

Volumes 2

16. Landscape Master Plan



Sapphire

Landscape Masterplan Report

prepared for Sapphire Beach Development Pty Ltd
August 2006



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Introduction

This landscape masterplan has been prepared as part of the Concept Plan for the proposed residential and tourist accommodation at 740/742 Pacific Highway, Sapphire Beach, Coffs Harbour. This Concept Plan is being submitted to the NSW Government Department of Planning pursuant to S75M of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The proposal redevelopment of the site comprises a maximum of 200 dwellings and subdivision under community, torrens and strata titles. The landscape masterplan, and Concept Plan, have been prepared in response to the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs) for the project. These requirements were prepared in consultation with the relevant government agencies.

The Landscape Masterplan includes two sections. The first considers the existing site and its surrounds. This includes an assessment of existing views to the site from public locations, site analysis studies, identification of the character of the surrounding land uses and an analysis of the existing site character. The second section details the landscape proposals for the redevelopment. The landscape masterplan is to be reviewed in conjunction with the Concept Plan prepared by PTW, Sydney.

Section One

Site Analysis



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1.1 Site Location

Pelican Beach is located north of Coffs Harbour between Korora and Sapphire. The site is east of the Pacific Highway and fronts onto Campbells Beach. The existing resort represents a small part of the almost continuous development that currently exists between Coffs Harbour and Sapphire. This development includes pockets of residential development, tourist facilities, public open space and reserve.

The site is accessed from the Pacific Highway. At Pelican Beach, the highway is approximately 260 metres from the Pacific Ocean. The landscape is undulating with the Korora Basin to the west of the highway. The basin includes a series of natural drainage lines that ultimately drain under the highway and to the ocean. The narrow corridor of development to the east of the highway is also undulating with a series of vegetated headlands and creeks. Pelican Beach is located between two ridgelines, approximately 450 metres apart. The first traverses the northern part of Coachmans Close, south of the site. The second ridgeline runs west to east from the highway at Sapphire Beach Apartments. Located below the highway and below the ridgelines, much of Pelican Beach is tucked into a depression.



Illustration 1 - Site Location

1.2 Site Context

The Sapphire development is seeking to establish new tourist/residential development at the Pelican Beach Resort site. As part of site planning, and to establish an appropriate development character, it will be important to consider the character of the site context. This process will assist in establishing a character for the development site that is appropriate and sympathetic to the site surrounds. The proposed tourist/residential development will respect and contribute to the existing character of the surrounding landscape. The following illustration provides a first glance impression of the land uses within a 1km radius of the project site.



Illustration 2 - Site Context

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The locality to the proposed tourist/residential development includes:

- Korora;
- Opal Cove Resort;
- Hills Beach Reserve;
- residential area accessed from Coachmans Close;
- Nautilus Resort;
- Sapphire Beach Apartments;
- Sapphire to the north;
- Korora Basin accessed from Old Coast Road.

The following is a brief description of the character of these locations within the Pelican Beach site context.

1.2.1 Korora

The northern extent of the residential area of Korora is approximately 1km to the south of Pelican Beach. Korora is located on the eastern side of the Pacific Highway between the highway and Korora Beach. It is accessed from James Small Drive off the Pacific Highway. James Small Drive meets the highway at the southern and northern extents of Korora. It is the main through road within the settlement.

Korora represents part of the continuous development between the Pacific Highway and the coastline north of Colts Harbour to Sapphire. The settlement partially retains its identity as a separate settlement by being accessed from the highway at only two locations. Korora is also separated from other residential areas by the Pacific Bay Resort to the south and the Opal Cove Resort to the north.

Most of Korora represents an established residential area, however, there is some recent residential development immediately to the east of the highway. The street layout is organic in form with road locations determined by the undulating, and often steep topography. There are many mature garden and street trees and areas of reserves located along a series of lagoons. There is also a large area of park on the beach front. The overall character is of a leafy, attractive suburb. The road verges are grassed and are generally without kerb and gutter.

The topography at Korora is undulating but in general falls from the highway to the coastline. The settlement is located between the northern headland of Charlesworth Bay and the rocky point north of Korora Beach. The undulating landscape falls to two main drainage lines. The southern drains to the ocean at the southern end of Korora Beach and the northern drains to the southern end of Opal Cove Beach.

The majority of lots in this area appear to have been established at approximately the same time, and are generally in the range of 600 to 800m². Housing styles are varied, reflecting different eras of construction. Materials include brick, masonry and timber. New homes in the area tend to be of rendered blockwork with contemporary detailing.

West of James Small Drive, there are some remnant rural and banana properties. There is also a new subdivision which includes new homes and houses currently under construction. These newer homes tend to be of rendered blockwork with tile roofs. The street layout in the new residential area is also organic in format culminating in a number of cul-de-sacs. There are no street trees in this newer residential area.

At the southern extent of Korora a number of new large homes are currently under construction along Breakers Way. These homes are fairly contemporary in style compared to homes in the older area of Korora. They feature rendered, painted blockwork, contemporary roof lines and timber detailing. These homes are located on the northern slope of the ridgeline between Korora and the Pacific Bay Resort.

Korora includes a local school located on James Small Drive and a number of small resort facilities. There is a carpark and public access to the beach at the end of Sandy Beach Road. The Hills Beach Reserve is accessed by Norman Hill Road.



James Small Drive



Korora public school



holiday units, Korora Bay Drive



new residences east of highway



residences on an Breakers Way



Opal Cove Beach looking north



Opal Cove Beach looking south



parkland on foreshore



Norman Hill Drive



sportsfields



James Hill Drive

1.2.2 Opal Cove Resort

Opal Cove Resort is located approximately 600m south of the Pelican Beach site on the eastern side of the highway. The resort is accessed by Opal Boulevard. This established resort includes a golf course, a large resort building, recreational facilities such as a pool and tennis courts, an area of residential development and manicured streetscapes and gardens. The resort is separated from Korora to the south by the Korora Beach Reserve and a discontinuation of James Small Drive. The resort is separated from the residential area to the north by Pine Brush Creek, an area of reserve on the ridgeline and the headland at the northern end of Opal Cove Beach.

From the highway, the prominent visual characteristics of the resort include the mature fig trees lining Opal Boulevard and the cultivated greens of the golf course.

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1.2.3 Coachmans Close Residential Area

A newer residential area is located north of Opal Cove Resort and is also accessed from the highway by Opal Boulevard. This area is located along Coachmans Close and Daintree Drive. This residential precinct is immediately south of the Pelican Beach site. This development includes an organic layout with a number of cul-de-sacs. Homes are typically large and are either of brick or rendered block with a tiled roof. Gardens are new and there are few large trees. Most of the homes in this area are located on a south facing slope and subsequently look to the south rather than to the north. There are a small number of homes, approximately ten, that are located overlooking Pelican Beach. These homes are at the northern end of Coachmans Close or are accessed from Beachfront Close. A natural feature to this pocket of residential development is the heavily vegetated headland between Opal Cove Beach and Campbells Beach.



1.2.4 744 Pacific Highway & the Quality Nautilus Resort

Immediately north of the Pelican Beach site is a narrow site of residential units. These are located at 744 Pacific Highway and are accessed from the same highway exit as the Pelican Beach Resort. The units are staggered down the hill between the highway and Campbell's Beach. They are of rendered blockwork and tile construction with a number of balconies overlooking the Pelican Beach site. The unit development includes a small area of open space immediately behind the beach. This area includes a number of mature Norfolk Pines and a small area of manicured grass and low gardens.

The Nautilus Resort is to the north of these units and is also accessed by the same highway exit. This resort site drops off quickly from the highway and the bulk of the resort is located below the highway away from view. This resort includes resort facilities such as tennis courts, a swimming pool, a restaurant in addition to a number of individual tourist dwellings. The buildings are scattered throughout sub-tropical gardens. The buildings are typically of rendered blockwork and are painted white with terracotta tile roofs.



entry to 744 Pacific Highway



access north of Pelican Beach



units at 744 Pacific Highway



drive way entry to resorts & units



foreshore at Nautilus Resort



Nautilus Resort pool area



Nautilus Resort holiday dwellings



Nautilus Resort street & gardens

1.2.5 Sapphire Beach Apartments

This high density residential development is located on the ridgeline to the north of Pelican Beach and represents the furthestmost location from which the Pelican Beach site can be viewed east of the highway. This development includes two main towers located at the top of the site and a series of connected smaller buildings to the south. The residential dwellings are located on the high ground adjacent to the highway. A series of paved pathways provide access between the buildings and ultimately lead to a timber staircase. A series of steps and landings give access to the communal facilities that are located behind the beach.

Significant natural features of this site include the vegetated drainage line to the south of the development. This drains out to Campbell's Beach. The other natural feature is the large group of Hoop Pines in the building surrounds. Given that the apartments are located on a ridgeline, these trees are a distinct visual feature when travelling along the highway. These trees are visible from the entry to the Pelican Beach Resort and the Nautilus Resort. The large hoop pine groups and vegetation along the drainage line assist in offsetting the bulk of the unit buildings.

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The buildings are rendered blockwork and are painted in a light colour. Subsequently, they are visible from the highway, sites to the south, from the beach and from the water.



hoop pines south of apartments



western facade of the apartments



facilities behind beach



one of main apartment buildings

1.2.6 Sapphire Residential Area

This is a small residential pocket accessed from Sapphire Crescent off the Pacific Highway. This is an older residential area although a number of new large homes are currently under construction. Building materials are varied and include timber, brick, rendered blockwork and contemporary claddings. Emerald Avenue, off Sapphire Crescent, provides access to an informal carpark and turn-around area behind Campbell's Beach.



homes on Emerald Avenue with
Sapphire Apartments behind



Emerald Avenue



Sapphire Crescent



Sapphire Crescent

1.2.7 Korora Basin, west of highway

The land to the west of the highway is part of the Korora Basin and is relatively steep. It includes remnant banana farms, small rural holdings, residential properties and pockets of remnant vegetation. Immediately west of the Pelican Beach site, the Old Coast Road provides the main access to properties within the basin. This road leaves the highway opposite the access to the Opal Cove Resort and rejoins the highway north of the Pelican Beach site, opposite Sapphire Gardens.



view from Old Coast Road over
banana plantation

1.3 Site Analysis

1.3.1 Topographical Analysis

The project site is located between the Pacific Highway and Campbells Beach with a fall from 27.000 at the highway to 6.00 on the foreshore. The site has previously been developed with an Italian restaurant and carpark on the higher part of the site, the main resort buildings approximately halfway down and on the lower level of the site and the resort recreational facilities on the lower ground behind the beach. Illustration 3 provides an overview of the topography of the site.

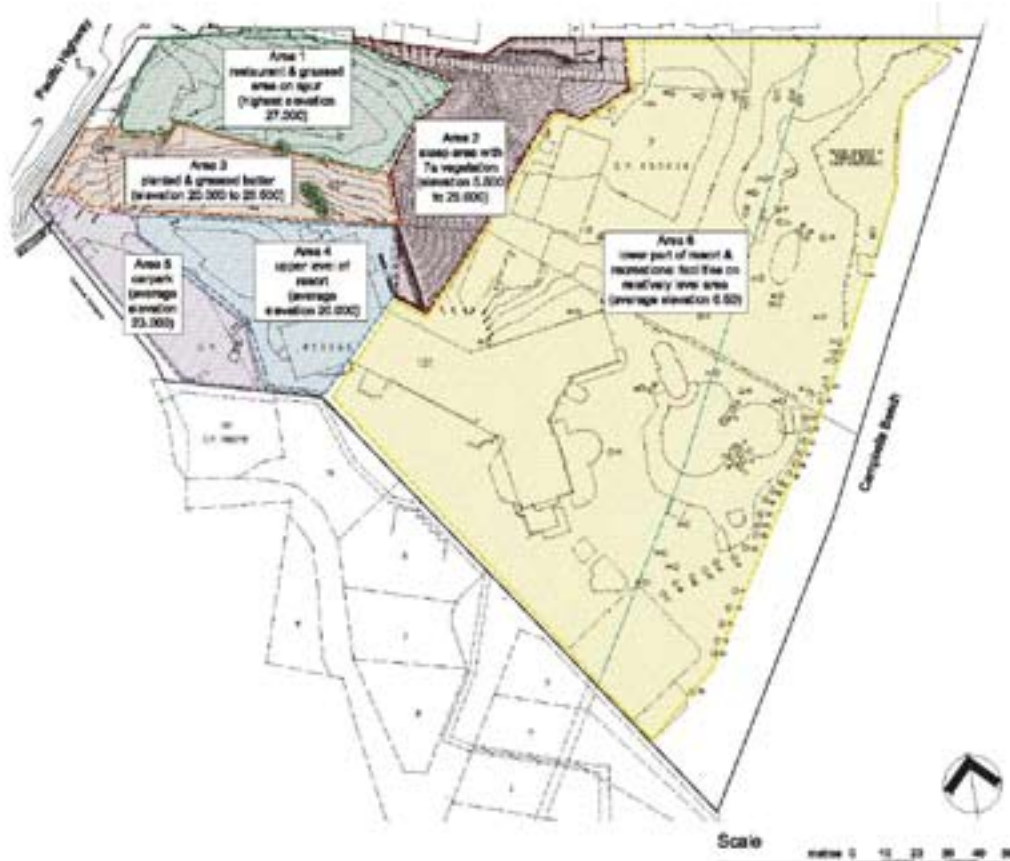


Illustration 3 - Topographical Analysis

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1.4 Site Character

The following illustration identifies key site character areas with a description of each character area type following.



not to scale

LEGEND

	character area type 1		character area type 5
	character area type 2		character area type 6
	character area type 3		character area type 7
	character area type 4		character area type 8

Illustration 5 - Site Character Analysis

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1.4.1 Character Area Type 1 *existing access road and carpark*

This character area type includes two locations. The first is the existing entry to the Pelican Beach Resort, former Italian restaurant and associated carparking. The second is located south of the lower resort building and is an elongated carparking area with landscaping. The existing character of these locations is of a highly modified landscape with a focus on built infrastructure including road pavement, kerbing, services, drainage and signage. Both areas include retaining walls along their southern extent. The landscape surrounds to these areas are also highly manipulated with a focus on gardens of exotic species, in particular, palms and sub-tropical species. The lower carparking area includes a number of shade trees, however, due to the limited size of planting beds these are mostly struggling with the growing conditions. These locations are highly maintained, however, they generally appear fairly dated. Some garden areas includes species that are now environmental weeds or are deemed inappropriate plant choices by the local authority e.g. Umbrella Trees.



former Italian restaurant and carpark



entry to existing Pelican Beach Resort



resort entry



loop road outside resort entry



retaining wall and landscaping between access & carpark



lower carpark

1.4.2 Character Area Type 2 *elevated grassed area with isolated trees*

This character area type is located on the highest part of the site, east of the former Italian restaurant. The area is a grassed spur with an easterly aspect. It overlooks the pocket of 7(a) vegetation and the lower part of the site. This area includes a scattering of isolated trees. The most visually obvious of these are a pair of Hoop Pines just to the south of the ridgeline, a single Hoop Pine further to the south and a line of four Hoop Pines on the southeastern extent of the grassed area. Other trees include a Lilly Pilly, Mango tree and a Norfolk Island Pine. Given the age and species of these trees, it appears that all the trees at this location have been planted at some stage. A number of the Hoop Pines are showing signs of illness with yellowing foliage. Features of this location are the elevation, the easterly aspect and the ocean views.



grassed spur with planted landscape trees and views to the ocean

1.4.3 Character Area Type 3 *grassed batter with landscaping*

This area is located south of the former restaurant and elevated grassed spur. It represents one of the steeper parts of the site with a fall from 28.500 to 20.000. The area is part of the landscaped surrounds to the resort and includes isolated trees and grass. The location is south facing. Species include exotics such as Leopard Trees and native species (not local) such as a Bunya Pine.



looking north to resort entry



Hoop Pines & Bunya Pine at top of batter



looking from access road into resort

1.4.4 Character Area Type 4 *7(a) vegetation*

This area represents the sleepest part of the resort site with an approximate slope of 1:2. The area is east of the grassed spur and extends to just above the recreational facilities associated with the resort. The area is zoned 7(a) Environment Protection Habitat/Catchment. The vegetation is described as Dry Sclerophyll Forest and is mostly regrowth vegetation. This pocket of vegetation is approximately 4000 square metres in size. The vegetation pocket is currently weed infested, particularly at the edges. The area represents one of only two pockets of remnant vegetation on the site. It includes a number of mature trees.



western edge of 7(a) zone with weeds at interface between vegetation and grassed spur



eastern edge of 7(a) zone adjacent to existing recreational area of resort



northern edge of 7(a) vegetation with weed infestation adjacent to existing access

1.4.5 Character Area Type 5 *existing landscaped recreational area*

This character area is the largest at the site and covers the recreational facilities and open spaces associated with the existing resort. There are two main areas with the first east of the 7(a) vegetation. This space includes a basketball court, open grassed area with BBQs, a childrens playground, a beach volleyball court and a mini golf course. There are also a number of isolated trees with the most common species being Norfolk Island Pines, Screw Pines (*Pandanus pedunculatus*), Coastal Banksias (*Banksia integrifolia*). This area is relatively level and is located at the lowest part of the site. There is an existing depression at RL5.500 just to the east of the tennis court. The second location of this type is to the east of the main resort building and includes the pool, additional tennis courts, the access to Campbell's Beach and an area of parkland behind the beach. This area is slightly more manicured than the grassed open space. The pool area sits immediately behind the beach with the pool located below the dune level. The immediate surrounds include paving, shade shelters, tree planting of *Pandanus pedunculatus* and sub-tropical species.

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