-through.

Promote high levels of visible activity around buildings by adopting elements of traditional "mainstreet" shopping villages, including extensive windows and building entrances that are located to reveal indoor activity. Incorporate footpaths, verandahs or colonnades to concentrate pedestrian access between clearly-identified building entrances and carparks.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings and avoid the appearance of uniform building heights along any street by well-articulated forms. Divide floorspace into separate pavilion structures that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards, and vary the shape and height of facades, particularly to identify major entrances. For visually-prominent facades, incorporate extensive windows that are shaded by framed verandahs or exterior sunscreens, and display some variety of materials or finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry or metal cladding. Roofs should be gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves or verandahs that disguise the scale of exterior walls.

Avoca 12: Scenic Buffers - Existing

Existing Character

A large rural allotment, situated on moderate to gentle slopes and fronting the main road to Avoca Beach.

A partially-cleared former grazing property, with fencing, yards and outbuildings along the road frontage, and open paddocks surrounded by an unbroken backdrop of dense woodland, provides a scenically-distinctive backdrop to the main road and tourist route.

Avoca 12: Scenic Buffers - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain rural-residential buffers where the scenically-distinctive semi-rural and natural qualities of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's major roads and tourist routes are preserved by appropriate very-low density residential developments associated with low-impact rural activities, and by small-scale businesses or community and educational facilities that have a modest impact.

Retain natural slopes and prevent further fragmentation of the tree canopy in order to maintain habitat values and informal scenic characters of hillside or valley properties, plus meandering roads with unformed verges. Along creeks, ridges, slopes or road frontages, conserve all mature bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops visible from any road or nearby property. Limit intrusion of structures upon their landscape setting by concentrating new buildings and pavements in existing clearings. Use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill, particularly on elevated slopes or near bushland.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to the understorey plus thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees.

Maintain the informal character of existing semi-rural hillsides by avoiding tall retaining walls, extensive terraces or broad driveways that would be visible from any road or nearby property, and provide boundary fences that are see-through such as traditional post-and-rail designs. Surround all buildings with extensive garden setbacks, planted with new trees and shrubs that are predominantly indigenous to complement the established canopy. Noxious or environmental weeds must not be planted, and existing infestations should be controlled.

In order to minimise their scale and bulk, all new structures that would be visible from a road or nearby property should reflect the modest character and simple articulation of traditional farm buildings. For example, divide floorspace into a series of linked pavilion structures or wings of rooms that are surrounded by landscaped courtyards, and preferably, provide parking in carports or separate garages. Roofs should be simple hips or gables without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges and flanked by wide eaves or extensive verandahs to disguise the scale of exterior walls. (In bushfire prone areas, verandahs, roofs and suspended floors must be screened to prevent the entry of sparks and flying embers.)

Disguise the scale of facades that are visible from the street by incorporating extensive windows and verandahs, some painted finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any frontage. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with the scale and design of their associated dwelling, particularly by using a similar roof pitch and wide eaves. Any commercial signs should be limited in size and number.

Avoca 13: Scenic Conservation Scenic Buffers - Existing

Existing Character

Three areas containing blocks of woodland and forest that are scenically and ecologically significant: one flanking a creekline that feeds the coastal lagoon, another comprising rural residential blocks on hillsides and ridgelines to the south of Avoca Drive, and the third an area of coastal woodland on the exposed headland to the south of Avoca Beach that has been identified for future acquisition as coastal open space.

Abutting established residential subdivisions at Avoca Beach, these areas maintain a substantial natural lagoon foreshore, are significant components in a fauna corridor linking Kincumba Mountain with the coast, and have natural qualities that contribute to the landscape value of a prominent coastal feature. The scenic-distinctiveness of these areas, reflecting the extent and integrity of bushland landscapes, indicates an ecological value that deserves conservation, in addition to their role as scenically-distinctive buffers between neighbouring suburbs.

Avoca 13: Scenic Conservation Scenic Buffers - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain near-natural buffers where the ecological and scenic qualities of Gosford City's distinctive ridgetop reserves are conserved by very-low impact residential development upon existing private properties supported by active environmental management.

Conserve the natural qualities of hillside properties and reserves by minimising further clearing of bushland, and avoid any land-management activities that would compromise the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of natural plant communities that are associated with public reserves. New structures should be sited within existing clearings. Only where there is no reasonable alternative to accommodate a new structure upon an existing property, minor clearing might be acceptable in locations with a lesser ecological value, provided that effective long-term management of bushland ecology would not be compromised and where the extent of bushland backdrops that are visible from major roads, waterways or surrounding neighbourhoods would not be diminished. Avoid cut-and-fill construction, and employ very-low impact techniques such as light-weight framed structures with suspended floors and decks. Control existing infestations of noxious or environmental weeds, and progressively repair any existing disturbance to landforms or natural vegetation using bush-regeneration techniques.

In areas that are defined as bushfire prone, hazard must not be increased by inappropriate new plantings or structures. Minimise the extent of cleared asset protection zones by fire-resistant siting, design and construction for all new structures plus effective management of gardens. The ideal compromise between desired scenic quality and hazard-reduction would limit clearing to the understorey plus thinning of the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Regular garden management should maintain separation between canopies and remove accumulated leaf litter by ecological best-practice techniques such as mosaic burns that strike a balance between conservation, scenic quality and public safety.

Minimise the scale and bulk of any new building that would be visible from a road or nearby property. For example, divide floorspace into linked pavilion structures that are surrounded by shady verandahs, and preferably provide parking in separate garages or outdoors. Roofs should be simple hips or gables without elaborate articulation or extensive valleys, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges and flanked by wide eaves and verandahs that disguise the scale of exterior walls. All verandahs, windows, roofs and suspended floors must be screened to prevent the entry of sparks and flying bushfire embers.

Disguise the scale of facades that are visible from the street by incorporating extensive windows and verandahs, some painted finishes rather than expanses of plain masonry, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any frontage. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with the scale and design of their associated dwelling, particularly by using a similar roof pitch and wide eaves.

