

Spencer



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Spencer 1: Cottage Hillside - Existing

Existing Character

On gentle to moderate slopes that have been cleared almost entirely of their original vegetation, older subdivisions with allotments that vary from small to medium provide prominent backdrops to a major tourist route and the River.

Predominantly accommodating traditional dwelling types that once were widespread throughout Gosford City, some allotments have been redeveloped for new houses.

Facing narrow roads that are flanked by shallow swales, wide grassed verges extend into front gardens that vary from areas of open turf to a mature mix of planted trees and shrubs which "frame" individual dwellings. Occasionally, gardens around the older houses contain mature trees or isolated bushland remnants that provide distinctive neighbourhood landmarks. Front boundaries are sometimes marked by low timber fences.

Original dwellings are early-to-mid Twentieth Century cottages or bungalows which are modestly-scaled single storey timber-framed buildings, set on tall stumps, clad in simple sheet-materials or weatherboards, and capped by hipped or gabled roofs. Newer houses are typically timber-framed or brick, with pitched roofs that accentuate their inherently modest scale.

Spencer 1: Cottage Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

This area should remain a low-density residential hillside where existing scenic qualities of river backdrops are not compromised, and where new building works complement the distinctive pattern of early-to-mid Twentieth Century cottages that remains a prominent feature of this area.

Maintain and enhance existing scenic qualities of each property. Concentrate new buildings within existing clearings to retain established patterns of trees, particularly bushland located on slopes and adjacent to foreshores. Surround each new dwelling with clusters of additional trees and shrubs that provide shady street backdrops. Ensure that plantings do not include any identified noxious or environmental weeds, and remove any existing infestations. Avoid disturbing natural landforms, and on the steeper properties use low-impact construction such as suspended floors and decks rather than masonry structures that require extensive excavation or terracing. Maintain the informality of this landscape setting by avoiding wide paved driveways, large garden terraces, tall retaining walls or tall opaque fences.

Complement the siting of traditional bungalows nearby. Provide front and side boundary setbacks that are similar to neighbouring properties. Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of buildings along any street or river frontage by providing at least one wide side setback, or by stepping the shape of front and rear facades to create space for leafy gardens.

For new dwellings and additions to existing dwellings, reflect the modest scale and simple articulation of traditional early-to-mid Twentieth Century cottages. Roofs should be simple hips, gables or skillions without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves to disguise the scale and bulk of exterior walls. Use stepped floorplans, or divide floorspace into linked pavilion structures that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Screen any facades that would appear taller or longer than neighbouring dwellings by extra setbacks, or by shady balconies and verandahs. Preferably, provide parking in open carports or single-space garages that are detached from each dwelling and screened by shady trees.

Complement the scale and design character of traditional cottages by incorporating a "light-weight appearance" in all facades that would be visible from the street or River. For example, use large windows plus timber-framed balconies or verandahs, plus painted finishes and some sheet or board cladding rather than extensive plain masonry. Also provide a traditional "street address" for each dwelling, with verandahs and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the road, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any facade or street frontage.

Along the street, maintain the informal qualities of existing gently-sloping grassed verges. Facing all streets, plant the boundaries of each property with hedges or shrubs that allow filtered views of dwellings, rather than using fences that are tall and opaque. Screen all balconies or decks to protect the privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Spencer 2: Open Woodland Hillsides - Existing

Existing Character

An established area of detached dwellings on medium-to-large allotments that are elevated above the nearby River. Partly-cleared of their original vegetation, these properties nevertheless contribute scenically-distinctive backdrops that are visible from the River and a major tourist route.

Facing narrow streets that are flanked by swales, grassed verges extend into turfed front gardens that are planted with a scattering of shrubs. Facing the National Park, back yards retain a canopy of tall bushland remnants that are visible from the River and tourist route above rooftops, providing visually-prominent neighbourhood features as well as contributing to scenic quality of the River's bushland backdrops.

Houses mostly date from the mid-to-late Twentieth Century, and generally are modestly-scaled timber-framed buildings of one or two storeys. Street facades incorporate a traditional mix of balconies and verandahs, living rooms and entrances.

Spencer 2: Open Woodland Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain leafy residential hillsides where the scenic quality of woodland backdrops are protected and enhanced by new indigenous canopy trees surrounding each new development, and by new buildings that do not dominate their landscape setting.

In these bushfire prone areas, 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 exclude sparks and flying embers.

Conserve existing scenic qualities of each property by retaining natural slopes, rock faces and continuity of the bushland canopy. Concentrate new buildings and works within existing clearings. Future garden plantings should incorporate primarily indigenous tree-species. Avoid planting noxious or environmental weeds, and remove any existing infestations.

Ensure that building works would not compromise existing natural or scenic qualities. Avoid disturbing natural landforms by using low-impact framed construction with suspended floors rather than masonry structures that require extensive excavation or tall basement walls. On prominent slopes, avoid extensive garden terraces or tall retaining walls, and conceal wastewater treatment systems. Ensure that wastewater discharges would not compromise the scenic quality of hillside or waterfront bushland, or encourage the growth of weeds.

From any street, avoid the appearance of continuous walls of development. Maintain the established irregular pattern of buildings that are scattered across hillsides. Setbacks to side boundaries and any street should be similar to existing dwellings on each property as well as nearby.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings. Use strongly-articulated forms that appear to sit beneath the canopy, and stepping floor-levels that follow natural slopes. For large buildings, employ irregular floorplans such as pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Disguise building scale by incorporating gently-pitched roofs with wide shady eaves, verandahs and extensive windows, plus a variety of light-weight cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry.

Along the street, maintain informal or natural qualities of existing verges that are either wide grassy slopes or bushland. Plant the street boundary of each property with hedges or shrubs that allow filtered views of dwellings, rather than using fences that are tall and opaque. Provide a traditional "street address" for each dwelling, with verandahs and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the road, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any facade or street frontage. Screen all balconies and decks to protect the privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Spencer 3: Woodland Hillsides - Existing

Existing Character

Located upon moderate to steep slopes, a row of detached dwellings is nestled beneath a near-continuous canopy of bushland remnants that provide scenically-distinctive backdrops to a major tourist route and the River.

Medium-to-large allotments face a narrow road that is flanked by swales and a steep verge that supports tall bushland remnants. House-gardens are an ad-hoc mix of planted shrubs and bushland remnants.

Dwellings range in age and style from early-to-mid Twentieth Century cottages and bungalows to later-century two storey houses of brick. A number of properties have shed structures attached to caravans that are permanently-parked.

Parking is located in undercrofts, carports or open driveways.

Spencer 3: Woodland Hillsides - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain very leafy residential foreshores where new development conserves the natural and scenic qualities of state-significant River backdrops, and where prominent settings are not dominated by new building works.

In these bushfire prone areas, 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 exclude sparks and flying embers.

Conserve existing scenic qualities of each property by retaining natural slopes, rock faces and continuity of the bushland canopy. Concentrate new buildings and works within existing clearings. Ensure that future garden plantings do not include exotic trees plus identified noxious or environmental weeds, and remove any existing weed infestations.

Ensure that building works would not compromise existing natural or scenic qualities. Avoid disturbing natural landforms by using low-impact framed construction with suspended floors rather than masonry structures that require extensive excavation or tall basement walls. On prominent slopes, avoid extensive garden terraces or tall retaining walls, and conceal wastewater treatment systems. Ensure that wastewater discharges would not compromise the scenic quality of hillside or waterfront bushland, or encourage the growth of weeds.

From the River and street frontage, avoid the appearance of continuous walls of development. Maintain the established irregular pattern of buildings that are scattered across rocky foreshores and hillsides. Setbacks to side boundaries and street should be similar to existing dwellings on each property as well as nearby.

Minimise the scale and bulk of new buildings. Use strongly-articulated forms that appear to sit beneath the canopy, and stepping floor-levels that follow natural slopes. For large buildings, employ irregular floorplans such as pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Disguise building scale by incorporating gently-pitched roofs with wide shady eaves, verandahs and extensive windows, plus a variety of light-weight cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry.

Along the street, maintain the natural quality of existing bushland verges. Plant the street boundary of each property with hedges or shrubs that allow filtered views of dwellings, rather than using fences that are tall and opaque. Provide a traditional "street address" for each dwelling, with verandahs and living rooms or front doors that are visible from the road, and avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any facade or street frontage. Screen all balconies and decks to protect the privacy and amenity that are enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings.

Spencer 4: Caravan Parks - Existing

Existing Character

This prominent waterfront property supports a mix of permanent, week-end and tourist accommodation.

Created by landfilling a former saltmarsh, river-frontages of this property retain some mangroves that partly-screen an

ad-hoc arrangement of buildings, shelters and caravans.

Although not scenically-attractive, this property is an established feature of the River environment and provides low-cost accommodation.

Spencer 4: Caravan Parks - Desired

Desired Character

These properties located in scenically-prominent settings should remain camping grounds and caravan parks that provide a combination of holiday and semi-permanent accommodation.

Maintain and enhance existing scenic qualities of River backdrops. Conserve all indigenous vegetation that provides prominent backdrops to the River or shade. Complement surrounding bushland by encouraging natural regeneration and planting new indigenous trees and shrubs, particularly along river and road frontages. Stabilise riverbanks and encourage mangrove regrowth. Ensure that future plantings do not include any identified noxious or environmental weeds, and remove any existing infestations.

Ensure that structures would not visually-dominate these scenic settings. Limit foreshore building works to refurbishment of any existing timber-framed boatsheds or timber-piered jetties, and sea-walls. Distribute buildings, camping and caravan sites away from immediate riverfrontages and road frontages so that they can be concealed by existing or new screen plantings. Conceal site services and ensure that any wastewater discharges would not compromise the composition or scenic quality of waterfront bushland, encourage weed growth, or affect water quality within the River.

Spencer 5: Village Centre - Existing

Existing Character

Facing a major tourist route and waterfront, two shop buildings include an established general store that serves residents of the surrounding river, foreshore and valley settlements as well as tourists, and a former cafe-restaurant.

This centre includes a foreshore reserve that has publicly-accessible jetties, an amenities block, parking areas and boat ramps, together with an abandoned swimming enclosure. An improvements program for these public areas has been adopted by the Council, according to a design that was guided by community input.

The store is a traditional timber-framed building with distinctive features such as painted signs mounted on a broad awning that protects substantial timber framed shopfronts as well as providing shelter for outdoor cafe seating on a raised verandah. The other shop-building is a more-modern structure, and a number of traditional cottages are located between the two retail buildings.

Spencer 5: Village Centre - Desired

Desired Character

This should remain a low-intensity centre that services residents from the surrounding area as well as visitors, and also may incorporate low-scale accommodation. Future redevelopment, including alterations and additions to existing buildings, should complement the quality of surrounding scenic settings as well as enhancing existing standards of urban design quality along the main street.

Enhance the scenic quality of predominantly-natural settings. Retain existing trees as well as planting new trees to provide avenues along street verges and leafy backdrops to each building. Next to any neighbouring dwelling, provide wide setbacks as buffers that accommodate a screen of existing or new trees.

Maximise pedestrian amenity along all street frontages. Provide shop-windows across almost the entire frontage of each retail building, protected from sun and weather by awnings or lightly-framed colonnades and balconies that sit next to kerb-side parking. Adjust building forms to maximise midday sunlight along the footpath, and encourage outdoor seating in locations that are sunny, sheltered and commercially-visible. Maintain a modest pedestrian-friendly scale by screening any second storey facing the street with terraces or balconies. Provide shady front gardens for any residential buildings, together with a traditional "street address" that includes verandahs and living rooms or front doors which are visible from the road. For all buildings, avoid wide garages that would visually-dominate any facade or interrupt pedestrian activity along street frontages, and also conceal all storage areas from

streets.

Avoid the appearance of a continuous wall of development or uniform building heights along any street. Vary both the shape and height of all visible facades, with roofs and parapet heights that step from one building to the next, and street corners that are emphasised by slightly-taller forms. Roofs should be simple hips, gables or skillions without elaborate articulation, gently-pitched to minimise the height of ridges, and flanked by wide eaves that shade upper-storey terraces.

Disguise the scale and bulk of new building works. All visible facades should employ extensive windows that are shaded by wide eaves, lightly-framed balconies, verandahs or exterior sunshades, together with painted finishes and some board or sheet cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry. Upper storeys should provide an extra setback from the walls below, or a screen of balconies and verandahs. Side and rear facades should match the design quality of the street frontage.

Provide parking in locations that are appropriate for a small retail village. In addition to kerbside parking, locate additional off-street parking to the rear of buildings, accessed by unobtrusive vehicle entrances that do not interrupt the continuity of shopfronts and associated pedestrian activity. Screen driveways and outdoor parking courtyards by hedges and shady trees. Contribute to co-ordinated street improvements that include dedicated pedestrian crossings, footpaths, 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 this local centre.

Spencer 6: Community Centres + Schools - Existing

Existing Character

Facing a major tourist route, significant services for the surrounding residential community are provided by a primary school, playing fields and a community hall.

These properties have been partly-cleared of their original vegetation, but both retain a fringe of tall trees that are either bushland remnants or planted.

The school includes a timber-framed structure that dates from the mid Twentieth Century, maintaining a visible link to this long-established village. The hall and playing field amenities blocks are simple timber or brick structures that sit next to ball courts and a carparking area.

Spencer 6: Community Centres + Schools - Desired

Desired Character

These properties should continue to provide community, educational and recreation services according to needs of local and / or regional populations. The scenic and civic qualities of prominent vegetated backdrops to Gosford City's riverfronts, major roads and residential areas should be protected as well as enhanced by future development of buildings, infrastructure and landscaping, as well as by appropriate open space management.

Protect the habitat or scenic values of existing trees by retaining natural slopes and avoiding further clearing of canopy, particularly mature bushland remnants along any slope or road frontage that are scenically-prominent.

Enhance the recreation and scenic potentials of landscaped areas and playing fields by co-ordinated 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.

Ensure that new developments (including alterations to existing buildings and infrastructure works) do not dominate natural and streetscape settings. Surround buildings with landscaped areas that maintain the scenic quality of prominent bushland backdrops or existing corridors of planted trees. Ensure that height and siting of new structures preserve the current 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 street boundaries, provide for surveillance and safety by planting hedges or by using fences that are low or see-through.

Promote high levels of visible activity around buildings by adapting elements of traditional shopping villages, such as extensive windows and building entrances which are located to reveal indoor activity, as well as footpaths, verandahs or colonnades that concentrate pedestrian movements around clearly-identified building entrances, carparks and surrounding streets.

Facing the River and any road, avoid the appearance of long buildings or uniform height-structures. Use well-articulated building forms, such as a series of linked pavilion structures that are capped by individual roofs and surrounded by landscaped courtyards. For visually-prominent facades, vary the shape and height of walls to identify major entrances, 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.

Spencer 7: River Grazing Flats - Existing

Existing Character

Flanking a major tourist route, these low-lying frontages to the River and its major inlets were substantially cleared of their original vegetation to accommodate grazing.

These areas include the flatter portions of some larger properties which also have bushland on steeper slopes that are not suitable for grazing. Along road and waterfrontages, as well as along some paddock fencelines, narrow rows of bushland remnants survive and contribute to the distinctive non-urban character of this area.

Typically, dwellings are not visually- or scenically-intrusive. On some properties, dwellings and structures located immediately beside the road date from the mid-to-late Nineteenth Century, and maintain visible links with the area's early European settlement. However, the majority of properties have newer buildings that vary in size and style from early-to-mid Twentieth Century timber-framed cottages to newer and larger one and two storey brick houses. Most buildings are sited well back from road frontages.

Spencer 7: River Grazing Flats - Desired

Desired Character

These areas should remain productive rural landscapes that accommodate broad-hectare livestock or agricultural activities, together with a scattering of residential and small-scale tourist activities that do not interfere with the preferred primary-productive uses. Future development and land management should enhance the distinctive scenic qualities of prominent backdrops to the River or Gosford City's major tourist routes.

Conserve scenic qualities and habitat values by retaining natural slopes and continuity of existing bushland which includes trees and shrub-layers on drier lands plus mangroves and marshes. Conserve existing bushland and bushland remnants that provide scenically-prominent backdrops to the River and any creeks, as well as facing any road or nearby property. In particular, retain existing trees along road verges and frontages, as well as along the side and rear boundaries to each property. Restore banks to the River and any creeks by indigenous plantings, and restore the desired pattern of "green" property boundaries by new screen plantings of indigenous trees. Noxious or environmental weeds must not be planted, and existing infestations should be controlled. Concentrate new buildings and works within existing clearings, away from foreshores, watercourses or low-lying areas that are prone to flooding. Use low-impact framed construction with suspended floors rather than masonry structures that would require extensive filling, particularly on flood-prone flats or visually-prominent slopes.

Achieve bushfire asset protection zones preferably by thinning the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Locate new dwellings and accommodation buildings to avoid extensive additional clearing, and use fire-resistant design and construction techniques for all new structures as well as effective land management. Screen all verandahs, windows and suspended floors to exclude bushfire embers and sparks.

Complement the existing informal landscape quality of buildings that are scattered across paddocks and surrounded by trees. Locate all new buildings and works (other than roadside stalls) well back from road frontages, and vary both the siting and form of adjacent structures in order to avoid the appearance of continuous walls of development or visually-dense clusters of buildings. Promote natural or informal scenic qualities of River and road frontages by avoiding opaque fences, urban-style entrance walls, extensive landfilling or terracing, and large commercial signs.

Conceal wastewater treatment systems, and ensure that any discharges would not compromise the composition or scenic quality of bushland, encourage weed growth, or affect water quality within any watercourse. Limit foreshore building works to the refurbishment of existing boatsheds, sea walls and jetties.

Ensure that new buildings would not visually-dominate any property within these scenically-prominent settings. Minimise scale and bulk by using strongly-articulated forms, such as stepped floor-levels that follow natural slopes, and irregular floorplans, such as linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Roofs should be simple forms without elaborate articulation, with wide eaves plus gentle pitches to minimise height and scale of each building.

Disguise the scale of facades that would be visible from the River or any roadway. Use extensive windows and shady verandahs, as well as a variety of exterior finishes and cladding rather than expanses of plain masonry or metal sheeting. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with scale and design quality of the principal structures upon any property by using similar roof pitches and eaves, plus appropriate exterior materials and finishes.

Spencer 8: Scenic Buffers (Private Properties) - Existing

Existing Character

Visible from a major tourist route, these areas include moderate-to-steeply sloping portions of rural properties that are not suitable for grazing.

Ranging in condition from partly-modified to natural, these areas accommodate bushland and rocky escarpments. They complement the scenic and ecological values of nearby bushland reserves, and significantly expand Gosford City's natural asset base as well as contributing to scenic qualities of the City's peri-urban areas.

Spencer 8: Scenic Buffers (Private Properties) - Desired

Desired Character

These should remain buffers between farming properties and bushland reserves, where existing natural and scenic qualities of backdrops to the River or Gosford City's major tourist routes would not be compromised by further clearing, by intensive development that would be visually-intrusive, or inappropriate land management.

Conserve natural scenic qualities and habitat values by maintaining natural slopes, rock outcrops, stream banks, and existing bushland that includes mangroves and marshes along shorelines. Minimise further clearing by concentrating new buildings and works within existing clearings, away from scenically-prominent foreshores or hillsides, as well as away from watercourses and low-lying areas that are prone to flooding. Where further clearing cannot be avoided, conserve bushland in blocks that have a low proportion of perimeter-to-area in order to promote sustainable long-term management, in locations that maintain existing scenic quality and that also provide effective habitat for native fauna. Avoid exotic trees as well as any identified noxious or environmental weeds, and control any existing infestations. Use low-impact framed construction with suspended floors rather than masonry structures that would require extensive additional cut-and-fill, particularly on visually-prominent slopes or next to bushland.

Achieve bushfire asset protection zones preferably by thinning the canopy to establish breaks between existing trees. Locate new dwellings and accommodation buildings to avoid extensive additional clearing, and use fire-resistant design and construction techniques for all new structures together with effective land management to reduce bushfire hazard. Screen all verandahs, windows and suspended floors to exclude bushfire embers and sparks.

Complement the scenically-distinctive quality of bushland backdrops. Vary both the siting and form of adjacent structures to avoid the appearance of continuous walls of development or visually-dense clusters of buildings. Avoid tall opaque fences and retaining walls, as well as wide terraces and driveways that would be scenically-intrusive. Conceal wastewater treatment systems and ensure that any discharges would not compromise the composition or scenic quality of bushland, encourage weed growth, or affect water quality within any stream. Limit building works along River foreshores to the refurbishment of existing boatsheds, sea walls and jetties.

Ensure that new buildings would not visually-dominate any scenically-prominent backdrop to the River or major tourist route. Minimise scale and bulk by using strongly-articulated forms, such as stepped floor-levels that follow natural slopes, and irregular floorplans, such as linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Roofs should be simple forms without elaborate articulation, with wide eaves plus gentle

pitches to minimise height and scale of each building. Use extensive windows and shady verandahs, as well as a variety of exterior finishes and cladding, rather than expanses of plain masonry or metal sheeting. Ensure that outbuildings are compatible with scale and design quality of the principal structures upon any property by using similar roof pitches and eaves, together with complementary exterior materials and finishes.

Spencer 9: Scenic Buffers (Reserves) - Existing

Existing Character

Flanking a major tourist route, these long and narrow foreshore reserves accommodate a variety of native vegetation which contributes to the scenic quality of backdrops facing the River and major roads.

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

Spencer 9: Scenic Buffers (Reserves) - 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 the River and Gosford City's major tourist routes.

Conserve existing natural qualities by retaining existing slopes and minimising further clearing of natural vegetation. Protect the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of natural plant communities in these reserves by appropriate design and construction for infrastructure works, and by effective land-management. Control any infestations of noxious or environmental weeds, and progressively repair any existing disturbance to landforms or bushland with natural bush-regeneration techniques. Employ ecological best-practice for bushfire hazard reduction in order to strike a balance between environmental quality and public safety.

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

Spencer 10: Scenic Conservation - Existing

Existing Character

These natural plateau and foreshore areas are part of the National Park reserve, but also include private lands that are undeveloped or where buildings are concealed in small clearings.

Providing expansive natural backdrops to the River and surrounding rural areas, these areas are scenically- and ecologically-significant. They contribute a landscape barrier to the westwards expansion of urban development within the Central Coast region.

These areas also conserve extensive aboriginal cultural artefacts and values, as well as scattered remains of early-European rural settlement.

Spencer 10: Scenic Conservation - Desired

Desired Character

These areas predominantly should remain conservation reserves, with a scattering of privately-owned lands that accommodate very low-impact residential development. Reserves should remain cornerstones of Gosford City's environmental identity, preserving natural and scenic features that are important elements of Aboriginal heritage, as well as scattered remains of the early colonial settlement.

Conserve the long-term diversity, vigour and habitat value of natural plant communities within reserves by preventing development, land-management or activities that would be intensive or intrusive. Maintain natural slopes, rock outcrops, watercourses and stream banks, as well as all existing bushland including mangroves and marshes near foreshores. Avoid further clearing by confining new works to existing clearings, and away from scenically-prominent foreshores, hillsides or road frontages, as well as away from watercourses and low-lying areas that are prone to

flooding. Where clearing cannot be avoided, locate works to minimise natural and scenic impacts. Use low-impact framed construction with suspended floors rather than masonry structures that would require extensive additional cut-and-fill, particularly on visually-prominent slopes or next to bushland. Apply best-practice ecological management techniques to remove noxious and environmental weeds, as well as for bushfire hazard reduction works that strike a balance between environmental quality and public safety. Conserve Aboriginal artefacts and cultural sites, as well as structural remains of early European settlement in this region.

Achieve bushfire asset protection zones within existing clearings. Use fire-resistant design and construction techniques for all new structures as well as effective land management to reduce bushfire hazard. Screen all verandahs, windows and suspended floors to exclude bushfire embers and sparks.

Maintain natural and scenic qualities of surrounding bushland. Ensure that structures are small-scale or widely-separated to avoid the appearance of continuous walls of development or visually-dense clusters of buildings. Avoid tall opaque fences and retaining walls, as well as broad paved areas that would be scenically-intrusive. Conceal wastewater treatment systems and ensure that any discharges would not compromise the composition or scenic quality of bushland, encourage weed growth, or affect water quality within any stream.

Ensure that new buildings would not visually-dominate any scenically-prominent backdrop to the River or a major tourist route. Minimise scale and bulk by using strongly-articulated forms, such as stepped floor-levels that follow natural slopes, and irregular floorplans, such as linked pavilions that are capped by individual roofs and separated by landscaped courtyards. Roofs should be simple forms without elaborate articulation, with wide eaves plus gentle pitches to minimise height and scale of each building. Use extensive windows and shady verandahs, as well as a variety of exterior finishes and cladding, rather than expanses of plain masonry or metal sheeting.

