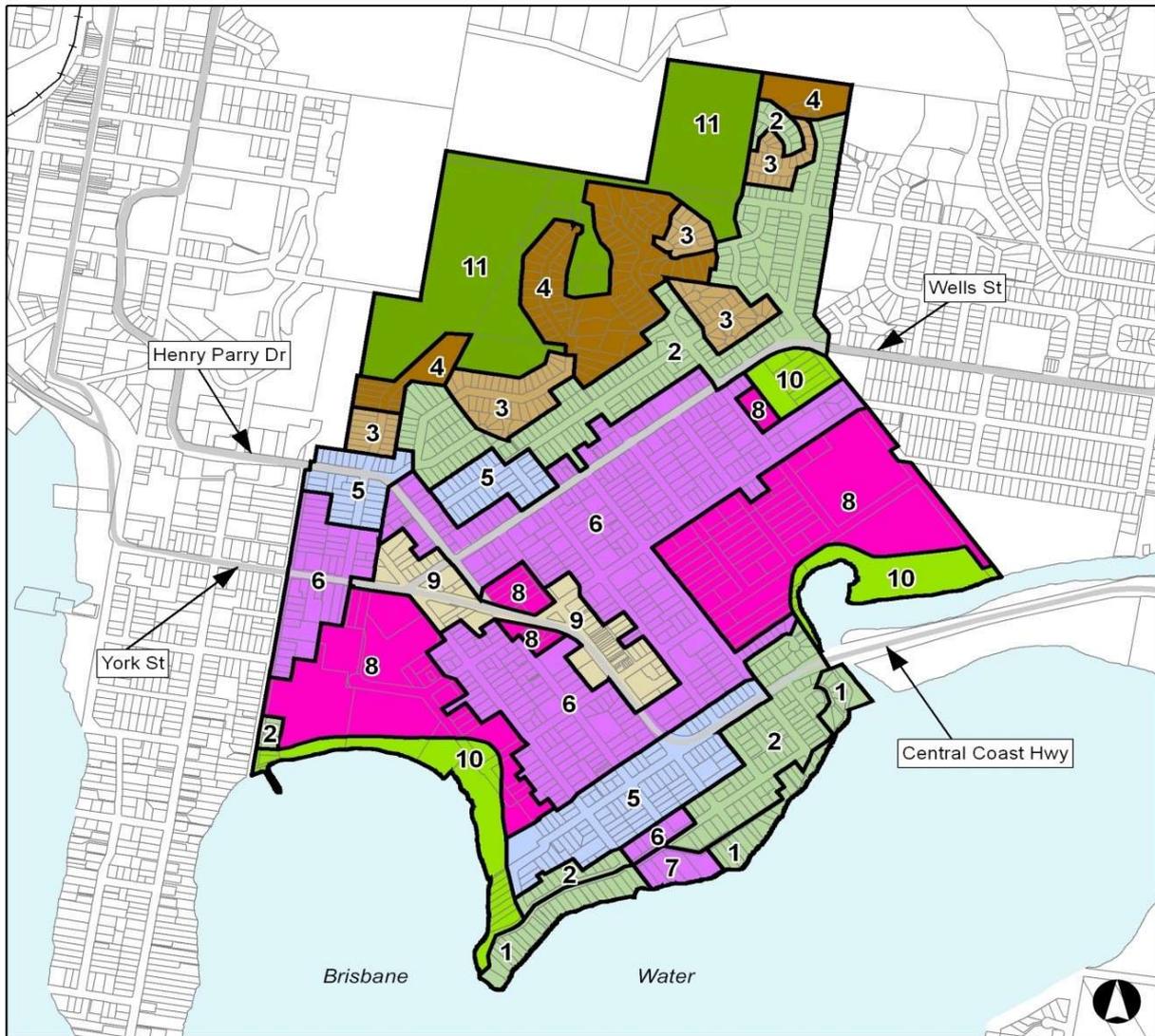


East Gosford



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East Gosford 1: Open Parkland Foreshores - Existing

Existing Character

Low density residential foreshores, situated on gentle to moderate slopes that have been almost entirely cleared of original vegetation, where tightly-spaced dwellings form visually-prominent backdrops that are visible from surrounding residential areas and waterways.

Allotments that vary from medium to large, with dual frontages to waterfronts and paved streets that are flanked by kerbing and turfed verges. Street gardens are small-to-medium sized areas of open turf, set behind fences or tall walls, and dotted with small trees or shrubs. Occasional taller trees partly screen buildings and provide scenically-prominent backdrops to street frontages as well as to waterfrontages. Facing the waterways, jetties extend from seawalls that contain either flat areas of open turf or terraced garden beds climbing up the steeper slopes.

Houses range from older coastal bungalows to very large brick-and-tile buildings sited close to their neighbours and forming near-continuous walls of development. The older bungalows are modestly-scaled, single storey timber-framed structures, elevated above tall basements on the steeper slopes, capped by pitched roofs and surrounded on at least three sides by gardens. Newer dwellings are designed to capture panoramic waterviews, with broad two storey facades facing the waterfront, partly-screened behind extensive verandahs, decks, and terraces.

East Gosford 1: Open Parkland Foreshores - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential foreshores where the informal open but leafy character of prominent backdrops to Gosford City's coastal waterways are enhanced by new dwellings that are surrounded by shady gardens.

Ensure that new structures do not dominate these foreshore settings or disrupt development patterns that are evident upon their surrounding properties. Avoid disturbing natural slopes and on properties that are floodprone, use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive landfilling to elevate habitable floors. Ensure a leafy character for these prominent backdrops by conserving any existing trees that are visually-prominent foreshore features, as well as planting gardens with low hedges and trees that are predominantly indigenous, arranged in clusters to maintain existing panoramic views. Maintain the informal character of existing wide street verges that are dotted with shady street trees.

Facing waterfronts in particular, avoid retaining walls, tall fences or extensive terraces that would visibly compromise the desired leafy character. Use fences that are low or see-through, or plant low hedges to maintain glimpses of the waterfront from street frontages. For properties with a 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 foreshore development by surrounding buildings with leafy gardens that maintain waterfront and street setbacks similar to the surrounding properties. 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 by reflecting elements of traditional foreshore bungalows. 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 waterfront, disguise the visual impact of upper storeys by a combination of extra setbacks from the ground floor plus shady balconies and verandahs.

Reflect 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.

East Gosford 2: Open Parkland Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

Residential neighbourhoods that are situated on gentle to moderate slopes almost entirely cleared of their original vegetation, where gardens that have been planted with shrubs and small trees are maturing, creating a leafy but open parkland character that contributes to the quality of local streetscapes.

A variety of medium-sized allotments face streets with narrow pavements that are flanked by wide turfed verges extending across front gardens without fences.

Houses are a mix of timber-framed bungalows dating from the 1950's and 60's, plus newer brick-and-tile buildings that are generally medium-sized, of single or double storey construction and elevated above basement garages on the steeper slopes. The older bungalows maintain wide side setbacks for driveways to rear garages, while the newer buildings are sited close to their neighbours. The appearance of streets that are lined by near-continuous walls of buildings is avoided by the overall variety of building designs and front setbacks together with leafy front gardens.

Generally, the newer houses have broad street facades that are often dominated by wide garages. The older bungalows are modestly-scaled buildings, capped by pitched roofs with shady eaves, and they incorporate traditional front facades with living rooms, verandahs or glazed sunrooms.

Occasionally, front or rear gardens accommodate isolated tall bushland remnants that provide distinctive local landmarks.

East Gosford 2: Open Parkland Hillside - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain low-density residential hillsides where existing streetscape quality and amenity are enhanced substantially by further "greening" of gardens and street verges.

Minimise disturbance to natural slopes and any existing trees that are visually-prominent. Retain existing ground levels along all boundaries, and on the steeper slopes, use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than extensive cut-and-fill.

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, and plant clusters of trees and shrubs throughout each garden to screen buildings and driveways, as well as to provide shady backdrops to the roadway. Facing the street, emphasise a leafy garden character by gardens and street verges planted with taller trees that are indigenous plus hedges of shrubs, and avoid wide driveways, tall fences or multiple retaining walls.

On hillsides that are scenically-prominent, 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 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.

East Gosford 3: Open Woodland Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

Low density residential neighbourhoods in elevated locations that are visually-prominent, adjoining bushland reserves. On slopes that range from gentle to steep, original vegetation has been thinned or cleared from street frontages, but a scattered bushland canopy survives, partly-screening buildings and forming a scenically-distinctive backdrop that is visible from major roads, waterways and surrounding residential areas.

Allotments are mostly medium-sized, facing medium-width paved streets flanked by kerbing, with grassed verges extending across front gardens that have been substantially cleared of original vegetation. Front gardens are dotted with a variety of planted trees plus isolated bushland remnants that partly-screen buildings, contributing to the leafy quality of streetscapes. Along rear boundaries, corridors of tall bushland remnants are visible above rooftops,

providing visually-prominent neighbourhood features and contributing to the scenic quality of neighbouring reserves that are visible from surrounding areas.

Houses are mostly modestly-scaled one or two storey dwellings set into hillsides, sometimes elevated above basement garages, and of project-style brick construction or clad with weatherboards. Siting varies according to slope and to the design of each dwelling, producing varied streetscapes, notably on the steeper slopes that retain denser vegetation. Street facades incorporate a traditional mix of balconies and verandahs, living rooms and entrances.

East Gosford 3: 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.

East Gosford 4: Woodland Hillsides - Existing

Existing Character

Elevated hillside locations where bushland has been thinned or partly cleared, where low density residential development is sheltered beneath a near-continuous canopy of forest remnants that extend across both front and rear gardens. Substantially concealing buildings, this forest canopy provides scenically-distinctive backdrops that are visible from major roads, centres, waterways and surrounding residential areas, as well as enhancing the natural qualities of neighbouring bushland reserves that are scenically- and ecologically-significant.

Allotments are generally medium-sized, facing winding access streets that are paved, flanked by kerbing and grassed verges that extend into front gardens accommodating tall canopy trees that partly-screen houses from street frontages as well as immediate neighbours.

Dwellings vary from one to two storeys, and are medium-to-large. Designs and siting range from the regular alignment of conventional brick-and-tile structures located on gentler slopes to irregular siting of pole-structures elevated above steeper slopes.

Gardens generally have a cleared understorey, and are mostly planted with turf and shrubs beneath the bushland canopy. On the steeper slopes, there are scattered rock outcrops, and decks or balconies provide outdoor living space that is directly accessible from indoors. Parking is provided in carports located at the street frontage or in basement garages accessed via driveways that are often very steep.

East Gosford 4: Woodland Hillside - 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.

East Gosford 5: Mixed Density Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

Neighbourhoods on gentle to moderate slopes that have been substantially cleared of their original vegetation, accommodate traditional coastal bungalows that are undergoing redevelopment for medium-density housing.

In visually-prominent locations flanking major roads and across hillsides, medium density redevelopments are creating significant contrasts with the character and the design quality displayed by traditional garden-suburb bungalows that remain the predominant type of housing in these areas.

Bungalows dating from the early-to-mid Twentieth Century are modestly-scaled single storey timber-framed buildings, elevated above tall basements on the steeper properties, clad in sheet-materials or weatherboards and capped by hipped or gabled roofs, plus traditional street-facades that incorporate double-fronted configurations, living room windows, front doors and verandahs. On hillside properties, the height and siting of bungalows allow a variety of street-vistas between neighbouring buildings, as well as providing views from some properties toward scenically-distinctive hillsides and waterways.

Traditional bungalows generally have leafy front and rear gardens, plus side driveways that lead to back-yard garages. Corridors of tall forest remnants occur along the rear boundary of many properties, and extend along street frontages on the steeper properties, providing local habitat as well as scenically-distinctive features that are visible from major roads and surrounding areas.

New developments are predominantly two storey town houses, frequently with “gun-barrel” layouts that are typified by straight rows of buildings sited close to side boundaries, flanked by narrow courtyards and long driveways. The majority of new developments create a pronounced contrast with established development patterns and mature landscapes due to their modular and repetitive configuration of dwellings, their excessive scale and bulk measured relative to traditional bungalows, the substantial proportion of each site that is covered by buildings and pavements, plus their extensive removal of existing vegetation.

Within the majority of new developments, small garden areas are distributed as private courtyards that are substantially paved and surrounded by tall walls, small areas of open turf along street frontages, and narrow driveway verges.

East Gosford 5: Mixed Density Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These areas should remain mixed-density residential hillsides, retaining some of the original mid-Twentieth Century bungalows which remain distinctive elements of Gosford City’s identity and provide distinctive backdrops to town centres, main roads or the railway. Future developments should achieve significantly improved standards of amenity and urban design quality by reflecting features of those traditional bungalows, as well as providing a variety of low-rise dwellings that include apartments, town houses and villas.

Maintain the existing informal scenic qualities of hillside properties and road verges by appropriate site planning to conserve visually-prominent trees, particularly near hill crests, close to ridgelines, along street frontages or 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 with 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.

Ensure that new developments complement the siting, form and scale of surviving traditional bungalows upon nearby properties, as well as retaining a proportion of any panoramic views and maintaining reasonable levels of the sunlight, privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings and their private open spaces.

Minimise the height and scale of new buildings 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 buildings on neighbouring properties should be disguised by a combination of extra setbacks and stepped forms, 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.

East Gosford 6: Medium Density Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

On gentle to moderate slopes that have been almost entirely cleared of their original vegetation, areas that formerly accommodated coastal bungalows have been substantially redeveloped for a variety of medium density housing.

In visually-prominent locations, either flanking major roads or overlooked from surrounding residential hillsides, one and two storey medium density developments have created significant contrasts with the character and the design quality that were displayed by the original garden-suburb bungalows.

New developments are predominantly one and two storey villas or town houses, often with “gun-barrel” layouts that are typified by straight rows of buildings sited close to side boundaries, flanked by narrow courtyards and long driveways. Such developments have created a dramatic contrast with traditional development patterns due to their modular and repetitive configuration of dwellings, their excessive scale and bulk measured relative to traditional bungalows in neighbourhoods nearby, the substantial proportion of each site that is covered by buildings and pavements, the absence of shade trees around buildings, plus extensive cutting-and-filling in proximity to site boundaries.

Within many of the newer developments, facades facing streets and driveways are dominated by wide garages, and do not incorporate a traditional “address”. Garden areas are generally distributed in small private courtyards that are substantially paved and surrounded by tall walls, in small areas of open turf along street frontages, and along narrow driveway verges. On elevated properties, extensive cut-and-fill frequently has created street frontages that are dominated by tall retaining walls and fences.

East Gosford 6: Medium Density Hillside - 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.

East Gosford 7: Medium Density Foreshore - Existing

Existing Character

On gentle to steeply sloping foreshores that have been almost entirely cleared of their original vegetation, almost every traditional bungalow allotment has been redeveloped for multi-storey apartments that display poor standards of scenic and urban design quality.

Four and five storey buildings set above sloping foreshores and cut into hillsides have created significant contrasts with the character displayed by surrounding foreshores, whether single dwellings or scenic reserves. Facing the access street, the depth of excavated foundations reduces the scale of these apartments, but does not entirely conceal them.

Existing apartment buildings are sheer-sided, capped either by flat parapets that accentuate their scale and bulk, or by gently-pitched roofs. A recently-approved building adopts the form of stepping terraces that are set into a deeply-excavated hillside. Garden areas are concentrated along foreshores, with driveways and garages located to the side and the rear of buildings, facing street frontages.

Only one traditional bungalow survives, surrounded by substantial gardens that accommodate trees and shrubs, adjoining a narrow reserve that provides foreshore access.

East Gosford 7: Medium Density Foreshore - 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.

East Gosford 8: Community Centres + Schools - Existing

Existing Character

Several properties, including one very large reserve, a regional gallery, meeting halls primary and secondary schools that provide significant gathering places for the community, as well as green backdrops contributing to the scenic or civic qualities of foreshores, residential areas, and frontages to main roads that are visually-prominent.

The landscape character of these properties varies from open playing fields, to a small main-street school, to campuses of buildings surrounded by substantial open spaces where corridors and copses of tall trees provide scenically-prominent shady backdrops to playing fields, community buildings and blocks of classroom buildings.

The gallery as well as most of the schools are modern campus-style developments, where gardens or playing fields surround substantial pavilion buildings of one and two storeys that are partly-screened by tall shady trees. Associated with the gallery, a commemorative garden and walkways are used extensively. Dedicated car-parking is provided by the gallery, gardens and nearby community buildings, but overflow parking by students at the major high school is affecting neighbouring residential areas.

Straddling the arterial road, two small schools vary from a main-street office-style building to a hill-top campus of buildings screened behind tall forest remnants that provide a scenically-prominent main road landmark.

Adjoining a major creek, a substantial series of playing fields creates an open backdrop to nearby residential areas, accommodating significant week-end gatherings and sporting events.

East Gosford 8: Community Centres + Schools - Desired

Desired Character

These properties should continue to provide community, educational and recreation services according to the needs of their surrounding residential population. The scenic and civic qualities of prominent vegetated backdrops to Gosford City's waterfronts, major roads and residential areas should be protected as well as enhanced by future development, infrastructure or landscape improvements, and by open space management.

Protect the habitat and scenic values of remnant bushland, wetland or salt marsh by retaining natural slopes and by avoiding further fragmentation of the tree canopy, particularly mature bushland remnants along any ridge, slope, waterway or road frontage that provide scenically-prominent backdrops.

Enhance the recreation and scenic potentials of playing fields by masterplanned improvements that satisfy a wide range of recreation needs, including clustered shelter plantings around existing ovals and pitches, walking trails and seating, and amenities buildings. Around carparks and along street frontages in general, protect the safety of children 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, or their predominantly low-rise residential surroundings. 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 neighbouring dwellings and their private open spaces. 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 surrounding streets or 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.

East Gosford 9: Mainstreet Centre - Existing

Existing Character

An extended precinct of local retailers, businesses, recreation and community facilities, arranged as a traditional “main street” or ribbon of development along an arterial thoroughfare, and surrounded by low-rise medium density residential neighbourhoods.

Incorporating a variety of small-to-medium scale shops and business premises, this strip includes a small supermarket, restaurants, shops and offices plus a hotel, and provides services to both local and district residents.

Lining the main street, one and two storey mid-Twentieth Century shop front buildings are visually-uncoordinated but accommodate diverse activity, with near-continuous shop-fronts and awnings. Recently, a substantial stretch of the main-street footpath was upgraded by new paving, commemorative plaques and street furniture.

Flanking a major thoroughfare, this centre is highly visible and accessible, but it experiences peak hour traffic congestion that restricts kerb-side parking. To the rear of main street buildings, there are substantial parking areas accessed from side streets and major local roads.

East Gosford 9: Mainstreet Centre - Desired

Desired Character

This should remain a mixed-use centre that provides a range of services to the surrounding district as well as some accommodation, where the civic-and-urban design quality of a prominent backdrop to a major arterial road in Gosford City are enhanced by new development that encourages high levels of street activity.

Protect and enhance existing levels of “main-street” activity by building forms that maintain the pedestrian-friendly scale of existing one and two storey shop-front developments, and also the current level of midday sunlight that is available along footpaths. Promote high levels of on-street activity by maximising the number of retailers or businesses and the continuity of shop-windows along all street and laneway 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 their low-scale residential surroundings or disrupt the established main-street development patterns of this traditional strip-shopping village. Along all public streets and laneways, 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 as well as midday sunlight along all footpaths. Vary the overall height of buildings to prevent the appearance of a continuous wall of building, and ensure that siting and form preserve 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 mainstreet centres where a wide variety of retailers are accommodated by separate buildings upon narrow-fronted allotments. Along any street or laneway, avoid the appearance of 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. Street corners should be emphasised by taller forms. Ensure that side and rear facades match the design quality of the street frontage.

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 from laneways or secondary streets 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 this centre's identity, rather than emphasising corporate sponsorship.

East Gosford 10: Scenic Buffers - Existing

Existing Character

Foreshores to creeks and waterways plus a small local reserve that are both scenically prominent and distinctive. Supporting corridors of wetland or saltmarsh, or pockets of bushland remnants, these areas also provide habitat and control foreshore erosion, but management of their ecological quality is complicated by their size or configuration.

Foreshores to Caroline Bay plus frontages to Erina Creek support mangrove and saltmarsh plant communities, standing in public reserves or on school properties. The height and density of foreshore vegetation conceals nearby buildings and provides scenically-distinctive backdrops to waterways and surrounding suburbs.

Fronting a major local thoroughfare and flanked by residential development, a bushland reserve with an area equivalent to ten or twelve house blocks supports a pocket of bushland that includes canopy and understorey, providing a scenically-distinctive landmark as well as an ecologically-valuable remnant of the original coastal moist forest.

These remnant plant communities have a high ratio of edge-to-area that compromises their ecological integrity and complicates bushland management over the long term, with natural understoreys progressively affected by rubbish, unauthorised clearing for recreation access, and incursion by environmental or noxious weeds.

East Gosford 10: Scenic Buffers - Desired

Desired Character

These ribbon reserves should remain near-natural buffers to surrounding urban areas, where active environmental management enhances the natural and scenic qualities of bushland backdrops that are visible from Gosford City's waterways, major roads and surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

Conserve the natural qualities of bushland reserves by maintaining existing slopes and minimising further clearing of natural vegetation. Avoid any land-management activities that would compromise the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of the natural plant communities that occur in these reserves. Control any infestations of noxious or environmental weeds, and progressively repair any disturbance to landforms or bushland using natural bush-regeneration techniques. Employ ecological best-practice for bushfire hazard reduction, for example mosaic burns, in order to strike a balance between scenic quality and public safety.

Where pedestrian desire lines are significant, provide low-impact pathways and boardwalks.

Advise surrounding residential property owners of the natural and scenic values of bushland remnants within these reserves, and manage adjacent private gardens to prevent the spread of noxious or environmental weeds. Prosecute illicit dumping of garden waste or rubbish into these accessible bushland reserves.

East Gosford 11: Scenic Conservation - Existing

Existing Character

Located along ridgetops plus adjoining slopes that are moderate-to-steep, public reserves that are extensively forested conserve ecologically-significant lands plus scenically-distinctive backdrops that are visible from waterways, residential areas and major thoroughfares, as well as providing buffers that separate neighbouring suburbs.

Forming part of Council's coastal reserve network, these areas remain in a substantially-natural condition, and they conserve indigenous plant communities as well as contributing to fauna corridors with regional ecological significance.

Public access is available via walking tracks.

East Gosford 11: Scenic Conservation - Desired

Desired Character

These landmark reserves should remain near-natural buffers between residential areas, where active environmental management conserves the ecological and scenic qualities of Gosford City's unique forested hillsides and ridgetops.

Conserve the natural qualities of hillside and ridgetop reserves by preventing further clearing of bushland, and avoid any land-management activity that would compromise the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of natural plant communities occurring in these reserves. Control any infestations of noxious or environmental weeds, and progressively repair any disturbance to landforms or natural vegetation using bush-regeneration techniques. Employ ecological best-practice for bushfire hazard reduction, for example mosaic burns, in order to strike a balance between conservation, scenic quality and public safety.

Where recreational or infrastructure works are necessary, ensure that natural landscape settings are not dominated by the size, siting, design or construction of new structures. Avoid disturbing natural slopes and bushland by locating works or structures primarily within existing cleared areas. Where there is no reasonable alternative, allow minor clearings in locations that have a lesser ecological value, where effective long-term management of bushland ecology would not be compromised and where the extent of scenic bushland backdrops that are visible from major roads, waterways or surrounding neighbourhoods would not be interrupted. In sloping areas and close to bushland, very-low impact construction such as light-weight framed structures with suspended floors and decks should be used, and cut-and-fill techniques should be avoided.

