

# Urban Context Study

## Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct Rezoning Taree

August 2008  
(Issue 1)

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## Executive Summary

The Urban Context Study in relation to the land contained within the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct investigates how the proposed mixed use rezoning of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct will fit within the context of both Taree City and the Greater Taree area. The Urban Context Study is intended to inform the master planning process and rezoning for the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct.

The Urban Context Study considers:

- The statutory planning framework that applies to the Precinct;
- The strategic planning framework that applies to the Precinct; and
- The role of the Precinct in the broader Taree context.

The objective of the Urban Context Study is to assess opportunities and constraints within the Precinct in regard to achieving the aims and objectives of both local and regional planning strategies.

The opportunities identified by the Urban Context Study for the redevelopment of land within the Precinct include:

- Creating a tourist destination;
- Revitalising public spaces and improving the quality of the public domain;
- Revitalising the Taree CBD through appropriate commercial/mixed uses within the Precinct;
- Enhancing the waterfront;
- Establishment & Maintenance of the nature and identity of the Precinct;
- Potential for the Precinct to act as a gateway to Taree;
- Opportunities for buildings within the waterfront precinct to be designed so as to provide an active frontage to the waterfront land and to allow for view sharing; and
- Protection of heritage buildings and spaces from demolition and the ability for any future development of land within the precinct to be designed so that they do not obstruct views from areas within and around the precinct to the former dairy buildings.

The potential constraints identified by the Urban Context Study for the redevelopment of land within the Precinct include:

- Multiple land ownership;
- Narrow land along waterfront and heritage buildings;
- Adjacent residential areas;
- Water & Sewer Infrastructure Issues; and
- Flood prone.

The main issues and elements relevant to the urban context and in terms of guidance for the redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct are:

- *Desired Urban Context of the Precinct:* The desired urban context is one that will enhance the character, sense of place and improve accessibility for the public to the Manning River foreshore. In this manner, paths and gathering places within the precinct will be provided, and connecting paths between the town centre to the west, the foreshore and residential areas to the north and the sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east will be formalised.
- *Commercial Uses & Character:* In general, development within the Precinct should be of a reduced scale and mass so as to evolve a character that is not consistent with that generally perceived for a commercial area. In this manner, the uses of the buildings within the Precinct will tend towards smaller boutique or niche type business rather than those that are commonly service or retail orientated and are usually located in the CBD of a town or city. The commercial aspects of the use of buildings within the Precinct should be such that it is guaranteed to remain subservient to the main retail and service function of the Taree CBD and not result in a situation where competition may result where businesses seek to relocate from the CBD to the precinct.
- *Mixed Use Redevelopment:* It is possible that the redevelopment of the land within the Precinct will be seen as a positive aspect by residents in the area and this may encourage further investment in slight increases in residential density on the land between Pitt Street and the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue.

## Executive Summary (continued)

- Traffic & Pedestrian Linkage Issues to be considered: Additional vehicular connections will be provided to improve traffic movements but care should be taken to limit the amount of vehicular traffic that will be consistently generated throughout the Precinct.
- Public Access to the river foreshore: In terms of the ability for public access and use of the river foreshore, the redevelopment of the Pitt Street waterfront precinct will provide additional gathering places throughout the precinct along the waterfront to enhance urban amenity for pedestrians and users of the area.
- Building forms and protection of heritage values: Given the relatively narrow width of the waterfront land within the Precinct between the riverfront and the southern side of Pitt Street, it is likely that buildings that are perimeter block forms will be more appropriate so that they may be located closer to the existing street frontage and not encroach upon the potential public land between the southern elevation of those buildings and the riverfront.
- The potential for the Precinct to form a gateway to Taree: The ability exists for the eastern part of the Precinct to form a gateway to the overall township of Taree. This gateway can define the eastern entrance to the Precinct and, from an architectural point of view, should be treated so as to signal the entrance to not only the township of Taree but to the Precinct.
- Water & Sewer Infrastructure: The redevelopment of the Precinct should consider and promote Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) principles. As a minimum, this will include the incorporation of measures within the Precinct with a suitable local stormwater harvesting or wastewater recycling scheme to offset the demand on the existing infrastructure.
- Stormwater Management: The environmentally sensitive nature of the land within the Precinct requires that the elements of water sensitive urban design be considered to effectively manage stormwater from the range of different land uses likely to arise within the Precinct and also the range of different land uses existing on the land around the precinct in the existing urban areas of Chatham.

The role of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct is to act as a critical element within the overall future character of Taree and form an integral link between the CBD and the recreation and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct.

The most important and defining influence on the urban context – present and future – of the Precinct is its relationship with the major natural feature of the Manning Valley: the Manning River.

The proposed rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct provide the ideal opportunity to enhance the site from both a water and land based point of view.

The redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct has the potential to support the ongoing urban renewal of the CBD and its environs, and it is acknowledged that the Precinct may develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the CBD and neighbourhood shopping centre.

The rezoning and eventual redevelopment of the land will rectify a visual eyesore that presently characterises the Precinct, particularly when viewed from the river.

The opportunity to respond to the unique riverfront environment and to create a dynamic waterfront mixed use and recreational experience within the Precinct will deliver benefits to future residents of the Precinct and to the wider community. This will provide an example, and perhaps an impetus, for the appropriate redevelopment of other presently underutilised riverfront land in Taree.



# 1. Introduction

Coastplan Group Pty Ltd (Coastplan Consulting) has been commissioned by Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) on behalf of Greater Taree City Council to undertake an Urban Context Study in relation to the land contained within the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct.

This Urban Context Study investigates how the proposed mixed use rezoning of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct will fit within the context of both Taree City and the Greater Taree area.

The Urban Context Study is intended to inform the master planning and rezoning processes for the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct.

The Precinct is located in the Greater Taree local government area, approximately 2 kilometres north-east along the North Passage of the Manning River from the Taree city centre (SKM, 2007).

A Master Plan and Development Control Plan for the Precinct will be prepared as part of the rezoning process.

The objective of the Urban Context Study is to assess opportunities and constraints within the Precinct in regard to achieving the aims and objectives of both local and regional planning strategies.

Outcomes of the study will include recommendations that will assist the rezoning to satisfy the aims and objectives of these strategies and ensure that development outcomes for the Precinct are complimentary to surrounding areas, limiting the possibility of any direct competition. These recommendations will draw on relevant planning principles and will provide the basis and direction of the Master Plan.



## 2. Urban Context

The Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct ("the Precinct") is located at Chatham (Taree) in the Greater Taree local government area.

The Precinct is located approximately 2 kilometres north-east along the North Passage of the Manning River from the Taree city centre. The area of the Precinct is approximately 22 hectares.

The existing development in the Precinct consists of:

- The former Manning Valley Dairy Cooperative with occupied and unoccupied buildings including a disused rail spur and associated infrastructure;
- Residential development;
- Agricultural land with minor remnant structures (previous piggery);
- A car dealership on the site of the former 'Big Oyster' service station;
- A creek and drainage channel;
- Scattered vegetation, generally along the creek and the Manning River;
- Disused wharfs on the Manning River;
- An adjacent parcel of vacant Crown Land;
- Fishermans' Cooperative;
- Fuel depot; and
- Concrete batching plant.

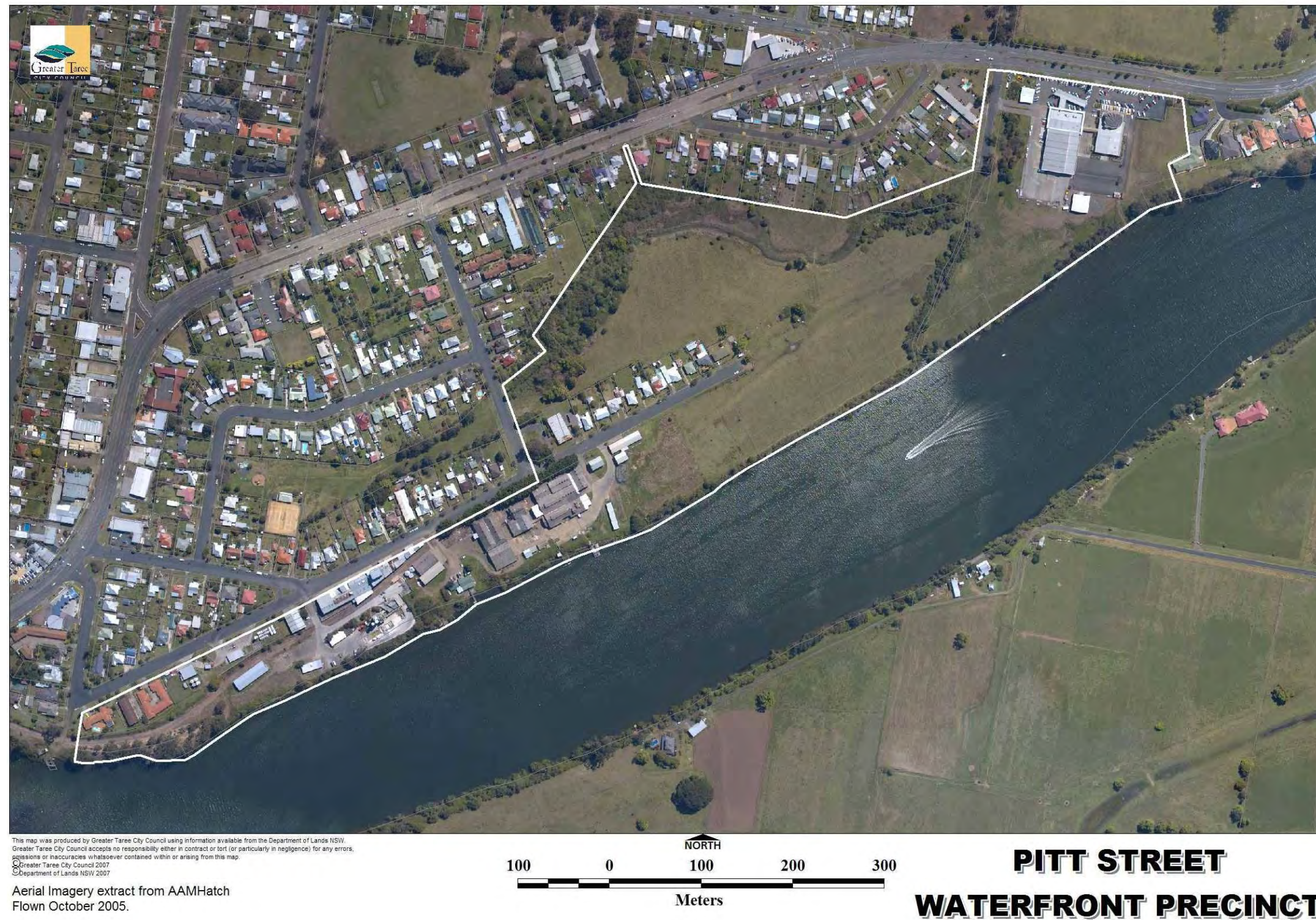
Figure 2.1 (opposite) is an aerial view looking north-east through the Precinct.

An aerial photograph of the Precinct is shown in Figure 2.2 on the following page.





Figure 2.2 [Source: Greater Taree City Council, 2007]





The following photographs show the existing conditions within the Precinct [Source: GTCC].



**Figure 2.3: Old washroom and pay office – possibly the most important heritage building on site**



**Figure 2.4: View east of low-lying land being considered for marina and associated uses**



**Figure 2.5: View from southern side of Old Dairy Factory site of Manning River, with Martin Bridge in the distance**



**Figure 2.6: Buildings on Old Dairy Factory site facing Pitt Street with disused rail access**





**Figure 2.7: Internal view of Old Dairy Factory site**



**Figure 2.9: "Big Oyster" (Mid Coast Ford/Taree Nissan & Kia) development within eastern edge of rezoning**



**Figure 2.8: View from western edge of narrow point of site looking east towards Old Dairy Factory**



**Figure 2.10: Land between Mid Coast Ford and the Manning River included in rezoning**



### 3. Statutory Planning Framework

The statutory planning framework that applies to the Precinct includes:

- Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989;
- Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 1995;
- Draft Greater Taree LEP 2008;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No.32 – Urban Consolidation (Redevelopment of Urban Land);
- State Environmental Planning Policy No.55 – Remediation of Land;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No.71 – Coastal Protection;
- Any conditions for the preparation of a draft LEP provided by the Director-General, Department of Planning under Section 54(4) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979; and
- Local Planning Directions under Section 117(2) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 that may apply to the Precinct.



### 3.1 Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989

The provisions of the Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989 (REP) that are most relevant to the Precinct relate to planning strategies and principles for commercial and tourism development.

In relation to commercial development:

- The REP emphasises Newcastle as the major centre in the region. Importantly, the draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (see Section 4 of this Study), shifts this emphasis to the four (4) major regional centres in the Mid North Coast Region – Taree, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and Grafton.
- While not directly applicable to the local Taree situation, the principles outlined in Clause 20 of the REP include the encouragement of retailing, office and associated service functions in the CBD and subregional and district centres.

As the new draft Regional Strategy applies this principle at the local level of the major regional centres, of which Taree is one, it is important to recognise the relationship between the Precinct and the Taree CBD.

In relation to tourism, the objectives of the REP include to encourage:

- appropriate leisure and tourism developments on land which is environmentally capable and suitably located as a means of improving the region's economic diversity and employment prospects; and
- the recognition of natural and heritage conservation values as a means of improving tourism opportunities.

The principles outlined in the REP for tourism include the encouragement of initiatives which increase tourism interest and potential, such as historic site interpretation, and the consideration of developments that are capable of providing significant increases in tourism activity and jobs for the region.

Table 3.1 outlines the main issues relevant to the relationship between the REP and the rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct.

**Table 3.1 (Hunter REP 1989)**

Hunter REP 1989: Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
<b>Relationship between the Precinct and the Taree CBD</b>	The Precinct will develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the Taree CBD and Chatham neighbourhood shopping centre.
<b>Appropriate leisure and tourism developments</b> <b>Recognition of natural and heritage conservation values as a means of improving tourism opportunities</b>	The site presents a significant opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment with deep-water frontage to the Manning River. The mixed use focus of the proposed rezoning of the Precinct will see tourism related uses feature prominently, and will also allow for the retention of the more significant heritage buildings in the Precinct.



### 3.2 Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan 1995

The local environmental planning instrument that currently applies to the site is the Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan 1995 (LEP). Areas within the Precinct are currently zoned:

- 1(a) Rural General;
- 2(a) Residential;
- 4 Industrial;
- 5 Special Uses; and
- 6(a) Open Space Recreation.

Figure 3.2 on the following page shows the existing land use zonings within and around the Precinct. The primary outcome envisaged by the redevelopment of the Precinct is the achievement of the rezoning of the land to facilitate mixed use developments within the Precinct.

The 1(a) Rural General zoned land within the Precinct remains as the last parcel of rural zoned land in the now residential dominated area of north-east Taree and Chatham. This land has negligible agricultural potential and has become so isolated by encroaching residential development that it maintains no commercially viable agricultural potential. It appears that the rural zoning may have been maintained over the land – despite its limited agricultural potential – as a “holding zone” to restrict development of that land, given that the substantive portion of the 1(a) zoned land within the site is mapped as being subject to inundation during the 1 in 100 year flood event. The objectives of the Rural General zone generally bear little relevance to the mixed use developments proposed for the precinct.

The current boundaries of the Precinct only include a limited amount of residential development. Figure 3.2 indicates that the predominant land use within the immediate locality is residential in nature and this is an important determinant of the existing and future character of the Precinct.

For example, the natural boundaries of the precinct may eventually be identified as the southern/south-eastern side of the Old Pacific Highway (now Manning River Drive/Chatham Avenue).

The core of the larger area of residential land to the north and north-west of the Precinct presently consists of approximately 200 residential allotments, generally supporting existing low density residential development which is predominated by single detached dwelling-houses. Therefore, while it is possible that the density of residential uses within the precinct may increase, the preservation of residential amenity will remain a key issue in any redevelopment in the precinct.

The 4 Industrial zoning over the relevant portion of land within the Precinct appears to have been maintained so as to support the former industrial uses of the waterfront land, most of which have now ceased. The objectives of the Industrial zone generally bear little relevance to the mixed use developments proposed for the precinct. The objectives of the Industrial zone do, however, include the consideration of whether development of the land is likely to have a substantial adverse affect on existing business centres or on adjoining residential properties. This remains an important consideration in terms of identifying the optimal mix of uses for the land within the precinct.

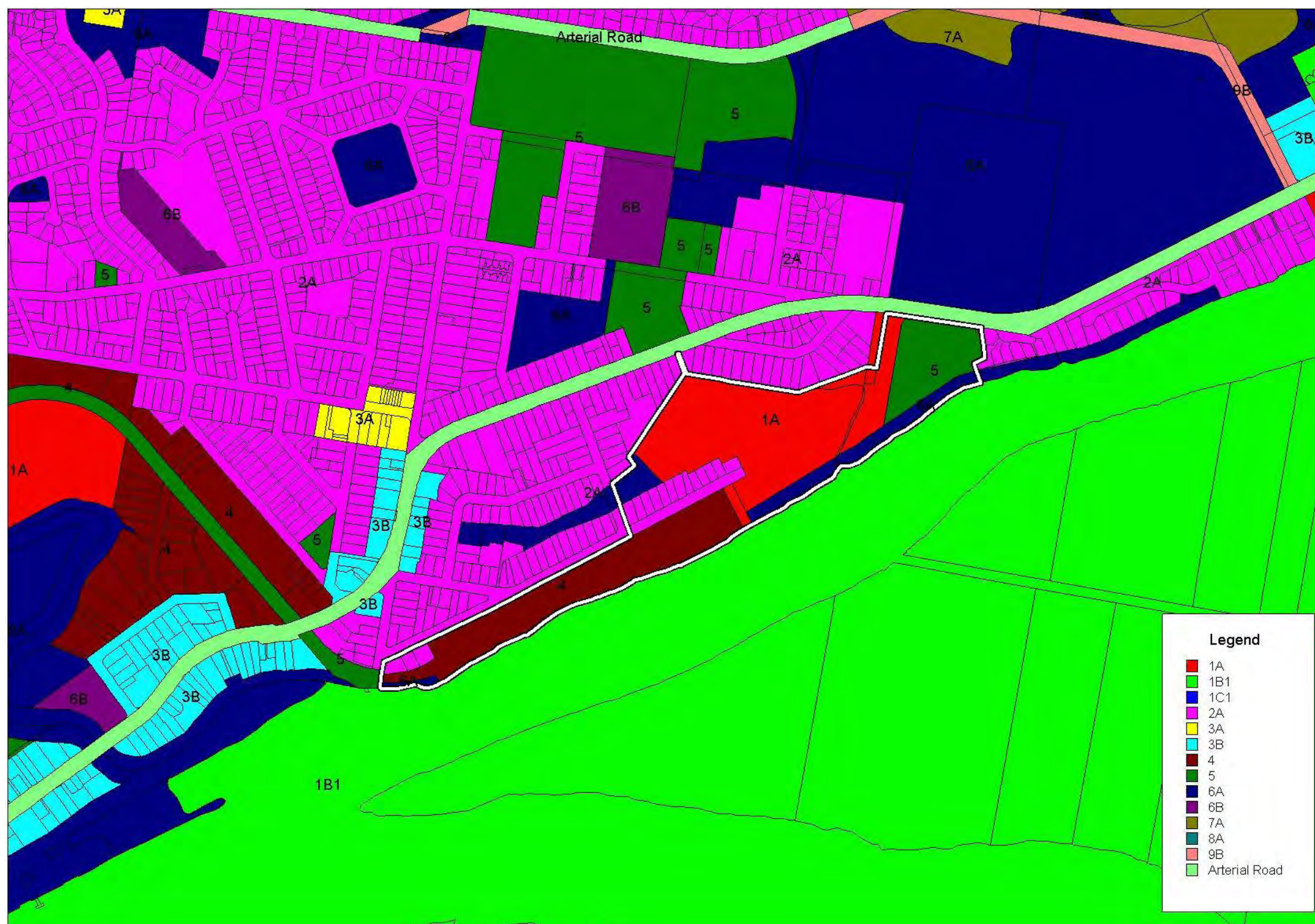
The portion of the land within the Precinct that is currently zoned 5 Special Uses is limited to the “Big Oyster” site at the eastern end of the Precinct, which is now occupied by car yards. This land is located directly opposite the main sporting precinct within Taree, with the entertainment precinct located adjacent to (the east of) the sporting fields.

The land that is currently zoned 6(a) Open Space Recreation is located at the eastern and western ends. Any potential linkage between the respective sections of 6(a) zoned land is broken by the former industrial land (presently zoned 4 Industrial).

It is appropriate that the redevelopment of land within the precinct consider the opportunities to provide a linkage between the respective portions of 6(a) land as a means of enhancing public accessibility and use of the Manning River foreshore by enabling the provision of a pedestrian link through the site, to and from the lands to the east and west.



Figure 3.2 – Existing Land Use Zones: Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan 1995





### 3.3 Draft Greater Taree LEP 2008

Greater Taree LEP 1995 will be replaced by a new comprehensive local environmental planning instrument at some stage during 2008. The draft instrument, which is yet to be publicly exhibited, is the draft Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan 2008 (draft LEP).

The mixed use rezoning of the Precinct will include open space, residential, (possibly) light industrial, commercial, and tourism uses, together with the potential for a marina.

The likely zoning of the land within the precinct will be Zone B4 Mixed Use under the draft LEP.

The objectives of the B4 zone will include:

- To provide a mixture of compatible land uses.
- To integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations so as to maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.

The B4 zone will prohibit the historic and former land uses that characterised the precinct, including agriculture, depots, farm buildings, freight transport facilities, industries (other than light industries), liquid fuel depots, truck depots, warehouse and distribution centres.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will proceed under the provisions of the draft LEP once gazetted. The main drivers for the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct are to create a high quality mixed precinct which can provide the basis for conduits for access between the existing residential zoned land and the riverfront land. For example, the land that is currently zoned 6(a) under Greater Taree LEP 1995 could be incorporated into the proposed mixed use zone for the Precinct, in return for public access to the entire foreshore length and other public domain outcomes.

Access is presently impeded by the private and formerly industrial uses of the land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the riverfront. The proposed redevelopment, which requires a rezoning of the land to facilitate the establishment of mixed use and ancillary development, is a unique opportunity to activate some of the most valuable waterfront land in Taree. The rezoning also provides the opportunity to recognise the significant heritage on the site and the adaptive reuse of the more significant buildings within the Dairy Cooperative group of buildings with the Precinct and adjacent to the river foreshore.

**Table 3.3 (Greater Taree LEP 1995 & Draft Greater Taree LEP 2008)**

Greater Taree LEP 1995 & Draft Greater Taree LEP 2008: Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
<b>Pedestrian Linkage along Manning River foreshore</b>	The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will involve a series of measures to promote public accessibility and use of the river foreshore, including a pedestrian connection from the Taree CBD, through the Precinct. The rezoning will facilitate this connection by removing the impediment of the present industrial zoned land.
<b>Preservation of residential amenity</b>	The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will incorporate a series of defined residential precincts, related to existing local street patterning.
<b>Provision of a range of residential housing</b>	The design of the defined residential precincts will allow for the provision of a variety of housing typologies.
<b>Whether the redevelopment of the Precinct is likely to have a substantial adverse affect on existing business centres or on adjoining residential properties.</b>	The redevelopment of the Precinct will facilitate a mixed-use development of broad regional importance. The Precinct will develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the Taree CBD and Chatham neighbourhood shopping centre.
<b>Relationship between the Precinct and the main sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct</b>	The proposed redevelopment will facilitate a pedestrian connection from the Taree CBD, through the Precinct. This connection will extend to the Manning Entertainment Centre and adjacent sports precinct.
<b>Recognition of heritage on the site</b>	The proposed rezoning, to be supported by a development control Plan, will facilitate the recognition of the more significant heritage items within the Dairy Cooperative group of buildings.
<b>Provision for adaptive reuse of the more significant heritage buildings</b>	The proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct to mixed uses will provide the impetus for the retention and adaptive reuse of some of the more significant heritage buildings within the Precinct.



### 3.4 State Environmental Planning Policy No.32 – Urban Consolidation (Redevelopment of Urban Land)

The proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct involves the redevelopment of both urban and rural land to achieve an overall mixed use outcome for the Precinct. The provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy No.32 – Urban Consolidation (SEPP32) apply to the redevelopment of the urban land. The rural land within the Precinct is excluded from the application of the SEPP.

The aims of SEPP32 are:

- (a) *to promote the orderly and economic use and development of land by enabling urban land which is no longer required for the purpose for which it is currently zoned or used to be redeveloped for multi-unit housing and related development, and*
- (b) *to implement a policy of urban consolidation which will promote the social and economic welfare of the State and a better environment by enabling:*
  - a. *the location of housing in areas where there are existing public infrastructure, transport and community facilities, and*
  - b. *increased opportunities for people to live in a locality which is close to employment, leisure and other opportunities, and*
  - c. *the reduction in the rate at which land is released for development on the fringe of existing urban areas.*

Clause 6 of SEPP32 (Identification of land for urban consolidation) requires that “each council must consider and the Minister must consider whether urban land is no longer needed or used for the purposes for which it is currently zoned or used, whether it is suitable for redevelopment for multi-unit housing and related development in accordance with the aims and objectives of this Policy and whether action should be taken to make the land available for such redevelopment”.

The proposed redevelopment of the industrial zoned land within the Precinct is subject to the provisions of the SEPP as it is no longer needed or used in accordance with its current zoning.

The proposed mixed use rezoning will involve consideration of redevelopment of the land for multi-unit housing and related development (being development which is compatible with development for residential purposes and which would make a contribution to the employment or other opportunities available in the locality in which the development is proposed to be carried out).

Clause 7 of SEPP32 (Implementation of aims and objectives) requires that GTCC must, when preparing environmental planning instruments or considering development applications relating to urban land, implement the aims and objectives of this Policy to the fullest extent practicable. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the relevant objectives of SEPP32.

**Table 3.4 (State Environmental Planning Policy No.32)**

Objective	Is proposed rezoning Consistent?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban land suitable for multi-unit housing and related development is made available for that development in a timely manner</li> </ul>	Yes –former industrial land identified as being suitable for mixed use development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment of urban land for multi-unit housing and related development should result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) an increase in the availability of housing within a particular locality, or</li> <li>(ii) a greater diversity of housing types within a particular locality to meet the demand generated by changing demographic and household needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Yes – both an increase in the availability of housing, and a variety of housing typologies are included in the Master Plan

### 3.5 State Environmental Planning Policy No.55 – Remediation of Land

The former uses of the land within the Precinct may have resulted in contamination of land, particularly associated with the former industrial uses.

The findings of the report by Coffey Geotechnics Pty Ltd (GEOTTUNC01736AA-AD), dated 7 November 2007, noted several issues in relation to the possible contamination of land within the Precinct, mainly in relation to the industrial land on the southern side of Pitt Street.

The main points as outlined in Section 7.7 of that report are as follow:

- The fuel depot at the south-western end of the Precinct is a significant area of concern from a contamination perspective. The facility has been decommissioned and is undergoing demolition.
- Groundwater beneath the fuel depot contains contamination by petroleum hydrocarbons that from the test results obtained appear to be related to the presence of diesel.
- This area should be subjected to a detailed site contamination assessment and remediation will be required within and adjacent to the fuel depot area.
- The extent of contamination downslope of the fuel depot should be investigated further. In particular, further wells should be installed and monitoring undertaken, to assess the extent and degree of groundwater contamination.
- The majority of the site on the southern, or river side of Pitt Street has been used for a variety of industrial purposes. Several phases of site investigation have been conducted over this area, resulting in identification of areas of contamination that were subsequently remediated.
- The majority of the site would be considered suitable for land uses including residential, recreational, or commercial uses.
- The previous assessment and remediation work, although comprehensive, were not exhaustive, and therefore there may be some areas of contamination present within the Precinct. In particular, areas containing ash fill or visible surface staining should be further assessed.

- The Big Oyster site was formerly used as a service station. Underground tanks and associated lines were removed in 1999. The area was remediated and validated following the removal of the tanks.

The provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy No.55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP55) require that:

*“in preparing an environmental planning instrument, a planning authority is not to include in a particular zone any land ... if the inclusion of the land in that zone would permit a change of use of the land, unless:*

- (a) the planning authority has considered whether the land is contaminated, and*
- (b) if the land is contaminated, the planning authority is satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state (or will be suitable, after remediation) for all the purposes for which land in the zone concerned is permitted to be used, and*
- (c) if the land requires remediation to be made suitable for any purpose for which land in that zone is permitted to be used, the planning authority is satisfied that the land will be so remediated before the land is used for that purpose”.*

**Table 3.5 (State Environmental Planning Policy No.55)**

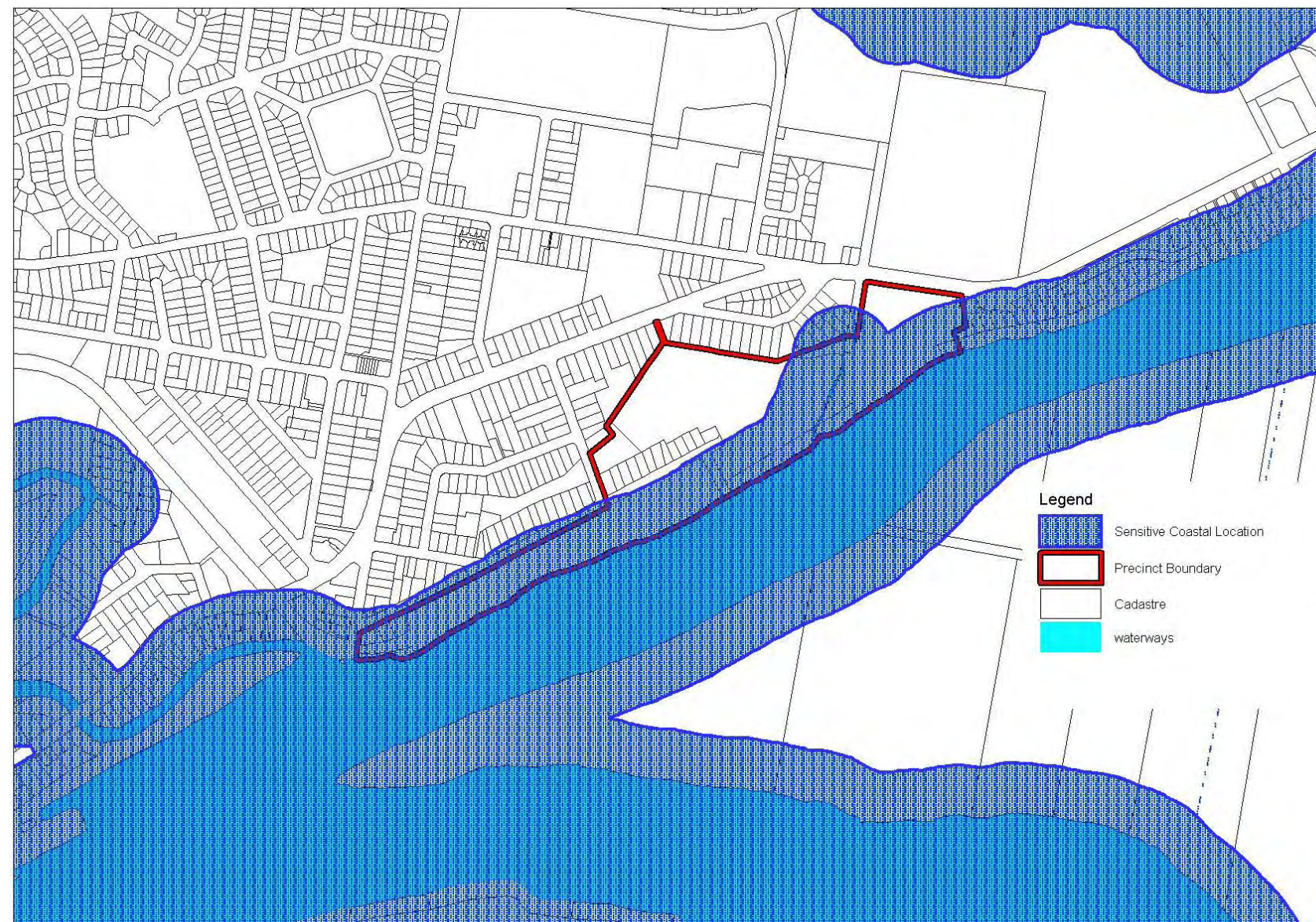
Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
The report by Coffey Geotechnics indicates that there are areas of concern in relation to contamination of the site	Subject to appropriate further investigation, and remediation where necessary, the Coffey Geotechnics report concludes that the majority of the site would be considered suitable for uses including residential, recreational and/or commercial uses. DCP should provide that remediation is to be confirmed prior to land use



### 3.6 State Environmental Planning Policy No.71 – Coastal Protection

The Precinct is located within the coastal zone for the purposes of the Coastal Protection Act 1979. The provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy No.71 – Coastal Protection (SEPP71) applies to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct. A significant portion of land within the Precinct is located within a “sensitive coastal location” as defined by SEPP71.

The land that is located within the sensitive coastal location is indicated in Figure 3.6. As indicated in Figure 3.6, this includes all of the land currently zoned 4 for industrial purposes, as well as significant portions of the presently 1(a) Rural General zoned land and the land in the eastern part of the Precinct. The aims of SEPP 71 are set out in Clause 2 of SEPP71.



The matters for consideration set out in Clause 8 of SEPP71, which include the aims of the Policy, are required to be taken into account by a council, when it prepares a draft local environmental plan that applies to land within the coastal zone (and therefore land to which SEPP71 applies).

Table 3.8 outlines the relationship between the concept plan and both the aims of SEPP71 and the matters for consideration set out in Clause 8 of the Policy.

**Figure 3.6**



Table 3.6 (State Environmental Planning Policy No.71)

Matters for consideration	Relationship of concept plan to matter for consideration
<i>to protect and manage the natural, cultural, recreational and economic attributes of the New South Wales coast</i>	The Precinct redevelopment will facilitate the enhancement of the Manning River foreshore with resultant natural, cultural, recreational and economic benefits.
<i>to protect and improve existing public access to and along coastal foreshores to the extent that this is compatible with the natural attributes of the coastal foreshore</i> <i>existing public access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability should be retained and, where possible, public access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability should be improved</i> <i>opportunities to provide new public access to and along the coastal foreshore for pedestrians or persons with a disability</i>	The promotion of public access to the Manning River foreshore through the Precinct is the key outcome from the proposed redevelopment. The redevelopment will facilitate a pedestrian link along the river foreshore from the CBD, through the Precinct and on to the entertainment and sporting Precinct. Public access along the river foreshore throughout the Precinct will be suitable for persons with a disability.
<i>to ensure that new opportunities for public access to and along coastal foreshores are identified and realised to the extent that this is compatible with the natural attributes of the coastal foreshore</i>	New opportunities for public access along the coastal foreshore throughout the former industrial lands will be facilitated by the foreshore land being brought in to public ownership.
<i>to protect and preserve Aboriginal cultural heritage, and Aboriginal places, values, customs, beliefs and traditional knowledge</i> <i>measures to protect the cultural places, values, customs, beliefs and traditional knowledge of Aboriginals</i>	The Precinct redevelopment will allow for the protection of a significant Aboriginal place in the western part of the Precinct, between the disused railway line and the river foreshore.
<i>to ensure that the visual amenity of the coast is protected</i>	The redevelopment will enhance the visual amenity of the river foreshore.
<i>to protect and preserve beach environments and beach amenity</i>	N/A
<i>to protect and preserve native coastal vegetation</i>	The retention of native vegetation along the coastal foreshore is proposed through the redevelopment.
<i>to protect and preserve the marine environment of New South Wales</i>	The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to protect and preserve the marine environment in the Manning River.
<i>to protect and preserve rock platforms</i>	The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to protect and preserve any rock platforms.
<i>to manage the coastal zone in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (within the meaning of section 6 (2) of the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991)</i>	The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to manage the coastal zone.
<i>existing wildlife corridors and the impact of development on these corridors</i>	There are no wildlife corridors that will be affected by the proposed redevelopment.
<i>to encourage a strategic approach to coastal management</i>	The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to adopt a strategic approach to coastal management.



Table 3.6 (State Environmental Planning Policy No.71)

Matters for consideration	Relationship of concept plan to matter for consideration
<p><i>to ensure that the type, bulk, scale and size of development is appropriate for the location and protects and improves the natural scenic quality of the surrounding area</i></p> <p><i>the suitability of development given its type, location and design and its relationship with the surrounding area</i></p> <p><i>any detrimental impact that development may have on the amenity of the coastal foreshore, including any significant overshadowing of the coastal foreshore and any significant loss of views from a public place to the coastal foreshore</i></p>	<p>The development proposed for the Precinct has been master planned so as to be appropriate for the location and to complement the scenic attributes of the locality.</p>
<p><i>the scenic qualities of the New South Wales coast, and means to protect and improve these qualities</i></p>	<p>The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct is unlikely to detract from the scenic quality along the Manning River and will facilitate the beautification of a presently disused and run-down former industrial site.</p>
<p><i>measures to conserve animals (within the meaning of the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995) and plants (within the meaning of that Act), and their habitats</i></p>	<p>The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to conserve animals and their habitats.</p>
<p><i>measures to conserve fish (within the meaning of Part 7A of the Fisheries Management Act 1994) and marine vegetation (within the meaning of that Part), and their habitats</i></p>	<p>The redevelopment will not reduce opportunities to conserve fish and their habitats.</p>
<p><i>the likely impact of coastal processes and coastal hazards on development and any likely impacts of development on coastal processes and coastal hazards</i></p>	<p>The Precinct is unlikely to be subject to any significant coastal processes/hazards. The land within the Precinct that is presently mapped by GTCC as being flood prone will be filled (where residential development is proposed) to minimise impacts on proposed developments. The watercourses within the Precinct will be maintained.</p>
<p><i>measures to reduce the potential for conflict between land-based and water-based coastal activities</i></p>	<p>There is unlikely to be any conflict between land-based and water-based activities. The recreational value of the Precinct will see an increase in both land-based and water-based activities in this part of the Manning River.</p>
<p><i>likely impacts of development on the water quality of coastal water bodies</i></p>	<p>The proposed redevelopment, with accompanying remediation efforts on the former industrial lands, is likely to result in positive impacts on water quality.</p>
<p><i>the conservation and preservation of items of heritage, archaeological or historic significance</i></p>	<p>The proposed redevelopment will allow for the conservation of heritage items within the former dairy group of buildings. The buildings to be retained are proposed to be adaptive reused within the redevelopment to maintain the link with the past.</p>
<p><i>only in cases in which a council prepares a draft local environmental plan that applies to land to which this Policy applies, the means to encourage compact towns and cities</i></p>	<p>The Precinct is located such that the urban area of Taree will not be subject to any sprawl or outward expansion. The redevelopment will “infill” an existing underutilised area of riverfront land within a predominantly residential area.</p>

### 3.7 Section 54(4) Notification

Greater Taree City Council (“the Council”) provided notification to the Director-General of the Department of Planning on 7 February 2007 of its decision to prepare a draft LEP to rezone land within the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct to zone(s) that permit a mixed use outcome for the Precinct.

The Department, in a letter to the Council dated 8 March 2007, confirmed that the Council could proceed with the preparation of the draft LEP and that there was no need for an environmental

study to be prepared in respect of the draft LEP. The Department did, however, advise the Council that a detailed land use and capability assessment should be prepared, of which this Urban Context Study is a component.

The notification from the Department to Council was accompanied by a Written Authorisation to Exercise Delegation in respect of the draft LEP. The Authorisation provides that exercise of the delegation is subject to compliance with several matters as outlined in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7 (Issues Identified by NSW Department of Planning)**

Issues identified in Department of Planning letter	How have the issues been addressed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Draft LEP being consistent with any relevant Ministerial Direction issued pursuant to section 117 of the EP&amp;A Act</li> </ul>	The proposed rezoning of the Precinct to a mixed use zoning will be inconsistent with some Ministerial Directions as outlined in Section 3.8. Each of these Directions provides that any minor inconsistencies are permitted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Draft LEP not being the subject of an unresolved objection by a public authority or body</li> </ul>	This will depend upon the outcome of the Section 62 Consultation Process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Draft LEP not containing provisions suspending laws pursuant to section 28 of the EP&amp;A Act</li> </ul>	The Draft LEP will not contain provisions suspending any laws pursuant to section 28 of the Act.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compliance with the Best Practice Guideline published by the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning in January 1997 entitled, ‘<i>LEPs and Council Land – Guideline for Councils using delegated powers to prepare LEPs involving land that is or was previously owned or controlled by Council</i>’</li> </ul>	The Precinct does contain some land that is owned by Council and compliance with the Best Practice guideline will be required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compliance with instructions issued by the Director General with respect to the preparation and content of reports prepared pursuant to section 69 of the EP&amp;A Act</li> </ul>	This Urban Context Analysis forms part of the suite of reports prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Director-General to inform the Minister’s decision in relation to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct.



### 3.8 Local Planning Directions

The following Local Planning Directions issued by The Minister for Planning under Section 117(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (issued 19 July 2007) apply to the proposed rezoning of the land within the Precinct.

Table 3.8 analyses the consistency or otherwise of the proposed rezoning with the relevant Local Planning Direction.

**Table 3.8 (Relationship of Proposed Rezoning to relevant Local Planning Directions)**

Direction Number	Title	Consistent (Yes/No)?	Comments
1.1	<b>Business &amp; Industrial Zones</b>	<b>No (Minor)</b>	Clause 5 of the Direction provides that a draft LEP may be inconsistent with the terms of the Planning Direction if the provisions of the draft LEP that are inconsistent are of minor significance. The proposed rezoning of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct will comprise a majority of land zoned for mixed use development and will be inconsistent with Direction 1.1. This is considered of minor significance as the portion of the land presently zoned 4 Industrial supported the former industrial uses of the waterfront land, most of which have now ceased. The industrial area of Taree has evolved and become well established in the area of Taree to the north of the main railway line. The former industrial zoned land in the Precinct does not maintain any link with the other industrial zoned land in Taree and, in relation to the objectives of the planning direction, the proposed rezoning of the industrial land to mixed uses is of relatively minor significance.
1.2	<b>Rural Zones</b>	<b>No (Minor)</b>	Clause 5 of the Direction provides that a draft LEP may be inconsistent with the terms of the Planning Direction if the provisions of the draft LEP that are inconsistent are of minor significance. The 1(a) Rural General zoned land within the Precinct remains as the last parcel of rural zoned land in the now residential zone dominated area of north-east Taree and Chatham. The land has negligible agricultural potential and has clearly become so isolated by encroaching residential development that it maintains no commercially viable agricultural potential. The proposed rezoning of the presently rural zoned land to a residential or mixed use zoning is of relatively minor significance.
1.4	<b>Oyster Aquaculture</b>	<b>N/A</b>	There are no priority oyster aquaculture areas or oyster leases in the vicinity of the Precinct and, therefore, there will be no impact from the proposed rezoning.
2.2	<b>Coastal Protection</b>	<b>Yes</b>	The land within the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct is located within the coastal zone as defined in the <i>Coastal Protection Act 1979</i> . The draft LEP for the Precinct will be required to comply with the requirements of the Direction. The NSW Coastal Policy and Coastal Design Guidelines are discussed in Sections 4.3 and 4.4 of this document respectively.
2.3	<b>Heritage Conservation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	The former dairy is identified as a heritage item under Part 2 (Industrial Items) of Schedule 2 of Greater Taree LEP 1995. The objective of the Direction is to conserve items, areas, objects and places of environmental heritage significance and indigenous heritage significance, and the Direction applies when a council prepares a draft LEP. The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct addresses the conservation of the former dairy and a place of significance to the local Aboriginal community.
3.1	<b>Residential Zones</b>	<b>Yes</b>	The Direction applies to the rezoning of the Precinct as it will affect some residential zoned land. The rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct will be consistent with the objectives of the Direction as it will provide for a variety and choice of housing types, not involve the consumption of land for housing/urban development on the urban fringe, and allow for the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services (some upgrading of water and sewer infrastructure will be required for the overall redevelopment). The rezoning will not reduce the permissible residential density of land.

**Table 3.8 (Relationship of Proposed Rezoning to relevant Local Planning Directions)**

Direction Number	Title	Consistent (Yes/No)?	Comments
3.2	<b>Caravan Parks &amp; Manufactured Home Estates</b>	N/A	The Direction is not strictly applicable to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct as the land is not generally suitable for the location of a caravan park, the existing zonings do not contain specific provisions that permit development of a caravan park on the land and the proposed rezoning will not affect existing caravan parks.
3.3	<b>Home Occupations</b>	Yes	The objective of the Direction is to encourage the carrying out of low-impact small businesses in dwelling houses which is one of the main objectives of the rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct. The mixed use rezoning of the Precinct will allow for home occupations to be carried out in dwelling houses without the need for development consent.
3.4	<b>Integrating Land Use &amp; Transport</b>	Yes	<p>The Direction will apply to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct. The rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct will be consistent with the objective of the Direction as it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve access to housing, jobs and services by walking, cycling and public transport;</li> <li>• increase the choice of available transport and reducing dependence on cars; and</li> <li>• reduce travel demand including the number of trips generated by development and the distances travelled, especially by car.</li> </ul> <p>The relationship between the rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct and <i>Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines for planning and development</i> (DUAP 2001), is discussed in detail in Section 4.5 of this document.</p>
3.5	<b>Development Near Licensed Aerodromes</b>	Yes	<p>The Direction will apply to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct as the land is in the vicinity of the Taree Airport. Given the relevance of the Direction to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct, in the preparation of a draft LEP for the land, Council must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consult with the Department of the Commonwealth responsible for aerodromes; and</li> <li>• take into consideration the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) as defined by that Department of the Commonwealth.</li> </ul>
4.1	<b>Acid Sulfate Soils</b>	Yes	The objective of the Direction is to avoid significant adverse environmental impacts from the use of land that has a probability of containing acid sulfate soils. The majority of the land within the Precinct is mapped as Class 5 in terms of the probability of containing acid sulfate soils, as shown on Acid Sulfate Soils Planning Maps held by the Dept Planning. Some of the lower lying land within the present 1(a) zone is mapped as Class 3. The issue of acid sulfate soils will be addressed by Council in the preparation of its comprehensive LEP 2008, and this instrument will apply to land within the Precinct. In the preparation of LEP 2008, the Council will be required to consider the Acid Sulfate Soils Planning Guidelines adopted by the Director-General of the Dept Planning and ensure that the provisions of the LEP (as they relate to acid sulfate soils) are consistent with the Acid Sulfate Soils Model LEP in the Acid Sulfate Soils Planning Guidelines.
4.3	<b>Flood Prone Land</b>	Yes	<p>A significant portion of the land within the Precinct is mapped as being subject to flooding during a 1:100 year flood event. The Direction will apply to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct as the rezoning will affect flood prone land. The issue of flooding is discussed in detail in Section 7 of this document.</p> <p>According to the Direction, any draft LEP shall include provisions that give effect to and are consistent with the NSW Flood Prone Land Policy and the principles of the <i>Floodplain Development Manual 2005</i> (including the <i>Guideline on Development Controls on Low Flood Risk Areas</i>). In order to effect the rezoning, the Department of Planning must be satisfied that the draft LEP is in accordance with a floodplain risk management plan prepared in accordance with the principles and guidelines of the Floodplain Development Manual 2005.</p>



**Table 3.8 (Relationship of Proposed Rezoning to relevant Local Planning Directions)**

Direction Number	Title	Consistent (Yes/No)?	Comments
5.1	Implementation of Regional Strategies	N/A	The Direction does not apply to the proposed rezoning as the Precinct is not subject to any of the regional strategies listed in the Direction.
6.1	Approval & Referral Requirements	Yes	The objective of the Direction is to ensure that LEP provisions encourage the efficient and appropriate assessment of development. The Direction will apply to the proposed rezoning of the land within the Precinct. The draft LEP for the rezoning should minimise the inclusion of provisions that require the concurrence, consultation or referral of development applications to a Minister or public authority.
6.2	Reserving Land for Public Purposes	Yes	The Direction will apply to the proposed rezoning of land within the Precinct as the draft LEP is likely to create new zonings and affect existing zonings or reservations of land for public purposes. The Precinct boundary contains land zoned 6(a) Open Space Recreation that includes land owned by both the Council and the Department of Lands. The rezoning will allow for the strip of foreshore land that is privately owned and zoned Industrial to be put to public uses, with accompanying public access and public domain benefits. The rezoning of the land within the Precinct will be consistent with the relevant objective of the Direction as it will facilitate the provision of public services and facilities by reserving land for public purposes.
6.3	Site Specific Provisions	Yes	The objective of the Direction is to discourage unnecessarily restrictive site specific planning controls. The proposed rezoning of the land within the Precinct will involve the rezoning of the land from its present zonings to a predominantly mixed use zone. The rezoning is proposed so as to allow some flexibility in the uses to which the land can be put, and to avoid the imposition of restrictive provisions.

## 4. Strategic Planning Framework

### 4.1 Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy

The Greater Taree local government area falls under the Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (the draft Strategy, DoP 2006). The draft Strategy identifies Taree as one of four (4) major regional centres, and the major regional centre of the Manning Valley-Great Lakes sub-region.

The site represents a very significant opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment and especially to capitalise on the deep-water frontage with existing jetties along the Manning River (SKM, 2007). Obviously, with the mixed use focus of the proposed rezoning of the Precinct, tourism related uses are likely to feature prominently as part of any future redevelopment of the site. Under the draft Strategy, councils will be encouraged to identify appropriate locations and criteria for new tourism developments, to ensure that the region's character and appeal is not undermined by inappropriate developments.

An important aspect of the proposed mixed use rezoning of the Precinct is to ensure that its redevelopment does not result in the emergence of an out-of-town-centre retailing/commercial character which will only serve to fragment the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD or the nearby neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre. The draft Strategy identifies that such development should be resisted to prevent fragmentation. Figure 4.1 shows the location of the Precinct in relation to the Taree CBD and Chatham retail strip.

The redevelopment of the Precinct has the potential to support the ongoing urban renewal of the CBD and its environs. The Precinct will develop a specialised retail and commercial function, with the establishment of restaurants, cafés, fresh produce markets, a relocated fish co-op and small-scale office space (possibly combined with professional residences) envisaged. Each of these uses can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to either the Taree CBD or the nearby Chatham neighbourhood shopping centre. Tourism orientated businesses, including a museum, hotel and conference facilities, and community facilities, including multipurpose cultural and educational facilities, are also proposed to be established within the Precinct (Suters, 2008).

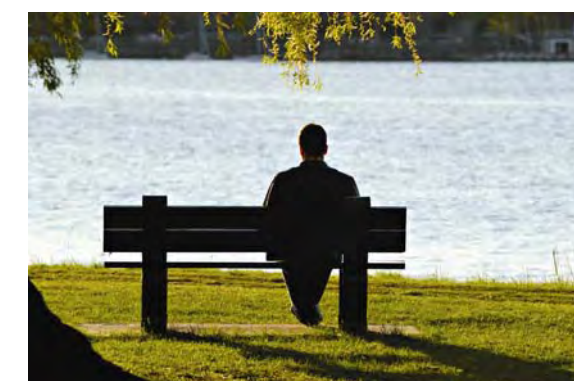
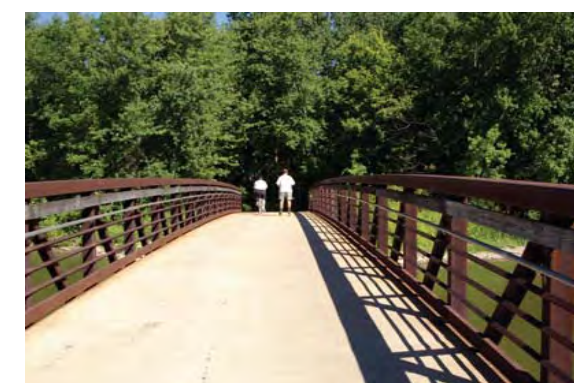
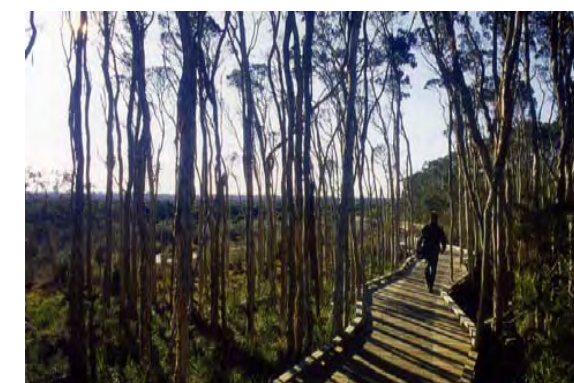
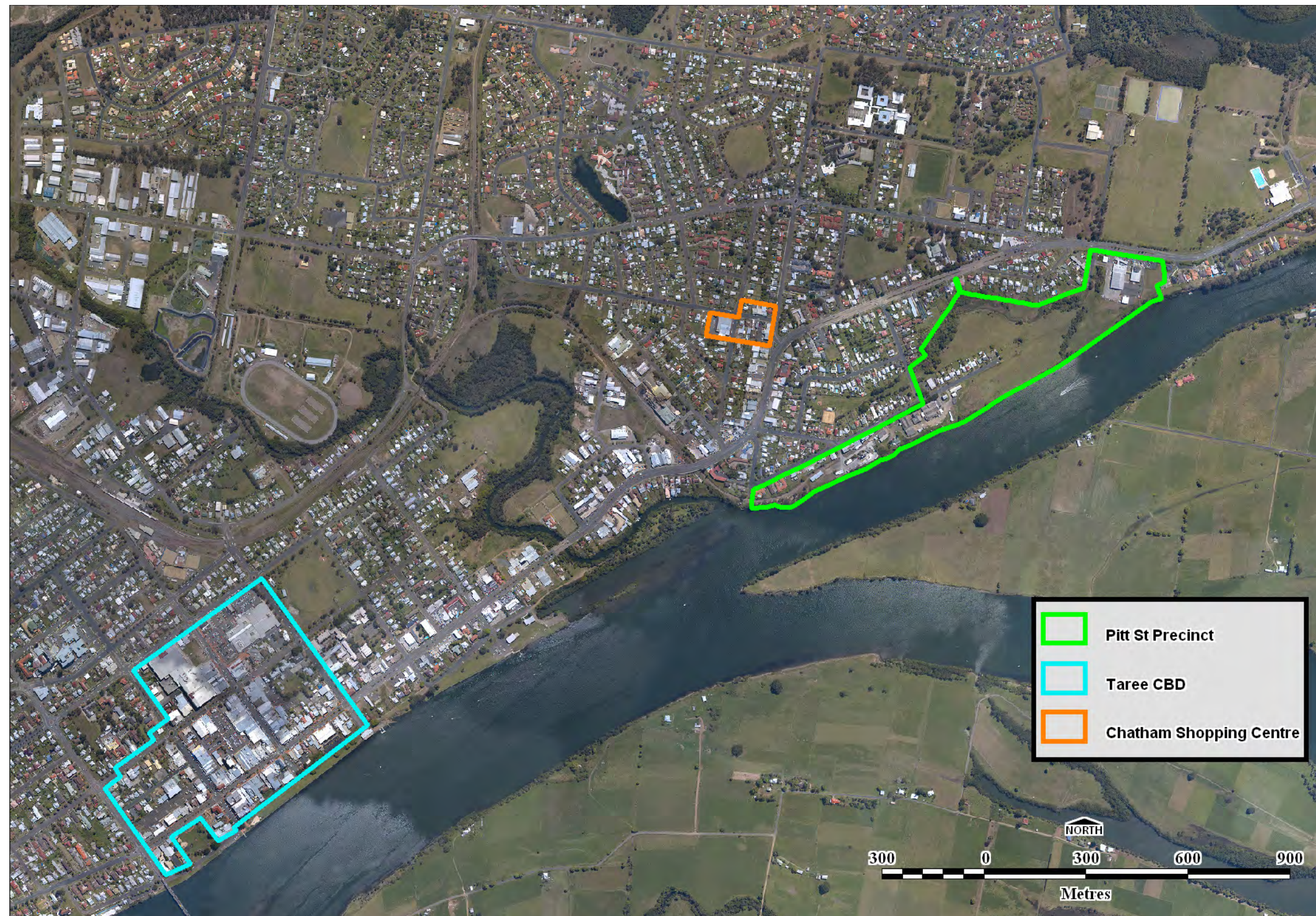




Figure 4.1: Broader aerial photo indicating location of the Precinct relative to the CBD and Chatham retail strip [Source: Greater Taree City Council, 2007].





## 4.2 Local Growth Management Strategy

The Local Growth Management Strategy has been prepared by GTCC as an input into the Department of Planning's Draft Mid-North Coast Regional Strategy. The aim of the LGM Strategy is to analyse supply and demand for future dwellings over a 25 year period for the local government area. The Precinct has been included in the Local Growth Management Strategy (GTCC 2007).

**Table 4.2 (Draft Mid North Coast Strategy & Local Growth Management Strategy**

Draft MNC Regional Strategy & LGM Strategy – Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the rezoning of the Precinct does not result in the emergence of an out-of-town centre that could fragment the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD or the nearby neighbourhood shopping centre</li> </ul>	<p>The Precinct will develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the Taree CBD and Chatham neighbourhood shopping centre.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whether the Precinct is appropriate as a location for new tourism development, and whether the region's character and appeal will be maintained by the avoidance of inappropriate developments?</li> </ul>	<p>The site presents a significant opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment with deep-water frontage to the Manning River. Tourism developments will be focused on the Manning River foreshore. The retention of the more significant heritage buildings in the Precinct will be ensured and the redevelopment of the Precinct will be likely to feature a museum to maintain a link with the industrial heritage of the site and its prominence in the early days of Taree as a developing and major centre.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provision of residential housing opportunities to accommodate some of the likely demand for dwellings in the Greater Taree LGA.</li> </ul>	<p>The mixed use outcome proposed for the Precinct is for a range of Low, Medium and High density residential developments.</p>

## 4.3 NSW Coastal Policy

The NSW Coastal Policy: A Sustainable Future for the New South Wales Coast (1997) was introduced by the NSW Government in an attempt to better coordinate the management of the coast by identifying the State's various management policies, programs and standards as they apply to the defined coastal zone.

Appendix C of the Coastal Policy outlines how the policy should be implemented by local government in the planning process. The Coastal Policy provides a strategic policy framework for the coast and has a series of goals (principles), objectives and strategic actions.

The principles outlined in the Coastal Policy are outlined to guide decision making and to clarify the basic philosophy of the goals.

Strategic Action 3.2.4 of the policy contains the most detailed information regarding the matters that should be considered by councils when preparing or amending LEPs. The "Design and Locational Principles for consideration in LEPs, DCPs and Development Control (Strategic Action 3.2.4)" as relevant to the proposed rezoning of the Precinct are outlined in Table 4.3 on the following page.



Table 4.3 (NSW Coastal Policy)

Design & Locational Principles	Relationship of Precinct to Principles
<p>Issues in relation to beaches, frontal dunes, undeveloped headlands, national parks, nature reserves or state recreation areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only developments which do not compromise the natural and cultural values of the area will be permitted on beaches and frontal dunes</li> <li>• Works to protect, restore and rehabilitate beaches and frontal dunes may be permitted where appropriate</li> <li>• Undeveloped headlands will be preserved</li> <li>• Any development on headlands or any development should strictly be limited to a height and scale no greater than existing buildings and will require an environmental assessment, including an assessment of visual impact from adjoining beaches</li> <li>• developments should not compromise the natural and cultural values of any adjacent national park, nature reserve or state recreation area</li> </ul>	<p>The Precinct is not located on any beach or frontal dune area, near any headland area or adjacent to any national park, nature reserve or state recreation area.</p>
<p>Beaches and waterfront open space will be protected from overshadowing. The standard to be applied will vary according to local circumstances, however, generally the standard to be applied is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in cities or large towns, no overshadowing before 3pm mid-winter and 6.30pm summer daylight savings time;</li> <li>- elsewhere no overshadowing before 4pm mid-winter and 7pm summer daylight saving time</li> </ul>	<p>The Coastal Policy acknowledges that the suggested standard in this principle may be difficult to apply in highly urbanised environments. In the case of the Precinct, obviously the situation in relation to overshadowing of the waterfront open space area adjacent to the Manning River will be that some of the existing dairy buildings that are proposed to be retained in the redevelopment of the Precinct for adaptive reuse within the Dairy Heritage Precinct area already cast a significant shadow over the relevant part of the foreshore to some extent. In the case of any new developments though, care should be taken to carefully analyse the overshadowing impacts that any new buildings will have and the likely outcome may be that higher parts of buildings will be encouraged closer to the Pitt Street frontage with the heights stepping back to lower buildings closer to the waterfront. In this manner, the overshadowing impacts from any new buildings will fall on or over the forecourts of the buildings and are less likely to fall over the natural areas closer to the waterfront.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tall buildings (greater than 14 metres) will not be permitted except where they can be justified due to environmental planning considerations, the prevailing scale of development or a relevant LEP, DCP or REP.</li> <li>• Applications for buildings taller than 14 metres will be assessed on their merits having regard to the prevailing scale of development and in accordance with any relevant LEP, DCP or REP.</li> </ul>	<p>The imperative to avoid overshadowing of the foreshore area dictates that any building should be of a height that is unlikely to cast any significant shadow over the public domain. Comprehensive analysis of shadowing where buildings are located adjacent to public areas and the Manning River foreshore is required. The DCP for the Precinct will incorporate appropriate controls in relation to building heights, overshadowing and relationship to the public domain.</p>
<p>Public setback lines will be set for every new development that immediately joins coastal lakes, estuaries, beaches, foreshores and cliffs. The amount of setback will be determined by consent authorities taking into consideration specific details of public access requirements, local topography, scenic factors (including the impact of the development as viewed from the waterway and foreshore area), coastal hazards (including sea level rise considerations), buildings design criteria and pollution and saltation management measures. No new development will be allowed to impede public access to foreshore areas. Apart from facilities essential to surf lifesaving, community facilities, works to protect property and environmental restoration measures, no development will be permitted seaward of this set back line and developers will be required to dedicate this land for public use or enter into a satisfactory agreement for ensuring public access, use and maintenance of the area to a suitable standard as a condition of the development.</p>	<p>The design criteria for any new buildings on the narrow strip of land between Pitt Street and the Manning River waterfront should be such that new development should facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority. This access should be provided not only along the riverfront (east to west) but the design of buildings should also make provision for regular access points to be available from the Pitt Street frontage of the land through to the riverfront.</p>

#### 4.4 Coastal Design Guidelines

Taree exhibits the qualities of both a coastal city and an inland coastal centre for the purposes of the Coastal Design guidelines.

The Coastal Design guidelines describe coastal cities as being large centres with more than 20,000 people. The guidelines identify that the population of these centres is generally increasing because they provide easy access to the ocean, rivers, beaches and other natural areas.

In the case of Taree, the population has traditionally been based upon employment opportunities in the town with the river generally being underutilised in terms of its potential as a natural attribute to draw people to the area.

Consistent with a coastal city, Taree offers a range of services generally identified as being attributes of a coastal city including:

- a central activity area with a large range of retail outlets;
- transport infrastructure including regular air and rail services and good access to the Pacific Highway;
- large employment generating uses;
- schools and higher education, sporting facilities, hospitals and other health services;
- state government agency offices; and
- tourist accommodation including caravan parks.

Whilst Taree is the major centre within the local government area, the broader area provides significant services, mainly in relation to waterfront and tourist opportunities. The Greater Taree area comprises a number of discrete villages and towns, most of which provide local services to their residents. The services provided in each village or town have generally evolved along the lines of the characteristics or location of the respective town or village. For example, the services available in Wingham generally cater for the predominantly rural uses around that town, while the services available in Hallidays Point, Old Bar and Harrington tend to be more orientated towards the coastal location of those towns, the waterfront uses and tourism.

Despite the range of services available in each town or village within the Greater Taree area, the situation remains that the Taree CBD maintains the function as being the main service and business centre for the broader region.

The principles outlined in the Coastal Design Guidelines are central to the planning principles for the Precinct. In terms of present and future opportunities for the Precinct:

- the improvement of public access and a diversity of uses along the coastal edge is a major opportunity presented by best practice, place based planning.
- development is encouraged in the main centres and suburban centres where it provides economic stimulus and allows for the efficient use of public transport, services and social infrastructure and cycle networks.
- the protection and enhancement of natural areas within the city and the provision of a wide range of tourist accommodation types.
- the relationship of a city to the coast is improved by aspects including the extension, connection and improvement of the open space network and the public domain throughout the whole city for conservation, recreation, access and water management.
- planning to minimise the expansion of city edges is advocated. The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will infill an existing underutilised area and will not involve any expansion of the edges of Taree, with the site being located at the northern end of the town but confined within existing developed areas to both the east and west.
- views from public places should be retained and reinstated where they have been lost through inappropriately located development. This is relevant with regard to the former dairy within the Precinct, where the form and location of the existing buildings has tended to dominate views to and from public places, for example, from the residential area on the northern side of Pitt Street through to the river. Some of the dairy buildings will be retained given their heritage significance and opportunities exist for other development of the former industrial land along the river foreshore to be undertaken in a manner that allows views and access through the site from the Pitt Street alignment to the riverfront.



- the provision of access to and along the foreshore and the optimisation of the riverfront areas as a gathering place to allow cultural and social opportunities.

The following diagrams indicate the visual corridors and public domain outcomes envisaged by the Master Plan.



Figure 4.4.1 – Visual Corridors [Source: Suters, 2008]



Figure 4.4.2 – Public Domain: Defining Public Spaces [Source: Suters, 2008]

### Coastal Design Guidelines (continued)

Other key aspects of the Coastal Design guidelines in relation to the redevelopment of the precinct include:

- Emphasis being placed on increasing use and provision of public transport, the use of public streets or pedestrian pathways to mark the boundary between urban development and open spaces and river foreshore.
- The avoidance of urban sprawl and ribbon development.
- The discouragement of gated developments in favour of neighbourhood oriented development.
- The provision of higher density development where appropriate.
- The location of industrial areas in appropriate locations within the urban context.
- The redevelopment of the precinct in a manner that builds upon the original historic street pattern.

In terms of building heights, and relevant to the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct, the Coastal Design guidelines emphasise that:

- New development should be appropriate to the predominant form and scale of surrounding development (either present or future), surrounding landforms and the visual setting of the settlement.
- In general, buildings should avoid overshadowing of public open spaces, the foreshore area before 3pm mid-winter and 6.30 pm summer daylight saving time.

Chapter 1.5 of the Coastal Design guidelines deals with inland coastal centres, cities towns and villages. Taree may be equally described as an inland coastal centre as a coastal city as discussed above.

The Coastal Design guidelines describe inland coastal centres as being generally typified by their location on a flat site, often with their centre backing onto a river. The guideline identifies that

inland coastal centres have an important role to play as the commercial and retail hub for surrounding lands and smaller settlements located on the coast that cannot readily access a city or town. The guidelines note that the catchment of an inland coastal centre covers a significant area and the range of services generally includes educational, retail and commercial, service industries, medical facilities, tourist facilities and accommodation.

The Coastal Design guidelines identify several issues that face inland coastal centres. How these issues relate to the Precinct is outlined in Table 4.4.1.

**Table 4.4.1 (Coastal Design Guidelines – Issues: Inland Coastal Centres)**

Issue	Comment
<b>Flooding at regular intervals affecting servicing, infrastructure and properties.</b>	The redevelopment of the Precinct recognises the importance of responsible use and development of flood prone land.
<b>Clearing of riparian ecologies and degradation by boating activities and new residential development.</b>	The redevelopment of the Precinct will be accompanied by a focus on the quality of the riverfront, with an emphasis upon rehabilitation of important areas of riparian vegetation.
<b>Privatisation of the river frontage.</b>	The river frontage will be public domain.
<b>No connection of the settlement to the river.</b>	The redevelopment will improve connectivity to the river as indicated in Figure 4.4.1.
<b>Erosion of the settlement centre's economic base as a result of large new retail developments remotely located.</b> <b>New commercial and retail development is not compatible with the scale, design and architecture of existing buildings.</b>	The Taree CBD will maintain its role as the main economic base of Taree. The Precinct will include a range of commercial uses that will not directly compete with the CBD or the nearby Chatham shopping strip.
<b>Large new developments erode the quality pedestrian environment throughout the settlement.</b>	The Precinct redevelopment will promote and enhance pedestrian activity and form a vital link between the CBD, sporting and entertainment Precincts.



## Coastal Design Guidelines (continued)

The present and future opportunities for inland coastal centres identified by the Coastal Design guidelines, and how they relate to the Precinct, are outlined in Table 4.4.2.

**Table 4.4.2 (Coastal Design Guidelines – Opportunities: Inland Coastal Centres)**

Opportunities	Comment
<b>The development of ecological, social and tourist benefits by extending and reinstating native indigenous vegetation along rivers to provide habitat for native fauna.</b>	The Precinct redevelopment will allow for protection and enhancement of existing riverfront vegetation and provision of access along the foreshore which will provide tourist and social benefits.
<b>Maintenance and development of the historical characteristics of the centre to encourage tourism and maintain and promote the centre's historic context.</b>	The Precinct redevelopment will maintain the historic context of the former dairy and the prominence of the site in the history of Taree.
<b>Strengthening links with the waterways to provide an appropriate focus for the cultural and tourist life of the settlement.</b>	The river frontage will be public domain and the key driver for the redevelopment is the strengthening of links with the river.
<b>Providing public transport and better links to coastal settlements.</b>	The redevelopment will improve accessibility to the Precinct and the improvement of links between the CBD and the sporting/entertainment precinct.

In terms of desired future character, the Coastal Design guidelines note that in relation to an inland coastal centre such as Taree, the Manning River is central to the character of the centre. The guidelines emphasise that the waterway is the positive defining feature with strong visual and physical links between the town and the waterfront.

In terms of relationship to the environment, the guidelines note the following in terms of desired future character:

- A clear relationship with the original landform and topography, the waterfront and other natural features is maintained. Aboriginal and European sites and relics are protected.
- The river frontage remains in public ownership.
- Water based transport options are implemented, where possible.
- A positive role for the river and open space created by refocusing development within the settlement to the river.
- Boating and marina facilities are designed to limit impact upon aquatic vegetation and discourage anchorage over these sensitive areas.
- Set backs are to protect the river bank from erosion and rehabilitate riparian areas and restrict vegetation clearance along the river.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct incorporates:

- Links between the major open spaces within the Precinct to the river to create and maintain visual connections and a physical link between urban areas and the waterfront.
- The promotion of access to the river foreshore and open space, walks and recreation areas whilst protecting the river banks and maintaining access from the adjacent urban areas to the river.
- The retention and enhancement of the original street pattern within the Precinct.
- The retention and adaptive reuse of the more significant heritage buildings within the group of former dairy buildings.
- New development that is sensitive to the heritage buildings to be retained, enhanced and reused through the redevelopment.
- Building heights that are appropriate to the predominant form and scale of surrounding residential development and which avoid the overshadowing of open public spaces and the foreshore areas.

## **Coastal Design Guidelines (continued)**

Figure 4.4.3 on the following page illustrates the key public spaces envisaged by the Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct.

Chapter 2.2 of the Coastal Design guidelines deals with the connection of open spaces. In many coastal settlements, past planning has focused on the provision of roads and houses, with open spaces forming isolated pockets rather than constituting an integrated, connected network. This, in many cases, has led to the alienation of public space for private uses and this is prevalent along the former industrial land between the Pitt Street alignment and the Manning River foreshore and within the Precinct.

To ensure the appropriate connection of open spaces, the guidelines identify simple objectives for the provision of open space networks which incorporate a logical pedestrian and cycle system to provide connection within the settlement and provide access to the waterfront area.

These objectives have been achieved in the Master Plan for the Precinct, which recognises that the connection of open space areas and the provision of logical pedestrian and cycle system can create the identity and character for settlements and provide amenity for residents and visitors. The design guidelines for an open space network identified by the guidelines include:

- The location and connection of new and existing open spaces which protect and maintain nature reserves, conservation areas, parklands and environmental protection areas.
- Provide pedestrian and cycle access that does not compromise the ecological values of high conservation areas, connects important places throughout the settlement, and connects residential areas to commercial and retail locations without compromising the visual, aesthetic or ecological values of the foreshore.
- Locate open spaces to build upon the special attributes of an area for long term public amenity and identity of the place.

In terms of desirable practice for provision of open space networks, the benefits identified by the guidelines in relation to the provision of such network involves the provision of continuous public access around the foreshore and the provision of foreshore reserves that set back urban development from the coastal edge.

The guidelines note the positive aspects of parks and playing fields and, in this regard, the interconnection of pedestrian and cycle networks between the town centre of Taree and the main sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct is in accordance with the desirable practice outcomes envisaged by the Coastal Design Guidelines.

A major benefit with the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct includes the potential benefits that will flow in terms of protecting the natural edges between the existing and future urban development and the Manning River. In the case of the Precinct, the western part of the land which comprises the former industrial uses has generally privatised and alienated the foreshore land along the Manning River. The land to the eastern part of the Precinct has not developed to the riverfront but it is considered that the potential for public access along the foreshore has more or less been limited by the lack of access along the part of the land within the Precinct that is occupied by the former industrial uses. It is considered that the promotion of public access from the town centre to the west along and through the former industrial lands will have flow on benefits for the utilisation of access ways along the riverfront in the eastern part of the precinct.



**Figure 4.4.3 – Defining Public Spaces within the Precinct redevelopment Master Plan [Source: Suters, 2008]**

### **Coastal Design Guidelines (continued)**

In response to the issues and objectives identified in Chapter 2.3 of the Coastal Design Guidelines with respect to the protection of the natural edges, the proposed redevelopment of the precinct will bring presently privately owned areas of foreshore land into public ownership. In this manner, the improved public access to the river foreshore will be a key outcome of the redevelopment project. This is consistent with the relevant design guidelines for the natural edges outlined by the Coastal Design Guidelines:

- Definition of the key characteristics and functions of public spaces along the foreshore with particular regard to sites of significant social and cultural importance.
- The maintenance of foreshore areas and setbacks in public ownership.
- The provision of public pedestrian access to and along the foreshore with provision for those with less mobility.
- views to the foreshore as well as distant views and vistas.
- The definition of clear pedestrian access routes through the foreshore reserve.

The redevelopment of the Precinct is consistent with the desirable practice principles outlined by the Guidelines for achieving a public and accessible coastal edge, which include:

- Views and access to the foreshore being optimised, and
- The reinforcement of the urban park adjoining the town centre with access to the river and the harbour.

The guidelines envisage that public uses, such as a wharf or a marina, can make waterfront locations accessible, useable and memorable to all. The guidelines also note that the natural edge allows a high level of activity and use and the provision of a café and boardwalk/pathway can create a unique urban and coastal experience for visitors and residents. The urban context of the Precinct is such that the maximisation of public use of the river front is paramount to the redevelopment and revitalisation of the Precinct.



## 4.5 Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines for Planning & Development

*Improving Transport Choice* was published by the former NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning in 2001. The guidelines were intended to package a range of initiatives to improve the integration of land use and transport planning and to provide principles, initiatives and best practice examples for locating land uses and designing development that encourages viable and more sustainable transport modes than the private car. These more sustainable transport modes include public transport, walking and cycling.

The critical objectives of the guidelines are to:

- 1) Reduce the growth in vehicle kilometres travelled.
- 2) Improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3) Build more compact cities.
- 4) Promote economic development and create jobs.

The guidelines recognise the importance of local action in terms of the realisation of the objectives of the guidelines. The guidelines note that Councils have a major role in applying the broader strategies for land use and transport issues in ways appropriate to local conditions.

One of the ways that the guidelines identify that sustainability in transport can be achieved is to maximise accessibility or the ability to undertake a range of daily activities with a minimum of travel, rather than mobility, which is the ability to move freely. The guidelines contain a range of principles intended to achieve the objectives of the guidelines and their consideration is directly relevant to Local Planning Direction 3.4 which was discussed previously.

Consistent with the guidelines, and in order to improve transport choice, the redevelopment of the Precinct will create an environment that is friendly to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users, including people with disabilities. In this manner, the rezoning involves land use and development decisions that will achieve outcomes that are designed to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport for one or more trips per day.

The guidelines envisage that planning and development will consider all relevant transport modes. The improvement of access by walking, cycling and public transport should all receive equal to or greater consideration than private car access. Public transport within Taree is limited to buses, and while the redevelopment will encourage the use of public transport over private cars, the emphasis within the redeveloped Precinct will clearly be upon pedestrians and cyclists and the creation of connections to other parts of Taree via the river foreshore.

In this manner, the redevelopment of the Precinct is actively seeking to use sound planning to open up opportunities to use viable alternatives to the private car and to improve transport choice. Also, poor planning can reduce transport choice and as a consequence encourage greater car reliance.

The guidelines outline six (6) key transport planning concepts to be considered when planning for transport choice. These are:

- 1) **Convenience** – the transport mode needs to be easy to find and use, and to transfer from one mode to another.
- 2) **Information** – reliable information at accessible locations is essential to encourage use of various travel alternatives.
- 3) **Proximity** – transport facilities and services, such as cycle paths and bus services, need to be in close, convenient and obvious locations to peoples trip origins and destinations.
- 4) **Destination choice** – the more destinations that can be linked on a public transport route, the more attractive it will be.
- 5) **Directness** – routes should take the shortest and least deviating course with priority to achieve fast travel times for walking, cycling and public transport (for example pedestrian links and bikeways).
- 6) **Security** – the environment for walking and waiting needs to be comfortable and safe from personal attack or conflicts with traffic, for example abilities for natural surveillance, good lighting and bike lanes on major roads.

## **Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines (continued)**

The guidelines contain ten (10) planning principles intended to encourage and support development that is highly accessible upon walking, cycling and/or public transport. These principles are discussed as follows:

### ***Principle 1 – Concentrating Centres***

This principle envisages the development of concentrated centres contained in the highest appropriate densities of housing, employment, and public facilities within an acceptable walking distance – 400 metres to 1000 metres – of major public transport modes.

While bus services are available in Taree, the availability or use of public transport is not significant to the degree that prevails in major metropolitan centres such as, for example, Newcastle or Sydney. Car dependency in Taree is characteristically high due to the spread out nature of the town and the wider region that it serves.

In accordance with the best practice identified by the guidelines, the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will:

- involve a mix of compatible uses, such as shops and restaurants on the ground floor of residential or commercial buildings, with the dairy heritage precinct forming an activity centre incorporating a range of compatible cultural, community, entertainment and recreational facilities within walking distance of public transport nodes.
- Promote good access within and through the Precinct to maximise pedestrian and cycle activity within the Precinct.
- Promote the ability for access to the Precinct to be gained via the primary public transport mode (bus).

### ***Principle 2 – Mixed Uses in Centres***

The guidelines envisage the encouragement of a mix of housing, employment, services, public facilities and other compatible land uses, and accessible service centres.

The guidelines outline that activities need to be located to meet the needs of the economy and peoples' lifestyle choices.

The redeveloped Precinct will be attractive to those people seeking residential accommodation closer to the Taree CBD and to those professionals seeking an improved lifestyle by combining their home and workplace rather than being dependant on commuting to and from the Taree CBD for work.

For those persons who choose to settle within the Precinct from a lifestyle point of view, it is important that as many as possible compatible uses are located within the Precinct to serve the day-to-day needs of residents. In this regard, it is not envisaged that major supermarkets or service providers would necessarily relocate to the precinct, but it is important that smaller convenience type businesses have the ability to establish within the Precinct so that they can service the likely permanent residential population that will accompany the overall redevelopment of land within the Precinct. The redeveloped Precinct will be dominated by pedestrian and cycle activity and the mixed use land use will afford residents the opportunity to establish home businesses – lessening the dependence upon car travel to and from work – and the provision of safe pedestrian and bicycle access within the Precinct with a link to the CBD along the river foreshore will allow for sustainable transport modes to be considered.

### ***Principle 3 – Align Centres within Corridors***

This principle envisages the concentration of high density, mixed use, accessible centres along major public transport corridors within urban areas. This involves new centres being located along key transport centres with existing centres and corridors being reinforced.

While the Precinct is not located along a major public transport corridor, the proposed redevelopment does involve the revitalisation of land within an existing urban area to establish a mixed use, accessible centre within the existing Taree urban area. As outlined in the discussion of Principle 1, the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct is designed and intended to promote the ability for access to the Precinct to be gained via the primary public transport mode (bus).

## **Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines (continued)**

### ***Principle 4 – Link Public Transport with Land Use Strategies***

This principle envisages the planning and implementation of public transport infrastructure and services in conjunction with land use strategies to maximise access along corridors, and to and from centres. As with Principle 3, the achievement of this principle is not necessarily relevant to the example of redevelopment of land within the Precinct given that it is located within an existing urban area and is not located along a major public transport corridor.

The Precinct is not subject to an overall land use strategy which would necessarily trigger the implementation of large scale public transport infrastructure and services programs. Nevertheless, as for Principle 3, the opportunities for public transport to access and service the Precinct have been promoted via the Master Plan for the Precinct, together with plans for the connection of the eastern and western parts of the Precinct to allow travel within the Precinct rather than having vehicles having to leave the precinct and travel along the Old Pacific Highway (Manning River Drive/Chatham Avenue) to access the east and western parts of the precinct and vice versa.

### ***Principle 5 – Connect Streets***

This principle envisages the provision of street networks with multiple and direct connections to public transport services and efficient access for buses. The guidelines identify the background to this principle as being that an interconnected street system provides pedestrians and cyclists with more direct and safer links to public transport stops and nodes. As a result, the street system becomes more legible (that is, more easily understood) and permeable (that is, it allows for a choice of routes) and flexible, allowing for maximum choice of land use and future movement options.

In terms of the Precinct, the main ability to connect streets within the Precinct exists with the connection of Pitt Street to the current dead-end at the southern end of Bligh Street in the eastern part of the Precinct. While the connection of streets is considered a positive, it can also present a negative in that it might introduce through traffic to the Precinct that seek to take a short cut through the precinct in times of heavier traffic. Therefore, the street system within the Precinct, which is proposed to be connected between eastern and western ends, will include measures for traffic calming to limit the speed of traffic using the Precinct. In this manner, streets will be

designed and constructed with appropriate treatments so that they tend to favour pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct incorporates measures that are consistent with best practice principles identified by the guidelines with regard to Principle 5, that is:

- 1) The street, footpath and open space network provides multiple pedestrian and cycle routes with connections to adjoining streets, open spaces, public transport stops and activity centres throughout the Precinct and within the sporting and entertainment precincts to the north-east.
- 2) Street design features will be implemented to:
  - i. ensure that driver behaviour is appropriate to the primary function of the streets within the Precinct and that drivers recognise the needs of non-car modes of transport.
  - ii. enhance the multiple functions of the streets as public places.

The Master Plan for the Precinct recognises the importance of the ability for the land within the Precinct to function as an adjunct to the overall open space network of Taree to be fostered in order to maximise the pedestrian and bicycle use of the Precinct. In this regard, the point in relation to street design features being able to influence driver behaviour in favour of enhancement of the multiple functions of the streets as public places so that drivers recognise the needs of non-car modes becomes critically important.

Figure 4.4.4 on the following page shows the major traffic routes through the Precinct, as well as detailing the provision of basement car parking to limit the prominence of parked cars at street level.





Figure 4.4.4: Traffic routes (shown orange) and basement parking (shown blue) [Source: Suters, 2008]

### Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines (continued)

#### ***Principle 6 – Improved Pedestrian Access***

This principle envisages the provision of walkable environments with greater priority given to access for pedestrians, including access for people with disabilities. The issue in relation to access for pedestrians versus access for cars has been a key consideration in the master planning process for the redevelopment of the Precinct. The outcome that has been achieved has been one where pedestrian and bicycle activity is maximised within the Precinct and the use of cars within the Precinct is generally discouraged or is kept at an absolute minimum. The provision of services within the Precinct for both residents and visitors has also been identified as being very influential in terms of whether people decide that their needs can be fulfilled by the businesses within the precinct or whether a car trip is required to the CBD area to obtain other goods and services.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct incorporates measures that are consistent with best practice principles identified by the guidelines with regard to Principle 6, that is:

- Existing and proposed local street and footpath networks provide a choice of routes that are easily understood.
- safety from traffic is to be provided by traffic calming and appropriate road crossing facilities.
- pedestrian crossing distances are to be reduced through kerb extensions and tight turning radii to slow traffic.
- footpaths are designed and maintained as a connection network between the CBD, the Precinct and the sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct.

## **Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines (continued)**

### ***Principle 7 – Improve Cycle Access***

This principle envisages maximisation of cyclists' accessibility to centres, services, facilities and employment locations.

The guidelines provide the background of this principle as being that cycling is a cheap, efficient, clean and healthy mode of transport, being well suited to trips of less than 10 kilometres. The guidelines envisage that, if people are encouraged to use bicycles instead of cars they need to be convinced that cycling is a reasonably safe, convenient and comfortable way to travel.

Consistent with the guidelines, the redevelopment of the Precinct recognises that the provision of an easy to follow and direct network of roads/paths, spaces, lighting, direction signs and storage and other facilities at destinations will enhance cycling (and pedestrian) activity. Within the Precinct, the pedestrian and cycle networks will mainly comprise recreational routes, with elements located both on and off road. The cycle networks eventually established through the Precinct may not necessarily take the most direct route but will otherwise be focused upon the river foreshore area.

The improvement of cycle access to and within the precinct is discussed in Section 5 of this document in relation to the Greater Taree Draft Bike Plan 1996.

### ***Principle 8 – Manage Parking Supply***

This principle envisages using the location, supply and availability of parking to discourage car use.

In relation to the Pitt Street Precinct, basement parking has been proposed (see Figure 4.4.4) to remove residents' vehicles from street level and from the larger area of the precinct. In general, "at ground" parking should be kept to a minimum to encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity. While it is noted that small amounts of car parking will be distributed at various parts of the Precinct, the provision of larger public car parking areas is to be avoided to reduce the tendency of people visiting the Precinct to drive to their destination. In this manner, it may be worthwhile to consider the provision of parking at one point in the Precinct, for example, at the eastern part of the Precinct where it can provide a parking area for those people visiting the Precinct and may also be used by those people visiting the sporting and/or entertainment facilities to the north-east of the Precinct where required.

### ***Principle 9 – Improve Road Management***

The guideline envisages the improvement of transport choice and promotion of an integrated transport approach by managing road traffic flow and priority of transport modes.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct incorporates measures that are consistent with best practice principles identified by the guidelines with regard to Principle 9, that is:

- traffic calming measures are to be used to slow traffic;
- traffic speed and reduction measures will be implemented that are compatible with the needs of other street users and adjoining dwellings;
- through traffic is to be discouraged from the local road network.

### ***Principle 10 – Implement Good Urban Design***

This principle envisages design with an emphasis on the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.

The guidelines provide the background of this principle as being that the details of urban design are very important in terms of efforts to encourage travel by foot, bicycle and public transport as these details can have a significant impact on actual and perceived personal safety. The guidelines provide the example that buildings that are human scaled and oriented to the street with clear pedestrian entry provide natural surveillance, a sense of security for pedestrians and visual interest.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct incorporates measures that are consistent with best practice principles identified by the guidelines with regard to Principle 10, that is:

- buildings and pedestrian entrances are oriented to the street and public domain along the river foreshore;
- opportunities to provide natural surveillance of footpaths etc are maximised;
- footpaths, cycle ways etc. are to be well lit and are located within the Precinct where there is natural surveillance from adjacent uses;
- pedestrian amenity will be enhanced by attractive, coordinated street furniture, lighting and signage.

## 5. Role of the Precinct – Broader Taree Context

The analysis of the role of the Precinct in the broader Taree context considers several issues, local strategies and other developments in Taree, including:

- Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy;
- Taree CBD Town Centre Study 2004;
- Other Commercial, Retail & Industrial Developments;
- Taree CBD Foreshore Management Plan;
- Browns Creek Estuary & Catchment Management Plan; and
- Greater Taree City Draft Bike Plan.



### 5.1 Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy

The Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy (draft CDS) was prepared by Edge Land Planning for Greater Taree City Council in October 2005.

The draft CDS is intended to develop a vision and a set of strategies for the Greater Taree local government area to ensure that conservation and development are balanced for a sustainable future.

Section 2.4 of the draft CDS deals with the economy of the Greater Taree local government area, and identifies that tourism is a key industry within the Greater Taree local government area. This reflects the image and placement of Greater Taree within the broader region and the State and this observation is directly relevant to the Precinct redevelopment project. Also relevant is the observation made in Section 2.4 of the draft CDS that the growing appeal of the area as a lifestyle destination is another influence upon the economic growth of the area.





## **Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy (continued)**

The draft CDS identifies that the natural environment of Greater Taree is one of its principal attributes and provides the potential to promote the growth of the area, based on preservation of its environmental values.

The draft CDS identifies that GTCC's 20-20 Vision Strategic Plan lists the Manning River as one of its main themes. The draft CDS identifies that one of the key strategies of the 20-20 Vision Plan is to prepare and implement plans for land and water based activities and waterfront facilities. Related to this is the encouragement of the provision of tourism, recreational and commercial facilities in proximity to population centres. In terms of options and directions for waterfront land, the draft CDS identifies that it is considered that the river is underutilised and that there are opportunities for using it more than at present. The issues identified in relation to the use of waterfront land along the Manning River are identified as:

- fishing and aquaculture;
- connection to the ocean;
- opportunities for boating, marinas and access to the river;
- river based tourism; and
- the Taree CBD.

The draft CDS identifies that the fishing and aquaculture industry have been a strong contributor to the local economy.

The draft CDS also notes that the Manning Valley Economic Development Strategy has suggested that a centralised fish market be established in Taree that would serve the local restaurants as well as the residents. The draft CDS identifies that this facility could be built on the waterfront area in Taree and, obviously, the Precinct may be a suitable location for the establishment of such markets. This would provide a valuable link between the historic use of part of the site as a Fishermen's Co-operative, and maintain the importance of the area in terms of the fishing and aquaculture industry by providing the central fish markets in this locality.

In relation to river-based tourism, the draft CDS identifies that there are opportunities for utilising the river for boating, boating facilities and public access to the river. The draft CDS notes that the river is currently used by recreational boats but there is no use of the river for transportation. The draft CDS notes that while there is a wharf and boat launching ramp at Taree, there is no facility for larger boats to be moored.

The draft CDS identifies that the provision of new and enhanced boating facilities and public access would promote tourism in the area and utilise the river in a more purposeful manner. The draft CDS identifies that the style of boating facilities envisaged would be small scale wharfing facilities with the ability for people to tie up boats and access the town.

The draft CDS identifies that river based tourism occurs from Harrington and Manning Point but is not a major tourist attraction. The draft Strategy identifies that the opportunities for river based tourism should be promoted more, and notes that if there was a boating facility at Taree, it would make a more attractive option as tourists would not have to go to Harrington or Old Bar to access river cruises.

The redevelopment of the Precinct responds to this issue with the promotion of river based tourism as key aspect of the Master Plan. The Master Plan features a floating marina at the eastern end of the Precinct with adjacent provision for adjacent areas for the mooring of larger vessels. The provision of floating moorings for smaller vessels, a floating jetty and boatel is proposed for the area adjacent to the Dairy Heritage precinct and main residential areas in the central part of the overall Precinct.

In terms of the strategy plans contained within the draft CDS, the proposed rezoning of the land within the Precinct from its present zones – 1(a) Rural General, 2(a) Residential, 4 Industrial, 5 Special Uses and 6(a) Open Space Recreation – to zones that permit a mixed use outcome for the Precinct, are not presently identified within the draft Strategy.

The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct stemmed from a submission made by the landowners in response to Council's exhibition of the draft strategy.

## Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy (continued)

Table 5.1 identifies the main issues identified by the draft CDS and how the rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct addresses the issues.

**Table 5.1 (Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy)**

Draft Conservation & Development Strategy: Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote Tourism</b></li> <li>• <b>Under-utilised river foreshore</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide waterfront activities</b></li> <li>• <b>Opportunities for boating and marina facilities</b></li> <li>• <b>Opportunities for river based tourism</b></li> <li>• <b>Relationship to the Taree CBD</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The promotion of tourism is a major driver in the redevelopment of the Precinct. The unique location of the Precinct on the Manning River presents opportunities to promote the natural values of the area through the provision of quality tourism developments within the Precinct.</li> <li>• The redevelopment of the Precinct will stimulate use of the river front with the promotion of public access and beautification of the public domain. The provision of marina and mooring opportunities along the foreshore will activate the river front and provide the infrastructure required to establish and maintain river based tourism activities.</li> <li>• Waterfront activities will flow from the focus placed upon the importance of the river foreshore by the Master Plan.</li> <li>• The ability for the redevelopment of the Precinct to provide a link from the Taree CBD to the sporting and entertainment precincts will see the river become the focus of the Taree community.</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Taree CBD Town Centre Study 2004

The Taree CBD Town Centre Study conducted by Andrews Neil (2004) provides the basis for understanding the evolution of Taree and the historical basis for the location of the CBD. By extension, the basis for the location of the CBD can also be applied to the former industrial use of the waterfront land in the Precinct. The land within the Precinct, like the land now within the CBD, provided an area of level land adjacent to relatively deep water frontage to allow for transportation. While the CBD is separated from the railway by the ridge to the north of the CBD, the former industrial location within the Precinct appears to have been favoured because it gave access to transportation of materials and products by both water and rail. A railway cutting (now disused), approximately following the eastern side of Browns Creek, links the site to the main railway line. The other factor in the location of, in particular, the former dairy operations on the land within the Precinct, appears to have been its accessibility from farmland.

The Town Centre Study identifies issues in relation to poor connectivity within the Town Centre and the inadequate visual and physical connections to the riverfront.

The redevelopment of the Precinct will provide a unique opportunity to overcome issues previously identified as being applicable to the CBD. For example, the potential for the redevelopment of the Precinct to have flow-on effects in terms of providing the impetus for the provision of a pedestrian friendly connection between the Taree CBD, the Precinct and the sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct. The illustration of this connection is shown in Figure 5.2 on the following page.

The redevelopment of the Precinct, and the practical measures proposed to address and activate the river foreshore, can also provide a useful model for any redevelopment of land within the Taree CBD to enhance the use of the riverfront adjacent to that area, with perhaps the potential for dual frontage development to be promoted to activate the waterfront (Andrews Neil, 2004).



Taree CBD Town Centre Study (continued)

The Town Centre Study also makes the important observation that Taree is not regarded as a major tourist destination. The Study identifies that the main tourist orientated development is generally limited to motels, fast food outlets and roadside service establishments (Andrews Neil 2004).

In relation to this aspect of the Town Centre Study, it has been identified previously that the redevelopment of the Precinct provides an ideal opportunity for the creation of a tourist development that will define Taree as a tourist destination and to promote its regional role (Andrews Neil 2004).

The Master Plan recognises the potential for the redevelopment of the Precinct to establish a destination, including a destination for tourists, where the river foreshore becomes the focus providing the basis for a dynamic public domain while also acting as an incentive and stimulus for the establishment of river-based tourism along the Manning River foreshore.

Table 5.2 identifies the main issues identified by the Taree CBD Ton Centre Study and how the rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct addresses the issues.

Figure 5.2: Diagrammatic representation of the connection between the Taree CBD to the west, the Precinct, and the sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east  
[Source: Suters, 2008]



Table 5.2 (Taree CBD Town Centre Study)

Taree CBD Town Centre Study – Main Issues	How will the issues be addressed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Connectivity within the precinct and visual and physical connections to the riverfront</li><li>Promotion of Taree as a tourist destination</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The promotion of tourism is a major driver in the redevelopment of the Precinct. The mixed use focus of the proposed rezoning of the Precinct will see tourism related uses feature prominently. The unique location of the Precinct on the Manning River presents opportunities to promote the natural values of the area through the provision of quality tourism developments within the Precinct.</li><li>The redevelopment of the Precinct will stimulate use of the river front with the promotion of public access and beautification of the public domain.</li><li>The proposed redevelopment of the Precinct will involve a series of measures to promote public accessibility and use of the river foreshore, including a pedestrian connection from the Taree CBD, through the Precinct and onto the sporting/entertainment precinct. The rezoning will facilitate this connection by removing the impediment of the present industrial zoned land.</li></ul>

### 5.3 Taree CBD Foreshore Management Plan

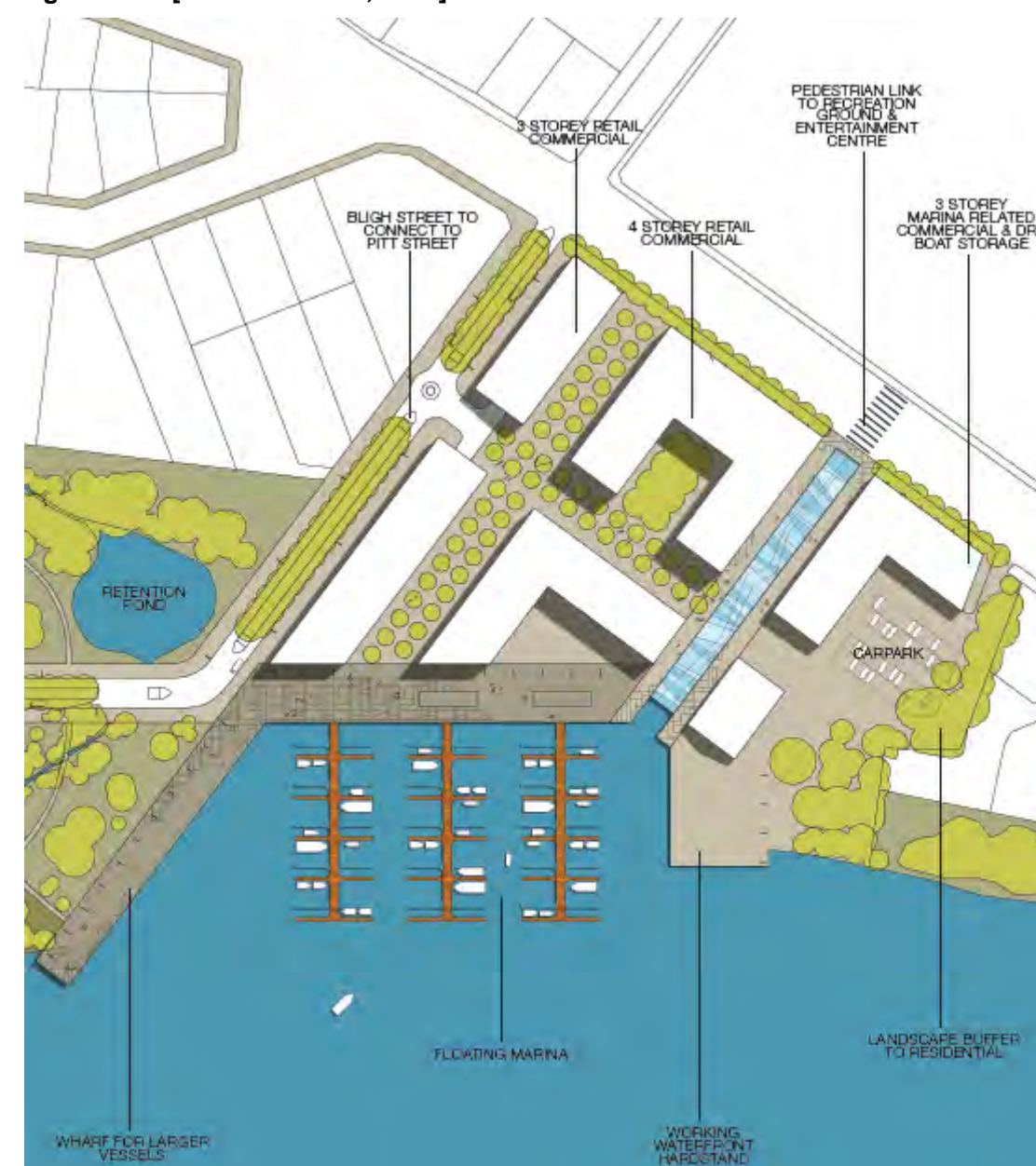
The major aspect of the Taree CBD Foreshore Management Plan (Webb, McKeown & Associates Pty Ltd, 2000) that is relevant to the site is the consideration that has been given to the establishment of a marina development adjacent to the city centre. For various reasons, most likely to do with the existing development patterns in the CBD, the viability of a marina in that location has resulted in the concept not progressing. The master planning process that has been implemented for the Precinct has, however, recognised the previously identified need for the provision of a marina in relatively close proximity to the Taree CBD with access the major road into Taree. The inclusion of a marina is a key element identified in the Master Plan for the eastern part of the Precinct (see Figure 5.3.1).

**Figure 5.3.1 - The concept for the marina commercial precinct proposed by the Precinct Master Plan [Source: Suters, 2008].**



Figure 5.3.2 shows the extract of the Master Plan with the concept for the marina and associated facilities in the eastern part of the Precinct.

**Figure 5.3.2 [Source: Suters, 2008]**





#### 5.4 Browns Creek Estuary and Catchment Management Plan

The Browns Creek Estuary and Catchment Management Plan (dated July 2006) was adopted by Greater Taree City Council on 16 August 2006. Figure 1.1 on page 6 of the Management Plan indicates the extent of the Browns Creek catchment. According to Figure 1.1 of the Management Plan, the south- western part of the Precinct is located within the catchment of Browns Creek.

Relevant to the Urban Context Study for the Precinct, the Management Plan refers to the 20-20 Vision (2005-2020) adopted by Council, which identifies the major strategic change as being to effectively manage the Manning River system and identify and develop opportunities for enhanced commercial and recreational usage in balance with the environmental considerations and protection of this key natural asset (the river). One of the key strategies identified by Council's 20-20 Vision Plan is to prepare and implement plans for land and water based activities and water fun facilities.

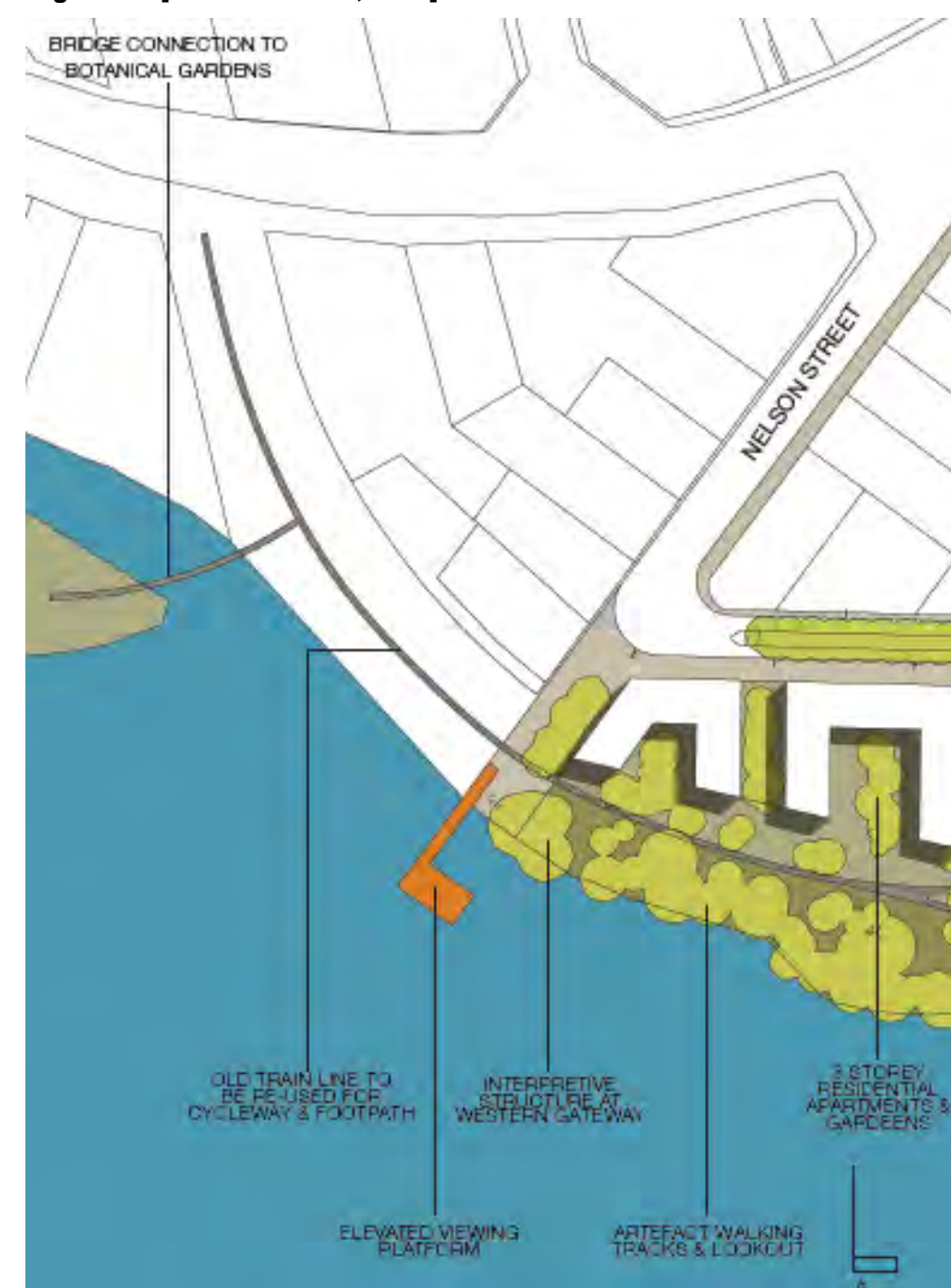
The Master Plan for the Precinct proposes a bridge at the confluence of Browns Creek and the Manning River. The bridge will provide a connection between the precinct and the Botanical Gardens and, most importantly, constitutes the physical means of facilitating the realisation of a pedestrian link between the Precinct and the Taree CBD.

The Master Plan also proposes measures to enhance key ecological habitats (mangroves, drainage lines and creek lines). Landscaping proposed by the Master Plan also includes the enhancement of remnant vegetation with planting to include the discontinuous patches or narrow bands of riparian vegetation along river and creek banks.

The measures proposed by the Master Plan to increase biodiversity and conservation along waterfronts will address the issues identified by Table 9: Commercial Use and Land Use Management Options/Actions of the Management Plan.

Figure 5.4 shows an extract of the concept for the south-western part of the Precinct, including the bridge over the mouth of Browns Creek to provide the connection between the Precinct and foreshore land to the west, on the opposite side of Browns Creek.

**Figure 5.4 [Source: Suters, 2008]**





## 5.5 Greater Taree City Draft Bike Plan

The Greater Taree City Draft Bike Plan was prepared for Greater Taree City Council by ERM Mitchell McCotter in May 1996.

The background of the Draft Bike Plan indicates that Council commissioned the plan following recognition of the need to prepare a bike plan which incorporates the objectives of encouragement, engineering, enforcement and education and which offers local residents and tourists the opportunity to use bicycles as a viable form of transport.

The study area for the Draft Bike Plan incorporates the whole of the city of Greater Taree. For the purposes of this discussion, however, the findings and recommendations in relation to the township of Taree and specifically for the land encompassed within the Precinct will be emphasised.

The aims and objectives of the Draft Bike Plan are to provide a network of routes and to integrate cycling into the transport system to support safe, convenient and pleasant cycling for residents and visitors, both for recreation and commuting and to identify specific cycling routes. The study was carried out in recognition that the urban area of Taree is relatively flat and in general traffic flow was low.

The Draft Bike Plan, at Section 2.2, discusses tourism opportunities associated with the promotion of cycling within the Taree area. The main points discussed by the Draft Bike Plan include the following:

- 1) *Establishment of Taree as a modern visitor centre* – Taree should be developed as an attractive visitor centre with upgrading of access to the waterfront.
- 2) *Make the river a focus of tourism* – Improved accessibility and amenity of Taree's riverbank would offer opportunities for cyclists and pedestrians. The river is recognised as an underutilised resource which could be used as a cycle route for local and tourist bicycle travel.

The Draft Bike Plan concludes that the promotion of cycling and the provision of cycling facilities will make Taree a better place to live and visit, and that the provision of cycling provides a valuable means for promotion of tourism in the area.

The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct reflects the objectives of the Draft Bike Plan and also responds to the potential tourism opportunities that can be facilitated by the upgrading of access to the waterfront which will result in the focus being placed upon the importance of the Manning River foreshore for cyclists and pedestrians whether they be permanent residents of The Greater Taree area or tourists attracted by the provision of upgraded cycling routes along the river foreshore. An important issue in the attractiveness or otherwise of cycling and pedestrian routes is that they need to have focal points along the routes. The Precinct redevelopment will facilitate the connection of the Taree CBD, the Precinct and the sporting/entertainment precinct via the improvement of access along the Manning River foreshore.

Chapter 6 of the Draft Bike Plan deals with the development of route plans.

Section 6.1.1 (Taree Urban Area) of the Draft Bike Plan notes that the Taree urban area provides opportunities for cycling for both recreation and commuter purposes. In relation to the Precinct, the Draft Bike Plan recommends a continuous cycle route extending from the Martin Bridge all the way along the Manning River Waterfront through the Precinct and then along the southern side of residential properties in Ochiltree Close before linking with an east bound cycleway at the intersection of Manning River Drive and John Street.

In relation to the Precinct, the Draft Bike Plan envisages a combination of on-road and off-road cycle paths through the Precinct linking with the off-road shared bicycle path at Browns Creek, continuing with an on-road bicycle path along the Pitt Street alignment and then reverting to an off-road bicycle path between the eastern end of the present Pitt Street road construction and the western side of the John Street dead-end road from Manning River Drive where it extends south to the Manning River foreshore.

# **Greater Taree City Draft Bike Plan (continued)**

Appendix C of the Draft Bike Plan identifies a work schedule for provision of the various routes through the towns and villages within the Greater Taree local government area. In the vicinity of the study area this includes the provision of a concrete sealed bike path from the Browns Creek link, construction of a new bridge over Browns Creek and construction of a concrete sealed bike path 3m wide from the eastern side of the bridge to the western end of Pitt Street. In terms of the on-road shared bicycle/parking path along Pitt Street, the bike plan proposes line marking from the eastern end of Pitt Street. An off-road shared bicycle path was proposed by the Draft Bike Plan known as the Pitt Street River Link which would involve the construction of a 1 kilometre bike path from the eastern end of the Pitt Street construction (at 2.5m wide), to the intersection of the bike path with John Street as discussed earlier. The bike path does not involve any bridging of the existing drainage line which presently delineates the eastern and western ends of the Precinct.

The Draft Bike Plan has relevance in terms of consideration of the NSW Coastline Cycleway program which provides grant funding to non-metropolitan coastal councils to improve cycling facilities by developing and implementing the NSW Coastline Cycleway route. The route aims to avoid major roads and highways and link together separate communities along the NSW coastline. Grants are to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the participating councils. A component of the NSW Coastline Cycleway program funding is the Northern Cycle Link Stage 1 - Planning and design for bridge over Browns Creek, Taree.

Figure 5.5 illustrates the proposed pedestrian cycleways through the Precinct. The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct addresses the crossing of Browns Creek in the western part of the Precinct (see also Figure 5.4) and the means of obtaining pedestrian and cycle access from the Precinct, across the creekline that presently separates the eastern and western part of the precinct and onto the sporting and entertainment to the north-east.



**Figure 5.5 – Defining Main Street and Gateways – Pedestrian & Cycleway Thoroughfares [Source: Suters, 2008]**

## 6. Planning & Context Objectives: Opportunities

Analysis of the urban context of the Precinct and the relevant local and regional planning policies has identified several opportunities for the redevelopment of the Precinct.

### 6.1 Creating a tourist destination

The Taree CBD Town Centre Study makes the important observation that Taree is not regarded as a major tourist destination.

The Town Centre Study identifies that the main tourist orientated development is generally limited to motels, fast food outlets and roadside service establishments (Andrews Neil 2004).

The redevelopment of the Precinct provides a real opportunity for the inclusion of a tourist development that will define Taree as a tourist destination and to promote its regional role (Andrews Neil 2004).

The location of the Precinct adjacent to the Manning River allows for an outcome capitalising upon the prime natural asset. The establishment of the Precinct as a tourist destination will provide benefits for the wider Taree area and its economy.

The Precinct site represents a very significant opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment, to capitalise on the deep-water frontage with existing jetties along the Manning River. Obviously, with the mixed use focus of the proposed rezoning of the Precinct, tourism related uses are likely to feature prominently as part of any future redevelopment of the site.





### **Creating a tourist destination (continued)**

The opportunity to create the Precinct as a tourist destination has been identified following analysis of the aims and/or objectives of relevant local and regional planning policies/strategies. The opportunity for creation of a tourist destination via the redevelopment of the Precinct is consistent with the aims/objectives/principles of the following policies and/or plans:

- **Hunter REP 1989** – particularly with regard to the establishment of the Precinct as a tourist destination and the recognition of the natural and heritage conservation values of the Precinct lands as a means of improving tourism opportunities. The principles outlined in the REP for tourism include the encouragement of initiatives which increase tourism interest and potential, such as historic site interpretation, and the consideration of developments that are capable of providing significant increases in tourism activity and jobs for the region.
- **Draft Mid-North Coast Regional Strategy** – the Draft Regional Strategy encourages Councils to identify appropriate locations and criteria for new tourism developments, to ensure that the region's character is not undermined by inappropriate developments.
- **Draft Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy** – Section 2.4 of the Draft CDS identifies that tourism is a key industry within the Greater Taree local government area. This observation is directly relevant to the Precinct rezoning and redevelopment project. The draft CDS identifies that the natural environment of Greater Taree is one of its principal attributes and provides the potential to promote the growth of the area, based on preservation of its environmental values.
- **NSW Coastal Policy** – the creation of the precinct as a tourist destination can fulfil one of the key objectives of the Coastal Policy, that is, to facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority.
- **NSW Coastal Design Guidelines** – a key aspect of the guidelines is the protection and enhancement of natural areas within coastal cities and the provision of a wide range of tourist accommodation types.

### **6.2 Revitalising public spaces and improving the quality of the public domain**

The promotion of public space along the foreshore of the River and within the Precinct can provide impetus for the revitalisation of the foreshore areas and realisation of a link between the Precinct and the Taree CBD, focusing upon the activation of public spaces.

The redevelopment of the Precinct will provide the opportunity for a formal connection to be made along the Manning River foreshore to link the Taree CBD, the Precinct and the main sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct.

The provision of a network of footpaths linking the Taree CBD through to the site and then to the main recreational/playing field area to the north-east of the precinct will ensure that the importance of the Precinct in the overall future character and community of Taree is significant.

This will provide benefits for the wider Taree area and its economy and will allow for the objectives of local planning policies such as the GTCC Draft Bike Plan and Browns Creek Estuary and Catchment Management Plan (GTCC, 2006) to be realised.

The opportunity also exists for pedestrian paths to be created to strengthen the connection from the Old Pacific Highway, currently known as Oxley Avenue and Chatham Avenue in the area, to the Precinct land and the river foreshore beyond. The road network between the former industrial land within the precinct and the southern side of the Oxley Avenue/Chatham Avenue allows for meaningful connections to be established to the river foreshore.

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to facilitate the revitalisation of public spaces and improve the quality of the public domain has been identified following analysis of the aims and/or objectives of relevant local and regional planning policies/strategies.

## **Revitalising public spaces and improving the quality of the public domain (continued)**

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to facilitate the revitalisation of public spaces and improve the quality of the public domain is consistent with the aims/objectives/principles of the following policies and/or plans:

- **Draft Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy** – In relation to the waterfront land along the Manning River, the draft CDS identifies that the river is underutilised and the potential exists for water based activities and waterfront uses. The revitalisation of public spaces is also consistent with the identification by the draft CDS that the natural environment of Greater Taree is one of its principal attributes.
- **Taree CBD Town Centre Study** - The redevelopment of the Precinct can provide a useful model for any redevelopment of land within the Taree CBD to enhance the use of the riverfront, with perhaps the potential for dual frontage development to be promoted to activate the waterfront (Andrews Neil, 2004).
- **NSW Coastal Policy** –one of the key objectives of the Coastal Policy is to facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority.
- **NSW Coastal Design Guidelines** – the guidelines identify that the improvement of public access and a diversity of uses along the coastal edge is a major opportunity presented by best practice, place-based planning.
- **Improving Transport Choice** –The revitalisation of public spaces can also provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle access, consistent with Principles 6 and 7 of the guidelines.

## **6.3 Revitalising the Taree CBD through appropriate commercial/mixed uses within the Precinct**

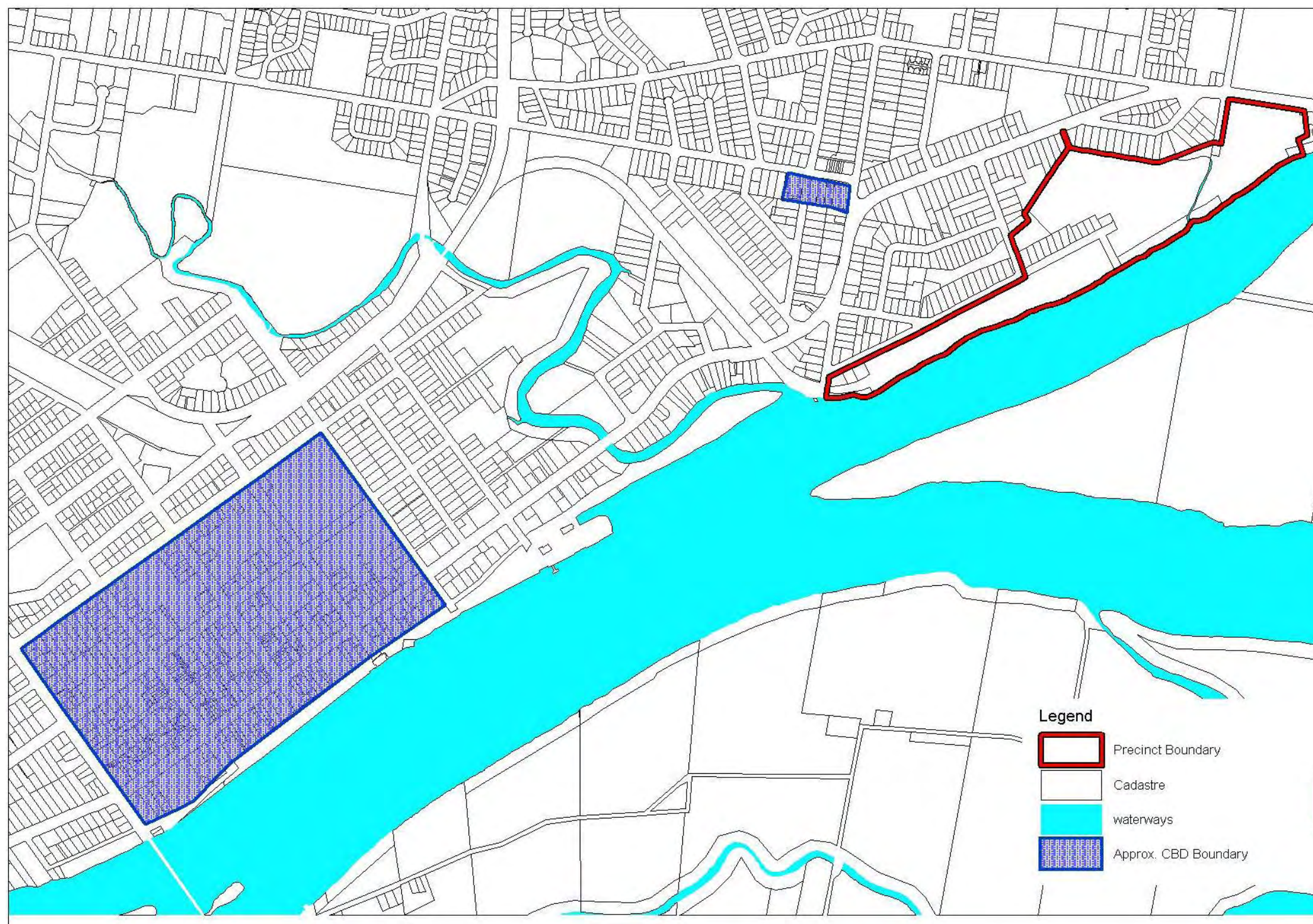
Opportunities for the Precinct to support the Taree CBD is emphasised through the master planning process for the redevelopment of the Precinct.

While tourism related uses are likely to feature prominently as part of any future redevelopment of the site, an important aspect of the proposed mixed use rezoning of the Precinct is to ensure that its redevelopment does not result in the emergence of an out-of-town-centre retailing/commercial character which will only serve to fragment the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD or the nearby neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre. The Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (DoP, 2006) identifies that such development should be resisted to prevent fragmentation.

Figure 6.3.1, on the following page, indicates the spatial relationship between the Taree CBD, the nearby Chatham Shopping Centre and the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct. Figure 6.3.2 (on page 51) shows the existing situation with regard to the extent of “highway commercial” type developments along Manning River Drive/Chatham Avenue.

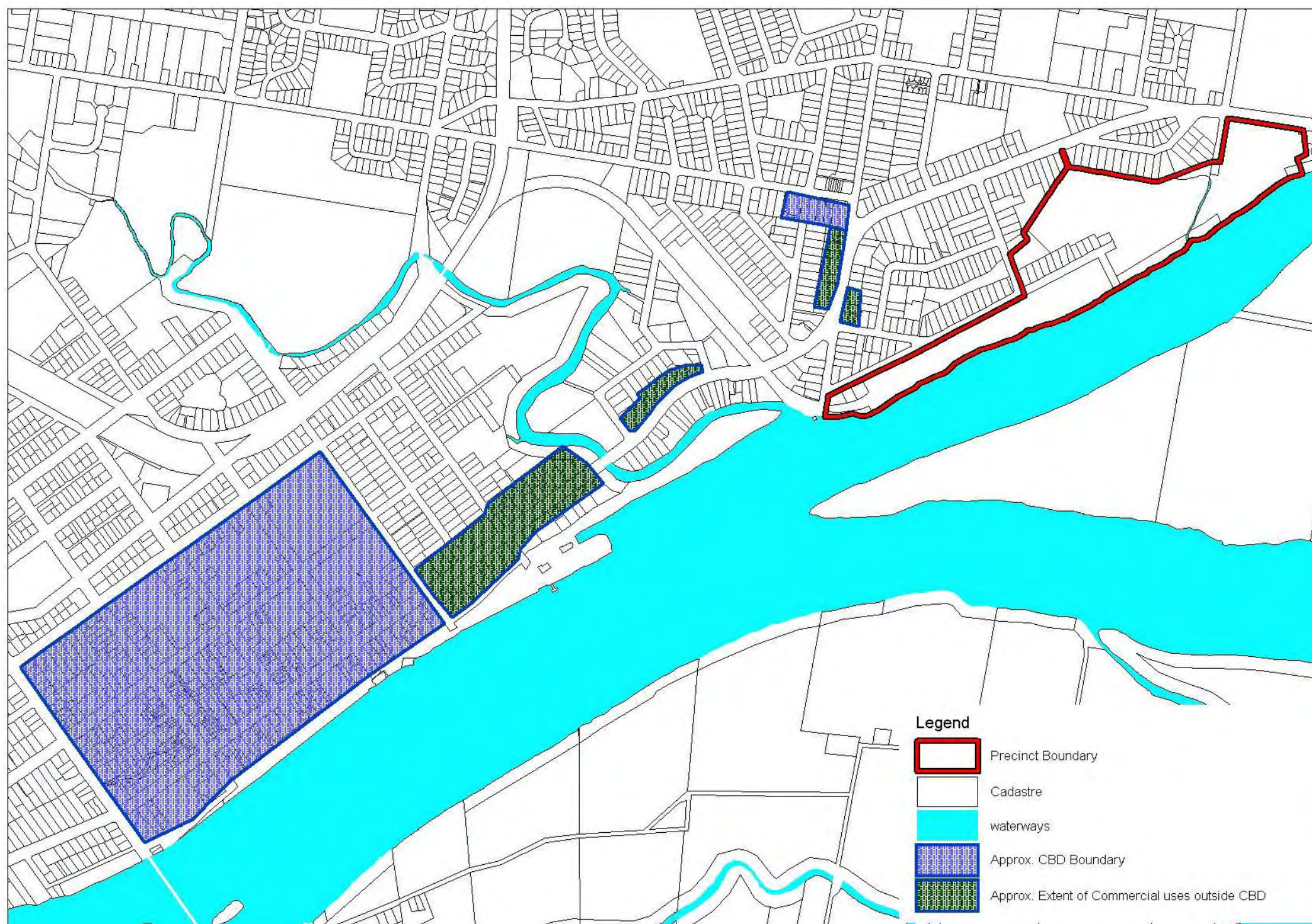
The redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct has the potential to support the ongoing urban renewal of the CBD and its environs, however, and it is acknowledged that the Precinct may develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses, that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the CBD and neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre.





**Figure 6.3.1 – Map showing the location of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct relative to the Taree CBD and Chatham Shopping Centre.**





**Figure 6.3.2 – Map showing the location of the Precinct relative to the Taree CBD and Chatham Shopping Centre (shown ma. The approximate extent of highway commercial development along Manning River Drive/Chatham Avenue is also shown.**



### Revitalising the Taree CBD through appropriate commercial/mixed uses within the Precinct (continued)

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to revitalise the Taree CBD has been identified following analysis of the aims and/or objectives of relevant local and regional planning policies/strategies.

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to revitalise the Taree CBD is consistent with the aims/objectives/principles of the following policies and/or plans:

- **Hunter REP 1989** – the principles outlined in Clause 20 of the REP include the encouragement of retailing, office and associated service functions in the CBD and subregional and district centres. Technically, the REP relates to the Newcastle CBD, but the Draft Mid-North Coast Regional Strategy, once adopted, will shift this focus to Taree as one of the four (4) major regional centres.
- **Draft Mid-North Coast Regional Strategy** – the Draft Regional Strategy identifies that development which may result in the emergence of “out-of-town” centres should be resisted to prevent fragmentation of the main retail/service functions of the Taree CBD.
- **Taree CBD Town Centre Study** – The redevelopment of the Precinct will provide a useful model for any redevelopment of land within the Taree CBD to enhance the use of the riverfront, with perhaps the potential for dual frontage development to be promoted to activate the waterfront (Andrews Neil, 2004).

### 6.4 Enhancing the waterfront

The Pitt Street waterfront precinct redevelopment will provide an opportunity for this area of the Manning River to become the focus for recreation and lifestyle activities as well as commercial activities, for example, eateries, are developed along the foreshore. An example of the type of outcome envisaged is shown in Figure 6.4.



**Figure 6.4 [Source: GTCC]**

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to enhance the waterfront has been identified following analysis of the aims and/or objectives of relevant local and regional planning policies/strategies.

## Enhancing the waterfront (continued)

The opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct to enhance the waterfront is consistent with the aims/objectives/principles of the following policies and/or plans:

- **Draft Greater Taree Draft Conservation & Development Strategy** – the manner of use of waterfront land adjacent to the CBD is identified as an issue in the Draft CDS. The Precinct redevelopment can provide a model in this regard.
- **NSW Coastal Policy** – the enhancement of the waterfront via the redevelopment of the land within the Precinct will facilitate public access to foreshore areas. One of the key objectives of the Coastal Policy is to facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority.
- **NSW Coastal Design Guidelines** – The guidelines envisage that public uses, such as a wharf or a marina, can make waterfront locations accessible, useable and memorable to all. The urban context of the Precinct is such that the maximisation of public use of the river front is paramount to the redevelopment and revitalisation of the Precinct.
- **Improving Transport Choice** – the enhancement of the waterfront via the redevelopment of the Precinct can increase the attractiveness of the area for use by pedestrians and cyclists. This is consistent with the relevant principles outlined in the guidelines.

### **6.5 Establishment & Maintenance of the nature and identity of the Precinct**

The waterfront location of the Precinct will be the guiding influence in the establishment and maintenance of the nature and identity of the Precinct.

The guidance provided by regional planning policies such as the Coastal Policy, Coastal Design Guidelines and SEPP 71 promote the coastal values of the Precinct as the key attributes of the nature and identity of the Precinct.

The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct proposes to establish development that will create the Precinct as a destination for both tourists and members of the local community. The redevelopment of the Precinct will be focussed upon the Manning River foreshore. The redevelopment will create the Precinct as a mixed use centre and this will facilitate the continuous use of the area. In this manner, the Precinct will become an attraction for visitation more or less around the clock whereas a purely commercial centre might be deserted out of usual business hours. The identity of the Precinct will be overwhelmingly one where pedestrians and cyclists take precedence in terms of transport, and where the public domain and river foreshore is invigorated by frequent activity and surveillance from adjacent residential uses.

Figure 6.5 indicates the type of character that may develop within the Precinct.



Figure 6.5 [Source: GTCC]



## 6.6 Potential for the Precinct to act as a gateway to Taree

The ability exists for the eastern part of the Precinct to form a gateway to the overall township of Taree. This is consistent with the opportunities to improve the public domain and the establishment and maintenance of the identity of the precinct.

The gateway can provide the physical entrance to the Precinct, and the Taree town ship. The gateway and its physical representation – likely to be adjacent to the regional sporting fields to the north-east of the Precinct – can establish the location as a land mark which can be identified by locals and visitors alike.

This can be achieved by the planting of larger scale trees in areas associated with the gateways to the precinct. Large signage structures should be avoided within these locations.

## 6.7 Opportunities for buildings within the waterfront precinct to be designed so as to provide an active frontage to the waterfront land and to allow for view sharing

This is consistent with the opportunities to improve the public domain and the establishment and maintenance of the identity of the precinct.

In terms of desirable practice for achieving a public and accessible coastal edge, the Coastal Design Guidelines identify desirable practices including the maintenance of views to the foreshore being optimised

Pedestrian amenity of the waterfront land can also be enhanced through paving, street furniture and planting. An example of the type of outcome envisaged is shown in Figure 6.7.

Presently, one of the predominant characteristics of the land within the Precinct is that a person who is unfamiliar with the area may not necessarily perceive that the river foreshore is located adjacent to the Precinct. The views from the residential land within the Precinct towards the south are such that they are dominated by the existing industrial type buildings within the area. There are no views or obvious links to suggest that the valuable waterfront land is located just to the south of those buildings.



**Figure 6.7 [Source: GTCC]**

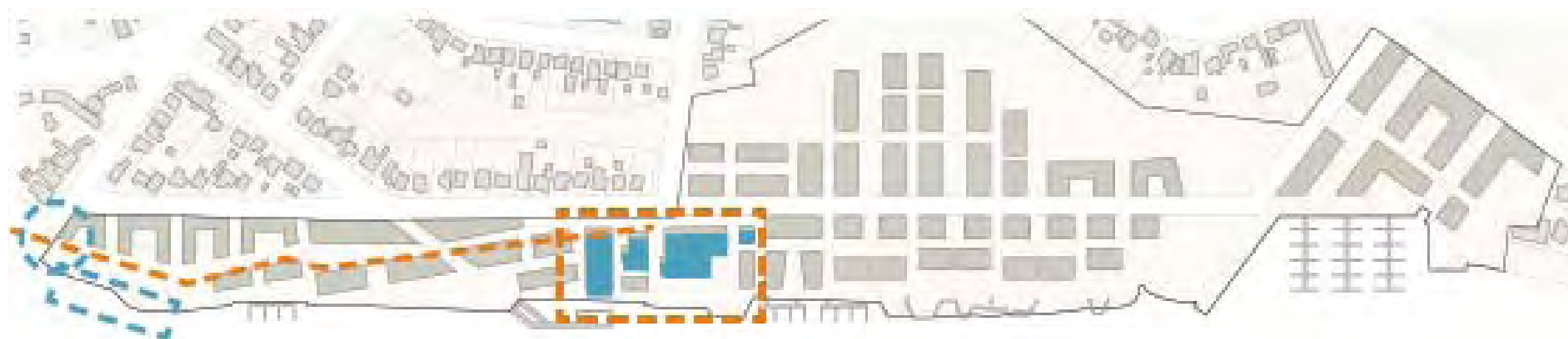
The opportunity arises in relation to the design of any new buildings on the narrow strip of land between Pitt Street and the Manning River waterfront so that new development will facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority. This access should be provided not only along the riverfront (east to west) but the design of buildings should also make provision for regular access points to be available from the Pitt Street frontage of the land through to the riverfront. These regular access points may also provide opportunities for view sharing between the development and the adjacent residential area on the northern side of Pitt Street.

**6.8 Protection of heritage buildings and spaces from demolition and the ability for any future development of land within the precinct to be designed so that they do not obstruct views from areas within and around the precinct to the former dairy buildings**

The opportunity exists for the existing landmark buildings within the Precinct, that is, the former dairy buildings to be protected from demolition as part of the redevelopment of the Precinct.

This is relevant to the principles outlined in the Hunter REP which include the encouragement of initiatives, such as historic site interpretation, and this can have flow-on effects in relation to tourism. In this manner, any redevelopment of those buildings, and/or any new buildings, should not diminish their landmark character.

Figure 6.8 illustrates the measures to preserve and integrate the historic buildings and spaces proposed by the Master Plan.



**Figure 6.8 – Preserving & Integrating Historic Buildings & Spaces [Source: Suters, 2008]**

## 7. Planning & Context Objectives: Constraints

The Precinct is comprised of three (3) vastly different areas of land. They are:

- a) The narrow, former industrial land, between the southern side of Pitt Street and the Manning River;
- b) The currently rural zoned land in the central part of the Precinct; and
- c) The large, higher part of the land in the eastern part of the Precinct which is presently occupied by car yards.

Analysis of the urban context of the Precinct and the relevant local and regional planning policies has identified several constraints that require consideration in the redevelopment of the Precinct.

### 7.1 Multiple land ownership

The land within the Precinct is held under several different ownerships which could present a significant constraint to redevelopment of the land in an integrated manner. This constraint is unlikely to be significant, however, as each of the landowners has elected to include their land in the master planning process. Indeed, the concept of the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct stemmed from a submission made by the landowners in response to Council's exhibition of the draft strategy.

### 7.2 Narrow land along waterfront and heritage buildings

The Pitt Street alignment has been identified as one of the major elements of the Precinct from a heritage point of view, as are the significant trees along Pitt Street.

The area of land available for development between Pitt Street and the waterfront is very narrow, and the ability to develop that area must take this characteristic into account along with the location of the heritage buildings within the Precinct that, ideally, will be retained.





## 7.2 Narrow land along waterfront and heritage buildings (continued)

The protection of the heritage buildings within the Precinct has been identified in Section 6 as an opportunity for the redevelopment of the Precinct. While this is true, this is also a limiting factor for the range of buildings and uses that might otherwise be identified for the narrow strip of land between Pitt Street and the waterfront.

The Master Plan proposes the integration of the significant heritage on-site within the overall redevelopment of the Precinct. This includes the establishment of the Dairy Heritage Precinct within the redevelopment to recognise heritage significance of the Manning Cooperative Dairy Society group of buildings.

## 7.3 Adjacent residential areas

The Precinct incorporates several residential properties, on the southern side of Pitt Street at its western end and also on the northern side of Pitt Street at the eastern end of the road formation.

The major portion of the existing residential development on the northern side of Pitt Street is, however, not included within the Precinct. The existing residential development presents challenges to redevelopment of the Precinct, particularly in terms of promoting development that is compatible with the residential amenity of the residential areas. At the same time, however, it is obvious that the natural future boundary of the Precinct may lie along the southern side of the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue.

The redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct will apply some pressure on the existing residential stock between the northern side of Pitt Street and the southern side of Chatham Avenue to redevelop. This will raise a number of issues including overshadowing, solar access, public access and open space linkages, proximity to the riverfront, view sharing and privacy.

The residential development adjacent to the Precinct is a traditional residential area with generally single and two storey detached dwellings. In general, the existing residential dwellings do not presently enjoy views or access to the river frontage to any form or degree. It is likely that this situation will change as redevelopment takes place of the narrow strip of waterfront land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the river foreshore and this will increase pressure on residential land to redevelop so as to take advantage of views and to take access of the likely higher land values that will result in the area as a result of the provision of an attractive public domain along what has predominantly been an undesirable industrial strip of land until recently. Most of the

residential lots to the north of the Pitt Street precinct have direct access off the streets which they front.

Future redevelopment of the precinct will likely see pressure for the construction of larger residential dwellings designed to utilise and maximise any possible views of the Manning River waterfront. In general, and in order to maintain the residential amenity of the area, modern equivalents to the existing residential structures are preferred in order to maintain this character.

## 7.4 Water & Sewer Infrastructure

Consultation has been undertaken with MidCoast Water in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct. This consultation has highlighted some issues as to the ability of MidCoast Water to provide reticulated water and sewerage to satisfactorily service the new development within the Precinct.

MidCoast Water has advised that, in the absence of the promotion of Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) principles, the ability to achieve the economic provision of water infrastructure for the community may be impeded. This issue is discussed in more detail in Section 8.8 of this Study.

## 7.5 Flood prone

The predominant physical constraint to development of the land is the extent to which land within the Precinct is subject to flooding during a 1:100 year flood event. The extent of land within the Precinct that is subject to flooding is shown in Figure 7.5 on the following page.

The NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy and Floodplain Development Manual support the wise and rational development of flood prone land and the Policy acknowledges that flood prone land is a valuable resource that should not be sterilised by unnecessarily precluding its development.

The Master Plan includes the strategic consideration of a number of key issues relating to protecting future occupants of flood prone land within the Precinct from the ramifications of flooding. The Master Plan provides for residential development in the flood-prone area of the Precinct, with the incorporation of appropriate flood-related development controls and design measures to allow for development of the flood prone land whilst mitigating the impacts of flooding on structures.



Figure 7.6 – Extent of the Precinct mapped as flood prone land (shown orange) [Source: GTCC]

## 8. Issues & Elements Relevant to Site Planning: Establishing the Context

This Section discusses the main issues and elements relevant to the urban context and in terms of guidance for the redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct.

### 8.1 Desired Urban Context of the Precinct

The desired urban context of the Precinct is one that will enhance the character, sense of place and improve accessibility for the public to the Manning River foreshore. In this manner, paths and gathering places within the precinct will be provided, and connecting paths between the town centre to the west, the foreshore and residential areas to the north and the sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east will be formalised.

The following principles are relevant to the desired future character of the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- The desired future character for the Precinct should be emphasised as being characterised by a mixture of uses, including the integration of open space, residential, commercial, and tourism uses, together with the potential for a marina.
- Strengthening of links with the Manning River should be emphasised.
- Development within the Precinct should be carried out in a manner that preserves the residential amenity of adjoining lands. At the same time, however, development should take into account that there may be a tendency for a gradual increase in density as properties between the northern side of Pitt Street and the southern side of the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue are redeveloped.
- The proximity of the eastern lands within the Precinct to the sporting and entertainment precincts should be considered in terms of the relative benefits of providing quality tourist accommodation which can, in turn, contribute to the use and vitality of the waterfront areas of the Precinct.
- Gated developments should be avoided in favour of neighbourhood oriented development.





## 8.2 Commercial Uses & Character

In general, development within the Precinct should be of a reduced scale and mass so as to evolve a character that is not consistent with that generally perceived for a commercial area. In this manner, the uses of the buildings within the Precinct will tend towards smaller boutique or niche type business rather than those that are commonly service or retail orientated and are usually located in the CBD of a town or city. The commercial aspects of the use of buildings within the Precinct should be such that it is guaranteed to remain subservient to the main retail and service function of the Taree CBD and not result in a situation where competition may result where businesses seek to relocate from the CBD to the precinct.

The types of businesses that will locate within the precinct are envisaged to be waterfront orientated businesses or smaller specialised businesses that generally have no link with the services generally offered by the CBD. It is considered that the situation where people may travel to and from the CBD because service functions are taken from the CBD to the precinct will be disruptive and will have an overall adverse impact upon the core function of the CBD area.

The following principles are relevant to the commercial uses and character of the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- The redevelopment of the Precinct should avoid the emergence of the Precinct as an out-of-town retailing/commercial centre so as to maintain the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD (supported by the nearby neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre).
- The non-residential/commercial uses should be selected so that they do not directly compete with the main commercial, retail and service functions of the Taree CBD. Suitable uses would provide a support and convenience function for residents and users of the Precinct with an emphasis on uses that are associated with the waterfront setting of the Precinct.
- The introduction of uses that are likely to be accompanied by the generation of significant volumes of traffic within the Precinct should be avoided in order to create an attractive area for low intensity public and private uses. Such uses should remain within the Taree CBD or Chatham Shopping Centre.

- Opportunities should be explored for the Precinct to develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the CBD and neighbourhood shopping centre. This may include the establishment of boutique retail businesses within the Precinct, or to such businesses as chandleries or fish markets.

## 8.3 Mixed Use Redevelopment

It is clear that although the mixed use redevelopment of the Precinct is proposed, the area will remain heavily characterised by residential uses. For example, it is unlikely that the redevelopment of the Precinct of itself will generate widespread demand for rezoning of the residential land to the north of Pitt Street for other purposes. It is quite possible, though, that the redevelopment of the land within the Precinct will be seen as a positive aspect by residents in the area and that may encourage further investment in slight increases in residential density on the land between Pitt Street and the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue.

It is important that any waterfront medium to high density development is of a scale and character that is consistent and unlikely to detract from the overriding residential character of the land to the north of the Precinct. The waterfront land should be seen as an adjunct to the overall residential character of the area and, in this manner, the Precinct is likely to be not only successful in attracting patronage from the wider community but, most importantly, residents of the area immediately around the waterfront Precinct.

The Master Plan indicates that three (3) of the sub-precincts within the overall redevelopment project will be located between the Manning River foreshore and the residential land on the northern side of Pitt Street.

These are the:

- Gateway Residential Precinct – built form proposed to be of modest scale with predominantly 3 storeys which step down to the adjoining residences.
- Figtree Commercial Precinct – buildings are proposed to range from 3 storeys to a maximum of 5 storeys in height.
- Dairy Heritage Precinct – is proposed to contain a mixture of new and existing buildings including refurbishment of the significant heritage buildings. The bulk and scale of built form is to be restricted so as to not exceed the existing heritage building fabric.

### 8.3 Mixed Use Redevelopment (continued)

Over time, it is envisaged that the Precinct will evolve, with or without the incorporation of the residential land to the north of Pitt Street, into an area with appropriate densities of housing, employment-based uses, and a mix of compatible uses such as shops, restaurants, convenience functions and on the ground floor of residential or commercial buildings, and limited entertainment facilities within walking distance say, 400 metres to 800 metres, from one end of the Precinct to the other.

The following principles are relevant to the mixed use redevelopment of the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- The optimal mix of non-residential development within the Precinct should be formulated in a manner so that they are reliant on a mixed use type of environment and are generally compatible with co-located residential uses. In this regard, it is envisaged that non-residential uses would be selected that are compatible with adjacent residential uses, such as shops and restaurants on the ground floor of residential or commercial buildings. Also, smaller convenience type businesses that will have the ability to service the likely permanent residential population that will accompany the overall redevelopment of land within the Precinct should be promoted.
- Uses likely to be incompatible with adjacent residential uses, such as major supermarkets or service providers should be avoided in the Precinct.
- The establishment of home occupations and home-based businesses should be promoted in the Precinct.

### 8.4 Traffic & Pedestrian Linkage Issues to be considered

Additional vehicular connections will be provided to improve traffic movements but care should be taken to limit the amount of vehicular traffic that will be consistently generated throughout the Precinct.

In general, the character of the Precinct is presently influenced heavily by the low levels of vehicular traffic volumes that travel into and through the Precinct. Obviously, there will be some increase in these volumes as the waterfront land is redeveloped to a mixed use type character.

Overall, however, the emphasis should be on development within the precinct that encourages people to walk or cycle to and from the precinct rather than those which are likely to attract large volumes of vehicular traffic to use the facilities within the precinct.

It is preferable that the Precinct be established so that any high traffic generating developments, such as accommodation and highway commercial development is located either in the eastern part of the precinct closer to the main road and sporting facilities or encouraged along the southern side of the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue that skirts the northernmost part of the Precinct.

To encourage pedestrian linkages between the precinct and other land on the northern side of the Old Pacific Highway/Chatham Avenue, development should be carried out and infrastructure works undertaken to create safe and accessible crossings across Chatham Avenue at its intersections with Lyndhurst Street, Pioneer Street and Bligh Street. The introduction of pedestrian linkages through these streets can also be used as a basis for future development to provide view paths parallel with these streets through the waterfront land (where possible, subject to location of existing buildings) to provide a visual link between Chatham Avenue and the riverfront. It is also envisaged that to the west of the precinct, the existing rail corridor will form the basis of a pedestrian path which will provide a future connection with land on the western side of the mouth of Brown's Creek which can then be linked further to the west with the eastern end of William Wynter Drive and from there further west to the Taree CBD area.

The following principles are relevant to the traffic and pedestrian issues affecting the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- The provision of a linkage between the respective portions of open space/reserve (present 6(a) zoned) land as a means of forming a pedestrian link to and from lands to the east and west of the site, as well as through the site and also as a means of promoting public access to the Manning River foreshore.
- The interconnection of pedestrian and cycle networks between the town centre of Taree and the main sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the precinct.
- The provision of good access within and through the Precinct to maximise pedestrian and cycle activity within the Precinct.
- The ability for access to the Precinct to be gained via the primary public transport mode in Taree – bus – to be maximised.

#### 8.4 Traffic & Pedestrian Linkage Issues to be considered (continued)

- Footpaths, cycle ways etc. should be well lit and located where there is natural surveillance from adjacent uses.
- The enhancement of pedestrian amenity by the provision of attractive, coordinated street furniture, lighting and signage.
- Facilitating the ability for public transport to access and service the Precinct.
- The connection of the eastern and western parts of the Precinct to allow travel within the Precinct rather than a scenario where vehicles have to leave the Precinct to access the eastern and western parts of the Precinct and vice versa.
- The design and connection of the street system so that it naturally prevents through traffic using the Precinct. In this manner, streets could be designed and constructed so that they tend to favour pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles and otherwise the connection of streets could be done in a manner where it only allows one-way travel rather than two-way travel so as to limit the through traffic use of the precinct.
- The minimisation of car parking within the larger area of the Precinct to encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity. While small amounts of car parking may be distributed at various parts of the Precinct, the provision of separate larger public car parking areas should be avoided to reduce the tendency of people visiting the Precinct to drive to their destination. In this manner, it may be worthwhile to consider the provision of parking at one point in the Precinct, for example, at the eastern part of the Precinct where it can provide a parking area for those people visiting the Precinct and may also be used by those people visiting the sporting and/or entertainment facilities to the north-east of the Precinct where required.
- The final design of the road network within the Precinct should incorporate traffic calming measures to slow traffic.

#### 8.5 Public Access to the river foreshore

In terms of the ability for public access and use of the river foreshore, the redevelopment of the Pitt Street waterfront precinct will provide additional gathering places throughout the precinct along the waterfront to enhance urban amenity for pedestrians and users of the area. It is envisaged that development of the precinct will reinforce gathering places with appropriate paving, landscaping, shade structures and other design elements, including public art which will draw pedestrians and users of the area to these places. Also, the attractiveness of the area will be enhanced by newer buildings in the area addressing the public domain along the riverfront.

The following principles are relevant to the promotion of public access within the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- The potential for the land along the waterfront, and particularly the former industrial zone, to provide a connection between the existing open space to the east and west to enhance public accessibility and use of the river foreshore.
- The retention of land along the river frontage to remain in public ownership, where possible.
- Investigate opportunities for access between the existing residential zoned land and the riverfront land that is presently impeded by the private and formerly industrial uses of the land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the riverfront.
- Emphasise the provision of public access to the entire foreshore length and other public domain outcomes in return for the incorporation of land that is currently zoned open space into the proposed mixed use zone for the Precinct.
- Emphasise the use of public streets or pedestrian pathways to mark the boundary between urban development and open spaces and river foreshore.
- The redevelopment of the precinct in a manner that builds upon the original historic street pattern.
- Design of marina facilities to limit impact upon aquatic vegetation and discourage anchorage of vessels in these areas.



## 8.6 Building forms and protection of heritage values

Given the relatively narrow width of the waterfront land within the Precinct between the riverfront and the southern side of Pitt Street, it is likely that buildings that are perimeter block forms will be more appropriate so that they may be located closer to the existing street frontage and not encroach upon the potential public land between the southern elevation of those buildings and the riverfront.

The scale and character of buildings along the waterfront land is also critical in terms of the need for future development along the waterfront strip not to have any adverse overshadowing impacts upon the river foreshore. The ability of development to take place without any accompanying adverse overshadowing impacts will assist in maintaining the amenity of the waterfront land for public use and access. In general, building elements should be informed by the existing built form and where possible, new building facades should contain specific design elements which translate from existing buildings on the old dairy site to provide a link between the past while displaying a contemporary expression.



**Figure 8.6 [Source, GTCC] – The design and construction of buildings that are human-scaled can provide significant benefits in terms of the attractiveness of the Precinct to the general community.**

It is noted that the existing former dairy buildings provide a definite street edge to Pitt Street, and the future development of the narrow strip of riverfront land to the west and south-west of those buildings should respect the existing relationship between the existing buildings and Pitt Street. While they would respect this relationship, the building types would ideally have active frontages facing onto the street to the north and onto the public spaces to the south. Pedestrian routes would also be provided through buildings to provide convenient access between the Pitt Street alignment and the public land adjacent to the river foreshore.

The following principles are relevant to the likely building forms within the Precinct, and require consideration in the Master Planning process:

- Maintenance and development of the historical characteristics of the Precinct to encourage tourism and maintain and promote the Precinct's historic context.
- Protection of the existing landmark buildings within the Precinct, that is, the former dairy buildings, from demolition and redevelopment of those buildings in a manner that will not diminish their landmark character.
- The promotion of the adaptive re-use of the existing buildings within the former dairy complex as it can provide a link between the historical uses of the Precinct and the future character which can be established by the relationship between any new buildings and the existing dairy buildings.
- Ensuring that any new buildings respect the existing character of the former dairy buildings on the site and their careful design and planning to maintain the role of the former dairy buildings in the overall heritage context can provide a memorable and prominent built form along the land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the waterfront.
- Careful analysis of the overshadowing impacts that any new buildings may have on foreshore and proposed open space areas. In general, buildings should avoid overshadowing of public open spaces, the foreshore area before 3pm mid-winter and 6.30 pm summer daylight saving time. The likely outcome may be that higher parts of buildings will be encouraged closer to the Pitt Street frontage with the heights stepping back to lower buildings closer to the waterfront. In this manner, the overshadowing impacts from any new buildings will fall on or over the forecourts of the buildings and are less likely to fall over the natural areas closer to the waterfront.
- Buildings closer to the foreshore edges being maintained at up to three (3) storeys in height at a maximum.

## 8.6 Building forms and protection of heritage values (continued)

- The design of any new buildings on the narrow strip of land between Pitt Street and the Manning River waterfront to be so that new development will facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority. This access should be provided not only along the riverfront (east to west) but the design of buildings should also make provision for regular access points to be available from the Pitt Street frontage of the land through to the riverfront.
- While several of the former dairy buildings will be retained given their heritage significance, other development of the former industrial land along the river foreshore should be undertaken in a manner that allows views and access through the site from the Pitt Street alignment to the riverfront.
- The design of new buildings for the Precinct so that an outcome is achieved which is human scaled and oriented to the street with clear pedestrian entry so as provide natural surveillance, a sense of security for pedestrians and visual interest.

## 8.7 The potential for the Precinct to form a gateway to Taree

The ability exists for the eastern part of the Precinct to form a gateway to the overall township of Taree. This gateway can define the eastern entrance to the Precinct and, from an architectural point of view, should be treated so as to signal the entrance to not only the township of Taree but to the Precinct. Signage structures should be avoided in terms of advertising commercial structures or other facilities in favour of an adopted landscaping and architectural theme that sets the scene for the development to be located on the eastern end of the Precinct.

The following principles are relevant to the “gateway” function of the Precinct, and require consideration in the master planning process:

- Investigation of the ability for the eastern part of the Precinct to form a gateway to the overall township of Taree. The gateway can provide the eastern entrance to the precinct and, from an architectural point of view, should be treated so as to signal the entrance to not only the township of Taree but to the Precinct.
- Signage structures should be avoided in terms of commercial advertising structures or other facilities in favour of an adopted landscaping and architectural theme that sets the scene for the development to be located on the eastern end of the Precinct.

- The planting of larger scale trees in areas associated with the gateways to the precinct should be preferred so as to emphasise these locations.

## 8.8 Water & Sewer Infrastructure

In relation to the provision of vital infrastructure such as reticulated water and sewerage, consultation with MidCoast Water has advised that any comprehensive redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct should consider and promote Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) principles.

In this regard, MidCoast Water has advised that a strategic approach is required to ensure that water, sewerage and stormwater infrastructure needs to be planned in an integrated manner to maximise the benefits for future development in the Precinct and to achieve the economic provision of water infrastructure for the community.

MidCoast Water has advised that, in the absence of IWCM principles, the result will potentially be upsizing of infrastructure to Kolodong (water supply) and Brimbin (sewerage) respectively. This can, however, be avoided with the incorporation of measures within the Precinct with a suitable local stormwater harvesting or wastewater recycling scheme to offset the demand on the existing infrastructure.

The redevelopment of the Precinct should consider and promote Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) principles in consultation with MidCoast Water. As a minimum, this will include the incorporation of measures within the Precinct with a suitable local stormwater harvesting or wastewater recycling scheme to offset the demand on the existing infrastructure.

## 8.9 Stormwater Management

It is important that the proposed rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct observe the principles of water sensitive urban design.

Given the environmentally sensitive nature of the land within the Precinct, containing several drainage lines and having significant frontage to the Manning River, it is important that the elements of water sensitive urban design be considered so that they may form part of a treatment train (BCC, 2005) to effectively manage stormwater from the range of different land uses likely to arise within the Precinct and also the range of different land uses existing on the land around the precinct in the existing urban areas of Chatham.

The Master Plan has taken water sensitive design principles into account, with stormwater design recognised as being intrinsically tied to the landscape architecture of the site. In particular, and based on information from Suters (2008):

- All roads will provide bioswales. Stormwater from roads and paved areas is sent directly to filtration biotypes/bioswales where it is filtered under low flow conditions.
- Overflow from the road bioswales will be directed into biofiltration biotopes, located in the public open space. It will disappear in filtered condition into the creek and river.
- Clean roof water is to be sent to retention tanks located in the public open space under paved areas, where it is to be stored for reuse and irrigation of vegetated areas.

Figure 8.9 shows the stormwater management concept for the proposed redevelopment of the Precinct.



Figure 8.9



## 9. Master Plan Overview



Figure 9.1 – Aerial view of Master Plan [Source: Suters, 2008]

The Master Plan for the Precinct envisages five (5) area-based precincts within the overall redevelopment of the site. The following text and images are from Suters (2008).

### Gateway Residential Precinct

A residential precinct which fronts Pitt Street on the north and the riverfront to the south and forms the western gateway to the site. It overlooks the natural ironbark and spotted gum reserve, historic railway cutting and walking tracks to provide many comprehensive vistas along the Manning River and into the Public Domain. The built form is of modest scale with predominantly 3 storeys which steps down to the adjoining residences and opens towards the river and public spaces, defining an ambient open area that encourages people to meet, interact and relax.



Figure 9.2 – Gateway Residential Precinct

### Figtree Commercial Precinct

The business hub of the proposal, it incorporates mixed uses including high quality and specialty Restaurants and Cafes opening out to the terraced public domain areas with Green Star rated Commercial Office space and Professional Residences over. Accommodated in buildings ranging from 3 stories to a maximum of 5 stories in height this precinct provides a public plaza containing external seating and dining areas as well as selective landscaping and terraced paving which activates the hard edged urban waterfront.



Figure 9.3 – Figtree Commercial Precinct



### The Dairy Heritage Precinct

A heritage enclave with a mixture of new and existing buildings and in particular refurbishment of the unique heritage buildings with an appropriate adaptive reuse function to activate sheds and public open spaces. Primary uses of this area could include multipurpose cultural and educational facilities, taverns, restaurants, fish co-op, fresh produce markets, community facilities, museum and potential hotel and conference facilities. The variation of external spaces and landscaping strategies will generate an active precinct. The public pontoon and pool is the major public domain feature: an extension of the pedestrian walk and a great place to enjoy a Riverside swim. Bulk and scale of built form does not exceed the existing heritage building fabric.



Figure 9.4 - Dairy Heritage Precinct

### Riverpark Village Precinct

A Residential Village which proposes an assorted number of dwellings, with a mixture of residential types including medium density, integrated housing and apartments. The concept framework for the residential area is proposed as a flexible approach to allow for a range of residential development types including some mixed use and home based business. Nestled between the existing creek, vegetation and Riverside, the structure allows building frontage to enjoy a landscaped aspect with a variety of panoramic and glimpse views of the river. Lookout nodes are connected to a Boardwalk between existing Riverside vegetation. The built form is predominantly single and two storeys with some loft spaces towards the northern fringe to take advantage of the fantastic views.



Figure 9.5 –Riverpark Village Precinct



### Marina Commercial Precinct

A commercial Centre with a dual frontage: to the main road, it forms the Eastern Gateway to Taree and to the Marina and Manning River. This Centre is proposed to be the third stage of development and would therefore maintain the existing Commercial and 'Oyster' icon until economics would support the new development. Cutting into the Riverside to create a protected Marina environment provides another exciting Public Domain. A built form of up to four stories would be encouraged in the Commercial Centre with the potential for an iconic gateway landmark.



Figure 9.6 - Marina Commercial Precinct

## 10. Conclusions

The role of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct is to act as a critical element within the overall future character of Taree and form an integral link between the CBD and the recreation and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct.

The most important and defining influence on the urban context – present and future – of the Precinct is its relationship with the major natural feature of the Manning Valley: the Manning River.

The proposed rezoning and redevelopment of the Precinct provide the ideal opportunity to enhance the site from both a water and land based point of view.

The rezoning and eventual redevelopment of the land will rectify a visual eyesore that presently characterises the Precinct, particularly when viewed from the river.

The opportunity to respond to the unique riverfront environment and to create a dynamic waterfront mixed use and recreational experience within the Precinct will deliver benefits to future residents of the Precinct and to the wider community. This will provide an example, and perhaps an impetus, for the appropriate redevelopment of other presently underutilised riverfront land in Taree.

### 10.1 The Case for Growth & Redevelopment of the Precinct

The Greater Taree local government area falls under the Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (the Strategy, DoP 2006). Importantly, the Strategy identifies Taree as one of four (4) major regional centres, and as the major regional centre of the Manning Valley-Great Lakes sub-region.

An important aspect of the proposed mixed use rezoning of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct is to ensure that its redevelopment does not result in the emergence of an out-of-town-centre retailing/commercial character which will only serve to fragment the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD or the nearby neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre. The Strategy identifies that such development should be resisted to prevent fragmentation.

Obviously, with the mixed use focus of the proposed rezoning of the Precinct, tourism related uses are likely to feature prominently as part of any future redevelopment of the site. Under the Strategy, councils will be encouraged to identify appropriate locations and criteria for new tourism developments, to ensure that the region's character and appeal is not undermined by inappropriate developments.

The redevelopment of the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct has the potential to support the ongoing urban renewal of the CBD and its environs, and it is acknowledged that the Precinct may develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses that can evolve on the site without presenting significant competition to the CBD and neighbourhood shopping centre.

Importantly, the Pitt Street Waterfront Precinct site has been included in the Local Growth Management Strategy (GTCC 2007).

### 10.2 Summary of relationship between key issues & the Master Plan

Table 10.2 (on the following page) outlines the key issues relevant to the desired urban context of the Precinct and the relationship between those issues and the Master Plan for the Precinct.

**Table 10.2: Summary of relationship between key issues and the Master Plan**

Key Issues	How does the Master Plan respond?
<b>Desired future character and relationship to adjacent uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan emphasises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ the desired future character for the Precinct as being characterised by a mixture of uses, including the integration of open space, residential, commercial, and tourism uses.</li> <li>➢ Strengthening of links with the Manning River.</li> <li>➢ Development of land within the Precinct that preserves the residential amenity of adjoining lands.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The introduction of uses that are likely to be accompanied by the generation of significant volumes of traffic within the Precinct have been avoided in order to create an attractive area for low intensity public and private uses.</li> <li>• The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct seeks to avoid the emergence of the Precinct as an out-of-town retailing/commercial centre so as to maintain the retail and service functions of the Taree CBD (supported by the nearby neighbourhood Chatham Shopping Centre).</li> <li>• The optimal mix of non-residential development within the Precinct has been formulated in a manner so that these uses do not directly compete with the main commercial, retail and service functions of the Taree CBD.</li> <li>• The non-residential uses within the Precinct are intended to provide a support and convenience function for residents and users of the Precinct, with an emphasis on uses that are associated with the waterfront setting of the Precinct.</li> <li>• The Master Plan includes recognition of opportunities for the Precinct to develop a specialised retail function, such as markets or tourism orientated businesses.</li> <li>• Gated developments have been avoided in favour of neighbourhood oriented development.</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage &amp; Adaptive re-use of existing buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan proposes the renovation and adaptive re-use of the major historical buildings within the Precinct to maintain and promote the Precinct's historic context.</li> <li>• The existing landmark buildings within the Precinct, that is, the former dairy buildings are to be protected from demolition and redevelopment/reuse of those buildings proposed in a manner so as not to diminish their landmark character.</li> <li>• The adaptive re-use of the existing buildings within the former dairy complex has been promoted to provide a link between the historical uses of the Precinct and the future character which can be established by the relationship between any new buildings and the existing dairy buildings.</li> <li>• The new buildings within the Dairy Heritage Precinct have been proposed so as to respect the existing character of the former dairy buildings. The design and planning of the new buildings maintain the significance of the former dairy buildings in the overall heritage context and contribute to the prominent built form along the land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the waterfront.</li> </ul>
<b>Public domain issues and access to foreshore areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct has considered how the land along the waterfront, and particularly the former industrial land, can provide a connection between the existing open space to the east and west to enhance public accessibility and use of the river foreshore.</li> <li>• The Master Plan promotes the public ownership of the river frontage.</li> <li>• The master planning process for the Precinct has considered opportunities for access between the existing residential zoned land and the riverfront land that is presently impeded by the private and formerly industrial uses of the land between the southern side of Pitt Street and the riverfront.</li> <li>• The master planning process for the Precinct emphasises the provision of public access to the entire foreshore length and other public domain outcomes in return for the incorporation of land that is currently zoned open space into the proposed mixed use zone for the Precinct.</li> <li>• Emphasis placed on the use of public streets or pedestrian pathways to mark boundary between urban development , open spaces &amp; river foreshore.</li> <li>• The redevelopment of the precinct builds upon the original historic street pattern.</li> <li>• Marina facilities have been designed to limit impact upon aquatic vegetation and discourage anchorage of vessels in these areas.</li> </ul>



**Table 10.2: Summary of relationship between key issues and the Master Plan**

Key Issues	How does the Master Plan respond?
<b>Pedestrian &amp; bicycle access and public transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The master planning process has considered the opportunities to provide a linkage between the respective portions of (currently zoned) 6(a) land as a means of providing a pedestrian link to and from lands to the east and west of the site, as well as through the site and also as a means of promoting public access to the Manning River foreshore.</li> <li>• The interconnection of pedestrian and cycle networks between the town centre of Taree and the main sporting and entertainment precinct to the north-east of the Precinct have been promoted through the master planning process.</li> <li>• Good access is provided within and through the Precinct to maximise pedestrian and cycle activity within the Precinct.</li> <li>• Footpaths, cycle ways etc are located where there is the ability for natural surveillance from adjacent uses.</li> <li>• Pedestrian amenity is likely to be enhanced by the provision of attractive, coordinated street furniture, lighting and signage.</li> </ul>
<b>Car Parking &amp; Road Network within the Precinct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan allows for opportunities for public transport to access and service the main central and western parts of the Precinct.</li> <li>• The connection of the street system within the Precinct generally prevents through traffic using the precinct.</li> <li>• At ground car parking within the Precinct has been generally kept to a minimum to encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity. While it is noted that small amounts of car parking will be distributed at various parts of the Precinct, the provision of larger public car parking areas has been avoided</li> <li>• The road network within the Precinct will incorporate traffic calming measures to slow traffic.</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion of tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan includes initiatives which will encourage the tourism potential and interest in the Precinct and embrace the natural, social and heritage conservation values and features of the site as providing the basis for tourism opportunities and activity within the Precinct.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of flood prone land</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan envisages that the area of land that is currently mapped as flood prone land [mainly that land within the Precinct that is presently zoned 1(a)] should be investigated for its suitability for residential development and/or passive recreational and drainage infrastructure uses.</li> </ul>
<b>Design of buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The master planning process has included an analysis of the overshadowing impacts that new buildings may have on the river foreshore and proposed open space areas. In general, the Master Plan promotes building forms and/or heights that will avoid prolonged overshadowing of public open spaces and the river foreshore area. In this manner, while the shadows cast by any new buildings may fall on or over the forecourts of the buildings, they are less likely to fall over the natural areas closer to the waterfront.</li> <li>• The design criteria for any new buildings on the narrow strip of land between Pitt Street and The Manning River waterfront has included a clear intent that new development should facilitate public access to the foreshore areas as a priority. This access is provided not only along the riverfront (east to west) but the design of buildings has also made provision for regular access points to be available from the Pitt Street frontage of the land through to the riverfront.</li> <li>• While the majority of the former dairy buildings are proposed to be retained given their heritage significance, the master planning process has explored opportunities for other development of the former industrial land along the river foreshore to be undertaken in a manner that allows views and access through the site from the Pitt Street alignment to the riverfront.</li> <li>• The design of new buildings for the Precinct has been undertaken in a manner that promotes buildings that are human scaled and oriented to the street with clear pedestrian entry so as provide natural surveillance, a sense of security for pedestrians and visual interest.</li> </ul>
<b>Gateway to Taree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Precinct provides the ability for the eastern part of the Precinct to form a gateway to the overall township of Taree. In this regard, the potential exists for the eastern entrance to the Precinct to be enhanced, particularly from an architectural point of view. This potential allows for the eastern part of the Precinct to be treated so as to signal the entrance to not only the Precinct, but also to the overall city of Taree.</li> </ul>

**Table 10.2: Summary of relationship between key issues and the Master Plan**

Key Issues	How does the Master Plan respond?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Master Plan avoids the potential for signage structures to dominate the eastern part of the Precinct and opts in favour of the adoption of a landscaping and architectural theme that sets the scene for the development within the Precinct.</li> <li>• The adoption of an appropriate landscaping theme will facilitate the planting of larger scale trees in areas associated with the gateways to the Precinct so as to emphasise these locations.</li> </ul>
<b>Water &amp; sewer infrastructure and stormwater management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The master planning process takes water sensitive design principles into account.</li> <li>• The master planning process provides for the formulation of mechanisms and/or management regimes to address the short and long term maintenance and management of all water sensitive urban design elements incorporated within the redevelopment of the Precinct to ensure that the system achieves optimal performance and meets intended water treatment and water quality targets. This will include provision for ongoing monitoring of the performance of the water sensitive urban design elements incorporated within the redevelopment of the Precinct.</li> <li>• The master planning process allows for the implementation of the principles of Integrated Water Cycle Management in consultation with MidCoast Water in terms of the provision of water, sewerage and stormwater infrastructure.</li> </ul>

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### **Acknowledgement:**

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